

Murder accused remanded until June 4

Story on Page 2



Prime Minister Gaston Browne and Ministry of Finance officials meeting with the IMF team

Story on Page 4&10

Murder accused remanded until June 4

The woman accused of murder in the homicide of 9-year old Chantel Crump has been remanded at His Majesty's Prison until June 4.

The woman – 20-Angela Mejia – of Glanville's appeared in the Magistrate's Court on Monday to answer the charge. She appeared before the court unrepresented by a lawyer, but she has since indicated to the court that she wants to be represented by an attorney.

Senior Magistrate Ngaio Emanuel adjourned the committal proceedings until June 4. Mejia has been remanded to prison until that time.

The police are alleging that on



Wednesday 12 March, 2025, Mejia murdered Chantel Crump at Glanville's in the Parish of St. Phillip in the Magisterial Dis-

trict 'B' contrary to Common Law.

Meanwhile, the police have not yet charged the man suspected to have had a role in Chantel's death as the police have intensified their investigation into the homicide.

It is believed that Mejia have not provided any evidence linking the man to the child's abduction and death even as the police are of the view that the accused woman did not act alone.

The police have dismissed suggestions that Chantel's body had been mutilated as has been claimed on many social media postings.

TUESDAYS & WEDNESDAYS



\$16.99

- *2 pcs
- Biscuit
- Drink



\$19.99

- Zinger / CCB
- Drink

limitations apply






Senior Ministry of Education officials, counsellors spend day at Five Islands Primary school



Senior officials of the Ministry of Education, including the Minister, Daryll Matthew and Director of Education, Clare Browne, along with several counsellors spent Monday with students and staff at the Five Islands Primary School.

Both Minister Matthew and Director Browne spent time interacting with the students and their teachers listening, consoling and generally providing a ‘pillar of support’ as collective the school remains in a state of unease following the abduction and subsequent homicide of 9-year old Chantel Crump, a former student of the institution. She

was reported missing on Wednesday and by Friday night/Saturday morning, her body was discovered at Weatherill’s beach.

Director Browne said the decision to visit the school came out of a realization that things at the school will not be ‘normal’ on Monday, the first full day of classes since the death of the minor.

“I wanted to be there for no other reason but to share in the grief and to give the school, the staff and students, the ministry’s full support. The minister had to leave after some time, but I stayed for practically the entire morning. The experience

felt like a somber cloud hovered over the school during my time there,” he recalled.

According to Director Browne he went from class to class with his first stop being the Grade 4 class where Chantel was a student. “Just walking into the room and seeing the desk; a lone empty desk in the centre of the room with a flower placed on it that I felt an emptiness within myself and I know that this was the feeling of many persons at Five Islands Primary on Monday morning; something was missing; someone was missing; certainly Chantel Crump was missing from the school,” he declared.

The education senior official also noted that during discussions with the teachers, one teacher, through tears, exclaimed ‘I miss her, I miss her’. Director Browne reported that the ministry had reassigned a number of counsellors to Five Islands Primary during this period to help the students and staff cope with the loss of having a student die violently.

A total of 14 counsellors were at the school on Monday with the intention to work in pairs moving from classroom to classroom offering comfort for the students.

IMF gives Antigua and Barbuda positive economic review



The International Monetary Fund (IMF) gives Antigua and Barbuda a positive economic review following its latest Article Four consultation held with the government and which concluded last week.

“Antigua and Barbuda’s post-pandemic economic expansion is continuing. Real output is estimated to have surpassed pre-pandemic levels in 2024, with growth estimated at 4.3 percent, driven by strong tourism and one-off events (including the 4th International Conference on Small Island Developing States and the T20 Cricket World Cup). Inflation was elevated in 2024, reflecting contributions from specific items, notably communication, as well as increases in indirect taxes,” the report from the IMF Executive Board stated.

It said the recovery in nominal GDP, along with improved fiscal balances,

brought down the public debt from around 100 percent of GDP in 2020 to 67 percent in 2024. However, gross financing needs are projected to remain around 10 percent of GDP in the medium term. Substantial domestic and external arrears, albeit with domestic arrears uncertain in size, have limited financing options.

The report quoted the Eastern Caribbean Central Bank (ECCB) preliminary estimates as stating that the current account deficit narrowed to 7 percent of GDP in 2024, reflecting both a higher service trade balance—mainly tourism receipts—and a smaller goods deficit due to a contraction in imports. FDI inflows were resilient to tightening global financial conditions, it noted, continued to support ongoing hotel construction. Credit growth, it added, is recovering, with nonperforming loans contained.

Whilst noting that economic growth had surpassed the pre-pandemic levels in 2024, the IMF nonetheless is forecasting a slowdown in economic expansion for 2025. It now anticipates that expansion would be half a percent point less than earlier forecast of 3 percent to two-and-a-half percent.

The IMF said the recent improvements in tax revenue are welcome, with further domestic revenue mobilization needed in the medium term to ensure fiscal sustainability.

“Antigua and Barbuda’s tax revenues remain below the authorities’ fiscal resilience guideline targets and are low by peer country standards. The authorities’ 2024 Budget measures have started to close the gap, but more will be needed in the medium term,” the report noted.

(Please read the full IMF report later in today’s paper)

Senate President ends UN visit with fruitful bilateral discussions



Senate President and the head of Antigua and Barbuda's delegation to the annual Commission on the Status of Women Conference, Senator Alincia Williams-Grant, ended her visit to the United Nations, by holding bilateral dis-

cussions with the Deputy Executive Director of UN Women.

During these discussions, the top UN official, Nyaradzayi Gumbonzvanda, and Senator Grant, reflected on the role the UN agency is playing in im-

proving the lives of women globally and especially those in small island developing states, such as Antigua and Barbuda.

Only last year, UN Women demonstrated its commitment to the goals of SIDS by partnering with Antigua

and Barbuda in hosting the Gender Equality Forum, which formed a major component of the historic SIDS4 Conference.

Gumbonzvanda was in Antigua and Barbuda for the landmark gathering and during her meeting with Senator Williams Grant last Friday reaffirmed UN Women's commitment to the goals of the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for SIDS (ABAS), the framework document that is mapping the work of SIDS for the next ten years.

Senator Williams Grant expressed her gratitude to Gumbonzvanda for UN Women's financial support which allowed Antigua and Barbuda to fully participate in the CSW Conference.

She also used the opportunity to render Antigua and Barbuda's appreciation to the Multi-Country Office (MCO) of UN Women in Barbados for the supportive role it continues to play in strengthening national policies and programmes geared at fostering gender equality and combating gender-based violence.

Senator Williams-Grant was accompanied to the bilateral discussion by First Secretary of the Antigua and Barbuda Mission to the United Nations Asha Challenger, Executive Director of the Directorate of Gender Affairs Jamie Saunders and Programme Officer T'Chell Looby.

Its ABLP Primary Day in St. George



Michael Freeland



Bakisha Francis-James



Salim Browne



Joel Rayne

The highly anticipated primary elections to select a candidate/caretaker for the Antigua and Barbuda Labour Party in St George constituency is taking place later today.

The contest is between four candidates and it has generated much interest among the party members in the constituency.

Registration for membership of the party has soared over the past several weeks to where there are a total of 1611 persons who are eligible to vote in the primary.

The candidates are; Joel Rayne, Michael Freeland, Bakisha Francis and Salim Browne.

