

# FOOD PRODUCTION TO TAKE CENTRE STAGE AT SYMPOSIUM

*Story on Page 2*



The second annual Antigua and Barbuda Art Week got off with a bang. *Story on page 3.*



# Local News



## Antigua and Barbuda's high food import bill continues to be a concern

The government is to convene an agricultural symposium early in the next year to address ways to boost local food production.

The announcement comes from Prime Minister Gaston Browne who noted that in recent times it has been observed that the country's food import bill has jumped sharply.

PM Browne was speaking at a town-hall meeting held in Bolans last night organized by the ABLP caretaker for St. Mary's South, Senator Dwayne George.

He said the emphasis of the symposium will be to find ways to bring the farming community together with local investors to raise the level of production throughout the country.

"Having a lot of small farmers who are doing subsistent farming clearly will not satisfy the demands. So we will be hosting an agricultural symposium



Prime Minister Gaston Browne

shortly and we should be bringing all the money-people together with the existing farmers to see how we can get them to scale up their production so that we can grow more nutritious local food while at the same time reduce imports," he announced.

Additionally, the prime minister noted that criticisms that the govern-

ment is not producing enough food is misplaced as it is not the government that produces food, but small farmers who produce food," he stated.

"If we don't have more private people who see farming as a viable venture and exploit opportunities to grow food and to sell food, then clearly we are going to have a problem. Therefore, we are going the extra mile to bring all the stakeholders together in January next year and those in this community, who are interested, are invited to attend," he added.

PM Browne is suggesting that farmers should consider combining resources in order to achieve economies of scale and have larger plots from which to produce food.

According to the prime minister Antigua and Barbuda is one of the most 'food insecure' countries in the world and this has to change.

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## Antigua and Barbuda Art Week 2024 starts with a bang!

The second annual Antigua and Barbuda Art Week got off with a bang as artists, artisans, members of the public and officials of the Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority in collaboration with the Department of Culture gathered at Bay Gardens in Hodges Bay for the start of the 10-day event.

Scores of people gathered to see the art on display and to tour the shops and displays at Bay Gardens to hear remarks from representatives from the creative community as well as from



the ABTA and the Department of Culture.

Celebrated Artist, Heather Doram in her remarks noted that Art Week reminds all in the commu-



nity of the transformative power of creativity as it bridges divides, tells stories and connects everyone to a shared humanity.

“Art is essential for our community. It reflects who we are, celebrates our culture and preserves our heritage. It also challenges us to think, feel and grow. Beyond its beauty, art fosters unity and encourages us to see the world through new lenses,” she remarked.

Director of Culture,



Khan Cordice spoke of the vital role art plays in shaping the cultural and nation-

*cont'd on pg 4*





# Local News

*cont'd from pg 3*

al identity of Antigua and Barbuda through the 2024 Art Week under the theme *Symphony of Colours*.

“Art, in all its forms, is not just a reflection of who we are, but a powerful tool that shapes how we see the world around us.

“From the vibrant colors of our local paintings to the rhythms of our music, art tells the story of our history, our heritage, and our unique place in the Caribbean,” he observed.

CEO of the ABTA, Colin C. James said Art Week is part of the tourism offerings of Antigua and Barbuda and it helps to broaden the experiences of visitors to the country. He noted that the ABTA is committed to making the event an annual feature of the country’s tourism attractions.

Antigua and Barbuda Art Week 2024: ‘*Culture in Colour*’ runs from November 27 – December 3, 2024.

ABTA said this year’s Art Week is being hosted with support from its partners, promises to be an immersive experience, where you can explore vibrant art exhibits and installations, meet with talented artists, enjoy cul-



tural performances, panel discussions, art tours, and live demonstrations. You’ll have the opportunity to discover our music, dance, fashion, and artisan products at inspiring venues and beach-side settings.

Whether it’s getting creative with our very elevated canvas-and-cocktail experience or spending a relaxed weekend art hopping in beautiful Barbuda, there is something for everyone.

Antigua and Barbuda Art Week is truly a celebration of the incredibly talented emerging and established artists and is designed to attract art-lovers and cultural enthusiasts residing in the destination and visiting the nation’s shores.





## Japan to name new ambassador to Antigua and Barbuda

Japan will be naming a new Ambassador to Antigua and Barbuda shortly as the currently ambassador, MATSUBARA Yutaka, will end his tour of duty on December 10, 2024.

The ambassador paid a farewell visit to St. John's on Tuesday to have engagements with Foreign Affairs Minister, E.P Chet Greene and Permanent Secretary in the Ministry, Ambassador Clarence Pilgrim.

Minister Greene thanked the ambassador and the Japanese government for the long history of assistance to Antigua and Barbuda since diplomatic relations were established

right after Independence.

The foreign minister expressed special appreciation to the Japanese government on the donation of equipment that will assist Antigua and Barbuda fight the scourge of the annual sargassum seaweed invasion.

"The seaweed is a major problem for us as we here in the Caribbean invite people to visit our countries and when the seaweeds arrive from across the Atlantic they make the beaches unusable and create quite a stench as they begin to rot," he explained.

The ambassador revealed that the next fund-

ing cycle for the Japanese government starts in April next year and he urged the minister to ensure that Antigua and Barbuda gets in its requests for assistance for both the 2025 and 2026 cycles.

He noted too that a Japanese professor has been teaching a short course at the University of the West Indies FIC.

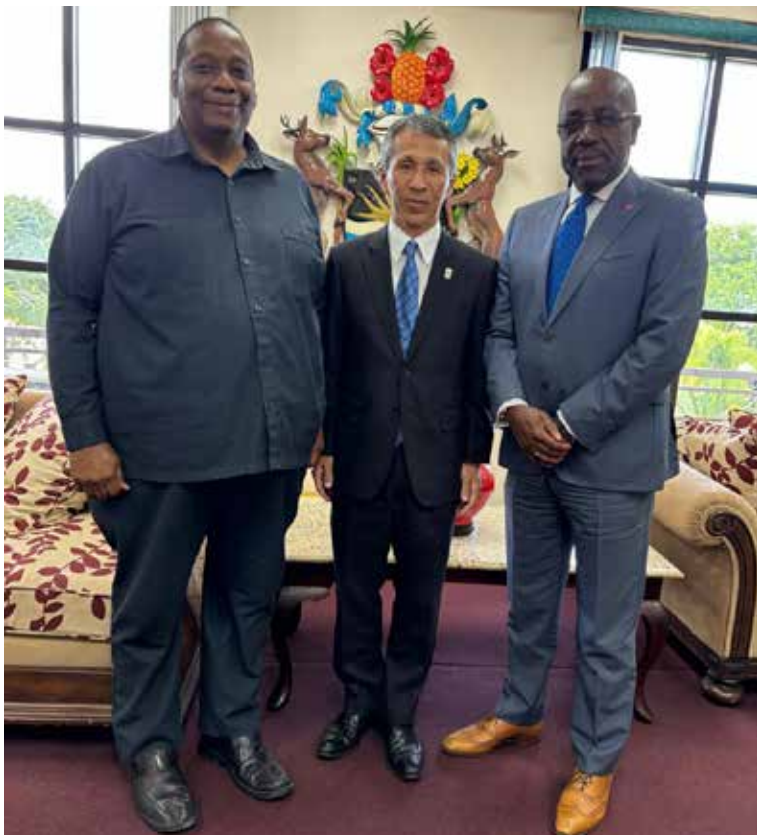
At this, Minister Greene thanked him again for the assistance noting that the government has great plans for the university to help with the human resource development of the country and he welcomed the spe-



Outgoing Japanese Ambassador Matsubara Yutaka (left) with FA Minister E. P. Chet Greene (right)

cialized training in the blue economy.

