

Tropical storm Jerry impacts Antigua and Barbuda

Page 2

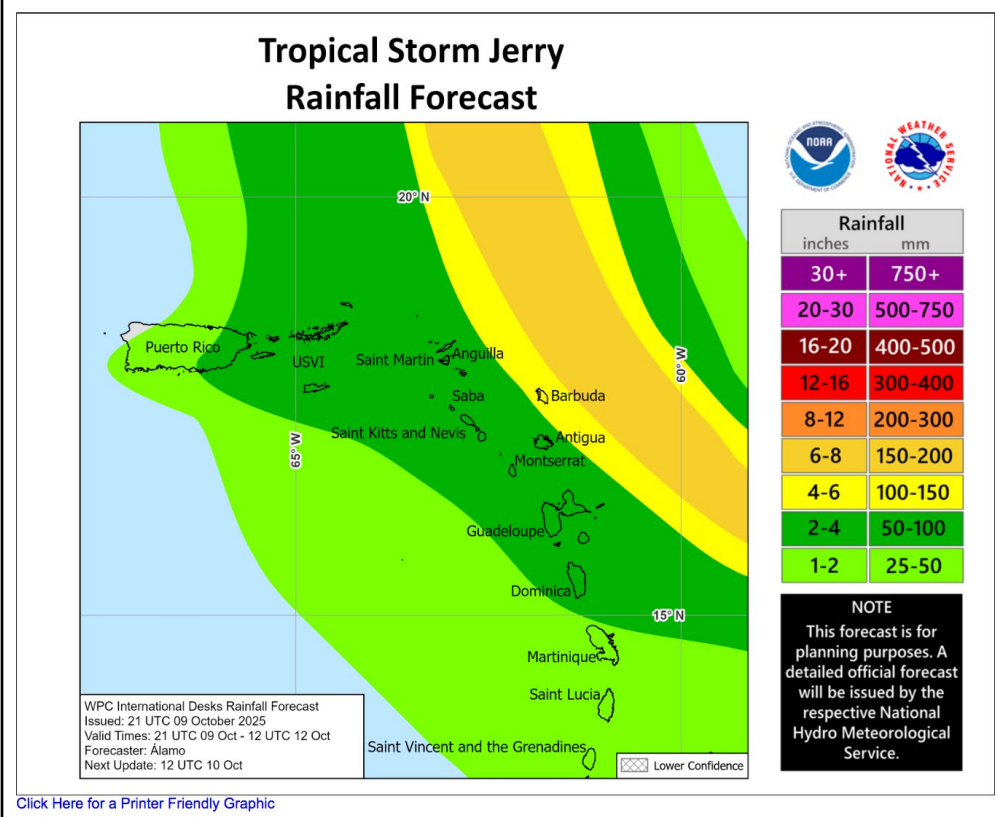


The marquee event of Antigua and Barbuda's Independence celebrations in the United States will this year honour and pay tribute to legendary musical icons, the Burning Flames

Story on Page 14

Tropical storm Jerry impacts Antigua and Barbuda

Rainfall Forecast (from the Weather Prediction Center)



Residents of Antigua and Barbuda are this morning waking up assessing the impact the passage of Tropical Storm Jerry might have had on the two islands.

At 8:00 o'clock last night, the storm was located approximately 45 miles east of Barbuda moving west, north-west at 18 miles per hour. With the storm passing this close to the islands, especially Barbuda, the forecast was

for heavy overnight rains estimated at 6 inches for Barbuda and between 2 and 4 inches for Antigua.

Barbuda has been under a Tropical Storm Warning, while Antigua has been on a Tropical Storm Watch overnight.

Senior Forecaster, Orville Paige said the he expects much of the rain that will affect both islands will fall overnight with Friday anticipated to be a

normal day with all key events expected to take place.

Tropical Storm Jerry was packing winds up to 65 miles per hour and according to Paige even if it later develops into a Hurricane this will happen after it has passed Antigua and Barbuda.

Last night, both the Met Office and the National Office of Disaster Services (NODS) were advising residents to continue preparing in case tropical storm conditions extend farther south than currently projected.

NODS also encouraged residents to have their emergency kits stocked with canned and other non-perishable foods, water, first aid kit, battery-operated radio, flashlight, medication, personal hygiene items, clothing, blanket and other needed supplies.

Homes, businesses and other structures should be secured and safeguarded. It is also important that fishermen and farmers secure their equipment and activate their preparedness plans.

NODS appealed to individuals to avoid walking or driving in flood waters as they can become dangerous and life-threatening.

NODS said it remains in close contact with the Met Office and will continue to update residents so it's important individuals constantly monitor the local media.

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Antigua and Barbuda and Panama are on the cusp of signing several significant agreements



Prime Minister Gaston Browne and Panamanian Ambassador to Antigua and Barbuda, H.E. Ana Irene Delgado



Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Ambassador Dr. Clarence Pilgrim (left), Prime Minister Gaston Browne (center) and Panamanian Ambassador to Antigua and Barbuda, H.E. Ana Irene Delgado (right)

Antigua and Barbuda and Panama are currently engaged in high-level discussions that will soon see the two countries sign several important agreements that seek to strengthen economic and other ties.

Prime Minister Gaston Browne described Panama as an important trade and business hub in Central America that offers many services including shopping at what have always been described as ‘reasonable prices’. His remarks came as he welcomed the new Panamanian Ambassador to Antigua and Barbuda, H.E. Ana Irene Delgado, who presented her credentials to the government on Thursday.

“We are having discussions with COPA Airlines to see if they can begin direct flights to Antigua and Barbuda or even Fifth Freedom flights with Barbados as the airline already operates into that Caribbean territory. Additionally, we are talking to LIAT Air to see if they can do direct flights to Panama so that people from the Eastern Caribbean can go there to shop,” he stated.

The prime minister also announced the

Antigua and Barbuda’s Ambassador to the OAS, Sir Ron Sanders, has been appointed Ambassador to Panama ‘so that he can expedite these agreements between our two countries’.

One of the areas where PM Browne wanted to see immediate movement is in the area of closer collaborations between the Antigua Port Authority and the ports in Panama. “There are opportunities to exploit greater logistics between our ports and Sir Ron has responsibility to expedite these agreements,” he indicated.

PM Browne told the ambassador that he recently discovered that Panamanians required a visa to visit Antigua and Barbuda. “This must have been an oversight; however, I must tell you that this has been corrected; there are no visa requirements for Panamanians to visit Antigua and Barbuda just as our people can visit Panama without a visa,” he declared.

On geopolitical matters, the prime minister observed that the Panamanian government had adopted ‘a principled’ position regarding the build-up

of US military in the region. He said Panama’s position that the Caribbean should remain a Zone of Peace is to be commended and it is one supported by Antigua and Barbuda.

Ambassador Delgado noted that while Antigua and Barbuda and Panama established diplomatic relations back in 1996, it is time to strengthen these ties especially in light of the fact that many persons from this country have familial ties with people in Panama.

As part of building stronger ties between the two nations, the ambassador extended an invitation to the prime minister to visit Panama next January to attend an international business and investment forum taking place there.

“This is going to be like the Doha of the Americas with many heads of state already have confirmed their attendance. We think it’s a perfect opportunity for the Antigua and Barbuda Prime Minister to source investments from regional and international companies that have already pledged to attend,” she revealed.

Local News

Statement by the Honourable E. Paul Chet Greene, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Antigua and Barbuda on Israel – Hamas Ceasefire



Antigua and Barbuda welcomes the ceasefire announcement between Israel and Hamas, secured through the unstinting efforts of the United States, supported by Qatar, Egypt, and Turkey. We join the positions expressed by the UN Secretary-General, France, China, and Saudi Arabia in calling for an immediate, sustainable halt to hostilities and unfettered humanitarian access.

This ceasefire is a hard-won pause that must lead to full humanitarian relief, restoration of essential services, the release of all hostages and detainees, and the complete withdrawal of Israeli forces from the occupied Palestinian territory, including Gaza. This is the necessary basis for restoring durable security and stability.

We call on all sides to use this fragile opening to establish a credible political path toward a just and comprehensive peace, based on the two-state solution and the establishment of an independent, sovereign Palestinian state living side-by-side with Israel in peace and security.

Antigua and Barbuda will work to support these steps, consistent with international humanitarian law.



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Government to enforce strict policy for the purchase of new vehicles

Government to implement strict policies regarding the purchase of new vehicles for the public sector. The Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Gaston Browne reiterated its policy of 2023 captioned: Government Motor Vehicle Purchases and Procurement Procedures for Car Dealerships in Antigua.

“Cabinet reminded that all requests for the purchase of motor vehicles by and for the use of the government are required to be furnished with a Decision of Cabinet, expressly authorizing such purchase.

“Further, it must be noted that according to the 2023 policy, should any vehicle be delivered or consigned to the government without the appropriate legal authority and Decision of Cabinet, the purchase shall be deemed



Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Gaston Browne

null and void, and as a consequence the government shall accept no liability for any costs or charges arising therefrom,” the Cabinet Notes stated.

Cabinet also advises that, notwithstanding any accompanying Decision of

Cabinet authorizing the purchase, all requests for the purchase of motor vehicles must be duly processed by the purchasing authority and the corresponding payment vouchers must have been prepared and approved prior to the delivery of any motor vehicle.

