

FROC Reports Fiscal Turnaround, Strong Growth for Antigua and Barbuda

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Joshuanette Francis is named the Antigua and Barbuda winner of CIBC Caribbean's Unsung Heroes Initiative for her advocacy on behalf of persons with disabilities. Francis becomes eligible for the Regional Unsung Hero, The winner will be announced in October.

FROC Reports Strong Fiscal Turnaround for Antigua and Barbuda

Antigua and Barbuda's economic outlook is "bright," according to the Fiscal Responsibility Oversight Committee (FROC), which this week presented its latest report to the Cabinet of Antigua and Barbuda.

The report points to sustained economic growth, a swing from deficit to surplus, and progress toward debt reduction targets.

The FROC was established under the Fiscal Responsibility Act of 2018 to ensure the government adheres to legally mandated fiscal rules. The body, chaired by attorney and former Finance Minister Dr. Leon Errol Cort, functions as an independent monitor of government revenue, expenditure, debt, and fiscal balance. Its remit includes submitting reports to Parliament, promoting transparency in policymaking, and advising on corrective measures to safeguard fiscal sustainability.

Deputy Chairman of the FROC, Professor C. Justin Robinson, of the University of the West Indies Five Islands Campus, outlined a series of key achievements.

- **GDP Growth:** Output is expected to expand by approximately 6% in 2024, making Antigua and Barbuda one of the fastest-growing economies in the Caribbean, second only to Guyana.
- **Inflation:** Price pressures have moderated, falling to 5–6%, easing household and business costs.
- **Fiscal Balance:** Government finances swung from a deficit of EC\$91.9 million in 2023 to a surplus of EC\$86.4 million in 2024, an improvement of EC\$178.3 million — equivalent to nearly EC\$1,900 per citizen.



- **Debt Position:** The debt-to-GDP ratio has declined to 62.3%, close to the Eastern Caribbean Central Bank's (ECCB) 60% benchmark for long-term fiscal stability.
- **Primary Balance:** For the first time since 2016, the country recorded a primary surplus, reversing a trend of sustained deficits.
- **Employment:** Labour market conditions remain resilient, with roughly 49,000 jobs reported.

Despite the achievements, the FROC cautioned that several vulnerabilities linger. These include one-off revenues, rigid expenditure base and external headwinds.

The Fiscal Responsibility Oversight Committee urged the government to stay focused on medium- to long-term fiscal consolidation, while balancing debt management and growth imperatives, recommending a primary balance target, debt management and transparency.

As for priorities, a number of near-term policy actions were contained in the report.

- Task the Ministry of Finance with developing a Debt Operations

Note covering swaps, reprofiling, amortization pilots, and a sovereign rating pathway.

- Commission studies on property tax reform and a blue carbon roadmap (including nationwide seagrass and seabed assessments with partner outreach).
- Approve frameworks for performance-linked pay and needs-tested social benefits.
- Adopt a formal arrears clearance policy with clear eligibility and settlement modalities.

The FROC's assessment underscores that Antigua and Barbuda has entered a new phase of fiscal stability, supported by growth, improving balances, and debt reduction. Yet, sustaining these gains will depend on structural reforms, prudent expenditure management, and resilience to external shocks.

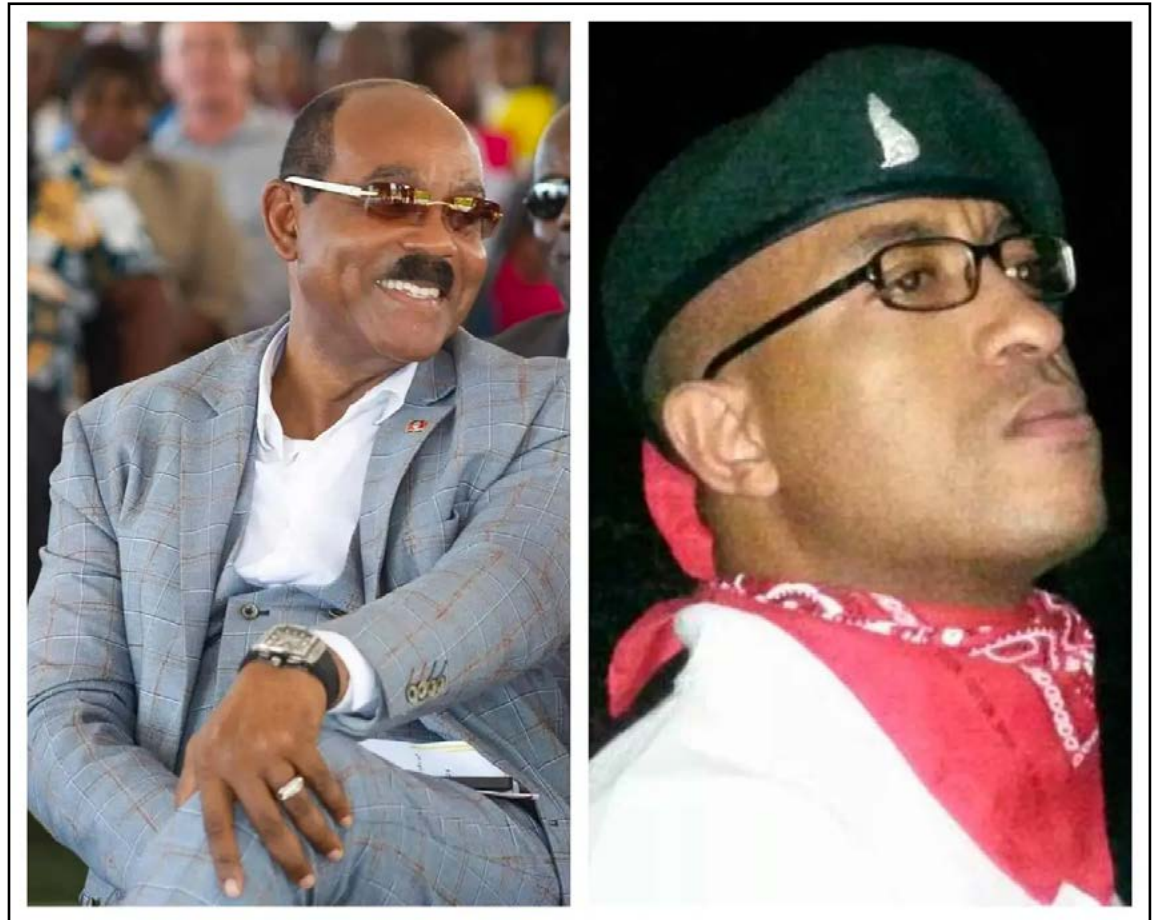
Cabinet has applauded the oversight body for its detailed work and signalled its commitment to ongoing fiscal discipline. It said the FROC's recommendations will be considered during the upcoming parliamentary debate on the report.

Vere Bird III Loses Appeal in Defamation Case

The Eastern Caribbean Court of Appeal has dismissed an appeal against the decision of Justice Nicola Byer in a civil defamation case filed by Vere Bird III against Prime Minister Gaston Browne.

In the decision of Justice Byer of 27th April 2023, the High Court ruled that the prime minister's statements that Vere Bird III benefitted from an illegitimate cabinet decision to sell him Crown Lands at a rate reserved for parliamentarians, was true, justified, and fair comment.

Mr. Bird filed suit against the Prime Minister on the grounds of defamation, alleging that he never actually received the lands, and that the cabinet decision



was legitimate.

Vere Bird III did not find favour with the High Court ruling and approached the Eastern Caribbean Court of Appeal, challenging Justice Byer's ruling on 16

grounds.

According to a statement, all 16 grounds of appeal were dismissed unanimously by the Court of Appeal on Wednesday, September 17th 2025, affirming

Justice Byer's ruling.

Costs were awarded to Prime Minister Gaston Browne by the High Court and the Appeals Court.

The amounts are currently being assessed.



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Cabinet Considers National Single Window for Customs and Trade

The Cabinet of Antigua and Barbuda is considering a proposal for the implementation of a National Single Window (NSW) for Customs and Trade.

It is a digital platform designed to integrate all border-related government agencies into one online entry point and once implemented, will streamline import and export processes, reduce clearance times, and improve transparency.

Comptroller of Customs Raju Boddu, advanced the proposal to the cabinet at its weekly meeting on Wednesday, following a vendor demonstration of customs management and single-window solutions. Cabinet has directed that a further review of the proposal be undertaken. As such, a Cabinet-level steering group with representation from Customs, Ports, Trade, Finance and ICT sectors will be established to assess options. Additionally, a feasibility and due-diligence report will be commissioned to assess the scope, costs, legal requirements, data governance, and phased roll-out of the programme. The Ministry of Legal Affairs has been directed to review legislative and regulatory changes needed for e-documents, risk management, and data-sharing.

Further, additional vendors will be engaged for comparative analysis of single-window solutions.

Single Window systems are recognised internationally as a best practice in trade modernisation.



The platform allows traders to upload permits, invoices, and certificates once, with the system automatically sharing the information with all relevant agencies — customs, ports, agriculture, health, and

standards bodies.

Officials noted that such a system could improve Antigua and Barbuda's ease of doing business rankings while strengthening compliance and revenue collection.

Across the Caribbean, Trinidad and Tobago, Barbados and Jamaica are among countries that have advanced Single Window projects.

Trade specialists are confident that adopting a Single Window system would enhance efficiency, reduce costs, and increase transparency — while aligning Antigua and Barbuda with international standards. It could also strengthen the country's investment climate by making cross-border trade more predictable and business-friendly.



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Joshuanette Francis is CIBC's Unsung Hero



CIBC Unsung Hero Joshuanette Francis



CIBC Unsung Hero Joshuanette Francis with her family



CIBC Unsung Hero Joshuanette Francis with the Judges

Joshuanette Francis, Founder of Good Humans 268 has been named the Antigua and Barbuda winner of CIBC Caribbean's Unsung Heroes initiative.

In the presence of the judges, fam-

ily, friends, supporters, media and management and staff, an emotional Joshuanette Francis received her award and prizes from Country Head, Ladesa James- Williams.

In her congratulatory address Mrs.

James-Williams noted that Joshuanette Francis is a true advocate for inclusion, empowerment, sustainability and community transformation in Antigua and Barbuda.

