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GUILTY

Knowles faces lifetime prison sentence

Story on Page 3



Health Minister, Sir Molwyn Joseph and team paid a visit to the Tindall Temple Seventh-day Adventist Church upon the completion of a project designed to strengthen the capabilities of the church to serve as a disaster shelter. [Story on page 7.](#)

Voter ID replacement to commence in a matter of months

August 12 is the date when the expired voter ID card replacement programme will officially begin.

Confirmation comes from ABEC Public Relations Officer Elisa Graham.

“So we encourage persons from August 12 to get themselves ready for that date for the commencement of the expired voters ID card replacement programme in all 17 constituencies. We are looking forward to an influx as a number of persons rely on their cards for several reasons,” Graham said.

She explained that the voter ID card replacement programme is only for those individuals whose cards have expired. Those whose cards are still valid need not apply.

With this concrete date, electors are being encouraged not to wait until the last minute to register and get their cards renewed as some 40 thousand persons are expected to receive new cards.

The replacement of the cards begins

in the constituencies where electors are asked to present themselves; they must take along the expired cards as well as one government issued ID to the officers in the registration units that will open in each of the seventeen constituencies.

Supervisor of Elections Ian Hughes further explained that efforts are being made at this time to ensure that registration units are fully functioning in all 17 constituencies.

“Locations will be published because we are working on the locations at the moment,” Hughes added.

ABEC officials are encouraging persons to double-check the date on their cards prior to beginning the replacement process. Registered voters must go to the constituencies in which they are registered to have their cards replaced.

As part of the replacement process, ABEC will update its information of the elector to include fingerprints, signature, and photo. This information will



ABEC Public Relations Officer Elisa Graham

then be captured in the system at the unit and transferred to ABEC Headquarters where the cards will be printed and transported back to the unit office.

Persons will then be contacted for collection and the expired IDs must be presented and handed over to the registration officer when the new cards are being collected.

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Tedson Knowles found guilty of murder...faces a lifetime prison sentence

A 9-member jury has returned a guilty verdict against 49-year-old Tedson Knowles for the murder of his then girlfriend and live-in companion 30-year-old Carrisa Chandler of New Winthorpes.

The jury returned with the verdict on Wednesday at the end of a 12-day

trial in which the prosecution presented evidence to support their case that Knowles shot and killed Chandler following a domestic dispute. The incident happened around 4:00 am on Thursday, 23rd May, 2019. Knowles was 44 at the time of the murder.

The jury deliberated for three

hours before returning with the verdict. The trial took place before Justice Ann-Marie Smith.

Following the verdict, Knowles was returned to HM Prison where he will remain until July 12 when he returns to court for sentencing. He faces a possible life sentence.

UPP leader supports CIP

The Leader of the opposition United Progressive Party, Jamale Pringle is among four OECS Leaders of the Opposition affirming their support of Citizenship By Investment Programmes (CIP).

Pringle, along with Allen Chastanet of Saint Lucia, Dr. Keith Mitchell of Grenada and Mark Brantley of Saint Kitts and Nevis have affixed their signatures to a statement "Reaffirming the Value and Integrity of the Citizen Investment Programmes in the OECS and a call for one common standard".

In the statement, the leaders of opposition parties within the sub-region said their public declaration is in response to "recent developments surrounding our CIP programmes and the increased international scrutiny thereof".

Pringle, Mitchell, Chastanet and Brantley are call-



Leader of the opposition United Progressive Party, Jamale Pringle

ing for countries with CBI Programmes to sign and enforce the Memorandum of Agreement and to adhere to one common standard, overseen by an independent regulatory authority, to ensure the continued success and credibility of the programmes.

In March this year, Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada and Saint Kitts and

Nevis agreed via a Memorandum of Understanding to collaborate in order to strengthen their CBIs by exchanging best practices, due diligence processes, and intelligence related to potential security or compliance risks.

Now the leaders of the opposition in the four countries are stressing the importance of the leaders

following through on their promises.

In their statement, the leaders of the opposition this week said they "acknowledge the meaningful contribution that the Citizenship by Investment Programmes (CIP) have made and continue to make to the economic strength and resilience of our respective economies", adding "the CIP programmes have been instrumental in providing critical resources for budgetary support, capital programmes, investment and infrastructure improvement, especially at a time when external shocks have adversely affected us such as climate change, global wars, supply chain disruptions and global recessions".

They also acknowledged the concerns expressed by the EU, US, UK and Canada and that maintaining the integrity of borders is as crucial as safeguarding theirs.

Grade Six National Assessment Exams enter Day 2 today

Almost thirteen hundred students from the public and private primary schools are writing the annual Grade Six National Assessment Examinations to secure scholarships into the public secondary school system.

Assistant Director of Education, Measurement and Evaluation, Ineta Francis, reported that the overall figure of those writing the exams this year is 1296; of that amount 653 are

males and 643 are females. The bulk of the students – 743 – are from the public primary schools while the remaining 553 are students attending privately-run primary schools.

She said this figure of approximately 1300 students have been consistent for the last three to four years.

The exams started on Wednesday with students going to designated centers (there are 53 in all) to

write their exams. On Day 1, the subject areas were Language Arts Papers 1, (multiple choice) and 2 (long answer) and Science. There is only one paper for the Science subject; this contains various parts, one of which is a section with multiple choice questions.

For Day 2, today, the subjects are Mathematics, Papers 1 and 2 and Social Studies, Papers 1 and 2.

Francis said she believes that the students have

been properly prepared for the Grade 6 assessments as they were exposed to a variety of methods to ensure that they had a good grasp of the subject areas. “One of the tools utilised by the teachers was the holding of retreats where the subject areas were revised to help with the students’ comprehension.

“I therefore believe that the vast majority of students have been properly prepared for the Grade 6 exams,” she explained.

Following the exams will be the marking of the papers, which according to Francis, should run over an eight-day period. “The marking process is handled by the Education Officers responsible for the four core areas and they have a team of teachers assist with the markings.

