

# More than half of rooms controlled by local, says Tourism Minister

*Story on Page 2*



Prime Minister Gaston Browne (centre) with Tourism Minister Charles Fernandez and ABTA CEO, Colin C James to his right and CHTA President Sanovnik Destang on his left, at Caribbean Tourism Marketplace on Tuesday

## More than half of rooms controlled by local, says Tourism Minister



Antigua and Barbuda nationals are benefitting significantly from the country's hosting of Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association's Tourism Marketplace at the AUA Conference Centre.

Tourism Minister Charles Fernandez said the major event is creating much economic activities for many sectors in the society with several local entities mounting booths at the event. These include accommodation, transportation and restaurants.

"What is also important to me is that we have some twenty-two local entities participating; that is really impressive. We have delegates from fifteen Caribbean countries with more than eight hundred persons at-

tending from abroad. These has been very impressive and we are thrilled with the feedback that we are getting from everyone. They are even saying we should do it again, and that's a great compliment for our team from the ABTA," he noted.

The tourism minister also revealed that local control a fairly large stake of the tourism industry. "Many persons may not realize it but our locals control roughly 2000 of the available rooms in the country. These are short-term rental rooms that they control. Yes, they may not be able to put up US\$100 million to build a luxury property, but collectively, our people control more than fifty percent of the room stock that that's something that about

which we should all be very proud," he stated.

According to Fernandez that government has rolled out several incentives including making loans available through the Entrepreneurial Development Fund to finance tourism and other projects.

In addition to the involvement of locals, the country continues to attract foreign direct investments such as the One and Only development earmarked for Half Moon Bay which is to commence shortly.

Since Antigua and Barbuda successfully hosted last year's SIDS4 conference many in the industry are now looking differently at the country as it makes a concerted push to attract more of the Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Exhibitions (MICE) segment of the tourism industry.

The recent implementation of the paperless ED card has led to seamless interactions with both immigration and customs which add to the overall reputation of the country.



## CHTA President: Antigua and Barbuda now part of our rotation to host future events



President of the Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association, Sanovnik Destang, says his organization is ‘quite impressed’ with the efforts of the local organ-

isers of Caribbean Tourism Marketplace, 2025, now taking place at the American University of Antigua Conference Room near Jaberwock Beach.



Destang’s comments came as he welcomed Prime Minister Gaston Browne to Caribbean Marketplace on Tuesday.

“If you were here a few days ago with all the rain and the inclement weather, you would have been very concerned about whether we would have been able to put this show on. Yet, despite the rain and unfavourable weather, the team on the ground showed great resilience and incredible creativity and we are very happy to be here for

the first time. I can now say safely that Antigua and Barbuda is officially part of the CHTA Marketplace rotation for hosting a future marketplace; we will be back,” he declared.

PM Browne expressed his pleasure in hearing from the CHTA’s president, a commitment to return CHTA Marketplace to Antigua and Barbuda sometime in the future.

“As have indicated, we in the Caribbean rank among the top of countries that



# Local News



have shown great resilience; it is not coincidence as our shared history speaks to resilience. I am very happy that the conference is going very well as we say locally, ‘de conference sell-off’,” he remarked.

PM Browne told President Destang to ‘come as often as you wish’ adding that Antigua and Barbuda stands ready to step in should another country that has been earmarked to host CHTA Marketplace declines to follow through for one reason or the other.

The prime minister was formally introduced to two of the visiting ministers of tourism – from Grenada and Anguilla – before being given a briefing by Minister of Tourism, Charles Fernandez and ABTA CEO, Colin C. James.

PM Browne then toured the marketplace, stopping at many of the booths to personally greet attendees, take photos and to offer welcome on behalf of the country.


 A vibrant poster for Barbuda Caribana 2025. The background is green with a hexagonal pattern. Two large, ornate microphones are positioned on either side of the central text. The text reads:
 

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## Missing woman returns...gets warm welcome at airport



Antigua and Barbuda national, Denise Odelia Charles, received an enthusiastic and warm welcome when she returned to Antigua on Tuesday from Venezuela.

Prime Minister Gaston Browne and Social Improvement Minister, Rawdon Turner, were among a group

of government officials and family members who turned out at the VC Bird International Airport on Tuesday to welcome her back to the country.

She was reportedly missing for a period of 32 years and 5 months. This until she made contact with PM

Browne and he arranged for her to return to Antigua.

There were tears of joy during the surreal family reunion. Charles is expected to speak in detail in coming weeks about the circumstances that led to her being in Venezuela for over three decades.

The Venezuelan Government arranged for the private charter flight to transport her, as well her brother Terrence Charles and nephew Tishorn Watson, back to Antigua.

Prime Minister Browne expressed his elation at the incredible outcome of this case, and the role he and his administration were able to play in securing Charles' return. He says this story demonstrates the importance of Antiguan and Barbudans remaining hopeful and positive.



## Antigua and Barbuda Horticultural Society Wins Silver Medal at RHS Chelsea Flower Show 2025

The Antigua and Barbuda Horticultural Society (ABHS) has earned a Silver Medal at the prestigious RHS Chelsea Flower Show 2025, marking an outstanding achievement in their first-ever participation at this world-renowned event.

The Governor General, Sir Rodney Williams, and Lady Williams, serve as patrons of the event.