He expressed the hope that the incoming ambassador, when named, will continue the good works started by Ambassador Matsubara.



Japanese outgoing Ambassador Matsubara Yotaka (centre) flanked by Ambassador Clarence Pilgrim (Left) and FA Minister E.P Chet Greene (right)

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## Governor General receives special accolades in India

Governor-General of Antigua and Barbuda, Sir Rodney Williams, has been honoured with two distinguished awards during his recent visit to India.

At the 25th International Conference of Chief Justices, Heads of States, and Heads of Governments, held in Lucknow from November 20 to 24, 2024, Sir Rodney received the Mahatma Gandhi Award for his unwavering support for World Unity and World Peace.

Additionally, he was recognized for his significant contributions to Education and Humanitarianism.

As a Guest of Honour at the conference, Sir Rodney chaired several sessions and shared his insights on critical global issues, including Sustainable Development, Climate Action, Financing, and the challenges facing today's youth and their fu-



ture development.

The conference convened 156 delegates from 56 countries, providing a platform to exchange ideas aimed at enhancing the social, legal, technological, physical, and moral environment for over 2.5 billion children and future generations.

In his remarks, Sir Rodney emphasized the im-

portance of strengthening ties between India and the Caribbean, particularly in technology and education. He noted that Prime Minister Gaston Browne of Antigua and Barbuda was concurrently discussing these initiatives at the 2nd India-CARICOM Summit in Guyana.

Expressing his gratitude, Sir Rodney stated, "I

am humbled by this accolade, which reflects the collective efforts of many professionals dedicated to the vision initiated by the late Dr. Jagdish Gandhi and his widow Mrs. Bharti Gandhi some twenty-five years ago."

The awards were presented by Mrs. Gandhi at a special ceremony during the Conference.



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# Local News



## Police officer defendant 'pulled over the coals'

The police who is facing a charge of shooting with intent has received a serious reprimand for repeatedly finding ways to delay the trial.

Sgt. Karim Warner is charged with discharging his service firearm at a moving

vehicle whose occupants he had a dispute over payment for car rental.

The case surrounds an incident where Sgt. Warner reportedly rented a vehicle to a Willikies couple. However, when the vehicle was returned both parties could not

agree on the amount owed.

In the heat of the dispute, the couple went back into the vehicle and started to drive off. It was at that time that Warner allegedly took his police-issued firearm and discharged multiple shots at the vehicle. No one was hurt,

but Warner nonetheless has been charged with multiple offences, including the unlawful discharge of a firearm.

He has since been suspended and he had to remit his service revolver as part of his bail condition.

Following postponement, the matter was due to resume on Tuesday, however, Warner got word to the matter that he had a delay and wanted the start time delayed by an hour when that was granted and the time had elapsed, his attorney appeared before the court to present a sick certificate from a doctor indicating that Warner was granted a 10-day sick leave...apparently for having COVID-19-like symptoms.

Senior Magistrate Ngaio Emanuel was clearly not pleased as she issued a serious reprimand of Warner's behavior noting that he had repeatedly found ways to delay the case. From having to travel and several other reasons that have forced delays after delays, Warner appeared to be finding ways to exploit the system.

Magistrate Emanuel noted that Warner was wasting the court's time, the prosecutor's and the witnesses' time in the process and that 'enough was enough'.

Warner has been urged to be in court at the conclusion of the sick-leave as too much time has been wasted already on the matter.



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- Research and recommend innovative, and where possible, automated approaches for system administration tasks.

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- Good written and oral skills
- Two (2) years or more experience in helpdesk support
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**The deadline for receipt of applications is Wednesday 4th December 2024  
Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted**



## Police probe break-in at Ministry of Agriculture building

Police are carrying out investigations into an alleged break-in at the Ministry of Agriculture Building on Queen Elizabeth Highway.

Around 3:30 am on Tuesday, November 26, the police responded to a report at the said location and found several air conditioning units laying outside on the ground. A vehicle was

also found on the premises and was seized by the police. Several of the units were recovered and one man is currently assisting the police with their investigation.

The police are further appealing to anyone with information surrounding this incident to contact the Criminal Investigations Department at 462-3913.



boxes strewn across the lawn at the Ministry of Agriculture

### NATURALISATION NOTICE

Date: 21st November, 2024

Notice is hereby given that Arelis Castro Sepulveda of Ottos, St. John's, Antigua is applying to the Minister of Naturalisation and that any person who knows any reason why naturalisation should not be granted should send a written and signed statement with the facts to the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs.

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# Letter to the Editor



## The ABLP's leadership highlights UPP's irrelevance

As Antigua and Barbuda continue to make strides in governance and development under the Antigua and Barbuda Labour Party (ABLP), the ongoing dysfunction and lack of vision within the United Progressive Party (UPP) have become glaringly evident. While some attempt to attribute the UPP's struggles to the ABLP, it is clear that the ruling party cannot and should not be blamed for the opposition's internal failings. Here's why.

The narrative that ABLP bears any responsibility for UPP's current state is an absurd attempt to deflect attention from the latter's failures. ABLP has remained focused on implementing policies that drive economic growth, improve infrastructure, and elevate Antigua and Barbuda on the global stage. UPP's disorganization and inability to present a cohesive political strategy are entirely their own doing.

Political competition thrives when all parties rise to the occasion. However, UPP has repeatedly shown that it lacks the capacity to challenge ABLP's leadership meaningfully. Instead of blaming external factors, UPP should engage in self-reflection and work to address its own deficiencies.

Democracy requires a robust opposition, yet UPP consistently fails to meet this standard. The party's absence of clear leadership and political vision is a disservice to the people of Antigua and Barbuda. Instead of offering viable alternatives or constructive criticism, UPP's approach has been one of reactionary politics devoid of innovation or foresight.

In contrast, ABLP has demon-



strated strong leadership under Prime Minister Gaston Browne. From tackling economic challenges to spearheading transformative projects, ABLP's proactive governance highlights UPP's inability to contribute to meaningful political discourse. An opposition that cannot articulate a vision for the future does little to advance the democratic process.

The stagnation of UPP is not just a political issue; it poses a threat to national progress. A failing political party saps energy from the political ecosystem, creating distractions instead of contributing to growth. UPP's inefficacy diverts attention from critical discussions and slows the momentum of national development.

The ABLP, despite these distractions, has continued to drive forward its agenda, focusing on economic resilience, social welfare, and infrastructure development. The party's ability to deliver results even in the face of weak opposition underscores its commitment to the people. UPP's

ineffectiveness only underscores the necessity of strong and consistent leadership, which ABLP has consistently provided.

