

“We did the right thing” says PM Browne



Opening of the GPH/Antigua Cruise Port cruise terminal at Lower Newgate Street. The terminal is where visitors who are homeporting will be processed when they arrive or when they leave for the Airport.

“We did the right thing”, says PM Browne



Prime Minister Gaston Browne

The developments that are transforming Lower Newgate Street in St. John's, which are turning an 'eye-sore' into a first-class tourist attraction, indicate that the government made the right decision when it entered into a partnership with Global Port Holdings to expand and further develop the cruise infrastructure.

That's the contention of Prime Minister Gaston Browne when he addressed the official opening ceremony on Saturday for the new cruise terminal, which marks phase one of the overall development of the area.

The prime minister recalled that when his government first engaged Global Port Holdings (GPH) back in 2018, there was a big uproar about the wisdom of entering into an agreement with GPH. Despite the vociferous opposition to the move, his government 'stood its ground' knowing that it was making the right decision.

“We did the research and we found that over a 30-year period, we would have invested over \$300 million in cruise infrastructure at the St. John's Harbour, most of which went into dredging, a costly exercise. However, when we looked at the return, we were making no much less than we were

spending; at best \$100 million over that 30-year period with a deficit of \$200 million,” he explained.

According to PM Browne, his government took a decision recognizing that this particular model ‘was not working for us’. He added that the government came to the realization that it had to pursue a public-private partnership, for profit.

“Even before we came to office, we developed our own bespoke economic model known as ‘empowerment capitalism’, which involves the govern-

ment partnering with the private sector to undertake certain development for profit. Under this arrangement, the government takes an equity stake in the company and develop other businesses so that others can share in the benefits,” he furthered explained.

The arrangement with GPH is that the government provides the land, GPH funds the infrastructural development and then operate the facility for a period of thirty years, following which the facility will be handed over to the government.

“With its superior finances, GPH invested US\$80 million to build out the infrastructure, including the 5th berth, as well as paying off the government's loan at one of the commercial banks for a sum of \$21 million. All the head tax went to pay that loan for nearly twenty years and now that loan has been retired, thanks to GPH,” PM Browne revealed.

The prime minister emphasized that while many argued against the partnership with GPH, accusing the government of ‘giving away’ the people's patrimony, however, based on all the benefits that accrue to the government under the arrangement, it has worked out in favour of the people of Antigua and Barbuda.



Tourism Minister Fernandez celebrates the partnership with Global Ports Holdings



Tourism Minister Charles Fernandez

Tourism Minister, Charles ‘Max’ Fernandez, is fully endorsing what he termed ‘the growing partnership’ between the government and Global Ports Holdings Ltd. and Antigua Cruise Ports, describing it as ‘transformative’.

He told last Saturday’s grand opening of the cruise terminal on Lower Newgate Street that from the outset, GPH and ACP brought global expertise, operational excellence, and a long-term vision of what a modern cruise destination must be; effi-

cient, guest-centred, commercially vibrant, and deeply connected to the local economy.

“Antigua Cruise Port has become more than a facility. It has become a platform, one that connects cruise passengers to our people, our culture, our entrepreneurs, and our communities. When the Government entered into this partnership in 2019, it was not without careful consideration.

“At that time, Antigua and Barbuda faced a choice:

to maintain the status quo, or to position ourselves decisively for the future of cruise tourism. I championed this agreement because cruise tourism was evolving rapidly, and to remain competitive, we needed investment, innovation, and international best practice,” Minister Fernandez remarked.

The minister recalled that at that time, the government needed a partner with scale, experience, and credibility, one that could help Antigua and Barbuda move from being simply a port of call to becoming a regional leader in cruise operations and homeporting.

He emphasized that Global Port Holding offered that opportunity, and Antigua Cruise Port has delivered on that promise. The minister revealed that this year, Antigua and Barbuda can look forward to a doubling the number of cruise passenger arrivals before GPH/ACP came on board and since the COVID-19 shutdown.

Additionally, the Minister reported that during the shutdown, ACP stood out as one of the few private-sector entities that continued to pay salaries and wages throughout the lockdown period. That decision speaks volume, according to Minister Fernandez.

“It demonstrated not only corporate responsibility, but a genuine commitment to the people of Antigua and Barbuda, recognizing that tourism is ultimately about livelihoods, families, and national resilience.

“Since then, we have seen measurable progress. Our cruise product has been modernized.

“Passenger flow and the overall visitor experience have improved. Local businesses have been more deliberately integrated into the cruise ecosystem,” the minister observed.



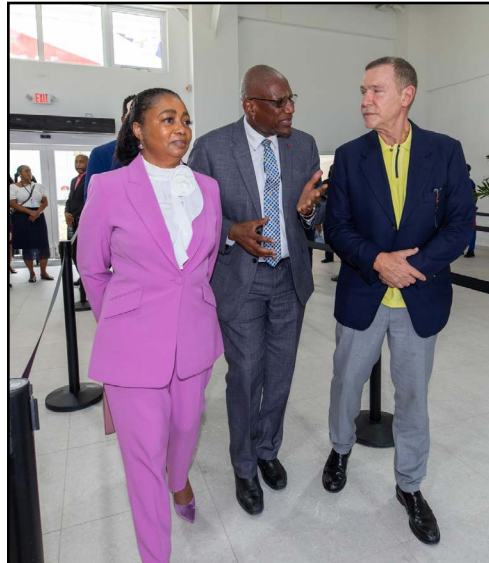
Global Port Holdings commits to more developments in Antigua and Barbuda



GPH Chairman and CEO, Mehmet Kutman

The Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Global Port Holdings, Mehmet Kutman, who announced that he is now a citizen of Antigua and Barbuda, is giving a firm commitment of further major investments in the country into the foreseeable future.

CEO Kutman made the commitment Saturday as he addressed the opening of the GPH/Antigua Cruise Port cruise terminal at Lower Newgate Street. The terminal is where visitors who are homeporting will be processed when they arrive or when they leave for the Airport.



Governor General Dr. Rodney Williams(center) and Lady Williams(left) with GPH Chairman and CEO, Mehmet Kutman(right)

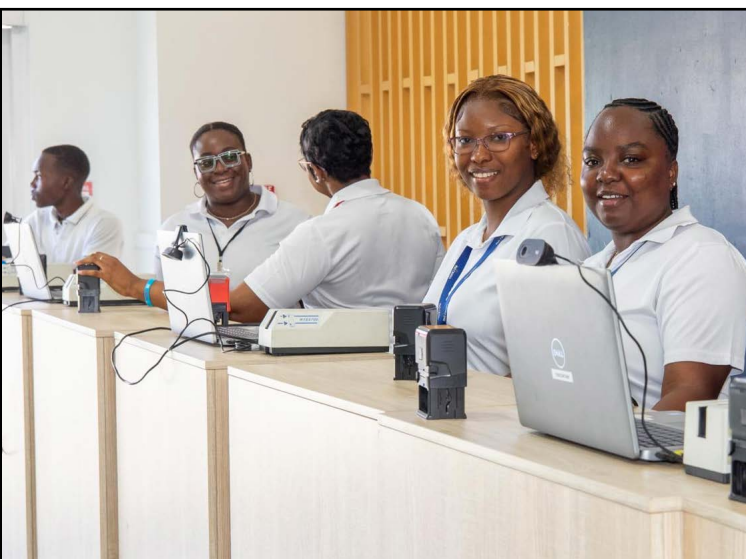
Already, GHP/ACP is undertaking a multi-million-dollar development to transform Lower Newgate Street, once an eyesore for visitors arriving on cruise ships, to a modern, sophisticated tourist facility that both cruise passengers, stay-over visitors from hotels and locals can enjoy.

Kutman said one area of focus will be the Heritage Quay shopping area, which is in line for further upgrade and enhancement in the coming year.

He noted that the demand for home-

porting berths is greater than the capacity at the moment and he is hoping to have further discussions with the prime minister and the Cabinet about constructing additional berths in order to get a bigger slice of the homeporting pie.

CEO Kutman observed that when he arrived in Antigua on this current visit, he was pleasantly surprised to see the number of private jets parked at Runway 10, adding that this was a sign that 'something good' was happening in this country.





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Cruise tourism official sees Antigua and Barbuda as a gateway for cruises to the Southern Caribbean

Antigua and Barbuda could become a major hub for cruise tourism serving as a gateway for cruise excursions to the Southern Caribbean.

That's the view of Global Ports Holding's Regional Director for the Eastern Caribbean, Lancelot Arnold.

