

Years of service alone will no longer determine promotions in the public sector

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The first cohort to complete specialized training in golf course management organized by the Barbuda Ocean Club and The UWI FIC

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Years of service alone will no longer determine promotions in the public sector

Cabinet this week continued the dialogue with permanent secretaries, heads of department and union representatives to address the inefficiencies that currently exist in the public sector.

According to the Director General of Communications in the Office of the Prime Minister Maurice Merchant, these key officials were again invited by the Cabinet to continue dialogue it started last meeting on public sector service inefficiencies, worker accountability, union relations, and efforts to reform and professionalize the public sector in Antigua and Barbuda.

“The Prime Minister emphasized the importance of an interactive dialogue to address performance issues and solutions, noting that the cabinet supports initiatives to increase PNC (Performance and National Competitiveness) introduced by heads of department. The Prime Minister acknowledged serious training gaps and the need for an active training division to collaborate in developing accredited courses that can contribute to efficiency, proficiency, and career advancement within the public sector. He stressed



Director General of Communications in the Office of the Prime Minister Maurice Merchant,

that promotions should be based on competence and performance, not just length of service, to ensure qualified individuals advance and contribute effectively,” Merchant reported.

He said the Prime Minister highlighted the importance of aligning job descriptions with actual duties and providing necessary training to public servants, including technology and skills to adapt to the new environment. The Prime Minister discussed performance evaluation and accountability, urging senior public servants to take appropriate

action and utilize available technologies to enhance efficiency and decision-making. In this regard the Prime Minister announced that government will assume the cost of Permanent Secretaries and Heads of Department who are expected to attend the University of the West Indies Five Islands Campus AI Annual Research Conference on June 23 and 24.

“In addition, Permanent Secretaries, Heads of Department and other Senior Officials will be required to participate in a Public Sector Leadership Training Programme at the Univer-

sity of the West Indies Five Islands Campus, designed to integrate robust content from existing proposals and globally recognized leadership frameworks, specifically leveraging insights from the Results-Based Management model and the Harvard Core Curriculum on public leadership,” Merchant announced.

Discussions also centered on the need for Permanent Secretaries and Senior Officials to familiarize themselves with the Procurement Administration Act and other Legislations and Amendments relating to their roles.

According to Merchant, the meeting with Permanent Secretaries, Heads of Departments, and Union Officials was both robust and productive, with key challenges and potential solutions thoroughly discussed. A designated team has been tasked with preparing an outcome document to guide implementation across all government departments. To ensure continuity in the dialogue, a team of senior officials will be invited to the Cabinet meeting next week to further the discussions.



268 736 7165

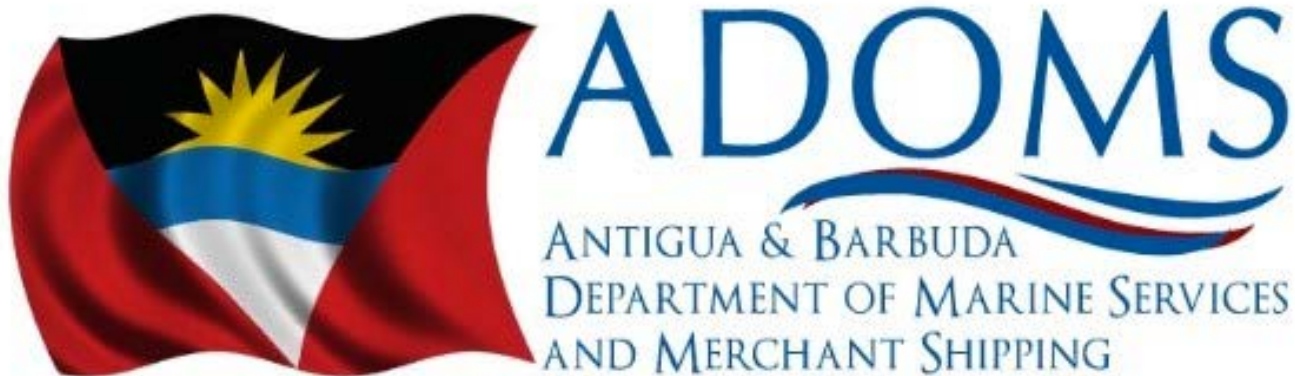
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 🍳 Breakfast served from 7:30am
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Prohibition on the carriage of arms and ammunition destined for use in conflict zones



The Antigua and Barbuda Department of Marine Services and Merchant Shipping (ADOMS) was made aware of allegations that one of its flagged vessels the **HC Opal (IMO 9377846)** is carrying arms, ammunition or supplies destined for delivery to the Israel Defence Forces or private Israeli defence contractors.

ADOMS would like to reiterate the policy of the Government of Antigua and Barbuda in this respect. In line with the State's general obligations under international law and in keeping with United Nations General Assembly Resolution A/RES/Es-10/24, and United Nations Human Rights Council Resolution A/HRC/RES/55/28, the Government of Antigua and Barbuda and Antigua and Barbuda entities, shall not facilitate the sale, transfer, and diversion of arms, munitions, and other military equipment to Israel.

The policy of the Government with respect to Antigua and Barbuda flagged ships is laid out in our Information Notice 2025-001.

Any Antigua and Barbuda-flagged vessel found to be in breach of this prohibition is liable to be de-registered under the authority granted by the Merchant Shipping Act 2006.



Local News



CPL deliver major economic boost to Antigua and Barbuda



Caribbean Premier League CEO Pete Russell

The Republic Bank Premier League (CPL) made a substantial contribution to the Antigua and Barbuda economy in 2024, generating an impressive US\$14 million in total economic impact. This result highlights the immense value the CPL brings to its

host nations, especially as this was the tournament's first visit to the country in a decade.

According to a CPL statement, in August and September, five CPL matches were hosted in Antigua, marking the debut season for the Antigua and Barbuda Falcons. The new franchise quickly won the hearts of the local population, creating a surge in excitement and engagement across the islands.

The impact assessment – conducted by GSIQ, CPL's official Media and Sponsor Evaluation partner – measured the combined effects of spending by event organisers and attendees, as well as the extensive media exposure. Antigua and Barbuda was prominently featured across global broadcast channels and social media platforms, reinforcing its reputation as a premier travel destination.

Pete Russell, CEO of the Caribbean

Premier League, shared his enthusiasm for the tournament's successful return.

"It was fantastic to be back in Antigua and Barbuda for the first time since 2014, and we are thrilled with the impact we've had on the local economy. The passion of the fans and the success of the Falcons made our return truly special. We're confident this is just the beginning, and we look forward to building on these strong results in the coming years."

As the CPL continues to expand its reach and influence, the tournament remains a powerful catalyst for economic growth, tourism development, and international visibility across the Caribbean. Antigua and Barbuda stands as a shining example of how sport can drive tangible, lasting benefits for local communities and national economies.

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WEEKEND!... KRUNCH BUCKET

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Barbuda
Caribana
2025

CARIBBEAN CULTURAL SHOW

**FARMER NAPPY • RUPEE • SMALL AXE BAND
CLAUDETTE PETERS • BARBUDAN ARTISTS
DJ JIME • DJ MARLON • DJ FLUSH • DJ WAYNE**

FRI. JUNE 6TH 2025

8PM **CARIBANA CITY**

JR'S BLUE OCEAN VIP EXPERIENCE

ADM: GENERAL \$75 • VIP IN ADVANCE: \$150 • VIP AT THE GATE: \$200

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

Antigua and Barbuda Strengthens Climate Leadership at Climate Week 2025 in Panama



Garth Simon made several noteworthy contributions



The Antigua and Barbuda delegation



Climate Ambassador, Ruleta Comancho-Thomas (far right) participates in several key panel discussions

A three-member delegation from Antigua and Barbuda participated in Climate Week 2025: Dialogue for Ambition and Implementation, held from May 19–23, 2025, in Panama City, Panama.

The delegation contributed to high-level forums and technical dialogues focused on advancing climate finance, technology cooperation, mitigation strategies, and just transition planning—demonstrating Antigua and Barbuda’s ongoing commitment to ambitious and inclusive climate action.

