

# AN APPEAL FOR WOMEN TO TAKE UP CONSTRUCTION

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Minister of Works and Housing Maria Browne, centre, speaks during the debate on the National Budget on Tuesday



# Local News



Housing Minister Maria Browne

## An appeal for women to take up construction

Housing Minister Maria Browne wants to see more women take up careers in the construction industry as she bemoans the dearth of women engaged in that sector.

Speaking during the debate on the National Budget on Tuesday, Minister Browne said as minister responsible for housing development and of works she has only come across ‘a

handful of women’ who are actively engaged in construction.

“Construction is a male-dominated industry and I have only met a handful of females who are interested in construction. In fact, we had about ten interns from the Harrison Centre assigned to National Housing this year and all have agreed to stay on after they were offered permanent jobs by the agency; among them was one female,” she observed.

According to the minister, going forward, it is her wish to see more females taking up jobs in the construction sector.

She noted that there is a scarcity of skilled construction workers in the country and this has led the government to contemplate granting special waivers for skilled non-nationals to come to Antigua and Barbuda to fill those vacancies.

Minister Maria Browne noted also that the wages paid in the construction sector are quite good and females answering the call can be guaranteed that they will receive attractive wages.

“You would have heard of the construction boom, the attractive wages and I believe that it is time for our women to tap into that industry; whether it is heavy-duty, construction itself or construction management, there are many avenues for revenue-generation especially for single mothers,” she exclaimed.

Minister Browne made it clear that the opportunities for women are endless and she is making a special appeal for women to come forward and to share in the many benefits that are available in the construction sector.

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## APUA's Water Business Unit promises much improvements for 2025

APUA's Water Business Unit is expressing its appreciation to water consumers in Antigua for their patience as it grapples with a myriad of challengers to make water readily available on a round-the-clock basis.

Utilities Minister, Melford Nicholas was joined by the authority's General Manager, John Bradshaw, Water Business Unit Manager, Ian Lewis and Hydrologist, Veronica Yearwood in addressing issues with the water production and distribution systems and the plans that are being made to bring an end to the water woes which consumers have been experiencing over an extended period of time.

The minister identified two of the main issues facing the Water Business Unit as the need for increased production of water through the use of reverse osmosis plants and the distribution of that water to households through a distribution network that is old and subject to numerous cracks.

This, he noted, is taking place against the backdrop that the hotels sector is now extending into May and June each year and with activities such as the hosting of additional international conferences on the horizon coupled with the expansion of new housing developments across the island, causing the demand for water to increase almost on a daily basis.

"There is a production challenge and as the prime minister has indicated, we have projects in the pipeline for which we have funding to complete but it's a matter of time so by the end of September, 2025, we expect that we will increase production by approximately seven-and-a-half million gallons daily; the first five million of that amount is being put in place as we speak," Nicholas announced.

GM John Bradshaw said the other half of the challenge that faces APUA

is the aging pipelines through which the water is transported to homes and businesses across Antigua. He said replacing these will take years and especially in St. John's proper, that will be very disruptive for everyone doing business in the city centre.

One of the areas that the general manager plans to do is to utilize new technologies to digitize the system from the turning on-and-off of the valves down to meter reading. "We are a technology company and for us not to be utilizing the available technology would be self-defeating. You should be able to stay in the office and use the technology to move water around the island," he stated.

The Chinese government has pledged to finance the re-piping of Antigua and according to Bradshaw with several miles of pipelines in need of re-



Utilities Minister, Melford Nicholas placement, the task will take between three and four years to complete.

In addition, he disclosed that there is a suggestion to install a sewage system for the city simultaneously as well as to bury all the utility lines underground while the re-piping is taking place.

"APUA is aware of what has to be done to improve the water system and we want to ask the public for their patience as we undertake this massive task," he urged.



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# Local News



## Antigua and Barbuda to be a hub for international conferences

Following the successful hosting of the 4th Conference of Small Islands Developing States (SIDS4) in May this year, the government has been aggressively marketing Antigua and Barbuda as a venue for international conferences and meetings.

Prime Minister Gaston Browne revealed that the SIDS4 conference

drew over 3,000 participants, including 22 Heads of State, and delivered the landmark outcome - the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for SIDS (ABAS).

"The SIDS Conference significantly boosted tourism during a typically slow period, benefiting hotels, businesses, and service providers,

while elevating our country's global profile. SIDS was good for Antigua and Barbuda.

"Building on this momentum, Antigua and Barbuda has been selected to host several other major conferences," he indicated.

Among the events already planned for Antigua and Barbuda is the 43rd Annual Caribbean Travel Marketplace in May next year, to be held for the first time in the Eastern Caribbean.

This event, he added, will bring leading hospitality players for buyer-seller appointments and networking.

