

ABCAS Officially Launched

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Governor General, Sir Rodney Williams and Prime Minister Gaston Browne unveil a plaque, marking the official launch of the Antigua and Barbuda College of Advanced Studies (ABCAS), during a ceremony held at Sandals Grande Antigua yesterday.

Launch of ABCAS described as revolutionary

A ceremony at Sandals Grande yesterday marked the launch of the Antigua and Barbuda College of Advanced Studies (ABCAS).

The ABCAS Bill 2025 was approved by both houses of parliament earlier this year and led to the amalgamation of three post-secondary educational institutions, namely Antigua State College, Antigua Barbuda International Institute of Technology and Antigua and Barbuda Hospitality Training Institute—all of which are now renamed. The third institution, the Harrison Centre Antigua and Barbuda Institute of Continuing Education, is also expected to be part of the amalgamation.

The amalgamation is being described as revolutionary, with Minister of Education, Sports and Creative Industries, Daryll Matthew, calling for all involved parties to adapt to the change, which aims to improve the delivery of tertiary-level education in Antigua and Barbuda. He said the consolidation has achieved what no single campus can, creating a pathway for students to earn from certificates to bachelor's degrees. "By bringing these institutions together, we create something bigger, better. Administrators will worry about timing, integration



Minister of Education, Sports and Creative Industries, Daryll Matthew,

of systems, budgets and so forth. But I say to you that these ought not to be viewed as obstacles, but they are challenges to us that we need to ensure are appropriately overcome," Matthew stated.

He expressed appreciation to those who worked within the individual institutions, whose contributions have made ABCAS a reality and has assured that the institution will maintain high standards in every area of its operations, with equal attention given to its students and faculty. This he believes, will augur well for national development.

Prime Minister Gaston Browne applauded Minister Matthew and those responsible for ABCAS coming into being, maintaining ABCAS now stands

as another example of the education revolution taking place in the country under

his leadership, one that is all-inclusive.

"It is a deliberate strategy by my administration to ensure that we have an inclusive and progressive society. We understand that in order to ensure inclusion, we must provide an entry point for every single Antiguan and Barbudan to improve his skill, or for that matter, to improve his educational standing."

During yesterday's launch, the ABCAS logo was unveiled and the executive team of the newly-formed institution introduced, along with the membership of the board of trustees.

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The Central Marketing Corporation (CMC) is in the process of hiring a Project Manager to assist with the upgrading of its facilities at Utility Drive and at its Headquarters at Valley Road, St. John's.

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Bids should be submitted on or before Monday, 29 September 2025.

Prime Minister urges self-development amidst global competition



Prime Minister Gaston Browne

With tens of millions of dollars being spent to educate Antiguan and Barbudans, Prime Minister Gaston Browne says his administration is determined to stamp out illiteracy and upskill citizens and residents.

Addressing attendees at yesterday's launch of the Antigua and Barbuda College of Advanced Studies (ABCAS), Prime Minister Browne said the investments being made in educating the citizenry are to ensure that the population become the most skilled and best educated anywhere globally.

Therefore, he said, it is necessary for Antiguan and Barbudans to rise to the occasion and capitalise on the educational opportunities that are available.

In addition to scholarships offered by friendly nations, the prime minister's administration also supports students attending local educational institutions that are now under the umbrella of ABCAS and also international and regional tertiary institutions, to include UWI FIC and its other campuses in Barbados, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago and online.

According to Mr. Browne, there must be determination on the part of the

people to go beyond secondary level education, adding a culture of self-development is paramount.

"There must be this desire to go on to improve your skills, to improve your intellectual standing, as we seek to become a more competitive country and at the same time, to ensure that our people can satisfy their self-actualisation needs."

The Antiguan and Barbudan leader re-stated a goal of his administration that over the next decade, at least 40 percent of the population should possess at least a first degree and with the establishment of ABCAS, the probability of achieving that goal is greater.

"When you add ABCAS, we can now say that within the next 10 years, at least 50 percent of the population should have at least a college or university degree," the prime minister said, which will contribute in a major way to nation building.

He pledged his administration's continued commitment in creating avenues through which people can advance their education and upskill themselves.

Prime Minister Gaston Browne addressed the question of an oversaturation of degree holders. He said if that becomes the case, then Antigua and Barbuda will be in a position to export its skills and labour.

"I'd rather have a nation with qualified surplus persons and skilled persons, than a nation with individuals who are illiterate, unskilled and individuals that are involved in crime and violence," he declared.

The head of government expressed confidence that the country's future looks bright and with the continued development of key sectors, Antigua and Barbuda, within the next three years, will "rank within the top 40 of all countries globally".



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Gov't officials join in celebrating PRC at 76



Prime Minister Gaston Browne

The 76th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China was marked in Antigua & Barbuda on Monday evening, with a celebration of progress, partnership, and people-centered development, a reflection of the growing ties between the two nations.

Her Excellency Zhang Yanling, Ambassador of China to Antigua & Barbuda, hailed her country's journey from hardship to global leadership, emphasizing the dramatic transformation China has achieved through unity, discipline, and a focus on national development.

"What happened 76 years ago marked the beginning of a new era, one where the destiny of China was placed firmly in the hands of the Chinese people," Ambassador Zhang said. She pointed to major accomplishments in education, healthcare, elderly care, and poverty reduction, noting that life expectancy in China has more than doubled since 1949.

