

55 Antigua and Barbuda Students graduate from Monroe University

Story on Page 2



Constable Kymara Davis, Corporal Jerry Peters, Corporal Lashel Thomas, Constable Stacey Thomas, Sergeant Verlica Chatham

Story on Page 7

55 Antigua and Barbuda Students graduate from Monroe University at Radio City Music Hall Commencement

Residents from Antigua and Barbuda Represent One of the Largest

Groups of International Graduates in the Class of 2025

Fifty-five students from Antigua and Barbuda were awarded their degrees from Monroe University, a New York-based leader in educating first-generation and international students, last Thursday during Monroe's 92nd Annual Commencement at Radio City Music Hall in midtown New York City.

There were 55 residents from Antigua and Barbuda among the 2,785 graduates in Monroe's Class of 2025, the fourth largest group of international graduates this year.

This year's Commencement was par-

ticularly special as it marked the first one held at the iconic venue since Monroe's elevation to university status last summer. President Marc Jerome reflected on the institution's historic achievement during his uplifting, celebratory remarks.

"Graduation is always one of my favorite days of the year. There's just something about putting on the graduation cap and gown, coming with your family to the greatest city in the world -- New York City -- and celebrating your graduation at one of the most famous venues in the world, Radio City Music Hall," said Monroe University President Marc Jerome. "When you walk in through the doors, you cannot help but be inspired and impressed by

what we're seeing. But today, we're inspired and impressed by you. Just think back to the person you were when you first started at Monroe. You arrived with a dream and the determination to make life better for yourself, your family and your community. Today that dream comes true."

For many graduates from Antigua and Barbuda, that dream was first made possible through a generous scholarship program jointly funded by the Prime Minister's Scholarship Committee and Monroe University. The program is designed to make a quality tertiary education more accessible, affordable, and attainable for local students and their families.

The 2025 Monroe University graduates from Antigua and Barbuda are:

- **Addison Jamie Rumeal Simon**
- **Alisa Ingrid Cort Smith**
- **Alisha Jno Jules**
- **Amanda Z. Tappin**
- **Brianna Vanessa Monroe**
- **Chata Karina Pipe**
- **Clair Jaydeesha Claudia Jacobs**
- **D'Anjae Julyssa Delicia Joseph**
- **De Laun Devon Martin**
- **Denise A. Matthias-Thomas**
- **Denley R. Jarvis**
- **Dwayne Dashawn Fleming**
- **Fiona A. Wehner**
- **Iyesha S. Calame**
- **Jade G. Henry**
- **Jayzee Brittney Loucil Smith**
- **Jeconiah Ahijah Roberts**
- **Joycelyn E. Peters**
- **Kareem E. Charles**
- **Karel Alyssa Knight**
- **Kendel K. Shillingford**
- **Kentisha B. Tonge**
- **Kerena L. Bethel**
- **Kettia Sydney Patricia Ambrose**
- **Kia T. Harrigan**
- **Krystal-Ann Jahnine Patrice Gonsalves**
- **Kwatawnya Kelsey Junessa Roberts**
- **Lake-ann Laticia Lake**
- **Lisa S. Browne**
- **Luann N. Rodney**
- **Lyle Jackson**
- **Makeda Rashida Zuwena Brookes**
- **Melissa Florisca George**
- **Melody St. Claire - Felicia Quinland**
- **Michael Tajair Southwell**
- **Milton J. Jeremy**
- **Nalian L. Gonsalves, Jr.**
- **Nekisha C. Pryce**
- **Nyelvia Francis**
- **Omya I. Fleming**
- **Paula Simon**
- **Rita Folashade Adesewa Falowo-Osbourne**
- **Sally Ibrahim**
- **Shaquancia Ketara Leadeatte**
- **Shara R. Toussaint**
- **Shawnje' Shazaria Imani Williams**
- **Shemar Breonne Bejai**
- **Sheneke M. Francis**
- **Tashie-Ann S. Mack**
- **Tenisha C. Sebastian**
- **Tonya Williams**
- **Trevin Rece Keane McDonald**
- **Y'Mahzie J. Lewis**
- **Youlanda S. Gordon-Richards**
- **Zharii I. Luke**



Two separate ceremonies were held to accommodate the families and friends of the students earning Associate, Bachelor's, or Master's degrees or professional and advanced certificates.

Graduates participating in the morning ceremony completed programs of study in Monroe's School of Business and Accounting, School of Criminal and Social Justice, School of Information Technology, and School of Nursing. The Grand Marshal was Cicely Spann, a valued member of staff for 30 years who currently works within the Office of Loan Management. Bronx County (NY) District Attorney Darcel Clark gave the keynote address.

The afternoon ceremony conferred degrees on graduate students from Monroe's King Graduate School, as well as undergraduate students from the School of Allied Health Professions, School of Education, and School of Hospitality Management and the Culinary Institute of New York. Maria Vega, a member of the Student Financial Services team who has also served Monroe students for 30 years, led the procession as Grand Marshal. New York City Public Schools Chancellor and former Monroe University Vice

President Melissa Aviles-Ramos delivered the keynote address.

Graduates in the Class of 2025 represented 65 countries. Aside from stu-

dents from the U.S. and its territories, the largest contingents of students were from, in order: India, Saint Lucia, China, Antigua and Barbuda, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Jamaica, The Bahamas, Dominica, Saint Kitts and Nevis, and Bangladesh.

The University conferred 596 Master's degrees; 1,081 Bachelor's degrees; and 1,051 Associate degrees this year, as well as awarded 57 professional and advanced certificates.

The University's three-semester academic calendar enables Monroe students to earn 45 or more college credits per year (compared to the 30 credits college students typically earn per year at other institutions). That means that many of the graduates this year earned their Bachelor's degree in three years or their Associate degree in less than two years.



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One man died, police officer wounded in shootout near Freetown



Cadaphe Evanson

The police have reported that a man, who has been identified as Cadaphe Evanson was shot and killed on Monday night during what police say was a shootout.

Informed sources say the police had received certain intelligence that led them to an area near Freetown where they encountered the victim and others in a motor vehicle. When the police identified themselves, the victim opened fire at the police who in turn returned fire.

During the exchange, one police officer was wounded, but the victim is believed to have sustained several gunshot wounds which, it is believed, led to his death.

An official police report indicated that the incident happened around 9:00 o'clock on Monday night while the police were conducting what they described as 'an operation' when they came under gunfire from unknown assailants.

"A police officer was shot and injured in the process and the police returned fire.

"During the exchange, a male suspect was shot and subsequently pro-

nounced dead at the scene by a medical doctor.

"The injured officer was transported to the hospital, where he is currently receiving medical treatment. His injury is not considered life-threatening, and his condition remains stable," the police statement reported.

The police reported that a firearm and several matching rounds of ammunition were recovered from the scene as part of the ongoing investigation.

