

\$3 million in back-pay for teachers

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Health Minister, Sir Molwyn Joseph at the formal opening ceremony of the temporary Browne Avenue Clinic situated at the former Holberton Hospital.

Story on Page 4

Local News

\$3 million in back-pay for teachers



Permanent Secretary Ena Dalso-Henry

The ministry of Education has started the distribution of cheques to teachers representing back pay related to their re-classification.

Permanent Secretary Ena Dalso-Henry said the distribution is taking place at the Antigua State College Auditorium. The distribution started on Tuesday from 9:30 am to 1:00 pm and continued Wednesday from 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm.

The permanent secretary said in total some fourteen hundred teachers are to receive cheques of varying amounts. She is reporting that the Treasury Department has completed the preparation of approximately one thousand cheques that are available immediately for collection from the teachers.

She added that the Treasury has promised that the remaining cheques will soon be processed and be ready for distribution. This as the ministry awaits the remaining 400 cheques to be com-

pleted by the treasury. On the first day of distribution, approximately 500 cheques were collected by teachers.

The permanent secretary revealed that for 2024, the amounts that will be paid out to teachers will be close to \$3 million. She noted that the period January to June this year is also outstanding and this is expected to be another \$2 million.

She said there are some requirements for collection the cheques...

- Teachers must present a valid government issued photo ID at the time of collection.

If someone is collecting on a teacher's behalf, that person must present:

- A written authorization letter signed by the teacher.
- A copy of the teacher's valid government issued photo ID.
- That person's valid government issued photo ID.



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TERMS AND CONDITIONS APPLY

No increases in Medical Benefits Scheme contributions under consideration



Sir Molwyn Joseph, speaking earlier this week at a news conference hosted by the ministry.

There is no need to raise the contributions paid into the Medical Benefits Scheme deducted from the salaries and wages of workers in the country and matched by their employers.

That's the word from Health Minister Sir Molwyn Joseph, speaking earlier this week at a news conference hosted by the ministry. The minister acknowledged that there are significant demands that are placed on the funds of the MBS, but so far the board has been made to meet these expenses and still report excess funds.

According to Sir Molwyn he is of the view that MBS should try to meet the total health costs of the country especially as the country is currently exploring the possibility of establishing a National Health Insurance Scheme.

He confirmed that he has held discussions with one of a team of experts from the University of the West Indies that visited the country for discussions on the national health insurance proposal. According to Sir Molwyn one professor did raise the question of whether the country would be willing to increase the MBS deductions to help finance the scheme.

However, prior to the introduction

of the scheme, the minister feels that MBS should meet current health costs especially in cases where patients have to travel abroad for specialized health care.

"For instance, one of the things we're doing now is we have determined that any disease that we cannot fix in Antigua, we offer to pay for the patients to go abroad. We've been spending a lot of money sending people abroad for heart disease and other things.

"The idea is that if you expose Medical Benefit to the full demand of what it costs to provide healthcare whether it's here or overseas and they are able to meet that demand on the basis of the deductions now that is a good sign that we might not require or have any

need to go up on the deductions. So far we are able to meet all those financial demands without getting any deficits or any shortfall," he noted.

Another benefit of having MBS being able to meet much the health care costs is the flexibility it allows the government to be able to bring specialists into the country for a short time to see multiple patients which works out to be more costs effective than to send each patient overseas.

Alternatively, the minister revealed that the government's plan is to provide as much specialized care in-country including cardiac care, various times of cancers, kidneys, vision and head trauma and that this is the next area of focus for the ministry.



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Temporary facility to house the Browne's Avenue clinic formally opened



Health Minister, Sir Molwyn Joseph at the formal opening ceremony of the temporary Browne's Avenue Clinic situated at the former Holberton Hospital.

A formal opening ceremony took place Wednesday morning in one of the buildings at the former Holberton Hospital where the Browne's Avenue clinic will operate on a temporary basis.

Health Minister, Sir Molwyn Joseph, flanked by Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Health, Stacey Gregg-Paige and Principal Nursing Officer (Ag), Clarissa Christopher, participated in the opening exercises on Wednesday.

Pastor Olson Daniel of the Swetes Wesleyan Holiness Church offered prayers at the opening as well as to offer blessings on the facility.

Minister Joseph noted that when the government made the decision to renovate the facilities at Holberton Hospital there was much criticism emanating from some quarters suggesting that this was a case of the government

'wasting money'. However, time has proven that it was money well-spent.

"Well, today we stand here and the evidence is clear. It has been renovated to the point where we can facilitate a

clinic temporarily. Additionally, just next door will be the home of the sickle cell patients. First time in the history of Antigua and Barbuda. We will have a place where the sickle cell patients





can be treated. And they can stay overnight because they now have a place where they can rest,” Sir Molwyn remarked.

The minister noted that when the conditions at the Browne’s Avenue clinic became unbearable for the staff there, there was a recommendation that was made to the Cabinet to transfer the clinic to Holberton temporarily.

All the services that the clinic provided at its Browne’s Avenue location will continue at the Holberton Hospital facility.

The Browne’s Avenue Clinic and the All Saints Clinic are two health facil-

ities that had to be closed temporarily in order to carry out expensive repairs and expansion.

Meanwhile, Sir Molwyn has disclosed that since 2014, the government has spent millions of dollars renovating or constructing new clinics across the country.

“When I assumed the portfolio of Minister of Health in 2014, a comprehensive review by the then Principal Nursing Officer revealed that every single public clinic in Antigua and Barbuda had been neglected for years.

Since then, this Government has taken decisive steps to reverse that trend.

We have built two new polyclinics in Villa and Glanvilles; carried out major refurbishments at the Parham, Clare Hall, and Liberta Clinics; constructed a new clinic in Bolans; and are preparing to open the new Cobbs Cross Clinic.

Minister Joseph also identified the Grays Farm clinic as one that is also in need of urgent repairs. He explained that the clinic was sited at a place when water runoff poses a problem as this water seeped into the foundation and has done some structural damage.

