

# CARNIVAL SUPPLIERS TO FACE PENALTIES FOR LACK OF GOOD SERVICE

*Story on Page 2*



Minister of Creative Industries, Dayll Matthew, left, with members of the National Festivals Commission: Senator Shenella Govia, Ambassador Elizabeth Mahkoul, and Michael Freeland.

# Local News



## Carnival suppliers face penalties if they don't deliver good service

Service providers to Carnival may face penalties if they fail to deliver the service according to contractual agreements between them and the Antigua and Barbuda Festivals Commission.

Minister of Creative Industries, Dayll Matthew issued the warning on Thursday at a press conference convened by the Ministry of Creative Industries. He said this has become necessary because some service providers fail to deliver their services on a timely basis that, in the end, result in delays to the start of shows or poor-quality service that affects the technical production of carnival events.

Minister Matthew explained that the commission ensured that practically all service providers were paid 75



Minister of Creative Industries, Dayll Matthew

percent of the contracted amount up front so as to eliminate concerns over payments by service providers. However, he said before the remaining 25 percent is paid, the commission will conduct a review to ensure that the provider lived up to their obligations.

“That 25 percent of the amount, we have kept that as a ‘retention fee’ similar to what happens in construction where a portion of the amount is held back until both parties agreed that the job has been completed to their satisfaction. It cannot be that you pay a person for a particular service or a particular timeliness of service; they get paid, they do not deliver on either the quality or the timeliness of the service but we the promoters get beaten with many straps from the public; it simply cannot be right,” he declared.

The minister holds the view that the public is within its right to demand better service from the Carnival organisers, be it starting of the shows on *cont'd on pg 3*

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## Festivals Commission found ‘creative’ ways to save money for Carnival, 2024

The National Festivals Commission, the body responsible for planning and executing the national festival, Carnival, said it employed ‘creative’ ways to save money and to keep expenditures in check.

That’s the word of Commission chair, Ambassador Elizabeth Makhoul, speaking on Thursday at a post-Carnival press briefing.

This year, the government allocated just over \$5 million to finance the staging of the 2024 Carnival festivities. This amount is similar to the amount that the government allocated to the commission in 2023.

However, Amb. Makhoul said the commission resorted to finding alternative ways to save money and to reduce expenditures.

“What we did this year was to find creative ways where we could cut costs. The Senator (Govia), the permanent secretary (Sharon Stevens) and myself

*cont’d from pg 2*

time or to have a show executed with a sufficiently high level of technical competency. He said if the Festivals Commission is paying for a service, it expects to get the service it paid for.

“That is why this year, we did everything that we could, with the support of the Ministry of Finance and the Cabinet to take the money issue off of the table. So, the complaint could not be that ‘we haven’t been paid’ so we come at whatever time we felt like; that has now been removed. The issue now is whether or not the quality and the timeliness of the service that the commission paid for, were delivered,” he stated.

Minister Matthew hinted that discussions will take place with those service providers whose tardiness resulted in embarrassment for the commission and possible compensation for the commission.

found ways to reduce costs wherever we could. For example, we did not rent tents in the quantities that we have done in the past. Instead, we borrowed special containers from the National Housing and the Ministry of Works to use as dressing rooms. We were able to use the generator based at the stadium instead of having to rent a generator for use for the duration of Carnival,” she explained.

Additionally, Amb. Makhoul reported that approaches were made to the West Indies Oil Company to supply diesel for use by the generators at the Antigua Recreation Grounds (Carnival City). “By doing this, we were able to save a significant amount of money as diesel runs us an estimated \$200-thousand to power Carnival City for the entire festival. We had to be innovative in our actions to save money and I believe



Ambassador Elizabeth Makhoul that it works. We anticipate that there will be a drop in expenditures this year,” according to the festivals commission chair.

The saving that the commission anticipates could run in the vicinity of \$1 million this year, when compared with the expenditures for 2023.



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# Local News



## 'Antigua Day' festivities in NYC move to bigger venue

The annual event tagged – Antigua Day – that is held on the Labour Day weekend in New York City has outgrown its current venue and will be moved to a bigger venue this year.

Executive Director of Antigua Day Festival, Tara Mason, said the event has had a problem because it continues to grow and to attract more patrons so with this in mind a decision was made to move it to Clairmont Park from St. Mary's Park, which has been deemed 'too small'.

"Clairmont Park's manager reached out to us and offered the venue after we were told by the manager at St. Mary's Park, 'you're too big for this venue'. Clairmont is at 170th Street and Teller in New York City and those of us who are familiar with the Antigua and Barbuda community in the city, seventy percent of us live within a mile of Clairmont. It is easily accessible to anyone wanting to attend," she noted.

This year, as has been in the past, the show will feature the 'Winners' Circle' from Carnival 2024 representing the top artists of Party Monarch, Road March and Calypso. The show will also have vendors selling authentic Antigua and Barbuda cuisine such as fungi, ducana and other local delicacies.

"We see this as an opportunity to promote Antigua and Barbuda's culture not just to those in the diaspora, but also to other patrons who may be attending from other countries. Last year, our fina-

le was a performance by the late Ricardo Drue and this year our aim is to have a special tribute to him as the finale," Mason revealed.

The Antigua Day executive director anticipates that as much as ten thousand persons are expected to attend the festivities this year slated for August 31, the weekend

of the Labour Holiday in the United States.

