

ABEC makes appeal to Barbudans as Council elections draw near

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Returning Officer, Lornamay Benjamin-Hughes conducting training for Election Day workers in Barbuda

ABEC makes appeal to Barbudans as Council elections draw near



Registered voters in the island constituency of Barbuda are voting in Council Elections next week Wednesday and with just days to go the Antigua and Barbuda Electoral Commission is making every effort to ensure that everyone who wants to vote will have the opportunity to do so.

With the final weekend before the elections, ABEC is opening the registration centre in Codrington to accommodate those voters who need to apply for updated Voter ID Cards, or for those who have already applied, to collect their cards, as this is necessary for them to participate in the elections.

“Once again, we wish to inform Barbudans who are yet to apply for replacement Voter ID Cards, to do so as soon as possible. For those who have already applied for replacement cards, the registration unit will open from 8:00 am to 6:00 pm daily Mondays to Fridays and 9:00 am to 1:00 pm on the weekend until the elec-



tions. I wish to encourage all those concerned to utilize the extra time collect their replacement cards or to apply for replacement cards. This as the preparations for the Council Elections 2025 move into high gear,” ABEC spokesman, Elisa Graham announced.

Meanwhile, ABEC has been mounting training sessions for those individuals who have applied to be Election Day Workers. Those sessions

started on Thursday and are being held at the Holy Trinity School in Codrington.

Returning Officer, Lornamay Benjamin- Hughes is facilitating the training sessions, which will cover all aspects of procedures associated with the electoral process.

A team from the Antigua and Barbuda Electoral Commission is also in Barbuda to assist with preparations for Council Elections 2025.

Statement from the Principal of The UWI Five Islands Campus



“Standing Together in Grief, Action, and Love”

By Professor C. Justin Robinson

Ladies and gentlemen, members of our Five Islands community, my heart is heavy today as I stand before you, not as an academic, not as an administrator, but as a parent, a neighbour, and a Caribbean soul deeply wounded by this unspeakable tragedy.

We are gathered in the shadow of immense sorrow, mourning the brutal and senseless loss of an innocent child—one of our own. A young girl, full of promise, laughter, and dreams, was taken from us in an act so cruel that words cannot capture the depth of our anguish. The Five Islands Primary School, our neighbour, a place of learning and joy, now bears the weight of this profound tragedy. Our entire community feels the pain, the outrage, the grief.

But we must not let this heartbreak paralyze us. We must channel our sorrow into action, our anger into protection, and our love into change.

A Call to Action

1. Supporting the Family – No family should have to endure this kind of loss alone. The UWI Five Islands Campus stands in full solidarity with the grieving family. We commit to providing support, whether through counselling, financial assistance, or simply standing by them in their darkest hour. I urge each of you—our faculty, students, and the wider community—to do the same. Let us be their strength when theirs is gone.

2. Ensuring the Safety of Our Children – This cannot, must not, happen again. We must demand stronger protections for our children. We need enhanced security measures in our schools and communities. We need educational programs that teach our children how to recognize danger and seek help. We need every adult—every parent, every teacher, every neighbour—to be vigilant, to be aware, to be a protector.

3. Justice and Accountability – We must insist on swift and firm action from law enforcement. The perpetra-

tors of this horrific crime must face the full weight of justice. At the same time, we must look beyond punishment and ask ourselves: What more can we do? How can we, as a society, prevent this from happening to another child?

Standing Together

There is an old Caribbean saying: “One, one cocoa full basket.” This means that when we each do our part, together, we can create something powerful. Today, I call on all of us to do our part—to support this grieving family, to demand a safer community, and to promise, from the depths of our hearts, that we will not allow another innocent child to be stolen from us.

Let us turn this pain into purpose. Let us honour this young soul not just with our tears, but with our actions.

May she rest in peace. May we rise in resolve. And may we, together, ensure that our children can live without fear, grow without harm, and dream without limits.

Thank you.

Medical Director reports to Cabinet

The Medical Director (ag) of the Sir Lester Bird Medical Centre, Dr. Shivon Belle-Jarvis, has provided the Cabinet with a detailed report of her findings since assuming the post at the end of January.

During the update, Dr. Belle-Jarvis, who was Head of the SLBMC Pediatrics Unit, noted that the neonatal mortality-rate for Antigua and Barbuda is relatively lower than several other islands in the Caribbean.

“The Antigua and Barbuda rate is 5.4 deaths per one thousand live births. Antigua and Barbuda has surpassed its 2030 SDG goal of no more than 12 per one thousand. The Director spoke of the need for increased staffing and replacement equipment at the SLBMC. The Cabinet agreed to provide 800,000.00 USD for the most acute equipment needs,” the Cabinet Notes reported.

It said in order to provide more nurses, the SLBMC will provide incentives for young men and women to pursue careers in nursing. Those who are enrolled in UWI Five Islands Nursing Programme will be offered scholarships of a greater amount than that of other disciplines which are already saturated.

The SLBMC will also encourage students who are in Fifth Form and are planning to select a career, to be encouraged by monetary in-



centives to choose nursing. The proposal is to have a short, medium and long-term plan since it takes four years to grow new nurses.

Additionally, the director provided a capital-assets-needs list; a second CT Scan Machine is among the equipment that will be immediately purchased. The

Doctor was applauded for her integrity, high level of efficiency, and for bringing very useful changes to the SLBMC.

Sir Lester Bird Medical Centre Joins the World in Observing Down Syndrome Awareness Day

Sir Lester Bird Medical Centre (SLBMC) is proud to join the global community in observing

participate in Rock Your Socks Day by wearing brightly colored socks in support of individuals

brating the abilities and achievements of individuals with Down syndrome but also on the vital im-

Ride. The ride will feature one route suitable for all ages and skill levels, offering a great opportunity for the community to come together, have fun, and raise funds to support SLBMC's pediatric care services and local organizations that assist individuals with Down syndrome.

"We invite the community to join us for both events," said **Salma Crump, Head of Marketing & Communications at SLBMC**. "These activities are not only a chance to raise awareness about Down syndrome, but also to come together as a community to support those who need it most. The funds raised will help SLBMC continue its vital work, as well as support local organizations that assist persons living with Down syndrome."

Funds raised from Rock Your Socks Day will support SLBMC's programs and other organizations dedicated to enhancing the lives of people with Down syndrome. Whether participating in the fun ride or supporting Rock Your Socks Day, the community's involvement will help make a meaningful difference.



