



ANTIGUA & BARBUDA

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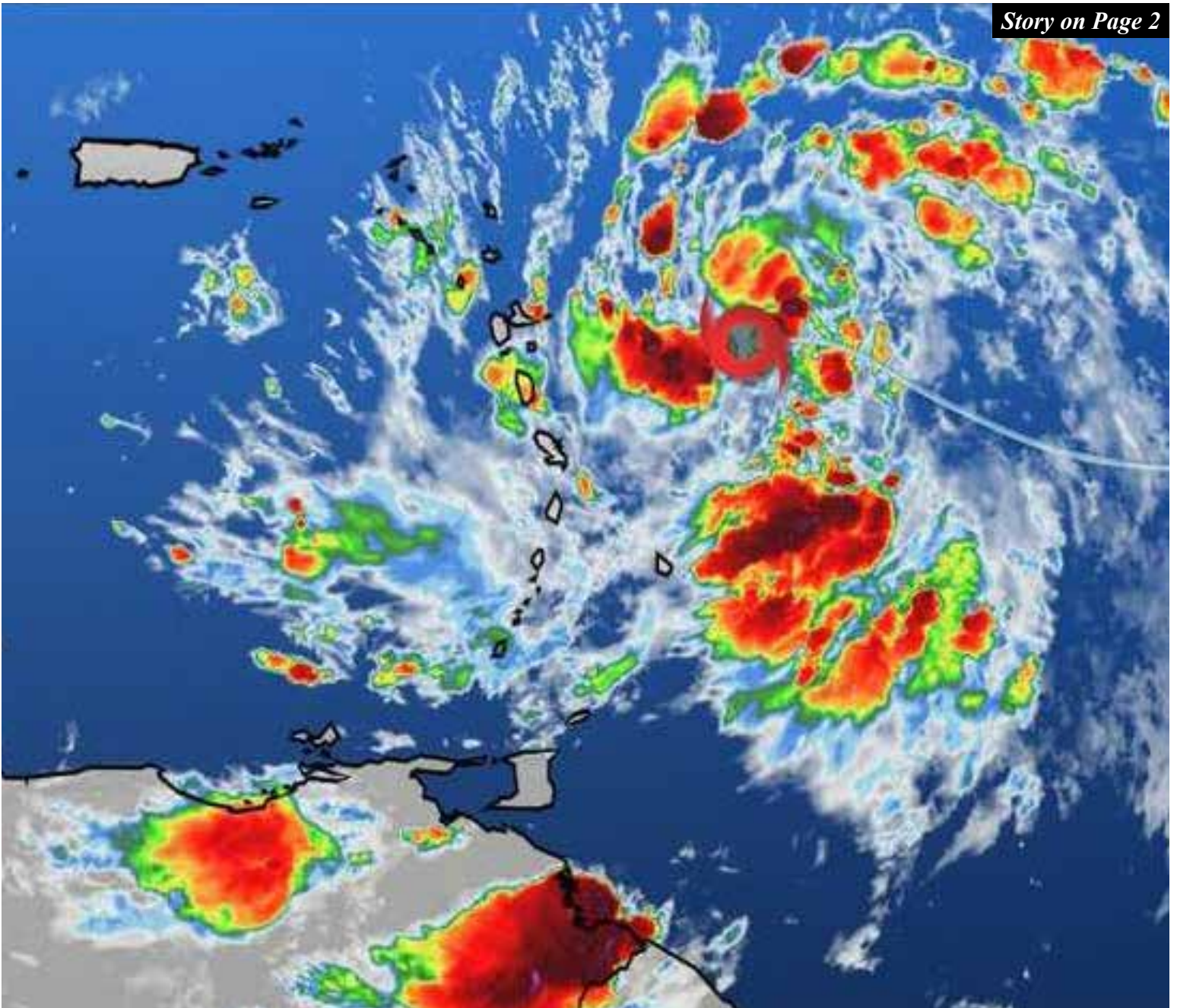
TUESDAY 13TH AUGUST 2024

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# NEOC ACTIVATED

*Story on Page 2*



The centre of Tropical Storm Ernesto was expected to pass between Montserrat and Guadeloupe during the early morning hours today.

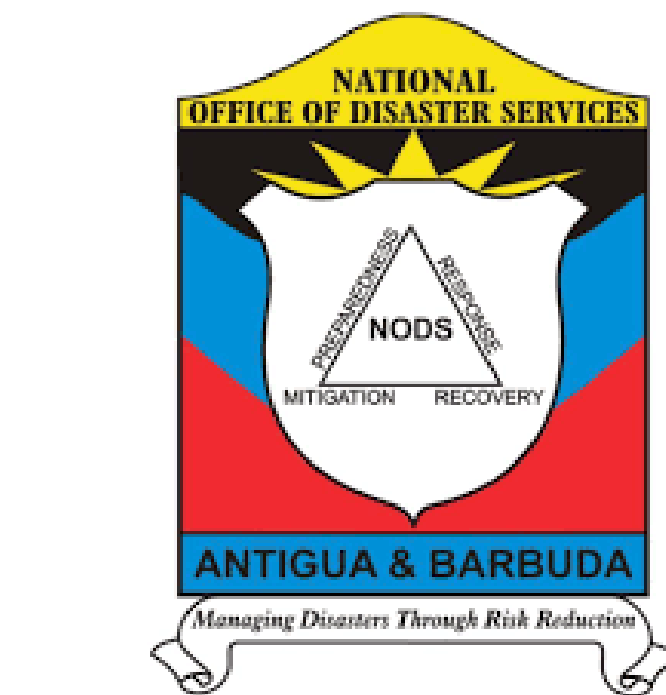
## National Emergency Operation Centre activated

As Tropical Storm Ernesto to fast approached Antigua and Barbuda on Monday, the National Emergency Operation Centre was activated to review the nation's state of preparedness for the storm.

Spokesperson for the National Office of Disaster Services (NODS) Midcie Francis, said members of the NEOC convened a meeting at the NODS headquarters, where the entity is being housed.

