

“We will not *kick the can down the road*”

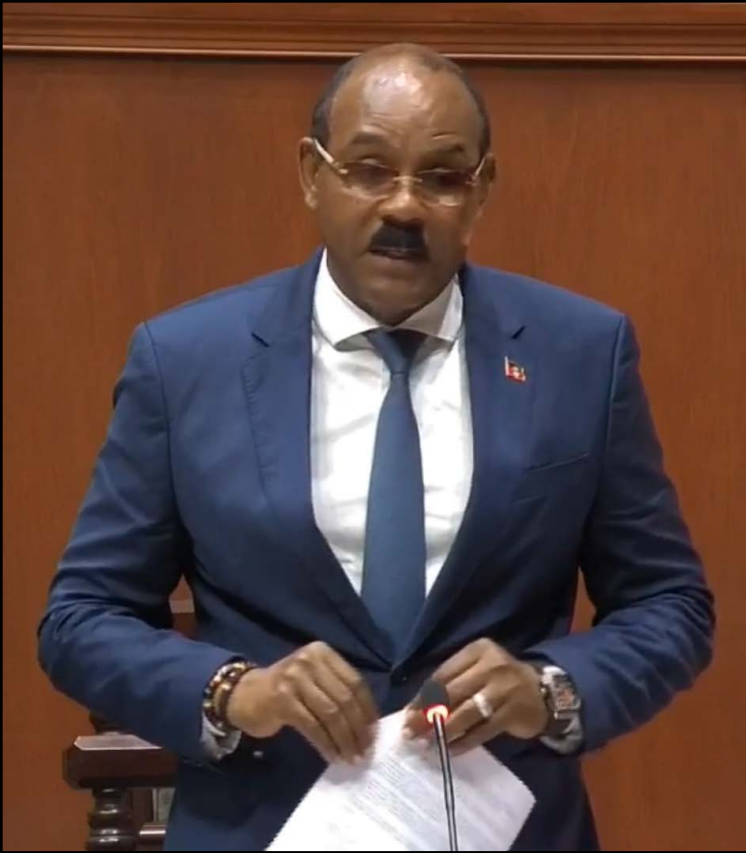
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Antigua and Barbuda's artists, cuisine and its overall culture continue to make an impression at the Caribbean's leading cultural exposition, CARIFESTA 15

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“We will not **KICK THE CAN** down the road”



Prime Minister Gaston Browne

Prime Minister Gaston Browne has reiterated the philosophy of his government as a ‘can do’ government that is willing and able to solve the problems which the country faces rather than to ‘kick the proverbial can’ down the road.

The prime minister made the point on Monday as he introduced a motion in the House of Representatives seeking parliamentary approval to invest monies the government owes to the Social Security Scheme into the Jolly Beach Hotel where it can earn greater returns on its investments rather than to deposit those funds into a bank where the returns would be insufficient to fund the scheme into the

foreseeable future.

He noted that previous administrations, particularly the former UPP Administration, had ignored recommendations from a 2010 Actuarial report which indicated that action was needed to stabilize the solvency of the funds.

Despite the warning, the UPP did nothing and it was only the ABLP Administration in 2016 which took the decisive action to bring some measure of stability to the fund.

“Our government, notwithstanding all the progress that we have made, we are determined that all of the issues that will affect our development, not only now but in

the future, we must address them now. We are not a government or an administration that actually kicks the cans down the road. Many cans have been kicked down the road for decades. When for example, it was deemed to be insolvent back in 2010, during that four-year period under the UPP Administration (2010-14) nothing was done. It took the Labour Party government back in 2016 to make the parametric changes,” he recalled.

The prime minister noted that the government’s actions were not popular, but nonetheless, it felt that it had a responsibility to act in the best interest of the people of Antigua and Barbuda. With regard to the proposed investments by Social Security into the Jolly Beach Ho-

tel, the motion stated; ‘Recognising the investment of surplus monies in the Fund is necessary to maintain the viability of the Social Security Fund by establishing a well-balanced portfolio of liquid and non-liquid assets to satisfy the liquidity and long-term obligations of the Fund; the proposal noted too that the arrangement by the government is only to retire a portion of the principal of the outstanding government debt to Social Security’.

Importantly, PM Browne noted that the Scheme’s investments into Jolly Beach Hotel, already a profit making entity, are fully guaranteed by the government thereby eliminating the scheme’s exposure for making the investment.



SS Superintendent gives sombre report to the House of Representatives



Superintendent/Director of the Social Security Scheme, David Matthias,

Superintendent/Director of the Social Security Scheme, David Matthias, has underscored the need for urgent action to secure the financial solvency of the scheme or face the prospect of the scheme going bankrupt in a mere five years.

Matthias was speaking in the House of Representatives on Monday where he was invited to share his expert knowledge on the situation at the Scheme and specially to address the issue of its long-term viability.

The Director said the fiduciary responsibility of the Board of Directors of the Scheme is to secure the long-term solvency of the Social Security Scheme Fund. “We have a single fiduciary responsibility; that is the continued solvency of the Social Security Fund. What that entails is simply this; there are moments when parametric changes are required to ensure the continued solvency of that Fund. Legally, we are required to seek the advice of an actuary as to how you ensure that solvency,” he remarked.

Matthias referred to previous actuarial reports which indicated that securing solvency of a Social Security Scheme requires that for every one beneficiary there needs to be ten contributors. This, he noted is not the case in Antigua and Barbuda where there are twelve thousand (12,000) beneficia-

ries while there are only forty-seven thousand (47,000) contributors.

And here, the Director painted a dire picture about the future of the scheme. He warned that contributions, at their current levels, will reach what he termed ‘forced equilibrium’ by 2029 or by 2030 the latest. He noted that in 2016, there was an adjustment made to the rate of contributions as well as to increase the age of retirement to 65 years. However, Matthias said he is of the view that there is ‘no appetite in the society for either an increase in contributions nor to increase retirement age further.

