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PM BROWNE TO ADDRESS ICJ TODAY

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Prime Minister Gaston Browne (third from left) and Brig. of the ABDF, Telbert Benjamin (right) paid a joint visit to Redonda for the first time last Friday. *Story on page 8.*

PM Browne to address the International Court of Justice today

Prime Minister Gaston Browne is in the Netherlands where he will address the International Court of Justice (ICJ) today on the matter of a request for the Court to provide an advisory opinion on the Obligations of States in respect of Climate Change. The request made by Small Island Developing States (SIDS) was made in response to the vulnerability of SIDS to the adverse effects of Climate Change, which are due to their geographical circumstances and level of development.

Prime Minister Browne, in concert with other Small Island Developing States, has played a leading role in the pursuit of climate justice. Prime Minister Browne's advocacy has taken him to fora outside of the UNFCCC; to the UNGA, to the ITLOS and to SIDS creating the Commission of Small Island States on Climate Change and International Law (COSIS).

In 2022, the Commission sought the first-ever advisory opinion from the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea, on the obligations of states to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions.

In May of this year, the Tribunal rendered an historic opinion, affirming that major polluters are under a legally binding obligation to protect the oceans - and by extension, Small Island



From left: Kausea Natano, Prime Minister of Tuvalu, Gaston Browne, Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda, and Arnold Loughman, Attorney General of Vanuatu, pose for a photo after attending a hearing at the International Tribunal for the Law of the Seas (ITLOS) on September 11, 2023 in Hamburg, northern Germany. (Photo by Gregor Fischer / AFP) (Photo by GREGOR FISCHER/AFP via Getty Images)

States - from catastrophic harm.

The ITLOS decision sets the stage for the oral hearings now before the International Court of Justice for the next two weeks, initiated under the leadership of Vanuatu, with the co-sponsorship of Antigua and Barbuda and other SIDS.

Ninety-Eight states and twelve international organizations have expressed their intention to participate in the proceedings before the Court commencing on Monday. Prime Minister Gaston Browne will address the Court at 10 AM EST Time.

Immediately following the Prime Minister's address, Crown Counsel II and Agent to the ICJ for the proceedings, Zachary Phillips will present legal arguments

on behalf of Antigua and Barbuda.

In his address to the ICJ, Prime Minister Browne is expected to outline the dire situation of the climate crisis, and make the linkage between the climate crisis and sovereign debt.

The country's leader is expected to also highlight Antigua and Barbuda's tireless work to address the climate crisis, pointing out that at every Conference of the Parties, from Paris to Baku, he has joined with other vulnerable nations to demand action on financing and justice.

The country's leader is also expected to make clear that Antigua and Barbuda is not pointing fingers but seeks clarity on the obligations of States under in-

ternational law before time runs out on Small Island Developing States.

Prime Minister Browne's statement will ask the court what States should do to protect the climate system for present and future generations and what is the responsibility of those whose actions have contributed disproportionately to the crisis.

Antigua and Barbuda's delegation to the ICJ hearing of Oral Arguments in the Climate Advisory proceedings also includes Crown Counsels II Nneka Nicholas and Jeniece St. Romain and COSIS Officer, J'Moul Francis from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Prime Minister Browne returns to Antigua and Barbuda on Wednesday.

Government provides insights into 2025 Budget

The presentation of the National Budget for 2025 will not take place until Thursday, but already Prime Minister Gaston Browne is providing the public with some insights of what he has in store come Budget Day.

Prime Minister Browne has indicated that there will be no new taxes...despite having one of the lowest tax-to-GDP rates in the Caribbean, the government will not impose any additional tax measures in the 2025 Budget.

The prime minister will also hail Antigua and Barbuda's achievements in reducing its debt to GDP ratio from 104 percent in 2014 to approximately 60 percent in 2024, the lowest in the Eastern Caribbean Currency Union.

Other areas of focus, include the planned upgrade of the country's road network where already some of the major highways have either been completed or are works in progress. The government has also allocated \$20 million to purchase heavy duty equipment to help in the road programme.

The water situation will also be addressed...the government is promising that by August next year the country will have full water production capacity. Other successes are the seven new

fire trucks, equipment for National Solid Waste Management Authority and the planned expansion of the Barbuda runway.

"We have had a good

year and we want to share the good news with the population," PM Browne stated.

Additionally, the prime minister will spend some time talking about his gov-

ernment's many policies designed to ignite entrepreneurship among nationals, enhance public services and infrastructural development.



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PM Browne offering scholarships to UPP parliamentarians

Prime Minister Gaston Browne has again underscored the value of personal development and growth for anyone seeking higher office in Antigua and Barbuda.

In particular, the prime minister has pledged to offer scholarships to members of the opposition United Progressive Party to pursue higher learning at the University of the West Indies, Five Islands Campus. This goodwill gesture, according to the prime minister is to al-

low them to be better rounded individuals and to assist them to make more meaningful presentations whenever they have to speak on various topics in the parliament.

Speaking on Saturday's Browne and Browne show, PM Browne repeated his offer to the UPP Political Leader, Jamale Pringle to take up a scholarship and added that this offer also extends to other members of the party's leadership.

"I have personally called on the

Leader of the Opposition, even though he is my political opponent, I reached out to him about six and a half years ago, to encourage him to do a degree. I advised him that the university would soon come on stream and that he should pursue his studies there. Even now, if Pringle wants a scholarship I would give it to him and I'm not being facetious here," PM Browne remarked.

The prime minister contends that people in leadership need to be properly trained in order to be effective in today's environment. "I'm not saying that you must have a degree to govern, however, when you have a trained mind you make better decisions because the mind is trained to be a little more rational, to look at multiple options rather than to settle on option one, and to think critically," he declared.

According to the nation's leader, the brain is a muscle in the body that gets better from constant exercise. "That is what education does for us; you are building intellectual muscles and clearly, Pringle's muscles are weak," he observed.

PM Browne said the offer for scholarships does not end with Pringle but it is for any other parliamentarian within the ranks of the UPP.

