

NATIONAL AWARD FOR AMBASSADOR WEBSON

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Retired Fire Chief Elvis C. L. Weaver, second left, has been bestowed the King's Fire Service Medal. The medal was pinned on Weaver by Governor General, Sir Rodney Williams at a ceremony at Government House on Tuesday. *Story on page 3.*

National Awards for Amb. Webson, AUA for successful SIDS4

Antigua and Barbuda's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Ambassador Dr. Walton Aubrey Webson as well as the American University of Antigua (AUA), will be recommended for National Awards for their respective roles in the successful hosting of SIDS4.

The major conference, the Fourth International Conference of Small Island Developing States (SIDS4) was held at the campus of the AUA from May 27 to 30. AUA officials headed by Dr Neil Simon, made available a brand-new conference centre as well as the entire campus to host the gathering of more than five thousand persons.

Ambassador Dr. Webson has been singled out for coming up with the idea of having Antigua and Barbuda host the conference and



FM Greene in final stakeholders meeting at SIDS4 satellite office he made the recommendation to the government, which was accepted by the Cabinet.

He was then named to head the planning committee with the support of the staff at the Antigua and Barbuda mission to the UN.

Foreign Affairs Minister, E.P Chet Greene, who had portfolio responsibility for hosting the conference,

met with the stakeholder committee at the SIDS4 satellite office on the AUA compound on Tuesday to thank the members for the sterling job they did on behalf of the government and people of Antigua and Barbuda.

During the meeting, Minister Greene announced that he intends to recommend both Ambassador Dr.

Webson and AUA for National Awards to be presented in November during the Independence Ceremonial Parade.

“Ambassador Webson, you provided the vision for the entire nation. I do believe that this project which you undertook is without doubt, the largest such project ever undertaken by any group in this country and the fact that it came off successfully is to your credit.

“This experience has also set the stage for future meetings. As you would have been aware, already, Prime Minister Gaston Browne has written to the Commonwealth Secretariat offering to host a meeting of the Commonwealth Heads of Government.

“Should we be successful, I believe this is the team which will form the core of the organization to host such a meeting,” Minister Greene remarked.



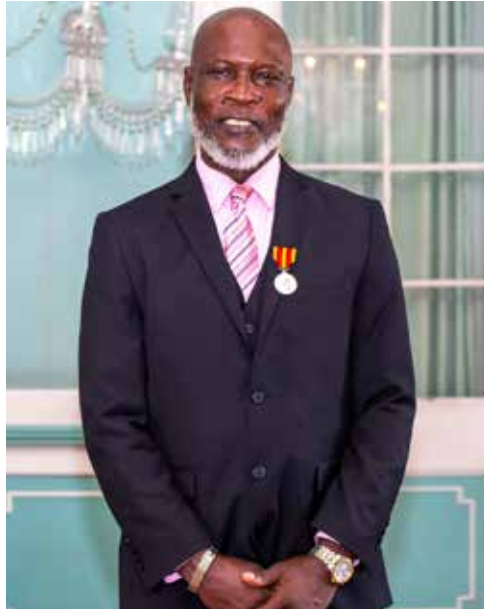
Stakeholders meet to review SIDS4 with FM Greene in attendance

King's Fire Service Medal for retired Fire Chief, Elvis Weaver

Retired Fire Chief Elvis C. L. Weaver has been bestowed the King's Fire Service Medal. The medal was pinned on Weaver by Governor General, Sir Rodney Williams at a ceremony at Government House on Tuesday.

Weaver committed 43 years of his life to the Police and Fire departments rising to the highest. The award is part of the initial New Year Honor's by the new monarch King Charles III.

Governor General Sir Rodney Williams commended the former Fire Chief, highlighting his contribution to the development of the Police and Fire Services of Antigua and Barbuda. The Governor General stated that Weaver demonstrated unparalleled dedication and commitment during a long and distinguished



Retired Fire Chief Elvis C. L. Weaver career, demonstrating strong leadership in calls for the independence of the Fire Service.

"I wish to point to your leadership and vision which was instru-

mental in advocacy for the independence of the Fire Service from the Royal Police Force of Antigua and Barbuda. A cause you passionately championed for the betterment of the department. Your efforts have certainly paved the way for future progress and improvements. Your legacy is not just one of service but of inspiration. Your advice to the new Fire Chief and fellow firefighters to continue the fight to push for more improvements for the department reflects your enduring commitment to the profession and your hope for its future." Sir Rodney stated.

Police Commissioner Atlee Rodney congratulated Weaver on his award. Commissioner Rodney is certain that this award is a result of Weaver's resourcefulness, determi-

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Local News



cont'd from pg 3

nation and commitment to duty.

“I recall the many times I had the opportunity to interact with this athletic figure and see him in his working environment.

“To me, and many of us, Weaver was not just a leader, but also a mentor. He always possessed a calm posture, and demonstrated leadership, even in the most heated situations.

“I have benefited tremendously from the depth of knowledge and experience he brought to the table at many meetings.” Commissioner Rodney stated.

For his part, the former Fire Chief expressed his gratitude and humility in receipt of this prestigious

award.

Weaver said he was honored to be recognized in such a manner while advising young firefighters to remain humble.

“Joining this esteemed organization can be a tremendous contribution to your nation. My experience serving has been incredibly rewarding... To the young officers, I urge you to aim high and not to compete fiercely for promotion.

“Hard work, discipline and dedication to the organization will naturally pave your way to success.” Weaver stated.

Elvis Conrad Lemuel Weaver joined the Royal Police Force of Antigua and Barbuda in 1979 at the age of 18.



Governor General Sir Rodney Williams bestows the King's Fire Service Medal on Retired Fire Chief Elvis C. L. Weaver

He later joined the Fire of Fire Chief until his retirement earlier this year.

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Prime Minister Browne congratulates Indian Prime Minister Modi on historic election victory

Antigua and Barbuda's Prime Minister, Gaston Browne, has dispatched a letter of congratulations to the newly-re-elected Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi, on winning a third consecutive term in office.

In the letter, PM Browne not only congratulated his Indian counterpart, but he expressed a desire to build on the already strong ties that exist between the two Commonwealth States.

The full text of the Prime Minister's letter follows;

4 June 2024

Honorable Narendra

Modi
Prime Minister of India
South Block, Raisina Hill
New Delhi
India

Dear Prime Minister Modi,

It is with immense pleasure that I extend heartfelt congratulations on your re-election as the Prime Minister of India for a third term. This victory reaffirms your leadership and emphasizes the trust and hope that the majority of the electorate has placed in you.

I also congratulate your



Prime Minister, Gaston Browne (left) and Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi.


Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) for securing the single largest block of seats in the Lok Sabha. This is a responsibility that I know will be treated as a responsibility to continue its efforts in building a stronger and more prosperous India.

As fellow Commonwealth nations, Antigua and Barbuda and India have enjoyed a long-standing relationship based on mutual respect, shared democratic values, and a common passion for cricket, a sport that unites our peoples across oceans. Our countries have stood together not just on the playing fields but also in fostering international cooperation.

I look forward to continuing to work with you to strengthen our bonds and to collaboratively pursue the social advancement and economic development of our citizens. I am confident that together we can achieve significant progress.