He was speaking Saturday at the official opening of the new Global Ports Holding/Antigua Cruise Port cruise terminal on Lower Newgate Street where the processing of passengers who begin or end their homeporting journeys in Antigua and Barbuda.

He said the opening of the cruise terminal, which forms part of the ongoing Upland Development, significantly expands what Antigua Cruise Port can offer.

"Beyond Antigua and Barbuda, these developments also strengthen the port's strategic role within the wider Caribbean cruise network. As homeporting and turnaround capacity continue to grow here, Antigua and Barbuda is increasingly positioned as both a destination and as a gateway that supports itineraries that extend further south to destinations such as St. Lucia and across the Southern Caribbean," he suggested.

In this way, he added, Antigua Cruise Port contributes not only to national growth, but to regional connectivity and resilience. "It demonstrates how strategic infrastructure investment can support a more integrated and competitive Caribbean cruise offering; one where destinations complement rather than compete with each other," he remarked.

None of this, Arnold emphasized, would have been possible without strong partnership with the government.

Meanwhile, General Manager of Antigua Cruise Port Ltd., Gasper



Global Ports Holding's Regional Director for the Eastern Caribbean, Lancelot Arnold



General Manager of Antigua Cruise Port Ltd. Gasper George

George, highlighted that the terminal was completed less than a year after the ground breaking ceremony took place and that the Upland Development, of which it is a part, will be ready by the middle of the year.

"Today truly marks the beginning of the next chapter. A chapter that calls for renewed commitment to excellence, adaptability, and strategic thinking. The cruise industry is evolving, ships are larger, guest expectations are higher and destinations are increasingly assessed on efficiency, experience and value creation. As participants and players within this eco-system, we too must evolve to fully harness the economic benefits from the projected millions of visitors who grace our shores annually," he remarked.

George noted too that the cruise industry delivers direct and tangible benefits across the economy; from transportation providers and tour operators, to vendors, artisans, retailers, restaurants, hotels and service professionals.

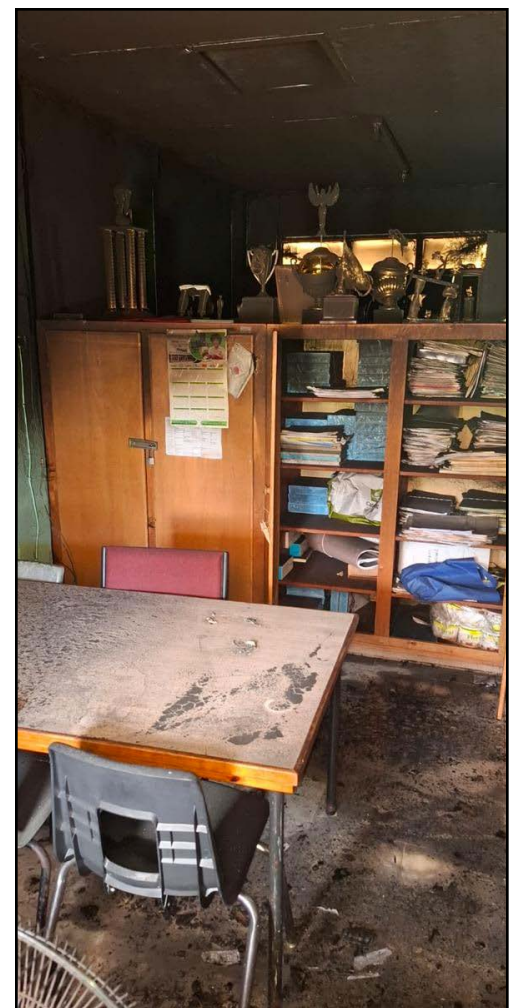
Fire of unknown origin forces a two-day closer of the Bendals Primary school

The Ministry of Education has had to implement special arrangements for Bendals Primary School following an early morning fire on Sunday at the school's Administrative Block.

The ministry has announced that all classes have been suspended for Monday and Tuesday with the students expected back in the classrooms by Wednesday. The teaching staff is however asked to report to the school on Tuesday.

According to reports, a call was made on the St. John's Fire Station just after 5:00 o'clock with the department responding quickly to the call.

After reports of the fire were circulated, both Education Minister Daryll Matthew and Director of Education, Clare Browne, rushed to the scene to see fire-hand what had happened.



Firemen were kept busy over the weekend

Firemen attached to the St. John's Fire Brigade were kept busy over the weekend answering calls to two fires, one of which involved a fire at the Bendals Primary School.

Department spokesman Insp Lester Bagot reported that at 5:17am on Sunday 25th January, 2026, the St John's Fire Station received a call stating that there was smoke emitting from a building on the compound of the Bendals Primary School.

"An immediate response was made with the No 17 Fire tender. On arrival at the scene the fire, the crew met smoke emitting from the roof of a 24 X 36 feet concrete structure located on the southern side of the compound. Forcible entry was used to gain access to the interior of the building. Upon entry, it was discovered that the fire was isolated to the northern side of the building. Water was used from the Fire tender to extinguish the flames. The contents, interior and roof of the build-



ing suffered fire and soot damage. No one was present at the school at the time of the incident. The Fire Brigade is investigating the origin of the fire," he reported.

On Saturday, Insp Bagot reported at 9:57 am, the St John's Fire Station received a call stating that there was a structure on fire on Wireless Road. An immediate response was made with the No 17 Fire tender. On arrival at the scene, he said the fire crew met a concrete and wooden structure fully engulfed in flames. "Water was used from the fire tender to control and extinguish the flames. The structure measured 27 X 43 feet. The structure along with its contents were destroyed by the fire. No one was injured during the incident. The Fire brigade is investigating the origin of the fire," Inspector Bagot noted.

Already, the St. John's Fire Station has received 24 fire calls for the year.

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Cabinet agrees on another amnesty to tackle labour shortage



Director of Communications in the Office of the Prime Minister, Maurice Merchant

The government will shortly introduce another period of amnesty as part of measures to deal with the shortage of labour in critical sectors of the economy and to provide a pathway for those living in the country illegally to have their status rectified.

A government spokesman said the amnesty is intended to address current labour shortages across key sectors of the economy while providing an opportunity for individuals who have fallen out of immigration status to regularise their stay.

Cabinet noted that a number of non-nationals have become out of time due primarily to financial constraints, rather than willful non-compliance. The amnesty will allow affected individuals to bring their status into good standing without penalty, enabling them to live and work legally and contribute fully to national development.

The initiative is also designed to support employers by expanding the available labour pool at a time when Antigua and Barbuda is experiencing increased economic activity and demand for workers.

Further details regarding eligibility criteria, application procedures, date of implantation and the duration of the



amnesty will be presented to the Cabinet at its next sitting by Immigration Minister Sir Steadroy Benjamin and his team from the Department of Immigration.

The Cabinet also reaffirms its commitment to fair, humane, and practical immigration policies that balance national interests with social and economic realities.



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A mid-year ABST reduction is coming



Prime Minister Gaston Browne

The government has decided to introduce a reduction in the ABST later this year as part of efforts to cushion consumers from the high cost of living, which is largely due to the high cost of imported items.

Prime minister Gaston Browne noted that with Antigua and Barbuda importing as much as approximately 90 percent of what it consumes, there is very little option available to the government to seriously tackle rising prices as the government has no control on prices of goods imported into the country.

However, he said that as a matter of policy, the Cabinet has approved a reduction in the Antigua and Barbuda Sales Tax (ABST) to 7% between the second or third quarters of 2026, as part of ongoing efforts to relieve the cost-of-living pressures faced by households and to stimulate consumer spending.

According to the prime minister the decision follows careful consideration of the effects of international events on the country's economy and continued feedback from citizens and businesses regarding the rising cost of essential goods

and services. Cabinet agreed that temporarily easing indirect tax burdens will help households manage everyday expenses while encouraging increased commercial activity across the local economy.

"This temporary reduction in ABST complements other efforts by the Government to balance revenue collection with measures that support the purchasing power of households. Measures such as targeted tax reliefs and initiatives aimed at alleviating inflationary pressures form part of the Government's broader strategy for promoting economic stability and growth,"

a government statement added.

Cabinet emphasised that the reduction will be carefully monitored to assess its impact on consumer behaviour and economic activity. Details regarding the implementation of the measure, including specific effective dates and any administrative guidance, will be communicated by the Inland Revenue Department in due course.

The Cabinet says that the Government remains committed to a balanced approach to fiscal policy that supports both the wellbeing of citizens and the long-term sustainability of public finances.



