

Two Candidates Will Contest St. Philip North Seat

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Team Randy Baltimore came out to show their colours on Nomination Day ahead of the March 16 By-election in St. Philip North constituency

Two Candidates Will Contest St. Philip North Seat



The By-Election in the St. Philip North constituency will be a straight race between two candidates; Randy Baltimore of the Antigua and Barbuda Labour Party and Alex Browne of the United Progressive Party.

Both men emerged as duly nominated candidates as Nomination Day came to a close at 6:00 pm on Wednesday.

The By-election in St. Philip North is necessitated following the resignation of Sir Robin Yearwood last Wednesday, the 50th anniversary of his election to the House of Representatives. Sir Robin created a record for serving the longest unbroken years in parliament, not just in Antigua and Barbuda but throughout the region and the Commonwealth.

With the nomination process completed and of the Returning Officer and team already in place, the next

step is for the By-election set for March 16.

At Wednesday's Nomination Day, both candidates arrived with their entourages of supporters although the process only

requires ten persons to participate in the Nomination.

Randy Baltimore was nominated by Fitzgerald

Lewis and seconded by Lydia Greenaway Phillip. Along with these two, there were eight other per-

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Local News



sons who are registered voters in the constituency who were required by law to support his candidacy.

For Alex Browne, he was nominated by Arlene Browne and seconded by Ainsworth Grant. Similarly, he also presented eight other registered voters from the constituency to support his candidacy.

Both candidates were also required to make a \$500.00 deposit.

Meanwhile, the Antigua and Barbuda Electoral Commission has announced extended hours for the renewal of Voter ID Cards for St. Philip to accommodate those voters who are yet to renew their voter ID Cards.

The replacement will take place at the Glanville Community Centre Mondays to Fridays from 8:30 am to 6:00 pm and on Saturdays and Sundays 9:00 am to 1:00 pm up until Sunday March 15.

The extended hours for the replacement go into effect from today (Thursday February 27).

An advertisement for ACB Caribbean, Home Advantage, and LOTS. The background is blue with a yellow and white geometric pattern on the right. On the left, the ACB Caribbean logo is shown. In the center, the text 'Claim Your Keys. Secure Your Land.' is written in white and yellow. Below this, the Home Advantage logo (a house icon) and the LOTS logo (a colorful map icon) are displayed. On the right, a family consisting of a man, a woman, and a child is shown smiling. Below the family, the text 'Apply today.' is written in yellow. At the bottom right, there are social media icons for Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and LinkedIn.

CARICOM Leaders 'encouraged' After Meeting With US Secretary of State, Rubio



(CMC): Caribbean Community (CARICOM) leaders say they are encouraged by statements made by visiting United States Secretary of State, Marco Rubio, regarding improved relations with the North American country.

Rubio addressed the regional leaders at their 50th regular CARICOM summit on Wednesday for just 10 minutes and held further deliberations with them as a group as well as bilateral before his departure.

Antigua and Barbuda Prime Minister Gaston Browne told the Caribbean Media Corporation (CMC) that "he made a brief statement, I would say, very encouraging".

"The Caribbean has the largest diaspora in the United States and we are also linked by our common humanity," Browne said, adding "I sense that the statement that he made, through brief would have signalled a level of commitment to enhance relationship between the United States and CARICOM and that itself is encouraging".

"We will have further discussions... and at that point we will get into more specifics," he said, adding that the deliberations with the US Secretary of State were expected to last for at least more than an hour.

Prior to the meeting, Prime Minister



Antigua and Barbuda Prime Minister Gaston Browne

Browne told reporters that he was hoping for a reset of the relationship with

Washington in general.

"I will say closer relations between the Caribbean and the United States. So we hope that this will be a reset, one in which there will be strong relations, one in which the United States will understand the vulnerabilities of Caribbean countries, the needs of Caribbean countries, and one in which they will work with us to adjust those vulnerabilities while at the same time strengthening our common security interests and ensuring that this hemisphere remains a zone of peace," Browne said.

"I know some people don't like to hear it, but that is what keeps us united, and that is what helps to fuel growth and development within the Caribbean region."



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PM Browne, Commonwealth Secretary General hold bilateral talks



Antigua and Barbuda’s Prime Minister Gaston Browne, who is in St. Kitts and Nevis for the 50th Regular Meeting of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), on Wednesday held bilateral discussions with the Secretary General of the Commonwealth, Shirley Botchwey.

Reports are that the two discussed the upcoming Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) that is taking place in Antigua and Barbuda from November 1 to 4 this year.

The prime minister updated the secretary general on the plans to host this important meeting, which is the second largest gathering of world leaders and which is held biennially. Only the United Nations General Assembly attracts a larger number of world lead-

ers.

The Cabinet has appointed a Task Force, headed by Ambassador Dr. Clarence Pilgrim, to plan and implement all aspects of the meeting and already a Secretariat has been established, headed by a Coordinator, Celia Roberts-Morgan. The Antigua and Barbuda High Commissioner in London, Karen-Mae Hill serves as the Focal Point for CHOGM 2026.

Several sub-committees have also been established to be responsible for critical areas such as; accommodation, accreditation, media and public affairs, security, and protocol. There are going to be three forums that form part of the meeting, each of which has its own sub-committee planning these events. They are the People’s Forum,

the Business Forum and the Youth Forum.

Next week, several events related to CHOGM will take place in Antigua and Barbuda. Director General of the Commonwealth Foundation Razmi Farook, will be in St. John’s on 2nd and 3rd March, to launch aspects of the CPF and to engage with stakeholders.

Additionally, representatives from the International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness will be on Island to launch the Global Summit on Eye Health which will be one of the official side events at CHOGM 2026. The launch will be early next week as well.

These events that are taking place next week will be held at the Sir John E. St. Luce Conference Centre.

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40 persons participate in training for groundsmen and custodians



The Central Board of Health (CBH) has successfully facilitated a comprehensive training session aimed at strengthening the capacity of custodians and groundsmen across multiple government institutions.

A total of 40 participants attended, including custodial and grounds staff from Muriel O'Mard Campus (MOC), Dr. Alister Francis Campus (AFC), Eustace Hill Campus (EHC), the School of Agriculture, as well as custodians from the National Office of Disaster Services (NODS), National Solid Waste Management Authority (NSWMA), and the Environment Division. The training was hosted by the Antigua and Barbuda College of Advanced Studies (AB-CAS).

practical guidance on essential topics including:

- ▶ Cleaning and sanitizing techniques
- ▶ Pest control practices
- ▶ Waste management and sanitation practices
- ▶ Safe and effective use of chemicals
- ▶ Proper use of personal protective equipment (PPE)

This initiative highlights the vital role custodians and groundsmen play in maintaining safe, healthy environments.

Proper cleaning and disinfection are critical in preventing the spread of germs, reducing pest infestations, and protecting the health of staff, students, and the wider community.

CBH said clean school plants and workplaces are not just about appearance — they are



foundational to public health, productivity, and overall well-being. It added that it remains committed to support-

ing frontline workers through continued training and capacity-building initiatives.

Participants received

Royal Police Force Announces Plans for International Women’s Day 2026 Observance



The Royal Police Force of Antigua and Barbuda (RP-FAB) is planning a series of events as part of its International Women’s Day (IWD) 2026 Observance, scheduled to take place from Thursday March 5 to Sunday March 8, 2026.

This year’s observance will be held under the theme: **“Building Strength Beyond the Badge”**.

The four-day programme is designed to highlight the strength, resilience, and invaluable contributions of women in policing and society, while focusing on holistic development, leadership, wellness, and community engagement. Programme of Activities

Thursday, 5 March 2026

Community Outreach Day:

Officers will engage directly with community members, particularly women and young girls, promoting empowerment, mentorship, and trust-building.

Friday, 6 March 2026

Seminar at AUA:

Discussions will address leadership development, wellness, work-life balance, and the evolving role of women in policing and national security.

Saturday, 7 March 2026

Formal Banquet: John E. St. Luce Finance & Conference Center:

Honouring female officers and staff for their dedication, service, and professional achievements.

Sunday March 8, 2026

Church Service: at Swetes Wesleyan Holiness Church

A service of thanksgiving and reflection recognizing faith, strength, and unity as pillars supporting women in service.

The RPFAB remains committed to fostering an inclusive and supportive environment where women are empowered to thrive both within and beyond the uniform.

