

# PM BROWNE CALLS OUT SANDALS

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# Local News



## PM Browne calls out Sandals over its anti-tax policy

Prime Minister Gaston Browne is again calling out the luxury hotel brand – Sandals – for its policy of not wanting to pay taxes generally, and for wanting to hold onto ABST that it collects on behalf of the government.

Speaking on the Browne and Browne show on Point FM on Saturday, PM Browne revealed that the latest issue surrounds recent assessment performed by the Inland Revenue Department where it determined that the company owes an estimated \$30 million in taxes, most of which were from ABST

payments which it collected for the government and was holding on to portions of the money.

“I don’t understand why these ‘so-called’ investors feel that they are the only game in town and are the only stakeholders to benefit. So they try to wring every ounce of revenue out of the business and they don’t want the government to get anything in the form of taxes. I have been through this already with Sandals and I don’t want to go down that road with them again,” he emphasized.

*cont’d on pg 3*



Prime Minister Gaston Browne

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*cont'd from pg 2*

The prime minister said he is making a public appeal to the company to cooperate with the IRD as he wants to avoid another public spat with them. He noted too that Sandals had a recent issue with the Bahamas where they ended up having to pay 'some money'.

"Everywhere they go, this is their modus operandi! Everywhere they go, there is a feeling that they don't want to pay government taxes and that they are the ones who must extract all these profits so that they can expand. Well, I want to tell my dear friend, Adam Stewart, (Sandals' Executive Chairman), Sandals is not the only stakeholder when you open your hotels in a Caribbean country; you have staff who deserve a good pay; you have the government who ought to get its fair share of taxes; you cannot rely exclusively on exploiting concessions and to push governments into the ground; you all need to stop it!" the prime minister declared.

He described the Sandals' model as reminiscent to the colonial period and slavery, noting that he is very disappointed that a Caribbean brand, which is loved and admired by the people of the region, would be engaged in the exploitation of Caribbean people.

"This is a colonialist model that does not work

for the Caribbean people and Sandals needs to end this practice immediately," he advised.

According to PM Browne, as a beloved Caribbean brand, Sandals ought to feel proud that it is making a worthwhile contribution to the Caribbean countries within which it operates, but the opposite is true based on its policies.

"You should be proud to be able to say that your workers are making a decent salary so that they could afford a mortgage, a good car etc. It's not about

you expanding while others are suffering. We can't even attract workers to the hotels sector because of the low wages, while you are making tens of millions of dollars each year out of each of these small economies and every time there is an assessment, you come with all kinds of reasons why you should not be paying.

"I'm tired of it. If this is going to be your attitude going forward where only Sandals benefits, then take your hotel elsewhere; and I am very serious," PM Browne declared.

The prime minister reiterated that he does not want another public spat with the hotel and he is urging them to come to the table in a spirit of equity to resolve the outstanding matters.

He said he was 'shocked' when he was told that the hotel was not cooperating with the IRD.

According to the prime minister the issue with Sandals is not an Antigua and Barbuda problem... but a Caribbean problem, as the company's policies throughout the region are the same everywhere.



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# Local News



## The Antigua and Barbuda Economy: A success story to tell

The Antigua and Barbuda economy has regained all the grounds it lost during the 2020-21 COVID-19 pandemic when it lost more than twenty percent of its value. Tangible indicators of the strength and performance of the economy will come to light when all the data is presented to the ministry of finance at the end of the year. New records are expected to be established in revenues; an economy valued at over \$6 billion and growth rate that averaged approximately eight (8) percent over the last several years.

It is instructive too, that the economy will out-perform the forecast of leading international institutions; the International Monetary Fund has predicted growth of just over four percent for 2024, while the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) is predicting that the economy will grow by six percent.

However, in the words of Financial Secretary, Rasona Davis-Crump, who provided insights into the economy as the country celebrates its 43rd anniversary of Political Independence, real growth for the year will be between seven (7) and eight (8) percent.

“We continue to rebound (from the pandemic) very, very strongly as we expect



Rasona Davis-Crump

growth of between 7 and 8 percent for 2024. There are projections by ECLAC on one hand, which indicates that the growth will be 6.3 percent, however, the figures upon which those projections are based, are from June this year. The IMF has projected 4.9 percent,” she revealed.

Davis-Crump said she is not too concerned about the projections at this point as in the end ‘the figures will bear things out’ when the actual data arrives at the end of the year. That’s important according to the Financial Secretary as there are many uncertainties, mainly international, that could still impact the economy negatively.

“There are many things

that are unfolding that could have knock-on effects on the economy positively or negatively. However, based on where we are today with the projects that are in the pipeline in terms of hotels, business expansion or private home construction coupled with the significant performance in tourism, I would say that we are looking very good,” she declared.

Tourism is the main driver of the Antigua and Barbuda economy and recent data indicates that the sector has already bypassed the figures for 2019, generally seen as the best performing year on record for Antigua and Barbuda tourism.

At a meeting in St. John’s to discuss plans for Antigua and Barbuda to

host Caribbean Marketplace next year, CEO of the Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association (CHTA), Vanessa Ledesma said the Caribbean continues to show impressive growth with a 16% increase in international arrivals compared to 2023, ranking second only to the APAC region. “Antigua and Barbuda, in particular, is leading this surge, with an expected 17% growth in overseas arrivals from October to December, just behind St. Maarten. Moreover, Antigua and Barbuda stands out as the top-performing destination in terms of seat capacity growth, with a remarkable 19% increase over last year. These statistics clearly demonstrate the value Antigua and Barbuda brings as the host of Caribbean Travel Marketplace 2025, cementing its position as a key player in regional tourism,” she observed.

Similar sentiments were expressed by the Florida Caribbean Cruise Association in their report on the cruise sector just last week. It showed that Antigua and Barbuda ranks only second to St. Kitts Nevis in terms of passenger and crews spending among Eastern Caribbean destinations. The total for Antigua and Barbuda was US\$89.1 million. This as the number of cruise calls and passengers continues to grow.

## Public servants in line for one-month extra salary for December

Workers in the public sector are in line for an extra month's salary in time for the Christmas holiday period.

In responding to a question regarding back-pay when he appeared Saturday on the *Browne and Browne* show,

Prime Minister Gaston Browne, who is also the country's Minister of Finance, reported that he had instructed the team at the ministry headquarters to 'find the money' so that public sector workers can get an extra month's salary for Decem-

ber. PM Browne said the extra salary will constitute a portion of the back-pay that government owes to public servants following the fourteen percent salary increase which went into effect nearly two years ago.

## The egg-production business that former gang members will manage will soon be a reality

The egg-production business enterprise that will be owned and managed by former members of a Grays Farm-based gang, will soon become a reality.

Prime Minister Gaston Browne announced that the first container of feed as well as an estimated two thousand chicks have arrived on the island and are to be turned over to the new business as soon as it is up and ready.

He said the ABLP Caretaker for the St. John's Rural West constituency, Michael C. Joseph, is spearheading the efforts to establish the business,

Joseph told Point Express newspaper that the two acres of land upon which the buildings will be erected to house the chicks is currently being cleared. "The land is located on the approach to the landfill at Cooks and the preparation should be completed this week. Immediately after that is done, we will begin to erect the build-



Michael C. Joseph

ings. Meanwhile, we are conducting training for the guys who will be in charge of the facility. They will undergo training in management, marketing and financial management for about a six-month period," he noted.

He revealed that funding for the project has been provided by the Cabinet. Joseph has assembled a team of experts on how to

successfully manage a business to conduct the training. He reported that the former gang members are quite anxious to get started.

"The experts will also teach them how to run an egg-production facility with emphasis on critical areas such as hygiene and the nurture and care of the layers. The guys are excited about the project as they see it as acquiring new skills and a

form of employment. They recognize too that they have to approach it with much seriousness in order to make it a sustainable enterprise," he explained.

Joseph said he continues to interact with the young men alongside Mitch Jeremiah, who has been a part of the team that joined PM Browne in his several engagements with the former gang members.

"These guys are eager to become productive members of the society and we are doing our part in making this happen," he remarked.

In addition to all this, the prime minister said there is also a commitment from the government to employ the former gang members in an exercise to beautify the city and its environs.

