



POLICE ESTABLISH ANTI-GANG UNIT

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Governor General Sir Rodney Williams and Lady Williams (centre) among officials involved with the staging of the Kung Fu and Mandarin summer camp at the closing ceremony Tuesday. *Story on page 8.*

Local News



Police establish special anti-gang unit

As the nation of Antigua and Barbuda focuses its attention on the recent uptick in violent crimes, Prime Minister Gaston Browne has announced that the police have established a special anti-gang unit within its ranks.

The prime minister made the disclosure during a nationally televised address on Tuesday night. This address comes just one day after the prime minister, along with the Public Safety Minister, convened a meeting of the National

Security Council to address the crime issue.

In a statement on Monday, PM Browne indicated that the authorities are aware that criminal gang members are involved in several of the recent acts of violence perpetrated in the country.

“The police have also established a guns and gangs suppression unit to fight these gang members who are destabilizing our society. We will be introducing anti-gang and juvenile curfew legislation,

to curb criminal behaviors involving juveniles and to protect our minors from predators,” he disclosed in the national address.

He added that the gang suppression strategy will also include counseling and anti-gang public education and awareness in schools. Also, alternative rehabilitation programs, will be introduced in the penal institutions to reduce recidivism.

According to the prime minister those young people who are involved in crimi-



Prime Minister Gaston Browne national activities will be housed at a juvenile detention facility, to be constructed on the defense force premises at Crabbs Peninsula.

The nation’s leader also issued a stern warning to those individuals who migrate to Antigua and Barbuda from other Caribbean jurisdictions and find themselves involved in criminal behavior.

“Let me be abundantly clear: while we have pursued a liberal immigration policy, welcoming those who contribute positively to our society, we will show no tolerance for any immigrant involved in criminal activities.

“They will be deported immediately upon conviction and service of their time in prison and will never return to our shores. To every criminal, whether a national or an immigrant, I say this: you have a choice,” he stated.

PM Browne warned criminals and would-be criminals that crime and violence will not pay and those who engage in crime and violence will surely pay.

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PM returns to issue of lenient sentences in national address

Antigua and Barbuda's Prime Minister Gaston Browne is again voicing his displeasure with what he sees as lenient sentences being handed down to repeat offenders by the judiciary, not just in this country but throughout the region.

In a national address on Tuesday night, PM Browne said he plans to reach out to other jurisdictions for there to be a realignment of sentencing guidelines across the sub-region.

"Therefore, I continue to urge the judiciary to realign their sentencing practices with regional governments' efforts to combat crime and violence.

"There are currently 474 repeat offenders who are roaming our streets with impunity. A significant number of them are on bail, armed and dangerous; pursuing a full time career of crime and violence, at the expense of our people.

"If the judiciary continues to extend routine bail, short, or soft sentences on these hardened criminals, then their influence in attracting others to a life of crime and violence will expand and their numbers will continue to swell and soon exceed the aggregate numbers of law enforcement officers in our country," he suggested.

PM Browne is beseeching the regional judiciary to act urgently in realigning the sentencing guidelines and to administer stiffer penalties, including mandatory jail time for gun crimes. "Your libertarian policies to protect the constitutional and human rights of hardened criminals is now a significant impediment to effective crime fighting," he declared.

According to the prime minister the government has done its part by enacting legislation to support strict-

er sentencing, extending the maximum penalty for gun crimes up to ten years.

"Yet, when the courts hand down sentences that seem disproportionate to the gravity of the crime, it leaves us perplexed.

"Despite this, we will at the next sitting of parliament enact increased penalties and tighten the condi-

tions of bail to keep these criminal elements off of our streets," he explained.

The prime minister indicated that he has instructed the Attorney General, Sir Steadroy Benjamin to meet with the acting Chief Justice of the Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court, Justice Mario Mitchel to discuss the matter.



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Local News



Two men charged with unlawful possession of firearm and ammunition

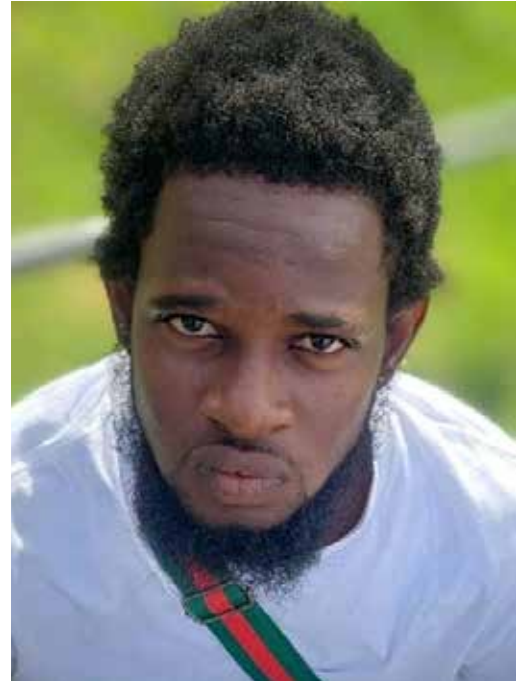


O'Neil Swaby

Police have arrested and jointly charged 34-year-old O'Neil Swaby of Bendals and 28-year-old Riccardo McKenzie of Sutherlands with unlawful possession of one 9mm automatic pistol, and possession of seven rounds of 9mm ammunition.

