

# No new taxes in Budget 2026

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Story on Pages 6 & 7



# Local News

## No new taxes in Budget 2026



**Prime Minister Gaston Browne**

It's Budget Day in Antigua and Barbuda when Prime Minister and Finance Minister Gaston Browne will present the government's fiscal priorities for the next financial year.

Already sources close to the government have indicated that the 2026 National Budget will not prescribe any new tax measures as the government expects to increase revenues by increased economic activities and by reducing certain concessions that are offered to businesses.

The sources say the 2026 National Budget will also contain several 'goodies' for workers in the public sector. Not only will public servants receive their December salaries and wages early, but there is word that there will likely be a second salary to be paid out by the end of the month.

The government had earlier indicated that it will continue the tradition of paying December salaries early in order to enable public servants to be able to take advantage of the re-

duction in the ABST slated for December 19-21.

In his presentation, PM Browne is also expected to make an announcement regarding back-pay for public servants as well as the implementation of another round of salary increases.

As is customary, the prime minister will provide details of the government's revenue intake for the year

following another successful year where actual intake surpassed the budgeted amounts.

Details on the amount of money that will be provided to each ministry will also be announced during the budget presentation.

The overall budget for 2026 is expected to be in excess of 2-billion dollars.



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## Celia Roberts-Morgan named Coordinator for CHOGM, 2026

Business consultant, Celia Roberts-Morgan, has been named by the government as Coordinator of the National Task Force responsible for planning all aspects of the preparation towards Antigua and Barbuda's hosting of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM), 2026.

Roberts-Morgan will be based at the CHOGM Secretariat which has been established at the Ministry of Trade located on Friar's Hill Road. She will serve as the coordinator of the several sub-committees responsible for the planning and execution of the various events associated with CHOGM.

She will also serve a dual role as head of the committee planning the Business Forum, one of four such events that will take place as part of CHOGM. The others are the People's Forum, the Women's Forum and the Youth Forum. Roberts-Morgan's appointment was formally announced on Tuesday when the Task Force convened a meeting at the American University of Antigua. That meeting heard updates from the sub-committee chairs who provided insights into their planning and the progress that they have been making thus far.

Celia Roberts Morgan describes herself as a strategic human resource consultant, governance and organizational development specialist and business leader.

She is a seasoned business consultant, Chartered Director, and Human Resource strategist with over two decades of experience advancing organizational effectiveness and public-sector transformation across the Caribbean. As the founder and principal consultant of Roberts & Associates, she has advised governments, financial institutions, and hospitality enterprises on strategic HR, governance, and policy reform—strengthening institutional performance while fostering cultures of integrity, inclusion, and accountability.

Responding to the announcement of



**Celia Roberts-Morgan**

her appointment, Roberts Morgan said she is deeply honoured and deeply humbled by the confidence which the Cabinet of Antigua and Barbuda has placed in her in naming her as Coordinator for CHOGM, 2026.

"This is a profound responsibility and a significant moment for our nation as

we prepare to welcome the Commonwealth family to Antigua and Barbuda. I stand ready to serve with integrity, dedication, and an unwavering commitment to excellence. I look forward to working closely with our national partners, regional stakeholders, and international counterparts to ensure that CHOGM 2026 reflects the very best of who we are as a people.

"I am grateful for this opportunity to contribute to our country's development and global presence, and I pledge to approach this role with humility, professionalism, and respect for the trust placed in me," she stated.

Foreign Affairs Minister, E.P. Chet Greene, Head of the Task Force, Ambassador Dr. Clarence Pilgrim and High Commissioner for Antigua and Barbuda in London, Karen-Mae Hill all joined to congratulate Roberts Morgan on her appointment and in wishing her much success in her new role.



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# Local News

## Top tourism producers to be honoured at special gala ceremony on Saturday night

Antigua and Barbuda's top-producing travel advisors will be honoured and celebrated during the 2025 Antigua and Barbuda Black Pineapple Awards. The event, hosted by the Antigua and Barbuda Ministry of Tourism and the Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority (ABTA), recognises travel professionals from Antigua and Barbuda's main source markets for their exceptional contribution to the destination's tourism growth.

Approximately seventy leading travel advisors from the United States of America, the United Kingdom and Europe, Canada, the Caribbean and Latin America are on their way to Antigua for the gala awards ceremony, which will be held at Sandals Grande Antigua Resort and Spa on December 5, 2025.

Minister of Tourism, Charles Fernandez, remarked, "The Black Pineapple Awards are our way of expressing heartfelt appreciation for the excellence and the experiences delivered by our travel advisors. Every recommendation of Antigua and Barbuda, made by these travel advisors to their clients, aids in our destination's success, and they are to be recognised and celebrated."

Colin C. James, CEO of the Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority, added,

"We have certainly had a great year, with strong sales across our markets supported by our travel agent partners who have developed a deep affinity for Antigua and Barbuda. Our top producers are as invested in the destination as we are. Their passion is reflected in their sales performance, and we are proud to honour their excellence."

Directors of Tourism: Dean Fenton (USA), Cherrie Osborne (UK and Europe) Charmaine Spencer (Caribbean and Latin America) and Tameka Wharton (Canada) alongside Business Development Managers from each source market will accompany the top-producing agents on their visit to Antigua and Barbuda.

During the ceremony, special awards will be presented in the following categories:

**Director's Award:** For outstanding achievement in room night sales.

**CEO's Award:** Recognising individuals from each market who demonstrated exceptional performance in driving bookings.

**Minister's Award:** Celebrating agents who have shown steadfast commitment to selling Antigua and Barbuda and contributing to the destination's overall growth.

