

# Reshaping APUA from Within

Story on Page 2



Miss Caribbean Universe, Desrie Markham of Antigua and Barbuda

Story on Page 6



# Reshaping APUA from Within



Utilities Minister Melford Nicholas outlined a transformative vision for the Antigua Public Utilities Authority (APUA), centered on data-driven performance and structural accountability. Under his directive, every member of the organization—from “cook to captain”—will be evaluated based on measurable outcomes. This new results-oriented framework requires the APUA board to actively engage with management and enforce accountability across all divisions through monthly performance reviews.

Appearing on Saturday’s *Browne and Browne* show, the minister said this approach marks a significant shift from past practices, where complacency and a lack of transparent performance standards stifled efficiency. The goal, as emphasized by Nicholas, is to drive the organization toward excellence and responsiveness in serving the public.

Delving deeper, the Minister spoke candidly about the internal challenges within APUA. He referenced a longstanding culture of complacency, comparing the organization’s environment to a “cradle-to-grave” job culture reminiscent of earlier decades at Cable & Wireless, where employees rarely left before retirement.

Nicholas emphasized his role as a “disruptive element” determined to

drive revolutionary change. He acknowledged that while APUA has provided stability for many families, it must now evolve to meet rising public expectations. To this end, new policy directions are being developed to restructure not only the water division but also APUA’s overall service framework.

The Minister stated that meetings with senior management had already taken place and that a complete overhaul in operational culture is underway. He reiterated that Antigua and Barbuda cannot afford to remain stagnant in the face of rapid regional and global shifts.



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## From 9 Million Gallons to a Culture of Maintenance



**Utilities Minister Melford Nicholas,**

The milestone achievement of reaching a daily output of 9 million imperial gallons of water by APUA was not an accident.

According to Utilities Minister Melford Nicholas, the achievement was made possible through the imple-

mentation of four strategic policy measures, or foundational pillars.

He identified these as;

- Strong partnerships
- Strategic investments
- A renewed emphasis on equipping plants

□ And perhaps most critically: a break from the culture of reactive maintenance

The Minister emphasized that historically, APUA operated under a “\*breakdown culture”—waiting until systems failed to act. However, the minister recalled that when he assumed his role in January 2023, he immediately requested a centralized reporting system.

There was none, he reported. No dashboard, no real-time data. Instead, he had a basic daily water report developed—a simple but powerful spreadsheet that now serves as the most important operational document.

The Minister emphasized how ‘daily tracking of production by site’—from Ffryes Bay to Fort James—has empowered leadership

to make timely decisions, optimize plant output, and identify gaps.

Minister Nicholas received praise for improvements at the Antigua Public Utilities Authority (APUA), particularly in water production. However, he was quick to caution that there’s still a long way to go.

While acknowledging that APUA’s recent milestone of achieving nine million gallons of daily water production is commendable, the Minister conceded that persistent inefficiencies, especially coordination issues between APUA and the Ministry of Works. He noted that the recurring challenge of newly constructed roads being dug up shortly afterward due to utility installations was cited as an example of systemic misalignment.





## Prime Minister Browne Participates in Brazil-Caribbean Summit to Strengthen Regional Cooperation



Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda Gaston A. Browne, participated in the inaugural Brazil-Caribbean Summit, held in Brasília and hosted by President of the Federative Republic of Brazil, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva. The high-level meeting brought together leaders from across the Caribbean to enhance cooperation on shared regional and global challenges.

The Summit provided a strategic platform to deepen dialogue and collaboration between Brazil and the Caribbean, as Brazil continues to play a pivotal role both as a regional power and a leading voice among developing nations on the global stage.

Discussions at the Summit focused on key issues such as trade, food security, climate change, and the multifaceted crisis in Haiti.

Prime Minister Browne delivered an address reaffirming Antigua and Barbuda's commitment to regional integration and climate resilience. He commended Brazil's leadership

in promoting South-South cooperation and advocated for regularized high-level engagement between Brazil and the Caribbean to jointly develop policies that enhance trade, economic development, and citizen well-being.

Prime Minister Browne also welcomed Brazil's role as host of COP30 in November 2025, emphasizing its historic significance as the first UN Climate Change Conference to be held in the Amazon region.

He stated, "COP30 must serve as an inflection point for concrete commitments, particularly toward capitalizing and operationalizing the Loss and Damage Fund — a vital mechanism for vulnerable nations like ours."

The Prime Minister also expressed gratitude to President Lula for Brazil's renewed diplomatic outreach to the Caribbean, including plans to re-open Brazilian embassies in CARICOM member states, notably in Antigua and Barbuda. He further called

for enhanced transportation connectivity across the region to strengthen supply chains and bolster food security.

Two major agreements were signed during the Summit:

1. The Brazil-Caribbean Joint Communiqué, which commits to deepened collaboration in areas such as food and nutrition security, poverty reduction, climate action, and sustainable energy. The Communiqué also highlights joint support for initiatives like the Global Alliance Against Hunger and Poverty and the CARICOM Agri-Food Systems Agenda, along with efforts to improve connectivity to promote trade, tourism, investment, and cultural exchange.
2. The Brazil-Caribbean Statement on Climate Change and COP30, which underscores the existential threat of climate change to Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and calls for urgent global action. The Statement highlights COP30 as a critical moment for advancing bold, inclusive, and effective climate solutions.

Prime Minister Browne was accompanied by a delegation comprising:

- Dr. Clarence Henry, Ambassador to CARICOM
- Mr. Kurt M. Williams, Senior Foreign Service Officer
- Ms. Zeina Hechme, Senior Foreign Service Officer

The participation of Antigua and Barbuda in this landmark Summit reaffirms the country's commitment to multilateral engagement and regional solidarity in addressing the most pressing development challenges of our time.

## Sir Rodney Williams helps make history in the UK



**His Excellency Sir Rodney Williams reads the message from His Majesty King Charles III during the Thanksgiving Service held at All Hallows-on-the-Wall.**

Governor General, Sir Rodney Williams, played a role in creation history when he participated in a first-of-its-kind event making the official recognition of the vital contributions of Caribbean servicemen and women to the British Armed Forces.

Sir Rodney was among officials who participated in the landmark event held in London.

It should be recognized too that Sir Rodney did not

merely attend the function, Sir Rodney Williams, Governor General of Antigua and Barbuda and President of the West India Committee, delivered a special message on behalf of His Majesty King Charles III to the congregation: "I send every possible good wish to those present for a memorable and enjoyable event that pays tribute to all the men and women of the Caribbean, who, over many hundreds of years, served the British Armed



**Group photo (left to right): Dignitaries including officiating priests, military representatives, third from left The Right Honourable Lord Mayor of London, Alastair King, Their Excellencies Sir Rodney and Lady Williams, and at the extreme right, Mrs. Blondel Cluff CBE, CEO of the West India Committee.**

Forces with great loyalty and distinction."