They are to appear in court today (Wednesday) to answer the charge.

Around 4pm on Monday, August 19, the police were acting on certain information when they intercepted a silver Toyota Belta motor car at Green Castle, Bendals with Swaby and McKenzie inside. A search was carried out on the vehicle and the illegal weapon, along with the matching rounds of ammunition were found. Both men were arrested and taken into custody.



Riccardo McKenzie

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Festivals Commission holds series of reviews of Carnival 2024

The Antigua and Barbuda Festivals Commission is getting high marks for its decision to convene meetings with stakeholder groups during this week to conduct an in-depth review of the activities associated with Carnival 2024.

Carnival sources say this was the general comment coming from stakeholder groups which participated in the first series of such meetings that took place on Monday evening in the conference room of the Office of the Prime Minister.

“The stakeholders shared the view that convening these discussions so soon after the end of Carnival is a sign of the seriousness of the Festivals Commission to ‘right-side’ the national festival in the immediate to long-term and they were particularly pleased for the opportunity to make contributions to the planning of Carnival 2025 and beyond,” the sources



revealed.

Representatives from the mas bands, parade marshals, junior carnival and the police events committee were among groups invited by the Festivals Commission to discuss the pros and cons of their respective activity and to make recommendations on how to make their events better for Carnival 2025.

Already, one of the areas under review is the route for the Tuesday Parade, the biggest parade for Antigua Carnival. This year, the parade started on Parliament



Drive, turned right unto Queen Elizabeth Highway, turned left unto Independence Drive to Robinson’s Gas Station when it turned right unto All Saints Road, then Joseph’s Lane, right

unto Market Street, left unto Newgate Street, right unto Popeshead Street, right unto Cross Street, left unto Bishopgate Street, right unto Old Parham Road and right unto Coronation Road into Carnival City.

According to the source the changes to the route were made on the recommendation of the mas troupes, however, there have been many complaints from revelers that the route was too long resulting on many sore or swollen feet.

On Tuesday, similar discussions were held with representatives of soca and calypso.





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The National Taxi Association elects new executive

The largest tax association in the country, the Antigua and Barbuda National Taxi Association, has elected a new executive with its first new president in a decade.

The National Taxi Association represents taxi operators based at the nation's hotels scattered across Antigua. It has more than 200 card-carrying members.

This week, the association convened an annual general meeting where a new executive was elected. The new president is Gregory Athill, Vice President, Denley Millette, General Secretary, Sherry Murraine, Assistant Secretary, Patrick Browne, Treasurer, John Weston, Asst. Treasurer, Ronnie Roberts, Public Relations Officer, Ishan Charles, Education Officer, Kysa Francis and Project Coordinator, Cordell Anthony.

The new executive will serve a two-year term ending the presidency of long-standing president, Daniel Tittle, who served five consecutive terms.

Athill said the immediate concerns of the association are to be an effective representative for the members and to provide certain benefits. For example, each member is required to pay

an annual subscription of \$300.00 which goes into a fund to support the operations of the association's office, including the fees for an accountant as well as to assist members with navigating the licensing process each year.

One of the main concerns of the association is the growing number of people who are using private vehicles with 'A' or 'C' plates to operate taxis. "Our members are required to submit to a process that involves training at the Hospitality Institute and other processes including a character check before they are granted the 'taxi' plates. Yet these unauthorized drivers are getting away with this illegal act and we are calling on the police and the transport board to address this as a matter of urgency. What happens if someone who is criminally minded decided to take a fare and to commit a crime when operating an illegal taxi service. This could have dire consequences," he emphasized.

Athill is also complaining about the difficulties that bona fide taxi operators have in acquiring firearm licenses even after meeting all the demands laid down by the police.

EcoFit Youth Camp kicks off in Antigua and Barbuda

The Ministry of Health, in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, the Department of Environment, and the Ashley Lashley Foundation, has announced the commencement of the EcoFit Youth Camp.

The camp, which runs from Monday, August 19th to Friday, August 23rd, 2024, is being held at the Department of Environment and brings together young minds to promote environmental consciousness, physical wellness, and sustainable living.

This week-long camp is designed to engage participants in a variety of interactive and educational activities that emphasize the importance of environmental stewardship and healthy lifestyles. The initiative aligns with the Government of Antigua and Barbuda's ongoing commitment to fostering a greener, healthier nation by equipping the younger generation with the knowledge and tools to lead the charge toward sustainability.

Participants are engaging in workshops on topics such as climate change, biodiversity conservation, waste management, and the benefits of an active lifestyle. The camp also includes



hands-on activities like tree planting, eco-friendly crafting, fitness sessions, and guided nature walks, all aimed at instilling a deep appreciation for the environment and personal well-being.