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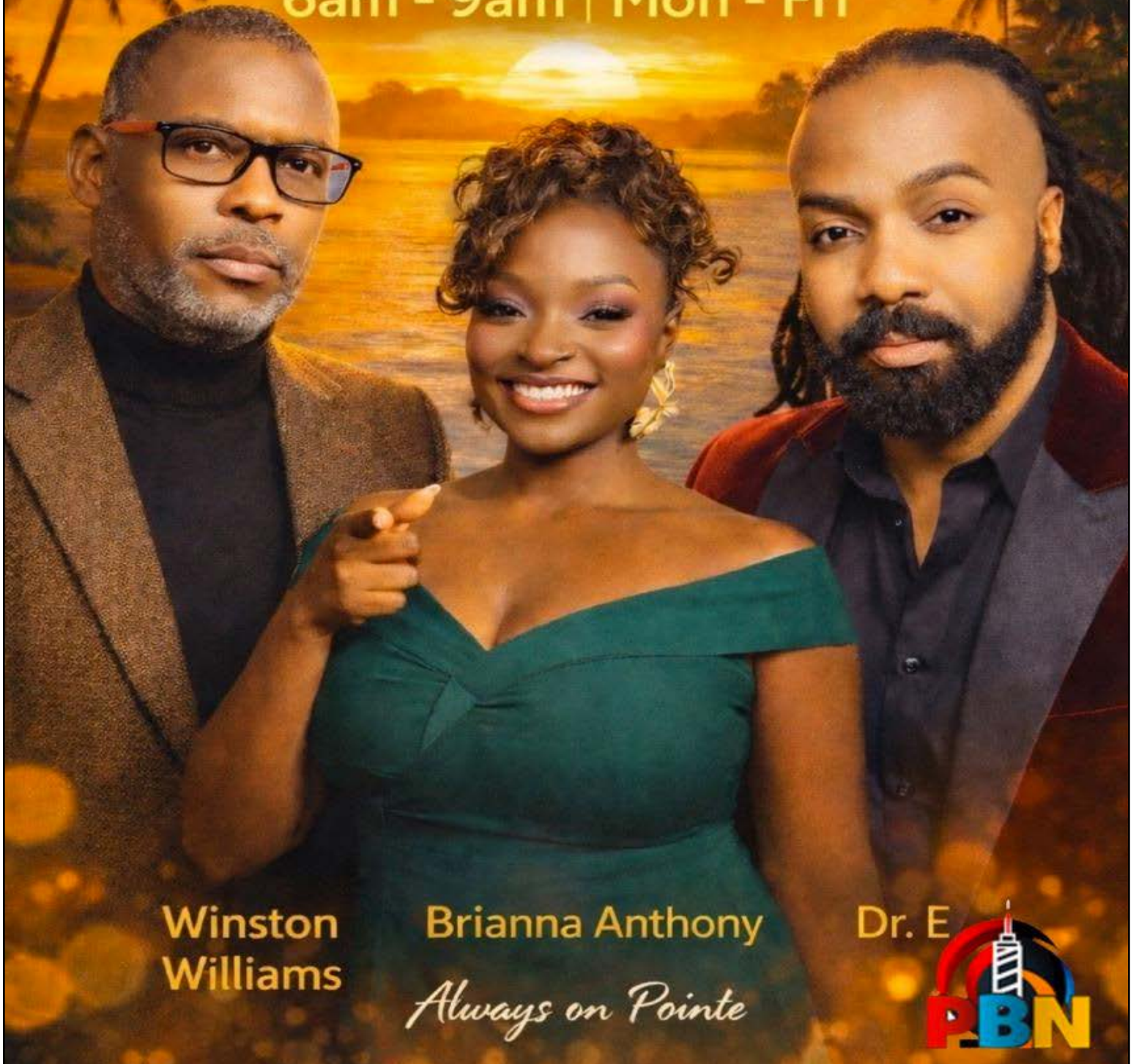
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Board of Education Launches Video Series Showcasing the Systems That Power Education



The Board of Education set to officially launch a new video series designed to spotlight the people, processes, and systems that quietly but critically support education across Antigua and Barbuda.

The series offers the public an inside look at key operational areas of the Board of Education, including procurement, logistics, textbook distribution, projects and information technology. Through engaging features, the videos highlight how coordinated planning, accountability, and innovation work together to ensure that schools are properly resourced and

students are equipped to succeed.

“This series is about visibility and trust,” Executive Secretary of Board of Education, Carla Farquhar noted, “Education does not function in classrooms alone. Behind every textbook, laptop, and learning resource is a team committed to efficiency, stewardship, and national development.”

The initial feature of the series is the Board’s IT-EDU Laptop Programme, which demonstrates how technology is responsibly deployed, maintained, and managed to support modern teaching and learning. The videos also recognize

the dedicated professionals whose behind-the-scenes work directly impacts educational outcomes nationwide.

This initiative forms part of the Board’s broader commitment to transparency, public education, and stakeholder engagement, while reinforcing the importance of strong systems in building a resilient, future-ready education sector.

The video series will be released across the Board of Education’s digital platforms starting this week and will run over the course of 2026.

RETRACTION

In our Friday 23 January, 2026, certain statements were attributed to Sen. Colin O’Neal, regarding the situation in Venezuela. Sen. O’Neal says his comments were taken out of context and as a consequence, Point Express hereby retracts the offending sentence.

We regret any embarrassment that this matter may have caused Sen. O’Neal.

Editor

Point Express Newspaper



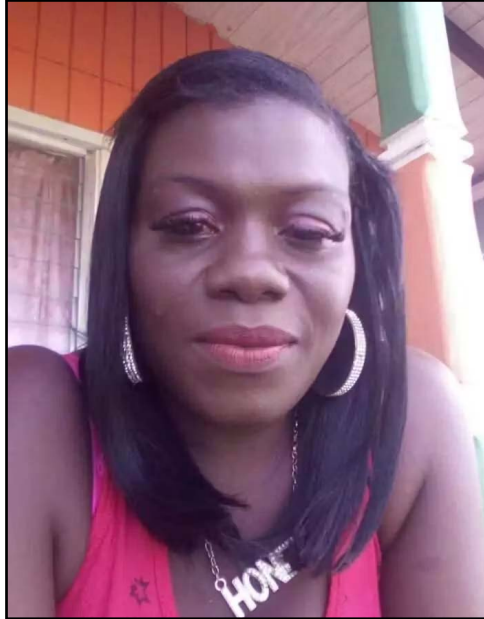
42-year old female shot dead at Michael's Village

A 42-year old Grays Farm resident is the country's latest fatal shooting victim following an incident on Friday night that is currently under police investigation.

A STRATCOM media release said the police are investigating the fatal shooting that occurred around 10:30 p.m. on Friday, January 23, in the vicinity of the G&E Parking Lot, Michael's Village.

According to the report a man and a woman were transported to the Sir Lester Bird Medical Centre with gunshot wounds.

The female victim, 42-year-old Nikisha Rose of Parliament Street, Gray's Farm, later succumbed to her injuries and was pronounced dead at approximately 11:21 p.m.



Nikisha Rose of Parliament Street, Gray's Farm

The male victim, also of Gray's Farm,

sustained gunshot wounds and remains hospitalised in stable condition.

Preliminary reports indicate that the victims were travelling in a motor vehicle when an unknown assailant opened fire at the vehicle, and injuring both occupants. Further investigations remain ongoing into the incident.

Meanwhile, the police are appealing to anyone with information surrounding this incident to contact the Criminal Investigations Department at 462-3913 or call the anonymous Crimestoppers hotline number at 800-Tips (8477).

The Police Administration extends sincere condolences to the family and loved ones of the deceased during this difficult time.

Three Arrested for Unlawful Possession of Firearm and Ammunition

The police have arrested three men for unlawful possession of a firearm and several rounds of ammunition following a targeted operation in the Green Bay area.

Around 7:00 p.m., on Saturday, January 24, a joint operation involving police officers from several departments resulted in the discovery of one Glock 17 (9mm) pistol along with fifteen (15) rounds of 9mm ammunition.

The firearm and ammunition were seized, and three adult males, ages 21, 25, and 33, were arrested and taken into custody.

Further investigations remain ongoing in the matter.

The Police Administration



continues to intensify operations aimed at removing illegal firearms from communities and reaffirms its

commitment to ensuring the safety and security of all residents. Members of the public are encouraged to

continue cooperating with the police by sharing information that can assist ongoing crime-fighting efforts.

