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Cabinet gives consideration to an initiative to help the blind and visually-impaired

Story on Page 2



A team from the Workshop for the Blind visits the Cabinet

Cabinet gives consideration to an initiative to help the blind and visually-impaired

The Cabinet is giving consideration to introducing an initiative whereby specially trained dogs will be used to help the blind and visually-impaired members of the society.

To this end, the Cabinet invited a group, led by the Manager of the Industrial Workshop for the Blind, to its sitting, in order to seek to improve the standard of care which is received by the blind and the severely, visually-impaired population.

The delegation comprised a blind male and his “seeing eye dog” and his spouse (Mr. and Mrs. Adams), Ronald Greenaway, Dr. Radcliffe Robins (who trains dogs), a middle-aged blind female, and a resident of Antigua who is going blind because of an inherited condition that has affected her mother and grandmother before her. Her preference is to begin working with a seeing-eye dog as her eyesight deteriorates since she wishes to be independent.

The Cabinet was told that 1% of our adult population is completely blind (less than 950 men and women); while an additional figure of less than 750 adults have very low vision; and, 3 out of every 100 children also suffer from very low vision. The Cabinet learnt that a guide dog is superior to a white cane—the latter being the usual method employed by most blind men



and women in Antigua; however, a seeing-eye dog is far superior for re-gaining independence, for living alone, and for alerting the non-seeing person of an emergency. Many blind

Antiguans would prefer having a seeing-eye dog but the animals must be bred and trained here in Antigua; and, according to Dr. Robins, the strays and the roaming dogs that aren't on

leashes are a threat. That particular challenge must first be overcome.

The Dog Control Act provides the solution but the law is not enforced, he asserted. The need for dog pounds and other methods of control, including the work of the Humane Society, would be self-financing. The Minister of Health made a pledge to work closely with the team to enhance the possibilities and conditions that would be helpful. The group departed after one hour before the Cabinet.

In related development, The Cabinet received a report from the Minister of Health and Wellness regarding the effort of a non-governmental organization from the USA to address blindness and failing eyesight within zones in the country. The NGO would undertake testing of the eyes of every resident, young and elderly, within a zone and, if required, provide free eyeglasses and cataract removal; the NGO would also test for glaucoma and other eye diseases, and provide medicines at no cost. The first zone would be defined from Big Creek to Old Road; the next zone would continue through John Hughes Swetes and St. Paul. The Cabinet gave its approval which the Minister would then convey and fix acceptable dates, times and venues.

The traffic congestion in St. John's, a concern for the Cabinet



The growing problem of traffic congestion into and out of St. John's especially at peak hours has attracted the attention of members of the Cabinet.

On Wednesday, the Cabinet invited several members of the top brass of the Royal Police Force of Antigua and Barbuda to address several issues, chief among which was how to solve this problem that has led to motorists spending much time in their vehicles as they attempt to leave the city for their respective homes.

Sources close to the Cabinet said the Police were asked to address the issue of traffic congestion, leading into and out of the City of St. John's during the hours of 7:00 to 10:30 am, and again from 3:30 to 5:30 pm. The Police are responsible for traffic control although the traffic lights are operated by the Ministry of Works; congestion is thought to be a cause for significant back-up of traffic, since the traffic seems to flow freely at several junctions when the lights are blinking.

The sources reported that there was agreement that

several traffic lights are absolutely necessary if there are to be fewer accidents,

and non-reliance upon driver-courtesy in order for the traffic to flow smoothly. It was agreed that experimentation to test the workability of the proposed easing of traffic flow by blinking lights during the rush hours.

These were among several proposals that are being considered.

Meanwhile, the Cabinet enquired about the progress made in finding missing persons. The Police assured the Cabinet that teams are dedicated to pursuing the

outcomes for which the families are hoping. The Police indicated that many tips are being pursued, and that the public is encouraged to share whatever they may know with the authorities. They noted that the burnt-out car of one victim, and several stolen vehicles, found in bushes, resulted from continuous attention to the effort to find the victims. All manner of record-keeping is being pursued, the Police noted, and videos are being examined.

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Prime Minister Browne in Barbados for CARICOM Heads Meeting



Prime Minister Gaston Browne



Foreign Minister E. P. Chet Greene

Prime Minister Gaston Browne and Foreign Minister E. P. Chet Greene are in Barbados for the Forty-Eight Regular Meeting of the Conference of Heads of Government of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) which opens today at the Wyndham Grand Barbados Hotel.

The Opening ceremony was held last night at the Lloyd Erskine Sandiford Centre with remarks from Chairman of CARICOM, Mia Mottley, Dr. Reuben Meade, Premier of Montserrat, Secretary-General of CARICOM, Dr. Carla

Barnett and Outgoing Chairman of CARICOM, Dickon Mitchell, Prime Minister of Grenada. Preceding the Opening Ceremony, Heads met with Silicon Valley Investors.

Prime Minister Browne said that the Heads Meeting will address a wide range of areas to include the CARICOM Single Market and Economy, Advancing the CARICOM Agri-Food Systems Agenda, Climate Change to include Climate Finance, Crime and Security and the CARICOM Commission on the Economy.

