

Social cases continue to strain SLBMC

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Aerial view of the Sir Lester Bird Medical Centre, the country's main health care facility

Local News

Social cases continue to strain SLBMC

Social cases remain one of the most persistent challenges facing the Sir Lester Bird Medical Centre (SLBMC), according to Medical Director Dr. Shivon Belle-Jarvis, who has again raised concern about the impact such cases are having on patient care and hospital capacity.

Speaking on the Morning Pointe Show on Tuesday, Dr. Belle-Jarvis explained that many individuals are taken to the hospital despite not requiring acute medical care. While these patients are assessed and medically reviewed, difficulties arise when they are to be discharged.

"We have persons who are brought to the hospital not in need of acute care, but would have been reviewed, and then afterwards we can't find the family members," she said. "They're no longer answering their phones, or they're saying they're no longer associated or affiliated, and that poses a challenge."

Dr. Belle-Jarvis revealed that at one point the hospital was managing as many as 17 social cases simultaneously. These patients, while medically stable, continued to occupy ward beds because there was nowhere safe for them to go.

"You have persons on the ward for whom you're primarily feeding and caring, not actively getting medical intervention, and you have persons in the ER who can't come up — up to 17 spaces," she noted.



Medical Director Dr. Shivon Belle-Jarvis

The situation temporarily improved after the number of social cases was reduced to one patient over the weekend. Dr. Belle-Jarvis said the reduction occurred due to a combination of factors, including some patients being placed in nursing homes, others being reunited with family, and, regrettably, some passing away. However, the relief was short-lived.

"By Monday, from my census, we're back up to four," she said, underscoring the recurring nature of the problem.

The medical director stressed that while the hospital remains committed to compassionate care, it is not designed to function as a long-term care facility, underscoring the need for families and the wider community to play a more active role in supporting elderly and vulnerable individuals.

"It's just for us to be mindful that we

need to continually care for the elderly," she said, adding pointedly that "the hospital really does not serve the purpose of a nursing home."

Hospital officials are warning that unless the issue of social cases is addressed, access to timely emergency and inpatient care will remain under pressure at the country's main hospital.

In 2025, the Government of Antigua and Barbuda announced its intention to introduce legislation this year to address rising concerns of elder abuse and neglect.

It was revealed that the Ministry of Social Transformation was receiving increased reports that some children and other relatives are failing in their responsibilities to provide the necessary care and attention that the elderly require.

Alarmed by what is taking place, Cabinet announced it intends to table a bill in parliament to address the growing problem.

In 2024, Minister of Health, Wellness, the Environment and Civil Service Affairs, Sir Molwyn Joseph, revealed there no law currently exists that will hold children or other family members accountable for abandoning their elderly relatives.

As such, he stated his intention then to lobby the Cabinet to advance an "Abandonment of the Elderly and Protection of their Assets" Act.



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CBH appeals to families to claim bodies

The Central Board of Health is making a public appeal for the families of two deceased males whose bodies have been in storage at a local funeral home, one since last October.

In a media release, the office of the Chief Health Inspector stated that the department is making the situation public hoping that family members may get to learn of the current situation.

The release said CBH is therefore making public the names of two (2) deceased bodies and date of passing.

The bodies are currently being kept in storage at Barnes Funeral Home. Family member(s) can contact Ms. Jessica Barnes, Managing Director of Barnes Funeral Home, Irwin Barnes Close; American Road, at 462-1037 to arrange for private burial.

The names of the deceased:

1. Mr. La Shaune Tunsha Charles – Date of death 19th October, 2025

2. Mr. Augustin White – Date of death 2nd January, 2026

“Failing to do so within fourteen (14) days of the appearance of this advertisement will result in the government taking the appropriate action to have the deceased body interred at a Public Cemetery without any further notice. Legal action after burial would not be an option,” the release stated.

A spokesman for CBH revealed that there are times when family members, for a variety of reasons,



Chief Health Inspector Miss. Sharo Martin

decline to go forward to accept responsibility for a deceased relative. Quite often, the issue surrounds finances; either an inability to pay or an unwillingness to pay.

When this happens, it is left to the government to bury the bodies. Legislation passed by parliament last year however requires that CBH advertises that the body of the deceased is at the funeral home and that family members are encouraged to go forward and claim the bodies. After one month has elapsed with no one coming forward to make a claim, the body is then buried.

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Launch of the Official Website for the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting 2026

The official website for the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) 2026, is now up and running.

An official release said the website establishes a central digital platform to support delegates, media representatives and audiences across the Commonwealth in advance of the Meeting to be held in Antigua and Barbuda from 1 to 4 November 2026.

The CHOGM website will serve as the official information hub for delegates and members of the media attending CHOGM 2026, providing updates on the Meeting's programme, thematic priorities, logistical arrangements and official news.

In keeping with the national effort to showcase Antigua and Barbuda as a premier destination, the website features curated imagery of iconic locations across the country, including Shirley's Heights, St. John's Anglican Cathedral, Devil's Bridge, the Frigate Bird Sanctuary and Antigua and Barbuda's award-winning beaches, among other captivating scenes. All imagery has been provided by the Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority.

Delegates and accredited media will also be able to review accommodation options through a dedicated listing of nearly thirty unique properties and hotels across Antigua, supporting efficient planning for participation in CHOGM 2026. Information regarding registration and accreditation procedures will be published separately and announced in a subsequent press release once available.

The website further provides a comprehensive photo and video bank of CHOGM-related imagery, practical travel information for delegates and visitors, and the latest news and announcements related to CHOGM 2026. It also includes contact details for key CHOGM committees, direct links to official CHOGM social media platforms as well as to the Antigua and Barbuda



destination website and the Commonwealth Secretariat, ensuring that users can easily access all relevant information in one location.

The development and ongoing maintenance of the official CHOGM website are being undertaken by the Government of Antigua and Barbuda's Ministry of Information, in collaboration with the Commonwealth Secretariat, reflecting a shared commitment to transparent communication and global engagement. The Antigua and Barbuda High Commission in London continues to assist in engagement with Commonwealth partners and stakeholders to raise awareness of the official CHOGM 2026 website in the lead-up to the Meeting.

Antigua and Barbuda Prime Minister, Gaston Browne, stated: "As Antigua and Barbuda prepares to welcome the Commonwealth family in 2026 and to serve as a place of dialogue, partnership and shared purpose, this platform will help connect people across our regions, provide delegates and media with clear and reliable information, and share with the world the beauty, culture and warm hospitality that define our nation. We look forward to engaging citizens and partners across the Commonwealth as we work together to advance shared priorities and strengthen cooperation

for the benefit of present and future generations."

Commonwealth Secretary-General Shirley Botchwey, noted: "We warmly welcome the launch of the CHOGM website by the Government of Antigua and Barbuda as another important milestone on the road to November, when Commonwealth leaders will gather under the theme, 'Accelerating Partnerships and Investment for a Prosperous Commonwealth.' This website will serve as a valuable gateway for information and collaboration, and we continue to work closely with Antigua and Barbuda toward a successful CHOGM."

Permanent Secretary Ministry of Foreign Affairs/Head of the CHOGM Task Force Ambassador Dr. Clarence Pilgrim also noted: "This site will serve three critical purposes: First, it will provide timely and accurate information to governments, delegates, media, partners, and the general public — ensuring that all stakeholders remain informed as preparations progress. Second, it will function as a coordination tool, supporting logistics, accreditation, events scheduling, and official communications in a streamlined and efficient manner. Third, it will showcase Antigua and Barbuda — our readiness, our hospitality, our culture, and our capacity to successfully deliver a meeting of global significance."

CHOGM 2026 will bring together Heads of Government and delegations from across the Commonwealth to advance collective action on shared priorities, including sustainable development, climate resilience, economic cooperation and the empowerment of young people.

Members of the public, delegates and media organisations are encouraged to visit the official website at chogm26.gov.ag and follow updates as preparations continue towards this important global gathering.

Elkhorn Marine Conservancy Announces Rebrand to AnuBlue

Elkhorn Marine Conservation (EMC) announces its official rebrand to AnuBlue, reflecting its expanded programming that includes more than elkhorn coral restoration. The new name references “Anu”, a well-known reference to Antigua, and “Blue” refers to the marine ecosystems they restore. Pronounced as “a new blue”, the name has a layered meaning that captures the vision of giving Antigua and Barbuda’s marine ecosystems “a new” shot at life as restored and resilient seas.