"It's a one-day, free event to promote Antigua and Barbuda culture and we see it as an opportunity to allow those who were not able to make it back home for carnival to enjoy the best of the festival each year," Mason emphasized.



Tara Mason

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## ABEC is ready for new Expired Voter ID Cards replacement programme

All systems are go as the Antigua and Barbuda Electoral Commission gets ready to roll out its Expired Voter ID Card replacement programme, which starts in all 17 constituencies on Monday.

Supervisor of Elections, Ian Hughes, has confirmed that the Registration Units that will service the constituencies have been identified and prepared for the thousands of persons who are expected to participate in the programme.

“We have moved two registration units to better locations – St. Mary’s North, now located at the Moravian Conference Centre at Cashew Hill, and St. Philip’s North, now in the Glanville Polyclinic. Two of the units which operated out of the Central Unit

on Factory Road have been moved to new locations in their respective constituencies; these are St. Peter’s, now in the Precision Centre and St. Mary’s South, now in the Bolans Primary School,” Hughes reported.

According to Hughes the registration units for both St. John’s City South and St. John’s City East constituencies will remain at the Central Unit. He said each unit will be manned by a minimum of four persons with the larger constituencies having an additional one or two persons.

Whilst the replacement card programme is continuous, Hughes said it is expected that within the first few weeks there will be a deluge of persons showing up at the registration units seeking to have their expired

cards replaced.

Persons wanting to replace expired cards must present themselves in person with a valid government ID, the expired card, proof of address and or a marriage/divorce certificate in cases where a person wishes to change a surname or to revert to a surname.

After completing the application process, the applicant will be advised to await a call from the Antigua and Barbuda Electoral Commission within two to three weeks when they may return to collect the new cards.

Along with the staff of ABEC who will be present in the registration units, each unit will also have scrutineers representing the political parties and the independent candidates in the House of Representatives.



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Central Registration Unit, Sir Sydney Walling Highway  
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Roman Catholic Church Hall, Roman Hill  
Former Community Access Centre, All Saints  
Potters Village  
Precision Centre, Paynters  
Glanvilles Community Centre  
St. Philip Post Office  
Former Real Local Art Gallery, Horsford Hill  
Low School, Barbuda

# Local News



George Akeba Chiddick

## Chiddick surrenders to police

Twenty-four hours after the police issued a Wanted Bulletin for George Akeba Chiddick, the man voluntarily turned himself over to the police on Thursday morning.

Police reports say Chiddick turned himself in at the Police Headquarters on the American Road. There was no indication whether he did so acting alone or if he was accompanied by members of his family or an attorney.

He was wanted in connection with a shooting incident at No. 3 George Street that resulted in a young woman receiving a wound to her left leg. The incident occurred around 8:30 am on Tuesday, August 6. The victim was treated at the hospital and later discharged.

In the Wanted Bulletin Chiddick was described as armed and was therefore considered dangerous.

The Police Administration expresses gratitude for the public's assistance and support from the media.

## Alex Feng charged with malicious damage

Police arrested and charged 32-year-old Alex Feng Tianzhao of Potters for maliciously causing damage to the XPZ property on Factory Road.

The accused went onto XPZ property and broke a glass window, and damaged

several galvanize panels and a metal gate. He was also charged with Threatening Language and Throwing Missiles.

The incident occurred around 5:00 pm on Tuesday, August 6. He will be appearing in court on Friday.

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## Candlelight vigil for Keith Yearwood

The National Festivals Commission and the Ministry of Creative Industries will mount a special candle light vigil for the late Keith Yearwood, a former member of staff who died suddenly during one of the World Cup T20 matches at the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium.

Minister Daryll Matthew said the vigil will take place Sunday August 11 outside the office of the Festival Commission on Redcliffe Street. He described Yearwood as a 'very helpful' person who completed all tasks assigned to him without murmur or making a fuss.

He said he died doing what he loved best, volunteering for Antigua and Barbuda.

Yearwood will be buried on Monday August 12.



Keith Yearwood



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# Opinion



## Verification of Election Results: A Pathway to Progress for Venezuela

By Sir Ronald Sanders

In the immediate aftermath of the Venezuelan presidential elections, whose results were widely disputed within Venezuela and by the majority of neighbouring Latin American states, the Permanent Council of the Organization of American States (OAS) held a Special Session on July 31, under my chairmanship, to attempt to reach a consensus among the 32 active member states.

The meeting was requested by 12 countries with the aim of addressing the results of the Venezuelan electoral process. Unusually, nine foreign ministers attended the Permanent Council, which is typically attended by Permanent Representatives or their alternates.

These ministers represented six countries in South America and three in Central America, all of whom had publicly expressed significant concern about the validity of the election that declared President Nicolás Maduro the winner.

Chaos ensued in Venezuela as thousands of people protested openly in the streets. Before the elections, polls had indicated that the opposition party's candidate, Edmundo González, would win overwhelmingly. González is a surrogate for the vigorous María Corina Machado, who was banned

by the Maduro government from running for the presidency but campaigned on González's behalf.

While the government proclaimed Maduro's victory and dismissed opposition claims that the results did not match the polling station tally sheets, local observer groups insisted that the government's declaration was false. Of course, it is not uncommon for opposition parties to dispute election results worldwide if they lose, so the opposition's claim alone was insufficient to prove the result was wrong.