Prime Minister Browne

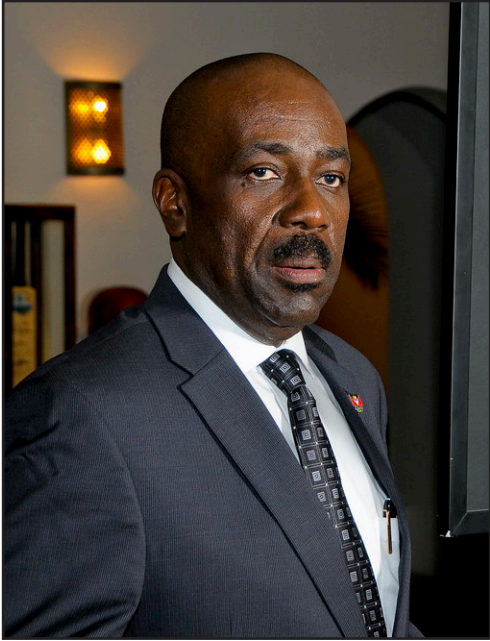
said that also of major concern to Heads is the Situation in Haiti, Border issues involving Belize and Guatemala and Guyana and Venezuela. He said that reparations, a recommendation for the appointment to the position of president of the Caribbean Court of Justice, CCJ and the Candidature of Suriname to the post of the Secretary General of the Organization of American States (OAS) will also be addressed. Heads are also expected to engage UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres and European Commission President,

Ursula von der Leyen, who have been invited by Heads as special guests.

Senior Foreign Service Officer, Kurt Williams and Senior Foreign Service Officer for Consular Affairs Lance Browne are also part of the Antigua and Barbuda delegation to the Meeting.

Attorney General and Minister for Legal Affairs, Sir Steadroy Benjamin is the Acting Prime Minister during the prime minister's absence. Prime Minister Browne returns to Antigua and Barbuda on Saturday 22nd February

FA Minister Greene outlines areas of focus with Pakistani High Commissioner



Foreign Minister E. P. Chet Greene

Foreign Affairs Minister, E.P Chet Greene has outlined three main areas of focus as he gives an undertaking to work towards strengthening the relationship between Antigua and Barbuda and Pakistan.

Speaking on Wednesday during a courtesy call by the new Pakistani High Commissioner, Shahbaz M. Malik, and his delegation to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Minister Greene noted that cricket is a common passion for the people of this country as well as in Pakistan and that this could be the area of first contact.

“In the context of Antigua and Barbuda and Pakistan relations, I would like to suggest a few areas of cooperation. Firstly, I would start with

something that we hold in common, cricket, I will wish to invite exchanges between Pakistani cricketers and Antigua and Barbuda cricketers as we continue to build capacity among our young players to ensure that we have that pathway into international cricket. I can also promise you that Pakistani cricketers who come to Antigua and Barbuda would have the benefit of some of the world’s best cricketers because we have the Four-knights Cricket Academy headed by Sir Vivian Richards, Sir Andy Roberts, Sir Richie Richardson and Sir Curtly Ambrose. So with this offer, I expect to see Pakistanis in droves coming to Antigua and Barbuda to train at the academy,” he remarked.

Noting that Pakistani cricket pitches and environment are different to what obtains here, Minister Greene said this exchange will allow for better adaptation by the cricketers who participate in the exchange programme.

The foreign minister also took note of Pakistan’s agricultural industry, noting that it is quite substantial and that there are lessons that Antigua and Barbuda can learn from Pakistani farmers and farming methods.

“We in Antigua and Barbuda are on a path to building sustainability in our agricultural sector, so machinery, agricultural techniques are the areas we would want to discuss further with you as we seek to improve our agricultural output,” he stated. He expressed the hope that there could be some agricultural cooperation between both countries.

Minister Greene also expressed the hope that Antigua and Barbuda could establish links with the textiles sector in Pakistan to import products into the Caribbean and he offered St. John’s as an excellent hub for imports from Pakistan to be re-exported to the rest of the Caribbean.

High Commissioner Malik expressed his government appreciation for Antigua and Barbuda’s support for his country’s candidates for positions in several important committees in the U.N and other multilateral agencies. He expressed strong interest in the areas raised by Minister Greene and he gave a commitment to have follow up discussions with his colleagues in Pakistan to see how soon some of the minister’s proposals could become a reality.

Local News



On the move! Tumasie Blair leaves the Foreign Service

Tumasie Blair, the second highest ranking member of the Antigua and Bar-

more than 20-years of service in the country's foreign service as he pur-

Mission to the United Nations in New York, and the broader community

their brightest minds and tireless advocates.

Deputy Permanent Representative Tumasie Blair has ended his tour of duty at the Mission, leaving an inspiring legacy of achievement and unwavering dedication to the unique circumstances facing his nation as a small island state and all others around the globe.

Tears flowed in an emotional farewell on Monday, led by Antigua and Barbuda Prime Minister, Gaston Browne, with whom Blair shared a special relationship in their unceasing effort to advance a number of initiatives that brought considerable respect to Antigua and Barbuda's name internationally and in diplomatic circles.

Blair is often seen shadowing Prime Minister Browne whenever he travels to New York for meetings at the United Nations, particularly the annual General Assembly or even further afield, at the environment summit, COP. Prime Minister Browne called his departure a bitter sweet moment in a pre-recorded video statement that was played before a room filled with colleagues and



buda Permanent Mission to the United Nations, is bringing an end to his

sues another calling. This as the Antigua and Barbuda, its Permanent

of Small Island Developing States (SIDS) are bidding farewell to one of

con't on pg 7

con't from pg 6
fellow diplomats from across the UN system. "You are clearly one of the most progressive and one of the best diplomats Antigua and Barbuda has

diversification for you as you seek to broaden your horizon," Prime Minister Browne stated.

In paying homage to their relationship and not willing to relinquish ties,

new position."

