

CANCER CENTRE SALE COMPLETE

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The Antigua and Barbuda economy experienced positive growth for 38 of the past 46 years. *Story on page 6.*



Cancer Centre sale complete

Antigua and Barbuda patients afflicted with cancer will soon be able to receive cutting edge cancer therapy with the planned reopening of the Cancer Centre located adjacent to the Sir Lester Bird Medical Centre.

The announcement comes from Prime Minister Gaston Browne who revealed that the deal to complete the sale of the entity has been reached with a North American company that is to take over the operations of the facility shortly.

“I am pleased to announce that we closed the sale of the Cancer Centre on Friday for EC\$13 million. We acquired the building, not the



equipment, and the value that has always been placed on the building was that amount. There is an entity out of North America that is involved in the health space. They have a number of novel cancer

treatments and they will be providing the services here. In addition, they have some products that will be exported throughout the region from St. John's, and that cancer centre services are now likely to become an export product for the Caribbean region,” he reported.

In the case of locals, the prime minister indicated that the price for treatment at the cancer centre has been capped at US\$12,000.00 per person, which he indicated the government will underwrite. Under the former operation of the centre, that amount was at US\$10,000.00, but the prime minister explained that this meant that the government had to write off the cost of electricity. In absence of this, therefore, the government agreed to increase the amount it spends on each patient receiving treatment at the facility.

The prime minister's comments came on Saturday's Browne and Browne show on Pointe FM, where he spoke of the push for Antigua

and Barbuda to export certain services, such as health care, and health education with plans for a new medical school as well as educational services offered through The UWI FIC.

PM Browne also revealed too that Ambassador, Dr. Joseph (Joey) John, has built out a private hospital and that this too will be providing healthcare services not just for Antigua and Barbuda but for the rest of the north eastern Caribbean. These include cosmetic surgery among other therapies.

Many are already benefiting from some of these services, according to the prime minister.

“For example, we have developed a very extensive stem-cell industry. Every month, we have dozens of North Americans traveling here to get treatment with stem cell. So, you can come to the Caribbean for vacation and leave rejuvenated because of the many services that we will offer,” he revealed.

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Novel proposal to deal with LIAT severance payments

Prime Minister Gaston Browne is making a new proposal to deal constructively with the outstanding severance issue affecting hundreds of LIAT (1974) Ltd. employees throughout the Caribbean.

PM Minister plans to pen a letter to all shareholder governments of the former airline to forego payments following the sale of the three aircraft held by the Caribbean Development Bank and make that money available to LIAT staff as part of the outstanding payments.

The Antigua and Barbuda government has placed



Prime Minister Gaston Browne US\$12.1 million into an escrow account at the Caribbean Development Bank to

purchase three ATR aircraft for the new airline, LIAT 2020.

The prime minister said this proposal comes out of his government's long-standing commitment to make good on its promise to work towards getting the former LIAT (1974) Ltd. staff paid their severance.

"We have always said as a government that we will pay the 32% representing our shareholding in LIAT (1974) Ltd. We have never refused to pay the 32%! We said that all of the shareholding governments should pay; that Barbados should pay based on its shareholding; that St. Vincent and the Grenadines

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should pay based on that formula and Dominica similarly. We owned 32% so we should pay that amount. At one point we even said we would pay 50%, but we said that was because we wanted the workers to use that to negotiate with the other governments to pay. It was the union, the ABWU, that stood in the way of this happening,” the prime minister explained.

Despite all this, the Antigua and Barbuda leader said the government is still committed to paying its share of the severance to the former workers of the now defunct airline.

“That offer is still on the table and my government will not revoke it. As soon as the workers indicate that they are willing to accept, the money will be paid,” he reiterated.

Now, he is proposing that the US\$12.1 million dollars which the Antigua and Barbuda government will pay to the CDB for the three aircraft it is holding based on a lien for the loan it granted to purchase the planes, that this money should be made available to workers, instead of going to the shareholder governments and the bank.

“I am going to write a letter, first thing Monday morning (today) to my colleague Heads (of Government) calling on all four shareholder-governments to subordinate our interests from the sale of the aircraft, the US\$12.1 million, and to

make those funds available to pay severance to LIAT workers system-wide as an ex-gratia payment in lieu of severance,” he declared. He is also calling on the CDB to act similarly in this regard.

According to PM Browne, it is a view that he has always held, but one which he is now stating publicly for the first time. He added that he believes that this is a fair proposal aimed at bringing some relief to the many LIAT workers scattered across the Caribbean.

Additionally, PM Browne said whilst he was not in office when the re-fleeting of LIAT (1974) Ltd. was being undertaken, he disagrees with the CDB for taking liens on the aircraft as the loans were sovereign loans, guaranteed by the respective governments.

“The loans that were issued to the four shareholder governments were sovereign loans and there was absolutely no need for the CDB to take any lien over those aircraft. In fact, what they did by taking that lien, was to prejudice the interests of other stakeholders, while protecting the bank’s interests. If there wasn’t that lien, then the staff would have had priority when the aircraft are sold,” he noted.

By taking the lien, the prime minister feels that even the CDB has done the former LIAT (1974) Ltd. staff a disservice.



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The 'entrepreneurial spirit' among nationals singled out for commendation

Antigua and Barbuda has recorded positive growth for the thirty-eight (38) of the last 46 years (1978 to 2023), a stand-alone achievement for the English-speaking Caribbean Community countries.

Making the observation, Professor C. Justin Robinson, Principal of the University of the West Indies Five Islands Campus, said he has been studying the performances of Caribbean economies over a period of time and what

he has seen in Antigua and Barbuda has been 'a pleasant surprise'.

"The natural tendency of this economy is to grow. So, since 1978, there have only been eight years of decline. 1982, a minor recession, 1995, a four-point decline due to Hurricane Luis, 2005, and then suddenly you had a difficult period; 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, four years of negative growth. There was a rebound in 2012, but decline again in 2013.

Growth picked up again in 2014 to 2019 before the recession hit in 2020," he reported.

The professor observed that Antigua and Barbuda economy is always on a growth path when the economic matrix is reviewed. "This country has done fantastically well over the past 46 years when it recorded only eight years of negative growth. Compare that with Barbados where that economy has not grown in the past twen-

ty to twenty-five years as growth is often followed by decline," he stated.

The UWI FIC principal noted too that almost all the negative growth years have been associated with some kind of external shock. "The natural tendency here is to grow and to create wealth. This is a strong economy under normal circumstance," he emphasized.