Down Syndrome Awareness Day on March 21, 2025. This year's theme, "Improving Our Support Systems," highlights the importance of strengthening the systems that support individuals with Down syndrome and their families. To mark the occasion, SLBMC will host its annual "Rock Your Socks Day" and invite the community to participate in the Family Fun Ride hosted by the Antigua & Barbuda Cycling Federation.

Rock Your Socks Day

On March 21, SLBMC encourages everyone to

with Down syndrome. This fun and engaging awareness activity (and fundraiser) is an opportunity for the community to show solidarity and raise awareness about the importance of inclusivity and support for people with Down syndrome.

"At SLBMC, we believe that every child deserves access to high-quality healthcare, regardless of their abilities," said **Dr. Saleem Hughes, Chair of the Pediatric Department at SLBMC**. "During Down Syndrome Awareness Month, we focus not only on cele-

portance of improving our support systems. By strengthening healthcare, education, and community resources, we can create a more inclusive and empowering environment where every individual with Down syndrome has the opportunity to thrive. Let's work together to ensure that all families receive the care, support, and opportunities they deserve."

Family Fun Ride

On March 23, SLBMC is excited to collaborate with the Antigua & Barbuda Cycling Federation for the annual Family Fun

The Calvin Ayre Foundation Donates USD \$39,000 to Help 10-Year-Old Boy Battling Hodgkin's Lymphoma

March 17, 2025 — The Calvin Ayre Foundation recently donated US\$39,000 to help a 10-year-old boy, Kishon John, who is courageously battling Hodgkin's Lymphoma. The funds have gone toward covering a part of his medical expenses for life-saving treatment in Colombia, where he will undergo specialized care. The donation also covered accommodation costs, as Kishon and his mom will need to be in Colombia for up to eight months.

Kishon John was diagnosed with Hodgkin's Lymphoma, a form of cancer that affects the lymphatic system. Despite the challenges of his diagnosis, Kishon has remained resilient and hopeful. However, his family faced significant financial obstacles in accessing the necessary treatment, as specialized care for his condition is unavailable in Antigua and Barbuda. In response to Kishon's urgent need, the Calvin Ayre Foundation, known for its commitment to supporting individuals and communities in need, stepped forward with a generous donation of US\$39,000. The donation will ensure that Kishon can receive the critical treatment he needs to fight this disease.

Jamilla Kirwan, Manager of the Calvin Ayre Foundation, expressed her deep empathy for Kishon's situation, stating, "We are honored to assist Kishon and his family during this challenging time. Every child deserves the chance to fight for their health, and we are proud to contribute to giving Kishon that opportunity. His strength and determination are an inspiration to us all."

Kishon's mother, Kishere John, who has been by his side throughout his journey, expressed immense gratitude for the donation.

"We want to say thank you to the Calvin Ayre Foundation. Your timely donation makes it possible for Kishon and I to go down to Colombia, where we will be for 8 months, where he will be getting treatment that he is urgently in need of. Everybody that has donated, we are grateful, we are thankful and we will update on how he is doing as the time goes by. Thank you kindly."

Kishere has advised that Kishon

is now admitted to hospital in Colombia, undergoing testing. Doctors have advised that he will be in hospital for approximately two months. Kishon's family, relatives and friends are all hopeful that this treatment will lead to a successful recovery.

The donation to Kishon is a testament of the Calvin Ayre Foundation's mission to continue providing critical support to individuals facing medical hardships.



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Three Arrested on Suspicion of Robbery and Illegal Firearm Possession

Police are questioning three individuals on suspicion of robbery and unlawful possession of a firearm along with several rounds of ammunition.

During an extensive foot and mobile patrol across various communities,

police arrested two male suspects of Fort Road and Liberta, who were both wanted for questioning regarding a robbery.

Additionally, a man from Grays Farm was taken into custody for ques-

tioning for unlawful possession of a revolver and several matching rounds of ammunition. These offenses occurred on Wednesday night at Fort Road and Grays Farm. Investigations are ongoing.

Smoldering Notice for Cook's Landfill

NSWNA Press Statement

The National Solid Waste Management Authority (NSWMA) experienced a small fire at the Cook's Sanitary Landfill on Monday 17th March, 2025 at approximately 9:30pm. The fire was quickly extinguished on Tuesday afternoon with coordinated ef-

forts, however Landfill fires can be challenging, the site remains smothering with after fumes.

NSWMA would like to publicly thank all the government stakeholders who acted swiftly in the emergency situation to gain control of the fire and the management and staff of Cook's Sanitary

Landfill who joined forces to aid in the extinguishing of the blaze.

Finally, the Authority would like to express sincere apologies to the surrounding communities for the disruption of their day to day activities. To include the poor air quality, person with respiratory ailments are asked

to stay indoors or take precautionary measures.

As, we move forward the Authority pledges to minimize hazardous events within the Landfill.

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The Caribbean: Destined to Grin and Bear the Consequences of Its Self-Created Vulnerabilities?



by Sir Ronald Sanders

For decades, many Caribbean nations have grappled with dependence on a small number of powerful countries to supply vital imports, fill hotel rooms with tourists, and grant visas that open doors to opportunity.

These dependencies, while convenient in the short term, have far-reaching implications that undermine the sovereignty, economic resilience, and social cohesion of the region.

The result is a precarious position in which external forces can, at will, stop issuing visas or curtail the flow of remittances, tourism revenues, and imports, thereby threatening local economies and well-being.

Yet this vulnerability is not imposed solely by big countries outside the region; it is fuelled by our own choices and the persistence of historically ingrained attitudes of dependence.

If the Caribbean is to protect its sovereignty and genuine-

ly chart its own path, urgent action is needed on multiple fronts: strengthening public institutions, embracing import substitution where feasible, boosting food security, and forging deeper regional integration that goes beyond rhetoric.

The High Cost of Reliance on Few Sources

Most Caribbean countries have traditionally counted on one or two main trading partners to supply the lion's share of basic goods - food, fuel, and other consumer items. Similarly, the tourism industry often hinges on a narrow band of visitors from North America and, in some instances, Europe. When these markets thrive, substantial income flows into the region. However, when economic downturns or political decisions arise in these external sources, local economies can be brought to a standstill overnight.

Adding to this is the strong appetite for visas among Caribbean populations. Many citizens in the region aspire to travel or migrate to a handful of countries; some even sacrifice to ensure that their children are born in these states so it might help secure residence.

There is no denying that social and economic factors underpin this reality. Yet it inadvertently strengthens these same countries' leverage over Caribbean states. The spectre of visa restric-

tions or migration clamp-downs worries populations who, by this preference, place their personal - and by extension, economic - aspirations in the hands of foreign government policies.

