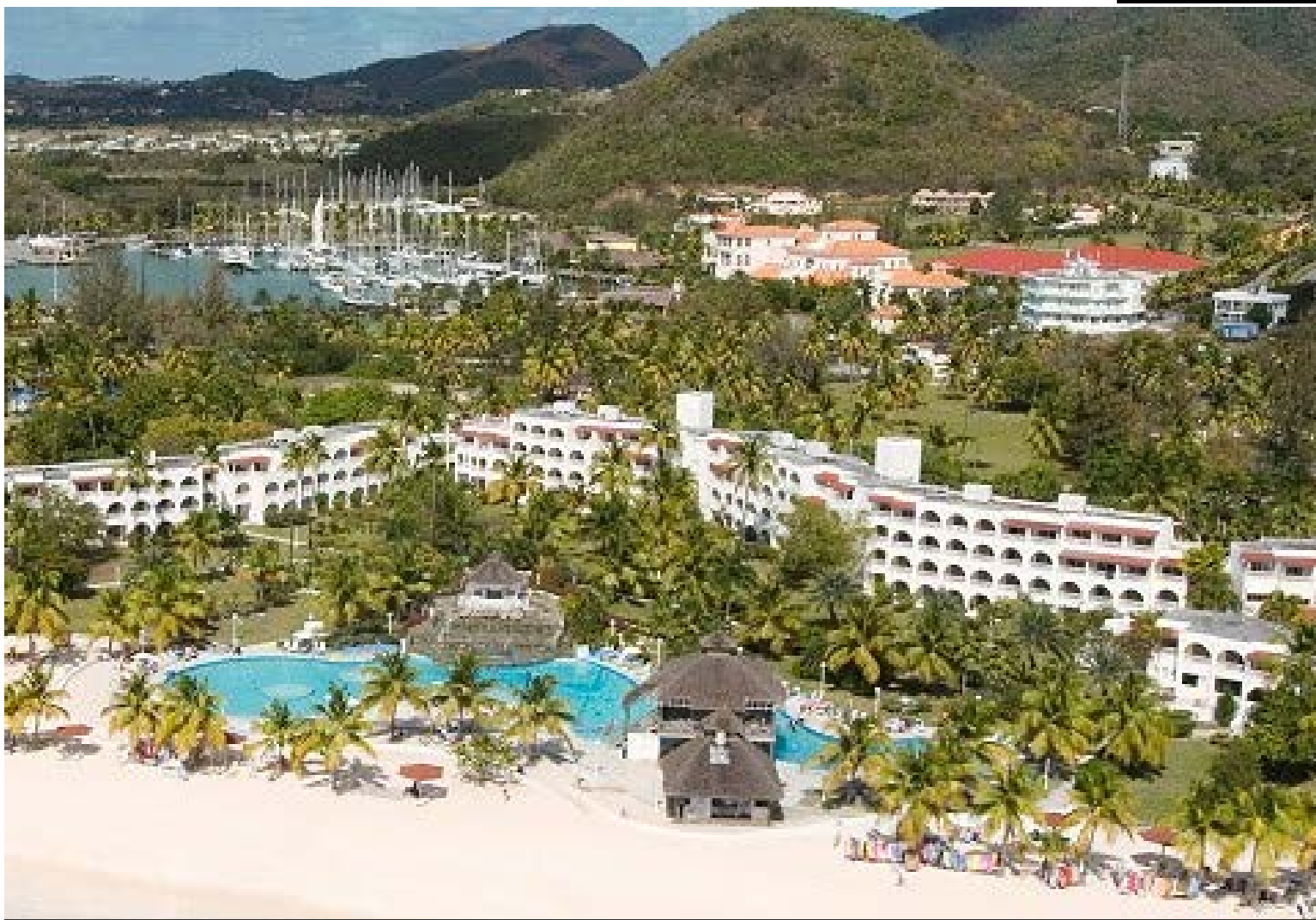


# Government agrees to allow the Social Security Scheme to invest in the Jolly Beach Resort

*Story on Page 2*



*Aerial view of Jolly Beach Resort*

## Government agrees to allow the Social Security Scheme to invest in the Jolly Beach Resort



The Cabinet has okayed a plan that will allow the Social Security Scheme of Antigua and Barbuda to undertake what has been termed ‘a strategic investment’ in the redevelopment of the Jolly Beach Resort.

In a statement, the government said the move is designed to strengthen the long-term viability of the Scheme. “As part of this initiative, the Government will inject \$75 million into the Scheme, which will be directed toward transforming the Jolly Beach property into a 500-room resort. The development will also include the construction of a new section featuring condominiums, which will be sold under the Citizenship by Investment Programme (CIP),” the statement noted.

Accordingly, this new policy is designed to diversify and enhance the investment portfolio of the Social Security Scheme, allowing it to generate sustainable revenue through both contributions and income-yielding investments. To facilitate this transformation, the Government will introduce amend-

ments to the Social Security Act, enabling the Scheme to restructure and actively participate in commercial ventures.

The Cabinet has emphasized that the Jolly Beach Resort holds strategic

significance for Antigua and Barbuda’s tourism sector. This policy will ensure the property’s full refurbishment, expansion, and long-term profitability, reinforcing its role as a key contributor to the national economy.



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DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT  
Antigua and Barbuda

## PROJECT CLEAN UP

We're cleaning and clearing out debris in key areas to help reduce storm-related risks in the community.

**SATURDAY 14 JUNE 2025**

**Woods Pond, Fort Road, Yorks, and McKinnons area**

**7:00 AM – 3:00 PM**

Comfortable clothing, closed-toe shoes, and sun protection

**SAFER WITH STATE.**



## Eleven years since the change in government

On 12 June 2014, or eleven years ago on this day (yes-terday), the people of Antigua and Barbuda decided to elect a new government to serve their needs. The United Progressive Party (UPP) was defeated after ten years as Government, from 2004 to 2014, by the Antigua and Barbuda Labour Party (ABLP), led by the Honourable Gaston Browne.

The ABLP won 14 of the 17 seats, and the UPP won 3. Barbuda was won by ABLP Arthur Nibbs who defeated the BPM/UPP candidate by a single vote. Nonetheless, the entire victory was decisive and the people spoke loudly. They rejected the majority mandate that had been given to the UPP administration in 2004 and in 2009, and they armed the ABLP with the power to govern, believing that the heritage party was indeed “Ready To Rebuild”.

Whenever a country turns to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for funding, it is because no other lending institution will provide needed capital; the IMF is the bank of last resort. The UPP borrowed \$320,000,000 including interest from the IMF, beginning shortly after the start of its second term; that sum was not invested but spent to meet regular obligations.

When the 6<sup>th</sup> June 2014 arrived, and time for repayment had arrived, the UPP defaulted. The general elec-



**Prime Minister Gaston Browne**

tions were six days away, on 12 June 2014. This particular failure led the Antigua and Barbuda people to reject the incumbent; they turned to a renewed Labour Party. By 2018, the IMF debt was repaid in full, a decade ahead of the scheduled time given.

Debts owed and unpaid by the UPP regime in 2014 included more than \$80,000,000 owed to the West Indies Oil Company for fuel delivered to the electricity plant; a debt in excess of \$120,000,000 owed to Antigua Power Company for unpaid electricity provided; a debt in excess of \$22,000,000 owed to Sembcorp—the provider of potable water by reverse osmosis; a failed ABI Bank that would cost more than \$375,000,000 to resolve and to save the banking system.

Antigua and Barbuda was on the verge of becoming a failed State in 2014. The ABLP would win the general elections of 2018 and again in 2023, reviving the mandate of 2014, in each case.

The UPP has, since 2014, alienated many of its talented members who have joined with the ABLP to ensure that better governance remains in the hands of the superior political party and government. Eleven years of successful governance have provided a clear measurement of the effectiveness of the incumbent administration, led by Prime Minister Gaston Browne. The economy has expanded exponentially, jobs and investment opportunities have multiplied, new housing has become available to more than 3,000 households, and

crime has been driven to very low levels. The gross domestic product has almost doubled since 2014.

Government transparency and openness have become commonplace, in the eleven years since 2014, including weekly briefings by a spokesperson for Cabinet whose responsibility has been to appear before reporters who ask probing questions. In the Parliament, there is a half-hour dedicated to allowing the Opposition members to ask questions of the Prime Minister; the Prime Minister responds spontaneously, since no questions are submitted in advance.

The losing UPP has resorted to joining with those who wish to harm Antigua and Barbuda and to destroy the ability to attract foreign direct investment, required for economic expansion and increased investment opportunities. Their recent alignment with a Russian plaintiff, claiming ownership of the Alfa Nero yacht that was sold by auction, is a clear example of unpatriotic and untruthful assertions; the Russian dispatched an investigator to Antigua, seeking to find dirt on government officials and family members of the Prime Minister. The UPP operatives gladly collaborated with fictionalized accounts. That matter has come to an end in the US court.

