

Ministry of Works increases momentum on roadworks

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Minister, E.P Chet Greene, on a visit to the Christian Union Church's Primary School on Wireless Road.

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Ministry of Works increases momentum on roadworks



The Ministry of Works is moving full speed ahead in meeting the agenda set by Cabinet to build and maintain community roads across Antigua and Barbuda.

According to Works Minister Maria Browne, quarries are working overtime to fuel roadworks. This will facilitate increased scarifying and base preparation work that must be done before laying asphalt and concrete

to ensure smoother, more accessible roads.

“Each department under the MoW has a critical role to play in our infrastructure construction, from Planning and Design and Engineering to Quarries, Asphalt and Concrete Plants, Security, Transportation and Road Crews. All are integral,” Minister Browne said in a recent social media post.

Heavy-duty equipment was



than 5 days compared to 20+ days curing time for regular concrete mix,” Minister Browne explained.

Meanwhile, night crews are being deployed to increase road works and reduce the traffic congestion usually present during the daytime. Recently, night works began

on Herbert’s Main Road, Tanner Street and Newgate Street.

Motorists are being encouraged to follow the detours and follow all instructions given by employees controlling traffic. This will ensure safe travelling and working conditions.

recently added to the fleet of vehicles, growing the capacity to pour and lay concrete roads. Several communities have already benefited, including Lightfoot, Briggins and Mount Pleasant. These roller-compacted concrete roads will provide a climate-resilient infrastructural solution for our communities.

Testing and training for the new pugmill began on Tuesday. This equipment will produce concrete on-site for roller-compacted concrete roads within communities. Additionally, the curing time for the new concrete roads will be faster.

“Aggregates in appropriate amounts are first loaded into the pugmill, then the concrete produced is shuttled out from a belt and into a truck. This special concrete mix is then poured into a spreader and lastly compacted by a roller. Maxi-

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Local News

Ministry of Foreign Affairs launches public education campaign ahead of OAS GA



The Ministry of Foreign Affairs which is spearheading preparations for Antigua and Barbuda's hosting of the 55th General Assembly of the Organisation of American States (OAS) next month, has launched an education campaign to raise the level of awareness among members of the public.

The communications team within the Ministry is targeting schools in the country in an effort to engage with students on what is the OAS, what it stands for and how will hosting the General Assembly benefit Antigua and Barbuda.

On Wednesday, members of the team accompanied Foreign Affairs Minister, E.P Chet Greene, on a visit to the Christian Union Church's Primary School on Wireless Road.

Minister Greene explained to the eager young people that the OAS supports sev-



eral key principles among its membership; supporting democracy, protecting human rights and promoting peace. In fact, he noted that the Americas as a region, has been declared 'a Zone of Peace'.

He noted that the June 25-27 meeting of the OAS General Assembly will bring together presidents and prime ministers along with their foreign ministers from the 35-member states of the organization. He told the students that as the host

country, everyone, including students, has a role to play in making our guests feel welcome.

The minister also announced that one student from each of the schools visited during the campaign will be selected to be his special guest to attend the opening of the OAS General Assembly next month. "This will be a special opportunity to meet with foreign ministers of the OAS during the meeting in Antigua and Barbuda. Additionally, if the schedule per-

mits, I will also explore the possibility of having some of the visiting foreign ministers make special visits to some of our schools," Minister Greene revealed.

Communications team member, Everton Barnes, spoke of the economic spin-offs of the country's hosting of the OAS GA. These range from increased occupancy of local hotels, brisk business for taxi-drivers and others in the hospitality sector as well as an opportunity for the country to showcase its many attractions.

Briana Anthony, another member of the communications team, laid the groundwork for the discussion by explaining the significance of the visit to the school and the purpose of the campaign.

The communications team plans to visit other schools over the coming weeks for similar engagements.



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Minister Rawdon Turner participates in 'state of readiness' discussion

Just days before the official start of the 2025 Hurricane Season on June 1, Minister responsible for Disaster Management, Rawdon Turner, joined members of the National Emergency Operations Centre (NEOC) and other stakeholders to assess the country's readiness for the upcoming hurricane season.

Representatives from various critical departments spoke about their level of preparedness, the various challenges they face and the need to coordinate efforts for a better disaster management system in Antigua and Barbuda.

Among some of the concerns are the problems of illegal dumping and littering which compound the issue of flooding throughout the island. General Manager of the National Solid Waste Management Authority Indira James-Henry says one of the challenges is that after solid waste would have cleaned drains and gutters the cleaning teams would return shortly after and find these same drains and gutters filled with waste.

There are also several illegal dumping sites around the island - an issue that needs serious attention so that action can be taken against those individuals that are responsible.

It was recommended that a drainage management committee which consists of Solid Waste, Public Works, APUA and the Department of Environment, coordinated by NODS, could be set up.

Other issues outlined include the need for additional resources for the Met Office such as a purpose-built headquarters and additional staff, the importance of educational programmes to help residents understand their roles in various aspects of disaster management, persons adhering to evacuation



Minister responsible for Disaster Management, Rawdon Turner



Members of the National Emergency Operations Centre (NEOC) and other stakeholders

notices and departments establishing contingency plans so they can continue to operate after an impact.