We should note that it is not a power these foreign governments necessarily seek; it is a power that Caribbean peoples grant by the importance they place on visas and migration.

Weakening Independence and Sovereignty

After more than six decades of political independence, Caribbean nations often find their sovereignty limited by those foreign powers on which they still depend. The freedom to determine priorities - be they in food supply, manufacturing policy, or migrant labour regulations - can be undercut by reliance on international tourism, shipping lanes, and external finances.

Additionally, continuing distrust of political governance in the region - often linked to perceptions of corruption, unfair treatment, or non-transparent policies - has eroded public faith. Ironically, many Caribbean citizens remain more inclined to trust residual colonial-era institutions (such as the British Privy Council) or to seek stability abroad - where they risk facing discrimination and xenophobia - rather than channelling their energies toward home-

grown solutions. Collectively, this mindset locks the region into a cycle of dependence and vulnerability.

The Need for Stronger Institutions and Self-Sufficiency

Breaking these chains of dependency starts with ensuring that public institutions are capable, efficient, and transparent.

The region's public services must curb bureaucratic waste, channel resources more effectively, and provide support for local industries that can scale up and meet domestic demand. This includes building food security, encouraging import substitution, strengthening public services and good governance, and diversifying trade and tourism markets.

CARICOM: From Talk to Action

Regional unity, symbolized by the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), has been extolled for decades as the key to addressing persistent vulnerabilities. Indeed, food security, manufacturing, sea and air transportation, and coordinated trade policies are perennial topics on CARICOM's agenda. Yet the advances have been minimal compared to the region's ever-growing external dependencies. Squabbles between member states, inertia in implementing collective decisions, and

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the prevalence of insular nationalism undermine the region's potential to pool resources and collaborate on large-scale initiatives.

For the region's sovereignty to be meaningful, CARICOM and its member governments must move decisively from consideration to implementation. Every additional "baby step" is overshadowed by the giant leaps of ongoing external reliance.

Education and Cultural Mindset

Despite noteworthy achievements by the University of the West Indies and other institutions, much remains to be done to instil self-belief, civic responsibility, and a willingness to innovate at every level of Caribbean society.

Education must go beyond imparting academic knowledge to embed values of entrepreneurship, resilience, and collective responsibility. It should also build a sense of pride in being Caribbean and an appreciation for our shared cultural heritage.

Caribbean nations must re-imagine themselves not just as small states tethered to global powers, but as part of a shared international civilization with a storied history and a boundless future.

Overcoming tribalism and nationalism to build a strong regional community—and a genuine commitment to it—is not just a political project; it is also a cultural, psychological, and generational

one.

Collective Action to Change or Remain Vulnerable

While there are physical and geographical factors that limit the region, the current vulnerabilities and dependencies that define much of Caribbean economic and social life are neither permanent nor insurmountable. They can be mitigated - if not eliminated - through deliberate, coordinated, and purposeful action.

Governments must enact clear policies to strengthen public institutions and boost local production. Businesses should expand their supplier networks and invest in local production, not just for profit but for long-term stability.

CARICOM countries must realize the power and promise of unity – regional economic integration offers a resilient path forward. They must make a reality of all its potential.

True independence cannot thrive on the scaffolding of external reliance. If the people and governments of the region want to exercise full autonomy of their own affairs, they must collectively work to break free from the vulnerabilities that threaten to define us. The alternative is to grin and bear it.

(The writer is Antigua and Barbuda's Ambassador to the US and the OAS. The views expressed are entirely his own. Responses and previous commentaries: www.sirronaldsanders.com)

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Commentary



CDB's Call to Action: Rebirth, Resilience, and Regional Transformation



My Write by Julian Rogers. mecaribbean@gmail.com

The Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) has laid out an ambitious vision for the region's future, defined by resilience, innovation, and transformation. At its 2025 Annual News Conference, the bank's leadership reinforced the urgency of addressing climate change, economic diversification, and private sector engagement while unveiling new financing mechanisms to accelerate development.

At the heart of this year's event was the theme of "Rebirth: Innovate, Transform, and Thrive," articulated by CDB President Daniel Best. This guiding principle sets the tone for a more agile and impactful institution that adapts to regional and global realities while remaining steadfast in its core mission of reducing poverty and fostering sustainable growth.

A Caribbean at a Crossroads

The Caribbean faces unprecedented global challenges, from geopolitical tensions threatening trade to climate-induced disasters that put economies at risk. But, as President Best emphasised, this is also a moment of opportunity.

"Our region faces uncertainties that we have never before contemplated. Geopolitical shifts, financial aid withdrawals, and extreme climate events have created new risks. But they also present a moment for renewal—one where the Caribbean must harness its strengths and rethink how development is approached."

To this end, the CDB has mobilised \$460 million in concessional financing through the 11th replenishment of the Special Development Fund (SDF), its largest pool of grant and low-interest loan resources. A significant 35% of these funds will be directed toward climate financing, supporting adaptation projects, disaster response, and sustainability initiatives.

Financing a Climate-Resilient Future

The Caribbean remains one of the most climate-vulnerable regions in the world, with extreme weather events becoming more frequent and intense.

The devastating impact of Hurricane Beryl in 2024 reinforced the need for stronger pre-disaster financing mechanisms and resilience-building investments.

During her presentation, Valerie Isaac, CDB's Chief of Environmental Sustainability, detailed the

bank's growing emphasis on climate financing, including:

- \$101.5 million in climate finance in 2024 (33.5% of CDB's total financing).
- Expanding access to the Green Climate Fund (GCF), increasing CDB's project development capacity to \$250 million per programme—a fivefold increase.
- The launch of a Climate Change Project Preparation Fund, helping Caribbean countries design bankable adaptation and mitigation projects.
- Greater focus on nature-based solutions, coastal resilience, and early warning systems.

However, funding alone is not enough. The CDB emphasised that climate resilience must be fully integrated into national budgets, infrastructure projects, and private-sector investment strategies.

"We can no longer be surprised when we are impacted by a natural disaster," said President Best. "Our region is seven times more likely to be affected by extreme weather than larger economies. That means we must plan, build, and finance accordingly."

The Urgency of Economic Diversification

The Caribbean's reliance on tourism and commodity exports remains a double-edged sword. While these sectors have rebounded post-pandemic, CDB economists warn that slow growth, inflationary pressures, and external shocks make diversification an urgent priority.