The EcoFit Youth Camp is the result of a strong partnership between key stakeholders dedicated to environmental and public health. The Ministry of Health underscores the importance of such collaborative efforts in achieving the nation's health and environmental goals. The Ministry of Education's involvement ensures that the camp's educational components are aligned with national curricula, enhancing the learning experience for all

participants.

The Department of Environment plays a pivotal role by hosting the event, providing a fitting backdrop that inspires young participants to connect with nature and understand the critical role of environmental conservation in the face of global challenges. The Ashley Lashley Foundation, known for its advocacy on health and environmental issues, brings a wealth of expertise and enthusiasm, further enriching the camp's offerings.



Local News



Chinese culture showcased at Kung Fu/ Mandarin summer camp closing ceremony

Scores of people who gathered for the Kung Fu and Mandarin summer camp's closing ceremony, were treated to various aspects of the Chinese culture.

The event took place on the grounds of Government House on Tuesday and was organized jointly by the Confucius Institute of Antigua and Barbuda and the Antigua and Barbuda-China Friendship Association.

The closing ceremony marked the end of one week of training in Kung Fu as well as the main Chi-



nese language, Mandarin. More than one hundred students accompanied by their

parents participated in the event.

the audience was able to see live demonstrations of Chi-

As part of the exercise,

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nese Kung Fu by the instructors. These include: Mantis style shadowboxing, Form-and-will style shadow boxing, Drunken style shadowboxing, as well as Taichi.

In addition, there was a presentation of the Lion Dance, Chinese song and dance and a grand finale involving the campers demonstrating the Kung Fu techniques they learnt over the past week.

The classes in Kung Fu and Mandarin were conducted by a team from China which traveled to Antigua to teach the classes and to expose attendees to various aspects of Chinese culture.

President of the Board of Directors, the Caribbean International Chinese Language Education Community, Arlene Weste, who addressed the ceremony, described the camp as more than just an opportunity to learn self-defense, noting that it was a gateway to understanding and appreciating a different culture.

“This camp has left a lasting impression on all who attended. It has opened doors to new friendships, fostered a deeper understanding of Chinese culture and instilled in our youth the values of perseverance and respect,” she remarked.

Representative of the Chinese Embassy, Wang Erdong noted that Antigua and Barbuda has a rich cultural heritage and diverse ethnic characteristics. This is evident, he explained, in the language, cuisine, architecture, religion, music, sporting interests, and festivals such as carnival.

“Visitors from China, the Chinese community here and my colleagues at the embassy, are encouraged to immerse ourselves in the local culture for a deeper understanding by our people, sample delicious local cuisine and enjoy the enchanting sounds of music from pan, iron band and calypso among others,” he stated.

Speaking for the Antigua and Barbuda-China Friendship Association, Cuthbert Forbes Jnr. urged the young people to seize the opportunity presented by the summer camp.

“You were given a chance to acquire basic self-defense skills while gaining an introductory understanding of the Chinese language through a thoughtfully designed cultural exchange programme.”

Co-director of the Confucius Institute, Gayle Greene-Phillip, said she was filled with pride and gratitude for each of the participants.

“Over the past week, they have

not only honed their physical skills through the art of Kung Fu, but they have also immersed themselves in the beauty of the Mandarin language. We are here to celebrate with you today. It is my sincere hope that all the participants will relive their shared sense of accomplishment, and that it will offer each one a lasting reminder of the transformative power of physical and intellectual pursuits,” she stated.

Both Greene-Phillip and the Chinese Co-Director, Joanna Li jointly announced that the summer camp will be held next year, perhaps for a longer period.

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Local News



Recovered body believed to be luxury yacht's chef

A body recovered near the luxury yacht which sank off the coast of Sicily is believed to be that of chef Recaldo Thomas.

The Canadian-Antiguan national was one of 22 people aboard the Bayesian when it sank during a violent storm on Monday.

His friend Gareth Williams described him as well-loved and kind, with "the deepest, most sultry voice in the world, and a smile that lit up the room."

Divers are struggling to reach the cabins of the sunken vessel as they search for six missing passengers including the British tech entrepreneur Mike Lynch and the Morgan Stanley International bank chairman Jonathan Bloomer.

British investigators arrived in Italy on Tuesday to assess what happened during the extreme weather that hit the yacht.

The Bayesian capsized around 700m (2,300ft) from Porticello, just east of Sicily's capital Palermo, early on Monday morning.

Of the 22 people on board, 15 survived - including a British mother who described holding her baby girl above the surface of the sea to save her from drowning.

So far only one body,

that of Recaldo Thomas, has been found.

Mr Williams said he had known the chef for 30

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Recaldo Thomas

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Valley Road sidewalk project continues

Work is progressing on the construction of 1.2 miles (6,200ft/ 1,915m) of sidewalks from Ebenezer to Jolly Harbour (Valley Road). Approximately 25% of the sidewalks have already been completed.

The sidewalks are 1.2m/ 4ft wide though the full width may not be achieved in built up area because of property fences,

roadside drains, utility poles etc.

The project aims to improve property access, vehicular and pedestrian traffic.

Project Contractor C O Williams has pledged to take the necessary precautions to minimize the impact on pedestrians when the new school year commences in September.