Minister Turner was grateful for the opportunity to meet with the various

representatives and to hear their concerns. He was joined at the meeting at NODS by Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Social Transformation, Sarah Stuart.

Empowering Women Through Voice: DoGA Hosts “Fearless & Fluent” A Public Speaking & Media Training Workshop



The Directorate of Gender Affairs (DoGA), under the Ministry of Social and Urban Transformation, successfully hosted the Fearless & Fluent: A Public Speaking and Media Training Workshop on Wednesday, May 28th, 2025, at the Villa Polyclinic.

Sponsored by Community First Co-Operative Credit Union, this dynamic, one-day workshop was part of DoGA’s Emerging Female Leaders (EFL) Programme, an initiative aimed at developing the leadership capacity of women across Antigua and Barbuda. The session brought together over 25 female participants representing various sectors to enhance their communication, media engagement, and public speaking

skills.

Facilitated by renowned media and communications expert, Angelica O’Donoghue, the workshop covered essential topics including active listening and message development, tips for press engagement & crisis communication and public speaking under pressure. Participants engaged in hands-on exercises and received personalised feedback, culminating in a certificate of completion.

When speaking on the event, Programme Officer T’Chell Looby-Antonio said, “Fearless & Fluent was conceptualized to help women realise that their voices are not just valuable—it’s powerful. When women speak with confidence, they inspire

action and lead change. We hope that every participant was able to walk away knowing they are capable of commanding a room, shaping a conversation, and representing their communities fearlessly.”

DoGA remains committed to empowering women and girls through strategic programmes like EFL, and continues to advocate for gender equity, capacity building, and inclusive leadership across the nation.



Local News



Loose Cannon named winner for Restaurant Week 2024, as voting opens for 2025



It's said that good things take time and for one local restaurant, the wait has finally paid off in the most delicious way.

The Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority is proud to shine a long-overdue spotlight on the **2024 People's Choice Award Winner for Restaurant Week: Loose Cannon**, voted by locals and visitors as their favorite dining experience of last year's culinary celebration.

"Restaurant Week is about celebrating the authentic

flavors and culinary talent of Antigua and Barbuda," said Shermain Jeremy, Culinary Month Lead and Special Projects and Events Manager at the Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority. "We are proud to honour Loose Cannon as the 2024 People's Choice Winner and thank the public for making their voices heard."

Loose Cannon, known for its vibrant ambiance and creative island-inspired cuisine, shared their gratitude for the recognition.

"We are incredibly honored

to be named the 2024 People's Choice Award Winner," said Head Chef, **Bernardino David III**. "This recognition means the world to us because it comes directly from the people we love to serve. We are grateful for the support and can't wait to welcome you back for another unforgettable dining experience."

Now, with Restaurant Week 2025 officially wrapped up, all eyes are on which restaurant will take home the coveted **2025 People's Choice Award**.

Voting for the 2025 Peo-

ple's Choice Award officially opens on May 28. Diners who participated in Antigua and Barbuda Restaurant Week (May 4– May 22) can leave their feedback and help crown the next local favorite by clicking on the following link: <https://bit.ly/people-schoiceaward2025>

For more information on Restaurant Week 2025 and Antigua and Barbuda's Culinary Month, visit www.antiguabarbudaculinary-month.com.



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WE ARE GETTING STRONGER

Are You in Search of Excellence? Benchmark Against the Best in Order to go Further



By Garfield Joseph, MBA
The Power of Benchmarking

In a world where performance is everything—whether in business, government, or personal development—benchmarking stands out as one of the most practical and transformative tools available. It is not just a buzzword for consultants or corporate strategists; it is a mindset and a method that can drive meaningful improvement across every facet of life.

Why Benchmarking Matters

Benchmarking is the process of comparing one's performance, processes, or outcomes against a recognized standard or best practice. It allows individuals and organizations to identify performance gaps, learn from the best, and implement changes that lead to measurable improvement. For public sector employees, benchmarking is especially critical. In an era of limited resources and rising expectations, governments must deliver more with less. Benchmarking helps ministries, departments, and agencies evaluate their efficiency, effectiveness, and impact. It fosters a culture of accountability and continuous improvement. For individuals—whether professionals, students, or entrepreneurs—benchmarking offers a clear path to growth. It answers

the question: “Where am I now, and how do I get better?”

Benchmarking in Action: The OECS Case Study

Professor C. Justin Robinson, Pro Vice-Chancellor and Principal of The University of the West Indies (UWI) Five Islands Campus, recently published a compelling analysis of the financial performance of countries in the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS). His article, part of the OECS Budget Watch 2025 series, benchmarks the economic growth, inflation, and fiscal discipline of six member states. Robinson's work is a textbook example of benchmarking in the public sector. By comparing GDP growth rates, debt levels, and spending priorities, he highlights which countries are sprinting toward resilience and which are lagging behind. For instance, Dominica and Saint Lucia are leading with growth rates above 4%, while St. Kitts and Nevis is struggling at 2.5%, weighed down by declining Citizenship by Investment revenues. This kind of comparative analysis is not just academic—it's actionable. It provides policymakers with a mirror and a map: a reflection of where they stand and a guide to where they need to go.