The nation's debut exhibit, titled "A Glimpse into the Past," was a captivating homage to Antigua and Barbuda's cultural heritage and natural environment. Designed by the creative duo Michael Hunte and his wife Imogen Margrie Hunte, the display featured traditional items such as sugar cane, cotton, rum barrels, pots and coal pots from Elvie's in Seaview Farm, and chained palms symbolizing slavery. Antigua and Barbuda's exhibit was awarded a Silver Gilt Medal, placing the nation just one point away from a Gold Medal—an extraordinary achievement for a first-time participant at the RHS Chelsea Flower Show. The Silver Gilt distinction is a high honour and reflects the exceptional quality, design, and execution of the presentation titled "A Glimpse into the Past."

### Special Recognition:

Special commendation is also extended to Grant Joyce of Claremont Farms, who displayed the iconic Antigua Black Pineapple to perfection within the exhibit. His contribution added authenticity and visual richness to the presentation, drawing attention to one of Antigua and Barbuda's most treasured agricultural and national symbols.

A highlight was the Barbuda-inspired depiction of the Fallow Deer



(Dama Dama) and a pink sand pathway adorned with cut conch shells, echoing the unique coastal charm of the island.

The plant selection celebrated Antigua and Barbuda's drier climate, offering a striking contrast to the lush displays from the southern Caribbean. Visitors and judges alike were captivated by the thoughtful storytelling and artistic execution of the exhibit.

Participation in this year's RHS Chelsea Flower Show was made possible through the generous support of the Halo Foundation, which provided financial assistance and continues to champion national rep-



resentation in global forums. Additional appreciation is extended to the following sponsors and supporters:

- Caribbean Alliance Insurance
- Mill Reef Fund
- Janey Henderson Howell and Family
- The Harrison Foundation
- Friends of the Horticultural Society
- Leo Hagerman
- June & David Dickinson
- Sam Fuller Landscapes

The RHS Chelsea Flower Show is considered the pinnacle of international horticultural exhibitions, attracting leading designers and garden specialists from around the world. Antigua and Barbuda's Silver Medal award marks a proud milestone and elevates the nation's presence in the global horticultural community.

Watch the BBC feature on Antigua and Barbuda's exhibit: BBC Two – RHS Chelsea Flower Show 2025, Episode 2

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p0lc58my>

# Local News



## Gareth Walker pleads 'not guilty' to charges of firearm possession

Gareth Walker, who turned himself into the police earlier this month after the police posted a 'Wanted Bulletin' for him, appeared in the magistrate court on Tuesday to answer a charge of illegally possessing firearm and ammunition.

Following his 'not guilty' plea, the magistrate ordered that he be remanded at HM Prison until the trial date of September 16. The prosecution has indicated that it will call a total of five witness-



es when the case resumes in four months.

The police have advised the court that on March 20, 2025, they intercepted Walker on the Friar's Hill road and it was discovered that he had a firearm along with five rounds of 45 mm ammunition without being the holder of a firearms licence.

Meanwhile, Walker may apply to the High Court for bail if he wishes.

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## ECAB donates wheelchairs to Potters Primary School



The Eastern Caribbean Amalgamated Bank (ECAB) has made a donation of two wheelchairs to the Potter's Primary School last Friday. A presentation was held last Friday when a representative of the bank along with Good Humans 268, a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting disability rights and inclusion, when the wheelchairs were formally presented to the school.

The ceremony underscored the critical role of community partnerships in creating a more inclusive society.

"We are very excited to be here today," said an ECAB spokesperson as the wheelchairs were unveiled. "We know that this has been a long time in coming, and we're so happy that our donation will help to improve the lives of these two individuals. At ECAB, we're always looking for opportunities to give back and to make a difference where it really matters."

One of the recipients, a young student named Diana, was visibly emotional as she was gently guided into her new wheelchair. Her journey to this moment has been marked by challenges, including limited access to

mobility aids and inaccessible facilities that have made day-to-day school

life difficult. Diana's story came to light through the advocacy of **Good Humans 268**, whose founder, Joshua-nette Francis, met her during a community outreach activity.

The school's principal also shared her gratitude, noting the emotional and logistical struggles they've faced in trying to secure the necessary mobility aids on their own.

For ECAB, the donation reflects a broader commitment to social responsibility and inclusion. The bank continues to support projects that improve quality of life, particularly for vulnerable groups. Their partnership with Good Humans 268 is a model of what can be achieved when the corporate world and civil society collaborate for the greater good.