She added, "Joshuanette is the Founding president of Good Humans 268 Inc., a nonprofit organization dedicated to uplifting persons with disabilities and ensuring they have equal opportunities to thrive. Through her vision and leadership, Good Humans 268 has become a beacon of hope, offering training programmes, employment initiatives and sustainable projects that open doors for some of the most marginalized members of our society."

The bank official noted that Joshuanette's journey has not been without challenges.

"Diagnosed with osteoarthritis at



CIBC Unsung Hero Joshuanette Francis with the Judges and CIBC staff

just 24, Joshuanette transformed her personal experience into a powerful mission. Rather than allowing her condition to define her, she uses her story to inspire others and to challenge the discrimination and

barriers faced by people living with disabilities.”

With tears in her eyes, Joshuanette accepted the award. She thanked the bank for the award and most importantly the recognition. She

said that her journey has not been easy as it has been filled with many obstacles along the way. However, with her deep faith in God along with the unstinting support of her family, friends and supporters, she will continue to serve those in need.

She received a cash grant of US\$5,000, a plaque and a bouquet of flowers. A panel of five distinguished judges will determine the Regional Unsung Hero from those individual country winners. The announcement will be made in late October.

The rebooted CIBC Caribbean Unsung Heroes campaign was launched on 30th May, 2025 and was open to all individuals aged 10 and over.

The campaign spans the ten territories where CIBC Caribbean operates.



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Antigua and Barbuda joins the ‘Forest of Civilizations’ Exhibition in Japan

Antigua and Barbuda is participating in the ‘Forest of Civilizations’, one of the largest exhibitions at Expo 2025 Osaka, Japan.

The extraordinary global initiative brings together nations through symbolic trees that represent history, culture, and a shared responsibility for the future.

As part of the historic exhibition, Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority (ABTA) Operations Manager Javier Jacobs who serves as Commissioner General of Antigua and Barbuda at Japan Expo and Kayla Christian, Marketing Communications Officer at the ABTA, selected a 6,500-year-old subfossil oak tree, during a ceremonial event held on September 16, 2025.

The tree is now marked with a metal QR code engraved with the words: “This tree stands here in honour of Antigua and Barbuda.” When scanned, the QR code shares a special message: “This tree stands in honour of Antigua and Barbuda’s enduring commitment to safeguarding our environment for generations



Kayla Christian Marketing Communications Officer and Javier Jacobs Commissioner General of Antigua and Barbuda at Japan expo 2025 next to the Antigua and Barbuda Tree in the Forest of Civilizations

to come. Our twin-island nation is blessed with rich biodiversity and vibrant marine ecosystems that shape the natural beauty of Antigua and Barbuda. Our Pavilion theme - ‘Each endeavoring, all achieving, committing to protect and save the environment for all walks of life in Antigua and Barbuda’—reminds us that sus-

tainability is everyone’s responsibility.”

Through the tree, Antigua and Barbuda extends the warmth of its people and the spirit of united action to protect the environment. From the land of 365 beaches to the world, the nation shares a message of collective responsibility: country by country, let us each play our

part in protecting natural treasures.

“We are honored to be part of this meaningful exhibition,” said the Antigua and Barbuda Commissioner General, Javier Jacobs. “The Forest of Civilizations represents not only the richness of our shared past but also a call to action for unity and sustainability. Antigua and Barbuda is proud to stand among nations in contributing to this vision.”

The Forest of Civilizations exhibition features 133 ancient oak trees, each more than 6,500 years old, carefully recovered from subfossil deposits and digitally preserved. Designed to celebrate diversity while promoting global cooperation, each tree reflects the identity and spirit of its respective country, creating a lasting collective symbol for generations to come.

By participating in the landmark installation, Antigua and Barbuda becomes part of a global network of nations, fostering cultural dialogue and environmental stewardship that will continue beyond Expo 2025.



NOTICE OF THE 2025 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

ST. JOHN'S, Antigua and Barbuda - September 19, 2025

To: Shareholders of The West Indies Oil Company Limited

The West Indies Oil Company Limited (WIOC) is pleased to invite you to its third Annual General Meeting of shareholders since listing on the Eastern Caribbean Securities Exchange (ECSE).

Date: Thursday, October 9, 2025

Time: 5:30 PM

Venue: John E. St. Luce Finance and Conference Centre, Factory Road

Online Access: Details will be provided in the official notice

Key Agenda Items:

- Approval of a dividend of EC\$2.75 per share (as recommended by the Directors)
- Election of Directors
- Ratification of the company's draft revised bylaws
- Appointment of auditors of the financial statements for the fiscal year ending December 31, 2025

If you are unable to attend, we encourage you to vote by proxy using the form included in the official notice of meeting.

Shareholders attending (in person or online) should be in place at least 30 minutes before the meeting commences.

We look forward to another very productive meeting and thank you for your support and commitment to the Company.

Sincerely,

The West Indies Oil Company Limited



Antigua and Barbuda Youths Demand Bold Action on Waste, Oceans and Climate Justice



Marva B. Woodley (left) and Joshuanette Francis (right)

Antigua and Barbuda's youth delegation has returned from the *Caribbean Youth Environment and Climate Change Conference (CYCC)* in Jamaica with a powerful message: climate action in the region must be rooted in justice, innovation, and accountability. The three-day conference, held September 9–11 at the Jamaica Conference Centre, gathered over 20 youth delegates from across the Caribbean under the theme “*Securing Our Planet for Current and Future Generations*.” The Antigua and Barbuda team played a prominent role in both the high-level panels and technical working groups that drafted the *Caribbean Youth Declaration*.

On the conference's first day, **Marva B. Woodley**, Acting Deputy Director in the Department of the Blue Economy, made a strong case for rethinking Caribbean economic dependency on tourism. She pointed to the risks of unregulated extraction industries

and called for governments to prioritize environmental, social, and governance sustainability.

“You have to make sure we're not just extracting to say we're taking and it helps to diversify our economies and our portfolios, but you're looking at the long run, the next five, the next ten years, we're doing this with the scientists in mind,” Woodley said.

Woodley also explained the significance of the BBNJ Treaty and the opportunities it presents for capacity-building and marine research in small island states. She reminded participants that while islands like Antigua are geographically small, their ocean territories—and the responsibilities that come with them—are vast.

Equally compelling was **Joshuanette Francis**, who steered a breakout session on plastic pollution and waste management. Rather than fo-

cusing only on the challenges, Francis emphasized the innovative spirit and responsibility of Caribbean youth in finding solutions.

“As youth, we believe that solutions must be bold, creative, and grounded in both innovation and responsibility,” Francis said. “There are research, innovation, and technology opportunities across the region that we can tap into, but we must also prioritize education—because people need to understand that waste is more than just a paper cup. It includes water waste, food scraps, and even construction waste.”

Francis explained that identifying the different types of waste is the first step to building effective policies. She noted the diversity of approaches already in place across countries like Antigua, Trinidad and Tobago, Anguilla, Guyana, and Jamaica, stressing the importance of collecting baseline data and sharing best

practices. Her message was clear: with coordinated action, innovation, and strong community education, the Caribbean can lead on waste reform and plastic reduction.

Her conclusion was clear: education, research, and regional cooperation must be at the center of any waste management strategy. The Antigua and Barbuda delegation's work fed directly into the *Caribbean Youth Declaration*, which was adopted on the final day of the conference. The document outlines regional priorities on climate justice, food security, waste management, and ocean governance, and is expected to inform both national policies and international negotiations.

Woodley delivered the vote of thanks at the closing session, praising the dedication of sponsors, organizers, and youth participants. Her words captured the spirit of the event: collaboration, determination, and the belief that young people are not waiting for permission to act. From Woodley's advocacy for responsible ocean governance to Francis's impassioned call for waste reform, Antigua and Barbuda's presence at the conference demonstrated the country's commitment to leading by example. The delegation reminded the region that climate change is not just a global issue—it is a Caribbean reality that demands Caribbean solutions.

As the Antigua and Barbuda team joined their Caribbean counterparts in final reflections, the urgency of the global climate target was clear. Throughout the week, delegates repeated the call: *"1.5 to stay alive."*

What began as a technical phrase was transformed into a rallying cry for survival and justice. From Jamaica to

Guyana, Trinidad and Tobago to Antigua and Barbuda, young voices reminded the world that the difference between 1.5 and 2 degrees of warming is the difference between thriving and drowning for small island states. One delegate summed it up simply: *"It means where we live should not determine if we live."* Another added: *"1.5 to stay alive—hashtag small islands, big voices."* Others called for *#CaribbeanClimateJustice* and *#PreservingOurPlanet*, un-

derscoring the creativity and determination of a generation that refuses to be silent.

For Antigua and Barbuda's delegation, the message was consistent: youth are not only inheriting the crisis—they are leading the charge to confront it. And as the Caribbean Youth Declaration is prepared for release, they have left no doubt that their demand is urgent, unshakable, and united: *1.5 to stay alive.*



ANTIGUA & BARBUDA ANNIVERSARY OF INDEPENDENCE

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2025 INDEPENDENCE SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

25 OCT - 03 NOV

SATURDAY 25 OCT

- **NATIONAL SCHOOLS' PANORAMA**
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 Barbuda FESTIVALS COMMISSION



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GOVERNMENT OF ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA ANNOUNCES OFFICIAL LOGO DESIGN COMPETITION FOR CHOGM 2026

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

St. John's, Antigua and Barbuda – 12 September 2025

The Government of Antigua and Barbuda, through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, Sports and Creative Industries, has officially launched the **CHOGM 2026 Logo Design Competition**.

In 2026, Antigua and Barbuda will proudly host the **Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM)** for the first time in its history. As preparations progress, the Government is calling on nationals at home and across the diaspora to create a logo that will serve as the official global emblem of CHOGM 2026.

The winning design will feature prominently on all event communications, signage, merchandise, and digital platforms, symbolizing Antigua and Barbuda's role as host nation. This competition offers professional designers, students, and creatives alike a unique opportunity to showcase their talent and contribute to a historic moment of national and international significance.