When these are completed, the scores, along with the scores from the SBA’s (School-Based Assessments) are fed into an electronic system, following which an analysis is done,” she further explained.

Up to this point, all of the students are identified only by numbers, not by names. When the information is loaded into the data centre, it is at this point that the numbers are matched to names and the overall assessment of the top student(s) is determined.




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Prime Minister Browne welcomes new Methodist Connexional President

Prime Minister Gaston Browne has welcomed to Antigua and Barbuda the newly elected Connexional President of the Methodist Church in the Caribbean and the Americas, headquartered in St. John's.

During a visit to the Office of the Prime Minister, the country's leader welcomed Bishop, the Rev'd Juan Miguel Simpson Bennett and pledged his government's continued support of the work of the church, particularly among the nation's youth.

Bishop Simpson, a native of Panama, replaces Bishop Everald Leeanah Galbraith, who served as Connexional President from May 2018 to May 2024. Prime Minister Browne thanked Bishop Galbraith for his work in Antigua



Prime Minister Gaston Browne and Barbuda and wished him the best as he takes up his new post in Montserrat on 1st September.

Bishop Simpson thanked Prime Minister Browne for his words of welcome and outlined that he looks forward to continued close working relations with the government of Antigua and Barbuda and other countries

within the region. He says the work of the Church is intrinsically aligned with that of governments as they are both focused on taking care of God's people.

The Methodist Church in the Caribbean and the Americas, a regional organisation that is headquartered in Antigua, commenced in Antigua in 1760. The Church is now present in 27 countries, including Guyana, Panama, Bahamas, Haiti, Barbados, Anguilla, BVI, Aruba, Jamaica Honduras, Holland.

Sis. Petra Payne, Circuit Steward of the Antigua Circuit, was the chaperone during the courtesy call on the Prime Minister. Mrs. Gena Simpson, wife of the Connexional President accompanied her husband.

SUNDAY STARTER

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Prime Minister sends congratulations to the new Mexican President

Prime Minister Gaston Browne has congratulated the newly elected president of Mexico on her historic electoral victory. Claudia Sheinbaum is Mexico's first elected female president.

The full text of the prime minister's letter follows;

5th June 2024

Her Excellency

President-Elect of the United Mexican States

Mexico City, Mexico

Dear President-Elect Sheinbaum,

On behalf of the Government and people of Antigua and Barbuda, I extend our warmest congratulations on your historic election as the President of the United Mexican States. Your

achievement as the first female President of Mexico is a testament to your exceptional leadership and the trust the Mexican people have in your vision for their future.

Antigua and Barbuda values the strong and friendly relations we share with Mexico, fostered through our cooperation as member states of the Organization of American States and other international forums.

Our nations have stood together in addressing critical regional issues such as trafficking in guns and drugs, organized crime, and the pursuit of democratic governance.

We welcome your declared dedication to tackling the shared challenges that confront our region, including

poverty alleviation, promoting equity and inclusion in international decision-making, and advancing security, development, democracy, and human rights.

I look forward to working closely with your administration to build on our mutual interests and to further strengthen our bonds for the betterment of our peoples.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration and best wishes for your success as you prepare to assume your responsibilities as President on 1st October 2024.

Sincerely,

Gaston Browne

Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda

Met Office makes call for additional personnel

Expansion plans are on the cards for the local Met Office.

Director of the Met Office, Dale Destin revealed that the department is limited with the human resources on hand to assist in the proper monitoring and advising of weather conditions.

"We are seeking to expand the Met Office in that regard because we are really short of staff.

"We don't have the accurate amount of staff to function as nimbly and as accurately as we need to and so, it is always a task of mine to encourage further investments in the Met Service," Destin said,

He is calling on greater investment in not only the Met Office but NODS and other related agencies; a call



NODS Director Sherrod James he has made on several occasions.

He did however mention that these agencies are working on improving the services they do provide like early warning initiatives.

"We have procedures in place to deal with the various hazards and so we are seeking to tighten up on



Director of the Met Office, Dale Destin

those protocols. Rainfall is however the most difficult to forecast but we will still try our best to ensure that it is accurate and timely in giving adequate warnings," Destin added.

Destin's call comes just a few days after the 2024 hurricane season began.

NODS Director Sher-

rod James added to that call explaining that as time progresses the roles of the Met Office increase as well.

He mentioned that forecasting any weather condition is quite difficult in itself, especially with the unprecedented weather anomalies brought on by climate change.

Community resilience enhanced through successful completion of enhanced direct access project

A project designed to strengthen the capabilities of the Tindall Temple Seventh-Day Adventist Church to serve as a disaster shelter has just been completed.

Coordinated by the Department of the Environment, the Enhanced Direct Access (EDA) project was funded by the Green Climate Fund (GCF).

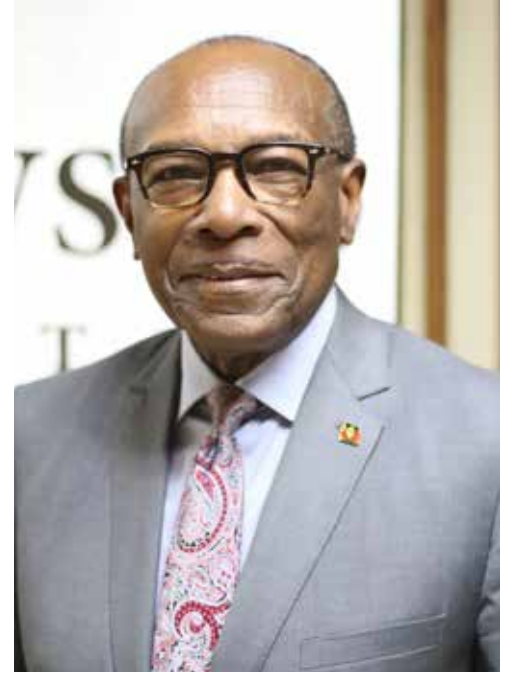
“This significant achievement marks a critical step forward in our community’s journey towards enhanced resilience and preparedness in the face of climate change,” a DoE release stated.

