

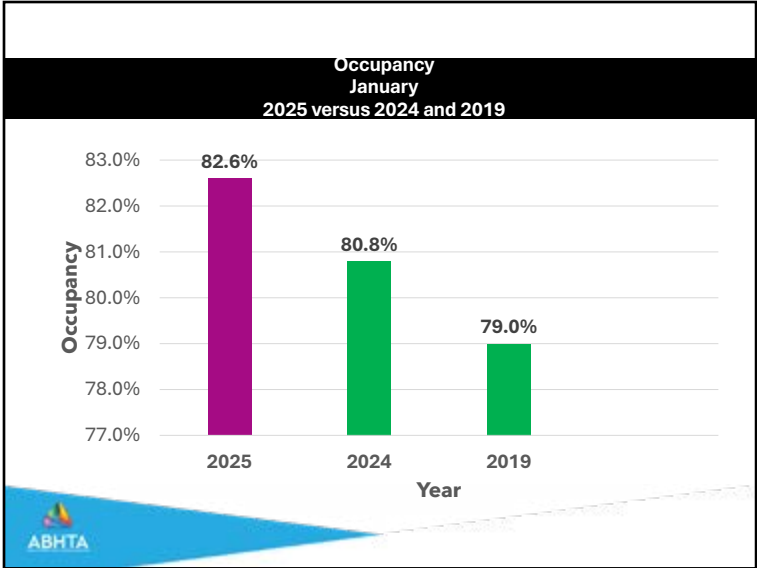
# Tourism's strong growth continues into 2025

*Story on Page 2*



**Prime Minister Gaston Browne, (centre), accompanied by National Park Authority Board Chairman Sen. Philip Shoul (extreme left) and NPA CEO Ann Marie Martin (on the PM's left) posed with workers carrying out repairs to some of the historic buildings at Shirley Heights**

# Tourism's strong growth continues into 2025



**Arrivals by Air January 2025 versus 2024 and 2019**

| Market         | 2025 Arrivals | (%) of Arrivals | 2024   | (%) of Arrivals | 2019   | (%) of Arrivals |
|----------------|---------------|-----------------|--------|-----------------|--------|-----------------|
| USA            | 16974         | 49%             | 13,724 | 45%             | 11,071 | 37%             |
| UK             | 8346          | 24%             | 7,812  | 25%             | 8,776  | 29%             |
| Canada         | 3935          | 11%             | 4,798  | 16%             | 4,802  | 16%             |
| Caribbean      | 2443          | 7%              | 1,913  | 6%              | 2,405  | 8%              |
| Italy          | 378           | 1%              | 371    | 1%              | 1052   | 3%              |
| Other          | 2237          | 7%              | 2072   | 7%              | 2137   | 7%              |
| Total Arrivals | 34313         |                 | 30,690 |                 | 30,243 |                 |

ABHTA

**Arrivals by Air February 2025 versus 2024 and 2019**

| Market         | 2025 Arrivals | (%) of Arrivals | 2024 Arrivals | (%) of Arrivals | 2019   | (%) of Arrivals |
|----------------|---------------|-----------------|---------------|-----------------|--------|-----------------|
| USA            | 16777         | 49%             | 14,606        | 47%             | 11,722 | 40%             |
| UK             | 8792          | 26%             | 7,955         | 25%             | 7,681  | 26%             |
| Canada         | 4007          | 12%             | 4,525         | 14%             | 5,752  | 19%             |
| Caribbean      | 2443          | 7%              | 1,840         | 6%              | 2,273  | 8%              |
| Italy          | 378           | 1%              | 256           | 1%              | 835    | 3%              |
| Other          | 1680          | 5%              | 2124          | 7%              | 1406   | 5%              |
| Total Arrivals | 34077         |                 | 31,306        |                 | 29,669 |                 |

ABHTA

The tourism industry's strong performances that were recorded in 2024 have continued into the first months of 2025, according to the latest data released by the Antigua and Barbuda Hotels and Tourism Association.

The ABHTA's data shows that for January, 2025, occupancy rates were at 82.6 percent versus 80.8 percent in 2024. These compare favourably with the figure of 79.0 for 2019, the best year for tourism before it was eclipsed by 2024.

However, while the occupancy rates for February 2025 improved over January 2025 and for the same month in

2024, it was marginable lower than for February 2019. The figures are 86.3 percent for February 2025, 85.5 for February 2024 and 86.5 for February 2019.

The ABHTA' date also provided an insight into the arrivals figures for the first two months with comparisons for both 2024 and 2019. The figures show that arrivals for January and February 2025 totaled 68,390 compared with 61,996 for the first two months of 2024 and 59,912 for the same period in 2019.

The United States continues to be the major source market for tourists visit-

ing Antigua and Barbuda by accounting for roughly 49 percent of the arrivals in both years. The UK remains the second leading market from which visitors arrive in the country with Canada ranked at number three.

Tourism is Antigua and Barbuda's main industry accounting for 70 percent of the country's GDP and about one third of all the jobs in the country.

However, there are concerns that the economic outlook for the United States could, if the pessimistic view is realized, have a negative impact on the good performances that the industry has been enjoying.



## Police appeal for the public's support for National Gun Amnesty

The Cabinet of Antigua and Barbuda has introduced a **Gun Amnesty** initiative, effective **April 7 to April 30, 2025**, aimed at reducing gun violence and removing illegal firearms and ammunition from the nation's streets.

This significant initiative is being implemented under the careful and professional supervision of the Royal Police Force of Antigua and Barbuda. During the amnesty period, individuals are encouraged to voluntarily surrender illegal firearms



and ammunition without fear of arrest or prosecution.

Additionally, the government is also offering **rewards for credible information** that leads to the successful recovery of il-

legal weapons. Residents can be assured that all police stations have been equipped and prepared to facilitate the safe and discreet handling of this process.

The Police Administra-

tion is appealing to the public to fully support this effort, which is intended to enhance public safety and preserve the peace and security of Antigua and Barbuda.

All information shared with the police during this amnesty will be treated with **strict confidentiality**.

"Let us work together to keep our communities safe and free from the threats of illegal firearms," the police administration urges.