The Cabinet is making it clear that the decision to strictly enforce the policy applies to all suppliers and vendors of motor vehicles to the government without exception, unless otherwise expressly approved by Cabinet.



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Local News

The National Trade Council (NTC) convened another session in St. John's



The National Trade Council convened its fourth meeting in St. John's on Thursday with focus on the ongoing discussion on the proposed ban on certain chemicals

contained in sunscreen lotions.

In opening remarks, Permanent Secretary in the Min-

istry of Trade, Ambassador Dr. Clarence Pilgrim noted that the Council continues to serve as a vital platform for the integration of the trade,

ATTENTION SHAREHOLDERS OF ANTIGUA COMMERCIAL BANK LTD. TRADING AS ACB CARIBBEAN

We are pleased to advise that the **SIXTY - NINETH (69th) ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM)** of the Company will be held via hybrid format (both online and in-person) on **Thursday December 4, 2025, at 2:00 pm** at the Sir John E. St. Luce Finance and Convention Centre on Factory Road, St. John's, Antigua and on the Microsoft Teams Platform.

Formal Notice of the Annual General Meeting, to include Shareholders' Packages and Pre-registration and sign – in details, **will be distributed no later than thirty (30) days prior to the AGM date**, in accordance with Articles 12.3 and 12.4 of the Company's Bylaws.

Applications are still being accepted from qualified Shareholders for election to our Board of Directors. Interested Shareholders are encouraged to submit their applications no later than Friday October 24, 2025.

We look forward to hosting our upcoming 69th AGM under the theme, **STEADY HANDS. BOLD STEPS** and to celebrating with our Shareholders, as we mark our 70th Anniversary.

BY ORDER OF THE BOARD
RHODETTE PAIGE | LEGAL COUNSEL/CORPORATE SECRETARY


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economic, and environmental objectives, ensuring that Antigua and Barbuda's policy direction remains both globally responsive and nationally relevant.

"Today's agenda captures the very essence of what effective governance demands—coherence between our trade ambitions, public health priorities, and environmental stewardship. As we address the proposed Compliant Policy to impose a ban on the importation, manufacture, and sale of sunscreens containing harmful chemicals, we are reminded that trade is not solely about transactions—it is about transformation. It is about protecting our marine ecosystems, particularly our coral reefs, which are integral to tourism, biodiversity, and food security," he stated.

According to the permanent secretary...the policy direction strongly advances several Sustainable Development Goals:

SDG 3 – Good Health and Well-being, by protecting

citizens from chemical exposure;

SDG 12 – Responsible Consumption and Production, through sustainable market regulation;

SDG 13 – Climate Action, as part of our national resilience agenda; and

SDG 14 – Life Below Water, by preserving oceanic ecosystems central to our island identity.

Other key items on the agenda included deliberations that explored the WTO Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) Enquiry Point and ePing System, which was presented by Mrs. Solange Baptiste of the Bureau of Standards. "This initiative," he explained, "Reinforces our commitment to transparency, compliance, and evidence-based trade governance. It ensures that our exporters are informed, our regulations are harmonized, and our national systems remain consistent with international best practices."

Following the discussion on the proposed on harm-



ful chemicals contained in some sunscreen lotions, participants recommended that such a ban would be

more manageable on specific products containing the chemicals, rather than on the chemicals themselves.

31 YEARS STRONG, INVESTING IN EDUCATION, SHAPING FUTURES



"For 31 years, the Board of Education has been entrusted with the responsibility of advancing learning in Antigua and Barbuda. These funds, made possible through the Education Levy, are not abstract numbers, but tangible investments in classrooms, in teachers, and in the future of every child. Our nation's progress is directly tied to the strength of our education system, and together we are ensuring that foundation remains strong."

As the BoE looks ahead, its commitment remains firm: to continue strengthening the education system, investing in the nation's youth, and ensuring that the foundation of learning remains strong for decades to come.

Procurement & Projects

As the Board of Education (BoE) celebrates its 31st Anniversary, the institution reflects on three decades of service to the nation's children and the broader education sector. Since its establishment, the BoE has stood as a cornerstone of educational development in Antigua and Barbuda, ensuring that schools are resourced, maintained, and equipped to deliver quality learning experiences.

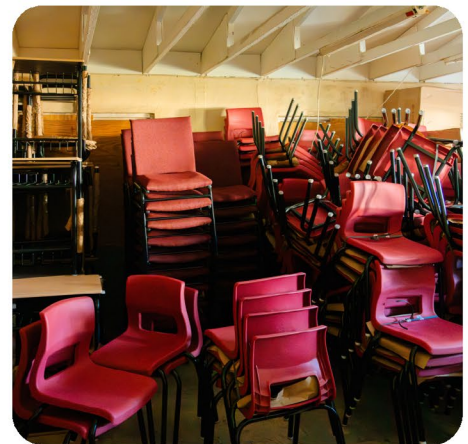
In the 2025 financial year alone, the Board has committed approximately EC\$7 million towards projects and school maintenance, improving learning environments and addressing infrastructural needs across public institutions. These investments reflect a continued dedication to ensuring that students and teachers alike can thrive in safe, functional, and modern spaces.

In addition to infrastructure, the BoE has prioritized access to learning materials and essential supplies. An estimated EC\$1.5 million has been allocated to procurement for both public and private schools, helping to provide critical resources that support teaching and learning across the nation.

Central to the Board's ability to sustain these initiatives is the Education Levy, a dedicated tax that remains a vital source of funding for the sector. This levy underscores the collective responsibility of all citizens in shaping the country's educational future.

Every contribution directly supports the maintenance of schools, the supply of resources, and the investment in projects that uplift generations of students.

Executive Secretary of the Board of Education, Mrs. Carla Farquhar, noted:



An economic impact study of the yachting sector on the economy is now underway



Antigua-Barbuda-Yachting-and-Marina-Association-Celebrates-Day-One-of-the-2026-Expo

The just-concluded Yachting Expo organized by the Antigua and Barbuda Yachting and Marine Association (ABYMA) has initiated a new project; an Economic Impact Study of the sector on the Antigua and Barbuda economy.

This comprehensive study, commissioned by the ABYMA, which has not been undertaken in over 20 years, aims to evaluate the value the yachting and marina industry brings to Antigua and Barbuda, identifying both current challenges and future growth opportunities.

“With the remarkable growth of our industry over the last two decades, this assessment is crucial at this pivotal moment in our history,” noted President of the ABYMA, Franklyn Braithwaite, in his opening speech. “Understanding how we can continue to develop and support this sector will ultimately benefit the whole economy of Antigua and Barbuda.”

The study, guided by the consultancy Eco-Sustain-



Antigua Grammar School had more than 90 students in attendance

ability and led by Guy Chester, will begin in December and continue through June 2026. It will assess both the consumer side, focusing on visiting sailors, as well as the business landscape in Antigua, ensuring a robust understanding of the entire industry. He went on to thank sponsors the Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority, Falmouth Harbour Marina, The Antigua Yacht Club Marina, Budget Marine & Falmouth Ocean

Club who have all come on board significantly to fund the study and asks that other members consider a donation to assist in the final funding.”

Vice President of the ABYMA, Bobby Reis, emphasized the vital role the yachting industry plays in the local economy. In particular, Reis highlighted, “The yachting sector not only supports tourism but also creates job opportuni-

ties year round.”

Liz Isdale from the IYRS School of Technology & Trades (formerly International Yacht Restoration School) Scholarship Fund delivered an inspiring speech. She said, “The scholarship is a transformative initiative led by IYRS in Newport, Rhode Island, in partnership with the Antigua and Barbuda Yachting & Marine Association (ABYMA), the government and other local organizations. Together, we are working to open doors for Antiguan talent to thrive in the global marine trades.

“This scholarship program was born out of a simple but powerful truth: Antigua’s marine industry is both growing and current workforce is aging out, and it needs skilled professionals to sustain and expand that growth. We saw a clear demand for trained marine technicians, individuals who not only have the passion but also the credentials to lead and innovate in this field. And we knew that the solution was not just to import talent, but to invest in the incredible potential that already exists right here in Antigua.”

Governor General Deputy, Sir Clare Roberts, officially declared the Expo open and enthused, ‘Opportunity does not lie only on the road but takes to the seas’.

Local News

Outgoing Chinese Ambassador Zhang Yanling receives Governor General's Meritorious Award

Antigua and Barbuda's Governor General, Sir Rodney Williams and Lady Williams, have presented the Governor General's Faithful and Meritorious Service Cross (FMC) to Zhang Yanling, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the People's Republic of China to Antigua and Barbuda (December 2021 – October 2025). The presentation took place at the Chinese Embassy in St. John's.

The Governor General's honour recognizes Ambassador Zhang's four years of distinguished service in strengthening the bonds of friendship, practical cooperation, and cultural exchange between Antigua and Barbuda and the People's Republic of China. During her tenure, Ambassador Zhang championed tangible development support and capacity-building across multiple sectors, including education, agriculture, fisheries, security services, health, culture, and housing, advancing national development priorities.

Ambassador Zhang also deepened people-to-people ties through sustained cultural outreach, Children's Day activities, Chinese New Year receptions, and National Day observances, welcoming Antiguan and Barbudan communities to experience Chinese culture and reinforcing mutual respect. She further supported local charitable initiatives reflecting a sincere commitment to community well-being.

