

OMBUDSMAN ON COLLISION COURSE WITH GOVERNMENT

Story on Page 2



Happy Times - Prime Minister Gaston Browne and his mother several years ago. Patricia Rose Richards passed away on Tuesday at 76 years old. *Story on page 3.*

Local News



Ombudsman on collision course with government

The Government of Antigua and Barbuda has registered its disapproval of a report, allegedly authored by the country's ombudsman.

While the contents of the report are yet to be revealed, it has not stopped the government from publicly declaring that it was bias reporting and that the ombudsman may have acted outside the ambit of her role.

In the House of Representatives last week, Attorney General, Sir Steadroy Benjamin said the matter will be laid bare during the next sitting of parliament. Saint Phillip's South MP, Sherfield Bowen, suggested the composition of a committee to address the issues arising from the report, but Prime Minister Gaston Browne said it was necessary for the discussion to be held when next the lower house convenes, to which Sir Steadroy Benjamin agreed.

"Mr. Speaker, this counsel has had the opportunity of reading reports from ombudsmen over the years from Australia and other places and from this particular person as well. Sad to say sir, this is not in keeping with the ordinary reports one would expect from a constitutional provision holder, where there is to be no bias, but impartial representation of facts," he stated.

The attorney general said the issue will not be allowed to go unnoticed.

"This will be dealt with by us and by me in particular on the appropriate occasion Mr. Speaker."

Efforts to contact Sir Steadroy Benjamin to shed more light on this development were unsuccessful.

The Office of the Ombudsman, established in June, 1995, is enshrined in the Constitution of Antigua and Barbuda, 1981 and Ombudsman Act, 1994 No. 5 of 1994. Its functions are



Attorney General, Sir Steadroy Benjamin "To investigate any complaint relating to any decision or recommendation made or any act done or omitted by any officer of Government or Statutory Body in any case in which a member of the Public claims to be aggrieved, or appears to the Ombudsman to have sustained injustice as a result of the exercise of administrative function of that officer or body".

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Prime Minister mourns loss of his mother

Patricia Rose Richards, the mother of Prime Minister Gaston Browne passed away yesterday at the age of 76 years.

According to reports, Richards was discovered unresponsive at home in Belmont yesterday morning by her daughter, Blondell, who was her carer.

She was pronounced dead by a medical doctor and her body was subse-

quently removed to a funeral home pending an autopsy to determine the cause of death.

“Soldiering on in grief on the sudden passing of my dear mother, Patricia Rose Richards.

“Love you mom; may your soul rest in peace and rise in heaven,” Mr. Browne wrote on his Facebook page yesterday, alongside a photograph of

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Local News



cont'd from pg 3
him and his mother.

Patricia Richards was diabetic and for decades suffered from mental illness, which Prime Minister Browne has spoken of on numerous occasions. In the past, he told the nation of his mother's institutionalisation.

She was later moved

out of the Clarevue Psychiatric Hospital and was cared for at home.

Government officials, relatives, friends, supporters, citizens and residents across the country have been offering condolences to Prime Minister Browne and his family in their time of mourning.

The head of govern-

ment has reportedly said his mother lived a long life, despite her illness.

Minister Maria Browne, daughter-in-law of the late Patricia Rose Richards paid tribute to her mother-in-law, noting,

“Immensely grateful for this lady who nurtured her family despite her challenges, instilling

in them priceless values - giving her children all she could. She is the true definition of resilience and strength”.

Antigua and Barbuda Labour Party Chairman, E.P Chet Greene offered condolences to the prime minister and his family on behalf of the party, writing in a statement, “The loss of a parent is a profound and life-altering experience and we can only imagine the depth of your grief.

Your mother's unwavering love, guidance and support have undoubtedly played an integral role in shaping the leader and person you are today.

Her legacy will continue to inspire not only her family but also the wider community that she touched with her kindness and compassion”.

It continued, “We know that no words can truly ease the pain of this profound loss, but please know that our thoughts and prayers are with you and your family.

“We stand alongside you, ready to provide any support or assistance you may need during this challenging period.

“May the cherished memories of your mother and the love of your family and friends bring you comfort and strength in the days ahead.

We mourn with you and celebrate the life of a remarkable woman who will be deeply missed”.

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DEPARTURE: 3 PM

JUL | 25

ROUTE:

RIGHT onto Independence Drive, LEFT on Redcliffe St, RIGHT on Thames St, RIGHT on High Street, LEFT on Independence Drive into ARG.



Local News



ABEMS unveils comprehensive plan for Carnival 2024

A comprehensive strategic plan has been implemented by the Antigua and Barbuda Emergency Medical Services (ABEMS) to ensure the highest quality of pre-hospital care for citizens, residents and visitors during the carnival season.

ABEMS said it is committed to maintaining safety and providing swift medical responses during the carnival celebrations.

To ensure readiness and prompt response, two ambulances and four highly trained Medics/EMTs will be stationed at Carnival City, with operations commencing one hour before showtime.

Additionally, a field supervisor will rove around Carnival City and the ABEMS base to assist with the well-being of staff and equipment.

At ABEMS headquarters on University Drive, two fully equipped ambulances, two rapid response units and eight medics will be on duty, prepared to respond and support field medics, it was revealed.

For Tee-Shirt Mas on Saturday, 27th July, 2024, a medical outpost/triage area will be positioned at the ABEMS headquarters from noon to midnight and on 5th and 6th August, 2024.

