

Cabinet approves proposals to tackle 'fly-by-night taxi operators at VCBIA

Page 2



Story on Page 6

Students of Post Millennial Academy display Aunty Honey's Money book during a visit to the Caribbean Union Bank

Cabinet approves recommendations to tackle the issue of 'fly-by-night' taxi operators at VCBIA



The government has brought together representatives from several entities to look about organizing in an acceptable manner the issue of transportation of visiting guests at the country's main gateway, the VC Bird International Airport.

Reports from Wednesday's Cabinet meeting said the recently appointed Ground Transportation Advisory Committee has submitted recommendations aimed at addressing ongoing challenges in the regulation of ground transportation services at the V.C. Bird International Airport.

The reports noted that of particular concern is the issue of "fly-by-night" operators who unlawfully solicit and transport arriving passengers, undermining legitimate operators and creating safety, order, and security risks. Additionally, gaps in coordination between taxi operators, the United Taxi Company (UTC), Destination Management Companies (DMCs), and the Antigua and Barbuda Airport Authority (ABAA) have contributed to inefficiencies and unfair competition within the system.

The Ground Transportation Advisory Committee was asked to devise measures to strengthen regulation, enhance enforcement, improve coordination, and increase the professionalism of transportation services at the

Airport.

The following recommendations were agreed to by all parties:

1. Curtailment of Fly-by-Night Operators through stronger police enforcement and stronger ABAA enforcement in collaboration with the Police.
2. Non-UTC taxi operators must submit written notification 24 hours in advance to ABAA and UTC before picking up booked passengers.
3. Reintroduction of Dispatcher System at the Airport, organized by the Ministry of Tourism.
4. DMCs to pay a separate vehicle license fee comparable to bus and taxi operators.
5. Introduction of a decal/sticker system for DMCs operating A&C plated vehicles.
6. DMCs must regularize their status with ABAA.
7. DMCs to pay UTC a premium/royalty amount on every vehicle, per trip for jobs not performed by UTC, with terms negotiated between the parties including ABAA.

8. UTC is urged to create an administrative office, implement online bookings to increase market share, and acquire cars and SUVs to complement its fleet.

Present at the meeting were representatives from the following bodies:

- a. Transport Board – Mr. Hubert Joseph (Chairperson),
 - b. Traffic Department – Mr. Carver Wilson (Inspector)
 - c. United Taxi Association – Mr. Ian Joseph (President)
 - d. United Taxi Company (UTC) – Mr. Matthew, Mr. Brodie
 - e. ABAA – Mr. Joseph Samuel, Mr. Jan Walker, Ms. Geneva George
 - f. Eagle Tours – Mr. Adolphus Freeland
 - g. ABTB Inspection Centre – Ms. Josette Payne (Supervisor) Mrs. Sherrylaine Bowens (Project Officer)
- Additional stakeholder groups represented included:
1. Ministry of Tourism
 2. ABAA
 3. United Taxi Company operators at the Airport
 4. National Taxi Association (including Villa, West Bus Station, Heritage Quay)
 5. Destination Management Companies
 6. The Police (Traffic Department)
 7. The Ministry of Legal Affairs

PM Browne makes concrete proposals to improving relations with Turkiye (Turkey)



Prime Minister Gaston Browne (left) and Ambassador of Turkiye to Antigua and Barbuda, Emriye Bağdagül Ormancı (right)

Prime Minister Gaston Browne has put forward a number of proposals aimed at strengthening the bilateral relations between Antigua and Barbuda and the Republic of Turkiye (Turkey).

The prime minister made the point during a courtesy call by the newly accredited Ambassador of Turkiye to Antigua and Barbuda, Emriye Bağdagül Ormancı.

Turkiye and Antigua and Barbuda established diplomatic relations 26 years ago and according to PM Browne, the ties between both nations have been 'quite good'. However, the Antigua and Barbuda leaders believes that there are opportunities to strengthen and further deepen those relations.

"I have met your president on a number of occasions so there is some familiarity there. However, I believe there is a need for us to put a framework together to increase trade and investment and to see how we can have deeper cooperation go-

ing forward. There are lots of areas in which we can cooperate and I am hoping that arising from this visit that we can put together a technical team to look at areas where we can strengthen our technical cooperation," he stated.

As an example, PM Browne suggested that the area of student exchanges in the field of education is one such area especially with the presence of the University of West Indies FIC here.

"We have the campus here and we would like to see student exchanges with your universities in Turkiye," he suggested.

Turning to the area of tourism, the prime minister noted that Turkiye has a 'strong' tourism product and with tourism being Antigua and Barbuda's main industry, there may be opportunities for training for its nationals in this sector in Turkiye.

In the area of diplomacy, PM Browne noted that Turkiye has in

the past sought Antigua and Barbuda's support on a number of initiatives as he sees the country as one of the world's emerging powers.

For her part, Ambassador Ormancı agreed with PM Browne on the need to strengthen the existing relations between the two countries and she supported the suggestions made by the prime minister in this regard.

"We need to establish, first of all, the legal framework and begin working on some drafts as we seek to negotiate our future relations in basic areas such as education, culture economic cooperation, youth, sports as we strengthen relations in these fields as well," she remarked.

The ambassador also identified business and investments as areas of interest for Turkiye as its business people are keen on investing in this part of the world. "I hope in the coming months to have a Turkish business delegation visiting the region," she declared.

FA Minister Greene wants to 'tap into' Turkiye's achievements in agriculture



Minister of Foreign Affairs, E.P. Chet Greene (left) and Ambassador of Turkiye to Antigua and Barbuda, Emriye Bağdagül Ormancı (right)

Minister of Foreign Affairs, E.P. Chet Greene wants Antigua and Barbuda to 'tap into' the advances that Turkiye (Turkey) has made in the agricultural sector, noting that the Eastern Europe country is one of the 'bread-baskets' of the world.

The minister was speaking on Thursday during a courtesy call by Turkiye's new Ambassador to Antigua and Barbuda, Emriye Bağdagül Ormancı, when he made the suggestion.

"If you take the area of agriculture, you are easily one

of the world's leading agricultural producing countries and so we anticipate that through this relationship that we can see further growth in our own agricultural sector as this is one of the areas that we have targeted for growth," he told the visiting diplomat.

Greene outlined that the government has placed a priority on food security and food sovereignty. "For us, these are not just mere buzz words; they come with a deep and abiding meaning. As we pay attention to the global realities



with food chains shortening, logistics issues and the ever increasing prices for food, it is incumbent on us as a people to build capacity with the help of friendly countries such as yours," he remarked.

He disclosed that the government has publicly made its intentions known with regard to agriculture and the need to upscale this sector to help meet the need for the nation to feed itself and to reduce the reliance on imported food.

"If you take a look at our food importation bill, you would see we import practically everything that we consume as we do not have the land size to do 100 per cent food import substitution. We however, have the climatic conditions to grow certain crops and where animal products are

concerned we can do quite a bit of substitution there," he explained.

FA Minister Greene indicated that these are some of the areas for which Antigua and Barbuda would be seeking assistance from Turkiye.

Ambassador Ormancı noted that Turkiye has made a conscious decision to expand its ties with the countries of the region with the opening of new embassies and other diplomatic outposts.

She gave a commitment to work alongside Antigua and Barbuda on matters of mutual interest. She noted that Turkiye has a well-developed agricultural sector and it stands ready to assist Antigua and Barbuda achieve its stated goals in this area.

Government greenlights a proposal for public health programmes at ABCAS



Cabinet spokesman, Maurice Merchant

The Cabinet has okayed a proposal from Health Minister, Sir Molwyn Joseph for the establishment and support of diploma and graduate public health programmes at the recently established Antigua and Barbuda College of Advanced Studies (ABCAS).

According to Cabinet spokesman, Maurice Merchant the programmes will seek to provide a cadre of locally-trained individuals to meet the growing need to demands for these skills within the health sector.

He said these programmes would:

1. Provide accessible and affordable accredited training locally.
2. Reduce dependence on external institutions and high tuition costs abroad.
3. Allow for curriculum tailored to Antigua and Barbuda's specific public health priorities, including epide-

miology, waste management, occupational health, and health systems management.

4. Create a steady pipeline of qualified professionals to strengthen the national health system and improve preparedness for evolving health challenges

Merchant noted that public health is a cornerstone of national development, serving as the foundation for a healthy population and a resilient society. "The need for specialized public health training in Antigua and Barbuda is urgent and growing as national health challenges—ranging from infectious disease management, occupational and environmental health, to epidemic preparedness—demand a well-trained and adequately staffed public health workforce," he outlined.

According to the official the Central Board of Health (CBH) currently operates with only six (6) trained public health officers, three of whom are due to retire within the next two years. This represents a severe shortage compared to the thirty-five (35) inspectors required to meet the country's needs. This deficit directly impacts disease surveillance, health education, food safety, inspections, and national disaster responses.

"Access to accredited public health training within the region is limited to the University of Technology (UTech) in Jamaica and the College of Science, Technology and Applied Arts of Trinidad and Tobago (COSTAATT), both of which pose financial and logistical barriers for Antiguan and Barbudan students," he explained.

It is felt that the Antigua and Barbuda College of Advanced Studies (ABCAS) is well-positioned to fill this gap by developing and delivering accredited diploma and graduate-level public health programmes. Such programmes would address the workforce shortage while creating a sustainable pipeline of public health professionals to meet the nation's long-term health objectives.

The Honourable Minister recommended Cabinet's approval of the following:

1. Designation of public

health programmes offered by ABCAS and other regional institutions as national priority programmes under the Prime Minister's and the Board of Education's scholarship schemes.

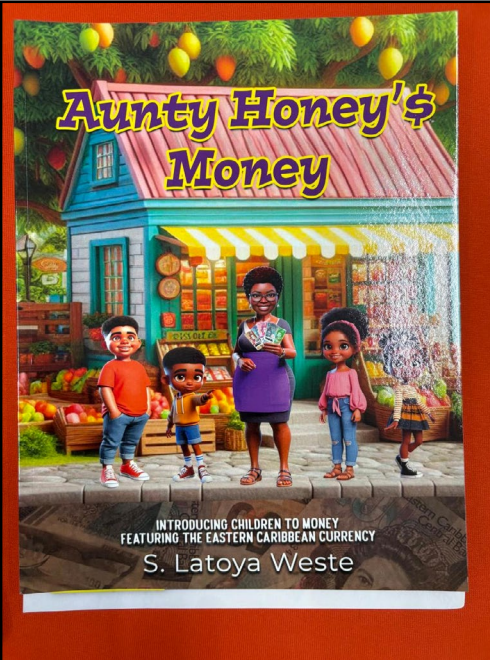
2. Approval of an increase to the training and development budget of the Central Board of Health to support training, staff development, and the implementation of public health programmes at ABCAS.

3. Development of a Diploma in Public Health at ABCAS specifically geared towards the training of all District Medical Officers within the Ministry of Health, Wellness, the Environment and Civil Service Affairs.

4. Contractual employment of trained environmental health professionals to assist in the management of public health conditions in Antigua and Barbuda, while simultaneously providing internship opportunities for young Antiguan and Barbudans pursuing Environmental Health, Environmental Engineering, and related specialist disciplines.

