

ANTIGUA & BARBUDA  
**POINT EXPRESS**  
TRUSTED NEWS AND RESPECTED VIEWS

FRIDAY 11<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2025

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Antigua Barbuda  
FESTIVALS  
COMMISSION

CIU

ANTIGUA  
BARBUDA  
The beach is just the beginning...  
PRESENTS

Caribbean

Melting

JULY  
**31**  
CARNIVAL  
CITY

FEATURING:  
**MACHIEL MONTANO**  
*Itz A ViBe*



# Selling the Alfa Nero was the 'best option' available to the government

*Story on Page 3*



**Desire Markham, Queen of Carnival 2024 (with crown on her head) surrounded by the 2025 Queen of Carnival delegates**

*Story on Page 6*



## PM Browne: Selling the Alfa Nero was the 'best option' available to the government



Prime Minister Gaston Browne

The decision by the Antigua and Barbuda government to sell the Alfa Nero, the sanctioned superyacht that was abandoned in the Falmouth Harbour, was the best option available to the government at the time of the sale.

That's the view expressed by Prime Minister Gaston Browne as he and a team of officials who played varying roles in the sale of the vessel last year, appeared on ABS Television to address issues regarding the sale of the vessel and he subsequent disposal of the

sale funds.

"We are the only small island state that had ended up with a sanctioned vessel and we don't have the US\$5 million that is required annually to upkeep the vessel. In the United States, they have seized a number of Russian yachts and my understanding is that it is costing them tens of millions of dollars annually to upkeep these vessels. They can afford those payments," PM Browne stated.

The prime minister indicated that prior to the government selling the Alfa Nero, it had to pe-

tition the US Treasury Department to lift the sanction off the vessel and in doing so it had to explain the potential environmental problems, the economic problems and the cost of maintaining the vessel.

"We had to explain that there was no way that a small island state could afford to maintain a sanctioned vessel that was uninsured and without a flag and there was a need for us to acquire the vessel so that we could sell it and in the process resolve a fundamental liability that the government and people of Antigua and Barbuda would have had," he stated.

According to PM Browne when all the issues are properly examined, the government took what was the best option available in the disposal of the vessel, prior to it becoming a major environmental challenge and for the smooth operations of the Falmouth Harbour.

The prime minister is assuring the people of Antigua and Barbuda that 'there is nothing

to worry about' as the government is taking certain legal actions to ensure the view that it acted in the best interest of the people of the country.

The prime minister's contention was fully supported by Port Manager, Darwin Telemaque who stated that the actions of the government were the correct ones. "The boat was delisted, uninsured, and without a flag. Therefore, moving it was impossible. The crew that was on board said they were about to leave because they had no more food on board the vessel. A decision was taken to acquire the vessel and to sell it. But even at that time, it was still sanctioned and our task was to persuade the US authorities to remove the sanction before we could proceed with anything," Telemaque explained.

Also appearing on the programme were the government's chief attorney handling the sale, Senior Council Anthony Astaphan and Financial Secretary, Rosana Davis-Crump.



## Cuba's Medical Brigade celebrates 25 years in Antigua and Barbuda

The Medical Brigade, through which Cuba has provided hundreds of healthcare professionals to work in Antigua and Barbuda is celebrating 25 years of providing medical service to the country's healthcare delivery system.

Governor General Sir Rodney Williams, Prime Minister, Gaston Browne, Health Minister, Sir Molwyn Joseph, Leader of the Opposition, Jamale Pringle, and Medical Director of the Sir Lester Bird Medical Centre, Dr. Jarvis-Belle were among a number of individuals who attended a photographic exhibition at the Parliament Chambers that celebrated the work of the members of the Brigade here in Antigua and Barbuda.

In brief remarks, Sir Rodney described the anniversary as '25 years of selfless partnership between Antigua and Barbuda and the Republic of Cuba in the field of healthcare', noting that the photographic exhibition is not merely a collection of images; it is a testament to resilience, solidarity, and humanity.

"Twenty-five years ago, our nations embarked on a journey rooted in compassion. When Cuba answered our call for support, they did not send merely doctors, they sent heroes. Heroes who left their homes to safeguard ours. Heroes who have touched countless lives, from the bustling streets of St. John's to the tranquil shores of Barbuda. Through hurricanes, pandemics, and challenges unforeseen, the Cuban Medical Brigade stood with us, undaunted, unwavering, and united in purpose," he remarked.

For his part, Prime Minister Browne described the work of members of the Brigade as providing the cornerstone of the country's healthcare services.

"We are very pleased to have you here and we hope that as we celebrate this 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary that this will represent



just a fraction of the many more years to come as part of this partnership. Antigua and Barbuda and Cuba established diplomatic relations with Cuba back in 1994 under the leadership of the late National Hero Sir Lester Bird. It is a partnership that has been mutually beneficial; one in which Cuba has helped us to build capacity in a number of areas; including healthcare, education as well as certain aspect of our infrastructural development," PM Bird observed.

The nation's leader recalled that Cuba has been a reliable partner and friend especially in times of disaster as the country has always given 'from the little that it has'. "This makes Cuba a very reliable friend of Antigua and Barbuda," he added.

The prime minister took time to reassure the Cuban medical personnel that their work in the country is being valued and that irrespective of what other countries may say, Antigua and Barbuda knows that it is not involved in any trafficking of humans as claimed by US government officials. He added that they have been well-integrated within the Antigua and Barbuda society.

Leader of the Opposition, Jamale Pringle, noted that the Cuban Medical Brigade has saved lives and has helped to improve the health of hundreds of our citizens and residents. "The doctors, nurses and technicians have done so not only with the highest professionalism but with the greatest medical prescription, which is empathy," Pringle stated.