It said the EDA project, designed to empower individuals, businesses, communities, and governance systems, has successfully reached its primary objective: to strengthen institutional capacities and enhance the resilience of at least 5%

of the population in the Eastern Caribbean pilot countries to climate variability and change. Emphasizing inclusivity and equity, the project proudly reports that 50% of its beneficiaries are women.

“On October 21st, 2021, the Department of Environment awarded the Tindall Temple Seventh-day Adventist Church a grant of \$225,000 USD. This funding has been instrumental in transforming the church into a fortified hurricane shelter, serving the residents of Nut Grove, Golden Grove, Gray Hill, and surrounding communities. The upgraded facility now also supports various community development initiatives,” the release reported. Accordingly, the project has accomplished several key

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Environment Minister, Sir Molwyn Joseph

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World Environment Day: A call to action for land restoration, desertification, and drought resilience

The Department of Environment, under the leadership of Environment Minister, Sir Molwyn Joseph and Director, Diann Black-Layne, is reaffirming the commitment to promote environmental sustainability and to address the pressing challenges of climate change.

This is the message emanating from the department as it observed World Environment Day (June 5). This year's theme, "Land Restoration, Desertification, and Drought Resilience," highlights the urgent need for collective action to protect and rejuvenate our planet's lands.

Environment Minister Sir Molwyn emphasised the importance of this global observance, stating, "World Environment Day is a vital reminder of our responsibility to safeguard the nat-



Director of the Department of Environment, Diann Black-Layne

ural world. In Antigua and Barbuda, we are dedicated to implementing robust policies and initiatives that foster sustainable development and environmental resilience. It is imperative that we work together — government, businesses, communities, and individuals — to combat desertification, restore degraded lands, and build resilience to

drought. This is essential for creating a greener and healthier future for generations to come."

Director of DoE, Diann Black-Layne, underscores the critical role of community involvement and innovative solutions in achieving environmental sustainability. "Our efforts to address land degradation and drought

must be inclusive and forward-thinking," she notes.

The Department of Environment is highlighting several key initiatives that align with the goals of World Environment Day. "Our Green Energy Programs promote the use of solar and other renewable energy sources to reduce carbon emissions and enhance energy resilience across Antigua and Barbuda.

"Community engagement and education efforts include conducting workshops, seminars, and outreach programs to raise awareness about land restoration, desertification, and drought resilience. We are implementing biodiversity conservation measures to protect and restore critical habitats and ecosystems, ensuring the preservation of our rich bio-
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activities. Significant reinforcement of existing structures, including roof reinforcement, ensures durability against severe weather conditions. The installation of an energy-resilient solar renewable energy system, comprising solar panels, batteries, and a grid-interactive inverter, has also been completed.

"The 12-kWh solar system, complete with 12 batteries, provides substantial energy cost savings and ensures power availability during hurricanes. Additionally, windows and doors have been upgraded and reinforced to withstand extreme weather, and water harvesting systems have been implemented to ensure a reliable water supply during emergencies.

"This initiative underscores the De-

partment's commitment to safeguarding community members from the escalating impacts of climate change, particularly the increasing frequency and intensity of hurricanes and other natural disasters," it emphasised.

Environment Minister, Sir Molwyn Joseph expressed his enthusiasm for the project, stating, "The completion of the EDA project at Tindall Temple is a landmark achievement in our ongoing efforts to bolster community resilience. This project not only fortifies our infrastructure but also empowers our citizens to face the challenges of climate change with greater confidence and security."

Director of the Department of Environment, Diann Black-Layne, added, "This project exemplifies the power of collaboration and the positive impact of

targeted funding. The Tindall Temple now stands as a symbol of our community's strength and preparedness. We are proud to have contributed to a safer, more resilient future for our people."

The DoE said it is reminded of the broader objectives of the EDA project: to raise awareness and educate the public, acknowledge contributions, demonstrate the facility's capabilities, and engage with media and public relations to ensure widespread dissemination of the project's achievements and ongoing efforts. The Department of Environment extends heartfelt thanks to all partners, stakeholders, and community members for their unwavering support and commitment to this project. Together, we are building a safer, stronger, and more resilient community.



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Educational Development: STEM Programs: Establish after-school, out-of-time, and summer camp programs focusing on STEM ed-



Dr. Oswald R. Thomas
 ucation.


Emergency Services: Fire Station: Push for the completion or erection of a fire station in St. Phillip’s North.

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Disclaimer: Point Express newspaper is open to all candidates participating in the several primaries to be undertaken by the ABLP. This publication will not and cannot support any one candidate in any primary; that is not our role. Our pages are however available to those who wish to communicate their ideas/policies to the respective electorates.



PRESS RELEASE

Public Information About: Technical Assistance for Women Entrepreneurs in Antigua and Barbuda.

The Program: The Antigua and Barbuda Investment Authority, (ABIA) in collaboration with the OAS Women Economic Empowerment (WEE) project announces a call for registration for the women owned businesses who can benefit from technical assistance in the area of e-commerce, and online marketing.

More specifically, Women owned businesses who are market-ready and or near market-ready, who have marketable products and services and wish to effectively market their products using the international e-commerce platforms such as Amazon and Etsy, among others are encouraged to apply

How To Apply:

- Interested business owners are asked to apply by clicking on the link shown below.
- Survey:** <https://forms.office.com/r/PjnHx7nG3z>
- Apply before June 10, 2024

Summary of the Training Program

The training program will include virtual training sessions on topics ranging from product development to market readiness and will also focus on the entire value chain to include quality products, packaging, photographing, marketing, uploading, selling, and online payment systems. The training sessions will be followed by virtual coaching sessions to aid attendees in the seamless integration of digital tools and effective use of international e-commerce platforms.

Media Contact: For questions and additional information: Jacqueline Yearwood: Telephone 481-1015

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diversity. Furthermore, we advocate for and enact sustainable development policies that support sustainable land use, waste management, and water conservation,” the message from the DoE stated.