Cabinet considered the recommendations and approved the establishment and support of diploma and graduate public health programmes at the Antigua and Barbuda College of Advanced Studies (ABCAS), including the additional measures outlined.

ECCB teams up with CUB to host Financial Information Month event



The Eastern Caribbean Central Bank (ECCB) has designated the month of October as Financial Information Month Festival across the members of the currency union.

ECCB Country Manager here in Antigua and Barbuda, Karel Forde-Harrigan explained that the bank is working along with its part-

ners within the currency union to organize events that promote financial literacy.

“Each country within the ECCU uses the month of October to spread information on financial education, to aim at improving financial literacy amongst our people as well as to provide information on savings

and investments, which is, in fact, our theme for this year. In fact, our sub-focus is: ***‘financial investing; from savers to investors’***,” she explained.

According to Forde-Harrigan, the overarching theme for the month is: ***‘Financial empowerment through education’***.

Local News

PAGE 7



She disclosed that the main activity for the month will be a scavenger hunt on October 19 and the ECCB is inviting teams from businesses and organisations to register to participate.

On Wednesday, ECCB joined the Caribbean Union Bank in hosting a group of students from the Post-Millennial Academy at the bank to get an understanding of the workings of a financial institution.

Additionally, the event was used to promote a book published by S.

Latoya Weste, whose background is in the financial sector, entitled '*Aunty Honey's Money*', which is geared towards introducing children to understanding and appreciating the value of money at an early stage.

General Manager of CUB, Karen Richardson, said the bank is happy to partner with the ECCB in promoting the activities of Financial Information Month Festival and in particular to help promote the book written by Weste among young people.

"CUB is part of the Antigua and Barbuda Bankers Association and as part of that we decided to do two things; 1. Rather than go to the schools, we wanted to bring to schools to us so that they can see first-hand how a bank works and 2. We wanted to support Weste by presenting copies of her book to the visiting children," Richardson stated.

She noted that for CB, it is important that financial literacy starts at a young age as we are of the view that if they are educated about money at that age, when they become adults they will be financially responsible.

"This was a great activity for us and we are happy to join with the ECCB to pull it off," she stated.

Speaking with Point Express, Weste said the motivation for writing the book came from 'necessity being the mother of invention'. "I wanted a similar resource for my own child when she was interested in money as I truly believe in 'training up a child in the way that she should go'. I was teaching her everything else and I felt that part of that training ought to be about money so that she could develop good money habits at an early age. I have been in the financial sector for far too long and have seen too many people fall through the cracks simply because they lacked financial knowledge. Unfortunately, I could not find anything that would provide the information that I sought; so I decided to write a book myself and *Aunty Honey's Money* is the result," she explained.

Weste worked for over a decade in the banking sector and she is now currently employed at a major insurance company.

Antigua and Barbuda Shows Strong Leadership at Regional Maritime Conference



The Caribbean Maritime University (CMU) hosted its annual CMU Industry Conference at the Jamaica Pegasus Hotel in Kingston, Jamaica from 1st to 2nd October 2025, under the theme “*Embracing the Blue Economy: Navigating the Future through Sustainable Development*”.

The CMU is the Caribbean’s premier maritime training institution and a key partner institution of the Government of Antigua and Barbuda for maritime training and education since 2014. Through scholarships offered by the Department of Marine Services and Merchant Shipping (ADOMS) and the Port Authority, over 30 nationals have graduated from CMU with BSc in Marine Transportation or BSc in Marine Engineering.

Nationals trained through these programmes serve both at home in a regulatory or operational capacity for the ADOMS and the Port Authority as well as around the world

aboard vessels of all sizes such as superyachts, cruise ships, cargo ships and tankers.

The conference was opened by greetings from Ambassador Dwight Gardiner, Director/Registrar General of ADOMS and Permanent Representative of Antigua and Barbuda to the International Maritime Organization, who received an honorary Doctor of Laws from CMU in 2024.

The conference brings together regulators, industry and academia from across the Caribbean and North America to discuss critical issues for the region such as:

- ▶ Industry 4.0 applications for Caribbean development
- ▶ Climate-resilient practices in maritime operations
- ▶ Inclusive policies for indigenous communities and the sea
- ▶ Cutting-edge training and

education models

- ▶ Economic analyses of shipping decarbonization
- ▶ Inter-agency strategies for blue economy governance

The Antigua and Barbuda delegation also includes other prominent local maritime experts who will lead various panels being held, including:

▶ Mr. Darwin Telemaque, CEO of the Port Authority and Chairman of the Port Managers Association of the Caribbean

▶ Lt. Cdr. Wayne Mykoo, Deputy Director – Maritime Affairs and External Relations, ADOMS

▶ Dr. Branson Belle, Executive Director of the Centre of Excellence for Oceanography and the Blue Economy, UWI Five Islands Campus

▶ Mr. Ethan James, CEO of Green Energy Management Inc.

Teshawn Lynch fined \$19,000.00 for the illegal possession of cocaine



All Saints resident, Teshawn Lynch has been ordered to pay a fine of \$19,000.00 to be paid over the course of a year or face a 15-month prison term if he defaults following his conviction of cocaine possession charges. Based on the sentencing guidelines established by the Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court, the presiding magistrate determined that the matter was a Category 4 offence based on the quantity of drugs that was involved, 293.5 grams. Additionally, since Lynch has a pending matter before the court for the illegal possession of cannabis, this also had a bearing on the sentence that was handed down.

39-year-old Lynch was arrested last Friday during a police unit early morning 'stop and search' when he was found in possession of the illegal substance, cocaine.

The police then obtained a search warrant and conducted a search of his All Saints home where, with the aid of the K9 officer, a metal flask was found partially buried in the backyard. When opened, it was found to be full of transparent bags with the substance, cocaine.

He made a court appearance on Monday at which time he pleaded guilty. The presiding magistrate ordered that he be remanded and to return to court on October 2, 2025, for sentencing.



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Antigua Horizons - on Deck with Antigua Yacht Club

By Zoë Carlton

It's that time again! As the summer draws to a close, Antigua Yacht Club (AYC), among the regular local racing and sailing enthusiasts, is planning for the season. AYC & Budget Marine Announce the Jol Byerley Hightide Series 2025 - Bigger fleet, thrilling new courses, and a lively social calendar

The Antigua Yacht Club (AYC) is delighted to confirm that the AYC / Budget Marine Jol Byerley Hightide Series is shaping up to be one of the most exciting racing events of the season. With expressions of interest continuing to roll in, anticipation is high for a strong fleet and spectacular competition on Antigua's waters.

AYC is proud to welcome long-term sponsor Budget Marine yet again as the headline sponsor for the 2025 edition, bringing fresh energy and support to this much-loved annual series.

This year, sailors can look forward to a completely new programme format:

- Warm-Up Point Series: Saturday, 13 December & Wednesday, 17 December — for those eager for extra racing in the lead-up.
- Main Event: An open 7-race series across the weekend of 20–21 December, expected to draw not only Jolly Harbour boats but also visiting competitors. This will also count towards season points for the proposed West Coast Cup.

The race committee is introducing new, more exciting courses and a dedicated new start boat with Race Officer to ensure fair starts at the harbour mouth. Large, high-visibility Budget Marine race marks will guide competitors around the course. While protests are discouraged, a competent protest jury will be in place if needed.



ANTIGUA 2025
AYC / BUDGET MARINE
JOL BYERLEY
HIGHTIDE SERIES
NEW WARM-UP POINT RACES
DEC 13 & 17
MAIN 7-RACE SERIES
DEC 20-21
NEW COURSES
NEW START BOAT
BIG BUDGET MARINE
MARKS
SEASON POINTS
FOR THE WEST COAST CUP
PLUS EPIC SOCIALS – INCLUDING
A KNEES-UP CEILIDH PARTY AT AYC

Off the water, the social programme promises to be just as vibrant. Skipper's briefings will see the Commodore's Bar open for sailors and supporters, while Saturday night (20 December) will feature a lively old-fashioned knees-up party at the AYC — a perfect way to celebrate the racing spirit.

AYC race organisers are buzzing with enthusiasm. "It's going to be a great fleet and some incredible racing. We can't wait to see everyone out on the water," said an AYC spokesperson.

Mark your calendars, polish your hulls, and get ready — the Jol Byerley Hightide Series 2025 is set to be one for the books.



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Caribbean Union Bank

Caribbean Union Bank Welcomes Primary School Students for Financial Information Month Festival

St. John's, Antigua – October 3, 2025 – As part of our commitment to fostering financial literacy and empowerment among the nation's youth, Caribbean Union Bank (CUB) is proud to announce a special program of activities in celebration of the Financial Information Month Festival, a collaborative initiative of the Eastern Caribbean Central Bank (ECCB) and financial partners across the OECS held every October.

On October 1st and 8th, students from both public and private primary schools across Antigua will visit CUB for an engaging and educational tour of the bank's facilities. The visits will not only give students a behind-the-scenes look at the operations of a modern financial institution but will also feature an interactive "Meet the Author" session with Ms. S. Latoya Weste, esteemed author of the children's financial literacy book *Aunty Honey's Money*. Ms. Weste will share insights from her book and inspire students to develop wise money habits from an early age.

As a highlight of the month's activities, the *Aunty Honey's Money* book launch and financial fair will take place on Sunday, October 26, 2025, at the UWI Open Campus on Factory Road from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. This family-friendly event will offer engaging activities, opportunities to meet the author, and valuable financial literacy resources for children and parents alike.

"We are excited to open our doors to the next generation, helping them understand the importance of financial responsibility from a young age," said Mrs. Karen Richardson, General Manager. "Events like these are essential for building a financially savvy community, and we hope to make this an annual tradition at CUB."

The program aligns with the Financial Information Month Festival's mission to educate and empower the public, fostering a culture of financial responsibility and smart decision-making. CUB remains dedicated to supporting financial literacy initiatives and looks forward to welcoming young learners to our bank.

CUB also joins with its colleagues of the Antigua Barbuda Montserrat Bankers Association and the ECCB in hosting a number of activities as part of the Financial Information Month Festival.

Caribbean Union Bank (CUB) is committed to providing innovative banking solutions and supporting community development through education and outreach.



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For Immediate Release

Warning: Fraudulent Website Impersonating Official Government Site

ST. JOHN'S, Antigua and Barbuda – October 2, 2025... The Ministry of Information Communication Technologies (ICTs), Utilities, and Energy wishes to advise the public that a website claiming to be an official platform for the Government of Antigua and Barbuda is not authorized or affiliated with the government in any capacity.

The site in question, ecitizen.ag, has been identified as fraudulent.

We are currently conducting investigations into this matter and urge citizens to exercise caution when providing personal information online. The safety of our citizens and the integrity of our official communications are of utmost importance.

For accurate information and updates regarding government services, please refer to our official website and authorized channels.

Should you have any concerns or further inquiries, please contact the Ministry directly.

Thank you for your cooperation.