The NEOC comprises members of the police, the defense force, the ministry of health, the fire department, the environment division, the red cross and the Barbuda Council.

"Whenever there is a storm or a hurricane approaching, the NEOC is acti-



vated to monitor preparations ahead of the storm, the conditions during the storm as well as the impact following the passage of the storm. On Monday, the members discussed the level of prepared-

ness as Ernesto approached the Leeward Islands," she explained.

According to Francis the team was activated at the start of the hurricane season in June and Monday's meeting

was to present an assessment of the state of preparedness since then.

A special core team of NEOC members coupled with staff from NODS have established base at the NODS facility on the American Road to monitor the storm which was forecast to pass south of Antigua on Tuesday morning.

That team comprised representatives from the police, fire and the defense force along with a few staff members from NODS.

Meanwhile, Francis said instructions had been communicated to the district disaster managers that at least one shelter should have been opened overnight for persons wishing to seek shelter to wait out the storm.

## Antigua and Barbuda not expected to take direct hit from TS Ernesto

The Met Office predicted overnight that Antigua and Barbuda will not take a direct hit from Tropical Storm Ernesto, which was expected to pass south of the island during the overnight hours.

Senior forecaster, Orville Paige reported that TS Ernesto had developed into a storm and was officially named on Monday.

Late Monday afternoon, the storm was located at 295 miles east-southeast of Antigua and was moving west-north-west at 28 miles per hour.

That means that the storm had not only strengthened, but it was moving

rapidly westward with maximum sustained winds of 40 miles per hour.

"We anticipate that the storm will pass between Montserrat and Guadeloupe sometime around 4:00 am on Tuesday.

"This is roughly 50 miles south of Antigua and even further away from Barbuda. It is not expected to be a hurricane by the time it passes those islands so rather than wind damage, we anticipate that this will be a rain event," he explained.

Despite this, Paige is urging residents of both islands not to let their guards down and to still carry out

their preparations as these systems are often unpredictable and often take on a life of their own.

Several government agencies have taken precautionary steps in preparation for the passage of the storm.

The authorities at the VC Bird International Airport announced the closure of the airport at 8:00 o'clock last night.

The Sir Lester Bird Medical Centre also announced the suspension of all outpatient services today (Tuesday) in anticipation of the passage of the storm.



## Police prepare for Tropical Storm Ernesto

Top members of the police force met on Monday to fine-tune preparations for the upcoming tropical storm.

Meteorologists have issued a Tropical Storm Warning for Antigua and Barbuda and several other islands.

Police Commissioner Atlee Rodney took the opportunity to go over the Police Disaster Operations Plan with several senior officers and emphasize the police's roles and responsibilities in the event that Antigua and Barbuda is affected by the storm.

The primary focus of the discussion was on ensuring that proper measures were in place to safeguard life and property, as well as the safety and security of everyone before, during, and after the storm.

Additionally, the police collaborated with the National Office of Disaster Services (NODS) and other supporting agencies to provide assistance if the islands are affected. Residents of low-lying and flood-prone areas were advised to continuously monitor the weather and to be prepared to take necessary actions in advance.

The public has been urged to remain indoors

during and after the storm until the relevant authorities give the all-clear to minimize the risk of injury or harm to first responders and emergency personnel.

Residents can be confident that the police are prepared and equipped to respond effectively to any situation if the impending weather impacts Antigua and Barbuda.





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# PRESS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE ATTENTION

## APUA Prepares for Tropical Storm

**ST. JOHN'S Antigua, August, 12th 2024 - The Antigua Public Utilities Authority would like to assure its customers of our readiness for Tropical Storm.**

The APUA Electricity Business Unit has been conducting frequent line and pole maintenance and Utility Vegetation Management throughout the year. An adequate stock of restoration supplies is in storage in the event of infrastructural damage. Customers are reminded to prepare for the possibility of power outages as several factors may disrupt electrical services, including but not limited to; strong winds, downpours of heavy rain, and lightning.

The APUA Water Business Unit is actively filling storage tanks to secure potable water for post-storm distribution. Desalination plants might be temporarily shut down to prevent moisture in High Voltage Electrical Panels and Motors for up to 48 hours after the storm, safeguarding equipment from permanent damage.

The APUA Telecommunications Business Unit is in the final stages of securing network cables and refilling generators at cell sites in preparation for potential power outages. We advise customers to disconnect sensitive devices like modems and PABX equipment.

Customers are reminded of the following safety procedures to adhere to before, during, and after a storm:

- Please ensure that a qualified electrician correctly installs a transfer switch to isolate your generator from APUA power.
- Ensure your generator is in a well-ventilated area.
- Do not interfere with electrical wires; always treat downed power lines as energized and dangerous.
- Customers are encouraged not to remove and/or severely downed telephone lines.
- Switch off and unplug sensitive electronic appliances such as televisions, modems, cable boxes, microwave ovens, and computers.
- If low voltage is being experienced, please turn off the main switch to your home.
- Charge your mobile devices and power banks.
- Keep a battery-operated AM/FM Radio for updates throughout and after the storm.
- Ensure that enough potable water is stored to sustain a household for at least 7 days.

Antigua Public Utilities Authority remains committed to ensuring that the safety of our employees, the general public of Antigua and Barbuda, and equipment are our paramount priority. The electricity network will be closely monitored during a storm and based on the severity of the storm and or/loss of extensive load we may be forced to completely close the entire network to protect lives and equipment.

We encourage the general public to continue to adhere to guidelines from the National Office of Disaster Services and the Meteorological Office as we experience these adverse weather conditions. We also encourage customers to connect to our social media platforms for further updates.

During an active storm, crews are not dispatched to address electricity faults and outages until it is safe to do so. Specific timelines will not be available until restoration for impacted areas has commenced.

After the storm, our Restoration Plan will be immediately implemented upon the advice of the Met Office.

-END -



## SVG PM Gonsalves hopeful LIAT 2020 will fly there

Prime Minister Ralph Gonsalves said he is hopeful that LIAT2020 will fly to St. Vincent (SVG). On Tuesday 6, LIAT 2020 took to the skies; however, the airline did not include St. Vincent and the Grenadines on its list of immediate routes.