When asked to identify what are some of the issues that led to the performances here in Antigua and Barbuda, Prof. Robinson said living here over the past ten months, one of the things he has observed is the presence of an 'entrepreneurial spirit' among residents; a 'hustler mentality' is how he described it.

He said coupled with other factors, he has observed a strong desire for Antiguan and Barbudans to get into business and that this has certainly been cause for continued growth.

With regards to foreign direct investments, Prof. Robinson said when foreign business people invest into a country, what they are doing is investing in people.

"There has to be a level of comfort when these people decide to invest in one country as opposed to another," he stated.




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UWI FIC Principal says Antigua and Barbuda should use climate change to its advantage

The Principal of the University of the West Indies Five Islands Campus, Prof. C Justin Robinson wants to see countries in the Caribbean, such as Antigua and Barbuda, use climate change to their advantage.

Speaking as a guest of the Browne and Browne show on Saturday, Prof. Robinson described the Antigua and Barbuda economy as ‘having a natural propensity’ for growth. But he is suggesting various avenues through which the country may sustain that growth trajectory.

“What I see as the most promising growth opportunity is if we can turn a crisis into opportunity. For example, Antigua and Barbuda just hosted SIDS4 and we academics were quite focused on this climate crisis, how vulnerable we are; as you build sustainable economy that can adopt to the climate crisis, I see that as a fantastic growth opportunity,” he declared.

He noted that with the focus on climate change, the region should see



Principal of the University of the West Indies Five Islands Campus, Prof. C Justin Robinson

this as an opportunity to leverage the crisis in its favour.

“We could use this as an opportunity to rebuild St. John’s as a sustainable city. Look at people’s homes, how do we rebuild these homes to make them more resilient to climate change. How do we reshape our economy to make it more adaptable and resilient to climate change? That gives us a chance so that our grandchildren will have a place

to live. It however creates a fantastic growth opportunity, right now, if we attract the funding, and come up with the projects to transform our economy to be more climate disaster resistant,” he explained.

Prof. Robinson noted that Antigua and Barbuda and Barbados are two Caribbean countries with their respective leaders, PM Gaston Browne and Barbados’ Mia Mottley, as two leading voices on climate change, not just regionally, but internationally.

“I believe we can transform their stature into an opportunity to attract significant resources and investment to the region. We could therefore create a new building boom! Can we have all these houses and buildings in the country retrofitted so that they become resistant to storms of a certain strength? Can we redo our towns and villages to make them resistant to flooding ect? That is the name of the game and we have an advantage in that area,” he remarked.

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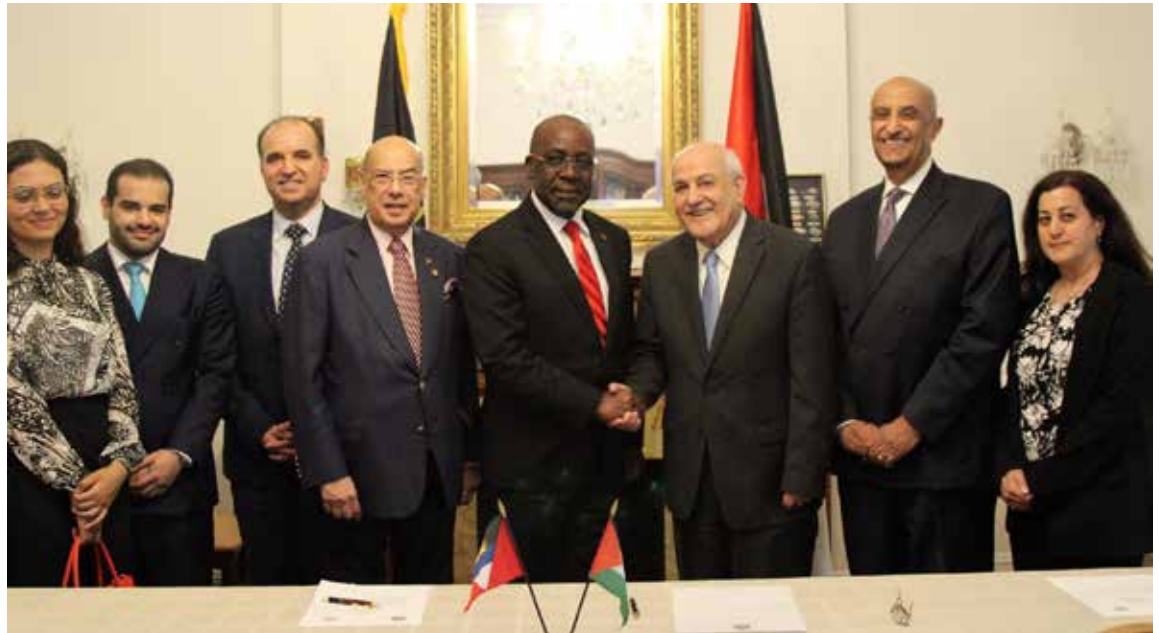
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Antigua and Barbuda and the State of Palestine establish diplomatic relations



Antigua and Barbuda and the State of Palestine have signed an agreement, establishing diplomatic relations between the two countries.

The agreement was signed in New York on Friday by Antigua and Barbuda's Foreign Minister, E. Paul Chet Greene and Palestine's Ambassador with Ministerial rank, Dr. Riyad Mansour.

Both officials reaffirmed their countries adherence and commitment to the principles and purposes enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and the provisions of international law,



particularly in the promotion of international peace and security, respect for the sov-
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Excellency,

We have the honor to inform you that the Government of Antigua and Barbuda and the Government of the State of Palestine have established diplomatic relations as of, 14 June 2024. Attached is the Joint Communiqué we have signed on behalf of our respective Governments to this effect.

We therefore kindly request Your Excellency to circulate this letter and the enclosed Joint Communiqué to all Member States of the United Nations for their information.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of our highest consideration.



FOR ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA

Hon. Everly Paul Chet Greene
Minister of Foreign Affairs, Agriculture,
Trade, and Barbuda Affairs

FOR THE STATE OF PALESTINE

H.E. Dr.Riyad Mansour
Minister
Permanent Representative to the
United Nations

H.E. Mr. António Guterres
Secretary General of the United Nations
United Nations
New York

**JOINT COMMUNIQUE
ON THE
ESTABLISHMENT OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS
BETWEEN
ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA
AND
THE STATE OF PALESTINE**

The Government of Antigua and Barbuda and the Government of the State of Palestine, guided by their willingness to promote the ties of friendship between their two countries, widen horizons of mutual cooperation, and responding to the aspirations of the two countries for friendly relations and contacts:

Have decided to establish diplomatic relations from the date of signature of this Joint Communiqué in accordance with the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations of 1961, willing by this step to strengthen fruitful cooperation in political, economic, trade, technical and cultural spheres and in other fields of mutual interest.