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## SLBMC uses World Health Day celebrations to highlight its achievements

Sir Lester Bird Medical Centre (SLBMC) joined the global community in celebrating World Health Day (April 7, 2025), focusing on the theme “Healthy Beginnings, Hopeful Futures.” This year’s theme emphasized the critical importance of maternal and newborn health, highlighting the hospital’s continuous efforts to ensure every pregnancy and birth leads to a thriving future for both mothers and babies.

Dr. Shivon Belle-Jarvis, Medical Director at SLBMC, underscored the hospital’s dedication to improving maternal and newborn health outcomes, noting the institution’s pivotal role in shaping the future of healthcare in Antigua and Barbuda. “Our mission to enhance maternal and newborn health is a responsibility we take very seriously,” said Dr. Belle-Jarvis. “Thanks to the tireless efforts of our staff, we have made remarkable strides in providing comprehensive, high-quality care. Our investments in advanced medical practices and evidence-based strategies are transforming the lives of families across our community.”

Over the past four years, the hospital has maintained a neonatal mortality rate below the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) target of 12 per 1,000 live births by 2030, achieving its lowest rate to date of 5.3 per 1,000 live births in 2023.

As part of its ongoing commitment to excellence in maternal and newborn care, SLBMC is on the cusp of initiating its Universal Newborn Hearing Screening program, a crucial step in identifying hearing impairments early. Early detection of hearing loss in newborns is essential, as it allows for timely intervention that can significantly improve language development, cognitive skills, and social integration. By screening every newborn, SLBMC

aims to give children the best possible start in life, ensuring they have access to the support and resources needed to



*Dr. Shivon Belle-Jarvis, Medical Director at SLBMC*

thrive.

Beyond newborns, SLBMC remains equally committed to providing ongoing care and support for mothers, recognizing the crucial role they play in the early stages of their children’s lives. The hospital’s comprehensive care model includes continuous support for mothers, empowering them with the knowledge and confidence they need to ensure their own health and well-being alongside their infants’. Through initiatives like the High-Risk Antenatal Clinic, SLBMC offers specialized care for pregnant women, focusing on the health of both mother and baby. This clinic provides personalized attention to reduce risks during pregnancy and ensure the best possible outcomes for both mothers and their newborns.

“Having zero maternal deaths in 2024 is a remarkable achievement,” said the Medical Director. But it’s the result of countless factors working together, day in and day out. It’s not by chance; it’s the outcome of consistent, quality care, the dedication of our medical team, and a community that prioritizes

maternal health. This success reflects the strength of our collective effort—our hospital staff and the broader community—working in unison to ensure the safety and well-being of mothers.”

SLBMC is expanding its capabilities through the introduction of point-of-care ultrasonography, which will significantly enhance the hospital’s ability to provide immediate, on-site diagnostic imaging. This advancement allows for faster, more accurate assessments of maternal and fetal health, enabling healthcare providers to make timely, informed decisions and improve outcomes for both mothers and newborns.

This innovation enhances the hospital’s diagnostic abilities, particularly in maternal and fetal care. Dr. Belle-Jarvis expressed her appreciation for the hospital’s team, saying, “The success we’ve achieved is a testament to the dedication of our entire staff—doctors, nurses, support personnel, and volunteers. It is their commitment to providing the best care that has made all of this possible.”

Thanks to the generous support of donors, SLBMC has further strengthened its Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) and Maternity Department with state-of-the-art equipment. Dr. Belle-Jarvis added, “We are deeply grateful for the support we’ve received from our donors. Their generosity allows us to continue improving our facilities and providing the highest level of care to the families we serve. As we celebrate World Health Day, we reaffirm our commitment to ensuring healthy beginnings and hopeful futures for all families in Antigua and Barbuda.” With the continued dedication of the medical staff, the support of the community, and strategic investments in healthcare, SLBMC is setting the standard for maternal and newborn care in Antigua and Barbuda.



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**FRIDAY**

**11<sup>TH</sup>  
APRIL**

**7PM**

**People's Place  
Nugent Avenue**



## The second instalment of the Inter-school Garden Competition initiative kicks off today

The historical Botanical Gardens provides the setting for the second instalment of the Inter-School Garden Competition which kicks off today (Tuesday April 8) with increased participation from the nation's schools.

The initiative is a joint undertaking of the ministries of education and agriculture and it is designed to highlight and promote agricultural education, sustainability, and hands-on



a 138% increase. Both ministries are indeed delighted and it shows that



health, garden management, and record keeping. Schools are competing for

a total score of 50 points and the criteria included other categories evaluat-



learning/training.

The significant increase of participating schools of different levels ranging from pre, primary and secondary schools across the nation only confirms that the sector is moving in the right direction.

In 2024, only eleven schools participated. "Having an increase to 26 participants which is

the efforts are not falling on barren ground" according to Carol-Faye Bynoe-George, Head of Communication in the Ministry of Agriculture and who also serves as head judge of the event.

According to George a panel of five judges has started visiting schools to evaluate their gardens based on key criteria such as design and layout, plant



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268-462-0192 Botanical Gardens Items will be on sale



ing aspects such as visual impact, originality, soil She identified the participating schools as; Ottos



conservation practices, pest control, and financial tracking of garden yields. Comprehensive School, Mills Academy, Maria Holder Preschool, TN

Kirnon Primary, Green Bay Primary School, Villa



Preschool, Adele School, Glanvilles Secondary, Pares Secondary, Pares Primary, Clare Hall Secondary, Sir Novelle Richards Academy, Old Road, Freetown, Bolans and Jennings Primary schools, Jennings Secondary and Sir McChestney George Secondary of Barbuda, all of which have put effort into developing their gardens. It was observed by the judges that the pre-schools and primary schools' gardens were quite impressive when compared with those for the secondary schools.

Sadly, she noted, both Cedar Grove Primary and Villa Primary dropped out the races, this was very disappointing for the judges because in 2024 these schools showed so much promise. Last year both schools were outstanding, it was anticipated that there would have

been continuity.

Meanwhile, the following

schools have now confirmed their participation, Eleven Hours Daycare & Preschool, Sir Luther Wynter, Ocean View, Yah Weyh and Simon Bolivar preschools

This initiative is not only a competition but also an avenue to foster agricultural awareness, environmental stewardship, and entrepreneurship among students. Through their involvement, students gain practical experience in growing crops, managing resources and tracking productivity- skills that align with national food security and sustainability efforts.