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2025 INDEPENDENCE SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

25 OCT - 03 NOV

SATURDAY 25 OCT

- **NATIONAL SCHOOLS' PANORAMA**
ANTIGUA PORT AUTHORITY PARKING LOT
5:00PM

SUNDAY 26 OCT

- **INDEPENDENCE CHURCH SERVICE**
SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH CREEKSIDE
4:00PM

MONDAY 27-29 OCT

- **NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE
BUSINESS DECOR COMPETITION**

MONDAY 27 OCT

- **NATIONAL HEROES DAY
WREATH LAYING CEREMONY**
HEROES PARK- SIR SYDNEY WALLINGS HIGHWAY
10:00 AM

TUESDAY 28 OCT

- **FESTIVAL OF CHOIRS**
ST. ANTHONY'S SECONDARY SCHOOL
8:00PM
- **BARBUDA DAY ACTIVITIES (TBC)**



WEDNESDAY 29 OCT

- **SCHOOLS' INDEPENDENCE PROGRAMS**
SCHOOLS ACROSS THE STATE
- **GOLDEN AGE CELEBRATIONS**
VARIOUS COMMUNITIES IN ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA
- **THEATRICAL PRESENTATION
"WADADLI ROOTS"**
7:30PM (TBC)

THURSDAY 30 OCT

- **NATIONAL YOUTH RALLY** 8:30AM
- **CHEERLEADING COMPETITION** 11:30AM
SIR VIVIAN RICHARDS STADIUM
- **INDEPENDENCE CALYPSO COMPETITION**
JACK IDLE
8:00PM

FRIDAY 31 OCT

- **NATIONAL DRESS DAY**
- **NATIONAL FLAG DAY**
- **UNCHARTERED WATERS**
JOHN E ST. LUCE BUILDING
8:00PM

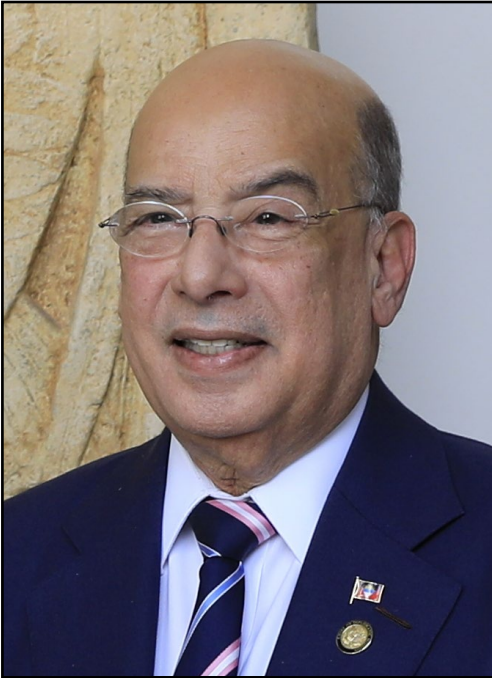
SATURDAY 01 NOV

- **INDEPENDENCE FLAG CEREMONY**
BARBUDA
9:00AM
- **NATIONAL FOOD FAIR**
SIR VIVIAN RICHARDS STADIUM
10:00AM UNTIL
- **INDEPENDENCE CEREMONIAL
PARADE & NATIONAL AWARDS**
SIR VIVIAN RICHARDS STADIUM
5:30PM

MONDAY 03 NOV

- **BURNING FLAMES HIGHWAY
TRAFFIC JAM**
BURNING FLAMES HIGHWAY
(TIME TBC)

No Empty Chairs: The Case for Attending the 2025 Summit of the Americas



By Sir Ronald Sanders

The Dominican Republic (DR) is hosting the 2025 Summit of the Americas – a gathering of the Heads of State and Government of 32 countries of the Western Hemisphere.

On September 30, the Government of the DR, publicly stated that Cuba, Nicaragua, and Venezuela will not be invited to the 2025 Summit of the Americas. The Government was careful to explain that its choice is necessary to “ensure the widest possible political dialogue” and to “guarantee the success of the Summit.” It also makes clear that this decision “does not interfere with bilateral relations” with any of the three countries.

This decision is likely to provoke a response similar to that seen at the 2022 Summit in Los Angeles, when the U.S. administration of Joe Biden did not invite the same three governments. Calls for Heads of Government to stay away followed, and a few did so in protest at the non-invitation of Cuba’s President Miguel Díaz-Canel Bermúdez,

Nicaragua’s President Daniel Ortega Saavedra, and Venezuela’s President Nicolás Maduro Moros.

Leaders should think hard before staying away from the 2025 Summit. Global and regional conditions have shifted: wars in the Middle East and Europe cast economic and security shadows across the Americas; within the hemisphere, ideological rifts are reopening. This is precisely the moment for leaders to meet—to manage differences, protect interests, and act in the interest of all the peoples of the Americas.

Attendance is leverage, not endorsement. Leaders who believe that Cuba, Nicaragua, and Venezuela should be invited should say so at the Summit, in direct terms. Refusing to attend neither alters the guest list nor delivers gains for the peoples of the Americas; it only removes strong national voices from the room where decisions and deals are made.

The agenda in Punta Cana in the DR is built around four urgent security pillars: citizen security, energy security, water security, and food security. Across reputable global assessments, Latin America and the Caribbean ranks poorly on all four: the region bears the world’s highest homicide burden; most countries are not water-secure; energy-transition progress and grid reliability lag behind other regions; and the cost of a healthy diet is the highest in the world, alongside elevated food-insecurity rates. They determine whether freedom of speech is preserved; whether hospitals, schools and hotels have electricity; whether water pipes run and crops survive; whether households have access to food at prices they can afford.

The DR government put out the suggested theme for the Summit with these four pillars since February and the first draft of a possible Declaration from the Summit was issued in June. Since September 11, government representatives of the 32 countries have been negotiating the outcome document.

A major initiative at this Summit is the CEO Convocation co-hosted with the Inter-American Development Bank. That platform is designed for public authorities and private capital to assemble the financing and execution capacity that the four pillars require. Public-private partnerships, built transparently and on fair terms, can shorten delivery timelines and spread costs sensibly. The CEO meeting is where those partnerships can be made real.

Another imperative is greater trade and economic integration across Latin America and the Caribbean. Integration scales markets, deepens and de-risks supply chains, and accelerates the spread of knowledge and expertise. Practical steps such as, customs facilitation, reliable sea- and air-links, and competitively priced access to infrastructure inputs, are all matters leaders should use the Summit to agree and advance.

Apart from these general considerations, Caribbean leaders should be at the Summit to focus on particular Caribbean concerns. The recent UN Security Council decision on Haiti must be advanced with practical timelines, resources, and roles. Understanding and progress are also needed on differences over climate change and sustainable development, where positions diverge but impacts converge.

The negotiations in the Summit Implementation Review Group (SIRG), made up of all the independent states of the Americas except Cuba, Nicaragua, and Venezuela, began on September 11 and have yet to resolve differences on these points at the technical level. It may take direct consultation by leaders to agree on actions that can be taken.

The last Summit, despite political controversy, still produced outcomes of value, including climate- and energy-cooperation channels that mobilized technical support and investment for Caribbean states. The lesson is straightforward: even when politics creates dissonance, useful progress is possible when leaders are present, prepared, and focused.

There is a wider principle that should be stated; movement toward greater democracy and respect for human, civil, and political rights is necessary for broad-based development and for international financial support. In Cuba, Nicaragua, and Venezuela, tangible steps in that direction would encourage broader backing across the hemisphere. In Venezuela's case specifically, military threats against Guyana should give way to a peaceful, lawful path under international law and the process of the International Court of Justice that the UN Secretary-General authorized and CARICOM governments have endorsed.

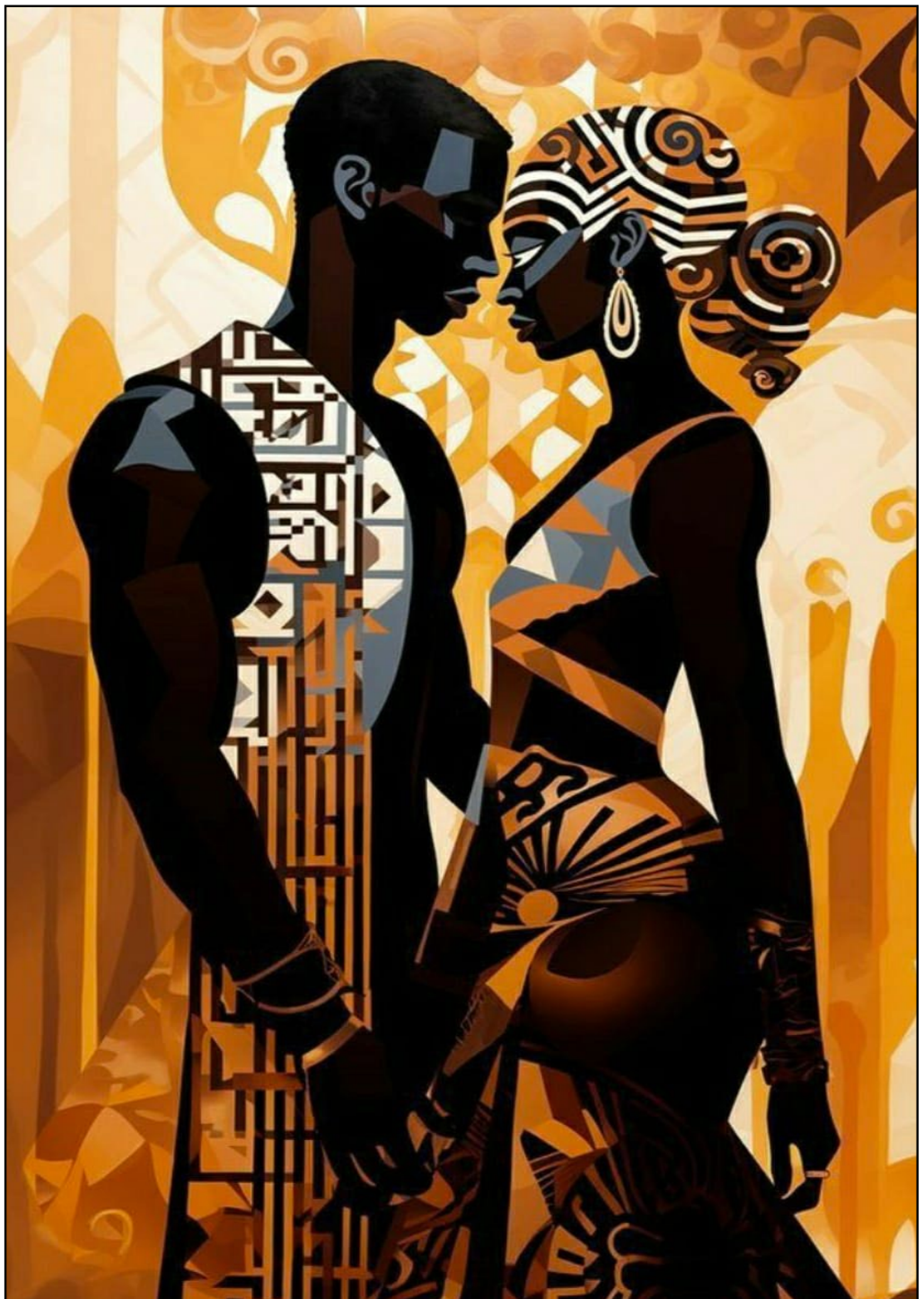
It is understood that President Trump may not attend for security reasons – a concern that might yet be resolved. Nonetheless, senior U.S. representation is expected; at minimum Secretary of State Marco Rubio or Vice President Vance, or both. The margins of the Summit are well-suited to quiet, candid exchanges with U.S. principals on the effects of U.S. policy across the hemisphere; conversations that can

yield practical attention to pressing issues.