He said the engineers are considering several options on how the repairs can be done while resolving the water issue permanently.



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Police warn against recent hike in break-ins



The police are urging residents to heighten their security awareness and take precautionary measures against break-ins and theft.

Recently, there have been incidents of break-ins and thefts, and although the offences are not widespread, it has raised serious concerns within the Police Administration.

To enhance safety and security, the police advise residents to implement proper security measures to secure their homes and other properties.

Additionally, residents are encouraged to be aware of their surroundings and adopt the following safety measures for their safety:

1. Ensure that your property is secured at all times by locking all windows and doors.
2. It is advisable to install proper functioning security systems on your property for your safety, security, and also peace of mind.
3. Avoid leaving valuable items unattended outside your home or on your property.
4. Report any suspicious vehicles or persons seen loitering in your area to any police station or call 911.

The Police Administration assures residents that additional security mea-



sures have been implemented to urgently and adequately address this issue.

The public is urged to continue supporting the efforts of the police as they work to ensure everyone feel safe in the comfort of their homes.

Featured SPEAKERS

DR. HANYBAL YAZIGI
SLBMC CONSULTANT ONCOLOGIST

DR. CHERIE TULLOCH
SLBMC CONSULTANT OB/GYN/CHAIR, CERVICAL CANCER ELIMINATION PROGRAM (ANTIGUA & BARBUDA)

DR. JONATHAN MAKANJUOLA
UROLOGIST

DR. ANESA AHAMAD
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IHO to mount Eco-Tourism workshop next week

Integrated Health Outreach Inc. (IHO), the non-profit organisation concerned with environmental and other related issues, wants residents and stakeholders in the Nelson's Dockyard National Park (NDNP) to register for its upcoming Eco-Tourism Workshop on Saturday, August 23rd, 2025.

The event will expose participants to topics like cultural heritage preservation, environmental education, conservation, eco-friendly business models, green procurement, and waste management. It is part of an ongoing donor-funded project being implemented by IHO to benefit the communities within the Nelson's Dockyard National Park, which aims to build resilience to climate change by ecosystem restoration and by promoting sustainable livelihood practices among residents and stakeholders.

Lead Facilitator and Social and Climate Specialist, Britney McDonald, stated, "We want people to walk away being able to apply what they learned and to use it as a basis to strengthen sustainable tourism practices that promote conservation and adaptation. The impact on our communities has continued to be a reality with growing concerns. Anyone who is eligible should seize the opportunity to participate in this free workshop, especially our youth."

The one-day workshop which will take place at the John E. St. Luce Financial & Conference Centre this Saturday, August 23rd, builds on work done by IHO during its EcoTourism Livelihoods Course. This activity has so far impacted over 40 participants who are connected to the NDNP Protected Area.

Through the workshop, IHO is aiming to reach more people, especially young



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people who are seeking opportunities to network and expand their knowledge in the tourism sector, as it continues to be the most significant sector of Antigua and Barbuda's economy, and the economies of many other Caribbean small island developing states.

Interested persons can register here: <https://qrco.de/bgE0a9>. The goal is to reach those who live, work or do business in the Nelson's Dockyard National Park's communities, as well as those from surrounding com-

munities. NDNP communities include English Harbour, Cobbs Cross, Falmouth, Spring Hill, Patterson, Fishers, Doigs, Barters, Cherry Hill, and the southern part of Liberta. Communities buffering the National Park to the north and west whose residents are also eligible, include Tyrells, Liberta, Piccadilly, Table Hill Gordon, Blake's, Sawcolts, Old Road, John Hughes, Swetes, Jennings, Wallings Reserve, Boggy Peak Area, Crabbe Hill, Christian Valley, and Cades Bay.

Ministry of Works provides more details of communities benefiting from roadworks

The Ministry of Works says its community road rehabilitation programme continues apace with multiple communities benefiting from the ongoing roadworks.

Head of communications in the Ministry, Damani Tabor, is reporting that areas such as Michael Village, Liberta, Swetes and Clare Hall are seeing teams from the ministry engaged in road construction and/or repairs.

In Liberta, the ministry's team is constructing concrete roads, asphalt repairs, drainage and sidewalk preparation. In Swetes, asphalt road construction is taking place. The ministry has engaged multiple teams so that the roadworks can continue in several communities at a time. This is taking place while patching is ongoing in parts of Clare Hall.

Many communities in Antigua are beginning to see improvements in their roads as the ministry has made an effort to simultaneously get work done in several communities.



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WE ARE GETTING STRONGER

If at First You Don't Succeed... Move Constituencies? Harold Lovell's Never-Ending Political Tour

By Kay Archer

The latest development coming out of the United Progressive Party has been nothing short of entertaining. Harold Lovell, former candidate and representative for St. John's City East, expressed intent to return to elective politics. Not in St. John's City East, where he was unsuccessful six out of the eight times he contested, but on new stomping grounds, the All Saints West constituency.

Within the party itself, the move is also causing quiet ripples. Lovell is not just any candidate. He's a former political leader, former minister, and the long-time face of the party. But instead of using his influence to elevate new blood or groom a successor in City East, he is once again stepping into the ring himself, dragging his 25% win rate along like it's a badge of honour. Displacing Barbara Coates, who just this year declared her intent to represent the UPP. This sudden move has left onlookers with a barrage of questions. Will he challenge Pringle for the leadership? Is the UPP in such disrepair that they have to rely on a relic of the past?

Why abandon City East now, when the loss margin for the last election was so miniscule? Why start from zero in All Saints West, where he has no political roots, no proven base, and no real rationale



Harold Lovell, former candidate and representative for St. John's City East

for being there? The answer, it seems, is both sad and disturbing. Harold Lovell has been ill-advised, manipulated even, into one last desperate dash for relevance. And behind this misguided decision lie nefarious actors, puppet masters, and desperate internal party strategists who see Lovell not as a man, but as a tool.

This isn't statesmanship. It's sabotage. But truly, how does one sabotage a man with six losses under his belt and the misguided confidence to seek re-election?

