

Cabinet Weighs Tighter Police/Telecom Cooperation

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CIBC on Thursday launched 'Walk for the Cure' 2025.
This is the 14th year the financial institution will organise the fundraising event, which will be held on 11th October, 2025.
Walk for the Cure raises awareness of Breast Cancer and funds raised go towards support and research. The contributions of corporate sponsors were highlighted during yesterday's launch.

Local News

Cabinet Weighs Police Request for Greater Telecom Support in Crime Fighting



The Cabinet of Antigua and Barbuda is reviewing a request from the Royal Police Force of Antigua and Barbuda for greater cooperation from telecommunications providers to aid in solving crimes.

The matter, discussed this week and set to continue at the next Cabinet meeting, stems from recent consultations between police officials and government leaders.

According to Maurice Merchant, Director General of Communications, the police believe telecom providers could play a stronger role in providing information that might prove vital to criminal investigations. Law enforcement officials argue that additional support from providers could help close cases more efficiently and strengthen overall public safety.

The issue was raised with Attorney General, Sir Steadroy Benjamin and his legal team, who have been tasked with examining the legal pathways available to encourage or persuade providers to share information when necessary.

While the request underscores the police's urgent need for investiga-

tive tools, the Cabinet acknowledged the delicate balance between public safety and individual privacy.

Merchant noted that many modern mobile devices, such as iPhones, feature end-to-end encryption that restricts access to private communications. "It's all in the legislation," he explained, adding that both government and providers must tread carefully given the sensitivity of citizens' data.

The Police have long relied on the public to voluntarily share information that could assist in solving crimes. However, when individuals are unwilling to come forward, investigators argue that telecom-

munications data could provide another avenue for gathering critical evidence.

The Cabinet is expected to continue its discussions in the coming weeks with the aim of striking a balance between enhancing law enforcement's investigative capacity and safeguarding constitutional rights to privacy.

Officials have stressed that no immediate decisions have been made, adding any outcome is likely to involve complex legal considerations and negotiations with telecom providers, as Antigua and Barbuda works to both strengthen national security and uphold the trust of its citizens.




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Government Moves to Regulate Motorised Bikes and Scooters Amid Rising Safety Concerns

The Government of Antigua and Barbuda is considering new measures to regulate motorised bicycles, scooters, and similar vehicles following a surge in accidents and traffic disruptions linked to their use.

Minister responsible for Public Safety, Sir Steadroy Benjamin, convened a high-level meeting with the Police High Command, the Ministry of Legal Affairs' drafting team, and other stakeholders to address the growing problem.

Law enforcement officials highlighted a sharp increase in road incidents involving scooters and small motorised vehicles. Officers noted that these machines often weave unpredictably through traffic, distracting drivers and heightening the risk of collisions.

Maurice Merchant, Director General of Communications, described the situation as a mounting public hazard.

"They zip through the traffic and they're responsible for



a number of accidents because you'll be driving and then all of a sudden someone speeds past you on the right or left. You're immediately distracted—and then what happens after? A collision," Merchant explained.

A major challenge facing the police is the lack of clear regulations. Unlike cars and motorcycles, scooters and motorised bicycles are not

currently subject to licensing requirements. This has left officers uncertain about how to pursue charges when accidents occur.

"The police are concerned. When accidents happen, how do they charge them, seeing that they are not licensed vehicles?" Merchant said, adding that Cabinet discussions focused on possible legislative fixes.

The popularity of scooters has grown rapidly, particularly among commuters looking for a quicker way to navigate Antigua and Barbuda's congested roads. However, police stress that the convenience must be weighed against serious safety risks for drivers, passengers, and pedestrians alike.

"These little motorised vehicles zip through traffic at considerable speed," Merchant noted. "The concern is not only for those driving them, but for the motoring public and pedestrians."

Cabinet is expected to review policy options in the coming weeks, which could include licensing requirements, speed restrictions, or new penalties for traffic violations involving scooters and motorised bicycles.

For now, officials say the priority is ensuring that road safety regulations keep pace with changing transport trends, protecting both riders and the wider public.

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Prime Minister Gaston Browne Calls for Delivery on Development Finance at UN High-Level Summit



Prime Minister Gaston Browne

Prime Minister Gaston Browne addressed the First Biennial Summit for a Sustainable, Inclusive and Resilient Global Economy: Implementing Commitments on Financing Development, urging the international community to move “from promises to practice” and deliver scaled, fair, and timely finance—especially for Small Island Developing States (SIDS).

The Prime Minister noted that global growth of 2.5–3% and public debt at US\$97 trillion are falling far short of what is needed to meet development and climate goals, while trade fragmentation, financial volatility, and worsening climate disasters erode confidence worldwide.

For SIDS, he said, instability is a lived reality: in 2024, climate-related disasters wiped out an estimated US\$7 billion across small islands in a single season. With the IPCC warning that sea levels could rise up to one metre this century—and with tourism exceeding 40% of GDP in some islands—SIDS remain three times more vulnerable to shocks than the

global average, often carrying 80–100% of GDP in public debt due to recovery costs and scarce concessional finance.

Prime Minister Browne said: “We cannot keep mortgaging our children’s future merely to survive today. The vision is not missing; the problem is implementation.”

Prime Minister Browne outlined concrete national steps to align words with delivery:

- Under the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for SIDS (ABAS), the Government has established a Debt Sustainability Support Service (DSSS) to restructure debt and channel finance into resilience.
- The first DSSS transaction is targeted to close by March 2026.
- Beginning in 2026, climate-resilient debt clauses will be included in all new sovereign issuances by Antigua and Barbuda.

To unlock finance at the necessary speed and scale, the Prime

Minister called on partners to:

1. Expand concessional and grant finance through Multilateral Development Banks using vulnerability-based access, not income per capita alone.
2. Adopt automatic disaster clauses so that debt service pauses immediately after catastrophes—“no pleadings while our people suffer.”
3. Standardise state-contingent instruments—including climate-resilient clauses and debt-for-nature/resilience swaps—as mainstream tools, not pilots.
4. Blend finance at scale, using guarantees and first-loss capital to crowd in philanthropy and private investment and lower costs.
5. Fund pipelines, not one-off projects, with ready country-owned programmes in resilient infrastructure, clean energy, and adaptation.

