

Health Ministry defends the recruitment of Ghanaian nurses

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Antigua and Barbuda tourism branding is currently featured on a Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) streetcar travelling primarily along Dundas and Bathurst streets. Those major arteries of the city transport a combined average of 51,000 passengers daily and are seen by thousands more during their daily commutes, delivering high-visibility exposure in peak winter months.

Health Ministry defends the recruitment of Ghanaian nurses



Health Minister, Sir Molwyn Joseph

The ministry of health has mounted a robust defense of its decision to recruit more than one hundred nurses from Ghana, West Africa, noting that the current ratio of nurses to patient in the healthcare system is ‘alarming’.

Health Minister, Sir Molwyn Joseph, flanked by top officials of the ministry held a press conference on Tuesday to address the recruiting issue as well as other health-related concerns.

The minister opened the press conference by explaining that Antigua and Barbuda has always had a challenge with providing the adequate number of nurses to man the country’s health care system.

According to the minister this has led to public comments indicating that nurses are overworked, burnt out and who face other challenges. He said the decision to recruit nurses from Ghana is an attempt to address this serious problem.

“As you can appreciate, if you have nurses who are overworked or burnt out, then this compromises patient care. We now have an opportunity to fix this issue and I want to thank the



permanent secretary and the technical team for the valuable input they gave

to this exercise,” he stated.

Sir Molwyn explained that recruiting



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the nurses was the government's way to solve a critical issue in the health-care system and that he has no doubt that when the full complement of nurses is deployed in the system, then at all concerns regarding this valuable component of the system will be addressed.

Permanent Secretary for Health, Stacey Gregg-Paige, who headed the team that traveled to Ghana to interview the prospective nurses, provided insights into the process.

She said the recruitment was done in collaboration with the Ministry of Ghana and that the recruitment is governed by a Memorandum of Understanding as well as a Service Agreement.

"Both instruments were comprehensively reviewed and vetted by the Ministry of Legal Affairs, confirmed to be consistent with Antigua and Barbuda's legal, regulatory, and policy framework, and formally accepted by the Government of Ghana.

"Accordingly, this initiative is lawful, transparent, and structured, and operates fully within established public service, regulatory, and immigration requirements," she emphasized.

Gregg-Paige provided details of the visit to Ghana and the process of selection that was involved. "The recruitment mission was conducted in Accra, Ghana, from 16th to 22nd September, 2025 under the Ghana Labour Exchange Programme, in collaboration with the Ministry of Special Initiatives, Office of the President.

190 applications were received

32 were rejected due to incomplete documentation or ineligibility

158 candidates were interviewed using a structured, competency-based process and 127 candidates were accepted as the most suitable to be vetted by the Antigua & Barbuda Nursing Council," She reported.

Meanwhile, the Medical Director for

the Sir Lester Bird Medical Centre, Dr. Shivon Belle-Jarvis, revealed that the Ghanaian nurses are due in the country during this month and a three-week programme of orientation has been planned for them prior to their deployment in the system.

"It's important to understand that anyone going into a system has to go through an onboarding process whether you are coming from within the local system or from abroad. This onboarding process is specifically designed to achieve a number of objectives; to help our Ghanaian colleagues to be familiar with the process here in Antigua and Barbuda. So the first week is designed to provide exposure to the country, its culture and systems. In the second week, there will be the alignment of skills where we will be looking at procedures, documentation and the third week, we will look at specifics as they relate to the areas to which they will be assigned," she explained.

The healthcare system requires 400 nurses to be considered sufficient to meet the demands. Currently, there are 260 local nurses, 33 Cubans with 120 Ghanaians due this month, bringing to number to just over the required amount. It will reduce the nurse to patient ratio from the current 1 nurse to ten patients to a more acceptable level.

The government opted for nurses from Ghana because nurses from that country have been recruited by at least two other Caribbean territories – the Bahamas and Barbados – and the reports about their performances have been very positive.



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Local News

Police Investigate Suspected Suicide in Jennings

Police investigators were on Tuesday evening at the scene of an incident in the Jennings area that is being treated as a suspected suicide.

Preliminary reports indicate that the incident occurred earlier Tuesday afternoon and involved a female in her mid-twenties.

Police personnel are actively conducting investigations to establish the circumstances surrounding her death.

Reports are that her body was discovered by members of the family who immediately called the police to the scene.

The police are assuring the public that additional information will be provided as the investigation progresses.



Suspect Arrested in Connection with Robbery at Fast Food Restaurant

The police have arrested a male suspect in connection with an alleged robbery at Enzo's Restaurant, located at the junction of St. John's Street and Popeshead Street.

Reports indicate that around 2:20 a.m. on Monday, January 19, two male suspects entered the restaurant while an employee was at the cash register.

One of the suspects, described as being approximately 5 feet 11 inches tall, slimly built, dressed in a green hoodie, short pants, and wearing a mask, reportedly pointed what appeared to be a firearm at the employee, while a second suspect allegedly jumped over the counter and robbed the owners of a Samsung A25 cellular phone valued at \$1,000, along with a cash pan containing an undis-



closed sum of money.

Both men reportedly fled the scene on foot in an eastern direction.

Police officers promptly responded to the scene and carried out a search of the

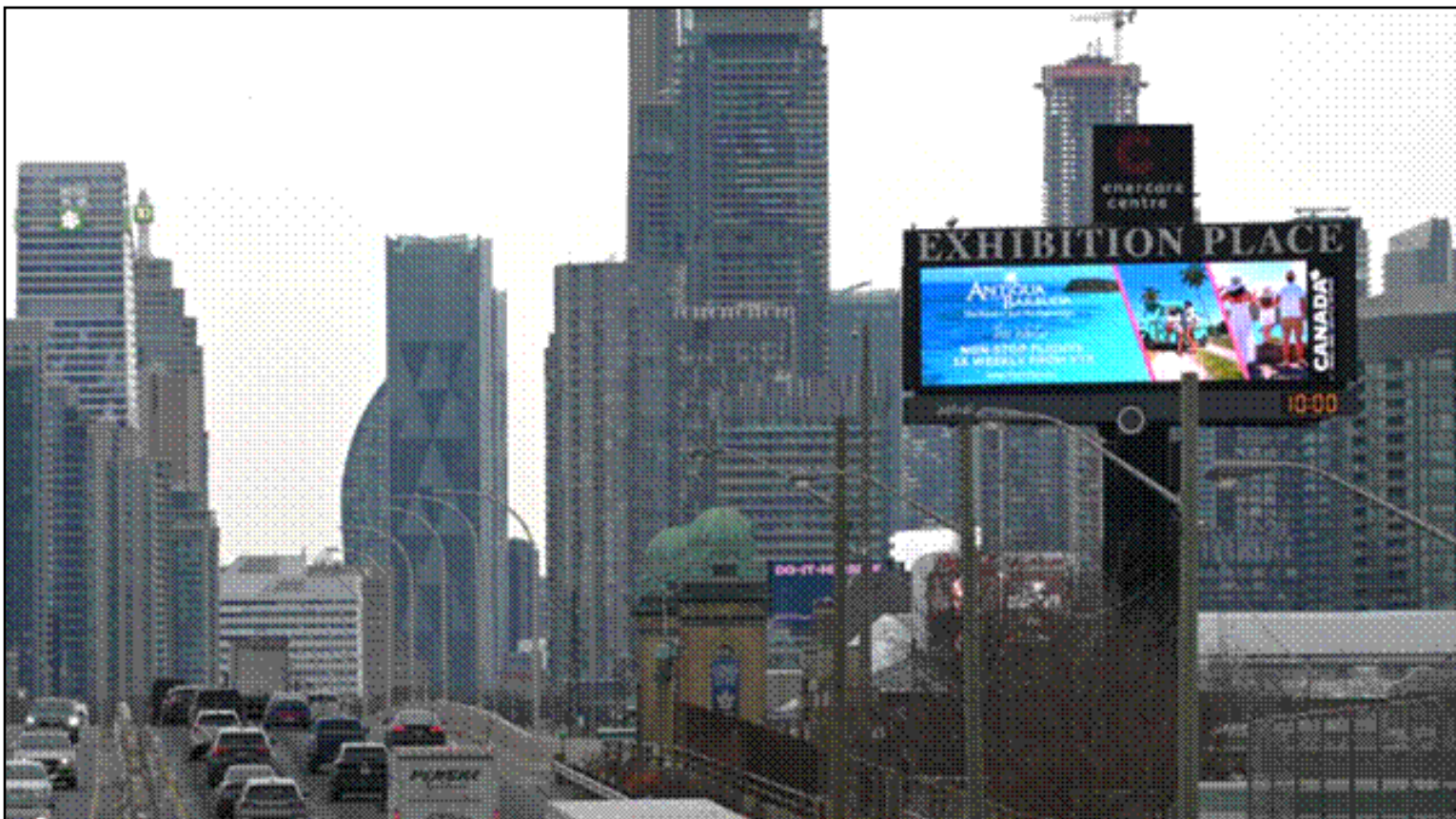
immediate area.