Nurses With Figures

Dr James E. Knight

Who wants to be a nurse? Many persons would like to be nurses, because they would like to take care of people. It would give them a great sense of self-worth and purpose. Many developed the desire while caring for loved ones who were injured, ill, or in whatever way incapacitated. Perhaps they just helped to care for aged family members. Perhaps they themselves needed care at some time, and appreciated the value of it. Or even if they only observed others practice nursing, they loved it. Those are the people who should be given the opportunity to fulfill their noble desire.

I got into many arguments about this issue when I worked at Holberton Hospital. There were several young women who had worked as nursing aides and ward assistants for many years, and were not just experienced, but also intelligent, dedicated and desirous of being nurses. But the authorities insisted that they had to have a pass in CXC math. Eventually, a small number of them became registered nurses. How much math do they have to use?

Tell me now, why should one need to pass the math that engineers need to know, to become a nurse? We had great old nurses when few people, especially females, had education beyond primary school. Solid primary



Dr James Knight with dedicated nurses at Holberton, 1992.

school math, with the times table as the backbone, was more than enough, in the absence of calculators. So how is it now that all sorts of 'brain-cheating' devices are allowed even in primary schools, getting into the school of nursing requires that persons pass CXC math, complete with algebra and trigonometry? To do what to the patients? Aren't we trying to produce the required number of basic RNs required in the country?

Would it not make sense to teach a module of math that's appropriate for nursing, whether in a preparatory programme or in the

school of nursing itself? I'm asking. This colonial system of education which was always about producing an elite and a mass of labourers, has us weaponizing math against the masses of young people. Why not put specialized math teachers in the primary school to provide that good old solid foundation, including the times table, so that students don't enter secondary school trembling before the first math class even starts? Statistics have convinced them that they've already failed. Worse yet, that they may be failures in life.

After mid secondary school, why should any-

one be obliged to study a level or module of math for which they will have absolutely no use, then nor in the future? Everyone won't be an engineer. Young people don't need nightmares; they need dreams. Their imagination is what must be boosted; their skills are what we need. Not subjects for the sake of having them.

So we find ourselves now, with nurses who met the math requirement. They have several CXC subjects; CAPE at that. But they just wanted a 'decent job' with 'good pay'. They never really wished to see, hear nor smell anything unpleasant, let alone touch it, even with gloves. Nor did they look forward to any task that might require caring and patience. People used to try to get their elderly ones into Holberton, and leave them, because they knew that they'd be well cared. Now, young or old had better have someone come in to help them in the hospital.

Food and medicine are put down and left in front of the blind or otherwise incapacitated. Patients who manage themselves at home, but are disoriented in the hospital, often get no help. A bed sore was a big deal in Holberton; now it is commonplace. Why? Because with all that math, many only dream of big figures.

Unite. Share. Build: A Call for Connection in a Fragmented World

Across Antigua and Barbuda—and across the wider Commonwealth—civil society organisations are doing extraordinary work every day. From environmental protection and youth development to mental health, disability inclusion, culture, sports, and community safety, people are showing up, often with limited resources, driven by purpose rather than profit. But here is a simple question worth asking: How often do we actually know who else is doing similar work?

How often do community groups, NGOs, sports clubs, volunteers, schools, or even government departments struggle to find the right organisation to partner with, refer to, or support—simply because the information is scattered, outdated, or inaccessible? This question sits at the heart of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 17:

Partnerships for the Goals. Progress does not happen in silos. It happens when people, data, and purpose align. In response to this long-standing gap, a Commonwealth-wide civil society database is being built—starting with a simple but powerful tool: a shared Google Sheet. This is not a commercial venture. It is a public-good listing, designed to support anyone who needs access to civil society information—volunteers, private sector partners, schools, community leaders, donors, public institutions, and everyday citizens. Think about the possibilities. A regional forum such as the People's

Forum connected to upcoming Commonwealth engagements can quickly identify grassroots voices. An environmental body can filter

and connect with climate and conservation NGOs. Someone searching for mental health support can identify organisations working in that space. A school can find community partners. A volunteer can find where their skills are needed most. The use cases are endless because the need for connection is endless. For Small Island Developing States (SIDS) like Antigua and Barbuda, coordination is not a luxury—it is a necessity. Our populations are small, our resources finite, and our challenges increasingly complex. Climate change, social inequality, public health, and economic vulnerability require collective action, not fragmented responses. The SDGs remind us that development is interconnected.

You cannot talk about climate action (SDG 13) without considering disability inclusion (SDG 10). You cannot speak about education (SDG 4) without community support systems. You cannot advance sustainable cities and communities (SDG 11) without knowing who is already doing the work on the ground. A shared, living database becomes a form of social infrastructure—quiet, practical, and powerful.

For Antigua and Barbuda specifically, this is a moment to lead by example. Existing NGO information has already been transferred into a new Antigua and Barbuda sheet as part of this regional effort. However, many entries are incomplete, and many organisations are still missing altogether. Community groups, NGOs, sports clubs, faith-based organisations, and informal initiatives are being asked to do three simple things:

1. Review your entry

2. Add missing details—including phone number, WhatsApp contact, website, and social media handles
3. Share the sheet widely across your networks

No permission is required to edit or add information. This tool is designed to be shared, updated annually, and owned collectively. With Antigua and Barbuda preparing to host major Commonwealth engagements in 2026, this work is timely—but it is also intentionally bigger than any single event. The database is not about optics. It is about legacy. It is about leaving behind a tool that can continue to serve communities long after banners are taken down and conferences conclude. A tool that strengthens cooperation across the Commonwealth.

A tool that supports data-driven decision-making. A tool that helps civil society be seen, heard, and connected. The question now is simple: Will we choose to work beside one another—or continue working apart?

Togetherness does not happen by accident. It is built—intentionally, collaboratively, and one shared step at a time. Antigua & Barbuda organisations are encouraged to update and share the national sheet widely. This is how we unite. This is how we share. This is how we build.

Joshuanette Francis

Founder and President, Good Humans 268 Inc.

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Applications Open at SCHSBM for August Intake New programmes advance future-conscious Caribbean leadership

Applications are now open at the Sagicor Cave Hill School of Business and Management (SCHSBM), The University of the West Indies, Cave Hill Campus for degree programmes beginning in August, as the School expands its academic offering to prepare students for leadership in sectors reshaping the global economy.

SCHSBM's Executive Director and CEO, Dr. Dion Greenidge, said the School's approach reflects a dedication to education as a public good.

"Our commitment is to widening access to education that prepares people to step into leadership," the CEO said. "Through programmes in the leading fields shaping the global economy today, delivered with a strong Caribbean perspective, SCHSBM prepares graduates to work and lead anywhere in the world while remaining grounded in the region they serve."

The new academic year introduces degree pathways across **aviation, sustainability, energy, artificial intelligence, cybersecurity and data analytics**. SCHSBM frames this expansion in programme offerings around a clear aim: building a community of future-conscious Caribbean leaders equipped to think critically, act responsibly and lead with purpose at a global level.

The newly established Aviation Ground School opens clear degree pathways linked to a Commercial Pilot Licence (CPL), including the BBA Aviation Management with CPL, MSc Aviation and Airline Business

Analytics with CPL, and MSc Sustainable Air Transport and Aviation Management with CPL. These programmes blend flight training with business leadership in aviation operations, analytics and sustainability, enabling graduates to take their place in the cockpit and to shape the future of air transport through roles in airline management, strategic planning and sector-wide transformation.

SCHSBM has also launched new specialised MBAs and master's degrees in Energy Business, Finance, Cybersecurity Management, AI and Data & Analytics, Sustainability Management, Sustainable Procurement, Logistics and Supply Chain Management, Energy Finance and Trade, and Taxation and Policy. These programmes are designed for fields where informed decision-making now carries high economic, technological and societal stakes.

Applications for academic programmes close on March 31, with early registration incentives available until February 15. A range of scholarships is also available, including part-time MBA awards and programme-specific scholarships across sustainability, digital futures, energy and aviation.

Professional and Executive Pathways Senior leaders and talent managers seeking to keep their organisations competitive can access SCHSBM Executive Education short courses spanning leadership, data, risk, sustainability and other emerging capability

areas. Corporate bundles and special group rates are also available to support Caribbean-based organisations in ensuring sustained strategic relevance and business growth.

Prospective students are encouraged to apply early to access incentives and explore programme options.