As the competition progresses, anticipation builds for the announcement of the winners, who will be recognized for their excellence in school gardening.



# Government House Set to Host Ground-breaking Exhibition in 2026



The Heritage Trust Antigua and Barbuda Inc. (HTAB), in collaboration with the Irish Immigrant Museum, is thrilled to announce a transformative exhibition entitled “Entangled Islands,” set to launch in 2026 at the historic Government House. This innovative display will delve into the deep connections between Antigua and Barbuda and other significant islands including Montserrat revealing the rich tapestry of shared history, culture, and resilience.

“Entangled Islands” will illuminate the enduring Irish influence in the Caribbean, tracing back to the 17th century. It will showcase the stories of individuals who played pivotal roles, from indentured laborers to plantation owners and colonial governors, forging a unique bond between these islands.

“This exhibition is more than just a recounting of the past,” said Janey Henderson-Howell, Project Director. “It is an immersive experience that reveals how Ireland’s quest for independence resonates throughout the Caribbean, inspiring solidarity and political thought across generations.”



The timing of the event is particularly significant, coinciding with the phased reopening of Government House, which is currently undergoing extensive restoration. Skilled craftsmen are diligently restoring the structure, enhancing its historical integrity while preparing to unveil its new role as a vibrant museum. Once completed,

Government House will serve as an unparalleled gateway into Antigua and Barbuda’s rich heritage.

“The restoration of Government House represents a commitment to preserving our history and culture,” said Governor General Sir Rodney Williams. “The ‘Entangled Islands’ exhibition will enchant visitors, connecting them to the profound stories that shaped our nations.”

Visitors can anticipate an engaging and thought-provoking experience as “Entangled Islands” brings to life the intricate narratives of 19 remarkable figures, including merchants, poets, and journalists. Their stories will highlight the lasting impact of these historical ties, making this exhibition a must-see event. One such example is the popular Irish Rum which was actually made in Antigua and then transported by ship to Ireland.

The public can prepare to be captivated by this extraordinary journey through time—an unforgettable exploration of the intertwined legacies of our islands. Phase 3 of the project is kindly funded by Sir David Harrison.



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



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## ABLP's Men's Action Group formalised



Kevin AG Morgan

### Relations Officer

**Board of Trustees: Damian Benjamin, Philip George, and Philip Isaac**

Following the election of officers, the new president presided over the remainder of the meeting where the discussions centered around a number of issues namely;

- MAG would look to undertake the com-

pletion of work on the unfinished southern portion of the People's Place. The intent is to transform the area into a social gathering area.

- Conduct fundraising efforts on Friday nights.
- MAG will assist with the HAPI program as a part of community outreach.
- Agree on a uniform for MAG

The several meetings involving men who are supporters of the Antigua and Barbuda Labour Party (ABLP) have now been formalized into a formal organization with its own management structure within the party.

Coming out of a meeting held last week, an executive has been elected with a number of persons who will serve as trustees of the newly formed ABLP Men's Action Group.

The executive comprises;

**Kevin Morgan - President**

**Jean Pierre Bloodman - Vice President**

**Secretary - Malcolm Charles**





**Adrian Richardson - Treasurer**

**Conliffe Philip - Public**

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## UHSA Charts Course for Campus Sustainability and National Waste Reform

Sustainability on campus is no longer a distant dream — it's becoming a powerful reality, thanks to Good Humans 268 Inc. and the University of Health Sciences Antigua (UHSA), which has officially joined the Student Community Service Recycling Project. Now the second tertiary institution in Antigua and Barbuda to come on board, UHSA's involvement represents a significant step in expanding waste management efforts across the island. With clearly labeled bins now installed for plastics, cans, and glass, and students trained in proper waste separation, the project is cultivating a new generation of eco-conscious citizens.

"This partnership with UHSA is part of a much larger mission," said Joshuanette Francis, founder of Good Humans 268 Inc. "We're aiming to move beyond education into Eco-Communities, Eco-Businesses, and Eco-Events. We're rewriting the script on how waste is managed in every sector." The campus rollout is supported by the Sandals Foundation and the GEF Small Grants Programme, both of which have fueled the program's rapid growth. In just its first year, the initiative has diverted over 1 million items from the landfill.

Dr. Adedayo Akande, UHSA's President, sees the

collaboration as integral to the university's ethos. "We are preparing tomorrow's healthcare professionals — and that must include responsibility

to people and planet." As plans are made to distribute bins to more institutions and communities across the island, UHSA's participation marks a vital push for-

ward toward a cleaner, more sustainable Antigua and Barbuda.

**Joshuanette Francis**  
**Good Humans 268 Inc.**



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# Commentary



## “Beyond Tourism: Building National Excellence Through Basic Courtesy and Excellence in Customer Service”



by Garfield Joseph, MBA

Antigua and Barbuda, known for its pristine beaches and warm hospitality, has the potential to lead by example—not only in the tourism industry but across all facets of society. While tourists are drawn to our shores by natural beauty, their experiences are shaped by the interactions they have with our people. Imagine a nation where every exchange—whether in a hotel, government office, or casual conversation—reflects our commitment to excellence through courtesy and exceptional customer service. This is not just a dream; it is a vision we can achieve together.

### What is Customer Service, and Why Does It Matter?

At its core, customer service is the art of understanding and meeting the needs of others. It is not limited to business transactions but encompasses any situation where help, support, or a positive experience is expected. Courtesy, meanwhile, is the foundation of civility—exemplified through small acts of kind-

ness, such as greeting someone with a smile or saying “please” and “thank you.” Together, they form a powerful foundation for relationships and a thriving society.

In a developing nation like ours, these qualities are more than niceties; they are tools for nation-building. They contribute to improved communication, stronger trust among citizens, and a reputation that attracts visitors and investors alike. Courtesy and customer service are, ultimately, a reflection of how much we value one another.

### Why Customer Service Extends Beyond Tourism

Tourism is our most important industry, accounting for much of our economy. Fortunately, many of our resorts and tourism professionals excel in delivering world-class service. Yet, this excellence should not be confined to hotel lobbies or tour groups. For Antigua and Barbuda to truly thrive, customer service must extend into every sector—government offices, private enterprises, and even small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs).