## Minister of Tourism, UN Ambassador agree future is bright for Antigua and Barbuda as international conference destination



**Antigua and Barbuda's Minister of Tourism, Charles Fernandez, CEO of the Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority (ABTA) Colin C. James, Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Tourism Sandra Joseph, the ABTA's US Director Dean Fenton and the ABTA's Director of the Caribbean and Latin America Charmaine Spencer.**



Antigua and Barbuda's Minister of Tourism, Charles Fernandez, is receiving high praise for his role in making Antigua and Barbuda a premier destination for hosting international meetings and conferences.

Recognition of his Ministry's strate-

gic vision comes from none other than Antigua and Barbuda's Permanent Representative to the United Nations Ambassador Walton Webson, who exerted his diplomatic influence in bringing the SIDS4 Conference to Antigua and Barbuda. The Conference was the largest of its kind to be held in the Ca-

ribbean and with the construction of the American University of Antigua conference centre, showcased Antigua and Barbuda's potential and ability to host major international meetings.

The spotlight was again shining brightly on Antigua and Barbuda as the recent hosts of Caribbean Marketplace, organized by the Caribbean Hotels and Tourism Association, almost exactly a year from the country's hosting of the SIDS4 Conference.

Both Minister Fernandez and Ambassador Webson shared thoughts on the exciting possibilities for the future during a meeting at the Antigua and Barbuda Permanent Mission in New York last week. The Minister was in the United States to participate in the events of Caribbean Week, organized by the Caribbean Tourism Organisation (CTO). He was joined in the meeting by CEO of the Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority (ABTA) Colin C. James, Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Tourism Sandra Joseph, the ABTA's US Director Dean Fenton and the ABTA's Director of the Caribbean and Latin America Charmaine Spencer.

Ambassador Webson noted that Antigua and Barbuda has gained international prominence as the premier meetings and conference destination of the Caribbean. He said he was proud that last year's SIDS Conference, a tribute to all the stakeholders who made it possible, has left a legacy for others to follow.

Meantime Minister Fernandez declared that this was a boast that his Ministry and the Cabinet of Antigua and Barbuda have not taken lightly as they are actively pursuing opportunities to leverage their newfound recognition as the Caribbean hub for meetings and conferences.



## Volunteerism Day 2025: Honouring Our Elders Through Service



As part of the ongoing Centenarian Week 2025 celebrations, the Community Development and Citizens' Engagement Division under the Ministry of Social and Urban Transformation observed Volunteerism Day today, Thursday, June 12, under the theme "Honouring Our Elders, Preserving Our Heritage."

This day is focused on giving back to the nation's elderly through acts of kindness, labour, and genuine community service, demonstrating the lasting value of unity, care, and generational respect.

Partnering with the Youth Volunteer Corps

In a beautiful display of intergenerational solidarity, the Division partnered with the Youth Volunteer Corps to carry out a special community project in service of one of the nation's oldest and most beloved residents. The initiative not only encouraged civic responsibility among young people but also allowed them to witness the importance of honouring and preserving the legacy of our centenarians.

Serving the Nation's Oldest Living Citizen

The highlight of Volunteerism Day was a heartfelt visit to assist Mrs. Hermena Goodwin, 104 years old, of Jonas Road, All Saints — the oldest living person in Antigua and Barbuda. With energy, compassion, and commitment, volunteers worked alongside the Department's staff to groom her yard, clean her surroundings, and perform general outdoor maintenance. The atmosphere was filled with joy, gratitude, and respect as young people and community representatives poured love into the life and home of a woman who has lived through over a century of national and global history. A Living Example of Service, Respect and Gratitude

Today's outreach was a tangible reminder that true legacy is not just measured in years lived but in the relationships we build and the care we show for one another. The effort brought joy to Mrs. Goodwin and served as a powerful lesson to all involved about the importance of serving others, especially those whose shoulders we now stand upon.

Final Celebration Tomorrow: Bake Sale Fundraiser!

The public is warmly invited to support the final event of Centenarian Week 2025 — the Centenarian Week Bake Sale Fundraiser, taking place tomorrow, Friday, June 13. All proceeds from the event will go toward continuing initiatives that honour and support Antigua and Barbuda's centenarian community.

**Location:**

***Doumith Building Parking Lot,  
Old Parham Road***

**Time: 10:00 a.m.**

**Contribution: \$10**

Come out and enjoy delicious baked goods while making a meaningful difference in the lives of our treasured elders. Every purchase helps uplift and preserve their stories, comfort, and dignity. Celebrating Longevity, Love, and Legacy As Centenarian Week 2025 comes to a close, let us carry forward its message beyond the week to continue celebrating and caring for the elders in our communities, honouring their contributions, and ensuring that their legacy lives on for generations to come.



# Local News

## Nobu Restaurant Barbuda – A truly delightful experience



The Nobu Restaurant Barbuda is nestled on the south-western side of the island, just a few minutes' drive from the River Dock, where the ferry lands and departs to and from Antigua at least twice a day.

Located on the beachfront with a spectacular view of one of Barbuda's many lovely beaches, the restaurant's ambience is laid back; no formalities as casual attire is permitted. However, the food is a gastronomical treat you would not soon forget.

My team and I traveled to Codrington for the Caribana activities over the Whit Weekend and arrangements were made for us to have lunch at Nobu on Saturday. By the time the confirmation came and we hurried to the restaurant it was a few minutes after 4:00 pm. "You are just in time for a quick lunch as our kitchen closes at 4:30," Manager Michela Eremita informed us as we arrived. (She too received late word that we were com-

ing and she was doing her best to accommodate us under the circumstances).

What transpired next was a joy as one member of the team ordered sushi while two others ordered chicken kebab, one served with rice and the other with fries. I can't speak to the sushi, but the chicken skewers with teriyaki sauce was as tender as it was succulent. The baby spinach with avocado was attractively presented and pleasing to the taste buds.

Despite the short notice and with preparations for closing in progress prior to our arrival, it was truly a delightful experience dining at Nobu Restaurant Barbuda.

We also learnt that visitors to the island quite often do a daytrip to Barbuda specially to have lunch at Nobu. It's a trip worth the while.

My team and I wish to extend our thanks and appreciation to the staff at Nobu, including sushi chef, Jose Sanchez Fajarda, bartender, Jedidiah Harris and server,



Kelton Griffith.

Special thanks to LIAT20 for seamless travel to and from Barbuda, to the Barbuda Ocean Club (PLH) for accommodation, Matthew John of the Barbuda Cari-

bana Committee, Francis Hadeed and Ambassador Patrice Luke for their assistance.

**Everton Barnes**

**Point Express Newspaper**



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

Antigua Barbuda  
**FESTIVALS  
COMMISSION**

**JACK  
IDLE**  
BAR AND RESTAURANT

# CARNIVAL KAISO TENT

**JACK  
IDLE | 8PM | \$20**

**DATE**

**FRI 13TH AND SAT 14TH JUNE**

(continuing every Friday and Saturday thereafter)

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Antigua's Carnival Festivals Commission



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# Local News



## PRESS RELEASE

### **Junior Calypsonians: They Are A VIBE! Historic Opportunity for Rising Juniors to Shine on the Big Stage**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> June 2025 - St. John's, Antigua.....**

Over the past decade, the Antigua and Barbuda Junior Calypso scene has witnessed remarkable growth, with young performers consistently delivering high-caliber, dynamic performances that rival even our most seasoned Calypsonians. This steady rise in quality and talent can be directly attributed to the Ministry of Education, Sports, and Creative Industries, which has invested in developmental training and coaching platforms designed to empower and elevate our youth in the performing arts.

In a bold and progressive move, the Hon. Daryll S. Matthew, Minister of Education, Sports and Creative Industries, in collaboration with the Antigua and Barbuda Festivals Commission (ABFC) has announced a significant new initiative:

**The Winner and First Runner-Up from the Senior Category (ages 13–19) of the 2024 University of the West Indies Five Islands Campus Junior Calypso Monarch Competition will be granted a bye into the Semi-Finals of the 2025 Calypso Monarch Competition, scheduled for Thursday, July 17th, 2025.**

These selected juniors have the option of performing an ABFC sponsored song or their 2024 competition calypso hit. However, it is important to note that any new composition produced under this initiative **cannot** be used to compete in the 2025 Junior Calypso Monarch Competition.

This historic initiative proudly includes:

- **Mr. Ruez Titre**, former Mr. Teenage 2023, the reigning 2024 Groovy Party Monarch, and 2024 Junior Calypso Monarch.
- **Mr. Mandela Anyandjuh**, reigning Mr. Teenage and first runner-up of the 2024 Junior Monarch Competition.

Both young men have earned their place in this inaugural initiative through talent, hard work, and consistent excellence.