The area will feature two tents, two ambulances, medical equipment, cots and six highly trained Medics/EMTs to support Sir Lester



Bird Medical Centre and manage intoxicated patients. More serious cases will be transported to SLBMC for advanced care, the ABEMS said.

To ensure comprehensive coverage, medics equipped with medical bags, Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) and communication devices will be posted at strategic locations around Saint John's on Carnival Monday and Tuesday. All ambulances and medical outposts will be equipped with AEDs and necessary medical supplies.

The Antigua and Barbuda Emergency Medical Services (ABEMS) assures that it remains steadfast in its mission to provide the best pre-hospital care throughout the carnival festivities and stand committed to ensuring the health and safety of all participants during the annual summer festival.

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Suitably qualified applicants are invited to email their applications to: humanresources.ntw@gmail.com on or before July 29, 2024.

Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted.

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Villa teen on larceny charges

A 16-year-old Villa youth has found himself on the wrong side of the law.

The young man who was not identified due to his age, is facing charges of breaking and larceny following an incident in April of this year at Fort Road.

The boy is accused of breaking into a home on 24th April, 2024 and stealing several items including a PlayStation 3 console, a Lenovo laptop computer, and a 40-inch TV among other items.

The value of the items is said to be almost \$5,500.

Meanwhile, a Freemans Village man has been arrested and charged with fraud.

The 50-year-old is ac-



cused of fraudulently converting over one hundred and seventy-six thousand

dollars, which was given to him for the construction of a house.

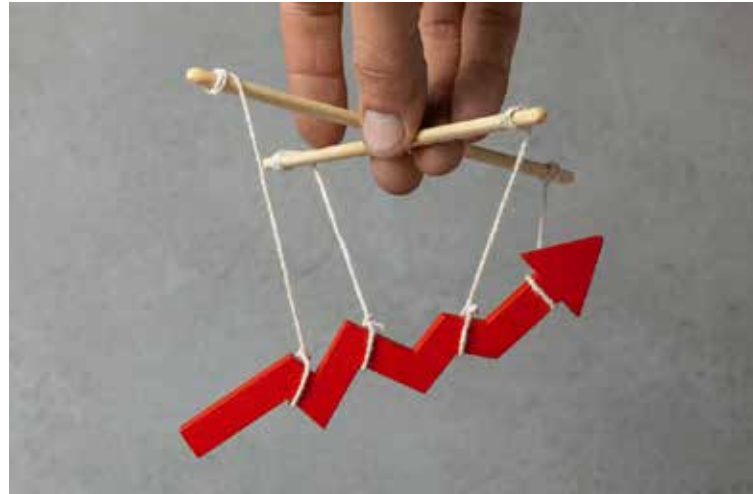
He has also been charged with larceny for the cash amount.

Price Control Order revised

The Price Control Order has been revised based on the provision given under section three of the Distribution and Price of Goods Act CAP 138 of 1967.

In a statement, the Prices and Consumer Affairs Division said the primary objective is to make essential goods affordable and accessible to the public at fair prices.

The revision in goods will result in adult diapers, antibacterial ointment, bed pad/liner, infant products, personal care items (deodorant, lotion, mouthwash, shampoo and conditioner), fabric softener, sanitary nap-



kins, seeds, tofu and chunks being added to the order for the first time. In other instances, size specifications have been added to goods.

Traders and consumers are asked to pay special attention to these goods, as all

sizes are not covered under the Act. Additionally, juices must be 100% juice and below one liter. Notably, removed from the Order are sodas, aerated water, mineral water, condensed milk, confectionery, cereal and

other foods with high sugar content.

The revised Price Control Order was gazetted in May 2024 and takes effect on 1st August, 2024. Traders can obtain a copy from the Government Printery for \$4.70.

Traders are advised that they must display the revised order prominently in their business so that consumers can access it.

Traders and consumers can contact the division at 462-0834 for more information and details regarding the fixed percentage markup for goods named under the Act.

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VACANCY - SALES CONTROLLER

The Antigua Public Utilities Authority is now seeking applications from suitably qualified persons for the position of Sales Controller:

The Sales Controller is responsible for leading the Corporate and Retail sales teams and functions in the Telecommunications Business Unit. This includes setting sales quotas, creating sales plans, analyzing data, managing the relationships with key corporate customers, monitoring sales zones and building the sales teams through training, mentoring and implementing performance interventions to maximize their potential for success.

Key tasks include, but are not limited to the following:

- Meeting marketing and sales financial objectives by forecasting requirements, preparing budgets & scheduling expenditures, analyzing variances and initiating corrective actions;
- Developing sales plans by forecasting and developing sales quotas, projecting sales volumes and profit for existing and new products, analyzing trends, establishing pricing strategies while monitoring costs, competition, supply and demand;
- Completing sales audits, identifying trends, determining improvements and recommending changes;
- Achieving marketing and sales objectives by planning, developing, implementing, and evaluating advertising, merchandising, and trade promotion programs including developing field sales action plans;
- Developing and sustaining rapport with key accounts by creating and maintaining a portfolio of corporate customers; exploring their specific usage patterns to recommend service plans that best fit their needs while anticipating new opportunities for business;
- Managing the relationships with outside vendors and re-sellers of our products and services;
- Managing the remuneration schemes and performance of sales teams including setting & monitoring of targets, issuing assignments & sales calls, formally assessing performance of teams and individuals routinely;
- Preparing comprehensive monthly reports to include growth trends, customer churn & receivables by product line.

