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Cabinet assesses the impact of new U.S policies

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The Office of the Prime Minister is a popular destination for students in the nation's schools as seen here in this photo

Cabinet assesses the impact of new U.S policies

The Cabinet of Antigua and Barbuda has been assessing the impact of the policies of the Trump Administration will have on the country.

Sources close to the Cabinet said the country's highest executive body has determined that there are several ways in which the new policies will impact the country, especially the indication that as many of 110 Antigua and Barbuda citizens who have been earmarked for deportation by US authorities.

“The executive order which will likely result in the deportation of 110 nationals of Antigua and Barbuda citizenship requires pre-planning by the government to receive those men and women who have overstayed their time in the USA. There is no indication that any criminals are included in that list. Nevertheless, the Cabinet is of the view that their wholesale return to Antigua and Barbuda will need to be addressed, especially if they are youthful enough to be employed,” accord-



President Donald Trump signs an executive order in the Oval Office of the White House according to the sources.

In addition, there are other ways in which the Cabinet feels that President Trump's policies will negatively impact the country. These include the current uncertainties surrounding the president's plans to significantly reduce funding to USAID and eventually to close it down.

Another area where there is a belief of a likely impact is the decision by the U.S to withdraw from the World Health Organisation (WHO) since it is the largest contributor of funds to this body. This

move will most certainly result in a reduction of WHO activities that help developing countries such as Antigua and Barbuda. The new US Administration has also ordered the withdrawal of the US from the Paris Accord, the international agreements on environmental issues. This will likely roll back gains made towards slowing down the impact of climate change.

There was also consensus in the Cabinet that the policies of the new administration were likely to have affected the

pledge of Harvard University to provide reparations to Antigua and Barbuda.

The sources explain that the owner of the Royalls Estate and several of his descendants were slave-holders in Antigua; they contributed significant sums to Harvard University over many decades. The plan to provide meaningful reparations, and not trinkets, has seemingly been withdrawn by the lay-off of the team which visited Antigua and Barbuda last month. (See next story)

Antigua and Barbuda insists that Harvard University Fulfil Its Pledge on Slavery compensation



Sir Ronald Sanders

Antigua and Barbuda's Ambassador to the United States, Sir Ronald Sanders, has formally written to the President of Harvard University, calling on the institution to honour its commitments to addressing its historical benefits from slavery in the Caribbean nation. The letter, sent on the instructions of Antigua and Barbuda Prime Minister Gaston Browne, expresses deep concern over Harvard's abrupt termination of its Harvard Slavery Remembrance Program (HSRP) research team and the unexplained transfer of its responsibilities to an external genealogical nonprofit organization without any notification to the Antigua and Barbuda government.

In his letter, Sir Ronald recalls that Harvard publicly committed to identifying and addressing the legacies of slavery tied to its wealth, particularly the contributions made from the sale of enslaved individuals in Antigua and Barbuda, whose forced labour helped fi-

nance Harvard Law School through the Royall family's plantations. He calls on the University to ensure that the research into these historical injustices continues with the same institutional rigor and, crucially, with the full involvement of the Government of Antigua and Barbuda.

"The people of Antigua and Barbuda are not seeking mere symbolic gestures but substantive and meaningful engagement," the letter states. "Harvard has an opportunity to lead by example in the global reparatory justice movement - through deepened and sustained commitment."

The HSRP had identified nearly 1,000 individuals enslaved by Harvard donors, with several hundred specifically coming from Antigua and Barbuda. The initiative had gained momentum following high-level meetings in January between Harvard officials and Prime Minister Gaston Browne. However, Harvard has since laid off

the entire research team and reassigned the work to American Ancestors, a New England-based genealogical nonprofit, raising concerns about the future of the initiative,

The Antigua and Barbuda Ambassador has urged Harvard to ensure that any new research entity undertaking this work directly engages the Government of Antigua and Barbuda and keeps it fully informed. He also emphasized that Harvard owes a practical debt, as well as a debt of conscience, to the people of Antigua and Barbuda, whose ancestors were integral to the financial foundation of the University.



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11 February 2025

Dr. Alan Garber
President
Harvard University
Massachusetts Hall
Cambridge, MA 02138
United States

Dear President Garber

I write to you regarding Harvard University's undertakings to the Government and people of Antigua and Barbuda, concerning its historical benefits from slavery, particularly from the island of Antigua. The Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda, Gaston Browne, welcomed Harvard's commitment, as expressed through the Harvard Slavery Remembrance Program (HSRP), to acknowledge and address the injustices of the past in a manner that is substantive and meaningful. The HSRP identified nearly 1,000 individuals enslaved by persons associated with Harvard; Hundreds of these enslaved persons coming from Antigua.

It is therefore with deep surprise and concern that we have learned that Harvard has terminated the work of the HSRP research team, including its Director, Dr. Richard J. Cellini, and has transferred the responsibilities of the program to American Ancestors, a New England-based genealogical nonprofit organization. This decision was taken without consultation or notification to the Government of Antigua and Barbuda, despite the significance of this initiative to our nation and its people.

Harvard's historical ties to Antigua and Barbuda are clear. The wealth derived from the forced labour of enslaved persons on Antiguan plantations - including those owned by the Royall family - helped to fund Harvard Law School and other aspects of the University's development. The lives and labour of those enslaved individuals were intrinsic to Harvard's early financial capacity, and as such, Harvard bears not only a moral debt but a practical one to Antigua and Barbuda.

Given these facts, I respectfully urge Harvard University to:

- Ensure that the research into Harvard's historical ties to slavery in Antigua and Barbuda continues with the same level of institutional commitment and rigor that was previously demonstrated.

con't on pg 5

con't from pg 4

- Commit to keeping the Government of Antigua and Barbuda fully informed and engaged as this important initiative progresses.
- Guarantee that any new research entity undertaking this work directly involves the Government of Antigua and Barbuda in its processes and findings.

The people of Antigua and Barbuda seek not symbolic gestures, but real engagement and meaningful action that befits the benefits that Harvard derived. Harvard has an opportunity to lead by example in the global reparatory justice movement - not through withdrawal, but through deepened and sustained commitment.

I trust that Harvard will uphold its pledges and will ensure that this important work continues in a manner that is both transparent and inclusive of those most directly affected by the legacies of slavery.

I look forward to your favourable response.

Yours sincerely



Sir Ronald Sanders
Ambassador of Antigua and Barbuda to the United States of America

cc: The Hon. Gaston Browne, Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda



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 **POINT FM99.1**

Dr. Shivon Belle-Jarvis is the new Medical Director at SLBMC

The Sir Lester Bird Medical Centre has named Dr. Shivon Belle-Jarvis as the new Medical Director. The announcement is contained in a congratulatory message sent to her by Health Minister, Sir Molwyn Joseph.

Dr. Belle-Jarvis, an accomplished pediatric consultant and public health advocate, brings a wealth of expertise, dedication, and leadership to this critical role. Her extensive career in healthcare and her unwavering commitment to improving the lives of the people of Antigua and Barbuda make her uniquely qualified for this position.

