

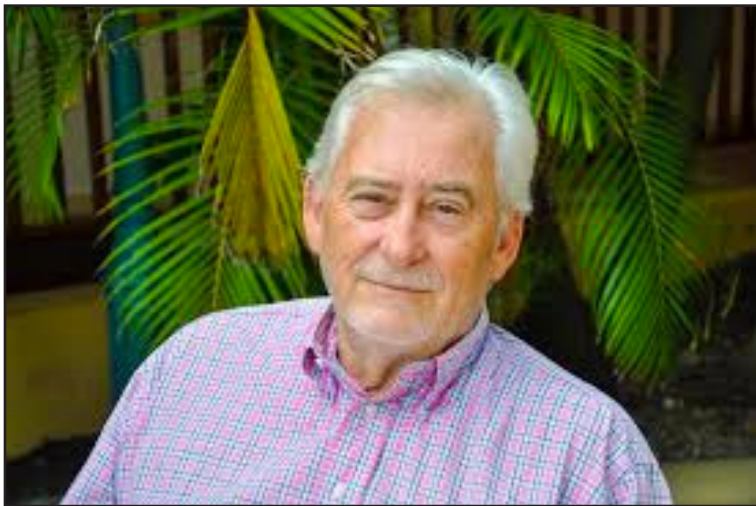
The nation mourns the death of top hotelier, Sir Robert 'Rob' Barrett

Story on Page 2



Governor General Sir Rodney Williams congratulated Sir Robert Barrett on the occasion of the presentation of his knighthood

PM Browne joins in mourning the death of Sir Robert ‘Rob’ Barrett



Prime Minister the Hon. Gaston Browne on Thursday expressed condolences on the passing of hotelier Sir Robert Allen Barrett. The full text of the Prime Minister's Statement is printed below:

“On behalf of the Government and people of Antigua and Barbuda, I

express deep condolences to the children, family, friends and colleagues of Sir Robert Allen Barrett who died on this date.

Sir Robert Barrett Esq. was the single-most successful entrepreneur who relied on accumulated capital from early ventures to

finance succeeding hotel and hospitality projects. For these reasons, my Government conferred one of the highest national honours on this outstanding citizen several years ago. He is to be granted an official memorial service.

The reliable and highly regarded trustee of Sir Robert Barret, who telephoned this morning, Thursday 6 March 2025, conveyed a message which Sir Robert delivered before breathing his last breath: “Tell P.M. Browne that he is an extraordinary leader and that he is taking the country in the right direction.”

Sir Robert Barret decided to make Antigua his home and to become a citizen of this great little country. Several entrepreneurs who had faith in his abilities, conjoined with him to invest in the hotel/hospitality industry. None regrets their decision. He was smart, unrelenting in his quest to make a success of every venture, showed enormous staying-power, and multiplied his talents many times in his lifetime. He will surely be missed. May his soul rest in peace and rise in paradise.”

Honourable Gaston Browne M.P.

ABHTA mourns the passing of Sir Robert A Barrett, KCN



Sir Robert A. Barrett, KCN

The Antigua & Barbuda Hotels and Tourism Association (ABHTA) acknowledges with deep sadness the passing of Sir Robert A. Barrett, KCN, a visionary hotelier and entrepreneur whose contributions to the tourism industry in Antigua and Barbuda have been monumental. Sir Barrett's death marks a pivotal moment in the history of our hospitality sector, and it is with profound respect that we honour his legacy.

Craig Marshall, Chairman of the ABHTA, expressed

his condolences on behalf of the Association: "Sir Robert Barrett's impact on the hospitality landscape in Antigua and Barbuda cannot be overstated. His presence was larger than life, not just in his business acumen but in his generous spirit, always eager to share his expert knowledge of the industry. His guidance was instrumental in shaping the ABHTA into what it is today. He was not only a leader in the industry but a mentor to many, constantly pushing the boundaries for the betterment of the hospitality sector.

As an organization, we recognize that his passing leaves an enormous void. However, his legacy is one that will live on in the countless professionals whose careers he helped to shape, in the businesses he nurtured, and in the generosity he extended to

his community. Sir Barrett's vision for a thriving tourism industry has left us a solid foundation upon which we must continue to build.

At this critical juncture in our history, we pause to reflect and pay tribute to the profound impact Sir Barrett had on the lives of so many Antiguan and Barbudans. His influence, expertise, and dedication have undeniably made our industry all the better. Sir Robert Barrett has left a legacy that will continue to inspire us all."

We extend our deepest sympathy to Lady Irina Barrett, the Barrett family, The Elite Island Resort family, and all those who were fortunate enough to have known him. May we continue to build on the incredible legacy he has left us.

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New APUA Board officially takes office



From left to right: Commissioners - Mr. Dwayne Edwards, Mr. Craig Christian, Mr. Luther Lee, Mr. Peter Benjamin (Chairman), Governor General, Sir Rodney Williams, Ms. Lornette Kirby, Ms. Lattoia Auguiste, Mr. Glentis Goodwin, Ms. Joy Dublin (Board Secretary), Mr. Purcell Bird.

The Swearing-In Ceremony for the new Board of the Antigua and Barbuda Public Utilities Authority (APUA) took place on Thursday at Government House with Governor General, Sir Rodney Williams presiding.

Eight of the nine appointed Commissioners took the oath of office, including Mr. Peter Benjamin, who was sworn in as Chairman of the Board.

The ninth Commissioner, Sir McLean Emmanuel, is currently abroad and will be sworn in at a later date.

The newly sworn-in Commissioners are:

- Mr. Dwayne Edwards
- Mr. Craig Christian

- Mr. Luther Lee

- Mr. Peter Benjamin
(Chairman)

- Ms. Lornette Kirby

- Ms. Lattoia Auguiste

- Mr. Glentis Goodwin

- Mr. Purcell Bird

During his remarks, Governor General Sir Rodney Williams emphasized the critical role of the APUA Board in ensuring the efficient, reliable, and sustainable provision of public utilities in Antigua and Barbuda. He noted that the Public Utilities Act, CAP. 359, as amended, provides the legal framework for APUA's operations and empowers the Board to oversee and

guide the management, regulation, and strategic direction of essential services, including electricity, water, and telecommunications.

The Governor General further highlighted key priorities for the Board, including:

- Enhancing service reliability to meet growing consumer and business demands.
- Ensuring financial sustainability while keeping utilities affordable for all citizens.
- Advancing technological innovation to modernize infrastructure.
- Promoting regulatory compliance and transpar-

ency in governance.

Sir Rodney also underscored the importance of public and private sector engagement in the tariff-setting process, as mandated under Section 15 of the Act, and encouraged the Board to work towards adopting green and innovative solutions that align with the Government's renewable energy and smart infrastructure initiatives.

The Governor General expressed his confidence in the new Board's ability to fulfill its mandate with diligence, wisdom, and integrity and congratulated the members on their appointments.

Two UWI FIC students receive bursaries through CIBC Caribbean bank

Two female students at the University of the West Indies Five Islands Campus have received bursaries from CIBC Caribbean bank as both institutions collaborate to observe International Women's Day, 2025.

The students – Makkedah Lawrence and Zalika Fields – were selected based on an essay competition launched by the university to select the top two entries for the bursaries. The essays were based on the theme for IWD, Accelerate Action.

“International Women's Day has long stood as a global celebration of the social, economic, cultural, and political achievements of women. This year's theme reminds us that gender equity isn't simply a women's issue but a fundamental human right that benefits us all.