Minimum Qualifications:

- Bachelor's Degree in Marketing, Business Management (or related field) from a reputable tertiary institution;
- Three (3) to five (5) years work experience in a senior sales role;
- Demonstrated ability to successfully lead a sales team.

Knowledge, Skills & Abilities:

- Experience in planning and implementing sales strategies and customer relationship management;
- Proven leadership experience managing and directing a sales team with the ability to inspire and motivate them to achieve targets;
- Dedication to providing outstanding customer experiences;
- Excellent oral and written communication skills;
- A high degree of flexibility; the ability to work under pressure and to deadlines; the ability to work additional hours and/or perform additional duties in the event of planned/unplanned outages, storms and emergencies.

Interested persons are asked to apply in writing to:

The Human Resources Manager
Antigua Public Utilities Authority
P.O. Box 416
Cnr. High Street & Independence Avenue
St. Johns, Antigua
OR Email: hr@apua.ag

Deadline for application is Wednesday 7th August, 2024

** Only suitable applicants will be acknowledged **
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Technology



Cyber-security firm rejects \$23bn Google takeover

Israeli cyber-security firm Wiz has rejected a \$23bn (£17.8bn) takeover offer from Google parent company Alphabet, in what would have been its largest-ever acquisition.

In an internal memo to staff seen by the BBC, Wiz founder and chief executive Assaf Rappaport said he was “flattered” by the offer.

He said the company would instead seek to reach \$1bn (£775m) in revenue before selling shares to the public.

A source close to the deal told the BBC the offer was “very tempting”, but Wiz believed it was big enough to go it alone and attempt to become the biggest cyber-security company in the world.

Earlier this year, the firm reported an annual recurring revenue of \$500m (£387m).

And it claimed itself to be the fastest-growing software company in history in 2022, when it reached \$100m (£74m) in annual revenue in its first 18 months.

Wiz and Alphabet have been approached for comment.

“I know the last week has been intense, with the buzz around a potential acquisition,” said Mr Rappaport in the memo sent to staff.

“While we are flattered



Wiz CEO Assaf Rappaport told staff they company was “flattered by offers” it had received.

by offers we have received, we have chosen to continue on our path to building Wiz.”

In turning down Google’s offer, Wiz will look to make an initial public offering (IPO) - a major step which would see the firm debut on a stock exchange.

Wiz is the third venture by Mr Rappaport and his three co-founders Ami Luttwak, Roy Reznik and Yinon Costic, who first met while serving in the Israeli military.

The group worked together in the country’s equivalent of the UK’s GCHQ or the US National Security Agency.

Many of the biggest Israeli cyber-security com-

panies in the world have been created by people who served in this division, including Check Point, Palo Alto and Armis.

In 2012 the founders started a cyber-security company called Adallom, which was bought by Microsoft for \$320m (£248m) three years later.

The founders took their team to the tech giant as part of the deal, where they worked on security products.

They left Microsoft and launched Wiz in March 2020.

Commentators have attributed the founders’ work at Microsoft for creating such excitement at Alphabet about a potential purchase

of Wiz.

In May, it was valued at \$12bn (£9.3bn) during a \$1bn (£775m) fundraising campaign.

“This is the mindset we need in Europe,” said London Stock Exchange head of tech Neil Shah in a post on LinkedIn.

“The founders of Wiz walk away from a billion \$ payday and have put it back on the roulette table in the hope of a more rewarding outcome in the long term.

“They saw where the value went last time when they sold. Good luck to them.”

Wiz has bases in New York, Tel Aviv and three other US locations according to its website.

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Ethiopia landslide rescuers pull 229 bodies from mud

Rescue teams have so far retrieved the bodies of 229 people killed in two landslides in southern Ethiopia, a local official has told the BBC.

The landslides occurred on Sunday evening and Monday morning, after heavy rains in a remote mountainous area of the Gofa zone.

The local authority said the search for survivors was “continuing vigorously” but that the “death toll could yet increase”.

Footage showed hundreds of people gathered at the scene and others digging in the dirt in search of people



Footage showed hundreds of people gathered at the scene. In the background, a hillside can be seen partially collapsed and a large patch of red earth has been exposed.

In the background, a hillside can be seen partially

collapsed and a large patch of red earth has been exposed.

The chief administrator of Goza zone, Dagmawi cont'd on pg 13

Sint Maarten: Arrest made in fatal shooting of OMC leader's wife

The Prosecutor's Office of Sint Maarten said a "person of interest" has been arrested in connection with the July 17 shooting that left Oualichi Movement for Change (OMC) leader Olivier Arrindell injured and his wife Sabine dead.

In a statement, the prosecutor said: "This arrest marks a significant step forward in the ongoing investigation into the late night shooting that claimed one life and saw two others injured."

"Due to the sensitive nature of this case and to preserve the integrity of the investigation, no further information will be disclosed at this time."

Both the Prosecutor's Office and Police Force of Sint Maarten thanked the public for their cooperation with law



Oualichi Movement for Change leader Olivier Arrindell and his wife Sabine. Photo: Olivier Arrindell

enforcement in the matter.

Arrindell and his wife were attacked by an armed assailant while in the Cupecoy area.