**Prime Minister's Global Award:** The highest honour,



*Flashback at the Black Pineapple Awards, 2024*



*More images from 2024 Gala and Awards Ceremony*

presented to the top-performing travel advisor across all markets for exceptional annual revenue generation.

The winner of the Prime Minister's Global Award will receive a unique artisan-crafted wooden award shaped as the twin-islands with the Antigua Black pineapple featured.

In addition to the awards gala, honourees will enjoy a curated itinerary highlighting some of Antigua and

Barbuda's best experiences, including accommodations at Blue Waters Resort, Galley Bay Resort and Spa, Royalton Chic, Tamarind Hills, St. James's Club, The Verandah Resort and Grand Pineapple Resort. Activities include a welcome reception at Tamarind Hills, land and sea tours, a visit to the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Shirley Heights, and to the Frigate Bird Sanctuary and Princess Diana beach in Barbuda.





## CELEBRATION CHURCH SERVICE HOLINESS MEETING

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# Local News

## The Antigua and Barbuda Chamber of Commerce and Industry and DeVry University enter educational pact



The Antigua and Barbuda Chamber of Commerce and Industry and DeVry University have signed an agreement through which members of the private sector grouping and their staff as well as other nationals of Antigua and Barbuda may pursue higher learning through the American university's online programme.

The agreement was penned by former president of ABCCI, Dr Errol Samuel and Vice President of Strategic



Partnerships - DeVry University, Scarlett Howery.

On hand to witness the



signing of the agreement was the new Principal of the Antigua and Barbuda

College for Advanced Studies (ABCAS), Dr. Jonah Greene, who also delivered the keynote address.

She noted that both Prime Minister Gaston Browne and Education Minister, Daryll Matthew are deeply committed to a strategic vision of education as a driving force towards economic development. She noted that PM Browne often speaks of building an economic powerhouse premised on the idea that an educated people will propel

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economic development and growth.

She added that building collaborative relationships with institutions like DeVry forms part of that thrust towards achieving that goal. ABCAS, she noted is intent on helping to build an economic powerhouse through the revolutionization of education.

“Today marks a transformative moment for Antigua and Barbuda, as we advance toward one of our most ambitious national education goals; ensuring that every household in the country has at least one degree-holder. This vision is not symbolic. It is strategic and intentional. It is a com-



mitment to lifting families, strengthening communities and securing a prosperous and competitive future for our nation,” she declared.

DeVry University’s Director for International En-

rollment, Neville Madden, noted that in a world where technology is shifting and where industries are transforming, the skills that powered yesterday’s economy won’t drive tomor-

row’s prosperity. Intellectual capital, he added, must be continuously invested, refreshed and expanded, or it loses its value.

“We proudly launch the DeVry University Bridge to Brilliance Initiative, making high-quality, career-focused, technology-embedded US education accessible and affordable,” he remarked.

He announced that eligible students will get a 50 percent tuition assistance, a waiver in application fee and access to over 140 online undergraduate, graduate and certificate programmes designed by industry experts.



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# Local News

## AT&LU President DeNully continues his advocacy on behalf of migrant workers at CCL conference

The 22nd Triennial Delegates Conference of the Caribbean Congress of Labour (CCL) is entering Day three today in Port of Spain, Trinidad, under the theme *“One Caribbean, One Voice: Advancing Workers’ Rights through Governance and Solidarity”*.

A sub-theme for this year’s conference is “Balancing Mobility and Protection: Building a Fair Labour Migration System,” as the regional labour movement continues to address the urgent challenges facing workers throughout the Caribbean.

Representatives from three Antigua and Barbuda trade unions are attending the CCL conference; the delegates are, three from the Antigua Trades and Labour Union (AT&LU), another three from the Antigua and Barbuda Workers Union (ABWU) and one from the Antigua and Barbuda Public Service Association (ABPSA).

AT&LU President Bernard De Nully participated in a panel discussion



**Bernard DeNully makes a point in his presentation at CCL Conference**


on the topic; *Balancing Mobility and Protection: Building a Fair Labour Migration System*.

In his presentation, De Nully underscored the importance of equal rights for migrant workers, paralleling those

of local employees. He highlighted the core mission of the AT&LU, which is dedicated to safeguarding workers’ rights and ensuring fair wages.

“There should not be any form of social injustice meted out to migrant workers as we adhere to the concept to **Balance Mobility and Protection and Building a Fair Labour Migration System**. There also must be an established policy that is equitable and which follows the fair recruitment framework to give suitable and qualified workers be they nationals, CARICOM nationals or migrants workers a reasonable recruitment process for employment,” he declared.

He added that it is quintessentially important for the social dialogue between government, employers and trade unions to continue, as collectively, they seek a more equitable system for all, including migrant workers.



# AFRICA UNITE

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**Guests: Hon Hugh Marshal Sr**  
**Sir Lionel Max Hurst and**  
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# Local News

## Delegation from the Caribbean Studies Center of Hangzhou Normal University Deepens Medical Cooperation with Antigua and Barbuda



**Sir Molwyn Joseph (second from right) with representatives of the Hangzhou Normal University of China**

A delegation from the Center for Caribbean Studies at Hangzhou Normal University visited, Minister of Health, Sir Molwyn Joseph of Antigua and Barbuda. Professor Zhang Xingwei, the head of the delegation, Director of the Affiliated Hospital and Dean of the School of Clinical Medicine of Hangzhou Normal University, and a renowned cardiovascular expert, conveyed the greetings of Professor Tang Ruikang, President of Hangzhou Normal University, to Minister Joseph.