This is a meeting to be present, active, and speaking: the DR government has set a constructive path; its non-invitations to Cuba, Nicaragua and Venezuela are framed as a Summit-specific decision, without prejudice to bilateral relations. Leaders should use that path to pursue national interests and advance hemispheric cooperation.

Not attending leaves influence at the table in other hands. Attending, and doing the work, serves the people of the Americas.

(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)



LAST STAND: TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO RACES AGAINST TIME TO SAVE CARIBBEAN'S FINAL INVESTMENT GRADE RATING



By Professor C. Justin Robinson
*Pro Vice-Chancellor and Principal,
 The UWI Five Islands Campus*

For Trinidad and Tobago's 1.4 million citizens, last week's warning from Standard & Poor's could mean the difference between affordable government services and painful economic hardship. The rating agency's decision to downgrade the country's outlook from "stable" to "negative" puts the twin-island nation just one step away from joining its Caribbean neighbours in financial exile—with borrowing costs that could cripple public spending on everything from healthcare to education.

Key Takeaways

- **The Warning:** S&P sees 1-in-3 chance of credit downgrade within 6-24 months
- **The Stakes:** T&T is the Caribbean's last investment-grade sovereign; losing this status means much higher borrowing costs
- **The Problem:** Over-dependence on declining oil/gas sector, chronic deficits, economic stagnation
- **The Deadline:** Government has less than two years to implement fundamental reforms

What's at Stake for Everyday Citizens

When countries lose their investment grade status, the impact ripples through

every household. Look no further than Barbados, which saw borrowing costs surge after its 2014 downgrade, eventually forcing the government to suspend debt payments in 2018. The result? Austerity measures that cut public sector wages, reduced social programs, and increased taxes on essential goods. "The USD shortage is already affecting our ability to import medical supplies and spare parts," explains a Port of Spain business owner who requested anonymity. "If borrowing becomes more expensive, it will only get worse."

Trinidad and Tobago currently sits at BBB-, the lowest rung of investment grade status. Fall one notch to BB+, and the country enters "junk" territory—a classification that forces institutional investors like pension funds to sell their holdings and dramatically increases the cost of government borrowing.

Understanding the Credit Rating Cliff

Think of credit ratings as financial report cards that determine how much countries pay to borrow money. The system works like this:

- **AAA to AA:** Premium borrowers with rock-solid finances
- **A:** High quality with minimal risk
- **BBB:** Good quality but vulnerable to economic shocks
- **BBB-:** The critical threshold—investment grade's last line of defence
- **BB+ and below:** "Junk" status with significantly higher borrowing costs

The difference isn't academic. When Barbados lost investment grade status, its borrowing costs increased by several percentage points. For a government budget, that translates to millions less available for hospitals, schools, and infrastructure.

The Caribbean's Domino Effect

Trinidad and Tobago now stands alone as the Caribbean's only investment-grade sovereign—a position that carries both privilege and pressure. The region's other economic anchors have already fallen. Barbados tumbled first, losing investment grade status in 2013-2014 before defaulting on external debt in 2018. While the country has since restructured and improved to B status, it remains firmly in junk territory nearly a decade later. The Bahamas followed around 2016-2017 and currently sits at B+—well below the investment grade threshold. Both countries now pay premium rates to access international capital markets. Trinidad and Tobago's potential downgrade would leave the entire English-speaking Caribbean without a single investment-grade sovereign.

The Numbers Behind the Crisis

S&P's concerns aren't abstract—they're grounded in troubling economic fundamentals:

Energy Addiction: Oil and gas still represent over 25% of GDP, nearly 80% of exports, and the bulk of government revenues. But production has been declining for years, and new projects require expensive deep-water drilling.

Chronic Deficits: The government spent 6% more than it earned in 2024, with S&P projecting similar deficits through 2026. Energy windfalls traditionally covered these gaps, but that strategy is no longer sustainable.

Anaemic Growth: Economic expansion is projected at just 1% annually through 2026—far below what developing economies need to improve living standards and generate sufficient tax revenues.

Debt Burden: Government debt reached 81.3% of GDP in 2024, while the Heritage and Stabilisation Fund—built from past oil booms—continues

shrinking as the government withdraws funds to balance budgets.

Currency Crunch: Chronic USD shortages have hampered businesses' ability to pay suppliers and import essential goods, from medical equipment to food staples.

The Government's Reform Challenge

S&P has essentially issued an ultimatum: implement fundamental structural reforms within 6-24 months or face junk status. The required changes include:

Economic Diversification: Moving beyond oil and gas into tourism, agriculture, manufacturing, and services—something successive governments have promised but failed to achieve.

Fiscal Discipline: Reducing dependence on volatile energy revenues while improving tax collection and spending efficiency.

Currency Management: Addressing the USD shortage through more flexible exchange rate policies or improved foreign exchange management.

Institutional Strengthening: Building robust institutions that can weather political changes and implement long-term strategies.

Reasons for Cautious Hope

Despite the challenges, Trinidad and Tobago retains several advantages that distinguish it from regional peers:

Political Stability: The country maintains a functioning parliamentary democracy with peaceful transitions of power—increasingly rare in a volatile global environment.

Financial Cushions: Unlike many developing nations, T&T still possesses substantial liquid assets and maintains a strong external creditor position.

Monetary Discipline: Inflation has averaged just 2.7% over five years, indicating sound monetary management.

Strategic Location: The country's position as a regional energy hub and

gateway to South America offers diversification opportunities.

Learning from Regional Examples

While the Caribbean's recent credit history offers cautionary tales, it also provides roadmaps for recovery. Barbados, despite its ongoing junk status, has successfully restructured its debt and stabilized its economy through comprehensive reforms and international support. The key lesson: early action matters. Countries that wait until crisis hits face far more limited and expensive options.

The Bottom Line

Standard & Poor's negative outlook serves as both final warning and last opportunity. For too long, Trinidad and Tobago has relied on energy windfalls to mask fundamental economic weaknesses. That luxury has expired. The stakes extend far beyond credit rat-

ings. Success could position Trinidad and Tobago as a model for small island developing states navigating the transition to post-petroleum prosperity. Failure would not only burden citizens with higher borrowing costs but also eliminate the Caribbean's last beacon of investment-grade credibility.

Prof. C. Justin Robinson, a Vincentian and UWI graduate, holds a BSc in Management Studies, MSc in Finance and Econometrics, and PhD in Finance. With over 20 years at UWI, he has served in various leadership roles, including Dean and Pro Vice Chancellor, Board for Undergraduate Studies. A Professor of Corporate Finance with extensive research publications, he is actively involved in regional financial institutions and is currently the Principal of The UWI Five Islands Campus in Antigua and Barbuda.

PUBLIC NOTICE

IN THE MATTER OF ANTIGUA OVERSEAS BANK LTD.
AOB (IN LIQUIDATION)

NOTICE OF FINAL CALL FOR DEPOSITOR CLAIMS

TO ALL DEPOSITORS:

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that, pursuant to the provisions of the International Banking Act, 2016, and the International Business Corporation Act, of the laws of Antigua and Barbuda, Antigua Overseas Bank Ltd. (AOB) (In Liquidation) is in its liquidation process.

This notice serves as a final and urgent call for all remaining depositors of Antigua Overseas Bank Ltd to contact the Joint Liquidators and file a claim for possible settlement of amounts being distributed by the Estate.

All claims, duly substantiated with the required documentation, must be submitted to the Joint Liquidators on or before October 31, 2025.

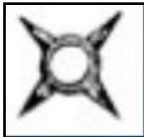
Claim forms and further information can be obtained by contacting the Joint Liquidators at the address and email provided below.

Cleveland Seaforth and Raquel Glynn
Joint Liquidators

Antigua Overseas Bank Limited (In Liquidation)
Cnr. Factory Road and Carnival Gardens
P O Box 3109
St. John's
ANTIGUA
Tel : +1 268 462 8868/69
Fax: +1 268 462 8808

Email: aobliquidation@bdoecc.com

Dated this 01 October, 2025.



Antigua Barbuda Reparations Support Commission

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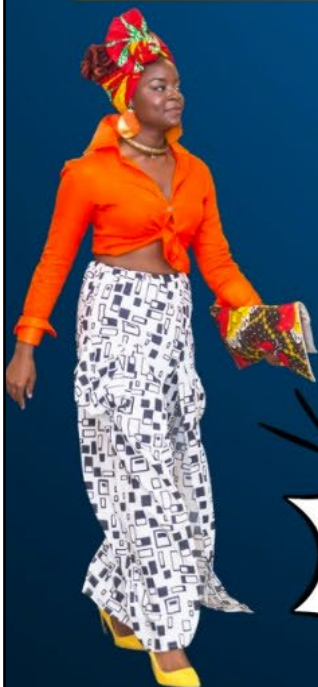
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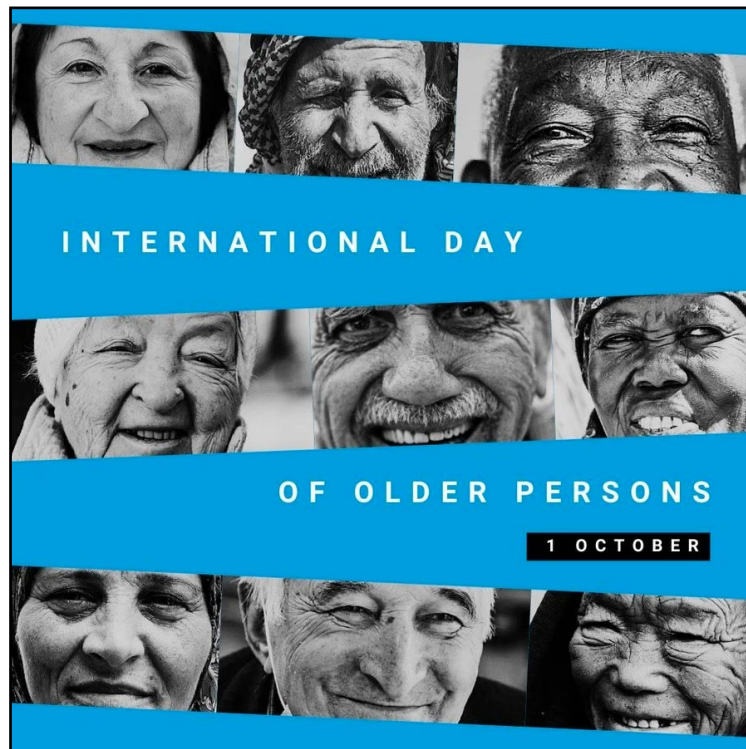


Honoring Age, Embracing Peace: Lessons for Antigua and Barbuda



October begins with two global observances that should stir our hearts and actions: the International Day of Older Persons (October 1) and the International Day of Non-Violence (October 2). At first glance, one highlights age and the other highlights peace—but when we look deeper, both days intersect in powerful ways.