His advice to the members of parliament is to make the urgent steps that are required now or be forced to make parametric changes (increasing contributions and raising the retirement age)

by as early as 2029 or 2030.

According to the Director he does not believe that there is ‘economic space’ for further increases in contributions at this time.

“Therefore, it simply means that the solvency of the fund requires a single, immediate objective; having greater returns on our investment portfolio. It means diversification, it means long and short-term strategic alignment of that portfolio to bring the required returns. Currently, we are not properly funded,” he warned.

Matthias is therefore calling for a national consensus on the need for urgency in making critical investment decisions that will secure the SS Funds into perpetuity as the shortfall in contributor to beneficiary can only be met through investment income.



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Speaker expunges 'Serpent's' contributions to March 3 debate from parliamentary records

It was a rare move by a Speaker of the House of Representatives, if not unprecedented. The removal of the contributions to a debate by a member of the House from the records of the parliament.

However, rare or unprecedented such an act may have been, House Speaker, Osbert Frederick, felt that he had good reasons to make such a drastic move; the expunging of from the records, a member's complete contributions to the debate on a particular bill.

The matter refers to the debate on March 3 this year on the Road Traffic Amendment Act, when the Member for St. George, Algernon 'Serpent' Watt, quoted extensively from a document.

In response, the member for St. John's City East, Melford Nicholas, rose on a Point of Order requesting that the member make available to the House the document from which he read. This, according to the Speaker, he promised to do before the end of the day's session.

When he failed to live up to that promise and after he was reminded of this failure, the Speaker wrote to the member requesting that he makes good on his promise to submit to the House the document from



Speaker of the House of Representatives, Osbert Frederick

which he quoted during the debate.

However, rather than responding to the Speaker directly, MP Watt, decided to raise that matter on his radio programme and made allegations that the Speaker's letter was 'threatening' because the Speaker indicated that failure to provide the document as promised would have 'consequences'.

According to the Speaker, in a report to Monday's sitting of the House, the MP for St. George even asserted that he was 'protected' by the fact that he was a member of the House and by the Constitution.

Speaker Frederick said he found this response 'laughable'. He did however rule that there would be no further quotation from any



St. George, Algernon 'Serpent' Watt

document by any member in the House unless that document was first submitted to the Clerk of Parliament.

Additionally, he instructed

the Clerk to expunge from the records the entire contributions of the MP for St. George as he had failed to abide by the rules and conventions of the parliament.



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Eastern Caribbean Amalgamated Bank Announces our **2025 Aspiring Leaders Scholarship Recipient**

The Eastern Caribbean Amalgamated Bank is proud to announce Tajhere Browne as the 2025 recipient of the ECAB Aspiring Leaders Scholarship. Tajhere will be pursuing a degree in Data Science, Innovation Management, and Computer Science at the University of the West Indies, Five Islands Campus.

This prestigious scholarship represents ECAB's commitment to nurturing the next generation of visionary leaders. Tajhere has demonstrated exceptional academic achievement, a deep passion for innovation, and a strong dedication to creating positive social change, all qualities that align with the values we celebrate and support through this initiative.

Congratulations, Tajhere your ambition, perseverance, and drive are truly inspiring. All of us at ECAB are proud to stand beside you on this journey, and we look forward to witnessing the incredible impact you will make in the years to come.

Management & Staff
Eastern Caribbean Amalgamated Bank Limited



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Antigua and Barbuda to increase capital shares in CAF 2



Prime Minister Gaston Browne

The House of Representatives has approved a motion through which the government is seeking to acquire a further 4,225 shares in the Corporacion

Andina De Fomento (CAF) (the development bank for Latin America and the Caribbean) valued at US\$59.9 million.

Prime Minister and Finance Minister, Gaston Browne, moved the motion in the House on Monday indicating that the government had already invested a total of US\$15 million into the bank.

He explained that the government intends to bring its total investments into the bank to US\$75 million since as a consequent of its membership of the bank it will be able to borrow four times the amount of its share holdings.

PM Browne further explained that the government wants to borrow as much as EC\$400 million from CAF

at a consolidation loan and to use the proceeds to retire a number of smaller debts owed by the government.

“What we want to do is to borrow this amount from CAF which we will likely get at an interest rate of between five and six percent. We will clear off several loans which we contracted at higher interest rates. By doing so, the government will generate better cash flows and put us in a position to pay off debts even those owed to local supplies,” he told the House of Representatives.

The motion was approved by the House of Representatives without debate.

Antigua and Barbuda became a member of CAF earlier this year.



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August 25, 2025- St. John's, Antigua – **The Eastern Caribbean Amalgamated Bank (ECAB)** is proud to announce **Tajhere Browne** as the recipient of the ECAB Aspiring Leaders Scholarship, a landmark initiative aimed at supporting the next generation of national leaders.

Tajhere is a graduate of the St. Joseph's Academy where he earned the impressive National CXC Gold Award. He continued his studies at the Antigua State College graduating with an Associate's Degree in Science and Mathematics with honours.

The ECAB Selection Committee commended **Tajhere** for being an outstanding candidate who was well- endorsed by his lecturers not only for his academic performance but his conduct.

The ECAB Aspiring Leaders Scholarship will cover the full tuition of **Tajhere's** academic tenure and will cover ancillary costs in the first year of his studies. Additionally, **Tajhere** will also be granted an 8-week internship at ECAB during the final year of his program.

Tajhere said, "I'm truly grateful to ECAB for giving me this opportunity. This scholarship not only helps me but allows me to contribute to Antigua & Barbuda."

We at Eastern Caribbean Amalgamated Bank wish Tajhere much success in his studies.



Regional health officials gather in St. John's to discuss health disaster responses



Regional health officials are meeting in St. John's this week to develop strategies to be able to detect, respond to and to manage health emergencies now and in the future.

Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Health, Colin O'Keffe, who welcomed the delegates to Antigua and Barbuda, described the workshop as 'timely' as it promises to be extremely productive engagement

— which will continuously and positively impact the local domestic capabilities as well as the regional capabilities and international obligations to competently prepare for, respond to and recover from health emergencies.