Climate Ambassador Ruleta Comancho Thomas, represented Antigua and Barbuda at the UNFCCC NDC Clinic, which took place from May 22–23. Participating as a panelist in the session on “Investability: Prioritizing Investment Needs,” she underscored the need for structured, investment-ready Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) that are grounded in evidence-based planning and national development priorities.

She emphasized the importance of adopting available investment tools and approaches—including multi-criteria prioritization frameworks, in-

tegration of capital expenditure and operational expenditure, planning, and alignment with public budgeting processes. These tools are critical to attracting both public and private financing for climate action. She also highlighted that inclusive stakeholder engagement and policy coherence are essential elements for translating NDCs into effective, fundable strategies.

National Designated Entity (NDE) representative Garth Simon, delivered a presentation at the Latin America and Caribbean NDE Forum and Capacity Building Programme, hosted by the UN Climate Technology Centre and Network (CTCN).

His intervention, titled “Lessons Learned from CTCN Technical Assistance to GCF FP133”, shared how Antigua and Barbuda successfully leveraged international technical support to structure and implement a flagship Green Climate Fund (GCF) project focused on climate-resilient construction, improved climate information



Garth Simon making a point at the Climate Week meeting

systems, and post-disaster response.

Simon highlighted the importance of close coordination between technical and financial mechanisms in enabling transformational climate investments, particularly for Small Island Developing States (SIDS).

Crown Counsel in the Attorney General's Office and legal advisor on climate policy, Jeniece St. Romain, represented Antigua and Barbuda at two key global events: the Sharm el-Sheikh Mitigation Ambition and Implementation Work Programme held from May 19–20, 2025, and the Third Dialogue under the United Arab Emirates Just Transition Work Programme from May 22–23, 2025. Drawing on her experience with the UNFCCC, she contributed to critical discussions on forest-sector mitigation and equitable pathways for adaptation and resilience-building.

During the mitigation dialogue, St. Romain noted growing concern over the increasing vulnerability of forests to climate change, particularly due to the rise in wildfires and the need for integrated planning. She reported on promising approaches such as the use of AI and satellite technologies for monitoring, the role of national climate legislation, and economic incentives for sustainable land management. In the just transition dialogue,

she emphasized the importance of rights-based, community-led adaptation strategies, workforce reskilling, inclusion of the informal economy, and the expansion of social protection systems as key enablers for climate resilience.

The participation of the Antigua and Barbuda delegation reinforced the country's role in shaping global climate policy and advancing inclusive, investment-aligned climate action for SIDS. Their contributions reflect a commitment to bridging ambition with implementation across finance, technology, governance, and social equity.

NOTICE

TO: THE LICENSING MAGISTRATE

Magistrate's Court
St. John's
Antigua.

TO: COMMISSIONER OF POLICE

Police Headquarters
American Road
St. John's
Antigua

NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR A TAVERN LICENCE FOR BUSINESS

REGISTERED AS

"TOMTOM'S BREAKFAST & LUNCH"

I, CASHANE THOMAS, DO HEREBY GIVE NOTICE, that it is my intention to apply at the next sitting of the Liquor Licence Court to be held at the Magistrate's Court, High Street, St. John's, Antigua on 3rd July 2025 next ensuing for a Bottle Licence in respect of premises known as "TOMTOM'S BREAKFAST & LUNCH" situated EAST BUS STATION, in the Parish of St. John's, Antigua pursuant to Section 11 (3) of the Licensing (Intoxicating Liquor) Act Cap 249 of the Laws of Antigua and Barbuda Revised Edition 1992.

Dated the 2nd day of May 2025

.....
CASHANE THOMAS

1-268-726-8416

The countdown for Caribana 2025 is on

Preparations for the 2025 edition of the annual Whit-weekend festivities in Barbuda – Caribana – are moving into high gear with the event now less than a week away.

The Caribana Coordinator, Matthew John, said his team is working feverishly to complete the preparations in time for the opening parade slated for Thursday June 5. “We have a contingent of 25 persons from the Festivals Office which is coming to participate in our opening parade. Additionally, we have the Point Iron Band along with local revelers who are planning to combine the opening with a t-shirt mas,” John explained.

Two of the shows long associated with Caribana- the Teen Pageant and the Miss Caribana show – will not take place this year due to a lack of interest by young women in Barbuda. “We even tried to do a pageant with three girls from Barbuda and invite three from Antigua to participate, but the response from the Barbudans was not positive,” he remarked.

Nonetheless, the Caribana committee has a programme of activities from June 5 - 9 which will provide entertainment for locals as well as the scores of Antiguan expected to journey to Barbuda for Caribana.

Thursday June 5:

- ☐ Opening Parade 4:00 pm
- ☐ Opening Ceremony 6:30 pm
- ☐ State Insurance Junior Calypso Monarch 8:00 pm

Friday June 6:

- ☐ Caribbean Cultural Show (featuring Claudette Peters) 8:00 pm

Saturday June 7:

- ☐ Johnny Desouza Fishing Tournament at River Dock 8:00 am
- ☐ International Beach Bash International Night 8:00 pm at River Dock

Sunday June 8:

- ☐ Classic Horse Racing at Coronation Park 12:00 noon
- ☐ Barbuda Council Calypso/Soca Monarch competition 8:30 pm at Caribana City

Monday Jun 9:

- ☐ Jouvett 4:00 am to 10:00 am at Caribana City
- ☐ Last Lap 6:00 pm to 10:00 pm at Caribana City

John identifies the main sponsors for the event as the Barbuda Council, State Insurance Company, PLH Development, Nobu Restaurant and KB Supplies. Other Barbuda entities have also contributed to the festivities.





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COMMISSION



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AND BARBUDA
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SUN. AUG 3RD | 8:00PM | \$40
ANTIGUA RECREATION GROUNDS

H2A ViBe



 Antigua's Carnival Festivals Commission  @antiguacarnival  @antiguacarnival  @antiguafestivalsofficial

Local News



Calvin Ayre Foundation and CalvinAir Helicopters Respond Swiftly to Save Young Boy's Life



G'Ani Bridgewater and Mother Leoma Prince

7-year-old G'Ani Bridgewater

In a powerful demonstration of compassion and urgency, the Calvin Ayre Foundation and CalvinAir Helicopters, in partnership with the Medical Benefits Scheme (MBS), came together to ensure that 7-year-old G'Ani Bridgewater received the critical medical attention he urgently needed. On Tuesday, May 27th, G'Ani and his parents were airlifted to Martinique aboard a medically equipped CalvinAir helicopter, for specialized treatment.

When G'Ani's condition required immediate overseas intervention, the Medical Benefits Scheme mobilized financial support, but a significant shortfall threatened to delay the mission. With-

out hesitation, the Calvin Ayre Foundation stepped in, covering nearly US\$22,000 of the US\$31,540 total cost. Their swift response removed all financial barriers in the way of G'Ani's care.

"This is exactly why the Calvin Ayre Foundation exists," said Ayre Group's Media Relations Specialist, Jamilla Kirwan. "When someone's life is on the line – especially a child - there is no room for delay. We are proud to stand with partners like MBS and our team at CalvinAir, to make a difference when it truly matters."

"MBS carries the medical burden of the nation and sometimes it isn't feasible to carry all of it," said Valena Tannis, Board Secretary

of the Medical Benefits Scheme. "We are grateful that the MBS Board, under the auspices of the Minister of Health, Sir Molwyn Joseph, has established a working partnership with the Calvin Ayre Foundation, where they are able to assist in areas that we are unable to bear the full financial responsibility. This is a testament to what can happen when public and private sectors join forces."

Simultaneously, CalvinAir Helicopters activated a rapid-response medical transport operation, outfitting one of its aircraft for critical care and personally transporting the young boy and his parents – Leoma Prince and Gerald Bridgewater –

to Martinique, under the watchful eye of Pediatrician, Dr. Tessy Fenton-Lee.

