

# Cabinet gives support to Warri Project

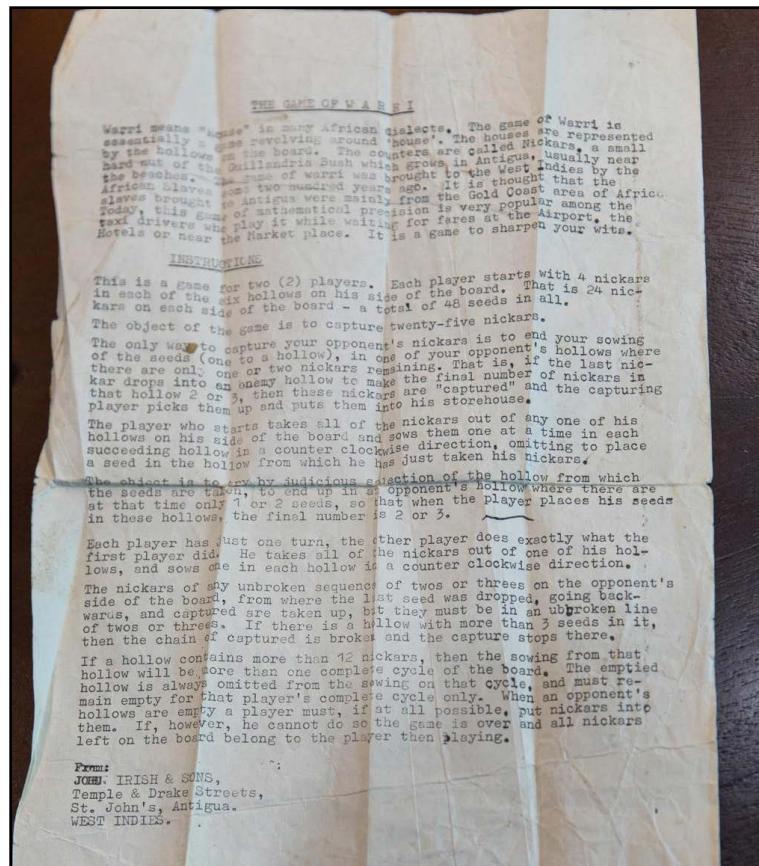
*Story on page 2*



**Members of the Cabinet pose with the Advisor on the Warri Rival Project Dr Hazra Medica (fourth from left) who presented a Warri board to Prime Minister Gaston Browne**

# Local News

## Cabinet gives support to Warri Project



A project to popularize the game of Warri across Antigua and Barbuda has been launched by the Department of Creative Industries.

Spearheaded by the Cultural Advisor to the Department and Coordinator of the UNESCO Project dubbed *The Warri Rival Project*, Dr. Hazra Medica, provided the Cabinet with an in-depth overview of the project and

even encouraged members of the executive body to engage in a friendly warri game.

Minister of Creative Industries, Daryll Matthew reported on his Facebook page that the project received the full and unequivocal support of the Cabinet of Antigua and Barbuda following the detailed presentation.

The engagement offered Cabinet Ministers an immersive look into the cultural, historical, and creative significance of the Warri Rival initiative. Ministers examined how the project preserves heritage while transforming a traditional African game into a contemporary cultural asset with educational, tourism, and creative-economy val-

ue.

Under the project, the Warri game will be introduced in the schools across Antigua and Barbuda with an Inter-Schools Warri Championship forming part of the plans.

The Warri game is part of the country's cultural traditions that can be traced back to Africa.

## SLBMC Moves to Expand Bed Capacity, Strengthen Staffing and Supplies



Officials at Sir Lester Bird Medical Centre (SLBMC) are preparing to expand the hospital's operational capacity as they work to further improve the provision and delivery of healthcare.

Medical Director Dr. Shivon Belle-Jarvis says the hospital's immediate priority is reopening a currently non-operational wing and increasing the number of usable beds - a move that could significantly ease congestion in the Emergency Room and improve the flow of patients into wards.

"We definitely need to look at our bed count," Dr. Belle-Jarvis said, outlining the challenge facing Antigua and Barbuda's primary public hospital. "There is a non-operational wing. We're 185-bedded, but we're currently operating at a 158-bed capacity, and the challenge has been beds as well as human resources."

Approximately two dozen beds re-

main out of service because of staffing constraints, she revealed. But the situation will normalize when the Ghanaian nurses are rostered.

"Now that we've gotten the additional strength from the Ghanaian Brigade, and they're going to start on Monday, once we operationalize the beds, we'll be able to expand that space," she explained. "In expanding that space, we can then take persons from the ER up quite quickly to the ward."

Health officials anticipate that relief can be almost immediate. With additional beds, patients admitted through the Emergency Room would spend less time waiting to be warded.

Administrators are also focusing on providing an adequate supply of linen at Sir Lester Bird Medical Centre. Currently, the hospital provides approximately four sheets per bed. With 185 beds, the total linen amounts to 710 sheets - just enough

to maintain a modest buffer.

While it may appear adequate, the number leaves little room for unexpected demand or wear and tear. Therefore, the focus is on increasing the linen stock.

"Our aim is to go to six sheets per bed," Dr. Belle-Jarvis said, noting that a larger surplus provides greater reliability and prevents shortages that could delay patient turnover or create sanitation risks. At least 1,100 to 1,200 sheets will be required at minimum to ensure there are no shortages.

It was noted that currently, SLBMC is operating with 710 sheets. In the past week, the hospital received 300 more through support from the Medical Benefits Scheme, bringing the total to about 1,000. An additional order of 500 sheets has already been placed, which would increase the inventory to approximately 1,500.

"That keeps us in a much safer place," Dr. Belle-Jarvis said. "Because in the hospital, you really should never be short on sheets." As they continue to improve the hospital's infrastructure, the medical director revealed that the facility's capital assets are valued at approximately \$27 million, highlighting the scale of the institution's needs. So far, about \$2 million worth of new equipment has been purchased, but there is an acknowledgment that much more remains to be done.

"Infrastructural challenges, equipment challenges - we still have a long way to go," she said.

"It cannot be done by the government alone," the SLBMC Medical Director declared. "It must also include investment by private partners, civil society, and we're so thankful for our partners to date."