Gonsalves stated that, while he does not have an update on when the airline will fly into SVG, airline officials are expected to come to Kingstown for a meeting.

“I don’t have an update; the CEO and I had informal discussions on the margins of the CARICOM meeting recently, and they’re supposed to come for us to have a discussion.”

“I’m hopeful that they will come. I told them that they were welcome. We’ll have space to accommodate them if they want to set up any offices and so forth. I told them we will fully cooperate, as I told Gaston Brown, and Gaston knows that.”

Gonsalves said he thinks it’s a matter of a limited number of aircraft at the moment.

“I think what’s happening is that they have a limited number of planes at the moment, and they are awaiting further expansion. So, I think this has to be more of their internal planning. They’re rolling out in some rational manner from their perspective.”

Last Tuesday CEO Hafsaf Abdulsalam said LIAT 2020 will run the Antigua/St. Lucia route for the next two weeks, with hopes to expand shortly, and will include flights to Barbados, Grenada, Dominica, and St. Kitts & Nevis.

Abdulsalam also stated that in September, the airline will add 11 new destinations and expand into larger Caribbean territories in the south,

including Guyana, Trinidad, and Tobago.

LIAT2020 also plans to launch their new generation, the 128-seat E2-195 narrow-body aircraft, before the end of the first year.

According to Abdulsalam, ECCA’s Cat 1 designation will enable us to increase flights to Panama and, ideally, Miami, Puerto Rico, and the British Virgin Islands.



SVG Prime Minister Ralph Gonsalves

*Reprinted  
from stvincenttimes.com*



### IMPORTANT ADVISORY

**VC Bird International Airport closes tonight as weather system approaches**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
MONDAY 12TH AUGUST**

**The Antigua and Barbuda Airport Authority (ABAA) advises all travelers and stakeholders that the VC Bird International Airport will close at 8 PM tonight due to the approaching tropical system.**

**Based on the guidance from the Antigua and Barbuda Meteorological Services, we anticipate reopening the airport for regular commercial service by 3 PM tomorrow, Tuesday August 13th.**

**We urge all members of the public to heed the advice of Antigua and Barbuda’s disaster emergency services and take all necessary precautions to ensure their safety during the passage of the weather system.**

**The Authority will continue to monitor the storm’s progress and issue further advisories as appropriate.**

**For the latest updates, please listen out for further advisories or contact your airline directly.**

# Local News



## Department of Environment staff attends closure of UNDP EnGenDER Project

Two representatives of the Department of Environment - Garth Simon and Cathy Thomas - participated in the closure sessions of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Enabling Gender-Responsive Disaster Recovery, Climate, and Environmental Resilience in the Caribbean (EnGenDER) Project in St. Lucia.

The three-day event marked the conclusion of this impactful five-year initiative, which has significantly enhanced climate and disaster resilience among vulnerable populations, including women, youth, the elderly, and persons with disabilities across several Caribbean islands, including Antigua and Barbuda.

During the sessions, Si-

mon and Thomas engaged with regional counterparts to share key lessons learned, assess the project's impact on beneficiaries, and strategize on next steps to ensure the sustainability of the EnGenDER Project's initiatives. Their contributions highlighted Antigua and Barbuda's commitment to advancing gender-responsive resilience strategies.

A major component of the EnGenDER Project in Antigua and Barbuda, executed by the Department of Environment, involved the distribution of 400-gallon water tanks to vulnerable women and men. This initiative played a critical role in ensuring that these populations have access to essential resources during disaster events, thereby bol-



stering their resilience.

The Ministry of Health, and the Environment extends its gratitude to Simon and Thomas for their

dedicated participation and reaffirms its ongoing commitment to fostering climate and disaster resilience within the nation.

## CIBC Caribbean appoints Mali Newton to senior post

CIBC Caribbean has announced the appointment of Mali Newton, to the post of Manager, Loans and Mortgage Centre in Antigua and Barbuda effective August 2024.

The bank's Country Head, Ladesa James-Williams said his appointment will further enhance the bank's service to its clients.

"We are delighted to have Mali, a seasoned banking professional join our team and know he will work assiduously towards the benefit of our staff, clients and community at large".

A native of Antigua and Barbuda, Mali previously, worked at the Eastern Caribbean Central Bank as an Examiner from January 2021 to May 2024 and spent nearly ten years at Scotia-



Mali Newton

bank Antigua in various capacities, including Teller, Personal Banking Assistant and Customer Relations Representative.

A qualified banker, Mali earned his BBA in Finance (Magna Cum Laude) from Midwestern State University in 2015 and later obtained an MSc in Corporate Finance from the University of the West Indies, Mona in 2021.

His experience includes roles as an Advisor at Sagikor Life (Eastern Caribbean) Inc. in Antigua and as an Investment Officer at MoneyMasters Limited in Kingston, Jamaica.

A passionate sports enthusiast, Mali enjoys basketball, gym workouts, and hiking, participating in various sporting leagues in Antigua and Barbuda and beyond. He is dedicated to supporting CIBC Caribbean's goals and serving the community in Antigua and Barbuda.



## Halo Foundation, Progressive Vision and Swiss Embassy launch eye care initiative

The Halo Foundation has joined forces with Progressive Vision to launch an eye care initiative under the slogan “Future Bright with the Gift of Sight”. The goal of the project is to provide essential eye care services to underprivileged youth, offering free eye exams and when needed, glasses to improve their vision. It is being funded through the Honorary Consul of Switzerland in Antigua and Barbuda, Patricia Gyger.

The initiative has already garnered significant support from the public, having received donations of gently



H.E. Lady Williams welcomes Dr. Salem Zreibe (Optometrist) to Government House to discuss the programme.

used (fairly new) eyeglass frames, free of damage and excessive scratches. These contributions have been instrumental in the provision

of lenses and frames to those in need.

During the first phase of the project, over 65 individuals were provided with free

vision care services, including new glasses. This timely initiative will also assist the youth as they are about to return to school.