A male suspect of Villa was arrested and taken into custody on suspicion of robbery. Investigations into the matter are ongoing.

The police are appealing

to anyone who may have information that can further assist with this investigation to contact the Criminal Investigations Department (CID) or the nearest police station.

Tourism Authority launches aggressive ad campaign in Toronto, Canada



As Toronto, Canada's largest city, contend with temperatures well below freezing this week, the warmth and beauty of Antigua and Barbuda are on display through an aggressive campaign being mounted by the Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority.

As part of a strategic winter marketing presence, Antigua and Barbuda tourism branding is currently featured on a Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) streetcar travelling primarily along Dundas and Bathurst streets. Those major arteries of the city transport a combined average of 51,000 passengers daily and are seen by thousands more during their daily commutes, delivering high-visibility exposure in peak winter months.

Such out-of-home activations form part of a broader fall and winter marketing strategy across Cana-

da, including expanded presence in cities such as Halifax, Nova Scotia and Montreal, Quebec, designed to strengthen awareness of the destination through a mix of high-impact placements in diverse media channels.

Tameka Wharton, Director of Tourism, Canada said, "This campaign reflects a strategic investment in the Canadian market, leveraging high-impact placements to strengthen year-round visibility for Antigua and Barbuda. By bringing a touch of our island warmth to Toronto's winter streets, we're keeping the destination top of mind and reminding Canadians that paradise is just a short, direct flight away."

Complementing this execution, Antigua and Barbuda was also showcased in December across several of Toronto's most prominent loca-

tions. Along the Gardiner Expressway overlooking historic Exhibition Place, a large digital billboard invited Canadians to book their sunny getaway to Antigua and Barbuda. At Sankofa Square (formerly Yonge-Dundas Square), the country's most visited destination and often referred to as the "Times Square of Canada", 20-foot LED screens displayed the destination's stunning beaches and breathtaking natural vistas. The iconic Canadian landmark draws thousands of visitors daily for public events, performances, and shopping.

Together, these efforts reflect the Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority's continued focus on thoughtful, high-impact promotion, strengthening presence in the Canadian market and maintaining Antigua and Barbuda's visibility among travellers year-round.

Ministry of Education Reports Strong Success of PBM and SEL Training Sessions



Teachers, principals, school attendance counsellors and ancillary staff across the public education system in Antigua and Barbuda were engaged in training and retraining sessions on Positive Behaviour Management (PBM) and Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) organized by the Ministry of Education. From all reports, this initiative was exceptionally well received.

Designed to strengthen and streamline PBM and SEL practices in all public schools, the training sessions centred on the PBM Teachers' Manual and accompanying workbooks introduced two years ago. Facilitators reported strong participation, noting that attendees engaged enthusiastically in discussions, collaborative activ-

ities, and reflective exercises aimed at promoting best practices in behaviour management and socialemotional development.

Feedback from participants was overwhelmingly positive. The insights gathered through evaluation tools will be used to further refine and improve the programme to ensure continued relevance and effectiveness.

A team of Education Officers, principals, and teachers served as facilitators and cofacilitators across twenty-five (25) schools and centres islandwide. While some approached their roles with initial hesitation, particularly firsttime trainers, they demonstrated outstanding professionalism and adaptability. Many expressed grati-

tude for the opportunity to contribute to the Ministry's ongoing efforts to build safe, nurturing, and wellman-aged learning spaces for students.

The Ministry of Education commends all educators and ancillary personnel who participated, as well as to the dedicated facilitators who helped make these sessions impactful. The ministry also acknowledged UNICEF for its continued support of this important programme.

The Ministry says it remains committed to advancing PBM and SEL initiatives to help students and stakeholders foster strong relationships, interact positively, and model behaviours that support holistic student development.

Flow Wraps Up a Season of Joy with Major Apple Bundle Giveaway and Community Impact



Customers and communities across Antigua and Barbuda enjoyed festive rewards, meaningful support, and the chance to win big as Flow concluded its annual Christmas campaign, which ran from November 14 to December 31.

The campaign featured a series of engaging promotions designed

to thank customers for their loyalty and spread Christmas cheer. Among the highlights was Flow's popular 12 Days of Christmas Spin & Win promotion, which provided customers with daily chances to win exciting prizes throughout the festive period.

As part of its strong commitment to corporate social respon-

sibility, Flow also hosted its annual Christmas Lunch for the Less Fortunate, providing warm meals, fellowship, and holiday spirit to members of the community. This initiative reflected Flow's dedication to connecting people not only through technology, but through compassion and service.

The campaign concluded with the announcement of the winner of Flow's Apple Bundle, the grand prize and final highlight of the Christmas promotion. The giveaway generated enthusiastic participation and brought the campaign to a celebratory close. Flow is pleased to congratulate Janelle Hamlet, the winner of the Apple Bundle.

"This year's Christmas campaign was all about giving back — to our customers and to our community," said Shand Merchant, Marketing Manager. "We're pleased that our promotions brought joy during the festive season, and equally proud of our continued support for those in need. Congratulations to Janelle on winning the Apple Bundle; we're excited to see how it helps her achieve her goals."

Hamlet, who is currently in her second year at the UWI Five Islands Campus, expressed her gratitude for the timely prize.

"This Apple Bundle came at the perfect time, because it will really help me as I get started in the marketing field," she said. "I'm very thankful to Flow for this bundle of items."

270 Students Participate in the 2026 Caribbean STEM Olympiads

The Caribbean Science Foundation (CSF) held the Medal Awards and Closing Ceremony on 18 January 2026 to celebrate the medalists of the fourth annual Caribbean STEM Olympiads (CSO). The event, which was held in a virtual format, awarded platinum, gold, silver and bronze medals to teams and individuals from seven Caribbean countries (Barbados, Belize, Jamaica, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and Trinidad and Tobago). The medalists represented either their educational institutions or themselves, and competed in the Math, Computer Coding, and Robotics & Electronics Systems Olympiads at three different age levels (13 – 15, 16 – 18 and 19 – 21 years of age).