“Let us measure success not by communiqués,” the Prime Minister added, “but by classrooms rebuilt, clinics powered, homes protected, and by debt trajectories bent toward sustainability.”

Antigua and Barbuda invited MDBs, IFIs, philanthropy and private capital to partner through blended-finance structures and guarantees. The Government confirmed that its pipeline of resilience, clean energy, and adaptation projects is ready for co-financing and rapid execution.

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Antigua and Barbuda Signs Visa Waiver Agreements with three African States



Minister of Foreign Affairs, E.P. Chet Greene and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ghana



Minister of Foreign Affairs, E.P. Chet Greene and His Excellency Samuel Ablawka, Cabinet Secretary for Foreign Affairs of Kenya

The Government of Antigua and Barbuda this week signed three separate visa waiver agreements with the Republic of Ghana, the Republic of Kenya, and the Republic of Benin, in ceremonies held on the margins of the 80th Session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York.

The agreements were signed by Minister of Foreign Affairs, E.P. Chet Greene, on behalf of Antigua and Barbuda, with Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ghana, His Excellency Samuel Ablawka, Cabinet Secretary for Foreign Affairs of Kenya, His Excellency Dr. Musalia Mudavadi and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Benin, His Excellency Olushegun Adjadi Bakar.

The agreements mark an important milestone in strengthening the partnership between the Caribbean



Minister of Foreign Affairs, E.P. Chet Greene and His Excellency Olushegun Adjadi Bakar.

and Africa, rooted in shared history, cultural ties, and common aspirations for sustainable development. By facilitating easier travel, the visa waivers will deepen bonds between Antigua and Barbuda and its African partners, opening new pathways for expanded cultural, social, economic, and trade exchanges.

Minister Greene extended a formal invitation to Ghana, Kenya, and Benin to partic-

ipate in the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM), which Antigua and Barbuda will host in 2026. The meeting will be an opportunity to advance collaboration across the Commonwealth, with small states and Global South priorities at the centre of the agenda.

The Antiguan and Barbuda Foreign Affairs Minister welcomed the agreements, noting the shared history

and common purpose between the Caribbean and Africa.

“These agreements symbolize our commitment to building bridges across the Atlantic, fostering stronger partnerships, and ensuring that our peoples benefit from greater mobility, opportunity, and shared prosperity,” Greene stated.

The governments reaffirmed their commitment to continue building a robust framework for cooperation in multilateral fora, and to work collectively to advance the interests of developing countries, particularly those of small states and the wider Global South.

The agreements are also expected to unlock opportunities for collaboration across trade, investment, education, and culture.



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2025 INDEPENDENCE SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

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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)

Teen Held by Police for High Street Robbery

The police are questioning a 17-year-old male in connection with allegations of robbery.

In a statement, the Strategic Communications Department of the Royal Police Force of Antigua and Barbuda (STRATCOM) outlined that at approximately 7:00 p.m. on Monday, 22nd September, 2025, two people reported that they were accosted at gunpoint by two assailants, who robbed them of their vehicle, mobile phone, and other valuable items on High Street.

The suspects reportedly drove off with the stolen vehicle, heading in a westerly direction on High Street.

A report was made to the Criminal Investigations Department (CID), and an investigation was launched.

On Thursday, police say they arrested



the 17-year-old in the Clare Hall area and took him into custody. He is now assisting them with their investigation.

The Police Administration is appealing

to anyone with information that may assist in their investigation to contact the CID at 462-3913, or anonymously through the Crimestoppers Hotline at 800-TIPS (8477).

Police Report Two Cannabis Seizures in 24 Hours

The police have reported two Cannabis seizures within a 24-hour period in joint drug operations at V.C. Bird International Airport and Deep Water Harbour.

On Wednesday, the police and Customs Division conducted a search at the Deep Water Harbour Cargo area and discovered two cardboard boxes with 40 vacuum-sealed packages containing the controlled drug Cannabis.

The boxes, along with the contents, were transported to Police Head-



File Photo

quarters for further processing. The substance weighed in at 40 pounds with an estimated street value of \$240,000.

On Tuesday, a similar operation was conducted at the Cargo Shed at V.C. Bird International

Airport. During that operation, two cardboard boxes with 52 vacuum-sealed packages of the controlled drug Cannabis were discovered.

The packages were seized and taken to Police Headquarters. The

illicit drug totalled 52 pounds, with an estimated street value of \$312,000.

No arrests have been made.

Investigation into both incidents remains ongoing.

The police have described the seizures as a significant disruption to the illegal drug trade and highlighted the continued vigilance and cooperation between the Police and Customs in safeguarding the borders of Antigua and Barbuda.

The UWI FIC Wins Award for Technology Deployment



The UWI Five Islands team receives award at Ellucian LAC in Cancun, Mexico.

The University of the West Indies Five Islands Campus has been named recipient of the Ellucian LAC Visionary Leadership and Outstanding Award for its successful deployment of Ellucian SaaS, becoming the first institution in the English-speaking Caribbean to achieve this distinction.

The award was presented to The UWI Five Islands Team at the Ellucian Latin America and the Caribbean User Conference held in Cancun, Mexico from September 9 -11.

The campus completed its implementation of the baseline components in just six months, joining a select group of pioneering institutions across Latin America and the Caribbean that have

successfully launched Ellucian SaaS.

“This achievement represents more than a technological upgrade – it demonstrates the campus’ commitment to innovation and excellence in higher education” said Professor C. Justin Robinson, Campus Principal. “Our team’s dedication and focus have positioned The UWI Five Islands as a leader in high quality education delivery especially in the area of technology services, and we are excited about the possibilities this opens for our students, staff and the wider Caribbean.”