President Tang warmly welcomed Minister Joseph's visit to the university and expressed high regard for the significance of this event.

The two parties held a candid and in-depth discussion on deepening bilateral medical cooperation and success-

fully conducted a signing ceremony for the cooperation agreements. Seven agreements were signed, covering key areas such as the establishment of a Chest Pain Center, the development of internet-based hospitals, and the training of medical personnel.

Minister Joseph highly praised the clinical medical capabilities of Hangzhou Normal University and its affiliated hospital, emphasizing that this cooperation has created a historic milestone in Antigua and Barbuda's international medical collaborations. He noted that it marks the first systematic, high-level commitment to medical cooperation for the country and represents a vivid implementation of the Belt and Road Initiative in the health sector of the Caribbean region.

President Zhang Xingwei stated that, under the guidance of the Chinese Embassy in Antigua and Barbuda and Hangzhou Normal University, the affiliated hospital will earnestly advance the seven agreements, particularly focusing on supporting the construction of the Chest Pain Center and medical personnel training. These efforts will contribute to the treatment of cardiovascular disease patients in the region.

This event has laid a solid foundation for deep cooperation between China and Antigua and Barbuda in the field of healthcare, helping to enhance Antigua and Barbuda's capacity for the prevention and treatment of cardiovascular diseases, while jointly advancing the construction of a global community of health for all.



## Level Up Team Extends Support to Jamaica After Hurricane Melissa

In the wake of the devastating impact of Hurricane Melissa on sister CARICOM country, Jamaica, the Level Up team has once again demonstrated compassion, solidarity, and community spirit. Guided by its motto, "It's nice to be nice," the team rallied together to gather essential items to dispatch to families affected in the affected areas of Jamaica.

Over the past weeks, the Level Up team collected food, clothing, and other necessities from generous supporters. These items were



London and Level Up Team members with supplies destined for Jamaica

carefully sorted, packed, and placed into barrels for shipment to the communities in need.

This initiative reflects the heart of the Level Up movement, helping others, uplifting communities, and showing kindness beyond borders. As Antigua and Barbuda and Jamaica share deep Caribbean ties, the Level Up team is proud to stand with Jamaica during this difficult time and remains committed to offering wherever support it can provide.

## Two men arrested and charged for larceny at Valley Church Beach

Police have arrested and jointly charged 24-year-old Damien Henry of Bathlodge and 20-year-old Terry Williams of Nut Grove in connection with a larceny at Valley Church Beach.

Around 1:30 p.m. on Tuesday, December 2, beach security personnel at Valley Church Beach contacted the Bolans Police Station and reported that two visitors had their bag stolen while they were swimming.

It was further reported that a young male stole the visitors' bag and fled the area in an orange Honda Fit motor car.

As a result of a coordinated response between the Bolans Police Station and the Johnson's Point Police Station, the vehicle was intercepted at Johnson's Point with both men onboard. The bag along with its contents, were recovered by police.

Henry and Williams were arrested, taken into custody, and are now formally charged with the offence. They were



scheduled to appear before the court Wednesday to answer to the charge.

The Police Administration commends the officers for their swift action and

reminds residents and visitors to remain vigilant at beaches and other public areas.



# Orange Fire, Orange Frame, Orange Strength, Orange Rhymes

*Sixteen Days, One Phrase: Protect Her All Ways.  
Day Ten — December 4th : Teaching Tomorrow Peace*



Day Ten dawns like a school bell ringing across Wadadli — a call to the classrooms, the playgrounds, and the dreams of our youth. Today we ask the questions that matter: If violence is learned, can peace be taught? If silence is modeled, can courage be trained? If hurt is inherited, can healing be passed down instead? UN Women tells us plainly: the roots of violence grow early. UNESCO echoes the call: “Education can transform values and replace harmful norms with cultures of respect.” This tells us where the battleground lies — not just in courts and clinics, but in classrooms.

In Antigua and Barbuda, our students sit with textbooks on their desks and social expectations on their shoulders. Boys watch how strength is described to them — fists or fairness? Girls learn whether confidence is celebrated or silenced. What lessons are shaping them when the teacher stops talking and the world begins instructing? Violence does not usually begin with blows — it begins with beliefs. Beliefs about power. Beliefs about control. Beliefs about what love should cost. We must interrupt these beliefs with education rooted in empathy.

Teach boys that emotion is not weakness but wisdom. Teach girls that their voice is not insolence but independence. Teach youth that boundaries protect love — they do not hinder it. Many children carry unseen wounds. Homes fractured by conflict.



Phones glowing with cyber harassment. Bodies burdened by silence. They walk into classrooms pretending everything is fine because no one has told them that it's safe not to be okay. The UN Secretary-General reminds us: “Young people are catalysts for cultural change.” So why not give them the tools to reshape their future?

Imagine schools where life skills are valued as much as math. Where consent is taught as carefully as reading. Where mental health is protected as fiercely as exam scores. Where reporting abuse is safe and supported. Imagine youth clubs where leadership means service, not dominance. Where sporting fields train teamwork alongside discipline. Where every child — with or without disability — belongs equally and safely.

In Antigua and Barbuda, inclusion must be a pillar of education. Students with disabilities face additional risks of abuse and bullying. Accessible support services, disability-sensitive counsellors, and inclusive teaching strategies become shields of safety. No child should be ashamed of their needs — every need deserves response. But education alone is not enough if homes contradict the lessons. Parents must speak truth. Churches must teach dignity. Coaches must model restraint. Artists must write hope into songs and stories. Communities must reinforce respect.