Organisers say the polls will open at the Potters Primary School at 4:00 pm and will close at 8:00 pm. Counting of the votes will commence shortly after the polls have closed.

ABLP Political Leader, Prime Minister Gaston Browne said the renewed support for the

party is reflected by the overwhelming desire on the part of residents of the constituency to participate in the primary.

This is the latest primary that

the ABLP has held to select candidates over the past several months. However, it appears as though interest in St. George has intensified as many are predicting a tight race.



STATE INSURANCE
COMPANY LIMITED
 Live in a better State of mind

ANTIGUA (268) 481-7800/04 BARBUDA (268) 727-7422 info@siclfinancial.com www.siclfinancial.com f i t

A workshop to promote insurance for at-risk communities opens today

A workshop that is designed to steer financial institutions and insurance companies towards offering finances and coverage for at-risk communities opens at the Methodist Conference Centre today.

Organised jointly by the Caribbean Development Policy Centre based in Barbados and the Gilbert Agricultural and Rural Development Centre (GARD), the workshop will attract representatives from financial institutions, including credit unions as well

as insurance companies.

Twenty-five representatives are set to attend the workshop that will run over two days.

Executive Director of the GARD Centre, June Jackson explained that this week's workshop is the first of a two-part series of workshops where the focus will be on how to offer financing and insurance coverage to local farmers.

Part two of the workshop is slated

from April 2-3 where the attendees will be members of the local farming community.

Jackson explained that the idea is to encourage farmers to seek insurance for their crops or animals as they are quite vulnerable to the vagaries of the weather as well as to larceny of both crops and animals.

The workshop will help the financial institutions to fashion special packages that meet the peculiar needs of farmers.



care



MCII



the GARD center

Join Us!

Roundtable Discussion

'Innovative Approaches to Catalyse the Delivery of Meso-Level Climate and Disaster Risk Finance and Insurance'

Date / Time

March 18-19, 2025

Start at 8:45am

Register Now!

bit.ly/42HiL2c



**The Methodist Conference Room,
Sherlock Hall, Scotts Hill, Belmont,
Antigua & Barbuda**



**Register by:
March 7, 2025**

Local News

Antigua and Barbuda Bureau of Standards Relocation in Process

Antigua and Barbuda – Monday 17 March, 2025 – The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Barbuda Affairs announces that the Antigua and Barbuda Bureau of Standards is currently undergoing a relocation process.

Ambassador Clarence Pilgrim, Permanent Secretary advises that the Bureau is temporarily closed until further notice.

This closure is due to the ongoing retrofitting of the building that will house the Bureau in the near future.



Ambassador Clarence Pilgrim

The necessary steps to rectify and prepare the new facility are being implemented promptly.

The Ministry assures the public that these adjustments are part of a larger initiative to improve the Bureau's services and infrastructure.

Further updates regarding the reopening and any additional changes to the Bureau's operations will be provided as soon as they are available.

The ministry is asking for the public's understanding and patience during this transitional period.



HEALTH ON POINT
 WITH CHRISTOPHER HONORE
 HEALTH COACH & NUTRITIONIST

EVERY MONDAY!
 ON POINTE FM 99.1
 12 NOON TO 2PM

POINTE FM 99.1
 BROADCASTING FROM THE POINT COMMUNITY



**MON - FRI
9AM TO 11AM**



**HOSTED BY
TROY ALLEN**

TALK YOUR MIND

CALL: 562-3989 OR 562-2991 | US: 718 285 7889
FACEBOOK LIVE @ POINTE FM99.1

WE ARE GETTING STRONGER

IMF Executive Board Concludes 2025 Article IV Consultation with Antigua and Barbuda

On March 13, 2025, the Executive Board of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) concluded the Article IV consultation^[1] with Antigua and Barbuda and endorsed the staff appraisal without a meeting on a lapse-of-time basis. The authorities need more time to consider the publication of the Staff Report prepared for this consultation.^[2]

Antigua and Barbuda's post-pandemic economic expansion is continuing. Real output is estimated to have surpassed pre-pandemic levels in 2024, with growth estimated at 4.3 percent, driven by strong tourism and one-off events (including the 4th International Conference on Small Island Developing States and the T20 Cricket World Cup). Inflation was elevated in 2024, reflecting contributions from specific items, notably communication, as well as increases in indirect taxes.

The recovery in nominal GDP, along with improved fiscal balances, brought down the public debt from around 100 percent of GDP in 2020 to 67 percent in 2024. However, gross financing needs are projected to remain around 10 percent of GDP in the medium term. Substantial domestic and external arrears, albeit with domestic arrears uncertain in size, have limit-



ed financing options. The fiscal primary balance improved to 4.6 percent in 2024, aided by indirect tax increases, a broader economic recovery, and one-off factors (e.g., nearly 2 percent of GDP from an asset forfeiture and unusually low capital spending). The 2025 Budget envisages stronger tax revenues and higher capital spending.

According to Eastern Caribbean Central Bank (ECCB) preliminary esti-

mates, the current account deficit narrowed to 7 percent of GDP in 2024, reflecting both a higher service trade balance—mainly tourism receipts—and a smaller goods deficit due to a contraction in imports. FDI inflows were resilient to tightening global financial conditions and continued to support ongoing hotel construction. Credit growth is recovering, with nonperforming loans contained.

Executive Board Assessment^[3]

In concluding the 2025 Article IV consultation with Antigua and Barbuda, Executive Directors endorsed the staff's appraisal, as follows:

Antigua and Barbuda's post-pandemic economic expansion continues. Economic activity, boosted by tourism, is estimated to have surpassed pre-pandemic levels. As the recovery matures, staff projects economic growth to moderate from 3 percent in 2025 to 2½ percent over the medium term. After an increase in inflation in 2024, in part reflecting one-off factors, underlying price pressures are expected to dissipate. The external position in 2024 is assessed to be moderately weaker than the level implied by medium term fundamentals and desirable policies. Efforts to raise revenue and address debt and fiscal challenges bore fruit in 2024, though further steps will be needed to restore debt sustainability, address the stock of outstanding arrears, and reduce gross financing needs in the medium term.

Risks are currently tilted to the downside, although upside risks are also present. Downside risks emanate from elevated uncertainty about the global outlook; a deepening of geoeconomic

con't on pg11

con't from pg 10

fragmentation; commodity price volatility; climate-related vulnerabilities; and capacity constraints in the construction sector. Upside risks stem from stronger demand for tourism; improved air connectivity; new cruise port facilities; hosting of special events; and the intensification of productivity-enhancing structural reforms, which could support higher medium- and long-term growth.

Addressing external and domestic arrears is key to broadening financing options. While the fall in nominal debt in 2024 is welcome, outstanding arrears to domestic suppliers and to the Paris Club remain obstacles to debt sustainability and constrain Antigua and Barbuda's potential access to external and domestic financing. Given the additional vulnerabilities stemming from climate change and the resulting substantial adaption and resilience-building investment needs, efforts to address the current debt challenges, bolster government revenues, and improve public financial management are all the more critical.

Recent improvements in tax revenue are welcome, with further domestic revenue mobilization needed in the medium term to ensure fiscal sustainability. Antigua and Barbuda's tax revenues remain below the authorities' fiscal resilience guideline targets and are low by peer country standards. The

authorities' 2024 Budget measures have started to close the gap, but more will be needed in the medium term. To mobilize revenue without recourse to a personal income tax or higher ABST rates, near-term priorities could include tighter control of tax exemptions, transitioning to HS2022 classification in customs, and modernizing the framework for property taxation. Intensifying efforts to introduce a single window system at customs and to operationalize systems to allow e-filing, e-payment and e-registration of taxes is warranted. Introducing a large taxpayer unit as well as modernized IT systems would strengthen tax administration.

