

ANTHONY SMITH QUITS UPP

Story on Page 2



Anthony Smith, the member of parliament for the All Saints West constituency, has tendered his resignation from the opposition, United Progressive Party. Photo Credit: Wayne Mariette

Anthony Smith quits UPP

Anthony Smith, the member of parliament for the All Saints West constituency, has tendered his resignation from the opposition, United Progressive Party. The MP was elected on January 18, 2023, defeating the then ABLP candidate, Michael Browne.

News of this came to light on Monday afternoon, by which time Smith had sequestered himself from public view or contact, and whilst the UPP had denied receiving any correspondence indicating the validity of the media reports, overnight a letter from the MP himself came to light.

The letter is dated July 15, 2024, and addressed to Sen. Shawn Nicholas, UPP General Secretary.

In the letter, Smith spoke of 'a misalignment of values that cannot be reconciled'. He disclosed that over the past few months, he had been at odds with the party's directions and decisions.

"My core values and principles, which include transparency, integrity and a steadfast commitment to the public good, have conflicted with actions, directions and policies endorsed by the party leadership. Despite my best efforts to address these concerns

internally, I have come to the realization that my continued membership of the party compromises my abilities to serve my constituency and uphold my ethical standards," he wrote.

The MP spoke of being ostracized by the party prior to, and following the recent convention where MP Jamale Pringle was re-elected as Political Leader. He said there have been threats of expulsion and he has been subjected to 'appalling' treatment from within the UPP.

News of Smith's resignation is likely to see a shift in the political balance of power within the parliament of Antigua and Barbuda. As required by the Constitution, Smith must remain an independent member of the House of Representatives and will not be allowed to 'cross the floor'.

However, legal sources have indicated that this does not preclude him from accepting any appointment that may be offered to him as a sitting member of parliament.

For the first time ever, there will be two independent members of parliament in the House of Representatives.

(The full text of the letter is attached).

Hon. Anthony Smith,
Parliamentary Representative,
All Saint's West,
St. George,
Antigua.

July 15, 2024

Shawn Nicholas,
General Secretary,
United Progressive Party,
Antigua.

Dear General Secretary,

I am writing this letter to formally tender my resignation as a member of the United Progressive Party, effective immediately. This decision was not made lightly. After much consideration, I have concluded that there is a misalignment of values that cannot be reconciled.

Over recent months, I have found myself increasingly at odds with the direction and decisions of the United Progressive Party. My core values and principles, which include transparency, integrity, and a steadfast commitment to the public good, have conflicted with the actions, direction, and policies endorsed by the party's leadership. Despite my best efforts to address these concerns internally, I have come to the realization that my continued membership in the party compromises my ability to serve my constituents and uphold my ethical standards.

As a result, I will no longer fall under the Party Whip and will instead serve as an Independent Member of the House of Representatives. This transition will allow me to act in accordance with my conscience and make decisions that I believe are in the best interest of the people I represent.

This decision, although difficult, was motivated by a deep-seated commitment to my constituency and to the principles of good governance and ethical conduct. I believe that by serving as an independent member, I will be better positioned to advocate for policies and initiatives that align with the needs and aspirations of my constituents.

As a young professional, words cannot fully express my hurt regarding recent events in the party. Myself and several other party members participated in the democratic process of contesting the leadership of the party. However, instead of being encouraged, the treatment meted out to us before and after the convention was appalling.

Over the past few months, I have had to deal with insults and lies because of my challenge for the Chairmanship and my support of Hon. Richard Lewis for the leadership of the party. To come under attack by the leadership and central executive of the party, along with being threatened with expulsion, has shown me that I had no value in the party to begin with.

Constant threats of dwindling party support within the United Progressive Party and the unheard-of suggestion that only the political leader and the deputy leader would retain their seats are demoralizing. The fact that this is coming from the people who should be uniting the party and supporting each of its members has made me see that the leadership has lost its way and further demonstrates the lack of value the party has for its members.

When I reflect on my decision to serve under the banner of the party, it was in the best interest of serving the people of All Saints West. However, the treatment I have recently received has been more than undesirable. Feeling and being treated as an outcast is something that I can no longer tolerate. Politics should not be about self-interest but about the interest of the people, and I find myself in an organization that has moved away from being people-centric and now operates on self-interest.

In closing, I would like to express my gratitude for the opportunities and support I have received from the United Progressive Party during my tenure. I remain committed to working collaboratively with all members of the House to achieve our shared goals and to promote the well-being of our nation.

Sincerely,



Hon. Anthony Smith Jr
Member of Parliament
All Saints West



20 percent growth in revenues - January to June 30, 2024

There was a twenty percent growth in revenues for the first six months of 2024, compared with the same period of last year.

Comptroller of Customs, Raju Boddu, has reported that the Customs Division collected \$40 million dollars more over the six-month period than it did for the first six months of 2023. This he said represents a twenty percent increase in revenues.

The Comptroller credits a number of things that contributed to the increased collections, including a more efficient collection machinery. "This has been incredible! Of course, it was aided by lots of seasonal events as well as increased economic activity. We have had continued growth in construction, several projects have taken off etc. The interesting thing is that we at customs don't collect when these projects start, however, they create increased demand because they employ people who then demand more goods and services, from which we collect taxes," he explained.

A similar phenomenon happened for the ICC T20 Cricket World Cup during which a total of eight matches were played at the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium. "Everything that comes through customs for World Cup is free of customs duties, however, we have the impact of this on the travel industry, the food industry

among others. This all leads to higher levels of consumption; leading to higher levels of collection," Boddu further explained.

He added that the economy will always benefit from such major events taking

place in the country as they drive demand that leads to higher imports resulting in more customs revenues.

The comptroller disclosed that the total value of goods imported into the country will exceed \$2 bil-

lion dollars this year. Last year, that figure stood between \$1.6 - \$1.8 billion. Already, this year, total imports into the country have already surpassed the \$1 billion mark for the first six months of 2024.

WE ARE HIRING!