While political diversity is essential to democracy, the UPP's failures render it unfit for purpose. The party brings no value to the people of Antigua and Barbuda, offering neither innovative ideas nor effective opposition to the ABLP's governance. To suggest otherwise is to ignore the UPP's track record of disorganization, lackluster performance, and absence of tangible contributions.

This critique does not advocate for a one-party state but emphasizes the importance of a functional opposition. UPP's persistent shortcomings leave the electorate with little choice but to place their trust in the ABLP—a party that has consistently delivered on its promises and prioritized the nation's development.

As Antigua and Barbuda forge ahead, the nation needs steadfast leadership that can navigate challenges and seize opportunities. The ABLP has proven itself to be a reliable steward, guiding the country with a clear vision and strong governance and is clearly the choice for those who prioritize stability, growth, and progress. There is no denying the UPP's lack of leadership and purpose only serves as a hindrance to the democratic process and national progress.

The people of Antigua and Barbuda deserve an opposition party that can rise to the occasion and contribute meaningfully to the national discourse and development. To the extent that we agree on the foregoing, the UPP is simply not fit for purpose.

*E. P. Chet Greene*



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# Drake takes legal action over Kendrick Lamar's Not Like Us

By Mark Savage

Drake has launched legal action against Universal Music accusing the label of artificially boosting streams of Kendrick Lamar's diss track against him, Not Like Us.

In papers filed in New York, Drake's company, Frozen Moments LLC, accused Universal and the streaming giant Spotify of engaging in an illegal "scheme" involving bots, payola and other methods to promote Lamar's song.

Universal Music "did not rely on chance," Drake's lawyers alleged. "It instead launched a campaign to manipulate and saturate the streaming services and airwaves."

A spokesperson for Universal called the claims "offensive and untrue", adding that "fans choose the music they want to hear".

Spotify and Lamar have yet to respond.

The petition is not a full lawsuit but a so-called "pre-action petition", under which Drake's lawyers can ask the court to order Universal and Spotify to preserve all relevant documents and information, ahead of future legal action.

The BBC understands the action is principally aimed at Universal, with Spotify named in the belief



A rap beef between Drake (pictured) and Kendrick Lamar kicked off earlier this year.

it may have information that would be relevant to a lawsuit.

Not Like Us was widely seen as the decisive blow in an escalating rap beef between Drake and Lamar earlier this year.

Drake's court filing highlights the song's runaway success - 96 million streams in seven days, number one in the US charts, and a top 10 radio hit - but suggests those achievements were artificially inflated.

His lawyers claim that Universal "conspired with and paid currently unknown parties" to "artificially" boost the prominence of Not Like Us.

They allege that the label cut its royalty rates for

the song by 30%, in exchange for Spotify recommending it to users.

The filing also cites supposed claims from a "whistleblower" on a podcast, who said they were paid \$2,500 to set up software "bots" that would stream the song on repeat, turning it into "a crazy hit".

The effort spread to other streaming services, Drake's lawyers allege, referencing online reports that fans who asked Apple's voice assistant to play Drake's album *Certified Loverboy* were instead delivered Not Like Us.

The legal filing is a surprising coda to the musicians' feud, but it also represents a rift between Drake and Universal - the

label that has represented him for his entire career.

In court documents, the star's lawyers say he tried to address these allegations in private but that the label has "no interest in taking responsibility for its misconduct."

Furthermore, they claim Universal made "an apparent effort to conceal its schemes", which included firing staff "perceived as having loyalty to Drake".

"Streaming is a zero-sum game," they argue. "Every time a song breaks through, it means another artist does not." As a result, they claim, Drake suffered "economic harm" at Lamar's expense.

*cont'd on pg 13*



*cont'd from pg 12*

A spokesperson for Universal rejected the claims.

"The suggestion that UMG would do anything to undermine any of its artists is offensive and untrue," they said in a statement.

"We employ the highest ethical practices in our marketing and promotional campaigns. No amount of contrived and absurd legal arguments in this pre-action submission can mask the fact that fans choose the music they want to hear."

The legal filing came days after Lamar released a surprise album, GNX, which is widely seen as a follow-up to Not Like Us.

His diss track was recently nominated for four



Kendrick Lamar released a surprise new album called GNX last week.

Grammy awards, including song of the year, and he has been booked to play next year's Super Bowl

halftime show.

However, he lags behind Drake in terms of popularity. On Spoti-

fy, the rapper is the 23rd most-streamed artist in the world, while Drake places 13th.



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## Black Friday shoppers warned to be wary of deals

By Charlotte Edwards

Black Friday shoppers should be wary of deals to avoid being ripped off, retail experts have warned.

Nine out of 10 Black Friday offers are cheaper or the same price at other times of the year, according to research by consumer group Which?.

While Sarah Johnson, director of merchandise consultancy Flourish Retail, told the BBC some brands may inflate prices ahead of sales to make discounts look bigger.

Black Friday originally marked the day after Thanksgiving in the US but in recent years the sales have extended into the weeks before and after, with Cyber Monday driving millions in online sales.

Shoppers spent an estimated £13.3bn during the Black Friday sales in 2023, according to Which?.

Ms Johnson said: "It used to be that you had to establish a price for 28 days before it could be changed, but this is no longer the case.

"As a result, many brands inflate

prices in the lead-up to Black Friday, allowing them to advertise 'big discounts' that, in reality, aren't genuine."

Which? researchers looked at 227 products in last year's Black Friday fortnight between 20 November and 1 December.

The deals analysed were from eight of the biggest home and tech retailers in the UK and some of the products on offer were the same price or cheaper at different times in the year.

In what it called "one of the worst examples", Which? found a hairdryer priced at £18.99 in a Boots Black Friday deal, claiming to be reduced from £49.99.

However, the product had never been £49.99 at Boots in the preceding 12 months.

Which? said a spokesperson for Boots told it its researchers had "reviewed a very small number of our Black Friday deals from last year and in all cases, the items were at a lower price whilst on promotion or when price

matched against competitors." The BBC has contacted Boots for a comment.

Which? also highlighted a previous John Lewis Black Friday deal which featured a smartwatch discounted to £294 with a saving of £90. But Which? found at no point in the previous 12 months had it been sold at £384.

Which? said a John Lewis spokesperson told it: "The recent return of our reimagined Never Knowingly Under-sold brand promise - which matches prices with 25 leading retailers - gives customers absolute confidence that they are getting fantastic value."

The BBC has contacted John Lewis for comment.

Harry Rose, editor of Which? Magazine said: "We want retailers to drop the sneaky pricing tactics so consumers are not misled about the deals on offer."

He advised shoppers to compare prices at multiple retailers and use websites which check the product's price history. "That way you'll know a good deal when you see one," he said.



## SVG: Gonsalves retained as ULP leader, party to field new candidates

CMC - Prime Minister Dr Ralph Gonsalves has been re-elected leader of the ruling Unity Labour Party (ULP) that says it will field new candidates in at least four of the 15 constituencies in the next general elections, widely expected within the next year, ahead of the February 2026 constitutional deadline.

Gonsalves told the party's 26th annual convention that two legislators have indicated their intention to bow out of politics, while a candidate, who has lost five times, also wants to quit.

He said that the North Windward representative and Deputy Prime Minister, Montgomery Daniel, who is also the ULP deputy leader and South Windward representative, Frederick Stephenson, are retiring from politics.

