

Police cite public safety concerns for denying UPP request

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Antigua Barbuda Student Resa B. Nelson named 2026 Caribbean Rhodes Scholar

Police cite public safety concerns for denying UPP request



The Police Administration has denied a request from the United Progressive Party (UPP) to host a whistle stop activity within the Constituency of Rural East.

“The decision follows careful consideration of several operational factors, particularly the time of day proposed, which coincides with a period of heavy vehicular and pedestrian traffic, among other security issues.

“While the request for the whistle stop was declined, the Police Administration has granted permission for a motorcade to be held on Sunday, 16th November 2025, based on a prior application submitted by the party. Formal communication confirming this approval was issued to the General Secretary of the United Progressive Party on Tuesday, 11th November 2025,” a STRATCOM release indicated.

Acting Commissioner of Police Everton Jeffers stated,

“The Royal Police Force of Antigua and Barbuda remains committed in its duty to maintain law and order

while facilitating lawful public and political activities. Our decisions are guided solely by public safety considerations and the efficient use of police resources. We urge the continued cooperation of all citizens and organizations as we work together to ensure a peaceful and orderly environment for everyone.”

The Police Administration continues to operate in the best interest of every citizen and resident of Antigua and Barbuda, and remains committed to upholding the highest standards of fairness, professionalism, and integrity in the execution of its duties.



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UWI FIC expansion moves closer to construction phase



Education Minister Daryl Matthew

The long-anticipated expansion of The University of the West Indies (UWI) Five Islands Campus is one step closer to construction, with the design phase now officially complete.

Education Minister Daryl Matthew met on Tuesday with representatives from the Saudi Fund for Development, the government's development partners on the project, to review progress and next steps.

"Tuesday's meeting is really the first of about four days of sessions with the development team, the project management team, the government, and other stakeholders to get an update on where things are," Matthew explained.

Renderings for the dormitory buildings and sports complex have been finalized, while the construction drawings are expected to be completed within weeks. Once finalized, the project will be sent out for international tender.

The minister noted that construction of the new Five Islands Primary

School — which must be relocated to make room for the campus — has already begun.

According to Matthew, the new campus will feature modern and sustainable designs, including solar panels, water treatment systems, full IT integration, and accessibility features. A highlight of the development will be the School of Computing and Artificial Intelligence, aimed at embedding computer science across disciplines.

"It's a very modern campus with a modern curriculum. It will transform our country. It will transform our region. And I'm so happy that I'm alive to see this happen," the minister said.

Following the 90-day tendering process and contractor selection, construction is set to begin. Matthew emphasized that the expansion addresses the OECS region's low tertiary education attainment rate by improving access to higher education opportunities.



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Antigua and Barbuda represented at High-Level side event at COP30 in Brazil

At a high-level side event on Building Climate Resilience through Debt Reform, Infrastructure Investment, and Private Sector Action held at COP30 in Belém, Ambassador for Climate Change for Antigua and Barbuda, Ruleta Camacho Thomas delivered a strong message on behalf of the Government of Antigua and Barbuda, calling for systemic financial reform to enable Small Island Developing States (SIDS) to achieve climate-resilient prosperity.

Ambassador Camacho Thomas highlighted that for SIDS, debt is not a technical issue but an existential one.

“Despite contributing less than one percent of global emissions, small island nations remain among the most climate-vulnerable in the world. Every storm, every hurricane, every drought pushes us further into debt as we are forced to rebuild what climate impacts destroy,” she said. “Debt has become the default response to disaster, trapping our countries in a cycle where recovery is always outpaced by the next crisis.”

With over 40 percent of SIDS currently in or near debt distress, many spend more on debt servicing than on health, education, or adaptation. Ambassador Camacho Thomas emphasized that the global financial system must be redesigned to reflect climate realities and to provide fiscal space for sustainable development.



Ambassador for Climate Change for Antigua and Barbuda, Ruleta Camacho Thomas

velopment.

She explained that the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for SIDS (ABAS) – adopted as the SIDS Development Strategy for the next 10 years – sets out a clear framework to align debt reform, resilience, and sustainable growth across all small island states.

A key element of ABAS implementation is the Debt Sustainability Support Service (DSSS), established as a pillar of the Centre of Excellence for SIDS. The DSSS provides an integrated framework that links debt reform, climate resilience, and access to finance, supporting countries to:

- Implement debt swaps, restructuring, and climate-contingent clauses that create fiscal space when disasters strike;
- Build risk-layered protection systems through insurance and

reserves; and

- Channel savings from debt relief into resilient infrastructure and climate-aligned growth.

“The DSSS is not another fund,” Ambassador Camacho Thomas explained. “It is a coordination mechanism that connects existing tools, institutions, and financial flows. It transforms the way the financial system treats vulnerable economies and makes financial flows consistent with a pathway toward climate-resilient development.”

She underscored that debt sustainability and climate resilience are two sides of the same coin, and that reforms such as the DSSS are essential for SIDS to develop, grow, and achieve resilient prosperity.

Antigua and Barbuda is working with partners across SIDS, Least Developed Countries (LDCs),

and fragile states to operationalise the DSSS so as to, provide access to technical expertise, supporting fairer negotiations, and ensuring that debt relief is translated into concrete resilience investments.

Ambassador Camacho Thomas urged development banks, donors, rating agencies, and private investors to prioritise climate finance for debt and resilience reform.

“Resilience must begin with fiscal and financial stability,” she concluded. “The DSSS provides a pathway to achieve both—aligning debt reform with the fight for climate justice. For small islands, this is not about economics alone; it is about survival, dignity, and the right to a sustainable future. The DSSS offers a means to secure that future—not through charity, but through fairness and reform.”

Antiguan Student Resa B. Nelson Named 2026 Caribbean Rhodes Scholar

The announcement was this week in Barbados, following a rigorous selection process that saw nine regional finalists compete for one of the world's most prestigious academic awards.