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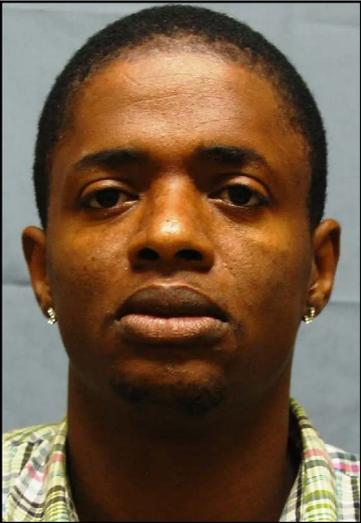
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- ✓ Phlebotomist
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- ✓ Unit Nurse Manager
- ✓ Admission and Registration Representative

Deadline: March 13, 2026



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Police Investigate Latest Homicide



Dalton Baby J Cornwall

Police have commenced investigations into the circumstances that resulted in the death of a man.

The victim has been identified as Dalton Cornwall, who is also known by his alias 'Baby J'.

According to a source, Baby J was allegedly stabbed during an altercation with Kevin Frederick, who is said to be suffering with mental health challenges.

The incident took place on Wednesday afternoon outside the Service Station on Valley Road.

Cornwall was transported to hospital where he was pronounced dead.

The suspect is already in police custody.



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- 3rd Place... \$3,500**

Judging Based On:

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JUDGING STARTS AT THE END OF APRIL 2026

Tizzy Sets Her Sights On Antigua Carnival After Successful Return To Trinidad and Tobago



International soca sensation Tizzy officially wraps up what her team describes as ‘an unforgettable journey back to Trinidad and Tobago’ during that country’s just-concluded carnival festivities.

In a media release, the team said Tizzy’s engagements in Trinidad and Tobago marked a significant milestone in her 2026 mission. “Following a dynamic schedule of radio and television interviews, eleven electrifying performances, and an exhilarating experience singing on the road with Exousia Mas, Tizzy is now preparing for a year filled with international appearances and the upcoming Antigua and Barbuda Carnival 2026 – the World’s Greatest Summer Festival,” the release stated.

Tizzy expressed sincere gratitude to the corporate partners from Antigua and Barbuda whose unwavering support made this journey a resounding success. In particular, she acknowledged Paradiso Water, Shouls Liquor and Perfumery, and Cool & Smooth for steadfastly supporting her as she

showcased Antigua and Barbuda’s talent on one of the Caribbean’s most prestigious stages.

“This experience has been nothing short of extraordinary. From the interviews to the performances, and then feeling that energy on the road with Exousia Mas – it reminded me why I love what I do,” Tizzy shared. “I could not have achieved this without the incredible support from my Antigua and Barbuda family and our corporate sponsors – Paradiso Water, Shouls Liquor and Perfumery, and Cool & Smooth. You have fueled this journey every step of the way. I also want to thank my team on the ground in Trinidad – Keith Riley, Damien Malco, and Denith Nichols. Last but not least, I want to thank Glenroy Richards, Black Star Pro, and Rohan Hector for the music that made this all possible.”

With Trinidad and Tobago Carnival 2026 now behind her, Tizzy’s next chapter is in full motion. The focus shifts to an ambitious schedule of international performances as she



continues to represent Antigua and Barbuda on global stages. All roads, however, lead back home for the highly anticipated Antigua and Barbuda Carnival 2026, where fans can expect the unmatched energy, music, and vibrancy that make it the World’s Greatest Summer Festival.

CIBC Caribbean Simplifies Banking for Small Business owners

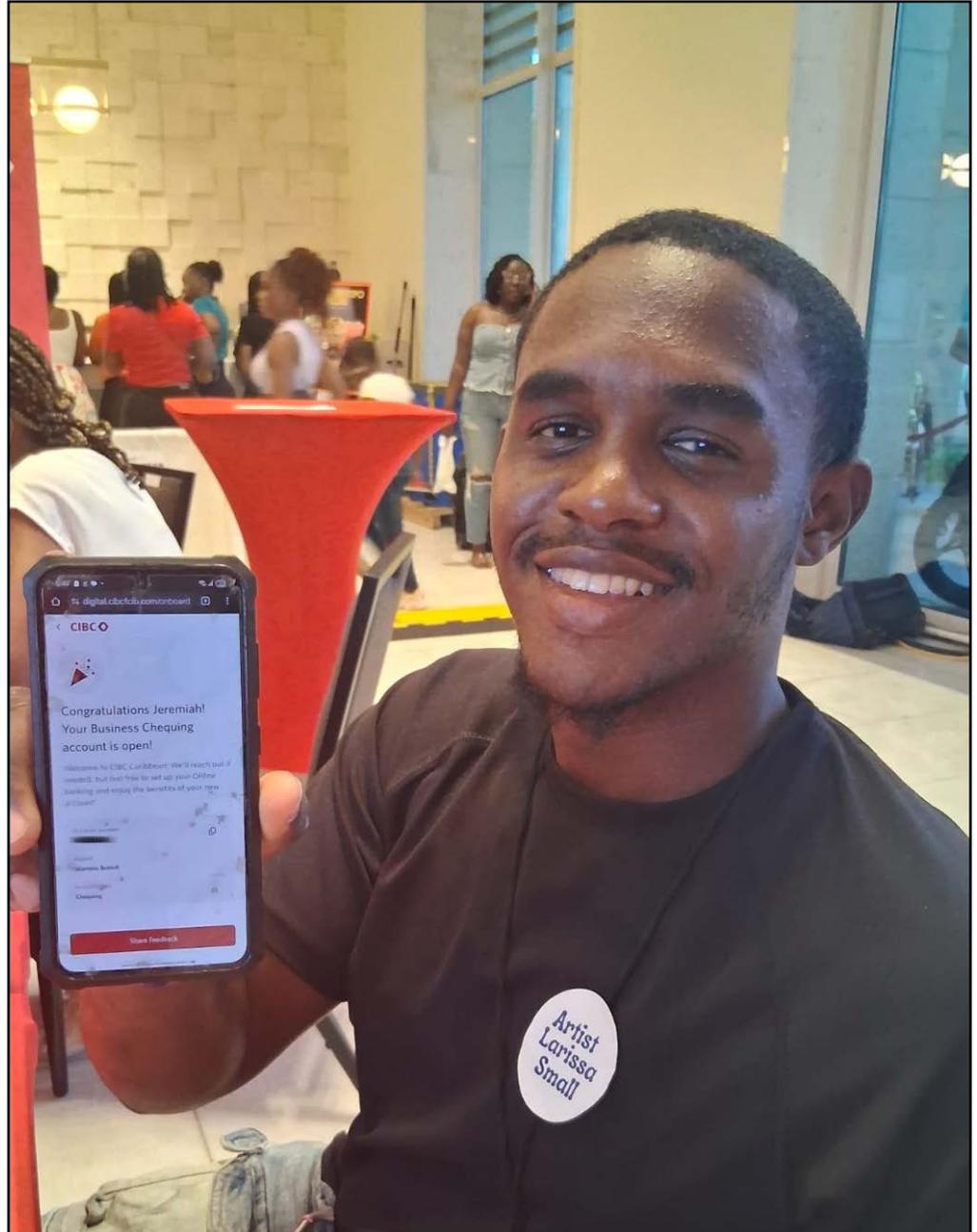
CIBC Caribbean has launched a new service targeting the small business sector in Antigua and Barbuda that makes opening a bank account much easier.

Regional bank CIBC Caribbean recently launched its new Business Banking Digital Client Onboarding (DCO) feature, a modern, mobilefirst solution that allows small entrepreneurs to open business banking accounts entirely online.

The new platform is a significant step forward in the bank's digital transformation agenda and reinforces its commitment to supporting the growth of small and microbusinesses across the region.

The feature is currently available in Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Jamaica, St Kitts and Nevis, and St Lucia, and will be released in the other five territories where the bank has a presence in the coming months.

"The new system is designed to remove traditional barriers to opening a business account, providing entrepreneurs with a faster, simpler, and more transparent onboarding experience, replacing paperheavy requirements with streamlined digital interactions. Entrepreneurs can upload required documents, verify details, and complete their business profile from any device, at their own pace," said Deepa Boucaud, Executive Director, Personal and Business Banking, CIBC Caribbean.



Flow Opens New Friar's Hill Store



Flow Antigua and Barbuda celebrated a proud moment with the opening of its relocated and upgraded Friars Hill Retail Store on Wednesday.

