



ANTIGUA & BARBUDA

# POINT EXPRESS

TRUSTED NEWS AND RESPECTED VIEWS

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# LIAT (2020) LIMITED CLARIFIES OWNERSHIP

*Story on Page 2*



# LIAT (2020) Ltd clarifies ownership

In light of recent speculations and misinformation regarding the ownership and structure of LIAT (2020) Limited, we believe it is important to provide clear and accurate information to our valued customers, partners, and stakeholders. At LIAT (2020) Ltd, transparency and our commitment to regional connectivity remains at the forefront of our operations. This statement serves to address any misconceptions and reaffirm our dedication to delivering exceptional customer experience across the Caribbean.

LIAT (2020) Limited, a local company incorporated under the Laws of Antigua and Barbuda, is a joint venture between the Government of Antigua and Barbuda (GOAB) and Air Peace Caribbean Limited (APCL) another local company incorporated under the Laws of Antigua and Barbuda. The shareholding structure is 30% for the GOAB and 70% for APCL. It is important to clarify that APCL is an entirely separate entity from Air Peace Nigeria Ltd. Mr. Allen Onyema, the CEO of Air Peace Nigeria Ltd, holds no shares, directorship, nor is he involved in APCL or LIAT (2020) Ltd.

LIAT (2020) Limited wishes to reassure its stakeholders, that the company's ownership and operations have not been impacted by

the incorrect speculations regarding Mr. Onyema. We emphasise that Mr. Onyema has no ownership stake in LIAT (2020) Ltd, and such claims are completely unfounded as they do not exist.

As we continue our mission to provide reliable flight services throughout the region, we are grateful for the ongoing support of our customers, stakeholders and partners. We remain committed to delivering the best, exceptional customer experience, as we strive to



connect the Caribbean and SOAR! please contact our communications team at: [communications@flyliat20.com](mailto:communications@flyliat20.com)

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## Former Speaker D. Gisele Isaac loses at the High Court

The High Court has dismissed a case brought by former Speaker of the House of Representatives and UPP Chairman, D. Gisele Isaac, in which she was seeking compensation for alleged reputational damage.

Attorney appearing for the Antigua and Barbuda government, one of the respondents, Dr. David Dorsett, said the court dismissed the case on all grounds.

Isaac had brought the case against the former Education Minister, Michael Browne, and the government claiming that the manner in which she was suspended was improper.



D. Gisele Isaac

She alleged that an investigation into her conduct as Secretary of the Board of Education was conducted without consulting or speaking with her and thus there was no 'natural justice'. Additionally, she noted that the

report from the said investigation was leaked and that this caused damage to her reputation.

However, Justice Jan Drysdale, who presided over the case, noted that Isaac failed to prove to the court

that the government had a hand in leaking the report.

On the basis that she was unable to prove the source of the leak to the court the matter was dismissed.

Isaac told the court that many persons had taken to social media and other outlets to discuss the contents of the report causing much harm to her reputation.

Critically, she was unable to prove to the court that the government or any of its agents had leaked the report.

Isaac had previously won a judgement against the Board of Education regarding her termination.

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## France seeks closer security arrangements with A&B, OECS

Two officials of the French embassy in St. Lucia have spent the last two days in Antigua and Barbuda holding talks with key officials on security and other matters.

The officials are Security Attache, Jean-Raoul Bargmann and Liaison Judge Emmanuelle Doffe, who have been engaged in a series of discussions with senior government officials of the government where they discussed matters of mutual interest.

On Tuesday, they held discussions with Foreign Affairs Minister, E.P Chet Greene and Permanent Secretary, Ambassador Clarence

Pilgrim, where security and other areas of cooperation were discussed.

Reports are that the officials are requesting that Antigua and Barbuda sign on to an agreement to support technological co-operations to understanding and improving judicial systems here and in other OECS territories. Additionally, they want improved relations between the French and local law enforcement agencies in the country.

The French government is also looking to facilitate the improvement of communications on important criminal matters between Antigua and Barbuda and France as well



as the ability to share information on criminal records with the necessary personnel in the country from France.

Minister Greene extended to the visiting officials Antigua and Barbuda's desire to strengthen and deepen the cooperation between the two states going forward. He also pledged to continue the excellent bilateral relationship that currently exists between France and Antigua and Barbuda.

He observed that language has been a barrier to closer ties and communications between the two countries even though, Guadeloupe, which is part of France, can be seen from Shirley's Heights and other points on a clear day.

Minister Greene also made a case for assistance for Antigua and Barbuda with securing a vessel to assist with the monitoring of the country's borders. "Antigua and Barbuda's borders require protection or controlling as we are very vulnerable to anyone entering the borders. We are in need of additional assistance of at least a coastal vessel to facilitate security of the country and furthermore the global fight against human trafficking," the Minister expressed to the visiting French team. During their stay, they also met with the Attorney General, Sir Steadroy Benjamin, the local Interpol Focal Point, the Director of Public Prosecutions and the Commissioner of Police.

LETTERS OF ADMINISTRATION FORM P7

Rule 15

THE EASTERN CARIBBEAN SUPREME COURT  
IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE  
ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA  
(Probate)

In the Estate of Marlene Edwards late of Bathlodge, St. John's, Antigua, Deceased

ADVERTISEMENT OF APPLICATION FOR GRANT  
FIRST PUBLICATION

TAKE NOTICE that an application has been filed by CLAUDIA HOLMES of Bathlodge,, St. John's, Antigua for a Grant of Letters of Administration to the Applicant who is the daughter of the deceased, the deceased having died intestate on the 13<sup>th</sup> day of November, 2020.