For Health Minister, Sir Molwyn the true value of the Medical Brigade was re-enforced during the COVID-19 pandemic when Antigua and Barbuda faced its biggest health challenge. The members of the Cuban Brigade were the ones who gave hope that the health institutions, mainly the SLB-MC, would be able to save lives.

He noted too that Cuba's position in the world is unique, as he knows of no other country that has invested so much of its human resources specifically to help others.

Cuban Ambassador Sergio Martinez Gonzalez noted that the Cuban Medical Brigades has operated in many countries across the globe bringing much needed healthcare and saving the lives of many persons.



SAINT LUCIA  
**JAZZ  
& ARTS**  
*Festival*  
APRIL 30 - MAY 11  
2025

**OPENING**  
*Night*  
WED 30<sup>TH</sup> APRIL

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LADY LAVA | TRILLA G | NICE | PUDAZ | LM STONE  
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*Pure*  
**Jazz**  
*moments of the Arts*  
TUE 6<sup>TH</sup> MAY

**MATTEO MANCUSO**

ETIENNE CHARLES | MANASSETH EDWARD (PAN JAZZ)

**KINGDOM**  
*night*  
WED 7<sup>TH</sup> MAY

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CHANDLER MOORE, NAOMI RAINE & MORE | JCK WORSHIP  
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OLYMPIA VITALIS | ZAMANI FOLADE

*Caribbean*  
**FUSION**  
FRI 9<sup>TH</sup> MAY

**BEENIE MAN AND BOUNTY KILLER**

PATRICE ROBERTS | YUNG BREDDA  
RICKY T – THE STORY

**WORLD**  
**BEATS**  
SAT 10<sup>TH</sup> MAY

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BARBARA CADET | SEMI FRANCIS, SLY & FRIENDS

*The Ultimate*  
**Celebration**  
SUN 11<sup>TH</sup> MAY

**JOHN LEGEND | EARTH, WIND & FIRE**

RICHARD PAYNE | RONALD BOO HINKSON SHOW THE WORLD  
THE LAO TIZER BAND FEATURING ELLIOTT YAMIN, ERIC MARIENTHAL,  
KAREN BRIGGS AND CHIELI MINUCCI

SAINT LUCIA  
Jazz & Arts Festival



EVENTS  
SAINT LUCIA



## Festival Commission reveals the five 2025 Queen of Carnival delegates



*'Celestial Five'*

The names of the 2025 Queen of Carnival delegates and their sponsors have been revealed by the Antigua and Barbuda Festivals Commission.

In a gala event held at the Royalton Chic Resort on Thursday evening, the 'Celestial Five' were revealed and sashed by their respective sponsors. The 2025 delegates are;

- 1 - Kia Kirwan- Miss ACB Caribbean
- 2 - Kaaliyha Guiste - Miss Antigua Masonry Products
- 3 - Danijha Simon- Miss Furniture Gallery
- 4 - Abigail Piper - Miss Board Walk Casino
- 5 - Asheila Pluck - Miss Antigua Port Authority

The Queen of Carnival show takes place on July 20th under the theme: "Celestial – Illuminate, Inspire, Reign". The Commission said this theme reflects the inner brilliance and guiding light within each of the delegates. It's about power, elegance, and influence, qualities that shine beyond the stage.

The Queen of Carnival is one of the most prestigious events of the Carnival calendar, highlighting the intelligence, beauty, and cultural pride of young Antiguan women. It's a platform that not only celebrates who they are, but also who they aspire to become, as ambassadors of our nation's heritage.

The delegates will compete in five exciting segments:

\* **Interview** – A test of intellect,

clarity, and confidence.

\* **Swimwear** – Where strength and individuality are on full display.

\* **Performing Talent** – A space for raw creativity and artistic expression.

\* **Costume** – This year with a twist: each delegate's presentation must feature an element of light, tying directly into our celestial theme.

\* **Evening Wear** – The pinnacle of poise and sophistication.

The Queen off Carnival show is this year being organized by a committee with two co-chairs, Shenique Barry and Raynel Carroll.



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# ***FLOW***



# Photo Story

## Cuba's Medical Brigade celebrates 25 years in Antigua and Barbuda





# Photo Story





# PUBLIC RALLY



*Hosted By  
Tiffany Strann &  
Jesse Fyah*



*Music by  
MadRass  
Entertainment*



*Come and hear the facts  
on the Alfa Nero Sale*

*Come and hear of the  
work of the experienced  
Gaston Browne team*

*Come and be a part of the movement to make  
Antigua and Barbuda an economic powerhouse*

**FRIDAY 11<sup>TH</sup>  
APRIL 7PM**

**People's Place  
Nugent Avenue**



## A US aerospace firm explores business relationships in A&B



An American company associated with the US Aerospace and Defense industries is exploring the possibilities of establishing a subsidiary company here in Antigua and Barbuda.

Already, the company, M2C Aerospace, Inc. (M2C), which provides key support to the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), has held meetings with Aviation, Investment and Transportation Minister, Charles Max Fernandez, on strategic planning discussion focused on establishing Antigua and Barbuda as an International destination for advanced aviation technology.

Representing M2C were Ann Dancik, CEO and President, and Captain Elpert Hodge, Executive Vice President, who is a native son of Antigua and where

he started his aviation career.

Topics discussed included Antigua and Barbuda hosting an International Commercial Aviation Technology Symposium in the spring of 2027 to be attended by global and regional airlines, aircraft manufacturers, and aircraft suppliers, and the technology transfer of the Virtual Pilot Assistant (VPA) currently being developed by M2C USA to M2C Antigua.

The VPA is an Artificial Intelligence (AI) Automatic Voice Recognition (AVR) piloting information retrieval system that

could significantly improve aviation safety and efficiency, particularly for less experienced pilots.