“Education remains one of the most powerful vehicles for empowerment. The bursaries we present today represent more than financial support – they symbolize belief in potential, recognition of merit, and investment in our collective future,” said FIC spokesman Shavar Maloney at Thursday's presentation ceremony.

New FIC Registrar, Dr. Camille Samuel, congratulated the winners for their ‘fantastic’ essays noting that they were completed in a short period of time. “This is a very important time for



us, not just as we reflect on what it means to celebrate International Women's Day, because we do understand the many struggles women have had to endure to get through to where we all are today. Sometimes, with the passage of time, it is very easy to forget; it is very easy to look around and say, what more is there to accomplish? We have women pilots, we have women in banking, there was a time when they said that male brain was stronger than that of a female. But it was soon recognized that a woman's voice was important for the overall development of society,” she observed.

Lending a voice to the occasion was CIBC Caribbean Corporate Manager, Priscilla Leonce who urged the recipients to use the theme of the IWD celebration, Accelerate Action, to seize the moments, to push beyond barriers and to rise above challenges.

“Acceleration alone is not enough. Action is the force that turns potential into results, ideas into tangible outcomes. It is not enough to simply have a vision or a dream; you must act on it,” she stated.

The presentation of bursaries to outstanding UWI FIC female students has become an annual undertaking of CIBC Caribbean. (The two winning essays are published in today's paper)

TO: Your Worship
 St. Johns Magistrate Court
 High Street
 St. Johns
 Antigua.

TO: The Commissioner of Police
 Police Headquarters
 American Road
 St. Johns
 Antigua.

Dear Sir/Madame,

Re: Notice- Application for Tavern Licence

I, Amer Horani Grayman of Darkwood Beach, with a registered business situated at Beach St. Mary's Antigua and Barbuda, DO HEREBY GIVE NOTICE that it is our intention to apply at the next sitting of the liquor licensing Court to be held at the Magistrate's Court, High Street, St. John's, Antigua on Thursday 3rd April, 2025 next ensuring for a Tavern License Pursuant to section (11) (5) of the Licensing (Intoxication Liquor) Act Cap. 249 of the laws of Antigua and Barbuda 1992 Revised Edition, in respect of premises known as “Swash Water Park” situated at Darkwood Beach in the parish of St. Mary's Antigua and Barbuda.

Dated the 22nd day of February 2025

Tel# 726-7179

Antigua and Barbuda bids farewell to 'a very good friend'



The ambassador of the Dominican Republic to Antigua and Barbuda, Raquel Jacobo, is leaving her post this week to take up a new posting in Trinidad and Tobago.

Ambassador Jacobo paid a farewell visit to Prime Minister Gaston Browne on Thursday and she also used the opportunity to say farewell to the staff in the Office of the Prime Minister, including Am-

bassador Lionel Max Hurst and the Prime Minister's Executive Assistant, Lynette Thwaites.

"I leave with the satisfaction of having opened our diplomatic mission, initiated bilateral relations, contributed to the pending school project, and laid the groundwork for aviation and cooperation agreements with the Ministry of Tourism. The governmental relations

we have built have been excellent.

"This beautiful country has given me the opportunity to grow professionally and, on a spiritual level, to reconnect with the true essence of life—simplicity, meaningful communication, and strong relationships. The bond established with the government has been outstanding, and I am convinced it will only

continue to flourish," she told Point Express newspaper.

She added that she is leaving 'with a heavy heart', yet filled with happiness for this wonderful opportunity and the great relationships she has built.

"I firmly believe that the years ahead will be glorious for my beloved Antigua and Barbuda," she noted.

International Women's Day salute: Valerie Gonsalves-Barreiro



Valerie Gonsalves Barreiro

By Samantha Marshall

As we prepare to celebrate International Women's Day, it is fitting to honor an extraordinary woman who has made a profound impact on our community: Valerie Patricia Gonsalves-Barreiro. Today, in the Season of Lent, we reflect on her remarkable contributions as the first female sexton at the Anglican Cathedral in Antigua and Barbuda.

Valerie's dedication to service is evident in every aspect of her life. As a proud member of the Lions Club, she has devoted herself to uplifting others,

demonstrating the true spirit of community service. Her commitment to helping those in need is unwavering, and she continually goes above and beyond to make a difference in the lives of those around her.

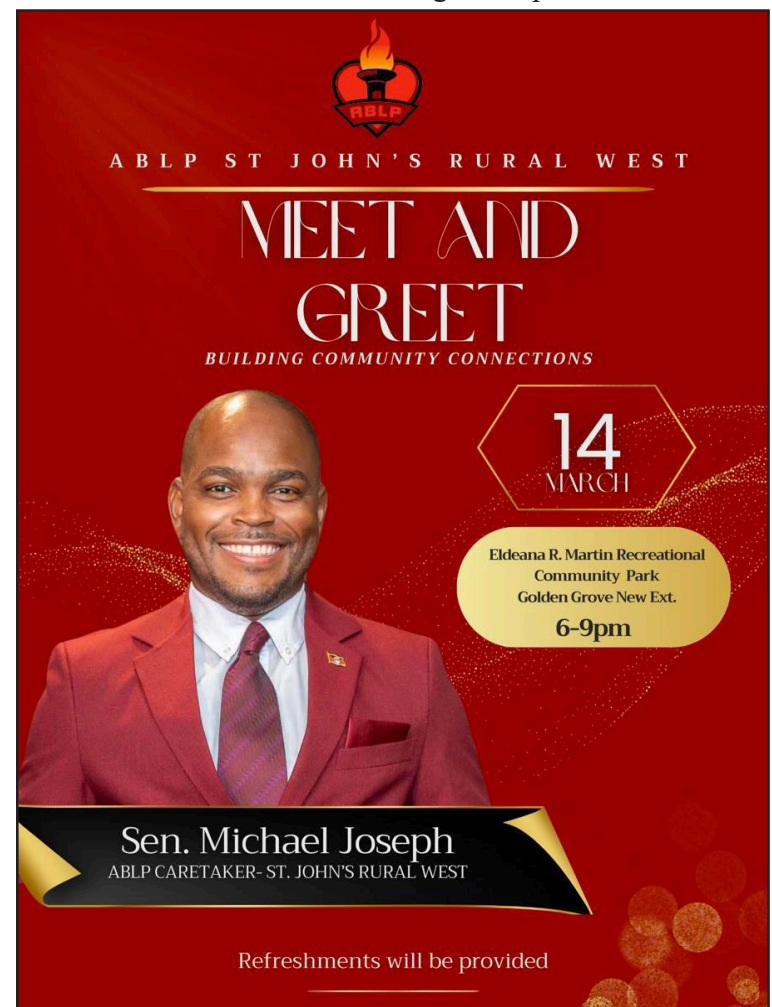
Beyond her official roles, Valerie has become a cherished presence in our community, capturing nearly every birthday celebration—just take a look at her vibrant social media page! Her infectious enthusiasm and warm spirit shine through as she engages with others, making each moment a reason to celebrate.

In times of sorrow, when families face the loss of a loved one, Valerie is there to offer comfort and support. She not only provides a listening ear but also takes on the important task of planning heartfelt farewells. Her compassionate nature and attention to detail ensure that every service is a fitting tribute, allowing families to honor their loved ones with grace and dignity.

Valerie's impact extends beyond her service; she also plays a significant role in nurturing the next generation. Together with my son Ayden, we attended the 11 AM Ash Wednesday service at the Cathedral, where

Valerie has embraced him as her little assistant. She has taken the time to show him the ropes, igniting his passion for worship. Ayden absolutely loves it, and it's heartwarming to see the bond they share.