The police are continuing inquiries into the circumstances surrounding the incident and will provide further updates as the investigation progresses.

In the meantime, anyone with information that may assist in this matter is urged to contact the Criminal Investigations Department at 462-3913 or call the anonymous Crimestoppers hotline at 800-TIPS (8477).



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Local News

Former parliamentarian, Samantha Marshall elected as Deputy Speaker of the OECS Assembly



Samantha Marshall, Minister of Foreign Affairs, E.P. Chet Greene and Leader of the Opposition, Jamale Pringle.

Former Member of the Antigua and Barbuda Parliament, Samantha Marshall, has been elected to the post of Deputy Speaker of the OECS Assembly, which concluded its 7th meeting in St. Vincent and the Grenadines on Tuesday.

Marshall's election was one of the activities of the Assembly.

Held under the theme, "Strengthening Regional Unity in a Shifting Global Order", Antigua and Barbuda was represented by a delegation comprised of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, E.P. Chet Greene, and Leader of the Opposition, Jamale Pringle.

The Assembly received a presentation from the guest speaker, Director General of the World Trade Organization, Dr. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala. Dr. Okonjo-Iweala praised the active role of the OECS at the WTO in highlighting issues pertinent to the Region. The Director General also urged the OECS to continue to be a leading voice in the organization.

Minister Greene delivered closing remarks on behalf of the Assembly after the presentation of Dr. Okonjo-Iweala. The Foreign Minister commended the choice of guest speaker for the sitting of the Assembly

which he mentioned was timely during these tumultuous times within the multilateral trading system.

The Foreign Minister also commented on the present geopolitical tensions that have extended to OECS Member States, directly impacting the economies and wider society. He further stated that "the forces shaping today's world have no patience for small island developing states (SIDS)". Mentioning that the vulnerabilities of the OECS are not acknowledged, with the situation not eliciting any special consideration.

The Foreign Minister while reminding the Assembly of Antigua and Barbuda's long standing challenges at the WTO, called for further reform of the WTO dispute-settlement system that would be more fit for purpose in the modern world. Moreover, Minister Greene called for the furthering of integration of the Eastern Caribbean Economic Union and the strengthening of strategic engagement to rebuild the multilateral trading system in the interest of all Member States.

The OECS Assembly saw the reading of five (5) bills which were the Animal Health Bill; the Plant Health Bill; the Food Safety Bill; the Standards Bill; and the Customs Control and Management Bill.




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New faces emerge as the Police Welfare Association elects a new executive



Constable Kymara Davis, Corporal Jerry Peters, Corporal Lashel Thomas, Constable Stacey Thomas, Sergeant Verlica Chatham

Members of the Royal Police Force of Antigua and Barbuda have elected a new executive body to the Police Welfare Association.

The recent election was held across five polling stations located at St. John's, All Saints, Bolans, Parham, and Barbuda Police Stations. More than 250 officers from the ranks of Constable to Inspector participated in the electoral process.

Corporal Jerry Peters was elected as the new Chairman of the Association. The other elected members are as follows:

Vice Chairman: Constable Stacey Thomas

Treasurer: Sergeant Verlica Chatham

Secretary: Constable Kymarra Davis

Assistant Secretary/Treasurer: Constable Alvin Samuel

Public Relations Officer: Corporal Lashel Thomas

With the exception of the newly appointed Chairman, the other elected members are serving in their respective capacities for the first time. The former chairman is Corporal Marilyn Harris. The election process was supervised by members of the Antigua and Barbuda Electoral Commission (ABEC).

Already, acting Commissioner Everton Jeffers has met with the new executive and extended congratulations to them on their appointments. He further encouraged them to execute their duties with integrity, fairness, and commitment to the principles of the Association.

The Police Welfare Association was established under the Police Act, Chapter 330, Sections 62 and 63, to enable Inspectors and subordinate police officers to address and bring forward matters affecting their general welfare and efficiency to the Commissioner of Police and the Minister responsible police affairs.

The Police Administration extends best wishes to the new executive as they commence their term of office.



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Ministry of Foreign Affairs launches tour of the nation's schools



The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is undertaking a tour of the nation's schools in a campaign to educate students about the Organisation of American States (OAS) which convenes its 55th General Assembly in St. John's next week.

Officials at the ministry determined that it is essential that students across Antigua and Barbuda are made aware of the OAS, what it is, what are its core principles and how does being a member benefit Antigua and Barbuda.

The tour started two weeks ago at the Christian Union Primary School on the Wireless Road, but due to ongoing exams, visits to other educational institutions were paused to allow students to complete their exams.

However, with exams almost over, the engagements resumed this week with visits to the Antigua Girls High School, the Clare Hall Secondary and the Adele School on Monday and visits to the All Saints Secondary and the Liberta Primary School on Tuesday. On Wednesday (today), the team will visit the Antigua Grammar School and the Five Islands Primary. Other schools are being added daily as exam schedules allow. Additionally, a visit to schools in Barbuda is also under consideration.

On Monday at the AGHS, Foreign Affairs Minister, E.P. Chet Greene, who led the team, highlighted some of the main concerns of the OAS. These include raising concerns over the issue of climate change, the pro-

motion of democracy in the Americas, the declaration of the hemisphere as a 'Zone of Peace' and the protection of human rights.

Minister Greene also invited one of the students to accompany him as his official guest at the opening ceremony for the OAS General Assembly on Wednesday at the American University of Antigua Conference Centre. This invitation has been extended to one student from all of the schools visited.

Communications Officer in the Ministry, Everton Barnes, focused on the countries that comprise the OAS. He noted that it embraces some 34 countries stretching from Canada in North America all the way down to Central America, South American and the Ca-

ribbean. (Cuba and Venezuela are not members of the OAS). He told the students that whilst the countries of the English-speaking Caribbean are small in geographical and population size, many of the countries of the OAS are quite large. For example, Canada is the second largest country in the world, while the United States has the third largest population in the world (330 million), and Brazil has the largest population of black people outside of the African continent.

Also participating in the tour were Public Relations Officer, Briana Anthony, Barbuda Liaison Officer, Daralyn Burton along with Director General of Foreign Affairs, Ann-Marie Layne and Legal Officer, J'Moul Francis.

Happy Birthday, Barbara-Ann Cave!

For the past eight years, I take great joy in celebrating you on our birthday since we are birthday twins—and today is no different. You have been a remarkable presence in my life, and I truly appreciate you.

This year's celebration is extra special. You are featured in my book, *Integrity Comes With a Price*, which is now available in 164 countries and in 3 prestigious universities across the



USA and UK. That alone speaks to the impact you've had—not just on me, but now on readers around the world.

As one of your gifts this year, I'm honoured to present you with an autographed copy of the book. Thank you for being part of this journey. Enjoy your special day!