"Through continuous development of our systems of data gathering, data manipulation, data dissemination and data usage, inevitably, we will strengthen our ac-

curacy and rigor and our capacity to correctly make effective decisions in an efficient manner," he stated.

Also addressing the opening ceremony, was the Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA)'s Senior Technical Officer for the OECS, Chatoyer Bobb, who noted that this gathering marks a crucial step in strengthening the Caribbean's collective resilience against evolving

health threats.

"The Caribbean is uniquely vulnerable to a wide range of public health emergencies, including disease outbreaks, pandemics, and natural disasters, which can lead to increased illness, death, and population displacement. Furthermore, the OECS sub-region serves as a microcosm of health challenges faced by Small Island Developing States



(SIDS),” he explained.

He quoted Executive Director of CARPHA Dr. Lisa Indar as observing that the regional health security, prevention and preparedness and response to public health emergencies, must be improved, not just at the national level, but at regional levels, as functional regional capacities are greater than the sum of the capacities of individual countries.

“To meet these ever-evolving threats that test the responsiveness and resilience of our health systems, CARPHA, as the regional public health agency, is mandated

to bolster the response to public health threats,” Bobb further explained.

Participants are attending from Grenada, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, St. Lucia, Haiti and Antigua and Barbuda. The workshop is taking place at the Jolly Beach Hotel.

The Ministry of Health in collaboration with the Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA) and the UK Public Health Rapid Support Team (UK-PHRST) are combining efforts to mount this Global Outbreak Alert and Response Network Workshop.

Cruise Terminal completion on cue for November



By Carlena Knight-Humphreys

Cruise Terminal completion is set for November of this year, according to the Antigua Cruise Port officials all the timelines are being met.

ACP General Manager Gasper George was speaking during a media tour of the Upland Development project taking place on Lower Newgate Street on Monday morning.

“We are moving quite well

in terms of schedule with the terminal being ready for operations in November of this year,” George said.

The \$40 million-dollar Upland Development represents a transformative investment in modernizing the cruise infrastructure of Antigua and Barbuda.

The project, located along Newgate Street in St. John’s, is a central component of the ACP’s broader landside redevelopment.

In July, the first foundation-

al pour took place and since then work has been ongoing for the November deadline for the terminal. The foundational pour marks the beginning of vertical construction reflecting the focused efforts and teamwork amongst Global Ports Holding (GPH), Antigua Cruise Port and construction partners being led by LICCOM (Leeward Island Construction Company).

The cruise terminal will include the main operating

wing, bathrooms, information centre and a service road equipped with a roundabout where passengers will be dropped off and enter for bag scanning.

The overall completion of the project is scheduled for July 2026.

Once completed, it will elevate guest experiences with new amenities including a day club with pool and cabanas, increased cruise passenger capacity and support for the growing homeport-



ing operations by vessels such as P&O's Arvia.

George sang the praises of the construction team, LICOM for their dedication and focus on this project despite a few setbacks.

One of those being the negotiations and relocation of the Barnes Funeral Home.

Barring any other delays, the cruise terminal will be

completed by November and begin homeporting on November 15 with Arvia.

Additional cruise lines will also begin their homeporting here as well following that date.

"The cruise season officially opens in October, and we have roughly about 8 to 10 calls, but the height of the season begins Novem-

ber 1st. This season, we are very excited at Antigua Cruise Ports about what it will bring for us. Our figures show that we will be very close to a million passengers for the cruise season, that being from October to May 2026. The numbers are very strong. It is more than 25% for the last period.

"In addition, to Arvia, the main vessel for homeporting, you will see quite a bit of activity heightening up towards the end of October into November," George explained.

More than 100 workers are on the project at this time.

Antigua and Barbuda artists continue to shine at CARIFESTA



Antigua and Barbuda's artists, cuisine and its overall culture continue to make an impression at the Caribbean's leading cultural exposition, CARIFESTA 15, now underway in Bridgetown, Barbados.

Artists such as the Burning Flames, Ge'Eve, Empress, the National Combined Dance Theatre and Hell's Gate Steel Orchestra have created an impact with their performances at CARIFESTA.

And if that was not enough, the "Antigua and Barbuda Village" within the exhibition hall, is one of the most popular spots at the festival. One reason has been the demand for the Barbuda lobster.

"We brought about one thousand

pounds of lobster to Barbados. We started selling on Sunday, and I believe that by Wednesday all the lobster will finish. There has been such a demand for the lobster, its crazy!" said Chef De Mission of the Antigua and Barbuda delegation, Director of Culture, Khan Cordice.

He noted that there has also been an attraction for the arts and craft displays put on by the contingent.

With respect to the performances, Cordice is reporting that both the National Dance Group and the National Youth Theatre Company have been engaged in workshop sessions with the young dramatists slated to perform at the Frank Collymore Hall on Wednesday.

Meanwhile, Cordice himself has been conducting workshops on steel-band techniques and practice techniques. "These are Master-Class sessions on some of the intricacies of steel band preparation and performance for pan enthusiasts," he stated.

Other performers from Antigua and Barbuda who have also made a name for themselves at festival include singer, Asha Otto. Cordice also reported that there is a 'DJ' competition in which a member of the delegation has volunteered to participate.

Overall, Cordice said he is extremely pleased with the level of performances that the Antigua and Barbuda artists have displayed during the first few days at CARIFESTA.

ABNA donates funds to the Halo Foundation



Photo attached: Some of the members of ABNA at Halo's Wings of Charity at the London Peninsula a few weeks ago including President Everton George (third from left) , along with Their Excellencies Sir Rodney and Lady Williams (centre).

The Antigua and Barbuda National Association (ABNA) has donated approximately EC\$5000.00 to the Halo Foundation to assist the charity with its humanitarian endeavors. "The proceeds are from a raffle which was held at our Independence Dinner and Dance last year," said Everton George, President of ABNA.

