

Senator Govia: Trust the process!

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Senator Govia: Trust the process!



Leader of Government Business in the Senate, Senator Shenella Govia, is urging fellow senators, and by extension the nation of Antigua and Barbuda, to ‘trust the process’ by exercising faith that the Gaston Browne Administration’s record of successful investments in the past, will have similar results for Social Security’s takeover of the Jolly Beach Hotel.

Sen. Govia was speaking on Wednesday in the Senate as the Upper Chamber of parliament met to discuss the government-sponsored resolution to give legisla-

tion backing to the move to transfer ownership of Jolly Beach Hotel to the Social Security Board in order to reduce the government’s indebtedness to the Scheme.

“Madame. President, since 2014, this Government has been reshaping our economic model. We have embraced what our Prime Minister calls “Empowerment Capitalism” — a system where the State and private sector work together, but with one critical difference: profits remain here, in Antigua and Barbuda, to benefit our citizens.

“We have already seen re-

sults. The West Indies Oil Company is now majority-owned by our people. Over EC\$160 million in profits have been retained and reinvested here. Our domestic banks, kept in local hands, posted EC\$110 million in profits last year.

“The transfer of Jolly Beach is the next step in this vision,” she emphasised.

Sen. Govia noted that through this initiative, the government replaces delinquent bonds held by the scheme with a real, marketable, income-generating national asset — a 27-acre beachfront resort with 350

rooms, and the potential to expand by 200 more.

“Instead of a less than desirable IOU, Social Security will hold an asset capable of generating over EC\$390 million in receipts within ten years, plus ongoing hotel profits. That is more than twice the value of the bond it replaces,” she explained.

He noted that without investment, the Fund will drown in deficits, but with investments, the Scheme secures cash flow, diversifies its assets, and strengthens its future.

Disagreements among the Opposition in the Senate

There was a major policy disagreement among two members of the opposition in the Senate on Wednesday as the Upper House of Parliament debated the government's resolution to transfer ownership of the Jolly Beach Hotel to the Social Security Scheme.

In making his contributions to the debate, Senator Jonathan Joseph, a native of the south, said both the Jolly Beach Hotel and the Social Security Scheme are dear to him. He added that the viability of the Scheme is a concern for everyone in the community and that he too shares those concerns.

However, he noted that as a hotelier for approximately 26 years who worked his way up from the entry level all the way to Acting General Manager, he is of the opinion that any investments into a hotel property, ought to show positive returns after seven to ten years. He added that anyone who does not 'make back' their investments after seven to ten years 'is in the wrong business'.

"With that experience and with that knowledge, I have no problem with Social Security being given the chance with this investment. It can happen to make us all feel comfortable that Social Security has the financial resources to meet its obligations," he declared.



Senator Jonathan Joseph

Sen. Joseph indicated that he has some concerns as over the years there have been numerous changes in ownership and other developments which he believes may have stymied the full potential of the hotel.

He added that he would have loved to have been given an opportunity to tour the hotel along with other parliamentarians so that they could see first-hand what Social Security is getting.

Another concern is that he wants to see the management of the hotel remaining in local hands, noting that the skills set exists here to manage the property.



Senator Pearl Quinn-Williams

But his colleague on the opposition side, Senator Pearl Quinn-Williams took a different view of the proposal regarding the transfer of ownership of the hotel to the Social Security Scheme.

"Brother Jonathan, I must, respectfully, disagree with you on this matter. I forgive you because you missed the class," she remarked.

She said the move to invest the Social Security Trust Fund into the Jolly Beach Hotel, while being made legal, is not right as the investment was in her words, 'a risky venture'.



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The Social Security Scheme is not alone in investing in hotels



Executive Director of the Social Security Scheme, David Matthias, is throwing his full support behind the government's move to transfer ownership of the Jolly Beach Hotel to the Scheme.

Speaking in an interview with ABS Television, Matthias said the move was 'both a necessary and an informed' decision.

"The Social Security Schemes of Barbados and Jamaica are currently making investments in their respective tourism sectors.

Why then shouldn't we here in Antigua and Barbuda do the same; that is to invest in the sector that contributes most to the nation's GDP and growth?" he queried.

The Executive Director further explained that in Antigua and Barbuda the tourism and hospitality sector continues to thrive and the nation's development is intricately tied to the performance of the sector.

"If 65 percent of the economy is tourism related, then it means that growth

in the tourism sector, even in the purest example, is taking place. One of the robust things that we have observed is the fact that hotels are remaining filled throughout the year. If this is the leading sector in the Antigua and Barbuda economy, why not that sector?" he observed.

Matthias explained that the challenge for the Scheme to diversify its revenue stream is not a problem that Antigua and Barbuda alone faces, but across the Caribbean these Schemes are facing similar challenges.

"Any Social Security Scheme operating in any part of the world, will one day face the fact that contribution income is insufficient to pay out benefits and to fund its operations. It therefore means that the Social Security Scheme has the responsibility to invest excess funds in periods of surplus in a way that would grow the reserve to meet the growing demands," he declared.

According to Matthias, the time to make those investments is now.

NSWMA hosts professional training for staff



The Management of the National Solid Waste Management Authority hosted a work place etiquette and professionalism training session on Wednesday, at the Multipurpose cultural

center for its female employees.

This workshop was facilitated by Dr. Chrys-Ann Ambrose, a best-selling Author and international empowerment speaker.