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CDB's Director of Economics, highlighted the modest regional growth of 1.7% (excluding Guyana) in 2024. Guyana's booming oil sector masks broader economic vulnerabilities. Durant stressed the need for Caribbean economies to move beyond tourism dependence and build more competitive, high-value industries.

"We need to modernise our logistics infrastructure, reduce trade barriers, and strengthen supply chains across the region. The potential for agri-processing, digital services, and clean energy industries is enormous—but only if we create the right ecosystem for businesses to thrive."

The CDB is backing this vision with targeted private-sector financing, including:

- *A \$30 million line of credit for private-sector-led infrastructure and energy projects.*
- *\$399 million in financing for micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs), focusing on women-led businesses and agricultural entrepreneurs.*
- *Blended finance and risk-sharing models to unlock private investment.*

Breaking Barriers to Development Finance

One of the biggest hurdles facing Caribbean entrepreneurs and governments is access to affordable financing. Despite \$6 billion in excess liquidity in the region's banking system, businesses struggle to secure credit, and an estimated \$10 billion in development financing demand remains unmet.

To tackle this, CDB is introducing new financial instruments, includ-

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Durant,

ing:

- *A regional trade facilitation programme to bridge funding gaps for exporters.*
- *Guarantee schemes for commercial banks and central banks to de-risk investments.*
- *Expanded concessional financing for climate resilience and sustainable energy.*

"We need to get capital moving—both public and private. The region has the ideas, the entrepreneurs, and the demand. The missing link is financial access, and CDB is working aggressively to change that," said Daniel Best, CDB President.

Strengthening Implementation & Project Delivery

A recurring theme of the CDB's 2025 agenda is not just financing more projects—but ensuring they are executed efficiently and deliver real impact.

O'Reilly Lewis, Acting Director of Projects, acknowledged that many Caribbean governments struggle with implementation capacity, leading to delays, cost overruns, and underutilised funding.

To address this, the CDB is:

- *Conducting a regional study on project implementation bottlenecks.*
- *Enhancing technical assistance for governments and private sector players.*
- *Streamlining internal processes to accelerate project approval and execution.*

Lewis noted that a 10% improvement in project implementation could lead to billions in additional development impacts across the region.

A Bank in Transformation

Beyond regional transformation, the CDB itself is undergoing its transformation. President Best acknowledged that many of the bank's policies, processes, and systems date back decades and must be modernised.

To that end, the CDB is:

- *Adopting new policies to increase agility and responsiveness.*
- *Developing three new financial products to serve better borrowing member countries.*
- *Expanding partnerships with international donors, climate finance institutions, and regional development banks.*

The Caribbean's Defining Moment

The 2025 CDB Annual Press Conference was not just an update on numbers. It was also a call to action.

The Caribbean is at a critical juncture:

- *Climate change is no longer a future threat but a present reality.*
- *Economic diversification is no longer a luxury but an urgent necessity.*
- *Access to financing is no longer just a discussion point. It requires bold solutions.*

"This moment has come to us, and we will not turn away from it," Best affirmed. "We will not boast of our raised capital unless it reaches the people who need it most. Our Caribbean Development Bank exists to serve, to transform, and to build a future that is not only resilient but prosperous."

The challenge is immense, but so is the opportunity. The CDB has set the stage—the question now is whether governments, businesses, and citizens will seize it.

Fixing the Education Dilemma



by *Derrick Nicholas*

“Education is the most powerful weapon we can use to change the world.” Nelson Mandela (1918 – 2013)

At the heart of any nation’s development strategy must be the education of its most important resource: its people. Developing a literate and numerate population, is laying the foundation for a powerful nation, whose workforce would be able to compete globally.

So, it is therefore puzzling why more emphasis is not being paid to ensuring that students are taught to develop their literacy, numeracy and critical thinking skills. Antigua and Barbuda as well as the rest of the region have been dealing with perennial poor results in Mathematics at the Caribbean Examination Council.

We need to move beyond promises to do more if there is going to be a turnaround in these less than acceptable results. At the heart of

these poor results are students’ inability to read, and therefore comprehend. If a student cannot read, he stands very little chance of being able to understand and therefore master mathematics.

Several studies have shown that the ‘crisis’ is at the lower end of the education spectrum. That is to say in the formative years. These same studies suggest that no amount of money [later on] will be enough to ‘fix’ the problem. It is therefore imperative that more resources and attention need to be paid to giving priority to teaching foundational skills, linking learning to productivity.

As stated in a previous article, studies have shown that 80 per cent of students who struggle with mathematics come from poor or indigent families. It is in recognition of this fact that we must now look to adopt new strategies if we are to ‘fix’ this vexing issue. To quote an old cliché: “the numbers do not

lie”. Therefore, if we are to ‘fix’ the problem we must go straight to the cause, and stop applying a Band Aid in the hope that things will get better later on.

The greatest impact in this new paradigm will be realized when more resources are directed to early childhood and primary education. This is where the greatest impact will be felt. Each child must therefore learn to read, write and do basic arithmetic. These are the foundation for productivity.

If the problem is addressed at the start of a child’s educational journey, then there is little need for intervention later on. The promise of an education should mean that each child leaves with the ability to read, write and can do at the very least basic arithmetic. (This does not even begin to address the learning loss that took place during the COVID-19 pandemic).

Therefore, we must not produce students who can neither read nor write at the required grade level. There must also be a review of the automatic promotion system. To be sure, this is not a quick fix solution. Instead, it has to be a set of deliberate and sustained interventions.

ABOUT the Author: Derrick Nicholas is a Private Math tutor who is passionate about helping students. He believes that every child should be fully literate and numerate, as well as being functionally literate in Mathematics.

Send feedback to the author: mathtutor268@gmail.com

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Parks and trees
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waste kept low,
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A world where laws are firm yet grand.
No war, no hate, no silent fear,
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Regional News



Young holds first Cabinet meeting

Prime Minister Stuart Young held his first Cabinet meeting yesterday and there will be another today.

Sources said yesterday's meeting was relatively short but very "pleasant and positive".

While former prime minister Dr Keith Rowley was referred to as "PM, boss, or Doc" by Cabinet members because he was regarded as a "political elder", by contrast, Young's contemporaries in the Cabinet address him by his first name.

His style of chairing the meeting is said to be collaborative.

Attending yesterday's meeting was new Cabinet appointee and Finance Minister Vishnu Dhanpaul.

A parliamentary expert said yesterday that Dhanpaul had been properly appointed as a minister and as a senator. The oath taken at President's House on Monday by Dhanpaul covered his ministerial assignment.