Take, for example, a visitor who receives exceptional service at a luxury resort but later encounters frustration at a local eatery or a government office. These experiences matter; they are the stories that travelers take home and share with friends and family. Positive reviews can boost tourism, while negative ones can tarnish our reputation globally. The ripple effects are immense, influencing future visitation and economic growth.

### Poor Interactions That Hold Us

### Back

Unfortunately, there are still too many instances of poor service and discourtesy that hinder our progress. These challenges reflect a broader issue of neglecting the needs of others:

- ❑ *Traffic Etiquette: Drivers cutting off others, failing to signal, or refusing to yield disrupt the flow of not only vehicles but also goodwill.*
- ❑ *Unreturned Calls: Both residents and visitors are often frustrated when businesses or government offices fail to return calls, despite promises to do so.*
- ❑ *Dismissive Behavior: A cashier more engrossed in personal conversations than assisting waiting customers is an all-too-common scenario that leaves a bad impression.*

These behaviors erode trust, breed frustration, and ultimately harm the collective fabric of our nation. Each negative interaction is a missed opportunity to demonstrate excellence and build a reputation for exceptional service.

### The Broader Impacts of Courtesy and Service

Courtesy and customer service are not just about pleasing others—they are about creating a culture of excellence that benefits everyone. In the workplace, professionals who excel in interpersonal skills often see their careers flourish. Strong relationships, open communication, and an ability to solve problems collaboratively are high-

*con't on pg 11*



con't from pg 10

ly valued by employers across all industries.

On a national level, excellent service enhances societal harmony and supports economic growth. Countries known for their hospitality and kindness attract not only tourists but also businesses and investors. By fostering a culture of courtesy, we position Antigua and Barbuda as a place where people want to live, work, and visit.

### A Commitment to Growth

Improvement begins with recognizing that customer service and courtesy are skills that can always be acquired and refined. Whether you are a taxi driver, government employee, or private sector professional, there is room to grow. Training programs, mentorship, and personal reflection are tools we can use to continually raise the bar.

### Practical Steps for Change

As a society, we can take concrete actions to embed a culture of excellence:

1. **National Awareness Campaigns:** Introduce “Customer Service Day,” similar to Autism Awareness Day or Breast Cancer Awareness Month, to highlight the importance of kindness, civility, and service.
2. **Training and Development:** Employers can offer workshops and seminars to improve interpersonal skills, conflict resolution, and effective communication in both the public and private sectors.
3. **Mystery Shoppers:** Businesses can employ mystery shoppers for honest feedback on customer interactions.

#### 4. **Recognition and Rewards:** Celebrate individuals and organizations that exemplify outstanding service through awards and public acknowledgment.

### A Call to Excellence

At its heart, this is a call for every citizen of Antigua and Barbuda to embrace the spirit of excellence. Let us recognize the value of each interaction, no matter how small. Simple acts of kindness and courtesy—yielding in traffic, promptly returning calls, being kind to persons on the talk shows when they call in, or offering a warm smile even to strangers—can transform our society.

Together, we can create a nation where courtesy and customer ser-

vice are not just practiced in the workplace but are woven into the fabric of daily life. By committing to these ideals, we elevate not only our personal lives but also the collective potential of Antigua and Barbuda.

### Envisioning a Brighter Future

Imagine an Antigua and Barbuda where basic courtesy, respect and professionalism are the norms, where every visitor and citizen feel valued, and where excellence permeates every sector of society. This vision is achievable, but it requires each of us to take responsibility. Let us begin today, one kind gesture and one act of excellent service at a time. After all, building a culture of excellence is not just a goal, it is the essence of nation-building.



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In the meantime, our **Redcliffe Street and Ebenezer branches** will remain open to serve you as usual.

We sincerely apologize for any inconvenience this may cause and appreciate your understanding.

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# THE April 7, 1967, Land Purchase: Changing ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA FOREVER:

## The Beginning of a New History

When Europeans and Africans entered upon Antigua and Barbuda soil in 1632, the lopsided arrangement that was replicated in other English-speaking British territories would be repeated in Britain's newest colony. The indigenous people of the Caribbean would have been chased off the land; the African peoples imported against their will would become chattel and slaves; the Europeans would remain the only owners of the real estate that was now deemed the property of the Crown.

Sugarcane and other agricultural crops formed the basis of wealth-creation, driven by the enslavement of human imports from all across the African continent. That system of exclusive land ownership and decisions about what to grow, were the exclusive domain of the European masters. In 1807, the British brought an end to the trade in humans; and in 1834, decreed the end of enslavement of humans within the British dominions.

The people of African descent, who comprised the majority population in Antigua and Barbuda, remained extremely poor and illiterate throughout the 200 years of enslavement; they continued living in abject poverty for another century. The church, agitation by civic groups, and eventually the trade union movement, began to change the prevailing circumstances. On 20 December 1939, the Trades Union Act was adopted, allowing for collective bargaining, and for strikes by workers to take place. In 1939, the beginning of a velvet revolution and a new history began to unfurl.

## The Modern History of Antigua and Barbuda

The people of Antigua and Barbuda remained forlorn and downtrodden



until the trade union movement ignited a fearlessness that had been subdued for generations—especially following their unsuccessful 1736 attempt to bring an end to the majority's subjugation. Fear and hopelessness were ingrained in the population of people who lived through oppression for three hundred years.

Along came Vere Cornwall Bird, a daring Salvation Army preacher, imbued with the nationalist sentiment of Marcus Garvey, who came to believe that all civilization was created by the thoughts of men. Caribbean civilization, the black prophet preached and the new leaders learned, could be altered by those who had the courage to change their circumstances through leadership. God would seek to lead the Caribbean people by causing their leaders to strike out on new paths.

Between 1939 and 1967, a second period of 28 years, the alteration of the circumstances of the majority population began to change in myriad ways. The trade union movement oversaw the in-

roduction of government-controlled primary education; free secondary education; elective government; constitutional advances; increase in wages and better conditions of work; economic opportunities for entrepreneurs; new wealth-creation methods; the switch from sugarcane to tourism; superior housing; improved healthcare; longer life and better diets; ownership possibilities that saw a diversification of wealth-creation to include those entrepreneurs of African descent. The erosion of the colour barrier, and the upliftment of the entire Caribbean civilization by regional collaboration, was brought about by the trade union movement and its political arm. In this writer's view, the most telling change in circumstances occurred on 7 April 1967.