Please accept, Excellency, my best wishes for your continued success and the assurances of my highest consideration.

Yours sincerely,
Gaston Browne
Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda



WATER METER CHANGE PROJECT

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If you know of any issues with water meters please report them immediately to our fault report line 211.

ABHTA awards culinary scholarships to budding young Junior Chefs

Four young people who displayed much talent and culinary skills during the recent Taste of Wadadli Junior Chef Cook-Off, are to receive scholarships from the Antigua and Barbuda Hotels and Tourist Association (ABHTA).

The ABHTA announced that three students who are currently in their final year of High School will each receive a full two-year scholarship to the Antigua and Barbuda Hospitality Training Institute all sponsored by the ABHTA's Tourism Development Fund (TDF).

Scholarship recipients are, Azarie Crump from Saint Joseph's Academy, Shemiah Francis from All Saints Secondary School, and Gregoryann Thomas from Sir McChesney George Secondary School. Additionally, Ashauny Rattary of the Antigua State College will receive funding towards his studies in Food Science at the University of the West Indies, Mona in Jamaica.

"These scholarships valued at almost EC\$30,000 are made possible through the ABHTA's Tourism Development Fund contributed by Hermitage Bay, Blue Waters Resort & Spa, Curtain Bluff, Copper and Lumber Store Hotel and Jumby Bay Island. The TDF is de-



Azarie Crump - St. Joseph's Academy signed to contribute to the development of the sector and such awards underscore the significance of these hotels supporting this initiative of the ABHTA," a release from the ABHTA stated.

It said the Taste of Wadadli Junior Chef Cook-Off Competition plays a crucial role in developing young local culinary talent and has a positive impact on the hospitality sector. By providing a platform for budding chefs to showcase their skills, the competition encourages creativity and excellence in culinary arts. This not only prepares students for successful careers but also elevates the



Shemiah Francis - All Saints Secondary standards within the local hospitality industry, contributing to the overall growth and reputation of Antigua and Barbuda as a premier culinary destination.

Craig Marshall, Chairman of the Antigua and Barbuda Hotels and Tourism Association (ABHTA), expressed his enthusiasm for the young chefs' achievements. "We are incredibly proud of the talent and dedication demonstrated by these young chefs. Their passion for culinary arts is inspiring, and we are committed to supporting their educational journeys. These scholarships are a testament to our belief in nurturing the future leaders of our hospitality industry."

The Antigua and Barbuda Hospitality Training Institute is instrumental in developing individuals for the hospitality sector, providing them with the necessary skills and knowledge to excel.

As the Association sets its sights on the 2024 competition, it is delighted by the talent and skills expressed by these young chefs and looks forward to witnessing the abilities of the new cohort of competitors. Aspiring young chefs across Antigua and Barbuda are encouraged to apply through their schools, as registration is now open.



Gregoryann Thomas - Sir McChesney George



Ashauny Rattary - Antigua State College

NODS increasing efforts to improve early warning system

With the hurricane season now in full swing, the National Office of Disaster Services (NODS) is increasing its efforts to ensure that various areas are being addressed.

One of those is the early warning system, the 'CAP CAP APP'.

The App, which has been around for a few years now, is a software that notifies users about various weather conditions affecting Antigua and Barbuda.

The App has been used in several tsunami warning exercises as well and comes highly recommended by officials.

The software has however become a bit outdated and Director of NODS Sherrod James revealed during this week's press conference

that consultations are now underway to address these issues.

"We have been involved in ongoing consultations to look at the best sites and the type of sirens to be built out. We are having discussions with the developers and we have been asking them to improve the capabilities of the app.

"Some of them have indicated that they identified a challenge and what has been happening is that the original platform on which the CAP APP software was hosted, was experiencing challenges but now persons can go and Google the App and download it directly and have the App function," James explained.

Outside of the App itself, there is a major drive towards enhancing the

overall early warning system in the country through telecommunications companies.

"In addition to that the WMO (World Meteorological Organization) also has a platform in which it is asking member territories to log onto its CAP system so that updates and alerts can be seen globally by the WMO platform. That is a step we need to take," Dale Destin, Director of the Met Office shared.

James added that over the last several months, NODS has been undergoing discussions with international bodies zeroing in on early warning for all.

A road map has been outlined and will act as a guide to improving the early warning system.



Antigua Masonry Products Ltd. is seeking a suitable and qualified person for the following position: **EXCAVATOR OPERATOR.**

Job Functions:

- Operate a large excavator to complete daily production targets
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- Making quarry areas safe
- Maintain cleanliness of machine
- Identify and report safety issues and hazards
- Complete pre-start checks
- Look for areas of improvement or streamline work procedures
- Must comply with company, and governmental health and safety regulations, policies, and procedures at all times
- May be called upon to run other heavy equipment such as but not limited to Dozer and Loader, dump truck
- Work independently and collaboratively with other team members to achieve common objectives.

Qualifications & Skills:

- Must have a valid driver's license
- Must be able to safely and effectively operate an Excavator and or other heavy duty equipment
- Minimum 2 years' experience driving and operating an Excavator

Interested persons should send their application to hr@amp.company no later than **Friday 14th June, 2024**. Only suitable applications will be acknowledged.



Antigua Masonry Products Ltd. is seeking a suitable and qualified person for the following position: **BATCHER.**

Job Functions:

- Mix or blend products, work assembly lines, keep designated areas clean
- Ability to use a computer to operate the equipment that formulates the product
- Perform quality checks on finished products
- Set equipment parameters for operation
- Write routine reports and document routine forms and logs
- Comply with all company policies as well as practice safe work habits in accordance with company's health and safety regulations.
- Ensure that product conforms to customer specifications.
- Maintain communication with systems operator to insure quality work and fluidity
- Communicate with customers in a timely manner.
- Demonstrate a continuous effort to improve operations, reduce turnaround times and streamline work processes.
- Work independently and collaboratively with other team members to achieve common objectives.

Qualifications & Skills:

- Must have a valid driver's license
- Minimum 2 years' previous experience within a similar field
- Computer literate
- Multi-tasker and ability to work in a team environment
- Excellent customer service

Interested persons should send their application to hr@amp.company no later than **Friday 14th June, 2024**. Only suitable applications will be acknowledged.

Activities continue during Centenarian celebration week

Celebrations are now in full swing as a week-long schedule of activities is underway to recognize the country's 'golden souls'.

The 8th annual event is used to celebrate the country's centenarians in a lead-up to Centenarian Day on June 8.

The week began with a media blitz on Monday and aired interviews of several of the nation's centenarians.

Yesterday, Volunteerism Day saw officers "giving back" to the elderly by providing free services at

their homes.

"We actually encouraged officers to go and give back, apart from us just giving them a gift basket, we decided to go and assist them with anything they need to be done," Tanya Williams, Community Development Field Officer explained.

A magazine is also on the cards.

"Within our department, we try to document their life. It is very important because this information on their upbringing can help persons in school

and it is important for historical purposes. So, we make it our business to sit with them, speak with them and their families," Williams added.

This will be the second edition of the magazine.

A bake sale is expected to take place today and the general public is invited to support as all the proceeds will go towards the Centenarian department.

The fundraiser will take place at the Old Parham Road Office at the Doumith building.