The commemorations included a formal military parade followed by a Service of Thanksgiving Service at the All Hallows-on-the-Wall, a historic 18th-century church still in use by members of the Armed Forces. The theme of the event was "Respect", paying tribute to the bravery and commitment of Caribbean soldiers who served the British Armed Forces with loyalty and distinction during World War I, World War II, and across generations.

Sir Rodney was accompanied by Lady Williams, who joined him in representing Antigua and Barbuda at this historic occasion.

The service was organised by Mrs. Blondel Cluff CBE, CEO of the West India Committee, who stated that the Committee is committed to raising awareness of the significant sacrifices made by West Indians in protecting the security and prosperity of the United Kingdom. She further emphasized the importance of fostering greater respect for the Caribbean community and encouraging stronger social cohesion.

The event was attended by The Lord Mayor of the City of London, Governors General and representatives of Caribbean nations, Representatives of the UK Ministry of Defence, and Caribbean military personnel from all ranks based in London.



# Local News



## Desire Markham Crowned Miss Caribbean Universe 2025

### Antigua and Barbuda's Queen of Carnival captures the regional crown in St. Thomas, USVI



**Miss Caribbean Universe, Desrie Markham of Antigua and Barbuda**

Desire Markham, the reigning Miss Antigua and Barbuda and Queen of Carnival, was officially crowned Miss Caribbean Universe 2025 following a show-stopping performance at the prestigious regional pageant held on Saturday, June 14th in St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands.

Representing Antigua and Barbuda with distinction, elegance, and fierce confidence, Markham outshone contestants from across the region to



**Dearie Markham, moments after she was crowned Miss Caribbean Universe**

walk away with the coveted crown. Her performance earned her several of the most prestigious awards of the night:

- **Best Talent**
- **Miss Intellect- (interview) Shared with Trinidad and Tobago**
- **Miss Regal (evening gown)**
- **The People's Choice Award**

These titles, along with the ultimate crown, are a testament to her grace,

eloquence, and the cultural pride she carried with her throughout the competition.

Minister of State in the Ministry of Education, and the Creative Industries Senator Shenella Govia, speaking on behalf of Minister Darryll Matthew, the Government, and the people of Antigua and Barbuda, praised Markham's performance.

"We are incredibly proud of Desire's performance and had every confidence she would rise to the occasion. I watched the pageant from start to finish, and I could not be more impressed. Her poise, talent, and intellect lit up the stage. She carried our flag with honour and reminded the region of the brilliance Antigua and Barbuda has to offer."

Senator Govia also extended heartfelt gratitude to the people of Antigua and Barbuda and supporters worldwide for rallying behind Markham.

"Special thanks must go to every Antiguan and Barbudan who voted and supported Desire throughout her journey. One thing about us as a people we will always show up, stand together, and demonstrate the power of our unity when it matters most. Your votes made a difference, and The People's Choice title is a reflection of that."



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## Two people named on King's Birthday honours' list



**Cordel Josiah**

The Government of Antigua and Barbuda announces that Cordel Eden Alexander Josiah and Daniel Harrison have been formally recognised by His Majesty King Charles III in the 2025 Birthday Honours for their exceptional service and contributions to the nation and the wider Commonwealth.

Cordel Josiah has been awarded the Officer of the Order of the British Empire (O.B.E.) for his outstanding contributions to public administration and community development. With a career spanning decades in the public service, Josiah has played a pivotal role in strengthening institutional governance and community engagement in Antigua and Barbuda.

Daniel Harrison has been awarded the Member of the Order of the British Empire (M.B.E.) in recognition of his unwavering commitment to philanthropy. Through years of charitable work both locally and across the Commonwealth, Harrison has significantly impacted health, education, and youth em-



**Daniel Harrison**

powerment initiatives, leaving a lasting legacy of generosity and civic responsibility.

Prime Minister Gaston Browne

commended both honourees for their exemplary service, noting that their recognition is not only a personal achievement but a reflection of the values and potential of the people of Antigua and Barbuda. "These awards underscore the global impact of Antiguan and Barbudans who dedicate their lives to public good. On behalf of the nation, I extend heartfelt congratulations to Mr. Josiah and Mr. Harrison for their well-deserved honours."

The Government of Antigua and Barbuda celebrates these recognitions as a proud moment for the nation, reaffirming its ongoing commitment to nurturing excellence, leadership, and service among its citizens.



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# Local News



## Antigua and Barbuda national lands top finance job in an American aviation company



John Thomas, Jr., a veteran finance leader with more than 25 years of experience in global aviation finance, has been named Chief Financial Officer of FlyHouse, further strengthening the company's leadership bench as it accelerates its global growth strategy. Thomas is widely regarded as a transformative financial executive with a track record of driving performance in complex, multinational aviation environments. He has held senior leadership roles at British Airways, Etihad Airways, Silverhawk Aviation, and most recently served as Group CFO of Elevate Aviation Group. His career is defined by large-scale value creation, helping scale companies from \$500 million to \$3.5 billion in annual revenue, delivering over \$350 million in cost savings, and executing enterprise-wide efficiency initiatives that improved core operating perfor-

mance by more than 100%. At Etihad Airways, Thomas spearheaded a multi-billion-dollar financial restructuring that realigned global operations and positioned the airline for sustainable long-term growth. At Silverhawk Aviation, he architected a profitability turnaround, doubling operating margins in under two years through disciplined financial stewardship and operational refinement. Most recently at Elevate Aviation Group, he developed and implemented capital strategies that fueled rapid M&A activity and supported the company's aggressive expansion trajectory. These outcomes go beyond financial optimization; they demonstrate Thomas's rare ability to translate complex capital strategies into bold, scalable operational performance. FlyHouse's decision to bring Thomas on board is a strategic one. As the company scales its technology platform, expands internationally, and continues reshaping the economics of private aviation, Thomas's expertise in disciplined capital management, investor reporting, and global FP&A will be critical to navigating this next phase. His appointment signals FlyHouse's commitment to building a financial organization capable of supporting long-term enterprise value and public-market readiness.

"FlyHouse represents a rare intersection of innovation, operational excellence, and market timing," said Thomas. "I'm looking forward to building on its strong foundation and helping unlock the next chapter of growth." CEO Jack E. Lambert, Jr. added: "John's leadership isn't just proven, it's built for scale. His ability to integrate financial strategy with operational execution across international markets makes him the ideal partner as we enter this next phase. FlyHouse is growing fast, and John gives us the structure, experience, and insight to grow smart." Thomas earned a postgraduate credential in Mergers & Acquisitions from the Stanford Graduate School

of Business, a B.S. in Economics, Management & Accounting from the University of the West Indies, and an A.S. in Economics and Law from the University of Cambridge. He is a Certified Management Accountant and a member of both the Institute of Management Accountants and the Association for Financial Professionals. With Thomas's appointment, FlyHouse is reinforcing its vision to lead the next era of private aviation—supported by a world-class financial foundation and a leadership team built to scale.

