

Minimum wage to increase shortly

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Minimum wage to increase shortly



The national minimum wage for Antigua and Barbuda will be go-

ing up again, shortly, making it the third time that there has been such an increase since the Antigua and Barbuda Labour Party returned to office in 2014.

Speaking at the Labour Day Rally at the Sir V.C Bird Bust on Monday, PM Browne said his government needs no agitation to grant these periodic increases.

“We will also increase the minimum wage once again. It would be the third time in about 10-11 years because we are committed to your empowerment. We don’t need anybody to convince us that we must

that we must continue to empower the working class of this country,” PM Browne declared.

Labour Minister, Sir Steadroy Benjamin said study will be conducted into what can be considered as a ‘livable wage’ where people can survive and enjoy ‘the decency of life’. “People ought to be able to purchase what they want, when they want but only if wages equate with the cost of living index,” he remarked.

The currently minimum wage is at EC\$9.00 per hour. The last increase came at the end of 2023.

AT&LU to place emphasis on the issue of healthy work-places

The President of the Antigua Trades and Labour Union, Bernard DeNully, is emphasising that the union understands the importance of maintaining a safe and healthy workplace.

He told the combined ABLP/AT&LU Labour Day Rally on Monday that the union has been in constant dialogue with Government, voicing its observations of many health hazards and that it has made have made recommendations on the issue.

“Our recommendations include, but not limited to, shorten workdays for workers, work at home arrangements for workers, regular deep cleaning and installing ventilators to improve the



The President of the Antigua Trades and Labour Union, Bernard DeNully

air quality,” he revealed.

Already, he noted, the gov-

ernment recently recognized that the various departments of Government are suffering from ‘sick’ buildings that are rented and hence the recent announcement of plans to erect a purpose-built government office complex on lands it owns adjacent to the Police Headquarters.

DeNully credits the agitation from his union to help guide the government to come to the decision to have a new Government Office Complex. “This is a clear example of the Antigua Trades and Labour Union being an advocate for a safe and healthier work environment in the public sector,” he declared.

Statement by Acting Prime Minister, So Steadroy Benjamin on Labour Day tragic accident



Acting Prime Minister and Minister responsible for Labour and Public Safety Hon. Steadroy "Cutie" Benjamin

It is with deep sorrow and profound regret that I learned of the tragic death of a young woman during the Labour Day celebrations at Fort James Beach. On behalf of the Government and people of Antigua and Barbuda, I extend heartfelt condolences to her family, friends, and all who are grieving this sudden and painful loss.

Labour Day is a time when we come together to honour the hard work and contributions of our workers, and to celebrate the spirit of unity and progress that defines our nation. It is deeply sad-denying that such a joyous occasion has been marred by this unfortunate event.

As Acting Prime Minister and Minister responsible for Labour and

Public Safety, I call on all citizens and residents across the island who are partaking in Labour Day festivities to take special care to ensure their safety and the safety of others. Let us remain vigilant, look out for one another, and conduct our celebrations in a responsible and peaceful manner.

In moments like this, we are reminded of how fragile life truly is, and of the profound importance

of compassion, unity, and collective care. As we mourn this tragic loss, let us honour the memory of the deceased by committing ourselves to looking out for one another. Let our national observances not only be a time of celebration, but also a reflection of our shared responsibility to ensure that every gathering is marked by safety, and care for all. May her soul rest in eternal peace.



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Press Statement on Labour Day Incident



The Leadership and Executive of the Antigua and Barbuda Labour Party are deeply saddened to report an unfortunate incident that occurred during the Labour Day 2025 Parade

en route to Fort James. Tragically, this incident has resulted in the death of an individual, whose identity is being withheld at this time until family members have been notified.

The Royal Police Force is actively investigating the circumstances surrounding this incident, and we encourage anyone with information that may assist in the investigation to come forward.

As we participate in the Labour Day celebrations, we

urge all attendees to prioritize safety and exercise caution. It is imperative that everyone contributes to creating a secure environment for all participants.

Once the family and loved ones of the deceased have been informed, we will ensure that we reach out to offer our support during this incredibly difficult time.

We appreciate your understanding and cooperation.



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Prime Minister Browne travels to the US for meeting with Secretary of State, Rubio



PM Gaston Browne and Chief of Defence Staff, Brig. Telbert Benjamin



PM Gaston Browne with top security personnel at VCBIA as he awaits his flight to the USA

Prime Minister Gaston Browne traveled to Washington D.C. on Monday to engage in high-level discussions with United States Secretary of State, Marco Rubio, taking place today, (Tuesday).

Prime Minister Browne is among seven Caribbean leaders who will be engaged in those talks. The others are the leaders of St Kitts Nevis, St Lucia, Dominica, St Vincent and the Grenadines, Grenada and The Bahamas.

The discussions will focus on a broad range of issues, including tariffs of 10 per cent imposed on goods from countries of the region, including Antigua and Barbuda, as well as Washington's concerns about Citizenship by Investment Programmes operated by five OECS states.

The discussions are also expected to focus on geo-economic and geo-political alliances, as the U.S. seeks to reshape global trade and the Post-World War II order.

Antigua and Barbuda's Ambassador to the United States, Sir Ronald Sanders, said he expects to talk with Secretary Rubio to be 'free and frank' recognizing that Antigua and Barbuda wishes to maintain strong relations with the US.

"Our wish at the end of these talks, is to have a clearer understanding of our wish for stronger relations with the United States, but a beneficial one; one that benefits us," he stated.

As is customary, Prime Minister Browne met with the heads of the security forces before departing the island Monday afternoon.



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C&W Business and the Chamber of Commerce jointly host cybersecurity conference

C&W Business joined with the Antigua and Barbuda Chamber of Commerce and Industry, to host a pivotal cybersecurity forum on Thursday, May 1, addressing one of today's most urgent national and business challenges; cybersecurity. Held under the theme "Strategic Leadership for Cybersecurity – Safeguarding the Future," the event convened senior executives, IT professionals, technical experts, and digital stakeholders from across sectors to discuss escalating cyber threats and explore practical, forward-thinking solutions.

Wayne Hull, Country Manager of Flow Antigua and Barbuda, opened the event by highlighting the importance of public-private collaboration.

"I am extremely pleased that C&W Business has partnered with the Antigua and Barbuda Chamber of Commerce and Industry to bring greater awareness to such a vital subject. Cybersecurity is essential to the sustainability, resilience, and proper functioning of businesses and society. Ongoing training and development in this area are critical—not just for Antigua and Barbuda, but across the Caribbean—to meet disaster recovery and preparedness goals," Hull stated.