The DoE is encouraging everyone to take part in local activities and initiatives aimed at restoring the land and building resilience to drought. “Small actions, such as planting trees, reducing water usage, implementing sustainable farming practices, and supporting eco-friendly initiatives, can collectively make a significant impact as it observes World Environment Day,” the message added.



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Court rules Google must face £13.6bn advertising lawsuit

By Tom Gerken

Google must face a £13.6bn lawsuit alleging it has too much power over the online advertising market, a court has ruled.

The case, brought by a group called Ad Tech Collective Action LLP, alleges the search giant behaved in an anti-competitive way which caused online publishers in the UK to lose money.

Google parent company Alphabet called the case “incoherent” in its attempts to get the legal action dropped.

But the Competition Appeal Tribunal, in London, has ruled the case can now go to trial.

“This is a decision of major importance to the victims of Google’s anti-competitive conduct in adtech,” said former Ofcom director Claudio Pollack, now a partner in Ad Tech Collective Action.

“Google will now have to answer for its practices in a full trial.”

However, Google’s legal director, Oliver Bethell, described the lawsuit

as “speculative and opportunistic.”

“We’ll oppose it vigorously and on the facts,” he added in a statement.

The case concerns advertising technology, usually shortened to adtech, which decides which online adverts people see, as well as how much they cost to publishers.

Hosting such adverts is a huge source of revenue for many websites - Ad Tech Collective Action says digital advertising spend reached \$490 billion in 2021.

It is also an extremely valuable industry for Google, because it dominates web search so heavily.

At the core of the claim is the allegation that Google is abusing that dominance, reducing the income websites get.

Ad Tech Collective Action says Google has engaged in what is known as “self-preferencing” - in other words promoting its own products and services more prominently than that of its rivals.

It says that means publishers end up getting less money for the ads they

host as well as having to pay “very high” fees to Google.

“I look forward to working with our legal and economic advisers to deliver compensation for years during which the relevant markets did not provide a competitive outcome for the UK publishing market,” Mr Pollack said.

But it will be a long time before any of this is resolved - it has already taken eighteen months to get to this point, and no court date has been set.

The case is what is known as opt-out, meaning all relevant UK publishers are included unless they indicate otherwise.

It is being funded by an unknown third-party, and says UK publishers who form part of the claim will not pay costs to participate.

It comes as Google faces probes by regulators in the UK, Europe and US into its adtech business, while the firm has already faced fines valued at billions of pounds from the European Commission over what it labelled anti-competitive behaviour.

New study finds Earth warming at record rate

By Seth Borenstein

The rate Earth is warming hit an all-time high in 2023 with 92 per cent of last year's surprising record-shattering heat caused by humans, top scientists calculated.

The group of 57 scientists from around the world used United Nations-approved methods to examine what's behind last year's deadly burst of heat. They said even with a faster warming rate they don't see evidence of significant acceleration in human-caused climate change beyond increased fossil fuel burning.

Last year's record temperatures were so unusual that scientists have been debating what's behind the big jump and whether climate change is accelerating or if other factors are in play.

"If you look at this world accelerating or going through a big tipping point, things aren't doing that," study lead author Piers Forster, a Leeds University climate scientist, said. "Things are increasing in temperature and getting worse in sort of exactly the way we predicted."

It's pretty much explained by the buildup of carbon dioxide from rising fossil fuel use, he and a co-author said.

Last year the rate of



warming hit 0.26 degrees Celsius (0.47 degrees Fahrenheit) per decade — up from 0.25 degrees Celsius (0.45 degrees Fahrenheit) the year before. That's not a significant difference, though it does make this year's rate the highest ever, Forster said.

Still, outside scientists said this report highlights an ever more alarming situation.

"Choosing to act on climate has become a political talking point but this report should be a reminder to people that in fact it is fundamentally a choice to save human lives," said University of Wisconsin climate scientist Andrea Dutton, who wasn't part of the in-

ternational study team. "To me, that is something worth fighting for."

The team of authors — formed to provide annual scientific updates between the every seven- to eight-year major UN scientific assessments — determined last year was 1.43 degrees Celsius warmer than the 1850 to 1900 average with 1.31 degrees of that coming from human activity. The other 8 per cent of the warming is due mostly to El Nino, the natural and temporary warming of the central Pacific that changes weather worldwide and also a freak warming along the Atlantic and just other weather randomness.

On a larger 10-year time

frame, which scientists prefer to single years, the world has warmed about 1.19 degrees Celsius (2.14 degrees Fahrenheit) since pre-industrial times, the report in the journal *Earth System Science Data* found.

The report also said that as the world keeps using coal, oil and natural gas, Earth is likely to reach the point in 4.5 years that it can no longer avoid crossing the internationally accepted threshold for warming: 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 degrees Fahrenheit).

That fits with earlier studies projecting Earth being committed or stuck to at least 1.5 degrees by early 2029 if emission trajectory

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Regional News



Bermuda police seize over \$200K in money laundering crackdown

The Bermuda Police Service (BPS) Financial Crime Unit has confiscated over \$200,000 as a result of its investigations into money laundering over the last few years.

Since 2021, five individuals have been convicted, leading to the seizure of these illicit funds.

In a statement the BPS said: “These successes were realised thanks to a collaborative effort involving partner agencies, all with a commitment to prosecuting those who violate the law.”

Several additional cases are currently pending in both the Supreme and Magistrates’ Courts, involving over \$400,000 in suspected



illegal funds.

Detective Chief Inspector Jason Smith of the Specialist Investigations Unit (SIU) emphasized the BPS’s commitment to tack-

ling financial crimes.

“The BPS remains unwavering in its pursuit of those who choose to engage in criminal activity, and we continue to encourage any-

one with information regarding suspected money laundering offences to come forward. Together, we have the power to make a difference,” he said in the statement.

A spokesperson for the Department of Public Prosecutions praised the detection and prosecution efforts.

