

Prime Minister Gaston Browne Champions Debt Reform and Climate Justice at FfD4

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Local News

Prime Minister Gaston Browne Champions Debt Reform and Climate Justice at FfD4

Antigua and Barbuda took center stage on the third day of the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development (FFD4), as Prime Minister the Honourable Gaston Browne delivered impassioned and visionary statements that positioned Small Island Developing States (SIDS) at the forefront of the global development agenda.

In a packed side event titled “Financing Development in a Climate-Challenged World: Debt Sustainability Support Service (DSSS),” Prime Minister Browne delivered the keynote address, heralding a transformative moment for global financing frameworks. Declaring that the world stood “at a turning point,” he underscored the urgency of tackling the interlinked challenges of debt, climate vulnerability, and sustainable development—challenges acutely felt by SIDS.

“The inclusion of the DSSS in the Compromiso de Sevilla, the final outcome document of FfD4, reflects the growing recognition that these converging crises demand innovative and inclusive solutions,” he said.

Highlighting the disproportionate burdens borne by SIDS, he stated, “We did not create this crisis. But we are stepping forward to offer solutions.” He described the DSSS as a country-led, SIDS-driven initiative—originating from the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for SIDS (ABAS)—designed to place the voices and needs



Prime Minister the Honourable Gaston Browne took center stage on the third day of the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development (FFD4),



of the most vulnerable at the center of reform.

Later in the day, Prime Minister Browne was the sole Head of Government invited to deliver a Special Ad-

dress at Multi-Stakeholder Round Table 5: Realizing a Development-Oriented Sovereign Debt Architecture. The high-level session, co-chaired by H.E. Pedro

Sánchez, President of the Government of Spain, and H.E. Bassirou Diomaye Faye, President of Senegal, also featured Nobel Laureate Professor Joseph Stiglitz

Local News

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and other global financial leaders.

Addressing the gathering, Prime Minister Browne noted:

“For too long, our small island states have battled existential threats—climate shocks, pandemic after-shocks, and deep economic vulnerabilities—now compounded by unsustainable debt burdens. Our development and survival hang in the balance.”

He reiterated the centrality of ABAS as a strategic and action-oriented framework:

“ABAS is bold, comprehensive, and indispensable. It is more than a roadmap—it is a lifeline.”

Among the distinguished participants were Finance Ministers from Cameroon, Tunisia, and Ethiopia, along with senior representatives from the World Bank Group—underscoring



growing consensus on the need to overhaul the global financial architecture.

As the conference progresses, Prime Minister Browne’s leadership remains a source of inspiration and resolve.

He left the international community with a powerful charge:

“Financing for development must be measured not by pledges, but by progress. Now is the time to build a just and inclusive system—

one that allows every nation, no matter its size or circumstance, to thrive. Antigua and Barbuda will persist until that vision is fully realized.”



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The Public Accounts Committee to convene a meeting today



Opposition Leader, Jamale Pringle

A meeting of the Public Accounts Committee of parliament, which is a creature of the Constitution, is taking place at the Parliament Chambers this afternoon with Opposition Leader, Jamale Pringle, sitting in the chair presiding over the proceedings.

Pringle told Point Express that the meeting will discuss the audited statements for the year 2020, which is the latest financial statement that is available. He said there is likely to be questions raised regarding the information featured in the statements thus giving rise to a robust discussion on the matter.

Along with Pringle, the Parliamentary Representative from Barbuda, Trevor Walker is the other member on the opposition benches who is a member of the PAC. The government side is repre-

sented by the member for St. John's City East, Melford Nicholas, the member for St. John's Rural South, Daryll Matthew and the member for All Saints West, Anthony Smith Jr., who caucuses

with the government.

The Public Accounts Committee is authorised to query government's expenditures and it is headed by the Leader of the Opposition.



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The poster features several circular inset images showing people at a festival, including a man in a blue shirt and sunglasses, a group of people, and a man in a red shirt. There are also images of agricultural products like a pineapple and a tomato.



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Itz A ViBe



Sanders Urges Commonwealth to Reignite Ramphal's Vision



Sir Ronald Sanders, Antigua and Barbuda's Ambassador to the United States and the Organization of American States

Sir Ronald Sanders, Antigua and Barbuda's Ambassador to the United States and the Organization of American States, on Tuesday delivered the 2025 Patsy Robertson Memorial Lecture at Marlborough House in London. The lecture followed a Thanksgiving service at the Queen's Chapel commemorating Sir Shridath "Son-

ny" Ramphal's life and legacy to the Commonwealth, which he served as its second and longest-serving Secretary-General from 1975 to 1990. The present Secretary-General, Shirley Ayorkor Botchwey, was among the dignitaries who introduced Sanders and paid tribute to Ramphal's leadership.

Sanders began by recalling Ramphal's role in condemning Southern Rhodesia's white-minority regime in 1977 and facilitating Zimbabwe's transition to majority rule in 1980 despite significant opposition from the British government.

He then highlighted the 1988 Eminent Persons Group report, convened under Ramphal's chairmanship. It demanded Nelson Mandela's unconditional release and endorsed targeted economic sanctions, noting that "economic pressure will be needed before the white minority yields its monopoly of power".

Turning to development and environmental stewardship, Sanders noted Ramphal's unique distinction as the only person to serve on all four major international commissions of the 1980s, including the Commission on Environment and Development. Its 1989 report issued an early warning of sea-level rise, now threatening small