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years as they had grown up together in Antigua, where Thomas lived during yachting's off-season.

"He told me just the other day that he needed to work two more seasons to fix up his late parents' house. He loved yachting, but he was tired," Mr Williams told the BBC's Insaf Abbas.

Another friend, Eli Fuller, said he first met the chef 25 years ago and that he was a role model to young people.

"Personality was very important in his job. The world's richest people want to hang out with someone social. He was sought after," Mr Fuller said.

"The kids would see all these white people working on yachts. For them to see an Antiguan man traveling all over the world – it was important for our community," he added.

It is believed the Bayesian was struck by a tornado over the water

- otherwise known as a waterspout - which caused the vessel to capsize and sink to the seabed.

There are also reports that the boat's mast snapped, while other factors include water entering through hatches which may have been open due to hot temperatures.

The Italian coastguard said on Tuesday afternoon that their search was continuing and that divers were working out how to safely enter the wreckage.

Photo Essay



Photo Essay



Regional News



St. Kitts: Health Ministry refutes claims of rat infestation at hospital

The Ministry of Health in St Kitts and Nevis has refuted recent allegations claiming that the Joseph Nathaniel France (JNF) General Hospital is “infested by rats.”

According to the Ministry, these accusations are “both baseless and misleading, aimed at creating unwarranted fear and distrust in our primary healthcare institution.”

In their statement, the Ministry criticized the video circulating with these claims, noting that it “lacks any credible evidence of its date or time, raising serious doubts about its authenticity.”

They suggested that the footage could be “years old and is now being used maliciously to undermine public confidence in our



Joseph Nathaniel France (JNF) General Hospital. Photo: St Kitts and Nevis Information Service.

healthcare system.”

Over the past two years, the Ministry has implemented substantial improvements at JNF General Hospital.

The Ministry highlighted that the entrance to the hospital has been “completely transformed into a modern, calming, and aesthetically pleasing space,” which has received “overwhelmingly positive reviews from both patients

and visitors.”

Furthermore, the Ministry acknowledged the support received through public-private partnerships and noted the “fruitful partnership with the Republic of China (Taiwan), where extensive repairs have been made to the hospital’s roof.”

The Ministry said it has also invested in advanced medical technology, including a new surgical eye

laser that has “successfully cleared a more than two-year-old backlog of cases at the eye clinic.”

Additional new equipment includes CT and MRI machines, haemodialysis and anaesthesia machines, and an EEG machine. The Ministry concluded by urging the public to “not be swayed by bad actors and political entities” seeking to erode trust in the healthcare system.

Haitian ex-President Martelly hit with US sanctions

The US imposed sanctions on the former president of Haiti, Michel Joseph Martelly, Tuesday following accusations that he abused his influence to facilitate drug trafficking into the US and sponsored gangs that have contributed to instability in the Caribbean country.

The Treasury Department’s acting undersecretary for terrorism and financial intelligence, Bradley T Smith, said the action “emphasises the significant and destabilizing role he and other corrupt political elites have played in perpetuating the ongoing crisis in Haiti.”



Michel Martelly. Photo: JEPEPLA

Haiti is engulfed in gang violence while peaceful protesters are tear-gassed by police as they call on law enforcement to help them stop the gangs that have been violently seizing

control of neighbourhoods.

Hundreds of police officers from Kenya have arrived in Haiti for a UN-backed mission led by the East African country to deal with the gangs.

A July United Nations report states that gang violence in Haiti has displaced more than 300,000 children since March — with many children living in makeshift shelters, including schools in poor hygienic conditions, placing them at risk of disease.

Martelly, who served as president from 2011 to 2016, was previously sanctioned by the Canadian govern-

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Gianpiero Leoncini is the new Executive Vice President of CAF

The Executive President of CAF - Development Bank of Latin America and the Caribbean, Sergio Díaz-Granados, has appointed Gianpiero Leoncini as Executive Vice President, following consultations with the institution's Board of Directors, composed of Ministers of Economy and Finance, Central Bank presidents, and high-level authorities from shareholder countries.

In accordance with Article 48 of CAF's General Regulations, the Executive Vice President is the most senior international officer after the Executive President.

He is responsible for the internal operational management of the bank in matters of human resources, technology, physical infrastructure, administration, budget, operations control, planning, impact measurement, and corporate strategy monitoring.

All of this with the purpose of advancing the institution's strategic agenda through the formulation



Gianpiero Leoncini-Executive Vice President of CAF.

of work programs with the public and private sectors that promote sustainable and inclusive growth and regional integration.

Gianpiero Leoncini, a national of Peru, has had an outstanding performance in CAF during the last 14 years, in which he held the positions of Principal Executive and Senior Executive in the area of Secretariat and External Relations; Director of Secretariat and External

Relations; CAF Representative in Trinidad and Tobago; and Advisor to the Executive Vice President.

Between 2019 and 2023, he was responsible for CAF's strategy and actions in Trinidad and Tobago and Barbados, including the origination of loans and the implementation of technical assistance to support the economic and social development policies of these countries.

