

Telemaque warns of the devastating impact of US ban on Chinese ships on Antigua and Barbuda

Story on Page 2



Prime Minister Gaston Browne and new resident Ambassador for the Dominican Republic Yolanda Victoria (on his left) during courtesy visit to the Office of the Prime Minister

Story on Page 6

Local News

Telemaque warns of the devastating impact of US ban on Chinese ships on Antigua and Barbuda

Leaders of several Caribbean countries are meeting in Jamaica this week ahead of talks with US Secretary of State Marco Rubio next week. This as the region scrambles to arrive at a common approach to the Administration's announced intention of implementing a US\$1.5 million on all ships that are made in China or shipping lines which utilize Chinese vessels that call at US ports.

Speaking on state television on Monday night from Singapore where he is attending a shipping meeting, Port Manager, Darwin Telemaque said the move, if implemented, would be devastating to Antigua and Barbuda and the region.

He explained that of the cargo lines that make weekly calls at the St. John's Harbour from Miami, all have an average of forty percent of their vessels built in China. "We have Tropical Shipping, Seaborne, King Ocean and CMA CGM serving us weekly out of South Florida, Miami. King Ocean has approximately 25 percent of their fleet built in China; Tropical has somewhere between 48 and 52 percent of their fleet built in China; Seaborne has pretty much the same about 48 percent and 41 percent for CMA CGM," he disclosed.

According to Telemaque the impact is likely to go far beyond the anticipated increase in freight rates;



Port Manager, Darwin Telemaque

it could impact the type of service that the Caribbean gets should this policy go into effect. "For example, we have weekly service coming out of Miami, and that's because the ships are able to use all the tonnage they have to execute the services. If the ships are forced to make changes in order to reduce their exposure to those fines, then there are likely to be interruptions in the quality of service that we get from those shipping companies.

"Secondly, the freight rates would be astronomical; the increases we saw during COVID-19 would look like child's play. That's because during COVID, the regional lines serving us from Miami implemented minimal increases during that time. However, the analysis is that we could see rates increase of between 90 and 100 percent," he disclosed.

This means that a US\$9,000.00 freight rate could go as high as US\$18,000.00 to US\$20,000.00. This has to be coupled with the type of service that the region gets should the policy go into effect and shipping companies pass on the increased costs to consumers.

Telemaque noted CARICOM is seeking a special 'carve out' under the Caribbean Basin Initiative (CBI) in the meeting with Secretary Rubio, but additionally, a senior official of the shipping agency that serves the region has had meetings with US officials in recent days to get special accommodations for Caribbean states. If these do not work, Telemaque noted, the Caribbean can expect 'some very painful time ahead if this policy goes through without allowances for the region'.




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Testing of paperless ED cards are still ongoing... an announcement expected by month end



Technology Minister, Melford Nicholas

The testing of the paperless or electronic ED cards for entry or departure from Antigua and Barbuda is continuing as officials seek to 'iron-out' any remaining kinks in the system ahead of full introduction expected by the end of the month.

Technology Minister, Melford Nicholas, who is spearheading the efforts in collaboration with the Immigration Department, said the period of testing is continuing with passengers using the paperless system as part of the exercise.

According to Minister Nicholas the 'live' testing has been ongoing for the past five to six weeks and that the exercise is nearing the end point.

Additionally, a meeting is planned for Tuesday between technicians from the Ministry of Technology and the Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority to discuss the progress of the testing and to arrive at a date for the full implementation of the paperless system.

Antigua and Barbuda wants to implement the paperless system in keeping with the global trends and to make it easier for passengers to navigate the entry/departure processes at the country's main gateway, the VC Bird International Airport.

Minister Nicholas explained that the system allows passengers to fill out the new electronic ED cards between 48 and 24 hours prior to their travels

which will greatly reduce their contact time with the immigration officer.

He anticipates that an announcement on the implementation will come by the end of the week.



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Local News



Police Probe Death of 27-year-old Man

Police are continuing their investigations into the circumstances surrounding the death 27-year-old Jahkiem

Brown of Fort Road.

His body was discovered on the ground at the former Bruce's Night Club in

Hatton around 4:25 am on Monday, March 24.

A medical doctor pronounced him dead at 7:30

am. A postmortem examination is scheduled to determine the cause of death.

Man Jailed for Wielding Cutlass at a Female

Adrian Nurse of Liberta has been sentenced to two months in jail after pleading guilty to multiple charges, including assaulting a female, being armed with an offensive weapon—a cutlass—and using threatening language.

Nurse appeared before Senior Magistrate Ngaio Emanuel in District B of the Magistrate's Court, where he admitted to all charges. According to police reports, on March 19 in Liberta, Nurse armed himself with a cutlass

with the intent to commit certain felonious acts. He was also charged with using threatening language, which is a breach of the public peace, and assaulting Chelsea Matthias, an offense under the Small Charges Act.

The court heard that Nurse held the cutlass just inches away from Matthias' nose and threatened to chop it off.