Thomas is a native of Antigua and Barbuda. He is the son of John and Victoria Thomas of Marble Hill.

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**Itz A ViBe**  
ANTIGUA Carnival



## Victory Center Hosts Annual Talent Show



**Students showing off their talents in Victory School's Talent Show.**

The Victory Center, a school for children with different needs, came alive on Thursday, June 12, as students, families, and staff gathered for the school's annual Talent Show. The event, held at People's Place, showcased the students' remarkable creativity and confidence and was a vibrant celebration of the end of the school year.

Dressed to impress and beaming with excitement, students took to the stage to share a variety of performances. The audience was treated to a lively mix of singing, dancing, poetry, and even stand-up comedy.

The students showcased their outstanding performances while the audience encouraged them with cheers. Former students were also welcomed back to the stage. Liam Wint had the crowd in stitches with

his debut stand-up comedy routine. Rayanna captivated the audience with her graceful dance performance, while Junique and AJ's duet had the crowd swaying with their melodious harmonies. Adding to the entertainment were occupational Therapy students from the University of Alberta with two dance renditions. The show also featured a touching storytelling moment by Teacher Jahmorla, who captivated listeners with a heartwarming story about diversity and inclusion. Teacher Samantha delivered a moving tribute to the Victory Center students with her rendition of "You Decorated My Life."

The performances were met with enthusiastic applause and cheers, reflecting the supportive spirit of the Victory Center community. The event closed with a special presentation of end-of-year



**Fun for all at Victory School's Talent Show**

certificates and tokens to the students, acknowledging their hard work and achievements throughout the academic year.

This year marks the school's 13th anniversary since opening its doors, and each year,

families, friends, and neighbouring communities look forward to the annual talent show. Students' talents are displayed, and those in attendance are reminded that "different is a great thing to be".


 A poster for the National Soca and Calypso Adjudication Workshops. It features a portrait of a man in a suit and tie. The text on the poster includes:
 

- SATURDAY 21 JUNE 2025
- SUNDAY 22 JUNE 2025
- JOHN E. ST. LUCE CONFERENCE CENTRE
- 10AM - 3PM
- National Soca and Calypso ADJUDICATION WORKSHOPS
- FOR NEW AND RETURNING JUDGES
- WITH SYLVESTER "KING SOCRATES" HODGE
- H2A ViBe ANTIGUA Carnival



## UAIEN delegation convenes meeting in Antigua and Barbuda



**Members of the UAIEN delegation with Bishop Charlesworth Browne and officials of HM Prison**

Representatives of an organization known as the United Ancient Indigenous Enlightened Nations are currently meeting Antigua and Barbuda in what they described as their summit.

While here, the group has engaged in a number of activities including paying a courtesy call on high ranking officials of His Majesty's Prison as Bishop Browne, Chairman of the Prison Visiting Committee pilots the vision to introduce inmates to "Restorative Yoga" in an effort to boost the effective rehabilitation of prisoners. Ambassador Moksh, a humanitarian, steeped in the disciplines of Yoga, stands ready to give support to the initiative ONLY to the extent suggested by Bishop Browne and his team.

Meanwhile, the group

presented Bishop Browne an award for Interfaith Cooperation and Global Harmony on an occasion of special significance for the United Ancient Indigenous Enlightened Nations (UAN) as they Summit in Antigua and Barbuda.

Among those congratulating Bishop Browne is Governor General, Sir Rodney Williams who wrote, "I extend warmest congratulations to you on being conferred with the Kailasa Mitra Award in recognition of your distinguished service to Interfaith Cooperation and Global Harmony.

"This prestigious honour, bestowed during the historic Summit of the United Ancient Indigenous Enlightened Nations (UAN) recently held in Antigua and Barbuda, marks a moment of sig-



**Ambassador Moksh makes presentation to Superintendent of Prison, Col Trevor Pennyfeather**



**Section of the UAIEN meeting taking place at the MultiPurpose Cultural Centre in St. John's**

nificance, not only for you personally but for the wider community of faith leaders and peacebuilders who gathered for the special occasion.

"As Governor General, I am pleased that one of our own has been internationally recognised for

fostering unity and understanding across religious and cultural lines."

In response, Bishop Browne stated, "I am truly grateful and humbled to have received this award."



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# Local News

## Indian officials present cricket kits cricket institutions in Antigua and Barbuda



**From left to right: Indian High Commissioner Dr. Amit Telang, Vernon Springer, Indian Honorary Consul Vijay Tewani and Sir Richie Richardson**

The High Commission of India accredited to Antigua and Barbuda, Dr Amit Telang, presented cricket kits to the Coolidge Cricket Ground, Cricket West Indies and Leeward Cricket Academy in Antigua and Barbuda as part of the High Commission's outreach to

cricket institutions in the country.

The initiative has been undertaken with support from M/s Ashoka Buildcon, one of the prominent Indian infrastructure companies now active in many continents across the world including in South America and Ca-



ribbean. The initiative was supported by prominent cricketing legends like Sir Richie Richardson, Antigua and Barbuda's goodwill Ambassador for forging closer people to people contacts between the people of India and Caribbean.


Speaking at the handing over ceremony, High Commissioner highlighted that cricket is one of the important bridge connecting India and Caribbean promoting friendship and bilateral rela-

tions. Sir Richie Richardson also echoed the sentiments and recalled the cricketing ties between India and Antigua and Barbuda.

The High Commission and the Office of Hon. Consul Vijay Tewani will continue to work with the Government of Antigua and Barbuda to promote deeper ties between India and the twin-island nation which share a longstanding mutually beneficial partnership.

