

Customs Head Resigns Over Vehicle Procurement Breaches

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Golden Sunset



Following torrential rainfall and flash flooding yesterday, this sunset, as seen from Tamarind Hills, was a welcomed sight.

Photo Credit: Tyler Baldwin

Customs Comptroller Resigns Amid Vehicle Acquisition Fallout

At least one top government official has resigned amid what Prime Minister Gaston Browne described as “procedural breaches” and “wilful neglect” surrounding the acquisition of vehicles for the Government of Antigua and Barbuda.

Speaking in Parliament on Thursday, the Prime Minister confirmed that Raju Boddu, Comptroller of Customs, had tendered his resignation following revelations that vehicles were purchased without the required Cabinet approval.

“Where there is wilful neglect, it suggests culpability,” Browne told lawmakers, adding that the resignation was the consequence of serious lapses in compliance.

Raju Boddu, a national of India, is qualified in financial management, auditing, accounting, general administration and management in a career that spans approximately 40 years. He was appointed Comptroller of Customs in February of 2012. Additionally, he served as Chairman of the Special Economic Zone Advisory Board, Deputy Chairman, Saint John’s Development Corporation and Chair of the Finance Committee, Caribbean Customs Law Enforcement Council and Chairman of the Finance Committee, World



Raju Boddu

Customs Organization.

Mr. Browne reminded Parliament on Thursday that Cabinet had centralised all government vehicle purchases two years ago, following reports of widespread abuse of the procurement system — an issue that had persisted under both current and previous administrations.

“Each purchase of a motor vehicle had to be approved by Cabinet,” he said. “This was widely known and communicated to all dealers. Yet, we found that a number of vehicles were purchased without the supporting Cabinet decisions.”

The Prime Minister noted that, in addition to the resignation, a permanent secretary and two government senators were reassigned to other ministries. Although

he did not directly link them to the violations, Browne said the rotations were part of a broader restructuring effort to strengthen oversight and integrity across ministries.

It was revealed last week that car dealers were reminded through correspondence 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 authorising such purchase”.

It further advised 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 null and void, and as a consequence the government shall accept no liability for any costs or charges arising

therefrom”.

It was later confirmed that unapproved transactions for vehicle purchases were completed.

The government now plans to implement tighter internal controls and expanded monitoring within key revenue agencies, particularly Customs.

Prime Minister Browne announced that the Cabinet has approved new measures, including routine and random spot checks, and the involvement of independent private citizens in oversight activities.

“We are going system-wide, especially within Customs and other revenue areas,” Browne said. “There will be further redeployments and additional systems put in place to ensure compliance and transparency.”

The vehicle acquisition breaches have renewed attention on government procurement and accountability mechanisms in Antigua and Barbuda. The head of government emphasised that the administration remains committed to addressing vulnerabilities that allow for abuse and negligence within public service operations.

“Our goal is not only to correct the failures but to strengthen the systems so that such breaches cannot

CIP Regulatory Authority Bill Gets Full Support in House of Representatives



CITIZENSHIP BY INVESTMENT UNIT
ANTIGUA & BARBUDA

The Eastern Caribbean Citizenship by Investment Regulatory Authority Agreement Bill, 2025 received bi-partisan support in the House of Representatives yesterday.

The harmonised legislation will apply to countries within the OECS that

operate CIPs and makes provision for the establishment of a regional regulator, enhanced security and due diligence, maintaining transparency and accountability, compliance and enforcement and economic sustainability and resilience. The latter increases the Minimum Investment Threshold from

US\$ 100,000 to US \$200,000.

It comes as developed countries including the United States, United Kingdom and those within the European Union, express concerns over the programmes.

In parliament yesterday, Prime Minister Gaston Browne underscored the importance of the CIP to the country's economic development, describing it as a form of economic diversification that must be protected.

Based on the negative reviews the programmes are attracting in some parts of the world, Mr. Browne said realignment was necessary.

“Again, I’m pleased to say that no one has been able to provide any technical evidence of any skulduggery involving our programme, because, you



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Local News

know, we, and I'm not saying that skulduggery existed in the others, but these claims have been made.

"In our particular case, we have been commended by many practitioners for the transparency of our programme and the safeguards that we had in place. In fact, we're the only country that had an extensive sanction list so that whenever a country is sanctioned internationally by the UN, by the United States, we automatically cease processing their applications. So, we've been very conservative to the extent the yield and the monies that we've made from CIP was far less than the other countries," the prime minister asserted.

He defended the Antigua and Barbuda CIP, declaring that it is one of the best that can be found anywhere in the world.

"And it's not because we don't have a better product. It's not because Antigua and Barbuda doesn't have more to offer than the other countries, but it's because of the way our programme is structured. One, it was more difficult to manipulate. Two, we had a residency requirement that many people found unattractive, but our position was it must be some level of connection to the country and these are the things that are now literally enshrined. So, we're now moving from five to 30 days, but these are things that we are practicing all along.

That is why I made a point too that we operated and continue to operate one of the best programmes anywhere in the world."

Saint John's Rural West MP, Richard Lewis applauded the OECS nations that will operate their CIPs under the harmonised legislation for the deci-

sion to increase the Minimum Investment Threshold. He is convinced that if such a decision was not taken, all of the programmes would have "died a quick and tragic death".

"I welcome this move and I think we are better; we are stronger when we join forces together. Again, we see the OECS as an excellent example of how we can come together as nations and be stronger," Lewis said.

Meantime, Barbudan MP Trevor Walker, while applauding the introduction of the legislation, expressed scepticism that powerful nations will continue to go after countries like Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia and Grenada. He also suggested consideration be given to increasing the US \$200,000 Minimum Investment Threshold by US \$ 100,000.

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

LIAT Air Adds Dominican Republic to Growing Network



Antigua-based LIAT Air is adding the Dominican Republic to its network, with services to Santo Domingo and Punta Cana.

In a statement yesterday, the airline said flight to Santo Domingo will commence on 12th December, 2025, followed by the launch of service to Punta Cana on 15th December, 2025.

“This expansion represents a strategic step in deepening LIAT Air’s commitment to regional connectivity, connecting families, businesses, and diaspora communities not only between Antigua & Barbuda and the Dominican Republic, but across the wider Caribbean,” the airline outlined.

Santo Domingo, the capital and commercial heart of the Dominican Republic, offers a gateway for business travellers, government officials, and students, while Punta Cana, renowned for its world-class resorts and pristine beaches, is a magnet for leisure travellers seeking new vacation experiences. These routes will serve a diverse customer base, including Caribbean nationals, international tourists, and regional business professionals, LIAT Air added.

The airline’s CEO Hafsah Abdulsalam, said, “Our entry into the Dominican Republic is a natural extension of our mission to connect the Caribbean. These new routes respond to the growing demand for seamless travel between key regional destinations and

reflect our commitment to supporting economic development, tourism, and cultural exchange. We’re excited to welcome travelers on board to experience the warmth & friendly service LIAT Air is known for.”

With the new routes, LIAT Air continues to build a robust regional network that prioritises accessibility, con-

venience, and connectivity. The new flights will also support the movement of goods and services, opening doors for trade and collaboration between markets.

Flight schedules and booking information are available at www.flyliatair.com



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New Date Set for Grade 6 Awards Ceremony

Inclement weather forced officials of the Ministry of Education, Sports and Creative Industries to postpone yesterday's planned Grade Six National Assessment Awards.

The event will now be held on Tuesday, 21st October, 2025, at Saint John's Pentecostal Church House of Restoration Ministries, commencing at 4:00 p.m.