Both Governments reaffirm their commitment to the principles contained in the Charter of the United Nations and international law, including support of the cause of international peace and security, mutual respect for national sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-interference in internal affairs of another state.

In witness thereof, the undersigned representatives, duly authorized by their respective Governments, have signed this Joint Communiqué in the English and Arabic languages.

Done in New York on 14th of June, 2024.

FOR ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA

Hon. Everly Paul Chet Greene
Minister of Foreign Affairs, Agriculture,
Trade, and Barbuda Affairs

FOR THE STATE OF PALESTINE

H.E. Dr.Riyad Mansour
Minister
Permanent Representative to the
United Nations

A&B joins in condemning Russian aggression in Ukraine

Antigua and Barbuda has been credited for its stance condemning the Russian aggression against its neighbour, Ukraine.

The country was singled

out in comments made by the Ranking Member of the US House of Representatives' Foreign Affairs Committee, the Chair, Gregory W. Meeks.

At a hearing last week by the full Foreign Affairs Committee on the subject; 'Great Power Competition in the Western Hemisphere, Meeks noted that as a result of sever-

al engagements, the US was already seeing results of their efforts to win support against the Russian action.

"Antigua and Barbuda and 24 member states of the Organization of American States joined together to condemn Russia's continued aggression in Ukraine this past February," Representative Meeks stated.

Tension is mounting in the region with the arrival last week of a Russian submarine in Cuba and the subsequent arrival at Guantanamo Bay of a US submarine.

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ereignty and independence of States, and non-interference in their internal affairs.

Foreign Minister Greene highlighted the agreement's importance, stating: "We are pleased to enhance cooperation with the State of Palestine as a step towards global peace and to find lasting solutions to conflicts that secure the well-being of the people of Palestine and all nations."

Speaking for the State of Palestine,

Minster Mansour stressed "the readiness of the State of Palestine to deepen its friendship and strengthen its cooperation with Antigua and Barbuda across all fields to advance peace and security to which we all aspire and deserve".

This agreement will be formally transmitted to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, marking a significant milestone in the diplomatic efforts of both countries.

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It's trad dad

By Tony Deyal

I went to a seafood disco last week – I pulled a mussel! I ordered a chicken and an egg from Amazon - I'll let you know which one arrives first.

Every time I take my dog to the park, the ducks try to bite him – that's what I get for buying a pure-bread dog. To the person who stole my copy of Microsoft Office, I will find you – you have my word.

These jokes are from a poll which found that the sense of humour of fathers is one of the things that our children love about us. You can take my word and experience for that.

While the second-most loved quality about fathers is our hugs, we are also loved and respected because of the advice we give our children, our support and our life lessons.

One of the people involved in the poll said, "We may roll our eyes from time to time but there's no denying that a cheesy dad joke makes us laugh. It's no surprise that our dad's sense of humour is the favourite thing about the father figure in our life."

This was supported by the British Psychological Society, "By continuing telling their children jokes that are so bad that they're embarrassing, fathers may push their children's limits for how much embarrassment they can handle." That

said, and my being given permission to proceed with gusto instead of gutso, let's get ready to rumble with my four children, as well as you and yours.

Many are the times mine shook their heads and said loudly, "Dad! Oh gosh, man. Ease us up please! Mom, tell him to stop!"

Just in case some of you don't know how terrible dad jokes can be, and the boys get enough training so they would be ready when their times come, here are a few examples. I start with one from my favourite comedian when I was young, Jerry Lewis.

He said, "When I was a kid, I said to my father one afternoon, 'Daddy, will you take me to the zoo?' He answered, 'If the zoo wants you, let them come and get you.'" One youngster's father told him that he wanted something different, something really groundbreaking for Father's Day.

The youngster gave his daddy a shovel. One boy said his father wanted to listen to music while they were fishing. So, he put on something catchy.

Another father was so concerned that his son would buy him something that would be costly, he told the boy that he wanted a gift with no strings attached. The boy brought him a broken guitar.

One father, who said that he carries pictures



Tony Deyal

where his money used to be, was worried, "My children are buying gifts for me for Father's Day. I'm not sure if I can afford it!"

Another, on Father's Day, decided to get his son to help him wash the family car. The boy's mother ran out and shouted at her husband, "Can't you use a sponge instead?" Perhaps the father was getting back at his son who, in the previous year, gave his dad some soap flakes instead of corn flakes for breakfast.

When asked by a friend, "How did he react?" the boy replied, "He was foaming at the mouth!" So, now you've got the examples, when does a dad joke become a dad joke? When it becomes apparent!

The fact is that life doesn't come with an instruction book and that's why we have parents, fathers especially.

While the greatest thing a father can do for his children is love their mother, Robert Frost, the poet who wrote *The Road Not Taken*, did not take the mother as

first in line.

He believed that you don't have to deserve your mother's love, as they love you regardless. However, you have to deserve your father's, and that is not easy. He's more particular.

This is why another great poet, William Wordsworth, who believed that "Life is divided into three terms - that which was, which is, and which will be", was convinced that, "Father! to God himself we cannot give a holier name." For that reason, it is believed that the greatest gift we have ever got from God is someone we call "Dad".

Sigmund Freud, the neurologist, was convinced, "I cannot think of any need in childhood as strong as the need for a father's protection." But it's not just men. Chelsea Clinton, daughter of Bill Clinton and despite everything he is known to have done, said, "[My father] has always provided me a safe place to land and a hard place from which to launch."

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And television presenter Lisa Rogers put it into a broader context, “A man’s worth is measured by how he parents his children.

“What he gives them, what he keeps away from them, the lessons he teaches and the lessons he allows them to learn on their own.”

In other words, and in the case of so many of us, when our fathers didn’t have our hands, they held our backs and did not have a belt in the other one.

This is why my greatest concern, and perhaps the one that affected me most because of my own experience, is that, for many of us and our children, when Fathers’ Day came, our fathers, and later our children’s fathers, were not ‘day’ or ‘there’ when they were expected and needed.