Sir Rodney said:

"Ambassador Zhang's tenure has been marked by faithful service and practical partnership. Her leadership has translated goodwill into real benefits for our people—strengthening institutions, building capacity, and nurturing cultural understanding. On behalf of



Governor General Sir Rodney Williams honours Chinese Ambassador Zhang Yanling with Faithful and Meritorious Service Cross

the Government and people of Antigua and Barbuda, we thank her for a

legacy that will endure."

Lady Williams added:

"Through consistent outreach and genuine friendship, Ambassador Zhang brought our communities closer together. We are grateful for her warm engagement with our schools, our cultural groups, and our charitable organizations."

In accepting the award, Ambassador Zhang expressed appreciation for the honour and reiterated China's commitment to continued cooperation and friendship with Antigua and Barbuda.

By virtue of this conferment, Ambassador Zhang Yanling is entitled to use the post-nominals 'FMC'.


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MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, SPORTS AND CREATIVE INDUSTRIES

THE DEPARTMENT OF CREATIVE INDUSTRIES ANNOUNCES THE CHRISTMAS HOME AND BUSINESS LIGHTING COMPETITION 2025:

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – Wednesday 01st, October 2025 – *St. John's, Antigua and Barbuda.....*
The Department of Creative Industries is pleased to announce the Christmas Home and Business Lighting Competition 2025.

We aim to evoke the spirit of the season through the creative and dazzling lighting display of our 2025 competitors, the Department encourages all interested Home and Business owners to register for the competition on or before Wednesday, December 17, 2025.

Registration Forms are available Mondays to Fridays, 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the Department of Creative Industries Headquarters on Old Parham Road, upstairs INET or the National Festivals Office, 1st Floor Cecil George-John Building, Redcliffe Street and Corn Alley.

Pre-judging will commence on December 20th and 21st December, 2025, while the final displays will be judged on December 28, 2025. Winners will be announced via Good Morning Antigua, Barbuda on Friday, January 5th 2026.

Home entries will be categorized and judged according to the zones – East, West, North, and South. All Home participants will receive a 100% waiver on electricity service for December 15th 2025 to January 15th 2026, Duty-Free concessions on Christmas Lights and or Decorations and a Cash component for the top three winners in each zone as outlined below.

- **First Place - \$ 3,000.00 XCD**
- **Second Place - \$ 2,000.00 XCD**
- **Third Place - \$ 1,000.00 XCD**

Business entries will receive a 50% waiver on electricity service for December 2025, Duty-Free concessions on Christmas Lights and or Decorations and a Cash component for the top three winners as outlined below.

- **First Place - \$ 3,000.00 XCD**
- **Second Place - \$ 2,000.00 XCD**
- **Third Place - \$ 1,000.00 XCD**

Register now to be a part of the joy and splendor of Christmas 2025.

END.

Chinese Embassy Donates traditional Chinese-Style Pavilion to the SNRA



The Sir Novelle Richards Academy in Potters continues to serve as a symbol of the close ties that currently exist between Antigua and Barbuda and the People's Republic of China.

Already, the SNRA is one of the schools where the main Chinese language, Mandarin is taught, and this week the Chinese Embassy held a handover ceremony for the donation of a traditional Chinese-style pavilion to institution. The event was attended by Ambassador Zhang Yanling and Listine Bradshaw, Principal of SNRA School, who together signed the handover certificate.

In her remarks, Ambassador Zhang expressed that the pavilion symbolizes China's commitment to deepening cooperation with Antigua and Barbuda in the fields of education and culture. She emphasized that the Embassy hopes the pavilion will serve as a window for students to experience Chinese culture firsthand, while fostering mutual understanding and friendship between the two peoples.

Principal Bradshaw expressed sincere appreciation to the Chinese Embassy for the generous donation, noting that SNRA will continue to use Chinese

language education as a bridge for cultural exchange and people-to-people ties between Antigua and Barbuda and China.

Both sides highlighted the importance of educational collaboration, cultural exchange, and shared development as vital pillars in strengthening relations between China and Antigua

and Barbuda.

The traditional Chinese-style pavilion stands as a symbol of friendship, learning, and continued cooperation, inspiring students to explore the beauty of Chinese culture and the enduring partnership between both nations.

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2025 INDEPENDENCE SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

25 OCT - 03 NOV

SATURDAY 25 OCT

- **NATIONAL SCHOOLS' PANORAMA**
SIR VIVIAN RICHARDS STADIUM
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



TUESDAY 28 OCT

- **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"**
MULTIPURPOSE CULTURAL CENTRE
7:30PM

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**

MONDAY 03 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



Special honour for Burning Flames at Independence Gala in New York



The marquee event of Antigua and Barbuda's Independence celebrations in the United States will this year honour and pay tribute to legendary musical icons, the Burning Flames.

The family band has been a staple at the Antigua and Barbuda Independence Gala organized by the Consulate General for the past few years, and its members will this year take their rightful place in the spotlight not only as performers but as honored guests.

The Independence Gala will take place on Saturday 15th November at the renowned Glen Island Harbour Club, bringing together Antiguan and Barbudans for a night to celebrate the country's remarkable achievements in its 44th year of political independence. The theme is Red and Gold, aptly selected to symbolize the very name of the band and the fiery tunes it has produced over the years.

Antigua and Barbuda's Permanent Representative to the United Nations Ambassador Walton Webson, under whose responsibility the Consulate falls, stated that the honour and tributes the band has been receiving from the Government and people of Antigua and Barbuda are truly deserving.

"Our Independence Gala, in this milestone year for our revered cultural ambassadors, gives the members of the diaspora the perfect opportunity to show the band their own love and appreciation," Ambassador Webson stated.

"While so many Antiguan and Barbudans have made our country proud, in the galaxy of stars of our highest achievers, the Burning Flames continue to shine bright," he continued.

Tickets are moving fast for what is expected to be the Consulate's biggest

Independence Gala ever. Tickets for the highly anticipated gala affair are being sold in three tiers, starting with a limited amount going at US\$200 up until Oct 15. The second tier of tickets goes on sale for US\$225 from October 16 until Nov 9. And from Nov 10 up until the night of the event, tickets will be selling for US\$250.

The Consulate General and members of the organizing committee are encouraging members of the diaspora to come out in their numbers to not only celebrate 44 years of Independence, but 40 years of the musical legacy that has given every Antiguan and Barbudan a lifetime of joy, pride and memories. For tickets and more information contact the New York Office at 646-215-6013 or 646-215-6047.

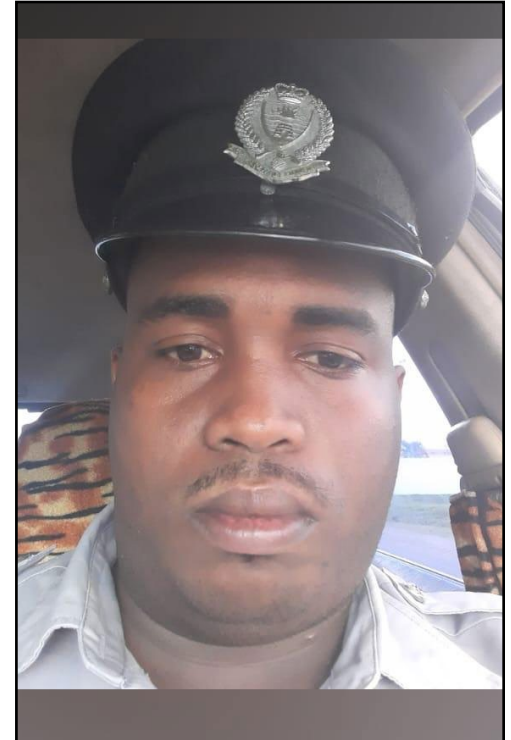
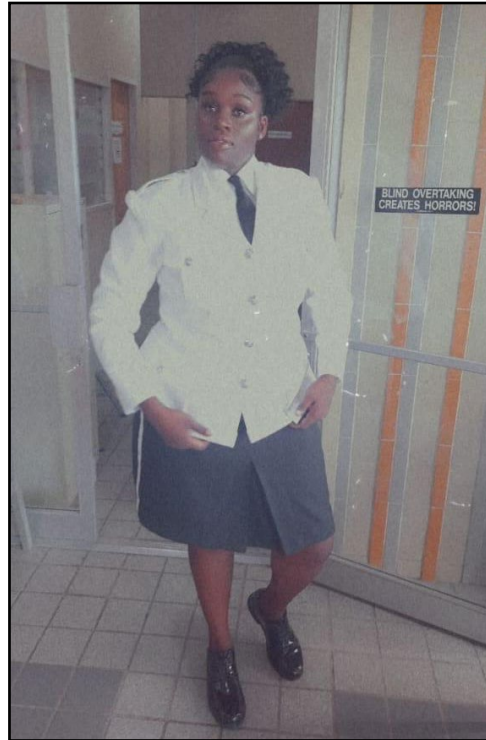
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A Liberta Woman Expresses Heartfelt Gratitude to Police Officers Who Came to Her Aid



The Three Officer: Constable 285 Jamilla Edwards, Constable 347 Choyan James, and Constable 241 Linton Degallerie

At a time when police officers often make headlines for the wrong reasons, a Liberta woman is highlighting the compassion, dedication, and humanity that can define law enforcement.