The ribbon cutting was performed by the

first customer to visit the new store, Sydney Codrington. Following opening remarks by Shand Merchant and a prayer of blessing by Rev. Algernon Lewis, Country Manager Wayne Hull

recognized and thanked the team members who were instrumental in completing the project. The retail team marked the occasion with pride as customers enjoyed refreshments and toured

the new space.

The new store is located in the same building that houses Tropical Shipping and Antigua Dentistry west of the Village Walk complex.



**JULY 25
TO
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2026**

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- | | |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
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| Calypso Monarch | Monday Wear |
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| Individual Mas | Party Monarch |
| J'ouvert Tropes Band | Prince & Princess |
| Junior Calypso Monarch | Queen of Carnival |
| Junior Carnival Private Mas | Road March |
| Junior Carnival School Mas | T-Shirt Mas |
| Junior Party Monarch | Vendors |

Where to Collect Forms:

National Festivals Office, 1st Floor, Cecil George-John Building, Corn Alley & Redcliffe Street
Ministry of Creative Industries, Old Parham Road
(Upstairs KFC/INET Building)

Hours:

Monday - Thursday: 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
Friday: 10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Request forms via email at info.nof@ab.gov.ag or
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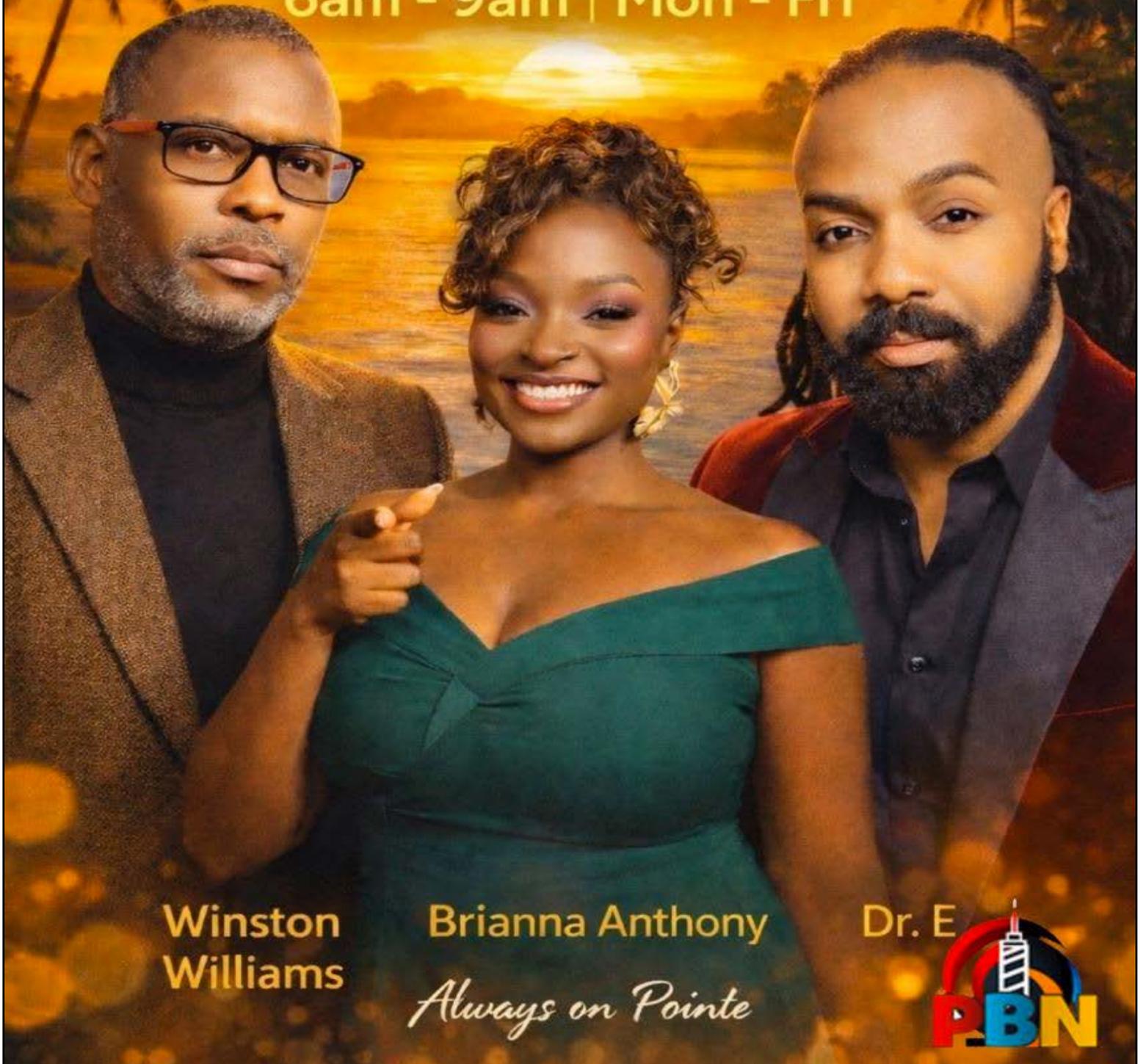
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CUBA PIVOT



Prime Minister Dr Andrew Holness has signalled a pivot in Jamaica's diplomatic stance toward Cuba, calling for a "principled realism" that balances traditional regional solidarity with a demand for democratic reform and open-market transitions.

Holness also warned that the growing humanitarian crisis in the Spanish-speaking nation could develop into a regional problem, pointing to a possible immigration threat.

"Humanitarian suffering serves no one. Apart from our fraternal care and solidarity with the Cuban people, it must be clear that a prolonged crisis in Cuba will not remain confined to Cuba. It will affect migration, security, and economic stability across the Caribbean basin. It is, therefore, important that we carefully consider this matter and take collective action," said Holness,

while addressing the 50th Regular Meeting of the Conference of Heads of Government of Caricom in St Kitts and Nevis.

He said the situation in Cuba must be addressed with clarity and courage, noting that Cuba has, for decades, through its doctors and teachers, served the region.

"Its people are part of our shared history. But today, the Cuban people face severe economic hardship, energy shortages, and growing humanitarian strain. Jamaica is sensitive to the struggles of the Cuban people," he said.

His comment comes even as the Trump administration intensified pressure on the Miguel Díaz-Canel regime, instituting an oil blockade aimed at crippling the island's energy infrastructure.

The US has also threatened additional tariffs for

countries that rally to the nation's aid.

On Tuesday, Holness stopped short of calling for an end to the communist regime in the neighbouring country, declaring that Jamaica supports democracies.

"Let there be no doubt. Jamaica stands firmly for democracy, human rights, political accountability, and open-market based economies. We do not believe that long-term stability can exist where economic freedom is constrained and political participation is limited. Sustainable prosperity requires openness to ideas, to enterprise, to investment, and to the will of the people," he said.

"This moment, therefore, calls not for rhetoric but for responsible statecraft even as we encourage support for humanitarian relief. Jamaica supports constructive dialogue between Cuba and the United States, aimed at de-escalation, reform, and stability. We believe there is space – perhaps more space now than in our past – for pragmatic engagement that protects the Cuban people from any further deterioration in their circumstances, and instead promotes national and regional prosperity," he said.

Holness said that the geopolitical environment is shifting, and noted that it presents an opportuni-

ty "for a new chapter" in which CARICOM can play a constructive role, not as an ideological bloc, but as a community of democratic states offering cooperation, economic reform, and social development.

"This is not a moment for division in our community. It is a moment for maturity, for principled realism, and if we act wisely, for positive change in our hemisphere," he said.

At the same time, Trinidad and Tobago Prime Minister Kamla Persad-Bissessar asserted that the twin-island republic would not offer support to communist regimes.

"We will not support a dictatorship in Cuba or anywhere else. We will not support it. What we do, we support regular, free and fair democratic elections in a multi-party system where all citizens must have equality before the law.

"There must be rule of law. There must be majority rule and minority rights. We must have the separation of powers and the checks and balances. We must have accountability and transparency. We must have freedom of expression and association and for us in Trinidad and Tobago, we must have capitalism. We will not support dictatorship," she said at the meeting. (Jamaica Gleaner)

FAO, GOJ start process for 10-year agri development plan

Stakeholders from across government, development partners, academia and the agri-food sector convened on February 10-11 for a two-day visioning workshop aimed at shaping Jamaica's 10-year National Agriculture Development Plan, a strategic response to growing climate risks and long-standing structural challenges facing the sector.