The most confusing day in the Caribbean is Father’s Day. While the

boys deal with the lack, or loss, of the father, with anger and even hate, the girls are totally devastated and may never recover from the pain and despair.

It is true that Father’s Day is also in honour of stepfathers, grandfathers, uncles and even big brothers, but not having a father around on Father’s Day is tough on all children.

One thing I have learnt is that, as Shakespeare wrote, we have to be true to our own selves and that is the only way we cannot be false to anybody else, especially our children, who, in many ways and almost every day, are the first heroes of their sons and the first loves of their daughters.

It is why dads are most ordinary men turned by love into heroes, adventurers, storytellers and singers of songs, and also the reason for children losing their way forward.

It is true, as Billy Graham, the evangelist, believed, “A good father is one of the most unsung, unpraised, unnoticed and yet one of the most valuable assets in our society.”

In fact, I have learnt from Rita Rudner, the US comedian, who was serious with this one, “I gave my father one hundred dollars and told him ‘Dad, buy yourself something that will make life easier.’

So, he went out and bought a present for my mother.” As we say, that is man! It is why I am proud of The Fathers’ Association of Trinidad and Tobago, as well as those in other parts of the region and the world, for helping families to be, and remain, together.

Tony Deyal was a young teacher and had four theories that he kept telling parents they should use to raise and train their children. Now, he has four children and no theories.

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Caribbean, Africa urged to trade in their own currencies

CMC - Barbados Minister of Economic Affairs and Investment, Chad Blackman, says the Caribbean and Africa should start looking at trading among themselves in their respective currencies, adding that the United States and European currencies might be less dominant a decade from now.

Blackman speaking Wednesday at the Africa Export-Import Bank (Afreximbank) 31st Annual Meeting (AAM2024) taking place here, said that his comments are “potentially controversial” but noted that some countries are already trading in their own currencies.

Blackman told a session titled “Managing Macroeconomic Crises: Some Lessons from Africa and the Caribbean” that in addition to appreciating over time, trading in a currency lends credibility to those markets where the currencies are in use.

“And when you look at the current geopolitical shifts taking place in the world, I’m no prophet, but I believe within the next 10 to 15 years, a number of the currencies that we’re now looking to, may not be in the same position that they are today,” said Blackman, a former diplomat.

“So the question is, ‘How do we prepare ourselves for that eventuality and that shift, which will take place?’” he said, noting that a lot of currencies are pegged to the US dollar.

“So, conversations must now be had not just at the domestic level, but also between the Caribbean and Africa, looking at perhaps a basket of currencies that we should actually start to look at that can anchor or monetary policies.”

He, however, noted that most Caribbean economies are tourism-based, adding, “and therefore, when you look



Barbados Minister of Economic Affairs and Investment, Chad Blackman. Photo: CMC at the strength of the dollar, given that we import most of our goods to service, for example, or tourism-based economies, it has a major implication.

“Now, that aside again, I want to go back to the whole issue of south-south, for a long time, we’ve held the view that in order for us to trade, we must trade only in the US dollar on the euro or in the pound.”

Blackman addressed a number of other issues, including reform of the global financial sector and tax revenue as a portion of gross domestic product.

He said that as it pertains to accessing financing, countries such as Barbados are oftentimes caught in “the vortex of being either classified as middle-income or high-income”.

This, he explained, limits a country’s policy options as regards addressing their developing challenges, noting that Barbados, through the Bridgetown initiative, has called at the international level for a rethinking of

using GDP per capita to determine a country’s access to developmental financing.

Blackman said that while some countries might have a high gross domestic product (GDP) per-capita ratio they also have “inherent inequalities”, adding that sometimes, in addressing these issues, a country cannot approach it as single nation state.

“You have to look at the entire multilateral development system. And therefore, Prime Minister (Mia) Motley ... conceived and led the initiative,” he said, noting that the Barbados proposal calls for a reform of the international financial architecture.

“So when you look at both the domestic reality coupled with the global reality, we, therefore, now have to ensure that we can have that policy space to be able to treat to a number of these things.

“Because if you’re indebted and then ... an external shock manifests,

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whether that be a climate shock, when you see the tensions around the world, causing an increase in energy prices, countries like Barbados, or the Bahamas or Trinidad and Tobago in the Caribbean, are often therefore faced with a very difficult task of being able to treat with the external shock whilst paying down the debt that was there before," Blackman said.

The former diplomat said that in such a situation, a country that goes to the international market for financing ideally needs long-term financing options.

"Why? The high interest rates are going to choke your ability to do so. So the country and the region, CARICOM, has been calling for that reformation around the world and the restructuring."

The Economic Affairs and Investment Minister made the point as he noted that the Governor of the Central Bank of Barbados, Dr Kevin Greenidge had told an earlier panel that there is a still a lot of work to be done in this regard.

Meanwhile, the panel also heard that no country has made it to advanced economy status without raising about 30 per cent of the GDP in taxes even as in Africa, tax contribution is about 15 or 16 per cent of GDP.

Blackman said the situation in the Caribbean is similar to Africa, adding that this goes back to the

constraints in the policy space in trying to raise revenue.

"Because of course you either do it through taxes or growth. But to be able to do that, in circumstances where you're constrained by high levels of debt is going to make it very difficult and that has been a major challenge."

On Wednesday, Greenidge, called for reform of the global financial architecture, saying credit rating agencies have a "natural bias" against smaller economies such as those in Africa and the Caribbean

Blackman said the time has long passed for the global south to have "credit rating agencies that can stand the test of time.

"Why? And not to knock them, but the credit rating agencies that we all look to in the world as we speak were not created by us or in our image," he said adding

that he was glad to hear that credit rating agencies are coming out of Africa.

"There has to be agencies that can be created around the global south that can stand the test of time, we have the credibility, but that the world also will respect."

He said that the current global credit rating agencies "have moved away from the original intent and the implications are massive to our economies".

Blackman said the global south must also leverage South-South cooperation and liquidity.

"Because there's a lot of finance going on in our part of the world. But if we don't harmonise our approaches, and try to unlock it, where it is, a lot of the mobilisation that we're needing is not going to be unlocked, but it is there. The question is what mechanism and instruments do we have to be able

to unlock them? Right."

He said that Africa and the Caribbean continue to push the reform agenda, adding that the Bridgetown Initiative is "a very good and real example of that.

"But we have to also not just look at the financial architecture and reform," adding that Africa and the Caribbean have to use the multilateral system around the world, for example, at the UN, "to ensure that when they're at the table, they constantly bring these issues that are faced by the Global South..."