## The Purchase of the Antigua Sugar Factory/Antigua Syndicates Estates: LAND AND BUSINESS

Although constitutional changes on 27 February 1967 placed Antigua and Barbuda on the road to becoming an



independent and sovereign state, the issue of economic survivability bedeviled even the smartest economists and thinkers of the period. How could a small island-state of 80,000 souls hope to become viable following a centuries-old history of exploitation, export of capital, and the freedom of its people to move to other places?

Ownership of the land was the answer, though it was not expressly so stated. On 7 April 1967, when the people of Antigua and Barbuda became the owners of the lands on which their forebears slaved, succumbed and died poor, they began to build the New Jerusalem.

The Sugar Factory had been unable to repay a loan from the Royal Bank of Canada when the bank demanded payment. It was declared a bankrupt, and its assets were put up for sale. A government eager to access land and to re-

shape a 300-year old history was led by a visionary who sought to change the circumstances of his people: **Laws of Antigua CAP 240 (30<sup>th</sup> December 1969):**

## SECOND SCHEDULE

**THIS AGREEMENT is made the 7th day of April, One thousand nine hundred and sixty-seven BETWEEN THE ANTIGUA SUGAR FACTORY LIMITED** the registered office of which is situate at 5, Laurence Pountney Hill, London E.C.4. (hereinafter called "the Factory") of the first part **ANTIGUA SYNDICATE ESTATES LIMITED** the registered office of which is situate in Antigua (hereinafter called "Estates") of the second Part **JAMES MACINDOE WATSON** of Gunthorpes Antigua (hereinafter called "the Receiver") of the Third Part and **THE HONOURABLE VERE**

**CORNWALL BIRD** The Premier and Finance Minister of Antigua for and on behalf of the Government of Antigua (hereinafter called "the Government") of the fourth part.

4. (A) THE total consideration to be paid by the Government for the assets of the Factory and Estates as set out in Clauses 1 and 2 hereof shall be E.C. \$5,621,386.80 which as between the Factory and Estates shall be apportioned as to E.C. \$2,621,386.80 to the assets of the Factory as set out in Clause 1 hereof and as to E.C. \$3,000,000 to the assets of Estates as set out in Clause 2 hereof.

This single Act changed the circumstances forever. Ownership of the land was now securely in the hands of the people, and the possibilities thereafter were endless.



## DAILY PROGRAMMING




**EARLY VIBRATIONS** 6AM-10AM MON. - FRI.  
WITH GREMST'A

**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



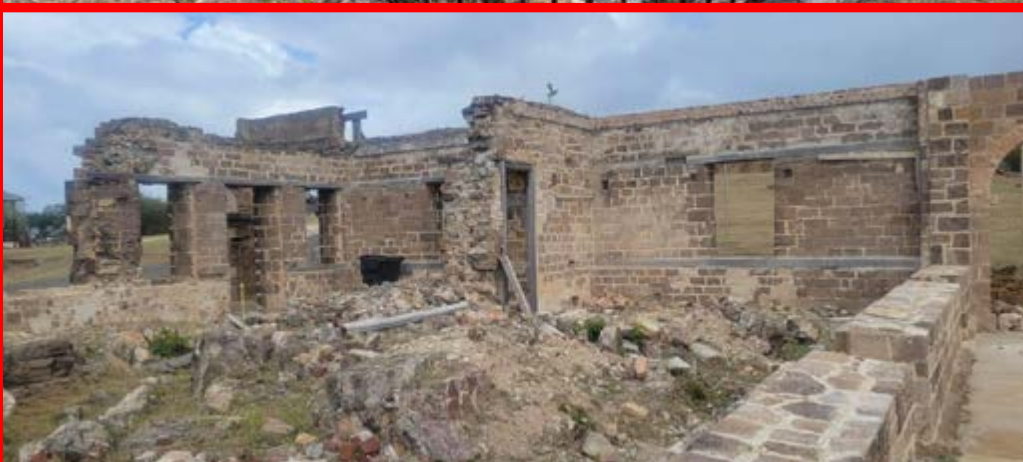
# Photo Story



**Prime Minister Gaston Browne along with National Park Authority officials visited several areas within the National Park last Friday. These included Nelson's Dockyard, Clarence House, the Interpretation Centre, the Block House at Shirley Heights, the historic cemetery at Shirley Heights and other historic sites within the National Park**



# Photo Story





# America and Russia invasion into Antigua Affairs



**By Patriot**

As we consider the ramifications of America and Russia invading of sovereignty, searching up our records and that of our Government representatives, the same anxiety which occupied us in the Guns to Colombia investigation is here again. Knowing that our island continues to be used by the corrupters from the North, we have been subjected to the role of corruptee, as the growing list of interlopers swells to include Russia.

True, some of us in Antigua and Barbuda were not in favour of seizing the boat for our own country's debt reduction, but having done the deal, we are stuck with it. However, on deliberating on the result, the frightening possibilities of Russian overreach, with support from the Trump craziness now perverting US support systems, we are in for a rough time.

What is not so obvious to most is that it is not just Antigua and Barbuda, the Caribbean gems are the target, and our acquisition of the Russian yacht has created an entry access to our region for interlopers.

With the isolation of the U.S. being created by the tariff wars, the time is now for the Caribbean to look South to our developed nation

friends of Latin America. Many food products travel up to Florida and sails back to the Caribbean. Additionally, whereas the Caribbean is the largest importers of soon to expire goods from the U.S. and South Florida in particular, it is time for us regionalists to look South for fresh foods served with respect.

Brazil, Colombia, Venezuela and other friendly nations can supply our needs, and at the same time assist our growth in a much less hostile trading environment than the current US contempt added to our business dealings.