Day Ten reminds us prevention is preparation. Preparation for peace. Preparation for partnership. Preparation for a nation where violence is history, not habit.

Sixteen days, one purpose: protect our women and girls by planting new roots in our children.

So let us teach tomorrow peace — one classroom at a time, one conversation at a time, one young heart at a time — until Antigua and Barbuda raises a generation that refuses harm and chooses harmony.

**Joshuanette Francis**

*Founder and President, Good Humans 268 Inc.*

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4<sup>th</sup> December

# HAPPY *Birthday*



**H.E. SIR LIONEL HURST**

We would like to extend our warmest birthday wishes to you, Chief of Staff. May this special day bring you joy, good health, and continued success in all your endeavors. Your dedication and leadership are deeply appreciated, and we are grateful for your invaluable contributions to the work of the government.

- Hon. Gaston Browne and the Prime Minister's Secretariat



## A National Treasure: Celebrating H.E. Sir Lionel Alexander “Max” Hurst, KCN

*Birthday Tribute Profile by Aneka Lee*

December 4<sup>th</sup> for the past 11 years has been a day of much celebration within the Office of the Prime Minister. This day marks the birth of none other than our Chief of Staff, His Excellency Sir Lionel Hurst. As we celebrate yet another year in the life of our dear Ambassador, we reflect on the life of a man whose service, intellect, and integrity have helped shape Antigua and Barbuda. Diplomat, historian, educator, administrator, mentor and devoted father of 10, Sir Lionel’s contributions transcend any single title. His much-deserved knighthood, conferred in recognition of decades of distinguished service, stands as a testament to a career spent advancing the interests and identity of Antigua and Barbuda both at home and on the world stage.

We would not have been able to celebrate Sir Lionel today without the profound act of love and sacrifice by his sister, Ivy Hurst, who donated a kidney to him in November of 2008. This act of love not only extended his life but preserved a great statesman who would go on to make bounteous contributions to Antigua and Barbuda. Sir Lionel, or Sir Max as he jokingly announced is his preferred moniker, is permanently etched into the diplomatic history of our nation. Ambassador Lionel Hurst, a trained lawyer who was called to the bars of New York and Florida, has represented Antigua and Barbuda on the national and international stages with exceptional skill and conviction. As Ambassador to the United States and Permanent Representative to the United Nations he advocated for regional cooperation, international justice, and the developmental priorities of small island states.

A career diplomat, his tenure was not only characterized by its length but also its impact. With great patriotism, he carried the voice of Antigua and Barbuda into global arenas where small nations often struggle to be heard. His eloquence, discipline, and deep understanding of geopolitics made him one of the region’s most respected diplomatic figures.

Today, Sir Lionel continues his service as the Chief of Staff in the Office of the Prime Minister, a role in which he continues to demonstrate remarkable skill and insight. With a steady hand, formidable intellect, and institutional memory he serves as invaluable assets to the machinery of government. His function as an advisor and strategist, permits him to remain involved in key national dialogues, assist in developing policy and guide governance with the same measured intelligibility that piloted his years as a diplomat.

Beyond his experience in diplomacy, Sir Lionel is widely regarded as a leading historian, author and intellectual. His writings, including works such as *Democracy by Diplomacy*, illuminate his expansive knowledge of the political evolution of Antigua and Barbuda and preserve the narratives that define us as a people.

Sir Lionel is a true custodian of memory, a guardian of context, and a voice of reason in an era often defined by fleeting information. Should you find yourself in an intellectual quandary Sir Lionel’s vast knowledge about a variety of topics will surely leave you satiated. On any given day we, the staff in the Prime Minister’s Secretariat, would make queries that could easily be directed at google. However, there is no search engine that would leave us with a more satisfactory response

than consulting with Sir Lionel.

“Unofficially”, Sir Lionel also functions as a teacher, communicator and public educator. Sir Lionel possesses a passion for education. From lectures at the public library to public commentary and media engagement, he has tirelessly worked to educate, enlighten, and empower the people of Antigua and Barbuda.

For many, including myself, Sir Lionel has been a personal mentor, a constant source of wisdom, unwavering encouragement, and steady guidance. His mentorship is characterized by patience, respect, and a belief in the potential of others, even when they do not possess that belief in themselves. It is here, in the mentorship of individuals, that his influence becomes deeply personal and enduring.

Sir Lionel’s elevation to the rank of Knight Commander of the Most Distinguished Order of the Nation (KCN) was a much deserved and highly fitting way to honour a man who has devoted a lifetime to public service, diplomacy and national development. His knighthood is not simply an award, it reflects the profound respect he has earned from his country and from all those whose lives he has touched, in celebration of his exceptional leadership, his commitment to truth and integrity and tireless advocacy on behalf of Antigua and Barbuda.

On this special day, we not only honour his accomplishments but the character behind them: a gentleman of grace, intellect, humility, and unwavering patriotism. Happy Birthday, Sir Lionel. Antigua and Barbuda, especially the staff of the Office of the Prime Minister, celebrates you with gratitude, admiration, and abiding respect.





MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, SPORTS AND CREATIVE INDUSTRIES

**THE DEPARTMENT OF CREATIVE INDUSTRIES REMINDS EVERYONE THAT THE  
CHRISTMAS HOME AND BUSINESS LIGHTING COMPETITION 2025 REGISTRATION IS  
STILL ONGOING.**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – Monday, 17th November 2025 – *St. John's, Antigua and Barbuda.....***

The Department of Creative Industries is reminding the public that registration for the Christmas Home and Business Lighting Competition 2025 is still ongoing.