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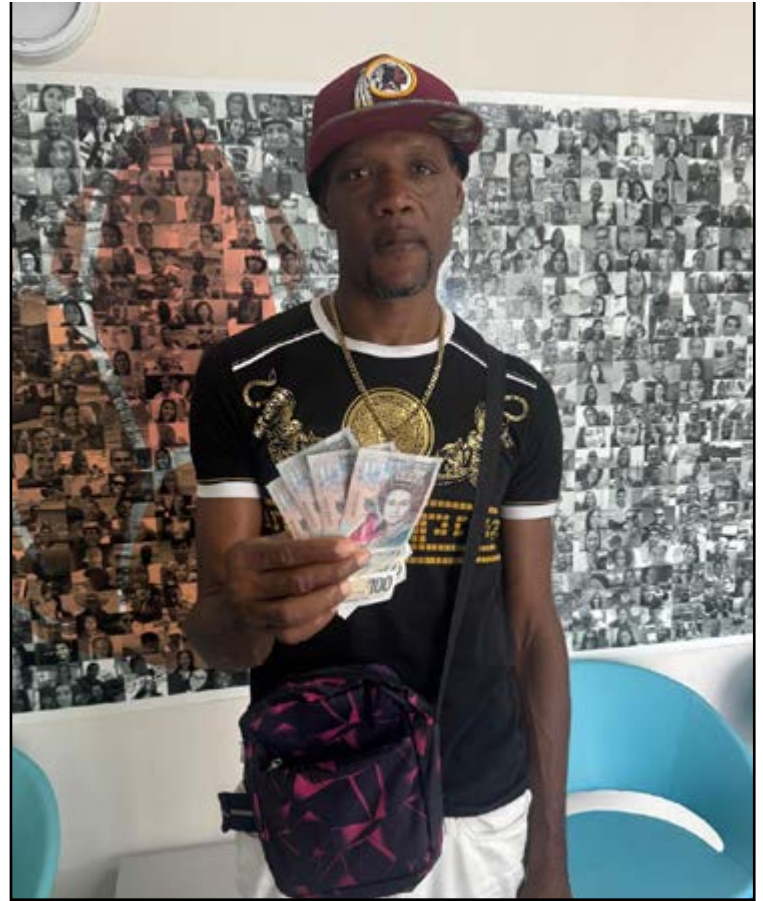
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## Flow Donates Chromebooks to National Robotics Team

Flow has donated five Chromebooks to Team DADLIBOTS, Antigua and Barbuda's national robotics team, to support their preparation for the 2025

FIRST Global Challenge in Panama. The devices were presented by Andrea Skerriitt-Browne and accepted by Elijah James on behalf of the team.

Team DADLIBOTS will proudly represent Antigua and Barbuda at the international competition, which takes place from October 29 to November 1, 2025.



**Elijah James , Andrea Skerriitt-Browne**





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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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# Promoting Mutual Development and Prosperity



Authored by H.E. Zhang Yanling, Chinese Ambassador to Antigua and Barbuda

During The Fourth Ministerial Meeting of the China-CELAC Forum held on May 13 in Beijing, President Xi Jinping expressed in his address at the opening ceremony that China stands ready to join hands with its Latin American and Caribbean (LAC) partners to write a new chapter in building a China-LAC community with a shared future.

China, together with the heads of delegations from LAC countries, including Antigua and Barbuda's Foreign Minister Hon. E.P. Chet Greene, discussed new programs to advance shared development and prosperity. The meeting adopted the Beijing Declaration and the Joint Action Plan (2025-2027), agreed on over 100 cooperation projects for the next three years. In addition, China announced 20 measures to support the LAC region's development.

The blueprint has been drawn. China is committed to work together with Antigua and Barbuda and other LAC countries to make the important consensus reached at the meeting be implemented.

The first is to strengthen unity and build a closer China-LAC community with a shared future. As President Xi said, China-LAC cooperation is founded upon equality, powered by

mutual benefit and win-win, invigorated by openness and inclusiveness, and dedicated to the people's well-being. No matter how the world changes, China will always stand by LAC countries as a good friend and a good partner. We will support each other on issues concerning each other's core interests and major concerns, firmly safeguard the international system with the United Nations at its core and the international order based on international law, and make a fair and just voice in international and regional affairs.

The second is to foster greater synergy between our development strategies and promote high-quality development of China-LAC cooperation. Development and revitalization are the inherent rights of the people of China and LAC countries. China will continue to unwaveringly promote high-level opening up and share the opportunities of Chinese modernization with other partners. China will 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. We should expand high-quality Belt and Road cooperation, bolster cooperation in traditional areas such as infrastructure, agriculture and food, accelerate cooperation in emerging areas such as clean energy, the digital economy and artificial intelligence.

The third is to enhance civilizational exchanges and deepen cooperation in the field of culture and art. China will work with LAC countries to implement the Global Civilization Initiative, uphold the vision of equality, mutual learning, dialogue, and inclusiveness between civilizations, and champion humanity's common values of peace, development, fairness, justice, democracy, and freedom. We should strengthen exchanges in

cultural heritage fields such as joint archaeological projects, conservation and restoration of ancient and historic sites, and museum exhibitions, and have more art troupes for mutual visits.

The fourth is to advocate peace and contribute to security and stability. Peace is the precondition for development and prosperity. China will work with LAC countries to implement the Global Security Initiative. China supports the Proclamation of Latin America and the Caribbean as a Zone of Peace and the Declaration of Member States of the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean. We two 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.

The fifth is to enrich People-to-People Connectivity. In the next three years, China will provide CELAC member states with 3,500 government scholarships, 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. We should work more closely to unlock more potential and inject new impetus into China-LAC friendly exchanges.

China and Antigua and Barbuda and other LAC countries are all members of the Global South. Independence and autonomy are our glorious tradition. Fairness and justice are our common pursuit. China looks forward to making a concerted effort with all partners to promote an equal and orderly multipolar world and a universally beneficial and inclusive economic globalization, jointly address the new turbulence and transformation, and bring more certainty to this uncertain world.



# PRESS RELEASE

The Department of Culture presents ***“Summer in Arts and Culture II”*** - Empowering Our Youth to Manifest Their Gifts.