As a result, the magistrate sentenced the 50-year-old man to two months and seven days for the assault charge, one month for being armed with an of-

fensive weapon, and fourteen days for using threatening language. The sentences are to run concurrently.

Meanwhile, Dequan Pryce, 20, of Grays Farm, appeared before the court on charges of illegal possession of a .32 revolver and six rounds of .32 ammunition, both offenses under the Firearms Act.

Pryce pleaded not guilty, and his case has been adjourned until June 24 and 25, when his trial is set to commence.

'Box money' case begins in magistrate court

The case in which the police are alleging that a Belmont woman defrauded another woman in relation to her handling of what is locally known as 'box money' opened in the magistrate court on Monday.

Senior Magistrate Ngaio Emanuel is hearing the case where the police have charged Keithesha Edwards of Belmont for defrauding one of her clients in the amount of \$4,800.00.

During the period October 2, 2023 and July 31, 2024, the client gave money to Edwards for the 'box hand' with the expectation that she would get a single lump sum payment when the box ended. That never happened and the matter was reported to the police.

The case has been adjourned until April 23. The court gave a short adjournment time as Edwards appeared in court on Monday visibly pregnant.

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Thursday 27th March 2025

Antigua and Barbuda, Dominican Republic commit to strengthening ties



Ambassador Victoria paid a courtesy call on Prime Minister, Gaston Browne

The new ambassador of the Dominican Republic to Antigua and Barbuda, Yolanda Alexandra Victoria, wants to strengthen already close ties that exist between Santo Domingo and St. John's.

The commitment comes as Ambassador Victoria paid a courtesy call on Prime Minister, Gaston Browne, and other senior officials of the government on Monday, including the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Clarence E. Pilgrim.

Ambassador Yolanda Alexandra Victoria expressed her gratitude for the warm reception and reiterated the Dominican Republic's commitment to deepening its

relationship with Antigua and Barbuda. "It is an honor to represent the Dominican Republic here in Antigua and Barbuda, and I look forward to working closely with the government and people of Antigua to foster stronger diplomatic, economic, and cultural ties," Ambassador Alexandra said.

During the ceremony, Prime Minister Browne spoke warmly about the longstanding and robust partnership between Antigua and Barbuda and the Dominican Republic, emphasizing the importance of continuing to strengthen and deepen the bilateral relationship. "Our countries share a history of collaboration and mutual respect, and it is my hope that this relation-



Prime Minister Gaston Browne and the New Ambassador of Dominican Republic to Antigua and Barbuda Yolanda Alexandra Victoria

ship continues to grow and evolve in the years to come," stated Prime Minister Browne.

One of the key points highlighted by the Prime Minister was the potential for expanding educational cooperation, particularly through student exchanges. He proposed exploring avenues for collaboration at the University of the West Indies (UWI) Five Islands Campus and discussed the possibility of establishing joint programs between UWI and universities in the Dominican Republic. "The exchange of students between

our nations, as well as the establishment of collaborative academic programs, could enhance the development of both of our countries and build stronger people-to-people ties," he remarked.

Prime Minister Browne also touched upon the economic cooperation between the two nations, mentioning the movement of people between Antigua and the Dominican Republic on a weekly basis and the opportunities for expanding trade, particularly through a free trade agreement. He expressed hope that such



an agreement would enhance the flow of goods, benefiting both nations and contributing to food security in the region. “By exploring ways to import essential goods from the Dominican Republic, we can work together to strengthen food security and ensure a more resilient

future for our citizens,” said the Prime Minister.

Ambassador Pilgrim extended a warm welcome to Ambassador Victoria and spoke of the exciting prospects for deepening the relationship between Antigua and Barbuda and the Dominican Republic. “We look forward to



strengthening this bilateral partnership and exploring new avenues of collaboration that benefit our countries and people,” said Ambassador Pilgrim.

Both sides expressed optimism for the fu-

ture and the potential to create new opportunities for collaboration, growth, and prosperity. As Antigua and Barbuda and the Dominican Republic continue to strengthen their partnership, both countries remain

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CIBC supports Down Syndrome initiative 'in cash and kind'



Public support for World Down Syndrome Awareness Day, observed in Antigua and Barbuda on Friday March 21, 2025, is growing every year. This year while the central theme was "Improve our Support Systems", one of the traditional sub themes was "Lots of socks" and everyone was encouraged to wear multi-coloured socks to participate and raise awareness.

For the second successive year, the staff of CIBC Caribbean not only donned their multi-coloured socks to support this international campaign to raise awareness of Down Syndrome, but the bank also made a contribution of EC\$2,500 to the Sir Lester Bird Medical Centre

(SLBMC) to support their work in this area.

Dr. Saleem Hughes, Chair of the Paediatric Department SLBMC, expressed thanks.

"On behalf of the Sir Lester Bird Medical Centre, as well as our patients and their families, we extend our sincere gratitude to CIBC for their generous contribution to our cause. Your support is greatly appreciated, and we encourage other institutions to follow suit as we work towards enhancing our support systems moving forward.