The successful deployment was led by Prof. Robinson and Campus Registrar Dr. Camille Samuel, along with a dedicated implementation team from sev-

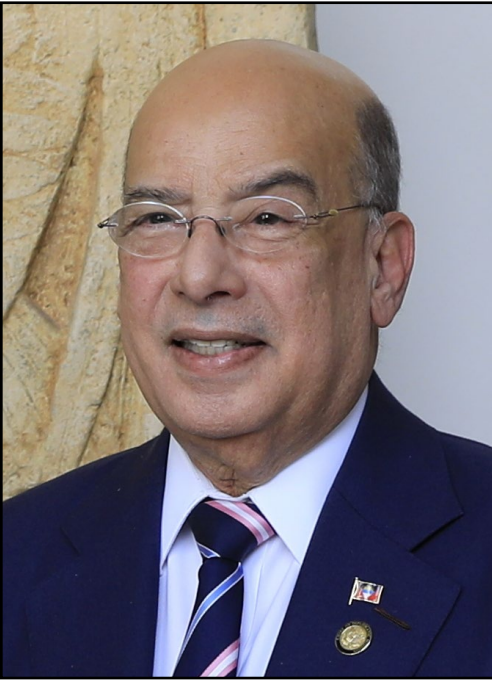
eral departments across the campus. The campus plans to launch Banner Apply this September, with additional components scheduled for rollout through the 2025/2026 academic year.

Raul Vega, Director of Global Success Services at Ellucian, noted in a LinkedIn post that this implementation could serve as a model for institutional transformation across the Caribbean and Latin America region and beyond.

The UWI Five Islands Campus currently has a student population of over 1300 students studying a variety of degrees at the undergraduate and post-graduate levels.

Commentary

Is the UN still beneficial to small countries?



By Sir Ronald Sanders

On September 23, 2025, U.S. President Donald Trump used his address to the 80th session of the UN General Assembly to question the Organization's purpose. He is not alone; leaders worldwide have asked the same question. "The UN has such tremendous potential," he said, but it is "not even coming close," and "empty words don't solve war." On that point, many would agree.

However, many countries contend that the UN falls short because real control rests with a few powerful states that wield veto power in the Security Council to serve perceived national interests. In consequence, the principles of the UN Charter - and at times international humanitarian law - are set aside, raising serious doubts about the system's fairness.

As the General Assembly met, the point was driven home. By September 25, 2025, Israel had intensified operations in Gaza City and

elsewhere, with rising casualties, mass displacement, and a deepening humanitarian emergency. The Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) confirmed famine in Gaza Governorate on August 22 and projected expansion to other areas by late September.

Global anger over the war and civilian suffering has broadened diplomatic responses. In the days around UNGA, the United Kingdom, Canada, France, Australia, and Portugal recognized the State of Palestine. Taken together, 157 of the UN's 193 member states - about 81% - now recognize Palestine.

In his address, President Trump argued that recognizing Palestine would "reward" Hamas for the October 2023 attacks. By contrast, most countries that spoke, including Caribbean states, condemned Hamas while reaffirming that Palestinians have a right to statehood alongside Israel. Hostage releases and an end to indiscriminate attacks were widely demanded, as was a political track that pursues the institutionalization of two states.

Countries also stressed that grave concerns about violations of international humanitarian law must not be conflated with antisemitism. Criticism of the policies and actions of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's government is not a commentary on Jewish people anywhere. The suffering and perseverance of Jewish communities are part of humanity's collective memory; invoking that history to shield present policies from scrutiny is unjustifiable and diminishes the fight against antisemi-

tism.

Perhaps the clearest divergence between President Trump and most UNGA speakers - especially small states - was on climate change. The President called climate change "the greatest con job ever perpetrated on the world". For small islands, this is not ideology but survival: stronger storms, rising seas, and soaring insurance costs are already eroding economies. As Palau's President Surangel Whipps Jr. put it during UNGA week, "Those with the greatest responsibility and the greatest capacity to act must do far more," noting that an advisory opinion by the International Court of Justice grounds this in international law.

Talking about CO₂ emissions, the main driver of climate change, President Trump argued that Europe's cuts had been "wiped out" by a global rise "much of it coming from China," adding that "China now produces more CO₂ than all the other developed nations in the world." Small states acknowledge the point, saying that it reinforces the case for all major emitters to cut. Notably, on September 24, 2025, China announced a target to cut its greenhouse-gas emissions by 7–10% below peak levels by 2035.

Small states, contributing least to CO₂ emissions yet suffering most, would agree with UN Secretary-General António Guterres, who put the issue plainly at a UNGA climate meeting: "The science demands action. The law commands it. The economics compel it. And people are calling for it." He warned that current pledges are inadequate and

Commentary

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linked the climate crisis to a wider risk - multipolarity without effective multilateral institutions “courts chaos.”

This exchange signals tougher terrain across UN institutions, including the Paris Agreement and COP talks. The U.S. has stepped back, while China’s assessed share of the UNFCCC budget is set to rise under the newly approved 2026–27 budget. This is a bureaucratic increase, not a new voluntary climate-finance pledge. Even so, U.S. policymakers should worry that their absence leaves more space for others to shape norms and agendas.

Small states, including in the Caribbean, want the United States engaged, not only for its resources, but because U.S. climate impacts spill across the neighbourhood, driving up insurance and transport costs that already-strained Caribbean and Central American economies struggle to absorb.

Caribbean states share President Trump’s often-stated desire for world peace. They welcomed his remarks on the war in Ukraine, following a meeting with President Volodymyr Zelenskyy in the margins of the UNGA. He said he now believes Ukraine can take back all its territory and urged quicker progress. Any U.S. initiative to secure such a development would be welcomed across the Caribbean.

So, is the UN still of value to small Caribbean states, despite big-power domination of Security Council decisions, influence over the UN’s budget and priorities, and sharp differences on vital matters? The answer is still yes, but with clear limits.

The UN remains the only place

where all states are present, where the record is public, and where small countries can put their concerns on the agenda and – if they are brave and astute – question major powers. Specialized agencies still deliver concrete services that benefit small states. But credibility is strained when rules are applied unevenly, financing is volatile, science is treated as optional, and equity of membership is denied.