Martin Cave, Executive Director of the Chamber, emphasized the increasing reliance on digital platforms and the risks they pose.

"Today, we are constantly



encouraged to adopt Artificial Intelligence and other digital innovations. And rightly so—our dependence on the internet spans communication, commerce, healthcare, and more. But with this dependence comes vulnerability. Cybercriminals exploit our digital reliance, making the internet a treasure trove for bad actors. We must take proactive steps to protect our

data, our businesses, and ourselves," Cave warned.

The conference featured a dynamic program including:

- * A Fireside Chat on Strategic Leadership for Cybersecurity
- * A ransomware prevention demonstration
- * An interactive tabletop exercise

* A presentation on building cyber-resilient businesses

Each session underscored the message that cybersecurity is a shared responsibility, requiring leadership, vigilance, and cross-sector preparedness.

The panel of expert speakers included:

* Ives Benjamin, Sales Engineering Manager (North Cluster)

* Kevin Gordon, CEO, Simply Secure Group

* Christian Benjamin, Associate Manager, Solution Architect Security/Networking, C&W Business

* Kamla Hamilton, Senior Product Manager, Security, C&W Business

Participants engaged deeply with the content, especially during the tabletop exercise, where they worked through real-world scenarios to identify ways to embed cyber-resilience into business operations.

C&W Business and the Antigua and Barbuda Chamber of Commerce extended their appreciation to all speakers, participants, and partners whose collaboration helped deliver an impactful and timely event. This forum reaffirmed C&W Business's commitment to supporting a safer, more secure digital environment in Antigua and Barbuda, helping businesses and communities strengthen their cybersecurity posture for the future.



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<p>SATURDAY, 3 MAY 2025</p> <p>PYTHONS VS LIONS</p> <p>(11:00 AM)  LIBERTA</p>	<p>SATURDAY, 03 MAY 2025</p> <p>BLACKHAWKS VS TIGERS</p> <p>(2:30 PM)  LIBERTA</p>
<p>SATURDAY, 3 MAY 2025</p> <p>CRUSHERS VS NATION</p> <p>(2:30 PM)  PIGOTTS</p>	<p>SUNDAY, 4 MAY 2025</p> <p>LIONS VS TIGERS</p> <p>(11:00 AM)  LIBERTA</p>
<p>SUNDAY, 4 MAY 2025</p> <p>BLACKHAWKS VS NATION</p> <p>(2:30 PM)  LIBERTA</p>	<p>SUNDAY, 4 MAY 2025</p> <p>PYTHONS VS CRUSHERS</p> <p>(2:30 PM)  PIGOTTS</p>
<p>MONDAY, 5 MAY 2025</p> <p>CRUSHERS VS BLACKHAWKS</p> <p>(11:00 AM)  PIGOTTS</p>	<p>MONDAY, 5 MAY 2025</p> <p>NATION VS PYTHONS</p> <p>(2:30 PM)  PIGOTTS</p>
<p>SATURDAY, 10 MAY 2025</p> <p>NATION VS TIGERS</p> <p>(11:00 AM)  LIBERTA</p>	<p>SATURDAY, 10 MAY 2025</p> <p>BLACKHAWKS VS LIONS</p> <p>(2:30 PM)  LIBERTA</p>
<p>SUNDAY, 11 MAY 2025</p> <p>BLACKHAWKS VS PYTHONS</p> <p>(11:00 AM)  LIBERTA</p>	<p>SUNDAY, 11 MAY 2025</p> <p>NATION VS LIONS</p> <p>(2:30 PM)  LIBERTA</p>
<p>SUNDAY, 11 MAY 2025</p> <p>TIGERS VS CRUSHERS</p> <p>(2:30 PM)  PIGOTTS</p>	
<p>THURSDAY, 15 MAY 2025</p> <p>2ND PLACE VS 3RD PLACE</p> <p>(2:30 PM)</p>	
<p>SATURDAY, 17 MAY 2025</p> <p>FINAL</p> <p>WINNER OF ELIMINATOR VS 1ST PLACE</p> <p>(2:00 PM)</p>	




Local News

Roberts & Co. marks 39th anniversary with big cash donation to Halo Foundation



The management and staff of the law firm, Roberts & Company, is celebrating its 39th anniversary and one of the ways that the company is marking this milestone is

by making a donation to the Halo Foundation that will help it to reach some of its goals.

President and Founder of the Halo Foundation Inc.,


Sandra Lady Williams was presented with a cheque for EC\$10,000.00 by Deputy to the Governor General, Sir Clare Roberts

Sir Clare noted that the con-

tribution was also in recognition of the Foundation's decade of unbroken service to the nation of Antigua and Barbuda.


In accepting the cheque at the company's chambers, Lady Williams expressed heartfelt appreciation for the unwavering support of Roberts & Co. since the inception of the Halo Foundation. She described the company's contributions as "meaningful, needed and sincerely appreciated."

Currently, Sir Rodney and Lady Williams are finalising plans for Wings of Charity 8 – The Masquerade Ball, one the Foundation's highly anticipated fundraisers, scheduled to take place on June 13 in the United Kingdom. They have indicated that this year's event promises to be the most spectacular yet.





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Regional News



Prisoner accused of orchestrating \$160 million fraud scheme

A man who is serving time behind bars has been charged for allegedly fleecing a businesswoman of approximately \$160 million between 2017 and 2024.

Thirty-seven-year-old Garrett Savoury of Paddington Avenue, Kingston 6, was charged on April 29 with four counts of obtaining money by false pretence by detectives assigned to the National Strategic Anti-Gang Division (NSAD) within the Counter-Terrorism and Organised Crime Investigation Branch.

The police say Savoury orchestrated a series of elaborate schemes against the woman, while in custody at a correctional facility, where he is serving time for other offences.

They say one of his schemes involved him impersonating a US diplomat and fabricating crisis scenarios about the victim and her family. It is alleged that Savoury later demanded significant sums of money from the woman under the guise of resolving the non-existent issues.

Detectives have reportedly confirmed that the victim transferred funds in both Jamaican and United States currency to Savoury's bank account over the period.

NSAD, with the assistance of the Financial Investigations Division, subsequently charged Savoury. His court date is being finalised.

Head of NSAD, Deputy Superintendent of Police Susan Bruce says "The investigation underscores the importance of vigilance as there is potential for criminals to exploit others."

