

PM COMMITS TO MAKING BROADBAND SERVICES AFFORDABLE FOR ALL

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The business sessions of the first annual Artificial Intelligence conference hosted by the University of the West Indies Five Islands Campus got off to a hectic start Monday morning with the registration and the presentation of several research papers by academics and other presenters. *Story on page 5.*



Local News



PM Browne commits to making broadband services affordable for all

Prime Minister Gaston Browne says broadband services must be available to all citizens of Antigua and Barbuda and the cost must be within the reach of everyone.

Speaking at the formal opening of the 5th Industrial Revolution Artificial Intelligence conference being hosted by the University of the West Indies Five Islands Campus, PM Browne said his government is committed to ensuring that affordable broadband services are readily available.

The conference opening took place Monday night at the Hodges Bay Club resort with senior officials

from the UWI, academics and experts drawn from top technology companies and institutions of higher learning from across the globe in attendance.

The prime minister revealed that his government is currently investing in Antigua and Barbuda having its own sub-sea cable thus ensuring that the government's policies regarding broadband are implemented.

"We are of the view that the ownership of our own sub-sea cable is important from the standpoint of ensuring that broadband services remain affordable and

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Prime Minister Gaston Browne

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Principal of the University of the West Indies Five Islands Campus, Professor, C. Justin Robinson, left, with Vice-chancellor of the University of the West Indies Sir Hilary Beckles.

UWI FIC Principal warns of ‘the great separation’

The Principal of the University of the West Indies Five Islands Campus, Professor, C. Justin Robinson, is cautioning Caribbean countries not to be left behind in another wave of what he described as ‘the great separation’.

Prof. Robinson was at the time delivering the welcome remarks at Monday night’s official opening of

the 5th IR Artificial Intelligence conference at the Hodges Bay Club being hosted by the university.

He noted that history shows that up to the 1500’s, economic wealth was reasonably distributed evenly; India, one third, China, one-third and Europe, a little less than one-third. He said after the 1500’s, Europe and later North America

embarked on the industrial revolution that separated it from the others and that it has taken China hundreds of years just to catch up.

“From being less than a third of the world economy, Europe, North America emerged to command over fifty percent of the global economy and it has taken China six hundred years to get back to almost where

it was previously,” he observed.

The professor said when he and his colleagues consider AI, their concern is whether or not this will lead to another ‘great separation’; that the countries that embrace AI will race ahead of those who are not able to do so.

He said the current conference is therefore the start of marshalling resources to address this and other pressing needs faced by Caribbean people.

“We have two big challenges; we have to deal with the climate crisis and we have to ensure that we don’t fall behind,” he remarked.

He invited the attendees to join the university in devising ways to ensure that the Caribbean is able to keep pace with the developments taking place in AI and other technologies.

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affordable for all so that we can close the digital divide.

“So, whereas it is extremely expensive, we see this as being amortised over 15-20 years, at the same time, we believe that based on the current trajectory of Antigua and Barbuda, we will be utilizing an enormous amount of data. For example, I foresee the UWI FIC, with 5-thousand students in another five years, utilizing an enormous amount of data,” he explained.

PM Browne said he is of the view that if the Caribbean countries are going to be early adopters of AI and digitization in general, then broadband services must become more affordable.

According to the prime minister, the current providers of broadband services locally, may not necessarily do so in line with government’s policies, as they are driven by the profit motive.

However, he sees broadband services as ‘a public good’ which means it has to be affordable.

“Where we are unable to get affordable prices from the private sector, we believe that the government has an obligation to intervene to make the investment to ensure that every single school child, every individual, every home will have access to broadband. In fact, broadband services are just as important as the provision of water and electricity,” he declared.

Local News



First-ever AI Conference starts with a bang!



Dr. Cleopatra Gittens

The business sessions of the first annual Artificial Intelligence conference hosted by the University of the West Indies Five Islands Campus got off to a hectic start Monday morning with the registration and the presentation of several research papers by academics and other presenters.

The UWI FIC 5IR AI

Conference is bringing together academics, scholars and those individuals at the cutting edge of the new technologies that are part of the 5th Industrial Revolution.

More than forty research papers will be presented over the course of the three days of the conference. On Day One, Monday, there were presentations across a variety of subject matters. These include; Simulating Sargassum Beaching Events in the Eastern Caribbean, which looked at how utilizing technologies could provide an 'early warning system' to Caribbean stakeholders on how they take measures to reduce the impact of the sea weeds on the tourism industry which is vital to so many countries. The presenters were Ilenius Ildephonse and Edward Dixon.

Another presentation by a team out of Jamaica, looked at 'the Role of Artificial Intelligence to inform Gender-based Violence Interventions' which delved into the issues surrounding GBV with Jamaica as a case study.

Former Accountant General, Dr. Cleopatra Gittens and Edward Dixon presented a research paper on 'The role of AI in providing financial services to MSME's in the Eastern Caribbean: the case of Antigua and Barbuda. Here, the researchers explored the chal-

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REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL SPA

The Antigua and Barbuda Airport Authority invites eligible proponents to submit Request For Proposals (RFP) for Concession opportunities at the New V.C. Bird International Airport Terminal.

