

PM ISSUES WARNING

Story on Page 2



Team Antigua and Barbuda emerged victorious at the esteemed APAG Inter-Caribbean Grand Debate Challenge held in Guadeloupe last Friday. From left: Acting Principal of Clare Hall Secondary School, Ms. Lorna Richardson; (teammembers) Anya Hull, Jada Quinland, and Ti-ikha Edwards; and Education Officer: Education Broadcasting, Ms. Alicia Knowles. *Story on page 6.*

Local News



PM Browne issues warning

Prime Minister Gaston Browne has described the United Progressive Party (UPP) as the ‘most serious threat’ facing Antigua and Barbuda and he is warning citizens to ‘be aware’.

Speaking on the Browne and Browne Show on Saturday, PM Browne was addressing the issue where some UPP members apparently had a role in providing information for a Newsweek article that he felt, attempted to undermine the relationship between Antigua and Barbuda and the People’s Republic of China.

The prime minister again underscored Antigua and Barbuda’s close ties with the United States and the importance of US investments and as the main source for tourists to the country, but he noted that at this moment, the PRC is the most important developmental partner the country has.

He admitted to being alarmed that UPP officials would want to jeop-



Prime Minister Gaston Browne **ardise** that relationship, even though when in government, the UPP sought and attained developmental assistance from China.

He said elements within the party want government ‘at any cost’ and they are prepared to figuratively ‘burn the place down’ to emerge from all the ashes.

“This notion that Antigua and Bar-

buda could be an outpost of China to undermine the United States interests, that is just a horrendous act of hostility against the state, coming from individuals who would like to run our country.

“I am wondering why individuals within the UPP who are seeking to take over the governance of this country, can show this level of disloyalty to our state. These people don’t care about the impact of their statements on the living standards of our people,” PM Browne stated.

He accused these elements of wanting to ‘take over the reins of governance’ because they failed to plan for their long-term future with no alternative plan to govern the country.

“I hope the people are paying attention to this because at the end of the day the level of irresponsible politics that we see coming from the opposi-

cont’d on pg 3

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Agricultural symposium planned for June 18

The government is scaling up its efforts to increase agricultural production in the country with food security one of its main goals. This will be the focus of an agricultural symposium planned for June 18 this year with the proposed theme; Agriculture-A new vision, unearthing opportunities.

Speaking on the *Browne and Browne* show on Saturday, Agricultural Minister, E.P Chet Greene, said there is no other sector of the local economy poised for investments like agriculture. The aim of the symposium will also explore ways to encourage more nationals to invest in agriculture.

“Our government has a major thrust to scale up agricultural production in this country in all areas, from a wider variety of crops to producing more animal meats for consumption and thus reducing the high food import bill that we now have,” he stated.

The figures produced by the ministry of agriculture tell

an alarming tale: The nation’s food consumption bill is over EC \$200 million per year.

Of this amount, over EC \$100 million is from Livestock and by-products.

From Agriculture, we produce only about 16% of what we consume annually:

- Only 3% of Chicken
- Only 3% Fruits and Nuts
- Only 3% of Goat
- Only 3% of Sheep
- Only 6% of Pork
- Only 7% of beef
- Only 17% of Vegetables and Melons (MoA Figures)

Clearly, according to the document, there is significant room for expansion, which creates opportunities for Investments in local production. How to narrow the gap between what is consumed locally and what is produced will take centre stage at the June 18 symposium.

As part of its plans, Greene said the government wants to encourage all farmers to register in order for them to access the package of incentives specially tai-



Agricultural Minister, E.P Chet Greene

lored for the agricultural sector. The list of government’s assistance to the agricultural sector includes the following;

Government already provides duty free concessions to farmers

Government provides lands at very low yearly rates of \$10 per acre per year

Government provides subsidies for both water and electricity to farmers

Farmers get materials without paying ABST, at wholesale prices from select stores

Government provides land preparation services at low rates

Government provides farming materials like fertilizer, drip lines, etc.

Government provides training, technical assistance

Government builds, expands dams for farmers

Government clears waterways for farms to prevent flooding

Government’s consultant on agriculture, Dr Patrick Lay, reported that both he and his team are conducting experiments with a variety of seeds that will produce greater yields from a single plant. They are also exploring different methodologies to improve both the quantity and the quality of meats that are produced locally.

cont’d from pg 2

tion, it is the most significant threat facing the people of Antigua and Barbuda at this time. There is no other potential threat that is more dangerous than the UPP taking office in this country,” he declared,

According to the prime minister the threat from the UPP would be worse than a Category 5 hurricane making a direct hit to Antigua and Barbuda.

“At the end of the day, we are building capacity and resilience to mitigate against these powerful storms, but the only way we can mitigate against the damage that a UPP administration would do is to keep them out of office. I hope the people understand that; I hope the people are paying attention,” he urged.

He also accused the opposition of spreading lies and mis-information about things that are happening in the country, especially to those in the diaspora, even while many independent and credible international agencies such as the United Nations, the International Monetary Fund and the Eastern Caribbean Central Bank all are giving the government high marks of its handling of the economy, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequently.

Police investigate drowning of a toddler

The police are continuing their investigations into the circumstances surrounding the drowning of a toddler at Briggins.

It was reported that sometime after 8 am on Sunday, April 28, the family of 3-year-old Zyonandon Collin Hope, found him floating face down in a swimming pool.

The Emergency Medical Services arrived on the scene and immediately began administering CPR, and subsequently transported him to the Sir Lester Bird Medical Center. Doctors at the hospital also tried to resuscitate him; however, were unsuccessful. His body was pronounced dead at 8:37 am.

Zyonandon and his mother arrived in the country about two weeks ago from the United States to spend time with family.

The Police Administration regrets the unfortunate incident and expresses condolences to his family.

Meanwhile, it was a busy weekend for law enforcement officers as they had to contend with several traffic accidents and other matters.

The police have reported that five persons were arrested and charged by the police for Dangerous Driving.



On Friday, April 26, the traffic department conducted several traffic checks at major intersections across the island and arrested five drivers for driving through the red light.

A total of fifty-two traffic tickets were also issued to drivers for various traffic violations, including: Failure to Wear Seat Belts, Missing License Plates, and Heavily Tinted Vehicles. Several vehicles were also impounded at the Government Motor Pool for unlicensed purposes.

The traffic department is appealing to motorists to drive with due care and attention, and avoid speeding on the

roads.

In other police news...last Friday, the police arrested and charged 27-year-old Jahari Adams of Golden Grove with robbery.

He is accused of robbing the owner of a Mini-Mart at Herberts of a cash-pan with an undisclosed amount of money. He is further accused of robbing the owner of her handbag with several important documents, ID's, and cash. These offences occurred on April 19, 2024. The police also charged him with unlawful possession of 309 grams of cannabis, and possession of cannabis with intent to transfer.

Sir Lester Bird Medical Center clarifies operational status of imaging machines

In response to recent circulating rumors, the Sir Lester Bird Medical Center (SLBMC) would like to reassure the public that its MRI machine and two CT scans are fully operational.

While occasional technical issues may arise, our dedicated management team ensures that repairs are conducted in the shortest time possible.

The SLBMC recognizes the immense demand placed on these vital imaging machines, with the majority of the public relying on these services at the hospital due to their affordability. As a result, ensuring the functionality of these machines remains paramount.

In acknowledgment of this need, the government is committed to enhancing our

imaging capabilities. To enhance capacity to meet the growing demands, efforts are underway to allocate the necessary financial resources to enhance the capacity and reliability of all medical services, including MRI, CT scan, and mammogram machines.

