



ANTIGUA & BARBUDA

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Government Re-possesses 150 Acres of Agricultural Lands

Story on page 2



Leaders of both the Girl Guides and the Scouts Associations of Antigua and Barbuda attended a service at the Spring Gardens Moravian Church to celebrate World Thinking Day and Founder's Day

Story on page 11

Government Re-possesses 150 Acres of Agricultural Lands

The government has moved to re-possess approximately 150 acres of non-performing agricultural lands that are to be re-assigned as a first step towards returning these lands to productive use.

“Cabinet has reaffirmed its commitment to national food security and agricultural expansion following the successful implementation of its policy decision, taken several months ago, to repossess unused and non-performing agricultural lands,” the Cabinet Notes for Thursday revealed.

Minister for Agriculture, Anthony Smith, reported to Cabinet that to date, the Ministry of Agriculture has repossessed approximately 150 acres of farmland that were previously underutilized or not in active production. This decisive action forms part of the Government’s broader strategy to increase domestic food production, reduce import dependence, and place productive lands into the hands of committed and capable farmers.

During the meeting, the Minister for Agriculture presented recommendations for the immediate reallocation of a portion of the recovered lands. Cabinet agreed to commit 75 acres of the repossessed acreage specifically to youth and women farmers as part of a targeted empowerment and agricultural development initiative.

This allocation underscores the Government’s recognition of the critical role that young people and women play in modernizing and sustaining the agricultural sector. By expanding access to arable land, Cabinet aims to create new opportunities for entrepreneurship, increase output, and stimulate rural economic activity.

The Ministry of Agriculture will issue rental agreements to the selected farmers, ensuring structured and



Minister for Agriculture, Anthony Smith

accountable use of the lands. Performance assessments will be conducted, and once positive production benchmarks are met, longer-term lease arrangements will be grant-

ed. This approach ensures that land distribution remains merit-based, productivity-driven, and aligned with national agricultural priorities.

Cabinet emphasized that land is a strategic national asset and must be actively cultivated in the interest of food security, economic resilience, and national development.

The Government remains resolute in its efforts to strengthen local food systems, support performing farmers who require additional acreage, and create pathways for the next generation of agricultural leaders.

The re-possessed lands are located at Comfort Hall, Sanderson’s, Jolly Hill, Orange Valley Cades Bay and Willikies.

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Six Rescued At Sea After Vessel Capsizes

Six were successfully rescued at sea on Wednesday night after the vessel upon which they were sailing capsized.

The announcement comes from the Antigua and Barbuda Defence Force (ABDF) Coast Guard which confirmed that at approximately 10:02 pm, the ABDF Coast Guard received a Marine Report from Antigua and Barbuda Search and Rescue (ABSAR) disclosing that Cata Sensation, a participating vessel in the RORC Caribbean 600 race, had capsized approximately 16 nautical miles west of St. John's Harbour with six persons onboard.

The ABDF Coast Guard immediately deployed its quick response team and issued an Urgent Marine Information Broadcast (UMIB) for all vessels in the vicinity to assist.

At 10:27 pm, further reports confirmed that all members had been safely recovered from the water by a fellow race participant, sailing yacht Solano. The rescued individuals sustained only minor abrasions, without major injuries or casualties reported. It is understood that the vessel experienced sudden gusts of winds of up to 40 knots, leading to its loss of stability and subsequent capsizing.

Following these efforts, the ABDF Coast Guard maintained overwatch of Solano as she completed her race and provided a safe escort into Falmouth Harbour. Currently, Cata Sensation remains capsized and partially submerged, drifting southwesterly. The ABDF Coast Guard is actively monitoring the vessel's position and ad-



vises all mariners to exercise extreme caution when navigating in the general area.

The ABDF Coast Guard commends the camaraderie displayed

by Solano and reaffirms its commitment to maritime safety and the protection of all persons within the sovereign waters of Antigua and Barbuda.

Volunteers Needed

There is still time to be a part of CHOGM 2026!

If you have been thinking about volunteering for the historic Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM 2026), to be hosted in St. John's, 1-4 November 2026, now is your chance!

Antigua and Barbuda's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Trade, and Barbuda Affairs continues to invite enthusiastic, motivated, and professional individuals aged 18 or older to volunteer for this world-class event. Do not miss your chance! It is a unique opportunity to contribute your time and skills to the event's success, gain experience, and expand your network.

Interested? Complete the volunteer application form at the following link for a fulfilling and worthwhile experience:



<https://forms.cloud.microsoft/r/h7bf39zPzT>

Please note that the QR code is attached.



Police Investigate Fatal Stabbing

A Green Bay man is currently in police custody assisting with investigations surrounding a stabbing incident that claimed the life of Dalton Cornwall of Jennings.

Dalton was transported to the Sir Lester Bird Medical Center with a puncture wound to his right shoulder, following an incident at the Valley Road Service Station at approximately 4:15 p.m. on Wednesday, 26 February.

He was later pronounced dead at approximately 5:08 p.m.

A male suspect from Green Bay was subsequently arrested and taken into police custody. Investigations into the matter remain ongoing.

Meanwhile, the police are appealing to anyone who may have witnessed the incident or has information that may assist with the investigation to contact the Criminal Investigations Department at 462-3913 or call the Crimestoppers anonymous hotline at



800-TIPS (8477).

The Police Administration extends

sincere condolences to Dalton's family as they grieve his tragic death.



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Liat Air opens new routes to Montego Bay, Guadeloupe.

Liat Air is teaming up with Guadeloupe's Maryse Condé International Airport to launch two new non-stop services from Pointe-à-Pitre (PTP): Antigua (ANU) and Montego Bay (MBJ). These new connections enhance air service across the Caribbean and reopen attractive onward connections to the United States (notably New York) and the United Kingdom, thanks to the reinstated Antigua route.

Beginning May 1st, Liat Air will operate two weekly rotations to Antigua (Fridays and Sundays) using ATR 42 aircraft (48 seats), plus two additional weekly rotations on Embraer ERJ 145 aircraft (50 seats) from July 2026, a year-round service.

The route to Montego Bay, Jamaica, will begin the first week of July — just in time for the legendary “Reggae Sumfest” — with two weekly flights (Tuesday and Saturday) on Embraer ERJ 145 aircraft (50 seats). This rotation will also operate year-round.

“The reopening of Antigua, a historic route, and the opening of a new gateway to the Greater Caribbean with Montego Bay in Jamaica mark a major step for Guadeloupe Maryse Condé. These routes, which follow new services to the southern Caribbean islands, Toronto and Quebec, realize



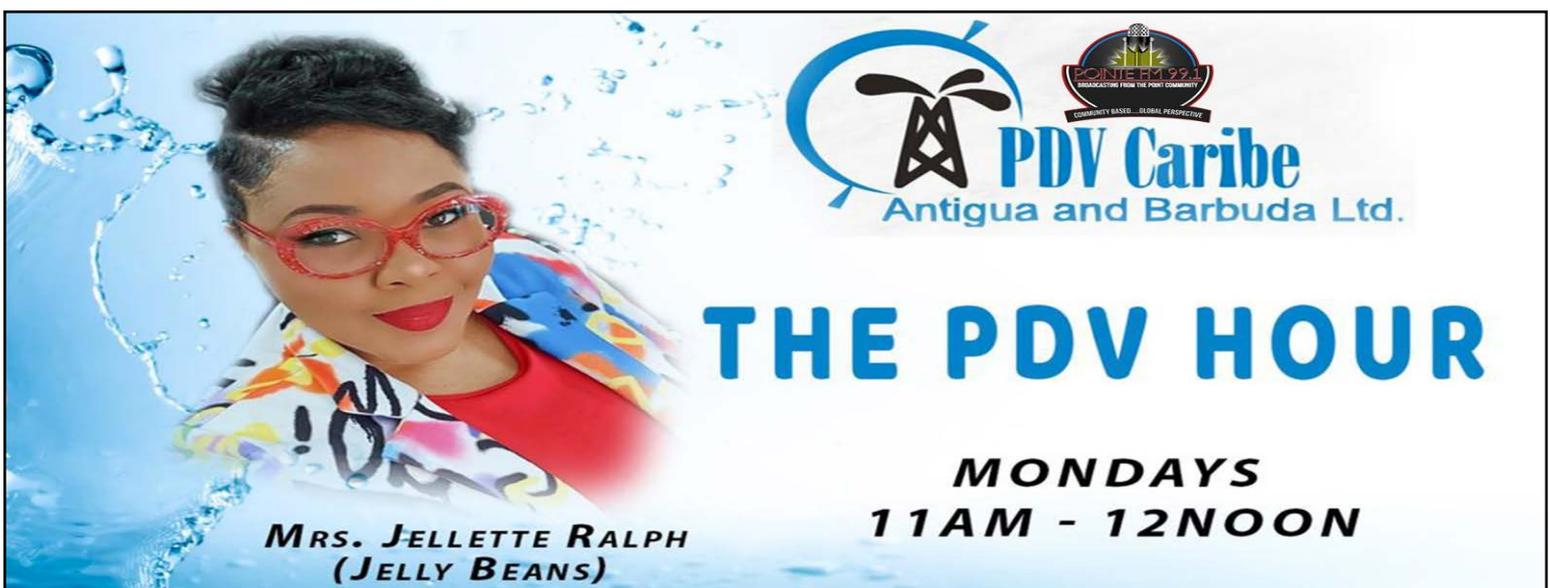
the diversification strategy adopted by the Management Board. This success is the result of prospecting work carried out by our teams in close cooperation with local partners, and confirms our desire to position our airport as a major tool for the economic and tourist development of the Guadeloupe Islands,” said Mr. Alain BIEVRE, Chairman of Board of Guadeloupe Maryse Condé Airport.

CEO of Liat Air, Mrs. Hafsah Abdulsalam said: “We are truly excited to further expand our regional network with the launch of these new services.

Reconnecting Antigua with Guadeloupe restores a vital link between our Islands, one that strengthens family ties, fuels economic activity, and enriches the cultural fabric of the Carib-

bean. At the same time, the introduction of flights between Guadeloupe and Montego Bay opens seamless access to one of the region's most dynamic tourism markets - not only from the Caribbean, but from the European corridor. Montego Bay is already a key destination within the Liat Air network, and extending direct access from Guadeloupe enhances travel options and deepens integration across the Greater Caribbean.

“We are proud to work alongside our partners at Guadeloupe Maryse Condé International Airport and Montego Bay's Sangster International Airport. Together we are delivering greater choice, enhanced accessibility, and expanded opportunities for our travellers, businesses and communities across our region.”






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14 Agricultural Technicians to Participate in Regional Training



Fourteen Agriculture Technicians from Antigua and Barbuda are set to participate in a regional virtual training programme focused on sweet potato identification, morphological characterization and cataloguing.

The local cohort will join 46 other participants from across the Caribbean under the Next Generation Sweet Potato Project, a regional initiative aimed at strengthening technical capacity in crop research and genetic resource management.

The training will be facilitated by Dr. Ronald Robles of the In-

ternational Potato Center (CIP). It comprises 10 hours of theoretical instruction delivered through five interactive virtual sessions, each approximately two hours long. Sessions run until to March 3, 2026.