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lenges Micro, Small and Medium size Enterprises face in accessing services from the financial institutions.

In a clear demonstration of the links between the research and real-life applications, one presentation by Dr. Jeiel Joseph looked at 'Leveraging Artificial Intelligence in Citizenship by Investments Programmes: A comprehensive Framework for minimum Due Diligence Standards.

This matter is one of the critical challenges facing CIP programmes as third countries want to ensure that persons attaining citizenship through these programmes are persons of the highest repute. The research papers present ways in which AI may help make the due diligence a much more robust process.

A spokesman for the university



Dr. Jeiel Joseph

said the first session of the conference 'went very well' as besides the presentation of papers, there has been a surge in registration over the past twenty-four hours. There are now more than three hundred persons registered

to participate in the conference. The spokesman said with the formal opening taking place Monday night, the conference activities will now accelerate today (Tuesday) and tomorrow (Wednesday).



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Local News



Antigua and Barbuda and Venezuela reaffirm relationship

Antigua and Barbuda and Venezuela have renewed their fraternal bonds as the South American nation celebrated the 213th anniversary of its independence last weekend.

A wreath-laying ceremony was held at the Simon Bolivar Park attended by Foreign Affairs Minister, E.P Chet Greene, the Venezuelan Ambassador to Antigua and Barbuda, Carmen Velasquez, the Ambassador of the People's Republic of China, Zhang

Yanling, the Ambassador of the Dominican Republic, Raquel Jacobo, and the Indian Honorary Consul, Vijay Tewari among others.

Foreign Minister Greene described Venezuela as a 'very friendly, brotherly country' with which Antigua and Barbuda has enjoyed very strong ties over the past several decades.

"Antigua and Barbuda stands proudly with Venezuela in wishing that



country, not just Happy Independence, but prosperity, peace, tranquility and for your country to be allowed to develop its own path; that you choose your course in tandem with your people as you proceed on a road of prosperity for all of Venezuela," he stated.

Noting that Venezuela will hold presidential elections on July 28, Greene stated that the elections speak volumes of the vision of the 'Great Liberator' Simon Bolivar that lives on through successive leaders down to the current president, Nicola Maduro.

In her comments, Ambassador Velasquez said her country stands for a united Caribbean and Latin America and a for a multi-polar world.

She also called for the full implementation of the Antigua and Barbuda

Agenda for SIDS adopted at May's Fourth International Conference of Small Island Developing States (SIDS4) held here in Antigua and Barbuda.

"Climate change is advancing strongly and requires our countries, especially the most developed ones, to make a reality the commitments to take urgent measures against climate change.

A month ago, we met in Antigua and Barbuda to reaffirm that SIDS remain a special case for sustainable development given their unique vulnerabilities.

It is time to put the "Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for SIDS into action", she emphasized.

The Simon Bolivar Park and its facilities serve as a reminder of the fraternal ties between the two countries.



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Team Antigua and Barbuda shines at Nevis Mango Festival

The team that represented Antigua and Barbuda at the 10th installment of the Nevis Mango Festival emerged as the 1st runner-up at the festival, organized by the Nevis Tourism Authority.

The event, held on July 7th, showcased the vibrant and diverse use of mango in various culinary creations, bringing together top chefs from St. Kitts, Nevis, the Caribbean and the United States of America to compete.

Representing Antigua and Barbuda were culinary stars Chef Ronald Wilson as Head Chef of the team and Chef de Cuisine/Head Chef at Blue Waters Resort & Spa, and Chef Jean Pierre-Tuitt as Sous Chef of the team and Junior Sous Chef at Jumby Bay Island. Their exceptional skills and creativity were put to the test in two demanding rounds.

In the first round, all four (4) teams were tasked with creating a plant-based appetizer featuring mango, plantain, avocado, and beet within just 30 minutes.

Team Antigua and Barbuda impressed the judges with their Vegan Tartare, featuring three distinct layers of avocado and cucumber mayo, pickled beetroot, roasted plantain, and mango, all topped with a mango and mint gel. The dish represented a beautiful and harmonious blend of flavors.

The final round presented a Mystery Basket challenge.



Team Antigua Barbuda announced first runner-up at Nevis Mango Festival

The chefs were given a basket containing chicken breast, coffee, plantain, orange, spinach, fresh coconut, and raisin, and had to create a dish from all ingredients on the spot.

Demonstrating remarkable culinary prowess and teamwork, Chef Wilson and Chef Tuitt crafted a chicken ballotine with sweet potato and coconut ragout, accompanied by a coconut mango coffee beurre blanc.

The chicken breast was stuffed with plantain, spinach, raisin, and green mango. Team Antigua Barbuda wowed the judges with their versatility, teamwork and bold flavors and detailed execution presented in their dish.

The judges' panel comprised three (3) hospitality professionals from Nevis and

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Team Antigua Barbuda, L-R Chef Ronald Wilson and Chef Jean Pierre-Tuitt at Nevis Mango Festival

Local News



Team Antigua Barbuda competes in Mystery Basket Round at Nevis Mango Festival



Team Antigua Barbuda competes in Appetizer Round at Nevis Mango Festival

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celebrity Chef Shorne Benjamin from the United States. After thorough deliberation, Team Antigua and Barbuda earned an impressive 499 points, securing the 1st runner-up position, just six points

shy of Team Nevis, who won with 505 points.