In expressing her gratitude, she acknowledged the con-

tinued support of Antigua & Barbuda as a valued partner — one that shares China's principles of sovereignty, non-interference, and mutual respect.

Prime Minister Gaston Browne delivered an impassioned address on Monday evening, commending China's rise on the world stage and celebrating the concrete benefits of their bilateral co-operation.

"What I saw in China was not just infrastructure, but the result of vision, resilience, and a people determined to chart their own future," Browne said. "It's a model that inspires nations like ours."

The prime minister highlighted China's support for projects that directly impact the lives of everyday citizens in Antigua & Barbuda. One of the most significant of these is the Booby Alley Housing Redevelopment, a project fully underwritten by China.

"This project is not just about concrete and steel," Browne said. "It is about



Her Excellency Zhang Yanling, Ambassador of China to Antigua & Barbuda



lifting people out of poverty, restoring pride in a historic neighbourhood and proving that no community is forgotten." He described the redevelopment as "a project that touches the lives of our most vulnerable citizens" and extended thanks to the Chinese government for recognizing its national importance.

Beyond Booby Alley, Browne also highlighted a series of transformative initiatives made possible by Chinese support:

► **The University of the West Indies Five Islands Campus**, which he called "a gateway to

higher education for our young people."

► **The Sir Vivian Richards Stadium**, now a landmark sporting facility in the region

► **Major investments in ports and airports**, strengthening Antigua & Barbuda's potential as a transshipment and tourism hub in the Caribbean.

"These are not token projects," the Prime Minister emphasized. "They are pillars of our nation's growth and symbols of what genuine partnership can achieve."

Political parties credited for not promoting violence

Barbadian Pollster Peter Wickham is crediting political parties in Antigua and Barbuda for not being promoters of violence.

On state television yesterday, Wickham was asked about his position on political violence in the region, in light of recent developments in the United States, specifically the shooting death of Charlie Kirk last week.

While such extreme acts are not prevalent in the Caribbean, Peter Wickham singled out Antigua and Barbuda, where he said the understanding among parties does not allow for such levels of violence to find root, despite them having deeply entrenched views.

“Speaking to an Antiguan audience, the point



Barbadian Pollster Peter Wickham

has to be made that the relationship that both sides has with each other...people may not realise it the way they speak to each other, but there is a private level of

consensus that I think is something that is good and speak to the way that political parties ought to behave,” Wickham remarked.

The issues within the

USA, he added, are largely based on ideological differences and access to guns.

“Mercifully, we don’t have ease of access to weapons in the Caribbean like they do and I think that is what has made the difference,” he added.

Wickham recalled in previous years, Jamaica experiencing such issues, which he was quick to point out has abated. Except for minor incidents, he said the Caribbean has largely been violence free.

“I don’t know that the main central movement, certainly the UPP, Antigua Labour Party would want to encourage that kind of behaviour and I think that’s good,” Peter Wickham noted.



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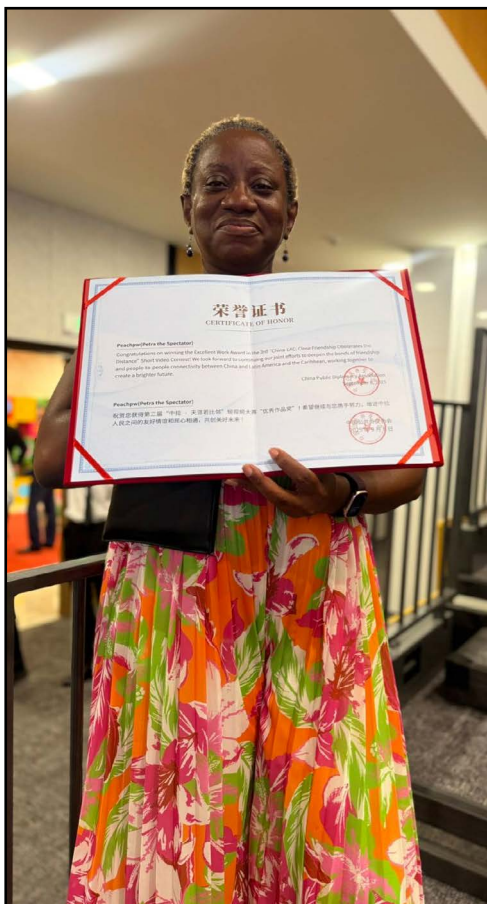
Petra Williams honoured at event in China

Antiguan and Barbudan features writer, publisher and media innovator Petra Williams has been honoured with the Excellent Work Award at the third China–Latin America and Caribbean (China–LAC): Close Friendships Obliterates the Distance Short Video Contest.

Selected from hundreds of entries, Williams emerged as one of twelve Caribbean finalists and is currently on a media influencers' tour in China.

The contest celebrates cultural diplomacy, people-to-people exchange, and digital storytelling. Williams' recognition signals Antigua & Barbuda's growing role in international cultural diplomacy.

"We are traditionally connected to the North, but the scope for South–South cooperation is boundless... I am particularly mindful of the prospects for our creative industries," she said.



Petra Williams

Her achievement highlights a new Caribbean voice, one that is proudly rooted at home, yet globally mobile and deeply connected.

China is among the more than 40 countries Williams has visited and her immersion in its cultural history, traditions and development under the concept of "socialism with Chinese characteristics" has created a lasting affinity.