Chairperson **Ambassador Elizabeth Makhoul** remarked: *“For the Board and I, this is more than just an achievement, it’s the realization of a vision we set three years ago when I was appointed Chair. One of our top goals has always been to create a legacy platform for our youth one that nurtures, supports, and promotes their continuous development through culture.”*

The **Hon. Daryll S. Matthew** added: *“As Minister responsible for Education, Culture, and Carnival, I am absolutely beaming. This initiative connects the core of all three pillars: Education empowers our youth to write compelling Calypso lyrics, Culture provides them with the training and mentorship to hone their skills, and Carnival offers the grand stage to showcase to the nation and by extension the world. This is the kind of synergy we must continue to build.”*

With this pioneering move, the Antigua and Barbuda Festivals Commission reaffirms its commitment to nurturing the next generation of iconic artists and creating spaces for young talent to flourish and be celebrated on national platforms.







ABLP St. John's Rural West Youth Arm & Senator the Hon.  
Michael Joseph presents

# FATHER'S DAY SIP AND PAINT

Join us for an unforgettable afternoon of laughter, creativity,  
and connection, for fathers or father figures and their  
child/children only.

No solo attendees — this event is all about sharing the  
moment together.



# 15



JUNE 2025  
1pm - 4pm

- LAWN GAMES 1-2PM
- SIP AND PAINT BEGINS PROMPTLY AT 2PM
- SPACES ARE LIMITED — RESERVE YOURS NOW!

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ENTRY



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# Commentary



## A Triumph of Trust – Prime Minister Browne’s Vindication and Antigua’s Democratic Resilience



By *E.P Chet Greene*

In a defining moment for Antigua and Barbuda, Prime Minister Gaston Browne has emerged vindicated by the U.S. court’s findings, which uncovered no culpability in the Alfa Nero yacht controversy. This outcome not only reaffirms the integrity of the nation’s leadership but also underscores the electorate’s wisdom in prioritizing due process over partisan theatrics. The ruling marks a pivotal victory for truth, sovereignty and the rule of law; values that have long anchored the Antigua Barbuda Labour Party’s (ABLP) stewardship of the nation.

The Alfa Nero saga, while marred by sensational claims, has ultimately validated the Antiguan government’s adherence to legal and transparent processes. The vessel’s sale, conducted under international scrutiny, was a necessary step to distance the nation from the fallout of global sanctions. Critics with alleged backroom deal-

ings underestimated the robustness of Antigua’s institutions. The U.S. court’s dismissal of corruption claims against PM Browne and the absence of illicit financial ties in his records expose the allegations as nothing short of politically motivated conjecture.

This verdict is a triumph for fairness. It reaffirms that Antigua’s governance frameworks, honed under successive ABLP administrations, remain resilient against baseless attacks. The Prime Minister’s stealth in the face of pressure, coupled with his confidence in judicial review, epitomizes leadership anchored in principle.

The United Progressive Party (UPP) wagered its credibility on a narrative of corruption, demanding Browne’s resignation without substantive evidence. Their strategy, rooted in opportunism rather than facts, has backfired most spectacularly. By staking their reputation on unproven claims, the UPP has once again alienated a public that values accountability over reckless politicization.

The electorate’s rejection of the UPP’s tactics reflects a deeper disillusionment with the party’s divisive approach. Internal discord, exemplified by public critiques of Jamale Pringle’s leadership, contrasts starkly with the ABLP’s unity and vision. The UPP’s failure to present a credible alternative, coupled with its role in amplifying unverified allegations, has eroded trust, positioning it as a party of obstruction rather than solutions. The outcome of this case was the UPP’s most costly miscalculation to date.

Antigua’s political heritage has been shaped by ABLP giants whose leader-

ship transcended crises. Sir V.C. Bird, the nation’s founding father, navigated the complexities of independence with a focus on unity and progress. Sir George Walter, though of the Progressive Labour Movement, faced challenges that later underscored the ABLP’s superior management of economic and social reforms.

Sir Lester Bryant Bird, architect of modern Antigua and Barbuda, elevated the nation onto the global stage through bold diplomacy and economic diversification. His intellect and vision laid the groundwork for initiatives like the Citizenship by Investment Programme (CIP), which today fuels 20% of GDP. PM Gaston Browne, inheriting this legacy, has modernized it, balancing partnerships with China, defending sovereignty against external pressures and steering the economy through global turbulence.

PM Browne’s exoneration solidifies his position as the leader best equipped to navigate Antigua’s challenges. His administration’s handling of the Alfa Nero crisis, despite relentless opposition demonstrates a commitment to transparency and national interest. Unlike the UPP, which traffics in division, Browne has prioritized stability, ensuring that Antigua’s reputation remains untarnished amid geopolitical crosscurrents.

Comparisons to UPP figures reveal a stark contrast. No current opposition member possesses Browne’s blend of strategic acumen, economic foresight, or diplomatic resolve. His leadership mirrors the innovative spirit of Sir Lester Bird, ensuring continuity in an era demanding adaptability.



# Commentary

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The Antiguan public's restraint throughout this ordeal deserves commendation. By rejecting mob justice and trusting institutions, citizens have proven that democracy thrives when facts prevail over fear. This maturity, cultivated through decades of ABLP-led nation-building, safeguards Antigua's future against those who would trade its stability for power.

This legal victory is not merely per-

sonal. It is a reaffirmation of Antigua and Barbuda's democratic ethos. The ABLP's legacy of principled leadership, from Bird to Browne, stands in stark relief against the UPP's hollow gambits. As the nation moves forward, let this moment remind us that honesty, integrity and fairness are not mere slogans but the bedrock of sovereignty.

To undermine these values is to

betray Antigua and Barbuda's future. To uphold them, as Browne has done, is to ensure its greatness. The electorate's verdict is clear: the ABLP remains the party of progress, and Gaston Browne, its indispensable champion.

The Alpha Nero has sailed. With fair winds the ship of state, captain, crew and passengers continue to navigate peace, progress and prosperity.

## Trinidadian man pleads to illegal firearm charge

A Trinidad and Tobago national, who resides at Bendals, has pleaded guilty to the illegal possession of firearm and ammunition.

50-year old Sheldon Sambury was arrested and charged last December for the illegal possession of a Smith and Wesson .357 revolver with eight matching rounds of ammunition.

He appeared in the magistrate's court on Thursday where he pleaded guilty to the charges and he is to return to court on Monday for sentencing.







## THE PDV HOUR

**MONDAYS**  
**11AM - 12NOON**

**MRS. JELLETTE RALPH**  
**(JELLY BEANS)**

## Antigua and Barbuda Hosts the OAS at a Crucial Juncture for the Americas



**By Sir Ronald Sanders**

The 55th Regular Session of the General Assembly of the Organization of American States (OAS) will be held in one of its smallest member states at a time of global political and economic uncertainty. That uncertainty is reflected across the Americas and within the OAS itself.

In this regard, the General Assembly in Antigua and Barbuda, from June 25 to 27, takes on special significance: it must provide the atmosphere and leadership to reinforce the OAS as a relevant instrument for advancing both individual and collective interests in the hemisphere.

Adding to the importance of this session is the first official appearance of the Organization's new Secretary-General, Albert Ramdin, who assumed office for a five-year term on May 26. He is the first national from the CARICOM group elected to this top post. For 40 years, CARICOM nationals held only the Assistant Secretary-General role, while Latin American countries dominated the leadership. His unanimous election,

following a contest with Paraguay's Foreign Minister, reflects confidence in CARICOM's contributions within the OAS. CARICOM representatives have worked diligently in OAS Councils, over many years, to earn this respect.

The Government of Antigua and Barbuda, as host and Chair of the Assembly, is acutely conscious of its role in providing an environment and guidance suited to current challenges. This Assembly takes place amid overlapping political, economic, social, security, and environmental pressures, and against a backdrop of longstanding institutional strains within the OAS. Those strains include chronic budget shortfalls, staffing gaps, and an overload of unfunded mandates, alongside the need to match aspirations with operational realities.

### **Building Inclusivity amid Tensions in the Americas**

Trade and migration tensions among the Organization's members, particularly Canada, Mexico, and the United States, remain public and ongoing. Ideological and other differences between Latin American states have surfaced in the OAS during elections for officeholders, such as the Assistant Secretary-General (now Colombia's Laura Gil) and the Commissioners of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights to be chosen at this Assembly.

Amid these tensions, Antigua and Barbuda has advanced the theme of the 55th General Assembly: "Building resilient and inclusive economies in the Americas." This theme captures pressing concerns across the region, emphasizing resilience—strengthening economies to withstand external shocks, whether global market disruptions, climate events, or public health emergencies—and inclusivity, allow-

ing each member and observer state, large or small, to articulate its priorities within a collective framework. It reaffirms that improving the well-being of every citizen in the Americas is a shared goal, and that collaboration, mutual respect, and solidarity are essential.

It is in that spirit that Antigua and Barbuda—whose Foreign Minister, E. Paul Chet Greene, is expected to be elected Chair—proposes to guide the Assembly.

### **Institutional Context: Chronic Strains and Mandate Overload**

Even with political will, progress faces an uphill battle due to inadequate funding. For years, the OAS Secretariat has contended with a persistent gap between assessed contributions and the costs of its core programs. Overreliance on unpredictable voluntary contributions, including support from Observer states, further exposes key programs to abrupt suspensions. As delegates prepare to debate mechanisms for mandate management and to consider the Organization's budget and funding sources, matching ambitions to resources remains vital for the OAS's effectiveness and credibility.