SERVICE CENTRE COORDINATOR
OUTDOOR WORLD LIMITED


Reports to: The Manager

Job Summary includes but not limited to:


- performing daily administrative functions of the Outdoor World Service Centre
- preparing estimates for service jobs/repair jobs
- assigning and monitoring technicians to ensure maximum productivity and efficiency in keeping with company's policies/procedures and dealership standards
- Communicating with customers on the status of service/repair orders
- Weekly/monthly reporting on Service Centre performance

Requirements

- 5 CXC's including English and Maths (Associate Degree would be a plus)
- Marine Certification would be an asset
- Computer literacy in Microsoft Office
- Strong analytical and problem-solving skills
- Excellent communication/interpersonal skills
- MUST HOLD a valid driver's licence C1 a "D" would be an asset
- Minimum two years in supervisory position



Submit your resume to: hr@autoartanu.com. Deadline: Friday July 26, 2024.
Only suitable applicants will be acknowledged.



Antiguan student selected as valedictorian at Cuban medical school

Four Antigua and Barbuda students were among the 2024 graduating class of newly minted doctors from the University of Medical Sciences of Las Tunas, Cuba.

The graduation exercises were held in Cuba last Friday and Antigua and Barbuda student, Dr. Michelle Jeffery, was selected to give the valedictorian speech in which she thanked the people of Cuba and the government for welcoming both her and the other foreign

students into their ‘family’.

“I wish to express my deepest gratitude to the Cuban Revolution and the university for welcoming me as a foreign student and thus incorporating me as part of a great family. Thanks to Cuba I learned the true meaning of humanism, community and sacrifice. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to be part of this great army of white coats and graduate from a university so committed to academic excellence and



Alex Kelsick, Neejah Crump, Ambassador Goodwin, Michelle Jeffery and Sadik Spencer

the comprehensive training of its students,” she stated.

Speaking directly to her fellow graduates, Dr. Jeffery said they now have an opportunity to use their training to make a difference in the world. “Now, as university graduates, we are in an unrivaled position to make a difference in the world. We have the knowledge, skills and tools necessary to face any competition and generate a positive impact in our communities. Whenever you face challenges, remember everything you have learned here, remember that you are capable of much more than you think. Today we celebrate this achievement, but also what is to come,” she added.

Among those attending the graduation exercises was Antigua and Barbuda’s Ambassador to Cuba, Amb. George ‘Junie’ Goodwin. The other Antigua and Barbuda members of the graduating class were Dr. Alex Kelsick, Dr. Neejah Crump, and Dr. Sadik Spencer.

STATE INSURANCE COMPANY LIMITED
Live in a better State of mind

In cases where goods are damaged in the carrier's possession, but no misconduct or negligence involved, marine cargo policy covers the losses.

ANTIGUA (268) 481-7800/04 BARBUDA (268) 727-7422 info@siclfinancial.com www.siclfinancial.com

Health professional completes 40 years of unbroken service to nursing

The health community on Monday offered congratulations to the Director of Nursing, Jacqueline Jno-Baptiste, who is marking forty unbroken years of service to nursing and to the health services of Antigua and Barbuda.

JnoBaptiste said she is happy to have celebrated 40 years of service to the profession that she loves, and her motivation was always to give the best patient care possible.

“Celebrating 40 years of unbroken nursing service is a major milestone. My mantra is; I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. Had it not

been for a life dedicated to Christ and my drive to make a difference in the lives of every person I meet, my life would have been in vain. As a young nurse I worked tirelessly to ensure that I met and exceeded my patients’ expectations. I did not do it for recognition, it was simply my job,” she stated.

As the Director of Nursing at Sir Lester Bird Medical Centre, JnoBaptiste said she sees herself as an advocate for nurses; seeking better salaries, better working conditions, more opportunities for training and development among other things.

She explained that she

cont’d on pg 6



Jacqueline JnoBaptiste

TUESDAYS & WEDNESDAYS

2 DAYS WAYS SAVE



\$16.99

- *2 pcs
- Biscuit
- Drink



\$19.99

- Zinger / CCB
- Drink

limitations apply




GARD Centre receives timely donation from CIBC Caribbean

Nearly a month after it suffered a devastating loss following a break-in and robbery, the Gilbert Agricultural and Rural Development Centre (GARD Centre) has been the recipient of a cash donation from CIBC Caribbean bank.

During the break-in, the intruders took almost everything – doors were broken and destroyed and stoves, fridges, freezers, mixers, the tools used to train students, AC units, seedlings, water fountain, a printer, microwave and even desks, were all stolen.

However, last week, staff of CIBC Caribbean paid a visit to the institution at the end of which they presented a cheque for \$5,000 and pledged the bank's ongoing support for the critical role it plays in training and equipping persons with skills to earn a living.

Speaking during the pre-



sentation, the bank's Human Resources Officer, Jesseca Ormond, said that as soon as they heard about the losses caused by the burglary, they saw it as a part of their corporate responsibility to assist and to always play an active role in its communities.

In fact, she noted that the bank's association with the GARD Centre dates back to 2011 when there was a US\$30,000 donation over a three-year period to support an EU programme called 'Empowering Women in their Income Generation'.

"CIBC recognizes the importance of the GARD Centre and its positive impact in educating and equipping individuals with the necessary training and skills to make a living and to be able to contribute to the nation's development. More recently for International Women's Day in March, we sponsored bursaries for two females to attend courses," added Ormond.

The GARD Centre's Executive Director, June Jackson, thanked the bank for its ongoing contributions to not just Antigua but also the Caribbean.

The Centre which celebrates its 35th anniversary in November, provides vocational training and business advice to assist vulnerable youths.

cont'd from pg 5

sees this as being part of her responsibilities, her love and admiration for nurses as well her desire to see nurses advance to being the best nurses possible.

"Nursing is a noble and rewarding profession and I have no regrets being a nurse and being a positive influence for the younger nurses; inspiring them to greatness. It has been a wonderful 40 years and I am humbled by the experiences, and the lessons learnt," she remarked.