G'Ani's parents expressed deep gratitude for the life-saving support. "We are overwhelmed by the love and help we've received," said G'Ani's mother, Leoma Prince. "Words cannot express our thanks to the Calvin Ayre Foundation, CalvinAir Helicopters, and Medical Benefits. They gave our son a fighting chance."

The Calvin Ayre Foundation and CalvinAir Helicopters reaffirm their commitment to serving the people of Antigua and Barbuda, especially in moments of urgent need, proving once again that compassion, backed by action can save lives.

Caribbean Airlines Adds Special Direct Flights from Toronto to VCBIA for Carnival and CPL Cricket



One of the airlines serving Antigua and Barbuda has announced its intention to introduce special flights that will fly directly from Toronto, Canada, to VC Bird International Airport in time for Carnival and CPL cricket.

In statement, the Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority has announced the addition of two special non-stop flights with Caribbean Airlines between Toronto and Antigua and Barbuda this summer in response to strong demand last summer and a surge of interest in this year's Antigua Carnival and Caribbean Premier League (CPL) T20 cricket matches.

"More Canadians than ever are choosing Antigua and Barbuda as their go-to summer destination, and this expanded service by Caribbean Airlines directly reflects that momentum," said Tameka Wharton, Director of Tourism, Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority. "Given the strong interest we've seen from the Canadian market, these flights offer more convenient access for travellers looking to experience the key summer events in Antigua and Barbuda."

The flights will operate on the fol-

lowing dates:

Departure from Toronto: July 31 | Return: August 6

□ Departure from Toronto: August 16 | Return: August 23

These special flights offer Canadian revellers and cricket fans timely and direct access to the twin-island nation,

complementing the existing weekly service from Air Canada and WestJet on Sundays.

This year's Antigua Carnival, known as the "Caribbean's Greatest Summer Festival," will take place from July 25 to August 5, drawing visitors from across the globe for two weeks of music, culture, and celebration. In August, the island will also host matches for the Caribbean Premier League (CPL) T20 Cricket at the iconic Sir Vivian Richards Stadium, another major draw for both local and international fans.

With seamless flight options and a packed summer calendar, Antigua and Barbuda continues to strengthen its position as a leading Caribbean destination for Canadian travellers seeking both relaxation and world-class events. Travellers are encouraged to book early, as demand is expected to remain high throughout the season.

Seats are limited and are available for booking now at [Caribbean Airlines website](#).



Barbuda Ocean Club graduates the country's first cohort in sports turfgrass management



BOC Class on Golf Course May 2025

On this sunny Barbuda day, we were delighted to join with fourteen of our dedicated Rockstars to celebrate a milestone achievement of being the first ever cohort to be trained in Amenity and Sports Turfgrass Management by the University of the West Indies Global Campus Antigua.

From May 19 to 23 through a combination of practical and theory sessions, the cohort received over forty contact hours of instruction leading to their certificates of achievement. Topics covered included Turfgrass Morphology and Growth, Nutrition and Soil Fertility, and Irrigation and Water

Management.

What started as an idea in December of 2022 came full circle to reality with instruction from a Soil Scientist and a Turfgrass Expert. Through their guidance, the team was able to connect their daily tasks with the Club's vision of delivering a first-class golfing experience in Barbuda. For many, this formal training cemented the years of grit and grind toward growing a golf course on a remote tropical island.

Antigua and Barbuda's Minister of Sports and Education Daryll Matthew was on hand at the Closing

Ceremony on May 24 to share words of encouragement with our Rockstars. He also congratulated Barbuda Ocean Club on a job well done through tangible investment in the learning and development of the local community. Minister Matthew added that such an investment in learning will continue to bear fruit for all involved for many years to come.

Barbuda Ocean Club's Project President, Justin Wilshaw, joined the Minister in congratulating the team and encouraged them to stay focused on bringing what they have learnt back to the golf course. He en-

couraged the group to continue to seek opportunities to develop their craft to be able to boast one day of having a top 100-hundred ranked golf course located in Barbuda.

Congratulatory remarks were also delivered by the Head of UWI Global, Coleen Letlow who reminded all present that this was seminal, as the Barbuda Ocean Club class is the first ever for this program.

The future looks bright for this elite local turfgrass crew and for Barbuda Ocean Club as it makes its way toward the list of top 100 golf courses in the world.

EcoShores Sustainable Futures Network Hosts Semester Students for Wetlands Tour in Antigua and Barbuda

The EcoShores Sustainable Futures Network recently hosted students from the Semester program for an immersive wetlands tour in Fitches Creek Bay, Antigua and Barbuda. This visit was part of a larger voyage aboard a 112-foot schooner, where students sailed from Cape Town, South Africa, stopping at destinations like St. Helena, Brazil, and Devil's Island before reaching the Caribbean.

Semester offers a unique combination of academic study, adventure travel, and sailing education. Students earn up to college credits, work toward professional sailing certifications through International Yacht Training (IYT), and gain hands-on experience in marine exploration and cultural exchange. Many participants are on gap years, seeking meaningful ways to engage with the world.

During their time in Antigua and Barbuda, students joined EcoShores' environmental and conservation educators to explore the mangrove-lined shores of Fitches Creek Bay, part of the North East Marine Management Area (NEMMA). They observed various bird species, discussed marine biodiversity, and learned about the threats of plastic pollution and the impacts of climate change on our small island ecosystems.

One student reflected on the experience: *"At home, I have wetlands areas which need restorative care, so it was very insightful to see the work being done with communities here. I'll take this information and use it for our wetlands."*

EcoShores sees this exchange as a stepping stone to larger regional initiatives. "We want our community members across Antigua and Barbuda and the wider Caribbean to participate in similar awareness programs. Following our World Wetlands Day activities, we will be continuing towards World Environment Day 2025 on June 5th," said Britney McDonald, Portfolio Manager for ESNF. "This opens



the door to creative, cultural, and environmental opportunities that connect young people with the places they visit in a meaningful and lasting way."

The collaboration underscores the value of regenerative tourism, youth empowerment, and cross-cultural environmental education in building

resilient island futures. Antigua and Barbuda was the final stop for the Semester Students before heading back home to share their knowledge with their family, friends and community. The island remains a hub for regional and international connectivity with many avenues yet to be explored.

ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA**A.D. 2023****AFFIDAVIT**

I Christopher Malcolm Lewis of The Haven, Lanreath, England, UK currently residing aboard the deregistered vessel known as Alfa Nero currently docked at Antigua Yacht Club Marina, Falmouth Harbour Antigua. make oath and say as follows:

1. To the best of my knowledge the vessel Alfa Nero is owned by Flying Dutchman Overseas Limited, a company duly incorporated in the British Virgin Islands. I am aware that Flying Dutchman Overseas is a trust company which is managed by the company Opus Private Ltd. which operates from Guernsey.
2. I am a ship's master and have been in this occupation for over 24 years. My services are ordinarily provided through a crew management company. Sometime in August, 2015 my services were engaged by Royale Oceanic, a Yacht Crew Management company to provide services to Alfa Nero. On or about 1st February, 2018, a new crew management company, Burgess Crew Services, took over the management of the crew who served on Alfa Nero. Until the imposition of EU Sanctions, my services to Alfa Nero were engaged through Burgess.
3. Sometime on or about 17th March, 2022 I received an email from the personnel manager of Burgess Crew Services, informing me that their crew management services, with immediate effect, were being withdrawn from the owners of the Alfa Nero. The Burgess representative informed me, and I verily believe, that the company had been informed of the imposition of sanctions on any individual who was closely affiliated with and related to the beneficial owner of the vessel. Consequently, Burgess formed the view that sanctions to this individual would be applicable to the vessel and as such Burgess could no longer conduct any business related to the vessel. I received this email shortly after docking the vessel in Antigua.
4. Given the withdrawal of the management company, as per the provisions of the Maritime Labour Convention, the crew, inclusive of myself, fell under the care and control of Flying Dutchman Overseas Limited, the owner of Alfa Nero. As such Flying Dutchman Overseas Limited, became and was now directly responsible for meeting the costs associated with maintaining the vessel and the payment of salaries and supplies and other expenses.
5. I immediately made contact with Opus Private to advise them of the new developments, that Flying Dutchman Overseas Limited was now directly responsible and to obtain instructions. I am aware that it is mandatory for Opus Private to be in possession of a valid operating licence which allows them to give directives as to the operation and management of the vessel. I was informed that the requisite steps would be taken to apply for and obtain the licence. I suggested to Opus Private that given the withdrawal of Burgess, that it would become necessary to engage the services of a new crew management company. I made several suggestions as to alternative companies whose services could be engaged. Regrettably to date, I have not been informed of a replacement crew management company.