ULP's chairman, Edwin Snagg, who has failed since 2001 to win the Southern Grenadines, does not want to make another attempt.

The party will likely field Senator Keisal Peters in West Kingstown, which the main opposition New Democratic Party (NDP) has held since 2010.

"We have to have candidates selection properly. There are some persons who run last time may not run next time. Gommery, for instance, has already said he is retiring, and we have to thank him for his tremendous service," Gonsalves said, referring to the North Windward MP.

"Montgomery has taken North Windward safe thus far and grace will lead us home," Gonsalves said, hinting that Grace Walters, who the ULP selected in March 2023, will be its North Windward candidate.

"Well, Cummings in West Kingstown ain't have nothing to say against



Prime Minister Ralph Gonsalves. (File photo)

Keisal, other than try to run she down personally," he said referring to Peters, who made history as the country's first female minister of foreign affairs when she was appointed to the post in August 2022, after two years as the junior minister.

However, in July 2024, she was relieved of the foreign ministry portfolio and reassigned to national mobilisation.

"Well, they began by saying, remember they start to say she using skin bleach, Gonsalves said, adding "what a beautiful black woman nuh. She look like she does use bleach? And Cummings say she's a fat lady. Well, Cummings, when you get licks, you will say the fat lady sings".

On September 28, Cummings told an NDP campaign event that "a fat lady" questions constituents seeking help to repair their damaged homes about their political allegiance.

He did not identify the "fat lady" but last month Gonsalves said that the opposition MP was referring to Peters.

"This is a woman who comes from the bowels of the working class, the bowels of the working class. Her father used to work at the port," Gonsalves told the convention, adding that Peters had not "just come by with labour so".

He spoke of the development of Peters under successive ULP administrations, adding that she also benefited from a university education under the ULP.

"She has done magnificently, and she having Cummings going crazier than ever."

In 2010, on his second attempt to win West Kingstown, Cummings defeated the ULP's Michelle Fife and held on to the seat amidst challenges by Deborah Charles in 2015 and 2020.

Meanwhile, Gonsalves said that the ULP was considering its alternatives in South Windward, as Stephenson, who is into his third five-year term as MP there has said he is not running anymore.

"And we have one or two persons in mind to take over from Snaggy in the Southern Grenadines, because Snaggy says he wants to take a rest from that," Gonsalves said.

"And I'm warning all of those candidates, NDP candidates in Kingstown. We coming at every single one of you. We coming at Leacock. We coming at Cummings, and we coming at [Fitz] Bramble," he said.

The NDP has held East Kingstown since 1984 and Central and West Kingstown since 2010.

Gonsalves said that the performance of the ULP's Carlos Williams, after the passage of Hurricane Beryl on July 1 "will keep (Opposition Leader Dr. Godwin) Friday more at home".

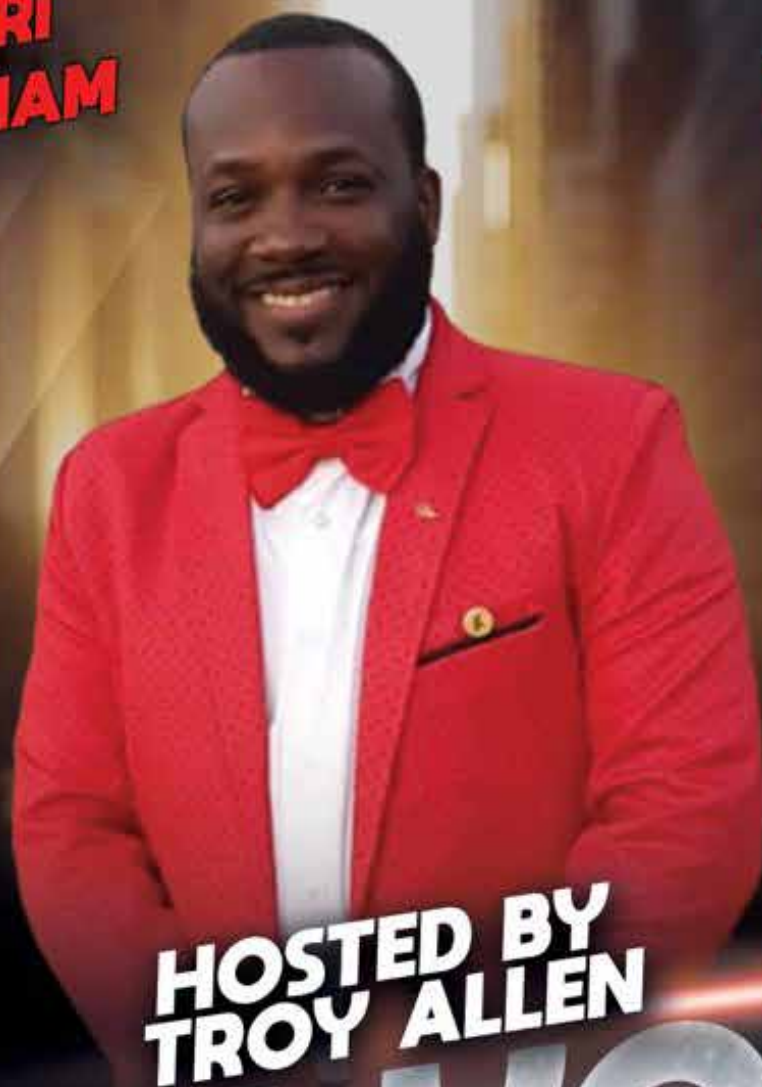
Williams failed in his bid in 2020 to unseat the NDP leader in the North Grenadines, which he has been representing since 2001.

"We going to keep the nine that we have, and we're going to add more to those nine come election 2025," Gonsalves said.





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## Suriname: Financial payments from energy royalties to citizens

CMC - President Chandrikapersad “Chan” Santokhi says every Surinamese national will receive a share in royalties of US\$750 with an interest of seven percent annually from the energy sector.

“Today, I announce the financial instrument, under the name Royalties for Everyone (RVI), which offers the people of Suriname a share in future oil royalties.

“The RVI instrument means that every Surinamese, who lives in our country, receives a savings note, worth US\$750, with an annual interest of seven percent. The money will be paid out in the future, from the royalty income, of Block 58.”

Santokhi said the payment would only be made when the oil from Block 58 has been sold and Suriname has received the royalties.

“The RVI is listed in US dollars so that it is stable in value. The payment will be made in Surinamese dollars. For people over 60 years old and people with disabilities, options are being developed to receive these before 2028.

“We must now translate that positive impact into opportunities for our own people. There are opportunities for our entrepreneurs, our youth to shape the future of Suriname with the right education and training,”



President Santokhi shares a light moment with Vice President Ronnie Brunswijk and the visiting Prime Minister of Curaçao, Gilmar Pisas. Photo CMC

Santokhi said as he spoke of the positive impact of an agreement reached with TotalEnergies, the global integrated energy company that produces and markets oil and biofuels, natural gas and green gases, renewables and electricity.

In October, TotalEnergies chairman and chief executive officer, Patrick Pouyanné, held talks with President Santokhi and Anand Jagesar, the chief executive officer of the state-owned Staatsolie Maatschappij Suriname NV, Suriname’s National Oil Company.