During this period, CAF's portfolio in Trinidad and Tobago and Barbados increased from USD 700 million at the beginning of 2019 to USD 1.45 billion at the end of 2022.

Before joining CAF, he held important positions as Chief of Staff to the Secretary General and as Officer of the General Directorate of Political and Social Affairs at the General Secretariat of the Andean Community.

Gianpiero Leoncini holds a degree in Political Science with a specialisation in International Relations from the Institute of Political Studies in Paris and has a master's degree in public administration from the National School of Administration (ENA) in France.

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ment in November 2022 for financing gangs.

In January, a Haitian judge issued an arrest warrant for Martelly and more than 30 other high-ranking officials accused of government corruption, namely misappropriation of funds or equipment related to Haiti's National Equipment Centre.

State Department official Vedant Patel said the Tuesday sanctions were meant to

“promote accountability for all individuals whose activities contribute to gang violence and destabilize the political environment in Haiti, regardless of their rank or stature.”

The US uses a December 2021 executive order related to foreigners engaged in the drug trade as its authority to impose the sanctions.

Martelly could not be reached for comment.

Twelve killed in Israeli strike on Gaza school, civil defence says

By David Gritten

At least 12 Palestinians have been killed in an Israeli air strike on a school housing displaced people in Gaza City, the Hamas-run Civil Defence authority says.

A spokesman said rescuers were struggling to recover a number of missing people believed to be trapped under the rubble at Mustafa Hafez school in the western Rimal neighbourhood.

The Israeli military said it had targeted a Hamas command and control centre inside the school, and that it had taken steps to mitigate risk of harming civilians.

Earlier, it announced that troops had recovered the bodies of six Israeli hostages being held in the Khan Younis area.

The men were among the 251 people kidnapped by Hamas-led gunmen in the 7 October attacks on southern Israel last year, when about 1,200 people were also killed.

Israel launching an air and ground campaign to destroy Hamas in response, during which more than 40,170 people have been killed in Gaza, according to the territory's Hamas-run health ministry.

Women and children can be heard screaming and seen running from the dust-enveloped Mustafa Hafez school in a video posted on social media showing the immediate aftermath of Tuesday morning's strike.



The UN condemned earlier this month what it called the "increasing frequency" of Israeli strikes on schools.

The camera then pans to show rubble on the ground beside the completely flattened remains of a two-storey building.

"We were sitting safely, we did not see the explosion," witness Umm Mohammed later told Reuters news agency.

"The people are gone, they're dead. They are under the rubble."

Civil Defence spokesman Mahmoud Basal said in the afternoon that rescue crews had so far recovered the bodies of 12 people.

He said the strike had targeted the entire wing of the school, where he estimated that 700 displaced people had been living.

The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) said aircraft had conducted a "a precise strike on terrorists who were operating within a Hamas command and control centre" which had been embedded inside the school and used to plan and launch attacks against its troops and Israel.

"Prior to the strike, numerous steps were taken to mitigate the risk of harming civilians, including the use of precise munitions, aerial surveillance and additional intelligence," it added.

The IDF accused Hamas of violating international law by operating within civilian infrastructure and exploiting Gaza's civilian population - allegations which Hamas has previously denied.

Earlier this month, the UN Human Rights Office condemned what it called the "increasing frequency" of Israeli strikes on schools sheltering displaced people and accused the IDF of conducting them "with apparent disregard for the high rate of civilian fatalities".

The warning after at least 70 Palestinians were killed in an air strike on al-Taba'een school in Gaza City, according to the director of a local hospital.

The IDF said the school had "served as an active Hamas and Islamic Jihad

military facility", and that it had confirmed the identities of 31 "terrorists" who were killed.

The UN said at the time that it had been at least the 21st strike on a school serving as a shelter since 4 July and that they had resulted in at least 274 fatalities.

Also on Tuesday, the civil defence said five people had been killed in a strike on a house in Bureij refugee camp, in central Gaza, while Palestinian news agency Wafa cited medical sources as saying four had been killed in nearby Deir al-Balah.

The IDF said its troops and aircraft had "eliminated numerous terrorists" operating in central Gaza, including two who exited an underground tunnel and attempted to plant an explosive device.

It came as the US Secretary of State, Antony Blinken, visited Egypt to continue to apply diplomatic pressure to try to secure a ceasefire and hostage release deal between Israel and Hamas.

The BBC's Tom Bateman, who is travelling with Mr Blinken, says the Americans hope for some sort of breakthrough within the next week or so, but that the mood on the ground in the region has not matched that expectation.

After talks with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Monday, Mr Blinken said Israel had ac-

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Panama starts returning migrants on US-funded flights

By Vanessa Buschschlüter

Panama on Tuesday started repatriating undocumented migrants on flights financed by the United States.

The move comes less than two months after José Raúl Mulino was sworn in as Panama's president.

Mr Mulino campaigned on a promise to "close" the Darién Gap, the dangerous stretch of jungle which more than half a million migrants crossed last year on their way north from South America.

The Biden administration said it had agreed to pay for the flights as part of its efforts to deter irregular migration.

A group of 29 Colombians with criminal records were the first to be returned on Tuesday.

