

# Cabinet wants 'make up' time for public school students

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Businesswoman, Charlene Selkridge (left), Governor General's Deputy, Sir Clare Roberts and Attorney Kari-Ann Reynolds (right). Antigua and Barbuda Industrial Court newest appointments.

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## Cabinet wants 'make up' time for public school students

The Cabinet spent much time on Wednesday reviewing the recent strike by public school teachers and the effect the industrial action has had on the instruction time for students in the classroom.

First, it was noted that the demand for outstanding allowances—the basis upon which the strike was announced—related only to those teachers at the Secondary and other higher levels; yet, all Primary Schools and their teachers also sat idly, causing the primary students to be deprived of contact time.

“The Cabinet repeated its earlier assertion that the strike was disproportionate to the number of teachers owed, and the amounts due. The nobility of the teaching profession was completely lost when students remained without teaching contact for six days

unnecessarily. The Cabinet also noted that cheques for the payment of the allowances were already prepared for distribution to the teachers; the publication of the names on the cheques became a necessary exercise to ensure that those persons knew that the cheques were awaiting pick-up,” Cabinet sources declared.

Consequently, the Cabinet has expressed the view that the students who were denied the days of instruction ought to be compensated by additional teaching time before the end of the term.

In related developments, the House of Representatives will convene on Thursday, (today), with many important items are on the legislative agenda for the parliamentarians to consider.

“One of the first items will be “Questions to the Prime Minister”. It is ex-

pected that the Opposition will pose many questions about the strike conducted by teachers whose union compelled the professionals to remain unproductive for six school days,” the Cabinet sources indicated.

Meanwhile, the Cabinet has agreed to proceed to an upgrade of the Simon Bolivar Pre-School after decades of successful operation in the Sutherlands Community.

Nearly One Hundred Thousand EC Dollars (\$100,000.00) will be spent to upgrade the buildings, their interior and furniture, making the school more attractive for parents and students.

It was revealed that the Embassy of Venezuela, whose gift it was in the first place, will also contribute to the upgrade.

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## Antigua and Barbuda becomes the newest shareholder country of CAF



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Antigua and Barbuda has officially become the newest shareholder in CAF – Development Bank of Latin America and the Caribbean, marking a significant step in the nation’s ongoing push for sustainable development and climate resilience.

On May 2, the twin-island state finalized its status as a “Series C Shareholder,” unlocking access to CAF’s agile and innovative financing solutions. To mark the occasion, the national flag of Antigua and Barbuda was raised at CAF’s headquarters in Caracas, Venezuela, in a symbolic ceremony celebrating the country’s entry into the CAF family as its 23rd shareholder.

The move is expected to bolster national development initiatives by providing flexible financing and technical support, particularly in areas such as infrastructure, climate adaptation, and economic inclusion.

“This represents a significant milestone in our deepening partnership with the Caribbean,” said CAF Executive President Sergio Díaz-Granados. “Antigua and Barbuda brings bold leadership to the regional development agenda as a strong advocate on behalf of Small Island Developing States. CAF stands ready to work with the Government of Antigua and Barbuda to deliver on its vision for a more resilient, inclusive, and sustainable future.”

Like many Small Island Developing States (SIDS), Antigua and Barbuda faces mounting challenges from the climate crisis—including more intense hurricanes, sea level rise, and natural resource scarcity. CAF’s support is ex-

pected to enhance the country’s ability to navigate these threats while advancing its development goals.

The move follows the November 2024 incorporation of The Bahamas as a CAF shareholder, as the institution continues expanding its Caribbean presence. Several other CARICOM

nations are reportedly in advanced stages of the incorporation process.

Founded in 1970, CAF now counts 23 shareholder countries—19 from Latin America and the Caribbean, along with Spain, Portugal, and 13 private banks. The bank is recognized as a major source of multilateral financing and development expertise for the region.

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## Cabinet laments the significant costs of the Alfa Nero matter to the people of Antigua and Barbuda

The Cabinet continues to lament the significant costs which fall on the people of Antigua and Barbuda to pay due to the ongoing Alfa Nero matter.

At Wednesday's meeting of the Cabinet, the Chairman and Prime Minister Gaston Browne revealed to his colleagues that the cost of the legal defense in the United States Court in the Alpha Nero matter, triggered by operatives of The United Progressive Party, now stands at One Hundred and Thirty-Six Thousand US Dollars (US\$136,000.00).

He noted that a complete fabrication of claims by a Russian citizen, fed to that individual by the members of the opposition, have now cost the Antigua and Barbuda public a significant sum which may yet increase.

"This unpatriotic, costly behavior has also damaged the country's reputation



**Prime Minister Gaston Browne**

and unjustly sullied the character of the country's leader," a Cabinet source noted.

PM Browne has repeatedly stated that the actions in the US courts will lead

nowhere as the premise upon which the Russian citizen's case, has been built, is based on a complete falsehood.



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<b>TOUCHLINE</b>	<b>7PM-9PM MON. - THURS.</b>
<b>WITH EPILUS</b>	
<b>BAD COMPANY</b>	<b>2PM-6PM THURS. 12PM-4PM SATURDAYS</b>
<b>LIVE FROM THE V.I.</b>	<b>&amp; 1PM-5PM ON SUNDAYS</b>
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<b>WITH SELECTOR KEEGAN</b>	
<b>JAH WADADLI</b>	<b>7PM-9PM FRIDAYS</b>
<b>WITH DJ JAH WADADLI</b>	

## Horse-racing is poised to return to the country on a grand scale



Horse-racing is poised to make a major return to Antigua and Barbuda that would include more races, more horses along with organized betting on a large scale.

This as the Cabinet invited five persons who have an interest in re-developing the Antigua Turf Club, where horse racing nor-

mally takes place. They believe that the location is ripe for development, now that the legal battles over the lease have ended.

Reports from Cabinet say the foreign investor, from the US Virgin Islands, is primarily a casino operator who agrees to transfer Fifteen Percent of all profits on their casino op-



eration with the Antigua Turf Club and to invest Five Million US Dollars (US\$5 million) in its upgrade immediately.

According to the reports the developer along with the members of the Antigua Turf Club, will make arrangements to house eighty horses and will generate over fifty jobs for nationals of Antigua and Barbuda.

The Investor-group will also partner with other turf clubs in the Caribbean, moving horses from one country to another, in order to encourage off-track-betting.

They estimate that it will be a very successful operation and the races will attract nationals and tourists alike, especially the seven hundred and fifty thousand cruise tourists expected to travel to Antigua and Barbuda over the next year.

## Two members appointed to the Industrial Court



Two persons have received their instruments of appointment to the Antigua and Barbuda Industrial Court.

On Wednesday, the Governor General's Deputy, Sir Clare Roberts presented the letters of appointment

and oversaw the swearing in ceremony for the court's newest members, Attorney Kari-Ann Reynolds and businesswoman, Charlene Selkridge.

In January, attorney Samantha May-Francis was appointed Interim Presi-

dent of the court. It was not immediately clear, whether or not she has since been confirmed in the post.

The Industrial Court is comprised of persons who are experienced in law, industrial matters or business.

## WISH Founder Chaneil Imhoff Nominated for 2025 ICON Woman Award

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Chaneil Imhoff, the founder of *Wadadli Initiative for Self-care and Healing* (WISH) has been nominated for the 2025 Caribbean POSH ICON Woman Award in the category of Health Advocate. This prestigious recognition honours Caribbean women who are blazing trails in their respective fields, making meaningful contributions to their communities, and inspiring the next generation of leaders across the region and diaspora.