Europe, Canada and Mexico are busy creating new trade routes and opportunities while we are crying to America for attention, while accepting their rash of con-

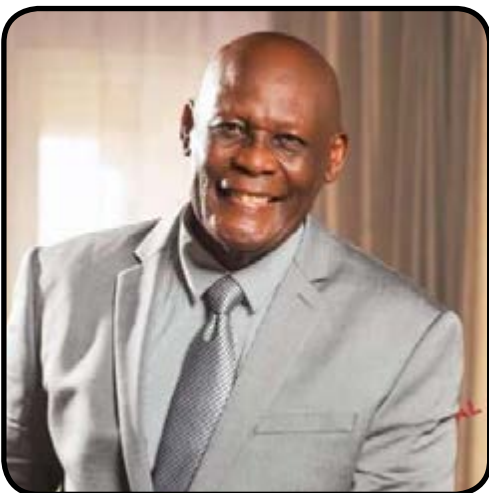
temptuous rulings and racist deportations of our people.

Getting on the South-South Trading conveyor belt will be the beginning of our new cooperation with colleague developing countries to our benefit and growth.

Finally, our islands and South American lands in Guyana and Suriname, may be forced by a hostile USA to join more effectively together to feed our nations, and restore our confidence of survival. The world war being created by Trump's tariffs will be bloodless for us, for starvation dries up the body, as opposed to the bloodletting of bombs and terror!

***We must look South and live!***

## Beloved "Man of God" passes



**Pastor, Reverend Doctor Lester Emanuel, O.M.**

It is with deep sadness that we share the passing of our beloved Bishop and Pastor, Reverend Doctor Lester Emanuel, O.M.

uel, O.M.

Bishop Emanuel was a guiding light for so many of us, not just at the Kentish Pentecostal Church where he served faithfully for over 40 years, but throughout Antigua and Barbuda and the Pentecostal Assemblies of the West Indies. His faith, kindness, and unwavering love for God and for our congregation touched countless lives. Whether through his powerful sermons, his words of encouragement, or his simple acts of love, he made an indelible impact on all who knew him.

Our hearts are heavy, but we are grateful for the time God allowed us to have him as our Shepherd. We ask for your

prayers for Bishop Emanuel's family and for all of us in Antigua and Barbuda who are grieving this loss. We know he's with the Lord now, and his legacy of faith will continue to inspire us.

We will share information soon about the home-going service where we will celebrate a life well lived for the Lord. For now, let's hold each other close in prayer and find comfort in the love and hope he shared with us.

*From members of the Kentish Road Pentecostal Church*



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# Dominica: Man dies from leptospirosis

A Dominican man has died of leptospirosis local media reported.

Leptospirosis is a disease caused by bacteria usually spread through the urine of infected animals. It affects both people and animals who are usually at higher risk after a hurricane or flood when people have contact with contaminated water or soil.

Dominica's National Epidemiologist Dr Shauladdin Ahmed said there has been an increased number of cases recently emerging since cases after Hurricane Maria in 2017.

He confirmed that out of ten suspected cases hospitalised in March 2025, two have come back positive with one patient succumbing to the disease.

"The deceased patient sought medical care at the

late stage of infection and died from multi-organ failure, a severe complication of leptospirosis."

Samples were sent to CARPHA for PCR testing Dr Ahmed confirmed.

He advised patients to look out for common symptoms like fever headache and muscle pain which are usually common to several illnesses. He said early intervention is critical as there may be diagnostic challenges and testing delays which can hinder timely confirmation of the disease.

Dr Ahmed has encouraged the public to seek urgent medical intervention if they believe they have been exposed to the threat of leptospirosis.

"If you are in contact with risk factors and you develop some symptoms then please seek immediate medical



attention. The earlier you come to seek medical care, it is better for you and better for the physician to administer the medication on time," he cautioned.

There were no reported cases of the disease in 2024. Dr Ahmed said the last known cases were soon after Hurricane Maria in 2017. He said while there were suspected cases subsequent to that they turned out to be negative.

"This is the first time we are seeing so many suspected cases within a month period so this is something that we are investigating," he stated.

He advised the public not to panic as these are still sporadic cases and not an indication of an outbreak.

Dr Ahmed again cautioned individuals to seek medical intervention as early as possible if they experience any symptoms. (*Loop Caribbean*)

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## Adventist World Church president to visit Jamaica for Youth Ambassador programme



President of the Seventh-day Adventist World Church, Pastor Ted N. C. Wilson, is slated to visit Jamaica this coming weekend.

The visit, the third since being elected World Church president in 2010, is primarily to meet with the Island's Adventist young people to launch the Youth Ambassador programme.

"We are delighted to have the chief pastor and president of the World-wide Seventh-day Adventist Church, Pastor Ted Wilson, and his wife, Nancy, in Jamaica," said Pastor Everett Brown, president of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Jamaica. "We welcome him as the keynote speaker at the first-ever Ambassador Convention organised by the youth department of our church. I am eagerly looking forward to his message on Sabbath, April 12, 2025. I am confident that our young people and the broader leadership members of the church will be inspired and blessed as he urges us to remain focused on the church's mission."

Wilson's last visit to Jamaica was in February 2019, when Jamaica hosted his team and senior officers from the

World Church headquarters and other regional offices worldwide to focus on the church's health strategies and methods. They also participated in a members' convention titled 'Lord Transform Me' at the Montego Bay Convention Centre.

Wilson's previous visit was in 2012, when he was the main speaker for a convention at the Northern Caribbean University Gymnasium in Mandeville dubbed 'That the World May Know'.

"Pastor Ted Wilson's visit is critical because the Ambassador Ministry is a comprehensive initiative of the Adventist World Church to address the needs and challenges of youth ages 16-21," said Pastor Dane Fletcher, youth ministries director of the Sev-

enth-day Adventist Church in Jamaica.

"As our world leader, he will emphasise that the Ambassador Ministry is a high priority for the Adventist Church. In line with the Church's Total Member Involvement strategy, it calls for all members to engage in the widespread efforts of ambassadors. Since Ambassador Ministry is relatively new, Pastor Ted's presence signals to youth, youth leaders, and all stakeholders that it is a strategic priority for the leadership of the Adventist Church, both in Jamaica and around the globe."

Wilson and his wife will be accompanied by other leaders of the Inter-American Division of Seventh-day Adventists. (*Jamaica Gleaner*)


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# ‘Massive win’ for teachers



## JTA president says retroactive increments to be disbursed month end

The Jamaica Teachers' Association (JTA) has reached an agreement with the Ministry of Finance and the Public Service to disburse retroactive increments at the end of this month, the president of the association, Dr Mark Smith, has disclosed.