In contrast to what is happening in the UPP, the prime minister noted that there has been a concerted effort by aspiring politicians in the governing party to attain university certification. He used the opportunity to congratulate the latest member of the Senate, Sen. Lamin Newton, who himself has been pursuing a degree at the UWI FIC and will complete his programme of study shortly.

Since taking office back in 2014, PM Browne said many of the younger members of the ABLP have pursued university studies to improve their professional qualifications.



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CHAPA unveils another model home

The Central Housing and Planning Authority is unveiling another housing development that it is bringing into the market in partnership with a private company.

Housing Executive Officer, Mark Richards, announced that CHAPA has entered into an agreement with a local company - HBJ Ltd. – to bring into the market a total of 65 three- and two-bed-

room homes at an area called, Senjen, near Glanville’s on the way to Willikies.

“We are doing another public/private partnership with HBJ Ltd. with local principals, Ambassador Johan Hesse and Kevin Joseph together with Colombian national, Martha Manuel. Our mandate is to bring affordable housing to the population so this is another effort to do just that. We are very happy with

the product as I have said previously, we get better results with public/private partnerships in terms of price, quality and efficiency. These homes meet that standard,” he stated.

The first model home – a three-bedroom 2-and-a-half bath unit - was presented to representatives from the commercial banks and other institutions as

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Local News



cont'd from pg 5

well as the insurance companies last Friday. According to Richards the feedback from the two industries has been ‘very positive’.

“Most of the insurance companies said that they would classify the house as an ‘A-Class’ structure in terms of hurricane resistance. It is not a new technology to Antigua and Barbuda so it has been well-proven. We have an affinity for concrete culturally, and this checks ‘all the boxes’ for CHAPA,” he indicated.

The model house will be available at just under \$300.00 per square foot, which is about 25 percent less than the market value

and will be available at various price options. Additionally, a two-bedroom, 2-baths model is nearing completion and would soon be available for display.

HBJ director, Hesse said his company welcomes the collaboration with CHAPA, through which his company will build the homes from its resources and CHAPA provides the land and it will be the agency through which these homes are sold. He also provided background information on his company.

“HBJ is a local company and we have partnered with Colombian affiliates so that we can benefit from negotiations for building materials and components from Co-



lombia. They have excellent prices on building components hence we saw it fit to partner with someone out of Colombia. We have over thirty years of building experience locally among the team in both the design and the construction spaces and

we felt that it was time to enter into an arrangement similar to this one we have with CHAPA,” he revealed.

Under the agreement, HBJ will construct houses from 700-square foot and ‘beyond’ to include townhouses and mid-rise structures.



Cruise industry starts December on high note

The month of December, traditionally, one of the busiest for the cruise sector has started on a high note, with a total of over eleven thousand passengers spending Sunday, the first day of the month, in Antigua and Barbuda.

There were five cruise ships in the St. John's Harbour with a sixth vessel spending the day in the sister island Barbuda.

Reports from the Antigua Cruise Ports state that the Arvia arrived on Saturday for its second fortnightly visit for the season and overnighted with 5,219 pas-



The Arvia

sengers. The vessel left on Sunday night.

The other four vessels in the St. John's Harbour were the Vista of the Oceania Lines with 956 passengers, Carnival Venezia with 4,062 passengers, Viking Sea with

502 passengers and Explorer 2 with 372 passengers. The Star Flyer with 145 passengers spent the day in Barbuda.

The total number of passengers was 11,256 with 11,111 in Antigua and 145

in Barbuda.

With this many visitors spending the day in Antigua and over in Barbuda... it meant that taxis and other related businesses enjoyed what must have been a 'very good day'.

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The nation records its fourth traffic fatality for the year

A family is mourning the loss of a loved one who succumbed to his injuries following a traffic accident on the Sir George Walter Highway early Friday morning.

The Traffic Department is reporting that 60-year old Trevor Roberts of St. Johnson's Village was traveling from west to east at approximately 6:30 in the

morning when he apparently lost control of the vehicle and it collided with a utility pole.

According to the reports Roberts was traveling alone at the time of the accident. He reportedly sustained multiple injuries and was transported to the SLB-MC via the EMS. He was said to have been in an unconscious state when he

arrived at the hospital and from the reports, he never regained consciousness.

At approximately 11:00 pm on Friday, he was pronounced dead in the hospital's Intensive Care Unit. His death brings to four the number of road fatalities for 2024.

The traffic department said investigations into the incident are ongoing.

PM Browne, Brig. Benjamin visit Redonda

Prime Minister Gaston Browne and Brigadier Telbert Benjamin, Chief of the Antigua and Barbuda Defence Force, have paid a joint visit to Redonda for the first time last Friday, exploring the island's ongoing conservation efforts and plans for its future as a protected area.

The tour was organised by the Environmental Awareness Group (EAG), and it served to provide an opportunity to showcase the progress being made in restoring Redonda's ecosystem.

The delegation observed firsthand the island's transformation, including efforts to preserve its unique wildlife and habitat.

Redonda, a critical part of Antigua and Barbuda's conservation strategy, is being developed as a key feature of the Redonda Ecosystem Reserve.

The EAG team highlighted their commitment to partnership, emphasizing the importance of collabo-



PM Browne with EAG Representative on Redonda

ration with the Government of Antigua and Barbuda and the Defence Force. With support from these stakeholders, the group aims to achieve ambitious conservation goals, aligning with the global "30 by 30" initiative, which seeks to protect 30% of the world's land and ocean areas by 2030.

The visit underscored the shared vision for Redonda as a symbol of success-

ful, locally-led conservation efforts. The EAG expressed excitement about the island's potential as a model for sustainability and a beacon for marine and terrestrial protection.

Prime Minister Browne's engagement reflects the government's dedication to advancing environmental stewardship in Antigua and Barbuda. Brigadier Benjamin's presence

further highlighted the Defence Force's role in safeguarding the nation's natural heritage.

The Redonda Ecosystem Reserve is set to become a cornerstone of the nation's environmental strategy, blending ecological restoration with long-term protection efforts. With continued collaboration, Redonda promises to be a lasting legacy for future generations.

Derelict vessel removed from Marina Bay

The Antigua Barbuda Defence Force (ABDF) Coast Guard has removed a derelict motor vessel from the waters at Marina Bay and now it wants the owner/owners to come forward to claim it.