With warmest wishes, from your birthday twin.

From: Trevor Young



DAILY PROGRAMMING



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Local News



CARPHA hosts capacity building workshop at SLBMC



workshop is designed to enhance laboratory systems and strengthen technical capacity across Antigua and Barbuda.

The Ministry of Health acknowledges the pivotal role laboratory professionals play in ensuring effective disease detection, surveillance, and public health response.

Minister of Health, Sir Molwyn Joseph, expresses his gratitude to CARPHA for its ongoing technical assistance and looks forward to the successful completion of the workshop and continued collaboration in the future.

Meanwhile, Laboratory Technologist from the Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA), Nikhella Winter-Reece, on Tuesday paid a courtesy call on the Health Minister, Sir Mol-

wyn Joseph.

Also in attendance were Permanent Secretary Colin O'Keiffe, Principal Assistant Secretary Gwendolyn Carter-Joseph, Chief Medical Officer Dr. Kamaria DeCastro, and Rhonda Bufong of the Sir Lester Bird Medical Centre.

Minister Joseph engaged in meaningful discussions with Winter-Reece about the goals of the training, the current status of laboratory services, and future collaboration with CARPHA. He expressed the Ministry's deep appreciation for CARPHA's continued partnership and emphasized the importance of building resilient and well-equipped laboratory services within the national healthcare system.



A four-day capacity-building workshop is currently underway at the Sir Lester Bird Medical Centre. The

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Permanent Secretary Colin O'Keffe Hosts Introductory Meeting with Ministry of Health Staff

The recently appointed Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Health, Wellness, the Environment, and Civil Service Affairs, Colin O'Keffe, held a general meeting with the management and staff at the Ministry's Headquarters.

This introductory engagement marked O'Keffe's first official opportunity to meet with the broader team since assuming his new role. The meeting served as a platform for staff and management to introduce themselves, raise concerns, and share ideas on how to improve working conditions and overall operations within the Ministry.

In his remarks, O'Keffe acknowledged the efforts already being made across the Ministry and reaffirmed his commitment to fostering a collaborative and transparent working environment. He highlighted the importance of open communication and assured staff that their voices would be heard as part of a broader vision to strengthen the Ministry's service delivery and internal functions.



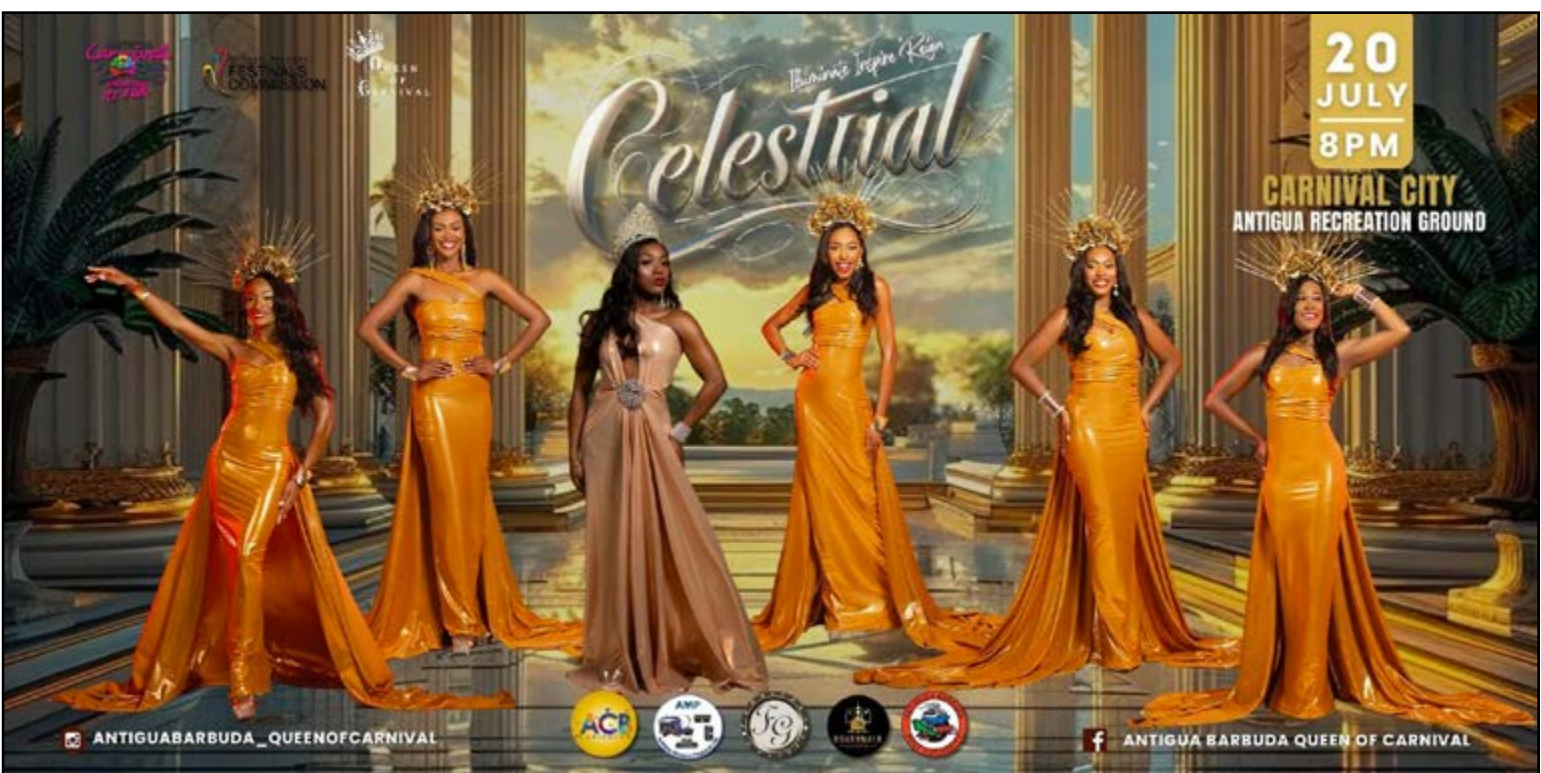
Newly appointed Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Health, Colin O'Keffe, met with the staff on Tuesday

Team members spoke openly about the challenges they face in their respective roles—from resource and infrastructure needs to matters related to morale, training, and administrative efficiency. Constructive suggestions were shared, and there was a clear sense of optimism about the potential for positive changes.

The meeting was widely described as productive and encouraging, set-

ting a constructive tone for future engagement between staff and senior leadership. O'Keffe emphasized that dialogue of this nature is essential to creating a stronger and more responsive Ministry.

To this end, he pledged to convene regular meetings to ensure that staff input remains a consistent part of the Ministry's decision-making process.