Older persons are the guardians of wisdom, the custodians of memory, and the living libraries of our societies. In Antigua and Barbuda, many of us still remember the stories of resilience passed down from grandparents—tales of surviving storms, building communities, and navigating hardships. But here's the question we must ask our-



selves: *Are we truly valuing and protecting our older citizens the way they deserve?* The United Nations

reminds us that “older persons are not a burden but an incredible resource for our societies.” Yet

globally and even locally, too many older persons face discrimination, neglect, or invisibility. The challenges multiply when age intersects with disability. An older Antiguan man who uses a wheelchair, for example, may find not just his voice ignored but also his mobility restricted by inaccessible spaces. Isn't it time we ensured that aging with dignity and independence is a right, not a privilege?

The International Day of Non-Violence, observed on October 2 in honor of Mahatma Gandhi's birthday, reinforces this call. Non-violence is more than the absence of war; it is the daily practice of respect, kindness, and empathy. How often do we consider that *ageism itself is a form of violence*? When we dismiss the voices of older persons, fail to include them in national planning, or overlook their needs in health care and housing, we are perpetuating a subtle but painful violence. The UNESCO Director-General Audrey Azoulay once stated, “Non-violence is not passive; it is active resistance against injustice.” Imagine applying that principle right here in Antigua and Barbuda. Could we resist ageism and advocate for systems that prioritize elder care? Could we ensure that the older woman with vision loss or the elderly man managing arthritis is still treated as a central contributor to community life?

Feature



The truth is, older persons continue to contribute every single day. Many are caretakers of grandchildren, knowledge keepers in cultural traditions, or quiet supporters of local churches and community organizations. As one UN statement on aging highlights,

“Societies that invest in older persons are investing in their own future.” Isn’t that a message we should take to heart in building a more inclusive Antigua and Barbuda? Let’s not forget, too, that the non-violence we preach must also extend to how we treat the plan-

et our elders leave behind. In the fight against climate change, older persons with disabilities are often at greatest risk during natural disasters, from hurricanes to floods. Ensuring accessible shelters, clear communication, and proper health services during emergencies is

not charity—it is justice.

So as we mark these two international days, let us commit to action: Advocate for accessible spaces so older persons with disabilities can move freely. Promote intergenerational programs in Antigua and Barbuda that allow youth to learn directly from elders. Push for non-violence in all forms—against women, against children, against older persons, and against our environment. The rhetorical question we must keep asking is this: *If we fail to protect those who came before us, what kind of example are we setting for those who will come after us?*

Let October 1 and October 2 not pass as calendar dates alone. Let them inspire us to create a nation where aging is celebrated, peace is cultivated, and every person—whether young, old, disabled, or able-bodied—can thrive in dignity.

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Saturday, October 11th, 2025

Venue: West Indies Oil Sports Field – Friars Hill Road
(next to the Friars Hill service station)

Time: 3:00 p.m.

Price: Adults \$50, Kids \$25 (Groups of 10 or more \$40)

Package includes: T-shirt and light refreshments



Register at Old Parham Road branch, online by clicking [here](#) or scanning the QR code.

Contact Jesseca Ormond 484-5119, Natasha Charles 484-5137 or Khadijah James 484-5064

All proceeds to be donated to Breast Friends & Oncology department at Sir Lester Bird Medical.

Route: Leave WIOC play field, Left turn onto Friars Hill Rd, Left turn onto West Indies Oil Rd (by the pond), Right Turn onto Marble Hill Rd and continue on with transition to Cedar Grove Main Rd, Right turn by roundabout onto Friars Hill Rd, Back to WIOC play field.




Post your photos to social media with **#WFTCAntigua**

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**SIR LESTER BIRD
MEDICAL CENTRE**

Rotary Club of Antigua Advances Education Through Technology Programme



The Rotary Club of Antigua is forging ahead, playing a major role in assisting institutions through its Education Through Technology Programme.

On 1st October, 2025, we distributed laptop devices to a number of organizations and educators to include: The Tiny Smiles Preschool and Daycare Centre, presented to Director Ms. Deandra Cooper. New Bethel Seventh Day Adventist Academy, presented to Ms. Coreen Patrick, Principal. The Caribbean Council of the Blind, presented to Ms. Carolyn Gopaul and the Industrial Workshop for the Blind distributed to Mrs. Jacqueline Tweed-Harris. The Victory Center, and Industri-



al Arts Teacher, Fitzgerald Ponde. The representatives collectively

thanked the Rotary Club of Antigua for answering the respective calls for assistance in advancing the training, professional development and overall technological growth in various areas.

President of the Rotary Club of Antigua, Elisa Graham noted that “the Rotary Club of Antigua remains committed to assisting in the technological development of young minds through this hallmark programme. “We are thankful to our international partners the Bellevue Breakfast Rotary Club from Washington State, for their continued engagement in bringing together local knowledge to the needs of schools and students”.



Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela Official Communique

The Ministries of People's Power for Defense and for Foreign Affairs of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela strongly denounce and reject the illegal incursion of combat aircraft of the United States of America detected on October 2, 2025, approximately 75 kilometers from our coasts, within the Maiquetía Flight Information Region (FIR).

This maneuver, identified by the Comprehensive Aerospace Defense Command (CODAI), constitutes a provocation that threatens national sovereignty and contravenes the norms of international law and the Chicago Convention on International Civil Aviation.

This action seriously endangered the operational safety of civil and commercial aviation in the Caribbean Sea; the incident was also sighted by the Colombian airline Avianca, adding to the official detection of CODAI.

This serious report adds to other similar illegal incursions previously recorded and already denounced by the Bolivarian Government, which constitutes a pattern of harassment that cannot be tolerated.

In this regard, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela demands that the Secretary of War of the United States, Peter Hegseth, immediately cease his reckless, adventurous, and warlike stance, which seeks to undermine the zone of peace of Latin America and the Caribbean and endangers regional stability.

The Bolivarian Government will take this complaint before the Secretary General of the United Nations, the Security Council, the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), and the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), so that the necessary measures are adopted to prevent the repetition of these illegal and dangerous actions.

Venezuela reiterates that it will not accept intimidation or aggression from any foreign power and that it will fully exercise its right to defend national sovereignty, in accordance with international law.

The Bolivarian National Armed Force will remain on permanent alert with its Integrated Aerospace Defense System.

Caracas, October 2, 2025

Regional News

Full free movement begins for Barbados, St Vincent, Belize and Dominica, PM Mottley calls for more support

Prime Minister Mia Mottley says Barbados will “open our doors with order and with pride” as Barbados joins St Vincent and the Grenadines, Belize, and Dominica in fully implementing free movement of their nationals among themselves from today.

The countries are implementing one of the major aspects of the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME), which allows for the free movement of goods, skills, labour, and services across the region.

The Guyana-based CARICOM Secretariat said that extensive preparations have been undertaken to ensure “a smooth and secure roll-out” of the full free movement among the four countries, adding that the other member states that participate in the CSME and have not signed on to full free movement “will continue to facilitate movement of their nationals under the existing regime for skilled workers, for the provision of services and the operation of businesses”.

In a nationwide radio and television broadcast on Tuesday night, Mottley acknowledged that Barbados is on the cusp of a change that will touch the lives across the Caribbean region and strengthen the nation.

“I know some of you feel excited. I also know that some of you do feel anxious. You have questions. You want to know exactly what will happen and how it



will affect your family, your job, your children’s future,” she said, adding that “all of your questions and feelings are valid.”

During her broadcast, the Prime Minister gave a history of Barbados’ leadership within the regional integration movement, saying “we have had successive governments work fervently to build a regional integration project.”

She said all the various stakeholders were aware that “a small country like Barbados needed the regional integration project in order to do better for our people” and that the step being taken from October is practically nothing new, given that “the ties among the islands are not new, not

strange, and definitely not to be feared”.

She said that the new step “supports jobs, supports public services, and supports our future” and that the nationals from Barbados and the three other CARICOM countries “will be able to move among these states with the right to live, to work without a work permit, and to study on an indefinite basis.

“We call ourselves pioneers because we are putting in place a regime which I have every confidence that others in our Caribbean community will join in.

Mottley outlined the procedures that will be implemented, allowing for the full free movement, including immigration status, even as

she acknowledged that “any government may refuse entry to a person on the basis of public health concerns.

“As we learned recently, all of us in the COVID-19 pandemic, these principles remain in place. They are the guardrails of responsible regional integration. And believe me when I tell you that they will be applied should the need arise.

“Secondly, we operate within a regional security architecture that works every day and works professionally and has done so since 2007 for almost two decades,” she said, noting that the Caribbean became the first region to vet the names of all passengers against INTERPOL’s databases in 2007.

“We also vet against the

Regional News

PAGE 25

United States databases at Homeland Security, and indeed the CARICOM Regional Watch lists as a means of double and triple checking Barbadians. We are not closing our eyes and swiping. We do not welcome criminality; we welcome contribution. We do not welcome abuse of our systems. That is the balance and that is the commitment I make to you,” Mottley said, adding that while Cabinet has approved the policy framework, the bill should be laid at the next sitting of Parliament on October 7 for debate.

Mottley also spoke of the economic advantages of the new initiative, saying the fastest developing countries grow when people bring talent and energy and enterprise, and those that fall equally are those that turn inwards and refuse to recognise the need for skills to come in to help build out their country.

“We don’t only need investment and money for growth and development. We need people and skills. People who come to live and work here will fill that gap that exists, not force Bajans out of a job, that will help our businesses to serve more

customers. Create competition that benefits the consumer.

“They will rent homes or buy homes. They will buy from our shops. They will support local businesses. They will hire our tradesmen. They will go to our places of entertainment. This economic activity will benefit billions across the board. As we have seen in the past, this step also supports our public finances. Those who work will pay income tax,” she added.

Mottley said that at the risk of sounding like a stuck record, “I’ll say it again, Barbados, my friends, is seeing the number of people in their working years declining. The number of seniors is rising. The number of persons being born has declined. It is expected that one in every two Bajans will be over the age of 65 years old.

“Yes, we all want our people to live longer, but it also places pressure on pensions and health costs and our workforce, and therefore we must maintain a strong base of contributors to the Social Security scheme, to the building out of this country, to keep our promises to our elders, and indeed, for our

children to have a place that they can live in and hope to grow old in.

“Free movement among these four countries is therefore not the only answer, but it does go hand in hand with the other work that we are already doing to support our population strategy,” she added.

She also dismissed the notion that incoming workers would be exploited, saying the existing minimum wage regime “which we settled a few years ago, will apply equally to those workers who come to Barbados under the full free movement...”

“We are in the process also of expanding the human resource capacity of the Labour Department in order to effectively manage our current situation, as well as our expected growth, and to be able to appropriately police and enforce our labour laws.”

Mottley said that freedom of movement does not remove the need for persons moving into a country to comply with the legal requirements.

“The professional services registrations must still be followed. Lawyers, for example, will still need a valid

practising certificate as with any profession that is regulated by legislation. It is not a one-way arrangement that benefits others and leaves Barbadians behind.”