Torrential rainfall yesterday caused flash flooding across the country, forcing the postponement of several events.

The Ministry of Education, Sports and Creative Industries and CIBC Caribbean have apologised for any inconvenience the postponement of the ceremony may

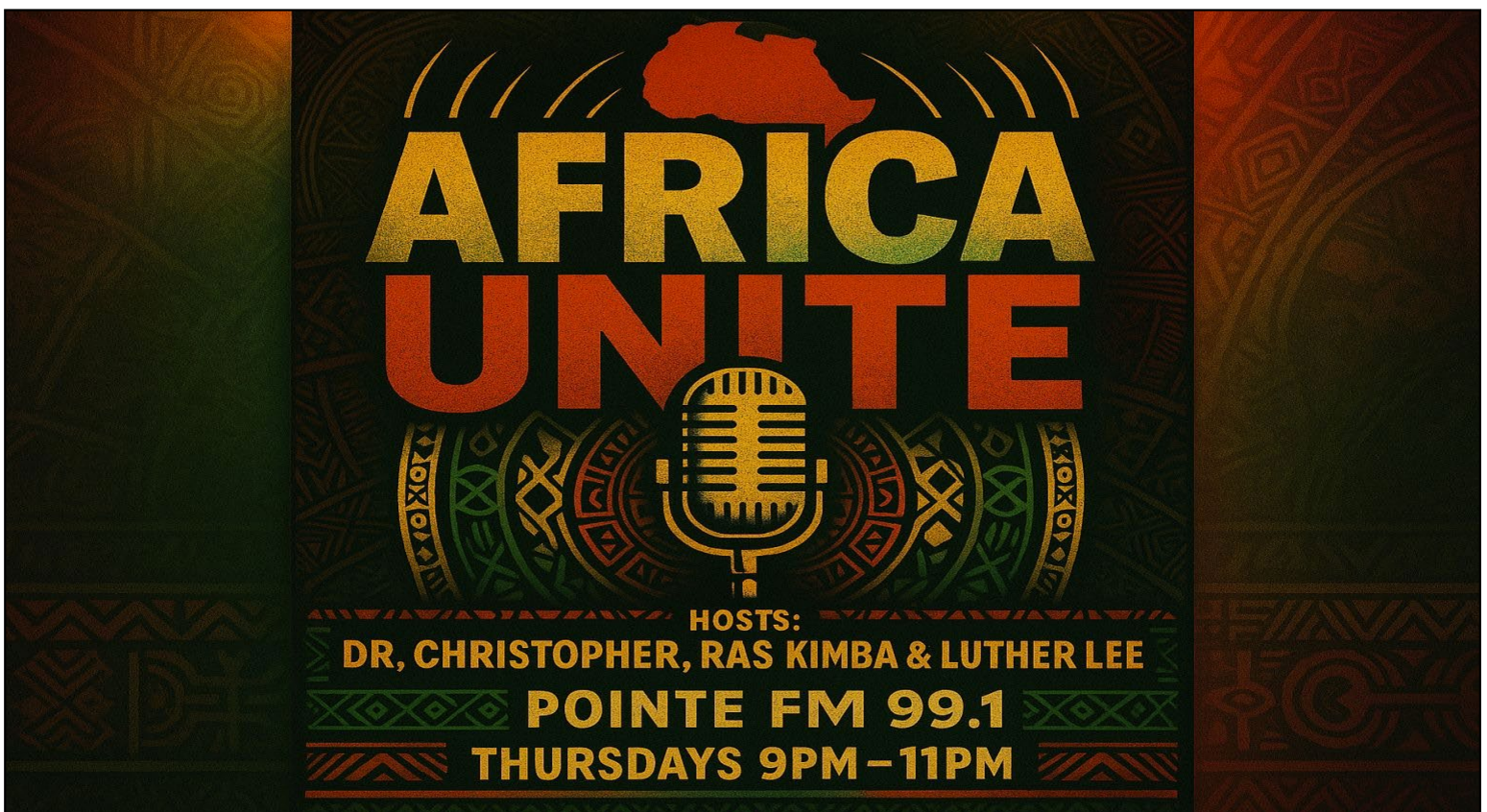


have caused.

104 students, listed in the top 100 positions of the 2025 Grade 6 National Assessment, will be awarded in gold (34) and silver (70) categories when the awards ceremony is held next Tuesday.

The programme will include presentations from top Grade Six National Assessment student, Jasmine Greenaway, Erin Frank, Minister of Education, Sports and Creative Industries, Daryll Matthew and CIBC's Corporate Manager, Priscilla Leonce.

Parents, guardians and other stakeholders are advised that no changes will be made to the programme.



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THURSDAYS 9PM – 11PM



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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



Public Library benefits from Office Equipment Through Shanghai Association



The Chinese Embassy in Antigua and Barbuda hosted a handover ceremony of office equipment on Tuesday morning with the National Public Library, marking another milestone between the People's Republic of China and Antigua and Barbuda in education and culture.

The donation was made possible through the generous support of the Shanghai People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries and the Shanghai Soong Ching Ling School, to enhance the library's technological resources and provide

a more comfortable environment for readers and staff.

The ceremony was attended by H.E. Zhang Yanling, Ambassador of the People's Republic of China to Antigua and Barbuda; Hon. Alincia Williams-Grant, President of the Senate; Mrs. Karen Browne-Francis, Acting Director of the National Public Library; Mr. Wen Han, Director of the Confucius Institute in Antigua and Barbuda; and supporting staff members of the National Public Library.

Joining virtually were Mr. Chen

Jing, Vice Chairman of the Standing Committee of the Shanghai Municipal People's Congress and President of the Shanghai People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, and Mrs. Tong Xiaohong, Secretary of the General Party Branch and Vice Principal of the Shanghai Soong Ching Ling School.

In her remarks, Ambassador Zhang highlighted that education and cultural exchange remain key pillars between China and Antigua and Barbuda relations, echoing the commitment made by both leaders during Prime

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Minister Gaston Browne's visit to China. She noted that Shanghai, as an important window for China's modernization and reform, continues to play a leading role in fostering cooperation. Quoting President Xi Jinping, Ambassador Zhang said, "A single flower does not make a spring; on the road to sustainable development, no one should be left behind."

Ambassador Zhang also expressed gratitude to the Shanghai partners for their contribution, stating that the donation would further strengthen the friendship between both countries and provide practical support for Antigua and Barbuda's development in education and technology.

Speaking virtually, Mr. Chen Jing noted that the donation exemplifies the deep friendship between Shanghai and Antigua and Barbuda, reaffirming China's continued support for mutual learning and shared growth. He mentioned that the Shanghai Library will subsequently provide a selection of books and launch online services, hoping to support the reading and learning of the people of Antigua and Barbuda, especially the youth, and to strengthen the exchanges and cooperation between China and Antigua and Barbuda.