Antigua and Barbuda's Permanent Representative to the United Nations Ambassador Walton Webson, in paying tribute to a colleague, whose wis-

He credited Blair for the tremendous role he played in helping him to navigate the uncertainty about Antigua and Barbuda's ability to host the SIDS4 Conference, a landmark and historic event for the twin island nation and all SIDS. He also praised him for his invaluable insight in the crafting of major initiatives to include the MVI and the SIDS Debt Sustainability Support Services, all major features of the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for SIDS (ABAS), the outcome document of SIDS4.

Blair, having dedicated in excess of 20 years of his life to the work of the Mission, now starts a new chapter as Senior Director at Global Citizens, an organization that is known for its work in eradicating poverty around the globe. For him, it is a natural fit as he vows to continue advocating for the causes that defined his tenure as a diplomat and negotiator with the Antigua and Barbuda mission.

"Antigua and Barbuda and other SIDS are constantly dealing with significant challenges every day. I have always fought and will continue to fight for our survival. My time at the mission has well equipped me for this new chapter in my life," Blair said.



in the diplomatic service. And we will certainly miss your expertise and your experience. But we understand this represents a level of growth and

Prime Minister Browne was quick to add, "We also believe too that you will be able to leverage opportunities too for Antigua and Barbuda in your

dom and guidance he has deeply valued over the years, called it a tremendous loss to their institutional capacity.

The UWI Five Islands Public Advocacy Series looks at AI for Economic Development



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Minister of Foreign Affairs,
Antigua and Barbuda



Tianze Zhang
Founder,
AI For Developing Countries
Forum (AIFOD)



Andrea Jacobs
AI Legal Advisor,
Ministry of Legal Affairs,
Antigua and Barbuda



Joy-Marie King
Director of International Trade,
Ministry of Foreign Affairs,
Antigua and Barbuda

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Following several recent advancements in the world of Artificial Intelligence, The University of the West Indies (UWI) Five Islands Campus will host a virtual public advocacy forum, “AI for the Economic Development of Emerging Economies”, on Monday, Feb. 24, 2025, at 6:30 p.m. AST. The event will explore how artificial intelligence can drive innovation and growth in developing economies across the Ca-

ribbean, Latin America, Africa, Asia and beyond.

Pro Vice-Chancellor and Campus Principal of The UWI Five Islands Campus, Professor C. Justin Robinson noted that this is timely following recent advancements in AI and the lowering of costs which brings the use of this technology into the reach of developing countries. “The impact that AI has for development now puts developing countries

in the new frontier race where they will be able to utilize these tools to analyse and help solve issues that may have been cost prohibitive before.” he stated. The Principal also noted that it is expected to an in-depth discussion that will help contextualize the use of AI and demonstrate its benefits to developing societies such as those in the OECS.

The forum will feature a panel of experts, includ-

ing Minister E.P. Chet Greene, Antigua and Barbuda’s Minister of Foreign Affairs, who will discuss national AI strategies and digital transformation. Tianze Zhang, founder of the China AI for Developing Countries Forum (AIFOD), will present case studies on AI’s impact on sectors like agriculture, finance and education.

Other panellists include Andrea Jacobs, AI legal advisor at Antigua and Barbuda’s Ministry of Legal Affairs, who will address the ethical and practical applications of AI, and Joy-Marie King, director of international trade at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, who will discuss AI’s role in achieving Sustainable Development Goals.

The Feb 24 virtual event begins at 6:30 p.m. (Eastern Caribbean time). Principal of The UWI Five Islands Campus, Professor C. Justin Robinson will deliver the opening remarks and will be chaired by Dr. Curtis Charles, Director of Academic Affairs. Following their presentations, participants will be able to pose questions directly to the panel during the discussion segment. To register for the event, visit <https://fiveislands.uwi.edu/publicadvocacyseries/>

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World's Toughest Row - Atlantic 2024/25 - Welcomes the last boat into Antigua!



The World's Toughest Row - Atlantic 2024/2025 has now come to an end.

The race welcomed 36 teams safely across the finish line in English Harbour. 108 incredible adventurers have completed the 3,000-mile row from La Gomera in the Canary Islands into Nelson's Dockyard. More than 650 family and friends to the rowers have visited Antigua and Barbuda in the past 30 days - experiencing

the beauty of the destination and the feel of the warm welcome you get here.

The World's Toughest Row are proud and honoured to be the Official Ocean Rowing event in Antigua and Barbuda backed by a strong partnership with the Ministry of Tourism and they are already excited to return next year with a fleet of 40+teams!

CEO and Race owner,

Carsten Heron Olsen said after the final arrival, "Once again we hear the horns of the super yachts marking the end of yet another incredible race. We would like to pass on our thanks and appreciation to the people of Antigua, particularly our treasured friends at Nelsons Dockyard for supporting and welcoming both us as race organisers, but also our intrepid teams, their families, friends and onto the island"

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Commentary

Caribbean education in crisis, World Bank warns



By Sheria Brathwaite for Barbados Today

The World Bank has delivered a damning verdict on the Caribbean's education system, labelling it as being in a state of crisis and warning of severe consequences if urgent reforms are not implemented.

During a virtual webinar on Monday, senior officials from the international financial institution laid bare the systemic inadequacies plaguing Caribbean schools, highlighting outdated teaching practices, ill-equipped infrastructure, and widening educational inequities. They stressed the need for significant financial investment and enhanced teacher support to reverse the region's educational decline.

The World Bank's Country Director for the Caribbean, Lilia Burunciuc did not mince words as she described a dire state of affairs.

"We are confronting a crisis that is jeopardising the future of the Caribbean, a crisis in education," she said. "This may sound dramatic, but the impact on education is so critical, and the systems are failing. Indeed, this constitutes a crisis. We must ask ourselves and answer questions about how we can strengthen foundational skills in literacy, numeracy, and critical thinking to improve learning outcomes."