The competition aims to evoke the spirit of the season through the creative, dazzling lighting displays of our 2025 competitors. The Department encourages all interested Home and Business owners to register for the competition by 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 in INET, or at the National Festivals Office, 1st Floor, Cecil George-John Building, Redcliffe Street and Corn Alley.

Pre-judging will commence on December 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>, 2025, while the final displays will be judged on December 28, 2025. Winners will be announced via Good Morning Antigua, Barbuda on Friday, January 5<sup>th</sup>, 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 from December 15<sup>th</sup>, 2025, to January 15<sup>th</sup>, 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, DutyFree 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.**



## Jamaican makes Forbes '30 under 30 Finance' list

Kristofer Madu, who has Jamaican and Nigerian heritage, has been named on the Forbes 30 under 30 list for Finance.

At 25 years old, he is a private equity investor and, according to Forbes, focuses on technology, as well as media and entertainment investments at TPG Investments.

The youngster, who was born in the United States to a Jamaican mother, Dr Dainia Baugh, and Nigerian father, Professor Ernest Madu, spent much of his childhood in Jamaica when his family moved back to the country.

This year, Madu was involved in a US\$7.6 billion acquisition of DirecTV from AT&T at TPG.



He previously served as an investment banker at Morgan Stanley's M&A Group, where he is credited with

contributing to deals including Ozempic's US\$17 billion acquisition of Catalent and a US\$10 billion acquisition of Immunogen by AbbVie's, Forbes says.

Aside from releasing music and touring as a rapper, Madu also founded a non-profit called "When We Grow Up".

The organisation says it aims "to provide underserved youth with direct access and early exposure to high-impact, high-paying career paths — like finance, technology, medicine, law, and more".

Madu was featured along founders and other investment bankers in the elite group of 30, picked out by 30 under 30 alumni. (Jamaica Observer)





# Regional News

## ‘Please Madam PM, give us the stadiums to fete’ - Promoters beg



The Trinidad and Tobago Promoters Association (TTPA) has again called on the government to reconsider its recent ban on hosting Carnival fetes at the Brian Lara Cricket Academy, Hasely Crawford Stadium, and Jean Pierre Complex.

In a ten-page December 1 letter addressed to Prime Minister Kamla Persad-Bissessar, TTPA President Robert Thompson highlighted the severe impact the ban would have on promoters, performers, and over 60,000 expected attendees, as well as thousands of service providers who rely on these events for their livelihoods.

The ban, announced in November 2025, cited noise pollution concerns and applies to fetes outside a limited permitted window during Carnival 2026. Promoters argue the decision is unfair, coming just weeks before the start of the Carnival season, and could force the cancellation of several major events already licensed and planned for January and February.

According to the Association, Carnival fetes have been hosted at these venues under government approval for

over eight years, with promoters adhering to licensing requirements and Environmental Management Agency (EMA) guidelines. Thompson emphasised that technical solutions, such as acoustic engineering and noise monitoring, could address sound concerns without canceling events.

The TTPA also criticised the lack of timely dialogue with government officials, noting that several scheduled meetings with the Ministry of Culture and the Arts did not occur as planned. The Association has requested an urgent meeting with the Prime Minister and the Minister of Culture and the

Arts to find a solution before the 2026 Carnival season.

“The ban threatens not just the promoters but the cultural and economic fabric of Carnival,” the letter stated, urging the government to allow events to proceed with proper noise mitigation measures while a long-term policy on stadium fetes is developed.

Promoters impacted include Lollabee Group, AIR Committee, Illusions, Scorch, Voice, Presentation College San Fernando, Naparima College, Spark Events, TRIBE Carnival, and Kariri People. (Trinidad Express)



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TERMS AND CONDITIONS APPLY




## ‘Please Madam PM, give us the stadiums to fete’ - Promoters beg



The Trinidad and Tobago Promoters Association (TTPA) has again called on the government to reconsider its recent ban on hosting Carnival fetes at the Brian Lara Cricket Academy, Hasely Crawford Stadium, and Jean Pierre Complex.

In a ten-page December 1 letter addressed to Prime Minister Kamla Persad-Bissessar, TTPA President Robert Thompson highlighted the severe impact the ban would have on promoters, performers, and over 60,000 expected attendees, as well as thousands of service providers who rely on these events for their livelihoods.

The ban, announced in November 2025, cited noise pollution concerns and applies to fetes outside a limited permitted window during Carnival

2026. Promoters argue the decision is unfair, coming just weeks before the start of the Carnival season, and could force the cancellation of several major events already licensed and planned for January and February.

According to the Association, Carnival fetes have been hosted at these venues under government approval for over eight years, with promoters adhering to licensing requirements and Environmental Management Agency (EMA) guidelines. Thompson emphasised that technical solutions, such as acoustic engineering and noise monitoring, could address sound concerns without canceling events.

The TTPA also criticised the lack of timely dialogue with government officials, noting that several scheduled

meetings with the Ministry of Culture and the Arts did not occur as planned. The Association has requested an urgent meeting with the Prime Minister and the Minister of Culture and the Arts to find a solution before the 2026 Carnival season.

“The ban threatens not just the promoters but the cultural and economic fabric of Carnival,” the letter stated, urging the government to allow events to proceed with proper noise mitigation measures while a long-term policy on stadium fetes is developed.

Promoters impacted include Lollabee Group, AIR Committee, Illusions, Scorch, Voice, Presentation College San Fernando, Naparima College, Spark Events, TRIBE Carnival, and Kariri People. (Trinidad Express)



## India rolls back order to preinstall cyber-security app on smartphones

India's telecoms ministry on Wednesday rolled back its order for smartphone manufacturers to preinstall a government-run cybersecurity app on new devices.