Better targeted social assistance would enhance inclusion while curbing inefficiencies. The current framework of social protection is fragmented across sectors and ministries. Staff sees scope to streamline these social programs to reduce overlap and tailor social assistance to the most vulnerable households. In this vein, staff encourages the development of a centralized information system or unified database to maintain accurate records of all beneficiaries, track support received, and identify gaps or duplications in coverage.

Room remains to strengthen fiscal institutions and oversight, building on recent progress. The operationalization of the Fiscal Responsibility Oversight

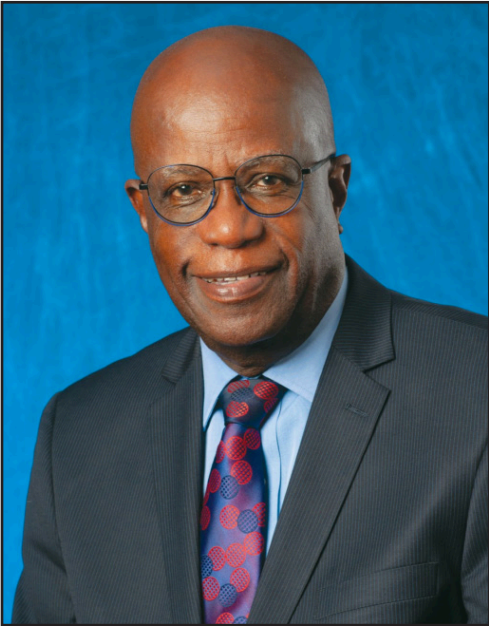
Committee is welcome. To promote transparency and help build public understanding, staff encourages publication of FROC reports once further experience has been gained. These goals would also be served by parliamentary endorsement of the Fiscal Resilience Guidelines and the medium-term fiscal framework. Statutory exemptions should be consistent with the Antigua and Barbuda Investment Authority Act and the Antigua and Barbuda Investment Authority should monitor the approved projects. The envisaged reestablishment of the SOE unit in the Ministry of Finance would enhance SOE oversight and contain potential fiscal risks.

To reinforce financial stability and build on efforts to promote financial inclusion, regional coordination remains key. Staff assesses the financial sector to be broadly stable, with credit growth recovering and non-performing loans approaching prudential levels. The launch of the regional credit bureau can promote faster access to credit while maintaining lending standards. The ECCB-led climate risk initiatives and the regional partial credit guarantee scheme should also boost credit quality and financial intermediation. A more risk-based supervisory framework for credit unions, with enhanced monitoring of asset quality and credit for-

bearance measures in the context of the planned regional common regulatory standards, would help put credit unions and banks on a more level playing field. The inclusion of the ECCB in the National Oversight Committee on Financial Action improves coordination among supervisory authorities. The increase in investment thresholds for the Citizenship by Investment Program and the improved due diligence process can help safeguard the program's integrity.

Intensifying reforms to improve the business environment would support potential growth by improving the allocation of resources between firms and addressing obstacles to firms' operations. Staff analysis finds potential for large aggregate productivity gains from the reallocation of resources between firms, and scope to continue addressing obstacles that firms report in areas such as workforce education, access to finance, and customs and trade regulations. Targeted efforts to increase educational opportunities, employer-employee matching at the One Stop Employment Centre, and the completion of the Skills Demand Survey, are warranted. Offering courses at local institutions could increase financial literacy among MSMEs, and implementing the single electronic window at customs would increase the efficiency of importing and exporting of goods.

Institutional Residences: The Role and Cost of Official Housing



Julian Rogers is following developments from his Caribbean home in Belize. Write to him at mycaribbean@gmail.com.

The debate surrounding the Eastern Caribbean Central Bank (ECCB) Governor's residence has raised questions about the justification for constructing official residences for high-ranking public officials. However, such accommodations are not unique to the ECCB or the Eastern Caribbean. Across the region and internationally, institutions provide housing for key officials to fulfil personal and professional responsibilities in a setting designed for official engagements.

A prime example is the Governor of the Central Bank of Barbados, who is provided with an official residence. This residence is not merely a home but a space designated for hosting official functions, allowing the Governor to engage with dignitaries, financial stakeholders, and international partners in a secure and professional environment. Importantly, this official residence is separate from the Central Bank's headquarters, reinforcing the understanding that institutional leadership

requires a setting suitable for private and formal duties.

The Cost of Official Residences: A Local Comparison

The criticism surrounding the ECCB residence project also presents an opportunity to assess how governments allocate resources for the upkeep of official residences. For instance, in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, a recurring annual allocation is made for the Prime Minister's residence, covering expenses for enhancements, staffing, and maintenance. This continuous expenditure suggests that institutional housing is an ongoing financial commitment, not a one-time investment.

A letter writer in Kingstown drew our attention to the national budget estimates in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, which reveal that substantial funds have been allocated for the Prime Minister's residence over several years. Salaries for additional staff at the residence have amounted to over EC\$1.5 million from 2021 to 2025. Meanwhile, ongoing enhancements and refurbishments have been assigned yearly allocations, bringing the total cost of improvements to an estimated EC\$437,747. Beyond the residence, an additional EC\$300,000 has been allocated to refurbish the Prime Minister's office between 2024 and 2025.

These figures highlight an essential reality—institutional residences are an expected part of governance and financial management.

Whether for a prime minister or a central bank governor, these accommodations serve more than just personal needs; they are extensions of official duties, ensuring that key

leaders can fulfil their roles effectively in a secure, functional environment.

The ECCB Residence: A One-Time Institutional Investment and Cost Considerations

Since 2016, when Antoine assumed the role of Governor, the ECCB has incurred significant rental costs to provide suitable accommodation. Over time, these recurring expenses add up, making a one-time capital investment in an official residence a more sustainable long-term solution. Instead of continuing to spend on rental payments, the ECCB has opted for a long-term solution that balances financial prudence, security, and institutional functionality.

Unlike the annual maintenance costs associated with government-provided housing for political leaders, the ECCB's residence project represents a one-time capital investment. Rather than relying on continuous rental expenditure, the Bank has invested in a permanent residence designed to provide institutional security, facilitate official engagements, and reduce long-term operational costs. Given the importance of the ECCB Governor's role in representing the institution at the highest levels, a designated official residence is not unreasonable.

While questions about cost escalation in the ECCB residence project remain relevant, it is crucial to distinguish between unnecessary spending and essential institutional planning. Suppose we accept that prime ministers and central bank governors require official spaces to carry out their responsibilities effectively. In that case, this debate should shift toward ensuring value

con't on pg 13

con't from pg 12

for money in construction projects rather than disputing the need for such spaces altogether.

The Justification for Official Residences

Providing central bank governors with an official residence is a strategic decision to ensure their independence, security, and ability to focus on their duties without undue influence or distraction. There are several key reasons why such accommodation is necessary:

- Independence and Impartiality – An official residence can help insulate the governor from potential conflicts of interest or undue influence from political or economic pressures.
- Security—Sometimes, an official residence enhances the governor's security, primarily where threats or safety concerns exist.
- Focus and Concentration – A secure and comfortable living space allows the governor to focus on the demands of their role without the additional stress of managing a personal residence.
- Symbol of Authority — In many countries, the central bank's official residence symbolises its stature, reinforcing its credibility and importance.
- Legal Basis – In some jurisdictions, such as Nigeria, the provision of an official residence for the central bank governor is explicitly stated in governing legislation (CBN Act 2007).