Meanwhile, the Counter-Terrorism and Organised Crime Investigation Branch is urging anyone with information that can assist in the investigations to

contact their office at 876-967-1389,



Crime Stop at 311, the National Intelligence Bureau at 811 or the nearest police station. (*Jamaica Gleaner*)



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Mini-tornado causes damage in Guadeloupe

French authorities were on Monday continuing their evaluation of the damage caused when what the media have described as a “mini-tornado” touched down on the French island on Sunday afternoon.

The weather phenomenon took place in Baie-Mahault, causing widespread panic among residents. There have been no reports of deaths on the island as a result of the weather situation.

The authorities have confirmed that major damage in residential areas in a town called Belcourt and that fire and rescue services have been deployed to the area.

Videos and photos circulating on social media show scenes similar to the passage of a hurricane.

Guadeloupe has been placed under Orange Alert



for “strong rains and thunderstorms.”

The French newspaper, *Guadeloupe la 1ère*, reported that the island was being affected by a wet and unstable air mass.

“Heavy and sometimes stormy showers can still be triggered quickly today and can generate significant rainfall totals reaching, or even exceeding, 80mm of

rain in three hours. Temporary flooding is therefore to be feared,” the newspaper said.

The French authorities have warned that heavy rain and thunderstorms are expected to return, given the weather pattern over the past few days.

Météo France has warned that conditions would likely turn humid and very unsta-

ble again raising concerns about renewed heavy showers.

In a report detailing the rainfall accumulation from the previous day, estimates indicated that the Jarry sector experienced significant downpours, with 50 to 60 mm of rain recorded over three hours and 80 mm over six hours.

According to Météo France’s bulletin, rainfall accumulations were projected to reach 20 to 30 mm, with localized areas possibly seeing up to 50 mm.

The situation serves as a reminder of the unpredictable nature of weather in the Caribbean, where conditions can shift rapidly, leading to both beautiful sunny days and intense storms, the French authorities warn. (*Loop Caribbean*)

Haitian national dies in ICE custody

The United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agency says a Haitian national died in its custody.

Last week, ICE said Marie Ange Blaise, 44, was pronounced deceased by medical professionals at the Broward Transitional Centre (BTC) in Pompano Beach, Florida, on April 25.

The cause of death is under investigation.

It said that, on an unknown date and place, Blaise entered the United States without admission or parole.

On February 12, ICE said US Customs and Border Protection (CBP) “encountered Blaise at the Henry E Rohlsen International Airport in Saint Croix, US Virgin Islands, while attempting to board a flight to Charlotte, North Carolina.”

On the same date, ICE said CBP is-

sued Blaise a Notice of Expedited Removal, “charging inadmissibility as an immigrant without a valid immigrant visa.”

On February 14, ICE said CBP transferred her to the custody of ICE’s Enforcement and Removal Operations (ERO) Miami at the San Juan staging facility in San Juan, Puerto Rico.

On February 21, ICE said ERO Miami transferred Blaise to ERO New Orleans custody, who detained her at the Richwood Correctional Centre in Oakdale, Louisiana.

On April 5, ICE said ERO New Orleans transferred Blaise to ERO Miami, who detained her at the BTC, in Pompano Beach, Florida.

Consistent with its policy, ICE said ERO Miami notified the US Department of Homeland Security, the Office of Inspector General, and the

ICE Office of Professional Responsibility via the Integrity Coordination Centre.

ERO Miami provided email notification of Blaise’s death to the Consulate of Haiti in Miami, Florida.

ICE said it “remains committed to ensuring that all those in its custody reside in safe, secure, and humane environments.

“Comprehensive medical care is provided from the moment individuals arrive and throughout the entirety of their stay.”

“All people in ICE custody receive medical, dental and mental health screening and 24-hour emergency care at each detention facility,” ICE added. “At no time during detention is a detained illegal alien denied emergent care.” (*Loop Caribbean*)

Regional News



CARICOM launches regional webinar series to boost agricultural preparedness for hurricane season



With the Atlantic hurricane season fast approaching, the CARICOM Secretariat is launching a regional webinar series aimed at improving disaster readiness across the agriculture and fisheries sectors. The five-part series begins on Friday, May 9, 2025, and continues weekly through June 6.

The initiative is a joint effort involving several regional and international agencies, including the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA), Caribbean Agricultural Health and Food Safety

Agency (CAHFSA), Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI), Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism (CRFM), the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO), and the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA).

Each one-hour session will be livestreamed on CARICOM's social media platforms and will focus on specific areas of agricultural disaster preparedness and response.

The series will kick off

with a session on Disaster Preparedness for On-Farm and Sea Assets, focusing on ways to safeguard farm equipment, fishing boats, and critical infrastructure. The webinar will also highlight steps to secure input supplies and other essential resources in the face of natural disasters.

On May 16, the spotlight will shift to crop production, with a webinar titled Disaster Preparedness: Crops – Open Field and Protected Systems. Discussions will center on enhancing the resilience of open-field farming and implementing protective structures and climate-smart practices.

The May 23 session will address the livestock sector, with a focus on disaster planning for animal sheltering, feed storage, disease prevention, and emergency response strategies for farmers.

Preparedness in the fisheries

sector will be explored on May 30, with topics including the safe storage and protection of fishing gear and vessels, and the use of early warning systems to help fishers respond effectively to storms.

The final webinar, scheduled for June 6, will examine Disaster Response and Recovery, providing guidance on post-storm recovery, rebuilding efforts, and access to financial aid, insurance, and support services. A panel discussion featuring experts from the CARICOM Secretariat, FAO, and CDEMA will conclude the series.

The webinar series is part of CARICOM's broader push to strengthen climate resilience across its member states and ensure that key agricultural systems can better withstand the growing threats posed by extreme weather. *(Loop Caribbean)*

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Trump administration to pay \$1,000 to undocumented immigrants who self-deport

The Department of Homeland Security is intensifying its efforts to persuade unauthorized immigrants to self-deport by offering a \$1,000 stipend and travel assistance.

The federal agency announced Monday that those who use the CBP Home app to voluntarily leave the United States will receive assistance “to facilitate travel back to their home country” and \$1,000 “paid after their return to their home country has been confirmed through the app.”

The announcement comes as the number of deportations has remained stagnant during President Donald Trump’s first 100 days in office. One of the president’s key campaign promises was that he would enact mass deportations as soon as he took office.