The Ministry of Communications on Monday asked smartphone makers to install the government's "Sanchar Saathi" app within 90 days and to prevent users from disabling it. It also required manufacturers to push the app onto older models through a software update.

Monday's directive led to widespread criticism and concerns of violation of data privacy and user consent in one of the largest handset markets in the world. That order also clashed with policies of companies like U.S.-



based Apple, which prohibits preinstalling third-party apps on its devices, including those developed by governments.

The ministry said in a statement Wednesday that 600,000 new users had reg-


istered to download the app in the last day. While noting its increased acceptance, it said the government "has decided not to make the pre-installation mandatory for mobile manufacturers."


"The app is secure and pure-

ly meant to help citizens from bad actors in the cyberworld. There is no other function other than protecting the users in the app and they can remove the app whenever they want," the statement said.

On Tuesday, India's telecom minister, Jyotiraditya M. Scindia, had called the app voluntary after privacy advocates said it could erode user privacy and consent.

The "Sanchar Saathi" app, which was released in January, was designed to let users block and track lost or stolen phones and to identify and shut down fraudulent mobile connections. Since its launch, it has drawn at least 14 million downloads, according to government data. (AP)





**PDV Caribe**  
Antigua and Barbuda Ltd.

## THE PDV HOUR

**MONDAYS**  
**11AM - 12NOON**

**MRS. JELLETTE RALPH**  
**(JELLY BEANS)**



## Search for long-missing Malaysia Airlines flight MH370 to resume



The search for the wreckage of Malaysia Airlines flight MH370 will resume on 30 December, over a decade after the aircraft with 239 people on board vanished, Malaysian authorities have said.

This fresh search, which will run for 55 days, had begun in March but was suspended shortly after because of poor weather conditions.

“The latest development underscores the [Malaysia’s] commitment to providing closure to the families affected by this tragedy,” the transport ministry said Wednesday, according to local media.

Flight MH370, a Boeing 777, disappeared in 2014 while travelling

from Kuala Lumpur to Beijing and sparked the largest search in aviation history.

Exploration firm Ocean Infinity is leading the current search under a “no find, no fee” arrangement. It will receive \$70m (£56m) if the wreckage is found, Transport Minister Loke Siew Fook earlier said. Previous attempts include a multinational search involving 60 ships and 50 aircraft from 26 countries, which ended in 2017, and a 2018 effort by Ocean Infinity ended after three months.

Flight MH370 lost contact with air traffic control less than an hour after take-off on 8 March 2014, and radar showed it had deviated from its original flight path.

It remains one of the greatest aviation mysteries, which continues to haunt the families of those on board. Over the years, many had called for a new search, noting their struggle to find closure.

The incident has also given rise to a host of conspiracy theories, including speculation that the pilot had deliberately brought the plane down or that it had been hijacked.

An investigation in 2018 found that the plane’s controls were likely deliberately manipulated to take it off course, but drew no conclusions behind it.

Investigators said at the time that “the answer can only be conclusive if the wreckage is found”. (BBC)



## DNA connects Colorado woman's murder to 'prolific serial killer' 40 years later, officials say

DNA from a "prolific serial killer" discovered on a pair of paper bags has led to a Colorado woman murder being solved nearly 40 years later, according to officials.

Rhonda Marie Fisher, 30, was found sexually assaulted and strangled to death alongside a rural highway roughly 35 miles south of Denver on April 1, 1987, according to authorities.

The Douglas County Sheriff's Office said in a news release on Tuesday that after decades of investigating, officials connected her DNA, found on a pair of paper bags, to one of the state's "most prolific serial killers."

"Obtaining a viable DNA profile from paper bags nearly four decades old is exceptionally rare and underscores the extraordinary value of meticulous evidence preservation and periodic forensic reevaluation," the sheriff's office said in the release.

Fisher was last seen the night before she died in Denver, about an hour's drive north of where her body was found, authorities said. In the weeks leading up to her murder, Fisher was staying with various acquaintances, authorities said. One person



became a person of interest early in the case but was ultimately cleared, according to the sheriff's office.

Detectives also failed to investigate multiple serial offenders in the Denver metropolitan area from the 1970s and 1990s, officials said. Even after renewed DNA testing in 2017, "no complete DNA profiles were produced to identify the perpetrator," according to the release.

This year, the sheriff's office's cold case unit reopened her investigation. And in October, investi-

gators matched DNA recovered from paper bags placed on Fisher's hands, used to preserve trace evidence, with biological evidence from three homicides committed in 1979 by Vincent Darrell Groves, according to the release.

Officials referred to Groves as "one of Colorado's most prolific serial killers." The sheriff's office said he was convicted of murder in 1982 and was involved in sex trafficking and drug distribution. He served less than five years for his murder conviction

and went on to commit attacks that "primarily targeted vulnerable women," officials said.

Groves is believed responsible for at least 12 homicides, an attempted murder, and a sexual assault in the Denver metro area, the sheriff's office said, adding that his "true number of victims is likely higher." He died in 1996 while in Colorado Department of Corrections custody after convictions related to the 1988 murders of Diann Mancera in Douglas County and another victim in Adams County, the news release stated.

"While Vincent Groves cannot be held accountable in a court of law, we hope this long-awaited resolution brings answers and a measure of peace to Rhonda Fisher's family and friends," Douglas County Sheriff Darren Weekly said in a statement. "This case is a testament to our commitment to pursue justice for every victim—no matter how much time has passed."