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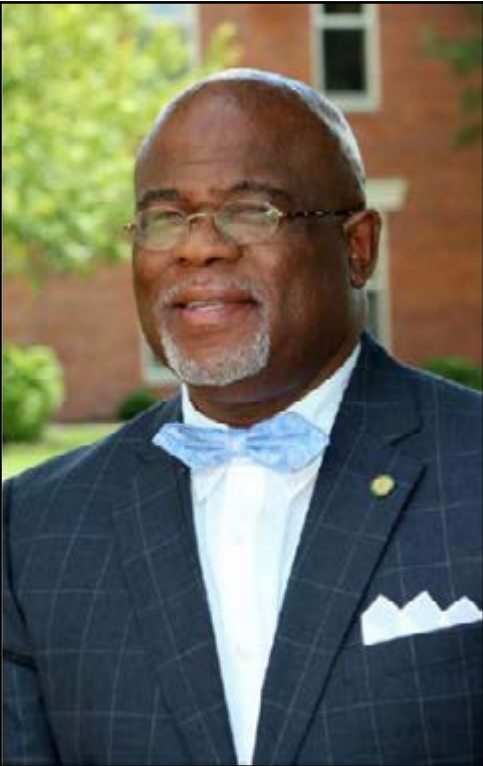
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# Feature



## AI and healthcare; the future is now



**Director of Academic Studies at the University of the West Indies FIC, Dr. Curtis Charles**

By Dr. Curtis B. Charles

In just seven days, some of the world's brightest minds in artificial intelligence and healthcare will gather right here in Antigua and Barbuda for the **2nd Annual AI Research Conference** at the University of the West Indies Five Islands Campus. But make no mistake—this isn't just another academic talk shop. It's a front-row seat to what's already happening across our hospitals, clinics, and communities.

One of the sessions stirring plenty of buzz is titled *"Healthy Futures: AI for Sustainable Caribbean Healthcare."* Now, that might sound like something far off in the future—but AI is already working behind the scenes in places

you wouldn't expect. It's spotting disease outbreaks before they spread, helping doctors diagnose faster, and even guiding policy decisions. Quietly, but powerfully, it's reshaping our healthcare.

The panel will be led by **Dr. George Mansor**, a respected regional health voice, and features

some real heavy-hitters in the space.

**Dr. Michael Lingzhi Li**, a Harvard professor and Chief Data Scientist at Waffle Labs, brings cutting-edge insight into how hospitals can use machine learning to predict things like ER overcrowding or supply shortages—tools

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**#ANTIGUAAI**



that could help us avoid chaos during the next health crisis.

Representing the frontline is **Dr. Cherie Tulloch**, a practicing OB-GYN right here at **Sir Lester Bird Medical Centre**. She knows firsthand the struggles our doctors face every day. Her take? AI isn't about replacing our healthcare workers—it's about supporting them, especially when resources are tight.

And if you know Caribbean public health, you'll know the name **Dr. James Hospedales**. The former Executive Director of **CARPHA**, he's long been a champion of using data to guide how we tackle regional health challenges—from

Zika to chronic diseases. With AI tools getting sharper by the day, he believes we have a real chance to strengthen our health systems if we act smart and move fast.

But here's the thing: for all its promise, AI is not magic. It needs local expertise. It needs investment. And most of all, it needs buy-in from our people—nurses, teachers, community leaders, even you reading this right now.

This panel will make the case that AI in Caribbean healthcare isn't optional anymore. It's necessary. Whether it's using predictive models to manage dengue season, or improving how we track medicine inventory, AI can help. But

only if we put it to work for us.

**The future is knocking. Will we answer?**

**The conference runs June 22–23 at UWI Five Islands. Come see what's possible. Bring your questions, bring your curiosity—and most of all, bring your Caribbean pride.**

**Dr. Curtis B. Charles, Ph.D.** is an MIT graduate and Data Scientist. He is currently Director of Academic Affairs, UWI Five Islands Campus, Antigua and Barbuda



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# Commentary



## 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 condemning. 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.



# Commentary

PAGE 17

## 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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## Waste-Free Carnival Dreams

*(A Rhyming Ode to Antigua's 2025 Carnival - "Itz A Vybzz")*



The steel pans beat and the rhythms rise,  
As the Caribbean sun lights up our skies.  
From Point to Pigotts, you'll hear the screams,  
We're dancing in waste-free carnival dreams.

Feathers fly and glitter gleams,  
Masqueraders live their gleaming dreams.  
Antigua's heart in every scene,  
But let's keep it lush, let's keep it clean.

Itz a Vybzz — that's 2025,  
We jam and jump, we feel alive!  
But what's the vybzz if trash is high?  
If bottles pile and plastics lie?  
So as we whine and soca play,  
Let's rethink how we fete each day.  
Let's bring our cups, let's ditch the foam,  
Let waste-free dreams become our home.

From Queen of Carnival to Parade of Bands,



Let's take a stand with cleaner hands.  
What if "party done" left not a mess,  
But footprints of joy and nothing less?  
No single-use in our vendors' line,  
Reusable forks? That sounds fine!  
Bins for bottles, cans and more,  
Let's recycle right from shore to shore.  
Antigua sweet, oh yes indeed,  
She gives us all we'll ever need.  
So why not give her love in turn?  
Let garbage not be what we burn.

The trucks roll by with sound and might,  
But let's make sure we treat waste right.  
The landfill grows — a nation cries,  
But change begins when we all rise.  
Waste-free dreams, they're not too far,  
They start with you, they start right yar.





Bring your bottle, say no to straws,  
 Be the change that earns applause.  
 In Carnival City and on the road,  
 Let's lighten Mother Nature's load.  
 Reuse, reduce, rethink your waste,  
 Let vibes be clean and full of taste.  
 "Itz a Vybzz!" we chant and say,  
 So let that vybzz show us the way.  
 To vibes with meaning, purpose, flair,  
 Where party sweet and Earth gets care.  
 Imagine jouvert at sunrise bright,  
 And not a plastic bag in sight.  
 Instead, we see a sea of pride,  
 With eco-warriors side by side.

From t-shirt bands to calypso kings,  
 Let's celebrate what action brings.  
 No cups tossed carelessly around,  
 But cleaner fetes with conscious sound.

Yes, Antigua — you set the pace,



Your Carnival, a sacred space.  
 So let's protect this cultural beam,  
 And live those waste-free carnival dreams.

This Carnival, don't just wear the theme,  
 Live it bold — let's chase the dream.  
 "Itz a Vybzz" — now make it green,  
 Join the clean-up, keep it serene.  
 Sign up, show up, lend a hand,  
 Let's build a cleaner, greener land.  
 Sort your waste, reuse your gear,  
 Let's keep this island bright and clear.  
 For every jump and every scream,  
 Push forward that waste-free dream.  
 With music high and spirits strong,  
 Let's vibe for Earth all Carnival long.

Antigua Carnival — we rise as one,  
 But when the last road march is done,  
 Let's leave behind no plastic streams...  
 Only footprints, love, and waste-free dreams.



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## Dominican Rep: Authorities discover cocaine hidden in shoes

Anti-drug agents in the Dominican Republic have uncovered a unique smuggling operation involving cocaine concealed inside the platform soles of women's shoes destined for London.

The National Directorate of Drug Control and Public Prosecutor's Office made the discovery during routine inspections at a DR Postal Institute facility, where officers were checking packages scheduled for international shipment.