Any person having an objection to the grant of Letters of Administration to the Applicant shall file an objection within fourteen (14) days of the publication of this Notice.

Dated this 11<sup>th</sup> day of October 2024.

Mrs. Denise Parillon  
Jonas Parillon & Co. Inc.  
Attorney at Law of the Applicant

Filed by Jonas Parillon & Co. Inc., Attorneys-at-Law, whose address for service is Sir Sydney Walling Highway, St. John's, Antigua, e-mail: [jonasparillon@gmail.com](mailto:jonasparillon@gmail.com) and telephone number: (268) 562-6530 / (268) 721-3882.

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## New police recruits urged to wear uniform with pride, courage

The newest batch of police recruits, 68 in total, now undergoing training, were exposed to a key aspect of the justice system in Antigua and Barbuda, the magistrate's court.

Chief Instructor at the Sir George Wright Police Academy, ASP Rodney Ellis, said the field trip to the magistrate's court on Tuesday was aimed at familiarizing the recruits with the workings of the court and to afford them the opportunity to see the court in operation.

On hand to welcome them were, Senior Magistrate, Ngaio Emanuel, Chief Police Prosecutor, ASP Jeffrey Morgan and Senior Executive/Clerk, Cindy Thomas.

In a brief address, Magistrate Emanuel told the recruits that they stand at the threshold of a challenging, rewarding, and profoundly



meaningful journey – a journey as guardians of peace, protectors of the innocent, and upholders of justice.

“The uniform you will wear is not merely a garment; it is a symbol. It represents the trust bestowed upon you by every citizen who believes in the power of law and order. It embodies the courage to face adversity, the compassion to understand human frailty, and the unwavering commitment to serve and protect, no matter

the cost.

“The road ahead will demand much of you. You will face challenges that test your physical and mental fortitude. You will encounter situations that require split-second decisions, where lives may hang in the balance. And you will witness the best and worst of humanity, often in the same shift,” she emphasised.

Magistrate Emanuel extolled the recruits to always keep in mind four key principles; integrity, empathy, courage and professional-



ism.

The recruits began their training at the SWGA in June and are set for a graduation ceremony, to be announced shortly.



# World Food Day



## Message for World Food Day 2024 by Minister of Agriculture, Lands, Fisheries and the Blue Economy, Hon. Anthony Smith Jr.

On October 16th, 2024, as we gather to celebrate World Food Day, we honour a fundamental part of our existence: food. This day is a celebration for all of humanity, for food is as essential to life as air and water. It is not merely a source of nourishment but also a vital component of our health, culture, and community. It is our collective responsibility to ensure that food is available, accessible, and affordable to everyone, everywhere.

This year, World Food Day emphasizes the right to food for a better life and a better future. Despite the remarkable capabilities of our global farmers, who produce enough food to feed the world, an alarming 733 million people go hungry each year.

The reasons for this are numerous: conflicts, weather shocks, economic downturns, and deep-rooted inequalities contribute to the ongoing crisis of food insecurity. This suffering permeates our communities, and it is time for us to act decisively to alleviate it.

Moreover, we must examine how we produce our food. Unsustainable agricultural practices not only threaten biodiversity but also restrict our food choices. As we delve into our



Minister of Agriculture Anthony Smith Jr

aquatic resources, we realize the gravity of our situation: nearly a third of our fish stocks are overfished, and certain breeds are now at risk of extinction. The implications of these practices extend beyond the environment; they affect our ability to provide healthy and nutritious meals to our communities.

Currently, close to 3 billion people around our planet cannot access healthy diets. We must prioritize the education of our populations on the importance of nutrition because the saying “a healthy nation is a wealthy nation” rings true. Healthy individuals lead to thriving societies; thus, food security and nutrition are cornerstones of sustainable development.

Yet, we cannot overlook the impact of climate

change on our food security. As our climate shifts and becomes more unpredictable, so too does our ability to secure safe and adequate food supplies. In light of this, it is imperative that we recognize food security and nutrition as essential human rights, vital for paving the way to better lives and brighter futures.

Achieving food security is not solely the responsibility of governments or organizations; it requires global collaboration across all sectors, surrounding the voices of youth and all genders. A food-secure future is not just a goal; it is a right that must be upheld and pursued.

It is essential for governments to integrate the right policies and programs to support these initiatives. We need leaders who will actively engage with all

stakeholders — farmers, NGOs, the private sector, and communities — fostering partnerships that can drive change at every level. The private sector has an immense role to play, providing innovative solutions and investment to ensure food systems are resilient and sustainable.

Most importantly, youth must be empowered to participate in this crucial transformation. They are the leaders of tomorrow, and their innovation and passion are essential in shaping a sustainable food system. In this collective effort, every individual has a role, and every action counts.

Today, as we celebrate World Food Day, let us answer this call to action. Let us renew our commitment to guaranteeing everyone’s right to nutritious food. Together, we can achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development by transforming agri-food systems for better production, nutrition, environments, and lifestyles—ensuring that no one is left behind.

Thank you for your attention, your passion, and your commitment to joining us in this vital cause. Together, let’s forge a future where food security is not merely a dream, but a reality for all.

## Antiguans and Barbudans get set to celebrate Independence anniversary

Preparations are well on the way to host the two cornerstone activities to celebrate Antigua and Barbuda's Independence for its nationals living in the tristate area of United States this year.

The Service of Thanksgiving and the highly anticipated Independence Gala and awards will bring Antiguan and Barbudans together in the usual spirited display of pride and patriotism as the nation observes 43 Years of Independence under the theme "From Community Collaboration to Global Gains"

The church service will take place on Sunday October 27th at 4 pm at the Westchester Methodist Church on 2547 East Tremont Avenue in the Bronx.