Chaneil Imhoff, a communications specialist, mental health advocate,

and youth leader, is being recognized for her work through WISH to break the silence and dismantle the stigma surrounding mental health in Antigua and Barbuda. Since its launch in 2024, WISH has led national conversations, school visits, and digital innovation in mental wellness, including the creation of the WISH Mood Tracker platform and multiple community-based mental health programs.

“This nomination is a testament to the power of purpose-driven work and the importance of community care,” said Im-

hoff. “I am truly honored to be recognized alongside so many phenomenal Caribbean women who are leading with courage, compassion, and vision.”

WISH also extends heartfelt congratulations to the other Antiguan nominees who are being celebrated for their outstanding leadership and achievements.

Their nominations reflect the remarkable talent, tenacity, and impact emerging from Antigua and Barbuda, and WISH encourages the public to support each of these women as they represent our nation on the regional stage.

The Caribbean POSH ICON Woman Awards are part of the annual Caribbean POSH Weekend, which will be held from June 27–29, 2025, in St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands. Winners will be announced at the official award ceremony.

Voting is open to the public and can be done here:

<https://caribbeanposh.com/wkd/icon-woman-awards-nominees-health-advocate-award/>

For more information about the awards and other nominees, visit [www.caribbeanposh.com](http://www.caribbeanposh.com).

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## ECCO Inc. to Host 14th Annual General Meeting on May 17th

The Eastern Caribbean Collective Organisation for Music Rights (ECCO) Inc. will host its 14<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting (AGM) will be held on **Saturday**.

The meeting will take place at the **Burke King Conference Room in Sans Souci, Castries, Saint Lucia** and will also be accessible online via Zoom.

The AGM is a key event in ECCO’s calendar, bringing together members from across the Eastern Caribbean to review the organisation’s performance, elect directors, and make decisions on matters affecting the collective management of music rights in the region.

According to the official notice, the agenda will include:

- Approval of the minutes of the 13th

AGM held in March 2024

- Presentation of reports from the Chairman and CEO
- Presentation of the External Auditors’ Report for the year ending December 31, 2024
- Discussion and vote on proposed changes to the organisation’s by-laws
- Election of new board directors

This year’s election will see the appointment of four directors: **one Director from Grenada, one Writer Director from Saint Lucia, and two Publisher Directors from Saint Lucia.**

The hybrid format reflects ECCO’s commitment to improving access and participation for its membership, particularly those based outside of Saint Lucia. Members who wish to

attend online will receive a Zoom link after completing the registration process.

ECCO Inc. is the region’s primary collective management organisation responsible for administering the rights of composers, authors, and publishers of music. The AGM provides a platform for accountability, transparency, and member engagement in the governance of the organisation.

There are approximately 120 members of the ECCO here in Antigua and Barbuda some of whom are expected to participate in the AGM.

For further details, members are encouraged to visit the ECCO website at [www.eccorights.org](http://www.eccorights.org) or telephone 1-758-451-6436 or WhatsApp 1-758-285-0404.

## The police are alerting the public to a recent increase in vehicular theft

The Police Administration is concerned about the increasing number of vehicle that have been reported stolen in recent times.

In a statement, the police communications unit, STRATCOM said these criminal acts not only threaten public safety but also highlight the importance of the need for motorists to adopt safe security practices.

“Investigations have also revealed that in several instances, vehicles were left unattended with engines running, a practice that the police continuously discourage among drivers,” according to the statement.

Motorists are therefore urged to take the following precautions to further minimize the risk of vehicle theft:

- ☐ Ensure that you switch off your engine and remove the keys from the ignition when exiting your vehicle.
- ☐ Ensure all doors and windows are securely locked.
- ☐ Avoid leaving valuable items inside your vehicle in plain view of the public.
- ☐ Always park in secure and well-lit areas.

The police remain committed to investigating these incidents and bringing the perpetrators to justice.

Anyone with information that can assist the police in their investigations is asked to contact the Criminal Investigations Department at



462-3913 or 462-3914, or call the anonymous Crimestoppers hotline at 800-TIPS (8477).

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# Local News



## Statement by Health Minister, Sir Molwyn Joseph in observance of Nurses Week 2025

As we come together to observe Nurses Week 2025, I take this opportunity to extend the deepest appreciation on behalf of the Government and people of Antigua and Barbuda to one of the most vital pillars of our healthcare system—our nurses.

This year’s theme, “Nurses Make the Difference,” is not just a slogan—it is a statement of truth. Nurses are the heartbeat of our healthcare system. They are there in our most vulnerable moments—when a child is born, when an elderly parent needs care, when families face medical emergencies, and when communities are in crisis. Through every moment, nurses are present—calm, courageous, and compassionate.

Throughout the years, and particularly in recent times, our nurses have demonstrat-



**Health Minister, Sir Molwyn Joseph**

ed extraordinary resilience. Whether during hurricanes, public health emergencies, or the unprecedented demands of the COVID-19 pandemic, they have stepped up time and time again. Their commitment to

service, even in the face of personal risk and sacrifice, is nothing short of heroic.

But their impact extends far beyond hospital walls. Nurses are community educators, advocates for wellness,

counselors to families, and the bridge between medical systems and the people they serve. Their voices, insights, and hands are central to shaping a healthier, more equitable future for all of us.

Here in Antigua and Barbuda, we are committed to supporting and uplifting our nurses—not only with words of thanks, but through action. We continue to invest in training, infrastructure, and resources to better equip our nurses to do what they do best: care, heal, and lead.

To every nurse—whether you are on the frontlines in emergency care, tending to patients in rural clinics, caring for the elderly, or mentoring the next generation of professionals—know this: You matter. You are seen. You are valued. You truly make the difference.

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And I'm Dewey

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## FLOW presents Sir Richie Richardson with smartphone

Flow Antigua and Barbuda Country Manager, Wayne Hull presents a Samsung smartphone to Sir Richie Richardson, KCN GCM former West Indies international cricketer and a former captain of the West Indian cricket team.



He is celebrated as one of Antigua and Barbuda's crick-eting Knights and has spearheaded the 2nd annual Sir Richie's Golf Day in support of local charities. The phone will be part of a live auction at the event, with all proceeds going to several local charities.

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# Kiwanis stage Child Abuse Prevention Walk



The Kiwanis Club of St. John's Antigua has once again taken the lead in this noble cause with its 6th annual Child Abuse Prevention Walk to focus attention on this social issue. This year, the event drew a remarkable turnout of over 450 participants, all united in their commitment to shine a light on the critical issue of child abuse in our communities.

The walk, which took place in April as part of Child Abuse Prevention Month, was a vibrant display of solidarity and awareness. Club members donned Kiwanis-branded T-shirts, proudly showcasing their dedication to protecting the most vulnerable members of society—our children. The visual impact of the walk was not only felt on the day itself but echoed throughout the month, as the club engaged in various media appearances to spread their message far and wide.

A noteworthy highlight of this year's event was the partnership with key figures in the education and social services sectors. The Director of Education and the Director of Family and Social Services were both in attendance, underscoring the collaborative effort to address child abuse in Antigua. The Director of Education also contributed to the cause by creating a one-minute video that was shared across social



**Members of the Kiwanis Club participating in Child Abuse Prevention walk**

media platforms, further amplifying the message of child abuse prevention and reaching a wider audience.

The impact of the Kiwanis Club's initiatives throughout the month cannot be overstated. By quantifying their reach, it is estimated that approximately 25,000 individuals became more aware of child abuse and the importance of prevention efforts. This significant increase in awareness is a testament to the club's dedication and the effectiveness of their outreach strategies.

In addition to the walk, Kiwanis Club members participated in various pop-

up activities throughout the month. These initiatives included the distribution of badges that carried powerful abuse prevention messages, further reinforcing the importance of community involvement in safeguarding children. Each badge served as a conversation starter, encouraging discussions about the signs of abuse and the resources available for those in need.