### **Governance and Humanitarian Pressures**

Democratic practices across member states show signs of strain. For example, a June 2025 assassination attempt on Miguel Uribe, a presidential candidate in Colombia, underscores risks to electoral integrity and citizen confidence. However, the most acute emergency grips Haiti, where armed groups now control the majority of Port-au-Prince, blocking basic state functions, precipitating a humanitarian catastrophe, and preventing the restoration of democratic institutions and the election of a representative gov-



ernment. At the General Assembly, it is incumbent upon the OAS and its member states, within the framework of the OAS Charter and their respective means, to continue demonstrating solidarity with the people of Haiti.

## Discussions in the Margins

As important as the formal agenda is, equally vital are the informal discussions among high representatives of member and Observer states that will take place outside public sessions. These exchanges on global economic and political realities often shape understanding and trust, informing official deliberations. And the international scene is not encouraging.

Global growth projections for 2025 indicate subdued expansion, with the United Nations forecasting approximately 2.4% growth worldwide. Regional estimates indicate growth near 2.5% in South America, about 1.0% in Central America and Mexico, and under 2% in the Caribbean for 2025. Elevated debt burdens limit fiscal space for social investments. Inflationary pressures have resurfaced amid trade tensions. U.S. tariffs, imposed on all countries last April, have raised costs in hemispheric supply chains, intensifying cost-of-living strains even where measures have been paused.

Concurrent reductions in US funding—for example, cuts affecting UN Organizations, the Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO), and the OAS—impact health programmes and emergency-response capacity, with knock-on effects on workforce productivity in these organizations and social welfare conditions in Latin American and Caribbean countries. These economic and social pressures underscore why the Assembly's consideration of financing the OAS's Program Budget for 2026 mirrors the broader fiscal constraints faced by member governments. The discussion will not be procedural; it will be vital.

## Spillover effects of conflicts

The Russian war against Ukraine, the Israel-Hamas conflict in Gaza, and the high level of civilian deaths in both theatres have spilled over into the concerns of OAS member states as the prospect of global economic and political instability grows. Though not on the formal agenda of the Assembly, delegates will hardly be able to avoid informal discussion of these issues in their private conversations.

## Conclusion: Seizing a Watershed Moment for the OAS

Therefore, the General Assembly in Antigua presents an opportunity for

member states to reclaim the relevance of the OAS and to deliver results that citizens truly value. Member States face a clear choice: allow another Assembly to close amid familiar frustrations, or seize this moment with pragmatic actions to foster resilient, inclusive economies across the Americas for the benefit of all.

*(The writer is Antigua and Barbuda's Ambassador to the US. He is also the Dean of the Corps of Ambassadors accredited to the Organization of American States. The views expressed are entirely his own. Responses and previous commentaries: [www.sirronaldsanders.com](http://www.sirronaldsanders.com))*



# REGISTRATION DEADLINE

## 13TH JUNE 2025

### CATEGORIES:

- Carnival Floats
- The University of the West Indies Five Islands Campus Junior Calypso Monarch
- Junior Party Monarch
- LIAT 2020 T-Shirt Mas Troupes
- Koscab Junior Carnival
- Calypso Monarch
- APUA INET Party Monarch
- Koscab J'ouvert Troupes
- Individual Mas
- Road March **23RD JULY 2025**
- Monday Wear
- Mas Troupes
- Vendors & Booth Operators **30TH JUNE 2025**

#### WHERE TO COLLECT FORMS:

- National Festivals Office, 1st Floor, Cecil George-John Building, Corn Alley & Redcliffe Street
- Ministry of Creative Industries, Old Parham Road (Upstairs KFC/INET Building)

#### HOURS:

**MON - THURS**  
10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

**FRI**  
10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

mail: [info.nof@ab.gov.ag](mailto:info.nof@ab.gov.ag) or WhatsApp: (268) 727-9201. For inquiries, call (268) 462-4707

#### COMPLETED REGISTRATION FORMS MUST BE RETURNED TO:

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

# ANTIGUA Carnival 2025

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# Opinion

## When Life Changes in an Instant: Travon Giddings and the Fragility of Ability

On June 5, 2025, Constable Travon Giddings suffered a catastrophic attack—so severe that it led to the amputating of his leg. The shooter remains at large, but the larger crisis is the sudden shift in Travon's life. One moment, he was walking and serving; the next, he's navigating a prosthetic. It's a stark reminder: *any one of us can become disabled in an instant.*

This sudden transformation demands we rally—not just for Travon, but for all of us. A community built on hope and support is one that recognizes disability isn't a distant possibility, it's a human reality. Whether someone is born with a disability or acquires it through tragedy or illness, our compassion and



**Constable Travon Giddings**

infrastructure must extend to everyone—today.

Our work supports those

born with disabilities and those who become disabled throughout life. We strive to offer emotional, finan-

cial, and practical support—from accessible healthcare to workplace accommodations—because ability isn't static. It can vanish without warning, and we must be prepared.

As Robert M. Hensel, an advocate born with a disability, once said: "We, the ones who are challenged, need to be heard. To be seen not as a disability, but as a person who has and will continue to bloom." Or consider Martina Navratilova's reminder: "Disability is a matter of perception. If you can do just one thing well, you're needed by someone."

These voices ground us: a disability doesn't erase purpose, passion, or belonging.



**Tuesdays & Wednesdays are... #KRUNCH DAYS**

4 Pieces  
2 Biscuits  
**\$24.00**

**BURGER**  
Medium Drink  
**\$19.99**

**WEEKEND!... KRUNCH BUCKET**

12 Pieces  
**\$72.00**

...add a 2 liter soda for **\$10.99**  
\*\*while supplies last\*\*  
...don't forget your favorite sides

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FESTIVALS  
COMMISSION

# PANDE VIBE



FOOD & DRINKS  
ON SALE

KIDS ZONE

SAT. JUN 14<sup>TH</sup> | 2:00PM

REDCLIFFE STREET  
(BETWEEN CROSS STREET & TEMPLE STREET)

Hellsgate | Halcyon | Westside  
Original | Pandemonium | Panache



# Together We Rise: Confronting the Culture of Division



By Garfield Joseph

There's a saying that "many hands make light work," yet in Antigua and Barbuda, and even among our diaspora in places like New York, Florida and Georgia, we often find ourselves working in silos—distrustful, divided, and disengaged from one another. Meanwhile, we watch as other nationalities—Jamaicans, Guyanese, Dominicans—come together, support each other's businesses, and build thriving communities both at home and abroad. Why is it so hard for us to do the same?

This article is not about blame. It's about reflection. It's about understanding the motivations behind our behaviours—both positive and negative—and choosing a better path forward.

## The Heart of the Matter

The Bible tells us in Jeremiah 17:9, "*The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?*" This verse speaks to the root of many of our struggles. Our behaviours—how we treat one another, how we speak about each other, how we support

or sabotage—are often driven by the condition of our hearts.

We forget the biblical imperative found in Matthew 7:12: "*Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.*" Instead of lifting each other up, we tear each other down. Instead of celebrating each other's successes, we criticize, gossip, and complain.

## Understanding Behaviour: Positive vs. Negative

**Positive behaviour** is any action that builds up, encourages, and promotes unity. It includes:

- Offering constructive feedback
- Respecting others' opinions
- Supporting local businesses
- Giving credit where it's due ("giving Jack his jacket")
- Collaborating rather than competing

These behaviours are essential in every area of life—at work, at home, at church, and even at play. They lead to harmony, productivity, and mutual respect.

**Negative behaviour**, on the other hand, is destructive. It includes:

- Criticizing without cause
- Complaining without offering solutions
- Cheating, lying, and gossiping
- Disrespecting others
- Sabotaging others' efforts

Then there's **passive-aggressive**

**behaviour**—perhaps the most dangerous of all. It wears the mask of positivity but hides malicious intent. It's the smile in your face followed by slander behind your back. We've all experienced it. Some of us have even practiced it.

## The Brain Drain: A Loss of Trust

Many of our brightest minds go abroad to study, full of hope and ambition to return to contribute to their country's development. But far too often, they choose not to return—not because they don't love their country, but because they fear rejection, jealousy, and sabotage from their own people. They worry that their ideas will be dismissed, their efforts undermined, and their character attacked.

Ironically, these same individuals flourish abroad in even more competitive environments. Their talents are recognized, their skills are valued, and their contributions are celebrated. What others see as assets, we too often treat as threats.

## The Politics of Division

We must also confront the toxic culture of political division and character assassination. Too many are motivated to publish the worst stories about people and our beloved country, not realizing—or not caring—about the damage done to individuals and to our national image. We must ask ourselves: to what end?

Political rivalry should never come at the expense of national unity. We can disagree without being destructive. We can critique without con-



demning. We can hold each other accountable without tearing each other apart.

## A Better Way Forward

The good news, we don't have to follow this playbook of division. We can choose our attitudes. We can manage our behaviours. We can decide to build up rather than to tear down.