Since its founding in 2021, the organisation has grown from starting a single coral nursery near Green Island into a multi-dimensional ocean restoration program. Under the new identity of AnuBlue, the organization operates across three interconnected pillars: restoration, research, and community engagement.

AnuBlue’s restoration program propagates 13 endangered coral species to support reef resilience. Over the last five years of its existence, AnuBlue has established four coral nurseries - at Jumby Bay, Cades Reef and two around Green Island - where coral fragments propagated from parent colonies that have demonstrated heat



and disease resistance are grown. Once mature, these fragments are out-planted onto nearby degraded reef beds. Corals with different genotypes are placed in close proximity, encouraging natural gamete exchange during spawning events and promoting genetic mixing. This approach helps produce more robust coral populations with a greater capacity to withstand climate change impacts and future disease outbreaks.

AnuBlue’s restoration efforts are guided by innovative research tailored to Antigua and Barbuda’s

unique ocean conditions. Being a science-driven organisation, AnuBlue rigorously conducts regular water quality monitoring, explores the impact of sponges and herbivorous organisms (e.g. crabs and sea urchins) on coral reef restoration, and conducts whale acoustic monitoring, and shark tagging — to inform region wide ecosystem conservation. In the last year, AnuBlue’s efforts have been recognized by the international scientific community through publication in a peer-reviewed journal.

Equally central to

AnuBlue’s mission is community connection to the sea. From the onset, the organisation has employed local fisher-folk and scuba divers to ensure the sustainability of the various coral nurseries and restoration sites around Antigua. Recognising the complex relationship many people in Antigua and Barbuda have with the sea, AnuBlue offers ocean-based swimming lessons, summer camps, and educational outreach programs. Through these initiatives the organization works to build ocean confidence, foster stewardship, and nurture a culture of care for the local coastal environments.

“This new name reflects our growth and captures the scale and ambition of what we aim to become,” said Christal Clashing, Director of Advancement and Community Engagement. “AnuBlue captures our belief that restoration must go hand-in-hand with education, research, and community partnership if we want lasting change.”

The rebrand signals a commitment not just to restoring coral reefs, but to strengthening the relationship between people and ocean — ensuring that Antigua and Barbuda’s marine ecosystems can thrive for generations to come.

The Queen's Commonwealth Writing Competition



THE QUEEN'S COMMONWEALTH WRITING COMPETITION 2026

The Royal Commonwealth Society has announced the rebrand of its flagship youth writing initiative. The Queen's Commonwealth Essay Competition will now be known as the Queen's Commonwealth Writing Competition

This evolution reflects a broader, more inclusive approach to written expression, while continuing to champion young voices across the Commonwealth.

The competition structure has also been redesigned to strengthen regional representation. The competition will be open to all Commonwealth nationals or residents under 18, with one winner selected from each of the five regions of the Commonwealth. From

these regional winners, one overall winner will be chosen, ensuring excellence in writing is recognised across all regions.

Janet Cooper OBE, Chair of the Royal Commonwealth Society, said:

“As we look to the future of this historic competition, this reimagining marks an important and timely evolution. By strengthening regional representation across the Commonwealth, we are ensuring that a greater diversity of voices, perspectives, and experiences are reflected and celebrated. This renewed structure honours our long-standing legacy while positioning the competition to be more inclusive, accessible and responsive to young people across all regions. It is a change rooted in our



Janet Cooper OBE, Chair of the Royal Commonwealth Society

values and one that will enable the competition to flourish for generations to come.”

The rebrand is reflected in a refreshed visual identity, including a new logo symbolising creativity, writing, and the five regions of the Commonwealth.

The competition is honoured to be supported by Her Majesty The Queen, Vice-Patron of the Royal Commonwealth Society. Her longstanding commitment to literacy continues to inspire young people across the Commonwealth, reflected in a 53% growth in participation over the past year.

The Queen's Commonwealth Writing Competition will open to entrants on 4 March 2026.

Liberty Caribbean urges responsible digital choices on Safer Internet Day



Inge Smidts, Chief Executive Officer, Liberty Caribbean



Itay Yefet, Vice President of Information Technology, IT Operations, Liberty Caribbean



Felipe Ruiz, Vice President, Information Security and CISO, Liberty Latin America.

Liberty Caribbean joins the international community in observing Safer Internet Day 2026 with a renewed focus on personal digital responsibility under the theme: **“Smart Tech, Safe Choices – Exploring the Safe and Responsible Use of AI”**.

Safer Internet Day promotes safer, more responsible and more inclusive use of online technologies. This year’s theme highlights the importance of ethical, mindful decision-making as smart technologies, including artificial intelligence, become increasingly integrated into everyday life.

“We reaffirm our commitment as the regional connectivity leader to help customers, employees and communities make smart, informed choices online. Technology may be advancing rapidly, but trust and safety must always remain at the centre of how we connect,” said Inge Smidts, Chief

Executive Officer, Liberty Caribbean.

As connectivity expands across homes, workplaces and communities, Liberty Caribbean, the operators of Flow, Liberty Business and BTC, continues to champion digital practices that protect people, data and communities.

“As technology evolves, so do the risks, and artificial intelligence adds a new layer of complexity,” said Itay Yefet, Vice President of Information Technology, IT Operations, Liberty Caribbean.

“Our role is not only to strengthen systems and networks, but to help people understand how their everyday digital choices impact security. Safe technology starts with informed users, supported by resilient infrastructure and responsible innovation.”

Liberty Caribbean joined parent company Liberty Latin America

(LLA) for an internal, all-staff virtual panel discussion **“Smart Tech, Safe Choices. A Better Internet”**, bringing together cybersecurity leaders, community advocates and executives from across the LLA group.

The discussion explored hyper-connectivity, artificial intelligence, human decision-making and the shared responsibility required to create a safer digital environment.

“Technology can be intelligent, but it does not replace judgment,” said Felipe Ruiz, Vice President, Information Security and CISO, Liberty Latin America.

“A safer internet begins with people, with the choices we make, the habits we build, and the awareness we share. When individuals understand their role in cybersecurity, communities become stronger and more resilient.”

Local News

ONDCP Workers Take Industrial Action Over Health and Safety Concerns

Employees of the Office of National Drug and Money Laundering Control Policy (ONDCP) have withdrawn their labour, citing serious and long-standing health and safety hazards at their Camp Blizzard headquarters.

General Secretary of The People's Union, Andie Stephen, said the issues inside the ONDCP building have persisted for approximately eight years, with conditions deteriorating rather than improving.

"At one point, while they were under the AT&LU, the minister reduced the working hours to four-hour shifts because of the environment. That arrangement has continued for years, likely since around the COVID period, but the building has only gotten worse," Stephen said.

She related that employees have reported visible mold on walls, chairs, and storage boxes, along with high humidity caused by air-conditioning condensation, poor air quality in several rooms, rodent infestation and leaky ceilings, adding that the prevailing conditions have contributed to staff illnesses, including fatigue and breathing difficulties.

The People's Union General Secretary recalled that last year, the ministry engaged Microbiologist and Director of the Department of Analytical Services Dr. Linroy Christian to assess the facility. After conducting a month-long review, he issued a report dated



General Secretary of The People's Union, Andie Stephen

August 1, 2025, outlining corrective measures and timelines ranging from three to six months, Andie Stephen explained. A follow-up inspection was also recommended to ensure the problems were properly addressed, but she alleges that management failed to carry out the prescribed repairs and undertook cosmetic work instead.

Stephen has chided ONDCP's management for its inability to treat the outstanding issues with the seriousness they deserve. The employees were previously represented by Antigua and Barbuda Trades and Labour Union, and allegedly wrote to have The People's Union become their bargaining agent. Despite this, she stated

that the union has been met with resistance.

Contacted for a response to the industrial action, Director of the ONDCP, Lieutenant Colonel Edward Croft, affirmed the entity's commitment to resolving the long-standing issues.

"We will continue to engage constructively with the Union and our staff to resolve the outstanding matters," Colonel Croft assured.

He told POINTE XPRESS, "While it is regrettable that we have reached this stage, every effort is being undertaken to expedite the additional repairs required and to provide clear, consistent updates on the progress being made to address all concerns. The health and safety of our officers and staff remain our highest priority. No effort will be spared to ensure that all identified issues are addressed effectively and in a timely manner", Colonel Croft stated.

