

A Moment of Silence, official funeral for Sir Gerald Watt

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A Moment of Silence, official funeral for Sir Gerald Watt

The members of the House of Representatives on Monday paid tribute to the former Speaker of the House, Sir Gerald Watt, who served in the post for just over ten years and who died last Saturday.

Current Speaker, Osbert Frederick, noted that the nation mourns the loss of ‘a giant of man’ referring to Sir Gerald’s Speakership and his service to the nation of Antigua and Barbuda for many decades.

“Sir Gerald served this country for many decades and for 10 years sat as Speaker of the House of Representatives. I invite this House and all present to stand for a moment of silence in honour of this outstanding son of the soil,” he stated.

Prime Minister Gaston Browne then moved a motion asking for the suspension of the debate to allow members to offer tribute to Sir Gerald.

In his tribute to Sir Gerald, PM Browne recalled Sir Gerald’s successes in defeating attempts by the former administration to blame him for electoral system’s failures, and this was one of the things that he found compelling.

“My decision to invite him to serve our people under an ABLP administration, transcended partisan politics and was based not only on my admiration for him but, primarily on his ability and integrity to serve as Speaker of the House of Representatives.

“His rulings during the multiple sittings over ten years, showed him to be compassionate, well-informed, eager to modernize the rules governing parliamentary sessions, fair and firm in his decision-making whenever he was required to rule.

“He was an excellent Speaker of the House of Representatives,” the prime minister remarked.

The MP for St. John’s Rural West, Richard Lewis, described Sir Gerald as an independent thinker; one whose in-



dependence of thought was evidenced when he served in the PLM Administration, as Chairman of ABEC and as Speaker of the House of Representatives. He revealed that Sir Gerald took a personal interest in his development and would often offer him words of advice and encouragement.

Attorney General, Sir Steadroy Benjamin spoke of Sir Gerald as a mentor and friend going back for many decades. He recalled that Sir Gerald had taken a personal interest in his development from the moment he returned from university. It was because of Sir Gerald that he went off to England to qualify as an Attorney at Law.

That’s mentorship continued throughout Sir Steadroy’s own development. Even as he was appointed a senator by the late VC Bird, Sir Gerald never wavered in his support fully cognizant that they supported opposing political parties.

According to Sir Steadroy, he played a role in convincing Sir Gerald to accept the Speakership when it was offered to him in 2014. “I can say wonderful things about Sir Gerald, because he was a wonderful man,” Sir Steadroy declared.

For Sir Molwyn Joseph, he recalled knowing of Sir Gerald as a lad growing up in Jennings as someone who did business with his father. But it was

when Sir Gerald was appointed Speaker that he really got to know the man. “It was then that we had opportunities to have personal discussions. I am of the view that when history is written and we look at the pantheon of men who have made significant contributions

to this nation, his place of birth, Sir Gerald Watt will be part of that pantheon,” he declared.

Leader of the Opposition, Jamale Pringle, who has had several disagreements with Sir Gerald as Speaker, showered praise on the late Speaker for contributing to shaping the politician that he has become today. “Having Sir Gerald as Speaker, forced me to grow up quickly because it wasn’t easy being the only UPP MP at the time in the House. Even with our many clashes, it never felt as it was a personal situation,” According to Pringle, Sir Gerald’s doors were always open for discussion on any subject.

Other members offering words of condolences include, MP’s Maria Browne, Daryll Matthew and E.P Chet Greene. All recalled very personal interactions with Sir Gerald and his stewardship in their personal growth and development.

PM Browne announced that Sir Gerald will be accorded an official funeral.

AG: The time is right to move to republican status

The Attorney General, Sir Steadroy Benjamin is making a strong case for Antigua and Barbuda to move to a republican status as part of overall Constitutional reform.

The AG made the point on Monday during his contributions to the debate on the National Budget for Antigua and Barbuda, 2026.

“It is my duty as the Attorney General to advice the nation on when it is time to advance to republican status, and I am saying here that it is time to become a Republic. We can’t continue like this; Smarty Jnr, others have made songs about it,”



Attorney General, Sir Steadroy Benjamin

he told his fellow parliamentarians and the nation.

The AG announced his in-

tention to hold public consultations on the issue to get the public engaged in discussions around the issue.

“The Constitution must be revised, we must go towards the Caribbean Court of Justice (CCJ) and we should become a republic,” he declared.

Later in the session, the house debated a bill to change the oath from swearing to the UK Sovereign to one swearing to Antigua and Barbuda. This, according to the AG, is part of the move towards Constitutional reform which he hopes will take place in the near future.

Under a Republican Constitution, the British Monarch will be replaced by a President, who will replace the Office of Governor General.



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MP Greene rejects increases for parliamentarians



Parliamentary representative for the St. Paul constituency, E.P. Chet Greene

The recommendation from one of the opposition members in the House of Representatives for an increase in the constituency allowance given to members of parliament, has been rejected by at least one member sitting on the government side, the MP for St. Paul, E.P. Chet Greene.

Speaking in parliament on Friday, Greene said he ‘vehemently opposes’ any recommendation from the opposition for increases because in his view ‘they have not proven that they deserve it’.

Greene pointed to the empty chairs on the opposition side of the house, noting that too often the opposition MP’s find ways to stay away when parliament is in session.

“The Rural West MP mooted the idea of an increase in constituency allowance. I want to stand here and now stating unequivocally that I vehemently oppose that suggestion, most vehemently. Look, (pointing to the opposition side) they want increase, where are they. They want increase but don’t want to come to work. Mr Speaker,

how can we justify to the people of Antigua and Barbuda, the tax payers, that people who don’t come to work, are getting increases,” declared.

He noted that except for the MP for St. John’s Rural West, who sponsors several students and who also engages in outreach programmes for people in the constituency, one cannot identify another MP on the opposition beach who has a sustaining programme that assists the people of their constituency.

He pointed to reports that one particular opposition member of parliament refused to assist a constituent who had asked him for assistance to help pay for school fees for her children.

“It’s Christmas time now, name one of them who is organizing Christmas parties in their constituencies. Each of us

on this side does it every year, and not because we are in government; we did it when we were in the opposition too. Additionally, every year, we distribute back-to-school supplies for children in our constituencies but they do not,” he remarked.

He added that the government MP’s can make a case for an increase, but any increase would have to be distributed across the board and this he does not support.

“I am prepared to suffer, notwithstanding all I do for St. Paul, or put it another way, I will continue to do what I have been doing with what I currently receive rather than see the opposition get an increase in constituency allowance that I don’t believe that they deserve,” Greene declared.



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Ministry of Education Clarifies Process for Payment and Refund of CXC Examination Fees



Education Minister Daryll Matthew

The Ministry of Education, Sports and Creative Industries informs the public that following the recent decision made by the Government of Antigua and Barbuda, all CXC examination fees from the May/June 2026 cycle will be covered by the government. This provision applies to all in-school candidates sitting the following examinations:

- Caribbean Certificate of Secondary Level Competence (CCSLC)



- Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate (CSEC)

- Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examination (CAPE)

In light of this policy directive, all monies already collected from prospective candidates or their parents/guardians for the May/June 2026 CXC examinations will be refunded in full, with immediate effect.