The course curriculum is structured to build both conceptual understanding and applied competencies. Session One will provide an overview of sweet potato genetic diversity. Session Two and Three will focus on the characterization of foliage and root traits respectively. Session Four will cover data analysis methods, while Session Five will introduce molecular tools for genotyping.

Following the virtual component, participants in Antigua and Barbuda will engage in a structured in-field practical session on March 23, 2026 at the Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI) field station. The hands-on exercise is designed to consolidate the theoretical concepts and technical techniques covered during the online sessions.

The initiative seeks to enhance regional expertise in sweet potato research and development, with particular emphasis on improved cataloguing and utilization of genetic resources. Strengthening these capacities is considered critical for advancing food security and agricultural innovation across the Caribbean.

The Next Generation Sweet Potato Project is being implemented and coordinated by the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA). Funding is provided by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture and the European Union.

The four-year project is being implemented in collaboration with Ministries of Agriculture and CARDI in Antigua and Barbuda, Jamaica and St. Lucia, reinforcing a coordinated regional approach to crop improvement and sustainable agricultural development.





Music for the Cure

**Spring Gardens
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**Sunday, March 1, 2026
4:00 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.**

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Contacts:

Natasha Charles 484-5137 | Joy-Marie Joseph 484-5068
Jaala Joseph 484-5103



**SIR LESTER BIRD
MEDICAL CENTRE**

Antiguan Baden Prince receives honorary literary recognition

An experienced Antiguan and Barbudan-born UK-based poet and storyteller has been recognized for his outstanding work.

Baden Sebastian Prince Jr, a graduate of the University of East Anglia, Norwich, England, was recently lauded after he was invited to be the headline act at an event called the Bardic Trials, which took place in the town of Stony Stratford in Buckinghamshire.

A veteran of more than 30 years, Prince, who holds a Bachelor of Arts in English and American studies, was invited as a storyteller to perform in the headline slot, marking the climax of the evening's entertainment.

"I was informed that I had been chosen to be this year's headliner because, in the words of the Chair of the Bardic Council which organises and hosts the Trials, I am regarded as "a shining example of the Bardic Arts!" said Prince who attended the Antigua Grammar School.

His thirty-minute storytelling performance was well received.

"Our headliner Baden Prince showed just why he is one of the most popular storytellers on the circuit - his tales of comeuppance had the audience enthralled, and was the perfect way to round off what had been a jam-packed evening of entertainment," organisers said in a review.

He also received a personal congratulatory message from the Chair, in



BADEN PRINCE

which she said, "It was a great honour to hear you tell again and share that with my town. It was a truly masterly telling that enthralled the audience and was the perfect way to round off the evening. Thank you for your time, talent and tales."

This event, which has been running for 15 years, is an open contest of

three rounds where poets, storytellers, dramatists and singer-songwriters (exponents of "the Bardic Arts") compete against each other in front of a live audience and a panel of expert judges for the prestigious title of Bard of Stony Stratford.



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Sandals Grande Welcomes Couple for 31st Visit

Sandals Grande Antigua Resort & Spa, is rolling out the red carpet once again for two of its most dedicated guests: Peter and Mureen Dibble.

The couple recently returned to the shores of Antigua and Barbuda for an unprecedented 31st visit, setting a new standard for loyalty and showcasing the enduring allure of the Caribbean's ultimate luxury included experience.

Peter and Mureen Dibble, who consider Sandals Grande Antigua their second home, were welcomed back with a special reception, personalized amenities, and the warm, familiar faces of team members they have come to know as family over three decades of travel.

Celebrating the milestone, David Latchimy, the general manager of Sandals Grande Antigua Resort & Spa, expressed immense pride in the relationship the resort shares with the couple.

"Thirty-one visits are more than just a number; they are a profound testament to the deep emotional connection we strive to create for every guest," said



Latchimy "Peter and Mureen aren't just guests; they are part of the Sandals family. Their loyalty speaks volumes about the dedication of our team, the quality of our luxury-included offerings, and the undeniable magic of Antigua's beautiful shores."

The Dibbles began their journey with

Sandals decades ago and have consistently returned to the pristine Dickenson Bay. When asked about why they continue to choose Sandals Grande Antigua above all other destinations, the couple emphasized the unparalleled service and the feeling of coming home.



DAILY PROGRAMMING




EARLY VIBRATIONS 6AM-10AM MON. - FRI.
WITH GREMSTA

THE RUSH HOUR SHOW 5PM-7PM MON. - FRI.
WITH ROGER LAKE 6AM-9AM SATURDAYS

TOUCHLINE 7PM-9PM MON. - THURS.
WITH EPILUS

BAD COMPANY 2PM-6PM THURS. 12PM-4PM SATURDAYS
LIVE FROM THE V.I. & 1PM-5PM ON SUNDAYS

REGGAE INSPIRATION 9PM-12AM MON. THURS. SUNDAY
WITH SELECTOR KEEGAN

JAH WADADLI 7PM-9PM FRIDAYS
WITH DJ JAH WADADLI

A Comprehensive Review Of The Situation Regarding Street Lights Is Underway

The Antigua and Barbuda government wants a comprehensive review of the situation regarding street lights across Antigua and Barbuda as a matter of much urgency.

To this end, the Manager of APUA's Electricity Business Unit, Andre Matthias, was invited to Cabinet to address the issue of street and community lighting across Antigua and Barbuda.

"During the engagement, Cabinet conducted a detailed review of lighting conditions in several communities and identified a number of areas requiring urgent improvement. Particular attention was given to residential districts, roadways, public spaces, and other strategic locations where enhanced lighting is necessary to improve visibility, safety, and overall community well-being," Director of Communications, Maurice Merchant reported.

He said APUA provided Cabinet with a firm commitment to address the concerns raised and to undertake the required upgrades and repairs in the identified areas. The Authority further informed Cabinet that it possesses the technical capacity, equipment, and resources necessary to complete the work in a timely and efficient manner.



APUA's Electricity Business Unit, Andre Matthias,

Cabinet welcomed this assurance and formally approved the advancement of the lighting improvement programme, recognizing that adequate street lighting plays a critical role in:

- Enhancing public safety and crime prevention
- Improving road safety for motorists and pedestrians
- Supporting community development and quality of life
- Strengthening national security efforts

The Government has consistently underscored the importance of well-lit communities as part of its broader strategy to create safer neighbor-



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

hoods and a more secure national environment.

APUA will commence targeted interventions in the identified areas, with priority given to communities where deficiencies were most acute. The works will include installation of new lights, repairs to non-functioning streetlights, replacement of damaged fixtures, and upgrades where necessary.

Merchant also reported that in a bid to reduce the incidence of theft of both the lighting fixtures and attendant equipment, APUA has agreed to place these at a place on the utility poles where thieves would encounter much difficulty in accessing these valuable equipment.



**REGGAE
IN THE
PARK** 15

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Patron of Girl Guides delivers feature address on World Thinking Day



Governor General, Sir Rodney and Lady Williams

Governor General, Sir Rodney and Lady Williams joined leaders of both the Girl Guides and Scouts Associations of Antigua and Barbuda in celebration of World Thinking Day and Founders Day, at a special service held at Spring Gardens Moravian Church.

Lady Williams delivered the feature address, which focused on this year's theme, "Our Friendships". She remarked, "As Patron of the Girl Guides Association, I am always deeply encouraged when I see our young people gathered in worship and unity. Today reminds us that this movement is not only about skills and badges. It is also about relationships."

With reference to past campaigns which have been undertaken, she stressed: "I am so proud that our Guides across the island proclaim to stand in support of gender-based



Guides and Brownies

violence. This is true friendship. This is what courage looks like. This is the magnetism of unity."

Lady Williams encouraged the young members of the uniformed bodies present to continue to work hard, in order to be selected by their leaders for the 2026 Guiding Light Award and medal presented by the Halo Foundation.

Lady Williams praised the Girl Guides for having recently hosted their very first Talent Show and Thinking Day Pageant. "This initiative indeed says a lot", she said. "The workshops leading up to the "Power of Friendship Pageant" helped to build solidarity and teamwork. It says that you all, as a group, are on the right track to even more intense and inspiring camaraderie. And of your innovation and collaboration, we couldn't be prouder."

Before closing, she referred to the relevant undertakings of Sir Rodney, "As the nation's Chief Scout, the Governor General continues to provide active leadership and unwavering support to the Scouting movement. Later this month, he will once again chair the Annual General Meeting of the Antigua and Barbuda Scouts Association at Government House — a reflection of his continued commitment to engage with leaders and strengthen the organisation at every level. His dedication affirms the importance of Scouting and Guiding in shaping the character and confidence of our young people."

The service was spearheaded by Chief Commissioners of the Scouts and Guides, Patricia Salmon and Suzette Spencer-Burton, with Rev. Judy Winspeare-Philip as the officiating Minister.

West Indies Oil Company Ltd Announces 2025 Service Stations of the Year

Senior executives, team members, and dealers from across the West Indies Oil Company Ltd (WIOC) retail network convened for its annual Service Stations of the Year Awards Ceremony and Dealer Meeting.

The event celebrated excellence throughout the network, recognizing outstanding performance, operational standards, and customer engagement.

For 2025, the top performing stations were:

- **WIOC Friars Hill Ltd**
- **Belle Vue Service Station**
- **Glanville's Service Station**

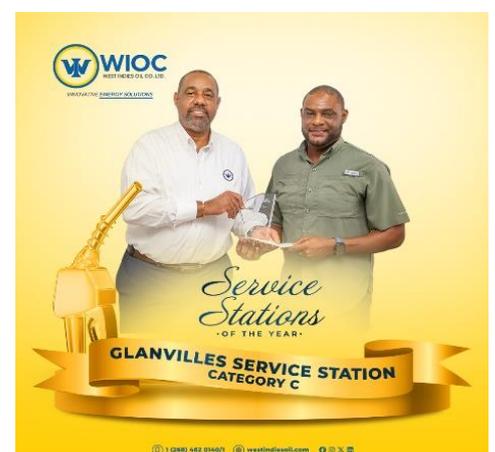
Additional honors were presented for excellence in customer service to Spencer's Servicenter, and to other stations for most improved in sales and safety standards that define the WIOC brand experience.

The ceremony also featured valued partners, including Automotive Art, KOSCAB Antigua, and ClicCash, who showcased opportunities to incorporate innovative solutions and services to deliver convenience and value for customers.

This year's Dealer Meeting focused on WIOC's strategic approach to strengthening its retail network and building brand loyalty through standardized best practices, impactful promotional initiatives, and consistent, high quality customer experience across all service stations.

Ms. Shari Dickenson, Brand and Commercial Manager, emphasized that this awards ceremony and dealer forum formed part of a broader initiative to elevate WIOC to industry standards and expand WIOC's market footprint. Ms. Dickenson said "Our aim is to continue to create brand loyalty! We are committed to growing our position as the preferred fuel provider in Antigua and Barbuda."

As WIOC continues its growth and innovation journey, we encourage our customers to join us as we focus on operational excellence, safety, and customer satisfaction across every Service Station within our expanding network.