These enhancements aim to better meet the growing demands and provide

more efficient healthcare services to our citizens.

The SLBMC remains steadfast in its mission to provide quality healthcare services to all residents of Antigua and Barbuda.

We appreciate the continued support and trust of the public as we work diligently to enhance and expand our medical capabilities.

SIDS4 helping to transform visitor accommodation landscape in Antigua and Barbuda

As thousands of delegates prepare to journey to Antigua and Barbuda for the 4th International Conference on Small Island States, many of them will be treated to the hospitality of some of the most charming and exclusive gems in the island's diverse collection of accommodations.

The chosen properties easily met the commanding standards established by Antigua and Barbuda's Ministry of Tourism and are included in the Island Accommodations portal (Small Island Developing States 2024 (gov.ag) which was created to meet the increasing demand for rooms from members of the international community travelling to the island for the May 27 – 30

Conference.

The portal was created through a collaborative effort involving the resources of the Tourism Ministry, the web developers in the ICT Department of the Ministry of Information and Communications Technology and the official travel partner of the Antigua and Barbuda New York Office for the SIDS4 Conference, Global Travel Collection out of the UK.

Conference delegates have been able to make use of the platform not only for the purposes of booking their accommodations but also to secure flights to Antigua and Barbuda for the historic gathering. While rooms at the more established hotels are filling up for the conference, these unique properties



are now satisfying the demand and expectations for accommodations in Antigua and Barbuda during a busy period for the twin island nation.

"I am extremely heartened by the support from our smaller properties, who have enthusiastically grasped an

opportunity to benefit from an historic occasion for Antigua and Barbuda but are also making sure SIDS4 is truly the success it needs to be," stated Antigua and Barbuda's Minister of Tourism, Charles Fernandez.

"Right before our eyes, the landscape of our tourism offerings is being transformed as the quality of these incredible accommodations are put on show to the rest of the world. The Ministry of Tourism and the Government of Antigua and Barbuda are indeed proud of them. This is an amazing legacy that this conference will establish by showcasing the versatility of our travel accommodations," Fernandez stated.

He also heaped praise on the Government's ICT Division, the Antigua and Barbuda New York Office,

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Team Antigua and Barbuda triumphs in APAG Inter-Caribbean Grand Debate Challenge

By Alicia Knowles

In a showcase of eloquence, intellect, and persuasive prowess, Team Antigua and Barbuda emerged victorious at the esteemed APAG Inter-Caribbean Grand Debate Challenge held in Guadeloupe last Friday. The event, which drew participants from across the Caribbean, witnessed a display of spirited debates on pressing issues, ultimately culminating in a triumph for the talented debaters from Antigua and Barbuda.

The APAG Inter-Caribbean Grand Debate Challenge serves as a platform for young English enthusiasts in the Caribbean to engage in constructive dialogue, articulate their viewpoints, and advocate for meaningful change. This



year's competition was particularly significant, as it was the first time reverting back to the face-to-face challenge since the pandemic after preliminary encounters were done virtually, and saw participants tackling topics focusing on social issues.

The team representing Antigua and Barbuda included the 2023 Best Debater of the Caribbean Union Bank Inter-secondary School Debate, Jada Quinland - Sir Novelle Richards Academy and the second-place winners Ti-ikha Edwards and Anya Hull

from the Clare Hall Secondary School. The team was chaperoned by Debate Coach and Acting Principal of Clare Hall Secondary School, Ms. Lorna Richardson and Education Officer: Education Broadcasting, Ms. Alicia Knowles.

Utilising Karl Popper style of debate, Team Antigua appeared in the first semifinal against Jardin d'Essai Guadeloupe proposing the moot, Transgender women should be allowed to compete in women's sports categories. Although a controversial and difficult side to have been given, Team Antigua and Barbuda delivered its arguments convincingly, showcased exceptional skills, captivating audiences and judges alike

cont'd on pg 7

cont'd from pg 5

his team at the Ministry of Tourism and Pro Travel Inc for the inventive and ground-breaking initiative that demanded a shared commitment and long hours in making it all work.

"At Global Travel Collection, we believe it is our fundamental responsibility to give back to the world we journey through," said Angie Licea, President, Global Travel Collection.

"Protecting the unique communities and ecosystems vital for small island nations is one of our key priorities. The SIDS4 conference offers an opportunity to gather global leaders and forge partnerships for sustainable development and resilience amid glob-



al challenges. It's an honor for us to be part of this important event and work alongside the Antigua and Barbuda

Mission to the United Nations as the official travel management company," Licea stated.

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with their insightful arguments and compelling delivery, undoubtedly setting them apart as frontrunners in the tournament. Unanimously, they were adjudged winners of the first semi final encounter. The second semifinal encounter saw La Persévérance Guadeloupe and Dominica debating the moot, Music genres are the most influential tools in promoting cultural and linguistic diversity on a global stage. Dominica emerged winners of this face off.

In a random draw, Team Antigua chose to propose the moot, The portrayal of violence in media contributes significantly to real-world violence, for the final encounter between Antigua and Barbuda and Dominica. The teams were given fifteen (15) minutes to organise and prepare for the position chosen. In the finale, Team Antigua and Barbuda with eloquent delivery, and cogent arguments emerged winners and ultimate champions of this event.

One of the defining moments of the debate competition was the team's ability to address complex issues with depth and clarity, draw-

ing upon a diverse array of perspectives and evidence to support their assertions. Their mastery of rhetoric and persuasive techniques resonated with both the panel of judges and spectators, earning them admiration and acclaim.

In addition to their impressive performance in the debates, Team Antigua and Barbuda exemplified the values of sportsmanship, professionalism, and teamwork throughout the competition. Their collaborative approach, mutual respect, and unwavering determination served as a shining example for aspiring debaters across the region.

Director Of Education, Clare Browne, offered congratulations to the team stating that he felt confident that Antigua and Barbuda had a 'winning team' and that he expected nothing less than the team returning to Antigua and Barbuda with the trophy. "Our education system is very good and the students we produce are able to hold their own anywhere against anyone. They can compete and they can win," he declared.

The victory of Team Antigua and Barbuda in



the APAG Inter-Caribbean Grand Debate Challenge not only highlights their exceptional talent and dedication but also underscores the significance of constructive dialogue and intellectual exchange in addressing the pressing issues facing the Caribbean and the world at large.

Education Officer with responsibility for Education Broadcasting, Ms. Alicia Knowles, expressed her delight at the win, emphasizing that the experience gained from participating in the APAG Inter-Caribbean Grand Debate Challenge is invaluable for the development of critical thinking skills among students.

She notes that the competition offered a unique opportunity and a platform for young debaters to engage with complex issues, articulate their viewpoints, and defend their arguments in a competitive yet respectful environment.

She affirms her commitment to ensuring that students in Antigua and Barbuda can participate in these events not only regionally but internationally as well. She underscored the role

of constructive debate in cultivating a generation of informed and articulate citizens capable of contributing meaningfully to public discourse and decision-making processes.

The Education Officer praised Team Antigua and Barbuda for their exemplary performance and sportsmanship throughout the competition. She commended the team for their dedication, teamwork, and ability to engage with diverse perspectives, noting that their success reflects positively on the quality of education and mentorship in Antigua and Barbuda.

Looking ahead, the Education Officer expressed optimism about the continued growth of debate programmes in schools across the country. She reiterated the commitment of the Ministry of Education to support initiatives that promote critical thinking, communication skills, and academic excellence among students. She also encourages educators to leverage the success of Team Antigua and Barbuda as inspiration for nurturing the next generation of debaters and leaders.