The workshop, held at the Bureau of Standards Jamaica, and was supported by the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO), in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Mining, provided a platform for stakeholders to collectively define a long-term vision for agriculture one focused on strengthening resilience, boosting productivity and safeguarding national food and nutrition security.

The workshop brought together representatives from the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Mining and its agencies, along with more than 25 organisations spanning government, the private sector, international development agencies and local producer organisations, reflecting broad-based engagement in shaping Jamaica's long-term agricultural development priorities.

Recent extreme weather events, including hurricanes Beryl and Melissa, have underscored the sector's exposure to climate shocks, with significant impacts on production, livelihoods and rural communities. Against this backdrop, the visioning exercise focused on moving beyond short-term recovery toward a coordinated, forward-looking development pathway for Jamaica's agrifood system.

Delivering welcome remarks on behalf of FAO Representative Dr Ana Touza, at the opening of the workshop, Assistant FAO Representative-Programme Roslyn Jackson-Richards, emphasised the importance of long-



term planning in the context of climate change.

“This process is about more than recovery. It is about repositioning agriculture as a resilient, competitive and inclusive pillar of Jamaica's development, one that can withstand climate extremes while delivering improved livelihoods, nutrition and economic opportunity. A strong national agricultural development plan provides that strategic anchor, aligning policy, investment and action around shared priorities.”

Speaking on behalf of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Mining, Chief Technical Director Michelle Parkins emphasised the importance of grounding the development of the national plan in strong technical evidence and practical experience across the agri-food sector.

“I wish to emphasise that strong technical input is central to this process. We must draw on research, field experience, market intelligence, and monitoring and evaluation systems to inform our decisions,” Parkins said. “Equally important is the knowledge and lived experience of our farmers, processors, exporters, and extension personnel, who interact daily with the realities of production and trade.”

Participants engaged in scenario building, identified key drivers of change, and articulated priority areas for policy action and investment. The outcomes of the sessions will inform the formulation of a comprehensive National Agriculture Development Plan, designed to guide coordinated action and investment in the sector over the next decade. (Jamaica Gleaner)

Kamla breaks with Caricom on foreign, security policy



Prime Minister Kamla Persad-Bissessar yesterday launched an onslaught against Caricom leaders, saying while Trinidad and Tobago remained ‘vested’ in the regional bloc, this country would no longer bind itself to the region’s political ideologies, foreign policy positions or security frameworks.

Instead, Persad-Bissessar said T&T will craft its own foreign and security policies to defend its sovereignty as it sees fit.

She also signalled that while T&T supported regional movement in principle, the burden of illegal immigration prevented any further commitment at this time.

The Prime Minister outlined her position during an address at the opening ceremony of the 50th Regular Meeting of the Conference of Heads of Government of the Caribbean Community (Caricom) in Basseterre, St Kitts.

It was the first Caricom meeting she attended since her election in April 2025.

She outlined issues she had with the regional body and criticised Car-

icom’s ‘unreliability’ in defending Trinidad and Tobago against threats from the former Nicolas Maduro regime in Venezuela.

She said it was the United States that stood with T&T, and she extended gratitude to US President Donald Trump.

Tensions among Caricom states have been high in recent months amid Persad-Bissessar’s strong support for the US military presence in the region and her criticism of Caricom as an ‘unreliable partner’ over its collective silence when the former Maduro regime threatened T&T.

Standing before regional leaders, Persad-Bissessar said Trinidad and Tobago respected the sovereign right of Caricom members to determine their own national security and foreign policies.

However, she said her Government had taken careful note of events in Caricom in 2025, when the then-Maduro government threatened Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana.

She recalled coming to Guyana’s defence, warning that if Guyana were touched, Trinidad and Tobago would

stand with it.

T&T was also threatened and ‘is still under threat’, she said.

Persad-Bissessar questioned how the Caribbean could be deemed a ‘zone of peace’ when a ‘narco dictator’, who she said imprisoned and killed thousands of civilians and opposition members, was threatening violence against two Caricom member states.

‘There was no voice from the Caricom,’ she said.

Because of that ‘unreliability’, she added, ‘we cannot bind ourselves to the same political ideologies, to the same foreign issues and the same security policies of the entire Caricom’.

Persad-Bissessar welcomed remarks by Jamaica’s Prime Minister, Andrew Holness, that each Caricom state must chart its own pathway according to national circumstances.

Persad-Bissessar said going forward, T&T will continue to work with Caricom, but ‘we will want to have our own foreign issues, policies, defend our sovereignty as we see best’.

US co-operation The Prime Minister acknowledged Trinidad and Tobago’s support for the United States military presence in the region.

She said this move was necessary as T&T grappled with crime fuelled by illegal trafficking from Venezuela.

‘Thanks to President Trump, thanks to Secretary (Marco) Rubio, and the US military, I say thank you today for standing firm against narco-trafficking, human and arms smuggling originating from Venezuela,’ she stated.

She recalled that in 2024, while crime was treated as a ‘public health gimmick’, this nation of 1.4 million recorded 623 murders.

Persad-Bissessar said of those, 40% were gang-related, driven by narcotics and firearms smuggled from Venezuela.

She noted that in 2025, following a change of government and a policy shift to treat drug cartels and gangs as violent terrorist organisations, US military action in the Caribbean contributed to a 42% reduction in murders with 257 fewer killings.

Persad-Bissessar reiterated her gratitude to the US government, stating she could not rely solely on Trinidad and Tobago's own military or the wider region for assistance, noting some islands lacked substantial military or police forces.

'In Trinidad there is a saying, 'who vex loss', she said, underscoring that T&T had benefited from US support.

The Prime Minister also criticised the Caricom Secretariat for its silence in 2022 when Trinidad and Tobago national Brent Thomas was kidnapped from Barbados, describing the matter as deeply 'unsettling'.

She said the then-T&T government 'coordinated' the kidnapping from another Caricom state using an RSS aircraft, and pointed out that a court had ruled that Thomas had been kidnapped.

As Opposition Leader, she said, she wrote to the Caricom Secretariat, seeking answers, but to date has received no response.

Seated in the audience was Caricom Secretary-General Dr Carla Barnett.

The Prime Minister suggested the lack of response could reflect poor management, lax accountability or, more troublingly, that one ceases to be recognised by the Secretariat as a Caricom citizen when not in government. She said Caricom must be a voice for all Caribbean people-not only governing parties.

Persad-Bissessar also accused regional leaders of interfering in domestic elections.

She warned that Caricom should not be misused to benefit or protect political parties aligned with incumbent governments.

'Caricom governments and their political parties who actively involve themselves in the domestic and political affairs of member states to assist sister or brother parties cannot then expect that when we come together, that we must hug up each other when in the last election gone you sent your political missives to openly campaign against another political party,' she said.

She continued: 'I am sorry I have to share this, but it hurt me a lot when I saw what transpired within the last set of elections in the Caricom.'

The Prime Minister further acknowledged Caricom's commitment to regional movement, but said Trinidad and Tobago faces acute challenges with illegal migration.

She said taxpayers were bearing the cost of tens of thousands of illegal migrants, placing significant strain on public services and financial resources.

Trinidad and Tobago remains committed to the principle of full and free movement, she said, 'but we have to deal with the illegal ones that I already have in my country'.

In closing, Persad-Bissessar reaffirmed Trinidad and Tobago's commitment to Caricom.

In that spirit of partnership, she invited member states to encourage their nationals to access educational opportunities at The UWI South Campus when academic programmes commence in September 2026.

She also announced that the Couva Children's Hospital has been reopened to all Caricom citizens. (Trinidad Express)



Beckles calls PM's Caricom speech 'revolting and bizarre'



Opposition Leader Penelope Beckles has condemned Prime Minister Kamla Persad-Bissessar's address at the Caricom Heads of Government Conference, describing it as "revolting and bizarre."

Persad-Bissessar, in her address on Tuesday, launched a strong critique of regional leadership, stating that while Trinidad and Tobago remained "vested" in Caricom, it would no longer bind itself to the region's political ideologies, foreign policy positions or security frameworks. Instead, she said this country would craft its own foreign and security policies to defend its sovereignty as it sees fit.

In a Facebook post last evening, Beckles criticised the Prime Minister's contribution to the regional forum.