As we celebrate International Women's Day, let us recognize Valerie Gonsalves-Barreiro for her unwavering dedication to service, her compassionate spirit, and her ability to bring joy and comfort to our community. Valerie, you are a shining example of what it means to lead with love and service, and we are grateful for all that you do. Thank you for being an inspiration to us all!



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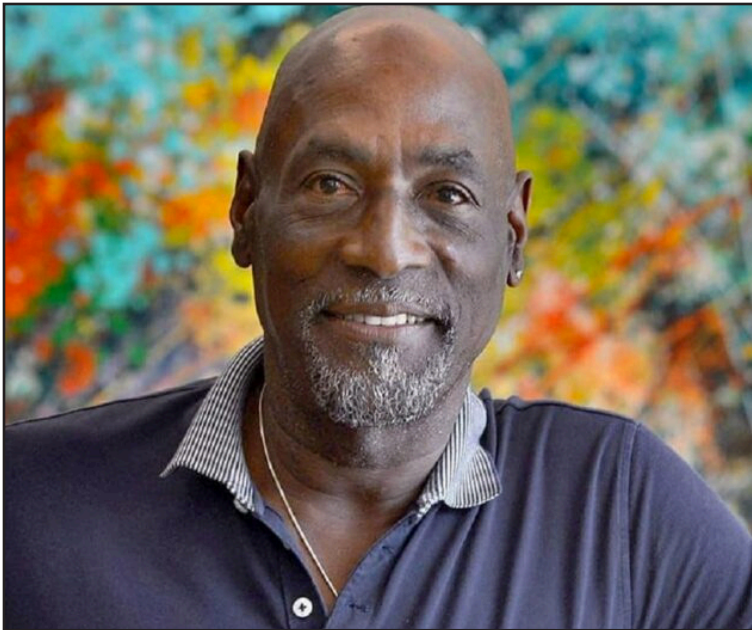
Sen. Michael Joseph
ABLP CARETAKER- ST. JOHN'S RURAL WEST

Refreshments will be provided

Local News



Platinum FM Celebrating Sir Viv's 73rd Birthday



In celebration of Antigua and Barbuda's only living National Hero, Sir Isaac Vivian Alexander Richards, 97.9 Platinum FM will be hosting a special birthday program tonight March 7, 2025, between 7:00pm-9:00pm, to offer kudos to the man known world-wide as the 'Master Blaster' on his special day.

From humble beginnings in Ovals Antigua, to representing Antigua and Barbuda, Combined Islands and Leeward Islands, Sir Viv became the greatest batsman of his generation, an iconic figure on the international stage for West Indies in not just the cricketing world but the world of sport in general. Inspiring many of his fellow Antiguan and Caribbean people right round the region and the world, Sir Viv proved to everyone that 'you too can defy the odds' as he rose from a promising talent to the world's number one batsman, changing the

game of cricket through courage and determination, as he destroyed all bowling attacks, helping West Indies to rule the cricketing world

for over two decades.

Sir Viv demonstrated such leadership qualities as well. Under his captaincy West Indies never lost a Test series, an achievement bettered by none.

The way the great man said "no" to South Africa in not accepting an 'open cheque' during Apartheid was testament to how Sir Viv stood up to a racist regime, proudly displaying his black roots and what it meant to him being a proud black man.

Influencing many people's lives over the years, this birthday celebration on Platinum FM will allow listeners and viewers on Facebook to hear from many dignitaries, such as

Prime Minister, Gaston Browne, Minister of Sports the Daryll Matthew, friends and family, including Sir Viv's son Mali Richards, brother Mervyn, and past Antigua and Barbuda and Leewards players, Hugh Gore and Samuel 'Best' Spencer, who will relive personal experiences and memorable moments they have shared with Sir Viv throughout his outstanding and illustrious career. So be sure to tune in and send best wishes to the King on his Birthday, as we celebrate the man who put Antigua and Barbuda on the map, and who continues to fly the flag proudly-National Hero Sir Vivian Richards!



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Local News

Birthday celebrations for Sir Molwyn



Minister of Health, Well-being, Environment and Civil Service Affairs, Sir Molwyn Joseph, was honoured with belated birthday gifts from members of his constituency branch, the

Social Protection Board, and the HAPPI Programme.

The thoughtful gesture was a testament to the appreciation and respect he has earned for his dedicated service to the people of



Antigua and Barbuda.

Sir Molwyn expressed his gratitude for the warm wishes and gifts, acknowledging the unwavering support of his team and constituents. As a leader

committed to improving healthcare, social services, and community development, he reaffirmed his dedication to serving the nation with integrity and passion.

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Accelerate Action: Advancing for a Better Future



By Makedah Lawrence

The early morning sun cast a golden glow over the bustling market square. Vendors arranged their goods, children weaved through the crowd, and among them was my grandmother, a woman of resilience and quiet strength. She was one of the first female business owners in our small community, defying the odds in a time when women were expected to stay at home. But despite her efforts she faced constant barriers, limited access to financial resources, societal skepticism, and the ever-present glass ceiling that held women back. Her story, like so many others, is a testament to both progress and the challenges that persist. It is a reminder that while we have moved forward, there is still work to be done. International Women's Day 2025 calls on us to Accelerate Action, to push harder, act faster, and commit to meaningful change for a better future.

Although significant strides have been made toward gender equity, systemic barriers continue to slow progress. Women and girls worldwide still face discrimination in education, employment, and leadership. According to

the World Economic Forum (2023), the global gender gap will take over 130 years to close at the current pace. Gender-based violence remains prevalent, with the UN reporting that one in three women experiences some form of violence in her lifetime (UN Women, 2023). Economic disparities persist as well, women continue to earn less than men for the same work, and they remain underrepresented in executive leadership positions (ILO, 2023). These challenges demand urgent attention and action from all sectors of society.

The fight for gender equity is not solely a women's issue, it requires the collective effort of individuals, communities, businesses, and governments. Individuals can contribute by challenging gender biases, supporting female-led initiatives, and advocating for policies that promote inclusivity. Communities play a crucial role in shaping attitudes and fostering environments where girls and women feel empowered to pursue their ambitions. Businesses must commit to equal pay, workplace diversity, and leadership opportunities for women. Governments, on the other hand, must enforce policies that protect women's

rights, ensure access to education, and promote financial inclusion.

Education is one of the most powerful tools for advancing gender equity. When girls receive quality education, they are more likely to become financially independent, contribute to their communities, and break cycles of poverty (UNESCO, 2023). Policy change is equally crucial, laws that mandate equal pay, parental leave, and protections against gender-based violence create a more just society. Advocacy movements, such as #MeToo and HeForShe, have sparked global conversations and led to tangible changes in workplace policies and legal reforms (UN Women, 2023). These efforts highlight the importance of speaking up and taking action at all levels.

Throughout history, women have taken bold steps to challenge injustice and pave the way for future generations. Malala Yousafzai risked her life to fight for girls' education in Pakistan and continues to be a leading voice for change. Kamala Harris shattered barriers as the first female Vice President of the United States, inspiring millions worldwide. On a local level, initiatives such as Women Entrepreneurs Network Caribbean (WENC) have empowered women in business, to providing them with resources and mentorship to thrive. These examples reinforce that progress is possible when action is taken.