In his congratulatory message, Minister Joseph stated:

“I am delighted to congratulate Dr. Shivon Belle-Jarvis on her well-deserved appointment as Medical Director. Dr. Belle-Jarvis has consistently demonstrated exceptional leadership, professionalism, and a deep passion for healthcare. Her academic achievements, innovative approach, and tireless work ethic make her a true asset



Health Minister Sir Molwyn Joseph and newly appointed Medical Director, SLBMC, Dr. Shivon Belle-Jarvis

to our nation’s health system.

As we continue to strive for excellence in healthcare delivery, I have no doubt that Dr. Belle-Jarvis will lead Sir Lester Bird Medical Centre to new heights. Her leadership will undoubtedly inspire her colleagues, enhance patient care, and strengthen the institution’s ability to serve the needs of our citizens. This appointment marks a pivotal

moment for our healthcare system, and I am confident she will rise to the occasion with her characteristic grace and determination.”

Dr. Belle-Jarvis has distinguished herself both locally and internationally. She holds a Doctor of Medicine in Pediatrics from the University of the West Indies, an MSc in Neonatology with Merit from the University of Southampton, and is currently

pursuing a Master of Public Health at Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health. Over the years, she has led numerous national and regional initiatives, including her role as Director of the Zika Registry and National Focal Point for PAHO Perinatal Audits. Her research and advocacy in maternal and neonatal health have been globally recognized, and her presentations have provided valuable insights into critical public health issues.

This appointment underscores Dr. Belle-Jarvis’s remarkable contributions to the healthcare sector. Her experience, innovative mindset, and collaborative approach will play a key role in transforming healthcare delivery at Sir Lester Bird Medical Centre and beyond.

The Ministry of Health joins Minister Joseph in celebrating this significant milestone in Dr. Belle-Jarvis’s career and looks forward to the transformative impact of her leadership on Antigua and Barbuda’s healthcare system.

St. John's Rural North's annual health fair returns on Saturday

The community of St. John's Rural North will host its annual health fair on Saturday, February 15, under the auspices of the Northern Vybz Community Group and Hon. Charles 'Max' Fernandez, in collaboration with AUA and MBS.

From 8:00 AM to 1:00 PM, the Cedar Grove Community Clinic will be transformed into a family-friendly health fair offering a wide range of free services, including HPV Education, Heart Health Checks, HIV Testing, HPV Vaccination, Children's Vaccination, Nutritional Counselling, Breast Examinations, Prostate Exams, BMI and Blood Pressure Testing, Glucose Testing, and much more.

In 2018, the focus was on women's health, and in 2019, the focus shifted to men's health-care. This year, the event will prioritize the health of the entire family, including both seniors and children, ensuring that all community members benefit from the vital services on offer.

Minister Fernandez emphasized the importance of prioritizing health, stating, "Health screenings and preventive care are vital to living a long, healthy life. This health fair provides an incredible opportunity for everyone in our community to take charge of their health, get vital

check-ups, and address potential concerns early on."

To ensure that no one misses out, free transportation will be available from Yorks Village to the health fair at Cedar Grove. The event organizers express their gratitude to key stakehold-

ers, including the Northern Vybz Community Group, the American University of Antigua, and the Medical Benefits Scheme, as well as the nurses and health professionals volunteering their time to make this event a success.

Northern Vybz Community Group & Hon. Charles 'Max' Fernandez in collaboration with AUA and MBS

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- Blood Pressure Test
- Glucose Testing
- HPV vaccination
- Nutritional counselling
- MBS Card registration

Free Transportation to Health fair from Yorks Village

For more information contact:
464-5062/63/2744 or 764-4340

Mill Reef Club makes sizable donation to Maternity Wing at SLBMC



The Mill Reef Fund has made a generous donation of US\$48,880.00 to the Maternity Department at Sir Lester Bird Medical Centre (SLBMC). This donation will be used to purchase an ultrasound machine, two hospital beds, and two ICU patient monitors, all essential for improving maternal and neonatal care at the hospital, which handles over 1,000 births annually.

The upgraded equipment will greatly enhance the department's ability to monitor and care for expectant mothers and newborns, ensuring better outcomes and more accurate diagnoses for both patients and healthcare professionals.

Dr. Nicole Roberts, Chair

of the Obstetrics & Gynecology Department at SLBMC, expressed her appreciation: "We are extremely grateful for the Mill Reef Fund's support. With over 1,000 births each year, the demand on our maternity services is high, and this donation will help us continue providing high-quality care. The ultrasound machine, beds, and ICU monitors will allow us to enhance our diagnostic and patient care capabilities, which is vital for the well-being of both mothers and their newborns."

Salma Crump, Head of Marketing and Communications at SLBMC, also shared her gratitude: "This generous donation provides a significant boost to our

maternity department. The equipment funded by the Mill Reef Fund will not only improve our ability to care for expectant mothers but will also directly impact the overall quality of maternal healthcare at SLBMC. We firmly believe that investing in maternal health is an investment in the future of our community. Our heartfelt thanks to the Mill Reef Fund for their continued commitment to improving healthcare in Antigua and Barbuda."

Helene van Beuren, Chair of the Mill Reef Fund, highlighted the importance of the donation: "On behalf of the Mill Reef Fund, we are honored to extend our heart-felt support to the hospital. Your unwavering

dedication to providing healthcare and improving the lives of countless Antiguans inspires us deeply. We hope this donation will further empower your mission and bring hope and healing to those in need. Together, we can make a profound difference in our community."

The Mill Reef Fund's donation reflects its ongoing commitment to advancing healthcare and supporting the well-being of the people of Antigua and Barbuda. SLBMC remains a critical institution for maternal health, and this contribution will help ensure its continued success.

Kiwanis Club of Antigua AR Fusion elevated to 'Distinguished Club' Status

The Kiwanis Club of Antigua AR Fusion has been honored with the prestigious title of 'Distinguished Club' in recognition of its exceptional service and unwavering commitment to community development throughout the 2023-2024 period. This accolade highlights the club's dedication to impactful volunteerism, innovative initiatives, and meaningful contributions that have positively impacted countless children in Antigua and Barbuda.

In his congratulatory letter, Governor for Kiwanis Clubs in the Eastern Caribbean and Canada, John Chave, noted that the 'Distinguished Club' status is awarded to clubs that meet or exceed specific standards established at the beginning of the Kiwanis year. He further emphasized that only a small percentage of clubs achieve this prestigious recognition annually, with the AR Fusion Club ranking in the top quartile of all Kiwanis clubs in the Eastern Caribbean and Canadian region.

President of the AR Fusion Club, Rebekah Warner, expressed gratitude for the recognition, stating, "The board and members of the Kiwanis Club of Antigua AR Fusion are extremely proud of achieving Distinguished Club status for the year 2023-2024. We recognize that this milestone was only possible through a combination of hard work,

dedication to helping the children in our community, and the invaluable support of corporate entities and private citizens who share our passion for service."

Highlighting the club's original signature charity project, Bright Minds, Warner explained that this collaborative initiative between the club and the Student Support Unit of the Ministry of Education provides financial assistance for the psychological or psychiatric assessment of students referred to the unit for evaluation.