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Speaker

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ENRIQUE ZAPATA

CIBC adds another event to its 'Walk for a Cure' campaign



CIBC Caribbean has announced that its annual Walk for the Cure campaign, has added a new feature, the inaugural ***Gala for the Cure*** which was held last weekend at the Galley Bay Resort, with resounding success.

The event welcomed 86 guests for an unforgettable evening of philanthropy and celebration in support of cancer awareness and research.

The evening began with a cocktail reception, followed by dinner and a silent auction featuring a stunning



art piece by renowned artist Marc Xavier. The event was overwhelmingly supported and has now been confirmed as an annual addition to the

Walk for the Cure fundraising calendar.

Walk Managers Natasha Charles, Khadijah James, Jesseca Ormand, Corporate

Manager Priscilla Leonce, and Country Head Ladesa James-Williams expressed their delight with the outcome and the community's generous support.

Special thanks go to the team at Galley Bay Resort for graciously hosting the event, as well as to Sharon Green and A.S. Bryden for their unwavering support. Appreciation is also extended to Pink Mongoose for the exquisite table centerpieces and WimbiPrint for the beautifully designed signage and printed materials.



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The Caribbean Cannot Be Left Behind in the AI Revolution

CAF backs regional digital transformation at UWI Five Islands AI Conference



Dr. Stacy Richards-Kennedy

As the global landscape for artificial intelligence continues to rapidly evolve, development actors, technology experts, and policymakers are posing a critical question: What will the future hold for small island developing states? This question will be front and centre at the 2025 UWI Five Islands Artificial Intelligence Conference, where CAF – Development Bank of Latin America and the Caribbean is this year’s Title Sponsor and strategic partner.

For the second consecutive year, CAF is supporting this growing regional platform, as it demonstrates its commitment to a digitally sovereign and inclusive Caribbean. CAF will present a comprehensive Roadmap for National AI Implementation which offers a practical, context-sensitive framework for countries in the region to embrace AI ethically and sustainably.

“The Caribbean cannot, and must not, be left out of the conversation about Artificial Intelligence,” said Dr. Stacy Richards-Kennedy, Regional Manager

for the Caribbean at CAF. “AI is reshaping the way we live, work, and govern. But to unlock its benefits, we must also proactively manage its risks. What this means is we must put ethics, equity, inclusion and people at the core of our discussions and decisions.”

According to Dr. Richards-Kennedy, “Caribbean countries should focus on shaping their own digital futures. And the decisions we make now will determine whether AI exacerbates inequality or opens doors to opportunity for all Caribbean citizens, which is why this conference comes at an important juncture for our region.”

The UWI Five Islands AI Conference provides an important space to address what has become one of the region’s defining development challenges: seizing the opportunities presented by AI while at the same time, closing the digital divide. In this vein, it must also lay the ground work for improving competitiveness, innovation, and the transformation of the public and private sectors. CAF’s growing digital portfolio across the Caribbean responds directly to these challenges. In Trinidad and Tobago, the bank has committed over USD 120 million to digital infrastructure projects, including the implementation of the country’s Interoperability Platform, e-Identity Programme, and a new Tier IV Government Data Centre. It also includes other elements that lay the foundation for digital public infrastructure.

CAF’s vision is not about investing in the hardware alone. The development bank, whose 23-shareholder membership also includes 7 English Speaking CARICOM countries, strongly believes that digital tools must serve the Caribbean’s unique needs and realities.

“We believe in supporting countries’ efforts to build a digitally sovereign Caribbean, one where every citizen

can access public services securely and participate fully in the digital economy,” said Dr. Richards-Kennedy. “Too often, new technologies are developed without our region in mind. We can no longer afford to be on the sidelines. The Caribbean has both the talent and the vision, as these conference sessions will demonstrate.”

CAF’s support for AI adoption is part of a wider digital transformation strategy in the Caribbean. It includes capacity-building initiatives like the School for Digital Transformation and Innovation, which equips policymakers with the requisite skills to advance digital transformation across the Caribbean. The strategy also focuses on financing for broadband expansion and e-government platforms and creating spaces for much-needed dialogue and knowledge exchange through the CAF Innovation Series. At the heart of these efforts is CAF’s belief that these transformations must be Caribbean led.

The good news is that momentum is growing within the region. Governments have begun to articulate national AI strategies and public expectation of digital innovations is rising.

CAF’s support for and participation in this conference demonstrates a deepening partnership between higher education, development partners, and regional institutions determined to ensure that the Caribbean is not merely a participant in the digital age, but also a leader, an innovator, a creator.

“CAF stands ready to work with public and private sector actors to support the Caribbean’s priorities for digital transformation and AI implementation,” Dr. Richards-Kennedy affirmed. “By working together, the Caribbean can leverage increased investments in research, technology and innovation to propel the region’s digital transformation.”

**TUES - FRIDAY
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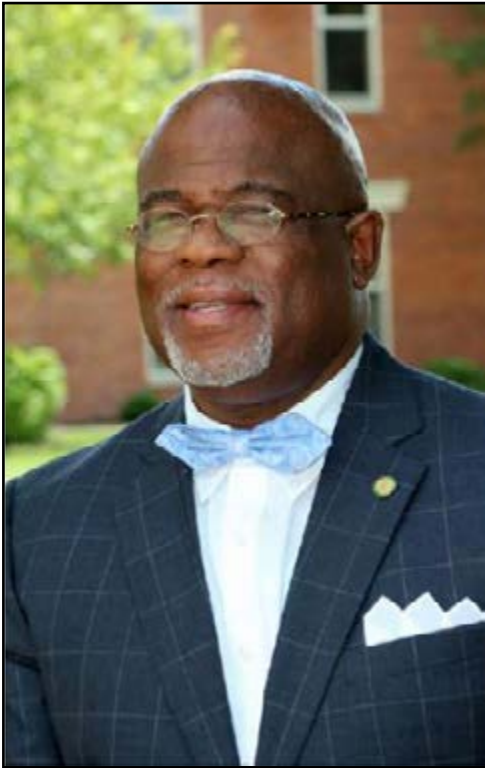


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AI and Climate Change: The Caribbean's Smart Fight for Survival



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

By Dr. Curtis Charles

When it comes to climate change, the Caribbean doesn't need a warning—it's already feeling the effects. From rising temperatures to disappearing shorelines and sudden droughts, the signs are everywhere. But at this year's AI Research Conference, a powerful panel titled "AI and Climate Change: Building Resilience Across Sectors" will explore how artificial intelligence is quietly becoming one of the region's most promising tools in the fight for a livable future.

Moderated by Dr. Chris Jones, the session brings together three experts working on different frontlines of the climate crisis—weather, agriculture, and infrastructure. And while their areas of focus may differ, they're united by a single truth: AI can help us prepare better, respond faster, and build smarter.