“We encourage the public to continue supporting this worthy cause by donating gently used eyeglasses (frames). These can be dropped off at the Halo Foundation Office in Government House, or at Progressive Vision on Old Parham Road,” a Halo Foundation release stated.

Those requiring further information are sked to contact the Halo Foundation at 562-9153.

# SUNDAY STARTER

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# Isaac Hayes' family threatens to sue Trump for \$3 million

By Mark Savage

The family of the late soul singer Isaac Hayes has ordered Donald Trump to stop playing the star's song *Hold On, I'm Coming* at his campaign rallies.

A letter sent to Trump and his team, and shared by Hayes' son on social media, threatens to sue the former US President if he does not comply by 16 August.

The family is also demanding \$3m (£2.4m) in licensing fees for the campaign's repeated use of the song between 2022 and 2024.

The song, which was made famous by soul duo Sam and Dave, is a regular feature of Trump's rallies, often playing before and after his speeches.

Hayes composed the song in 1966 with Dave



Trump played the Hayes-penned song as recently as last weekend.

Porter, when he was a staff writer at Stax Records. He went on to become a Grammy and Oscar-winner in his own right, with hits like *Shaft* and *Walk On By*.

In their legal letter, Hayes' family claimed to have "asked repeatedly" for Trump to stop using the song. They go on to cite 134 occasions on which the

campaign went ahead anyway.

Their lawyer, James Walker, alleged that the Trump campaign has "willfully and brazenly engaged in copyright infringement".

He went on to demand that the campaign remove any videos featuring the song, and issue a full statement acknowledging that Hayes' family have not "authorised, endorsed or permitted" the use of his music.

Walker added that the requested \$3m settlement is a "heavily discounted" figure, due to the frequency with which the campaign has played *Hold On, I'm Coming*.

The letter also stated that if a resolution was

*cont'd on pg 9*



Isaac Hayes was one of the most prolific and successful soul musicians of the 1960s and 70s.





*cont'd from pg 8*

not made and a lawsuit was issued, the Hayes family would demand damages of \$150,000 per use of the song - amounting to more than \$20m (£15.7m).

The Trump campaign has yet to respond to the letter or the threat of legal action.

The Hayes family previously criticised Trump for playing Hold On, I'm Coming at a National Rifle Association convention, less than a week after the Uvalde school shooting in 2022, which claimed the lives of 19 people.

"Our condolences go out to the victims and families of Uvalde and mass shooting victims everywhere," they wrote at the time.

Porter, the song's co-writer, also wrote: "I did not and would not approve of them using the song for any of his purposes."

Meanwhile, Sam Moore - who sang the original hit recording - objected to Barack Obama using the song in his 2008 presidential campaign.

"I have not agreed to endorse you for the highest office in our land," he said in a statement at the time.

"My vote is a very private matter between myself and the ballot box,"

he added.

On Sunday, Hayes' son, Isaac Hayes III, elaborated on his objections to the Trump campaign.

"Donald Trump epitomises a lack of integrity and class, not only through his continuous use of my father's music without permission but also through his history of sexual abuse against women and his racist rhetoric," he wrote on Instagram.

"This behaviour will no longer be tolerated, and we will take swift action to put an end to it."

The Hayes family are the latest in a long line of musicians to complain about the Trump campaign.

The Beatles, Neil Young, Adele, Bruce Springsteen, Sinéad O'Connor and Aerosmith are among the artists who have issued the politician with cease-and-desist orders.

In fact, the list of artists who have protested is so lengthy that the topic has its own Wikipedia page.

On Saturday, Celine Dion's team also protested against the use of her track My Heart Will Go On at a rally in Montana.

"In no way is this use authorised, and Celine Dion does not endorse this or any similar use," a statement read.

"And really, THAT song?," it added - alluding to the fact that the track was recorded for the film Titanic, about a sinking ship.

However, musicians have only had limited success in stopping politicians from using their music.

In the US, campaigns are required to obtain a Political Entities License from the music rights body BMI, which gives them access to more than 20 million tracks for use in their rallies.

Artists and publishers can ask for their music to be withdrawn from the list, but it seems that organisers rarely check the database to ensure they have clearance.

"They don't care as much about artists' rights as perhaps you'd want," said Larry Iser, a lawyer who represented Jackson Browne when he sued Republican candidate John McCain for one of his songs in a 2008 commercial. (The case was later settled).

"It's not just the Trump campaign," Iser told Billboard magazine. "Most political campaigns aren't keen about just taking the song down."

Cases rarely, if ever, head to court - with both sides typically backing down after a flurry of legal letters.

# The 'superfood' taking over fields in northern India

By Priti Gupta

Like his father and grandfather before him, Phool dev Shahni once made a living by diving to the bottom of 8ft-deep (2.4m), muddy ponds.

"I used to dive in 7 to 8ft of water for hours a day - coming to the surface to breathe after 8 to ten minutes," explains Mr Shahni.

While down in those murky depths he was harvesting the seeds of a type of water lily called euryale ferox.

Known as makhanas, fox nuts or lotus seeds, they are prized for their nutritional value, being high in B vitamins, protein and fibre, with some touting them as a superfood.

Often eaten as a snack, makhanas are also used in



Phool dev Shahni makes a living harvesting makhana or lotus seeds.

various dishes, including the milk pudding kheer, as well as being ground into flour.

In the north-western Indian state of Bihar, where Mr Shahni lives, 90% of the world's makhana is grown.

The leaves of the lily plant are large and circular and sit on the top of the pond. But the seeds form in pods under water and collecting them was an exhausting process.

"While we are at the

bottom diving, mud enters our ears, eyes, nose and mouth. Lots of us have skin issues due to this. Also the plant is covered in thorns, which give us cuts all over our body during harvesting of the seeds," Mr Shahni says.

But in recent years farmers have changed the cultivation process. The plants are now often grown in fields, in much shallower water.

Harvesting seeds in just a foot of water means Mr Shahni can make twice as much money in a day.