Weekly added that Fisher was a mother, daughter, sister, and friend, and that her case exemplifies the need "to bring closure to families who have endured unimaginable waits." (NBC)



## PMS drop points but stay atop Girls Division League

Defending champions Princess School has maintained their three-point lead at the top of the Under-20 Girls Division in the Ministry of Sports, Cool and Smooth, and Joma Patrick C. Whyte Cup Secondary Schools' Football Competition.

Leaders Princess Margaret School dropped points for the first time but maintained their unbeaten run with a 1-1 draw against Jennings Secondary on Tuesday.

Gimel Samuel snatched the equalizer for Princess Margaret School with a 56th-minute conversion after Abigail

Donalds scored in the 22nd minute to give Jennings Secondary a one-nil lead at halftime.

Princess Margaret School remains at the top of the standings by advancing to 13 points after recording their first draw in five games.

Jennings Secondary School moved into second place with 10 points after securing their first draw in six matches. The Antigua Girls High School is in third place with nine points from four matches.

Meanwhile, the Sir Novelle Rich-

ards Academy and Pares Secondary School played to a goalless draw in the Under-14 Boys Division League of the Ministry of Sports, Cool and Smooth, and Joma Caribbean Patrick C. Whyte Cup Secondary Schools' Football Competition on Tuesday.

The result allows the Sir Novelle Richards Academy to move on to seven points after securing their first draw in seven matches.

Pares Secondary School advanced to 10 points after recording their first draw in eight matches.

## Sea View Farm stay perfect in Second Division



**The Sea View Farm FC team**

Sea View Farm maintained their perfect winning starts to their campaigns in the Antigua and Barbuda Football Association's (ABFA) Second Division during the latest round of matches.

Sea View Fam FC recorded their fourth win in

as many games with a 5-0 drubbing of the Young Warriors at the Sea View Farm playing field.

All the goals came in the second half, in which Nigel Graham and Leon O'Garro both scored twice. Graham scored in the 61st and 63rd minutes, while O'Garro had

conversions in the 69th and 76th minutes.

The other goal was scored by Jayden Browne in the 74th minute as the Young Warriors succumbed to their third defeat in as many matches.

Bethesda also maintained their unbeaten run by secur-

ing their third win in four matches with a 4-0 victory against Herberts United at the Pigotts playing field. Herberts United lost for the second time in as many games.

Earthquake FC claimed their first win in two matches with a 6-2 drubbing of TAMO FC at the Keithley Sheppard Recreational Park. Earthquake FC advanced to three points, while TAMO FC remains on three points after suffering their third defeat in four matches.

The CPTSA Wings are still searching for their first win after battling to a 1-1 draw with Blackburn Palace at the Fort Road playing field.

Karanja Mack scored a free kick for the CPTSA Wings, who moved on to four points after salvaging their fourth draw in as many games. Blackburn Palace advanced to seven points after securing their first draw in four matches.



# Sports News

## Antigua Yacht Club Announces the Jol Byerley Hightide Series 2025



Commodore's Bar, drinks on Saturday and a bit of a bash on Sunday evening, celebrating the spirit of the sailing community.

"We're expecting a fantastic fleet and truly memorable racing," said an AYC spokesperson. "The enthusiasm is already high."

The Antigua Yacht Club welcomes all sailors and supporters to join in what promises to be an outstanding edition of the Jol Byerley Hightide Series.

**By Zoë Carlton**

The Antigua Yacht Club (AYC) is pleased to announce the upcoming Jol Byerley Hightide Series 2025, set to deliver some of the most exciting racing of the season. With strong interest already building, AYC anticipates a competitive fleet and vibrant on-shore camaraderie.

This year introduces a refreshed race format:

- Warm-Up Point Series on 13 and 17 December
- Main Event on 20–21 December — a 7-race open series expected to attract both local and visiting sailors. The event will also contribute to the proposed West Coast Cup standings.

The race committee has

designed new, dynamic courses and will employ a dedicated start boat with Race Officer to ensure accuracy and fairness at the gun. High-visibility marks will guide competitors around the course, supported by a protest jury where required.

For 2025, the AYC is raising a toast to two fantastic new sponsors! Caribbean Alliance and Antigua Distilleries are contributing generously to make this year's event unforgettable—bringing a little extra sparkle, a lot of flavour, and plenty of cheer to yachts, guests, and everyone in between.

Alongside the racing, AYC will host a lively social calendar, including skippers' briefings at the



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HIGH TIDE  
SERIES**

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ALLIANCE  
INSURANCE**

**ANTIGUA  
DISTILLERY  
LIMITED**



## New Zealand seize control of opening Test against Windies



**New Zealand's Jacob Duffy hold up the ball after taking 5 wickets against the West Indies during the second day of the first cricket Test match in Christchurch, New Zealand, Wednesday, Dec. 3, 2025. (AP)**

CHRISTCHURCH (Reuters) - Seamer Jacob Duffy claimed a maiden five-wicket haul to secure New Zealand a handy first innings lead, and the upper hand in the opening Test against the West Indies at Christchurch's Hagley Oval on Wednesday.

Duffy claimed five for 34 to help bundle out the West Indies for 167 in a spectacular collapse from 100 for two at one stage.

Opener Tagenarine Chanderpaul and Shai Hope made half-centuries in their otherwise feeble reply to New Zealand's first innings total of 231.

New Zealand finished a stop-start Day 2 on 32 for no loss, for an overall lead of 96 runs.

Tom Latham (14) and Devon Con-

way (15) will come out on Thursday hoping to bat the West Indies out of the contest.