"We recognize that these assessments, while essential for children facing difficulties in school or at home, often come at a high cost to parents. Through our fundraising efforts and partnerships with qualified mental health professionals, the Kiwanis Club of Antigua AR Fusion covers the cost of assessments for each referred child," she added. "Our hope is that through this initiative, we can help identify and address mental health challenges early, providing children with the necessary support to thrive."

Warner also extended gratitude to all who have contributed to the club's success, stating, "To those who have supported us in any way, we say thank you. We look forward to continuing our mission and invite others who share our

passion to join us in making our community a safe and nurturing environment where children can grow, thrive, and achieve their dreams."

The Kiwanis Club of Antigua AR Fusion will be

formally recognized for this achievement at the Eastern Caribbean and Canadian District Convention, scheduled to take place in Niagara Falls, Ontario, from May 29-31, 2025.





Congratulations



for achieving Distinguished Club status.



Kiwanis Antigua AR Fusion Board Members

KIDS NEED KIWANIS >>

Feature

Girl Guides join the call to stop gender-based violence

The campaign to bring an end to gender-based violence (GBV) was brought to another enthusiastic cohort of youngsters this past weekend including a contingent from the Antigua and Barbuda Girl Guides.

In a media release, the organisers say more than two dozen young people attended the second Change Starts Here: Youth Against Gender-Based Violence Workshop with more than half of them being 12-14 years old. The event aimed to sensitise youth about consent, healthy relationships, the nature of abuse, and the need to end violence against women and girls.

One of the Girl Guides, 17-year-old Jhorden, said she was most impacted by a slogan on the pamphlets provided at the beginning of the session. It addressed consent and intimate partner violence. She said, "When we walked through the door, they gave you a pamphlet that said 46 percent of women experience different forms of violence, many in their relationships. It stood out to me because I wondered about whether in a relationship, if people experienced rape, but another message on the pamphlet also said 'without consent, it's always rape'. That really stood out for me."

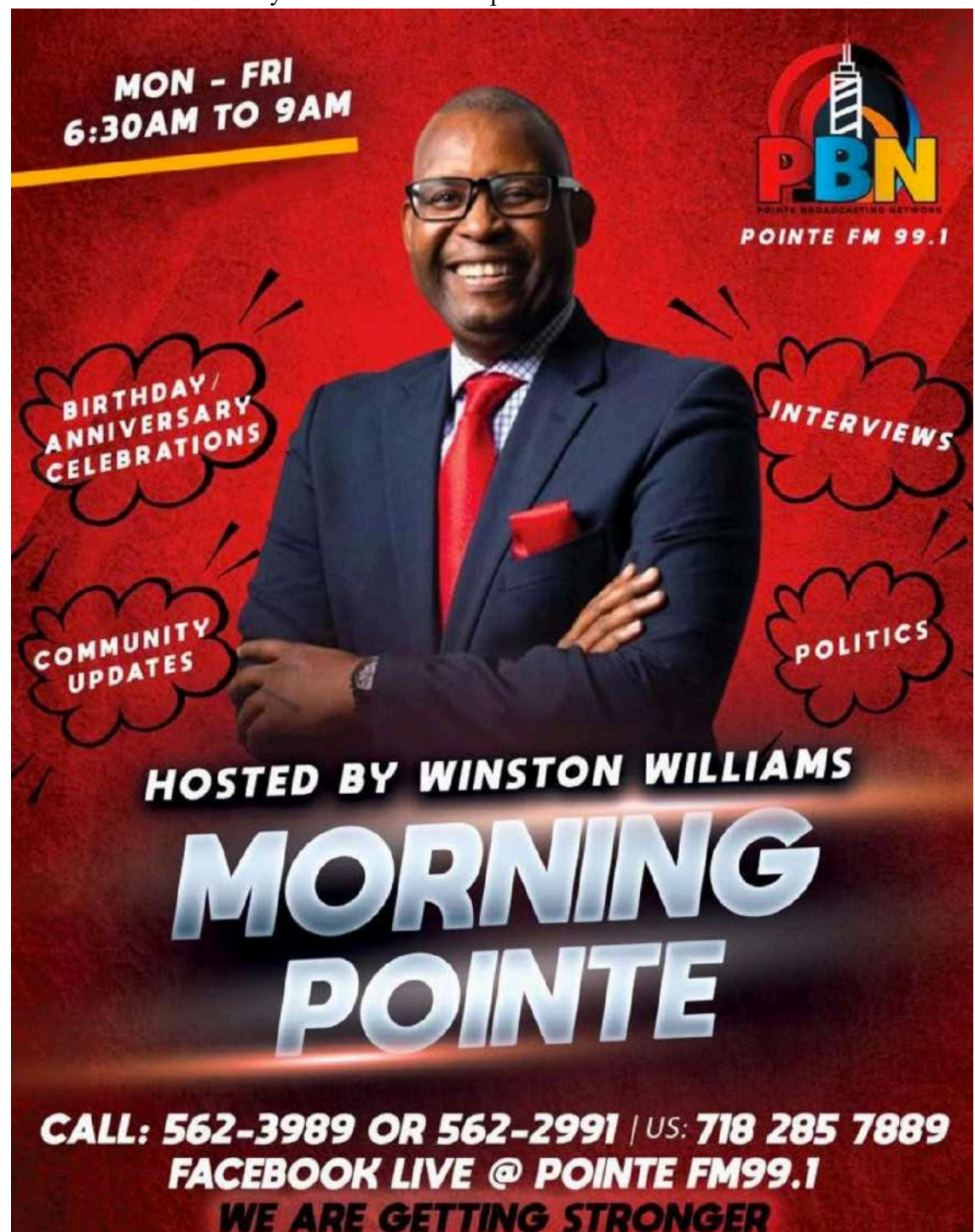
The statistic Jhorden referenced relates to past surveys done by UN Women in the Caribbean in nine territories that indicate that 46 percent of women in the Caribbean region experience violence of some kind in their lifetime - physical, sexual, emotional, or economic.

Another member of the contingent of Guides, 15-year-old Anija, said what stood out most was learning that people can suffer from abuse that is sometimes not physical or sexual, but is nonetheless traumatic and destructive. "Understanding that emotional and psychological violence are issues - that stuck with me. We usually

think of the more physical types, but today I got a clearer understanding of the other forms of violence as well," Anija said.

Also present at the session was 16-year-old Henderson, a fifth form student and Head Boy at the Ottos Comprehensive School. He said that while he had encountered some of the topics discussed

at the training previously at school, it was the first time that he had the benefit of a more focused discussion. Gabriella, a third form student who also attends the Ottos Comprehensive, said that it was the first time she was made aware of other types of violence such as emotional and psychological.