"... most of our countries did not exist when the current architecture that we now operate under was created and therefore with new challenges, new realities, deep inequalities, we have to now ensure that that financial architecture is reformed if we are going to treat to these challenges," Blackman said.



Barbados calls for Cuba's removal from US list

Barbados welcomes the news that the Government of the United States of America (USA) has removed the Republic of Cuba from the USA's list of countries that are "not cooperating fully" in the USA's fight against terrorism.

Barbados notes, however, that the Republic of Cuba remains on the US State Department's list of countries that have been deemed by the USA to be state sponsors of terrorism.

Barbados reiterates that there was absolutely no justification for Cuba to

have been placed on the List of State Sponsors of Terrorism back in January 2021. Equally, no such justification exists today.

Barbados deplores the fact that Cuba's unjust inclusion on the State Department's List of State Sponsors of Terrorism has caused and continues to cause severe damage to the economy of Cuba and tremendous suffering to the Cuban people.

Barbados further notes that the damage caused to Cuba by its unjustified inclusion on the List of state

sponsors of terrorism augments and amplifies the severe damage inflicted on Cuba by the USA's now 62-year-old economic, commercial, and financial embargo.

Barbados urges that both the designation as a state sponsor of terrorism and the 62-year-old embargo be terminated as a matter of urgency so that relief can be brought to the harsh conditions under which the Cuban people have had to endure.

(Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade)

St Kitts: Government establishes new unit to strengthen CBI programme

CMC - The Government of St Kitts and Nevis is moving ahead with the establishment and operationalization of its Continuing International Due Diligence (CIDD) Unit, a move that underscores efforts towards strengthening the Citizenship by Investment (CBI) Programme and protecting the country's reputation internationally.

The new CIDD unit will be headed by former Commissioner of the Royal St Christopher and Nevis Police Force and current Ambassador for the Eastern Caribbean States to the Kingdom of Morocco.

In making the announcement during the June 14 sitting of the National Assembly, Prime Minister and Minister responsible for Citizenship and Immigra-



tion, Dr Terrance Drew said this new mechanism will further help to protect the Federation's reputation on the international stage.

"We are serious and we want to ensure that we engender confidence in our international partners that we are serious about their

security as well," Dr Drew said during the second reading and debate on the Citizenship by Investment Unit Bill, 2024.

The CIDD Unit will be headquartered in Europe and will be responsible for conducting continuing due diligence on economic citi-

zens worldwide.

"It will ensure that citizens holding passports issued by St Kitts and Nevis and residing and working internationally, abide by the laws of the countries in which they reside and visit, and that they respect the in-

cont'd on pg 15

US probing gold smuggling between Colombia, Venezuela and Guyana

CMC - The United States is investigating a gold smuggling operation involving Colombia, Venezuela, and Guyana.

Former Minister of Natural Resources, Raphael Trotman, revealed that the investigation commenced during the previous People's Progressive Party Civic (PPPC) administration.

In a statement on Saturday, Trotman mentioned that a local investigation by the APNU+AFC coalition administration was halted when the PPP returned to power in 2020.

"Sometime afterwards, the Ministry of the Presidency ordered and initiated its own intelligence-led operation, with a unique sobriquet, to curb gold smuggling and transnational crime. I am reliably informed that this operation was shut down within 5 days of the new administra-

tion taking office in August, 2020," Trotman said.

He noted that the current sanctions stemmed from a separate investigation spanning over two years, preceding the recent announcements by the US Department of Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control.

US Ambassador Nicole Theriot stated on Friday that the US government did not share detailed information about the investigation into Nazar "Shell" Mohamed, his son Azruddin, and Permanent Secretary Mae Thomas, following standard protocol similar to that in the US.

"They have to keep these investigations very close-hold because they can be compromised by anyone and so we tend to not share a lot of information until the investigation reaches a certain stage and so I regret that people feel they've been left



in the dark but in the United States it would be exactly the same way. If we are conducting an investigation against someone accused of corruption in the United States, we would not share that information until the investigation was at a stage where that was possible," she told reporters.

The US Treasury Department alleged that between 2019 and 2023, Mohamed's Enterprise allegedly omitted more than 10 thousand kilograms of gold from import and export declarations and

avoided paying more than \$50 million in duty taxes to the Government of Guyana.

Trotman said at that time US agents were concerned mainly that gold mined in Guyana, Venezuela and Colombia, was being illegally shipped from, and through Guyana, to the US. "Most concerning, was the belief that the proceeds of the sale of this gold were financing activities that were very inimical to the security and interests of the United States. This was not an investigation into corruption only," he said Mr Trotman who studied Defence Planning & Resources Management at the US National Defence University.

The then Natural Resources Minister said the US agents related that they were then authorised to share such information with representatives of the then government because "in the past, there were serious concerns about confidences being kept and sensitive investigations being compromised by government of Guyana officials."

cont'd from pg 14

international laws as well. [It will] alert the Ministry of National Security of St Kitts and Nevis citizens who are being investigated for committing or have been arrested and/or charged with financial or other crimes internationally."

In addition, the unit will liaise with and report to international law enforcement, anti-money laundering and anti-terrorist financing agencies when St Kitts and Nevis citizens are being investigated for committing or have been arrested and/or charged with financial or other crimes internationally.

It will also be responsible for retrieving passports issued by St Kitts and Nevis

which have been cancelled by the Ministry of National pursuant to the Passport and Travel Document Act Principle 5 of the US-Caribbean roundtable on CBI.

In addition, the CIDD unit will seek to create policies to mitigate and address any risks associated with St Kitts and Nevis citizens who obtained their citizenship via the CBI programme.

According to Drew, the Government of St Kitts and Nevis is "making sure that there would also be strict security measures to protect ourselves and to protect our international partners."

The Continuing International Due Diligence (CIDD) Unit will be operationalized by July 31.

Putin peace terms slammed at Ukraine summit

By Sarah Rainsford

The leaders of Italy and Germany have strongly rejected ceasefire terms laid out by Vladimir Putin to stop the war in Ukraine, as scores of countries gathered at a two-day summit in Switzerland to discuss ending the conflict.

Italy's Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni called the Russian president's plan "propaganda" which effectively suggested that Ukraine "must withdraw from Ukraine".

German Chancellor Olaf Scholz dismissed it as a "dictatorial peace".

A draft declaration issued at the summit reaffirms Ukraine's territorial integrity and unambiguously rejects any nuclear threat against the country.