The service will be officiated by Evangelist Patricia George Ralph while the sermon will be delivered by Rev. Dr. Elouise Hill-Challenger.

Other participating clergy are host pastor Rev. Dr. Gordon Edwards, Rev. Dr. Ava Jolley, Rev. Dr. Dave K. Allen, Rev. Dr. Cheryl White Lewis, and Rev. Dr. Freddie Mason.

The Very Rev. Belgrave Pelle will serve as organist and direct the Antigua and Barbuda International Choral as it leads the congregation with traditional hymns and patriotic songs. City South Steel Orchestra will add its dynamic sound to the worship experience.

Meantime, the gala re-



turns to the sophisticated and stylish Glen Island Harbor Club in New Rochelle and will take place on Saturday November 16th at 8 pm. It will feature Antigua and Barbuda's finest, the Original Burning Flames.

The gala takes the form of an all-white affair this year under the theme Festival of Hope.

The event aligns with the Independence theme as it reflects and celebrates the success of Antigua and Barbuda's Permanent Mission in hosting the historic gathering of small island developing states, SIDS4.

Through the support of the Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority, the country's global gains will also be reflected with the presence of guest of honor Keisha Schaff, who brought additional spotlight on Antigua and Bar-



buda. Keisha and her daughter, Anastatia Mayers, earned global recognition after journeying into space on Virgin Galactic's flight in August 2023.

The two major events are expected as usual to not only celebrate another milestone

in the country's development but strengthen the bonds of community between Antiguan and Barbudans in the diaspora.

For information on these events, including tickets to the Gala, contact the New York Office at 212-541-4117.

# Local News



## Lion's Club remains committed to its core principles

The Antigua Lions Club, which is now embarking on its 57th year in existence, says it remains committed to providing assistance to those in need in the society.

Following recent activities to celebrate its 56th anniversary of service to the people of Antigua and Barbuda, Club members recounted the organisation's long history of service to the needy.

Over the past 56 years, families in need of immediate medical aid, both domestically or externally, received financial support. Every week, the club members provide hot meals to about thirty people, and food packages are given to individuals or families who are in urgent need of help.

The Lions Club of Antigua also has completed numerous service initiatives with success. Among these

service initiatives are free eyeglasses and vision screenings in both primary and secondary schools throughout Antigua as well as in Barbuda, working with the New York-based Barbudan Network Society.

There is also popular event each year where more than 800 men are screened for prostate cancer in collaboration with Dr. Dwayne Baba Thwaites, Bio Health Laboratory and their medical staff.

Additionally, the Antigua Lions collaborate with the Diabetes Association and Breast Friends to support their events. The annual Thanksgiving Takeaway Dinner, Wine and Tappas event, and the Golf Tournament are just a few of the cooperative relationships and fundraising events that enable the club to provide its services.

The Lions of Antigua is a presti-

gious charity organization that is a part of a global network of over 48,000 clubs with 1.4 million members that are committed to helping those in need all over the world. The Antigua Lions Club currently has 76 members.

On October 14, 1968, the Antigua Lions Club was officially established. Embracing the journey of service creating our legacy of change; is the theme that guides the organisation this year. Every action it performs, no matter how minor, contributes to a greater whole.

As it embarks on this adventure, Lions are considering the legacy that will be left behind in addition to the present. Future generations will be motivated to carry on this crucial job by the positive legacy they leave behind. Antigua Leo Club serves as evidence.

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## Venezuelan Ambassador hails last weekend's Mass of Prayer for Peace

Venezuela's ambassador to Antigua and Barbuda Carmen Velasquez, who organized a Mass for Prayer for Peace in the Middle East last weekend, is describing the event as 'successful'.

The Venezuelan Embassy organized several solidarity groups and

other concerned individuals in Antigua in solidarity with the peoples of Palestine, Lebanon and Syria and to pray for peace in the region.

The Mass which was held in the Roman Catholic Church of Villa 'Saint Francis of Assisi'. Father Lawrence Malama, who officiated, prayed for Peace throughout the World.

Ambassador Velásquez emphasized her government's commitment to promoting World Peace and expressed her country's condemnation of terrorism in all its forms.

She expressed her profound sadness that in Palestine, Lebanon, Syria, there are civilians in the line of fire; homes destroyed; children traumatized and terrified, and populations who have lost everything, and sometimes everyone.

She called for an end to this tragic situation.

Among the attendees were the Ambassador of Cuba, the Honorary Consul of Syria, members of the government of Antigua and Barbuda, friends who believe in the need for peace in

*cont'd on pg 10*





## Walk for the Cure aims at surpassing \$90-thousand in donations this year

Hundreds of persons of all ages gathered at the WIOC sports field last Saturday to participate in the 13th CIBC Annual Walk for the Cure, one of the Caribbean's largest activities to raise both funds and awareness of cancer.

Prior to the start, one of the bank's Walk for the Cure Managers, Natasha Charles, thanked the participants and sponsors for their continued support and stressed that in addition to raising awareness and support for persons battling cancer, it is also about

raising funds to support the Breast Friends Organisation and the Oncology Department of the SLBMC.

"Last year we raised EC\$90,000 which was donated to these two organisations so that they can have the resources to support and

care for our cancer patients. With your support we hope to top that figure this year," she said.

She added that the bank viewed the walk as an integral part of CIBC Caribbean's continuing commitment to its community.