Let us be the catalyst for the change we wish to see in Antigua and Barbuda, inspiring others to follow our

lead in making a positive impact."

The bank's Human Resources Officer, Jesseca Ormond Byers, said that CIBC Caribbean believes in offering support and becoming involved in issues that will improve our country.

"We are so privileged to be here for the second successive year, to offer our support to the staff at SLBMC and to thank you for your dedication. We encourage individuals and organizations to champion the rights and dignity of individuals with Down Syndrome, not just today, but every day.

Our collective efforts will continue to make a positive difference".

CIBC Caribbean reaffirms its dedication to support these initiatives as we strongly believe in social corporate responsibility."

World Down Syndrome Day is marked each year on March 21, beginning in 2007. The 21st day of March was selected to signify the uniqueness of the triplication of the 21st chromosome which causes Down syndrome. The General Assembly of the United Nations has decided to observe it each year since 2012



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Ayers-Caesar wins landmark legal battle against JLSC

Former chief magistrate Marcia Ayers-Caesar has emerged as the victor in an almost-eight-year legal battle between herself and the Judicial and Legal Service Commission (JLSC) over her “forced” resignation as a High Court judge in 2017.

This comes as five law lords at the Privy Council in London, England, on Monday morning, dismissed an appeal brought by the JLSC, which contended that Ayers-Caesar had willfully tendered the resignation to then-president Anthony Carmona, just two weeks after she was appointed to the position.

Now that the final appeal has been determined, the local courts will now have to determine the quantum of compensation that is to be awarded to Ayers-Caesar for breaches to the constitutional rights under section 4 of the Constitution.

Not just that, but she will also have to be paid the salaries owed to her since her appointment on April 12, 2017. This is because, given the ruling, for the duration of time the matter had been before the courts, Ayers-Caesar remained a legitimate member of the High Court Bench.

Hearing the final appeal were Lords Reed, Hodge, Stephens, Lady Rose and Lady Simler.

While the judgment, which was written by Lord Reed stated that the panel did not agree with some of the findings of the local Court of Appeal, it was in agreement with the overall decision that the JLSC’s



appeal had to be dismissed.

Essentially, Privy Council found that Ayer-Caesar’s resignation was influenced by chair of the JLSC, Chief Justice Ivor Archie, after she was informed that she may be made to face disciplinary proceedings if she did not withdraw her appointment and return to the Magistracy to complete the part-heard matters she had left behind upon her appointment to the Bench.

“What the Chief Justice told the claimant placed her under pressure to resign, as the implicit alternative of a disciplinary enquiry - ‘effectively the equivalent of impeachment proceedings...,’ read the judgment.

It went on to add that such proceedings would have been damaging to her professional and personal reputation and to her standing among her colleagues.

“It is unsurprising that she responded by agreeing to resign,” the judgment read.

What led to the resignation letter being tendered was a series of meetings Ayers-Caesar had with Archie following her appointment to the Bench after it came to Archie’s attention that the former chief magistrate had left behind 53 incomplete cases at the Port of Spain Magistrates’ Court.

Ayers-Caesar had informed Archie, prior to her appointment, that there were only 28 cases on her docket. Based on the evidence, this information was obtained by Ayers-Caesar from administrative court staff at the Magistrates’ Court.

At first instance, then-High Court judge David Harris had found that Ayers-Caesar was not forced into tendering the resignation letter.

In October 2022, however, an Appeal Court panel comprising Justices Allan Mendonca, Nolan Bereaux and Alice Yorke-Soo Hon set aside that judgment after finding that she was pressured and “tricked” by Archie who allegedly threatened that if she did not resign, her appointment would be revoked by Carmona.

Ayers-Caesar was represented by King’s Counsel Peter Knox, Ramesh Lawrence Maharaj, SC, Ronnie Bissessar, SC, Robert Strang and Varin Gopaul-Gosine; while the JLSC was represented by Ian Benjamin, SC, Ian Roach and Tamara Toolsie. (*Trinidad Express*)



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Regional News

Sandals St Vincent named one of Time's World's Greatest Places of 2025



Sandals St Vincent and The Grenadines has earned a spot on Time magazine's prestigious list of World's Greatest Places of 2025, a recognition that celebrates the most exciting and unique destinations around the globe after one year of operations.

Opened in March 2024, this luxurious resort offers guests a one-of-a-kind experience, blending stunning natural beauty with exceptional

all-inclusive offerings. Discover St Vincent and The Grenadines congratulated the achievement of the resort which is set against a lush, volcanic backdrop, boasts breathtaking views and a wide array of activities for both relaxation and adventure.

The resort's unique features, including its overwater villas and distinctive dining experiences, make it a standout destination in the Caribbean, the

Time Magazine feature highlighted.

Sandals' 18th resort is also the first major all-inclusive property on St Vincent, marking a significant development in the region's tourism industry. With the addition of 10 exclusive two-story overwater villas, complete with personal butlers, Sandals is re-defining luxury in the Caribbean Time Magazine stated further.