The 6th Annual Child Abuse Prevention Walk was not just an event; it was a movement, a call to action for everyone in Antigua to come together and protect the children. With the unwavering support of the community, the Kiwanis Club of St. John's Antigua continues to lead the charge in raising awareness and advocating for the prevention of child abuse.

As club members reflect on the success of this year's walk, it is clear that the Kiwanis Club's efforts have made a significant impact. Together, the entire society can continue to foster a safe environment for the children, ensuring they grow up in a world free from abuse and full of opportunities for a brighter future.

The Kiwanis are urging everyone to remain vigilant and proactive in a commitment to protecting the next generation.

## Health ministers of non-aligned countries approve a strong statement rejecting the United States campaign against Cuba's international medical cooperation.



The Ministers of Health of the member nations of the Non-Aligned Movement issued a strong statement this Tuesday rejecting the dishonest and unjustified smear campaign being carried out by the United States government against Cuban international medical collaboration.

The ministers, meeting virtually as part of preparations for the 78th World Health Assembly, being held in Geneva, Switzerland, from May 19-27, expressed their deep appreciation for the Cuban health professionals who have served and continue

to serve in various nations around the world.

In their statement, the Movement's member countries denounced that since 2019, and even more intensely now, a dishonest campaign has been unleashed to discredit Cuba's international medical cooperation, pressure the governments that receive it, and deprive people of essential health services.

They emphasized that no one with a basic sense of honesty can doubt that this is an attack on multilateralism, a political manipulation, and an extension of aggression and hostility

against Cuba.

“Access to health care is a human right, and millions of people cannot be deprived of this inalienable right for political reasons,” they said.

The approved text recalls that Cuban medical cooperation has enabled the provision of high-quality healthcare to millions of people around the world.

They emphasized the imperative to defend and recognize the valuable contributions of the thousands of Cuban health professionals who, at enormous sacrifice, continue to provide their

cooperation.

“Neither the discrediting campaigns nor the devastating effects of the intensified economic, commercial, and financial blockade have been able to prevent Cuba from continuing to save lives and share its scarce resources with other nations in need. Cuban medical collaboration will continue to be a symbol of hope, selflessness, humanity, and solidarity,” concludes the Declaration issued by the Ministers of Health of the 120 member countries of the Non-Aligned Movement.

## Planning Together for Development and Revitalization, Building Together a China-LAC Community with a Shared Future



by Wang Yi

*Foreign Minister of the People's Republic of China*

The Fourth Ministerial Meeting of the China-CELAC Forum was successfully held on May 13 in Beijing. It is an important meeting on the 10th anniversary of the official launch of the China-CELAC Forum. As the hosting country, China warmly welcomed friends from CELAC member states and organizations of the Latin American and Caribbean (LAC) region. We look forward to working with all sides to plan together for development and revitalization, and build together a China-LAC community with a shared future.

I

In July 2014, President Xi Jinping proposed the major initiative of building a China-LAC community with a shared future at the leaders' meeting between China and LAC countries in Brasilia. The leaders also agreed at the meeting to establish the China-CELAC Forum, affirming their political consensus to promote the overall cooperation between the two sides. In January 2015, the successful conclusion of the First Ministerial Meeting of the China-CELAC Forum

in Beijing marked the inauguration of a cooperation platform for China and all the 33 independent LAC countries, turning a vision into reality.

Over the past 10 years, under the strategic guidance of head-of-state diplomacy, China and LAC countries have worked toward the goal of win-win cooperation in line with the principle of acting as equal partners. We have pursued cooperation in a flexible and pragmatic way and in an open and inclusive spirit. Our joint efforts have spurred the dynamic growth of the China-CELAC Forum, and synergized the overall cooperation with bilateral cooperation, allowing China-LAC relations to progress with accelerated speed.

**China-LAC relations feature a stronger foundation for mutual trust.** The two sides firmly accommodate each other's core interests and major concerns, and firmly support each other in safeguarding sovereignty and territorial integrity. Panama, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Nicaragua and Honduras established or resumed diplomatic relations with China. The one-China principle has increasingly gained the consensus of regional countries. To date, China has established different types of partnerships with 16 countries in the region, including the China-Cuba community with a shared future and the China-Brazil community with a shared future for a more just world and a more sustainable planet. These all added to the substance of China-LAC relations.

**China-LAC relations feature more fruitful cooperation.** The Global Development Initiative has gained wide support of regional countries, and more than 20 countries have synergized development strategies with China

under the Belt and Road cooperation framework. The trade volume between China and LAC countries doubled in the past decade, reaching a historic milestone of US\$518.4 billion in 2024. China stays the second largest trading partner country of the region for years in a row. More than 200 infrastructure projects and multiple industrial capacity cooperation projects built by China have generated more than one million jobs for the local people. China has launched livelihood assistance projects in all countries with which it has diplomatic ties, and Chinese enterprises have actively fulfilled their social responsibilities. These efforts have given a significant boost to local industrialization and economic and social development, and set a fine example of mutual benefit and win-win cooperation between China and LAC countries.

**China-LAC relations feature deeper mutual learning between civilizations.** LAC countries widely recognize the Global Civilization Initiative, and the two sides have had seven rounds of successful Dialogue Between Civilizations. China has so far provided LAC countries with 17,000 government scholarships and around 13,000 training opportunities in China, signed 26 cooperation documents on education with 19 regional countries, and opened 68 Confucius Institutes or Classrooms in 26 regional countries. Many regional countries have designated the Spring Festival as their public holiday. China has rolled out 240-hour visa-free transit policy for multiple LAC countries. These show that people-to-people and cultural exchanges between the two sides have deepened and our peoples' mutual understanding of and goodwill for each other have been enhanced.

**China-LAC relations feature closer**

## coordination in multilateral fora.

The two sides firmly uphold the U.N.-centered international system, stay committed to multilateralism underpinned by coordination and cooperation, stand firmly against interference in other countries' internal affairs, and oppose hegemonism and power politics. China and LAC countries have conducted close communication at the U.N., the G20, APEC and BRICS to advance the reform of the global governance system and safeguard the common interests of developing countries. China and Brazil jointly issued the six-point consensus on political settlement of the Ukraine crisis and launched the group of "friends for peace" at the U.N., gaining extensive support of the international community.

**China-LAC relations feature a more multidimensional framework of cooperation.** The China-CELAC Forum, with mechanisms of the ministerial meeting, foreign ministers' dialogue between China and the CELAC Quartet, and meeting of national coordinators, has hosted more than a hundred events, including three ministerial meetings and 31 subforum sessions. It has served as the main channel for the overall cooperation between China and LAC countries. China's National People's Congress is a permanent observer of the Central American Parliament (PARLACEN). China is an observer country of the Latin American Faculty of Social Sciences (FLACSO). China also maintains close contact with the Latin American Parliament (PARLATINO) and subregional organizations including the Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR), the Pacific Alliance (AP), the Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America-People's Trade Treaty (ALBA-TCP), and the Caribbean Community (CARICOM). All these have provided extensive support and multiple drivers for the development of China-LAC

relations.

## II

The Chinese people often say, "Reviewing the past helps understand the future." In LAC countries, there is also a famous saying, "History is a prophet with the gaze turned back." To evaluate the decade-long development of the China-CELAC Forum and the China-LAC relations with a broader vision and a longer-term perspective helps us to better grasp the general trend, strengthen confidence, and work toward the future together. From the significant progress of China-LAC relations over the past decade, we have learned the following:

**China-LAC cooperation is a natural choice in line with the prevailing trend of the world.** The collective rise of the Global South is a distinctive hallmark of the great transformation in the world. China and LAC countries are important members of the Global South. Increased cooperation between the two sides sends a strong message of the Global South seeking strength through unity and aligns with the dominant trend toward a multipolar world. This not only injects new substance into China-LAC relations but also makes new contributions to a more fair and equitable international order.