In an address to the nation on July 18, Prime Minister Dr Luc Mercelina said there was no indication the shooting was politically motivated.

The prime minister assured that the authorities are diligently working to investigate the horrific crime, which he described as a dark spot in the nation's history.

He said the investigation's conclusion will determine the exact motivation.

"I assure you we will leave no stone unturned in our pursuit of justice, the police are actively seeking those responsible for this act and they will be held accountable for their actions," said the prime minister.

"I want to explicitly state violence has no place in our political discourse and no place in our society. We must stand united against hatred and division and work together to build a peaceful prosperous future for our citizens," he added.

cont'd from pg 12

Ayele, told the BBC that the dead included both adults and children, while 10 people rescued alive were receiving treatment in hospital.

Heavy rains caused a landslide on Sunday, and as police officers, teachers and residents from nearby villages frantically continued with search-and-rescue operations on Monday, a second landslide occurred, burying them too under the mud, Mr Dagmawi said.

"We are still digging," he told the BBC.

Markos Melese, the Gofa disaster management head, said that 229 bodies had so far been recovered.

Gofa is part of the state known as Southern Ethiopia, located around 320km (199 miles) south-west of the capital, Addis Ababa.

Southern Ethiopia is among the areas of the country that have been hit by particularly heavy rain and flooding in recent months, according to the UN's Office for the Co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs (Ocha).

But instances of landslides and floods go back further. In May 2016, at least 50 people were killed in floods and landslides following heavy rain across the south of the country.

Many factors contribute to flooding, but a warming atmosphere caused by climate change makes extreme rainfall more likely.

The world has already warmed by about 1.2C since the industrial era began and temperatures will keep rising unless governments around the world make steep cuts to emissions.

CDB confirms removal of Leon as president of the bank

CMC - The Barbados-based Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) Sunday confirmed that it had concluded the “internal administrative process” involving its president, Dr Hyginus ‘Gene’ Leon, and that he “has ceased to hold the office of the President of the Bank”.

In a four paragraph statement, the CDB said that its board of governors had taken note of the “closure of the internal administrative process” involving the St Lucian-born economist and that “in accordance with the Agreement Establishing the Caribbean Development Bank, the Vice President (Operations), Mr Isaac Solomon, will continue to exercise the authority and perform the functions of President until a new President is elected”.

It said that “the process for the election of a new President has commenced and the Board of Governors has been invited to submit nominations for the position of the President of the Bank by August 26, 2024. It is expected that the election process will conclude in October 2024.”

In April this year, Leon submitted his resigned with “immediate effect” from the regional financial institution after his St Lucia-based lawyers wrote to the bank indicating Leon is of the opinion that “he will never be treated fairly” after being sent on ad-

ministrative leave in January.

“It is also evident that the bank has lost all trust and confidence in our client by the failure of the Board of Governors to prevent the continued violations of its Charter, policies, rules and regulations with regard to its elected President.

“Our client has therefore made the extremely difficult decision to resign his elected position of the President of the Bank with immediate effect.”

The lawyers have given the regional financial institution until May 4 “to negotiate an amicable separation”, indicating also that their correspondence should be viewed “as our client’s pre-action protocol letter” regarding the entire situation.

In the letter dated April 21, a copy of which has been obtained by the Caribbean Media Corporation, Leon’s lawyers said they would be moving to the courts in Barbados “or any other jurisdiction more appropriate, to enforce our client’s legal and constitutional rights.”

In January, it was disclosed that Leon had been sent on administrative leave until April this year as “an ongoing administrative process” continued at the financial institution.

The CDB has continued to remain mum on the circumstances surrounding the decision to send the former



Dr Hyginus Leon.

International Monetary Fund (IMF) senior official on administrative leave, with Solomon, confirming at a news conference by the bank in February that “there is an internal administrative process involving the president.”

In February, Antigua and Barbuda Prime Minister Gaston Browne, who was attending the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) summit in Guyana, said concerns had been raised about the method used to send Leon on administrative leave.

“... at some point we will have to address the issue of the procedures and the fact that subordinates within an institution can literally take disciplinary action against their superior without even consulting with the directors or the governors of the bank.”

In May, St Vincent and

the Grenadines Finance Minister, Camillo Gonsalves, called on his fellow CDB governors to stop “exposing” the financial institution “to further ridicule and undoubtedly, more litigation” and move on from the “resignation” of its former president.

In a May 14, 2024, letter sent to “my fellow members of the CDB Board of Governors,” Gonsalves said that he has been asked to “vote on whether the Caribbean Development Bank should accept the resignation of Dr Hyginus Leon from his position as President of the CDB, or whether he should be terminated as of a date three weeks beyond his resignation letter.”

In the letter, a copy of which has been obtained by the CMC, Gonsalves said

cont'd on pg 15

cont'd from pg 14

that “as Governor for Saint Vincent and the Grenadines” he had received two separate voting forms on “successive days” asking him to vote on the issue.

In his letter, Gonsalves noted that the correspondence attached to the voting form he had received regarding whether to vote to accept Leon’s resignation or his termination, notes that “In accordance with Article 33 of the Agreement Establishing the Caribbean Development Bank, for a Proposal to be adopted, replies in favour must be received from Governors representing not less than two-thirds of the total number of governors and not less than three-fourths of the total voting power of the members”.

But Gonsalves, a lawyer, said “this citation of Article 33 and the procedure laid out in the correspondence “do not support the ‘Options’ laid out in the Voting Form.