"The 55th General Assembly of the Organization of American States in June 2025: This prestigious event, which will attract participation of Foreign Ministers from more than 40 countries, bringing an expected 2,000 participants, filling hotels and continuing employment.

"The Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in 2026: This biennial summit of 56 leaders of Commonwealth nations, will be the largest conference Antigua and Barbuda has ever hosted," he explained.

PM Bowne expects that there will be close to 6,000 delegates at the Meeting and its side events. Every hotel will be full, and our service industry suppliers will be fully engaged.

Additionally, the media coverage for each of these events will give Antigua and Barbuda and its attractions considerable exposure all over the world.

"Clearly, Antigua and Barbuda is respected globally and is fast emerging as a diplomatic centre in the Caribbean," he emphasized.

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# Local News



## Minister Fernandez hosts luncheon for seniors

Parliamentary Representative for St. John's Rural North, Charles 'Max' Fernandez, hosted a memorable Golden Age Seniors' Luncheon on Saturday at the Atlantic View Restaurant, ABHTI. This event marked a heartwarming celebration

of the seniors who form the backbone of the community.

Traditionally, MP Fernandez and his team treat seniors to an island bus tour, exploring scenic sites followed by an afternoon lunch. This year, the event took a delightful turn with the introduction

of a formal luncheon, elevating the experience to a new level of fun and appreciation.

The gathering welcomed over 60 seniors who were treated to a three-course meal meticulously prepared and served by the talented culinary arts students of ABHTI. Adding to the festive atmosphere, live entertainment by Bernard DeNully and Lacu Samuel of Steels and Keys, along with classic oldies from resident DJ Stan, brought smiles and energy to the room.

The luncheon featured exciting activities such as trivia games, door raffles, and a surprise dance competition. Special awards were presented for Best Dressed Male and Female, Most Vintage Male, and Mother with the Most Children in Attendance.

Award Highlights:

Best Dressed Male: Mr. Eustace Cornelius



Best Dressed Female: Mrs. Claudette Nolland

Most Vintage Male: 83-year-old Mr. Cecil Charles

Mothers with the Most Children in Attendance: Mrs. Hildred Nicholas and Mrs. Deliah Daniels, each with 10 children

In his opening remarks, MP Fernandez reflected on the importance of celebrating the seniors who have made invaluable contributions to

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*cont'd from pg 6*

the community. "Our elders are the foundation of our society," he stated. "This annual tradition is a way of showing our gratitude for their wisdom, resilience, and love. Moving forward, I am

committed to hosting more events like this to ensure our seniors feel appreciated and cherished."

The Minister extended his gratitude to the event's sponsors, whose generosity made the day's activities even more

special.

The Golden Age Seniors' Luncheon was a beautiful afternoon of laughter, music, and treasured memories—a true testament to the importance of community and togetherness.



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# Local News



## Community groups donate to Clare Vue Hospital

Dr. Terri London, alongside Level Up Team and The Mitch League, conducted a meaningful holiday outreach program at Clarevue Hospital on Tuesday, delivering essential clothing items and spreading festive cheer to residents and staff.

“During this Christmas season, we felt compelled to reach out to the residents and staff at Clarevue Hospital,” said Dr. London. “Our presence

here goes beyond delivering clothing – it’s about showing these individuals that they are remembered and valued members of our community.”

The initiative recognizes the crucial role Clarevue Hospital plays in providing medical stabilization and safe recovery spaces for individuals facing mental health challenges. Dr. London emphasized that the facility serves those who require specialized care and support during vulnerable periods in their lives.

Drawing from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration’s framework, Dr. London highlighted the four pillars of mental health recovery: health, home, purpose, and community. She called upon the wider public to actively participate in supporting vulnerable members of society, including children, single mothers, and the elderly.

“Every contribution, regardless of size, can make a significant impact in



alleviating the mental health challenges faced within our community,” Dr. London stated. “Our goal is to foster a more compassionate Antigua and Barbuda where everyone feels supported and valued.”

Level Up Team and The Mitch League continue to demonstrate their commitment to community service and mental health awareness through initiatives like this holiday outreach program.



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## Dr. Lisset Bird-Pickens visits for VC Bird Day

Dr. Lisset Bird-Pickens, the last child of Sir Vere Cornwall Bird is visiting the country from Atlanta, Georgia, where she now resides, especially to participate in the events marking the annual observance of VC Bird Day on Monday.

Dr. Bird-Pickens is armed with multiple degrees in education, psychology and behavioural sciences, and she is an educator who teaches at multiple universities, including the University of the West Indies Global Campus, the Caribbean Commonwealth University and the Amer-



ican Public University/the US Military University,

She participated in two of the events held to mark VC Bird Day, the church service held on Sunday at the Salvation Army Citadel and the wreath laying ceremony held at the Bust of VC Bird on Monday.