A canine unit alerted officers to a suspicious box



containing several pairs of women's shoes. Upon closer examination, agents found eight sheets impreg-

nated with cocaine cleverly hidden inside the platform soles of four pairs of slippers. The seized substance weighed more than one kilogram.

The package was reportedly sent by a woman with an alleged address on Juan Alberto Ozoria Street in Santo Domingo and was addressed to a man claiming residence at Trinity Close House in London, England.

The matter is under investigation. (*Loop Caribbean*)

## Deported man charged with multiple counts of sexual intercourse with a minor

A Jamaican man who was wanted in connection with multiple counts of sexual intercourse with a minor has been charged following his deportation from the United States.

The accused is 28-year-old Sanjay Walsh, otherwise called "Sicky", a forklift operator from Connecticut, USA.

Having sexual intercourse with a person under six is an offence under Jamaican law and is distinct from the offence of rape.

Walsh was arrested and charged upon arrival at the Norman Manley International Airport on Wednesday, confirmed Superintendent Anthony Wallace, head of the St Mary police division. "Walsh was deported to Jamaica and met by local law enforcement officers who executed a warrant of arrest upon his arrival.

The charges stem from alleged incidents that occurred between No-



vember 2017 and January 2018 in Tremolesworth, Highgate, St Mary, involving a then 15-year-old girl.

According to police, the complainant, who is now 23, reported that she met Walsh in 2016 and developed a relationship with him. It is alleged that

they engaged in sexual intercourse on multiple occasions during the period in question.

A formal report was later made to the police, resulting in a warrant being issued for Walsh's arrest. (*Jamaica Gleaner*)



## Tancoo halts printing of new \$100 bill

Finance Minister Daven-  
dranath Tancoo has instructed  
the Central Bank to halt  
printing of the new \$100  
polymer bill which features  
Trinidad and Tobago's rede-  
signed coat of arms with the  
pan in place of Columbus' ships.

"I confirm that I have in-  
structed the Central Bank to  
immediately cease all activ-  
ity associated with the print-  
ing of any new bills bearing  
the new coat of arms," Tan-  
coo told the Sunday Express  
yesterday via WhatsApp.

However, Tancoo said he  
was not at liberty to disclose  
the reason for the decision  
at this time.

In its most recent Strategic  
Plan, published in April,  
the Central Bank stated the  
newly designed note was  
expected to enter public cir-  
culation by October.

However, according to a  
statement from the Bank  
yesterday, that timeline has  
now been shelved.

"Following a request by the  
Minister of Finance to sus-  
pend printing of any new  
notes with the revised coat  
of arms until further notice,  
the Central Bank instruct-  
ed the contracted banknote  
printer to cease any work re-  
lated to the printing, prepa-  
ration and designing of the  
2025 series hundred dollar  
denomination," the Central  
Bank stated.

The suspension comes amid  
signs of a potentially tense  
relationship between the  
Central Bank and the Kamla  
Persad-Bissessar adminis-



tration.

On Friday, the Prime Minis-  
ter instructed Tancoo to dis-  
patch the Auditor General to  
conduct an audit of the Cen-  
tral Bank's accounts.

The move followed frustra-  
tion expressed by Auditor  
General Jaiwantie Ramdass  
over difficulties in auditing  
the country's public financ-  
es, which led to her issuing  
a disclaimer of opinion on  
Trinidad and Tobago's Pub-  
lic Accounts for the second  
consecutive year.

Ramdass, in her report, ex-  
plained that at the heart of  
the issue was a lack of ac-  
cess to critical Government  
financial data managed by  
the Central Bank of Trini-  
dad and Tobago.

Although the Ministry of  
Finance approved an audit  
of the Electronic Cheque  
Clearing System and the  
GoAnywhere Platform—  
two systems used to process  
Government transactions—the  
Central Bank denied per-  
mission for the audit to  
proceed.

The Auditor General no lon-

ger functions as the external  
auditor for the Central Bank  
of T&T.

This is the second time that  
Trinidad and Tobago's new  
\$100 polymer bill has been  
postponed.

The note was originally  
scheduled for rollout in De-  
cember 2024, but that plan  
was pushed back due to the  
former People's National  
Movement government's  
decision to redesign the na-  
tional coat of arms.

The current \$100 polymer  
note, which was introduced  
in December 2019, remains  
in circulation as the first in  
the country's suite of poly-  
mer banknotes.

On August 18, 2024, for-  
mer prime minister Dr  
Keith Rowley announced  
at a PNM convention that  
the three ships representing  
Christopher Columbus on  
the country's coat of arms  
would be replaced with the  
pan, the national instrument.

Following legislative ap-  
proval in both the House of  
Representatives and the Sen-  
ate, the National Emblems

of Trinidad and Tobago  
(Regulation) (Amendment)  
Act, 2025 was proclaimed  
by President Christine Kan-  
galoo on February 25.

The act provides for the  
replacement of the Colum-  
bus-era ships with a gold  
pan and pan sticks.

It also permits the continued  
use of the former coat of  
arms until January 1, 2026,  
or a later date, as prescribed  
by ministerial order.

The Central Bank said the  
redesign of the \$100 note  
would come at no additional  
cost to the public purse.

"The new coat of arms was  
integrated into the design  
of the upcoming TT\$100  
banknote at no additional  
cost. With the finalisation  
of the change in the coat  
of arms to incorporate the  
steelpan in early 2025, the  
Central Bank worked with  
De La Rue International Ltd  
to reflect this adjustment to  
an important national sym-  
bol in the planned banknote.  
De La Rue's designers were  
able to accommodate this  
modification, and the notes  
are expected to be ready for  
public distribution by Octo-  
ber 2025," it stated.

In addition to the updated  
coat of arms, the note was  
also expected to feature a  
larger security strip incor-  
porating enhanced banknote  
technology.

These included "among oth-  
er things, the Bird of Para-  
dise in iridescent ink in a  
larger see-through 'window'  
with holographic elements",  
it stated. (*Trinidad Express*)





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# International

AROUND THE WORLD

**POINTE EXPRESS**  
 POINTS ARE THE RESPECTED VIEW

## Israel-Iran conflict set to dominate G7 summit

This week's G7 summit in Canada will be dominated by war - only not one of those that the world leaders had expected.

High on the agenda had been Russia's war against Ukraine and Donald Trump's tariff war against America's trading partners.

Instead the three-day gathering in the Rocky Mountains of Alberta will inevitably be focused on war in the Middle East.

Israel's decision to attack Iran will force the Group of Seven western powers to spend less time on other issues and instead discuss ways of managing the conflict.

Like so many of their discussions, that will involve Britain, France, Germany and Italy - along with Canada and Japan - seeking to influence the United States.