# Local News

## 150 delegates to attend the First Caribbean-EU Parliamentary Assembly meeting in St. John's

Antigua and Barbuda will again attract the international spotlight as it hosts the 1<sup>st</sup> Caribbean-EU Parliamentary Assembly from February 16 to 18 that is expected to bring together approximately 150 delegates.

The Assembly will attract parliamentary representatives from Caribbean States and the European Union and represents an important opportunity to strengthen political dialogue.

Prime Minister Gaston Browne will deliver what has been described as 'a solemn address' to the opening ceremony slated for Monday February 16 at the conference venue, the Conference Centre at the American University of Antigua (AUA).

A number of topical issues that are relevant to Antigua and Barbuda and other Small Island Development States (SIDS) will form the core of the discussions over the three days of the Assembly. Alongside several panel discussions on the agenda items, there are two forums that will take place as part of the Assembly. One is a Women's Forum where one of the panelists will be the President of the Senate, Senator Alincia Grant. The theme for this Forum is '**Women as Change-makers in Economy and Business**'. The other is a Youth Forum, which has as its theme, '**From Vision to Action: Empowering Youth for Climate Resilience**'.

Some of the topics to be discussed at the main conference include;

- Climate Resilience – Sargassum Crisis –Renewable Energy
- EU-Caribbean Pathways to Resilience – accelerating the Renewable Energy Transition in the Caribbean
- Economic and Trade Partnership Agreement – Investments and Global Gateway
- The Future of EU-Caribbean Trade
- Territorial Integrity and Multilateral



eralism

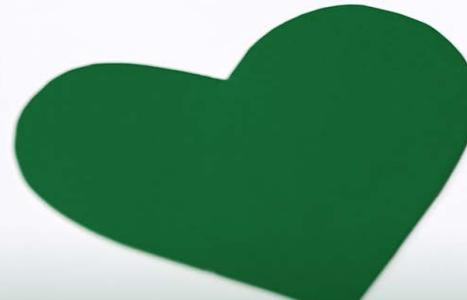
Speaking on behalf of the Antigua and Barbuda government, Foreign Affairs and Trade Minister, E.P Chet Greene said the government looks forward to welcoming regional and international parliamentary delegates and

reaffirming the country's commitment to diplomacy, multilateral cooperation and international engagement.

He also made an appeal to all the agencies involved in the planning 'to rise to the occasion to deliver excellent service'.


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## Orientation Programme for Ghanaian Nurses Continues with Ministry-Level Engagement



The comprehensive orientation programme for the cohort of nurses recruited from Ghana continued Wednesday with an in-depth session focused on strengthening their understanding of the Ministry of Health and the broader public health system.

The session provided a detailed overview of the Ministry's structure, hierarchy, and operational framework. Nurses were formally introduced to the organizational leadership, including the roles and responsibilities within the executive and administrative arms of the Ministry. The orientation also highlighted the function and coordination of community clinics, healthcare institutions, various technical and administrative departments, and statutory corporations operating under the Ministry's portfolio.

The session was led by Deputy Chief Medical Officer, Dr. Teri-Ann Joseph, who provided strategic insights into the Ministry's vision, governance structure, and service delivery model. Dr. Joseph emphasized the critical role that the nurses will play in strengthening patient care, supporting public health initiatives, and contributing to the continued development of the national healthcare system.

Presentations were also delivered by representatives from key departments, community health services, institutional care facilities, and affiliated statutory bodies. These speakers outlined how their respective units function, how they collaborate across the health sector, and how the newly recruited nurses will integrate into their assigned areas of service.

The interactive session allowed the nurses to ask questions, gain clarity on operational procedures, and better understand expectations within their professional roles. The ministry underscored its commitment to ensuring that the nurses are fully equipped, informed, and supported as they transition into the local healthcare environment.

The orientation programme will continue over the coming days, covering clinical protocols, administrative processes, and community engagement strategies to ensure a smooth and effective integration into the national health system.

The ministry extends its appreciation to all presenters and participants who continue to contribute to a structured and meaningful onboarding process.

## Utilities Minister Nicholas represents Antigua and Barbuda at annual CAF meeting in Panama City



Antigua and Barbuda was duly represented at the just concluded CAF International Economic Forum – Latin America and the Caribbean 2026 that was held in Panama City Panama.

Minister of Utilities and Information Technology, Melford Nicholas, attended the high-level meeting on behalf of Prime Minister Gaston Browne. Reports from Panama City indicate that Caribbean priorities featured prominently at CAF's International Economic Forum – Latin America and the Caribbean 2026, as regional leaders, policymakers, experts and business stakeholders advanced discussions on issues at the forefront of the region's development agenda, including resilience and financing solutions tailored

to small island economies.

The Forum, now in its second year, was conceptualised by CAF – Development Bank of Latin America and the Caribbean to provide a space for countries of the region to engage in dialogue on common challenges and opportunities. This year's agenda placed a spotlight on the Caribbean and addressed issues related to climate resilience, infrastructure, energy transition, water and food security, trade and sustainable development, and culture as a tool for economic growth, among other priority areas.

As part of the Forum, CAF's Regional Management Office for the Caribbean convened a closed-door Caribbean Ministerial Dialogue, bringing together

Ministers of Finance, Ministers of Economic Development, and senior officials from several Caribbean countries. The dialogue provided a dedicated space to strengthen alignment between CAF's agile and flexible financing solutions and the respective countries' development priorities, with a focus on innovative financing instruments for Small Island Developing States (SIDS).

More than 50 delegates from across the Caribbean participated in the Forum.

CAF welcomed several Caribbean Ministers and regional dignitaries including, Hon. Melford Nicholas of Antigua and Barbuda, Hon. Michael Halkitis of The Bahamas, Hon. Dennis Cornwall and Hon. Joseph Andall of Grenada, Hon. Fayval Williams, Hon. Kamina Johnson Smith and Hon. Auby Hill of Jamaica, Hon. Alva Baptiste of Saint Lucia, Hon. Dave Tancoo of Trinidad and Tobago and Dr. Didacus Jules, Director General of the OECS, among others.

Caribbean leaders also participated in panel discussions and technical sessions on priority issues, including the region's economic outlook, the blue economy, relations with Africa, global fragmentation and its implications for development, and opportunities to boost tourism investment. These exchanges were complemented by closed-door technical discussions aimed at advancing practical, solutions-oriented outcomes for the region.