Overall, the call to *Accelerate Action* is not just a theme it is a necessity. Women like my grandmother paved the way, but the road ahead is still long. We must dismantle barriers, challenge outdated norms, and push for policies that create real change. Gender equity is not a distant dream; it is an achievable reality if we commit to urgent and sustained action. The future is waiting, but we must be bold enough to build it now.

Accelerating Action for Gender Equity: A Caribbean Perspective



By **Zalika Fields**

Gender equity is defined as the “provision of fairness and justice in the distribution of benefits and responsibilities between women, men and all genders”. True fairness remains elusive despite advancements due to structural obstacles, societal norms, and economic imbalances. In keeping with the theme of International Women’s Day “Accelerate Action”, the Caribbean is the main focus of this article which aims to examine the ongoing barriers to gender equity, the cooperative responsibilities of many society-stakeholders and the transformational potential of lobbying, policy-reform and education. Despite noteworthy progress, many women still encounter societal, political and economic barriers that restrict their options and access to opportunities.

Systemic impediments in the labour and economic institutions are one of the main obstacles impeding gender parity. There is a continuing gender pay gap, with women worldwide earning around 20% less than males.

Women only control 8% of registered firms in the Caribbean. Most of these firms are sole-proprietorships, suggesting that women have restricted access to chances for entrepreneurship. Historical prejudice and structural barriers that now impede women’s advancement and potential significant social change are to blame for this low level of economic engagement.

In the Caribbean, women carry out most of the unpaid housework, limiting their capacity to earn a living or grow in their careers. Despite legal initiatives to promote gender equality, cultural patterns continue to perpetuate discriminatory practices. Women with greater qualifications than the average male counterpart have fewer career opportunities and earn lower wages. Women in the Caribbean experience greater unemployment rates and poorer earnings than men, which hinders their potential to become financially independent. Many women in Antigua and Barbuda, for example, struggle to get financing or financial assistance to establish their own enterprises. Addressing these issues is critical to improving economic inclusion amongst genders. Another big impediment to gender equality is violence against women. The Caribbean has one of the world’s highest rates of intimate-partner violence, with one of three women experiencing some degree of abuse. This not only endangers women’s safety but also restricts their capacity to participate in social and economic activities.

To promote gender parity, people, communities, corporations, and governments must work together through confronting gender preconceptions, support women’s ini-

tiatives and education. Grassroots groups, such as the Caribbean Association for Feminist Research and Action (CAFRA), work to eliminate violence against women and promote gender equality. Local programs that provide mentorship and economic possibilities for women can produce long-term positive effects. Governments must provide legal and policy-support for gender equality.

Policy-reform is vital for greater gender equity such as equal-pay laws and childcare support for working mothers. According to research, nations that promote gender equality experience faster economic growth. Advocacy also plays an important part in gender-equity campaigns. The Caribbean Shereroes Initiative, established by UNESCO in 2024, empowers young women to confront power systems and demand equality. This initiative promotes youth-led advocacy and education surrounding gender equality, ensuring that the next generation actively participates in creating a fairer society.

In conclusion, accelerating action for gender equity in the Caribbean requires a collective effort from everyone. Although some progress has been achieved, substantial impediments remain. However, we can take comfort in the fact that the Caribbean can progress towards a fairer and more equitable society by tackling structural issues, enacting inclusive policies and supporting education and advocacy efforts. Gender parity is not only a moral concern, but also a financial and social need to ensure sustainable development, economic progress, and a more inclusive future for all.

Commentary

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If Guyana's President Ali is the "Zelensky of the Caribbean", who is the Putin?



By Sir Ronald Sanders

In the latest round of barbs with which Venezuela has responded to events surrounding its claim to the Essequibo region of Guyana, Guyana's President, Irfaan Ali, was described as "the Zelensky of the Caribbean". This characterization begs the question: If Ali is the "Zelensky of the Caribbean," then who is the "Putin"?

However, posing and answering that latter question is as unhelpful to resolving the border controversy peacefully as is describing Ali as "Zelensky". It is far more constructive to focus on facts and to work toward a peaceful solution to Venezuela's claims in accordance with the UN Charter and international law.

The most recent incident that inflamed the situation between the two countries occurred on 1 March 2025, when a Venezuelan military vessel approached and accosted Floating Production Storage and Offloading (FPSO) platforms, operated by the US company Exxon,

in an area that Guyana considers its Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). It is important to note that, because of the land boundary contention still before the International Court of Justice (ICJ), Guyana and Venezuela have not yet formally delimited their maritime boundaries.

Both countries claim the waters in question. However, under a December 2023 Order of the ICJ, Guyana has administrative control over the disputed territory pending the Court's final judgment. Consequently, Guyana is entitled to authorize lawful activities in the EEZ, including those undertaken by the FPSO platforms operated by Exxon.

While the right of navigation through contested waters is recognized under customary international law, that right does not extend to confronting or intimidating entities engaged in legally authorized activity. Although the Venezuelan patrol boat did not use force, its actions arguably violated the spirit of both the ICJ's 1 December 2023 Order and Clauses 1 and 6 of the Argyle Agreement, which collectively demand that neither side take steps that might aggravate or extend the dispute.

Hence, instead of exploring the implications of who is a "Zelensky" or a "Putin" in this matter, it is far more constructive for the government and peoples of both countries to maintain their focus on the arbitration of the controversy before the ICJ. At the same time, they should abide by the terms of "The Joint Declaration of Argyle for Dialogue and Peace" (the Argyle Agreement), which they signed on 14 December

2023.

In adhering to the Argyle Agreement, Venezuela should recall Clause 1, which states that both parties agreed "directly or indirectly" not to threaten or use force under any circumstances, and Clause 6, which states that both parties committed to "refrain from escalating any conflict or disagreement arising from any controversy between them."

In this regard, the Venezuelan authorities should reflect on whether taking over Ankoko Island (divided between the two countries) and placing military assets on it constitutes a threat of the use of force. Consideration might also be given to Venezuela's declared intent to hold local elections on 27 April 2025 in Guyana's Essequibo region, asserting it as "Guayana-Essequiba," complete with a parallel governance structure—an action that directly challenges Guyana's sovereignty.

The leaders of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) countries have publicly described these plans a breach of international norms and of the ICJ's provisional measures. Importantly, CARICOM has not forcibly inserted itself into the border issue. Instead, both the governments of Venezuela and Guyana solicit CARICOM's mediating role, and to the credit of its leaders and the Secretariat's staff, the organization has tried to play a steadying role. It is all the more unfortunate, therefore, that the Venezuelan Vice President labelled officials of the CARICOM Secretariat as "third-rank bureaucrats of CARICOM, who act behind the backs of Heads

Commentary

of Government.” Anyone who knows how the Secretariat operates would confirm that it issues no public statement without the unanimous support of CARICOM governments.

Following the 1 March incident involving the Venezuelan military vessel and the FPSOs, Guyana’s President reported the matter to the Interlocutors of the Argyle Agreement, seeking “appropriate” action. In response—and while affirming in a 1 March 2025 statement that “The Essequibo is and will remain an inseparable part of Venezuela”—the Venezuelan Foreign Minister added that Venezuela will urgently activate the Argyle Mechanism to pursue peaceful dialogue.

Thus, President Nicolás Maduro requested an immediate meeting with

President Ali under the chairmanship of the Argyle Interlocutors. For his part, while stating that he remains “fully committed to dialogue, particularly when it serves to reinforce international law and the peaceful resolution of disputes, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations,” President Ali proposed a preparatory meeting of the two countries’ foreign ministers.

President Ali’s proposal is wise—not only because it allows time to diffuse heightened emotions ignited by recent events, but also because it permits careful preparation for such an important encounter.