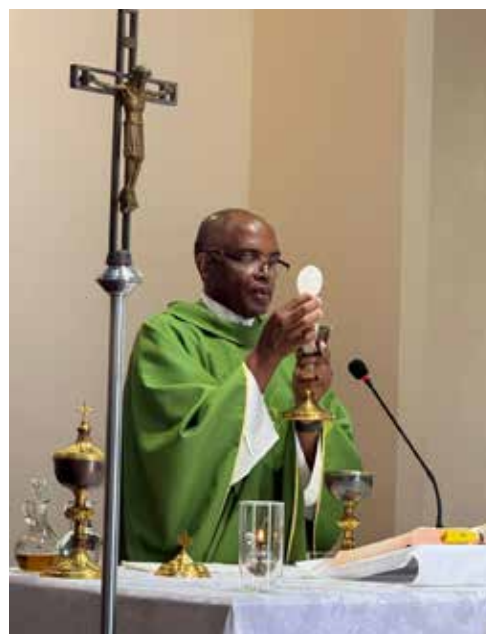
*cont'd from pg 9*

the world and support the Palestinian cause.

Cuban Ambassador Sergio Martinez called for increased solidarity with Palestine and to reject the massacre being committed against its people.

Ambassador Anthony Liverpool, recalling the prayer for Peace made by Pope Francis, invoked "Mary, Mother-Queen of Peace!" and the mercy of God, to "transform the hearts of those who feed hatred, silence the roar of weapons that generate death, extinguish the violence that brews in the heart of humanity, and inspire projects of peace in the actions of the rulers of nations".

Representing solidarity groups was Professor Blenis Vera who con-



demned the war that caused thousands of innocent people to die and called for dialogue to achieve peace.



# Photo Essay

## Chefs meeting with PM Browne





## Lufthansa hit with record penalty after barring Jewish passengers

By Natalie Sherman

The US has hit Lufthansa with a record \$4m (3m) penalty after the airline barred Jewish passengers from a 2022 flight because some allegedly refused to follow rules requiring face masks.

The Department of Transportation said Lufthansa discriminated against the passengers, treating them “as if they were all a single group”, though many were not travelling together and did not know one another.

It said the penalty was the largest it had ever issued against an airline for civil rights violations.

Lufthansa said in the consent order that it was agreeing to the payment to avoid litigation but denied discrimination, blaming the incident on “an unfortunate series of inaccurate communications”.

“Lufthansa is dedicated to being an ambassador of goodwill, tolerance, diversity, and acceptance,” the company said in a statement, adding that it had cooperated with the investigation and remained focused on training for

its staff.

The episode involved passengers who were travelling from New York to Budapest, with a connection in Frankfurt, in May 2022.

Many of the passengers were male, wearing “distinctive garb typically worn by Orthodox Jewish men” and had used the same handful of travel agencies to book their tickets, according to the DOT.

During the first flight, the captain alerted Lufthansa security that some passengers had failed to follow crew instructions requiring masks, and barring gathering in aisles and other places on board.

The alert led to holds on tickets of more than 100 passengers, all of them Jewish, which led to them being blocked from their connecting flight.

The DOT said Lufthansa recognised that the action also would hurt people who had complied with the instructions but “concluded it was not practical to address each passenger individually”.

The majority were rebooked on

other flights the same day.

“No one should face discrimination when they travel, and today’s action sends a clear message to the airline industry that we are prepared to investigate and take action whenever passengers’ civil rights are violated,” US Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg said.

The DOT said passengers interviewed for the investigation said they had not witnessed misbehaviour and Lufthansa later failed to identify any one passenger who had not followed the rules.

But in the consent order, Lufthansa said its staff was unable to single out passengers because “the infractions were so numerous, the misconduct continued for substantial portions of the flight and at different intervals and the passengers changed seats during the flight”.

The DOT said it was requiring Lufthansa to pay \$2m and would give the airline credit for \$2m it has already paid to passengers as part of a legal settlement.

## Ozempic could delay ageing, researchers suggest

By Sam Hancock

A drug used to treat Type 2 diabetes and obesity could also slow down the process of ageing, researchers believe.

Semaglutide, better known as Ozempic, “has far-reaching benefits beyond what we initially imagined,” Prof Harlan Krumholz, from the Yale School of Medicine, said following the publication of several new studies.

They found that the drug could be used to treat a wide range of illnesses linked to heart failure, arthritis, Alzheimer’s and even cancer.

“It wouldn’t surprise me that improving people’s health this way actually slows down the ageing process,” Prof Krumholz was quoted on Friday as telling the European Society of Cardiology Conference 2024, where the studies were presented.

The new data has been published in a number of medical journals, including the Journal of the American College of Cardiology (JACC), which Prof Krumholz edits.

“These ground-breaking medications are poised to revolutionise cardiovascular care and could dramatically enhance cardiovascular health,” he said.

The studies - part of the Select trial, funded by



Ozempic’s manufacturer Novo Nordisk - tracked more than 17,600 people, aged 45 or older, as they were given either 2.4 mg of semaglutide or a placebo for more than three years.

Participants were obese or overweight and had cardiovascular disease but not diabetes.

Those who took the drug died at a lower rate from all causes, including cardiovascular issues and Covid-19, researchers found.

People using the weight-loss drug were just as likely to catch Covid but they were less likely to die from it, with 2.6% dying among those on semaglutide compared with 3.1% on the placebo.

And while women ex-

perienced fewer major adverse cardiovascular events, the drug “consistently reduced the risk” of adverse cardiovascular outcomes regardless of sex.

It also improved heart failure symptoms and cut levels of inflammation in the body regardless of whether or not people lost weight.