Nurse JnoBaptiste always dreamt of becoming a nurse. That dream became a reality in July 1984. She completed her midwifery certification and several courses,

to include Psychiatry, Public Administration, Nursing Administration, Executive Diploma in Management, Project Management, Customer Service, a BSc in Nursing, and an MBA in Human Resources Management.

Nurse JnoBaptiste has held several positions at Holberton Hospital, including Infection Control Nurse, Departmental Manager for several Nursing Units, Acting Deputy Matron, In-Service Education Coordinator, and Quality Coordinator.

At Sir Lester Bird Medical Center, she held the positions of Education Coordinator, Human Resources Manager, and now the Director of Nursing.



**THURS
AUG
1ST**
ARG | 8PM



DESIGN STORE CO 2024

Queens & Divas

IN MUSIC

**CALYPSO
QUEENS**

QUEEN SINGING ALTHIA | QUEEN THALIA
GE'EVE | SAMMIE C | GB



[f @antiguacarnival](#) [@antiguafestivalsofficial](#) [@antiguacarnival](#) +1 268 727-9201

UPP - Things fall apart, the center cannot hold

By Watchman

In the wake of the dramatic resignation of Mr. Anthony Smith, the youngest member of Antigua and Barbuda's parliament, from the opposition Unity Progressive Party (UPP), one cannot help but question whether this was truly a surprising development.

The move by Mr. Smith, an ambitious young politician, to challenge the UPP chairperson in the party's recent internal elections appears to have been the catalyst for his move.

Whispers around the country suggest that he was viewed as a

“marked man” within the party, with speculation swirling about how long he would last as the chairperson of the party was “gunning for him”.

Sadly, this is not the first time the UPP has been faced with internal turmoil.

The recent resignation of Cleon Athill from the party in the past few months has been linked to the chairperson's apparent unwillingness to tolerate dissent, preferring a “my way or the highway” approach to leadership.

This “one-man-ism” seems to be the order of the day for those aspir-

ing to be political dictators and it is a class of politics that the younger and more experienced politicians alike are rejecting hands down.

Jamal Pringle's apparent approach of “if not them (the ruling Antigua and Barbuda Labour Party), then me” highlights the fuel that is feeding the UPP's core, but it also serves as a glaring testament to the party's myopic vision on leadership.

Coupled with the “do it my way or else” attitude of the party's chairperson, Ms. Giselle Isaac and Mr. Pringle's apparent belief that he is des-

cont'd on pg 9

NEW Kentucky **CHIZZA** SANDWICH

Sandwich Combo
(with fries & a medium drink)
\$27

Sandwich Only
(spicy or original)
\$21

Pepperoni

Mozzarella Cheese

Marinara sauce

KFC

@kfcanu

FOR PICKUP/DELIVERY

cont'd from pg 8

tioned to become prime minister “by default,” it is no wonder that the limited talent within the UPP is bolting for the exits, leaving behind a wasteland of incompetence.

This toxic combination of egotistical ambition and authoritarian tendencies is the recipe for the pending UPP’s implosion.

As the party’s core supporters cling to the false hope of a victory, the reality is that the UPP does not have a credible leader and it is driving away the very individuals who could breathe new life into their ranks.

As we wait with bated breath for the other shoe to drop, the burning question is “Who will be the next to exit the UPP?”

In contrast, the ruling Antigua and Barbuda Labour Party (ABLP) has maintained a laser-like focus on addressing the concerns of the people, showcasing a dedication and commitment to moving the country forward to the next level of progress and prosperity.

This stark difference in approach is resonating with the electorate, further compounding the struggles faced by the UPP.

Mr. Smith should be commended for having the courage to step away from the madness that has taken up permanent residence within the UPP.

His decision to distance himself from this toxic en-

vironment is a clear sign that he is taking his political career seriously.

The ABLP would be wise to take note of his interests and intentions, as the party may find an invaluable ally in this young and ambitious politician.

The implosion of the UPP is not just a political earthquake – it is a symptom of a deeper malaise



within the party.

Until the UPP confronts and addresses the rot at its core, the cracks in

the center will continue to widen pushing them deeper into the political wilderness.

IT'S A FEEL HOT SUMMER
WITH HADEED MOTORS & CARIBBEAN UNION BANK

THE BEST DEAL EVER. 100% FINANCING
THE BEST INTEREST RATE AND UP TO 8 YEARS TO REPAY.

CHANCE TO WIN NISSAN FRONTIER PRO4X

CHANCE TO WIN T-SHIRT MAS AND J'OUVERT PACKAGES

- Insurance
- 8 Years To Repay
- Gas
- 100% Financing
- Free Service
- Low Interest Rate
- Up To 5 Years Warranty
- No Out Of Pocket Fees
- Licensing & Registration
- No Payment For First Month
- Plates

Terms & Conditions Apply

HADEED MOTORS LTD.
CALL 481-2500

Caribbean Union Bank
CALL 481-8285

How AI is fuelling uncertainty for game developers

By Tom Richardson

"I'm very aware that I could wake up tomorrow and my job could be gone," says Jess Hyland.

The video game artist says the industry she's spent almost 15 years working in is on "shaky" ground at the moment.

A boom in players and profits during the pandemic sparked a flurry of investments, expansions and acquisitions that, in hindsight, now look short-sighted.

Gaming remains profitable, but thousands of workers worldwide have lost their jobs, and successful studios have been shut down over the past two years.

More closures and cuts are feared.

"Everyone knows someone who's been laid off. There's lots of worry about the future," says Jess.

Some bosses are talking up the potential of generative AI - the tech behind tools such as ChatGPT - as a potential saviour.

Tech giant Nvidia has shown off impressive development tool prototypes, and gaming industry heavyweights such as Electronic Arts and Ubisoft are investing in the tech.

It's claimed AI tools can save development time, free workers up to focus on creativity and provide a more personalised user experience.



Nvidia's AI-driven avatars have been hailed as a glimpse of gaming's potential future by some.

With budgets at the blockbuster end of the industry spiralling as audience expectations rise with them, it sounds like a perfect solution.

But not to everyone.