Ultimately, the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean have committed themselves to remain a Zone of Peace. By respecting the ICJ’s judgment on the border

contention, once it is delivered, and the guiding principles of international law, Guyana and Venezuela can resolve their differences to the benefit of their peoples and regional stability.

A lasting solution lies not in epithets over who is the “Caribbean Zelensky” or “Putin,” but in deference to the legal frameworks upon which the peace and prosperity of all nations depend.

(The writer is Antigua and Barbuda’s Ambassador to the US and the OAS. He is also a Visiting Fellow at the Institute of Commonwealth Studies, London University and Massey College, University of Toronto. The views expressed are entirely his own. Responses and previous commentaries: www.sir-ronaldsanders.com)



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Commentary

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No Surrender to Evil Sickening Attack on Cuban Medical Brigades

The Cuban medical brigades are rooted in the internationalist spirit of the Cuban Revolution, which has long been established policy, and its success can be traced right back to the very beginning of the revolutionary process.

When Fidel Castro came to power with the triumph of the Rebel Army, on January 1st 1959, there were dire health conditions in Cuba, especially in rural areas, just as there were widespread poverty and illiteracy.

Of the few young people from poor families, who had got the opportunity to study medicine, most were waiting for many years, to save enough money to pay for graduation. It was the revolution that allowed them to graduate as doctors free of cost.

Many doctors, who were members of elite families, left the country, rather than participate in a new, socialized healthcare system. It was therefore necessary to train as many doctors as would be needed, as soon as possible.

But the Cuban revolutionary leadership was never just concerned about Cuba. Theirs was the cause of human dignity. The immortal Ernesto Che' Guevara, a medical doctor from Argentina, and who gave his life in Bolivia, while fighting to liberate the people of that country, was a passionate humanist and internationalist.

Che' gave up his position in government, and role as head of the Central Bank of Cuba, to be a guerilla fighter and doctor on the African continent, among those struggling to liberate themselves from colonialism and white supremacy. That was in the true spirit of uplifting all humanity; the spirit of the Cuban revolution.

Today, as part of the revolutionary commitment born of that great internationalist vision, Cuba has positioned herself in the forefront of healthcare, not only for her own

citizens, but for people around the world. Thousands of young people from around the world, primarily the Third World, have been trained as medical doctors in Cuba, and Cuban doctors can be found working around the world as part of cooperation with the various governments.

That has been accomplished by the extraordinary effort and revolutionary generosity of a people blockaded economically and financially, and un-



der constant threat and hostility. The Cuban government and people know what they have had to do and what they must do for the survival of their revolution and for its internationalist thrust. The Cuban professionals fulfill their internationalist missions with great enthusiasm and pride. They also benefit personally in the process.

Here in Antigua and Barbuda, as elsewhere, the work of the Cuban medical brigades has been invaluable, especially in affording us a range and level of specialist services that we so badly lacked until recently, in an increasingly modern society, where healthcare is easily accessible to all. The late Leonard Tim Hector, the man responsible for introducing Antigua and Barbuda to the Cuban Revolution, did not have the fortune of specialist intensive care here, because it was not until a decade after his death in our ICU, that we got our first intensive care specialists from Cuba.

We therefore reject and soundly denounce the repeated false pronounce-

ments made by the evil and uncaring Trump regime, against the Cuban Medical Brigade program, in an effort to vilify the Cuban leadership, demean the internationalist engagements of the Cuban professionals, and cripple the noble revolution.

Leaders of the USA and senselessly bitter Miami Cubans choose to be shamelessly loud in pouring scorn on Cuba, a little blockaded and struggling island in the Caribbean, that is coming to the rescue of even countries in the developed world, while the average person in that country, which is the wealthiest in the world, cannot afford healthcare.

With the most sophisticated medical technology imaginable, and with an abundance of super specialists in the medical field, the cost of healthcare to average persons is so prohibitive, that they avoid it, even at the risk of death. Because in the USA's version of healthcare, a trip on an ambulance and hospitalization for a significant medical intervention can create such a huge bill, that the patient becomes homeless afterwards. They can't find enough money to pay rent and buy food, and if their job is even a minimum wage job, it might disqualify them from a space in a homeless shelter.

Meanwhile, here is poor and stoic Cuba, not only taking care of her own, but positioning herself to help the governments of our region and elsewhere to help their people. So helping and supporting Cuba is helping and supporting ourselves. Defending Cuba's sovereign right to self-determination is defending our own.

***Our governments must not flinch.
Long live the Cuban cooperation!***

By Friends of Cuba in Antigua and Barbuda.

Regional News

Dominica Carnival: Mas Domnik 2025 deemed a major success



Mas Domnik 2025, Dominica's annual carnival celebration, has been hailed a resounding success, culminating on Carnival Tuesday with the highly anticipated costume parade and street jump-up, which wrapped up at 10:00 p.m.

This year's festivities saw an extension of Carnival Monday activities until 11:00pm, much to the delight of revellers, marking a significant milestone in the event's planning and execution.

Marva Williams, Chief Executive Officer of Discover Dominica Authority, spoke on local radio about the success of this year's Mas Domnik, emphasizing the surge in international visitors. She attributed the success to the extensive promotions that positioned Dominica's carnival as the "most authentic, safest, and most diverse" in the Caribbean.

"We saw this as a reality on Monday and Tuesday and the week leading up to those days with a massive success in terms of visibility and being able to draw local and overseas patrons...this sets us apart from other Caribbean carnivals," Williams told state radio.

A number of international influencers, including British actress Nath-


alie Emmanuel—who has starred in films such as Fast and Furious and has Dominican roots—also attended the celebrations, further raising the event's profile.

Meanwhile, acting Police Chief Davidson Valerie reported that the carnival was incident-free, with only six arrests made for minor offenses across the island.


Davidson expressed gratitude for the public's cooperation and the dedication of officers in maintaining order throughout the event. "The

support of the carnival organising committee and the public who were generally very cooperative must be commended," he said in a statement to local media.

There is one more event to mark the end of the season—burying the spirit of Carnival, known traditionally as Tewe Vaval will be held in the western community of Dublanc and in the Kalinago Territory on Wednesday evening. (*Loop Caribbean*)



Did you know?



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DOWN SYNDROME TYPE

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Happens when some cells have three copies of chromosome 21, while others have the usual two copies.

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Support AWARENESS Down Syndrome

Fire destroys private schools in Guyana

The Guyana government says it will “fully support” students affected by the fire on Wednesday at the privately-owned Mae’s Schools in Subryanville.

“The government will fully support [them]. As you know, we treat our public and private school children the same way we do public schools, with every intent and purpose,” said Education Minister Priya Manickchand. She added that the Examinations Division of the Ministry was implementing systems to accommodate students scheduled to sit exams administered by the Barbados-based Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC) and the Grade Six Assessment.

“We are just a couple of weeks away from Grade Six, so we are ensuring they are comfortable, properly seated, and that the CXC students are also provided for. As I speak, our Exams Division is currently assessing two locations to make that determination, but they will receive our full support,” she added.

In a statement, Mae’s Schools, which serves approximately 1,000 students across its Nursery, Primary, and Secondary levels, said it was implementing urgent measures to ensure the continuity of its students’ education



following the fire, which completely destroyed its main structure.

The school stated that the affected building previously housed the playground, as well as primary and secondary students. It also confirmed that all students, teachers, and staff members were safely accounted for, as verified by the Guyana Fire Service.