Dr Benjamin Scirica, lead author of one of the studies and a professor of cardiovascular medicine at Harvard Medical School, said the findings “reinforce that overweight and obesity increases the risk of death due to many etiologies”.

But, he told the PA news agency, this “can be modified with potent incretin-based therapies like

semaglutide”.

The medication is a prescription drug offered by the NHS, which suppresses appetite and is sold under the brand names Wegovy - used to treat obesity - and Ozempic, for diabetes.

It comes in the form of an injection and mimics the hormone GLP-1, making people feel fuller and less hungry.

Experts have warned in the past that the drug is not a quick fix or a replacement for eating well and exercising, and should only be offered under medical supervision.

Like any medication, there can be side effects and risks - the most common being nausea, an upset stomach, bloating and gas.

## SVG: Opposition will introduce CBI if it wins next general election

CMC - The main opposition New Democratic Party (NDP) says it will introduce a citizenship by investment (CBI) programme if it is successful in the next general election.

Under the CBI, countries provide citizenship to foreign nationals in return for making a significant contribution to the socio-economic development of the country.

Prime Minister Dr Ralph Gonsalves has ruled out his Unity Labour Party (ULP) of ever introducing the programme in SVG, saying on numerous occasions that he will not be joining other Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) like St Lucia, Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica and St Kitts-Nevis in selling the passport of the country.

In July last year, during an interview with the state-run Agency For Public Information (API) Gonsalves commented on the decision of the United Kingdom government to remove Dominica and Vanuatu passport holders from its list of visa-free countries due to concerns about undesirable people gaining entry to British soil using their purchased citizenship.

Gonsalves said he had foreseen this as an unsustainable policy to earn revenue from the beginning.

“Look, those who didn’t see it, and who wanted to



Godwin Friday, Opposition and NDP party leader.

base an economic strategy on that, like the opposition in St Vincent and the Grenadines, they now get their comeuppance. Mature judgment brought to bear when I say this thing is not sustainable. You can’t base your economic development on this. You can’t finance a budget on these kinds of monies,” he said.

But as he addressed last weekend’s NDP convention, Opposition and party leader, Dr Godwin Friday told supporters, that an NDP government would implement the CBI, which would be needed to fund social and economic programmes in SVG.

“Don’t tell me we can’t do it because they’re doing it in St Kitts, they’re doing it in Dominica, and the reason they can do it is because they have a citizenship by investment programme that

pays for it.”

“So, I will tell you this... Don’t let Ralph and them ... tell you about you selling passports and stupidity. If I selling passports, I selling it for you because that money is not going in your pocket,” Friday said.

“I am going to make sure that the citizenship by investment programme is properly monitored, and it will be one that will meet the highest levels of scrutiny,” he said, adding that, most importantly, the CBI programme will be transparent.

“... no money, going in my pocket, nobody on this side, it going in anybody else pocket.

It going in the pocket of public servants. It’s going in the pockets of people who are on public assistance,” Friday said.

He said non-government

workers and people who are not on public assistance will also benefit from the NDP’s policies to reduce the cost of living.

The opposition leader said an NDP administration would introduce “VAT-free shopping days” in August before schools reopen and around Christmas time.

“That is something that is going to put more money back into people’s pockets and give them a chance to be able to make ends meet,” Friday said, adding that he would not be bothered by criticism from the government that these policies cannot work.

The Opposition Leader proposed additional policies to ease the “cost-of-living crisis” here and is urging Prime Minister Gonsalves to announce them in his independence address on Oc-

*cont’d on pg 15*

## Suriname President Santokhi names date for general election

CMC - President Chandrikapersad Santokhi says elections in the Dutch-speaking Caribbean Community (CARICOM) country will be held on May 25, 2025.

“Ahead of us lies an important year, in which we prepare for the general, free and secret elections. The elections will be held on Sunday, May 25, 2025. This will be a historic moment for Suriname, in which you, the people, will go to the polls under a renewed and fairer electoral system,” Santokhi said during his two-hour address to the National Assembly in which he outlined the policies to be pursued by his coalition government in the coming months.

Santokhi told legislators that the organisation of the elections is a national responsibility and that “preparations for this have already been started”.

The elections will be the first under a new electoral system from the district system to a national electoral system. Under the old district system, seats were distributed based on the population of each district.

Electoral officials said that by switching to national proportionality, the votes of all citizens are treated equally throughout the country, regardless of where they live and that the amendments to the Constitution were necessary to bring the Electoral Regulation into line with the ruling of the Constitutional Court, which considered certain articles of the Electoral Regulation to be in conflict with the Constitution and international treaties.

“Mr Chairman, this subject has always been sensitive, and this unjust system has been maintained because of its many advantages. Historically, all factions within the National Assembly reached agreement on national proportionality. This gives all political parties, large and small, a fairer chance to be represented in Parliament,” Santokhi told the National Assembly.

Santokhi said that political parties with national proportionality are now encouraged to develop programmes that appeal to the entire country rather than focusing on specific dis-



tricts.

He said this promotes national unity and cohesion, as political parties must appeal to the entire electorate.

Santokhi said that in the interest of integral monitoring of election activities and decision-making, a presidential monitoring team has been established.

“This monitoring offers me as president the opportunity to have a total overview of the progress of the election organization and to take action where necessary,” he added.

The new system allows for the establishment of the Independent Electoral Bureau of Suriname, which is the supervisory body for the elections and the Central Polling Station.

“We will do everything

we can to ensure that these elections are fair, free and orderly. We will invite international observers to ensure the fair conduct of our elections so that the voice of our people is fully heard,” Santokhi added.