On Friday, Mr Putin claimed he would agree to a ceasefire if Ukraine withdrew troops from four regions which Russia partially occupies and claims to have annexed.

Andriy Yermak, chief of staff to Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelensky, told the BBC at the Swiss summit that there would be "no compromise on independence, sovereignty or territorial integrity".

Mr Putin revealed his terms ahead of the two-day Summit on Peace in Ukraine which is aimed at discussing the basic principles for end-



President Volodymyr Zelensky said Ukraine wanted to "give diplomacy a chance".

ing the war.

More than 90 countries and global institutions are attending the event. It is the biggest gathering for Ukraine since the full-scale invasion.

But Russia was not invited, and China - a key ally of Russia - is not attending, so expectations of significant progress at this stage are low.

Commenting on Mr Putin's proposal, Ms Meloni said: "It doesn't seem particularly effective to me as a negotiation proposal to tell Ukraine that it must withdraw from Ukraine."

Britain's Prime Minister Rishi Sunak accused the Russian president of "spinning a phoney narrative about his willingness to negotiate".

He added that countries helping Russia with weapon supplies "are on the wrong side of history".

Ukraine is already presenting the gathering at the secluded spot in Bürgen-

stock as a success, pointing to its global reach and the number of countries represented.

Mr Zelensky said Ukraine wanted to "give diplomacy a chance", and show that "joint efforts" could stop wars.

"I believe that we will witness history being made here at the summit. May a just peace be established as soon as possible," he said.

His aide Mr Yermak - an influential figure in Ukrainian politics - brushed aside the absence of China, and suggested that when a joint plan for peace talks is ready it could be presented to Russia.

"We think that can happen at the second summit at the level of leaders," he said.

Mr Putin has already ruled out any kind of peace process on Ukraine's terms. The four Ukrainian regions he wants Ukraine to withdraw from are only partially occupied by Russia, which

claims to have annexed them in 2022. The voting process held then was denounced in Ukraine and the West as a sham.

European Commission chief Ursula von der Leyen said that "freezing the conflict today with foreign troops occupying Ukrainian land is not an answer".

"In fact, it is a recipe for future wars of aggression," she said.

Mr Putin's terms for a ceasefire were branded "offensive to common sense" by Ukraine.

Participating countries are due to formally adopt the draft declaration reaffirming Ukraine's territorial integrity on Sunday.

The leaders also state that the safe transit of commercial shipping in the Black and Azov Seas is vital for global food security. The draft text also calls for a prisoner of war exchange.

The Swiss summit comes after G7 leaders agreed to use interest from frozen Russian assets to help Ukraine defend itself against the invading Russian forces.

Around \$325bn (£256bn) in assets were frozen by the G7 countries and the EU after Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022. The interest generated by those assets amounts to some \$3bn a

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Protests across Brazil over divisive abortion law

By Malu Cursino

Thousands of people in Brazil have protested against a proposed nationwide law change which would equate abortion to homicide, even in cases where a pregnancy is the result of rape.

It would mean women who terminate pregnancies after 22 weeks could be jailed for up to 20 years.

Brazil's ruling party opposes the move but conservatives in Congress are attempting to push the bill through.

Protesters have gathered in many Brazilian cities in recent days, including Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo and Brasília.

Some have carried placards reading "a girl is not a mother", with much of the anger focused on the impact the law change could have on under-18s.

Analysis of crime data shows children aged 13 and younger make up more than 60% of rape victims in the country.

Currently under Brazilian law, abortion is legal in very limited circumstances - when someone has been raped, if there is risk to life or if there is a diagnosis of foetal brain abnormality



- and can carry prison sentences of up to three years outside of those cases.

If this change goes ahead, self-administering or consenting to an abortion could result in a jail sentence equivalent to those handed out in "simple homicide" cases, which range from six to 20 years.

The law would also apply to health professionals carrying out the procedure.

Simple homicide, under Brazil's penal code, is when a person kills another with intent.

The bill has made quicker progress than expected after lawmakers bypassed some procedural stages, leading to outcry from oppo-

nents.

"We will not accept a setback," councilwoman Monica Benicio told Reuters news agency.

"We will not accept a conservative government negotiating spurious policies over our lives. We will continue to advance until legal abortion is a guaranteed right in Brazil," she added.

After the vote was pushed through, deputy Sóstenes Cavalcante, who authored the law change, was buoyant and responded by writing "victory to life" on social media.

The Brazilian government vehemently opposes the law change, with the country's human rights min-

ister Silvio Almeida calling it "immoral".

In a statement, Mr Almeida said: "It is difficult to believe that Brazilian society, with the countless problems that it has, is currently discussing whether a raped woman and a rapist have the same value in terms of law."

His comments came as many activists highlighted the jail sentence for someone charged with rape is around 10 years. While Brazil is led by President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva's left-wing party, many of the country's lawmakers belong to former President Jair Bolsonaro's right-wing Liberal Party (PL) and other conservative groups.

PL are the largest party in Congress's Chamber of Deputies, but they will need support from other opposition lawmakers for it to pass.

No date has been set yet for a vote in the Congress's Chamber of Deputies.

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year.

Under the G7 plan, that \$3bn will be used to pay off the annual interest on a \$50bn loan for Ukraine, taken out on the international markets.

The money is not expected to arrive until the end of the year but is seen as a

longer-term solution to support Ukraine's war effort and economy.

In the immediate term, Ukraine says it urgently needs more weapons - primarily air defence systems to combat Russia's missile and drone attacks, as well as F-16 fighter jets, which it hopes will start arriving as early as this summer.



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Stoneville win to stay second in men's volleyball league

Defending champions Stoneville notched up another win to stay within touching distance of Men's Division 1 leaders Pytonz in the Antigua and Barbuda Amateur Volleyball Association's (ABAVA) Local League on Saturday night.

Stoneville consolidated their second-place position in the standings with a 3-0 victory against the Top Ranking Storming Lions in an hour and 25 minutes at the indoor stadium at the YMCA Sports Complex.

Stoneville notched up their 14th win in 15 games by prevailing 25-22, 26-24, and 25-17 against the Top Ranking Storming Lions, who lost for the fifth time in 16 encounters.

Stoneville also recorded a 3-0 victory by default against the Print Express Renegades, who were unable to field a team.

Stoneville was awarded a 25-0, 25-0, and 25-0 victory against the Renegades, who lost for the sixth time in 15 encounters.