The Department of Culture is pleased to announce the return of its highly anticipated youth arts summer camp, ***“Summer in Arts and Culture II”***, taking place from **Monday, June 30 to Friday, July 11, 2025**. The program will be held weekdays from **9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.** at **Princess Margaret Secondary School**.

Open to young people ages **9 to 17**, this two-week camp aims to inspire creativity, build confidence, and empower youth to explore and develop their artistic talents. The camp will provide a nurturing and stimulating environment where participants can discover new forms of expression, learn from experienced instructors, and connect with their cultural identity.

Campers will be immersed in a wide range of artistic disciplines, including:

- ☐ Dance
- ☐ Drama
- ☐ Music (Vocals, Steel Pan, Recorder, Folk Drum)
- ☐ Visual Arts
- ☐ Carnival Arts

These workshops are more than just an introduction to the arts—they are designed to foster personal growth, teamwork, critical thinking, and emotional resilience. Participants will gain valuable skills in discipline, communication, and creative problem-solving, all of which contribute to well-rounded personal development.

The Department of Culture believes in cultivating the next generation of creatives, cultural practitioners, and lead-

ers who will help shape the nation’s cultural identity and contribute mean-



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# Regional News



## JCF reminds persons to exercise extreme caution during citizen's arrest



The Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF) is reminding members of the public to exercise extreme caution when attempting a citizen's arrest.

Under the law, a private citizen can hold a suspect in a felony matter until the police arrive. This can occur if the person has witnessed someone committing a felony.

Addressing the topic on the Police Civilian Oversight Authority (PCOA) Pon Di Corner Podcast recently, Assistant Commissioner

of Police (ACP) Desmond Brooks, of the Inspectorate and Professional Standards Oversight Bureau (IPSOB) clarified that citizens do have the power of arrest in certain situations.

The question, though, is whether or not as a citizen you have powers of arrest; yes, it is absolutely correct," ACP Brooks stated.

"For felony, which is really a serious crime, the arrest is to just hold the person. Remember, I said arrest is really restraining a person's freedom," he added.

ACP Brooks emphasised that a citizen's role in such circumstances is only to temporarily detain the suspect until law enforcement arrives.

"So, for a citizen's arrest, it is to just be holding the person until the police can take action," he explained.

However, the ACP stressed that personal safety must always come first. "The first thing you have to take into account is your own safety and your ability to do so. In other words, you should not risk your life because as a

citizen you have the powers of arrest," he noted.

ACP Brooks advised the public to be thoughtful and strategic before intervening. "You should weigh the pros and cons. Look at all the scenarios and if it is safe. It is always safer to summon the police and take copious notes of persons, their description, and pass that information to the police," he said.

He added that, in some cases, if the situation involves a felony (for example murder) and the individual believes they can safely intervene, they may proceed with caution.

In the meantime, the JCF is urging Jamaicans to refrain from carrying out vigilante or "jungle justice"

"We strongly encourage citizens to hold the suspect alive – no injury, no attack, no violence – and to hand them over safely to the police. Very often when we resort to vigilantism, you kill the person and the person has information that can give you better insight into what is happening and you kill that information," ACP Brooks said.

The JCF continues to encourage citizens to partner with law enforcement in promoting public safety but to do so responsibly and within the bounds of the law. (Jamaica Gleaner)



## Haitians sent back to their homeland



The 42 Haitians, who landed at a beach in Ross Craig, Portland, on Sunday, were at the Boundbrook wharf in Port Antonio for repatriation on Monday night.

It is understood that another group of Haitians, who were housed at a facility in St Mary over a prolonged period, are to be sent back to their homeland as well.

The group of Haitians comprising men, women, including an expectant mother in an advanced stage of pregnancy, and children landed on Sunday, shortly after 6 a.m. in 20-foot sailboat at a rugged beach area near Long Bay.

In a press release on Monday, migrant rights group Freedom Imaginaries urged the Government of Jamaica to refrain from “expelling” the Haitians and to ensure they are granted access to a fair and effective asylum procedure.

The release said that Sunday’s arrival underscores the escalating crisis in Haiti, driven by spiralling gang violence and worsening humanitarian conditions. It said that the United Nations has warned that the situation is approaching a “point of no return,”

with over 5,600 people killed due to gang violence in 2024 alone and over one million people now forcibly displaced.

“The crisis is landing hardest on women and children, who face systematic practices of sexual violence and make up over half of the displaced popula-

tion. International law leaves no room for doubt: the forced return of individuals to a place where they may face risk of persecution, torture, or other serious or irreparable harm constitutes refoulement, which is strictly prohibited under international refugee and human rights law,” the statement said. (Jamaica Gleaner)





# Regional News



## Construction of geothermal plant puts Dominica's renewable energy goals on the international map



As Dominica continues to reclaim its reputation as a pristine paradise after Hurricane Maria, the country is making waves not only for its natural beauty but also for its pioneering efforts in renewable energy, positioning itself as a leader in sustainable development within the Caribbean.

A BBC article reported the island's ambitious journey to fully harness its natural resources for clean electricity.

"We hope to totally eliminate the need for diesel generation for electricity in Dominica by 2030," Dr Vince Henderson, minister for renewable energy said to the BBC.

This commitment is exemplified by the ongoing construction of a geothermal power station in the community of Laudat in the Roseau Valley. The facility, which will be the second of its kind in the Caribbean after Guadeloupe—with a 15-megawatt plant operational for over three decades—aims to revolutionize the island's energy landscape.