In the competitions, the focus was on rewarding inventiveness, as well as critical, logical and analytical thinking. In particular, the Math Olympiad was held in a Jeopardy-style format and covered the fundamentals in topics ranging from consumer arithmetic at Level I to vector calculus at Level III. The Computer Coding Olympiad tasked applicants with creating apps, games, and websites aimed at solving a challenge faced by Caribbean communities. The list of challenges included geohazards and climate change, tourism, non-communicable diseases, inter- and intra-country transportation, energy security, food safety and security, and financial education.

The Robotics & Electronics

Systems Olympiad tasked the Level I applicants with building innovative systems from kits, whereas the Level III robotics and electronics systems teams were required to design and assemble their robots starting from the basic components. This year, to encourage greater participation and enhance the quality of the projects, the CSF offered Amazon gift cards worth up to US\$ 150 to Robotics & Electronics Systems teams that registered early.

Registration for the Olympiads continues to increase each year, and this year a total of 270 students from 9 Caribbean countries registered for the Olympiads. After the preliminary rounds, 90 students (in 42 teams) made it to the finals: 41 in the Math Olympiad, 26 in the Computer Coding Olympiad, and 27 in the Robotics & Electronics Systems Olympiad, with some students participating in more than one Olympiad. Medal certificates and cash prizes of US\$ 500, 400, 300 and 200 were awarded to teams winning platinum, gold, silver, and bronze medals, respectively. The Medal Awards and Closing Ceremony revealed that Jamaica led the medal count with 10 medals, followed by Trinidad and Tobago with 5 medals, Belize with 3 medals, Barbados, Saint Lucia, and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines with 2 each, and Saint Kitts and Nevis with 1 medal.

Barbados

Barbados won two medals in the Math Olympiad,



"The Prime Trio" consisting of Taijuo Morris, Samiya Allen and Ian Francis from Barbados earned a silver medal in Level III of the 2026 Math Olympiad.



Denisha Fields-Caleb, Caelan Pearce and Khyce Belgrave, of "Perplexing Polynomials", from Barbados, earned a bronze medal in Level I of the 2026 Math Olympiad.

Bridget Pineda



Bridget Pineda from Belize captured the platinum medal in Level III of the 2026 Robotics & Electronics Systems Olympiad with her project "Oxyflow".

a bronze medal in Level I and a silver medal in Level III. The Level III team was “The Prime Trio” consisting of Taijuo Morris, Samiya Allen and Ian Francis who attend the University of the West Indies, Cave Hill, but represented themselves. The level I team, “Perplexing Polynomials”, consisted of Denisha Fields-Caleb, Caelan Pearce and Khyce Belgrave who attend Queen’s College but represented themselves.

Belize

Belize earned one platinum medal, one gold medal and one silver medal in the Olympiads. Bridget Pineda, who represented Nazarene High School in the Level III Robotics & Electronics Systems Olympiad, awed the judges with her project “OxyFlow”, a portable automated medical ventilation device, and earned the only platinum medal awarded in 2026. The platinum medal is awarded to any team who receives a final score between 95% and 100% from the judges.

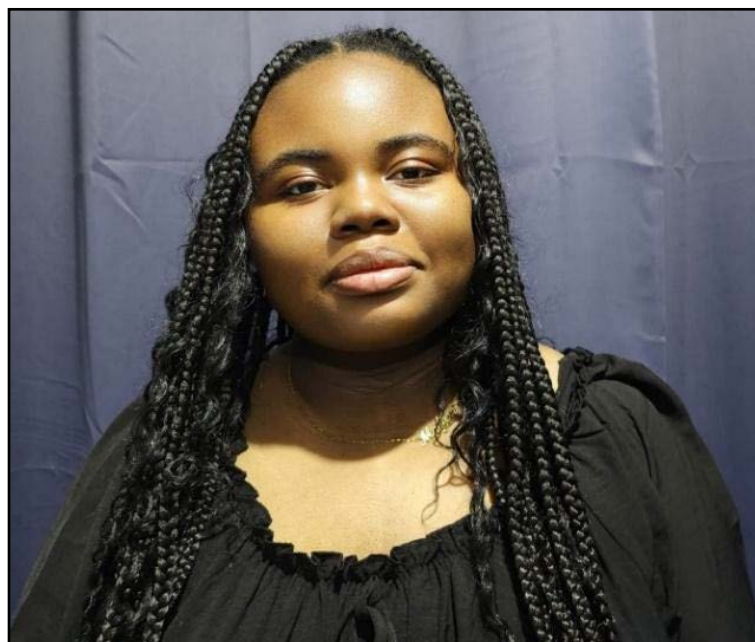
A gold medal in the Level I Computer Coding Olympiad was earned by Maliyah Casey who represented herself but formerly attended Belize High School. Her project was “Belize Bus Transit”, a bus scheduling app which aimed to unify AI-driven predictions, digital payments and QR code verification into one system. Additionally, “The Prime Minds” consisting of Leyao Li and Max Wei who represented Belize High School, won a silver medal in Level I of the Math Olympiad.

Jamaica

Jamaica clinched three gold

medals, two silver medals and five bronze medals. In Level II of the Math Olympiad, “Pi Enthusiasts” consisting of Chad Wright, Jaheim Smart and Stephen Wong (who represented themselves but attend Campion College) won a gold medal. The other two gold medals were won in the Robotics & Electronics Systems Olympiad. The Level II gold medalist team was “DC’S Circuit” consisting of Jayden Cover, Khalia Lewis, Serina Pitter and Mykael Pottinger who represented themselves but attend DeCarteret College. Their project, “Hydroponic Monitoring and Management System”, was designed to monitor the conditions required for plant growth in a hydroponic system. The Level III gold medalist team was “Ohm’s Army”, consisting of Nevaeh Scott, Damia Sibbles, Kirabo Musaaazi and Leanna Webb, who attend Immaculate Conception High School but represented themselves. Their project, “SPACIS - Solar Powered Automatic Collection and Irrigation System” was designed to improve water efficiency and reduce manual labour in agriculture.

Ayeisha Mcpherson, who attends Immaculate Conception High School but represented herself, earned a silver medal in Level II of the Computer Coding Olympiad with her project “Farm Safe - Disaster Risk Assessment”, an app which combined weather-based risk assessment, crop suitability analysis, and expected yield estimation to pro-



Maliyah Casey from Belize clinched the gold medal in Level I of the 2026 Computer Coding Olympiad with her project “Belize Bus Transit”.



“The Prime Minds” consisting of Leyao Li and Max Wei from Belize won a silver medal in Level I of the 2026 Math Olympiad.



Jaheim Smart, Chad Wright and Stephen Wong of “Pi Enthusiasts”, from Jamaica, captured the gold medal in Level II of the 2026 Math Olympiad.

Feature

vide insights for agriculture in the Region.

Jamaica won two bronze medals in the Math Olympiad. "Kippy's Disciples", consisting of Jaden-Tyler Gayle, Juvauno Maragh and Levar Meade (who are all taking a gap year but were past Champion College students) earned a bronze medal in Level III. In Level II, a bronze medal was won by Ayanna James, Chelsea Marriott and Sa-eel Harris of "Team Rocket", who represented themselves but attend Champion College.