The Storming Lions enjoyed success by claiming their 11th win of the competition with a 3-0 victory against the Invaders.

The Storming Lions took an hour and five minutes to claim their 25-19, 25-22, and 25-19 victory against the Invaders.

Phoenix High Flyerz



The Stoneville men's volleyball team.

2 also had success. The Phoenix High Flyerz 2 recorded their sixth win in 15 games by pulling off a 3-1 victory against the Invaders in an hour and 46 minutes on Saturday.

The Phoenix High Flyerz 2 prevailed 25-16, 20-25, 25-12, and 25-19 against the Invaders, who lost for the 12th time in 15 encounters.

The Sharks and High Flyerz 1 also recorded wins in the Men's Division

1 competition of the ABAVA's Local League.

The Sharks took an hour and 42 minutes to prevail 3-1 against TOA Media and MKUU Tours Chargers Velocity in a bottom-of-the-table clash.

The Sharks claimed their second win in 15 games to remain second from the bottom of the standings by prevailing 25-19, 23-25, 25-16, and 25-18 against the Chargers Velocity, which lost for

the 15th time in as many games to remain in the cellar of the Men's Division 1 League.

High Flyerz notched up their eighth win in 15 games with a straight-set 3-0 win against Phoenix High Flyerz 2, which lost for the ninth time in the competition.

The High Flyerz took an hour and five minutes to secure their 25-14, 25-21, and 25-22 victory against the Phoenix High Flyerz 2.

Rain disrupts ABFA's Youth Premier Leagues

Heavy and persistent rains across the island over the weekend forced the cancellation of matches in the Antigua and Barbuda Football Association's (ABFA) Cool and Smooth Youth Premier Leagues.

Several matches in round five of both the Under-17 and Under-19 leagues, which were slated to take place at the ABFA Technical Center on Saturday and Sunday, were postponed due to the wet and rainy conditions.

Weather permitting, the matches have been rescheduled to take place on Tuesday.

Meanwhile, Willikies FC and Ottos Rangers FC notched up wins in two rescheduled games in the ABFA's Cool and Smooth Under-19 Youth Premier League (YPL) on Thursday.

Willikies FC claimed their third win in four matches with a six-nil drubbing of Sea View Farm in the second game of a double header at the ABFA Technical Center.



The goals were scored by Nadre Simon, J'twan Brown, Antwan Hastings, Te'Jae Edwards, Elijah Carty, and captain James Simon.

Ottos Rangers recorded their second win in five matches with a 6-2 vic-

tory against the bottom team, TAMO FC, in the opening game.

TAMO FC remains in the cellar of the 14-team round-robin competition without a point after losing for the fourth time in as many games.

Cricket West Indies announces new partnership with FairBreak Foundation

Cricket West Indies (CWI) and FairBreak Foundation have announced a new partnership to promote and support Women's Cricket in the region.

As well as FairBreak Invitational T20 Tournaments, FairBreak has created a new Foundation, which will use donations to support grassroots women and girls cricket programmes across the Caribbean.

FairBreak Global, are

dedicated to promoting gender equality through Women's Invitational T20 tournaments, having successfully hosted two ICC-sanctioned tournaments to date in Dubai (2022) and Hong Kong (2023).

Johnny Grave, CWI Chief Executive Officer stated, "we are pleased and enthusiastic to be the first ICC Full Member Board to partner with FairBreak.

"One of the new strate-

gic objectives of CWI has been to achieve parity between women and men in cricket by 2027 and we believe that this partnership will allow us to showcase the talent and potential of female cricketers in the West Indies, while promoting inclusivity and gender equality within the sport."

Cheryll Rogers, FairBreak Chief Executive Officer commented, "we are delighted to partner with

CWI and bring the support of FairBreak to the communities of the Caribbean. It has been my pleasure to bring FairBreak up to a new level for women's cricket.

"Our aspiration is to partner with cricket boards and charities to uplift community cricket as well as create new pathways into the women's professional game.

The new FairBreak team and their commitment to the highest standards of safety

cont'd on pg 21



The West Indies women's team at the opening of the one-day series at the Mahinda Rajapaksa International Cricket Stadium, Hambantota, Sri Lanka, on Saturday, June 15, 2024. (Sri Lanka Cricket)

West Indies Women lose first ODI in Sri Lanka

Solid performances with ball and bat set Sri Lanka Women up for a six-wicket win over the West Indies Women in Hambantota to open their three-match ODI series on Saturday.

The West Indies, after losing the toss, made a strong start, getting to 75 for one, courtesy of a 68-run second-wicket stand between captain Hayley Matthews and vice-captain Shemaine Campbelle.

They lost momentum after left-arm spinner Sugandika Kumari broke that partnership in the 19th over, losing their last eight wickets for 120 runs.

Matthews (38) and Stafanie Taylor (33) were the only Windies batters to get past 30, as the spinners, led by Sugandika Kumari and Kavisha Dilhari, chipped away. The tourists were eventually restricted to 195 off 47.1 overs.

Kumari led the way with three for 30 from nine overs, while Dilhari took three for 41 from 9.1 overs.

Sri Lanka's top five then managed the chase perfectly, with four of them getting past 35.

Captain Chamari Athapaththu (38) and Vishmi Gunaratne (40) got them off to a solid start, putting on 88 in 13.2 overs, before a brief stumble, losing three wickets for 13 runs, with

two of them falling to the medium-pace of Aaliyah Alleyne.

Harshitha Samarawickrama (44 not out) and Hasini Perera (43), however, ensured there wouldn't be any more major hiccups, putting on 63 for the fourth wicket to all but seal victory, before Afy Fletcher picked up a consolation wicket late in the game. Sri Lanka achieved victory at 198 for four in just 34.1 overs.

This win broke a streak of six straight ODI defeats to the West Indies for the hosts since their last win over the regional outfit all the way back in 2015. The second ODI is set for Monday (Today).

cont'd from pg 20

and governance, are setting a gold standard for the environment in which we invite players to play.

“Our tournaments will now be held in the best stadiums in the world, including the West Indies. A truly unique opportunity.”

FairBreak's commitment to the West

Indies includes investment in grassroots cricket programmes that will benefit and inspire future generations of female cricketers throughout the region, as well through engaging local coaches, match officials and other support personnel in upcoming FairBreak Invitational T20 Tournaments planned for the future.