A Broader Perspective on Institutional Residences

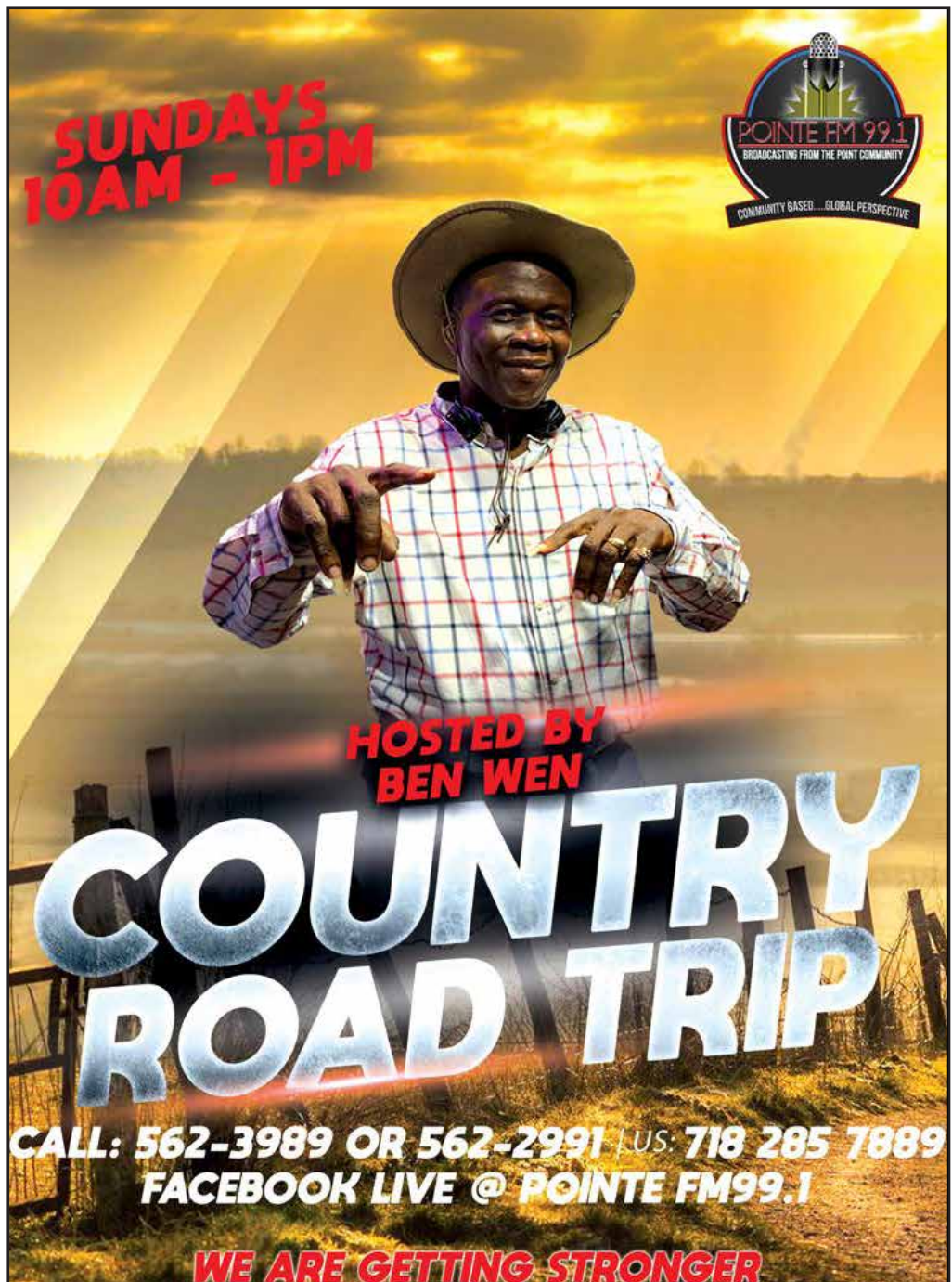
Across the world, high-ranking officials are provided with residences that serve as both homes and venues for official state functions. From Government House in Canada to

Chevening in the United Kingdom, institutional housing is widely acknowledged as a necessary investment in governance infrastructure.

In the Caribbean, where financial institutions play a crucial role in economic stability, ensuring that central bank governors have the appropriate environment to host dignitaries, international financial representatives, and regional stakeholders is just as essential. Suppose the conversation on the ECCB residence is to be productive. In that

case, it must move beyond questioning its necessity and instead focus on how best to manage such investments to ensure financial accountability and long-term benefits.

This debate presents an opportunity for the region to reflect on how institutional projects are planned, budgeted, and executed. Rather than dismissing the idea of an official residence outright, the discussion should focus on how best to implement such projects with efficiency, transparency, and fiscal responsibility.



**SUNDAYS
10AM - 1PM**

**HOSTED BY
BEN WEN**

**COUNTRY
ROAD TRIP**

CALL: 562-3989 OR 562-2991 | US: 718 285 7889
FACEBOOK LIVE @ POINTE FM99.1

WE ARE GETTING STRONGER

POINTE FM 99.1
BROADCASTING FROM THE POINT COMMUNITY
COMMUNITY BASED... GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE

Regional News



Two 15-y-o boys charged for beating, stabbing schoolboy in Manchester

Detectives assigned to the Manchester Police Division on Saturday charged two 15-year-old boys for attacking a schoolboy while he was walking home along a roadway in Christiana.

The teens are charged with wounding with intent.

The incident happened on the afternoon of Thursday, March 13.

Reports from the Christiana police are that about 1:30, the complainant was walking home from school in the company of his friend along Main Street in Christiana when they were



approached by a group of boys, including the accused, who were armed with boards and knives.

It is alleged that an argument developed between them, during which the

accused teen boys hit the complainant all over his body with the board and stabbed him in his right side, causing a wound that bled.

The complainant was assisted to hospital by persons, where he was admitted in serious but stable condition.

The police were summoned to the scene and the accused teens were subsequently arrested.

They were jointly charged with the offence on Saturday, March 15.

Their court date is being finalised. (*Jamaica Gleaner*)

Arrest warrant still active for Mavado

The Jamaican police have an outstanding warrant for the arrest of international dancehall star Mavado, a police official and the entertainer's attorney have confirmed to The Gleaner.

Mavado, whose real name is David Brooks, is wanted for assault occasioning actual bodily harm arising from an incident in 2018, Deputy Superintendent Randy Sweeney, head of the St Andrew North Police, revealed.

Sweeney declined to disclose details of the alleged assault.

Oswest Senior-Smith, one of the entertainer's attorneys, acknowledged that he



had been "officially notified" of the warrant, which was issued on June 9, 2018.

According to Senior-Smith, the warrant is based on a complaint by Anthony Goulbourne.

Goulbourne's complaint was made after he was arrested and charged by the police for allegedly shooting at Mavado in June 2018, the attorney noted.