**China-LAC cooperation is a natural choice to realize modernization in the world.** China and LAC countries, with one-fifth of the world's total land mass, a quarter of the world's population and a quarter of the global economic output, are the country and region with the greatest growth potential and development vitality. When China and LAC countries come together and collaborate, we can create a supersized trans-Pacific market covering some two billion people. This will provide sustained momentum for our respective development and revitalization as well as confidence and strength to face any blackmail or

suppression.

**China-LAC cooperation is a natural choice to safeguard fairness and justice for humanity.** China advocates extensive consultation, joint contribution and shared benefit, which is the antithesis of coercion and bullying. China's investment in the LAC region has no political strings; such investment meets the need of the LAC side and helps empower their development. By contrast, what a certain major power does in the LAC region only disempowers the region. Who is a trustworthy friend for LAC countries? And who is their reliable long-term partner? The answer is crystal clear.

**China-LAC cooperation is a natural choice to pursue a shared future.** China and LAC countries have supported each other in our respective struggle against imperialism and colonialism and in our fight for national liberation. We have also supported each other in exploring development paths befitting our respective national conditions. Deeper cooperation between us has created growth drivers for both sides. During the COVID-19 pandemic, China and LAC countries went all-out supporting each other. History and reality have consistently demonstrated that building a China-LAC community with a shared future is a common endeavor of the willing that is underpinned by concrete actions.

## III

Currently, the world is undergoing changes and turbulence. Peace and development faces challenges. The foundational idea underpinning international cooperation is being eroded. Uncertainties and destabilizing factors in the international environment are increasing. Most notably, a certain major country, holding a "me-first" world view, is trying to snatch the fruits of development from the Global South, including China and LAC



**Wang Yi, Chinese Foreign Minister**

countries, and to hold back or even halt our modernization process. Pursuing modernization is a legitimate right of people in all countries, not the privilege of a few. Turning back the wheel of history will find no public support; bullying and power politics will lead to nowhere. In the face of risks and challenges, China and LAC countries should stand on the right side of history and on the side of fairness and justice, safeguard our respective development outcomes, continue to strive on side by side toward modernization, and build a China-LAC community with a shared future.

**We must defend independence.** Without independence, development cannot be achieved and its outcomes cannot be sustained. LAC countries propose to achieve not only political and sovereign independence but also true economic and cultural independence. China fully agrees and stands ready to work with the LAC side to continue supporting each other firmly in exploring development paths suited to our respective national conditions, oppose all forms of interference in internal affairs and pursue greater

democracy in international relations.

**We must safeguard peace and security.** China is the only major country that has written the commitment to peaceful development into its Constitution. It has been reaffirmed at multiple CELAC Summits that Latin America and the Caribbean is a Zone of Peace. As forces for international peace, China and LAC countries should practice the vision of common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security, and support peaceful settlement of disputes. We must oppose building one's own security on the insecurity of others, oppose the threat or use of force and oppose overstretching the concept of security.

**We must realize development and revitalization.** Modernization is the common aspiration and pursuit of the peoples of China and LAC countries. The two sides need to further synergize development strategies, strengthen top-level design, and provide each other with drivers of development. We need to weave a tighter network of connectivity and further facilitate trade and investment so as to foster a large

China-LAC market. We need to deepen industrial capacity cooperation, jointly safeguard the stability of industrial and supply chains, strengthen cooperation in high-tech and emerging areas as well as talent cultivation to achieve leapfrog development together. China will also implement more "small and beautiful" livelihood projects to enhance people's sense of gain.

**We must uphold multilateralism.** Multilateralism is the cornerstone of the post-war international order. China and LAC countries need to practice true multilateralism, firmly safeguard the international system with the U.N. at its core and the international order underpinned by international law, and protect the legitimate rights and interests of developing countries. We need to jointly reject unilateralism and uphold the WTO-centered multilateral trading system. We need to jointly advocate an equal and orderly multipolar world and a universally beneficial and inclusive economic globalization, and inject more stability and positivity into global development.

**We must deepen solidarity and cooperation.** CELAC is committed to the vision of the great unity of people in the LAC region. The CELAC Summit in Havana adopted a Special Declaration on the Establishment of the China-CELAC Forum. The Forum embodies the friendship between the two sides. We should work for its better development so that it can provide greater driving force for China-LAC relations and integration in the LAC region.

As a proverb in the LAC countries says, "United, we are invincible." In China, we also have an old saying, "All must row to move a big boat." The Fourth Ministerial Meeting of the Forum is an opportunity to solidify our commitment to development, dedication to cooperation and bond of friendship, and to make new progress in building a China-LAC community with a shared future.

## Meet Bonita John – A True Community Hero in Barbuda!



**Bonita John**

The ‘noise and din’ associated with the most recent Barbuda Council elections have ended, yet fortuitously, Bonita John has been able to make the transition from candidate to community activist for the benefit of the people of Barbuda.

John has been donating clothing to families in need, supporting daycare and preschool programs, and helping create fun, nurturing spaces for the island’s youngest residents.

John said she is committed to mobilising resources to assist those in most need within the Barbuda community. Her intentions are ‘to make a difference’ in the lives of these individuals. Her efforts have assured that families in need have access



**One happy recipient of a donation from Bonita John**

to essential items. Her initiative also supports daycare and preschool programs, helping to create fun and caring environments for young children.

In addition, John has demonstrated that she is passionate about health and wellness and she has taken steps to promote healthy habits among students by donating bottled water to local schools, encouraging children to stay hydrated throughout the day.

Her heart for community shines bright and her efforts serve as an example for the other residents of Barbuda.

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# Regional News

## China to expand visa-free access for 5 Latin American/Caribbean countries



China plans to expand its visa-free policy for five Latin American/Caribbean countries and offer 3,500 scholarships and 10,000 training opportunities, as part of a five-program plan to advance shared development and revitalisation with Latin American and Caribbean (LAC) countries.

President Xi Jinping announced these developments during a keynote speech at the opening of the fourth ministerial meeting of the China-CELAC (the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States) Forum in Beijing on May 13, 2025.

President Xi said as part of the People-to-People Connectivity Program, China has decided to offer a visa-free policy to five LAC countries, and will expand the policy to cover more regional countries in due course.

This is one of five programs targeted for LAC countries, ranging from solidarity, development and civilization to peace and people-to-people connectivity.

The People-to-People Connectivity Program also includes a three-year plan to provide CELAC member states with 3,500 government schol-

arships, 10,000 training opportunities in China, 500 International Chinese Language Teachers Scholarships, 300 training opportunities for poverty reduction professionals, and 1,000 funded placements through the Chinese Bridge program, initiate 300 “small and beautiful” livelihood projects, and support CELAC member states in developing Chinese language education.

On the Solidarity Program, Xi said China is willing to strengthen solidarity with LAC countries and continue to support each other on issues concerning their core interests and major concerns, to firmly safeguard the international system with the UN at its core and the international order underpinned by international law, and to speak with one voice in international and regional affairs.

In the next three years, China will also invite 300 members from political parties of CELAC member states every year to visit China to facilitate exchanges on national governance best practices, Xi said.

On Development Program, China is willing to work with LAC countries to implement the Global Development

Initiative, resolutely uphold the multilateral trading system, ensure stable, unimpeded global industrial and supply chains, and promote an international environment of openness and cooperation, Xi said.

Noting that the two sides should foster greater synergy between their development strategies and expand high-quality Belt and Road cooperation, Xi said China will import more quality products from LAC countries and encourage Chinese enterprises to expand their investment in the region.