COMPETITION DETAILS

Eligibility

- Open to nationals of Antigua and Barbuda, both residents and diaspora
- Entrants under 18 must include a signed consent letter from a parent or legal guardian
- Submissions may be individual or team entries (maximum one entry per participant or team)

Design Guidelines

- Must be original and unpublished
- Should reflect the identity and spirit of Antigua and Barbuda
- Must be adaptable for colour and monochrome use
- Clear and effective across all formats (print, digital, signage, merchandise)
- Accepted formats: Vector (.AI or .EPS), plus high-resolution .PNG/.JPG
- Each entry must include a **100–150-word concept statement** outlining inspiration and symbolism

Submission Process

- Email entries to **chogm2026logocomp@gmail.com** with the subject line: *CHOGM 2026 Logo Competition*
- Each entry must be accompanied by a completed entry form (available on the official Government website)
- A maximum of one submission per participant/team will be accepted

Judging Criteria

- Creativity and originality (30%)
- Relevance to CHOGM 2026 and Commonwealth values (30%)
- Visual impact and versatility (20%)
- Technical quality and adaptability (20%)

Prizes & Recognition

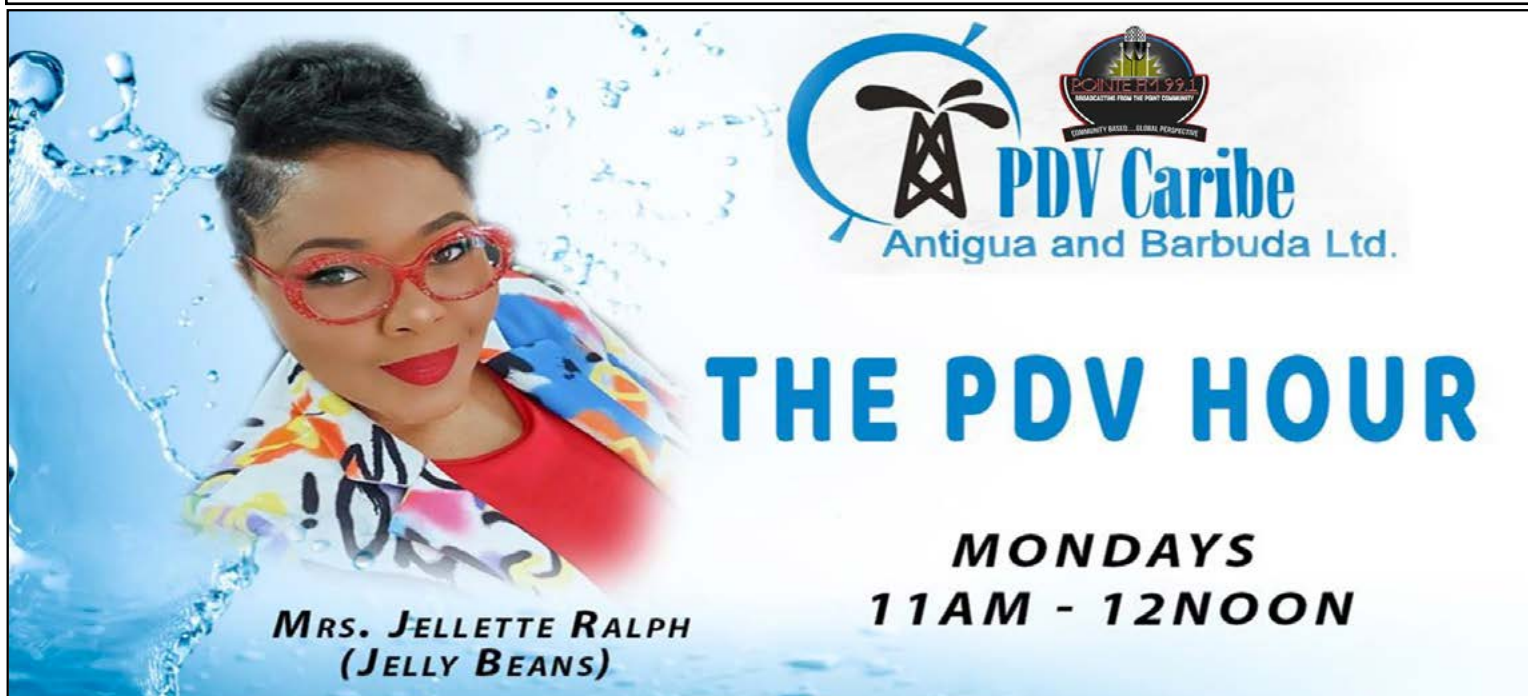
- **Grand Prize:** EC\$5,000.00, plus official recognition during CHOGM 2026
- **Winning Design:** Adopted as the official global logo of CHOGM 2026
- **Finalists:** Shortlisted entries may be displayed in a national exhibition and featured on official platforms

Timeline

- Launch: 15 September 2025
- Submission Deadline: 10 October 2025
- Winner Announcement: 1–2 November 2025

Rules & Conditions

- All entries must be original and will become the property of the Government of Antigua and Barbuda
- The Government reserves the right to adapt the winning logo for branding and official use
- By submitting, participants grant full usage rights to the Government
- Late or incomplete entries will not be considered



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Haiti Needs a Single Strategy, Real Money, and Political Discipline



By Sir Ronald Sanders

I return to a focus on Haiti because it is too easy for the world to discard the situation in that beleaguered country. In part, it is precisely because insufficient attention has been paid to Haiti in a holistic way that its circumstances worsen and its people continue to suffer. This assessment draws on recent reporting by the Réseau National de Défense des Droits Humains (RND-DH)—“Laboderie Massacre – Internal Situation Report” and “Calls to Return Issued to Citizens by Armed Gangs” as well as an analysis by the Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime (GI-TOC), “Addressing Haiti’s Escalating Crisis: From Criminal Governance to Community Fragmentation” (September 2025).

On security, the strategy in Haiti - if one exists - is fragmented and ineffective. Several separate activities, such as a Prime Minister’s task force, scattered drone projects by private contractors, and a Kenyan-led Multinational Security Support (MSS) mission, do not add up to strategy. The bottom line

is that there is no real security. The Haitian National Police - even with help from the MSS mission - is thin and overstretched, and results are inconsistent. Meanwhile, gangs control roads, neighbourhoods, and revenue streams. Plainly, this is criminal-style governance (a pattern documented by GI-TOC and RNDDH).

Politics is equally stuck. The Transitional Presidential Council (TPC) has stalled; elections in November 2025 are not going to happen; and there is still no credible plan for the period after 7 February 2026, when the TPC mandate ends. Power plays among politicians and elites are consuming time the country does not have. Every week of drift strengthens armed groups and weakens the state.

Yet a workable path is available, but it must be executed as a single package, not as isolated efforts. Haitian authorities have to secure critical transport infrastructure, such as airports, ports, fuel depots, bridges, and the national road corridors. Without safe movement of goods, people, and services, every other effort fails. To achieve this, there must be an organised and funded apparatus that includes mobile response teams, clear rules of engagement, and humanitarian corridors that aid agencies can actually use. At the same time, the Haitian authorities and their international partners must cut off the arms (except to the Haitian Police) and illicit finance that keep gang structures alive. Interdiction at entry points, surveillance of organiser-financier networks, and real-time financial intelligence must be routine.

U.S. sanctions on gang leaders and enablers should be matched with sei-

zures, arrests, and prosecutions so the cost of doing business rises for organisers and financiers, not just street enforcers. Justice institutions must prioritise prosecution of those persons behind the networks that procure, launder, and shield criminal enterprise. If the logistics and money persons remain untouched, gangs regenerate. We know these things to be true, but too little is done.

Finally, the UN, the Organization of American States (OAS) and the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) should act from one plan that incorporates security, humanitarian relief, governance transition, and economic measures. That plan must include a clear transition architecture for the period after February 2026 that avoids a governance vacuum (already within Haiti, influential groups are crying out for action on this). The OAS Secretary General’s Haitian-Led Roadmap provides the framework; what’s missing is one budgeted operational plan, a unified Security Council mandate, and a funded UN instrument to run it.

While a UN trust fund for the MSS mission already exists, it is voluntary and insufficiently capitalised; the United Nations should therefore operationalise one Haiti Fund that is transparent, audited, and tied to results across the whole plan. This approach will cost money and requires sustained attention. However, we should remind ourselves that UN-coordinated appeals for Haiti drew roughly two-thirds of a billion dollars from 2023 to 2025; it is far less than what Sudan’s war, the Gaza crisis, or Ukraine’s war receive in a single year. The Fund should be financed in particular by the Unit-

Feature

PAGE 15

ed States and France, joined by other states that have benefited from their involvement with Haiti, its labour and its markets. This is not charity; it is responsibility.

Disbursements for projects in Haiti should be linked to concrete milestones: keeping open essential corridors for the movement of people, goods, and humanitarian aid; stopping extortion on national routes; seizing arms and cash connected to criminal networks; reopening schools and health-care centres in secured zones; and completing agreed steps toward the post-February 2026 transition on schedule.

The UN Security Council's veto-holding members must back a single, coherent strategy. No mixed signals, no competing mandates, and no symbolic resolutions that excuse meaningful action. Mandates, money,

and operational support need to line up behind the unified plan. If the Council will not support a plan that can actually be executed, it should say so plainly and accept the consequences.

Also, external support without internal discipline will fail. Haitian political and economic actors need to stop manoeuvring for advantage while the state erodes. The country needs one focused government with a limited, public programme: restore security along lifelines; stabilise essential services; support justice operations against organiser-financier networks; and set a realistic timeline for elections when minimum security conditions exist. Anything else invites more violence and deeper collapse.

The Haitian people have been promised a lot, but their situation has worsened. The next phase must be different: one integrated security design; one

transition path; one financing vehicle; and one set of performance measures. Haitian authorities must own the plan by showing that they have the capacity to act in their nation's interest; international partners must support it; and the Security Council must stop treating Haiti as an inconvenient intrusion.

If action is not taken now, the Haitian state will contract further and armed groups will expand, with spillovers across the Caribbean and the Americas in migration, security and human suffering.