"It's still hard work but I am proud of my tradition. I have three children and I will make sure that one of my sons continues the legacy of working in a fox nut field."



A new superfood? This is how makhana looks before being roasted and popped.

*cont'd on pg 11*



*cont'd from pg 10*

Dr Manoj Kumar, is one of those behind the change in makhana cultivation.

About ten years ago he realised it would be difficult to expand its cultivation in deep ponds.

As head of the National Research Centre for Makhana (NRCM) he helped to develop the cultivation of lilies in fields of shallow water.

Over the last four or five years that technique has been taking off.

“With our innovations, growing fox nuts is now as easy as any crop grown on land. The only amount of water needed is a foot. The workers don’t have to work for hours in deep water,” he explains.

And after experiments with different seeds, his centre found a more resilient and productive variety, which he says has tripled the income of farmers.

Dr Kumar says that makhana cultivation has helped some farmers cope with more uncertain weather conditions and floods that have hit Bihar in recent years.

Now NRCM is working on machines that can harvest the seeds.

All that innovation has attracted more and more farmers.

In 2022, the area used for fox nut farming was 35,224 hectares (87,000 acres), an almost threefold increase over 10 years.

Dhirendra Kumar is one farmer who has made



Dhirendra Kumar switched his family farm to fox nut production. a recent switch to makhana cultivation.

Although he grew up on a farm, he didn’t want to follow in his father’s footsteps.

“As farmers we always grew wheat, lentils and mustard but ended up losing a lot of money.

“Most of the time floods destroyed the crops,” he says.

While studying for a PhD, he came into contact with a scientist working on makhana cultivation and decided to experiment with the crop on his family farm.

“The results were amazing. In the first year I made a profit of £340 [US\$432],” he says.

Now he grows lilies on 17 acres (6.9 hectares) of land.

“In my wildest dreams

I did not think that I would get into growing fox nuts, as it was a labour-intensive job, which was mostly carried out by fishermen.”

The change in crop has also opened up job opportunities for women. Mr Kumar now employs about 200 local women who sow the seeds.

“My aim is to provide jobs to as many farmers as possible so they don’t leave farming because of uncertainty in agriculture,” he says.

It’s not just in the field that innovations have been made.

As well as being one of the leading cultivators of makhana, Madhubani Makhana, processes it for export all over the world.

Traditionally, once the makhanas have been har-

vested, they are washed, roasted and then hit with a mallet-like tool to make them pop.

“The method is crude, unhygienic and risky. It is laborious, time-consuming and a number of times leads to injuries and burns,” says Shambhu Prasad, the founder and chief executive of Madhubani Makhana.

In partnership with the NRCM, his company has developed a machine which roasts and pops the fox seeds.

“This has helped us increase the quality and the production of fox nuts,” says Mr Prasad.

Three of the machines have been incorporated into his manufacturing plant in Madhubani, in the north of Bihar.

*cont'd on pg 12*



Venezuelans living in Mexico City took to the streets to protest against President Nicolás Maduro being given a third term after last month's election.

## Venezuela opposition urges global protest over poll result

By Sofia Ferreira Santos

Venezuela's opposition coalition has called for protests to be held worldwide on 17 August in support of its claim to have won the country's presidential election.

President Nicolás Maduro was declared the winner by the government-controlled electoral commission, which handed him a

third consecutive term in office.

The opposition says its candidate, Edmundo González, was the real winner, and has called for the commission to release detailed data from polling stations.

This call has been backed by the European Union and the US while a number of other Latin

American nations have so far held off recognising Mr Maduro as the winner of last month's poll.

Opposition leader María Corina Machado posted a video on social media in which she said Venezuelans should "take to the streets" worldwide on Saturday 17 August in support of her party's claim of victory.

"Let's shout together

for the world to support our victory and recognize truth and popular sovereignty", she said on Sunday.

The opposition published a data set online shortly after the 28 July election which it says proves Mr González won by a wide margin.

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken said there was "overwhelming evidence" that Edmundo González had won the most votes.

The Maduro government, however, insists that the result announced by the National Electoral Council (CNE), which is stacked

*cont'd on pg 13*

*cont'd from pg 11*

While innovation in the farming and processing of makhana is increasing production, Mr Prasad does not think that will be enough to see prices fall.

"Given the rising global demand for makhana, significant increases in production will be necessary to achieve any sub-

stantial reduction in prices," he says.

Back on his farm, Dharendra Kumar thinks that makhana cultivation will bring far-reaching change.

"It's the beginning of innovation in Bihar when it comes to fox nut harvesting. It will change the landscape of the state," he says.



## Suriname state oil company to invest in first offshore project

CMC - The state-owned energy, oil and gas company, Staatsolie, says it plans to will invest US\$1.8 billion in its first offshore oil project with the possibility of taking up a 20 per cent stake in the Block 38 field project.

In its 2023 annual report, Staatsolie it fully intends to take up “our option for a stake of up to 20 per cent in this groundbreaking project, which at current investment levels will entail an investment of approximately US\$1.8 billion”.

Staatsolie said it is considering all options to finance its participation, from its own cash reserves, bonds, loans, partnerships with strategic and/or non-strategic partners to other forms of financing or a combination of options.

The company estimates it will receive significant government revenues from the Block 58 development. This amount, including royalties,



profit oil and taxes, will be between US\$16 billion and US\$26 billion over the expected life of the production field of 20 years, depending on current oil prices.

France-based TotalEnergies and the Texas-based APA Corporation are leading a nine billion US dollar development focused on two huge reservoirs, the Sapakara South and Krabdagu fields, which together contain an estimated 700 million barrels

of oil. The Sapakara South and Krabdagu reservoirs are located at water depths ranging from 100 to 1,000 meters.

Staatsolie said that the development of the first offshore production field will involve drilling approximately 30 wells over a period of 2.5 years. The development proposal is being prepared, with an evaluation expected this year. First oil is expected in 2028.

### *cont'd from pg 12*

with its allies, is the only valid one.

Mr Maduro has said he will publish the vote tallies, but has not specified when.

He accused the opposition of producing fake evidence to contest the result of the election and said the US was behind what he described as a farce and a coup attempt.