However, the Carter Center, a reputable and internationally recognized organization invited by the Maduro government to observe the elections, also expressed serious concerns with the electoral process. It stated that the process "did not meet international standards of electoral integrity at any of its stages and violated numerous provisions of its own national laws," and criticized the arbitrary decisions of The National Electoral Council (CNE) in not registering opposition candidacies.

Given the Maduro government's contention that the election results were accurate and the conflicting claims of rigging, there was a need for verification of the votes cast to dispel any doubt concerning the validity of the results. There-



Sir Ronald Sanders

fore, prior to the meeting of the Permanent Council, as Chair, I circulated a draft resolution that recognized the large turnout of voters; acknowledged that the result was being disputed; recalled the agreement by the Venezuelan political parties in Barbados in October 2023 on political rights and electoral guarantees for all; and "urged" that the NEC "publish the presidential election voting results at the level of each polling station and conduct a comprehensive recount of votes in the presence of independent international observation organizations in a spirit of full transparency and to verify the result."

This request was not

unprecedented. In 2020, the OAS, Commonwealth, European Union (EU), and CARICOM made a similar request to Guyana to resolve an election dispute.

To ensure full participation, I convened an informal meeting of all member states to discuss the draft resolution and seek consensus.

At an informal meeting of all OAS member states, prior to the formal Council meeting, the resolution was amended to include legal and institutional considerations, but one point of disagreement remained. Brazil objected to urging the NEC to conduct verification with "international observers,"

*cont'd on pg 9*



*cont'd from pg 8*

arguing that such observation could only occur at the government’s invitation. This single point caused the draft resolution to flounder, despite consensus on urging the NEC to publish the voting results and conduct a comprehensive verification.

Five Latin American ministers, particularly Peru’s Foreign Minister, insisted on retaining the reference to international observers and stated that they would call for a vote in the Council, discarding attempts to adopt the resolution by consensus. Ultimately, the resolution was not adopted. While no country voted against it, five countries absented themselves, and 11 abstained, making the 17 votes in favour insufficient for an absolute majority. Nonetheless, many member states made clear their great unease with the situation in Venezuela. In terms of the 14 CARICOM states, 4 voted in favour, 7 abstained and 3 absented themselves.

Since then, there have been many developments. On August 1, the governments of Colombia, Brazil, and Mexico called on the Venezuelan authorities to publish in an “expeditious way” the data “disaggregated by polling station” of the elections. This call was supported by the former President of Argentina, Cristina Fernández de Kirchner, demonstrating that the left-leaning parties in Latin America also want verification of the election results.

On August 2, the Heads of Government of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), while congratulating Maduro on his election victory and calling for national reconciliation, also affirmed that they “stand on the principle that

elections must be free as the expression of the will of the people and free from outside interference and they must be fair – contested in good faith and subject to the adjudication of independent mechanisms with relevant safeguards for verification

and arbitration of any dispute.”

Further, UN Secretary-General António Guterres has called for “complete transparency” and “the timely publication of the election results and a break-

*cont'd on pg 10*

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## Russia airspace ban forces BA to drop key China flights

By Ben King

British Airways will drop its flights to Beijing from October, as it feels the impact of being banned from Russian airspace.

Western airlines have been banned from flying over Russia since the invasion of Ukraine in 2022.

This has forced them to fly longer routes, leading to longer flight times and higher costs, including for fuel and crew.

Chinese airlines are still able to fly over Russia, giving them a commercial advantage.

When British Airways (BA) resumed flights last year, after pausing during the Covid-19 pandemic, it



said Heathrow to Beijing was “one of our most important routes”.

However, in a call with investors last month, Nicholas Cadbury, the chief finan-

cial officer of BA’s parent company IAG, said it faced “weak demand” in China.

The airline now says Beijing flights will be suspended until November

2025, but schedules will remain under review.

BA is also dropping one of its two daily flights to Hong Kong. It will continue flying to Shanghai.

Air traffic between Europe and China has been slow to recover since the pandemic, with Chinese carriers taking a majority of the market.

Last month Virgin Atlantic also announced plans to cancel its flights from Shanghai, its only destination in China, from October.

It said “significant challenges and complexities on this route have contributed to the commercial decision to suspend flying to Shanghai.”

It said flight times were approximately one hour longer to Shanghai, and two hours longer on the way back to London.

*cont’d from pg 9*

down by polling stations.” Significantly, Pope Francis has appealed to all parties “to seek the truth,” following assertions from two Venezuelan cardinals, Baltazar Porras and Diego Padrón, that the Maduro government may be “fabricating” election tallies “accommodating its interests” to supposedly prove that Maduro actually won the election.

It is now evident that while some countries, including in the Caribbean, want to demonstrate friendship to Maduro, who, along with the late President Hugo Chavez, provided an oil lifeline to them for 10 years beginning at the global financial crisis in 2008, there is a mounting international clamour for the result of the July 28 elections to be verified.

This outcry is driven principally by Venezuela’s neighbours in South and Central America, who have borne the brunt of

accommodating nearly 8 million Venezuelan refugees. Arrests of protestors since the election are also energizing the UN Human Rights organization and other international groups to demand action. The Venezuelan government has confirmed that more than 1,000 people have been arrested.

For peace to prevail in Venezuela and for the country’s relations with its immediate neighbours and the international community to improve and advance, verification of the election results is imperative.