Parents/guardians are advised of the following:

1. Return of Funds

CXC fees for the May/June 2026 examinations that have already been paid into the Ministry of Education's Examination account will be returned to the respective schools. Parents/guardians are advised that all refunds will be processed and issued through these schools.

2. Cessation of Payments/Deposits

No other school or institution is to deposit CXC examination fees into the Ministry of Education External Examination Fees Account at ACB Caribbean for the May/June 2026 examinations nor should parents/guardians make any further payment to any institution.

The Ministry of Education anticipates the full cooperation from all stakeholders in implementing this important national initiative.



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China undertakes to help Antigua and Barbuda further develops its health sector

Antigua and Barbuda can expect significant developments in its health sector over the coming years as the People's Republic of China undertakes to contribute to the further enhancement and development of the sector.

This was one of the outcomes when the new Chinese Ambassador to Antigua and Barbuda, Jiang Wei, along with a delegation from the Center for Caribbean Studies led by Professor Zhang Xingwei, Director of the Affiliated Hospital and Dean of the School of Clinical Medicine of Hangzhou Normal University, and a renowned cardiovascular expert, paid a joint courtesy call on the Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda, Gaston Browne.

The two sides held pragmatic and fruitful discussions on new avenues for cooperation in the field of healthcare.

Ambassador Jiang Wei emphasized that cooperation in the field of healthcare is an important component of China-Antigua and Barbuda relations, and that China places great importance on deepening bilateral collaboration in this area. She noted that the multiple cooperation agreements reached between the medical team of the Center for Caribbean Studies at Hangzhou Normal University and Antigua and Barbuda will help promote exchanges in medical



New Chinese Ambassador Jaing Wei (left) Prime Minister Gaston Browne (centre) and Professor Zhang Xingwei

technologies and expertise between the two countries.

"Building on this foundation, China is also willing to expand cooperation with Antigua and Barbuda in the training of medical personnel, assist the country in cultivating more local doctors, and make positive contributions to safeguarding the health and well-being of the Antigua and Barbuda's people," she emphasised.

Prime Minister Browne expressed his sincere appreciation for China's long-standing support and assistance to Antigua and Barbuda in areas such as infrastructure development and agriculture. He highlighted that extending bilateral cooperation into the field of healthcare marks a new and more pragmatic stage in the development of relations between the two countries. The Prime Minister stated

that he looks forward to leveraging professional platforms such as Hangzhou Normal University and its Affiliated Hospital to provide sustained training for relevant Antigua and Barbuda's professionals.

Professor Zhang Xingwei conveyed the warm regards of Professor Tang Ruikang, President of Hangzhou Normal University, to Prime Minister Browne, and extended an invitation for him to visit the university at a convenient time. Prime Minister Browne expressed his appreciation, noting that he has visited China multiple times, including visits to the university, and that he looks forward to returning again soon.

Professor Zhang also provided a brief overview of the delegation's signing activities and academic exchanges in Antigua and

Barbuda. He noted that the Affiliated Hospital of Hangzhou Normal University has significant strengths in the diagnosis and treatment of cardiovascular diseases, with extensive experience in the development and management of chest pain centers, and expressed the hospital's willingness to actively participate in the establishment of a chest pain center in Antigua and Barbuda under the guidance of the Chinese Embassy in Antigua and Barbuda and Hangzhou Normal University.

Following the meeting, at the Prime Minister's request, Professor Zhang delivered a public science lecture titled Prevention of Cardiovascular Diseases for Prime Minister Browne and members of the Antigua and Barbuda's Cabinet. The lecture was clear and informative, with lively interactions throughout. Prime Minister Browne and participating Antigua's officials raised in-depth questions on cardiovascular health, to which Professor Zhang provided professional and detailed responses.

After the lecture, Prime Minister Browne expressed high appreciation and gratitude for the delegation's visit and the excellent presentation, and engaged once again in warm and friendly exchanges with members of the delegation.

Antigua Barbuda
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**10TH JAN
2026**
NIGHT ONE



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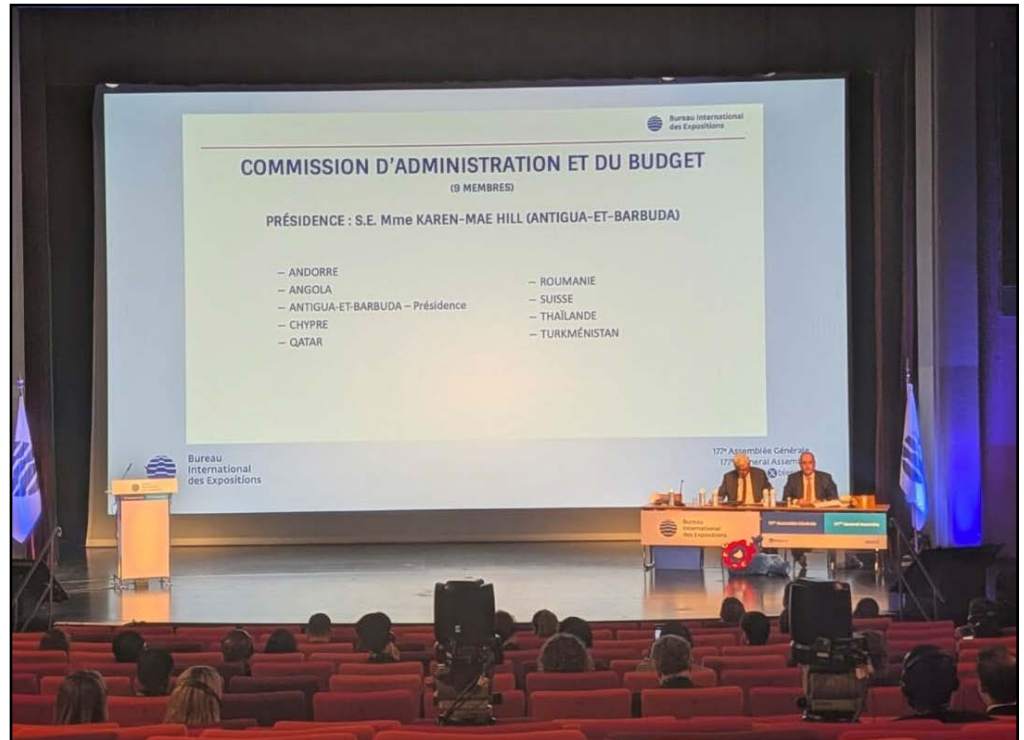
HC Karen-Mae Hill Re-Elected President of the Administration and Budget Committee of the Bureau International des Expositions



High Commissioner for Antigua and Barbuda to the United Kingdom, Karen-Mae Hill, has been re-elected President of the Administration and Budget Committee of the Bureau International des Expositions (BIE) at the Organisation's 177th General Assembly, held on 25 November 2025 in Paris, France.

The High Commissioner's re-election reflects the confidence of Member States in her leadership, experience and commitment to effective governance within the BIE.