On Wednesday evening, while on her way home, the woman experienced an unexpected setback when her vehicle struck a pothole, causing her tire to puncture. The incident occurred along a poorly lit stretch of road, leaving her anxious amid rising concerns about crime in the area.

What could have been a stressful situation quickly turned into a moment of relief thanks to the prompt response of three officers on patrol. Constable 285 Jamilla Edwards, Constable 347 Choyan James, and Constable 241 Linton Degallerie immediately assisted by changing the damaged tire, accompanying

her to three tire shops in St. John's to find the correct replacement, and returning to the scene to reinstall it. The officers' professionalism, diligence, and friendly demeanor left a lasting impression. Between moments of lighthearted conversation, they demonstrated genuine care that went far beyond their formal duties.

Constable Edwards reflected on the role of police officers, saying, "We have a tough job. But beneath the uniform are compassionate, empathetic humans who quietly work behind the scenes, offering support, kindness, and sometimes even a helping hand. That is the message we want to send to society to help build stronger and healthier communities."

The Liberta woman expressed deep appreciation for the officers' actions. She noted that too often the

media highlights the darker side of law enforcement, while daily acts of service and integrity go unnoticed. She felt compelled to share her gratitude to acknowledge their kindness.

Reflecting on the encounter, she shared a verse that resonated with her spirit:

"In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you." — 1 Thessalonians 5:18

She concluded by saying she is truly thankful, noting that the officers' actions are a reminder that goodness still exists in the world. Their efforts exemplified the kind of policing that communities hope to see: compassionate, community-centered, and grounded in humanity. She ended with heartfelt words: "Thank you, thank you, thank you."

Police Blotter

Elohim Bloodman Charged for Attempted Armed Robbery

The police have formally charged 19-year-old Elohim Bloodman of Perry Bay in connection with an attempted robbery at a convenience store earlier this week.

Bloodman is charged with Assault with Intent to Rob and Attempting to Use a Firearm in Furtherance of an Offence. It is alleged



Elohim Bloodman of Perry Ba

that on October 6, 2025, he armed himself with a gun and assaulted a woman with the intent to rob her.

A wanted bulletin was issued for his arrest, and he later surrendered himself to the police.

The accused is expected to appear before the court to

answer to the charges.

The Police Administration commends the swift action of the police and reminds members of the public that unlawful possession or use of firearms will not be tolerated. Anyone found in violation will face the full consequences of the law.

Police Investigate Fight Among Youths at ABICE

The police have launched an investigation into a series of fights that broke out among a group of students at the Antigua and Barbuda Institute of Continuing Education (ABICE) on Wednesday morning.

Reports indicate that around 11:30 a.m., officers on mobile patrol responded to several altercations involv-

ing students.

During the disturbance, two students sustained stab wounds and were transported to the Sir Lester Bird Medical Centre by emergency medical personnel for treatment.

Several other persons were also taken into custody in connection with the incident.

The Police Administration is appealing to students to exercise restraint and seek non-violent methods of resolving conflicts.

The Royal Police Force of Antigua and Barbuda remains committed to ensuring the safety of all educational institutions across the nation.

Police Search for Suspects in Alleged Abduction and Robbery

Police are investigating an alleged abduction and robbery that occurred around 11:05 p.m. on Tuesday, October 7, 2025.

A Villa resident reported that he was abducted, assaulted, and robbed by three male assailants in the Dockyard area.

The suspects allegedly took him to an area in Parham near the APUA Water Plant; however, he managed to free himself and seek help.

The victim sustained injuries and was transported to the Sir Lester Bird Medical Centre for medical treatment. Investigations are on-



going.

Anyone with information is

asked to contact the Criminal Investigations Department (CID) at 462-3913 or

call 911. All information will be treated confidentially.

**TUES - FRIDAY
11AM - 2PM**



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Regional News

Dominica Electoral Commission confirms October 15 start for voter confirmation process



The Dominica Electoral Commission has formally announced that the long-awaited voter confirmation process will begin on October 15, 2025, marking a major step in the country's electoral reform agenda.

Speaking at a press conference on Tuesday October 7, 2025, Chairman of the Electoral Commission Duncan Stowe emphasized the significance of the initiative, describing it as "a renewal of trust between the people and the institutions that safeguard their voice." He noted that electoral reform has been a central theme in Dominica's national dialogue for years, driven by a collective desire to modernize the voting system and strengthen democratic participation.

"Our mission has been clear," Stowe said. "To modernize the electoral process, making it transparent, inclusive, efficient, and credible." He added that since the passage of the Electoral Reform legislation earlier this year, the Commission has worked diligently to operationalize the reforms through staff training, system upgrades, and logistical preparations.

The confirmation process, as outlined by Chief Elections Officer Anthia Joseph, is designed to transition eligible voters from the existing register to a new one compiled under the Electors

Act of 2025. Only individuals whose names appear on the voters list as of May 2025 are eligible to apply for confirmation.

Confirmation will be conducted exclusively within Dominica, across designated centers in each constituency. Some constituencies will host multiple centers. Overseas confirmation will not be permitted.

Enrollment officers, appointed and supervised by the Chief Registering Officer, will staff the centers. These officers are required to take an oath before assuming their duties. Applicants must present themselves at the confirmation center corresponding to their registered constituency and must be accompanied by a witness who is also registered to vote in the same polling district.

To complete the process, Dominican citizens must present one of the following original documents along with a copy: a valid Dominican passport, driver's license, or social security card. Commonwealth citizens must provide a valid passport from a Commonwealth country and a secondary government-issued document from the same country, such as a driver's license or voter ID card. Certified copies are acceptable only if originals are unavailable and must be authenticated by a justice of the peace or commissioner.

The confirmation procedure involves several steps:

- Verification of the applicant's name on the May 2025 voters list.

- Validation of the witness's registration in the same polling district.

- Review of required documents.

- Completion and signing of Form 31 in the presence of the enrollment officer and witness.

- Entry of applicant data into an elec-

tronic database, including a photograph and scanned documents.

- Applicant review of the entered information via a dual-screen setup.

- Issuance of a receipt (Form 32) confirming the application.

If discrepancies arise, such as mismatched names due to nicknames, the enrollment officer may proceed if satisfied that the applicant is the same person.

A hotline staffed by senior personnel will be available to assist with such cases. If the officer is not satisfied, the applicant will receive a notice of interim non-confirmation (Form 34) and may appeal the decision to the Chief Registering Officer.

Joseph clarified that the final authority on confirmation lies with the Chief Registering Officer, not the enrollment officer. Grounds for refusal include inadequate documentation, absence from the May 2025 register, or evidence that a Commonwealth citizen is no longer resident in Dominica.

The announcement follows months of public scrutiny surrounding delays in the confirmation timeline. Originally slated to begin September 1, the process was postponed after Parliament approved amendments to the Registration of Voters Act. Prime Minister Roosevelt Skerit had urged the Commission to meet the October 15 deadline, underscoring the urgency of implementing reforms.

Despite earlier criticism, the Commission expressed confidence in its readiness.

"We've come a long way," Stowe said. "Though challenges remain, we are proud of our progress and we are confident that we will see through in all the challenges and with the head." (Dominica News Online)

Gov't continues to make case for restoration of visa-free travel to UK



Dominica continues to engage in discussion with the United Kingdom (UK) government to restore visa-free travel to that country.

This information was disclosed by Prime Minister Roosevelt Skerrett during a press conference held recently.

In July 2023, the British Home Office stated that nationals from Dominica who intend to travel to the United Kingdom (UK) must now apply for a visa due to changes in that country's immigration re-

gime. The revisions were a result of concerns over the island's (and another country, Vanuatu) Citizenship by Investment Program (CBI).

"Careful consideration of Dominica's and Vanuatu's operation of a citizenship by investment scheme has shown clear and evident abuse of the scheme, including the granting of citizenship to individuals known to pose a risk to the UK," Home Secretary, Suella Braverman, said in a statement to the British parliament.

The new visa regime took effect on July 19, 2023.

"We continue to engage them[the UK] and I am hoping that by our conclusion on this regional agreement and the legislation that we will bring to Parliament, the United Kingdom will take those things into consideration and restore the visa-free regime for Dominica," Skerrett stated.

He continued, "As you know, we have a new High Commissioner in London and I have made it clear to her that this is priority number one for us."

The Prime Minister stated further that she was advised to place the visa-free regime at the top of her agenda.

"She has started that process, and so we will continue to engage, and we hope that the visa-free regime will be restored for Dominica," he noted. "We think that there is sufficient positive argument to be made and to be considered by the United Kingdom government for the reinstatement, so we look forward to that." (Dominica News Online)

Free movement among CARICOM nations expected to face implementation hurdles

Although Jamaica could benefit from joining the four Caribbean Community (CARICOM) countries that have recently implemented free movement of their nationals among themselves, Damion Gordon, lecturer in the Department of Government at The University of the West Indies (UWI), Mona, believes differences in values, structural, ideological and execution barriers may hinder any such move by the Government.