Finance and business mogul tipped to be UWI's new Chancellor

The University of the West Indies (The UWI) has named a finance and business mogul as its Chancellor-designate to replace the current Chancellor, Robert Bermudez, effective August 1, 2024.

Coming out of its University Council meeting last Friday, the UWI announced that The Most Honourable Dodridge D. Miller, FB, FCCA, MBA, LL.M, LLD (Hon) has been appointed as its 7th Chancellor—the highest office-holder in The UWI system. Now formally Chancellor-Designate, Dr Miller is expected to serve a seven-year term beginning August 1, 2024. Chancellor Bermudez has served as in the since 2017.

At its virtual annual business meeting held on Friday, April 26, members of the University Council accepted the recommendation of the Chancellor's Search Committee to appoint Dr Miller.

As the sole authority that has the power to make decisions related to the leadership of the regional institution, the University Council is responsible for appointing the new Chancellor in accordance with established statutes and processes outlined in the University's Statute 4.

Dr Miller, a graduate of The UWI, is a Caribbean luminary with over 30 years of leadership experience in the banking, insurance, and financial services sectors. He was the Group President and CEO of Sagicor Financial Company for more than two decades until he retired in March 2023.

Dr Miller is globally recognised as the chief architect of Sagicor Financial, the largest financial services conglomerate in the region. He is credited with transforming the old Barbados Mutual Life Assurance Society into the Sagicor Caribbean group, and with strategic USA and Canadian



Chancellor Designate of The UWI The Most Honourable Dodridge D. Miller, FB, FCCA, MBA, LL.M, LLD (Hon)

investments, into the global corporation it is today. As a determined regionalist, he expanded Sagicor's operations in Trinidad and Tobago, Jamaica, the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States, and the Bahamas, and created a pan-Caribbean identity for the company.

Dr Miller is a fellow of the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (FCCA). He holds an MBA from the University of Wales and the Manchester Business School, and an LL.M. in Corporate and Commercial Law from The UWI, where he also served as a member of the Cave Hill Campus Council.

He has received several prestigious honours in his distinguished career, including the Order of Freedom of Barbados (FB), and from The UWI, an Honorary Doctor of Laws degree in 2008 and the award of the title, Professor of Practice in 2019.

Upon the confirmation of his appointment, Dr Miller responded, "It is with great humility that I accept your appointment as Chancellor of this distinguished and important University.

"For most of my adult life, I have

been an advocate for a strong, vibrant UWI. As a corporate executive I demonstrated my support for your mission and remained committed to the certainty of your path as you sought to build the capacity of the region's human capital.

"As Chancellor, I will strive to uphold the strong principles and values of the University, and with your guidance and support hope to contribute to the very important task of fashioning a Caribbean that is sustainable and that can engage the rest of the world on equal terms. I look forward to being a part of The UWI's journey towards the continued development of our region. I am honoured."

In extending congratulations, Chancellor Bermudez said, "I am delighted to welcome Dr Miller as Chancellor-Designate. It is my belief that the University will benefit from his experience and contribution."

Offering further details on the process, Vice-Chancellor, Professor Sir Hilary Beckles, who chaired the Search Committee that recommended Dr Miller for the post noted, "Dr the Most Honourable Dodridge Miller is an eminent corporate transformational leader who possesses all the required skills to make an outstanding Chancellor to his alma mater. The University community that knows him well is looking forward to working with him in this new role."

At the Council Meeting, Chancellor Bermudez delivered the opening remarks to commence the proceedings. University Registrar, Dr. Maurice D. Smith then paid tribute to Robert Bermudez for his outstanding leadership.

The University of the West Indies community expresses its profound appreciation to Mr Bermudez for his distinguished service.

Training for ICC Cricket T20 World Cup Volunteers starts

The first in a series of training sessions for volunteers for the ICC Cricket T20 World Cup took place on Saturday at the Villa Polytechnic.

Approximately one hundred and thirteen (113) persons attended the training session that is a critical part of the hosting responsibilities of Antigua and Barbuda as one of six host destinations in the Caribbean for the cricket matches.

The training was facilitated by volunteer lead, Ayana Dorsette, with assistance



from Caleb Gardiner and Sanka Riley. The topics covered include; Function-

ing as a team, Organizing yourself in the work place, Service excellence - Quality

Customer Service and Risk and Safety

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Antigua and Barbuda Falcons announce GG Sir Rodney Williams as Patron

The Antigua and Barbuda Falcons, the newest team in the Caribbean Premier League (CPL), proudly announces the appointment of His Excellency Sir Rodney Williams, Governor General of Antigua and Barbuda, as their esteemed patron. This significant collaboration marks a new era for cricket in Antigua and Barbuda and the wider Caribbean, combining sports excellence with community impact.

The Antigua and Barbuda Falcons, established in January 2024, are set to soar in the upcoming CPL season. Replacing the Jamaica Tallawahs, the Falcons bring fresh energy and determination to the league. Their home ground, the iconic Sir Vivian Richards Stadium in Antigua, will witness several thrilling matches as the Falcons compete against other top teams.

Jefferson Miller, CEO of the Antigua and Barbuda Falcons, expressed his enthusiasm: "We're thrilled to have H.E. Sir Rodney Williams as our patron. His unwavering commitment to Antigua and Barbuda aligns perfectly with our team's vision. Together, we aim to elevate cricket and inspire the next generation of players."

In a pioneering move, the Falcons will join forces with the Halo Foundation, a leading Antiguan and Barbudan charitable organization, which is also under the patronage of H.E. Sir Rod-



From left: Vernon Springer, H.E. Sir Rodney Williams, Jeff Miller - CEO, The Antigua and Barbuda Falcons, and H.E. Lady Sandra Williams.

ney Williams and H.E. Lady Williams. This partnership aims to create positive change beyond the cricket field. The Falcons and the Halo Foundation will collaborate on initiatives that support education, arts, and community development.

Sir Rodney Williams, known for his passion for education and youth empowerment, shared his thoughts:

"We are absolutely delighted to witness the return of the Falcons to the competitive arena. As individuals deeply rooted in the Caribbean culture, we hold a profound understand-

ing of cricket not merely as a sport, but as a powerful unifying force that binds us together.

The re-entry of the Falcons into the competition not only heightens our excitement but also enhances our collective enjoyment of the game. We extend our heartfelt wishes for their unparalleled success and look forward to seeing them soar high in the tournaments to come."

The Antigua and Barbuda Falcons will commence their quest in the Republic Bank Caribbean Premier League on August 29, 2024.

cont'd from pg 9

Junior Minister in the Ministry of Sports, Senator Shenella Govia, who is spearheading this aspect of the preparation, expressed her delight at the enthusiasm shown by the volunteers during the T20 World Cup preparation training.

"The participants

demonstrated their excitement about Antigua and Barbuda hosting the event, their willingness, and readiness to contribute, pledging their commitment to ensuring the success of the undertaking.

"I am confident that they will do Antigua and Barbuda proud," she stated.



Photo Essay

PM Gaston Browne and party toured the facilities at AUA where SIDS4 will be held. The PM wanted a first-hand account of the state of readiness.



Opinion



Allies or all lies?

By Tony Deyal

Earlier this week I found out about the “World Biggest Liar” Competition in England. I immediately said it was in the wrong place with the wrong people. I remember one of my friends who lied about everything and his father, really upset, decided to teach him a lesson. He told the boy, “I will give you a whole twenty-five cents if you could tell me a lie now, right now!” The boy looked at the father and with a big smile said, “Twenty-five cents? But Daddy, you just promise me a dollar!” Then there was a Trini who went to one of the “lying” competitions in San Fernando, Trinidad. He tried to get in through the gate for the performers and was refused entry. The gate man told him loudly, “We don’t want no professionals here!”