The World Bank's scathing assessment pinpointed numerous flaws within the Caribbean's education system.

In a detailed analysis, Victoria Levin, senior economist in the World Bank's education global practice cited outdated teaching methods, inadequate infrastructure, and severe disparities in educational access as key contributors to the region's educational underperformance.

Levin highlighted the so-called "two-tier system" where elite schools cater to students from wealthier families, while under-resourced institutions serve lower-income communities.

"The elite secondary schools maintain their privileged status through highly selective admissions processes based on standardised entrance exams. This serves as a sorting mechanism with lifelong consequences for students,"

Levin said. "Meanwhile, the rest of the secondary school system fails to deliver the necessary competencies, perpetuating social inequality."

The World Bank also condemned the region's inadequate provision for special education, citing a lack of reliable data, insufficient specialised schools, and a shortage of qualified teachers. Levin pointed to rigid curricula that fail to accommodate diverse learning needs and highlighted the absence of essential facilities such as accessible toilets and ramps.

"Special education remains under-prioritised, with missing policies and procedures for transitioning students into or out of special

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education," she added.

Despite notable progress in educational access such as an increase in pre-primary enrolment from 65 per cent to 85 per cent over the last two decades, learning outcomes across the Caribbean remain worryingly low. Results from the global database of harmonised test scores show that students in the Caribbean are significantly underperforming compared to their peers in high-income and upper-middle-income countries.

Levin revealed that "students are struggling with foundational skills, such as literacy and numeracy, even in primary schools. Numeracy skills, in particular, are lagging behind literacy by the end of primary education in most countries."

This learning deficit extends into secondary education.

Levin said: "Students who fall behind in early grades on foundational skills are unable to master more advanced competencies later on. This is evident in CSEC exam results, where less than 80 per cent of students passed English and fewer than half passed Maths, even among the better-performing students."

The situation is further exacerbated by persistently low post-secondary and tertiary enrolment rates across the region, which limit young people's access to higher education and better job opportunities.

The World Bank also highlighted a growing

disconnect between education and labour market requirements. Burunciuc noted that Caribbean employers consistently report skills shortages, indicating that the current education system is failing to prepare students for the workforce.

She also expressed concern about declining parental engagement.

Both Levin and Burunciuc stressed the urgent need for increased investment in education across the Caribbean. Levin noted that while the region spends more per student on tertiary education than high-income countries, it allocates significantly less funding

to primary and secondary education.

"With the share of the young population declining across the region, it is crucial to invest more in every child to ensure they receive quality education and acquire the skills necessary to be productive adults," Levin argued. "If we can fix the quality of education, we can achieve tremendous impacts, including higher productivity, reduced crime and risky behaviours, improved health, and greater civic engagement."

Although the World Bank paint a bleak picture of the current state of Caribbean education, they also pro-

vide a roadmap for change. The organisation urges Caribbean governments to modernise curricula, enhance teacher training, and increase investment in digital infrastructure.

Officials said that addressing the deep-seated inequities within the education system is critical to ensuring that all students regardless of their socio-economic background have access to high-quality education.

Burunciuc concluded with a stark warning: "This is not just an education crisis; it is a crisis that threatens the future of the Caribbean. The time for action is now."




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Regional News

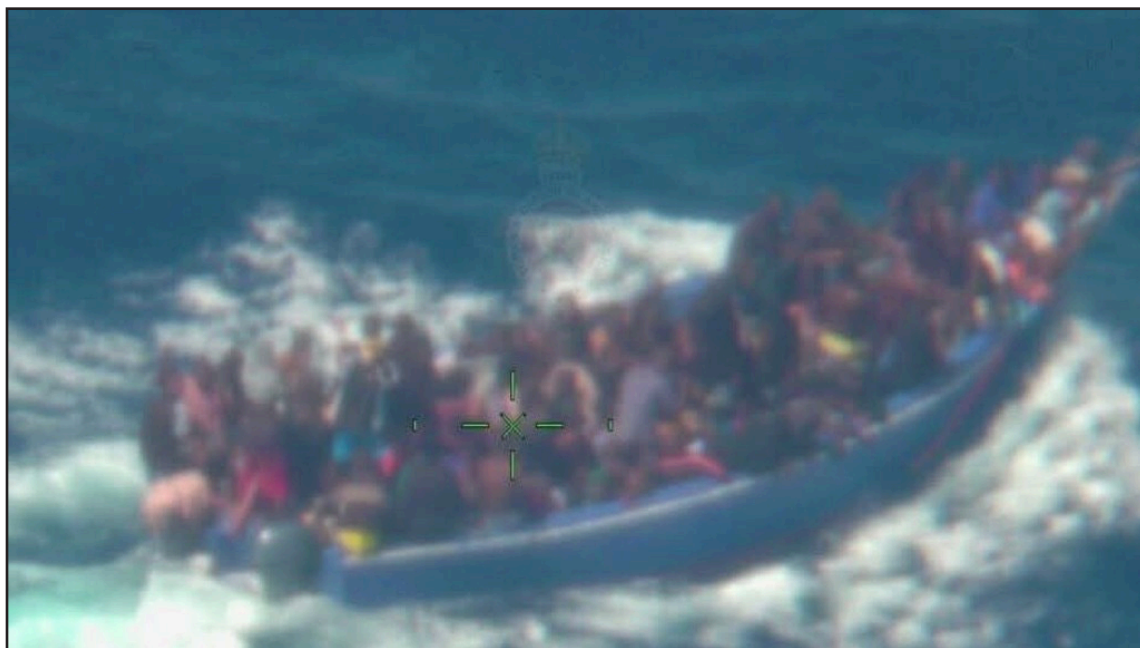


Vessel with 148 migrants intercepted off TCI coast

Authorities recently detained 148 irregular migrants after intercepting their vessel off the Turks and Caicos Islands coast on Monday evening.