Garfield Burford of ABS TV-A High Water Mark

Benchmarking is not limited to macroeconomics. It applies just as powerfully to individual careers. Take, for example, Garfield Burford, Director of News and Current Affairs at ABS Television in Antigua and Barbuda. Since his arrival, Burford has elevated the standard of journalism in the country through his professionalism, integrity, and commitment to truth, even while mentoring and coaching others along the way. For young and aspiring journalists, Burford represents a

benchmark. His work ethic, storytelling skill, and ethical compass set a high bar—one that others can strive toward. By studying his methods, emulating his discipline, and adapting his best practices, emerging journalists can accelerate their own development as we have seen in Urcil Charles Jr.

Lessons from Mr. Leroy Merchant: Benchmark with the Best

One of the earliest and most enduring lessons I learned about success came from Mr. Leroy Merchant, my high school teacher at Clare Hall Secondary School. He often reminded us that if we wanted to be successful, we had to do what successful people do. His message was simple but powerful: benchmark with the best. Whether it was in academics, behavior, or ambition, he encouraged us to observe high achievers, learn from their habits, and model our efforts accordingly. That mindset—of measuring ourselves against excellence—has stayed with me ever since, shaping how I approach growth in both my personal and professional life.

Universities and the Ivy League Standard

Even institutions of higher learning engage in benchmarking. Caribbean universities, including UWI, often measure their performance against Ivy League institutions like Harvard, Yale, and MIT. While the contexts differ, the aspiration to match global standards in research output, student success, and innovation drives continuous improvement. This benchmarking process informs strategic planning, curriculum development, and faculty recruitment. It pushes universities to ask hard questions: Are we preparing students for the future? Are we producing research that matters? Are we delivering value to our communities?

Benchmarking as a Personal and Professional Tool

Beyond institutions and industries, benchmarking is a powerful tool for personal growth. Whether you're a permanent secretary in the government service, a teacher, manager, head of a trade or labour union, or athlete, or artist, you can benchmark your performance against the best in your field. This doesn't mean copying others blindly—it means learning from their strengths, understanding their strategies, and adapting their approaches to fit your unique context.

As a part-time lecturer at The University of the West Indies Five Islands Campus over the past two years, teaching summer classes as needed, I've come to appreciate benchmarking not just as a concept, but as a personal practice. Though I've taught at the secondary and A-Level for brief periods, I knew that when benchmarked against the best educators, I still had a long way to go. Determined to improve, I turned to someone I trust deeply—my wife, a trained educator who teaches teachers how to teach, and also a part-time lecturer at UWI Five Islands Campus. I invited her to observe a few of my classes and give me honest feedback. Her insights were invaluable. From refining my delivery to rethinking how I engaged students, her guidance helped me to get better.

This experience reminded me that benchmarking isn't reserved for boardrooms or bureaucracies. It's a tool that professionals across all fields can use to elevate their craft—if they're willing to be open, reflective, and committed to growth.

The process is simple but profound:

1. Identify the Best – Who is excelling in your field or role?
2. Measure Your Current Performance – Where do you stand today?
3. Analyze the Gap – What separates you from the top performers?
4. Learn and Adapt – What can you

learn, adopt or modify to improve?

5. Implement and Monitor – Take action and track your progress.

Conclusion: Start Where You Are, Benchmark to Go Further

Benchmarking is not about perfection—it's about progress. It's about recognizing that excellence leaves clues, and those clues can guide us to better outcomes.

Whether you're leading a government agency, running a business, or simply trying to become a better version of yourself, benchmarking offers a clear

and practical path forward.

If you're unsure where to begin your journey of improvement, start by benchmarking. Look at the best in your field. Study their habits, systems, and results. Then take deliberate steps to close the gap—not by imitation, but by innovation. Learn what works, adapt it to your reality, and commit to continuous growth.

In the end, the goal is not to be a copy of someone else, but to become the best version of yourself—measured, informed, and inspired by the best.

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Opinion

A new step in its anti-immigrant policy



By Sergio Martínez González

Cuban Ambassador in Antigua and Barbuda

Last Tuesday, CNN announced the new instruction issued by the U.S. Secretary of State to all U.S. embassies and consulates to suspend all work related to the processing of so-called student visas, which the U.S. issues to young people from different latitudes applying to study at U.S. universities. This is a new step in the xenophobic and discriminatory policy that the current ruling administration of the northern empire has been implementing against the rest of the world, especially against less developed countries belonging to the so-called "global south."

It is no coincidence that these types of measures are being implemented after growing protests by broad youth and student groups at major US universities against the fascist policies of the White House, and especially against the US support and complicity in the genocide perpetrated by Israel against the Palestinian people.

Paradoxically, and in contrast to these measures, other countries around the world are opening their doors to provide opportunities for study and advancement to hundreds of young

people from low-income households whose families cannot provide the financial resources necessary to cover the cost of a university degree.

Cuba, which has been subjected to a criminal economic war for more than 60 years by the US government, is one of these countries that has generously offered scholarships and graduated thousands of young students from more than 40 countries around the world. From Antigua and Barbuda alone, 300 young people from this sister nation have graduated in various fields such as medicine, economics, teaching, and engineering, among

others. For the upcoming academic year, which begins in September, 23 new scholarships have been offered to young Antiguan for the study of medical sciences and other specialties.

Even in the most complex circumstances Cuba faces as a result of the genocidal economic blockade imposed by the U.S., it will never abandon its commitment to solidarity with sister countries like Antigua and Barbuda, and its support for the important and necessary task of human resource development that will help ensure a better future and development for this beautiful nation.