The President issued an instrument of appointment of Dhanpaul as a senator, and that instrument was forwarded to the Parliament, as was customary. The instrument indicated the date of his appointment as a senator was Monday, March



17. The President also sent the instrument of revocation of former attorney general Reginald Armour, the parliamentary expert indicated.

With the dissolution of the Parliament at midnight on March 18, it means Dhanpaul was a senator for one day.

With a dissolution of Parliament, all senators and members of the House vacate their seats. The parliamentary expert said a letter was sent to all Members indicating that with the dissolution all seats become vacant. The parliamentary expert said people who questioned whether Dhanpaul could validly exercise the functions of a minister were wrongly assuming his position as a senator was based on the taking of the

senatorial oath.

He quoted Section 57 of the Constitution, which states: "No Member of either House shall take part in the proceedings of that House until he has made and subscribed before the House the oath of allegiance." He said the oath of allegiance taken by senators and elected MP referred to their participation in the proceedings of that House.

Asked whether the executive authority of a person appointed as a senator and minister is affected, when, after his appointment and the Parliament is dissolved before the taking of the senator's oath, the parliamentary expert said: "No. Because there is no requirement for him to participate in the proceedings of the Senate."

The expert noted that usually after elections, Parliament may not meet until weeks after when there is the ceremonial opening. But ministers are sworn in and begin performing their duties before that.

He said in the 18-18 impasse, the election was held in December 2001 but the Parliament did not meet until April of the next year, months after the Prime Minister and ministers were appointed and were functioning. The Attorney General in fact at that time was a senator, Glenda Morean, and who therefore did not take the oath in the Senate until April. Others like (former senator) Lenny Saith were in the same position.

The parliamentary expert said the senators (who are also) ministers exercise authority and can embark on the duties of the ministers upon the issuance of the instrument and the taking of the ministerial oath administered by the President. Appointment by presidential instrument makes the person a minister while the taking of the ministerial oath allows them to commence duties as a minister. (*Trinidad Express*)



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Montserrat: WINAIR flights cancelled, ferry service arranged



“It is expected that the weather will stabilize by Friday 21st March so that scheduled WINAIR flights could resume for the period,” the statement noted.

The division has expressed regret for the disruption, stating, “The Access Division apologises for the inconveniences caused by this unforeseen disruption to the services. We continue to work diligently to remedy the situation.”

Travelers are advised to stay informed through sev-

eral channels including ZJB Radio, the Access Division MNI and GIU Montserrat Facebook pages, or by contacting the Access Division directly via email at accessmni@gov.ms, by phone at 491-3378, or WhatsApp at 664-392-3600.

The ferry service has been arranged specifically to accommodate passengers affected by the flight cancellations between Montserrat and Antigua. (*Loop Caribbean*)

The Access Division of the Office of the Premier in Montserrat has announced that WINAIR flights will not operate on March 20, 2025, due to weather regulations.

“To facilitate passenger movement from Montserrat to Antigua, for affected travelers the Access Division will be conducting a charter vessel service via the Barbuda Express Ferry,” officials stated in a press release issued Wednesday.

Passengers affected by the cancellations are being directed to the Ferry Terminal in Little Bay at 5:00 am Thursday for registration and transportation arrangements. This includes both passengers scheduled to depart on March 20 and those without confirmed tickets.

According to the Access Division, the weather situation is expected to improve by Friday.



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Regional News



Spanish Town truck driver charged over alleged non-delivery of \$335,000 worth of goods

Forty-two-year-old Andrew Amos, a truck driver of Jacaranda, Spanish Town, St Catherine, has been charged with theft over the alleged non-delivery of several items valued at just over \$335,000 earlier this year.

He has been charged with larceny as a servant following a series of incidents that occurred between January 28 and February 28.

Reports from the Spanish Town police indicate that Amos, who was employed as a truck driver, was entrusted with the delivery of several items valued at \$335,466.88.

However, the goods were allegedly never delivered.

When confronted about the missing items, Amos allegedly failed to provide a satisfactory explanation for their disappearance.

A report was made to the police, leading to an investigation.

Amos was arrested and charged after a session and answer in the presence of his attorney, a police statement said on Wednesday. (*Jamaica Gleaner*)

PNP seeks Supreme Court block on Portmore parish law

The Parliamentary Opposition has filed an affidavit of urgency asking the Su-

preme Court to temporarily block the enactment of the law passed to establish Portmore as a parish, arguing that it violates the Constitution of Jamaica.

Attorney General Dr Derrick McKoy and Minister of Local Government Des-

mond McKenzie have been named as defendants. McKenzie piloted the bill through the House of Representatives in February.

Jackson argued in the three-page affidavit that the act — which is now awaiting the assent of Governor General Sir Patrick Allen or an effective-date notice from McK-

enzie — if brought into effect “will result in potentially irreparable constitutional breaches”. He said these breaches would include, according to the document obtained by The Gleaner, the violation of the structure of local governance, the democratic rights of electors, and fundamental principles of fairness and the rule of law.

Jackson said if the act is implemented before judicial determination, it will infringe the Jamaican Constitution and result in confusion regarding electoral representation, constituency delineation, and the rights



People’s National Party (PNP) Member of Parliament for St Catherine Southern Fitz Jackson filed the document on March 17,

councillors Claude Hamilton and Vanrick Preddie.

Jackson wants the status of Portmore unchanged until the High Court decides whether the Government violated the Constitution in the passing of the Counties and Parishes (Amendment) Act.

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Greenpeace ordered to pay more than \$660 million over Dakota Access Pipeline protests



A jury on Wednesday ordered environmental campaign group Greenpeace to pay more than \$660 million in damages to Texas-based oil company Energy Transfer, the developer of the Dakota Access Pipeline.

A nine-person jury in Mandan, North Dakota, reached a verdict after roughly two days of deliberations. The outcome found Greenpeace liable for hundreds of millions of dollars over actions taken to prevent the construction of the Dakota Access Pipeline nearly a decade ago.

It marks an extraordinary legal blow

for Greenpeace, which had previously warned that it could be forced into bankruptcy because of the case. The environmental advocacy group said it intends to appeal the verdict.

“This case should alarm everyone, no matter their political inclinations,” Greenpeace U.S. interim executive director Sushma Raman said in a statement published Wednesday.

“It’s part of a renewed push by corporations to weaponize our courts to silence dissent. We should all be concerned about the future of the

First Amendment, and lawsuits like this aimed at destroying our rights to peaceful protest and free speech,” Raman said.