The union official said employees are eager to return to the office full time, but will not do so until the building is safe to occupy for extended periods.

"This has been going on for over eight years and we've had enough," The People's Union executive member declared. "We are not going back into the building until Dr. Christian comes and let us know what needs to be done, and how long it's going to take. Until we are satisfied, the workers will be off the job."



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WE ARE GETTING STRONGER**

Build It Like We Mean It



By Professor C. Justin Robinson
*Pro Vice-Chancellor and Principal,
 The UWI Five Islands Campus*

Walk through St. John's on a Tuesday afternoon and the heat sits on the streets like a punishment. A vendor on Market Street arranges her produce under a tarpaulin that has survived three hurricane seasons and looks it. A civil servant edges his car through water pooling where the drains failed again, the same drains, the same places, year after year. A cruise ship towers over the harbour and a few hundred passengers step ashore into a town that cannot quite decide whether it exists for them or for the people who live there. On Redcliffe Street, a young woman home for Christmas looks at the shopfront where her grandmother once sold fabric and sees a locked door. She has a degree in environmental engineering from Toronto. She will fly back next week.

The government has announced the redevelopment of St. John's. Whatever one's political persuasion, this is the right decision at the right time. For too long the capital has been the subject of lament rather than action, and leadership means going first. On this, the government has gone first, however, a launch is a beginning, not a conclusion. The harder question is whether the rest of us, citizens, professionals, the private sector, residents, the diaspora, will own this project and shape

it into what this moment demands and whether the government, having invited us in, will actually let us through the door.

In three previous essays I have argued that the international order that once protected small states is collapsing, that no external power is coming to rescue us, and that the ancient instruction the prophet Jeremiah gave to a displaced people, build houses, plant gardens, seek the welfare of the city where you find yourselves, is the Caribbean's mandate now. That instruction was not sentimental; it was given to people who had lost everything and were tempted to wait for deliverance. Jeremiah told them to stop waiting, the government has given us the building site, the question is whether we will build on it like people who intend to stay.

Every Caribbean development document invokes climate resilience. The phrase has become an incantation, spoken at conferences, printed on summit banners, inserted into funding proposals. We are world champions at describing the crisis and world laggards at demonstrating the response. No Caribbean city has ever shown, in a completed, functioning, living place, what climate resilience actually looks like when you stop talking and pour the foundations.

St. John's can be that demonstration. Consider one detail, drainage. The water pooling on the streets of the capital after every heavy shower is not an act of God, it is a design failure. Permeable paving, bioswales, retention gardens, and properly graded stormwater channels are not experimental technology, they are standard urban engineering in cities that take flooding seriously. A redesigned St. John's could capture and reuse rainwater instead of letting it rot in the road. Scale that principle across every system, energy, transport, waste, building codes, and you have a city rebuilt for the storms that

are coming, powered by the sun that is already here. Climate resilience not as branding, but as engineering. No one in the region has done it, Antigua and Barbuda can be first, and being first has a value that being third never will.

The young woman with the engineering degree is not a metaphor, she is a category. The expertise required to build a climate-resilient city, renewable energy, sustainable drainage, green architecture, smart water management, is precisely the expertise we keep exporting via the airport every August. This project can reverse that flow, but only if it creates genuine professional pathways, not junior roles for locals while foreign firms collect the fees. The default must be local, of course we partner with international expertise where necessary, but we structure it as knowledge transfer, as China did, not as permanent dependency. Every foreign specialist should have a local counterpart being trained to replace them, anything less is colonialism with a consulting fee.

However, reversing the brain drain is only half the challenge. The deeper question is one of ownership. Antigua and Barbuda sits on hundreds of millions of dollars in idle capital, bank deposits earn next to nothing, and pension fund returns barely keep pace with inflation. Private savings circulate in a narrow loop of consumption and real estate while productive investment starves, not because our people lack money, but because they have never been given a credible way to put that money to work building their own country.

This has to change, and the redevelopment of St. John's is the place to change it. Imagine a St. John's Development Bond, or a community equity vehicle, designed not for foreign institutional investors but for the Antiguan on the ground. A schoolteacher invests five thousand dollars, a taxi driver puts in two thousand, a retired civil servant

Feature

commits a portion of her pension. They are not donating, they are buying a stake, a real, return-generating stake, in the transformation of their capital city. Transparently governed, independently audited and with small investors given priority over large ones.

Why does this matter beyond the economics? It matters because ownership changes behaviour. An employee watches; an owner asks questions. People who hold equity in their own national development do not sit on the sidelines while contracts go to friends and costs balloon without explanation. They demand standards because their money is on the line. For too long, the Caribbean development model has offered ordinary citizens only two roles, worker or spectator, this project can create a third, owner! That is not a financial innovation, it is a democratic one.

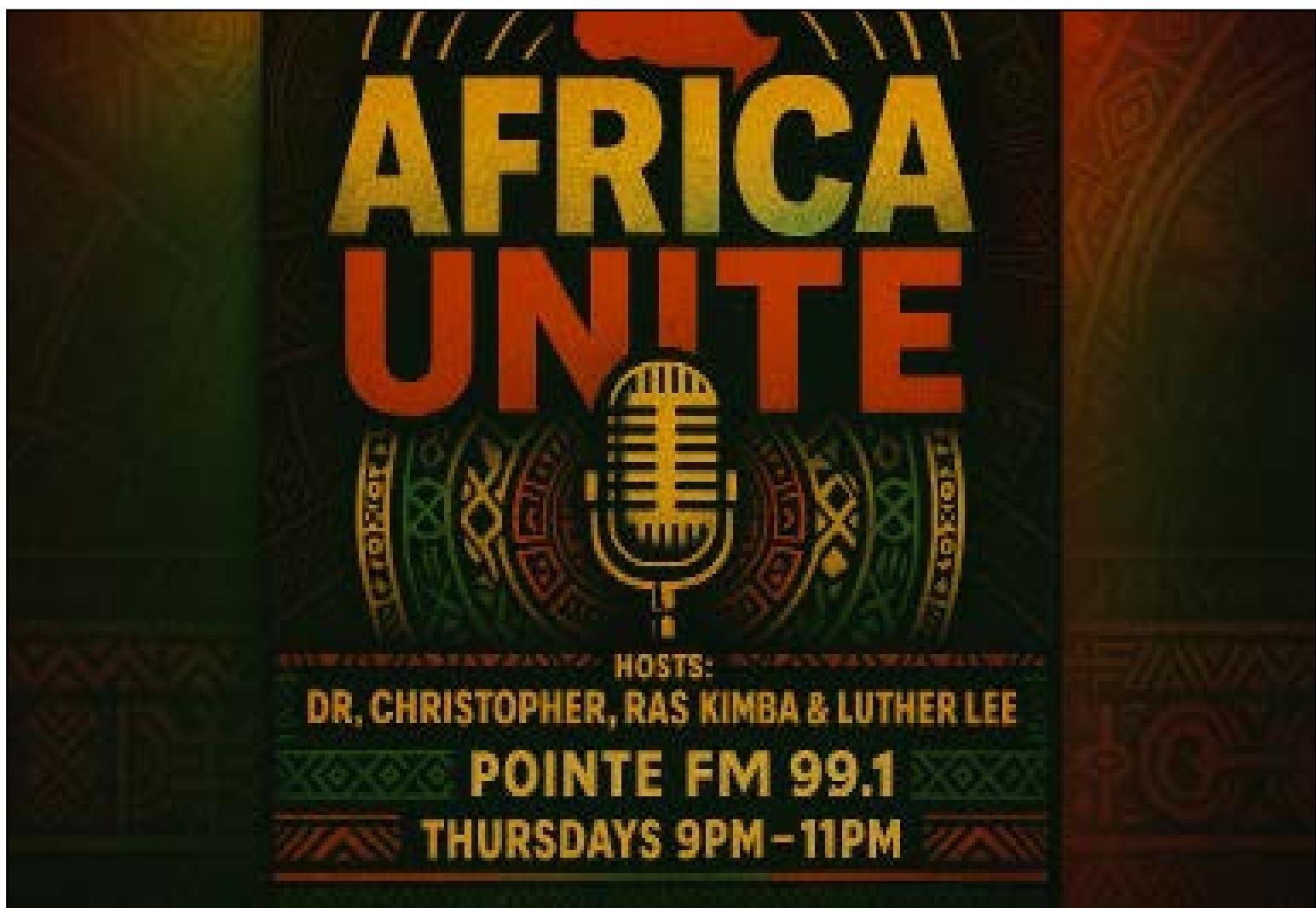
The government has launched the project, now citizens must own and shape it if allowed to. Here we must be honest, because we know the old model, we have lived it. In one Caribbean country after another, the pattern repeats, a contract quietly steered to a connected firm, procurement technically open but practically predetermined, a community consulted after the concrete has already been poured. I remember a regional infrastructure project, I will not name it, where the “public consultation” was held forty-eight hours before the contract was signed. The room was full of people who understood, with perfect clarity, that they had been invited to ratify a decision, not to shape one.