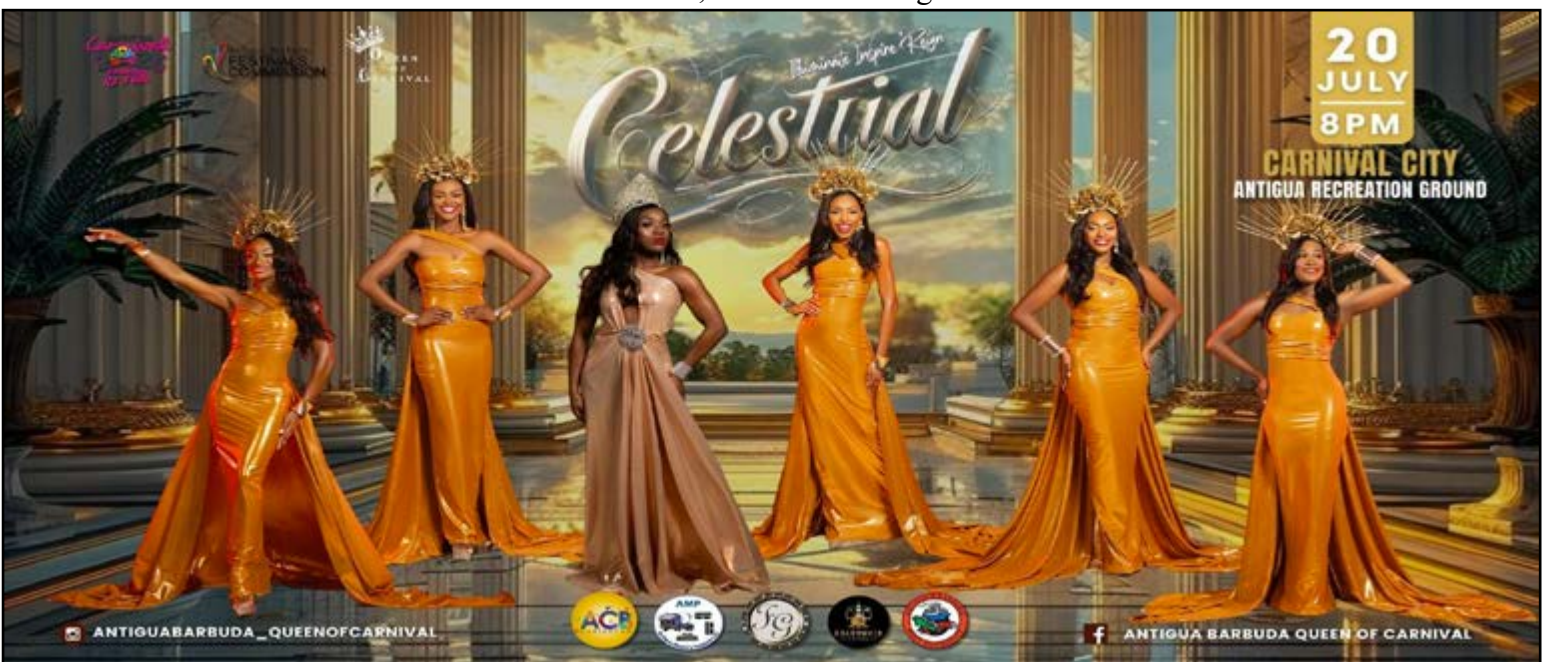
island states across the Commonwealth.

Sanders also detailed Ramphal's institutional reforms at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meetings. He pointed to the two-day retreats introduced at the 1982 Ottawa summit, which yielded the Declaration on Debt Relief and Development, and the 1985 Nassau gathering, which combined sanctions on South Africa with new environmental pledges for vulnerable nations.

He invoked Ramphal's principle that "while the Commonwealth cannot negotiate for the world, it can help the world to negotiate," urging member states to revive these retreats as forums for candid, solution-driven dialogue.

Looking to the present, Sanders warned that "three decades on from Sonny's tenure, the Commonwealth confronts fresh trials—each striking at the values he cherished. Our world needs enlightened, collective action now more than ever."

His remarks drew a sustained standing ovation, underscoring that Ramphal's principles remain essential to the Commonwealth's mission amid today's challenges.





JULY
31
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Russian woman Appeals Ruling in Alfa Nero Case

Yulia Gyryeva-Motlokhov has taken to the courts, appealing a recent decision by a US federal judge that dismissed all subpoenas aimed at Antigua and Barbuda Prime Minister Gaston Browne, his family, and government officials.

The conflict centers around the sale of the Alfa Nero superyacht, which Gyryeva-Motlokhov claims is owned by her father, a Russian oligarch who is currently under sanctions.

The appeal comes after Judge Jesse M. Furman of the US District Court for the Southern District of New York ruled in early June that the applicant had “failed to meet the statutory requirements for relief” under federal law.

This ruling effectively concluded what the Antigua and Barbuda government has characterized as a harassment campaign against its leadership.

Lead Counsel for Antigua and Barbuda, Anthony Astaphan, expressed confidence in the judicial process, stating that the ruling to quash the subpoenas was clear.

“This was always a campaign to discredit the government and the prime minister in respect of the Alfa Nero,” Astaphan remarked in an interview.

The case is costing the government a significant amount, and Astaphan mentioned that attorneys will seek advice on possible legal means to recover the costs on an indemnity basis.



“I will follow up with the US lawyers because in these countries, if you come with a frivolous matter, you can be condemned for the cost, so if there is a similar principle in the US, then we intend to follow that up,” he said.

“I have read the investiga-

tive report that was put in the US court, and there was so much misinformation there...” he added

Prime Minister Gaston has said that his government continues to be dedicated to transparency, the rule of law, and high standards of public accountability.

According to him, it remains resolute in opposing any efforts, whether domestic or foreign, to damage the reputation of its officials or pressure the nation into abandoning decisions made in the best interest of its citizens.



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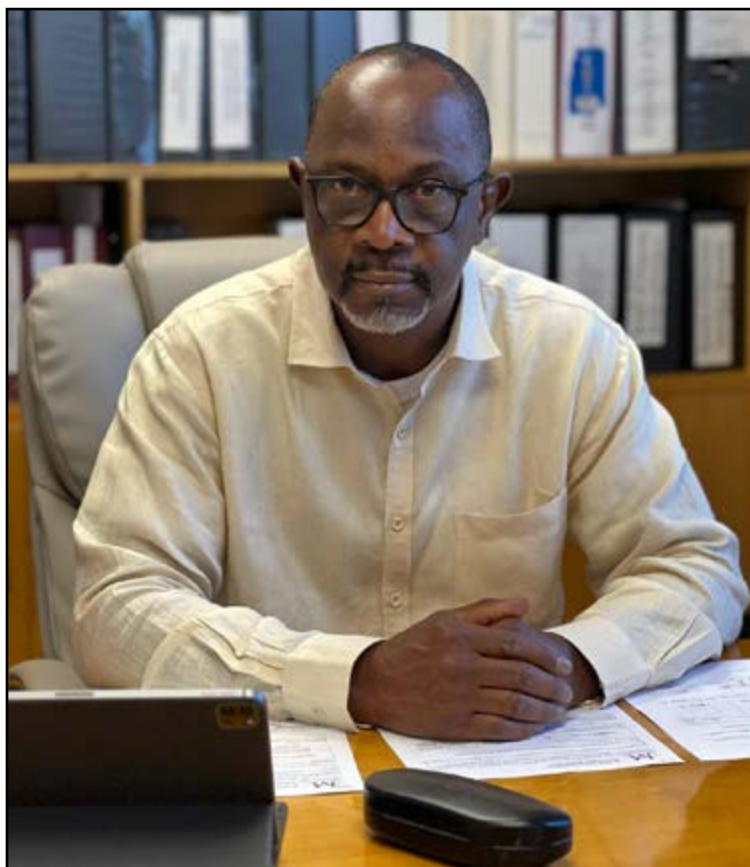
Sir Lester Bird Medical Centre names new Director of Administration

The Sir Lester Bird Medical Centre has announced the appointment of a new Director of Administration, Danley Philip. His appointment took effect from July 1st.

Our new Director of Administration joins us during a time of exciting growth—and we're looking forward to the leadership and fresh ideas he'll bring as we continue serving our community with care.

Philip has been described as an accomplished financial management professional and healthcare administration specialist who combines technical expertise with values-driven leadership. He holds a Master's degree in Accounting and Finance Management and a Professional Certificate in Hospital Management from Johns Hopkins University, along with certification as a board director.