Another bronze medal was captured in Level II of the Computer Coding Olympiad by Aiden Bramwell, Alyssa Nelson and Jaheim Smart of team "Cash Coders" who attend Champion College but represented themselves. Their project was "Money Moves", a financial literacy game. In the Level II Robotics & Electronics Systems Olympiad, team "Amaryllis" consisting of Richaiya Henry, Jhenessa Arnold, Torrie McTurner and Alayna Rodney who represented Immaculate Conception High School, won a bronze medal with their electronics systems project "Solar-Powered Water Purifier System", designed to treat water from various sources, alert users of the water quality and turn off the water pump if the water is unsafe.

Saint Kitts and Nevis

A gold medal for Saint Kitts and Nevis was won in Level II of the Computer Coding Olympiad by team "Syntax & Savings" comprising Fraimer De La Cruz, Josiah Davis, Nikhal Dore and Na-

than Lewis who represented themselves but attend Clarence Fitzroy Bryant College. This team presented their financial education platform, "ASPIRE", which simulated a real-time stock market, requiring players to make investment decisions based on continuously updated news events.

Saint Lucia

Saint Lucia clinched one silver medal and one bronze medal. Team "CariByte" comprised of Madison Altius, Dion Evlyn Francois, Kaireda Lionel and Thandi Wilson, represented St. Joseph's Convent Secondary School earned a silver medal in Level I of the Computer Coding Olympiad with their project "The Path to Wellness", an interactive coding game aimed at teaching persons in the Caribbean about non-communicable diseases. Jayden Miller-Monrose who represented Saint 2 Mary's College won a bronze medal in Level I of the Robotics & Electronics Systems Olympiad with his project "Hydropicium Cybernetic Arm", a robotic arm combining hydraulics and electronics.

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines earned one silver medal and one bronze medal. LeBern Matthews who is currently on a gap year but formerly attended St. Vincent and the Grenadines Community College clinched the silver medal in Level III of the Computer Coding Olympiad with his hurricane-preparedness and emergency-response app, "LookOut". Team "EJ Tech" consisting of Enna-



"Ohm's Army", an all-girls team consisting of Nevaeh Scott, Kirabo Musaaazi, Damia Sibblies and Leanna Webb from Jamaica, earned a gold medal in Level III of the 2026 Robotics & Electronics Systems Olympiad for their project "SPACIS - Solar Powered Automatic Collection and Irrigation System".



"DC'S Circuit" consisting of Khalia Lewis, Jayden Cover, Mykael Pottinger and Serina Pitter from Jamaica, won the gold medal in Level II of the 2026 Robotics & Electronics Systems Olympiad with their project "Hydroponic Monitoring and Management System".



Ayeisha Mcpherson from Jamaica earned a silver medal in Level II of the 2026 Computer Coding Olympiad with her project "Farm Safe - Disaster Risk Assessment".

Belle McMaster and Julian-dra Sterling who attend St. Vincent Girls' High School but represented themselves earned a bronze medal in Level I of the Computer Coding Olympiad with their project "CareCloud", a multi-user healthcare management app.

Trinidad and Tobago

Trinidad and Tobago won three gold medals and two silver medals. Two of Trinidad and Tobago's gold medals were won in the Math Olympiad (one each in Levels I and III) with both teams coming from Hillview College. The members of the Level I team were Gautham Thota, Casimir John and Aaron Mahabir, while the members of the Level III team were Syon Mano and Rikard Harricharan. Also earning a gold medal was Joseann Boneo who competed in Level III of the Computer Coding Olympiad. She currently attends the New York Institute of Technology, and her web-based platform "Inter Regional Movement Planner" was designed to help CARICOM citizens navigate the process of legally moving between Caribbean countries for work.

Team "NC Pi-thagorean Triple" consisting of Rahul Kissoon, Nicholas Chablal and Arjun Singh represented Naparima College earned a silver medal in Level II of the Math Olympiad. Additionally, "Plant's Constant", an all-girls team consisting of Abigail Ali, Chaeli Ramnath and Az-Zahra Asgarali representing Holy Faith Convent Couva won a silver medal in Level II of the Robotics & Electron-

ics Systems Olympiad with their project "Eve". Their project was an automated robot designed to take care of indoor plants without human intervention.

Professor Cardinal Warde, the Interim Executive Director of the CSF, in his comments at the Medal Awards and Closing Ceremony said, "The students apparently found the Level III Math Olympiad to be very challenging. However, the standards will not be lowered for next year. I want the Level III students to rise to the challenge, and I believe they will." He went on to say to the students, "you cannot know too much mathematics; it will stand you in good stead as you go forward into the STEM disciplines. And if you did not win a medal this year, it is OK. Simply start preparing now to improve your robot, your code, or your mathematical skills for next year."

The competing students also had a lot to say. Caelan Pearce of team "Perplexing Polynomials" from Barbados who earned a bronze medal said, "This was our first time participating in the Olympiad, so we were definitely shocked when we found out that we made it to the finals. We were nervous at the beginning, but once the competition actually began, it became fun and engaging."

Platinum medalist Bridget Pineda from Belize said, "I can tell that everyone worked hard on their projects and it's really inspiring to see others my age that are working hard as well and who are in STEM. I would



Jaylen Allen of Jamaica won a silver medal in Level III of the 2026 Robotics & Electronics Systems Olympiad with his project "Smart Microgrid System (SMS)", and a bronze medal in Level III of the 2026 Computer Coding Olympiad with his project "Climate Futures".



Richaiya Henry, Jhenessa Arnold, Torrie McTurner and Alayna Rodney of team "Amaryllis" from Jamaica won a bronze medal in Level II of the 2026 Robotics & Electronics Systems Olympiad with their project "Solar-Powered Water Purifier System".



Team "Syntax & Savings" consisting of Fraimer De La Cruz, Josiah Davis, Nikhal Dore and Nathan Lewis from Saint Kitts and Nevis clinched the gold medal in Level II of the 2026 Computer Coding Olympiad with their project "ASPIRE".

also like to thank my teachers and my mentors who have been supporting me and some of my classmates, who I see here, for all of your support."

A complete list of all final-

ists by country, event, and age level is provided in the Table linked.

<https://drive.google.com/>



The Caribbean stands together against external threats and for lasting peace

As part of the actions to denounce and condemn the attacks recently perpetrated against Venezuela by the United States, political and civil organizations, jurists, and solidarity movements from Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Canada, Cuba, Curacao, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Martinique, Palestine (From the Gaza Strip), Paraguay, Dominican Republic, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Saint Lucia, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Venezuela, among other regions of the world, joined an initiative to concentrate ideas and energies in defense of the proclamation of Latin America and the Caribbean as a Zone of Peace.

This event called “1st Regional Conference: The Voices of the Caribbean in Defense of Venezuela and International Law,” featured the participation of more than 180 political and social actors from the aforementioned coun-

tries who included among their action proposals the development of strategies from a perspective of analysis and study of the different threats that put the region at risk, especially in light of the current situation where the people of Venezuela were affected by the bombing of January 03, 2026, which resulted in the kidnapping of President Nicolás Maduro Moros and the First Lady Cilia Flores.

Caribbean contributions for peace

The meeting served to articulate proposals and actions between social and solidarity movements of the Caribbean, unifying criteria in the face of external threats that seek to destabilize the region. The main purpose was to promote regional cohesion and the defense of peace through public positions from each of the nations in the region.

Each of the illustrious interventions coincided in the need to build an inter-

national solidarity network that allows for a defense of the sovereignty of our nations, as well as to implement an action plan that seeks to influence the reformulation of the foreign policy of each of our countries.