Government previously announced that the 10-megawatt geothermal plant

is on track to become operational by the end of the year. It will tap into underground reservoirs heated by Dominica's volcanic activity, utilizing steam to drive turbines that generate electricity. The process involves drawing steam to the surface, converting it into power, then cooling and reinjecting it underground for continuous operation, explained the BBC article.

"We hope to totally eliminate the need for diesel generation for electricity in Dominica by 2030," stated Henderson, referring to the bold objective to achieve 100% renewable energy by 2030.

The move, if achieved, would put the country far ahead of the goal set by other OECS members of 30% sustainable energy within a ten-year timeframe.

The article underscored that the initiative not only aims to drastically reduce reliance on imported diesel but also promises lower electricity bills for residents and businesses. Moreover, it delineated the government's future projection of exporting surplus electricity

via undersea cables to neighboring islands. Dr. Henderson emphasizes that this success could serve as an inspiring model for other Caribbean nations to diversify their energy sources.

The project involves a public-private partnership with US-Israeli renewable energy company Ormat Technologies. The total cost of the venture is projected at USD 68 million, supported by loans from major financial institutions such as the Caribbean Development Bank and the World Bank, and reported grants, and investments from the US, UK, Japan, New Zealand.

The BBC also cites the investment by the Dominican government as about USD 15 million, stating that it "required high upfront costs and a complex exploration process including drilling deep underground to test temperatures."

Ormat's CEO, Doron Blachar, highlighted geothermal energy's advantages in the article: "Geothermal is a great, zero-emission electricity that doesn't depend on wind or sun, and operates 24/7. It brings jobs to a country, both during construction and, more importantly, during the plant's operations, along with new technology and expertise." The company reportedly has decades of experience in developing geothermal projects across the Americas and Africa, making Dominica a strategic new addition to its portfolio. The agreement entails Ornat running the plant for 20 years, with about 30 local people being employed, then handing it off to DOMLEC for full operation.

Despite the enthusiasm surrounding green technology, Dominican Environmentalist Atherton Martin was also tapped by the news site for his

**Con't on page 21**



# Regional News

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## From page 20

concerns over ecological impacts, particularly the potential disturbance to the Roseau Valley's rich biodiversity. "There is no other area like it in the Caribbean," he warns, citing wildlife decimation during exploration activities.

Martin has expressed opposition to the project in the past, including going on the record in a 2024 interview on Q95, saying that the proposed plans for the facility at the time were in "complete violation of all protocols."

Secondly, the reports states that there has been some push-back from local residents who voiced worries about

the project's costs.

Safety concerns, says the BBC, such as the potential for induced seismic activity, have also reportedly been raised, though Ormat assures that its operations have never triggered earthquakes in its many years of geothermal development.

Looking ahead, Dominica's pioneering geothermal project aims to serve as a test case for the wider region. The Caribbean's volcanic islands—Grenada, St. Lucia, St. Kitts and Nevis, and St. Vincent and the Grenadines—are actively exploring and developing their geothermal potential, supported by the OECS.

OECS Director-General Dr. Didacus

Jules describes Dominica's geothermal initiative as a "bold and visionary step." He emphasizes the region's dependence on imported fossil fuels, calling the transition to green energy "not optional – it is existential."

He adds, "This development also breathes new life into the long-held vision of a regional energy grid—one that connects our islands through clean, reliable, and affordable energy."

Meantime, Dr Henderson acknowledged that the feat will not be an easy one, given the country's post-Maria challenges to rebuild the electricity grid, however, the administration is promising that the investments will be worth it. (Dominica News Online)



## DAILY PROGRAMMING




**EARLY VIBRATIONS** 6AM-10AM MON. - FRI.  
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**THE RUSH HOUR SHOW** 5PM-7PM MON. - FRI.  
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WITH DJ JAH WADADLI



## WHO members adopt 'pandemic agreement' born out of disjointed global COVID response



The World Health Organization's member countries on Tuesday approved an agreement to better prevent, prepare for and respond to future pandemics in the wake of the devastation wrought by the coronavirus.

Sustained applause echoed in a Geneva Hall hosting the

WHO's annual assembly as the measure — debated and devised over three years — passed without opposition.

The treaty guarantees that countries which share virus samples will receive tests, medicines and vaccines.

Up to 20% of such products would be given to the WHO

to ensure poorer countries have some access to them when the next pandemic hits.


WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus has touted the agreement as "historic" and a sign of multilateralism at a time when many countries are putting national interests ahead of shared values and cooperation.

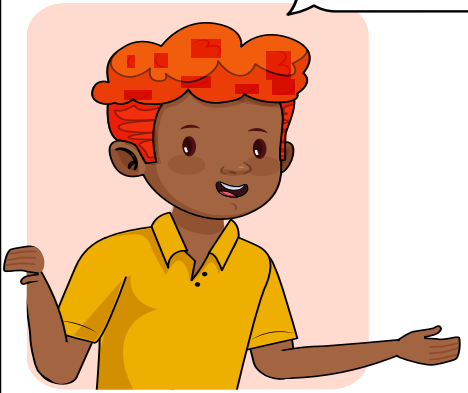
Dr Esperance Luvindao, Namibia's health minister and the chair of a committee that paved the way for Tuesday's adoption, said that the COVID-19 pandemic inflicted huge costs "on lives, livelihoods and economies." "We — as sovereign states — have resolved to join hands, as one world together, so we can protect our children, elders, frontline

health workers and all others from the next pandemic," Luvindao added. "It is our duty and responsibility to humanity."