“The false application of Article 33 to the situation before us leads to a number of absurdities and illogical possibilities: namely that (a) a president cannot resign without ‘permission’ of two-thirds of the Governors; (b) Governors may vote endlessly until a threshold of two-thirds is reached; or a resignation can be held in abeyance for weeks-possibly months-on end, unless Governors by a supermajority decide to accept or reject it.”

Gonsalves wrote “to put it simply, while Article 33 indicates that a two-thirds majority is required to terminate the President, there is no requirement that a two-thirds majority is required to accept a resignation.

“The Secretariat is reading into Article 33, a requirement that does not exist. The Secretariat, or the Board of Governors, have no power under the Agreement Establishing the Caribbean Development Bank to reject or defer a President’s resignation. The attempt to read such a power into the Agreement is misplaced and has led to the absurd

daily-voting scenario we now face,” he added.

Gonsalves said that the “options” placed before the board of governors “would create the incongruous situation of a President who remains in the employ of CDB three weeks after he submitted his resignation-and possibly beyond.

St Lucia’s Prime Minister Phillip J Pierre, speaking in his country’s Parliament in May, blamed a “conspiracy” for the removal of Leon saying: “I want to put on record St Lucia’s full support for the work that Gene Leon did at the Caribbean Development Bank and to regret that a conspiracy, and I make no bones about it and this is not personal to anybody, to any function to the bank, a conspiracy is what caused Gene Leon to resign”.

Leon is the sixth president of the regional financial institution. He was elected at a special meeting of the CDB

Board of Governors held on January 19, 2021, for a five-year term, and assumed office on May 4, 2021.

Leon headed a team of more than 200 employees and came to the assignment with 35 years of experience in economics, financial policy development, and executive management, more than 20 of which were spent working with the Washington-based IMF.

He succeeded Jamaica-born Dr Warren Smith who retired in 2021 after serving as president for 10 years.

In its brief statement on Sunday, the CDB said that “under the direction of its Board of Governors and Directors, and through the leadership of its management and the efforts of its staff, continues to work fully and effectively together with its member countries and development partners to advance CDB’s mission of reducing poverty and transforming lives through sustainable and resilient development initiatives”.



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Labour suspends seven rebel MPs over two-child benefit cap

Seven Labour MPs have had the whip suspended for six months after voting against the government on an amendment to scrap the two-child benefit cap.

Ex-shadow chancellor John McDonnell was among the Labour MPs who voted for an SNP motion calling for an end to the policy, which prevents almost all parents from claiming Universal Credit or child tax credit for more than two children.

Mr McDonnell backed the SNP motion alongside Richard Burgon, Ian Byrne, Rebecca Long-Bailey, Imran Hussain, Apsana Begum and Zarah Sultana.

MPs rejected the SNP amendment by 363 votes to 103, in the first major test of the new Labour government's authority.

Losing the whip means the MPs are suspended from the parliamentary party and will now sit as independent MPs.

Nearly all of the rebels were allies of the former Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn, who now sits as an independent MP and put his name to the SNP motion.

In a statement on social media, Ms Sultana said she would "always stand up for the most vulnerable in our society", adding that scrapping the cap would "lift 33,000 children out of poverty".

Mr Burgon said he was



Former shadow ministers Rebecca Long-Bailey and John McDonnell, who served on Jeremy Corbyn's front bench, were among the seven voting against the government.

"disappointed" by the decision to suspend him, explaining that "many struggling families" in his Leeds East constituency had raised the cap with him.

Ms Begum said she had voted against the cap because it had "contributed to rising and deepening levels of child poverty and food insecurity for many East End families".

Mr Byrne, meanwhile, said the "best way" to help his Liverpool West Derby constituents living in poverty was to scrap the cap.

Before the vote, Mr McDonnell said: "I don't like voting for other parties' amendments, but I'm following Keir Starmer's example as he said put country before party."

The decision to remove the whip is an early show of force from the new government.

This is their first rebellion. Even though it is a small one, Labour whips are trying to send a message to

MPs that dissent will not be tolerated in votes.

However, there are many more Labour MPs who are opposed to the two-child benefit cap.

Many hope the party will make a decision in the coming months to scrap it.

A government source said Labour's policy on the two-child benefit cap had been agreed going into the election – and the manifesto commitments made by Labour were clear.

The government has said it is not prepared to make "unfunded promises" by abolishing the cap.

Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer previously said there was "no silver bullet" to end child poverty but acknowledged the "passion" of Labour MPs on the issue.

The rebellion marks another moment of pressure from Labour politicians on the government to scrap the cap.

Scottish Labour leader

Anas Sarwar and Greater Manchester mayor Andy Burnham have also backed calls for a change.

"The evidence is plain that it really does cause harm," Mr Burnham told BBC Newsnight on Tuesday.

But he also called for party unity and said the government should be given "time and space" to come up with a plan to reduce poverty.

The government had received a "terrible economic inheritance", he added.

Kim Johnson and Rosie Duffield were among 19 Labour MPs to sign another amendment calling for an end to the cap – which was ultimately not put to a vote.

Several prominent critics of the cap, including Ian Lavery and Nadia Whittome who both signed rebel amendments, abstained on the vote.

Labour veteran and Mother of the House Dianne Abbott did not take part in the vote due to "personal reasons" but in a statement said she was "horrified" MPs had been suspended "when removing the cap is supposed to be party policy".