However, it is not Trinidad alone. I saw in a National Geographic that, like Trinidad and 12 other countries, “Jamaica lies in the Caribbean Sea.” Even Barbados. But are we the worst? I know that in the Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) where “0” (zero) is “highly corrupt”, and 100 is “very clean”, Barbados, with a score of 69 out of 100, is 24th out of 180 countries. Jamaica is 44 out of 100 and Trinidad is 42, or closer to zero, than the others. But are these countries “allies” or “all lies”? Actually, the only time a politician tells the truth is when he or

she calls another politician a liar. Given that each country in the world has politicians “like bush” as some Caribbean people say, or “like Trump” which is the highest or lowest anyone can go, the lies in the rest of the world make CARICOM look like a babe in arms with a finger in its mouth instead of a foot or two.

For example, Donald Trump claimed, “I won the popular vote if you deduct the millions of people who voted illegally.” However, there was no evidence at all that there was any significant voter fraud. Bill Clinton, the President in 1998, kept insisting, “I did not have sexual relations with that woman.” It turned out he was lying. They found his DNA in a stain on the dress of Monica Lewinsky.

The worst of the US breed was Richard Nixon who set the record for presidential lies when he insisted that he played no role in Watergate. Worse, he went on television and declared, “I am not a crook.” Certain to be impeached, he resigned his second term in office on August 9, 1974.

If you think that the Americans were bad, think again. The Greeks came first with their “Trojan Horse” which would have beaten any Caribbean, or even American politician, going and coming. The “horse” was a Greek strategy. They were fighting a war against



Tony Deyal

the Trojans and built a huge wooden horse in which they concealed their soldiers. They then offered the “animal” as a peace offering. Instead of running a mile from the Greeks, the Trojans carried the “horse” into their heavily protected, and totally locked in, “safe” city. It was more a “piece” offering than a “peace” offering because the Germans came out of the belly of the “horse” and won the war by cutting the Trojans into pieces.

There were many more that were not about war. Han van Meegeren, a Dutch artist, forged the paintings of the great artist, Johannes Vermeer, and said they were “rediscovered”. He was, fortunately, “uncovered”. Then, right here in Trinidad and the rest of the world, the Tobacco Industry denied the link between smoking and health issues. The deliberate misinformation prolonged suffering, cost lives

and are still doing it. Just a week ago, they started a “vape” line with “no need to rush”. The Government like an “ape” line hush. And, of course, there was what was known as “Nazi Propaganda”. This was lies and more lies perpetuated about Jews, minorities and others. It fuelled hatred and started the Holocaust.

Even though we hear “Liar, liar, pants on fire”, we are certain that no bottoms are really burnt and millions, or even trillions, of mouths are everywhere in the world telling lies every split second. An average person lies one to two times a day. 60 per cent of people lie at least once in a 10-minute conversation. Men lie six times a day on average while women lie three times. 40 per cent of people who are looking for jokes lie on their resumes. 90 per cent of people lie on their online dating profiles or

cont'd on pg 13

cont'd from pg 12

letters to friends. 80 per cent of women admit to lying to their partners about their spending habits. 50 per cent of teenagers admit to lying to their parents about their whereabouts. People are likely to lie over the phone than face-to-face. And politicians lie on the average once every five minutes (although a friend says that Caribbean politicians lie whenever they talk). What is scary is that one to two lies a day can reach as many as 730 lies a year or the daily breath of the politicians.

So why do we lie? Fear of punishment – 27 per cent. Protecting ourselves from harm – 24 per cent. Avoiding embarrassment and shame – 20 per cent. The ones I have met a lot in the Caribbean and in my days covering the Parliament, lie out of habit, compulsion and, what we call, “just for so”. Who do we lie to? Friends – 80 per cent; roman-

tic partners – 70 per cent; family members – 69 per cent; coworkers – 67 per cent; and acquaintances – 40 per cent. And what kind of lies we tell and how many? Well first is the “white” lies. This has nothing to do with the people of that colour, or does it? Europeans did promise land and peace for the natives. Of course, the natives, like the Africans and Indians, didn’t get what they wanted. But what can you expect?

They were just “white” lies after all. The whites say that a “white lie” is telling someone that they are looking great even when they’re ugly like sin and dressed in shabby and sloppy clothes. The whites also have what they call a “black” lie”. For them it is a “simple and callous selfishness”.

They also have “grey” lies that “held the characteristics of a real lie yet were still viewed as justifiable given the circumstance.” The whites also have a

“blue” lie. It is what “police officers tell to protect others in the law enforcement community” and even a “red” lie for “spite and revenge”. Clearly, when it comes to lies, better lie down. The whites have it.

I got into “who” or “which” party is lying because with elections coming up soon, the parties are ignoring the real issues or what they will do for us. We are like the politician who joined Liars Anonymous yesterday and by midnight was already President. In the Caribbean, whether it is the President, Prime Minister or leader of the Opposition, when it comes to that we will have absolutely no opposition and win a first in less than a second.

Tony Deyal was last seen saying that in the US presidential history, Washington could not tell a lie, Nixon could not tell the truth, and Trump cannot tell the difference.



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Elon Musk in China to discuss enabling full self driving

By Ido Vack

Elon Musk is visiting Beijing with media reports saying he aims to discuss enabling autonomous driving mode on Tesla cars in China.

Mr Musk wants to enable Full Self Driving (FSD) in China and transfer data collected in the country abroad to train its algorithms.

FSD is available in countries including the US but not in China.

The news came after a US report tied Tesla's autonomous driving modes to at least 13 crashes, involving one death.

During a meeting with Chinese Premier Li Qiang, Mr Musk was quoted by state media as saying Tesla was willing deep cooperation with China to "achieve more win-win results".

In response, Mr Li told Mr Musk the Chinese market would "always be open to foreign-funded firms," according to the reports.

China is Tesla's second-biggest market. Other carmakers such as Xpeng - headquartered in Guangzhou - have been attempting to compete with Tesla by rolling out similar self-driving functions in their cars.

On Sunday, Mr Musk described Chinese car manufacturers as "the most competitive car companies in the world".

Tesla has taken previously taken steps to reassure



China is Tesla's second-biggest market.

Chinese authorities about the rollout of FSD in the country, including establishing a data centre in Shanghai to process data about Chinese consumers in accordance with local laws.

The trip comes days after the US's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) said it was investigating whether a recall successfully addressed safety concerns relating to Tesla's driver assistance system.

The NHTSA said that despite requirements that drivers maintain focus on the road and be prepared to take control at a moment's notice when autonomous driving was enabled, drivers involved in the crashes "were not sufficiently engaged". The regulator's analysis was conducted before a recall Tesla said would fix the is-

sue.

Tesla's software is supposed to make sure that drivers are paying attention and that the feature is only in use in appropriate conditions, such as driving on highways.

Mr Musk has promised that Teslas will be able to act as autonomous "robotaxis" for years. In 2015, he said Teslas would achieve "full autonomy" by 2018. And in 2019, he said the company would have robotaxis operating by the following year.

This month, the Tesla chief executive said he would reveal the company's robotaxi in August.

Critics accuse Mr Musk of consistently hyping up the prospects of full autonomous driving to prop up the company's share price, which has fallen on the back of challenges including falling

demand for electric vehicles worldwide and competition from cheaper Chinese manufacturers. Mr Musk denies the accusations.

Tesla has been cutting the prices of its cars in China and other markets to drum up demand.

"Tesla prices must change frequently in order to match production with demand," Mr Musk recently said on X, the microblogging platform previously known as Twitter which the billionaire owns.