The treaty's effectiveness will face doubts because the United States — which poured billions into speedy work by pharmaceutical companies to develop COVID-19 vaccines — is sitting out, and because countries face no penalties if they ignore it, a common issue in international law.


The US, traditionally the top donor to the UN health agency, was not part of the final stages of the agreement process after the Trump administration announced a US pullout from the WHO and funding to the agency in January. (Jamaica Gleaner)





Hi I'm Piper





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## Passenger jet had to abort takeoff to avoid runway collision at New York's LaGuardia Airport

Federal officials are investigating why two planes got dangerously close on a runway at New York's LaGuardia Airport earlier this month despite the airport being equipped with an advanced surface radar system that's designed to help prevent such close calls.

Both the Federal Aviation Administration and the National Transportation Safety Board said Monday that they are investigating the May 6 incident when a Republic Airways jet had to abort takeoff and slam to a stop because a United Airlines plane was still taxiing across the runway.

In audio from the tower that ABC obtained from the website [www.Live-ATC.net](http://www.Live-ATC.net), the air traffic control said to the pilot of the Republic Airways jet: "Sorry, I thought United had cleared well before that."

At the time that controller was directing the Republic Airways jet to takeoff, a ground controller on a different radio frequency was directing the United plane to a new taxiway after it missed the first one it was supposed to use to exit the runway.

Both the airlines and the airport referred questions to the FAA.

The number of close calls in recent years has created serious concerns for the FAA, NTSB and other safety experts. The NTSB's investigation of a February 2023 close call in Austin highlighted the concerns, but there have been a number of other high-profile near misses. In one case, a Southwest Airlines jet coming in for a landing in Chicago narrowly avoided smashing into a business jet crossing the runway.

LaGuardia is one of just 35 airports across the country equipped with the FAA's best technology to prevent



such runway incursions. The ASDS-X system uses a variety of technology to help controllers track planes and vehicles on the ground. At the other 490 U.S. airports with a control tower, air traffic controllers have to rely on more low-tech tools like a pair of binoculars to keep track of aircraft on the ground because the systems are expensive.

Expanding the systems to more airports is something Transportation Secretary Sean Duffy would like to do if Congress signs off on his multi-billion-dollar plan to overhaul the nation's ageing air traffic control system.

But it's clear the technology is not perfect because close calls continue happening. The FAA is taking a number of additional steps to try to reduce the number of close calls, and it plans to install an additional warning system at LaGuardia in the future.

But the rate of runway incursions per one million takeoffs and landings has

remained around 30 for a decade. The rate got as high as 35 in 2017 and 2018.

But generally there are fewer than 20 of the most serious kind of incursions where a collision was narrowly avoided or there was a significant potential for a crash, according to the FAA. That number did hit 22 in 2023 but fell to just 7 last year.

To help, there are efforts to develop a system that will warn pilots directly about traffic on a runway instead of alerting the controller and relying on them to relay the warning. That could save precious seconds. But the FAA has not yet certified a system to warn pilots directly that Honeywell International has been developing for years.

The worst accident in aviation history occurred in 1977 on the Spanish island of Tenerife, when a KLM 747 began its takeoff roll while a Pan Am 747 was still on the runway; 583 people died when the planes collided in thick fog. (*Jamaica Gleaner*)



## US sends 68 migrants back to Honduras and Colombia in first voluntary deportation

The United States on Monday sent 68 immigrants from Honduras and Colombia back to their countries, the first government-funded flight of what the Trump administration is calling voluntary deportations.

In the northern Honduran city of San Pedro Sula, 38 Hondurans, including 19 children, disembarked from the charter flight carrying \$1,000 debit cards from the US government and the offer to one day be allowed to apply for legal entry into the US.

US President Donald Trump has promised to increase deportations substantially. Experts believe the self-deportation offer will only appeal to a small portion of migrants already considering return, but unlikely to spur high demand. The offer has been paired with highly publicized migrant detentions in the US and flying a couple hundred Venezuelan migrants to a maximum-security prison in El Salvador. Kevin Antonio Posadas, from Tegucigalpa, had lived in Houston for three years, but had already been considering a return to Honduras when the Trump administration announced its offer.

"I wanted to see my family and my mom," said Posadas, who added that the process was easy.

"You just apply (through the CBP Home app) and in three days you've got it," he



said. The flight left Houston early Monday. "It's good because you save the cost of the flight if you have the intention of leaving."

Posadas said he hadn't feared deportation and liked living in the US, but had been thinking for some time about going home. He said eventually he would consider taking up the US government's offer of allowing those who self-deport to apply to enter the United States legally.

In a statement about the flight Monday, US Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem said, "If you are here illegally, use the CBP Home App to take control of your departure and receive financial support to return home. If you don't, you will be subjected to fines, arrest, deportation and will never be allowed to return."

Twenty-six more migrants aboard the flight were headed home to Colombia, according to a US Department of Homeland Security statement.

Honduras Deputy Foreign Minister Antonio García said the Honduran government would also support the returning migrants with \$100 cash and another \$200 credit at a government-run store that sells basic necessities.

Among the migrants arriving voluntarily Monday were four children who were born in the United States, García said.