The PM also made an appeal to members of the private sector to reach out to the young men to offer either part time or full time jobs to help keep them off the streets.



# Local News



## Transportation representatives leave for World Travel Market

Two members of the United Taxi Association which operates from the VC Bird International Airport have been included in the Antigua and Barbuda delegation that has traveled to attend this week's World Travel Market in London.

The team which is led by Tourism Minister, Charles Max Fernandez and which also includes, Chief Executive Officer of the Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority, Colin C. James and National Hero, Sir Vivian Richards, will include executive members of the association, Ian Hughes and Emelda Frank.

Hughes revealed that this



Ian Hughes

is the second time that he has been included in the team and he specifically made a request for more members of the association to be included based on the importance of the experience for those in the transportation sector.

"It is important as taxi operators to attend these important gatherings as we are then able to speak directly with the tour operators and to under-



Emelda Frank

stand the business from their point of view. These meetings allow us to forge relationships that will redound to all of our benefits. For example, the tour operator will be able to reach out to us directly if a problem arises, rather than to seek solutions through 'middle men'," he stated.

Joseph noted that these experiences are important for as many members of the as-

sociation as possible as they will get a first-hand look and an understanding of the efforts that are made by the tourism authority to attract visitors to Antigua and Barbuda.

"I want other members of the association to recognize that visitors who come to our country don't do so by accident. The tourism authority and others put in much effort and energy to market the country and everyone ought to appreciate this and to approach their contributions to the sector from the point of view of knowledge," he remarked.

World Travel Market runs from November 5-7.

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## 25-year old man in custody after police recover tons of suspected stolen items

The police executed a search warrant at the home of 25-year-old Jared Bryant of Wireless Road on Sunday, November 3, and seized a large amount of household appliances.

The items include refrigerators, washing machines, air conditioning units, and televisions. The police also seized a vehicle with several pieces of mechanical tools, and plumbing fixtures, all of which are suspected to have been stolen.

Bryant was arrested and taken into custody on suspicion of larceny. The items were taken to the police station.

Police are inviting members of the public who may have been victims of theft to come forward and assist them in their investigations.

### Bethesda man charged with wounding

Police arrested and charged 29 year-old Wesley Josiah of Bethesda with Wounding With Intent to do

Grievous Bodily Harm. He was further charged with House Breaking and Larceny, and Armed With an Offensive to Commit a Felony.

The charges came as result of an incident at Lightfoot on October 30, 2024, where the accused allegedly injured a minor during an altercation. The minor was treated at the hospital for non-life threatening injuries. Josiah is expected before the court this week.

## Department of Culture launches - "Folklore" - The Cultural Character Design Competition

The Department of Culture is teaming up with two private sector entities to launch "**Folklore**", a costume design competition geared towards students between the ages of seven (7) to twenty-one (21) years old.

In a media release the department said this is being done in an effort to further educate and preserve the country's cultural mas characters, as it sets out to engage the nation's youth through this design competition.

The media release said support for the project is coming from Arton Capital and Sechuns The band.

The contest will challenge the students to create their own one-of-a-kind designs based on a traditional cultural character. The competition is divided into two categories; 7-13 and 14-21, with one winner, second (2nd) and third (3rd) place

from each category.

"For participants in the 7-13 category, they must present a design of the "Carnival Clown" also known as the "Fancy Clown". For participants in the 14-21 category, they must present a design of the "John Bull". Participants are encouraged to speak with local designers, cultural leaders and research through online and local sources to further shape their designs," according to the release.

The 1st place winners will be able to see their costume become a reality and also participate in a costume building experience with established Antiguan costume designers and builders to get first-hand experience in costume making from concept to reality.

Cash prizes for each category:


- 1st Place - \$500
- 2nd Place - \$300
- 3rd Place - \$200

Interested parties can submit designs with the following details;

- Name

- Date of Birth
- Address
- School (If Applicable)
- Name and description

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**ST. JOHN'S, Antigua and Barbuda - October 30, 2024**






The West Indies Oil Company Limited (WIOC) wishes to inform the public that we will be conducting repairs on a pipeline at Sand Haven Beach, in proximity to our pump station.

This important maintenance work is scheduled to take place from **Wednesday November 6 through Wednesday November 13, 2024.**

During this time, we kindly ask beachgoers to prioritize their safety by observing all caution signage and follow the guidance of our on-site work crew. We appreciate your cooperation and understanding as we undertake these essential repairs to ensure the continued safe and efficient operation of our facilities.

For any inquiries, please contact Ms. Charma John, our Health, Safety, and Environment Officer at 464-9504.

-END-

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## WISH responds to recent commentary on mental health in Antigua and Barbuda

“For lack of wisdom, my people perish” - Hosea 4:6. This powerful scripture speaks to the importance of seeking knowledge and understanding concerning human well-being. While religion and spirituality play vital roles in our society and personal lives, they should never be wielded as tools to dismiss or degrade scientific research and medical facts. As the verse suggests, true wisdom comes from embracing both spiritual insights and human understanding – including the vast body of research and evidence supporting mental health care.

Today, the Wadadli Initiative for Self-care and Healing (WISH) addresses recent commentary questioning the legitimacy of mental health concerns in our community. As a mental health advocacy organization in Antigua and Barbuda, we feel compelled to provide clarity and context to this important discussion.

“Mental health challenges are not a product of moral failure or lack of faith - they are legitimate medical conditions that affect one in four Caribbean citizens,” states WISH founder Chaneil Imhoff.

“The World Health Organization reports that mental health conditions have increased by 25% since the pandemic, impacting people of all backgrounds, beliefs, and walks of life. Dismissing these challenges as merely spiritual issues does a grave disservice to our community and potentially prevents people from seeking life-saving help.”

Imhoff continues, “We’ve seen firsthand how untreated mental health conditions impact families, workplaces, and communities across our islands. The statistics are clear: 75% of mental health conditions develop before age 24, yet the average person waits 11 years before seeking help, largely due to stigma and misconceptions.”

WISH Content Creator Raisa Charles offers a balanced perspective on the intersection of faith and mental healthcare: “Religious freedom is a constitutional right and plays an important role in our society. People should do whatever helps them feel spiritually grounded and connected.

However, we must be wary of indulging in spiritual



Chaneil Imhoff

escapism remembering that some approaches can be so heavenly-minded that they are no earthly good. The idea that a person’s mental health struggle is their fault due to a lack of faith is unsupportive at best and extremely harmful at worst. While involvement with communities of faith and spiritual support systems are often part of the treatment approach for improving a person’s mental health, these measures are especially effective when paired with credible assessment, accurate diagnosis and therapeutic intervention where necessary. It is imperative that we, as people, arm ourselves with sound, evidence-based infor-

mation before attempting to offer care and support to vulnerable communities.”

WISH advocates for a comprehensive approach to mental health that:

- Recognizes mental health as a fundamental aspect of overall wellbeing

- Supports evidence-based treatment methods while respecting cultural and spiritual beliefs

- Promotes early intervention and prevention strategies

- Reduces stigma through education and open dialogue

- Increases accessibility to mental health resources across Antigua and Barbuda

We invite religious leaders, community members, and all stakeholders to join us in creating a more compassionate and informed dialogue about mental health.

For more information about mental health resources and WISH’s initiatives, please visit our website at [wishwadadli.org](http://wishwadadli.org).

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of the Design

- The Design

Physical copies can be submitted to the Ministry of Creative Industries Headquarters on Old Parham Road (Above KFC) or via the submission link located on the Department’s facebook page.

Deadline for submission is December 20th.

For more information about this project and other Department of Culture projects, follow us on our Facebook page; Department of Culture- Antigua and Barbuda, Instagram at Department of Culture Anu or email us at [cddanu.info@gmail.com](mailto:cddanu.info@gmail.com).