"He has always denied any offence that could give rise to a warrant and particularly the assault that is alleged. That has always been his position," Senior-Smith said during an interview with The Gleaner on Friday. (*Jamaica Gleaner*)



268 736 7165

Open Daily -
7:00am - 11:30pm



Thursdays, 7:30pm - Karaoke

Saturdays, 8pm - Live Band

Breakfast served from 7:30am

Games Night - COMING SOON!



**TUES - FRIDAY
11AM - 2PM**



**HOSTED BY
SENATOR COLIN O'NEAL BROWNE**

TALKING POINT

CALL: 562-3989 OR 562-2991 | US: 718 285 7889

FACEBOOK LIVE @ POINTE FM99.1

WE ARE GETTING STRONGER

Regional News



Nevis Premier calls for unified, strategic Caribbean response to US



Premier of Nevis, Mark Brantley, believes that the Caribbean, through CARICOM, should adopt a more measured and collective approach in responding to the Trump administration's policies.

In a statement posted on his Facebook page on Sunday, Brantley emphasized the need for a thoughtful, flexible diplomatic strategy in the face of rapidly shifting global and hemispheric dynamics.

"Our region needs a well thought out and well-crafted diplomatic strategy which must be flexible enough to allow us to plan for and respond to a rapidly changing hemispheric and global environment," Brantley said.

Caribbean leaders have recently voiced concerns over the Trump administration's plans to impose visa restrictions on countries benefiting from Cuba's medical missions. The US government claims that these nations are contributing to Cuba's alleged exploitation of medical personnel.

The leaders are also responding to the threat of visa restrictions related to issues such as passport security, fail-

ure to share traveler information with the US, and the sale of citizenship to individuals from banned countries.

In his statement, Brantley stressed that the Caribbean, as the "third border" of the United States, must present a unified front and avoid responding unilaterally to these challenges.

"From Guyana in the South to The Bahamas in the North, our diplomatic strategy over the near term must be coordinated and agile and must respond not to the occupant of the White House but to the strategic interests of our Caribbean people. At best, the Caribbean needs a win in our engagement with the United States over the next 4 years. At worst, we can settle for a draw," he said.

Brantley cautioned against emotional outbursts and unproductive criticism, particularly when it comes to the democratically elected leadership of the United States.

"Heaping odium and contempt upon a democratically elected President of the world's leading superpower may make for good headlines but does not constitute a strategy. Bold statements from regional leaders about sovereignty may excite emotions at the local rum shop but have little impact in the real world of geopolitics," he

warned.

Brantley further argued that the Caribbean must recognize and respect the outcome of the US elections, where President Donald Trump won a decisive victory.

He explained that Trump had followed through on his campaign promises, particularly addressing the issues he claimed would "make America great again."

"In the 2024 election, Trump won 31 out of 50 states, securing 77,284,118 votes, or 49.8 percent of the total, which is the second-highest vote total in US history. This landslide victory indicates that most American states and voters support his values and priorities," Brantley said.

Reflecting on the broader geopolitical context, Brantley expressed concern that emotional reactions from some in the Caribbean and beyond were counterproductive.

"I have abiding faith in the intellectual capacity and innovation of our Caribbean civilization to navigate these uncharted and difficult waters. We have the talent. Now we must muster the political will," he concluded.

(Loop Caribbean)

Victor Wade



Painting, Landscaping, Soil Care and more.

1-268-781-3824

PAINPit_ink@gmail.com
Bendals St. Mary's Antigua



ANTIGUA
AND BARBUDA
The beach is just the beginning...



PARTY MONARCH

SEMI-FINALS

THE COOLER FETE

H2A ViBe

CARNIVAL CITY | 8:00 PM

18TH JULY 2025

ADM:
\$20.00

SPECIAL GUEST ARTIST **YUNG BREDDA**

DRINK RESPONSIBLY



Harvard announces free tuition for families making under \$200K annually

Harvard announced on Monday that undergraduate tuition will be free for students of families who make annual incomes of \$200,000 or less in a move to make the prestigious institution “affordable to more students than ever.”

The university will also make schooling completely free for students from families with annual incomes of \$100,000 or less, covering tuition, food, housing, health insurance and travel costs.

The new expansion of financial aid will begin in the 2025-26 academic year.

“Putting Harvard within financial reach for more individuals widens the array of backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives that all of our students encounter, fostering their intellectual and personal growth,” Harvard University President Alan M. Garber said in a press release. “By bringing people of outstanding promise together to learn with and from one another, we truly realize the tremendous potential of the University.”



According to the release, the aid expansion will “enable approximately 86% of U.S. families to qualify for Harvard College’s financial aid.”

Students with an annual family income of \$100,000 and below will also receive a \$2,000 start-up grant in their first year and a \$2,000 launch grant in their junior year to “help support the transition beyond Harvard.”

Meanwhile, students with family incomes of \$200,000 or less will receive free tuition and additional financial aid for billed expenses.

Since the launch of the Harvard Financial Aid Initiative in 2004, the

university has expanded its threshold to cover tuition, food, and housing costs four times. Currently, 55% of undergraduates receive financial aid, and their families paid an average of \$15,700 for the 2023-24 year.

“We know the most talented students come from different socioeconomic backgrounds and experiences, from every state and around the globe,” William R. Fitzsimmons, Harvard College’s dean of admissions and financial aid, said in a statement. “Our financial aid is critical to ensuring that these students know Harvard College is a place where they can be part of a vibrant

learning community strengthened by their presence and participation.”

Other schools have also expanded their financial aid programs to accommodate lower and middle-class families.

In November, the University of Texas System announced it would expand its free tuition program for lower-income families to include all families making \$100,000 or less a year. The Massachusetts Institute of Technology also announced last year it would eliminate tuition costs for undergraduate students whose families make less than \$200,000. (*NBC News*)

Rwanda severs diplomatic ties with Belgium



Rwanda says it has cut diplomatic ties with Belgium and ordered all of the European country's diplomats to leave the country within 48 hours, drawing a swift response from Brussels.

In a statement on Monday, the Rwandan Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation accused Belgium of "consistently" undermining Kigali "during the ongoing conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo" (DRC).

"The Government of Rwanda today

notified the Government of Belgium of its decision to sever diplomatic relations, effective immediately," it added.

In turn, Belgium said Rwandan diplomats were no longer welcome in the country.

"Belgium regrets the decision of Rwanda to cut off diplomatic relations with Belgium and to declare Belgium's diplomats persona non grata," Foreign Minister Maxime Prevot said on X.

"This is disproportionate and shows

that when we disagree with Rwanda they prefer not to engage in dialogue."

Rwanda's move came a day after President Paul Kagame accused Belgium of advocating for international sanctions against his country over the conflict in eastern DRC.

The Rwanda-backed M23 armed group launched a large offensive in the mineral-rich east of the DRC earlier this year, taking two major cities in a lightning advance.

A UN report has said Kigali controls the group and has about 4,000 soldiers in the country. Kigali has denied involvement in the conflict and says it faces a threat from ethnic Hutu fighters in the DRC.

The Congolese government says at least 7,000 people have died amid the offensive and has called for international action.

Monday's diplomatic tension emerged as DRC and the M23 rebels announced they would send delegations to peace talks, which are set to take place on Tuesday in Angola. (*Al Jazeera English*)

POINTE ON DE STREETZ

HOSTED BY
VERNON A. SPRINGER



TUE - FRI
2PM - 3PM

CALL: 562-3989 OR 562-2991

f POINT FM99.1

Putin and Trump to talk with proposed Russia-Ukraine truce in balance

United States President Donald Trump says he will speak to Russian President Vladimir Putin on Tuesday about ending the Ukraine war with territorial concessions by Kyiv and control of the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant expected to feature prominently in the talks.