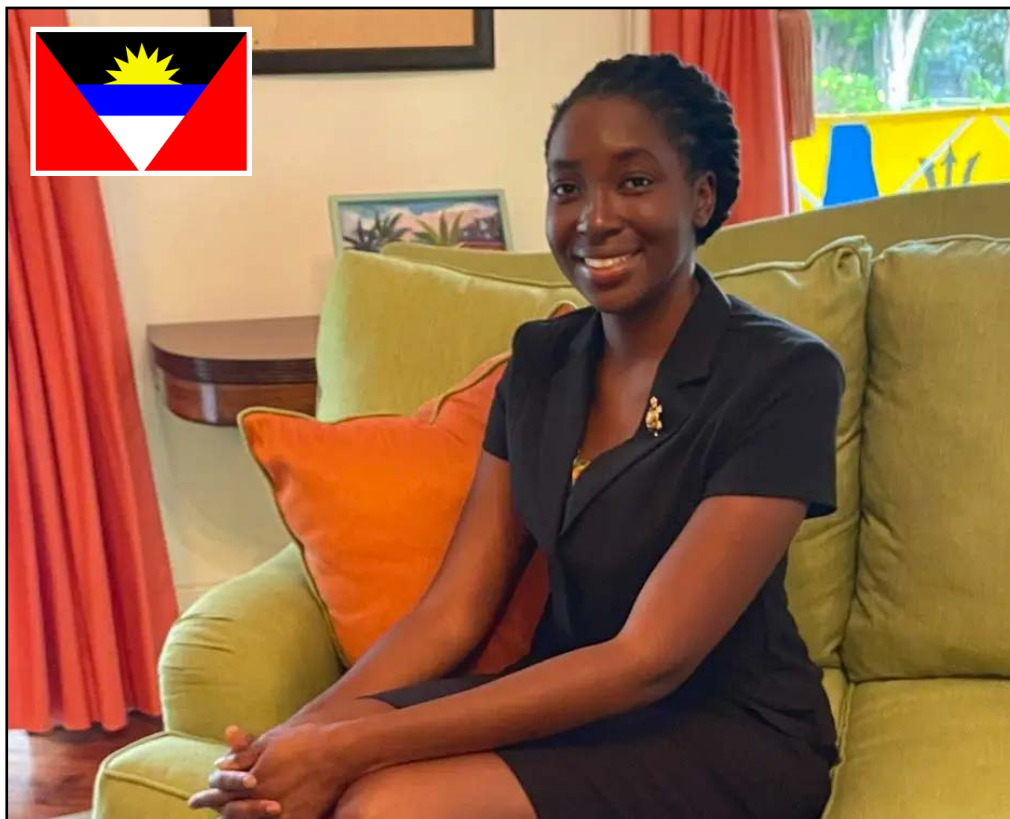
Nelson, 21, will pursue a **Master's in Biology by Research** at the University of Oxford under the scholarship. Fighting back tears, she said she was honoured to be chosen and determined to use the opportunity to serve the region.

"I want to do amazing work. I want to do work that helps the Caribbean. I want to do work that helps people," Nelson said. "There is need everywhere, and I know that I can fulfill the need, especially in the bios.

There's one Rhodes Scholar at Antigua, and I will be the second one. I want to give that representation for Afro-Caribbean people, especially in the cell world, in cell biology, and that's what I would like to do."

Meanwhile, **Barbadian finalist Lianna Williams**, the island's sole representative, described the experience as rewarding.

She outlined her vision of applying economics to shape stronger social policy for Barbados and the wider Caribbean, citing pressing issues such as youth violence, income inequality, and rising living costs.



Sratcomnews-Photo Antiguan student Resa B Nelson



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Local News

Police Officer Injured in Line of Duty

Police are investigating an incident in which a police officer and another man were injured during an altercation on Lower All Saints Road.

Reports indicate that around 9:35 p.m. on Tuesday, a member of the Police Force was in the vicinity of Sammy's Supermarket when he observed two men involved in a fight. The officer intervened, and during the process, one of the men reportedly used a broken glass bottle to stab him on the right side of his face.

In defence to the attack, the officer discharged his service firearm and shot his attacker. Both men were subsequently transported by ambulance to the Sir Lester Bird Medical Centre, where they were treated for injuries that were later deemed non-life-threatening.

The matter remains under active investigation by the Criminal Investigations Department. Further updates will be provided as the investigation progresses.



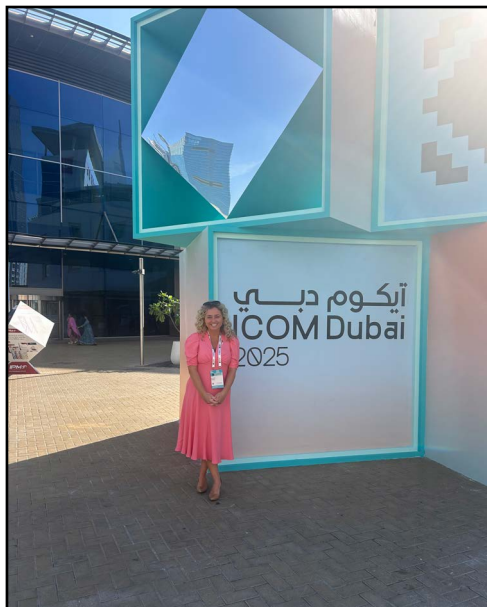
A presentation on the Government House Museum made at international conference in Dubai

Every three years, the International Council of Museums (ICOM) convenes its General Conference - a flagship global gathering that brings together museum professionals from across the world to exchange ideas and address the most pressing challenges shaping the museum sector.

The selection of Dubai as the host city for the 2025 ICOM General Conference marks a historic milestone. For the first time since ICOM's establishment in 1946, this prestigious event will be held in the Middle East, Africa, or South Asia, positioning Dubai as a global hub for cultural dialogue and innovation.