The female members

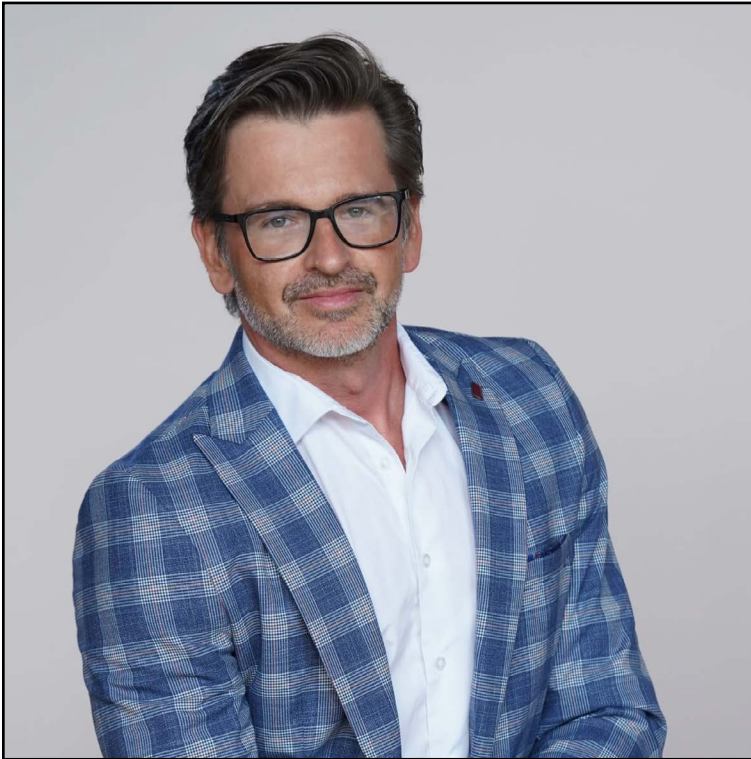
of staff were reminded of the significance of professionalism and teamwork within the workplace along with challenges arising such as personality conflicts, work habits and the overall mind-

set of each employee.

This is the first of a two-day session hosted by management, where both female and male staff can strengthen their individual key strengths.

Local News

New specialist joins the medical team at SLBMC



Dr. Christopher Sulowski

The Sir Lester Bird Medical Centre has announced that it is excited to welcome Dr. Christopher Sulowski, Pedi-

atric Emergency Medicine physician to the team at the nation's top medical facility.

Dr. Sulowski brings specialized training and experience in emergency care for children, ensuring the youngest patients receive the best possible treatment when they need it most.

"I am excited to join the Department of Pediatrics and contribute my international Pediatric Emergency Medicine experience to further Mount St. John's mission of delivering the highest quality care. Together, we'll continue promoting an exceptional standard of timely, compassionate care for the children of Antigua and Barbuda," Dr. Sulowski stated.

He previously worked as a Clinical Physician at McMaster Children's Hospital — dealing with Pediatrics, and Emergency Medicine.

Additionally, he is an Associate Professor of Pediatrics, CAWAR, and Health Sciences, at McMaster University.

Dr. Sulowski is a Canadian who is married and is a graduate of the University of Toronto.

Meanwhile, the SLBMC is putting the final touches to its annual symposium on cancer slated for October 4. "We're bringing together leading experts in oncology, surgery, nutrition, and more — all in one space to share insights, research, and strategies for cancer care," the SLBMC's Marketing Department's brochure indicated.

The hospital has urged all interested persons to register now as spaces are going fast.

BACK TO SCHOOL COMBO

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CalvinAir Provides Swift Medevac for 20-Year-Old Patient from Barbuda



CalvinAir has once again demonstrated its commitment to the people of Antigua and Barbuda with the rapid medical evacuation of 20-year-old male patient from Barbuda to Antigua, for urgent medical care.

The patient presented at the Hanna Thomas Hospital with severe neck and head pain and was unable to walk, prompting doctors to request an immediate transfer to the mainland for a CAT scan. Within minutes of the request, a CalvinAir helicopter was dispatched, ensuring the patient received timely access to specialized diagnostic care at the Sir Lester Bird Medical Centre.

Dr. Jeremy Deazle, Head Resident Doctor at the Hanna Thomas Hospital, expressed his gratitude for the swift response:

"I want to thank CalvinAir Helicopters, who was able to assist us with a medevac from Barbuda to Antigua. I appreciate the humanitarian effort

and dedication the team at CalvinAir has always provided and will hopefully continue to provide for the nation of Antigua and Barbuda."

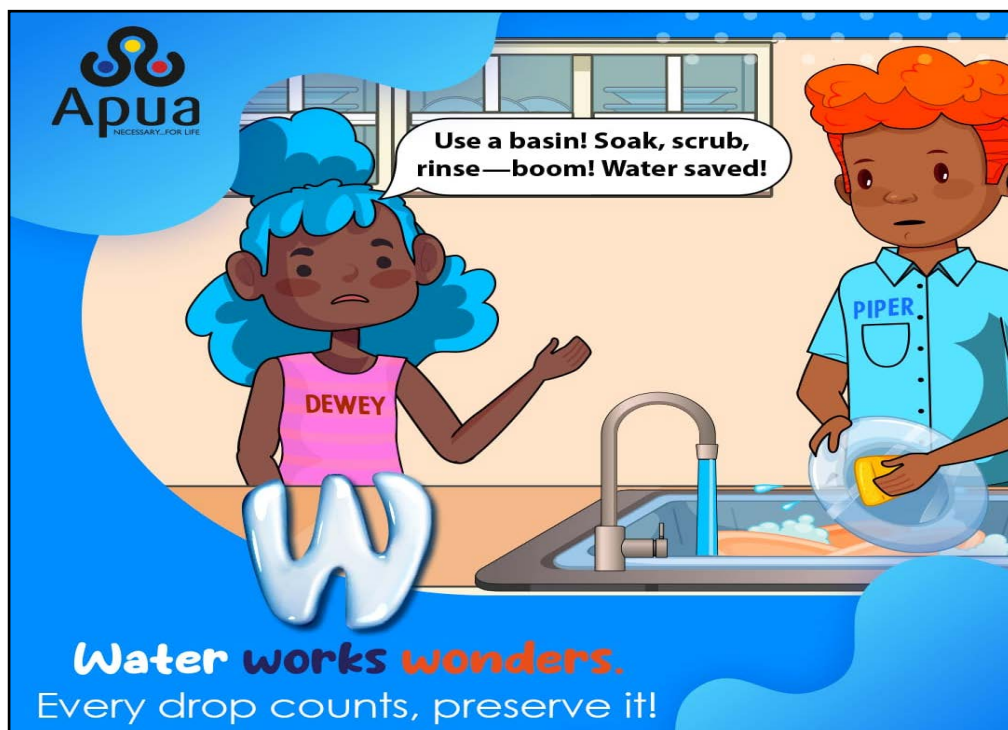
Jamilla Kirwan, Media Relations Spe-

cialist at the Calvin Ayre Foundation, added:

"This is exactly why the Calvin Ayre Foundation continues to support the work of our sister-company, CalvinAir. Every minute counts in a medical emergency, and being able to bridge the gap between Barbuda and Antigua ensures patients receive the urgent care they deserve. It's about giving families hope and reaffirming our commitment to the people of Antigua and Barbuda."