“We want to see if we can bring that war to an end,” the US president told reporters on Air Force One during a flight back to the Washington, DC, area from Florida on Sunday. “Maybe we can, maybe we can’t, but I think we have a very good chance.”

“I’ll be speaking to President Putin on Tuesday. A lot of work’s been done over the weekend.”

Kremlin spokesperson Dmitry Peskov confirmed on Monday that Putin would speak with Trump by phone but declined to comment on Trump’s remarks about land concessions and power plants.

“Yes, this is indeed the case,” he said during a news briefing. “Such a conversation is being prepared for Tuesday.”

Trump is trying to win Putin’s support for a proposed 30-day ceasefire that Ukraine accepted last week as both sides continued trading heavy aerial strikes through the weekend and Russia moved closer to ejecting Ukrainian forces from their months-old foothold in the western Russian border region of Kursk.

Asked about what concessions were being considered in the ceasefire negotiations, Trump said: “We’ll be talking about land. We’ll

be talking about power plants. ... We’re already talking about that, dividing up certain assets.”

Trump gave no details but was most likely referring to the Russian-occupied Zaporizhzhia nuclear facility in Ukraine, Europe’s largest nuclear plant. Russia and Ukraine have accused each other of attacks that have risked an accident at the plant.

Reporting from Moscow, Al Jazeera’s Dorsa Jabbari said one of the main topics of discussion is indeed expected to be the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant.

“This is the largest nuclear facility in Europe, which came under Russian control early in the conflict in March 2022. Since then, it has been shut down, but it remains under the control of Russian forces and Russia’s state nuclear energy organisation, Rosatom,” she said.

“There is also the proposed temporary ceasefire. Russia maintains that any such agreement must include security guarantees for its side, meaning it does not want Ukraine to use the opportunity to rearm, regroup and restart the conflict,” she added.

The Kremlin said on Friday that Putin had sent Trump a message about his ceasefire plan via US envoy Steve Witkoff, who held talks in Moscow, expressing “cautious optimism” that a deal could be reached to end the three-year conflict.

In separate appearances on Sunday TV shows in the US, Witkoff, Secretary of State Marco Rubio and Trump’s national security adviser,

Mike Waltz, emphasised that there were still challenges to be worked out before Russia agrees to a ceasefire, much less a final resolution to the war.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said on Friday that he saw a good chance of ending the Russian war after Kyiv accepted the US proposal for a 30-day interim ceasefire.

However, Zelenskyy has consistently said the sovereignty of his country is not negotiable and Russia must surrender the territory it has seized. Russia seized the Crimean Peninsula in 2014 and now controls parts of four eastern and southern Ukrainian regions since it invaded the country in 2022.

Putin said his actions in Ukraine are aimed at protecting Russia’s security against what he casts as an aggressive and hostile West, in particular NATO’s eastward expansion. Ukraine and its Western partners said Russia is waging an unprovoked war of aggression and an imperial-style land grab.

Moscow has demanded that Ukraine drop its NATO ambitions, that Russia keeps control of all the Ukrainian territory it has seized and that the size of the Ukrainian army be limited. It also wants Western sanctions eased and a presidential election in Ukraine, which Kyiv said is premature while martial law is in force.

The European Union’s foreign policy chief, Kaja Kallas, said on Monday that the conditions de-

con’t on pg 21

DR Congo's M23 rebels say they will no longer join peace talks in Angola

The Rwanda-backed M23 rebel group has announced that it is no longer participating in peace talks after earlier confirming alongside the Congolese government that it would join the Angola-mediated talks.

M23 spokesperson Lawrence Kanyuka wrote on X that “certain international institutions are deliberately working to sabotage peace efforts in the Democratic Republic of Congo and make the long-awaited talks impossible”.

“The successive sanctions imposed on our members, including those adopted on the eve of the Luanda discussions, seriously compromise direct dialogue and prevent any progress,” Kanyuka said, adding that



for those reasons, they can “no longer participate in the discussion”.

Earlier on Monday, Kanyuka had reported that a delegation had been sent to Angola's capital, Luanda.

The rebel group has captured key areas of the Democratic Republic of the Congo's (DRC) mineral-rich east since the start of

this year in a major offensive that has killed many thousands.

A delegation representing the DRC was now in Luanda for Tuesday's talks, a spokesperson for President Felix Tshisekedi told The Associated Press news agency earlier. Tshisekedi had previously refused direct negotiations with the

rebel group over the conflict, which has longstanding roots.

Angola has been trying to mediate a ceasefire for many months. Peace talks were cancelled late last year after Rwanda insisted on direct dialogue between the DRC and M23, which the Congolese government refused.

However, Luanda announced last week that it would host direct peace negotiations.

M23 leader Bertrand Bisimwa declared last week that the rebels had forced Tshisekedi to the negotiating table, saying “peace begins with dialogue. The sooner we talk, the sooner peace becomes a reality.” (*Al Jazeera English*)

con't from pg 20

manded by Russia to agree to a ceasefire showed that Moscow does not really want peace.

British Prime Minister Keir Starmer said on Saturday that Western allies other than the US were stepping up preparations to support Ukraine in the event of a ceasefire with Russia with defence chiefs set to firm up “robust plans” next week.

Britain and France both have said they are willing to send a peace-keeping force to monitor any ceasefire in Ukraine.

New Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney – who met with his French counterpart, President

Emmanuel Macron, on Monday in Paris – also pledged to support Ukraine's sovereignty.

On the front lines, Ukrainian forces launched a drone attack on southern Russia overnight, sparking a fire at an oil refinery, local authorities said on Monday, as Moscow launched a barrage of nearly 200 drones against Ukraine.

Astrakhan Governor Igor Babushkin said staff of a “fuel and energy” complex were evacuated before the attack, which sparked a large blaze. “One person was wounded during the attack. The victim has now been taken to the hospital,” Babushkin wrote on social media.

The latest bombardment comes as Ukraine criticised Russia for refusing to accept the US-proposed ceasefire without any conditions.

Moscow also launched its own barrage of 174 drones on Ukraine, where air defence units shot down 90, including the Iranian-designed Shahed drone, the air force said.

About 500 people in the southern Ukrainian region of Odesa lost power because of the attacks and one person was wounded, Governor Oleg Kiper said, adding that several buildings were damaged, including a preschool. (*Al Jazeera English*)

Sports News

Blackhawks still on course to retaining ABCA two-day title

Reigning champions PIC Insurance Liberta Black Hawks moved a step closer to claiming their fourth consecutive title in the Antigua and Barbuda Cricket Association's (ABCA) two-day contest over the weekend.

Leaders Liberta Blackhawks tightened their grip on first place by soaring to their sixth win in seven matches with an innings and 42-run victory over CMW New Winthorpes Lions in a top-of-the-table clash at New Winthorpes.

The Lions were bundled out in their first innings for 113 in 30.1 overs after winning the toss and opting to bat. Chamiqueko Landerfort grabbed five for 30, and leg-spinner Hayden Walsh Jr. claimed three for 25.

In reply, the Blackhawks made 308 in 52.2 overs. Malique Walsh hit 68; opener Kofi James struck 53 off 29 balls, including five sixes and three fours; captain Joshua Thomas cracked 47; and opener Tarek Charles scored 36. Orandel Boston took four for 57, and Ishmael Peters claimed three for 81.