Reflecting on the competition, Chef Ronald Wilson remarked, "I want to thank the almighty for giving me the strength to take part in this competition. My experi-

ence was great competing at the Nevis mango festival for the first time. JP and I worked very cohesively, starting with our training sessions in Antigua right down to the competition. My focus is now going to be on Taste of the

Caribbean in Miami later this year. I'm going to take out all the positive from this competition to build myself for the bigger stage, I'm a fighter and I'm going to make sure I make my nation proud!"

Junior Sous Chef Jean Pierre Tuitt added, "The Nevis Mango Festival was an incredibly enjoyable event, blending elements of "Mission Impossible" with a touch of culinary flair. I extend my gratitude to the Nevis Tourism Authority for hosting us, and to our own association for providing essential support and resources."

Team Antigua and Barbuda's outstanding performance highlights the exceptional culinary talent the island nation has to offer, promising a bright future for its gastronomy.

Chef Ronald Wilson will also join Team Antigua and Barbuda to compete at Taste of the Caribbean in Miami from November 18th-20th, hosted by the Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association. Taste of the Caribbean is the region's premier culinary competition and cultural showcase.

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Happy 97th birthday Mr. Rufus Lewis, OM

Today, we celebrate the birthday of a remarkable son of the soil, Rufus Adolphus Lewis, who turns 97 years today. Rufus was born in Old Road Village to Felicia Georges and Henry Lewis.

As this birthday arrives, Mr. Lewis celebrates with physical strength, clarity

of thought, and joy for the journey.

Along the way to 97 years, Rufus was married in 1954 to Hildred Jeromie Lewis of Swetes where the family home is located. They had ten boys and two girls, all of whom are alive. Family is of utmost importance to him and he feels

most comfortable surrounded by his children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, nieces, and nephews. He is the last of his generation alive.

Mr. Lewis has made significant contributions to Antigua and Barbuda. In 2005 he was recognized by the Employer's Federation for his tireless efforts on behalf of workers in the country.

In 2009 the nation awarded him the Order of Merit OM, for service to the nation specifically through the trade union movement. Even though his trade was carpentry, Rufus always refers to himself as an industrial relations specialist/trade unionist.

He has been a member of the Antigua Trade and Labour Union since he was fifteen years old, having



served at the executive levels. The wellbeing of the organization is still uppermost in his mind.

As a cricketer, Mr. Lewis knows that batting into the 90s is tricky. Therefore, he is ever mindful as he consistently quotes hymns and Bible verses, that his times are in God's hand and to trust in the Lord with his whole heart. Happy, joyful, and blessed 97th birthday Mr. Rufus Adolphus Lewis, OM.



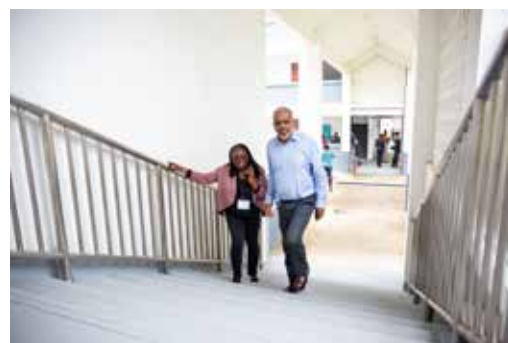
Mr. Lewis, flanked by his children in order of age.



Photo Essay



Photo Essay



CARPHA issues warning regarding mosquito-borne diseases

CMC -The Trinidad-based Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA) says mosquito-borne diseases continue to pose a serious public health threat to the Caribbean region and that there are more reports of dengue outbreaks with hospitalisations and deaths in some instances.

In addition, CARPHA said that it recently confirmed cases of Zika, and Chikungunya at its Medical Microbiology Laboratory, warning these mosquito-borne diseases can have a major impact on our way of life and our vital tourist industry on which most of our islands depend”.

Interim executive director at CARPHA, Dr Lisa Dar said the region of the Americas has seen a 200 fold increase in suspected dengue cases in the first half of 2024, compared to the same period 2023.

“Member states are encouraged to remain vigilant. It is crucial that surveillance, prevention and control measures are boosted to reduce the transmission of arboviruses in the Caribbean,” she added.

CARPHA said dengue is known to cause outbreaks every three to five years. The region has seen outbreaks of chikungunya and Zika virus infections that challenged public health systems in virtually every country in the region.



“These viral infections are transmitted by the *Aedes aegypti* mosquito, a vector known to be endemic to the region. With the start of the hurricane season CARPHA is urging its member states to strengthen integrated vector management strategies in their communities. These include the elimination of mosquito breeding sites with the aim of reducing the number of mosquito larvae,” said Dr Horace Cox, Assistant Director of Surveillance, Disease Prevention and Control, and Head Vector Borne Diseases at CARPHA.”

CARPHA said to counter the increase in mosquitoes and potential disease transmission, greater effort should be placed on mosquito control activities in communities, and these should be intensified. CARPHA said it is urging member countries to review their preparedness

and response plans, as well as to continue surveillance, early diagnosis, and timely care of arboviral disease cases, to prevent complications leading to hospitalisation and deaths.