Xi said the Civilization Program refers to the joint implementation of the Global Civilization Initiative. He said both sides should uphold the vision of equality, mutual learning, dialogue, and inclusiveness between civilizations, champion humanity’s common values of peace, development, fairness, justice, democracy and freedom, and enhance China-LAC civilizational exchanges and mutual learning, including through a conference on China-LAC inter-civilizational dialogue.

As part of the Peace Program, Xi called for joint implementation of the

*con't on pg 19*

## Grenada: High Court judge de-rostered after being charged with criminal offence

The Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court (ECSC) says it has de-rostered a sitting judge in Grenada after he had been charged with the indictable offence of “assault with a deadly instrument”.

In a statement, the ECSC, a superior court of record for the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), said that it had been recently made aware that Justice Shawn Innocent, a High Court Judge currently assigned to the Criminal court in Grenada, had been charged on April 28 with the indictable offence.

“Following this charge, Justice Innocent was granted bail until his court appearance, where he is expected to respond to the allegations.



“In light of these circumstances, Justice Innocent has been temporarily de-rostered. To minimise the disruption of proceedings in the Criminal court in Grenada, another judge has been assigned to assume Justice Innocent’s responsibilities, effective 1st June 2025,” the ECSC said.

It said it is “approaching this matter with the utmost seriousness, being mindful of Justice Innocent’s fundamental rights under the Constitution, while reaffirming its dedication to upholding the rule of law and maintaining the integrity of the judiciary”.

Grenada media reported that the judge is to return to court on June 23. (*Loop Caribbean*)

## Bahamas: American tourist critically injured in boating accident

An American woman is hospitalized in critical condition following a serious boating accident on Monday afternoon.

The incident occurred shortly after 3:45 pm on May 12, when the victim, who has not been publicly identified, reportedly entered the wa-

ter from a vessel where she was a passenger. According to investigators, the boat was attempting to dock at a location in the Bay Street area when the accident happened.

Police say the woman sustained severe injuries to her lower body after coming

into contact with the vessel’s propeller.

Crew members responded immediately, retrieving her from the water and bringing her back aboard the boat, where they administered emergency first aid and worked to control the bleeding until professional help

arrived.

Emergency medical services transported the victim to hospital where medical staff admitted her for urgent treatment. Hospital officials listed her condition as critical. (*Loop Caribbean*)

### con’t from pg 18

Global Security Initiative. He said both sides should cooperate more closely in disaster governance, cybersecurity, counterterrorism, anti-corruption, narcotics control and combating transnational organized crime so as to safeguard security and stability in the region.

China’s Foreign Minister Wang Yi, speaking at the plenary session of the Fourth Ministerial Meeting of the China-Latin America Forum, noted that over the past decade, China-Lat-

in America strategic mutual trust has deepened.

He added that over the past decade over 80 per cent of its \$35 billion financing package has been implemented within LAC countries, while the \$20 billion China-Latin America infrastructure loan has been exceeded.

He said China intends to implement the RMB66 billion credit line announced by President Xi for development projects in Latin America, as well as assistance in disaster management capabilities, disaster prevention

and mitigation.

He said: “China is willing to work with Latin American countries to practice true multilateralism, adhere to extensive consultation, joint construction and sharing, lead global governance reform with the concepts of fairness, justice, openness and inclusiveness, jointly safeguard the international system with the United Nations at its core and the international order based on international law, and continuously enhance the representation and voice of developing countries.” (*Loop Caribbean*)

## PAHO/WHO, National Road Safety Council donate breathalysers

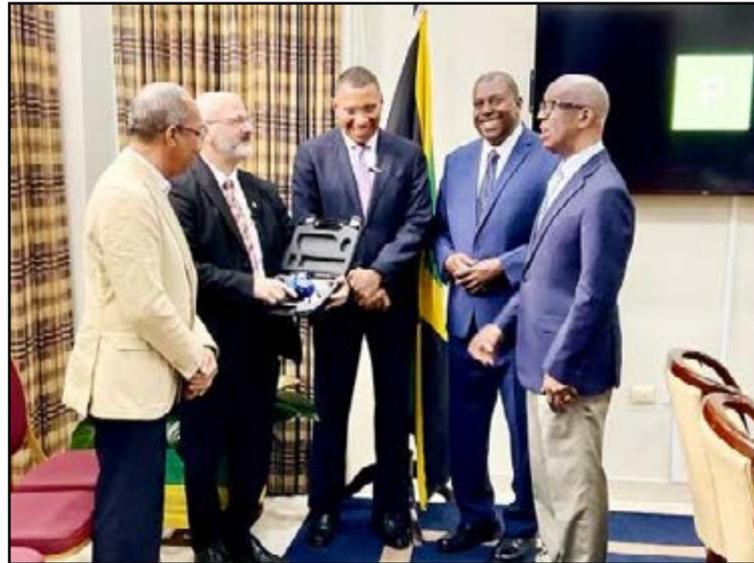
In a major boost to Jamaica's efforts to reduce road traffic injuries and fatalities, the Pan American Health Organization/World Health Organization (PAHO/WHO), in partnership with the National Road Safety Council (NRSC), recently handed over 52 alcohol breathalysers to the Government of Jamaica.

The donation, made under the United Nations Road Safety Fund initiative, 'Safe System Approach for Safer Roads in Jamaica,' included 50 Intoxilyzer 300 and two Intoxilyzer 9000 breathalysers, valued at approximately US\$55,000.

This equipment was officially handed over to Prime Minister Andrew Holness on April 17. The new equipment is expected to substantively strengthen the country's road safety programme by increasing alcohol checkpoints across the island and enabling more efficient roadside testing.

Approximately 30 officers from the Public Safety and Traffic Enforcement Branch (PSTEB) were trained in the use of the new devices. Since the end of April 2025, breathalyser tests have been administered at approximately 20 checkpoints nationwide, with over 500 tests conducted to date.

Motorists driving under the influence of alcohol remain a pressing concern, with international research linking the practice to a high incidence of road traffic crash-



es. Even small amounts of alcohol can impair a driver's vision, reflexes, and judgement. These factors are often compounded by other risky behaviours, such as speeding or failure to wear seat belts.

The breathalysers are expected to significantly aid roadside law enforcement and prosecution, enhancing Jamaica's ability to address this serious public safety issue.

In 2022, at the High-level Meeting of the United Nations General Assembly on Global Road Safety, member states committed to reducing road traffic deaths and injuries by 50 per cent by 2030.

The Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) works with the countries of the Americas to improve the health and quality of life of its population. Founded in 1902, it is the world's oldest international public health agency. It serves as the regional office of WHO for

the Americas and is the specialised health agency of the Inter-American system.

To date, adult pedestrian fatalities remain a major concern among that category of road users in Jamaica. As of 2025, the daily fatality rate stands at 1.04, with a 30-day average of 1.06 deaths per day. There have been seven days where at least five people died in traffic incidents.

The recent spike in road crashes has highlighted the urgent need for targeted interventions. Strengthening enforcement, improving public education and fast-tracking legislative and technological reforms are critical to reversing this trend and saving lives. During the period April 1, 2024 to March 31, 2025, there was a noticeable decline in fatalities.

However, there has been a sharp uptick in fatal traffic crashes over the past four weeks, which has pushed the number of people killed

on the nation's roads to 138 as of Friday, May 9.

The deaths resulted from 124 fatal crashes, the Island Traffic Authority (ITA) revealed in its latest daily crash report. The ITA said fatalities have decreased by nine percentage points when compared to the prior year, while fatal crashes are down five per cent compared to last year.

Motorcyclists continue to top the list in terms of category of roads users killed, amounting to 40, or 29 per cent, as of May 9. Pedestrians are next with 32 fatalities, or 23 per cent, followed by drivers of private motor vehicles with 29 fatalities, or 21 per cent.