The island's transformation into a top vacation destination

is further supported by the introduction of new flights from JetBlue and American Airlines, which are expected to make the island more accessible to travelers, the article added.

Once a popular port of call for yachts, St Vincent is now on its way to becoming a must-visit hotspot, with Sandals leading the charge in showcasing the beauty and charm of this Caribbean gem. (*Loop Caribbean*)

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Regional News



Dominica: Former Opposition Parliamentarian allegedly arrested

Over the weekend, local media in Dominica reported that former Parliamentary Representative of the Salisbury Constituency Hector John was taken into police custody.

On Wednesday night, John went live on Facebook showing his audience that

law enforcement officers were outside his home and attempting to get in saying they had a warrant to search his home and to place him under arrest.

However, as seen in the footage, the police eventually left without entering John's home.

On Thursday morning villagers in Salisbury blocked the E O Leblanc Highway, using white goods and tires, obstructing the flow of traffic to and from the capital.

Local media reported that in a radio interview, John denied allegations made by the national security minis-

ter that Thursday morning's protest was initiated by him.

It is not clear at this time why John was held by police or if he remains in custody. *(Loop Caribbean)*

Prank gone wrong Man's hands glued to steering wheel requires medical intervention

A lighthearted prank took a serious turn when a young man's hands became glued to the steering wheel of his car, requiring urgent medical assistance.

Several hospital staff members had to intervene to resolve the situation.

In response, the Southern Regional Health Authority (SRHA) is cautioning the public about the dangers of pranks that could lead to medical emergencies.

"With the healthcare system already under immense pressure, incidents like these place an unnecessary burden on staff and resources," SRHA said.

The SRHA is also urging individuals to refrain from recording and sharing videos of healthcare workers and patients in public health spaces without consent, as this is unlawful.



This specific prank was recorded and shared on social media, raising additional concerns.

"While pranks can be fun and harmless, the SRHA emphasises that they should not violate laws, cause distress, or endanger others," the health agency

said.

The health authority, which oversees public healthcare in St Elizabeth, Manchester, and Clarendon, is calling for more responsible behaviour to ensure the safety and well-being of all. *(Jamaica Gleaner)*

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Greenland PM slams US delegation's 'provocation'



Greenland's prime minister has criticised a planned trip by a high-profile United States delegation as a "provocation".

The visit this week to the semi-autonomous Danish territory by the US second lady, accompanied by the White House national security adviser, earned criticism from across Greenland's political spectrum on Monday. The trip comes amid ongoing claims by President Donald Trump that the US wants to annex the island.

The delegation, which will visit a US military base, will be led by Usha Vance – wife of Vice President JD Vance – and include White House National Security Advisor Mike Waltz and Energy Secretary Chris Wright.

Greenland's Prime Minister Mute Egede called the visit, which will run from Thursday to Saturday, a "provocation", and said his caretaker government would not meet with it.

"Until recently, we could trust the Americans, who were our allies and friends, and with whom we enjoyed working closely," Egede told local newspaper *Sermitsiaq*. "But that time

is over."

The "only purpose of the visit was a demonstration of power, and the signal should not be misunderstood", he added.

Greenland's government is currently in a caretaker phase following a March 11 parliamentary election won by the Democrats. The pro-business party favours a slow approach to independence from Denmark.

Party leader Jens-Frederik Nielsen said the visit during coalition talks, and with municipal elections due next week, "once again shows a lack of respect for the Greenlandic people".

Brian Hughes, spokesman for the White House National Security Council, said the US delegation's visit "presents an opportunity to build on partnerships that respects Greenland's self-determination and advances economic cooperation".

Trump has made US annexation of Greenland a major talking point since his eldest son, Donald Trump Jr., paid a private visit to the mineral-rich island in January.

Amid the criticism from Greenland, Denmark said it was boosting security prior to the delegation's arrival.

Danish police sent extra personnel and sniffer dogs to the island before the planned visit, the chief spokesman for Denmark's national police said, adding that the reinforcements were part of regular steps taken during visits by dignitaries to Greenland.

About 60 police officers from Denmark arrived in Nuuk on Sunday, state broadcaster KNR reported.

Greenland's strategic location and rich oil, gas and mineral resources could benefit the US. It also lies along the shortest route from Europe to North America, vital for the US ballistic missile warning system.

Waltz and Wright plan to visit the Pituffik Space Base, the US military base in Greenland. The White House said they would receive briefings from US service members there.

The governments of both Greenland and Denmark have voiced opposition to the rising pressure from the Trump administration. (*Al Jazeera English*)

Russia and U.S. start new Ukraine peace talks on tricky footing with warnings of 'difficult negotiations'



The United States and Russia began a new set of talks Monday aimed at a partial Ukraine ceasefire — while the two sides disagreed over how well the talks in Saudi Arabia were going and as Kremlin forces continued another night of drone strikes into Monday. Even as Russia's delegation sat down in the Saudi capital of Riyadh, the country's military launched missiles at the Ukrainian city of Sumy on Monday, damaging apartment buildings and a children's hospital, and injuring 24 people, Ukrainian officials said.

