



YEAR in REVIEW 2022



JANUARY

The country recorded its first murder for 2022, when a 13-year-old girl succumbed to stab wounds to the chest, reportedly inflicted by an 18-year-old girl on New Year's Day. The Collective Prevention Services (CPS) issues a call to retired or available nurses to assist with COVID-19 source and contact tracing.

--The Inspectorate of Public Health of the Ministry of Public Health, Social Development and Labor VSA warns against the illegal practices of commercial rapid antigen COVID test sites, and the sale of antigen COVID self-tests.

--Claudius "Toontje" Buncamper, who was elected on the United St. Maarten Party (US Party) slate but later declared himself an independent Member of Parliament (MP), has been suspended as an MP -- and Parliament has started procedures to comply with provisions to appoint a substitute member.

--The White and Yellow Cross Care Foundation (WYCCF) seeks volunteers to assist with the care of its clients, as it is confronted with a staffing shortage due to the surge in positive coronavirus COVID-19 cases.

--The School Board for Secondary Education SVOBE has moved to online classes effective Monday, January 10, given the rise in COVID-19 cases on its campuses.

--The paediatric Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine is now



The CPS COVID-19 testing centre saw a significant surge in demand on January 3 resulting in serious back-up traffic stretching from Sucker Garden Road into Hope Estate.

available to all children in St. Maarten. (TEATT) is looking into different sources for food should a pandemic-related shortage affect the country.

--The Ministry of Tourism, Economic Affairs, Transport and Telecommunication --Party for Progress (PPF)



The emergency road repairs on Front Street started on Wednesday, January 5.



Staff and sponsors raise a glass to the 25th anniversary of Helping Hands Foundation.

MPs Melissa Gumbs and Raeyhon Peterson renew their call for government to establish an official poverty line, as well as the cost-of-living adjustment (COLA).

--The St. Maarten Carnival Development Foundation (SCDF) says, "We remain on" for Carnival 2022. "We are confident in our extensive protocols for Carnival and believe that we are still in a good place to deliver to you an amazing event."

--Subsidised school boards decline to meet with Minister of Education Rodolphe Samuel until he addresses written requests to discuss cost-cutting measures.

--St. Maarten-based casino owner Francesco Corallo, also known as "King of the Slots", is suing an Israeli spyware company and related entities for allegedly conspiring with his native country Italy and the Netherlands as part of what he claims is a year's long persecution campaign that led to his unjust prosecution for tax fraud, bribery and money laundering.

--US Party MP Chanel Brownbill says he is now more focussed and ready to work in the best interest of the people of St. Maarten now that he is back in the legislature.

--Independent MP Christophe Emmanuel says a dossier of complaints and allegations made by Princess Juliana International Airport (PJIA) now-suspended Chief Operations Officer (COO) Michel Hyman against the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and the supervisory board SBOD of operating company PJIAE was submitted to the Council of Ministers and the President of Parliament in June 2019.

--St. Maarten Bankers Association express willingness to take steps to ease the process of opening bank accounts in the country, but warn that simplifying the process won't entirely solve the issue as many undocumented persons in the country want to open accounts.

--Public Health Minister Omar Ottley confirms a reduction in the self-isolation period for asymptomatic persons from 10 to seven days, in a decision he says could help address current staffing issues.

--A PPF proposal to suspend the handling of the draft 2022 budget to after



Young police officers did their part to spruce up the nation's capital by painting a mural on Front Street on Friday, January 14.



Twelve St. Martiners are featured in "Stories of St. Martin".



MP Raeyhon Peterson, MP Sarah Wescot-Williams and MP Christophe Emmanuel held a joint press conference to share their concerns about the budget for 2022.

the next Kingdom Council of Ministers meeting, where a decision is expected on St. Maarten's request for a deviation from the budget norm, was voted down by a majority in Parliament.

--Parliament approves a motion tabled by National Alliance (NA) MP Angelique Romou for motorists, who are late with paying their motor vehicle tax, to be fined instead of losing their licence plates.

--Dossier containing complaints and allegations made by PJIA's now-

suspended COO Michel Hyman against the company's SBOD and its CEO Brian Mingo raises questions about the state of corporate governance at the nation's gateway.

--To prevent air traffic controllers from stopping air traffic again, PJIA Operating Company NV asks the Court of First Instance in preliminary proceedings to prohibit Windward Islands Civil Servants Union/Private Sector Union (WICSU/PSU) from launching another strike.

FEBRUARY

The Immigration and Border Protection Services (IBP), the St. Maarten Police Force KPSM, Customs St. Maarten and the Inspectorates of the Ministries of Tourism, Economic Affairs, Transport and Telecommunication (TEATT) and Public Health, Social Development and Labor VSA carry out multidisciplinary joint controls for residence and work permits, illegal substances and business licences. Dutch State Secretary of Kingdom Relations and Digitisation Alexandra van Huffelen tour several St. Maarten Trust Fund projects.

--Daniella Engelhardt is sworn in as a clerk in the Joint Court of Justice.

--The Simpson Bay Bridge is past its life cycle and internal discussions are currently underway on the viability of changing the bridge, says Port St. Maarten Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Alexander Gumbs.

--Funtopia Youth Initiative (FYI) Foundation announces that it is one of the 13 recipients in the third round of funding provided by Resources for Community Resilience R4CR Trust Fund.

--Political authorities – Ministers and Members of Parliament (MP) – who are currently receiving redundancy pay are almost completely paid, Finance Minister Ardwell Irion says during the debate on the draft 2022 budget.

--St. Maarten Police Force KPSM re-implemented its patrolling in school districts to curb school-related fights.

--With less than two weeks to go before the February 28 deadline, the payment of 2022 motor vehicle tax (informally called road tax) continues to move at a snail's pace.

--The Integrity Chamber

has advised Minister of Public Housing, Spatial Planning, Environment and Infrastructure VROMI Egbert Doran to critically assess the conditions in the draft long-lease land policy to ensure that they are not unnecessarily (dis) advantageous or creating biases within the process.

--Even though she says she is not yet ready to bid farewell to the Prosecutor's Office OM of St. Maarten and the island itself, Chief Prosecutor Mirjam Mol reached the end of her three-year term.

--An official portrait of Governor Eugene Holiday, painted by portrait artist Alfredo Doornkamp, was unveiled during a ceremony at John Larmonie Center.

--An assessment will be



The St. Maarten Police Force KPSM disposed of all confiscated narcotics products in a joint cooperation with other judicial departments.



Ministers of education from Curaçao, Aruba, St. Maarten and the Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture and Science OCW work together to strengthen teacher training in the Caribbean part of the kingdom.



The management of Discovery Kidz Day Care Center talking about renovations to the building that were made possible through the R4CR project, to NRPB Director Claret Connor, Prime Minister Silveria Jacobs, VROMI Minister Egbert Doran, Dutch State Secretary of Kingdom Relations and Digitisation Alexandra van Huffelen, and R4CR's Rolf Hunink, during Van Huffelen's tour of several St. Maarten Trust Fund projects.



Philipsburg Promotional Board (PPB) representatives Lydia Arnell and Valentin Davis stand by the vision board outlining PPB's vision for the country's capital.

done on the cost of living in St. Maarten and its impact and discussions will be had on the 12.5 per cent cuts to determine how it can be "bearable" for those affected and fair for parties, indicated Dutch State Secretary of Kingdom Relations and Digitisation Alexandra van Huffelen.

--The St. Maarten Police Force KPSM confiscated marijuana-laced cookies at a high school.

--MPs question the draft policy for the issuance of long-lease land presented by Minister of Public Housing, Spatial Planning, Environment and Infrastructure VROMI Egbert Doran.

--The Public Health Inspectorate is advising against the use of certain powdered infant formula following recall from the United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

--Six MPs walked out of a public meeting in Parliament on Wednesday, February 23, forcing Chairperson of Parliament Grisha S.

Heyliger-Marten to adjourn the meeting on long lease land policy until further notice.

--The Committee for Financial Supervision CFT says the financial situation of the country's healthcare funds is unsustainable and urges St. Maarten to address the situation.

--Prime Minister Silveria Jacobs has called "highly premature" the resubmission of the petition on behalf of the Parliament of St. Maarten to the United Nations' Special Rapporteur on Contemporary

Forms of Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, and the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent.

--United Democrats (UD) MP Sarah Wescot-Williams says that the governing coalition is showing clear signs of cracks and that this is coming at a time when the country needs a strong voice.

--Government has thrown its support behind the decision of St. Maarten Heineken Regatta organisers to suspend the participation of teams registered as Russian and Belarusian.



Community Police Officer Richards and Inspector Muller from the Juvenile and Morals Department met with school managers on Friday, February 18, to discuss recent fights, drugs and weapons in high schools.



Minister of VROMI Egbert Doran attended the ground-breaking yesterday of the much-anticipated Village at the Border at Bethlehem Estate commissioned by Bethlehem Real Estate Development, with design by ICE and infrastructure by Windward Roads.

MARCH

St. Maarten Innovations, Initiatives and Industries Link-Up Event featured an Estonian expert on culture tourism, the St. Maarten Chamber of Commerce and Industry on its new services, including its B2B connect platform, and 360° of Innovation from Aruba and M&N Media Group from the Netherlands on the film "WOW!" in the making, about the unique natural world of the Caribbean part of the Kingdom. There was broad-based

relaxation of COVID restrictions and Carnival took place, but drivers' propensity for severe accidents continued. With the cyberattack on GEBE, cybersecurity was revisited. Women were celebrated by various organisations for International Women's Day.

--One SXM Association called on the legislature for a referendum on independence for St. Maarten. Most Members



Numbers of motorists turned up to the old Receiver's Building from early morning to collect their 2022 number plates. The first in line was said to have arrived at 2:11 am and slept in his vehicle until dawn.

of Parliament present agreed the people should be consulted.

--With the government of St. Maarten's full support, the St. Maarten Heineken Regatta suspended Russian and Belarusian teams' participation due to Russia's hostilities in Ukraine.

--SXM DOET saw over 1,000 volunteers completing 98 projects focussed on gardening and agriculture, murals for schools and day cares, social outings with

vulnerable youth, the elderly and the differently abled, and upkeep of playgrounds and sports facilities.

--The St. Maarten Recovery, Reconstruction and Resilience Trust Fund Steering Committee allocated US \$90 million more to social housing, waste management, wastewater services and sports facilities. It recognised work towards rehabilitating Princess Juliana International Airport, upgrading St. Maarten Medical Center, building St. Maarten General Hospital and repairing shelters, police stations, homes and schools, plus safely removing 149 shipwrecks and cleaning up over 10 kilometres of shoreline.

--After a near 90% drop in COVID numbers, mask restrictions for public transportation were lifted, leaving it up to drivers to decide what measures to apply in their vehicles.

--Utilities company GEBE closed its offices after its systems were crippled by a "Black Byte" ransomware attack.

--The prices of gas and diesel fuel increased for the fourth time in eight weeks,



Active member in the community and celebrated author Gerard Van Veen, perhaps best known for "Schoolboy in Wartime – Memories of my early years", passed away at the age of 88. Originally from the Netherlands, Van Veen lived in St. Maarten from 1983. attributed by government to "ongoing developments internationally, in particular Russia's invasion of Ukraine."

--US Consul General to the Dutch Caribbean, Margy Bond paid her first visit to St. Maarten since taking up her three-year position based in Curaçao, in January.

--Local graphic designers/artists were invited to design the final number plate that motorists will use before the country switches to a Quick Response (QR)

code sticker system.

--Interested parties situated close to District 721 in Simpson Bay aired their objections at a meeting with government on the entertainment venue's request to increase its sound level to 75-80 decibels and for a later closing time of 4:00am.

--The Integrity Chamber said the amendment to cut its NAF. 2.4 million annual grant to a level closer to what other High Councils of State receive, would severely impact its functioning.

--Although the US Customs and Border Protection said it would not proceed with US pre-clearance with St. Maarten for now "due to budgetary constraints coupled with current national security priorities", Prime Minister Silveria Jacobs said government would continue preparing for it.

--"No entity should have the power to execute, supervise and control itself in a democracy," said United St. Maarten Party leader Pamela Gordon-Carty, urging government to go back to the drawing board regarding the proposed Caribbean Body for Reform and Development.



Family and friends of young murder victim Jordiano J. Bakmeijer held a March for Justice in Philipsburg, on the second anniversary of his death at the hands of shooter J.B., then 16, incensed that B. escaped with psychiatric treatment instead of prison time and wanting him to be tried now as an adult.



Motorworld launched its first fully-electric vehicle – the Hyundai Kona, said to be incredibly efficient, with features like regenerative braking that allows you to capture the energy that is already in motion.



The world's largest cruise ship, Royal Caribbean's Fifth Oasis Class "Wonder of the Seas" made its inaugural port call. At 1,188 feet long and 210 feet wide, she can carry over 6,000 guests. Occupancy numbers at the time averaged around 45-50%.



SHOWME Caribbean launched an interactive map for St. Maarten during the St. Maarten Innovations, Initiatives and Industries Link-Up Event. An online presentation of St. Maarten, it shows hotels, activities, restaurants and more, allowing visitors to explore the island pre-visit and during their stay on a mobile version.

APRIL

Wrangling over the draft Caribbean Body for Reform and Development COHO law, highly disliked by Members of Parliament, and the new Media Policy, to which the media strongly objected, dominated the discussion, along with scrutiny of the Kingdom Charter and the democratic deficit, while the public enjoyed a successful staging of Carnival. Financial supervision was prolonged due to budgets neither balanced nor properly prepared for 2018-2020. Earth Day saw Minister Omar Ottley celebrating with Green Learning Academy and Prime Minister Silveria Jacobs challenging

everyone to reduce their use of products that harm the environment. Vacation exchange network Interval renewed its affiliation with Dawn Beach Club and Party for Progress demanded answers on the failed Dutch Quarter Sewerage Project. St. Maarten Consumers Coalition said retirement should be voluntary and registered opposition to new prescription medication legislation that increased prescription cost.

--Musical Minds Global, represented in St. Maarten by Sneh Damaris, celebrated the Hindu New Year Chetichand and the



Vineyard Office Park owners Andre Bolhuis (left) and Rene Wisman cut the ribbon to launch Ecoplant – a sun-tracing solar system that generates energy to power homes and charge electric cars, for example.



Investigation revealed that thousands of garbage-fed pigs on the Bell family's property in Cay Bay and elsewhere are bred and slaughtered in squalid conditions for black market sale, unhampered by any regulations.



Helmich Snijders Hillside Christian School pupil Jadya (12) won SXM Against Littering's sign competition with slogan "Stopping pollution is the best solution". Banners were placed at two primary schools and a supermarket.

Holi festival with a virtual Bollywood musical show.

--Teachers, community leaders and parents attended Student Support Services Division's workshop on anxiety and depression in youth and their impact on the individual and the family.

--Minister of Public Health, Social Development and Labor Omar Ottley requested of the Council of Ministers, indexation of the hourly minimum wage for 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2021, following the 1% indexation of 2020. He said more than 35,000 persons would benefit.

--CATC-HCC Accounting and Advisory Firm marked its 50th anniversary doing business in St. Maarten with a firm-wide celebration and donated a cheque to Mental Health Foundation.

--Quality Sweepers recycled cardboard and plastics for the first time as it cleaned and removed garbage for St. Maarten Carnival.

--The Traffic Department issued 204 fines for various infractions and had 46 vehicles towed for non-payment of road tax.

--Cyber security expert Roy Richardson addressed Members of Parliament on protection from cyber threats, in the wake of the crippling March ransomware attack against NV GEBE. Stating that data is digital cash, he recommended ongoing security awareness training for every employee from the top down and stressed the importance of backing up in the "cloud".

--Government gave the media two weeks to respond to its Media Accreditation Policy 2022. The policy required journalists to reapply for a press pass yearly, excluded lobbyists,



Prime Minister Silveria Jacobs (centre) cut the ribbon at the Sol-branded Causeway Service Station, one of three rebranded, while Sol General Manager Robert-Jan James (left) and Causeway and Simpson Bay Service Stations dealer Macressa Simon assisted.



First-time booth holder Mark Hylton ("the Bearded Cook") (centre) won the Village Cook-Up with a crispy shrimp appetizer followed by stewed chicken with rice and peas, all with Maggi seasoning. Hylton won US \$500, a cooking-gas voucher and a free booth for Carnival 2023. Maggi brand rep Graciella Zimmerman (right) and Cook-Up Coordinator Vida Boirard presented him his trophy.

HCS, Wilhelm Helmich Snijders, who passed away on Good Friday.

--Member of Parliament George Pantophlet said St. Maarten has to do its part in collecting available revenues to deal with its internal debts. "Asking the Dutch government to cancel our debt while not doing our part is being irresponsible."

--Dr. Marlon Halley was decorated as Knight in the Order of Oranje Nassau for his contributions to Catholic education in St. Maarten.

--The Paramedic Association St. Maarten (PASM) released a new sign and sticker to identify its members so persons may easily see who has met the mandatory quality requirements.

consultants and journalists who are civil servants from attending the Council of Ministers press briefing; required "The Honourable" in addressing ministers; and that journalists be scanned by a metal detector before entering the briefing.

--Prime Minister Silveria Jacobs urged Parliament to propose amendments to the draft law on the Caribbean Body for Reform and Development COHO. Her concerns included that reforms were linked to liquidity support; the Committee for Financial Supervision would have additional powers; and insufficient addressing of capacity-building and the democratic deficit.

--Management, teachers and staff of Hillside Christian Schools (HCS) bade farewell to founder and President of the Supervisory Council for



Royanna Baly made history as the first known St. Maarten-born person to be Deputy Prosecutor in the country.

MAY

A combination of issues made the news in June from the sad passing of local icon Acting Governor Reynold Groeneveldt to the renaming of the St. Maarten Festival Village in honour of the late Jocelyn Arndell. Here is a sneak peek into what made headlines.

--The St. Maarten Festival Village was renamed in honour of Jocelyn Arndell in an official ceremony held on May 3. The small ceremony was held at the entrance of the village where the new signage was unveiled.

--The court ordered Minister of Public Health, Social Development and Labour VSA, Omar Ottley, to allow two individual healthcare professionals, whose licences he revoked, to act as BIG-registered psychiatrists, to work in St. Maarten as owner and treating doctors at the new healthcare institution PsyCare BV in Cay Hill. The ruling was made in the case of Dr. Ilse Kelbrick-Furstenburg and Dr. Hendrik Nijdam

against the VSA Minister and, simultaneously, but not merged, in the case of PsyCare BV against the VSA Minister.

--Government sent a letter to State Secretary for Kingdom Relations and Digitisation Alexandra van Huffelen with a proposal to remove the 12.5 per cent reduction in employment benefits of civil servants and persons employed at (semi-) public sector entities. The cuts, which went into effect in 2020, were part of agreements made with the Dutch government in exchange for liquidity support.

--A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed between VSA Minister Omar Ottley and Royal Caribbean Group's (RCG's) Regional Vice President of Government Relations Wendy McDonald for citizens to access up to 1,000 jobs aboard Royal Caribbean cruise ships. The big fanfare over the signing did not match the poor reaction to the opportunity by citizens.

--Parliament approved changes to several tax laws to allow the World Bank and Inter Governmental Organisations (IGOs) that

operate in the country to have their assets, income, activities and transactions exempt from a number of taxes in accordance with international agreements and treaties.

--A 20-year-old man was shot dead on Back Street near Kruythofsteeg. The way in which the victim died suggests that it was a liquidation. Witnesses heard only a single gunshot. The victim was behind the wheel of a parked car.

--Creating a floating farm and a "Fun Pond" attraction in the Great Salt Pond and an Orton botanical garden and aquarium in the Simpson Bay Lagoon are proposals that businessman Louis Engel believes government can explore in an effort to generate substantial income, attract more tourists and help St. Maarten to become more self-sufficient. Engel outlined the details of his proposals to Parliament in May.

--St. Maarten was plunged into mourning when news spread that Acting Governor Attorney at law Reynold Amando Groeneveldt passed away suddenly. Many indicated that his passing represented a significant loss for the country.

--United People's (UP) party supporter and former board member Armand Meda submitted a petition to the party calling for an extraordinary congress to be held as soon as possible to address the leadership of the party.

--Eight more conditions were proposed by the Dutch government for the removal of the 12.5 per cent solidarity cuts in employment benefits of civil servants and (semi-) public sector entities, and while government has no issue with some of them, some can delay the "de-escalation" of the cuts.

--Utilities company GEBE announced in May that it will be reopening its doors to physically accept payments as of Monday, June 6, and while consumers will be issued three bills at the same time, payment arrangements can be made and there will be no disconnections until further notice and no late fees will be applied.

--The Medical Disciplinary Board has been requested to remove psychiatrist Dr. Kitty Pelswijk from her authority to practice medicine. The court-regulated board acknowledged receipt of the complaint on May 16.