None of that is inevitable, citizens can choose differently by demanding differently. Open procurement with published criteria. Independent oversight with civil society teeth, public re-

porting on expenditures and contracts, a citizen advisory structure with real authority, not decorative consultation. These are not radical proposals, they are standard practice in countries that take their own development seriously. If Antigua and Barbuda gets this right, not just the buildings, but the process, this project can do for the Caribbean what Viv Richards did with his bat and Andy Roberts did with the ball, prove to the world, and more importantly to ourselves, what we are capable of when we refuse to settle for less.

The young woman on Redcliffe Street is watching. She has heard the speeches before, she has seen plans that came to nothing, she knows the difference between a country that talks about transformation and one that practices it, because she left the first kind and is deciding whether to come back.

She will know if we didn’t.



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Taking a Maple Leaf from the Canadian Book



By Lawrence A. Jardine

“Give me liberty, or give me death!” is a famous 1775 declaration by Patrick Henry, signaling a desperate, ultimate choice: either the American colonies secure freedom from British tyranny, or they face the consequences of armed resistance, including death. It signifies that life under oppression is not worth living, emphasizing that freedom is worth any sacrifice.

Trump’s disrespect for predominantly Black countries that he called “shithole” countries, Cuba, Venezuela, Greenland and Canada, among many

others, invokes the above human instinct for dignity that is universal and as old as mankind itself. Mankind has a history of relentlessly and innovatively struggling against acts of God and man, and freaks of nature. We have been maimed and killed struggling - and we will eternally continue to do so - for freedom, dignity and justice.

In the Caribbean, at worst of times, our ancestors would have fought, jumped overboard, and with their last breath proclaimed give us liberty or give us death. We, having been exploited for centuries by European powers and descendants, are still on this historical continuum; fighting for self-determination, economic justice and reparations. Where recent US

Presidents may have been clandestine, Trump’s disrespect for their so called American ‘back yard’ is conspicuous, brazen and obscene. Nonetheless, this is America’s core: regardless of presidency, they fabricate pretexts to traverse the globe instigating wars, destabilizing governments, assassinating leaders, destroying economies, undermining nations, fragmenting families, and killing thousands of innocent children, women and men.

The Caribbean cannot thrive in an uncivilized and barbaric world where might is right. We will never attain re-

spect or balance of power by military means. We will never come pompously to the negotiating table flaunting weapons of mutually assured destruction. All we have is a moral authority as a people who have endured European barbarism; substantively an inhumane philosophy of profit over people. Clearly, we can only thrive in a humane world of peace and mutual respect for all peoples and nations. It is for these reasons that we, all of us in the Caribbean region, must be most strident in maintaining a rule-based global order. We must be front and center of such proclamations and activism as articulated by the late Walter Rodney, and as recently stated by the honorable and courageous Prime Minister of Barbados, Mia Mottley. So, as we currently face American tyranny, we must push back; by whatever means necessary.

Unlike centuries ago, before telecommunications and multi-media technologies, Trump’s obscene political personality, inhumane madness, racism and blatant disrespect for sovereign peoples can be seen far and wide, by all and sundry, on social media via the Internet. As St. Lucian Dr. Tennyson Joseph admonished the Caribbean, “[W]e must not normalize what Trump is doing.” This is critically pointing to some Caribbean politicians, commentators and intellectuals who are already

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calling Trump's belligerent attack on democracy, sovereignty and international law, 'the new world order'.

Trump's new world order is a frantic MAGA response to America's economic decadence, which is partially due to internal exploitations by its very own unpatriotic capitalists. For personal profit, the so called American patriots and innovators avoided paying taxes, closed industries and outsourced American production and jobs.

Further, Trump's new world order is provoked by the Cuban and Venezuelan mission of using national intellect and material resources to alleviate mass poverty, as China is doing. Their egalitarian vision of a new world order is a menacing contrasting example to American Capitalism and its old imperial order of exploiting its working-class to everlasting hoard profits and wealth in the pockets of an elite minority.

Trump is the representative of a persistent primitive and uncivilized mind set in an age of non-scarcity. Observing Trump's racism, white supremacy, and dictatorial ambitions is depressing. And for some Caribbean observers, it may beg the question: is the pursuit of goodness and justice in his world indicative of naïve and wishful thinking? No, it is not, for the world is not Trump's! We should not be indifferent and surrender to Trump's world view; it is an unacceptable order to which we should not genuflect. The Caribbean population must assist our politicians to pushback against such American imperialistic impositions.

As European and White leaders are now experiencing, the same unhinged American stick that has been striking the wild goat is disrespectfully threatening to strike the tame; NATO allies. However, the economic response to Trump's America by Canadians is exemplary.

Canadians are pushing back in reaction to Trump's imposed tariff on their exports and his stated ambition to an-

nex Canada as America's 51st state. In concert, Canadians have reduced travel to the United States and their consumption of American goods and services.

Between February and October, Canadian air travel returns from the United States had fallen by 21%. Even more concerning was the drop in automobile returns, which fell by a staggering 33.5%. These figures will likely get worse as the final travel return numbers from 2025 are tallied.

In solidarity with my Canadian friends and schoolmates, I will not travel to America while President Trump is in office. I will not be the typical shop-binging good Caribbean tourist in America; shopping on Fordham Road – and bringing home a lot of American stuff.

But I will continue to watch America's Got Talent (AGT). AGT is the American amphitheater showcasing human talents, perseverance and dreams from across the globe. And I will sob as the American audience often does when people of all ethnicities, ages, and walks of life express their hopes and aspirations; in pursuit of the universal American dream.

And I will never forget the life-lesson from Robert Finley; the blind sixty-five (65) year old man who was pursuing his American dream on AGT. Finley performed his self-composed philosophical love song: "Now, it may not come in the mailbox; it might come in a moving van. But you got to take it when you can get it, and get it while you can."

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Regional News

SVG Moves to Phase Out Cuban Medical Doctors

As the U.S continues to pressure Caribbean governments as it pertains to Cuban medical personnel, the St Vincent government announced on Monday a plan to reduce the country's reliance on Cuban medical personnel as part of a strategy for "Medical Staffing Localisation."

Prime Minister Godwin Friday said the government will begin a three-year phase-out of the reliance on Cuban District Medical Officers.

Friday cited two primary reasons for this policy shift including the language barriers which he says is often faced by patients and staff and to reduce foreign staffing costs associated with maintaining international medical teams.

In a February 6 post from the U.S Embassy the following was stated;

"The United States is committed to holding accountable Cuban regime officials, foreign government officials, and others for facilitating forced labor in Cuba's medical missions. By participating in these programs, despite known human rights abuses, foreign governments become complicit in the regime's tactics".

The Embassy further stated that their actions directly contribute to the abuses of Cuban workers. "There are alternative methods available for Caribbean nations to recruit foreign medical workers and ethically meet the health-care needs of their people".

Well the Opposition leader Ralph Gonsalves questioned whether these changes are part of U.S pressure, the Prime Minister did not indicate such at the time of his announcement on Monday.

To fill the gap, the government plans to recruit four local Medical Officers in 2026.

This initiative he said is part of a wider health strategy focused on moving from "dependence to capability" and ensuring the health system is staffed



by local professionals where possible. (St Vincent Times)



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Jamaica's corruption perception score unchanged; still among countries with 'serious problems'

Jamaica has recorded no change on the latest Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI), maintaining a score of 44, to be among countries with significant problems with corruption, according to Transparency International.

The score is two points above a "new low" global average of 42.