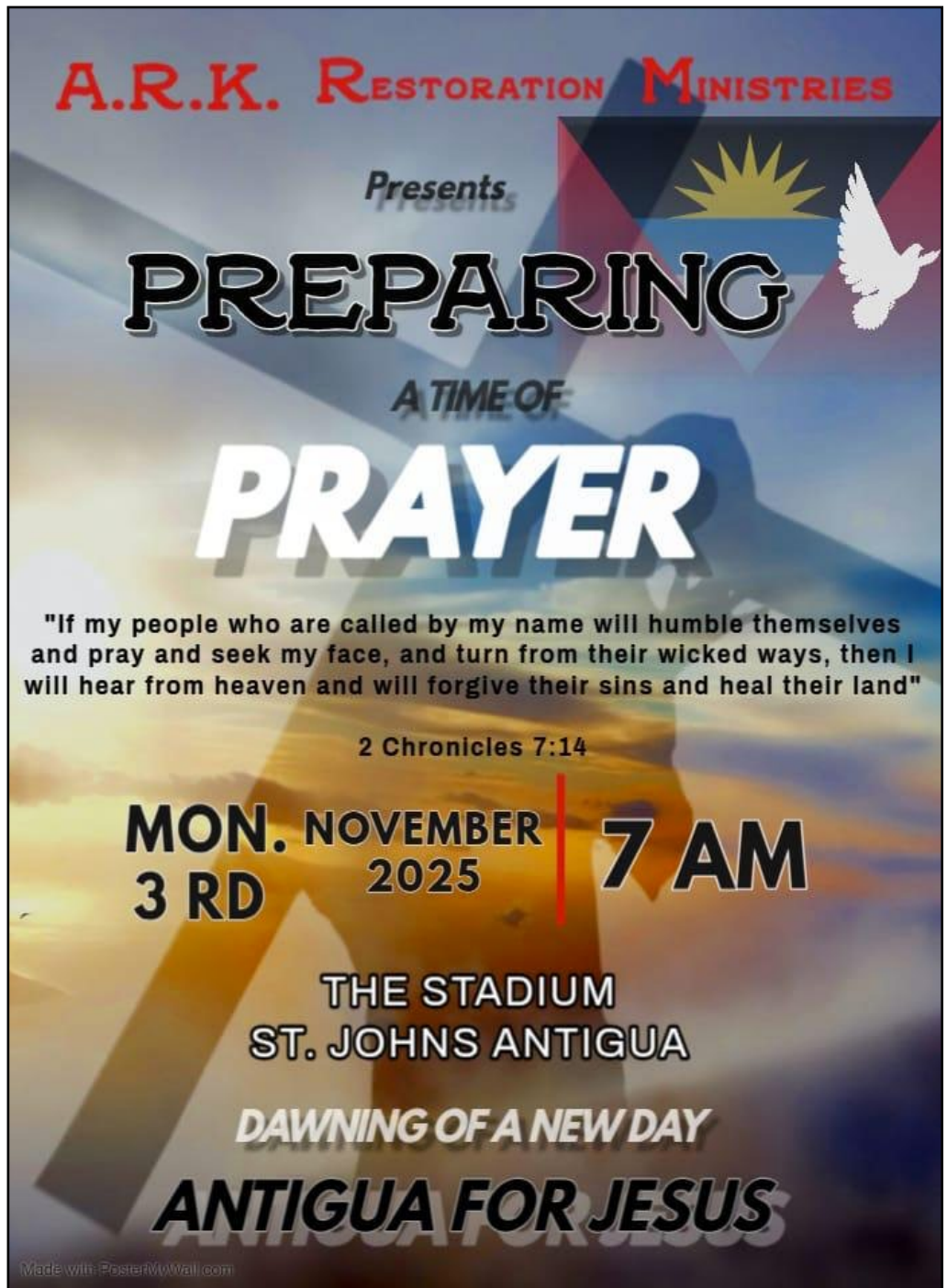
Mrs. Tong Xiaohong, Vice Principal of the Shanghai Soong Ching Ling School, showed that the school upholds the great spirit of Soong Ching Ling, dedicated to fostering global youth and peace ambassadors. She emphasized that libraries serve as bridges of knowledge and culture and expressed hope that the donated equipment would allow more people to experience cultural diversity and the warmth of friendship from China.

In her remarks, Mrs. Karen Browne-Francis, Acting Director of the National Public Library, expressed heartfelt thanks to the Chinese Embassy and its

Shanghai partners for their thoughtful donation. She noted that the equipment will greatly enhance the library's digital access capabilities and create a more efficient and modern space for readers. She also looked forward to further collaboration in education and cultural exchange.

Hon. Alincia Williams-Grant, President of the Senate, warmly recalled the fruitful exchanges with the Shanghai delegation during their visit last year. She expressed deep

appreciation for China's longstanding support in education and culture, highlighting the vital role of education in empowerment and sustainable development. She praised the inspiring contributions of women leaders and expressed optimism for the continued impact of this partnership. Looking forward, she reaffirmed Antigua and Barbuda's commitment to deepening bilateral relations, with a particular emphasis on advancing women's empowerment.



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2 Chronicles 7:14

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**THE STADIUM
ST. JOHNS ANTIGUA**

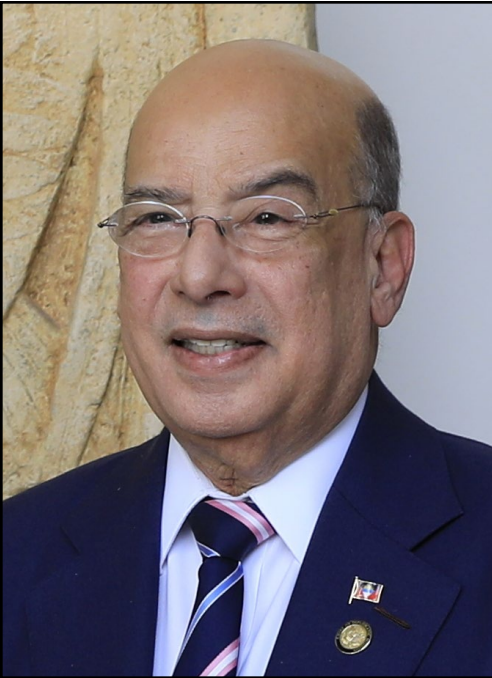
DAWNING OF A NEW DAY

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Commentary

A New World Order—or the formal admission of the Old?



By Sir Ronald Sanders

The world has long spoken of a “rules-based order,” as though the law itself held dominion over power. Yet, behind the diplomatic courtesies and the fine print of charters, it was power that wrote the rules and altered them at will. The difference today is that the altering is done in full view and only a few feign surprise.

We all knew what the Order was even when we hoped for better. We knew it in World Trade Organization negotiations when our cries for special and differential treatment for small states in trade relations fell on deaf ears. We knew it in Climate Change negotiations when our pleas for a loss and damage fund evinced a sop, not a solution.

From the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648 to the Charter of the United Nations in 1945, the international system has proclaimed the sovereign equality of states. In practice, this has always been more aspiration than achieve-