"The people of Trinidad and Tobago deserve leadership that reflects dignity, responsibility, and respect for our regional partners. What we witnessed moments ago at the Opening Ceremony of the 50th Meeting of the Caricom Heads of Government Conference was none of those things."

She said the remarks delivered by "Trinidad and Tobago Prime Minister Kamla Persad-Bissessar were, quite frankly, revolting and bizarre."

"They were inflammatory, reckless, and wholly unbecoming of the high office she occupies. Her statement was the worst speech ever delivered by a Head of Government at a Caricom meeting in the organisation's history," Beckles stressed.

Beckles also rejected allegations raised by the Prime Minister that the former PNM administration assisted in the kidnapping of a Trinidad and Tobago citizen in Barbados in October 2022, calling the claim "a dangerous fabrication."

"It maligns the integrity of those who served in government, both in Trinidad and Tobago and in Barbados, and it undermines confidence in our institutions," she said, adding that it was "quite unfortunate" that the Prime Minister sought to attack and ridicule the Caricom Secretariat.

She further accused Persad-Bissessar of weaponising the realities of Venezuelan migrants and using them "as an excuse to justify her disinclination toward the free movement of Caricom nationals." Regional integration, Beckles argued, requires collaboration, not rhetoric designed to inflame domestic anxieties.

The Opposition Leader also questioned the Prime Minister's claim that she "changed policy" and reduced murders by 42%.

"The public deserves clarity, not slogans. Was the State of Emergency (SOE) itself the so-called 'policy'? An SOE is an extraordinary, temporary constitutional measure, not a sustainable crime policy," Beckles said, arguing that long-term crime reduction requires comprehensive reforms.

She also described as "extremely alarming" what she viewed as an attack on the sovereignty of Cuba.

"Trinidad and Tobago has long upheld a principled foreign policy rooted in non-interference, mutual respect, and firm adherence to international law. We do not lecture sovereign states from podiums, nor do we threaten interventionist postures merely to please

foreign powers or score political points," Beckles added.

Citing economic data, she noted that in 2024 Trinidad and Tobago generated approximately US\$1.1 billion in trade within the Caricom market and an estimated US\$142 million in customs revenue under the Common External Tariff regime. "These are not symbolic benefits. They represent measurable economic returns made possible through regional cooperation," she said.

Meanwhile, Acting Prime Minister and Minister of Works and Infrastructure Jearlean John moved swiftly to defend the Prime Minister's position. In a Facebook post, John said she fully supports and endorses the positions articulated in Persad-Bissessar's address.

"I congratulate the Prime Minister, the Honourable Kamla Persad-Bissessar, on her ground-breaking speech at the Caricom Heads of Government Meeting earlier today (yesterday). The Prime Minister's address was notable for its clarity and forthright engagement with matters affecting the region," John said.

She added that the remarks "did not shy away from difficult observations regarding the current functioning of regional mechanisms," and said the Prime Minister advanced "an important conversation" about meaningful integration.

The Ministry of Foreign and Caricom Affairs also signalled its support in a news release, stating that the Prime Minister's address reflected "clarity, leadership, and firm commitment" at a critical juncture for the country and the wider Caribbean.

Minister of Foreign and Caricom Affairs Sean Sobers said the Ministry stands "fully aligned" with the Prime Minister's position and reaffirmed its commitment to advancing foreign policy rooted in transparency, cooperation, and the promotion of national and regional prosperity. (Trinidad Express)

German chancellor lands in Beijing for inaugural China trip

Germany's chancellor has touched down in China as German businesses sound the alarm about a yawning trade imbalance.

Imports into Germany from China were more than double the value of those exported back last year – according to federal statistics.

“We want a partnership with China that is balanced, reliable, regulated and fair,” said Friedrich Merz, before leaving for Beijing.

Merz is also expected to press China to use its influence with Moscow to help end the war in Ukraine. However, the huge trade gap looms large over these talks as the chancellor takes along a sizeable business delegation.

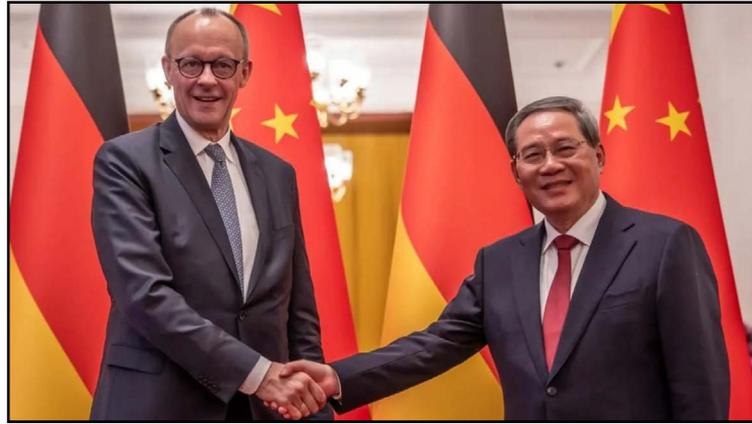
China once again took the top spot as Germany's biggest trade partner in 2025, supplanting the US.

Behind that headline is a stark and worrying imbalance for Germany, the EU's largest economy.

In 2025, goods worth €170.6 billion (£148.8bn; \$200.9bn) came from China into Germany - an 8.8% annual increase - while German exports to China fell by 9.7% to €81.3 billion.

The situation “is eroding the core of German industry, especially in the car, machinery and chemicals sectors,” warns Jürgen Matthes at the German Economic Institute (IW).

Matthes, the IW's head of International Economic Policy, believes distortions are chiefly down to “massive” Chinese subsidies and currency under-valuation.



Chinese price advantages “cannot just come from more innovation and efficiency,” he told the BBC.

Beijing has previously said its subsidy policies are transparent and fully consistent with international trade rules.

While, in response to past allegations of unfairly controlling its currency's value, it's said it's committed to implementing a floating exchange rate regime, based on market supply and demand, but managed where necessary.

The bloating trade deficit, that's hitting the EU as a whole, is being dubbed the latest “China shock”.

A trend partly caused by the pandemic and Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine which led to rising production costs in Europe, according to Brussels-based economic think tank Bruegel.

“During the same period, China entered a prolonged deflationary phase, stemming from over-investment in manufacturing, creating the overcapacity we see today.”

It's left leaders weighing how best to offset the impact

of cheap Chinese goods.

That's as the continent's already been rocked by the turbulence of US President Donald Trump's tariff policies.

“No one in Europe wants a two front trade war with the world's two superpowers,” says Noah Barkin, a visiting senior fellow at the German Marshall Fund.

Europe does have leverage, says Barkin, who's also a senior adviser at the Rhodium Group: “China needs somewhere to sell its goods. It has a real problem with over-capacity.”

But the arrival of these goods is sparking acute angst in Germany – the traditional engine of Europe but one that's been stuttering, economically, for years.

Notably, its once mighty car industry is shedding jobs in what's become a bumpy transition to electric vehicles; a field China dominates.

Business groups in Germany are urging Merz to send a clear signal during what will be his inaugural trip to China as chancellor.

He must address problems including “distortions” in competition and export con-

trols on critical rare earths – according to the Federation of German Industries.

While the German Engineering Federation says Europe should act to “restore fair competitive conditions” if necessary.

Merz's instincts, as a free-trade trans-Atlanticist, are clashing with current global realities.

“France is behind a protect agenda while Germany is more sceptical,” says the GMF's Barkin.

The EU has launched numerous anti-dumping cases against China while there are proposals to boost domestic production and curb foreign dependencies.

“I think where the Commission struggles is classic trade defence tools like tariffs,” says Barkin. “Unlike the US, which can use tariffs much more flexibly.”

For Berlin, the headache spells yet another strategic defeat for its past approach of “change through trade” with countries like China and Russia.

Former long-serving Chancellor Angel Merkel faced frequent accusations of brushing aside human rights concerns in favour of deepening economic ties with Beijing.

Such deep ties - and dependencies - are now not easily discarded.

Ahead of boarding the plane on Tuesday night, Merz said Germany would continue its broader de-risking policy but that, “it would be a mistake for us to seek to decouple ourselves from China”. (BBC)

Bill Gates 'took responsibility' over Epstein ties in staff meeting, foundation says

Bill Gates "took responsibility for his actions" and addressed his links to convicted sex offender Jeffrey Epstein during a meeting with staff from his charitable foundation, the organisation said.