A man was shot and killed on Back Street in May while in the driver's seat of this parked car.



UP faction member and supporting board member Alston Lourens (left) accepts a petition from UP supporter and former board member Armand Meda, who called for a congress to be held.



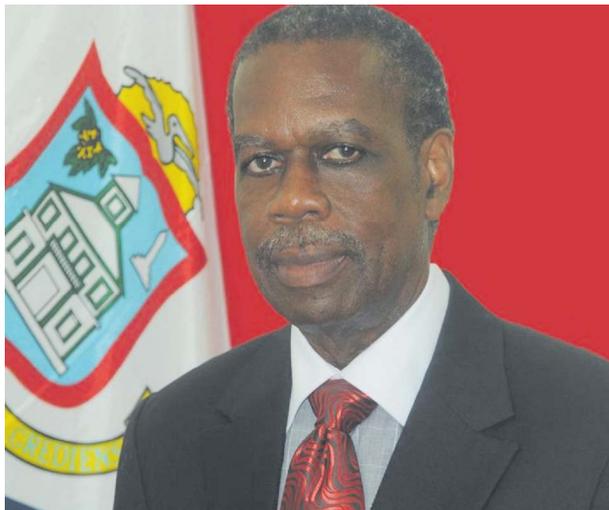
Royal Caribbean Group's Regional Vice President of Government Relations Wendy McDonald and VSA Minister Omar Ottley signing an MOU for jobs aboard RCG's ships for citizens.



Jocelyn Arndell Festival Village renamed signage at the village's entrance.

Pelswijk was in charge of the medical treatment of his wife Lelia. Two persons entered the elderly couple's home on May 29, around 5:00am. Lelia Manning woke up and heard the burglars entering the house on Thrush Road in Pointe Blanche. The shock and panic caused by the home invasion led to a massive heart attack, which caused the woman's death.

--An early morning robbery at the residence of retired Judge of Instruction Wilfred Manning in Pointe Blanche



The late Acting Governor attorney at law Reynold Groeneveldt, who passed away suddenly in May.



GEBE officials after announcing that the company would be reopening on June 6, following the March 17 black byte ransomware attack. From left: GEBE IT Department representative Leandro Amarello; GEBE board representative Dimar Labega; GEBE IT Department representative Cintje Milangelo; Commercial Manager Iris Arrindell; Acting Temporary Manager Dr. Sharine Daniel; Aurora InfoTech official Roy Richardson and GEBE Public Relations Officer Paula Gordon.



An aerial view of the Philipsburg (Ellinger Paul photo).

JUNE

The funeral of the late Acting Governor Reynold Amando Groeneveldt, a deadly car accident, the return of COPA Airlines, issues related to utilities company GEBE which reopened after its cyber-attack and updates related to the St. Maarten Trust Fund were among the topics making the news his month.

--Acting Governor, the late Reynold Amando Groeneveldt, was laid to rest at the Mount Pleasant Methodist Cemetery in Philipsburg in June

following a solemn ceremony at the Philipsburg Methodist Church. Then Governor Eugene Holiday described Groeneveldt as a champion of the country's constitution.

--Two persons lost their lives following a late-night collision on Union Road in Cole Bay in mid-June. Dead are a four-year-old girl and a man; both of whom were in different vehicles. Reports indicate that a woman driving a black Kia Forte had overtaken another vehicle heading in the direction of Philipsburg. This happened



A bird's eye view of a section of the Pond Island area showing part of the affected area of impact of the Philipsburg landfill whose residents have to permanently relocate for the Emergency Debris Management Project (EDMP) to be executed.



Mourners paying their last respects to the late Acting Governor attorney Reynold Amando Groeneveldt.



Customers at GEBE on June 6, when it reopened its doors after its March 17 cyber-attack, which rendered its systems inoperable.

at the same time a grey Suzuki Vitara was coming from the opposite direction, resulting in the collision. The passenger and two drivers were all extricated from the car wreckage. All three were rushed to the SMMC in critical condition. The little girl and the driver of the grey Vitara later died at the hospital as a result of their injuries and the woman was admitted in critical condition.

--The St. Maarten Trust Fund will have to fork out a projected US \$12.5 million to resettle the 141 households and businesses that live and operate in the area of impact of the Philipsburg landfill that have to permanently relocate in order for the Emergency Debris Management Project (EDMP) to be implemented. Of the \$12.5 million, \$6.5 million will be to compensate those who have to be resettled.

--Copa Airlines returned to St. Maarten in June after a two-year interruption of flights. The return was marked by a festive ceremony held at PJIA.

--VSA Minister Omar Ottley issued a ministerial decree for healthcare institution PsyCare BV and two BIG-registered psychiatrists. Owner of PsyCare BV is Dr. Ilse Kelbrick-Fürstenburg, specializing in psychiatric disorders and dementia in elderly patients, as well as mental disorders in children and adolescents. Second applicant, Dr. Hendrik Nijdam, has an affinity with forensic psychiatry.

--GEBE reopened its doors on June 6, following its March 17 ransomware attack. The opening was marred by a minor setback with printing of physical utility bills. Customers later received exorbitant bills, which GEBE subsequently apologized for.



Government and the World Bank signed a US \$26.8 million grant agreement for the Fostering Resilient Learning Project. Sitting from left: St. Maarten Minister of Education, Culture, Youth, and Sport Rodolphe Samuel; St. Maarten NRPB Director Claret Connor; World Bank Director of Caribbean Countries Lilia Burunciuc; St. Maarten Prime Minister Silveria Jacobs.



The Trust Fund Steering Committee after a sit down with The Daily Herald in June: From left: Former Dutch State Secretary Frans Weekers (Netherlands), World Bank Country Director for the Caribbean Countries Lilia Burunciuc (World Bank) and former St. Maarten Prime Minister Marcel Gumbs (St Maarten).



Copa Airlines' return to St. Maarten in June was celebrated during a festive ceremony at the airport. From left: Cultural performers, Captain Marcelo Gallino and Copa Airlines crew, Vice President Valerie Damaseau, Minister of VSA Omar Ottley, more Copa Airlines crew members, Management of Halley Aviation Services, Ariana and Priscilla Halley and St. Maarten Tourist Bureau Representative Gianira Arrindell.

--VROMI Minister Egbert Doran told Parliament subsequently that no in-depth audits were conducted

on GEBE's IT network and that the audits will have to be outsourced.



One of the vehicles involved in the crash that claimed the lives of two persons in mid-June.

--Government and the World Bank signed a US \$26.8 million grant agreement for the Fostering Resilient Learning Project, which aims to rebuild the Sister Marie Lawrence and Charles Leopold Bell schools, reconstruction of the Philipsburg Jubilee Library, and to strengthen government's management information system for the Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth and Sport.

--Government instituted a relief on gas prices, which went into effect on June 21, giving consumers a little ease at the pumps over several months. The relief saw consumers saving approximately NAf. 15 cents per litre on gas. The relief was for a maximum period of six months and ended in December.

--St. Maarten Harbour Group of Companies Former Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Mark Mingo was acquitted on appeal of falsifying invoices and fraud at Port St. Maarten. Co-defendants O'Neal Arrindell and parliamentarian Frans Richardson have both been sentenced to unconditional prison terms.

--While the projects being implemented under the St. Maarten Trust Fund are progressing to the satisfaction of the Steering Committee, it has not escaped the challenges facing the construction sector worldwide and does not rule out potential budget overruns on its projects. The Trust Fund has, however, made clear that there are sufficient resources to cover any potential overruns. World Bank Country Director for the Caribbean Countries Lilia Burunciuc addressed the issue during a June sit down with *The Daily Herald*, along with fellow Steering Committee members former Dutch State Secretary Frans Weekers (Netherlands) and former St. Maarten Prime Minister Marcel Gumbs (St. Maarten).

JULY

Political conflict soared in the month of July. After Member of Parliament Ludmila Duncan decided to break with the National Alliance, the weakened governing coalition approached Members of Parliament Akeem Arrindell and Chanel Brownbill. Prime Minister Silveria Jacobs and leader of the United People's Party MP Rolando Brison, stated that "it was decided to explore discussions with other MPs to see whether there is a feasible option

to strengthen the coalition in the interest of stability and continuity."

MP Wescot-Williams (Democratic Party) called the political developments "an embarrassment" and "a sham". She fiercely criticized the coalition that issued "a hastily put together and poorly worded agreement, trying to secure their efforts to strengthen the coalition's dwindling numbers". The MP said she is "utterly disappointed in the Prime Minister of St. Maarten who,

for the sake of holding on to that office, accepted this type of political horse trading."

Meanwhile, VROMI Minister Egbert Doran was accused by independent Member of Parliament Christophe Emmanuel of using the summer recess of Parliament "to attack everything and everyone that calls his accountability to the forefront". The Minister of VROMI and the entire government are said to have made it a political tactic to attack any institution that makes their accountability possible, from the press to Parliament.

The Annual Report of the common Court of Curaçao, Aruba, St. Maarten and the BES islands showed that in one year (2021), the number of civil service cases in St. Maarten doubled; twice as many people and organizations that had a conflict with the Government of St. Maarten asked the administrative court to rule on this. The number of criminal cases related to violent crimes decreased by 25 percent.

--On July 5, new President of the common Court of Curaçao, Aruba, St. Maarten and the BES islands, Maurits de Kort, presented the Annual Report 2021. Entitled "Retrospectus pro future" (Looking back for the future), the annual report provides a review of the court's 10 years as an independent entity since 2010 in charge of the case law on six islands.

--Prime Minister Jacobs announced that government has plans in place to address pertinent issues related to electoral reform: "To accommodate electoral form in its broadest



The 2022 licence plate, featuring the Walter Plantz Square, was in high demand. By mid-July, 31,665 pairs of license plates had been sold. This is an increase of almost 2,800 compared to the previous year.

sense by addressing the participation of new parties in snap elections, allowing them more time to meet the various thresholds to participate in an election, whether the election is called on short notice or generally."

--After employment of almost 30 years, Michel Hyman's career at Princess Juliana International Airport Operating Company PJIAE came to an end. The court found the former Chief Operations Officer (COO) guilty of gross neglect of duty and violation of the 2017 Service Agreement with PJIAE to which he owed his appointment as COO. On October 22, 2021, Hyman was arrested on suspicion of fraud related to clean-up and repair works at the airport after Hurricane Irma in 2017.

--On July 13, Minister of Housing, Spatial Planning, Environment and Infrastructure VROMI Egbert Doran escaped facing a motion of no-confidence that was going to be tabled by Party for Progress (PPF). Two governing coalition members walked out of the public meeting, resulting in lack of quorum for the meeting to proceed.

--Addressing the walkout by two coalition MPs. Party for Progress MP Raeyhon Peterson said no

to smear MP Peterson, using "the minutes" from the meeting with Alegria. "I am a politician just like you. I can use this now to discredit you 100%. And it will work," Doran can be heard saying. "I know that this don't carry no weight, but this is what works in our society," the Minister said, without knowing at the time that he was being recorded.

--Alegria Real Estate NV, Morgan Resort's owner, publicly stated that it "emphatically rejected" any connection between Minister Doran's "political struggles" and Alegria's water rights, and said it considered legal action, including filing a criminal complaint for false accusations. Doran wrongfully tried to link a motion of no confidence against him to the neglect by VROMI under three ministers, the company said.

--While the back and forth between Doran and Peterson dominated the news on the island, the Kingdom Council of Ministers RMR postponed a decision about new liquidity support for St. Maarten. The Dutch government wanted additional advice about the vacation payment for civil servants. St. Maarten requested liquidity support of NAF. 14 million for the third quarter of 2022.

--St. Maarten was recorded among 22 worst offenders in fighting human trafficking. The government is not making significant efforts to meet the minimum standards for the elimination of human trafficking, according to the United States of America Department of State Trafficking in Persons Report. St. Maarten was downgraded to level 3, the worst ranking.



"Our fight continues", said Prime Minister Silveria Jacobs in her Emancipation Day speech, on July 1, commemorating the abolition of slavery, 159 years prior. "We are often asked why we continue to remember the period of enslavement, since it was so long ago and such a brutal and traumatic experience. I personally will never forget, especially as our fight continues. It is part of who we are."



The 25th anniversary ceremony of the Volunteer Corps St. Maarten VKS was held on Saturday, July 2. Prime Minister Silveria Jacobs congratulated the VKS and at the same time welcomed Alain Richardson, who was sworn in as Commander. Jacobs commended the VKS on its achievements in the 25 years of its existence. "You have had and continue to have a profound impact on our community," the PM said.



Florida-Caribbean Cruise Association (FCCA) added the private yacht-style cruise line Windstar as an FCCA member, while the association planned to work with cruise destinations to create more immersive and authentic experiences for cruise passengers. "Along with endeavouring to advance longer stays," said Michele Paige, Chief Executive Officer of FCCA.



Thousands of revellers turned out for the Splash Summer J'ouvert, after several years without the usual Carnival staple event. The Jouvert began at Carrefour Market on Bush Road around 4:00am and ended at Festival Village.

AUGUST

While the Council of Ministers received Roger Lawrence's formal resignation as Minister of Tourism, Economic Affairs, Transportation and Telecommunication (TEATT), due to health issues, the tourism sector and economy of St. Maarten were at risk. As of August 5, air traffic between St. Maarten and the Dominican Republic was in danger of coming to a complete standstill. St. Maarten Civil Aviation Authority, on behalf of Acting Minister of TEATT Omar Ottley, gave its counterpart in the Dominican Republic an ultimatum, informing that all Dominican flights between the two countries would be cancelled if Windward Island Airways (Winair) was refused permission to operate in the DR. While Ottley quickly postponed the ultimatum to August 31, allowing vacationers to return, it emerged that Winair did not comply with aviation protocol in the DR

and had previously been requested to submit the necessary documents.

Speaking of paperwork, the Central Bank of Curaçao and St. Maarten (CBCS) determined that the cost of bureaucracy, unnecessary rules or procedures, commonly referred to as "red Tape", had increased in St. Maarten. "With an average of six months, it takes way too long to open a business," CBCS concluded. Another report on doing business, "Spurring entrepreneurship in St. Maarten", showed that government lacks strategic vision for promoting capital investments, "sometimes changing direction unexpectedly and making limited progress on existing dossiers", making it difficult for entrepreneurs to plan for the future.

--The price of gas in St. Maarten can only be lowered after the new stock is received by the wholesaler, said

Acting Minister of Tourism, Economic Affairs, Transport and Telecommunication (TEATT) Omar Ottley in response to questions about the lowering of gas prices around the world. Due to the pandemic, when there was less movement on island, there was a still a gas reserve, he said.

--Justice Minister Anna Richardson stated that she "at no point refused to grant police their promotions". Richardson made this statement after 11 police officers won their cases in court seeking clarity on their legal position. The judge ordered the Minister to provide the officers with National Decrees regulating their positions. Penalty payments were part of the court ruling.

--Minister of Public Housing, Spatial Planning, Environment and Infrastructure VROMI, Egbert Doran, signed off on transfer of land to Social and Health Insurances (SZV). Some 6,400 square metres of land between St. Maarten Medical Center and Raoul Illidge Sport Complex in Cay Hill will serve as the location for the new SZV Offices and Wellness Unit.

--On August 15, Members of Parliament dissected the Ombudsman's final report on the tendering and awarding of garbage collection contracts during a meeting of the Central Committee of Parliament in the absence of Ombudsman Gwendolien Mossel who was off-island. The Party for Progress (PFP) faction booked documents into Parliament that the party said it had received anonymously. The package included completeness checklists from the tendering process, documents that the ombudsman had not received.

--Of the five companies awarded contracts by the government of St. Maarten for the collection of solid



The Caribbean Brigade of the Royal Netherlands Marechaussee is getting 71 new colleagues, 11 of whom are assigned to serve in St. Maarten. The new Marechaussee will be deployed for surveillance at air and maritime borders, as part of the Strengthening Border Control Protocol on Aruba, Curaçao and St. Maarten.

waste from 2021 to 2026, two had been disqualified during the tendering process. However, these companies – Garden Boyz Cleanup Services BV and Avyanna Cleanup and Construction – are under contract for a total sum of NAF. 9,689,971.65 in five years. Both companies had incomplete checklists for tender documents.

--VROMI Minister Egbert Doran returned to Parliament on August 17 to answer 21 questions he received in the first round of the meeting on the Ombudsman report, on June 29. The Minister aroused amazement by stating that he had not received copies of the documents that were leaked to PFP and subsequently sent to Government, the Ombudsman and the governor of St. Maarten. When presented with copies, Doran said: "I must say that these documents seem to be altered."

--Minister Doran insisted the authenticity of the leaked documents would have to be confirmed by experts. "And I come back [to Parliament, Ed] after the investigation is done," he said. MP Melissa Gumbs (PFP) reacted: "What else is there to conclude but bid-rigging?" She then proceeded to read the Motion of No Confidence against Doran. The Minister was granted 10 days to answer additional questions.

--Utilities company GEBE said it could no longer finance the electricity and water usage of the country from its reserves and urged clients to uphold their responsibility by settling their bills. The company specified which categories of clients would be eligible for disconnection and when. Starting September 1, clients who received invoices from NV GEBE and did not make any payments would be disconnected.

--Prime Minister Silveria Jacobs said that the lack of communication from utilities company GEBE to the public post the ransomware attack on the company on March 17, 2022, is one of the concerns



After intensive consultations with stakeholders, the National Recovery Program Bureau (NRPB) finalized arrangements to sink the salvaged 27-metre-long tugboat Marion in Man of Shoal Marine Park. The tugboat will serve as an artificial reef and dive site.



St. Maarten Chamber of Commerce and Industry (COCI) received its building permit for the development of Pelican Park, the first economic service centre (ESC) in St. Maarten. Pelican Park will be constructed on Walter Nisbeth Road (Pondfill Road). Pictured is a bird's eye view of what the park will look like.



Art students unveiled a mural of self-portraits at Belair Beach Hotel during a ceremony held at the property. Included in the mural was a portrait of Arnold Harris, owner of the Belair Beach Hotel, and Beulah Jemmott, the hotel's longest serving employee. The students were coached by renowned Dutch Aruba-born artist Gustave Nouel Croes.

of government. This was addressed in a shareholder meeting, the PM said. "The action that was expected out of that was that more clarity would be given to the general public." Seeing that this didn't happen, the way forward in dealing with the lack of communication from GEBE was discussed in the council of Ministers.



Former Carnival Queen Estika Halley (25) was stabbed by a former lover who then tried to slit her throat. Miraculously she survived. Prime Minister Silveria Jacobs expressed outrage at the brutal attack which took place in the parking of the funeral home across from St. Maarten Medical Center in Cay Hill. Jacobs encouraged the young woman to "come out stronger and testify your story when this is over".



A total of 26 St. Maarten students safely arrived in the Netherlands on August 8, eager to embark on a new academic year at the institution of their choice. Minister Plenipotentiary Rene Violenus welcomed the students in the Netherlands and wished them much luck with their studies.

SEPTEMBER

A year after it was announced that St. Maarten entered into a partnership with New York based GridMarket to transition away from diesel fuel dependence and create a sustainable, low-cost energy future, Prime Minister Silveria Jacobs said no progress could be made. Due to GEBE's computer system being hacked on March 17, the utilities company was unable to provide key information to GridMarket, the PM said.

NV GEBE's temporary manager Sharine Daniel stated on the Breakfast Lounge with Lady Grace on PJD2 radio, that the government owned company lost "a year gap of data" during the BlackByte ransomware attack. Employees had to manually put the information back into the company's system, she said.

Meanwhile, clients of NV GEBE were forced to pay their bills in full. Despite promising

that clients would be able to make payment arrangements to settle their bills that had piled up as a result of the ransomware attack, NV GEBE back pedalled on this promise.

Disconnections, which were slated to start September 1, were held off. Clients who had received correct bills were given an additional two weeks to make payments. All other clients, including those that were disputing their bills, were strongly urged to make payments.

NV GEBE's financial situation was "critical", Daniels said on radio. The relief the company offered to seniors was off the table awaiting improvement of the company's finances.

After being under medical care for 6.5 months in Panama, Member of Parliament for the National Alliance, William Marlin, returned to St. Maarten. He made his appearance in Parliament on Friday, September 2.

--During the Parliament Meeting on September 2, Member of Parliament Ludmila de Weever withdrew her support from the United People's (UP) party and declared herself independent. "Things are no longer aligned and with that I will have to declare my independence," said De Weever.

--Seven out of 15 Members of Parliament, including newly independent MP De Weever, demonstrated having no faith in VROMI Minister Egbert Doran by voting for a motion of no confidence. Eight voted against. Doran partly owes his continuation as a Minister to National Alliance Member of Parliament William Marlin, who tipped off the balance.