Under an agreement jointly signed by the Panamanian foreign minister and US Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas, the US has committed to helping Panama with \$6m (£4.6m) for equipment, transportation and logistics to "remove foreign nationals

who do not have a legal basis to remain in Panama".

Immigration is a hot topic ahead of November's presidential election in the US and the stream of migrants arriving at its border with Mexico is being closely monitored.

The agreement with Panama aims to drive down the number of people making it to the US border by stopping them further south.

The Darién Gap, an expanse of jungle which straddles Colombia and Panama, is a natural bottleneck for those heading from South to North America.

In 2023, an estimated 520,000 people made the perilous journey on foot, many of whom had to pay gangs who prey on those embarking on the crossing.

President Mulino, who has promised to reduce the number of migrants transiting through Panama, described their situation as "sad".

"Most of them are from Venezuela," he explained. "They're human beings... there are families torn apart,



Crossing the Darién Gap on foot takes several days and is fraught with danger.

children of five or six years of age whose parents have died during the crossing. We don't even know who they are or what their names are."

The president had earlier said that the flights would in the first instance take migrants to Colombia, the country from which they entered Panama.

It is not yet clear if flights will be organised from Colombia to repatriate them to their homelands.

According to Panamanian government figures, Venezuelans form the largest share of migrants trekking through the Darién Gap, followed by Colombians, Ecuadorians and Haitians.

There is widespread con-

cern in the region that the flow of those fleeing Venezuela could increase in the months to come if the political crisis triggered by the announcement of disputed election results is not solved.

Ahead of the election, polls had suggested that large numbers of Venezuelans were planning on migrating should President Nicolás Maduro win.

Tension has been high since he was declared the winner by the government-dominated National Electoral Council, with the result being rejected as fraudulent by the opposition and questioned by the US, the EU and many Latin American countries.

Panamanian President Mulino earlier this month offered Mr Maduro "safe passage" so that the Venezuelan leader could leave to a third country, but his offer was rejected by Mr Maduro, who warned his Panamanian counterpart not to "mess" with Venezuela.

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accepted a US proposal aimed at bridging the remaining gaps between the warring parties.

But Hamas accused the US of "acquiescing" to what it called Mr Netanyahu's "new conditions". The group also criticised as misleading President Joe Biden's claim that it seemed to be "backing away" from an agreement.

A major sticking point is Mr Netanyahu's insistence that Israeli troops remain in the Philadelphi corridor, a narrow strip of land running along Gaza's border with Egypt, which Hamas has rejected.

He says it is necessary to prevent smuggling and Hamas rearming itself, but Hamas says it would amount to continued Israeli occupation and not an end to the war.

Cricket West Indies to hold election for vice president

Cricket West Indies (CWI) will hold elections for the office of the Vice President on September 20.

A media release by CWI, states, "On Thursday, August 8, 2024, at a Board of Directors meeting, in consideration of the recent judicial pronouncement from the High Court of Guyana concerning the challenge to the Vice President's election initiated by the Guyana Cricket Board, the decision was made to have the re-elections as soon as possible.

"This decision means that Mr. Azim Bassarath has vacated the office of Vice President for CWI."

Commenting on the board's position, CWI President Dr. Kishore Shallow said, "This situation presents an invaluable opportunity to



strengthen the CWI Memorandum and Articles of Association.

"Over time, policies and frameworks will always be tested. As a board, we must remain open-minded and committed to evolving in all aspects; this circumstance is a testa-

ment to such fact," said Dr. Shallow.

The CWI President continued, "I am particularly grateful for the level of cooperation and professionalism in which Mr. Bassarath has handled this matter, and therefore extend my gratitude to him for such."

According to the release, "Pursuant to the CWI Articles of Association, a Special Meeting of Members will be convened on September 20, 2024, for the sole purpose of electing a new Vice President.

"CWI reaffirms its unwavering commitment to democratic principles and transparency. The forthcoming election will be conducted with the highest standards of fairness and in alignment with CWI's core values."

Hayley Matthews 'Life Stories' documentary released

The Massy Women's Caribbean Premier League (WCPL) will be releasing a new documentary on the cricketing journey of Hayley Matthews, the number one ranked T20 all-rounder.

The 'Life Stories' film follows Matthews from her childhood in Barbados to winning the T20 World Cup and claiming the WCPL title.

As a cricketer who is a regular in both the international and global franchise game, her story as a superb athlete in multiple disciplines to the top of world cricket is brilliant-

ly told by Director, Paul Pritchett-Brown and Director of Photography, Arjun Choudary.

The film will be broadcast on Willow in the USA, TNT Sport in the UK, TV6 in Trinidad, Fancode in India, Fox Sports in Australia and SportsMax in the Caribbean. The film will also be available to watch on the Caribbean Premier League's YouTube channel.

The film's Director, Paul Pritchett-Brown, said: "It was a real pleasure to work with Hayley and her family to produce this film.

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Hayley Matthews



The Potters Tigers football team. (File photo)

Potters Tigers claim second win in Parham Super League

Potters recorded their second win in the second annual Parham Super League on Sunday.