DHS did not immediately respond to questions about how the funds would be provided or what proof would be required to show the person had returned to their home country.

DHS spokesperson Tricia McLaughlin said in late March that those who are self-deporting can use biographical data, documents, facial images and geo location in the app to prove that they have left the country. “The alien must be at least three miles outside of the United States to successfully utilize this feature,” she said. “While the use of the verify departure functionality is optional, if the alien chooses to use it, they must submit a facial image. It’s required.”

In a press release, DHS Secretary Kristi Noem said self-deportations are

“the best, safest and most cost-effective way to leave the United States to avoid arrest.”

A single deportation costs U.S. taxpayers \$17,121, according to DHS. The federal agency expects self-deportations to decrease that cost by 70%, even after factoring in the stipend.

So far this year, at least 5,000 immigrants have reportedly used CBP Home to say that they were voluntarily leaving the country, according to the Migration Policy Institute, a Washington think tank.

DHS has declined to say how many unauthorized immigrants have used the app so far to self-deport.

According to Appfigures, a company that tracks app downloads, CBP Home app has recently been downloaded about 1,500 times per day. Since the start of 2025, the app was downloaded about 300,000 times, according to the company’s CEO, Ariel Michaeli.

In March, the Trump administration repurposed the Biden-era CBP One app that allowed migrants to enter the U.S. legally as asylum-seekers, changing it into the CBP Home app. This version of the mobile application has a self-deportation reporting feature.

The Trump administration has spent \$200 million in revamping the app and creating an accompanying advertising campaign featuring Noem to promote the app’s use.

The ads, which have aired in English and Spanish across the U.S. and Mexico, encourage immigrants who are not legally present in the U.S. to leave the

country.

As part of their announcement Monday, DHS said that undocumented immigrants who “submit their intent to voluntarily self-deport in CBP Home will also be deprioritized for detention and removal ahead of their departure as long as they demonstrate they are making meaningful strides in completing that departure.”

The agency also said that self-deportation through the app “may help preserve the option for an illegal alien to re-enter the United States legally in the future,” echoing key points Noem touts in her ads.

Immigration experts and advocates have previously warned of Noem’s self-deportation message and the possibility of being able to legally return to the U.S.

“The operative word in that quote from the secretary is ‘may,’” Kathleen Bush-Joseph, a policy analyst with the U.S. Immigration Policy Program at the Migration Policy Institute, told NBC News in March.

“For many people who leave the United States, there may never be a lawful option for return to the United States, or reentry may be barred for many years,” Heidi Altman, the vice president of policy at the National Immigration Law Center, an advocacy organization, told NBC News in a statement in March. “Forcing or coercing people into leaving their homes and their loved ones carries political, moral, and economic costs.” (*NBC News*)



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Air traffic control at Newark Airport briefly lost communication with aircraft, kicking off travel chaos



Air traffic controllers temporarily lost communication with aircraft flying in and out of Newark Liberty International Airport last week, an incident that has continued causing major delays at the travel hub.

Last Monday, a ground stop was issued at Newark airport due to a Federal Aviation Administration equipment malfunction. The administration has still not clarified what the equipment malfunction was.

During the incident, air traffic controllers in Area C of the Philadelphia TRACON, a traffic control facility that guides flights in and out of Newark, lost communication with aircraft traveling to and from the airport, making them unable to see, hear, or talk to them, according to the National Air Traffic Controllers Association

(NATCA). The air traffic controllers are in charge of “separating and sequencing aircraft in and out of Newark Airport.”

It’s not clear at this time how long the air traffic controllers lost communication with the aircraft.

The event led the air traffic controllers to take leave under the Federal Employees Compensation Act, which covers federal employees who are physically injured or experience a traumatic event on the job, according to NATCA, a union that represents around 20,000 aviation professionals.

While the union did not elaborate on what caused the communication loss, it said it supports Department of Transportation Secretary Sean Duffy’s “efforts to upgrade and modernize our

nation’s air traffic control systems and infrastructure.”

Since the incident, delays and cancellations of flights traveling into and out of Newark airport have been constant. Airlines, including United, have had to cancel hundreds of flights, and dozens of others were diverted to other airports.

Many issues contributed to the disruptions, including understaffing, several instances of technical equipment failure and construction. On Monday afternoon, over 300 flights traveling to and from Newark were delayed, and more than 150 were canceled, according to FlightAware.com.

Bill Walker was one of the passengers to have his flight delayed on Monday.

“We were delayed almost 3 hours in Seattle because

they couldn’t get air clearance to come into Newark,” Walker told NBC News.

Other travelers weren’t as lucky.

Ireland Hernandez, who was trying to get back home to Mexico, had an afternoon flight to Houston that got canceled.

“We came here just for the weekend and vacation, and we were planning to go back to Los Angeles,” Hernandez said. “But we have this connection flight from Newark to Dallas, and then we were driving to Mexico.”

She was traveling with her friend, Sarah Arce. They said they struggled to get answers or support from airline staff.

“They said ‘we can’t give you a voucher,’” Arce said.

United CEO Scott Kirby said that the Philadelphia TRACON “has been chronically understaffed for years,” adding that “Newark airport cannot handle the number of planes that are scheduled to operate there in the weeks and months ahead.”

A shortage in air traffic controllers is an ongoing, nationwide problem. According to Duffy, there are some 3,000 vacant positions nationwide and he’s planning to roll out a strategy to incentivize the labor force.

The Federal Aviation Administration did not immediately respond to a request for comment. (NBC News)

Top UN court rejects Sudan's bid to sue UAE for genocide

The UN's top court has dismissed Sudan's case against the UAE accusing the Gulf state of complicity in genocide.

Sudan alleged the UAE supported the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) in the Sudanese civil war, in which tens of thousands of people have died, forced millions from their homes and left many facing famine.

The UAE categorically denied the accusations, branding the case "political theatre" and "a cynical publicity stunt".

The International Court of Justice in The Hague ruled that the case could not proceed because the UAE had opted out Article 9 of the Genocide Convention, which means that it cannot be sued by other states over genocide allegations.



The court said that it lacked jurisdiction and was therefore "precluded by its statute from taking any position on the merits of the claims made by Sudan". The case was thrown out in a 14-2 vote.

Sudan case had claimed that the UAE's alleged military, financial and logistical backing of the RSF - including weapons shipments and mercenary recruitment - enabled systematic attacks against non-Arab communi-

ties, particularly the Masalit, in Darfur.

The allegations included mass killings, forced displacement and the use of sexual violence as a weapon.