In collaboration with the

Ministry of Education, the school’s management said it is working swiftly to provide temporary accommodations for all displaced students.

“Parents are advised to stay in contact with their child’s respective class teachers to remain informed about all ongoing developments as they become available,” Mae’s Schools said, thanking the government and emergen-

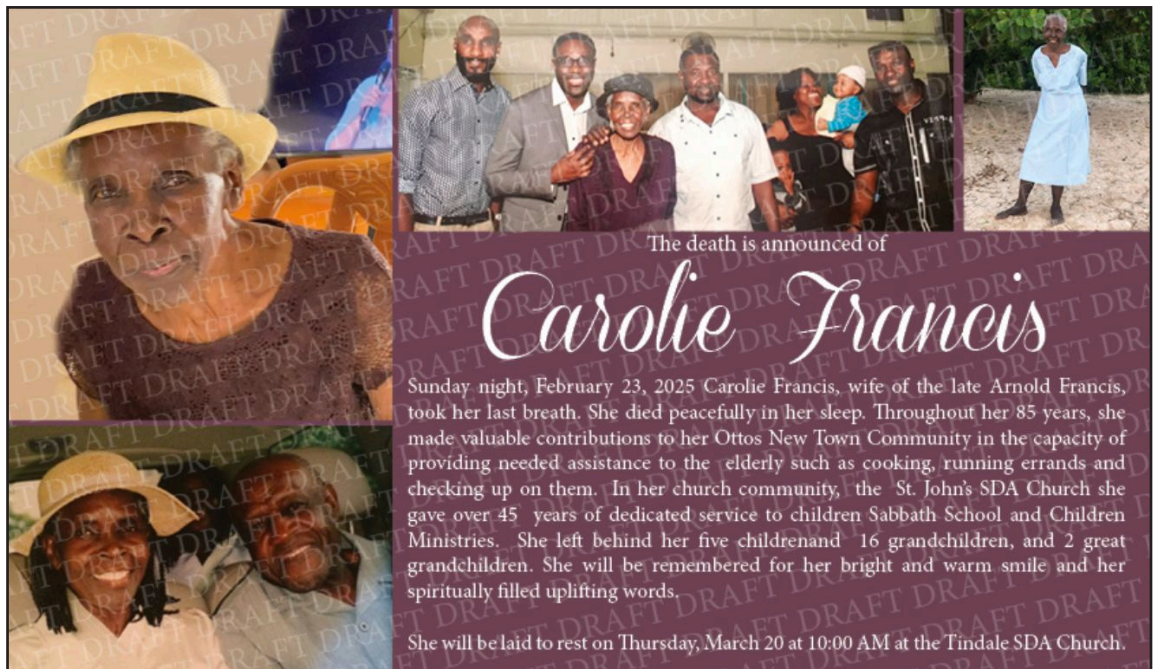
cy agencies for their swift response and support.

We also thank the many parents for their cooperation and trust in the systems we are putting in place to recover,” it added.

Fire Chief Gregory Wickham confirmed that no casualties were reported from the fire, which quickly consumed the decades-old wooden building.

The Ministry of Home Affairs, in a brief statement, said preliminary reports indicate that the fire started before 8:00 a.m. (local time).

“A parent at the scene recounted seeing a small fire inside one of the buildings. Despite efforts to extinguish it, the flames quickly spread, engulfing the entire school,” the statement added. (*Jamaica Gleaner*)



The death is announced of

Carolie Francis

Sunday night, February 23, 2025 Carolie Francis, wife of the late Arnold Francis, took her last breath. She died peacefully in her sleep. Throughout her 85 years, she made valuable contributions to her Ottos New Town Community in the capacity of providing needed assistance to the elderly such as cooking, running errands and checking up on them. In her church community, the St. John's SDA Church she gave over 45 years of dedicated service to children Sabbath School and Children Ministries. She left behind her five children and 16 grandchildren, and 2 great grandchildren. She will be remembered for her bright and warm smile and her spiritually filled uplifting words.

She will be laid to rest on Thursday, March 20 at 10:00 AM at the Tindale SDA Church.

Regional News



Dominican Republic seizes weapons and thousands of ammunition destined for Haiti via Miami



Authorities in the Dominican Republic said Tuesday that they seized 36,000 cartridges, 23 firearms and more than two dozen rifle and pistol chargers from a Miami shipment destined for Haiti.

Agents also confiscated a submachine gun and a charger for a .50-caliber rifle, according to a statement from the Dominican customs office.

Dominican officials said the investigation is ongoing and that they are working with agencies including the US Department of Homeland Security. They noted that Dominican agents recently seized 37 weapons at the same port in the Santo Domingo capital.


The seizures come as gang violence in neighboring Haiti surges across


the capital, Port-au-Prince, forcing 25,000 people to flee in the past two weeks, according to the International Organization for Migration.

Last year, more than 5,600 people were reported killed across Haiti, with gang violence leaving more than one million people homeless in recent years, according to the UN.

Illegal firearms were blamed for an increase or a record number of killings in the Caribbean last year. An estimated 90% of weapons used in the region were smuggled in from the US, according to US officials.

On Tuesday, police in Jamaica said they charged a truck driver from Columbus, Georgia with trafficking prohibited weapons after agents on the island seized 66 firearms and more than 4,500 rounds of ammunition at a port in the capital, Kingston, last month. The suspect is a dual citizen of the US and Jamaica, where he was arrested. (*Jamaica Gleaner*)






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Mozambique police fire on protesters with opposition leader's location unknown

Mozambican police fired on supporters of opposition leader Venancio Mondlane marching in the capital Maputo on Wednesday, injuring at least 10 people, Mondlane's team and a human rights researcher said.

A police spokesperson confirmed that law enforcement had dispersed marchers but declined to elaborate.

Mondlane's supporters had gathered hours before President Daniel Chapo signed an agreement with some political parties aimed at ending months of protests over Chapo's disputed election victory last year.

Mondlane came second in the presidential vote but has been excluded from the talks leading up to the agreement, which is meant to include a review of the country's electoral laws.

Analysts say Mondlane's exclusion means the agreement will likely do little to stabilize the resource-rich Southern African country.



Mondlane's team said in a statement posted on Facebook that his whereabouts were not known after police broke up the march. It said 16 people had been injured.

Mondlane did not answer a phone call from Reuters.

In a separate video broadcast live from Mondlane's Facebook page, the opposition leader was seen standing in a car moving down a street surrounded by a crowd of people cheering and singing. The sound of gunshots rang out, after which people started running and the video abruptly cut off.

Zenaida Machado, a

senior researcher at Human Rights Watch, said the organization had confirmed at least 10 people had been injured by police Wednesday. She added that firing on a peaceful opposition gathering jeopardized efforts to bring stability to Mozambique.

Political analyst Joao Feijo said the government's talks with other political parties were little more than theatre without Mondlane's involvement.

"The longer it takes to include Venancio, the worse the chances of stabilizing the situation," he said.

Local civil society monitoring group Plataforma Decide says

more than 350 people have been killed in the post-election demonstrations that started in late October.

Mondlane told supporters Wednesday that he would continue with his anti-government protests, for years if necessary.

He says Chapo and his Frelimo party won the October election through vote-rigging, while Western observers say it was not free and fair.

Frelimo has ruled Mozambique since the end of Portuguese colonial rule in 1975 and denies accusations of electoral fraud. (*NBC News*)

South Korean fighter jets accidentally drop bombs, injuring 8 people

Two South Korean fighter jets accidentally dropped eight bombs on a civilian area during a joint live-fire exercise with the U.S. military on Thursday, injuring eight people, officials said.