Key local contributors to these planned developments are Make-da Mikael, Antigua Hangars Inc. whose facility could be used to support the Symposium and the planned technology flight demonstrations, and Dr. Curtis Charles, Director Academic Affairs, UWI FIC. The UWI FIC would be key in providing a pipeline of AI professionals to support VPA enhancements and establishment of a Data Center to support aircraft fleets of both global and regional airlines.



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## Oyster Yachts Chairman Richard Hadida Awarded Governor General's Faithful and Meritorious Service Cross



from right to left: Lady Williams, Sir Rodney Williams, Mr. Richard Hadida and his family members

Chairman of Oyster Yachts, Richard Hadida, who has been at the forefront of marine tourism here in Antigua and Barbuda, is the latest recipient the Faithful and Meritorious Service Cross conferred by Governor General, Sir Rodney Williams.

A Note from Government House said the national award, presented under the authority of the Chancery of the Orders and Decorations, recognizes individuals who have rendered sustained and distinguished service in fields of national importance. Hadida was honoured for his long-standing and visionary contributions to marine tourism and sailing culture, both in Antigua and Barbuda and internation-

ally.

Hadida was supported at the ceremony by members of his family and by, Parks Commissioner of Nelson's Dockyard, Ann Marie Martin, whose presence underscored the strong partnership between

***Oyster Yachts and Antigua and Barbuda's national parks and heritage institutions.***

In his official remarks, the Governor General lauded Hadida's "leadership, vision, and generosity of spirit," which have "left an enduring mark on our nation's tourism and maritime identity". He highlighted Chairman Hadida's transformative leadership since acquiring Oyster Yachts in 2018, his role in revi-

talizing the Oyster Regatta, and his support of the Oyster World Rally, which has helped establish Antigua and Barbuda as a premier global sailing destination.

In addressing the honouree, Sir Rodney described the award as "a lasting symbol of our nation's appreciation and the strong bond that now exists between you and the people of Antigua and Barbuda."

The citation, presented by the Acting Herald, Rozanne Emmanuel, noted that Hadida's work has significantly enhanced the island's visibility and prestige, while creating meaningful economic and cultural benefits for the local community. With regattas that welcome over a hundred par-

ticipants from around the world and world rallies planned through 2028, his initiatives continue to deepen international connections and showcase Antigua and Barbuda's marine excellence.

In a brief response, Hadida expressed his heartfelt appreciation for the award, describing it as a profound honour and reaffirming his commitment to continuing the work of building lasting ties between the Oyster community and the people of Antigua and Barbuda.

Hadida joins a select group of honourees who have demonstrated exemplary leadership and faithful commitment to the advancement of the nation.



**TUES - FRIDAY  
11AM - 2PM**



**HOSTED BY  
SENATOR COLIN O'NEAL BROWNE**

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# CDF, ACB Caribbean, sign Credit Risk Abatement Facility (CRAF) Agreement

The ACB Caribbean Group and the CARICOM Development Fund (CDF) have officially signed the Master Guarantee Agreement under the Credit Risk Abatement Facility (CRAF), in a significant move aimed at enhancing financing for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) engaged in renewable energy and energy efficiency projects across Antigua and Barbuda and Grenada.

The signing ceremony marked a milestone in sustainable finance and climate resilience in the region. The CRAF initiative is designed to support SMEs by mobilising capital through credit enhancement and offering targeted technical assistance – tackling head-on the often-cited challenge that banks are not supportive of small businesses.

In her welcome remarks, ACB Caribbean Group General Manager, Joana Charles noted:

*“The ACB Caribbean Group is thrilled to sign the Credit Risk Abatement Facility (CRAF) agreement alongside the CARICOM Development Fund. This initiative directly aligns with the implementation of our strategic plan for the next three years, and we are eager to roll it out in both Antigua and Barbuda and Grenada.*

*The CRAF provides support to SMEs through the banking sector, for renewable energy and energy efficiency projects by providing credit enhancement and targeted technical assistance. This aligns with several key areas of our strategic plan – namely, implementing a practical and meaningful ESG strategy, and empowering our customers with access to financing and support as they adopt sus-*



*tainable, environmentally conscious business practices.*

*ACB Caribbean Group is proud to be the first lending institution to sign this agreement in both of our territories. We are excited about what the future holds for our customers and future generations who will benefit from this programme.”*

Also speaking at the event was Rodinald Soomer, CEO of the CARICOM Development Fund, who emphasised the importance of private sector inclusion in climate resilience strategies:

*“It is important to close the circle on resilience building by bringing the private sector front and centre into national and regional efforts at implementing a long-term sustainable response to climate change mitigation and systematic adaptation to its impacts. Within this context, the CDF is pleased to welcome the ACB Caribbean Group as a strategic financing partner to the Credit Risk Abatement Facility.*

*This is a most opportune time to advance this endeavour, given the increasingly urgent need for access to domestic and regional financing for the energy transition in the Caribbean – particularly in light of the escalating impacts of climate change and recent geopolitical developments. Now more than ever, we must collaborate to design and scale viable, home-grown, and sustainable development solutions.”*

The partnership marks a strong alignment between the two organisations’ goals, with ACB Caribbean Group’s customer-focused small business programme playing a pivotal role in ensuring that diverse business needs are met across both territories. The Group reiterated its commitment to supporting SMEs not just through funding but also through capacity-building and technical guidance.

The signing represents a shared vision to drive environmental sustainability, climate resilience, and economic empowerment throughout the region.



# Mystic Larissa Barnes wins tablet courtesy of Flow

Congratulations to Mystic Larissa Barnes on winning a Samsung tablet at the Myst Carnival band launch, courtesy of Flow! We're proud to be a Myst Partner for the past 18 years and to be part of the 2025 Carnival festivities.