Small states do not have the luxury of disengagement. The task is to use what still works, while being clear that constraints come from members, not the Charter.

(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)

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Regional News

Haitians who landed in Portland sent home, search continues for those in hiding



Thirty Haitians who were among a group that landed on a beach in Kensington in Portland on Sunday have been sent home.

They were repatriated today.

The group, which comprised children, was transported from a holding area in Manchioneal to the Boundbrook Wharf facility by the police, where they boarded a Jamaica Defence Force (JDF) coast guard vessel bound for Haiti.

The police are still searching for the remaining five Haitians who are still in hiding.

The Haitians reportedly fled their country as a result of political unrest, gang warfare, persecution, famine, and a lack of economic opportunities.

Subsequent to landing on Sunday, the police, with the support of the JDF, have carried out intense searches over the past three days to locate the Haitians, during which a total of 30 of them were captured and since repatriated.

The police say the search will continue for the remaining five Haitians. (Jamaica Gleaner)

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

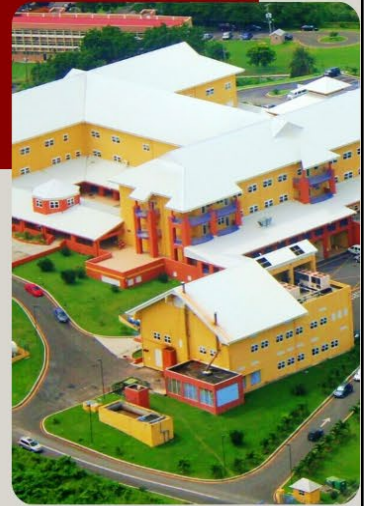
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Regional News

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Colombia's president calls for criminal investigation against Trump over Caribbean strikes



Colombian President Gustavo Petro on Tuesday called for a criminal investigation against US President Donald Trump and other officials involved in this month's deadly strikes on boats in the Caribbean that the White House has said were transporting drugs.

Petro repudiated the three attacks in his speech at the annual meeting of the UN General Assembly during which he also accused Trump of criminalizing poverty and migration.

"Criminal proceedings must be opened against those officials, who are from the US, even if it includes the highest-ranking official who gave the order: President Trump," Petro said of the strikes, adding that boat passengers were not members of the Venezu-

elan Tren de Aragua gang as claimed by the Trump administration after the first attack.

If the boats were carrying drugs as alleged by the US government, Petro said, their passengers "were not drug traffickers; they were simply poor young people from Latin America who had no other option."

Petro's comments came shortly after Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro announced that his government is preparing a series of constitutional decrees to defend the country's sovereignty in the event of an "attack" from US forces.

Few details are known about the deadly strikes, the first of which took place September 2 and killed 11 people, ac-

cording to the Trump administration.

US officials have said that boat and another vessel targeted September 16 had set out to sea from Venezuela.

Three people died in the second attack.

The US military struck a third boat Friday, killing three people.

The Trump administration has justified the military action as a necessary escalation to stem the flow of drugs into the United States.

It has yet to explain how the military assessed the boats' cargo and determined the alleged gang affiliation of passengers.

US national security officials told members of Congress that the first boat taken out was fired on multiple times after it had changed course and appeared headed back to shore.

"They said that the missiles in the Caribbean were used to stop drug trafficking. That is a lie stated here in this very rostrum," Petro said Tuesday in what appeared to be a direct reference to Trump, who spoke hours earlier. "Was it really necessary to bomb unarmed, poor young people in the Caribbean?"

Maduro has accused the Trump administration of using drug trafficking accusations as an excuse for a military operation whose intentions are to oust his government.

Petro, Colombia's first leftist president, restarted his country's diplomatic relations with Venezuela after taking office in 2022. (AP)



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Regional News

Church leaders stage march against obeah ahead of constitutional court challenge

Some church leaders on Wednesday staged a march in Spanish Town, St Catherine calling for Jamaica to uphold the law against obeah, saying the practise is wrong and goes against Jamaica's Christian principles.

It came a day before a constitutional challenge filed is expected to be heard in the Supreme Court.

The application is arguing, among other things, that sections of the 19th-century Obeah Act violate some rights and freedoms guaranteed under the Constitution, including freedom of religion, privacy, conscience, and expression.

Bishop Rowan Edwards, head of the 10,000 men and family March, argued at the gathering that the practise of obeah is sinful and should not be legalised in Jamaica.

He asserted that Jamaica could face becoming destroyed like countries such as Haiti that accept and practice voodoo or obeah.

"Whatever name it is called, we cannot allow for the demonic practise to be here, so we are praying and protesting



that the Government upholds the law in the continued role that obeah is simply wrong," said Edwards.

Expressing similar sentiments, President of the Jamaica Evangelical Alliance, Dr Alvin Bailey, argued that while obeah has gained some level of tolerance in the society, as it benefits some, the practice is destructive to Jamaica's moral fibre and should be shunned instead of given legal acceptance.

"The deviant, devilish practise of obeah in Jamaica must not become lawful, the church is against it. It is simply unacceptable."

"We are not going to have obeah being legalised, it is ungodly. It is a case now where criminals are

given guard rings to reign terror against the State, which is a Christian nation," said Pastor Dalbert Simmonds, President of

the Spanish Town Ministers Fraternal.

Meanwhile, attorney-at-law Bert Samuel, who is representing the applicant in the court case, which is set to be heard in the Constitutional Court on Thursday, dismissed the concerns of the church leaders.

He called their criticisms an emotional response, arguing that all religious practitioners and religious groups should be treated equally by the law. (Jamaica Gleaner)

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL



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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.