Emma Lewell-Buck, Labour MP for South Shields, who put her name to a rebel amendment, said she did not vote against the government because "none of the votes taking place tonight would have resulted in scrapping the cap".

Kamala Harris slams Trump at first rally as he hits back

By Bernd Debusmann Jr

US Vice-President Kamala Harris has gone on the offensive against Donald Trump in the first rally of her White House campaign, portraying November's election as a choice between a former prosecutor and a convicted felon.

Speaking to a crowd of about 3,000 in the battleground state of Wisconsin, Ms Harris likened her Republican opponent to fraudsters she said she had prosecuted.

Trump, meanwhile, assailed her record on the border, and posted on social media: "Lyn' Kamala Harris destroys everything she touches!"

It comes a day after she secured the support of a majority of Democratic delegates, paving the way for her to become the party's nominee.

On Sunday afternoon, President Joe Biden announced he was withdrawing from the race and endorsed his vice-president amid mounting pressure from top Democrats and donors following his disastrous debate against Trump in late June.

The fledgling Harris campaign raised a staggering \$100m plus (£77m) in the 36 hours after Mr Biden's exit.

Adding to her momentum, a new national poll from Reuters and Ipsos shows her with a two-point lead over Trump, 44% to 42%.

Taking the stage to applause at a high school in a suburb of Milwaukee on Tuesday, Ms Harris highlighted her experience as California's attorney general.

"I took on perpetrators of all kinds," she said. "Predators who abused women. Fraudsters who ripped off consumers. Cheaters who broke the rules for their own gain."

"So hear me when I say I know



Harris took the stage to sustained applause at a high school in Milwaukee.

Donald Trump's type," Ms Harris added. "In this campaign, I promise you, I will proudly put my record against his any day of the week."

In response, the crowd shouted "Kamala! Kamala!" Some observers noted that the audience's enthusiasm contrasted with that seen at Biden events this electoral cycle.

When her Republican opponent's name was mentioned, many attendees chanted "lock him up", echoing a similar refrain at Trump events when he was running against Hillary Clinton in 2016.

Trump, meanwhile, posted on his social media platform, Truth Social, about a poll finding that Ms Harris was the most unpopular vice-president in US history.

He also shared a post noting that she was rated by the non-partisan congressional scorekeeper GovTrack as one of the most left-wing among dozens of Democratic senators during her tenure.

Ms Harris laid out a number of liberal priorities in her speech, on gun control and abortion access, as well as child poverty, union rights and affordable healthcare.

"Do we want to live in a country of

freedom, compassion and rule of law, or a country of chaos, fear and hate?" she said.

Whether Ms Harris can maintain her momentum is unclear. In a memo released Tuesday, pollster Tony Fabrizio predicted her "honeymoon" period with voters would end and that there would be a "refocus on her role as Biden's partner and co-pilot".

The Trump campaign is attacking Ms Harris' "failure" to stem a record influx of illegal immigrants at the US-Mexico border. It has also signalled that it will slam the Biden-Harris administration's record on crime and inflation.

A Tuesday afternoon email from the Republican nominee's team accused her of bailing out "accused murderers, rapists and other violent offenders", insulting Israel and deceiving the US public about Mr Biden's "cognitive decline".

During a call with reporters, Trump said of Ms Harris: "She's a radical left person, but this country doesn't want a radical left person to destroy it.

"I think she should be easier than Biden, because he was slightly more mainstream, but not much."

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Sports News



Cutting Edge FC win Under-17 Youth Premier League title

Cutting Edge FC have captured the title in the Cool and Smooth Antigua and Barbuda Football Association's (ABFA) Under-17 Youth Premier League.

Cutting Edge FC secured the title after recording wins in their first two matches during the second phase group stage of the competition at the ABFA Technical Center over the weekend.

Cutting Edge FC recorded 3-0 wins against Antigua Barracuda FC and CPTSA Wings Sports Club to extend their unbeaten run at the top of the Under-17 league.

Their 11 wins in as many matches carry Cutting Edge FC to an unassailable 33 points with one match remaining.

Aston Villa Lions also recorded multiple successes to secure the runner-up position by advancing to 30 points from 11 matches, including 10 wins.

The Villa Lions prevailed 2-0 against Five Islands FC and romped to an



11-1 victory against SAP FC.

Liberta Blackhawks also notched up two wins to secure third place in the Under-17 league by advancing to 27 points from 11 matches. The Liberta Blackhawks soared to a 4-1 victory against SAP FC and snatched a 2-1 win against Five Islands FC.

Old Road FC also recorded a win and a loss in the other two matches to secure fourth place by advancing to 18 points from 11 matches.

Old Road FC lost 4-2

against CPTSA Wings but prevailed 3-0 against the Antigua Barracuda FC.

All Saints United FC romped to an 8-0 victory against Ottos Rangers FC and prevailed 2-0 against Willikies FC to extend their unbeaten run at the top of the Under-19 league.

Their 15 wins in as many games carry All Saints United to 45 points with one match remaining.

All Saints United is being challenged by Aston Villa Lions, who are currently in second place with 42 points from 15 matches.

Villa Lions won their latest two matches, beating Greenbay Hoppers FC 3-0 and prevailing 3-1 against Garden Stars FC.

Although Villa Lions are three points behind, they boast a superior goal difference to All Saints United.