The successful interception occurred at 9:07 pm on February 17, bringing the year's total migrant interdictions to nearly 300. Among those detained were 109 men, 39 women, and two minors.

The vessel was towed to South Dock Port where Border Force officials processed the migrants, who have since been transferred



to the Detention Centre. This interdiction marks the fourth vessel intercepted this year, with authorities having detained a total of 296 irregular migrants since January, including three minors. (Loop Caribbean)

DAILY PROGRAMMING

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JAH WADADLI 7PM-9PM FRIDAYS
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Police in Haiti name former senator among suspects facing arrest over deadly gang attacks

Authorities in Haiti have issued more than a dozen arrest warrants against suspects accused of back-

comment. Among the victims of the attacks was a two-month-

called for the creation of a special international criminal tribunal to try all those accused of killing

“Road access is very difficult where the gangs are located, but that’s not going to stop us from fighting against them,” said Lazarre, adding that “a lot” of gang members have been killed in the attacks. He did not provide details.

Gangs control 85% of the capital Port-au-Prince and in recent months have launched attacks on previously peaceful communities in a bid to seize more territory.

More than 5,600 people were reported killed in Haiti last year, with gang violence leaving more than one million people homeless in recent years, according to the United Nations. (Jamaica Gleaner)



ing gang members that have been attacking a peaceful community near the capital for the past three weeks.

Dozens of people have been killed in Kenscoff this month, including three police officers and one soldier, police spokesman Lionel Lazarre said Tuesday at a press conference.

Among those accused of plotting against the government and backing the gangs is former Senator Nel Cassy and former Kenscoff legislator Alfredo Antoine, Lazarre said. Neither could not be immediately reached for

old baby, according to the Cooperative for Peace and Development, a local human rights group who

thousands of people, including children, across Haiti in recent years.

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Regional News

Man wanted for murder of schoolboys and others fatally shot by police in Spanish Town

A man wanted for at least three murders, including the gunning down of two teenage boys last December, in the St Andrew North Police Division was fatally shot during an alleged shoot-out with the police in St Catherine early this morning.

The deceased has been identified as Keith Newman, otherwise called 'Neeko'.

The incident reportedly occurred at about 3:40 a.m. in March Pen, Spanish Town.

Newman was listed as wanted by the police for the murder of Adrian Hinds, alias 'Shoppy', on October 12, 2024 in Stony Hill.

He was also wanted for the December 12, 2024 murders of schoolboys 16-year-old Nicquan Whitely, a former student of Meadowbrook High, and 14-year-old Jumaane Henry, formerly of Oberlin High School, who were killed along Airy Castle Road in Stony Hill, St Andrew.

The police told The Gleaner that Newman was also wanted for the shooting of a man along Long Lane,



in the vicinity of Red Gyal Ring in St Andrew, on February 10, 2025.

It was noted that Newman's arch-rival, Orville 'Marvin' Dennie, who was also wanted for murder by the police, was recently fatally shot by a police team on 11 February in St Thomas.

Newman is now the 46th person to be fatally wounded by the police since the start of the year.

The Independent Commission of Investigations (INDECOM) has been notified about this morning's incident.

The police believe the deaths of Dennie and Newman have put a dent in

the gang warfare that has plagued the Stony Hill, St Andrew community for several months.

The community of Airy Castle Road is currently under a 48-hour curfew, which was imposed at 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday.

Acting Superintendent of Police in charge of the St Andrew North Division, Randy Sweeney, told The Gleaner that the police are relentless in finding and prosecuting wanted persons and persons of interest, regardless of where they run and hide after committing crimes in the division.

"We are committed to and making valiant efforts to reduce crime and violence in the St Andrew North Division and reassure the citizens," Sweeney said.

The divisional commander is also appealing to persons to share information regarding crime, suspicious persons, or activities with the St Andrew North Criminal Investigation Branch at 876-924-1421 or Crime Stop at 311. (Jamaica Gleaner)