In the 2020 elections, no party won an outright majority in the 51-member National Assembly, with Santokhi’s Progressive Reform Party (VHP) winning 20 seats, four more than the then-ruling National Democratic Party (NDP), led by Desi Bouterse.

The VHP subsequently formed a four-party coalition and on 29 June 2020, the newly elected National Assembly elected Ronnie Brunswijk of the General Liberation and Development Party (ABOP) as its new Speaker.

He became the first Maroon to assume the post and on July 15, the National Assembly elected Santokhi as the new President, with Brunswijk as the Vice President.

*cont'd from pg 14*  
tober 27.

“The cost-of-living crisis is something that we can bring relief to the people of this country,” he said as he proposed bonuses for public sector workers and public assistance recipients.

Friday said that an NDP administration

would go further and waive interest payments on student loans until after the student graduates.

“That provides a lot of relief for parents and families who are struggling to carry the loans when the children are going to school,” he said, adding that a similar policy is in operation in St Kitts and Nevis.

## Bolivian ex-leader's looming arrest warrant triggers protests

By Vanessa Buschschlüter

Supporters of former Bolivian president Evo Morales have clashed with police after a prosecutor said she would order his arrest.

Morales, who governed Bolivia from 2006 to 2019, is under investigation for alleged statutory rape and human trafficking, which he denies.

The accusations against the 64-year-old have resurfaced ahead of presidential elections next year, in which he plans to run.

The prosecutor announced she would issue an arrest warrant after Morales failed to attend a hearing in the case last week.

Tension has been high in Bolivia for months, with supporters of Morales clashing with those of the current president, Luis Arce.

Both men belong to the governing Mas party and are battling over who will be the party's candidate in the presidential election scheduled for August 2025.

Three weeks ago, the two rival groups of supporters came to blows in the city of El Alto.

The investigation into Morales has further heightened the already volatile atmosphere.

On Monday, Morales's followers erected blockades on two major roads, which police tried to lift. At least 12 people were arrested and one police officer was in-



Followers of former president Evo Morales have threatened to paralyse the country should he be arrested.

jured.

Morales supporters have said they will keep the blockade up "indefinitely" and could extend it to affect major roads across the country should he be arrested.

The allegations against Morales are not new.

In 2020, the ministry of justice filed a criminal complaint against the ex-president, accusing him of rape and human trafficking.

In the complaint, prosecutors argued that sexual encounters Morales allegedly had in 2015 with a girl who was reportedly under age at the time constituted statutory rape.

They said he had taken the girl on trips abroad, which they said amounted to human trafficking.

Morales argued the accusations were part of a

right-wing vendetta against him by the interim president who replaced him in office after his resignation in 2019 following allegations of vote-rigging.

Morales, who was living in exile at the time, was also accused of sedition and terrorism and an arrest warrant for him was issued.

However, the arrest warrant was annulled after his lawyers argued successfully that due process had not been followed.

Morales returned to Bolivia a day after Luis Arce from Morales's Mas party was sworn in as president in November 2020.

But the two erstwhile allies have since fallen out and their relations have become even more acrimonious since both announced their intentions to run as the Mas party's candidate in the

2025 presidential election.

Both politicians have groups of loyal supporters willing to take to the streets - and in some cases engage in street brawls - to show their backing for their candidate.

Followers of Morales have threatened to paralyse the country should he be arrested.

Sandra Gutiérrez, the prosecutor in the case against Morales, said on Thursday that a warrant for his arrest would be issued after he failed to appear at a hearing.

On Monday, the chief of police said he had not yet been issued with orders to detain the former president.

But the police chief stressed that, once he received the order to arrest Morales, he would carry it out.



# Ukraine denies supplying drones to Mali rebels

By **Basillioh Rukanga**

Ukraine has denied allegations that it had supplied drones to rebels fighting against the Malian army and Russia-backed mercenaries.

It comes after Paris-based *Le Monde* newspaper reported that Ukrainian drones were providing support for the Tuareg rebels “who are benefiting from discreet but decisive support from Kyiv”.

Mali’s junta-led government ended a long-running alliance with former colonial power France in 2022 in favour of Russia in a bid to tackle a years-long insurgency in the north.

But it has been unable to quell the unrest and recently suffered heavy losses, alongside its Russian allies.

Mali and its neighbours Niger and Burkina Faso, where the military is also in charge, have since accused Kyiv of supporting terrorism in the Sahel after a Ukrainian official said earlier this year that the country had offered support to the rebels.

But on Monday, Ukraine’s foreign ministry said in a statement that the country «strongly rejects the accusations that have recently been released by the international media outlets about the alleged



The Malian army has been unable to quell unrest by rebels fighting in the north.

involvement of our state in the supply of UAVs [unmanned aerial vehicles] to the rebels in Mali».

It also denied allegations by Malian and Nigerien officials that Ukraine was arming, providing information and giving “support to the terrorist coalition”.

It called for an end to “spreading of the false information that repeats the fake narratives of the aggressor state Russia’s propaganda”.

In late July, at least 84 Russia-backed fighters and 47 Malian soldiers were reportedly killed following days of clashes with Tuareg separatist rebels and fighters linked to al-Qaeda

at Tinzaouten, in northern Mali.

It was seen as the heaviest-ever African defeat for the Wagner mercenary group, which has since been renamed Corps Africa.

A spokesman for Kyiv’s military intelligence service, Andriy Yusov, then said that the rebels in Mali had “received necessary information” to successfully carry out the attack.