“Community involvement is essential in the fight against mosquito-borne diseases. A proactive approach can help to reduce risk and keep communities safe,” said Rajesh Ragoo, CARPHA’s Senior Technical Officer for Vector-Borne Diseases.

CARPHA is urging people to check and remove standing water from around their homes as well as ensure that their surroundings are clean and free of materials or containers that can accumulate water around your homes and communities.

It urges the use of wire-mesh/screens on doors and windows also help in reducing the entry of mosquitoes

into homes and that water storage drums and tanks must be properly covered and inspected periodically to ensure that there is no breeding. Roof gutters should also be cleaned to prevent water from pooling.

“The mosquitoes that spread dengue are active during the day. Personal preventative measures to minimise mosquito bites are also extremely important. Vulnerable groups such as infants, young children, older adults, and women who are pregnant, or trying to get pregnant, must be extra cautious,” CARPHA said, adding that confirmed cases of mosquito-borne diseases should rest under mosquito nets.

CARPHA said it remains committed to supporting member states in their vector control efforts, including capacity building in integrated vector control strategies.



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Regional News



ERC wants jail term for people who buy votes in Dominica

CMC - The Electoral Reform Coalition (ERC) is calling for a jail term of no less than two years for anyone convicted of bribery or treating in order to secure the vote of anyone during a general election in Dominica.

The ERC on Sunday 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, 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.

Sir 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.

“With respect to the of-



fence of bribery...it must provide for the avoidance of doubt that the payment or promise to pay to a voter or his travelling expenses on the condition, expressed or implied that he will vote for a particular candidate is bribery and here must be a compulsory prison term of not less than two years for bribery, treating and undue influence campaign finance regulation,” said the ERC executive member, Pastor Randy Rodney.

“One of the best pieces of law that Dennis Byron wrote, we want that back. We want to know where the money come from and who gave you the money because we understand that people buying election those days to get what they want.

“We recommend provisions to strictly to prohibit public officers, the resources of the state and projects

resulting from the expenditure of public funds as campaign tools to corruptly, improperly and unduly influence voters and thereby gain political advantage”.

The religious leader said also there should be access to the public funded media in Dominica by all political parties and independent candidates contesting an election.

“The House of Assembly Election bill must provide for access to all media for all political parties and that all public media houses, print, radio, television, digital and electronic are prohibited from denying any political party or candidate paid time and or space for the broadcast or publication of their messages,” he added.

The ERC said 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 fails to adequately address residency, voter identification, and reregistration requirements.

Randy said that the new legislation must ensure that only persons who are “ordinarily resident in Dominica should be eligible to vote in elections in Dominica” and also that ‘every eligible voter shall be issued a voter’s identification card produced by the Electoral Commission and will contain photographs, fingerprints, ID number, voter registration number, polling district, voter name and address”.

He said the security features on the card cannot be at the discretion of the chief registering officer “and must

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Bermuda: Mystery surrounds deaths of four people in Pembroke

Two children were among four people found dead at an apartment in South Terrace, Pembroke, Bermuda by police yesterday.

Na'imah Astwood, the Acting Commissioner of Police, told the media yesterday that they received reports of unresponsive persons at the apartment and upon arrival found two adults and two minors.

"An on-call doctor attended and their deaths were pronounced at the scene shortly thereafter," Astwood said.

Astwood noted that initial investigations did not link the deaths of the four people with the recent murder of Diante Trimm in a nearby apartment.

Trimm, a mother of five, was shot dead in her apartment last month in what po-



lice describe as a "targeted attack".

"At this time, the BPS is treating the murder of Diante Trimm as separate and distinct from the tragedy that occurred," she said.

"We are actively working to gather more information and a thorough investigation is under way to

determine the circumstances surrounding the deaths of these four individuals. We urge the public to remain calm and co-operative as we carry out our investigation."

When asked if the incident was being investigated as a homicide, Superintendent Sherwin Joseph said

police could not classify the incident as they were still early in their investigation.

"We are keeping an open mind into the investigation at this time," he stated.

Joseph added police were still in the process of confirming timelines and were unable to say how long the four people had died.

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be a requirement in the law".

He said the process of the registration and reconfirmation of voters "shall only be conducted in Dominica within a three-month period..."

In May, the government said that it had provided the Electoral Commission (EC) with copies of the proposed electoral modernisation legislation and that the submission followed extensive public debates, discussions, written recommendations from individuals and entities, and prolonged government-initiated electoral reform consultation.

The government said that copies of the proposed legislation have also been

provided to President Sylvanie Burton and will be subsequently published on the government website and on other media platforms for public review.

Copies will also be forwarded to the Organization of American States (OAS), the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), and the London-based Commonwealth Secretariat.

The proposed legislation provides for the Registration of Electors Act and Regulations 2024;

The House of Assembly (Elections) Act and Regulations 2024, which incorporates the House of Assembly (Election Petition) Rules 2024;

and The Electoral Commission Act 2024.

"We intend to have this finalized in June so that all the necessary budgetary allocations can be made in the upcoming financial estimates to give the electoral commission not only the legislative mandate but also the financial resources required to advance the implementation of the electoral reform process," Skerit said upon the release of the documents.