"The people who are most excited about AI enabling creativity aren't creatives," says Jess, a member of the Independent Workers Union of Great Britain's game workers branch. She sits on its artificial intelligence working group.

Against the backdrop of widespread layoffs, Jess says the suspicion among workers is that bosses see

AI as a path to cutting costs when labour is their biggest expense.

Jess says she knows one person who's lost work due to AI, and has heard of it happening to others.

There are also dozens of accounts online suggesting that jobs in concept art and other traditionally entry-level roles have been affected.

Most firms making AI tools insist they're not designed to replace humans, and there's broad agreement that the technology is a long way from being able to do so.

Jess says the bigger

worry is that "jobs are going to change, but not in a good way".

Rather than creating their own material, says Jess, artists worry they could end up supplementing AI's efforts, rather than the other way around.

Publicly available AI image generators, for example, can quickly output impressive-looking results from simple text prompts, but are famously poor at rendering hands. They can also struggle with chairs.

"The stuff that AI generates, you become the person whose job is fixing it,"

cont'd on pg 12



Antigua Barbuda
FESTIVALS
COMMISSION

CIU

ANTIGUA
AND BARBUDA
The beach is just the beginning.

CAVALIER

RUM

CALYPSO

MARCH

SEMI-FINALS THE COOLER FETE

18TH JULY

ADM: \$20.00 ARG | 8:00PM

STATE INSURANCE

inet

RECAB

N

FRENCH
CRU

COOL & SMOOTH

KENNEDY'S CLUB LTD

Technology



cont'd from pg 10

says Jess. "It's not why I got into making games."

Gaming is a multibillion-dollar business but it's also an artistic medium that brings together artists, musicians, writers, program-

mers and actors, to name just some.

A frequent concern is that AI will serve to minimise, rather than enable, the work of those creatives.

It's a view echoed by Chris Knowles, a former

senior engine developer at UK gaming firm Jagex, known for its Runescape title.

"If you're going to have to hire actual human artists to fix the output, why not harness their creativity and

make something new that connects with players?" he says.

Chris, who now runs UK indie studio Sidequest Ninja, says that in his experience smaller developers are generally unenthusiastic about using generative AI.

One of his concerns is around cloned games.

Online game stores - where indie developers make most of their sales - are rife with imitations of original titles.

This is especially true of mobile games, says Chris, and there are studios set up "entirely to churn out clones".

It's not yet possible to rip off a whole game using AI, he says, but copying assets such as artwork is easily done.

"Anything that makes the clone studios' business model even cheaper and quicker makes the difficult task of running a financially sustainable indie studio even harder," says Chris.

He also points to the huge amounts of electricity required to run generative AI systems as a big concern.

Copyright concerns over generative AI - currently the subject of several ongoing legal cases - are one of the biggest barriers to its wider use in gaming right now. Tools are trained on vast quantities of text and pictures scraped from the internet and, like many artists, Jess believes it

cont'd on pg 13





Jess Hyland (seen holding the right side of the banner) is a member of the IWGB union's game workers branch.

cont'd from pg 12
amounts to “mass copyright infringement”.

Some studios are exploring systems trained on internal data, and third parties advertising ethical tools that claim to work off authorised sources are springing up.

Even then, the fear is that AI will be used to turn out assets such as artwork and 3D models at scale, and the expectation on workers will be to produce more output.

“The more content you can make, the more money you can make,” says Jess.

Some in the industry are more positive about AI.

Composer Borislav Slavov, who won a Bafta Games Award for his work on Baldur's Gate 3, told the BBC he was “excited about what AI could bring to the table for music in the near future”.

Speaking at the recent Games Music Festival in London, he said he believed it would enable composers to “explore music directions faster” and push them out of their comfort zones.

“This would allow the composers to focus way more on the essence - getting inspired and composing deeply emotional and strong themes,” he said.

However, he did agree that AI could not “replace the human soul and spirit”.

While she has serious personal reservations about using the tech to “automate creativity”, Jess says she wouldn't be against using it to bear the burden of some of the more repetitive admin tasks that are a feature of most projects.

The AI industry is currently trying to reassure governments and regulators over concerns about its future

use, as shown by a recent law passed by the EU

It will also have to work hard to win over another group - gamers.

Online shooter The Finals received a backlash over its use of synthesised voice lines, and developer Square Enix was criticised for the limited use of generated art in its multiplayer game Foamstars.

Jess believes growing talk about AI has made gamers “think about what they love about games and what's special about that - sharing experiences crafted by other humans”.

“I'm still putting something of myself into it and I think there's a growing recognition of that.”

Indie developer Chris adds: “If you train a generative model on nothing but cave paintings, all it'll ever give you will be cave paintings.”

“It takes humans to get from there to the Sistene Chapel.”

Truth Social shares surge after Trump shooting

Shares in Donald Trump's social media company have surged after he survived an assassination attempt on Saturday.

Shares in Trump Media, which runs the Truth Social platform, closed up about 31%. The price had risen as much as 70% in pre-market trading over the weekend before falling back again.

Analysts said the gains reflected bets that the shooting had improved Mr Trump's chances of winning the US presidential election in November.

A bullet caught the former president's ear during one of his election rallies, shortly before the gunman was shot dead by a Secret Service sniper.

"I'm supposed to be dead, I'm not supposed to be here," Mr Trump said in one of his first interviews since the attack.

Billionaire Elon Musk is among those who have formally endorsed Mr Trump since the shooting.

"As the election intensifies, investors are betting that more individuals will tune in to the social media platform to express their views as well as be among the first to view the postings from President Trump and his team," said Susan Schmidt, head of public equity at State of Wisconsin Investment Board.

However, Wall Street analyst Cary Leahey said this was a trade "about the election more than the business", noting that Truth Social had been struggling to grow.

"If [Trump's] chances of being elected go up, is his firm more valuable? Some traders think so.

"I am confident that if Biden dropped out, Truth Social shares would go down," he added.

Mr Trump founded the Trump Media and Technology Group in 2021 after



he lost the 2020 presidential election and was temporarily booted off major social platforms, including Twitter and Facebook, which accused him of inciting violence after the Capitol Hill riots.