The Administration and Budget Committee is one of the four principal committees of the BIE and is responsible for the preparation of the Organisation's annual budget and for ensuring compliance with its financial and administrative framework. The Committee comprises representatives from nine BIE Member States including Andorra, Angola, Bangladesh, Cy-



prus, France, Gabon, Switzerland, and Turkmenistan.

High Commissioner Hill was first elected to the position at the 173rd General Assembly of the BIE, held on 28 November 2023 in Paris. That Assembly also marked the conclusion of her service on the Information and Communication Committee and included the election of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as host of World Expo 2030.

Presidents of BIE committees are elected from among the delegates of Member States for a term of two years and may be re-elected for a second consecutive term. In addition to their committee responsibilities, Presidents also serve as Vice-Presidents of the

BIE General Assembly.

The 177th General Assembly was attended by delegates from the BIE'S 184 Member States and included progress reports from BIE Committees, updates on upcoming Expos and closing reports for Expo 2025 Osaka Kansai and the 24th Triennial Milano International Exhibition.

The Bureau International des Expositions is the intergovernmental organisation responsible for overseeing and regulating international exhibitions lasting more than three weeks and of a noncommercial nature. Four categories of Expos are organised under its auspices: World Expos, Specialised Expos, Horticultural Expos, and the Triennial di Milano.


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ABHTA Concludes 2025 Training Series with Successful Supervisory and Maintenance Courses



The Antigua & Barbuda Hotels and Tourism Association (ABHTA) has announced the successful completion of two training programmes that brought the 2025 Professional Learning Series to a close.

The 6-Week Supervisory Management Leadership Development Course and the 8-Week Maintenance Course: Electrics & Basic Maintenance, equipping participants across the sector with strengthened skills, enhanced competencies, and renewed professional confidence.

Supervisory Management Leadership Development Course

Hosted virtually, the **Supervisory Management Leadership Development Course** delivered six weeks of essential and interactive training, led by **Shirlene Nibbs**, a respected tourism and hospitality training expert with over 30 years of industry experience.

Participants explored vital leadership competencies including leadership, effective communication, managing workplace relationships, performance management and other core supervisory competencies.

Zorah Beazer, participant of the Supervisory Course and Claims Manager

– Life & Medical Division at State Insurance Company Limited, shared her experience: *“Participating in this Supervisory Management course has been an invaluable experience. I must admit that, at first, I was unsure of what to expect and initially thought the course would involve “a lot of reading.” However, nothing compares to the opportunity to view workplace challenges from new perspectives and to become better equipped to address them effectively when they arise.”*

Ms. Shirlene Nibbs, course facilitator, shared her reflections of the course: *“As the facilitator of the ABHTA Supervisory Management Leadership programme, I thoroughly enjoyed the journey and challenge of facilitating this year’s record number of participants. It was a journey of passion and enthusiasm by all participants. We were able to raise the bar on this product as it had immense value to a wide cross section of business sectors.”*

Maintenance Course: Electrics & Basic Maintenance

ABHTA also successfully concluded its **8-Week Maintenance Course: Electrics & Basic Maintenance**, held at the Sandals Merrick Fray Training & Development Centre. This hands-

on programme was facilitated by **Kim Burdon**, an aircraft maintenance engineer with more than 35 years of experience in aviation and facility management. Throughout the course, participants engaged in core areas of basic Electricity & Magnetism, Motor Theory, Wiring & Circuit Controls, Refrigeration Basics, and practical Testing & Troubleshooting.

Donald Bennett, participant of this course and Maintenance Technician at Curtain Bluff Antigua, reflected on the experience as expressed: *“I found the course very informative and worthwhile to me as a Maintenance Technician. Mr. Burdon often encouraged us to take our skills to the next level. His guidance and hands on teaching made the sessions clear and engaging.”*

Mr. Burdon, course facilitator, shared his thoughts: *“Maintenance is a fascinating subject which covers so many subjects. These past two months have been enjoyable, sharing what I know with others.”*

These two programmes officially conclude the ABHTA’s **2025 Professional Learning Series**, which delivered comprehensive training opportunities aimed at elevating industry standards and strengthening workforce excellence across the tourism sector.



**11TH JAN
2026
NIGHT TWO**



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Police Encourage Residents & Visitors to Practice Safety For The Christmas Season



As the festive season approaches and activity increases across the nation, the Royal Police Force of Antigua and Barbuda (RPFAB) is encouraging residents and visitors alike to remain alert and practice proper safety habits throughout the Christmas season.

Residents can expect increased police presence across the island, with regular patrols in the city, residential communities, beaches, and busy shopping areas.

The police are appealing to everyone to adhere to the practical safety tips provided, in an effort to ensure an incident-free holiday season.

Safety Tips for the Season

1. Personal Safety

- Remain aware of your surroundings, especially in crowded areas such as

shopping centres, markets, beaches, and public events.

- Secure personal belongings and avoid carrying large sums of cash.
- Plan travel carefully, particularly at night, and use well-lit routes and trusted transportation.
- Avoid over consumption of alcohol and walking or driving under the influence.
- When attending public events or family gatherings, be mindful of crowd safety and follow any instructions given by event organizers or security personnel.

2. Beach and Recreational Safety

- Swim only in designated areas and observe all posted safety warnings.
- Supervise children at all times while at the beach or near water.
- Avoid swimming under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- Secure valuables before entering the water and avoid leaving personal items unattended.
- Pay close attention to changing weather and sea conditions.

3. Home Safety

- Lock all doors and windows before leaving home, even for short periods.
- Avoid displaying valuables or wrapped gifts in full view of windows.
- Practice electrical safety by checking

Christmas lights, avoiding overloaded outlets, and unplugging decorations when not in use.

- Keep candles, heat sources, and flammable materials away from Christmas trees and decorations.
- Dispose of packaging discreetly, particularly boxes from electronics or appliances.

4. Safety at Family Gatherings and Events

- Be considerate of neighbours and communities when hosting or attending gatherings. Avoid loud noises at late hours of night.
- Avoid overcrowding and ensure adequate supervision of children and elderly family members.
- Designate a sober driver or arrange safe transportation in advance.
- Keep emergency contact numbers readily available.

The Police Administration remains committed to protecting life and property and encourages residents and visitors to work in partnership with the police by reporting suspicious activity and complying with public safety guidelines.

The Royal Police Force of Antigua and Barbuda wishes everyone a safe, enjoyable, and memorable Christmas season and looks forward to continued cooperation in the New Year.



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Tribute

Antigua and Barbuda Reparations Support Commission (ABRSC) Pays Tribute to Elder and Rastafarian Leader

Glasford “King Osagyefu” Mack



The Antigua and Barbuda Reparations Support Commission (ABRSC) pays tribute to the life, legacy, and lifelong service of Elder and Rastafarian leader Glasford “King Osagyefu” Mack and extends deep respect to the members of the Big Creek Nyabinghi Theocracy, of which he was a revered elder and guiding force.

As a devoted promoter and steadfast defender of the Rastafari faith and culture, Ras Osagyefu was a bold advocate for societal respect for the tenets that guide the Rastafarian way of life, rooted in the teachings of Marcus Mosiah Garvey and others who affirmed Africa as the cradle of civilization and the foundation of Black consciousness and liberation.