Tesla recently reported a 13% fall in automotive sales to \$17.3bn (£13.7bn) for the first three months of this year.

Overall sales across Tesla dropped by 9% while its profits fell sharply to \$1.13bn compared to \$2.51bn for the same period last year.

Long lines form and frustration grows as Cuba runs short of cash

Alejandro Fonseca stood in line for several hours outside a bank in Havana hoping to withdraw Cuban pesos from an ATM, but when it was almost his turn, the cash ran out. He angrily hopped on his electric tricycle and travelled several kilometres to another branch where he finally managed to withdraw some money after wasting the entire morning.

“It shouldn’t be so difficult to get the money you earn by working,” the 23-year-old told The Associated Press in a recent interview.

Fonseca is one of an increasing number of frustrated Cubans who have to grapple with yet another hurdle while navigating the island’s already complicated monetary system — a shortage of cash.

Long queues outside banks and ATM’s in the capital, Havana, and beyond start forming early in the day as people seek cash for routine transactions like buying food and other essentials.

Experts say there are several reasons behind the shortage, all somehow related to Cuba’s deep economic crisis, one of the worst in decades.

Omar Everlenny Pérez, a Cuban economist and university professor, says the main culprits



An ice cream street vendor shows his Cuban pesos in Havana, Cuba, Monday, April 20, 2024. An increasing number of Cubans are having to grapple with the country’s shortage of cash. Converting those Cuban pesos to other currencies poses yet another challenge, as there are several, highly fluctuating exchange rates in the island. (AP Photo/Ariel Ley)

are the government’s growing fiscal deficit, the nonexistence of banknotes with a denomination greater than 1,000 Cuban pesos (about \$3 in the parallel market), stubbornly high inflation and the non-return of cash to banks.

“There is money, yes, but not in the banks,” said Pérez, adding that most of the cash is being held not by salaried workers, but by entrepreneurs and owners of small- and medium-size business who are more likely to collect cash from commercial transactions but are reluctant to return the money to the banks.

This, Pérez says, is ei-

ther because they don’t trust the local banks or simply because they need the Cuban pesos to convert into foreign currency.

Most entrepreneurs and small business owners in Cuba have to import almost everything they sell or pay in foreign currency for the supplies needed to run their businesses. As a consequence, many end up hoarding Cuban pesos to later change into foreign currency on the informal market.

Converting those Cuban pesos to other currencies poses yet another challenge, as there are several, highly fluctuating ex-

change rates in the island.

For example, the official rate used by government industries and agencies is 24 pesos to the US dollar, while for individuals, the rate is 120 pesos to the dollar. However, the dollar can fetch up to 350 Cuban pesos on the informal market.

Pérez notes that in 2018, 50 per cent of the cash in circulation was in the hands of the Cuban population and the other half in Cuban banks. But in 2022, the latest year for which information is available, 70 per cent of cash was in the wallets of individuals.

cont’d on pg 16

Tobago shark attack: British man injured 10 metres from shore

A British man has been seriously injured after being attacked by a shark on the Caribbean island of Tobago.

Peter Smith, 64, received critical care after sustaining serious injuries to his left arm, left leg and stomach, according to a local official.

He said Mr Smith was attacked 10 metres off the shore in Courland Bay, on the island's north coast, at 09:15 (14:15 BST) on Friday.

The Foreign Office said it was supporting the family.

The incident involved a bull shark estimated to be eight to 10 ft (2.4m to 3m) long and 2ft (60cm) wide, according to a statement by the Tobago House of Assembly.

In a press briefing late



Bull sharks are most often found in shallow waters along tropical coastlines (file image).

on Friday, its chief secretary Farley Augustine had said Mr Smith was being treated in intensive care, where he was being kept under sedation.

He had had some fingers reattached but still had

“significant wounds” to one of his legs and would require “extensive work”, Mr Augustine said.

At the briefing he had told reporters that health professionals had initially been trying to stabilise Mr

Smith and “save life and limb”.

Mr Augustine told the BBC on Saturday that Mr Smith, from Berkhamsted, Hertfordshire, was doing “extremely well and is recovering nicely”.

Mr Smith had been in Tobago with his wife and friends, and that the group had been due to fly home on Friday, Mr Augustine said.

He added that the local government was working closely with the British High Commission to “ensure that the family gets all that they need during this difficult time”.

Eyewitness Orion Jakerov, water sports manager at the nearby Starfish Hotel, said other people in the water were “physically trying to fight off the shark”.

He told the local broadcaster TTT Live: “I don’t

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Cuban monetary authorities did not immediately respond to AP’s emailed request for comment.

The shortage of cash comes as Cubans grapple with a complex monetary system in which several currencies circulate, including a virtual currency, MLC, created in 2019.

Then, in 2023 the government announced several measures aimed at promoting a “cashless society,” making the use of credit cards mandatory to pay for some transactions — including purchases of food, fuel and other basic goods — but many businesses simply refuse to accept them.

Making things worse is stubbornly high inflation, meaning more and more physical bills are needed to buy products.

According to official figures, inflation stood at 77 per cent in 2021, then dropped to 31 per cent in 2023. But for the average Cuban, the official figures barely reflect the reality of their lives, since market inflation can reach up to three digits on the informal market. For example, a carton of eggs, which sold for 300 Cuban pesos in 2019, these days sells for about 3,100 pesos.

All while the monthly salary for Cuban state workers ranges between 5,000 and 7,000 Cuban pesos (between \$14 and \$20 in the parallel market).

“To live in an economy that, in addition to having several currencies, has several exchange rates and a three-digit inflation is quite complicated,” said Pavel Vidal, a Cuba expert and professor at Colombia’s Javeriana University of Cali.

Rwanda plan: Irish government wants to send asylum seekers back to UK

The Taoiseach (Irish prime minister) Simon Harris has asked Ireland's justice minister to bring legislation to cabinet to enable asylum seekers to be sent back to the UK.

Helen McEntee has revealed that 80% of recent arrivals to the Republic came from the UK across the Irish border.

Tánaiste (deputy prime minister) Micheál Martin said the UK's Rwanda policy was already impacting Ireland.

Legislation to revive the UK's Rwanda policy became law on Thursday.

It aims to deter people from crossing the English Channel by sending some asylum seekers to the cen-

tral African country.

No migrants have yet been sent from the UK.

The UK government had hoped for flights to take off by the spring but Prime Minister Rishi Sunak says this should now happen within 10 to 12 weeks.

A spokesman for Mr Harris said the taoiseach had asked Ms McEntee "to bring proposals to cabinet next week to amend existing law regarding the designation of safe 'third countries' and allowing the return of inadmissible international protection applicants to the UK", Irish broadcaster RTÉ reported on Saturday.

Speaking on RTÉ's Six One News, Ms McEntee

said: "There are many reasons why we have seen an increase in migration toward Ireland.

"What's clear in the decision that the UK have taken in choosing Brexit, they have actually seen an increase in people seeking asylum in their country. The way that they deal with that, it's their policy.

"My focus as minister for justice is making sure that we have an effective immigration structure and system.

"That's why I'm introducing fast processing. That's why I'll have emergency legislation at cabinet this week to make sure that we can effectively return people to the UK and that's

why I'll be meeting with the home secretary [James Cleverly] to raise these issues on Monday."

A spokesman for the Irish Department of Justice told BBC News NI that "the issue of irregular movement within the CTA" - the Common Travel Area between Britain and Ireland - would be discussed at the ministers' meeting.

Earlier in the week, Ms McEntee told a committee of the Oireachtas (Irish Parliament) there had been a rise in the number of people crossing the land border between Northern Ireland and the Republic, with this now making up 80% of the total number of asylum seekers.

cont'd on pg 18

cont'd from pg 16

think they saw it. They were about waist height in the water so they weren't out of their depth.