--The United People's (UP) Party has become a stepchild of the National Alliance, UP founder and former leader Theo Heyliger stated in a letter, in which he spoke out against apparent plans to remove his wife MP Grisha Heyliger-Marten as Chairperson of Parliament. "I would like to dispel any rumours that I agree with any action to fire Grisha," Heyliger wrote. Two weeks later, on September 19, UP leader Rolando Brison called for the removal of UP Parliament Chair Heyliger-Marten.

--On September 6, five years after hurricane Irma pummelled St. Maarten, Prime Minister Silveria Jacobs said: "Together we survived and we started to thrive. St. Maarten is sturdy, St. Maarten remains, and even though we may be bruised, we continue our motto: 'Semper Pro Grediens' - 'Always progressing!'"

--The Committee for Financial Supervision (CFT) advised positively about St. Maarten's proposals to allocate funding within its budget to reduce the 12.5



Ministry of VROMI deployed heavy equipment in Philipsburg for the removal of Sargassum from Great Bay Beach. On satellite images, Sargassum detections were still quite numerous in September, with more or less long filaments transiting west to northwest, between St. Kitts and Barbuda, which could partially be the source of strandings on the southern coast of the island.



The Royal Netherlands Navy announced that it will have a permanent marine base on St. Maarten in 2026. The new base will be located off Juancho Irausquin Boulevard, between the Chesterfield's restaurant and the parking lot of Bobby's Marina. It will be manned by the Marine Detachment St. Maarten (MARNSDET SXM) and the Royal Netherlands Marechaussee (KMar).

percent employment benefit cut. Covering the costs of this reduction within the country's budget, and not from Dutch liquidity support loans, was a condition of the kingdom Council of Ministers RMR.

--More than five months after Dante Ottley (then 27) and Stevevanus Richardson (then 23), both responsible for the 2018 El Capitan shooting of Manuel Gomez Lopez (28), fled the country to avoid going to prison, they were caught. The two were arrested in Fulton County, Georgia, USA. Extradition proceedings were expected to take two to three months. On March 31, Ottley and Richardson were sentenced in absentia to 20 and 18 years, respectively, for manslaughter.

--Former port St. Maarten CEO Mark Mingo announced he intends to file a multi-million dollar claim against Government and the Prosecutor's Office. Seven prosecutors in the Emerald investigation into fraud in Port St. Maarten crossed the line at his expense, Mingo said. After being acquitted of fraud on appeal, Mingo wants to be compensated for

loss of employment, material and financial losses, as well as the reputational damage that he suffered.

--In his first public comments, NV GEBE's temporary Manager Troy Washington said that he is dedicated to restoring consumer confidence in NV GEBE's management and operations. "This requires a thorough review and possible reorganization of key aspects of NV GEBE's operational processes," Washington said.

--In continuing digitization efforts started during the COVID-19 pandemic, the government launched its Digital Transformation Strategy, eSXM. Designed as a seven-year roadmap, the strategy lays out the framework in which a greater number of services will be placed in an online "one-stop-shop" platform that will be accessible and understandable for everyone, even those who are less technologically savvy.



Destination Hub St. Maarten-Anguilla, a joint venture of the yachting sectors of both islands, was showcased at the prestigious 2022 Monaco Yacht Show in Port Hercule, Monaco. St. Maarten was represented by St. Maarten Yacht Club Port de Plaisance, Palapa Marina, IGY Marinas Yacht Club Isle de Sol and Delta Petroleum.



On September 6, five years after Hurricane Irma, Minister of Home Affairs and Kingdom Relations (BZK) Hanke Bruins Slot and State Secretary of Kingdom Relations and Digitization Alexandra van Huffelen visited John Larmonie Community Center in Philipsburg. They were informed about artistic and cultural initiatives to uplift youth after Irma's devastation.



Volunteer Corps St. Maarten VKS members salute Governor of St. Maarten Eugene Holiday (centre), Parliament Chair Grisha Heyliger-Marten (in white, next to Governor), Prime Minister Silveria Jacobs (in blue, next to Parliament Chair), Ministers and other dignitaries who gather on Tuesday, September 13, for the opening of the Parliamentary Year 2022-2023. The ceremonies ended with military tributes.



Hilton Grand Vacations (HGV), the industry-leading global vacation ownership company, celebrated the rebranding of Flamingo Beach as a Hilton Vacation Club at a ribbon-cutting ceremony at the resort. Both Flamingo and Royal Palms were rebranded for HGV following HGV's acquisition of Diamond Resort in August 2021. Assisting with the ribbon-cutting were Minister Omar Ottley, Flamingo Area manager Mervin Leblanc, Minister Ardwell Irion and Deputy Prime Minister Egbert Doran.

OCTOBER

With a focus on cancer awareness, Positive and Elektraljets foundations partnered with St. Maarten Medical Center (SMMC) to cover 100 free mammograms for uninsured women, among other pink events, and CIBC FirstCaribbean held its Walk for the Cure event. SMMC offered free blood pressure and blood glucose monitoring, eye exams, HIV testing by the St. Maarten AIDS Foundation, vegan food tasting by Freegan Food Foundation and information on insurance from Social and Health Insurances and Guardian Group. Older persons were celebrated, as was World Animal Day, World Food Day and World Suicide Prevention Day. VANEPS Law Firm celebrated 85 years serving St. Maarten, and Sister Regina School 55 years. Governor Eugene Holiday was given a grand farewell as his term came to an end and he passed along the reins to Governor Ajamu Baly.

--Justice Minister Anna Richardson revealed the 2022 Weapon Policy, detailing the application process, fees and requirements by permit type for individuals, security companies and details, shooting clubs and weapons dealers.

--St. Maarten Hospitality and Trade Association (SHTA) and BZSE Attorneys at Law held two seminars on the new labour law, designed to eliminate the "revolving door effect" of short-term contracts, which took effect October 1.

--In response to high inflation and supply chain disruptions, St. Maarten Medical Center and contractor FINSO signed a letter of intent with adjusted terms for the construction of St. Maarten General Hospital so that the project slated for completion in 2025 could continue.

--The rollout of the Pfizer COVID-19 bivalent booster shot, effective against the original and Omicron variants of coronavirus, began for persons 60-plus as well as healthcare providers and essential workers.

--The Emma Foundation relaunched Project Hope in Sight for a second year on World Sight Day, providing free prescription eye wear to vulnerable students ages 16 years and under.

--During a public meeting of Parliament on the unanimously approved

2019 and 2020 annual accounts, Finance Minister Ardwell Irión announced that government had collected NAF. 800,000 in outstanding "erfpacht" (ground lease) fees.

--Children from various schools met with authors during Children's Book Week. Stories were read to the children, who in turn asked the authors questions.

--The Integrity Chamber held its first two "Meet and Greet" events, where it shared information about the Chamber and

the importance of integrity, and enabled the Chamber to hear from the community.

--The Proud Breast prosthesis QUPS was launched during a survivor social event hosted by Commodore Suites Boutique Hotel in collaboration with Positive and Elektraljets foundations.

--Member of Parliament (MP) Grisha Heyliger-Marten withdrew her support of the Jacobs II Cabinet after resigning from the United People's party and going independent, having been ousted as Chairperson of Parliament.

--Almost 500 women were examined by Dr.



New Governor of St. Maarten, Ajamu Baly, reviewed the guards lined up in front of the Courthouse where Baly worked as substitute judge.



The St. Maarten Development Fund (SMDF) represented by Managing Director Makhicia Brooks (left), awarded Vensia Matthew (right) an Accounts Receivable Billing Clerk at the St. Maarten Medical Center (SMMC), a Certificate of Excellence for completing 89 courses within its Learn SMART Programme.



A group of young St. Maarten adults participated in an underwater clean-up hosted by The Scuba Shop as part of the Kidz at Sea's SXM Coastal CleanUp project. Some 613 pounds of debris were collected.



"We are witnessing a changing of the guard as my successor, Ajamu Baly, prepares to take office on October 10, 2022. In doing so we can look ahead with and build on the experiences of the past 12 years," stated Governor Eugene Holiday in his farewell speech.



Independent Member of Parliament (MP) Christophe Emmanuel with family and team cut a cake to launch the Nation, Opportunity, Wealth (NOW) party to contest the next parliamentary elections. Suspended MP Claudius "Toontje" Buncamper announced joining the party.

Naira Chobanyan and her team from the American University of the Caribbean School of Medicine (AUC) at the Community Breast Abnormalities Screening Event. with AUC, in collaboration Positive Foundation and the Ministry of Public Health, Social Development and Labor, hosted the free

breast screening event in Philipsburg.

--Catering to over 650, Fire Department personnel held their first Open House since 2016, providing information sessions with other stakeholders, on the importance of fire safety and prevention. Also included were water activities, a mini

obstacle course and fire truck rides.

--Toyin Jagha was appointed by the World Bank as Programme Manager for the St. Maarten Reconstruction, Recovery and Resilience Trust Fund, to take up the role locally once the World Bank office is established here.



Prime Minister Silveria Jacobs announced a team would assess the firefighters' situation, after her meeting with the Fire Department and its union, following a go-slow and protest action. Issues discussed included safety in working and living conditions; the function book, official position, retirement age and operational materials.

NOVEMBER

A St. Maarten Police Force KPSM team conducted general controls over the course of the past week related to the end-of-year safety plan carried out by the special team. The team conducted a total of 192 vehicle controls and two people with outstanding arrest warrants were arrested during these controls. The Dutch government will delegate seven ministers and state secretaries to the six Dutch Caribbean islands and to Suriname on December 19 to simultaneously pronounce formal apologies for the slavery past in the former Dutch

colonies.

--The Advisory Council is currently reviewing the draft Legal Position Regulation for the Police of St. Maarten with the new salary scales.

--St. Maarten Carnival Development Foundation (SCDF) President Edwardo Radjouki minced no words when he said the foundation will no longer allow government to continue to undermine its operations by spreading misinformation and deliberately working around the foundation instead of with it.

--Two baggage handlers at Princess Juliana International Airport (PJIA)

are sentenced in the Court of First Instance for the attempted smuggling of 39 kilogrammes of marijuana from Canada into St. Maarten.

--Government will have to enter an instalment arrangement with police officers when disbursing retroactive payments, Minister of Justice Anna Richardson says.

--The formal announcement of approval for use of the Unity Flag as a cultural symbol of St. Martin/St. Maarten was made at a press briefing in the Government Building, hosted by St. Maarten PM Silveria Jacobs and President of the Collectivité Louis Mussington.

--Dutch State Secretary for Kingdom Relations and Digitisation Alexandra van Huffelen denied on Thursday that pressure was put on Aruba, Curaçao and St. Maarten to accept the conditions that were attached to the liquidity support loans during the coronavirus COVID-19 pandemic.

--The top incomes law to cap the salary of top officials in the public and semi-public sector to 130% of that of the Prime Minister got the green light from Parliament on Thursday last when 11 MPs voted in favour.

--St. Maarten Carnival Development Foundation (SCDF) on Thursday released the official Carnival schedule of events for Carnival 2023.

--"Drama," "a circus show" and "a joke" were amongst the terms used by United Democrats (UD) Member of Parliament (MP) Sarah Wescot-Williams to describe the 2022 budget amendment meeting.

--Utilities company GEBE says it has stepped up repairs of defective and malfunctioning streetlights in an effort to optimise electricity services.

--Milton Peters College's (MPC) Upcycl team has copped the top spot in the National Youth Pitch competition, winning the grand prize of Naf. 10,000 and a trip abroad in 2023.

--Minister Anna Richardson led the Kingdom delegation to the 41st session of the 4th Universal Periodic Review (UPR) of the Kingdom of the Netherlands at the UN Office in Geneva, Switzerland, on November 15.

--St. Maarten Ombudsman Gwendolien Mossel was elected as the new President of Caribbean Ombudsman



Estika Halley (right), her attorney Sjamira Roseburg (left), and family members, friends and supporters marching to the Courthouse.



Dutch-side Prime Minister Silveria Jacobs and President of the Collectivité Louis Mussington prepare to lay a wreath at the border monument in Belle Plaine, French Quarter, during the St. Martin Day official ceremonies on November 11.

Association CAROA for the period November 2022 – October 2024.

--With the unveiling of the new library name, the new logo and the launching of the website, Philipsburg Jubilee Library celebrated its 99th anniversary.

--Opposition Members of Parliament (MPs) say they, and by extension the people of St. Maarten, are being muzzled and silenced in the legislature.

--Chief of Police Carl John and Chief Inspector Benjamin Gout have admitted that individuals were detained and forced to disrobe completely at the police station for no valid reason and without permission from the District Attorney or Judge-Commissioner.

--With the support and commitment of government, the National Recovery Programme Bureau (NRPB) has begun

the process of resettling the community in the area next to the landfill on Pond Island.

--Firefighters are requesting immediate relocation from the Fire and Ambulance Building in Cay Hill until the needed repairs are carried out in the building.

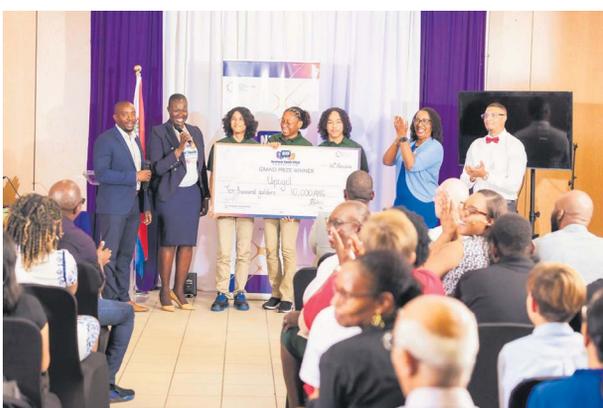
--A total of 33,847 sets of number plates, with 900 being for motorbikes, have been ordered for 2023.



St. Maarten Hindu Organisation recently held its "Diwali Dhamaka" at Belair Community Center. It was a cultural evening of songs, dances, and skits.



St. Maarten Academy teachers from both the academic and PSVE campuses walked out of their classrooms and stood unified while demanding full and fair payment of their outstanding vacation pay.



Milton Peters College's (MPC) Upcycl team has copped the top spot in the National Youth Pitch competition, winning the grand prize of Naf. 10,000 and a trip abroad in 2023.



Twenty-seven persons, mostly volunteers, participated in Resources for Community Resilience R4CR workshops on Governance for Non-Profit Organizations held on November 21 and 23.

DECEMBER

An apology from the Dutch government for slavery past and stiff local reactions; a fatal crash that claimed the life of a young woman and a new President of Parliament were amongst the headline grabbers this month.

--Following the December 19 apology for slavery past by Netherlands Prime Minister Mark Rutte in The Hague, Dutch Minister of Public Health, Wellbeing and Sport Ernst Kuipers assured an audience at University of St. Martin (USM) in St. Maarten that the Dutch government is "fully open" to continue the dialogue on slavery past for as long as St. Maarten

needs. He was delivering remarks following Rutte's apology. Kuipers also pledged to take the feedback and sentiments made in reaction to Rutte's remarks back to the Netherlands.

--In a firm reaction to the apology, Prime Minister Silveria Jacobs said financial aid and loans provided thus far by the Netherlands to St. Maarten can never be conceived of as part of reparations owed as a result of the apology. Jacobs also reiterated that St. Maarten is not at a stage to either accept or reject Rutte's apology. She felt that the dialogue on

a topic of such enormous proportions was not properly executed.

--United Democrats (UD) Member of Parliament (MP) Sarah Wescot-Williams said days later that the stage of redoing the apology has passed, and the focus should now be on the next steps.

--The One SXM Association's "petition against accepting Dutch 'apology' for 'slavery past'" without reparations, which netted over 1,000 signatures, was submitted to Prime Minister Silveria Jacobs on December 19. The Association also rejected the 'apology' because the Association believes that it falls "completely short of what a sincere apology should be".

--Two former top civil servants were given jail sentences by the Court of First Instance on December 21, in a long-term investigation called 'Seabass.' The investigation by the National Detectives (Landsrecherche) looked into fraud, embezzlement, abuse of their position, and money laundering regarding the bidding and tendering for information technology (IT) projects and the purchasing of computer hardware and software for the government of St. Maarten.

--A 37-year-old woman, who was forced to strip naked when she was submitted to a body search after she was arrested

for an attempted break-in and burglary on May 19, received a conditional sentence of 40 hours of community service, on two years' probation in December.

--The St. Maarten Council of Appeals for Civil Service ruled in favour of Louis Brown. The former Secretary-General (SG) of the Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning, Environment and Infrastructure VROMI was unfairly dismissed, the council concluded.

--St. Maarten's newest mixed-use location "The Village at the Border" at Bethlehem Estate, Dutch Quarter, officially opened its first phase on December 14. Located at the border of Dutch Quarter and French Quarter, The Village at the Border at Bethlehem Estate offers large commercial and developer lots for sale with infrastructure already available. This first phase includes sidewalks, utilities, drainage, streetlights, parking and a public park.

--Chef Renata de Weever will be joining the exploratory committee as a coach of a new national culinary team. During St. Maarten Flavors, funds were collected for launching a new St. Maarten talent team for this prestigious Miami contest. The last St. Maarten culinary team competing in the "Taste of the Caribbean 2017," of which Chef de Weever was captain, brought

nine medals back to St. Maarten.

--Battling medical issues and sleeping in his car after becoming homeless, a 63-year-old senior, who was given a place to sleep, which had tarpaulin on part of its roof, now rests comfortably in a dry environment – thanks to the benevolence of Tzu Chi Foundation and its volunteers, who sacrificed their personal time to help repair the man's leaky roof in December.

--The driver of a Blue i-10 with initials M.S.J. lost her life in a tragic early morning accident on A.J.C. Brouwer Road. Preliminary reports indicated that the woman was driving downhill

towards the Kruithoff Roundabout when she apparently lost control of her vehicle and slammed into a bus heading uphill towards Harold-Jack.

--United People's Party Member of Parliament (MP) Sidharth "Cookie" Bijlani was appointed as the new Chairperson of Parliament. Bijlani took over the reins of former Chairperson Grisha Heyliger-Marten, who was ousted from the position on October 17. Also appointed was Second Vice Chairperson of Parliament Rolando Brison. The Current First Vice Chairperson of Parliament is National Alliance MP William Marlin.



Prime Minister Silveria Jacobs and Minister Ernst Kuipers speaking after an event held in St. Maarten at USM after the Dutch apologised for slavery past.



A view of the landfills on Pond Island from Guana Bay Hill (NRPB file photo).



Chef Renata de Weever will be coaching the 'Taste of the Caribbean' committee.



Dr. Rhoda Arrindell (right) presenting a petition against the Dutch apology for slavery past to PM Silveria Jacobs.



Dr. Rhoda Arrindell (second right) with One SXM members and leading activists at the Government Administration Building (12/19/22) (CLF photo).



Tzu Chi volunteers and the senior pose for a group photo after repairing the roof of an ill senior who was previously homeless.

SABA YEAR IN REVIEW

JANUARY

Despite the fact that Saba had a vaccination rate of 93% against the coronavirus, persons breaking quarantine or isolation rules were at risk of receiving a fine, Governor Jonathan Johnson announced. At the start of 2022, Saba recorded 87 active cases, the tally being the highest number of active cases since the start of the pandemic in early 2020. As a result, the schools and after-school day cares were closed.

--Queen Máxima paid a virtual visit to Expertise Centre Education Care EC2. Officials of EC2 and the Oranje Fund, parents and students participated in an animated, open talk with the queen.

--Despite the rocky start of the New Year, Commissioner of General Affairs Bruce Zagers looked at the future with much optimism as the local economy was recovering. The old power plant was to be converted into a marine research station. Officers of the Caribbean Netherlands Police Force had to fire a warning shot during a brawl in Windwardside.

FEBRUARY

--A fake telephone call to the police sparked a search for a person in distress on Mt. Scenery. Screening of the female population for cervical cancer started and the nesting places of the tropicbird and the foraging grounds of this iconic, endangered seabird were researched.

--A water grid from Fort Bay harbour to all villages was installed to distribute reverse-osmosis water. Dutch State Secretary for Kingdom Relations and Digitisation Alexandra van Huffelen arrived for a two-day visit, which she said was "very special". The Royal Netherlands Meteorological Institute KNMI installed new global navigation satellite system (GNSS) on Parish Hill.

MARCH

--Saba received funding of 4.1 million from the European Union (EU) for renewable energy. With the removal of close to 1,300 wild goats under the first phase of the goat control project, Saba's nature was visibly recovering.

APRIL

--Saba Cares received formal approval from the Ministry of Public Health, Welfare and Sport VWS for the project to build a new nursing home and residential facilities. From big litigation to renovations for their new sea lab, Saba Conservation Foundation (SCF) presented several new projects.

--The community attended the Saba Health Fair 2022. Saba Heritage Center and Carmen Simmons' family presented her second memoir. Sacred Heart School (SHS) pupils took part in the King's Games.