Both contenders in the election – Maduro and González – claim confidence in their victory; thus, both should welcome a verification process that will confirm their position.

*(The writer is Antigua and Barbuda’s Ambassador to the US and the OAS. The views expressed are entirely his own. Responses and previous commentaries: [www.sirronaldsanders.com](http://www.sirronaldsanders.com))*

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## Defiant Taylor Swift fans take to streets after Vienna plot

Taylor Swift fans came out in force on Vienna's streets to sing her songs and show their defiance, a day after her concerts there were cancelled because of a plot to attack them.

Hundreds of Swifties staged an impromptu open-air gathering to overcome the disappointment of not seeing the US superstar on her record-breaking Eras tour.

They also said they understood the decision to cancel the stadium shows on Thursday, Friday and Saturday, and were grateful to the police.

Austrian authorities said they had foiled a plan by a supporter of the Islamic State group to carry out a suicide attack.

One British fan called Becky said she felt "sombre but also excited by the atmosphere" on Corneliusgasse, a road whose name resembles Cornelia Street in New York, after which Swift named a song.

"It's a really strange situation and I think the ultimate thing we feel is just grateful that we're safe and that everyone else is safe," she told BBC News. "A bit of a mixed bag of emotions."

She said the cancellation made her feel "probably the most disappointed about anything I've ever been in my life", but she agreed the



Swifties swapped friendship bracelets and sang the star's songs.

decision had been made "for the right reasons".

She was one of almost 200,000 fans who were due to attend the three concerts.

Others included Jessica Holroyd, who had flown to the city from Bristol.

"I found out the news when I was in the airport, and I had a bit of a cry in the airport toilets," she said.

"It's all quite emotional. I've been a fan since I was 15 and I'm 32 soon, so it's just quite devastating, really."

Ms Holroyd said the gigs were "such a momentous occasion for loads of people".

"It feels like it might be the only opportunity to see her, particularly the Eras tour, so it just feels like a huge loss."

However, she said she thought Austrian police had

"handled it really well".

"And as sad as it is, it seems like the best decision for everyone's safety - the fans and the crew and Taylor, of course. It's not worth the loss of life."

Fans also traded friendship bracelets, some restaurants and coffee shops gave away free food and drink, several museums offered free admission, and a church opened its doors and played Swift songs all day.

"The way Vienna is responding to this and embracing Swifties is so, so, so incredibly beautiful," wrote one fan on X.

"I know it doesn't erase the sadness and fear from having the concerts cancelled for the reason they were cancelled, but by God is it a rainbow amidst this nasty storm."

Natascha Strobl, an

Austrian political scientist and author, was planning to go to two of the three gigs, and said she was "absolutely devastated" they were cancelled.

"I was looking forward to it for over a year, and made bracelets and planned outfits and planned the whole day," she told BBC News.

"There are people sitting in hotel rooms who don't know what to do, people who are supposed to fly over who don't know what to do now. They're in shock. There's a lot of crying, of course."

But she agreed that there could be "no debate when it comes to security".

"If it's not safe, it's not safe," she said, explaining that no-one could risk the prospect of a repeat of

*cont'd on pg 13*



Swift is due to bring her tour back to London next week.

*cont'd from pg 12*

previous “devastating and shocking” atrocities like at Manchester Arena, when 22 people were killed in a suicide bombing at an Ariana Grande concert in 2017.

Last week, three young girls were killed in a knife attack on a Taylor Swift-themed dance class in Southport.

“Of course, safety is paramount,” Ms Strobl said. “But still, we’re allowed to feel absolutely terrible about it.”

Two suspects, aged 19 and 17, have been arrested.

The head of Austria’s domestic intelligence service, Omar Haijawi-Pirchner, told a news conference the 19-year-old had planned to carry out an attack using explosives and knives.

“We have seized these weapons and he considered either possibility and his goal was to kill himself and a large number of people either today or tomorrow at the concert,” Mr Haijawi-Pirchner said.

Austrian Interior Minister Gerhard

Karner said: “The situation was serious, but a tragedy had been prevented.”

Swift said in a 2019 interview that an attack on one of her gigs was “her biggest fear”.

“After the Manchester Arena bombing and the Vegas concert shooting [also in 2017], I was completely terrified to go on tour this time because I didn’t know how we were going to keep three million fans safe over seven months,” she told Elle at the time.

“There was a tremendous amount of planning, expense, and effort put into keeping my fans safe.”

She has not yet commented on the Austrian plot and cancellations.

The next concerts in the singer’s schedule are in London, with five nights at Wembley Stadium from next Thursday.

A spokesman for the city’s Metropolitan Police said it worked “closely with venue security teams and other partners to ensure there are appropriate security and policing plans in place”.

They added: “There is nothing to indicate that the matters being inves-

tigated by the Austrian authorities will have an impact on upcoming events here in London.

“As always, we will continue to keep any new information under careful review.”

Chris Phillips, former head of the National Counter Terrorism Security Office, said the incident was “another reminder if we need it that terrorism and Islamic terrorism in particular is still an issue”.

However, fans going to the UK gigs should be “no more [worried] today than you were yesterday”, he told BBC 5 Live.

“There’s an enormous amount of work behind the scenes which you’ll never hear about, and you don’t even see the results because a success is when nothing happens,” he said.