## Awardees at the 2024 Independence Ceremonial Parade



DR. CYNTHIA LUCILLA AG-ATHA CRUMP RUSSELL –To be a Grand Officer, of the Most Illustrious Order of Princely Heritage -GOH



CATHERINE CHIDDICK –To be a Grand Officer, of the Most Illustrious Order of Princely Heritage -GOH



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SAMUEL AYMER, ESQUIRE –To be Knight Grand Commander of the Most Distinguished Order of the Nation – KCN



RONALD LESLIE RANDALL, ESQUIRE –To be Knight Grand Commander of the Most Distinguished Order of the Nation – KCN



VERNEST MACK –To be a Grand Officer, of the Most Illustrious Order of Merit -GOM



GREGORY COLIN BAILEY, ESQUIRE – To be a Commander of the Most Precious Order of Princely Heritage - CH



EVERTON DECOUSEY JACOBS, ESQUIRE – To be a Commander of the Most Precious Order of Princely Heritage - CH



MIRIAM SAMUEL – To be a Commander of the Most Precious Order of Princely Heritage - CH



# PM's Independence Message



## Independence Address by Prime Minister the Hon. Gaston Browne

My fellow citizens and residents of Antigua and Barbuda,

On this glorious occasion of our nation's 43rd independence, we have good reason for a deep sense of pride and gratitude.

Today, we not only celebrate our independence, but we also reaffirm our commitment to the principles that have brought us this far - resilience, belief in our worth as a people, and faith in our capacity to succeed.

As the Apostle Paul said, "Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time, we will reap a harvest if we do not give up".

And, neither we, nor the generations before us, ever gave up.

Over the years, we have shown the world – and indeed the elements - that we, the people of Antigua and Barbuda, possess an indomitable spirit.

In the face of the COVID-19 pandemic - a disaster that crippled many economies and devastated lives across the globe—we stood firm.

Through swift, decisive action and careful management, we saved lives and safeguarded livelihoods.

While other nations faltered, we reopened our economy quickly and effectively, experiencing a recovery faster than most.

Our economy grew by 7.8% in 2023, second only to Guyana in the region, and our 2024 performance will be similar, evidencing that we continue to lead in recovery and resilience.

This was possible because we worked together, with faith and determination.

Undoubtedly, there have been political bickering and the usual political claims that sought to divide our communities; but our society as a people remained faithful to our common goals of uplifting our nation and strengthen-



Prime Minister Gaston Browne  
ing it to meet every challenge.

But even as we celebrate our achievements, we know that there is still much work to be done.

Ten years ago, we inherited an outdated socio-economic infrastructure: our schools and other public buildings, roads, curbs and drains, water systems, electricity grid, and internet broadband services were in decay.

We faced unsustainable debt, economic contraction, high rates of crime, unemployment, bank failure and poverty.

But we steadfastly addressed each of these problems and worked diligently to resolve them.

That task is not yet over, but you know from your own lived experience that the situation has dramatically improved.

And as I have always implored you; let's give thanks for our achievements to date no matter how small.

Employment has increased to the point where we have a shortage of labour in crucial areas of our economy, to include construction and the hotel

sector, further increasing our dependence on imported labor.

Access to education at all levels, and provision of health services have greatly progressed and are advancing every year.

Commencing in 2025, we will spend \$200 million to expand the UWI Five Islands Campus, which currently hosts over 1000 students, to provide even more opportunities for higher education; ensuring that every young person has the tools they need to contribute to our nation's future.

This is in addition to the \$20 Million investment in the Antigua & Barbuda institute of Continuing Education (The Harrison Centre), that is now providing vocational training for over 800 Antiguan & Barbudans.

We have expanded healthcare services to include kidney transplants and hip replacements. The construction of the cardiac centre and renal unit for advanced dialysis care should be completed in 2025, further advancing our healthcare delivery. In addition, the

*cont'd on pg 11*



# PM's Independence Message

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Cancer Centre will be retrofitted and re-equipped with modern equipment to enhance the delivery of cancer treatments and is projected to recommence operations in the first quarter of 2025.

With the establishment of a 40meg Liquid Natural Gas electricity plant earlier this year, the delivery of electricity has been better than at any other time in the history of our country. The delivery of water, though challenging, because of the persistent droughts, continues to improve with the expansion and upgrade of our water distribution system. We have expanded the water production capacity from 3 Million gallons per day to

approximately 8.5 million per day and this is projected to increase to 12 Million per day in 2025, thereby satisfying the full water demand of our population.

Our roads remain a challenge.

Not because we have neglected them, but because they were ignored for far too long and unusual extreme weather events have taken a harsh toll. Nonetheless, we continue to pay focused attention on our main arteries and have recently purchased \$21 Million of heavy equipment to accelerate the reconstruction of our roads; especially our community roads.

Because we are an island, our society imports

most of the commodities we need, including food products. In recent years particularly as costs have risen globally, we have been importing the increased costs of our major trading partners, and, in turn, this has raised prices for all of us.

Fortunately, we are beginning to enjoy a stabilization in prices, which had previously galloped to six percent earlier this year. As a caring administration, we did not wait for this imported inflation to fall to address this problem, but increased the wages, salaries and pensions of public servants, even in difficult financial circumstances.

By doing so, we eased the pressure of imported in-


flationary costs.

We also gave an example to the private sector to share its profits with the consumer by curtailing the extent of profit margins.

We did so on the basis that the private sector will sustain itself and prosper, if it maintains a large and steady clientele; if prices push purchasers out of the market, the private sector will quickly decline.

Further, we hoped that the entire private sector would follow the government's example by improving wages and salaries, rewarding their staff for productivity and encouraging them to help enlarge businesses and improve ser-

*cont'd on pg 12*



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# PM's Independence Message



*cont'd from pg 11*

vice to the society as a whole.

Our collective success depends on more than just government action.

It requires the effort of every citizen, every business, and every worker to contribute to a more productive and thriving society.

We should draw inspiration from small nations like Singapore and South Korea - places that, despite their size, have achieved extraordinary economic progress through dedication, discipline, and a shared vision for the future.

Like these nations, Antigua and Barbuda can rise to new heights, not by relying exclusively on external support, but by harnessing the potential within our borders.

When we work together to improve productivity, when businesses reward hard work and invest in their people, and when each of us takes responsibility for our role in the economy, we strengthen not just our prosperity but our independence.

The challenges we face are not insurmountable.

With unity, determination, and a shared commitment to excellence, Antigua and Barbuda will not only survive but thrive.

My dear people, the future of Antigua and Barbuda is bright if we seize the opportunities as a caring nation.

Several transformative projects are underway and are reshaping our economy and providing unprecedented opportunities for all our citizens.

On Barbuda, we have witnessed incredible progress.

From the devastation of Hurricane Irma seven years ago, Barbuda has been reborn, like a Phoenix for the ashes, with new energy and exciting prospects for its sustained advancement.

The modern international airport has opened Barbuda to international tourism, through projects like the

“Peace, Love & Happiness (PLH) Resort, the luxury Nobu Resort by Robert De Niro, and RoseWood Luxury Hotel by Murbee Ltd, creating hundreds of jobs, directly and indirectly.

These initiatives are putting Barbuda on the map as one of the world’s premier luxury destinations, giving opportunities for growth and development to all who inhabit the island.

On Antigua, there are several luxury resorts to be constructed included the recently launched US\$400M Nikki Beach Resort and Residences, the One & Only Hotel at half Moon Bay and the Luxury Marriot at Yeptons Beach, which will commence construction next month.

Our government has embarked on the construction of thousands of affordable homes, using eco-friendly, energy-efficient materials. These homes will not only provide security and comfort to our people; their construction will also generate employment and stimulate the economy.

Resorts such as Royalton Chic on Dickenson Bay, which add to our stock of luxury resorts are bringing expanded tourism benefits, including employment and new investment in supply companies.

With regard to crime, despite the occurrence of random acts of violent robbery a few months ago, Antigua and Barbuda continues to have one of the lowest crime rates in the region and the hemisphere.

We are determined to take the fight to the criminals until they get the message and reform their ways. Our message is simply: Crime & Violence will not pay and those who engage in crime and violence will certainly pay.

Our goal is to eradicate all crime so that our homes, businesses, schools, and streets are safe.

Our people must not only feel safe; they must be safe.

In this regard, I commend our law enforcement agencies, particularly the

Police, for their proactive leadership in significantly reducing crime and violence by apprehending and putting criminals behind bars.

We will continue to be tough on crime.