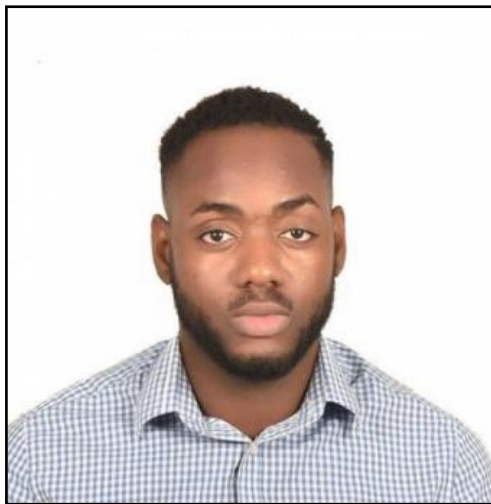
“We are very likely to experience many ideological, institutional and implementation hurdles in terms of building solidarity and national consensus for unrestricted free movement, mainly because in the over 52 years since the establishment of CARICOM, members states have made very little progress in cultivating a strong regional identity,” he told *The Gleaner*.

Free movement among citizens of Barbados, Belize, Dominica and St Vincent and the Grenadines came into effect last Wednesday.

This means that nationals of these four countries will be able to travel to any of these territories to reside, work and remain indefinitely, with the right to access emergency and primary health care as well as public primary and secondary education for their children.

They will no longer be limited to temporary entry of up to six months, or to work under the CARICOM skills regime.

The decision by the four member states to implement full free movement ahead of the other member states was approved by CARICOM Heads of Government during their meeting in July 2025. This arrangement falls under the Enhanced Cooperation Protocol to the Revised Treaty of Chaguara-



mas, which provides for groups of at least three CARICOM member states to pursue deeper regional integration efforts among themselves, with the option for other member states to join later.

Gordon emphasised that the four countries have shared characteristics which made them more conducive to “fruitful” free movement. This includes relatively small population sizes, relatively strong and stable currencies, relative macroeconomic stability, and generally favourable domestic security environments.

Dominica and St Vincent and the Grenadines are members of the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States, which has allowed for free movement among the nine-member subregional group since 2009.

He noted that addressing the region’s sustainability challenges, amid the rise of right-wing domestic and foreign policies in the developed world, requires a more inward-looking disposition that fosters new forms of mutual economic and cultural exchanges that will make Caribbean countries more prosperous and resilient.

Jamaica, he said, would have many

factors to contemplate.

“Unrestricted free movement may help to create new streams of economic livelihoods and prosperity for Jamaicans and fill some local skill gaps at the same time, [but] the inducement of higher salaries and improved living conditions in other Caribbean countries might pull talent away and worsen brain drain,” he said.

However, he noted that the country also is in close proximity to Haiti, “which has a unique and complicated set of challenges”.

“How will Haiti fit into such an arrangement, since it would be inconsistent with the spirit of regionalism to exclude them with them being a part of CARICOM?” Gordon quizzed.

Haiti continues to face a security and humanitarian crisis, with criminal gangs taking over the capital city and other areas of the country.

While Jamaica might be able to earn more tax revenue, attract new investments and improve labour productivity by having a more skilled labour force from joining the free movement, Gordon pointed out that the country might still have to reckon with internal fiscal and resource constraints which would undermine its ability to offer social protection and economic inclusion to its citizens, while expanding benefits and entitlements to migrants.

“This challenge is compounded by the fact that Jamaicans have generally shown the tendency of xenophobia towards other Caribbean nationals, oftentimes driven by historical distrust, ignorance and misconceptions, and their own economic survival interests,” he said. (*Jamaica Gleaner*)

Caribbean Court of Justice holds special sitting for fourth president

The Caribbean Court of Justice (CCJ) hosted a special session at its headquarters in Port of Spain on Monday, October 6, 2025, bringing together Judiciary leaders, distinguished guests, regional judicial officials, and staff members, honoring the formal inauguration of Honourable Mr Justice Winston Anderson as the Court's fourth President.

CCJ reports that Justice Anderson was officially sworn in as President earlier that year on July 6 in Montego Bay, Jamaica, ahead of the 49th Regular Meeting of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Heads of Government.

Prior to his appointment to the CCJ bench in 2010, a media statement shared, President Anderson was a respected academic at The University of the West Indies (UWI) Faculty of Law. He joined UWI in 1988, eventually serving as a professor from 2006 onward. His roles at the Faculty included Deputy Dean, Head of Teaching, and General Counsel to CARICOM during a secondment. Additionally, he was the founding Chair of the CCJ Academy for Law, established in 2010.

During the special sitting, President Anderson reportedly emphasized the impact of the CCJ in enhancing access to final appellate justice across the Caribbean. Using Barbados as an example, he highlighted that the number of appeals from Barbados to the Privy Council over the



20 years prior to 2005 was 19. Since the establishment of the CCJ, the number of appeals from Barbados to the Court has soared to 105 over the same period—an increase of over 450 per cent.

Nonetheless, he pointed out that the full potential of the Court has yet to be realized, noting, “there would have been a significantly larger number of CCJ appellate decisions had there been full compliance with the obliga-

tion in the CCJ Agreement for all member states to join the Appellate Jurisdiction of the Court. The opportunity cost of non-accession can therefore be measured in terms of reduced access to justice, which is also a denial of justice. Equally, there is a corresponding loss in the opportunity to fulfil the mandate of the CCJ Agreement to develop a Caribbean jurisprudence that is responsive to all areas of Caribbean life.”

The theme of expanding access to justice resonated throughout the event, echoed by various speakers.



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Chief Justice Ivor Archie of Trinidad and Tobago expressed his support, affirming that the judiciary of his country stands ready to collaborate with President Anderson to realize the vision of greater regional justice accessibility.

‘Today’s ceremony celebrated the embodiment and continuance of a dream long held across the region, a dream of a Caribbean jurisprudence shaped by Caribbean minds and serving Caribbean people.’ Chief Justice Archie continued, ‘Although the dream is still under construction, there could be no better argument for its pursuit than the people who sat on and led the CCJ Bench.’

Senator the Honourable John Jeremie, SC, the Attorney General of Trinidad and Tobago, also shared his perspective, recalling his initial encounter with President Anderson during his time at UWI’s Faculty of Law. He described Anderson’s calm demeanor and integrity, adding, ‘over the years, I came to respect his deep appreciation for the rule of law and to our Caribbean project.’

Professor Rose-Marie Belle Antoine, Principal of The University of the West Indies at St. Augustine, highlighted that Anderson’s appointment was a win not only for the Court but also for the university. As outlined in the release, she urged advocates and judges who identify with the Caribbean’s regional ethos to reflect deeply on local issues and support the development or rebuilding of our justice system when neces-

sary—affirming that President Anderson embodies this ideal.

The event also featured a message from former CCJ President, the Right Honourable Sir Dennis Byron, who expressed confidence in Anderson’s leadership. Byron reflected on some of Anderson’s landmark cases and his role in shaping the Needham’s Point Declaration, which provides a regionally approved framework for collaborative efforts against crime.

In her opening remarks, CCJ Judge Honourable Mme Justice Maureen Rajnauth-Lee praised President Anderson’s dedication to the region’s peoples. ‘Your respectful engagement with different perspectives and your steadfast commitment to collaborative problem solving have not only elevated the quality of our discourse and enriched the work of the Court but have also inspired each of us.’

Additionally, Ms Lisa Shoman, CARICOM’s General Counsel, underscored the critical importance of the CCJ in today’s volatile global environment. ‘More than ever, CARICOM depends on our commitment to integration, the rule of law, democracy, and respect for human rights. The Caribbean Court of Justice plays a seminal role in offering us guidance, support, and a guarantee of impartial decision-making in its original jurisdiction,’ she stated. ‘The next seven years under President Anderson’s leadership will define and shape the future of the Community.’ (Dominica News Online)



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Colombia's president says boat struck by US was carrying Colombians



Colombian President Gustavo Petro has said that a boat recently bombed by the US was “Colombian with Colombian citizens inside”, an allegation the White House called “baseless”.

The US has struck at least four vessels in the Caribbean in recent weeks, killing 21 people. The US government has said the strikes in international waters were targeting “narco-traffickers”.

But it has not provided evidence or details about who or what is aboard, and the strikes have attracted condemnation in countries in the region amid concerns they breach international law.

The US Senate rejected a measure on Wednesday that would have barred President Donald Trump from using military force against the boats.

Petro replied to a post on X by US Senator Adam Schiff, a Democrat, who said he would vote to block strikes against vessels in the Caribbean as some lawmakers sought to challenge the use of the armed forces in Congress.

The Colombian president said that a “new war scenario has opened up: the

Caribbean”.

Petro added that “indications show that the last boat bombed was Colombian with Colombian citizens inside it.

“I hope their families come forward and report it. There is no war against smuggling; there is a war for oil and it must be stopped by the world. The aggression is against all of Latin America and the Caribbean.”

Petro did not provide further details about the alleged identities of those on board. The US has not commented on the identities of the individuals killed in the strikes.

The White House said in a statement that it “looks forward to President Petro publicly retracting his baseless and reprehensible statement”

It said that while the two nations had “policy differences”, the US remained “committed to close co-operation on a range of shared priorities, including regional security and stability”.

The US says its strikes, which began on 2 September, had targeted vessels

off the coast of Venezuela that it alleges were carrying illegal drugs.

The measure considered by the Senate on Wednesday, which would have required Trump to seek congressional approval for the strikes, was rejected in a 48-51 vote.

It had been introduced by Democratic Senators Schiff and Tim Kaine. The vote broke down mostly along partisan lines.