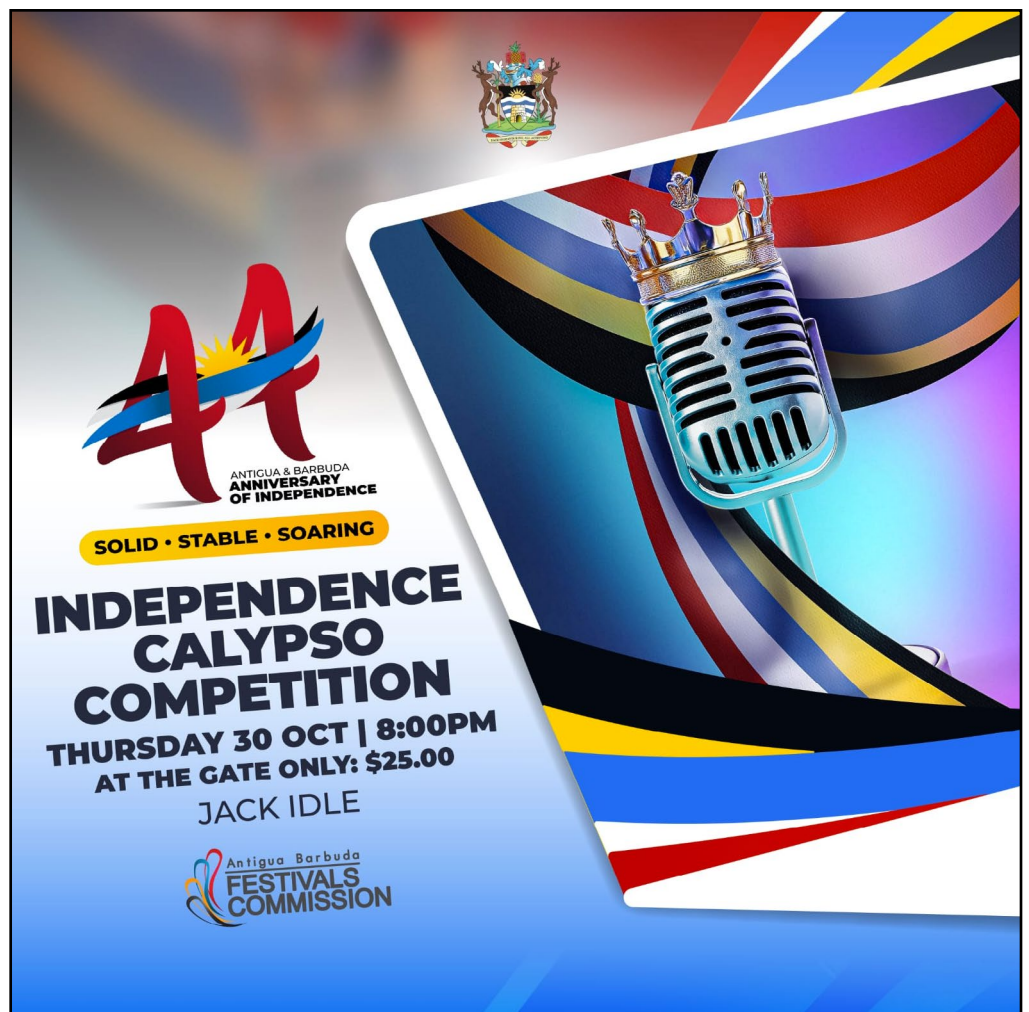
ment. Legal sovereignty - the declared right to be free from interference - belongs to all; political sovereignty - the power to act without permission - belongs to the few

The theorists of pluralism have long argued that sovereignty has never been absolute, but continuously bargained, constrained, and reshaped by circumstance. Small and powerless countries know this truth by experience, not by theory.

The difference in the present circumstances is bluntness. The restraint that once moderated power – or at least gave a pretence of negotiation and respect for state rights - has given way to open display of might. Commitments

to multilateral cooperation are treated as conveniences; treaties are interpreted as optional; international courts are ignored. The change is not in achieving objectives; it is in the tossing aside of pretension. Power no longer feels obliged to disguise itself in contrived negotiations.

For small states, this unmasking is more than academic. Their sovereignty is not an instrument to dictate to others; it is a fragile shield of defence - the space within which they may choose their partners, legislate their priorities, and speak their truths. When that space contracts, their independence becomes more ceremony than substance.



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**INDEPENDENCE
CALYPSO
COMPETITION**

THURSDAY 30 OCT | 8:00PM
AT THE GATE ONLY: \$25.00

JACK IDLE

Antigua Barbuda
FESTIVALS
COMMISSION

Commentary

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This tension is now evident in the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), where half a century ago four leaders - Michael Manley, Errol Barrow, Forbes Burnham, and Eric Williams - declared the region a Zone of Peace. It was a visionary pledge: that the Caribbean's destiny would not be shaped by the rivalries of distant powers. Yet, as former Jamaican Prime Minister P. J. Patterson recently warned, that pledge is under threat. He described as "fundamentally dangerous and a horrible erosion" the intrusion of external military operations into Caribbean waters - actions which have been justified in the name of security which appear to be unmindful of sovereignty, if not of law. None of this denies the value of cooperation against transnational crime; it insists only that such cooperation be anchored in international law, transparency, and respect for regional consultation.

Patterson's concerns are not about who acts, but what the action signifies: that even within the waters the Caribbean calls its own, decisions are made elsewhere. And while the Caribbean Community has often spoken of "collective sovereignty," the truth is that each nation, bound by economic and security dependence, has often pursued its own accommodations with external powers. Dependence invites compromise of the very sovereignty so often declared.

This is the paradox of small states: they depend on the international rule of law but are powerless when it is ignored. Sanctions regimes are threatened or imposed without UN mandate - as the OECD and the European Union have done on financial services; trade restrictions are justified by assertions of unfair trade deficits, even though Caribbean small states have no surplus with any trading partner - Guyana is now an exception only in the area of oil and gas sales; human-rights mechanisms are starved of funds or credibility.

In reality, poor and powerless countries have lived in a world order where justice has nominally existed, but enforcement has not. So, when the present international situation suggests that we are moving to a "new world order," we should ask: what is new? The only thing new is the bluntness with which power is exercised. The hierarchy has always been there - now only some pretend otherwise. We are witnessing not the birth of a new order, but the formal admission of the old: an order in which might makes the rules.

For small nations, the implications are sobering. Sovereignty may soon mean no more than the right to manage domestic affairs, provided they do not offend the ideologies or interests of those who command the oceans, the markets, and the security umbrella.

Yet, the response of small states can-

not be withdrawal or despair. It must be steadfast insistence on the language of law and principle - not because it always protects us, but because without it there is nothing left to which to appeal. The rules-based order may be throwing off the disguise of legal robes, but its vocabulary still defines the terrain. The Caribbean's security and prosperity have long benefited from principled partnerships with larger democracies; their appeal should be to keep those partnerships squarely within the framework of law.

In the Caribbean Community, governments will have to understand and tolerate why some amongst them, in their national interest, have to be more accommodating of larger powers. They will also have to accept that "collective sovereignty" cannot be exercised if it invites individual punishment.

The challenge, then, is not to submit to the emerging new world order dominated by power and might, but to prevent the old one from becoming unashamedly permanent. For when law is silenced and power alone speaks, the ladder of equity collapses, leaving the powerless helpless at the bottom. Caution is now required, but so is courage.

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



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Regional News

CCJ dismisses former St Lucia PM Allen Chastanet's appeal in case against sitting Deputy PM, Dr Ernest Hilaire



On Wednesday, October 15, 2025, the Caribbean Court of Justice (CCJ) rendered a decision to dismiss an appeal filed by former Saint Lucian Prime Minister Allen Chastanet. A CCJ report outlined that the appeal contested the decision to withdraw criminal proceedings against the current Deputy Prime Minister, Dr. Ernest Hilaire.

It further stated that the case originated from the discontinuation of criminal charges initiated in 2020 by the Saint Lucian Customs Comptroller against Dr. Hilaire. These charges stemmed from allegations that Dr. Hilaire failed to present a commercial invoice for a vehicle imported into Saint Lucia during his tenure as High Commissioner in London. Following a change in govern-

ment and mediation efforts, the new Customs Comptroller decided to halt the prosecution, and a Magistrate subsequently granted permission for the case to be withdrawn.

Chastanet challenged this decision through a judicial review, asserting that by January 2021, the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP) had assumed responsibility for the case. He argued that under the Saint Lucian Constitution, only the DPP had the authority to discontinue criminal proceedings. Furthermore, Chastanet claimed that the decision to end the case was irrational, driven by political motives, and constituted an abuse of power. Both the High Court and the Court of Appeal rejected his application for judicial review.