At the same time, I encourage those involved in criminal activities to seek alternatives.

There are ample employment opportunities in sectors such as construction and hospitality—so there is no justification to rob and kill.

Antigua and Barbuda offers work, and there are better, legal ways to provide for yourself and your families.

My fellow citizens and residents, as we continue on this journey to modernize Antigua and Barbuda, we must present our nation to the world as a place of investment, beauty, and dynamism.

In doing so, we cannot afford to tolerate decrepit buildings and abandoned lands overgrown with unsightly bush in our communities.

This is not the Antigua and Barbuda we envision for ourselves or for future generations.

To address this, my government will take decisive action.

We will confront the issue of derelict properties and unsightly parcels of land in built-up areas.

Property owners will be held accountable for the maintenance of their land, and if neglected, the costs of maintenance will become a charge against the property. Also, our government will exercise the power of sale at public auction for derelict properties where property taxes and other charges on the land remain unpaid for an extended period.

We will also tackle indiscriminate dumping, littering, and unregulated vending in public spaces.

The Government will enforce existing laws and strengthen regulations to ensure that our country remains

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# PM's Independence Message

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 clean and orderly.

But this task is not for the government alone.

All of us -every citizen, business owner, and community member - have a role to play in preserving the beauty of our nation.

I implore everyone to exercise greater discipline and take pride in keeping our country clean and pristine.

Whether it is on our streets, on our beaches, in our marketplaces, let us take ownership of our land and preserve it for the generations to come.

This is our country, our home, our place.

Let us display it not with shame, but with pride; not with apology, but with joy.

We should all want to live in a country about which we can boast.

Let us show the world that Antigua and Barbuda is not only beautiful in its natural landscape, but also well looked after by its people.

In this connection, I want to encourage the greening and beautification of our beloved country.

Let us come together - the government, private sector, schools, and neighbourhoods - and make it our collective ambition to plant one hundred thousand trees annually.

If we achieve this goal one year after the other, we will not only beautify our island but also contribute immensely to the climate resilience of our nation.

These trees will help

encourage rainfall, absorb CO2 emissions, and support our fight against climate change.

Let us be a model nation of cleanliness, sustainability, and beauty - an example for others to follow.

My sisters and brothers, ours is a young nation in the global community of nations.

Today, we are only 43 years old, while the majority of countries have been controlling the world's economic, financial, and political systems for hundreds of years.

We emerged as an independent nation into a world where our interests were marginal to their concerns and our rights were neglected.

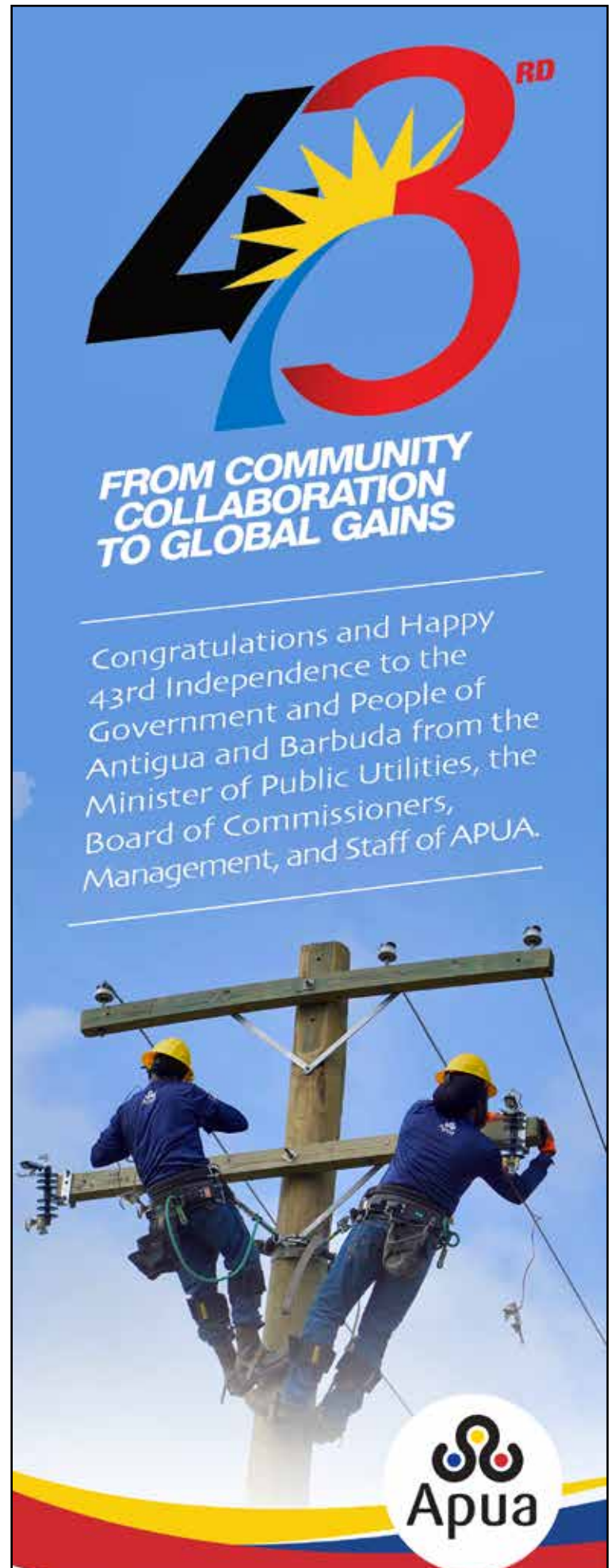
From the outset, we determined that we would carve a place of respect in the international community by taking a proactive stance on issues critical to our well-being and survival.

At times, we marched out on our own, convinced that standing up for justice, equity, and what is right was far better than staying silent or accepting the dictates of others.

On other occasions, we took initiatives to create or strengthen alliances.

That is how we helped to form the CARICOM Community and the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States, how we built the Alliance of Small Island Developing States (AOSIS), and how we initiated the

*cont'd on pg 14*



# PM's Independence Message



*cont'd from pg 13*

Commission of Small Island States on International Law (COSIS).

Today, Antigua and Barbuda is recognized globally as a leader in advocating for the rights of small states, particularly in safeguarding our civilizations against the catastrophic effects of climate change.

We have also become a trusted voice within the Organization of American States (OAS), where we have presided over the group for an unprecedented three terms and continue to lead initiatives that advance the interests of the poor and vulnerable.

We have emerged as a voice for the voiceless, championing the causes of those who face challenges with limited resources.

We are actively contributing to new standards for establishing a nation's vulnerability and securing concessional financing for those most in need, an effort encapsulated in the Multi-dimensional Vulnerability Index, stemming from a UN committee I was honoured to chair.

We operate on principles of justice and support for rightful causes.

In the words of Maya Angelou, "We may encounter many defeats, but we must not be defeated. It may even be necessary to encounter the defeat, so we can know who we are and rise from it."

As a nation, we may face obstacles, but with every step we take together, we rise, stronger and more united.

Antigua and Barbuda is leveraging its leadership role to build a new future as an international Convention Centre.

This vision is why we hosted the UN SIDS4 Conference this year, 2024, and why we will host the OAS 55th General Assembly next June in 2025, The Caribbean Tourism Association Convention next May, as well as the Commonwealth Heads of Government Conference in 2026.

The fact that Antigua and Barbuda

is the first micro state— a country with less than 100,000 people —that has been judged by the 32 Nations of the OAS and the 56 member states of the Commonwealth as capable not only to host their leadership meetings, but also to Chair and guide their deliberations, is a testimony to the significant respect we have achieved.

All in our nation have cause for pride, for satisfaction and for delight.

Establishing Antigua and Barbuda as a hub for major inter-governmental conferences will also attract multinational companies to host conventions here.

This, in turn, will diversify our tourism offerings, extend our hospitality sector into year-round employment, and put more money in the pockets of our people.

My sisters and brothers, we are aligning our foreign policy to meet our domestic aspirations for the benefit of all our people.

Together, with courage in our hearts and action in our hands, Antigua and Barbuda will rise ever higher.