Facing a deficit of 195 runs, the New Winthorpes Lions were dismissed in their second innings for 153 in 30.5 overs. Demari Benta struck 65 not out, and Nino Henry made 32.

Landerfort took five for 45 to finish with a match



Tyrone Williams Jr.

haul of 10 for 85, and left-arm pacer Javier Henry captured four for 44.

The result allows the Liberta Blackhawks to remain unbeaten at the top of the standings and advance to 78 points, while the New Winthorpes Lions slipped from second to third place with 58 points after suffering their first defeat in seven matches.

Empire Nation leapfrogged the Lions from third to second place with 63 points after securing their fourth win in seven matches with an innings and 71-run victory over WES Rising Sun Spartans at the Rising Sun playing field.

The Spartans were dismissed in their first innings for 120 in 25.1 overs after winning the toss and electing to bat. Opener Ryshon Williams cracked 60 off 52 balls, including seven fours and three sixes, and captain Kerry Mentore chipped in with 31.

Justin Athanaze grabbed three wickets without conceding a run, and Michael



James Cornelius

Harilall picked up three wickets for seven runs.

In reply, opener Tyrone Williams Jr. slammed a century as Empire Nation declared their first innings at 330 for six off 47 overs.

Williams Jr. hammered 170 off 136 balls, including 19 fours and six sixes. Damian Lowenfield struck 61 off 43 balls, including four sixes and five fours, and captain Kenrick Scott chipped in with 37.

Facing a deficit of 210 runs, Rising Sun Spartans were dismissed in their second innings for 139 in 39.1 overs. Ryshon Williams slammed 58 off 46 balls, including five sixes and four fours. Harilall captured six for 64, and leg-spinner Micah McKenzie took three for 51.

All Saints Pythons remain in fourth place with 51 points after securing their first draw in seven matches, losing on first innings in their drawn affair with the Jennings Tigers at Jennings.

Scores: Jennings Tigers made 170 off 40.3 overs.

(Glenton Williams 52, captain Paul Miller 33; Alzarri Joseph 6 for 50); All Saints Pythons made 133 off 28.3 overs (Alzarri Joseph 49, Demetri Lucas 33, Kenny Sutton 31; Glenton Williams 4 for 67).

The Bolans Blasters claimed their first win in seven matches, beating the Pigotts Crushers by six wickets at Pigotts.

Scores: Pigotts Crushers 55 off 24.5 overs (Dwayne Fordyce 4 for 22, Richie Thomas 3 for 6) and 124 off 31.4 overs (captain Uri Smith 56; Orlando Peters 7 for 22); Bolans Blasters 141 off 26.1 overs (captain Taiem Tonge 60; Tyree Moore 4 for 17, Jalen Harris 3 for 37) and 39 for 4 off 12.3 overs.

The Caribbean Union Bank (CUB) Bethesda Golden Eagles beat Tertiary Institutions and Schools by 86 runs when they met in a bottom-of-the-table clash at the Factory Grounds.

Scores: Bethesda Golden Eagles 121 off 39.2 overs (captain Kaivalya Mishra 6 for 32) and 191 for 6 declared off 45.4 overs (captain Tehrique Mason 82, Shacoy Floyd 41, Tron Payne 39; Kaivalya Mishra 4 for 65); Tertiary Institutions and Schools 92 off 32 overs (James Cornelius 5 for 25, Tehrique Mason 4 for 14) and 134 off 45.4 overs (Xanden Hobson 33; James Cornelius 4 for 23, Tehrique Mason 4 for 65).

Sports News

PAGE 23

Paragons 2 make successful start in defense of D-2 volleyball title



Reigning women's Division 2 champions Paragons 2. (ABAVA)

Reigning champions Paragons 2 made a successful start to their campaign in defense of their female Division 2 title in the Antigua and Barbuda Amateur Volleyball Association's (ABAVA) Development League on Sunday.

Paragons 2 launched their title defense with a straight-set 2-0 victory against Chargers Eagles 2 in their opening match at the indoor stadium at the YMCA Sports Complex.

Paragons 2 prevailed 25-20, 25-19 against Chargers Eagles 2 in the first game of Sunday's Division 2 triple header.

High Flyerz-Valkyries made a winning start on their debut in the women's development league. High Flyerz-Valkyries produced a solid performance to prevail 2-1 against Starz 2 in a keenly contested affair.

The day's second match delivered a thrilling three-set showdown, with

Valkyries taking the opening set 25-11. Starz 2, who launched their campaign with a 2-0 win against Dynasty Queen 1, hit back to clinch the second set 25-23 to level the match 1-1.

But Valkyries defied a strong response from Starz2 and managed to prevail 17-15 in a nail-biting third set to secure the 2-1 victory.

Chargers Velocity kicked off their campaign in the Men's Division 2 League with a hard-fought 2-0 win against Invaders 2 in the last encounter on Sunday.

Chargers Velocity controlled the tempo and held their nerve in crucial moments to prevail 25-22, 27-25 against the Invaders 2.

The 2025 ABAVA's domestic club championships will resume with matches in the Division 1 League at the YMCA Sports Complex on Wednesday.

Royal Cruisers 1 will face Stoneville in a women's Division 1 encounter at 6:45 pm, while reigning men's Division 1 champions Stoneville will take on the Renegades at 7:45 pm.



ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA
The beach is just the beginning...

Antigua Barbuda
FESTIVALS
COMMISSION

ANTIGUA CARNIVAL

Itz A ViBe

JUL 25 2025
2 AUG 05 2025

Antigua Carnival @antiguafestivalsofficial Antigua Carnival info.nfo@ab.gov.ag 268 727 9201

Sports News

Steelers remain perfect in ABBA's Division 1 League



Total Imports EMC's Potters Steelers maintained their unbeaten run in the Antigua and Barbuda Basketball Association's (ABBA) First Division League on Sunday evening.

The Steelers won for the ninth time

in as many games to remain the only unbeaten team in the league with a 114-56 drubbing of Spanish Heat in the first game of a double header at the JSC Sports Complex.

Kareem Edwards shot a game-high 30 points and grabbed 10 rebounds; Keroi Lee produced 19 points with 23 rebounds and five assists; Cohen Desouza had 19 points, 16 rebounds, and six assists; Darnell Azille sank 14 points and claimed 15 rebounds; Decosta Walbrook scored 13 points; and Devorn Benjamin converted 12 points for the Steelers.

Steven Matthew converted 16 points and snatched six rebounds; Coy Quinland sank 13 points and grabbed 10 rebounds; and Javonte Valerie scored 10 points for the Spanish Heat, who lost

for the fifth time in 10 games.

Reigning league and playoff champions, the EZ Fit Flyers, claimed their ninth win in 10 matches with a 77-70 victory over Da Project in Sunday's second encounter.

Selassie Brathwaite sank 17 points and claimed six rebounds; Adonis Humphreys converted 15 points and grabbed 17 rebounds; David Hernandez also scored 15 points; Xavier "X-Man" Meade produced 11 points and eight rebounds; and Alexis Jackson had 10 points and 10 rebounds for the Flyers.

Terry Dawkins shot a game-high 29 points, and T-Shawn Lewis sank 23 points and grabbed 10 rebounds for Da Project, who suffered their fourth defeat in 10 games.