The ABRSC particularly acknowledges Ras Osagyefu’s consistent and active participation in the Commission’s annual Watchnight celebrations and Emancipation activities, where his presence was both grounding and symbolic. Year after year, he ensured that members of the Rastafarian community were present, visible, and fully engaged, offering prayers, chants, reflections, and guidance that reinforced the spiritual significance of these observances. His unwavering support underscored the importance of remembering our ancestors, honouring resistance to enslavement, and maintaining the sacred link between Emancipation, African identity, and reparatory justice.

The Commission further recognizes the tremendous and enduring contributions of the Rastafarian movement to the preservation of African heritage and to the advancement of calls for reparations, repatriation, and historical justice. Ras Osagyefu embodied the spirit of commitment and service exemplified by the late Ras King Frank I and Ras Colin Bone Cumberbatch, former members of the ABRSC whose work continues to inform and strengthen the Commission’s mandate.

Through his leadership, counsel, and example, Ras Osagyefu served as a bridge between generations, ensuring that culture, spirituality, and resistance were not only remembered, but lived and practiced within the community.

The Antigua and Barbuda Reparations Support Commission extends its deepest condolences to his family, the Big Creek Nyabinghi community, the Rasfreeman Foundation Unification of Rastafari, and all who mourn his passing. We honour his life, his work, and his unwavering dedication to justice, culture, and community.

May his soul rest in eternal peace among the Ancestors.

-END-

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Cellphone Repair Technicians Raise concerns during meeting on new Consumer Protection Act



Productive discussion with Mr. Orrin Steele and Phone Technicians

Earlier this month, the Prices and Consumer Affairs Division held a meeting with cellphone repair technicians to raise awareness about the new Consumer Protection Act 2025. The session, held at the Inland Revenue Department's Conference Room, was led by Orrin Steele, Director of Prices and Consumer Affairs.

During the meeting, over 20 technicians in attendance shared their views and experiences on how requirements under the new Act would impact their operations. Some of the major changes include displaying price of goods and services, misleading trade descriptions, disclosure of reconditioned goods, implied warranties as to quality and fitness, return of defective goods, approval for services and recording keeping.

Under the new Act, a supplier who offers repair services to a consumer shall keep a record including the name, address and telephone number of the consumer, an accurate description of the goods to be repaired, an estimate of the replacement value of the goods in its present state, an estimate of the labour and other costs to be paid by the consumer and the date on which the goods are received for repair and will be ready for delivery.

Cell phone repair technicians will now

be required to give such a record to consumers for each repair service offered. This record shall be prepared in writing and presented to the consumer in either printed or electronic for-

mat for the consumer's signature and approval. While the technicians noted that the new measure could increase operational costs, they noted that it would assist in tracking customers, repair services, business activities, and dispute resolution.

The requirement to display prices for goods and services was another challenging topic discussed. The technicians explained that while prices for goods are quite easy to display, setting specific prices for some services, for example, unlocking services, could be difficult as such prices often change based on the market. The technicians were advised to provide consumers with a price range for such services that reflects these changes, to ensure compliance.

Regarding sales of non-genuine parts,



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Director of the prices and consumer affairs addressing technicians during the meeting

Steele explained that before selling them to consumers, the technicians must inform the consumer that the part (or good) is not authentic, and this must be stated on the receipt. Steele added that selling non-genuine parts as original can result in a fine of up to \$5,000 ECD or prison time for misleading consumer.

Another important concern for the technicians was the time allowed to keep a cellphone after repairs were completed. Some technicians said they still have phones from as far back as 2019. Although the new Act does not make provision for this aspect, the Division recommended that 90 days is sufficient time to keep a phone after repairs are completed. However, Steele noted that this 90-day limit should be clearly written in the contract that customers sign before the job begins, and an active effort should be made to reach the consumer during this period.

The requirement to notify consumers and receive approval before any additional repair work is carried out was welcomed by the technicians. This, technicians said, would help alleviate some potential conflicts with consumers. Should a technician make extra repairs without the consumer's consent, the consumer is not required to pay for those repairs.

Technicians also raised concerns about consumers purchasing cellphone parts, then returning them for a refund after finding the items cheaper elsewhere. Steele explained that once the parts are not defective, consumers are not enti-

tled to a refund.

The discussion then moved to the topic of layaway. Technicians were in-

formed that, should a consumer cancel a layaway agreement before paying in full for the goods, a cancellation fee may be charged. A cancellation fee could also be charged with the balance refund should the consumer fail to complete the payment within sixty [60] business days after the anticipated date of completion, or the technician may regard the consumer as having ended the agreement. However, in no case should a cancellation fee be charged unless the supplier informed the consumer of details of the cancellation fee before the consumer entered into the lay-away agreement.



Antigua Barbuda
FESTIVALS
COMMISSION

10TH JAN
2026
NIGHT ONE

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AND ICONIC**

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- Optimize warehouse layout, organization, maintaining a high level of cleanliness, safety and proper storage of goods.
- Demonstrate strong team management leadership abilities.
- Proficiency with Microsoft Office applications.
- Proficiency with inventory and billing software (QuickBooks Enterprise is a plus)

Qualifications

- An associate or bachelor's degree (having a degree in business administration or any studies or experience in supply chain management, or a related field is advantageous).
- 3–5 years of experience in inventory control or warehouse operations with demonstrated supervisory or leadership roles, preferably in wholesale or distribution.
- Must be a holder of a valid class D3 driver's license or willing and able to upgrade to a D3.

Interested candidates should send their resume and cover letter to: **The Human Resource Manager, St John's, Antigua** by email: humanresources.ntw@gmail.com by December 29, 2025. Only those short-listed candidates will be contacted.

Parliament of
Antigua and Barbuda

YWIL

Young Women in Leadership



CIWIL

Caribbean Women in Leadership

ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR WOMEN



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JANUARY 2026-MARCH 2026

AGES: 18 - 30

26 NOV - 17 DEC
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Regional News

Yung Bredda: I got no money for OPM luncheon

AMID Opposition accusations that the Government is splurging on events while citizens face hardship, entertainer Yung Bredda (Akhenaton Lewis) has disclosed that he did not receive any payment for his performance at the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) Christmas luncheon.

The event was held last Friday at the Diplomatic Centre, St Ann's, where staff were treated to lunch and entertainment, joined by Prime Minister Kamla Persad-Bissessar, Minister of Public Utilities Barry Padarath, and Senator Darrell Allaha, who also serves as a Minister in the Office of the Prime Minister.

On Saturday, Opposition MP Stuart Young shared photographs from the luncheon on social media, including one with the Prime Minister and Yung Bredda.

He condemned the Government for having "extravagant, vulgar and expensive functions and parties, rubbing their contempt, and disregard in the faces of those who at this time do not even know where their next meal will come from."

In an immediate response, Padarath fired back at Young, calling him "Shameless," and noting that the artistes were fulfilling contractual obligations secured under the People's National Movement (PNM) administration and had offered to perform at zero cost to the Office of the Prime Minister.

The minister further said that ministers from both the Ministry of Public Utilities and the OPM assisted by dipping into their own pockets to subsidise food and beverages at the event.

