WEDNESDAY 26th FEBRUARY 2025

VOLUME 6 ISSUE 40

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VCBIA opens new rental car facility



From left to right: Tourism Minister Charles Fernandez, representative of rental car companies, Benjamin Quinland Jnr, ABAA CEO, Wendy Williams and ABAA chairman, Rolston Potter during ribbon cutting ceremony at new Car Rental facility at VCBIA on Tuesday

Local News

POINLEXPRESS

VCBIA opens new rental car facility



Tourism Minister Charles Fernandez

Rental car operators have a new air-conditioned facility at the VC Bird International Airport from which they will be conducting their respective businesses.

This as the Antigua and Barbuda



Airport Authority has completed an \$300-thousand refurbishing and re-purposing of the facility that once served as a counter for regional airlines. It is located adjacent to the eastern end of



the Old Terminal Building.

Tourism Minister Charles Fernandez said he is particularly pleased to note that the facility will be able to accommodate up to fifteen rental companies and that he is proud of the fact that all the companies that will

for rental vehicles as this has been observed to be a growing trend.

"Car rental is a thriving industry, and its growth is a direct reflection of changing travel trends. More and more visitors are choosing to explore the island



operate there are locally owned, even while some are affiliated with well-known franchises.

He noted that as tourist arrivals to Antigua and Barbuda increase, so too will be the need independently, and Antigua's reputation as a safe and welcoming destination has made this an attractive option. Gone are the days when tourists simply

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stayed within resort properties. Instead, we see a rise in Airbnb accommodations, private villas, and boutique stays, all of which contribute to the diversification of our tourism industry beyond the traditional all-inclusive model," he observed.

He noted that a previous decision to sign an agreement for Google Maps to add to Antigua and Barbuda to its network, makes getting around the country much easier for visitors.

ABAA Chairman, Rolston Potter, described the initiative as 'bold' adding that it comes from a collaboration between the authority and the car rental operators.

"This project has been long in coming; to move from the curb-side operation that is both unattractive and dangerous, to an aesthetically pleasing and upscale rental car facility is cause for celebration," he stated.

Potter affirmed that the core belief of ABAA is the sustainable provision of employment and wealth creation for Antigua and Barbuda nationals. "This is a fitting example of what collaboration between ABIA and the car rental operation means," he declared.

New ABAA Chief Executive Officer, Wendy Williams, welcomed the opening of the facility as it ensures that the desired levels of customer safety and comfort that are required at international airports are met.



"Car rentals offer unrivalled flexibility and convenience in the visitor's journey to different destinations. Once you rent a car, you have full control over your travel path. You can stop whenever, or wherever you want allowing you to make the most of your time when traveling," she remarked.

Also participating in the ceremony was Benjamin Quinland Jnr. who spoke on behalf of the car rental operators.

A ribbon cutting exercise took







Canadian firm wins bid to undertake major upgrades of the VCBIA runway

A Canadian firm – AECON Construction – has won the bid to undertake major upgrades to the runway and parking apron of the VC Bird International Airport.

ABAA CEO, Wendy Williams, said all this happened over the past week and that it will be some time before actual work starts at the airport.

"We first have to negotiate a contract with the firm and then we should go directly into mobilization and we expected that sometime around the end of June we will see actual construction start at the airport," she reported.

Williams revealed that the scope of work will involve resurfacing of some areas of the runway while other areas where the wear-and-tear has been determined to be quite significant, this will involve some rebuilding of those areas of the runway.

"The work will involve resurfacing, but we also have to look at some of the deficiencies, and we do have, so we have to do an aeronautics report as well that will highlight all the deficiencies and then we will move into construction around mid-to-late June. However, we will know then what needs to be done before construction starts," she indicated.

The Canadian firm came in with a bid of US\$47 million.

Included in the scope of work are the runway, taxi ways and apron. Work will also be done at Runway #10, the FBO facility that serves private jets.



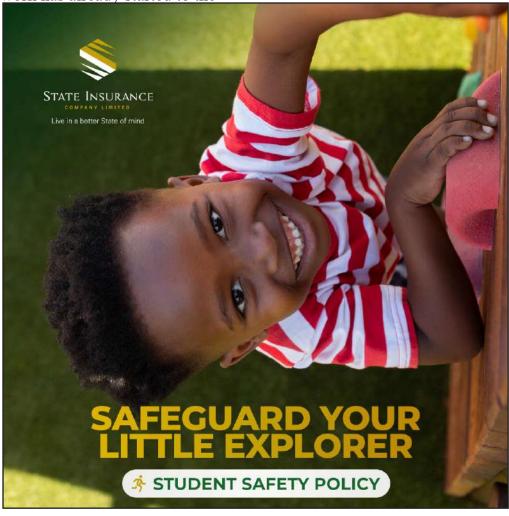
VCBIA CEO Wendy Williams

According to Williams some work has already started to the

parking and taxi areas for these aircraft. "We are improving the infrastructure there by placing concrete slaps as part of the overall improvements approved by the Cabinet," she detailed.

The government has already secured a loan to undertake major upgrades of the VC Bird International Airport. It is expected that a portion of these funds will go towards the extension of the runway at the new Barbuda International Airport.

Prime Minister Gaston Browne wants this to take place simultaneously alongside the major upgrades to VCBIA runway.





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House of Representatives to meet on Thursday -Thirteen Bills on Order Paper

The House of Representatives will meet on Thursday of this week to debate Thirteen Bills on the Order Paper down for second and third readings.

The Payment System and Services Bill, the Cannabis (Amendment) Bill, Civil Registration Vital Statistics (Amendment) Bill, the Litter Control and Prevention (Amendment) Bill, the CARICOM Arrest Warrant Bill and the Vehicles and Road Traffic (Amendment) Bill will receive their First Readings.

Prime Minister and Minister for Finance, the Hon. Gaston Browne will move the First and Second Readings of the Corporacion Andina de Fomento (CAF) Bill, 2025, which will ratify Antigua and Barbuda Share Subscription Agreement entered with the bank to secure the membership of the country into CAF as a Shareholder Member Country.

The Hon. Prime Minister will also move the Second and Third Readings of the Base Erosion and Profit Shifting (BEPS) Bill, the Automatic Exchange of Financial Account Information Bill, and the Tax Administration and Procedure (Amendment) Bill.

Attorney General and Minister for Legal Affairs, the Hon. Sir Steadroy Benjamin will move the Second and Third Readings of the Fire and Rescue Service Bill which will see the Fire Department renamed as the Fire and Rescue Service (replacing the Fire Brigades



Act). In addition, the new Act once passed through the House will result in the Police Act and the accompanying regulations not being applicable to the Fire and Rescue Service.