The Antigua and Barbuda National Association (ABNA) is based in the United Kingdom, and was established in June 1967 by a group of Antiguan and Barbudans living in Hackney,

London. A forum was organized to meet, socialise and help address the needs of the Antiguan and Barbudan community in the UK, as well as their fellow nationals in Antigua and Barbuda.


The aims of ABNA are:

- (1) To support the relief of poverty in the UK and Antigua and Barbuda, for its vulnerable community members.
- (2) To support the advancement and development of education in all aspects - including the arts and culture,

science and economics, and other areas of academic study.


Lady Sandra Williams thanked the Association for its thoughtfulness. "The Halo Foundation is extremely appreciative of companies, organisations and individuals who donate to our cause. It is because of this heartfelt benevolence that we are able to help so many people in need," she stated.

For more information about ABNA (UK) visit their website at <https://abnauk.org/>



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Liberty Caribbean connecting CARIFESTA XV



Liberty Caribbean, the operators of Flow, Liberty Business and BTC, has reinforced its commitment to the Caribbean's cultural and creative industries by providing over \$125,000 in connectivity support to CARIFESTA XV, the region's premier celebration of arts, culture, and identity.

Flow is the official telecoms provider of the CARIFESTA XV hosted in Barbados from August 22 to 31 under the banner "Caribbean Roots. Global Excellence."

CARIFESTA XV will showcase the richness of Caribbean creativity through an extraordinary ten-day programme of music, visual and literary arts, culinary experiences, dance, theatre, fashion, film, and cultural dialogue.

Flow is delivering robust connectivity across key festival sites, including the Culture Village & Grand Market at Waterford, St Michael; the Student Jamboree at The Ellerslie School and The Lester Vaughan Secondary School; four 'Super Concerts' at the Richard Stoute Amphitheatre and the National Botanical Gardens; and the Performing Arts Centre at Newton, Christ Church.

Flow will also power the live broadcasts of both the Opening Ceremony at Queen's Park and the Closing



Ceremony at the National Botanical Gardens, while Flow TV will broadcast select live events and provide festival information and promotions, ensuring that audiences both at home and across the region can stay connected to the celebration.

Marilyn Sealy, Senior Director and Head of Communications, Liberty Caribbean, underscored the importance of CARIFESTA to the region's cultural identity.

"CARIFESTA is a living expression of our shared Caribbean heritage, creativity, and resilience. At Liberty Caribbean, we believe culture is a unifying force that transcends bor-

ders, strengthening the bonds that connect our people across islands and communities. By supporting CARIFESTA XV, we are investing in the storytellers, performers, and visionaries who define who we are and inspire where we are going," she said.

Liberty Caribbean's investment aligns with the company's mission to foster connection, innovation, and community growth. Flow and Liberty Business will also have a strong presence at the Grand Market, engaging with delegates, providing connectivity support, and offering exclusive promotions for attendees.

CARIFESTA XV has drawn more than 3,000 delegates from over 30 countries, joining with Barbados' 730-strong local delegation to celebrate the Caribbean's unique heritage while embracing global excellence.

"As the leading telecommunications provider across more than 20 Caribbean markets, Liberty Caribbean is proud to help amplify the voices of our region. CARIFESTA XV is a just a showcase of talent and a bold statement to the world of the Caribbean's creative power and potential," added Sealy.

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Regional News

Caribbean risk conference announces ambitious plan to address climactic, economic, social, and digital disparities

A comprehensive and forward-looking agenda has been unveiled for the 2nd Wider Caribbean Regional Risk Conference, scheduled for September 3–4, 2025.

A joint press release shared that this hybrid event, combining virtual and in-person participation in Barbados, is organized collaboratively by the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB), CCRIF SPC—the Caribbean and Central America’s parametric insurance and development entity—and CAF – Development Bank of Latin America and the Caribbean.

It also stated that the conference aims to address the wide array of risks impacting the region’s development across economic, social, environmental, and governance spheres. Over 40 distinguished experts from Caribbean nations, Central America, and international organizations are confirmed to participate. Key discussions will focus on the region’s pressing challenges, sharing innovative approaches, lessons learned, and strategies to promote sustainability and resilience.

Reportedly targeting an audience of over 2,000 participants—both online and on-site—the event encourages the exchange of ideas, experiences, and perspectives. Attendees will collaborate to develop policy proposals and initiatives aimed at fos-



tering collective solutions to regional issues.

The program features seven panel discussions and three expert dialogues or “café corners,” covering critical topics such as:

Economic Tensions, Uncertainty and Geoeconomic Confrontations: Navigating these new Global Economic Relations

Sovereign Risk and Financial Sustainability in the Caribbean: Strategic Financing and MDB Interventions

Loss and Damage and Climate Finance: Emerging Trends, Challenges and Opportunities

Has the Global Sense of Societal Fragmentation Tricked Down to the Region? The Region’s Response

The Role of Nature-Based Solutions: Keys to Building a Resilient Caribbean

Unlocking Private Sector Potential & Risk-Sharing Solutions for Sustainable Development

Sessions will analyze how increasing global trade tensions, new tariffs, and supply chain disruptions influence the Caribbean’s economic outlook. Discussions will also involve rating agencies, central banks, and development partners on improving sovereign risk management, fiscal resilience, and addressing debt vulnerabilities faced by Small Island Developing States (SIDS).

Additional focus areas include confronting misinformation and disinformation, exploring the potential and risks of artificial intelligence, and enhancing climate justice efforts. Emphasis will be placed on expanding climate risk assessment capabilities and increasing access to climate finance.

Organizers say the conference will spotlight private sector growth, with leaders from finance institutions, development banks, and entrepreneurial sectors shar-

ing insights on innovative financing models—such as risk-sharing, blended finance, and co-financing—that can unlock capital for small and medium enterprises and strengthen regional supply chains.