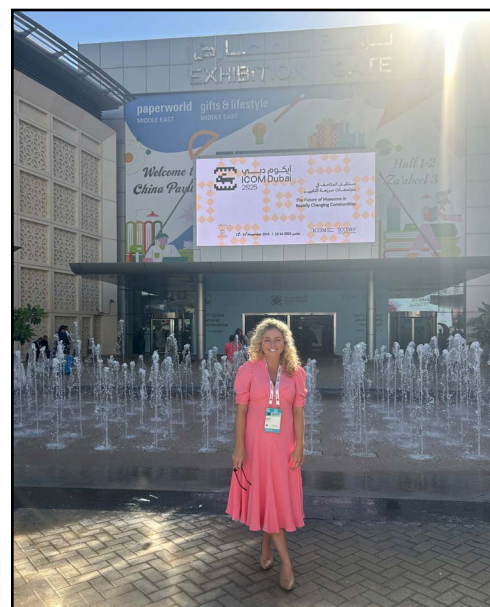
The 2025 conference will explore the theme, "The Future of Museums in Rapidly Changing Communities." This theme reflects the evolving landscape that museums and communities navigate today, emphasizing the sector's role in responding to societal transformation. Three interconnected sub-themes - safeguarding intangible heritage, empowering youth, and embracing new technologies - will frame in-depth discussions on how museums can adapt, innovate, and inspire in an era of constant change.

At this year's conference, Dr. Gabriella Howell, Director on the Board of The Heritage Trust (Antigua & Barbu-



da) Inc., presented on the forthcoming Government House Museum project. Her presentation highlighted the dual purpose of Government House - soon to reopen as both the Official Offices of the Governor-General and, for the first time, as a public museum.

This innovative hybrid model offers a compelling case study in how house museums can bear witness not only to the past but also to the dynamic political and cultural realities of the present. The project explores how the building's rich history can be curated alongside its ongoing governmental function, challenging conventional museological boundaries and inviting

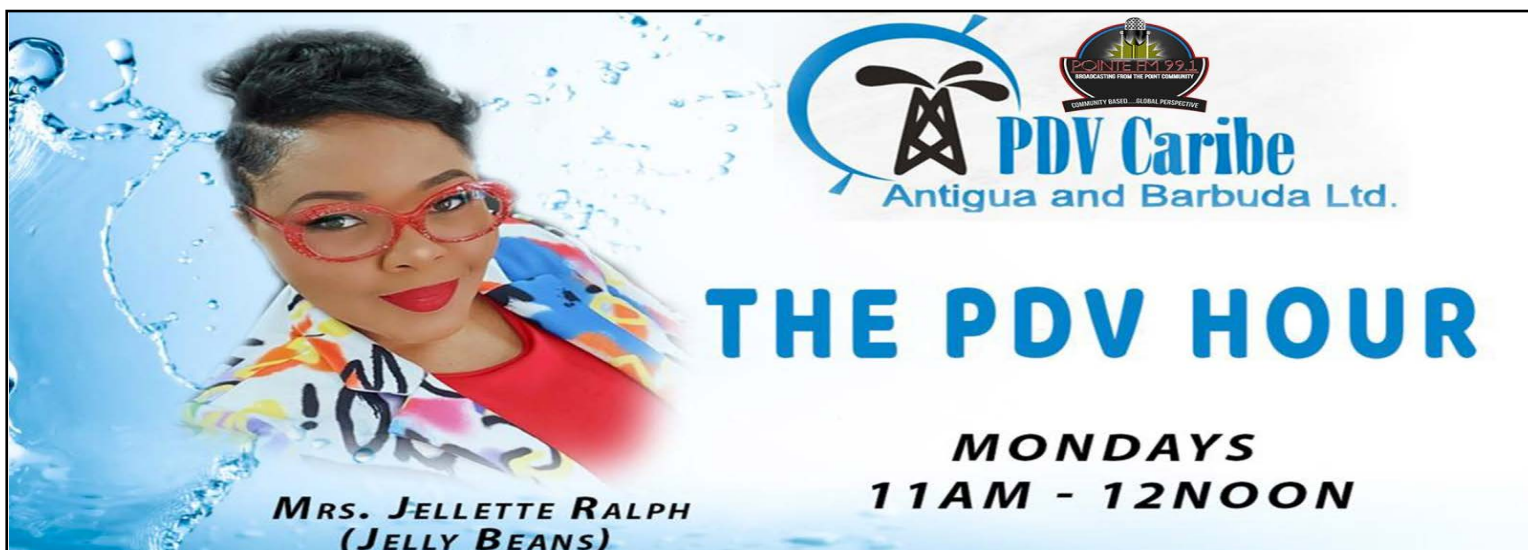


visitors to consider how contemporary narratives and colonial legacies coexist within a living heritage site.

Reflecting on the project, Dr Howell noted:

"By reimagining Government House as both a functional political space and a public-facing museum, we are crafting a new paradigm - one where the house museum becomes an active participant in shaping national identity, mediating between historical continuity and contemporary relevance."

The Government House Museum - Antigua and Barbuda - will be opening in 2026.



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Two Antiguan Interactors Represent Antigua and Barbuda at the 25th Model United Nations Assembly

The Rotary Club of Antigua (RCA) and the Rotary Club of Antigua Sundown (RCAS) each sponsored a delegate to the 25th Model United Nations (MUN) Assembly hosted by the Rotary Club of Central Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, on Saturday, 8 November 2025, under the theme of Peace and Human Rights.

Prior to their departure as delegates, Kiara Kwenga and Akemi Ducreay underwent an intensive online training over a seven-week period from September 20 to November 1, 2025, while approximately 200 students in Trinidad and Tobago received in-person training.

The RCA President Elect, Anastasia Wilson, herself a former United Nations staff member, championed Antigua's participation in this event and served as advisor and chaperone to the delegates.

The delegates from Antigua and Barbuda were randomly assigned the country of Portugal and had to research Portugal's stance on a number of Peace and Human Rights issues in order to draft and deliver oral position papers and contribute to the development of clauses for draft resolutions related to current political and economic issues in the world. Reflecting on the experience, one delegate shared, *"It was a wonderful initiative. I learned so much from the other delegates' speeches, rebuttals, articulation, their research skills and their attention to detail. My goal is to emulate them."*

The Model United Nations programme aligns with Rotary's area of focus on peacebuilding and conflict prevention. Through MUN, student delegates strengthen their understanding of international relations, enhance their research and debating skills, and learn methods of resolving conflicts peacefully, all central to Rotary's commitment to youth development and global understanding.



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The Rise of New Public Management in the Caribbean: Reform or Reinvention?



By Andrecia Lewis

During the 1980s, governments around the world began reshaping their public bureaucracies through a new philosophy known as New Public Management (NPM). This concept was Popularized by scholars like Christopher Hood (1991).