The lifesaving flight was made possible through the ongoing mandate of Ambassador Calvin Ayre, Chairman of the Ayre Group and Founder of the Calvin Ayre Foundation, which fully funds the emergency service, to ensure equitable healthcare access for all citizens of Antigua and Barbuda.

This latest mission highlights the vital role of public-private partnerships in strengthening the country's healthcare system and ensuring that distance is never a barrier to critical medical care.



Police reach out to Kahleel's family

The Acting Commissioner of Police, Everton Jeffers and members of the Royal Police Force of Antigua and Barbuda continue to express condolences to the family of Kahleel Simon of Bolans, who lost his life during what the police have described as 'unfortunate incident' involving a member of the Police Force.

Acting Commissioner Jeffers said, "I cannot begin to imagine the pain or grief that the family is going through at this time, and I pray that God will continue to grant them His peace and comfort during this time of loss".

Investigations into the matter are continuing and will be forwarded to the Coroner for a Coroner's Inquest.

On Monday, a senior police officer met with Khaleel's family to express condolences, as well as to share certain pertinent information regarding the process of the investigation.

Acting Commissioner Jeffers is appealing to the public to remain calm and patient, and to allow the investigative process to take its due course.


The Police Administration has taken certain administrative measures concerning the police officer involved in



the incident, pending the outcome of the inquiry.

The Royal Police Force of Antigua and Barbuda remains committed to

transparency and accountability and assures the public that due process will be followed in this matter.





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(JELLY BEANS)

Scrub Life Cares “Back to School Menstrual Pantry Restock” Supporting Students as They Return to the Classroom

Scrub Life Cares recently called on the community to take part in its *Back to School Menstrual Pantry Restock*, an effort aimed at ensuring girls and women have consistent access to essential menstrual and hygiene products as they head back to school.

The collection drive, which runs through September 15, focuses on replenishing the organization’s pantry with much-needed supplies, including menstrual pads, panty liners, soap, wipes, hand sanitizer, deodorant, lotion, toothpaste, toothbrushes, shampoo, and conditioner.

“All donated products will go directly toward helping those in the community we serve,” said Tanya Ambrose, MPH, Founder of Scrub Life Cares. “By restocking our pantry, we are removing barriers to dignity, health, and education, making sure no girl misses out on opportunities because of a lack of access to basic supplies.”

Community members have been encouraged to contribute in two ways:

☐ **Amazon Wish-list:** Donating items directly through the organization’s online list for easy delivery. (https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/6IXNUQ5P-GT28?ref_=wl_share)

☐ **Call or WhatsApp:** Arranging for a drop-off or pick-up by contacting 973-641-2527.

Ambrose noted that every contribution, no matter how big or small, makes a tangible difference in the lives of students and families who rely on the pantry. A little

will go a long way.

Scrub Life Cares continues its year-round mission of promoting menstrual equity, reproductive and sexual

health, and dignity for all. The pantry restock is one of several initiatives designed to help young people begin the school year with confidence and care.



BACK TO SCHOOL

MENSTRUAL PANTRY RESTOCK

HELP US RESTOCK OUR MENSTRUAL PANTRY

ITEMS NEEDED:

- MENSTRUAL PADS
- SOAP
- HAND SANITIZER
- PANTY LINER
- DEODORANT
- WIPES
- LOTION
- SHAMPOO
- TOOTHPASTE
- CONDITIONER
- TOOTHBRUSH

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ANY SMALL DONATION WILL MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN THE LIVES OF OUR YOUNG GIRLS AND WOMEN SO THEY CAN CONTINUE **TO GROW WITH THE FLO.**

Spinal Cord Injury Awareness Month



It can happen in a moment. A teenager playing football takes a fall. A father on his way to work is struck in traffic. A young woman slips while climbing stairs. In seconds, a spinal cord injury changes everything—not just for the individual, but for their family, their school, their workplace, and their entire community. Spinal Cord Injury Awareness Month, observed each September, is a reminder that these injuries are not distant stories. They are our neighbors' stories. They are

our community's stories. And they demand our attention.

The World Health Organization estimates that up to half a million people suffer spinal cord injuries every year. Many of these injuries are preventable, yet the consequences are lifelong. The United Nations has underscored this truth in its Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, declaring: "Accessibility is a precondition for persons with disabilities to live independently and participate fully and

equally in society." If accessibility is a precondition, then isn't it our collective duty to create communities where no one is left behind?

The reality is that spinal cord injuries don't only affect movement. They alter almost every aspect of daily life—bladder and bowel control, blood pressure, even breathing. They also reshape relationships, employment opportunities, and personal dreams. Yet within these challenges, there are stories of profound resilience. People with SCI become leaders in advocacy, innovators in technology, and role models in determination. Their stories are not ones of pity, but of perseverance and possibility. Why then does society so often overlook them? Why do we continue to design schools, workplaces, and public spaces that silently shut them out?

Kerry Peterson of United Spinal captured the diversity of this experience when she said, "Depending on the level and the extent of the spinal cord injury, sensation and function will look very different between people." That truth reminds us that every individual's journey is unique. There is no single solution. What works for one may not work for another. But what is universal is the need for inclusion, compassion, and opportunity. Isn't that what every community should guarantee its members, regardless of circumstance?

Spinal Cord Injury Awareness Month is not just about drawing national headlines. It is about sparking conversations at the community level. Do our sidewalks have curb cuts? Do our churches and community centers have ramps? Do our schools celebrate the abilities of all students, or quietly set some apart? Do we as neighbors show up when families are navigating the overwhelming costs of rehabilitation, equipment, and home modifications? In a small community, where everyone knows someone, why should anyone



ever feel isolated in their struggle?

The truth is that small acts of collective care create enormous ripples. When volunteers help build a ramp, a student returns to school with dignity. When local businesses support fundraising drives, families can afford essential equipment. When teachers invite someone with lived experience to speak in a classroom, young people learn empathy and respect. When communities choose to include rather than exclude, everyone benefits. So why not start where we are, with what we have, and with the people right in front of us?

Stories from around the world prove that community-driven action works. A town that raised money to buy an accessible van gave one young man the freedom to get back to college. A sports club that opened adaptive programs allowed former athletes to keep

competing and inspiring. A neighborhood that came together to check in on a newly injured parent eased the burden on their children. These are not

extraordinary acts. They are ordinary people deciding that no member of their community should face hardship alone. Isn't that what real awareness looks like in practice?