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# **ABRSC Launches 2026 Reparations Art Competition for Youth**

The Antigua and Barbuda Reparations Support Commission (ABRSC), in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, has officially launched the 2026 Reparations Art Competition, inviting secondary school and college students to creatively explore the theme “The Spirit of Reparations through Art”.

The competition, which launches in February 2026 in observance of Black History/Heritage Month, seeks to inspire young artists to visually interpret the principles of reparations through themes such as healing, justice, unity, empowerment, pride, and cultural identity. Submissions will close on April 15th, 2026 – World Art Day, with a public exhibition scheduled for September 2026 during Africa/CARICOM Month.

The competition is open to Secondary school students (ages 11–13 and 14–17) and College students (ages 16–20).

Participants may submit original traditional or mixed media artworks, accompanied by a short-written description (50–150 words) explaining how their piece reflects the competition's



theme

Three thousand dollars (EC\$3,000.00) in cash and prizes will be awarded to outstanding entries across categories, with all participants receiving certificates of participation.

## Speaking on the importance of youth engagement in the arts, Bernard Peters, Educa-

tion Officer for Visual Arts, encouraged young creatives to see their work as part of a larger national and global dialogue;

“Art has always been a powerful tool for truth-telling and healing. This competition gives our young people the space to reflect, question, and express what

reparations mean to them, not just historically, but emotionally and culturally. I strongly encourage students to participate and allow their voices to be seen and heard through their art.”

Chair of the ABRSC, Dorene O'Marde, underscored the deeper purpose of the initiative:

“Reparations is not only a political or legal conversation, it is a human one. By engaging our young people through art, we are nurturing critical thinking, cultural pride, and intergenerational awareness. This competition invites our youth to imagine justice, healing, and repair through their own creative lens.”

The 2026 Reparations Art Competition forms part of the Commission's ongoing commitment to public education, cultural expression, and youth engagement in the reparatory justice movement.

For more information on submission guidelines and participation, interested persons are encouraged to contact [bernard.peters@ab.gov.ag](mailto:bernard.peters@ab.gov.ag) / [abreprations@gmail.com](mailto:abreprations@gmail.com) or WhatsApp 464-2744.

An advertisement banner for ACB Caribbean. The top left features the ACB logo with the text 'ACB' and 'CARIBBEAN' below it. To the right is the slogan 'Claim Your Keys. Secure Your Land.' in large, bold, white and yellow letters. Below the slogan are two logos: 'Home Advantage' with a stylized house icon and 'LOTS' with a colorful geometric design. To the right is a photograph of a smiling family of three. To the far right is the text 'Apply today.' with social media icons for Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and LinkedIn.

# Feature

## Open Letter to the Barbuda Council



### ***Urgent Call to the Barbuda Council***

Dear Members of the Barbuda Council,

I, Bonnietha John, Community Activist in Barbuda, respectfully call upon the members of the Barbuda Council to urgently convene a meeting with the Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda, the Honourable Gaston Browne, along with other parliamentary representatives.

Such a meeting is of critical importance to address the pressing issues currently impacting the people of Barbuda.

The matters requiring immediate attention include;

- The condition and delivery of health-care services on the island
- The quality and accessibility of educational services
- The operations and necessary support of the Fisheries Department
- The urgent upgrading of the APUA facility

The strengthening and restructuring of sports education programmes

Sports development in Barbuda must be treated as a national priority. It is not simply recreational activity; it is a strategic investment in our future generation.

Many of our young people are losing direction and are increasingly vulnera-

ble to negative influences. Structured sports and educational programmes can provide discipline, mentorship, purpose, and meaningful opportunities for growth.

This is not a time for personal grievances or political division. Our focus must remain on the advancement of Barbuda's youth and the sustainable development of our island.

Our young people must not be left behind. They deserve proper infra-

structure, reliable services, and opportunities that allow them to succeed and thrive.

The future of Barbuda depends on the decisions we make today. Let us unite in the interest of national development and the well-being of the next generation.

Respectfully,  
 Bonnietha John  
 Community Activist, Barbuda



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**Date: Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> February 2026**

**Time: 9:00am – 1:00pm**

**All Applicants must:**

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- Be eligible to work in Antigua & Barbuda
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- Two (2) Passport size photos
- Police Record
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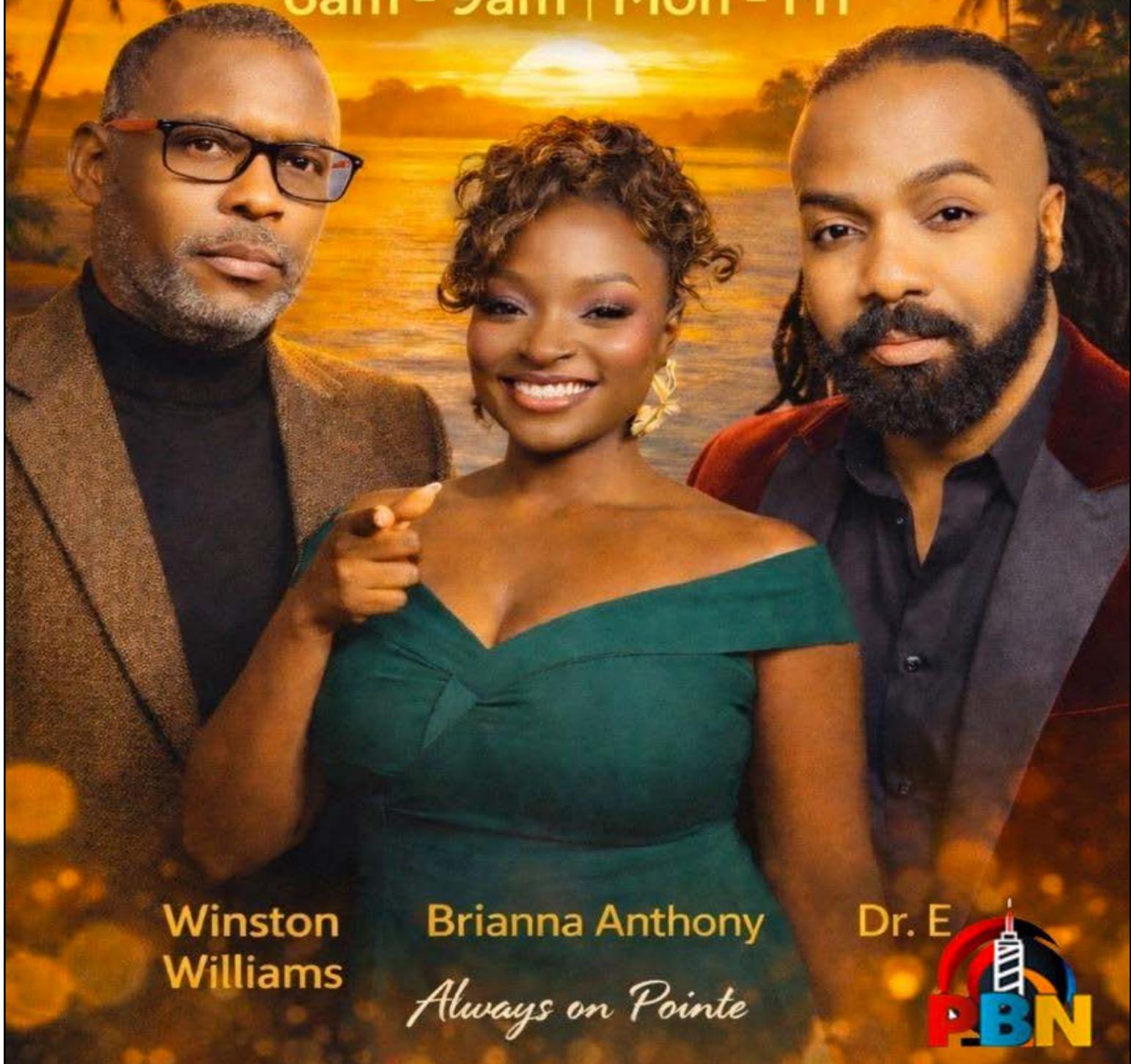
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# Regional News