"I am always interested to me to be afforded the opportunity to celebrate my dad and his contributions to our country. It is important that we keep these memories alive with the annual observance of a day in his



Dr Lisset Bird-Pickens as a child with her father, the late Sir VC Bird



A young Lisset Bird with her father, VC Bird

honour," she told Pointe Express newspaper.

She was asked to deliver an address to the service on Sunday where she spoke on the topic: The Ripple Effect of Leadership and the Legacy of a Servant Leader.

During her address, she remarked that the Citadel has special meaning for her.

"This was not only the place where I celebrated life with my father but also where I would last see his face in human form. It was here at in this very church, a place that taught

and illustrated the beauty of unwavering faith, that my father's soul and spirit were literally ushered into the arms of our Lord. This place, the Salvation Army, was more than just a building to him—it was a living, breathing embodiment of God's work here on Earth," she remarked.

Dr. Lisset Bird-Pickens last visited Antigua and Barbuda back in 2014 when the Gaston Browne Administration re-instated the VC Bird Day festivities.

She is the child of Leona 'Cutie' Francis and VC Bird.



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# Business

## Amazon and eBay to pay 'fair share' for e-waste recycling

By Graham Fraser

Online marketplaces such as Amazon and eBay will have to pay their "fair share" of the costs of recycling electrical waste under new government proposals.

Circular economy minister Mary Creagh said planned reforms would create a "level playing field" for electronics producers by putting more onus on international retailers to contribute to recycling costs.

Some foreign sellers have been able to avoid this charge by selling via online marketplaces, leaving UK-based firms such as Currys to foot much of the bill.

Firms which produce e-cigarettes will also be asked to pay more, with the plans not coming into action until January, 2026.

In 2023, the UN estimated 844 million vapes are thrown away every year - though it said "77 times more" e-waste is generated from unwanted toys.

"Under these new plans, online marketplaces - Amazon, eBay and others - will face much tougher obligations to ensure that overseas sellers who use their platforms contribute to that cost of collection and recycling," Creagh told PA News.



The UK government hope its plan will ensure fairness for UK businesses by making major online marketplaces pay more for the recycling of old technology.

The minister is responsible for the UK government's commitment to a circular economy, which is the idea of reusing, repairing, and the sharing of materials and products to live in a more environmentally sustainable world.

Amazon told BBC News it is "committed to minimising waste and helping our customers to reuse, repair, and recycle their products". It says it offers customers free recycling options including home pick-up via its website.

Other major online marketplaces eBay, Temu and Euronics have not commented yet.

The plans will bring an end to vapes being categorised alongside toys, lei-

sure and sports equipment for recycling purposes.

Instead, a new category for e-waste specifically from vapes will be introduced.

UK non-profit Material Focus estimates five million vapes are either littered or thrown away in general waste every week in the UK.

And it estimates British households throw away over 100,000 tonnes of smaller household electrical items, such as kettles and lamps every year.

Elfbar, one of the UK's leading vape brands, told BBC News it welcomed the change.

"We are committed to providing products that reduce waste and are working with retailers to

support them through regulatory changes while ensuring adult smokers and ex-smokers get continued access to smoking alternatives," said a spokesperson.

The government will also require online marketplaces to register with the Environment Agency and report UK sales from their overseas sellers.

This data will be used to calculate the financial contribution the online marketplaces must make towards the costs of recycling e-waste.

The UK government said the new obligations will be enforced by the Environment Agency and equivalent regulators in Northern Ireland, Scotland

*cont'd on pg 13*





Jamie Foxx's daughter Corinne helped to keep his condition private until he was ready to speak.

## Jamie Foxx reveals he had a stroke in 2023

By Emma Saunders

Hollywood star Jamie Foxx has revealed the cause of his hospital admission in April last year.

Speaking during a Netflix special, the *Django Unchained* star told the audience he'd suffered a "brain bleed that led to a stroke".

He said he had a bad headache one day and asked for an aspirin but before he could take it, he "went out (blacked out). I don't remember 20 days".

At the time, his daughter Corinne Foxx said he had experienced a "medical complication" but the family did not share details about his health issues.

In an emotional chat

with the audience for Jamie Foxx: *What Had Happened Was...*, recorded in Atlanta, the city where he was working when he fell ill, Foxx said he was initially sent home by medics after being given a cortisone injection.

His sister then came over to see him and felt that he wasn't himself so she took him in her car to Piedmont Hospital.

It was then that a doctor told him he was having a brain bleed that had led to a stroke, adding: "If I don't go in his head right now, we're going to lose him."

He said his sister prayed the whole time during his operation outside the the-

atre.

Doctors couldn't locate the origin of the brain bleed.

Foxx also told the audience that "your life doesn't flash before your face, it was kind of oddly peaceful, I saw a tunnel, I didn't see the light."

He joked: "It was hot in that tunnel, am I going to the wrong place?"