*Le Monde* newspaper reports that since Yusov’s statement, the Mali rebel commanders “have been forced to reluctantly acknowledge a co-operation they would have preferred to keep secret”.

The paper says that

the rebels have admitted having “links” with Kyiv, although “they were not forthcoming about the provenance of their drones”.

Mali cut diplomatic relations with Ukraine in August, in the wake of Yusov’s remarks, with a top official accusing Ukraine of violating the country’s sovereignty.

Russia invaded Ukraine in 2022 and has been waging a devastating war since then.

Facing isolation by Western countries because of the war, it has been seeking to gain influence in Africa by establishing political and security links, including in Mali.

# Sports News



## Anjo Wholesale return to winning form in Business Basketball League

Anjo Wholesale returned to winning form in the Antigua and Barbuda Basketball Association's (ABBA) Cool and Smooth Business Basketball League

on Monday evening. After suffering their first loss to unbeaten league leaders Sandals in their previous outing on Sunday, Anjo Wholesale rebounded

to claim their eighth win in nine encounters with a narrow 48-46 victory against the Antigua Power Company in the opening game of a double header at the JSC

Sports Complex. Damion Floyd converted 14 points and grabbed seven rebounds, and Jaheem James had 10 points and four steals for Anjo Wholesale.

Ezekiel Francois scored nine points and grabbed 14 rebounds, Judah Ferris sank nine points and claimed 10 rebounds, and Allister Nibbs Sr. also had nine points for the Antigua Power Company, which suffered their fourth loss in 10 games.


Eye Mobile Vision Care recorded their third win in eight outings, cruising a 66-52 victory against Lion Feast in Monday's second encounter.

Jayele Joseph produced a game-high 19 points with 12 rebounds and six steals, and Tajahron Davis had 15 points, seven rebounds, and four steals for Eye Mobile Vision Care.

Adrian Carnegie converted 15 points; Delornje Jules got 11 points; and Mali Newton scored 10 points and grabbed 13 rebounds for Lion Feast, which suffered their ninth loss in 11 games.

The business basketball league will continue with a double header at the JSC Sports Complex on Wednesday.


Eye Mobile Vision Care will take on the Sledge O'Ballers at 7 pm, and Anjo Wholesale will tackle Richie's Shooterz at 8 pm.



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## Clare Hall Secondary gets second win in Under-16 boys division

Clare Hall Secondary School (CHSS) has made it two wins in a row in the Under-16 Boys Division of the Ministry of Sports, Cool and Smooth, Joma Patrick C. Whyte Cup.

Clare Hall Secondary snatched a 1-0 victory against the Irene B. Williams Secondary in the second round of matches of the 2024 secondary



Tafari Looby

schools' football league at the Mack Pond playing field in All Saints on Monday.

Teven Henderson scored the lone goal of the match in the 21st minute for Clare Hall Secondary School. It was the second defeat in as many games for Irene B. Williams Secondary.

Ottos Comprehensive School, St. Joseph's Academy, and Sir Novel- le Richards Academy also recorded wins in the second round of matches.

Tafari Looby scored both goals with conversions in the 6th and 45th minutes as Ottos Comprehensive School launched their campaign with a 2-0 victory against All Saints Secondary at the Mack Pond playing field.

Joshua James scored all four goals to lead St. Joseph's Academy to a 4-0 drubbing of St. Mary's Secondary School in a rescheduled first-round match at the Princess Margaret School playing field.

James had conversions in the 15th, 16th, 21st, and 25th minutes.

Caseam Dennis scored a hat-trick as Sir Novel- le Richards Academy rebounded from a 3-0 defeat to Clare Hall Secondary in the opening round by romping to a 6-0 victory against Glanvilles Secondary School at the Keithley Sheppard Recreational Park in St. John's.

Dennis had conversions in the 3rd, 20th, and 25th minutes. The other goals were scored by Jamil Thomas in the 6th minute, Tequan Anthony in the 45th minute, and Ajay Barthley in the 60th minute.

However, the second-round match between defending Under-16 boys' division champions Princess



Joshua James

Margaret School and Antigua Grammar School at the PMS playing field was postponed.

The secondary schools' football league will continue with two third-round matches in the Under-20 Boys Division on Wednesday (today) at 3 pm.

The Antigua and Barbuda Institute of Continuing Education (ABICE) will face All Saints Secondary at the Keithley Sheppard Recreational Park in St. John's, and Clare Hall Secondary will clash with Jennings Secondary at the Golden Grove playing field.

## CWI president congratulates Sir Curtly on Honorary Doctorate

President of Cricket West Indies (CWI), Dr. Kishore Shallow, has extended heartfelt congratulations to cricket legend Sir Curtly Ambrose, who was conferred an Honorary Doctorate of Laws by the University of the West Indies Five Islands Campus (UWIFIC) over the weekend.

This prestigious recognition highlights Sir Curtly's immense contributions, not only to West Indies cricket but also to the broader sporting and cultural fabric of the Caribbean.

Sir Curtly Ambrose, known for his towering presence on and off the field, has inspired generations of cricketers and fans alike.

His exceptional talent, unwavering discipline, and extraordinary commitment to West Indies cricket have earned him a place among the greatest fast bowlers in the history of the game.

His illustrious career, marked by over 400 Test wickets and countless memorable performances, has cemented his legacy as a pillar of excellence and dedication.

President Shallow said, "On behalf of the entire West Indies cricket family, I extend our warmest congratulations to Sir Curtly Ambrose on this remarkable achievement.