## At CAF summit, CDB President calls for enhanced South-South collaboration to drive development



The President of the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB), Mr. Daniel M. Best, has emphasized the importance of strengthening South-South cooperation and fostering more inclusive regional integration as vital strategies to speed up progress throughout the Caribbean, Latin America, and Africa.

During his remarks at the Latin America and the Caribbean International Economic Forum 2026, Mr. Best highlighted the increasing strategic significance of alliances connecting the region with Africa's emerging economies., shared a CDB press release.

"There is a growing urgency to bridge the Atlantic in a more deliberate and coordinated way," Best stated. "Africa is the fastest growing region in the world, and alongside our deep historical and cultural ties, there is significant opportunity to learn from one another and chart a cohesive path forward for our people."

Reaffirming CDB's dedication to advancing regional cooperation and South-South collaboration, he pointed out that the bank is actively broad-

ening its network of partnerships to enhance development results and generate tangible impacts.

He also underscored current initiatives involving CDB, CAF – Development Bank of Latin America and the Caribbean, and the African Export-Import Bank (Afreximbank), highlighting the vital role of development finance institutions in fostering transformative partnerships."

"CDB and CAF continue to deepen our partnerships to integrate more closely with our Latin American and African counterparts," he explained. "We are currently developing several innovative offerings, including a multi-guarantor debt swap facility and a new line of credit for the Caribbean, while also advancing product development with Afreximbank. This is the kind of deep cooperation the region needs to accelerate."

CAF's Regional Manager for the Caribbean, Dr. Stacy Richards-Kennedy, echoed this perspective, stressing the transformative impact of proactive partnerships.

"Our engagements underscore the strength of regional partnerships and

emphasise their critical role in mobilising capital, bridging development gaps, and fostering inclusive growth. CAF remains committed to working closely with partners like CDB to design innovative financial solutions that support sustainable development outcomes. Similarly, we continue to deepen our collaboration with Afreximbank because I firmly believe that by pooling our expertise and our finances, we can truly assist the Caribbean with addressing its development needs," she said.

The forum, held from January 28 to 30 in Panama City, reportedly brought together over 6,500 leaders from 70 nations, including heads of state and government officials. It focused on exploring avenues for Latin America and the Caribbean to amplify their global influence through enhanced coordination, innovation, and shared development strategies. Key topics of discussion included regional integration, trade, artificial intelligence, energy transition, and competitiveness, with a common goal of transforming regional vulnerability into strategic global leadership.

Mr. Best participated in a senior panel titled "South-South Connection: CELAC-Africa Partnerships Toward a New Global Leadership," which explored opportunities for closer collaboration between Latin America, the Caribbean, and Africa across various development sectors.

As per the release, on the sidelines of the event, the CDB delegation also held discussions with regional policymakers and development partners to explore innovative financing approaches aimed at speeding up infrastructure projects, reducing inequality, and supporting inclusive growth across the Caribbean. (Dominica News Online)

## Machel Eyes 12th Road March, Signals Exit



Machel Montano has his eyes set on his 12th Road March title, which would break Kitchener's record for the most wins. But even if things don't go his way come Ash Wednesday, the soca king said he will bow out of Carnival limelight to focus on projects that would better benefit upcoming artistes.

Speaking to guests at MovieTowne, Port of Spain, following the private screening of his *Like Ah Boss* documentary last night, Montano said he has reached that point in his career where "I get it".

Pressed about his next move by Aaron Fingal, host of the question-and-answer segment following the movie premiere, Montano replied: "Naked. No more suits, no more made-up things, just say what I have to say. I have nothing to prove anymore. I am

good.

"I have seen it all, done it all, have it all. When you have seen it all, done it all, have it all, you look up and do what is needed. It is needed for my children in this country to be higher educated, not try to be fully dunce."

Montano added: "It is needed for my country to know that oil and gas is not our richest resource. It's the people, the talent. I am going to take that journey... but I'm trying to win one more Road March to make the shelf complete, and then I could get to it."

"But win, lose or draw, I going. That's it. This is the end of one and the beginning of a new thing."

The 51-year-old Montano also described Carnival as a hustle.

"We're hustling. And if we hustling

like this -- doing 250 fetes, five a night, ten different people pulling you here and there -- that is not quality work.

"We could do way better than we are doing now, but somebody has to step off. If I step off and a few others step off, you'll have young ones who will fill the holes."

The reigning Road March winner also had a message for the Government and corporate Trinidad and Tobago to teach young people what he learned at the University of Trinidad and Tobago (UTT) at 49 years old. Montano graduated from UTT in October 2024 with a Master of Arts in Carnival Studies.

He also drew reference to eight-year-old Angelo Gore as a perfect example of the young talent that exists in the country.