DAILY PROGRAMMING



EARLY VIBRATIONS 6AM-10AM MON. - FRI.
WITH GREMSTA

THE RUSH HOUR SHOW 5PM-7PM MON. - FRI.
WITH ROGER LAKE 6AM-9AM SATURDAYS

TOUCHLINE 7PM-9PM MON. - THURS.
WITH EPILUS

BAD COMPANY 2PM-6PM THURS. 12PM-4PM SATURDAYS
LIVE FROM THE V.I. & 1PM-5PM ON SUNDAYS

REGGAE INSPIRATION 9PM-12AM MON. THURS. SUNDAY
WITH SELECTOR KEEGAN

JAH WADADLI 7PM-9PM FRIDAYS
WITH DJ JAH WADADLI

Emrit unfazed by break and loss of key seamers

Trinidad and Tobago Red Force head coach Rayad Emrit isn't losing sleep over the two-week break in the West Indies Championship or the impending departure of key seamers Jayden Seales and Anderson Phillip, who are set to join the English County Championship.

Instead, Emrit is focused on maintaining his team's momentum as they push to end a two-decade title drought.

The Red Force have been in red-hot form this season, as they won four of their five matches and claimed first-innings points in the other.

Their most recent triumph—a 56-run demolition of Barbados Pride at Kensington Oval—came in just two days, a performance that bolstered their status as title contenders.

Yet Emrit knows the job isn't done. They head into the break in second position on 101 points, just behind Guyana Harpy Eagles on 102.6 points.

"It was really an emphatic win. Words can't really express how the celebrations were and how the guys reacted to the victory because everyone knew how important the game was.

"Turning up and seeing the sort of pitch they prepared, we knew they were



Fast bowler Jayden Seales, second right, celebrates with his Trinidad and Tobago Red Force teammates after capturing a wicket against Barbados in the West Indies Championship at the Kensington Oval in Barbados.

wary of what we could do with our fast bowlers, but we were also a bit concerned with the type of pitch, which was a grassy track. In the past, our batters really didn't do well on these types of surfaces," Emrit shared.

"I think the guys showed a lot of character throughout the season, and it is good to see the way they went about their business, and they are reaping the rewards for their hard work. They deserve every single credit for what they have achieved so far," he added.

Seales, Phillip, and Joshua James have spearheaded the Red Force pace attack all season, as they wreaked havoc on opposing line-ups. But with Seales and Phillip soon to be off to England, Emrit is confident that others will rise to the challenge.

"They've led the attack from game two, and the sort of effort they put in, in the last game, was great to see. Even the Bajans acknowledged the quality of our attack.

"It's going to be a big gap to fill, but we have promising fast bowlers coming through. They're young and inexperienced, but we'll try to integrate them into the squad and find the best combination when we play Jamaica and Guyana," Emrit noted.

Still, Emrit said the Red Force's bowling depth extends beyond their pace attack, as he highlighted the contributions of spinners Khary Pierre, Yannic Cariah, and Bryan Charles, all of whom have played key roles throughout the season.

"Pierre remains our leading bowler, Cariah

is performing well, and Charles got six wickets prior to the Barbados game. We haven't finalised our bowling attack yet, but we have a couple of bowlers who can step up. We'll assess conditions and make that decision when the time comes," the coach stated.

In the meantime, Emrit pointed out that despite the two-week break, he is intent on ensuring that the team remains sharp as they will use the time to fine-tune their plans for the final two matches.

"We have a two-week break, but that doesn't mean we're taking a break," Emrit declared.

"We have a job to do, and we want to stay focused and stay in form as much as possible. Hopefully, we can get some good outdoor practice and game simulations. If we can keep the momentum going, I think we'll have a good chance now," he shared.

With Jamaica next on the schedule in a day/night match, Emrit knows the road ahead won't be easy, but he believes in his squad.

"A break is always a setback when you have momentum, but hopefully, we can stay on course and continue to do the right things," he ended.

West Indies breakout league to launch in 2025

Cricket West Indies (CWI) and the Republic Bank Caribbean Premier League (CPL) are jointly launching the inaugural West Indies Breakout League, a new cricket tournament designed to spotlight emerging talent across the region.

The competition is scheduled to take place from April 25 to May 10, featuring six teams and 17 matches. All the games will take place at the Brian Lara Cricket Academy in Trinidad.

The six teams taking part will be Barbados Pelicans, Guyana Rainforest Rangers, Jamaica Titans, Leeward Islands Thunder, Trinidad & Tobago Legions, and the Windward Islands Infernos.

Players eligible to participate must be under 30 years old or at the start of the 2025 event, with limited professional experience—fewer than 40 List A T20 matches and fewer than 10 International T20s.

This initiative aims to bridge the gap between domestic, CPL and international cricket, with each team closely associated with their local territorial board and a CPL franchise.

The tournament will provide a crucial platform for the next generation of T20 stars, allowing them to showcase their skills and take significant steps in their



Players of the West Indies Academy

careers.

Miles Bascombe, CWI's Director of Cricket, expressed his enthusiasm for the tournament, stating, "This tournament is a fantastic opportunity for the next wave of players to get the game time they need to push through to the next level and add depth in our T20 talent pool."

"We are delighted to collaborate with the CPL on this initiative, which promises to provide a strong platform for up-and-coming talent in the West Indies."

Pete Russell, CEO of Republic Bank CPL, echoed these sentiments, saying, "We are excited to join forces with Cricket West Indies to deliver a world-class and sustainable tournament."

"This initiative is not only an investment in the future of West Indies cricket but

also a valuable opportunity for stakeholders to witness exceptional talent and great cricket."

The West Indies Breakout League is poised to become a key element in the region's cricketing calendar, offering fans, players, and franchises a chance to play their part nurturing the next wave of cricketing stars.

The fixtures for the 2025 West Indies Breakout League are as follows:

25 Apr 2025 | 2:00 PM | Guyana Rainforest Rangers v Windward Islands Infernos

25 Apr 2025 | 7:00 PM | Trinidad & Tobago Legions v Barbados Pelicans

26 Apr 2025 | 2:00 PM | Jamaica Titans v Leeward Islands Thunder

26 Apr 2025 | 7:00 PM | Trinidad & Tobago Legions v Guyana Rainforest Rang-

ers

29 Apr 2025 | 2:00 PM | Jamaica Titans v Guyana Rainforest Rangers

29 Apr 2025 | 7:00 PM | Barbados Pelicans v Windward Islands Infernos

30 Apr 2025 | 2:00 PM | Trinidad & Tobago Legions v Jamaica Titans

30 Apr 2025 | 7:00 PM | Barbados Pelicans v Leeward Islands Thunder

2 May 2025 | 2:00 PM | Jamaica Titans v Barbados Pelicans

2 May 2025 | 7:00 PM | Leeward Islands Thunder v Trinidad & Tobago Legions

4 May 2025 | 2:00 PM | Windward Islands Infernos v Trinidad & Tobago Legions

4 May 2025 | 7:00 PM | Guyana Rainforest Rangers v Leeward Islands Thunder

6 May 2025 | 2:00 PM | Barbados Pelicans v Guyana Rainforest Rangers

6 May 2025 | 7:00 PM | Jamaica Titans v Windward Islands Infernos

7 May 2025 | 7:00 PM | Leeward Islands Thunder v Windward Islands Infernos

Playoffs

9 May 2025 | 7:00 PM | Playoff – 2nd place vs 3rd Place

10 May 2025 | 7:00 PM | Final – 1st place vs winner of Playoff