Hence, All Saints United will need to win their final encounter against Green City FC to clinch the title.

For Villa Lions to win, they must prevail in their final encounter against Soccer Academy and All Saints United lose against Green City.

Soccer Academy (33 points), Green City (30 points), and Garden Stars (30 points) are all in contention to secure third place with one match remaining.

In their latest outings, Soccer Academy lost 2-0 against Garden Stars and recorded a 3-0 victory against Greenbay Hoppers FC.

Green City lost 3-0 against Willikies FC and recorded a 3-0 victory against Ottos Rangers FC.

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Trump also said he was open to debating her in September, when he was originally due to face Biden on ABC News.

"I haven't agreed to anything," he said. "I agreed to a debate with Joe Biden. But I want to debate her. She'll be no different."

Most Democratic lawmakers - including House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries and Senate Majority Leader

Chuck Schumer - have already endorsed Ms Harris' candidacy.

Entertainers George Clooney, Barbara Streisand and Jamie Lee Curtis and other Hollywood stars have also endorsed her, potentially unlocking further substantial donations to her campaign.

Her campaign is still vetting potential running mates.

On Wednesday, President Biden will deliver an Oval Office speech explaining his decision to withdraw. He arrived

back at the White House on Tuesday after several days away from the public eye as he recovered from Covid.

In Washington, a Republican member of the US House of Representatives introduced articles of impeachment against Ms Harris.

The resolution, written by Tennessee's Andy Ogles, accuses her of high crimes and misdemeanours over her handling of immigration at the border.

It is considered unlikely to advance.

Antigua and Barbuda make losing start in Americas Group Davis Cup contest

Antigua and Barbuda made a losing start to their campaign in the Americas Group IV Davis Cup Competition, which started on Monday in Trinidad and Tobago.

The Antiguan and Barbudans lost 2-1 against Honduras in their opening match in Pool A, which featured four of the nine teams contesting the men's round-robin group competition that is taking place at the National Racquet Centre in Tacarigua, Trinidad and Tobago, from July 22 to 27.

Antiguan and Barbudan Shaquan Rodain Monelle lost the first singles match, conceding defeat to Alejandro Obando, who won 6-1, 6-1 in straight sets.

In the second singles

encounter, Antigua and Barbuda drew level professional tennis player, Jody Maginley prevailed 2-0 against Mario Richmagui, winning 6-4, 6-2.

However, Antigua and Barbuda lost the tie after losing 2-1 in the doubles match. Obando and Keny Turcios defeated the Antigua pair of Maginley and Cordell Williams Jr. 6-7, 6-3, 6-2.

Aruba trounced Haiti 3-0 in the opening round tie between the other two teams in Pool A.

Frederick Sydow defeated Jayven Andrew Ryan Jean Baptiste 6-4, 6-3 in the first singles, and Patrick Sydow beat Luckens Dorcelly 6-1, 6-1 in the second singles.

Aruba wrapped up the



Jody Maginley

tie when the combination of Patrick Sydow and Kyle Frankel crushed the Haitian pair of Luckens Dorcelly and Francky St. Louis 6-1, 6-0 in the doubles.

Hosts Trinidad and To-

bago and Nicaragua got off to winning starts in their campaign in Pool B. The Trinidadians snatched a 2-1 win against Cuba, and Nicaragua also prevailed 2-1 against the United States Virgin Islands (USVI).

The other team in Pool B is St. Lucia. Panama pulled out of the tournament.

The top two teams in each pool at the end of the round-robin group play will advance to the promotion play-offs. The two top teams at the end of the promotion play-offs will be promoted to compete in Americas Group III in 2025.

Nations finishing third and fourth in the pools will compete in positional play-offs. The nation finishing fifth in Pool B will finish 9th overall.



Alejandro Obando

European soccer leagues, player unions challenge FIFA on competition law

PARIS (AP) — European soccer leagues and player unions said on Tuesday they will formally complain to the European Commission about how FIFA adds competitions to congested fixture schedules.

The legal move backs up warnings to FIFA in May by European Leagues and FIFPRO Europe urging a rethink on what they claimed was an “inherently abusive” decision-making process, including to expand the men’s World Cup and Club World Cup.

It also follows a European Court of Justice ruling in December which found FIFA and UEFA abused their dominant position as regulator and competition organizer in a case brought by storied clubs that tried to launch a breakaway Super League in 2021.

“Regretfully, FIFA has consistently refused to include national leagues and player unions in its decision-making process,” European Leagues and FIFPRO Europe said in a statement.

Soccer’s world body hit back suggesting some leagues in Europe were “acting with commercial self-interest, hypocrisy, and without consideration to everyone else in the world.”

The European Commission in Brussels is the executive arm of the 27-nation European Union and can intervene on alleged breaches of competition law.

“FIFA’s decisions over the last years have repeatedly favored its own competitions and commercial interests, neglected its responsibilities as a governing body, and harmed the economic interests of national leagues and the welfare of players,” European Leagues and FIFPRO Eu-



UEFA President Aleksander Ceferin, left, talks to FIFA President Gianni Infantino, right, before a round of sixteen match between Switzerland and Italy at the Euro 2024 soccer tournament in Berlin, Germany, Saturday, June 29, 2024. (AP)

rope said.

“The international match calendar is now beyond saturation and has become unsustainable for national leagues and a risk for the health of players.”