"I think their backs were turned and they were just kind of lounging around. Nobody saw the shark coming."

Authorities closed seven beaches and all coastal areas between the town of Plymouth on the island's northern coast and Store Bay on its western tip, a stretch of around seven miles (11.3km).

The stretch also includes a marine park surrounding the Bucco Reef, one of the island's largest coral reefs and a popular tourist attraction.

Drones were being used to carry out surveillance of the area, and anyone operating a boat was urged to exercise caution.

Officials said the closures had been enacted "out of an abundance of caution" and would remain in place on Saturday. They also said they would "neutralise the threat if possible".

Mr Augustine said a \$10,000 (£8,010) bounty previously offered to anyone who could capture the shark and move it away from the beaches had been retracted.

Bull sharks are known to be aggressive and are most often found in shallow waters along tropical coastlines, making them - along with great

white and tiger sharks - among the species most likely to come into contact with, and attack, humans.

Tobago, the smaller of the two islands of Trinidad and Tobago, is located in the southern Caribbean, around 74 miles (119km) off the coast of South America.

According to the International Shark Attack File database, the vast majority of shark attacks in the region occur further north, in the central Caribbean and off the eastern and southern coasts of the US.

In the last 20 years, there have been only two recorded shark attacks as far south as Tobago, and neither was within 200 miles of the island itself.



The UK government's Rwanda plan seeks to deter people from crossing the English Channel in small boats.

cont'd from pg 17

In response to her comments, Mr Martin said the UK government's Rwanda policy meant people were "fearful" of staying in the UK and were crossing the border to the Republic so they would not be sent to Rwanda. Mr Martin, who also serves as Ireland's foreign minister, has spoken of his opposition to the policy.

On Sky News on Sunday, Prime Minister Rishi Sunak was asked whether Mr Martin's comments showed the UK was "exporting the problem".

Mr Sunak replied: "The deterrent is - according to your comment - already having an impact, because people are worried about coming here and that demonstrates exactly what I'm saying: if people come to our country illegally, but know that they won't be able to stay, they're much less likely to come."

It comes as Home Office figures showed some 500 migrants had

crossed the English Channel over two days - with 141 people arriving on Friday and 359 on Saturday, in a total of 10 small boats.

It brings the number of arrivals on small boats to 7,167 so far this year, which is higher compared to the same period the year before.

Mr Sunak told Sky News that illegal migration was a "global problem" and said many countries were looking to replicate "third-country partnerships" similar to the agreement struck between the UK and Rwanda.

A No 10 spokesperson had previously said it was "too early to jump to specific conclusions about the impact of the act and treaty in terms of migrant behaviour".

The Safety of Rwanda Act, which aims to avoid further legal challenges to the policy by declaring Rwanda a safe country, was approved by MPs and peers this week and passed into law on Thursday - although the plan could still be held up by court chal-

lenges.

In the UK, politicians have also been discussing reducing net migration - with former immigration minister Robert Jenrick on Sunday calling for a "far more restrictive system".

Writing in the Sunday Telegraph, Mr Jenrick criticised "politicians of all stripes" who have failed to deliver on "promises to control and reduce the levels of legal migration" in the last 30 years - and said he wanted to see net migration capped at "tens of thousands" of people.

Policing Minister Chris Philp said he was "not in a position to... advocate for a hard cap" on migration levels, but the government was introducing measures to reduce legal migration numbers by about "300,000 a year".

Mr Philp also made a plea to migrants considering making the dangerous Channel crossing from Europe, saying: "Please don't do it. It is dangerous, it is illegal, and it is unnecessary."

Burkina Faso rejects 'baseless accusations' that soldiers massacred 223 villagers

By Alex Binley

Burkina Faso has rejected "baseless accusations" that soldiers massacred 223 people in attacks in February.

A Human Rights Watch report alleged the army killed 179 people in Soro village and 44 others in Nondin, at least 56 of who were children, on 25 February.

The NGO said this was "among the worst army abuse" incidents in the country in nearly a decade.

Burkinabè authorities said they had opened a legal inquiry to "establish the facts" and condemned HRW's report.

"The government of Burkina Faso strongly rejects and condemns such baseless accusations," communications minister Rimtalba Jean Emmanuel Ouedraogo said in a statement late on Saturday.

The minister also expressed his surprise that "while this inquiry is under way to establish the facts and identify the authors, HRW has been able, with boundless imagination, to identify 'the guilty' and pronounce its verdict".

Earlier this week, officials in the military-ruled country suspended the BBC and US public broadcaster Voice of America over their coverage of the HRW report.

In a statement released on Thursday, HRW said the alleged mass killings "appear to be part of a widespread military campaign against civilians accused of collaborating with Islamist armed groups, and may amount to crimes against humanity".

Villagers who survived the attack told HRW that a military convoy of more than 100 soldiers descended on Nondin village, about 30 minutes after Islamist fighters passed nearby.

The soldiers went door-to-door, ejecting residents from their homes.

"They then rounded up villagers in



A military convoy with over 100 soldiers descended on the villages, survivors said (file photo).

groups before opening fire on them," the report added, citing witness and survivor accounts.

The soldiers arrived in Soro, about 5km (3 miles) away, an hour later, also gathering and shooting at villagers, the survivors added.

In both villages, the soldiers also shot at those who attempted to hide or escape, witnesses said.

The alleged mass killings are believed to be retaliation by the military, which accused the villagers of aiding armed Islamist fighters.

They followed an attack by Islamist fighters on a nearby military camp in the northern Yatenga province.

A survivor was quoted as saying that before the shootings, the soldiers accused the residents of failing to cooperate with them by not informing them of the movements of the Islamist fighters.

"The massacres in Nondin and Soro villages are just the latest mass killings of civilians by the Burkina Faso military in their counterinsurgency operations," said Tirana Hassan, executive director of Human Rights Watch.

The Sahel country is ruled by a military junta, which seized power in a coup in 2022, promising to end the in-

surgency.

The violence has however continued to escalate, with more than a third of Burkina Faso controlled by jihadist groups.

International and human rights groups including the European Union and UN have accused Burkina Faso of serious human rights violations in its fight against insurgency, including the indiscriminate killings and forced disappearances of dozens of civilians.

Supporters of the military junta have previously criticised the media for reporting alleged atrocities, saying that the reporting is designed to hit the morale of the Burkina Faso armed forces.

The statement from the authorities also hit out at what it described as a "media campaign orchestrated around these accusations" which "shows the avowed intention... to discredit our fighting forces".

Broadcasts of BBC and Voice of America have been stopped and the websites of both organisations banned for two weeks, officials said.

In a statement on Thursday, Burkina Faso's media regulator warned all media outlets against covering the report, threatening sanctions, state-owned media reported.

Motie lead West Indies A to series levelling victory against Nepal

Gudakesh Motie emerged as the standout performer for West Indies A, propelling his team to a crucial 10-run victory over Nepal in the second T20 International at Kirtipur to level the five-match series at 1-1 on Sunday.

Motie's exceptional all-round display, featuring an unbeaten 33 off just eight balls and impactful bowling, played a pivotal role in securing the win.

Batting first, West Indies A faced early setbacks but rallied behind Andre Fletcher's resilient 43 and Captain Roston Chase's 23.

However, wickets fell at regular intervals, leaving the team in a precarious position at 115 for seven. When Fletcher departed, the onus fell on Motie to provide a late surge.