6. Since Burgess' withdrawal we utilized the fuel, food, maintenance supplies and funding which were on board to meet our day to day expenses. There was sufficient supplies and funding to last for a period of approximately five months and lasted until August, 2022.
7. Since August 2022, the crew has been left with no choice but to fend for ourselves and the limited maintenance and operation of the vessel. I made arrangements with Carlo Falcone, owner/operator of Antigua Yacht Club and Marina & Resort to extend credit to the Alfa Nero as it relates to the supply of fuel for the generators. This fuel supply in the amount of 11,000 litres per week is necessary to keep the vessel habitable and safe. A constant supply of fuel is needed to power the generators on board. Should the fuel supply be suppressed, the generators would not be able to function resulting in a catastrophic sequence of events. This could lead to not only power outage, but ultimately the sinking of the vessel which could lead to damage to the marine, other vessels and the environment.
8. To date the sums payable to Mr. Falcone totals approximately US\$560,000.00 for fuel credited. Dockage fees, for the month of March, 2022, which are ordinarily paid for via wire transfer issued on the instructions of the crew management company or Opus Private, was paid from cash which was onboard. Since then no payment have been made to the docking fees which continue to accrue. As at this date, the outstanding docking fees amounts to approximately US\$420,000.00. I am aware that Mr. Falcone is anxious about receiving payment for the outstanding funds and may cease providing fuel on credit.
9. Since dockage in March, 2022 the vessel has not received regular maintenance and as a result is now unseaworthy and unable to move under its own power. Consequently in the event of a storm requiring emergency evacuation from the marina, the vessel would be a liability to the marina, the environment and its surroundings in that it cannot be moved.
10. There are a host of maintenance tasks which must be performed. Attached and marked "A" is the maintenance schedule indicating maintenance tasks which are outstanding and/or shortly to become due. Given the pending 2023 hurricane season time is of the essence in completing these maintenance tasks.
11. We are currently unable to obtain various spare parts. One part, which is critical to the operation of the sewage treatment plant, has not been provided since March, 2022. Currently we are prevented from treating the sewage generated on board before disposal into the ocean. We have also not been able to maintain fire extinguishers and fire pumps. In the event of a fire it is unlikely that the equipment will be in working order.
12. The vessel since March, 2022 has not been under protection and indemnity insurance coverage. Since that time and continuing to date, there is no insurance coverage as to pollution, wreck, crew medical and accident or coverage for any other liability under the customary protection and indemnity insurance plan. Should any incident occur for which Alfa Nero is found to be liable there is nothing in place to facilitate the payment of any sums

Local News

due and owing to any affected vessel, person, marina, business or even the State of Antigua and Barbuda. I am aware that the vessel is currently docked in an area which is considered a national park and ecologically fragile.

13. Lloyds Shipping Register has removed classification of Alfa Nero in August, 2022. The effect of this removal is that all of the certificates relating to pollution have been removed. These certificates confirm that the equipment on board the vessel are safe and functioning properly according to its maintenance schedule. Attached herewith and marked "B" is notification received from Lloyds Shipping in this regard.
14. Cayman Island has also removed the Alfa Nero from its shipping registry. The implications of this removal is that the vessel is deregistered and cannot dock at any port around the world. Attached herewith and marked "C" is notification received from Cayman Islands in this regard.
15. At the time of docking there was a total of 41 crew members, with 28 members physically on board. Since then and due to the failure of the vessel owner to take requisite steps regarding management of the vessel only 5 crew members remain. This number is insufficient to safely operate the vessel. The reduction/resignation of the crew members was primarily due to the owner's failing to make arrangements for the management and operation of the vessel as well as the payment of outstanding salaries due. Salaries in the amount of approximately US\$2.7 million is currently due and owing as at this date.
16. After consuming the food supplies onboard crew members started utilizing the cash on board to purchase food supplies and pay for meals. Currently, as of today's date, there remains sufficient cash to provide food for approximately ten (10) days. Once the remaining funds have been diminished the remaining crew will have no choice but to leave the ship. When this occurs the vessel will be unmanned and will be a hazard on the marina, other docked vessels and the environs.

SWORN at Parliament Drive, St. John's)

Antigua this16th..... day of March, 2023)

before me:-)





 Commissioner of Oaths
 ANTIGUA & BARBUDA



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



PARTY MONARCH

SEMI-FINALS

THE COOLER FETE

H2 A ViBe

CARNIVAL CITY | 8:00 PM

18TH JULY 2025 **ADM: \$20.00**

SPECIAL GUEST ARTIST **YUNG BREDDA**

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THE UWI FIVE ISLANDS CAMPUS OECS BUDGET WATCH 2025
**“WHO PAYS THE BILLS? TAX AND REVENUE REALITIES ACROSS THE
 EASTERN CARIBBEAN”**

By Professor C. Justin Robinson

Pro Vice-Chancellor and Principal, UWI Five Islands Campus

When governments spend, someone has to pay. Across the Eastern Caribbean, the who and the how of revenue collection are revealing—and in some cases, worrying. As 2025 budgets roll out, the six countries face a common challenge: building **fair, stable, and resilient revenue systems**. But while some rely on a broad base of taxes, others lean heavily on **volatile programs like Citizenship by Investment (CBI) or import duties from shrinking trade volumes**. Let us unpack the region’s revenue mix.

VAT: The Regional Workhorse

The **Value Added Tax (VAT)** is the dominant source of revenue across the ECCU. No surprise—it is efficient, hard to avoid, and pulls in revenue as long as people spend.

Country	VAT as % of Total Revenue
Saint Lucia	~30% (up to 45% of tax revenue)
Antigua & Barbuda	~30–32%
St. Kitts & Nevis	~30%
Dominica	~30–35%
Grenada	~50% of tax revenue
SVG	~25–30%

VAT remains the fiscal backbone, and there’s little appetite for raising rates. Instead, **governments are doubling down on compliance**. Antigua and Saint Lucia both launched crackdowns and amnesties; Grenada is digitizing systems.

Income Taxes: Present in Some, Absent in Others

A major divergence exists on **personal income tax**. Antigua and St. Kitts have **no personal income tax**. Their systems rely almost entirely on VAT, customs duties, and business taxes.

- Grenada, Saint Lucia, Dominica, and SVG all **retain income taxes**, though collections vary.

But direct taxes—corporate and personal—**rarely surpass 20% of total tax revenue**, even in income-tax countries. The region remains tilted toward indirect taxation, raising fairness concerns, especially as food and fuel prices remain elevated.

Trade Taxes: Still Hanging On

Import duties, customs charges, and fuel excises remain significant, particularly in **St. Kitts, Saint Lucia**, and



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From page 18

Grenada. But they are shrinking in relative terms. As trade liberalization and exemptions expand, so too do **tax gaps**. Grenada, for example, cut its property transfer tax to boost real estate, while Saint Lucia slashed its airport service tax by **50%** to stimulate tourism.

CBI

Four countries—**Dominica, St. Kitts, Grenada, and Antigua**—earn large non-tax revenues from **Citizenship by Investment (CBI)** programs.

Country	CBI Role in Budget (2024–25)
Dominica	Essential for funding airport, housing, energy
St. Kitts & Nevis	Plunged 2024 into deficit after CBI revenues fell
Grenada	Helped deliver 2024’s large surplus
Antigua	A steady source of revenue

While CBI funds have allowed for **massive capital investments**, they are **non-recurring and vulnerable** to international scrutiny. St. Kitts is already under pressure to reform its CBI program. The IMF and Eastern Caribbean Central Bank urge countries to treat CBI as **a bonus, not a baseline**.