Transparency International released the 2025 index on Tuesday, showing Jamaica also unchanged at 73rd out of 182 countries in the global rankings.

The CPI, published by Transparency International, scores countries on a scale of 0 to 100, where 0 represents a highly corrupt public sector and 100 indicates a very clean one. A CPI score of below 50 usually means that a country has a serious corruption problem.

Jamaica's Integrity Commission previously reported that Jamaica's best CPI score is 44, which was first achieved in 2017, moving up from 39. The country has scored 44 since, except in 2019 when it slipped to 43.

TI said the 2025 CPI shows that "corruption remains a serious threat in every part of the world, although there are limited signs of progress."

"Leaders must act to tackle abuses of power and the wider factors driving this decline, such as the roll-back of democratic checks and balances, and attacks on independent civil society. Anti-government protests in many parts of the world show that people are fed up



with unaccountable leadership and are demanding reform.

TI said while 31 countries have significantly reduced their corruption levels since 2012, the rest are failing to tackle the problem and have stayed stagnant or got worse during the same period.

The anti-corruption watchdog added that global average has fallen to a new low of 42, while more than two-thirds of countries score below 50. "And people are paying the price, as corruption leads to under-funded hospitals, unbuilt flood defences and blights the hopes and dreams of young people.

Within the Caribbean, Jamaica continues to trail several regional counterparts. Countries with higher scores include Barbados (68), The Bahamas (64), St Vincent and the Grenadines (63), Dominica (60), St Lucia (59) and Grenada (56).

Caribbean countries scoring lower than Jamaica include Trinidad and Tobago

(41), Guyana (40) and Haiti (16).

Denmark is ranked number one followed by Finland.

Transparency International said each country's score is a combination of at least three data sources drawn from 13 different corruption surveys and assessments. It said the data sources are collected by a variety of reputable institutions, including the World Bank and the World Economic Forum. (Jamaica Gleaner)

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Dated the <u>22nd</u> day of <u>September</u> 2025		
 Registrar of Lands		

Regional News

More care for children with special needs

hildren with special needs are set to benefit from major technological advancements at The Mico College University Child Assessment and Research in Education (CARE) Centre under a partnership with Digicel Foundation and the Ministry of Education.

The development was announced on Monday at the signing of a memorandum of understanding at the ministry's head office at National Heroes' Circle in Kingston.

Charmaine Daniels, chief executive officer at Digicel Foundation Jamaica, expressed excitement about the planned upgrades, noting that the foundation would also be investing US\$75,000 in the centre to ensure all needs for the facility's improvement were met.

"We're very happy and proud to have a partner that works with us. We do not pretend at the foundation to be experts. We are here to work with you and to work for you, and so we are looking forward to delivering what you have asked, as you have asked it, and we know that it will be put to good use," Daniels said as she thanked both the ministry and Mico for their work in making the initiative possible.

According to permanent secretary at the ministry Dr Kasan Troupe, the initiative will support the upgrade of five classrooms to meet innovative learning environment (ILE) standards, by providing information and



communications technology (ICT) to enhance learning conditions.

"Today, we are building out five classrooms over by Mico CARE. We're looking at ICT support, smart rooms, and smart technology in those rooms. We're looking at making sure the room is fit for purpose. The windows will be renovated, the floor and the doors, everything you can think of to make it smart and adequate for students who need this kind of support. So the ministry, again, is really grateful and extremely proud and we fully endorse this investment in Mico CARE," said Troupe.

She also declared that in addition to the renovation of classrooms, the ministry has sourced additional workers to better handle the high demand of assessments for children at the centre.

"Mico CARE is one of our lead assessment support services for our special needs students in Jamaica and we have heard the cry that they need more. The parents are coming out

and they are responding to the call from teachers and principals for their children to be assessed and Mico is overburdened with that," Troupe said.

"So they continue to call upon us for support and I must announce that we have provided the human resource support to expand the assessment services at The Mico CARE. We have done so also for Church Teachers' College, Sam Sharpe Teachers College, and we have the structure in place for CASE (College of Agriculture Science and Education) that we are building to support the assessment services for students in Region 2, which covers Portland, St Thomas, and St Mary," said Troupe.

Dr Sharon Anderson-Morgan, director of The Mico CARE Centre, told the ceremony that she was grateful for the improvements to come, noting that intervention in children with special needs is essential to their development as well-rounded adults.

"I want to highlight the

power of partnership, and also to say that we're investing in the right places, even though the stories are not often told, but just rest assured that a difference is being made, and it's a difference that will go on for a lifetime and affect generations," she said.

The Mico University College CARE Centre, per its website, states that it was established in 1980 as a centre of excellence, dedicated to child assessment and research in education. It was formed through a partnership between the Netherlands and Jamaican governments.

The centre serves children 4-18 years who meet one or more of the following criteria:

- * Children who are not making sufficient academic progress, despite intervention in the regular school;
- * Children who exhibit emotional and behavioural problems that inhibit learning;
- * Children who are experiencing difficulties in reading, written expression and mathematics; and
- * Children who might be gifted and/or talented yet are underperforming in school.

It also caters to parents who need guidance concerning child development and behaviour management, as well as teachers and other professionals who require skills to equip them to treat with learners who have various exceptionalities. (Jamaica Observer)

Macron urges Europe to start acting like world power



French President Emmanuel Macron has urged Europe to assert itself on the world stage, saying it is time to start acting like a “power”.

In the face of growing threats from China, Russia and now the US, he told a group of European newspapers that the continent faced a “wake-up call”.

“Are we ready to become a power? This is the question in the field of economy and finance, in defence and security, and in our democratic systems.

“In another era we might have said it is the moment to ‘assume our majority’,” he said ahead of an EU summit in Brussels later this week.

Macron repeated his call for EU-wide mutualised loans in order to raise hundreds of billions of euros needed for industrial investment.

“The time has come to launch a shared debt capacity to fund our future expense - eurobonds for the future. We need big European programmes to finance the best projects,” he said.

Similar calls in the past have met scepticism from Germany and other countries, who feel France wants to

use Europe to bear a financial burden which it alone - because of its failure to reform - is unable to take up.

Macron admitted that France “has never had a balanced model, unlike certain economies of the north, which are built more on a sense of responsibility.

“And we have never had reforms like the ones initiated in the 2010s in Portugal, Spain, Italy and Greece, which are paying dividends today.”

But he said there was growing demand in the world’s financial markets for mutualised European debt, which currently the EU was not equipped to supply.

“The world markets are increasingly afraid of the American greenback [dollar]. They want alternatives...

“For investors everywhere a democratic state of law is a huge attraction. And when I look at the world as it is, we have the authoritarian regime that is China, and on the other side we have the US distancing itself further and further from a state of law.”

According to Macron, the 27-member EU needs €1.2tn (£1tn; \$1.4tn) a year to invest in the vital sectors of security and defence, clean energy,

and artificial intelligence.

Calling on the EU to “protect” these and other industries, he said: “The Chinese do it, the Americans too. Europe today is the most open market in the world.

“In the face of that, I am not saying we should be protectionist. It’s more a question of being coherent - in other words not imposing on our own producers rules which we do not impose on non-Europeans.”

“Today Europe faces a massive challenge, in a world of disorder,” he said.

“Climate change is accelerating. The US – which we thought would guarantee our security for ever – is no longer sure. Russia was to give us cheap energy for ever, but that stopped three years ago. China... has become a rival that gets fiercer and fiercer.

“Today, we Europeans are on our own. But we have each other. We are 450 million people. It’s huge. For me [becoming a power] is the fulfilment of the European adventure.