This September, Spinal Cord Injury Awareness Month challenges us to look beyond sympathy and hashtags. It asks us to move toward empathy and action. It calls parents, teachers, pastors, coaches, neighbors, and friends to step forward, to ask what can be done, and to do it. Because while spinal cord injuries may change lives in an instant, strong communities can change them back—restoring hope, rebuilding confidence, and reminding survivors that they are never alone.

The question is not whether our communities can be more inclusive—the tools, technology, and knowledge are already here. The question is whether we choose to act. And when the next person in our neighborhood sustains an injury, will they face the journey alone, or will they be carried forward by the strength of a community that cares?

Joshuanette Francis

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The Need for Strategic Planning: What Are We Missing?



By Garfield Joseph, MBA

Strategic planning is more than a buzzword—It's the blueprint for a company's future. It is also a vital tool for navigating uncertainty and building resilience. In Antigua and Barbuda, it's gaining traction not only in business but also in government. This shift reflects a growing commitment to long-term thinking and inclusive growth.

From Adaptation to Anticipation

The Caribbean has always been a region of resilience. From hurricanes to economic shocks, our societies have learned to adapt and survive. But survival is not enough. In today's globalized and fast-changing world, we must move from adaptation to anticipation—from reacting to shaping our future. This is where strategic planning becomes not just useful, but essential.

Historically, many Caribbean institutions have operated with short-term planning cycles, often driven by immediate needs or political timelines. While this has allowed for flexibility, it has also limited our ability to build sustainable systems, attract long-term investment, and foster innova-

tion. Strategic planning offers a way to break this cycle.

By embracing strategic planning, Caribbean organizations can:

- Strengthen institutional capacity and governance
- Improve resource allocation and financial management
- Enhance stakeholder engagement and transparency
- Drive innovation and competitiveness

Strategic planning is not a foreign concept—it is a tool that can be localized and customized to fit our unique cultural, economic, and social realities. It is about building a shared vision and executing it with discipline and purpose.

Lessons from the Private Sector

During my tenure at one of the world's largest retail brands, I was part of the international team tasked with revitalizing underperforming markets. Whether it was in Latin America, the US, or the Caribbean, the approach was consistent: strategic planning grounded in data, market insight, and disciplined execution.

We began by conducting SWOT analyses to understand internal strengths and weaknesses, as well as external opportunities and threats. We studied the competition and examined key success factors in our industry. We engaged stakeholders—from franchisees to customers—to ensure alignment. We set SMART goals (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound) and developed KPIs to track performance. We created scenario plans to anticipate

market volatility and built contingency strategies to remain agile.

The results were transformative. Markets that had been stagnant for years began to grow. Teams became more focused. Resources were deployed more effectively. And most importantly, we built a culture of strategic thinking that endured beyond the initial turnaround.

How Strategic Planning Works

Strategic planning is not a one-time event—it is a continuous cycle. The strategic management process typically involves the following steps:

1. Environmental Scanning – Understanding internal capabilities and external conditions
2. Strategy Formulation – Defining mission, vision, goals, and strategic options
3. Strategy Implementation – Translating plans into action through policies, budgets, and initiatives
4. Evaluation and Control – Monitoring outcomes and making adjustments as needed

Each step requires leadership, collaboration, and a commitment to learning. It is a process that empowers organizations to be proactive rather than reactive, resilient rather than brittle.

Avoiding Common Pitfalls

Despite its benefits, strategic planning is often misunderstood or misapplied. Here are some common pitfalls—and how to avoid them:

- Confusing strategy with operations
- Lack of stakeholder involvement

- Overambitious goals without resources
- Failure to monitor and adapt
- Treating it as a one-time event

Strategy is not a document—it's a mindset. It must be embedded in the culture and decision-making processes of the organization.

Strategic Planning for Small Organizations

Small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and nonprofit organizations often operate with limited resources. Yet, they are among the most dynamic and impactful entities in our society. Strategic planning can help them maximize their impact, build resilience, and scale their operations.

In my work since returning to Antigua in 2019, I've supported several financial institutions and nonprofits in developing strategic plans that led to:

- Improved financial sustainability
- Clearer programmatic focus
- Stronger donor and stakeholder relationships
- Enhanced organizational credibility

One for-profit business, for example, was struggling with mission drift. Through a strategic planning process, we clarified their core purpose and streamlined their programs with clear objectives and accountabilities. Within a year, they saw a significant turnaround in overall business performance.

For SMEs, strategic planning helps navigate market competition, regulatory changes, and customer expectations. It enables entrepreneurs to make informed decisions, prioritize investments, and build scalable business models.

Get on Board

To support the wider adoption of strategic planning across Antigua and Barbuda, the Antigua and Barbuda Investment Authority (ABIA) will be hosting a Strategic Planning Workshop, open to the general public.

This workshop is designed to equip participants with:

- Practical tools for developing strategic plans
- Real-world case studies from Caribbean and international markets
- Hands-on experience in applying strategic frameworks
- Insights into aligning strategy with execution

This type of 360-degree approach to learning is critical. Theory without application is just information. But theory applied to real-life situations becomes knowledge.

So, whether you are a business owner, civil servant, NGO leader, or aspiring entrepreneur, this workshop will help you build the skills needed to lead with vision and purpose. Registration is now open, and I encourage all who are serious about growth and impact to attend.

Strategic planning is not just a tool—it is a mindset, a discipline, and a pathway to transformation. Let us embrace it, apply it, and use it to build better businesses and a stronger nation.




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Regional News

Body of man found tied up and mouth taped in Epworth, St Ann

The body of a man who was tied up and had his mouth taped was found on Tuesday night in the Epworth district, St Ann.

The body was discovered beside a water tank that serves the community.

It was reported that there was no blood at the scene.

The police were called to the location, which was processed by investigators.

The Gleaner was informed that the man had lived overseas and returned to Jamaica some time ago and was living alone in the area. (Jamaica Gleaner)



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

PM Skerrit on US Navy Venezuela deployment: Region should remain 'zone of peace'



Prime Minister Roosevelt Skerrit has reiterated the Caribbean Community's (CARICOM) position, which ensures that the Caribbean remains "a zone of peace."

His comments came following a question posed to him at a press conference recently, concerning a decision made by Prime Minister of Trinidad & Tobago Kamla Persad-Bissessar in relation to the United States Navy's deployment near Venezuela.