POINTE ON THE STREETZ

HOSTED BY
VERNON A. SPRINGER

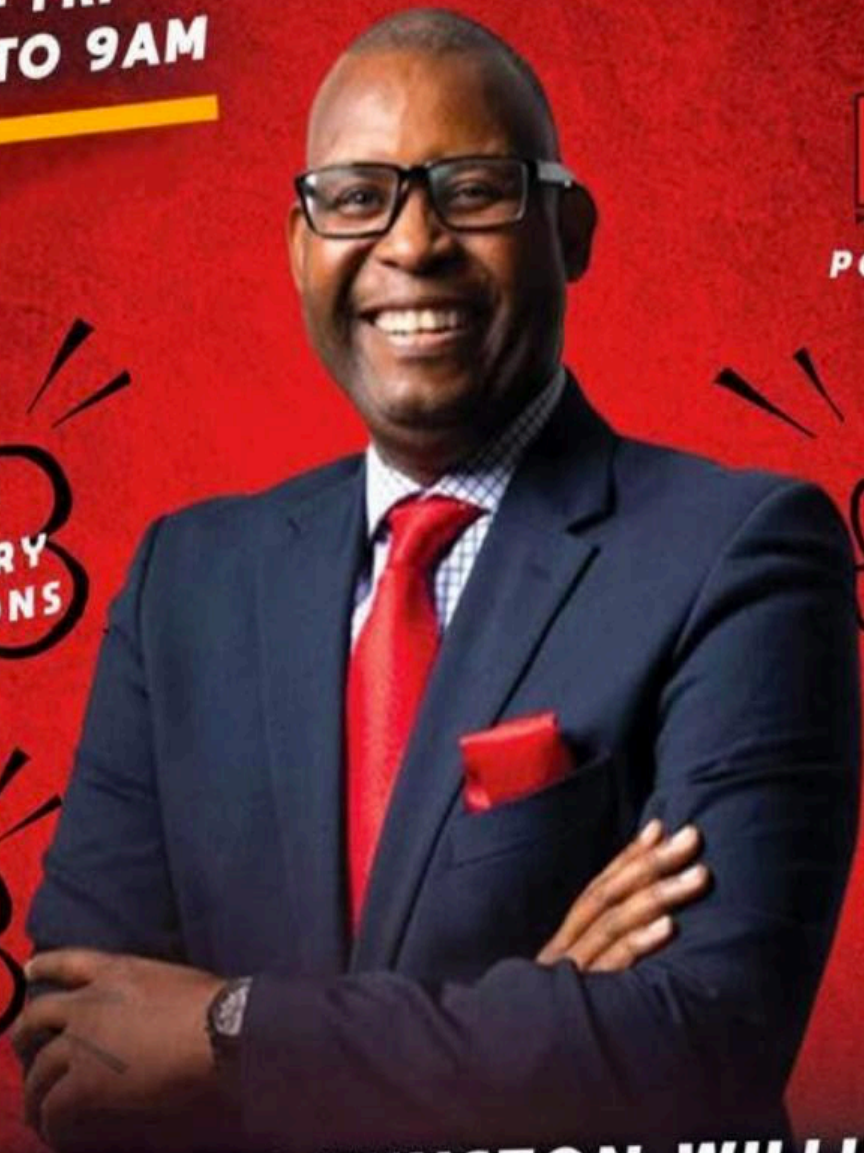
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MORNING POINTE

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Mexican cartel member arrested at Punta Cana Airport



A member of Mexico's notorious Sinaloa Cartel was recently apprehended at Punta Cana International Airport as he attempted to flee the Dominican Republic on a commercial flight.

Efrain Sánchez Cabanillas, known by the alias "Bala," was captured by a joint operation involving the National

Drug Control Directorate (DNCD), the Public Prosecutor's Office, and supported by agents from the US Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) and US Marshals Service.

According to authorities, the 38-year-old Mexican national is "a high-interest target for American justice" who faces serious charges in the United

States.

Sánchez Cabanillas is wanted by a Massachusetts District Court for conspiracy to distribute and possess more than 400 grams of fentanyl, five kilograms of cocaine, and over 500 grams of methamphetamines. (Loop Caribbean)

Kentucky child shoots and kills 2 home invaders

A Kentucky child shot and killed two men attempting to steal firearms from a safe within a home early Sunday morning, police said.

Clay County 911 received a call at approximately 4:24 a.m. regarding a shooting incident in Manchester. Upon responding, Manchester Police found two individuals had been shot and requested assistance from Kentucky State Police, according to a news

release from KSP.

Investigators found that the child, who is a resident of the home, discovered the two men inside and saw them holding firearms, KSP said.

"The juvenile, acting in self-defense, retrieved a handgun and shot both men before escaping through a bedroom window," according to KSP.

It is unclear how the child

was able to locate a handgun or if any additional residents were present in the home at the time of the incident.

The two men have been identified by state police as 44-year-old Roger D. Smith and 51-year-old Jeffrey M. Allen. Smith was transported to Advent Health Manchester, where he died from his injuries. Allen was pronounced dead at the scene.

The deaths of both men were confirmed by the Clay County Coroner. Autopsies were performed by the medical examiner on Monday. The investigation remains ongoing.

Manchester Police Department and Kentucky State Police did not immediately respond to NBC News requests for comment. (NBC News)

Trump tells ‘dictator’ Zelenskiy to move fast for peace or lose Ukraine

U.S. President Donald Trump on Wednesday denounced Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskiy as “a dictator without elections” and said he had better move fast to secure a peace or he would have no country left.

Trump spoke hours after Zelenskiy hit back at his suggestion that Ukraine was responsible for Russia’s 2022 full-scale invasion, saying the U.S. president was trapped in a Russian disinformation bubble.

“A Dictator without Elections, Zelenskiy better move fast or he is not going to have a Country left,” Trump wrote on his Truth Social media platform.

In response, Ukrainian Foreign Minister Andrii Sybiha said no one could force his country to give in. “We will defend our right to exist,” Sybiha said on X.

Zelenskiy’s five-year term was supposed to end in 2024 but presidential and parliamentary elections cannot be held under martial law, which Ukraine imposed in February 2022 in response to Russia’s invasion.

Russia has seized some



20% of Ukraine and is slowly but steadily gaining more territory in the east. Moscow said its “special military operation” responded to an existential threat posed by Kyiv’s pursuit of NATO membership. Ukraine and the West call Russia’s action an imperialist land grab.

Zelenskiy, who met Trump’s Ukraine envoy Keith Kellogg in Kyiv on Wednesday, said he would like Trump’s team to have “more truth” about Ukraine, a day after Trump said Ukraine “should never have started” the conflict with Russia.

The Ukrainian leader said Trump’s assertion that his approval rating was just 4% was Russian disinformation and that any attempt to replace him would fail.


“We have evidence that these figures are being

discussed between America and Russia. That is, President Trump ... unfortunately lives in this disinformation space,” Zelenskiy told Ukrainian

TV.