Greenpeace has described Energy Transfer’s case as a clear-cut example of SLAPPs, referring to a lawsuit designed to bury activist groups in legal fees and ultimately silence dissent. SLAPP is an acronym for “strategic lawsuit against public participation.”

Energy Transfer said the jury verdict was a “win” for “Americans who understand the difference between the right to free speech and breaking the law,” according to The Associated Press, citing a statement from the company.

“While we are pleased that Greenpeace has been held accountable for their actions against us, this win is really for the people of Mandan and throughout North Dakota who had to live through the daily harassment and disruptions caused by the protesters who were funded and trained by Greenpeace,” the company added.

A spokesperson for Energy Transfer was not immediately available to comment when contacted by CNBC on Thursday morning. (*NBC News*)



Anglican Church in Toronto holds Bob Marley Mass



One of Toronto's oldest churches, the St James Cathedral (Toronto), last Sunday held for the first time a Bob Marley Mass composed by the Reverend Canon Dr Stephen Fields, vicar of the church, in observation of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, which is recognised on March 21.

Fields said in October that the leadership of the church was involved in planning the Snell Lectures and the featured speaker, theologian Dr Brian Walsh, connected the songs and poetry of the late Canadian songwriter Leonard Cohen with scripture. Fields also discovered that there was a mass called the Cohen Mass.

"I thought, 'What about Bob Marley?' to myself because, [in] one of his songs, to paraphrase, he says he has so much things to talk about. I thought let me do some research, let me do some reflecting, let me do some praying and then let me attempt to write a service that draws upon his work. For yes, he has so much things to say to us today – church and un-church."

In the homily, Fields told the congregation that he was sure none of them had ever imagined that they would have lived long enough to hear Bob Marley's music in an Anglican church such as St James Cathedral.

"That's because we grew up in a world held bound by

the chains about which Bob Nesta Marley spoke and sang about, chains that not only bound our hands and feet but shackled our mind and have held us captive. And today, still do so. Bob Marley's music embodies a spirituality, and a theology rooted in his faith. To speak of Bob Marley's theology is to explore how his body of work reflects his view of God, what he knows of God, of humanity, the world, and we see him both as a musician and a prophet, a prophet of the oppressed."

Fields said that, at the heart of Marley's theology is the belief in Jah, the Rastafarian term for God derived from Yahweh.

"Songs like Jah Live express his belief in God's

nearness, a theme that we Christians hold dearly. Marley understood Jah as one who was engaged in the affairs of the oppressed and was actively working for justice and freedom. This belief infused his music with divine urgency. While Rastas and Christians may differ in some ways, Marley is calling upon God as imminent, liberating, a force that echoes throughout the Christian's view of our understanding of God's presence. In human suffering, we share something in common, we speak of a God as being present in flesh and incarnate, in another prophet, Jesus Christ, who came that all may have life and have it in abundance." (*Jamaica Gleaner*)

Pope Francis no longer needs mechanical help to breathe as his health improves, Vatican says



Pope Francis' condition continued to improve, and he hasn't needed to use the mechanical ventilation mask to help him breathe, the Vatican said Wednesday in signalling further progress in his recovery from double pneumonia.

The 88-year-old pontiff is also reducing his reliance on high-flow supplemental oxygen during the day, the Vatican said in a medical bulletin. His pneumonia infection, while not com-

pletely eliminated, is under control, the Holy See press office said.

Francis concelebrated Mass on Wednesday, which is an important feast day for the Catholic Church and is the anniversary of his installation as pope 12 years ago.

Francis has been at Rome's Gemelli hospital since Feb. 14 for a complex lung infection that turned into pneumonia in both lungs. He has been re-

ceiving respiratory and physical therapy to help strengthen his lungs.

For two nights in a row, he hasn't needed to use the non-invasive mechanical ventilation mask, which pumps oxygen into his lungs, and doctors said its use had been "suspended." Francis was put on the ventilation mask after he suffered a spate of respiratory crises in late February and early March during which he was unable to expel the mucus and fluid that had accumulated in his lungs.

Suspending use of the mask means Francis' lungs are working harder and better on their own.

The Vatican is also again reducing its medical updates as Francis slowly continues his recovery, with the next one not expected before Monday.

Italian President Sergio Mattarella commemorated the 12th anniversary of Francis' installation as pope by sending him a letter praising his initiatives as pope. Mattarella offered best wishes for the continuation of his pontificate and "all the more heartfelt wishes for a speedy recovery." (*NBC News*)



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Coventry becomes first woman and first African to lead IOC

PYLOS, Greece (Reuters) - Kirsty Coventry smashed through the International Olympic Committee's glass ceiling on Thursday to become the organisation's first female and first African president in its 130-year history.

The Zimbabwean swimming great, already a towering figure in Olympic circles, emerged victorious to replace Thomas Bach, securing the top job in world sport and ushering in a new era for the Games.

Coventry needed only one round of voting to clinch the race to succeed Bach, winning an immediate overall majority in the secret ballot with 49 of the available 97 votes.

She beat Juan Antonio Samaranch Jr. into second place, the Spaniard winning 28 votes. Britain's Sebastian Coe, considered one of the front runners in the days leading up to the vote, came third with eight votes.

The remaining votes went to Frenchman David Lappartient, Jordan's Prince Feisal, Swedish-born Johan Eliasch, and Japan's Morinari Watanabe.

"This is not just a huge honour but it is a reminder of my commitment to every single one of you that I will lead this organisation with so much pride," a beaming Coventry told her fellow IOC members at the luxury seaside resort in Greece's southwestern Peloponnese which hosted the IOC Session.

"I will make all of you very, very proud, and hopefully extremely confident with the choice you've taken today, thank you from the bottom of my heart," she added. Coventry said she wants to bring all the candidates together.

"I'm going to sit down with President Bach. We're going to have a few months for a handover takeover. And what I want to focus on is bringing all the candidates together. There were so



Kirsty Coventry reacts after she was announced as the new IOC President at the International Olympic Committee 144th session in Costa Navarino, western Greece, Thursday, March 20, 2025. (AP)

many good ideas and exchanges over the last six months.

"Look at the IOC and our Olympic movement and family and decide how exactly we're going to move forward in the future. What is it that we want to focus on in the first six months? I have some ideas, but a part of my campaign was listening to the IOC members and hearing what they have to say and hearing how we want to move together."

Coventry's first-round landslide was a show of unity in the body, she said.

"It's extremely important we have to be a united front and we have to work together. We don't and we might not always agree, but we have to be able to come together for the betterment of the movement."