The MK-82 bombs released by the KF-16 fighter jets fell outside a firing range, the air force said in a statement. It apologized and expressed hopes for a speedy recovery of the injured and said it would offer compensation and take other necessary steps.

The air force said the fighter jets were taking part in the one-day firing drill with the U.S. military in Pocheon, a city close to the heavily armed border with North Korea.

The air force also said a committee would investigate the accident and examine the scale of the damage inflicted.

An unidentified air force official told local reporters that a pilot of one of the KF-16s had entered wrong coordinates for a bombing site. An unidentified Defense Ministry official told reporters that further investigation was needed to determine why the second KF-16 also dropped bombs on a civilian area.

In a televised briefing, Pocheon Mayor Paek Young Hyeun called the bombings “awful” and urged the military to halt drills in the city until it formulates reliable steps that can prevent a recurrence. He said that Pocheon, a city of 140,000 people, provides three major firing ranges for the South Korean and U.S. militaries. Park Seong-sook, a 70-year-old eyewitness who was not hurt in the bombing, said she thought “a war has broken out.”

“It was such a loud sound,” she said, adding that it left her trembling with fear.

The military said later Thursday it has decided to suspend all live-fire drills across South Korea.

The accident came just before the

South Korean and U.S. militaries announced they will begin large-scale annual military drills next Monday.

It’s unclear how long the suspension of the live-fire training would last, but observers said it would likely be until the military determines the cause of Thursday’s accident and maps out preventative steps.

Pocheon’s disaster response department said six civilians and two soldiers were injured and were be-

ing treated at hospitals. Four of the injured — all civilians — were in serious condition, the department said. Two of the seriously injured are foreigners, one from Thailand and the other from Myanmar.

Three houses, a Catholic church and a greenhouse were partially damaged but they did not appear to have been directly hit by the bombs, according to the department. (*Associated Press*)



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Panama President Mulino says Trump 'lying' about reclaiming the canal



Panama President Jose Raul Mulino has accused his American counterpart, Donald Trump, of lying when he told members of Congress that the United States is “reclaiming” the Panama Canal.

In a statement posted on X on Wednesday, Mulino said the man-made waterway

that connects the Atlantic and Pacific oceans “is not in the process of recovery” by Trump and the US government.

“Once again, President Trump is lying,” Mulino wrote on X.

“I reject, on behalf of Panama and all Panamani-

ans, this new affront to the truth and to our dignity as a nation,” Mulino added.

During the annual presidential address to the US Congress on Tuesday, Trump declared that Washington would be reclaiming the Panama Canal “to further enhance” US national security.

“We’ve already started doing it. We’re taking it back.”

He was referencing a deal announced on Tuesday for a consortium, led by the US investment management company BlackRock Inc, to buy a controlling stake in the company held by a Chinese group that operates ports at both ends of one of the busiest water channels in the world.

In a filing, CK Hutchison Holding had announced that it would sell all shares in Hutchison Port Holdings and in Hutchison Port Group Holdings to BlackRock in a deal valued at nearly \$23bn, including \$5bn in debt.

The deal has to be approved
by Panama's government.
(*Al Jazeera English*)

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Sports News



Ojays extend unbeaten run in ABBA's Division 2 league



ect in the second game of a double-header at the JSC Sports Complex.

Tajahron Davis produced 26 points, seven steals, and five rebounds, and Aiden Christian scored 12 points and snatched eight rebounds for the Ovals Ojays 2.

Beniah Mack had eight points and 10 rebounds, and Donalde Hunte

chipped in with seven points and 10 rebounds for Da Project 2, who suffered their seventh loss in as many games.

The Navigators claimed their fourth win in seven matches with a 74-55 victory against Michael Joseph Phoenix in the second game of Wednesday's double-header.

Ryan Sheppard produced 19

points, seven re-

DA
ning...



DAILY PROGRAMMING



EARLY VIBRATIONS 6AM-10AM MON. - FRI.
WITH GREMSTA

THE RUSH HOUR SHOW 5PM-7PM MON. - FRI.
WITH ROGER LAKE 6AM-9AM SATURDAYS

TOUCHLINE 7PM-9PM MON. - THURS.
WITH EPILUS

BAD COMPANY 2PM-6PM THURS. 12PM-4PM SATURDAYS
LIVE FROM THE V.I. & 1PM-5PM ON SUNDAYS

REGGAE INSPIRATION 9PM-12AM MON. THURS. SUNDAY
WITH SELECTOR KEEGAN

JAH WADADLI 7PM-9PM FRIDAYS
WITH DJ JAH WADADLI

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

The Ovals Ojays 2 notched up their seventh win in as many games with a 90-34 drubbing of Da Proj-

OFFICIAL
CARNIVAL

MON JULY 28	JAYCEES QUEEN SHOW CARNIVAL CITY
TUES JULY 29	KARI SOCA INTERNATIONAL SOCA MONARCH CARNIVAL CITY
WED JULY 30	BURNING FLAMES 40TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION CARNIVAL CITY
THURS JULY 31	DRINK TILL YA WEAK BOAT CRUISE MELTING POT CARNIVAL CITY WATCH NIGHT ARG / BOTANICAL GARDENS

SUN AUG 3	SPLASH ANTIGUA PARTY MONARCH CARNIVAL CITY
MON AUG 4	JOUVERT ST. JOHN'S MONDAY MAS PARADE ST. JOHN'S
TUES AUG 5	PARADE OF BANDS CARNIVAL CITY LAST LAP ST. JOHN'S



Sports News

PAGE 25

Blackhawks resume quest to retain ABCA two-day championship

Reigning champions PIC Insurance Liberta Black Hawks, who won the competition for the past three seasons, will be seeking to remain on course for a successful defense of their title in the Antigua and Barbuda Cricket Association's (ABCA) two-day contest this weekend.

The Blackhawks are holding a slender six-point lead over their closest rivals in the 10-team round-robin competition after five rounds of matches.

Liberta will enter this weekend's sixth round of matches as one of four unbeaten teams and sole leaders of the competition with 51 points.

The Blackhawks are followed by the other three unbeaten teams in the

points standings. The New Winthorpes Lions are clipping at the heels in second place with 45 points, three points ahead of Empire Nation in third place.

Jennings Tigers, the other unbeaten team, currently occupy fourth place with 37 points. The Tigers are just one point ahead of the All Saints Pythons in fifth place.

The Pigotts Crushers occupy sixth place with 22 points, and the Bolans Blasters are in seventh place with 12 points.

WES Rising Sun Spartans and Caribbean Union Bank (CUB) Bethesda Golden Eagles are tied second from the bottom of the standings with nine points apiece.

Tertiary Institutions and

Schools are currently occupying the cellar with six points.

Like the Blackhawks, all the teams will have the chance to improve their standings when they compete in the sixth round of matches, starting on Saturday at 10 am.

The Liberta Blackhawks will be seeking to record their fifth win in six matches when they face the Pigotts Crushers at the Pigotts playing field.

The New Winthorpes Lions will take on the Bolans Blasters at home in New Winthorpes Village, and Empire Nation will clash with the Jennings Tigers at the Factory Grounds.

The Bethesda Golden Eagles will travel to face the

All Saints Pythons at the Mack Pond playing field in All Saints Village, and Tertiary Institutions and School will meet the Rising Sun Spartans at the Rising Sun Grounds in St. John's.

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.