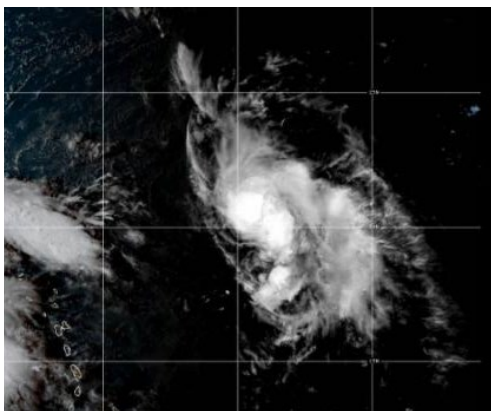
Individuals who are interested in making a bid for this position are kindly asked to contact the CMC Board via email atiya.fabian@ab.gov.ag with the subject heading REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL.

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

Regional News

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Tropical Storm Humberto forms in Atlantic as Hurricane Gabrielle takes aim at the Azores



Tropical Storm Humberto formed in the Atlantic Ocean on Wednesday at the same time Hurricane Gabrielle was racing across the ocean toward the Azores islands, forecasters said.

A hurricane warning was in effect for the volcanic archipelago which could experience dangerous conditions from Gabrielle as early as Thursday, the Miami-based National Hurricane Center said.

The Category 2 storm is forecast to weaken but could cause significant coastal flooding in the island chain as well as large, destructive waves, forecasters said. From Thursday into Friday, Gabrielle may bring up to 5 inches (13 centimetres) of rain across the central and western Azores.

In the Northern Atlantic, Gabrielle was centred about 1,010 miles (1,625 kilometres) west of the Azores on Wednesday afternoon.

It had maximum sustained winds of 100 mph (160 kph) and was travelling to the east at 28 mph (45 kph).

Waves generated by Gabrielle will continue to affect Bermuda, the US East Coast from North Carolina northward and the Atlantic coast of Canada, forecasters said. Life-threatening surf and rip currents are possible.

Tropical Storm Humberto was located 550 miles (885 kilometres) east-northeast of the northern Leeward Islands

with maximum sustained winds of 40 mph (65 kph), the weather centre said. Humberto is expected to affect the eastern coast of the US with 39 mph winds within the next five days.

In the Pacific, Hurricane Narda remained a Category 2 storm while continuing to move away from Mexico, forecasters said. On Wednesday afternoon, it had top sustained winds of about 100 mph.

Narda was centred about 560 miles (900 kilometres) south-southwest

of the southern tip of Mexico's Baja California peninsula, and was moving west at 10 mph (16 kph). No coastal watches or warnings were in effect as the hurricane was expected to continue moving further offshore.

Swells generated by Narda could bring rough surf and rip current conditions to some parts of coastal Mexico, forecasters said. The hurricane was expected to weaken over the next day or so, but restrengthen on Thursday and Friday. (AP)

NOTICE

TO:THE LICENSING MAGISTRATE

Magistrate's Court
Gray's Farm
St. John's
Antigua

TO:COMMISSIONER OF POLICE

Police Headquarters
American Road
St. John's
Antigua

NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR A TAVERN LICENSE FOR BUSINESS

REGISTERED AS

"QUBES LAUNDRY AND MINI MART"

I, LATOYA JOSEPH - PELLE, DO HEREBY GIVE NOTICE, that it is my intension to apply at the next sitting of the Liquor License Court to be held at the Magistrate's Court, High Street, StJohn's Antigua on Thursday 2nd October, 2025 next ensuring for a tavern license in respect of premises known as "QUBES LAUNDRY AND MINI MART" situated in BUCKLEY VILLAGE, in the Parish of St. John's Antigua pursuantto Section 11 (3) of the Licensing (intoxicating Liquor) Act Cap 249 of the Laws of Antigua and Barbuda, Revised Edition 1992.

Dated the 10th day of September, 2025

Latoya Joseph-Pelle
(268) 723-0025

Starbucks to cut 900 jobs, close some underperforming stores



Starbucks said Thursday that it will eliminate 900 nonretail jobs and “close many open positions.”

The coffee retailer will also shutter some of its underperforming stores, CEO Brian Niccol told employees in a memo.

Even with the closures, Starbucks will end the year with more than 18,000 locations, he added. Thursday’s announcements will cost the company about \$1 billion, it disclosed in a securities filing.

“The ‘Back to Starbucks’ strategy focuses on revitalizing coffeehouses and enhancing the customer experience,” the company wrote. “As part of this strategy, the Company assessed its existing store portfolio

with respect to both whether coffeehouses had a viable path to offering the physical environment consistent with the brand and a clear path to financial performance. It will close those coffeehouses that do not meet these criteria.”

The restructuring is the latest major change from Niccol, who was appointed to run the company just over a year ago. Earlier this year, Starbucks cut another 1,100 corporate jobs.

“While we’re making good progress, there is much more to do to build a better, stronger and more resilient Starbucks,” Niccol wrote in the memo.

So far, Niccol’s strategy has received mixed reviews. The company’s stock is

down more than 7% so far this year.

Starbucks revamped in-store condiment offerings, instructed store workers to write personal messages on

cups again and aims to have drinks prepared in under four minutes.

It rebranded stores as “coffeehouses” and also pulled some complicated-to-make items off its menu to streamline operations.

The company’s sales have also faced challenges. Same-store sales have fallen for six straight quarters, hurt by price-sensitive consumers.

After Starbucks rolled out a dress code, thousands of baristas went on strike. The strike expanded when workers demanded pay increases.

Starbucks also ordered corporate workers back to the office four days a week. Niccol received a “small remote office” in his hometown of Newport, California, when he was hired to run the company. (NBC)



Nicolas Sarkozy sentenced to five years in Libya campaign financing case

Former French president Nicolas Sarkozy has been sentenced to five years in jail after being found guilty of criminal conspiracy in a case related to millions of euros of illicit funds from the late Libyan leader Col Muammar Gaddafi.

The Paris criminal court acquitted him of all other charges, including passive corruption and illegal campaign financing.

Speaking to reporters after the hearing the 70-year-old, who was the president of France from 2007 to 2012, called the verdict an “extremely serious for rule of law”.

Sarkozy, who claims the case is politically motivated, was accused of using the funds from Gaddafi to finance his 2007 election campaign.

In exchange, the prosecution alleged Sarkozy promised to help Gaddafi combat his reputation as a pariah with Western countries.