For although Israel might have launched these strikes without explicit American support, the US president is the only leader with real leverage over Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

The G7 leaders, due to arrive in Canada on Sunday, know the global security and economic risks if this conflict escalates, dragging in other countries, sending oil prices soaring.

Yet they may struggle to achieve a common position. Some, such as UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer and President Emmanuel Macron of France, have called



for restraint and de-escalation.

But others such as Japan's Prime Minister, Shigeru Ishiba, have condemned Israel's attack as "in-

tolerable" and "extremely regrettable". For his part, Mr Trump praised Israel's strikes as "excellent". (*BBC News*)



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## Air India plane crash death toll rises to 270

Doctors in India say 270 bodies have been recovered from the site of Thursday's plane crash in Ahmedabad.

The London-bound aircraft crashed into a residential area shortly after take-off killing all but one of the 242 passengers and crew members, a 40-year-old British man.

Officials have also been trying to establish how many people were killed on the ground and have been continuing the slow process of matching DNA samples to confirm the victims' identities.

Vigils honouring the dead have taken place across India and the UK.

India's Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau (AAIB) is leading the inquiry into the cause of the crash, helped by teams from the US and UK.

On Friday, a black box was found at the site of the crash which India's civil aviation minister, Ram Mohan Naidu Kinjarapu, said would "significantly aid the inquiry" into the disaster.

Less than 60 seconds af-



ter leaving Ahmedabad's Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel International Airport, the plane lost altitude and crashed into a building that was used as doctors' accommodation at the BJ Medical College and Civil Hospital.

On Saturday, the President of the Junior Doctors' Association of the college, Dr Dhaval Gameti, confirmed the hospital had received the bodies of 270 victims.

Of those, 241 are believed to be passengers and crew of Flight AI171.

More than thirty victims have also been formally

identified using DNA samples provided by relatives.

According to data by tracking website, Flightradar24, the Boeing Dreamliner 787-8 was 11 years old and had operated 25 flights from Ahmedabad to London Gatwick in the past two years.

In response to Thursday's crash, India's aviation regulator, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), ordered additional safety checks on Air India's Boeing 787-8 and 787-9 fleet, describing it as a "preventive measure".

India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi spent around 20 minutes walking around the site of the plane crash on Friday.

He also visited the hospital to meet some of those injured in the disaster, including the sole plane survivor Vishwash Kumar Ramesh, later saying that "the entire nation is praying for their speedy recovery".

Air India CEO Campbell Wilson also went to the crash site on Friday and described the visit as "deeply moving". (*BBC News*)



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## Authorities still searching for suspect in 'assassination' of US state lawmaker



Hundreds of law officers fanned out across a suburb in the US state of Minneapolis in pursuit of a man who authorities say posed as a police officer and fatally shot a Democratic state lawmaker in her home on Saturday.

Governor Tim Walz has called the shooting "a politically motivated assassination".

Authorities say the same suspect also shot and wounded a second lawmaker.

Democratic former House Speaker Melissa Hortman and her husband, Mark, were killed in their Brooklyn Park home. Senator John Hoffman, also a Democrat, and his wife, Yvette, were injured at their Champlin address, about nine miles away.

The early morning attacks targeting lawmakers in the northern suburbs of Minneapolis prompted warnings to other elected officials around the state and the cancellation of planned "No Kings" demonstrations against President Donald Trump.

Authorities say the suspect had "No Kings" flyers in his car and writings mentioning the names of the victims

as well as other lawmakers and officials, though they could not say if he had any other specific targets.

The shootings happened at a time when political leaders nationwide have been attacked, harassed and intimidated during a time of deep political divisions.

"We must all, in Minnesota and across the country, stand against all forms of political violence," Walz, a Democrat, said at a news conference. "Those responsible for this will be held accountable."

Two people familiar with the matter identified the suspect as 57-year-old Vance Boelter. The people could not publicly discuss details of the ongoing investigation and spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity.

Law enforcement has recovered several AK-style firearms from the suspect's vehicle, and he's believed to still be armed with a pistol, one of the people familiar with the matter told the AP.

The shootings are the latest in a series of violent attacks against lawmakers across parties in recent years.

In April, a suspect set fire to the home of Democratic Pennsylvania Governor Josh Shapiro, forcing him and his family to flee the building during the Jewish holiday of Passover. The suspect told law enforcement that he planned to beat Shapiro with a small sledgehammer if he found him, according to court documents.

In July 2024, the Republican Trump was grazed on the ear by one of a hail of bullets that killed a Trump supporter. Two months later, a man with a rifle was discovered in some shrubbery near the president's golf course in Florida and arrested by Secret Service agents.

Other high profile attacks in recent years have included a 2022 hammer attack on the husband of then-House Speaker Nancy Pelosi inside their San Francisco home, and a 2020 plot by anti-government extremists to kidnap Democratic Gov. Gretchen Whitmer at her vacation home and start a civil war.

Senate Democratic Leader Chuck Schumer said Saturday that he has asked Capitol Police to "immediately increase security" for Minnesota Senators Amy Klobuchar and Tina Smith, both Democrats.

Schumer said he had also asked Senate Majority Leader John Thune, a Republican from South Dakota, to hold a briefing for senators on member security.

"Condemning violence is important but it is not enough," Schumer said in a post on X. "We must also confront the toxic forces radicalizing individuals and we must do more to protect one another, our democracy, and the values that bind us as Americans." (*Jamaica Gleaner*)



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# Sports News



## Blackhawks make winning start in defense of ABCA's Super40 Cup

Defending champions PIC Insurance Liberta Blackhawks made a successful start in their quest for a fourth consecutive Antigua and Barbuda Cricket Association's (ABCA) Super40 Cup limited overs championship on Saturday.

The Blackhawks soared to a commanding 57-run victory against the Pigotts Crushers in their opening round Zone A encounter at the Ball Beef playing field in Liberta.

The Blackhawks made 258 for seven off their allotted 40 overs after losing the toss and being sent in to bat. Hayden Walsh Jr. slammed 53 off 43 balls, including six fours and two sixes.

Opener Kofi James hammered 45 off 28 balls, including four sixes and four fours; Joshua Thomas hit 36 off 43 balls; Deran Benta cracked 34 off 43 balls; captain Rahkeem Cornwall struck 31 off 24 balls; and Elroy Francis Jr. scored 29 off 38 balls.

Captain Kadeem Henry captured three for 23, and Vishal Gobin picked up two for 44.

In reply, the Pigotts Crushers were dismissed for 201 in 35.4 overs. Amahl Nathaniel cracked 53 off 58 balls, including four fours and a six. Jewel Andrew hit 52 off 27 balls, including six fours and three sixes, and Joshua Grant scored 39 off 55 balls.