With only 13 balls remaining, Motie unleashed a blitz, smashing two fours



Gudakesh Motie

and four sixes to power his team to a competitive total of 160 for seven. Matthew Forde contributed with an unbeaten 11, as Sagar Dhakal and Kushal Bhurtel each picked up crucial wickets for Nepal.

In response, Nepal's captain Rohit Paudel led the charge with a magnif-

icent 71 off 48 balls, keeping his team in contention.

However, the rest of Nepal's batting struggled against the West Indies A bowling attack, with only Gulsan Jha offering notable support with 26 runs.

Motie continued to make an impact with the ball, claiming two crucial

wickets for 24 runs alongside Obed McCoy, who showed signs of returning to form with his two for 24.

Motie's exceptional performance earned him the Player of the Match award. The third match in the series is set for Wednesday.

Liberta Blackhawks beat Bolans in First Division football league

The Liberta Blackhawks snatched a one-nil victory against Bolans in the Antigua and Barbuda Football Association's (ABFA) First Division on Friday.

Shamar Anthony scored the only goal of the match in the 59th minute to secure the fourth win in 17 matches for the Liberta Blackhawks, who advance to eighth place with 13 points.

Bolans will remain in seventh

place with 14 points after suffering their 10th defeat in 16 matches.

However, the First Division encounter between Fort and Bendals at Fort Road was postponed last Friday.

Fort Road will remain second from the bottom of the 11-team round-robin competition with 10 points from 16 matches. Bendals will remain in ninth place with 12 points from 17 matches.

Meanwhile, TAMO FC and Real

Blizzard have ended their campaign in the first phase of the Antigua and Barbuda Football Association's (ABFA) Second Division on a winning note.

TAMO FC snatched a 2-1 victory against Bethesda in their last preliminary round-robin encounter at the Golden Grove playing field.

Adonijah Dyett scored in the 61st minute, and Jaheim Grant had an

cont'd on pg 21

More success for Liberta Blackhawks in ABCA's Super-40 Cup

Cup-holders the PIC Insurance Liberta Blackhawks continued their impressive form in defense of their Antigua and Barbuda Cricket Association's (ABCA) Super40 Cup limited overs title on Saturday.

The Blackhawks extended their unbeaten streak to six wins in seven matches with an eight-wicket victory against Empire Nation at Ball Beef in Liberta.

Empire was dismissed for 103 in 24.4 overs after winning the toss and batting. Jao Benjamin captured three for 35. The Blackhawks achieved victory at 104 for two in 14.3 overs.

Michael Greaves hit an unbeaten run-a-ball 44, and captain Karima Gore struck 42 not out off 28 balls, including six fours and a six.

Pigotts Crushed secured a 10-wicket win against the Caribbean Union Bank (CUB) Bethesda Golden Eagles in Pigotts.

Bethesda was dismissed for 94 in 27.2 overs after winning the toss and opting to bat. Captain Teron Payne, who opened the innings, hit a topscore of 40 off 54 balls. Vishal Gobin snapped up five for 21.

Pigotts Crushers wrapped up the match by scoring 96 without losing a wicket in 11.2 overs. Kadeem Henry cracked an unbeaten 48 off 36 balls, and Deran Benta struck 40 not

out off 32 balls.

The Jennings Tigers beat Combined Schools by 96 runs at the Factory Grounds. The Tigers made 183 for eight off 36 overs after winning the toss and batting. Kief Baltimore slammed 55 off 67 balls.

In reply, Combined Schools were bundled out for 87 in 22.4 overs. Captain George Elvin stuck 30 off 46 balls, and left-arm spinner Glenton Williams grabbed five wickets for seven runs in seven overs.

The WES Rising Sun Spartans prevailed by nine wickets against the Bolans Blasters at Rising Sun in St. John's.

The Bolans Blasters were shot out for 40 in 11.5 overs after winning the toss and opting to bat. Medium pacer Shane Burtons snapped up five wickets for 12 runs, and Martin Singh grabbed three wickets without conceding a run in one over.

Opener Hilroy Andrew cracked an unbeaten 26 off 16 balls as the Rising Sun



Karima Gore

Spartans achieved victory at 43 for one in 4.4 overs.

The New Winthorpes Lions won by default

against the All Saints Pythons, who failed to prepare their pitch at the Mack Pond playing field.

cont'd from pg 20

83rd-minute conversion for TAMO FC, while O'Shale Simon scored the lone goal for Bethesda in the 90th minute.

TAMO FC finished with 23 points after claiming their seventh win during their quota of 19 first-round matches.

Bethesda ended their first-round campaign with 34 points after losing for the fifth time during their quota of 19 matches.

Real Blizzard wrapped up their first-

round campaign with a 3-0 win by default against JSC Progressors, who failed to show up for their encounter in New Winthorpes.

The Real Blizzard finished their first-round campaign with 31 points after claiming their ninth win during their quota of 19 matches.

The JSC Progressors will remain in the cellar on goal difference with six points after losing for the 16th time in 18 matches.

Sports News



Wins for Lower Ottos Warriors and Spanish Heat II in D-2 basketball

Lava Smoke Shop Lower Ottos Warriors and Spanish Heat II recorded wins in the Antigua and Barbuda Basketball Association's (ABBA) Second Division League on Saturday night.

The Lower Ottos Warriors claimed their eighth win in 10 games with an 88-55 drubbing of the bottom team, MJ Gray's Green Phoenix, in their encounter at the JSC Sports Complex.

Michael Barton produced 24 points, 18 rebounds, seven steals, and five assists; Lincoln Weekes had 19 points, seven rebounds, and six steals; Abdul Khan converted 13 points; and Kwame Huntley scored 12 points and grabbed 10 rebounds for the Lower Ottos Warriors.

Tyreke Lewis produced 22 points, eight rebounds, and five steals; Ajani Adams sank eight points and grabbed 10 rebounds; and Kevorn Shirley had eight points, 10 steals, and nine rebounds for MJ Gray's Green Phoenix, who remain in the cellar after suffering their ninth defeat in as many games.

The Spanish Heat II secured their seventh win in nine games with an 86-73 victory against the Wadadli Elite.



Jesus Emmanuel shot a game-high 27 points and grabbed 14 rebounds; Ismael Palemo sank 22 points and snatched 25 rebounds; Rohland Hamilton converted 14 points and claimed 14 rebounds; and Kevin Pimentel had 13 points and 10 assists for the Spanish Heat II.

Orion Seraphine converted 23 points; Aiden Christian sank 15 points and grabbed 12 rebounds; and Jayleyle Joseph scored 13 points and claimed six rebounds for the Wadadli Elite, which lost for the sixth time in 10 games.

Meanwhile, third-seed Potters Steelers and fifth-seed Kennedy's Club Ottos Full Throttle have recorded contrasting wins to take a one-nil lead in their respective best-of-three first-round series in the Antigua and Barbuda Basketball Association's (ABBA) First Division playoff championships.

The Potters Steelers cruised to an 85-63 victory against the sixth-seeded New Generation All Saints Slam as the Division 1 playoffs got under way at the JSC Sports Complex.

Humroy Wright sank

13 points; Darnell Azill converted 11 points and grabbed 22 rebounds; Marlon Charles had 11 points and seven assists; and Adrian Carnegie scored 10 points for the Potters Steelers.

Kim Casey produced 13 points and eight assists; Judah Ferris scored 13 points; and Keaddy Martin had eight points and five rebounds for the All Saints Slam.

Ottos Full Throttle snatched a narrow three-point win against the fourth-seeded Spanish Heat. Morlon Davis produced a triple double to lead the Ottos Full Throttle to their 73-70 victory against the Spanish Heat.