«We are pleased with the rate of detection of money laundering offences which have led to successful prosecutions and convictions before the courts,» the spokesperson stated, expressing gratitude to the investigating officers and partner agencies for their contributions to these positive outcomes.

cont’d from pg 13

ries don’t change. The actual hitting of 1.5 degrees could be years later, but it would be inevitable if all that carbon is used, Forster said.

It’s not the end of the world or humanity if temperatures blow past the 1.5 limit, but it will be quite bad, scientists said. Past UN studies show massive changes to Earth’s ecosystem are more likely to kick in between 1.5 and 2 degrees Celsius of warming, including eventual loss of the planet’s coral reefs, Arctic sea ice, species of plants and animals — along with nastier extreme weather events that kill people.

Last year’s temperature rise was more than just a little jump. It was especially unusual in September, said study co-author Sonia Seneviratne, head of land-climate dynamics at ETH Zurich, a Swiss university.

The year was within the range of what was predicted, albeit it was at the upper edge of the range, Seneviratne said.

“Acceleration if it were to happen would be even worse, like hitting a global tipping point, it would be probably the worst scenario,” Seneviratne said. “But what is happening is already extremely bad and it is having major impacts already now. We are in the middle of a crisis.”

University of Michigan environment dean Jonathan Overpeck and Berkeley Earth climate scientist Zeke Hausfather, neither of whom were part of the study, said they still see acceleration. Hausfather pointed out the rate of warming is considerably higher than 0.18 degrees Celsius (0.32 Fahrenheit) per decade of warming that it was between 1970 and 2010.

Scientists had theorized a few ex-

planations for the massive jump in September, which Hausfather called “gobsmacking.” Wednesday’s report didn’t find enough warming from other potential causes. The report said the reduction of sulfur pollution from shipping — which had been providing some cooling to the atmosphere — was overwhelmed last year by carbon particles put in the air from Canadian wildfires. The report also said an undersea volcano that injected massive amounts of heat-trapping water vapor into the atmosphere also spewed cooling particles with both forces pretty much canceling each other out.

Texas Tech climate scientist and chief scientist at the Nature Conservancy Katharine Hayhoe said “the future is in our hands. It’s us — not physics, but humans — who will determine how quickly the world warms and by how much.”



Sint Maarten seeking to fix island's energy crisis

By Melissa Wong

Sint Maarten's hopes to secure mobile generation units from its sister islands to alleviate its electricity woes appears to no longer be a reality, with the government now looking for an alternative way to source these units.

Deputy Prime Minister Veronica Jansen-Webster stated this as she delivered a national address on NV GEBE's energy crisis after it was recently revealed that the country's sole electricity provider, NV GEBE, is currently unable to generate the power required to supply everyone.

The Dutch Caribbean Island has been grappling with load shedding with matters being made worse on Sunday, June 2 after GEBE was affected by a fire which rendered two more engines inoperable and resulted in an island wide blackout.

Power was eventually restored to

communities with residents immediately returned to the load shedding schedule.

In response to last Sunday's incident, a crisis team meeting was urgently convened with representatives from the Netherlands, Curacao, Aruba, and St Maarten.

Initially the government believed it could secure sufficient mobile generators from its sister islands. She says regrettably, this is not the case as the quantities needed to mitigate Sint Maarten's crisis and halt the relentless load shedding are not available.

The Deputy PM says the government is not deterred, and in collaboration with GEBE's management, is actively exploring alternative sources to acquire mobile generation units.

She notes a swift, short-term plan is being finalised to ensure these units are delivered and operational as quick-

ly as possible, aiming to restore normalcy to the island.

In the meantime, the public is urged to conserve energy wherever possible.

NV GEBE in a recent statement had identified its ageing power generation units, climate change and the growing economy as reasons for the rapid increase in load demand. It explained the company operates a fleet of 10 traditional power generation units, which are reciprocating diesel engines. Out of these 10 units, three (30 per cent of the total fleet) have exceeded their technical lifespan of 30 years.

The electricity company is expected to host on June 7, a public information series "Candid Conversations with NV GEBE" featuring in depth discussions about NV GEBE's state of affairs.

New knife attack wounds local German politician

By Paul Kirby

A local politician has been attacked in the German city of Mannheim, five days after the fatal stabbing of a police officer in its market square.

The man, described as a local election candidate for the far-right Alternative for Germany (AfD) party, was left with cuts in the attack, German press agency DPA reported.

Police confirmed the incident took place on Tuesday evening, close to scene of Friday's deadly attack that targeted organisers of a rally against radical Islam and which claimed the life of a 29-year-old officer.

They said the politician was taken to hospital for treatment, but had not suffered life-threatening injuries.

The local AfD association said its candidate had chased after a man tearing down election posters, who then cut him with a knife.

Senior AfD politicians identified the victim of Tuesday's attack as Heinrich Koch, 62, a candidate standing in this weekend's municipal election in Mannheim.

Police in the south-western state of Baden-Württemberg said they arrested a 25-year-old suspect, who was then taken to a psychiatric hospital after showing



Police do not think the suspect was aware the victim was a far-right candidate.

clear signs of mental illness.

They stressed there was no concrete evidence that he had been aware that the victim was an AfD politician.

The latest incident in Mannheim came after an Afghan asylum seeker was detained on suspicion of repeatedly stabbing a police officer, who later died in hospital. Five other people were wounded in the attack, who had been preparing for a rally by a group opposed to radical Islam.

The killing sparked outrage in Germany, prompting the government to say it may allow deportations to Afghanistan.

The 25-year-old suspect in Friday's attack is said to have come to Germany as a refugee in 2013 and has since had two children. Deportations to Afghanistan were halted when the Tali-

ban returned to power three years ago.

The violence comes as Germans prepare to vote on Sunday in European Parliament elections, as well as municipal elections in seven states including Baden-Württemberg.

All 27 EU countries are taking part in the European Parliament vote. The AfD is challenging the centre-left Social Democrats of Chancellor Olaf Scholz for second place, although the far-right party's top candidates have been hit by a succession of scandals.