**2024 ABCA Super40 Cup champions PIC Insurance Liberta Blackhawks**

Hayden Walsh Jr. bagged three for 32, Elroy Francis Jr. claimed two for 19, Rahkeem Cornwall picked up two for 20, and Oshane Thomas captured two for 48.

All Saints Pythons, Empire Nation, and the Jennings Tigers also made winning starts to their campaigns in the Super40 Cup.

All Saints Pythons overcame WES Rising Sun Spartans by five wickets in their Zone A affair at the Mack Pond playing field in All Saints.

Rising Sun Spartans were dismissed for 170 in 36 overs after winning the toss and electing to bat. Opener Jahiem Norde struck 42, Hilroy Andrew scored 36, skipper Kerry Mentore made 31, and Royal Richards hit 23.

Captain Kenrick Scott claimed three for 21, Kadeem Josiah took two for 27, Justin Robinson picked up two for 33, and Demetri

Lucas captured two for 48.

All Saints Pythons achieved victory at 171 for five in 22 overs. Kenricj Scott hammered an unbeaten 58 off 52 balls, including eight fours, and Michael Haynes Dover hit 57 off 54 balls, with seven boundaries. There was also a contribution of 36 extras, including 20 wides and 12 byes.

Empire Nation crushed Tertiary Institutions & Schools by 75 runs in their Zone B encounter at the Factory Ground. Set 184 to win, Tertiary Institutions & Schools were bundled out for 108 in 22.5 overs.

Only three batsmen managed to reach double figures, and there was a contribution of 28 extras, including 26 wides. Tayari Tonge hit a top score of 26, opener Vonde Bowers struck 23 off 20 balls, and last man Kjay Parker made 12.

Damian Lowenfield snapped up four for 25,

JQuan Athanaze claimed three for 16, and leg-spinner Micah McKenzie picked up two for 11.

Empire Nation made 183 all out in 28.2 overs after winning the toss and opting to bat. JQuan Athanaze struck 55 off 64 balls, including seven fours, and George Elvin scored 27 off 32 balls.

Isaiah Attwood and Kjay Parker each picked up three for 36, and Xanden Hobson captured two for 27.

The Jennings Tigers recorded a 43-run victory against the Bolans Blasters in their Zone B match at the Jennings playing field.

The Jennings Tigers made 193 for nine off their 40 overs after winning the toss and electing to bat. Matthew Miller hit 58, Glen-ton Williams struck 32 off 36 balls, and Jahiem Africa scored 27.

Richie Thomas captured four for 28, and Javaughn James claimed two for 35.

In reply, the Bolans Blasters were dismissed for 150 in 36 overs. Orlando Peters and Winston Nelson each made 28, opener Peter Bellanfanti struck 26, and Hughon Tonge scored 20.

Zavier Freeland snapped up three for 17, left-arm spinner Glenton Williams grabbed three for 18, and Grayson Cuffy picked up three for 29.



## West Indies beat Ireland to win T20I series



**West Indies captain Shai Hope bats against Ireland during the third T20 International in Bready, Ireland, on Sunday, June 15, 2025. (Getty Images)**

Evin Lewis turned back the clock with a blistering 91 off 44 balls to lead the West Indies to a resounding 62-run win over Ireland in the third and final T20 International at Bready Cricket Club on Sunday, clinching the three-match series 1-0 after the first two games were abandoned due to rain.

Batting first after Ireland elected to field, the West Indies piled up a mammoth 256 for five — their highest T20I total against Ireland — with Lewis at the heart of the carnage.

The left-handed opener smashed seven fours and eight sixes, racing to a half-century in just 23 balls before narrowly missing out on a hundred.

He shared a punishing 122-run opening stand in 63 balls with captain Shai Hope, who contributed a fluent 51 from 27 deliveries, striking four fours and four sixes. The pair took the attack to the Irish bowlers,

bringing up the century stand inside nine overs.

Hope was the first to fall, caught off Barry McCarthy in the 11th over. Lewis followed two overs later, sky-ing a catch to Stirling off left-arm spinner Matthew Humphreys, who was the pick of the Irish bowlers with two wickets for just 16 runs in his four overs.

Rovman Powell (2) and Shimron Hetmyer (15) fell in quick succession, but Keacy Carty kept the momentum going with an unbeaten 49 off 22 balls, which included four fours and four sixes.

He combined with Jason Holder (18) for a 39-run stand and closed the innings with Romario Shepherd, who blasted 19 not out from six balls, including three sixes, to take West Indies to an imposing total.

Ireland's bowlers were put to the sword, with Liam McCarthy conceding eighty-one runs in his four

overs — one of the most expensive spells in T20I history.

Set a daunting 257 for victory, Ireland's chase began with promise but quickly fell apart. Captain Paul Stirling struck a couple of boundaries before falling for 13 in the second over, caught by Powell off Holder.

Ross Adair and Harry Tector launched a counterattack, adding a 101-run stand in 54 balls that briefly threatened to make a game of it. Tector smashed four fours and two sixes in his 38 off 25 balls, while Adair top-scored with 48 from 36, hitting three fours and four sixes.

But the stand was broken when Roston Chase trapped Tector lbw in the 11th over, sparking a collapse. Lorcan Tucker (one) fell soon after, caught off Akeal Hosein, who also removed George Dockrell (15) and Ross Adair to finish with three for 27.

Holder returned to dismiss Tim Tector (seven) and Barry McCarthy, while Shepherd accounted for the latter with a sharp catch by Lewis.

Ireland never recovered, despite a late flurry from Mark Adair, who struck thirty-one off fourteen balls, including four sixes, and Liam McCarthy, who ended unbeaten on sixteen.

The West Indies rotated their bowlers effectively, with Hosein, Holder (two for 49), Shepherd (one for 23), and Chase (one for 16) all among the wickets. Ireland closed on 194 for seven — a spirited total, but well short of the target.



# Sports News

## South Africa Women beat West Indies to level ODI series

South Africa Women produced a fine all-round performance to secure a 40-run win over the West Indies Women at the 3ws Oval on Saturday and tie their three-match One-Day International Series at 1-1.

The tourists posted 309 for nine from their 50 overs after being asked to bat first by West Indian captain Hayley Matthews on a sunny day at the UWI Cave Hill campus.

All but four of South Africa's batters on the day got starts but Sune Luus and Nondumiso Shangase were the only two to register half-centuries.

Luus, batting at number four, top scored with 76 off just 65 balls, including eight fours while Nondumiso, who batted one spot higher, hit four fours and two sixes on her way to a 48-ball 55.

Annerie Dercksen (37), Marizanne Kapp (32), captain Laura Wolvaardt (28), Chloe Tryon (28) and Tazmin Brits (26) also made solid contributions to what ended up being a winning total.