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Regional News

DR authorities arrest second suspect for cocaine found in pumpkins



Dominican Republic authorities have arrested a second man in connection with the seizure of 334 packages of cocaine weighing 624.07 kilograms discovered last week at the Multimodal Caucedo Port.

Ángel Wilfredo Leguisamón Peña was apprehended by court order at José Francisco Peña Gómez International Airport in the Americas as he attempted to board a com-

mercial flight to Madrid, Spain. The arrest came as part of ongoing investigations into the major drug trafficking operation.

During his arrest, authorities seized multiple documents from Leguisamón Peña, including a Spanish passport and residence permit, an Italian residence permit, electronic devices, cash, and business cards from various companies. He was also found carrying a firearm

permit and weapon registered under another person's name.

The cocaine was discovered during a verification operation at Multimodal Port Caucedo after authorities identified suspicious activity in containers carrying pumpkins.

The shipment was registered under Careca Agribusiness SRL and was scheduled to depart on May 17, 2025, aboard

the CMA CGM vessel Jacques Joseph bound for Antwerp, Belgium, with a final destination of Atlantic Import Company S.L. in Madrid, Spain.

Last week, authorities arrested Noely Germán Reynoso Guzmán, the owner of Careca Agribusiness SRL, the company under which the cocaine shipment was registered using falsified export documentation for pumpkins. *(Loop Caribbean)*

Belize: Government moving to establish gun and gang court



The Belize government has announced plans to establish a Gun and Gang court as the John Briceño administration seeks to deal with violent crime here.

“A new section ninety-four A, establishment of a Gun and Gang Court as a feature of the separation of powers principles enshrined in our constitution of a democratic state like Belize, the judiciary is to be independent of the other branches of government,” Briceño told legislators.

He said the power to create a new court should find its sources within the constitution. “Currently, there is no power for the creation and establishment of a specialized court, to hear and determine only gang and gun matters and with the court having special hybrid powers of a Magistrate and High Court judge.

“This is not how we solve crime. It is a temporary measure to solve crime we need to look at the root causes, the challenges our families are having, children going to school and having access. The challenge

that when our young people come out of school they feel they don’t have a future,” he added.

The government has already announced a series of amendments to the Constitution, among them being a proposal that would give the National Security Council the power to recommend states of emergency (SoE) but only if there are reasonable grounds to do so.

Prime Minister Briceño has also introduced a move to legally validate past SoE proclamations, dating back to 2018.

“Crime evokes strong emotions from the citizens of a country. Families and friends of murder victims, victims of rape and robbery, all citizens who cannot live in peace because of the lawlessness among them. They all deserve strong and decisive action from their government,” Briceño said.

He told legislators that a judge in a recent case before the High Court, pointed out that people should not and I quote, fail to be sensitive to the fact that human life is valuable and the state is responsible for creating an environment in which people can live in safety in circumstances where law and order prevails.

Briceño said to do otherwise is to surrender to laws of the jungle.

“I have publicly stated the government will appeal the recent decision handed down by Justice Nabie,” he said.

Earlier this month, Justice Nabie ruled that 16 men held under the SoE in July 2020 were unlawfully imprisoned, resulting in the government now having to pay over

BZ\$300,000 (One BZ\$=US\$0.49 cents) in compensation to them.

In July 2020, the government declared a state of emergency with the then minister of national security, Michael Peyrefitte, indicating that the government would not tolerate any lawlessness.

Prime Minister Briceño said such an appeal could not come for hearing for at least nine months, in the March 2026 Court of Appeal Session.

“The state of uncertainty cannot persist for such a long period. So, this is why I am here introducing this, Belize Constitution the 13th amendment bill 2025 because legislative intervention is necessary.”

Prime Minister Briceño said it is no secret that successive governments have used the emergency powers provided to the state by the constitution of Belize in the interest of public safety or order or for preventing, detecting or controlling crime in the country.

“There has been proclamation declaring a state of emergency in the southside in 2018 to 2020 and in 2021, 2022, 2023. There were additionally two proclamations in 2024 and one in May of this year.”

Briceño said the data shows when an SoE is declared crime goes down dramatically, especially murder.

“Two recent high court rulings have created an uncertainty about the use by the state of this measure as of the public emergency powers to deceive, prevent and control crime,” he told legislators. (Loop Caribbean)

Regional News



Guyana: Cuban man kills stepdaughter, injures mother

A Cuban man killed his 21-year-old stepdaughter with a chopper and severely injured her mother at their Georgetown home Friday before walking into a police station and surrendering with the murder weapon.

The Guyana Police Force identified the suspect as

Wispry Alfonso, 40, who walked into the Kitty Police Station carrying the blood-stained chopper used in the attack.

"The suspect walked into the Kitty Police Station with the chopper in hand. He was arrested and placed into custody. The chopper had what

appeared to be blood stains," police said in a statement.

The victim has been identified as Davelly Morales, 21, also a Cuban national who worked as a sales representative. Police said her body showed multiple chop wounds to her hands, the back of her head, and jaw.

Her mother, Milaysi Rodriguez, was hospitalized in serious condition following the attack.