The truth is, there are individuals within and around the UPP who

would rather preserve their own influence than pass the torch. They have latched onto Lovell as a convenient figurehead; one they can control, one who still holds name recognition, even if that name is more associated with loss than leadership. His decision to abandon the constituency that nearly returned him to Parliament reeks not only of personal delusional, but of manipulation by those who benefit from keeping him on the front lines, even if it's at his own political expense.

Harold Lovell should be mentoring the next generation, not competing with them for what the UPP deems a safe seat. If the success of the UPP depends on a 70-year-old serial loser, then there is no future in it at all: it is a farce.

Harold Lovell's return is **NOT** a story of resilience. It is however a story of refusal to listen, to reflect, and to let go. The tragedy is not that he is running again. The tragedy is that he does not seem to know when to quit.

If history repeats itself again do not be surprised when he pops up in St. Mary's South, Rural North, or wherever the wind next blows him. Because if there's one thing Harold Lovell has taught us, it's that if at first you don't succeed, try, try again. And again. And again. And again preferably somewhere new.

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WE ARE GETTING STRONGER

Humanity in Action – From Global Calls to Local Change

World Humanitarian Day is more than an annual commemoration. Observed each year on August 19, it is a solemn recognition of those who put humanity first—often at great personal risk—and an invitation to the rest of us to join them in spirit and in action. The day carries a universal message, and in 2024, United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres reminded the world: *“Wherever there is human suffering, humanitarian aid workers are striving to alleviate hardship and pain.”* That message, though spoken from New York, found a powerful echo in Antigua and Barbuda this year.

On World Humanitarian Day 2025, the island’s humanitarian spirit was not confined to words or ceremonies. It came alive in the dust and sweat of Potters Primary School, where we poured concrete as part of our ongoing **Project Red**. The first phase of this effort is already 90 percent complete, a clear symbol that what once was vision is becoming reality. Backed by **The Giving Syndicate**, this project is more than construction—it is the laying of foundations for equity, access, and dignity.

But why should this matter on World Humanitarian Day? Because at its heart, humanitarianism is about recognizing and responding to the needs of the vulnerable. And who could be more vulnerable than children—especially children



with disabilities—who for decades have tried to learn in environments not designed with them in mind? The new ramp at Potter’s Primary is designed with accessibility at its core. That commitment to inclusivity is not an afterthought; it is the mission itself. If schools do not serve every child, then can we honestly call them schools?

These questions demand answers, but perhaps more importantly, they demand action. The pouring of concrete may seem like a small, local act compared to the scale of global crises, yet isn’t it precisely in such local actions that global val-

ues find their truest form? Humanitarianism is not limited to war zones or refugee camps; it is present wherever people refuse to accept inequality as inevitable.

At Potters Primary, humanitarian values have been translated into bricks and mortar. But they are also being told in stories. On this same World Humanitarian Day, Good Humans 268 Inc. launched the first episode of *“What’s Your Story.”* This series provides a platform for individuals—especially those living with disabilities—to share their journeys. For too long, their experiences have been spoken about but not spoken

with. This platform flips the narrative, placing the microphone where it always should have been: in the hands of the people themselves.

The first episode was raw, authentic, and deeply moving. It reminded listeners that disability is not a limitation but a perspective. And isn’t listening the very essence of humanitarianism? To pause, to hear, to allow another’s reality to reshape our own understanding of the world? If humanitarian work is to be sustainable, it must go beyond charity; it must be rooted in respect.

Project Red itself, supported by The Giving Syndi-



cate, reflects that respect. It is not charity work—it is justice work. For decades, children with disabilities have been forced to adapt to systems that ignore them. Project Red turns the question around: why not adapt the system instead? Why not build schools, roads, and spaces where accessibility is assumed rather than requested? And if not us, then who will? If not now, then when?

The Giving Syndicate's involvement is a story worth highlighting. This collective embodies the idea that sustainable change requires not just one champion but many shoulders lifting together. By pooling resources, expertise, and passion, the Syndicate transforms big dreams into achievable milestones. Their partnership with Good Humans 268 proves that when communities come together, barriers crumble—sometimes literally.

On World Humanitarian Day, their work at Potters Primary became a visible expression of the day's global message. Around the world, humanitarian operations provide life-saving aid to millions. Here in Anti-

gua, our humanitarian operation is not about food drops or medical tents, but about ensuring that children can walk—or wheel—through school doors without fear of exclusion. Is that any less urgent? Can the denial of dignity be tolerated simply because it is less dramatic than disaster?

The humanitarian call is not only about responding to crises; it is about preventing them. When we fail to create accessible schools, we create crises of exclusion. When we neglect to amplify the voices of persons with disabilities, we perpetuate cycles of invisibility. By acting now, through Project Red and *"What's Your Story,"* we are not only building for today—we are preventing tomorrow's injustices.

Yet let us be honest: the work is hard. Funding is not always certain. Cultural attitudes toward disability can still be resistant. There are days when the weight of the task seems heavier than the blocks being lifted at Potters Primary. But isn't that precisely why World Humanitarian Day exists? To remind us that the path of service is rarely smooth,

but it is always necessary? To remind us that hardship does not excuse us from responsibility, but instead defines the urgency of it?

The beauty of humanitarian action is that it multiplies. One act inspires another. The concrete poured at Potters Primary may inspire another school to prioritize accessibility. The stories shared in *"What's Your Story"* may give courage to another individual to speak up. The Giving Syndicate's model may inspire others to pool resources for causes that matter. Change is contagious—are we willing to spread it?

As we reflect on this year's observance, we must ask ourselves: what will our humanitarian legacy be? Will we allow World Humanitarian Day to pass as a date marked by hashtags and press releases, or will we let it mark a turning point where we decided, in our own corner of the world, to embody the very values it proclaims? Will we see humanitarianism as something distant, or will we, like those at Potters Primary, realize that it begins exactly where we stand?