NPM marked a shift away from traditional public administration toward market-oriented management. The New Public Man-

agement framework was rooted in the "New Right" ideology, championing efficiency, competition, privatization, and a reduced role for the state. This wave of reform soon swept across the Commonwealth Caribbean, reshaping governance in nations such as Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, Barbados, and Guyana.

In developed nations like the United Kingdom and the United States, econom-

ic crises and fiscal austerity in the 1970s spurred these changes. The Caribbean's adoption, however, was driven by a mix of internal pressures and external forces, some of which included: globalization and the structural adjustment conditions imposed by international lending agencies such as the IMF and World Bank. These agencies demanded smaller, more efficient governments, privatization of state enterprises, and performance-based management, which were essentially the foundations of the NPM philosophy.

By the mid-1980s, Caribbean governments had little choice but to adapt. In Jamaica, sweeping reforms were introduced to rationalize ministries, implement performance appraisals, and contract managers on performance-based terms. Barbados followed a similar path, achieving measurable improvements in public sector efficiency. In contrast, Trinidad and Tobago's efforts were only partially implemented, hindered by entrenched bureaucratic

traditions. Guyana, facing deep economic decline and ethnic division, made only limited attempts at reform.

The success of NPM across the region depended largely on each country's political culture and economic conditions. Homogeneous societies like Barbados and Jamaica, where political consensus was easier to achieve, fared better. Plural societies such as Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana, struggled to sustain reform.

Ultimately, while NPM promised to modernize Caribbean governance, its impact was uneven. For some nations, it offered a path toward administrative efficiency and global competitiveness. For others, it exposed the enduring challenges of economic dependency and limited institutional capacity. In today's technological era, modernization necessitates the integration of digital tools to transform outdated practices into more efficient processes, thereby enhancing productivity and outcomes.



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MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, SPORTS AND CREATIVE INDUSTRIES

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

END.



LOAN APPLICATION

Application No: _____

Application Date: _____ Contact No.: _____

Home Address: _____ Email Address: _____

Registration No.: _____ Date of Business Registration: _____

Trading / Business Name: _____

Authorized Representative: _____

Gender: _____

Business Address: _____

Nature of Business: _____

Business Tax ID No.: _____

Business Type: Sole Proprietor ☐ Partnership ☐ Corporation ☐ Other _____

Business Status: Existing ☐ No. of years in operation: _____
New ☐

Loan Amount Requested: _____ **Security or Collateral to cover the loan amount:** _____

Please State Purpose for which Loan is Requested:

Applying for Concessions: Yes ☐ No ☒

Documents to be Provided with Application :

- ☐ Business Registration/ Certificate of Incorporation
- ☐ Articles of Association /By-Laws
- ☐ Business License
- ☐ Business Plan with financial projection
- ☐ Business Financial Statements for the 2 previous years (*existing companies only*)
- ☐ Evidence of Registration with the Inland Revenue Department
- ☐ Valid Government-issued photo ID (*passport, driver's license, electoral, social security, MBS cards*)
- ☐ Proof of Address (*utility bills not older than 3 months, driver's license*)
- ☐ Minimum 1 financial reference
- ☐ Character Reference Letter
- ☐ Invoice/ Estimate

Additional documents may be required

Credit History

Have you applied for funding from a bank or other financial institution?
(please tick)

☐ Yes

☐ No

If yes, please provide the name of institution(s) and Purpose(s):

Are you currently employed? Yes ☐ No ☐

Do you have any existing loans? Yes ☐ No ☐

Amount/s outstanding: \$ _____

Purpose of loan: _____

Institution: _____

Are you or your spouse involved in any lawsuits or claims? Yes ☐ No ☐

Have you or your spouse ever had a judgement filed against you? Yes ☐ No ☐

Have you or your spouse served as a co-signer, guarantor or endorser for any financial obligation?
Yes ☐ No ☐

Source(s) of Funding:

Grants ☐

Personal Funds ☐

Bank Loan ☐

Investor ☐

Crowd Funding ☐

Other
(specify) _____

Details of Your Personal Income and Expenses:

Annual Household Income	\$	Annual Household Expenses	\$
Employment Income		Loan and/or mortgage payments	
Other Income(state source)		Lease/rental payments	
Spouse's Income		Property taxes	
Interest and dividends		Approx. total living expenses (food, utilities, clothing etc.)	
Other Income:		Other Expenses:	
Total Annual Income	\$	Total Annual Expenses	\$

Average Monthly Income: _____

Average Monthly Expenses: _____

By signing below, you are certifying that the information provided in this application is accurate and complete and that you agree to the terms and conditions set out in this application.

Terms and Conditions - by signing this application you,

- Authorize us to obtain further information about banking/credit relationships that you have or intend to establish.
- Authorize us to request, obtain and disclose information to credit grantors, any person or body who have financial relationships with you or as required under the Laws of Antigua and Barbuda.
- Authorize us to verify the information you have provided to us.
- Authorize any person or financial institution relating to this application to provide us with the relevant information.
- Will not withdraw any consent given to us as long as a business relationship exists with us including the use or disclosure of information and collections procedures.
- Agree that we reserve the right to either agree or decline to grant credit to you.
- Agree that we will assess the above information in addition to conducting due diligence to determine the eligibility of this application.
- Agree that should the loan be approved, each owner of the company is required to individually sign or personally guaranty this loan facility.

Applicant's Signature(s):

DD/MM/YY

DD/MM/YY

Regional News

Health Ministry assessing food-handling establishments following Hurricane Melissa



Health Minister Dr Christopher Tufton says food safety assessments carried out at over 5,000 critical food-handling establishments following Hurricane Melissa found just over half of them being satisfactory, while 5,661 kilogrammes of food were condemned.

Tufton told the House of Representatives on Tuesday that warehouses, cold stores, high-risk establishments such as abattoirs, butcheries, poultry farms, markets, supermarkets, restaurants, food and milk-processing plants were targeted for assessment.

He said as of November 9, approximately 5,052 food handling establishments

were assessed post Hurricane Melissa with 2,794 or 55 per cent being satisfactory, of which 100 were sited for violation.

Additionally, Tufton said large farms and food processing farms were visited and continued to be monitored to ensure that unsafe food is precluded from the country's food supply chain and to prevent the outbreak of largescale foodborne disease outbreaks.