The incident occurred at their Georgetown residence where all three had been living since arriving in Guyana approximately one month ago. (*Loop Caribbean*)

Decomposing body of missing 8-y-o Gregory Park, Portmore boy found in car

The decomposing body of eight-year-old Navardo Blackburn, who was reported missing over the weekend, was found today in his community of Gregory Park in Portmore, St Catherine.

The body was discovered in an abandoned car along Milvin Avenue in the area.

Blackburn, who is autistic, lived on Queens Avenue in the community.

The body was identified by his mother and relatives, who, along with others, went to the area with the police as they searched for the boy.

The police had reported that Navardo was last seen at a playfield in his community about 4:30 p.m. on Saturday.

It was later reported missing.

The crime scene was cordoned off, and forensic investigators were called in. (*Jamaica Gleaner*)



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US stops visa interviews for foreign students, expands social media vetting



The State Department has halted the scheduling of new visa interviews for foreign students hoping to study in the United States while it prepares to expand the screening of their activity on social media, officials said.

A US official said Tuesday the suspension is intended to be temporary and does not apply to applicants who already had scheduled their visa interviews.

The official spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss an internal administration document.

A cable signed by Secretary of State Marco Rubio and obtained by The Associated Press says the State Department plans to issue guidance on expanded social media vetting.

“Effective immediately, in preparation for an expansion of required social media screening and vetting, consulate sections should not add any additional student or exchange visitor visa appointment capacity” until the guidance is issued, the cable says.

Asked about the suspension at a briefing Tuesday, State Department spokesperson Tammy Bruce said the US uses every available resource to vet people applying for visas.

“We will continue to use every tool we can to assess who it is that’s coming here, whether they are students or otherwise,” Bruce said.

The move, first reported by Politico, is the latest in the Trump administration’s crackdown on international

students.

Last week, the Trump administration revoked Harvard University’s ability to enrol international students, removing the college from the program that allows schools to sponsor foreign students for visas. That effort was quickly challenged in court and for now is blocked by a federal judge.

This spring the administration also revoked the legal status of thousands of international students already in the country, leading some to leave the US out of fear of deportation.

After many students filed successful legal challenges, the administration said it was restoring the students’ legal status. But the government also expanded the grounds for terminating in-

ternational students’ legal status going forward.

President Donald Trump’s previous administration stepped up scrutiny of all visa applicants, introducing reviews of their social media accounts. The policy remained during President Joe Biden’s administration.

An extended pause in scheduling student visas could lead to delays that may disrupt college, boarding-school or exchange students’ plans to enrol in summer and fall terms.

A downturn in enrolment of international students could hurt university budgets. To make up for cuts in federal research funding, some colleges shifted to enrolling more international students, who often pay full tuition. *(Jamaica Gleaner)*

Wisconsin Supreme Court suspends judge who left court to arrest hospitalised defendant



The Wisconsin Supreme Court suspended a Dane County judge for a week Tuesday for leaving court to try to arrest a hospitalized defendant herself and getting into a sarcastic exchange with another defendant seeking a trial delay.

The court agreed with a judicial conduct review panel's suspension recommendation for Ellen Berz, finding that she deserved more than a reprimand because she behaved impulsively and showed a lack of restraint.

The suspension will begin June 26, the court ordered.

"We believe that the recommended seven-day suspension is of sufficient length to impress upon Judge Berz the necessity of patience, impartiality, and restraint in her work, and to demonstrate to the public the judiciary's dedication to promoting professionalism among its members," the justices wrote in the suspension order. Justice Jill Karofsky, herself a former Dane County judge, did not participate in

the case.

The suspension order noted that Berz has acknowledged the facts of the case and has accepted full responsibility.

Andrew Rima, one of two attorneys for Berz listed in online court records,

declined to comment.

Her other attorney, Steven Caya, didn't immediately respond to an email.

Berz is the second Wisconsin judge that the state Supreme Court has suspended in the last five weeks. The justices suspended Milwaukee County Circuit Judge Hannah Dugan indefinitely on April 29 after federal prosecutors accused her of helping a man evade US immigration agents by showing him out a back door in her courtroom.

A federal grand jury has indicted Dugan on one count of obstruction and one count of concealing a person to prevent arrest.

She has pleaded not guilty and is set to stand trial in July.

The Wisconsin Judicial Commission filed a misconduct complaint against Berz, the Dane County judge, in October accusing her of failing to promote public confidence in judicial impartiality, failing to treat people professionally and failing to performing her duties without bias. (*Jamaica Gleaner*)



SpaceX launches another Starship rocket after back-to-back explosions, but it tumbles out of control

After back-to-back explosions, SpaceX launched its mega rocket Starship again on Tuesday evening but fell short of the main objectives when the spacecraft tumbled out of control and broke apart.

The 403-foot (123-meter) rocket blasted off on its ninth demo from Starbase, SpaceX's launch site at the southern tip of Texas.

CEO Elon Musk's SpaceX hoped to release a series of mock satellites following liftoff, but that got nixed because the door failed to open all the way. Then the spacecraft began spinning as it skimmed space toward an uncontrolled landing in the Indian Ocean.

SpaceX later confirmed that the spacecraft experienced "a rapid unscheduled disassembly," or burst apart. "Teams will continue to review data and work toward our next flight test," the company said in an on-line statement.