"Bill spoke candidly, addressing several questions in detail," the Gates Foundation said in a statement.

The Wall Street Journal (WSJ) reported that Gates apologised to staff, said he had two affairs with Russian women which Epstein later found out about, and in relation to the late financier said: "I did nothing illicit. I saw nothing illicit."

Gates has come under renewed scrutiny over his relationship with Epstein following the release of files by the US Department of Justice in January.

The Microsoft co-founder, 70, has not been accused of wrongdoing by any of Epstein's victims.

The WSJ reported that Gates said it was a "huge mistake to spend time with Epstein", but insisted he "never spent any time with victims, the women around him".

"I apologise to other people who are drawn into this because of the mistake that I made," he told staff, according to the US newspaper, which said it had reviewed a recording of Gates's remarks.

It reported that Gates said images of him with women, whose faces are redacted, included in the so-called Epstein files were pictures that the late financier asked him to take with his assistants after their meetings.

Gates told the foundation's staff he met Epstein in 2011 - years after Epstein pleaded guilty to soliciting a minor for prostitution - adding that he said he was aware of some "18-month thing" that had limited Epstein's travel, but that he didn't properly check his background, according to the report.

He continued to meet Epstein through 2014, and spent time with him abroad, he reportedly said, adding that he "never stayed overnight" or visited Epstein's island.

The relationship continued even after his ex-wife expressed doubts, he is re-



ported to have said, adding: "To give her credit, she was always kind of sceptical about the Epstein thing."

Epstein told him he had links with other billionaires and suggested he could help raise money for charitable causes Gates was engaged with, the paper reported.

A spokesperson for the Gates Foundation said in a statement: "This was a scheduled town hall with employees, which Bill does twice a year.

"In the conversation, Bill answered questions submitted by foundation staff on a range of issues, including the release of the Epstein files, the foundation's work in AI, and the future of global health.

"In the town hall, Bill spoke candidly, addressing several questions in detail, and took responsibility for his actions."

Gates established his philanthropic organisation alongside his then wife, Melinda French Gates. They divorced in 2021 after 27 years of marriage.

In an interview with an NPR podcast earlier this month she said the latest release of files dredged up "painful times in my marriage".

"I am so happy to be away from all the muck," she said, adding elsewhere in the interview: "Whatever questions remain there of what - I can't even begin to know all of it - those questions are for those people and for even my ex-husband.

"They need to answer to those things, not me."

US media have reported that before their separation Melinda had been upset about her husband's association

with Epstein. After their split was announced, Bill Gates acknowledged having had an affair with a Microsoft employee in 2019.

In his reported remarks to staff on Tuesday, Gates said he met the two women with whom he said he had affairs with through his own social and business activities.

It follows claims made in emails drafted by Epstein in July 2013, and contained in the files released in January, that Gates contracted a sexually transmitted infection and tried to hide it, including from his then-wife Melinda.

Gates's spokesperson has previously called the claim "absolutely absurd and completely false".

One draft email is written as a resignation letter from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and complains about having had to procure medicine for Gates "in order to deal with the consequences of sex with Russian girls".

"While Mr Gates acknowledges that meeting with Epstein was a serious error in judgment, he unequivocally denies any improper conduct related to Epstein and the horrible activities in which Epstein was involved," they said at the time.

Gates said in an interview with Australian outlet 9News in February that his interactions with Epstein were limited to dinners and that he regretted "every minute" he spent with him. "I apologise that I did that," he said.

In separate statement shared previously in response to the latest batch of Epstein files, the Gates Foundation said "a small number of foundation employees interacted" with the late financier on the basis that he claimed to be able to "mobilise significant philanthropic resources".

"Ultimately, the foundation did not pursue any collaboration with Epstein and no fund was ever created. At no time were financial payments made by the foundation to Epstein, nor was he employed by the foundation at any time," it said. (BBC)

Senegal PM proposes tougher anti-LGBT law, doubling prison terms

Senegal's Prime Minister Ousmane Sonko has introduced legislation that could double the maximum penalty for same-sex relations, making them punishable by up to 10 years in prison.

The proposal was sent to parliament on Tuesday after cabinet approval last week, after a wave of arrests over alleged same-sex relationships, already banned under Senegal law.

Addressing lawmakers, Sonko said the bill would punish what it describes as "acts against nature" with prison sentences ranging from five to 10 years, compared with the current one- to five-year terms.

"If an act is committed with a minor, it will attract the maximum penalty," he said. The bill has been criticised by rights advocates.

Debate over LGBT rights has long generated tension in Senegal, a conservative country where some groups portray pro-LGBT activism as foreign interference.

Religious organisations have held demonstrations in recent years calling for harsher punishments.

Earlier this month, police detained 12 men, among them two public figures and a prominent journalist, under anti-LGBT laws. Local media outlets say around 30 people have been arrested in total this month.

Sonko explained that the draft law defines any sexual conduct between two people of the same sex as an "act against nature".



The bill proposes prison terms of three to seven years for anyone found to be promoting or advocating same-sex relations.

It also prescribes separate punishment for those who accuse others of homosexuality "without proof".

Those found guilty of crimes in the bill could also face fines up to 10 million CFA francs (about \$18,000; £13,000), Sonko added.

Sonko said the revised law would keep the offence at its current misdemeanour level.

"We can achieve the intended objectives without going so far as to elevate the acts to the level of more serious crimes," he added.

A date has yet to be set for parliament to vote on the bill, in a chamber controlled by Sonko's Pastef party.

Sonko, a former firebrand opposition leader appointed prime minister in 2024, had pledged to criminalise same-sex relations in the Muslim-majority country.

Human Rights Watch said the recent anti-LGBT crackdown violated "multiple internationally protected rights," including equality and nondiscrimination.

Several African countries have also introduced similar sanctions against the LGBT community in recent years. In September last year, Burkina Faso's transitional parliament approved a bill banning homosexual acts, following its neighbour Mali in 2024.

In 2023, Uganda voted in some of the world's harshest anti-homosexual legislation meaning that anybody engaging in certain same-sex acts can be sentenced to death. (BBC)

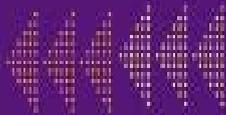


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New Zealand eliminate co-hosts Sri Lanka from T20 World Cup



Tim Seifert and Rachin Ravindra, right celebrate after taking a wicket against Sri Lanka during the T20 World Cup cricket match in Colombo, Sri Lanka, Wednesday, Feb. 25, 2026. (ICC/Getty Images)

COLOMBO (Reuters) - New Zealand recovered from a poor start to crush Sri Lanka by 61 runs in the Twenty20 World Cup Super Eights and eliminate the co-hosts from the tournament on Wednesday.

Mitchell Santner led New Zealand's recovery with a captain's knock of 47 off 26 balls after coming in with his side in huge trouble at 84 for five to power them to a competitive 168 for seven at the R. Premadasa Stadium.

Sri Lanka managed 107 for eight in reply, never recovering from a top-order collapse to succumb to their second defeat in the Super Eight stage of the 20-team tournament.

Rachin Ravindra snapped up four for 27 and Matt Henry took two wickets for three runs to impress with the ball for New Zealand.

"It's embarrassing to disappoint the home crowd, they've been very supportive," Sri Lanka captain Dasun Shanaka said.

"We wanted to restrict them to 130 but, to be honest, they played really well so we must give them credit."

Having lost to England in their first Super Eight match, it was a do-or-die game for Sri Lanka and they initially showed a sense of urgency with the ball after electing to field.

New Zealand got off to a strong start before losing openers Finn Allen and Tim Seifert in successive overs. They were 75 for two in the 10th over before the Sri Lankan spinners wreaked havoc to reduce them to 84 for six.

Maheesh Theekshana, who claimed three for 30, removed the well-set Ravindra (32) and Mark

Chapman in the same over to turn the screw. Santner joined Cole McConchie, who made 31 not out, in a rapid 47-ball stand of 84 that proved decisive.

Santner smacked four sixes as New Zealand plundered 70 runs from the last four overs to ensure their bowlers had a decent total to defend.

Henry bowled Pathum Nissanka for a duck with the first ball of the Sri Lankan innings and deceived Charith Asalanka with a slower delivery in his next over. Player of the match Ravindra then whittled out Sri Lanka's middle order to derail the chase.