"We are shocked and dismayed," Markus Frohnmair, a top AfD official in Baden-Württemberg told German media in response to the latest incident.

Attacks have also taken place in other areas of Germany ahead of Sun-

day's European elections, prompting the chancellor to warn last month of a threat to democracy.

A candidate from Mr Scholz's party, Matthias Ecke, was seriously injured by a group of people as he put up posters in the eastern city of Dresden, and a female Greens politician there was also attacked.

Berlin senator Franziska Giffey, who is a well-known former minister in Mr Scholz's party, was struck on the head and neck last month by a man as she visited a local library in the capital.

The mayor of Mannheim, Christian Specht, denounced the latest attack as abhorrent. "The hatred and willingness to use violence that is currently erupting in our society is intolerable," he said in a statement.

Hunter Biden used crack 'every 20 minutes or so', court hears

Hunter Biden's ex-girlfriend has told a jury he was abusing crack cocaine "every 20 minutes or so" when they first met.

The US president's son is on trial in Wilmington, Delaware, on charges related to his possession of a firearm while allegedly using narcotics.

Zoe Kestan, who met Mr Biden, 54, during a "private dance" at a "gentleman's club" in New York, told the court he was often withdrawing cash for drug deals.

It is the first criminal trial for the son of a sitting US president.

He is accused of knowingly lying on federal paperwork when he said he was not a drug user in order to buy a revolver and ammunition from a Wilmington gun shop on 12 October 2018, as well as illegally having the gun for 11 days.

Mr Biden could face up to 25 years in prison if found guilty of all three federal counts in the case.

He has pleaded not guilty and his legal team says he was in recovery at the time he bought the weapon.

The prosecution is expected to rest its case on Thursday after calling on another six witnesses, including Hallie Biden, Mr Biden's former partner and the widow of his brother, as



Hunter Biden (seen with his wife Melissa Cohen Biden) could face up to 25 years in prison if found guilty on all counts.

well as Delaware state police officers, a DEA agent and a forensic expert.

Among the other prosecution witnesses was Gordon Cleveland, the former employee of the gun store who sold Mr Biden the gun in 2018.

In his testimony on Wednesday, Mr Cleveland said he told Mr Biden - and all other customers - to "truthfully" fill out the form.

The prosecution is trying to prove that Hunter Biden, who wrote a memoir about his drug addiction, was abusing crack cocaine at the time he bought the weapon.

During opening remarks earlier this week, Mr Biden's attorney, Abbe Lowell, told jurors that the revolver was an impulse buy stemming from the tactics of a pushy

salesman - Mr Cleveland.

In his testimony, Mr Cleveland acknowledged his reputation as a "whale hunter" known for being able to "sell whatever you had", mostly expensive, high-quality guns.

He denied, however, ever trying to "upsell" Mr Biden, who he claimed had come into the store and "brought up" buying a gun, specifically a revolver.

On Wednesday, the defendant's stepmother, US first lady Jill Biden, was again in court.

She sat in the first row behind Hunter Biden, along with his wife, Melissa Cohen Biden, and a Secret Service agent.

President Joe Biden is in France for events commemorating the 80th anniversary of the D-Day invasion.

FBI agent Erika Jensen, Ms Kestan, and the defendant's ex-wife, Kathleen Buhle, also testified on the third day of the trial.

Ms Kestan detailed Hunter Biden's drug use during their relationship.

On the first day they met at the gentleman's club in December 2017, she said he started smoking crack "within 10 minutes".

She said she saw this pattern repeated during their relationship in luxury hotel rooms in New York, New Jersey and California.

She said Mr Biden "would want to smoke as soon as he woke up".

Ms Kestan also testified that she saw him smoking crack in Malibu, California, over several days in September 2018, a month before he

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Sports News



NBA nears rights deal worth US\$76 billion with NBC, ESPN and Amazon, WSJ reports

NEW YORK (Reuters) - The National Basketball Association is closing in on media rights deals with Comcast-owned NBC, Disney's ESPN, and Amazon.com that would generate about US\$76 billion in media revenue over 11 years, the Wall Street Journal reported on Wednesday.

Rights to the widely watched professional basket-

ball league are a prized possession for media companies. Sports content continues to attract a reliable and loyal audience at a time when traditional TV businesses are losing millions of subscribers to cord-cutting.

The WSJ report said that NBC would pay an average of US\$2.5 billion a year to the NBA under the arrange-

ment and show around 100 games per season, with about half airing exclusively on Comcast's Peacock streaming service.

Amazon's package would amount to US\$1.8 billion a year and will include regular-season and playoff games and a share of the conference finals, which will be split in a rotation among

the media partners, the report said.

Disney's payments will average about US\$2.6 billion annually, more than the US\$1.5 billion it paid under the current deal, and will continue to air the NBA Finals though it will get fewer games under the new deal, the WSJ reported.

The deal, as reported by WSJ, would leave out Warner Bros Discovery, whose Turner Sports network has shown NBA games for about four decades. Analysts have said that Warner Bros Discovery's heavy debt load could hamper its ability to compete for NBA's rights.

The Journal report said that Warner Bros Discovery can still match a rival package, while the NBA can create a new package for the company in the final stretch, but the options for the media company are limited.

ESPN and Comcast declined to comment, while the other companies and the NBA did not immediately respond to Reuters' requests for comment.

If finalized, ESPN's deal will enable the company to air the games on its direct-to-consumer streaming service, set to launch in 2025, WSJ said, adding that the deal will also include rights to WNBA telecasts.

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bought the gun.

Prosecutors showed the jury images allegedly taken by Ms Kestan showing crack pipes in the rooms she stayed in with Hunter Biden.

Another apparently showed the defendant in a bath with a crack pipe in his hand.

Ms Buhle, who was married to Mr Biden between 1993 and 2017 and has three daughters with him, testified that she first learned of his drug use in 2015 after finding a crack pipe in an ashtray.