Celebrating the Life and Legacy of Sir Dr. McLean “King Short Shirt” Emanuel

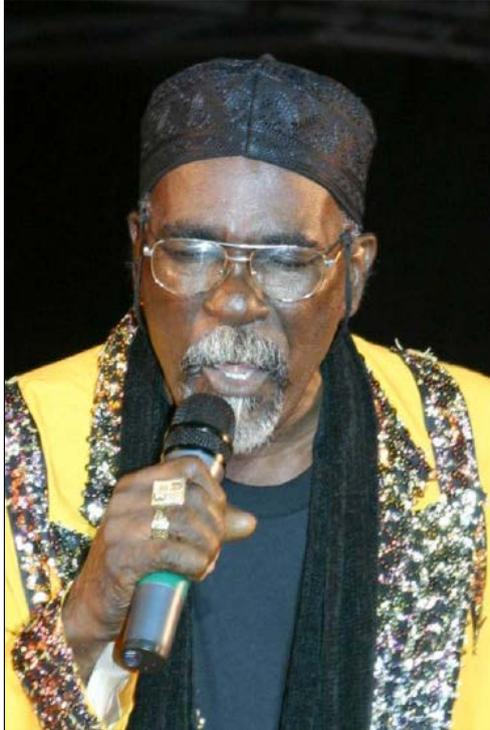
By Aneka Lee

February 28th is a date that marks the arrival of one of Antigua and Barbuda’s most treasured cultural icons. Today, we honour the birthday of Sir Dr. McLean “King Short Shirt” Emanuel, a master calypsonian, Cultural Ambassador, storyteller, entrepreneur, and beloved hometown hero of the Point and Villa community.

Sir McLean rose from humble beginnings to become one of the most celebrated calypsonians within the region. Known affectionately as “King Short Shirt,” he earned his royal moniker not merely from his stage name, but from his commanding presence in the calypso arena. Over decades of performance, he dominated competitions, capturing numerous Calypso Monarch titles and thrilling audiences with his wit, lyrical brilliance, and unmistakable voice.

Sir McLean is a true Cultural Ambassador of Antigua and Barbuda whose influence has never been confined to local stages. He carried the sound and spirit of Antigua and Barbuda across the Caribbean, North America, and Europe, representing our great nation with distinction. Through his music he promoted Caribbean identity, heritage, and consciousness wherever he performed.

A regional integrationist to his core, his music serves as a love letter to the region, with melodies such as “I love Dominica”, “Viva Grenada” and “Welcome to Antigua”. His masterful storytelling has always transcended entertainment. Through the rich tapestry of his words he addressed social justice, political awareness, Black empowerment, re-



gional unity, and national development. Not only did his songs deliver pleasing melodies, they also gave voice to the people, reflecting their struggles, triumphs, and aspirations. He became known as a “people’s champion,” unafraid to speak truth to power while inspiring pride and self-confidence in his listeners.

His contribution to national culture was formally recognised when he was knighted for his outstanding service to music and the development of Antigua and Barbuda’s cultural landscape. The honour affirmed what the public already knew, that King Short Shirt is not simply an entertainer, but a national treasure.

In recognition of his immense contribution to Caribbean culture and scholarship through music, King Short Shirt was conferred with a Doctorate by University of the West Indies, a truly befitting honour.

Beyond the stage Sir McLean has

demonstrated entrepreneurial vision through Shorty’s Glass Bottom Boat. This venture showcased the beauty of Antigua and Barbuda’s marine life to visitors from around the world, blending tourism with cultural personality. It further cemented his role as an ambassador, not only of music, but of the island’s natural splendour and warm hospitality. As a child in the 90s, it was a pleasure to experience this tour with my family, the delectable offerings prepared by Sir. McLean himself were a delight.

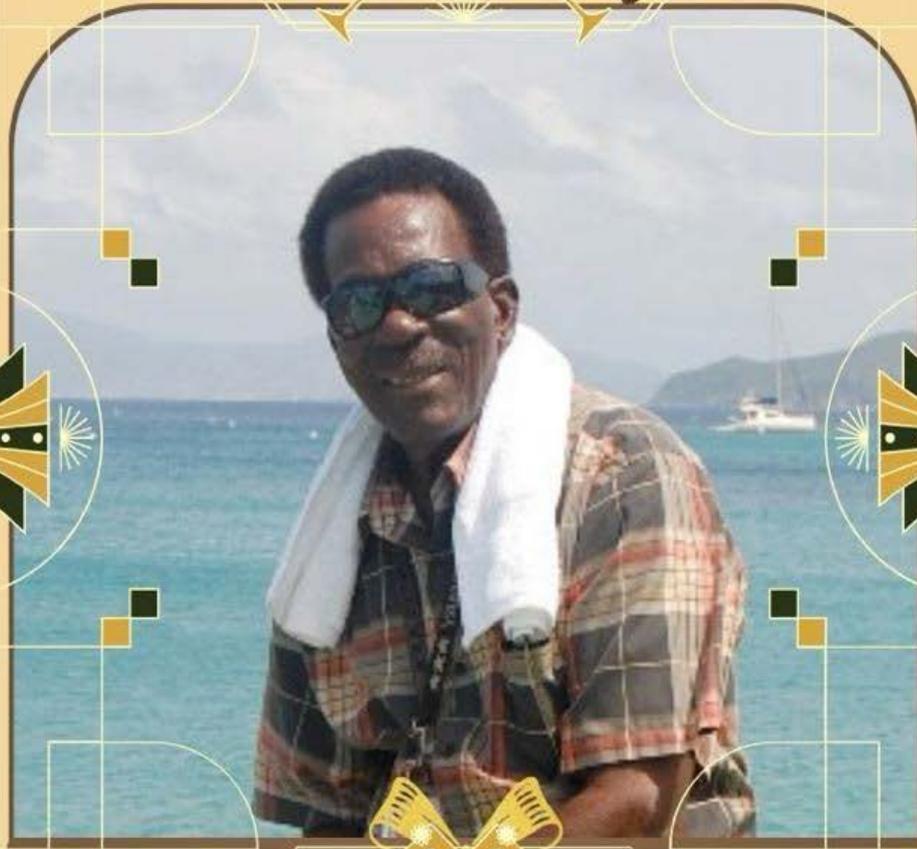
Few artists sustain relevance across generations; yet, King Short Shirt has done exactly that. His songs remain staples during Carnival and Independence celebrations, his lyrics still studied and admired, and his impact still felt in the voices of younger calypsonians who follow in his footsteps.

His career reflects discipline, courage, and commitment to culture. He helped shape the identity of modern Antiguan calypso and ensured that the art form remains a vehicle for education, resistance, and celebration.

On this special day, we celebrate a cultural ambassador, we celebrate a legacy, we celebrate an undeniable contribution to the art form, and we celebrate the pride of Point and Villa. Sir Dr. McLean “King Short Shirt” Emanuel has given his nation a soundtrack of pride and purpose. Through his music and through ventures like Shorty’s Glass Bottom Boat, he has shown what it truly means to serve one’s country.

Happy Birthday, Sir McLean. Your voice, vision, and unwavering love for Antigua and Barbuda continue to inspire us all.

28th February



Happy

BIRTHDAY

SIR DR. MCLEAN "KING SHORT SHIRT" EMANUEL

Your voice, artistry, and dedication to culture have inspired generations and carried the spirit of our people to the world. May this year bring you continued strength, joy, and the same vibrant energy you've always shared through your music and service.

March 1st



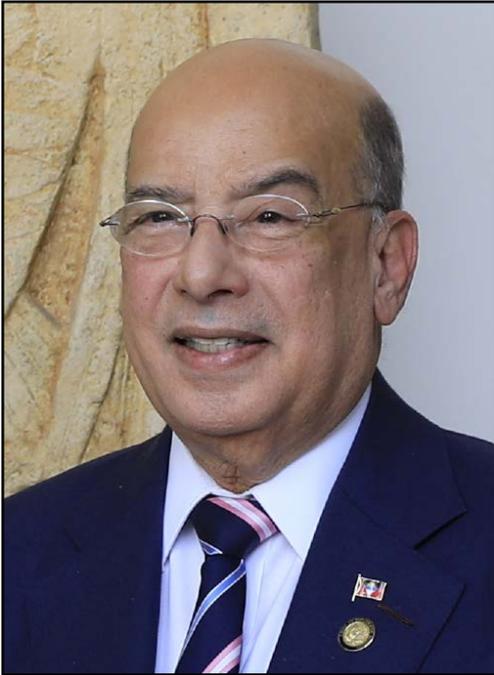
Happy

Birthday
Ricardo White

On behalf of the Staff of the Office of the Prime Minister, we warmly wish you a very happy birthday. Thank you for your dedication, hard work, and the valuable contributions you make each day. Your efforts are truly appreciated. Wishing you continued success, good health, and a wonderful year ahead.

Commentary

Reinvigoration with Purpose: Rubio, CARICOM, and the Work of Diplomacy



By Sir Ronald Sanders

When Marco Rubio arrived in St. Kitts to address the Heads of Government of the Caribbean Community, CARICOM, he did so only hours after attending President Trump's State of the Union address in Washington. The speech ended late. Before dawn, he was on his way to the Caribbean.

That matters.

Secretaries of State do not lightly compress regional diplomacy into an already demanding schedule. His decision to attend signaled respect for CARICOM's collective invitation and recognition that the Caribbean is not marginal in Washington's hemispheric priorities. It also demonstrated continued commitment to direct engagement.

In his public remarks, Secretary Rubio spoke plainly about transnational crime, illegal migration, energy opportunity, and the stabilization of Venezuela under interim authorities led by Delcy Rodríguez. He referenced the reopening of the U.S. Embassy in Caracas and made clear that democratic elections remain the ultimate measure of legitimacy. His point was straightforward: a stronger, safer Caribbean strengthens the United States. There would have been no quarrel with any of that.

On security, there is also no disagreement. The criminal organizations that exploit Caribbean waters and transit

routes threaten both U.S. and CARICOM societies. Drug trafficking, arms flows, and gang networks undermine governance from Haiti to Miami. Closer intelligence cooperation and maritime coordination are shared necessities.

On migration, Secretary Rubio emphasized that the United States is conducting a global review of its migration and visa policies, expected to conclude by the end of June. For CARICOM countries, access to U.S. visas is not a peripheral matter. It affects business travel, family connections, tourism flows, education, and longstanding people-to-people ties. Any restrictions are therefore felt quickly and widely across Caribbean societies.

Caribbean governments have consistently accepted their own nationals who are deported from the United States. The difficulty arises when small states are encouraged to accept non-nationals without defined limits or shared responsibility. For large countries, numbers may be manageable. For small island and coastal states with limited fiscal space and



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investigative reach, even modest numbers can carry disproportionate social and financial impact.

It is understood that some CARICOM states have already entered such arrangements. What remains essential, however, is that any framework across the region be based on clarity, reciprocity, defined limits, and respect for sovereign decision-making. Caribbean governments will follow the outcome of the U.S. review closely and will engage constructively once its parameters are known.

Energy and regional stability formed the second major theme of the Secretary's remarks. Developments in Venezuela were presented as a shift from immediate stabilization to recovery. Caribbean governments will judge that progress by results. If Venezuela moves toward durable legitimacy and reduces regional instability, the entire basin benefits. If uncertainty returns, its effects will again be widely felt.

Cuba, though absent from the Secretary's formal plenary remarks, was part of private discussions.