Mr González, who replaced Ms Machado as the opposition's candidate after she was banned from running, also called for national and worldwide protests in support of “the truth”.

Both have been in hid-

ing - Ms Machado wrote in the Wall Street Journal that she is fearing for her “life” and “freedom”.

The government has said Ms Machado should be arrested.

Thousands of protesters have taken to the streets in Venezuela and other Latin American countries since the official poll result was contested.

The government says more than 2,000 people have been detained, some of which it accuses of “terrorism”.

Some opposition figures have also been seized in the last few weeks.

María Oropeza, a campaign co-ordinator for opposition coalition Vente Venezuela, live-streamed her detention on Instagram.

In a video, loud bangs could be heard in the background as she told her followers that she had done nothing wrong. Officials from Venezuela's military counter-intelligence agency then burst through her door and the video cuts to black.

Members of the security forces have seized Freddy Superlano and Roland Carreño – both of whom worked for the opposition party Popular Will – and Ricardo Estévez, a techni-

cal adviser for the same opposition movement as Ms Oropeza.

Last week, Mr González refused to appear at the country's Supreme Court after it summoned all presidential candidates for an audit of the disputed vote.

He later said he would have risked his freedom and “the will of the Venezuelan people” by attending.

Venezuela's Supreme Court, which is stacked with allies of President Maduro, said on Saturday that it was continuing to assess the election and that its ruling would be “final and binding”.

## One dead as wildfires rage across Athens suburbs

By Christy Cooney

One person has died as fierce wildfires spread in the suburbs of Athens in Greece on Monday.

The body, believed to be that of a woman, was found inside a shop in the town of Vrilissia, northern Athens, a source from the fire service told the BBC.

Thousands of people have been evacuated after firefighters warned that homes, businesses and schools were under threat, with fires expected to continue into Tuesday.

Fire service spokesman Col Vassilios Vathrakogiannis said while there was no longer a single active fire front in the north-eastern Attica region, which includes parts of Athens, there were still “many active localised blazes”, mostly around the towns of Marathon and Penteli.

In a statement, Col Vathrakogiannis added that conditions for new fires remained dangerous not only for Tuesday, but for further into the week too.

Greece has just experienced its hottest June and July on record.

More than 700 firefighters, 199 fire engines and 35 waterbombing aircraft have been involved in efforts to extinguish the fires, which first broke out on Sunday afternoon around 35km (22 miles)



north of the Greek capital.

Aircraft were forced to land as night set in on Monday, but ground operations continued through the night.

Greece’s National Observatory said on Monday evening satellite images showed that, by noon local time (10:00 BST), the fire had already affected around 100,000 acres (405 sq km; 156 sq miles).

In Penteli, three hospitals had to be evacuated, and one of the sites of the National Observatory was at one stage feared to be under threat.

The blaze also engulfed a timber factory, and elsewhere in the area a number of explosions were heard, most likely from fuel tanks and residential gas cylinders.

In response to the fires, European nations announced that they would be providing assistance to Greece, after its government activated the EU’s mutual civil protection mechanism.

Italy is providing two planes while France and Serbia are providing one helicopter each, Col Vathrakogiannis said.

Spain, the Czech Republic and Romania are sending further vehicles, personnel, and aid.

Neighbouring Turkey is also preparing to send two planes and a helicopter, Foreign Minister Öncü Keçeli said.

Writing on X, formerly Twitter, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen said the EU would “stand with Greece

as it battles devastating fires”.

Officials said fires broke out in 40 different locations on Monday and that some areas saw flames as high as 25 metres (82 feet).

In unprecedented scenes, people in Athens have been wearing face-masks to protect themselves from the smoke, which has blown into the city.

Climate change increases the risk of the hot, dry weather that is likely to fuel wildfires.

The world has already warmed by about 1.1C since the industrial era began and temperatures will keep rising unless governments around the world make steep cuts to emissions.





Residents in parts of the Kursk region have been warned to shelter in basements, and a growing number have been evacuated.

## Ukraine claims to control 1,000 square km of Russian territory

Ukraine's top commander has said Kyiv's forces control 1,000 sq km of Russian territory as they press their biggest cross-border incursion in two-and-a-half years of full-scale war.

Commander Oleksandr Syrskyi said Ukraine continued to "conduct an offensive operation in the Kursk region" seven days after it began.

Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelensky said Russia had brought war to others and now it was coming back to Russia.

But Russian leader Vladimir Putin described the offensive as a "major provocation" and ordered Russian forces to "to kick the enemy out of our territory".

A growing number of people have been evacuated from the western Russian region for their safety, with a further 59,000 told to leave.

The local governor said some 28 villages in the area had fallen to Ukrainian forces, that 12 civilians had been killed and that "the situation remains difficult".

Ukrainian troops launched their surprise attack last Tuesday, advancing up to 18 miles (30km) into Russia.

The offensive is said to have boosted morale on the Ukrainian side, but analysts say the strategy brings fresh dangers to Ukraine.

A senior British military source, who asked not to be named, told the BBC there was the risk that Moscow will be so angered by this incursion that it could redouble its own attacks on Ukraine's civilian population and infrastructure.

In comments aired on state television, President Putin said on Monday: "One of the obvious goals of the ene-

my is to sow discord, strife, intimidate people, destroy the unity and cohesion of Russian society.

"The main task is, of course, for the defence ministry to dislodge the enemy from our territories," he told a meeting of officials.

The region's governor said 121,000 people had been evacuated from their homes. He told Mr Putin that about 2,000 Russian citizens remained in areas occupied by Ukrainian forces in the area.

"We don't know anything about their fate," he said.

He warned people to take shelter from missiles in rooms without windows and with solid walls.

In Belgorod, the region next to Kursk, about 11,000 people were also urged to leave, as governor Vyacheslav

*cont'd on pg 16*

# Sports News



## Johnny Grave's tenure as CWI Chief Executive Officer set to end

Cricket West Indies (CWI) has announced that Johnny Grave will be concluding his tenure as Chief Executive Officer (CEO), a position he has held since February 2017, at the end of October 2024.