He said food safety interventions would be strengthened in the coming weeks as greater access is gained into the communities that were marooned and unreachable. (Jamaica Gleaner)

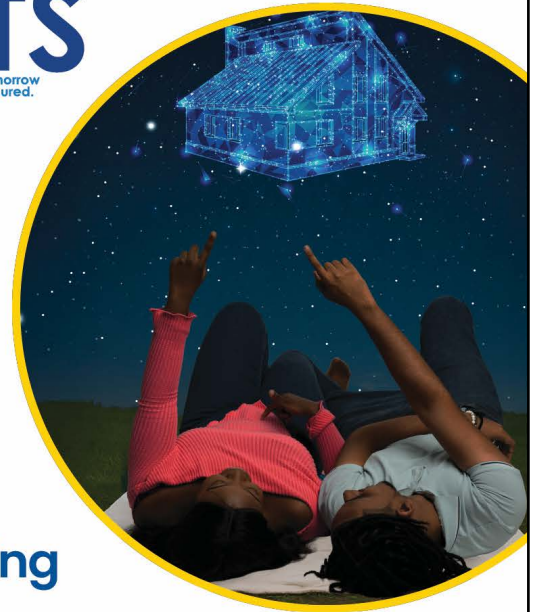


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Ambassador Benoit Bardouille appointed as Dominica's Permanent Representative to the International Maritime Organization



Former Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Dominica Air and Sea Ports Authority (DASPA), Ambassador Benoit Bardouille, has been recently appointed as Dominica's Permanent Representative to the International Maritime Organization.

"As Minister for Tourism, I am pleased to announce the appointment of Ambassador Benoit Bardouille as Dominica's Permanent Representative to the International Maritime Organization," Tourism Minister Denise Charles-Pemberton said during a statement.

According to her, this appointment ensures that Dominica continues to have a strong and experienced voice at the global level, championing the country's interest in maritime safety, ocean governance, and the sustainable development of its blue economy.

"Ambassador Bardouille brings over two decades of leadership in port management and maritime administration," she stated. "His experience will be invaluable as Dominica depends on its engagement with the IMO and strengthens its position in international maritime affairs."

She extends heartfelt congratulations

to Ambassador Bardouille and has every confidence that he will represent Dominica with distinction, dedication,

and national pride. (Dominica News Online)



VACANCY CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

The Antigua and Barbuda Airport Authority (ABAA) invites applications for the position of **Chief Executive Officer (CEO)** at the V.C. Bird International Airport (VCBIA).

ABAA is responsible for the management and operations of both V.C. Bird International Airport and Barbuda International Airport, ensuring safety, efficiency, and world-class service in compliance with international aviation standards.

Key Responsibilities:

- Provide strategic leadership and oversight to ensure alignment with the Authority's mission and vision.
- Develop and implement Board-approved policies, plans, and operational strategies.
- Ensure compliance with national, regional, and international aviation regulations and standards.
- Oversee financial performance, budgeting, and resource allocation.
- Lead airport modernisation, infrastructure, and development initiatives.
- Foster a culture of safety, accountability, and service excellence.
- Build and maintain strong relationships with government ministries, regulators, unions, and industry partners.
- Represent the Authority at local, regional, and international meetings, conferences, and forums.

Minimum Qualifications & Experience:

- Bachelor's in Business Administration, Aviation Management, Public Administration, or a related discipline
- 10-15 years of progressively responsible experience in aviation, transportation, or a comparable leadership environment.
- Proven expertise in strategic planning, financial management, and stakeholder relations.
- Completion of or active enrollment in the Airport Management Professional Accreditation Programme (AMPAP) will be considered a strong asset.
- Strong knowledge of aviation regulatory bodies (MOCA, ECCAA, ICAO).
- Demonstrated ability to lead in high-pressure and complex environments

Key Competencies:

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- Relationship management and negotiation
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 Coolidge, St. George's, Antigua
 E-mail: hr@abairportauthority.com

The deadline for receipt of applications is 28 November 2025.

Only suitable applicants will be acknowledged.

Regional News

88 emergency shelters remain open across nine parishes two weeks after Hurricane Melissa

Director General of the Office of Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Management (ODPEM), Commander Alvin Gayle, says 88 shelters remain operational across nine parishes, currently housing approximately 1,100 citizens, two weeks after the passage of Hurricane Melissa on October 28.

The hurricane displaced approximately 30,000 households and inflicted damage on more than 130,000 buildings, ranging from partial roof loss to complete structural collapse.

“Just over 182 communities have been officially recorded as having sustained damage, primarily in western Jamaica, during the brunt of



the impacts,” Gayle shared during a special press briefing on Hurricane Melissa recovery, held at Jamaica House on Tuesday.

He noted that while some individuals whose homes were damaged have chosen to remain in place, many

continue to rely on emergency shelters as the Government works to restore access and rehabilitate affected residences.

“I’m happy to report that we are in touch with more than 90 per cent of the shelters in western Jamaica,” the Director General stated.

Meanwhile, Gayle shared that the Government has distributed some 80 per cent of the approximately 45,000 tarpaulins that were received on the island for relief efforts.

These provisions will offer short-term relief to individuals with roof damage, as the Government continues efforts to implement long-term solutions for those affected by the hurricane.

Hurricane Melissa made landfall in New Hope, Westmoreland, on October 28 as a catastrophic Category 5 cyclone, leaving widespread damage across sections of Trelawny, St James, Hanover, Westmoreland, St Elizabeth, and St Ann. (Jamaica Gleaner)



AFRICA UNITE

Hosts: Dr. Christopher Ras Kimba & Luther Lee

Guests: Pastor Bloodman Ambassador Daven Joseph

Station: **Pointe FM 99.1**

Colombian military bombs suspected rebel camp, killing 19

At least 19 people have been killed in an air strike on a suspected rebel camp in Colombian province of Guaviare, according to the country's military.

The attack targeted a dissident faction of the Farc rebel group, which engages in drug trafficking.

Colombia's left-wing president, Gustavo Petro, had in the past been reluctant to use air strikes to hit rebel camps but following the breakdown of peace talks with several of Colombia's armed groups, he gave the green light for the military offensive.