Truth Social largely follows the same format as X, formerly Twitter, and has about 2 million active users, although claims vary according to difference sources.

Mr Trump is the majority shareholder. At the current share price - roughly \$40 a share - his holdings are worth roughly \$5bn - far more than analysts say is justified by the company's sales and operations.

The firm's share price has been notoriously volatile, often tied to events in Mr Trump's life - and his election odds.

Shares of its predecessor company started rallying in January, after Mr Trump defeated Republican challengers in the primaries.

The price soared further after Trump Media formally debuted on the Nasdaq stock exchange in March.

But shares slumped at the start of his criminal trial in April, in which he was later convicted of fraud charges linked to hush-money that was paid to adult-film

actress Stormy Daniels.

The current share price remains below levels seen in March.

"There is no current fundamental business performance of the company that supports this current 'price' but buyers are likely political supporters purchasing shares to support the President's wealth ahead of the election," said Thomas J Hayes, chairman of Great Hill Capital.

On Saturday, images of Mr Trump holding up his fist defiantly to show he had survived the assassination attempt elicited roars from his supporting crowd.

Mr Trump later told US media he felt that he had been saved "by luck or by God".

"The most incredible thing was that I happened to not only turn [my head] but to turn at the exact right time and in just the right amount," he said, adding that the bullet that grazed his ear could have easily killed him.

One audience member was killed in the attack, while two other people were seriously injured. The gunman has been named as Thomas Matthew Crooks.

The motive of the shooter remains unclear.



ON AIR

STAY ON POINTE

POINTE FM 99.1

Your **Monday Conversations**,
this and every **Monday!**

6:30pm - 8:30pm

Host Michael Freeland

CALL 562- 3989 OR 562-2991 (US) 718-285-7889 FACEBOOK LIVE @POINTE FM99.1

Regional News



Dominica PM says regional leaders discuss campaign finance reform

CMC - Prime Minister Roosevelt Skerrit says Caribbean Community (CARICOM) governments have discussed the issue of campaign financing reform, even as he acknowledged that the matter is “not a straightforward” situation.

Opposition parties here have been calling for campaign finance reform as part of the overall electoral reform in Dominica, boycotting the last general election in 2022.

“Now the issue of campaign financing, in principle we support it. But when that was discussed at the CARICOM level and the OECS (Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States) level...there was a view by the heads of government in CARICOM, look, this is a matter that should be dealt with from a regional standpoint because of the complexity of it,” he said

“They were of the view that this should be handled at a regional level. As a matter of fact, there was even a view that we should engage on further consultations on this and to see what type of uniform legislation that we can bring to the table for consideration by the CARICOM heads of government on the issue of campaign finance.”

Skerrit described the issue as a “very complex” one, adding “it is not a straightforward stuff.

“Those who are not involved in politics believe it is straight forward, but it is not straight forward. This is why even in the United States where you have such legislation, it gives ... the candidates the opportunity to opt out that arrangement and they are allowed to raise as much money as they wish to.

“So we are not opposed to it in principle. But what we are saying is



Prime Minister Roosevelt Skerrit. Photo: CMC

that, one, that was never part of the original consideration that where electoral reform is concerned and secondly that would not affect the fundamental points that were raised and are addressed in the bill before the country now,” Skerrit said, adding “but at next rounds of discussion we can look at it, likewise amendments to the constitution”.

Earlier this month, the Electoral Reform Coalition (ERC) called for the implementation of recommendations that it claimed have been omitted from draft legislation the government has released as it moves ahead with its efforts to bring to Parliament before yearend, the proposed electoral modernisation legislation as part of the electoral reform process in Dominica.

In June last year, the former president of the Trinidad-based Caribbean Court of Justice (CCJ), Sir Dennis Byron, submitted a report on electoral reform to the Dominica government.

Dennis had been the sole commissioner advancing the efforts towards electoral reform, a major issue here with the opposition parties, the United Workers Party (UWP) and the Dominica Freedom Party (DFP) boycotting the last general election.

The boycott led to the ruling Dominica Labour Party (DLP) securing 19 of the 21 seats, with the remainder going to independent candidates.

ERC executive member, Pastor Randy Rodney, told a rally that among the recommendations made by Sir Dennis Byron to have been inexplicably deleted from the draft legislation, include provisions related to campaign financing and that the draft legislation also fails to adequately address residency, voter identification, and registration requirements.

Skerrit said that a commission is to be appointed to begin the process of constitutional reform for Dominica and that it could be in place this year.

cont'd on pg 17



Arrival of Containerized Generators in Sint Maarten. (Photo credit: Government of Sint Maarten)

Sint Maarten PM says 'hope on the horizon' with arrival of generators

Prime Minister of Sint Maarten Dr Luc Mercelina says the arrival of Containerized generators on the island represents a significant step forward in ensuring a stable and reliable energy supply for residents of the island.

Over the weekend, energy company, NV GEBE

announced the arrival of seven containerized engines totalling 10MW to address the country's Load Shedding issues.

The prime minister said under the presence of NV GEBE's management Troy Washington, SoEnergy International and Harbor personnel, the gener-

ators were successfully offloaded without incident on Sunday afternoon.

Prime Minister Dr Luc Mercelina stated: "The arrival of these generators is a monumental step towards securing a reliable energy supply for our country and minimising the current load shedding.

"Next is to ensure the smooth delivery and installation process at the GEBE Power Plant."

The Prime Minister emphasized the positive impact these generators will have on the island, stating, "Hope is on the horizon!"

NV GEBE on Sunday said final preparations were underway at NV GEBE's Power Plant for the highly-anticipated containerized generators.

Sint Maarten has been under a load shedding schedule as the country's sole electricity provider, NV GEBE, is currently unable to generate the power required to supply everyone.

cont'd from pg 16

"Very soon we will appoint a Commission, once we pass the Electoral Reform Bill, we intend to appoint a Commission that will look at constitutional reform and we shall use the Telford Georges report and the Liverpool report as a base for consultation.