Apply now: <https://www.cavehill.uwi.edu/schsbm/programmes/>

About the Sagicor Cave Hill School of Business and Management

The Sagicor Cave Hill School of Business and Management (SCHSBM) is the business school of the University of the West Indies, Cave Hill Campus, an internationally accredited university serving the Caribbean and the wider global community. SCHSBM is dedicated to building an ecosystem of future-conscious leaders who develop sustainable businesses and organisations for the benefit of all stakeholders. Through undergraduate, postgraduate, executive education and professional development programmes, the School delivers leadership education aligned with regional priorities and ground in international standards.

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PRESS RELEASE

ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA'S QUEEN KIA KIRWAN TO REPRESENT AT THE MISS OECS PAGEANT IN DOMINICA

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – Sunday, 25th January 2026 – St. John's.....

Antigua and Barbuda is set to shine on the regional stage as Queen Kia (Ms Kia Kirwan) prepares to compete in the much-anticipated Miss OECS Pageant. The esteemed event is scheduled to take place on Friday, 30 January 2026, in the Commonwealth of Dominica.

The Miss OECS Pageant is a prestigious regional showcase that brings together contestants from across the **Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS)**. The pageant celebrates beauty, intelligence, cultural pride, and regional unity, while providing a platform for young women to serve as ambassadors for their respective countries. Queen Kia's participation underscores Antigua and Barbuda's continued commitment to empowering young women and promoting cultural excellence throughout the OECS.

Ambassador Elizabeth Makhoul, Chairperson of the **Antigua and Barbuda Festivals Commission (ABFC)**, expressed the Commission's full support for Queen Kia, stating: *"The Commission commends Queen Kia for her dedication, poise, and passion. She truly embodies the vibrant spirit and cultural richness of Antigua and Barbuda. In this spirit, we are delighted to pledge our full support to Ms. Kia Kirwan as she represents our nation with confidence, grace, and distinction."*

The Honourable Daryll S. Matthew, Minister of Education, Sports and Creative Industries, also expressed strong praise and encouragement: *"Queen Kia is an outstanding ambassador for our country. Her participation in the Miss OECS Pageant is not only a personal achievement but also a proud moment for Antigua and Barbuda as we continue to showcase our talent, creativity, and cultural identity on the regional stage, including within the OECS."*

As anticipation builds toward pageant night, the Antigua and Barbuda Festivals Commission encourages Antiguan and Barbudan to rally behind Queen Kia and remind her that **'268' stands firmly in support** as she takes the OECS stage carrying the flag of Antigua and Barbuda in a celebration of regional beauty, unity, and empowerment.

- END -

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Regional News

Some JetBlue flights to and from Kingston cancelled amid US winter storm

Several JetBlue flights in and out of Norman Manley International Airport (NMIA) have been cancelled from Sunday through Tuesday due to a winter storm affecting parts of the United States, airport operator PAC Kingston Airport Limited (PACKAL) says.

In a late Saturday update, PACKAL said the cancellations include multiple flights between Kingston and New York's John F Kennedy International Airport, both inbound and outbound.

Additional JetBlue flights between Kingston, New York, and Fort Lauderdale have also been cancelled for Monday, while a flight from Fort Lauderdale to Kingston has been cancelled for Tuesday.

"Passengers are urged to contact JetBlue for updates on flight schedules prior to going to the airport and for rebooking," PACKAL said in a media statement.

The airport operator advised travellers to monitor official channels for further updates as weather conditions



continue to affect air travel.

The announcement comes amid wider disruptions across Jamaica's airports, as operators of Sangster Inter-

national Airport in Montego Bay have also confirmed cancellations and delays extending into Monday. (Jamaica Gleaner)



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SVG govt, World Bank advance strategic partnership



Senior officials from the Government of St. Vincent and the Grenadines recently convened a series of high-level meetings with representatives of the World Bank to discuss priority development initiatives, bolster economic resilience, and refine sustainable growth strategies.

These discussions, aimed at fortifying the nation's fiscal and social infrastructure, were highlighted during a formal reception and cultural evening held at the Holiday Inn and Suites on Friday, January 23, 2026.

During the reception, World Bank Executive Director Mr. Abdelhak Bedjaoui emphasized that the primary purpose of the visit was "...to listen, to learn and to further strengthen the partnership between St. Vincent and Grenadines and the World Bank Group." This approach signals a shift toward a more integrated partnership model, characterized by active listening rather than passive observation. According to Mr. Bedjaoui, the delegation gained critical insights into:

- Operational Success:

Identifying specific programs and initiatives that have demonstrated measurable success within the Vincentian landscape.

- Targeted Improvement: Pinpointing areas where existing frameworks can be refined for greater efficiency and reach.

- Strategic Alignment: Ensuring that World Bank support is precisely aligned with the established national development priorities of the government.

Prime Minister Hon. Dr. Godwin Friday underscored the importance of this direct engagement, highlighting the necessity for the World Bank to recognize the immediate challenges facing the country. In his address regarding the discussions, the Prime Minister stated:

"At the very highest level, it is an opportunity for us, to engage in a way that impresses upon the directors who are here, the urgency of the needs that we encounter in our country. The desire for a continued and effective partnership. in meeting those challenges that we have." (St. Vincet Times)



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TERMS AND CONDITIONS APPLY

Regional News

'Police murdered my son'

Family in shock after footage goes public, calls on top cop for justice...

Police murdered my son.

These were the words of Christopher Samaroo, the father of Joshua Samaroo yesterday, hours after CCTV (closed-circuit television) footage of the police-involved shooting that claimed Joshua's life and left his wife, Kaia Sealy, paralysed was made public.

The grieving father held his composure during an interview at his Maraval home with the Sunday Express but pleaded for Commissioner of Police Allister Guevarro to treat with the incident, which he described as unlawful.

CCTV footage of the incident in Valsayn last Tuesday showed Samaroo's car crashing in a drain, after which several police officers fired multiple times through his car window, killing him instantly.

Sealy was also shot multiple times.

"(The police) say they chase them (Joshua and Kaia) from Maloney, which we don't believe. But let's stand here today and say okay, that happened, for whatever reason. At the end of the day, we weren't there, and the footage only provides some information.

"So we have to fill in some gaps. But even if we accept that for now, does that give you the right to have opened fire without identifying yourself, without assessing the situation? The police came out of their car shooting after the accident.

"You can see in the video, my son, after the accident, put his hands outside (the driver's side window). And not just one, both hands. So they could see he was not a threat. But they did not want to see that. They just came out shooting. And now my son is dead. His girlfriend is paralysed."

He believes police should have come out of their vehicle and told his son what to do instead of opening fire.



"...Because they were right behind them and clearly saw the accident because they came to a stop. See that Joshua had his hands out. They should have given him instructions, guns drawn and all, telling him, put your hands out, then tell him to get out, lean up against the car and arrest him.

"All of these things could have happened because he is alleged to have been a suspect. But they did not," Samaroo said.

He said other questions arose.

"So then we have more questions because in the video, there is a motion that an officer does, where he appears to drop something after all the shooting took place. There are so many questions and no answers."

Samaroo said his family remains in shock following the incident.

He said he was seeking all available avenues to ensure the officers involved are held responsible, not only for his son's death but for others who may have had similar experiences.

He said he intends to pursue the matter fully.

"These were police officers in uniform but bandit form," Samaroo said, calling on the Police Commissioner to take action against what he described as rogue officers.

He warned that public outrage would increase if the matter is not addressed.

Samaroo said Sealy is an American citizen.

Remembering his son, Samaroo said Joshua lived in Bamboo Settlement, Valsayn, and was health-conscious.

He said Joshua did not smoke, drink alcohol indiscriminately or use illegal drugs, including marijuana, cocaine or ecstasy.

Samaroo also said his son regularly checked on him and maintained close contact.

Joshua Samaroo leaves behind a five-year-old daughter, who had not yet been told of her father's death yesterday, and a ten-year-old son from a previous relationship.

Samaroo said he expects the Police Commissioner to take responsibility and ensure accountability.

He said his son should be the last to

Regional News

die in such circumstances.

Director of the Police Complaints Authority David West confirmed with the Sunday Express that an investigation had already been launched by the authority.

“The PCA is aware of an incident involving a police-involved fatal shooting of Mr Joshua Samaroo and the non-fatal shooting of Ms Kaia Sealy, which occurred on January 20, in the vicinity of St Augustine South. The Authority has began an investigation into the matter.