External Grants and Loans: The Hidden Hand

- Some budgets—especially in **St. Vincent and Dominica**—lean heavily on **external support**. For example:
- **SVG’s 2025 capital budget is larger than its entire revenue base**, with over **EC\$900 million** coming from loans and grants.
 - Dominica’s international airport is primarily funded by China and a CBI-managed escrow facility.

These funds are vital for recovery and development, but the debt service burden is growing. In SVG, interest payments already account for **40% of current revenue**.

Takeaway:

The Caribbean tax model is still dominated by **VAT, trade taxes**, and, for some, **CBI inflows**. But as needs grow and pressures mount, the region faces a hard truth: it must **broaden and modernize its revenue systems**, or risk running deficits that no CBI windfall can fix.

Prof. C. Justin Robinson, a Vincentian and UWI graduate, holds a BSc in Management Studies, MSc in Finance and Econometrics, and PhD in Finance. With over 20 years at UWI, he has served in various leadership roles, including Dean and Pro Vice Chancellor, Board for Undergraduate Studies. A Professor of Corporate Finance with extensive research publications, he is actively involved in regional financial institutions and is currently the Principal of The UWI Five Islands Campus in Antigua and Barbuda.

UN Security Council Fails Ukraine, Gaza and the World



By Sir Ronald Sanders

When Russian drones stalk civilians along Ukraine's Dnipro River and Gaza's hospitals lie in ruins under relentless bombardment, the world cannot pretend that these are distant crises. Yet the UN Security Council, which is entrusted to uphold global peace, is paralyzed by the self-interest of its veto powers, exposing its failure to fulfil both its mandate and its duty to safeguard humanity.

For small Caribbean nations struggling to build themselves in a world whose financial and trading architecture excludes their meaningful participation, such failures impose immediate costs. Among these costs are: rising energy costs, food insecurity, and the alarming precedent that might makes right. It is time for every voice, large and small, to rise in defence of law, humanity, and the UN Charter's promise of global security.

Campaign of Fear

Since July 2024, Russian forces have executed a coordinated drone assault across Kherson Province in Ukraine, killing nearly 150 civilians and injuring countless more. The UN's Independent Commission of Inquiry on Ukraine found that these strikes targeted people going about daily life — fetching water, riding mopeds, and even boarding ambulances — using live video feeds to pick off victims with surgical precision. One witness described rescuers, who were tending to the wounded, being blown apart by a second strike. The Commission concluded that these were deliberate war crimes and crimes against humanity, designed to drive entire communities from their homes.

Yet when some members of the UN Security Council moved to condemn these atrocities, Russia vetoed the resolution, transforming the veto from a safeguard of human life into a license for impunity. Meanwhile, estimates put the number of Ukrainian and Russian deaths — military and civilian — at much more than 300,000 since the conflict started in 2022.

Gaza's Descent into Collective Punishment

Since the horrific attack on Israel by Hamas on 7 October 2023, Gaza has endured an unrelenting counteroffensive that has reduced whole neighbourhoods to rubble by the Israeli military. In the most recent atrocity, the UN reports that nearly 4,000 Palestinians—mostly civilians—have died under a blockade that cuts off food, water, and medicine. This adds

to the more than 54,000 that had reportedly been killed before this latest cruelty. The UN Special Coordinator stressed that families are being “denied the very basics” and warned of looming famine. Hospitals and schools, even those sheltering the displaced, have not been spared. Calls for a ceasefire and unimpeded humanitarian access have repeatedly faltered on threatened or actual vetoes — each one a vote for further suffering.

The Israeli government said its action is to stop Hamas from “stealing aid”, which Hamas denies. Either way, civilians continue to suffer and perish.

When the Veto Shields Aggressors

The UN Charter gave its five permanent Council members “primary responsibility” for keeping the peace, not for shielding those who flout humanitarian law. Each self-interest veto of this kind is a blow to the rule of law, eroding the norm that civilian lives must be protected from direct attack.

Small States, Big Stakes

Caribbean nations live daily with the consequences of the Security Council's failure to act. Rising energy costs sparked by conflict erode their budgets, threaten their food security, and stoke social unrest. Worse still, if veto-wielders can ignore mass atrocity, what protections remain for a small state that cannot count on the UN to safeguard its welfare? National sovereignty, territorial integrity, and individual human rights, which were hard-won through centuries of struggle, demand that small, devel-

Opinion

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oping states speak out, or risk standing by while these rights are trampled.

Commending the European Union

In the current climate of diplomatic paralysis, the European Union (EU) has recently shown rare courage in relation to the horrifying events in Gaza. EU High Representative, Kaja Kallas, declared that "Israeli strikes in Gaza go beyond what is necessary to fight Hamas" and rejected any aid distribution model that bypasses the UN, warning that "humanitarian aid cannot be weaponised".

EU Commission President, Ursula von der Leyen, described recent attacks on civilian infrastructure as "abhorrent" and "disproportionate," and Germany's new chancellor publicly questioned Israel's objectives. By suspending trade talks with Israel and reviewing its association agreement, the EU is sending a clear message: strategic partnerships must not eclipse human life.

Raising Voices in Unity

Like the EU, Caribbean Community (CARICOM) states need not wait for the UN Security Council to perform its duty. Their parliaments can pass motions demanding accountability; their foreign ministries can coordinate regional statements; their civil societies can keep Ukraine and Gaza in the public eye. When CARICOM states speak with one voice - rooted in their shared history of fighting for self-determination - they amplify the UN Charter's promise that "representative democracy is indispensable," and remind the great powers of their pledge to protect it.

A Collective Imperative

The UN Security Council veto was

never meant to be a refuge for perpetrators. If left unchallenged, aggression becomes the new normal, spreading like a cancer until every nation feels its ruin. Now is the moment for Latin American and Caribbean states - and all who value stability - to demand that the Security Council honour its founding covenant. For if the rule of law dies in Ukraine and Gaza, it will be extinguished everywhere.

The nations of Latin America and the Caribbean - each forged in the

foundation of oppression and steeled by ancestral struggles for liberty - must unmask every veto that shields atrocity, champion resolutions that protect civilians, and restore the Charter's promise of peace and security.

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

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Regional News



PAHO warns risk of yellow fever remains high



The Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) has issued a new Rapid Risk Assessment (RRA) on yellow fever in the Americas, including the Caribbean, which it said shows that the risk to public health remains high due to continued human cases in endemic countries of the region.

PAHO said that so far this year, there has been a more than eightfold increase in cases compared to the same period of 2024.

It said this is due to the periodic reactivation of sylvatic transmission cycles with spillover cases among people and that, in total, countries have reported 221 confirmed human cases of yellow fever, including 89 deaths.

In comparison, in 2024, there were 61 human cas-

es confirmed, including 30 deaths.

PAHO said that of concern is the fact that while in 2024 most cases were reported in the Amazon region of Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Guyana, and Peru, this year, cases have also been reported outside the Amazon region in areas such as São Paulo State in Brazil and Tolima Department in Colombia.

It said Sylvatic yellow fever occurrence near densely populated areas increases the risk of an urban outbreak.

“Almost all cases reported in both 2024 and 2025 have occurred in unvaccinated individuals. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, vaccination coverage against yellow fever in endemic countries of the region

ranged from 57 percent to 100 percent among children aged 9 to 18 months.

“However, 10 out of 12 endemic countries had coverage rates below the recommended 95 percent. Between 2020 and 2023, these rates declined further, leaving a substantial proportion of the population unprotected,” PAHO said.

It said that while vaccination capacities in endemic countries have since improved, the limited global supply of yellow fever vaccine continues to pose a challenge, with current supplies unable to cover demand in the Americas and Africa.

In the risk assessment, PAHO calls for the need to strengthen surveillance, vaccination of at-risk populations, and communica-

tion strategies to ensure the provision of public health advice for affected communities and those travelling to areas where vaccination is recommended.

PAHO said it is also working with endemic countries to provide technical support aimed at optimizing vaccination strategies. This includes the use of fractional doses where appropriate and identifying populations most at risk and in greatest need of vaccination.