Nevertheless, American negotiators say they are hopeful of achieving "real progress" at the talks in Saudi Arabia, while Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov warned of "difficult negotiations."

"There are still many aspects related to the settlement which are to be worked out," Peskov told

reporters on a media call Monday after Russia's Foreign Ministry published video of its delegation arriving at the Ritz Carlton in Riyadh.

The White House is attempting a strategy of "shuttle diplomacy," one source familiar with the negotiations told NBC News — meeting with Russian delegates Monday having already spoken with Ukrainian officials in Saudi Arabia a day before. Both sides sounded upbeat following those talks, with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy on Sunday calling the discussions "quite useful," and saying his side was working in a "completely constructive manner."

President Donald Trump's special envoy Steve Witkoff told several broadcast shows the same day that he was hopeful of "real progress."

But Witkoff had already raised alarm in Europe

before both rounds of talks, telling Tucker Carlson's podcast Friday that he didn't regard Russian President Vladimir "Putin as a bad guy" and said that Putin counted Trump as a friend.

Putin was reviled as a pariah across the West before Trump began his second term as president in January, not just for launching an unprovoked invasion of Ukraine, but for decades of election meddling and aggression abroad, and for brutally silencing political opposition at home.

Sunday brought another reality check to the White House's optimism.

Russia launched 99 drones into Ukraine overnight into Monday and injured at least one person, officials said. The night before, it sent 147 of them across the border, killing three people in the capital, Kyiv, including a father and his 5-year-old daughter, according to Zelenskyy.

Ukraine has increasingly attempted to defend itself by returning fire, and the Russian Minister of Defense said Kremlin forces had intercepted and destroyed 28 drones sent into Russia on Sunday and overnight into Monday.

"Every night is now a large-scale Russian drone attack," Zelenskyy said Sunday. "Without pressure on Russia, they will continue to despise real

diplomacy in Moscow and continue to destroy lives," he added.

"No matter what we talk about with our partners, we need to push Putin to give a real order to stop the strikes: whoever brought this war must take it away."

There is also an apparent discrepancy in terms of what the three parties say is on the table. The White House has said that "energy and infrastructure" would be covered by the agreement, while the Kremlin phrases this as "energy infrastructure." Zelenskyy has since said he would also like railways and ports to be protected.

On March 11, Putin said he would accept a partial 30-day ceasefire covering energy infrastructure but included demands that would be so punishing for Kyiv as to be tantamount to surrender.

Ukraine is also concerned that an agreement for unrestricted trade with the European Union, of which it is not a member, is set to end June 5.

While Ukrainian finance minister Serhiy Marchenko told the Financial Times that the deal's expiry would damage Ukraine's economy, some EU member states have recently opposed the agreement — made after Russia's invasion in Feb. 2022 — is hurting their own economies. (*NBC News*)

Jailed Imamoglu elected Turkish opposition's presidential candidate

Close to 15 million people voted for jailed Istanbul Mayor Ekrem Imamoglu in a presidential primary organised by Turkiye's main opposition CHP, municipal officials said.

In a sign of growing national support, the party announced late on Monday that an estimated 1.7 million members were joined by 13 million non-party members in supporting Imamoglu to become its official candidate for the next presidential election, which is due to take place in 2028.

Mass protests have broken out since Imamoglu, widely seen as the top challenger of President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, was detained on Wednesday. On Sunday, he was formally jailed, exacerbating the unrest.

Erdogan's critics insist that it was the looming primary that triggered the arrest. People turned out in such large numbers that voting was extended by three and a half hours.

Erdogan's government has denied that the arrest of Imamoglu was political-



ly motivated, insisting that Turkiye's courts are independent.

Mehmet Celik from the Daily Sabah pro-government daily told Al Jazeera that the CHP and government critics must come up with answers to the "serious allegations" against Imamoglu.

However, the CHP sought to double down on the claims as it established that Imamoglu was its official candi-

date.

"The number of votes for Ekrem Imamoglu from our members and the solidarity ballot box is over 14 million 850 thousand," wrote chairman Ozgur Ozel on X. "Today's results have completely opened Erdogan's legitimacy to question and made an early election ballot box inevitable. Let's come out and challenge!" (Al Jazeera English)



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Buddhism's holiest site erupts in protests over Hindu 'control' of shrine

As he stood in a queue outside a makeshift tent kitchen for breakfast, 30-year-old Abhishek Bauddh could not help but reflect on the throngs of people around him in Bodh Gaya, Buddhism's holiest site.

Bauddh has been visiting the town in eastern India's Bihar state, where the Buddha gained enlightenment, since he was 15. "But I have never seen such an atmosphere. Buddhists from all over the country are gathering here," he said.