Participants spoke out in unison to denounce the warlike actions of last January 03 carried out by the government of Donald Trump, leading to the death of more than 100 people and the unlawful kidnapping of the constitutional President of Venezuela, Nicolás Maduro Moros and the First Lady Cilia Flores.

This conference is part of a series of coordinated activities that include presentations by experts in International Law, talks, and sessions of analysis. Through this work plan, the aim will be to generate legal instruments and spaces for thoughtful discussions that ensure the unity and integrity of the entire Caribbean.

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Pride of the Caribbean

First robotic cardiac surgery performed in Cayman Islands expands regional medical options

Health City Cayman Islands successfully performed its inaugural robotic-assisted heart surgeries, marking a major advancement in cardiac healthcare for the Cayman Islands and the broader Caribbean region.

These pioneering procedures were conducted by Dr. Binoy Chat-tuparambil, who serves as the Head of Cardiac Surgery and Clinical Director at Health City, outlines a press release from the organization.

This accomplishment positions the Cayman Islands among a select group of global centers capable of delivering fully robotic cardiac surgical interventions.

Reportedly, the initiation of this cutting-edge program followed an intensive training phase and a collaborative clinical partnership with Emory Saint Joseph's Hospital, renowned as one of the world's leading high-volume robotic cardiac surgery centers. Throughout this period, Health City's surgical team received mentorship from Dr. Douglas Murphy, Chief of Cardiothoracic Surgery at Emory Saint Joseph's Hospital. Dr. Murphy is recognized globally as a pioneer in the field, having performed over 4,000 robotic mitral valve surgeries.

While Dr. Murphy continues to provide expert oversight as a supervisory mentor, the actual surgeries are performed by Dr. Binoy and the dedicated cardiac team at Health City. According to Health City, this collaboration ensures that residents of the Cayman Islands and the wider Caribbean can access world-class, minimally invasive cardiac procedures locally, eliminating the need for lengthy travel abroad.

Robotic cardiac surgery involves operating through small incisions with advanced robotic instruments,



resulting in less trauma to the body and quicker recovery times compared to traditional open-heart procedures.

“One of the greatest advantages of robotic cardiac surgery is how quickly patients recover compared to traditional open-heart procedures,” Dr. Murphy explained. “In our program at Emory, most patients are discharged within 48 hours, and many return to normal daily activities within three weeks, compared with two to three months for conventional cardiac surgery.

He further emphasized the safety benefits, stating, “Robotic mitral valve repair also carries a very low risk of stroke, often under 0.5% compared with 2–3% for traditional open surgery, and mortality rates remain well below 0.5% in high-volume robotic centers. These results reflect the reduced trauma and enhanced surgical precision that robotic technology provides.”

Dr. Binoy expressed pride in this achievement, noting its significance for the region: “Performing these surgeries here in Cayman is a transformational moment. Patients no longer need to travel overseas for advanced

cardiac procedures that can now be safely completed robotically on the island. The reduced recovery time, lower complication rates and overall patient experience are extraordinary. We are proud to bring this level of care to the Cayman Islands.”

The robotic cardiac program at Health City is set to expand its offerings, including procedures such as cardiac valve repair and replacement, intracardiac tumor removal, and additional robotic interventions as the program develops. This approach aims to reduce hospital stays, speed up recovery, and improve clinical outcomes, all within the local healthcare setting.

As per the release, “This development reinforces Health City Cayman Islands as a center of excellence for advanced heart care, strengthens the national health system’s capability, and positions the Cayman Islands as a leader in robotic surgery in the Caribbean.”

The earliest known Cardiac surgery centers in the Caribbean date back to Cuba in 1951, according to the National Library of Medicine. (Jamaica Gleaner)

J'can spirits see sales bump in Ontario after US brands pulled

Jamaican rum producers are seeing a boost in Canada after the Liquor Control Board of Ontario (LCBO) – one of North America's largest alcohol retailers – halted imports and sales of United States alcoholic products in early 2025 amid escalating trade tensions between Ottawa and Washington.

In response to 25 per cent tariffs imposed by the US government on Canadian goods, the Ontario government directed the LCBO to immediately stop purchasing and remove all US spirits, wine, beer, cider and ready-to-drink products from its shelves and online platforms in several provinces, including British Columbia and Nova Scotia.

The move left gaps on store shelves once filled by American brands and created opportunities for other international spirits, including Jamaican rums. The LCBO told *The Gleaner* that it has seen a five per cent year-over-year increase in net sales of Jamaican rums, along with a three per cent year-over-year rise in units sold, as customers explore alternatives to US products.

The LCBO's press office noted that shifting consumer interest – with customers “increasingly open to discovering something new” – is among a number of factors that contributed to the uptick.

Ontario is home to Canada's largest



Jamaican diaspora, particularly in the Greater Toronto Area, which has supported strong demand for familiar Caribbean rum brands. A midday visit by *The Gleaner* to LCBO stores over the Christmas period showed brisk sales of Jamaican rum amid the conspicuous absence of many US labels.


The LCBO, a provincially owned Crown corporation responsible for

importing, distributing and retailing beverage alcohol in Ontario, supplies wine, spirits and beer through hundreds of stores, while generating significant revenue for the province. Its 2025 decision to remove US products – part of a broader set of retaliatory trade measures – has reshaped the retail spirits landscape, inadvertently benefiting Jamaican producers.

Data from the Campari Group, parent of J. Wray & Nephew – the maker of Appleton Estate, White Overproof and Kingston 62 – shows global sales of those Jamaican rum brands reached €119 million in the first nine months of 2025, up from €106 million in the same period in 2024. This growth reflects strong international demand, of which Canada's shifting market has become a meaningful part.

Last week, *The New York Post* said Trump was reportedly pressing Canada to lift a sweeping boycott of US-made alcohol as new data shows American distillers getting hammered by a collapse in sales north of the border.

Brown-Forman, the maker of Jack Daniel's, told Bloomberg that its Canadian organic net sales plunged more than 60 per cent in the first half of its 2026 fiscal year, with Chief Executive Officer Lawson Whiting calling the boycott “worse than a tariff”. (*Jamaica Gleaner*)



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Regional News

Ministry probing allegations of sexual exploitation at police academy in Guyana

The Guyana government says it has become aware of serious allegations of sexual exploitation, abuse of authority, and misconduct at the Guyana Police Force Academy.

The Ministry of Home Affairs said that upon receipt of the report, it immediately directed the Criminal Investigation Department and the Office of Professional Responsibility to commence full investigations into the allegations.

“The Ministry treats these matters with the utmost seriousness and reiterates its zero-tolerance policy for abuse, exploitation, or misconduct within any agency under its oversight.


“Any individual—regardless of rank, position, or tenure—found to have engaged in wrongdoing will be charged and held fully accountable under the law. At the same time, the Ministry remains firmly committed to ensuring that due process is observed and

that investigations are conducted thoroughly, fairly, and without interference,” it added.

The ministry gave no details as to

when the allegations were committed, but said “the welfare, dignity, and protection of all trainees and officers within the Guyana Police Force remain paramount”. (Jamaica Gleaner)





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Brazil agriculture minister says country is ready to increase collaboration with IICA and member states



Brazil has high hopes for Muhammad Ibrahim's leadership of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), reflecting confidence in the new Director General's extensive background in managing agricultural organizations that focus on enhancing competitiveness through science, technology, and innovation.

IICA reports in a press release that Cleber Soares, Brazil's Deputy Minister (Executive Secretary) of Agriculture and Livestock, expressed these expectations, emphasizing Ibrahim's comprehensive understanding of the opportunities and challenges facing agriculture across the Americas.