At home, she is best known for her platform, "Petra the Spectator," which combines commentary on culture, sports and national development with global insights. Williams also produces the Time Capsule series, a digital archive of Antigua & Barbuda's daily stories.

She will shortly release the third edition of The Spectator – Patriots Edition, an annual hard-copy magazine featuring 12 legacy pieces showcasing Antigua and Barbuda.

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ANTIGUA PORT AUTHORITY PARKING LOT
5:00PM

SUNDAY 26 OCT

- **INDEPENDENCE CHURCH SERVICE**
SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH CREEKSIDE
4:00PM

MONDAY 27-29 OCT

- **NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE
BUSINESS DECOR COMPETITION**

MONDAY 27 OCT

- **NATIONAL HEROES DAY
WREATH LAYING CEREMONY**
HEROES PARK- SIR SYDNEY WALLINGS HIGHWAY
10:00 AM

TUESDAY 28 OCT

- **FESTIVAL OF CHOIRS**
ST. ANTHONY'S SECONDARY SCHOOL
8:00PM
- **BARBUDA DAY ACTIVITIES (TBC)**



WEDNESDAY 29 OCT

- **SCHOOLS' INDEPENDENCE PROGRAMS**
SCHOOLS ACROSS THE STATE
- **GOLDEN AGE CELEBRATIONS**
VARIOUS COMMUNITIES IN ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA
- **THEATRICAL PRESENTATION
"WADADLI ROOTS"**
7:30PM (TBC)

THURSDAY 30 OCT

- **NATIONAL YOUTH RALLY** 8:30AM
- **CHEERLEADING COMPETITION** 11:30AM
SIR VIVIAN RICHARDS STADIUM
- **INDEPENDENCE CALYPSO COMPETITION**
JACK IDLE
8:00PM

FRIDAY 31 OCT

- **NATIONAL DRESS DAY**
- **NATIONAL FLAG DAY**
- **UNCHARTERED WATERS**
JOHN E ST. LUCE BUILDING
8:00PM

SATURDAY 01 NOV

- **INDEPENDENCE FLAG CEREMONY**
BARBUDA
9:00AM
- **NATIONAL FOOD FAIR**
SIR VIVIAN RICHARDS STADIUM
10:00AM UNTIL
- **INDEPENDENCE CEREMONIAL
PARADE & NATIONAL AWARDS**
SIR VIVIAN RICHARDS STADIUM
5:30PM

MONDAY 03 NOV

- **BURNING FLAMES HIGHWAY
TRAFFIC JAM**
BURNING FLAMES HIGHWAY
(TIME TBC)

Antigua and Barbuda to Celebrate World Wellness Weekend

Antigua and Barbuda is all set to join more than 150 countries in celebrating World Wellness Weekend (WWW) from September 19–21, 2025, offering a vibrant program of free and engaging activities across the twin-islands.

Presented by the Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority, in partnership with Wellness Ambassador Tricia Greenaway, and supported by Wellness Footprints Antigua, Myst Purified Water, and the Cortsland Hotel, this year's celebration shines a spotlight on the islands' natural beauty, vibrant culture, and dedication to holistic wellness.

"In Antigua and Barbuda, wellness isn't just something we do, it surrounds us in our serene and rejuvenating beaches, it is part of our culture, our environment, and our everyday life," said Donyelle Bird-Browne, Senior Business Development Manager, Partnerships, and Destination Wellness Marketing Lead at the Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority (ABTA).

"World Wellness Weekend is our chance to invite friends, visitors, and residents to hike our trails that lead to lush vegetation or picturesque beaches, heal through art, connect with nature, and enjoy healthy local foods. Experiences like these are what make Antigua and Barbuda stand



out. From being named the first ever Official Wellness Destination by the Wellness Tourism Association, to Barbuda earning the title of 'Most Active Small Island in the World' during World Wellness Weekend 2024, we are showing the world why our destination is the choice for holistic wellness experiences".

The series of activities begins this Friday with a Barbuda Beach Clean-up in the morning followed by The Wellness Healing Circle: Heal Through Art Therapy, session led by Antigua and Barbuda Astronaut and Wellness Coach Keisha Schahaff in the afternoon.

On Saturday, Adventurers can take on the Pensioners Beach to Fort Barrington Hike, while those seeking inspiration will gather at the Wellness Forum for Women, moderated by Tricia Greenaway with panelists Dr. Monica Osborne-Stevens and Dr. Cherie Tulloch.

The experience deepens with a full day of exploration and renewal on Sunday. Begin the morning with the Treasure Hunt Hike from Pigeon Point to Fort Berkley, then shift into the afternoon with a *SHAADÉ* Hydroponic Garden tour, complete with yoga and a restorative sound bath.

Every activity is designed to recharge, reconnect, and celebrate Antigua and Barbuda's natural spirit of wellness.

Adding to the excitement, The Royal Spa at Royalton Antigua Resort will host three complimentary wellness activities and has been recognized globally as a "2025 Wellness Champion" by the World Wellness Weekend team.