Reading the Skies, Saving Lives

Dr. David Farrell, who heads the Caribbean Institute for Meteorology and Hydrology, knows how unpredictable the weather has become. For years, meteorologists in the region have struggled to keep pace with the rapid shifts in climate. But now, AI is changing the game.

By crunching huge amounts of satellite data, rainfall patterns, and ocean temperatures, machine learning models can spot early signs of hurricanes, droughts, or flash floods—sometimes days earlier than traditional forecasts. "The earlier we can alert communities, the more lives we can save," says Dr. Farrell. "And that's where AI gives us the edge."

Farming Smarter, Not Harder

On the agricultural side, Dr. Cynthia Zeng, an Assistant Professor at NYU's Abu Dhabi campus, is looking at how AI can help farmers grow more with less. In the Caribbean, where food imports are high and droughts are getting longer, local farming is both a necessity and a challenge.

Using AI-powered tools, farmers can

get real-time advice on what to plant, when to water, and how to handle pests or soil issues. "This isn't about replacing farmers," Dr. Zeng explains. "It's about giving them better tools to protect their crops and their incomes."

But she's also careful to highlight the importance of access. "Technology won't make us more resilient if only a few people can afford to use it. We need to make sure the smallest farms get these benefits too."

Protecting Our Health and Roads

Dr. Sandeep Maharaj, Director of the School of Pharmacy at UWI, brings a different but equally urgent view. His focus is on how climate shocks disrupt the systems we depend on—like getting medicine to clinics or keeping roads safe after a storm.

AI, he says, can help governments spot weak points in their supply chains or road networks before disaster strikes. "If we can map risk in advance, we can plan better and respond quicker," Dr. Maharaj says. "It's not just about reacting to storms—it's about preparing systems to hold strong when they come."

Moving From Talk to Action

This panel isn't just about tech—it's about using what we have, right now, to protect the region's future. AI isn't magic, and it won't stop climate change on its own. But in the hands of committed experts and communities willing to adapt, it just might help us stay one step ahead.

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SVG: Illegal firearms seized in major police operation

In what police call a significant progress in its anti-gun operation, the Royal Saint Vincent and the Grenadines Police Force (RSVGPF) successfully seized two illegal firearms and a significant quantity of ammunition during a pre-dawn operation in the Diamond community.

Acting on credible intelligence, officers from the Rapid Response Unit carried out a targeted operation in the early hours of Friday, June 13 police said. Their swift action led to the recovery of an AK-47 rifle with 19 rounds of 7.62mm ammunition and an Uzi submachine gun loaded with 40 rounds of 9mm ammunition.

The results of the operation were formally shared at a press conference held this morning at the RSVGPF's Police Conference Room, where the force emphasized the importance of ongoing efforts to remove illegal weapons from the nation's



streets.

Officials stressed that every illegal firearm taken out of circulation makes St Vincent and the Grenadines safer.

The successful operation is part of a broader national strategy to curb the spread

of illegal weapons and strengthen community safety.

The RSVGPF continues to urge the public to come forward with any information that could assist in these efforts. Individuals can reach out through the police emergency lines (999

or 911), Police Control at (784) 457-1211, or the CID/Major Crimes Unit at (784) 456-1810.

Citizens were also advised that they can speak with any trusted police officer or station. (*Loop Caribbean*)



Golding slams Holness over dismissal of Opposition's role

People's National Party (PNP) President Mark Golding has strongly rejected Prime Minister Dr Andrew Holness's recent claim that the Government does not need an Opposition to remain accountable, asserting instead that supporters of the ruling Jamaica Labour Party (JLP) are sufficient for oversight.

In a blunt response, Golding dismissed Holness's assertion as a "nonsense argument", which, he said, reflects the prime minister's ongoing misunderstanding of Jamaica's democratic governance system.

"It's just another example of his failure to understand the democratic system of governance in the country and the role of the parliamentary Opposition in holding the Government accountable," he told *The Gleaner*.

The Opposition leader's position is a constitutional appointment.

Section 80 of the Jamaican Constitution states that the leader of the Opposition is appointed by the governor general by instrument under the Broad Seal. It also details the roles and functions of the Opposition, including acting as a check on the Government's power, contributing to bipartisan governance through key appointments and legislative amendments, and presenting alternative perspectives in Parliament.

Stating that the role of the Opposition is "absolutely vital in keeping Government accountable", Golding highlighted ways in which this has been shown.

"Were it not for the Opposition, the NIDS legislation would have passed in its original form, which was a violation of the rights of the people. States of emergency would have continued to be used in the way that they were, like confetti, and without the desired effect. It's because we put an end to that, that we are seeing the benefits of proper



policing strategy," Golding said.

At a party meeting honouring workers in Hanover Eastern on Sunday, the prime minister argued that JLP supporters are the administration's most "constructive critics", unlike some followers of the PNP, who, he suggested, are not informed.

"We nuh really need an Opposition because our supporters hold us to account. In fact, our supporters are our staunchest constructive critics," Holness said.

He added: "The Jamaica Labour Party workers are not fanatics; they don't believe in following blindly."

He further contrasted JLP supporters with some "exuberant and loud" PNP supporters, who were unable to articulate why they were at a recent PNP protest in Kingston.

"That is not this party (JLP)," Holness said. "We come here to enlighten, we come here to give you knowledge, we come here to empower, we see you as the candles that will go back into the community and light the way for the members of your community," he said.

Golding, who was speaking at the campaign launch for Dennis Gordon in St Andrew East Central on Sunday, also urged Jamaicans to resist what he described as a dismantling of democracy by the current administration.

He argued that a future PNP government would prioritise strengthening institutions of accountability, rather than weakening them.

He noted that the Integrity Commission Act, which established Jamaica's premier anti-corruption agency, the Integrity Commission, was first introduced in Parliament during his tenure as justice minister under the Portia Simpson Miller administration, prior to its dissolution in 2016.

Accusing the current Government of trying to undermine the Integrity Commission, Golding said, "I am fully committed to ensuring its independence and that it has the tools it needs to hold people accountable ... people who receive resources from the public purse and are responsible for delivering services and goods with those resources." (*Jamaica Gleaner*)

Regional News

PAGE 21

Dominica: Government says no one injured after roof collapses

Dominican Education Minister Octavia Alfred has confirmed that no one was injured when the concrete roof structure for the auditorium of the Dominica Grammar School (DGS) collapsed on Monday.

She said that the roof had collapsed “during the ongoing construction work” and that “fortunately no one was injured”.

She said that the students and staff were not affected “as the construction area is secure and separate from school operations.

“Students and staff do not have access to the site. As such, classes and other activities continue as normal.

The ministry is engaging with the contractor and the matter is under review”.

The education minister said the government is assuring everyone “that the safety of students, staff and the wider school community remains our highest priority”.

In January, Prime Minister Roosevelt Skerrit, who toured the construction of the new DGS said the building is expected to be completed by the end of June this year.