García, who met the arriving migrants at the airport, said they told him that being in the US without documents required for legal immigration or residence had been increasingly difficult, that things were growing more hostile and they feared going to work.

Still, the number of Hondurans deported from the U.S. so far this year is below last year's pace, said Honduras immigration director Wilson Paz.

While about 13,500 Hondurans have been deported from the US this year, the figure stood at more than 15,000 by this time in 2024, Paz said.

He didn't expect the number to accelerate much, despite the Trump administration's intentions.

Some would continue applying to self-deport, because they feel like their time in the US is up or because it's getting harder to work, he said.

"I don't think it will be thousands of people who apply for the programme," Paz said. "Our responsibility is that they come in an orderly fashion and we support them." (Jamaica Gleaner)



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# Sports News



## ABTTA to host generations rally for 2025 World Table Tennis Day

In celebration of 2025 World Table Tennis Day, the Antigua and Barbuda Table Tennis Association (ABTTA) will host a vibrant, all-inclusive community event under the theme “All Ages, All Abilities: The Generations Rally”.

The event is set for the Multipurpose Cultural & Exhibition Centre at Perry Bay in St. John’s on Saturday, June 28, from 1:30 to 5 pm.

It promises to be a lively afternoon of fun, fitness, and fellowship — welcoming players and supporters from across generations and backgrounds.

With the global theme of “Diversity and Inclusion”, ABTTA is proudly promoting the message: “Table Tennis for EveryBODY — Everyone is Welcome at the Table.”

The Rally will include Family Pairings — parent/child and grandparent/child matches; Para & Adaptive Table Tennis — accessible games for differently-abled players; and NCD Wellness Zone — low-impact activities and awareness for persons living with non-communicable diseases.

It will also include Body-Positive Awards & Fun Recognition — celebrating players of all shapes and sizes; “Why I Play” Expression Wall — a

**WORLD TABLE TENNIS DAY 2025**  
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**ALL AGES, ALL ABILITIES**  
**THE GENERATIONS RALLY**

Table Tennis for EveryBODY  
Everyone is Welcome at the Table

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- Family Pairings (Parent/Child, Grandparent/Child)
- Para & Adaptive Table Tennis
- Wellness Activities for Persons Living with NCDs
- Body Positive Awards & Fun Recognition
- “Why I Play” Expression wall
- Music, Games & Group Rallies

**June 28<sup>th</sup> 1:30-5:00pm**

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creative space for stories and inspiration; and Music, Group Rallies & Surprises — fostering laughter, movement, and community spirit.

Whether you’re 8 or 80, experienced or brand new to the sport, this event is for everyone. Entry is free, and no experience is required.

“The Generations Rally isn’t just about table tennis,” said ABTTA President Charles “Chucky” Bellot.

“It’s about inclusion. It’s about connection. It’s about showing that sport has a place for everyBODY — regardless of age, ability, or background.”

World Table Tennis Day is a global initiative celebrated annually to raise awareness of the social power of sport.

The ABTTA’s event is part of a broader movement recognizing table tennis as a tool for development, inclusion, and joy.

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## Jets 2 advance to third place in Women's Division 2 Volleyball League

Jets 2 won their latest match to move into third place in the women's division standings of the Antigua and Barbuda Amateur Volleyball Association's (ABAVA) Second Division Development League on Monday evening.

Jets 2 claimed their third win in five matches by snatching a 2-1 victory against Starz 2 Juniors in their keenly contested encounter at the indoor stadium at the YMCA Sports Complex.

It took Jets 2 an hour and 45 minutes to prevail 25-22, 28-30, and 15-13 against Starz 2 Juniors, who remain in second place in the nine-team round-robin league after suffering their third loss in six encounters.

Dynasty Queens 1 also snatched a 2-1 victory against their colleagues Dynasty Queens 2 to advance into fifth place in the women's Division 2 standings.

Dynasty Queens 1 took an hour and five minutes to secure their 24-26, 25-14, 15-1 victory against Dynasty Queens 2 and secure their third win in five matches to move into fifth place.

Dynasty Queens 2 remain winless and in the cellar of the women's second division league after suffering their sixth loss in as many games.

The ABAVA's Division 1 league will resume with a double-header at the YMCA Sports Complex on Wednesday (today).

Reigning Women's Division 1 champions Da Squad will meet Paragons at 6:45 pm, and Vernon G. Edwards High Flyerz will take on Pytonz in a Men's Division 1 affair at 7:45 pm.

In another double-header on Thursday, Royal Cruisers will face Jets in



**The Jets 2 women's volleyball team**

the women's first division at 6:45 pm, pions Stoneville will clash with the and reigning Men's Division 1 cham- Storming Lions at 7:45 pm.

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# Sports News



## CWI announces West Indies 'A' squads for home series against South Africa



**Alick Athanaze**

Cricket West Indies (CWI) has announced the squads for the 50-over and "A" Team Test matches in the upcoming West Indies "A" home series against South Africa "A", set to take place from May 21 to June 11 at the Daren Sammy Cricket Ground in St. Lucia.

The selected players have delivered strong performances across regional formats and will now have the chance to test their skills against international opposition.

CWI Director of Cricket, Miles Bascombe, emphasized the importance of the series in building depth and continuity within West Indies cricket.

"This series gives us the opportunity to broaden our player pool and aligns with our long-term strategic plan to support the growth of emerging and fringe players who are on the cusp of advancing to the senior team."