The CCJ, presided over by Mr. Justice Eboe-Osuji and supported by President Anderson and Justices Rajnauth-Lee, Barrow, and Ononaiwu, affirmed the lower courts' rulings. The Court clarified that the evidence did not substantiate that the DPP had taken over the prosecution. It emphasized that simply forwarding the case file to the DPP and the involvement of DPP's counsel did not automatically transfer control of the case away from the Comptroller. The Court emphasized that clearer evidence was necessary to prove such a transfer. Notably, the DPP had never claimed responsibility for the case, even after its discontinuance.

The CCJ further clarified that, according to section 73(4) of the Constitution,

only the DPP possesses exclusive authority to discontinue criminal proceedings. If another authority initiates proceedings, the withdrawal can only occur with judicial approval. Once the Magistrate granted leave to withdraw the case, the decision effectively merged into the judicial act, making the Magistrate's order the only challengeable act. Since no challenge was lodged against the Magistrate's decision, the Court held that judicial review of the Comptroller's initial decision was legally misplaced.

Supporting the majority opinion, Mr. Justice Barrow pointed out the inconsistency in Chastanet's arguments, according to the CCJ release. He noted that the appellant claimed the Comptroller lacked authority to withdraw the case because the DPP had taken over, yet also sought orders to reinstate the case, which was illogical.

Ultimately, the appeal was dismissed without any order as to costs. Chastanet was represented by Mr. Garth Patterson KC, Mr. Mark Maragh, Ms. Tanya Alexis-Francis, and Ms. Akeelia Richards. The respondents' legal representatives included Mr. Anthony Astaphan KC and Mr. Seryozha Cenac. (Dominica News Online)

Motion passes in Parliament: Douglas and Charles to posthumously receive highest honour on independence day

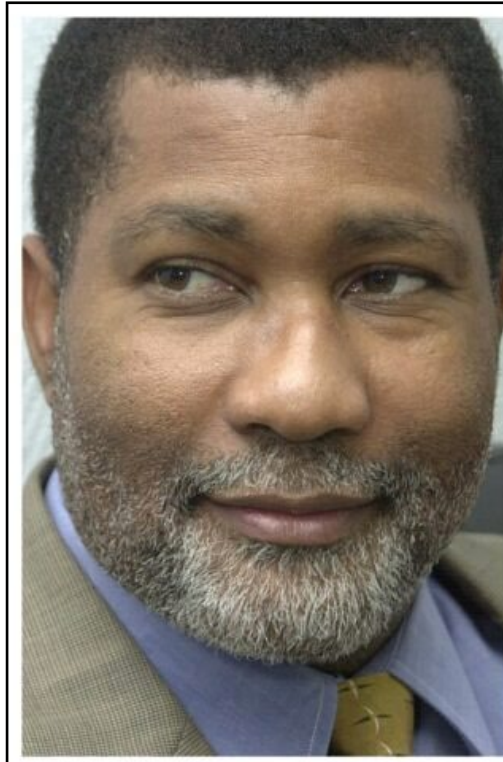
The Parliament of Dominica on Tuesday passed a motion to bestow the Dominica Award of Honour (D.A.H), the nation's highest accolade, upon the late Prime Ministers Roosevelt "Rosie" Douglas and Pierre Charles.

The motion, which was brought before Parliament by Prime Minister Roosevelt Skerrit, pays tribute to the national service and leadership demonstrated by both former leaders, whose efforts, says the government, significantly contributed to the country's development and inspired citizens through their commitment to social justice, education, and community progress.

The awards will be awarded posthumously during the formal commemoration of the country's 47th independence anniversary, scheduled for November 3.

"The Honourable Roosevelt Bernard Rosie Douglas and the Honourable Pierre Charles were both exemplary and patriotic citizens of the Commonwealth of Dominica who served this nation and its people with honour, distinction and unwavering dedication," Skerrit said while speaking during Parliament on Tuesday "And whereas, the said Honourable Roosevelt Bernard "Rosie" Douglas and the said Honourable Pierre Charles each served as Prime Minister of the Commonwealth of Dominica and as members of this Honourable House."

He continued, "The Honourable Roosevelt Bernard Rosie Douglas



and the Honourable Pierre Charles were first elected to this Honourable house on the 1st day of July 1985 for the constituency of Paix Bouche and Grand Bay respectively."

Furthermore, Skerrit added that both Douglas and Charles devoted their lives to the advancement and development of Dominica as well as the improvement of the welfare and well-being of all citizens and residents of Dominica.

"Whereas, this honourable house deems it most fitting and desirable that the Honourable Roosevelt Bernard "Rosie" Douglas and Honourable Pierre Charles be formerly recognized for their selfless, devoted and distinguished service to the Honourable house, to the Com-

monwealth of Dominica, to its people and indeed to the wider Caribbean Region," he stated.

According to the Prime Minister, Parliament considers it appropriate that, as a token of such recognition, this title of Dominica Award of Honour, be posthumously conferred upon the late Honourable Roosevelt Bernard Rosie Douglas and the late Pierre Charles.

Roosevelt "Rosie" Douglas became Prime Minister in February 2000, serving until his sudden death on October 1 of the same year. Following his passing, Pierre Charles assumed the role of Prime Minister on October 3, 2000, and remained in office until his death on January 6, 2004. (Dominica News Online)

Regional News

Record hunger, displacements continue to hit Haiti as hospitals, businesses close

“For several weeks now, the area surrounding the center of Port-au-Prince has been the scene of regular armed violence,” Jean-Marc Biquet, one of the charity’s heads of mission, said. “If medical activities were to resume at this hospital, located in the immediate vicinity of these clashes, they would be severely compromised by the level of risk to patients and healthcare workers.”

In a city where most hospitals aren’t functioning - and those still operating are struggling to stay open amid violence, funding cuts, staff layoffs and Haitians’ inability to pay - the loss of the trauma center will have a profound impact. So far this year, 3,000 people have been killed in gang-related violence, and gunshot injuries and gang rapes are on the rise.

On Tuesday, the same day the medical charity announced the permanent closure of its hospital in Turgeau, a metalworks company that had been in operation for more than 75 years and employed 350 people was doing the same.

Haiti Metal S.A., located in Carrefour, a sprawling suburb at the southern end of metropolitan Port-au-Prince that’s completely under gang control, said it has no choice but to shut down. The company has been the victim of rampant gang attacks, including the kidnappings of staff in 2022 and



the Nov. 15, 2024, killing of its director of operations, Clairangélique Guirand Villard, who was gunned down by a gang in front of her 4-year-old daughter.

The company said in a press release that it was “again a victim of a lack of vision and understanding of people claiming to play the role of leaders of the country. A few weeks ago, the company’s production facilities were looted and completely stripped by gangs, and the last of its employees forced to flee. The factory is known for its manufacturing of everyday metal items

that catered to the country’s lower classes, including houseware and beds.

The grounds of the Ministry of Public Works, Transport and Communication in Port-au-Prince’s Delmas 33 is among dozens of spontaneous displacement camps that have popped up as record numbers of Haitian flee criminal groups. Most of these tarps are from previous disasters.

The grounds of the Ministry of Public Works, Transport and Communication in Port-au-Prince’s Delmas 33 is among dozens of sponta-

neous displacement camps that have popped up as record numbers of Haitian flee criminal groups. Most of these tarps are from previous disasters.

On Wednesday, the United Nations International Organization for Migration said the number of Haitians forced to flee their homes because of the ongoing violence has hit a new record: more than 1.4 million.

A 36% increase since the end of last year, the number of Haitians displaced by violence is the highest ever, said the U.N., which warned in a separate report that Haiti continues to be stricken by record levels of hunger.