This weekend, wellness comes alive across Antigua and Barbuda. There is something for everyone to enjoy. Participants in the Weekend are encouraged to share their "*Welfie*" moments with the hashtag #LoveAntiguaBarbuda, and #welfie. Find all the details of the activities on the Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority's website www.visitantiguabarbuda.com and social media pages, on Facebook: www.facebook.com/antiguabarbuda; and www.facebook.com/AntiguaaBTL Instagram: www.instagram.com/AntiguaandBarbuda

NOTICE

The China Aid Programme in collaboration with The Embassy of China Antigua and Barbuda, Yuan Long Ping High Tech Agriculture Co. Ltd. Ministry of Agriculture Lands Fisheries and the Blue Economy presents, a 3-week training course on Agricultural Water Saving Irrigation for Antigua and Barbuda from 16 th October to 5th November 2025 at the Villa Poly Clinic ,Villa Area.

Please call 462 0418 or 764 1256 for further information on registration

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Regional News

US names Jamaica and four other Caribbean countries on drugs list

Four CARICOM countries have been listed in US President Donald Trump's "Determination on Major Drug Transit or Major Illicit Drug Producing Countries for Fiscal Year 2026" submitted to the United States Congress.

According to the document, Trump has identified The Bahamas, Belize, Haiti and Jamaica as major transit or major illicit drug producing countries.

The other countries named are Afghanistan, Bolivia, Burma, the People's Republic of China (PRC), Colombia, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, India, Laos, Mexico, Nicaragua, Pakistan, Panama, Peru and Venezuela.

Trump noted that a country's presence on the list "is not necessarily a reflection of its government's counter-drug efforts or level of cooperation with the United States".

But he said consistent with the statutory definition of a major drug transit or major illicit drug producing country outlined in the Foreign Assistance Act (FAA) of 1961, "the reason countries are placed on the list is the combination of geographic, commercial, and economic factors that allow drugs or precursor chemicals to be transited or produced, even if a government has engaged in robust and diligent narcotics control and law enforcement measures".



He said that Afghanistan, Bolivia, Burma, Colombia, and Venezuela have failed demonstrably during the previous 12 months to both adhere to their obligations under international counter-narcotics agreements and to take the measures required by the FAA.

Trump told Congress that transnational organised crime's trafficking of fentanyl and other deadly illicit drugs into the United States has created a national emergency, including a public health crisis in the United States that remains the leading cause of death for Americans ages 18 to 44.

He said more than 40 per cent of Americans know someone who has died from an opioid overdose, and in 2024 the United States averaged over 200 deaths daily due to illicit drugs.

"This remains unacceptable, and my administration is deploying every aspect of American power and unprecedented resources to defeat this threat to our nation."

Trump spoke of the various measures being implemented by his administration to keep the country safe from drug dealers, including "using the full range of law enforcement and military resources."

"For the first time in four years, our border is no longer an open sieve for drug terrorist cartels, human traffickers, and all others who would do our country harm. American lives are being saved, with overdose deaths finally starting to recede significantly for the first time in over a decade."

He said he has also marshalled United States eco-

nomics strength to compel greater cooperation from its North American neighbours to confront the drug threat and do their part.

"While the United States will devote all necessary resources to punish criminals enabling the production, transportation, and smuggling of illicit drugs across our borders, I will also call on countries where these drugs originate and transit to fulfil their obligations and shut off these supplies – or face serious consequences."

While the United States President gave detailed accounts of the drug situation in some of the countries identified as major transit or major illicit drug producing countries, he did not give any specific explanation for putting the CARICOM countries on the list. (CMC)

Regional News

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Gang attack on armoured vehicle in Haiti leaves two police officers injured and one driver dead



Gunmen attacked an armoured vehicle in a community near Haiti's capital, leaving two police officers injured and one driver dead, authorities said Monday.

The attack occurred over the weekend in the once peaceful farming community of Kenscoff, which heavily armed gangs have repeatedly raided in recent months.

Police said in a statement that gunmen threw Molotov cocktails into the armoured vehicle, which then overturned into a ravine.

Haitian police have been battling gangs alongside Kenyan police leading a UN-backed mission that began more than a year ago.

The attack comes days after gangs razed a small fishing town north of Port-au-Prince, killing at least 40 people, including women and children, according to local officials.

UN Secretary-General António Guterres condemned that attack on Saturday, saying that he was "alarmed by the levels of violence rocking Haiti" as he urged Haitian authorities "to ensure that perpetrators of these and all other human rights abuses and violations are brought to justice."

He also called on the international community to help the struggling multinational force with the logistics, personnel and funding it requires.

On Monday, Haiti's government announced that it had coordinated an urgent meeting with high-ranking police officials and ordered the deployment of specialized units to towns including Labodrie, Arcahaïe and Cabaret following last week's massacre north of the capital.

The attack in Cabaret displaced more than 2,900 people, with some 70% fleeing to the nearby community of Arcahaïe, the U.N.'s International Organization for Migration said Monday. More than 40% of those forced to flee their homes sought shelter at four schools, officials said.

Overall, gang violence has displaced a record 1.3 million people across Haiti in recent years. (AP)

Regional News

New MPs and senators to be sworn in Thursday



When parliament officially reopens on Thursday, it will not be as lopsided as it was coming out of the 2020 general election, with the People's National Party (PNP) having more say with 28 members of parliament, a 100 per cent increase from its previous cohort.

The ruling Jamaica Labour Party (JLP) will have 35 members in the reconstituted House of Represen-

tatives.

The new senators and members of parliament are to be sworn in on Thursday, in an event that marks the official beginning of the 2025 Parliamentary term.