(The author is the Ambassador of Antigua and Barbuda to the United States and the OAS, and Dean of the OAS Ambassadors accredited to the OAS. Responses and previous commentaries: www.sirronaldsanders.com)



DAILY PROGRAMMING




EARLY VIBRATIONS 6AM-10AM MON. - FRI.
WITH GREMSTA

THE RUSH HOUR SHOW 5PM-7PM MON. - FRI.
WITH ROGER LAKE 6AM-9AM SATURDAYS

TOUCHLINE 7PM-9PM MON. - THURS.
WITH EPILUS

BAD COMPANY 2PM-6PM THURS. 12PM-4PM SATURDAYS
LIVE FROM THE V.I. & 1PM-5PM ON SUNDAYS

REGGAE INSPIRATION 9PM-12AM MON. THURS. SUNDAY
WITH SELECTOR KEEGAN

JAH WADADLI 7PM-9PM FRIDAYS
WITH DJ JAH WADADLI

Commentary

The Marginalization of Emancipation Day: Making a Correction



Dr. Lenworth W. Johnson

The Slavery Abolition Act of 1833 in England abolished slavery throughout the British Empire on August 1, 1834. It was, naturally, a momentous and solemn event. Evidence of this deeply moving and reflective occasion is provided by, though an example from the colonizers, the proclamation issued by the Governor of Antigua and the Leeward Islands, Sir John Murray MacGregor, at Government House on June 13, 1834, which reads as follows:

Whereas it hath pleased Almighty God in His Infinite Wisdom to bring to a happy termination the System of Slavery hitherto existing in these Islands and to bring all its inhabitants the privilege of Freedom, and it being incumbent on us to certify our grateful thanks of the Divine Favour on so interesting an occasion, and to implore the permanent protection of the Supreme Being, I do hereby and with the advice of His Majesty's Privy Council, direct and appoint that Friday the first day of August next be observed in all

Churches as a Day of General Thanksgiving for these Mercies and likewise of Humble Intercession to the Wise Disposer of all things for the continued Blessing on this most important change.

It is expected that this Day will be observed by Persons of all Classes with the same marks of Respect and Reverence as the Sabbath.

God Save the King

In the early years after emancipation, August 1st was celebrated in Antigua in various ways, mainly through church services giving thanks to the Almighty (in line with the earlier proclamation), but also through more jubilant and festive events. As B.W. Higman explains in his 1998 article - Remembering slavery: The rise, decline, and revival of Emancipation Day in the English-speaking Caribbean – over the following hundred years leading up to the centenary of abolition, attitudes toward celebrating Emancipation Day in the West Indies varied between not celebrating due to the horrible memories of slavery and feelings of shame and inferiority and celebrating because of their triumph over slavery and pride in their race. Indeed, Higman mentions Marcus Garvey's first effort in 1928 to turn August 1st into "a sacred and holy day...a day of blessed memory" with large processions through Kingston's streets. Garvey criticized a "disposition of late to forget slavery and emancipation" because of the shame associated with slavery and believed that "history is a thing no civilized or intelligent person can well ignore," and

saw the past as a guide for the future. Over the next 85 years up to today, West Indian territories vacillated between making August 1st (or the first Monday in August) an official holiday, replacing it with Independence or Discovery Day, or having no official celebration at all. Trinidad and Tobago reinstated Emancipation Day in 1984, and Jamaica in 1997.

Higman further notes that in the years just prior to the ill-fated Federation of the West Indies (1958-1962), Emancipation Day was recognized as a public holiday in the English-speaking Caribbean, though "generally with an emphasis on recreation." On September 10, 1954, Parliament in Antigua formally enacted the Public Holidays Act, which listed the first Monday in August as an official holiday. The annual Carnival festivities began in 1957, with the first Monday in August designated as J'Ouvert (from the French words "jour ouvert," meaning daybreak or morning). According to N. Sheriff in "J'ouvert speaks to the present," J'Ouvert is a morning street dance or "jump-up" that celebrates resistance to cultural domination and triumph over enslavement. On September 13, 2005, Parliament amended the Public Holidays Act to provide for the Carnival Holiday, designated as the first Monday in August, and the Tuesday following that Monday. Interestingly, neither the original nor the amended Act used the word "Emancipation." Based on anecdotal records, it seems that staging the Antigua Carnival around

Commentary

the first Monday in August served three main purposes: celebrating the sugar cane harvest for that year, commemorating emancipation, and providing a summer tourism attraction to boost the economy. Regardless of the primary reason, it is clear that, 68 years later, the euphoric revelry of the annual Carnival has overshadowed and eclipsed the solemnity and significance of August 1st.

The Carnival celebrations now span from the last two weeks of July to the first week of August. During this three-week period, various shows and competitions take place, some more popular than others. The Carnival Queen Show, T-shirt mas (from masquerade), the Teenage Pageant, and calypso and soca contests are among the most favored events. The festivities peak with the costume parade and Last Lap jump-up on the Tuesday after the first Monday in August. Aside from a few conscious artists, African and ancestor themes are rarely part of the competitions and choreography. During this time, the word Emancipation is scarcely mentioned by officials, and those participating in Carnival seem more interested in merrymaking, carousing, and even debauchery. If the Festivals Commission or government mentions Emancipation, it is usually in relation to the Watch Night event organized by the Antigua and Barbuda Reparations Support Commission (ABRSC), which advocates for reparations for slavery. The Watch Night ceremony always takes place on the evening leading up to midnight on July 31st to mark the beginning of Emancipation Day and to give thanks to God. However, attendance at this event is minimal

compared to the popular Carnival shows, one of which is always held on the same evening. Society at large rarely considers the true significance of August 1st or the first Monday in August, and the remarkable struggles and ultimate victory of our enslaved ancestors, and the lasting inequalities resulting from those struggles, which now affect their descendants, are often forgotten or overlooked.

How do we address the marginalization of Emancipation Day? Two options are put forward for consideration. The first option, and the one preferred by this writer, is to designate Emancipation Day (August 1st) as an official holiday. In line with other holidays, if August 1st falls on a Saturday or Sunday, the following Monday should be observed as a public holiday. On these days (Saturday or Sunday), Emancipation Day events would be held on the public holiday (Monday). When observed, Emancipation Day is meant for reflection, church services, cultural events, government activities, speeches, public lectures, storytelling, media discussions, and other activities that honor our ancestors and their liberation. Except when J'Ouvert morning falls on August 1st, no official Carnival shows or festivities should take place on Emancipation Day. Put another way, if August 1st falls on a Monday, J'Ouvert morning would be the only Carnival event on that day, as that day is directly linked to our ancestors' fight for liberation. This option may seem impractical to some, but as a friend of mine often says, men have gone to the moon. Making a course correction regarding Emancipation Day is not 'rocket science.' The

Festivals Commission can make the necessary adjustments to event dates each year, and I believe, still keep the public holidays in August to two days only, thereby avoiding complaints from the business community.

The second option is to integrate the Emancipation Day events into the Carnival festivities, ensuring they are given a prominent place and proper scheduling. This can be achieved in various ways, such as prayers for our ancestors at the start of Carnival shows, moments of silence, increased use of African motifs and themes by groups and troupes performing mas, public readings, lectures, folk concerts, and more. Full Emancipation events can be appropriately included during the two or three-week Carnival season. Angelica O'Donoghue of the Antigua and Barbuda Reparations Support Commission has already called for no official Carnival events to be scheduled on Watch Night (July 31st), as the Commission marks the beginning of Emancipation Day in memory of that first day (August 1st, 1834). Perhaps we should consider adopting a similar approach to that of Barbados, which features an annual Season of Emancipation from April to August, encompassing activities such as an Emancipation Village, Heritage Month, the Crop Over Festival (their Carnival), Emancipation Day, Marcus Garvey Day, and others. During these months, many memorial, educational, and cultural events take place. Although Antigua and Barbuda has similar holidays and occasions, it may not be necessary to designate such an extended period as a season of emancipation; instead, it might suffice to

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reserve the month leading up to the first Tuesday in August for this purpose. Whatever option is chosen, the key is that we should never forget our history; we should strive to blend a joyful Carnival celebration with reverence and remembrance of our ancestors.

As difficult as it may be, we should recall a description of the suffering and degradation our ancestors endured. This can help shock us back into awareness and sensitivity regarding this very serious issue. There are, of course, many descriptions, but a short excerpt from C.L.R. James' *The Black Jacobins*, describing plantation conditions in Saint Domingue (Haiti), is particularly relevant.

The slaves received the whip with more certainty and regularity than they received their food. It was the incentive to work and the guardian of discipline. But there was no ingenuity that fear, or a depraved imagination could devise which was not employed to break their spirit and satisfy the lusts and resentment of their owners and guardians – irons on the feet, blocks of wood that the slaves had to drag behind them wherever they went, the tin-plate mask designed to prevent the slaves eating sugar-cane, the iron collar. Whipping was interrupted in order to pass a piece of hot wood on the buttocks

of the victim; salt, pepper, citron, cinders, aloes and hot ashes were poured on the bleeding wounds. Mutilations were common, limbs, ears, and sometimes the private parts, to deprive them of the pleasures which they could indulge in without expense. Their masters poured burning wax on their arms and hands and shoulders, emptied the boiling sugar canoe over their heads, burned them alive, roasted them on slow fires, filled them with gunpowder and blew them up with a match; buried them up to the neck and smeared their heads with sugar that the flies might devour them; fastened them near to nests or ants or wasps; made them eat their excrement, drink their urine, and lick the saliva of other slaves. One colonist was known in moments of anger to throw himself on his slaves and stick his teeth into their flesh.

It is therefore not without reason that the citizens and residents of this our beautiful Antigua and Barbuda are asked to show proper respect and honor to those who came before us hundreds of years ago, and who sacrificed their blood, sweat, and tears for our current freedom. Many things can be forgotten or overlooked, but not this—not slavery. Here is a positive account of what our ancestors achieved – Charles Buxton, an English Member of Par-

liament, writing in 1860 on Slavery and Freedom in the British West Indies, although from a colonialist's skewed perspective, still had this to say:

Never was a more radical revolution made in the fortunes of a whole people, than when the 800,000 British negroes stepped from slavery into freedom. When the clock began to strike twelve on the night of July 31, 1834, they were, in the eye of the law, things, chattels, beasts of burden, the mere property of others. When it had ceased to sound, they were for the first time, not only free- men but men; standing on the same level as those who had formerly owned them

This is truly what our enslaved ancestors achieved. Again, we must never forget it, but always remember and celebrate it, especially during the biggest celebration spawned by it, Carnival.

We must think on these things.

Dr. Lenworth Johnson is a chartered accountant and an attorney-at-law, as well as a former member of the Senate, the Upper House of Parliament in Antigua and Barbuda. In 2024, he graduated from the University of the West Indies with the degree of Doctor of Education.