The left-arm spinner sent down a two-wicket over in which Kusal Mendis and Pavan Rathnayake were stumped to reduce Sri Lanka to 29-4 in the ninth over.

Ravindra also dismissed Shanaka for three to effectively seal their victory. Kamindu Mendis (31) and Dunith Wellalage (29) offered brief resistance but Sri Lanka were never in the chase.

"It's one of those wickets where, if you can get in and give yourself a bit of time, you can cash in. It was pretty tough to start out there, so to hit 160 was nice," Santner said.

Group Two leaders England have qualified for the semi-finals with four points from two matches. New Zealand, who came into the match with one point from their washed-out match against Pakistan, have three points.



SUPER 8 ALL FIXTURES

| | | | | | | |
|---------------------------|--------------|---|---|---|-------------------|-----------|
| Saturday, 21 February | NEW ZEALAND |  | V |  | PAKISTAN | Colombo |
| Sunday, 22 February | SRI LANKA |  | V |  | ENGLAND | Kandy |
| Sunday, 22 February | INDIA |  | V |  | SOUTH AFRICA | Ahmedabad |
| Monday, 23 February | ZIMBABWE |  | V |  | WEST INDIES | Mumbai |
| Tuesday, 24 February | ENGLAND |  | V |  | PAKISTAN | Kandy |
| Wednesday, 25 February | SRI LANKA |  | V |  | NEW ZEALAND | Colombo |
| Thursday, 26 February | WEST INDIES |  | V |  | SOUTH AFRICA | Ahmedabad |
| Thursday, 26 February | INDIA |  | V |  | ZIMBABWE | Chennai |
| Friday, 27 February | ENGLAND |  | V |  | NEW ZEALAND | Colombo |
| Saturday, 28 February | SRI LANKA |  | V |  | PAKISTAN | Kandy |
| Sunday, 1 March | ZIMBABWE |  | V |  | SOUTH AFRICA | Delhi |
| Sunday, 1 March | INDIA |  | V |  | WEST INDIES | Kolkata |
| Wednesday, 4 March | SEMI FINAL 1 | | | | Kolkata/Colombo | |
| Thursday, 5 March | SEMI FINAL 2 | | | | Mumbai | |
| Sunday, 8 March | FINAL | | | | Ahmedabad/Colombo | |

Hoppers close gap on leaders Five Islands in First Division League



Players of the Greenbay Hoppers FC

Second-placed Greenbay Hoppers narrowed the gap on leaders Five Islands in the Antigua and Barbuda Football Association's (ABFA) First Division League after the latest round of matches.

Hoppers moved within three points of Five Islands after recording their ninth win in 14 matches by pulling off a 3-1 victory against Swetes Vipers FC at the Golden Grove playing field on Tuesday.

Goals by Tyler Anthony in the 16th minute and Khimani Cox in the 25th minute gave Hoppers a two-nil lead at halftime. Ammiel Greenaway made it three-nil with a 61st-minute conversion, while Juwan Roberts scored a consolation goal for the Swetes Vipers in the 77th minute.

The result allows the Greenbay Hoppers, who have a game in hand, to advance to 28 points, three adrift of leaders Five Islands FC.

The Swetes Vipers slipped from sixth to seventh place on goal difference with 23 points after crashing to their fourth defeat in 15 matches.

SAP FC moved from fourth to third place after securing their seventh win in 14 matches with a 4-0 drubbing of the Freemans Village Scorpions at the Golden Grove playing field.

Tyrique Tonge scored a second-half hat trick with conversions in the 52nd, 70th, and 77th minutes after Emerson Henry scored the team's opening goal in the 33rd minute to give SAP FC a one-nil lead at halftime.

The result allows SAP FC to advance to 26 points, while the Freemans Village Scorpions slipped from fifth to sixth place on goal difference with 23 points after suffering their third defeat in 12 matches.

Empire FC jumped from eighth to fourth place on goal difference after claiming their seventh win in 15

matches with a 3-0 drubbing of Willikies FC at the Willikies playing field.

LeeAndreeNicholas' 34th-minute conversion gave Empire FC a one-nil lead at halftime. Empire FC wrapped up their victory with second-half goals by Kamali Looby in the 69th minute and Marckens Dorisca in the 72nd minute.

Empire FC advanced to 24 points, the same as Parham, who have played 14 matches. Willikies FC remains in ninth place with 20 points after losing for the seventh time in 15 matches.

Meanwhile, Glanvilles FC was successful in their latest match in the ABFA's Second Division league on Tuesday.

Jayquanie Nanton scored both goals as Glanvilles FC recorded their second win in 11 matches by pulling off a 2-0 victory over Belmont FC at the Glanvilles playing field.

Nanton scored on either side of half-time with conversions in the 30th and 78th minutes. Belmont FC finished the match with 10 players after N'Jre Carbon-Buckley received a red card and was expelled in the 76th minute.

Glanvilles FC advanced to 10 points, while Belmont FC remains in 13th place with 11 points after crashing to their sixth defeat in 11 matches.

Daggers and Ovals Ojays win again in Division 2 basketball league



The Old Road Daggers and Cuties Ovals Ojays 2 won their latest matches in the Antigua and Barbuda Basketball Association's (ABBA) Second Division League on Tuesday.

The Old Road Daggers continued to lead the division by recording their fifth win in six matches with a hard-fought 87-71 victory over Square One

Construction United in the second game of a double-header at the JSC Sports Complex.

Kwame Huntley converted 19 points and snatched seven rebounds, and Kedar Clarke produced 18 points, 11 rebounds, and five assists to lead the Old Road Daggers.

In support, Ryan Sheppard sank 13 points and claimed eight rebounds, Wester Batista Perez scored 11 points, and Devea Aaron chipped in with 10 points, 14 rebounds, and eight steals for the Old Road Daggers.

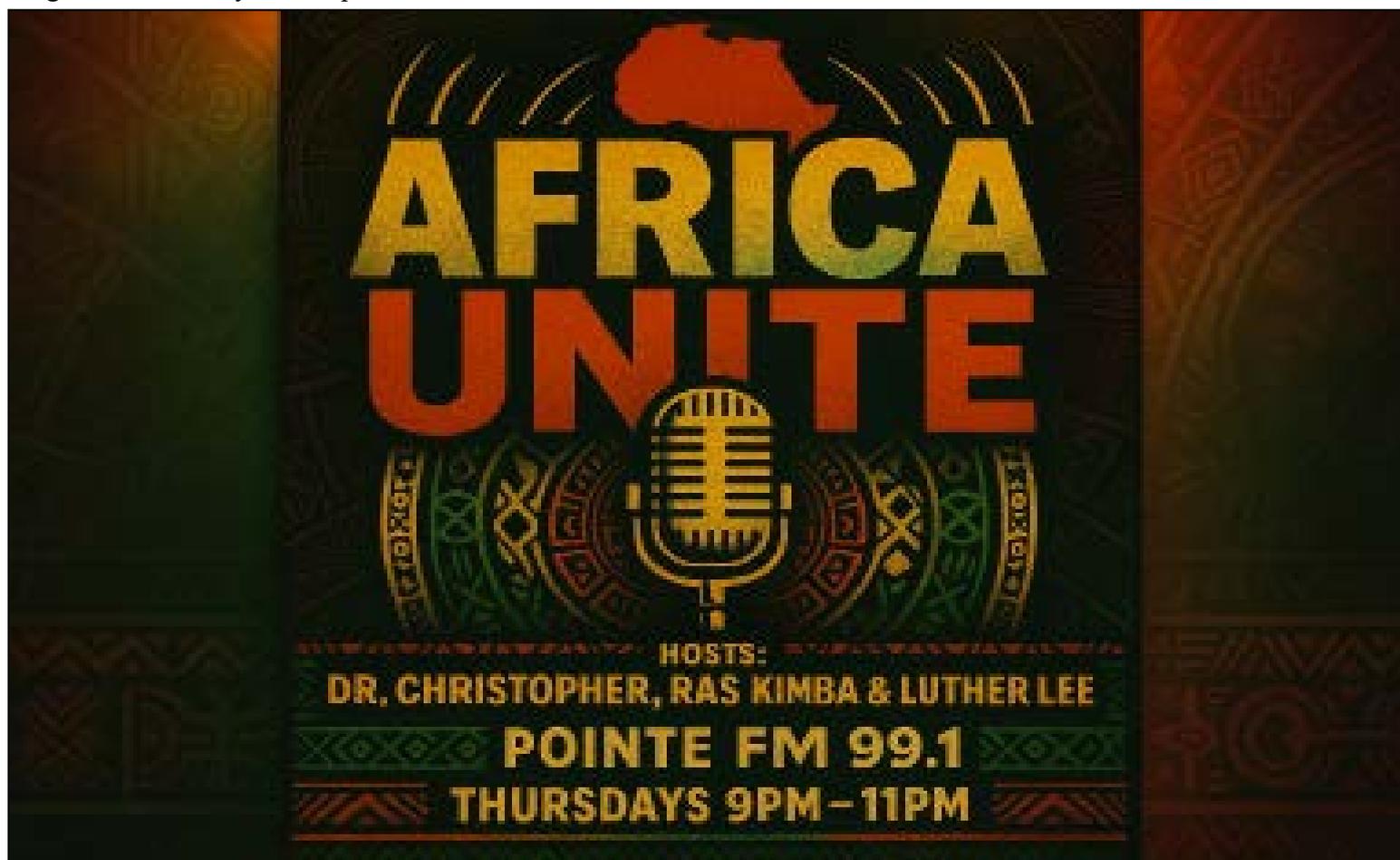
Pernell Phillip shot a game-high 25 points, grabbed 10 rebounds, and claimed five steals; Tyndale Telemaque sank 20 points and snatched six rebounds; and Dwayne Samuel chipped in with 13 points and five rebounds for United, who lost for the third time in as many games.