“I imagine as well that Taylor Swift, after the recent events in Southport, would be particularly sensitive to anything like this happening, and so would her management team.

“So maybe that’s the rationale behind cancelling these, particularly if they’ve arrested the two suspects.”

# Regional News



## Bahamas: UK crime agency to assist in investigation of top cop

The Royal Bahamas Police Force has announced that it will be receiving assistance from the United Kingdom's National Crime Agency (NCA) in an investigation involving allegations against Chief Superintendent Michael Johnson.

The investigation was sparked by the emergence of several voice notes that purportedly capture conversations involving Johnson, a well-known lawyer, and Michael Fox, Jr., a man the police previously described

as a "prominent gang leader" before his death in May.

Another person, identified as Dino Smith, who was killed in January is also featured on the voice notes, which spread rapidly last month.

The leaked voice notes suggest an arrangement that would have allowed the police to drop their investigation into Fox and his associates.

This has prompted the police to take immediate action.

"The Royal Bahamas



Police Force has taken significant steps to ensure a thorough and impartial investigation into these serious allegations. In cooperation

with our international partners, we have forwarded files in relations to the case to the UK National Crime Agency (NCA) to aid in the investigation," the police said in an update on the matter.

They confirmed the involvement of senior NCA officials in this matter.

"John Michael McKeon, Head of the NCA's Anti-Corruption Unit, and Andrew John Black, a senior investigator, will be arriving in The Bahamas from the UK on August 14, 2024, to personally oversee aspects of this investigation. They are scheduled to depart on August 17, 2024. Additionally, Francisco Savvaki Kyriarou, an investigator based in the NCA's Miami office, will join the team and is scheduled to arrive and depart on the same dates," they disclosed.

The police have vowed to keep the public informed as the investigation progresses, "consistent with our duty to uphold the integrity of our institution and the trust placed in us by the people of The Bahamas."

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This photo provided by the Dominican Republic Civil Defense shows a boat retrieved by the Civil Defense from the sea off Rio San Juan, Dominican Republic, Tuesday, Aug. 6, 2024. Photo: AP/Dominican Republic Civil Defense

## 14 decomposed bodies discovered on boat near Dominican Republic

Forensic authorities in the Dominican Republic worked Wednesday to identify the remains of at least 14 mostly decomposed bodies found on an abandoned vessel 10 nautical miles off its northern coast.

The Dominican Republic Navy said the 14 skeletons appeared to belong to individuals from Senegal and Mauritania, according to the documentation found next to the bodies.

Authorities are also working to determine the cause and time of the deaths and whether 12 packages of a substance found on the boat contained illicit drugs, presumably cocaine or heroin.

Cell phones and geolocation devices were also found on the boat, the Navy said.

The Atlantic route from West Africa to the European Union territory is one of the most dangerous in the world. Boats that miss their destination can be swept away by Atlantic trade winds and currents from east to west, drifting for months.

Migrants aboard often die of dehydration and malnutrition. Others have also been known to jump into the ocean out of desperation.

An Associated Press investigation published last year revealed that in 2021, at least seven boats from north-

west Africa had been found in the Caribbean and Brazil, all carrying dead bodies.

The bodies found Tuesday in the Dominican Republic are being analysed by the National Institute of Forensic Sciences (INACIF) in Santiago, the country's second largest city and near where the discovery was made, said Nairobi Vilorio, a spokeswoman for the Attorney General's Office.

Meanwhile, the substance found next to the bodies is being analysed in laboratories operated by the country's anti-drug agency, said Carlos Devers, a spokesman for the National Directorate of Drug Control.

## Driver jailed for death of Ecuador politician's daughter

A speeding Mercedes driver has been jailed for 10 years for causing the death of an Ecuadorian politician's daughter.

Psychologist Vanessa Sagnay de la Bastida was crossing the road holding hands with her fiancé Michael Williams as they walked home near Wandsworth Bridge on 16 March 2022.

Octavian Cadar, 39, drove towards them at about 55mph, more than double the 20mph speed limit, causing the terrified couple to become separated as they fled.

Ms Sagnay, 27, who was known as Charlotte, was hit before she reached the pavement, causing her to somersault in the air and land on a railing and sign post.

She suffered a catastrophic head injury and died at the scene.

Cadar, of Bexley, south-east London, had accused the couple of causing the collision by "messaging about in the road", only admitting later to jurors that was wrong.

He also claimed he was trying to avoid them but the court was told the accident would not have happened if he had been driving at 30mph.

A jury deliberated for 42 minutes to find him guilty of causing Ms Sagnay's death by dangerous driving.



Vanessa was crossing the road with her fiancé when she was hit.

Cadar was jailed for 10 years and disqualified from driving for 10 years and eight months.

In 2018, he had been convicted of speeding, fined, and given six penalty points at Bromley Magistrates' Court.

Speaking at his sentencing, Mr Williams, who was studying for a PhD at University College London, said: "No-one should have the power to kill just to drive fast.

"Cadar valued speeding in a sports car more than our lives. Afterwards he reacted with anger and blame.

"What was my worst nightmare is now my reality. At least in my nightmares I am with Charlotte again."

On his fiancée, he said: "My life with Charlotte was wonderful, she was the best friend I ever had.

"She had the magical ability to support people in just the way they needed."

He added: "She was completely non-judgmental and fiercely, unflinchingly, fought for everyone to be treated fairly.