They later announced the Final Investment Decision (FID) for the “GranMorgu” development located on offshore Block 58.

According to a statement posted on the website

of TotalEnergies, the GranMorgu project will develop the Sapakara and Krabdagu oil discoveries, on which a successful exploration and appraisal campaign was completed in 2023.

It said the fields are located 150 km off the coast of Suriname and hold recoverable reserves estimated at over 750 million barrels.

The project includes a 220,000 barrels of oil per day Floating Production Storage and Offloading (FPSO) unit, that replicates a proven and efficient design.

Total investment is estimated at around US\$10.5 billion and first oil is expected in 2028.

The GranMorgu FPSO is designed to accommodate future tie-back opportunities that would extend its

production plateau.

TotalEnergies is the operator of Block 58 with a 50 per cent interest, alongside APA Corporation (50 per cent).

Staatsolie has announced its intent to exercise its option to enter the development project with up to 20 percent interest. Partners agreed that Staatsolie will contribute to the project from FID and will finalise its interest before June 2025.

The Suriname Constitution stipulates that “natural resources are the property of the nation and will be used to promote economic, social and cultural development”.

It also states that “the State strives for a fair distribution of the national income, aimed at a fair distribution of welfare and prosperity among all levels of the population”.

Speaking at a luncheon for the media, Santokhi, who was accompanied by the visiting Prime Minister of Curacao, Gilmar Pisas, who was a special guest of the country celebrating its 49th anniversary of independence, said “after the announcement of the first investment decision for block 58, ‘I have received many requests to better implement those requirements of the

*cont’d on pg 18*



## Israel-Hezbollah ceasefire designed to be permanent, says Biden

A ceasefire has been agreed to end 13 months of fighting between Israel and Hezbollah in Lebanon, US President Joe Biden has announced.

“Effective at 04:00 tomorrow local time (02:00 GMT on Wednesday), the fighting across the Lebanese-Israeli border will end,” Biden said, adding that it aimed to be a “permanent cessation of hostilities”.

Israel’s Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said Israel will not hesitate to strike if Hezbollah breaks any part of the agreed deal.

There has been no response from the Iran-backed armed group which had been trading fire with Israel since October 2023. Fighting escalated in late September when Israel in-



Israel has pummelled Lebanon in near-daily strikes since September.

tensified bombardments and launched a limited ground invasion.

It has been Lebanon’s deadliest conflict in decades, killing more than 3,823 people say local officials.

Under the deal an-

nounced on Tuesday and brokered by the US, there will be a 60-day period during which Israel will gradually withdraw its troops from Lebanon’s south as Lebanese government forces regain control of an area currently held by

Hezbollah.

It is expected that Hezbollah fighters and weapons will be removed from the area south of the Litani River, a boundary established at the end of the last Israel-Hezbollah war in 2006.

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constitution.’

“And some groups, especially retirees, have informed me that they, unlike younger generations, will not benefit from the positive effects of oil in the country.

“With these requests in mind, I have commissioned financial experts to propose a financial instrument that offers the people of Suriname a share in our natural resources.

“Today I can announce the creation of a financial instrument that offers the people of Suriname a share in future oil royalties. In this way, our people become de facto owners of Suriname’s natural assets.

“Consider this share as a form of

reward for a number of years of necessary efforts during the macroeconomic and financial stabilization,” Santokhi added.

The government said the “Royalties for Everyone” has three objectives, namely that everyone has a share in the development of the oil and gas sector, just as other countries, such as Alaska, have done.

It said citizens are rewarded for the years of necessary efforts during the macroeconomic and financial stabilization and thirdly that the instrument is a powerful incentive to achieve important and cross-party policy goals such as reducing the informal economy, by everyone freely identifying themselves with the tax authorities,

and everyone who does not yet have one, getting a bank account.

Santokhi said that several experts have been working for several months, under the coordination of the ministry of finance and planning, to develop this instrument, with the timeline that it will be implemented in the first half of 2025.

“I expressly inform you that the RVI will be paid from future royalties to be received by the State of Suriname.

“The State will not be burdened with a loan and future oil will not be pledged. The only thing that will happen is that part of the future royalty revenues will be allocated to the population,” Santokhi added.



*cont'd from pg 18*

"This announcement will create the conditions to restore lasting calm and allow residents in both countries to return safely to their homes," said a joint statement from the US and France - which will be involved in monitoring the implementation of the deal.

Israel has claimed the right to respond with military action if Hezbollah breaches the ceasefire. President Biden has echoed this saying Israel "retains the right to self defence consistent with international law".

"If Hezbollah violates the agreement and tries to arm itself, we will attack. If it tries to rebuild terrorist infrastructure near the border, we will attack," Netanyahu said.

Netanyahu also said ending the fighting against Hezbollah in Lebanon, Israel's northern neighbour, would allow the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) to focus on "the Iranian threat".

Hezbollah in Lebanon had long been seen as Iran's first line of defence. But with much of the group's missile arsenal now destroyed, the military balance between Iran and Israel appears to have tilted in Israel's favour.

Israel and Hezbollah had long been enemies but the past 13 months of fighting were triggered by the war in the Gaza Strip.

Hezbollah started firing rockets into Israel a day after its Gaza ally Hamas carried out a wide-ranging attack on southern Israel on 7 October 2023, which killed about 1,200 people.

Netanyahu said ending the fighting in Lebanon would also isolate and increase pressure on Hamas.

"From day two of the war, Hamas was counting on Hezbollah to fight by its side. With Hezbollah out of the picture, Hamas is left on its own," Netanyahu said.

He said ending fighting in Lebanon would also give the IDF space to resupply weapons, munitions and

troops.

Israeli commentators had noted that the country's military was not ready nor equipped to fight two wars on two fronts over an extended period of time.

Ending the conflict in Lebanon thus could also free up more Israeli forces to serve in Gaza, a conflict which shows no sign of ending.

At the White House on Tuesday, Biden was asked about a ceasefire in Gaza and said his government was working with other negotiators Turkey, Egypt and Qatar to "make another push" on a deal.

The US, Israel's key backer, had led the charge with France in negotiating the deal in Lebanon.

France, which administered Lebanon for more than 20 years in the last century, is also a long-term ally and is expected to be involved through the monitoring of the truce. Biden confirmed that no US troops would be deployed to managing the ceasefire.

The war has been devastating for Lebanon, where, in addition to the 3,823 people killed and 15,859 injured, one million residents have been displaced in areas where Hezbollah holds sway.

Lebanon's Prime Minister Najib Mikati welcomed the ceasefire deal, calling it a "fundamental step towards restoring calm and stability" in the country and allowing citizens to return home.

But he also demanded that Israel "fully comply" with the deal, withdraw from the sites it currently occupies and to respect the UN resolution previously set at the end of the last Hezbollah-Israel war in 2006.

Israel went on the offensive against Hezbollah - which is proscribed as a terrorist organisation by Israel and many Western countries - after almost a year of cross-border fighting sparked by the war in Gaza.

It has said it wants to ensure the

safe return of about 60,000 residents of northern Israeli areas displaced by rocket attacks, which Hezbollah launched in support of Palestinians.