They will take their oaths at Gordon House on Duke Street in Kingston, starting at 11 a.m.

Among the new members on the JLP's side are Delroy Williams, who won in

Clarendon Central; Andrew Morris, who retained St Elizabeth North Western for the JLP; and Audrey Marks, who will represent Manchester North Eastern.

New members on the PNP side will include Nekeisha Burchell, who will represent St James Southern; Yvonne Rosemarie Shaw, who flipped the St Thomas Eastern seat in the PNP's favour; Isat Buchanan, who won in Portland East-

ern; and Zuleika Jess, who won St Elizabeth North Eastern.

Meanwhile, among those returning to the Lower House on the opposition side after previous election losses are Peter Bunting, Manchester Southern; Darnion Crawford, St Catherine North Western; and Richard Azan, who will serve as MP for Clarendon North West. (Jamaica Gleaner)

Robert Redford, Oscar-winning actor, director and indie patriarch, dies at 89



Robert Redford, the Hollywood golden boy who became an Oscar-winning director, liberal activist and godfather for independent cinema under the name of one of his best-loved characters, died Tuesday at 89.

Redford died “at his home at Sundance in the mountains of Utah — the place he loved, surrounded by those he loved,” publicist Cindi Berger said in a statement. No cause of death was provided.

After rising to stardom in the 1960s, Redford was one of the biggest stars of the ‘70s with such films as “The Candidate,” “All the President’s Men” and “The Way We Were,” capping that decade with the best director Oscar for 1980’s “Ordinary People,” which also won best picture in 1980. His wavy blond hair and boyish grin made him the most desired of leading men, but he worked hard to transcend his looks — whether through his political advocacy, his willingness to take on unglamorous roles or his dedication to providing a platform for low-budget movies.

His roles ranged from Washington Post journalist Bob Woodward to a mountain man in “Jeremiah Johnson” to a double agent in the Marvel Cinematic Universe, and his co-stars included Jane Fonda, Meryl Streep and Tom Cruise. But his most famous screen partner was his old friend and fellow activist and practical joker Paul New-



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man, their films a variation of their warm, teasing relationship off screen. Redford played the wily outlaw opposite Newman in 1969's "Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid," a box-office smash from which Redford's Sundance Institute and festival got its name. He also teamed with Newman on 1973's best picture Oscar winner, "The Sting," which earned Redford a best-actor nomination as a young con artist in 1930s Chicago.

Film roles after the '70s became more sporadic as Redford concentrated on directing and producing, and his new role as patriarch of the independent-film movement in the 1980s and '90s through his Sundance Institute. But he starred in 1985's best picture champion "Out of Africa" and in 2013 received some of the best reviews of his career as a shipwrecked sailor in "All is Lost," in which he was the film's only performer. In 2018, he was praised again in what he called his farewell movie, "The Old Man and the Gun."

"I just figure that I've had a long career that I'm very pleased with. It's been so long, ever since I was 21," he told The Associated Press shortly before the film came out. "I figure now as I'm getting into my 80s, it's maybe time to move toward retirement and spend more time with my wife and family."

Redford had watched Hollywood grow

more cautious and controlling during the 1970s and wanted to recapture the creative spirit of the early part of the decade. Sundance was created to nurture new talent away from the pressures of Hollywood, the institute providing a training ground and the festival, based in Park City, Utah, where Redford had purchased land with the initial hope of opening a ski resort. Instead, Park City became a place of discovery for such previously unknown filmmakers as Quentin Tarantino, Steven Soderbergh, Paul Thomas Anderson and Darren Aronofsky.

"For me, the word to be underscored is 'independence,'" Redford told the AP in 2018. "I've always believed in that word. That's what led to me eventually wanting to create a category that supported independent artists who weren't given a chance to be heard."

"The industry was pretty well controlled by the mainstream, which I was a part of. But I saw other stories out there that weren't having a chance to be told and I thought, 'Well, maybe I can commit my energies to giving those people a chance.' As I look back on it, I feel very good about that."

By 2025, the festival had become so prominent that organisers decided they had outgrown Park City and approved relocating to Boulder, Colorado, starting in 2027. Redford, who had attended the University of Colorado in

Boulder, issued a statement saying that "change is inevitable, we must always evolve and grow, which has been at the core of our survival."

Redford tended toward mainstream drama in his acting and directing, though he also appeared in several political narratives. He satirised campaigning as an idealist running for US senator in 1972's "The Candidate" and uttered one of the more memorable closing lines, "What do we do now?" after his character manages to win. He starred as Woodward to Dustin Hoffman's Carl Bernstein in 1976's "All the President's Men," the story of the Washington Post reporters whose Watergate investigation helped bring down President Richard Nixon.

With 2007's "Lions for Lambs," Redford returned to directing in a saga of a congressman (Tom Cruise), a journalist (Meryl Streep) and an academic (Redford) whose lives intersect over the war on terrorism in Afghanistan.

Redford was married twice, most recently to Sibylle Szaggars. He had four children, two of whom have died — Scott Anthony, who died in infancy, in 1959; and James Redford, an activist and filmmaker who died in 2020. (AP)

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Two men sentenced to prison in Zambia for plotting to kill president with witchcraft



A judge in Zambia on Monday sentenced two men to two-year terms in prison with hard labour after they were convicted of plotting to kill the president using witchcraft.