In a media release the Coast Guard said it took the action while acting within its legislated authority and on behalf of the receiver of wrecks, the Antigua Barbuda Department of Marine Services and Merchant Shipping (ADOMS). It reported that the vessel was removed and repositioned at the ABDF Coast Guard Headquarters, Deep Water Harbour facility.

“The vessel, of what appears to be a white Boston



Whaler, approximately 18 feet in length and bearing no clear identifying markings, was removed after being found partially submerged while moored in the Marina Bay Area.

“This action was taken to mitigate the risk of further submersion and subse-

quent emergence as a navigational hazard,” the release stated.

It urged the owner/operator of the vessel to complete his/her claim at the ABDF Coast Guard Headquarters, Monday to Friday between the hours of 9 am to 5 pm local time. Kindly note that

any individual giving claim to the vessel MUST present valid documentation in support of this claim to achieve effective release. All other queries may be channeled to the Operations Officer, Lieutenant (Junior Grade) Randolph Best at 268-729-5802, the Coast Guard hotline at (268) 462-3206 or 462-2841(2)(3).

The ABDF Coast Guard remains steadfast in ensuring the safety of Antigua and Barbuda’s maritime space including all navigable and unnavigable waters in the sovereign state; maintaining its mandate in consistent pursuit of the Force’s mission to better serve the citizens of Antigua and Barbuda.

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Suite for days

By Tony Deyal

My column today is dedicated to four doctors. The first is a young man, Dr Adam Wildman, who helped me when I was more cut up than a 'Julienne salad'. However, since I never had one, I will go for a "pooyah" or cutlass, what we used to call a "cot lash".

Adam made sure I did not end up in a hospital bed. The second is Dr David Bratt. He deals with youngsters but shares "old talk" with me. When I asked for advice, he immediately responded: "You need to see a dermatologist!" This is how the third doctor, Dr Marilyn Suite, ended up waiting in the wings.

The fourth doctor, my cricket friend Dr Patrick Seepaul, told me to "give it time" because "being older, it takes a bit longer to heal." He also made it clear that I should not use anything alcohol-based.

Not being a drinker anymore, I let him know, "I don't have alcohol, but I have the occasional wine!" I did not add, "Wine, wine, wine. Wine like a ball of twine." I did not mention what I read this morning "Doctors say it's fine to 'pee' in the shower".

Instead I promised Dr Bratt that if I ended up in Dr Suite's office, I would not say anything like, "How Suite though art" unless I am better.

At this point, Dr Bratt told me, "Listen, you could build a good article on the old talk." This is why I promised that this week, I would go after doctors. Just to take them off-guard, I am starting with something one of my colleagues, a "Dr." but not a Doctor like the Bratt, who worked with the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) when I was there.

He is Dr Fred Nunes, former head of the Department of Management Studies at the University of Management Studies in Jamaica. Dr Fred was at a meeting where a doctor/administrator was boasting about his foresight as a manager. He was inordinately proud that he had participated in a two-week intensive course in management and had become an expert.

Fred, who was a former senior management specialist at the World Bank and who spent most of his life teaching management, bided his time and then asked very politely: "Sir, I have always wanted to be a doctor. Do you know of any two-week intensive course that I can take to make me one?"

Seeing that I don't have two weeks, I will share some 'oldies but goodies' in honour of my doctor friends.

The first is about the doctor who told his patient, "I have some bad news and some very bad news for



Tony Deyal

you." The poor man asked, "Doc, you might as well give me the bad news first."

The doc said: "The lab called with your test results. They said you have 24 hours to live!" The poor patient responded in shock: "Twenty-four hours! That's terrible! What could be worse than that? What is the very bad news that you're holding on to?" "Well," the doctor told him quietly, "I've been trying to reach you since yesterday."

At least it was not like the doctor who, when asked by the patient to give him the "Good News" first, replied: "You and your family should be very proud. We're naming a disease after you!"

This is unlike the man who complained, "Doctor, my bottom hurts right around the entrance." The

doctor pointed out: "That's the exit. As long as you call it the entrance, it will hurt!"

Wives can feel hurt but not in the same way. A man was just coming out of anaesthesia after a series of tests in the hospital, and his wife was sitting at his bedside.

His eyes fluttered open, and he murmured, "You're beautiful." Flattered, the wife continued her vigil while he drifted back to sleep.

Later, her husband woke up and said, "You're cute." Startled, she asked him, "What happened to 'beautiful?'" He replied, "The drugs are wearing off." Younger women are different.

One of my favourites is about Miss Smith from col-

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lege.

Her biology teacher asked her, ““Miss Smith, would you please name the organ of the human body, which under the appropriate conditions, expands to six times its normal size, and define the conditions.”

Miss Smith gasped, blushed deeply, then said freezingly, “Dr Parker, I do not think that is a proper question to ask me. You should be asking a boy. And I assure you my parents will hear of this.”

With that she sat down, very red-faced. Unperturbed, Dr Parker called on Miss Johnson and asked the same question. Miss Johnson, with composure, replied, “The pupil of the eye, in dim light.”

“Correct,” said Dr Parker. “And now, Miss Smith, I have three things to say to you. One, you have not studied your lesson. Two, you have a dirty mind. And three, you will some day be faced with a dreadful disappointment.”

This is another. Two doctors in practice in a small country clinic had to hire a new nurse when the one they had won the lottery and quit.

They interviewed Nurse Nancy and decided to hire her. She had only worked two days when one doctor called the other to his office and said that they would have to let Nurse Nancy go. “Why? We just hired her.”

“Well, I think she is dyslexic and gets things back-

ward. I told her to give Mr Smith two shots of morphine every 24 hours, but she gave him 24 shots in two hours, and it almost killed him. I told her to give Mrs Jones an enema every twelve hours, and she gave her twelve in one hour.”

The doctor had barely finished his reasons when the other doctor rushed out of the room. “Where are you going in such a hurry?” the doctor asked. “To see Nurse Nancy. I just instructed her to prick Mr Hill’s boil!”