Mottley said that the move towards full free movement is “not a sudden leap into the unknown.

“It is measured. It is managed. It is ours. My friends, in a world where many are building walls, the Caribbean must build bridges. We must never become what we say we despise. We must not allow fear and insecurity to define us. Barbados has led with courage and conviction on climate justice, on fair access to finance, on the dignity of small states, and, my friends, on the protection of migrants.

“In this moment, we lead again with the steady work of implementation. We are not naive. We are not careless. We are not unprepared. We are careful and compassionate. We will measure, we will review. And my friends, we will adjust where necessary. We do not expect perfection at the outset. This is how responsible nations govern. Let us look beyond rumour and beyond rhetoric,” Mottley said. (CMC)

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Regional News

New Regional Tourism Task Force to host first meeting in Jamaica

Jamaica will later this year host the first meeting of the newly formed Regional Tourism Task Force.

The task force, officially established by the Council of Ministers and Commissioners of Tourism, will focus on strengthening tourism's connections with other economic sectors, including agriculture, transportation, education, manufacturing, and the creative economy.

It marks a move towards a supply-side approach to tourism development—one that looks beyond visitor arrivals to how the region can produce and deliver more of what the industry consumes, locally and efficiently.

Speaking on the matter during his address at the State of the Tourism Industry Conference (SOTIC) on Wednesday, Barbados' Minister of Tourism, Ian Gooding-Edghill, outlined key pillars of a new strategy to build a more sustainable, interconnected, and future-ready tourism industry across the region.

"We are answering the call with purpose. We are aligning our tourism strategy with the principles of sustainability, innovation, and inclusivity," said Gooding-Edghill.

"We can no longer afford to pursue tourism as business as usual. We must become smarter, more resilient, and more regenerative."

The task force is part of the broader Reimagined Caribbean Tourism Plan, launched earlier this year by the Caribbean Tourism Organization (CTO).

The plan calls for tourism that is not just profitable, but purpose-driven and deeply rooted in the lived experiences of Caribbean people.

Too often in the past, Gooding-Edghill, who is also Chairman of the CTO, said regional strategies have been discussed but not implemented.



He made clear that this new sub-committee must break that cycle.

"This is a regional industry. The challenges we face—whether climate change, cruise industry renewal, or workforce deployment—are shared across our borders. So our solutions must be shared as well."

Meanwhile, Gooding-Edghill, also in his address, argued that the Caribbean needs a more sustainable and inclusive approach to tourism growth, one that is grounded in data, community benefit, and long-term value.

"Are we measuring and maximising the true economic impact of tourism? Are communities benefiting equitably? We must go beyond sun, sea, and sand. The Caribbean brand is also about our people, our peace, our culture, and our creativity," he said, while growth figures seen last year.

He indicated that in 2024, the Caribbean saw growth in stay-over visitors, welcoming over 34 million.

Global tourism also saw a sharp rebound, with 1.5 billion international

arrivals and US\$2 trillion in export revenues in 2024.

This buoyancy helped drive regional gains.

US–Caribbean airlift grew by five per cent, driven by expanded routes from major carriers like American Airlines, United, and JetBlue.

Cruise arrivals surged, with scheduled cruise calls up seven per cent in 2025.

Gooding-Edghill stated that while these gains are to be celebrated, it must also be noted that recovery alone is not enough.

He argued that what's needed are more sustainable and inclusive approaches that will better drive long-term growth, underscoring the need for not only volume but value.

The conference is being held under the theme Reimagining Caribbean Tourism: Research, Relevance, and the Road Ahead and is being attended by 400 delegates from across the Caribbean.

It is taking place from September 30 to October 3. (Jamaica Gleaner)

Hurricane Imelda pummels Bermuda as airport, schools and government offices close

Hurricane Imelda lashed Bermuda as a Category 2 storm late Wednesday as officials locked up the tiny British territory.

Heavy winds and rain that began pummeling the island on Wednesday afternoon were expected to continue through Thursday, with the eye of the storm forecast to pass near Bermuda overnight.

A hurricane warning was in effect for Bermuda, a wealthy overseas territory with strong structures that have withstood powerful storms in previous years.

Imelda was located about 100 miles (160 kilometres) west-southwest of Bermuda. It had maximum sustained winds of 100 mph (155 kph) and was moving east-northeast at 24 mph (39 kph), according to the US National Hurricane Center in Miami.

"This is a dangerous storm system that could bring destructive winds, heavy rainfall and significant coastal impacts," said Michael Weeks, Bermuda's national security minister.

Bermuda closed its public schools, government offices and international airport on Wednesday as it deployed 100 soldiers to secure infrastructure, clear roads and help at emergency shelters ahead of the storm.

Imelda is expected to drop up to four inches (10 centimetres) of rain across Bermuda and produce a dangerous storm surge that forecasters say could unleash flooding.

Hundreds of customers



were without power ahead of the storm.

The National Hurricane Center warned that the strongest winds may occur early Thursday morning after the center has passed Bermuda.

Earlier in the week, Imelda battered the northern Caribbean, unleashing widespread flooding in eastern Cuba, where two people died.

In the province of Guantánamo, more than 18,000 people were evacuated, while in Santiago de Cuba, flooding and landslides cut off access to 17 communities where more than 24,000 people live, according to state reports.

On Wednesday, more than 3,500 people remained evacuated in Guantánamo while crews began to repair damaged roads and bridges in the area.

Meanwhile, authorities in Haiti said that one person is missing and two were injured following heavy flooding in the country's southwest and northwest regions.

Hurricane Humberto, which had been racing ahead of Imelda, dissipated on

Wednesday after passing west of Bermuda on Tuesday. Its remnants were named Storm Amy by UK forecasters, who warned it would affect much of Ireland and the UK starting on Friday.

Imelda and Humberto's remnants were generating dangerous surf and deadly rip currents affecting beaches along the north Caribbean, Bahamas, Bermuda and much of the US East Coast. At least five unoccupied houses along North Carolina's Outer Banks collapsed into the ocean on Tuesday, according to the US National Park Service, marking the latest private beachfront structures to fall into the surf there in recent years.

This Atlantic hurricane season marks the first time in 10 years that a hurricane hasn't made landfall in the US through the end of September, according to AccuWeather, a private US weather forecasting company.

"This hurricane season so far is quite unique, with several close calls for the United States," said Alex DaSilva, AccuWeather's lead hurricane expert.

Only Tropical Storm Chantal made landfall in the US earlier this year.

He noted that Humberto pulled Imelda away from the US East Coast in what's known as the Fujiwhara Effect, a rare phenomenon in the Atlantic in which two storms are so close together that they start rotating counterclockwise around each other.

Humberto and Imelda were a mere 467 miles (751 kilometres) apart earlier this week, the closest distance recorded between two Atlantic hurricanes since 1853, according to Michael Lowry, a hurricane specialist and storm surge expert.

While the Atlantic hurricane season is winding down, DaSilva urged people to remain alert.

"We expect atmospheric conditions that could support tropical storms and hurricanes well into late October and November this year," he said.

Imelda reached hurricane strength on Tuesday, becoming the Atlantic season's fourth hurricane this year.

The U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration had predicted an above-normal season with 13 to 18 named storms. Of those, five to nine were forecast to become hurricanes, including two to five major hurricanes, which pack winds of 111 mph (178 kph) or greater.

The Atlantic hurricane season runs from June 1 to November 30. (AP)

Tennessee court sets execution date for the state's only woman on death row and three male inmates

The Tennessee Supreme Court on Tuesday set execution dates for four people, including the only woman in the state on death row.

Christa Pike received the death sentence at age 18 for the 1995 torture slaying of Colleen Slemmer, who was a fellow Knoxville Job Corps student. Slemmer, 18, was stabbed and beaten by Pike and Tadaryl Shipp, Pike's boyfriend at the time, on the University of Tennessee's Agricultural campus.

They carved a pentagram into Slemmer's chest, and investigators claimed Pike took a piece of the victim's skull for a souvenir. Shipp, of Memphis, was sentenced to life in prison with the possibility of parole. Pike was also convicted in 2004 for trying to strangle a fellow inmate during a prison fight, which added 25 years to her sentence.

Pike's attorneys previously asked the state's high court to commute her sentence based on her youth and "severe mental illness at the time of her crime."

Pike suffered physical and sexual abuse and neglect as a child, according to her attorneys. She also suffered from bipolar and post-traumatic stress disorders that were not diagnosed until years after her arrest.

"With time and treatment ... Christa has become a thoughtful woman with deep remorse for her crime," a Wednesday statement from her attorneys reads.

Tennessee began a new round of executions in May after a three-year pause following the discovery that the state was not properly testing lethal injection drugs for purity and potency.

An independent review later found that none of the drugs prepared for the



seven inmates executed in Tennessee since 2018 had been fully tested. The state Attorney General's Office also conceded in court that two of the people most responsible for overseeing Tennessee's lethal injection drugs "incorrectly testified" under oath that officials were testing the chemicals as required.

Kelley Henry, a federal public defender who represents several death row inmates, said on Wednesday that the state still has not answered many questions about the last execution where Byron Black said he was "hurting so bad" while he lay on the gurney. Black's autopsy found pulmonary edema, a condition of fluid in the lungs his attorneys have said would feel like drowning or suffocating.

"We will continue to fight to bring the truth of what happened to light before these executions move forward to protect our clients from being tortured the way Byron was," Henry said.

The court on Tuesday also set execution dates for Tony Carruthers, Gary Sutton and Anthony Hines.

Carruthers was convicted in 1996 of robbing and killing Marcellos Anderson, 21, Frederick Tucker, 17, and Anderson's mother, Delois Anderson, 43, in 1994. Authorities said Marcellos Anderson was a drug dealer, and Carruthers was trying to take over the illegal drug trade in their Memphis neighbourhood. Carruthers was forced to represent himself at trial after repeatedly complaining about court-appointed attorneys and threatening to harm several of them.

Hines was convicted of the fatal stabbing of Katherine Jean Jenkins, 54, a motel maid in Kingston Springs in 1985.

Sutton was sentenced to death for the 1992 shotgun slaying of Tommy Griffin, 24, after he had already been convicted of the murder of Griffin's sister, Connie Branam, whose body was discovered in her burned vehicle.