The air strike comes after the Trump administration accused Petro of allowing the drugs trade to expand, which the Colombian president has denied.

Colombian Defence Minister Pedro Sánchez said that President Petro had authorised the air strike after learning of "the imminent threat [the group] posed to the population and the security forces".

Sánchez said that the camp belonged to members of a dissident group led by a commander known by the alias of Iván Mordisco.

The military says the camp belonged to an armed group led by Iván Mordisco

Mordisco once formed part of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (Farc) but broke away from the rebel group as it negotiated a peace deal with the government, which he did not support.

He is considered to be the most powerful dissident rebel leader in Colombia, whose group engages in illegal mining and extortion as well as drug trafficking.



Defence Minister Sánchez described Mordisco as "one of the most dangerous criminals and drug traffickers" in the country.

During the military operation, the security forces also detained three people and freed three children who had been recruited by the group.

The forced recruitment of children by armed groups has been on the rise in recent years in Colombia according to rights groups, which have documented how children as young as nine are kidnapped, or lured away from their parents with false promises.

After Petro, Colombia's first left-wing president, was sworn in, he opened peace talks with a number of armed groups in an attempt to make good on his campaign promise to bring "total peace" to the country.

Mordisco's group was one of those that entered into talks, but they broke down after six months when Mordisco led a walk-out.

The government blames the group for a deadly explosive attack on a military facility in the city of Cali in August.

Following that explosion, Petro described Mordisco as "a drug trafficker disguised as a revolutionary".

Petro is under pressure by the United States to combat drug trafficking.

Colombia is the world's biggest producer of cocaine and the US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent says Petro "has allowed drug cartels to flourish and refused to stop this activity".

Last month, the US government imposed financial sanctions on the Colombian president.

Petro in turn has accused the United States government of "murder" over the US strikes on boats in the Caribbean and the Pacific allegedly carrying drugs.

On Tuesday, he again expressed his opposition to the US strikes - in which at least 76 people have been killed - and ordered his government to suspend intelligence sharing with US security agencies.

In his post on X, he said that "the fight against drugs must be subordinated to the human rights of the Caribbean people". (BBC)

New Trump directive could deny more visas based on applicants' health and finances



A new directive by President Donald Trump's administration could make it more difficult for foreigners to visit or live in the United States if they have certain medical conditions such as diabetes or obesity or lack the economic resources and assets to support themselves.

The guidance, issued last week in a cable from the State Department and obtained by The Associated Press, directs embassy and consular officials to comprehensively and thoroughly vet visa applicants to demonstrate that they will not need to rely on public benefits from the government any time

after their admission in the US.

Experts say it could further limit who gets to enter the country at a time when the Republican administration is already tightening those rules.

The directive reveals how the Trump administration interprets public charge, the concept in immigration law that foreigners can be refused entry or permanent residency status if they are likely to rely on US government resources, such as certain types of cash and food aid.

While federal law already required those seeking permanent residency or legal status to prove they wouldn't

be a public charge, Trump in his first term widened the range of benefit programmes that could disqualify applicants, and the guidelines in the cable appear to go further in scope.

"This could lead to a substantial narrowing of immigration," said Julia Gelatt, associate director of the US immigration policy program at the Migration Policy Institute. "

The Trump administration is trying to go back to the policies that it worked to implement in its first term related to public charge."

Since returning to office in January, Trump has pursued a government-wide immigration crackdown that has involved tightening rules on foreigners being let into the country and those already in it. Immigration policy experts say the latest guidance could reduce the number of immigrant and non-immigrant visas granted and could disproportionately affect some groups of foreigners seeking access to the US, such as older adults and people with low incomes.

The cable was sent from State Department headquarters to every US Embassy and US Consulate around the world.

"The Trump Administration is putting the interests of the American people first," State Department spokesman Tommy Pigott said Tuesday.

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International

AROUND THE WORLD

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“This includes enforcing policies that ensure our immigration system is not a burden on the American taxpayer.”

Immigrants seeking entry into the US already undergo a medical exam by a physician who’s been approved by a US Embassy.

They are screened for communicable diseases, like tuberculosis, and asked to disclose any history of drug or alcohol use, mental health conditions or violence. They’re also required to have a number of vaccinations.

The new directive goes further with more specific requirements.

The cable says consular officials must consider a range of specific details about people seeking visas, including their age, health, family status, finances, education, skills and any past use of public assistance regardless of the country. It also says they should assess applicants’ English proficiency and can do so by conducting interviews in English.

Among the medical conditions that could disqualify a visa applicant are chronic conditions; obesity; high blood pressure; cardiovascular, metabolic and neurological diseases; depression; anxiety; and mental health conditions that can require “hundreds of thousands of dollars’ worth of care,” the cable says.

It also tells consular officials that whenever an applicant is seeking to use finances to satisfy public charge requirements, they should request to view the applicant’s bank and financial documents, evidence of their assets, checking, savings, brokerage, trust funds and retirement accounts.

Although the guidelines primarily impact people outside the United States or those seeking to renew their visas, some experts warn that they could also affect family members of people already living in the US who would like to come to visit or live with them.

Adriana Cadena, executive director at Protecting Immigrant Families, said

the policy is “dangerous” and impacts immigrant families living legally in the US.

“Its reported breadth and secrecy drive confusion and concern that deter lawfully present immigrants and US citizens in immigrant families from getting help and care for which they qualify under federal law,” Cadena said.

US officials familiar with the new guidelines said that the change applied to immigrant visas and not to non-immigrant visas known as B-2s, which allows for short-term stays that include personal visits and medical treatment.

Much discretion is left to consular of-

ficers to interpret the guidance as they see fit, immigration attorney Steven Heller said.

But he added that the guidance represents a messaging shift, from approaching visa applications in a favourable light toward considering all circumstances to find reasons to deny them.

“The new guidance is about messaging,” Heller said.

“They are being given clearance to use the ‘totality of the circumstances’ as a sword, rather than a shield.”

Fox News first reported on the cable. (AP)



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At least 42 migrants presumed dead after boat capsizes off Libya, says UN



out a rescue mission near al-Buri Oil Field on Saturday.

The rubber boat was said to have been carrying 47 men and two women. The missing include 29 Sudanese, eight Somalis, three Cameroonian nationals, and two people from Nigeria.