The answer, thankfully, is

already being written. It is being written in the nearly finished first phase of Project Red. It is being written in the voices amplified through *"What's Your Story."* It is being written in the collective generosity of The Giving Syndicate. These are not abstract principles; they are concrete actions—actions that matter, actions that last.

So as the concrete hardens at Potters Primary, let us not forget what those structures represent. They represent a refusal to accept inequality. They represent a community choosing inclusion over indifference. They represent the living, breathing spirit of humanitarianism, not as an idea but as a reality.

On this World Humanitarian Day, Antigua and Barbuda showed the world that humanitarianism is not only about emergency response. It is about building foundations—foundations of hope, inclusion, and justice. And just as the foundation at Potters Primary will support generations of students, may our collective humanitarian spirit support generations of communities, ensuring that no one, ever again, is left behind

Joshuanette Francis

**Founder and President,
Good Humans 268 Inc.**

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Regional News

Another escapee from the Constant Spring police lock-up recaptured



The police have recaptured another of the nine inmates who escaped from the Constant Spring police lock-up on Tuesday.

He has been identified as 19-year-old, Richard Bishop, of an Olympic Way address in St Andrew. He is charged with burglary and larceny.

The police did not release details of his capture.

The police recaptured 45-year-old, David Rhoden of Malvern Avenue in Kingston, shortly after the jailbreak on Tuesday.

The other men still at large are:

- Kemal Kelly, 25-year-

old, of Mannings Hill district, St Andrew. He is charged with assault at common law and using a firearm to commit a scheduled offence.

- Talik Chambers, 23-year-old, of a Burlington Avenue address in St Andrew, who is charged with identity theft.

- Brandon Ennis, 26-year-old, of Belvedere, Red Hills, St Andrew, who is charged with possession of prohibited weapon.

- Junior Anthony Barnes, 26-year-old, of Iron river, Stony Hill, St Andrew, who is charged with possession of weapon and ammunition.

- Donque Douglas,

25-year-old, of Oxford Street, Kingston, charge unknown.

-Alonzo Espute, 19-year-old, of Cassava Piece, St Andrew, who is charged with murder (stabbing).

- Fray Mesias, 18-year-old, of Pinto, Stony Hill, St Andrew, who is charged with rape.

The police are reminding members of the public that it is a criminal offence to harbour a fugitive.

The police say the prisoners escaped by cutting their way through a grille and a door made of metal.

The High Command says resources have been deployed islandwide to support the recapture of the men. (Jamaica Gleaner)

Important Notice

Please be advised that the distribution of cheques for Teachers takes place today from 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm at the Antigua State College Auditorium.

Please note the following requirements: Teachers must present a valid government issued photo ID at the time of collection.

Additionally, if someone is collecting on your behalf, they must present:

- ☐ **A written authorization letter signed by you.**
- ☐ **A copy of your valid government issued photo ID.**
- ☐ **Their own valid government issued photo ID.**

Thank you

Guyana' president announces an upgrade in monetary benefits for country's children and seniors



Guyana's Head of State, Dr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali, has announced a comprehensive set of new welfare initiatives targeting children and senior citizens, should his People's Progressive Party/Civic (PPP/C) secure victory in the upcoming September elections.

An article published on www.caribbeanationalweekly.com stated that during a rally held in Lethem, situated in Region Nine, on Sunday evening, President Ali revealed plans to provide each child with an annual government support of GY\$200,000 (the equivalent of ECD 2587.62). This support package comprises a fresh transportation subsidy of GY\$100,000 and a

doubling of the existing Because We Care cash assistance, which will now be GY\$100,000 instead of GY\$50,000.

Ali stated passionately to an enthusiastic audience, "We are going to put in your children's pockets an additional GY\$200,000 every year at a minimum."

According to the article, he further elaborated that these combined measures are projected to channel approximately GY\$40 billion into the welfare of children each year, a significant rise from the current annual expenditure of around GY\$10 billion allocated through the Because We Care program and uniform grants.

"All of these are our minimum positions...because once our economy performs at a higher than expected rate, then you can expect more benefits and expanded benefits coming to you and your children," Ali emphasized.

Currently, children attending both public and private educational institutions receive GY\$50,000 annually through the Because We Care initiative, along with an additional GY\$5,000 for school uniforms, bringing the total yearly support to GY\$55,000.

In addition to the child-focused benefits, President Ali reportedly outlined new proposals aimed at assisting senior citizens. These include a proposed GY\$50,000 annual transportation grant for every pensioner, along with an increase in the old age pension to GY\$60,000 per month.

"Tonight, I'm pleased to tell you that we are going to set aside at a minimum GY\$65 billion for old age pensioners. That means that pension will be, at a minimum, GY\$60,000," the president said.

He also mentioned an additional GY\$4 billion allocated specifically for transportation support, which will amount to a GY\$50,000 grant for each pensioner.

The article reports that since assuming office, the PPP/C government has already taken steps to improve pension benefits, doubling the old age pension from GY\$20,500 in 2020 to GY\$41,000. (Dominica News Online)



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Haiti listed among countries with highest number of conflict-related sexual violence cases

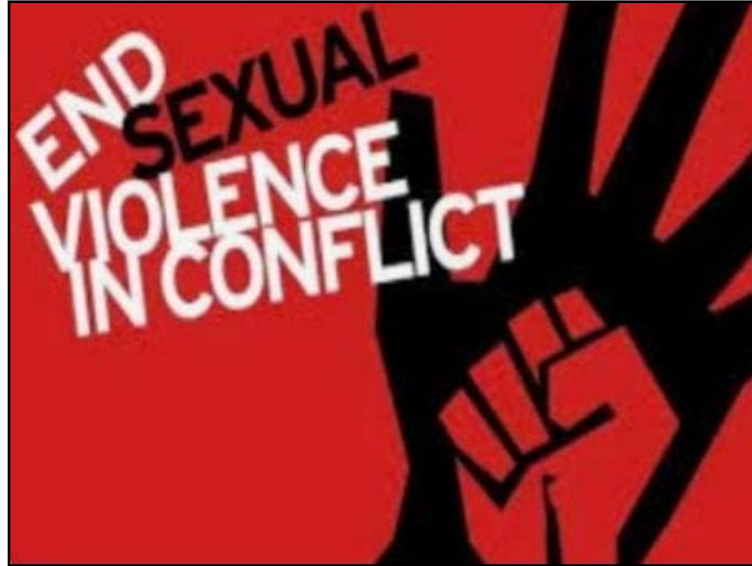
Haiti is listed among countries with the highest cases of conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV) as the United Nations stressed the need to support survivors in conflict zones where services are increasingly inaccessible.

Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict, Pramila Patten, addressing the UN Security Council listed Haiti along with Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Somalia and South Sudan with the most CRSV cases.

Earlier this week, the humanitarian coordinator of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), Christian Vovi, said the gang violence in Haiti is affecting the organisation's work in the French-speaking CARICOM country.

As gang violence across Haiti escalates, and the United States and other donors reduce their humanitarian funding with at least 1.3 million people having to flee their homes and as a result are facing the direst of consequences.

Women and girls face the brunt of this crisis. Gender-based violence (GBV) such as gang rape is rampant, particularly in the capital Port-au-Prince, and is exacerbated by precari-



ous conditions in displacement camps

In presenting the UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres' report to the Security Council, Patten said the crisis of CRSV is deepening, reflecting the widening scope of warfare globally. There were more than 4,600 reported cases of conflict-related sexual violence in 2024, marking a 25 per cent increase from 2023. Patten said this data is a chronic undercount, only reflecting cases verified by the UN.

Amid a general rise in CRSV, sexual violence against children increased by a disturbing 35 per cent in the past year, with victims as young as one year old.

The report spans 21 situations of concern, and outside of the numbers, Patten explained numerous con-

cerning trends seen in the report.

Firstly, displaced and refugee women and girls are exposed to heightened risks of sexual violence, which inhibit their safe return. Food insecurity also heightens the risk of sexual violence as belligerent parties restrict humanitarian access.

Additionally, armed groups use sexual violence to consolidate control over territory and natural resources, and to incentivise the recruitment of fighters.

Notably, CRSV also persists in formal and informal detention settings worldwide.

Finally, as funding cuts cause UN peace operations to draw down, the capacity of the UN system to reach and support CRSV survivors has greatly diminished.

The report notes that as global military spending in just 24 hours exceeds what is allocated in a year to address CRSV, and needs continue to rise, and Patten stressed that "women's frontline organisations are going from underfunded to unfunded."

Outside of UN peacekeeping missions decreasing their capacities, funding cuts have caused shelters for survivors to shutter, medical supplies for rape victims to run out and clinics to close worldwide.

In major conflict hotspots where healthcare systems have been decimated, "humanitarian organisations forced to do more and more with less and less and less."

"If we are serious about peace, we must fund the institutions that make peace possible. If we are serious about security, we must reaffirm the Rule of Law, and hold accountable those who commit, command, or condone grave violations, including the atrocity crime of conflict-related sexual violence," she urged.

Patten said her mandate is pursuing three lines of response: fostering compliance, enhancing service delivery and strengthening safeguards against impunity. (CMC)

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WE ARE GETTING STRONGER

An unidentified flying object has crashed and exploded in Poland's east

An unidentified flying object crashed into a cornfield and exploded in eastern Poland early Wednesday, the country's news agency PAP reported.

Local police said they received reports of the crash around 2 a.m. and found burned metal and plastic debris at the scene, near the village of Osiny. As a result of the explosion, windows were broken in some houses but nobody was injured, PAP reported.

Poland's Armed Forces Operational Command said Wednesday on social media that no violations of Polish airspace from neighbouring Ukraine or Belarus were recorded overnight.

Officials initially said the explosion may have been caused by a part of an old engine with a propeller.

Defence Minister Wladyslaw Kosiniak-Kamysz later said the object was most likely a drone, adding that an analysis was underway to determine whether it was a military or smuggling one, PAP reported.

Lublin District Prosecutor Grzegorz Trusiewicz told reporters several investigators — both civilian and military — were examining the crash site.

"We have a lot of manpower, we have the army to help us. I hope that we will be able to finish the operation by the evening," Trusiewicz said.

Since Russia launched a full-scale invasion of Ukraine more than three years ago, there have been a number of intrusions into Polish airspace, raising alarm in the European Union and NATO member state and reminding people how close the war is. (AP)



Adjusted Hours for SJCW Registration Unit

Please note that effective Tuesday 19th August to August 29th 2025, the St. John's City West Registration Unit located at the Villa Primary School will open from 8:30 am - 1pm (Monday - Friday).

The early closure is as a result of maintenance and construction work taking place at the facility. We do apologize for any inconvenience caused at this time.

We thank you all in advance for your cooperation in disseminating this information and will communicate via this forum when the hours of operation return to normal.

Immigrants seeking lawful work and citizenship in US now subject to ‘anti-Americanism’ screening



Immigrants seeking a legal pathway to live and work in the United States will now be subject to screening for “anti-Americanism,” authorities said Tuesday, raising concerns among critics that it gives officers too much leeway in rejecting foreigners based on a subjective judgment.

US Citizenship and Immigration Services said officers will now consider whether an applicant for benefits, such as a green card, “endorsed, promoted, supported, or otherwise espoused” anti-American, terrorist or antisemitic views.

“America’s benefits should not be given to those who despise the

country and promote anti-American ideologies,” Matthew Tragesser, USCIS spokesman, said in a statement. “Immigration benefits—including to live and work in the United States—remain a privilege, not a right.”

It isn’t specified what constitutes anti-Americanism and it isn’t clear how and when the directive would be applied.

“The message is that the US and immigration agencies are going to be less tolerant of anti-Americanism or antisemitism when making immigration decisions,” Elizabeth Jacobs, director of regulatory affairs and policy at the Center for Immigration Studies, a

group that advocates for immigration restrictions, said on Tuesday.