On Thursday and Friday, visitation to the centenarians will occur. Gift baskets will also be presented to each person.

Williams touched on the importance of events like these.

"Our former director Brenda Thomas-Odlum

back in 2017 decided to have a week of activities. Usually, in our field of work, there is a day set aside for centenarians' celebrations but then, it was decided to have a full week instead.

"It is important to celebrate and recognize these phenomenal people as they have such a wealth of knowledge to unload. It is an amazing achievement to reach 100 years. Many of us don't live to see 60 so why not celebrate them when we can? It's really a big deal," she said.

Two banners will be erected this year to recognize them.

Antigua and Barbuda presently boasts 16 centenarians-15 female and one male.

Two of the 16 reside overseas.

Jamaican man deported on court order

A Jamaican man has been deported back to his native land on orders from the court after he was found to have violated the immigration laws of Antigua and Barbuda.

Immigration officials reported that they carried out an operation during which the man – 35-year-old Odain Clayton Lee – was apprehended for staying in the country beyond the date permitted by the department.

This operation happened last Wednesday, and the following day, Lee was brought before the court which ordered that he be removed from the jurisdiction immediately. He was deported back to Jamaica the same day.

Immigration officials said the man was wanted in Jamaica for an undisclosed offense.



Antigua Masonry Products Ltd. is seeking a suitable and qualified person for the following position: **REDI-MIX CONCRETE TRUCK DRIVER.**

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- Protecting truck using protective compound and performing minor maintenance task
- Washing and cleaning of trucks or equipment used in the concrete production line
- Backing truck under loading hopper and starting the mixer to get concrete

Qualifications & Skills:

- Must be able to operate truck and its auxiliaries such as levers, chutes and mixing drums efficiently
- Have a good understanding of mixing procedure and knowledge of adjusting the mixing speed
- A valid truck driver's license
- Have at least 2 years' truck driving experience

Interested persons should send their application to hr@amp.company no later than **Friday 14th June, 2024**. Only suitable applications will be acknowledged.



Woman caught with drugs at airport granted bail

Thirty-year-old Taji Tricia Bright has been granted bail.

Bright, a resident of St. George Street made her first appearance on Tuesday morning in the All Saints Magistrates' Court after being arrested and charged with possession of cannabis and cocaine, drug trafficking, possession of both drugs with intent to transfer, and possession with intent to supply.

Magistrate Ngaio Emanuel granted her bail set at \$8,000.00 with a cash component of \$3,000.00 and additional conditions including a ban from all of the country's ports to prevent her from fleeing.

On Thursday, May 30, officers from the Narcotics Department, while on duty at the airport, encountered Bright in the departure lounge.

Upon searching her, they discovered 1¼ pounds of cannabis and 42.5 grams of cocaine strapped to her body. The estimated value

of the cocaine is \$1,487.50, and the cannabis is valued at \$3,500.00.

She was taken into custody and charged.

Nelson Street man fined for gun-related offences

A 21 year-old Nelson Street man has one year to come up with thirty thousand dollars or spend three years at His Majesty's Prison. Nickquan Valarie last week pleaded guilty before a local magistrate and several gun related charges.

Valarie must pay one thousand five hundred dollars by August 1, 2024 and the remainder in one year. He was charged with unlawful possession of a firearm, unlawful possession of 12 rounds of 9mm ammunition, unlawful possession of one 9mm spent shell,

and larceny of said firearm and ammunition. Valarie was fined \$10,000 for unlawful possession of ammunition and twenty thousand dollars for unlawful possession of a firearm. He was reprimanded and discharged on the unlawful possession of one 9mm spent shell and larceny of said items.

Valarie stole the firearm from a licensed firearm holder while working on a farm in Orange Valley. A complaint was made to the Police who conducted a search of his home where the items were recovered.

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Unlocking core memories: EAG's floating classroom makes waves in Antigua & Barbuda

Every islander has a version of these memories. The vibrant colours of a beautiful day in the Caribbean. The smell of salt in the air, and the sounds of excited chatter and laughter from children eager to be outside.

But how many of them also can add the gentle sounds of the boat's engine as it heads off to the offshore islands? The sights and sounds of birds overhead as you peer at them through your binoculars or observe them nesting up close while standing on Great Bird Island. And the distinct features of the critically endangered endemic Antiguan Racer as wildlife ecologists give you your very first glimpse of this rare Antiguan and Barbudan treasure.

Every year on 5 June, World Environment Day is celebrated as a global event raising awareness about the challenges facing our planet. This year's theme focuses on land restoration, desertification and drought resilience under the slogan "Our land. Our future. We are #GenerationRestoration". For over two decades, the Environmental Awareness Group (EAG) and the Sandals Foundation have built human-nature connections in Antigua and Barbuda through the EAG's Floating Classroom Initia-

tive. As we celebrate this year's theme we are pleased to share how our work has benefited over three hundred children, unlocking core memories during the 2023-2024 school year period.

Under its award-winning Offshore Islands Conservation Programme, the Floating Classroom is designed as an outdoor experiential learning activity that takes children into one of Antigua and Barbuda's largest marine reserves where they can experience the wonders of the natural environment, learn about resident and migratory birds, marine life, ecosystems and the power of local-led conservation efforts by the EAG and its partners, which brought back the critically endangered Antiguan Racer from the brink of extinction. In recent years, the Floating Classroom has gotten an extra boost to complement the field activity through the incorporation of the three-episodic series "Into the Wild with the EAG." This interactive programme is coupled with colourful Student Activity Booklets and Teachers' Resource Guides and was developed to align with the primary science curriculum within Antigua and Barbuda. Used as a critical learning tool, the Into the Wild Series has since been endorsed by the Ministry

of Education to "Bring Science Alive." Anthony Spencer, Science Coordinator at the Ministry said, "This kind of engagement is absolutely critical to the development of students and has helped me fulfill a personal dream of partnering with groups that love science and youth involvement as much as I do."

- With the energy and excitement surrounding the series, the EAG realized that we needed to do even more! In 2023, the Sandals Foundation allowed us to offer a unique experience for 33 Barbudan students to come to Antigua for their first ever Floating Classroom. The children took a ferry over to Antigua and spent the day with the EAG team, searching for the Antiguan Racer and experiencing the offshore islands for themselves. Then, the EAG took 20 Antiguan students, teachers, and parents on the first 'Discover Barbuda' Floating Classroom to explore the wonders of the sister island and meet local environmentalists about Barbuda's ecological importance. Highlights of the full-day trip included observing the endemic Barbuda Warbler, visiting historic landmarks and experiencing the largest Magnificent Frigatebird nesting colony in the

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Western Hemisphere - the Codrington Lagoon.