“This morning, I have noticed some things I believe that may need to be revisited, but overall, it’s so far, so good...,” he said, adding “both the contractor and the




developer are saying at the end of June. It’s a huge goal from my standpoint which requires longer working hours.

“Though we are under pressure to have the students in at the earliest opportunity,

but at the same time we have to be careful that we do not speed-compromise the structural integrity and the architectural quality of the Dominica Grammar School,” he said then. (*Loop Caribbean*)





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MRS. JELLETTE RALPH
(JELLY BEANS)

Kraft Heinz to remove artificial dyes from U.S. products by end of 2027



Kraft Heinz said Tuesday that it will remove FD&C artificial dyes from its products by the end of 2027, and will not launch any new products in the U.S. containing those ingredients.

The company said in a release that about 10% of its U.S. items use FD&C colors, the synthetic additives that make many foods more visually appealing. Kraft Heinz brands that sell products with these dyes include Crystal Light, Kool-Aid, MiO, Jell-O and Jet-Puffed, according to a Kraft Heinz spokesperson.

The company removed artificial colors, preservatives and flavors from its Kraft macaroni and cheese in 2016 and its Heinz ketchup has never used artificial dyes, according to Pedro Navio, North America president at Kraft Heinz. It is unclear how removing the dyes will affect the company's business, as consumers could perceive the products as healthier but also may be less drawn to duller colors.

The decision follows pressure from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration and Department of Health and Human Services, led by Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr., for the food in-

dustry to pull back on artificial dyes as part of a larger so-called Make America Healthy Again platform.

The FDA in April announced a plan to phase out the use of petroleum-based synthetic dyes by the end of next year and replace them with natural alternatives. Besides the previously banned Red No. 3, other dyes that will be eliminated include red dye 40, yellow dye 5, yellow dye 6, blue dye 1, blue dye 2 and green dye 2, FDA Commissioner Marty Makary said at the time.

Kennedy said at the time that the FDA and the food industry have "an understanding," not a formal agreement, to remove artificial dyes. The Health and Human Services secretary discussed removing artificial food dyes during a meeting in March with top food executives from companies including Kraft Heinz, PepsiCo North America, General Mills, WK Kellogg, Tyson Foods, J.M. Smucker and the Consumer Brands Association, the industry's top trade group.

A spokesperson for Kraft Heinz said on Tuesday that the company looks forward to partnering with the administration "to provide quality, afford-

able, and wholesome food for all."

Momentum against food dyes had been building for years. In January, before President Donald Trump and Kennedy took office, the FDA announced a ban on the use of Red No. 3 dye in food and ingested drugs. The dye gives many candies and cereals their bright red color, but is also known to cause cancer in laboratory animals. The FDA allowed Red No. 3 to be used by food manufacturers for years, though the state of California had already banned the dye in 2023.

Kraft Heinz said in the release Tuesday that it has made more than 1,000 recipe changes over the past five years to improve product nutrition.

"The vast majority of our products use natural or no colors, and we've been on a journey to reduce our use of FD&C colors across the remainder of our portfolio," Navio said. "Above all, we are focused on providing nutritious, affordable and great-tasting food for Americans and this is a privilege we don't take lightly." (*NBC News*)

JetBlue to cut more flights, other costs with break-even 2025 'unlikely' due to weaker travel demand



JetBlue Airways CEO Joanna Geraghty told staff that the carrier is implementing a host of new cost cuts as softer-than-expected travel demand is making break-even operating margins this year “unlikely.”

“We’re hopeful demand and bookings will rebound, but even a recovery won’t fully offset the ground we’ve lost this year and our path back to profitability will take longer than we’d hoped. That means we’re still relying on borrowed cash to keep the airline running,” Geraghty said in a note to staff dated Monday, which was seen by CNBC.

JetBlue didn’t immediately comment.

JetBlue will further cut off-

peak flights and trim unprofitable routes. It will also pause plans to retrofit four of its older Airbus A320 jets with new interiors and park them, while the six remaining jets slated for the refurbishment are still on track for next year, Geraghty wrote.

The carrier is also assessing its hiring plans and could combine some leadership roles and rein in travel spending, according to the memo.

U.S. carriers have announced plans to trim capacity, particularly in the second half of the year, as bookings for domestic travel came in weaker than expected this year and fares fell. Airfare in May was

down 7.3% compared with last year, according to U.S. Department of Labor’s inflation report.

The carrier has been looking for ways to increase revenue and reduce costs after its acquisition of budget Spirit Airlines was blocked by a federal judge. That failed merger came after judge blocked its Northeast U.S. alliance with American Airlines in 2023. The airline last posted an annual profit in 2019.

Last month, JetBlue announced a new partnership with United Airlines that will allow customers to book flights on each other’s airline and earn and use frequent flyer programs.

Geraghty, who took the reins at JetBlue in February last year, told staff that while the carrier is assessing its hiring plans, it will continue to bring on new frontline employees and fill other positions, including a new director for the United partnership, “given its importance to our business.”

JetBlue has invested heavily in premium-class seats in an effort to win over travelers willing to splurge on their trips. The memo said it’s still planning to outfit some of its planes with its first domestic-first class and build airport lounges.

“These are the building blocks of a stronger JetBlue, and they remain in motion,” Geraghty said. (*NBC News*)

Colombian senator in 'extremely critical condition' after being shot



Doctors treating Colombian presidential hopeful Miguel Uribe Turbay have warned that he is in an "extremely critical condition" after being shot in the head 10 days ago.

Uribe underwent emergency surgery on Monday to stem a bleed to the brain, according to a hospital statement.

His wife said that the hours after the operation would be critical and asked Colombians to pray for his recovery.

The June 7 attack on Uribe has shocked Colombians, who turned out in their tens of thousands to attend silent protests held across the country on Sunday.

"Miguel continues to fight for his life like never before," his wife, María Claudia Tarazona, said outside Santa Fe hospital, where he is being treated.

"We need all the prayers and words of

love. It's love is keeping him alive."

The 39-year-old conservative senator, who was seeking his party's nomination for the 2026 presidential election, was shot three times at an event in the capital Bogota.

A teenage suspect was arrested as he was fleeing the scene. The 15-year-old has been charged with attempted murder and pleaded not guilty.

A man accused of providing the shooter with the gun has also been detained as well as a woman suspected of providing "logistical support" for the attack.

However, police are still trying to determine the possible motive for the attack and who may have ordered it.

The brazen attack on the politician - in broad daylight as he was giving a speech in a middle-class neighbourhood in Bogota - has brought back

memories of the turbulent decades of the 1980s and 90s in Colombia, when several presidential candidates and influential Colombian figures were assassinated.

Uribe's own mother, journalist Diana Turbay, was kidnapped by Los Extraditables in 1990 - an alliance created by leading drug lords.