“The severity of this crisis demands increased and sustained response,” said Grégoire Goodstein, the U.N. migration office’s chief of mission in Haiti. “What is needed now are sustainable solutions that restore dignity, foster resilience, and create lasting alternatives for those enduring this long and complex crisis.”

Nearly two thirds of the new displacements have occurred outside Port-au-Prince, particularly in the Center and Artibonite regions, continuing a trend seen in previous assessments, the migration office said. In addition to being overcrowded, shelters for people who are homeless continue to experience shortages of basic services.

With no income or assets,

Regional News

the internally displaced are disproportionately affected by the crisis, the U.N. said.

Haiti remains among the world's top hotspots for hunger, and is among six countries the World Food Program decided to focus in a report, "A Lifeline At Risk." The report looks at funding cuts and what it means for the countries already experiencing civil strife. Along with Haiti, the report features Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Somalia, South Sudan and Sudan.

"We see significant reductions in our operations and the operations of our partners, and that goes from cutting people completely off of assistance, reducing rations, reducing the duration of assistance. And many vulnerable people are completely without a safety net," said Ross Smith, WFP's director of emergency preparedness and response.

Smith said while the U.N. is seeing "a minor success story" in a drop in the number of Haitians now facing famine-like conditions because of some targeted assistance in specific areas in the country, Haiti is still "facing record levels" of people struggling to find enough to eat.

"We've been forced to suspend our hot meals program

for displaced people, and we've had monthly rations, because of funding issues," Smith said.

This year alone, the World Food Program is facing a 40% reduction in funding as the U.S. and other countries cut assistance. The reductions mean that 13.7 million people worldwide will fall into emergency levels of hunger, Director of Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Jean Martin Bauer said.

"There's no contingency stock in Haiti," Bauer said. "And we're still in the hurricane season that lasts until Nov. 30."

Haiti's deepening crisis come as the country awaits the arrival of a beefed up international mission. Last month, the U.N. Security Council approved a Gang Suppression Force for Haiti, but the arrival of the first deployments are still months away as the Trump administration tries to get countries to provide the funds.

The situation remains tense in Port-au-Prince. Over the weekend, members of the Viv Ansanm gang coalition launched another attack in Kenscoff in the hills above Port-au-Prince, and amid a firefight with Haitian police, set fire to the Wynn Farm, according to police. The property is a revered eco-

logical preserve.

Also, after a lull, ransom kidnappings are making a resurgence. One viral video on Wednesday showed a resident who was traveling by car near the Airport Road in Port-au-Prince successfully averting an abduction in an exchange of gunfire with his attempted kidnappers, who appeared to be dressed as cops.

The day before, several people were injured outside a hospital in downtown Port-au-Prince after two armed drones, supposedly targeting a tractor, missed their target. The incident occurred near the downtown branch of GHESKIO, a local medical center that had already been forced to reduce staffing at the location after many of its doctors and healthcare providers were victims of kidnappings. No patients were killed, but individuals in front of the hospital were injured, along with several cars and motorcycles, an employee told the Miami Herald. In an audio shared with the Herald, a hospital employee could be heard pleading for hospitals to remain protected.

To the north of Port-au-Prince, in the Lower Artibonite Valley, gang clashes near the Hôpital Albert Schweitzer prompted a call for police reinforcements.

Médecins Sans Frontières first suspended services at its Turgeau location in March after staffers were fired on during a battle between gang members and police. The charity also shut down operations at a trauma hospital just to its south in Carrefour.

Since then, several assessments have been conducted to identify suitable protection solutions at the Turgeau site, but no option has been able to guarantee a sufficient level of security to continue activities, the medical charity. Meanwhile, the building has already been hit several times by stray bullets due to its location near the combat zones, Biquet, the charity's head of mission, said.

"MSF deeply regrets this difficult decision, which was taken as a last resort," he said. "This closure has a significant impact on access to healthcare for a community already severely affected by violence, instability, and increasingly precarious living conditions."

As for its other facilities, MSF said before resuming medical activities in Carrefour and downtown Port-au-Prince, it is awaiting the signing of a memorandum of understanding with Haitian authorities that would establish a safe pathway between both areas. (MSN)



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Police fire tear gas at thousands of mourners at former Kenyan PM Raila Odinga's public viewing

Police in Kenya fired tear gas Thursday at thousands of mourners at a public viewing of the body of former Prime Minister Raila Odinga, an influential politician who died a day earlier in India.

The mourners filled a 60,000-capacity football stadium in the capital after escorting the body on foot from the country's main airport, 18 miles (29 kilometres) away.

Tensions rose when they breached the presidential pavilion, prompting police officers to fire tear gas.

There was a stampede at the gates of the stadium as the mourners ran outside, and leaders present remained locked in a room. An unknown number of people were injured in the stampede.

Odinga's body arrived from India Thursday morning in a chartered airplane and was given a water cannon salute at the airport.

A planned ceremonial reception of the body by close family and top leaders at the airport was disrupted when mourners demanded access to view the body. People eager to view the body walked alongside the military vehicle carrying Odinga from the runway while waving twigs.

"We are in mourning as a country. We loved Baba so much, he was the defender of the people," said Beatrice Adala, one of many who went to the airport. Like many, she called Odinga "Baba," a Kiswahili honorific usually reserved for a beloved father figure.

The politician, who was lauded for his fight for democracy, died Wednesday at 80 years old after he collapsed during a morning walk. Efforts to resuscitate him at a hospital in India's Kerala state failed.

Odinga will be given a state funeral Sunday at his rural home of Bondo, in the western region of the country.



According to his family, he had requested to be buried quickly, ideally within 72 hours, which is unusual for popular leaders in Kenya.

The country has declared Friday a public holiday when Kenyans will congregate at a football stadium in Nairobi for his state funeral service. Another public viewing will be held Saturday in the western county of Kisumu, close to his rural home.

Parliament announced that the planned public viewing at the parliamentary precincts had been moved to a football stadium to provide more space for mourners.

Kenyan President William Ruto, who won the 2022 election against Odinga but later signed a political pact with him to appoint opposition members to the Cabinet, mourned him as "a patriot of uncommon courage, a pan-Africanist, a unifier who sought peace and unity above power and self-gain."

Ruto declared seven days of national mourning for the veteran politician.

Odinga ran for Kenya's presidency five times over three decades — sometimes with enough support that many believed he might win.

Although Odinga never succeeded at becoming president, for many he was a revered figure and statesman whose activism helped steer Kenya into a vibrant multiparty democracy.

He came close to taking the presidency in 2007, when he narrowly lost to incumbent Mwai Kibaki in a disputed election marred by ethnic violence.

Odinga then served as prime minister of Kenya from 2008 to 2013 in a unity government put together with the mediation of the international community.

In 2017, a court nullified the presidential election — a first in Africa — after Odinga challenged it, but he decided to boycott the fresh vote, asserting it wouldn't be credible without reforms. (AP)

US revokes visas for six foreigners over Charlie Kirk-related speech

The Trump administration has revoked the visas of six foreigners deemed by United States officials to have made derisive comments or made light of the assassination of conservative activist Charlie Kirk last month.

The State Department said Tuesday it had determined they should lose their visas after reviewing their online social media posts and clips about Kirk, who was killed while speaking at a Utah college campus on September 10.

The announcement came as President Donald Trump was posthumously awarding him America's highest civilian honour, the Presidential Medal of Freedom. At Kirk's funeral in September, Trump called him a "great American hero" and "martyr" for freedom.

The administration and its supporters have targeted people for their comments



about Kirk, leading to firings or other discipline of journalists, teachers and others, and raising free speech concerns.