After claiming a 2-0 win against FC Master Ballerz in their first encounter, Potters snatched a 2-1 victory against the Greenbay Hoppers in the opening game of a triple header at the Parham playing field.

Forward Keon Greene

scored both goals for Potters, and Demarrie Swift had the conversion for the Greenbay Hoppers, which lost for the first time after winning their opening encounter.

All Saints United extended their unbeaten run with their second win in three matches after snatching a 2-1 victory against the FC Master Ballerz, which

lost for the second time in as many outings.

Joshua Roach and Raheem Deterville each converted once for All Saints United, and Alex Davis scored for FC Master Ballerz.

John Hughes claimed their second win in three matches after being awarded a 3-0 victory by default against SAP FC, which

failed to show up for their encounter on Sunday.

It was the third defeat in as many matches for SAP, which claimed their runners-up position in last year's inaugural Parham Super League.

The Parham Super League will resume with a double header at the Parham playing field on Wednesday (today).

Parham will take on Freeman's Village at 6 pm, and Willikies will clash with Garden Stars 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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The final product is a testament to their commitment to helping us tell this story.

"Hayley is one of the most impressive athletes the Caribbean has produced, and it was an honour to be able to make this film about her journey."

Pete Russell, CEO of the CPL and Executive Producer of this film, said: "It is so important that we take the time to tell the stories of the wonderful cricketers that bring our tournaments to life, and this film is a beautiful example of what can be done when given this level of access.

"I would like to thank Hayley and her family for their commitment to the project and I am looking forward to the cricketing world enjoying this brilliantly put together film."

Hayley Matthews said: "It was a fantastic experience to work with the CPL team to put together this documentary on my journey into cricket and myself and my family are really excited for the world to see it.

"My story has many more chapters left to be told, but it is great to be able to showcase how I got to where I am today."

Sports News



New York, Tarouba pitches used at Men's T20 World Cup deemed 'unsatisfactory' by ICC

The pitches for the first two matches at New York's Nassau County Stadium during the International Cricket Council (ICC) Men's T20 World Cup 2024, as well as the one for the semi-final between Afghanistan and South Africa at the Brian Lara Academy in Tarouba, have been rated "unsatisfactory" by the ICC.

The verdict comes nearly two months after the tournament, which India won by beating South Africa by seven runs in the final in Barbados on June 29.

In those two games at the Nassau County Stadium, Sri Lanka were skittled out for 77 against South Africa on June 3, while Ireland were dismissed for 96 by India two days later.

In the second game, a number of players from both sides copped were struck on the body as a result of the uneven bounce in the pitch.

Indian captain Rohit Sharma had to retire hurt as a precautionary measure after being hit on the upper arm by Josh Little.

India wicketkeeper Rishabh Pant and Ireland batsman Harry Tector were also struck as a result of the nature of the surface.

At the time, Andy Flower had said the pitch in New



Nassau County International Stadium in New York

York was "bordering on dangerous," while former England captain Michael Vaughan called it "shocking."

The venue in New York was readied in five months. Damian Hough, chief curator at the Adelaide Oval, was brought in by the ICC to prepare the drop-in pitches. But after criticism from various quarters, the ICC had acknowledged that the pitches there had been substandard and the short turnaround time between matches didn't help. New York hosted eight games in two weeks.

Remedial work was carried out, and ahead of the following game, between Canada and Ireland, areas where grass shoots were growing under the cracks were covered with topsoil

and rolled in to make the surface much flatter.

The surfaces used for the subsequent fixtures in New York, including India vs Pakistan, where 119 beat 113 for 7, have been rated as "satisfactory."

The bigger point of scrutiny, perhaps more than New York, was on the surface for the semi-final, where Afghanistan were bowled out for 56 at the Brian Lara Cricket Academy.

The wicket was wildly unpredictable as some deliveries rolled along the ground while a few reared up from a similar spot.

At the time, Afghanistan head coach Jonathan Trott was clear "that's not a pitch you want to play a semi-final on."

Generally, surfaces at the Brian Lara Cricket

Academy were a challenge. West Indies, who scored 149 there and defended it narrowly against New Zealand, were tottering at 30 for five at one stage.

The ICC rates pitches, and outfielders, for all international games on a scale of very good to unfit: very good, good, satisfactory, unsatisfactory and unfit.

The surface at Providence for the India vs England semi-final was rated "satisfactory", while the Kensington Oval deck for the final between India and South Africa was rated "very good."

The ICC was largely happy with the state of the outfielders, with only New York and Guyana receiving "satisfactory" ratings, while the others were "very good."

ICC Women's T20 World Cup to be moved to the UAE

The International Cricket Council (ICC) has confirmed that the ICC Women's T20 World Cup 2024 will be moved from Bangladesh to the United Arab Emirates.

The event, scheduled to take place from October 3–20, will now be staged in Dubai and Sharjah.

The venue was changed following the countrywide anti-government agitations in Bangladesh through July and early August, which ended when Sheikh Hasina, the prime minister, resigned and fled to India.

An interim government has been put in place by the army since, but widespread incidents of vandalism and looting, as well as acts of violence, have been reported from Bangladesh.