Yellow fever is an acute haemorrhagic disease that is endemic in tropical areas of the Americas and Africa. In the Americas, it is commonly transmitted by Sylvatic mosquitoes belonging to the *Haemagogus* and *Sabethes* species.

Symptoms usually appear three to six days after the bite of an infected mosquito and include fever, muscle pain, headache, shivers, loss of appetite, nausea and vomiting. While most patients' symptoms disappear, around 15 percent experience high fever, organ damage and sometimes death.

PAHO said it continues to monitor the situation and support countries in adopting the best strategies for preventing and responding to yellow fever outbreaks. *(Loop Caribbean)*

Regional News

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CARICOM and Colombia deepen ties at Third Meeting of Foreign Ministers



CARICOM Secretary-General, Dr Carla Barnett, today led the CARICOM Secretariat's delegation to the Third Meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and the Republic of Colombia, held in Cartagena de Indias, Colombia.

This high-level engagement is taking place in the lead-up to two major regional events: the Thirtieth Ordinary Meeting of the Ministerial Council and the Tenth Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Association of Caribbean States (ACS), scheduled for May 29 and 30 in Cartagena de Indias and Montería, respectively.

Convened under the theme "Sustainable Development and Climate Change," today's meeting was co-chaired by Dr Denzil Douglas, Minister of Foreign Affairs of St Kitts and Nevis and Chair of the Council for Foreign and Community Relations

(COFCOR), alongside Laura Sarabia Torres, Colombia's Minister of Foreign Affairs.

This marked Minister Sarabia Torres' first group engagement with CARICOM Foreign Ministers since assuming office in January 2025.

The meeting served as a critical opportunity to reinforce political, economic, and cultural cooperation between CARICOM and Colombia, particularly within the context of an increasingly complex global landscape.

Discussions centered on enhancing collaboration across key sectors, while reaffirming a shared commitment to multilateralism and regional solidarity.

Joint Commissions between CARICOM and Colombia have already made strides in areas such as technical cooperation, cultural exchange, education, and sports development. These efforts build on prior engagements

in 2019 and 2022, which focused on strengthening ties in trade, transportation, climate resilience, disaster risk management, security, and the regional response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Today's meeting also provided a strategic platform for CARICOM to encourage Colombia, in its current roles as Chair of the ACS Ministerial Council and President Pro Tempore of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), to continue championing the concerns of small and vulnerable states within regional and global forums.

The CARICOM-Colombia dialogue continues to be a valuable mechanism for advancing mutual interests and deepening South-South cooperation in pursuit of a more sustainable and resilient Caribbean-Latin American partnership. *(Loop Caribbean)*

Regional News

Dominica: Government to hold national symposium on education



The Dominica government has announced plans to stage a national symposium on education in June as it seeks to implement reforms to the country's education system that Prime Minister Roosevelt Skerrit has described as outdated and harmful to students' development.

Skerrit said that next month's national symposium is intended to guide urgent changes, which he hoped could take effect

as early as the upcoming school year in September.

Prime Minister Skerrit criticised the current structure in which primary school students are taught as many as 13 subjects, calling it "ridiculous" while proposing a streamlined curriculum focused on English, Mathematics, Social Studies, History, and Social Science, in addition to practical life skills such as agriculture, carpentry, art, and civics.

"We're not building a culture of collaboration. We're not building a culture of co-operation. We're not building students with analytical skills and critical thinking and comprehension," Skerrit told reporters, emphasising the need to recognise different learning styles, talents, and intelligences.

Prime Minister Skerrit said extracurricular activities such as music and sports should create settings for children to work and play

collaboratively.

"I don't think another school year should come, where we place children in depressing situations. And if we lose that opportunity, we are going to lose a generation," he said, adding that the education system should be tailored to today's realities, including technological advancement and artificial intelligence. (*Loop Caribbean*)



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Mother who sold six-year-old daughter given life term in South Africa

A South African woman convicted of kidnapping and trafficking her six-year-old daughter has been sentenced to life in prison, along with her two accomplices.

The jail terms for Racquel “Kelly” Smith, her boyfriend Jacquen Appollis and their friend Steveno van Rhyn come more than a year after Joshlin Smith mysteriously disappeared outside her home in Saldanha Bay, near Cape Town.

Despite a highly publicised search for the girl, who vanished in February 2024, she is yet to be found.

The sentencing follows an eight-week trial that captivated South Africa, with witnesses and prosecutors making a number of shocking allegations.

Judge Nathan Erasmus said he “drew no distinction” between the trio in handing down the sentences.

“On the human trafficking charge, you are sentenced to life imprisonment. On the kidnapping charge, you are sentenced to 10 years imprisonment,” he said to loud applause in the courtroom. Judge Erasmus took over an hour to deliver the sentence and was measured as he gave a brief summary of the case and highlighted points that stood out during the trial.

He rebuked the trio, especially Van Rhyn and Smith, saying they showed no remorse for their actions.

“There is nothing that I can find that is redeeming or deserving of a lesser sentence,” he said.

He also spoke of the impact their conduct had on the community of Middelpos, where the girl lived, saying it had left residents “fractured”.

Smith, 35, and her accomplices showed no emotion as their sentences were read out in the community centre in Saldanha where the trial was held to allow residents to attend proceedings.



Police said the search for the little girl would continue, even beyond South Africa’s borders.

“We will not rest until we find [out] what happened to Joshlin. We are continuing day and night looking for her,” Western Cape police commissioner Thembisile Patekile told local media.

The National Prosecuting Authority (NPA) welcomed the sentence and lauded the work of its team in proving that Joshlin was “sold [and] delivered to the intended buyer” for the purpose of “exploitation, namely slavery or practices similar to slavery”.

Emotions were high ahead of the sentencing, with angry community members saying the trio should get a “harsh sentence because they deserve it”.

Ahead of sentencing, Joshlin’s grandmother, Amanda Smith-Daniels, once again pleaded with her daughter to “bring my [grand]child back or tell me where she is”.

“I don’t feel that any sentence they get will bring my grandchild back,” she told local broadcaster Newzroom Afrika.

Ms Smith-Daniels said that Joshlin’s disappearance had left her family “broken”.

She urged her daughter to stop blaming others for her misfortune as she “was the person that did the deed”.

During the trial, the court heard testimonies from more than 30 witnesses,

who painted a picture of the young girl’s troubled life and subsequent disappearance.

Kelly Smith and her accomplices refused to testify or call any witnesses for their defence.

The most explosive came from Lourentia Lombaard, a friend and neighbour of Smith who turned state witness.

Ms Lombaard alleged that Smith told her she had done “something silly” and sold Joshlin to a traditional healer, known in South Africa as a “sangoma”.

The “person who [allegedly took] Joshlin wanted her for her eyes and skin”, Ms Lombaard told the court.

A local pastor testified that in 2023, he had heard Smith - a mother of three - talk of selling her children for 20,000 rand (\$1,100; £850) each, though she had said she was willing to accept a lower figure of \$275.

Joshlin’s teacher then alleged in court that Smith had told her during the search that her daughter was already “on a ship, inside a container, and they were on the way to West Africa”.

It was the testimonies of Ms Lombard and the clergyman that were key to securing a conviction.

During sentencing hearings, Smith was described as manipulative and someone who told “bald-faced lies”. A social worker appointed to compile a report on Smith and her accomplices, went so far as to say it would not be a “stretch to conclude that [Kelly] Smith is the mastermind behind the trafficking of her own daughter”.

The court also heard powerful statements from those who knew Joshlin about the devastating effect of her disappearance on the community. (BBC News)

Judge extends order blocking Trump administration from revoking Harvard's ability to enroll foreign students



A federal judge said she is extending a temporary order on Thursday to block the Trump administration's revocation of Harvard University's ability to enroll international students.

The extension came after the Trump administration said it would give Harvard 30 days to challenge its revocation, according to a letter attached to the Wednesday night court filing.