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# Commentary



## Collaborative Government-Private Sector Action Imperative for a Resilient Trade Future



By Sir Ronald Sanders

On April 9, 2025, U.S. President Donald Trump announced a 90-day suspension of the higher global tariffs imposed on April 3. This suspension spares only the baseline 10% tariff on imports—levied without exception on all countries, including the 14 independent states of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM). For CARICOM, this moment is not a reprieve, but a brief, strategic window—an opportunity to press for fairer trade terms with the United States.

### The CARICOM Cost-Benefit Ledger

Take Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago, whose exports had been hit with reciprocal tariffs of 38% and 12%, respectively. With this suspension, both now have a crucial chance to renegotiate. It's worth noting that their key

exports - oil and gas - remain exempt, shielding these sectors from immediate harm. Yet beyond these commodities, the terrain remains uncertain.

CARICOM's trade relationship with the U.S. has long been asymmetrical. The region imports far more than it exports, a pattern entrenched despite the concessions granted under the Caribbean Basin Economic Recovery Act (CBERA) since 1983. The new tariffs raise uncomfortable questions: Were CBERA preferences even considered? Thus far, no clear answer has emerged.

The 10% tariff, while not devastating, will likely burden the Caribbean diaspora more than Caribbean exporters. Caribbean communities in the U.S.- the main consumers of West Indian goods - may absorb the cost without shifting their loyalties. Competing imports will face the same tariff, after all. But the greater blow comes on the other side of the ledger: the rising cost of imports into CARICOM countries from the U.S. itself.

With a 145% tariff now cemented on Chinese goods, U.S. manufacturers will face skyrocketing input costs. For CARICOM importers reliant on those finished American goods, the ripple effect is already taking shape - higher prices, tighter margins, rising inflation. For small Caribbean

economies still shaking off pandemic shocks and global financial volatility, this spells deeper pain.

### A Call for Diversification

This is a moment that should not be wasted. Currently, approximately 60% of CARICOM imports come from the United States - a dependency that borders on the unsustainable. Diversification is no longer optional; it is imperative. But shifting trade routes is easier said than done.

Caribbean traders are tethered to U.S. suppliers by geography, history, and logistics. The supply chains from South Florida are reliable, swift, and familiar. In contrast, importing from Asia, Africa, or Latin America presents real challenges: costly shipping through indirect routes, inconsistent logistics, unfamiliar partners, and negligible bargaining power. Infrastructure gaps and fragmented regional transport systems compound the difficulty.

Still, hardship breeds innovation. The private sector must not remain passive. It is the engine of diversification. Governments may build the pathways, but private enterprise must drive the vehicles.

### Private Sector: Catalyst, Not Bystander

Governments can streamline  
*con't on pg 13*



# Commentary

PAGE 17

con't from pg 12

processes, negotiate new trade agreements, and upgrade ports and logistics. But it is the private sector that must seek out new partners, forge trade ties, and invest in supply chain resilience. This means attending international trade expos, embracing digital trade platforms, and engaging in joint ventures beyond the traditional Atlantic axis.

A pivot to Africa, Asia, and Latin America will demand boldness. It will also require a fundamental shift in mindset - one that sees opportunity not inconvenience, and strategic autonomy, rather than unmanaged reliance.

## The United States: an important Partner

None of this is to suggest that the U.S. should be cast aside. Its geographic proximity, deep-rooted trade relationships, and consumer preference in the Caribbean ensure its continued importance. But a healthy trade relationship is one of balance and mutual respect. CARICOM must press for the modernization of CBERA -especially to include services, which now dominate the regional economy. The trade surplus the U.S. enjoys with the region justifies such reconsideration.

## One Market, One Region, One Voice

Finally, this moment must serve as a catalyst for what has too long remained a slogan: a real, functioning CARICOM Single Market. A common market with effi-

cient regional transport for goods is not utopian -it is overdue. Dozens of studies have mapped the path. What's missing is the will.

Isolated national efforts are no match for coordinated regional action. The time for fragmentation is over. In this moment of global flux, unity is the Caribbean's best insurance policy.

This opportunity should not be another footnote in regional inaction. It should be the moment the

Caribbean found its voice, lifted its sails, and charted a broader course.

*(The writer is Antigua and Barbuda's Ambassador to the US and the OAS. He is also the Dean of the Ambassadors of the Western Hemisphere Group accredited to the U.S. The views expressed are entirely his own. Responses and previous commentaries: [www.sir-ronaldsanders.com](http://www.sir-ronaldsanders.com))*




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# Local News

## CLIMATE CONSCIOUS

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268 Inc

The Earth is calling, loud and clear,  
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Unless we rise and take a stand,  
With cleaner hearts and greener hands.



The oceans choke on plastic waste,  
Our forests fall in deadly haste.  
But still, there's hope—don't look away,  
The power to change begins today.

Everything  
Can you reuse instead of buy?  
Plant trees that reach into the sky?  
Will you refuse that plastic straw  
And stand for Earth, uphold her law?

## Eco

Eco-challenges light the way,  
One bold green step for every day.  
Walk, bike, or take the bus to school,  
Turn off the lights, conserve, stay cool.



Sort your waste and start to share,

Show kindness to the world we wear.  
From schools to homes, from land to sea,  
Your pledge can shape our destiny.  
Say this aloud, then act with grace:  
"I pledge to love my planet's face.  
To mend, reduce, refuse, repair—  
To live with purpose, breathe with care.

## Eco-Business

I'll teach, I'll lead, I'll learn anew,  
And walk the path where green dreams grew."



So will you take this pledge with me?  
Be part of change we wish to see?  
Let's rise, resolve, and take the call—  
One world, one fight, it's up to all.