CWI extends its deepest gratitude for his dedicated service and leadership throughout his term.

In his reflection, Johnny Grave said, "It has been an absolute privilege to have been CEO of CWI since February 2017. Having just hosted a successful T20 World Cup and delivered significant surpluses for CWI for the third consecutive year, I do feel it is the right time for me and my family to seek a new challenge.

"I have received tremendous support from so many people since becoming CEO, and I'd like to thank everyone, especially the staff and the players, particularly during the difficult pandemic, for their trust in me and their commitment to West Indies cricket.

"My family and I have loved living in Antigua and will leave with many special memories having watched our young children grow up here. I have put everything into



Johnny Grave

this role, and now is the right time for someone new with fresh energy to lead the organization and continue this important work and build on the strong foundations that are now in place."

Dr. Kishore Shallow, CWI President, commended the work done by Greave, particularly through challenging times such as the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as successfully hosting three World Cups.

During Greave's tenure, the CWI hosted the Women's T20 World Cup in 2018, the Men's Under-19 Cricket World Cup in 2022, and recently, the 2024 Men's T20 World Cup, which have made a lasting impact on the CWI.

"Appreciably, the organization has taken many positive strides during

his tenure. A standout achievement is the acquisition and full ownership of the Coolidge Cricket Ground (CCG), which is now our headquarters and home to our men's and women's academies.

"On behalf of the Board and all at CWI, I express heartfelt thanks to him for the unwavering commitment and leadership over the past several years," Dr. Shallow said.

Dr. Shallow further emphasized, "As we look forward to embracing a new chapter in the organization's evolution, CWI is poised to deliver the new strategic plan and enter a new era of governance. This transition reflects our commitment to adapting and innovating in response to the evolving landscape of cricket."

Cricket West Indies will be initiating a comprehensive recruitment process to select the next CEO. The organization is dedicated to ensuring a thorough and transparent selection process.

Details regarding the recruitment process will be announced shortly and will be published across various media platforms to keep stakeholders informed.

### cont'd from pg 15

Gladkov told people from the Krasnaya Yaruga district they were being moved due to "enemy activity on the border".

He issued a similar missile warning, and told people to shelter in their basements.

In his nightly address, Ukraine's president acknowledged the offensive, saying: "Russia must be forced to make peace if Pu-

tin wants to fight so badly."

"Russia brought war to others, now it's coming home. Ukraine has always wanted only peace, and we will certainly ensure peace," Mr Zelensky added.

Ukrainian officials have said thousands of troops are engaged in the operation, far more than the small incursion initially reported by Russian border guards.

An official told news agency AFP that their aim

was to "to inflict maximum losses and to destabilise the situation in Russia".

During a meeting with Mr Zelensky in Kyiv on Monday, US Senator Lindsey Graham called the cross-border operation "brilliant" and "bold", and urged the Biden administration to provide Ukraine with the weapons it needs.

Some in Russia have questioned how Ukraine was able to enter the Kursk

region - with one pro-Russian war blogger, Yuri Podolyaka calling the situation "alarming".

Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said a tough response from Russia's armed forces "will not take long".

Meanwhile, Russian ally Belarus said it was bolstering its own troop numbers at its border after claiming Ukraine had entered its airspace with drones.





## CWI Regional U-17 boys' tournament commences in T&T this week

The Leeward Islands will be hoping for an improved performance in the 2024 Cricket West Indies (CWI) Rising Stars Boys' Under-17 regional tournament, which will commence in Trinidad and Tobago this week.

Players from the Leeward Islands will be among the best young cricketers in the West Indies who are assembling in Trinidad and Tobago for the tournament that features both 50-over and two-day formats and starts on Wednesday, August 14, until September 2.

The Leeward Islands 14-member squad left Antigua on Sunday for Trinidad, where they will be seeking to improve on their last place finish in 2023 in both two-day and one-day un-

der-17 boys' competitions, which were both won by Barbados.

The Leeward Islands squad comprised captain Tanez Francis, Lythe Browne, Is-rael Morton, Lawshorn Bergan, Carlton Pluck, J'quan Athanaze, De-antré Drew, Jaheem Clarke, Devanand Singh, Caiden Francis, Micah McKenzie, Mekali Tonge, Amoree Jones, and wicket-keeper Eirette Richards.

Similar to the 2023 edition, Cricket West Indies (CWI) is once again using a two-day red ball format to add to the pre-existing 50-Over format for the Rising Stars Under-17 regional championships. Teams will compete first for the 2-Day Championship and then the 50-Over Cup.

The West Indies Ris-

ing Stars Under-17 tournament will feature three rounds of two-day red ball matches from August 14-22 and five rounds of 50-over white ball matches from August 25 to September 2 to be played at the National Cricket Centre (NCC), Inshan Ali Park, and Gilbert Park Cricket Ground (GPCG).

A champion will be crowned at the end of each format, as WI Rising Stars Under-17 50 Over Cup Champions and WI Rising Stars Under-17 2-Day Champions.

In Wednesday's opening round of two-day matches, the Leeward Islands will face the Windward Islands at Gilbert Park Cricket Ground, Jamaica will face defending champions Barbados at NCC, and Trinidad

and Tobago will clash with Guyana at Inshan Ali Park.

The tournament is a key element of the West Indies Future Stars development programme, allowing the best players in the region to test themselves within their age group.

The tournament is pivotal for identifying talent and facilitating player progression to produce the next generation of West Indies senior international cricketers.

The West Indies Rising Stars Boys' Under-17 Championships complete the full 2023 calendar of CWI's regional age group cricket, which featured the men's West Indies Rising Stars Under 15s and Under 19s Championships, as well as the Rising Stars Women's Under 19s Championship.

# Sports News



## Wins for three teams in Parham Super League

Three teams recorded wins on the second day of the second annual Parham Super League on Sunday.

The Potters FC claimed a 2-0 victory against FC Master Ballerz in the only match that was played in a scheduled triple header at the Parham playing field.