Hezbollah attacks on Israel and the occupied Golan Heights have killed at least 75 people, more than half of them civilians, while more than 50 soldiers have been killed in combat in southern Lebanon, according to Israeli authorities.

The World Bank estimates \$8.5bn (£6.8bn) in economic losses and damage in Lebanon. Recovery will take time, and it is unknown how this will be funded.

Hezbollah, too, has been devastated. Many of its leaders have been killed, including long-time chief Hassan Nasrallah, in an IDF strike on Beirut on 27 September. A week later Israel also killed his presumed successor, Hashem Safieddine, in another strike.

With much of its infrastructure also damaged, how Hezbollah will look after the war remains unclear. The group has been severely weakened but it has not been destroyed.

In Lebanon, it is also more than a militia: it is a political party with representation in parliament, and a social organisation, with significant support among Shia Muslims.

Hezbollah's opponents could see it as an opportunity to limit its influence - it was often described as "a state within a state" in Lebanon before the conflict - and many fear this could lead to internal violence.

Since intensifying the fighting in September, Israel has carried out hundreds of daily strikes in Lebanon, targeting what it said were Hezbollah areas in the south, east and in the capital Beirut.

As reports emerged that Netanyahu was discussing a ceasefire deal with his cabinet on Tuesday, the IDF continued its strikes - targeting Beirut with strikes that killed at least 10 people.



# Trump vows tariffs on Mexico, Canada and China on day one

By Peter Hoskins

Donald Trump says he will hit China, Mexico and Canada with new tariffs on day one of his presidency, in an effort to force them to crack down on illegal immigration and drug smuggling into the US.

The US president-elect said he would sign an executive order imposing a 25% tariff on all goods coming from Mexico and Canada, after being inaugurated on 20 January 2025.

He also said “we will be charging China an additional 10% tariff, above any additional tariffs” until it cracked down on fentanyl smuggling.

The threat could mark a major escalation in tensions with the US’s three top trading partners. It could also lead to higher prices for Americans, since tariffs work as a form of tax on imports.

The US is the world’s largest importer. China, Mexico and Canada account for about 40% of the \$3.2tn (£2.6tn) of goods it imports each year, according to official data.

China has defended its efforts to stop the flow of illegal drugs, and has warned that there can be no winner in a trade war between the two.

After Trump made his tariff threat, he spoke to Canada’s Prime Minister Justin Trudeau for about 10 minutes, discussing trade and border security, a Canadian government official told the BBC. They had a “good discussion”, the source said.

During the call, Trudeau pointed out that the number of migrants crossing the Canadian border was much smaller compared to the US-Mexico border, the official said.

Mexico’s finance ministry said: “Mexico is the United States’ top trade partner, and the USMCA provides a



framework of certainty for national and international investors.”

The measures have the potential to cause disruptions to the global supply chain and would hit the three countries targeted by the tariffs hard.

The tariffs on Mexico and Canada will remain in place until the two countries clamp down on drugs, particularly fentanyl, and migrants illegally crossing the border, Trump said in a post on his Truth Social platform.

“Both Mexico and Canada have the absolute right and power to easily solve this long simmering problem,” he wrote. “It is time for them to pay a very big price!”

In a follow-up Truth Social post, Trump attacked Beijing for failing to follow through on promises that he said Chinese officials made to carry out the death penalty for people caught dealing fentanyl, a synthetic opioid.

A spokesperson for the Chinese embassy in Washington told the BBC “the idea of China knowingly allowing fentanyl precursors to flow into the United States runs completely counter to facts and reality”.

“China believes that China-US economic and trade cooperation is

mutually beneficial in nature. No one will win a trade war or a tariff war,” he added.

The Biden administration has been calling on Beijing to do more to stop the production of ingredients used in fentanyl, which Washington estimates killed almost 75,000 Americans last year.

During his election campaign, Trump threatened Mexico and China with tariffs of up to 100%, if he deemed them necessary, much higher than those he put in place during his first term in office.

Trump has also said he will end China’s most-favoured-nation trading status with the US - the most advantageous terms Washington offers on tariffs and other restrictions.

Last year, more than 80% of Mexico’s exports went to the US, while around 75% of Canada’s went to its southern neighbour.

Even after years of a bitter trade dispute between the world’s two biggest economies, the US still accounts for about 15% of China’s exports.

A tariff is a domestic tax levied on goods as they enter the country, pro-

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portional to the value of the import. So a car imported to the US with a value of \$50,000 subject to a 25% tariff, would face a \$12,500 charge.

Tariffs are a central part of Trump's economic vision - he sees them as a way of growing the US economy, protecting jobs and raising tax revenue.

He has previously claimed that these taxes are "not going to be a cost to you, it's a cost to another country".

This is almost universally regarded by economists as misleading.

The charge is physically paid by the domestic company that imports the goods, not the foreign company that exports them.

So, in that sense, it is a straightforward tax paid by domestic US firms to the US government.

Trump imposed a number of tariffs in his first term of office, many of which have been kept in place by his successor, President Joe Biden. Economic studies suggest most of the economic burden was ultimately borne by US consumers.

It was not immediately clear whether Trump's "additional 10% tariff, above any additional tariffs" earmarked for China were on top of the 25% he was planning for Canada and Mexico.

The move is "clearly consistent with his promise that he made during the campaign to utilise

tariffs as a weapon to accomplish many of his policy initiatives," Stephen Roach, Senior Fellow at the Paul Tsai China Center of Yale Law School, told the BBC's Business Today programme.

Trump's pick for Treasury Secretary, Scott Bessent, has previously suggested that the president-elect's threats to impose major tariff hikes were part of his negotiating strategy.

"My general view is that at the end of the day, he's a free trader," Bessent said of Trump in an interview with the Financial Times before he was nominated for the

role.

"It's escalate to de-escalate."

It comes as the Chinese economy is in a significantly more vulnerable position than it was during the previous Trump presidency.

The country has been struggling with a number of serious issues, including an ongoing property market crisis, weak domestic demand and growing local government debt.

The new tariffs appear to break the terms of the US-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) on trade.