Musk noted in a post on X it was a "big improvement" from the two previous demos, which ended in flaming debris over the Atlantic. Despite the latest setback, he promised a faster launch pace moving forward, with a Starship soaring every three to four weeks for the next three flights.

It was the first time one of Musk's Starships — intended for moon and Mars



travel — flew with a recycled booster. There were no plans to catch the booster with giant chopsticks back at the launch pad, with the company instead pushing it to its limits. Contact with the booster was lost at one point, and it slammed into the Gulf of Mexico in pieces as the spacecraft continued toward the Indian Ocean.

Then the spacecraft went out of control, apparently due to fuel leaks.

"Not looking great with a lot of our on-orbit objectives for today," said SpaceX flight commentator Dan Huot. The company had been looking to test the spacecraft's heat shield during a controlled re-entry.

Communication ceased before the spacecraft came down, and SpaceX ended its webcast soon afterward.

The previous two Starships never made it past the Caribbean. The demos earlier this year ended just minutes after liftoff, raining wreckage into the ocean.

No injuries or serious damage were reported, although airline travel was disrupted. The Federal Aviation Administration last week cleared Starship for another flight, expanding the hazard area and pushing the liftoff outside peak air travel times.

Besides taking corrective action and making upgrades, SpaceX modified the latest spacecraft's

thermal tiles and installed special catch fittings. This one was meant to sink in the Indian Ocean, but the company wanted to test the add-ons for capturing future versions back at the pad, just like the boosters.

NASA needs SpaceX to make major strides over the next year with Starship — the biggest and most powerful rocket ever built — in order to land astronauts back on the moon. Next year's moonshot with four astronauts will fly around the moon, but will not land. That will happen in 2027 at the earliest and require a Starship to get two astronauts from lunar orbit to the surface and back off again. (*Jamaica Gleaner*)



Barbuda Caribana 2025
JUNE 5TH TO 9TH
SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

THURSDAY, JUNE 5	SATURDAY, JUNE 7
<ul style="list-style-type: none">· OPENING PARADE – 4:00 PM· JUNIOR CALYPSO MONARCH – 8:00 PM	<ul style="list-style-type: none">· BARBUDA OCEAN CLUB CARIBANA BEACH BASH· FISHING TOURNAMENT· INTERNATIONAL SHOW· STARTS 8:00 AM – UNTIL
FRIDAY, JUNE 6	SUNDAY, JUNE 8
<ul style="list-style-type: none">· CARIBANA CULTURAL SHOW – 8:00 PM· JR'S BLUE OCEAN EXPERIENCE VIP	<ul style="list-style-type: none">· CARIBANA CLASSIC HORSE RACING – 1:00 PM· CALYPSO/SOCA MONARCH – 8:30 PM
	MONDAY, JUNE 9
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">· JOUVERT – 4:00 AM TO 10:00 AM· LAST LAP – 6:00 PM TO 10:00 PM

**WHERE RHYTHM AND CULTURE THRIVE,
BARBUDA'S CARIBANA 2025**

Sports News

Steelers level Division 1 Playoffs Finals with the Flyers



Second seed Total Imports EMC's Potters Steelers continued their comeback from a two-nil deficit to level their best-of-five Antigua and Barbuda Basketball Association's (ABBA) First Division Playoff Finals against defending champions and top seed EZ Fit Flyers on Tuesday evening.

After losing the first two encounters, the Potters Steelers notched up their second consecutive win to level their finals at 2-2 by snatching a narrow 76-72 victory in Game 4 at the JSC Sports Complex.

The Flyers made the better start to Game 4, swooping to a 22-17 advantage at the end of the first quarter and clinching the second 15-14 to hold a slender 37-31 lead at halftime.

But the Potters Steelers stormed back by outscoring the Flyers 27-21 to tie the game at 58-58 at the end of the third quarter. The Steelers surged ahead to outscore the Flyers 18-14 in the fourth and final quarter to snatch victory.

The Steelers avoided being swept by surging to an impressive 86-67 victory against the Flyers in Game 3 at the same venue on Sunday to reduce the deficit to 2-1.

Like the previous game, Jayden Andrew once again produced a dominant performance on Tuesday to engineer the Potters Steelers' resurgence and forced a deciding Game 5 against the Flyers, who have already captured the Division 1 round-robin league title.

Jayden Andrew provided a game-high 29 points, 10 rebounds, and six steals; Cohen Desouza sank 19 points and snatched nine rebounds; and Raniq Nicholas came off the bench to contribute 14 points and six rebounds for the Potters Steelers.

Xavier "X-Man" Meade converted 27 points and claimed eight rebounds, David Hernandez sank 11 points, and Adonis Humphreys scored 10 points and grabbed nine rebounds for the Flyers.

Both teams will clash in the deciding Game 5 at the JSC Sports Complex on Thursday evening (today).



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KRUNCH BUCKET
 12 Pieces
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 ...add a 2 liter soda for **\$10.99**
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Chargers Eagles 1 extend unbeaten run in Women's Division 2 Volleyball League



The City South Municipal Foundation Inc., Townhouse Furnishings, CIU, and MKUU Tours, Chargers Eagles 1 women's volleyball team.

The City South Municipal Foundation Inc., Townhouse Furnishings, CIU, and MKUU Tours Chargers Eagles 1 have maintained their perfect record and continue to lead the standings in the women's division of the Antigua and Barbuda Amateur Volleyball Association's (ABAVA) Second Division Development League.