Previously serving as a business consultant, Philip leverages his extensive background in financial



Director of Administration, Danley Philip.

management to guide organizations through complex operational and strategic challenges. His previous role as Accounting Manager at AUA demonstrated strong financial leadership while building lasting

professional relationships with colleagues who have advanced to key positions across government ministries and departments.

His professional philosophy centers on the principle that “the purpose of serving oth-

ers should come from care, not necessity or profit,” emphasizing that effective leadership requires genuine concern for stakeholders. This approach is particularly relevant in healthcare and public service sectors, where he believes that “patients want to know that the healthcare provider cares.”

Core Competencies: Financial Management & Analysis, Healthcare Administration, Board Governance & Strategic Oversight, Business Consulting & Organizational Development, Financial Management, Risk Assessment & Compliance, and Team Leadership & Professional Development.

Philip's unique combination of technical financial expertise, specialized healthcare administration knowledge, and commitment to service excellence positions him as a valuable leader in both private and public sector organizations.



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JUL 25 2025
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Approximately two thousand persons attend 4-day Health Clinic



An anticipated two thousand persons received medical services at a free health clinic organized jointly by the Ministry of Health, United Health Incorporated, and the Seventh-day Adventist South Leeward Conference and held at the Multi-Purpose Cultural Centre.

Sources close to the organisers say the clinic provided services to between 450 and 500 persons on each of the four days that the clinic operated.

The clinic opened on Sunday which was set aside for seniors and children twelve years and under with the other three days

opened to anyone. Large numbers of persons have turned out seeking medical assistance in the areas of general health, eye-care and dentistry.

The turnout has been such that persons are often turned away after the day's quota had been met.

VACANCY

PUBLIC RELATIONS COORDINATOR

The Antigua Public Utilities Authority (APUA) is seeking a motivated and creative Public Relations Coordinator to support and manage key public relations and public education initiatives. This role is essential to strengthening APUA's brand presence and fostering meaningful connections with the public, media, and key stakeholders.

Key duties include:

- Develop and execute strategic public relations campaigns that align with APUA's goals
- Serve as a key contact for media, partners, and stakeholders, managing communications across multiple platforms
- Monitor media coverage and assess the impact of PR initiatives
- Craft and refine compelling content across formats, including articles, reports, and promotional materials
- Oversee the production of brochures, leaflets, videos, photography, and other multimedia assets
- Plan and coordinate events such as press conferences, exhibitions, and community outreach activities
- Manage APUA's website updates and support digital engagement efforts
- Conduct research to guide public relations and education strategies
- Strengthen community relations through public engagement and participation in local initiatives
- Provide communications support during crisis situations while upholding and enhancing the Authority's reputation

The successful candidate MUST possess the following:

- Bachelor's degree in Communications, Marketing or a related field.
- Minimum of 3 years' experience in public relations, communications, or related area.
- Exceptional interpersonal and human relations skills with the ability to build and maintain relationships.
- Strong verbal and written communication skills, with proven editing and content creation abilities.
- Excellent organizational, time-management, and multitasking skills; adept at working under pressure.
- Creative mindset with a strong sense of initiative and imagination.
- Business acumen and awareness of current affairs affecting the organization.
- Positive, proactive attitude with a vibrant, hardworking, and detail-oriented approach.
- Ability to work collaboratively within a team and adapt to a dynamic environment.

ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE (CORPORATE SALES)

We are seeking a dynamic, results-driven professional with strong business acumen and a passion for strategic client engagement. This role is ideal for a self-motivated individual who thrives on building meaningful partnerships and driving growth in a competitive environment.

Key duties include:

- Secure and grow a strong portfolio of corporate clients across various sectors
- Develop and implement strategic sales plans to achieve and exceed targets
- Build and maintain trusted relationships with key decision-makers and stakeholders
- Identify and capitalize on new business opportunities
- Deliver customised solutions that align with client needs
- Prepare accurate sales forecasts and performance reports
- Use a variety of sales methods including cold calling, networking, and referrals

The successful candidate MUST possess the following:

- Proven track record in B2B sales, preferably in telecommunications or a related sector
- Excellent interpersonal, negotiation, and presentation skills
- Strong understanding of sales pipelines, client relationship management, and sales software
- Highly self-driven with the ability to work independently and consistently deliver results
- Proficient in Microsoft Office Suite
- Must own a reliable vehicle and hold a valid driver's license
- Familiarity with APUA Telecommunications products and services is an asset

Interested persons are asked to apply in writing to:

Human Resources Manager
Antigua Public Utilities Authority
Cnr. High Street & Independence Avenue
St. Johns, Antigua
OR Email: hr@apua.ag

Deadline for application is Wednesday 16th July, 2025

** Only suitable applicants will be acknowledged **
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Two men have been remanded to HMP for their role in an armed robbery at a service station

Two men were remanded to His Majesty's Prison when they appeared before a magistrate on Wednesday charged with armed robbery of the All Saints Service Station.

The men- 30-year-old Ernesto Estevan Lawrence of Swetes Village and 18-year-old Maurice Belgrave Jr. of All Saints who were charged with Aggravated Robbery. Lawrence was further charged with Unlawful Possession of a Firearm and Discharging a Firearm.

The charges stem from an incident that occurred on Saturday, 28 June 2025, in which an armed assailant entered the All Saints Service Station and robbed the pump attendants of an undisclosed sum of money.



A single gunshot was discharged during the robbery; however, no injuries were reported.

Subsequent investigations by the police led to the arrest of the two suspects, who were later charged accordingly.

They appeared in the Magistrate's Court on Wednesday

to answer the charges and the case was adjourned until September 24, 2025. Both men were remanded to prison to await the trial.

In a separate incident, both Lawrence and Belgrave were also arrested and charged with robbery at Brownie's Bakery on the Herberts Main Road.

However, in this incident, 16-year old male was also arrested with the other two.

In a press statement, the police say they have arrested and jointly charged the three males in connection with a robbery at Brownie's Bakery in Herbert's on Sunday, 29 June 2025.

Lawrence and Belgrave along with the minor were charged with Aggravated Robbery, Possession of a Firearm in Furtherance of an Offence, and Unlawful Possession of Twelve (12) Rounds of .32 Ammunition.

Shortly after the incident, the accused were intercepted in a vehicle on Jonas Road and were arrested and taken into custody.

Nut Grove man charged with breaking and entering granted bail in the magistrate's court

Pete Cummings of Nut Grove has been slapped with a bail of \$30,000.00 when he appeared in the magistrate's court on Wednesday to answer charges of breaking and entering as well as larceny.

The bail condition has a cash component of \$5,000.00 with two sureties. Cummings has been ordered to report to the Nut Grove Police Outpost three

times weekly. He was also ordered not to go to English Harbour (where the crime occurred) and to stay 50 feet away from the virtual complainant and not to interfere or make contact with the virtual complainant.

The court learnt that on May 2, 2025, Cummings and another individual broke into the business place of Marine Power Services in Cobbs Cross

and stole a number of items including a stand-by generator, a power drill a set of business drawers and other items as well as \$850.00 in cash. The stolen items had a total value of EC.\$21,550.00

The case has been adjourned until 24th September.