Earlier this month, a leaked memo sent to Congress said that the US was now categorising itself as being in a “non-international armed conflict”

Framing this as an active armed conflict is likely a way for the administration to justify the use of wartime powers, including killing “enemy fighters”, even if they pose no violent threat.

Trump has already designated many cartels, including in Mexico, Ecuador and Venezuela, as terrorist organisations – granting US authorities more powers in their response to them. (BBC)

Trump says Israel and Hamas have agreed to the ‘first phase’ of his peace plan

US President Donald Trump announced Wednesday that Israel and Hamas have agreed to the “first phase” of his peace plan to pause fighting and release at least some hostages and prisoners, in a major breakthrough in the two-year-old war.

“This means that ALL of the Hostages will be released very soon, and Israel will withdraw their Troops to an agreed upon line as the first steps toward a Strong, Durable, and Everlasting Peace,” Trump wrote on social media.

Hamas plans to release all 20 living hostages this weekend, people familiar with the matter told The Associated Press, while the Israeli military will begin a withdrawal from the majority of Gaza.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said on social media, “With God’s help we will bring them all home.” Hamas said separately that the deal would ensure the withdrawal of Israeli troops as well as allow for the entry of aid and exchange of hostages and prisoners.

Daniel Lifshitz, whose grandmother was freed and grandfather was killed in captivity, on Wednesday thanked world leaders for



helping secure the newly signed agreement to release all hostages held in Gaza.

“We express our deepest gratitude as the historic agreement has been signed — the hostages, our brothers and sisters, are coming home,” Lifshitz said in a statement.

He thanked Trump for his “decisive leadership and unwavering commitment to bringing every hostage back within 72 hours,” and also praised the roles of Egyptian, Turkish and Qatari leaders and negotiators, citing their “personal dedication and relentless efforts.”

Lifshitz also expressed appreciation to Israel’s negotiation team and Netanyahu “for their determination and courage in achieving this vital agreement.”

From the 20 hostages returned, four are from his community including life-

long friends. “This united cooperation and shared moral responsibility have proven that when the right people stand together, humanity prevails” he said.

UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres welcomed the agreement between Israel and Hamas late Wednesday to begin the initial phase of a US-brokered peace deal while urging all parties to “abide fully by the terms of the agreement.”

Guterres said that the UN will support the full implementation of the agreement and has been ready to scale up delivery of humanitarian aid in Gaza that has been sitting on the borders of Jordan and Egypt.

“I urge all stakeholders to seize this momentous opportunity to establish a credible political path forward towards ending the occupation, recognising the right to self-determina-

tion of the Palestinian people, and achieving a two-state solution that enables Israelis and Palestinians to live in peace and security,” he said.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu spoke with President Donald Trump, and they congratulated each other on an agreement to release all the hostages which Netanyahu’s office described as a “historic achievement”

According to a statement from the prime minister’s office, the conversation was “warm and moving.”

Netanyahu thanked Trump for his “efforts and global leadership,” while Trump praised Netanyahu’s “determined leadership and the actions he led.”

The agreement will head to the Israeli Cabinet on Thursday for its approval, and once that occurs, Israeli forces will begin withdrawing to the agreed upon boundary, according to a senior White House official. That should take less than 24 hours, according to the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss planning.

Hamas then has 72 hours to release hostages, and the White House believes they will begin being released on Monday, the official said. (Jamaica Gleaner)

Hair museum filled with century-old mementos closes its doors, scattering contents around the nation



Century-old wreaths made from human hair fill the walls of Leila's Hair Museum, and glass cases overflow with necklaces and watch bands woven from the locks of the dead. There also are tresses purported to come from past presidents, Hollywood legend Marilyn Monroe and even Jesus.

For about 30 years, this hair art collection in the Kansas City suburb of Independence attracted an eclectic group of gawkers that included the likes of heavy metal legend Ozzy Osbourne.

But the museum's namesake, Leila Cohoon, died last November at the age of 92. Now her granddaughter, Lindsay Evans, is busy rehoming the collection of more than 3,000 pieces to museums across the country, including the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, and the National Museum of Women in the Arts in Washington, D.C.

"Every time I come here, I feel her here," Evans said Monday while touring with representatives of the National Museum of Funeral History in Houston who

left with around 30 pieces. "This place is her. And so I feel like this process of rehoming her collection has helped me grieve her in a way that I didn't even realize I really needed."

It all started in 1956 when Cohoon, a hair dresser, was shopping for Easter shoes. Inside an antique store she found a gold frame filled with strands of hair twisted into the shape of flowers.

"She said forget the Easter shoes," Evans said. "My granddad always said that this was the most expensive piece of the museum because look at what it started."

Evans is keeping that one for herself.

This form of art peaked in popularity in the mid-1800s as women coiled the hair of the dead into jewelry or told their family history by intertwining the curls of loved ones into wreaths.

But hair art had fallen out of favor by the 1940s, as memories were captured in photos, Evans said. Additionally, "this artwork was not celebrated because it was mostly done by wom-

en. And so in larger museums, they don't have a lot of this."

Her grandmother saved some from being trashed, wrote a book and taught classes on the art form, training a new generation of artists.

Often the hair art was housed in elaborate frames with original glass, so when her grandmother started haggling with antique dealers for the frames, they frequently offered to get rid of the hair

"And she'd say, 'No, no, keep that in there,'" Evans said.

Then her grandmother would hand them her business card and tell them to be on the lookout. Soon dealers across the country were calling.

"If it had hair, she got it," said Evans, who sometimes accompanied her grandmother as she hunted for new additions.

The collection grew to include a wreath containing hair from every woman in the League of Women Voters from Vermont in 1865. A pair of crescent-shaped wreaths contain the tresses of two sisters whose heads were shaved when they entered a convent. A couple pieces even feature taxidermy.

The frames filled the walls of her home and the beauty school she ran with her husband. She shoved them under beds and in closets. Eventually, the couple snatched up this building — a former car dealership —

nestled between a fast-food restaurant and car wash.

Celebrities caught wind of the attraction. Actress and comedian Phyllis Diller donated a hair wreath that had been in her family for generations. TV personality Mike Rowe filmed an episode of "Somebody's Gotta Do It" here. There might also be a few strands from Osbourne inside. When he came to visit, Cohoon snipped a lock, although Evans has yet to find it.

Evans said her grandmother was tight-lipped on what she spent over the years, but she anticipates the worth of the art may top \$1 million.

As Genevieve Keeney, the head of the National Museum of Funeral History in Houston, waded through the collection, she eagerly eyed the jewelry that memorialized the dead, including a small pin containing the locks of a 7-year-old girl who died in 1811.

"I always felt it was important to educate people about death," said Keeney, also a licensed mortician. "Our society does such an injustice on getting people to understand what the true emotions are going to feel like when death happens."

Evans herself is struggling with a mix of emotions as she slowly rehomes her grandmother's legacy.

"I want people to see all of this because that's what she wanted," Evans said. "But when this is empty it'll break my heart a little bit."

(AP)

Man charged with sparking the most destructive wildfire in Los Angeles history

A 29-year-old man has been charged with sparking California's deadly Palisades Fire, one of the most destructive wildfires in its history, authorities said Wednesday.

Federal officials said Jonathan Rinderknecht, who lived in the area, started a small fire on New Year's Day that smoldered underground before reigniting nearly a week later and roaring through Pacific Palisades, home to many of Los Angeles' rich and famous.

The fire, which left 12 dead in the hillside neighborhoods across Pacific Palisades and Malibu, was one of two blazes that broke out on Jan. 7, killing more than 30 people in all and destroying over 17,000 homes and buildings while burning for days in Los Angeles County.

Rinderknecht was arrested Tuesday in Florida and made his first court appearance Wednesday in Orlando on charges including malicious destruction by means of a fire, which carries a minimum sentence of five years in prison. Wearing shorts and a T-shirt while shackled at the ankles, he told a federal magistrate in a soft-spoken voice that he was not under the influence and did not have mental issues.

The judge set a hearing for Oct. 17 to consider bond and extradition proceedings. Messages seeking comment were left for Aziza Hawthorne, the federal assistant public defender assigned to represent Rinderknecht.

Los Angeles Fire Department Interim Fire Chief Ronnie Villanueva said the arrest was an important first step toward justice.

The department released a report Wednesday that found firefighters lacked enough resources and struggled



to communicate clearly in the first 36 hours of the blaze, and that those challenges hampered their response during a critical time.

The report said the department did not pre-deploy enough resources despite warnings of severe winds.

Investigators said Wednesday that Rinderknecht was working as an Uber driver on New Year's Eve, 2024. After dropping off a passenger in Pacific Palisades, he parked and walked up a trail. He took videos at a nearby hilltop area and listened to a rap song with a music video showing objects being lit on fire, prosecutors said. Shortly after midnight, he lit the fire, they alleged.

He fled the scene after starting the fire but returned to the trail to watch it burn, acting U.S. Attorney Bill Essayli said.

"He left as soon as he saw the fire trucks were headed to the location. He turned around and went back up there. And he took some video and, and watched them fight the fire," Essayli

said.

Uber said in a statement that it worked with the U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives to determine the driver's whereabouts around the time of the fire.

Rinderknecht also made several 911 calls to report the fire, according to a criminal complaint.

During an interview Jan. 24, Rinderknecht told investigators where the fire began, information not yet public and that he would not have known if he hadn't witnessed it, the complaint said.