With the energy and excitement surrounding the series, the EAG realized that we needed to do even more! In 2023, the Sandals Foundation generously enabled us to offer a truly unique experience for 33 Barbudan students, allowing them to come to Antigua for their first ever Floating Classroom. These eager young minds traveled by ferry, crossing the waters to Antigua, where they spent a day immersed in the EAG's world. They embarked on a thrilling search for the elusive Antiguan Racer, a critically endangered snake, and marveled at the beauty of the offshore islands, gaining a deeper understanding of their surrounding environment. The EAG then reciprocated this opportunity, taking 20 Antiguan students, teachers, and parents on the first ever 'Discover Barbuda' Floating Classroom, a journey designed to explore the wonders of the sister island. This special trip allowed them to connect with local environmentalists, learning about Barbuda's crucial ecological significance. The day was filled with unforgettable moments: observing the endemic Barbuda Warbler, a unique and charming songbird; visiting historic landmarks that whispered tales of the past; and witnessing the awe-inspiring sight of the largest Magnificent Frigatebird nesting colony in the Western Hemisphere – the Codrington Lagoon. These Floating



Classroom experiences were a testament to the EAG's commitment to fostering environmental awareness and appreciation for the natural wonders of the Caribbean, bridging the islands through shared experiences and creating lasting memories for the future generations.

Since the launch of Into the Wild in 2022, the EAG has disseminated 2700 educational booklets and 135 resource guides to sixty schools across the twin-island nation. These materials provide students with comprehensive knowledge on marine conservation, waste management, and the importance of preserving Antigua and Barbuda's natural and cultural heritage.

Complementing the distribution of educational materials, the Floating Classroom Experience has embarked on 18 trips, engaging 350 children and sixty adults in hands-on learning expeditions. These trips have catered to a diverse range of participants, including students from pri-

mary, secondary, and tertiary institutions, summer camps, service organizations, and community groups. The program has fostered a sense of environmental responsibility and instilled a love of nature in participants of all ages. "Through our Floating Classrooms Initiative, we've empowered our country's future stewards to connect with and protect their natural and cultural heritage. Creating these meaningful experiences with nature has allowed us to cultivate a sense of responsibility, leaving lifelong impressions on Antiguan and Barbudans from all ages, faces and spaces." remarked Offshore Islands Conservation Programme Coordinator Shanna Challenger.

In Antigua and Barbuda, a common weekend activity is a good "soak" at the beach. Each weekend, people flock to one of our 365 beaches and enjoy an afternoon soaking up the sun and the sea, but many do not have any idea what lies beneath.

Well. It was time to un-

lock some more memories and literally make waves!

This past year, the EAG has taken out 31 amateur snorkelers to snorkel around the reefs of Antigua and Barbuda and over coral nurseries being managed by the National Parks Authority and the Elkhorn Marine Conservancy. Armed with laminated Species ID cards, the snorkelers got a crash course in fish and invertebrate species that they could expect to see while they paddled slowly around. The adults are no different from the children as the sounds of muffled enjoyment came from them as they swam with sea turtles, and saw sea urchins and parrotfish up close, but from a safe distance. Seeing our country from underwater also allowed them to see the impact of threats such as plastic pollution and coral bleaching, emphasizing the need for local reef restoration action. Perhaps the question is "why do all of this?". Why expend all of this energy to create

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Special Feature



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memories for children and adults?

As climate change shifts from becoming a global phenomenon, to becoming a part of our everyday lives, there is a real need for Caribbean countries to do things differently. "Understanding how our ecosystems provide for us, whether it is through protection from storm surge, food through fisheries, livelihoods through ecotourism and more, strategic education programmes will enhance how we view and interact with these spaces.

By supporting local organizations such as the EAG, the Sandals Foundation is ensuring that there will always be generations of local environmentalists, who can see the change and be the change needed to preserve and conserve our natural treasures," says Patrice Gilpin, Public Relations Manager at Sandals Foundation.

What began as a humble endeavour over two decades ago has now blossomed, and the EAG's Floating Classroom Initiative has surpassed all expectations.

The programme has not only educated countless individuals about the importance of environmental conservation but has also inspired a deep sense of commitment and responsibility in its participants. In 2023, six of the tertiary level attendees became dedicated volunteers, actively engaging in EAG's conservation programmes.

One notable area of involvement is wildlife monitoring, where these passionate individuals have been trained by the EAG and collect invaluable data on critically endangered snakes, nesting sea turtles, and threatened birds. One of the participants – Trinity Archibald – has taken it even further and is currently a technical intern at the EAG, and will be

pursuing a Bachelor's degree in Ecology at UWI Cavehill in September 2024.

Through their tireless efforts, these individuals have created a generation of environmentally conscious citizens but also nurtured a community of dedicated conservationists. So, let's continue to unlock core memories and make waves in Antigua and Barbuda for the benefit of people and wildlife.

Thank you to the Sandals Foundation for graciously supporting the Floating Classroom Initiative over the years. Special thanks to our partners and service providers: Ministry of Education, National Parks Authority, Antigua Nature Tours, Stingray City Antigua, The Birds Nest, Stooze Co., ScripJ, U-Design, Chaso Media, barbudanGO, BirdsCaribbean, Josmar Marquez, Elderfield "Tommy" George, the Lifeguard Association and the Elkhorn Marine Conservancy.

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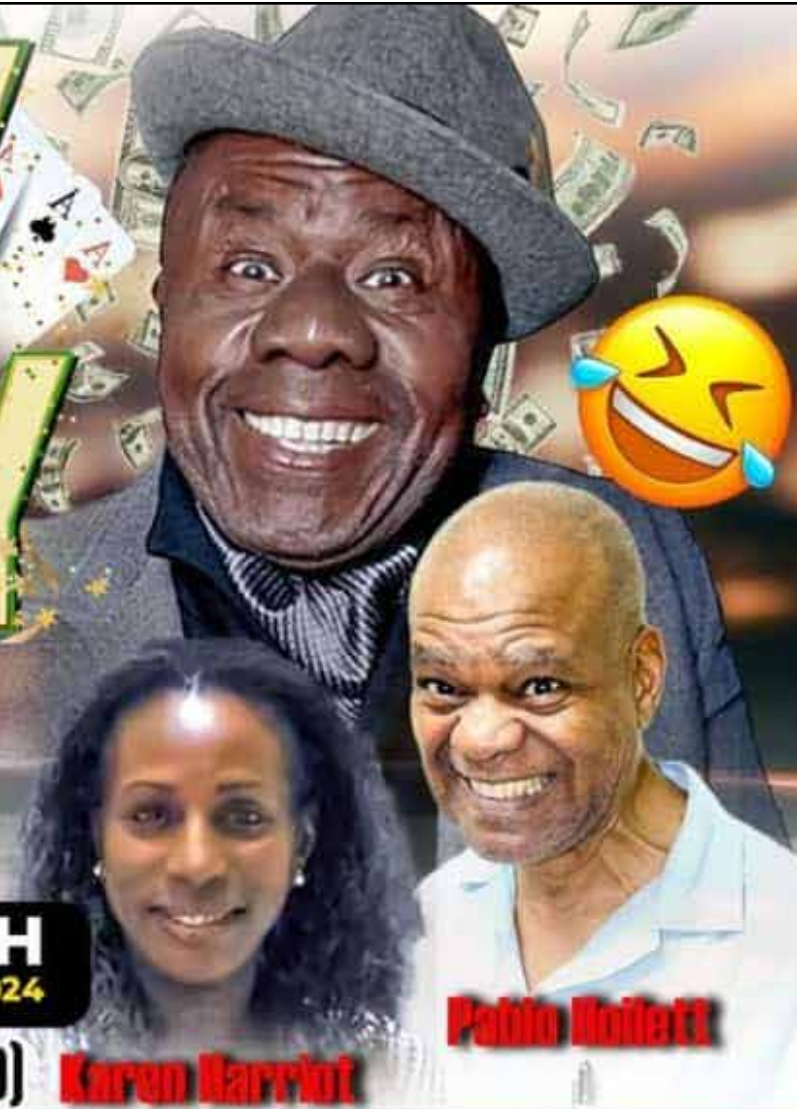
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The scandal involving Toyota has shaken up the Japanese car industry.