The government said it is confident that the proposed drafts address the principal areas of immediate concern and will set Dominica on a firm path to a comprehensive modernisation of the electoral process.

Children's hospital hit as Russian strikes kill dozens in Ukraine

A children's hospital in Kyiv has been hit after Russia launched a wave of missile strikes against cities across Ukraine.

Two people died when the Ohmatdyt Children's Hospital - Ukraine's biggest paediatrics facility - sustained major damage during the blast. Thirty-one people across the country were killed in the early morning bombardment, officials said.

Lesia Lysytsia, a doctor at the hospital, told the BBC the moment the missile struck was "like in a film" with a "big light, then an awful sound".

"One part of the hospital was destroyed and there was a fire in another. It's really very damaged - maybe 60-70% of the hospital," she said.

Pictures from the scene showed young children - some with IV drips - sitting outside the hospital as it was evacuated.

Vitaliy Klitschko, Kyiv's mayor, said the two who died at the hospital were adults - one of whom was a doctor. He added that rescuers feared more people were trapped under the rubble.

Russia has denied targeting the hospital, saying it was hit by fragments of a Ukrainian air defence missile. But Ukraine says it has found remnants of a Russian cruise missile.

Ohmatdyt is a major

hospital which carries out cancer treatment and organ transplants.

"Now we are in the process of evacuating patients to the nearest hospital.. [but] many patients are intubated and on ventilators and cannot have contact with other patients or go outside," Dr Lysytsia said.

Hospital officials told Ukrainian TV that about 20 children were being treated in the ward which was hit.

Following the strike, Ukrainian tennis player Elina Svitolina wore a black ribbon as a mark of respect when she played in the round of 16 at Wimbledon on Monday afternoon.

Mayor Klitschko accused Russia of attempting the "genocide of [the] population in Ukraine".

"Right now the whole world can see how Russian missiles and Kamikaze drones killed Ukrainian citizens in our peaceful city.

The mayor added that a separate maternity hospital in Kyiv's Dniprotsky district had also been partially destroyed by falling debris, killing seven people.

Mr Zelensky wrote on social media that "more than 40 missiles of different types" had hit buildings and infrastructure in cities including Kyiv, Dnipro, Kryvyi Rih, Sloviansk and Kramatorsk.

He called for a stronger Western response "to the



Patients had to be taken to safety with their intravenous drips still attached.

blow that Russia has once again delivered on our population, on our land, on our children".

Dnipro regional head Sergiy Lysak said one person was killed in Dnipro city and six more injured. He added that a high-rise building and a business had been hit.

Three people were killed in Pokrovsk, in the eastern Donetsk region, where Russian forces have taken control of a number of villages in recent weeks.

The Russian bombardment comes as Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi is in Moscow for a two-day state visit where he is due to hold talks with President Vladimir Putin.

Russia, which has denied targeting civilian infrastructure, said the damage to the children's hospital was caused by a Ukrainian air defence missile.

However, the Security Service of Ukraine has published pictures of what it says are fragments of a Rus-

sian Kh-101 cruise missile recovered from the site.

Ukraine's Defence Minister Rustem Umerov responded to the attacks by urging the country's allies to help quickly strengthen its air defences.

"Our defence capabilities are still insufficient... We need more air defence systems," he said.

Ukraine's allies have condemned the attack on the Ohmatdyt hospital, with EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell accusing Russia of "ruthlessly targeting Ukrainian civilians".

New UK Foreign Secretary David Lammy said "we must hold those responsible for Putin's illegal war to account".

The UN's human rights monitoring mission in Ukraine has said civilian casualties have been mounting in recent months, as Russia renewed its air campaign. A recent report said May was the deadliest month for civilian deaths in almost a year.

Two dead as Beryl slams Texas leaving millions without power

At least two people have died as Hurricane Beryl slammed into south-east Texas, knocking out power for more than two million people while bringing heavy rain and fierce wind gusts.

When Beryl first hit Texas on Monday morning, it landed as a category one hurricane but has since been downgraded to a tropical storm.

Officials have warned of destructive winds, up to 15in (38cm) of rain and "life-threatening" storm surges.

More than 1,000 flights in Houston's largest airport have been cancelled.

The state governor's office has repeatedly urged residents not to underestimate the storm, which caused at least 10 deaths in the Caribbean days before.

In Texas, a 53-year-old man died after ripping winds downed powerlines and knocked a tree onto his home in Harris County, causing his roof to collapse.

In the same county, which includes parts of Houston, a 74-year-old woman was also reported dead after a tree crashed through the roof of her home. The police were notified by the woman's granddaughter.

On Monday, police in one Houston suburb had already begun conducting water rescues as the hurricane continued to pound the state.

According to US forecaster AccuWeather, landfalling hurricanes of this kind are somewhat rare for Texas in July.

Sustained wind speeds in the Houston area had reached 75mph (120km/h) with wind gusts reaching 87mph (140km/h).

Torrential rainfall and flash flooding have also occurred in areas where



A tree in Houston, Texas was toppled by Hurricane Beryl's fierce winds. inches of rain fell in just a few hours.