The Chargers Eagles 1 claimed their sixth win in as many games after being awarded a 2-0 victory by default against defending champions Paragons 2, who were unable to field a team for their encounter at the indoor volleyball stadium at the YMCA Sports Complex on Tuesday evening.

The Chargers Eagles 1 were awarded victory via a 25-0, 25-0 scoreline against Paragons 2, who remain in sixth place in the nine-team round-robin competition after suffering their third defeat in five games.

Jets 2 won their latest match to move into second place in the women's division standings of the women's Second Division League.

Jets 2 claimed their fourth win in six matches by snatching a 2-1 victory against Chargers Eagles 2 in their keenly contested encounter.

Jets 2 prevailed 26-28, 25-21, and 16-14 against Char-

gers Eagles 2, who remain in fourth place after suffering their second loss in five encounters.

TOA Media & MKUU Tours Chargers Velocity has leapfrogged Stoneville to move to the top of the standings in the four-team Men's Second Division League.

The Chargers Velocity men achieved the feat by snatching a 2-1 victory against Stoneville 2 when both teams met in a top-of-the-table clash in their latest outings.

The Chargers Velocity took an hour and 45 minutes to prevail 23-25, 25-18, and 16-14 against Stoneville 2.

The Chargers Velocity

now leads the standings after recording their fifth win in six matches, while Stoneville 2 drops down into second place after suffering their first loss in five games.

The ABAVA's Women's Division 2 League will continue at the YMCA Sports Complex on Thursday (today). DHS, Print Xpress and Auto Craze Royal Cruisers 2 will take on the High Flyerz Valkyries at 5:15 pm.

It will be followed by a men's Division 1 double-header. The Storming Lions will tackle the Phoenix High Flyerz at 6:45 pm, and ABI Insurance and Cool and Smooth Pytonz will clash with the Renegades at 7:45 pm.

Deitz focused on building for bigger goals after Windies women



Shane Deitz

Despite a 3-0 T20I series sweep at the hands of England, West Indies Women's head coach Shane Deitz says his eyes are firmly on the long game, which includes a competitive showing at next year's ICC Women's T20 World Cup and the broader goal of rebuilding the team's depth and resilience.

Deitz's declaration followed another gutsy, albeit unsuccessful, performance from the Caribbean side, as they fell 17 runs short in the final T20I against England on Monday.

West Indies ended on 127 for eight in response to England's 144 for five, as another masterful knock from captain Hayley Matthews, who struck 71 from 54 deliveries, proved insufficient. England won the first two encounters by eight and nine wickets, respectively.

"I thought today we fought really hard. We had five girls 21 and under playing major roles. We gave them a responsibility, and they stepped up really well, especially (Jahzara) Claxton; she bowled brilliantly on debut," Deitz said after the match.

The 19-year-old Claxton, one of the rising stars in the regional setup, finished with an impressive one for 15 from her four overs, supporting Matthews, who also starred with the ball, claiming three for 32.

"She's just super talented, a great athlete. So I just told her to go out and enjoy it, back yourself, bowl hard, bowl straight, and try your bouncers because you've got nothing to lose. There was no pressure on her, and she stepped up to the occasion. She looked great out there, comfortable, so very proud of her, and she's got a big future ahead of her for sure," he added.

Though the scoreboard may not reflect it, Deitz sees signs of growth and potential across the team.

"Obviously, the results aren't going well, but we're just trying to find some players who can step up at this level. And come this time next year at the World Cup, hopefully we will have found what we are looking for, and they will be really competitive," he noted.

Though the losses may sting now, Deitz pointed out that it is part of a broader transformation. With regional cricket standards still catching up to international levels, he emphasized the need for patient development, structure, and investment in youth.

"We've got a lot of work to do to get up to speed. Our regional cricket is probably not where it should be, but we're improving on that. So we're going to bring players in and get them to this international level as quickly as

possible, which is difficult, but the attitude and the hard training that we're doing will help that. So we give them opportunities and support them, try to guide them through, and I think we've got some talent there coming through," Deitz shared.

"Obviously we're missing a couple of big names, but as I said to the squad, we need 20 international players if we're going to be consistently competitive. So that's the long-term plan.

"As a coaching staff, we're just going to get players good enough to compete now, learn about the game, get better every day, and come T20 World Cup next year, we're going to be real dangerous," he declared.

However, that goal is challenged by logistical realities. "Because we are not going to the ODI World Cup, we've got a long period where I can get them in and work with them all.

"Because we haven't had that yet. They live on different islands, so as a coach, I don't get much time with our players, and that's probably the hardest thing. People will criticize a coach for losing 3-0, but I want to spend some time with our players and improve their skills, and that's probably the plan for after the South Africa tour...the next six to seven months after that," Deitz revealed.

In addition to centralized camps, Deitz hopes overseas placements will also assist in players' readiness.

"We're trying to get some players maybe to Australia like we did last year. So July and August before the WCPL and then maybe something (a regional camp) after that.

"We are also looking at October, November, and December before we play Sri Lanka in February next year. So it's a really big period where we can really focus on skills, fitness, all those things, and be ready for the next year, which is a big year," he ended.