The seven-times Olympic medalist was added to the IOC's Athletes' Commission in 2012, and her election to the top job signals a new era for the IOC, with expectations that she will bring a fresh perspective to pressing issues such as athlete rights, the gender debate and the sustainability of the

Games.

A champion of sport development in Africa, Coventry has pledged to expand Olympic participation and ensure the Games remain relevant to younger generations.

She also inherits the complex task of navigating relations with global sports federations and sponsors while maintaining the IOC's financial stability, which has relied heavily on its multi-billion-dollar broadcasting and sponsorship deals.

As she takes the helm, the global sporting community will be watching closely to see how Coventry shapes the future of the world's biggest multi-sport organisation.

Any IOC members with a superstitious streak might rest easier tonight — Kirsty Coventry's golden touch in Greece shows no signs of fading.

Champion in Athens 2004, victorious again in Pylos, the omens are stacking up. "Greece seems to be my lucky charm," she grinned.

Sports News





Sports News



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Sports News



Ojays continue to dominate ABBA's Division 2 league



The Cutie's Ovals Ojays extended their unbeaten run and remain the leaders of the Second Division of the 2025 Antigua and Barbuda Basketball Association's (ABBA) domestic season on Wednesday evening.

The Ovals Ojays notched up their

10th win in as many games with an 85-63 victory against the EZ Flyers 2 in the second game of a double-header at the JSC Sports Complex.

Tajahron Davis shot a game-high 24 points with six assists; Raheem Sawyer converted 21 points and claimed six rebounds; Najee Simon produced 15 points, five rebounds, and five steals; and Shaheim Omarde had 11 points, seven rebounds, and five steals for the Ovals Ojays.

Amare Browne scored 23 points, Rashaun Harry converted 16 points and grabbed 18 rebounds, and Shavaun Francis sank 10 points and snapped up 12 rebounds for the EZ Fit Flyers, who crashed to their fifth loss in 10 games.

Spanish Heat 2 consolidated their second-place position in the stand-

ings by notching up their seventh win in nine games with an 89-68 victory against Square One Construction United in the first game of Wednesday's double-header.

Derek Perez shot a team-high 21 points; Kevin Pimentel produced 18 points and five steals; Erwin Rodriguez scored 12 points and snatched 12 rebounds; Maicol Reyes had 11 points, eight rebounds, and six assists; and Charlie Daniel sank 10 points and grabbed 14 rebounds for Spanish Heat 2.

Dwayne Samuel shot a game-high 24 points and claimed seven rebounds; Manlight Simmons sank 18 points and grabbed 19 rebounds; and Neville Chambers converted 12 points and snatched 11 rebounds for United, who lost for the eighth time in nine games.



AGS lose to PMS in Under-15s school cricket contest

After winning their opening match, Antigua Grammar School (AGS) suffered a 54-run loss to Princess Margaret School (PMS) in the second round of matches in the Under-15 Division 30-Over Competition of the Ministry of Sports Schools' Cricket Championships.

Princess Margaret School made 90 for three off 13 overs in their encounter at the Factory Grounds. There was a contribution of 32 extras, including 18 wides; J'Quan Athanaze struck 24, and Kawanie Atherly scored 12 not out. Tiandre Charles picked up two for 34.

In reply, Antigua Grammar School crashed to 36 all out in 11.2 overs. There was a contribution of 17 extras, including 12 wides. Ondre

Peters grabbed three wickets for five runs, Jariek Francis snapped up two wickets for four runs, and Janiel Henry captured two for 12.

Antigua Grammar School had beaten Sir Novelle Richards Academy by nine wickets in their opening encounter at Clare Hall.

Ottos Comprehensive School also lost their second-round match after launching their campaign with a 10-wicket win against Irene B. Williams Secondary at Rising Sun.

Jennings Secondary romped to an emphatic 128-run victory against Ottos Comprehensive School at the Rising Sun playing field.

Jennings Secondary made 156 for seven off 15 overs.

Dequan Cochrane cracked 21, and Tequan Tonge struck 20. Akez Francis claimed three for 36, and Nathan Fernandos captured two for 45.

In reply, Ottos Comprehensive School crashed to 28 all out in 8.4 overs. Giovanni Thomas grabbed four wickets for six runs, and Cochrane picked up two for 16.

After suffering a 48-run defeat to All Saints Secondary in their opening encounter at the Mack Pond playing field, Clare Hall Secondary hit back to claim their first win with a six-wicket victory against Sir Novelle Richards Academy in their second-round match at the Clare Hall playing field.

Sir Novelle Richards

Academy was dismissed for 94 in 20.1 overs. There was a contribution of 75 extras, including 64 wides.

Ian Jerimiah bagged two wickets for eight runs, Glenroy Richards snatched two wickets for nine runs, and captain Jayden Charles claimed two for 12.

Clare Hall achieved victory by scoring 95 for four in 12.1 overs. The top scorer was 32 extras, including 23 wides. Nevon Lashley hit 31 not out off 32 balls, Jayden Charles hit 18, and Jamarri Laville scored 11.

Claton Joseph captured two for 11, and Ayden Bazil claimed two for 23 for Sir Novelle Richards Academy, which lost for the second time in as many matches.



MINISTRY OF SPORTS

Schools Netball Competition

AGHS-2 captures schools' netball U-16 knockout championship

The second team of the Antigua Girls High School (AGHS-2) captured the Under-16 Knockout title in the Ministry of Sports, Cool & Smooth Schools' Netball Championships on Wednesday.

The Antigua Girls High School's second team trounced Christ the King High School 12-0 in the final at the YMCA Sports Complex.

Both teams advanced to the final after securing wins in the semi-finals. AGHS-2 crushed Ottos Comprehensive School 15-0, while Christ the King High School prevailed 5-2 against Princess Margaret School.

In the opening rounds, the second team of the Antigua Girls High School snatched a 7-6 victory against the first team of the Antigua Girls High School.

Christ the King High School also snatched a narrow 3-2 victory against Irene B. Williams Secondary.

Ottos Comprehensive School prevailed 2-1 against Jennings Secondary School, and the second team of the Antigua Girls High School romped to a 13-0 victory against Sir Novelle Richards Academy.

Sports News



More success for AGHS in U/16 Girls School Football League



Nafissa Quashie

The Antigua Girls High School (AGHS) continued their successful run in the Under-16 Division of the Ministry of Sports Cool and Smooth Joma Female School Football League.