Subsequent reporting confirms that U.S. officials close to the Secretary met privately in St. Kitts with Raúl Guillermo Rodríguez Castro, grandson and close aide to former Cuban leader Raúl Castro. That meeting confirms that discussions between Washington and Havana are active.

Reports suggest that the United States is exploring a phased easing of sanctions in exchange for incremental economic and governance changes. Sec-

retary Rubio has indicated publicly that the United States is prepared to listen if Cuban authorities are willing to undertake significant economic reforms that expand private enterprise and open space for broader freedoms.

This moment differs from earlier periods of strain. Cuba faces severe economic contraction, energy shortages, and humanitarian pressure. Regional energy dynamics are also shifting. In such circumstances, steady engagement may yield more than isolation alone.

It is further understood that discussions are underway regarding energy arrangements that could allow Venezuelan oil to reach Cuba through controlled channels, easing the island's acute pressures. These negotiations remain sensitive and incomplete. But they reflect recognition that collapse in Cuba would carry consequences for the wider Caribbean, particularly in migration and regional stability.

CARICOM governments have long advocated dialogue rather than rupture in dealing with Cuba. Public statements by regional leaders emphasized de-escalation, reform, and stability. The indication that Washington is pursuing quiet engagement was therefore noted with interest and, in many quarters, with cautious welcome.

The broader significance of the meeting is clear. The Caribbean is America's immediate neighbourhood. Trade flows in both directions. Migration binds families. Security threats move across maritime space without regard to borders.

The United States seeks secure borders, stable neighbours, and resilient economic ties. CARICOM states seek growth, climate resilience, and protection against transnational crime. These aims intersect.

If reinvigoration means deeper security cooperation, structured and lawful migration arrangements, investment that integrates Caribbean economies into resilient supply chains, and pragmatic engagement to reduce instability in Venezuela and Cuba, then the meeting in Basseterre may prove consequential.

If it becomes a series of expectations unsupported by proportional safeguards, friction will return. Small states guard sovereignty carefully because sovereignty is their shield. That instinct is not obstruction. It is prudence.

The Secretary's overnight journey from Washington to Basseterre signalled seriousness. The discussions that followed were constructive. They did not erase every difference. But they kept dialogue open at a moment when steady engagement is essential.

In this hemisphere, instability travels quickly. Sustained diplomacy must move faster, in Washington and across CARICOM alike.

(The author is the Ambassador of Antigua and Barbuda to the United States and the OAS, Dean of the OAS Ambassadors accredited to the OAS, and Chancellor of the University of Guyana. Responses and previous commentaries: www.sirronaldsanders.com)



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Press Release

ABEC Waives Replacement Fee for Lost Voter Identification Cards

St. John's, February 26th 2026 — The Antigua and Barbuda Electoral Commission (ABEC) wishes to inform the general public that, effective Friday, 27th February 2026, the replacement fee of EC\$100 for lost but valid Voter Identification (ID) Cards will be waived.

Eligible voters who have lost their valid Voter ID Cards may have them replaced free of charge at the Commission's Headquarters located on Queen Elizabeth Highway.

This initiative forms part of ABEC's ongoing efforts to ensure that all eligible voters have convenient and equitable access to a VALID voter's ID as well as to strengthen electoral participation and the further integrity of the democratic process.

Electors seeking a replacement card are reminded to present a valid form of identification and any documentation that may assist in verifying their identity.

For further information, members of the public are encouraged to contact the ABEC's Headquarters at 562-4191/4195 or 4198 or visit the Commission's social media platforms.

-END-



**JULY 25
TO
AUG 04
2026**

REGISTRATION IS OPEN FOR THE FOLLOWING CATEGORIES:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Business Floats | Mas Band |
| Calypso Monarch | Monday Wear |
| Cheerleaders | Mr. & Miss Teenage Pageant |
| 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 WhatsApp at (268) 727-9201. For inquiries, call (268) 462-4707.



Submission Details:

Completed registration forms must be returned to: NATIONAL FESTIVALS OFFICE, 1ST FLOOR, CECIL GEORGE-JOHN BUILDING, CORN ALLEY & REDCLIFFE STREET

Antigua Carnival @antiguafestivalsofficial



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BLESS EYE

LUCIANO

THE STRAYS

THE CLIMAXX BAND

TUE 21 APR

EARLY BIRD

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GENERAL

\$120

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FALMOUTH RECTORY GROUNDS @ 7:00PM UNTIL

FOOD AND DRINKS ON SALE

TICKET OUTLETS

Landing Strip, Weatherill's, Pink Mongoose Studio, Roti King, Rivers by Quintessence (Redcliffe Quay), Quintessence Variety Plus (QV+, Friars Hill Road)



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BARBUDA TRADES
AND LABOUR UNION
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FRIDAY 1ST MAY 2026



THE ULTIMATE DJ COMPETITION DE-LABOUR MIX

8PM - 12AM



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THE YOUTH
ARM TUNE
AFTER TUNE.

REQUIREMENTS:
-MUST BE A UNION MEMBER
-MUST BE A DJ

CALLING ALL
SKILLED
WORKERS
WHO ARE DJS

REGISTER NOW

GRAND PRIZE \$1000.00 | 2ND \$ 750.00 | 3RD \$ 500.00

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Bingo will be played between the rounds.

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46 NORTH STREET



Cuba will defend itself against any ‘terrorist aggression’ — president

Cuba will defend itself against any “terrorist aggression”, President Miguel Diaz-Canel declared Thursday, a day after a deadly shoot-out between gunmen on a United States (US) registered speedboat and Cuban coast guard vessels.

“Cuba will defend itself with determination and firmness against any terrorist and mercenary aggression against its sovereignty and national stability,” the president said on X, denouncing Wednesday’s confrontation as an attempted “infiltration”.

Four people on the speedboat were killed and six wounded after being intercepted in Cuban waters by the country’s coast guard. (AFP)



T&T business remains priority, says PM after CARICOM visit

Prime Minister Kamla Persad-Bissessar has returned to Trinidad and Tobago after attending the 50th Regular Meeting of the Conference of Heads of Government of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) in Saint Kitts and Nevis.

In a statement posted on her official social media account, Persad-Bissessar described the engagements as “productive and constructive” and reaffirmed that the business of Trinidad and Tobago remains her priority.

She noted that the Minister of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs, Sean Sobers, will continue to represent Trinidad and Tobago at the meeting and is expected to return on Friday.

The Prime Minister also indicated that she will chair the weekly Cabinet meeting on Thursday and that work will continue in Parliament on Friday.

Persad-Bissessar thanked Jearlean



John, Minister of Works and Infrastructure, for serving as Acting Prime Minister during her absence. (Trinidad Express)

US-Caribbean reboot



In a clear signal of renewed diplomatic focus, the United States has pledged to “reinvigorate” ties with CARICOM countries, framing the region’s economic stability and security as “intricately tied” to its own national interests.

In an address to CARICOM heads of governments yesterday, and on the heels of the capture of Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro and a partially lifted oil blockade on Cuba, United States (US) Secretary of State Marco Rubio said the Trump administration is aiming to make the region a magnet for inbound investment.

Rubio, while acknowledging CARICOM countries’ efforts to move beyond traditional industries, promised to facilitate American business involvement in emerging new sectors.

“The stronger, the safer, the more prosperous, and the more secure that all of your countries are, the stronger, safer, more secure, and

prosperous the United States is going to be,” he said at the 50th Regular Meeting of the Conference of Heads of Government of CARICOM now under way in St Kitts and Nevis.

“We view our security, our prosperity, our stability to be intricately tied to yours; and we are going to evidence, in the actions we’re prepared to take and in the priority that we want to give this, our intent to follow through on it,” he added.

He called his attendance at the regional meeting a move to “reinvigorate” relationships, noting that the US and Caribbean countries have “a lot in common to work on both opportunities and challenges”.

“The United States is committed to doing that. And certainly, over the next three years [that] I remain in this post, it will be a personal priority to me. It will be one that I will be personally engaged in, and it’s one that I hope to leave for my successor, whoever that may be,

a very strong and stable relationship that they can continue to build upon as well,” Rubio said.

At the same time, the US top diplomat did not publicly address the growing humanitarian crisis in Cuba, exacerbated by his government’s discontinuation of Venezuelan oil supply to the Spanish-speaking Caribbean country.

The United Nations has warned of an imminent humanitarian collapse if energy needs remain unmet, noting that hospitals and water systems are failing.

On Wednesday, the US Treasury Department announced that it would allow companies to sell and export oil, gas, and Venezuelan-origin fuel to Cuba.

However, it said the authorisation is not for a direct sale to the Cuban government, but is limited to private-sector entities and for humanitarian purposes, in response to a severe energy crisis that worsened after Maduro’s capture.

“Irrespective of how some of you may have individually felt about our operations and our policy towards Venezuela, I will tell you this, and I will tell you this without any apology or without any apprehension: Venezuela is better off today than it was eight weeks ago,” he said.

The progress being made there is substantial, and there’s a long ways to go. But the new interim authorities, led by Delcy Rodríguez, have done things that eight or nine weeks ago would have been unimaginable,” Rubio added. (Jamaica Gleaner)

Maduro's lawyer says US is blocking Venezuela gov't from paying deposed leader's drug defence

The Trump administration is blocking Venezuela's government from paying for the cost of Venezuelan leader Nicolás Maduro's defence against drug trafficking charges in New York, a move that potentially interferes with his constitutional right to counsel, his lawyer says.

Attorney Barry Pollack told a Manhattan federal judge in an email last week that the US Treasury Department had blocked the authorisation of legal fees that the government of Venezuela is required to pay for Maduro and First Lady Cilia Flores under its law and custom.

The email was entered into the public court record on Wednesday.

Maduro and his wife have been jailed in New York without bail since they were seized from their Venezuelan home January 3 in a stealth nighttime raid by US military forces. They have both pleaded not guilty.

The stunning capture following a months-long military build-up in the Caribbean has paved the way for the Trump administration to assert enormous influence over Maduro's replacement, his vice president and now acting President Delcy Rodríguez.

Under pressure from the US, Rodríguez has moved swiftly to open up Venezuela's oil industry to American investment, free political prisoners and re-establish direct communications with Washington — something unseen since the first Trump administration shuttered the U.S. embassy in Caracas in 2019.

In the email, Pollack said that the Treasury Department's Office of



Foreign Assets Control, which administers sanctions against Venezuela, had granted permission on Jan. 9 approving the payment of legal fees by the Venezuelan government.

Less than three hours later, though, the Trump administration snatched back the authorization "without explanation," though it left in place a license granting permission for Maduro's wife's lawyers to be paid, Pollack said.

The dispute over Maduro's legal fees is intimately linked to US foreign policy.

The first Trump administration cut ties with Maduro in 2019, recognizing the then opposition head of the National Assembly as Venezuela's legitimate leader.

The Biden administration hewed closely to the same policy.

However, allowing Rodríguez's government to pay for the cost of Maduro's defence could complicate prosecutors' efforts in court to

counter the deposed leader's argument that his capture was illegal and that as the foreign head of a state he is immune from prosecution under US and international law.

A 25-page indictment against Maduro accused him and others of working with drug cartels and members of the military to facilitate the shipment of thousands of tons of cocaine into the US.