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Local News

Mary Lewis, aka, Vida Lewis celebrates 100th birthday



Mary Lewis also known as Vida Lewis was born in the village of Bolans, Antigua on June 18, 1925 to the parents of Sarah Simon and Richard Slaven. She is the first of three children. She grew up in the village of Bolans. She attended the Cedar Hall Moravian Church located in Jennings.

Mary/Vida attended the Bolans and the Jennings School. She was married to Robert Lewis until he passed in 1992. She had 7 children, four boys and three girls. She was a house wife and an agriculturist. She did

her best to juggle taking care of her children while taking care of other household chores.

Like many Antiguans before and after her, in 1989 Mary/Vida migrated to the USA, where she still lives today.

“We stand firm with a firm foundation that she was pioneered through hardships, determination and faith.

“We pray God’s favour and mercy upon her as we continue to cherish her while we have a chance,” a member of her family stated.





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Regional News

Logos Hope to return to Dominica after 15 years



Logos Hope, the world's largest floating book fair will make its return to Dominica from July 1 – 14, 2025.

The ship, which offers over 5,000 titles and provides many visitors the opportunity to purchase quality literature, last visited Dominica in 2010.

The ship visits each port of call for one to four weeks at a time and opens to hundreds, and often thousands, of visitors every day.

According to information from www.gbaships.org, the Logos Hope community hosts individuals from approximately 60 different nationalities. All crew members and staff are reportedly dedicated volunteers who serve without pay, many of whom contribute in their professional roles as seafarers, engineers, electricians, nurses, teachers, and cooks. The organization states that they are supported by friends, family, and civic organizations through sponsorship.

It further states that, on average, one million visitors are welcomed onboard

one of the ships every year.

The website shares that “the Logos Hope community is regarded as a genuine expression of international goodwill and understanding.”

Philanthropic works are also part of the program, states the organization, with crew members reportedly conducting visits in each port of call to “hospitals, schools, orphanages or prisons, supply aid and [providing] community care.”

The Logos Hope opening hours are Tuesdays to Saturdays from 10:00 AM to 10:00 PM and Sundays from 1:00 PM to 10:00 PM. The boat will be closed on Mondays.

Future ports of call:

Castries, Saint Lucia 17 Jun 2025 to 1 Jul 2025

Roseau, Dominica 1 Jul 2025 to 14 Jul 2025

Kingston, Jamaica 18 Jul 2025 to 20 Aug 2025

Montego Bay, Jamaica 21 Aug 2025 to

15 Sept 2025

Freeport, Bahamas 18 Sept 2025 to 1 Oct 2025

Nassau, Bahamas 2 Oct 2025 to 20 Oct 2025

Basseterre, Saint Kitts and Nevis 24 Oct 2025 to 30 Oct 2025

St Johns, Antigua and Barbuda 30 Oct 2025 to 10 Nov 2025

Bridgetown, Barbados 11 Nov 2025 to 2 Dec 2025 TBC

Kingstown, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines 3 Dec 2025 to 22 Dec 2025 TBC

Scarborough – Tobago, Trinidad and Tobago 22 Dec 2025 to 6 Jan 2026 TBC

Port of Spain – Trinidad, Trinidad and Tobago 6 Jan 2026 to 3 Feb 2026 TBC

Vieux Fort, Saint Lucia 4 Feb 2026 to 17 Feb 2026 TBC

Georgetown, Guyana 19 Feb 2026 to 3 Mar 2026 TBC (*Dominica News Online*)



OECS and UNICEF collaborate for early childhood development training

The youngest residents of the OECS, and their futures, took center stage as early childhood education advocates convened for a two-day event dedicated to meaningful dialogue, strategic action, and capacity enhancement.

An OECS press release shared that from May 7 to 9, 2025, the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States Commission's Inclusive Education Programme, supported by the United Nations Children's Fund, in partnership with Saint Lucia's Ministry of Education, successfully hosted the 9th Annual Gathering of Early Childhood Leaders, along with an Early Childhood Development (ECD) Mapping Workshop.

Held at the Coco Palm Hotel in Saint Lucia, the two-day conference assembled early childhood officials from nine OECS member nations, including Dominica, along with representatives from the OECS Commission and UNICEF, aiming to foster regional cooperation, exchange best practices, and shape the trajectory of early childhood education across the Eastern Caribbean.

The gathering reportedly underscored the significance of strategic alliances, the adoption of technology within ECD centers, formalized training programs for practitioners, and the revision of existing ECD policies. The OECS reports that participants concurred that investing in early child-



hood is essential for securing sustainable, long-term educational achievements throughout the OECS.

The first day concentrated on assessing national inventories, standardizing data formats, and creating a comprehensive regional repository of ECD learning resources, communication tools, and training materials. Ms. Shelly-Ann Harper, UNICEF's ECD Specialist, highlighted the importance of ongoing cross-sector collaboration, especially given emerging challenges such as escalating gun violence and its effects on children's well-being.

The second day featured the Annual Meeting of ECD Leaders, where delegates shared insights from their respective countries, identified critical needs, and contributed to the development of the OECS Education Sector Strategy (2027–2036). Discussions covered areas

including the integration of technology, inclusive education, parental involvement, and the urgent need to bridge access gaps, notably for vulnerable and rural populations.

Ms. Zephрина Lansiquot, Saint Lucia's Curriculum Officer for Early Childhood Services, stressed the importance of leveraging the region's collective strengths to craft actionable recommendations for the future of ECD, said the release.

In her remarks, Mrs. Sisera Simon, Head of the OECS Human and Social Division at the OECS Commission, called on participants to pursue bold, transformative initiatives. She pointed out that more than 30% of children across the OECS still lack access to formal early childhood education, emphasizing that genuine educational reform must start with early childhood development:

“Across our Member States,

we have made undeniable progress. Yet, the reality is sobering, as more than 30% of children in the OECS still do not access formal early childhood education, and many who do are in environments that lack adequate learning materials, trained personnel, and infrastructural support. While some of our countries boast nearly universal enrolment, others face significant challenges related to affordability, rural access, and limited public provision.”

According to the press release, the event concluded with a resolute call to action: the future of early childhood education in the OECS must prioritize expanding access and promoting equity, especially for children with special educational needs.

The OECS Education Sector Strategy for 2027–2036 requires that leaders emphasize the importance of revising policies, providing formal training for ECD practitioners, increasing technology integration, and strengthening partnerships with private sector and community stakeholders.

In conclusion, the Organization shared that enhancing data systems, encouraging knowledge-sharing, and accelerating collective efforts will be vital to making substantial progress and ensuring the goal of every child in the OECS having the opportunity to flourish from their earliest years. (*Dominica News Online*)

Regional News

ECCB records highest profit in history

The St Kitts-Nevis based Eastern Caribbean Central Bank (ECCB) has recorded its highest ever profit in its history after registering a net profit of EC\$126.2 million for the year ending March 31, 2025.