Seventeen private motor vehicle passengers were killed as of the same period, making up 12 per cent of the overall death count.

Combined, vulnerable road users (pedestrians, pedal cyclists, motorcyclists and pillion passengers) account for 61 per cent of all road deaths this year.

Males account for 85 per cent, while females make up 15 per cent of all fatalities since the start of the year.

PAHO/WHO has commended the Government of Jamaica for its progress, highlighting a decline in road traffic deaths over the past two years, and has pledged continued support for the country's efforts to meet the 2030 targets. (*Jamaica Gleaner*)

# REGISTRATION

# OPEN

## CATEGORIES:

- Carnival Floats
- The University of the West Indies Five Islands Campus Junior Calypso Monarch
- Junior Party Monarch
- LIAT 2020 T-Shirt Mas Troupes
- Koscab Junior Carnival
- Calypso Monarch
- APUA INET Pary Monarch
- Koscab J'ouvert Troupes
- Individual Mas
- Road March
- Monday Wear
- Mas Troupes
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### WHERE TO COLLECT FORMS:

- National Festivals Office, 1st Floor, Cecil George-John Building, Corn Alley & Redcliffe Street
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**FRI**

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## Rapper Tory Lanez's alleged prison attacker is man with previous conviction for assault on inmate

Authorities said Tuesday that a man who attacked rapper Tory Lanez in a California prison is an inmate serving a life sentence for second-degree murder who was previously convicted for an in-prison assault with a deadly weapon.

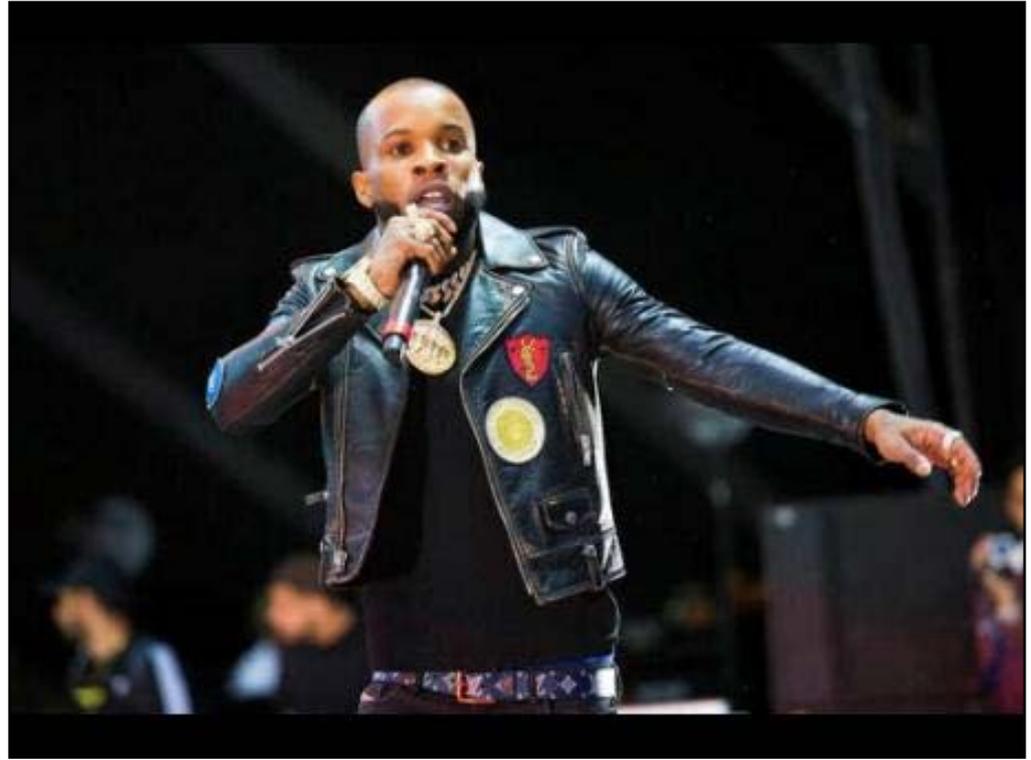
Lanez was in fair condition a day after the attack in a housing unit at the California Correctional Institution in Tehachapi, where he's serving a 10-year sentence for shooting hip-hop star Megan Thee Stallion in the feet, Pedro Calderon Michel, spokesman for the state Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, said in an email.

Authorities did not specify how Lanez was attacked, but a message posted on the rapper's Instagram account Monday evening said Lanez was stabbed 14 times and both his lungs collapsed.

Prison officials identified the alleged attacker as Santino Casio, 42. He has been put in restricted housing pending an investigation by the prison and the Kern County District Attorney's Office.

Casio has been in the facility since 2004, after he was sentenced to life, with parole possible, for convictions of second-degree murder and first-degree attempted murder. In 2008, he was sentenced to six more years for assault by a prisoner with a deadly weapon, and in 2018 he was sentenced to two more years for possession and manufacture of a deadly weapon by a prisoner.

An email seeking comment sent to an attorney who previously represented Casio was not immediately answered.



The prison is about 100 miles (160 kilometres) north of Los Angeles in the mountains of the Mojave Desert and houses about 1,700 medium- and maximum-security inmates.

In December 2022, Lanez was convicted of three felonies: assault with a semi-automatic firearm; having a loaded, unregistered firearm in a vehicle and discharging a firearm with gross negligence.

Megan, whose legal name is Megan Pete, testified during the trial that in July 2020, after they left a party at Kylie Jenner's Hollywood Hills home, Lanez fired the gun at the back of her feet and shouted for her to dance as she walked away from an SUV in which they had been riding.

She had bullet fragments in both feet that had to be surgically removed. It wasn't until months after the incident that she publicly identified Lanez as the person who had

fired the gun.

A judge rejected a motion for a new trial from Lanez's lawyers, who are appealing his conviction. They had no immediate comment after the attack.

Megan recently alleged that Lanez was harassing her from prison through surrogates, and in January a judge issued a protective order through 2030 ordering him to stop any such harassment or any other contact.

The 32-year-old Canadian Lanez began releasing mixtapes in 2009 and saw a steady rise in popularity, moving on to major label albums, two of which reached the top 10 on Billboard's charts.

The Monday Instagram post on Lanez's status said he was "talking normally, in good spirits, and deeply thankful to God that he is pulling through." (*Jamaica Gleaner*)

## Judge reduces Menendez brothers' murder sentences, putting them a step closer to freedom



Erik and Lyle Menendez will have a new shot at freedom after 35 years behind bars for murdering their parents, a judge ruled Tuesday.

Los Angeles County Superior Court Judge Michael Jesic reduced the brothers' sentences from life without parole to 50 years to life. They're now eligible for parole under California's youthful offender law because they committed the crime under the age of 26. The state parole board must still decide whether to release them from prison.

The brothers appeared via livestream video and spoke for the first time

in court before the ruling.

"I killed my mom and dad. I make no excuses and also no justification," Lyle said in a statement to the court. "The impact of my violent actions on my family ... is unfathomable."

Erik also spoke about taking responsibility for his actions and apologizing to his family. "You did not deserve what I did to you, but you inspire me to do better," he said.

The judge said he had given "long thought" to what sentences the brothers deserved, taking into account all of

the arguments.

"I do give them a lot of credit for changing their lives," Jesic said.

He said he was especially moved by a letter that was submitted by a prison official who wrote in support of the resentencing, something he had never done for any inmate in 25 years.

"I'm not saying they should be released, it's not for me to decide," Jesic said. "I do believe they've done enough in the past 35 years, that they should get that chance."