Both he and his wife face life in prison if convicted.

As part of the purported conspiracy, Maduro and his wife allegedly ordering kidnappings, beatings and murders of those who owed them drug money, according to the indictment. It said that included the killing of a local drug boss in Caracas.

Messages seeking comment from the Treasury Department, White House and the Justice Department were not immediately returned. (Jamaica Gleaner)

Kenya administers first HIV prevention shots



Kenya began administering the first dose of a groundbreaking HIV prevention drug in a Nairobi slum on Thursday.

Lenacapavir, taken twice a year, has been shown to reduce the risk of HIV transmission by more than 99.9 per cent, though it is technically a chemical drug rather than a vaccine because it does not train the immune system.

“Today is a moment of hope for thousands of Kenyan families,” Health Minister Aden Duale said during the rollout.

Kenya was among nine African countries selected last year to introduce lenacapavir, which has already been introduced in South Africa, Eswatini and Zambia since December.

There are roughly 1.3 million people living with HIV in Kenya, with the highest burden among those aged 15 to 24.

“Many of our young people still face the risk of infection... this innovation gives us renewed strength in our national fight against

HIV,” Duale, said adding that the drug will be free to those receiving it.

Last week, Kenya received its first batch of 21,000 doses through a deal with lenacapavir’s manufacturer, Gilead Sciences, and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS.

Lenacapavir offers greater privacy compared to regularly visits to health clinics for treatment, said Carol Njomo, a community health worker in Nairobi’s Kawangware area, where the first doses were administered.

“This is an added protection,” said Samson Mutua, 27, the first person to receive the injection.

Peace Lawrence, a 23-year-old sex worker, said it was “a relief” since she often forgot to take the oral pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP).

“Having sex with multiple partners always leaves me in fear,” Lawrence told AFP.

The rollout comes as African countries grapple with United States aid cuts that have affected HIV/AIDS programmes across the continent. (AFP)

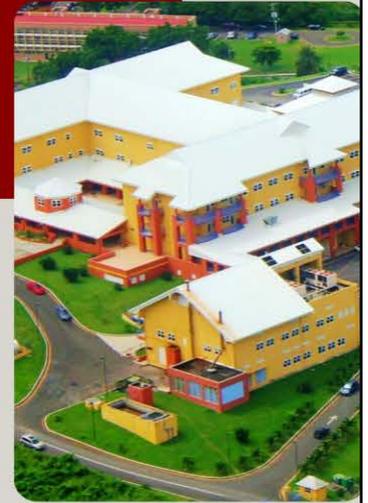
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Instagram to alert parents if teens search for self-harm and suicide content

Parents using Instagram's child supervision tools will soon receive alerts if their teen repeatedly searches for suicide or self-harm related terms on the platform.

It is the first time parent company Meta will proactively alert parents to searches by their child on Instagram for harmful material, rather than block searches and direct users to external help.

Parents and teens enrolled in Instagram's Teen Accounts experience in the UK, US, Australia and Canada will be notified about the alerts from next week, with the rest of the world to follow later.

But suicide prevention charity, the Molly Rose Foundation, has strongly criticised the measures, warning they "could do more harm than good".

"This clumsy announcement is fraught with risk and we are concerned that forced disclosures could do more harm than good," said its chief executive Andy Burrows.

The organisation was established by the family of Molly Russell, who took her own life in 2017 at the age of 14 after viewing self-harm and suicide content on platforms including Instagram.

Burrows said "every parent would want to know if their child is struggling, but these flimsy notifications will leave parents panicked and ill-prepared to have the sensitive and difficult conversations that will follow".

Meta says alerts to parents about their child searching for suicide and self-harm material within a short space of time on Instagram will also be accompanied by expert resources to help them navigate difficult conversations.

Ged Flynn, chief executive of charity Papyrus Prevention of Young Suicide, said while it welcomed Instagram's announcement, Meta was "neglecting the real issue that children and young people continue to be

"The onus should be on addressing these risks rather than making yet another cynically timed announcement that passes the buck to parents," he added.

Meta disputed the organisation's findings published last September, saying it "misrepresents our efforts to empower parents and protect teens".

Instagram's Teen Account alerts are designed to tell parents if there is a sudden change in their child's behaviour and search habits on

no cause for concern and will "err on the side of caution".

Sameer Hinduja, co-director of the Cyberbullying Research Center, said the alert would "obviously" be alarming for any parent to receive.

But he told the BBC "what matters is not just the alert itself but the quality and usefulness of the resources parents immediately receive to guide them through what to do next".

"You can't drop a notification on a parent and leave them on their own, and it seems like Meta understands that," Hinduja added.

Instagram says in coming months it will also look to apply similar alerts if teens discuss self-harm and suicide with its AI chatbot as children "increasingly turn to AI for support".

Social media companies are facing increasing pressure from governments worldwide to make their platforms safer for children.

At the start of the year, Australia banned social media for under-16s - with Spain, France and the UK considering similar steps.

Regulators and lawmakers are meanwhile closely scrutinising big tech's business practices towards young users.

Meta boss Mark Zuckerberg and Instagram chief Adam Mosseri recently appeared in court in the US to defend the company against claims it targeted younger users. (BBC)



sucked into a dark and dangerous online world".

"Parents contact us every day to say how worried they are about their children online," he told the BBC.

"They don't want to be warned after their children search for harmful content, they don't want it to be spoon-fed to them by unthinking algorithms."

Burrows also cited prior research by the Foundation which indicated Instagram still "actively" recommends harmful content about depression, suicide and self-harm to "vulnerable young people".

the platform.

Meta said in a blog post the measures build on Instagram's existing teen protections, which include hiding material relating to suicide or self-harm on the app and blocking searches for harmful or dangerous content.

Alerts will be sent to parents by email, text, WhatsApp or on the Instagram app itself, depending on what contact information Meta has for families.

Meta says Instagram's new alerts - stemming from its analysis of user search patterns - may occasionally alert parents when there is

US and Iran hold talks seen as crucial to prevent conflict

US and Iranian officials have met in Geneva for a third round of indirect talks seen as crucial to averting conflict, with President Donald Trump threatening to strike Iran if a nuclear deal is not reached.

The discussions come amid the largest US military build-up in the Middle East since the US-led invasion of Iraq in 2003, and with Iran vowing to respond to an attack with force.

Thursday's talks were adjourned after three hours. Oman's Foreign Minister Badr Albusaidi, who is acting as the mediator, said negotiators had exchanged "creative and positive ideas" and would return after taking a break. "We hope to make more progress," he added.

But the chances of an agreement remain unclear.

While Trump has said he prefers to solve the crisis through diplomacy, he has also said he is considering a limited strike on Iran to pressure its leaders to accept a deal.

The president, however, has done little to explain what he is demanding in the negotiations and why there could be the need to take military action now, eight months after the US bombed Iranian nuclear facilities during a war between Israel and Iran.

Iran has rejected the US demand to stop the enrichment of uranium in its territory, but there have been indications that it is prepared to offer some concessions about its nuclear programme.

As in the previous two rounds of discussions earlier this month, the Iranian delegation is being led by Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi, while the US is represented by special envoy Steve Witkoff and Trump's son-in-law, Jared Kushner.

In recent weeks, the US has sent thousands of troops and what Trump



has described as an "armada" to the region, including two aircraft carriers along with other warships, as well as fighter jets and refuelling aircraft.

Trump first threatened to bomb Iran last month as security forces brutally repressed anti-government protests, killing thousands of people. But since then, his focus has turned to Iran's nuclear programme, which has been at the centre of a long-running dispute with the West.

For decades, the US and Israel have accused Iran of trying to secretly develop a nuclear weapon. Iran insists its programme is only for peaceful purposes, though the country is the only non-nuclear-armed state to have enriched uranium at near weapons-grade level.

In his State of the Union speech to Congress on Tuesday, Trump briefly and vaguely talked about the tensions with Iran, without clearly laying out the case for strikes.

He said Iran was working to build missiles that would "soon" be capable of reaching the US, without giving details. He also accused the country of trying to "start all over again" with a nuclear weapons programme following last year's strikes, and said he could not allow the "world's number

one sponsor of terror... to have a nuclear weapon".

The US struck three nuclear sites in Iran last June, as it joined Israel in its bombing campaign. At the time, Trump said the facilities had been "obliterated".

Iran says its enrichment activity stopped after the attacks, although it has not allowed the International Atomic Energy Agency's inspectors to access the damaged sites.

"They want to make a deal," Trump said, "but we haven't heard those secret words: 'We will never have a nuclear weapon'."

Hours before the speech, however, the Iranian foreign minister posted on social media that Iran would "under no circumstances ever develop a nuclear weapon". Araghchi also said there was an "historic opportunity to strike an unprecedented agreement that addresses mutual concerns and achieves mutual interests".

Reacting to Trump's address, an Iranian foreign ministry spokesman accused the US of repeating "big lies" regarding its nuclear programme, ballistic missiles and the number of protesters killed in the crackdown.

Iran's proposals have not been made

International

AROUND THE WORLD



public, but the discussions in Geneva could include the creation of a regional consortium for uranium enrichment, which has been raised in previous negotiations, as well as ideas about what to do with Iran's roughly 400kg (880lb) stockpile of highly enriched uranium and verification and monitoring mechanisms.

In return, Iran expects the lifting of sanctions that have crippled its economy. Opponents of the regime say any relief would give the clerical rulers a lifeline.

But it remains unclear which conditions Trump could find acceptable for a deal. Iran has already rejected discussing limits to the country's ballistic missile programme and ending its support for proxies in the region - an alliance Tehran calls the "Axis of Resistance" that includes Hamas in Gaza, Hezbollah in Lebanon, militias in Iraq, and the Houthis in Yemen.

Reports in US media, quoting unnamed administration officials, have suggested that Trump was considering an initial strike in the coming days on Iran's Revolutionary Guards or nuclear sites to pressure the country's leaders. If negotiations failed, according to the reports, the president might go as far as ordering a campaign with the aim of toppling the Iranian Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff is also said to have warned that strikes against Iran could be risky, potentially drawing the US into a prolonged conflict, although Trump has insisted that Gen Dan Caine believes it would be "easily won".

Iran, meanwhile, has threatened to respond to any attack by striking American military assets in the Middle East and Israel.

US-allied countries in the region are concerned that an attack on Iran could lead to a wider conflict, and have warned that air power alone will not be able to change the country's leadership.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, however, has warned against a deal that does not include Iran's ballistic missiles and its proxies. Netanyahu has long described Iran as a key threat for Israel, and a source of instability in the region.

Analysts believe that the prime minister, who visited the White House earlier this month, may be pushing for a campaign with the goal of toppling the Iranian regime.

The US has the world's second-largest nuclear arsenal. Israel is also believed to have nuclear weapons, although it neither confirms nor denies

this.

Ahead of the State of the Union, Secretary of State Marco Rubio delivered a classified briefing to the so-called "gang of eight", composed of the leaders of both parties in the Senate and House of Representatives and the chairs and ranking members of the intelligence committees of both chambers.

Following the briefing, Chuck Schumer, the Senate minority leader, gave a brief statement, saying: "This is serious, and the administration has to make its case to the American people." (BBC)




NATIONAL BACKYARD GARDENING COMPETITION

FINAL ROUND OF REGISTRATIONS...