Antigua Girls High School maintained their unbeaten run in the competition with an 8-0 drubbing of All Saints Secondary School at the Antigua Recreation Grounds (ARG) on Wednesday.

Nafissa Quashie scored five times

for the Antigua Girls High School with conversions in the 24th, 31st, 35th, 37th, and 43rd minutes.

The other goals were scored by Rosheda Joseph in the 10th minute, Blessings Creese in the 51st minute, and Na'jireh Wijndaldu.

There was success as well for the under-16 girls of St. Mary's Secondary School, who pulled off a 3-0 victory against Clare Hall Sec-

ondary School.

Michaela Isaac hit a hat trick with conversions in the third, sixth, and 20th minutes, and Blessings Creese scored twice with goals in the fifth and 33rd minutes.

Zahkiya Morgan struck twice with conversions in the seventh and 14th minutes, and N'Shia Williams scored the other goal in the 24th minute.

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Squads finalized for inaugural West Indies Breakout League



Young Antiguan and West Indies batsman Jewel Andrew will represent the Leeward Islands Thunder in the inaugural edition of the West Indies Breakout League, which will commence in Trinidad and Tobago next month. (CWI Media)

The six franchise teams set to compete in the inaugural edition of the West Indies Breakout League have officially finalized their squads following a highly anticipated player draft.

Ahead of the draft, each team had the opportunity to retain seven cricketers, with a cap of three players aged between 27 and 29. The remaining seven squad members were selected during the draft process, with all draftees required to be 26 years old or younger.

In keeping with the league's mission to spotlight emerging talent, all selected players must have limited professional experience.

Eligibility criteria stipulate that players must have participated in fewer than 40 List A T20 matches and fewer than 10 International T20s.

Each franchise was also permitted to select two players from outside their home territory. The draft saw an exciting influx of young talent, with 15 teenagers securing spots on various teams.

The 2025 West Indies Breakout League is set to take place from April 25 to May 10, featuring 17 matches, all to be hosted at the prestigious Brian Lara Cricket Academy in Trinidad.

The full squads are as follows:

Trinidad & Tobago Legends: Kamil Pooran, Amir Jangoo, Jyd Goolie, Cristian Thurton, Navin Bidasie, Mikkel Govia, Joshua James, Joshua Da Silva, McKenny Clarke, Cephas Cooper, Damien Joachim, Shaaron Lewis, Abdul-Raheem Toppin, and Johann Layne.

Leeward Islands Thunder: Jeremiah Louis, Keacy Carty, Kofi James, Karima Gore, Mikyle Louis, Jewel Andrew, Micah McKenzie, Nathan Edward, Giovonte Depeiza, Anderson Mahase, Michael Palmer, Jamie Cornelius, Jaden

Carmichael, and Jedidiah Martin.

Windward Islands Infernos: Darel Cyrus, Shadrack Descarte, Shamar Springer, Alick Athanaze, Dillon Douglas, Teddy Bishop, Ackeem Auguste, Ryshon Williams, Avinash Mahabirsingh, Johann Jeremiah, Kyron Phillips, Keon Gaston, Noelle Leo, and Lee John.

Guyana Rainforest Rangers: Nial Smith, Kemol Savory, Ronaldo Alimohamed, Kevin Sinclair, Ashmead Nedd, Kevlon Anderson, Riyadh Latif, Rivaldo Clarke, Jediah Blades, Isai Thorne, Richie Looknauth, Zynul Ramsammy, Adrian Sukhwa, and Quentin Sampson.

Barbados Pelicans: Leniko Boucher, Kadeem Alleyne, Joshua Bishop, Nyeem Young, Shaqkere Parris, Kevin Wickham, Zishan Motara, Ramon Simmonds, Junior Sinclair, Demetrius Richards, Shian Brathwaite, Sion Hackett, Nathan Sealy, and Amari Goodridge.

Jamaica Titans: Deethmar Anderson, Leroy Lugg, Ramaal Lewis, Jeavor Royal, Kirk McKenzie, Jordan Johnson, Tamarie Redwood, Michael Clarke, Govasta Edmond, Reon Edwards, Anthony Dacres, Brian Barnes, Andrew Rambaran, and Zion Brathwaite.

Blackhawks can wrap-up ABCA two-day championship this weekend

Reigning champions PIC Insurance Liberta Black Hawks can retain the Antigua and Barbuda Cricket Association's (ABCA) Two-Day Championship with victory in the penultimate round of matches this weekend.

The Blackhawks, who have won the competition for the past three seasons, will host struggling Caribbean Union Bank (CUB) Bethesda Golden Eagles at Ball Beef in Liberta in one of five eighth-round matches that will commence on Saturday at 10 am.

The Blackhawks, who have won six of their previous seven matches, currently hold a 15-point lead at the top of the standings with a total of 75 points.

With just two rounds of matches left, victory over the Golden Eagles this weekend will give the Blackhawks an unassailable lead and secure their fourth consecutive ABCA Two-Day Championship.

The Golden Eagles, who have just one win and four losses in seven matches, will enter this weekend's encounter joint-second from the bottom of the standings with the WES Rising Sun Spartans with 21 points apiece and are not expected to provide much resistance to the rampaging Blackhawks.

Former champions Empire Nation will hope to consolidate their second-place position with victory over fourth-placed All Saints Pythons when both sides clash at the Mack



Liberta Blackhawks

Pond playing field in All Saints.

Both teams have won four of their seven matches, with Empire Nation currently on 60 points, nine ahead of the All Saints Pythons.

CMW New Winthorpes Lions will hope to rebound from last week's heavy defeat to the Blackhawks in their top-of-the-table clash when they host the bottom-of-the-table team, Tertiary Institutions and Schools.

The New Winthorpes Lions will enter this weekend's match in third place with 57 points, while Tertiary Institutions and Schools currently occupy the cellar with six points.

In the other eighth-round matches this weekend, the Pigotts Crushers will meet the WES Rising Sun Spartans at the Rising Sun playing field in St. John's, while the Bolans Blasters will take on the Jennings Tigers at

Jennings.

The Jennings Tigers are currently occupying fifth place with 46 points, while the Pigotts Crushers are in sixth place with 26 points. The Bolans Blasters are in seventh place with 24 points.

Unlike previous years, the winner of this year's two-day competition will be the team with the most points at the end of the 10-team round-robin contest.

Under the new format, there will be no semi-finals and finals this year. In previous years, the top four teams in the standings at the end of the round-robin preliminary stage would advance to the semi-finals.

The winners of the two semi-finals would advance to the final to decide the title winners of the two-day competition.