Foxx said the doctor told his family: "He may be able to make a full recovery but it's going to be the worst year of his life."

The star heaped praise on his sister Deidra Dixon and daughter Corinne for "holding it down" so no-one would see him.

"They didn't want you to see me like this and I didn't want you to see me like this," he told his fans.

He gestured that his head movements were a little unsteady after the stroke and his daughter was worried people would make memes out of him.

He said he woke up on 4 May 2023 and was in a wheelchair because he was unable to walk, and had no recollection as to why, adding he was initially in denial: "Jamie Foxx don't get strokes."

He revealed he later underwent rehabilitation in Chicago. Foxx had been filming Netflix's *Back In Action* alongside Cameron Diaz when he became ill.

Since then, he has spoken fondly of the support he received from his family but this is the first time he has given detail about his condition.

*cont'd from pg 12*

and Wales. The government says the move will help fund recycling services.

"We welcome the government's new measures to help level the playing field for responsibility for waste, making on-

line marketplaces do their part," said Currys boss Alex Baldock.

"Low value, low quality and unsustainable tech is piling up in landfills, and it's good to see government doing something to tackle that."



# Regional News

## Haiti gang kills 110 people accused of witchcraft

By Vanessa Buschschlüter

At least 110 mostly elderly people have been brutally murdered by gang members in the Haitian capital, Port-au-Prince, according to a human rights group.

The National Human Rights Defence Network (RNDDH) said a local gang leader had targeted them after his son fell ill and subsequently died.

The gang leader reportedly consulted a voodoo priest who blamed elderly locals practising “witchcraft” for the boy’s mystery illness.

The United Nations said the number of people killed in Haiti so far this year in spiralling gang violence had reached “a staggering 5,000”.

While details from the massacre are still emerging, the UN’s human rights chief Volker Türk on Monday put the number of people killed over the weekend “in violence orchestrated by the leader of a powerful gang” at 184.

The killings happened in the Cité Soleil neighbourhood of the capital.

According to reports, gang members seized scores of residents aged over 60 from their homes in the Wharf Jérémie area, rounded them up and then shot or stabbed them to death with knives and machetes.



Haiti has been gripped by bloody gang violence in recent years.

Residents reported seeing mutilated bodies being burned in the streets.

RNDDH estimated 60 were killed on Friday while another 50 were rounded up and murdered on Saturday, after the gang leader’s son had died of his illness.

While RNDDH said that all the victims were over 60, another rights group said some younger people who had tried to protect the elderly had also been killed.

Local media said that elderly people believed to be practitioners of voodoo had been singled out because the gang leader had been told his son’s illness had been caused by them.

Rights groups said the man who had ordered the killings was Monel Felix, also known as Mikano.

Mikano is known to

control Wharf Jérémie, a strategic area in the port of the capital.

According to Romain Le Cour Grandmaison, a Haiti expert at the Global Initiative against Transnational Crime (GI-TOC), the area is small but hard for the security forces to penetrate.

Local media said that residents had been prevented from leaving Wharf Jérémie by Mikano’s gang, so news of the deadly killings was slow to spread.

The group forms part of the Viv Ansanm gang alliance, which controls much of the Haitian capital.

Haiti has been engulfed in a wave of gang violence since the assassination in 2021 of the then-president, Jovenel Moïse.

Data gathered by GI-TOC shows there was

a decline in the murder rate between May and September of this year, after rival gangs had reached an uneasy truce.

But attempts by the gangs to expand their territory beyond their strongholds in the capital have led to particularly bloody incidents in the past two months, with ordinary residents rather than rival gang members being increasingly targeted.

On 3 October, 115 locals were killed in the small town of Pont-Sondé in the Artibonite department.

That massacre was reportedly carried out by the Gran Grif gang in retaliation for some residents joining a vigilante group to resist attempts by Gran Grif to extort locals.

*cont’d on pg 15*



## IDB approves US\$25 million program to enhance Suriname's air transport

The Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) has approved a US\$25 million programme aimed at improving Suriname's air transportation sector, with a focus on enhancing safety, connectivity, and infrastructure. The approval was granted by the IDB's Board of Executive Directors and will fund key improvements to ensure the country meets international civil aviation safety and security standards.

The programme will benefit approximately 465,000 air passengers annually, including residents of Amerindian and Maroon communities, by providing more reliable access to isolated regions, improving operational safety, and reducing the cost and time of transporting both cargo and passengers.

A notable beneficiary will be the Amerindian vil-



lage of Kwamalasamutu, home to 1,308 inhabitants, who will gain better access to essential services such as healthcare and education.

In addition to the direct benefits to communities, the programme is expected to expand employment opportunities, particularly for women, people with disabilities, and the Amerindian population.

By investing in air navigation, communication equipment, and digital technology at several airfields managed by the

Ministry of Transportation, Communications, and Tourism, the programme aims to improve both connectivity and safety.