In a statement last week, Persad-Bissessar reiterated her government's firm support for the United States Navy's deployment near Venezuela, declaring that Trinidad and Tobago's foreign and domestic policy will be guided by a "Trinidad and Tobago first" approach for the next five years.

The Trump administration has framed the deployment as part of a counter-narcotics mission targeting Latin American drug cartels, particularly Venezuela's Tren de Aragua and

Mexico's Sinaloa Cartel, which it accuses of fueling the fentanyl crisis in the U.S.

White House officials have stated that the operation aims to intercept smuggling vessels, gather intelligence, and potentially conduct precision strikes against cartel-linked infrastructure. President Trump has designated several cartels as foreign terrorist organizations, opening the door to expanded military action under counterterrorism.

In a detailed statement to Guardian Media, Persad-Bissessar defended her position against criticism from regional leaders and opposition figures, emphasizing that the U.S. has the operational capacity to disrupt transnational drug and arms trafficking networks. She stated that cooperation with Washington is intended to protect—not undermine—the Caribbean region.

"As you know, many years ago, the

Community: Caribbean and Latin American countries, and also CARICOM declared the Caribbean as a zone of peace, and we would like for this to remain a zone of peace," Skerrit said. "Because any military action in the Caribbean would have serious negative impacts on the way of life of every single citizen in the Caribbean and Latin America."

Skerrit continued, "and so we would urge caution on this because any misunderstanding can flare up into something that none of us really want."

Meanwhile, on the issue of fighting drugs, Skerrit said his government has always been at the forefront of playing its part in the fight against narcotics and trafficking of firearms and ammunitions, "and this government has been unrelenting with its efforts in joining international and regional partners in ensuring that this monster of the presence of drugs, ammunition and guns are not on our streets and in the hands of our children and our society and we are very firm on this."

"We would like to ensure that we continue to fight this, but we would certainly want to ensure that the Caribbean remains a zone of peace and that we call on cooler heads to prevail, so that we can enjoy the peace and tranquility that this region has been known for," he reiterated.

Skerrit went on to state that this is a reiteration of CARICOM's position on this matter as done in previous circumstances.

"But in respect to the views expressed by the government, I have never been in the business of criticizing any Head of State in stating their own position on any particular matter," he noted. (Dominica News Online)

Regional News

St Kitts and Nevis welcomes visa-free travel to Nigeria



The St Kitts and Nevis government Monday announced that the twin-island federation had reached an agreement with Nigeria allowing citizens to visit the African country visa-free.

A government statement described the agreement as “a historic milestone in bilateral relations between the two nations.”

It said that the accord was reached follow-

ing high-level talks between Prime Minister Dr Terrance M Drew and Nigerian President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, earlier this year in Abuja, and during regional meetings with the leaders of the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS).

“This is a symbolic and practical step in reconnecting our peoples. St Kitts and Nevis has long extended visa-free ac-

cess to Nigerian nationals, and we are heartened that Nigeria has reciprocated in the same spirit of unity and mutual respect,” Drew said.

He said that the agreement reflects the shared vision of both governments to remove barriers and foster closer ties across the Atlantic.

He expressed gratitude to President Tinubu for his leadership in advancing this initiative and re-

affirmed the federation’s commitment to strengthening Africa–Caribbean relations under its Sustainable Island State Agenda.

The government stated that visa-free access is expected to foster greater collaboration in trade, investment, education, and tourism, thereby further strengthening the historic bond between Africa and the Caribbean. (CMC)

Amazon ends programme that lets Prime members share free shipping perk with users outside household

Amazon is ending a programme that allows members of its Prime membership subscription programme to share their free shipping benefits with people who don't have the same primary address.

In an update to the customer service section of its website, the online behemoth says it will eliminate the sharing on October 1 and is encouraging users outside the household of the account holder to sign up for their own Prime subscription.

Amazon is replacing the so-called Prime Invitee program with Amazon Family, which lets account holders share the free two-day shipping perk as well as a broad range of other perks like exclusive deals and movies with only one other adult in their household, up to four teens (who were added before April 7) and up to four profiles for children, according to Amazon's website. Amazon said that the adult could be a spouse, family member or roommate.



Prime members pay \$14.99 monthly or \$139 annually.

The news comes as the Seattle-based company is making big investments in expanding its network to bring faster delivery to customers in less densely

populated areas across the US.

The service is available in 1,000 of the more than 4,000 smaller cities, towns and rural communities targeted by year-end, the company said in late July. (AP)

SIR LESTER BIRD MEDICAL CENTRE

Multidisciplinary Cancer Symposium



**Hanybal
Yazigi MD**

ONCOLOGIST



**Cherie
Tulloch MD**
A&B CHAIR
CERVICAL CANCER
ELIMINATION
PROGRAM



**Dr. Jonathan
Mankanjuola**

UROLOGIST



**Dr. Anesa
Ahamad**

RADIATION
ONCOLOGIST



**Samantha
Mott**

CHIEF NUTRITION
OFFICER (ANTIGUA
& BARBUDA)

4 OCTOBER 2025 SANDALS
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AROUND THE WORLD

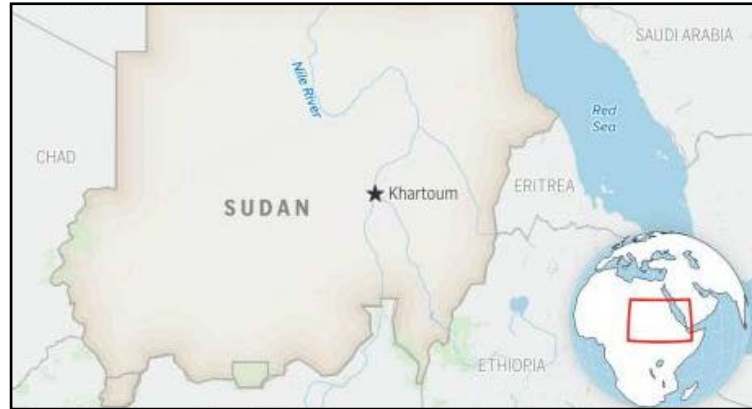
POINT-EXPRESS
 TRUSTED NEWS AND RESPECTED VIEWS

Sudan appeals for aid after landslide kills more than 1,000 people in single village in Darfur

Sudan appealed for international aid on Tuesday after a landslide wiped out an entire village in western region of Darfur, killing an estimated 1,000 people in one of the deadliest natural disasters in the African country's recent history.