...ends February 28th, 2026

| | |
|--------------------------------|----------------|
| 1st Place... | \$7,500 |
| 2nd Place... | \$5,000 |
| 3rd Place... | \$3,500 |

Judging Based On:

- Plant Health & Vigor
- Variety 7 Crop Density
- Maintenance & Cleanliness
- Sustainability & Soil Management
- Design & Layout
- Record Keeping

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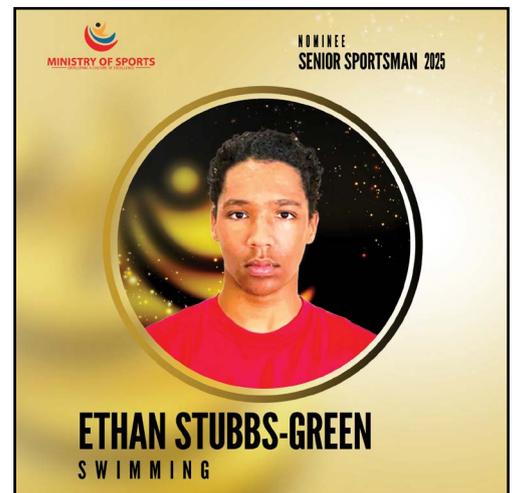
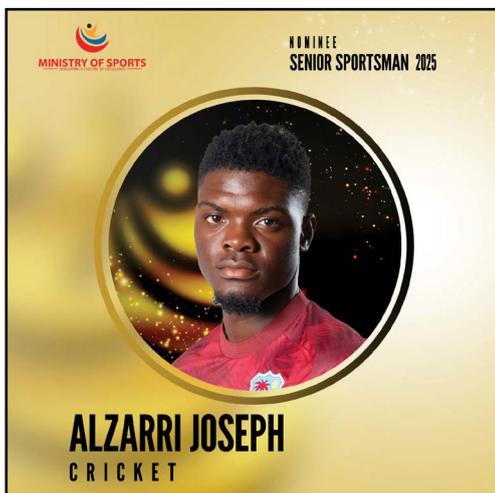
MINISTRY OF SPORTS SENIOR SPORTSMAN OF THE YEAR 2025

| NAMES | ASSOCIATIONS | YEAR |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| 1. Christopher B. Johnson | Antigua and Barbuda Athletics Association | 2025 |
| 2. Daniel Antonio | Antigua and Barbuda Arm-wrestling Association | 2025 |
| 3. Tariq Kienesberger | Antigua and Barbuda Bodybuilding & Weightlifting Federation | 2025 |
| 4. Alzarri Joseph | Antigua and Barbuda Cricket Association | 2025 |
| 5. Alexander Whittaker | Antigua and Barbuda Cycling Association | 2025 |
| 6. Shahoi Dorsett | Antigua and Barbuda Football Association | 2025 |
| 7. Omary James | Antigua and Barbuda Golf Association | 2025 |
| 8. Nicholas Geyleyns | Ralling Racing Association | 2025 |
| 9. Jules Mitchell | Antigua and Barbuda Sailing Association | 2025 |
| 10. Ethan Stubbs - Green | Antigua and Barbuda Swimming Federation | 2025 |
| 11. Jody Maginley | Antigua and Barbuda Tennis Association | 2025 |
| 12. Cairson Davis | Antigua and Barbuda Volleyball Association | 2025 |
| 13. Steve Martin | Antigua and Barbuda Softball Cricket Association | 2025 |

Adonis Humphreys

Antigua and Barbuda Basketball Association

2025



Sports News



MINISTRY OF SPORTS

NOMINEE
SENIOR SPORTSMAN 2025

JODY MAGINLEY
TENNIS

MINISTRY OF SPORTS

NOMINEE
SENIOR SPORTSMAN 2025

CAIRON DAVIS
VOLLEYBALL

MINISTRY OF SPORTS

NOMINEE
SENIOR SPORTSMAN 2025

ADONIS HUMPHREYS
BASKETBALL



MINISTRY OF SPORTS JUNIOR SPORTSMAN OF THE YEAR 2025

| NAMES | ASSOCIATIONS | YEAR |
|-----------------------|----------------------------------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Gedion Roberts | Antigua and Barbuda Athletics Association | 2025 |
| 2. Tajahron Davis | Antigua and Barbuda Basketball Association | 2025 |
| 3. Matthew Miller | Antigua and Barbuda Cricket Association | 2025 |
| 4. Tahje JJ Browne | Antigua and Barbuda Cycling Federation | 2025 |
| 5. Dajari Bartley | Antigua and Barbuda Football Association | 2025 |
| 6. Shanoy K.A. Malone | Antigua and Barbuda Sailing Association | 2025 |
| 7. Alessandro Bazzoni | Antigua and Barbuda Swimming Federation | 2025 |
| 8. Mekhi Simmons | Antigua and Barbuda Table Tennis Association | 2025 |
| 9. Elite Thomas | Antigua and Barbuda Triathlon Association | 2025 |
| 10. Asafa Donovan | Antigua and Barbuda Volleyball Association | 2025 |
| | | 10 Nominees |

MINISTRY OF SPORTS

NOMINEE
JUNIOR SPORTSMAN 2025

GEDION ROBERTS
ATHLETICS

MINISTRY OF SPORTS

NOMINEE
JUNIOR SPORTSMAN 2025

MATTHEW MILLER
CRICKET

MINISTRY OF SPORTS

NOMINEE
JUNIOR SPORTSMAN 2025

TAHJE BROWNE
CYCLING

Sports News

MINISTRY OF SPORTS

NOMINEE
JUNIOR SPORTSMAN 2025



SHANY MALONE
SAILING

MINISTRY OF SPORTS

NOMINEE
JUNIOR SPORTSMAN 2025



DAJARI BARTHLEY
FOOTBALL

MINISTRY OF SPORTS

NOMINEE
JUNIOR SPORTSMAN 2025



ALESSANDRO BAZZONI
SWIMMING

MINISTRY OF SPORTS

NOMINEE
JUNIOR SPORTSMAN 2025



MEKHI SIMMONS
TABLE TENNIS

MINISTRY OF SPORTS

NOMINEE
JUNIOR SPORTSMAN 2025



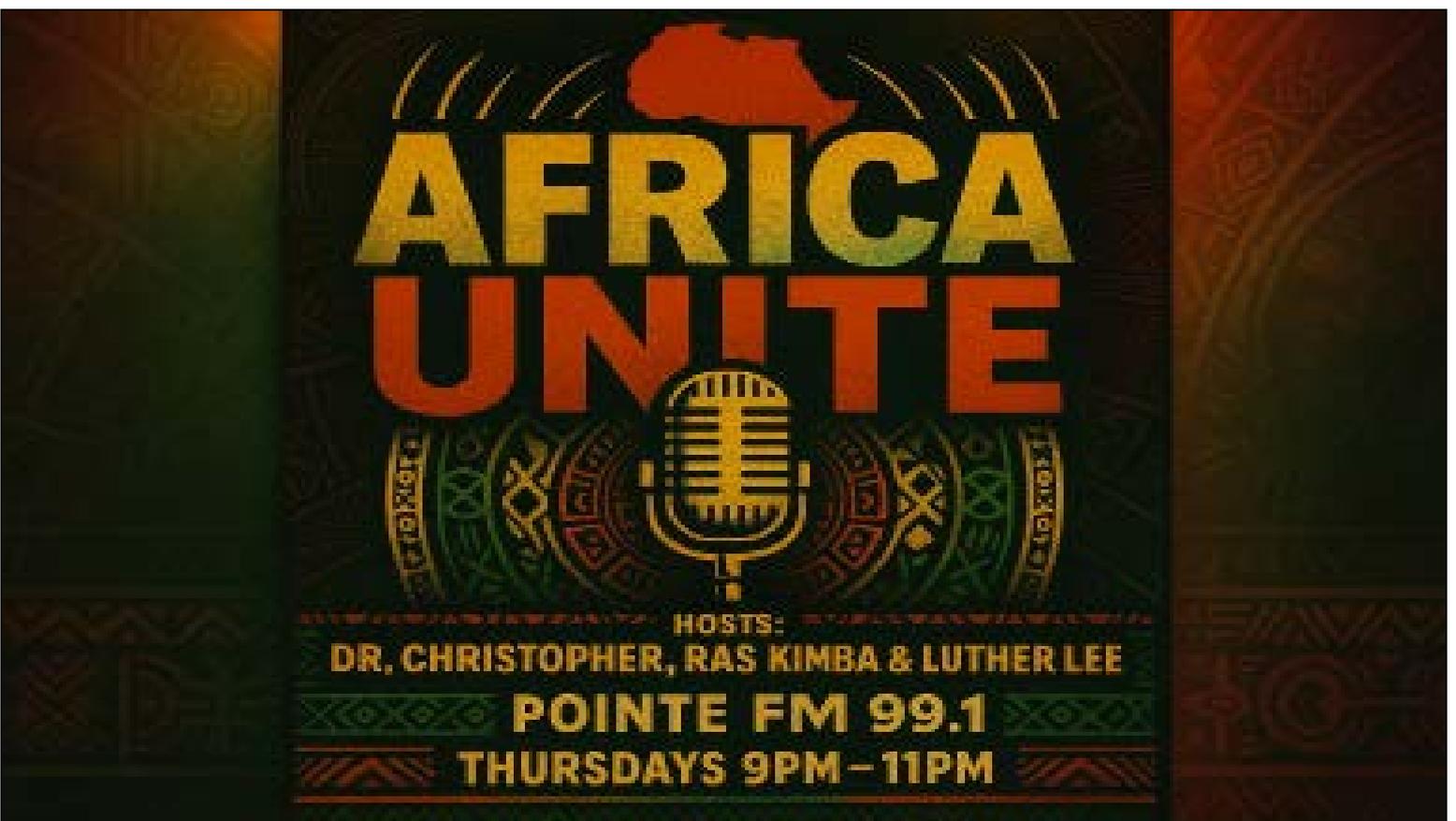
ELITE THOMAS
TRIATHLON, ATHLETICS AND CYCLING