The storm is expected to lose strength as it gradually tracks north-northeast but flash flooding and heavy rain remains a risk.

More than 2.7 million customers in Texas are without power as of Monday afternoon, according to poweroutage.us.

At Bush Intercontinental Airport, Houston's largest airport, 1,097 flights were cancelled, according to flight-aware.com.

As the storm barrelled its way past Houston, tornado warnings were issued for dozens of other Texas counties in its path, including a few counties in Louisiana.

"Take cover now!" the National Weather Service warned in all caps in its weather update around 13:00 CDT (19:00 BST) for residents in Louisiana's Northeastern Beauregard Parish.

"Move to an interior room on the lowest floor of a sturdy building. Avoid windows."

Earlier, the city of Galveston, south-east of Houston, issued a voluntary evacuation order for some areas.

Storm surges in the Galveston area

were predicted to reach 4-6ft above ground.

In Surfside Beach, police posted a photo of flood waters rising above the lower part of a truck's door, feet above the ground.

The director of the US National Hurricane Center, Michael Brennan, has warned those living in Beryl's path to find a safe place to be through Monday "as hazardous conditions will persist even after the centre of Beryl moves through".

"There's a very considerable risk of flash flooding across the Texas Gulf Coast, eastern Texas, ArkaTex [Arkansas-Texas] region.

"Do not ignore this very serious storm," urged Acting Governor Dan Patrick.

The ports of Corpus Christi, Houston, Galveston, Freeport and Texas City have all closed, meaning there could be a temporary halt to exports.

All vessel movement and cargo operations have been restricted.

Refugio County, north of Galveston, on Saturday issued a mandatory evacuation - stating the limited capacity of emergency services staff, 4 July

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Sports News



Old Road made good start to Antigua Cup tournament

Old Road notched up victory by one of the biggest margins during the opening round of matches in the inaugural Antigua Cup International Youth Football Tournament at Buckley's Primary School Playing Field in Buckley's Village on Sunday.

Nazeem Bretney scored a hat-trick as Old Road romped to an emphatic 8-1 victory against the Young Warriors in the opening encounter in the Under-17 division.

Iczjaire Sebastian, Tenaure Simon, Tkai Williams, and Nathon Nicholas each converted once for Old Road. Omari Francis converted a penalty kick to score the only goal for the Young Warriors.

The Lion Hill Cubs also made a winning start in two divisions. The Cubs hammered the Young Warriors 8-0 in the Under-10 division, and the Lion Hill Cubs prevailed 3-0 against the Young Warriors second team in the Under-13 division.

The New Generation Ladies recorded a 3-1 victory against the Young Warriors in the Under-15 division.



The teams, grouped into four age categories, are competing in the Under-10, Under-13, Under-15, and Under-17 age-group categories during the first annual Antigua Cup International Youth Football Tournament from July 7-15.

The tournament is being hosted by the Young Warriors Football Club (YWFC) and its marketing partner, Sports Promotions International (SPI).

The Young Warriors Football Club, established in 1990, is dedicated to the

development of players in Antigua and Barbuda from ages five to 15 through its academy and also competes in the Antigua and Barbuda Football Association's (ABFA) Second Division domestic league.

Sports Promotions International is an Antigua-based company that organizes, promotes, and markets events globally, with connections to former and present professional players, sports officials, executives, companies, and organizations.

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holiday traffic and the area's weakened infrastructure from Hurricane Harvey in 2017 as reasons.

Nueces County, meanwhile, ordered the mandatory evacuation of visitors and strongly encouraged locals to leave as well.

More than 2,000 emergency responders have been made ready to deal with Beryl's aftermath, Mr Patrick announced, including members of the Texas National Guard.

Beryl is expected to move east across America's central states, including Mississippi, later in the week.

In the process, it will likely skip over central and west Texas, areas that are currently experiencing moderate to severe levels of drought.

Hurricane Beryl has been an unprecedented storm. At one stage, it became the earliest Category Five hurricane ever recorded.

It has already left a trail of devastation across the

Caribbean - hitting islands including St Vincent and the Grenadines, Mayreau and Union, and Grenada especially hard.

The storm was also one of the most powerful to ever hit Jamaica and left hundreds of thousands of people without power.

Beryl brought heavy rain to the tourist hotspots of Cancún and Tulum in southern Mexico. No major damage was reported but the high winds felled trees and caused power outages.

While it is difficult to attribute specific storms to climate change as the causes are complex, exceptionally high sea surface temperatures are seen as a key reason why Hurricane Beryl has been so powerful.

It is the first hurricane of the 2024 Atlantic season but the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration has warned that the North Atlantic could get as many as seven major hurricanes this year - up from an average of three in a season.

Claxton leads Leewards to second win at Women's Under-19 Rising Stars tournament

Captain Jahzara Claxton continues to lead from in-front as she inspires the Leeward Islands to their second win in three matches at the Cricket West Indies (CWI) Under-19 Women's Rising Stars T20 Championship in Trinidad and Tobago.

The Leeward Islands women beat the Windward Islands by 33 runs at the Diego Martin Sporting Complex on Sunday.

Claxton snapped up four wickets for seven runs as the Windward Islands, who were chasing an 85-run victory target, were dismissed for 51 in 16.3 overs.