Recognizing the vital role of nature as the first line of defense, discussions will examine ecosystem restoration, nature-based solutions, and the investments necessary to scale climate adaptation in blue, green, and yellow economies. A dedicated session will also address rising inequality and societal fragmentation, exploring how community leadership, policy reform, and innovation can foster social cohesion and stability.

The event will feature a Youth Forum, providing an opportunity for students from 5th and 6th form levels and young people across the region to participate both in person and online. They will share ideas on regional risks, community resilience, and pathways toward sustainable development.

Registration for the 2nd Wider Caribbean Regional Risk Conference is now open at: Caribbean Regional Risk Conference.

The complete agenda can be viewed at: 2nd Wider Caribbean Regional Risk Conference. (Dominica News Online)

JLP Rally | PM lists water, housing projects for JLP's next term



Prime Minister Dr Andrew Holness is seeking to assure Jamaicans that, if the Jamaica Labour Party (JLP) wins the September 3 general election, his administration will endeavour to supply water to approximately 900,000 citizens who now have limited or non-existent supply.

During his main address at the JLP's mass rally in Montego Bay, St James, on Sunday night, Holness cited several

water supply projects which have started under his administration and are already under way, including works being done in Clarendon and Manchester, the Pedro Plains water supply project in St Elizabeth, and a project to bring water from the Rio Cobre in St Catherine to the Corporate Area.

"Since our administration, we have delivered water to 350,000 households that have not had water for their entire

lives. In our next term, we will deliver water to 900,000 Jamaicans who either have no water or have water in inconsistent supply," said Holness.

The prime minister also outlined new housing plans which his administration intends to act on, including 8,000 housing units in St Thomas, new housing projects to take place in Hopewell and Lucea in Hanover once the Montego Bay Perimeter Road project is completed, and 50,000 new houses to come on the market in St Catherine.

"We are not producing the houses faster than Jamaicans are demanding them. The more houses go on the market, the more the price of the houses will go down," said Holness.

Additionally, Holness said that 660 roads will be repaired if the JLP gets its third term in office, in addition to the 660 already being repaired under the Shared Prosperity through Accelerated Improvement to our Road Network (SPARK) programme.

He was speaking shortly after the unveiling of the JLP's 'I Choose Jamaica' manifesto, which outlines the party's plans for Jamaica's development that will impact various age groups and sectors. (Jamaica Gleaner)

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Regional News

Double killing jolts rural St Andrew community



A pall of gloom fell over the afternoon in the rustic community of Mount James in St Andrew yesterday as the bodies of two men, one on the ground and the other in a stream, lay lifeless.

They were killed hours apart in an apparent murder and vigilante justice attack, which has since sent tongues wagging.

Sounds of wailing could be heard in the bushes where Gregory Henry, a chef affectionately called ‘Tripey’, was covered with a cloth.

“Gregory, I never know is the last time I would see you ... Gregory gone,” a relative of the deceased said as she was being consoled by a family friend.

The police were on hand to

safeguard the scene, which was nestled in the hilly terrain.

About 800 metres from there, police also had watchful eyes on the scene where Henry’s alleged killer was found dead in a stream.

His identity has not yet been ascertained.

The Gleaner understands that sometime after 11 a.m., Henry was attacked in a section of the community known as Water Lane.

He had chop wounds to his head and upper body.

An angry mob reportedly went in search of the suspect, believed to be mentally ill, and he was set upon.

Information reaching The Gleaner suggests he was

shot and chopped.

“A hard-working man was killed. Tripey never deserve that. Man have him children dem a live for. The next one nuh come from up here; him come here. The people dem vex over it,” a resident told The Gleaner.

“You can’t nuh come from ‘bout ya come kill man weh born and grow [here]. The people dem hunt him [down], and him don’t know the bush like who live up here. When the police deh a Tripey scene ... dem catch the killer and deal with him. The police dem deh deh and hear and had to call in back-up,” a resident with knowledge of the incident told The Gleaner.

The St Andrew North Police

Division recorded a deadly and bloody day on Sunday, as there was also a gun murder in Florence Hill, Lawrence Tavern.

An unidentified man was shot and killed in that incident sometime after midday, marking three killings within two hours in the division.

The police division recorded a 50 per cent decline in homicides as at August 16.

Twenty-two murders were committed since the start of the year when compared to 44 for the similar period in 2024.

The Constant Spring Criminal Investigation Branch is probing all the incidents. (Jamaica Gleaner)

Dominican police install special unit to tackle illegal firearms



Minister for National Security Rayburn Blackmoore has revealed that the police have put a unit in place to fulfill the aim of ridding the streets of illegal firearms in Dominica.

This decision followed a current series of troubling gun-related incidents across the country.

“We have actually put in place a team—a unit with the specific purpose of ridding the streets of illegal firearms,” he said during a recent press conference. “I want to give the public the assurance that the members of that team will be of high caliber, and every member of the task force to deal with illegal firearms shall have to go through a stringent vetting process to include polygraphing.”

According to Blackmoore, his ministry has been working with regional and international partners to ensure that the individuals who will be administering the polygraphing process maintain neutrality.

“And that is the reason why we are getting people from the region...,” he stated.

Furthermore, he said following a ‘Gun and Ammunition Amnesty’ which

came into effect from July 16 to August 15, 2025, a total of five firearms were surrendered to the police along with a quantity of ammunition.

These firearms came from the Roseau Catchment area, Belles, and Portsmouth.

“But I think it is worth mentioning... the people who actually participated in the process, and I want to place on record my appreciation and that of the government for a man of the Lord, a real man of the Lord, a pastor who actually from day one used his good office and good self to have brought in on behalf of individuals two firearms from the inception of the program,” Blackmoore revealed.

He continued, “Having said that, the program is over—that you’re given a chance to bring in your illegal firearms without fear of being prosecuted. And some of us have made the rational decision, therefore, to keep our illegal firearms. Now, the onus is on the police from a law enforcement standpoint to do everything necessary to go after those people who are actually involved in that trade.”