The village of Tarasin was "completely levelled to the ground," the Sudan Liberation Movement-Army said as it appealed to the UN and international aid groups for help to recover the bodies. The tragedy happened Sunday in the village, located in Central Darfur's Marrah Mountains, after days of heavy rainfall.

"Initial information indicates the death of all village residents, estimated to be more than 1,000 people," the rebel group said in a



statement.

"Only one person survived," it added.

Abdel-Wahid Nour, the group's leader, made an appeal on Tuesday for international help.

"The scale and magnitude of the disaster are immense and defy description," he said.

The ruling Sovereign Coun-

cil in Khartoum said it mourned "the death of hundreds of innocent residents" in the Marrah Mountains' landslide.

In a statement, it said "all possible capabilities" have been mobilized to support the area.

Footage shared by the Marrah Mountains news outlet showed a flattened area between mountain ranges with

a group of people searching the area.

Luca Renda, the UN humanitarian coordinator in Sudan, said he was "deeply saddened" by the reported landslide, adding that local sources indicated that "between 300 and 1,000 people may have lost their lives."

He said the UN and its partners were mobilizing to support the impacted communities at the scene.

A local emergency network, which has been providing support to communities across Sudan during the war, said its teams recovered the bodies of at nine people on Tuesday.

Search teams were facing challenges to reach the area because of bad weather and lack of resources, it added. (AP)

Cardi B wins case filed by security guard who claimed rapper assaulted her

A jury gave Cardi B a quick and absolute victory Tuesday at a trial in the lawsuit of a security guard who alleged the rap star assaulted her at a doctor's office during her first pregnancy.

The jury at a small courthouse in Alhambra, California, deliberated for only about an hour before finding Cardi not liable in the lawsuit brought by Emani Ellis, who alleged Cardi cut her face with a fingernail and spat on her in the hallway of a Beverly Hills obstetrician in February of 2018.

Cardi said her pregnancy was a secret to most of the world at the time, and she feared that Ellis was going to make it public. She acknowledged that the two argued, but said it never got physical.

Her testimony over two days last week was streamed live and widely viewed. After several days off, the trial resumed with closing arguments Tuesday, and the jury got the case in mid-afternoon.

Cardi said she had been visiting Los



Angeles doing promotional work in February 2018 around that year's NBA All-Star Game. She was four months into her pregnancy with the first of her three children with rapper Offset. She had told her inner circle she was having a baby, but not the public or her parents.

The obstetrician's office had been closed to other patients on a Saturday for her privacy.

She said Ellis, a security guard for the building, followed her to her fifth-floor appointment. Cardi told jurors last week that she heard Ellis say her name into a phone and appeared to be

filming her.

"I told her, 'Why are you recording?'" Cardi testified, "and she said, 'Oh my bad.' She practically apologised."

But the argument grew increasingly heated, she said.

"As we were arguing she's backing me, she's walking into me," Cardi said.

Ellis testified that the incident left her humiliated and traumatised, and the scar on her face required cosmetic surgery. Ellis, who lost her job over the incident, sought damages that include medical expenses, compensation for emotional and physical suffering, and lost wages, along with punitive damages. She did not specify a total amount in the lawsuit but Cardi said from the stand that she is "suing me for \$24 million."

A receptionist who broke up the argument between Cardi and Ellis largely backed the rapper's account in testimony. (AP)

Lorena becomes hurricane off western coast of Mexico as Kiko travels over open waters



Hurricane Lorena formed off the coast of Mexico's Baja California peninsula and a tropical storm warning has been issued for parts for of the area, forecasters said Wednesday.

The storm is expected to strengthen in the next 24 hours and heavy rain up to 15 inches (38 centimetres) was forecast for portions of the peninsula, the U.S. National Hurricane Center in Miami said.

The weather agency warned of the risk of life-threatening flash floods and mudslides for the area, especially in higher terrain.

Lorena was centred Wednesday about 120 miles (195 kilometres) south-southwest of Cabo San Lucas, Mexico. The storm had maximum sustained winds of 75 mph (120 kph) and was moving northwest at 14 mph (22 kph).

Those living in southwestern Mexico and the Baja California peninsula were urged to monitor the progress of the storm.

Lorena's track was still uncertain and it was not known if it would eventually make landfall in Baja California or continue moving over cooler waters in the Pacific Ocean.

Forecasters said Lorena should weak-

en to a tropical storm by Friday.

Meanwhile, Hurricane Kiko was still a Category 2 storm with winds of 105 mph (169 kph) as it travelled west over open waters of the Pacific about 1,700 miles (2,735 kilometres) east of Hilo, Hawaii, the hurricane centre said.

No watches or warnings were associated with Kiko, and there were no hazards affecting land, forecasters said.

Steady strengthening was expected and Kiko could become a major hurricane by Wednesday. (AP)

NOTICE



GOVERNMENT OF ANTIGUA & BARBUDA

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NOTICE FROM THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT

SUBJECT: EARLY CLOSURE OF THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT

The General Public is hereby advised that the Labour Department will close at **11am** on **Tuesday 9th September, 2025** as a mark of respect, and to facilitate staff attendance at the funeral service of a former Labour Commissioner, Mr. Hesketh Williams.

Please be advised that the **Cashier** (Employment Unit/Work Permit Section) will close to the Public from **10:30am** on the day in question.

Any inconvenience caused is regretted.



Business football league to kick off this weekend

The 2025 JOMA Caribbean Ministry of Sports Business Football League Championship is set to commence this weekend.

Thirty-four (34) teams, an increase of seven teams from last year, will battle for supremacy in this year's competition, which will kick off with triple headers across five venues in Antigua on Saturday. Matches at all five venues will be played simultaneously at 5 pm, 6:15 pm, and 7:30 pm.

The 2024 champions, Hermitage Hotel, will be defending their title in the competition in which the 34 teams are divided into four groups to engage in round-robin pool play in the preliminary stage.

Hermitage Hotel will launch their title defense against Cocos Hotel in a Group 4 clash at Jennings at 6:15 pm.

It will be preceded by a Group 2 match between the University of the West Indies Frigate Bird FC and Jolly Harbour Stingers at 5 pm. Keyonna Beach Hotel and Royalton Chic Hotel will meet in a Group 3 encounter at the same venue at 7:30 pm.