MAY

--Saba discontinued the pre-travel COVID-19 testing, the Electronic Health Application System (EHAS) form, and the fourth day post-

arrival testing. A delegation of 10 members of the First and Second Chambers of the Dutch Parliament visited. Esmeralda Johnson, who at 21 was the youngest person to ever take seat in the Saba Island Council, announced that she has decided not to run in the election of March 2023. Saba marked Memorial Day and International Firefighters Day.

--The Johan Cruyff Court in The Bottom was festively reopened. Vice-Prime Minister and Minister of Poverty Policy, Participation and Pensions Carola Schouten started her visit to the Caribbean Netherlands



Bar and disco owners' petition.



Beautifying Sacred Heart Primary School for Saba Doet.



Booster vaccinations for Governor Jonathan Johnson (left) and his wife Rosalyn.



State Secretary Alexandra van Huffelen climbed Mt. Scenery.



Highest point Under the Hill social-housing project.

in Saba. Joined by their colleagues from Statia, healthcare workers in Saba celebrated International Healthcare Workers Day.

--Saba's hospitality sector welcomed a new addition: 27-room Arawak Hotel. Saba kicked off Book Week and Anti-Bullying Week. The public entities Saba and St. Eustatius agreed to further strengthen cooperation between the two islands.

JUNE

--"There was much to see and learn," said Minister of Primary and Secondary Education Dennis Wiersma after his first visit to Saba. The Saba Lions Club celebrated 45 years. Island Council Member Hemmie van Xanten resigned from



Draft Canon of Saba's history.

the Windward Islands People's Movement (WIPM). He continued his term as an independent. The party regretted his decision. Bruce Zagers signed the multi-year governing agreement "Saba Package 2.0". Saba and Statia signed a document to collaborate on waste management. "Guana Chat" child helpline expanded to Saba.

--State Secretary Van Huffelen and Commissioner

SABA..
continued from page 14

JULY

--The Saba Youth Council went to the Netherlands for a work visit. The boards of Sacred Heart School (SHS) and Saba Comprehensive School (SCS) decided to intensify their collaboration. Notarial services for residents of Saba were restored with the swearing-in of Marcia Bouterse. The COVID-19 test centre was closed and the public entity signed a contract to expand and renovate one of the building blocks at SHS.

--Saba concluded its week-long 2022 Carnival celebration with two parades with the participation of some 200 revellers in five troupes.

AUGUST

--Laura Linzey Day Care Centre moved into brand-new prefabricated units in the yard of the Governor's House. Many people paid their last respects to "Icon of Saba" Harriet Carmen Simmons-Nicholson. The parking policy was promoted with

drivers receiving blue disks. The Island Council unanimously adopted the financial report for the budgetary year 2021, which showed a positive balance of US \$1.3 million.

--The Island Council demanded more transparency and adopted a motion obligating the Executive Council to give clarity on its decisions. The public entity in the first half of 2022 realised a negative result of \$1.6 million, but the budget remained balanced because of financial contributions by the Dutch government.

--Former Commissioner Will Johnson and attorney Michiel Bijkerk lost a procedure with the United Nations Human Rights Council for payment of the old age pension AOV to be equal to the AOW pension in the European Netherlands. Commissioner of Education Bruce Zagers was present at SHS to welcome pupils and teachers back to school. Consumers who received their July electricity consumption bills noted that even though the price went up, the increase was mitigated by a subsidy provided by the public entity.

SEPTEMBER

--Saba worked on instruments and measures to lower the cost of living. Due to crosswinds, an aircraft of Windward Express ran into difficulty when attempting to land at Juancho E. Yrausquin Airport. The public entity started a public transportation pilot, during which all residents could make use of free bus services in the morning and afternoon. Amidst rising electricity prices and climate change, the public entity and Saba Electric Company (SEC) announced plans to further develop renewable energy.

--Sea & Learn Foundation was honoured by Prince Bernhard Culture Fund Caribbean Region with the Culture Prize 2022 for nature conservation. Saba made a one-time \$1,300 energy subsidy available for low-income households to help with their electricity bills. Saba Culinary week started. Island Secretary Tim Muller was appointed



Some 200 revellers participated in Carnival 2022.

director and quartermaster of the National Department Caribbean Netherlands RCN.

OCTOBER

--Sea & Learn Foundation's 19th annual environmental awareness programme attracted young and old. Artisans highlighted their work to residents and visitors during an arts and crafts pop-up market. The Executive Council called for an investigation into Care and Youth Caribbean Netherlands (ZJCN) in connection with the longstanding problems with the medical referral of patients to hospitals abroad. A demonstration and a letter called attention to this same problem.

NOVEMBER

--Leo A.I. Chance pier at Fort Bay harbour marked its 50th anniversary. Saba Lobster Fest returned. National Institute for Professional Advancement (NIPA) in St. Maarten expanded its programme offerings to Saba. The Saba (business) community sent a letter with a large number of complaints regarding the transfer of bank accounts from Windward Islands Bank (WIB) to Maduro and Curief's Bank (MCB).

--The Executive Council appointed Henk de Jong as interim island secretary. UNICEF Netherlands opened Saba's Children's Week by hosting an interactive theatre show at Eugenius Johnson Centre. Research conducted by Saba Bank Management Unit and Wageningen University and Research in the Netherlands documented rapid lionfish population decline.

--All residents of Saba

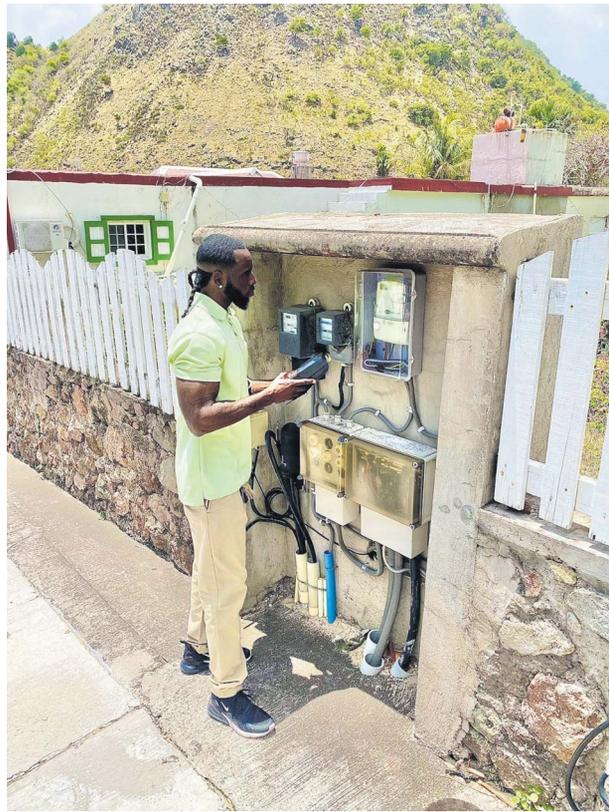
were invited to participate in a collaborative public art project with artist Sara Ramo for the new fire station at Juancho Yrausquin Airport. Saba celebrated the 2022 Children's Rights Week. The 2022-2025 Sports Policy was presented.

DECEMBER

--Saba celebrated the 47th edition of Saba Day. Four restaurants participated in the second edition of Wahoo Food Fest. Saba Cares joined the Dutch Caribbean Hospital Alliance (DCHA). New streetlights were installed in Hell's Gate Guts. The public entity decided to intensify

the bounty period to tackle free-roaming goats.

--The Island Council approved the 2023-2026 multi-annual budget for 2023 which totalled \$17.5 million, an increase of \$4.5 million in comparison to 2022. Members of the Saba community gathered at Queen Wilhelmina Library to witness the historic speech of Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte via livestream, in which he offered apologies on behalf of the Dutch State for its role in slavery. The Supreme Court upheld the conviction of a suspect for manslaughter of a fellow student at Saba University School of Medicine on April 15, 2015.



Subsidies relieved the price hikes for electricity.



Back at school at Sacred Heart.



Arts/crafts market in Windwardside.



Visionary award for Leo Chance.



Pupils performing during Saba Day 2022.

ST. EUSTATIUS

YEAR IN REVIEW

JANUARY

In 2022, St. Eustatius bounced back from the coronavirus pandemic, with tourist numbers picking up. In the political field, the island took the first steps towards the restoration of full democracy with two island commissioners regaining their seats.

--In connection with the spread of the COVID-19 Omicron variant, the public entity implemented stricter measures for entry. Schools were closed and distance learning introduced. The public entity reported the first COVID-19 death.

--In her New Year's speech, Government Commissioner Alida Francis referred to the "long and tumultuous" year 2021. CNN Travel's weekly newsletter "Unlocking the World" listed Statia as one of the best destinations to visit in 2022. The public entity, the Waste Management Facility and the Public Health Department carried

out bin inspections with regard to the collection of waste.

--The Statia Heritage Research Commission (SHRC) recommended implementation of international standards for heritage research of ancestral burial grounds. Commissioner Francis announced an immediate end to any further excavation of human remains at the Golden Rock burial ground. A boulder rolling down the cliff towards St. Eustatius Utility Company STUCO caused a complete blackout.

FEBRUARY

--A vehicle drove off a cliff in Lower Lynch. The driver was not injured. An 81-year-old man was robbed by two masked and armed men. The new Public Health Prevention Clinic was opened. A new batch of vaccines arrived from the Netherlands. State Secretary for Kingdom Relations and Digitisation

Alexandra van Huffelen paid her inaugural visit.

--The public entity eased COVID-19 measures, as the number of positive cases was slowly decreasing. Deputy Government Commissioner Claudia Toet married her long-time love.

MARCH

--First Chamber delegation leader Paul Rosenmöller tested positive for the COVID-19 virus and did not travel to Statia. Island Council Member Clyde van Putten called for a reset in the relationship between The Hague and Oranjestad. Prime Ministers of the former Netherlands Antilles Suzanne "Suzy" Camelia-Römer and Maria Liberia-Peters mediated between the Island Council and the government commissioners.

--The first baby for 2022 was born. A 68-year-old American citizen passed away while diving. The budget year 2021 had a positive result of US \$1 million. Gynaecologist and obstetrician, Dr. Dorette Courtar was honoured on International Women's Day. The Island Council voted in

favour of the establishment of an Audit Chamber. The Crater Trail was reopened. Child helpline Guana Chat 918 was launched.

--At 149, the number of COVID-19 cases surpassed the highest total since the outbreak started in December 2021. Half of those infected were between the ages of 10 and 20. The Second Chamber of the Dutch Parliament once more called on the Dutch government to speed up the process to restore democracy in Statia. The police reported 76 collisions, 33 thefts and 18 burglaries last year. Sjahairah Fleming was elected leader of political party Christian Democratic Appeal (CDA) and Koos Sneek party president.

APRIL

--The Island Council called for an inquiry into the status of healthcare in Statia and an incident which claimed the life of a COVID-19 patient. The passing of a male patient prompted St. Eustatius Health Care Foundation (SEHCF) to have an external committee conduct an independent

investigation. The sudden passing of an ill 27-year-old civil servant, who failed in her attempts to obtain a medical referral for specialist help abroad, left Statia in mourning.

--National Ombudsman Reinier van Zutphen presented the report "Caribbean children pay the price". Seven residents were honoured with a Royal Decoration, among them *The Daily Herald* correspondent Althea Merkman.

MAY

--The Kingdom Relations Committees of the Dutch Parliament visited. Memorial Day 2022 was observed. Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Poverty Policy, Participation and Pensions Carola Schouten sailed to Statia on board of the *Makana* ferry.

--No more entry policy, tests and forms as Statia called off COVID-19 measures. Newly appointed president of the Joint Court of Justice Mauritsz de Kort visited. Statia joined Airbnb's "Live and Work Anywhere" campaign to attract digital

nomads, and Nurses Week was celebrated.

--Some 324 volunteers participated in Statia Doet 2022. Two suspects in a string of break-ins were arrested. Government commissioners and the Island Council unanimously agreed that the mediation process pertaining to the restoration of democracy was successfully concluded. Former Commissioner and State Secretary Leonora Sneek-Gibbs passed away. Renovation of the Roman Catholic Church started.

JUNE

--A Letter of Intent for the upgrading of social housing and the construction of new homes was signed by Minister for Public Housing and Spatial Planning Hugo de Jonge and Commissioner Claudia Toet. New protocols were drafted for sea-turtle protection. State Secretary Van Huffelen and Commissioner Francis signed the St. Eustatius Agreement Accord. SEHCF announced "structural changes" to the foundation's organisation and appointed Frank Rothweiler as interim director.



Burial of the first COVID-19 victim.



Newlyweds Commissioner Claudia Toet and Rolf Rosloot.



State Secretary Van Huffelen visits.



Recipients of a royal decoration.

ST. EUSTATIUS...

continued from page 16

JULY

--On Emancipation Day, Commissioner Francis called for apologies from the Netherlands for its role in slavery. A packed Mike van Putten Youth Centre witnessed the first-ever musical performed in Statia as Aloei School for Performing Arts presented "Cinderella, the musical with a touch of Caribbeaness". Statia started the shooting of roaming cattle.

--Raquel Spanner-Carty was elected new leader of the Democratic Party (DP). The 57th edition of Statia Carnival kicked off.

AUGUST

--Maliska Brown was crowned 2022 Miss Mature Queen. Aloei Historical Dance School took part in the Dance Teacher Web Conference and Expo in Las Vegas, Nevada.

--At the start of the new school year, Commissioner Toet applauded the collaboration between the Seventh Day Adventist (SDA) and Gwendoline van Putten schools.

SEPTEMBER

--A distressed hiker was rescued in the hills of Venus. SEHCF signed a letter of intent with Dr. Courtar at Queen Beatrix Medical Centre (QBMC). The board of the Court of Audit paid its first working visit. A 34-year-old man was arrested for attempted murder in an assault with a hammer. Ubuntu Connected Front (UCF) Caribbean drew attention to reparations in conversations about the slavery past during the visit of Minister of Home Affairs and Kingdom Relations Hanke Bruins Slot and State Secretary Van Huffelen.

--A project developer filed a complaint alleging an unlawful act in the denial of requested financing by Pension Fund Caribbean Netherlands PCN. The Statia and Bonaire fire departments engaged in a work exchange programme. Tropical

storm Fiona dumped rain, but did not cause any significant damage. A prostate cancer clinic was held. Oldest resident Mary Busby turned 103.

--Low income households were offered support to shield them from soaring energy prices. The Statia Health and Sport Expo organised by the Public Health and Prevention Clinic (PHPC) kicked off. Gertrude Judson Bicentennial Public Library was broken into. A small fire occurred inside historical Fort Oranje.

OCTOBER

--The Island Council appointed Commissioners Glenn Schmidt and Derrick Simmons during an extraordinary council meeting. Expertise Centre Education (ECE) care celebrated its 10th anniversary with the grand opening of the resource centre. An agreement was signed for the renovation and expansion of the seaport. A delegation of the Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture and Science visited to discuss the Cultural Agenda for Statia.

--The public entity signed contracts with three caterers to provide healthy breakfasts to schoolchildren. The fourth annual Teachers' Awards Gala was held. Global Terminal Investment Statia (GTIS) proposed three initiatives to the public entity for its operations to be futureproof.

--A new song titled "Welcome to my Island Statia" was released to pique the interest of potential travellers. Commissioner Francis attended the 31st Annual Conference and Exhibition of the Caribbean Water and Wastewater Association in the Bahamas.

--The Statia Cultural Heritage Implementation Committee (SCHIC) was installed. Four Statians were honoured during an agricultural fair in commemoration of World Food Day.

NOVEMBER

--The long-awaited *Makana* ferry connecting Statia, Saba, St. Maarten and St. Kitts launched its inaugural voyage. National Institute for Professional Advancement (NIPA) in St. Maarten expanded its

programme offerings to Statia.

--The Committee for Financial Supervision CFT did not approve the proposed changes to the 2022 budget. Several items were stolen from the public swimming pool. Statia Day Week of Activities kicked off with Gospel Night.

--All For One labour union and nurses discussed the alleged theft of ampules of morphine at QBMC by a quality nurse from the Netherlands. The long-awaited official opening of the Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) took place. "Resilience: It's in our DNA" was theme for this year's Statia Day celebration.

--The public entity and St. Eustatius Housing Foundation signed an agreement about management of the social homes in Golden Rock. An all-Statia crew of airline WINAIR flew to their home island. The "soft opening" of Ingrid Whitfield Shelter for victims took place.

DECEMBER

--The Court of First Instance ordered the public entity to take "adequate measures" to protect Orange Bay Hotel in Lower Town against the dangers of cliff erosion. The Chamber of Commerce elected new board members. SEHCF joined the Dutch Caribbean Hospital Alliance (DCHA). The Coast Guard rescued a vessel with engine problems between Statia and St. Barths.

--A service was held to give thanks for the island passing through the hurricane season safely. Statia was named best eco-tourism destination in the Caribbean by CJ Caribbean Travelers' Choice Awards 2022. It was announced that five years after the Dutch intervention, the Executive and Island Councils will get back their budget right after the Island Council election in March 2023.

--Government Commissioner Francis warned the Dutch government "not to move too fast" after Prime Minister Mark Rutte offered his apologies for the Dutch role in slavery.



Cinderella and Prince Charming dancing.



Welcome-back assembly at SDA School.



Start of the abuse prevention parade.



Opening Ingrid Whitfield Shelter.

ANGUILLA YEAR IN REVIEW

January

--Health Permanent Secretary Foster Rogers and Chief Medical Officer Dr. Aisha Andrewin receive OBE in Queen's New Year Honours for their service during the COVID-19 pandemic.

--Budget for 2022 given with the theme "Advancing through Adversity: Restoring Prosperity".

--The Omicron variant of COVID-19 is confirmed in Anguilla. 177 cases confirmed in mid-January. Vaccination starts for 12-17 year olds.

--World Doctors Orchestra gives impressive performance with pianist and composer Emily Bear – first time for a large

orchestra performance in Anguilla.

--The Law Year of the Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court opened virtually with a church service from Tortola, British Virgin Islands, and an opening session from Chief Justice Dame Janice Pereira.

February

--Central Polyclinic opened in The Valley with doctor, physiotherapy, dental, pharmacy and other services included – funded by UK government grant of US \$5 million.

--Vaccine arrives for 5-11 year olds. Described by Governor Dileeni Daniel Selvaratnam and Premier Ellis Lorenzo Webster as a turning point.

--Kimberley Fleming, 37-year old is missing – found dead two days later. Man held for her murder.

--Census Day announced as May 11 with all residents living in Anguilla for more than six months included.

--Oluwakemi Linda Banks awarded the MBE in Queen's honours.

March

--Women's Week held under the theme "Building a Better You." The focus on building holistic wellness for women. Ten women honoured.

--Director of Social Security Timothy Hodge retired after 40 years of service since 1986. Founder of Social Security Ronald Webster commended for starting the fund.

--Four officials from the Panama Clinic in Anguilla to explain the facilities at the Clinic in Panama City and how it can help Anguilla



Airport re-development started.



Emily Bear with the World Doctors Orchestra.



Governor Dileeni Daniel Selvaratnam and Premier Ellis Lorenzo Webster taking salute on Anguilla Day.



Governor presents plaque to commemorate RAPF 50th Anniversary.

patients. It has 400 offices, 900 doctors, 14 operating rooms and 400 specialists.

--Western Polyclinic opened in the presence of UK Minister Amanda Milling. A wide range of services offered. It is part of the UK Government 60 million pounds grant after Hurricane Irma.

--Valley Main Road (Carter Rey Boulevard) completed and opened. Funded by the UK through the Governor's office.

--Politician in the United Front party, Evans McNeil Rogers, announced

retirement after 17 years as elected member for Valley North.

April

--Five Anguillian athletes to the CARIFTA Games in Jamaica, one of the leading regional junior meetings.

--Nineteen-year old male shot and killed in incident at South Hill.

--Shellya Rogers announces she will be contesting the seat in the Valley North district representing the Anguilla United Front party. She was formerly a Deputy Director of the Anguilla

Tourist Board.

--Aurora Resort and Golf Club announced that the resort will be managed by Salamander, with a reputation for impeccable service and led by Sheila Johnson, well-known in Anguilla.

--Eighteen ladies successfully graduated from a Beekeepers Course, calling themselves "The Queen Bees". They took 14 practical and three theoretical nodules along with other regional participants.

--The Excise tax on gasoline was removed by



Nine-hole golf course opened at Aurora Resort and Golf Club.

ANGUILLA... continued from page 22

the government making a reduction of EC \$1.59 at the pumps.

May

--Three candidates for by-election in Valley North – Courtney Morton from the Anguilla Progressive Movement, Shellya Webster from the United Front and independent Lanny Hobson.

--Governor of the Eastern Caribbean Central Bank (ECCB), Timothy Antoine held meetings with key stakeholders in Anguilla. This was the first stop in his outreach to the eight ECCB member countries.