Soares underlined Ibrahim's in-depth knowledge of regional agricultural issues and reaffirmed Brazil's willingness to collaborate with IICA and its member states under his new leadership.

The swearing-in ceremony took place in San José, Costa Rica, where Soares represented Carlos Fávaro, Brazil's Minister of Agriculture and Chair of the Inter-American Board

of Agriculture (IICA)—the organization's top governing body.

During the event, Ibrahim, a distinguished Guyanese agronomist, officially took office after being elected in November by the continent's agriculture ministers for a four-year term. He succeeded Manuel Otero of Argentina, who served two terms in the role.

"We are already in talks with the new Director General to support him and to share with other countries Brazil's experience in aspects of tropical agriculture such as sustainable livestock farming, technological development, innovation, the adding of value, competitiveness and market access", Soares announced during his visit to IICA Headquarters.

Brazil's transformation over the past few decades exemplifies the potential of technological progress in agriculture, asserts IICA. From being a significant importer of foodstuffs, Brazil has become one of the world's foremost agricultural nations, driven by research and innovative technologies that have dramatically increased pro-

ductivity and sustainability.

Looking ahead, Soares sees strengthening ties between major food-exporting countries like Brazil and nations heavily reliant on imports—particularly in Central America and the Caribbean—as a vital mission for IICA. One of the primary challenges in this endeavor is integrating small-scale farmers into modern agricultural systems through the adoption of new technologies that promote sustainability and add value.

"Our goal," Soares explained, "is to help producers better manage their farms. They need to understand not only what to produce, but also how to sell, distribute, purchase inputs, and adapt to climate change. This also involves tackling emerging issues such as plant and animal diseases, which are re-emerging after being thought eradicated. Diseases do not respect borders, and therefore IICA has a crucial role in eradication and control efforts."

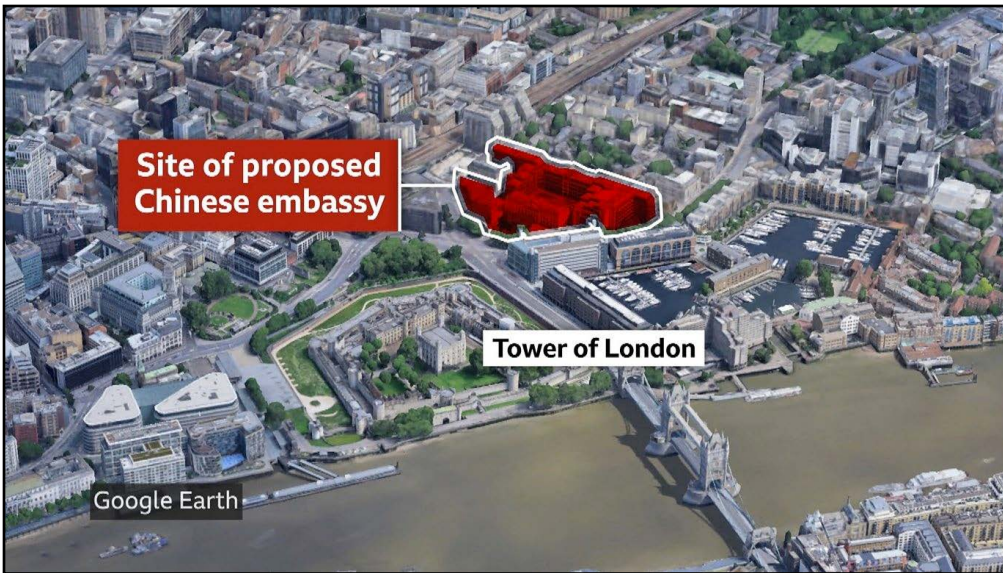
Additionally, access to credit and agricultural insurance for smallholders were highlighted as essential pillars for sustainable farming across the continent.

Soares emphasized that without credit, it remains impossible for many producers—especially small farmers—to sustain their operations.

He pointed out that agricultural insurance is particularly critical in tropical regions.

"Without credit", he suggested, "it is impossible for producers, especially small farmers, to produce. Agricultural insurance is another key issue, especially in the tropics, where the need to equip producers with a tool to protect them against the risk of losing production is of the utmost importance". (Dominica News Online)

UK approves plans for Chinese mega-embassy



The UK has approved China's plans for a huge new embassy in central London, despite opponents warning it could be used as a base for spying and pose security risks.

Security Minister Dan Jarvis said intelligence agencies had been "integral" to the process and he was "content any risks are being appropriately managed".

The decision, which has repeatedly been delayed, had posed a challenge for the government, as it seeks to balance its desire for closer ties with Beijing with warnings of the threat posed by China.

It comes as Sir Keir Starmer is expected to visit Beijing early this year, becoming the first UK prime minister to do so since 2018.

In a letter, the housing department confirmed that Housing Secretary Steve Reed, who is responsible for planning policy, had given permission for the development to go ahead, subject to certain conditions.

The site at Royal Mint Court is close to the City of London and fibre optic cables that carry vast

quantities of highly sensitive data, sparking concerns they could be used by China to infiltrate the UK's financial system.

However, in its decision letter, the department said there was no suggestion the use of the site as an embassy would interfere with the cables.

It added that no bodies with responsibility for national security, including the Home Office and the Foreign Office, had raised concerns or objected to the proposal on the basis of the proximity of the cables.

Jarvis told MPs the government had "acted to increase the resilience of cables in the area through an extensive series of measures to protect sensitive data".

The minister argued that the development brought "clear national security advantages", by consolidating China's diplomatic premises from seven sites into a single location.

In a joint letter to the home secretary and foreign secretary about the embassy plans, MI5 director gen-

eral Sir Ken McCallum and GC-HQ's director Anne Keast-Butler said it was "not realistic to expect to be able wholly to eliminate each and every potential risk".

However, they added a "proportionate" package of national security mitigations had been developed for the site.

Conditions on the planning approval include that the development must begin within three years, and a steering group of local bodies should be established to manage protests outside the site.

Opposition parties and some Labour MPs had called for the project to be blocked. Local residents also oppose the plans and are planning a legal challenge.

Conservative shadow foreign secretary Priti Patel said: "Keir Starmer has sold off our national security to the Chinese Communist Party with his shameful super embassy surrender."

Liberal Democrat foreign affairs spokesperson Calum Miller said the decision would "amplify China's surveillance efforts here in the UK and endanger the security of our data - not to speak of the safety of the brave Hong Kongers on British soil".

He added that it was "categorically wrong" that the prime minister had "embraced these threats to further his flirtation with China".

Reform UK said the decision was "a serious threat to national security" and "a desperate attempt by the Labour government to cosy up to the Chinese Communist Party". (BBC)

Europe to suspend approval of US tariffs deal

The European Parliament is planning to suspend approval of the US tariffs deal agreed in July, according to sources close to its international trade committee.

The suspension is set to be announced in Strasbourg, France on Wednesday. The move would mark another escalation in tensions between the US and Europe, as Donald Trump ratchets up his efforts to acquire Greenland, threatening new tariffs over the issue on the weekend.

The stand-off has rattled financial markets, reviving talk of a trade war and the possibility of retaliation against the US for its trade measures.

Shares on both sides of the Atlantic were lower on Tuesday, with European stock markets seeing a second day of losses. In the US, the Dow Jones was down 1.3% in midday trading, while the S&P 500 dropped 1.5% and the Nasdaq was 1.7% lower.