Jacobs said the government is being more explicit in the kind of behaviours and practices officers should consider, but emphasized that discretion is still in place.

“The agency cannot tell officers that they have to deny — just to consider it as a negative discretion,” she said.

The policy changes follow others recently implemented since the start of the Trump administration including social media vetting and the most recent addition of assessing applicants seeking naturalization for ‘good

moral character’.

That will not only consider “not simply the absence of misconduct” but also factor the applicant’s positive attributes and contributions.

“It means you are going to just do a whole lot more work to provide evidence that you meet our standards,” Lopez said.

Experts disagree on the constitutionality of the policy involving people who are not US citizens and their freedom of speech.

Jacobs, of the Center for Immigration Studies, said First Amendment rights do not extend to people outside the US or who are not US citizens.

Ruby Robinson, senior managing attorney with the Michigan Immigrant Rights Center, believes the Bill of Rights and the US Constitution protects all people in the United States, regardless of their immigration status, against government encroachment.

“A lot of this administration’s activities infringe on constitutional rights and do need to be resolved, ultimately, in courts,” Robinson added. (AP)

Six severed heads found on road in Mexico



Six severed heads have been found on a road in central Mexico, in an area not normally associated with cartel violence.

Local authorities made the discovery early on Tuesday morning on a route that links the broadly peaceful states of Puebla and Tlaxcala.

Police have not given a motive for the killings or said which of the criminal groups operating in Mexico might have carried them out.

Local media has reported that a blanket was left at the scene with a message issuing a warning to rival gangs and apparently signed by a group called “La Barredora”, meaning “the sweeper”.

It is the same name as a little-known criminal group operat-

ing in the western state of Guerrero but it isn't clear if they were behind the attack or why.

The local prosecutor's office said the heads found in Tlaxcala were those of men and it has launched an investigation into the killings, according to news agency AFP.

As well as drug-trafficking, there is an issue in the region with fuel smuggling, known as “huachicoleo”, which generates billions of dollars a year for the groups behind the illegal activity.

So far, federal authorities have not commented on the killings.

They come amid a major crack-down by the administration of President Claudia Sheinbaum on fentanyl trafficking.

Puebla and Tlaxcala are not prone to the kind of extreme cartel violence prominent in other parts of the country.

In June, the bodies of 20 people - four of them decapitated - were found in Sinaloa, a state gripped by gang violence.

Seven Mexican youths were also killed in a shooting at a Catholic Church festivity in the central state of Guanajuato in May.

Violence between cartels has surged in recent years, with hundreds of thousands of people killed and tens of thousands missing since the government first began to use the Mexican military against gangs in 2006. (BBC)

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Sports News

Antiguan athlete to contest triathlon and aquathlon contests in Tobago

One athlete will represent the Antigua and Barbuda Triathlon Association (ABTA) at an event in Tobago this weekend.

Elite Thomas will be flying the Antigua and Barbuda flag in the 2025 Americas Triathlon, Aquathlon, and Mixed Relay CARIFTA Championships in Courland Heritage Park in Tobago on Saturday and Sunday.

Elite, who will be accompanied by his father and coach Timothy Thomas, will be participating in the aquathlon and the triathlon events.

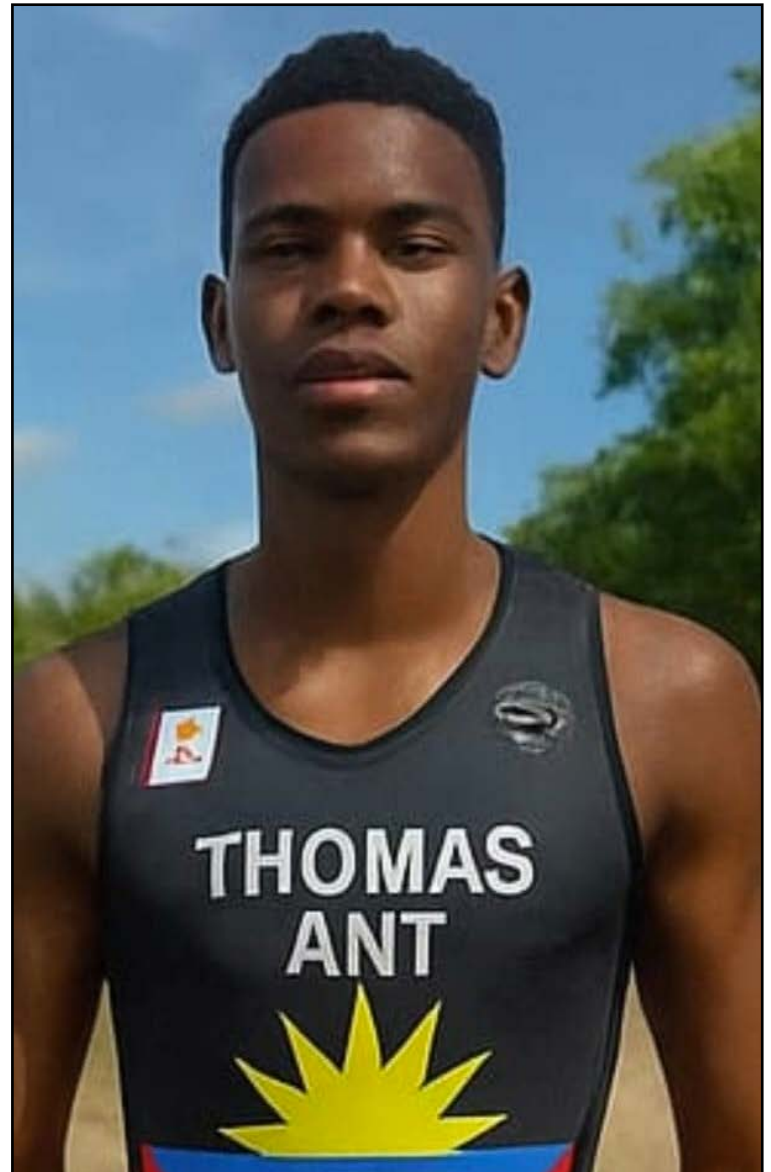
Scores of athletes will come together to compete and showcase their endurance and skill in the three events.