She also said he was "not himself" when he used drugs and would become "short tempered". At the end of their marriage, she testified that "he didn't want to go to rehab".

But when asked by Mr Lowell whether she had seen the defendant use drugs in 2018, she said: "No."

Earlier in the day, FBI agent Ms Jensen testified about text messages that were found on a laptop left by Mr Biden at a Delaware repair shop and never retrieved.

The day after the gun purchase he texted his then-girlfriend, Hallie Biden - the widow of his late brother, Beau Biden - that he was "sleeping on a car smoking crack on 4th street and Rodney".

"There's my truth," he added in another text.

Mr Biden's lawyers explained the texts by suggesting that their client had been lying to avoid seeing Hallie Biden.

On Thursday, the jury is expected to hear during the trial how Hallie Biden also became addicted to crack cocaine during her brief relationship with Mr Biden after her husband Beau's death in 2015.

She took the gun from Hunter Biden and threw it in a grocery store bin 11 days after he bought it, concerned about what he might do with the weapon.

The laptop at the centre of the testimony became a political grenade during the 2020 election campaign as its explicit images of Hunter Biden and messages about his business activities were leaked.

Joe Biden claimed at the time that the data was Russian disinformation, but the laptop has since been confirmed as genuine by the FBI.

The Bidens have denied any wrongdoing in overseas business dealings, which are the focus of an ongoing Republican impeachment investigation.

Hunter Biden also faces a trial in California in September on charges of failing to pay \$1.4m in taxes.

Spanish Heat 2 advance to ABBA's Division II Playoff finals

Third-seed Spanish Heat 2 have advanced to the Antigua and Barbuda Basketball Association's (ABBA) Second Division playoff finals.

Spanish Heat 2 booked their spot in the finals after eliminating second-seeded Da Project by clinching their best-of-three semi-final series 2-1 on Tuesday night.

Spanish Heat 2 romped to an 83-69 victory against Da Project in the decisive Game 3 at the JSC Sports Complex.

Jesus Emmanuel produced a game-high 25 points, eight steals, and six assists, and Wilkin Floyd had 21 points, eight rebounds, seven assists, and five steals for Spanish Heat 2.

In support, Ismael Palermo converted 13 points and



Spanish Heat 2 player Jesus Emmanuel, second right, is fouled by a player of Da Project while driving to the basket during a game in their Division II semi-final playoff series at the JSC Sports Complex. (ABBA)

grabbed 10 rebounds; Kevin Pimentel sank 12 points; and Rohland Hamilton scored 2.

Bryan "Hollywood" Matthew converted 24 points and grabbed 10 rebounds; Nyique Watkins sank 14 points and claimed six rebounds; Eric Joseph had 13 points, 10 rebounds, and seven assists; and Olive Morris scored 10 points and snatched five rebounds for Da Project.

Spanish Heat 2 will clash with the eight-seed Rebels in the best-of-five Division II playoff finals.

The Rebels booked their spot in the finals after eliminating fifth-seed Jim Nance Jan Serv Fearless Crew by sweeping their best-of-three semi-final series 2-0.

Spanish Heat 2 and the Rebels will clash in the opening game of the Division II playoff finals at the JSC Sports Complex today at 8 pm.

T.N. Kirnon and Five Islands to battle for Primary School Cup title

T.N. Kirnon Primary and Five Islands Primary will battle for this year's Ministry of Sports Primary School Cup football title.

Both teams advanced to the final after securing wins in the semi-finals at Buckley's Primary School playing field. T.N. Kirnon Primary, which finished as the runner-up to three-peat champion Golden Grove Primary last year, booked their spot in the final after eliminating Freeman's Village Primary 2-0 on penalties in the semi-finals.

T.N. Kirnon Primary and Free-

man's Village played to a 2-2 draw at the end of regulation, sending the game to be decided in a best-of-three penalty shootout.

Tevorn Henderson scored both goals for T.N. Kirnon Primary, and Dakarie Gore and D'Jarie Gregory each converted once for Freeman's Village Primary.

Five Islands Primary, which lost to Golden Grove in the final in 2022, advanced to this year's final by romping to a 7-1 victory against St. Peter's Primary in the other semi-final.

The competition's chief marksman

with a total of 24 goals, Allan Henry, scored four times, Jaheedi Charles converted twice, and Tequan Samuels scored once for Five Islands Primary.

Johnathan Duberry scored the lone goal for St. Peter's Primary. Five Islands and T.N. Kirnon Primary will clash in the final on the rescheduled date of Friday, June 14.

The final was originally slated to take place on Friday, June 6, but the match has been rescheduled as the schools requested some additional time to prepare after students finished their final term exams.

Favoured Celtics battle Doncic and the Mavs in NBA Finals

BOSTON (Reuters) - A Celtics team desperate for championship glory face Luka Doncic and a Dallas Mavericks squad eager to play spoiler in an intriguing NBA Finals matchup that tips off Thursday in Boston.

Led by superstars Jayson Tatum and Jaylen Brown, the sharpshooting Celtics have had a relatively easy road to the finals.

Coming out of the weaker Eastern Conference as the top seed, they breezed past the Jimmy Butler-less Miami Heat, dispatched the Cleveland Cavaliers and swept the Indiana Pacers, who were without point guard Tyrese Haliburton for the final two games.

The Celtics have won 12 of their 14 playoff games and gone undefeated on the road but they know that none of that will matter if they fail to end a title drought that stretches back to 2008.

The mission is clear - hang that elusive 18th championship banner from the TD Garden rafters and put recent postseason disappointment, including falling to the Warriors in the 2022 finals and coming up short in the conference finals last year, firmly behind them.

Anything less will be seen as a bitter disappointment. "They were the best



Dallas Mavericks center Dereck Lively II (2) slaps hands with Mavericks guard Luka Doncic, second from left, after Doncic's score against the Minnesota Timberwolves during the first half of Game 5 of the Western Conference finals in the NBA basketball playoffs in Minneapolis, Thursday, May 30, 2024. (AP)

team in the regular season and they have been the best team in the playoffs," former player and current ESPN analyst JJ Redick said on a call with reporters.