And here is the biblical indicative found in Galatians 6:7, "*Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.*" That is to say their time will come, for better or for worse, according to their deeds. Somethings are better left in the hands of the almighty.

The moral imperative is clear: choose the good path. Let us take inspiration from our national anthem: "*Each endeavouring, all achieving.*" This is not just a poetic line—it's a call to action. It's a vision of what we can become if we work together.

## A Word to the Diaspora

To our brothers and sisters living abroad—in Brooklyn, in the Bronx, in Atlanta—we see the same patterns. While other Caribbean communities rally around their own, we often fail to support each other. We open businesses and expect strangers to support us, while our own people walk past without a second glance.

Let's change that. Let's be intentional about supporting Antiguan and Barbudan businesses, initiatives, and dreams—whether we're at home or abroad.

**Conclusion: Answering Duty's**

## Call

We are a small nation with a big heart. But we must guard that heart. We must choose to act with kindness, integrity, and unity. Let us create a culture of lifting up rather than tearing down. Let us be known not for our divisions, but for our

solidarity.

Let us answer duty's call—not just in words, but in action. Let us live out the anthem we sing with pride: "*Raise the standard! Raise it boldly! Answer now to duty's call.*"

The choice is ours. Let's begin today.



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# The Importance of Fathers



by *Derrick Nicholas*

It has often been said that there is no stronger bond than a father and daughter. I, too, have now come to that conclusion. Last summer my daughter and I embarked on a trip to the United States. What initially was a trip primarily to get school supplies, some articles of clothing, and shoes as well, mushroomed into so much more.

The trip mushroomed into a bonding experience as well as an opportunity to deeply learn about each other. The two and a half weeks together provided us with an opportunity to learn and understand each other on a far deeper level.

Parents in general are the biggest influencers in a child's life. Forget about social media: a child learns what he or she lives or is taught. Of all the relationships a child is expected to have and cultivate, the father-daughter relationship has the potential to have the greatest positive impact on a girl's life.

What you say or do as a father carries more weight than if anybody else says or does the same thing. It is why as fathers we must recognize and understand our role in the lives of our children – in particular girls. Our number one role is to validate our daughter without ceasing. When we do so, we are letting them know that they are special, unique, loved, valued and

greatly treasured.

It is a father who is his daughter's first love. It is he who sets the bar – whether high or low – for what his daughter is to expect later in life. It is by his standards that any future partner will be judged. That is why the father-daughter bond is so important.

In many ways, as a father you are shaping your daughter's life in more ways than you can ever imagine. You are giving her perspectives that she would not otherwise have. You are a male – different to her and her mother. This is not to discount the role of her mother.

Your opinion on topics such as boys and how they think, dating, safety concerns and personal boundaries. These things are taught to our daughters via a trusted source: dad. As fathers, we are also preparing our daughters to deal with people of differing views. Therefore, fathers must be gentle, knowledgeable, and trustworthy. Your daughter will tell you things that she will never tell her mother.

We know that being a parent does not come with a manual nor a handbook. Here are some things you

can do in order to be a good father: (i) Be present in your daughter's life. This means attending her recitals, basketball or football games, school events including Parent Teacher Association meetings; (ii) Do things that she likes to do. This gives her a sense of individuality. (iii) Show appropriate affection to your daughter. Understand that how you show affection will change as her body develops. Do not shy away, but stay connected in safe and appropriate ways. (iv) Include her in things you like. Make her feel included in your world. (v) Treat her as equally valuable. Her female-ness is just as valued as well as her perspective. (vi) Be curious. Find out if there are things that you do or say that embarrasses her. This will show that you are emotionally protecting her from your words or actions which may cause harm. (vii) Validate. Validate her efforts, accomplishments, unique personality traits, her female way of thinking and character.

Being a father is an incredible privilege as well as a challenge. The responsibilities are huge, and consequential. However, they are doable.





MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, SPORTS AND CREATIVE INDUSTRIES

**Ministry of Creative Industries Announces National Adjudication  
Workshop for Calypso and Soca Competitions:**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup>, June 2025 – *St. John's, Antigua and Barbuda*.....**

The Ministry of Creative Industries is pleased to announce the hosting of the National Adjudication Workshop for both new and returning adjudicators of the nation's premier Soca and Calypso vocal competitions. The two-day workshop will be held on Saturday, June 21<sup>st</sup> and Sunday, June 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2025, from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. each day, at the State Insurance Company Limited Conference Room, located in the Treasury Building at the corner of St. Mary's Street and Independence Avenue.

This workshop is a critical component of the Ministry's ongoing commitment to elevating the standards of cultural adjudication and ensuring fairness, transparency, and cultural integrity in the judging process. It is mandatory for all adjudicators wishing to be considered for selection in the 2025 national Soca and Calypso competitions to attend this workshop.

Workshop sessions will be facilitated by the esteemed **Sylvester "King Socrates" Hodge**, a celebrated cultural icon, veteran calypsonian, and respected adjudicator with decades of experience in the field.

**This year's training will include sessions on:**

- Understanding Calypso as a Cultural Expression
- A Deep Dive into the Calypso Criteria
- A Deep Dive into the Soca Criteria
- Practical Sessions: Approaches to Scoring
- Understanding Soca: Structure and Purpose
- Ethical Judging and Bias Awareness
- Open Session with Artists, Writers, and Composers

All persons interested in participating must register in advance at the **Festival Office on Redcliff Street**. For more information, please call the **Festival Office at 562-7267 or 562-9606**.

The Ministry encourages the participation of both seasoned adjudicators and newcomers who are passionate about the development and fair evaluation of Antigua and Barbuda's vibrant musical traditions.

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## Dominica: Elderly woman takes her life

Police in Dominica are investigating what appeared to be a woman taking her own life.

The Criminal Investigations Department (CID) of the Commonwealth of Dominica Police Force (CDPF) is investigating the incident that occurred in Castle Comfort earlier today.

According to reports from police, at 7:57am, the CID investigators arrived at the victim's residence in Castle Comfort in response to a reported suicide.

A 74-year-old female was found in her bedroom in circumstances which suggested that she had taken her own life.

The District Medical Doctor pronounced her dead.

Inspector Fixton Henderson processed the scene and reported that there was no initial sign of foul play.

Authorities said an autopsy of the deceased will be conducted, fol-

lowed by a coroner's inquest.

If you are in crisis or need support, please reach out to a mental health professional or contact a crisis line in your area. Dominica Emergency Hotline (Police, Fire, Ambulance): 911 or Lifeline Ministries at 767-235-8367 (*Loop Caribbean*)

## USVI: Former bank teller charged for stealing \$100K from elderly customer

A former Oriental Bank teller has been arrested on multiple fraud charges after allegedly stealing \$100,000 from a 90-year-old customer's account.

The Economic Crimes Unit began investigating on January 29, 2025, following a complaint from the elderly victim reporting an incident of obtaining money by false pretence. The investigation revealed that Jahmaira Farrell, while working as a bank teller, allegedly abused her position to fraudulently access the victim's account.

According to reports, Farrell created false documents to authorize printing a manager's check for \$100,000, made payable to an accomplice. The accomplice deposited the check into his Banco Popular de Puerto Rico account and subsequently wired \$60,386.49 to Metro Motors Management Incorporation in Florida to purchase a 2022 blue Acura MDX for Farrell. The accomplice then provided Farrell with a \$30,000 check, which she deposited into her personal Bank of St Croix account. The accomplice retained and spent the remaining \$9,613.51 from his account.

Investigators discovered additional fraudulent checks had been cashed



against the victim's account, but these fell outside the statute of limitations.

On June 9, detectives arrested 29-year-old Farrell at the United States Postal Service facility in Mars Hill. She was advised of her rights and taken into custody without incident before being transported to the Wilbur H. Francis Command Police Operation building for booking.

Farrell faces charges including obtaining money by false pretence, forgery, uttering or passing forged or counterfeited matters, passing or possession of forged bills or notes, embezzlement by fiduciaries, grand larceny, aggravated identity theft, participating in fraud on creditors, access to computer for fraudulent purposes, financial exploitation of an elderly or dependent adult, and conspiracy.

Bail was set at \$35,000 but having been unable to post bail, Farrell was remanded to the John A. Bell Adult Correction Facility pending her advice of rights hearing.

Meanwhile, police also arrested Farrell's accomplice in the scheme. On June 10, 2025, 44-year-old Mylon Allen surrendered at the Wilbur H. Francis Command Police Station after being notified that an arrest warrant had been issued for him. Allen was advised of his rights and placed under arrest without incident.

Allen faces the same charges as Farrell, including obtaining money by false pretence, forgery, uttering or passing forged or counterfeited matters, passing or possession of forged bills or notes, grand larceny, aggravated identity theft, participating in fraud on creditors, access to computer for fraudulent purposes, financial exploitation of an elderly or dependent adult, and conspiracy.