The men, a Zambian and a Mozambican national, were convicted under a colonial-era witchcraft law last week.

The court found that they had been in possession of charms, including a live chameleon, an animal tail and 12 bottles of concoctions

and had intended to use them to put a spell on President Hakainde Hichilema with the intention of killing him.

Leonard Phiri, 43, and Jasten Candunde, 42, pleaded for leniency from the magistrate who sentenced them.

Zambia's witchcraft law, passed in 1914, defines practicing witchcraft as pretending to exercise any kind of supernatural power, sorcery, or enchantment intended to

cause fear, annoyance, or injury.

The maximum sentence is three years in prison.

The trial also had a heavy dose of political intrigue, with prosecutors alleging the two men were hired by a brother of a former lawmaker to curse Hichilema.

Police said the men were arrested in a hotel room in the capital, Lusaka, last year after a cleaner reported hearing strange noises.

They were found with a chameleon in a bottle and the other items.

Many traditional beliefs have survived in Zambia alongside its official Christian religion.

A 2018 study by the Zambia Law Development Commission found that 79% of Zambians believed in witchcraft.

The belief in witchcraft also is prevalent in many other African countries. (AP)

New York's commuter rail system averts possible strike as unions ask Trump for help



A potential strike has been averted that could have shut down the nation's largest commuter rail system this week.

Unionised workers for the Long Island Railroad announced they voted overwhelmingly Monday to authorize their labour leaders to call a strike if an agreement on a new contract isn't reached.

But officials representing locomotive engineers, machinists, signalmen and other train workers said they've also asked President Donald Trump to intercede by forming an emergency board that delays the potential for a strike at least for a few more months. Union leaders said the earliest a strike

could happen is in January while the Presidential Emergency Board, once formed, reviews the contract dispute and presents its recommendations.

A strike, which could have happened as early as Thursday under federal rules, would have impacted some 250,000 riders who ride the LIRR to work each day to and from New York City and its eastern suburbs.

A work stoppage would have also thrown a wrench in the Ryder Cup, which begins September 26.

The three-day men's golf tournament between players from the US and Europe is expected to bring 225,000 spectators to Bethpage State Park in Farmingdale on Long Island.

"This action does not mean a strike won't happen, but it does mean it won't happen now," said Gil Lang, general chairman for the union representing LIRR locomotive engineers, at a news conference at the union's office in Manhattan on Monday.

"We will continue to be the adults in the room," he added. "A strike is the last thing we want, and we'll do everything we can to avoid that."

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority, which oversees the LIRR and other area transit systems, dismissed the union's announcement as a "cynical delay" that "serves no one." (AP)

British aristocrat and her boyfriend sentenced to 14 years in prison for killing their newborn



A British aristocrat and her boyfriend were sentenced to 14 years in prison on Monday for killing their newborn daughter while on the run from authorities.

Constance Marten, 38, and her boyfriend Mark Gordon, 51, a convicted sex offender, were sentenced Monday after being found guilty of gross negligence manslaughter at London's Central Criminal Court in July.

They were previously convicted of perverting the course of justice, concealing the birth of a child and child cruelty.

Gordon will serve a further

four years on extended license.

Police launched a nationwide search after officers found a placenta on Jan. 5, 2023, in a burned-out car belonging to Marten and Gordon near Bolton in northwestern England.

The couple travelled across England and went off-grid, spending hundreds of pounds (dollars) on cabs to shuttle them around, and avoided using credit cards or anything that might identify them.

They slept in a tent on the South Downs, a range of hills in southern England,

where their baby, Victoria died.

The decomposed body of the infant was found by police in a shopping bag under garbage in a garden shed in Brighton in 2023, concluding a seven-week-long search.

During sentencing, the judge ruled that the baby died from hypothermia after being exposed to "significant cold stress," rejecting the couple's claims that she died in a "terrible accident." "It is clear throughout the period neither of you gave much or any thought for the care or love for your baby,"

Judge Mark Lucraft told the defendants.

Marten secretly gave birth to Victoria after the couple's other four children were taken by courts because they were at risk of harm.

After their arrest in Brighton on Feb. 27, the couple refused to say where the baby was.

While on the run, Victoria was only briefly glimpsed on CCTV footage in London wearing the onesie with teddy bear pattern she was later recovered in. (AP)

Sri Lanka goes down to Windies in YODI Series



The West Indies Under-19 team won the seven match Youth ODI series against the Sri Lankans 4-3.

Sri Lanka Under-19s produced a dominant performance to crush West Indies Under-19s by 130 runs via the Duckworth/Lewis/Stern (DLS) method in the seventh and final Youth One Day International in Antigua on Monday.

With the Windies having already wrapped up the series, Vimath Dinsara and Kavija Gamage both struck half-centuries in Sri Lanka's total of 180 for five, after the match at the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium was reduced to 26 overs per side due to persistent rain.

Gamage then returned to snare four wickets to help the visitors skittle out West Indies for just 62 in 14.5 overs, after they were set 193 in 24 overs following another interruption due to

rain.

Dinsara hit an unbeaten 58 off 39 balls with three sixes and three fours, while Gamage made 51 from 38 balls, inclusive of six fours and one six, with the pair putting on 85 runs in just over eight overs to set a solid foundation.

Sri Lanka also received useful contributions from openers Dimantha Mahavithana and Viran Chamuditha, who scored 26 and 25, respectively. Isra-el Morton was the Windies' best bowler with three for 30.