The brothers were sentenced in 1996 to life in prison without the possi-

bility of parole for murdering their father, Jose Menendez, and mother, Kitty Menendez, in their Beverly Hills home in 1989. The brothers were 18 and 21 at the time. While defence attorneys argued the brothers acted out of self-defence after years of sexual abuse by their father, prosecutors said the brothers killed their parents for a multimillion-dollar inheritance.

The case has captured the public's attention for decades — and last year, the Netflix drama "Monsters: The Lyle and Erik Menendez Story" and documentary "The Menendez Brothers" brought new attention to the case. Supporters of the brothers have flown in from across the country to attend rallies and hearings in the past few months.

"Today is a great day after 35 years," defence attorney Mark Geragos said.

"We have evolved," Geragos said. "This is not the '90s anymore. We have a more robust understanding of a lot of things." (*Jamaica Gleaner*)

## Kremlin declines to say if Putin will meet Ukraine's Zelenskyy in Istanbul



The Kremlin has again declined to say whether President Vladimir Putin will travel to Turkiye for planned negotiations with Ukraine's Volodymyr Zelenskyy, amid growing international pressure on Moscow to hold direct talks and end its three-year war.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters on Wednesday that Moscow would disclose the makeup of its delegation to Turkiye once Putin gave the order.

"The Russian delegation will be waiting for the Ukrainian delegation in Istanbul on May 15," he said.

Peskov said he would provide an update "when we get the relevant instructions from the president".

"No such instructions have been received yet."

The planned negotiations, expected to take place on Thursday in Istanbul, Turkiye's commercial hub, would be the first direct talks between Kyiv and Moscow since 2022, shortly after Russia's full-scale invasion of its neighbour.

Zelenskyy is expected to travel to Tur-

kiye where he said he would hold talks with President Recep Tayyip Erdogan on either Wednesday or Thursday.

The Ukrainian leader has challenged Putin to meet him in Turkiye, saying if he does not show up, it would show

that Moscow is not interested in peace.

He also urged United States President Donald Trump, currently on a tour of Middle Eastern countries, to visit Turkiye and participate in the talks.

Trump on Wednesday said there was a "possibility" he would head to Turkiye for talks on Ukraine if Putin also travelled there.

"I don't know that he (Putin) would be there if I'm not there," Trump told reporters on Air Force One as he flew from Saudi Arabia to Qatar.

"I know he would like me to be there, and that's a possibility. If we could end the war, I'd be thinking about that," he said.

Secretary of State Marco Rubio is already set to travel to Istanbul on Friday.

"Marco is going and Marco has been very effective," Trump said. (*Al Jazeera English*)



## Narine, Russell set to rejoin KKR for resumption of IPL



**West Indies cricketers Sunil Narine, center, and Andre Russell, right, are set to rejoin Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) ahead of the resumption of the 2025 Indian Premier League (IPL) on May 17.**

The West Indies core of Sunil Narine, Andre Russell, Rovman Powell, and team mentor Dwayne Bravo is set to rejoin Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) ahead of the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2025 resumption, with the franchise gearing up for a must-win clash against Royal Challengers Bengaluru on May 17 at the M Chinnaswamy Stadium.

The quartet has been stationed in Dubai since leaving India on May 9, when the IPL was abruptly suspended due to escalating cross-border tensions between India and Pakistan.

But following a ceasefire announcement on May 10, preparations for the league's resumption were quickly reignited, and franchises began rallying their overseas contingents.

Alongside the West Indians, Rah-

manullah Gurbaz, KKR's Afghan wicketkeeper-batter, will fly from Kabul to Dubai before linking up with the group en route to India.

South African pacer Anrich Nortje is set to arrive in Bengaluru directly from the Maldives, while updates on Moeen Ali (England) and Spencer Johnson (Australia) are pending, though both are expected to return. There is still no confirmation on Quinton de Kock's availability.

Meanwhile, KKR's Indian players and support staff will arrive in Bengaluru in staggered batches from Wednesday, as the franchise ramps up its preparations for a high-stakes finish to the league phase.

KKR currently sit sixth on 11 points with five wins and one no-result from 12 games. To have any real-

istic shot at qualifying for the playoffs, they must win both remaining league fixtures—against RCB on May 17 and Sunrisers Hyderabad in Delhi on May 25—which would take them to 15 points. They would also have to hope other results fall in their favour.

The IPL's revised schedule, released on Monday, includes 13 remaining league games and four playoff fixtures.

The league stage will unfold across six cities—Delhi, Jaipur, Lucknow, Ahmedabad, Mumbai, and Bengaluru. However, venues for the playoffs are yet to be confirmed.

The Qualifier, Eliminator, Qualifier 2, and Final are scheduled for May 29, May 30, June 1, and June 3, respectively.

# Sports News



## Antigua to host LICB T20 Festival



Six teams, comprising all eight member territories, will participate in an inaugural Leeward Islands Cricket Board (LICB) T20 Festival in Antigua and Barbuda at the end of the month.

The event will take place at the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium in North Sound

from Saturday, May 31, to Sunday, June 8.

Two of the six participating teams will utilize players from two territories to form combined teams.

Players from Montserrat and St. Maarten will team up to represent the Com-

bined Islands, while players from the British and United States Virgin Islands will join forces to compete at the Virgin Islands team.

The other four participating teams are host Antigua and Barbuda, Anguilla, Nevis, and St. Kitts.

The tournament will feature triple-headers on match days, except on Sunday, June 8, when the third place playoff and the final will be contested at 3 pm and 7 pm, respectively. The encounters on all other match days will be contested at 11 am, 3 pm, and 7 pm.

The LICB T20 Festival will bowl off with the first triple-header on Saturday, May 31. The Combined Islands will take on Nevis at 11 am, Anguilla will meet the Virgin Islands, and St. Kitts will clash with Antigua and Barbuda at 7 pm.

In the following days, An-

tigua and Barbuda will face Nevis on Sunday, June 1; Anguilla on Tuesday, June 3; the Combined Virgin Islands on Thursday, June 5; and the Virgin Islands on Saturday, June 7.

Each team will play five round-robin matches, at the end of which the top two will advance to the final, while the third and fourth place finishers will meet in a playoff for third place.

The nine-day tournament is being supported by the government of Antigua and Barbuda, which will provide sponsorship via LIAT 20, the Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority, the Antigua and Barbuda Port Authority, and APUA Inet.

The event is also receiving sponsorship from other corporate citizens in Antigua and Barbuda. They are JOMA Caribbean, Subway, and Cool and Smooth.

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## CPTSA Wings express concerns over lack of school and parental interest in sports



**Girls' division champs Wings Tough Gals (Photos courtesy of the CPTSA Wings)**

The CPTSA Wings Sports Club has expressed its concerns with the lack of interest and support for sports by many schools and parents alike in Antigua and Barbuda.

The club made the disclosure in the publication of its latest newsletter.

According to the CPTSA Wings Sports Club, it has observed the lack of interest most prominently in the basketball programme in Antigua and Barbuda, where the sport is on a very slippery decline.

“There are only 15 teams in two divisions in the national basketball programme, and the level of participation at the school level fell to an all-time low this year.

“Unlike football, the sport is lacking at the community and youth club level, and when it comes to the females, there are only two clubs fielding teams and three teams in the Schools’ Girls Division.

“When it comes to the involvement of parents, either as supporters or encouragers of their children in sports, the interest is sadly lacking.

“As for the Wings Youth Basketball Festival, on May 10, if there were 100 children participating, no more than a dozen parents attended and stayed only for a short while,” commented an official of the CPTSA Wings Sports Club.

On the court of play at the 10th Wings Youth Basketball Festival,



*Jodaliah Constant, right, holds her trophy alongside former national men's player Brian 'Hollywood' Matthews, who presented her with the most outstanding player award.*

which was held at the JSC Sports Complex last weekend, Wave Elite won the Under-11 Division. N'yerdae Jarvis of Wave Elite was the most outstanding player in the Under-11 division.