She was held hostage by them for five months before being shot dead during a botched rescue attempt.

Uribe often cited her as his inspiration to run for political office "to work for our country".

Los Extraditables, who have said they would prefer a grave in Colombia to a prison cell in the US, abducted and attacked renowned Colombians in an attempt to force the government at the time to overturn its extradition treaty with the US. (*BBC News*)



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Sports News



Stoneville lose opening match in All Saints Community Football League

Newly crowned Soccerama champions Stoneville have made a losing start to their campaign in the All Saints Community Football League (ASCFL).

Stoneville captured their first Soccerama title in the ASCFL by defeating last year's champions, Fundamentals, in the final at the Mack Pond playing field in All Saints on Sunday.

However, Stoneville suffered a 2-1 loss to Freeman's Village in the second match of an opening night double-header in the ASCFL at the same venue on Monday evening.

Strikes by Vaughn Jackson in the 22nd minute and



The Stoneville football team. (ASCFL)

J'Cory Lewis in the 24th minute gave Freeman's Village a two-nil lead. Joshua Samuel reduced the deficit by scoring the only goal for Stoneville in the 27th min-

ute.

Last year's losing finalist, Police, won the opening match of the ASCFL by default. Police were awarded a 3-0 victory against York-

shire, who failed to show up for the opening match in the league.

The All Saints Community Football League will continue with another double-header on Wednesday.

Last year's champions, Old Stagers, will launch their title defence against Darg A Bark at 6:15 pm, and Ovals will clash with Fundamentals at 7:30 pm.

Like last year, 12 teams, which are divided into two groups of six teams, are contesting the All Saints Community Football League.

Nine teams participated in Sunday's soccerama.

Parish League to stage last two contests for 2025 domestic season this week



The last two competitions for the 2025 Antigua Commercial Bank (ACB) Parish League will commence this week.

After the completion of the Dave Joseph Limited Overs Championship, which was won by PIC Insurance Libertas Blackhawks, and the Sir Richie Richardson Limited Overs Champi-

onship that was captured by Freetown, the Sir Vivian Richards Thursday League will commence on June 19.

The Thursday League, now in its 45th year, is a T20 competition, while the other three Parish League competitions are of a 30-over-per-side duration.

This week's Thursday League will bowl off with three matches, which will all start at 2:30 pm.

Reigning two-peat champions the Rising Sun Spartans will begin their title defence against the Jennings Tigers at the Rising Sun playing field in St. John's.

The Libertas Blackhawks will face Police at Ball Beef in Libertas, and the New Winthropes Lions will clash with Mahico at Clare Hall.

Umpires Keller Joseph and Calvin Thomas will officiate at Rising Sun, Melissa Lawrie and Dirk Schouten will umpire at Libertas, and Dalis Adams and Tasillo Allen will be in charge at Clare Hall.

Matches in the Curtly Ambrose one-day contest will commence on Saturday.

Sammy happy with preparation ahead of Australia series



Daren Sammy

West Indies Head Coach Daren Sammy said he is delighted with the hard work being put in by his players during the ongoing pre-series camp in Barbados.

With over a week before the first ball against Australia in the opening Test, Sammy put the players through an all-day training session in the middle to test their readiness to face the world number one ranked team.

“Today was a full day of ‘Test’ cricket as we looked a game-sense training. It was good to see Shamar run in and bowl those really good areas and so did all the other bowlers. The ability to consistently hit that six-metre mark was good to see and I enjoyed seeing the bowlers firing,” Sammy said.

He was hugely impressed by Shamar Joseph, the 24-year-old fast bowler who is making a return to the interna-

tional stage.

“Shamar, since he announced himself on the Test arena against Australia in these two Test matches Down Under, I would love to see him repeat those kinds of performances in the coming weeks here on home soil. We went back to see the preparations he had then, and the kind of work he had in his legs, and we tried to recreate that kind of situation,” Sammy said.

The series will be played for the Frank Worrell trophy and will signal the start of the 2025-2027 cycle of the ICC Men’s World Test Championship for both teams. Australia starts the series as the No.1-ranked team having not lost a series in the 2023-25 WTC cycle.

They have 123 points while West Indies are in eighth place on 73 points. A win in the series could see them move

to seventh above Pakistan who are on 78 points.

Meanwhile the Australians were due to arrive in Barbados on Tuesday and will have a training camp at the picturesque Windward Cricket Club on the eastern side of the island.

They have been forced to make a change to the squad with all-rounder Sean Abbott replacement Brendan Doggett, who had an injury complaint during the ICC Men’s Test Championship finals in England last week.

They are also expected to be without batting legend Steve Smith, who suffered a dislocated finger when he spilled a vital catch in the final at Lord’s. Smith’s absence means Josh Inglis, the back-up wicket-keeper is expected to take his place in the middle order.

It is also expected that 19-year-old sensation Sam Konstas will open the batting and Marnus Labuschagne will return to number three as a replacement for Cameron Green, the giant allrounder, who struggled at Lord’s.

Squads: West Indies: Roston Chase (captain), Jomel Warrican (vice-captain), Kevlon Anderson, Kraigg Brathwaite, John Campbell, Keacy Carty, Justin Greaves, Shai Hope, Tevin Imlach, Alzarri Joseph, Shamar Joseph, Brandon King, Johann Layne, Mikyle Louis, Anderson Phillip, and Jayden Seales. Daren Sammy (head coach).

Australia: Pat Cummins (captain), Usman Khawaja, Marnus Labuschagne, Cameron Green, Steve Smith, Travis Head, Beau Webster, Alex Carey, Mitchell Starc, Nathan Lyon, Josh Hazlewood, Josh Inglis, Sam Konstas, Scott Boland, Matt Kuhnemann, and Sean Abbott. Andrew McDonald (head coach).

Joseph, Fletcher among movers in ICC ODI Rankings



West Indies opener Qiana Joseph, right, bats during the first ODI against South Africa at the 3Ws Oval in Cave Hill, Barbados, on Wednesday, June 11, 2025. (Getty Images)

West Indies opener Qiana Joseph and experienced spinner Afy Fletcher have surged up the latest ICC Women's ODI Rankings following standout performances in the ongoing three-match series against South Africa.

Joseph, who struck a composed 60 in the series opener, climbed 12 places to joint-67th in the ODI batting rankings and now sits on 371 points.

Her contributions at the top have not only boosted her individual stock but also provided solidity for the West Indies side, which went into Tuesday's series decider level at 1-1.

Among other West In-

dies batters, captain Hayley Matthews remains steady at sixth with 682 points, while Shemaine Campbelle made a notable seven-place jump to 62nd with 384 points after consistent performances in the middle order.

Stafanie Taylor slipped two places to 48th with 478 points, Chinelle Henry held firm at 52nd with 444, and the injured Deandra Dottin dropped two spots to 53rd with 433 points.