He told illegal firearm holders who decided to keep their piece that if caught,

they will face the consequences.

“A firearm is a lethal weapon, and it has been used for one purpose, and that is to cause harm or death, sadly, to a human being. Now, in terms of the overall approach—because if you have made a rational decision to keep your illegal firearms, there must be consequences if you’re caught with illegal firearms,” he warned.

Blackmoore called on all the players within the criminal justice system, not only the police, to recognize the urgency and importance of this matter and to ensure that people who are arrested and brought before the court, and are convicted, feel the full weight and ‘heat’ of the law.

“And then what we’re trying to do, therefore, is to embark on a mission to ensure that this country does not fall into the hands of criminal elements, so that we can continue to embrace peace and prosperity that have been a major hallmark and part of our traditions as a peaceful nation.”

He added that this is going to require not only the police, but the cooperation of everyone in society.

Meanwhile, according to Acting Police Chief Lincoln Corbette, during the first half of this year, there was an increase in the use of firearms.

He thanked those who had come forward and surrendered their illegal firearms and ammunition.

“And although the amnesty is over, we are still urging members of the public and those who have firearms to surrender them to the police,” he encouraged. “Surrender them to the police, or if you have information where a firearm could be, call the police or the hotline at 1-800-TIPS/ 1-800-8477.” (Dominica News Online)

Oklahoma man arrested after 11-year-old stepdaughter gives birth; mother charged with enabling abuse



An Oklahoma man was arrested and charged with child sexual abuse after his 11-year-old stepdaughter gave birth at their home in Muskogee.

Dustin Walker, 34, and Cherie Walker, 33, were arrested last week and originally charged with one count of felony child neglect each after the child gave birth to a full-term baby at home on Aug. 16, court records show. The parents initially claimed they did not know the child was pregnant, and the child had not been to the doctor in over a year.

The charges against the couple were amended on Mon-

day after DNA test results revealed that the stepfather was a 99.9% DNA match for the baby's father, according to the test shared with NBC News by the Muskogee County District Attorney's Office.

Dustin Walker is accused of sexually abusing the child, who was 11 years old at the time, on or between Jan. 1 to Aug. 16, resulting in her giving birth to his child, court documents show. The child's mother, Cherie Walker, was charged with enabling child sexual abuse. "This is one of the most if not the most serious child sexual abuse and neglect

cases I have ever prosecuted," Muskogee County Assistant District Attorney Janet Hutson said in a statement.

The couple were also charged with six counts of felony child neglect, including for failing to provide the 11-year-old adequate medical care and supervision when she gave birth at home, per court documents. The remaining five counts of child neglect are for allegedly neglecting the five children that they share, aged 2, 4, 6, 7 and 9, on or between Jan. 1 and Aug. 16. The children were "living in deplorable conditions," according to the documents.

The children were removed from the home on Tuesday, per court records.

"The victims were found to be living in dog feces and had no clothing on," court documents state.

Bond was set for the couple at \$100,000 each, per court records. A sounding docket court hearing is scheduled for Sept. 3.

"Each of the charges against both defendants are punishable by up to life," Hutson said.

It is not clear if Dustin and Cherie Walker are being represented by attorneys at this time. (NBC)

Mexico cartel leader 'El Mayo' enters guilty plea



Mexican drug lord, Ismael 'El Mayo' Zambada, has entered a guilty plea to two drug smuggling and conspiracy charges in a court in New York, bringing an end to one of the longest and most notorious criminal careers in the history of organised crime.

Zambada was not just any drug lord.

He was the founder of the Sinaloa Cartel, for years the biggest and most powerful criminal organisation in Mexico - with an astonishing global reach.

Last year, he pleaded not guilty to a raft of drug smuggling, gun-running and money laundering offences. But now, he has changed his plea before a federal judge in Brooklyn.

In doing so, he officially accepted his role in creating the vast criminal network which has sent huge amounts of cocaine and other drugs into the US since he co-founded the cartel at the end of

the 1980s.

The step comes weeks after US prosecutors confirmed they would not be seeking the death penalty against the 77-year-old Mexican kingpin.

Zambada was arrested in Texas last year following an extraordinary double-cross by the sons of his former ally, the jailed co-founder of the Sinaloa Cartel, Joaquín 'El Chapo' Guzmán

El Chapo was sentenced to life imprisonment in the same court in 2019.

After his arrest, the cartel splintered into two main factions: one led by El Mayo, and its rival, led by Guzmán's sons, known as 'Los Chapitos'. The conflict between the two sides continues to rage, particularly in the state of Sinaloa itself.

In late July 2024, Zambada was allegedly lured to a meeting with one of El Chapo's son, Joaquín Guzmán López.

Initial reports suggested Guzmán López then duped his rival into boarding a light aircraft, but Zambada later claimed he was ambushed and overpowered by Los Chapitos, and forcibly removed to Texas.

US law enforcement officials were waiting for the aircraft when it landed near El Paso and both men were immediately taken into custody.

By entering a guilty plea, Zambada is expected to receive a more le-

nient sentence. In his late 70s and reportedly in poor health, he may have reasoned that it was futile to continue to claim his innocence, especially given Guzmán's conviction and life sentence in 2019.

It was confirmed last year that both the Guzmán sons - Joaquín and his younger brother, Ovidio - were negotiating plea bargains with the US government.

In May, 17 members of the Guzmán family were escorted into the US by officials. Last month, Ovidio pleaded guilty in Chicago to multiple charges of drug smuggling and involvement in a continuing criminal enterprise.

At his height, Zambada was probably the most powerful drug lord in the world.

More shadowy than other kingpins - particularly El Chapo whose escapes from prison in 2001 and 2015 made headlines around the world - Zambada was no less ruthless or calculating.

For some five decades, he successfully evaded arrest or capture. During that time he oversaw the transport of vast quantities of heroin, cocaine and methamphetamine into the US via land, sea and air.

Now, in a US courtroom, one of the most enduring names in global drug trafficking has accepted his role at the top of the one of the biggest and most sophisticated criminal networks in the world.