Toyota raided as safety testing scandal grows

By Annabelle Liang

Japan's transport ministry raided the headquarters of motor giant Toyota on Tuesday, as a scandal over faulty safety data escalated.

The world's largest carmaker has apologised for providing incorrect or manipulated data for safety certification tests.

The scandal has shaken the Japanese car industry, with rivals Honda, Mazda and Suzuki also admitting to submitting faulty data.

Toyota sold more than 11 million passenger vehicles in 2023.

It has said the findings do not affect the safety of vehicles already on the road.

The company has suspended the production of three car models - the Corolla Fielder, Corolla Axio and

Yaris Cross.

It has also been accused of using modified vehicles during safety collision tests, for vehicles that are no longer in production.

The raids come a day after Toyota chairman Akio Toyoda apologised to customers and car enthusiasts.

He bowed deeply and held the position for a few seconds, which is customary in Japan when companies apologise for wrongdoing.

"We neglected the certification process and mass produced our cars without first taking the proper precautionary steps," Mr Toyoda said.

Japanese carmakers Honda, Mazda and Suzuki are also due to be inspected by the authorities over the same issue.

Honda said it found wrongdoing

on tests related to noise and engine power, but it has stressed that its vehicles are safe to drive.

Mazda has halted the shipments of some cars and said it will bear the cost to its suppliers.

However, the company added that it is not planning on issuing recalls.

The findings also apply to one Suzuki car model that is no longer being produced.

Last December, Toyota-owned carmaker Daihatsu closed all of its factories for more than a month, after admitting that it had falsified safety tests.

Some of the cars were sold with Toyota branding.

Daihatsu compensated more than 400 domestic suppliers during the period where its plants were idle.

CXC decides against suspending subjects

LOOP - After a meeting with education ministers from the region, the Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC) has decided not to suspend four subjects.

This was announced by Dr Wayne Wesley, the Chief Executive Officer and Registrar of the CXC, in a press conference this afternoon.

Wesley stated that CXC agreed to continue offering CAPE Electrical and Electronic Engineering Technology, CAPE Green Engineering, CSEC Agricultural Science (double award), and CSEC Industrial Technology (mechanical option).

He said: "The meeting demonstrated our shared commitment to finding a critical path forward on this matter, given the pressing education and human capacity development imperatives facing the region.

"The Ministers of Education were forthright in their positions, as well as pledging their support for CXC and for more direct lines of communications with the Council."

He further explained that governments agreed to partner with CXC to build demand for these programs, which are not yet at

the desired level.

"A collective regional marketing thrust to promote the priority subject areas in STEM or STEAM education and climate-smart agriculture, which are considered critical for the economic growth and sustainable development of the region," will be employed, Dr Wesley added.

Dr Wesley further iterated CXC's commitment "to ensuring its communications protocols accord the Ministers of Education greater line of sight of high-level policy rec-

ommendations for decision-making."

Dr Eduardo Ali, Pro-Registrar and Deputy CEO of CXC, also explained the reasons behind considering the suspension of these courses.

He said that not only is there low or zero enrolment in some countries but there is also the "issue of plants and equipment that are outdated, the lack of practical experience for students because of the inadequacy of the labs and facilities that are there [and] lack of qualified teaching professionals to

teach the broad syllabus."

He also cited challenges related to resources like textbooks and learning materials.

Moreover, he noted that many universities and community colleges do not require these subjects for entry.

"One of the things we have found is that in many instances, there are no opportunities for upward mobility beyond the subjects because many of the universities and community colleges do not make it a requirement for entry into their programs," he added.



Regional News



US nationals arrested after gold seized by Customs in Guyana

CMC - Customs officers in Guyana apprehended three individuals, including two American citizens, as they attempted to board an American Airlines flight bound for New York.

The Guyana Revenue Authority (GRA) said the arrest followed the discovery of 240 ounces of gold jewelry disguised as silver-plated items, valued at over US\$560,000. The pure gold was being transported out of the country without the necessary permits and declaration to Customs.

The operation was fully supported by officers of the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) and the Customs Anti Narcotic Unit (CANU).

The Guyana Police Force (GPF) is conducting investigations to determine



whether they are part of a ring reportedly smuggling gold out of Guyana.

The GRA said charges are likely to be made under the Customs and Anti-Money Laundering Acts, with the relevant authorities both in Guyana and overseas being informed of the results of the investiga-

tions.

“The Authority continues to note the alarming trend in the efforts to smuggle items including gold, monetary instruments, arms, and narcotics through ports in Guyana and cautions that all such persons dealing in or contemplating engaging in such illegal

activities should cease and desist therefrom, or face the consequences for their actions.”

The GRA said it is urging the public to report any illicit, unlawful or smuggling activities and that all information provided will be dealt with strict confidentiality.

Grenada: Gov't tables legislation increasing compulsory school age

CMC - The Grenada government has successfully passed legislation amending the Education Act to raise the compulsory school age from five to 16 years to now encompass ages up to 17 years.

The policy goes into effect at the start of the new academic term beginning in September.

The Dickon Mitchell administration stated that the move is laying the foundation to start addressing critical issues that confront the development

of the island.

Leader of Government Business, Phillip Telesford, in tabling the legislation, said that it will amend the Education Act by redefining compulsory school age.

“By increasing it to 17 inclusive, it means that a child ought to remain in school until he or she attains the age of 17. This particular bill is important because it sets the foundation to start to address some critical issues that confront us in our growing economy, our

developing island.

“We campaigned speaking on the good development of our young people, our youths, and one of the elements that spoke to the development was that of skills training, and so our government is setting the platform to implement skills training throughout the system,” said Phillip, who is also the health minister.

He told legislators that “this is guaranteeing that every child that leaves the school system should have at least

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Critical incident over London hospitals' cyber-attack

Major hospitals in London have declared a critical incident after a cyber-attack led to operations being cancelled and emergency patients being diverted elsewhere.

It applies to hospitals partnered with Synnovis - a provider of pathology services.

King's College Hospital, Guy's and St Thomas' - including the Royal Brompton and the Evelina London Children's Hospital - and primary care services are among those affected.

The incident has had a "major impact" on the delivery of services, especially blood transfusions and test results.

It is thought to have happened on Monday, meaning some departments

could not connect to a main server.

Some procedures have been cancelled or have been redirected to other NHS providers as the hospitals try to establish what work can be carried out safely.

The NHS said emergency care continued to be available.

GP services across Bexley, Greenwich, Lewisham, Bromley, Southwark and Lambeth boroughs have also been affected.

A spokesperson from Synnovis said the company had sent in a "taskforce of IT experts" to "fully assess" the impact.

The NHS apologised for the inconvenience and said it was working with the National Cyber Security Centre to

understand the impact.