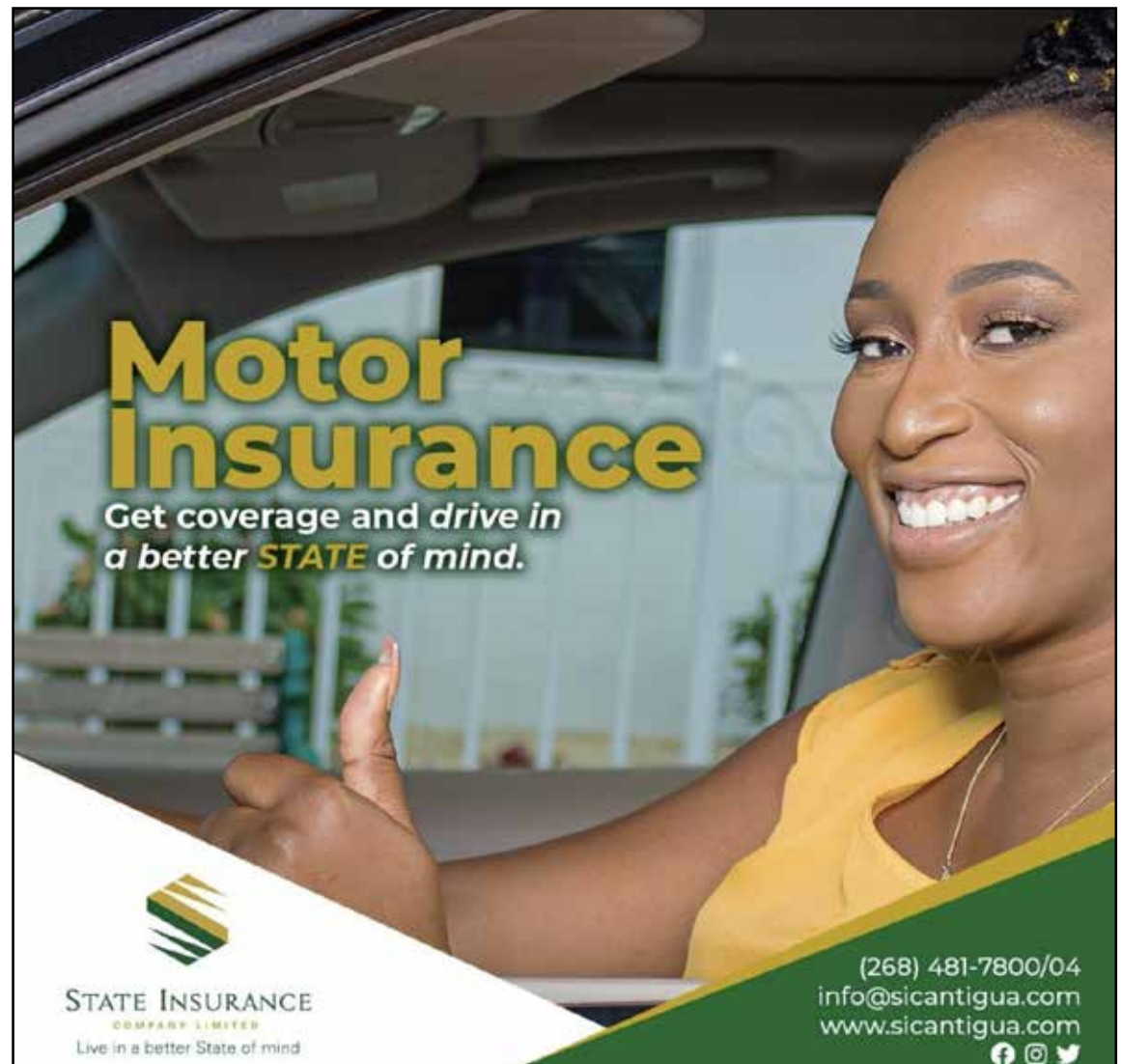
The deal, which Trump signed into law, took effect in 2020. It continued a

largely duty-free trading relationship between the three neighbouring countries.


Outside the official reaction from the three countries affected, the response has been critical.

Doug Ford, the premier of the Canadian province of Ontario, said Trump's planned tariff would be "devastating to workers and jobs in both Canada and the US".


Leader of the Mexican senate, Gerardo Fernández, asked: "What tariffs should we impose on their [America's] goods until they stop consuming drugs and illegally exporting weapons to our homeland?"



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# Sports News



## Youth Soccerama to showcase future talent

The Young Warriors Soccerama on the V.C Bird Football Club will be staging its second annual Youth Day public holiday next month.

The event at the Buckley's Primary School playing field is being held as

part of a fundraising breakfast soup and barbeque to assist with the development of the game at the grassroots level.

Competitions will be held in four age groups. Organizers are hoping to stage competition among four to six teams in the Under-7, Under-9, Under-11, and Under-13 age groups.

Prizes will include trophies for the champions, runners-up, and third-place finishers in each age group, as well as individual Golden Ball (best player) and Golden Boot (most goals) awards to top players.

The VC Bird Day extravaganza is open to all clubs, teams, schools, communities, and groups who wish to participate. Registration closes on December 2.

The Breakfast Soups and Barbeque fundraiser will serve up local specials to satisfy the taste buds of all and sundry, including vegetarian patrons.

There will also be a bar featuring local drinks and other beverages, plus a pop-up shop selling items for gifts and Christmas decorating.

Special attractions will comprise live entertainment, a bounce castle, fun games, and a lucky dip. For more information, call: 1 (268) 786-0115.

**YOUTH SOCERAMA & FUND RAISING BREAKFAST SOUPS & BARBEQUE**

**MON 9 DECEMBER 2024 – V C Bird Day**

**BOYS & GIRLS**  
**AGE-GROUPS: U7, U9, U11, U13**

**TIMELINE:**  
7am – 10am: BREAKFAST  
10am – 4pm: SOCCERAMA  
12pm – 4pm: SOUPS & BBQ  
4pm-6pm: Live Entertainment:  
DJs \* SOCA \* CALYPSO \* STEELBAND

**PRIZES:**  
**\*Trophies: Champions, Runners-Up, Third-Place**

**ATTRACTIONS:**  
**Bounce Castle-Fun Games-Lucky-Dip**

**Golden Ball MVP** **Golden Boot(Most Goals)**

**268-786-0115**

**BUCKLEY'S PRIMARY SCHOOL PLAYING FIELD**



Players of an Old Road FC's starting XI. (ABFA Media)

## Old Road FC returns to winning form in Premier Division League

Old Road FC returned to winning form in the Antigua and Barbuda Football Association's (ABFA) Premier Division on Monday.

Old Road, which won their first three matches before suffering a 3-0 defeat to Terminix Piggotts Bullets in their previous outing, notched up their fourth win in five matches when they returned to Premier League action with a 7-0 drubbing of Five Islands at the ABFA Technical Center.

Gisner Joseph struck a hat trick with conversions in the 19th, 67th, and 82nd minutes. The other goals for Old Road were scored by Jajuan Williams in the 28th minute, Joylan Sinclair in the 33rd minute, Clarens Exil in the 74th minute, and Johnathan Shoy in the second minute of added time (90+2 minutes).

The result allows Old Road FC to join Piggotts Bullets FC on 12 points, while Five Islands will re-

main mid-table on six points after suffering their second defeat in five matches.

Meanwhile, Jahvier Joseph, Joshua Blenman, and Zamaal Greene each scored twice as Belmont FC won for the fifth time in six matches in the Second Division league with an 8-0 victory against Glanvilles FC at the ABFA Technical Center.

Joseph had conversions in the third and 38th minutes; Blenman scored in the 11th and 29th minutes, and Greene had conversions in the 15th and 24th minutes.

The other goals were scored by Urel Mitchell in the 74th minute and Rondre Mills in the 83rd minute for Belmont FC, which advanced to 15 points from six matches.

Glanvilles FC will remain on one point after suffering its third defeat in four matches.

TAMO FC claimed their second

win in six matches with a 4-0 victory against West Ham FC at the PMS playing field.

Kariem Knight opened the scoring with a goal in the first minute. An own goal scored by Damian Azille in the 14th minute gave TAMO FC a two-nil lead at halftime.

Daniel Westford also scored an own goal in the 65th minute, and Carlus Stephens had a 75th-minute conversion to complete victory for TAMO FC, which advanced to six points from six matches.