My sisters and brothers, I now recall the words of the Father of the Nation, Sir Vere Cornwall Bird Snr., who, 43 years ago on November 1st, 1981, addressed the youth of our country as the flag of our independent and sovereign nation was raised for the first time. He said:

"This independence and the benefits, which will be its bounty, are your inheritance.

You have been given what generations of your forefathers struggled and suffered to achieve.

I ask you now to cherish it.

And to cherish it not only with words, but with action.

You are the future of Antigua and Barbuda, and if that future is to be prosperous, if it is to be meaningful, much will depend on you.

The future calls for discipline and dedication. There is no ideal more no-

ble, no task more rewarding, than to work for your own country's development."

These words should continue to reverberate among our youth in shaping their aspirations and ambitions for this, our beloved country.

I hope that by recalling these words of encouragement from Sir Vere, they would help to summon the better angels of all our people, especially our youth, to greater productivity.

We must understand that the freedom and rights we enjoy today are a sacred trust - a trust that we all have an obligation to protect and advance.

If we betray that trust through lawlessness, criminality, or by neglecting to care for our communities, those rights and freedoms could quickly disappear, as we have seen in places where gangs rule, the law is ignored, and fear prevails.

That must never happen in our beloved Antigua and Barbuda, where, for generations, our forefathers strived, struggled, and fought to give us a better life.

I take this opportunity to thank the many young men and women who have turned away from gang life and embraced the second chances we have offered them.

They are living proof that no one is beyond redemption, and that with the right support, we can all change the trajectory of our lives.

To our youth, I say: there is a better path.

Engage in wholesome activities - whether through sports, music, or the creative arts - and resolve your conflicts peacefully.

Violence is never the answer.

We must replace anger and aggression with understanding and respect.

Ours must be a society where our differences are resolved through dialogue, not with knives and guns.

There are ample opportunities for  
*cont'd on pg 15*



# PM's Independence Message

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*cont'd from pg 14*

upskilling and reskilling through programs offered by ABICE.

For those who dream of earning a degree, UWI Five Islands provides a world-class education, and scholarships to study abroad are available to those who seek further horizons.

Even those without CXC's are not left behind; through our YEEP - Second Chance Program, you can obtain the qualifications you need to matriculate into UWI and other tertiary institutions.

These initiatives are part of our unwavering investment in our people - building the socio-economic infrastructure that will uplift every citizen and provide the tools for a better life.

We have also gone beyond the call of duty to empower our people.

Our administration has incentivized car, home, land, and business

ownership, giving more Antiguan and Barbudans the opportunity to build wealth and security.

These measures are not just about economic growth; they are about empowerment, ensuring that our citizens have the means and opportunities to contribute meaningfully to society.

Parents play a critical role in shaping the destiny of our children, and, therefore, of our nation's future.

I urge all parents to instill sound moral values and ethics in our children.

Let us teach them to respect one another, to cherish discipline, and to take pride in their actions.

Together, we can build a society where our youth are responsible, compassionate, and productive citizens.

So, my fellow citizens and residents, as we celebrate our independence, I urge each of you to take pride

in the progress we have made and to embrace the responsibility that comes with freedom.

Whether you are in Antigua or Barbuda, whether you are a student, a business owner, or a member of our diaspora, you have a role to play in shaping the future of our beloved country.

Let's commit to protect our environment, lift up our communities, and build an Antigua and Barbuda that stands as a beacon of hope, progress, and unity in the Caribbean and the world.

Let us continue to climb the ladder of success.

With faith, discipline, and hard work, we will continue to rise.

May God continue to bless our nation, and may we continue to walk in the path of progress and prosperity.

Thank you, and Happy Independence to all.



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# Regional News



## Haiti confirms date for inauguration of newly-elected president

CMC - The Organization of American States (OAS) and the Venice Commission of the Council of Europe say Haitian authorities have confirmed their intent to maintain February 7, 2026, as the target date for the inauguration of a newly-elected president.

The Washington-based OAS said it continues its work to assist Haiti in developing the “enabling legal framework” for its next general elections in collaboration with the European Commission for Democracy through Law, known as the Venice Commission.

The Venice Commission is the Council of Europe’s advisory body on constitutional matters that provides legal advice to its member states and, in particular, assists states wishing to bring their legal and institutional structures into line with European standards and international experience in the fields of democracy, human rights and the rule of law.

The Venice Commission also helps to ensure the dissemination and consolidation of a common constitutional heritage, “playing a unique role in conflict management, and provides emergency constitutional aid to states in transition,” the OAS said.

In keeping with the Commission’s policy and in line with the OAS Secretary General Luis Almagro’s commitment, the OAS said the work of the Venice Commission is being conducted “in close collaboration with the Hai-

tian state and proceeds from the basis that all solutions to the current crisis must be Haitian-led and Haitian-approved.”

“While participants discussed establishing intermediate steps toward this goal, all parties stressed that the re-establishment of security is a fundamental precondition for holding the referendum and the elections,” said the OAS and the Venice Commission in a joint statement on Friday after a series of high-level meetings, from October 28 to 30, with a delegation from Haiti.

The OAS hosted the meetings through its Department of Electoral Cooperation and Observation (DECO) in following up to the OAS Permanent Council Resolution 1237.

“These sessions focused on essential constitutional and legislative measures needed to facilitate future elections in Haiti,” the statement said. “Haitian authorities reiterated their call for international support, particularly through a United Nations peacekeeping mission, to assist in restoring safety and stability.”

In parallel with these efforts, the OAS and the Venice Commission said the Haitian Steering Committee plans to launch a national consultation on constitutional reform beginning November 7, 2024, with a draft constitution anticipated by the end of December.

This draft is expected to be presented to the Haitian



public ahead of a referendum planned for 2025.

“The Venice Commission has offered to provide recommendations to the draft constitution, while DECO remains available for technical cooperation on specific issues, if requested by Haitian authorities,” the statement said. “Haitian authorities have pledged to keep both the public and international partners informed on the progress of these initiatives.”

In a collaborative spirit, the statement said Haiti, the Venice Commission and the OAS have “committed to open communication channels and to considering a roadmap to support Haiti’s next steps following the adoption of a new constitution.” Conclusions from these discussions will be made available next week.

The Venice Commission is scheduled to issue its final opinion in December 2024 on potential constitutional and legislative solutions for Haiti’s electoral processes.

“This opinion will address several areas discussed during the meetings, such as

the stability of electoral institutions, gender equality in elections, youth representation, voting for Haitians abroad, electronic vote, party funding and formation, security conditions for voters and materials, and voting rights,” the statement said.

At the request of Almagro, the statement said the Venice Commission issued an Interim Opinion in June 2024 on potential constitutional and legislative approaches to elections in Haiti.

“This opinion, while provisional, highlighted the importance of a secure and inclusive electoral framework, and underlined the principle that the Haitian people and their representatives will determine the terms and timing for resolving the current crisis.”

The OAS expressed its gratitude to the governments of Canada, France, and the United States for their “generous contributions, which made it possible to hold these meetings and to secure the participation of the Haitian delegation in these productive discussions.”



## Jamaica: INDECOM concerned about more police officers being prosecuted

CMC - The Independent Commission of Investigations, INDECOM, has expressed concern that a significant number of police officers continue to be prosecuted for serious offenses.

INDECOM is the state agency tasked to undertake investigations concerning actions by members of the security forces

According to the agency's Commissioner Hugh Faulkner, he was hoping that the Police High Command would review a report prepared by INDECOM, with a view to effecting changes to police operations.

He said the police high command should review the conduct of the police to prevent them from being charged.

Speaking during a press conference on Friday, Faulkner revealed that for the period January 2011 to December 2023, more than 150 cases were brought before the courts involving police officers who have been charged.

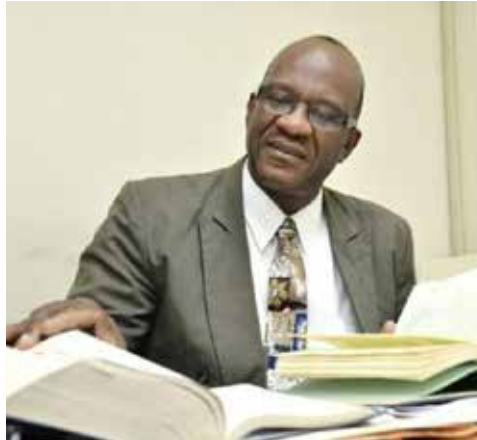
The commissioner also called for the full implementation of body-worn cameras by the Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF) and all law enforcement bodies as police-related fatalities reach alarming levels across the country.