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If I'm not, my purpose is gone.
Did you know I'm worth the town?
Melt me down, I'm good as new,
Into a bike, a plane, or a shiny screw!
It takes less energy—just a fraction,
Compared to mining—recycling is the action.
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I'll sit for centuries, waste my youth.
No sunshine nor rain will make me decay,
But recycled, I'll come back another day.
In a factory, I'm melted and rolled,
A brand-new can, polished and bold.
From soda to soup, maybe beans in brine,
A second chance is yours and mine.
When you recycle, you help the Earth,
Reducing waste and proving its worth.

So, next time you finish a fizzy drink,
Don't let your can just sit and stink.
Find a bin marked "Recycle Here,"
And give me a future, bright and clear.
At school or home, or at the park,
Keep cans out of landfills—it's a start!
Tell your friends, your family too,
Together, there's so much we can do.
Raise your hand, let's make it clear,
"I'll recycle every can I see near!
I'll rinse them clean and place with care,
Because the Earth is ours to share!"
So let my story inspire today,
Recycle your cans, don't let them stray.
Give me a chance to live once more,
I'm just a can—but I'm so much more.
With every can recycled anew,
We're saving energy, it's true.
Together we reduce, reuse, restore,
A greener planet forevermore.
Remember my tale, let it echo through,
What happens to me depends on you.
So, recycle me, and you'll agree—
A better world starts with you and me.
Let's make recycling a habit! Start today!

This week's Question

“Are all plastics recyclable?”

Think you know the answer? Check back next week to see if you're a recycling pro!

Social Media: A double edged sword

By: *Andrecia Lewis*

The advent of the post-industrial society has led to the development of the technological revolution. The technological revolution has enabled the widespread usage of the internet, and various forms of new media such as: blogs, podcasts, and social media sites, to include: Facebook, Instagram and TikTok. On one hand, this has resulted in positives such as the amplifying of marginalized voices and an increased participation of citizens in the democratic process. On the other hand, social media can pose a direct threat to the democratic process of a nation.

Social media can be used as an impactful tool to give a voice to marginalized groups. The ongoing humanitarian crisis in the Democratic Republic of Congo gained significant traction on TikTok. This allowed for persons to become aware of the displacement of millions of citizens and the food insecurity being experienced by adults and children alike in Congo. Additionally, the recent Luigi Mangione case and its widespread publicity on social media platforms, helped to bring global attention to the oppressive

healthcare system that continues to negatively impact millions of Americans.

Social media is an impactful tool which can be used to facilitate greater participation by citizens. It provides an avenue for instant information regarding proposed bills and legislations. Additionally, it allows for instant feedback. This feedback can be successfully communicated to parliamentary representatives or their team. Furthermore, the streaming of parliamentary sittings on social media platforms also increases citizen participation.

Despite its advantages and seemingly harmlessness, social media can be considered as a threat to democracy. The recent attempt to ban TikTok by the United States, may have appeared to be silly according to many. However, an app seen as an avenue for teenagers to express their creativity and young adults to film “get ready with me” videos is a lot more powerful than many may think. During Romania’s elections in late 2024, TikTok’s algorithm was held responsible for swaying the general elections in favor of Georgescu. Therefore, the election was annulled.

Furthermore, if individuals lack the discernment to decipher real from fake, they may fall prey to misinformation and disinformation. With the development of AI, it is becoming increasingly difficult to determine what is authentic and what is manmade. On social media, there exist numerous deepfakes, reversed and altered videos of politicians and other persons of influence that appear very realistic. These images and videos portray them saying and doing things, using their real voices and images. However, the videos are not real. This is extremely

harmful; and without the presence of fact checkers, can tarnish the reputation of a political candidate or a political party.

The technological revolution facilitated a more interconnected society. Additionally, it gave a voice to marginalized groups and increased citizen participation in the democratic process. However, social media poses a threat to the democracy of a nation state. Therefore, the question can be asked. Should social media sites be held liable and penalized for the content that is posted on their platforms?



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Letter to the Editor PAGE 13

Joel Rayne displays grassroots support ahead of ABLP St. George Primary Race



By Enthusiastic St. George constituent

The Antigua and Barbuda Labour Party (ABLP) executive meeting held on Friday at the People's Place was a resounding success for Joel Rayne, a leading contender in the St. George primary race. The high turnout of his supporters at the meeting was a strong signal that Rayne ap-

pears to have not only captured the popular sentiment but also earned the trust of key party members and constituents.

Rayne's impressive showing at the meeting was a testament to his growing popularity and credibility among the people. His ability to connect with his constituents, listen to their concerns, and provide solutions

to their problems has resonated deeply with the community. His passion for education, community development, and social justice has also been a significant factor in his success.

The crowd at the executive meeting was a diverse and energetic group, comprising old and young supporters, many of whom were eager to show their support for Rayne. The atmosphere was electric, with chants of "Joel, Joel, Joel" ringing out throughout the selection process. In contrast, other candidates appeared to have had smaller crowds, with some having reasonably sized gatherings. Rayne supporters were energized shouting the motto 'Let it Rayne'.

Rayne's community involvement and commitment to education have been key to his popularity. His tireless efforts to improve the lives of his constituents, particularly in the areas of education and job creation, have earned him a reputation as a dedicated

and caring leader. His ability to bring people together and build coalitions has also been impressive, and his leadership style has been praised by many.

The ABLP executive meeting was an important milestone in the St. George primary race, and Rayne's strong showing has identified him as the candidate to watch in the primary. His ability to inspire and mobilize his supporters will be crucial in the coming weeks and months, and his campaign team is confident that he will emerge victorious.

As the primary race heats up, it is my view that Rayne's opponents will have to work hard to catch up with him. His popularity and credibility among the people are undeniable, and his commitment to education, community development, and social justice has resonated deeply with the community. One thing is certain: Joel Rayne is the man to beat in the St. George primary race.

Belize sets March 12 for general elections

Prime Minister John Briceño has called for general elections in Belize, setting the date for March 12, 2025.

The announcement came today from the Office of the Prime Minister in Belmopan.

Following his advice to the Governor General, the National Assembly of Belize was dissolved on today.

The electoral process will begin with Nomination Day scheduled for February 24, when political parties will formally register their



candidates.

The announcement gives political parties exactly one month from

today to campaign before voter's head to the polls. (*Loop Caribbean*)

Police probing robbery and assault of businessman by men dressed as cops

A major investigation has been launched following the robbery and grievous assault of an elderly businessman and contractor last evening in Barbican, St Andrew, by masked men reportedly dressed in police gear.

The incident which occurred about 6 p.m., has sent shockwaves across the construction sector and the upper St Andrew community, where the victim is widely known and a respected contractor.

The Gleaner was told the complainant was beaten and relieved of his licensed firearm and \$100,000 cash during a purported traffic

stop.



Head of the St Andrew North police division, Acting Superintendent Randy Sweeney, confirmed the incident and told The Gleaner that an investigation is

under way into the incident,

including the use of police paraphernalia.

“The report is that men dressed in police vest committed the crime... The investigation is also on-

going in that regard. Men travelling in an unmarked motor vehicle intercepted his vehicle, saying they are police officers. They were masked, or at least some of them were,” Acting Superintendent Sweeney told The Gleaner.