In addition to preventing and controlling the outbreak of fire, one of the new objectives of the Fire and Rescue Service is to educate the public on preventative measures to safeguard life and property. The new construct will also see the Fire and Rescue Service being the lead agency in Antigua and Barbuda responsible for search and rescue operations in collaboration with other organizations and agencies. Under the new Act, the command of the Fire and Rescue Service will be under the Chief Fire Officer who will be directly involved with supervising the daily operations of the Fire and Rescue Service.

A Fire Service Board will also be established, which will be responsible for appointing persons to the Service, promoting officers of higher ranks with the Service and approving transfers. It will also be responsible for disciplining fire officers and approving the dismissal of any officer from the Service. Under the Act, a Fire and rescue Service Welfare Association will also be established to address matters that affect the general welfare and efficiency of the subordinate fire officers.

The Attorney General will also move the Second and Third Readings of the Antigua and Barbuda Forensic Services (ABFS) Bill which establish a legislative framework for the establishment of the Antigua and Barbuda Forensic Services to assist law enforcement agencies in the investigation and prosecution of

criminal offences. It will see the appointment and functions of the Forensic Director and Deputy Director, as well as the duties and obligations of staff and protection from personal liability.

The Hon. Attorney General will also table the Magistrate's Code of Procedure (Amendment) Bill, The Girl Guides Association of Antigua and Barbuda (Incorporation) Act, and the Architects (Professions) (Amendment) Bill.

Other Bills to be tabled and debated include the Cultural Heritage (Protection) Bill and the Consumer Protection Bill to be presented by National Parks Minister the Hon. E. P. Chet Greene; and the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the Leeward Island (Incorporation) Bill to be tabled by Minister responsible for Ecclesiastical Affairs, the Hon. Sir Molwyn Joseph.

Local News



PM Browne outlines Antigua and Barbuda's efforts to build resilience across sectors

Prime Minister Gaston Browne has highlighted Antigua and Barbuda's efforts to build resilience across various sectors. He was speaking at the launch of the 17-Point recommendations of the Build Resilience Roadmap for Antigua and Barbuda conceptualized by the United Nations Development Programme.

The country's leader highlighted his government's efforts in Vulnerability and Resilience Building, Food Security, Water and Energy Security, Financial and Social Resilience, Climate Resilient Infrastructure, Health Resilience, Digital Transformation and Education Reform.

Prime Minister Browne pointed out that Antigua and Barbuda is a small island state with significant vulnerabilities across social, economic, and environmental dimensions. He said that his government is committed to building resilience, particularly in areas like food security, energy, and financing.

In the area of Food Security, he pointed out that Antigua and Barbuda is highly dependent on food imports, making it vulnerable to disruptions. To address this, he said the government is investing in domestic food production, including subsidies and infrastructure support for farmers, to improve food security. He also issued a call for all citizens to contribute to food security efforts, such as, by planting fruit trees.

The country's leader also



said that his government is addressing water scarcity through investments in water infrastructure, including dams and ponds for irrigation. In addition, he said that by expanding renewable energy, with the goal of Barbuda being powered exclusively by renewable sources and achieving 50% emissions reduction by 2030 are part of government's efforts to build water and energy resilience.

Prime Minister Browne also highlighted that his government continues to advocate for the use of the Multi-Dimensional Vulnerability Index (MVI) to access concessional financing, while at the same time providing low-interest loans and subsidies to support entrepreneurship and business expansion, all part of efforts to build financial resilience.

In the area of Climate

resilience, he said that his government has launched an extensive investment programme in climate-resilient roads, using roller-compacted concrete. In addition, he outlined that his government intends to raise funds through increased vehicle registration fees to finance climate-resilient infrastructure.

The country's leader also pointed to his government's extensive social programmes, including utility subsidy, food vouchers, school meals and home repair/construction for vulnerable groups. He spoke of his government's investment in the health infrastructure, such as a new renal unit and a cardiac unit, as well as renovating the cancer center.

Prime Minister Browne also highlighted the government's expansion of the University of the West Indies Five Islands Campus to focus on developing modern skills required for the country's and region's development.

"The government emphasizes the need for a comprehensive, integrated approach to building resilience and welcomes the UN's support. We also suggest that the resilience roadmap should focus more on implementation and go beyond the current government initiatives," concluded Prime Minister Browne.

Stakeholders at the Royalton Hotel discussions examined the 17-point UNDP recommendations and efforts that can be made to ensure their full implementation. Prime Minister Browne gave his government's commitment to the implementation of the recommendations.

The Antigua and Barbuda Red Cross Society

Local News

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Red Cross celebrates the work of its volunteers

(ABRCS) hosted its annual Volunteer Recognition and Awards Ceremony celebrating the remarkable service and dedication of volunteers, partners, and humanitarian champions. Under the theme "Shining Stars of Service: Honouring Dedication and Impact," the event recognized outstanding contributions made in 2024, a year marked by significant humanitarian efforts, disaster response, and community resiliencebuilding initiatives.

The ceremony was attended by the Governor General, Sir Rodney Williams, who serves as Patron of the Antigua and Barbuda Red Cross Society. In his congratulatory remarks, the Governor General applauded the dedication, resilience, and compassion of the Red Cross volunteers, emphasizing their invaluable role in providing emergency relief, first aid training, and disaster preparedness. He underscored the importance of humanitarian service in Antigua and Barbuda and called for continued support and collaboration to sustain the organization's impact. A key highlight of the evening was the presentation of the Governor General's Award to Dr. José Humphreys, President of the Antigua and Barbuda Red Cross Society. Dr. Humphreys was recognized for his transformational leadership, which has significantly enhanced the ac-



Governor General's Award to Dr. José Humphreys, President of the Antigua and Barbuda Red Cross Society

countability, efficiency, and visibility of the Red Cross at both national and regional levels. A distinguished medical professional, he has made significant contributions in disaster risk management and mental health support, ensuring that the Red Cross remains at the forefront of emergency response and community resilience in Antigua and Barbuda. Dr. Humphreys was also presented with the Governor General's Faithful and Meritorious Service Cross by Sir Rodney. Several volunteers, youth leaders, and corporate partners were honoured for their outstanding service throughout 2024, including: ☐ Volunteer Service Awards

- Recognizing individuals who contributed 90 or more hours of service in 2024, including Sheanna Henry, Julion Daniel, Zachariah Roberts, Malik Vincent, Aliah Jenkins, Era Birk, and Faye Joseph.
- ☐ Special Volunteer Service
 Awards Presented to:

 Otesia Mel ville-Rowe For dedi

cation and leadership in climate change resilience.