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Regional News



Three police officers in Trinidad charged with corruption

Three police officers in Trinidad and Tobago were granted bail in the sum of TT\$60,000 each when they appeared before a Master of the High Court charged with corruption.

The police said that Woman Sergeant Andrea Smith and police constables Keegan Quamina and Darryle Halls were each charged with corruptly soliciting a bribe in the sum of TT\$6,000 and corruptly receiving a bribe in the sum of TT\$5,000, contrary to the Prevention of Corruption Act.

The trio has also been ordered to stay 100 feet away from the victim, who had told the police that on June 17, he had proceeded to a location in the Central Division where he met with one of his employees, a Venezuelan national in the com-



pany of what appeared to be three police officers, one female in plain clothes and two males.

They were standing close to a marked police vehicle and during a conversation

with the officers, the female officer, who identified herself as a Woman Sergeant of Police, allegedly made certain accusations against the victim and his employee, which the victim denied.

The woman then allegedly threatened to arrest the victim and his employee unless they handed over TT\$6,000.

The police said that the victim reportedly retrieved TT\$5,000 from his vehicle and was instructed to place the cash in the back seat of the police vehicle.

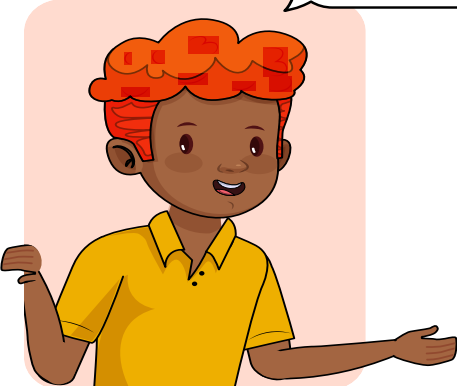
The victim allegedly told the woman that she could visit his business place to get the rest of the money, to which she allegedly agreed.

A report of the incident was made to the Professional Standards Bureau and an investigation was launched, which resulted in the arrest of three suspects.

The police said that the charges against the trio were laid following consultations with the Deputy Director of Public Prosecutions, Sabrina Dougdeen-Jaglal. (CMC)



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CABINET FOR RENEWAL

Holness brings back Montague, Wheatley but no return for Malahoo Forte



Prime Minister Dr Andrew Holness yesterday announced a 19-member Cabinet, the composition of which he said is aimed at building on the momentum and experience of the previous administration, while creating room for renewal.

Speaking to the newly appointed government ministers during yesterday's swearing-in ceremony at King's House in St Andrew, Holness also indicated that his third consecutive term in office "will also be about seamless succession and transition planning".

"As time passes, you will see the momentum of renewal accelerating, steadily reshaping not only the composition of the Government, but also the way the Government thinks, acts and delivers for the Jamaican people," the prime minister, who is also minister of defence and minister of economic growth and infrastructure development, said.

"We will never be archaic or unable to change, but we will also give stability, the confidence, the assurance, and the certainty of good results for the Jamaican people," he added.

Meanwhile, Dr Andrew Wheatley and

Robert Montague were both recalled to duty, while the Ministry of Legal and Constitutional Affairs, which was formerly led by Marlene Malahoo Forte, is to be joined with the Ministry of Justice.

Wheatley, who resigned from Cabinet in 2018 to allow for issues surrounding the management of the energy, science and technology portfolio to be ventilated, has been appointed minister without portfolio in the Office of the Prime Minister, with responsibility for science, technology and special projects.

Montague has been named minister without portfolio in the Ministry of Economic Growth and Infrastructure Development, with responsibility for

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NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR A TAVERN LICENCE FOR BUSINESS
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I, Marianna Mingo, DO HEREBY GIVE NOTICE, that it is my intention to apply at the next sitting of the Liquor Licence Court to be held at the Magistrate's Court, High Street, St. John's, Antigua, on Thursday, 2nd October, 2025, next ensuing for Tavern Licence in respect of premises known as "Normin's Delight 2" situated on Bishopgate Street, in the Parish of St. John's, Antigua pursuant to Section (11) (5) of the Licensing (Intoxicating Liquor) Act Cap 249 of the Laws of Antigua and Barbuda, Revised Edition 1992.

Dated the 26th day of August, 2025

Yours truly,

Marianna Mingo

268-778-3108

Regional News



land-titling and settlements. He had resigned in 2022 in the wake of a damning Integrity Commission report on the Firearm Licensing Authority.

Matthew Samuda, in the meantime, is now minister of water, environment and climate change, a departure from his previous appointment as a minister without portfolio.

The Ministry of National Security has been renamed the Ministry of National Security and Peace, with Dr Horace Chang retaining leadership. Fayval Williams continues as minister of finance and the public service, while Senator Kamina Johnson Smith remains minister of foreign affairs and foreign trade.

Edmund Bartlett remains minister of tourism, while Dr Christopher Tufton continues as minister of health and wellness. Olivia Grange retains her post as minister of culture, gender, entertainment and sport, while Delroy Chuck is now the minister of justice, legal and constitutional affairs; and Senator Dr Dana Morris Dixon continues as minister of education, skills, youth and information.

Senator Aubyn Hill continues as minister of industry, investment and commerce; Desmond McKenzie remains minister of local government and rural development, and Parnell Charles Jr retains the portfolio for labour and social security. Daryl Vaz stays on as

minister of transport, telecommunications and energy (removing science), while Floyd Green continues as minister of agriculture, fisheries and mining.

Ambassador Audrey Marks has been appointed minister without portfolio in the Office of the Prime Minister, with responsibility for efficiency, innovation and digital transformation, while Robert Morgan remains minister without portfolio in the Ministry of Economic Growth and Infrastructure Development, overseeing works.

In the meantime, Johnson Smith, Hill and Morris Dixon were appointed as senators during yesterday's ceremony.

They were joined by Tom Tavares-Finson, Charles Sinclair, Abka Fitz-Henley, Keith Duncan, Sherene Golding Campbell, Kavan Anthony Gayle, Marlon Morgan, Dr Elon Thompson, Rose Marie Bennett-Cooper, and Christian Tavares-Finson, who were also appointed to the Senate.

Stating that organisations can only remain relevant if they renew, Holness stressed that the one he leads is in the process of doing so, but without disruption.

"We'll do it in a balanced way, continuity gives us strength, renewal gives us dynamism, and we'll have both. Together... this will allow us to carry forward what works, while creating space for what we can do differently," he said.

Holness said the Government's agenda for this new administration will be to unlock the country's potential in all areas of development. He emphasised that the work is interconnected and called for Cabinet members to work as a team.

"This is not about our legacy, it is about fulfilling Jamaica's destiny. This is not about title, it is about service. The Cabinet will be judged by outcomes, not announcements; by results, not rhetoric. Each of you will have clear targets and will be held accountable for meeting them."

The prime minister also cautioned Cabinet members against disregarding the "sacred trust" placed in them by the Jamaican people to conduct the country's affairs circumspectly.

"I remind you that corruption and arrogance are not just a curse of failure, they weaken the entire government. Corruption drains resources, erodes public trust, and gives our opponent the sharpest weapons to discredit everything we seek to achieve. Arrogance blinds us to the needs of the people we serve and distances us from the humility that leadership demands," he said.

"If we allow this in our ranks, it is not only the Government that will suffer, but the confidence of the Jamaican people in their democracy," he added. (Jamaica Gleaner)

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Regional News

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Discover Dominica CEO projects nine-fold return on World Creole Music Fest 2025



Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Discover Dominica Authority (DDA), Marva Williams, said that the 25th Edition of the World Creole Music Festival (WCMF) is a significant financial investment, but the event is expected to greatly benefit the Dominican people.

Speaking with Ambassador Leroy 'Wadix' Charles on the Crele HeartBeat Program on Wednesday, Williams put her assertion into context, explaining: "Investment in the festival this year is a little over 13 million-[dollars]. It is a very expensive undertaking, but it is worthwhile."

"When we look at the economic impact as it relates to festivals in Dominica and more so the World Creole Music Festival, and recent studies that were done, that amount of investment in the World Creole Music Festival—it is going to circulate and for each dollar you are

going to get nine times [the] return," she asserted.

She continued, "Who is benefiting from that circulation? Not only the major airlines or the ferries, but you have the people from Dominica. The taxi drivers, the vendors, the hairdressers, the restaurants, those who sell little merchandise, these are the people, the vendors within the stadium as well, the service providers who we are engaging to help us put together that event, because the small team at DFC, they cannot do it alone."

Williams added, "They have to engage other individuals to help with production, stage management [and] all these individuals are the other benefiting from that investment."

This year's festival is scheduled for October 24-26 at the Windsor Park Sports Stadium. (Dominica News Online)

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Trump's U.K. visit gets political after royal pageantry

President Donald Trump traded pageantry for politics Thursday as he ended a lavish stay hosted by Britain's King Charles III at Windsor Castle and met with Prime Minister Keir Starmer at his country residence, Chequers.

Hailing the "unbreakable bond" between the two nations, Trump said ties between America and the U.K. were "priceless" and the two governments were "making those ties closer than ever before."

Starmer has lavished Trump with praise and royal pomp in a bid to curry favor with Washington as Britain looks to deepen its economic ties with the U.S., ease tariffs and hold difficult conversations on a range of thorny issues — including Israel's offensive in Gaza and Russia's war in Ukraine.

The pair held a joint news conference in one of Chequers' grandest rooms on Thursday ahead of Trump's return home, where they continued to emphasize their countries' long and close ties. The two leaders also avoided commenting on each other's domestic policies, which is customary, when asked about hot-button issues such as immigration, free speech and the recognition of the state of Palestine.

Asked when he would tell Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to end the war in Gaza, Trump said he wanted hostages to be freed. "I don't want the hostages used as human shields,



which is what Hamas is threatening to do," Trump said.

Trump acknowledged that the U.K.'s expected recognition of a Palestinian state was one of the "few disagreements" he has with Starmer.

For his part, Starmer said the situation in Gaza is "intolerable," adding that the hostages have been held for a long time and "must be freed."

"We need aid to get into Gaza at speed. And so it's within that context of a plan for peace, which we're working hard on ... that the question of recognition needs to be seen," he said. "It's part of that overall package which hopefully takes us from the appalling situation we're in now, to the outcome of a safe and secure Israel, which we do not have."