Reem Ketait, the UAE's deputy assistant minister for political affairs, said the court's decision was "clear and decisive".

"The international community must focus urgently on ending this devastating war and supporting the Sudanese

people, and it must demand humanitarian aid reaches all those in need," she said.

Both the Sudanese army and the RSF have been accused of committing atrocities, including ethnically targeted killings, obstruction of humanitarian relief and looting.

Sudan's case at the ICJ was unusual because it targeted an alleged sponsor of atrocities, not the direct perpetrators.

The case was seen as a test of whether states can be held responsible for fuelling atrocities abroad.

While the ICJ's judges found they did not have the power to rule in the case, it nevertheless serves as a powerful illustration of how international courts are becoming diplomatic battlegrounds. (*BBC News*)



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	

Jury selection begins in Sean ‘Diddy’ Combs sex trafficking trial

Nearly three dozen New Yorkers were questioned Monday about what they knew about the federal sex trafficking case against Sean “Diddy” Combs as jury selection got underway in a Manhattan courtroom.

Prospective jurors were also shown a list of more than 100 places and people whose names may come up at trial and were asked whether they knew any of the people and whether it would affect their ability to be impartial. The list included celebrities such as Michael B. Jordan, Mike Myers and Kanye West, none of whom are implicated in the case.

The names of women who have filed civil lawsuits against Combs also appeared on the list, including his former girlfriend Cassandra Ventura, whose suit paved the way for the sex trafficking and racketeering charges, and Dawn Richard, a member of two now-defunct musical groups Combs had formed.

Richard alleged in a suit filed last year that he had groped and threatened her and that she had witnessed him assaulting Ventura. Combs has denied her allegations, and her suit is pending.

The attorneys did not provide an explanation for the list, and representatives for Jordan, Myers and West did not immediately return requests for comment.

Also Monday, Assistant



U.S. Attorney Maurene Comey said prosecutors have had trouble getting in touch with the attorney for a woman identified only as Victim-3 in the indictment and that they were unsure whether she would show up to court even if they tried to enforce a subpoena.

Twelve jurors will ultimately decide whether Combs used his power and influence to sexually exploit women for more than two decades, as federal prosecutors allege in a five-count indictment.

A clean-shaven Combs, who has been detained at a federal prison in Brooklyn since his September 2024 arrest, arrived for the first day of jury selection dressed in a white collared shirt, black crewneck sweater and charcoal-colored pants.

U.S. District Judge Arun Subramanian gave Combs permission to wear his own clothes during the trial.

He hugged and shook hands with his attorneys before Subramanian issued various rulings, including that Dr. Elie Aoun, a clinical psychiatrist, can testify as an expert for the defense about drugs Combs may have taken and their combined effects. Subramanian said Aoun could also testify about blackouts and other episodes in which Combs may have been intoxicated.

At the heart of the government’s case are allegations that Combs forced women — including his former girlfriend Ventura — to participate in drug-fueled sexual encounters with male sex workers that Combs directed and filmed and called

“freak offs.”

The indictment does not name any victims, but the allegations of Victim-1 closely align with those Ventura made in a 2023 civil lawsuit that she and Combs settled within a day without him admitting any wrongdoing.

The public first learned about the alleged sexual encounters from her lawsuit, which alleged Combs had abused her for years. Combs has vehemently denied the allegations, and his attorneys have said the sex was consensual.

But prosecutors say those encounters amounted to sex trafficking and allege Combs kept recordings of the encounters and silenced victims through blackmail and violence.

Central to the prosecution’s case is a video from March

5, 2016, showing Combs attacking and dragging Ventura in a Los Angeles hotel hallway.

Prosecutors have said that Ventura, who was signed to Combs' music label as Cassie, had been trying to escape the hotel room and that the events of that day "are powerful evidence of trafficking" and of Combs' "use of force in connection with a freak off," which they allege preceded the assault. Combs was wearing only a towel in the video and Ventura did not have shoes on. After CNN aired the video last year, Combs apologized publicly, saying his behavior in it was "inexcusable" and that he took full responsibility for his actions.

According to prosecutors, Combs bribed hotel security with \$100,000 to obtain the footage and cover up what he had done. Combs' attorneys had sought to exclude the video from evidence, arguing it "is wholly inaccurate, having been altered,

manipulated, sped-up, and edited to be out of sequence" — claims CNN has forcefully denied.

When questioned by Subramanian on Monday, a number of prospective jurors said they had seen the video, with one woman referring to it as "damning." The woman was excused.

Another woman, who said she works for HBO, said she found the video "disturbing" and "upsetting" but that she could be impartial. Combs' lead attorney, Marc Agnifilo, expressed concern because HBO released a documentary about Combs titled "The Fall of Diddy" that the woman said she was unaware of.

After another prospective juror said she had been caught stealing a wand from a Harry Potter store, Combs nodded in apparent approval to his attorneys. Throughout the day, as potential jurors were questioned, he appeared to express his approval or disapproval, either

with a nod or by shaking his head no.

Another woman disclosed she had liked a video on social media of a comedian who made a joke about Combs and baby oil because she thought it was funny. Prosecutors have said that when Combs' homes in Los Angeles and Miami Beach, Florida, were raided last year, federal agents seized more than 1,000 bottles of baby oil and lubricant.

Both women were allowed to stay.

When the defense asked for a quick bathroom break, Subramanian suggested they wait and continue questioning jurors.

"I'm a machine," Subramanian said, to which Combs responded: "I'm sorry, your honor. I'm a little nervous today." Subramanian granted the break.

Subramanian said last week that he hoped to seat a jury of 12 people and six alternates in three days for the trial, which is expected to

last eight weeks. Defense attorney Teny Geragos told NBC News earlier Monday that she was confident they could choose a jury in three days.

Her father, high-profile defense lawyer Mark Geragos, was also in court Monday. "Can't I just watch my daughter? I'm a helicopter parent," he said jokingly as he entered court.

A source familiar with the case told NBC News that Mark Geragos will help throughout the trial in an unofficial role and will advise Combs' legal team this week on which jurors to choose. He was seen Monday in court conferring with the defense's jury consultant.

Mark Geragos had no further comment, and Combs' legal team did not respond to a request for comment.

The jurors will remain anonymous. (*NBC News*)



PDV Caribe
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THE PDV HOUR

MONDAYS
11AM - 12NOON

MRS. JELLETTE RALPH
(JELLY BEANS)

Sports News



Lions extend unbeaten run in Antigua T20 Premier League

The New Winthorpes Lions maintained their successful start to the inaugural Antigua and Barbuda T20 Premier League over the weekend.