Earlier, New Zealand took two early wickets when the track looked lively but Hope and Chanderpaul, who struck a patient 52, put on 90 for the third wicket.

Hope fell caught behind off a Duffy short ball for 56 and Matt Henry, who captured three for 43, drove home the advantage by removing touring captain Roston Chase (0) and Justin Greaves (0) in the space of four deliveries.

Chanderpaul did not look convincing at the start and was dropped twice but he dug in, found his rhythm, and raised a hard-earned fifty.

His marathon 169-ball stay finally

ended on a pull off Zak Foulkes that did not get past square. An airborne Devon Conway took a stunning catch to make amends for an earlier drop.

When play resumed after a rain break, Duffy sent down a two-wicket maiden over to rattle West Indies and removed Jayden Seales (2) and Ojay Shields (0) to hasten their collapse.

"Obviously, they got a bit of a partnership going, we knew they would at some stage, and it coincided with the ball stopping swinging," all-rounder Foulkes said afterwards.

"Duff has taken on that enforcer role, which is awesome. It's great to see. And then we actually saw it swing again at the end, which was interesting."





**COMMONWEALTH**  
HEADS OF GOVERNMENT MEETING  
ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA 2026

# **REGISTRATION NOW OPEN FOR CHOGM 2026 ACCOMMODATION PROVIDERS**

We are pleased to announce that accommodation providers across Antigua and Barbuda can now register to participate in the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) 2026, taking place 1- 4 November 2026.

With an anticipated 5,000 delegates expected to attend this historic event, it is **vital that all accommodation providers register through the CHOGM Accommodation Team.**

**Registration ensures your property is included in the official accommodation listings** and positioned to benefit from the significant opportunities this groundbreaking conference will bring to our destination.

**Registration will close on Friday 12 December 2025.**

We encourage all providers not to delay and to be part of showcasing the very best of Antiguan and Barbudan hospitality.

**REGISTER TODAY:**

To register your property, SignUp here:  
<https://bit.ly/chogmhotels>

**Let's work together to welcome the Commonwealth to our shores!**

## Serena Williams denies pending return to pro tennis



**Serena Williams**

TORONTO (Reuters) - Serena Williams has re-entered the tennis anti-doping testing pool but the 23-times Grand Slam champion denied on Tuesday that the move had anything to do with her making a return to the sport she dominated for nearly two decades.

The International Tennis Integrity Agency confirmed to Reuters that Williams, who has not competed since the 2022 US Open, was among the list of players in its testing pool, which requires individuals to provide their whereabouts at any given time, every day, and participate in random testing.

But as the story of 44-year-old Williams' inclusion on the list, first reported earlier on Tuesday by The Athletic, gained traction and

sparked talk about her potential return, the tennis great took to social media to deny a comeback was in her plans.

"Omg yall I'm NOT coming back. This wildfire is crazy," Williams wrote on X.

Her agent did not immediately respond to an email from Reuters asking why the player had re-entered the testing pool.

Williams' name appears on the ITIA website's list of retired players and would be able to return to a sanctioned event after making herself available for out-of-competition testing for at least six months.

Last week former world number one Williams posted a series of photos on Instagram showing

herself on a tennis court with her youngest daughter, Adira River, whom she gave birth to in August 2023.

In August 2022, ahead of her final US Open, Williams announced in a Vogue article that she was "evolving away from tennis."

Williams, who won her last Grand Slam singles title in 2017, had been chasing an elusive 24th crown that would have drawn her level with Australian Margaret Court, who holds the record.

The American came tantalisingly close to achieving that feat, featuring in four major finals since giving birth to her first daughter, Olympia, in 2017.



## Empire FC extends unbeaten run in First Division



*Players of the Empire football team in a huddle before the start of a match*

Empire FC continued their unbeaten run in the Antigua and Barbuda Football Association's (ABFA) First Division on Tuesday.

Empire FC claimed their third win in five matches by snatching a 3-2 victory against Bendals at the Cashew Hill playing field.

Kamali Looby scored twice with conversions in the 11th and 61st minutes, while Twadadre Jacobs converted the other goal for Empire FC with a strike in the 15th minute.

The goals for Bendals FC were scored by Kaijah Matthew in the 51st minute and Alva Guishard Jr. in the

80th minute.

The result allows Empire FC to advance to 11 points, while Bendals remain on two points after suffering their fourth defeat in six matches.

The other two First Division matches ended in draws on Tuesday. Five Islands FC battled to a 2-2 draw with Bolans FC at the Five Islands playing field.

Dennison Stevens converted a penalty kick in the 30th minute, and Obediah Browne scored in the 51st minute for Five Islands FC. The goals for Bolans FC were scored by Demario Roberts in the 48th minute

and Jamal Joseph in the 70th minute.

The result allows Five Islands FC to advance to nine points after recording their third draw in six matches. Bolans FC moved on to four points after salvaging their fourth draw in five matches.

FC Master Ballerz and the Swetes Vipers fought to a 3-3 draw at the Radio Range playing field in Ottos.

Shumba Thomas scored twice for FC Master Ballerz. Thomas converted a penalty kick in the 15th minute and found the back of the net with a strike in the 81st minute.

The other goal for FC Master Ballerz was scored by Marvin Moses, who also converted a penalty kick in the 75th minute.

The goals for the Swetes Vipers were scored by Shamar Anthony in the first minute, Juwan Roberts in the 53rd, and Lyndon Goodwin in the 59th minute.

The result carries FC Master Ballerz to six points after securing their third draw in five matches.

The Swetes Vipers FC advanced to three points after recording their third draw in five matches.