These improvements will support private sector development, especially in the country's interior.

The operation will focus on key interventions at Paramaribo's international airport, including upgrades to the Zorg en Hoop domestic hub's landside facilities and navigation equipment.

A pilot project will also modernize the Kwamalasamutu aerodrome to fa-

cilitate all-weather operations.

The programme will also address the strengthening of the country's civil aviation system, including the Civil Aviation Safety Authority's regulatory capacity, the creation of an independent Air Accident Investigation Authority, and the introduction of a new, international standard-based fee structure and collection mechanism.

This US\$25 million IDB loan comes with a 23.5-year repayment term, a 7-year grace period, and an interest rate based on the Secured Overnight Financing Rate (SOFR).

The IDB's approval marks a significant step in improving Suriname's air transportation infrastructure, boosting connectivity, and promoting inclusive development across the country.

### *cont'd from pg 14*

If confirmed, the death toll given by the UN for this weekend's killings in Cité Soleil, would make it the deadliest incident so far this year.

With gangs in control of an estimated 85% of Port-au-Prince and increasingly large swathes of the countryside, hundreds of thousands of Haitians have been forced to flee their homes.

According to the International Organization for Migration, more than 700,000 people - half of them children - are internally displaced across the country.

Gang members often use sexual abuse, including gang rape, to sow terror among the local population.

In a report published two weeks ago, Human Rights Watch researcher Nathalye Cotrino wrote that "the rule of law in Haiti is so broken that members of criminal groups rape girls or women without fearing any consequences".

Attempts by the Kenyan-led Multinational Security Support Mission to quell the violence have so far failed.

The international police force arrived in Haiti in June to bolster the Haitian National Police but is under-

funded and lacks the necessary equipment to take on the heavily armed gangs.

Meanwhile, the Transitional Presidential Council (TPC) - the body created to organise elections and re-establish democratic order - appears to be in turmoil.

The TPC replaced the interim prime minister last month and seems to have made little progress towards organising elections.

"They reign over a mountain of ashes," GI-TOC's Romain Le Cour Grandmaison writes of the council in his report.



## Malibu wildfire destroys homes and forces evacuations in California

By Christal Hayes

Thousands have been ordered to evacuate near the city of Malibu in the US state of California after a fast-moving wildfire broke out and burned hundreds of acres - including several homes.

The blaze has been dubbed the Franklin Fire by authorities, who say it started in Malibu Canyon at about 22:50 local time on Monday (06:50 GMT).

A mandatory evacuation order is in place for a wide swathe of Malibu. No injuries have been reported but the blaze has destroyed multiple houses.

It is not yet clear what caused the fire but the region has been under a red-flag warning, meaning conditions are ripe for extreme fires.

Malibu itself is a small, upmarket city west of Los Angeles that is popular with celebrities. Homes owned by stars including Lady Gaga, Beyonce and Jay Z were reportedly among those in the evacuation zone.

More than 2,700 acres of land have so far been burned, according to the latest update from the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (Cal Fire).

Photos showed the aftermath of the blaze's path, with burned out cars and buses as well as the charred



The remnants of a home in Malibu after the blaze roared through the area.

remains of homes.

Schools in the area have closed, roads are shut, and power has been cut in the area to prevent worsening the blaze.

Meanwhile, evacuation centres have been opened for residents and animals. More than 5,000 people were in the evacuation zone, according to data from Cal Fire.

The blaze broke out near Pepperdine University, a private ocean-side school. The university had ordered students to shelter in place but has since lifted those orders, though the school continues to encourage students to remain on campus since nearby roads are closed for crews fighting the blaze. Power to the much of the campus and wider area had been cut and was expected to stay that way for the "foreseeable future", the

school added.

Footage showed students at the school sheltering in the school's library as a wall of fire approached on Monday evening. Fire crews hosed down the flames. The school reported there was minor damage on campus but no students or staff had been injured.

Wildfires more generally in California have the capacity to burn through tens of thousands of acres of vegetation due to the typical dry conditions in the region, meaning that this blaze is relatively small - although officials were quick to highlight its speed of spread.

Malibu city authorities initially said the fire was about three miles (4.8km) north of the Pacific Coast Highway (PCH) - an iconic road along the Pacific Ocean known for its stunning views - but it quickly

spread south across the road into the Malibu Pier area. The pier itself and other structures had been affected, they said.

The evacuation order covered a region that included east of Malibu Canyon Road and South of Puma Road as well as the Serra Retreat area, the County of Los Angeles Fire Department said.

A map of the blaze shows it was bordering city hall government facilities, a school and a number of homes in the area - including a line of ocean-front properties.

The latest incident comes about a month after another fire forced thousands of people to evacuate another nearby city, Moorpark.