Given the politics in the US and all the national elections coming up in the Caribbean, this is the most

appropriate ending.

Five surgeons are discussing who the best patients are to operate on. The first surgeon said, “I like to see accountants on my operating table because when you open them up, everything inside them are numbered.”

The second responded: “You should try electricians! Everything inside them are colour coded.”

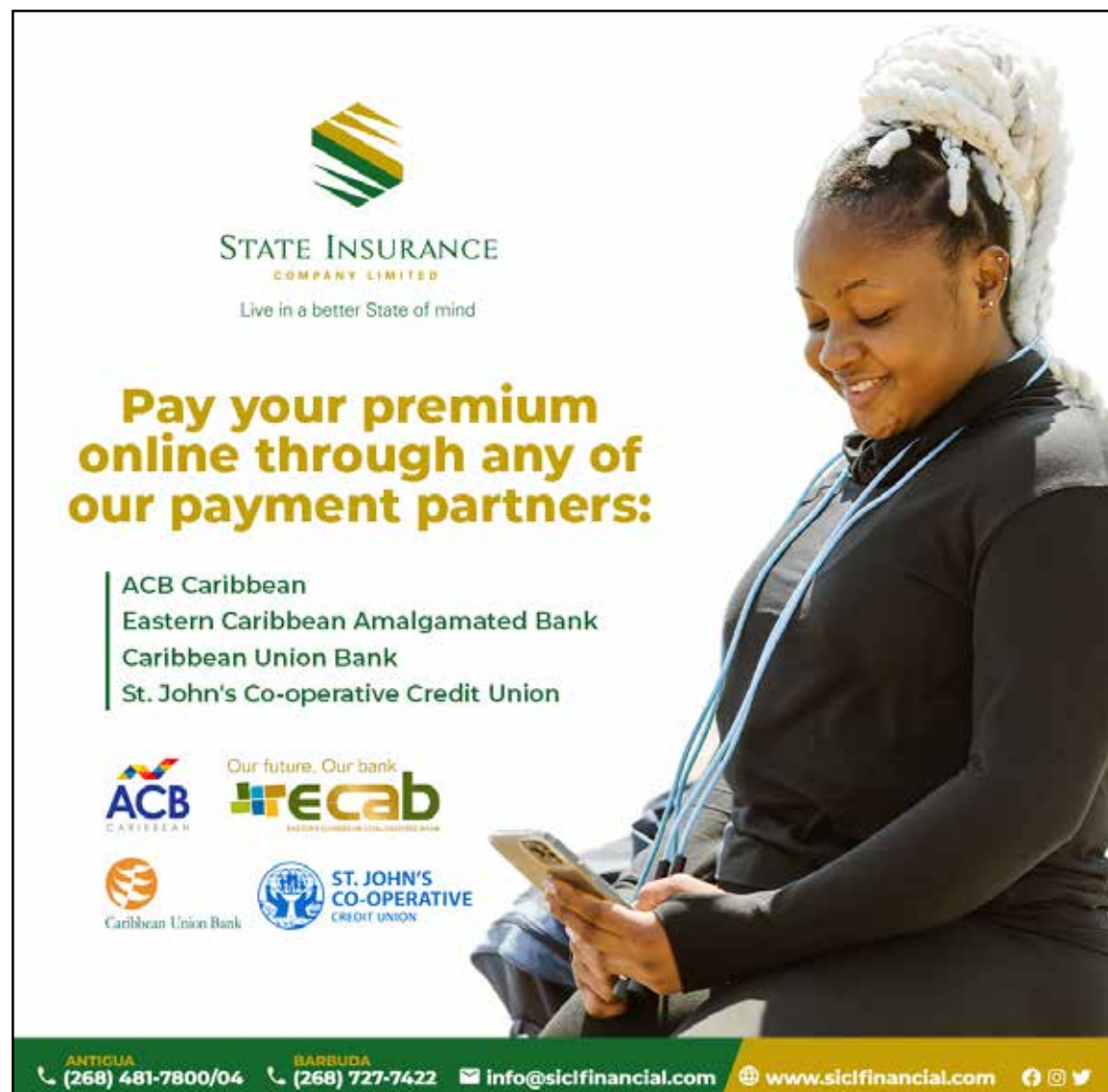
The third surgeon said: “I really think librarians are the best. Everything inside them are in alphabetical order.”


The fourth surgeon chimed in, “You know, I

like construction workers ... they always understand when you have a few parts left over in the end and when the job takes longer than you said it would.”

But the fifth surgeon shut them all up with this observation: “You’re all wrong. Politicians are the easiest to operate on. There’s no guts, no heart, no spine, and the head and butt are interchangeable.”


Tony Deyal could not help himself from sharing this one. My hot female doctor said I was sweet. Her exact words were, severely diabetic, but I know what she meant.





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Regional News



Guyana: Public servants to receive increased salaries by January

CMC - The Guyanese government has confirmed that public servants will receive their promised salary increases and a GUY\$100,000 cash grant by January 1, 2025, Vice President Bharrat Jagdeo announced Wednesday.

Last year, 54,000 public workers, including teachers and disciplined services members, received a 6.5% retroactive salary increase, adding GUY\$7.5 billion to disposable income.

Members of the Disciplined Services and Guy-



ana Defence Force (GDF) also received a one-month tax-free bonus.

The salary increase will be paid in public servants' December salary,

Jagdeo stated.

The government *cont'd on pg 15*

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SVG introduces cost of living allowance to support the vulnerable

In a move to provide social support for those struggling with rising living expenses, the government of St Vincent and the Grenadines has launched a Cost-of-Living Allowance (COLA) program aimed at easing financial pressures on vulnerable households.

Three thousand households will receive \$175 monthly for three months, designed to help offset increasing electricity and food costs.

Minister of Finance Camillo Gonsalves detailed the program's structure in a recent parliamentary address.

"The COLA will pay 75 dollars of the 175 total directly to the VINLEC accounts of selected recipients to help alleviate the increases in electricity costs that have been caused by



the rising fuel cost," Gonsalves stated.

The remaining \$100 will be allocated towards grocery expenses, provid-

ing additional financial relief to eligible households.