For once, they are not in Bodh Gaya only for a pilgrimage. They are part of a protest by Buddhists that has erupted across India in recent weeks over a demand that control of Bodh Gaya's Mahabodhi Temple, one of the faith's most sacred shrines, be handed over exclusively to the community.

Several Buddhist organisations have held rallies, from Ladakh bordering China in the north to the cities of Mumbai in the west and Mysuru in the south. Now, people are increasingly trooping to Bodh Gaya to join the main protest, said Akash Lama, general secretary



of the All India Buddhist Forum (AIBF), the collective leading the campaign. India has an estimated 8.4 million Buddhist citizens, according to the country's last census in 2011.

For the last 76 years, the temple has been managed by an eight-member committee — four Hindus and four Buddhists — under the Bodh Gaya Temple Act, 1949, a Bihar state law.

But the protesters, including monks clad in saffron with loudspeakers and banners in their hands, are demanding a repeal of that Act and a

complete handover of the temple to the Buddhists. They argue that in recent years, Hindu monks, enabled by the fact that the influence the community wields under the law, have increasingly been performing rituals that defy the spirit of Buddhism — and that other, more subtle forms of protest have failed.

The Bodh Gaya Math, the Hindu monastery that performs the rituals inside the complex, insists that it has played a central role in the upkeep of the shrine for centuries and that it has the law on its side.

The protesters point out that the Buddha was opposed to Vedic rituals. All religions in India "take care and manage their own religious sites", said Bauddh, who travelled 540km (335 miles) from his home in the central state of Chhattisgarh to Bodh Gaya. "So why are Hindus involved in the committee of a Buddhist religious place?"

Sitting down with his plate of hot rice with dal, he said, "Buddhists have not received justice [so far], what should we do if we do not protest peacefully?" (*Al Jazeera English*)

Parham relegated from Premier League after trashing by Old Road

Parham on Sunday evening became the second team to be automatically relegated from the Antigua and Barbuda Football Association's (ABFA) Premier Division to compete in the First Division next season.

Parham joined Cool and Smooth Greenbay Hoppers as two of the four teams that will be automatically relegated at the end of the season after suffering a 7-2 loss to Old Road in their penultimate match of the current Premier Division League at the ABFA Technical Center.

Gisner Joseph and Rodney Lawrence both scored twice for Old Road. Joseph had conversions in the 70th and 73rd minutes, while Lawrence scored in the 28th and 85th minutes.

The other goals for Old Road were scored by Johnathan Shoy, Zaheim Greene, and Tenaury Simon, who converted a penalty kick in the 81st minute.

The goals for Parham were scored by Nicquan Lyndon Philipps in the seventh minute and Tyrese Gowe in the 73rd minute.

Both teams finished the match with 10 men after Zaheim Greene of Old Road and Zidane Smith of Parham received red cards and were expelled in the 60th minute.

The match also marked the end of Old Road's Premier League campaign, which finished with their 12th win from their quota of 19 matches.

The result allows Old Road to leapfrog Garden Stars into third place on goal difference, as both teams are now level on 37 points. However, Garden Stars have one



Players of the Old Road football team

game remaining.

Parham, who have one game left, remain in the cellar of the 14-team competition with 10 points after suffering their 14th defeat in 18 matches.

The teams that finished in positions 11th to 14th will automatically be relegated to compete in the First Division next season.

But Green City FC ensured the team avoided automatic relegation with a 3-0 victory over Island Original John Hughes in their penultimate match of the season.

Malik Charles scored twice with strikes in the 52nd and the fourth minute of added time after teammate Elijah Whyte opened the scoring with a conversion in the seventh minute.

Green City FC advanced to 20 points and remained in ninth place after recording their sixth win in 18 matches.

John Hughes dropped from seventh to eighth place with 21 points after tumbling to their ninth defeat in 18 matches.

But Attacking Saints remain just outside of the automatic relegation zone in 10th place with 16 points after suffering their 10th defeat in 18 matches in a 2-1 loss to the Potters Tigers.

Keon Greene scored both goals for the Potters Tigers with conversions in the 31st and 37th minutes. Kenijah Challenger scored for the Attacking Saints in the 51st minute.

The result allows the Potters Tigers to leapfrog John Hughes from eighth to seventh place with 24 points after securing their seventh win in 18 matches.

The Premier Division League will conclude with the final round of matches at the ABFA Technical Center this weekend.

Island Academy retains school volleyball titles

Island Academy has retained both female and male division titles in the Ministry of Sports JOMA Caribbean Inter-School Volleyball League.

Both teams successfully defended their titles during the finals at the YMCA Sports Complex on Friday.

Island Academy defeated Christ the King High School 2-0 in the female division final, winning 25-18, 25-21.

Island Academy had advanced to the final after

beating the Antigua Girls High School first team (AGHS-1) 25-23, 25-21 in the semi-finals.

The Christ the King High School booked their place in the female division final after pulling off a 25-22, 25-22 victory against the Antigua Girls High School second team (AGHS-2) in the other semi-final.