"Friendship like that made it feel easy for me to be myself, and my best self.

"How could I possibly explain who Charlotte was, what she meant to me, and everything that was lost when she was killed?

"She was half of me. I am less than a person without her."

On the day of her death, they had been finalising details of their wedding, he said: "Charlotte never got to hear what I wrote in my wedding vows.

"Instead I read them at her funeral."

Her mother, Jeanne Sa-

gnay de la Bastida, spoke of her pride at her daughter's academic success at St Andrew's University, having achieved two Masters degrees, and that she was about to embark on a PhD.

Weeping, she told the court: "My daughter was, is and always will be my life, my everything and my everyone.

On her grief and loss, she said she felt as if an atomic bomb had exploded, leaving her struggling to breathe "toxic air".

She said: "It is unnatural, unexpected, violent, undeserved, senseless, amoral.

"It has taken up residence in my body and consumed me."

Ms Sagnay and Mr Williams, who had known each other since school in Scotland, were on their way

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## Hunter Biden allegedly paid in Romanian 'influence' plot

By Bernd Debusmann Jr

US prosecutors in Hunter Biden's tax evasion case have accused him of accepting money from a Romanian oligarch who sought to "influence US government agencies".

The accusation is part of a larger case against the president's son, who is charged with evading \$1.4m (£1.1m) in taxes between 2016 and 2019 while spending millions on luxury cars, drugs and escorts.

Republicans have long accused Hunter Biden, 54, of "influence peddling", although Congressional probes have yet to uncover any wrongdoing.

The tax case is scheduled to go to trial in California in September. He has pleaded not guilty to the charges.

According to a court filing made on Wednesday in a Los Angeles federal court, the Romanian national hired Biden for legal work in 2015, at a time when his father was vice-president under then-President Barack Obama.



Hunter Biden, 54, was found guilty on federal gun charges in June.

While the filing only identifies the Romanian businessman by his initials, GP, US media has identified him as Gabriel Popoviciu, who at the time was facing corruption charges in Romania.

In the filing, prosecutors said they plan to introduce evidence that Hunter Biden and an associate "received compensation from a foreign principal who was attempting to influence US policy and public opinion" and prompt the US "to investigate the Romanian investigation of GP".

The document also says that Biden and his associate "were concerned that lobbying work might cause political ramifications for the defendant's father" - Joe Biden - and wanted to conceal the "true nature" of the arrangement.

In total, prosecutors believe that Biden and two associates split \$3m in payments from Popoviciu.

Popoviciu was sentenced to seven years in a Romanian prison on real estate fraud charges in 2017. He denied any wrongdoing.

Republicans in the

House of Representatives - who last year opened an impeachment inquiry into the Biden family's foreign business ties - had previously raised concerns about ties between Hunter Biden and Popoviciu.

"Told ya," the House Judiciary Committee's Republican wing wrote in a brief post on X, formerly Twitter.

James Comer, the chair of the House Oversight Committee, tweeted "bank records don't lie".

The latest claims against Hunter Biden come less than two months after he was found guilty on all three charges in a federal gun trial held in Delaware.

While he faces a maximum of 25 years in prison, he is a first-time, non-violent offender and experts say it is highly unlikely he will receive such a lengthy sentence.

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home from a trip to the gym.

Describing the collision, Mr Williams said he realised he had been separated from Ms Sagnay because they were no longer holding hands.

He said: "She fell on the front of the car. She went onto a street sign. There was a loud bang. I screamed and I crossed the

street. I tried to call the ambulance.

"I was on the phone to the emergency services and that is when the driver of the car came out.

"He was shouting. He was angry and he was saying 'why did you freeze? Why didn't you keep walking?'

"I said to him 'because we were terrified'."

# Sports News



## Mahijah Davis academy to stage invitational basketball tournament

Former national forward Mahijah Davis is continuing his drive to develop young basketball talent in Antigua and Barbuda with the staging of an invitational tournament next week.

Davis, creator of the Mahijah Davis Basketball Academy (MDBA),

will be hosting an Under-15 Youth Summer Basketball Splash Invitational tournament at the JSC Sports Complex from August 15 to 19.

The competition will feature the MDBA Shooters, a team from Barbados, and two other Antiguan teams

that are coached by former national forward Oslyn "Pigeon" Gregory along with Guy Yearwood.

Davis said he has decided to take a break from hosting the MDBA's annual summer camp, which he has held annually for the past 16 years, to stage the invitational tournament that will feature four teams.

"I am collaborating with four other coaches and their teams to stage this competition where we will play games in the mornings and evenings from next Thursday to Sunday.

"It is a competition for under-15 boys, and I decided to cancel my annual summer basketball camp to stage this event with my other colleagues.

"This is a collaborative effort between the four coaches to try and provide some meaningful competition for the young players as an incentive for them to carry on developing their skills and maintain interest in the sport that has been on the decline for several years in Antigua and other parts of the Caribbean."

The four teams taking part in the competition are the Barbados Young Ballers, the Mahijah Davis Basketball Academy Shooters, the Guy Yearwood Ballers of Villa, and the Gray's Green (GG) Phoenix, which is coached by Gregory.

A contingent of approximately 18 people will arrive from Barbados next Thursday, and the tournament will commence with four games the following day.

The Barbados Young Ballers will face Guy Yearwood Ballers at 9 am, and MDBA Shooters will take on GG Phoenix at 11 am.