On the bowling front, Fletcher's four-wicket haul in the second ODI propelled her four places up to 19th, now with 513 ranking points.

Matthews also continued her rise with the ball, as she

inched up one spot to eighth with 634 points. Karishma Ramharack held her ground at 26th with 473 points, and Aaliyah Alleyne moved two places up to 65th with 349 points.

Globally, India's Smriti Mandhana reclaimed the top spot in the ODI batting rankings for the first time since November 2019.

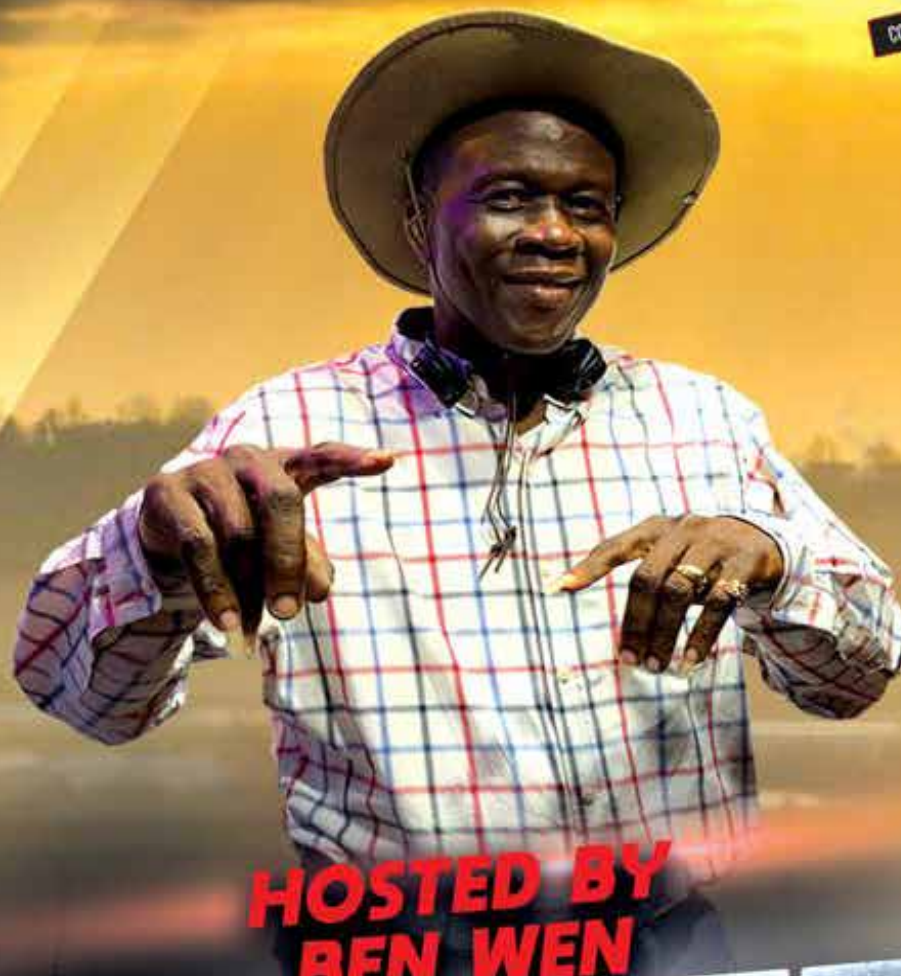
Her return came at the expense of South Africa's captain, Laura Wolvaardt, who dropped to joint second, with England's Nat Sciver-Brunt, after scores of 27 and 28 in the first two games against the West Indies. Mandhana now holds 727 points, while both Wolvaardt and Sciver-Brunt are

tied on 719.

Tazmin Brits also made gains with a gritty half-century in the first match. She jumped five spots to 27th in the batting chart. Former Proteas skipper Suné Luus climbed seven spots in both batting and bowling, now ranked 42nd in both lists after her all-round display that included a 76-run knock in the second ODI.

South Africa's Nonkululeko Mlaba also impressed with the ball to jump six spots to 23rd after taking four wickets in the second ODI, a match that saw the visitors level the series with a 40-run win following their opening four-wicket defeat.

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Female Flyers win ABSCA's 15-Over Championship



Champions of the St. John's Co-operative Credit Union ABSCA's Women's 15-Over Championship Alzarri and Sharon Joseph North Sails Antigua Female Flyers.

Top seed Alzarri and Sharon Joseph North Sails Antigua Female Flyers have captured the title in the St. John's Co-operative Credit Union Antigua Barbuda Softball Cricket Association's (ABSCA) Women's 15-Over Championship.

Female Flyers soared to a 28-run victory over second seed Wayne's Electrical Services Survivors in the final at the Rising Sun playing field on Sunday.

The Female Flyers made 111 for five off their allotted 15 overs. Player of the match Terez Parker slammed 45, and Makada Hector struck 31. Editha Burnham claimed two for 13, and Menova Govia captured two for 34.

In reply, the Survivors were restricted to 83 for five in 15 overs. Grace Persaud hit 27, Leukelle Pelle scored 21, and Stacey Bright made 12. Gaynel Ogarro and Akeda Francis each

picked up a wicket.

Meanwhile, top seed Rackaman Construction Strictly Business and second seed Marcko Inc. Buckley's 3Js have advanced to the final of the Antigua Barbuda Softball Cricket Association's (ABSCA) WTP 93.5 FM Men's 30-Over Championship.

Both teams booked their spots in next Sunday's final at Powells after recording victories in their respective semi-finals over the weekend.

Strictly Business snatched a one-wicket win against fourth seed Bryson's Shipping and Insurance Bullets at Rising Sun.

Bullets made 114 for nine off 23 overs. Player of the match Deran Benta slammed 71, including six sixes. Melvin Charles took three for 34, and Owen Graham picked up three for 46.

Strictly Business achieved victory at



Terez Parker

116 for nine off 23 overs. Kim George hit 23, Melvin Charles scored 15, and Owen Graham made 14. Dorian Grant snapped up four for 28, and Deran Benta claimed one for 21.

The Buckley's 3Js crushed Dredgers by 65 runs at the Dredgers playing field. The Buckley's 3Js made 217 for six off 21 overs.

Kenrick Scott cracked 54, including five sixes; Richie Thomas hit 44 not out; Charanlall Ramjohn scored 33; there was a contribution of 28 extras; and Steve Martin made 19. Mervin Higgins captured three for 57, and Loy Weste captured two for 33.

In reply, the Dredgers were restricted to 152 for nine in 21 overs. Jaquan Atharnez slammed 63, including seven sixes; Kurt Douglas hit 20; Javon James scored 16; and there was a contribution of 14 extras.

Player of the match Xavier Otto captured five for 37, Charanlall Ramjohn took three for 42, and Rodney Williams picked up two for 38.