"Look at who I had on stage last night (at Monday Madness). This little boy was on key. I was so amazed.

"We have people making roti and playing pan, people driving taxi and playing pan — how they remembering all them notes for ten minutes? This is talent. We not recognising it."

"So I am not waiting on anyone to do it. I will use my money and other people's money, my friends' money, and I will build it."

Soundbridge is a programme that will be a major part of Montano's next step.

According to Che Kothari, the singer's manager, the programme will live online and will "break down Machel's journey in an educational way via workshops, tutorials, public relations practitioners and interviews with artistes".

Montano's *Like Ah Boss* documentary opens in cinemas today. (Trinidad Express)

## UK Court rules Mehul Choksi's claim of kidnapping from Antigua to Dominica, not substantiated

A UK court has found that fugitive diamantaire Mehul Choksi presented no concrete evidence to support his claim that he was kidnapped from Antigua by Indian Agents in 2021, "while ordering him to provide security for legal costs amounting to £600,000," an Antigua.News article reported.

Choksi is a citizen of Antigua and Barbuda under the Citizenship By Investment Programme (CBIP).

"In an order obtained by Times Now, Justice Mansfield noted that Choksi's allegations were largely supported by circumstantial evidence and lacked independent witness testimony," Antigua.News further stated.

According to the judge, unsurprisingly, there is no witness evidence as to the kidnapping and assault of the Claimant, other than that of the Claimant himself.

The article went on to add that, "while acknowledging that circumstantial evidence can be persuasive in conspiracy cases, the court said that at this early stage of proceedings it was difficult to assess the strength of such claims without fuller examination of the evidence."

"Choksi's London-based counsel, Mr Fitzgerald KC, had argued that ordering security for costs would be unjust, claiming there was strong evidence that the defendants were part of a conspiracy to abduct, torture, and forcibly render Choksi to India," the article continued.

However, the court was not persuaded.

The ruling stems from a lawsuit filed by Choksi in May 2024 against



the Government of India, four non-resident Indians, and a Hungarian woman. He alleged that he was physically assaulted and mentally harassed after being abducted in Antigua and Barbuda, before being taken by boat to Dominica.

"In support of his case, Choksi relied on an Antiguan police report prepared by Inspector Adonis Henry in June 2021 and a witness statement from private investigator Oliver Laurence, who was hired by Choksi's family," Antigua.News added.

The court observed that both documents relied heavily on second-hand accounts and documents reviewed by others, rather than direct witness testimony.

The article also explained that Justice Mansfield further noted that the police investigation in Antigua did not progress beyond the initial re-

port.

Choksi's legal team contended that the probe was halted due to alleged collusion between the defendants and the governments of Antigua and Dominica—"claims that are the subject of separate legal proceedings filed by Choksi against the Antiguan government."

The UK court also referenced earlier rulings in Europe. Both the Antwerp Court and the Court of Cassation had previously concluded that there was no evidence to substantiate claims that Choksi was abducted by agents acting on behalf of the Indian government in May 2021.

The UK proceedings are ongoing, with the security for costs order standing as a significant financial hurdle for Choksi as the case moves forward. (Dominica News Online)

## Gunman takes hostages after firing shots at school in southern Thailand

A gunman who fired shots at a school in Hat Yai district in southern Thailand on Wednesday has been detained and all the people who were held hostage have been freed, a police official told Reuters.

An 18-year-old man entered the Patongprathankiriwat School in Songkhla Province's Hat Yai earlier on Wednesday with a gun, the provincial administration said on social media.

"The perpetrator has been captured," Deputy Superintendent Wichian Sooboon told Reuters.

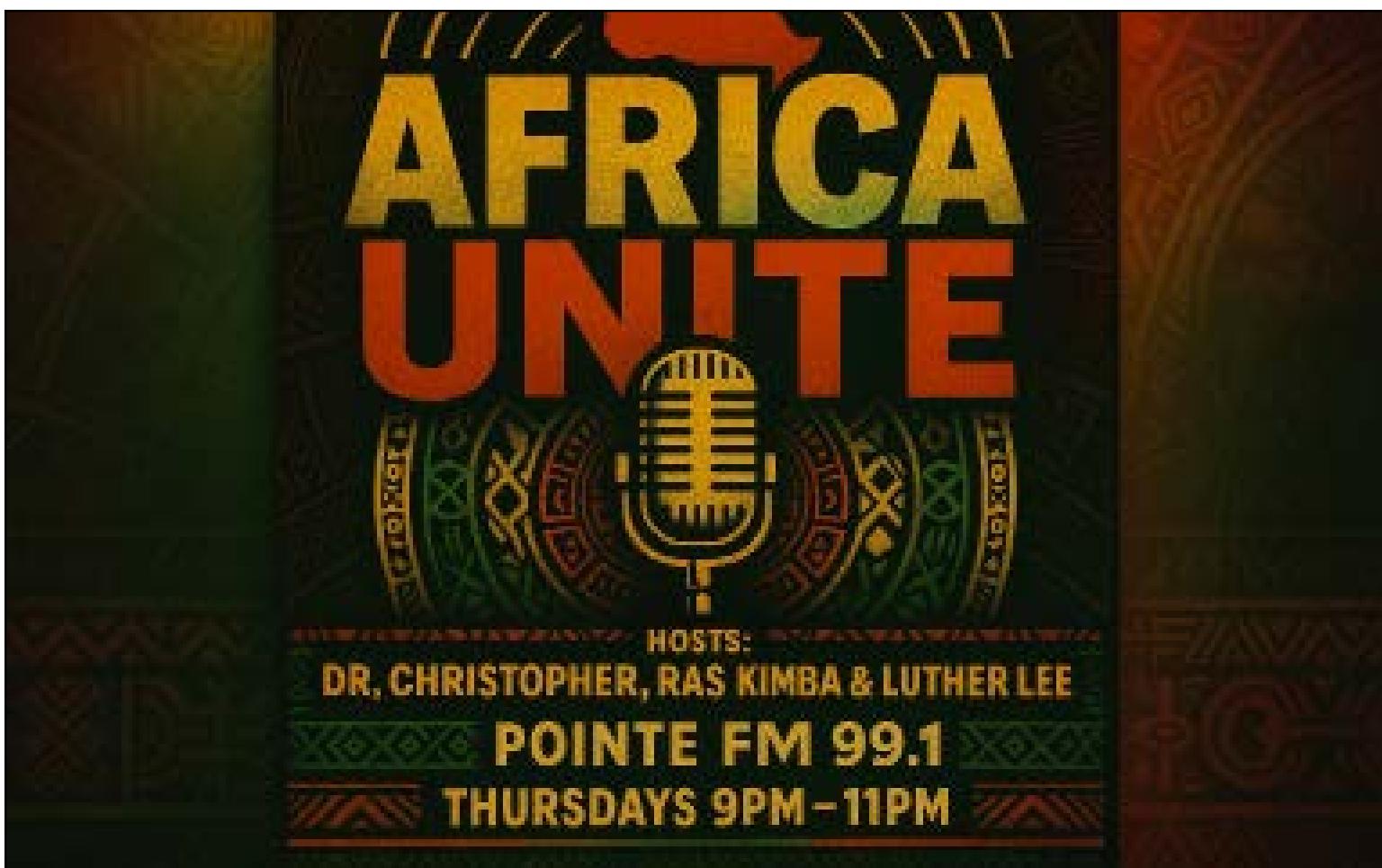
At least three people were injured in the incident, a second police official said.