Davis had 16 points, 10 assists, and 10 rebounds; Warren Bogle got 15 points, 11 rebounds, and six steals; Akeem Davis converted 15 points and claimed five rebounds; Allister Nibbs sank 13 points and snatched five rebounds; and N'Kenge Drew scored 11 points and grabbed 16 rebounds for the Ottos Full Throttle.

Steven Matthew shot a game-high 26 points and claimed nine rebounds, and Damian Floyd converted 13 points and grabbed six rebounds for the Spanish Heat.

cont'd from pg 24

18 matches ensured the Villa Lions would finish in fourth place with 33 points. Their first defeat in 17 matches left the Grenades at the top of the standings with 48 points, five ahead of All Saints United in second place.

The loss to the Villa Lions also halted the Grenades charge towards a successful retention of the Premier League title.

A victory against the Villa Lions would have given the Grenades back-to-back titles with a game to spare.

Saturday's loss has at least delayed the Grenades' acquisition of a second Premier League title, as the reigning champions are still in pole position to secure the crown.

If second-placed All Saints United beat Swetes in their 17th match of the season, the Grenades will need to win their final encounter against the Ottos Rangers to make certain of retaining their title.

Empire, who are certain of being relegated at the end of the competition, recorded their second win in their penultimate match of their Premier League season.

Nique Watkins scored twice as Empire beat the Ottos Rangers 3-0 in the second match of Saturday's triple header.

Watkins scored the rebound after his initial penalty kick was saved in the 25th minute and also had

a 41st-minute conversion. Lee Andrew scored the other goal for Empire in the 80th minute.

Both teams finished the match with 10 men after a player from each team received red cards and was expelled from the match.

Ottos Rangers' Clarence Francis was red carded for committing series foul play in the 65th minute.

Empire's Jomo Andrew was sent off for using abusive and insulting language towards some spectators in the 73rd minute.

Their second win in 17 matches carries Empire,

who will remain in the cellar, to eight points and one match remaining.

Their ninth loss in 17 matches has left the Ottos Rangers just above the relegation zone on goal difference with 12 points and one game remaining.

Parham kept their hopes of avoiding automatic relegation by securing a 1-1 draw with Green City in Saturday's first encounter.

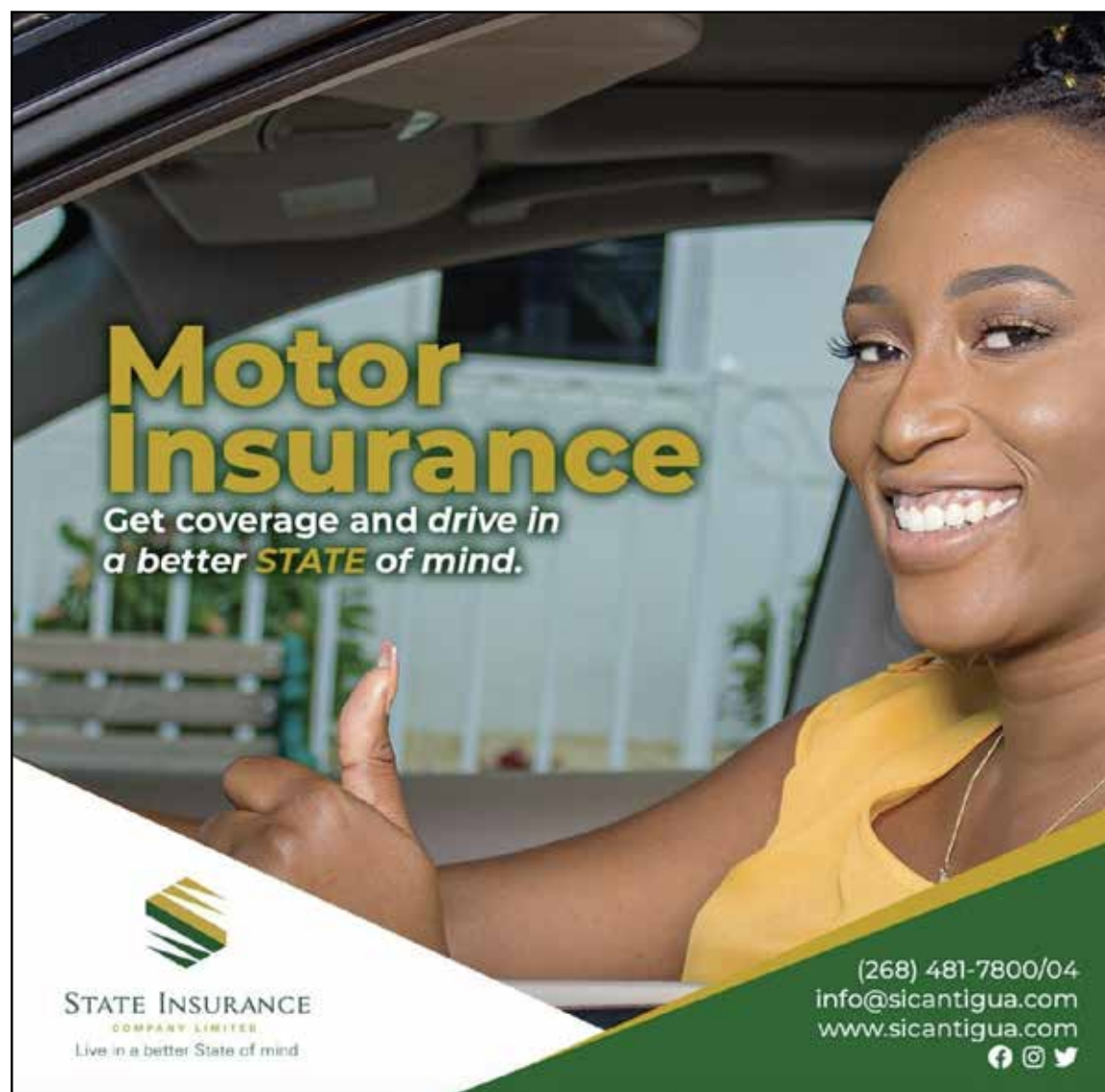
Following a goalless first half, Shamar Carr put Parham ahead with a 59th-minute conversion. But his teammate Jeremiah Harriette scored an own

goal in the 73rd minute to snatch the equalizer for Green City.

Their sixth draw in 17 matches allows Parham to move up one place to 13th on goal difference in the 15-team competition with 12 points.

Green City will remain in ninth place by advancing to 21 points after drawing for the third time in 16 matches.

The last three teams at the bottom of the standings at the end of the current Premier League competition will be relegated to the First Division for next season.



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Players of the Villa Lions team. (File photo)

Villa Lions halt Grenades title charge

The Villa Lions have ended the unbeaten run of reigning champions Sandals and Inet Jennings Grenades and halted their march towards a successful title defense of their Antigua and Barbuda Football Association's (ABFA) Premier Division League Championship.

National midfielder Kwame "Munchie" Kirby scored in the last minute of regulation time to snatch a 2-1 victory for the Villa Lions

against the Grenades in the last game of a triple-header at the ABFA Technical Center on Saturday.

Kirby's 90th-minute conversion was greeted with scenes of jubilation from teammates and spectators in celebration of the giant-killing act by the Lions as they ended a perfect 16-match unbeaten run by the Grenades.

Cuban striker Samoel Rodriguez scored in the 6th minute to give the

Villa Lions a one-nil lead, but the Grenades equalized via Carl Osborne's 31st-minute conversion.

Villa Lions' Cardel Washington was sent off in the fourth minute of added time after getting a second caution (yellow card), which is upgraded to an automatic red card that resulted in the player's expulsion from the match.

Their 10th win in their quota of

cont'd on pg 23