--Anguilla welcomed the Queen's Baton Relay for the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games. It was the 58th country the baton has visited. Activities included visits to schools, historic and coastal areas and other places of interest.

--Shellya Rogers swept to victory in the Valley North By Election. She gained a total of 632 votes, with Courtney Morton having 194 and Lanny Hobson 163 votes.

--"Standing Proudly 55 years later, United we make Anguilla Greater" was the theme for this year's Anguilla Day celebration. Four persons were presented with the Anguilla Badge of

Honour in the category of Social Development. Two nurses – Irma Geneva Carty, Joan Harriet Carty, and two sports persons – Shara Proctor and Zharnel Hughes.

June

--A shooting incident occurred at The Keys in Island Harbour and a young man was shot and killed.

--An International Master Plan (2022-2041) for the Clayton J Lloyd International Airport was released. It includes immediate plans for car parks near the airport, plans for a new terminal and future plans for extending the runway.

--After two decades in the luxury resort industry, Kevin Carty of Anguilla has been named the General Manager of Aurora Resort and Golf Club. He was previously at Belmond Cap Juluca.

--June 15, Census Day, postponed from May due to the by-election. It will continue for six to eight weeks with details from individuals including marital status, religion, occupation, education and more.

--Minister for Economic Affairs, Kyle Hodge resigns from the Anguilla Progressive Movement government. He had voted against the Goods

and Service Tax and said his relationship with the Premier since then had not been the same.

July

--Huge disagreement with the Goods and Service Tax from businesses. Supermarkets and hardware stores, 80 in all, closed doors for three days in protest. On the last day, there was a protest march with over 300 people.

--On July 3, Minister Dee Ann Rogers resigned from the Anguilla Progressive Movement government and joined the opposition side of the House of Assembly. Two days later, she rejoined the government as Minister of Education and Social Development.

--Social Security actuary gave a report on the state of the funds. He said that unless contributions are increased, the fund will be broke by 2027.

--13 athletes leave Anguilla to attend the Commonwealth Games in Birmingham, England. Six coaches, President of the Commonwealth Association Ken Banks, Chef de Mission Cardigan Connor and board members also left to attend the Games.

--Anguilla ranked #3 in *Travel + Leisure* magazine awards in the top 25 islands of the Caribbean. Anguilla also placed 21st in the top 25 islands of the world.

August

--More protocols for COVID-19 dropped, allowing vaccinated persons to enter without a test and unvaccinated persons to enter Anguilla with a pre-test.

--Anguillian athlete Zharnel Hughes gained a silver medal in the 200m sprint at

the Commonwealth Games in the UK.

--Government assists citizens with living expenses giving all householders EC \$1,000 off electricity bills and EC \$500 food vouchers for the over 70s.

--Sky High airline from the Dominican Republic now with a 190 seater Embraer aircraft instead of the 50 seater, scheduled for twice a week.

--Delayed championship boat race from the Summer Festival with Real Deal emerging winner and also declared Boat of the Year for its performance in previous events.

--Anguilla's eldest citizen, Ursilla Connor, celebrated 109th birthday. Visited by Governor Dileeni Daniel Selvaratnam and Social Security staff, as well as family and friends.

September

--British Royal Navy Ship *HMS Protector* visited Anguilla and provided training with several services and departments of government.

--Public Accounts Committee examines the Anguilla Tourist Board and review historical and financial practices.

--ANGLEC announces plans for renewable energy. CEO Sutcliffe Hodge says this is vital and Phase 1 will install an 8 megawatt solar farm.

--Governor Dileeni Daniel Selvaratnam and Premier Ellis Lorenzo Webster went to London to attend the late Queen's State Funeral and a reception at Buckingham Palace.

--Minister of Infrastructure and Tourism Haydn Hughes reported to the Caribbean Tourism Organisation on

Anguilla's strong tourism expected this season.

--A fatal crash on the West End Road involving three cars caused the death of one person and serious injuries to five others.

--Anguilla's oldest citizen, Ursilla Connor, dies at 109 years of age.

October

--All entry protocols for COVID-19 stopped on October 1. Vaccination continues and still advised.

--Minimum wage committee appointed chaired by Wycliffe Fahie. Public consultations planned in the coming weeks.

--In the Conde Nast Awards, Anguilla places second to St. Barths with Turks and Caicos in third place. Tourism Minister Haydn Hughes congratulates all involved in the tourism industry.

--FLOW completed fibre optic connections throughout the island. The project started in 2018 and is now the first in the Cable and Wireless Community to operate 100% fibre to homes.

--Anguilla awarded 0.9 million Euro grant from RESEMBID (Resilience, Sustainable Energy and Marine Biodiversity Programme) that supports sustainable human development in 12 Caribbean Overseas Territories. It will support Anguilla's future renewable energy programme.

--Attorney General Dwight Horsford re-appointed for another two-year term.

November

--Parliament reopens with Premier describing the year as one of recovery. He

outlined the achievements for the year and listed more than 70 items for legislation during the coming year.

--Aurora Resort and Golf Club opens a nine-hole golf course.

--Many activities organised by the Gender Affairs Unit and other groups for the 16 days of activism against gender based violence.

--Anguilla wins the Association of Project Managers Award in the UK for building back a better health service and facilities through the Anguilla Programme grant.

--Government awards a second cost of living support of EC \$1,000 off electricity bills for all households and EC \$500 food voucher for over 70s.

December

--Anguilla signs Education Management Information System with a grant of Euro 533,757 to implement the project designed to build resilience against disasters in the education sector.

--A pilot project for hydroponic farming was launched with lettuce and basil seeds planted.

--The Royal Anguilla Police Force celebrates 50 years of service with Governor Dileeni Daniel Selvaratnam presenting a plaque to honour the occasion.

--Premier Ellis Lorenzo Webster presents budget with the theme, "Anguilla reimagined: Economically Resilient, Socially Inclusive and Fiscally Responsible."

--Announced that Governor Dileeni Daniel Selvaratnam appointed to be governor of Turks and Caicos will leave Anguilla in June 2023 to take up the new position.



"Real Deal" A Class sailing boat is Boat of the Year.



Valley Main Road opened.

2022 – War in Europe rocks global economy



May: Sri Lanka riots



Sep: Queen mourned



Jul: Abe assassination



Feb: Russia invades Ukraine



Jun: U.S. abortion ruling



Sep: Iran protests



Dec: Zelensky honour



Jul: Europe heatwaves



Aug: Pakistan floods

JAN 14 A volcanic eruption in Tonga triggers tsunamis across the Pacific Ocean

16 Tennis star **Novak Djokovic** is deported from Australia for not meeting coronavirus requirements



FEB 4 The Winter Olympics open in Beijing, the first city to host both the Summer and Winter Games

24 Russia launches a full-scale invasion of Ukraine by land, air and sea in the biggest such attack in Europe since World War II

MAR 4 A spent rocket booster smacks into the far side of the moon

9 Australia declares a national emergency in response to devastating floods along much of its east coast

27 Best actor winner **Will Smith** slaps host **Chris Rock** at the Academy Awards for making a joke about his wife



APR 10 **Imran Khan** is ousted as Prime Minister of Pakistan in a motion of no-confidence



24 **Emmanuel Macron** is the first president of France in 20 years to win a second term

25 Twitter agrees to a \$44 billion takeover offer by business magnate **Elon Musk**



MAY 9 Sri Lanka's prime minister **Mahinda Rajapaksa** resigns amid mass protests over the worst economic crisis in decades. Ongoing unrest forces out his brother, President **Gotabaya Rajapaksa**, in July



11 The U.S. surpasses 1 million deaths attributed to Covid-19

15 Finland and Sweden announce they will apply to join NATO in the face of Russia's aggression in Ukraine

JUN 2 **Queen Elizabeth II** celebrates her Platinum Jubilee, marking her 70-year reign



17 The U.S. Supreme Court strikes down the landmark 1973 *Roe v Wade* ruling, removing the federal right to an abortion

JUL 7 UK Prime Minister **Boris Johnson** agrees to step down after mass resignations in parliament over his leadership



8 **Shinzo Abe**, former prime minister of Japan, is assassinated while campaigning for a political candidate

19 Persistent heatwaves through the summer affect much of western Europe, causing huge wildfires, mass evacuations and heat-related deaths



AUG 2 U.S. House Speaker **Nancy Pelosi** flies into Taiwan despite Chinese threats of military action in response

29 Heavier than usual monsoon rains leave around one-third of Pakistan underwater, affecting 33 million people

SEP 8 **Queen Elizabeth II** dies at age 96. On her death her eldest son becomes **King Charles III**

16 Widespread protests break out in Iran after 22 year-old **Mahsa Amini** is beaten to death by the religious police for not properly wearing her hijab

25 Italy gets its first female prime minister following right-winger **Giorgia Meloni's** election win

30 Russia annexes four regions of Ukraine following sham referendums

OCT 1 Soaring food and energy prices worsen cost of living crises in rich and poor nations alike, affecting millions across the globe



22 **Xi Jinping** is confirmed as General Secretary of the Chinese Communist Party for an unprecedented third term

24 **Rishi Sunak** becomes Britain's third prime minister in 50 days, after **Liz Truss** is forced to resign when her economic policies lead to financial chaos



29 A deadly crush in Seoul kills over 150 mostly young people as they celebrate Halloween

30 Former president **Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva** makes a stunning comeback to win Brazil's presidential election



NOV 8 A Republican "red wave" in the U.S. midterm elections fails to materialise as the Democrats retain control of the Senate

10 Russia abandons the city of Kherson, the only provincial capital captured during its invasion, marking a strategic victory for Ukraine

15 The world population reaches eight billion



15 Mass protests break out in mainland China over stringent anti-Covid measures

DEC 8 Time names Ukraine's President **Volodymyr Zelensky** its Person of the Year



11 NASA's first Artemis flight splashes down after a 26-day mission to orbit the moon

13 Scientists in the U.S. achieve a long-held goal of producing energy from nuclear fusion

WHAT HAPPENED – AND WHAT DID NOT

LONDON--Sometimes, it's what doesn't happen that matters most.

By the evening of Feb. 25 this year, a day after Russian tanks had crossed into Ukraine in the largest military attack in Europe since World War Two, Moscow's troops had reached the outskirts of Kyiv.

With distant artillery fire booming across the capital, Ukraine's defence ministry urged residents to build petrol bombs to repel the invaders. President Volodymyr Zelenskiy filmed himself with aides on the streets of the city, vowing to defend his country's independence. "Tonight, they will launch an assault," Zelenskiy said. "All of us must understand what awaits us. We must withstand this night."

The assault never came – and 10 months on, Moscow's "special military operation" is bogged down. In some places, it's in retreat. Many in Moscow had expected Russia's military to sweep to victory, oust Zelenskiy's government and install a

Russia-friendly regime.

To be sure, Russian forces remain in control of vast swathes of Ukraine's east and south, and at least 40,000 civilians have been killed and 14 million displaced in the grinding conflict. But Ukrainian forces, reinforced by billions of dollars of Western weaponry, have regularly proven themselves savvier and more effective than the morale-sapped Russians.

It was a similar story in the United States, where Republicans and some pundits had predicted a red wave in midterm elections. The Republican Party won control of the House of Representatives, but victory there was slim with a majority of fewer than 10 seats. The party not only failed to take back the Senate, but lost several gubernatorial races. Democrats triumphed in all three secretary of state contests in presidential battleground states where their Republican rivals had denied the legitimacy of the

2020 elections.

Midterms usually deliver a loud rebuke to the party of the sitting president. This time around it was a soft tsk.

In economics, most of the world's big central banks waited until March to begin ratcheting up interest rates. The European Central Bank did not move until July. Monetary hawks complained that the delay allowed inflation to surge.

Will that prove costly in the long term? Can the Fed keep the U.S. economy from recession?

The answers will become clearer in 2023. There are early signs that inflation may have peaked in some economies, but growth is also softening. In a few countries – looking at you, Britain – the outlook remains grim.

At United Nations climate talks in Egypt, countries agreed to create a fund to help poor nations threatened by climate disasters, but failed to agree plans to cut emissions faster. Meantime, record heatwaves in China,



A man looks in through a gap in a barrier in a residential area, after the lockdown placed to curb the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) outbreak was lifted in Shanghai, China, June 7, 2022.

floods in Pakistan and Europe, and glacier collapses in India, Italy and Chile were reminders of how fast our planet's climate is shifting.

This was also the year that protests exploded in Iran after the death of 22-year-old Mahsa Amini, who was arrested for wearing an "improper" head covering. Eyewitnesses said she was beaten, though Iranian authorities deny that. The protests, led mostly by women, spread through the country and across social classes. The longer they continue, the more of a threat they will pose to the 43-year-old Islamic revolution.

What else happened in 2022? The U.S. dollar soared, crypto imploded, and Elon Musk bought Twitter (which he preceded to shake up so much it has threatened to fall apart). It was the year Latin America lurched to the left, a ceasefire finally came in Ethiopia's civil war, and North Korea fired off missile after missile. And it was the year Britain lost a queen, gained a king and saw three Prime Ministers in Downing Street.

Finally, much of the world emerged from COVID, at least socially if not in epidemiological terms. The big exception was China, whose zero-COVID policy has sparked protests and unrest in the past few weeks. In October, the country's twice-a-decade Communist Party congress had seen President Xi Jinping tighten his grip on power and win a third term, a break with recent party tradition which had seen presidents serve just two terms. Could Zero-COVID rock the status quo?

We'll be there if it does. In 2022, Reuters delivered all of these vital stories and tens of thousands more. Over

the coming few weeks we'll recap the biggest, dig into why they mattered, and ask where they may be headed. And in 2023, we'll continue to deliver the world to you,

wherever you are.

Explore the Reuters round-up of news stories that dominated the year, and the outlook for 2023.



An aerial view shows a branch of the Loire River as historical drought hits France, in Loireauxence, France, August 16, 2022.



Servicemen of the Ukrainian National Guard take positions in central Kyiv, after Russia launched a massive military operation against Ukraine, February 25, 2022.



Former Brazilian President and presidential candidate Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva attends a rally in Curitiba, Brazil, September 17, 2022.



The coffin of Britain's Queen Elizabeth II is carried out of Westminster Abbey after a service on the day of her state funeral and burial, in London, Britain, September 19, 2022.



A protestor cuts her hair during a demonstration following the death of Mahsa Amini in Iran, in Istanbul, Turkey, October 2, 2022.

UKRAINE WITHSTOOD THE RUSSIANS IN 2022. CAN IT DRIVE THEM OUT IN 2023?

KYIV--When Russia invaded Ukraine, Vadym Khlupianets, a 26-year-old ballet dancer at Kyiv's National Operetta Theatre, joined the army. Nine months later, he was killed by a sniper on the eastern front.

At his funeral, the theatre's creative director Bohdan Strutynskii said the young ballet dancer deserved a very different honour: "Applause at the end of a performance, with people asking for an encore."

Olga Kucher, director of the Zaporizhzhia Regional Children's Shelter, also found herself in an unexpected role. In March she led 215 orphaned children in woolly hats and puffer coats on a 24-hour train ride, fleeing for their lives.

"My heart is being torn apart," she said. "And I feel so sorry for these children. They're so young."

Ukrainians astonished the world - and themselves - in 2022, withstanding an all-out military assault by a superpower meant to crush them within days. Millions fled to safety. Millions endured bombardment in basements and bomb shelters. Tens of

thousands perished in cities laid to waste by the invaders.

And millions rallied to the cause of a nation, taking up arms, volunteering in ambulances, ferrying food to villages at the front, caring for one another's children.

Why It Matters

Russia says it launched its "special military operation" to protect its security from Western encroachment. Ukrainians, who heard President Vladimir Putin proclaim their national identity a fraud and their land as wrongly stripped from Russia, view the war as an existential struggle - both national and personal.

On the battlefield, David dealt blow after blow to Goliath. In the war's first hours, Ukrainian defenders obliterated Russia's elite paratroopers attempting to seize an airfield on Kyiv's outskirts.

In April, they sank Russia's flagship cruiser. Last month, they were mobbed by joyous residents as they rode into Kherson, a city Putin had proclaimed Russia's forever.

Now, with the war's first winter setting in, it is Russia that is on the defensive, drafting in hundreds of thousands of reservists to protect remaining occupied territory - about a fifth of Ukraine.

Military experts who once debated whether Kyiv could stand for more than a few days, are discussing whether it can win the war outright. Kyiv says it will not stop until it drives all Russian forces out, including from lands occupied since 2014.

What Does It Mean For 2023?

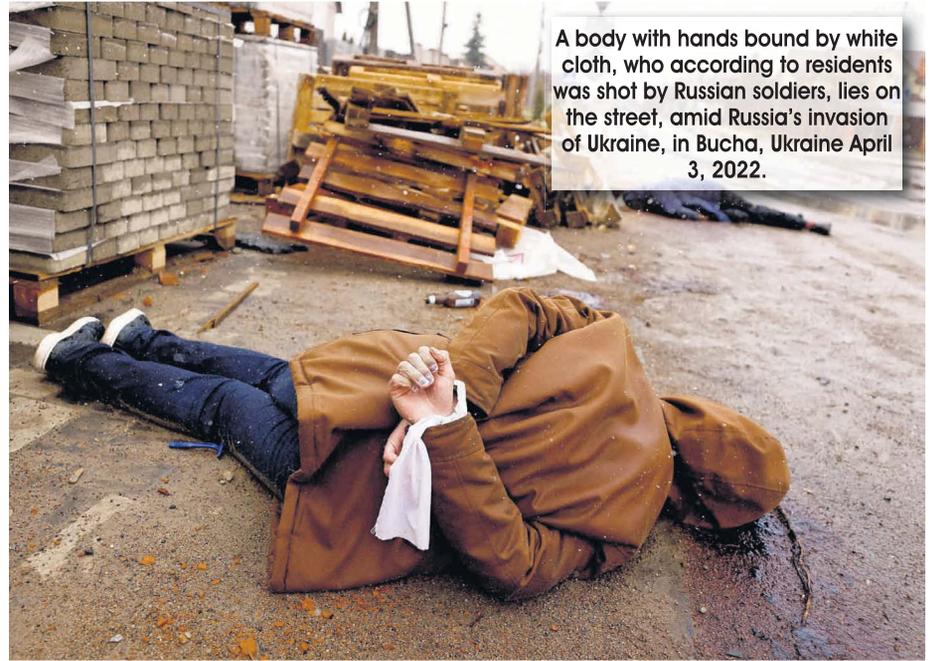
Both sides face new challenges. Russia's retreats, including beyond the wide Dnipro River, have left the front line far shorter and better fortified, making it harder for Ukraine to find new weak spots to repeat the breakthroughs that shifted the war's momentum in the autumn.

But the brutal winter also brings advantages to Ukrainians defending their own country against conscripted reservists that Russia must feed and supply thousands of kilometres from home.

Ukraine "has been masterful thus far in attacking and defeating Russian forces," tweeted Mark Hertling, a former commander of U.S. ground forces in Europe. But its next objectives - to breach fortified Russian defences in the east and cross the Dnipro River in the south - are among the toughest any military could face, he said. "They'll succeed, but not fast."

Meanwhile, there are no talks to end - or even pause - the war. Kyiv says even a temporary truce would give Russia a chance to regroup and solidify its grip on occupied land.

As 2022 winds down, Russia has been hurling missiles at Ukraine's energy infrastructure, plunging millions of Ukrainians into darkness



A body with hands bound by white cloth, who according to residents was shot by Russian soldiers, lies on the street, amid Russia's invasion of Ukraine, in Bucha, Ukraine April 3, 2022.



A civilian trains to throw Molotov cocktails to defend the city, as Russia's invasion of Ukraine continues, in Zhytomyr, Ukraine, March 1, 2022.



Yana Bachek is consoled by her partner Yevgeniy Vlasenko and her mother Lyubov Gubareva, as she mourns over the body of her father Victor Gubarev, 79, killed by shelling during Russia's invasion of Ukraine, in Kharkiv, Ukraine, April 18, 2022.



A Ukrainian serviceman looks on from inside a tank at a position in Donetsk region, as Russia's attack on Ukraine continues, June 11, 2022.

and cold. Moscow claims a military justification; Ukraine says this serves no purpose but to harm civilians.

"Cold, hunger, darkness

and thirst aren't as scary and deadly for us as your 'friendship and brotherhood'," Zelenskiy said, addressing Russians in a speech in September. "Without gas or without you? Without you.

Without light or without you? Without you. Without water or without you? Without you. Without food or without you? Without you. Without you."



A woman carries her cat as she walks past buildings that were destroyed by Russian shelling, amid Russia's invasion of Ukraine in Borodyanka, in the Kyiv region, Ukraine, April 5, 2022.