The West Indies never recovered after losing their first two wickets with just two runs on the board.

Gamage then got in on the action by dismissing Joshua Dorne for the top score of 16, and also accounted for the wickets of Matthew Miller (1), Bren-

dan Boodoo (6) and Pajay Nelson (10) to see the West Indies collapse to 57 for nine.

Gamage ended with four wickets for nine runs, Vigneshwaran Akash took two for 12, and Sethmika Seneviratne claimed two for 20. Monday's result meant the West Indies won the seven-match Youth ODI series 4-3.

Summarised scores: SRI LANKA Under-19s 180 for five in 26 overs (Vimath Dinsara 58 not out, Kavija Gamage 51, Dimantha Mahavithana 26, Viran Chamuditha 25; Isra-el Morton 3-30).

WEST INDIES Under-19s 62 in 14.2 overs (Joshua Dorne 16, Pajay Nelson 10; Kavija Gamage 4-9, Vigneshwaran Akash 2-12, Sethmika Seneviratne 2-20).

Windies men's team to embark on overseas tours to close out 2025



Players of the West Indies men's T20 team. (CWI Media)

The West Indies senior men's team will embark on high-profile overseas tours to complete a busy year of international cricket for 2025, following a bumper home series against Australia and Pakistan.

A historic three-match T20 bilateral series against Nepal in Sharjah will kick off the 22 international matches scheduled for the rest of the year across all formats.

The Windies will take on Nepal in their three-match T20 series on September 27,

29, and 30.

The Men in Maroon will commence their second fixture of the 2025-2027 ICC World Test Championship cycle, taking on India in Ahmedabad (October 2-6) and Delhi (October 10-14), the team's first Test tour to India since 2018.

A white ball tour against Bangladesh follows shortly after, featuring three One Day Internationals (ODI) and three (3) T20 internationals from October 18 to November 1.

The Windies will face

Bangladesh in the three ODIs on October 18, 20, and 23, while both sides will clash in the T20 matches on October 27 and 30 and November 1.

The regional team closes out the year with an all-format tour of New Zealand from November 5 to December 22, comprising five (5) T20 internationals, three (3) One Day Internationals and three (3) Test matches.

The five T20 matches will take place on November 5, 6, 8, 9 and 12, while the three ODI encounters will

be held on November 15, 18, and 21.

The three Test matches between New Zealand and the West Indies will be held at Hagley Oval in Christchurch on December 2 to 6, at the Basin Reserve in Wellington on December 9 to 13 and at Bay Oval in Mount Maunganui on December 17 to 21.

According to Cricket West Indies (CWI), the squads for the respective series against Nepal and India will be released shortly.

Hundreds of clubs added to US\$355-million FIFA payments plan



Norway's Erling Haaland, right, gets past Moldova goalkeeper Cristian Avram before scoring his fourth goal of the game during the World Cup qualifying soccer match between Norway and Moldova at Ullevaal Stadion, Oslo, Tuesday Sept. 9, 2025. (AP)

ZURICH (AP) — Hundreds more soccer clubs will get shares of a US\$355 million FIFA fund from its multi-billion 2026 World Cup revenues for releasing players to men's national teams.

FIFA said on Tuesday the program which has shared a total of hundreds of millions of dollars among clubs whose players were selected for each World Cup finals tournament since 2010 will now include all players who took part in qualifying games.

Eritrea and Russia — which has been suspended from international soccer

since 2022 — did not play qualifying games among FIFA's 211 member federations.

"This new approach means that any club that releases a player for a FIFA World Cup 2026 qualifier will now be directly compensated," FIFA said in a statement.

FIFA previously agreed on a US\$355 million allocation for the 2026 edition in the United States, Canada, and Mexico as part of a renewed working agreement with the European Club Association (ECA) signed more than two years ago.

That was an increase from

US\$209 million paid to clubs worldwide from each of the past two editions, played in Qatar in 2022 and Russia in 2018.

FIFA said 440 clubs across 51 member countries got payments from the 2022 programme, which were calculated as a daily rate for as long as players were involved with their squads at the tournament. Manchester City got the biggest payment with almost US\$4.6 million.

The highest-earning clubs will earn a lower overall share this time because the pool of eligible teams has widened due to FIFA ex-

panding the men's World Cup to 48 teams from 32, and qualifying games now also included.

More than 900 clubs across all 55 UEFA member countries got payments from a similar European programme that already includes qualifying games for national team competitions played for four years through 2024.

FIFA created its "club benefits programme" with US\$40 million of revenue from the 2010 World Cup in South Africa as part of a deal with the ECA, which was created two years earlier.

Kipyegon destroys the field for fourth 1500m world gold



Kenya's Faith Kipyegon celebrates after winning gold medal in the women's 1500 meters final at the World Athletics Championships in Tokyo, Japan, Tuesday, Sept. 16, 2025. (AP)

TOKYO (Reuters) - Kenya's peerless Faith Kipyegon underlined her status as one of the greatest athletes of all time when she convincingly claimed a fourth 1,500-meter title at the World Athletics Championships in Japan on Tuesday to go with her three Olympic golds and world record in the event.

Kipyegon delivered a gun-to-tape run that destroyed the field as she came home clear in three minutes and 52.15 seconds.