A triathlon is a multi-sport race that combines three continuous endurance disciplines: swimming, cycling, and running. Athletes complete these events

in sequence, with transitions between each sport contributing to the overall time. Triathlons vary in distance, from sprint distances to long-distance events like the Ironman.

Aquathlon is a multisport event consisting of swimming and running, performed one after the other without a break. It's often described as a stepping stone to triathlon, as it eliminates the bike portion. Typically, an aquathlon involves a swim followed by a run, or a run-swim-run format.

A mixed relay triathlon is a team event where two men and two women from the same country each complete a shortened "super-sprint" triathlon (swim, bike, and run) in succession. The order of the relay is typically male-female-male-female. The team with the fastest combined time wins.



Elite Thomas

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Bullets get first win in defence of Parham Super League



The Pigotts Bullets celebrate after retaining their title as champions of the Parham Super League at the Parham playing field on Saturday, September 14, 2024. (File Photo)

The Pigotts Bullets recovered from a poor start to claim their first win in their defence of the Parham Super League (PSL) title on Tuesday night.

The Bullets, who won the competition on its two previous occasions, recovered from a two-nil loss to Garden Stars in their opening game to pull off a commanding 4-1 victory against Parham in their second encounter at the Parham playing field.

Mali Johnson scored twice with conversions in the 13th and 45th minutes. Tyrique Thwaites had a 27th-minute conversion, and Karique Knight scored the other goal in the 60th minute for the Bullets.

Jair Baptiste scored a consolation goal in the 65th minute for Parham, who remain in the cellar of the four-team Group A standings without any points after suffering their second loss in as many games.

The Bullets are in third place on goal difference on three points, the same as second-placed Freemans Village, after two encounters in Group A.

Garden Stars notched up their second win in as many games by snatching a one-nil victory against Freemans Village in the last game of Tuesday night's double-header.

Dylan Martin scored the only goal of the match in the 11th minute to secure the victory, which will allow the Garden Stars to remain as Group A leaders with six points.

Roy Gregory squandered a good chance to snatch an equalizer for Freemans Village when he failed to convert a penalty kick in the second half, allowing his team to slump to their first loss in two matches.

In the other second-round matches, newcomers East Furlong maintained their lead at the top of Group B with six points by recording a 4-1

victory against Swetes on Sunday.

Shalon Knight scored twice with a conversion in each half, while Joylan Sinclair and Zaphique Andrew each scored once for East Furlong to claim their second win in as many games.

Vashorn James scored a consolation goal for Swetes, who will remain in the cellar of Group B without any points after crashing to their second loss in as many games.

East Furlong finished the match with 10 men after Sadique Adams received a red card and was expelled in the second half.

The Potters Tigers and the Willikies Warriors fought to a 3-3 draw in their second encounter in Group B.

Javorn Benjamin had a double conversion, and Keon Green scored once for Potters Tigers, while Nadre Thomas scored twice, and Dejazmatch Christian converted the other goal for the Willikies Warriors.

Willikies remain in second place in Group B with four points, while Potters remain in third place with two points after salvaging draws in their two encounters.

The third annual PSL will resume with a double-header at the Parham playing field on Saturday. Freemans Village will face Pigotts Bullets at 6:30 pm, and Garden Stars will meet Parham at 8 pm.

In Sunday's double-header, Swetes and Potters Tigers will clash at 5 pm, and Willikies will take on East Furlong at 6:30 pm.

Kings beat Patriots by three runs in CPL thriller

The St. Lucia Kings and hosts St. Kitts & Nevis Patriots were involved in a last-ball thriller in game six of the Republic Bank Caribbean Premier League (CPL) at Warner Park in Basseterre on Tuesday night.

A brilliant debut innings from Breakout League pick Navin Bidaisee, who struck a half-century, saw the Patriots stay in contention throughout a tight run chase, as they attempted to haul down the Kings' total of 200 for eight off their 20 overs.

The match went down to the final delivery, with Bidaisee and the Patriots requiring four to win off David Wiese's last ball. Bidaisee struck the ball towards the boundary at long off only for the towering Tim David to pull off an ice-veined catch to give the Kings victory by three runs, as the Patriots were restricted to 197 for six off their 20 overs.

Bidaisee made 50 off 36 balls, including four sixes and two fours. But it was Patriots skipper Jason Holder who hit a top score of 63 off 29 balls, including six sixes and three fours. Opener Andre Fletcher struck 25 off 19 balls, Kyle Mayers hit 13, and Jyd Goolie was not out on 15.

Left-arm spinner Khary Pierre bagged two for 25, and Weise finished with



St. Lucia Kings skipper David Wiese, right, celebrates as he is congratulated by wicketkeeper Tim Seifert after snatching a last-ball victory over the St. Kitts and Nevis Patriots in their CPL match at Warner Park in St. Kitts on Tuesday, August 19, 2025. (CPL/Getty Images)

two for 34.

But Roston Chase was named player of the match for scoring 61 off 38 deliveries with the bat and cementing an all-round performance with two for 27 with the ball, his wily spin economical as ever and pocketing the wickets of Rilee Rossouw for 11 and Holder.

"It was a bit nerve-racking," said Chase post-match. "I think we made it a hard victory. I thought we could have won it a bit more outright, but I'm still grateful for the two points."

With the momentum shifting back and forth all

match, it was a bitter pill for the Patriots to lose at the last after Bidaisee played such a spectacular maiden CPL innings to see the game go right down to the wire.

Opener Johnson Charles slammed 52 off 28 balls, including four sixes and four fours. Tim David contributed 46 off 23 balls, including five sixes and a four, during the Kings' batting display.

Mayers claimed two for 24, left-arm pacer Fazalhaq Farooqi captured two for 31, and left-arm spinner Waqar Salamkheil picked up two for 34.