“As with all matters of this nature, the investigation will be conducted independently and in accordance with the provisions of the Police Complaints Authority Act. The PCA takes this opportunity to reiterate that incidents such as these underscore the importance of the use of body-worn cameras by police officers.

“The Authority has consistently and vigorously advocated for the implementation of body-worn cameras as a measure to enhance accountability, transparency, and public confidence in policing.

“Members of the public who may have information relevant to this matter are encouraged to contact the Police Complaints Authority by email at info@pca.org.tt or by telephone at 226-4722. The PCA will provide further updates where appropriate and in accordance with the law,” West said in a statement.

In 2025, 68 people were killed in confrontations with police officers in a year when the country was placed under two states of emergency.

In 2024 that number was 54.

In 2023, police killed 45 people.

In 2023, 1,140 initial reports were made to the PCA, which saw 744 actual complaints being registered and investigated.

In 2024, there were 1,132 initial reports, and 800 complaints.

In 2025 there were 1,032 reports and 686 complaints.

Head of the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service Social and Welfare Association, Assistant Superintendent of Police Ishmael Pitt yesterday called for restraint and due process as investigations continue into the fatal police shooting that has generated widespread public attention.

“At this stage, the entire issue is very sensitive and is one that is gathering public attention, as is consistent with incidents of this nature,” Pitt told the Sunday Express.

He noted police officers were often required to make “split decisions” in real time.

“We need to allow the investigative process to take its natural course in order to determine exactly what occurred and let the facts inform the decision-making process going forward,” he said.

Pitt acknowledged that speculation and accusations have been circulating publicly but cautioned against drawing conclusions prematurely.

“We are aware of the speculations and accusations in the public domain and the concern that the CCTV footage has brought, but we would ask persons for patience,” he said.

He extended condolences to the relatives and friends of Joshua Samaroo, saying: “I must say condolences to the family and friends of the deceased.”

Pitt confirmed the executive of the association has viewed the video footage of the incident and is aware of its contents. However, he emphasised the association would not comment on the matter while investigations are ongoing.

“We must look at the situation of ensuring the investigation takes its natural course, and we will urge persons not to jump to conclusions prematurely,” he said.

On the issue of body-worn cameras, Pitt said the association did not wish to raise the matter in relation to this specific incident.

“I don’t want to raise the issues of

body cameras within this incident for obvious reasons,” he said.

He added: “Holistically, the arguments for body cameras by officers are needed, but we will not treat it to this situation. We don’t want to be premature on the investigations.

“We must be responsible; we know emotions are running high.”

Describing the incident as emotionally charged, Pitt said: “A life has been lost,” and stressed the need for balance in public discourse.

He said the association does not intend to add to the volume of commentary circulating online. “I don’t want to add to the number of statements being made online, except to say we rely on the investigation and its findings,” he said. “And wherever the chips may lie after that, then so be it,” he said. “But at this point, it would be premature.”

On Tuesday, Police Commissioner Allister Guevarro issued a voice recording where he described the incident as an “exchange of gunfire”:

“This afternoon (Tuesday) officers of the North Central Division Task Force were engaged in a high-risk vehicle pursuit when the car ran off the roadway at the corner of Dookiesingh Street and Bassie Street Extension in Valsayn.

“The occupants, instead of choosing to surrender, instead chose to challenge my officers. And acting in accordance with the use of force policy, my officers responded likewise. After an exchange of gunfire, two individuals were found nursing gunshot injuries and were taken for medical treatment.

“One male (Samaroo) was later pronounced dead on arrival at the hospital, while a female (Sealy) remains in critical condition under police guard. A firearm and ammunition were recovered at the scene, and the incident is now under active investigation by the relevant investigative units.” (Trinidad Express)

Caribbean-American legislator denounces ICE's latest fatal shooting



Caribbean-American New York State Assembly member Brian Cunningham on Saturday denounced the latest fatal shooting by agents from the United States (US) Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agency in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

ICE agents fatally shot Intensive Care Unit nurse Alex Pretti, an American citizen, as hundreds braved the cold weather to protest ICE's immigration clampdown tactics.

"This week, the country watched news out of Minneapolis that should stop every person in their tracks," Cunningham, the son of Jamaican immigrants, who represents the 43rd Assembly District in Brooklyn, told the Caribbean Media Corporation (CMC). "This tragic death follows yet another fatal shooting tied to immigration enforcement in the same city, involving Renee Good, amid rising tension around increasingly aggressive federal operations. Two ICE agents, two fatal shootings, in less than two weeks, it's unacceptable," he added.

According to Cunningham, "No matter where you stand politically federal force cannot become the default language of immigration policy.

"When civilians are dying and communities feel occupied rather than protected, democracy is being tested

in real time."


The Assemblyman said the Caribbean community and New Yorkers are not treating this as distant.

"When federal immigration enforcement becomes increasingly unregulated and insulated from oversight, immigrant communities are hit first, but the consequences affect us all," he said.

He noted that "Fear changes daily life. It discourages parents from sending kids to school, makes people avoid hospitals, and stops witnesses from reporting crime".

Cunningham is a co-sponsor of the New York for All Act which would restrict and regulate how state and local entities discover or disclose immigration status, including limits on questioning and information-sharing that can funnel families into civil immigration enforcement.

"That makes every neighbourhood less safe, and it leaves room for abuse to grow in silence," Cunningham continued. He said the Minneapolis shootings are not just Minnesota news. (Jamaica Observer)



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JUDGING CRITERIA:

- * Creativity/Originality
- * Appeal
- * Color combination
- * Nutrition Content:
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People cling to treetops as 'worst floods in a generation' sweep Mozambique

Tens of thousands of people in Mozambique are being rescued as rising waters continue to devastate the southern African nation - the worst flooding in a generation.

Teams from Brazil, South Africa and the UK have been helping with life-saving rescue operations.

"For me, this is the first time I have experienced a calamity of this magnitude. Elders say a similar disaster took place in the 1990s," 24-year-old mechanic Tomaz Antonio Mlau says.

Mlau and his family, who live near Marracuene - a town 30km (19 miles) north of the capital, Maputo - woke up to find their house inundated after the Inkomati River burst its banks.

"When a rescue boat came a few hours afterwards, we did not hesitate to board it and come to safety in Marracuene town," he said, adding they had to abandon all their belongings and only managed to bring a change of clothes.

Mlau, his wife and two children have found refuge at one of six centres - schools and churches - that are so far sheltering about 4,000 people.

Many of those gathered at Gwazamutini Secondary School are farmers from the low-lying areas with livestock and rice fields.

"We lost everything in the floodwaters, including houses, TV sets, fridges, clothing and livestock - cattle, goats and pigs. Our farms are under water. I am a farmer. I grow quality rice," 67-year-old Francisco Fernando Chivindzi told me.

His home is in Hobjana, one of several flooded neighbourhoods between the left bank of the Incomati



River and the coastal tourism resort of Macaneta. Marracuene town is on the river's right bank.

"The floodwaters reached heights we weren't expecting. We have never experienced this level of flooding in my lifetime," Chivindzi said.

"We are happy to be here on higher ground. However, we are very worried that all our belongings were left behind."

The farmer expressed his gratitude to the boat owners who came to assist him and his neighbours free of charge - and he urged others to save themselves.

"We hear that there are still some people resisting - clinging to treetops and on roofs. I wish they would heed the rescuers and join us here in this temporary shelter. We should value life more than the goods," the father of nine said.

This was a view echoed by Shafee Sidat, the mayor of the Marracuene municipality, as he visited Gwazamutini Secondary School on Saturday.

"We still have people to rescue,

some of whom refuse to abandon the risk areas. That's a challenge. We reckon that more than 10,000 people are affected in Marracuene as a whole," he told me.

At least 642,122 people have been affected since 7 January by flooding - particularly in southern and central regions, with 12 deaths recorded so far, according to provisional data from the National Institute for Disaster Risk Management and Reduction.

In total 125 people have died in Mozambique since the rainy season began in October.

Mayor Sidat fears the situation is likely to get worse because of heavy rain in neighbouring South Africa, the source of the Inkomati River.

"We are worried about discharges of a South African dam on the Inkomati River. Our town is the last one downstream," the mayor said.

"Before the waters flow into the Indian Ocean, they flood the 'machambas' (farmlands), homes and grazing areas here in the low-lying zones."

International

AROUND THE WORLD



Some aerial views show water as far as the eye can see. Hundreds of families remain cut off.

All vehicles have now been banned from roads between the provinces of Maputo and Gaza to the north.