- Tyrone Peters For outstanding service in financial management and sustainability.
- Juliet Hazlewood

 For outstanding service towards National Society
 Development.
- Julien Kentish For dedication towards youth development and diplomacy.
- ☐ Most Outstanding Youth Volunteer – Awarded to Sheanna Henry for her exceptional commitment and leadership.
- ☐ Most Outstanding Adult Volunteer & Pinnacle Performer Award – Awarded to Julion Daniel.
- ☐ First Responders Award

 Awarded to Victoria

 Charlton and Jameel

 Ambrose for their dedicated and impactful
 service during emergencies, particularly in first
 aid, disaster response, and
 ambulance operations.
- ☐ President's Award Presented to Zachariah Roberts.
- ☐ ABRCS Impact Award

 Presented to Malik

Vincent for his significant influence within the community.

☐ The Henry Dunant Award for Lifelong Service —
The highest Red Cross honour, presented to Sherilyn Anthony ("Mrs. A") for over 50 years of dedicated humanitarian service.

The Mill Reef Fund, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, the Antigua and Barbuda Fire Department, and other corporate and community partners were acknowledged for their critical support in advancing the Red Cross mission in disaster relief, emergency preparedness, and community outreach programmes.

Special business recognition was given to Ivan George Electrical Services, David Richardson Air-conditioning Services, Raeburns Generator Service, and Glenn Weeks of Bestechs Ltd. A Plaque of Appreciation was also presented to Sir Rodney and Lady Williams for their unwavering support of the ABRCS.

ABRCS President, Dr. J. Humphreys, also extended his profound appreciation and heartfelt congratulations to all the awardees. He emphasized that their exceptional dedication and commitment to humanitarian service have made a profound impact and continue to inspire others in the community. He reminded volunteers that their contributions are valued and essential in creating a more compassionate world.

Local News



World Consumers Rights Day activities

March 15 is World Consumer Rights Day (WCRD), an annual occasion for celebration, impact and global solidarity within the international consumer movement. Each year, consumer organizations mark WCRD by joining together to highlight and raise awareness of an issue that is important to consumers around the world.

The theme this year is "A Just Transition To Sustainable Life-styles". In the past decade record heat, extreme weather, biodiversity loss and pollution are posing a growing threat to planetary and human health. It is increasingly clear that the impact of these crises is not just environmental, but economic and social too and is undermining progres s towards the Sustainable Development

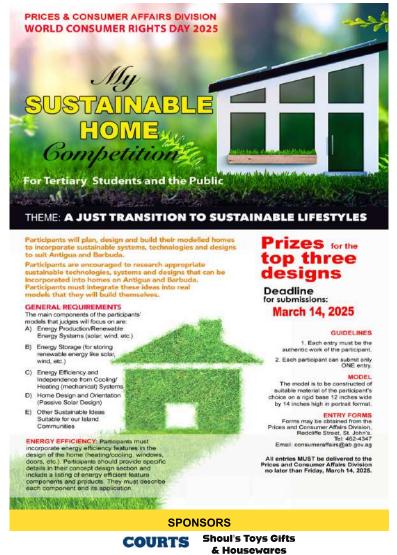
Goals (SDGs). To remain within planetary boundaries, we will need to make fundamental changes to the way we eat, how we travel, how we heat, cool, and power our homes, and the products and services we buy and use.

Therefore, the Prices & Consumer Affairs Division has scheduled various activities during March 2025 to commemorate this Day and bring public awareness. Attached is a copy of the scheduled activities.

☐ 5th March 2025 – Barbuda Day. Presentation at Sir Mc Chesney George Secondary School and Holy Trinity Primary School. Consumer Awareness Desk at Bobo Tree. 8:00 am - 3:00 pm

- ☐ 11th March 2025 Virtual
 Panel Discussion. Topic: A
 Just Transition To Sustainable
 Lifestyles Powering and Cooling
 Our Homes, 10:00 am Noon
- ☐ 16th March 2025 Thanksgiving Service at Kentish Pentecostal Church, Armstrong Road, Gray's Farm at 8:00 am
- ☐ 27th March 2025 Sustainable Lifestyle Exhibition (car show, marketplace, Free health screenings and more), Redcliffe Street (between Temple Street & Corn Alley) 9:30am - 1:00pm
- ☐ 31st March Awards Ceremony Villa Polyclinic at 9:30 am





Letter to the Editor

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A Different Perspective on the 40% Increase: A Call for Contribution, Accountability, and Sustainable Development

The recent announcement of a 40% increase in vehicle licence fees has sparked controversy across the nation. Many citizens, myself included, struggle with the affordability of such an increase. Yet, despite my personal financial constraints, I find myself in agreement with the necessity of this measure.

As citizens, we must recognize that the development of our country does not rest solely on the shoulders of the government. Rather, it is a collective effort, and our contributions no matter how small are vital in shaping a sustainable and prosperous future. Development is not free, and while this increase may be burdensome, it is also an opportunity for us to invest in the nation we wish to see flourish.

Of course, the implementation of such an increase must be strategic. A sudden 40% hike is understandably daunting. A gradual, incremental increase would be a more practical approach,

allowing citizens and businesses to adjust over time. Furthermore, there should be a clear distinction between businesses that rely on heavy-duty equipment and the everyday citizen. Large-scale operations that contribute significantly to wear and tear on public infrastructure should bear a different level of responsibility compared to individual taxpayers. Heavy-duty equipment businesses can contribute the full 40% increase, while regular citizens could be subject to a 30% increase to ease the financial burden on everyday households.

The notion that small contributions collectively make a substantial impact is not just theoretical—it is a proven principle of economic and social development. If every citizen contributed even \$20 a month towards national development initiatives, the cumulative effect would be transformative. This concept of shared responsibility should be at the forefront of

our national dialogue. Instead of outright rejection or uproar, we should focus on accountability. Where is this money going? How will it be spent? What improvements will we tangibly see as a result? The public should have access to clear and detailed reports about the roadworks being undertaken, ensuring transparency and trust in the process.

Another critical point that needs addressing before funneling large sums of money into projects such as road repairs is the assessment of our current infrastructure challenges. A prime example is drainage. How many times have we seen roads freshly paved, only to be dug up again months later due to flooding or underlying

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Letter to the Editor

con't from pg 9

structural issues? Before we commit thousands to fixing roads, we must ensure that we are not merely putting a band-aid on a wound that will require even greater financial attention in the near future. Proper assessments, planning, and execution must be prioritized.