Eligibility for the program is specifically targeted. "If you are registered in

the social registry, and you are not a beneficiary of one of the Beryl Relief Grants and if you are not a beneficiary of the vulnerability grant, or what is called the poor relief programme and if you are not beneficiary of the family support grant... you will have primary eligibility," Gonsalves explained.

This targeted approach ensures that support reaches those most in need while avoiding duplication of existing social assistance programs.

Households meeting the specified criteria are encouraged to verify their eligibility through local social services offices or government registration systems.

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aims to distribute approximately 300,000 cash grants before year-end, with public servants and pensioners being priority recipients.

"We had already explained that it will take us about five months to complete the task. We are trying to hurry this up so that we could at least get the public servants and the pensioners completed before the end of the year. We may be able to do that and then a number of other people who are registered," Jagdeo added.

He said that while some persons may receive their cash grants in the new year, he is nonetheless assuring that every eligible Guyanese will receive the cash

grant, as promised.

On Wednesday the National Assembly approved a GUY\$30.5 billion supplementary provision for the distribution of the cash grant to every citizen 18 years and above.

The government has announced several measures to govern this initiative with the first step being the registration exercises where each community will have a registration schedule, with the second stage being the verification of the registrants, followed by the cutting of checks.

A distribution schedule will then be published, and these cheques will be disbursed in the same locations where registration occurred.

More Russian strikes as Syrian rebels advance after taking Aleppo

Russia carried out “a series of air strikes” in Syria on Sunday as rebels advanced after seizing Aleppo, according to the UK-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights (SOHR).

Twelve people were killed in a strike on a hospital in Aleppo, while a strike inside the north-western city of Idlib killed eight civilians and wounded more than 50, SOHR said.

Warplanes also struck rural parts of Idlib and Hama where the group leading the rebel offensive “has recently taken control”, it added.

The Syrian government has meanwhile lost control of Aleppo for the first time since the country’s civil war began, the observers told news agency AFP.

The surprise offensive by opposition forces, which began on Wednesday, marks the most significant fighting in Syria’s civil war in recent years.

It has been led by the Islamist militant group Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS), as well as allied factions backed by Turkey.

More than 300 people, including at least 20 civilians, have been killed so far, according to SOHR.

Russian strikes hit Aleppo for the first time since 2016 on Saturday as rebel fighters swept



into Aleppo, Syria’s second-largest city, the observers said.

The Russian air force played a significant role in keeping President Bashar al-Assad in power during the peak of the civil war.

SOHR reported five Russian air strikes in a refugee camp in Idlib early on Sunday, a north-western city in which HTS is the dominant force.

SOHR later reported four strikes on Aleppo University Hospital, with eight civilians among the 12 dead, with other parts of the city also targeted.

Opposition fighters seized nearly all of the city from the government on Sunday, SOHR told AFP - except for the neighbourhoods controlled by Kurdish forces.

Syria’s military withdrew from the city to prepare a counteroffensive.

Meanwhile, the rebels pushed south from Aleppo into several towns in the countryside near Syria’s fourth largest city, Hama, according to SOHR.

Syria’s defence ministry said the force had “reinforced [its] defensive lines” in the region with troops, rocket launchers and heavy military hardware.

“Joint Syrian-Russian warplanes” have intensified precise strikes on rebel positions, killing and wounding dozens, it said in a statement.

It added its troops had recaptured several towns that had been seized and prevented rebels from advancing, and claimed they

were fleeing the region.

The situation poses “severe risks to civilians and [has] serious implications for international peace and security”, the United Nations (UN) special envoy for Syria warned.

Geir O Pederson said he had repeatedly warned of the dangers of “mere conflict management rather than conflict resolution” in Syria.

He called the present conflict a “mark of collective failure” to work towards a ceasefire in the country, an aim the UN Security Council endorsed in 2015, demanding “urgent and serious political engagement” to this end.

Speaking on Saturday, President Assad vowed to “defend [Syria’s] stability

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Rebels have reportedly taken control of Aleppo's airport and dozens of nearby towns.

cont'd from pg 16

and territorial integrity in the face of all terrorists and their backers”.

“[The country] is capable, with the help of its allies and friends, of defeating and eliminating them, no matter how intense their terrorist attacks are,” his office quoted him as saying.

Iran's top diplomat said the country, which has long been an ally of President Assad, “firmly support[s] the Syrian government and army”.

Foreign minister Abbas Aragchi issued the statement ahead visiting Damascus on Sunday to discuss the offensive.

The civil war, which has left around half a million people dead, began in 2011 after the Assad government responded to pro-democracy protests with a brutal crackdown.

The conflict has been largely dormant since a ceasefire agreed in

2020, but opposition forces have maintained control of the north-western city of Idlib and much of the surrounding province.

Idlib sits just 55km (34 miles) from Aleppo, which itself was a rebel stronghold until it fell to government forces in 2016.

HTS, which has led the latest offensive, was regarded as one of the most effective and deadly of the groups fighting the Assad government and was already the dominant force in Idlib.

The rebels took control of Aleppo's airport and dozens of nearby towns, according to SOHR.

They also announced an overnight curfew which came into force at 17:00 local time on Saturday (14:00 GMT).

SOHR also said the rebel fighters had advanced south toward Hama and that the Syrian army had with-

drawn.

But a military source quoted in Syrian state media on Saturday night disputed this claim.

The Syrian army said rebels had launched “a broad attack from multiple axes on the Aleppo and Idlib fronts” and that battles had taken place “over a strip exceeding 100km (60 miles)”.

Dozens of its soldiers have been killed, it said.

A US spokesperson said Syria's “reliance on Russia and Iran”, along with its refusal to move forward with a 2015 UN Security Council peace plan, had “created the conditions now unfolding” in the embattled country.

Pictures showed the roads leading out of Aleppo jammed with cars on Saturday as people tried to leave, and smoke rising out of the city's skyline.



The mayor of Rhodes has called for a state of emergency to be declared on the island.

Two die as Storm Bora sweeps across Greece

Two men have died as torrential rains and gale-force winds cause flooding and damage across Greece.

More than 30cm of rain was reported to have fallen on the island of Rhodes - one of the first areas to be impacted by Storm Bora - since Saturday.