Our news team understands that the victim is now hospitalised in a Corporate Area hospital for injuries sustained during the roadside assault which took place in the Graham Heights community.

The Constant Spring Criminal investigations Branch (CIB) is probing. (*Jamaica Gleaner*)



Dear Constituent of St. George,

The Executive of the Antigua & Barbuda Labour Party has accepted my application to be a candidate in the upcoming primary in our constituency of St. George. I am honored to reach out to you, the hardworking and dedicated residents of our great constituency. As we approach the primary, I want to take this opportunity to reintroduce myself, share my vision and ask for your support in this major decision for the future of St. George.

I was born and raised in St. George and I am proud to call it home. My father, the late Adolphus Freeland, dedicated many years of his life serving you as a Member of Parliament and I have witnessed firsthand what true leadership and commitment to the people look like. Now, I stand before you, not only as his son but as someone who is deeply committed to the development of our constituency and the well-being of every resident.

My vision is simple yet profound: ***constituency development must be at the heart of national progress.***

St. George deserves strong representation from a person who understands the needs of its people and is willing to work tirelessly to improve their lives. Whether you are from ***Potters, Barnes Hill, Piggotts, New Winthorpes, Carlisle, Herberts or any of the vibrant communities in St. George,*** know that my commitment is to all of you.

I am here to serve every farmer, teacher, nurse, small business owner, taxi operator, musician, student and retiree. I am here to serve all of you.

We need improved infrastructure, better access to health care, enhanced opportunities for our youth and stronger support for our local businesses. These are not just promises-I am ready to work with you, listen to your concerns and take decisive action.

This primary is not just about selecting a candidate; it is about choosing the future of St. George. I humbly ask for your support so that together, we can build a constituency that provides ***opportunity, security and prosperity for all.*** Let us continue this journey together, ensuring that every voice is heard, and every community is uplifted.

As the by-election day approaches, I look forward to meeting with you, listening to your concerns and working hand in hand to shape a brighter future for St. George. I am from this constituency and I am for this constituency. ***With your trust and support, we will move St. George forward-together.***

Sincerely,

Michael Freeland

Murder of young mom of three shakes Saint Lucia



The fatal shooting of a young mother of three has shaken Saint Lucia, sparking outrage and despair over the loss.

Reports are that Alana Bernard, 28, was near her home in Corinth when a vehicle pulled up next to her. A gunman exited the vehicle and fatally shot her in what appeared to be a targeted attack.

The disturbing killing has prompted responses from both Opposition Leader Allen Chastanet and Prime Minister Philip J Pierre.

Said Chastanet, "I'm heartbroken by the tragic loss of 27-year-old Alana Bernard. My deepest

condolences go out to her family and friends during this incredibly difficult time. No family should have to endure this kind of pain.

We have to do better, Saint Lucia. We owe it to each other to build a safer, more just society."

Pierre reacted saying, "We should all be outraged about the horrific news of the slain mother, Ms. Alana Bernard yesterday. To her family, friends and children, my sincerest condolences on this tragic loss. Saint Lucians, violence has no place in our society. We must not look away or remain silent as these senseless killings destroy families and threaten

the peace and prosperity of our country. The perpetrators of these heinous acts must not find shelter in our homes or friendships, they must be brought to justice. Our nation can only remain strong when as a collective we denounce crime, respect the law and show compassion, respect and love for one another. Let justice prevail."

According to the police, "On Tuesday, February 11, 2025, at about 4:57 pm, the Gros-Islet Police Station received a report of a shooting at Corinth, located in Gros-Islet.

At the scene, investigators discovered one female lying motionless with apparent injuries.

Personnel from the Saint Lucia Fire Service attended to the victim and conveyed her to the Owen King European Union Hospital (OKEU). The victim succumbed to her injuries and was pronounced dead by a medical practitioner.

The victim has been identified as Alana Bernard, a 28-year-old resident of Corinth, Gros-Islet.

Anyone with information regarding this incident is asked to contact the Gros-Islet Police Station at 456-3830 or the nearest police station. Alternatively, anonymous tips can be provided by dialing 555 (the Crime Hotline) or by utilizing the RSLPF Crime Hotline Application, which is available in Google Play Store." (*Loop Caribbean*)

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Bomb blast kills at least five in Afghanistan



A bomb blast has killed at least five people and wounded seven in northeastern Afghanistan, local police report.

The blast took place at 8:35am (04:05 GMT) on Tuesday near a Kabul Bank branch in Kunduz province. No group has claimed responsibility for the blast yet.

The bank's security guard and four others, including civilians and members of Afghanistan's ruling Taliban

group, were among those killed, police said.

"A suicide bomber, who had improvised explosive devices, detonated himself," Jumadin Khaksar, spokesman for Kunduz province police, noted.

"The Kunduz province police command is working with relevant organisations to find the perpetrators of the incident and bring them to justice," he added.

The number of bomb

blasts and suicide attacks in Afghanistan has markedly declined since the United States withdrew its forces and the government it backed was ousted by the Taliban in August 2021.

However, many armed groups – including ISIL (ISIS) – remain a threat.

Dozens of people were killed in a suicide bombing at a Shia mosque in Kunduz in October 2021, with the ISIL affiliate in Kho-

rasan Province (ISKP) claiming responsibility.

In March last year, a suicide bomber killed at least three people when he detonated a bomb outside a bank in the southern city of Kandahar, in an attack claimed by the regional chapter of the ISIL.

Despite the ongoing attacks, the Taliban authorities say they have mostly crushed the group. (*Al Jazeera English*)

Russia to get back jailed cybercrime boss from US after freeing teacher Marc Fogel

The United States is freeing a Russian cybercrime boss from prison in return for Moscow's release of American schoolteacher Marc Fogel, a U.S. official said on Wednesday.

The Kremlin said the deal - the first it has struck with the new administration of President Donald Trump - could help build trust between the two countries.

But it played down Trump's suggestion that the agreement could make a significant contribution towards ending the Russia-Ukraine war, opens new tab, which he has pledged to bring to a swift conclusion.

A U.S. administration official confirmed to Reuters that Alexander Vinnik, a cryptohacker, was being released. Vinnik has to forfeit more \$100 million to the U.S. government and he is currently in northern California awaiting transportation back to Russia, the official said.

Trump and other administration officials said a second American would be released on Wednesday but did not elaborate.

Alexander Vinnik was arrested in Greece in 2017 and subsequently extradited to the United States, where he pleaded guilty in May 2024 to conspiracy to commit money



laundering.

He operated a cryptocurrency exchange, BTC-e, through which he was suspected of funnelling \$4 billion in proceeds from ransomware attacks, identity theft, drug rings and other criminal activity.

Earlier, the Kremlin said a Russian was being freed but that it would not identify him until he was back in the country.