'We are going to use that to start off and whatever new elements that we come up to add to what we have because both the Telford Georges and the Liverpool re-

ports are pretty comprehensive in nature and scope, but we will put it to the public, so the Commissioner who will be appointed will use those two documents to present to the public".

Skerrit said that the final document will be taken to the public for consideration where constitutional reform is concerned "because we believe that it is important that we have constitutional reform especially as we are approaching our 50th anniversary of independence".

Irish Prime Minister condemns 'reprehensible' Dublin violence

Fifteen people have appeared at a special court sitting in Dublin following violence during a protest at a site which had been earmarked for asylum seekers.

Some protestors set pallets and construction machinery alight at the former Crown Paints factory in Coolock in north Dublin, resulting in a large fire.

It is understood work was due to begin on the Malahide Road site later in the week.

Taoiseach (Irish Prime Minister) Simon Harris described the disturbances as "reprehensible".

The 15 people who appeared at Dublin District Court on Monday evening were charged with public order offences, including failure to comply with the orders of a garda (police officer) and with threatening



A large crowd gathered at the Coolock site in north Dublin.

or abusive behaviour.

All 15 were released on conditional bail, provided they stay away from the scene of the disorder.

They are all due to appear in court again on 18 September.

Another four people who were arrested are due

to appear in court on Tuesday morning.

More than 200 gardaí were deployed to the incident.

Three Garda cars were been damaged, one of which was set on fire, Irish broadcaster RTÉ reported.

It said pepper spray was

used by police as a security guard and a number of gardaí were injured during clashes with protesters.

Petrol bombs and fireworks were thrown, mattresses were set on fire damaging a JCB and fires were lit on the roads during the disturbances.

Gardaí described the disturbances as a public order incident and the road was closed for a period.

They said officers were "subjected to both verbal and physical abuse throughout the day, which escalated into rocks, fireworks and other objects being launched towards them".

"A number of fires were lit and official Garda vehicles seriously damaged," a spokesperson said.

"As the situation inten-

cont'd on pg 19



In total 19 people were arrested during the disturbances.

Biden defends calling Trump a threat to democracy

By **Christal Hayes**

Joe Biden defended the rhetoric he has used against Donald Trump, in his first interview since the attempt on his rival's life.

The president said his campaign had a duty to clearly communicate the threat of a second Trump term.

He told NBC's Lester Holt it had been a "mistake" to have said it was "time to put Trump in a bullseye" during a private donor call days before the assassination attempt, and disagreed there was a need to tone down his rhetoric.

Mr Biden said he meant Democrats needed to focus more on Trump, his policies and the false statements he made during the presidential debate late last month.

The president has repeatedly called for Americans to "lower the temperature" since the shooting.

About a dozen Republicans have blamed Mr Biden and Democrats at-large for inciting the attempt on Trump's life. Many have cited Biden's «bullseye» comment.

According to Politico, Mr Biden said on the call: "I have one job, and that's to beat Donald Trump. I'm absolutely certain I'm the best person



to be able to do that. So, we're done talking about the debate. It's time to put Trump in a bullseye."

Biden, in an Oval Office address, denounced the attack and called for Americans to "take a step back" and warned that "political rhetoric in this country has gotten very heated".

When asked by NBC if he has also taken a step back to examine his past remarks for anything "that could incite people who are not balanced", Mr Biden said the inflammatory rhetoric has not come from him.

"I've not engaged in that rhetoric," Biden says firmly. "Now, my opponent is engaged in that rhetoric."

"How do you talk about the threat to democracy, which is real, when a president says things like he says?" Mr Biden said. "Do you just not say anything, because it may incite somebody?"

"I am not the guy that said I want to be a dictator on day one, I am not the guy that refused to accept the outcome of the election."

FBI officials identified the gunman who targeted Trump as Thomas Matthew Crooks, 20, a kitchen worker from Bethel Park, Pennsylvania, who is a registered Republican. A Secret Service sniper shot Crooks dead after he fired at the president.

cont'd from pg 18

sified, members of An Garda Síochána used force to defend themselves as part of an escalated response to the situation."

Garda Commissioner Drew Harris said: it had been a difficult day for his officers and condemned what happened.

"We have seen attacks on gardaí, criminal damage and offences of serious

public disorder," he said.

"All of these will be fully investigated. We have 15 people charged and we will have further charges overnight."

The Irish justice minister said she was "appalled at the criminal behaviour that took place in Coolock".

Helen McEntee said anybody involved would face "the full rigours of the law".

Dublin city councillor Mícheál Mac Donncha described the incident as "deplorable" and that "violence, intimidation and arson should have no place in our communities".

"The burning of vehicles and attempted burning of the building are violent criminal acts and must be strongly condemned," the Sinn Féin representative said.

He said the Department of Integration had said the site was being developed to accommodate families seeking international protection.

"Those responsible should desist immediately," he added.

"This is an effort to spread fear and hate in our communities and the vast majority of decent people want nothing to do with it."



Players of Argentina celebrate with the trophy after beating Colombia in the Copa America final soccer match in Miami Gardens, Florida, USA, July 15, 2024. (AP)

Argentina wins record 16th Copa America title

MIAMI GARDENS, Fla. (AP) — Lionel Messi pumped his arms. The trophy bounced up and down in his grasp. Tears of frustration from an hour or so earlier had turned to laughs and hugs for the two-time Copa America champion and World Cup winner.

Messi was forced to watch much of the second half and extra time because of a leg injury. Still, Argentina won their second straight Copa America championship, beating Colombia 1-0 Sunday night on Lautaro Martínez's 112th-minute goal.

"Leo is the greatest player in history," Argentina coach Lionel Scaloni said through an interpreter.

"He never wants to leave the pitch. He has a swollen ankle and

wants to keep playing. I prefer those players. He wants to play not because he is egotistical or selfish. He wants to keep playing because he doesn't want to leave his teammates. ... He was born to be on the pitch."

Messi appeared to sustain a non-contact injury while running and falling in the 64th minute. The eight-time Ballon d'Or winner covered his face with his hands as he sat on the bench and sobbed.