Judge Nathalie Gavarino said Sarkozy had allowed close aides to contact Libyan officials with a view to obtaining financial support for his campaign.

But the court ruled that there was not enough evidence to find Sarkozy was the beneficiary of the illegal campaign financing.

He was sentenced to five years in jail. The ruling means he will spend time in jail even if he appeals.

He was also ordered to pay a fine of 100,000 euros (£87,000).

There was a shocked intake of breath in court when the judge read out her sentence.

Sarkozy could be sent to prison in Paris in the coming days – a first for a former French president and a humil-



iating blow for a man who has always protested his innocence in this trial and the other legal cases against him.

Speaking outside court, Sarkozy said he was innocent and would appeal the ruling.

“What happened today... is of extreme gravity in regard to the rule of law, and for the trust one can have in the justice system.

“If they absolutely want me to sleep in jail, I will sleep in jail, but with my head held high,” he said.

The investigation was opened in 2013, two years after Saif al-Islam, son of the then-Libyan leader, first accused Sarkozy of taking millions of his father’s money for campaign funding.

The following year, Lebanese businessman Ziad Takieddine - who for a long time acted as a middleman between France and the Middle East - said he had written proof that Sarkozy’s campaign bid was “abundantly” financed by Tripoli, and that the €50m (£43m) worth of payments continued after he became president.

Among the others accused in the trial were former interior ministers,

Claude Gueant and Brice Hortefeux. The court found Gueant guilty of corruption, among other charges, and Hortefeux was found guilty of criminal conspiracy.

Sarkozy’s wife, Italian-born former supermodel and singer Carla Bruni-Sarkozy, was charged last year with hiding evidence linked to the Gaddafi case and associating with wrongdoers to commit fraud, both of which she denies.

Since losing his re-election bid in 2012, Sarkozy has been targeted by several criminal investigations.

He also appealed against a February 2024 ruling which found him guilty of overspending on his 2012 re-election campaign, then hiring a PR firm to cover it up. He was handed a one-year sentence, of which six months were suspended.

In 2021, he was found guilty of trying to bribe a judge in 2014 and became the first former French president to get a custodial sentence. In December, the Paris appeals court ruled that he could serve his time at home wearing a tag instead of going to jail. (BBC)

Over 1,000 children fall ill from free school lunches in Indonesia



More than 1,000 children have fallen ill from free school lunches in Indonesia this week, according to authorities – the latest in a string of mass food poisoning events linked to President Prabowo Subianto's multi-billion-dollar nutritious meals programme.

Yuyun Sarihotima, head of West Java's Cipongkor Community Health Center, told BBC Indonesia that the total number of poisoning victims recorded between Monday and Wednesday had reached 1,171.

It follows the poisoning of 800 students last week in West Java and Central Sulawesi provinces.

President Prabowo has made the nutritious meals

programme – which aims to offer free lunches to 80 million school children – a signature of his leadership.

But a spate of mass food poisoning incidents has led non-governmental organisations to call for authorities to suspend the programme due to health concerns.

Muhaimin Iskandar, Coordinating Minister for Community Empowerment, said on Wednesday that “there are no plans to stop it”.

Victims of the recent outbreaks complained of stomach aches, dizziness, and nausea – as well as shortness of breath, which is a non-typical symptom of food poisoning

Previous cases of food poi-

soning stemming from the free lunch programme have cited negligent food preparation as a suspected cause.

This week's victims ate meals that included soy sauce chicken, fried tofu, vegetables and fruit – but past poisoning incidents have been linked to expired sauce and, in one case, the serving of fried shark.

The head of Indonesia's National Nutrition Agency Dadan Hindayana said on Wednesday that the mass food poisoning in Cipongkor last week was the result of a technical error by the Nutrition Fulfillment Service Unit (SPPG)

The SPPG's operations in Cipongkor have reportedly been suspended, according

to the National Nutrition Agency.

West Bandung regent Jeje Ritchie Ismail said his party had declared the mass poisoning in Cipongkor “an extraordinary event so that handling can be faster and more comprehensive”.

The free school lunch program is a centrepiece project of President Prabowo Subianto.

Cipongkor is where the first suspected case of this week's mass poisoning occurred on Monday – with the number of victims quickly increasing to some 475 students.

On Wednesday, another mass poisoning in Cipongkor saw as many as 500 students fall ill after consum-

ing free lunches.

The National Narcotics Agency (BGN) reported that from January to 22 September, there were 4,711 cases of free school lunch poisoning. The majority of cases occurred on the island of Java.

However, a higher figure was reported by the Indonesian Education Monitoring Network (JPPI). This NGO recorded that as of 21 September 21, the number of poisoning victims had increased to 6,452 children.

“This abnormal situation should require the government to declare an outbreak and temporarily halt the program for a thorough evaluation,” said JPPI National Coordinator Ubaid Matraji.

Some have called for changes to the scheme, including a proposal that funds be distributed directly to parents so that they can prepare meals for their children in-

stead. The BGN has previously rejected this idea.

Across the world, programmes offering free meals to students have proved to be effective in improving health, academic performance and attendance.

But Indonesia’s \$28bn (£21bn) version - shaping up to be the most expensive of its kind - has become the growing target of food safety concerns and heated anti-government protests.

A centrepiece of Prabowo’s presidential campaign last year, the free meals programme was pitched as a way to tackle stunting - a condition caused by malnutrition that affects a fifth of children below the age of five in Indonesia.

“Through this initiative, our children will grow taller and emerge as champions,” Prabowo said in 2023.

Since he took office last October, this programme,

along with other populist policies like new houses and free medical check-ups, have earned him political points. His approval ratings stood at 80% after his first 100 days in power.

In the first phase, which began in January, free school meals have made their way to 550,000 students in 26 provinces.

While the programme is “well-intentioned”, Maria Monica Wihardja, a visiting fellow at ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute, previously told the BBC there has been “no evidence” of “widespread urgency” for free school meals.