According to the Report and Statement of Accounts, the ECCB, which is the monetary authority for the Eastern Caribbean Economic and Currency Union (ECCU), said the increase in profit was due to the financial institution continuing to pursue prudent financial management.

The ECCU is comprised of eight member countries, namely Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada, Montserrat, St Kitts and Nevis, St Lucia, and St Vincent and the Grenadines. Six of these are independent nations, while Anguilla and Montserrat are British Overseas Territories. All the countries share a common EC dollar and a common monetary policy.

“The Bank delivered a strong financial performance, recording a profit of EC\$126.2 million for the year ended 31 March 2025, representing an increase of EC\$46.1 million (57.5 per cent) over the profit of EC\$80.2 million in the prior year. This improvement was largely attributed to higher interest earned on the Bank’s foreign reserve assets,” said the report, signed by the bank’s Governor, Grenadian



Timothy Antoine.

The report said that the ECCB’s financial performance for the year reflected strong returns on foreign reserves and solid balance sheet growth.

“The increase in equity and the stability in operating expenses further strengthened the Bank’s financial position and operating results. These results reflect the Bank’s execution of key strategic initiatives and sustained progress in advancing its mandate and long-term priorities,” said the report.

As at 31 March 2025, the ECCB’s total assets stood at EC\$6,139.3 million, an increase of EC\$355.5 million (6.1 per cent) compared to the previous financial year.

“The expansion in the asset base was driven by growth in both foreign and domestic assets,” said the report,

which credits loans to regional governments by international institutions as contributing to the increase in assets.

“Foreign assets rose by EC\$263.3 million (five per cent) to EC\$5,485.8 million, largely due to inflows from loans issued to member governments by international institutions, the purchase of regional and foreign currencies from commercial banks, and fair value gains on foreign investment securities,” said the report, which explained that the increase in foreign assets was partially offset by the net sale of foreign currency balances to commercial banks.

Domestic assets, according to the report, increased by EC\$92.2 million (16.4 per cent) to EC\$653.5 million, primarily attributable to increases in property and

equipment and participating governments’ advances moderated by decreases in pension asset, intangible assets and participating governments’ securities.

“Property and equipment increased by EC\$55.6 million, attributable to acquisitions of fixed assets and revaluation gains on land and buildings. Participating governments’ advances grew by EC\$47.5 million, due to the increase in credit extended to participating governments,” said the report.

It said pension assets fell by EC\$8.4 million, owing to actuarial losses from lower-than-expected returns on the pension plan’s assets. The decrease of EC\$6.2 million in intangible assets was mainly attributable to the derecognition of software costs.

Regarding expenses, the report said that operating expenses totalled EC\$97.7 million, marking a slight decrease of \$0.1 million (0.1 per cent) from EC\$97.8 million in the previous year.

“The marginal decrease was due to a EC\$10.7 million in impairment recoveries on financial assets, tempered by increases of EC\$5.8 million in salaries, pensions and other staff benefits, and EC\$3.5 million in administrative and general expenses,” the report added. (*Loop Caribbean*)

Court rules Tren de Aragua a terrorist entity in T&T

The High Court of Trinidad and Tobago has officially designated the Venezuelan criminal group Tren de Aragua as a terrorist entity.

This decision follows an application filed by the Attorney General and is grounded in Section 22B of the Anti-Terrorism Act, Chapter 12:07, as well as the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1373.

The court's order, issued yesterday afternoon, officially prohibits all persons and entities in Trinidad and Tobago from engaging in any dealings with Tren de Aragua.

It also mandates the freezing of all property owned or controlled—whether directly or indirectly—by the group, including assets derived from its financial resources or other forms of support.

In addition, the provision of any form of financial services, material assistance or other related support to Tren de Aragua now constitutes a criminal offence under the Anti-Terrorism Act.

According to a statement from the Attorney General's Office, the organisation is composed of foreign nationals and is responsible for or poses a significant risk of committing acts of terrorism.

The Government described the group's operations as a direct threat to public safety. The organisation originated in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and has active cells in multiple countries across the Americas, including Colombia, Peru, Chile, the United States of America, Ecuador, Bolivia and Brazil.

In the official statement, the Government noted that Trinidad and Tobago's close proximity to Venezuela increased the urgency of the situation. It stated:

"Due to the geographical location of Venezuela and its close proximity to

Trinidad and Tobago, it was incumbent upon the Government of Trinidad and Tobago to take immediate steps and requisite measures to protect the safety and security of its nationals.

"This designation is a result of the Government of Trinidad and Tobago's close collaboration with our key partner, the United States of America. It is a significant milestone which forms part of the Government's continuing efforts to strengthen national security and protect the citizenry, uphold the rule of law, and disrupt transnational organised criminals and their operations," the release said.

It added that the Government, led by Prime Minister Kamla Persad-Bissessar, will take decisive action against the threats posed by violent international cartels and transnational criminal networks operating within and beyond our borders, and reaffirmed its unwavering commitment to protecting national security.

"As a member of the Caribbean Financial Action Task Force (CFATF), the

Government continues to demonstrate compliance with the requirements of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) standards and our obligations to implement promptly and without delay the targeted financial sanctions (TFS) regime to comply with the United Nations Security Council Resolutions relating to the prevention and suppression of terrorism and terrorist financing," the statement read.

In March, a bilateral meeting was held in Kingston, Jamaica, between then prime minister Stuart Young and US Secretary of State Marco Rubio.

During those talks, Young indicated that the Government of Trinidad and Tobago was prepared to take a "pre-emptive strike" by moving to have Tren de Aragua declared a terrorist organisation under domestic law.

He also said he requested information and evidence from the US government to assist in preparing the application to the High Court. Rubio reportedly agreed to provide the necessary material. (*Trinidad Express*)



Paramount will pay \$16 million in settlement with Trump over '60 Minutes' interview

In a case seen as a challenge to American free-speech principles, Paramount has agreed to pay \$16 million to settle a lawsuit by President Donald Trump over the editing of CBS' "60 Minutes" interview with then-Vice President Kamala Harris in October.

Paramount, which owns CBS, said the money will go to Trump's future presidential library, not to the Republican president himself. It said the settlement did not involve an apology.

Trump's lawyer said Trump had suffered "mental anguish" over the editing of the interview by CBS News, while Paramount and CBS rejected his contention that it was edited to enhance how Harris, the Democratic nominee for president in 2024, sounded. They had called Trump's case "completely without merit" and tried to have it dismissed, even while involved in settlement negotiations.

The case was widely discussed and was being seen as a referendum on how far organizations would go to curry favour with Trump. Paramount is simultaneously seeking approval from his administration for its proposed merger with Skydance Media.

A spokesman for Trump's legal team said that with the settlement, Trump "de-



livers another win for the American people."

In early February, "60 Minutes" released a full, unedited transcript of the Harris interview.

Under the settlement reached with help of a mediator, Paramount agreed that "60 Minutes" will release transcripts of future interviews of presidential candidates, "subject to redactions as required for legal and national security concerns," CBS News cited the statement as saying.