He lied about his location, claiming he was near the bottom of the hiking trail, Essayli said.

He was visibly anxious during that interview, according to the complaint. His efforts to call 911 and his question to ChatGPT about a cigarette lighting a fire indicated that he wanted to create a more innocent explanation for the fire's start and to show he tried to assist with suppression, the complaint

said.

Federal officials called the Palisades blaze a “holdover fire” from the Jan. 1 fire, which was not fully extinguished by firefighters. LA’s interim fire chief said such fires linger in root systems and can reach depths of 15 to 20 feet (4.6 to 6.1 meters), making them undetectable by thermal imaging cameras.

Investigators determined the initial blaze was likely lit by a lighter taken to vegetation or paper, according to the criminal complaint.

Investigators found a “barbecue-style” lighter in the glove compartment of Rinderknecht’s car on Jan. 24. It appeared to be the same lighter as one that was in his apartment on Dec. 31, based on a photo on his phone. He admitted to bringing a lighter with him when he walked up the hill, authorities said.

Federal prosecutors will need to prove beyond a reasonable doubt that the Palisades Fire grew from the blaze six days earlier, said Jerod Gunsberg, a California criminal defense attorney with experience in arson cases.

The department found that there was a delay in communicating evacuation orders to the public, resulting in spontaneous evacuations without traffic control that caused residents to block routes to the fire. The incident command had to be frequently relocated to escape the fire front, the report said.

The first evacuation orders came 40 minutes after some homes were already burning, reporting by The Associated Press has found.

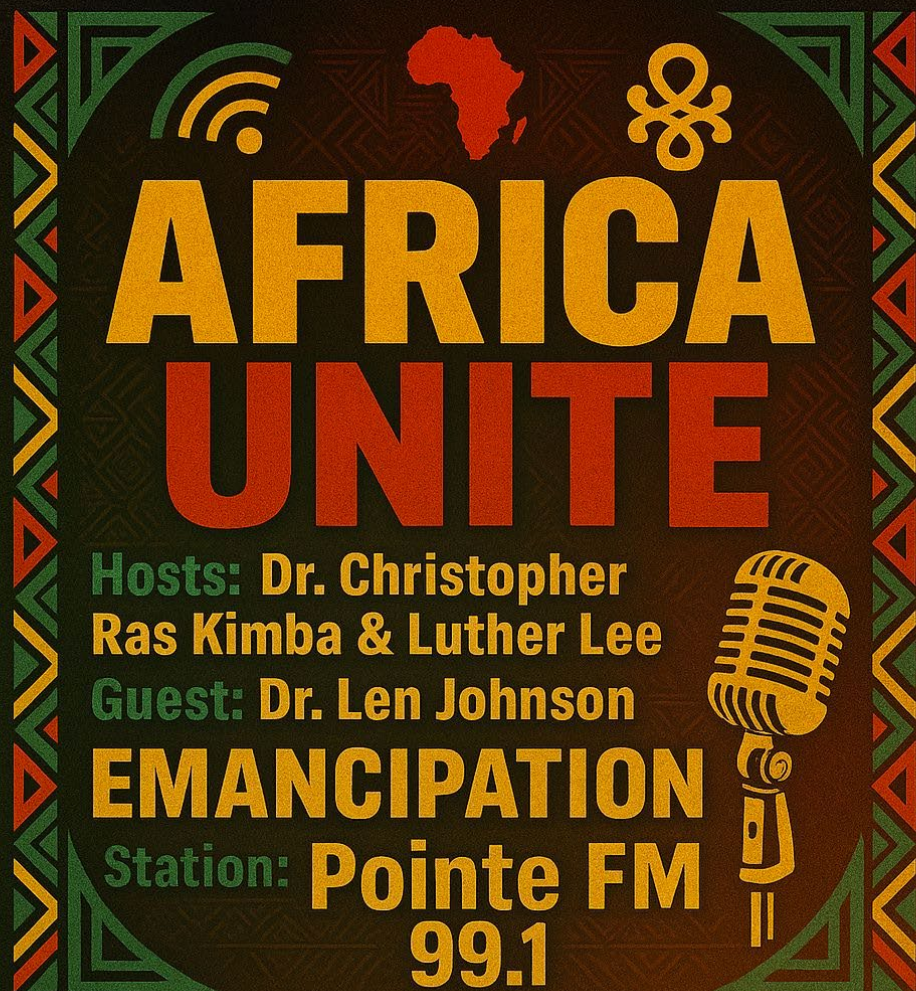
The department could not effectively recall off-duty personnel, and some fire chiefs had limited experience with “managing an incident of such

complexity,” the report said. Most firefighters worked for more than 36 hours without rest.

The Eaton Fire broke out the same day in the community of Altadena, destroying more than 9,400 homes and killing 19 people. Investigators have not officially determined a cause, but the federal government sued utility Southern California Edison last month, alleging that its equipment sparked the fire.

An outside review released in September found that a lack of resources and outdated policies for sending emergency alerts led to delayed evacuation warnings.

The report commissioned by Los Angeles County supervisors said a series of weaknesses, including “outdated policies, inconsistent practices and communications vulnerabilities,” hampered the county’s response. (AP)



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AGS make winning start in defense of U-14 Boys Division title



Director of Sports Heather Samuel-Daley presents the trophy to a player of Under-14 Boys Division champions Antigua Grammar School at the Antigua Recreation Grounds on Wednesday, December 11, 2024. (File Photo)

The Antigua Grammar School (AGS) made a winning start in defense of their Under-14 Boys Division league title in the Ministry of Sports, Cool and Smooth, and Joma Patrick C. Whyte Cup Secondary Schools' Football Competition on Wednesday.

Antigua Grammar School launched their campaign with a 6-0 drubbing of Sir Novelle Richards Academy in the first game of a double-header at the Antigua Grammar School playing field.

Uziah Zachariah scored twice with conversions in the ninth and 27th minutes,

while Uri Daley of Sir Novelle Richards Academy scored an own goal in the 29th minute.

The other goal scorers were Johnathan Duberry in the 3rd minute, Kenzi Ochoa in the 6th minute, and Tamarley Henry in the 13th minute.

Last year's third-place finishers Princess Margaret School also got off to a winning start, coasting to a 3-0 victory against Pares Secondary at the Radio Range playing field in Ottos.

Allan Henry struck twice with conversions in the 34th and 48th min-

utes, and Jahquan Barthley scored the other goal in the 28th minute.

St. Joseph's Academy snatched a 4-3 victory against All Saints Secondary in their opening encounter at the Antigua Grammar School playing field.

Jaariq Robers scored all four goals for St. Joseph's Academy with conversions in the 15th, 18th, 35th, and 47th minutes. The goals for All Saints Secondary were scored by Wayne McIntosh in the 42nd minute, Daniel Thomas in the 57th minute, and Jaime Francis in

the 62nd minute.

Jennings Secondary and St. Mary's Secondary School fought to a 2-2 draw in their opening encounter at the Golden Grove playing field.

Elreekk Francois scored in the sixth minute, and Keadone Satchell had a 38th-minute conversion for Jennings Secondary. Journey Charles had a fourth-minute conversion, and Veron Roberts scored in the 28th minute for St. Mary's Secondary School.

But the first-round match between last year's second-place finishers, Clare Hall Secondary, and Ottos Comprehensive School was rescheduled.

That under-14 encounter will now take place as the first game of a triple-header at the ABFA Technical Center on Friday at 3:00 pm.

It will precede a double-header in the opening round of matches in the under-20 boys division.

Clare Hall Secondary and Irene B. Williams Secondary will clash at 4:00 pm, while last year's champion, Princess Margaret School, will begin the defense of their Under-20 Boys Division title against Jennings Secondary at 6:30 pm.

Richie's Shooterz return to winning form in Business Basketball League

After suffering their first loss in their previous outing, last year's third-place finishers, Richie's Shooterz, returned to winning form in the 2025 Cool and Smooth Antigua and Barbuda Basketball Association's (ABBA) Business League championships on Wednesday night.

Richie's Shooters claimed their fourth win in five matches with a crushing 120-40 victory over Police in the second game of a triple-header at the JSC Sports Complex.

Tajahron Davis shot a game-high 35 points, Devorn Benjamin produced 27 points, six assists, and five rebounds, and Jaleyle Joseph sank 18 points and grabbed six rebounds as the top performers in leading Richie's Shooterz to the highest score and largest margin of victory in this year's competition.

In support, Jaheem James chipped in with 15 points and five assists; Kwame Brathwaite contributed 13 points, 13 rebounds, and seven assists; and Nickon McGregor narrowly missed out on achieving a triple-double by producing 11 points, 18 rebounds, nine assists, and five steals for Richie's Shooterz.

Joshua Salmon sank 18 points and grabbed nine rebounds, and Javon Simon scored 11 points and claimed nine rebounds for the Police, who suffered their sixth loss in as many games.

Anjo Wholesales recorded their sixth win in seven matches with a 74-61 victory against Antigua Power Company in the last game of Wednesday's triple-header.

Webster Baptista shot a game-high 26 points; Steven Matthew contribut-

ed 16 points and seven assists; Jesus Emmanuel converted 12 points; and Irwyn Rodriguez chipped in with 10 points, 14 rebounds, and four assists for Anjo Wholesale.