Faulkner then warned that the failure to activate body-worn cameras during police operations not only undermines accountability but also deepens public mistrust in law enforcement.

The commissioner added that at the current rate of fatal and non-fatal shootings by security forces, this year is projected to have the highest number of incidents in 11 years.

"Where they have been worn, the majority of cases have shown that officers fail to turn on the body-worn cameras, especially where a shooting incident occurs."

"Our new case management sys-



Hugh Faulkner

tem ensures that the data is captured on every event that inquiry is made and documented. Equally, the deployment of body-worn cameras to the specialised policing teams has not been introduced at all, and these teams are deployed in prepared and planned operations.

The commission again called for the swiftest and fullest implementation of this critical investigative equipment and tool for the procurement of justice."

The commission noted that, despite the "broken record" recommendation, implementation has not occurred in any meaningful way.

The "broken record" recommendation refers to a recurring recommendation from oversight bodies and human rights organisations regarding the conduct and oversight of Jamaica's security forces, particularly concerning accountability, transparency, and the use of force.

Stakeholders have noted that while the recommendations are consistent, implementation has been slow, leading to ongoing concerns from both domestic and international observers.

Meanwhile, INDECOM Deputy Commissioner Hammish Campbell pointed out that of the 252 fatal and

non-fatal shooting incidents in 2023, not a single one involved the deployment of a working body-worn camera.

"One camera was deployed in a fatal shooting incident, but the officer failed to turn it on, and that matter has been reported to the commissioner of the JCF."

Campbell added that body-worn cameras would significantly enhance the evidence-gathering process and alleviate ongoing concerns regarding alleged abuses by security forces while supporting traffic enforcement.

INDECOM notes that 58 people have been killed by security forces in 50 planned operations as of the end of October.

"So, 40 percent of people killed so far this year have come from planned operations where these specialised teams enter properties, yards, and premises, resulting in fatalities. In not one of those planned operations were body-worn cameras deployed," Campbell stated

In its report tabled in Parliament earlier this week, INDECOM pointed to an ever-increasing number of people being killed by security forces.

"The current projection shows that, unless trends are reversed by the security forces in Jamaica, 2024 will see the highest level of fatal incidents since 2013. In 2013, there were 253 fatalities, indicating a significant issue at present," INDECOM's Commissioner stated.

INDECOM noted that 2019 had the lowest police fatal shootings, with 86, and, since then, there has been an 80 percent increase in police fatal shootings. The numbers for previous years are as follows: 2020 had 115 fatalities, 2021 had 127, and 2022 had 134 police fatal shootings.

*cont'd on pg 18*

## Ex-police officers jailed over Brazil politician's murder

Two former police officers have been jailed in Brazil for the murder of Marielle Franco, a prominent left-wing politician killed in a drive-by shooting in 2018.

Anderson Gomes, Franco's driver, was also killed in the attack but her press officer Fernanda Chaves, who was in the car, survived.

Ronnie Lessa confessed to firing the shots and was sentenced to 78 years and nine months, while Élcio de Queiroz received 59 years and eight months for being behind the wheel.

Franco, a gay Black woman, was an emerging light in Brazil's socialist party, with her death at the age of 38 sparking nationwide protests.

Advertisement

Speaking to the court from prison by video-link, Lessa said he was "blinded" and "driven crazy" by the prospect of a million-dollar reward for the murder.

In March 2024, Brazil's Justice Minister Ricardo



Franco's daughter, mother, sister and father hugging after the verdict.

Lewandowski said the homicide was "evidently politically motivated".

He said Franco wanted to convert property into housing for the poor, while others wanted to use it for commercial use.

Both defendants signed plea bargains, leading to the arrest of politician Chiquinho Brazão and his brother Domingos in March on suspicion of ordering the hit.

Lessa said the brothers

told him Rivaldo Barbosa, the state's chief of police at the time, had signed off the killing. Barbosa was arrested the same month.

After the sentencing, Franco's father Antônio da Silva Neto said his family would continue their fight for justice.

"It doesn't end here because there were masterminds [of the crime]. The question we're asking now is: when will the master-

minds be convicted?"

Life sentences do not exist under Brazilian law and each defendant is expected to serve a maximum of 30 years.

The two were ordered to pay together 706,000 reais (£93,000; \$120,000) in damages to Franco's mother, partner and daughter, and to Gomes' wife.

They were also ordered to pay a pension to Gomes' son Arthur until he is 24.

Chaves, who survived the shooting, told the court how the night unfolded and "completely changed" her life.

Shortly after the attack, Chaves and her family fled the country and she was not able to attend Franco's funeral or memorial service. She has since moved back to Brazil.

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The commission also highlighted that many videos of incidents have been posted online recently.

"This underscores the importance of video footage in understanding police-civilian interactions, and we have seen numerous instances where digital images and video material have aided in establishing the truth in various matters," Commissioner Faulkner remarked.

INDECOM emphasises that police-ci-

vilian interactions must be civil, decent, and respectful.

"While we require trained law enforcement officers to lead in this regard, citizens themselves have a duty to be respectful, civil, and cooperative. Our recommendation is to comply and then complain, as there are several avenues for legal remedy. The citizens of Jamaica are entitled to possess cell phones and recording devices, and to use such devices in a lawful manner," Faulkner said.

*cont'd on pg 19*



## Slavery reparations not about transfer of cash, says Lammy

By Nkechi Ogbonna

UK Foreign Secretary David Lammy has said the concept of reparations for former colonial nations affected by slavery “is not about the transfer of cash”.

In his first comments since 56 Commonwealth leaders in October signed a joint letter saying “the time has come” for a conversation about reparations, Lammy told the BBC that was not “the debate people are wanting to have”.

“I’m keen to emphasise that there’s a sort of simplistic press debate in part of the media that thinks this is about the transfer of cash,” he said.

Speaking in Nigeria, Lammy said instead the UK wanted to look to developing relations with the continent based on the sharing of skills and science.

“It’s not about the transfer of cash, particularly at a time of a cost of living crisis around much of the globe,



David Lammy with Samoa PM Fiamē Naomi Mata’afa at the recent CHOGM summit at which some Commonwealth leaders called for a conversation about reparations.

and certainly in the UK,” Lammy said.

“That is not the debate I think that people are wanting to have. They’re wanting to think about the future.”

Speaking in Lagos, a Nigerian port city once central to the transatlantic slave trade, during his first visit to Africa as foreign secretary, Lammy said it was right the UK had

previously apologised for its role in slavery.

He said: “When we look back on that period, there were many horrors. It was horrific and horrendous in many, many ways. And there are scars that were left, and let’s be clear - I am the descendant of enslaved people, so I recognise that.

“When we were last in

government, we said sorry, and we commemorated the abolition of the slave trade.”

Lammy acknowledged that Caribbean nations had made a 10-point plan for reparatory justice.

But he said he believed developing nations would benefit as part of that through things such as the transfer of

*cont’d on pg 20*

*cont’d from pg 18*

Speaking to court via video-link, she said those responsible for Franco’s murder would spend the rest of their lives hearing Franco’s name and seeing her “face in walls across the world”.

“They took Marielle from us, but they couldn’t take away what Marielle means”, she added.

In court, families and friends clapped and chanted “Marielle is here! Anderson is here!” after the verdict was announced, a phrase popular-

ised in nationwide protests after their deaths in 2018. Anielle Franco said her sister’s legacy would be “evidence that women, black people from the favelas, when they get to positions of power, they deserve to remain alive”.

Franco had worked as a teacher before her sister’s death, but has since founded an institute in her memory and campaigned for various human rights issues. She was appointed Brazil’s minister of racial equality in 2023.

“While there is blood running through our veins, while we are alive,

we will keep defending the legacy and memory of Marielle and Anderson”, she added.