One patient, Oliver Dowson, 70, was prepared for an operation from 06:00 at the Royal Brompton. He was told by a surgeon at about 12:30 that it would not be going ahead.

"The staff on the ward didn't seem to know what had happened, just that many patients were being told to go home and wait for a new date," he said.

"I've been given a date for next Tuesday and am crossing my fingers.

"It's not the first time that they have cancelled, but that was probably staff shortages in half-term week."

Vanessa Welham from Streatham, south-west London, said her husband's

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a skill, that we believe is important because those skills will develop passions, and those passions if followed well and managed well can result in people developing wonderful and prosperous careers, businesses and other dreams".

Mitchell, in his contribution to the debate, said that the amendment is just a foundational piece and adjusting it to a wider construct of how his government is dealing with education in Grenada.

"You are ought not to be given a choice to say you are exiting the education system...There is a notion that compulsory education ends with secondary school but that is part of the challenge we have in the education system," he said.



Though the Employment Act defines the working age could start at 16, Prime Minister Mitchell said that people of that age cannot be legally hired "because employment is a legal agreement, a contract" and the age for legal responsibility is 18.

He said as part of the process, there will be an amendment to the Employment Act, indicating, however, that the move is not a cure for the many challenges facing young people. "It is the beginning of putting in place one of the architectural frameworks as

we begin to make sure that we don't have a significant number of students exiting school without a skill; this will be giving them an opportunity," he said.

The Bill is scheduled for debate and approval at the June 6 sitting of the Upper House.

International

AROUND THE WORLD



St Thomas', including the Royal Brompton and the Evelina London Children's Hospital, is among the affected trusts.

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blood test at Gracefield Gardens health centre was cancelled on Monday evening.

"My husband received a text message last night advising his appointment this morning had been cancelled due to circumstances beyond their control, and that all major south London hospitals are unable to take any bookings for an indefinite period of time.

"He went on to the Swift website and made a new appointment - the earliest available was June 17, but that's probably questionable."

A spokesperson for NHS England London region confirmed Synnovis was the victim of a ransomware cyber attack.

"Emergency care continues to be available, so patients should access services in the normal way, and patients should continue to attend appointments unless they are told otherwise," they said. "We will continue to provide updates about the impact on services and how patients can continue to get the care they need."

A spokesperson for Synnovis said: "We are incredibly sorry for the incon-

venience and upset this is causing to patients, service users and anyone else affected.

"We are doing our best to minimise the impact and will stay in touch with local NHS services to keep people up to date with developments."

The spokesperson added it had "invested heavily" in "ensuring our IT arrangements are as safe as they possibly can be".

"This is a harsh reminder that this sort of attack can happen to anyone at any time and that, dispiritingly, the individuals behind it have no scruples about who their actions might affect.

"The incident is being reported to law enforcement and the Information Commissioner, and we are working with the National Cyber Security Centre and the Cyber Operations Team."

Cyber security expert Steve Sands, from the Chartered Institute for IT, said ransomware threat was now an "ever-present danger to critical institutions from schools to hospitals".

He added: "Of course, the perpetrators have no conscience, and they will attack any organisation whose cyber de-

fences are not sufficiently robust.

"We need to ensure that all public sector organisations have contingency plans in place to manage cyber attacks, that staff are regularly trained on risk and there is sufficient investment in software resilience.

"Whoever forms the next government needs to make sure the NHS has this resource and that it is spent correctly, to ensure that lives are not put at risk."

Prof Awais Rashid, head of the Bristol Cyber Security Group at the University of Bristol, said digital infrastructures were often a complex combination of many different systems and third-party service providers.

"Hence, cyber-attacks can have significant and substantial cascading impacts as we are seeing in this unfolding situation where critical health services are being impacted."

A government spokesperson said patient safety was its priority and support was being provided to the company.

"We are working [with Synnovis] to minimise the impact on services for a number of NHS organisations in south-east London."

Germany's deadly floods spread along Danube

By Paul Kirby

Flood waters are continuing to rise in parts of southern Germany, and are now spreading down the Danube to Austria and Hungary.

Five people are now known to have died since heavy rain led to rivers bursting their banks in Bavaria and Baden-Württemberg.

One of the victims was a woman who died when her car left the road and became submerged west of Munich. A Bavarian firefighter is missing.

Although the German DWD weather service has declared an end to the torrential rain that has hit southern Germany for days, water levels in the historic city of Passau, where three rivers meet, have now risen close to 10m (32ft), the highest for more than a decade.

River levels on the Danube have also been rising in Austria and Hungary.

The Danube burst its banks in Austria's third-largest city Linz leaving areas close to the river banks submerged.

Local resident Gertrude told the Kurier website that the flooding brought back bad memories from August 2002 when a fifth of the city was left underwater.



Water levels in Passau have risen close to 10m (32ft) and the Danube has burst its banks.

The river reached 6.86m on Tuesday morning and was expected to peak during the afternoon.

All river traffic along the Danube was brought to a standstill in the Lower Austria area.

In Hungary, forecasters warned of significant rainfall in the coming three days and Gabriella Siklos of the National Water Directorate warned the situation was changing by the hour.

There were also concerns that the rising water levels would spread to the Danube floodplain in Slovakia.

Cargo shipping remains halted on the Rhine in some areas of southern Germany, although authorities in Baden-Württemberg in the south west say water levels are set to fall in the coming days.

Torrential rain has fallen for days in much of southern Germany and a state of emergency has been declared in the Rosenheim area of Bavaria.

Three people have now died in Bavaria, and a man and a woman were found dead in their basement in Baden-Württemberg on Monday. A 22-year-old firefighter is missing in

Bavaria.

Bavarian state premier Markus Söder has described the situation as "serious and critical".

In some areas of southern Germany, experts spoke of once-in-a-century levels of rainfall.

Cars were swept away and residential areas were flooded, although by Tuesday morning all severe weather warnings in southern Germany were lifted.

German Chancellor Olaf Scholz has said that the flooding in the south is a reminder that "halting man-made climate change" cannot be neglected.

Rain denies Scotland and England as Group B grudge match abandoned

Neighbours Scotland and England saw their first-ever Men's T20I abandoned after just 10 overs of play at the Kensington Oval, with the two teams sharing the points from their Group B meeting at the ICC Men's T20 World Cup in a damp Bridgetown on Tuesday.

It was Scotland who won the toss, with captain Richie Berrington opting to bat first in Barbados against an England line-up packed with pace options.

A brief rain shower delayed the start of play by 30 minutes before England's bowlers got the game underway at an overcast Kensington Oval.

But a second and heavier rain delay brought the match to a halt with Scotland 51 without loss after 6.2 overs, forcing the game to be reduced to 10 overs per side.

And a third rain delay, after Scotland had reached 90 without loss from their 10 overs, meant that the match was called off with no result possible.

The fans at the Kensington Oval were at least treated to one shortened innings, with Michael Jones hitting 45 not out off 30 balls, and George Munsey ending on 41 not out off 31 balls.

The adjusted target left England's batters requiring 109 to win, only for the rain to return before Buttler's side could even begin their



Rain interrupts an ICC Men's T20 World Cup cricket match between Scotland and England at Kensington Oval in Bridgetown, Barbados, Tuesday, June 4, 2024. (AP)

chase.