MINISTRY OF SPORTS

NOMINEE
JUNIOR SPORTSMAN 2025



ASAFA DONOVAN
VOLLEYBALL



**AFRICA
UNITE**

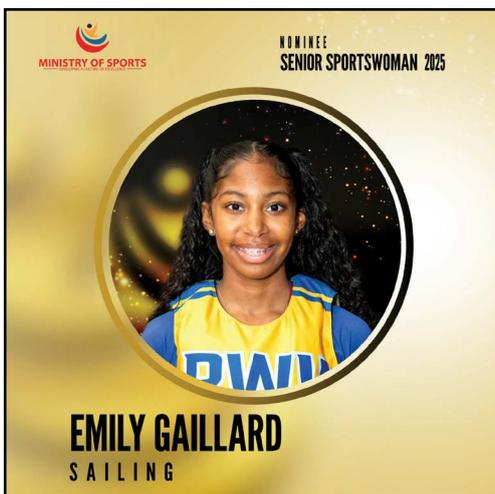
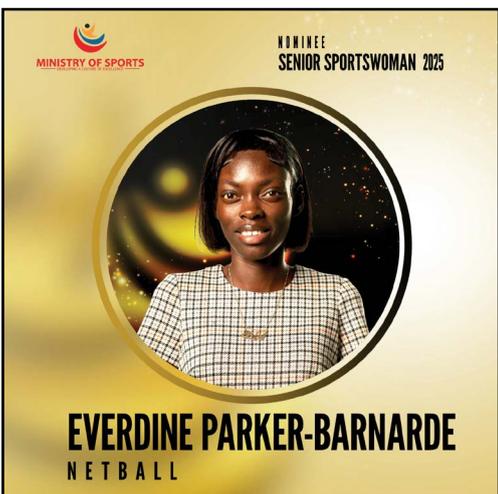
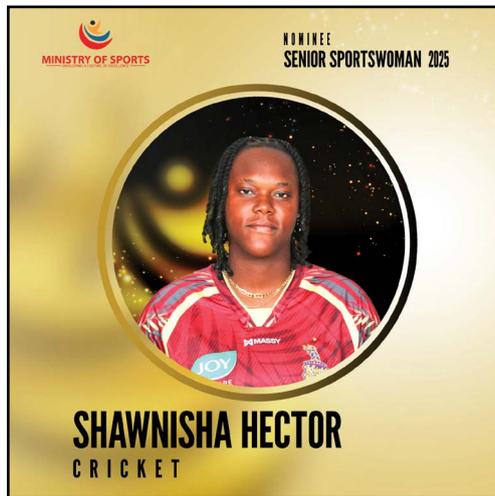
HOSTS:
DR. CHRISTOPHER, RAS KIMBA & LUTHER LEE

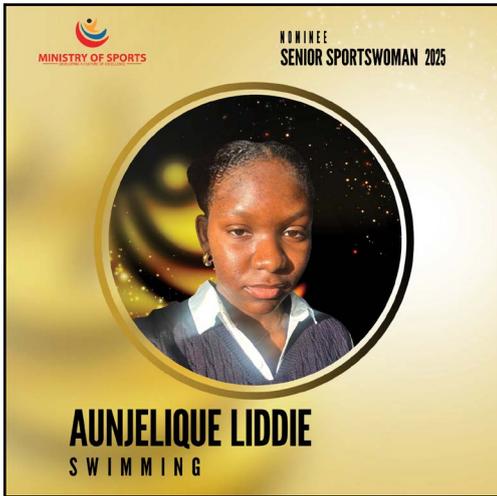
POINTE FM 99.1
THURSDAYS 9PM - 11PM



MINISTRY OF SPORTS SENIOR SPORTSWOMAN OF THE YEAR 2025

| NAMES | ASSOCIATIONS | YEAR |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| 1. Joella Kenjel Lloyd | Antigua and Barbuda Athletics Association | 2025 |
| 2. Shawnisha Hector | Antigua and Barbuda Cricket Association | 2025 |
| 3. Gabriella Desuza | Antigua and Barbuda Football Association | 2025 |
| 4. Jewel Crump | Antigua and Barbuda Fencing Association | 2025 |
| 5. Kimberlyn Weatherill | Antigua and Barbuda Golf Association | 2025 |
| 6. Erverdine Parker - Barnade | Antigua and Barbuda Netball Association | 2025 |
| 7. Emily Gaillard | Antigua and Barbuda Sailing Association | 2025 |
| 8. Ambassador Melissa Seaforth | Antigua and Barbuda Bodybuilding & Weightlifting Federation | 2025 |
| 9. Aunjelique Liddie | Antigua and Barbuda Swimming Federation | 2025 |
| 10. Jassania Joseph | Antigua and Barbuda Volleyball Association | 2025 |
| 11. Sacha Michael | Antigua and Barbuda Softball Cricket Association | 2025 |
| Jnai Spencer | Antigua and Barbuda Basketball Association | 2025 |





**MINISTRY OF SPORTS
JUNIOR SPORTSWOMAN OF THE YEAR 2025**

| NAMES | ASSOCIATIONS | YEAR |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------------------------|------|
| 1. Tyra Fenton | Antigua and Barbuda Athletics Association | 2025 |
| 2. Nafisa Quashi | Antigua and Barbuda Football Association | 2025 |
| 3. Nicole Weatherill | Antigua and Barbuda Golf Association | 2025 |
| 4. Madison Jules MacMillian | Antigua and Barbuda Swimming Federation | 2025 |
| 5. Stuti Kashyap | Antigua and Barbuda Table Tennis Association | 2025 |
| 6. Philisha Burnette | Antigua and Barbuda Volleyball Association | 2025 |
| 7. Kayla Melvin | Antigua and Barbuda Basketball Association | 2025 |

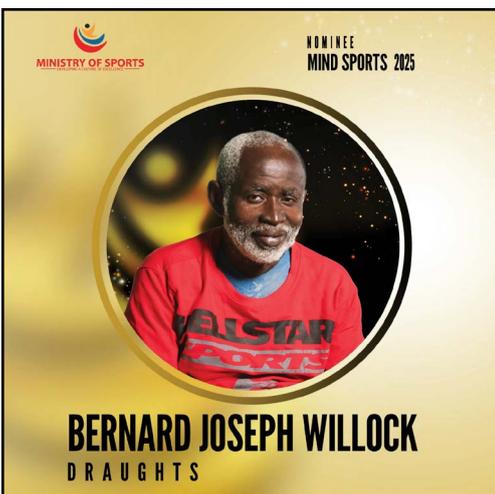


Sports News



MINISTRY OF SPORTS MIND SPORTS OF THE YEAR 2025

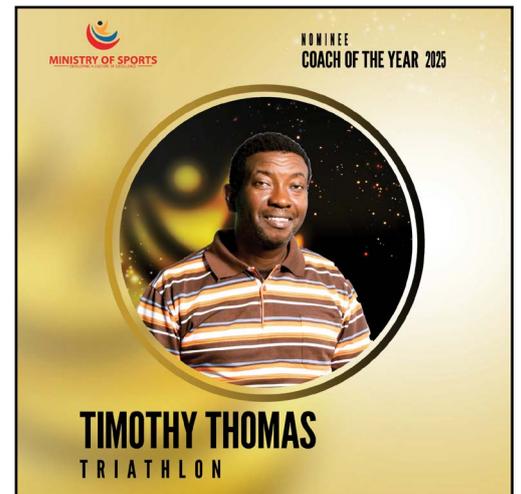
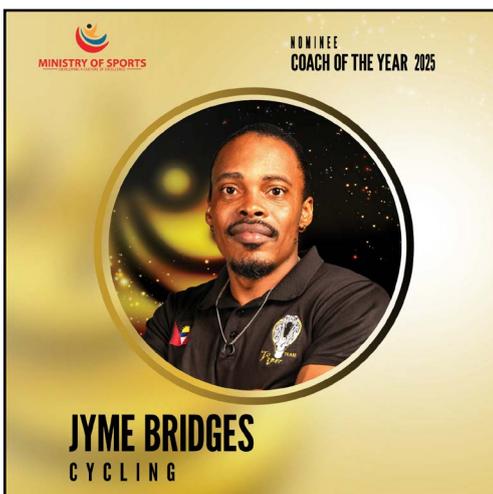
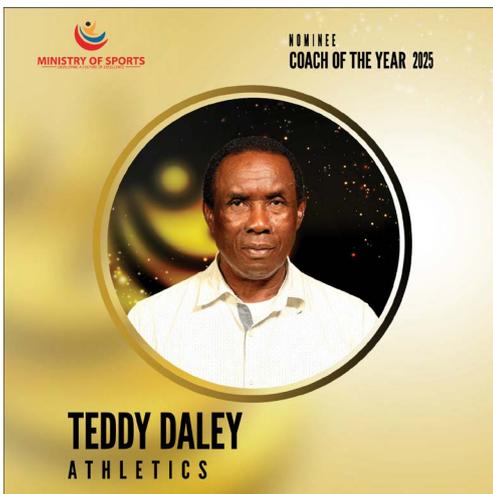
| NAMES | ASSOCIATIONS | YEAR |
|--------------------|------------------------------------------|------|
| 1. Kalid Jarvis | Antigua and Barbuda Dominio Association | 2025 |
| 2. Bernard Dowdy | Antigua and Barbuda Pool Association | 2025 |
| 3. Bernard Willock | Antigua and Barbuda Draughts Association | 2025 |

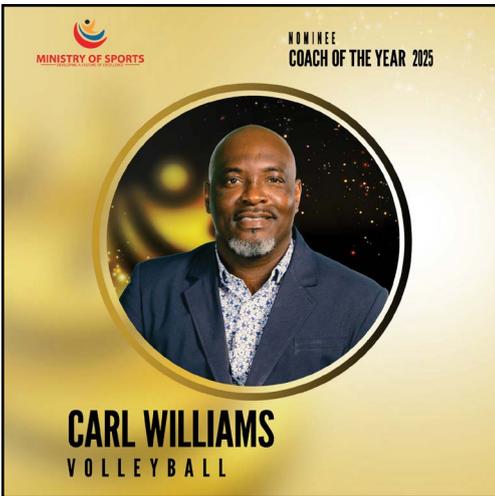




MINISTRY OF SPORTS COACH OF THE YEAR 2025

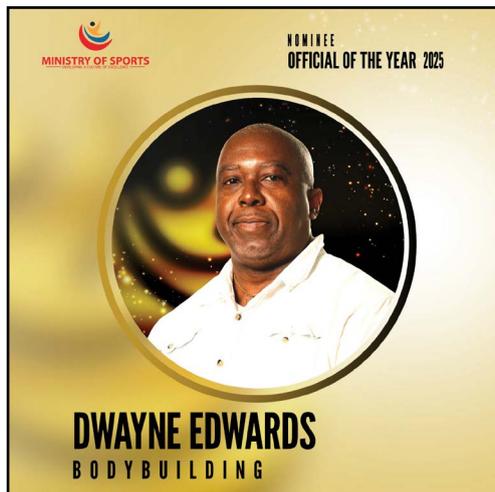
| NAMES | ASSOCIATIONS | YEAR |
|-------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Teddy Daley | Antigua and Barbuda Athletics Association | 2025 |
| 2. George Hughes | Antigua and Barbuda Basketball Association | 2025 |
| 3. Olyn Martin | Antigua and Barbuda Bodybuilding & Weightlifting Federation | 2025 |
| 4. Ian Tittle | Antigua and Barbuda Cricket Association | 2025 |
| 5. Jyme Bridges | Antigua and Barbuda Cycling Federation | 2025 |
| 6. Frank Govia | Antigua and Barbuda Domino Association | 2025 |
| 7. Schyan Jeffers | Antigua and Barbuda Football Association | 2025 |
| 8. Jamila Fitz | Antigua and Barbuda Netball Association | 2025 |
| 9. Timothy Thomas | Antigua and Barbuda Triathlon Association | 2025 |
| 10. Carl Williams | Antigua and Barbuda Volleyball Association | 2025 |
| | | 10 Nominees |