California is a state that is prone to wildfires. The

*cont'd on pg 17*



## US gives \$20bn to Ukraine funded by seized Russian assets

By Maia Davies

The US has given \$20bn (£15bn) to Ukraine, funded by the profits of seized Russian assets.

The economic support forms a significant part of a \$50bn (£39bn) package agreed by G7 member nations announced in June.

Funding the aid through frozen assets means Russia has to “bear the costs of its illegal war, instead of taxpayers,” US Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen said.

It comes a matter of weeks before US President Joe Biden is replaced by Donald Trump, who has said he wants to end the war in Ukraine quickly upon taking office.

The president-elect has characterised financial support to Kyiv as a drain on US resources, casting doubt on whether aid will continue under the new administration.

The US Treasury said on Tuesday that it had transferred the \$20bn to a World Bank fund, where it will be available for Ukraine to draw from.

Money handled by the



World Bank cannot be used for military purposes.

The administration had hoped to dedicate half of the money to military aid, the Reuters news agency reported, but this would have required approval from Congress.

There were months of delay, amid political wrangling in the House of Representatives, before \$61bn of military aid for Ukraine was approved in April.

The \$20bn will give the country “a critical infusion of support” as it defends it-

self “against an unprovoked war of aggression,” Yellen said in a statement on Tuesday.

It follows months of discussion among the US and its allies, including the EU, on how to use the approximately \$325bn (£276bn) worth of assets that were frozen since Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine began in 2022.

In October, the G7 agreed to use the interest generated by the assets – around \$3bn (£2.4bn) a year – to fund \$50bn in credit

over 30 years. Payments were expected to start by the end of the year.

The EU has committed more than €18bn (£15bn) funded in the same way.

The \$50bn is intended to ensure Ukraine has “the resources it needs to sustain emergency services, hospitals, and other foundations of its brave resistance,” Yellen said.

It comes at a critical juncture for Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky’s forces, who have been ceding territory recently.

Moscow has been re-taking ground in eastern Ukraine and in Russia’s Kursk – which Ukrainian forces launched an offensive in over the summer – while Ukrainian troops have painted a dismal picture of the war’s frontlines.

*cont’d from pg 16*

amount of burned areas in the summer in northern and central California increased five times from 1996 to 2021 compared with the 24-year period before, which scientists have attributed to human-caused climate change.

Not all wildfires can automatically be

linked directly to climate change. The science is complicated and human factors, including how we manage land and forests, also contribute.

However, scientists say that climate change is making weather conditions that lead to wildfires, such as heat and drought, more likely.



# Sports News



## IBWS and SNRA end campaigns in schools' football's Under-16 Division

Irene B. Williams Secondary (IBWS) and Sir Novelle Richards Academy (SNRA) have wrapped up their campaigns in the Under-16 Boys Division of the Ministry of Sports, Cool

and Smooth, and Joma Patrick C. Whyte Cup competition.

Irene B. Williams Secondary completed their campaign by salvaging a 1-1 draw with Jennings

Secondary School at the Keithley Sheppard Recreational Park on Friday.

Miquel Pajano scored the equalizer for Irene B. Williams Secondary in the 38th minute after Kaleel

Lawrence gave Jennings Secondary the lead with an 18th-minute conversion.

The result ensured that Irene B. Williams finished their campaign third from the bottom of the standings with eight points from their quota of 10 matches in the 11-team round-robin competition.

It also allows Jennings Secondary School to remain second from the bottom of the standings by advancing to five points from nine encounters with one game remaining.

The Sir Novelle Richards Academy concluded their campaign by claiming their fourth win via default against St. Mary's Secondary School, which failed to show up for their final encounter at the Keithley Sheppard Recreational Park.

The result allows Sir Novelle Richards Academy to finish with 12 points from their quota of 10 matches. The St. Mary's Secondary School, which has one game left to play, will remain on 12 points after suffering their fifth loss in nine matches.

Defending champions Princess Margaret School (PMS), currently in second place, and leaders Ottos Comprehensive School (OCS) are the two teams in contention to capture this year's title in the Under-16

*cont'd on pg 19*

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## Final four teams to battle in semi-finals of Business football league

The final four teams will continue their quest for supremacy in the 2024 JOMA Caribbean Ministry of Sports Business Football League Championship in the semi-finals at the Antigua Recreation Grounds (ARG) on Wednesday (today).

The Ministry of Agriculture will face DEWS Pro Builders in the first semi-final at 6:30 pm, and Sandals Resort will clash with Hermitage Hotel in the second encounter at 7:30 pm.

All four teams booked their spots into the semi-finals after securing victories in their respective matches in the quarter-finals, which took place at the Keithley Sheppard Recreational Park and the Radio Range playing field in Ottos on Saturday.