Gun violence and ownership are not uncommon in Thailand, where a former police officer killed 36 people,



including 22 children, in a gun-and-knife attack at a nursery in the coun-

try's east in 2022. (NBC)



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## Tropical Cyclone Gezani hits Madagascar and kills at least 20



At least 20 people are dead after Tropical Cyclone Gezani made landfall in Madagascar's main port city and collapsed houses on the Indian Ocean island, authorities said Wednesday.

Wind speeds exceeded 195 kph (121 mph), and Madagascar's weather service issued red alerts for several regions warning of possible floods and landslides as Gezani moved across the large island of 31 million people, many of whom live in poverty and have inadequate shelter from storms.

Madagascar is especially vulnerable to cyclones blowing in off the Indian Ocean and was battered by another deadly cyclone less than two weeks ago.

The National Office for Risk and Disaster Management said building collapses caused some of the at least 20 deaths, and at least 33 other people were injured as Gezani made landfall late Tuesday in the eastern city of Toamasina. The agency said 15 people were missing and more

than 2,700 people were evacuated.

Toamasina, with around 300,000 residents, sustained severe damage, residents told The Associated Press. The majority of the deaths were in that region, authorities said.

President Michael Rianirina, who took power in a military coup in October, visited Toamasina to survey damage and meet residents, according to videos posted on his office's Facebook page. The videos showed flooded neighborhoods, homes and shops with windows blown out and roofs blown off, and trees and other debris strewn across streets.

Rianirina's office said around 75% of the city's infrastructure had been damaged or destroyed.

"It's devastation. Roofs have been blown away, walls have collapsed, power poles are down, trees have been uprooted. It looks like a catastrophic landscape," resident Michel, who gave only his first name, said by phone.

Power has been cut off in Toamasina since Tuesday.

Gezani on Wednesday moved west across Madagascar, weakening to a tropical storm as it moved inland, according to the national weather service. The storm passed around 100 kilometers (62 miles) north of the capital, Antananarivo, one of the regions under a red alert warning for possible flooding.

Forecasts showed Gezani was expected to move into the channel between Madagascar and Africa's east coast on Thursday, and warned it might strengthen into a tropical cyclone again and turn back toward Madagascar's southwest coast next week.

On Jan. 31, Tropical Cyclone Fytia killed 14 people in Madagascar and displaced more than 85,000, according to the disaster management agency.

The United Nations released \$3 million from its emergency response fund to help Madagascar prepare for the impacts of Gezani, spokesperson Stephane Dujarric said Monday.

Cyclone season in Madagascar is from around November to March and brings repeated weather disasters to one of the world's poorest countries, which barely has time to recover before another hits.

Madagascar, the world's fourth largest island, has been impacted by more than a dozen tropical storms or cyclones since 2020. The United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction says they cause an estimated \$85 million worth of damage to infrastructure each year that impedes the nation's development. (AP)

## Shooter in Canada kills 9 people and injures 25 others at a school and home

A shooting at a school in remote northern British Columbia left seven people dead, while two more were found dead at a nearby home, Canadian authorities said Tuesday. A woman believed by police to be the shooter was also found dead, apparently from a self-inflicted wound.

Royal Canadian Mounted Police said more than 25 people were wounded, including two who were airlifted to hospital with life-threatening injuries, after the shooting at Tumbler Ridge Secondary School.

Tumbler Ridge in the Canadian Rockies is more than 1,000 kilometers (600 miles) northeast of Vancouver, near the provincial border with Alberta. The provincial government website lists Tumbler Ridge Secondary School as having 175 students from Grades 7 to 12.

British Columbia Premier David Eby told reporters that police officers reached the school within two minutes.

A video showed students walking out of the school with their hands raised as police vehicles surrounded the building and a helicopter circled overhead.

Police found six people dead, RCMP Superintendent Ken Floyd said. A seventh person died while being transported to a hospital, and two more were found dead at a residence the authorities believe was connected to the attack. A suspect appeared to have died of a "self-inflicted injury."

Floyd told reporters that investigators had identified a female suspect but would not release a name, and that the shooter's motive remained unclear. He added that police are still investigating the connection between the shooter and the victims.

Tumbler Ridge Mayor Darryl Krakowka said it was "devastating" to learn how many had died in the com-



munity of 2,700, which he called a "big family."

"I broke down," Krakowka said. "I have lived here for 18 years. I probably know every one of the victims."

The Rev. George Rowe of the Tumbler Ridge Fellowship Baptist Church went to the recreation center where the victims' families were awaiting more information.

"It was not a pretty sight. Families are still waiting to hear if it's their child that's deceased and because of protocol and procedure, the investigating team is very careful in releasing names," Rowe said. "The big thing tonight was my having to walk away and the families still waiting to find out. It is so difficult. Other pastors and counselors are there, so they are not alone."

Rowe once taught at the high school and his three children graduated from there.

"To walk through the corridors of that school will never be the same again," he said.

The school district said the high school and Tumbler Ridge Elementary School will be closed for the rest of the week.

School shootings are rare in Canada, which has strict gun control laws.

Canadian Prime Minister Mark Car-

ney said in a social media post that he was devastated by the shooting.