Additionally, we must begin looking at more sustainable methods for road repairs and infrastructure development. Small island developing states like ours do not have un-

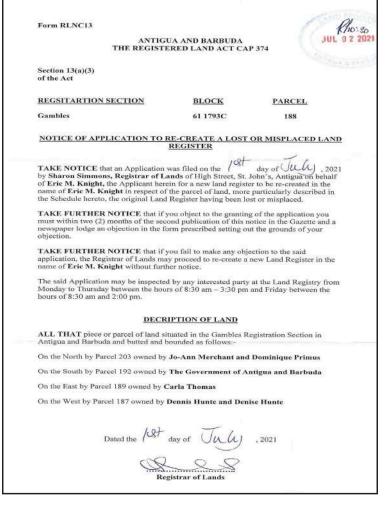
limited resources, and we must be mindful of how we invest in long-term solutions. Countries around the world have adopted innovative approaches such as using recycled plastics and tyres in road construction, implementing permeable pavements to assist with drainage, and exploring cost-effective yet durable alternatives to traditional asphalt and concrete roads. Why should we not explore such possibilities? Beyond financial contribution, this moment presents an opportunity for a much-needed

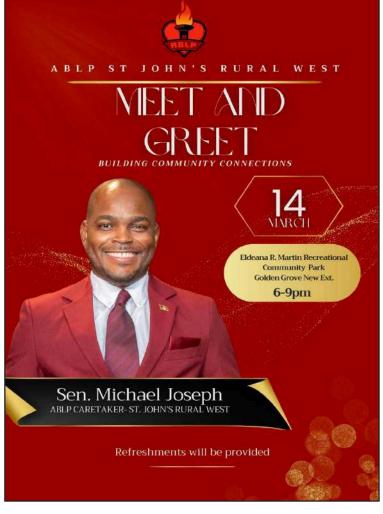
shift in our collective mindset. The tendency to resist change without seeking solutions only hinders progress. Instead of merely objecting to an increase, we should be actively participating in discussions that ensure the implementation of policies that benefit all citizens equitably.

While we demand accountability from those in leadership, we must also hold ourselves accountable for the role we play in national development. Complaining about an increase without proposing solutions is counter-

productive. Let us shift the narrative from one of resistance to one of engagement, where we actively seek ways to improve our country through both financial contributions and responsible governance.

Yes, the increase will be difficult for many, including myself. But instead of rejecting it outright, let us advocate for fairness in its application, transparency in its use, and sustainability in its impact. Our small contributions, when managed effectively, can lead to substantial, lasting change.







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Juvenile Arrested For Aggravated Robbery

A 16-year-old Potters youth is in police custody in connection with ongoing investigations into a report of aggravated robbery.

On Monday, a woman from Newgate Street reported to the police that she and her friends were robbed of their money and mobile phones by a group of young men armed with cutlasses and knives. Officers attached to the Criminal Investigations Department responded to the report and apprehended the young man on Tanner Street with certain items suspected of being stolen. The incident occurred around 1:50 am on Newgate Street. Further investigations are ongoing.

Introducing Guava de Art at Open Studio

February 25, 2025 — Art is everywhere and our artists are many! But we hardly speak about local art. We rarely speak to local artists, about their work, journey and how they have managed to develop and sustain their creative practice. And that is precisely what Open Studio, a local artist talk series, is about.

Gracing the stage on Tuesday, March 04 is Guava de Art, a prolific conceptual artist whose work has made it as far as the United Kingdom and Japan. Guava's love of art started with comic strips and has since been unleashed on canvas, large and small, and into the 3-D world of sculpture.

Open Studio will be hosted at UWI Global Campus on the first and third Tuesdays of each month from 6pm to 7pm from March until July. This artist talk series presents the opportunity for anyone interested in our local art and artists to engage with the people who continually build and expand the cultural tapestry of Antigua and Barbuda through their own creative expression. Open Studio is an opportunity for attendees of the talks to learn more about the art scene in Antigua. It is an opportunity to learn about the people and places which constitute it and to create connections with established and emerging creatives by not only listening to and watching prepared presentations but also by interacting with them in the Question & Answer segments.

For more information, visit facebook.com/openstudioanu or contact Chelsea McMaster at 774-4669.









OBITUARY



His Honour Carden Conliffe Clarke-A Tribute to a Life of Distinction

The passing of His Honour Carden Conliffe Clarke has left an indelible mark on the hearts and minds of all who had the privilege of knowing him. As an esteemed jurist, community leader, and a pillar of integrity, Carden Conliffe Clarke's legacy extends far beyond the confines of his distinguished legal career, touching the lives of countless individuals who were fortunate enough to have crossed paths with this extraordinary individual. Born on 27th October 1974, Carden Conliffe Clarke's journey was one of unwavering dedication, intellectual prowess, and a steadfast commitment to the principles of justice and fairness that defined his remarkable life.

His legal career spanned decades, during which he made significant contributions to the legal landscape via private practice, stints at Intellectual Property Division and serving with distinction on the bench. His Honour's unwavering dedication to the pursuit of justice and his ability to navigate the complexities of the legal system with grace and wisdom were hallmarks of his tenure on the bench, where he consistently demonstrated a keen intellect, a deep understanding of the law, fairness and an unwavering commitment to upholding

the highest standards of judicial conduct.

Beyond his professional achievements, Carden Conliffe Clarke was also a pillar of the Villa community, actively in-



Carden Conliffe Clarke

volved in sports and civic organizations that sought to improve the lives of those around him. He was well known in the basketball field. His unwavering commitment to public service and his genuine concern for the well-being of his fellow citizens were inspiring, and his legacy will continue to be felt for generations to come.

The passing of His Honour Carden Conliffe Clarke is a pro-

found loss, not only for his immediate family and friends, but for the entire legal community and the broader society that he so profoundly impacted. As we mourn the loss of this esteemed jurist and cherished community member, we are reminded of the enduring impact that a life of distinction and dedicated service can have on the world around us. Carden Conliffe Clarke's legacy will continue to inspire and guide us, reminding us of the power of integrity, compassion, and a steadfast commitment to the pursuit of justice.

His Honour Carden Conliffe Clarke you will sorely be missed.

MAY THE SOUL OF DEPARTED HIS HONOUR CARDEN CON-LIFFE CLARKE JOURNEY WELL.

The Honourable Sir Steadroy Cutie Benjamin- The Attorney General The Magistracy- His Honour Dexter Wason, Her Honour Ngaio Emanuel, Her Honour Veronica Thomas, His Honour Dane Hamilton Jr The Staff of the Magistrates' Court The Ministry of Legal Affairs The Staff of the Intellectual Property Division



Regional News

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Grenadian Coast Guard rescue 4 Trinidadians after boat sinks

Four Trinidadian men were rescued after their vessel sank in Grenadian waters on Friday, following a swift response by the Grenada Coast Guard.