While Allen's bail was initially set at \$20,000, he was granted permission to post just \$800 and was released pending his advice of rights hearing. (*Loop Caribbean*)

# Regional News



## Health ministry warns of sea lice in Bahamas waters through August

The Ministry of Health & Wellness in The Bahamas has issued an advisory reminding the public that sea lice are commonly present in the warm waters surrounding The Bahamas from March to August.

Sea lice are the larvae of jellyfish that, though barely visible to the human eye, float on the sea surface and tend to gather near the shoreline, especially in shallow, calm waters. Skin contact with sea lice often results in dermatitis or “sea bathers’ eruption,” which occurs when the larvae become trapped between swimwear and the skin.

The eruptions produce a prickly or stinging sensation that progresses into a bumpy, red rash within 4 to 24 hours following exposure. This skin rash can last up to two weeks. Other symptoms may include nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, headache, fever (usually 101°F), muscle spasms, joint pains, and difficulty sleeping.

According to the ministry, “treatment



for sea bathers’ eruption include antihistamines such as diphenhydramine or Benadryl and corticosteroid creams such as Hydrocortisone 0.5 per cent or 1 per cent. Bathing in colloidal oatmeal preparations and applying calamine lotion to the rash may also provide comfort.”

Officials warn that people should avoid scratching or scraping the affect-

ed area as it may cause further irritation and skin damage. In severe cases, epinephrine and other intramuscular steroids may be required.

The ministry also advises beachgoers to be aware of their individual risk, especially if they have strong allergic reactions. Officials recommend wearing two-piece swimsuits and avoiding t-shirts and one-piece swimsuits, which can trap larvae against the skin while swimming.

After swimming, people should “change out of swimwear [and] swimwear should be washed with detergent and dried in a dryer as there may be a recurrence of symptoms when wearing a swimsuit that was air-dried.”

“Anyone who suspects they have been affected by sea lice and are experiencing other symptoms along with the rash should seek medical attention,” according to the advisory. (*Loop Caribbean*)

## Neita Garvey calls for national training academy for firefighters and emergency responders

Opposition Spokesperson on Local Government, Natalie Neita Garvey, has called for the urgent modernisation of Jamaica’s fire services, including the establishment of a national training academy for firefighters and emergency responders.

Speaking during her Sectoral Debate contribution on Tuesday, Neita Garvey highlighted that despite Jamaica having a fire service for over 150 years, the country still lacks a proper training facility for new recruits.

This gap, she argued, has weakened Jamaica’s capacity to respond effectively to today’s evolving risk profile, including climate-related threats like wildfires.

“Our risk exposure is real and growing,” she said. “And yet, there is no allocation in the 2025/26 budget for fire service training. That is unacceptable.”



able.”

Neita Garvey announced that a future PNP administration will begin work within its first year to identify a location and begin the development of a Fire Response Training Academy.

She said the facility will provide ongoing, modular training with on-the-job

certification and clear pathways for promotion and improved compensation. “Our firefighters deserve modern training, international best practices, and proper tools to carry out their duties, not just in firefighting, but in rescue operations, emergency response, and disaster investigation,” she stated. In addition to training, she underscored the need for a comprehensive audit of fire hydrants across Jamaica and the development of a national hydrant maintenance programme. Many communities, she said, remain dangerously underserved, even those with running water.

The plan also includes upgrading existing fire stations, constructing new ones (including specialised response units), and ensuring all stations meet international safety standards. (*Jamaica Gleaner*)





MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, SPORTS AND CREATIVE INDUSTRIES

**THE DEPARTMENT OF CREATIVE INDUSTRIES PRESENTS**  
**“Understanding Your Voice” – A Vocal Development Workshop for Soca and Calypso Artists**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup>, June 2025 – *St. John's, Antigua and Barbuda*.....**

As Antigua and Barbuda prepares for the highly anticipated carnival and festival season, the Department of Creative Industries is proud to announce groundbreaking **Vocal Development Workshop** titled “**Understanding Your Voice**”, led by internationally acclaimed vocal trainer **Yulexis Garcia**. The workshop will be held on June 23<sup>rd</sup> 2025 at the State Insurance Conference Room in the Treasury Building from 7pm to 9pm.

This specialized workshop is designed to support all vocalist particularly those who participates in the **Soca and Calypso competitions**, in achieving peak performance while safeguarding their vocal health. Recognizing that the art of performance in these genres is both a cultural treasure and a rigorous discipline, the Ministry has crafted this initiative to enhance **vocal ability, longevity, and stage impact**.

**Who Should Attend:**

- **Soca and Calypso singers** preparing for the upcoming competitive season
- **Vocalists** looking to refine technical skills and preserve long-term vocal health
- **Emerging artists** seeking professional guidance and development

**Workshop Focus Areas:**

- Understanding Vocal Mechanics
- Vocal Health and Maintenance
- Performance Readiness and Stamina
- Breath Control and Projection
- Stage Presence and Delivery Techniques
- Practical Exercises for Long-Term Vocal Care

Led by the exceptional **Yulexis Garcia**, whose expertise in vocal training has benefitted artists across the Caribbean and Latin America, this session promises to equip participants with critical tools to elevate their artistry and preserve their vocal instrument throughout their careers.

Interested participants are encouraged to stay connected through the Ministry's channels. For more information, please contact the **Festival Office at 562-7267** or call **562-9606**.

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## Zambia's president not wanted at predecessor's funeral, family says

Zambia's former President Edgar Lungu, who died last week, left instructions that his successor Hakainde Hichilema "should not be anywhere near" his body, a family spokesman has said.

This is the latest development in the bitter feud over funeral plans for the late president following his death in South Africa at the age of 68.

The government had planned to fly his body back home on Wednesday, but failed to do so because of a dispute with Lungu's family and his political party, the Patriotic Front (PF), over mourning and funeral arrangements.

The two leaders were long-standing political rivals, with Hichilema defeating Lungu in the 2021 election after failing in five previous attempts.

Lungu died of an undisclosed illness, but the PF said last week that he had been receiving "specialised treatment" in South Africa.

The PF alleged that Lungu was banned from leaving the country for years and that if he had been allowed to travel to seek medical treatment sooner, he might still be alive.

The government has denied the allegation.



Zambia's Foreign Minister Mulambo Haimbe was among government officials who flew to South Africa on Wednesday for talks with Lungu's widow, Esther, and his influential daughter, Tasila, to break the deadlock over what happens next.

The government wants to give Lungu, who led Zambia from 2015 to 2021, a state funeral.

The Lungu family's spokesman, lawyer Makebi Zulu, previously told the BBC that the family was not opposed to this, but it wanted a say over who would preside over the service.

However, in a video released from South Africa on Thursday, Mr Zulu said the family had put in place "all logistics" to fulfil Lungu's wishes to be given a private funeral and that Hichilema "should not be anywhere near" his body.

The government was be-

having as though the family had "no say" over his burial and the way he should be mourned, Mr Zulu added.

It was the family's desire that the "conscience of the deceased should not be betrayed", he said.

In his response, Haimbe said that while the bereaved family had put forward its wishes, Lungu's funeral concerned all Zambians as he was a former president.

"I'm sure all of us would want to have a fitting send-off for our former president, and that is what we must work towards achieving," the foreign minister told local journalists.

In an earlier statement, the government said that "constructive consultations" were continuing with Lungu's family to ensure the "smooth repatriation" of his body.

The dispute has caused much sadness and confusion among Zambians

who are unclear how to mourn the ex-president.

The government declared a seven-day national mourning period starting last Saturday, even though the PF announced one days earlier.

The government declared that the official venue for mourning would be a lodge it owns in the capital, Lusaka, but the PF dismissed this plan, directing mourners to its headquarters instead.

Constitutional lawyer John Sangwa told the BBC that the "tug-of-war" highlighted the need for Zambia to come up with a law which outlined funeral arrangements for presidents and ex-presidents, but he believed that at the end of the day the wishes of the family should be respected.

After Lungu's defeat in the 2021 election, he stepped back from politics but later returned to the fray.

He remained the biggest political drawcard of the PF, and he had ambitions to vie for the presidency again.

However, at the end of last year the Constitutional Court barred him from running, ruling that he had already served the maximum two terms allowed by law. (BBC News)



## Some Jolly Rancher sweets unsafe to eat, FSA says



A number of products from a brand of US sweets are “unsafe to eat” and contain ingredients which could damage DNA and increase the risk of cancer, the Food Standards Agency (FSA) has warned.

UK businesses and consumers are being urged to stop buying and selling the Jolly Ranchers products, owned by US company Hershey.

The FSA says they contain chemical compounds - mineral oil aromatic hydrocarbons (MOAH) and mineral oil saturated hydrocarbons (MOSH) - which are “not compliant with UK laws”.

The products pose a safety risk if consumed regularly over time but there is “no immediate cause for concern, as [the] food safety risk is low”, the agency adds.

In a food alert published on Wednesday evening, the FSA said: “MOAH can cause damage to DNA and has the potential to increase the risk of cancer, particularly if consumed in high quantities over a prolonged period of time.

“MOAH is a genotoxic carcinogen,

therefore no exposure is without risk to human health.”