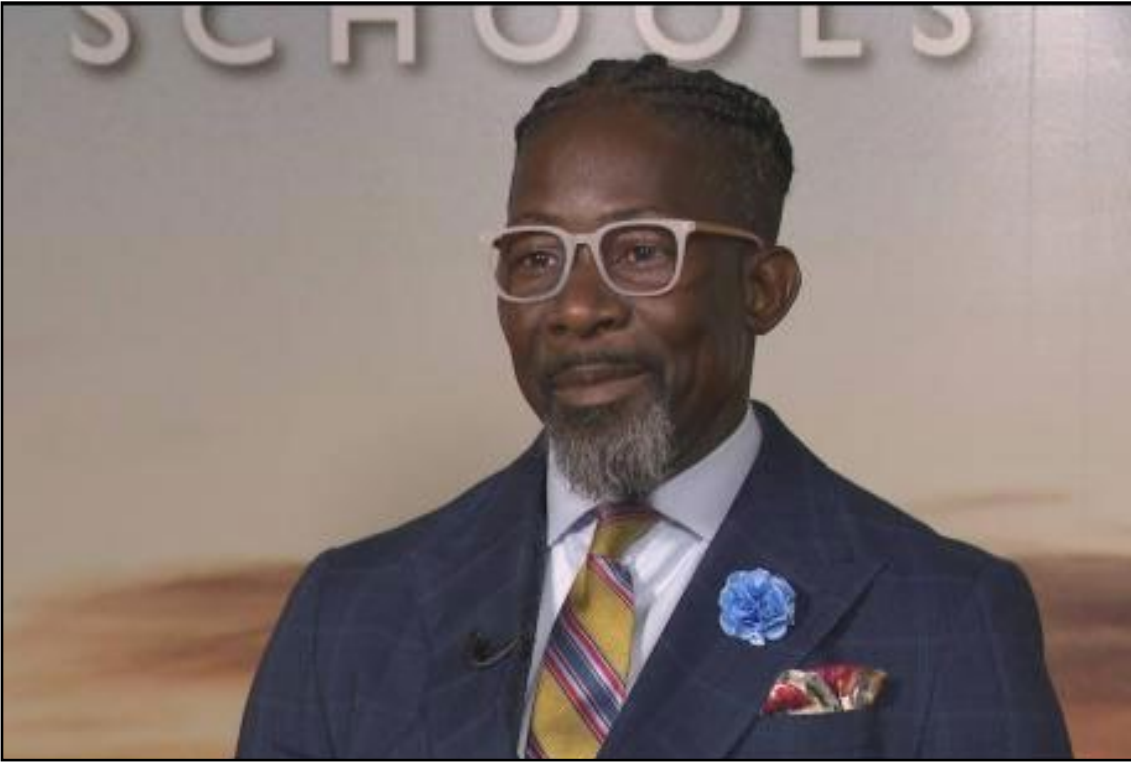
Sutton continues to plead his innocence. A statement from his attorneys notes that, "The scientific evidence linking Gary to the case is from disgraced state medical examiner Charles Harlan who was later stripped of his licence."

Griffin was Sutton's friend, and "there is no motive for the crime and no direct evidence linking Gary to the murder," according to the statement.

Harold Nichols, 64, is also scheduled to be executed in Tennessee by an order from earlier this year. Nichols was convicted of rape and first-degree felony murder in the 1988 death of Karen Pulley in Hamilton County.

The execution of Donald Middlebrooks is stayed pending the resolution of a federal court case challenging Tennessee's execution protocols. (AP)

Iowa district hired superintendent despite false Morgan State doctorate claim on his resume



The superintendent of Iowa's largest school district, who was detained last week by immigration agents, falsely claimed a doctoral degree when applying for the job two years ago but was hired even after the school board learned about the misrepresentation.

Ian Roberts, who immigration authorities say was living and working in the US illegally and who resigned this week as Des Moines' superintendent of schools, claimed in his 2023 application that he received a doctorate in urban educational leadership from Morgan State University in 2007, according to documents The Associated Press obtained through a public records request.

Although Roberts was enrolled in that doctorate programme from 2002 to 2007,

the school's public relations office confirmed in an email that he didn't receive that degree. It declined to say which degree requirements he hadn't met.

The Des Moines school board learned before hiring Roberts that he hadn't received the degree, but it still chose him to lead the district, which serves about 30,000 students.

"As part of the background check process that was done at the time, it indicated that he did not complete -- he began but did not complete a degree from Morgan State," district spokesman Phil Roeder told the AP.

The background check was conducted by a third party and is not a public record, Roeder said.

On Wednesday evening the board released a statement

saying Roberts provided a resume to a consulting company in which he indicated he had earned a doctorate from Morgan State, but that the search firm later flagged that he hadn't completed his dissertation.

A revised resume showing Roberts didn't receive the doctorate from Morgan was provided to the board, the statement said. After his hiring the district sought documents from the consultant, which provided the original resume and not the revised one.

"The Des Moines School Board is also a victim of deception by Dr Roberts, one on a growing list that includes our students and teachers, our parents and community, our elected officials and Iowa's Board of Educational Examiners, and others," board chair Jackie

Norris said in the statement.

Roberts, who is challenging the order to deport him to his native Guyana, remained jailed Wednesday in Sioux City, about 150 miles (240 kilometres) northwest of Des Moines. When asked to comment on Roberts' false application claim, his attorney, Alfredo Parrish, said he was looking into the matter and would discuss it with his client.

The job profile in the web archive of JG Consulting, a firm the district hired to assist in its 2023 superintendent search, said applicants must have a master's degree and at least 30 hours of graduate work in administration. Roberts appears to have met those requirements.

In his application materials, Roberts also wrote that he had a doctorate in educational leadership from "Trident American University" obtained in 2021. Roeder said the board's background check confirmed that Roberts did receive that degree from that online school, though it is called Trident University International. A school official declined to comment.

The false claim on Roberts' resume might not have been legally disqualifying, but it may have raised concerns about his integrity, education administration experts said.

"That's a pretty big discrepancy," said Sadika Jubo, managing partner of the School Liability Expert Group, a New Jersey firm

International

AROUND THE WORLD



that provides expert witnesses. “I think red flags would go up for the district. ... If they are making misrepresentations on their CV, is this a person of moral character? They are going to be in charge of the district, money, funds, people’s lives. Is this someone that we want to hire?”

When detaining Roberts, US Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents cited a final removal order issued last year and an unspecified past weapons charge. Since his detention, a state board has stripped Roberts’ licence to be superintendent and the Des Moines school board has voted to accept his letter of resignation, which Parrish wrote on Roberts’ behalf.

According to Parrish, Roberts was under the impression from a prior attorney that his immigration case was “resolved successfully. Parrish’s law firm has filed a request to stay Roberts’ deportation with an immigration court in Omaha, Nebraska. He described a “very complex case” that will take time to investigate but acknowledged Roberts could face deportation at any moment.

Parrish confirmed that his client was born in Guyana, but he didn’t say whether Roberts had ever applied for US citizenship or le-

gal permanent residency, if or when he was authorised to work in the US, or what happened during removal proceedings that resulted in a final order of removal last year.

Roberts, who ran in the Olympics for Guyana, had two decades of experience working as an educator and education professional across the country. He has long used the doctorate title.

Roberts’ biography on the Des Moines school district’s website touted a doctorate in urban educational leadership from Trident, misidentifying the degree, with no mention of Morgan State.

Trident, acquired by American InterContinental University in 2020, is a for-profit university that offers online degree programmes.

The AP confirmed some of the other degrees and places of employment listed on Roberts’ resume, including his undergraduate degree from Coppin State University in 1998 and master’s degree from St John’s University in 2000. Georgetown University did not respond to emails seeking comment about Roberts’ 2013 master’s degree.

His employment as a superintendent at Millcreek Township School District in Erie, Pennsylvania; a network superintendent at St

Louis Public Schools; and a principal and teacher at Baltimore City Public Schools was confirmed by each school district.

Aspire Public Schools, a charter school system in California, said it doesn’t comment on past or present personnel. A federal grant application submitted by Aspire in 2019 named Roberts as chief schools officer, as does his resume.

District of Columbia Public Schools did not respond to a public records request about his employment there.

After he got the Des Moines job but before his term began, Roberts was at the centre of a costly personnel settlement involving his treatment of a key subordinate and longtime colleague. It was intended to be kept secret.

The former director of human resources for the Millcreek Township School District, Melody Ellington, claimed that she faced unspecified unlawful treatment after she was hired by and worked for Roberts from July 1, 2021, through September 30, 2022.

The two previously worked together in St Louis public schools from 2015 to 2018, where Ellington was budget director and Roberts was a network superintendent.

A settlement agreement states that Ellington claimed she was unfairly pushed out of her job and that she had “threatened litigation,” while district administrators denied wrongdoing. The district agreed in late June 2023 to pay Ellington \$250,000 as part of an agreement requiring that she, Roberts and other officials would not disparage each other. Roberts started the Des Moines job on July 1.

Ellington and her lawyer didn’t respond to messages seeking comment on the settlement, which had a non-disclosure provision but was obtained by the Erie Times-News in late July 2023 through the public records law.

At the time, Roberts told the Des Moines Register that he couldn’t comment on the settlement but noted it wasn’t the reason he left Millcreek and accepted the Des Moines job. He said the school board “felt it was in the school district’s interest to approve the settlement,” according to the Register’s reporting.

The Des Moines school board chair at the time, Terree Caldwell-Johnson, said the board did not know about the settlement during his hiring because it only became public afterward. (AP)



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Dozens feared dead in Indonesia school collapse, officials say



There are “no signs of life” under the wreckage of a collapsed Indonesian school where 59 people are still missing, rescuers have said.

Hundreds of students, most of them teenage boys, were inside the two-storey Islamic boarding school in the town of Sidoarjo when it collapsed on Monday. At least five students were killed and about 100 injured, officials said.

Thirteen people have been freed from the debris since rescue efforts began, though two later died in hospital. Rescue operations had been challenging due to the unstable structure of the building.

On Thursday, the disaster mitigation agency (BNBP) said rescuers using thermal drones failed to detect signs of life from the rubble.

“Last night, we even [cleared] the area to ensure silence. [We] hoped that with the use of sophisticated equipment... we might hear some signs of life,” Lt

Gen Suharyanto, the head of the BNBP said at a press conference on Thursday afternoon.

“Scientifically, no signs of life were found.”

He added that the team had decided to move on to the “next phase” of operations - using heavy equipment to move slabs of concrete. These debris blocks will either be lifted using cranes or cut into smaller pieces.

Rescuers had not been able to do this earlier as there were fears it could lead the building to collapse further, risking the lives of any possible survivors.

Authorities had on Wednesday said crying and shouting could still be heard from under the rubble.

Anxious families are waiting at the school, many of them tearful but holding out hope that their loved ones are still alive.

“I am hoping for the best news, that my brother survives,” said Maulana

Bayu Rizky Pratama, whose 17-year-old brother is missing, told AFP news agency.

“I hope my brother will be found soon. I feel sad thinking of him being down there for four days.”

Ahmad Ikhsan, 52, told Reuters: “I believe my son is still alive.”

The BNBP said on Wednesday that 59 people were still trapped in the rubble, though this figure has fluctuated greatly over the past few days, with Suharyanto earlier saying that data would always be “conflicting” in the “early stages” of a disaster.

The building was under construction when it collapsed, with two extra floors being added. The BNBP later said that the building’s unstable foundation meant it could not support this weight.

Sidoarjo town’s regent says the school’s management had not obtained permits to add more floors to the building. (BBC)

Sports News

BOE extends unbeaten run in Business Basketball League

The Board of Education (BOE) extended their unbeaten run 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 fifth win in as many encounters with a 103-40 victory against Police in the second game of a triple-header at the JSC Sports Complex.

Danny Perez produced 25 points, seven rebounds, and five assists; Daniel Perez contributed 16 points and four steals; Erije Joseph had 14 points and five assists; Errol Henry converted 11 points; Adonis Humphreys

sank 10 points and grabbed 10 rebounds; and Noah Massiah scored 10 points and claimed five rebounds for the Board of Education.