Antigua Barbuda  
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ANTIGUA  
BARBUDA  
*The beach is just the beginning...*

Caribbean

PREVIEW



Artwork: Takumi Media 2025



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# Tribute



## Tribute to Edric K. Potter CN, QPM, CPM, FMC

*By Trevor Theo Adolphus  
Young, Retired Inspector  
of Police and Author*

It would be ungrateful of me not to take this opportunity to pay tribute to a great man who will be laid to rest today — Mr. Edric K. Potter.

Just about a month ago, I was planning my book signing ceremony, with Mr. Potter among the individuals I intended to honor in May 2025. Sadly, he is no longer with us.

Many may not know, but if there had been no Edric Potter, there would likely have been no Trevor Young in Antigua and Barbuda today — certainly not a retired Inspector of Police.

On January 19th, 1987, Mr. Potter, in consultation with former Commissioner Mr. Elton Martin made the final decision to recruit me into the Royal Police Force of Antigua and Barbuda. At the time, both men were in St. Vincent and the Grenadines on recruitment duty.

Their decision came under extraordinary circumstances. These two gentlemen met a young man — me — for the very first time at approximately 11:30 a.m. that day. By the next day, I was flown to Antigua and Barbuda and sworn into the police force. Just like that.



**Edric E.K. Potter ESQ. Q.P.M.  
Commissioner of Police  
1990 - 1995**

It might sound like a scene from a movie — like human trafficking in reverse. No interview. No background check by local authorities in St. Vincent. Some may call that a serious oversight. And yes, perhaps it could have been. They might have unwittingly brought in:

**A drug trafficker**

**A gun runner**

**A child molester**

**A fraudster**

**A rapist**

**A criminal of some sort**

But no — it was not a mistake. Mr. Potter and Mr. Martin possessed an extraordinary spirit of discernment. They somehow knew the caliber of man they were choosing. They saw potential in a young stranger — and trusted their instincts.

On the evening of January 19th, 1987, after everything was finalized, I pledged in my heart that I would never disappoint the two men who believed in me, even without knowing me.

And today, the rest is his-

tory. This story is found in Chapter One of my book, *Integrity Comes With a Price*.

My life story now lies before students at some of the world's most prestigious institutions — Harvard, Yale, and Oxford Universities. I do not say this to boast, but to honor the man who helped make it possible.

Because of Mr. Potter, I now stand among global authors, with my book *Integrity Comes With a Price* featured alongside those of Nelson Mandela, Bill and Hillary Clinton, Barack and Michelle Obama, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., and many others.

Mr. Potter gave me the opportunity that shaped my life and legacy. For that, I am forever grateful.

During my 29 years of service, I had the honor of serving as the orderly to two Commissioners of Police — Truehart Smith and Elton Martin. I also served under Mr. Martin at the Police Training School while he was Commandant. This gave me close insight into the leadership of these fine men. Yet, etched forever in my memory is the fact that it was Mr. Potter, who made the final call that started it all.

To me, Mr. Potter was the



# Tribute

**PAGE 21**

epitome of a decent and upright police officer. I never heard anything to suggest otherwise. He was quiet, composed, and firm — not one to compromise discipline. Respected by all ranks, he wore his authority with dignity. When you saw Mr. Potter, in his perfectly pressed and fitted uniform, you didn't need to ask who the Commissioner of Police was.

Despite his serious demeanor, he was jovial and had a distinctive laugh. Like all of us, he wasn't perfect, but he commanded respect and maintained the standards of excellence passed down to him by Sir Wright George.

It's disheartening to say that such standards are not as evident today.

Mr. Potter faced challenges, as all leaders do, but he had more triumphs than trials. He held the Police Force together, and for that alone, he would be remembered with honor.

To the powers that be — current and future — I urge you to remember our retired Commissioners of Police. Too often, these stalwarts are left to languish. That is not right.

Like retired politicians, our Commissioners deserve dignified treatment — drivers, security, and domestic support in their golden years. The same goes for our judges and magistrates, provided they left their offices with honor.

It pained me to know that in his final days, Mr. Potter

had to call around to police stations, asking for rides to the doctor or the bank. That should never have happened. His service deserved better.

These men and women served with distinction. They should be held in the highest esteem — in life and in death.

As I write this, the words of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. come to mind. In a 1965 graduation speech at the University of the West Indies in Jamaica, he said:

"If it falls your lot to be a street sweeper, sweep streets

like Raphael painted pictures.

Sweep streets like Michelangelo carved marble.

Sweep streets like Beethoven composed music.

Sweep streets like Shakespeare wrote poetry.

Sweep streets so well that all the hosts of heaven and earth will have to pause and say,

'Here lived a great street sweeper who swept his job well.'"

Mr. Edric K. Potter — CN, QPM, CPM, FMC — swept his job well. You served with integrity, sir.

You are gone, but never forgotten.

Goodbye, Mr. Potter.

Sleep in eternal peace.

Shalom.



## DAILY PROGRAMMING




<b>EARLY VIBRATIONS</b>	6AM-10AM MON. - FRI.
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<b>THE RUSH HOUR SHOW</b>	5PM-7PM MON. - FRI.
WITH ROGER LAKE	6AM-9AM SATURDAYS
<b>TOUCHLINE</b>	7PM-9PM MON. - THURS.
WITH EPILUS	
<b>BAD COMPANY</b>	2PM-6PM THURS. 12PM-4PM SATURDAYS
LIVE FROM THE V.I.	& 1PM-5PM ON SUNDAYS
<b>REGGAE INSPIRATION</b>	9PM-12AM MON. THURS. SUNDAY
WITH SELECTOR KEEGAN	
<b>JAH WADADLI</b>	7PM-9PM FRIDAYS
WITH DJ JAH WADADLI	



# Regional News



## Guyana: Government promises to fund CSEC fees for students

Great news for secondary school students in Guyana sitting their Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate (CSEC) examinations this year as the Guyanese government has promised to cover the fees.