The loss leaves the Patri-

ots with just one win in four matches and three defeats on the bounce. The Kings head to the top of the CPL table on net run rate despite their first match against the Antigua and Barbuda Falcons being abandoned due to rain.

The Patriots will play their final home match against the Barbados Royals at Warner Park on Thursday. The Antigua and Barbuda Falcons will take on the Guyana Amazon Warriors in their penultimate home match at Sir Vivian Richards Stadium on Friday. Both matches will start at 7 pm.

Italian soccer coaches call for Israel to be suspended by UEFA and FIFA over Gaza war



Carabinieri (Italian paramilitary police) patrol ahead of the Nations League soccer match between Italy and Israel, outside the Bluenergy stadium in Udine, Italy, Monday, October 14, 2024. (AP file photo)

MILAN (AP) — The Italian Soccer Coaches' Association (AIAC) is pushing for Israel to be suspended from international competition over the war in Gaza.

Ahead of Italy's crucial World Cup qualifiers against Israel in the next two months, the AIAC says "Israel must stop. Soccer must also take action."

The AIAC has written a formal letter to the Italian soccer federation, to be forwarded to European and world soccer's governing bodies, calling for Israel to be suspended.

Gabriele Gravina, the president of the Italian soccer federation, is also senior vice president of UEFA.

"The AIAC Board of Directors unanimously believes that, given the daily massacres, which have also resulted in hundreds of deaths among managers, coaches, and ath-

letes ... it is legitimate, necessary, indeed a duty, to place at the center of federation talks the request, to be submitted to UEFA and FIFA, for the temporary exclusion of Israel from sporting competitions," the letter concludes.

"Because the pain of the past cannot cloud anyone's conscience and humanity."

Italy is set to play Israel on neutral turf in Debrecen, Hungary, on Sept. 8, before hosting the return match in Udine on Oct. 14.

"We could just focus on playing, looking the other way. But we believe that is not right," AIAC vice president Giancarlo Camolese said.

The Azzurri also played Israel in Udine last October in a Nations League match that saw protests before and during the game and intense security measures, including snipers on the roof of the stadium.

Since then, the situation has continued to deteriorate with the Palestinian death toll from the 22-month war passing 62,000 earlier this month and an ever-worsening humanitarian catastrophe in Gaza, which experts say is sliding into famine.

The United Nations last week warned that starvation and malnutrition in the Palestinian territory are at their highest levels since the war began with the Hamas-led attack on southern Israel on Oct. 7, 2023, in which the militants abducted 251 people and killed around 1,200, mostly civilians.

"The world is in flames. Many people like the Palestinians are suffering," AIAC vice president Francesco Perondi said. "Indifference is unacceptable."

Russian teams have been suspended by UEFA and FIFA since days after the full invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 because future opponents clearly said they would not play those games in international competitions. No team in a UEFA member federation has refused to play an Israeli opponent.

The AIAC sent the letter after an unanimous vote by its board of directors. The association has around 18,000 members, consisting of coaches and technical staff at all levels of Italian soccer — from Serie A to amateur leagues.

A spokesperson told The Associated Press that, while it did not consult all its members, "the letter of appeal represents the widespread feelings present within the large community of Italian coaches."

Antiguans make poor start at Americas Zone Group III of Billie Jean King Cup

Antigua and Barbuda's four-member team has made a poor start to their campaign in the Americas Zone Group III of the 2025 Billie Jean King Cup in Santa Tecla, El Salvador.

The Antigua and Barbuda team, comprising Ariel Naomi Kelsick, Jolie George-Alexander, Janae George, and Isoke Perry, along with non-playing captain Cordell Williams, who is also the president of the Antigua and Barbuda Tennis Association (ABTA), lost their first two matches in the August 18 to 23 women's team tournament.

The Antiguan suffered a 3-0 loss to Cuba in their second match in Group round-robin pool play on Tuesday. Isoke Perry lost 6-0, 6-1 to Isid Hernandez in the opening singles.

Jolie George-Alexander was beaten 6-2, 6-0 by Roxana Valdez in the second singles. The Antiguan duo of Ariel Naomi Kelsick and Janae George narrowly lost 7-6, 4-6, 8-10 in the doubles to the Cuban pair of Maria Eduarda Perez Acosta and Meliza Perez.

Antigua and Barbuda launched their Group C campaign with a 3-0 loss to host El Salvador on Monday. Janae George was beaten 6-0, 6-0, by Susana Souhrada in the first singles.



The Antigua and Barbuda's team that is competing in the Americas Zone Group III of the 2025 Billy Jean King Cup in Santa Tecla, El Salvador. (Photo courtesy of Cordell Williams)

Ariel Naomi Kelsick lost 2-6, 1-6 to Sara Valentina Cruz Bonilla in the second singles. The Antiguan pair of Isoke Perry and Jolie George-Alexander were crushed 6-0, 6-0 by El Salvador's team of Michelle Irigoyen and Daniela Aguilar in the doubles.

El Salvador notched up a 3-0 win against the United States (US) Virgin Islands, the other team in Group C, to top the standings with two wins in as many games.

Bermuda and Costa Rica

withdrew from the competition, leaving 11 teams, divided into three groups, to battle for supremacy in the tournament.

Uruguay, Panama, and St. Lucia are contesting Group A, while Jamaica, the Bahamas, Trinidad and Tobago, and Suriname are vying for supremacy in Group B.

St. Lucia prevailed 2-1 against Panama after suffering defeat by the same scoreline to Uruguay in Group A matches.

Jamaica and the Baha-

mas won both their matches in Group B to top the standings. The Jamaicans notched up 3-0 wins against Trinidad and Tobago and Suriname. The Bahamas recorded a 2-1 win against Trinidad and Tobago and pulled off a 3-0 victory over Suriname.

The top two teams from the tie will be promoted to Americas Group II of the Billie Jean King Cup for 2026. The remaining nine teams will remain in the Americas Zone Group III for next year.