The Ministry of Agriculture snatched a 2-1 victory against the Antigua Port Authority at the Radio Range playing field. Daniel Bryan Roosevelt and Hal-



Roy Gregory

dain Spencer were the goal scorers for the Ministry of Agriculture. Stephon Whyte scored for Antigua Port Authority.

DEWS Pro Builders also prevailed 2-1 against

the General Post Office in their quarter-final encounter at the same venue.

Leroy Graham had a 32nd-minute conversion, and Shevorn Moore scored in the 37th minute for

DEWS Pro Builders. Neymar Arias scored the lone goal for the General Post Office in the 53rd minute.

Sandals prevailed 5-3 in a penalty shootout against Cocos/Keyonna in their quarter-final affair at Keithley Sheppard Recreational Park.

Sandals won the penalty shootout after both teams played to a goalless draw at the end of 60 minutes of regulation play.

Hermitage Hotel trounced APUA Head Office 7-0 in the other quarter-final match at the same venue.

Roy Gregory scored twice with conversions in the second and 34th minutes.

The other goals were scored by Romar Perry in the seventh minute, Hanel Burrell in the 26th minute, Samuel Semper in the 32nd minute, Jevonte Benjamin in the 41st minute, and Jamory Galloway in the 45th minute.

*cont'd from pg 18*

Boys Division.

Princess Margaret School has 22 points, two adrift of Ottos Comprehensive School, as both teams remain the only unbeaten sides in the round-robin competition.

Both teams will clash in their final outing, which will determine the champions, in the last match of the competition at the Antigua Recreation Ground (ARG) on Thursday, December 12, at 3:30 pm.

That encounter will be preceded by a match, which will determine the third-place finishers, between All Saints Secondary and St. Joseph's Academy at the same venue at 2:15 pm.

All Saints Secondary is currently in third place with 19 points, one more than St. Joseph's Academy, which is in fourth place, from nine matches apiece.

The title winners of the Under-14 Division will also be decided at the An-

tigua Recreation Grounds on Wednesday (today), when the top three teams will play their final matches.

Defending champion Princess Margaret School, in third place on goal difference with 19 points, will clash with leaders Clare Hall Secondary, which has 22 points, at 2:15 pm.

The Antigua Grammar School, in second place on goal difference with 19 points, will take on St. Joseph's Academy, which is in fifth place with 14 points, at 3:15 pm.



# Sports News



## TG Welding lose first match in defense of title in MPL

Buck and Sons Landscaping Services has ended the winning start of defending champions TG Welding in defense of their title in the Mandy Premier League (MPL), Cool and Smooth, Joma, and Sherma Jackson Business Softball Cricket League.

After winning their first two matches, TG Welding suffered their first loss in an eight-wicket defeat to Buck and Sons Landscaping in their third game of the 10-over competition at the Potters playing field on Sunday.

TG Welding batted first and was restricted to 92 for nine off their 10 overs. Essan Warner scored 30, Charanlall Ramjohn made 20, and Richie Thomas got 12. Kimani George grabbed three for 14, and Elroy Francis Jr. captured two for 27.

In reply, Buck and Sons secured victory by reaching 94 for two with one ball to spare. Male player of the match Elroy Francis Jr. struck 46, and Denley Thomas scored 19. Essan Warner picked up one for 15.

The female player of the game was Kimberly Anthony of Buck and Sons Landscaping Services. TG Welding will remain on 20 points from three matches.

Buck and Sons Landscaping Services advanced to 35 points after claiming their third win in four



Elroy Francis Jr.

matches with a 17-run victory against the Antigua and Barbuda Defense Force (ABDF).

Buck and Sons Landscaping Services made 99 for seven off their 10 overs. Male player of the game Kenrick Scott hit 37, Denley Thomas scored 25, and Kimani George got 17. Kerry Burton picked up two for 15.

After losing their first two matches, Construction Solutions recorded two wins to advance to 20 points from four encounters.

Construction Solutions defeated Grill Box AGSPT by nine wickets in a match that was reduced to six overs per side.

Male player of the game Melvin Charles bagged two wickets for nine runs as Grill Box AGSPT was restricted to 30 for five off their six overs.

In reply, Construction Solutions achieved victory at 31 for one in 3.4 overs. Clarence Francis made 14, while Steve Martin picked up the one wicket to fall for one run as Grill Box AGSPT will remain on five points after suffering their second defeat in three matches.

Jenny Scot of Construction Solutions claimed the female player of the game award.

Construction Solutions crushed Pel Mix Stars by 100 runs. Construction Solutions made 137 for two off their 10 overs. Male player of the match Clarence Francis slammed 59, and Melvin Charles hit 50. Isiah Viville took one for 19.

In reply, PEL Mix Stars were restricted to 37 for four in 10 overs. Isiah Viville made 15. Jevaughn James grabbed two wickets for five runs, and Kerique Mentore captured two for 10.