Island Academy-1 defeated Antigua Grammar School 2-0 in the male division final, winning 25-17,

25-21.

Island Academy-1 advanced to the final after prevailing 25-18, 25-16 against the Island Academy second team in the second semi-final.

The Antigua Grammar School booked their spot in the final by pulling off a 2-0 victory (25-17, 25-15) against the Harrison Center of Antigua and Barbuda School of Continuing Education (HCABSCE) in the first semi-final.

The first team of the Antigua Girls High School and HCABSCE each won bronze after the losing semi-finalists in both divisions met in the playoff for third place.

AGHS-1 prevailed 25-21, 25-20 against AGHS-2 in the female third-place decider, while HCABSCE defeated Island Academy-2 25-23, 19-25, and 17-15 to win the battle for the bronze medals in the male division.

Flyers stay second in ABBA's Division 1 League



The EZ Fit Flyers basketball team

Reigning league and playoff champions, the EZ Fit Flyers, consolidated their position in second place in the Antigua and Barbuda Basketball Association's (ABBA) First Division League on Sunday evening.

The Flyers stayed within touching distance of unbeaten leaders Total Imports EMC's Potters Steelers by

soaring to their 10th win in 11 matches with a 114-51 drubbing of Spanish Heat Da in the second game of a double-header at the JSC Sports Complex.

Adonis Humphreys produced 26 points, 18 rebounds, and five assists; Kwame Brathwaite sank 16 points and grabbed 13 rebounds; Javonte Daley also scored 16 points; Selassie

Brathwaite converted 15 points and claimed eight steals; Xavier "X-Man" Meade had 12 points and 10 rebounds; and Najee George also scored 12 points for the Flyers.

Steven Matthew converted 26 points for the Spanish Heat, who lost for the seventh time in 12 games.

Da Project claimed their eighth win in 12 encounters by pulling off a 92-64 victory against Lava Smoke Shop Warriors in Sunday's opening game.

Terry Dawkins produced a game-high 30 points with seven rebounds and five assists; T-Shawn Lewis narrowly missed out on completing a triple-double with 20 points, 16 rebounds, and nine assists; Bryan "Hollywood" Matthew had 17 points, seven rebounds, and seven assists; and Eric Joseph scored 10 points and claimed six rebounds for Da Project.

Kebo Orford sank 20 points and grabbed 11 rebounds; Lincoln Weekes also scored 20 points and claimed five rebounds; and Zuri Nesbitt produced 14 points and five rebounds for the Warriors, who lost for the eighth time in 12 games.

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WE ARE GETTING STRONGER

Falcons and Patriots to meet in 2025 CPL season opener in St. Kitts

Similar to last year, the 2025 Republic Bank Caribbean Premier League (CPL) will commence with the St. Kitts & Nevis Patriots squaring off against newcomers Antigua and Bar-

and Trinidad and Tobago.

Each of the six franchises will play 10 group-stage matches before the playoffs get underway in Guyana, culminating with the finals at the Guyana

the 2025 tournament will build on that success, providing unforgettable moments for players and spectators alike.”

The Antigua and Barbuda Falcons failed to advance from the preliminary stage during their debut season in last year's CPL.

The Falcons will once again host all their five home matches at the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium in the preliminary stage during the opening weeks of the 2025 CPL.

After kicking off their campaign away to the Patriots, the Falcons will return home to play the Barbados Royals in their first home match on Saturday, August 16.

The Falcons will entertain defending champions St. Lucia Kings the following day, Sunday, August 17.

The Antigua and Barbuda Falcons will also play home matches against the Trinbago Knight Riders on Wednesday, August 20; the Guyana Amazon Warriors on Friday, August 22; and the St. Kitts and Nevis Patriots on Sunday, August 24.

The competition will conclude with the start of the playoffs at the Guyana National Stadium in Providence on Tuesday, September 16, and the final at the same venue on Sunday, September 21.



Players of the St Kitts & Nevis Patriots (green uniform) and Antigua & Barbuda Falcons get ready to leave the field at the end of one of their matches in the 2024 CPL.

buda Falcons in the season opener at Warner Park on Thursday, August 14.

The tournament will run from August 14 to September 21, featuring 34 matches played across six host nations: Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Guyana, St. Kitts & Nevis, St. Lucia,

National Stadium in Providence.

Michael Hall, CPL's Tournament Operations Director, is confident this season will build on last year's success.

“The 2024 edition exceeded all expectations, and we are confident that with a 199-run victory against the Bolans Blasters at Jennings.

The Bolans Blaster currently occupies seventh place with 24 points after suffering their fifth defeat in eight matches.

Scores: Jennings Tigers 219 all out in 51.3 overs (Glenton Williams 61, Matthew Miller 51, Jedidiah Martin 32; Dwaine Fordyce six for 72) and 202 for six declared off 27.2 overs (Dahri Francis 65 off 29 balls, Shane Burton 59; Richie Thomas three for 31); Bolans Blasters 124 all out in 41.5 overs (Orlando Peters 34; Xavier Freeland three for 14) and 98 all out in 28.2 overs (Zavier Freeland four for 28, Glenton Williams three for 20).