She got good support from Savinani Kambalapalli and Gabrielle Harrylall. Kambalapalli claimed two for 12, and Harrylall captured two for 20.

Dennella Creese, who was the only player to reach double figures, hit a top score of 22 not out for the Windward Islands.

The Leeward Islands made 84 for three off their 20 overs after being sent in to bat. Kambalapalli made 22, Claxton got 21, and Kimberley Anthony scored 18. Selena Ross picked up two for 14.

Guyana's women maintained their unbeaten run, winning their third match in as many outings by snatching a five-run victory against Barbados at the Brian Lara Cricket Academy in Tarouba.

Set 58 to win, the Barbados women's team fell short as they were dismissed for 52 in 17.1 overs. Elecia Bowman scored 15, and Nia Wood made 12.

Danellie Manns grabbed three for 13, Crystal Durant snapped up



Jahzara Claxton

two wickets for six runs, Tramaine Marks took two for 13, and Nyia Latchman claimed two for 13.

Guyana's women were dismissed for 57 in 17.2 overs. Tilleya Madramootoo, who scored 12, was the only player to reach double figures.

Erin Deane grabbed four wickets for five runs, and Nia Wood picked up two wickets for eight runs.

Defending champions Trinidad and Tobago claimed their second win in three matches by recording a seven-wicket victory against Jamaica at the Sir Frank Worrell Memorial Ground in St. Augustine.

The Jamaica women were restricted to 82 for seven off 18 overs. Abigail Bryce made 25, and captain Jaunel Deers scored 13. Kenika Cas-

sar claimed three for 18.

Trinidad and Tobago's women achieved victory at 83 for three with seven balls to spare. Captain Samara Ramnath hit an unbeaten 49 off 58 balls, and Brianna Harricharan scored 11. Aneisha Miller captured two for 16.

The CWI Under-19 Women's Rising Stars T20 Championship will continue with the fourth round of matches in Trinidad and Tobago on Tuesday (today).

The Leeward Islands will face Guyana at the Diego Martin Sporting Complex. Barbados will meet Jamaica at the Sir Frank Worrell Memorial Ground, and Trinidad and Tobago will take on the Windward Islands at the Brian Lara Cricket Academy.

Sports News

Antiguan netballers contesting qualifiers for 2025 Netball World Youth Cup

Antigua and Barbuda's Under-21 netballers are among nine teams that are in Guadeloupe contesting the Americas Region Qualifiers for the 2025 Netball World Youth Cup (NWYC) in Gibraltar.

The Antigua and Barbuda Wadadli Pearls were slated to launch their campaign in the Americas region qualifiers for the NWYC against host Guadeloupe on Monday night in the tournament that is being held in Pointe-a-Pitre from July 7-14.

The Americas region qualifiers got on the way with two matches on Monday. Canada beat Cayman Islands 35-15 in the opening match in Pool A, and Barbados trounced St. Maarten 75-18 in the opening encounter in Pool B.

The official opening ceremony of the tournament was held before Antigua and Barbuda faced Guadeloupe on Monday night.

Antigua and Barbuda are contesting Pool B alongside Guadeloupe, Trinidad and Tobago, Barbados, and St. Maarten. Battling for supremacy in Pool A are Jamaica, Grenada, the Cayman Islands, and Canada.

Antigua and Barbuda will face Barbados in their second match on Tuesday (today) at 5 pm. Two other matches in Pool B will also take place on Tuesday.

Trinidad and Tobago will open their campaign against St. Maarten at 8 am, and the Trinidadians will face Guadeloupe at 7 pm.

The Netball World Youth Cup is the pinnacle of netball competition for emerging players who are under 21 years of age.

World Netball announced in August 2021 that Gibraltar Netball had been awarded the rights to host the Netball World Youth Cup 2025 (NWYC2025).

The tournament will take place in two main competition venues in Gibraltar, the Tercentenary Sports Hall and



Europa Sports Park, which was recently upgraded for the 2019 Island Games.

Twenty teams will compete in the event, taking place from September 19-28. Five teams have pre-qualified, and the remaining 15 teams will be determined by the five regional qualifier events taking place in 2024.

The five pre-qualified teams for the event are New Zealand, Australia, England, Fiji, and Gibraltar.

New Zealand, Australia, England, and Fiji are all invited to compete at the NWYC 2025 because of their top four finishes at the last NWYC in Gaborone, Botswana, in 2017. The NWYC 2021 in Fiji was cancelled because of the COVID-19 virus.

The final pre-qualified team is Gi-

braltar, who pre-qualify as the hosts of the event in 2025. This means that there are 15 more spots to fill at the NWYC 2025.

World Netball has five regional federations: Africa, the Americas, Asia, Europe, and Oceania. Each regional federation will host a NWYC 2025 Qualifier event, with the top three from each region then invited by World Netball to compete at the NWYC 2025.

Africa and Asia have already held their qualifiers, with South Africa, Malawi, and Zambia qualifying from Africa, and Malaysia, Singapore, and Sri Lanka qualifying from Asia.

Europe and Oceania will all host their qualifiers before the end of 2024, with dates still to be confirmed.