Alick Athanaze will lead

coach for the series.

The West Indies "A" vs South Africa "A" series also builds anticipation for the exciting "Full Ah Energy" West Indies Home Series, which begins on June 11 at the 3Ws Oval in Barbados, where the West Indies Women take on South Africa.

That match will serve as the curtain-raiser to a thrilling summer of international cricket across the region.

Admission to all "A" team matches is free – a unique opportunity for fans to see the future stars of West Indies cricket in action.

**West Indies A Squad For 50 Over Matches:** Alick Athanaze (captain), Kadeem Alleyne, Kevlon Anderson, Jediah Blades, Darel Cyrus, Jyd Goolie, Javelle Glenn, Marquino Mindley, Shaqkere Parris, Khary Pierre, Kemol Savory, Osane Thomas, Gilson Tyson, and Kevin Wickham.

**West Indies A Squad For A-Team Test 1:** Tevin Imlach (captain), Ronaldo Alimohammed, Kevlon Anderson, Alick Athanaze, John Campbell, Kavem Hodge, Mikyle Louis, Johann Layne, Khary Pierre, Kemol Savory, Ojay Shields, Osane Thomas, and Gilon



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## Rutherford joins Royals ahead of 2025 CPL



**Sherfane Rutherford**

The Barbados Royals have secured the services of hard-hitting middle order batsman Sherfane Rutherford for the 2025 Republic Bank Caribbean Premier League (CPL), in a move that will see all-rounder Jason Holder joining the St. Kitts & Nevis Patriots.

The two sides have also agreed for southpaw Alick Athanaze to move from the Royals to the Patriots for the 2025 season.

Rutherford will be turning out for his third CPL franchise, having previously represented the Guyana Amazon Warriors from 2018-2020 and the Patriots from 2021-2024.

His addition brings further firepower to the Royals' batting line-up as they look to mount a strong campaign in 2025.

In a landmark move, Holder departs his home franchise after a remarkable run with the Barbados-based team since the league's inaugural season in 2013 and having been part of championship wins with the Royals in 2014 and 2019.

The transfer marks the end of an era for the former West Indies captain, who has been a consistent

leader and key figure for the Royals for over a decade.

Alick Athanaze will also be joining the Patriots as part of these transfer

moves.

He was one of the standout performers for the Windward Islands Infernos in the West Indies Breakout League.

Athanaze's addition adds depth and versatility to the Patriots' squad as they continue to build for the future.

As per CPL regulations, teams are permitted to negotiate trades and transfers ahead of the official draft, which is set to take place next month.

The 2025 Republic Bank CPL will run from August 14 to September 21, with matches scheduled across six Caribbean nations: Antigua & Barbuda, Barbados, Guyana, St. Kitts & Nevis, St. Lucia, and Trinidad & Tobago.



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# Sports

WEDNESDAY 21<sup>ST</sup> MAY 2025



## Rampaul challenges Windies pacers to harness their strengths



**West Indies bowling coach Ravi Rampaul**

Former West Indies fast bowler Ravi Rampaul is relishing the opportunity to help guide the next generation of Caribbean quicks as he begins a new chapter in his cricketering journey, this time from the sidelines.

Rampaul, who was appointed as the West Indies' bowling coach for the upcoming tours of Ireland and England from May 21 to June 3, is hoping to impart enough knowledge to help fast bowlers unlock their full potential by playing to their strengths.

The Trinidad and Tobago stalwart says he is both humbled and excited by the opportunity to contribute to West Indies

cricket in a different capacity, as he takes over the role from New Zealand's James Franklin.

"At first, after I retired, it was a bit tough. But I always knew I wanted to return to cricket and give back to the younger generations of West Indian cricketers that are coming up using the experience I've gathered over the years as a player.

"I'm very excited about this role, and I look forward to sharing my experience with the younger guys moving forward to help them fulfil their full potential," Rampaul said.

West Indies will begin their tour with the first of

three One-Day Internationals against Ireland in Dublin on May 21, followed by another three-match ODI and T20I series in England.

For Rampaul, who enjoyed an international career spanning nearly two decades and played in conditions around the world, the transition to coaching feels like a natural evolution.

He has already begun working closely with the bowlers, focusing on tactical refinement and skill repetition, including spot bowling drills, an essential tool in fine-tuning consistency.

"Spot bowling is critical to sharpen your skills and yorkers, or bowling that length ball. We know that the more repetition you bowl and your body gets accustomed to doing the same thing over and over, the better chance you have of doing it under pressure," he explained.

When asked what specific qualities he hopes to instill in this current crop of bowlers, Rampaul pointed to game aware-

ness, adaptability, and a deep understanding of individual strengths.

"The game is constantly evolving, especially in the T20 and one-day formats. My goal is to help them evolve their bowling with it, whether it be learning how to swing the ball, bowl yorkers, or adjust to different match situations.

"Each of these bowlers has a different skill set...whether it's swing or pace, so it's about helping them understand that their strength is their weapon to get you most of your wickets and carry you through your career," Rampaul shared.

With the series taking place in England and Ireland, known for their seamer-friendly conditions, Rampaul has challenged his bowlers to be disciplined and patient.

"It's about hitting the right areas. In English conditions, where the bowlers do get a little assistance. So it's just bowling in the right areas and being able to be patient in these conditions," he ended.