The Lions won two more matches to record three wins in as many games to lead the six-team round-robin competition.

The New Winthorpes Lions beat Jennings Tigers by 41 runs at Ball Beef in Liberta on Sunday. Set 140 to win, the Jennings Tigers were restricted to 98 for nine off their 20 overs.

Dahri Francis top-scored with 32 off 22 balls, and fellow opener Shane Burton made 20 off 26 balls. Anthony Martin grabbed four for 13, Orandel Boston took three for 14, and captain Ian Eusebe captured two for 26.

The Lions made 139 for three off their 20 overs after winning the toss and opting to bat. Bartlette Henry hit an unbeaten 50 off 36 balls, Demari Benta struck 43 off 29 balls, and Eusebe made 21. Left-arm spinner Glenton Williams captured two for 15.

The New Winthorpes Lions snatched an 18-run victory against the All Saints Pythons at the same venue on Saturday. The Lions made 129 for three off 15 overs after being sent in to bat.

Bartlette Henry slammed 43 off 30 balls, Demari Benta hammered a run-a-ball 32, and captain Nino Henry hit 21 not out off 13 balls. Kadeem Josiah picked up two for 18.

In reply, the Pythons were restricted to 111 for eight off their 15 overs. Kenny Sutton struck 37 off 19 balls, and captain Kenrick Scott scored 30 off 22 balls.

Boston snapped up three for 13, Eusebe claimed two for 17, and pacer Nino Henry took two for 22.

PIC Insurance Liberta Blackhawks also made a successful start to the competition, winning their first two matches at Ball Beef over the weekend.

The Blackhawks defeated Empire Nation by eight wickets via the Duckworth/Lewis System (DLS) on a revised target on Sunday. Empire Na-



Bartlette Henry

tion was dismissed for 111 off their 20 overs.

J'Quan Athanaze hit 24 off 29 balls. Veteran left-arm spinner Kadeem Phillip took two for 12, Deran Benta claimed two for 13, Chamiqueko Landerfort picked up two for 16, and leg-spinner Hayden Walsh Jr. captured two for 20.

Set a revised target of 54 off eight overs, the Blackhawks achieved victory by scoring 54 for two in five overs. Hayden Walsh Jr. hit 22 not out off nine balls.

The Blackhawks defeated the Jennings Tigers by four wickets at Ball Beef in Liberta on Saturday.

Orlando Peters cracked 51 off 42 balls as the Tigers were dismissed for 109 in 18.3 overs after being sent in to bat. Skipper Rahkeem "Jimbo" Cornwall grabbed four for 14, and Chamiqueko Landerfort picked up three for 15.

The Blackhawks achieved victory at 112 for six in 14.4 overs. Hayden Walsh Jr. struck an unbeaten 53 off 34 balls, and Hilroy Andrew scored 23 off 18 balls. Shane Burton claimed two for eight, and Matthew Millers captured two for 36.

The All Saints Pythons claimed their first win in three matches by beating the Pigotts Crushers in the super over at the Pigotts playing field on Sunday.

The Crushers made eight for one in their super over, and the Pythons achieved victory by scoring 12 without losing a wicket. The match was



Michael Dover

decided by the super over after both teams finished with the same score at the end of their respective 20 overs.

Open Michael Hayne Dover scored the first century of the competition as the Pythons scored 163 for nine after winning the toss and opting to bat.

Dover hit an unbeaten 108 off 65 balls, including seven sixes and seven fours. Vishal Gobin bagged three for 18, skipper Kadeem Henry claimed two for 26, and Amahl Nathaniel picked up two for 28.

In reply, the Crushers made 163 for eight off their 20 overs. Kerry Mentore slammed 30 off 24 balls, Tron Payne and Kadeem Henry each made 28, and opener Uri Smith struck 23. Shaquan Reifer took three for 29, and Demetri Lucas claimed two for 31.

The Pigotts Crushers also recorded their first win in three matches when they defeated Empire Nation by seven wickets via the Duckworth/Lewis System (DLS) on a revised target.

Empire Nation made 145 for six off their 20 overs after being sent in to bat. Opener Tyrone Williams Jr. slammed 79 off 60 balls, and Tanez Francis hit 23 off 19 balls. Amahl Nathaniel claimed two for 13.

Set a revised target of 77 off nine overs, the Crushers achieved victory by scoring 79 for three off their allotted overs. Uri Smith hammered 45 off 24 balls, and left-arm seamer Yanique Watley captured two for 12.

Flyers, Steelers, and Da Project advance to semi-finals of Division 1 playoffs



League champions and top seed EZ Fit Flyers and second seed Total Imports EMC's Potters Steelers advanced to the semi-final stage of the Antigua and Barbuda Basketball Association's (ABBA) First Division playoffs on Sunday evening.

Both teams wrapped up their best-of-three first-round series 2-0 after surging to victories in Game 2 of their respective match-up at the JSC Sports Complex.

The Flyers soared to a commanding 110-56 victory against eighth-seed Northside Stingerz. Adonis Humphreys shot a game-high 30 points and grabbed 26 rebounds, and Selassie Brathwaite produced 18 points, nine rebounds, and five assists for the Flyers.

In support, Kwame Brathwaite converted 16 points and claimed six rebounds; Davis Hernandez sank 14 points; Russell Daley scored 12 points, and Xavier "X-Man" Meade chipped in with 11 points, 15 rebounds, and eight assists for the Flyers.

Te-Ran Zachariah sank 29 points and grabbed 10 rebounds, and Tristan Jacobs scored 11 points and claimed six rebounds for the Stingerz.

The Flyers pulled off a 108-56 victory against the Northside Stingerz in Game 1. Selassie Brathwaite shot a game-high 41 points and grabbed 10 rebounds; Adonis Humphreys sank 17 points and snatched 13 rebounds; Kenya Ahcom and Alexis Jackson each scored 11 points; and Xavier Meade chipped in with 10 points, eight rebounds, and seven assists for the Flyers.

Te-Ran Zachariah converted 19 points and claimed seven rebounds, and Theo Blair and Christopher Henry each scored nine points for the Stingerz.