The MDBA Shooters will tackle the Guy Yearwood Ballers at 6:45 pm, and the Barbados Young Ballers will

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**Mahijah Davis Basketball Academy (MDBA)  
Annual 15U Youth Summer Basketball  
Splash Invitational**

**Featuring:**  
**Barbados Young Ballers  
and three other Tenacious Teams  
Ready to Battle for Supremacy,**

**August 15-19, JSC Sports Complex**

**Shoot for your Goals!**

## ABNDA takes break from domestic domino competitions

The second team three-hand and four-hand competitions of the Antigua and Barbuda National Domino Association's (ABNDA) domestic season are currently on a break.

Both competitions went on a break in late July to facilitate the annual Antigua Carnival Celebrations, which concluded on Tuesday.

The A team of the Bolans Revellers and Dominatrix are joint leaders after the third round of matches in the team three-hand competition.

Both teams are tied at the top of the standings with eight points each in the three-hand competition, which is being conducted using the accumulated point format, with each match winner awarded three points, two for second place, and one point for third place.

Closely following on seven points are the A team of the Willikies Super Stars, Legacy Thunder Bolt, Double Six Ice, Ramplers, Bra-



vo, and S.K. Eagles.

Double Six and the Ramplers are joint leaders of the team four-hand contest. Both teams are currently tied at the top of the standings with five points each after the third round of matches.

The ABNA extended its Carnival break to facilitate an annual triangular competition, which will be taking place in Antigua from Saturday until Friday, August 16.

The Cyclone International Domino Club of Antigua and Barbuda will be hosting the visiting Barbados Union of Teachers (BUT) Travellers and the In-Time Domino Club of Guyana as they engage in the triangular series.

The BUT Travellers hosted the series in 2023, and In-Time will host the event in Guyana next year.

The ABNDA's two team competitions will resume

with the fourth round of matches at its headquarters in Ottos on Thursday, August 22.

Following the conclusion of the both contests, the ABNDA will continue its domestic season with competitions in the classics that will conclude during the period of Antigua and Barbuda's annual anniversary of independence celebrations in late October.

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meet GG Phoenix at 8:30 pm.

On Saturday, August 17, GG Phoenix will clash with Guy Yearwood Ballers at 6:45 pm, and the MDBA Shooters will face Barbados Young Ballers at 8:30 pm.

The two teams with the most wins at the end of round-robin play will advance to the final on Sunday, August 18, at 8:30 pm.

The championship final will be preceded by a playoff for third place

between the other two teams at 6:45 pm. There will be presentations of awards after the final.

The Barbados Young Ballers will depart Antigua and return home on Monday, August 19.

Meanwhile, the Flyers Basketball club has postponed its Just Hoop Basketball Youth Summer League until further notice.

The League, which will feature competitions for boys and girls from the ages of 13 to 15 and 15 to 19, was

slated to be held at the JSC Sports Complex from August 10 to 31.

But according to a media release from the organizers, the Just Hoop Summer League has been postponed until a later date. The organizers claim they are forced to take this action as a result of emergency travel during the month of August.

Therefore, early registration has been extended until August 31. Registration fee is EC\$300, while teams registering early will pay EC\$250.

## Botswana's Tebogo becomes Africa's first 200-meter champion

PARIS (Reuters) - Letsile Tebogo became the first African to win the men's Olympic 200-meter title on Thursday when he powered clear of American duo Kenny Bednarek and a COVID-hit Noah Lyles to claim Botswana's first Olympic gold medal.

Tebogo, who set a national record of 9.86 seconds when finishing sixth in 100-meter final, produced a dominant last 50 meters and crossed the line in 19.46 seconds, beating his chest as he become the fifth-fastest man in history over 200 meters.

Bednarek chased him all the way to take a second successive silver in 19.62 seconds, with Lyles, who had been hoping to become the first American to complete the sprint double since Carl Lewis 40 years ago, repeating his Tokyo bronze in 19.67.

It was the triple world champion's first defeat in a 200-meter final for three years. He received medical treatment after crossing the line and after the race United States of America officials said he had tested positive for COVID on Tuesday, two days after he won the 100-meter gold.

"In response (to the test, the USOPC and USATF swiftly enacted all necessary protocols to prioritise his health, the wellbeing of our team, and the safety of



Letsile Tebogo, of Botswana, second left, wins the men's 200-meters final at the 2024 Summer Olympics in Saint-Denis, France, Thursday, Aug. 8, 2024. (AP)

fellow competitors," US-ATF said in a statement.

"Our primary commitment is to ensure the safety of Team USA athletes while upholding their right to compete. After a thorough medical evaluation, Noah chose to compete tonight. We respect his decision and will continue to monitor his condition closely."

Adding to the chaos, a yellow card appeared against Lyle's name in the official results to mark a misconduct violation for damaging his lane box before the race start.

The Lyles show might still hog much of the limelight, but on the track it was Tebogo and Africa's night. It is common to see a clutch of Africans in major mid-

dle and long-distance races, but this was the first time in Olympic history that four appeared in a sprint final.

Although three filled the last three positions, Tebogo's place on top of the podium in an African record was a huge leap forward.

"I'm the Olympic champion, it's something I have never seen in my life or dreamt of - it is an amazing moment," the 21-year-old told reporters.