FIFA manages the calendar of international games and tournaments which mandates when clubs must release their players called up for national teams.

Top-tier leagues, which shut down their weekend programs for national-team fixtures, have long claimed they were not fully consulted on the latest version that runs to 2030.

“FIFA’s calendar is the only instrument ensuring that international football can continue to survive, co-exist, and prosper alongside domestic and continental club football,” the governing body said.

The complaint to Brussels, joined by Spain’s La Liga, will claim “FIFA’s conduct infringes EU competition law and notably constitutes

an abuse of dominance,” their statement said.

The first editions of FIFA’s revamped men’s competitions will be hosted in the United States.

The men’s 2026 World Cup will have 48 teams instead of 32, playing 104 total games instead of 64. Players whose teams reach the semifinals will be involved in eight games in a tournament stretching close to six weeks in the USA, Canada, and Mexico.

The USA also will host a relaunched Club World Cup next June-July, with 32 teams — 12 from Europe including Real Madrid, Manchester City and Bayern Munich — playing a maximum of seven games.

The Champions League run by UEFA also is adding more teams and more games — 36 each playing at least eight times in a new format — in the next seasons.

That will squeeze more midweek fixture options from domestic and cup organizers.



Players of the West Indies Under-19 women's team in Trinidad and Tobago.

West Indies U-19 Women level T20 series against USA

Hosts West Indies produced a dominant display of bowling to tie their five-match women's T20 series against the USA 1-1 at the Sir Frank Worrell Memorial Ground in St. Augustine, Trinidad & Tobago, on Monday.

The USA won the opening fixture on Saturday by 37 runs. Batting first on Saturday, the Americans

made 106 for eight.

Ritu Singh made 29 and captain Anika Kolan 22, but the visitors were helped mightily by their hosts with 25 extras.

Selena Ross took three wickets for 12 runs to lead the bowling attack with her left-arm medium pace, while right-arm medium pacer Jahzara Claxton took three for 20.

In the West Indian response, only Samara Ramnath (28) and Brianna Harichan (20) got to double figures, as the home team was held to 69 for nine.

On Monday, the USA chose to bat first once more. It was a completely different story from the first game as this time they were bundled out for just 65 in 18.1 overs.

Only Kolan (10) and Sasha Vallabhaneni (22) got notable scores.

Ross was back among the wickets, taking two wickets for eight runs from her three overs, including a maiden. Kenika Cassar (two for 17) and Trisha Hardat (two for 18) also bowled well.

The West Indies made quick work of their reply, reaching 69 for two in just 13.1 overs.

The Bajan duo of Nai-Janni Cumberbatch and Asabi Callender led the charge with 27 not out and 20, respectively.

The third match of the series will take place at the same venue today.

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an Golf Association has started to expand and become more modernized.

"The association is looking to expand to other countries that are not a part of the association by allowing them to join. The reason for this is to increase the competition as well as the camaraderie of Caribbean golfers.

"The game of golf is growing internationally and this is why the Eastern Caribbean Golf Association is following suit to that trend.

"We look forward to hosting the Eastern Caribbean Golf Association Championships and hope that the public will support our national teams in any manner in which they can," the release added.

Antigua and Barbuda to host regional golfers at ECGC

More than 80 golfers from across the region are expected to converge at Cedar Valley to participate in the 2024 Eastern Caribbean Golf Championships (ECGC), scheduled for October 5 and 6.

Seventy-four (74) golfers from seven regional territories are expected to travel to Antigua and Barbuda to participate in the annual event that will be hosted this year by the Antigua and Barbuda Golf Association (ABGA).

The golfers from St. Thomas, St. Croix, Anguil-

la, St. Lucia, St. Kitts, St. Martin and Barbados will be joined by their colleagues from host country Antigua and Barbuda to battle for supremacy in the two-day championship.

The Antigua and Barbuda team will consist of 13 players and it is expected that a grand total of 87 golfers will compete for honours at the coveted regional championship.

The defending champions are St. Lucia, which won the ECGC overall team title at last year's competition in St. Kitts.



The Antigua and Barbuda men's team that finished first in net at the 2023 Eastern Caribbean Golf Championships in St. Kitts in October 2023. From left: Wilston Charles, Marquise George, Prime Minister of St. Kitts and Nevis Honourable Dr. Terrance Drew, Tedson Weatherill, and Siyolo Joseph.

Team Antigua and Barbuda finished third overall at the 2023 Eastern Caribbean Golf Championships, which were held at the Royal St. Kitts Golf Course at Frigate Bay.

Antigua and Barbuda went into the October 7-8 event as defending champions, having won the overall title at the 2022 event, which was hosted by St. Lucia.

According to a press release from the ABGA, the last time Antigua and Barbuda hosted the Eastern Caribbean Golf Champi-

ships was in 2014.

"This year we are looking to put on the best Eastern Caribbean Golf Championships ever hosted. It will be played at the Cedar Valley Golf Club over the course of 36 holes.

"The Antigua Barbuda Golf Association is currently conducting its trials among its players. We are confident that we will emerge victorious," the release stated.

The media release also claims the Eastern Caribbean



The Antigua and Barbuda ladies team that finished first in net at the Eastern Caribbean Golf Championships at the Royal St. Kitts Golf Course at Frigate Bay in St. Kitts on October 7-8, 2023. From left: Akevia Warner, Lexi Hunte, and Kathrine Woodhouse. (File photos)

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