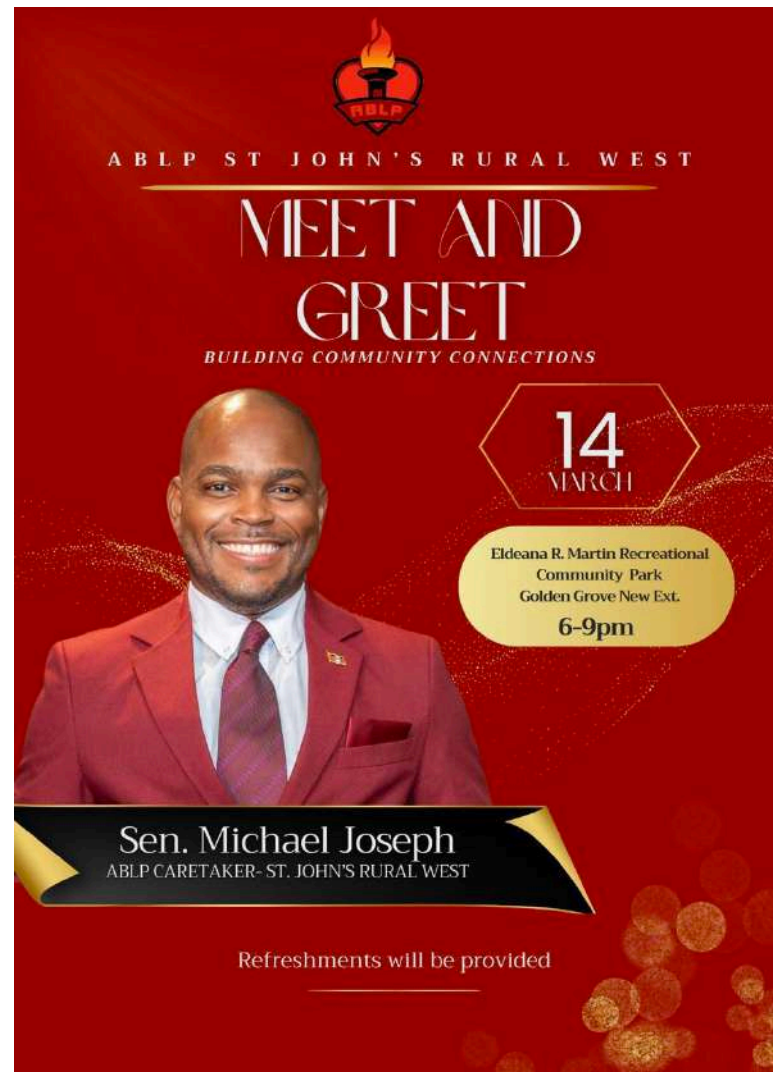
Fogel, 63, was serving a 14-year sentence for drug smuggling after being caught at a Moscow airport with a small amount of marijuana. He was flown on Tuesday to Washington, where he celebrated his release with Trump at the White House.

Trump said the deal "could be a big important part" of ending the three-year-old war in Ukraine.

Asked about that comment, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov

"Of course, such agreements are hardly capable of becoming a breakthrough moment but at the same time, bit by bit, these are steps to build mutual trust, which is now at its lowest point," he added.

A source close to the negotiations told Reuters that Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman and Russia's sovereign wealth fund chief Kirill Dmitriev were involved in arranging the exchange. *(Reuters)*



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Lawsuit accuses J'can NYPD chief of sexual harassment, retaliation

Assistant Chief Ruel Stephenson, the highest-ranking Jamaican officer in the New York Police Department (NYPD), is facing allegations of sexual harassment and retaliation from a female subordinate in a lawsuit filed last Friday in Manhattan Supreme Court.

Lt Mariela Matos-Leo, who works at the 24th Precinct, which is located in the same building as Manhattan North, has filed the lawsuit against Stephenson and the NYPD.

Mariela Matos-Leo alleged that Stephenson sexually harassed her in 2022 and then tried to derail her career after she rebuffed his advances.

In a May 2023 meeting, Stephenson reportedly told Matos-Leo that if he had the power, he would fire her because her “work is mediocre”, the lawsuit said.

“It got to the point where people recognised me,” she said. “Everyone knew he would take any chance to drag me through the mud.”

After that, Matos-Leo began putting in for transfers to various other units.

Matos-Leo claims Stephenson’s alleged retaliation caused her to make less than male lieutenants and cost her as much as US\$1.7 million in lost pension benefits, the lawsuit alleges.

She further claims that in December 2023 at Glen Island Harbour Club in New Rochelle, Stephenson held a “best dressed” contest at a Christmas party, offering a US\$700 prize and targeting female subordinates.

“There was no prize for best dressed man,” said Matos-Leo of the holiday party contest.

The lawsuit states that Stephenson,

who commands Manhattan North and was one of the judges of the contest, attempted multiple times before the event to persuade Matos-Leo to attend. She chose to skip the event, citing that Stephenson’s persistent invitations made her feel as though he had “his sights on making her the conquest” of the



event, she said in court papers.

Matos-Leo alleges that after she didn’t attend, Stephenson’s behaviour towards her changed dramatically. She claims he belittled her at meetings, calling her incompetent in front of colleagues. According to the lawsuit, one sergeant allegedly told Matos-Leo, this is “how the Chief gets when he is rejected”.

This lawsuit is not Matos-Leo’s first. In 2019, the 19-year veteran of the department claimed retaliation by other employees after filing a criminal complaint against her boyfriend, a fellow officer. That case was later settled.

In her current lawsuit, Matos-Leo is seeking unspecified damages.

The city’s Law Department has stated they will review the litigation once it is served.

An NYPD spokesperson emphasised that the department does not tolerate sexual harassment and is committed to maintaining a respectful work environment. The department also offers various reporting options for employees, including anonymous submissions, the spokesperson added.

Stephenson, the first Jamaican in NYPD history to be appointed as borough commander, has made significant contributions throughout his career.

Born in Clarendon, he attended Race Course Primary before migrating to the US at age 10. He joined the NYPD in June 1995, starting as a patrol officer in the 70th Precinct. Over the years, he served in numerous precincts and bureaus, earning promotions from sergeant to assistant chief.

Speaking with *The Gleaner* when he was made assistant chief, Stephenson said the appointment would put him in a position to affect how the NYPD interacts with the Jamaican community as there would now be someone in a position of authority who is sensitive to the cultural norms of the community and speaks its language.

“My hard work and perseverance paid off. I am now in a position to effect change coming out of the police policies that affect our community in a fair and impartial way,” he said at the time.

He said that members of the community are more at ease with the police when they have someone relatable to the community in charge. (*Jamaica Gleaner*)

Apple renames Gulf of Mexico to ‘Gulf of America’ on US app

Apple has renamed the Gulf of Mexico as the “Gulf of America” for US users of its mapping application to comply with an executive order by President Donald Trump.

People using the Apple Maps application from the United States will find the body of water is now called the “Gulf of America.”

Those accessing the service from abroad however will still find it called the “Gulf of Mexico.”

Apple’s decision comes after Google on Monday changed the name to “Gulf of America” for those using its Maps platform inside the United States.

Google wrote in a blog post that users outside the United States will continue to see both names.

“People using Maps in the U.S. will see ‘Gulf of America,’ and people in Mexico will see ‘Gulf of Mexico.’ Everyone else will see both names,” Google wrote.