The Potters Steelers prevailed 91-80 against seventh-seed Kennedy's Club Ottos Full Throttle. Devorn Benjamin shot a game-high 26 points; Keroi Lee converted 21 points and claimed 23 rebounds; Kareem Edwards sank 19 points and grabbed 11 rebounds; and Cohen Desouza also scored 19 points and snatched six rebounds for the Potters Steelers.

Shawn Williams sank 21 points and claimed five rebounds; Warren Bogle contributed 21 points and five assists; Akeem Davis scored 20 points and snatched seven rebounds; and Morlon Davis converted 12 points and grabbed 15 rebounds for Ottos Full Throttle.

The Potters Steelers recorded a 90-69 victory against the Ottos Full Throttle in Game 1.

Devorn Benjamin shot a game-high 30 points with seven rebounds and seven assists; Kareem Edwards sank 23 points and claimed six rebounds; Cohen Desouza converted 22 points and grabbed 12 rebounds; and Keroi Lee chipped in with 11 points, eight rebounds, and five as-

sists for the Potters Steelers.

Warren Bogle converted 23 points and claimed eight rebounds; Shawn Williams sank 18 points; and Akeem Davis scored 11 points and claimed five rebounds for the Ottos Full Throttle.

Third seed Da Project also wrapped up their best-of-three first-round series 2-0 against sixth seed Lava Smoke Shop Ottos Warriors. Da Project pulled off an 83-64 victory against the Ottos Warriors in Game 3 at the JSC Sports Complex on Saturday night.

T-Shawn Lewis sank 22 points and claimed seven rebounds; Sean Nicholas converted 20 points and grabbed 19 rebounds; and Terry Dawkins chipped in with 14 points, seven steals, and six rebounds for Da Project.

Faisal Obeidat sank 19 points and claimed seven rebounds, Kebo Orford converted 16 points and snatched six rebounds, and Michael Barton scored nine points and grabbed 16 rebounds for the Warriors.

However, the fifth seed Spanish Heat levelled their best-of-three first-round series 1-1 against fourth seed All Saints Slam.

Spanish Heat were awarded victory by default after All Saints Slam were unable to field a team for the second game of the series on Saturday.

All Saints Slam recorded a 94-64 victory against Spanish Heat in Game 1. Both teams will clash in the third and decisive Game 3 at the JSC Sports Complex on Thursday.

Sports News



Rainforest Rangers beat LI Thunder in CWI Breakout League



Jewel Andrew of Leeward Islands Thunders batsman gets bowled while Kemol Savory of Guyana Rainforest Rangers looks on during their match in the West Indies Breakout T20 League at the Brian Lara Cricket Academy Stadium in Tarouba, Trinidad and Tobago on Sunday, May 4, 2025. (CWI Med ia)

The Guyana Rainforest Rangers secured their first victory in the CWI Breakout League on Sunday with a commanding 52-run win over the Leeward Islands Thunder at the Brian Lara Cricket Academy.

Led by explosive batting from Kevlon Anderson and Ronaldo Alimohamed, and a clinical four-wicket haul from Riyadh Latiff, the Rangers outplayed their opponents in all departments to remain in strong contention for playoff qualification.

After being sent in to bat, Guyana posted an imposing 189 for five from their 20 overs. Anderson anchored the innings with a composed 52 from 45 balls, striking three fours and a six.

His 66-run third-wicket stand with Kevin Sinclair (39 off 24) laid a solid foundation after a rapid start from opener Rivaldo Clarke, who smashed 23 off 13 balls.

The innings reached its crescendo with Alimohamed's late onslaught—blasting 40 off just 20 deliveries, including three sixes and three fours.

His 45-run stand with Sinclair set the tone before a fiery cameo from Quentin Sampson (17 not out off 10 balls) pushed the Rangers to a competitive total. Elroy Francis and Michael Palmer were the pick of the Thunder's bowlers, both finishing with two wickets each.

In response, the Thunder never quite found their footing. Despite a promising start by Mikyle Louis (24 off 18) and Nathan Edward (28 off 32), wickets fell at regular intervals, halting any momentum.

The middle and lower order were rocked by Latiff's incisive spell, as he returned figures of four for 25 from his four overs.

Jediah Blades chipped in with two for 31 and Ashmead Nedd maintained the pressure with a miserly one for 18 from his four overs. The Thunder limped to 137 for eight at the end of their 20 overs, falling well short of the target.

It was the first loss in three four matches for the Leeward Islands Thunder. The Leeward Islands secured

their third successive win by pulling off a tense three-wicket victory over Trinidad and Tobago Legions on Friday night, and in doing so, dealt the tournament favourites their first defeat of the tournament.

In a contest that swung with every phase, it was Thunder's well-rounded performance — led by leg-spinner Micah McKenzie's devastating four for 25, and a trio of timely knocks from Kofi James (36), Jewel Andrew (47), and Giovonte Depeiza (32)—that made the difference.

They chased down the Legions' 151 for eight with three wickets and three overs to spare, finishing on 152 for seven in 17 overs to make it three wins from three.

Asked to bat first, the Legions looked to set the tone through the aggressive Amir Jangoo, who countered early losses with a fluent 52 off 39 balls, including five boundaries and two sixes. But around him, it was a procession.

The Thunder spinners, led by McKenzie, spun a web that the Legions could not escape. McKenzie removed Cephas Cooper (10), Kamil Pooran (six), Jangoo, and Navin Bidaisee (zero) in a match-defining burst. Earlier, Kofi James had made the breakthrough with the key scalp of Captain Joshua Da Silva for 15.

From 85 for five, the innings never truly recovered. Medium-fast bowler Cameron Pennyfeather chipped in with two wickets, including Mikel Govia (six) and McKenny Clarke (zero), while Elroy Francis accounted for the struggling Jyd Goolie (19).

At 114 for eight, a sub-150 score looked likely. But Johann Layne, with an unbeaten 22 off 10 balls, in a last-gasp show of power, clobbered three sixes in an entertaining cameo.

With support from Joshua James, who was also unbeaten on 13, the Legions scrambled to a total that gave their bowlers something to work with,

con't on pg 25

Joseph powers Leeward Islands women to victory over Jamaica

Qiana Joseph delivered a match-winning performance to lead the Leeward Islands Women to an emphatic eight-wicket victory over Jamaica in a rain-shortened encounter in the CWI T20 Blaze at the Arnos Vale Ground in Kingstown, St. Vincent, on Monday.

Opting to field first after winning the toss, the Leeward Islands restricted Jamaica to 48 for two in their allotted five overs. Jamaica's innings was anchored by Chinelle Henry, who remained unbeaten on 29 from 18 deliveries, while Chedean Nation contributed 11 not out.