The rescue operation was launched immediately after authorities received a distress call on February 21.

Coast Guard personnel arrived at the scene to discover the original vessel had already sunk after taking on too much water.

After searching the surrounding area, the rescue team located four male Trinidadian nationals, aged between 35 and 55, who had managed to escape onto a makeshift raft.

According to Coast Guard officials, the men's situation was deteriorating rapidly as their raft had also begun taking on water.

The Coast Guard successfully brought all four men aboard their vessel and transported them to Queen's Jetty. The survivors were subsequently taken to the General Hospital for medical evaluation and treatment.

Officials from the Royal Grenada Police Force praised the Coast Guard's efforts, highlighting the team's bravery and quick response in challenging conditions.

In the wake of the incident, the Grenada Coast Guard has issued a reminder to "review weather conditions before departure, as rough seas played a significant role in the difficulties encountered by the distressed vessel." (Loop Caribbean)

Dominica's signature sound takes centre stage for Bouyon Day 2025

Hanover Street will transform into the epicentre of Dominican musical culture today as the nation celebrates Bouyon Day with a free concert event that promises to showcase the island's distinctive sound.

"Bouyon in de Streets" will run from 6pm to midnight, bringing together an impressive lineup of the genre's top performers near the popular Banana Tree Bar & Grill location.

The celebration features a who's who of Bouyon talent, including Asa Bantan, Litle Boy, Quan, Reo, Freddy, Clint H, Najee, Likkle Man, Skinny Bantan, Rah, Delly, Kenny G, and TK International. Audiences can also look forward to performances by Unstoppable Shax, with DJ Snow handling music between

live sets.

Bouyon music emerged in Dominica during the late 1980s as a fusion of traditional island rhythms like Jing Ping and Lapo Kabwit. Music historians credit the WCK Band - whose name derives from founding members Wackas, Cornell, and Keith - with pioneering the genre's distinctive sound.

Over the decades, Bouyon has evolved to incorporate elements from other Caribbean styles including Cadence-Lypso, Soca, and Zouk, while also embracing electronic production techniques.

The result is a high-energy musical form that has become a cornerstone of Dominican cultural identity while gaining international



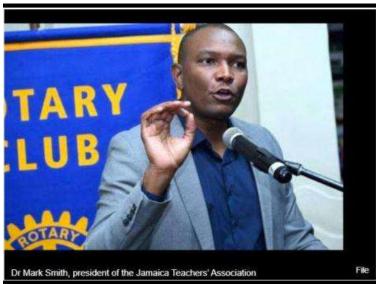
recognition. (Loop Carib-

bean)

Regional News



JTA warns gov't: Pay outstanding teacher allowances or face industrial action



The Jamaica Teachers' Association (JTA) is urging the education ministry to speak with the finance ministry about paying outstanding allowances to teachers to avert industrial action in the public school system.

In a news statement on Monday, JTA President Dr Mark Smith said the union will not accept any attempts by the finance ministry to renege on payment of outstanding graduate allowances to teachers, along with other payments included in an agreement signed on March 13, 2023.

"I am deeply troubled by reports reaching the JTA from across the island that many of our teachers are not in receipt of their graduate allowances, and this is making our members highly restive at this time. It is absolutely shameful that the MOESYI (Ministry of Education, Skills, Youth and Information) would have gone ahead and given permission for this action to be carried out," argued Smith.

He continued: "I am calling on the Minister of Education and the Permanent Secretary to speak with their colleagues in the MOFPS (Ministry of

Finance and the Public Service) to resolve this matter. The JTA stands willing to take the requisite action to ensure that our members are not deprived of what is rightfully theirs."

The JTA has also expressed displeasure at the lack of payment of retroactive mileage allowances for teachers, over the period April 1, 2022, to November 30, 2022, which it said should have been included in the last revised budget for the 2024-2025 fiscal year.

The union also said that it is dissatisfied with the pace of salary negotiations for the 2025-2028 contract period. (*Jamaica Gleaner*)



Regional News

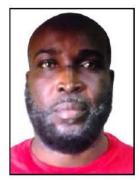
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SKN: Former police chief, one of two arrested for money laundering

Vaughan Henderson, a resident of Saddler's Village, and Andre Williams, also known as Andre Mills, from Newton Ground, were arrested and charged for serious criminal offenses related to financial misconduct and obstruction of justice.

The two men face multiple charges of money laundering and perverting the course of justice.

Henderson, a former As-



williams, and H sistant Commissioner of Police and now an attorney, was charged with six counts of money laundering and two counts of perverting the



course of justice.

Williams, a resident of
Newton Ground, faces four
counts of money launder-

perverting the course of justice.

Both men were arrested and charged at the White Collar Crime Unit's office on February 21 following an extensive investigation by law enforcement officials.

As of now, both Henderson and Williams are set to face legal proceedings in the near future, with authorities promising a thorough investigation. (*Loop Caribbean*)





Application Open!

Requirements:

Citizen of Antigua & Barbuda
Female, 18-26 years
Minimum 5 CSEC, including English A
Never married & no children
No criminal record

Forms can be collected at:

The Ministry of Creative Industries,
Old Parham Road, upstairs KFC

Mon-Thurs: 10am - 2pm

Fri: 10am - 1pm

Call: 562-9605/06

Deadline March 14th 2025



International

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AROUND THE WORLI

Search underway for US tourist lost in Puerto Rican rainforest

Authorities in Puerto Rico are searching for a US tourist they say got lost in the dense tropical rain forest of El Yunque in the US territory's east.

Police said in a statement that Abdur Rahman, 64, was

hiking with a group when he became separated from them on Sunday.

Crews resumed their search on Monday for Rahman, who police said lives in Wisconsin. El Yunque is a popular tourist spot and the only tropical rain forest overseen by the US Forest Service.

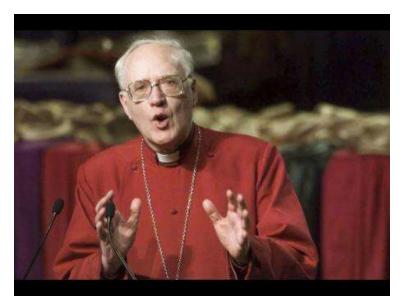
Last year, a US tourist died after authorities said he fell off a cliff after leaving a designated hiking area. (*Loop Caribbean*)

Former Church of England leader faces potential disciplinary action over handling of abuse claims

A former leader of the Church of England is among several members of the clergy facing potential disciplinary action over the way the institution handled sexual abuse allegations, church officials said Tuesday.