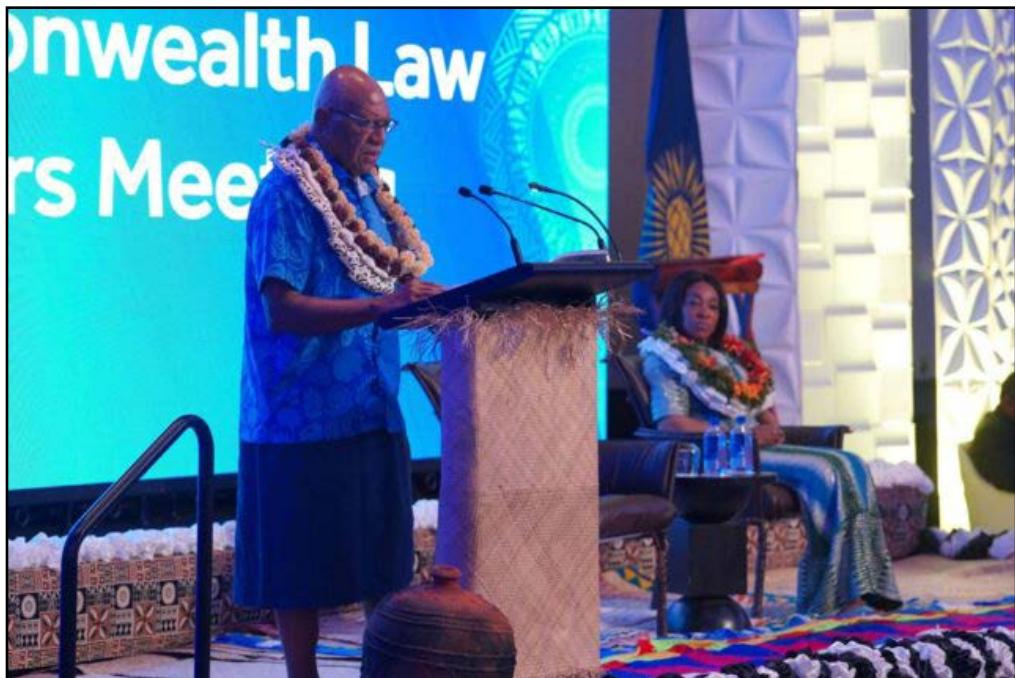
“We came together to stop war, we came together to build a market. But we always forbade ourselves to think of power.”

Asked about the latest stand-off with Washington over Greenland, at the end of which US President Donald Trump appeared to back down from threats to annex the Danish territory, Macron said the Europeans should not be fooled.

“At the end of a crisis, there is a cowardly tendency to sit back and say ‘phew’. There are threats and intimidation, and then suddenly Washington gives way. And people think it’s over.

“Don’t believe it for a single second,” the French leader said. (BBC)

Commonwealth law ministers meeting launches with appeals for equal application to global rule of law in changing times



The Commonwealth Law Ministers Conference commenced today in Fiji, emphasizing the urgent need for sustained efforts to uphold the rule of law, fostering progress and shared prosperity amid an increasingly unpredictable global landscape.

A Commonwealth media statement shared that over 250 delegates attended the gathering, including key figures such as Fiji's Prime Minister, Hon. Sitiveni Rabuka; Tuvalu's Prime Minister, Hon. Feleti Penitala Teo; and Tonga's Deputy Prime Minister, Hon. Viliami Latu. Their arrival in Nadi on February 9, 2026, was marked by a vibrant traditional Fijian ceremony celebrating their participation.

This assembly convenes justice ministers and attorneys general from the 56 nations of the Commonwealth to deliberate on emerging legal challenges impacting the daily lives and economic well-being of their populations.

It is reported that in his opening

remarks, Prime Minister Rabuka highlighted the increasing pressure on the rule of law worldwide. He emphasized that when legal systems are compromised—whether through weakening, inconsistent application, or loss of public trust—the real victims are ordinary citizens whose lives are directly affected.

Rabuka underscored the importance of this meeting, describing it not merely as a forum for dialogue but as a platform for tangible action with real-world implications. He called on participants to deliver practical solutions that meet the expectations of their people—ensuring justice remains reliable, institutions remain robust, and laws serve not just the informed but the most vulnerable.

Addressing the intersection of climate change and justice, the Prime Minister urged ministers to ensure legal systems act as protective shields for both communities and the environment.

According to the release, Sec-

retary-General of the Commonwealth, Hon. Shirley Botchwey, noted that the gathering occurs at a time marked by political instability, economic fluctuations, and environmental crises, which threaten democratic principles. She warned that when the rule of force begins to overshadow the rule of law, societal stability erodes.

Botchwey stressed the significance of the work being undertaken, as law ministers and attorneys general seek to bolster democratic resilience and rebuild trust in institutions—an endeavor she described as both challenging and essential.

She further explained that the Commonwealth's new strategic plan responds to this urgency by prioritizing concrete actions to embed the rule of law not only within judicial systems but also in everyday life.

Over the course of three days, participants will explore how legal frameworks influence democracy, economic development, and environmental sustainability. Key issues include defending maritime rights amid rising sea levels and promoting the responsible application of technology to expand access to justice.

The conference will conclude on February 11 with the issuance of an outcome statement outlining specific steps Commonwealth nations will undertake to reinforce the rule of law for their citizens' benefit.

The event is chaired by Fiji's Minister for Justice and Acting Attorney-General, Hon. Siromi Turaga, under the theme "Anchoring Justice in a Changing Tide: Strengthening the Rule of Law for a Resilient Future." (Dominica News Online)

UK PM Starmer averts leadership challenge amid Epstein fallout

United Kingdom Prime Minister Keir Starmer has survived a dramatic leadership challenge for now, following a crisis triggered by fallout from the Jeffrey Epstein files.

It comes amid hesitation among rivals and a determined fightback saved him from being toppled.

Energy Secretary Ed Miliband said Tuesday that Labour lawmakers had “looked over the precipice … and they didn’t like what they saw.”

“And they thought the right thing was to unite behind Keir,” Miliband told the BBC.

Starmer’s authority over his center-left party has been battered by aftershocks from the publication of files related to Epstein — a man he never met and whose sexual misconduct hasn’t implicated him.

But it was Starmer’s decision to appoint veteran Labour politician Peter Mandelson, a friend of Epstein, as UK ambassador to Washington in 2024 that has led many to question the leader’s judgment and call for his resignation.

Starmer has apologised, saying Mandelson had lied about the extent of his ties to the convicted sex offender. And he vowed to fight for his job.

“I will never walk away from the mandate I was given to change this country,” Starmer said Tuesday as he visited a community center in south-



ern England. “I will never walk away from the people that I’m charged with fighting for and I will never walk away from the country that I love.”

Starmer’s risky decision to appoint Mandelson — who brought extensive contacts and trade expertise but a history of questionable ethical judgment — backfired when emails were published in September showing that Mandelson had maintained a friendship with Epstein after the financier’s 2008 conviction for sex offenses involving a minor.

Starmer fired Mandelson, but a new trove of Epstein files released last month by the U.S. government contained more revelations. Mandelson

is now facing a police investigation for potential misconduct in public office over documents suggesting that he passed sensitive government information to Epstein. He’s not accused of any sexual offenses.

The Mandelson scandal may be the final straw that finishes Starmer’s premiership. But it follows discontent that has built since he led Labour to a landslide election victory 19 months ago.

Some of Starmer’s problems stem from a turbulent world and a gloomy economic backdrop. He has won praise for rallying international support for Ukraine and persuading US President Donald Trump to sign a trade deal eas-



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ing tariffs on UK goods. But at home, he has struggled to bring down inflation, boost economic growth and ease the cost of living.

Despite a huge parliamentary majority that should allow the government easily to implement its plans, Starmer has been forced to make multiple U-turns on contentious policies including welfare cuts and mandatory digital ID cards.

Starmer has been through two chiefs of staff, four directors of communications and multiple lower-level staff changes in Downing Street. The prime minister's powerful chief of staff, Morgan McSweeney, resigned Sunday over the decision to appoint Mandelson. Communications director Tim Allan left the next day.

Scottish Labour leader Anas Sarwar then held a news conference on Monday and called for Starmer to resign. If other senior party figures had followed, the pressure would have been impossible for Starmer to resist.

But none did. Instead, Starmer's Cabinet and parliamentary colleagues posted apparently choreographed messages of support. They included former Deputy Prime Minister Angela Rayner and Health Secretary Wes Streeting, considered the two most likely challengers for the top job.

Then, came a highly charged meeting with Labour members of Parliament, where Starmer impressed many with his sense of resolve. Lawmakers in the room said that the mood, initially skeptical, became supportive.

"It was clear he was up for the fight," said Chris Curtis, one of more than 200 Labour lawmakers elected in the 2024 Starmer landslide.

Starmer appears to have more political lives than Larry the cat, who has outlasted five prime ministers during 15 years as "chief mouser" in Downing Street.