England into Super 8s as Australia break Scotland's hearts

England qualified for the Super 8s at the ICC Men's T20 World Cup at Scotland's expense after Australia completed a dramatic chase, achieving victory at 186 for five in 19.4 overs to eliminate Richie Berrington's team at the Daren Sammy Cricket Ground in St. Lucia on Saturday night.

England's hopes of extending their title defence were left in Australia's hands following their 41-run, rain-affected victory over Namibia in Antigua earlier on Saturday.

That result meant Scotland needed a win to progress, while Australia had already clinched their place in the next stage and had nothing to play for.

England's old enemies did not treat it like a dead rubber, though, as Travis Head (68) and Marcus Stoinis (59) starred with the bat, the latter hitting his total from just 29 balls, including nine fours and two sixes.

That ensured they chased down a daunting target of 181 with just two balls to spare, as Scotland gave a good account of themselves once again.

It had looked like Scotland's innings of 180 for five off their 20 overs might be a short one when Michael Jones went for two after just six balls, but they recovered to reach 92 for two as Brandon McMullen made 60 off



Australia's Travis Head, right, plays an attacking shot during his team's Group B match against Scotland in the ICC Men's T20 World Cup at the Daren Sammy Cricket Ground in Gros Islet, St. Lucia, on Saturday, June 15, 2024. (ICC/Getty Images)

34 deliveries.

However, his vital wicket fell when he got a thick outside edge on Adam Zampa's delivery, Mitchell Starc diving to complete a clean catch.

Skipper Berrington hit an unbeaten 42, but Scotland's total would prove to be insufficient, some expensive bowling costing them as even Safyaan Sharif's two wickets came at a cost of 44 runs.

While Scotland have now fallen at the first hurdle on five of their six T20 World Cup appearances, England live to fight another day.

England's hopes of making it to the Super 8s was

kept alive after a 41-run victory on DLS over Namibia at the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium in Antigua on Saturday.

The rain heavily delayed the start in Antigua, reducing the match to a 10-over-a-side game. Despite the must-win nature of the match, England's openers got off to a slow start with Jos Buttler bowled for a duck, while Phil Salt was dismissed for just 11.

Harry Brook was the star with 47 not out, with Jonny Bairstow's 31 adding to their cushion, though Ruben Trimpelmann finished strongly for Namibia with two for 31.

With England finishing

on 122 for five, Namibia were set a target of 127 on DLS, and their chase got off to a steady start, but by the halfway point, Namibia still needed 92 runs from 30 balls.

Shortly after, Niko Davin retired with 18, and two big catches by Brook took out Michael van Lingen (33) and David Wiese (27) ensured England eased to victory, as Namibia finished on 84 for three off their 10 overs.

England, who won the title in Australia in 2022, will now face both co-hosts, the United States and the West Indies, as well as South Africa, in Group 2 at the Super-8 stage.

Antiguan swimmers attend CCCAN championships in Mexico

A nine-member team is representing the Antigua and Barbuda national team at the Central American and Caribbean Amateur Swimming Confederation (CCCAN) Championships in Mexico.

The team left the island over the weekend to compete at the event, which is taking place in Monterrey, Mexico, from June 17-22.

The squad includes four female swimmers who will compete in the pool events. They are Mila Festina Cromer, Keziah Joseph, Madison MacMillan, and Ellie Shaw.

Five male swimmers complete the squad. Jamie Tranter, Alessandro Ba-



Swimmer Mila Festina Cromer, Alessandro Bazzoni, Naeem De Souza, and Jadon Wuilliez will contest the men's pool events.

Yacine Williams will compete in the open-water competition. Leading the team is national coach Nelson Molina Fojos. Lisa MacMillan is the team manager, and Caroline Tranter is the chaperone.



From left to right: Swimmers Alessandro Bazzoni and Ellie Shaw and President of the Antigua and Barbuda Swimming Federation Edith Clashing.



The Five Islands Primary School football team poses with their trophies after winning the Primary School Cup competition at the Rising Sun playing field in St. John's on Friday, June 14, 2024.

cont'd from pg 24

ry captured third place by romping to a 5-0 victory against St. Peter's Primary in the playoff that preceded the final.

De Shawnie White and D'Jarie Gregory each converted twice, and Dimique Jackson scored the other goal for Freeman's Ville Primary.

A total of 24 schools, which were equally divided into three groups of eight teams, participated in the 2024 Primary School Cup competition.

Golden Grove Primary, which was ousted in the quarter-final stage, won the title for the previous three years.

Sports

MONDAY 17TH JUNE 2024



Five Islands win Primary School Cup

Led by captain Allan Henry, Five Islands Primary capped an unbeaten series of displays this season by capturing this year's Ministry of Sports Primary School Cup title on Friday.

Henry, who was named Most Valuable Player and Player of the Match, scored twice as Five Islands snatched a 3-1 victory against T.N. Kirnon Primary in the final at the Rising Sun playing field in St. John's.

Malique Boothe converted the other goal for Five Islands, while Marcus Thomas scored the lone goal for T.N. Kirnon Primary.

Henry was also the chief marksman or top goal-scorer, as he won the Golden Boot Award, scoring 26 goals during this year's competition.

Two years ago, Five Islands Primary also produced a series of successful displays to reach the final, where the team suffered their only defeat when they lost to 2022 champions Golden Grove Primary.



The parliamentary representative for St. John's Rural West, Honourable Richard Lewis, second right, presents the Primary School Cup to the captain of Five Islands Primary School, Allan Henry, at the Rising Sun playing field in St. John's on Friday, June 14, 2024. Looking on are coach Lyndon 'Luda' Lawrence, left, and the Coordinator of the Schools Football Programme in the Ministry of Sports, Rohan 'Porridge' Benjamin, right. (Photos by Elwin Francis)

Coach Lyndon "Luda" Lawrence said this season was pretty similar to 2022; the only difference is that Five Islands Primary are the 2024 champions of the Primary School Cup instead of losing finalists.

"This is the same kind of run we had in 2022 when we lost in the final. This time around, I got it right. We had another unbeaten run, and this time we won

the final. So, it feels like it was all for something and not all for nothing," Lawrence stated.

"Before the game (final), I didn't want to put any pressure on the players, so I just told them nothing changed. We did it for the whole season, and we are going to keep playing good football.

"Even though our opponents played us physi-

cally, we came to play football. We trained to play a passing football game, and that is what we did.

"As the coach, I was really impressed to see my players playing all those one-twos. Seeing them play that way made me, as the coach, feel like a teacher who has accomplished something."

Freeman's Ville Prima-
cont'd on pg 23