Transport Minister João Matlombe said it was because main roads, in particular the N1 highway which runs the whole length of the country and is the only link to the north, were flooded.

The suspension is already leading to shortages and price hikes, including of basic foodstuffs, coconut and fuel - even as far away as the north-western city of Tete, more than 1,500km from Maputo.

For those at shelters in Marracuene, food is also a challenge.

"There isn't yet enough food to eat," said Aninha Vicente Mivinga, whose two children are aged two and five.

"On the first day this Friday, there was almost nothing to eat. It was painful to see children sleeping without anything to eat, except biscuits. Today things improved," she said.

Mivinga, who is a police officer and farms in her spare time, described how she was at work in Marracuene town when the floods hit at her home in Hobjana.

The 32-year-old had taken the precaution of taking her children to stay with family members who lived on higher ground because of the continuous rain, but even they were affected by the rising waters.

"To learn that my children and other members of the family were on floodwaters and at risk of dying was horrific. I was devastated and completely shaken," the officer said.

"Eventually my relatives were brought to safety.

"It is the first time since I was born that we've been affected by flooding of this dimension."

Mivinga said that students were meant to resume classes soon - and she would like the authorities to find permanent alternative accommodation for them.

Hundreds of people are currently camping down in the classrooms using a traditional wrap cloth as bedding on which to lie down.

"When floodwaters subside, I believe everyone would love to go back home, but it's too risky. If only the authorities could give us another place on safer ground. We would go back to the risky area only for farming purposes but live on safer ground," the police officer said.

Education Minister Samaria Tovela

has already hinted that the cabinet is to consider rescheduling the start of the 2026 academic year, originally planned to begin next week, "to allow flood victims to continue using them as accommodation centres, especially in the provinces of Maputo and Gaza, the most affected at the moment".

Chivindzi, who is not sure that the floodwaters will recede before schools resume, is determined to return home.

"We'll restart life from scratch," the farmer says.

Mlau, who is unable to get to the garage where he works, is less sure of the future and the risks of starting again in the same place.

"Even if waters subside, I am not sure I'll go back there." (BBC)


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Row erupts within UK's governing Labour Party after popular mayor blocked from upcoming election



A row erupted Sunday within Britain's governing Labour Party after the ambitious mayor of Manchester was prevented from trying to re-enter Parliament at a special election in the city in the coming weeks. Critics claim that Prime Minister Keir Starmer did not want to see a potential rival back in the House of Commons.

Andy Burnham, who has been in charge of the Greater Manchester region since 2017, made a request to Labour's governing committee on Saturday to stand as the party's candidate in the upcoming election for the Gorton and Denton constituency, which is expected to take place by the end of February.

If he ended up winning that election in a traditionally safe Labour seat, then he would have to stand down from his job as mayor, meaning that there would likely have to be another special election there. Burnham's mandate ends in May 2028.

The decision to block Burnham

was made by a 10-strong group of Labour's National Executive Committee (NEC), the body behind the party's election machinery.

Labour said the NEC had decided to deny Burnham permission to stand in order to avoid "an unnecessary election" for Manchester mayor, which "would have a substantial and disproportionate impact on party campaign resources."

Labour is widely predicted to suffer a drubbing at a raft of elections in May — Britain's equivalent of the U.S. midterms. If current opinion polls are any guide, then Labour is expected to lose power in Wales for the first time since the legislature was created in 1999, fall way short of reclaiming power in Scotland and get battered in local elections in England.

Since winning July 2024's general election by a landslide, Labour has seen its poll ratings tank, partly because of a series of policy missteps, which have been directly linked to Starmer's decision-making.

Other parties, including the anti-immigration Reform UK and the Greens, have been the main beneficiaries of Labour's apparent drop in support.

The prime minister's poll ratings are particularly dire at present and many inside the party think he may face a leadership challenge if May's elections end up being as bad as predicted.

Burnham, who served in Labour governments in the 2000s under prime ministers Tony Blair and Gordon Brown, has made no secret of his ambition to lead the party at some stage in the future. Burnham, widely known as the "King of the North" in reference to the television fantasy show "Game of Thrones," has twice before fought for the Labour leadership and lost.

Though Burnham insisted he would be a team player in his request on Saturday, many Starmer allies appear unconvinced given he has expressed several views that put him at odds with the prime minister, notably on economic policy. Last September, he said he wanted to "launch a debate" about the direction of policy and how to defeat Reform.

Labour lawmaker John Slinger said the "quick and clear decision" meant the party could "move on from the damaging introspection and psychodrama of the last week" and "pull together" behind the eventual candidate.

Former Cabinet minister Louise Haigh said it was "incredibly disappointing" and called for the NEC to "change course and make the right decision." (Jamaica Gleaner)

Grenades crush Jennings to stay atop of Premier League



A starting XI of the Jennings Grenades football team

The Sandals and APUA Inet Jennings Grenades extended the unbeaten run at the start of the second round to remain at the top of the Antigua and Barbuda Football Association's (ABFA) Premier Division League on Saturday night.

Stanley Province achieved a hat trick as the Jennings Grenades maintained their unbeaten run and notched up their 10th win in 12 matches with a 5-0 drubbing of the bottom team, Sir Molwyn Joseph Jennings United, in the last game of a triple-header at the ABFA Technical Center.

Province scored in the 27th and 31st minutes and achieved his hat trick by

converting a penalty kick in the 75th minute. The other goals for the Grenades were scored by D'Jarie Sheppard in the 32nd minute and Luis Cuidad Labrada in the 71st minute.

The result allows the Jennings Grenades to consolidate their position at the top of the Premier League by advancing to 32 points, while Jennings United remains in the cellar with three points after crashing to their 11th defeat in 12 matches.

The Potters Tigers and the Pigotts Bullets picked up important wins in the other two matches to commence the start of the second round in the 12-team round-robin league competition.

Keon Greene struck a hat trick to lead the Potters Tigers to their fourth win in 12 matches with a surprising 5-1 drubbing of second-place FC Aston Villa Lions in Saturday's opening game.

Greene achieved his hat trick by scoring all three goals in the first half with conversions in the seventh, 16th, and 32nd minutes. The other goals for the Potters Tigers were converted by Javorn Benjamin in the 36th minute and Jamour Martin in the 80th minute.

Jahlanie Barzey scored a consolation goal in the 21st minute for the Villa Lions.

The result allows the Villa Lions to remain in second place with 27 points after slumping to their third defeat in 12 matches, while the Potters Tigers advanced to 16 points.

The Pigotts Bullets notched up their seventh win in 12 matches by snatching a one-nil victory against struggling John Hughes FC in the second game on Saturday.

Tyrique Thwaites struck the winner by scoring the only goal of the match in the 11th minute.

The result allows the Pigotts Bullets to move on to 21 points, while John Hughes FC remains third from the bottom of the standings with 10 points after losing for the eighth time in 12 matches.



Wins for Police and Blackburn Palace in Second Division League



Police and Blackburn Palace recorded wins during their latest outings in the Antigua and Barbuda Football Association's (ABFA) Second Division League.

Police extended their unbeaten run by claiming their fourth win in seven matches with a 4-1 drubbing of Bethesda SC at the St. Johnstone's Village Stadium on Friday.

Bethesda's unbeaten run was ended despite taking a one-nil lead via a penalty kick, which was converted by Chunsae Martin in the sixth minute.

Charmane Daley snatched the equalizer for Police with a 12th-minute conversion as both teams reached halftime deadlocked at 1-1. However, Police

seized victory by scoring three goals in the second half without conceding again in the match.

The goals were scored by Nijah Hope in the 52nd minute, Terrel Richards in the 54th minute, and Dimitri Scotland in the 73rd minute.

The result allows Police to move on to 15 points, while Bethesda remains on 13 points after suffering their first defeat in six matches.

Blackburn Palace notched up their fourth win in eight matches by snatching a 3-2 victory against Belmont FC at the Fort Road playing field.

Amoy James snatched the winner for Blackburn Palace with a 75th-minute conversion.

N'Jre Carbon Buckley scored twice with strikes in the 54th and 56th minutes to allow Belmont FC to draw level 2-2 after goals by Diondre Harrigan in the fifth minute and Jayvin Ambrose in the 28th minute gave Blackburn Palace a two-nil lead at halftime.

The result allows Blackburn Palace to move on to 13 points, while Belmont FC remains on five points after succumbing to their fourth loss in seven matches.

However, the other two matches were not played. The game at Buckleys between the Young Warriors and the Liberta Blackhawks and the encounter at the Keithley Sheppard Recreational Park between TAMO FC and Point West Ham were postponed.