The Express questioned Lewis on the issue yesterday at the basketball court in Sea Lots, where he attended a KFC-sponsored Christmas party held in collaboration between himself and the company.

He said he attended the OPM function as part of his obligations as a b-mobile brand ambassador.



Lewis said that he was not the only artiste involved. "But, I didn't get any money."

He spoke at length about the Sea Lots event and how he felt being part of a

team that was bringing "a vibe" to his community.

"Today is a very blessed day for me and a blessed day for this community and even kids out of the community



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Regional News

coming to enjoy the vibe,” he said. “This is where I grew up and its all my memories here,” he added.

Lewis said that as a boy he eagerly awaited “someone came from the outside” to host a Christmas party in his community, as it was one of the few ways he would receive a toy, since his mother could not always afford one.

“It still have children going through the same thing I used to go through and I give real thanks for KFC coming together with me as I am a part of the Sea Lots Legacy Foundation (NGO) as well so this is a big blessing,” he said.

Lewis credited his presence and work as a soca artiste for helping to bring the fully sponsored party to Sea Lots, complete with gifts, face painting, games, soft drinks, and KFC, both original and spicy.

He said the Sea Lots Legacy Foundation would be hosting another Christmas party next Sunday, December 21.

“This foundation is to push a good vibe throughout Sea Lots...my home is down the road, yuh know...I still live there and even if God bless me with

a house outside the community, my heart will still be here,” he said.

Stacey Ryan, head of marketing for KFC and Pizza Hut under the Prestige Holdings umbrella, said the initiative in Sea Lots could be replicated in other communities.

“We wanted to bring cheer and joy throughout the community of Sea Lots through our partnership with Yung Bredda,” she said.

Last Friday, the Prime Minister dined with her staff and subsequently handed over repaired vehicles to the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service (TTPS) on the grounds of the Diplomatic Centre.

She disclosed that a member of the Vehicle Maintenance Corporation of Trinidad and Tobago (VMCOTT) board indicated that police vehicles were parked across the country awaiting repairs, and that it was a simple matter to repair them and return them to service.

Persad-Bissessar said the Government had promised to repair 50 vehicles, of which 26 have already been delivered, with the remainder expected before Christmas.

She also noted that Police Commissioner Allister Guevarro had previously lamented the shortage of police vehicles.

The Prime Minister said she hoped that one of the TTPS vehicles would be deployed in the South, in her area, as she noted recent incidents of home invasions.

Guevarro said that as of Friday afternoon, the repaired vehicles would be deployed to various divisions to support patrols and the fight against crime- investigative, operational, and tactical.

Persad-Bissessar also noted that there had been a second drug bust, following an earlier seizure valued at \$171 million.

The Police Commissioner responded that, in total, 2.2 tonnes of marijuana valued at \$225 million had been seized.

Minister of Homeland Security Roger Alexander said the public wants to see a heavier police presence in their communities and noted that the Police Commissioner has assured that this will be provided. (Trinidad Express)



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THURSDAYS 9PM – 11PM

Regional News



RJRGLEANER mourns loss of CEO



Chairman of the RJRGLEANER Communications Group Joseph M. Matalon has reacted with shock and sadness at the sudden passing of the media conglomerate's chief executive officer, Anthony Smith.

Smith, who was appointed CEO in January of last year, passed away on Sunday morning after a brief period of illness.

An obviously shaken Matalon told The Gleaner yesterday that Smith's passing has hit his family and the group hard.

"As you may imagine, it was devastating news for me personally as someone who has worked closely with Tony over the last few years; and for the entire group it really has been a devastating shock, totally unexpected. So, we have to be strong now for his family, and all of us, I believe, need to keep his immediate and extended family in our thoughts and prayers in what as you may imagine is a very, very difficult time," the RJRGLEANER chairman said.

"I had been in constant contact with his immediate family over the last 72 hours. I know that they are suffering a very, very difficult moment for which my sympathies go out to them."

Smith was married with a son.

He joined RJRGLEANER on October 1, 2022 as deputy CEO – print and digital before being appointed CEO in January 2024.

"Tony did an incredible job for the two years that he has been running the organisation. He became a personal friend [and] frankly, I will miss him a great deal. The duty of the board and management right now is to look after the family and the arrangements that will need to be made for Tony and also to, in light of this very sudden event, stabilise the group. Everybody is going to be very shocked and moved by this development.

Matalon told The Gleaner that the board trusted Smith with the new direction the group needed to move into.

"I think he has had a tremendously clear thought process around the mat-

ters he had to deal with as a part of what was the required transformation of the group. He was very diligent and disciplined about execution, as he put together an excellent executive management and senior management team that will need to step into the breach and stabilise the organisation and deal with the hurt and shock that will be felt by a wide cross section of members across the group."

Matalon said that following Smith's illness a few weeks ago, the board had scheduled a meeting to plot the way forward during his absence, but was stunned by the escalation in his illness.

Smith was an engineer by training and held executive roles in telecommunications in Jamaica and the wider Caribbean, including at Cable & Wireless and Massy Technologies Limited. (Jamaica Gleaner)

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US\$7.1m to restore operating theatres hit by Melissa, says health minister

Health and Wellness Minister Dr Christopher Tufton says the ongoing work to restore the operating theatres at five hospitals in western Jamaica, which were damaged during the passage of Hurricane Melissa, could be completed by February 2026 and at an approximate cost of US\$7.1 million (J\$1.13 billion).

Tufton, who was addressing an online press conference last Thursday, said the figures arise from an assessment which was done at 13 operating theatres across the five affected hospitals. The facilities include the Falmouth Hospital in Trelawny; Cornwall Regional Hospital (CRH) in St James; Savanna-la-Mar Hospital in Westmoreland; Black River Hospital in St Elizabeth; and Noel Holmes Hospital in Hanover.

“A total of 13 operating theatres were reviewed across these facilities, of which only three were fully functional at the time of the assessment,” said Tufton. “There was significant infrastructure damage, including roof loss and compromised internal areas, some equipment damage driven by water exposure, and utility disruptions, and key among the findings was that multiple pieces of theatre and sterilisation equipment sustained some water damage.”

“Some can be repaired



based on the assessment, but others may require full replacement, and there is an approximate estimate of about US\$7.1 million,” Tufton continued. “We have a recovery plan as it relates to operating theatres, which is to align the infrastructure repairs of each facility to restore functionality within our operating theatres, within between two and three months. So, certainly going into January or February.”

According to Tufton, the projected restoration will affect the hospitals’ ability to perform elective medical procedures, although they will still be able to conduct emergency surgeries where needed.

“We are able to deal with emergencies, and are do-

ing emergency surgeries, life-saving surgeries, but it will result in some delay as it relates to electives, and we just want to bring that to the public. But the work has been done in terms of the assessment,” said Tufton.

The affected hospitals, along with other islandwide infrastructure, were left in need of extensive repairs after Hurricane Melissa made landfall on October 28 as a Category 5 storm, the most devastating hurricane in Jamaica’s history to date. Since then, the roof of the CRH, which was significantly damaged during the storm, has been restored.