The court document states that the Department of Homeland Security is asking Harvard "to sub-

mit sworn statements and documentary or other evidence to rebut the grounds for withdrawal of certification" under the federal Student and Exchange Visitor Program, which allows Harvard to enroll foreign students.

That includes misconduct records of its international students and "maintain a campus environment free from violence and antisemitism," according to the May 28 letter.

The Trump administration revoked Harvard's ability to enroll foreign students

last week. Hours later, U.S. District Judge Allison D. Burroughs temporarily blocked the administration's effort.

Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem shared the letter on X on Thursday.

"Harvard's refusal to comply with SEVP oversight was the latest evidence that it disdains the American people and takes for granted U.S. taxpayer benefits," Noem wrote, referring to the foreign student program. "Following our letter to Harvard, the

school attempted to claim it now wishes to comply with SEVP standards."

"We continue to reject Harvard's repeated pattern of endangering its students and spreading American hate—it must change its ways in order to participate in American programs," she added.

Harvard did not immediately return a request for comment.

Burroughs' extension of the order came on the same day of the university's 347th graduation ceremony. (*NBC News*)

Head of human smuggling plot gets 10 years after family of four froze to death on US-Canada border



More than three years after a family of four from India froze to death while trying to enter the United States along a remote stretch of the Canadian border in a blizzard, the convicted ringleader of an international human smuggling plot was sentenced in Minnesota on Wednesday to 10 years in prison.

Federal prosecutors had recommended nearly 20 years for Harshkumar Ramanlal Patel, and nearly 11 years for the driver who was supposed to pick them up, Steve Anthony Shand, who got 6 1/2 years Wednesday with two years' supervised release.

"The crime in many respects is extraordinary because it did result in the unimaginable death of four individuals, including two children," US District Judge John Tunheim said. "These were deaths that were clearly avoid-

able.

Patel's attorney, Thomas Leinenweber, told the court before sentencing that Patel maintains his innocence and argued he was no more than a "low man on the totem pole."

He asked for time served, 18 months.

But the acting US attorney for Minnesota, Lisa Kirkpatrick, said Patel exploited the migrants' hopes for a better life in America, out of his own greed.

"We should make no mistake, it was the defendant's greed that set in motion the facts that bring us here today," she said.

Patel, in an orange uniform and handcuffed, declined to address the court. He showed no visible emotion as the sentence was issued.

The judge noted that he is likely to be deported to his native India after completing his sentence.

He cooperated as marshals handcuffed him and led him from the courtroom.

Shand, who had been free pending sentencing, showed no visible reaction to his own sentence, either.

The judge ordered him to report to prison July 1 and agreed to recommend that he serve his sentence at the Federal Prison Camp in Pensacola, Florida, where he can be near his family.

The judge handed down the sentences at the federal courthouse in the northwestern Minnesota city of Fergus Falls, where the two men were tried and convicted on four counts apiece last November. (*Jamaica Gleaner*)

Chinese paraglider survives accidental 8,000m-high flight

A Chinese paraglider has survived being accidentally propelled 8,500m (27,800ft) into the sky above north-west China, state media report.

Peng Yujiang, 55, was testing new equipment at 3,000m above sea level, over the Qilian mountains, when a rare updraft or air current known as a “cloud suck” pulled him about 5,000m higher into a cloud formation.

Saturday’s events were filmed on a camera that was mounted on Mr Peng’s glider and the footage has gone

viral after being posted on Douyin, China’s version of TikTok.

It showed Mr Peng holding on to the glider’s controls, with his face and much of his body covered in ice crystals.

“It was terrifying... Everything was white. I couldn’t see any direction. Without the compass, I wouldn’t have known which way I was going. I thought I was flying straight, but in reality, I was spinning,” he told China Media Group.

Mr Peng narrowly survived death as oxygen is thin at

that altitude - slightly lower than the 8,849m peak of Mount Everest. Temperatures can also fall to -40C.

“I wanted to come down quickly, but I just couldn’t. I was lifted higher and higher until I was inside the cloud,” he said.

Mr Peng, who has been paragliding for four and a half years, said he might have lost consciousness during his descent.

He added that the most frightening part of his ordeal was trying to regain control of the glider as it spiralled in the air.

Chinese authorities are investigating the incident and Mr Peng has been suspended for six months because the flight was unauthorised, state-run Global Times reported.

Mr Peng had no intention to fly that day and was only testing the fit and comfort of his parachute on the ground, Global Times said.

However, strong winds lifted him off the ground and grew even stronger, until he encountered the updraft that shot him up into the clouds. (BBC News)



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- JUNIOR CALYPSO MONARCH – 8:00 PM

FRIDAY, JUNE 6

- CARIBANA CULTURAL SHOW – 8:00 PM
- JR'S BLUE OCEAN EXPERIENCE VIP

SATURDAY, JUNE 7

- BARBUDA OCEAN CLUB CARIBANA BEACH BASH
- FISHING TOURNAMENT
- INTERNATIONAL SHOW
- STARTS 8:00 AM – UNTIL

SUNDAY, JUNE 8

- CARIBANA CLASSIC HORSE RACING – 1:00 PM
- CALYPSO/SOCA MONARCH – 8:30 PM

MONDAY, JUNE 9

- JOUVERT – 4:00 AM TO 10:00 AM
- LAST LAP – 6:00 PM TO 10:00 PM

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BARBUDA'S CARIBANA 2025**

Sports News

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Pigotts Sports Club to host 7-A-Side Tournament

The Pigotts Sports Club will host its annual 7-A-Side Knockout Football Tournament next month.

A total of EC\$2,000 in

cash prizes will be on offer for outstanding performers during the event, which will take place at the Pigotts playing field on Friday, June

6.

The registration fee is EC\$20 per player. Persons may contact the Pigotts Sports Club via telephone

number 770-3578 to register. Food and drinks will be on sale at the event.



June 6th 2025

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Sports News



Deadline approaching for teams to register for Antigua Cup



As plans continue to progress, both Antiguan and overseas clubs and teams are reminded that the registration deadline is fast approaching to participate in staging the second edition of the Antigua Cup next month.

The Antigua Cup, which comprised the International Youth Football Tournament from July 6 to 13 and the Player Development Camp from July 14 to 18, will be held at the Buckley's Primary School playing field.

The deadline for teams to indicate their interest in participating in the event, which is organized by the Young Warriors Football Club (YWFC), is Saturday, May 31.

The event will also feature an end-of-tournament fundraising concert, which is dubbed Big Bands & Artists Showdown, at the Environ-

mental Division grounds in St. John's on July 12.

The organizers of the Antigua Cup, which is open to boys' and girls' teams, have invited Antiguan and overseas clubs and teams to compete in age-group competitions comprising players in the Under-10, Under-13, Under-15, and Under-17 categories.

According to a media release from the YWFC, "To date, interest to participate in the event has been shown by clubs in Antigua and Barbuda, Trinidad and Tobago, Barbados, St. Lucia, and Dominica.

"The primary objective of this initiative is to foster grassroots development and to provide a strong foundation for young athletes to grow in skills, discipline, and sportsmanship.

"Beyond sport, the Young Warriors

Football Club has played an instrumental role as a community partner, assisting numerous boys and girls in accessing educational opportunities and scholarships, both locally and internationally.

"This tournament not only aims to elevate sporting talent but also to reinforce the importance of education and character development.

"Participating youth will be involved in community outreach initiatives and educational workshops, shaping them into responsible, motivated young adults.

"The YWFC is currently funded primarily through community-driven fundraisers and other contributions.

"Organising an international event of this nature is significant, and for this reason, YWFC has been seeking the generous partnership of the corporate community to help grow this impactful initiative and make it accessible to children – many from underserved communities and single-parent households – who otherwise might not have the opportunity.

"Business, government and social leaders will be invited to speak to the youth and share words of encouragement and vision during the Player Development Seminars, which will focus on education, health, and lifestyle topics.

"Such interactions help inspire our players to dream bigger and see themselves in future leadership roles."



Paragons end campaign on winning note in women's volleyball league

Former perennial champions Paragons wrapped up their campaign in the Women's Division 1 League with a 3-0 victory against Starz 1 Seniors in the Antigua and Barbuda Amateur Volleyball Association's (ABAVA) Local Club League on Wednesday evening.