But his respite is likely to be temporary. Many Labour lawmakers remain worried about their reelection chances if the party's dire opinion poll ratings

don't improve

Labour faces potential electoral setbacks at a February 26 special election in what was once a party stronghold in northwest England, and in May's elections for legislatures in Scotland and Wales and local councils in England.

Tim Bale, professor of politics at Queen Mary University of London, said that Starmer had "bought himself some time" and challengers were "keeping their powder dry" for the moment.

"It's very difficult to image after the shellacking that the party will presumably face in May, him continuing to lead the party much beyond this summer," Bale said.

"There are problems with the other candidates," Bale said. "It's never an ideal situation for any party to be choosing a prime minister in midterm, and it may be that the Labour Party decides, better the devil you know. I suspect that Keir Starmer will go, but who knows?" (AP)

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US lawmakers accuse justice department of ‘inappropriately’ redacting Epstein files

US lawmakers say files related to convicted sex offender Jeffrey Epstein were improperly redacted ahead of their release by the Department of Justice (DOJ).

Members of Congress on Monday were allowed to begin a review of the unredacted versions of the approximately three million pages of files released under the Epstein Files Transparency Act (EFTA) since December.

“The core issue is that they’re not complying with... my law, because these were scrubbed back in March by Donald Trump’s FBI,” Democratic Representative Ro Khanna told MS NOW.

At least one document has been unredacted since the lawmakers’ complaint, with Deputy Attorney General Todd Blanche saying on X: “The DOJ is committed to transparency.”

The files’ redactions came under scrutiny last week after lawyers for Epstein’s victims said the latest tranche of files included email addresses and nude photos in which the names and faces of potential victims could be identified.

Survivors issued a statement calling the disclosure “outrageous” and said they should not be “named, scrutinized and retraumatized”.

The DOJ said it had taken down all the flagged files and that mistakes were due to “technical or human error”.

After viewing the unredacted documents, Massie and Khanna, who co-sponsored the law which compelled the release of the Epstein files last year, told reporters they had a list of about 20 people in which every name



was redacted except for Epstein’s and his convicted sex trafficker associate Ghislaine Maxwell.

Six of the names could even belong to men who are “likely incriminated by their inclusion in these files”, Massie said outside the DoJ on Monday night, before posting a screenshot of the redacted file online and demanding an explanation.

These names were “inappropriately” redacted, Khanna said on MS NOW.

In response to their concerns, Blanche said his department “just unredacted all non-victim names from this document. The DOJ is committed to transparency.”

He linked to what appears to be a new version of the file - which he said contains the names of Epstein victims, whose identities the EFTA law orders the government to conceal - with only two names now blacked out. Blanche also responded to two other files highlighted by Massie, saying those files do not obfuscate any substantive information.

But Khanna said those measures taken after the documents’ release are still not in compliance with the EFTA

and demanded the hidden identity be revealed.

Blanche quoted Massie’s post on X, saying the blacked-out text is an email address.

“The law requires redactions for personally identifiable information, including if in an email address. And you know that the Sultan’s name is available unredacted in the files,” he said.

“Stop grandstanding,” he added.

Massie also complained that the name of a “well known retired CEO” was missing from the publicly available version of an FBI document listing potential Epstein co-conspirators.

Within hours, Blanche said that name - which already appears elsewhere in the files - had also been uncovered.

“DOJ is hiding nothing,” he wrote.

Representatives Jamie Raskin, a Democrat, and Lauren Boebert, a Republican, were among the lawmakers who viewed the documents on Monday.

“I think there are folks who are definitely implicated” named in the files, Boebert said.

Raskin complained that the limited way in which lawmakers could view the unredacted files amounts to a “cover up”.

“The DOJ is giving Members of Congress just four computers in a satellite office to read the unredacted Epstein File of more than 3 million documents,” he wrote on X, calculating that it would take Congress seven years to read it all. (BBC)

law, which passed nearly unanimously in Congress and was signed by President Trump in November.

“Trump’s FBI scrubbed these files in March,” Khanna said on social media. “The documents (the Department of Justice [received] had the redactions that the FBI made back then.

“They need to unscrub the

FBI files so we know who the rich and powerful men are who raped underage girls.” Massie said the incorrect redactions show the justice department “need to do a little more homework” in their handling of the files.

“What we found out is those 302 forms were redacted before they got to the DOJ,” in contradiction of the law’s order for the FBI - which is part of the DOJ - to un-redact information before sending it to Blance and Attorney General Pam Bondi’s office.

Among the redactions flagged by Massie on Monday night was a document appearing the show an email exchange between Epstein and an unknown person discussing a “torture video” and travel between China and the United States.

Massie claimed that “a Sultan seems to have sent this”

Sports News

More success for Gunners in ABBA's Second Division



The Cedar Grove Gunners continued their successful start to their campaigns in this season's Antigua and Barbuda Basketball Association (ABBA) Second Division on Monday night.

After launching their campaign with a narrow 64-63 victory against Cuties Ovals Ojays 2, the Gunners made it two wins in a row by shooting their way to a 63-59 victory over Michael Joseph Phoenix in the second game of a double-header at the JSC Sports Complex. Shawn Thomas sank 17 points and grabbed 14 rebounds; Sergio Symister produced 13 points, six rebounds, and five assists; and Iornie Joseph converted 11 points and snatched 14 rebounds for the Gunners.

Gary Harrison shot a game-high 19 points and grabbed 16 rebounds, and Shalom Bloodman converted 17 points and snatched 10 rebounds for the Phoenix.

Cuties Ovals Ojays 2 rebounded from their opening-game loss to record their

first win with a 63-59 victory against the Old Road Daggers.

Tahjaron Davis shot a game-high 26 points and dished out five assists, and Jaleyle Joseph converted 10 points and claimed five rebounds for the Ovals Ojays.

Kelvin Simon produced 20 points and grabbed 12 rebounds; Kwame Huntley Clarke contributed 13 points and five rebounds; Kedar Clarke chipped in with 10 points, 12 rebounds, and five assists; and Devea Aaron had six points, 14 rebounds, and 10 assists for the Old Road Daggers.

It was the first defeat for the Old Road Daggers, who launched their campaign with a narrow 63-60 victory over the EZ Fit Flyers 2 in their opening game.

Comprehensive win for OCS in School Basketball League

The Ottos Comprehensive School (OCS) blew out Jennings Secondary by 32 points in the Cool and Smooth Inter-School Basketball League at the JSC Sports Complex on Monday.

Ottos Comprehensive School coasted to their 46-14 victory against Jennings Secondary School in the Junior Boys Division affair.

Jalen Isaac sank 12 points and Levi Richards scored 10 points for Ottos Comprehensive School, while Louis Mecla converted 10 points for Jennings Secondary School.

In previous matches, the Antigua Grammar School snatched a narrow 21-19 victory over Princess Margaret School in the Mini Boys Secondary Division.

Derick Perez sank 14 points for Antigua Grammar School, while Kevani Whyte



Players of the Ottos Comprehensive School and Jennings Secondary School (blue uniform) compete in the Junior Boys Division in the Cool and Smooth Inter-School Basketball League at the JSC Sports Complex on Monday, February 9, 2026. (Photo courtesy of the Inter-School Basketball League)

scored eight points for Princess Margaret School.

Joshua Perez scored seven points to lead Greenbay Primary to a 13-3 victory over T.N. Kirnon Primary in the Mini Boys Primary Division.

The Antigua and Barbuda College of Advanced Studies (ABCAS) notched up a 42-19 victory against Prin-

der Secondary Division on Monday.

Jennings Secondary School prevailed 6-1 over Pares Secondary School, while the Antigua Girls High School fourth team (AGHS 4) recorded a 13-6 victory over Princess Margaret School.

The Antigua Girls High School third team (AGHS 3) snatched a narrow 8-7 victory over the Antigua Girls High School first team (AGHS 1).

The Antigua Girls High School second team (AGHS 2) pulled off a 9-2 victory over Princess Margaret School, while Jennings Secondary clinched a 7-5 victory against Christ the King High School.

The was more success for Christ the King High School, which prevailed 7-5 over the Antigua Girls High School first team (AGHS 1).

cess Margaret School in the Senior Girls Division.

Jodaliah Constant shot a game-high 19 points and Aliana Jack sank 18 points for ABCAS, while Lena Mills scored 16 points for Princess Margaret School.