Trump signed executive orders changing the names of Denali, a mountain in Alaska, and the Gulf of Mexico soon after his January 20 swearing in as president.

The term “Gulf of America” was soon used by the US Coast Guard in a press release on enforcing Trump’s new crackdown on migrants, as well as Florida’s Republican governor, Ron DeSantis, when discussing a winter storm.

The move raised diplomatic concerns in Mexico, and President Claudia Sheinbaum said the government would write to Google and object to the name change.

The Associated Press said Tuesday that its White House reporter was barred from an event with Trump over the top US news agency’s refusal to use “Gulf of

America”.

Trump’s order to change Denali to Mount McKinley reverses then-president Barack Obama’s 2015 decision to officially recognize Denali, the name used by Alaska Natives for centuries for North America’s highest peak. *(Jamaica Observer)*



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Sports News

Blue Jays take sole leadership of Second Division League



The Cedar Grove Blue Jays recorded a victory and took sole leadership of first place after former joint-leaders Sea View Farm FC lost during the latest round of matches in the Antigua and Barbuda Football Association's (ABFA) Second Division League on Tuesday.

The Blue Jays moved three points ahead of Sea View Farm FC at the top of the standings in the 17-team league.

Reuben Reubel and Javere Joseph both scored twice as the Blue Jays achieved the feat by recording their 12th win in 14 matches with a 7-0 drubbing of Bethesda at the Bethesda playing field.

Reuben Reubel scored in the 15th and 17th minutes, and Joseph had conversions in the 63rd and

85th minutes. The other goals for the Blue Jays were scored by Maleke Francis in the sixth minute, Rajiel Parchment in the 29th minute, and Jarohn Thomas in the 81st minute.

Bethesda FC will remain on 11 points after suffering their seventh defeat in 12 matches. The result allows the Cedar Grove Blue Jays to advance to 37 points, three ahead of Sea View Farm FC.

Sea View Farm dropped crucial points in the title race in back-to-back losses to slip from first to second place in the standings.

After suffering a 2-1 defeat against Golden Grove in their previous outing, Sea View Farm slumped to their third loss in 15 matches this season in a 1-0 defeat against Guydadli FC at the Sea View Farm

playing field.

Following a goalless first half, Michael Peters scored the only goal of the match in the 54th minute to snatch victory for Guydadli FC.

Guydadli will move into sixth place by advancing to 21 points after recording their seventh win in 12 matches, while Sea View Farm will drop to second place by remaining on 34 points from 15 matches.

Golden Grove consolidated their position in third place by recording their 11th win in 14 matches with a 3-0 victory against the bottom team, Herberts FC, at the Golden Grove playing field.

Following a goalless first half, Golden Grove secured victory with three second-half goals, which were scored by Attian

Fabian in the 74th minute, Justin Pereira in the 77th minute, and Markland Wright in the 83rd minute.

Herberts FC will remain in the cellar of the Second Division with four points after suffering their ninth defeat in 13 matches. Golden Grove will move within a point of Sea View Farm by advancing to 33 points from 14 matches.

National Parks English Harbour will remain in fourth place with 29 points from 13 matches, while Belmont FC will stay in fifth place with 28 points from 14 matches.

The Young Lions of Old Road are in seventh place on goal difference ahead of Earthquake FC as both teams have 19 points from 12 encounters.

Narrow win for Fearless Crew in ABBA's Division 2 league



Ramco Pharmacy Fearless Crew clinched victory by the narrowest of margins in the Second Division of the 2025 Antigua and Barbuda Basketball Association's (ABBA) domestic season on Tuesday evening.

The Fearless Crew claimed their second win in three matches by snatching a one-point victory against the Navigators in the second game of a Division 2 double-header at the JSC Sports Complex.

Rafiki Harris produced a game-high 23 points with nine rebounds and six steals to lead the Fearless Crew to their 61-60 victory against the Navigators.

In support, Takeem Martin sank 12 points and grabbed 25 rebounds, and Raji Thomas scored nine points for the Fearless Crew.

Baldwin Anthony sank 14 points and grabbed 15 rebounds; Ralph Spooner produced 13 points, 14 rebounds, and seven steals; Ariel Quallis sank 12 points and claimed 11 rebounds; and Ricky Willock scored nine points for the Navigators, who suffered their second loss in three games.

After losing their previous two games, Curtain Bluff Old Road Daggers recorded their first win in three matches

with a convincing 61-44 victory against Michael Joseph Phoenix in the first encounter of Tuesday's double-header.

Kelvin Simon scored 17 points and claimed 10 rebounds, Jesus Lopez also converted 17 points, and Devea Aaron contributed eight points for the Old Road Daggers.

Daysher Samuel sank 16 points, and Shalom Bloodman scored 13 points and claimed nine rebounds for Michael

Joseph Phoenix, who suffered their second loss in as many games.

The ABBA First Division will continue with another double-header at the JSC Sports Complex on Thursday evening (today).

The EZ Fit Flyers will face Ottos Full Throttle in the first encounter at 6:45 pm, and Total Imports Potters Steelers will take on Da Project at 8:30 pm.



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Villa Primary among winners in school basketball league



Players of the Villa Primary School (red and white uniform) compete against Golden Grove Primary in the Miniboy's Primary Division in the Cool and Smooth Inter-School Basketball League at the JSC Sports Complex on Tuesday, February 11, 2025. (Photo courtesy of the school basketball league)

Villa Primary School was among the winners in the Cool and Smooth Inter-School Basketball League on Tuesday.

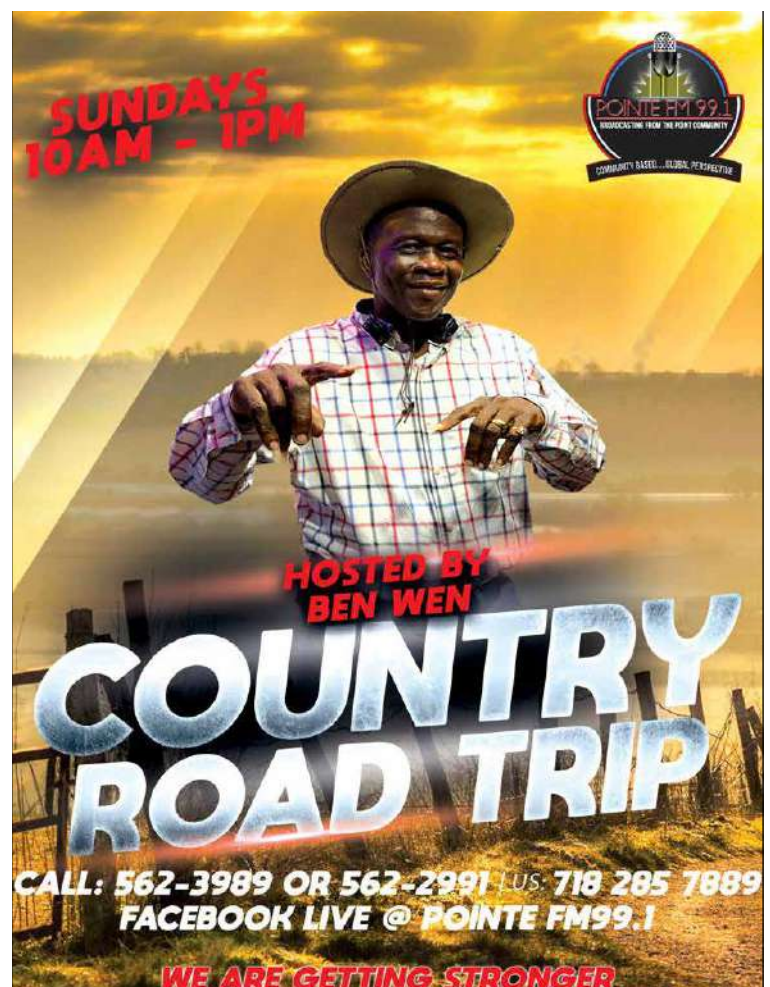
The Villa Primary, Mary E. Pigott Primary, and Cedar Grove Primary all recorded wins in the Miniboy's Primary Division at the JSC Sports Complex.