The Paragons took an hour and 20 minutes to prevail 25-20, 25-16, and 25-18 against Starz 1 Seniors in their final encounter in the six-team round-robin Women's Division 1 League at the indoor stadium at the YMCA Sports Complex.

The Paragons finished their campaign in fourth place with a record of four wins and six losses. Despite the loss, Starz 1 Seniors, who have one game remaining, clinched the runners-up spot.

Starz 1 Seniors remain in second place in the standings with a record of six wins and three losses from nine encounters.

Cool and Smooth and JOMA Caribbean Da Squad, who have two games remaining, have already secured the Women's Division 1 League title for the fourth consecutive year.

Da Squad have played unbeaten, winning all eight matches thus far, to lead the standings.

Meanwhile, reigning Men's Division 1 champions Theatric Lighting and Stage Effects and JOMA Ca-



Paragons 1 women's volleyball team

ibbean Stoneville slipped closer to relinquishing the title they have won for the past seven seasons.

Stoneville remains in second place behind current Men's Division 1 League leaders ABI Insurance and Cool and Smooth Pytonz after forfeiting their latest match on Wednesday evening.

The Invaders advanced into fourth place after being awarded a 3-0 (25-0, 25-0, and 25-0) victory by default against Stoneville, who failed to field a team for their encounter.

The Invaders leapfrogged

Vernon G. Edwards High Flyerz from fifth to fourth place after claiming their fourth win in 10 games. Stoneville remains in second place after suffering their third loss in 10 encounters.

The unbeaten Pytonz are currently leading the seven-team Men's Division 1 round-robin league with an unblemished record of eight wins from as many games. The Pytonz have four games remaining, two more than Stoneville.

The ABABA's Local Club League will continue with a double at the YMCA Sports

Complex on Saturday. Stoneville will take on Da Squad in a Women's Division 1 affair at 6:45 pm, and High Flyerz will clash with the Invaders in a Men's Division 1 encounter at 7:45 pm.

A triple-header will take place at the same venue in the Women's Second Division of the ABABA's Development League on Sunday.

Cup-holders Paragons 2 will face Jets 2 at 3 pm, Chargers Eagles 2 will take on High Flyerz Valkyries at 4 pm, and Starz 2 will clash with Dynasty Queens 2 at 5 pm.

Sports News

LICB T20 Festival to commence at SVRS in Antigua on Saturday



The inaugural Leeward Islands Cricket Board (LICB) T20 Festival will commence at the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium (SVRS) in North Sound, Antigua, on Saturday.

Six teams, comprising all eight member territories, will participate in the sub-regional T20 tournament that is slated to finish on Sunday, June 8.

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

Players from Montserrat and St. Maarten will team up to represent the Combined Islands, while players from the British and United States Virgin Islands will join forces to compete at the Virgin Islands team.

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

Antigua and Barbuda's 14-member squad, which is being led by captain Rahkeem "Jimbo" Cornwall, participated in a couple of practice matches at Ball Beef in Liberta in preparation for the tournament.

Nevis also released its 14-member squad, which is being captained by Theron Bussue. It also includes Leeward Islands Hurricane players Collin Archibald and Ross Powell.

Left-handed opener Jamie Cornelius and Jaden Carmichael, who represented the Leeward Islands Thunder at the recently concluded inaugural Cricket West Indies (CWI) Breakout T20 League, are also in the squad.

Tyler Martin is the head coach of the Nevis team, and Frank Monzac is the manager.

The tournament will fea-

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

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

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

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

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

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



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Antigua and Barbuda Draught Association to hold Bi-Election

The Antigua and Barbuda Draught Association (ABDA) is informing all members and the general public of its upcoming bi-election next month.

The election will be held at the ABDA's headquarters on Tuesday, June 3, at 7 pm.

The agenda for the evening includes the election of a new secretary for the organization, as well as the election of a floor member to serve on the executive council.

These elections are essential to ensuring the continued and effective governance of the body.

According to the ABDA, it is respectfully seeking the attendance and active participation of its membership to engage in this important democratic process.

Members of the ABDA are encouraged to arrive promptly and be prepared to cast their votes. For further



information, please contact the association's headquarters via telephone at (268) 723-4857 or 782-8331.

The Antigua and Barbuda Draught

Association is dedicated to the promulgation of the mind sport and related activities within the twin island state.

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off, while Brook took 13 singles from his first 19 balls before thrashing five fours and three sixes, including a couple of stylish whips over fine-leg.

However, his uppish cut was taken well by a tumbling Keacy Carty and Butler was also caught in the deep for 37 in his first innings back in the rank-and-file, leaving England vulnerable to a collapse with none of the top-five kicking on after getting in.

Having missed the Champions Trophy because of in-

jury and last week's Test win over Zimbabwe owing to his Indian Premier League commitments, Bethell was not so charitable in his first England innings in three months.

He warmed to his task gradually before upping the ante with a mighty slog sweep for six off the underused Gudakesh Motie – the only boundary the wily slow left-armer conceded in seven tidy overs.

Bethell cut loose with four sixes off the quicks in the final powerplay in an explosive 98-run stand in 44 balls alongside Will Jacks, who

contributed a rapid 39, including 22 in an over off the expensive Matthew Forde.

Needing 18 from the final over for a first international century, Bethell instead got a feather to Seales' wider off-cutter but England got to 400 – their sixth in ODIs – with four byes off the last ball.

Any hopes the Windies had of recording their highest ODI chase appeared to rest on captain Shai Hope anchoring the innings, but his pull off Mahmood's bouncer led to a stunning catch from Brydon Carse over his head, reminiscent

of Ben Stokes' unforgettable leaping grab in England's 2019 World Cup opener.

Hope's departure for 25 gave the bustling Mahmood his third wicket, having had Justin Greaves and Carty caught at mid-off by Brook, who dived to take a sharp chance off 18-year-old Jewel Andrew.

Brook took a couple more before Motie and Seales hit out down the order as the Windies avoided their heaviest defeat. England, though, sealed a commanding victory when Adil Rashid castled Alzarri Joseph.

England crush West Indies in first ODI



England's players celebrate after taking a wicket against the West Indies during the first One-Day International at Edgbaston in Birmingham, England, on Thursday, May 29, 2025. (Getty Images)

England's latest white-ball reboot under new captain Harry Brook started in stunning fashion as they thrashed the West Indies by 238 runs in the first One-Day International (ODI) at Edgbaston on Thursday.

A decade on from posting a 400-plus total in ODIs for the first time in Birmingham to kick-start Eoin Morgan's revival of the limited-overs sides, England piled up 400 for eight off their 50 overs in this Metro Bank ODI series opener despite no one reaching three figures.

Brook was one of four

batters to pass fifty – all of the top-seven made at least 37 – as he recorded 58 off 45 balls, but Jacob Bethell stole some of his thunder by top-scoring with 82 off 53 deliveries.

Ollie Pope and Zak Crawley may have quietened their critics with centuries against Zimbabwe last week but calls for Bethell to return to the Test side against India this summer are only likely to grow.

This was a classy innings which included five sixes and eight fours but was also paced perfectly before the

Windies were skittled for 162 in 26.2 overs as England snapped a seven-match losing run in style.

Saqib Mahmood and Jamie Overton claimed three wickets apiece as a record win was in the offing when the Windies lurched to 102 for eight, but the tail wagged and England settled for their second biggest ODI victory – bettered only by the 242-run margin by which they beat Australia in 2018.

Brook, who inherited an ODI side in disarray following a dreadful Champions Trophy that led to

Jos Buttler's resignation as skipper in March, claimed a record-equalling five catches to complete a memorable day.

It started by losing the toss but England's new-look opening pair pierced the in-field at will, with Jamie Smith showing off his range in his 37 after being dropped on one and Ben Duckett was customarily strong on the cut and pull in his 60 before both perished to outstanding catches inside the ring.

Joe Root made a typically unobtrusive 57 then nicked

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