Afy Fletcher was the best West Indian bowler on the day with four for 64 from her 10 overs of leg spin, while the skipper partnered her well with two for 47 from her 10 overs.

The West Indies then made a decent effort of the chase but lost wickets at crucial



**South Africa's Sune Luus celebrates after reaching a half century against the West Indies women during the second ODI at the 3Ws Oval in Cave Hill, Barbados on Saturday, June 14, 2025. (Getty Images)**

intervals before ultimately being dismissed on the last ball of the innings for 269.

Matthews led the charge with 56 off 58 balls at the top of the order, including nine fours, while vice-captain and wicket-keeper She-maine Campbelle was the next highest scorer with 53 off 58 balls, including four fours and a six.

All-rounder Chinelle Henry also played a good hand

with 39 but, unfortunately for the hosts, no other batter was able to get past 20.

Left arm spinner Nonkululeko Mlaba was excellent on her way to figures of four for 33 from her 10 overs, while pacer Marizanne Kapp picked up two for 42 from her six overs in support.

The series decider will be played at the same venue on Tuesday.




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## Injured Smith going with Australia to West Indies



**Australia's Steve Smith, left, and bowling coach Daniel Vettori watch players warm up before the start of play on day four of the World Test Championship final between South Africa and Australia at Lord's cricket ground in London, Saturday, June 14, 2025. (AP)**

LONDON (AP) — Star batter Steve Smith and his dislocated finger are going with Australia to the Caribbean.

Smith doesn't need surgery on the compound dislocation to his right pinkie from the World Test Championship final at Lord's, captain Pat Cummins said on Saturday.

But Smith's appearance in the three-Test series against the West Indies starting on June 25 in Barbados remained a major doubt.

"I'd say first test maybe unlikely and then go from there, but it's a bit early just to tell," Cummins said.

Smith became the highest non-English run-scorer in tests at Lord's and was hurt at a decisive moment in the

final against South Africa on Friday.

Standing at first slip and closer to the wickets than usual, his finger was smashed by an edge off South Africa captain Temba Bavuma and he dropped the catch. Bavuma was on two and went on to 66 in a match-winning stand with opener Aiden Markram, who scored 136.

Smith's finger should heal in two weeks and he could play depending on his tolerance for wearing a splint. He has to wear the splint for eight weeks, which encompasses the entire series.

Cummins was grateful that the West Indies tests — their opening series in the 2025-27 WTC cycle — mean they don't have long to lick their wounds after losing the final by five wickets inside four days.

"To make these finals, it's normally off the back of being really strong at home, but you've got to win some away series too," Cummins said.

"We've got a good chance to do that straight away. A three-test-match series out there, it means we're into

some really important cricket.

"So, in some ways, it's good we get to dust ourselves off and turn around in a couple of weeks and start looking ahead to the next one. That's one of the good things about the World Test Championship, every test series and every test match feels like you're playing for something significant."

Cummins said they naturally want to be in the 2027 final but the make-up of what is an aging team has to be balanced between giving new talent a chance while trying to win matches, with an Ashes home series coming up in November. It wouldn't surprise if there are test retirements after that.

"It does feel like a little bit of a fresh start," Cummins said. "Fast forward a couple of years, you start thinking about who's going to win. Hopefully if we make the final, who's going to be in that? Do we want to get some games into them? Do we feel like now is the right time to change? Or do you hold with the team that got us to the final?"

"A new WTC cycle in some ways does feel like a bit of a reset."





# Sports

MONDAY 16<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2025



## ABAVA wraps up Division 1 League competitions



**2025 Women's Division 1 champions Da Squad**



**2025 Men's Division 1 champions Pytonz**

Both men's and women's Division 1 competitions of the Antigua and Barbuda Amateur Volleyball Association's (ABAVA) Local Club League came to an end at the indoor stadium at the YMCA Sports Complex on Saturday evening.

Newly crowned champions ABI Insurance and Cool and Smooth Pytonz completed a perfect unbeaten season in the Men's Division 1 competition with a 3-0 victory against dethroned defending champs Stoneville.

The Pytonz took an hour and 26 minutes to record their 12th win in as many games in the seven-team round-robin league with a 27-25, 25-17, and 25-23 victory against Stoneville, who finished in the runners-up spot with a record of eight wins and four losses from their quota of 12 games.

The Pytonz also claimed a 3-0 victory against the Invaders in their penultimate game in the league.

The Pytonz recorded their 25-7, 25-7, and 25-12 victo-

ry against the Invaders in an hour and nine minutes.

The result also ensured that the Invaders finished their campaign in fifth place after slumping to their eighth defeat from their quota of 12 games.

Vernon G. Edwards High Flyerz won their last two matches to finish their campaign in fourth place in the Men's Division 1 competition.

The High Flyerz were awarded a 3-0 (25-0, 25-0, 25-0) victory via default against the Renegades, who finished their campaign second from the bottom of the standings after slumping to their 10th loss in 12 matches.

The High Flyerz also recorded a 3-1 victory against their colleagues, Phoenix High Flyerz, in an hour and 15 minutes in their penultimate match of the league.

After forfeiting the opening set 25-0, the High Flyerz stormed back to prevail 25-15, 25-21, and 25-19 to finish their season with a re-

cord of seven wins and five losses from their quota of 12 matches.

The result ensured that the Phoenix High Flyerz finished in the cellar after suffering their 11th loss in 12 encounters.

However, Cool and Smooth and JOMA Caribbean Da Squad, who clinched their fourth consecutive Women's Division 1 title, suffered their only blemish in another dominating season in a 3-0 loss by default to Starz 1 Seniors in their final league encounter on Friday.

Starz 1 Seniors were awarded a 3-0 (25-0, 25-0, 25-0) victory against Da Squad, who finished their title-winning campaign in the six-team round-robin league with a record of nine wins and a loss from their quota of 10 matches.

Starz 1 Seniors clinched the runners-up spot in the Women's Division 1 League with a record of seven wins and three losses.

However, the ABAVA has suspended its President's

Cup competition, which is usually held immediately after the completion of the round-robin league.

According to the ABAVA, the President's Cup, which will involve the top four teams in both men's and women's competitions, will be held sometime later this year.

The suspension of the President's Cup is to facilitate the preparation of the senior men's national team to participate in the 2025 NORCECA 28th Men's Pan American Cup in Mexico in August.

The competition, which is a qualification competition for three major competitions in 2026 and 2027, will take place in Guanajuato, Mexico, from August 24 to September 1.

It is a qualifier to the 2026 Men's PanAmerican Cup, the 2026 NORCECA Men's Continental Championship, and the 2027 Panamerican Games, as well as providing national teams with FIVB world ranking points.