In a triple-header at the Radio Range playing field in Ottos, His Majesty's Prison (HMP) United will take on the Antigua and



Players of the Hermitage Hotel football team after winning the 2024 JOMA Caribbean Ministry of Sports Business Football League Championship at the Antigua Recreation Grounds (ARG) on Saturday, December 14. (File photo)

Barbuda Airport Authority in a Group 3 affair in the opening game.

It will be followed by a Group 1 match between Royalton Strikers and Public Works Asphalt and a Group 4 encounter between 2023 champions APUA Telecoms and APCMOL.

At the Keithley Sheppard Recreational Park, Central Housing and Planning Authority (CHAPA) Warriors will meet Postal Services in a Group 3 affair at 5 pm.

Last year's losing finalist, the Ministry of Agri-

culture, will oppose Central Marketing Corporation (CMC) in a Group 2 encounter at 6:15 pm, and the National Housing Department Demolition Squad will tackle Blue Waters Hotel in a Group 1 match at 7:30 pm.

In a triple-header at Golden Grove, Macky Enterprise will challenge Sir Vivian Richards Stadium in a Group 2 match at 5 pm.

Newcomers Automotive Art will take on Sandals Hotel and Resort in a Group 1 match at 6:15 pm,

and A.S. Bryden Green Acres will clash with the Department of Immigration in a Group 4 encounter at 7:30 pm.

At the St. Johnstone's Village Stadium, the Ministry of Tourism will oppose Fresh Acres Enterprise in a Group 2 affair at 5 pm.

Newcomers ACE Trucking FC and SkyTiger Services will clash in a Group 3 match at 6:15 pm, and Galley Bay Ballers will meet APUA Head Office in a Group 1 encounter at 7:30 pm.

Jamaica set for CPL return as government backs new franchise for 2026



The Jamaica Tallawahs celebrate their second title as champions of the Caribbean Premier League after beating the Guyana Amazon Warriors in the final at Warner Park in Basseterre, St. Kitts, on Sunday, August 7, 2016.

KINGSTON, Jamaica (CMC) -- Cricket fans across the island have reason to celebrate, as the Jamaican government is finalising a deal to bring a new Caribbean Premier League (CPL) franchise back to Sabina Park for the 2026 season.

In a major push to cement Jamaica's status as a regional sports hub, the Ministry of Tourism and the Ministry of Culture, Gender, Entertainment, and Sport are leading a public-private partnership to secure the island's return to the world's biggest party in sport.

This move is a central part of a broader strategy to leverage sports tourism, transforming Kingston into a premier destination for major events and creating unforgettable experiences for visitors that blend cricket with the island's rich culture, food, and entertainment.

Tourism Minister Edmund Bartlett and Sports Minister Olivia Grange are spearheading the negotiations, expressing strong confidence that a deal will be concluded.

"Sports tourism is a critical component for destination Jamaica," stated Minister Bartlett.

"Minister Grange and I have been collaborating closely with CPL officials and local stakeholders to ensure we advance quality cricket offerings here. We are committed to making this a success and building sports tourism into a major driver for visitor arrivals and revenue."

Echoing his optimism, Minister Grange confirmed the positive progress.

"The discussions have been ongoing and are going very well. We have

resolved many of the challenges, and I'm very confident that we will welcome a new CPL franchise to Jamaica in the new season."

The excitement is shared by the CPL itself. Chief Executive Officer Peter Russell welcomed the prospect of a return to one of the Caribbean's most iconic cricketing grounds.

"The Republic Bank Caribbean Premier League is very excited at the prospect of a return to Jamaica," Russell said.

"We have had fruitful discussions with the government about securing a seventh CPL team based in Jamaica for 2026. We have seen the impact CPL has made on promoting host nations as premier tourism destinations and look forward to working with our partners to achieve similar success here."

Alcaraz and Djokovic set up blockbuster US Open semi-final

NEW YORK (Reuters) - Carlos Alcaraz dazzled at the US Open to make the semi-finals on Tuesday before Novak Djokovic danced his way through to book a New York show-down with the Spaniard that will mark the latest chapter in their generational rivalry.

Former champion Alcaraz produced yet another entertaining display at Flushing Meadows to dismantle 20th seed Jiri Lehecka 6-4, 6-2, 6-4 at a sunbathed Arthur Ashe Stadium, securing his place in the last four without dropping a set this year.

"Sometimes I play a shot that I should not play in that moment but it's the way I love playing tennis," Alcaraz, who is two wins away from taking the world number one spot from Italian rival Jannik Sinner, told Sky Sports.

"I want to play solid, play well and play smart but at the same time when I have the opportunity to play a great shot - or a hot shot let's say - why not? I'm here to entertain the people, myself, and the team."

Djokovic topped the bill in a truncated evening session after women's champion Aryna Sabalenka received a walkover when Marketa Vondrousova withdrew due to a knee injury. The Belarusian will face Jessica Pegula in the semi-finals.

Djokovic, chasing a 25th Grand Slam title to move above Margaret Court in the all-time list, beat American Taylor Fritz 6-3, 7-5, 3-6, 6-4 and celebrated the win



Novak Djokovic of Serbia returns a shot against Taylor Fritz of the United States during the quarterfinal round of the US Open tennis championships in New York on Tuesday, Sept. 2, 2025. (AP)

by performing a dance for his daughter on her birthday.

Fritz has now lost 11 straight to the 38-year-old Serb, who became the oldest player in the professional era -- since 1968 -- to reach the semis of all four Grand Slams in a single season.

Alcaraz is 16 years Djokovic's junior but could face a tough test in his pursuit of a sixth Grand Slam title having lost five of his eight matches against the Serb.

The Spaniard has lost his last two to Djokovic - in the Australian Open quarter-finals this year and in last year's Paris Olympics final, a clash that left both players in tears for different reasons.

The top ranking is also on the line for Alcaraz at the

end of the tournament but he was trying not to dwell on it.

"If I think about the world number one spot too much, I'm going to put pressure on myself and I don't want to do that," Alcaraz said.

Sabalenka moved ahead as Vondrousova was forced to withdraw after sparkling with upset victories over seventh seed Jasmine Paolini and ninth seed Elena Rybakina.

The 26-year-old has endured lengthy spells on the sidelines in recent years and was one of three Czech women to advance into the Flushing Meadows quarter-finals.