According to a national survey in 2024, less than 1% of Indonesia’s households went at least one day without any meals in the past year.

The cost of the programme has not helped matters.

Indonesia has set aside more

than \$10bn this year for the free school meals.

By comparison, India spends \$1.5bn a year to feed 120 million children in what is the world’s largest such programme. Brazil’s version costs about the same and serves some 40 million students.

Defenders of the programme have argued that it has been approved and secured in the already-passed 2026 State Budget.

But experts have warned that its colossal cost could also lead to other concerns.

Large-scale social assistance programmes in Indonesia have historically been “riddled with corruption”, Muhammad Rafi Bakri, a research analyst at Indonesia’s audit board, told the BBC.

“Given the sheer size of the budget,” he said, “this program is a goldmine for corrupt officials.” (BBC)



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Sports News

Springer to be inducted into Cricket Hall of Fame in USA



Vernon Springer, left, and veteran cricket commentator Joseph "Redds" Perreira during live commentary of a cricket match.



Vernon Springer, right, and legendary West Indies cricketer Sir Richie Richardson in the studios of Pointe FM Radio.

Vernon Springer, Chief Operations Officer of the Leeward Islands Cricket Board, will be inducted into the distinguished Cricket Hall of Fame (CHOF) in Hartford, Connecticut, in the United States of America next month.

Springer, who is also a cricket coach, analyst, commentator, owner of VA Sports Media, and media practitioner, will be among 12 nominees who will be admitted into the cricket museum of the CHOF during its 44th Induction Ceremony at the Marriott Hotel in Windsor, Connecticut, on Saturday, October 4.

Chairman of the CHOF Michael Chambers says Springer was nominated by Jatin Patel of California to be inducted in this year's edition.

"To be inducted, somebody had to nominate you. Springer was nominated by Jatin Patel and the Cricket Show out of California," Chambers said.

"Springer has accomplished all requirements

to be inducted this year, so when he comes to the induction ceremony in October, he will be announced as being qualified to be an inductee with all the honours and privileges of the CHOF.

"Springer will receive a certificate and a citation from one of the senators in the state of Connecticut."

Springer is being recognized for his distinguished contribution to the growth and development of cricket in the Caribbean islands.

A native of St. Kitts and Nevis, Vernon Springer, who currently resides in Antigua and Barbuda, hosts the Pointe On De Streetz current affairs programme on Pointe FM Radio (99.1 FM).

"When someone does something for over 40 years and you look at your life-long contribution, not only to cricket but to sports, serving in various capacities, and being recognized for it, is an honour," Springer said.

Springer has expressed his gratitude and is dedicat-

ing the honour to his mentors, sponsors, families, and friends.

He singled out mentors such as Hesketh Benjamin, Vincent Demin, Hugh Gore, Sir Vivian Richards, Sir Richie Richardson, Sir Andy Roberts, Eldeane Baptiste, Noel Guishard, Hayden "Sharlo" Walsh, Robert Pemberton, former basketballer and Minister of Sports in St. Kitts Glen "Ghost" Phillip, and his parents as playing instrumental roles in his life.

Another Kittitian, former cricketer Ingleton Liburd, who now resides in Canada, is also among the nominees to be inducted into the CHOF.

Former cricketer Roland Butcher of Barbados will also be inducted. Butcher is a former cricket player and coach who played for England in three Test matches and three One Day Internationals from 1980 to 1981. He is recognised as being the first black cricketer to represent England.

During this year's cere-

mony, Trinidadian Ivy Mahabir, who now resides in New Jersey, USA, will receive the CHOF's First Female Lifetime Achievement Award.

Mahabir, who is regarded as New Jersey's First Lady of Cricket, will be honoured for dedicating more than three decades of her life to developing cricket in New Jersey, leaving an impact that is wide and far-reaching.

Founded in 1980, the CHOF is the first international cricket hall of fame in the world. Every year, the CHOF hosts an induction ceremony on the first Saturday of October, drawing inductees from around the world.

Inductees are selected for two categories -- players of distinction and someone who has done something to advance the sport of cricket.

The Cricket Hall of Fame is supported by the Sportsmen's Athletic Club of Hartford, which was established in 1963.

Willock continues to dominate ABDA draughts tournament

Top-seed Bernard “King Premier” Willock continued his dominance of the Antigua and Barbuda Draughts Association’s (ABDA) Cool and Smooth Invitational Tournament on the third and penultimate night of the competition.

Willock, who won his previous four matches, notched up four more wins on Wednesday night to extend his unbeaten run in the four-day competition, which is taking place at the Gray’s Green Community Basketball Court.

Willock surged to 9-0 drubbings of Elvis Cordice and Anthony “Tony” Gomes. He trounced Tion Grant 7-1 and prevailed 5-2 against Stevenson “Smoothie” Vital in his most challenging match of the tournament.



Bernard ‘King Premier’ Willock

It was a good night as well for St. Clair Josiah, who won three of his four matches. Josiah romped to 7-1 wins against Tion Grant and Stevenson “Smoothie” Vital.

Josiah also prevailed 6-3 against Eustace “Zocio” Samuel but could only salvage a 4-4 draw in his encounter with Amakusa Jeremiah.

Elvis Cordice surged to a crushing 9-0 win against Amakusa Jeremiah and romped to a 7-1 win against Eustace “Zocio” Samuel.

Cordice was only able to secure a 4-4 draw with Tion Grant in his other encounter.

Anthony “Tony” Gomes also recorded a dominant 9-0 victory against Eustace “Zocio” Samuel.

Amakusa Jeremiah claimed a 7-1 victory against Eustace “Zocio” Samuel but was only able to achieve a 3-3 draw with Stevenson “Smoothie” Vital.

The draughts competition was expected to conclude on Thursday evening.

Teams get first wins in Business Basketball League

Two teams, Sledge O Ballers and Cornerstone Builders and Maintenance, recorded their first wins in the 2025 Cool and Smooth Antigua and Barbuda Basketball Association’s (ABBA) Business League Championships on Wednesday night.