"I join Canadians in grieving with those whose lives have been changed irreversibly today, and in gratitude for the courage and selflessness of the first responders who risked their lives to protect their fellow citizens," he wrote.

Carney's office said he is suspending a planned trip to Halifax, Nova Scotia and Munich, Germany. He was set to announce a long-awaited defense industrial strategy in Halifax on Wednesday before heading to Europe for the Munich Security Conference.

Eby said he had spoken to Carney about the "unimaginable tragedy."

"I know it's causing us all to hug our kids a little bit tighter tonight," he said. "I'm asking the people of British Columbia to look after the people of Tumbler Ridge tonight."

Canada's government has responded to previous mass shootings with gun control measures, including a recently broadened ban on all guns it considers assault weapons.

Tuesday's shootings were Canada's deadliest rampage since 2020, when a gunman in Nova Scotia killed 13 people and set fires that left another nine dead.

Gillies reported from Toronto. (AP)

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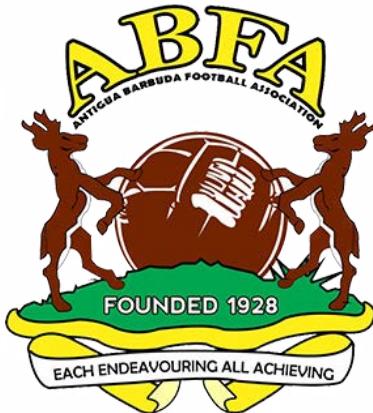
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# Sports News

## Wins for Parham and Bendals in First Division League



There were wins for Parham FC and Bendals FC in the Antigua and Barbuda Football Association's (ABFA) First Division League on Tuesday.

Andy Daniel and Dale Gardner each scored twice as Parham FC recorded their sixth win in 13 matches by pulling off a 4-1 victory against the Cedar Grove Blue Jays at the ABFA Technical Center.

Daniel scored in the 25th and 60th minutes, while Gardner had conversions in the 53rd and 64th minutes.

Kareem Martin scored a consolation goal in the 61st minute for the Cedar Grove Blue Jays.

The result allows Parham FC to move on to 21 points, while the Cedar Grove Blue Jays remain at the bottom of the standings with eight points after crashing to their ninth defeat in 13 matches.

Bendals FC notched up their third win in 14 matches by snatching a 3-2 victory against SAP FC at the ABFA Technical Center.

Tyrique Tonge scored in the fifth minute to give SAP FC the lead. But goals by Alva Guishard Jr. in the sixth minute and Te'Andre Elliott in the 10th minute gave Bendals FC a 2-1 advantage at halftime.

Bendals also finished the first half and the match with 10 players after Ronaldo Christian picked up two cautions (yellow cards) and was expelled in the 42nd minute.

Alva Guishard Jr. scored for the second time with a 53rd-minute conversion to propel Bendals FC to a 3-1 lead. Emerson Henry reduced the deficit by scoring a second goal for SAP FC in the 68th minute.

The result allows Bendals FC to move to third from the bottom of the 14-team standings with 12 points, while SAP FC remains on 20 points after suffering their second defeat in 12 matches.

Meanwhile, Fort Road and Point West Ham fought to a 1-1 draw in their latest outing in the ABFA's Second Division at the Fort Road playing field on Tuesday.

Following a goalless first half, Lloyd Sheppard broke the deadlock with a 69th-minute conversion to put Point West Ham ahead. Jahquan Davis scored in the 73rd minute to equalize and salvage the draw for Fort Road FC.

The result allows Fort Road FC to remain in sixth place with 22 points after salvaging their first draw in 12 matches.

Point West Ham FC advanced to 11 points after securing their second draw in eight matches.

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**ANTIGUA  
SAILING  
WEEK  
2026**



## Consolation win for Antiguans in CONCACAF Men's U-17 Qualifiers



*The Antigua and Barbuda National Men's Under-17 football squad. (Photo courtesy of the ABFA)*

The Antigua and Barbuda national team wrapped up their campaign in Group C at the 2026 CONCACAF Men's Under-17 Qualifiers in Guatemala with a consolation win on Tuesday.

The young Antiguans finished third in their four-team round-robin group competition by pulling off a one-nil win against Grenada in their third and final match at Estadio Cementos Progreso in Guatemala City.

**Deonjre Joseph** struck the winner for Antigua and Barbuda in the 58th minute by heading home a free kick

delivery into the box from **Robert Jeffrey**. The conversion marked the first and only goal for the *Antiguans* in the Group C competition.

The young Benna Boys were beaten 4-0 by Haiti in their second encounter after suffering a 2-0 loss to host Guatemala in their opening Group C encounter.

Haiti won Group C and qualified for a FIFA Under-17 World Cup for the fourth time by snatching a 2-1 victory against Guatemala in their top-of-the-table clash at the same venue on Tuesday.

Haiti found the opener in the 7th minute with a header from inside the penalty box from Sonson **Jean-Baptiste**. **Patrick Arana** tied the match for Guatemala with a conversion in the 11th minute, capitalizing on a cross from **Hensen Chacón**.

Baptiste recorded his second of the match in the 22nd minute, with a powerful shot from inside the box, to secure the pivotal win for Haiti.

The Haitians and the winners of the other seven groups have secured their berths in the 2026 FIFA Under-17 World Cup in Qatar in November.



Celebrating the life of

# *Darren Akeem Richards*

Sunrise: 27<sup>th</sup> October, 1984 | Sunset: 12<sup>th</sup>, January, 2026



## Homegoing Service

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

## Fearless Crew get first win in ABBA's Second Division



Ramco Pharmacy Fearless Crew secured their first win in this season's Antigua and Barbuda Basketball Association (ABBA) Second Division on

Tuesday night.

After launching their campaign with a 61-79 loss to Michael Joseph Phoenix in their opening game, the Fearless Crew rebounded to pull off a 71-66 victory against Square One Construction Cristos United at the JSC Sports Complex.

Takeem Martin sank 19 points and grabbed 19 rebounds; Emeka Emujuru Oupe produced 14 points, 10 rebounds, and seven steals; Tyler Jacobs converted 12 points; and Jesus Lopez and Daniel Thomas each chipped in with eight points for the Fearless Crew.

Dwayne Samuel shot a game-high 22 points and snatched eight rebounds; Tyndale Telemaque sank 21 points and

claimed six rebounds; Pernell Phillip converted 13 points and claimed five steals; and Manlight Simmons chipped in with eight points, 13 rebounds, and five blocks for Cristos United, who were playing their first game of the season.