He is due to be sentenced in the coming months. (BBC)

International

AROUND THE WORLD



Lil Nas X charged with 4 felonies after allegedly assaulting officers while wandering naked in L.A. street



Lil Nas X is being charged with four felonies after allegedly injuring officers when he was found naked on Ventura Blvd last week.

The Los Angeles Police de-

partment previously said the "Old Town Road" rapper, whose legal name is Montero Lamar Hill, charged at officers when they approached him in the early hours on Thursday morn-

ing. It came after officers said they received reports of a nude man in the area.

A law enforcement source told NBC News last week that Hill punched an officer


in the face twice and that it was unclear whether he was in mental distress or experiencing an overdose.

Hill was taken to the hospital at the time and arrested of arrest for battery on a police officer.

Court documents filed Monday in Los Angeles County Superior Court show Hill is now facing three counts of battery on a police officer and one count of resisting arrest.

Additional details on the incident were not immediately available.

TMZ first reported on Thursday that Hill was hospitalized and obtained exclusive video of the rapper walking the street in a pair of white briefs and cowboy boots. The outlet later obtained video in which Hill was completely nude and barefoot. (NBC)



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Antigua Falcons congratulate Shakib on 500th T20 career wicket



Shakib al-Hasan

The Antigua and Barbuda Falcons have congratulated star all-rounder Shakib al-Hasan on reaching an extraordinary milestone of 500 T20 career wickets, becoming just the fifth bowler in world cricket to achieve this feat.

Al-Hasan reached the significant

milestone during the Falcons' seven-wicket victory against the St. Kitts and Nevis Patriots in their final home match of the 2025 Republic Bank Caribbean Premier League at the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium in Antigua on Sunday.

Falcons' Head Coach Paul Nixon

lauded Shakib's achievement, calling it a testament to his consistency and tremendous skills.

"Shakib is a true professional and a match-winner. We saw it first-hand with the ball and then the bat. Reaching 500 T20 wickets is no small achievement," Nixon said.

"It speaks volumes about his tremendous ability, his superb skills, and his relentless competitiveness over the years. We're honoured to have a player of his calibre in the Falcons family."

During Sunday's match against the St. Kitts and Nevis Patriots, Shakib Al-Hasan took the wicket of Mohammed Rizwan – caught and bowled – and ended with three for 11 off two overs, as the Falcons won the match to stay top of the standings with seven points.

Meanwhile, rainy weather conditions across the Windward Islands forced the abandonment of the CPL match between the defending champions, the St. Lucia Kings, and the Barbados Royals at the Daren Sammy Cricket Ground in Gros Islet on Sunday.

Both teams received a point for the match, which ended as a no-result. It is the second match that ended in a no-result for the St. Lucia Kings in this year's CPL tournament.

The Kings' match against the Antigua and Barbuda Falcons was also abandoned without a ball being bowled at the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium in Antigua on Sunday, August 17.

The Kings will be hoping for an improvement in the weather conditions that will allow their next match to take place on Tuesday.

The Kings will entertain former champions Guyana Amazon Warriors at the Daren Sammy Cricket Ground at 7 pm.

The Antigua and Barbuda Falcons will face the Trinbago Knight Riders at the Brian Lara Cricket Academy in Trinidad on Wednesday night.

Rain disrupts opening matches in regional Under-17 one-day contest



Trinidad and Tobago are the defending champions of the CWI Rising Stars Under-17 50-over competition. (CWI Media)

The Leeward Islands Tropical Wave and the Barbados teams were left frustrated after their first match in the CWI Rising Stars Under-17 50-over competition ended in a no result due to rain at the National Cricket Centre in Couva, Trinidad and Tobago, on Sunday.

Batting first, the Leewards were restricted to 136 for eight off 32 overs. Opener Amoree Jones struck 34, fellow opener and captain Tanez Francis cracked 25, Jaheem Clarke scored 15 not out, and J'Quan Athanaze chipped in with 14.

Justin Parris claimed two for 16, and Reynaldo Bourne picked up two for 23.

However, only 3.3 overs were possible when Barbados replied, and rain stopped play with the young Bajans on 19 without loss.

Both teams finished as the top two teams during the two-competition, which forms a part of the regional under-17 tournament.

Rain also severely affected the first-round 50-over match between defending champions Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana. The match was abandoned without a ball being bowled at Inshan Ali Park in Preysal on Sunday.

However, there was play and a victory by four runs on the Duckworth/Lewis/Stern (DLS) method for the Windward Islands over Jamaica at the Queen's Park Oval.

Batting first, Jamaica made 217 for nine in their full 50 overs, with Ryan Littleton top-scoring with 70, Joel Williams getting 40 and captain Demarco Scott contributing 36.

Tyler Venner was the best Wind-

wards bowler, taking three for 47. Bjorn Fanis claimed two for 34, and Elran Glasgow picked up two for 35.

When the Windwards chased, they reached 117 for five in 23 overs when play stopped, leaving them just ahead of the required par score.

Theo Edward hit 36, Damali Phillips struck 25, and Johnathan Daniel made 22. Ryan Littleton captured four for 33.

The teams will be hoping for favourable weather during the second round of matches on Tuesday.

The Leeward Islands Tropical Wave will face Jamaica at the National Cricket Centre, Trinidad and Tobago will take on the Windward Islands at Gilbert Park, and Barbados will clash with Guyana at Inshan Ali Park.

Medvedev exits US Open with chaotic flourish



Daniil Medvedev, of Russia, gestures after a photographer ran onto the court during a match against Benjamin Bonzi, of France, in the first-round of the U.S. Open tennis championships in New York on Sunday, Aug. 24, 2025. (AP)

NEW YORK (Reuters) - Daniil Medvedev's turbulent relationship with the US Open took another dramatic turn on Sunday as the former champion was shown the door by France's Benjamin Bonzi at the end of a chaotic first-round encounter.