Martínez later ran to that bench to hug his 37-year-old captain after the goal that propelled Argentina to their record 16th Copa title.

Appearing to be limping after the final whistle sounded well past midnight, Messi beckoned for his senior teammates to lift the trophy with

him: 36-year-old Nicolás Ottamendi and Ángel Di María, who is retiring from the national team. As white confetti cascaded, the trio hugged.

In a match that started 1 hour, 22 minutes late because of crowd trouble at Hard Rock Stadium, Argentina won their third straight major title following the 2021 Copa America and 2022 World Cup and matched Spain, which won the 2008 and 2012 European Championships around the 2010 World Cup.

Argentina also stopped Colombia's 28-game unbeaten streak dating to a 1-0 loss to Albiceleste in a February 2022 World Cup qualifier, also on a Martínez goal.

Martínez entered in the 97th

cont'd on pg 21

Cutting Edge FC extend unbeaten run in U-17 Youth Premier League

Cutting Edge FC extended their unbeaten run during the penultimate round of matches in the preliminary phase of the Cool and Smooth Antigua and Barbuda Football Association's (ABFA) Under-17 Youth Premier League on Saturday.

Cutting Edge FC solidifies their position at the top of the 10-team round-robin competition, retaining their status as the only unbeaten team in the contest by snatching a 4-3 victory on penalties against the Liberta Blackhawks during the eighth round of matches at the ABFA Technical Center.

Cutting Edge FC advanced to 24 points after notching up their eighth win in as many games. The Liberta Blackhawks remain in third place with 15 points after losing for the second time in seven matches.

Aston Villa Lions beat Five Islands FC 3-1 to remain in second place, advancing to 21 points after

claiming their seventh win in eight matches.

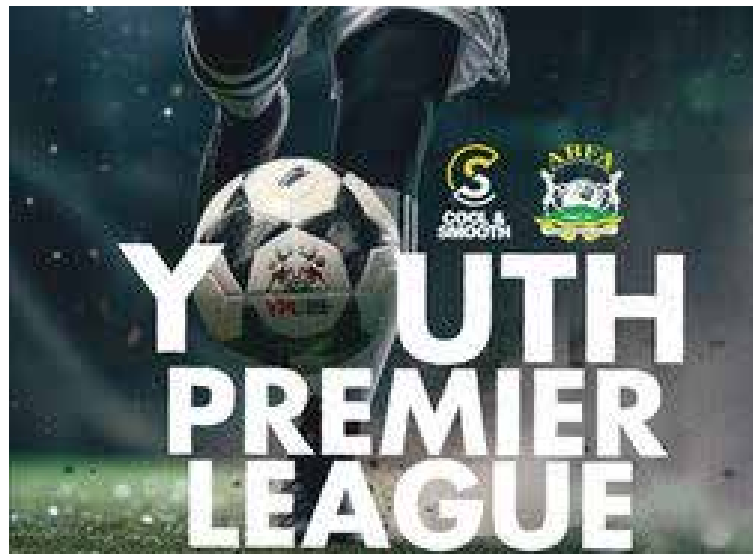
SAP FC won 3-0 by default against CPTSA Wings Sports Club, which failed to show up for their encounter. Their fifth win in eight matches allows SAP FC to join the Liberta Blackhawks on 15 points.

The CPTSA Wings will remain on 12 points after losing for the third time in seven matches.

The Young Warriors FC claimed their first win in eight matches after romping to a 7-2 victory against the Antigua Barracuda FC in a bottom-of-the-table clash.

The Young Warriors FC remain in the cellar on goal difference after joining the Antigua Barracuda FC, who are second from the bottom of the standings on three points.

Old Road trounced Empire 9-0 to claim their fourth win in eight matches and advanced to 12 points. Empire remains third from the bottom of the standings on three points after suf-



fering their seventh defeat in eight matches.

The ninth and final round of matches in the preliminary stage took place on Monday.

Two of the 10 teams will be eliminated, and the top eight finishers at the end of the preliminary stage will advance to the next phase of the competition.

The eight qualifiers and their accumulated points will go into two groups in the second phase of the competition. Matches in the second phase will be contested on Friday, July

19; Sunday, July 21; and Tuesday, July 23.

Meanwhile, the Under-19 Youth Premier League will continue with its 12th or penultimate round of matches in the preliminary phase on Tuesday (today).

There will be double headers at the Mack Pond playing field in All Saints, the Jennings playing field, and the ABFA Technical Center at 4:45 pm and 6:15 pm.

All Saints United FC will take on Urlings FC, and Sea View Farm FC will tackle Green City FC at All Saints.

Jennings United FC will face Willikies FC, and Soccer Academy will clash with Golden Grove FC at Jennings.

Aston Villa Lions will challenge Garden Stars FC, and Greenbay Hoppers will meet Ottos Rangers FC at the ABFA Technical Center.

cont'd from pg 20

minute Sunday and scored from Giovanni Lo Celso's perfect pass after Leandro Paredes stripped the ball from a Colombian with a sliding tackle near the center stripe.

Paredes exchanged passes with Martínez, then threaded the ball to Lo Celso, who one-timed a through ball as Martínez sprinted past defender Carlos Cuesta.

Martínez ran onto the ball, took a touch that sent him into the penalty area and struck a right-foot shot through the upraised arms of sliding goalkeeper Camilo Vargas for his 29th international goal, his tournament-high fifth.

Colombia's coach Néstor Lorenzo said many Colombia players finished with severe cramping. Temperatures were in the upper 80s with humidity around 73%.

Browne wins first national cycling champion title

Teenager Tajhe Browne has dethroned Jyme Bridges to become the National Cycling Champion of Antigua and Barbuda for the first time.

The 17-year-old Wadadli Cycling Academy cyclist won the overall title during the two-stage 2024 National Cycling Championships over the weekend.

Twenty-four hours after winning the Inet Individual Time Trial, which comprised the first part of the dual national cycling championships, Browne finished second overall in the Antigua and Barbuda Cycling Federation's (ABCF) Top Ranking Individual Road Race on Sunday.