Sergio Symister sank 21 points and grabbed 11 rebounds, and Akeem Davis narrowly missed out on achieving a triple double by producing 15 points, nine rebounds, eight assists, and four steals for the Antigua Power Company, who suffered their second loss in seven games.

Cornerstone Builders and Maintenance notched up their fourth win in five matches with a 66-50 victory against J&J Company Landscaping Services in the first game of Wednesday's triple-header.

Takeem Martin shot a game-high 26 points and grabbed 11 rebounds, and Yohan Nicholas produced 16 points, 17 rebounds, and five blocks for Cornerstone Builders and Maintenance.

Daysher Samuel converted 15 points, Dwayne Samuel sank 12 points and claimed nine rebounds, and Neville Chambers scored 11 points for J&J Company Landscaping Services, which remains joint-second from the bottom of the standings with Police after suffering their sixth loss in as many games.

There will be a pause in the matches as the players participate in the Business Basketball League All-Star Night at the JSC Sports Complex on Saturday.



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CWI names squads for ODI and T20I matches in Bangladesh

Cricket West Indies (CWI) has announced the squads for the three (3) One Day Internationals (ODI) and three (3) T20 International (T20I) matches against Bangladesh from October 18 to 31 in Dhaka and Chattogram, respectively.

Following a fourth consecutive home series triumph, with the recent victory against Pakistan, the Bangladesh series will be the penultimate ODI series of the year for the regional squad, providing an opportunity for continuity in preparation for the ICC Men's World Cup in 2027, with the nucleus of the squad being retained from the previous series.

Former West Indies Under-19 captain and academy member, Ackeem Auguste, has been rewarded with a maiden call up to the ODI squad as a replacement for Evin Lewis, who is recovering from a wrist injury and ruled out of the tour.

Khary Pierre, who made his Test debut against India earlier this month, has earned a recall to the shorter format to support Gudakesh Motie and Roston Chase in the spin department, while Alick Athanaze has also made a return to the squad, which is led by Shai Hope.

Head Coach Daren Sammy is excited to continue the progression of the ODI Team while exposing more players to strengthen the pool for the 2027 World Cup.

"The squad assembled will



Players of the West Indies T20 team

strive to maintain a winning mentality and strong team cohesion, essential components for long-term success ahead of the World Cup. Facing Bangladesh provides another opportunity to earn crucial points in our push for automatic qualification to the showpiece event."

Sammy also added, "The selection of Ackeem reflects the pathway Cricket West Indies is creating for our emerging players who have shown the qualities to perform at the international level. He is a player for the future, one who has progressed from Under-15s to the senior level, and another academy graduate to feature in an international squad this year."

Meanwhile, left arm pacer Ramon Simmonds along with Amir Jangoo have been included for the three (3) T20Is in Chattogram.

Simmonds' exploits in the Caribbean Premier League (CPL), where he ended with

13 wickets along with his strong outing with the ball against Nepal, sees him included in the 15-member squad. Jangoo has been selected as the second wicket-keeping option.

In a concerted effort to provide players with valuable exposure to sub-continent conditions in advance of the series, CWI have sent Keacy Carty, Gudakesh Motie, and Sherfane Rutherford to a preparatory camp at the Super Kings Academy in Chennai, India, with Ackeem Auguste and Amir Jangoo joining this contingent following their participation in the Nepal series.

CWI's Director of Cricket, Miles Bascombe said, "With the 2026 T20 World Cup around the corner, it is important for our players to get as much practice as possible in these conditions, with that tournament being held in India and Sri Lanka.

"In addition to the important aspect of acclimatisa-

tion, the camp will feature skill and tactical training and development specific to those conditions, which is critical to preparing the players ahead of this series as well as next year's World Cup."

West Indies ODI squad against Bangladesh: Shai Hope (captain), Alick Athanaze, Ackeem Auguste, Jediah Blades, Keacy Carty, Roston Chase, Justin Greaves, Amir Jangoo, Shamar Joseph, Brandon King, Gudakesh Motie, Khary Pierre, Sherfane Rutherford, Jayden Seales, and Romario Shepherd.

West Indies T20 Squad against Bangladesh: Shai Hope (captain), Alick Athanaze, Ackeem Auguste, Roston Chase, Jason Holder, Akeal Hosein, Amir Jangoo, Shamar Joseph, Brandon King, Gudakesh Motie, Rovman Powell, Sherfane Rutherford, Jayden Seales, Romario Shepherd, and Ramon Simmonds.

India target series sweep, Windies motivated by pep talk



West Indies captain Roston Chase prepares to bowl at the nets during a training session in Delhi, India, on Thursday, October 9, 2025. (CWI Media)

NEW DELHI (Reuters) - India captain Shubman Gill ruled out a drop in their intensity and said they will field their strongest playing XI in their pursuit of a 2-0 series sweep against a demoralised West Indies in the final Test, beginning on Friday.

India thumped the West Indies by an innings and 140 runs inside three days of the opening test in Ahmedabad and look on course to win their first Test series under Gill's captaincy at Delhi's Arun Jaitley Stadium.

The West Indies were blanked 3-0 by Australia in their previous Test series in July, which included the ignominy of being bundled out for 27 in the final Test in Kingston.

India, currently third in the World Test Championship standings, are also on a high after winning the Asia Cup T20 tournament last month.

"I don't think your intensity drops depending on the opposition," Gill told reporters on Thursday.

"It doesn't matter who you're playing. We want to be able to play at our own intensity. Playing for India, you don't need external motivation to up your intensity. It doesn't matter if you're playing West Indies, Bangladesh, Australia or England.

"We want to be able to play at our own intensity, and we want to maintain our own standards."

The top order batter did not disclose India's playing XI but made it clear that they would field the "strongest 11" players, keeping in mind the WTC implication of the series outcome.

While Gill felt they played the "perfect game" in Ahmedabad, Sai Sudharsan is yet to nail down the number three position, managing seven in In-

dia's lone innings in Ahmedabad.

The left-hander has one fifty in seven innings in that crucial position but Gill was ready to be patient with the 23-year-old.

"You have to give young players more opportunities," Gill said.

His counterpart Roston Chase drew inspiration from his chat with three former West Indies captains – Sir Viv Richards, Sir Richie Richardson, and Brian Lara -- ahead of the match.

"I had the privilege of speaking with all three of them, and they basically said the same thing. They just told me to keep believing," all-rounder Chase said.

"Obviously, we're down right now, but it has to change at some point. Change can start from now, and it starts with the belief and the mindset of each and every player."

Walsh Jr. rejects ABCA's invitation to play in LICB tournament

Former West Indies leg-spinner Hayden Walsh Jr. has declined an invitation for selection to represent the senior Antigua and Barbuda men's team at this year's Leeward Islands Cricket Board (LICB) senior men's tournament in St. Kitts.

According to a press release from the Antigua and Barbuda Cricket Association (ABCA), Hayden Walsh Jr. has formally declined an invitation for selection to represent Antigua and Barbuda in this year's Leeward Islands senior men's tournament.

The ABCA media release also claimed Hayden Walsh Jr. has indicated his intention to represent Montserrat in the 2025 LICB (mixed format) Tournament, which is slated to take place in St. Kitts from October 25 to November 1.

The ABCA expressed its gratitude to Hayden Walsh Jr. for his years of dedicated service and contribution to cricket in Antigua and Barbuda.

The ABCA's disclosure was made just hours after the national governing body for cricket named Hayden Walsh Jr. in an initial 18-member Antigua and Barbuda training squad for this month's LICB tournament.

The squad includes the twin-island nation's new-



Hayden Walsh Jr.

est selectee to represent the West Indies team in T20 cricket, all-rounder Karima Gore, who captained Antigua and Barbuda to their second consecutive title in the LICB Senior Men's 50-Over Championship in St. Kitts in October last year.

The squad also includes current West Indies Academy players, fast bowler Kelvin Pittman and wicket-keeper/batsman Jewel Andrew.

Also included are all-rounder Kofi James and leg-spinner Micah McKenzie, who topped the batting and bowling aggregates, respectively, during the inaugural West Indies Breakout T20 League that took place in Trinidad from April 25 to

May 10.

The squad includes all-rounder Elroy Francis Jr., experienced off-spinner Rahkeem "Jimbo" Cornwall, batsman Michael Greaves, and left-arm pacer Javier Spencer of the PIC Insurance Libertas Black Hawks.

Also selected are batsmen Uri Smith and Essan Warner, and all-rounders Kadeem Henry and Demari Benta of the Pigotts Crushers.

The other selected players are batsman Bartlette Henry and pacer Ishmael Peters of New Winthorpes Lions, batsman Tyrone Williams Jr. of Empire Nation, and left-arm spinner Glenton Williams of Jennings Ti-

gers.

Also retaining their posts are head coach and former national left-arm seamer Pernel "Shafto" Watley and Purnell "Roxie" Joseph, who is the manager and assistant coach.

Antigua and Barbuda training squad: Karima Gore, Demari Benta, Javier Spencer, Kadeem Henry, Kofi James, Tyrone Williams Jr., Jewel Andrew, Bartlette Henry, Rahkeem Cornwall, Micah McKenzie, Michael Greaves, Essan Warner, Elroy Francis Jr., Kelvin Pittman, Glenton Williams, Uri Smith, and Ishmael Peters. Pernel Watley (coach) and Purnell Joseph (manager/assistant coach).