Trump, who did not agree to be interviewed by "60 Minutes" during the campaign, protested editing where Harris is seen giving two different answers to a question by the show's Bill Whitaker in separate clips aired on "60 Minutes" and "Face the Nation" earlier in the day. CBS said each reply came within Harris' long-winded answer to Whitaker, but was edited to be more succinct.

"This settlement is a cowardly capitulation by the corporate leaders of Paramount, and a fundamental betrayal of '60 Minutes' and CBS News," said Rome Hartman, a producer of the Harris interview for the show. "The story that was the subject of this lawsuit was edited by the book and in accordance with CBS News standards."

In a letter to Paramount's leadership in early May, "60 Minutes" correspondents said they were troubled by reports that Paramount might settle the case "in a way that acknowledges some sort of wrongdoing on our part."

The correspondents, in the letter obtained by The Associated Press, said that "if our parent company caves in to his pressure and lies, it will leave a shameful stain and undermine the First Amendment." It was signed by Whitaker, Lesley Stahl, Scott Pelley, Ander-

son Cooper, Sharyn Alfonsi, Jon Wertheim and Cecilia Vega.

Trump's lawyer, Edward Andrew Paltzik, said the interview caused confusion and "mental anguish," misleading voters and causing them to pay less attention to Trump and his Truth Social online platform.

Paramount and controlling shareholder Shari Redstone were seeking the settlement with Trump. CBS News President and CEO Wendy McMahon and "60 Minutes" executive producer Bill Owens, who both opposed a settlement, resigned in recent weeks.

The Freedom of the Press Foundation, a media advocacy group that says it is a Paramount shareholder, has said that it would file a lawsuit in protest if a settlement was reached.

In December, ABC News settled a defamation lawsuit by Trump over statements made by anchor George Stephanopoulos, agreeing to pay \$15 million toward Trump's presidential library rather than engage in a public fight. Meta reportedly paid \$25 million to settle Trump's lawsuit against the company over its decision to suspend his social media accounts following the Jan. 6, 2021, riot at the US Capitol. (*Jamaica Gleaner*)

Costa Rica's top court seeks to strip President Chaves' immunity over corruption case



The case first emerged in 2023 when local media released leaked audio recordings that purported to show Chaves discussing Cruz's involvement in the contracts.

Chaves and his allies have other cases pending against them.

Costa Rica's attorney general's office filed a separate indictment last week accusing the president of illicit financing the 2022 election campaign that brought him to power.

Chaves also denies those charges. (*Jamaica Gleaner*)

Costa Rica's Supreme Court on Tuesday asked the country's legislature to strip President Rodrigo Chaves of his legal immunity so he can stand trial on corruption charges.

Chaves, accused of awarding lucrative consulting contracts to a close associate, has denied wrongdoing. His office did not immediately comment on the ruling, which justices decided in a 15-to-7 vote.

Costa Rica's top court has never before accepted a request to revoke a president's immunity. The case now goes to Congress, which is dominated by opposition lawmakers and has the final say.

Prosecutors accuse Chaves of abusing his authority in diverting part of a \$32,000 contract financed by a multi-lateral bank — the Central American Bank for Economic Integration — to his adviser and campaign strategist, Federico "Choreco" Cruz.

On Tuesday, the top court also asked Chaves' minister of culture and former chief of staff, Jorge Rodríguez, to stand trial in the same case.

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Sean ‘Diddy’ Combs acquitted of most serious charges, convicted of a prostitution-related offence

Sean “Diddy” Combs was convicted of a prostitution-related offence but acquitted Wednesday of sex trafficking and racketeering charges that could have put one of hip-hop’s most celebrated figures behind bars for life.

The mixed result came on the third day of deliberations. It could still send Combs, 55, to prison for as long as a decade, and is likely to end his career as a hitmaking music executive, fashion entrepreneur, brand ambassador and reality TV star.

Combs was convicted of flying people around the country, including his girlfriends and paid male sex workers, to engage in sexual encounters, a felony violation of the federal Mann Act.



But the jury of eight men and four women acquitted Combs of racketeering conspiracy and sex trafficking charges, related to allegations that he used his mon-

ey, power and frightening physical force to manipulate his girlfriends into hundreds of drug-fuelled sex marathons with the men.

Combs and his defence team argued that the women were willing participants and that none of his violence justified the severity of the charges. (*Jamaica Gleaner*)



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Sports News



Stuti Kashyap Secures Silver at WTT Youth Contender– Caracas Eyes Set on U19 Battles

Antigua and Barbuda's table tennis standout Stuti Kashyap continues her impressive international run, capturing the silver medal in the U17 Girls Singles at the WTT Youth Contender Caracas held at the Gimnasio de Tenis de Mesa "Elizabeth Popper Francisco Lopez".

In a thrilling tournament run, Stuti showcased resilience and world-class skill:

- *Quarterfinal: Edged India's Prisha Goel in a five-set thriller (3-2)*
- *Semifinal: Defeated Venezuela's Nathacha Dennys Mata Aponte 3-1*
- *Final: Fell short to Trinidad & Tobago's Chloe Fraser in a tight 0-3 battle (scores: 6-11, 10-12, 9-11)*

At 16 years old, Stuti continues to punch above her weight, consistently proving herself against older and more experienced opponents. This silver podium finish adds to an already stellar 2025 campaign and reinforces her No. 1 ITTF Americas ranking in



the U17 category.

Next Up: U19 Challenge Begins July 3

The competition doesn't stop here—Stuti returns to action on July 3 as she begins group-stage play in the U19 Girls Singles, aiming to deliver another powerful performance and

continue climbing the world rankings.

The Antigua and Barbuda Table Tennis Association (ABTTA) celebrates Stuti's continued excellence and thanks the local and international community for their ongoing support of her journey to the top.