Both agreed that more pressure to end the war in Ukraine needed to be placed on Russian President Vladimir Putin, although neither committed to new sanctions.

Falling oil prices would force the Russian leader's hand, Trump said, adding that "Putin is going to drop out" of the war in Ukraine if that happens.

"He's going to have no choice," he added.

Trump said last week that he was ready to enact "major sanctions on Russia" as soon as all NATO countries stop buying Russian oil.

Hungary and Slovakia have continued buying Russian fossil fuels.

Starmer also said the issue was "a challenge to Europe."

"There are a number of European countries which are too reliant on energy from Russia," he said.

Earlier, Starmer was all smiles as he and his wife Victoria greeted Trump at Chequers, a 16th century manor house that is the prime minister's official country residence, some 40 miles north of London.

There, they met with American and British business leaders, including the chief executives of Nvidia, Microsoft, Rolls-Royce and Boeing, before signing a multibillion-dollar tech prosperity agreement that British officials hope will

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Speaking ahead of the signing, Trump said the deal had been “long in the making” and thanked Starmer for his hard work to get it over the line. “With this agreement, our cherished friendship with the United Kingdom is getting stronger and stronger,” he said.

Starmer said the deal marked “a great day for the special relationship.” He earlier showed the president items from the archive of Winston Churchill, who coined the term.

The meeting took place after Trump woke up in Windsor Castle after a night of royal opulence and a lavish state dinner for 160 dignitaries and business leaders.

A day of unprecedented pomp saw Trump — the first elected politician to be invited for two state visits — and his wife treated to the full array of British pageantry and the largest ceremonial military welcome for a state visit in living memory.

“Our countries have the closest defense, security and intelligence relationship ever known,” Charles said in his speech addressing Trump at the state dinner. “In two World Wars, we fought together to defeat the forces of tyranny. Today, as tyranny once again threatens Europe, we and our allies stand together in support of Ukraine, to deter aggression and secure peace.”

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy thanked the king early Thursday “for his steadfast support,” with

sanctions on Russia and security guarantees for Kyiv continued sticking points between Washington, London and European powers.

The British government has meanwhile been increasingly critical of Israel’s deadly offensive in Gaza, including its new assault on famine-stricken Gaza City. The U.K. is soon expected to join a number of countries in recognizing Palestinian statehood, a move that has outraged Israeli officials.

Each leader is dealing with a febrile atmosphere at home.

Trump arrived in Britain in the wake of Charlie Kirk’s fatal shooting, while his host has been beset by far-right protests, sinking poll ratings and a recent scandal that led to a question about Jeffrey Epstein during Thursday’s press conference.

The meeting with Starmer comes days after Britain’s ambassador to the U.S., Peter Mandelson, was fired following revelations about his ties to Epstein.

Asked about the firing, Trump said he wasn’t familiar with Mandelson. At

Windsor Castle two days earlier, protesters had projected images of Trump alongside Epstein in an act that saw four people arrested.

And on the streets of London, thousands attended a protest march that culminated with a rally outside Parliament.

In recent polling highlighting British sentiments toward the president, 70% of Britons said they disliked Trump and 44% said they thought his state visit should be canceled. (NBC)

VACANCY PROJECT MANAGER

Overview: The Antigua Public Utilities Authority is inviting applications for the post of Project Manager – Water Infrastructure within the Water Business Unit. The successful candidate will be responsible for leading and overseeing all phases of major water infrastructure construction projects, from planning and design review through to execution, handover, and close-out. This includes managing project timelines, budgets, quality assurance, and ensuring compliance with safety and environmental standards. The role also requires effective communication and coordination with internal teams, contractors, consultants, and regulatory stakeholders.

Key responsibilities

- Lead the planning, design review, and execution of large-scale water infrastructure projects, including reverse osmosis plants, pipelines, and water storage systems.
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- Develop and manage detailed project plans, schedules, budgets, and risk mitigation strategies.
- Oversee procurement activities, ensuring timely and cost-effective acquisition of materials and services.
- Conduct regular site inspections and project meetings; proactively resolve construction and scheduling challenges.
- Maintain strict compliance with health, safety, environmental, and quality assurance regulations.
- Serve as the main point of contact for all project-related communications with internal and external stakeholders.
- Monitor financial performance; approve invoices and manage change orders as needed.
- Ensure proper documentation, testing, and handover of completed infrastructure to the Operations team.

Minimum qualifications & requirements:

- Bachelor's degree in Civil Engineering, Construction Management, Environmental Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, or a related field.
- A minimum of five (5) years' experience managing large-scale water infrastructure projects.
- Proven experience with at least one of the following: Reverse Osmosis (RO) plant construction, HDPE pipeline installation, or water storage tank construction.
- Project Management Professional (PMP) or equivalent certification (e.g., PRINCE2) is highly desirable.
- Strong leadership and communication skills with experience managing cross-functional teams.
- Proficiency in project management tools (e.g., MS Project, Primavera P6).
- Sound knowledge of health, safety, environmental compliance, and quality management practices.
- Excellent organizational, problem-solving, and decision-making abilities.

Interested persons are asked to apply in writing to:

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Kimmel's future hangs in balance after ABC suspends his late-night show over Charlie Kirk comments



Jimmy Kimmel's television future hung in the balance Thursday after ABC suspended his late-night show following the host's comments about Charlie Kirk's killing, which prompted dozens of stations to say they wouldn't air the show, a move that was cheered on by a top federal regulator.

The veteran late-night comic made several remarks on Monday and Tuesday about the reaction to the conservative activist's assassination, including saying that "many in MAGA land are working very hard to capitalise on the murder of Charlie Kirk."

ABC, which has aired "Jimmy Kimmel Live!" since 2003, moved swiftly

after Nexstar Communications Group said it would pull the show starting Wednesday. Kimmel's comments about Kirk's death were "offensive and insensitive at a critical time in our national political discourse," said Andrew Alford, president of Nexstar's broadcasting division. Nexstar operates 28 ABC affiliates.

Another company that owns 38 local television stations, Sinclair, called on Kimmel to apologise to Kirk's family and make a "meaningful personal donation" to the activist's political organisation, Turning Point USA. Sinclair says its ABC stations will air a tribute to Kirk on Friday in Kimmel's

time slot.

In an appearance on CNBC Thursday, FCC Chairman Brendan Carr cheered the moves by the two affiliate groups to push back against the network. While the Federal Communications Commission does not have power over the television networks, it does have the authority to suspend the licences of their individual stations in local markets.

"We're reinvigorating the FCC's enforcement of the public interest," Carr said, "and I think that's a good thing."

There was no immediate comment from Kimmel, whose contract is up in May 2026. ABC's statement did not cite a reason for why his show was pre-empted.

President Donald Trump celebrated ABC's move on the social media site Truth Social. "Congratulations to ABC for finally having the courage to do what had to be done," he wrote.

Carr on Wednesday called Kimmel's comments "truly sick" and said his agency has a strong case for holding Kimmel, ABC and network parent Walt Disney Co. accountable for spreading misinformation. He said the comic appeared to be making an intentional effort to mislead the public that Kirk's assassin was a right-wing Trump supporter.

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During his Monday evening monologue, Kimmel suggested that the suspect in Kirk's killing, Tyler Robinson, might have been a pro-Trump Republican.

"The MAGA Gang (is) desperately trying to characterise this kid who murdered Charlie Kirk as anything other than one of them and doing everything they can to score political points from it," Kimmel said. "In between the finger-pointing, there was grieving."

Authorities say the 22-year-old grew up in a conservative household in southern Utah but was enmeshed in "leftist ideology." His parents told investigators he had turned politically left and pro-LGBTQ rights in the last year. His voter status is inactive, meaning he did not vote in two regular general elections. He told his transgender partner that he targeted Kirk because he "had enough of his hatred."

Both Disney and Nexstar have FCC business ahead of them. Disney is seeking regulatory approval for ESPN's acquisition of the NFL Network, and Nexstar needs the Trump administration's blessing to complete its \$6.2 billion purchase of broadcast rival Tegna.

For both companies, reinstating Kimmel after a suspension would risk the ire of Trump, who has already claimed that the show has been cancelled.

Kimmel's suspension comes two months after CBS announced that it was cancelling Stephen Colbert's show next May for financial reasons. But some critics have wondered if his stance on Trump played a role.

Both Colbert and Kimmel have made the president the frequent target of jokes. Soon after the Colbert cancellation, the FCC approved CBS parent company Paramount's long-pending deal with Skydance.

Trump similarly celebrated Colbert's impending exit.

"I absolutely love that Colbert got fired," Trump said in July. "His talent was even less than his ratings. I hear Jimmy Kimmel is next."

Within the past year, both Disney and CBS parent Paramount chose to settle lawsuits brought by Trump against their news divisions rather than fight it out in court.

In a post on X, FCC Commissioner Anna Gomez criticised the administration for "using the weight of gov-

ernment power to suppress lawful expression."

"Another media outlet withered under government pressure, ensuring that the administration will continue to extort and exact retribution on broadcasters and publishers who criticise it," said Ari Cohn, lead counsel for technology policy at the Foundation for Individual Rights and Expression. "We cannot be a country where late-night talk show hosts serve at the pleasure of the president."

Kimmel departed the Hollywood theatre where his show is taped about three hours after ABC's decision. He kept his head down as he entered a waiting vehicle.

An audience was lined up outside the theatre when they were told Wednesday's show was cancelled.

"Interestingly enough, they waited to pull the plug on this right as the studio audience was about to walk in," Tommy Williams, a would-be audience member from Jacksonville, Florida, told The Associated Press outside the theatre. "They didn't tell us what had happened. They just said that the show was cancelled." (AP)

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Workers across France strike over budget cut plans

Hundreds of thousands of workers have taken part in strike action across France on Thursday, after trade unions called for a day of protests against budget cuts.

The interior ministry said between 600,000 and 900,000 people could attend demonstrations nationwide, adding it would deploy 80,000 police officers.

Scuffles were reported in the cities of Lyon and Nantes, and in Paris clashes broke out between police and protesters.

Officers in riot gear used tear gas and shields to disperse crowds in the centre of the capital after some protesters damaged a small number of businesses and buildings.

The strikes come barely a week after Sébastien Lecornu, a close ally of President Emmanuel Macron, was appointed prime minister following the toppling of François Bayrou's government.