On the currency markets, the US dollar also fell sharply. The euro climbed 0.7% against the dollar to \$1.1731 while the pound rose by 0.2% to \$1.346

Borrowing costs also rippled higher around the world, as the biggest sell-off of long-term government debt in months drove up yields on 30-year bonds in markets including the US, UK and Germany.

Trade tensions between the US and Europe had eased since the two sides struck a deal at Trump's Turnberry golf course in Scotland in July.

That agreement set US levies on European goods at 15%, down from the 30% Trump had initially threatened as part of his "Liberation Day" wave of tariffs in April. In exchange, Europe had agreed to invest in the US and make changes at on the continent expected to boost US exports.

The deal still needs approval from the European Parliament to become official.

But on Saturday, within hours of Trump's threat of US tariffs over



Greenland, Manfred Weber, an influential German member of European Parliament, said "approval is not possible at this stage".


The EU had put on hold plans to retaliate against the US tariffs with its own package targeting €93bn (\$109bn, £81bn) worth of American goods while the two sides finalised the details.

But that reprieve ends on 6 February, meaning EU levies will come into force on 7 February unless the bloc moves for an extension or approves

the new deal.

French Prime Minister Emmanuel Macron was among those urging the EU to consider its retaliatory options, including the anti-coercion instrument, nicknamed a "trade bazooka".

Washington's "endless accumulation" of new tariffs is "fundamentally unacceptable, even more so when they are used as leverage against territorial sovereignty," he said in a speech at the World Economic Forum in Davos. (BBC)



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PMS and AGS among winners in school basketball league

Princess Margaret School (PMS) and Antigua Grammar School (AGS) were among the winners in the Cool and Smooth Inter-School Basketball League at the JSC Sports Complex on Monday.

Princess Margaret School made a successful start to their campaign in the Junior Boys Division by snatching a 31-27 victory against the Ottos Comprehensive School.

Elijah Charles shot a game-high 27 points for Princess Margaret School, while Shakelo Joseph and Jalen Isaac each converted nine points for Ottos Comprehensive School.

Antigua Grammar School launched their campaign in the Senior Boys Division with a commanding 42-18 victory over Island Academy.

Raheem Sawyer sank 12 points for Antigua Grammar School, while Khalique Harris scored eight points for Island Academy, who suffered their second loss in as many games.

St. Anthony's Secondary School secured a 35-29 victory against Island Academy in the opening game of the competition.



The players of the Antigua Grammar School (green uniform) and Island Academy compete in the senior boys' division in the Cool and Smooth Inter-School Basketball League at the JSC Sports Complex on Monday, January 19, 2026. (Photo courtesy of the school basketball league)

Jordan Martin and Zenda Dorsett each converted eight points and Is-tel Clarke sank six points for St. Anthony's Secondary School.

Khalique Harris shot a game-high 12 points and Elijah Peters scored nine points for Island Academy.

The 2026 Cool and Smooth Inter-School Basketball League officially commenced with a march past and opening ceremony at the JSC Sports Complex on Thursday, January 15.



Sports News

Leewards Islands Stormers secure spot in women's T20 Blaze final

The Leeward Islands Stormers continued their successful unbeaten campaign to reach the final of the Cricket West Indies (CWI) Women's T20 Blaze in St. Vincent and the Grenadines on Monday.

The Leewards claimed their fourth consecutive win with a 31-run victory against Barbados in a top-of-the-table clash at Arnos Vale playing field.

With both sides heading into the contest unbeaten after three matches with one round remaining, the winner was guaranteed a place in Friday's final.

The Leewards made 118 for nine off their 20 overs and restricted Barbados women to 87 for nine off their 20 overs.

Qiana Joseph topscored for the Leewards with 27, Tonya Martin struck 23, Jahzara Claxton hit 22, Antiguan captain Amanda Edwards scored 12, and Rozel Liburd made 11 not out.

Off-spinner Naijanni Cumberbatch grabbed five for 15, and medium pacer Shanika Bruce picked up two for 14.

In the Barbados reply, Asabi Callender hit 17, Aaliyah Alleyne struck 15, Eboni Brathwaite got 14, and Theanny Herbert-Mayers made 10.

Left-arm spinner Qiana Joseph claimed two for 10, Antiguan pacer Shawnisha Hector took two for 13, and off-spinner Amanda Edwards captured two for 17.

Trinidad and Tobago women bolstered their chances of making the T20 Blaze final by beating defending



Players of the Leeward Islands Stormers

champions Guyana women by eight wickets in their fourth-round match.

Leg spinner Shriya Jairam bagged four for 11 and off spinner Samara Ramnath claimed three for 10, as Trinidad and Tobago women dismissed Guyana for a meagre 57 in 17 overs.

Britney Cooper hit an unbeaten 29 and Djenaba Joseph struck 27 not out in a 56-run unbroken third-wicket partnership to guide Trinidad and Tobago to victory at 58 for two in 13.2 overs.

The result left fourth-place Guyana needing to defeat second-placed Barbados in their final preliminary match on Wednesday, while hoping that T&T, who are currently in third place, lose to Jamaica if they are to have any

chance of joining Leeward Islands in the final.

Jamaica recorded their first win in the tournament with a seven-wicket victory against the Windward Islands in a bottom-of-the-table clash.

Both teams entered their penultimate match in the preliminary round without a win after losing their three previous encounters.

The Windwards, who will face the Leeward Islands in their final preliminary match on Wednesday, were restricted by the Jamaicans to 99 for seven off their 20 overs.

Jamaica women coasted to victory at 100 for three with 19 balls to spare.



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Senegal's Afcon celebrations overshadowed by threat of sanctions



The Senegalese soccer team rides through thousands of cheering fans celebrating their victory in the Africa Cup of Nations soccer tournament, in Dakar, Senegal, Tuesday, Jan. 20, 2026. (AP)

RABAT (Reuters) - Senegal might be celebrating their Africa Cup of Nations victory but will anxiously await possible sanctions for their walk-off during Sunday's final against Morocco.

Senegal staged a lengthy protest after a penalty awarded in the dying stages of the game to hosts Morocco after a VAR review, walking off the pitch before returning to continue.

Morocco squandered the penalty, taking the match to extra time where Senegal scored to win 1-0 and emerge victorious for a second time in the last three Cup of Nations editions.

But their actions have been widely condemned, including by FIFA President Gianni Infantino and the Confederation of African Football.

Senegal coach Pape Bouna Thiaw, who ordered his players off, and some of those who went to the changing

room can expect to face disciplinary charges.

With a trip to the World Cup next for Senegal, they will be concerned the manager and key players could be suspended for matches at the finals in Canada, Mexico, and the US in June.

Senegal's opening two games against France and Norway are in New York.

Thiaw has expressed belated regret for his actions, although a chance to address the post-match press conference after Sunday's final was quickly ended when he was jeered by Moroccan journalists.

But in a television interview, he said, "I don't want to dwell on the events of the match. In hindsight, I really shouldn't have told my players to come off.

"I apologise for the sake of football. After further consideration, I brought

them back on. We know what happens behind the scenes," he added, referring to conspiracy theories around hosts Morocco being favoured by the referee.

"We can react in the heat of the moment, and we must also ask ourselves whether that was a penalty? Now, we accept the referee's mistakes; it can happen. We shouldn't have done it, but it's done. Now, we apologise to football."

CAF said it was reviewing footage and that disciplinary proceedings will follow, adding that it "condemns the unacceptable behaviour from some players and officials."