Javon Simon scored 13 points for Police, who suffered their third loss in as many games.

After losing their previous three matches, the Sir Lester Bird Medical Centre recorded their first win in four encounters by pulling off a 50-43 victory against Antigua Computer Technology in Wednesday night's opening game.

Forward Demeitre Leitch converted 13 points and grabbed 12 rebounds, and veteran point guard Nigel Joseph chipped in with 11

points, six rebounds, and four assists for Sir Lester Bird Medical Centre.

Hansel Piper sank 11 points for Antigua Computer Technology, who suffered their fourth loss in as many games.

The Antigua Power Company secured their second win in three matches by snatching a narrow 56-51 victory over the Sledge O Ballers in the last game of Wednesday's triple-header.

Ammiel Williams scored 18 points and distributed four assists, and Akeem Davis produced 11 points, four assists, and four steals for the Antigua Power Company.

Terry Roberts produced 13 points, five rebounds, and four assists, and Morlon Davis chipped in with 11 points, 15 rebounds, and four blocks for the Sledge O Ballers, who lost for the third time in five matches.

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

Anjo Wholesale will face the Sledge O Ballers at 6:45 pm, Sir Lester Bird Medical Centre will meet Richie's Shooterz at 7:45 pm, and Sandals will clash with the Antigua and Barbuda Transport Board at 8:45 pm.



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India take control on Day 1 of first Test against Windies

GUJARAT (Reuters) - India seamers Mohammed Siraj and Jasprit Bumrah ripped through the West Indies line-up to claim seven wickets between them and dismiss the tourists for 162 before the hosts reached 121 for two at the close of the opening day of the first Test in Ahmedabad, India, on Thursday.

Opener KL Rahul (53) and captain Shubman Gill (18) were at the crease when stumps were drawn at the Narendra Modi Stadium, with India trailing by 41 runs following a brief interruption due to fading light and rain.

Yashasvi Jaiswal had looked to make up for his sedate start by smashing seven fours after that 22-minute delay, but the left-hander fell for 36 by edging Jayden Seales behind the wicket, while Sai Sudharsan perished tamely for seven.

A bout of cramp in his left hamstring notwithstanding, Rahul helped India remain in control by reaching his 20th half-century in front of a sparse crowd, helping to lay the platform for a big first-innings score.

Roston Chase (24), Shai Hope (26) and Justin Greaves (32) all got starts earlier, but the hosts gained the upper hand to put a dent in the West Indies' hopes of claiming a first Test win in India since 1994, when the



India's Mohammed Siraj, center, celebrates with teammates after the dismissal of West Indies' Brandon King on the first day of the first Test at Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad, India, Thursday, Oct. 2, 2025. (AP)

series was drawn 1-1.

The West Indies were rocked by India's pace bowlers early on after Chase won the toss and opted to bat first, with Tagenarine Chanderpaul gloving one from Siraj (four for 40) to wicketkeeper Dhruv Jurel and falling for an 11-ball duck on his test return.

John Campbell was then caught behind off Bumrah (three for 42) for eight following a review by India, joining his opening partner in the dressing room and leaving West Indies in big trouble at 20 for two on a moisture-heavy pitch that assisted the bowlers.

After a good start to his innings, Brandon King (13) paid a heavy price for a poor leave when Siraj got

a ball to come back in and crash into the wickets, before Alick Athanaze (12) edged the paceman to Rahul at second slip.

Kuldeep Yadav (two for 25) marked his selection as India's third spin bowler alongside Ravindra Jadeja and Washington Sundar by castling Hope at the stroke of lunch to end his fighting stand of 48 with Chase.

Siraj returned after the break to remove the West Indies captain with a superb swinging delivery that took the outside edge, before debutant Khary Pierre was trapped in front by Washington for 11.

Bumrah bowled out Greaves and Johann Layne (1) to take his 50th wicket at home, before Kuldeep

marked his first test start in nearly a year by getting rid of Jomel Warrican for eight to complete the job.

Thrashed 3-0 by Australia on home soil in July, the West Indies are missing injured seamers Shamar Joseph and Alzarri Joseph on their first tour of India in seven years.

India are playing their first test at home under new captain Gill after the retirements of veterans Rohit Sharma, Virat Kohli and Ravichandran Ashwin.

They are looking to sweep the current two-match series and banish memories of their previous home assignment when they were hammered 3-0 by New Zealand late last year.

Sports News

Infantino urges soccer to promote peace and takes no action against Israel



President of the Federation Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) Gianni Infantino speaks at the Global Citizen Awards ceremony, Wednesday, Sept. 24, 2025, in New York. (AP)

GENEVA (AP) — Facing growing global calls to suspend Israeli teams from soccer, FIFA president Gianni Infantino said on Thursday the governing body must promote peace and unity and could not solve political issues.

In a febrile period for soccer politics, Infantino led a meeting of FIFA's ruling council which did not have Israel formally on the agenda before 2026 World Cup qualifying games resume next week.

The strongest push against Israeli teams by European soccer leaders during the two-year conflict in Gaza was paused after a peace proposal on Monday

in the White House by US President Donald Trump and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

Infantino stressed to his 37-member council "the importance of promoting peace and unity, particularly in the context of the ongoing situation in Gaza," FIFA said in a news release that did not refer directly to Israel.

"FIFA cannot solve geopolitical problems," Infantino said in the statement, "but it can and must promote football around the world by harnessing its unifying, educational, cultural and humanitarian values."

FIFA did not schedule a news conference and Infan-

tino was not made available for interviews. The Israel men's team should now travel to play World Cup qualifiers against Norway in Oslo on Oct. 11 and Italy in Udine three days later.

Norway was among European soccer federations urging UEFA to call a vote of its executive committee ahead of the FIFA meeting in Zurich on suspending Israeli teams from international competitions. Turkey's soccer body directly called on UEFA and FIFA to suspend Israel.

Any vote of the 20-member UEFA panel seemed likely to pass, people familiar with the discussions told The Associated Press,

despite opposition from members from Israel and Germany.

FIFA and Infantino — who has built close ties to Trump ahead of the US co-hosting the World Cup next year with Canada and Mexico — were never likely to follow any UEFA vote. That prospect became even more distant last week when the US State Department said it would work to protect Israel's status in soccer.

The Trump-Netanyahu peace proposal on Monday also was quickly welcomed by governments in the Middle East including Qatar, a key supporter of the Palestinian people and which has close ties to UEFA and its president Aleksander Ceferin.

The FIFA meeting on Thursday was attended by Ceferin and the head of the group of European soccer clubs, Nasser al-Khelaifi, who is president of Paris Saint-Germain, the Qatar-owned Champions League titleholder. Al-Khelaifi also is a member of Qatar's government.

The head of the Palestinian soccer federation, Jibril Rajoub, also has been in Switzerland this week and met on Thursday with International Olympic Committee president Kirsty Coventry.

Bangladesh beat Pakistan at ICC Women's World Cup



Bangladesh's Shorna Akter, center, celebrates the wicket of Pakistan's Natalia Parvaiz during the ICC Women's Cricket World Cup match between Bangladesh and Pakistan in Colombo, Sri Lanka, Thursday, Oct. 2, 2025. (AP)

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka (AP) — Bangladesh spun out Pakistan for 129 and notched a memorable seven-wicket victory at the ICC Women's Cricket World Cup in Sri Lanka on Thursday.

Rubya Haider made a dream ODI debut for Bangladesh, in the World Cup no less, when her unbeaten 54 with eight fours anchored their chase to 131 for three in 31.3 overs for only their second victory in the tournament's history.

Bangladesh's only previous win was also against Pakistan at the last 50-over Women's World Cup in 2022 in New Zealand. Rubya used her feet well against the Pakistan spinners.

Fast bowler Diana Beg didn't allow Bangladesh to score freely with the new ball and trapped Fargana Hoque lbw in her second over. Rameen Shamim also claimed Sharmin Akhter

leg before in the 12th over.

But Rubya dominated the spinners with impeccable drives and reverse sweeps. She shared 62 runs with captain Nigar Sultana (23) and sealed the win with Sobhana Mostary, who was 24 not out, all from boundaries in 19 balls.

On a perfect batting pitch, Pakistan was squeezed by Bangladesh's five spinners, who combined for eight wickets.

The 20-year-old fast bowler Marufa Akter swung the new ball well and clean-bowled Omaina Sohail and inform batter Sidra Amin without scoring in her first over.

Amin, who scored back-to-back ODI centuries against South Africa at home, was out for a golden duck for the first time in her ODI career when

she chopped on. Pakistan never recovered from those two early jolts.

Left-arm spinner Nahida Akter took two for 19 and the 18-year-old Shorna Akter ran through the tail and took career-best figures of three wickets for five runs in 3.3 overs.

Shorna bowled three successive maiden overs before the bizarre dismissal of Nashra Sandhu, who got hit wicket when she left the ball but struck the stumps as she tried to bring her bat down.

Shamim was the top scorer with 23 as Pakistan was bowled out in 38.3 overs.

Pakistan will play all seven of their group games in Colombo. A semi-final and the final will also take place in the Sri Lanka capital if Pakistan make it that far.

Sports

FRIDAY 3RD OCTOBER 2025

POINT EXPRESS
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PMS and HCABSCE reach final in school boys' knockout contest



The Princess Margaret School girls football team

The Princess Margaret School (PMS) and the Harrison Centre Antigua and Barbuda School of Continuing Education (HCABSCE) have advanced to the final in the boys' division of the 2025 Ministry of Sports, Cool and Smooth, Joma Secondary Schools Football Knockout Championship.

Both teams booked their spots in the championship decider by securing wins in the semi-finals at the ABFA Technical Center at Paynters on Wednesday.

Princess Margaret School snatched a 2-1 victory against Antigua Grammar

School in the first semi-final. Sequan Shay had a 19th-minute conversion, and Dahvia Hughes scored in the 41st minute for Princess Margaret School.

Abediah Brown scored for Antigua Grammar School in the 51st minute.

Goals by Jermaine Allen in the 13th minute and Xarik Richards in the 45th minute gave HCABSCE a 2-0 victory against Jennings Secondary in the other semi-final.

HCABSCE and Princess Margaret School will clash in the boys' division knockout final at the ABFA Tech-

nical Center on Friday.

The boys' championship decider will be preceded by the girls' division knockout final and the official opening of the 2025 Ministry of Sports, Cool and Smooth, Joma Secondary Schools Football League Championships at 4 pm.

In the girls' division knockout competition, Antigua Girls High School and Princess Margaret School will face off in the final.

Both teams booked their spots in the championship decider by securing wins in the semi-finals at the ABFA Technical Center on Mon-

day.

Nafisha Quashie achieved the rare feat of a haul trick (seven goals in a single game) to propel Antigua Girls High School to a 10-0 drubbing of Clare Hall Secondary School in the first semi-final.

Princess Margaret School prevailed 3-0 against Ottos Comprehensive School in the other semi-final.

Seven teams contested the girls' category, while 11 teams participated in the boys' division of this year's schools' knockout competitions.