However, Tuesday's other Division 2 encounter between the Navigators 2 and the EZ Fit Flyers 2 was postponed.

The ABBA First Division League will resume with a double-header at the JSC Sports Complex on Thursday.

Lava Smoke Elite Stingerz will face the JSC Red Hawks at 6:30 pm, and All Saints Slam will clash with the Navigators at 8:30 pm.

## Athanaze scores more runs for PMS in Secondary Schools Cricket

JQuan Athanaze continued his fine batting form for Princess Margaret School (PMS) in the second round of matches in the Under-19 Boys Division in the Ministry of Sports Secondary Schools Cricket Championship.

Athanaze smashed a century for Princess Margaret School in their drawn encounter against Antigua Grammar School at the Antigua Grammar School's playing field.

Athanaze, who hit a double century for Princess Margaret School in their drawn opening-round encounter with All Saints Secondary School, hammered 131 not out in his team's total of 230 for six off 37 overs after winning the toss and electing to bat.

Athanaze faced 106 balls and his century included 13 fours and eight sixes. There was a contribution of 49 extras, and Kerique Mentore struck 22 off 32

balls. Captain Hosea Roberts picked up two for 53 in 10 overs.



**JQuan Athanaze**

Rain prevented any further play in the match; hence, Princess Margaret did not complete their first innings, and Antigua Grammar School did not get a chance to bat in the encounter.

The Antigua Grammar School

crushed Sir Novelle Richards Academy by an innings and 144 runs in their opening-round encounter.

The second-round match between Clare Hall and Pares Secondary also ended in a draw.

Clare Hall Secondary made 142 all out in their first innings. Jayden Charles hit 57. Kyano Goodwin grabbed five for 34, and Jervaulx Freeland captured three for 38.

In reply, Pares Secondary School was dismissed for 99. Tayari Tonge scored 50. Jayden Joseph claimed three for 13, Jayden Charles took two for 17, and K. Francis captured two for 22.

Clare Hall Secondary reached 49 without loss in their second innings when the match ended. Jayden Charles was not out on 27.

THURSDAY 12<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2026

## West Indies beat England at T20 World Cup

MUMBAI (Reuters) - Sherfane Rutherford struck a belligerent half-century and Gudakesh Motie produced a brilliant display of spin bowling as West Indies thumped England by 30 runs in their Twenty20 (T20) World Cup Group C match on Wednesday.

Rutherford smacked seven sixes in his unbeaten 76 off 42 deliveries to provide the bedrock of his team's imposing total of 196 for six.

Twice champions West Indies returned to choke their opponents with spin and bundled out England for 166 in 19 overs to top the group with their second successive victory.

England slipped to third place, behind Scotland, after their first defeat in the tournament. Put into bat, West Indies lost both openers in the first seven deliveries of their innings.

Shimron Hetmyer (23) and Roston Chase (34) steadied the ship before Rutherford walked in to light up the Wankhede Stadium. He shared a 61-run stand with Jason Holder, who struck four sixes in his 33 off 17 balls, to take West Indies close to 200.

Leg-spinner Adil Rashid excelled for England, conceding only 16 runs in his four overs and claiming the wickets of Chase and Rovman Powell.

England made a flying start before losing Phil Salt (30) in the fourth over. Chase removed Jos Buttler for 21



**Left-arm spinner Gudakesh Motie, center, is swamped by his teammates after getting rid of England's Harry Brook during their Group C match at the ICC Men's T20 World Cup in Mumbai, India, on Wednesday, February 11, 2026. (ICC/Getty Images)**

and left-arm spinner Motie produced a double strike to turn the heat on England, who slumped to 93 for four at the halfway stage of their innings.

The situation demanded caution and Brook duly curbed his normal aggression but the West Indian spinners would not be denied.

Motie, who took three for 33, caught Brook off his own bowling and Chase trapped Will Jacks lbw to further turn the screw. Sam Curran made a valiant 43 not out down the order but lacked support.

Meanwhile, Australia launched their Twenty20 World Cup campaign with a commanding 67-run victory over Ireland in Colombo on Wednesday, powered by four-wicket hauls from Nathan Ellis and Adam Zampa.

Australia shrugged off the last-minute pullout of captain Mitchell Marsh to post 182 for six in 20 overs, after stand-in skipper Travis Head won the toss and elect-

ed to bat first on a slow and spin-friendly wicket at the R Premadasa Stadium.

Ireland's chase got off to the worst possible start, slumping to 27 for four. Zampa, who took four for 23, then made his mark as he picked up the next four wickets, including middle-order batter George Dockrell, who gave Ireland hope with a quick-fire 41 off 29 balls. Ellis captured four for 12 as Ireland were all out for 115.

Earlier, Josh Inglis went all guns blazing during his 17-ball 37 as Australia accumulated 64 runs in their six powerplay overs for the loss of Head and Cameron Green (21).

Some tight spells of bowling turned the screws on Australia, but a workmanlike 61-run stand between Renshaw (37) and Marcus Stoinis (45) for the fifth wicket laid a solid platform for the 2021 champions to build on.

Mark Adair claimed two for 44, but Australia got past the

180-run mark, a score that proved decisive in the end and ensured Australia sealed a comfortable victory to top Group B.

In Ahmedabad, India, South Africa survived Kagiso Rabada's final-over meltdown against Afghanistan and then a double Super Over drama before prevailing in a heart-stopping Group D match of the Twenty20 World Cup on Wednesday.

In a remarkable match of fluctuating fortunes, South Africa appeared to be in the box seat after half-centuries from Ryan Rickleton (61) and Quinton de Kock (59) powered them to a commanding 187 for six.

Opener Rahmanullah Gurbaz smashed 84 off 42 balls in Afghanistan's spirited reply before they were all out for 187 with two deliveries left in their innings.

Afghanistan milked 17 runs from the first Super Over sent down by South African pace bowler Lungi Ngidi. This time South Africa tied the score with Tristan Stubbs hitting the final delivery from Azmatullah Omarzai for a six.

In the second Super Over, Afghanistan scored 19 before losing both the wickets in reply to South Africa's 23.

New Zealand and South Africa remain on course to advance to Super Eight from this group after winning two in two. Afghanistan, having lost to both of them, are staring at elimination from the tournament.