Wings Tough Gals were crowned winners of the girls' division. Jodaliah Constant of Wings Tough Gals was the most outstanding player in the girls' division.

Didlers captured the title in the under-19 division. Jordan Andrew of Didlers was the most outstanding player in the under-19 division.

Laurisa Ann Thomas won the girls' 3-point shootout contest. Competitions were also held in speed dribbles and right-and-left-hand layups.

## Dawson returns for England's T20 squad against West Indies



**England all-rounder Liam Dawson**

LONDON (Reuters) - All-rounder Liam Dawson has returned to England's T20 squad for the first time since 2022, while Phil Salt was not selected by the England & Wales Cricket Board for the upcoming white-ball home series against the West Indies.

England, who will play three ODIs and three T20 matches against West Indies between May 29 and June 10, have also recalled batting all-rounder Will Jacks to both squads led by Harry Brook, who was named white-ball captain last month.

Luke Wood and Tom Hartley, who have not played white-ball cricket for England since September 2023, have returned to the T20 and the ODI sides respectively.

Jacks, along with Jos Buttler, Jacob Bethell, Jamie Overton and Jofra Archer, were playing in the Indian Premier League before its matches were suspended amid fighting between India and Pakistan.

The IPL will resume on May 17, with the final now set for June 3, which clashes with the ODI series against West Indies.

British media reports said all 10 English players involved with the IPL will hold a meeting with the Professional Cricketers' Association over security arrangements for a potential return to India.

Cricket Australia also said they are working with the Indian cricket board (BCCI) on security arrangements with several of their players set to decide whether they will return to play the rest of the IPL season.

England will also play a four-day Test with Zimbabwe, starting May 22 at Trent Bridge.

England ODI Squads: Harry Brook (captain), Jofra Archer, Gus Atkinson (Surrey), Tom Banton, Jacob Bethell, Jos Buttler, Brydon Carse, Ben Duckett, Tom Hartley, Will Jacks, Saqib Mahmood, Jamie Overton, Matthew Potts, Adil Rashid, Joe Root, and Jamie Smith.

England T20 Squad: Harry Brook (captain), Rehan Ahmed, Tom Banton, Jacob Bethell, Jos Buttler, Brydon Carse, Liam Dawson, Ben Duckett, Will Jacks, Saqib Mahmood, Jamie Overton, Matthew Potts, Adil Rashid, Phil Salt, and Luke Wood.



## Windies women slip to ninth in ODI rankings



**Players of the West Indies women's cricket team**

The West Indies Women have slipped from seventh to ninth in the latest ICC Women's ODI Team Rankings following the annual update released on Wednesday, but they will be hoping to climb back up the standings with a strong showing in their upcoming series against England.

The latest shuffle in the rankings sees the Caribbean side fall behind Bangladesh and Pakistan, after losing 10 rating points in the updated calculation, which now discounts matches played between October 2021 and April 2022, including the 2022 ICC Women's World Cup.

This update has particularly hurt teams like West Indies and South Africa, who had made the knockout stages of that tournament but now see those perfor-

mances dropped from the equation.

Despite the rankings dip, the West Indies will look at their series in England as a crucial opportunity to reassert their ODI credentials, especially as the countdown to major global events continues.

A tidy performance on English soil could help them regain momentum and rebuild their position in the top tier of international women's cricket.

"Going to England is a fantastic opportunity to play one of the best teams in the world for a long time and to really test our skills and put into practice what we've talked about off the pitch. The talk is cheap off the pitch; we're going to put that talk into action and go out against England and play some good cricket."

West Indies Head Coach Shane Deitz said ahead of the series.

"We've got the T20Is first, and that's where we've played our better cricket in the past 12 to 18 months, so we're looking forward to getting the tour off to a good start and play some good attacking cricket the West Indian way. It's going to be an excellent tour for us to reestablish ourselves as a world-class team with world-class players," he added.

Meanwhile, Australia continue to dominate the women's ODI landscape, holding a commanding 167 rating points, though their lead over second-placed England has narrowed slightly from 44 to 40 points.

This change comes after the updated system shifted to weigh matches played between May 2022 and

April 2024 at 50 percent, and those played thereafter at 100 percent, aligning with the men's ranking cycle, which was previously updated in May.

Australia's formidable results in the full-weightage period include sweeping series wins against India (both home and away), Bangladesh, and England, as well as solid wins over South Africa, New Zealand, and the West Indies.

England, sitting at 127 points, have made up some ground, thanks to a string of recent series wins — notably 3-0 and 2-1 victories over New Zealand, and 2-0 wins against Pakistan and Sri Lanka at home. They also managed tight 2-1 wins away to both Ireland and South Africa.

India remain in third, now only six points behind England, having delivered a series of dominant performances over the last two years. Their clean sweeps against Ireland, West Indies, and South Africa, and a 2-1 win over New Zealand, have solidified their top-three status.

South Africa, though still fifth, lost nine rating points in the reshuffle, reflecting a decline since their World Cup semi-final showing, while USA have been dropped from the table altogether after losing ODI status. The UAE are now eligible to enter the rankings once they complete eight official ODIs.

# Sports

THURSDAY 15<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2025



## Bellot completes Prestigious international coaching programme



**Charles Bellot, second left, accepts his certificate from out-going IOC President Thomas Bach. Also pictured are USOPC's Michelle Hurtado, second right, and ICECP Director Professor Dr. Matthew Robinson. (Photos courtesy of the ABTTA)**

President of the Antigua and Barbuda Table Tennis Association (ABTTA) Charles “Chucky” Bellot has graduated from the International Coaching Enrichment Certificate Programme (ICECP).

Bellot has successfully completed the 2024–2025 edition of the globally respected International Coaching Enrichment Certificate Programme, a milestone that cements his growing reputation as a visionary in sport development and high-performance coaching.

Held in partnership with the United States Olympic & Paralympic Committee (USOPC), Olympic Solidarity, and the University of Delaware, ICECP brings

together elite coaches from around the world for intensive, high-level training in leadership, athlete development, and sustainable sport programming.

Bellot was selected to represent Antigua and Barbuda among a cohort of 31 coaches from across the globe and attended as a table tennis coach, but his experience extended far beyond a single discipline.

His capstone project—focused on sustainable athlete development and the social impact of sport—was extremely well received by ICECP tutors and peers, earning commendation for its clarity, innovation, and real-world applicability.

“I attended as a table tennis coach,” Bellot not-



**Coaches from around the world along with the tutors**

ed, “but the principles of high performance, strategic planning, and inclusive athlete development that I studied and applied throughout ICECP have sharpened my approach across all sports.

“The experience has already strengthened my contribution in my role as Technical Development Officer of the Antigua and Barbuda National Olympic Committee.”

Bellot is no stranger to sport leadership. He is the current president and senior coach of the Antigua and Barbuda Table Tennis Association (ABTTA) and a former national table tennis player (1982–2017).

His efforts in recent years have included launching grassroots development programmes like Nex-Gen Ping Pong, spearheading school and community outreach, and mentoring young athletes and coaches

across the nation.

His training includes certifications in sport psychology, athlete development, coaching methodology, and the Pan Am Sport Coaching Programme, reflecting a deep commitment to athlete-centered development.

He extends special thanks to the Antigua and Barbuda National Olympic Committee (ABNOC) for nominating and supporting his participation and to the ICECP organizers for providing what he describes as “an opportunity of a lifetime” for professional and personal growth.

Bellot’s successful completion of ICECP is not only a proud personal achievement but also augurs well for the continued growth, capacity building, and international alignment of Antigua and Barbuda’s sporting ambitions