Sports News

Teams resume quest for supremacy in Premier Division League

The battle for supremacy in the nation's top domestic league will resume with the penultimate round of matches for some teams this weekend.

The group, or second phase of the Antigua and Barbuda Football Association's (ABFA) Premier Division, will continue with the fifth round of matches at the ABFA Technical Center at Paynters.

In Saturday's triple header, Terminix Pigotts Bullets will tackle Island Original John Hughes in a Group 1 affair at 4 pm.

FC Aston Villa Lions will take on Cool and Smooth Greenbay Hoppers in another Group 1 encounter at 6 pm, and Old Road will oppose the Potters Tigers in a Group 2 match at 8 pm.

In Sunday's triple-header, Sandals and APUA Inet Jennings Grenades will challenge Green City FC in a Group 1 encounter at 4 pm.

Garden Stars will tackle Parham in a Group 2 match at 6 pm, and defending champions Special Security Services and Bitar Pizza All Saints United will clash with Attacking Saints in an All Saints derby in Group 2 at 8 pm.

Five Islands and the Willikies Warriors receive byes during the fifth round of matches. Heading into



Players of All Saints United and Five Islands (red and yellow uniform) compete in the Premier Division League at the ABFA Technical Center in October 2024. (ABFA Media)

this weekend's fixtures, one point still separates the only two teams that can win the title, All Saints United and Jennings Grenades.

All Saints United leads the competition with 46 points, one ahead of Jennings Grenades, with both teams having played 17 matches. Both teams have two games remaining, and the champions for this season will more than likely be decided in the last round of matches.

Old Road currently occupies third place on goal difference ahead of Garden Stars in fourth place. Both teams are tied on 34 points, but Old Road has played 17 matches, one more than Garden Stars.

Pigotts Bullets are in fifth place with 28 points from 17 matches, and they are closely followed by Aston Villa Lions with 27 points from 16 encounters.

Next is John Hughes in seventh place with 21 points from 16 matches, the Potters Tigers with 18 points from 16 games, and Attacking Saints with 16 points from 16 matches.

Green City FC occupies 10th place on goal difference ahead of Five Islands. Both teams have 14 points, but Five Islands have played 17 matches, one more than Green City FC.

Former champions Greenbay Hoppers are third from the bottom of the standings on goal difference ahead of the

Willikies Warriors.

Both teams have 11 points, but the Willikies Warriors, who are second from the bottom of the standings, have played 17 matches, one more than the Greenbay Hoppers.

Parham is currently in the cellar with 10 points from 16 matches. At the end of the contest, teams finishing in positions 11th to 14th will be automatically relegated to the First Division next season.

The team that finishes in the 10th position will enter into a playoff with the third and fourth-place finishers in the First Division. The winner of the playoff will compete in the Premier Division next season.

Barbados women claim dominant win over Leeward Islands

Barbados delivered a commanding performance in the final round of the CG United Insurance Super 50 Cup, cruising to a nine-wicket victory over the Leeward Islands at St Paul's Sports Complex in St. Kitts on Wednesday.

Led by a destructive spell from Allison Gordon and a composed chase by Kycia Knight, Barbados made light work of their opponents to close out their campaign in emphatic fashion.

After winning the toss and electing to field, Barbados' bowlers wasted no time in dismantling the Leeward Islands' batting lineup, skittling them out for just 85 runs in 31.2 overs.

Gordon was the chief destroyer, claiming four for 13 in seven overs, wreaking havoc through the middle order. She was well-supported by Shamilia Connell, who struck early to remove Melicia Clarke for a duck in the first over before trapping Divya Saxena lbw for five, reducing Leeward Islands to 19 for three inside nine overs.

Reniece Boyce fought hard with a 24-ball 15 before falling to Aaliyah Alleyne, while Shawnisha Hector added nine before becoming Gordon's second victim.

The collapse continued as Gor-



Players of the Barbados women's team celebrate
 don removed Amanda Edwards and Kimberly Anthony in quick succession, leaving the Leeward Islands reeling at 46 for seven.

Only captain Jahzara Claxton showed resistance, remaining unbeaten on 23 from 24 balls, as Keila Elliott wrapped up the innings by taking the final two wickets, ensuring Barbados needed just 86 runs for victory.

The chase was swift and clinical, thanks to an authoritative innings from Kycia Knight, who played with aggression and intent to finish unbeaten on 51 from 36 balls, including five boundaries.

Although Asabi Callender fell early for a three-ball duck, Barbados never looked troubled, with Trishan Holder anchoring

the innings with a patient 23 not out from 28 deliveries.

The pair guided Barbados to victory in just 17.5 overs, sealing an easy nine-wicket win with more than 32 overs to spare.

The Leeward Islands' bowlers had no answers for Barbados' dominance, with Sainavi Kam-balapalli picking up the only wicket, dismissing Callender in the second over.

She finished with one for 35 from 8.4 overs, while the rest of the Leeward Islands attack struggled to make inroads.

The Leewards ended the 50-over competition with one win and four losses from their quota of five matches.

Volleyball club championships set to commence this weekend



The 2025 Antigua and Barbuda Amateur Volleyball Association's (ABA-VA) Local League is set to serve off at the indoor stadium at the YMCA Sports Complex this weekend.

A male category has been added to the female section in the second division, which was incorporated into last year's local league competitions in the ABA-VA's quest to continue its development of young players.

Sharks, which competed in the male Division 1 competition for the past several seasons, is one of four teams that will be competing in the inaugural men's second division.

Chargers Velocity, which made their debut in the men's Division 1 competition last season, will also be contesting this year's second division.

Invaders and Stoneville are the other two teams that will participate in the men's

second division league.

Nine teams, including four newcomers, will compete in this year's female second division.

The four new additions are Chargers Eagles 2, Dynasty Queens 2, Jets, and HF-Valkyries. They will join five of the six teams that participated in last year's inaugural female second division.

Starz 2 Juniors, Dynasty Queens 1, Chargers Eagles 1, defending champions Paragons 2, and Royal Cruiser 2 will all return to participate in the Female Division 2 competition. However, Da Squad 2, which contested last year's contest, will not return this season.

The second division will commence with a triple-header on Sunday. Royal Cruisers 2 will face Dynasty Queens 2 in the first game of two games in the female division at 3 pm.

Dynasty Queens 1 will

take on Starz 2 Juniors in the other female game at 4 pm, and Sharks will clash with Stoneville in the opening men's second division encounter at 5 pm.

Like last year, six teams will be contesting the Female Division I competition. Among them is reigning three-peat champions Caribbean Alliance Insurance (CAI) Da Squad, who will be defending their title. The other five teams that contested last year's competition will once again be participating this year.

They are perennial and former champions, Paragons, who captured the runners-up position last year; Stoneville; last year's third-place finishers Starz 1 (Seniors); Jets; and Royal Cruisers.

With the departure of Sharks and Chargers Velocity to the second division, the remaining seven of the nine teams that contested last year's competition will

once again be competing for the coveted national men's division 1 league title, which was won for the seventh time by Stoneville in 2024.

Also returning with Stoneville are the Pytonz, who captured the runners-up position in the league and won the President's Cup title last year.

The other returning teams are the High Flyers, the Renegades, the Phoenix Flyers, Invaders, and last year's third-place finishers, the Top Ranking Storming Lions.

The national Division 1 club championship will commence with a double header at the volleyball stadium at the YMCA Sports Complex on Saturday.

Jets will face CAI Da Squad in the female Division I at 6:45 pm, while High Flyerz will meet the Storming Lions in the men's Division I at 7:45 pm.