However, the payments will only be made on behalf of students sitting at least eight subjects.

President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali announced the initiative on Wednesday during an engagement with residents at the West Demerara Secondary School in



Region Three.

According to the Ministry of Education, the CSEC exam-

ination fees include an initial entry fee of G\$3,900, a subject fee of G\$4,000, and a local administrative fee of G\$1,000 per subject. A late registration fee of G\$5,000 is also applicable.

These costs will now be absorbed by the government.

It is estimated that the initiative will cost the government about G\$700 million.

Ali confirmed that the initiative will apply to candidates from both public and private institutions. (*Loop Caribbean*)

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# MSF suspends operations in sections of Haiti for three months



The French-based Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) says following the targeted attack on its convoy earlier in March, it has had to take “the difficult decision to withdraw” its services from two areas in Haiti for a period of three months.

In a statement, MSF said that the attack on the convoy on March 15 travelling between its Turgeau emergency centre and Carrefour trauma hospital as well as the deteriorating security situation in the capital, Port-au-Prince, led it to take the decision.

It said the three month suspension “will allow an assessment as to whether the evolving security context offers the necessary conditions for the return of MSF teams”.

MSF said that on the day of the attack, it had already evacuated the Turgeau emergency centre, as the fighting and the frontline had advanced dangerously close to the centre, with stray bullets landing in the compound every day.

It said during the evacuation of teams from Turgeau to the Carrefour trauma hospital, clearly identified MSF vehicles, using the only access road separating the two structures, were deliberately targeted by at least one hooded man in uniform. The MSF vehicles were shot 15 times. The incident forced MSF to stop using this route.

“The Turgeau emergency centre and the Carrefour trauma hospital are closely linked in their operations. Without the possibility of using this road to transfer patients, transport personnel or deliver medical supplies,

these structures can no longer function,” says Benoît Vasseur, MSF’s head of mission in Haiti.

“This is why we have also been forced to withdraw from Carrefour as of 9 April 2025. This is an extremely painful decision, at a time when people’s vital medical needs continue to grow,” Vasseur added.

The MSF said that at these two medical facilities, its teams noted an alarming increase in the number of victims of violence.

It said between January and March 2025, MSF treated more than 750 people for violent trauma. At the same time, 3,600 emergency cases were treated.

They were the only medical facilities in the area to offer free care to victims of road accidents and domestic accidents, or to refer patients to appropriate facilities.

“Despite these withdrawals, MSF is continuing our activities in other medical facilities in Port-au-Prince and the south region of Haiti. The Tabarre trauma reference centre continues to treat victims of serious burns, accidents and violence. Hôpital Drouillard in Cité Soleil maintains a 24-hour emergency service, which includes physical and mental health treatment for victims and survivors of sexual and gender-based violence.

MSF said that the Pran Men’m clinic continues to provide comprehensive medical and psychological care to sexual violence victims and survivors, including at its main facility in Delmas

and at the Isaïe Jeanty maternity hospital.

MSF said that since 2021, it has also been sending mobile clinics to several sites for displaced people and disadvantaged neighbourhoods in the capital.

“However, medical transport has been suspended for all MSF teams in Port-au-Prince. Finally, in the south region, notably in Port-à-Piment and in the surrounding area, MSF continues to provide emergency obstetric and neonatal care, as well as maternal health services.”

MSF said that for over 30 years, it has responded to the major crises that have hit Haiti, ranging from earthquakes, hurricanes, cholera epidemics and continues to support people in the face of the current violence.

“However, MSF staff cannot continue risking their lives to provide this service,” it said, noting that on November 22 last year, it had to suspend all operations in the Port au Prince metropolitan area for around three weeks due to repeated attacks and threats against its staff.

“The extreme suffering of people in Haiti makes this decision all the more heartbreaking, but a dead or injured doctor or nurse can do nothing for patients in need,” said Vasseur.

“We reiterate our appeal to all parties concerned to respect the medical mission and ensure the protection of health structures, ambulances, patients and staff,” he added. (*Jamaica Gleaner*)



## St Ann man charged with murder of one-year-old girl

A 35-year-old St Ann man has been charged in connection with the death of a one-year-old girl who was found unresponsive in a tub of water in Golden Grove last Tuesday.

According to the police, a post-mortem performed on Alayah Michaels on Thursday, 3 April, revealed that the infant died from blunt force trauma to the head.

Joseph, who is reportedly

the child's stepfather, subsequently turned himself in and allegedly confessed to the crime.

He has since been charged with murder.

His court date is currently being finalised.

Reports from the St Ann's Bay police are that on Thursday, 27 March, the child was left in the care and protection of Joseph.

It is reported that on Tuesday, 1 April, the man was bathing the child in a tub of water, and that he left the toddler in the tub and she was subsequently found unresponsive.

It is further reported that the man took the child to a health centre and told medical personnel that she became unresponsive during the bath.

A medical team attempted

to resuscitate baby Alayah; however, she remained unresponsive.

She was transported to the St Ann's Bay Hospital, where she was pronounced dead.

An investigation was launched into the child's death. (*Jamaica Gleaner*)

## Dominica: Prominent lawyer arrested and charged for March 19 protest

The police in Dominica are continuing to arrest citizens in connection with the March 19 protest which turned violent near Parliament in Roseau.

The latest arrest is prominent Dominican attorney Ronald Charles local media reports.

Charles is said to have been among the protestors and also addressed the gathering on the day of the protest. He has also been one of the lawyers representing individuals previously arrested for being part of the March 19 protest.

Local media reported that on Tuesday police officers went to the law chambers of Charles, seeking to take him in for questioning.



On Wednesday morning Charles presented himself, accompanied by his lawyers, to be detained and was for-

mally charged at the police headquarters in Roseau where he remains in custody.