Tufton also noted that the Ministry of Health and Wellness is collaborating with the Inter-American De-

velopment Bank to assess whether the Black River, Noel Holmes, and Falmouth hospitals will need to be relocated from their current coastline sites.

“The assessments are aimed at answering the very critical question of whether these hospital plants located in vulnerable seashore areas can remain, given the vulnerabilities due to climate change. As we seek to build back better, we are trying to ensure that we create a health system that is not only responsive to the needs of the population, but also to the changing dynamics in the climatic situation that we are currently experiencing globally, with more severe storms, of course, being a critical indicator of that,” he said. (Jamaica Gleaner)

US director Rob Reiner and his wife found dead

Rob Reiner, the son of a comedy giant who became one himself as one of the preeminent filmmakers of his generation with movies such as “The Princess Bride,” “When Harry Met Sally ...” and “This Is Spinal Tap,” has died. He was 78.

Reiner and his wife, Michele Singer, were found dead Sunday at their home in the Brentwood neighborhood of Los Angeles, California. A law enforcement official briefed on the investigation confirmed their identities but could not publicly discuss details of the investigation and spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity.

Authorities were investigating an “apparent homicide,” said Captain Mike Bland with the Los Angeles Police Department. The Los Angeles Fire Department said it responded to a medical aid request shortly after 3:30 p.m.

Reiner grew up thinking his father, Carl Reiner, didn’t understand him or find him funny. But the younger Reiner would in many ways follow in his father’s footsteps, working both in front and behind the camera, in comedies that stretched from broad sketch work to accomplished dramedies.

“My father thought, ‘Oh, my God, this poor kid is worried about being in the shadow of a famous father,’” Reiner said, recalling the temptation to change his name to “60 Minutes” in October. “And he says, ‘What do you want to change your name to?’ And I said, ‘Carl.’ I just wanted to be like him.”

After starting out as a writer for “The Smothers Brothers Comedy Hour,” Reiner’s breakthrough came when



he was, at age 23, cast in Norman Lear’s “All in the Family” as Archie Bunker’s liberal son-in-law, Michael “Meathead” Stivic.

But by the 1980s, Reiner began as a feature film director, churning out some of the most beloved films of that, or any, era. His first film, the largely improvised 1984 cult classic “This Is Spinal Tap,” remains the quintessential mockumentary.

After the 1985 John Cusack summer comedy, “The Sure Thing,” Reiner made “Stand By Me” (1986), “The Princess Bride” (1987) and “When Harry Met Sally ...” (1989), a four-year stretch that resulted in a trio of American classics, all of them among the most often quoted movies of the 20th century.

For the next four decades, Reiner, a warm and gregarious presence on screen and an outspoken liberal ad-

vocate off it, remained a constant fixture in Hollywood.

The production company he co-founded, Castle Rock Entertainment, launched an enviable string of hits, including “Seinfeld” and “The Shawshank Redemption.” By the turn of the century, its success rate had fallen considerably, but Reiner revived it earlier this decade. This fall, Reiner and Castle Rock released the long-incoming sequel

All the while, Reiner was one of the film industry’s most passionate Democrat activists, regularly hosting fundraisers and campaigning for liberal issues.

He was co-founder of the American Foundation for Equal Rights, which challenged in court California’s ban on same-sex marriage, Proposition 8. He also chaired the campaign for Prop 10, a California initiative to

fund early childhood development services with a tax on tobacco products. Reiner was also a critic of President Donald Trump.

That ran in the family, too. Reiner's father opposed the Communist hunt of McCarthyism in the 1950s and his mother, Estelle Reiner, a singer and actor, protested the Vietnam War.

"If you're a nepo baby, doors will open," Reiner told the Guardian in 2024. "But you have to deliver. If you don't deliver, the door will close just as fast as it opened."

Robert Reiner was born in the Bronx on March 6, 1947. As a young man, he quickly set out to follow his father into entertainment. He studied at the University of California, Los Angeles film school and, in the 1960s, began appearing in small parts in various television shows.

Reiner was married to Penny Marshall, the actor and filmmaker, for 10 years beginning in 1971. Like Reiner, Marshall experienced sitcom fame, with "Laverne & Shirley," but found a more lasting legacy behind the camera.

After their divorce, Reiner, at a lunch with Nora Ephron, suggested a comedy about dating. In writing what became "When Harry Met Sally ..." Ephron and Reiner charted a relationship between a man and a woman (played in the film by Billy Crystal and Meg Ryan) over the course of 12 years.

Along the way, the movie's ending changed, as did some of the film's indelible moments. The famous line, "I'll have what she's having," said after witnessing Ryan's fake orgasm at Katz's Delicatessen, was a suggestion by Crystal — delivered by none other than Reiner's mother, Estelle.

The movie's happy ending also had

some real-life basis. Reiner met Singer, a photographer, on the set of "When Harry Met Sally ..." In 1989, they were wed. They had three children together: Nick, Jake and Romy.


Reiner's subsequent films included another King adaptation, "Mystery" (1990) and a pair of Aaron Sorkin-penned dramas: the military courtroom tale "A Few Good Men" (1992) and 1995's "The American President."

By the late '90s, Reiner's films (1996's "Ghosts of Mississippi," 2007's "The Bucket List") no longer had the same success rate. But he remained a frequent actor, often mem-

orably enlivening films like "Sleepless in Seattle" (1993) and "The Wolf of Wall Street" (2013). In 2023, he directed the documentary "Albert Brooks: Defending My Life."

In an interview earlier this year with Seth Rogen, Reiner suggested everything in his career boiled down to one thing.

"All I've ever done is say, 'Is this something that is an extension of me?' For 'Stand by Me,' I didn't know if it was going to be successful or not. All I thought was, 'I like this because I know what it feels like.'" (Jamaica Gleaner)



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Arrest made in Brown University shooting in US, which left 2 dead, 9 injured



A man in his twenties has been taken into custody by law enforcement authorities and is considered a person of interest in a shooting incident that occurred at Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island on Saturday, December 13.

The incident resulted in the deaths of two students and left nine others injured.

A CNN article outlined that the gunman entered the campus on Saturday afternoon during an Economics class and opened fire on 60 attending students.

The article stated further that Sources observed police activity at a hotel in Coventry, Rhode Island, early this morning, where a CNN crew witnessed officers executing an opera-

tion. According to a source, wrote CNN, the suspect who was apprehended using cell phone information, is from Wisconsin and was found to have a revolver along with a small Glock handgun in his hotel room.

In response to the tragedy, Brown University is reported as having canceled all remaining classes and exams to support the community's recovery. The city of Providence is also responding with a community gathering scheduled for tonight.

The city's mayor, who visited hospitalized victims and spoke emotionally about the incident, expressed the city's grief, as per the article. Community leaders have reportedly drawn a somber parallel to the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting, in Newtown Connecticut, which resulted in 26 fatalities, including 20 young students. Sunday marks the 13th anniversary of that event. (Dominica News Online)

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Australia to toughen gun laws as it mourns deadly Bondi attack



Australia's leaders agreed Monday to toughen gun laws after attackers killed 15 people at a Jewish festival on Bondi Beach, the worst mass shooting in decades decried as antisemitic "terrorism" by authorities.