Buttler's England are defending champions and have the boost of including a fit-again Jofra Archer in their squad for the tournament, with their next game coming on Saturday against Australia at the same venue.

England have never beaten a European side at a Men's T20 World Cup, and the rain ensured that record continued in Barbados. But Scotland will be rueing a missed opportunity to defend their decent total, and will hope to get a win on the board when they face Namibia on Thursday.

Elsewhere, a packed Dallas crowd were treated to a Max O'Dowd master-class as Netherlands ran out six-wicket winners over Ne-

pal in Group D of the ICC Men's T20 World Cup at the Grand Prairie Cricket Stadium in Dallas, Texas, on Tuesday.

O'Dowd anchored the Netherlands chase with a calm and composed half-century, carrying his bat as the Dutch survived a couple of nervy periods to reach 109 for four and win with seven balls to spare.

Earlier, the Netherlands bowling attack put in an impressive display to restrict Nepal to 106 all out in the first innings.

Runs were hard to come by for the Nepal top order on the nation's return to World Cup action for the first time since 2014, with captain Rohit Paudel (35 from 37) the only batter to

look comfortable against an attack that picked up wickets at helpful regularity.

Tim Pringle finished with three for 20 from his four overs, with Paul van Meekeren taking two for 19, Bas de Leede picking up two for 22, and Logan Van Beek wrapping the innings up to finish with three for 18.

Nepal had hope when Sompal Kami had Michael Levitt caught in just the second over. But O'Dowd and Vikramjit Singh (22) settled the nerves with a steady 40-run partnership, before Sybrand Engelbrecht added a helpful 14 from 16 to bring the target within reach.

However, it was always the Dutch who were on top

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Villa Lions among early leaders in ABFA Youth Premier Leagues

Aston Villa Lions are the early leaders of both competitions in the Antigua and Barbuda Football Association's (ABFA) Cool and Smooth Under-17 and Under-19 Youth Premier Leagues.

The Villa Lions, Cutting Edge FC, and Liberta Blackhawks FC are all joint leaders of the Under-17 Boys Youth Premier League.

All three clubs remain the only unbeaten teams after maintaining their perfect runs by recording victories in the third round of matches at the ABFA Technical Center over the weekend.

Cutting Edge achieved the biggest margin of victory, romping to an 11-0 drubbing of Empire FC.

The Liberta Blackhawks prevailed 3-0 against Five Islands FC, and the Aston Villa Lions snatched a one-nil victory against the CPTSA Wings.

Old Road FC claimed

their second win in three outings with an 8-0 drubbing of Young Warriors FC.

SAP FC recorded their first win in three matches with a 5-2 victory against Antigua Barracuda FC, which lost for the second time in three encounters.

The Aston Villa Lions FC, Soccer Academy FC, Garden Stars FC, and All Saints United FC are all joint leaders of the Under-19 Boys Youth Premier League.

All four clubs remain the only unbeaten teams after maintaining their perfect runs by recording victories in the third round of matches at the ABFA Technical Center over the weekend.

The Villa Lions achieved the biggest margin of victory, romping to a 12-0 drubbing of TAMO FC, which remain in the cellar of the 14-team round-robin competition after suffering their third defeat in as many out-



ings.

Soccer Academy defeated the CPTSA Wings 3-1. The Garden Stars snatched a 2-1 victory against Green City FC, and All Saints United FC also prevailed 2-1 against Golden Grove FC.

Urlings FC secured their second win in three matches after being awarded a 3-0 victory by default against the Greenbay Hoppers FC, which failed to show up for their encounter at the ABFA

Technical Center.

Willikies FC and Jennings United FC both recorded their first wins in the competition.

The Willikies FC won for the first time in two matches by snatching a 2-1 victory against the Ottos Rangers FC.

Jennings United FC claimed their first win in three matches by prevailing 2-0 against Sea View Farm FC, which lost for the second time in as many games.

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while O'Dowd was in the middle. And the experienced opener finished unbeaten on 54 from 48 balls, with Bas de Leede hitting the winning runs to end on 11 not out.

Nepal will hope to bounce back when they line up next against Sri Lanka in Lauderhill, Florida, on Wednesday, June 12.

Meanwhile, Afghanistan made a statement of intent as they opened their T20 World Cup campaign with a 125-run victory over debutants Ugan-

da at the National Stadium in Providence, Guyana, on Monday night.

With matches against the West Indies and New Zealand to come in Group C, Jonathan Trott's side were quick out of the blocks in Guyana.

Rahmanullah Gurbaz (76) and Ibrahim Zadran (70) led the way with an impressive opening stand of 154 after 14.3 overs. However, Afghanistan collapsed somewhat later on, adding just 29 more runs as they finished at 183 for five.

Nevertheless, they were quick to

ensure Uganda were unable to build any momentum. Fazalhaq Farooqi dismissed Ronak Patel and Roger Muktasa in consecutive deliveries during the first over.

Indeed, it was a true baptism of fire for the T20 World Cup debutants, who were bowled out for just 58 with four overs still remaining.

Cricket fans in Antigua and Barbuda can tune in to Platinum FM 97.9, which is providing daily live ball-by-ball coverage of matches in the current ICC Men's T20 World Cup.

CWI names West Indies squad for Test series in England

The Cricket West Indies (CWI) senior men's selection panel has unveiled the 15-member squad set to tour England for the three-Test Richards Botham series, which starts at Lord's on Wednesday, July 10, 2024.

Test matches between these two rivals date back to 1928 when the West Indies made their first trip to England. The teams now compete for the Richards Botham Trophy, named in honour of West Indies legend Sir Vivian Richards and England great Lord Ian Botham.

Captain Kraigg Brathwaite will continue his leadership role, with fast bowler Alzarri Joseph again serving as vice-captain.

The team is scheduled to arrive in England on June 23 for a training camp at Tonbridge School, ahead of a four-day warm-up match at Beckingham commencing on July 4.

CWI's lead selector, Dr. Desmond Haynes, expressed confidence in the squad's composition.

"The squad has been shaped with both experience and emerging talent, ensuring a strong balance as we face the challenge of playing in English conditions. Over the past year, our red-ball programme has continued to develop.

"Following our victory in the last Test in Australia



Leeward Islands Hurricanes' opening batsman Mikyle Louis

in January, it is evident that we are seeing the fruits of that investment. Each player selected has earned their place through consistent performances and hard work. We are confident that this blend of seasoned players and emerging faces will perform admirably against England."

Young fast bowler Jayden Seales returns to the squad having missed the last Test Series against Australia due to injury, and experienced all-rounder Jason Holder has earned a recall having made himself unavailable for the last tour.

There is also a first in-

which concluded in April and was won by the Guyana Harpy Eagles.

Nineteen-year-old fast bowler, Isai Thorne, will travel with the squad as a development player, following impressive performances in this debut First Class season, taking 31 wickets at average 16.29 in his first eight matches.

The West Indies are the current holders of the Richards Botham Trophy following the 1-0 home Test series win in March 2022.