West Ham FC, which is yet to record a point, will remain in the cellar of the second division after suffering their fourth defeat in as many games.

The ABFA's Second Division league will continue with one match on Wednesday (today).

Blackburn Palace FC will take on Herberts FC at the PMS playing field at 4:20 pm.



# Sports News



## OCS continues to lead Under-16 Boys school football league

The Ottos Comprehensive School (OCS) consolidated their lead after their closest challengers all dropped points in the latest round of matches in the Under-16 Boys Division of the Ministry of Sports, Cool and Smooth, and Joma Patrick C. Whyte Cup competition.

Ottos Comprehensive School claimed their seventh win in as many games by snatching a 3-0 victory against Clare Hall Secondary School at the Keithley Sheppard Recreational Park on Monday.

Shamoy Chiddick had a double conversion with strikes in the 14th and 32nd minutes, and Tafari Looby scored the other goal in the seventh minute as Ottos Comprehensive continues to lead the 11-team round-robin competition by advancing to 21 points.

Clare Hall Secondary, which entered the match in fourth place, will remain on 12 points after suffering their third defeat in seven matches.

Princess Margaret School kept their unbeaten run intact but dropped their first points during a 1-1 draw with St. Joseph's Academy at the Clare Hall playing field.

Joshua James scored for St. Joseph's Academy in the third minute, and Jahmarie George scored the equalizer for Princess Margaret School to remain with Ottos Comprehensive School as the only unbeaten teams in the Under-16 boys league.

It was the first draw in the competition for both teams as they remain in joint second place on 16 points apiece. However, St. Joseph's Academy has played seven matches, one more than Princess Margaret School.

All Saints Secondary recorded their fourth win in seven matches with



Shamoy Chiddick of OCS

a 2-0 victory against Jennings Secondary School at the Keithley Sheppard Recreational Park.

Kamarlie Benjamin scored in the 15th minute, and Kymani Francis had a 50th-minute conversion for All Saints Secondary. The result allows All Saints Secondary to leapfrog Clare Hall Secondary into fourth place with 13 points from seven matches.

Jennings Secondary School will remain third from the bottom of the standings on four points after suffer-

ing their fifth defeat in seven matches.

Sir Novelle Richards Academy won for the second time in eight matches, claiming victory by default against Irene B. Williams Secondary, which failed to show up for their encounter at the Clare Hall playing field.

Sir Novelle Richards Academy will advance to seven points from eight matches, and Irene B. Williams Secondary will remain on four points after suffering their sixth defeat in eight matches.



## Double Six wins final contest of ABNDA's 2024 Independence Classics

Everyday Service Station Double Six has won the final competition of the Antigua and Barbuda Domino Association's (ABNDA) 2024 Independence Classics.

Double Six won the Team Three-Hand Championship, which was held at the ABNDA's headquarters in Ottos.

Double Six secured the title after prevailing against Parham Strikers and De' Unstoppables in the final.

Double Six won the contest with 78 points, Parham Strikers clinched second place with 70 points, and De' Unstoppables finished in third place with 68 points.

A total of 14 teams participated in the competition. The other participating teams are Bolans Revellers, Dominatrixx, Eagle Eye International, Bravo, Fire Brigade, Full Clip, Legacy, Ramplers, Rising Stars, Triple Dynamite, and Willikies Super Stars.



Everyday Service Station Double Six won the Team Three-Hand Championship, which is the final competition of the Antigua and Barbuda Domino Association's 2024 Independence Classics. (Photo courtesy of the ABNDA)

Several other winners were crowned during the series of competitions of the 2024 Independence Classics.

The combination of Natalee Heron and Amsha-Ann Eusebe captured the Female Pairs title,

while the duo of Glenford George and Jahrio O'Brien won the Male Pairs competition.

The team comprising Joanne Davis and Edna Charles came in second, and the duo of Francine Hector and Bernia Rich-

ards claimed third place in the Female Pairs contest.

The combination of Zenus Williams and Maclean Harve captured the runner-up position, and the team of Kenny Charles and Mervin LeFleur secured third place in the Male Pairs competition.

Jason King won the King of Domino crown, while Seymone Parkes claimed the Queen of Domino title in the three-hand domino contests.

The duo of Zenus Williams and Maclean Harve won the first competition by securing victory in the 500 Pairs four-hand knockout competition.

### *cont'd from pg 26*

115 with the bat, as West Indies, opting to play five seamers, was not disappointed.

Captain Kraigg Brathwaite praised the team's effort, highlighting the bowlers' role in the victory.

"A lot of learning has taken place from the England tour. Test cricket is all about learning, and that's what I tell our guys. We have seen a hundred here, and that was positive.

"Good to get a Test win, and we con-

tinue working hard. (On five-man pace attack) It all depends on the surface, but these guys have different skill set," Brathwaite said in a post-game interview.

"Where improvement is concerned, we have to stay hungry is one. Some guys got big fifties; it was good to see, but this Test is over. We need to keep at it," he added.

Now leading 1-0, Brathwaite and his team will be aiming to wrap up the series when the second Test match bowls off at Sabina Park in Jamaica on Saturday.



## West Indies crush Bangladesh by 201 runs

The West Indies ended a two-and-a-half-year wait for a Test win on home soil with an emphatic 201-run triumph over Bangladesh on Tuesday's fifth and final day of the first Test of their two-match series at the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium in Antigua.

The West Indies commanding performance showcased their pace attack's dominance and underlined their desire to return to winning ways in the longest format.

Bangladesh's pursuit of an improbable 334 was thwarted on Tuesday's fifth morning at 132 for nine, with Shoriful Islam's retirement due to a shoulder injury effectively sealing the result.

Shoriful's decision not to continue resulted from Alzarri Joseph's short-ball assault on Bangladesh number 11, as West Indies needed just seven overs to wrap things up and secure their victory.

Alzarri Joseph set the tone early, dismissing Hasan Mahmud for a duck with a sharp delivery that moved away, drawing an edge that was caught low down by



West Indies fast bowlers, from left to right, Shamar Joseph, Alzarri Joseph, Kumar Roach, Jayden Seales, and Justin Greaves strike a pose on the fifth day of the first cricket Test against Bangladesh at the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium in Antigua on Tuesday, November 26, 2024. (CWI Media)

wicketkeeper Joshua da Silva.

Jaker Ali, the lone resistance in Bangladesh's lower order, seemed set to delay the inevitable but was later trapped leg-before-wicket for 31 after a dogged 58-ball stay that included four boundaries.

With only two wickets left, Alzarri turned up the heat, relentlessly peppering Taskin Ahmed and Shoriful

with bouncers. The West Indies fielders joined the action, adding verbal pressure to the beleaguered Bangladesh tailenders.

When Shoriful was unable to continue after Joseph's blow, the match was called off, capping an aggressive and clinical effort by the hosts.

This victory marks a turning point for the West Indies, who last tasted a

home Test win in 2021. The performance was built on a foundation of aggressive fast bowling and a collective resolve to dominate in all phases of the game.

Alzarri Joseph and Jayden Seales ended with five wickets in the match, while Kumar Roach finished with four, and Man-of-the-Match Justin Greaves had two to go with his unbeaten  
*cont'd on pg 25*