Up to 22 people have been arrested, charged and granted bail so far in Dominica in connection with the March 19 protest.

Among them, former Opposition Leader, Hector John and opposition legislator, Daniel Lugay.

Protesters were challenging three controversial electoral reform bills which were eventually passed in Parliament.

Those arrested have been charged with unlawful riotous gathering in violation of the Riot Act of Dominica. (*Loop Caribbean*)



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## Prada agrees to buy rival fashion house Versace in a deal valued at \$1.4 billion



The Prada Group announced a deal Thursday to buy Italy's Versace from the U.S. luxury group Capri Holdings under terms that value the fashion house at 1.25 billion euros (\$1.4 billion).

Prada said the addition of Versace's "highly recognizable aesthetic ... constitutes a strongly complementary addition" to its portfolio, which includes the Prada and Miu Miu fashion brands. It said Milan-based Versace offered "significant untapped growth potential."

The final value of the deal will be adjusted at closing, which is expected in the second half of the year. It will be funded by 1.5 billion euros in new debt and has

been approved by the Prada and Capri Holdings board of directors.

"Versace will maintain its creative DNA and cultural authenticity, while benefitting from the full strength of the Group's considerable consolidated platform, including industrial capabilities, retail execution and operational expertise," Prada said in a statement.

Versace, founded in 1978 by the late Gianni Versace, has been owned since 2018 by Capri Holdings, which includes Michael Kors and Jimmy Choo.

Capri Holdings paid \$2 billion for Versace but had been struggling in the recent era of "quiet luxury" to position the stalwart of Italian

fashion with its sexy silhouettes and loud patterns.

Last month, Capri Holdings named Dario Vitale as creative director to replace Donatella Versace, who assumed the role after her brother's 1997 murder. Vitale came from Miu Miu, the stunningly successful youth-driven brand in the Prada Group.

Versace was given the new role of chief brand ambassador in the shakeup, which was widely viewed as setting the scene for the long-rumored Prada sale. Miuccia Prada acknowledged the group's interest on the sidelines of Milan Fashion Week in February. (*NBC News*)



## South Sudan rescinds its decision to deny a deportee entry after US revokes all visas

South Sudanese officials said Tuesday that they will allow a foreign national entry into the country after their initial refusal to do so prompted the United States to revoke the visas of all its citizens.

Congolese national Makula Kintu will be accepted into the country “in the spirit of maintaining friendly relations” between South Sudan and the US, said foreign affairs ministry spokesperson Apuk Ayuel Mayen.

Last Friday, officials refused entry to Kintu, who had been deported from the United States, saying he illegally used the travel documents of a South Sudanese national, Nimeri Garang.

The following day, US Secretary of State Marco Rubio announced that the US

would revoke all visas for South Sudanese citizens because the country had failed to accept the return of its citizens deported from the United States “in a timely manner.”

On Monday, South Sudanese officials decried the move as unfair, saying Kintu’s case was an isolated one and it had cooperated with all other deportation cases.

The US had said it was “prepared to review” the decision to revoke all visas “when South Sudan is in full cooperation.”

Edmund Yakani, executive director for the Community Empowerment for Progress Organization, a local advocacy group, applauded the South Sudanese government’s decision to allow Kintu into the country.