CWI Rising Stars Men's Under-19 Tournament to begin on July 11

Cricket West Indies (CWI) Rising Stars Men's Under-19 Championship, initially set to commence on July 2, with a three-day competition preceding a 50-over tournament, has undergone significant changes due to Hurricane Beryl's passage across islands in the Eastern Caribbean last week.

The hurricane affected regions, including host country St. Vincent and the Grenadines, necessitating a delay and a subsequent alteration in the tournament's format.

The tournament will now begin on July 11 in St. Vincent and the Grenadines. The updated format will feature four rounds of two-day matches and five rounds of 50-over matches.

Despite these modifications, the tournament will still conclude on July 31 as initially planned, ensuring teams have a balance of match time to develop their skills and adequate time for



Players from the Leeward Islands engaging in net practice in Barbados. The Leeward Islands and Jamaica teams have been held up in Barbados since Sunday, June 30, en route to St. Vincent for the Cricket West Indies Rising Stars Men's Under-19 Championship, which was initially set to commence on July 2. (LICB)

recovery between matches.

Cricket West Indies Director of Cricket, Miles Bascombe, stated, "Following an assessment by our Cricket Department, I am pleased to confirm that the pitches and outfielders are in

excellent condition. Additionally, electricity and water services have been fully restored at all venues and accommodation facilities."

The Barbados, Leeward Islands, Jamaica, and Guyana teams were scheduled

to arrive in St. Vincent on Monday, July 8. The Trinidad and Tobago team will arrive on Wednesday, July 10. The Windward Islands team is already present in St. Vincent.

Bascombe also commended all stakeholders for their effort in reorganizing and readying the tournament under challenging circumstances.

"I want to extend my gratitude to everyone involved in the quick and efficient reorganization of the championship. Your dedication has ensured we can proceed as planned. I also commend the players for their patience and understanding during this period," Bascombe said.

In the opening round of two-day matches on Thursday, the Leeward Islands will meet Guyana at Park Hill, Jamaica will face the Windward Islands at Arnos Vale, and Barbados will tackle Trinidad and Tobago at Sion Hill.

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Alzarri and Sharon Joseph Female Flyers and Wayne's Electrical Services Survivors have also reached the final of the Goody's Taxi Service and Tours, Sherma Jackson, ABSCA Female T20 Competition.

Both teams advanced to the finals after recording wins in the semi-finals on Sunday.

The Female Flyers defeated Bryson's Shipping and Insurance

Bullets by 10 wickets. Bullets were dismissed for 41 in 11.5 overs after winning the toss and batting. Lana Thomas made 19.

Monique Titus grabbed three wickets for seven runs, Menila James snapped up three wickets for nine runs, and Makada Samuel claimed two wickets for five runs.

Female Flyers raced to victory, reaching 44 without losing a wicket in just 3.3 overs. Makada Samuel hit an unbeaten 24, and Terez Parker cracked

18 not out.

The Survivors defeated the Jennings Rockets by eight wickets. The Rockets won the toss and batted, scoring 91 for nine off their 20 overs.

Patara Francis struck 26 not out. Menover Govia snatched four wickets for 10 runs, and Cerie Richards captured two for 18.

The Survivors achieved victory by scoring 92 for two in 15.1 overs. Grace Persaud slammed 45, and Luke Hurst made 20.

Buckley's 3J's and Bullets advance to ABSCA's Men's T20 final

Marco Inc./Grill Box Buckley's 3J's and Bryson's Shipping and Insurance Bullets are through to the finals of the Natural Construction Glenroy Marsh Antigua and Barbuda Softball Cricket Association's (ABSCA) Men's T20 competition.

Both teams advanced to the finals after recording wins on Sunday in the semi-finals of the ABSCA's competition, which is supported by corporate sponsors Enforcers, Everyday 24/7 Ltd, Alva Joseph, We the People (WTP) 93.5FM, and the St. John's Co-operative Credit Union.

Marco Inc./Grill Box Buckley's 3J's defeated Rackaman Construction Strictly Business by eight wickets.

Strictly Business were dismissed for 92 in 17.4 overs after losing the toss and being sent in to bat.

Kim George cracked 33, and Raymond Ledeatte got 25. Richie Thomas grabbed five for 16, and Gregson Mer-



Marco Inc./Grill Box Buckley's 3J's softball cricket team

rick claimed two for 21.

In reply, Buckley's 3J's achieved victory by scoring 93 for two in eight

overs. Kenrick Scott struck 36, and Kadeem Henry hit 22. Alwyn Colbourne captured two for 46.

Deran Benta slammed a century as Bryson's Shipping and Insurance Bullets crushed Dredgers by 106 runs.

The Bullets, who were asked to bat first after losing the toss, made 200 for nine off 20 overs. Benta hammered 116, including 13 sixes, and Essan Warner scored 40.

Ricky Buckley bagged four for 27, Javaughn James took three for 34, and Tanez Francis picked up two for 30.

In reply, the Dredgers were restricted to 94 for nine off their 20 overs. Mervin Higgins struck 30. Dorian Grant snapped up three for 10, and Shaquan Reifer claimed two for

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Bryson's Shipping and Insurance Bullets softball cricket team