Keon Greene and Javorn Benjamin each scored once

for Potters FC. All Saints United and John Hughes were rewarded victories via 3-0 margins by default after their respective opponents failed to show up for their encounters.

All Saints United won against last year's losing finalists, SAP FC, and John Hughes secured their win against the Greenbay Hop-

pers.

The Pigotts Bullets began their defense of the Parham Super League title with a draw in the opening encounter on Saturday.

The Bullets were held to a 1-1 draw by Garden Stars in the opening match of the football competition during a triple header at the Parham playing field.

Kimon Harrigan scored for the Pigotts Bullets, and Wilden Cornwall Jr. converted for the Garden Stars.

Willikies and Parham launched their campaigns with convincing wins in the other two matches during Saturday's opening day of the round-robin tournament.

Willikies cruised to a 3-1 victory against Freeman's Village FC. Phil Nicholas, Nadre Thomas, and Novelle Francis Jr. each converted once for Willikies. Josue "Naymar" Arias scored for Freeman's Village.

Parham snatched a 4-2 victory against the Attacking Saints of All Saints. The goals for Parham came via conversions by Denie Henry, Ramone Montanana, and J'twan Browne, as well as an own goal conceded by the Attacking Saints. Corey Jarvis scored both goals for the Attacking Saints.

The Parham Super League will continue with a double header on Wednesday evening.

The Attacking Saints will face the Pigotts Bullets at 6 pm, and Garden Stars will meet Parham FC at 7:30 pm.

The second annual Parham Super League, which is organized by Eastboys Promotions, is featuring 12 teams this year.


The 12 teams, an increase of four teams, are competing in two zones, with the winner taking home a grand prize of EC\$5,000.

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## Thorpe's wife says former England cricketer took his own life

LONDON (AP) — Former England cricketer Graham Thorpe took his own life after suffering from depression and anxiety, his wife Amanda said on Monday.

Tributes poured in last week after it was announced that Thorpe had died at the age of 55.

Amanda Thorpe has now told The Times newspaper: "For the past couple of years Graham had been suffering from major depression and anxiety. This led him to make a serious attempt on his life in May 2022, which resulted in a prolonged stay in an intensive care unit.

"Despite having a wife and two daughters whom he loved and who loved him, he did not get better. He was so unwell in recent times and he really did believe that we would be better off without him. We are devastated that he acted on that and took his own life.

"Despite glimpses of hope and of the old Graham, he continued to suffer from depression and anxiety, which at times got very severe. We supported him as a family and he tried many, many treatments but unfortunately none of them really seemed to work.

"Graham was renowned as some-



England's coach Graham Thorpe arrives for their training session at the Gabba ahead of the first Ashes cricket test in Brisbane, Australia, Dec. 6, 2021. (AP File Photo)

one who was very mentally strong on the field and he was in good physical health. But mental illness is a real disease and can affect anyone."

Thorpe was a mainstay in the England set-up for the majority of his life, first as a batter between 1993 and 2005 and then for 12 years in various coaching roles.

A stylish and fluid top-order batter, Thorpe played 100 Tests for England.

He scored 16 centuries, including one on debut against Australia at Trent Bridge.

His 6,744 runs came at a sterling average of 44.66 at a time when England was struggling. But the gritty, left-handed Thorpe was key to his country's gradual improvement. He was also capped 82 times in One-Day Internationals (ODI) in which he scored 2,380 runs.

*cont'd from pg 20*

in Tier II Group A along with Guyana, Barbados, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, and the Cayman Islands.

The young Benna Boys will launch their campaign in the group phase against Guyana on Friday's opening day of the tournament at 2 pm.

Tier II Group B will comprise Anguilla, the British Virgin Islands (BVI), the Turks and Caicos Islands, the United States Virgin Islands (USVI), and Dominica.

Contesting Tier II Group C are Dutch St. Maarten, St. Lucia, Bonaire, Bermuda, and Grenada.

Tier I Group A will feature hosts Trinidad and Tobago, Jamaica, St. Kitts and Nevis, and Aruba. Contesting Tier I Group B will be Puerto Rico, French St. Martin, Curacao, and French Guiana.

Haiti are back-to-back champions of the CFU Under-14 Boys Challenge Series after winning the last tournament in 2022 in the Dominican Republic.



# Sports

TUESDAY 13TH AUGUST 2024

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TRUSTED NEWS AND RESPECTED VIEWS



Forward Allan Henry will spearhead the young Benna Boys attack.

Kharique Joseph will play a pivotal role in marshalling the young Benna Boys defense (ABFA Media)

## Antigua name squad for CFU Under-14 Boys Challenge Series

The Antigua and Barbuda Football Association (ABFA) has announced its national squad to represent the nation at the 2024 Caribbean Football Union (CFU) Boys Under-14 Challenge Series in Trinidad and Tobago from August 16-25.

The 19-member national under-14 squad includes Joshua James, Jameir Thomas, Ajay Barthley, Mehki Phillip, Mario Junior Lewis, Jahdante Griffith, and Shamar Walters.

Also selected are Delroy Francis, Allan Henry, Hakeem Musah, Luke

Harney-Rogerson, Ethan Camacho, and Lijthaddeus Christian.

The rest of the players are Delonte Phoenix, Jamil Thomas, Thorne Braithwaite Jr., Roshan Samuel, Shumba Thomas, and Kharique Joseph.

The team's head coach is George "Cajahwahwah" Warner, the assistant coach is Donovan Peart, and Malcolm "I Cup" Challenger is the equipment coordinator. Antiguan Alix Francis has also been appointed as a match coordinator for the CFU Under-14 Challenge

Series.

A total of 24 nations will assemble in Trinidad and Tobago for the tournament. The tournament will feature a group stage followed by knockout rounds.

The matches will be played at the Hasely Crawford Stadium in Port of Spain, Trinidad; Ato Bolden Stadium in Couva, Trinidad; La Horquetta Grounds in Arima, Trinidad; and the Dwight Yorke Stadium in Tobago.

Antigua and Barbuda will compete

*cont'd on pg 19*