Levi Richards shot a game-high 16 points to lead Villa Primary to a 20-5 victory against the Golden Grove Primary.

Marcus Weekes scored four points to propel Mary E. Pigott Primary to an 8-5 victory against S.R. Olivia David Primary School of Bolans.

Cedar Grove Primary romped to an emphatic 25-2 drubbing of defending champion Sea View Farm Primary.

Zemeka Daniel converted nine points, Cordell Telemaque sank eight points, and Khai Charles scored six points for Cedar Grove Primary.



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CEO of Cricket West Indies meets with TTCB Executives



TTCB President Azim Bassarath (left) in conversation with CEO Chris Dehring (right) after touring the Sir Frank Worrell Development Centre. (CWI Media)

Newly appointed Chief Executive Officer of Cricket West Indies (CWI), Chris Dehring, recently met with President Azim Bassarath and other executives of the Trinidad and Tobago Cricket Board (TTCB) as part of his ongoing engagement with regional stakeholders.

Dehring, who assumed office on February 1, 2025, emphasized the importance of reconnecting with key figures in West Indies cricket to better understand the current challenges and opportunities within each territory.

In his remarks, Dehring stated, “While I’m no stranger to cricket administration, the landscape of the industry is always evolving

so it’s crucial to reacquaint myself with the stakeholders across the region. Each territory has unique challenges and opportunities and I want to ensure that the vision of Cricket West Indies aligns with the realities on the ground.”

During the discussions at the Alloy Lequay Administrative Centre in Couva, Dehring also stressed the importance of territorial boards in shaping the future of West Indies cricket.

He added, “Territories are the core of West Indies cricket’s production line. Rebuilding and retooling that pipeline to ensure it is fit for purpose in the modern professional sports

world must be my focus as CEO.

“Our strength lies in our unity and shared vision of all our stakeholders—from territorial boards to players, coaches, and fans, notwithstanding the healthy tensions that will exist from time to time. If we want to compete at the highest level and ensure long-term success, we must build strong partnerships, invest in development, and create a sustainable structure that benefits everyone involved.

“In this regard, my role is not just about making executive decisions but about working alongside all of you to shape policies and innovative strategies

that will move the game forward for generations to come. When our territories are strong, West Indies cricket is strong.”

TTCB President Azim Bassarath, who also serves as Vice President of Cricket West Indies, welcomed Dehring’s visit and reaffirmed the board’s commitment to working alongside CWI.

He noted the following, “The TTCB extends its full support and best wishes to Chris on this important journey. This meeting demonstrates our commitment to a shared vision and marks a significant step in ensuring that Trinidad and Tobago remains a key player in the regional cricketing landscape.

“We look forward to collaborating with CWI to develop our players, enhance facilities, and elevate the overall cricketing structure in the Caribbean. By working together, we can strengthen domestic programs and contribute to the continued success of West Indies cricket.”

This engagement signals a renewed focus on unity and strategic planning, as CWI and its territorial boards work together to address challenges, seize opportunities, and ensure a bright future for the sport in the region.

Young Benna Boys lose opener in 2025 CONCACAF Qualifiers



The starting XI of the Antigua and Barbuda team against Guatemala in their opening Group E match of the CONCACAF Under-17 Qualifiers at the Estadio Cementos Progreso in Guatemala City, Guatemala, on Tuesday, February 11, 2025.

The young Antigua and Barbuda Benna Boys have lost their opening match in the 2025 CONCACAF Under-17 Qualifiers, which are taking place in Guatemala from February 7 to 16.

Antigua and Barbuda launched their campaign in Group E with a 2-1 loss against host Guatemala at the Estadio Cementos Progreso in Guatemala City, Guatemala, on Tuesday night.

Andrés García opened the scoring in the 24th minute with a right-footed finish in the box to give Guatemala the lead.

Marvin Ávila gave the hosts a two-nil lead at half-time when he scored in the

35th minute in what would be the match-winning goal.

Sakidi Meade cut the deficit for the young Benna Boys in the 69th minute when he finished an attacking build-up from the Antigua and Barbuda offense.

Marvin Ávila failed to score a third goal for Guatemala late in the second half when his poor shot from a penalty kick was collected by the Antigua goalkeeper Gavin Gonsalves, who made several fine saves during the match.

Haiti also made a winning start to their campaign in the four-team Group E round-robin contest.

Haiti romped to a 5-0

victory against St. Vincent and the Grenadines in the other opening Group E encounter at the Estadio Cementos Progreso in Guatemala City, Guatemala, on Tuesday night.

The teams in Group E will play their second match on Thursday. Antigua and Barbuda will face Haiti, while Guatemala will take on St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

The two games in Group E were among eight matches on Tuesday in the 2025 CONCACAF Under-17 Men's Qualifiers that are taking place in the ongoing quest of 35 nations fighting for the eight CONCACAF berths at the 2025 FIFA Un-

der-17 World Cup.

Costa Rica rose to first place in Group B, while Mexico did the same in Group C. In Group A at the National Sports Centre in Devonshire Parish, Bermuda, Curacao prevailed 2-0 against the Turks and Caicos Islands, and Canada beat Anguilla 8-0.

In Group B at Estadio Nacional in San José, Costa Rica, Guyana beat St. Maarten 3-0, and Costa Rica defeated the British Virgin Islands 5-0.

In Group C at the Mexican Football Federation facilities in Toluca, Mexico, Barbados snatched a 1-0 victory against Dominica, and Mexico prevailed 3-0 against Belize.

The 2025 CONCACAF Under-17 Men's Qualifiers kicked off on February 7 with a new single-round format to determine which eight national teams will represent the region at the 2025 FIFA Under-17 Men's World Cup.

The 2025 CONCACAF Under-17 Men's Qualifiers will be the sixteenth edition of the tournament as an Under-17 competition and the twentieth, including its initial years as an Under-16 tournament.

Thirty-five (35) national teams, divided into eight groups, are participating in the 2025 CONCACAF Under-17 Men's Qualifiers.