Public transport was heavily disrupted on Thursday, with many metro lines in Paris reported shut, while protesters blocked roads and streets in major cities across France.

Students gathered in front of schools and universities in the capital and beyond,



blocking entrances and chanting slogans. Around a third of teachers walked out.

Pharmacists are also adhering to strike action in droves, with 98% of pharmacies expected to stay closed.

More than 140 people were detained across France by late afternoon, the interior ministry said.

Unions have called for more spending on public services, higher taxes on the wealthy and for the budget cuts outlined by the short-lived Bayrou government to be axed.

Cyrielle, a 36-year-old IT worker, told the BBC she was striking because "Macron's economic and social policies don't suit me, nor did Bayrou's budget". She was taking part in a tightly-policed, large demon-

stration in central Paris.

"I would like more resources invested in public services and culture. Perhaps a percentage of people with enormous wealth could contribute a little more," she said, adding that if the new government "leaned more to the left, that would be the beginning of a solution."

Sophie Binet, the leader of one of France's major trade union groups, the General

Confederation of Labour (CGT), said: "We need to be out in force, that's how we gather strength to keep fighting... to force the government and the employers to put an end to policies that only serve the richest."

"We will be uncompromising and relentless," warned Bruno Retailleau, the outgoing interior minister, adding that he had given police instructions to make arrests "as soon as there is

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

the slightest slip-up”.

Jean-Luc Mélenchon, the leader of the radical left party France Unbowed (LFI), asked participants to the strike to be “disciplined”.

“Any violent actions would only serve one person - Mr Retailleau,” he said.

Ahead of the protests, Laurent Nunez, the Paris prosecutor, had expressed concerns that the demonstrations would be “derailed” by far-left groups and urged shops in the city centre to close for the day.

Thursday’s strikes come after around 200,000 people took part in protests organised by the grassroots Bloquons Tout (Let’s Block Everything) movement last week, which caused some disruption across France.

Bayrou’s unpopular budget proposal - aimed at bringing down France’s high public debt with €44bn (£38bn) worth of cuts - caused him to lose a confidence vote in the National Assembly last week when parties across the political spectrum united to topple him.

New Prime Minister Sébastien Lecornu, who is yet to assemble a ministerial team, has not entirely renounced the cuts and has held talks with opposition parties in an attempt to reach a compromise on the budget.

Lecornu’s position is per-

ilous. Like his two predecessors, Bayrou and Michel Barnier, he faces a hung parliament divided into three blocs with deeply differing political leanings, making it difficult to craft a budget palatable to a majority of MPs.

But France is also staring down the barrel of spiralling public debt, equiva-

lent to almost €50,000 per French citizen.

Barnier and Bayrou were also brought down as a result of their proposed budgets, which would have entailed substantial cuts - with politicians on the left instead calling for tax rises.

“Of course, we’d like more

stability in government, but whether it’s Lecornu or someone else, we want workers to be truly taken into account,” trade unionist Alexandre Dubois told the BBC.

“And we need to move away from this logic of short-term economic performance.” (BBC)

VACANCY

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT OFFICER

Overview: The Antigua Public Utilities Authority (APUA) invites applications for the position of Business Development Officer within the Sales & Marketing Department. The successful candidate will play a pivotal role in identifying, managing, and delivering strategic business development initiatives that support revenue growth, digital transformation, and network expansion across APUA Telecom’s services. This dynamic role requires both commercial insight and project management discipline to ensure timely and effective execution of enterprise-level initiatives.

Key responsibilities

- Identify and manage B2B and B2C opportunities to upsell and cross-sell APUA Telecom’s products and services.
- Develop and execute strategies to penetrate new and underserved markets.
- Lead the end-to-end business development lifecycle from prospecting through to closing deals.
- Prepare and submit bids, proposals, and tenders for large-scale telecom/ISP projects.
- Build and maintain relationships with property developers, real estate firms, government agencies, and other key stakeholders.
- Introduce and manage CRM tools to support prospecting, pipeline visibility, and performance metrics.
- Coordinate with internal teams to ensure service readiness for new business opportunities.
- Lead the planning, execution, and close-out of development projects in line with APUA’s strategic goals.
- Develop business cases, project plans, and risk mitigation strategies.
- Conduct post-project reviews to capture insights and drive continuous improvement.
- Explore strategic partnerships, joint ventures, and business collaborations.

Key competencies:

- Strong project management skills including budgeting, scheduling, and risk control.
- In-depth commercial knowledge of telecom/ISP products and market dynamics.
- Excellent analytical, communication, and stakeholder relationship skills.
- Strategic thinker with a proactive and solution-oriented approach.
- Highly organized, detail-oriented, and results-driven.
- Strong interpersonal and negotiation skills with the ability to lead cross-functional teams.

Minimum qualifications & requirements:

- Bachelor’s degree in Business Administration, Marketing, Telecommunications, or a related field.
- Minimum of five (5) years of experience in business development or corporate sales, preferably within the telecommunications or ISP sector.
- Demonstrated success in identifying and delivering commercial business opportunities.
- Proven experience managing projects from initiation to completion.
- Project Management certification (e.g., PMP) would be an asset.

Interested persons are asked to apply in writing to:

Human Resources Manager
 Antigua Public Utilities Authority
 Cnr. High Street & Independence Avenue
 P.O. Box 416
 St. Johns, Antigua
OR Email: hr@apua.ag

Deadline for application is Tuesday 30th September, 2025

** Only suitable applicants will be acknowledged **
 “APUA is an equal opportunity Employer”



Sports News

Gore and Seales lead Falcons' batting aggregates

Antiguan all-rounder Karima Gore and Trinidadian fast bowler Jayden Seales topped the bowling and batting aggregates for the Antigua and Barbuda Falcons during the newest franchise's campaign in the 2025 Republic Bank Caribbean Premier League T20 Competition.

The Antigua and Barbuda Falcons' campaign in this year's CPL came to an end in a nine-wicket loss to former champions, the Trinbago Knight Riders (TKR), in the eliminator match at the National Stadium in Providence, Guyana, on Tuesday night.

Gore, who was dismissed without scoring four times in his last five innings in which he scored only one run, still finished as the leading run-scorer for the Falcons in their second season in the CPL.

The Antiguan and Liberta Black-hawks all-rounder finished at the top of the Falcons' batting aggregate with 219 runs in 10 innings at an average of 27.37. Gore had the highest score of 64 not out against the Barbados Royals.

Trinidadian opening batsman Amir Jangoo was second in the Falcons' batting aggregates with 185 runs in four innings with a highest score of 56 against the Guyana Amazon Warriors. Jangoo led the Falcons' batting averages with 61.66 runs per innings.

Fellow opener Andries Gous, who was born in South Africa but represents the United States of America (USA) at the international level, was the third-highest run-scorer for the Falcons this season.

Gous scored a total of 170 runs in five innings with a highest score of 85 not out against the Barbados Royals. Gous also finished with the Falcons' second highest batting average of 56.66 runs per innings.

Seales finished as the Falcons' leading wicket-taker, grabbing 10 scalps for 284 runs in 10 matches.



Jayden Seales

His best figures were a match-winning four for 15 against the Guyana Amazon Warriors in the Falcons' last match in the preliminary stage of the competition.

Vincentian left-arm fast bowler Obed McCoy finished as the second-highest wicket-taker for the Falcons with nine wickets for 226 runs in seven matches.

Veteran Bangladesh all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan was the third leading



Karima Gore

wicket-taker for the Falcons. The left-arm spinner picked up six wickets for 191 runs in 10 matches.

This year, the Falcons made the knockout stages for the first time in their two-year history after becoming the CPL's newest franchise in 2024.

The Falcons were captained by all-rounder Imad Wasim of Pakistan, and Paul Nixon of England served as the new head coach of the team in this year's CPL.



Pooran sanctioned for Level 1 offence in CPL eliminator



Trinbago Knight Riders' captain Nicholas Pooran bats against Antigua and Barbuda Falcons during Eliminator 1 of the CPL at the National Stadium in Providence, Guyana, on Tuesday, September 16, 2025. (CPL/Getty Images)

The Republic Bank Caribbean Premier League (CPL) has confirmed that Trinbago Knight Riders captain Nicholas Pooran has been charged with a Level 1 offence under the CPL Code of Conduct for showing dissent at an umpire's decision during the eliminator match against the Antigua & Barbuda Falcons in Guyana on Tuesday night.

The incident occurred during a high-stakes clash, where Pooran was twice adjudged leg-before wicket by

on-field umpire Ryan Banwarie, both decisions overturned on review.

The emotional reactions that followed led to the charge under the league's disciplinary code. Pooran has accepted the sanction, which includes a fine of 20 percent of his match fee.

Despite the controversy, the left-hander delivered a commanding performance, guiding Trinbago Knight Riders to a nine-wicket victory with a match-defining

innings that ensured their progression in the tournament.

Speaking after the game, Pooran acknowledged the emotional nature of the contest and extended an apology for his conduct.

"In big games, we tend as players to be in the moment as much as possible," he said.

"And when decisions don't go your way, you tend to be emotional, and it was tough to keep your emotions

in. Obviously, I apologise to the umpires—in the spirit of the game—but I'm just happy that we could get over the line."

The win sees Trinbago Knight Riders advance to the second qualifier, where they will face defending champions St. Lucia Kings on Friday at the National Stadium in Providence for a place in the 2025 CPL final against Guyana Amazon Warriors at the same venue on Sunday.

Warriors beat Kings to advance to CPL final

The Guyana Amazon Warriors stormed into the 2025 Republic Bank Caribbean Premier League (CPL) final on the back of an all-round bowling display to snatch a 14-run victory against defending champions St. Lucia Kings in Qualifier 1 at the national stadium in Providence, Guyana, on Wednesday night.

The Amazon Warriors, who advanced to their 8th CPL final, were all out for 157 in 19.5 overs after being sent in to bat and pulled off their victory by dismissing the Kings for 143 in 19.1 overs.

A decent start with the bat saw the Warriors reach 45 for one at the end of the power play but lose wickets regularly throughout their innings.