The deaths occurred on the island of Lemnos where flooding damaged roads and buildings and residents were asked to evacuate their homes, amid fears that a dam could overflow.

Damage has also been reported in Greece's second-largest city of Thessaloniki on the mainland, with the rain and storms likely to affect the majority of the country in the hours to come, the National Meteorological Service of Greece said.

On Lemnos, the rural road network linking the villages of Kontias with Thanos and Agios Dimitris has been completely destroyed.

A 70-year-old man in Kontias died when he fell over as he tried to clear up his house. A 57-year-old farmer was found dead by firefighters after being

reported missing by his family near a flooded dam close to the village.

According to police sources, he drowned after being swept away by rushing waters while trying to free his car, which had become stuck in mud within a stream.

Residents in Kontias were asked to evacuate their homes as there is a fear that the dam will overflow.

The situation on Rhodes was described as "dramatic" by residents.

A 24-hour ban on vehicle movement on the road network has been imposed on the island.

During the night, several people were trapped by rushing waters, after many roads became flooded.

The regional governor of Southern Aegean, Giorgos Hatzimarkos, said Rhodes had sustained "enormous damage".

Many roads on the island are impassable, while bridges have collapsed in the Kallithea-Faliraki area.

The Mayor of Rhodes, Alexandros Koliadis, has submitted a request to the Greek government to declare the

island as being in a state of emergency.

In Thessaloniki, the civil protection department has called on residents in the Pylaia and Chortiatis areas to limit their movements because of gale-force winds - gusts have reached more than 80km/h (50mph).

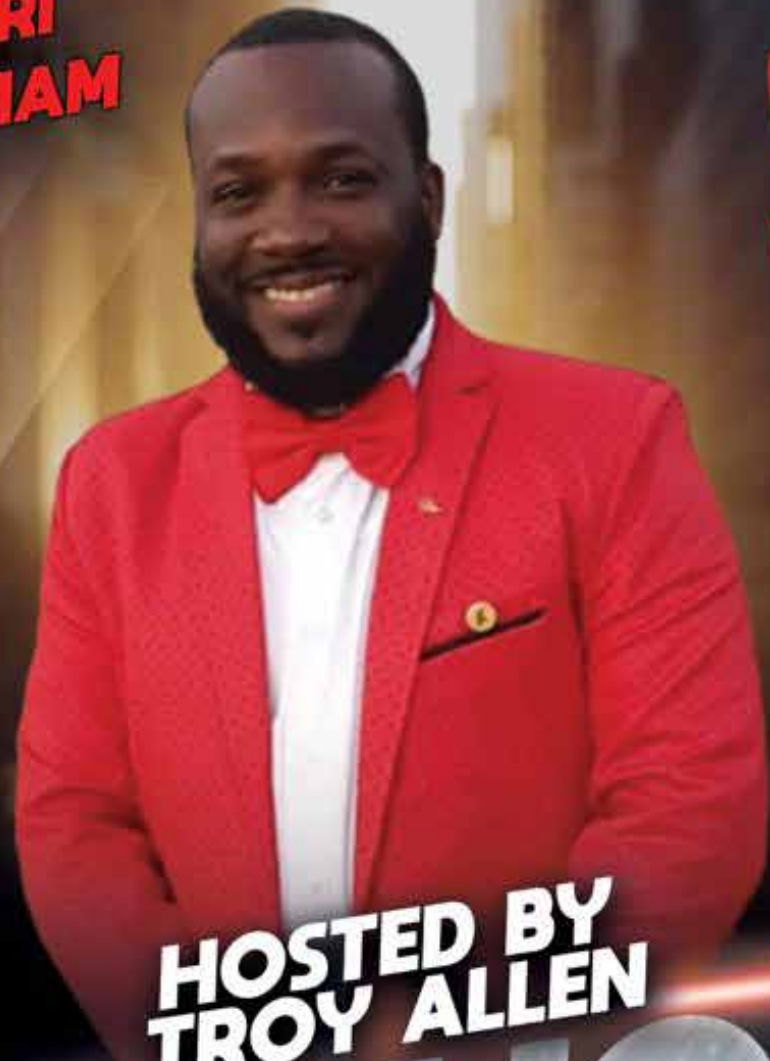
There have been power cuts in the area after strong winds and falling trees caused damage to the electricity grid. Power outages have also led to delays on the Thessaloniki-Athens railway line.

Meanwhile, a cargo ship moored in the port of Thessaloniki was swept away in the high winds, leading to a collision with another cargo ship, and damage to both vessels.

Forecasters say Storm Bora is likely to affect many parts of Greece until early on Tuesday.

In the coming hours, the conditions are expected to hit the northern Aegean region, central Macedonia, parts of Halkidiki, the prefecture of Thessaloniki, Imathia, Pieria, Thessaly and Larissa.

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WE ARE GETTING STRONGER

Cricket West Indies shareholders to vote on governance reform

Cricket West Indies (CWI) has announced that a pivotal meeting with its Full Member shareholders will take place on Friday, December 6, to vote on implementing the governance reforms recommended by the Wehby Report.

This marks a critical juncture in CWI's ongoing efforts to strengthen its governance structure and position West Indies cricket for future success.

In accordance with the company's Articles of Association, shareholders were notified on November 13, 2024, of the upcoming meeting to vote on governance reform.

The session follows discussions at the Annual General Meeting held on March 23, 2024, which resulted in the approval of some recommendations.

However, the meeting this week will give shareholders the opportunity to again consider the highly anticipated proposals on the duration of the term of office of President and Vice President of the organisation, as well as the introduction of term limits.

CWI President Dr. Kishore Shallow highlighted the importance of the upcoming meeting, emphasizing that the organization is fully committed to advancing the governance reform agenda.



“Governance reform continues to be a priority for Cricket West Indies as we take decisive action on our journey of organizational transformation and continuous improvement” President Shallow stated.

“The recommendations of the Wehby Report offer a clear pathway toward improving our governance framework, and this meeting provides an opportunity for our shareholders to collectively shape the future of West Indies cricket. We approach this process with a spirit of collaboration, transparency, and a shared commitment to building a more efficient and resilient organization.”