The West Indies 15-member test squad is as follows: Kraigg Brathwaite (captain), Alick Athanaze, Joshua Da Silva, Jason Holder, Kavem Hodge, Tevin Imlach, Alzarri Joseph (vice-captain), Shamar Joseph, Mikyle Louis, Zachary McCaskie, Kirk McKenzie, Gudakesh Motie, Kemar Roach, Jayden Seales, and Kevin Sinclair.

These players will be supported by the following team management unit: Head Coach - Andre Coley, Team Manager - Rawl Lewis, Assistant Coach - Jimmy Adams, Assistant Coach - Rayon Griffith, Assistant Coach - Shaun Tait, Physiotherapist - Dr. Denis Byam, Strength and Conditioning Coach - Ronald Rogers, Team Masseuse - Fitzbert Alleyne, and Team Analyst - Avenesh Seetram.

ternational selection for 23-year-old Leeward Islands Hurricanes' opening batsman Mikyle Louis.

Louis, a former West Indies Under-19 International, scored 682 runs in his debut First Class season for the Leeward Island Hurricanes at an average of 48.71. Should he debut for the West Indies in England, he will become the first Kittitian to wear the famous Maroon West Indies Test cap.

West Indies' last Test match was a resounding victory in Australia earlier this year. Since then, all selected players were involved in the West Indies Championship,

Pacesetters clinch one-point win against Black Lightning

Cool and Smooth Pacesetters snatched a narrow one-point win against S.W. Electronics Black Lightning in the Antigua and Barbuda Netball Association's (ABNA) League on Monday.

Cool and Smooth Pacesetters clinched a 27-26 victory against S.W. Electronics Black Lightning in the Mixed Division at the YMCA Sports Complex.

Randy Frederick sank 26 goals in 30 attempts for the Cool and Smooth Pacesetters.

Kareem Edwards converted 13 goals from 15 attempts, Zhanira Pereria sank seven of her 11 shots, Carlton Albert converted three goals from his four attempts, and Paula Jackson scored three goals from

five shots for S.W. Electronics Black Lightning.

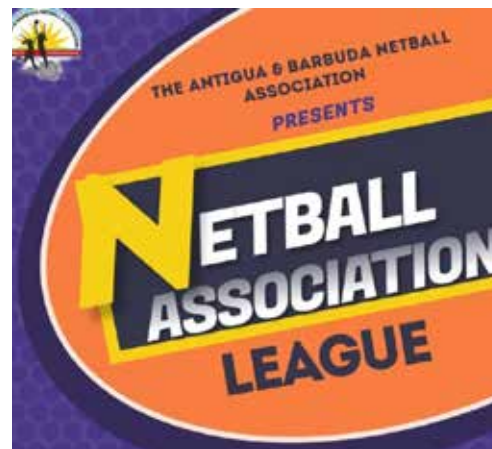
The S.W. Electronics Black Lightning prevailed 26-6 against the S.W. Electronics Black Lightning Under-16 in the B Division.

Zhanira Pereria converted 26 goals from 34 attempts for S.W. Electronics Black Lightning.

Vileeka Roberts scored three goals from seven attempts, and Leannie Darroux converted three goals from eight shots for S.W. Electronics Black Lightning Under-16.

The national netball league will continue at the YMCA Sports Complex on Wednesday.

Old Road will meet Cool and Smooth Pace Setters in the B Division at 6:30 pm, and Cool and



Smooth Pace Setters will face East Siders in the A Division at 7:30 pm.

On Thursday, June 6, Defante Stingers will oppose S.W. Electronics Black Lightning in the B Division at 6:30 pm, and All Saints Attackers will tackle Fly Ballers in the Mixed Division at 7:30 pm.

Team Experience win Michael Freeland Softball Cricket Tournament

Led by man of the match and man of the series, Melvin Charles, Team Experience held on for the victory to secure the title in the inaugural Michael Freeland 10-Over Softball Cricket League in New Winthorpes on Sunday.

Chasing 103 for victory, Charles cracked an unbeaten 65 to lead his boys in yellow to victory with two balls to spare, leading to scenes of jubilation by his teammates and supporters.

Earlier, Team Top Strikers, who finished as the runners-up, posted 102. Ian Eusebe produced a fine batting display by hitting a game-high 70.

Charles captured two wickets for 11 runs in two overs.

Optimus Prime finished third, and Barnes Hill ended in fourth place.

The top three teams were awarded trophies and cash prizes.

Team Experience won EC\$500,



Team Experience with trophy after winning the inaugural Michael Freeland 10-Over Softball Cricket League. (Photo courtesy of Jermaine Kentish)

Top Strikes got EC\$350, and Optimus Prime claimed EC\$150. For his exploits, Charles collected EC\$200.

There was an award too for Neil Martin, who kept the crowd entertained with his Betsy HiFi.

Antigua and Barbuda to compete in World Cup qualifiers

Antigua and Barbuda is among over 20 teams from the CONCACAF (Confederation of North, Central America, and Caribbean Association Football) Region that will be kicking off their campaign in the second round of qualifying matches this week in an effort to reach the 2026 FIFA World Cup.

The second round of the CONCACAF qualifiers for the 2026 FIFA World Cup includes the two round-one winners, the British Virgin Islands and Anguilla, and the Confederation's remaining 28 member associations that are also FIFA Members (excluding the three World Cup hosts, Canada, Mexico, and the United States).

For the second round, the 30 participating teams were divided into six groups of five each during the Concacaf World Cup Qualifiers official draw on January 25, 2024. The six groups are as follows:

Group A: Honduras, Antigua and Barbuda, Cuba, Bermuda, and the Cayman Islands. Group B: Costa Rica, Trinidad and Tobago, St. Kitts and Nevis, Grenada, and the Baha-



The Antigua Benna Boys training at the ABFA Technical Center. (ABFA) mas.

Group C: Haiti, Curaçao, St. Lucia, Barbados, and Aruba. Group D: Panama, Nicaragua, Guyana, Montserrat, and Belize.

Group E: Jamaica, Guatemala, the Dominican Republic, Dominica, and the British Virgin Islands.

Group F: El Salvador, Suriname, Puerto Rico, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, and Anguilla.

Second-round matches will be played during the FIFA Match Windows of June 2024 and June 2025, with each team playing four matches (two home and two away).

Antigua and Barbuda's Benna Boys will kick off their second round quali-

fyng campaign in Group A against Bermuda at the ABFA Technical Center today at 3 pm.

Antigua and Barbuda's second encounter will be against the Cayman Islands at the Truman Bodden Sports Complex in George Town, Cayman Islands, on Saturday at 3:30 pm.

In other Group A matches, Honduras will host Cuba at the Estadio Nacional Chelato Ucles in Tegucigalpa, Honduras, on Thursday at 6:30 pm. Bermuda will host Honduras at the Bermuda National Sports Centre in Devonshire, Bermuda, on Sunday at 8 pm.

Following the completion of the second round, the group winners and run-

ners-up (12 teams in total) will progress to the third and final round of World Cup qualifiers.

The final round matches will be played during the September, October, and November 2025 FIFA Match Windows.

The 2026 FIFA World Cup tournament will take place from June 11 to July 19.

It will be jointly hosted by 16 cities in three North American countries: Canada, Mexico, and the United States.

The tournament will be the first hosted by three nations and the first North American World Cup since 1994. Argentina is the defending World Cup champion.