The latest poll from the Kyiv International Institute of Sociology, from early February, says 57% of Ukrainians trust Zelenskiy.


Less than a month into his presidency, Trump has upended U.S. policy on Ukraine and Russia, ending Washington’s bid to isolate Russia over its invasion of Ukraine with a Trump-Putin phone call and talks between senior U.S. and Russian officials. (Reuters)



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Sports News

Wins for Navigators and Phoenix in Division 2 basketball league



The Navigators and Michael Joseph Phoenix recorded wins in the Antigua and Barbuda Basketball Association's (ABBA) Division 2 League on Tuesday evening.

The Navigators notched

up their second win in four encounters by snatching a 66-62 victory over the EZ Fit Flyers 2 in the opening game of a double-header at the JSC Sports Complex.

Ryan Sheppard converted 14 points and grabbed

14 rebounds; Ricky Willock also scored 14 points; Ariel Quallis sank 13 points and claimed 10 rebounds; and Baldwin Anthony sank 12 points and snatched 15 rebounds for the Navigators.

Amare Browne produced a game-high 23 points and claimed five rebounds, Rashaun Harry sank 14 points and grabbed 20 rebounds, and Piper Hansel had nine points and five rebounds for the EZ Fit Flyers, who lost for the second time in four encounters.

After losing their first two matches, Michael Joseph Phoenix secured their first win in three outings with a 78-49 victory against Da Project 2 in the second game of Tuesday's double-header.

Shalom Bloodman scored 21 points and

claimed 10 rebounds, Isaac Perez sank 16 points and snatched 12 rebounds, and Daysher Samuel produced 13 points and nine rebounds for Michael Joseph Phoenix, who suffered their second loss in as many games.

Gabriel De-Suza scored 16 points, Aiden Tonge converted 11 points, and Nathan Matthew had eight points for Da Project 2, who suffered their third loss in as many games.

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

Lava Smoke Shop Warriors will face defending champions EZ Fit Flyers at 6:45 pm, and All Saints Slam will take on Da Project at 8:30 pm.

Mixed fortunes for T.N. Kirnon in School Basketball League



Coach Cedric 'Supa' David and players of T.N. Kirnon Primary sit in the stands prior to their games in the Miniboy's Division in the Cool and Smooth Inter-School Basketball League at the JSC Sports Complex on Tuesday, February 18, 2025. (Photo courtesy of the school basketball league)

T.N. Kirnon Primary had mixed fortunes in the Miniboy's Primary Division in the Cool and Smooth Inter-School Basketball League on Tuesday.

Aril Adams sank 12 points to lead T.N. Kirnon Primary to a 15-2 victory against Golden Grove Primary in one of six matches at the JSC Sports Complex.

However, Mary E. Pigotts Primary notched up a 16-3 victory against T.N. Kirnon Primary.

Buckley's Primary prevailed 5-2 against Post Millennial Academy, and Five Islands Primary pulled off a 2-0 victory against defending champions Sea View Farm Primary.

Rylin Rodriguez converted 12 points to lead the Greenbay Primary to a 24-1 drubbing of the Golden Grove Primary, and J.T. Ambrose Primary snatched a 1-0 victory against S.R. Olivia David Primary of Bolans.

Bethesda trounce Young Warriors in Second Division League



Bethesda notched up their fourth win in the Antigua and Barbuda Football Association's (ABFA) Second Division League on Tuesday.

Devin Martin scored twice to propel Bethesda to a 7-1 drubbing of the Young Warriors at the Buckley's playing field.

Devin Martin had conversions in the 16th and 40th minutes. Christopher Orville opened the scoring for Bethesda with a conversion in the second minute, and Chunsae Martin scored in the seventh minute to double the lead.

Goals by Teori Ed-

wards in the 25th minute and O'Shale Simon in the 37th minute helped to propel Bethesda to a 6-0 lead at halftime.

Jawakie Joseph missed a chance to get on the scoresheet for Bethesda when he failed to convert a penalty kick in the 51st minute.

Caric James scored the only goal for the Young Warriors in the 79th minute, and Otima Floyd wrapped up the match by scoring the seventh and final goal for Bethesda in the third minute of added on time.

The result means that

Bethesda will remain in 12th place in the 17-team Second Division by advancing to 14 points from 13 matches.

The Young Warriors will remain third from the bottom of the standings with seven points after slumping to their 11th defeat in 14 encounters.

The Cedar Grove Blue Jays are leading the Second Division with 40 points, six ahead of Sea View Farm FC, with both teams having played 15 matches.

Golden Grove FC occupies third place with 33 points from 14 matches, while National Parks English Harbour are fourth with 32 points from 14 matches.

Closely following in fifth place is Belmont FC with 31 points from 15 matches, while Guyadli FC is sixth with 24 points from 13 matches.

The Young Lions occupy seventh place on goal difference with 19 points from 13 encounters, while Earthquake FC is in eighth place with 19 points from 14 matches.

Meanwhile, the

Antigua and Barbuda Football Association has suspended all matches in its three domestic league in recognition of its hosting of Group A matches in the 2025 CONCACAF Under-20 Qualifiers, which will be taking place across six four-team groups in four host countries from February 21 to 25.

Antigua and Barbuda will host Group A, which will also include the under-20 women's national teams of Haiti, Belize, and Guyana, at the ABFA Technical Center.

Competition in Group A will commence with a double-header at the ABFA Technical Center on Friday. Guyana will tackle Belize, and Antigua and Barbuda will take on Haiti.

The second round of Group A matches will take place on Sunday, February 23, and the third and final round will be held on Tuesday, February 25.

Action in the ABFA's domestic programme will resume with matches in the Second Division on Wednesday, February 26.