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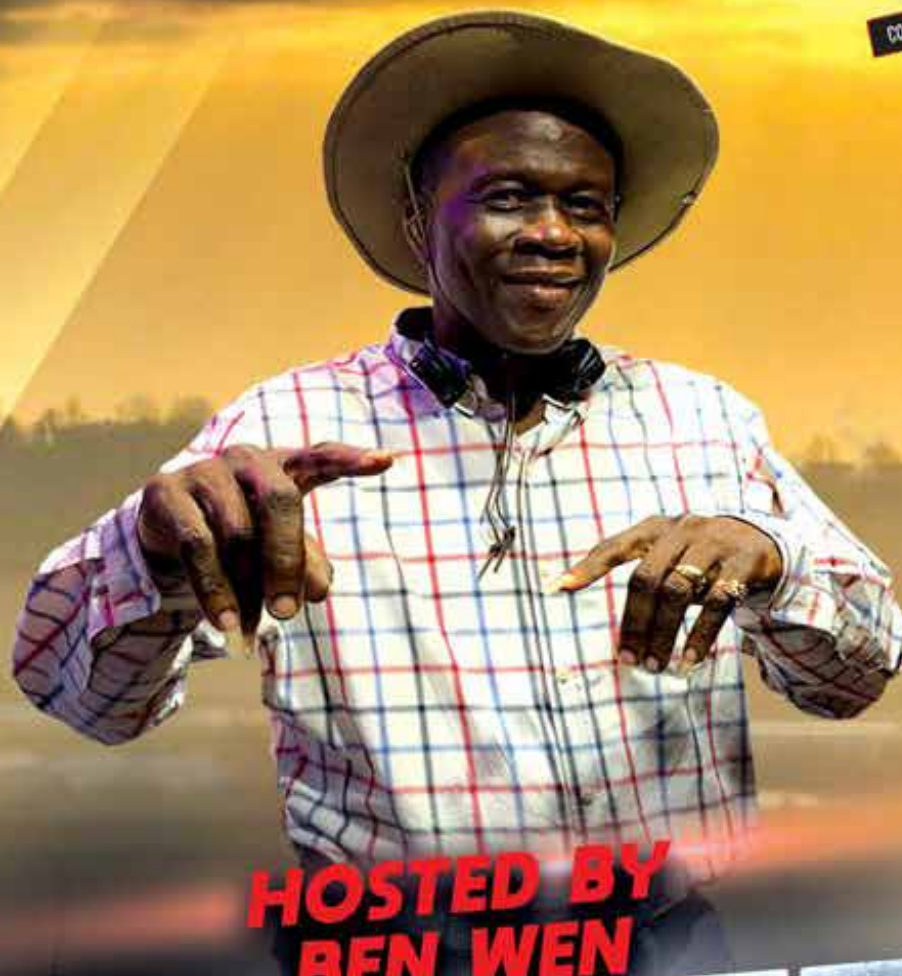
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WE ARE GETTING STRONGER

Antiguan cyclists unable to attend John T Memorial Race in Anguilla

For the first time in over 20 years, no cyclist from Antigua and Barbuda will participate in the annual John T. Memorial Road Race in Anguilla this weekend.

President of the Antigua and Barbuda Cycling Federation (ABCF) St. Clair Williams said an Antiguan contingent will not be travelling to Anguilla to contest Sunday's 80-mile road race due to financial constraints.

"For the first time in about 24 years, except for the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 and 2021, no Antiguan cyclists will be travelling to Anguilla to contest the John T. Memorial Road Race due to financial reasons," Williams stated.

"It's not a national team event, so each individual cyclist is required to finance their own participation. An Antigua contingent recently travelled to Grenada to take part in the national championship in the Spice Isle, so the cyclists who had the intention of going to Anguilla said they will not be able to make the trip to Anguilla due to a lack of finances."

For the past few years, Williams accompanied young cyclist Tahje Browne to the John T. Memorial event, where the Antiguan teenager achieved success in winning the cadets and junior male divisions.

But Browne, who is a member of the Wadadli Cycling Academy (WCA), is currently undergoing trials at a club in Italy in his pursuit of a professional contract.

Williams, who is also the President of the WCA, also performed coaching and managerial duties for Browne on overseas assignments.

Williams added that the ABCF and the Anguilla Cycling Association (ACA) have been able to forge a close-knit relationship over the years.



Antigua and Barbuda's Tahje Browne, center, on the winners' podium after capturing the Cadets Class at the annual John T Memorial Road Race in Anguilla on Sunday, July 16, 2023. (Photo courtesy of the Anguilla Cycling Association)

"The good relationship continues between the Antigua and Anguilla associations. In May, an eight-member contingent from Anguilla came to Antigua to participate in our annual Antigua and Barbuda Workers Union (ABWU) Invitational Cycling Road Race," Williams stated.

"So we continue to work closely with each other, and our absence this year from the John T. Memorial will not affect that. We look forward to having our cyclists return to the event in Anguilla next year."

Experienced cyclist Delroy Carty of Anguilla left the pack trailing to clinch the Elite Male Division and win the overall title at the annual Antigua and Barbuda Workers Union Invitational Cycling Road Race on Sunday, May 25.

Carty was one of five cyclists from

Anguilla that participated in the race, which covered approximately 58 miles and was staged by the ABCF from the ABWU's headquarters in St. John's to the St. James' Club and Villa in Marmora Bay in St. Paul's Parish.

This year's John T. Memorial Weekend, which is hosted by the Anguilla Cycling Association, will take place from July 4 to 6.

It will commence with an opening night and technical meeting on Friday. The youth and senior criterium races will take place on Saturday, and the event will culminate with the staging of the gruelling John T. Memorial Classic Road Race on Sunday.

Anguilla's professional cyclist Hasani Hennis is the overall winner of the 2024 John T. Memorial Cycling Race.

Windies players make moves in ICC Test Ranking



Roston Chase

Several West Indies players have made notable gains or re-entered the ICC Men's Test Player Rankings following recent international action, even as global stars like Travis Head, Pathum Nissanka, and Lhuan-dre Pretorius dominated headlines with their own ranking surges.

West Indies opener John Campbell and captain Roston Chase have both re-entered the Test batting rankings, now sitting at 80th and 85th, respectively, after contributing in the first Test against Australia in Bridgetown.

On the bowling side, Jason Holder moved up one

spot to 33rd, Shamar Joseph climbed to 35th, and Chase also returned to the bowling rankings at 56th, adding to the positive signs for the Caribbean side despite their defeat.

Meanwhile, Australia's Travis Head cracked the top 10 batters again, as he rose three places to seventh after back-to-back scores of 59 and 61 in the low-scoring series opener, which Australia won by 159 runs.

Elsewhere, Sri Lanka's Pathum Nissanka vaulted 14 spots to 17th in the batting rankings following his brilliant 159-run knock in their innings victory over Bangladesh.

Making a remarkable debut, South Africa's Lhuan-dre Pretorius surged into the rankings at 68th, thanks to a commanding 153-run innings that powered his side to a dominant win over Zimbabwe.

South Africa's batting unit saw further gains, as Wiaan Mulder jumped 17 places to 56th and Corbin Bosch climbed 15 spots to 59th after scoring centuries in Bulawayo.

Zimbabwe's Sean Williams reached a career-best 15th, while teammate Craig Ervine moved up to 48th after knocks of 36 and 49.

Sri Lanka's Dinesh Chan-

dimal (13th) and Kusal Mendis (30th) also advanced, as did Australia's Beau Webster, who leaped 11 spots to 52nd.

In the bowling charts, Australia's Josh Hazlewood jumped one spot to fourth after a seven-wicket match haul in Bridgetown.

Sri Lanka's Prabhath Jayasuriya (joint-14th) and Bangladesh's Taijul Islam (16th) also made upward moves after starring with the ball in Colombo. South Africa's Mulder (up six to 52nd) and Bosche (up 45 places to 57th) were other big movers.

Windies coach demands sharp response in Grenada



Fast bowler Jayden Seales, left, and West Indies players celebrate after picking up a wicket during the opening Test in Barbados. (File Photo)

Having done their assessment from a disappointing outing in Barbados, West Indies head coach Daren Sammy is demanding a sharper, more focused performance, particularly in the field and with the bat, in the second Test against Australia, which gets underway on Thursday (today).