Medvedev brought the match to a standstill for about six minutes while staring down match point in the third set, disputing an officiating decision after a photographer had interrupted Bonzi's serve by stepping onto the court surface.

Chair umpire Greg Allensworth's decision to give

Bonzi a first serve instead of a second after the interruption sparked Medvedev's fury.

"I wasn't upset with the photographer," Medvedev told a press conference. "I was upset with the decision."

"Every time there's a sound from the stands between serves, there's never a second serve. But the umpire gave him a first serve. That's what made me angry."

As boos erupted from the night-session crowd, Medvedev embraced the chaos, rallying fans into a frenzy in a scene he later described as "fun to witness."

"I thought I'm losing the match," Medvedev said. "I didn't break him once. So I said, okay, it's second serve, but they gave him a first. I got emotional."

"Honestly, while living it, I was like, you know what, it could be fun maybe to finish my career with one match at the US Open."

"I love New York," he added. "They did the work. I didn't do anything. The crowd pushed me to come back into the match."

Bonzi said he felt Medvedev's behaviour had crossed the line.

"Daniil started it, and he

put oil on the fire. He went with the crowd crazy. He went with them. Honestly, I never saw that," he told reporters.

"The rule is the rule. The guy went on the court between two serves. It's not my call to say first serve. I felt I didn't do anything bad in the match to receive this treatment, and I didn't want to serve in those conditions."

The defeat caps a terrible year at the majors for Medvedev, who ends 2025 with just one win across the four Grand Slams

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Dortmund warns players' parents to stay away from locker room



Borussia Dortmund's Jobe Bellingham applauds after the Club World Cup Group F soccer match between Borussia Dortmund and Ulsan in Cincinnati, June 25, 2025. (AP)

DORTMUND, Germany (AP) — Borussia Dortmund will keep players' parents away from locker room areas after an incident with Jobe Bellingham's father.

Mark Bellingham traveled from England to see his son's Bundesliga debut at St. Pauli on Saturday, but caused a scene in a restricted area of the stadium afterward when he spoke with sporting director Sebastian Kehl. He reportedly demanded to know why his son was taken off at halftime.

Dortmund managing director Lars Ricken would not comment on the nature of the discussion when asked Sunday, but told Sky TV there would be consequences.

"I wasn't present for the talk," said Ricken, who announced that only

players, coaches and officials would have access to the locker room areas in future.

"We'll ensure that we don't get into a furor again by commenting on such matters," Ricken also played down the nature of the disagreement.

"We got Jobe Bellingham because we built a trusting relationship with the parents over years," Ricken said. "Now the family came especially over from England for their son's first Bundesliga game and wanted to meet Jobe after the match at the bus.

"Then they stood at the entrance to the locker room and also spoke emotionally with Sebastian, which isn't a problem at all based on the relationship. Everything was cleared up already today."

Kehl told the Bild tabloid the day before that "the active area is and stays restricted for players, coaches and officials, not families or agents. That won't happen again. That's what we've clearly told all the parties involved."

Bellingham, in contrast to his older brother Jude, endured a disappointing German league debut in Hamburg. Dortmund ultimately held on to draw 3-3 with St. Pauli, with Bellingham replaced at halftime by Felix Nmecha.

In his own Bundesliga debut for the club in September 2020, Jude Bellingham set up one goal as Dortmund defeated Borussia Mönchengladbach 3-0. The older Bellingham moved to Real Madrid in 2023.

Semi-finalists decided in Parham Super League



Players of the Garden Stars FC. (File photo)

The semi-finalists have been decided in the third annual Parham Super League (PSL) after the last set of round-robin matches of the preliminary stage at the Parham playing field over the weekend.

East Furlong and the Potters Tigers claimed the last two semi-final spots by securing wins in their final outings on Sunday to finish as the top two finishers in Group B.

East Furlong snatched a 3-2 victory against the Willikies Warriors to finish at the top of the four-team Group B with seven points from their three matches.

Eroy Gonsalves scored twice with conversions in the 10th and 16th minutes,

and Shaquan Simon produced a 37th-minute conversion for East Furlong.

Daniel Nanton scored in the 24th minute, and Zahir Forde had a conversion in the 50th minute for the Willikies Warriors, who finished their Group B campaign in third place with four points from three matches.

After drawing their two previous matches, the Potters Tigers clinched their semi-final spot by recording their first win with a 4-0 drubbing of bottom-team Swetes.

Keon Green achieved a hat trick, converting a penalty kick in the 13th minute, followed by conversions in the 20th and 51st minutes.

Kelvin Carr sealed the Potters Tigers' victory with a 60th-minute conversion.

The Potters Tigers finished in second place in Group B, while Swetes ended their campaign in the cellar without any points after losing all three matches.

Group A winners Garden Stars and defending champions Pigotts Bullets finished in second place to claim the other two spots in the semi-finals.

The Garden Stars maintained their perfect run by winning all three Group A matches by recording a 4-0 drubbing of Parham in their last round-robin encounter.

Allan Martin produced a hat trick with conversions in the fourth, 18th, and

40th minutes, and Courtney Clarke wrapped up the Garden Stars' victory with a goal in the 60th minute.

Garden Stars finished at the top of the Group A standings with a perfect nine points, while Parham ended their campaign in the cellar without any points after losing all three matches.

Pigotts Bullets finished second in Group A with six points by snatching a 2-0 victory against Freeman's Village in their last round-robin encounter.

Shamoi Andrew scored in the 23rd minute to give the Bullets a one-nil lead at halftime, and Mali Johnson added a second goal in the 50th minute to wrap up the win.

Freeman's Village finished their Group A campaign in third place with three points after suffering their second loss in three matches.

The semi-finals of the Parham Super League will take place on Saturday. East Furlong will tackle Pigotts Bullets at 6:30 pm, and the Garden Stars will clash with the Potters Tigers at 8 pm.

The winners of the semi-finals will battle for the title in the final at the Parham playing field on Sunday at 6 pm.