The Pigotts Crushers remain in sixth place with 35 points after recording

their second win in eight matches with an innings and 43-run victory against the bottom team, WES Rising Sun Spartans, at Rising Sun.

The Spartans remain firmly rooted in the cellar with nine points after tumbling to their fourth defeat in eight matches.

Scores: Rising Sun Spartans 104 all out in 34.3 overs (Junior Henry 32; Glen Williams five for eight, Essan Warner three for 18) and 135 all out in 36 overs (Ryshon Williams 42; Jalen Harris five for 41); Pigotts Crushers 282 for two declared off 28.3 overs (Jewel Andrew 113 off 44 balls, Essan Warner 76 not out off 40 balls, captain Uri Smith 56 not out off 51 balls, Ka-deem Henry 35).V

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tory against Tertiary Institutions and Schools in New Winthropes.

Tertiary Institutions and Schools remain second from the bottom of the standings with 18 points after suffering their sixth defeat in eight matches.

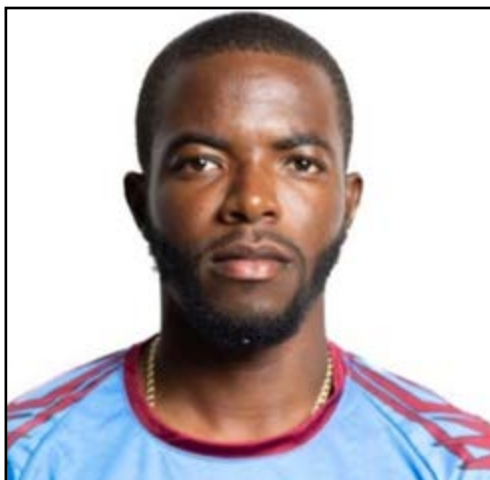
Scores: Tertiary Institutions and Schools 75 all out in 22.1 overs (Demari Benta four for 11) and 148 all out in 24.3 overs (Kylano Isaac 52, Xanden Hobson 50); New Winthropes Lions 311 for five declared off 43.4 overs (Ian Eusebe 123 not out off 119 balls, captain Nino Henry 79 off 46 balls, Asher Murray-Cornelius 72 off 66 balls).

The Jennings Tigers move into fourth place with 59 points after securing their third win in eight matches

Blackhawks retain ABCA two-day championship



Jewel Andrew



Karima Gore



Amahl Nathaniel

PIC Insurance Liberta Black Hawks captured their fourth consecutive Antigua and Barbuda Cricket Association's (ABCA) Two-Day Championship during the penultimate round of matches over the weekend.

The Blackhawks retained the title by extending their unbeaten run, recording their seventh win in eight matches with an innings and 340-run victory against Caribbean Union Bank (CUB) Bethesda Golden Eagles at Ball Beef in Liberta.

Scores: Bethesda Golden Eagles 87 all out in 31 overs (Chamiqueko Landerfort five for 23, captain Elroy Francis Jr. three for 20) and 64 all out in 20 overs (Elroy Francis Jr. four for 21); Liberta Blackhawks 491 for six declared off 70.3 overs (Karima Gore 139 off 104 balls, Elroy Francis Jr. 101 not out off 73 balls, Amahl Nathaniel 100 off 114 balls, Joshua Thomas 70 not out off 64 balls; captain Tehrique Mason three for 112).

The latest result took the Liberta Blackhawks to an unassailable 91



Elroy Francis

points at the top of the 10-team standings with just the final round of matches remaining.

The Bethesda Golden Eagles will remain third from the bottom of the standings with 21 points after crashing to their sixth defeat in eight matches.

Empire Nation, which finished in the runner-up spot for the past three seasons, is embroiled in a tight battle with CMW New Winthorpes Lions to finish second behind the Blackhawks in this year's two-day contest.

Only four points separate the two

teams as Empire Nation remains in second place by advancing to 75 after beating the All Saints Pythons by 44 runs in All Saints to claim their fourth win in eight matches.

The All Saints Pythons remain in fifth place with 53 points after slumping to their third defeat in eight matches.

Scores: Empire Nation 150 all out in 32.2 overs (Justin Athanaze 42, Damian Lowenfield 33; Colin Archibald six for 40, captain Alzarri Joseph three for 34) and 169 all out in 39.4 overs (Tanez Francis 49; Alzarri Joseph four for 39); All Saints Pythons 148 all out in 36.3 overs (Kadeem Josiah 37, Akeem Blackman 30; captain Justin Athanaze four for 31) and 127 all out in 29.3 overs (Micah McKenzie five for 38, Justin Athanaze four for 36).

The New Winthorpes Lions consolidated their position in third place by advancing to 71 points after claiming their fifth win in eight matches with a crushing innings and 88-run vic-

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