IRAN'S CLERICAL LEADERS TO GRAPPLE WITH DEEPENING DISSENT IN 2023

DUBAI--Nationwide protests sparked by the death in custody of Iranian Kurdish woman Mahsa Amini have ushered Iran into a new era of deepening crisis between the clerical leadership and society at large.

Amini's family said she was beaten after being arrested by the morality police on Sept. 13 for violating the Islamic Republic's imposed dress code. Amini died three days later. Authorities have blamed the 22-year-old's death on preexisting medical problems. Her death unleashed years of pent up grievances in Iranian society, over issues ranging from tightening social and political controls to economic misery and discrimination against ethnic minorities.

Facing their worst legitimacy crisis since the 1979 Islamic Revolution, Iran's religious leaders have tried to portray the unrest as breakaway uprisings by ethnic minorities threatening national unity rather than its clerical rule. Those efforts by authorities have been undermined by solidarity between Iran's different ethnic groups during the protests, according to activists and rights groups, with protesters chanting slogans in support of minorities.

Protesters from all walks of life have taken to the streets, calling for the downfall of the Islamic Republic. Women have torn off and burned the compulsory headscarves in fury.

Iran's rulers have accused a coalition of "anarchists, terrorists and foreign foes" of orchestrating the protests in which the activist HRANA news agency said 506 protesters had been killed as of Dec. 21, including 69 minors.

HRANA said 66 members of the security forces had also been killed. Two protesters have been executed, drawing strong Western condemnation, and

thousands have been arrested.

Why It Matters

The turmoil, with women and youth in the forefront, poses a grave threat to the priority that has defined Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei's rule since 1989 - the survival of the Islamic Republic and its religious establishment, at any cost.

However, the persistent unrest does not mean the four-decade-old Islamic Republic will disappear any time soon given the power wielded by its security apparatus. The protest movement is leaderless, a challenge to forcing a new political order.

But the unrest has shown the establishment's vulnerability to popular anger, raising concerns among top leaders that a misstep could mean more trouble ahead, even if current protests subside. There is no guarantee greater force will end the unrest, as so far the violent crackdown has only stoked more protests.

The clampdown on the protests and Iran's suspected transfer of drones and missiles to Russia to help Moscow in its war in Ukraine have made Western leaders reluctant to push for the revival of a 2015 nuclear pact that would provide Tehran billions of dollars worth of extra resources.

Alarmed by popular discontent, the clerical leaders fear economic misery could alienate core supporters among middle and lower-income Iranians should the nuclear deal remain on ice.

What Does It Mean For 2023?

The Islamic Republic will be engulfed by what analysts call a "revolutionary process" that will likely fuel more protests into 2023, with neither side

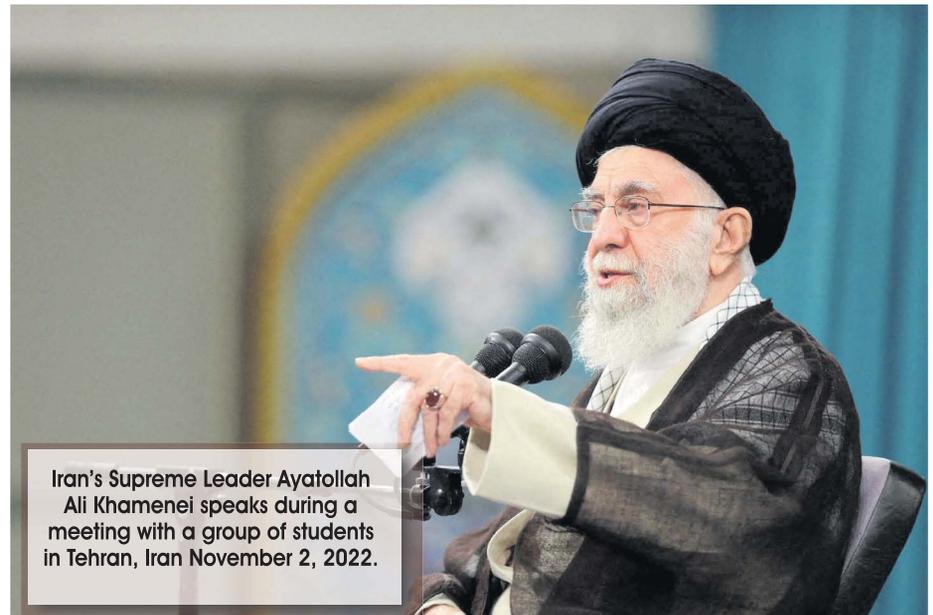


People take part in a protest against the Islamic regime of Iran following the death of Mahsa Amini, in Istanbul, Turkey December 10, 2022.

backing down.

With Khamenei, 83, believing compromise on the republic's ideological pillars such as hijab would bring its collapse, the establishment will double down on repression, resulting in more anger among the 85 million population, 70% of whom are under 30. The question of who will eventually succeed him as supreme leader, a role with vast power, may intensify jockeying among the elite, potentially widening rifts in the establishment.

Four years of sanctions have not stopped Iran's expansion of its nuclear programme or curtailed its support for proxies abroad. But its domestic crisis will likely give Western powers more scope to increase pressure on Tehran.



Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei speaks during a meeting with a group of students in Tehran, Iran November 2, 2022.

EMERGING FROM THE COVID PANDEMIC, AGAIN

LONDON--For much of the world, 2022 marked the beginning of the end of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The shift was palpable after several failed re-opening attempts in many countries. The arrival of the Omicron variant in late 2021, with its ability to re-infect people and the record spike in COVID cases that followed, initially stoked scientists' worst fears and confounded predictions for a return to normalcy.

Yet in the ensuing months, a more stable scenario played out. Emerging variations of

the coronavirus so far remain closely related to Omicron, without radically altering its impact.

Vaccination is largely protective against severe disease and death for many people, and a new generation of booster shots targeting Omicron variants was introduced. The medical community also has an improved arsenal of treatments for those who fall ill.

"It's almost as though the virus has somehow gotten stuck in this evolutionary valley," said Dr. Daniel Kuritzkes, chief of infectious diseases at Brigham and Women's Hospital

in Boston. "Fortunately, no dramatically different variant has emerged."

As a result, in many places, masks came off, schools resumed in-person classes, holiday travel and large celebrations became possible once again. "The pandemic is over," U.S. President Joe Biden said in September, referring to the changing behaviour of Americans.

Global health officials cautioned the public against letting its guard down, while acknowledging a change in outlook nearly three years after the virus was first detected. The World Health Organization (WHO) has

yet to declare an end to the COVID public health emergency introduced in January 2020.

"We are not there yet. But the end is in sight," WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus told reporters shortly after Biden's remarks in September.

Why It Matters

While the most acute threat of COVID has receded in many places, it continues to loom large in everyday life.

Nearly seven million people have died of the illness, with global daily deaths



People celebrate on the dance floor of KB nightclub after midnight as the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic restrictions have been lifted, in Malmo, Sweden, February 9, 2022.

continued on page 24

EMERGING CONTINUED FROM PAGE 23

remaining close to 2,000. New outbreaks continue to sideline people from work and school, and the risk of long COVID - debilitating symptoms that can last for months - appears to increase with repeat infection. Access to vaccines, booster shots and treatments remains unequal globally.

In China, a zero-COVID policy has kept deaths to a minimum and spared

its healthcare system from collapsing under a surge in infections.

But a significant proportion of the country's 1.4 billion population may not have been exposed to the virus, preventing development of natural immunity which, alongside high vaccination rates, creates protection. The policy has required large-scale lockdowns that have proven increasingly

intolerable to the public.

What Does It Mean For 2023?

For many experts, 2023 will bring COVID's full impact on global health into sharp focus.

Data show that the pandemic has disrupted all kinds of healthcare, from childhood immunizations to cancer screenings. Life expectancy in some countries has fallen, while

mental health concerns have skyrocketed. And the impacts of long COVID are just being recognized, while gaps in national healthcare systems have been exposed as never before.

The question, experts say, is whether these changes will persist, and what kind of policies can be implemented in response. The WHO and its member nations are hashing out a

pandemic treaty to govern a better response to future outbreaks.

COVID will continue to require vigilance for people with compromised immune systems, and more broadly when cases surge in a particular location. In such instances, people should consider putting masks back on in crowded places and should stay up to date on available vaccinations.

Infectious disease experts remain on alert for a new coronavirus variant that could dramatically undermine vaccines and treatments. Gaps in COVID testing and vaccination rates "are continuing to create the perfect conditions for a new variant of concern to emerge that could cause significant mortality," Tedros said last week. Read full story

Archaeological discoveries of 2022

1. AUSTRIA

New 3D imaging of the famous *Venus of Willendorf* reveals that the stone used to carve the 30,000-year-old statue originated from the Italian Alps. Scientists speculate the *Gravettians* - an Upper Paleolithic hunter-gatherer culture - carried the statue more than 900km while migrating north to Austria, where it was discovered in 1908



4. GUATEMALA

An image of a deer's head discovered at the base of a pyramid in the ancient city of San Bartolo is the earliest known notation from the 260-day Maya ritual calendar, still in use today. The "7 Deer" glyph represents a date and was painted around 250 BC as part of a mural decorating one of the pyramid's interior walls



6. PERU

The mummy of a high-status craftsman, along with exquisitely-wrought gold and silver jewellery and the remains of six other people, is found in a 1,300-year-old tomb in Peru. The unique find - the first of non-warrior artisans - belongs to the *Wari Empire*, a pre-Inca civilization that flourished in modern-day Peru



2. EGYPT

Pharaoh *Amenhotep I*, one of the last remaining unwrapped royal Egyptian mummies, is digitally unwrapped using non-invasive CT scanning. The images reveal remarkably detailed information about the ancient ruler, including his age, height and facial shape



7. JORDAN

A 9,000-year-old shrine at a remote Neolithic site in Jordan's eastern desert is one of the earliest ritual complexes ever unearthed. The shrine was discovered near a network of "desert kites" or mass traps consisting of two or more long stone walls, believed to have been used to corral wild gazelles for slaughter



3. PAKISTAN

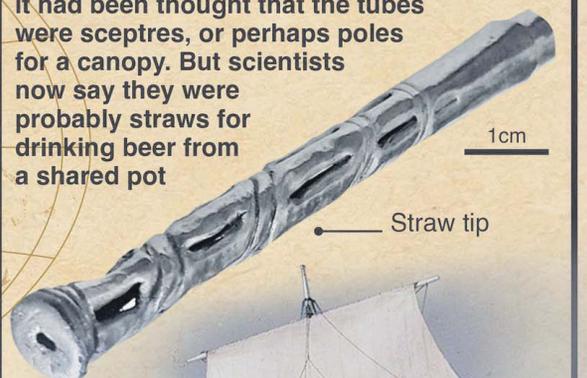
A temple found in the Swat Valley and dating back to the second half of the 2nd century BC, is believed to be one of the oldest known Buddhist temples.

The discovery sheds new light on the spread of Buddhism in the ancient Gandhara region, which was conquered by *Alexander the Great* and gave rise to a blending of Buddhist belief and Greek art



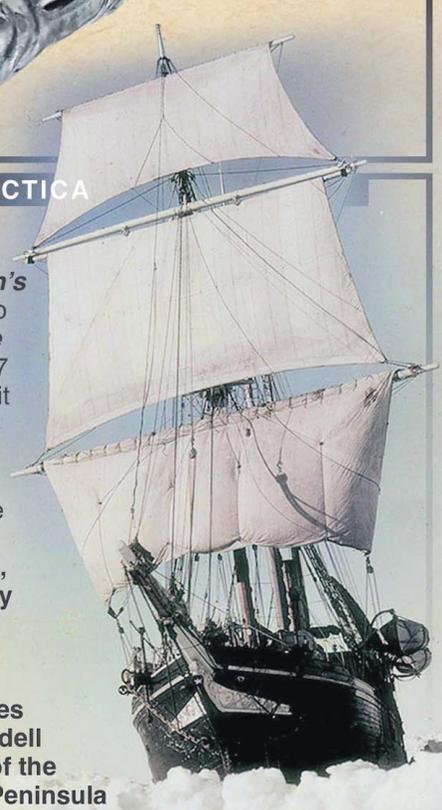
5. RUSSIA

A set of gold and silver tubes dating to around 5,500 years ago and unearthed from *Maikop kurgan*, a Bronze Age burial mound in North Caucasus, could be the world's oldest surviving drinking straws, experts claim. It had been thought that the tubes were sceptres, or perhaps poles for a canopy. But scientists now say they were probably straws for drinking beer from a shared pot



8. ANTARCTICA

The wreck of *Ernest Shackleton's* famous ship *Endurance* is found 107 years after it sank during her ill-fated attempt to reach the South Pole. The vessel, wonderfully preserved, remains at a depth of 3,000 metres in the Weddell Sea, east of the Antarctic Peninsula



Pictures: Bjorn Christian Tørrissen, Saleem, Hawass; Ca' Foscari University of Venice; Heather Hurst, David Stuart; Viktor Trifonov; Milosz Giersz; South Eastern Badia Archaeological Project; State Library of New South Wales

CHINA'S XI SOLIDIFIED GRIP ON POWER DURING TUMULTUOUS 2022

BEIJING-- Xi Jinping secured an historic third leadership term in October, emerging as China's most powerful ruler since Mao Zedong, bolstered by a Politburo Standing Committee stacked with allies and no successor-in-waiting to challenge him.

It was a rare highlight for Xi in 2022, a tumultuous year capped by unprecedented street protests followed by the sudden reversal of his zero-COVID policy and coronavirus infections rampaging across the world's most populous country.

While frustration over zero-COVID and its devastating impact on the second-largest economy did little to disrupt Xi's march towards five more years as general secretary of the ruling Communist Party, 2022 was a year of crises at home and abroad for the 69-year-

old leader.

China's economy is on track to grow at around 3% in 2022, far short of its official target of roughly 5.5%, as the country's outlier COVID curbs stifled consumption and disrupted supply chains, while crisis in its massive property sector continued to weigh.

Beijing's relations with the West deteriorated, worsened by Xi's "no limits" partnership with Moscow struck just ahead of Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February, as well as growing tensions over U.S.-backed Taiwan, which China considers part of its territory. Xi travelled abroad for the first since the start of the pandemic, meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin in September. In November, he met U.S. President Joe Biden at the G20 in Indonesia as both sides sought to steady relations.



Chinese President Xi Jinping waves as he arrives for the opening ceremony of the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing, China October 16, 2022.



U.S. President Joe Biden meets with Chinese President Xi Jinping on the sidelines of the G20 leaders' summit in Bali, Indonesia, November 14, 2022.



People gather for a vigil and hold white sheets of paper in protest of coronavirus disease (COVID-19) restrictions, as they commemorate the victims of a fire in Urumqi, amidst outbreaks of the coronavirus disease, in Beijing, China, November 27, 2022.

Later that month, protesters in cities across China took to the streets in opposition to nearly three years of stifling COVID-19 controls that were a signature Xi policy. Such widespread protests were the first in China since 1989.

In an unexpectedly sudden reversal, China in early December dropped most of its COVID controls as cases in cities including Beijing surged, despite warnings from global experts over insufficient vaccine coverage and a health system unprepared to cope with an explosion of infections.

Why It Matters

For decades, China has been the world's primary economic growth engine as well as the linchpin in industrial supply chains. A prolonged economic slowdown or fresh logistical disruptions, whether due to COVID or geopolitical tensions, would reverberate globally.

Xi further consolidated his power in a process that began when he first took office a decade ago, a concentration that has taken China in a more authoritarian direction and that critics warn raises the risk for policy missteps.

Immediately after October's Communist Party congress, global investors dumped Chinese assets and the yuan

currency tumbled to its weakest in nearly 15 years on fears that security and ideology would increasingly trump growth and international detente during a third Xi term.

What Does It Mean For 2023?

Since the congress, China has reversed zero-COVID and said it will focus on stabilising its \$17 trillion economy in 2023.

Management of mushrooming infections across a vast population with little "herd immunity" is Xi's most pressing challenge, with implications for public health as well as social stability and the economy. Experts warn that China, home to 1.4 billion people, could see more than 1 million COVID-related deaths in the coming year.

At its annual parliamentary gathering in March, China will complete its leadership transition, with Shanghai party chief Li Qiang, a close Xi ally, poised to replace the retiring Li Keqiang as premier, a role charged with managing the economy. The World Bank expects reopening of China's economy will lift growth to 4.3% in 2023 from its forecast of 2.7% for the current year.

Diplomatically, Xi appears to be trying to cool some of the tension that has made relations with the West increasingly fraught, even as Beijing tries to shore up its position as a counterweight to the U.S.-led post-World War Two order, with outreach such as Xi's recent visit to Saudi Arabia.



Medics wear personal protection gear as they deliver a patient to a fever clinic of a hospital as coronavirus disease (COVID-19) outbreaks continue in Beijing, December 9, 2022.

2022: The year in science

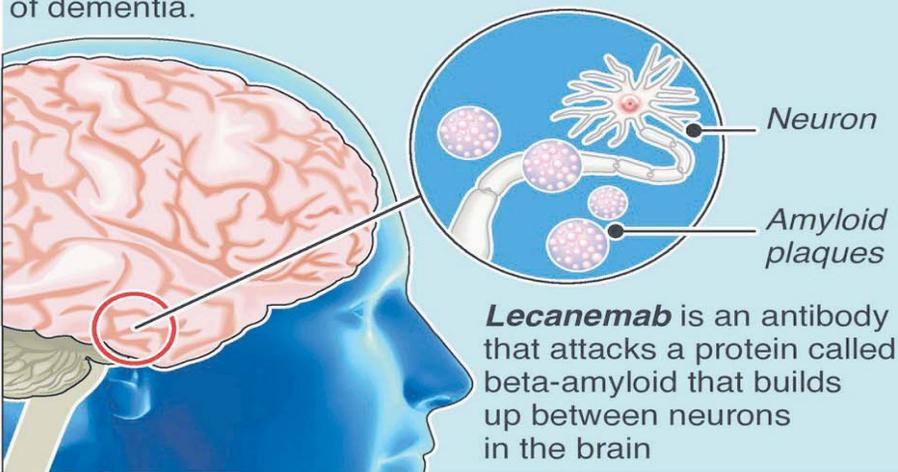
IMAGES OF AN UNSEEN UNIVERSE

JULY: NASA releases the first images from the *James Webb Space Telescope*, a partnership with the European and Canadian Space Agencies.

This landscape of glittering stars is the edge of a young, star-forming region called NGC 3324 in the *Carina Nebula*

ALZHEIMER'S BREAKTHROUGH

NOVEMBER: An experimental drug slows the destruction of the brain in Alzheimer's, the most common form of dementia.



ICE AGE WOOLLY MAMMOTH

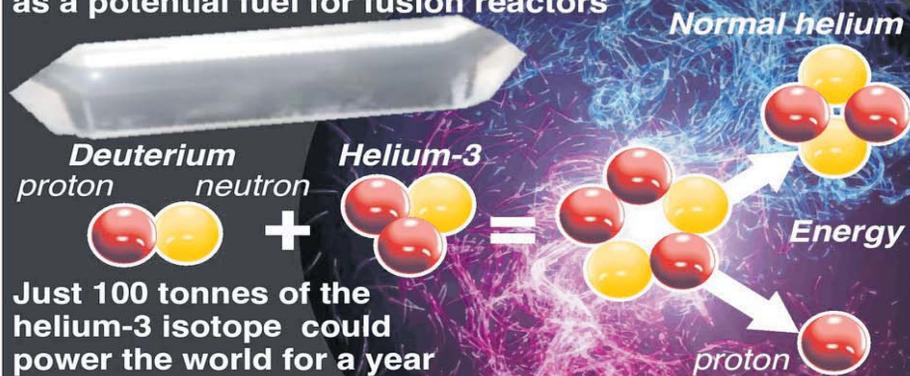
JULY: Miners working in the Yukon in northwestern Canada uncover a frozen baby mammoth while excavating permafrost.



Geologists from the University of Calgary identify the animal as female and more than 30,000 years old, with perfectly preserved toenails, skin, trunk, and hair

MINING THE MOON FOR HELIUM-3

SEPTEMBER: Chinese scientists announce the discovery of *Changesite-(Y)*, a new mineral found in lunar samples that contains helium-3, widely seen as a potential fuel for fusion reactors

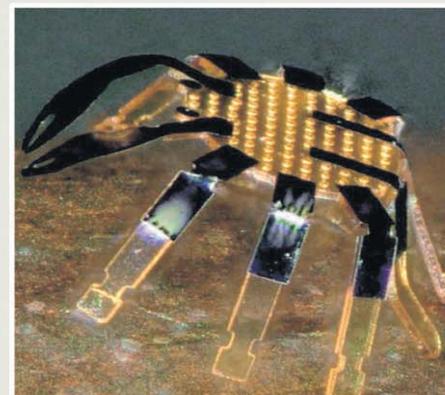


WORLD'S SMALLEST MICRO-ROBOT

MAY: Engineers at Northwestern University in Chicago demonstrate the smallest-ever walking robot, just 0.5mm wide and resembling a crab.