Fellow Kenyan Dorcus Ewoi ran a personal best 3:54.92 seconds for silver, while Jessica Hull won Australia's first medal in the event when she just held on for bronze in 3:55.16 seconds.

Kipyegon now matches Hicham El Guerrouj (1997-2003) by claiming four world 1,500 meters golds and she will also go for a second world 5,000 meters title later this week.

"Being able to defend my title and to win a fourth gold feels really special," Kipyegon said.

"After setting the world record in Eugene (in July), I said to myself, 'I have to go to Tokyo and defend my title.' I knew I could run it under control.

"I won here in the 2021 Olympics just after becoming a mother, so being back here, winning again, means I can show a new gold medal to my daughter."

Kipyegon, 31, set her stall out from the start on Tuesday, setting an early pace that strung out the busier-than-usual field after extra athletes were reinstated following semi-final falls.

However, she seemed to ease off slightly on the third lap and Ewoi and Olympic silver medallist Hull, who has spent most of her career watching Kipyegon's back disappear into the distance, were right on

her shoulder at the bell.

There was nothing to worry about, however, as Kipyegon quickly took control again and by the time she crossed the line she was 30 meters clear. Kipyegon will be back in the stadium on Thursday for the 5,000 meters' heats, with the final on Saturday.

Meanwhile, Cordell Tinch took the long road to elite athletics but capped a superb second season as a professional by winning 110 meters hurdles gold at the world championships on another sweltering Tokyo night on Tuesday.

The American was all control and pace as he blazed over the 10 hurdles and held off the fast finishers in the run-in to claim his first global title at his first global championships in 12.99 seconds.

"When I crossed the finish line I felt relieved," the 25-year-old said.

"I came into this season with the goal of winning the world title. I wanted to be the best hurdler in the world.

"Being the only one to run sub-13 today makes me happy. I believed I was the best out there, so I didn't feel any pressure. People expected me to panic but I stayed focused."

Jamaica's Orlando Bennett ran a personal best 13.08 seconds to win silver, while his fellow countryman Tyler Mason took the bronze in 13.12 seconds, which matched his previous best time.

"I was really trying to beat Cordell, but that wasn't the case," said Bennett. "The race was just an adrenaline rush. I wanted to get through the hurdles and keep going."

CWI names squad for Test tour of India

Cricket West Indies (CWI) has announced a 15-member squad for the upcoming West Indies men's team's tour to India for a two-test series in October.

The West Indies will play against India, with matches in Ahmedabad and Delhi between October 2 to 14.

The series forms part of the ICC World Test Championship and will be the first away fixture for the Windies Test team in the new cycle and the first Test tour of India since 2018.

There are three changes from the squad which recently faced Australia, with the inclusions of Guyanese Tagenarine Chanderpaul and Alick Athanaze of Dominica, along with a maiden test call-up for Trinidadian left-arm spinner Khary Pierre.

Chanderpaul and Athanaze have been included to bolster the top-order batting, while Pierre has been included as the second specialist spinner in the squad after strong performances in the West Indies Championship, where he claimed a chart topping 41 wickets at an average of 13.56.

The West Indies selectors have opted to rest Guyanese left-arm spinner Gudakesh



Players of the West Indies Test team. (CWI Media)

Motie for this red-ball series, given the demands of the upcoming limited overs schedule, the highlight being the ICC T20 World Cup in February and March of next year.

Head Coach Daren Sammy welcomes the challenge of playing against one of the top ranked teams on their home soil.

“Playing in the subcontinent always presents a challenge and we have selected a team to be competitive in these conditions,” said Sammy.

“This will be our second series together as a Test team, but we have already shown what we are capable of as a unit once we are committed to our brand and plans of the team.”

Sammy added, “The return of Tagenarine Chanderpaul

is to help transform our fortunes at the top of the order given the recent struggles, with Alick Athanaze being added for his strengths and qualities against spin bowling. Khary is included for the first time as our second spinner in what we expect to be helpful conditions.”

Director of Cricket Miles Bascombe underscored the thinking behind the squad selection.

“Our approach to squad selection continues to be calculated and deliberate. We consider the opposition, the playing conditions and the skill sets required to be successful against specific opposition.

“The inclusion of players has, therefore, been guided not only by their recent performances but also by identifying who within our

pool is best suited to deliver positive results on these surfaces against this quality of opposition.

“At the same time, we are conscious of building continuity and depth in our Test squad as we look to compete consistently throughout this World Test Championship cycle.”

The team departs the Caribbean on September 22 and is set to arrive in Ahmedabad on September 24.

West Indies Test squad: Roston Chase (captain), Jomel Warrican (vice-captain), Kevlon Anderson, Alick Athanaze, John Campbell, Tagenarine Chanderpaul, Justin Greaves, Shai Hope, Tevin Imlach, Alzarri Joseph, Shamar Joseph, Brandon King, Anderson Phillip, Khary Pierre, and Jayden Seales.

Team Management Unit: Head Coach Daren Sammy; Assistant Coach (batting) Floyd Reifer; Assistant Coach (bowling) Ravi Rampaul; Assistant Coach (fielding) Rayon Griffith; Team Manager Rawl Lewis; Physiotherapist Neil Barry; Strength & Conditioning Coach Ronald Rogers; Massage Therapist Fitzbert Alleyne; Team Analyst Avenesh Seetaram; and Media Officer Jerome Foster.