As a result, Australia, India, New Zealand and the United Kingdom (England and Scotland) had issued travel advisories to their citizens to not travel to Bangla-



Players of the West Indies women's cricket team. (File photo)

desh.

The ICC Chief Executive Geoff Allardice confirmed the move in a press release on Tuesday.

“It is a shame not to be hosting the Women's T20 World Cup in Bangladesh, as we know the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) would have staged a memorable event.

“I would like to thank the team at the BCB for ex-

ploring all avenues to try and enable the event to be hosted in Bangladesh, but travel advisories from the governments of a number of the participating teams meant that wasn't feasible. However, they will retain hosting rights,” Allardice said.

“We look forward to taking an ICC global event to Bangladesh in the near future. I'd also like to thank the Emirates Cricket Board

for stepping in to host on behalf of the BCB and Sri Lanka and Zimbabwe for their generous offers of support, and we look forward to seeing ICC global events in both of those countries in 2026,” he added.

The ICC Chair Greg Barclay confirmed to the board that he will not stand for a third term and will step down from the post when his current tenure finishes at the end of November. Barclay was appointed as the Independent ICC Chair in November 2020, before being re-elected in 2022.

Current directors are now required to put forward nominations for the next Chair by August 27, 2024, and if there is more than one candidate, an election will be held with the term of the new chair commencing on December 1, 2024.

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draw in their Tier II, Group C encounter at the Hasley Crawford Stadium.

In an enthralling Tier I, Group A clash at the Dwight Yorke Stadium in Tobago, St. Kitts and Nevis and Aruba played to a 2-2 draw, with both teams earning their first points of the tournament.

Jamaica prevailed 2-0 against Trinidad and Tobago in their Tier I, Group A clash at the Dwight Yorke Stadium.

French Guiana secured a convincing 5-0 victory over French St. Martin in their

Tier I, Group B match at the Ato Boldon Stadium. Puerto Rico and Curaçao played to a thrilling 0-0 draw in their Tier I Group B match at the Ato Boldon Stadium.

Puerto Rico finished second behind Tier I, Group B winner French Guiana. Curaçao finished in third place.

Tier I, Group B action continues on Wednesday when the first-place team plays fourth place and the second-placed team faces third. The teams in the group are Puerto Rico, French St. Martin, Curaçao, and Puerto Rico.

Sports

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Benna Boys salvage draw with Cayman Islands

Antigua and Barbuda's young Benna Boys scored a goal in second-half extra time to snatch a 3-3 draw with the Cayman Islands in their Tier II, Group A match in the Caribbean Football Union (CFU) Under-14 Boys Challenge Series at the Larry Gomes Stadium in Trinidad on Monday.

Wilfred Galeano Sevilla put the Cayman Islands ahead with a 13th-minute conversion.

But Luke Harney-Rogerson curled his right-footed corner kick directly into the roof of the net to grab an equalizer for Antigua and Barbuda in the 15th minute.

Harney-Rogerson turned provider when his superb cross found his captain Shamar Walters at the back post. Walters made no mistake as the Benna Boys forward scored in the first half added on time (35+3 minutes) to give Antigua and Barbuda a 2-1 lead at halftime.

Striker Ra'jon Boothe raced past the Antiguan defense and beat the advancing Benna Boys goalkeeper Jamier Thomas to equalize for the Cayman Islands in the 38th minute.



Players of the Cayman Islands (blue uniform) and Antigua and Barbuda compete during their Tier II, Group A match in the Caribbean Football Union Under-14 Boys Challenge Series at the Larry Gomes Stadium in Trinidad on Monday. (CFU Media)

The Cayman Islands took a 3-2 lead in the 67th minute via a conversion by Jha-Sean Cousins.

Not to be outdone, the Young Benna Boys grabbed a share of the points when substitute Shumba Thomas scored a header in the third minute of second-half stoppage time (70+3 minutes).

St. Vincent and the Grenadines and Guyana

played to a 1-1 draw in another Tier II, Group A clash at the Larry Gomes Stadium on Monday.

The draw earned Guyana their first point of the tournament, while St. Vincent and the Grenadines advanced to seven points and remain in second place behind unbeaten leaders Barbados in the standings.

However, the young

Vincentians campaign in round-robin group play is over, but Guyana will play their final match in Tier II, Group A, against the Cayman Islands on Wednesday (today).

Ty'Rique Charles scored a hat-trick as the British Virgin Islands (BVI) registered their first win, defeating the United States Virgin Islands (USVI) 3-1 in their Tier II, Group B match at the Hasley Crawford Stadium.

Dominica and Anguilla played to a goalless draw in their Tier II, Group B match at the Hasley Crawford Stadium. The draw meant that Dominica finished the group on seven points from four matches.

Bermuda completed a perfect run to win Tier II, Group C, with 12 points from four encounters after prevailing 1-0 against St. Lucia in their final group match at the Ato Boldon Stadium.

Bermuda, having completed all of their group stage matches, awaits their opponents in Friday's semi-finals.

Grenada and Dutch St. Maarten fought to a 1-1

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