MOAH and MOSH are used in confectionery to prevent stickiness and create a glossy appearance.

According to the agency, The Hershey Company has been working with the UK government body to remove the affected Jolly Rancher products from

the UK market since 2024, but some businesses in Britain have continued to import the products.

The affected products are: Jolly Rancher Hard Candy, Jolly Rancher ‘Misfits’ Gummies, Jolly Rancher Hard Candy Fruity 2 in 1, and Jolly Ranchers Berry Gummies.

The food agency is advising people who have any of the listed products to not eat them and dispose of them at home. If consumers have any concerns, they are being asked to notify the Trading Standards department or environmental health department in the local authority they made the purchase from.

The agency said it was asking enforcement authorities to make “immediate contact” with businesses which had been supplied with or received any of the products, and take action to ensure they were withdrawn from the market. (*BBC News*)



## Members of the Fulbright scholarship board resign, accusing Trump of meddling

All 12 members of the board overseeing the prestigious Fulbright scholarships resigned Wednesday in protest of what they call the Trump administration's meddling with the selection of award recipients for the international exchange programme.

A statement published online by the board members said the administration usurped the board's authority by denying awards to "a substantial number of people" who already had been chosen to study and teach in the US and abroad. Another 1,200 foreign award recipients who were already approved to go to the US are undergoing an unauthorised review process that could lead to their rejection, the board members said.

"To continue to serve after the Administration has consistently ignored the Board's request that they follow the law would risk legitimising actions we believe are unlawful and damage the integrity of this storied program and America's credibility abroad," the statement reads.

Congress established the Fulbright programme nearly 80 years ago to promote international exchange and American diplomacy. The highly selective programme awards about 9,000 scholarships annually in the US and in more than 160 other countries to students, scholars, and professionals in a range of fields.



Fulbright scholars include recent US college graduates who pursue further study or teach English overseas, American professors who spend a year at a university in another country and international scholars who go to the US to study or work at universities there. Alumni of the programme have gone on to serve as heads of state or government and have received Nobel and Pulitzer prizes. Notable alumni include Leslie Voltaire, president of Haiti's transitional presidential council; Muhammad Yunus, chief adviser of Bangladesh; Luc Frieden, prime minister of Luxembourg; and King Felipe VI of Spain.

Award recipients are selected in a yearlong process by nonpartisan staff at the State Department and other countries' embassies. The board

has had final approval. The recipients who had their awards cancelled are in fields including biology, engineering, agriculture, music, medical sciences, and history, the board members said.

All the board members who resigned were selected under former President Joe Biden. The State Department, which runs the scholarship programme, said they were partisan political appointees.

"It's ridiculous to believe that these members would continue to have final say over the application process, especially when it comes to determining academic suitability and alignment with President Trump's Executive Orders. The claim that the Fulbright Hayes Act affords exclusive and final

say over Fulbright Applications to the Fulbright board is false. This is nothing but a political stunt attempting to undermine President Trump," the department said.

The announcement comes as the Trump administration ratchets up scrutiny of international students on several fronts. The administration has expanded the grounds for revoking foreign students' legal status and recently paused scheduling of new interviews for student visas as it increases vetting of their social media activity.

The government also has moved to block foreign students from attending Harvard as it pressures the Ivy League school to adopt a series of reforms. (*Jamaica Gleaner*)



## Air India plane headed to London crashes with more than 240 onboard



An Air India passenger plane bound for London with more than 240 people on board crashed Thursday in India's northwestern city of Ahmedabad, and there were no known survivors, officials said.

Black smoke billowed from the site where the plane went down in a populated area near the airport in Ahmedabad, a city of more than five million and the capital of Gujarat, Prime Minister Narendra Modi's home state.

Firefighters doused the smoking wreckage of the plane, which would have been fully loaded with fuel shortly after takeoff, and adjacent multi-storey buildings with water. Many charred bodies lay on the ground and one was

carried away on a stretcher by first responders.

"The scenes emerging of a London-bound plane carrying many British nationals crashing in the Indian city of Ahmedabad are devastating," British Prime Minister Keir Starmer said in a statement.

Indian television news channels reported the plane crashed on top of the dining area of a medical college hostel. It was unclear if any medical students were present inside the building at the time of the crash.

The tail cone of the plane with damaged stabilizer fins still attached was lodged near the top of one building.

"It appears there are no survivors in the plane crash," Police Commissioner G.S. Malik told The Associated Press.

"As the plane has fallen in a residential area which also had offices, some locals would have also died," he added. "Exact figures on casualties are being ascertained."

Modi called the crash "heartbreaking beyond words."

"In this sad hour, my thoughts are with everyone affected," he said in a social media post.

The airline said the Gatwick Airport-bound flight was carrying 242 passengers and crew. Of those, Air India said there were 169 Indians, 53 Britons, seven Portuguese and one Canadian.

Faiz Ahmed Kidwai, the director general of the directorate of civil aviation, told AP that Air India flight 171, a Boeing 787-8, crashed into a residential area called Meghani Nagar five minutes after taking off at 1:38 p.m. local time. He said 244 people were on board and it was not immediately possible to reconcile the discrepancy with Air India's numbers.

All efforts were being made to ensure medical aid and relief support at the site, India's Civil Aviation Minister Ram Mohan Naidu Kinjarapu posted on X. The Indian army said in a statement that its teams were assisting civil authorities to clear debris and help treat the injured. (*Jamaica Gleaner*)



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# Sports News

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## National team in training to defend world domino championship

A 37-member national team, comprising male and female players, have been selected and undergoing training in preparation to represent host Antigua and Barbuda at the 19th World Council of Domino Federation (WCDF) Championship in August.

The Antigua and Barbuda National Domino Association (ABNDA) will host the World Domino Championships, which is held on a biennial basis, at the John E. St. Luce Conference Center from August 10 to 18.

Defending champions Antigua and Barbuda will be seeking their fourth successive world domino title at this year's event.

After capturing the title in 2016 and 2018, Antigua and Barbuda retained their World Council of Domino Federation Championship title by winning the 19th edition of the biennial tournament in Guyana in August 2023.

The national training squad includes Kaid Jarvis and Patricia Lewis of the Bolans Revellers, and Seymone Parkes, Jason Edwards, and Elsworth Richards of the Parham Strikers.

Selected from Double Six are Renfield Davis, Joanne Davis, Marilyn Gayle, Edna Charles, Michael



Roach, Dale Henry, and Carol-Faye Bynoe, who is also the president of the ABNDA.

Three players were also selected from Eagle Eye. They are Natalie Heron, Amsha-Ann Eusebe, and Shashona Carter.

Chosen from Fire Brigade are Glenford George, Wayne Hallpike, and Noxford Hoyte, while Francine Hector and Bernia Richards were selected from Legacy.

Ten players are chosen from the Willikies Super Stars. They are Kenny Charles, Devon Graham, Natasha Edwards, Lorraine Richardson, Sharon Matthew, Calvin Gordon, Reynold Isaac, Mervin LeFleur, Renee Ralph, and Glenroy Farrel.

The other selectees are Adelia John of Ramplers along with Sheldon Gomes, Gary Joseph, Frank Govia, Lucille Mack, and Isabelle Benjamin of Dominatrixx.

Francine Hector will captain the women's team and Lorraine Richardson has been chosen as her deputy. Renfield Davis will skipper the men's team and Devon Graham is the vice-captain. Former president of the ABNDA Sheldon Gomes will be the manager of the national team.

Twelve teams have already expressed their desire to participate in this year's world domino championships.

They are Anguilla, Antigua & Barbuda, Barbados, Dominica, St. Kitts & Nevis, St. Lucia, Grenada, the USA, Guyana, St. Maarten, St. Vincent & the Grenadines, and Montserrat.

Participants will compete in the following eight disciplines: Team Four Hand, Female Three Hand, Male Three Hand, Mixed Pairs, Female Pairs, Male Pairs, Queen of Domino, and King of Domino.




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# Sports News



## Rain forces washed out of Windies first T20I against Ireland

The West Indies men's team will have to put their redemption quest on hold for a few more days after the opening T20 International (T20I) against host Ireland was abandoned without a ball being bowled due to persistent rain at Bready Cricket Club on Thursday.

For the Caribbean side, this three-match series was billed as a crucial opportunity to bounce back after a sobering 3-0 T20 series defeat to England. But the elements had the final say, frustrating both teams and denying the Windies a much-needed chance to reset their campaign.

Instead of putting new strategies into motion and testing their resolve under pressure, the West Indies were left at their hotel sheltering from steady showers as any hopes of play faded early.

With the series opener rained out, attention now turns to Saturday's second match—weather permitting—as



**Players of the West Indies team celebrate a dismissal during the recent ODI series in England.**

the men from the Caribbean continue their search for form and confidence ahead of next year's T20 World Cup.

Head coach Darren Sammy, who had voiced his concerns about the team's bowling discipline following the England tour, will have to wait a

little longer to assess any changes or improvements.

For now, the focus shifts to preparation and fine-tuning, with the shortened series leaving little room for error.