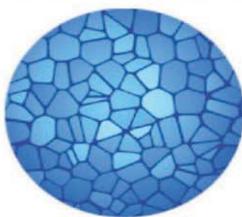
Their research brings the field of robotics one step closer to performing practical tasks within tight spaces.

Micro-robots could repair small machines or act as surgical assistants to clear clogged arteries or eliminate cancerous tumours

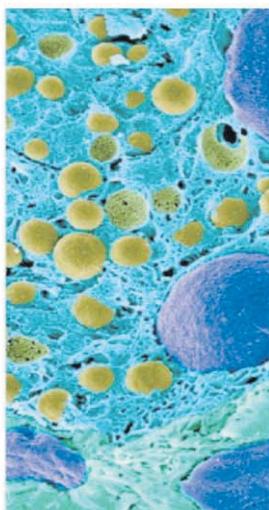
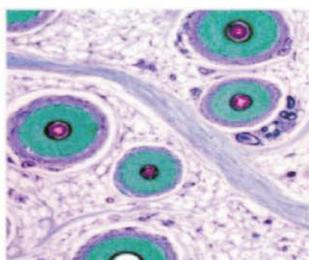


LIFE SCIENCES GET BIG DATA

MAY: More than 2,300 researchers across 83 countries compile a *Human Cell Atlas*, mapping the positions of over a million cells across 33 different organs.



HUMAN CELL ATLAS



The international HCA aims to map every cell type in the human body to transform our knowledge of human health and disease

PROTECTING OUR HOME PLANET

SEPTEMBER: NASA's *Double Asteroid Redirection Test (DART)* – the world's first planetary defence demonstration – successfully impacts its asteroid target.

DART smashes into the 160m-wide asteroid *Dimorphos* about 11,000,000km from Earth.

The craft slams into the space rock at 22,530km/h, pushing it off its previous orbit



‘THE WORST IS YET TO COME’: THE CURSE OF HIGH INFLATION

LONDON--Globally, people are experiencing inflation at levels not seen for decades as prices surge for essentials like food, heating, transport and accommodation. And though a peak could be in sight, the effects may yet get worse.

How did we get here? In two words: pandemic and war.

A long and comfortable period of scant inflation and low interest rates ended abruptly after COVID-19 struck, as governments and central banks kept locked-down businesses and households afloat with trillions of dollars of support.

That lifeline kept workers from joining dole queues, businesses from going broke and house prices from crash-



Price tags are seen as a woman shops at a local market in Nice, France, June 7, 2022.

to demand that wages keep pace with inflation. In most cases, they are having to settle for less.

Cost of living concerns dominate the politics of rich nations – in some cases relegating other priorities, such as climate change action. While recent falls in gasoline prices have eased some of the pressure, inflation remains a top focus for U.S. President Joe Biden’s administration. France’s Emmanuel Macron and Germany’s Olaf Scholz are stretching their budgets to channel billions of euros into support programmes.

But if things are tough in industrialised economies, rocketing food prices are worsening poverty and suffering in poorer countries, from Haiti to Sudan and Lebanon to Sri Lanka.



Signs with prices of different fruits and vegetables are seen in the Paloquemao market square, amid inflation reaching the highest figures in years, in Bogota, Colombia October 7, 2022.

ing. But it also knocked supply and demand out of kilter as never before.

By 2021, as lockdowns ended and the global economy grew at its fastest post-recession pace in 80 years, all that stimulus money overwhelmed the world’s trading system.

Factories that had been idled could not ratchet up fast enough to meet demand, COVID-safe rules caused labour shortages in retail, transport and healthcare, and the recovery boom caused a spike in energy prices.

If that wasn’t enough, Russia invaded Ukraine in February and Western sanctions on the major oil and gas exporter sent fuel prices yet higher.

Why It Matters

Known as a “tax on the poor” because it hits those on low incomes the hardest, double-digit inflation has exacerbated inequalities worldwide. While wealthier consumers can rely on savings built up during pandemic lockdowns, others struggle to make ends meet and a growing number rely on food banks.

With winter setting in across the northern hemisphere, that squeeze on living costs will tighten as fuel bills soar. Workers have taken strike action in sectors from healthcare to aviation

The World Food Programme estimates an extra 70 million people worldwide have been driven closer to starvation since the start of the Ukraine war in what it calls a “tsunami of hunger”.

What Does It Mean For 2023?

The world’s central banks have embarked on steep interest rate hikes to cool demand and tame inflation. By the end of 2023, the International Monetary Fund expects global inflation to have fallen to 4.7% - just less than half its current level.

The aim is for a “soft landing” in which the cooling-off happens without housing market crashes, business bankruptcies or surging joblessness. But such a best-case scenario has proven elusive in past encounters with high inflation.

From U.S. Federal Reserve chief Jerome Powell to the European Central Bank’s Christine Lagarde, there is growing talk that rate-hike medicine may taste bitter. On top of that, risks surrounding the big uncertainties – the Ukraine war, tensions between China and the West – are skewed to the downside.

The IMF’s regular October outlook was one of the bleakest for years, stating: “In short, the worst is yet to come and for many people, 2023 will feel like a recession.”



Meat is seen in a supermarket as rising inflation affects consumer prices in Los Angeles, California, U.S., June 13, 2022.

Organic Prime Boneless Ribeye Steak \$22.99

IN YEAR OF DRAMA, WORLD CUP SHINES SPOTLIGHT ON GROWTH IN THE SPORT

LONDON--Lionel Messi's World Cup fairytale lit up the year in soccer as heroics and heart-break at the finals captivated fans and highlighted the growth of the world's most popular sport despite the criticism of host country Qatar's human rights record.

European leagues have long dictated the global football calendar but world governing body FIFA's decision to hold the tournament in the Middle East for the first time resulted in a mid-season pause and shook up the domestic club game. With matches played in air-conditioned stadiums to cope with the heat of the desert state and no beer on tap in stadiums, spectators experienced a World Cup like never before.

But that did not kill the party mood as the finals repeatedly delivered exciting moments and concluded with Messi kissing the golden trophy, the missing piece in his vast collection, as Argentina defeated France on penalties. Playing in a fifth World Cup for Argentina, the incomparable Messi once again left everyone in awe of his magical powers on the field as he smashed records and delivered on the hopes of a nation, bringing the World Cup home after 36 years.

The illustrious achievement, which will dominate discussions over the coming weeks, finally brought the diminutive forward out of the shadow of the late great Diego Maradona and reignited the debate about the greatest of all time (GOAT).

Though Argentina triumphed in the final, they were also one of the many heavyweights who suffered an upset in Qatar. The South American giants were handed a shock defeat by Saudi Arabia in their first group game, which statisticians Gracenote credited as the biggest upset in World Cup history.

Shock Results

Shock results were a theme as Japan finished on top of a group that included former winners Spain and Germany, while South Korea also went through at the expense of Uruguay.

With every continent represented in the World Cup last 16, the most diverse knockout stage in the tournament's history was evidence of the sport's expanding reach. Underdogs Morocco injected new energy into African football as Walid Regragui's team conquered hearts with their never-say-die attitude, becoming the first African and Arab country to reach the semi-finals.

While the French screamed in agony after coming so close to winning, coach Didier Deschamps said "an important reservoir of talents" promises a bright future for the twice world champions.

France striker Kylian Mbappe returned from Qatar with the top scorer's Golden Boot, after netting a hat-trick in the final, reminding the world of his calibre before he celebrates his 24th birthday on Tuesday.

Cristiano Ronaldo also made headlines, albeit for different reasons, the Portugal international walking off in tears after they were knocked out in the quarter-finals, just weeks after he left Manchester United in a bitter farewell.

On the domestic scene, a few months before the World Cup club football in Europe saw Manchester City and Bayern Munich retain their titles, while Paris St Germain, Real Madrid and AC Milan prevailed after losing their grip the previous season.

Russia's invasion of Ukraine, which Moscow calls a "special military operation", led to changes in the hierarchy at Chelsea, with an investment group led by Todd Boehly and Clearlake Capital taking over from Russian oligarch Roman Abramovich.

Women's Euros

While men's football enjoyed an entertaining year, on and off the field, the women's game also had its



Real Madrid's Luka Modric celebrates with the trophy after winning the Champions League final against Liverpool at the Stade de France, Saint-Denis near Paris, France May 28, 2022.

fair share of memorable moments as England won the European Championship.

Doing what their men's team would not be able to achieve at the World Cup, England's women, covered in confetti, lifted the trophy before a record crowd at Wembley after beating Germany in the final. The victory marked a monumental day for English football, coming 56 years after England's men beat West Germany in the 1966 World Cup final, the only previous major trophy won by a men's or women's England senior team.

But above all it highlighted the huge strides made in women's football in England, where the Football Association banned the women's game for nearly 50 years from 1921. The 2022 Euros were the most watched edition of the tournament and the Lionesses were frequently seen on TV screens and in the newspapers after the victory, earning the recognition and visibility that female players have long fought for.

The event also proved to be a success for hosts England as crowds in the Women's Super League shot up 200% on last season, with a new generation of fans eager to see Leah Williamson, Chloe Kelly, Beth Mead and England's other Euro heroes.



Argentina's Lionel Messi scores their third goal against France during the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 final at the Lusail Stadium, Lusail, Qatar December 18, 2022.



England's Chloe Kelly celebrates scoring their second goal against Germany with Jill Scott and Lauren Hemp during the Women's Euro 2022 Final at Wembley Stadium, London, Britain - July 31, 2022.

Argentina win FIFA World Cup after thrilling final in Qatar



Sporting highlights of 2022

January

29-30 **Rafael Nadal** clinches 21st major at Australian Open. **Ashleigh Barty** is first Australian to win home Slam since 1978

February

BEIJING 2022



Gu wins gold

F1 champion

Euro 2022

New star

4 Beijing hosts **Winter Olympics**, staged on artificial snow

6 Senegal win first international trophy at **Africa Cup of Nations**

13 **Los Angeles Rams** win Super Bowl with late touchdown against Cincinnati



March

23 World No.1 **Ashleigh Barty** (below) announces shock retirement from tennis, aged 26



April

11 World No.1 **Scottie Scheffler** (right) clinches first golf major at U.S. Masters

May



22 **Man City, Real Madrid, AC Milan** and **Bayern Munich** win Europe's top soccer leagues



23 **Justin Thomas** overhauls 7-shot deficit to win U.S. PGA Championship

28 **Real Madrid** beat Liverpool to claim 14th European Cup, inspired by **Karim Benzema** (right), who later wins Ballon d'Or

June

5 **Rafael Nadal** extends Grand Slam records with 14th title at Roland Garros

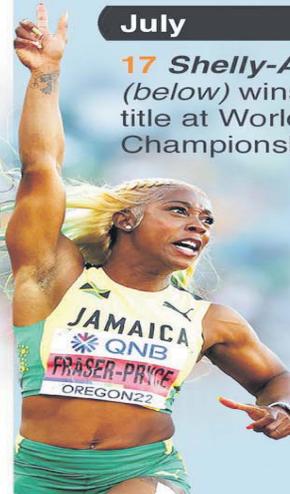
9 Inauguration of Saudi-backed breakaway LIV league sparks civil war in golf

17 **Golden State Warriors** beat Boston Celtics to claim fourth NBA title in eight years

28 **Colorado Avalanche** celebrate third NHL Stanley Cup title

July

17 **Shelly-Ann Fraser-Pryce** (below) wins record fifth 100m title at World Athletics Championships



31 Dutch rider **Annemiek van Vleuten** wins inaugural Tour de France Femmes

31 England win **UEFA Women's Euro 2022**, beating Germany 2-1 in extra time

August

20 **Oleksandr Usyk** retains heavyweight boxing titles, beating **Anthony Joshua** in split decision

September

11 Spanish tennis star **Carlos Alcaraz**, 19, wins U.S. Open and becomes youngest ever men's No.1

23 Tennis icons **Serena Williams** (inset) and **Roger Federer** retire within three weeks of each other



October

9 **Max Verstappen** clinches second consecutive F1 title in record-breaking season



November

5 **Houston Astros** beat Philadelphia Phillies to win MLB World Series

6 **Francesco Bagnaia** wins first MotoGP title

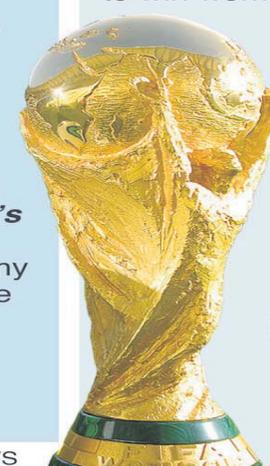
12 New Zealand beat England to win women's **Rugby World Cup**

19 Australia win both men's and women's **Rugby League World Cup** crowns

20 Qatar becomes first Middle Eastern country to host **FIFA World Cup**, estimated to cost up to \$220bn

December

18 **Lionel Messi** lifts trophy as Argentina win first World Cup victory since 1986



St. Maarten Sports Year in Review 2022

St. Maarten sports and their athletes are nothing if not resilient and creative. Many fought back to overcome the effects of Hurricane Irma in 2017. Most sports had not fully recovered when the coronavirus COVID-19 pandemic hit. Now in 2021 with variants, travel restrictions and civil protests making headlines, St. Maarten sports are still making a comeback.

Sailing

Sailing looked good coming out of the gate. They started with the fourth edition of the Domino's Interschool Dinghy Sailing Championship in January. Team Learning Unlimited won the tournament with St. Maarten Montessori placing second.

Later in January, the Grant Thornton Season Sailing Championship got under way and by February Team Island Water world had won first in the keelboat race.

Sailing continued all year long, but the St. Maarten Yacht Club's premier event, the Heineken Regatta, was cancelled by government due to "Mass Spreader Event Fears."

Sailing team Island Water World closed out the year repeating as the winner of the modified La Course de L'Alliance. Eleven teams battled for top honours in the 18th edition. The regatta normally featured races to other Islands. This year, due to travel restrictions,



The St. Maarten Yacht Club started 2022 off in January with both Dinghy and Keelboat sailing series.



Kimaiah Arndell was the first St. Maarten female athletes to be scouted recruited and offered a college sports scholarship.

the races stayed around the Friendly Island.

Running

Runners turned out in large numbers. Some 200 runners took part in the third annual St. Barths Half Marathon in February. Nearly half the field came from the Friendly Island – an unprecedented turnout given all the restrictions and lockdowns associated with COVID. The event was originally in doubt due to the travel restrictions (compelling reasons only) imposed by the French government, however the restrictions were lifted in time to allow the event to go ahead. A total of 35 teams competed.

The Coors Light Half 10 and 5K, in St. Maarten attracted a record turnout of 227 runners with 210 finishing their individual events in May.

While COVID played havoc with Island Sports, the 34th St. Martin Day Around the Island Relay race was side-tracked by protests and road blocks on the French Side of the Island.

Organisers, SXM Roadrunners, had to make the difficult decision the day before to change the course. A total of 52 teams participated in the technically not a true around-the-island relay race. Ironically, the winning team was French side's Intergeneration Runners



Leopard 3 stalks Deep Blue on their final gybes into finish for the first day of racing at St. Maarten Heineken Regatta. Photo © Laurens Morel.



Davinia Cuffy and Zoë Emer are college-bound thanks to having earned sports scholarships to Riverland Community College in Minnesota.



Team St. Maarten in action in Saba's first regional netball competition.

continued on page 31

LOCAL SPORTS *Continued from page 30*



Cyclists climb out of Great Bay during one of the many bike races held on both sides of the Island.

of the event that the race course had to be modified, but to date the race has never been cancelled.

Martial Arts

Among the most creative sports were Taekwondo and St. Maarten Brazilian Jiu Jitsu. Grandmaster Theo Liu, an insurance man by day, hated the idea of his students/athletes, ranging from small children to adults, sitting at home doing nothing. He acted. Instead of holding practice in a confined gym, he took the lessons outdoors and practiced at Emilio Wilson Park with lots of social distancing.

By May St. Maarten Brazilian Jiu Jitsu was ready to commemorate their athletes hard work by presenting them with their next level belts. Among the athletes ready to advance was Coach Jami Eloi. He would be awarded a brown belt after nine years of training. Family and friends normally attend the graduation ceremony. But with COVID concerns, a well-attended ceremony did not seem like a good idea so St. Maarten Brazilian Jiu Jitsu hosted the graduation and demonstration via Zoom.

In April, Grandmaster Liu's King Yen Taekwondo School was ready for graduation. Twenty-two youth and four adults passed their Belt Examination. "Despite the difficult situation caused by the COVID pandemic the students have done very well," said the grandmaster.

Technology popped up again later in the month when Grandmaster Liu was asked to speak at the World Taekwondo Leaders conference about how St. Maarten was coping with COVID. The conference was a virtual event that attracted Taekwondo leaders from 75 countries.

Thirty more athletes from the King Yen Taekwondo

School would take and pass their belt exams in October.

Cycling

Cycling started in February. The first competition was the VitaMalt Mountain Bike Race. Next event that brought out the road racers was the Valentine's Day Classic.

In late July, Mark Maidwell clinched national mountain bike champion title after winning the road race championship the month before.

Swimming

Swimmers were back in the pool at the Carib Swim Team's annual Sweetheart Classic on Valentine's Day. Due to the pandemic, it was a smaller, inter-squad meet this year. However, spirits were high, as many new personal best times were achieved by 32 swimmers.

Swim records were broken at annual Guardian Group Fall Invitational. Six Carib Swim Team athletes combined to set 10 new Carib Swim Team records at the Carib Swim Team Pool in October.

Golf

Golfers returned to the course in March with the 11th annual Three Person Scramble which was won by Sam Bashir, Safin Bashir and Tony Lake. A total of 17 teams competed with just a 10-stroke difference from first to last place.

Later in September the St. Maarten Golf Association honoured Howard Hobgood for his years of service. The Association hosted a 3-person Scramble on the Mullet Bay Golf Course that Hobgood had managed for two and a half decades.

Football

The St. Maarten Football Federation kicked off their season in April with their League Cup warm up. SCSA Eagles won the Cup defeating Flames United SC in the final 1-0.

Travel was limited in 2021 but a few teams did try. Flames United head to Dominican Republic to compete in the Concacaf Caribbean Football Club Championship.

Juventus SXM U13 won the Reuben Essed Football Tournament. The Risc Takers football club honour the memory of one of their coaches with a youth competition. Thirty-four teams, approximately 300 children aged 13 and under played 80 games. Essed was a football coach and very much involved in the Risc Takers youth program. He passed in 2018.

Netball

As schools started returning to in-person learning, the Netball Association shot into action with their Primary School programme. MAC Campus 1 and 2, Hillside School Dutch and English, Sister Borgia and Leonard Connor School were first to field teams.

In April, team Dutch Quarter won the Netball Community League. Dutch Quarter went undefeated and overpowered St. Peters 39-28.

Team St. Maarten travelled to Dominica to compete in the Netball U-16 Goodwill Invitational. St. Maarten won their first game against Dominica 21-8.

Cricket

St. Maarten U19 cricketer Nathan Edward was selected to the West Indies U19 team which will travel to England. Edward is the second cricketer from St. Maarten selected to the team. The first was

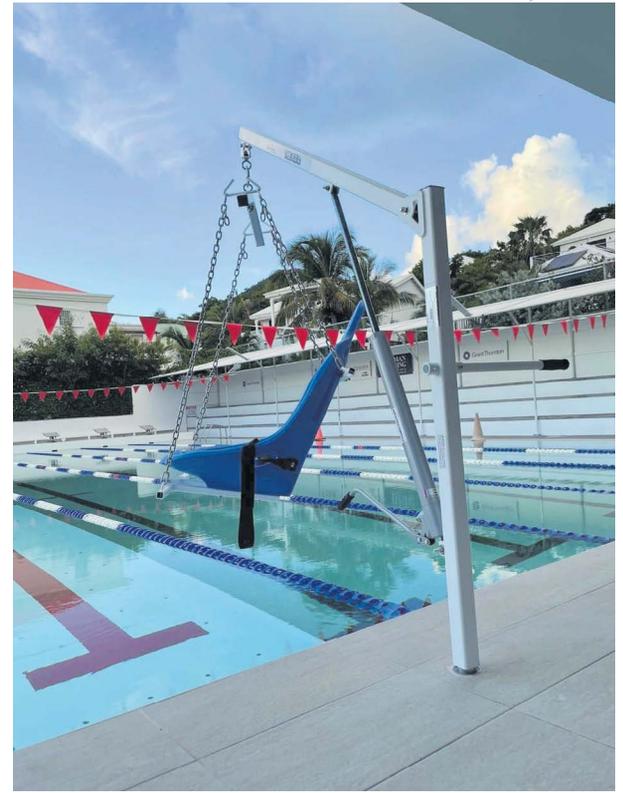
Keacy Carty, who eventually made the final squad for the World Cup in 2016.