Sledge O Ballers, who suffered a 54-82 victory against the Board of Education in their opening encounter, rebounded to claim a 69-39 victory against Sir Lester Bird Medical Centre in the first game of a double-header at the JSC Sports Complex.

ble-header at the JSC Sports Complex.

Bernard Andrew sank 18 points and grabbed eight rebounds; Morlon Davis produced 15 points, 12 rebounds, three assists, and three blocks; and Leroy Percival converted 10 points and claimed five rebounds for Sledge O Ballers.

Point guard Nigel Joseph scored 11 points and distributed four assists for Sir Lester Bird Medical Centre, who lost for the second time in as many games.

After losing their first three matches, Cornerstone Builders and Maintenance notched up their first win with a 52-37 victory against newcomers Antigua Computer Technology in the second game of Wednesday’s double-header.

Takeem Martin shot a game-high 18 points and grabbed 18 rebounds for Cornerstone Builders and Maintenance. David Mensah scored 10 points for Antigua Computer Technology in their debut appearance in the business basketball

league.

The business league competition will continue with a triple-header at the JSC Sports Complex on Saturday evening.

The Sledge O Ballers will meet former champions Antigua and Barbuda Transport Board at 7 pm, Antigua Computer Technology will tackle Anjo Wholesale at 8 pm, and the Board of Education will clash with H. Wright Promotions at 9 pm.



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WE ARE GETTING STRONGER

CWI congratulates Samson as breakout player of 2025 CPL



Guyana Amazon Warriors batsman Quentin Sampson, left, accepts his cheque from CEO of CWI Chris Dehring. (Photo courtesy of CWI Media)

Cricket West Indies (CWI) has congratulated Quentin Sampson on being named the Breakout Player of the 2025 Republic Bank Caribbean Premier League (CPL), following an outstanding debut season with the Guyana Amazon Warriors.

Several young players put their hands up for the award with eye-catching performances during the August 14 – September 21 tournament, having earned their opportunity through standout performances in the CWI Breakout League in Trinidad earlier this year.

Notably, Ackeem Auguste shone for the St. Lucia Kings, highlighted by a fluent 73 against the Guyana Amazon Warriors, while spinner Navin Bidaisee impressed with the ball, capturing 7 wickets for the St. Kitts & Nevis Patriots at an economy rate of 8.04.

Also putting their names on the map with respect to the development of talent throughout the region were Jediah Blades, Nathan Edward, and Antiguan all-rounder Karima Gore.

Sampson, however, stood out for his consistency and match-winning impact. In eight matches, he scored 241

runs at an average of 40.16 and a strike rate of 153, including a career-best 76 that helped secure victory for his team.

His ability to rise to the occasion underlined his talent and temperament at this level.

“Quentin’s performances, as well as those of others this season, are both pleasing and encouraging for West Indies Cricket,” said Miles Bascombe, CWI Director of Cricket.

“They have shown that our emerging players can step up and deliver when they are given the opportunity.”

Sports

FRIDAY 26TH SEPTEMBER 2025

POINT EXPRESS
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Winning starts for PMS and CHSS in schools' knockout competition



Princess Margaret School girls football team



Clare Hall Secondary girls football team

Princess Margaret School (PMS) and Clare Hall Secondary School (CHSS) made successful starts to their campaigns in the girls' division of the 2025 Ministry of Sports, Cool and Smooth, Joma Secondary Schools Football Knockout Championship on Wednesday.

Both teams recorded contrasting wins in their opening matches to kick off the girls' division competition, which is being played at the ABFA Technical Center at Paynters.

Princess Margaret School, which won the title in 2022, the year in which the competition was last held, romped to a 9-0 drubbing of St. Mary's Secondary School.

Rollesha Humphreys achieved a hat trick with conversions in the third, 33rd, and 42nd minutes, while Jakayla Bellot, Karmiellia Hughes, and Kavita Cordice each scored twice.

Bellot struck in the fifth

and 31st minutes, Hughes had conversions in the 10th and 48th minutes, and Cordice scored in the 41st and 58th minutes.

It was much closer in the second match of Tuesday's opening-round double-header, as Clare Hall Secondary School came from behind to snatch a 2-1 victory against Jennings Secondary School.

A 23rd-minute strike by Latoya Williams gave Jennings Secondary a one-nil lead at halftime. Clare Hall Secondary were able to overcome the deficit and snatch victory with second-half conversions by Jenica Matthias in the 32nd and 36th minutes.

A total of seven teams are contesting in the girls' knockout competition.

Meanwhile, Clare Hall Secondary, Antigua Grammar School, and Ottos Comprehensive School all recorded wins in the latest matches in the boys' division of the knockout com-

petition.

Clare Hall Secondary snatched a one-nil win against St. Mary's Secondary School. T'Kai Williams scored the winning goal in the 47th minute.

It's the first win for Clare Hall Secondary School, who were trailing Princess Margaret School 1-2 in their opening match that ended prematurely after a bottle, which was thrown onto the field by a spectator, struck one of the assistant referees in the 40th minute.

After prevailing 1-0 over All Saints Secondary School in their opening encounter, Antigua Grammar School notched up their second win in the competition with a 2-0 victory against Sir Novell Richards Academy.

Kent Pierre had a conversion in the 10th minute, and Owanell Williams scored in the 34th minute for Antigua Grammar School.

Ottos Comprehensive School, who suffered a 5-3

loss to the Harrison Centre Antigua and Barbuda School of Continuing Education (HCABSCE) in their opening match, rebounded to snatch a 1-0 victory against Irene B. Williams Secondary in their second encounter.

Robert Jeffrey scored the only goal of the match for Ottos Comprehensive School, which won the boys' division knockout title in 2022.

The Harrison Centre Antigua and Barbuda School of Continuing Education will face Irene B. Williams Secondary School in a boys' division match at the ABFA Technical Center on Friday at 5 pm.

It will be preceded by a girls' division double-header at the same venue. Ottos Comprehensive School will take on St. Mary's Secondary School at 3 pm, and Antigua Girls' High School will clash with Jennings Secondary at 4:15 pm.