The Leewards' bowlers kept the scoring in check, with Shawnisha Hector claiming the early wicket of Rashada Williams.

In response, the Leeward Islands faced early setbacks, losing two wickets for just 11 runs. However, Joseph's aggressive batting in which she struck an unbeaten 43 off just 19 balls, turned the tide.

She dominated the final over, particularly targeting



Qiana Joseph

Henry's bowling, to chase down the target in just 4.5 overs. Captain Amanda Edwards supported with a steady three not out.

It was the second successive win in three matches for the Leeward Islands women after suffering a seven-wicket loss against Guyana in their opening match of the regional T20 Blaze at the same venue last Thursday.

Shawnisha Hector and Qiana Joseph played valuable knocks as the Leeward Islands women earned their first win in the tournament by defeating Barbados women by six wickets on Saturday.

After sending Barbados in to bat at the Arnos Vale Playing Field, the Leeward Islands restricted their opponents to 95 for eight from their 20 overs.

Hector then scored 40, while Joseph made 34 to lead the Leewards to victory at 95 for four in 12.3 overs, as Barbados remain winless after losing their first two games.

The Leeward Islands used a balanced bowling attack to restrict Barbados' batters, who struggled to gain any momentum. Barbados also lost wickets at regular intervals, which further added to their woes, slipping from 23 for one to 50 for five in the 14th over.

Naijanni Cumberbatch tried her best to keep the innings together scoring a patient, unbeaten 22 from 30 balls, but she got little support from the other batters, with Kycia Knight needing 24 balls for her 14, while her twin sister Kyshona made 12 from 20 balls to be the next highest scorers.

Medium pacer Shawnisha Hector (two for 15) and off spinner Davronique Maynard (two for 16) were the Leeward Islands' best bowlers.

The Leeward Islands' run chase got off to a horrible start when Shamilia Connell had Melicia Clarke caught and bowled for a duck with one run on the board.

However, her departure brought Hector to the crease, and together with Joseph, they added 77 runs in nine overs to put the Leeward Islands in a dominant position.

And even though they both fell with the score on 78, the damage had already been done and they coasted to victory with 45 balls to spare.

con't from pg 24

but not enough breathing room against a confident Thunder lineup.

The Thunder reply began nervously, with the Legions striking twice in the powerplay to reduce the Leewards to 24 for two. But the experienced Kofi James and the enterprising Jewel Andrew stabilized the innings with a smart, calculated third-wicket partnership of 66 runs.

James, who struck three fours and two sixes in a breezy 23-ball 36, set

the tone, while Andrew, who laced four fours and three sixes in his 28-ball 47, threatened to take the game away completely.

When James fell to McKenny Clarke, Andrew followed soon after, caught off Johann Layne, leaving the Thunder at 115 for four, and though still in control, they had work to do.

However, Giovonte Depeiza stepped in with 32 off 24 balls, decorated with two boundaries and a six, as he carried the Thunder within touching distance

of victory at 145 for four in the 16th over.

Just as Thunder looked to cruise to a comfortable win, Navin Bidaisee engineered a late scare — removing Depeiza, trapping Anderson Mahase for a golden duck, and running out Karima Gore (11) in a sudden flurry that saw Thunder slip to 145 for seven.

But, with seven runs still required, Cameron Pennyfeather (six not out) and Elroy Francis (one) held their nerve to secure the win.

Sports

TUESDAY 6TH MAY 2025



English Harbour secures promotion to First Division

National Parks English Harbour has gained promotion from the Antigua and Barbuda Football Association's (ABFA) Second Division to compete in the First Division next season.

English Harbour achieved the feat after winning the three-team round-robin First and Second Division Playoff series.

English Harbour pulled off a 4-1 victory against Tryum FC in the final game at the ABFA Technical Center on Saturday.

Tryum started the game poorly, losing the services of Leroy Palmer, who was expelled after receiving a red card in the 15th minute. But Swayne Sawyer scored in the 20th minute to give Tryum a one-nil lead.

However, Delroy Simpson snatched an equalizer for English Harbour by scoring in the first minute of added time as both teams reached the interval deadlocked at 1-1.

English Harbour scored three more goals in the second half to secure victory and promotion to the First Division next season.

Akeem Weekes fired English Harbour ahead with a 67th-minute conversion, Shadaeki Fredericks struck in the 79th minute, and Nosakhare Edoleyi scored the final goal in the third minute of added time.

Tryum also lost another player when Mitchell Pryce received a red card and was sent off in the fifth minute of added time.

The result meant that English Harbour finished at the top of the standings with six points by virtue of winning their two matches. Tryum has been relegated to the Second Division after finishing at the bottom of the standings without any points by virtue of losing both of their matches.

Tryum lost 2-1 against Sea View



Players of the English Harbour football team

Farm, the other teams in the playoffs. English Harbour prevailed 2-1 against Sea View Farm in the opening match of the series.

However, the winner of the Premier and First Division playoff series is yet to be decided. The final match of that series is in dispute, and according to the ABFA, the matter has been sent to the association's disciplinary committee to resolve and rule on the outcome.

The dispute arose after First Division team Freeman's Village Scorpions failed to show up for the final match of the series against Premier Division side Attacking Saints at the ABFA Technical Center on Saturday.

The game was initially slated to be played at the same venue on Thursday, May 1, but was postponed due to rainy weather conditions. It was rescheduled by the ABFA to be played on Saturday, May 3.

However, it is alleged that the Scorpions made an initial application for the match to be rescheduled to allow their players to attend a function. However, the application was denied by the ABFA since it did not meet the criteria for the ABFA to grant the request.

However, the request would still be

able to be facilitated by the ABFA if the opposing team, Attacking Saints, agree to postpone the match on Saturday.

The Attacking Saints denied the request because they claim some of their overseas-based players were due to travel shortly, and postponing the match to a later date will not allow them to field their strongest team.

It is alleged that after being denied by the Attacking Saints, the Scorpions wrote to the ABFA asking that the match be postponed on Saturday due to the unavailability of some of their players due to work commitments.

The ABFA maintained their position and allowed the match to proceed according to the schedule. Attacking Saints showed up for the match on Saturday, but the Scorpions were a no-show.

The winner of the dispute will compete in the Premier Division next season. Both teams entered Saturday's scheduled final match with identical records after each side recorded 4-1 wins against SAP FC, the other side that contested the three-team round-robin playoff.