Browne clocked the fastest time to win the 24.435-kilometer individual time trial.

He completed the race in 35 minutes and 50.98 seconds to win the junior male category, in which Jomari King finished second and Aiden Tonge came in third.

Veteran Robert March beat Bridges to capture the elite male division. Marsh clocked 36 minutes and 08.91 seconds.

Bridges, who won the national title in 2022 and 2023, completed the time trial in 38 minutes and 31.88 seconds. Abbiel Flemming finished in third place.



Tajhe Browne

Lone competitor Telesha Choy won the female national title by winning both the individual time trial and road races. Choy won the time trial in 24 minutes and 36.25 seconds.

Choy won the road race by completing the three-lap course in a time of one hour, 55 minutes, and 40.71 seconds.

The other division winners in the individual time trial are as follows: Tacuma Davis won the sports class;

runner-up spot in the Elite Men's division ahead of Conroy Thomas.

Browne won the junior male category ahead of Tonge and King. Browne completed the six-lap race in three hours, 16 minutes, and 25.39 seconds.

Tonge completed four laps in two hours, 12 minutes, and 34.76 seconds, and King completed two laps in one hour, five minutes, and 33.95 seconds.

Vaughn Gomes held off a strong challenge from Ira Fabian in a sprint finish to capture the Masters Division title.

Gomes completed the four-lap race in a time of two hours, 24 minutes, and 46.33 seconds, while Fabian crossed the finish line in two hours, 24 minutes, and 48.22 seconds. Edward Henry came in third.

Lone competitor Tacuma Davis won the sports class by completing the two-lap course in one hour, 28 minutes, and 16.05 seconds.

Elite Thomas of Road Runners Cycling Club won the Cadets 11-14 category. Thomas completed one lap of the course in a time of 36 minutes and 01.84 seconds.

The National Cycling Championships were sponsored by APUA Inet, Top Ranking, and Anjo Wholesale, agents for Gatorade.

Ira Fabian won the masters division ahead of Edward Henry and Neil Lloyd; and Elite Thomas beat Benjamin Carr to win the Cadets 11-14 class.

Browne finished second overall in the road race, which was won by Bridges.

Bridges secured victory, winning the elite male division by completing the six-lap road race in a time of three hours, 11 minutes, and 51.78 seconds.

Marsh clinches the

Republic Bank CPL squads confirmed for 2024

The Republic Bank Caribbean Premier League (CPL) squads for the 2024 season have been confirmed following the completion of the player draft.

Kyle Mayers was the first pick of the draft, joining the St. Kitts and Nevis Patriots. He will be joined at the Patriots by Mikyle Louis, Ryan John, and Veerasammy Permaul.

The St. Lucia Kings welcome USA international Aaron Jones, who qualifies to play at the CPL as a local player as he has a Barbados passport. The Kings have also selected Khari Campbell, Johann Jeremiah, Mikkel Govia, and Akeem Auguste.

The Barbados Royals have picked Kadeem Alleyne, Isai Thorne, and Nathan Sealy to complete their squad, while the Guyana Amazon Warriors have selected all-rounders Raymon Reifer and Ronaldo Alimohamed.

Matthew Nandu also re-joins the Warriors, having been selected in the draft.

The Antigua and Barbuda Falcons picked five players at the draft with



Roshon Primus, Justin Greaves, Jahmar Hamilton, Teddy Bishop, and Kofi James joining the newest CPL team.

The Trinbago Knight Riders selected Nathan Ed-

ward and Shaquere Parris in their emerging player spots.

The 2024 season gets underway on August 29 with the Antigua and Barbuda Falcons taking on the St. Kitts and Nevis Patriots

at the Sir Vivian Richards Cricket Stadium.

Matches in the tournament will also be played in St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, Barbados, Trinidad & Tobago, and Guyana.

cont'd from pg 24

Jackson, ABSCA Female T20 Competition at the same venue on Sunday.

Female Flyers made 136 for six off their 20 overs after losing the toss and being sent in to bat.

Makada Samuel hit 39, and Gay-

nell O'Garro struck 24. Menover Govia and Joan Samuel each captured two wickets for 32 runs.

In reply, the Survivors were restricted to 93 for six off their allotted 20 overs. Joan Samuel scored 22 not out, and Kimberly Anthony made 19.

Gaynell O'Garro, who was named player of the final, snapped up three wickets for 11 runs.

O'Garro was also named the Most Valuable Player (MVP) of the tournament. She scored a total of 92 runs and captured nine wickets.

Sports

TUESDAY 16TH JULY 2024



Bullets and Female Flyers win T20 softball titles

Bryson's Shipping and Insurance Bullets and Alzarri and Sharon Joseph Female Flyers have captured titles in the Antigua and Barbuda Softball Cricket Association's (ABSCA) T20 competitions.

Bullets beat Marco Inc. Grill Box Buckley's 3J's by 25 runs in the final of the Natural Construction Glenroy Marsh ABSCA Men's T20 competition, which was reduced to 15 overs due to a wet pitch, at the Potters playing field on Sunday.

Bullets made 130 for nine off their 15 overs in the final of the ABSCA's competition, which is supported by corporate sponsors Enforcers, Everyday 24/7 Limited, Alva Joseph, We the People (WTP) 93.5FM,



Bryson's Shipping and Insurance Bullets and the St. John's Co-operative Credit Union.

Essan Warner slammed 44, and Deran Benta struck 35. Rodney Williams

claimed three for 24.

In reply, Buckley's 3J's were dismissed for 105. Kenrick Scott hit 47, and Kadeem Henry got 19.

Essan Warner, who was named player of the final, grabbed four wickets for 17 runs; Dorian Grant picked up two wickets for nine runs; and Kerry Burton claimed two wickets for 10 runs. Deran Benta was named the Most Valuable Player (MVP) of the tournament. Benta scored a total of 208 runs and captured four wickets.

Female Flyers beat Wayne's Electrical Services Survivors by 43 runs in the final of the Goody's Taxi Service and Tours, Sherma



Alzarri and Sharon Joseph Female Flyers

cont'd on pg 23