Pastor Henrique Vieira, a federal congressman, said: “I didn’t want her to be a flag, a slogan. She is missed and we really miss Mari’s joy, strength, bravery, brilliance.”

Investigations continue into Barbosa and the Brazão brothers who are alleged to have been involved in the ordering and planning of the attack.

They deny any involvement with the killing or with militias.

# Sports News



## ABICE go joint-top in Under-20 Boys Division in Schools' Football League

The Antigua and Barbuda Institute of Continued Education (ABICE) joined defending champions Antigua State College and Princess Margaret School at the top of the standings in the Under-20 Boys Division in the Ministry of Sports, Cool and Smooth, and Joma Patrick C. Whyte Cup.

ABICE notched up their third win in four matches with a 3-0 victory against Clare Hall Secondary in a rescheduled first-round match at the Clare Hall playing field.

Karique Knight had a sixth-minute conversion,



Jahlanie Barzey of ABICE

Jahlanie Barzey scored in the 37th minute, and Jahmar Malone scored the final goal for ABICE in the 58th min-

ute.

The result allowed ABICE to join State College and Princess Margaret School at the top of the standings with nine points each from four matches. Clare Hall Secondary remain in mid-table with six points after suffering their second loss in four matches.

The schools' football league will resume on Monday with matches in the Under-16 Boys Division.

Clare Hall Secondary will face All Saints Secondary in the first game of a double header at Clare Hall at 2:15 pm.

St. Joseph's Academy will clash with Irene B. Williams Secondary in the second game at 3:30 pm.

Glanvilles Secondary School will take on St. Mary's Secondary School in the first game of a double header at the Golden Grove playing field at 2:15 pm.

Jennings Secondary School will tackle Sir Novel-le Richards Academy in the second encounter at 3:30 pm.

Ottos Comprehensive School and Antigua Grammar School will clash at Antigua Grammar School at 2:15 pm.

*cont'd from pg 19*

technical skills and science expertise from the UK.

The foreign secretary's remarks on reparations follow the issue's discussion last month at CHOGM in Samoa.

The UK has faced growing calls from Commonwealth leaders to pay reparations for the country's role in the slave trade.

Before the Samoa summit, Downing Street had said the issue was not due for discussion but Sir Keir Starmer later signed a document calling for talks on "reparatory justice" alongside other Commonwealth leaders.

Lammy spoke to the BBC at the beginning of a trip in which he will visit Nigeria and South Africa - among the continent's biggest economies.

He said he wanted to launch a five-month consultation period with African nations.

"I think the UK needs a new approach to Africa," the foreign secretary said.

"Much has changed since the last

time my party was in government under Tony Blair and Gordon Brown, where there was a huge commitment to the continent but it was largely based on development.

"The dynamism, the energy here in Lagos. The potential for growth and opportunity in a range of areas. There is so much potential.

"What I hope over the coming months and years is that the UK can partner more, here in Nigeria and on the continent.

"And that the UK is present once more, because what I've heard is that the UK has stepped back somewhat over the last few years, it reflects on our trading figures.

"There's much that I think we can do together over the coming months and years."

Asked about other issues relating to Africa, Lammy said the conflict in Sudan was of "tremendous concern" and said the UK planned to make that a priority during November, when it has the rotational presidency of the United Na-

tions Security Council.

He said: "The loss of life is unbelievable and outstrips other conflicts around the world.

"The humanitarian catastrophe that has now been unfolding for many months is something of tremendous concern.

"We have just become the chair of the UN Security Council and I intend to make Sudan my priority over the course of this next month.

"I will be in New York raising the issues - both the humanitarian issues, but also how we bring the parties together to try and reach a peaceful outcome.

"It's been a subject of huge concern that Sudan has not commanded the international attention that it requires, given the way that it's not just the suffering involved, but the way that it is frankly unpicking stability in the wider region, and will have huge implications potentially if Sudan is to be a totally failed state. Huge implications not just for east Africa and the African continent, but of course for Europe as well."





League champions Sandals remain on course to capture the double in the 2024 Business Basketball Championship. (File photo)

## Richie's Shooters to face Sandals in Business Basketball League Playoff Finals

Former Champions Richie's Shooterz have earned the right to face top seed Sandals in the playoff championship in the Antigua and Barbuda Basketball Association's (ABBA) Cool and Smooth Business Basketball League.

The third-seeded Richie's Shooterz advanced to the finals after clinching their best-of-three semi-final series 2-1 with a 51-46 victory against second-seed Anjo Wholesale in the deciding Game 3 at the JSC Sports Complex on Saturday evening.

Cohen Desouzán shot a game-high 23 points for Richie's Shooterz, while Steven Matthew converted 13 points for Anjo Wholesale.

Anjo Wholesale forced a deciding

Game 3 after leveling their semi-final series 1-1 by surging to a 56-42 victory against Richie's Shooterz in Game 2.

Steven Matthew sank 15 points, and Damion Floyd scored 14 points for Anjo Wholesale, while Cohen Desouza shot a game-high 20 points for Richie's Shooterz.

Sandals have remained on course to capture both titles in the 2024 Business Basketball League.

After capturing the round-robin league title, the top-seeded Sandals made another significant step towards winning the business league playoff championship by advancing to the finals.

Sandals booked their spot in the finals by winning their best-of-three

business league playoff semi-final series 2-0 with a 52-43 victory against the fifth-seeded Antigua Power Company in Game 2.

Keroi Lee sank 17 points, and T-Shawn Lewis scored 15 points for Sandals. Sergio Symister converted 13 points, Ezekiel Francois scored 12 points, and Judah Ferris had 11 points for Antigua Power Company.

Sandals and Richie's Shooterz will clash in the opening game of their best-of-three final series at the JSC Sports Complex on Tuesday (tomorrow) at 7:30 pm.

Game 2 will take place at the same venue on Thursday, and if necessary, the deciding Game 3 will be played on Saturday.

# England levels ODI series against West Indies

NORTH SOUND, Antigua (AP) — Captain Liam Livingstone's first ODI century in a 140-run partnership with Sam Curran inspired England to a five-wicket win over West Indies in the second One-Day International on Saturday to level the three-match series.

England finished their successful run chase on 329 for five with 15 balls remaining at the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium in Antigua.

Livingstone, who hit a top score of 48 in England's eight-wicket loss in the first match at the same venue on Thursday, emerged in full bloom as he reached his century from 77 balls and finished 124 not out from 85 deliveries.

Livingstone produced only four half centuries in 31 previous ODIs. But his accession to the ODI captaincy has been energizing and he showed the full range of his ability as he led England to the second-highest successful ODI chase in the West Indies.

England had been set a formidable target after Livingstone's counterpart, West Indies captain Shai Hope, made 117 to lead his team to 328 for six off their allotted 50 overs.

Young fast bowler John Turner had West Indies in trouble at 12 for two, dismissing Brandon King (7) and Evin Lewis (4), inside four overs after Livingstone won the toss.

Dismissing Lewis was a welcome wicket for England as he made an unbeaten 94 on Thursday to lead the West Indies to victory in the series opener.

Hope and Keacy Carty, who made 71, rebuilt the West Indies innings. Hope and Keacy put on 143 for the third wicket. Carty gave a chance at eight to Bethell, struggled for boundaries early, then marched to his first half century in five ODI innings from



England's captain Liam Livingstone plays a shot against West Indies during the second ODI cricket match at Sir Vivian Richards Stadium in North Sound, Antigua and Barbuda, Saturday, Nov. 2, 2024. (AP)

62 balls.

Hope raised his half century — his 42nd in One-Day Internationals — from 66 balls with a six off a short ball from Bethell.

Carty was out in the 31st over when West Indies were 155 for three. Hope was joined by Sherfane Rutherford (54) with whom he added 79 for the fourth wicket, carrying the West Indies to 234 for four just as the last 10 overs were about to begin.

Hope left in the 47th over when West Indies were 297 for six and in the middle of a late charge, which brought 93 runs from the last 10 overs.

Rutherford continued his superb form of West Indies' recent one-day series in Sri Lanka in which he scored three consecutive half centuries with a top-score of 80. He took his first four from the second ball he faced and added three more and three sixes in reaching 50 from 35 balls.