The Ovals Ojays 2 notched up their third win in four encounters by soaring to a commanding 73-58 victory over Michael Joseph Phoenix in Tuesday's opening game.

Tajahron Davis produced 23 points, eight assists, and five rebounds; Jayleyle Joseph contributed 14 points, 15 rebounds, nine blocked shots, five steals, and five assists for the Ovals Ojays 2.

In support, Yohhan Nicholas sank 12 points and grabbed nine rebounds, and Dajon George scored 12 points for the Ovals Ojays 2.

Adrian Carnegie sank 15 points and claimed five rebounds, Daysher Samuel had seven points and five rebounds, and Shamar Joseph chipped in with seven points and five assists for Michael Joseph Phoenix, who lost for the second time in five games.



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AGS beat Ottos in Secondary Schools Cricket



JQuan Athanaze hits another half century for PMS

The Antigua Grammar School crushed Ottos Comprehensive School by an innings and 54 runs in the latest round of matches in the Under-19 Boys Division in the Ministry of Sports Secondary Schools Cricket Championship.

The Antigua Grammar School made 147 all out in 24.2 overs. Isaiah Harris hit 39, and there was a contribution of 28 extras, including 20 byes.

Hosea Roberts struck 18, Shane Walsh got 17, and Donte Odlum and Dejaunt Spencer each scored 15. Estan Hill bagged seven for 50.

In reply, Ottos Comprehensive School crashed to 48 all out in 11.1 overs. Estan Hill made 21, Isaiah Harris grabbed three wickets for nine runs, Marc Crawford took three for 12, and Donte Odlum picked up two wickets for six runs.

Asked to follow on 99 runs behind, Ottos Comprehensive School tumbled to 45 all out in 11.5 overs. Estan Hill struck 28, Dejaunt Spencer snapped up six for 11, and Donte Odlum claimed four for 25.

All Saints Secondary School claimed first-innings honours over Sir Novelle Richards Academy in a drawn encounter.

All Saints Secondary School made 186 for five declared in 31.4 overs after winning the toss and electing to bat.

Dequan Cochrane cracked 90 off 97 balls, including seven sixes and four fours. There was a contribution of 40 extras, including 16 wides and 16 byes. Nasri Brookes hit 32, and Dmique Allen scored 13. Sherwin Martin took two for 30.

In reply, Sir Novelle Richards Acad-

emy made 99 all out in 29.5 overs. Ayden Bazil hit 17, Evrick Chambers got 13, and Clayton Joseph scored 10.

Dmique Allen claimed two wickets for five runs, Terence Brown captured two wickets for six runs, Nasri Brookes took two wickets for seven runs, and Mathiel Moses picked up two for 13.

Jennings Secondary School and Princess Margaret School also played to a draw at Rising Sun. Jennings made 110 all out in 18 overs.

Giovani Thomas hit 37, there was a contribution of 34 extras, and captain Oziah Robertson scored 18. Ondre Peters claimed four wickets for nine runs, and captain JQuan Athanaze claimed three for 35.

Athanaze continued his prolific batting form by hitting an unbeaten half-century as Princess Margaret School reached 73 for two in eight overs when the match ended.

Athanaze cracked 60 not out off 26 balls, including eight fours and three sixes. Tiquan Tonge captured both wickets without conceding any runs.



Post Millennial Academy wins Mini Girls Primary Division title



Post Millennial Academy captured the Mini Girls Primary Division title in the Cool and Smooth Inter-School Basketball League on Tuesday.

Post Millennial Academy clinched the round-robin league title by snatching a 6-4 victory against Five Islands Primary School at the JSC Sports Complex.

Kymilah Choy converted four points for Post Millennial Academy, while Stevia Carr scored four points for Five Islands Primary School.

Success as well for JT Ambrose Primary, who prevailed 10-8 over Mary E. Pigott Primary in another Mini Girls Primary Division affair.

Beau Edwards sank six points for JT Ambrose Primary, while Kimmel Robinson scored four points for Mary E. Pigott Primary.

Ottos Comprehensive School pulled off a 25-20 victory over Princess Margaret School in the Mini Boys Secondary Division.

Levi Richards sank nine

points and Jordan Enriquez converted eight points for Ottos Comprehensive School, while Kevani Whyte shot a game-high 14 points for Princess Margaret School.

Meanwhile, there were wins for Antigua Grammar School and Island Academy in the Boys Division of the Cool and Smooth, JOMA Caribbean Inter-Schools Volleyball League at the indoor stadium at the YMCA Sports Complex on Tuesday.

Antigua Grammar School pulled off a 2-0 victory over Ottos Comprehensive School. Antigua Grammar School won 25-23 and 25-21.

Island Academy snatched a 2-1 win over the Antigua and Barbuda College of Advanced Studies (ABCAS), prevailing 21-15, 25-23, and 15-1



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Reifer claims Windies have nothing to prove against South Africa

AHMEDABAD (Reuters) - Unbeaten West Indies are being underestimated despite their flawless record so far in the Twenty20 World Cup, batting coach Floyd Reifer said ahead of their Super Eight clash against South Africa on Thursday when they hope to boost their chances of reaching the semi-finals.

The West Indies will take on South Africa in their second match in the Super Eight stage at the Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad, India.

"There's no point to prove for us and we came here like any other team to win the competition," Reifer told reporters on Wednesday.

"A lot of people have us flying under the radar but we plan every game to go in there with a positive mentality to win cricket games."

The West Indies are chasing World Cup glory for the first time in a decade, having last triumphed in 2016, and Reifer

credits their success to squad depth rather than star power.

"We have quality batters and we're not like the other teams, depending on one or two batters. Everybody has stepped up every game and put in performances and we've been consistent in doing that," he said.

South African spinner Keshav Maharaj believes his side, finalists in the last edition, have finally developed the character to overcome the shortcomings that have historically derailed their World Cup campaigns.

"In previous World Cups, we never crossed over those small moments... If the character is strong in winning those small moments, it propels us to go further on in this tournament," Maharaj said.

Despite the energy buzzing through the camp after Sunday's 76-run victory over India, Maharaj warned against

complacency against a West Indies side fresh off a mammoth 107-run win over Zimbabwe.

"We're not getting carried away at that. We still know that there's a lot of cricket to be played in this tournament," the 36-year-old said.

South Africa will be playing their fifth match of the tournament in Ahmedabad but Maharaj said that would not give them any advantage and stressed the need for clear execution and adaptation.

"The West Indies have a way of turning up in these events and we know the danger they possess from an explosive point of view," he added.

Regardless of Thursday's outcome, the group featuring defending champions India, West Indies, Zimbabwe, and South Africa will remain wide open, with all four teams having an equal chance of reaching the semi-finals.



West Indies Shai Hope walks back a proud captain after completing a win over Zimbabwe in the Super Eight stage of the ICC Men's T20 World Cup in Mumbai, India, on Monday, February 23, 2026. (ICC/Getty Images)