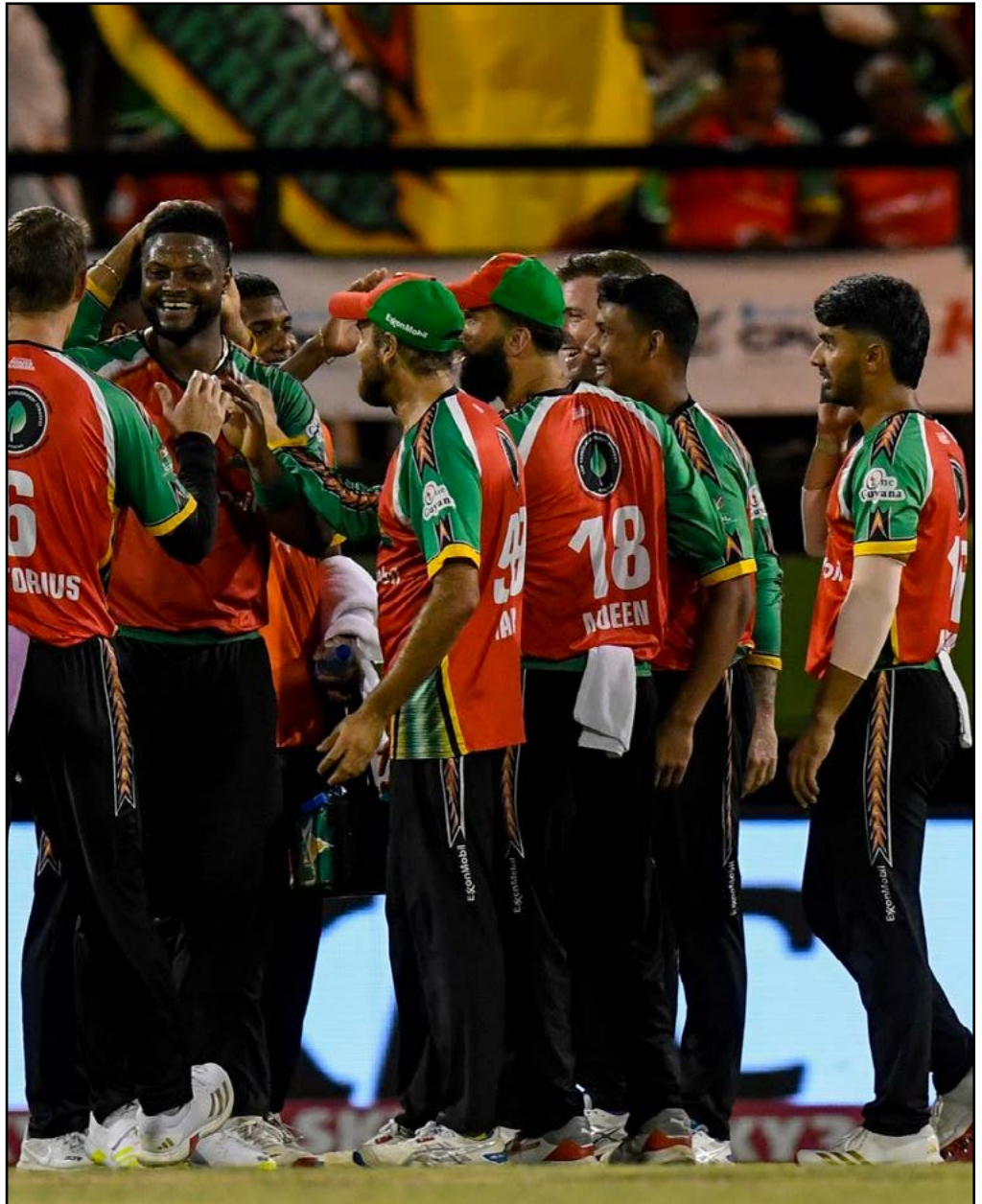
New recruit and pacer Tymal Mills claimed two for 28 on his CPL debut, but it was leg-spinner Tabraiz Shamsi who did the most damage, claiming three for 33 to keep his spot at the top of the Kings' wicket-taking list.

Captain David Wiese picked up two for 14, and Antiguan fast bowler Alzarri Joseph captured two for 34.

Opener Ben McDermott hit a top score of 34 off 27 balls, and Shai Hope struck 32 from 29 balls as wickets fell around him. Some big blows from Romario Shepherd, who made 21 off eight balls, and Dwaine Pretorius with 17 off eight balls took the Warriors' total past the 150 mark.

Any fears of a below-par total were quickly put to bed as the Warriors ripped apart the Kings' top order as the St. Lucian side crumbled to 12 for three and then 48 for seven. With the heart of their batting line-up gone, it became an impossible task for the Kings.

A stand of 37 between Khary Pierre, who hit 50 off 29 balls, and Alzarri Joseph gave some respectability to the Kings' total. But with the rate continuing to climb, it was not long before an-



Players of the Guyana Amazon Warriors celebrate after beating St. Lucia Kings in Qualifier 1 of the CPL at the National Stadium in Providence, Guyana, on Wednesday, September 17, 2025. (Getty Images)

other wicket fell, with Joseph caught in the deep for 14.

Pierre went on to make his maiden T20 half-century, which included five sixes and three fours, and Mills made a career-best 30, but the damage had been done earlier in the innings.

Left-arm spinner Gudakesh Motie claimed four for 30, and Imran Tahir finished with two for 22 as he cemented his place as this year's most de-

structive bowler in the CPL with 19 wickets. Pretorius took two for 24.

The Warriors have now won three games on the bounce and will go straight through to Sunday's final.

For the Kings, their CPL is not over yet; having finished top of the table, they will get another shot to make the final when they play the Trinbago Knight Riders in Qualifier 2 in Guyana on Friday night.

Champions Royals complete 3-peat feat in women's CPL



The Barbados Royals players and staff collect the winners' trophy at the end of the Women's Massy Caribbean Premier League Final match against Guyana Amazon Warriors at Providence Stadium in Georgetown, Guyana, on Wednesday, September 17, 2025. The Royals won by three wickets. (CPL/Getty Images)

The Barbados Royals went unbeaten in the Massy Women's Caribbean Premier League (WCPL) to win their third consecutive title after beating the Guyana Amazon Warriors by three wickets with two balls to spare in a nail-biting final at Providence Stadium in Guyana on Wednesday.

Asked to bat first, the Warriors reached a score of 136 for three with opener Amy Hunter scoring 29 from 36 balls. The rest of the top order supported but could not muster enough boundaries to put on a truly challenging total.

Dane Van Niekerk (27) and captain Shermaine Campbelle (28) joined forces to put together an unbeaten 56-run partnership for the fourth wicket after Stafanie Taylor was forced to retire hurt just when the Warriors were looking to accelerate the scoring.

In reply, the Royals lost two wickets in the power-play, including the in-form Chamari Athapaththu for 25. However, Kycia Knight and Courtney Webb each scored 31 to set up the push for a third consecutive title despite a late fightback from the hosts.

The Royals were on course at 108 for four in the 17th before losing three wickets for the addition of two runs.

With 19 needed from 12 balls, Aaliyah Alleyne hit seamer Molly Penfold for a six then a four, as 15 runs were wiped off leaving Laura Harris with a difficult assignment of defending four in the final over.

In the end, Alleyne and Shreyanka Patil avoided further drama with a 27-run partnership from 14 balls to spark wild celebrations among the Royals and heartbreak and tears for the

spirited Warriors.

Athapaththu scored the most runs in the tournament, and along with seven wickets, was named Player of the Series.

Ashmini Munisar took three for 21, and Nyia Latchman captured two for 31. Munisar and Laura Harris of the Warriors each bagged eight wickets to share the prize for the most wickets.

With the win, the Royals have now extended their dominance over the Warriors to 9-0.

Antigua names volleyball squad for ECVA's Final Four



The Antigua and Barbuda team and the coaching and management staff at the 18th Senior Men's Pan American Volleyball Cup at the Domo de la Feria in León, Guanajuato, Mexico, on Sunday, August 31, 2025. (File photo)

Host Antigua and Barbuda will be represented by a 14-member squad at this weekend's inaugural Eastern Caribbean Volleyball Association's (ECVA) Men's Final Four Championship.

Eleven of the 12 players who represented Antigua and Barbuda in their debut appearance at the 18th Senior Men's Pan American Cup in Mexico from August 24 to September 1 have been retained for the ECVA's Men's Final Four, which will be hosted by the Antigua and Barbuda and Barbuda Amateur Volleyball Association (ABAVA) at the indoor stadium at the YMCA Sports Complex in St. John's from September 19 to 21.

Setter Miguel Pena-Lugo is the only

omission from the squad that went to Mexico, while opposite hitters Paul Richards and Immanuel Donovan and outside hitter Kristos Daquaia Marshall have been included in the team for this weekend's ECVA championship.

Outside hitter Erwin Mathurin has been retained as captain to lead the senior national men's team.

The squad also includes experienced opposite attacker Adrian Constant, along with regular national players outside hitter Cairon Davis, setter Collin Thomas, middle blocker Dwight Bonnie, and libero Yashid Auguiste.

The squad is completed by inexperienced national players, setter Barrymore Daley, opposite attacker George

Freeland, libero Raenor Sharpe, and middle blockers Jervon Carbon and Kemarni Joseph.

The team will be supported and guided by head coach Carl Williams, assistant coaches Augusto Sabbatini of Brazil and Braulio Estrada, team manager Fitzroy Benjamin, and physiotherapist Anayra Ruiz.

Antigua and Barbuda, who qualified for the Senior Men's Pan American Cup by winning the Eastern Caribbean Volleyball Association's (ECVA) tournament for the past two years, will be among the favourites to win this month's inaugural ECVA Men's Final Four.

The host nation will be joined by the national men's teams of St. Lucia, Grenada, and Dominica to compete for the ECVA Men's Final Four title.

The four teams will engage each other in round-robin pool play, with the top two teams advancing to the final. The tournament will serve off with an opening night double-header on Friday, September 19.

St. Lucia will face Dominica at 6 pm, and host Antigua and Barbuda will launch their campaign against Grenada at 8:30 pm.

The tournament will continue with a double-header on the morning of Saturday, September 20. St. Lucia will tackle Grenada at 9 am, and Antigua and Barbuda will face Dominica at 11 am.

The teams return to the venue later that evening to battle in the final two round-robin matches. Dominica will take on Grenada at 7 pm, and Antigua and Barbuda will clash with St. Lucia at 9 pm.