Commissioned in 2019, the Wehby Report recommended several critical reforms designed to strengthen the effectiveness,

accountability, and transparency of CWI's governance framework.

Although some recommendations have been implemented, the process faced delays due to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 and the need for additional consultations.

Key proposals include restructuring of the Board of Directors, enhancing stakeholder engagement, and modernizing operational practices to align with global best practices, all of which remain pivotal to driving CWI's organizational transformation.

President Shallow further underscored the importance of unity in this process.

“While change can be challenging, it is essential for the growth and sustainability of cricket in the Ca-

ribbean.

“This meeting is not just about governance—it is about ensuring the long-term health of the sport we all cherish. We are optimistic that, with the support of our shareholders, we can move forward together and continue to inspire pride across the region.”

Cricket West Indies' Full Member shareholders are: the Barbados Cricket Association (BCA), Guyana Cricket Board (GCB), Jamaica Cricket Association (JCA), Leeward Islands Cricket Board (LICB), Trinidad and Tobago Cricket Board (TTCB), and Windward Islands Cricket Board (WICB).

These shareholder representatives play a critical role in shaping the governance and strategic direction of West Indies cricket.

Semi-finalists confirmed in school league's Under-20 Boys Division

The four teams that qualified for the knockout semifinal stage of the Under-20 Boys Division in the Ministry of Sports, Cool and Smooth, and Joma Patrick C. Whyte Cup football league were decided on Friday.

Princess Margaret School, defending champions Antigua State College, the Antigua and Barbuda Institute of Continuing Education (ABICE), and All Saints Secondary School were confirmed as four teams that will advance to the semi-finals, which are slated to take place at the Antigua Recreation Ground (ARG) next week.

Princess Margaret School will finish at the top of the standings of the competition at the end of the 10-team round-robin preliminary stage with an unsailable 24 points from their quota of nine matches.

Greg Williams struck a hat trick, and Howayne James scored twice as Princess Margaret School claimed their eighth win with a 6-0 drubbing of Jennings Secondary at the Keithley Sheppard Recreational Park.

Williams had conversions in the 31st, 44th, and 52nd minutes; James scored in the 11th and 16th minutes, and the other goal was converted by Jayden Warner in the 42nd minute.

Jennings Secondary,



The Antigua State College is the defending champion of the Under-20 Boys Division. (Photo by Elwin Francis)

which has one match to play, will remain on four points after suffering their sixth defeat in eight encounters.

Antigua State College, which has one game remaining, ABICE, and All Saints Secondary all have 19 points.

State College claimed their sixth win in eight matches by snatching a 1-0 victory against Antigua Grammar School at the AGS playing field. Nadre Thomas scored the only goal of the match in the 40th minute.

State College can clinch second place by avoiding

defeat in their final preliminary round match against Irene B. Williams Secondary at the Keithley Sheppard Recreational Park on Wednesday.

The Antigua Grammar School finished their campaign with 16 points from their quota of nine matches.

ABICE finished their quota of nine matches in the preliminary round by claiming their sixth win via default against St. Anthony's Secondary School, which failed to show up for their encounter at the AGS playing field.

St. Anthony's Secondary School, which has one

match to play, will remain on four points after suffering their sixth defeat in eight encounters.

All Saints Secondary and Ottos Comprehensive finished their quota of nine matches in the preliminary stage by battling to a 1-1 draw at the Keithley Sheppard Recreational Park.

Leon Ogarro scored the equalizer in the 44th minute for All Saints Secondary. Demarre Swift put his team ahead when he scored in the 30th minute for Ottos Comprehensive School, which finished their campaign with 13 points from their quota of nine matches.

Sports News



Rangers crush Blackhawks to remain unbeaten leaders of First Division

Unbeaten leaders Ottos Rangers continued their impressive run in the Antigua and Barbuda Football Association's (ABFA) First Division with a crushing win against the Liberta Blackhawks in the latest round of matches.

Junior Benjamin converted five goals, and Howayne James scored twice as the Ottos Rangers romped to their fifth win in six matches with an 11-0 drubbing of the Liberta Blackhawks in Liberta.

Benjamin had conversions in the first, 19th, 60th, 70th, and 79th minutes; James scored in the 17th and 39th minutes; and Jahkure Francis converted an own goal in the 25th minute.

The other goals were scored by Kylan Isaac in the 62nd minute, Tafari Peters in the 63rd minute, and Jhazzair Whyte in the 76th minute.

The result allows the Ottos Rangers to remain unbeaten leaders of the First Division by advancing to



16 points from six matches, and the Liberta Blackhawks will remain in the cellar of the First Division after suffering their sixth loss in as many games.

Taeim Tonge scored twice as Bolans recorded their second win in four matches with a 3-0 victory against the Freeman's Village Scorpions in Freeman's Village.

Tonge had conversions in the 47th

and 58th minutes, and Alex Joseph scored in the 51st minute for Bolans, who will advance to six points from four matches.

The result allows the Freeman's Village Scorpions to remain on 10 points after suffering their second loss in six matches.

FC Master Ballerz and Lion Hill played to a goalless draw at the Radio Range playing field in Ottos.

It was the first draw for both teams, as FC Master Ballerz will move on to seven points from five matches, while Lion Hill will advance to four points from four encounters.

But the encounter between Jennings United and Police was abandoned after the electricity came off at the Jennings playing field. Both teams were deadlocked at 0-0 in the 50th minute when the power failure occurred. Jennings United will remain unbeaten in four matches with eight points, while the Police will remain on six points from four matches.

Wins for Golden Grove and Guydadli in ABFA's Second Division

Golden Grove and Guydadli have recorded 5-0 victories in the latest round of matches in the Antigua and Barbuda Football Association's (ABFA) Second Division League.

Golden Grove recorded their fourth win in five matches to advance to 12 points with their commanding victory against hosts Young Lion at the Old Road playing field.

The goals for Golden Grove were scored by

Attien Fabian, Stephen Hughes, Tyler Anthony, Arnel Walsh, and Rashid Francis, who converted an own goal.