Off-Island Successes

St. Maarten athletes already overseas made headlines, too. Junior King from St. Maarten signed a professional baseball contract with the Vermont Mallards for the 2022 season. They will play 130 games starting in April and run through October. King is finishing his final year at Genesee Community College in New York.

St. Maarten's Denzel Richardson and Franklin Van Gorp made the Netherlands Baseball Olympic Qualifier Team and travelled to Mexico. Netherlands lost to Dominican Republic 4-3 and to Venezuela 9-3 and thus did not qualify for the games.

St. Barths triathlete Fabien Husson travelled to



The Carib Swim team was able to get funding for a lift to help handicapped clients enter the pool. The funds were made available through the World Bank Trust Fund.



The SCSA Eagles won the St. Maarten Football Federation Senior Men's competition at Raoul Illidge Sports Complex.

St. Maarten in June to win the Olympic distance 2021 Boardwalk Triathlon.

Boxing

In July, boxing went outdoors with Round One of the St. Maarten National Boxing Federation's Knockout Exercising Workout and Boxing Exhibition at Emilio Wilson Recreation Park. More than 30 people got up early and braved the elements to train with some of the Island's top boxing coaches from 6:30 to 9:00am. There were kettle bells, agility ladders and heavy rope waves in addition to leg exercises, warmups and squats. One More Round was held in December and was also a big hit.

Drag Racing

The Automotive Federation was creative and made St. Maarten Drag Race history as race cars and motorcycles took to



Alberto Rojas won the first ENNIA Full Marathon. He completed the 42K distance in 3 hours 27 seconds.



Maudienne Profas returned to the island with four medals she won at the Caribbean Grand Prix Pro Qualifier in Bermuda.

continued on page 32

LOCAL SPORTS *Continued from page 31*

the streets of St. Maarten cars and 24 drag racing to drag race in front of bikes competed. the government building. "This is the first time A total of 17 drag racing drag races were legally



Swimmers were kept busy competing in several inter-scholastic swim meets.



Pool has become so popular the federation divided the players into A (advanced) and B leagues and hosted separate completions for both. A-league pool player Michael Parris either won or was in the hunt for a win for most of his division competitions.



The 11th annual SXM Wahoo tournament had their weigh-in at Bobby's Marina in November. One boat landed more than 500 pounds of fish.

held on St. Maarten," said St. Maarten Automotive Federation president Charles Benders. Races have been held on St. Martin near the Grand Case Airport but not on the Dutch side. "This was history in the making."

The week before the drag race exhibition, 12 cars and 22 bikes took to the parking lot next to the government building to entertain the crowd with a display of drifting (sliding the car in circles.)

Billiards

Being an indoor sport, the St. Maarten Pool and Billiard Players Federation was slow to start organised competitions, but they held their 10-Ball Classic in September and the first St. Maarten National 9-Ball Championship was won by Junior Phillips in December.

Softball

The 50+ group took to the diamond as the year drew to a close. The Cay Hill Tiger Vets won the 50+ Male Veteran Softball Tournament. The tigers faced Controllers Vets in the best of five game series. The Tigers swept Controllers three games in a row.

Foiling

In December, the second edition of the Caribbean Foiling Championships featured an Around the Island Race for best Caribbean foilers.

New Organisations

New organisations popped up. Baseball added both the Pelican League and a Babe Ruth League.

St. Maarten added a new sport to the list played on the island in December. The St. Maarten Paddle Tennis Club inaugurated in Belair. There is already a Paddle Tennis Club after the French-side club in Sandy Ground.

Little League Baseball

The annual RBC Little League School Baseball and Softball Competition also started in December at the Stadium on Pond Island.

2022 and beyond

The future is unclear for 2022, with new lockdowns in Europe and elsewhere. Nevertheless, St. Maarten athletes will persevere and continue being creative and resilient.



Forty teams competed in the Senior Padel Tennis Tour of the Americas.



Fifteen year old David Rioual represented St. Maarten at the Caribbean Boxing Championships held in Dominica.



Several of the islands sports facilities are still damaged due to the passing of Hurricane Irma in 2017.



The Road Runner Interscholastic Run attracted a record breaking 130 entries.

CRICKET THRIVED UNDER DIFFICULT CIRCUMSTANCES IN 2022

CUL DE SAC—Cricket thrived under challenging circumstances in 2022.

President of Cricket St. Maarten Dwayne Elgin, in an invited comment, stated, "It has been a good year for cricket on St. Maarten, especially with respect to youths. Nathan Edwards played in the ICC Cricket World Cup; our youth cricketers played a major role in Leeward Islands U19 winning the West Indies U19 Championship for the first time in 20+ years. We had representation on all Leeward Island teams. Keacy Carty played for the West Indies team; Daniel Doram was granted a professional contract by the Leeward Island Hurricanes Franchise and also played for the Leeward Islands on multiple occasions. We started a youth academy."

Even though the training facilities are yet to be repaired after the destruction of Hurricanes Irma and Maria, a deteriorating pitch and run-up that were once deemed unsafe and a lack of finances to continue its academy, among other setbacks, the rewards and successes were unprecedented in 2022.

Keacy Carty became the first St. Maarten cricketer to be selected to a West Indies senior team; Nathan Edward further showcased the island with his selection to the West Indies U19 team, helped the Leeward Islands U19 team win its first regional trophy since 1989 and then competed in the Pakistan Junior League.

The Department of Sport recognised their achievements with accolades at the Brown Pelican Awards. Parsram

'Rishie' Singh, who was selected as The Daily Herald Sports Person of the Year in 2021, was awarded the Coach of the Year in 2022 at the Brown Pelican Awards.

Carty must be remembered for his outstanding feat in the Youth World Club final against India in 2016 but being selected for the West Indies senior team is one of the highest feats all cricketers in the region strive to achieve. He made his one-day international debut against the Netherlands on May 31 and has played nine One-Day Internationals for the West Indies. He had a top score of 43 not out against the Netherlands and averages 24.16.

In 2022, Carty represented the West Indies in the Netherlands, Pakistan, Guyana, Trinidad and Barbados. In the regional

one-day tournament, Carty scored an unbeaten 103 against the Academy XI to help the Leeward Islands top the table of Group B after the preliminary round.

He also debuted in the popular Caribbean Premier League (CPL) for the St. Kitts Patriots against Trinbago Knight Riders. Carty lived up to expectations and was duly rewarded for it.

Edward had a very successful year in the cricket arena. He became the second player from St. Maarten to represent the West Indies U19 team in a Youth World Cup. He captained the Leeward Islands U17 team in the regional tournament. Edward ensured the Leeward Islands held on for a draw against Barbados with a stubborn 11 off 55 balls (1x4) in the regional U19 final. The Leeward Islands U19 team was crowned the champion because of that critical inning.

Chemequiko Landefort from St. Maarten set up the win with impressive bowling figures of 6-1-23-4. The other cricketers from St. Maarten who were members of the Leeward Islands U19 team were Amarius Harris

and Michael Palmer.

Edward's next assignment was the inaugural Pakistan Junior League (PJL). At the PJL, his team, the Bahawalpur Royals, won the first edition of the league. Edward was again proficient with the ball. He was selected to play for the Combined Colleges and Campuses (CCC) in the regional One-Day tournament. The Government of St. Maarten, through Minister of Education, Culture, Youth and Sport Rudolph Samuel and Head of the Department of Sport Jonelle Richardson, along with the business community, honoured Edward at a special ceremony.

At the Brown Pelican Awards, Cricket St. Maarten representative swept the awards. Carty was the Male Athlete of the Year, Edward was the Male Athlete of the Year U18, and Parsram Rishie Singh was the Best Male Coach.

Another notable achievement for cricket was the St. Maarten Masters Cricket team defeated St. Kitts to win the Masters Invitational trophy.

These achievements were accomplished against a massive cash flow problem that impeded the continuation of the Cricket Academy for the second half of the year and stopped any local tournaments. The St. Maarten Concrete T20 tournament started in October 2021 and ended in May 2022. The financial issues are a grave concern and are causing difficulty in developing local cricket.

Even though Cricket St. Maarten could not repair the practice nets since being destroyed in 2017, many glittering stars popped up throughout the year. The year ended with the Northwestern Cricket Club from Texas defeating the local youth team 4-0. These youngsters would have started the academy but were unable to continue for the second half of the year.

Looking back at all the successes achieved in 2022, this Sope Agbelusi quote is fitting for each of the local players; 'Remember diamonds are created under pressure, so hold on, it will be your time to shine soon.'



Nathan Edward poses with the championship trophy of the Pakistan Junior League (PJL) after his team won the inaugural league in Pakistan.



The practice nets at Caribe Lumber Ballpark were destroyed by Hurricanes Irma and Maria in 2017. The nets have not been repaired as yet but cricket continues to thrive without such an important facility.



Keacy Carty in action against England at the Coolidge Cricket Ground in Antigua in March. He scored 57 and 49 for the President XI in the 4-day match. He was called up for the West Indies one day team a few weeks later. Carty is the first and only player from St. Maarten to play for the West Indies Senior team.



Cricketers pose with Minister of Education, Culture, Youth and Sport Rudolph Samuel after returning from winning the Regional U19 tournament in St. Vincent and the Grenadines. From left to right: Amarius Harris, Nathan Edward, Chemequiko Landedort and Michael Palmer.

PEOPLE

A slap, a maverick and some ABBAstars: the 2022 showbiz stories

LONDON--From a shocking Oscars slap to a virtual ABBA taking to the stage, this year has seen a range of entertainment stories dominate headlines. Below are some of the biggest.

* Will Smith smacked Oscars presenter Chris Rock in the face for making a joke about his wife's hairstyle in a shocking moment that overshadowed Hollywood's top awards ceremony. Smith went on to win best actor.

* A tearful Adele postponed her Las Vegas residency the day before the concerts were due to start, saying half her crew had COVID-19 and the pandemic had caused delivery delays. She kicked the shows off 10 months later.

* Johnny Depp and Amber Heard faced off in a Virginia court after the actor sued his ex-wife arguing she defamed him when she called herself "a public figure representing domestic abuse" in a newspaper opinion piece. Heard countersued, saying Depp smeared her when his lawyer called her accusations a "hoax". Depp won more than \$10 million in damages. The jury ruled for Heard on one counterclaim.

* #MeToo cases continued, with disgraced Hollywood producer Harvey Weinstein, currently serving a 23-year prison sentence for sex crimes in New York, going on trial in Los Angeles on 11 charges of rape and sexual assault. Four have since been dismissed. He has pleaded not guilty.

The jury later found Weinstein guilty of rape, forcible oral copulation and sexual penetration by a foreign object involving one woman, but acquitted him of charges relating to a second alleged victim, the Los Angeles Superior Court announced.

The jury could not reach a verdict on two allegations, including rape, by Jennifer Siebel Newsom, the wife of California's Democratic Governor Gavin Newsom, who previously disclosed she was Jane Doe 4 in the trial. The jury did not reach a verdict on charges relating to one other woman.

Meanwhile, actor Kevin Spacey defeated a sexual abuse case against him in a Manhattan civil trial. He appeared in court in Britain to plead not guilty to accusations of sex offences dating back almost 20 years.

* Rapper Kanye West, who now goes by Ye, courted controversy with outbursts on social media, including anti-Semitic remarks,

leading to the end of some corporate ties - a move that has knocked him off the Forbes list of the world's billionaires.

* Alec Baldwin and producers of Western movie "Rust" reached a settlement in a wrongful-death lawsuit brought by the family of cinematographer Halyna Hutchins, who the actor shot dead during filming last year. A New Mexico state prosecutor is deciding whether to press criminal charges.

* Beyoncé, Rihanna and Britney Spears made comebacks with new music. Kate Bush topped charts with "Running Up That Hill" as the 1985 song enjoyed a resurgence thanks to Netflix show "Stranger Things". Swedish supergroup ABBA returned to the stage, albeit as digital avatars, or "ABBAtars".

* Tom Cruise premiered his hotly anticipated sequel "Top Gun: Maverick", returning as the cocky pilot he first played in the 1986 action flick. "Maverick" remains the biggest film of 2022, grossing \$1.48 billion worldwide.

* The world said goodbye to: actors Sidney Poitier, Ray Liotta, Angela Lansbury, Olivia Newton-John and Robbie Coltrane as well as music stars Jerry Lee Lewis, Meat Loaf, Coolio, Taylor Hawkins and Loretta Lynn among others.



Members of Swedish music band ABBA arrive for the opening performance of the "ABBA Voyage" concert in London, Britain May 26, 2022.



Singer Rihanna attends a premiere for the film Black Panther: Wakanda Forever in Los Angeles, California, U.S., October 26, 2022.



Cast member Tom Cruise poses on the red carpet before the screening of the film "Top Gun: Maverick" at the 75th Cannes Film Festival, in Cannes, France May 18, 2022.



Actor Kevin Spacey arrives to Manhattan Federal Court for his sex abuse trial in New York, U.S., October 6, 2022.

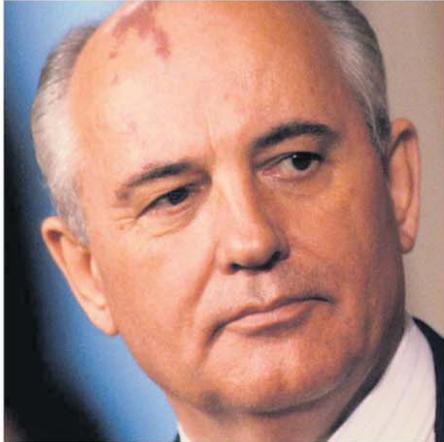


Will Smith (R) hits Chris Rock as Rock spoke on stage during the 94th Academy Awards in Hollywood, Los Angeles, California, U.S., March 27, 2022.

Former film producer Harvey Weinstein appears in court at the Clara Shortridge Foltz Criminal Justice Center in Los Angeles, California, USA, 04 October 2022. Harvey Weinstein was extradited from New York to Los Angeles to face sex-related charges.



Last farewells: Notable deaths 2022



Mikhail Gorbachev

91. Last Soviet leader ended Cold War without bloodshed but failed to prevent collapse of Soviet Union



Sidney Poitier

94. First black male to win best actor Oscar went on to deliver groundbreaking performances that helped combat social prejudice



Shinzo Abe

67. Japan's longest serving prime minister, whose assassination shocked nation where gun violence is extremely rare



Jean-Luc Godard

91. Pioneer of French New Wave cinema whose radical, experimental style produced masterpieces such as *Breathless*



Queen Elizabeth II

96. Britain's longest-reigning monarch, for 70 years seen as rock of stability and towering presence on world stage



Olivia Newton-John

73. Chart-topping singer of 1970s-80s who soared to global fame as *Sandy* in hugely successful film musical *Grease*



Angela Lansbury

96. Stage and screen star for more than eight decades won international acclaim in long-running TV hit *Murder, She Wrote*



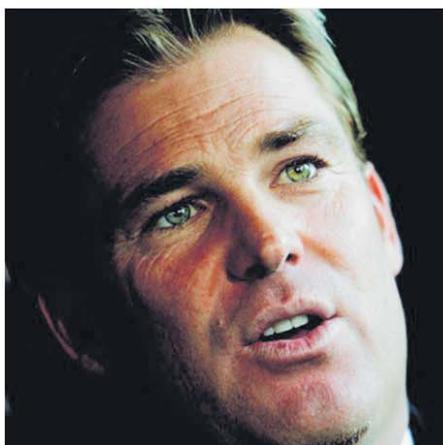
Jiang Zemin

96. Led China through decade of high-speed economic growth after bloody crackdown on Tiananmen protests



Madeleine Albright

84. First female U.S. secretary of state, who helped steer Western foreign policy in aftermath of Cold War



Shane Warne

52. Legendary Australian cricketer whose celebrity lifestyle often attracted as many headlines as his sporting prowess



Jerry Lee Lewis

87. Rock'n'roll pioneer known for raw, energetic songs like *Great Balls of Fire* and *Whole Lotta Shakin' Goin' On*

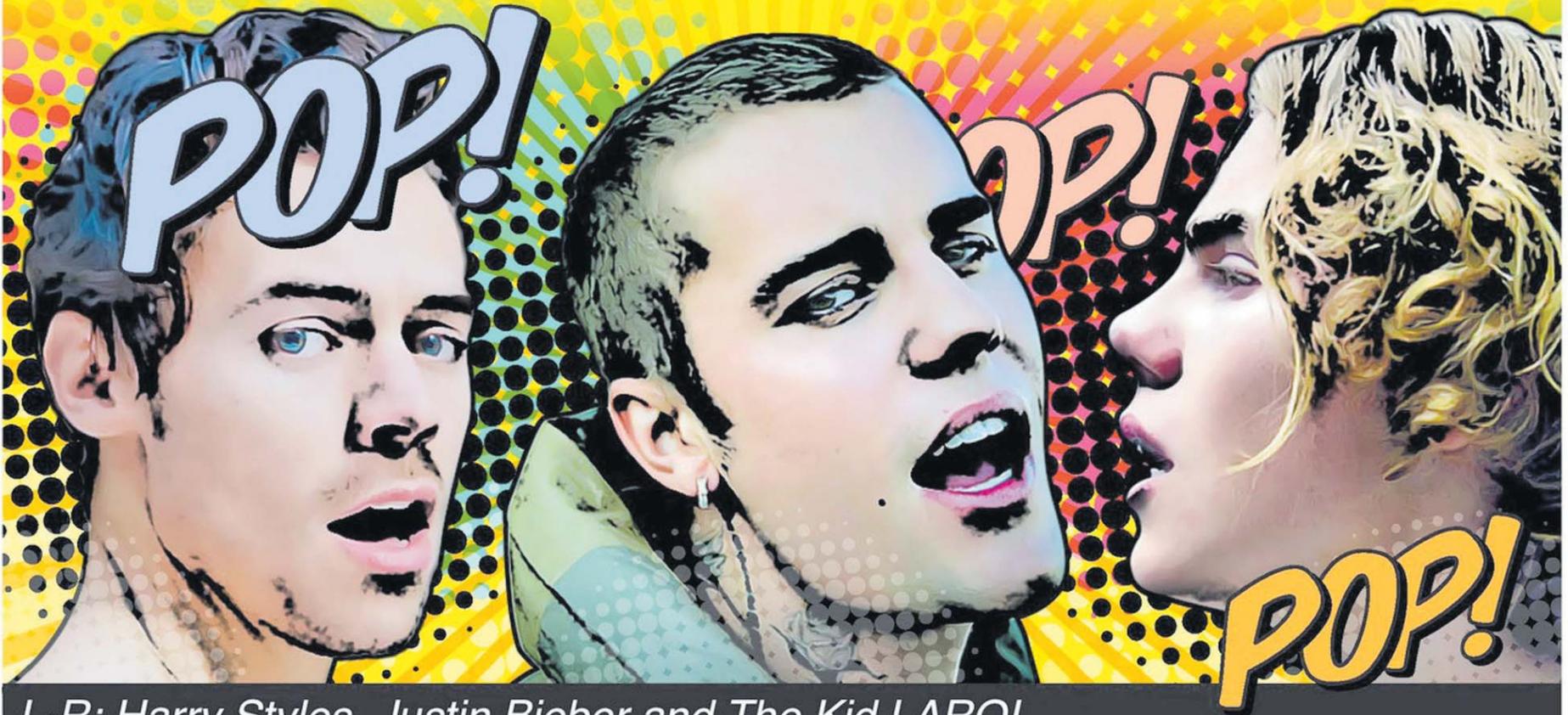


Nichelle Nichols

89. Achieved global fame as *Lt. Uhura* in *Star Trek*, breaking ground for black women playing figures of authority

Most streamed songs of 2022

The most streamed songs of the year according to *Spotify* and *Apple Music*, who together command almost half of global music streaming



L-R: Harry Styles, Justin Bieber and The Kid LAROI

SPOTIFY

Song



Artist

1 *As It Was*

Harry Styles

2 *Heat Waves*

Glass Animals

3 *STAY (with Justin Bieber)*

The Kid LAROI

4 *Me Porto Bonito*

Bad Bunny feat. Chencho Corleone

5 *Tití Me Preguntó*

Bad Bunny

APPLE MUSIC

Song



Artist

1 *STAY (with Justin Bieber)*

The Kid LAROI

2 *As It Was*

Harry Styles

3 *Wait For U (feat. Drake and Tems)*

Future

4 *Super Gremlin*

Kodak Black

5 *Easy On Me*

Adele

Sources: Rolling Stone, BBC, Spotify, Apple

Illustration based on scenes from "As It Was" and "STAY" music videos

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