The six foreigners who had their visas revoked were from Argentina, Brazil, Germany, Mexico, Paraguay and South Africa. They

were not identified.

Trump and Secretary of State Marco Rubio "will defend our borders, our culture, and our citizens by enforcing our immigration laws," the State Department said.

"Aliens who take advantage

of America's hospitality while celebrating the assassination of our citizens will be removed."

Vice President JD Vance and other top US officials have encouraged people to call out offensive language about Kirk that they see online. (AP)

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Ghana rights group files lawsuit against government's acceptance of US deportees



A group of 14 people have become the latest West Africans deported from the United States to Ghana under an accord between the countries, said a lawyer whose group filed a lawsuit Tuesday seeking to block the arrangement.

Oliver Barker-Vormawor, who represents migrants, said the latest group of 14 West African nationals arrived Monday to bring the overall total to 42 deportees accepted by the Ghanaian government.

His group, Democracy Hub, filed a lawsuit Tuesday against Ghana's government, alleging that the agreement with Washington is unconstitutional because it wasn't approved by the Ghanaian parliament and that it may violate conventions that forbid sending people to countries where they could face persecution.

Government spokesman Felix Kwakye Ofose said the attorney general would defend the arrangement in court, but otherwise declined to comment.

The administration of US President Donald Trump has been cracking down on migrants who have entered the country illegally, saying that it is especially targeting those with criminal records, including those who cannot easily be deported to their home countries.

Dozens of deportees have been sent to Africa since July after the Trump administration struck largely secretive

agreements with at least five African nations to take migrants under a new third-country deportation programme.

Rights groups have protested the program, saying it is opaque and sends deportees to countries where they have no ties and where they are likely to be denied due process. In some cases, migrants have been deported to third countries even when their home countries would have accepted them, critics say.

Last month, the US deported an initial group of 14 West African immigrants to Ghana, where authorities later said all of the deportees had been sent to their home countries elsewhere in West Africa, including Togo, Nigeria and Mali.

However, their lawyers told The Associated Press in September that 11 of

them still were being held at a military camp on the outskirts of the capital, Accra, in what they described as terrible conditions. Since then, 10 of those migrants have been deported to Togo even though only two are Togolese, Barker-Vormawor said.

The US sent a first group of five deportees to Eswatini in July, saying they had been convicted of serious crimes including murder and child rape.

Since then the US also has deported other migrants to South Sudan, Rwanda and Ghana. It also has an agreement with Uganda, though no deportations there have been announced.

Six deportees are still detained in an unspecified facility in South Sudan, while Rwanda hasn't said where it is holding seven deportees. (AP)





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.

Sports News

BOE and Sandals extend unbeaten runs in Business Basketball League

The Board of Education (BOE) and defending champions Sandals extended their unbeaten runs in the 2025 Cool and Smooth Antigua and Barbuda Basketball Association's (ABBA) Business League championships on Wednesday night.

The Board of Education notched up their ninth win in as many encounters with an 80-49 drubbing of Cornerstone Builders and Maintenance in the opening game of a double-header at the JSC Sports Complex.

Daniel Perez produced 26 points, 10 rebounds, five assists, and five steals, and Adonis Humphreys contributed 11 points, 11 rebounds, five steals, five blocks, and four assists for the Board of Education.

Takeem Martin sank 13 points and grabbed 13 rebounds, Joel Christian converted 13 points and claimed six rebounds, and Yohan Nicholas scored 11 points and snatched seven rebounds for Cornerstone Builders and Maintenance, who suffered their third loss in seven games.

Defending champions Sandals extended their unbeaten run by securing their seventh win in as many outings with a 74-53 victory against the Sledge O Ballers in Wednesday's second game.

T-Shawn Lewis shot a game-high 19 points, and Adissa "Ras I" Harris chipped in with 10 points, seven assists, and four steals for Sandals.



Sandals, the 2024 Cool and Smooth Antigua and Barbuda Basketball Association's (ABBA) Business League champions. (File Photo)

Kareem Edwards converted 18 points for the Sledge O Ballers, who suffered their fifth loss in nine games.

The business basketball league will continue with another double-header at the JSC Sports Complex on Saturday.

Sandals will face Sir Lester Bird Medical Centre in the opening game at 7 pm, and Fearless Security Services will clash with Cornerstone Builders and Maintenance in the second encounter at 8 pm.



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AGS continues winning start in defense of U-14 Boys' Division Title

Antigua Grammar School (AGS) continued their 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.

After launching their campaign with a 6-0 drubbing of Sir Novelle Richards Academy, Antigua Grammar School claimed their second win by snatching a 1-0 victory against Pares Secondary School in the second game of a double-header at Antigua Grammar School's playing field.

Tomarey Henry scored their winner with the only goal of the match that resulted in PSS suffering their second loss in as many games.

Sir Novelle Richards Academy rebounded from their opening-round loss to pull off a 4-2 victory against All Saints Secondary School in the second match of Wednesday's double-header at Antigua Grammar School's playing field.

The goals for Sir Novelle Richards Academy were scored by Alistair Kirnon in the first minute, Ivan Tavaréz in the fourth, Kiandre Morris in the 42nd, and Kalique Martin in the 48th minute.

Amyr Francis had a 13th-minute conversion, and Wayne McIntosh scored in the 29th minute for All Saints Secondary School, who suffered their second defeat in as many games.

Last year's third-place finishers, Princess Margaret School, also continued their winning start in the competition.

After coasting to a 3-0 victory against Pares Secondary School in



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)

their opening encounter, Princess Margaret School notched up their second win with a 7-0 drubbing of St. Mary's Secondary School at Jennings.

It was the first defeat for St. Mary's Secondary School after battling to a 2-2 draw with Jennings Secondary School in their opening encounter.

JSS recorded their first win in the competition by snatching a 2-1 victory against last year's second-place finishers, Clare Hall Secondary School, at Jennings. It was the first outing for CHSS.

All matches in the Under-20 Boys' Division of the Ministry of Sports, Cool and Smooth, and Joma Patrick C. Whyte Cup Secondary Schools'

Football Competition were postponed on Thursday due to inclement weather.

Weather permitting, the Under-20 Boys' competition will resume with a double-header at the ABFA Technical Center today.

Irene B. Williams Secondary School will challenge Jennings Secondary School in their opening affair at 4 pm, and Ottos Comprehensive School will oppose defending champion Princess Margaret School in the second encounter at 6:30 pm.

Both matches will be preceded by an under-14 Boys' division affair between Ottos Comprehensive School and St. Joseph's Academy at 3 pm.

Australia crush Bangladesh to reach semis at ICC Women's World Cup

VISAKHAPATNAM, India (AP) — Defending champion Australia reached the semifinals at the Women's Cricket World Cup with two matches to spare after thrashing Bangladesh by 10 wickets on Thursday.

Captain Alyssa Healy hit 113 not out off only 77 balls and Phoebe Litchner cracked 84 not out off 72 balls to propel Australia to victory at 202 without loss in reply to Bangladesh's 198 for nine.

Healy and Litchfield crossed the finish line in just 24.5 overs, extending Australia's unbeaten World Cup streak to 13 consecutive games.

Healy's second consecutive hundred after 142 against India at the same venue on Sunday, included 20 boundaries and was the fastest ton of this tournament. Litchfield struck 12 fours and a six.

Bangladesh opted to bat and wrist spinner Alana King took two for 18 in 10 overs and was named the player of the match. The Australians have nine points from five games. Bangladesh has two points from five matches and remained in sixth place.