Dozens fled the tourist hotspot in panic as a father and son fired into crowds packing the Sydney beach for the start of Hanukkah on Sunday evening.

A 10-year-old girl, a Holocaust survivor and a local rabbi were among those killed, while 42 others were rushed to hospital with gunshot wounds and other injuries.

Prime Minister Anthony Albanese convened a meeting of the leaders of Australia's states and territories in response Monday, agreeing with them "to strengthen gun laws across the nation".

Albanese's office said they had agreed to look into ways to improve background checks for firearm owners, bar non-nationals from obtaining gun licenses and limit the types of weapons that are legal.

Mass shootings have been rare in Australia since a lone gunman killed 35 people in the tourist town of Port Arthur in 1996, which led to sweeping reforms that were long seen as a gold standard worldwide.

Those included a gun buyback scheme, a national firearms register and a crackdown on the ownership of semi-automatic weapons.

But Sunday's shootings have raised fresh questions on how the father and son — who public broadcaster ABC reported had possible links to the Islamic State group — obtained the weapons.

Police are still unravelling what drove the shootings, although authorities have said it targeted the nation's Jews.

Albanese called it "an act of pure evil, an act of antisemitism, an act of terrorism on our shores".

A string of antisemitic attacks has spread fear among Australia's Jewish communities following the October 7, 2023, Hamas assault on Israel and the ensuing war in Gaza.

The Australian government this year accused Iran of orchestrating a recent wave of antisemitic attacks and expelled Tehran's ambassador nearly four months ago.

But Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu accused Australia's government of "pouring oil on the fire of antisemitism" in the months leading up to the shooting, referring to a letter he sent to Albanese following Canberra's announcement that it would recognise Palestinian statehood in August.

Other world leaders expressed revulsion, with United States (US) President Donald Trump condemning the "antisemitic attack".

The gunmen opened fire on an annual celebration that drew more than 1,000 people to the beach to mark the Jewish festival

They took aim from a raised boardwalk looking over the beach, packed with swimmers cooling off on the steamy summer evening.

Witness Beatrice was celebrating her birthday and had just blown out the candles when the shooting started.

"We thought it was fireworks," she told AFP.

"We're just feeling lucky we're all safe."

Carrying long-barrelled guns, they peppered the beach with bullets for 10 minutes before police shot and killed the 50-year-old father.

The 24-year-old son was arrested and remains under guard in hospital with serious injuries.

Hours after the shooting, police found a homemade bomb in a car parked close to the beach, saying the "improvised explosive device" had likely been planted by the pair.

Rabbi Mendel Kastel said his brother-in-law was among the dead.

“We need to hold strong. This is not the Australia that we know. This is not the Australia that we want.”

Wary of reprisals, police have so far avoided questions about the attackers’ religion or ideological motivations.

Misinformation spread quickly online in the wake of the attacks, some of it targeting immigrants and the Muslim community.

Police said they responded to reports on Monday of several pig heads left at a Muslim cemetery in southwestern Sydney.

A brave few dashed towards the beach as the shooting unfolded, wading through fleeing crowds to rescue children, treat the injured and confront the

gunmen.

Footage showed one man, identified by local media as fruit seller Ahmed al Ahmed, grabbing one of the gunmen as he fired.

The 43-year-old wrestled the gun out of the attacker’s hands, before pointing the weapon at him as he backed away.

A team of off-duty lifeguards sprinted across the sand to drag children to safety.

“The team ran out under fire to try and clear children from the playground while the gunmen were firing,” said Steven Pearce from Surf Life Saving New South Wales.

Bleeding victims were carried across the beach atop surfboards turned into makeshift stretchers.

A grassy hill overlooking Bondi Beach was strewn with discarded items from people fleeing the killing, including a camping table and blankets.

People gathered flip-flops, sneakers and thermos flasks and lined them up in the sand for collection.

A makeshift flower memorial next to Bondi Beach swelled in size on Monday evening as mourners gathered to pay tribute to the victims and mark the second day of Hanukkah.

Hundreds of mourners, including members of the Jewish community, sang songs, clapped and held each other.

Leading a ceremony to light a menorah candle, a rabbi told the crowd: “The only strength we have is if we bring light into the world.” (CBS19NEWS)



DAILY PROGRAMMING




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WITH ROGER LAKE 6AM-9AM SATURDAYS

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Wins for Old Road and Attacking Saints in Premier League



A starting XI of the Old Road FC

The Old Road FC and the Attacking Saints recorded wins in the Antigua and Barbuda Football Association's (ABFA) Premier Division League on Sunday night.

Old Road FC claimed their fourth win in six matches with a 2-1 victory against Green City FC in the last game of a triple-header at the ABFA Technical Center.

Shackwon Simon had a conversion in the 15th minute, and Rakeem Joseph scored in the 51st minute for Old Road. Tev Lawrence scored in the 39th minute for Green City FC.

The result carries Old Road FC to 13 points, while Green City FC remains on seven points after crashing to

their fourth defeat in seven matches.

The Attacking Saints claimed their third win in seven matches with a 2-0 victory against Sir Molwyn Joseph Jennings United in Sunday's opening game.

Rick Gordon had a 21st-minute conversion, and Kerron McKenzie scored in the 73rd minute.

The result carries the Attacking Saints to nine points, while Jennings United remains without any points after suffering their seventh defeat in as many games.

But there were no winners in Sunday's second game as the Potters Tigers and Garden Stars fought to a

2-2 draw.

Keon Greene scored both goals for the Potters Tigers. Greene scored with a strike in the 40th minute and converted a penalty kick in the 66th minute.

The goals for the Garden Stars were scored by Kemoi Walsh in the eighth minute and Tarek Charles in the 73rd minute.

The result allows the Garden Stars to advance to 11 points after salvaging their second draw in six matches.

The Potters Tigers advanced to eight points after securing their second draw in seven matches.

Chaos in Kolkata as Messi wraps up eventful India tour



Argentina and Inter Miami's Lionel Messi with his Inter Miami teammate Luis Suarez meet young fans at the Arun Jaitley stadium in New Delhi, India, on Monday, December 15, 2025. (Reuters)

NEW DELHI (Reuters) - Colourful confetti showered down on Lionel Messi as he ended his whirlwind four-city tour of India with a cameo at New Delhi's Arun Jaitley Stadium on Monday, where a near-capacity crowd shouted themselves hoarse during his half-hour appearance.

The world's most populous nation had temporarily put aside its cricket obsession and slipped into a 'Messi-mania' since the Argentine eight-times Ballon d'Or winner arrived late on Friday with thousands of fans waiting outside the airport in Kolkata.

Saturday's event in Kolkata, however, descended into chaos with irate fans ripping up seats and invading the pitch after local politicians had hijacked the event. The chief organiser was detained by police.

Events in Hyderabad and Mumbai featuring Messi, 38, and his Inter Miami teammates Luis Suarez and Rodrigo de Paul went ahead without issues and it was no different in Delhi.

The trio walked round the field occasionally kicking a ball into the packed stands, and engaged in kickabouts with local children at a sta-

dium that regularly hosts international cricket matches.