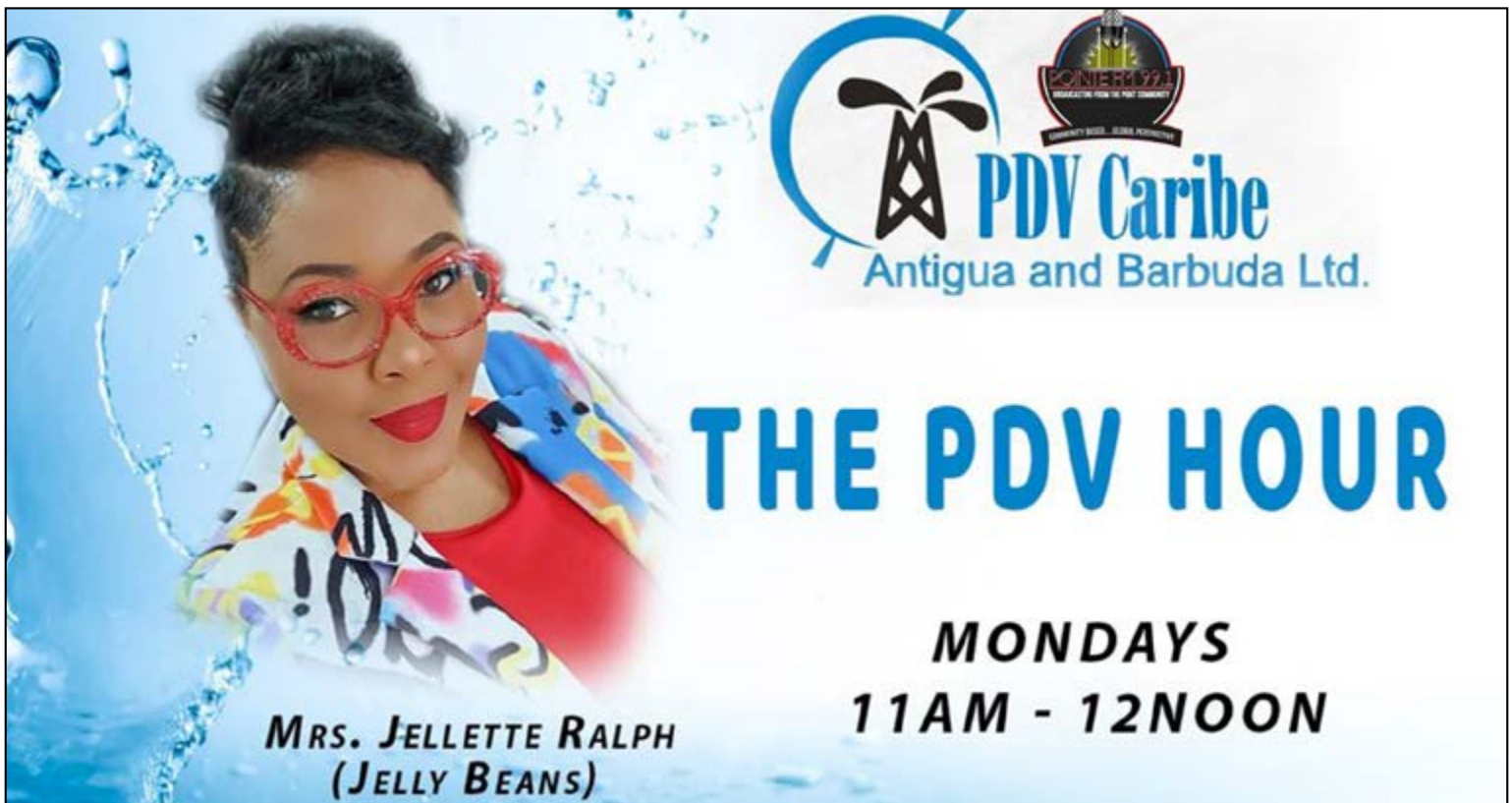


“The issues associated with the identity of the deportee should be handled legally without harming the South Sudanese in totality,” Yakani told The Associated Press.

South Sudan’s political landscape is fragile and recent violence between government troops and armed

opposition groups has escalated tensions.

Last week, United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres urged regional and international leaders to prevent South Sudan from falling “over the abyss” into another civil war. (*Jamaica Gleaner*)



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## New York jury awards \$1.68 billion to women who accused writer and director James Toback of sexual abuse

A New York jury on Wednesday awarded \$1.68 billion in damages to 40 women who accused writer and director James Toback of sexual abuse and other crimes over a span of 35 years, according to lawyers representing the plaintiffs.

The decision stems from a lawsuit filed in Manhattan in 2022 after New York state instituted a one-year window for people to file lawsuits over sexual assault claims even if they took place decades ago.

It marks one of the largest jury awards since the advent of the #MeToo movement, as well as in New York state history, said attorney Brad Beckworth, of the law firm Nix Patterson LLP, in an interview. The plaintiffs, he said, believe such a large verdict will send a message to powerful individuals “who don’t treat women appropriately.”

The court had not yet released documentation of the verdict as of Wednesday night. Beckworth said the verdict included \$280 million in compensatory damages and \$1.4 billion for punitive damages to the plaintiffs.



“This verdict is about justice,” Beckworth said in a statement. “But more importantly, It’s about taking power back from the abusers — and their enablers — and returning it to those he tried to control and silence.”

Beckworth said the abuse took place between 1979 and 2014.

Toback was nominated for an Oscar for writing 1991’s “Bugsy,” and his career in Hollywood has spanned more than 40 years. Accusations that he engaged in years of sexual abuse surfaced in late 2017 as the #MeToo movement gained attention. They were first reported by the Los Angeles Times.

In 2018, Los Angeles prosecutors said the statutes of limitations had expired in five cases they

reviewed and declined to bring criminal charges against Toback.

The plaintiffs then filed a lawsuit in New York a few days after the state’s Adult Survivors Act went into effect. The lawyers said they discovered a pattern of Toback attempting to lure young women on the streets of New York into meeting him by falsely promising roles in his films and then subjecting them to sexual acts, threats and psychological coercion.

Mary Monahan, a lead plaintiff in the case, called the jury award “validation” for her and the other women.

“For decades, I carried this trauma in silence, and today, a jury believed me. Believed us. That changes everything,” she said in a statement. “This

verdict is more than a number — it’s a declaration. We are not disposable. We are not liars. We are not collateral damage in someone else’s power trip. The world knows now what we’ve always known: what he did was real.”

Toback, 80, who most recently had represented himself, denied numerous times in court documents that he “committed any sexual offense” and that “any sexual encounter or contact between Plaintiffs and Defendant was consensual.”

He also argued that New York’s law extending the statute of limitations on sexual abuse cases violated his constitutional rights.

A message sent to an email address listed for him seeking comment was not immediately answered.

In January, the judge in the case entered a default judgment against Toback, who had failed to appear in court when ordered to do so. The judge then scheduled a trial for only damages last month to determine how much Toback had to pay the women. (*NBC News*)



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## Stuti Kashyap Strikes Again!



### Antigua and Barbuda's Rising Star Shines in San Francisco

Fresh off her gold-medal win in Puerto Rico, Stuti Kashyap of Antigua and Barbuda has delivered an-

other electrifying performance—this time at the WTT Youth Contender San Francisco II 2025.

**Silver in U17 Girls Singles**  
Stuti cruised through the group stage and eliminated

top American contenders Isabella Luo, Abigail Yu, and Mandy Yu on her way to the final. There, she faced Japan's Umi Nakada and, after a tight four-game battle (4-11, 8-11, 11-6, 13-15),

secured a proud second-place finish.

### Strong Showing in U19

In U19 Girls Singles, Stuti advanced out of her group with a 3-0 win over Qin Zhiyan (USA) and a gritty 3-2 victory against Irene Yeoh (USA). She exited in the Round of 16 after a hard-fought match again losing to top seed Umi Nakada (Japan).

### Mixed Doubles Momentum

Partnering with De La Torre (USA), Stuti also reached the U19 Mixed Doubles quarterfinals, defeating Lo/Huang (USA) before falling to Naresh/Moyland (USA).

### Back-to-Back Podiums

With medals in two WTT events in just two weeks, Stuti Kashyap is proving that a new table tennis force is rising from Antigua and Barbuda—and the world is taking notice.