It was a bitter blow for Czech fans who had hoped for a major upset in New

York but were left stunned when she pulled up injured in a practice session.

Sabalenka, who had defeated the 60th-ranked Czech in their most recent clash in the Cincinnati second round last month, now meets Pegula in a rematch of last year's final.

The American dispatched Czech twice Grand Slam champion Barbora Krejickova 6-3, 6-3 to get the day's action underway.

Her compatriot Venus Williams bowed out of the tournament after she and Canadian partner Leylah Fernandez were outclassed by top seeds Taylor Townsend and Katerina Siniakova 6-1, 6-2 in the women's doubles quarter-finals.

Australia pace great Starc retires from T20 internationals



Mitchell Starc

MELBOURNE (Reuters) - Australia's white-ball pace spearhead Mitchell Starc has retired from Twenty20 internationals six months out from the World Cup in India and Sri Lanka to focus on extending his career in test and one-day cricket.

The 35-year-old left-arm fast bowler retires as the nation's most prolific fast bowler in the format, with 79 wickets from 65 T20Is, second on the all-time Australia list to spin bowling teammate Adam Zampa.

"Test cricket is and has always been my highest priority," he said in a Cricket Australia statement on Tuesday.

"I have loved every minute of every T20 game I have played for Australia, particularly the 2021 World Cup, not just because we won but the incredible group and the fun along the way.

"Looking ahead to an away Indian test tour, the Ashes and an ODI World

Cup in 2027, I feel this is my best way forward to remain fresh, fit and at my best for those campaigns.

"It also gives the bowling group time to prepare for the T20 World Cup in the matches leading into that tournament."

Starc was not included in Australia's T20I squad released on Tuesday for the upcoming series against New Zealand. Selectors chairman George Bailey said the rangy, swing-bowling maestro would be hard to replace.

"His ability to impact early with the new ball and bowl clutch overs at the death (will be missed)," he told reporters on Tuesday.

"You don't find many swinging it at 145km per hour. His fielding's also outstanding. We won't replace him like-for-like, but we've exposed others to key roles -- Nathan Ellis, Ben Dwarshuis, Sean Abbott, and Xavier

Bartlett."

Starc played a pivotal role in Australia's first and only T20 World Cup title in 2021, taking nine wickets in seven matches in the United Arab Emirates.

His retirement, 13 years on from his 2012 debut, is a big blow for Australia's hopes of another T20 World Cup triumph next year and continues the winding-down of a golden generation of players.

Following opening batsman David Warner's retirement last year, Steve Smith, Glenn Maxwell and Marcus Stoinis have all retired from the one-day game.

Cricket Australia boss Todd Greenberg praised Starc for making "significant sacrifices" to play for his country.

"To allow the next crop of fast bowlers a clear path to the T20 World Cup early next year is another example of putting team first," he said.

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WE ARE GETTING STRONGER

Women's World Cup prize money to eclipse men's 2023 purse



The world champions Australia strike a happy pose on the podium after winning the ICC Women's T20 World Cup after beating South Africa in the final in Cape Town, South Africa, on February 26, 2023. (Getty Images)

NEW DELHI (Reuters) - The International Cricket Council announced a bumper hike in the prize money for this year's women's 50-over World Cup on Monday, making it financially more lucrative than the 2023 edition of the men's event held in India.

The winner's purse of US\$4.48 million is significantly higher than the US\$1.32 million awarded to Australia when they won the 2022 World Cup and exceeds the US\$4 million their men's team pocketed after lifting the 2023 World Cup in India.

"This four-fold increase in prize money is a landmark moment for

women's cricket and reflects our clear commitment to its long-term growth," ICC chairman Jay Shah said in a statement.

"Our message is simple; women cricketers must know they will be treated on par with men if they choose this sport professionally.

"Women's cricket is on a remarkable upward trajectory, and with this step we are confident the momentum will accelerate."

The overall tournament prize money of US\$13.88 million is a considerable jump from the US\$3.5 million

in 2022 and eclipses the US\$10 million at the 2023 men's World Cup. Each of the eight participating teams is guaranteed US\$250,000.

The 13th edition of the women's World Cup will kick off with an India versus Sri Lanka clash in the eastern Indian city of Guwahati on September 30.

The tournament, which culminates with the final on November 2, will be played across five venues in India, while Pakistan will play their matches in Colombo.

Sri Lanka edge West Indies in thriller to level Under-19 ODI series



West Indies under-19 team captain Joshua Dorne

In a breathtaking finish that encapsulated the drama of youth cricket, Sri Lanka Under-19s snatched a heart-stopping one-wicket victory from the jaws of defeat against West Indies Under-19s in the second Youth One-Day International (ODI) at the Coolidge Cricket Ground (CCC) in Antigua on Tuesday.

Chasing a modest target of 202, the young Sri Lankans seemed to be cruising before late wickets set up a grandstand finish, ultimately clinching victory with two overs and a single wicket to spare to level the seven-match series at a game apiece.

The West Indies, having been dismissed for 201 in 47.5 overs, will rue a missed opportunity after their bowlers fought valiantly to defend a below-par total.

The innings was built almost solely on the back of a magnificent 82 from captain Joshua Dorne, who provided the backbone of the West Indian effort.

His knock could not have come at a better time, as the host seemed to have made the wrong call to bat first, after they lost two wickets for just six runs with both openers, Zachary Carter and Micah Greenidge, back in the pavilion for one and nought respectively.

Dorne found minor support from Brendan Boodoo, who chipped in with 28 and Jonathan van Lange, 26, but the innings lacked a major partnership, consistently pegged back by the Sri Lankan attack.

Vigneshwaran Akash was the chief destroyer, his leg-spin proving too much for the middle order as he returned impressive figures of three for 30.

In reply, Sri Lanka's chase was anchored by a composed 45 from captain Vimath Dimsara, who steadied the innings after losing wickets, which saw Sri Lanka slipped to a precarious position of 98 for four.

Useful contributions followed from Chamika Heenatigala with 30 and a crucial, unbeaten 20 from Sethmika Seneviratne, who held his nerve in the dying stages to guide his team home.

The West Indies bowlers, led by Carter's three for 42 and a double strike from all-rounder Boodoo with two for 27, threw everything at the visitors, creating intense pressure that very nearly forced a two-nil lead in the series.

The teams will go at it again in the third game of the series at the same venue on Thursday (today).