Sports News

Buckley's 3Js get more success in ABSCA's warm-up matches

Buckley's 3Js recorded two more wins in the Antigua Barbuda Softball Cricket Association's (ABSCA) Rudy Mathew 10 Overs Warm Ups at the Potters playing field on Sunday.

After recording a 10-wicket win against Potters in their opening game, Buckley's 3Js won by the same margin against Strictly Fun in their second encounter.

Strictly Fun made 40 for six off 6.2 overs, and Menova Govia captured three for 15. In reply, Buckley's 3Js achieved victory by scoring 44 without losing a wicket in 1.5 overs. Kenrick Scott and Makada Hector each made 20 not out.

Buckley's 3Js prevailed by 28 runs against Jennings Rockets. Buckley's 3Js made 123 for three off their 10 overs. Steve Martin hit 30, and Gaynel O'Garro scored 20. Anmarie Parker captured one for 26.

Jennings Rockets were then restricted to 95 for four off their 10 overs. Hezekiah Weston struck 27, and Kushana David made 10. Collar Simon picked up one wicket for five runs, and Gaynel Og-



Jeniecee Russell of Wayne's Electrical Services Survivors and Malique Lamay of Police are the two youngest players to participate in the ABSCA's warm-up competition. (Photos courtesy of Mandy Weatherhead)

arro captured one for 17.

Wayne's Electrical Services Survivors/Dredgers made it two wins in as many games with a seven-wicket victory against Police.

In a match reduced to eight overs, Police were restricted to 34 for two, with Isiah Viville getting 12.

Cerie Richards took one wicket for three runs, and Gale Lee claimed

captured one for 11, and Valarie Isaac took one for 18.

In reply, Jennings Rockets were restricted to 82 for four off their 10 overs. Hezekiah Weston struck 26, and Anmarie Parker made 11 not out.

Gail Jobe achieved a hat trick to finish with three for 19, and Denley Thomas claimed one wicket for seven runs.

Meanwhile, Jeniecee Russell of Wayne's Electrical Services Survivors and Malique Lamay of Police are the two youngest players to participate in the ABSCA's warm-up competition.

Newly elected president Mandy Weatherhead has expressed getting softball cricket implemented as part of the Ministry of Sport programme in the schools across Antigua and Barbuda as one of the main objectives of the ABSCA.

The warm-up matches, which involve both male and female players, are being used to help prepare the teams and players for the 2025 domestic softball season.

The ABSCA is planning to start the new season on Sunday, March 9.

one wicket for eight runs. Survivors achieved victory at 38 for one in two overs.

Potters claimed their first win in three matches with a 64 run victory against Jennings Rockets, who lost for the second time in as many games.

Potters made 146 for five off their allotted 10 overs. Nolia Elvin hit 21, Denley Thomas struck 16, and Kemar Christian scored 15. Jamoy Jarvis



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Sports

THURSDAY 20TH FEBRUARY 2025



Regional Women's Super50 Cup returns to St. Kitts

Cricket West Indies (CWI) has announced the return of regional women's cricket to St. Kitts from next week with the CG United Women's Super50 Cup regional tournament, showcasing the Caribbean's premier female cricket talent.

The prestigious CG United Super50 Cup will unfold across three premier venues – the historic Warner Park, Conaree Cricket Centre, and St. Paul's Sports Complex – from February 24 to March 7, with matches beginning at 10 am daily.

Defending champions Jamaica will face fierce competition from a stellar line-up, including Barbados, Trinidad & Tobago Red Force, Guyana, Windward Islands, and hosts Leeward Islands. The tournament marks a crucial preparation phase in a landmark year for West Indies women's cricket.

This regional show-piece precedes an intensive international calendar for the West Indies women, who look to build on their commanding One-Day International (ODI) and T20 International (T20I) series



Jamaica are the defending champions after winning last year's round robin CG United Women's Super50 Cup.

victories against Bangladesh in St. Kitts last month.

CWI Director of Cricket Miles Bascombe expressed his excitement at the start of the tournament saying, "We at Cricket West Indies are thrilled to kick off this year's CG United Women's Super50.

"This tournament isn't just a competition but a celebration of the incredible strides we've made in women's cricket across the Caribbean. We are seeing phenomenal talent emerging from every corner of the region and watching these players battle it out on the field is going to be something special.

"With our international

tours on the horizon and the impending ODI World Cup coming up, the timing couldn't be better to showcase the strength of West Indies women's cricket. We are particularly excited for cricket fans in St. Kitts to see once again, some of our rising stars in action as the future of women's cricket in the Caribbean looks brighter than ever."

Last year's tournament highlighted the depth of women's cricket in the region.

Jamaica started strongly with a commanding 204-run victory over Barbados, powered by Stafanie Taylor's impressive 99. Guyana established themselves as serious contenders with

consistent performances, including a crucial win over Trinidad and Tobago where Ashmini Munisar claimed exceptional figures of five for 15.

The Windward Islands also made their mark with a thrilling two-wicket victory over Trinidad and Tobago, thanks to Jannillea Glasgow's decisive innings of 62.

Some notable individual performances also lit up the tournament, including Chinelle Henry's remarkable six for 31 for Jamaica against the Windward Islands, Kycia Knight's steady batting for Barbados, which brought her three half centuries, and Shemaine Campbelle's aggressive batting displays for Guyana.

The tournament will bowl off with the opening round of matches on Monday, February 24.

The Windward Islands will meet the Leeward Islands at St. Paul's, Barbados will take on Guyana at Conaree, and Jamaica will begin their title defense against Trinidad and Tobago at Warner Park.