George Carey, who was Archbishop of Canterbury from 1991 to 2002, resigned as a priest in December after media reports that he allowed the Reverend David Tudor, who had been banned over sexual abuse claims, to return to priesthood in the 1990s.

The church's national safeguarding team said Tuesday it is seeking to bring disciplinary proceedings against Carey and nine other clergy over potential failures



in a separate abuse case.

In November, the church published an independent report concluding that serial abuse by a volunteer at Christian summer camps was known about and not acted upon by various people within the church.

The report said Carey had been informed of the serious physical and sexual abuse by the volunteer, prominent lawyer John Smyth, and that he had been sent a copy of a previous report into it, "but he denies seeing it."

That inquiry also found that Justin Welby, the church's former head and spiritual leader of the global Anglican Communion, failed to tell police what he knew about the allegations against Smyth. Welby resigned last

year

Smyth, who is believed to have targeted more than 100 young boys and men over five decades, died in 2018 in Cape Town while he was under investigation by police.

Alexander Kubeyinje, the Church of England's national director of safeguarding, said the church was "truly sorry" for the harms caused to survivors and victims of abuse by Smyth.

"We know this will never undo the harm caused but the Church is committed to taking very seriously its response to the findings of the review as well as responding to its recommendations," he said. (Jamaica Gleaner) MON - FRI 6:30AM TO 9AM



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International

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Seven planets to be visible in night sky for last time until 2040



Skywatchers are in for a treat this week as seven planets - Mars, Jupiter, Uranus, Venus, Neptune, Mercury, and Saturn will all be briefly visible in the evening sky.

This phenomenon, known as a 'planetary parade' is a rare sight, and it will be the last time seven planets can be seen simultaneously so well until 2040.

The best chance to see as many planets as possible will be just after sunset on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday.

Four of the planets - Mercury, Venus, Jupiter, and Mars - will be visible to the naked eye. Saturn will be harder to see because it will be low in the horizon. You will need a telescope to spot the other two planets - Uranus and Neptune.

A good view of the horizon

and clear skies will offer the best chance of spotting them all. However, the window to see all seven planets will be very brief.

Dr Edward Bloomer, astronomer at the Royal Observatory Greenwich said: "There's a rare opportunity to have seven planets in essentially a convenient place for you to look for them."

As the sun sets, Saturn and Mercury will also be setting, making them particularly difficult to see.

"You really only have a few minutes after sunset to catch them before they drop below the horizon. After that, you'll still be able to see Venus, Jupiter, and Mars clearly for a much longer time," Dr Bloomer added.

The planets in our solar system orbit the Sun within

roughly the same flat plane as the Earth.

As they orbit at different speeds and distances from the Sun, there are moments when they appear to line up from Earth's perspective creating a spectacular visual display, although the planets remain separated by vast distances in space.

Venus and Jupiter will be the easiest to spot due to their brightness, while Mars will have a distinct reddish hue.

"Uranus is technically visible with the naked eye, but you'd need perfect eyesight and ideal conditions," Dr Bloomer explains.

To improve your chances of seeing as many planets as possible, Dr Bloomer advises heading to a location with a clear view of the horizon and minimal light pollution. "If you just pop out of your kitchen into your back garden, you will take time to adjust to the light levels. Give it a bit of time - your eyes take about half an hour to fully adjust," said Dr Bloomer.

"Avoid looking at your phone, get comfortable, and ensure you have an unobstructed view of the horizon."

While this is an exciting opportunity, Dr Bloomer encourages people to make a habit of gazing at the night sky.

"See how things change," he said, adding that observing the heavens is "a chance to witness the ongoing mechanics of the solar system at work." (BBC News)



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Internationa

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Prosecutors compare South Korean president Yoon to a dictator as impeachment trial nears end

South Korean parliamentary lawyers seeking President Yoon Suk Yeol's removal over his short-lived imposition of martial law compared him to a dictator in final arguments during his impeachment trial on Tuesday.

Yoon was expected to make a closing statement later in the hearing before the Constitutional Court reviewing his impeachment, as public hearings wrap up and his political fate is placed in the hands of eight judges.

Yoon faces being removed from office less than three years into his five-year presidency if the court upholds parliament's impeachment, which accused him of declaring martial law on December 3 with no justifiable constitutional grounds.

Lee Kwang-beom, one of the lawyers for parliament, compared Yoon to previous autocratic South Korean leaders including Park Chung-hee and Chun Doohwan.

Yoon wanted to create a world where his every word would be written into the constitution, and sought to privatize the country and reign over the constitution, Lee argued.

"We call this dictatorship," he said. "The moment he declared martial law, he effectively gave up on his position as the president of our democratic republic."



Another lawyer said Yoon's allegations of election fraud were conspiracy theories that have had a "fatal" impact on the credibility of the election system.

The president has said in his trial he had a right to declare martial law but never meant to impose full military rule, instead arguing he intended to warn of the opposition Democratic Party's abuse of its parliamentary majority.

The justices are expected to take days to rule on whether to remove him from office or reinstate him.

Yoon has said that martial law, which lasted just six hours before he rescinded the decree, was not a failure but simply ended sooner than he intended.

He said there was no point in debating accusations

that he ordered military commanders to break into parliament to remove lawmakers gathering to lift the martial law decree because "nothing actually happened" and nobody was harmed.

Yoon's arguments drew a rebuke from parliament that the president was incapable of judging what constituted a national emergency that requires such an extreme act and that he might attempt to impose martial law again if reinstated.