South Africa 'A' secure 2-0 series win over West Indies 'A'



West Indies A players Shaqkere Parris, left, and Javelle Glenn.

South Africa "A" comfortably defeated the West Indies "A" by six wickets at the Daren Sammy National Cricket Stadium in Gros Islet on Tuesday to secure a 2-0 50 Over series victory.

The hosts, after winning the toss and batting first, posted 253 for

nine from 47.3 overs thanks to half centuries from Shaqkere Parris and Javelle Glenn.

After losing Kadeem Alleyne (4), captain Alick Athanaze (0) and Kevlon Anderson (4) all early, Parris and Jyd Goolie combined to provide some stability to the innings before

Goolie was next to fall for 30, bringing Glenn to the crease.

Parris went on to top score with 96 off 111 balls, including 10 fours and two sixes, while Glenn hit 52 off 49 balls, including four fours and three sixes.

The pair brought the score from 94 for four after 22 overs to 195 for five in the 38th over when Glenn fell. Khary Pierre also played a handy knock with 26 not out off 25 balls in the end.

Pacer Okuhle Cele led the attack for the South Africans with three for 29 from 8.3 overs, while fellow

seamers Tshepo Moreki and Ruan de Swardt each took two wickets.

South Africa "A" then needed only 34.5 overs to reach 258 for four, thanks to fifties from Rivaldo Moonsamy and captain Marques Ackerman.

Moonsamy led the way with 94 off 91 balls, including 15 fours and a six, while Ackerman was more destructive, hitting his 71 off just 45 balls, including eight fours and two sixes.

Jason Smith also played well for his 35 not out off 22 balls. Ojay Shields picked up two for 44 in five overs.

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tain Harry Brook confirmed on Wednesday ahead of the three-match series.

"He's got the strength to do so -- the technique to be able to face the swinging ball," said Brook, who takes charge of his first match since replacing Jos Buttler as captain.

Smith, who will open alongside Ben Duckett, batted at three during England's disappointing Champions Trophy campaign, averaging a meagre eight with a top score of 15. He comes in at seven for the Test team.

"Baz (head coach Brendon McCullum) and I have this desire that he could be an unbelievable white-ball opener," Brook said.

"I am not saying he has cemented his spot but he is going to get a good crack. He is such an immense player and can play the moving ball, as we have seen in Test cricket. There is no reason he can't bang it as an opener."

Former captain Buttler and all-rounders Jacob Bethell and Will Jacks are all in the side after returning from the Indian Premier League (IPL) while Joe Root is slated to come in at three with

Brook at four.

Pace bowlers Jofra Archer, Mark Wood and Gus Atkinson are all missing because of injuries but Brydon Carse has recovered from a toe issue and will be joined by Saqib Mahmood and Jamie Overton in the pace attack.

England were de-throned as ODI world champions and then suffered a dire Champions Trophy within the space of nine months and Brook said it was time to begin a new chapter.

The second match takes place in Cardiff on Sunday with the third at the Oval on Tuesday.

Windies face England in first ODI in search of better away record



Head coach Darren Sammy oversees West Indies preparations during a training session at Edgbaston in Birmingham, England, on Wednesday, May 28, 2025. (Getty Images)

Having somewhat broken their overseas jinx with two decent batting performances in Ireland, West Indies head coach Darren Sammy is hoping that his team can raise the bar and outplay England on their home turf.

Fresh off two high-scoring performances in Dublin—one ruined by rain and the other a series-leveling win—the Caribbean side carries momentum into Thursday's opening One-Day International (ODI) at Edgbaston, but with England representing a more formidable opponent, Sammy knows that the real test begins now.

"It's always a challenge. Ireland was a challenge, England is a



West Indies batsman Keacy Carty during the Caribbean team's training session at Edgbaston in Birmingham, England, on Wednesday, May 28, 2025.

challenge, and every international team poses different tests. For us, it's about continuing to believe and continuing to work hard. We hold the trophy from winning the series at home, and now we're trying to better our away record, and we have a team capable of doing that," Sammy declared.

This three-match series holds weight far beyond national pride. The West Indies — currently ranked ninth in the ICC ODI standings — sit just three points behind eighth-placed England. Only the top eight teams, excluding co-hosts South Africa and Zimbabwe, will qualify automatically for the 2027 World Cup.

As such, the stakes could not be clearer for Sammy and his team, especially since West Indies missed both the 2023 World Cup

and the 2025 Champions Trophy.

However, a positive for the West Indies is the fact that they have enjoyed recent success against England, having won the 2023/24 and 2024/25 ODI series at home. But English conditions will pose new challenges, especially with limited preparation due to rain that forced the team indoors on Tuesday.

"That is very important. Ever since we started this journey, we've had World Cup 2027 in mind. Automatic qualification is the first goal, and climbing the rankings is the only way to do that.

"We have made some strides from when we just started, and so this series and every ODI game from now until the qualification deadline are important. So that should be extra incentive for our guys, and we are preparing well and will be ready to play, weather permitting," Sammy said.

Among the bright spots in the team is a blossoming middle order, anchored by the likes of Keacy Carty, whose rise has not gone unnoticed. Carty, who scored an unbeaten 128 against England, followed that up with 102 and 170 in the just-concluded Ireland series.

Jamie Smith will open the batting for England in Thursday's ODI against the West Indies, cap-

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