Windies beat Ireland to stay in hunt for the semis at U-19 World Cup

The West Indies notched up a crucial win on Sunday as the race for the final four at the ICC Under-19 Men's Cricket World Cup intensifies.

Antiguans Jewel Andrew and Micah McKenzie played pivotal roles as the West Indies stayed in the hunt for a spot in the semi-finals by recording a 25-run victory via the Duckworth Lewis Stern Method over Ireland at the High Performance Oval in Windhoek, Namibia.

Andrew, who is an attacking middle-order wicketkeeper/batsman, slammed a half century to guide the West Indies to 226 all out in 46.5 overs after winning the toss and electing to bat in a match that was affected by rain.

McKenzie then starred with the ball, grabbing four wickets as Ireland struggled to 164 for seven off 40 overs when rain came and brought an end to the match.

Andrew struck a top score of 66 off 82 balls, which included four sixes and four fours. However, several West Indies batsmen failed to convert good starts into big scores.

Jonathan van Lange played a useful knock of 28 to support Andrew, and Aadian Racha also chipped in with 28 in the lower order.

Fast bowler Reuben Wilson captured three for 50, leg-spinner Adam West claimed two for 24, and medium pacer Luke Murray picked up two for 37.

Ireland made a positive start to the run chase with James West leading from the front. His 55-ball 45 gave Ireland a solid platform.

Robert O'Brien with 26, Marko Bates with 22, and Adam Leckey



West Indies batsman Jewel Andrew bats against Ireland in their ICC Men's Under-19 World Cup Super Sixes match at the High Performance Oval in Windhoek, Namibia, on Sunday, January 25, 2026.



West Indies leg-spinner Micah McKenzie, second left, celebrates with teammate after taking a wicket against Ireland during their ICC Men's Under-19 World Cup Group 1 Super Sixes match at the High Performance Oval in Windhoek, Namibia, on Sunday, January 25, 2026. (Getty Images)

with 18 all got starts but couldn't carry on for long, allowing West Indies to take control of the match.

McKenzie was the key bowler for

the West Indies as he grabbed four wickets for 36 runs in 10 overs to run through the Irish middle order. Left-arm wrist spinner Vitel Lawes claimed two for 41.

Ireland were 164/7 in 40 overs, still needing 62 runs from 60 deliveries when rain stopped play. Eventually, with no further play possible, the West Indies won the encounter by 25 runs via the D/L method.

The win ensured the West Indies stayed in the hunt for a semi-final spot before their

game against Australia on Wednesday. Ireland, meanwhile, will conclude their campaign against Afghanistan on Friday.

WCA calls Bangladesh absence from T20 World Cup a sad moment for cricket



Bangladesh's Rishad Hossain, right, is congratulated by teammate Mahmudullah after dismissing Australia's Travis Head during the ICC Men's T20 World Cup cricket match between Australia and Bangladesh in North Sound, Antigua and Barbuda, Thursday, June 20, 2024. (AP File Photo)

NEW DELHI (Reuters) - The absence of Bangladesh from next month's Twenty20 World Cup is a sad moment for the game and should serve as a call for stakeholders to work towards uniting the sport, not dividing it, the international cricketers' association said on Sunday.

Bangladesh were replaced by Scotland in the 20-team showpiece on Saturday following their refusal to tour India over safety concerns in the wake of soured political relations between the Asian neighbours.

The governing International Cricket Council (ICC) rejected Bangladesh's request to move their matches to tournament co-host Sri Lanka, saying it was not feasible to change the schedule so close to the February 7 start of the tournament.

"The withdrawal of Bangladesh from the T20 World Cup, and resulting ab-

sence of a valued cricketing nation from cricket's pinnacle international T20 event, is a sad moment for our sport, the Bangladesh players and fans, and one that requires deep reflection," World Cricketers' Association (WCA) Chief Executive Tom Moffat said in a statement.

"Rather than allowing division or exclusion to take hold, we call on the game's leaders to work with all stakeholders, including Governing Bodies, leagues and players, to unite the sport, not divide it."

The events underline the current tension in South Asian cricket. India's fraught political relations with Pakistan prompted the ICC to broker an arrangement allowing them to play at a neutral venue when their neighbour hosts a global tournament.

Pakistan are set to play all their matches at the upcoming T20 World

Cup in Sri Lanka, though the country's board (PCB) chief Mohsin Naqvi said on Saturday their participation was still not confirmed.

"The prime minister is not in Pakistan right now. When he returns, I'll be able to give you our final decision," Naqvi, who is also the country's interior minister, told reporters.

Moffat said the WCA had become increasingly concerned by agreements not being honoured in the sport and by a lack of meaningful consultation with players and their representatives.

"It also highlights significant issues with the game's existing operating model at global level," he added.

"These issues, if continued to be left unaddressed, will weaken trust, unity, and ultimately the health and future of the game we love."

Leewards capture first regional women's T20 Blaze title

The Leeward Islands Stormers captured their first-ever Cricket West Indies (CWI) Women's T20 Blaze Championship at Arnos Vale in St. Vincent and the Grenadines on Friday night.

The Leewards finished their tournament unbeaten by winning all their matches, which culminated with a six-run victory via the Duckworth Lewis Stern Method against Barbados in the final that was affected by rain.

Set a revised target of 86 off 16 overs, the Barbados women were restricted to 79 for five.

Antiguan Shawnisha Hector struck a half-century for the Leewards, who made 116 for six off their 20 overs after winning the toss and electing to bat.

Hector slammed 58 off 44 balls, which included seven fours and two sixes. Reniece Boyce scored 26 off 32 balls. Fast bowler Aaliyah Alleyne claimed two for 14, and fellow pacer Shamilia Connell took two for 18.

Opener Eboni Brathwaite topscored for Barbados with 26 off 22 balls, Alleyne struck 16, and Asabi Calender made 14. Leg-spinner Rozel Liburd captured two for 12 in her four overs.

Trinidad and Tobago



The players of the Leeward Islands Stormers pose with the trophy after capturing the Cricket West Indies Women's T20 Blaze Championship at Arnos Vale in St. Vincent and the Grenadines on Friday, January 23, 2026. (Photo courtesy of the LICB)

claimed third place in the regional women's T20 Blaze, defeating Guyana by seven runs in the third-place playoff.

Batting first, Trinidad and Tobago were restricted to 104 for seven off their 20 overs, with veteran Britney Cooper again leading the way with a composed 46 off 44 balls. Djenaba Joseph made 15, and captain Karishma Ramharack scored 13.

Ashmini Munisar was the standout with the ball for Guyana with four for 15, while Daniellie Manns provided good support with two for 14.

In reply, Guyana were dismissed for 97 in 19.4 overs as T&T's bowlers successfully defended their modest total. Shabika Gajnabi top-scored for Guyana with a run-a-ball 32. Realean-

na Grimmond hit 20, and Latoya Williams made 13.

Ramharack led from the front with the ball, claiming three for 13. Lee-Ann Kirby claimed two for 10, Shalini Samaroo picked up two for 17, and Anisa Mohammed captured two for 17.

Jamaica Women ended their T20 Blaze campaign in fifth position by demolishing Windward Islands Women by 10 wickets.

After restricting the Windward Islands to a paltry 62 for nine in their 20 overs at the Arnos Vale Playing Field, Jamaica motored to 65 without loss in just 3.4 overs in their fifth-place playoff.

Following a terrible start to the tournament that saw them lose their first three matches, Jamaica finished strongly by winning their

final three games.

In their chase, Chedean Nation clobbered four fours and one six in her unbeaten knock of 23 off 12 balls, while captain Rashada Williams ended on 21 not out off 17 balls, inclusive of three boundaries.

Jamaica were ably assisted by their opponents, who sent down a staggering 14 wides and seven no-balls, contributing 21 extras to the total.

In a disastrous opening over bowled by the Windward Islands' Selena Ross, the left-arm pacer sent down eight wides and seven no balls in a 21-ball over that went for an unbelievable 44 runs.

That set the foundation for Jamaica's easy victory, with Nation ending the match in style by hitting Zaida James to the boundary.

Earlier, James was the Windward Islands' only bright spark with the bat after they were sent in to bat. James' 24 off 31 balls was the top score, with no other batter scoring more than seven in an extremely poor batting display.

Vanessa Watts led the way for Jamaica by snapping up three wickets for five runs from her four overs, while Stefanie Taylor took two for 13.