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## Windies women wins rain-hit ODI opener against South Africa



**West Indies women's opener Qiana Joseph, right, plays an attacking shot against South African women during the first ODI at the Three Ws Oval in Cave Hill, Barbados, on Wednesday, June 11, 2025. (Getty Images)**

The West Indies Women began their three-match One-Day International (ODI) campaign against South Africa on a winning note, as they held their nerve in a rain-affected encounter to secure a four-wicket victory via the Duckworth-Lewis-Stern (DLS) method at the Three Ws Oval in Barbados on Wednesday.

In a contest interrupted and shaped by intermittent showers, the home side showed flashes of grit and composure, qualities that head coach Shane Deitz will hope become hallmarks of a new

era for the regional side, who were returning to winning ways after being swept 6-0 on their tour of England.

After winning the toss and opting to field first, the West Indies bowlers found early reward through disciplined spells and crucial breakthroughs.

Aaliyah Alleyne captured two for 35 and Karishma Ramharack took two for 44 to lead the West Indies attack, which restrict South Africa to 232 for nine off their allotted 50 overs.

Despite threatening contributions from Tazmin Brits, who slammed five fours and a six in a 65-ball 57, and Nadine de Klerk, who made a brisk 42 off 38 balls, including three fours and two sixes, the visitors, who started brightly, faltered under pressure from an increasingly sharp West Indian fielding display.

Notably, run-outs proved pivotal, with Laura Wolvaardt (27) and Nondumiso Shangase (two) both falling short, thanks to some slick work from Realeanna Grimmond and Zaida James,

respectively.

Set a reduced target of 180, the West Indies' reply began with purpose, as captain Hayley Matthews, who made 40 off 44, and Qiana Joseph, who top-scored with a 58-ball 60, laid a confident platform.

The pair posted a rapid 88-run opening stand that put the West Indies well ahead of the DLS par score. Matthews struck four fours and a six in her knock, while Joseph slammed 10 fours and a six.

Though the middle order stumbled slightly with Grimmond (five) and the returning Chenelle Henry (11) having brief stays in the middle, along with Shemaine Campbelle (12) and Jannilla Glasgow (10), experienced hands Stafanie Taylor, with an unbeaten 34-ball 30, and Alleyne calmly steered the West Indies to victory.

South Africans briefly clawed back through Ayanda Hlubi's impressive three for 50.

With two more ODIs to come, the West Indies women will look to build on their 1-0 lead when they face South Africa in the second match at the same venue on Saturday.

# CWI announces historic T20I series against Nepal



**Players of the West Indies T20 team compete during a recent series against host England. (Getty Images)**

Cricket West Indies (CWI) has announced its participation in a historic three-match T20 International (T20I) series against the Asian nation of Nepal, the first-ever bilateral series between the two teams, marking a significant milestone in the ongoing mission to grow and globalize the game of cricket.

Taking place in Sharjah, United Arab Emirates, on September 27, 28, and 30, the series is being hosted by the Cricket Association of Nepal (CAN) and represents a landmark opportunity for Nepal as it gears up for the ICC Men's T20 World Cup Asia Qualifier later this year.

For CWI, the engagement reflects its strong commitment to supporting the development of cricket in emerging nations and fostering meaningful partnerships with fellow cricketing boards

worldwide.

Speaking on the importance of this occasion, CWI CEO Chris Dehring stated, "This series is more than just a set of international matches—it's a celebration of the game's expanding global footprint and a testament to what cricket represents: pride, purpose, and the power of unity."

"As a full-member nation, we see it as part of our responsibility to contribute to the development of cricket beyond our borders."

"Supporting Nepal in this key phase of their cricketing journey not only builds the sport at the grassroots and international levels but also reminds us of the deep pride and honour associated with representing our nation and wearing our national colours."

"We are proud to stand with Nepal at

this moment in their history and look forward to exciting and competitive cricket in Sharjah."

The West Indies team, known for its rich legacy and dynamic style of play, is expected to field a competitive squad that will offer Nepal critical exposure ahead of their World Cup qualifying campaign.

The series also provides an opportunity for players and fans alike to experience the spirit of international cricket in a vibrant, neutral venue.

Cricket West Indies extends its sincere thanks to the Cricket Association of Nepal and the Emirates Cricket Board for their collaboration in organizing the series and looks forward to continuing to work together towards advancing the global growth and accessibility of the game of cricket.



## WCPL returns to Guyana with Royals eyeing historic three-peat



**2024 Massy Women's Caribbean Premier Champions Barbados Royals.**

Cricket fans can look forward to an exciting showcase of world-class women's T20 cricket as the 2025 Massy Women's Caribbean Premier League (WCPL) comes to Guyana from September 6 to 17.

The tournament will feature three teams: The Barbados Royals, Guyana Amazon Warriors, and Trinidad Knight Riders, who will battle it out over six group stage matches, culminating in a thrilling final on September 17.

All fixtures are scheduled to be held at the Guyana National Stadium in Providence, a venue renowned for its electric atmosphere

and passionate support.

The Barbados Royals, defending champions for two consecutive years (2023 and 2024), will aim for a historic third title, while the Warriors and Knight Riders will seek to dethrone them and claim the WCPL crown.

Adding further excitement, the WCPL matches will be played as double-headers alongside games from the Republic Bank Caribbean Premier League (CPL).

This unique format provides fans with unparalleled access to both men's and women's elite T20 cricket in a single outing—doubling the action and delivering

even greater value for spectators.

Chris Dehring, CEO of Cricket West Indies, highlighted the growing stature of the tournament.

"Women's cricket continues to grow year on year, and the WCPL is a hugely important part of our cricketing calendar. We are looking forward to seeing the best Caribbean talent play alongside fantastic players from around the world in what we are sure will be an excellent event."

Pete Russell, CEO of the Caribbean Premier League, emphasized the significance of this year's edition.

"We are incredibly proud

to continue building on the success of the WCPL as we head into the 2025 tournament. Each year the competition grows stronger, and we are committed to providing a platform that showcases the exceptional talent within women's cricket across the region and beyond."

The 2025 WCPL is not only a celebration of top-tier women's cricket but also an opportunity to inspire the next generation of cricketers across the Caribbean.

With local and international stars on display, fans will witness unforgettable moments, emerging talents, and a renewed commitment to gender equity in the sport.

## Eight teams qualify for the quarter-finals of Primary School Cup

Defending champions Five Islands are among the eight teams that have qualified for the quarter-finals of the 2025 Ministry of Sports Primary School Cup Football Championship.

The quarter-finalists comprised the top two teams in each of the three zones along with the two best overall third-place finishers at the end of the preliminary round-robin stage of the competition.

Five Islands Primary and former three-peat winners Golden Grove Primary qualified as the top two teams from the seven-team round-robin competition in Zone A.

Five Islands won Zone A with 16 points from their six matches, and Golden Grove finished in second place with 14 points. Malique Boothe of Five Islands finished as the leading goal scorer in the group with 12 goals, and Aquari Joseph of Golden Grove Primary claimed second place with nine conversions.

Pigotts Primary and Parham Primary advanced to the quarter-finals as the top two teams from Zone B, which comprised eight



**The Five Islands Primary School football team poses with their trophies after winning the Primary School Cup competition at the Rising Sun playing field in St. John's on Friday, June 14, 2024. (File Photo)**

teams in round-robin pool play.

Pigotts Primary won Zone B with 16 points from their seven matches. Parham clinched second place by virtue of beating New Winthorpes in their head-to-head meeting after both teams ended the preliminary stage in Zone B with 14 points each.

Asana Percival of New Winthorpes Primary finished as the leading goal scorer with nine goals, and Kalique Martin of Pigotts Primary claimed second place with seven conversions.

Freemans Ville Primary

and St. Peter's Primary qualified for the quarter-finals from Zone C, which comprised seven teams.

Freemans Ville Primary won Zone C with a perfect 18 points from six matches, and St. Peter's Primary finished second with 15 points.

Johnathan Duberry of St. Peter's Primary finished as the top goal scorer in Zone C with 13 conversions, and the Freemans Ville Primary duo of Dakarie Gore and D'Jarie Gregory finished in joint second place with eight goals apiece.

Greenbay Primary and

New Winthorpes Primary complete the quarter-final lineup as the two best overall third-place finishers in the group stage.

Greenbay Primary finished third in Zone A with 12 points, and New Winthorpes Primary clinched third place in Zone B with 14 points.

The quarter-final matches are taking place in two double-headers at the Antigua Recreation Ground (ARG) on Thursday (yesterday) and Friday (today).

On Thursday (yesterday) Freeman's Ville Primary was slated to meet Parham Primary, and St. Peter's Primary was scheduled to take on Golden Grove Primary.

On Friday (today), defending champs Five Islands Primary will face Pigotts Primary at 3 pm, and Greenbay Primary will clash with New Winthorpes Primary at 4 pm.

The four winners of the quarter-finals will advance to the semi-finals, which will take place at the same venue on Wednesday, June 18. The final and third-place playoff will also be held at the ARG on Friday, June 20.