The IOM said it has provided urgent medical care, water and food to the survivors, who have been taken to Tripoli where they are said to be in a stable condition after suffering sunburn and skin irritation from seawater.

Libya has been a main transit point for migrants fleeing war and poverty in Africa and the Middle East. The country has plunged

into chaos following a NATO-backed uprising that toppled and killed longtime autocrat Moammar Gadhafi in 2011.

Last month, a migrant wooden boat that departed al-Zawiya in northwestern Libya capsized due to high waves, with the loss of 18 people, according to IOM. Another 64 people from Sudan, Bangladesh and Pakistan survived.

The latest shipwreck adds to the rising death toll in the Central Mediterranean, where more than 1,000 people have died since the beginning of 2025, including over 500 lost off the coast of Libya, according to the IOM's Missing Migrants Project. (AP)

At least 42 people are missing and presumed dead after a boat carrying migrants capsized off the coast of Libya last week, the UN's migration agency said on Wednesday.

Seven survivors have been located after the vessel's engine failed in high waves

at around dawn on November 3, several hours after it departed Zuwara, a coastal city in northwestern Libya, the International Organization for Migration, or IOM, said.

The survivors were stranded for six days and found after Libyan authorities carried

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LICB names Hurricane squad for regional Super50 Cup

The Leeward Islands Cricket Board (LICB) has named its 14-member squad to represent the Hurricanes in this year's Cricket West Indies (CWI) regional CG United Super50 Cup, which will take place over 11 days in Trinidad and Tobago from November 19 to 29.

Antiguan all-rounder Karima Gore had been elevated to captain the Leeward Islands Hurricane after leading the Leeward Islands Thunder to a second-place finish in this year's inaugural CWI T20 Breakout League, which was also held in Trinidad and Tobago from April 25 to May 10.

Gore takes over the captaincy from fellow Antiguan and Liberta Blackhawks teammate, all-rounder Rahkeem Cornwall, who had earlier this month announced his decision to step down as the leader of the Leeward Islands Hurricane.

Gore and Cornwall are two of seven Antiguan that have been named in the LI Hurricane squad.

Among them are opening batsman Tyrone Williams Jr., young leg-spinner Micah McKenzie, and fast bowler Ishmael Peters, all gaining their maiden selection to their senior Leeward Islands Hurricane squad.

Young wicketkeeper/batsman Jewel Andrew and attacking right-handed batsman and off-spinner Kofi James are the other Antiguan in the squad.

Another newcomer, Nevisian wicketkeeper/batsman Carlon



Karima Gore

Bowen-Tuckett, who has captained the Leeward Islands Under-19 team and is the current skipper of the Nevis senior team, has been named vice-captain of the LI Hurricanes.

Anguillan fast bowler Chamiqueko Landerfort is the other newcomer in the squad.

The other members of the LI Hurricane squad are opener Mikyle Louis, wicketkeeper/batsman Jahmar Hamilton, left-arm seamer Nathan Edwards, fast bowler Osane Thomas, and left-arm spinner Daniel Doram.

Cricket West Indies announced a restructured format for the 2025 CG United Super50 Cup against

the backdrop of a challenging financial period for the organization.

As a result, the rivalry returns with a shift from the traditional 31-match, eight-team layout to an abbreviated round-robin structure, with the top two teams qualifying directly for the final.

Trinidad & Tobago Red Force (TTRF), Barbados Pride (BP), Guyana Harpy Eagles (GHE), Jamaica Scorpions (JS), Leeward Islands Hurricanes (LIH), and Windward Islands Volcanoes (WIV) will engage in intense competition over the eleven-day period, with the West Indies Academy and Combined Campuses and Colleges (CCC) outfits being excluded for this year.

The rivalry will be highly charged, with the six franchises aiming to bring home the championship purse of US\$100,000, with US\$50,000 being awarded to the runner-up, while the 3rd-and-4th-placed teams will each take home US\$25,000.

The 50-over competition will bowl off with three matches on Wednesday, November 19.

The Leeward Islands Hurricane will take on the Windward Islands Volcanoes at the Brian Lara Cricket Academy, the Jamaica Scorpions will face the Guyana Harpy Eagles at Queen's Park Oval, and Trinidad and Tobago Red Force will meet Barbados Pride at Sir Frank Worrell Cricket Ground (UWI SPEC).

Sports News

Richie's Shooterz advance to Business Basketball League playoff finals

The third-seeded Richie's Shooterz have advanced to the playoff finals in the 2025 Cool and Smooth Antigua and Barbuda Basketball Association's (ABBA) Business League.

Richie's Shooterz, formerly Graphic Impact Shooters, which won the league and playoff titles in 2022, surged into the championship final by ousting defending playoff champions and second-seed Sandals 2-1 in their best-of-three semi-final series at

the JSC Sports Complex on Tuesday night.

Richie's Shooterz romped to a commanding 80-63 victory against Sandals in the third and decisive Game 3.

Devorn Benjamin shot a team-high 18 points, Cohen Desouza sank 17 points, and Jaleyle Joseph scored 12 points.

T-Shawn Lewis converted 18 points, Keroi Lee sank 17 points, and Selassie Brathwaite scored 15 points for Sandals, who had won

the opening game 62-53 before suffering a 52-66 loss to Richie's Shooterz in Game 2.

Richie's Shooterz advanced to face top seed and this year's league champions, Board of Education, in the best-of-three finals at the JSC Sports Complex.

The Board of Education dispatched fourth-seed and 2023 champions Antigua and Barbuda Transport Board 2-0 in their best-of-three semi-finals

playoff series.

The Board of Education will resume their quest to capture the double in this year's Business Basketball League when they clash with Richie's Shooterz in Game 1 of the play-off finals on Thursday at 7:30 pm.

Both teams will face off in Game 2 at the same time and venue on Saturday. If necessary, they will clash in a championship deciding Game 3 on Sunday.

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CPL makes donation to Jamaica's Hurricane Melissa Relief Fund



CPL T20
Caribbean Premier League

In the wake of the devastating impact of Hurricane Melissa, the Republic Bank Caribbean Premier League (CPL) has pledged a donation of US\$100,000 to support relief and rebuilding efforts across Jamaica.