Chasing 199 for victory, Australia was never in any trouble on the batter-friendly surface. Fresh from a record chase against India, Healy and Litchfield pressed on with their first



Australia's captain Alyssa Healy, right, celebrates with batting partner Phoebe Litchfield after scoring fifty runs during the ICC Women's Cricket World Cup match between Australia and Bangladesh at ACA-VDCA Cricket Stadium in Visakhapatnam, India, Thursday, Oct. 16, 2025. (AP)

50 off 44 balls.

They didn't slow down. Healy got to 50 off 43 balls and Litchfield got there off 46 balls for her first half-century in this tournament. Healy's second 50 came off only 30 deliveries as she hit eight more fours. Her 100 for a second straight game used 73 balls.

It was the second fastest century in tournament history. Healy scored consecutive hundreds at a World Cup for a second time, after 2022. She has four cricket World Cup hundreds, one behind Nat Sciver Brunt of England.

Healy and Litchfield didn't offer the Bangladesh bowlers a chance as they raised their first 100 runs off 83 balls, and went on to

150 off 125 balls.

The partnership ultimately was Australia's third highest for any wicket in Women's Cricket World Cups.

The chase was also the second highest for no wickets in women's ODIs, and the highest in tournament history as the seven-time champions won with 25.1 overs to spare.

Bangladesh chose to bat and made a sedate start. Opener Rubya Haider led the way with 44 off 59 balls, including eight fours.

The Australian spinners, led by King, kept tripping up the Tigresses. King had skipper Nigar Sultana stumped for 12 and sent back in-form Shorna Akter

for seven.

Sobhana Mostary's second half-century of the tournament propped up Bangladesh from 127 for five in the 35th over. She finished 66 not out off 80 balls with nine fours, but none of the last six batters reached double figures as Bangladesh fell well short of a par score.

Spinners Ashleigh Gardner (2-48) and Georgia Wareham (2-22) also collected braces.

Australia will play England in Indore next Wednesday. Bangladesh will take on Sri Lanka in Navi, Mumbai, on Monday. On Friday, co-host Sri Lanka will oppose South Africa in Colombo.

FIFA announces over 1 million tickets sold for 2026 World Cup



Canada Prime Minister Mark Carney, right, is presented with a novelty World Cup ticket by FIFA President Gianni Infantino on Parliament Hill in Ottawa, Ontario, Friday, Oct. 10, 2025. (AP)

MIAMI (AP) — More than 1 million tickets have already been sold for next year's World Cup, FIFA said Thursday in its first update on numbers since the official start of sales began earlier this month.

The highest demand, as would be expected, were from buyers in the USA, Canada, and Mexico — the three nations that will play host to the tournament. FIFA said people from 212 different countries and territories have already purchased, even though only 28 of the 48 spots in the field have been filled.

Rounding out the top-10 countries in terms of tickets purchased already: England, Germany, Brazil, Spain, Colombia, Argentina, and France, in order, FIFA said. The tournament runs from

June 11 through July 19.

“As national teams across the globe compete for a place at the historic FIFA World Cup 26, I am thrilled so many football-loving fans also want to be part of this watershed event in North America,” FIFA President Gianni Infantino said in a release.

He added, “It’s an incredible response, and a wonderful sign that the biggest, most inclusive FIFA World Cup in history is capturing the imagination of supporters everywhere.”

FIFA also announced that its resale site has opened — and tickets for the World Cup final in East Rutherford, New Jersey, were available there at prices ranging from US\$9,538 to US\$57,500 per seat as of Thursday afternoon.

FIFA did not reveal any specific figures about how many tickets have been sold for certain matches or offer any breakdowns by host site. It also has not issued a grid of list prices for tickets, as it has for each previous World Cup since at least 1990.

The buyers who purchased the tickets in this first round of availability were selected out of 4.5 million applicants in a lottery that took place last month. The entry period for the next draw will open to fans on Oct. 27, FIFA said, noting that single-match tickets to all 104 games, along with venue- and team-specific tickets, will be released.

Based on the listed stadium attendance figures, there are roughly 7.1 million seats to fill for the 104 matches

for the tournament around 16 North American venues. It is unknown how many of those seats will be available for sale to the public.

Ticket data has shown that the lowest-priced seats — set at US\$60 — were available for at least 40 matches. Almost all seats for the vast majority of matches were set at a much higher price.

The opening match for the USA, to be played at Inglewood, California, had prices ranging from US\$560 to US\$2,735 when sales opened. On the resale site, at least one ticket for that opening USA match on June 12 was listed for US\$61,642 on Thursday.

Fans with the option to purchase could choose seats in one of four categories. Category 1 is what FIFA officials call the best seats and Category 4 is somewhere around the tops of stadiums. Ticket costs are expected to fluctuate as soccer’s biggest event utilizes dynamic pricing for the first time.

Winners in the second phase of the ticket draw will be able to purchase from mid-November to early December. A third phase, termed a random selection draw, will start after the final draw of teams on Dec. 5 determines the World Cup schedule.

FIFA has said tickets also will be available closer to the tournament “on a first-come, first-served basis.”

Former giants West Indies reeling after five straight defeats

NEW DELHI (Reuters) - West Indies have suffered back-to-back series white-washes by Australia and India in a run of five straight losses that has exposed not just technical and structural gaps but a deeper erosion of the pride that once defined the famous maroon cap.

The former behemoths of the game have been on a steady decline since the 1990s and often struggle to assemble a decent test squad having lost their best talents to the lure of franchise cricket.

Few expected an overnight change in their fortunes when the test captaincy was thrust on Roston Chase in May but five consecutive defeats since then show how far the erstwhile giants have fallen.

Australia blanked them 3-0 and the humiliation of being bundled out for 27 in the final test in July triggered an emergency meeting also involving some of the past greats. It provided no silver bullet though.

India outclassed the West Indies 2-0 earlier this month, inflicting an innings defeat inside three days in Ahmedabad and the ignominy of a follow-on in Delhi.

Talking to reporters ahead of the Delhi test, Chase said finance and facilities limited his side's potential.



West Indies left-arm spinner Jomel Warrican, right, celebrates with captain Roston Chase after getting rid of India's Yashasvi Jaiswal on their fourth day of the second cricket Test in New Delhi, India, on Monday Oct 13, 2025. (BCCI)

"I think the systems in the Caribbean are a bit poor in terms of training facilities and stuff," Chase said though he did not use it as an excuse for the team's free-fall.

"But what I would say is yes, there is obviously a struggle in the Caribbean for finances."

Head coach Daren Sammy revisited history and felt West Indies did not reap the financial rewards despite being cricket's driving force. Now that they are in the doldrums, the global game owes West Indies more than nostalgia, he said.

"It's like India now. Everybody wants India to tour, because that's where the financial gains are. India

brings that to the home territory. That was West Indies in the past."

"So for now, when ... we are in need of those financial resources to help us grow and move forward, I think we deserve that."

The governing International Cricket Council (ICC) did not reply to a Reuters email asking if it had any plans to lift West Indies cricket out of the morass.

Batting great Brian Lara accepted that the funding squeeze was real and did not begrudge Caribbean players choosing franchise leagues over international cricket.

But the former captain wondered if the passion to wear the maroon cap that links multiple islands under

a single badge had diminished.

"We did not have better facilities 30-40 years ago," Lara said in Mumbai last week.

"Viv Richards didn't bat on any better practice pitches or anything. We had to do the same thing, the same grind, but the passion was different. The passion to play for West Indies was different."

Cricket West Indies has announced a slew of short-term and long-term measures to lift cricket in the region, including hiring specialist coaches, establishing a high-performance centre in Antigua and coordinating with franchise teams to monitor the players' fitness.