Describing it as a “massive win”, Smith told *The Gleaner* that the commitment was made during a recent meeting.

“There was an agreement reached that the increment would be paid effective the end of April, so there’ll be three increments for the three years dating back to 2022,” he said.

“We made it absolutely clear that that was non-negotiable and in the spirit of fairness and transparency, the ministry acquiesced to

our request, along with that of the Joint Confederation of Trade Unions,” he added.

In February, the JTA threatened strike action to protest the slow pace of salary negotiations, and the non-payment of graduate and retroactive travel allowance.

Smith shared that the travel allowance has since been paid to the vast majority of teachers, and that some graduate allowances have also been paid.

However, while he is feeling optimistic that concessions are being made on the payment of future graduate allowance, a resolution has not yet been finalised. Smith said the matter has been referred to the Attorney General’s Chambers for them to review the position.

At the same time, Smith

said the union is also monitoring the current state of geopolitics with concerns about how it might impact their negotiations.

Geopolitical tensions escalated following US President Donald Trump’s decision to impose universal tariffs on several countries, including Jamaica, which will now face a 10 per cent tax on its exports to the United States.

Trump said the tariffs were designed to boost domestic manufacturing, but experts have warned that the global economy could enter a recession by the end of the year.

“Many of the global economic markets have been upended, and we have been too frequently told by our governments, whether JLP (Jamaica Labour Party) or PNP (People’s National Party), to make serious concessions for the good of the nation and the teachers, like many of the public-sector workers, we band our belly, we went through it, the austerity issues, and now we’re at a point where people are signalling, ‘Oh, look what’s happening, all the instability globally and what does that mean for negotiations’,” he said.

However, he is hopeful that the Andrew Holness-led administration, which has since encouraged manufacturers to explore new markets, will be calculated in how it deals with the antici-

pated impacts.

“We have to understand that public-sector workers have really been put under pressure over several years, and while we conceded that we operate within a global context, we’re hoping that the Government will be very strategic in terms of navigating much of the issues that are plaguing the global economy now,” he said.

Smith, in the meanwhile, said the JTA is still awaiting clarity from the Government on how the performance-based pay system, which would inform the payment of future increments, will work.

Performance-based pay for teachers means a portion of their salary or bonuses are tied to their performance. This is often measured by student outcomes or other metrics, aiming to incentivise improved teaching and student achievement.

While outlining that the JTA is in full support of accountability and efficiency, Smith said any performance-based salary mechanism that is introduced must be based on a model that is “fair and transparent”.

“We believe that there is a great degree of inequity in the system. I think a lot of those issues must be tackled before we can truly and effectively implement a pay-by-performance model; we await the proposal first,” he said. (*Jamaica Gleaner*)



## Caribbean nationals among over 130 illegal immigrant offenders nabbed during New York operation

Caribbean nationals were among 133 illegal immigrants apprehended during an enhanced targeted enforcement operation focusing on criminal illegal immigration offenders and other immigration violators in western, central and northern New York.

The United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agency said that the Trinidadian and Dominican Republic nationals were among Caribbean immigrants arrested in the operation that spanned March 24 to 28.

ICE said among those arrested during the enhanced targeted operation include a 49-year-old illegal immigrant from Trinidad and Tobago convicted of murder; a 66-year-old illegal immigrant from the Dominican Republic convicted of course of sexual conduct with a child; and a 70-year-old illegal immigrant from the Dominican Republic convicted of manslaughter and criminal sale of controlled substance.

“By leveraging our federal partnerships and intelligence-driven investigations, ICE continues to carry out its mission in a way that best serves na-

tional security, public safety and border security,” said ICE Enforcement and Removal Operations Buffalo acting Deputy Field Office Director Philip Rhoney.

“I am grateful for the professionalism, dedication and support from all of our partners during this week-long operation to remove dangerous alien offenders from our New York communities,” he added.

ICE said while it and US federal partners concentrated their efforts in and around the Buffalo, New York area, the operations extended throughout western and upstate New York.

Operations led to arrests of 84 illegal immigrants from the Buffalo and Rochester areas, and 49 illegal aliens from Syracuse, Albany, Rouses Point, and Massena, ICE said.

“The success of this enhanced enforcement operation underscores the importance of utilizing a whole-of-government approach when protecting the public from criminal aliens and dangerous individuals living in our western, central, and northern New York communities,” said ICE Homeland

Security Investigations Buffalo Special Agent in Charge Erin Keegan.

“Standing side-by-side with our partners, ICE HSI will utilize every tool at our disposal to ensure the safety and security of New Yorkers. I commend our partners from the FBI, CBP, USBP, ATF, DEA, DSS, and USMS for their unwavering collaboration in support of this vital mission,” Keegan added.

ICE said of those arrested, 20 had criminal convictions or charges including three who were convicted of homicide.

Nine of the arrests were of immigrants who have been previously removed from the United States, ICE said.

It said four criminal search warrants were executed during the operation.

They were executed during the worksite enforcement component of the operation for federal violations of bringing in and harbouring certain immigrants, and resulted in multiple bookings and records seizures, as well as 18 administrative arrests for violations of immigration law, ICE said. *(Loop Caribbean)*



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## Gunmen kill at least 52 people and displace hundreds in northern Nigeria

Gunmen have killed at least 52 people and displaced nearly 2,000 others over several days of attacks in Nigeria's northern Plateau state, which has a history of violence between farmers and cattle herders, the national emergency agency said.

The reason for the attacks in six villages in Plateau's Bokkos district last week was not immediately known but it is the worst outbreak of violence since December 2023, when more than 100 people were killed in the same district.

The National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) said the scale of the violence became clearer



at the weekend as 52 people were confirmed dead while 22 others were taken to hospital.

NEMA said in a statement late on Sunday that "gunmen carried out brutal assaults," leading to multiple fatalities and widespread

destruction of property.

"Over 1,820 individuals have been displaced. Three displacement camps have been established," the agency said, adding that the security situation remained tense.

President Bola Tinubu directed security agencies to hunt down the attackers, who would face "severe punishment", the presidency said.

Plateau is one of several ethnically and religiously diverse hinterland states known as Nigeria's Middle Belt, where inter-communal conflict has claimed hundreds of lives in recent years.