"It was a dream-come-true moment for us to watch him in flesh and blood," said Messi and Argentina fan Kaustav Ghosh, who attended the event along with his wife and two sons.

"We travelled to Russia for the 2018 World Cup but could not get tickets for any of the Argentina matches there. At least we saw Messi here," said Ghosh, whose entire family turned up in Argentina jerseys.

Cricket, however, did manage to sneak into the proceedings. Messi, Su-

arez and De Paul received Indian cricket team jerseys from International Cricket Council chairman Jay Shah, along with tickets for next year's Twenty20 World Cup in India and Sri Lanka.

The hype around Messi's visit is a contrast to the general sense of gloom around the state of Indian football.

The country ranks a lowly 142nd in FIFA's world rankings, and the Indian Super League is in limbo as the All India Football Federation failed to find a new commercial partner after its 10-year deal with the previous one expired.

Maresca committed to Chelsea after revelation about 'worst' period at club

LONDON (AP) — Chelsea manager Enzo Maresca is happy at the club, he said on Monday as he refused to go into more detail about the weekend outburst that he had just endured his worst spell since arriving in June 2024.

After the 2-0 win over Everton on Saturday, Maresca said "the last 48 hours has been the worst since I joined the club" because "many people didn't support me and the team."

The Italian coach didn't specify who he was referring to, except to say it wasn't about the Chelsea supporters, and wouldn't expand two days later despite repeated questions about the comments.

"I respect people's opinions," Maresca said at a news conference ahead of Tuesday's English League Cup quarterfinal match at third-tier Cardiff. "But I don't have nothing to add and my focus is just on tomorrow's game."

Asked if he was "100%" committed to Chelsea, Maresca replied: "Absolutely, yes."

Chelsea is fourth in the Premier League, 13th in the 36-team Champions League, and looking to reach the semifinals of a cup competition for the third time since Maresca's arrival.

Beating Everton ended Chelsea's



Chelsea's head coach Enzo Maresca reacts after Atalanta's Charles De Ketelaere scored his side's second goal during the Champions League opening phase soccer match between Atalanta and Chelsea, in Bergamo, Italy, Tuesday, Dec. 9, 2025. (AP)

four-match winless run in all competitions.

Maresca said Cole Palmer will not be available for the trip to Wales, as the England forward looks to recover fully from a groin injury that has restricted him to seven games in all competitions this season.

Palmer scored the first goal against Everton but came off in the 58th minute.

"Cole is one of the players who deserve to be protected," Maresca said. "At this moment, he is not available to play two games in three games."

On Wednesday, Manchester City hosts Brentford and Fulham visits defending champion Newcastle. The fourth quarterfinal takes place next week, when Arsenal hosts Crystal Palace.



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Stokes issues Ashes rallying cry for England players

ADELAIDE (Reuters) - England captain Ben Stokes has called for his teammates to “show a bit of dog” as they look to fight back from two losses in the third Ashes test in Adelaide from Tuesday.

After Australia eased to victory in the second test in Brisbane, Stokes had said his dressing room was “no place for weak men” as he called for the England players to show courage against the dominant hosts.

“It’s just trying to fight in every situation that you find yourself in and understanding the situation and what you feel is required for your team. Just look at your opposition every single time and show a bit of dog. That’s fight to me,” Stokes told reporters on Monday.

“As long as you go out there and everyone is in that mindset around the situation and what is needed, you’re giving yourself the best possible chance if you’ve got a bit of dog in you.”

Stokes said his team had taken inspiration from their fighting spirit in the third test against India in July, when



Ben Stokes

they bounced back from a loss to clinch a 22-run victory at Lord’s.


“That was a moment where we all did that, we all noticed and we all identified that moment,” he said.

“You saw the way the team came out on that day. We were probably in a situation where we would have to be absolutely perfect to win that game, and

we were.


“The main thing is, we’re 2-0 down. We need to win the next three.”

Only one team has ever come back from 2-0 down to win a series in nearly 150 years of Test cricket - Don Bradman’s Australia in the home Ashes of 1936/37.





Apua

WATER



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Benna Girls win Turks and Caicos Islands Football Festival

The Antigua and Barbuda national women's senior team (Benna Girls) captured the title in the triangular Turks & Caicos Women's Football Festival on Sunday.

The three-team event, which is hosted by the Turks and Caicos Islands Football Association (TCIFA) from December 11 to 14, features the Turks and Caicos Islands senior women's national team, Antigua and Barbuda's Benna Girls, and Renegades FC of the Bahamas.

The Benna Girls won all three of their matches, which culminated with an emphatic 9-0 drubbing of the Turks and Caicos Islands in the final.

There were double conversions by Nafisa Quashie, Keitonya Skepple, and Nicelle Drew, while the other goals were scored by Gabrielle DeSuza, Kevoncia James, and Zoya Simon.

The Antigua and Barbuda Benna Girls qualified for the final after recording commanding wins in both preliminary round-robin matches.

The Antigua and Barbuda Benna Girls notched up a 6-1 victory against Renegades FC in their second



The Antigua and Barbuda senior women's national football team. (ABFA)

encounter on Saturday. Gabrielle DeSuza struck a hat trick, while the other goals for the Antiguan were scored by Kai Jacobs, Keitonya Skepple, and Nafisa Quashie.

The Antiguan launched their campaign with a 10-3 victory against the Turks and Caicos Islands on Friday.

Gabrielle DeSuza scored five of the goals. The Antiguan benefitted from an own goal, while the other goals came via the boots of Keitonya Skepple, Kai Jacobs, Zolique Samuel, and Nicelle Drew.

The Antigua Benna Girls claimed three special awards at the end of the tournament.

Midfielder Kai Jacobs was named the Most Valuable

Player (MVP) of the Tournament, Amya Hodge won the Golden Glove Award, and Gabrielle DeSuza captured the Golden Boot (Most Goals) Award.

Antigua and Barbuda's Benna Girls used the tournament to aid in their continued preparation and participation in the qualifying round of the 2026 CONCACAF Women's Championship, which will also serve as the Confederation's qualifier for the 2027 FIFA Women's World Cup in Brazil and the 2028 Summer Olympic Games in Los Angeles, California.

The Antigua and Barbuda senior team made a losing start to their campaign in the qualifying round of the 2026 CONCACAF Women's Championship in a 4-0 defeat to Nicaragua at

home in their first qualifier in Group B of the tournament at the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium on Thursday, November 27, 2025.

The Antigua and Barbuda women's team is competing in five-team Group B alongside Jamaica, Guyana, Nicaragua, and Dominica.

Antigua and Barbuda are among 29 CONCACAF member associations—excluding the region's two highest-ranked nations (USA and Canada)—that will be competing in six groups in the preliminary stage of the competition, which will be played during the FIFA Women's International Match Windows in November 2025 and February and April 2026.

Antigua and Barbuda will play Guyana at home in their second qualifier at the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium on March 5, 2026.

The Antiguan will travel to Kingston to face Jamaica's Reggae Girls on April 10, 2026, and will tackle Dominica on April 14, 2026.

The group winners will qualify for the CONCACAF Women's Championship, which will be played in November 2026.