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Sports Inter-Schools' Netball League continued with matches in the 13 and Un-



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CWI congratulates Lawes on ICC Under-19 World Cup Team of the Tournament selection

Cricket West Indies (CWI) extends its warmest congratulations to rising star Vitel Lawes on his deserved selection in the 2026 ICC Under 19 World Cup Team of the Tournament.

The 18-year-old Jamaican left-arm wrist spin bowler was a standout performer for the team, showcasing skill, bravery and consistency that captured the attention of the global cricketing community and the hearts of supporters across the region.

His inclusion in the prestigious team, selected by a panel of ICC experts and commentators, is a testament to his impactful performances on the world stage.

Lawes emerged as a leader in the West Indies bowling attack, finishing as the highest wicket-taker for the team with 10 scalps. His ability to extract turn from the pitch and make crucial breakthroughs at key moments was a highlight of the tournament.

In the team's opening encounter against Tanzania, Lawes struck with 3/23 to help restrict the opponents and set up a relatively easy chase for his side. In the following game, a defeat to Afghanistan, Lawes again picked up three wickets, this time for 48 runs.

Figures of 1/60 against South Africa in their final group game and 2/41 against Ireland in the Super 6 stage were marked by less bowling dominance but rather, crucial breakthroughs to nullify dangerous partnerships. He then signed off the tournament with 1/55 against Australia. He also had the most dot balls bowled with 150.

Speaking after being named to the prestigious team, Lawes remarked on his tournament experience saying, "It was an excellent tournament for me. Besides the team lifting the trophy, I couldn't ask for anything better in a World Cup. It was a once-in-a-lifetime experience. Before the tournament, I promised myself that I would give it 110 per cent every game and I think I did that as best as I could," Lawes shared.

"Being named in the Team of the Tour-



Vitel Lawes

nament is a very big achievement for me. In the Sri Lanka series last year, I only took one wicket and at one point I was questioning if I was going to make the World Cup team. To come from such a low moment, this is a tremendous feeling and to be the only West Indian makes it even more special for me, the region and my country. I feel like I represented my region and country very well in the circumstances."

Cricket West Indies' Director of Cricket Miles Bascombe also shared his thoughts on the honour saying, "Vitel's selection to the ICC Under 19 World Cup Team of the Tournament is richly deserved and reflects both his individual quality and his growth as a cricketer.

"Throughout the tournament, he showed maturity beyond his years, tremendous skill, and an excellent understanding of his role. All culminating in the ability to strike at important times against quality opposition. Performances like these underline the value of our youth development pathways and give us great confidence in the next generation of West Indies players."

In addition to Lawes, West Indies' World Cup run also featured excellent performances from several members of the team.

Opening batter Zachary Carter was the only West Indian player to hit a century in the tournament, a feat he accomplished in the victory over South Africa. He also struck a half century in the defeat to Australia. He enjoyed a generally explosive tournament with 13 sixes and 17 fours struck at 5.8 deliveries per boundary.

Wicketkeeper-batter Jewel Andrew was also a consistent provider at the top of the order while 17-year-old Tanez Francis impressed alongside Carter. With the ball, Shaquan Belle finished with the tournament's best bowling figures of 6/40 against South Africa.

Pace partner Jakeem Pollard had an extraordinary dot ball percentage of 68.4% as 130 of his 190 deliveries yielded no runs. Belle, Carter and Micah McKenzie were the three West Indians to claim Player of the Match prizes against Tanzania, South Africa, and Ireland, respectively.

Cricket West Indies commends the entire West Indies Under-19 squad and support staff for their commitment and effort throughout the tournament, laying a strong foundation for the future of West Indies cricket.

Celebrating the life of *Darren Akeem Richards*

Sunrise: 27th October, 1984 | Sunset: 12th, January, 2026



Homegoing Service

Thursday, 19th February 2026
Vewing: 9:30am | Service: 10:00am
Spring Gardens Moravian Church
St. John's Antigua

Pakistan agrees to play India in T20 World Cup match, government says



Players of the Pakistan T20 cricket team

LAHORE (Reuters) - Pakistan has agreed to play India in the Twenty20 cricket World Cup match scheduled to take place in Sri Lanka on Sunday, Pakistan's government said on Monday, reversing its decision to boycott the game citing geopolitical tensions.

The Pakistani government last week directed its team to boycott the Group A contest to show solidarity with Bangladesh, who were replaced in the tournament by Scotland after their refusal to tour India over safety concerns.

"In view of the outcomes achieved in multilateral discussions, as well as the request of friendly countries, the Government of Pakistan hereby directs the Pakistan National Cricket Team to take the field on February 15, 2026, for its scheduled fixture in the ICC Men's T20 World Cup," the

government said in a post on X.

The Bangladesh Cricket Board on Monday urged Pakistan to reverse their decision to boycott the match. Pakistan also received communications from Sri Lanka, the United Arab Emirates, and other member nations urging it to help in securing a resolution to the impasse, the government said in the statement.

Pakistan, who are scheduled to play all their matches in Sri Lanka, would have forfeited two points if they had withdrawn from the match and also dealt a serious blow to the tournament since an India-Pakistan clash remains cricket's greatest blockbuster.

Indian Captain Suryakumar Yadav said last week that his team would travel to Colombo as planned, regardless of Pakistan's decision on the

fixture.

New Delhi's ties with both Islamabad and Dhaka have deteriorated in recent months, with political strains increasingly spilling into cricket.

India engaged in its worst conflict with Pakistan in decades in May. Ties with Bangladesh soured after then Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina fled to Delhi in 2024 after violent protests against her government.

Bilateral cricket between India and Pakistan has long been suspended but an arrangement is in place enabling them to play at a neutral venue when either hosts a global tournament.

India, the world's top-ranked T20 team, are aiming to become the first side to successfully defend the title and the first hosts to win the tournament.

Young Lions jump to the top of Second Division League



The Young Lions football team

The Young Lions of Old Road moved to the top of the Antigua and Barbuda Football Association's (ABFA) Second Division on goal difference on Monday.

The Young Lions extended their unbeaten run, claiming their ninth win in 11 matches by snatching a 1-0 victory against the JSC Progressors at the St. Johnstone's Village Stadium.

Davanute Damien of JSC Progressors scored an own goal in the fourth minute to give the Young Lions their latest win.

The result allows the Young Lions to leapfrog Guydadli Jets into first place by advancing to 29 points. However, Guydadli Jets, who have 28 points, have played 10 matches, one less than the Young Lions.

The JSC Progressors remain on seven points after losing for the ninth time in 12 matches.

Sea View Farm FC also moved ahead of the Guydadli Jets into second place after claiming their ninth win in 12 matches with a 4-1 victory against Glanvilles FC at the Sea View Farm playing field.

Justin Hilaire scored twice with goals in the second and 26th minutes, and a conversion by Bertrand Chastanet gave Sea View Farm FC a three-nil lead at halftime.

Roshaun Martin reduced the deficit by scoring for Glanvilles FC with a strike in the 47th minute. Nigel Graham restored his team's three-goal advantage by scoring in the 82nd minute to seal Sea View Farm's victory.

The result allows Sea View Farm FC to join the Young Lions on 29 points. However, the Young Lions have a superior goal difference and have played 11 matches, one less than Sea View Farm FC.

Glanvilles FC remains on seven points after suffering their sixth defeat in nine matches.

Kelton Dalso Real Blizzard kept their unbeaten run intact to remain in fourth place, securing their eighth win in 11 matches by snatching a 2-1 victory against the Liberta Blackhawks at the New Winthorpes playing field.

Real Blizzard had to come from behind to snatch victory after Tyrique Francis scored in the 35th minute to give the Liberta Blackhawks a one-nil lead at halftime.

Substitute Dikembe Williams came off the bench to score the winner in the second minute of added time after teammate Amos Christian had snatched the equalizer for Real Blizzard with a 54th-minute conversion.

The result allows Real Blizzard to advance to 27 points, while the Liberta Blackhawks remain on one point after suffering their ninth defeat in 10 matches.

Meanwhile, Monday's other scheduled Second Division match between the Urlings Golden Stars and TAMO FC at the Keithley Sheppard Recreational Park was not played.

The ABFA has disclosed that TAMO FC has officially withdrawn from the 2025-2026 Second Division League matches.

Acting ABFA President Gwen Salmon said the coach of TAMO FC says the decision to pull out of the league was taken because the players are not attending matches in sufficient numbers to field a team.