This contribution will be made through the Office of the Prime Minister of Jamaica, ensuring that the funds are distributed efficiently and directed to the areas where they are most urgently needed as communities begin the long process of recovery and reconstruction.

Recognising Jamaica's vital role in both Caribbean cricket and the CPL's history, the league stands in solidarity with all those affected. Many within the CPL family – from players and coaches to staff and fans – have deep ties to Jamaica, making this initiative especially meaningful.

In addition to this donation, the

CPL will be collaborating with Chris Gayle to amplify his ongoing fundraising efforts. Through its extensive network of social media channels, media partners, and broadcast platforms, the CPL will help raise awareness globally and encourage fans to contribute to the relief initiatives that are supporting those most in need.

Pete Russell, Republic Bank CPL's CEO, said, "The people of Jamaica have always been an integral part of the CPL family – as players, fans, colleagues and friends. Seeing the devastation caused by Hurricane Melissa has deeply affected us all.

"We hope this contribution can offer some support to those rebuilding their lives, and we encourage everyone across the world to dig deep and donate what they can in helping Jamaica recover.

"We will be working with the

Jamaican authorities, our sponsors and franchise teams to continue to see what more can be done to further support Jamaica over the coming months."

Jamaica's Minister of Culture, Gender, Entertainment and Sport, the Honourable Olivia Grange, thanked the CPL for "its very kind support of Jamaica in our time of need.

"We have been hit hard. Approximately 90,000 families in western Jamaica alone were directly affected by Hurricane Melissa; and we need every support to provide relief. So we're very grateful for this contribution by the CPL towards the relief effort."

The CPL extends its heartfelt support to the people of Jamaica during this challenging time and remains committed to playing its part in the region's collective recovery

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Track to open LA Olympics in 2028

LOS ANGELES (Reuters) - The women's 100 metres final will headline the first day of competition at the Los Angeles 2028 Olympics, organizers said on Wednesday, part of a reshaped schedule that moves athletics into week one and gives swimmers the rare chance to attend the Opening Ceremony.

LA28 officials said the switch stems from venue logistics at SoFi Stadium, which will host parts of the Opening Ceremony and swimming. Athletics will be held at LA Memorial Coliseum and run first to allow time to convert SoFi for aquatics in week two.

"We want to open with a bang," said Shana Ferguson, LA28's chief of sport and games delivery, who called the women's 100m "one of the most-watched races of the Games."

Janet Evans, a four-time Olympic champion in swimming, added that placing swimming in the second week could let more swimmers join the Opening Ceremony, which many typically skip with competition starting the next morning.

"There's a component of the Olympic experience we want athletes to have at our Games," said Evans, who serves as LA28's chief athlete officer.

Ferguson said the schedule was built over months with the International Olympic Committee and international federations, factoring in athlete welfare, television windows and local conditions such as heat, tides and sun angles for outdoor events.

"Weather considerations were made not only for athletes but also



LA28 logos decorate a backdrop as First lady Jill Biden speaks at a reception at the US Chief of Mission Residence to commemorate the opening of the 2024 Summer Olympics and celebrate the upcoming 2028 Olympic Games, to be held in Los Angeles, Saturday, July 27, 2024, in Paris. (AP)

fans," she said, adding that the welfare of horses competing in equestrian events was also taken into account.

Day one will also award the first LA28 medals in the women's triathlon and feature the most women's finals ever in a single day, organizers said.

A "Super Saturday" on Day 15 is slated to include 26 medal sessions across 23 sports. LA28 expects women to comprise more than half of athlete quotas and highlighted new sports including flag football and squash, and the return of cricket, lacrosse and baseball/softball.

Ferguson said LA28 plans to sell about 14 million tickets across 51 Olympic sports at 49 venues, with public sales set to begin in April 2026 following registration in January.

Pricing is fixed and will not use dy-

namic pricing, she said, adding that organizers will outline measures to address secondary-market concerns closer to the on-sale date.

Organizers said 77% of sessions will be staged in existing venues, with 23% in temporary sites such as the Sepulveda Basin and Long Beach, with more than 90% of temporary materials to be reused or repurposed.

Softball will be held at Oklahoma City's existing facilities, a move Evans said offers "world-class" conditions and broadens the Games' reach within the United States.

LA28 officials added they are coordinating with local, state and federal authorities on visas and event delivery and have a dedicated visa assistance team to support pre-Games and Games-time travel.

Golden Grove continues to lead First Division League



Players of last season's Golden Grove football team. (File photo)

Promoted Golden Grove FC continued their impressive start to their campaign and remained leaders in the Antigua and Barbuda Football Association's (ABFA) First Division on Tuesday.

Golden Grove remain at the top of the standings with nine points after recording their third win in as many games with a 1-0 triumph over Bendals FC at the Golden Grove playing field.

Nyique Baptiste scored the only goal of the match in the 39th minute. Bendals remain on one point after suffering back-to-back losses in three matches.

Five Islands move on to

six points after claiming their second consecutive win in three matches with a 2-1 victory over newly promoted English Harbour at the English Harbour playing field.

Goals by Cordell Pelle in the 12th minute and Demario Roberts in the 28th minute gave Five Islands a two-nil lead at halftime. Clarence Marsh reduced the deficit with a 64th-minute conversion for English Harbour, who remains on three points after crashing to their second consecutive defeat in three matches.

After making a poor start to their First Division cam-

paign with back-to-back losses to Parham and Five Islands, newly promoted Cedar Grove Blue Jays claimed their first win on Tuesday.

The Blue Jays pulled off a 3-0 victory against FC Master Ballers in their third-round match at the Keithley Sheppard Recreational Park.

The goals were scored by Laurence James in the 10th and 23rd minutes and Maleke Francis in the 18th minute.

FC Master Ballers remain on four points after suffering their first loss in three matches.

Parham remains unbeaten after securing their second consecutive draw with a 1-1 stalemate with Bolans FC at the ABFA Technical Center.

Andy Daniel gave Parham a one-nil halftime lead with a 30th-minute conversion, while Javauhn Parker snatched the equalizer for Bolans FC with a strike in the 51st minute.

The result carries Parham to five points from three matches, while Bolans FC advanced to two points after salvaging their second draw in the same number of outings.