Shimron Hetmeyer scored a sprightly 24 from 11 balls with three sixes as the West Indies rapidly closed

on 300.

Roston Chase made 20 not out from 22 balls and Matthew Forde hit three consecutive sixes in his 11-ball 23 to keep up the momentum.

In reply, Phil Salt's 59 and a maiden half century by Jacob Bethell (55) gave England a solid start.

Livingstone began watchfully but steadily gained momentum as he eclipsed his previous ODI best of 95. He was in full flow when he took 26 runs from the 45th over, bowled by Jayden Seales, and 24 from Shamar Joseph in the 46th before finishing the chase with plenty to spare.

The match was still in the balance when England reached 176 for four in the 30th over, with the Livingstone-Curran partnership in its infancy and 7.5 runs per over needed to win.

But Livingstone expertly controlled his team's chase with the able assistance of Curran, who was out for a run-a-ball 52 in the 46th over with

*cont'd on pg 23*



## Former Premier League contenders continue good start in First Division

After being relegated from the Antigua and Barbuda Football Association's (ABFA) Premier Division at the end of last season, SAP FC and Empire FC continued their impressive starts to their campaign in the ABFA's First Division during the second round of matches.

Shaquan Telemaque struck a hat trick, and Tyrique Tonge scored twice as SAP FC romped to an 8-0 victory against the Liberta Blackhawks in Liberta.

Jermain Browne, Devonta Geran, and Emerson Henry each scored once for SAP FC, which recorded their second win in as many matches. The Liberta Blackhawks lost for the second time in as many games.

Empire FC also made it two wins in as many games with a 2-0 victory against Lion Hill FC at the Golden Grove playing field.

Dorland Jacobs had a 34th-minute conversion, and Corwin Mathurin scored in the 42nd minute for Empire FC. It was the first outing for Lion Hill FC in the First Division after their scheduled opening

round match against Tryum FC at Golden Grove was not played.

After losing to the Ottos Rangers in the opening round, Police rebounded to snatch a 2-1 victory against newly promoted Urlings FC in their second encounter at the St. Johnstone's Village Stadium.

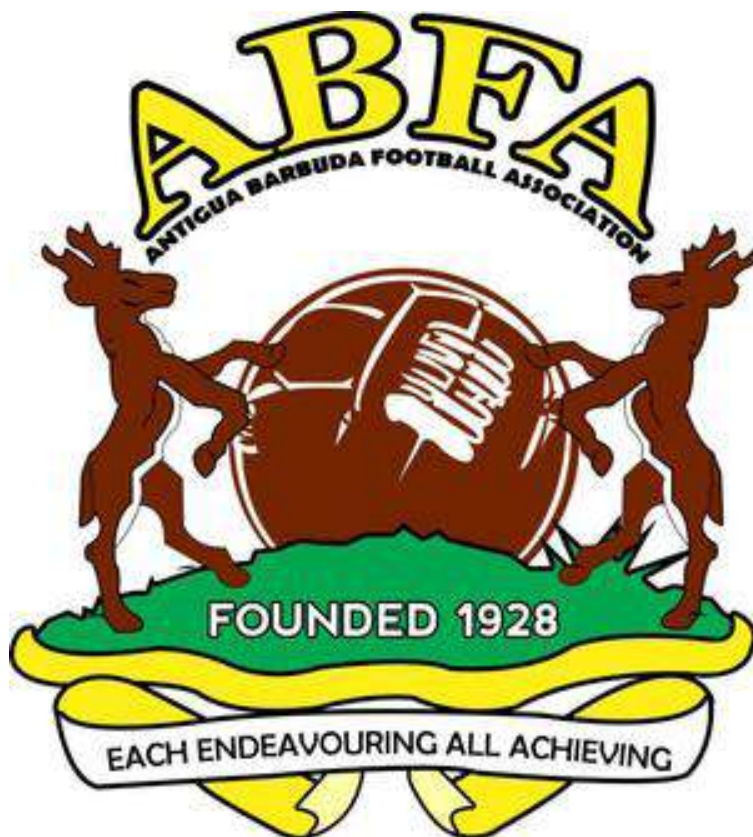
Dimitri Scotland scored in the 7th minute, and Adrian Barron converted a penalty kick in the 75th minute for Police, while Dequanjah Davis had a 27th-minute conversion for Urlings FC.

Urlings FC first round match against Bolans FC ended prematurely with both teams deadlocked at 0-0. Bolans FC's second-round match against Swetes FC at Bolans was not played.

Meanwhile, English Harbour FC has continued their impressive start to the Antigua and Barbuda Football Association's (ABFA) Second Division.

After trouncing TAMO FC 10-1 in their opening match, English Harbour notched up their second win with an 8-0 drubbing of Real Blizzard FC at English Harbour.

Clarence Marsh and



Akeem Weekes each scored tricks, and the other two goals were scored by Delroy Simpson. It was the first outing for Real Blizzard FC in this season's Second Division League.

Earthquake FC launched their Second Division campaign with a 2-1 victory against Guydadli FC at St. Johnstone's Village.

Shaquille Perry and Marlon Matthew each scored once for Earthquake FC, and Nicholas Clarke scored for Guydadli FC,

which lost for the first time after winning their opening encounter.

Stephen Hughes scored twice as Golden Grove FC also made a winning start to their campaign with a 4-2 victory against Belmont FC at Golden Grove.

Kemar Fullood and Jahvier Joseph each converted once for Belmont FC, which suffered their first defeat after winning their opening match.

After their opening match against West Ham FC was postponed, Bethesda picked up their first points with victory by default against TAMO FC, who suffered their second loss after failing to field a team for their match at the Bethesda playing field.

*cont'd from pg 22*

the target in sight at 300 for five.

"Certain things I've done in practice, the end I had to the summer in England ... I felt I was getting back to my best," Livingstone said.

"I'm just maturing a little bit, know-

ing my game pretty well and just enjoying cricket which I know is the main thing. A pretty proud day today."

The third and deciding match of the series will be played at the Kensington Oval in Bridgetown, Barbados, on Wednesday.

## Grenades maintain winning start in Premier League

Sandals and Inet Jennings Grenades continued their impressive start to the Antigua and Barbuda Football Association's (ABFA) Premier Division League on Saturday.

The Grenades surged to their third win in as many matches with a 4-1 victory against Green City in the last game of a triple header at the ABFA Technical Center.

Barrington Blake converted a penalty kick in the 15th minute, and Amali Colbourne also scored a penalty kick in the 18th minute to equalize for Green City, who lost for the second time in three matches.

Ridel Stanislas scored in the third minute of added time (45+3 minutes) to give the Grenades a 2-1 lead at halftime.

After the interval, the Grenades increased their lead as Rick Gordon converted a penalty kick in the 65th minute, and Keiron Richards scored their fourth goal with a conversion in the third minute of added time (90+3 minutes).

Meanwhile, Five Islands and former champions Greenbay Hoppers record-



Players of Sandals and Inet Jennings Grenades. (File photo)

ed their first win in three matches in this season's Premier League.

Tev Lawrence struck a hat trick to propel Five Islands to a 4-1 victory against Parham in Saturday's opening game. Lawrence had conversions in the 31st, 39th, and the second minute of added time (45+2 minutes) in the first half.

The other goal for Five Islands was scored by Juan Melenciano Jr. in the 89th minute. Jamol Yorke scored the only goal for Parham in the 63rd minute. Parham re-

main in the cellar after suffering their third defeat in as many games.

In a game in which both teams failed to convert penalty kicks, the Greenbay Hoppers claimed their first win by snatching a one-nil victory against the Pigotts Bullets in Saturday's second encounter.

Jevorn Stevens scored the only goal of the match in the 32nd minute to win it for the Greenbay Hoppers. Stevens missed a good opportunity to increase his team's margin of victory when he

failed to convert a penalty kick in the 77th minute.

Tyrique Thwaites also squandered a penalty kick for Pigotts Bullets in the 66th minute. After winning their first encounter, the Pigotts Bullets have now suffered back-to-back losses in their other two matches.

The Premier Division will continue with its last third-round match between Aston Villa Lions and Garden Stars at the ABFA Technical Center on Monday (today) at 7 pm.