After playing unbeaten in their first four matches, the Young Lions have now suffered back-to-back losses and will remain on 10 points from six encounters.

Guydadli FC notched up their third win in six matches to advance to nine points with victory against

Bethesda at the St. Johnstone's Village Stadium.

The goals for Guydadli were scored by Nazeek Williamson in the third minute; Michael Peters in the 12th minute; Nicholas Clarke in the 29th minute; Terroy Ponde in the 53rd minute; and Tajjah Christian in the 64th minute.

After playing unbeaten in their first three matches, Bethesda has also suffered back-to-back losses and will remain on seven

points from five encounters.

National Parks English Harbour overcame a two-nil deficit to salvage a 4-4 draw with Sea View Farm at the English Harbour playing field.

Akeem Weekes scored twice with conversions in the 53rd and 71st minutes, and Rakeem Isaac and Os-hane Blackwood converted the other two goals for English Harbour, which will

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PMS returns to winning ways in Under-16 Boys school football league

After surrendering their perfect record in a 1-1 draw with Clare Hall Secondary in their previous outing, defending champions Princess Margaret School returned to winning ways during the latest round of matches in the Under-16 Boys Division of the Ministry of Sports, Cool and Smooth, and Joma Patrick C. Whyte Cup competition.

Princess Margaret School consolidated their second-place position and remained with leaders Ottos Comprehensive School as the only unbeaten teams by claiming their sixth win in seven matches with a 4-0 drubbing of Jennings Secondary School at the Golden Grove playing field.

The goals were scored by Shumba Thomas in the fourth minute; Jace Bright in the 14th minute; Shamar Walters in the 17th minute; and Mario Lewis in the 42nd minute.

The result allowed Princess Margaret School to advance to 19 points from seven matches, and Jennings Secondary School will remain second from the bottom of the standings on goal difference with four points after suffering their sixth defeat in eight matches.

All Saints Secondary School recorded their fifth win in eight matches by snatching a 1-0 victory against St. Mary's Secondary School at the Golden Grove playing field.

Aaron Marie scored the only goal of the match in the 32nd minute for All Saints Secondary, which will remain in fourth place by advancing to 16 points from eight matches.

St. Mary's Secondary School will remain in sixth place with 10 points after suffering their third defeat in seven matches.

St. Joseph's Academy remained in third place after battling to a 2-2 draw



Mario Lewis of PMS with Clare Hall Secondary School at the Radio Range playing field in Ottos.

The result allows St. Joseph's Academy to ad-

vance to 17 points from eight matches, and Clare Hall Secondary will remain in fifth place by moving up to 13 points from eight encounters.

The Sir Novelle Richards Academy and Antigua Grammar School also fought to a 2-2 draw at the AGS playing field.

Sir Novelle Richards Academy will remain in seventh place with eight points from nine matches, and Antigua Grammar School will remain in eighth place with seven points from six matches.

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advance to 13 points after drawing for the first time in six matches.

Rhezal Gomes scored twice with conversions in the 32nd and 82nd minutes, Klyster Rowe had a 25th-minute conversion, and Rakeem Isaac scored an own goal in the 62nd minute for Sea View Farm, which will advance to 10 points after drawing for the first time in five matches.

The CPTSA Wings and the Cedar Grove Blue Jays played to a 1-1 draw in

their encounter at the Cedar Grove playing field.

Following a goalless first half, Ja-Rohn Thomas put the Blue Jays ahead with a 54th-minute conversion, and Joshua James scored the equalizer for the CPTSA Wings in the 59th minute.

The Cedar Grove Blue Jays will advance to 10 points after drawing for the first time in five matches. The CPTSA wings will move on to five points after securing their second draw in five encounters.

Sports

MONDAY 2ND DECEMBER 2024

ANTIGUA & BARBUDA
POINT EXPRESS
TRUSTED NEWS AND RESPECTED VIEWS

All Saints United ends Garden Stars unbeaten run

Cup-holders Special Security Services and Bitar Pizza All Saints United had ended the unbeaten run of Garden Stars in the Antigua and Barbuda Football Association's (ABFA) Premier Division League on Saturday.

Raheem Deterville scored twice as All Saints United extended their own unbeaten run with a 3-1 victory against Garden Stars in the last game of a triple header at the ABFA Technical Center.

Deterville scored in the eighth and 85th minutes, and the other goal for All Saints United was scored by Vashami Allen in the 21st minute.

Karique Knight scored a consolation goal in the 16th minute for the Garden Stars, who will remain at the top of the standings on 16 points after suffering their first defeat in seven matches.

All Saints United joined the Garden Stars at the top on 16 points after securing their fifth win in six matches.

Terminix Pigotts Bullets continued their resurgence, winning their fourth match in a row with



Players of the All Saints United Starting XI

a 4-0 victory against John Hughes in the second game of Saturday's triple header.

All four goals were scored in the first half, including two penalty kicks, which were converted by Akeem Isaac in the 36th minute and Tyrique Thwaites in the second minute of added time (45+2 minutes).

Jamoy Stevens scored an own goal in the 33rd minute, and Xavier Smith had a 42nd-minute conversion for the Pigotts Bullets.

The result allows the Pigotts Bullets to move up to third place by advancing to 15 points after securing their fifth win in seven matches.

John Hughes will remain on four points after crashing to their fifth loss in seven matches.

Green City climbed out of the cellar by recording their first win in six matches with a 3-2 victory against the struggling Greenbay Hoppers in Saturday's opening game.

Elijah Whyte scored the winner for Green City by converting a penalty kick in the 68th minute.

Kamali Looby gave the Greenbay Hoppers the lead with a 33rd-minute conversion, but Green City drew level on the stroke of half-time when Carllon Warner scored in the first minute of

added time (45+1 minute).

Kadeem Campbell restored the lead for Greenbay Hoppers with a 51st-minute conversion. Amali Colbourne scored the equalizer for Green City in the 61st minute before Whyte secured the victory from the penalty spot.

The result allows Green City to climb out of the cellar by advancing to four points from six matches.

It also allows the Greenbay Hoppers to slip to second from the bottom of the standings on goal difference by remaining on three points after suffering their fifth loss in six matches.