The violence is often painted as ethno-religious conflict between Muslim herders and mainly Christian farmers. But climate change and the reduction of grazing land through agricultural expansion are also major factors. (NBC News)



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## Two US border inspectors charged with taking bribes to wave in people without documents

Two United States border inspectors in Southern California have been charged with taking thousands of dollars in bribes to allow people to enter the country through the nation's busiest port of entry without showing documents, prosecutors said.

US Customs and Border Protection officers Farlis Almonte and Ricardo Rodriguez were assigned to immigration inspection booths at the San Ysidro Port of Entry. They were charged after investigators found phone evidence showing they had exchanged messages with human traffickers in Mexico and discovered unexplained cash deposits into their bank accounts, according to a criminal complaint unsealed Thursday.

Surveillance video showed at least one instance in which a vehicle with a driver and a passenger stopped at a checkpoint but only the driver was documented as having entered the country, prosecutors said.

Prosecutors said the officers waved dozens of vehicles carrying people without documents. They said both men were paid thousands for each vehicle they waved through.

It wasn't immediately known if Almonte has an attorney who can speak on his behalf. The National Border Patrol Council, the union representing Border Patrol officers, didn't immediately return an email seeking comment.

Rodriguez's attorney, Michael Hawkins, said the case was still in the "infant stages" and that Rodriguez has the presumption of innocence.

"We look forward to working through the current situation," Hawkins said in an email in which he described Rodriguez as hardworking and loyal.

The investigation on Almonte and Rodriguez started after three migrant

smugglers who were arrested last year told federal investigators they had been working with US border inspectors, federal prosecutors said.

While Almonte was in custody, investigators allegedly seized nearly \$70,000 in cash they believe his romantic partner was trying to move to Tijuana. Prosecutors wrote in a court filing that Almonte is potentially facing additional charges for money laun-

dering and obstruction of justice, The San Diego Union Tribune reported.

"Any Customs and Border Protection agent who aids or turns a blind eye to smugglers bringing undocumented immigrants into the US is betraying their oath and endangering our national security," Acting US Attorney Andrew Haden told the newspaper in a statement. (*Jamaica Gleaner*)



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# International

AROUND THE WORLD



## Hong Kong stock market plunges most since '97 crisis amid tariffs panic



You cannot short Chinese stocks. You can do all of that in Hong Kong. So it's obviously reflecting what is going on much better than Chinese stocks," Garcia-Herrero told Al Jazeera.

Hong Kong stocks were by far the worst performers on a dismal day overall for Asia's markets, with equities in mainland China, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Australia and Singapore all suffering steep declines.

Global stock markets have shed trillions of dollars in value since Trump unveiled sweeping tariffs on almost all countries on Wednesday.

US customs authorities began imposing a baseline tariff of 10 percent on imports on Sunday, with steeper duties of between 11 percent and 50 percent set to go into effect on Wednesday.

US stocks have shed more than \$6 trillion in value since Trump's "Liberation Day" announcement.

Further steep losses are expected when Wall Street reopens on Monday, with futures tied to the benchmark S&P500 and the tech-heavy Nasdaq-100 – which are traded outside usual market hours – down 2.7 percent and 3.55 percent, respectively. (*Al Jazeera English*)

Hong Kong's stock market has suffered its steepest single-day decline in nearly three decades amid a wave of panic selling brought on by United States President Donald Trump's tariff announcements.

The financial hub's benchmark Hang Seng Index closed down 13.22 percent on Monday, after plunging as much as 13.74 percent during the day.

It was the sharpest plunge for Hong Kong stocks since the index tumbled 13.7 percent in a single day during the 1997 Asian financial crisis.

On the worst day for Hong Kong stocks during the 2007-09 global financial crisis, the index fell 12.7 percent.

The rout came after Trump doubled down on his sweeping tariffs overnight, likening the measures to "medicine", and following China's announcement last week that it would retaliate

with a 34 percent tariff on US imports.

"Friday was a public holiday in Hong Kong, so what we are seeing is the reaction to Trump's tariffs and China's retaliation. So it's a double whammy," Carlos Casanova, a senior economist with UBP in Hong Kong, told Al Jazeera.

"To put this into context, previous retaliatory measures targeted less than 1 percent of China's total imports. The magnitude of the last measures is unprecedented," Casanova said.

"We're in uncharted territory."

Alicia Garcia-Herrero, chief economist for Asia Pacific at Natixis, said the dip in Hong Kong offered a more accurate gauge of the market's expectations for how the tariffs will affect China's economy than the stock markets on the Chinese mainland.

"The point is, you cannot trade freely in China.

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# Sports

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**POINTVILLE EXPRESS**  
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## Ravens to defend Gillian Brazier Basketball shootout



The Ravens of Canada—18th Gillian Brazier Basketball Champions with their winnings, last year

Five teams will contest the 19<sup>th</sup> edition of the Gillian Brazier Basketball shootout scheduled for April 14 to 19 at the JSC Sports Complex.

This year, the tournament will field newcomers, **Dover Tigers** out of Barbados, three Canadian teams, **Ravens**, **Stingers** and **Canucks** from the JUEL League in Ontario and host CPTSA Wings **Tough Gals** of Antigua and Barbuda. Out of the tournament this year are the **Cyclones**, the only other female basketball team in Antigua and Barbuda.

Cyclones were unable to field a team for the tournament this year due to a lack of practice attendance of the players, cited its coach, Oslyn 'Pigeon' Gregory.

Meanwhile, the Canadians are excited to return to do

battle on the court and to enjoy their holiday activities during their stay in Antigua.

Although many of last year's players are not returning, the Ravens are still focusing on retaining the Gillian Brazier Basketball shootout title with some new blood.

The tournament will get underway after a brief opening ceremony on Monday April 14, starting at 5:30 pm. Veteran past basketball player and two times Gillian Brazier MVP, Arlene Josiah will declare the tournament open with a free throw. Josiah played for Braves in the early days against Gillian Brazier Fireballs basketball team.

Meanwhile, the organisers of the event are bemoaning the lack of financial support for the event. They say the event costs approximately



CPTSA Wings Tough Gals



Barbados Dover Tigers

\$30,000.00 to host and with one week to go, they have not reached their target to undertake the event.

The CPTSA is holding two

fundraising event over the coming days to help boost its finances to successfully undertake the championship.

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