"I just came here with the little that I had in me to push through because yesterday we made it to the final, my coach told me 'now it's your race.'

"I knew Kenny was going to run away so made sure just to close him down, I have that top-end speed that

will allow me to finish the race without getting tired, so that's what I did, and when I saw Kenny fade I knew Noah was far, far away behind us so that means I'm the Olympic champion.

"It means a lot for everybody, the country, the continent and my family."

Bednarek, the man in the middle again, ran a fantastic bend in lane eight and finished strongly, but not just quite fast enough.

"I don't think I put my best race down, it was really tight at the end," he said.

"This year I'm finally healthy. I can build off this. There's also the world championships next year. I'm going to be dangerous. I expect big things in the next four years."



Sydney McLaughlin-Levrone, of the United States, wins the women's 400-meters hurdles final at the 2024 Summer Olympics in Saint-Denis, France, Thursday, Aug. 8, 2024. (AP)

## McLaughlin-Levrone smashes world record to retain 400m hurdles crown

PARIS (Reuters) - American Sydney McLaughlin-Levrone obliterated her own 400 metres hurdles world record with a time of 50.37 seconds to retain her Olympic title on Thursday.

Anna Cockrell made it a United States of America 1-2 in a time of 51.87 seconds and Dutchwoman Femke Bol, who had been expected to challenge for gold, faded in the last 50 metres to take bronze in 52.15 seconds.

It was the sixth time McLaughlin-Levrone had broken the world record, lowering her previous mark of 50.65 seconds that she set at the USA trials in June.

The crowd at the Stade de France went into a frenzy when it became clear a new all-time best was within her reach and she fittingly rang the victory bell with a glittering tiara perched on her head.

The first woman to break the 52 and 51-second barriers, McLaughlin-Levrone has been on a mission to rewrite the history books whenever she competes,

turning the 400 hurdles into a marquee event - and herself into a superstar - in the process.

"It's amazing to see our sport continue to grow, for people to want to watch the 400m hurdles, it's amazing. Just a lot of hard work put in this year," she told reporters.

"I knew it was going to be a tough race. An amazing competition all the way round."

She walked to her blocks like a prize fighter stepping into the ring, expressionless despite the chorus of cheers that greeted her, and wrested the lead from the moment the gun went off, gliding over each barrier with ease.

Bol, the only other woman to have cracked 51 seconds, was widely seen as McLaughlin-Levrone's closest challenger and had a large Dutch cohort in the stands on her side, but she lost steam five days after she delivered gold in the mixed relay.

McLaughlin-Levrone, the 2022 world champion, was miles ahead of

the field down the final straight and she charged ahead in a thrilling race against the clock as Cockrell held on to produce a personal best in second.

"I sacrificed a lot, my family has sacrificed a lot," said Cockrell. "To do this today, when it counts the most, on the biggest of stages, with my whole family here, we're all over there crying our eyes out. I'm truly a talker and I have no words."

It was the fourth time in a row the United States had won the event on another big medal night for the Americans, as Grant Holloway won the men's 110 hurdles.

McLaughlin-Levrone had an extra reason to party, as she turned 25 on Wednesday.

"Grateful to be celebrating my 25th birthday like this. It was yesterday, just a super opportunity, you can't even imagine," she said.

"My whole family's here. We're going to celebrate, we're going to enjoy this time and get ready for the relay too."

## Parham Super League returns this weekend

The second annual Parham Super League football competition, which is organized by Eastboys Promotions, will commence on Saturday.

Twelve teams, an increase of four teams, will compete in two zones in this year's competition, which will take place at the Parham football field.

Champions of the inaugural Parham Super League, Pigotts Bullets, will be among the participating teams in this year's competition that will offer a grand prize of EC\$5,000.

The Pigotts Bullets will be one of the six teams that will compete in Group A. The other teams are Attacking Saints, Garden Stars, Parham, Willikies, and Freeman's Village.

Contesting Group B will be last year's losing finalist, SAP FC, Greenbay Hoppers, All Saints United, John Hughes, Potters, and FC Master Ballerz.

The top four teams from each group will advance to the quarterfinals after the preliminary rounds. Thereafter, the winners of the quarter-finals will advance



The Pigotts Bullets team celebrate after winning the inaugural Parham Super League football competition at the Parham playing field on Saturday, September 2, 2023. (File photo)

to the semi-finals and finals to determine the champions.

The registration fee is EC\$25 per player, and teams must submit a minimum of 15 players before August 10, 2024, to guarantee participation.

The competition will commence with a triple header at the Parham football field on Saturday.

The Pigotts Bullets will begin their title defense against Garden Stars in the opening match of the tournament at 5 pm. Willikies

will face Freeman's Village at 6:30 pm, and Attacking Saints will clash with Parham at 8 pm.

In Sunday's triple header, All Saints United will take on SAP FC at 5 pm, Potters will face FC Master Ballerz at 6:30 pm, and the Greenbay Hoppers will tackle John Hughes at 8 pm.

The matches in this year's competition will be played on Saturdays, Sundays, Wednesdays, and Fridays for a period of six weeks.

The league was created to produce a preseason football experience that will equip teams for the upcoming Premier League competition.

It is an opportunity for Premier League teams to test themselves against the tough opponents they will meet in the Antigua and Barbuda Football Association's (ABFA) national domestic competitions.

It also gives teams an opportunity to discover prospective talents that will add value.