"I feel strongly that they are the favorites going into this series. At the same time, I wouldn't be surprised if Luka and Dallas and Kyrie (Irving) and (head coach Jason Kidd) made this a series and won... This is going to be a phenomenal series."

Standing in Boston's way is a confident Mavs team under far less pressure and uniquely equipped to ruin the Celtics' title as-

pirations.

That starts with Doncic, the 25-year-old Slovenian, who is quickly becoming the face of the league. He has been the best player in the playoffs and is the first to lead in points (489), rebounds (164) and assists (150) coming into a finals.

By his side is veteran point guard Irving who, after turbulent stints in Brooklyn and Boston, has looked more comfortable and confident on the court than he has in years.

"I think it's fair to say that offensively they are as talented as any backcourt in NBA history," Redick said of Doncic and Irving.

One big, 7-foot 2-inch question mark hanging over the series is the health of Boston's Kristaps Porzingis, the former Maverick, who suffered a calf strain in the Heat series and has been sidelined since.

The Celtics are hopeful that their prized offseason acquisition, who averaged 20.1 points and 7.2 rebounds and 1.9 blocks during the regular season, will be healthy enough to match up against the Mavs' breakout big men Daniel Gafford and Dereck Lively II.

Game One of the NBA Finals is Thursday in Boston.

India beat Ireland in T20 World Cup

WESTBURY, N.Y. (AP) -- Rohit Sharma scored a 36-ball half-century as India beat Ireland by eight wickets in their group A game at the Men's T20 World Cup at the Nassau County International Cricket Stadium in New York, USA, on Wednesday.

Sharma scored 52 off 37 balls before retiring hurt, while Rishabh Pant added 36 not out off 26 balls, as India easily reached 97 for two to finish off the chase in 12.2 overs.

That was after all-rounder Hardik Pandya took three for 27 as the Indian pacers made good use of the bowler-friendly conditions.

Jasprit Bumrah picked up two wickets for six runs in three overs, while left-arm pacer Arshdeep Singh had two for 35.

In all, India's pacers took eight of the 10 wickets to fall as Ireland was routed for 96 all out in 16 overs.

Put into bat, Singh caused havoc with the new ball under overcast conditions. He sent back both Irish openers by bowling Andrew Balbirnie for five and having Paul Stirling caught behind for two.

Singh was wayward in his four-over spell, though, which contributed for nearly a third of Ireland's total runs.

Pandya came in at first change and struck immedi-



India's captain Rohit Sharma plays a shot against Ireland during an ICC Men's T20 World Cup cricket match at the Nassau County International Cricket Stadium in Westbury, New York, Wednesday, June 5, 2024. (Getty Images)

ately, bowling Loran Tucker for 10 and having Curtis Campher caught behind for 12.

In between, Bumrah had Harry Tector caught for four as Ireland was reduced to 44 for five in nine overs. Ireland slipped to 50 for eight after 11.2 overs as Pandya struck again twice.

Gareth Delany provided some resistance and top-scored with 26, hitting two fours and two sixes. He was the only Irish batter to cross the 20-run mark and put on 27 runs with Joshua Little (14) for the ninth wicket, which allowed Ireland to get near 100.

Chasing a below-par total, India lost star batter

Virat Kohli for one run. In a major top-order shuffle, Kohli opened the innings with Sharma, but was out caught at third man attacking Mark Adair, who took one for 27.

Ireland's pacers also got help from the surface, making life tough for both Sharma and Pant. Both batters were hit on their elbows and upper arms.

Sharma and Pant still added 54 off 44 balls. The Indian skipper hit four fours and three sixes to bring up his half-century. He retired hurt after reaching the milestone, having suffered a hit on his right arm from Joshua Little.

Pant hit three fours

and two sixes, even as Suryakumar Yadav was out caught in the deep for two runs.

Returning to international action after a gap of nearly 18 months since his car accident in December 2022, Pant finished off proceedings with a reverse hit six over the slip cordon.

India next plays Pakistan in the T20 World Cup's marquee clash on June 9. Ireland will face Canada on June 7.

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.

GNFC players to go on trials in UK

A group of six players and a coach of the Generation Next Football Club (GNFC) Rebels will be traveling to the United Kingdom this weekend to undergo a 10-day trial stint at Brooke House College.

Players Joshua Henriques, Ethan Camacho, Clayton Compton, William Tranter, Chase Garner, and Leyland Powell, as well as coach Shakkimba “Yaya” Williams, will travel to Brooke House College on Sunday, June 9, and return to Antigua on Thursday, June 20.



Joshua Henriques during a game while on trials at Brooke House College in the United Kingdom in June 2023. (GNFC)

If successful, the selected players will be awarded either full or partial scholarships to study in the United Kingdom while pursuing pathways for professional football careers.

This is the second batch of players and coaches of the GNFC Rebels to undergo trials at Brooke House College as part of a coaches’ exchange programme between the British learning institution and the Generation Next Football Club in Antigua and Barbuda.

Joshua Henriques and Ethan Camacho were also part of the first batch of four players and two coaches that made the initial trip to Brooke House College from June 12 to 24 last year.

Ethan Barton was the other player that underwent trials at Brooke House College, while O’Niah Blair attended as an observer as part of last year’s contingent.

Coaches Vincent “Nabbu” Samuel and Desmond “Zeco” Bleau were part of the first batch to benefit from the international experience at Brooke House College as part of the club’s “coaches exchange programme” where they assisted in coaching the college’s football teams.

The players’ trials are being facilitated through GNFC’s partnership with Brooke House College and



Shakkimba ‘Yaya’ Williams. (File photo) the Calvin Ayre Foundation, sponsors of the club’s Advanced Academy programme.

The Calvin Ayre Foundation is also covering the cost of air travel, while Brooke House College is accommodating the coaches and players at their expense.