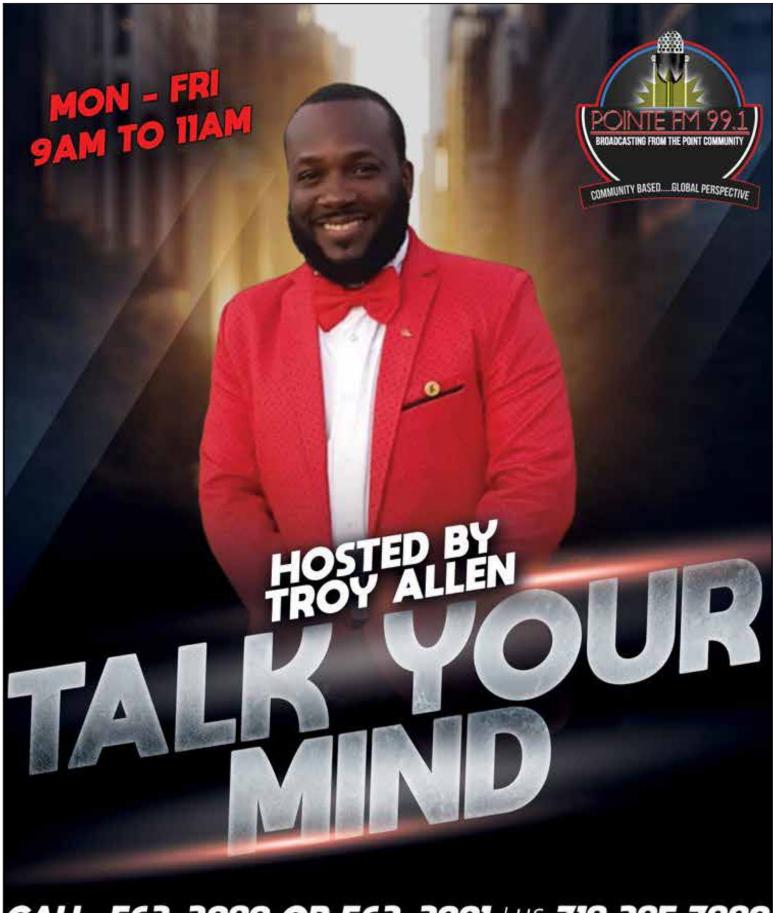
His shocking martial law announcement, which banned political and parliamentary activity, triggered a constitutional crisis that also led to the impeachment of the prime minister who was acting president. The finance minister currently leads the country.

Yoon is being held in the Seoul Detention Centre after he was arrested over a separate criminal case, charging him with leading an insurrection. The former prosecutor is the first sitting president to face a criminal trial.

The Constitutional Court has not said when it will deliver its ruling on Yoon but has up to six months from December 14, when it registered the case.

Former President Park Geun-hye was removed from office in 2017 by the Constitutional Court 11 days after the final arguments in her impeachment trial.

If Yoon is removed, a new presidential election must be held within 60 days. (NBC News)



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WE ARE GETTING STRONGER

Sports News

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United gets first win in Division 2 basketball league



Square One Construction United secured their first win in the Antigua and Barbuda Basketball Association's (ABBA) Division 2 League on Monday evening.

After losing all previous three games, United won for the first time in four encounters by snatching a 69-63 victory over Da Project 2 in the opening game of a double-header at the JSC Sports Complex.

Dwayne Samuel sank 21 points and grabbed 14 rebounds; Andrew Simon converted 16 points; Manlight Simmons converted 11 points and snatched 16 rebounds; Thomas Skerrit produced 11 points and 10 rebounds; and Neville Chambers had 10 points, 12 rebounds, and five assists for United.

Nathan Matthew converted 14 points,

and Gabriel De-Suza scored 10 points for Da Project 2, who suffered their fourth loss in as many games.

Spanish Heat 2 claimed their third win in five encounters by snatching a narrow 55-51 victory against Michael Joseph Phoenix in the second game of Monday's double-header.

Kevin Pimentel sank 20 points; Erwin Rodriguez scored 14 points and grabbed 12 rebounds; and Charlie Daniel produced 10 points, 17 rebounds, and six steals for Spanish Heat 2.

Tyreke Lewis shot

a game-high 23 points and claimed seven rebounds, and Shalom Bloodman scored 10 points and grabbed 11 rebounds for Michael Joseph Phoenix, who suffered their third loss in four games.

The Second Division League will continue with another double-header at the JSC Sports Complex on Wednesday (today).

The EZ Fit Flyers 2 will tackle Curtain Bluff Old Road Daggers in their first encounter at 6:45 pm, and Ramco Pharmacy Fearless Crew will take on Da Project 2 in the second game at 8:30 pm.



Sports News



Mixed fortunes for AGHS-1 in Schools' Netball Competition







Schools Netball Competition

The first team of the Antigua Girls High School (AGHS-1) had mixed fortunes in the latest round of matches in the Ministry of Sports, Joma Caribbean, Cool and Smooth Schools' Netball Competition on Monday.

The Antigua Girls
High School first team
(AGHS-1) suffered a narrow 3-4 loss to Sir Novelle Richards Academy in
the Under-13 Secondary
Division at the YMCA
Sports Complex.

But the Antigua Girls High School first team (AGHS-1) hit back to snatch a 3-2 victory against Clare Hall Secondary.

In the same division, the Antigua Girls High School second team (AGHS-2) prevailed 8-5 against Princess Margaret School, and Ottos Comprehensive School pulled off a 9-1 victory against All Saints Secondary.

The Antigua Girls

High School second team (AGHS-1) romped to an emphatic 32-4 drubbing of Christ the King High School in the Under-16 Secondary Division.

Pares Secondary had mixed fortunes in the same division. Pares Secondary snatched a narrow 5-4 victory against Sir Novelle Richards Academy but suffered a humiliating 2-33 loss to the Antigua Girls High School second team (AGHS-2).

The Antigua Girls
High School first team
(AGHS-1) also snatched a
narrow 5-4 victory against
Ottos Comprehensive
School in the Under-13
Secondary Division.

The Irene B. Williams Secondary pulled off a 15-5 victory against Ottos Comprehensive School in the Under-18 Secondary Division.

In the Under-13 Primary Division, J.T. Ambrose Primary snatched a 3-2 victory against St. Andrews Primary.

St. Andrews Primary rebounded to claim a 3-1 victory against Potters Primary, while Villa Primary prevailed 5-3 against Nelvie N. Gore Primary of Willikies.

In the Under-13 Development Division, Mary E. Pigott snatched a 2-1 victory against Five Islands Primary, and Greenbay Primary beat T.N. Kirnon Primary 5-1.

However, T.N. Kirnon Primary rebounded to snatch a 2-1 win against Mary E. Pigott Primary.

Meanwhile, action continued in the Ministry of Sports JOMA Caribbean Inter-School Volleyball League at the YMCA Sports Complex on Monday.

There were wins for the Harrison Centre Antigua and Barbuda School of Continuing Education (HCABSCE) and defending champions Island Academy in the male division.

HCABSCE prevailed

25-23, 14-25, and 17-15 against Sir Novelle Richards Academy.

Island Academy romped to a 25-15, 25-19 victory against Clare Hall Secondary.

The Antigua Girls High School first team (AGHS-1) recorded a 25-21, 20-25, 15-13 victory against Christ the King High School in the female division.

In previous results, the HCABSCE and defending champions Island Academy also notched up victories in the male division.

HCABDCE prevailed 2-1 against Clare Hall Secondary, winning 25-16, 25-27, and 15-12.

The Island Academy first team beat the Island Academy second team 25-7, 25-9.