In reply, the ABDF were restricted to 82 for seven off their 10 overs. Tron Payne smashed 37, while female player of the game Kimberly Anthony took two wickets for nine runs, and Kimani George claimed two for 12.

The ABDF will remain on 10 points after suffering their third defeat in four matches.



## Joseph fined for breaching ICC Code of Conduct

West Indies pacer Alzarri Joseph has been fined 25 percent of his match fee for breaching Level 1 of the International Cricket Council (ICC) Code of Conduct during first One-Day International (ODI) against Bangladesh at Warner Park in St. Kitts on Sunday.

Joseph was found to have violated Article 2.3 of the ICC Code of Conduct for Players and Player Support Personnel, which relates to the “use of an audible obscenity.”

The incident took place before the start of play, when Joseph used offensive and abusive language during an exchange with the fourth umpire.

The umpire had asked Joseph to avoid stepping onto the pitch with his spikes on, which prompted the inappropriate language.

As a result of the breach,

Joseph has also received one demerit point, marking his second offence in a 24-month period.

The sanction was accepted by Joseph, who admitted to the offence and agreed to the proposed penalty.

This decision was made in consultation with Jeff Crowe of the Emirates ICC Elite Panel of Match Referees, and no formal hearing was deemed necessary.

The charge was levied by on-field umpires Kumar Dharmasena and Leslie Reifer, third umpire Asif Yaqoob, and fourth umpire Gregory Brathwaite.

Level 1 breaches under the ICC Code of Conduct carry a minimum penalty of an official reprimand, a maximum penalty of 50 percent of a player’s match fee, and one or two demerit points.



Alzarri Joseph

*cont'd from pg 22*

He dealt three early blows before Gu-dakesh Motie claimed two for 36 to keep Bangladesh on a leash for much of the middle overs.

Bangladesh got to their 200-plus total mainly due to a record eighth-wicket 92-run partnership between Mahmudullah and Tanzid Hasan, who made 45 off 62 balls.

Mahmudullah hit a top score of 62, which was also his third consecutive fifty in ODIs, as he and Tanzid Hasan rescued Bangladesh from a precarious position of 115 for seven.

Roston Chase ended the partnership in the 44th over when he caught Tanzid off his own bowling. It was a fine effort from the young cricketer,

hitting six boundaries in his 62-ball stay.

Mahmudullah followed Tanzid back to the pavilion in the next over, caught by Motie of Seales. His 62 came off 92 balls, including two fours and four sixes.

It is only the second time in his career that Mahmudullah scored three fifties in a row in ODIs.

When the home side replied to Bangladesh’s 227, King got off to a strong start with five boundaries in the first seven overs, hitting the ball well square on both sides of the pitch.

The pair completed their second century opening partnership this year. King has been involved in the West Indies’ last five century opening stands.

This one ended when Lewis was caught and bowled by Rishad Hossein.

King fell to a Nahid Rana yorker in the 29th over after adding 66 runs for the second wicket with Carty. King struck eight fours and three sixes in his 76-ball stay.

Carty fell soon after King, slicing a catch to Rana off Afif Hossain. Rutherford and Hope then combined to seal victory for the West Indies.

Rutherford played out the final rites of the match when he disdainfully swung Shoriful Islam over square leg for two sixes in the 37th over to complete the win.

Both teams will clash in the third and final ODI at the same venue on Thursday.

## Windies beat Bangladesh to clinch ODI series

The West Indies coasted to a seven-wicket win in the second One-Day International (ODI) against Bangladesh at Warner Park in St. Kitts on Tuesday to take an unassailable 2-0 lead and clinch the three-match series.

It was West Indies' first ODI series win against Bangladesh in 10 years. Bangladesh had won the last four ODI series between the two sides.

The West Indies broke Bangladesh's 11-match winning streak against the men from the Caribbean with a five-wicket win in the first ODI at the same venue on Sunday.



Bangladesh batsman Mahmudullah, right, bats during the second ODI against the West Indies at Warner Park in St. Kitts on Tuesday, December 10, 2024. (Getty Images)

Jayden Seales' career-best figures of four for 22 led the home side's bowling efforts as the West

Indies bowled out the visitors for 227 in 45.5 overs.

Opener Brandon King then struck a rapid 82 to accelerate West Indies' chase, as they completed the win by reaching 230 for three in 36.5 overs. Fellow opener Evin Lewis struck 49 off 62 balls, and Keacy Carty made 45 off 47 balls.

Captain Shai Hope made 17 not out, and Sherfane Rutherford, who struck 113 in the first game, hit an unbeaten 24 off 15 balls to wrap up the match.

Seales gave West Indies the foundation for this win.

*cont'd on pg 21*



West Indies fast bowler Jayden Seales, right, celebrates with Roston Chase during the second ODI against Bangladesh at Warner Park in St. Kitts on Tuesday, December 10, 2024.