"CAF is reviewing all footage and will refer the matter to competent bodies for appropriate action to be taken against those found guilty," African football's governing body said in a statement on Monday.

Calvin Ayre Foundation Celebrates Culmination of 2025 Women's Premier League Season



The Calvin Ayre Foundation (CAF), in proud partnership with the Antigua and Barbuda Football Association (ABFA), is pleased to celebrate the successful conclusion of the inaugural CAF/ABFA Women's Premier League, which has marked a new era of opportunity for women's football in Antigua and Barbuda.

The 2025 season came to a thrilling close with Empire Trendsetters FC taking the championship title, Wadadli United FC securing second place, and Cutting Edge FA earning third place, each club demonstrating exceptional determination and growth throughout the league.

"The Calvin Ayre Foundation is proud to support the growth of women's football in Antigua and Barbuda through our partnership with the Antigua and Barbuda Football Association and the Women's Premier League," said Jamilla Kirwan, Manager of the Calvin Ayre Foundation. *"This league represents more than competition; it reflects progress, opportunity, and the creation of meaningful pathways for women and girls in sport."*

2025 CAF/ABFA Women's Premier League Award Winners:

Golden Glove: Anik Jarvis (Empire Trendsetters FC)

Golden Boot: Nafisa Quashie (Em-



pire Trendsetters FC)

Best Defender: Karmiellia Hughes (Empire Trendsetters FC)

Most Valuable Player (MVP): Jada Benjamin (Wadadli United FC)

As the season concludes, the Foundation is already looking ahead.

"As we review the inaugural season, we are committed to identifying areas for improvement and look forward to executing an even stronger and more impactful Season Two," added Kirwan. *"We commend the players, coaches, officials, and volunteers for their professionalism and dedication, and extend special thanks to Gwen Salmon and her team at the ABFA for their leadership, collaboration, and commitment in making this league*

possible."

Gwendolyn Salmon, Senior Vice President of the Antigua and Barbuda Football Association, also shared her reflections:

"This has been a historic season for women's football in our country, and we are grateful to the Calvin Ayre Foundation for their investment in the game and our players."

The CAF/ABFA Women's Premier League continues to highlight the vast potential of women's sport in Antigua and Barbuda. CAF remains committed to empowering young women through athletic development, visibility, and access to meaningful opportunities in sport.

Short shift for Sinner as Osaka makes bold Melbourne statement

MELBOURNE (Reuters) - Jannik Sinner and Madison Keys made winning starts to their Australian Open title defences on Tuesday, but former champion Naomi Osaka made the biggest splash on day three of the tournament with a dazzling entrance before her match.

Sinner, who is aiming for a third straight title at Melbourne Park, spent only 68 minutes on court in his first outing of the 2026 season before Hugo Gaston retired because of injury while losing 6-2, 6-1.

The world number two consoled the weeping Frenchman and wished him well in his recovery before declaring himself delighted with the results of his off-season training.

American Keys made an even shakier start to her maiden Grand Slam title defence before rallying for a 7-6 (6), 6-1 victory over Ukrainian Oleksandra Oliynykova.

A double break down thanks to some untimely double faults, Keys trailed 4-0 before forcing a tiebreak in which the unorthodox Oliynykova caused chaos with her deep, looping shots.

Oliynykova brought up two set points but Keys erased the deficit with some trademark big-hitting to eventually snatch a tense tiebreak before racing through the second stanza.

Oliynykova, who was playing in her first major, wore temporary face tattoos -- blue flowers that matched her outfit and the court -- but she was put into the shade in the fashion stakes by Osaka.

In one of the boldest fashion statements ever seen on a tennis court, Osaka entered Rod Laver Arena carrying a white parasol with a volumi-



Naomi Osaka of Japan plays a forehand return to Antonia Ruzic of Croatia during their first round match at the Australian Open tennis championship in Melbourne, Australia, Tuesday, Jan. 20, 2026. (AP)

nous trailing veil and wore a wide-brimmed hat above a long turquoise tunic with crimped white trousers.

The 2019 and 2021 Melbourne Park champion's tennis was at times less impressive than her self-designed outfit but Osaka finished strongly to beat Croatian Antonia Ruzic 6-3, 3-6, 6-4 and take her place in the second round.

Leylah Fernandez, the 2021 US Open runner-up, was not so fortunate and exited with a 6-2, 7-6 (1) loss to Janice Tjen, who became the first Indonesian to win a match at the Australian Open in 28 years.

There were comfortable first-round wins for fifth seed Elena Rybakina, in-form Tokyo Olympics gold medallist Belinda Bencic and 2017 French Open champion Jelena Ostapenko.

In the men's draw, 2023 finalist Stefanos Tsitsipas had to rally from a set down to beat Japan's Shintaro Mochizuki and avoid a first-round

exit for the second year in a row.

Sinner's compatriot Lorenzo Musetti, the fifth seed, also advanced after his opponent Raphael Collignon retired while trailing 4-6, 7-6(3), 7-5, 3-2.

Eighth seed Ben Shelton, who lost to Sinner in last year's semi-finals, beat Ugo Humbert in three tight sets, while his fellow American Taylor Fritz, seeded one spot lower, needed four to get past French opposition in the shape of Valentin Royer.

Melbourne Park's favourite Frenchman of recent years, Gael Monfils, bid farewell to the tournament for the 20th and final time after a 6-7 (3), 7-5, 6-4 7-5 loss to Australian qualifier Dane Sweeny.

"My journey started in 2003 with you guys, now we are in 2026 and somehow it's the finish line," the 39-year-old, who will retire at the end of the season, told the crowd after receiving a standing ovation.

Sports

WEDNESDAY 21ST JANUARY 2026

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Guydadli Jets go joint-top in Second Division League



The Guydadli Jets football team

The Guydadli Jets maintained their unbeaten run during the latest round of matches to join Sea View Farm FC at the top of the Antigua and Barbuda Football Association's (ABFA) Second Division League on Monday.

Michael Peters scored twice from the penalty spot as the Guydadli Jets notched up their seventh win in eight matches by cruising to a 3-0 victory against Urlings Golden Stars at the Urlings playing field.

James converted the two penalty kicks in the 50th and 56th minutes, while teammate Nicholas Clarke scored the other goal in the 76th min-

ute.

The result allows the Guydadli Jets to move into joint first place with Sea View Farm FC. Both teams are level on 22 points, but Sea View Farm FC has played nine matches, one less than the Guydadli Jets.

The Urlings Golden Stars remain on 11 points after suffering their third loss in eight matches.

Sea View Farm FC's unbeaten run in the competition was ended by a 2-1 loss to Fort Road at the Fort Road playing field.

Following a goalless first half, con-

versions by Jean-Pierre Williams in the 57th minute and Brandon Coates in the 64th minute gave Fort Road a two-nil lead.

A strike by Nigel Graham in the 88th minute reduced the deficit for Sea View Farm FC.

The result allows Fort Road to advance to 18 points after recording their sixth win in nine matches. Sea View Farm FC remains on 22 points after slipping to their first defeat in nine matches.

Kelton Dalso

Real Blizzard also kept their unbeaten run intact to move into third place. Real Blizzard notched up their sixth win in eight matches with a one-nil victory against the CPTSA Wings at the St. Johnstone's Village Stadium.

Following a goalless first half, Lincoln Celestine broke the deadlock by snatching the winner with a strike in the 70th minute.

The result carries Real Blizzard to 20 points, while the CPTSA Wings remain on nine points after slumping to their second defeat in nine matches.