"This Honorary Doctor-



Sir Curtly Ambrose at the 2024 UWIFIC Graduation exercise (CWI Media)

ate of Laws is a fitting tribute to his outstanding career and his broader contributions to society. Sir Curtly has been an ambassador for our region, both on the global stage of cricket and in his personal endeavours, demonstrating the best of West Indian pride, discipline, and passion.

"Sir Curtly's recognition by the UWI Five Islands Campus also underscores

the role of sports in shaping the social and cultural identity of the Caribbean.

"His journey from a young Antiguan cricketer to a world-renowned sports icon mirrors the region's commitment to nurturing excellence and pushing boundaries."

President Shallow concluded, "Sir Curtly Ambrose continues to be an inspiration not only to aspir-

ing cricketers but to all of us across the Caribbean.

"We celebrate this well-deserved honour and remain forever grateful for his indelible contributions to West Indies cricket and our region's heritage."

CWI joins the entire Caribbean in celebrating Sir Curtly's achievement and looks forward to his continued influence and mentorship in the sporting world.

## Sri Lanka beat West Indies to level T20 series

DAMBULLA, Sri Lanka (AP) — Dunith Wellalage led the way with three wickets in his debut match as Sri Lanka beat West Indies by 73 runs in the second Twenty20 match on Tuesday to level the three-match series 1-1.

Sri Lanka's captain Charith Asalanka won the toss and elected to bat first and his team scored 162 for five at the Rangiri Dambulla Stadium.

In reply, the West Indies were bowled out for 89 in the 17th over, handing the hosts their largest win by runs against the West Indies.

Pathum Nissanka made 54 runs off 49 deliveries for Sri Lanka, including a six and nine boundaries. Kusal Mendis and Kusal Perera had useful knocks of 26 and 24, respectively.

Fast bowler Romario Shepherd took two for 23 for the West Indies.

In reply, West Indies lost their way early, unable



Sri Lanka's Dunith Wellalage, center, is congratulated by his team-mates after capturing a wicket against the West Indies in the second T20 International at the Rangiri Dambulla Stadium in Dambulla, Sri Lanka, on Tuesday, October 15, 2024. (AP)

to score freely and falling to pressure on a pitch that helped spin bowling.

Wellalage had Brandon King, who top scored

in the first match, stumped by Kusal Mendis for five and had both Andre Fletcher (4) and Roston Chase (4) caught by Kamindu Mendis

to finish with three wickets for nine runs in his four overs.

Spinners Maheesh Theekshana, Asalanka, and Wanindu Hasaranga also took two wickets each.

The West Indies lost their first wicket at 12 and could not recover from losing seven for 40.

Brief resistance from captain Rovman Powell (20) and Alzarri Joseph (16) was to no avail.

The third and series-deciding match will be played at the same venue on Thursday.

### cont'd from pg 22

came out swinging as Joseph opened the innings after a gap of two games and targeted the leg side with some big hits.

Joseph hit six fours and two sixes to blow the English attack away.

At the other end, Matthews attacked too, hitting seven fours and a six, as the duo scored a tournament-high 67 runs in the power play.

In all, they put on 102 runs off 74 balls for the first wicket. Sciver-Brunt got the breakthrough in the 13th over, while Sarah

Glenn dismissed Matthews five balls later. Shemaine Campbell (5) was also run out to give England hope.

But Deandra Dottin continued the momentum with two fours and two sixes – scoring 27 off 19 balls – to help West Indies across the finish line with plenty to spare.

The West Indies will take on New Zealand in the second semifinal in Sharjah on Friday, while favourites Australia and South Africa will clash in the first semifinal on Thursday.

## Windies advance to Women's T20 World Cup semifinals

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — Qiana Joseph hit 52 runs off 38 balls as she led a spectacular West Indies chase to knock England out of the Women's T20 World Cup on Tuesday.

Joseph's half century, propped up by skipper Hayley Matthews' 50 off 38 balls, helped West Indies win by six wickets in the final league game of the tournament.

The 2016 champions finished with 142 for four in 18 overs in reply to England's 141 for seven, winning with 12 deliveries to spare and advancing to the semi-finals as winners of Group B.

The win was sufficient for West Indies to join South Africa in the knockouts. The Proteas' qualification was confirmed after the first innings ended, leaving England to defend the total for a place in the semifinals.

It is the first time since 2010 that England has failed to make the semi-finals. Australia and New Zealand already progressed from Group A, and will take on South Africa and West Indies in the semifinals, respectively.



The West Indies players celebrate after beating England in the last Group B match at the ICC Women's T20 World Cup in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, on Tuesday, October 15, 2024. (Getty Images)

Earlier, West Indies won the toss and opted to bowl in a must-win game for both sides. Coming into the fixture, England had history and form on their side — they hadn't lost to their opponent in 14 matches, and had won three successive games in Group B.

England didn't make the best of starts though as in-form Danielle Wyatt-Hodge was out caught for 16, while Maia Bouchier was dismissed for 14. Alice Capsey

was also run out for one, leaving England at 34 for three in 6.1 overs.

However, Nat Sciver-Brunt led the recovery with 57 not out off 50 balls, and put on 46 off 36 balls with skipper Heather Knight.

Knight sustained a calf injury during the innings and retired hurt for 21 off 13 balls. It took away momentum from England, with the West Indies making a comeback through leg break

bowler Afy Fletcher.

She picked up three for 21 in four overs, and squeezed runs in the middle part of the English innings, as Sciver-Brunt looked for more support.

England went from 94 for three to 135 for seven in the space of 30 deliveries, but still managed to put a fighting total on the board by scoring 31 runs in the final three overs.

But the West Indies

*cont'd on pg 21*