Defending female division champion Island Academy also recorded a 25-18, 25-21 victory against Ottos Comprehensive School.

Sports News

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LI Hurricanes seek to rebound from loss to Volcanoes in Women's Super50 Cup

The Leeward Islands (LI) Hurricanes will seek to rebound from an opening round loss to the Windward Islands Volcanoes when the 2025 CG United Insurance Women's Super50 Cup resumes in St. Kitts on Wednesday (today).

A stunning five-wicket haul from spinner Afy Fletcher propelled Windward Islands Volcanoes Women to a commanding eight-wicket victory over Leeward Islands Hurricanes Women in their opening match of the 50over one-day competition at the St Paul's Sports Complex in Basseterre on Monday.

Winning the toss and electing to field first, Windwards' bowling attack made light work of the Leeward Islands batting lineup, dismissing them for just 93 in 28 overs.

Fletcher led the charge with an exceptional spell, taking five for 15 in seven overs, while Amiah Gilbert



Afy Fletcher

(2-25) and Pearl Etienne (1-11) provided strong support. Reniece Boyce (24 off 37) and Melicia Clarke (23 off 66) were the only batters to offer resistance for the Leewards.

In response, the Windwards made easy work of their target, reaching 94 for two in just 13.5 overs. Jannillea Glasgow stole the show with a solid 55 not out off 44 balls, smashing 11 fours to accelerate the chase.

Zaida James (21

off 32) also played a crucial supporting role before Fletcher, capping off her all-round performance, guided her team home with an unbeaten six off as many balls.

For the Leeward Islands, Jahzara Claxton (1-20) and Rozel Liburd (1-32) were the only wicket-takers, but their efforts were not enough to stop Windwards' dominant display.

The women of the Leeward Islands Hurricanes will hope to

make amends when they take on Trinidad and Tobago in their second-round match at the Conaree Sports Club.

The Trinidad and Tobago women will also be seeking their first win after crashing to a 51-run defeat to the women of defending champions Jamaica Scorpions in their opening encounter at Warner Park.

The Jamaicans will take on the women of the Guyana Harpy Eagles in their second-round match at the St Paul's Sports Complex in Basseterre on Wednesday.

The Guyana Harpy Eagles women lost by 11 runs to the women of the Barbados Pride in their opening affair at the Conaree Sports Club on Monday.

The Barbados Pride women will clash with the women of the Windward Islands Volcanoes in the other second-round match at Warner Park on Wednesday.

Sports News



Wavell Hinds gains re-election as WIPA president



Wavell Hinds

Wavell Hinds says he remains committed to serving in the best interest of players after being re-elect-

ed unopposed as president of the West Indies Players' Association (WIPA) for a seventh consecutive term. Hinds, who has led WIPA since 2011, will continue to work alongside his executive team, who were all unanimously re-elected for another term, which will run until 2027

The other members of the WIPA executive team are vice-president Nixon McLean, honorary secretary Wayne Lewis, Liam Sebastien, who will continue to serve as assistant secretary, and treasurer Ridley Jacobs of Antigua and Barbuda.

"I remain committed to prioritising the needs of our players and membership throughout my leadership," Hinds said during WIPA's annual general meeting (AGM) at the St. Kitts Marriott on Sunday.

"I extend a warm welcome to our new director, Ms Rashada Williams, and wish her and the entire executive team success in the upcoming term," he added.

Jamaica women's captain Rashada Williams was appointed as WIPA's second non-elected director, joining Barbadian Shakera Selman on the board.

The AGM coincided with the Women's Super50 Cup, which allowed for participating players to engage with WIPA and gain deeper insights into its activities and achievements over the past year.

More success for Sir McChesney George in School Basketball League

The Sir McChesney George Secondary School of Barbuda extended its unbeaten run in the Junior Boys Division in the Cool and Smooth Inter-School Basketball League on Monday.

Sir McChesney George Secondary claimed their fourth win in as many games with a 40-13 drubbing of Sir Novelle Richards Academy at the JSC Sports Complex.

Eli Harris converted 12 points, and TJ Clarke scored 10 points for Sir Mc-Chesney George Secondary.

But Sir McChesney George Secondary suffered back-to-back losses in the Senior Boys Division.

After winning their first encounter, the senior boys of Sir McChesney George Secondary lost for the second time in three games in a 38-55 defeat to Antigua Grammar School.

Raheem Sawyer and Najee Simons each converted 17 points for Antigua Grammar School, while Eli Harris also scored 17 points for Sir Mc-Chesney George Secondary.



The Junior Boys Division team of the Sir McChesney George Secondary School.

The Sir Novelle Richards Academy snatched a 19-11 victory against All Saints Secondary in the Miniboys Secondary Division.

Jaden Royer sank 10 points for Sir

Novelle Richards Academy, while Tyrese Lewis scored 11 points for All Saints Secondary.

S OOFTS WEDNESDAY 26TH FEBRUARY 2025



Guyana advance to CONCACAF Women's Under-20 Championship



The Guyana team celebrate after beating Haiti in their Group A match in the CONCACAF Under-20 Women's Qualifiers at the ABFA Technical Center in Antigua on Tuesday, February 25, 2025.

Guyana qualified for the CONCACAF Women's Under-20 Championship on Tuesday in Antigua and Barbuda by winning Group A of the 2025 CONCACAF Under-20 Women's Qualifiers, which took place across six four-team groups in four host countries from February 21 to 25.

Guyana booked their spot in the CONCA-CAF Women's Under-20 Championship by snatching a 1-0 victory against favourites Haiti in their final Group A match at the

ABFA Technical Center in



A Guyanese player tries to evade a tackle from a Haitian defender during their Group A match in the CONCACAF Under-20 Women's Qualifiers at the ABFA Technical Center in Antiqua on Tuesday, February 25, 2025.

Paynters.

Myanne Fernandes scored the decisive goal in the 59th minute, sending Guyana through to the tournament's main draw for a second time. In 2020, they reached the quarter-finals, where they were knocked out by Haiti.

Guyana needed a win against Haiti to progress, as only the top team from the group would advance. Tuesday's win meant Guyana won Group A with seven points from their three matches, while Haiti finished in second place with six points by winning their other two matches.

The Guyanese girls will now join the other six winners of the 2025 CONCACAF Under-20 Women's Qualifiers and pre-seeded powerhouses, the United States and Mexico, to compete for places at the FIFA Under-20 Women's World Cup in Poland in August 2026.

The 2025 Under-20 Women's Championship will determine the four CONCACAF representatives for the 2026 FIFA Under-20 Women's World Cup in Poland.

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