Sammy admitted that while some decisions in the opening Test at Kensington Oval were contentious, it was the team's own shortcomings, most notably seven dropped catches, that ultimately saw them slip to a 159-run defeat.

"Yes, they (the umpires) had some human errors, but I think the biggest thing is we shot ourselves in the foot. You cannot drop seven catches against the world's number one team and expect to compete all the time and be victorious. So we have a lot of blame to take for the defeat," Sammy told reporters ahead of the match at the National Stadium in St. George's.

Still, Sammy believes there were flickers of promise from the Caribbean side as Shamar Joseph secured a fiery nine-wicket haul, and encouraging knocks from Shai Hope and Roston Chase also offered glimpses of

potential in a side that is undergoing transition under a new Test Championship cycle—with a new captain, new coach, and several new faces.

"For the first two days, we were head and shoulders above the number one team. That's the brand of cricket we want to play. Players like Brandon King showed what we're capable of when things click. So once things go well, then we could really compete and have an impact on winning," Sammy stated.

Despite the defeat, Sammy remains steadfast in his belief that the squad should remain unchanged, as he highlighted the need for continuity and trust in the players' abilities.

"We just started a new Test Championship. The 11 that we picked was probably the most balanced one we could field. After one game, there's no need to panic. It's about starting a culture, building a brand, and giving players a fair opportunity to perform," he declared.

With the Grenada wicket expected to be balanced, Sammy said execution will be key, regardless of pitch conditions.

"We've played more white-ball

cricket here, and it's normally a really good cricket wicket. You could have a grassy top or a flat deck, but you still have to come out and execute, and that's what I'll challenge my men to do on both sides of the game, batting and bowling," Sammy noted.

Sammy pointed out that a crucial area for improvement lies in the team's batting approach, particularly in the first innings, where he noted the West Indies often falter.

"We've probably faced the least number of overs, scored the slowest, and probably lost the most wickets as well in the last two Test Championships. That's not good enough. Either you score faster to bring the game closer, or you bat more overs. We have selected a squad that should allow us to do both," Sammy argued.

"I believe you have to bat about 150 overs in the first innings to really put yourself in contention for a result that is not on the losing side. It's a long way away from what we're doing, but we are going to continue to take steps and play in a way that helps us to improve," he added.

Thursday's Test will also mark a monumental moment in West Indies cricket history, as veteran opener Kraigg Brathwaite will become the 10th player to reach 100 Test appearances for the Caribbean side—a milestone Sammy was quick to celebrate.

"I was privileged to be captain when Kraigg played his first Test back in 2011. Now, to be his coach as he prepares for his 100th Test, in which he also has an opportunity to perform and have an impact on levelling a series, it will be a special moment for him and also for the team.

"We've shown signs that when we do things well, we compete with the best in the world. So we just need to put all facets of the game right, keep the pressure on, and not drop too many catches," Sammy ended.

Sammy urges caution amid allegations against Windies player

West Indies head coach Daren Sammy has offered limited comments on the sexual assault allegations reportedly made against a West Indies player, as he stressed the importance of allowing the justice system to take its course while expressing support for a fair and transparent process.

The allegations, which surfaced in a recent report by Guyana-based Kaieteur News, involve multiple women and are said to relate to incidents dating back as far as 2023.

While no charges have been filed, the matter has attracted growing media attention, especially as the West Indies prepare for the second Test against Australia in Grenada.

Sammy, who addressed the issue for the first time at a press conference on Tuesday, said he is aware of the developments but cautioned against jumping to conclusions.

“We’re all aware of what’s been going on in the media. I’m very close to my players and have had conversations with them to ensure their mental well-being is good. One thing I could say is that we believe in justice,” Sammy told reporters.

“We are a community that believes justice must be served. However,



West Indies head coach Daren Sammy

there’s a process, and we will continue to support in whatever way we can to ensure that due process and the right system are followed. As head coach, I want justice for everyone,” he added.

Sammy emphasized that, at this point, the matter remains in the realm of allegations, and he reiterated the importance of allowing the proper channels to handle the investigation.

“As of now, it’s all allegations. We know the justice system, so you have to wait for things to process the right way,” he stressed.

When asked about the nature of the allegations, which reportedly date back over a year, Sammy noted he was unaware of the specific timeline. “I’m not aware of that part of it,” he declared.

Even when pressed on whether Cricket West Indies (CWI) should launch an internal investigation

into the matter, Sammy declined to comment, as he suggested that the board would act appropriately behind the scenes.

“I can’t answer to that. I’m pretty sure they are doing all they can to make sure, like I said, the right process is followed,” Sammy stated.

Cricket West Indies, for its part, has maintained a position of non-intervention at this stage.

“Cricket West Indies has not received any communication or official information and is therefore unable to comment at this time,” a spokesperson told media outlets.

While the situation remains fluid, with more information expected in the coming weeks, Sammy and his team are focused on their on-field duties, as they look to rebound from a first Test defeat and level the series against the top-ranked Australians.




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Antiguans to contest NORCECA Beach contest in Dominican Republic

Antigua and Barbuda's two-member female team will be contesting the NORCECA (North, Central America and Caribbean Volleyball Confederation) Beach Championships in the Dominican Republic this week.

The national female team comprising Jassania Joseph and Jaya Isaac Carr will join several teams from four confederations for the July 3 to 7 NORCECA Championships in Juan Dolio, Dominican Republic, which serve as a qualifier for the International Volleyball Federation (FIVB) Under-21 World Championships later this year in Mexico.

The two players are being accompanied by coach Olsen "Karrat" Joseph. The top three finishers at the 2025 Eastern Caribbean Volleyball Association's (ECVA) Under-21 Beach Championships in St. Kitts from June 6 to 8 qualified for the event.

Antigua and Barbuda, who clinched the run-



Antigua and Barbuda's Jaya Carr holds the trophy alongside teammate Jassania Joseph, left, after clinching second place in the ECVA's Under-21 Women's Beach Volleyball Championships in St. Kitts on Sunday, June 8, 2025. (File photo)

ners-up spot; champions St. Lucia; and third-place finishers Dominica will represent the ECVA at this week's NORCECA Beach Championships.

The top three teams

from the CAZOVA (Caribbean Zonal Volleyball Association) zonal qualifying tournament will be in attendance. They are the Cayman Islands, Barbados, and Trinidad

and Tobago.

The top four teams from the AFECAVOL (Association of Central American Volleyball Federations) zonal qualifying tournament, as well as all six teams that comprised the Central Zone (North Central Americas Volleyball Association), will also be vying for supremacy.

Honduras and Costa Rica are among the qualifiers from AFECAVOL, while Canada, Cuba, Mexico, Puerto Rico, the Dominican Republic, and the United States of America qualified from the Central Zone.

NORCECA is a continental confederation that governs volleyball activities in the North American, Central American, and Caribbean regions. NORCECA is affiliated with the International Volleyball Federation (FIVB).

The 2025 FIVB Under-21 World Championships will take place in Puebla, Mexico, from October 16 to 19.