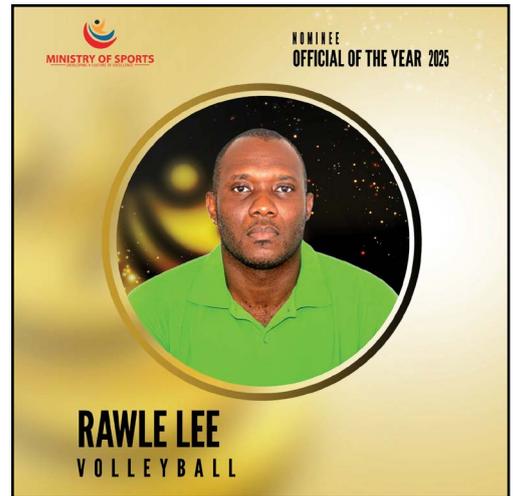




**MINISTRY OF SPORTS
OFFICIAL OF THE YEAR 2025**

| NAMES | ASSOCIATIONS | YEAR |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Ivalin Murrain | Antigua and Barbuda Basketball Association | 2025 |
| 2. Dwayne Edwards | Antigua and Barbuda Bodybuilding & Weightlifting Federation | 2025 |
| 3. Felix Auguiste | Antigua and Barbuda Cricket Association | 2025 |
| 4. St. Clair Williams | Antigua and Barbuda Cycling Federation | 2025 |
| 5. Carol – Faye L. Bynoe | Antigua and Barbuda Domino Association | 2025 |
| 6. Ken Pennyfeather | Antigua and Barbuda Football Association | 2025 |
| 7. Akiel Hazelwood | Antigua and Barbuda Netball Association | 2025 |
| 8. Gary Edwards | National Polling Association | 2025 |
| 9. Mr. Rawle Lee | Antigua and Barbuda Volleyball Association | 2025 |
| | | 9 Nominees |





**MINISTRY OF SPORTS
ADMINISTRATOR OF THE YEAR 2025**

| NAMES | ASSOCIATIONS | YEAR |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| 1. Shawnor Charles - Joseph | Antigua and Barbuda Athletics Association | 2025 |
| 2. Beverley Percival - Tonge | Antigua and Barbuda Bodybuilding & Weightlifting Federation | 2025 |
| 3. Dane Gustave | Antigua and Barbuda Cricket Association | 2025 |
| 4. Joshua Michael | Antigua and Barbuda Domino Association | 2025 |
| 5. Kelesha Antoine | Antigua and Barbuda Football Association | 2025 |
| 6. Andrea Roberts - Nicholas | Antigua and Barbuda Swimming Federation | 2025 |
| 7. Charles Bellot | Antigua and Barbuda Table Tennis Association | 2025 |
| 8. Mr. Wilbur Harrigan | Antigua and Barbuda Volleyball Association | 2025 |
| 9. Eustace Samuel | Antigua and Barbuda Draughts Association | 2025 |

Sports News



MINISTRY OF SPORTS

NOMINEE
SPORTS ADMINISTRATOR 2025



JNAI SPENCER
BASKETBALL

MINISTRY OF SPORTS

NOMINEE
SPORTS ADMINISTRATOR 2025



CHARLES BELLOT
TABLE TENNIS

MINISTRY OF SPORTS

NOMINEE
SPORTS ADMINISTRATOR 2025



SHAWNOR CHARLES JOSEPH
ATHLETICS

MINISTRY OF SPORTS

NOMINEE
SPORTS ADMINISTRATOR 2025



BEVERLY PERCIVAL-TONGE
BODYBUILDING

MINISTRY OF SPORTS

NOMINEE
SPORTS ADMINISTRATOR 2025



ANDREA ROBERTS-NICHOLAS
SWIMMING

MINISTRY OF SPORTS

NOMINEE
SPORTS ADMINISTRATOR 2025



WILBUR HARRIGAN
VOLLEYBALL

MINISTRY OF SPORTS

NOMINEE
SPORTS ADMINISTRATOR 2025



KELESHA ANTOINE
FOOTBALL

MINISTRY OF SPORTS

NOMINEE
SPORTS ADMINISTRATOR 2025



DANE GUSTAVE
CRICKET



Senior Hoggs
TEQUILA BAR

Open Daily -
7:00am - 11:30pm

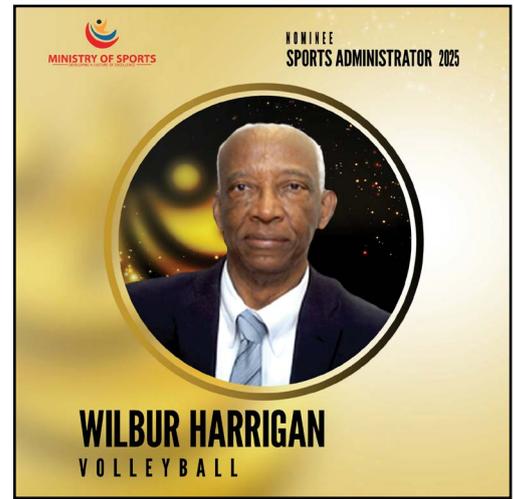
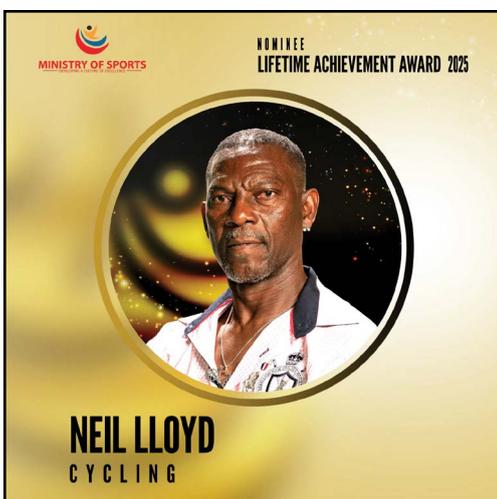
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- Thursdays, 7:30pm - Karaoke
- Saturdays, 8pm - Live Band
- Breakfast served from 7:30am
- Games Night - COMING SOON!



MINISTRY OF SPORTS
LIFE TIME ACHIEVEMENT OF THE YEAR 2025

| NAMES | ASSOCIATIONS | YEAR |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Neil Lloyd | Antigua and Barbuda Cricket Association | 2025 |
| 2. Joseph Henderson Meade | Antigua and Barbuda Bodybuilding & Weightlifting Federation | 2025 |
| 3. Wilbur Harrigan | Antigua and Barbuda Volleyball Association | 2025 |
| | | 3 Nominees |



Antiguans get second win in CONCACAF U-20 Men's Qualifiers



The Antigua and Barbuda squad, which is currently contesting the 2026 CONCACAF Under-20 Men's Qualifiers in Costa Rica. (Photo courtesy of the ABFA)

Antigua and Barbuda continued their successful start in their campaign by recording their second win in the 2026 CONCACAF Under-20 Men's Qualifiers in Costa Rica on Wednesday.

After snatching a one-nil win against St. Lucia in their opening game, the young Benna Boys secured a 2-0 victory against the British Virgin Islands in their second Group C encounter at the Costa Rica Football Federation Field in San Rafael de Alajuela, Costa Rica.

Forward Greg Williams scored the first goal of the match with a strike in the 15th minute. An own goal by Toby Whiteside in the 50th minute doubled the lead and sealed victory for Antigua and Barbuda.

The Dominican Republic launched their campaign in Group C with a 3-0 victory against Dominica at the same venue on Wednesday.

Nicolas Bobea scored the first for the Dominican Republic in the 14th minute, before Cristian Ortiz found the net in the 75th minute. Ortiz scored his second goal of the match in the second

minute of added time to wrap up his team's victory.

There were wins for Jamaica, St. Kitts and Nevis, and Puerto Rico in the second-round matches in Group B at Stadion Rignaal "Jean" Francisca in Willemstad, Curaçao.

Jamaica romped to a 7-0 victory over the Turks and Caicos Islands, St. Kitts and Nevis prevailed 3-0 against the Cayman Islands, and Puerto Rico coasted to a 5-0 victory against Bonaire.

Suriname, El Salvador, and Belize also won their respective second-round matches in Group A at Estadio Miguel Chocorrón Buitrago in Managua, Nicaragua.

Suriname snatched a 2-0 victory against French Guiana, El Salvador notched up a 4-1 victory over St. Martin, and Belize claimed their first win with a 3-0 victory against Grenada.

Thirty-two (32) member countries are contesting the 2026 CONCACAF Under-20 Men's Qualifiers this month.

The qualifying competition for the 2026 CONCACAF Under-20 Men's

Championship is taking place from February 23 to March 4 across three venues in Central America and the Caribbean.

The 32 participating men's under-20 teams were split into two groups of six and four groups of five.

The Antiguans are joined in five-team Group C by national teams from the Dominican Republic, St. Lucia, the British Virgin Islands, and Dominica.

Antigua and Barbuda will play their third match against Dominica on Sunday, March 1, and will wrap up their campaign against the Dominican Republic in their final Group C match on Tuesday, March 3.

The tournament will serve as a qualifier for the 2026 CONCACAF Under-20 Men's Championship in July and August.

After round-robin play, the first-place team from each of the six groups will advance to the 2026 CONCACAF Under-20 Championship, joining the six top-ranked nations that are pre-qualified directly for the tournament.

Gunners extend unbeaten run in Division 2 basketball league

The Cedar Grove Gunners maintained their unbeaten run in the Antigua and Barbuda Basketball Association's (ABBA) Second Division League on Wednesday.

The Gunners shot their way to their fourth win in as many matches with a commanding 80-65 victory over EZ Fit Flyers 2 in the opening game of a double-header at the JSC Sports Complex.

Tyras Grayman sank 16 points and grabbed 21 rebounds, and Shawn Thomas converted 16 points and claimed 15 rebounds to lead the Gunners.

Iornie Joseph produced 11 points and nine rebounds, John Rolland Jr. had 10 points and nine rebounds, and Keaddy Martin scored nine points for the Cedar Grove Gunners.

Elijah Charles sank 17 points, Gabriel Desuza converted 14 points, Piper Hansel got 11 points and five steals, and Tyrese White also scored 11 points for the EZ Fit Flyers 2, who lost for the fifth time in as many games.

The Ramco Pharmacy Fearless Crew notched up their fourth win in six games by pulling off a hard-fought 76-68 victory over Navigators 2 in Wednesday's second encounter.

Takeem Martin shot a game-high 21 points and grabbed 23 rebounds; Tyler Jacobs scored 17 points; Emeka Emujuru-Oupe produced nine points and seven rebounds; and Jesus Lopez chipped in with eight points and seven steals for the Fearless Crew.

Raheem Sawyer also shot a game-high 21 points and claimed seven



Gabriel De Suza

rebounds; Molefi Joseph converted 17 points and grabbed 10 rebounds; Henry Dorsette had 10 points and five rebounds; and Ricky Willock chipped in with nine points and nine rebounds for Navigators 2, who lost for the third time in four games.

Gabriel De Suza

Wins for the senior boys of PMS and CHSS in School Basketball League

The Princess Margaret School and the Clare Hall Secondary School

(CHSS) recorded wins in the Senior Boys Division of the Cool and Smooth Inter-School Basketball League on Wednesday.

Princess Margaret School secured a commanding 74-49 victory against the Antigua and Barbuda College of Advanced Studies (ABCAS) at the JSC Sports Complex.

Gabriel De Suza shot a game-high 28 points, Noah Massiah sank 16 points, Elijah Charles converted 13 points, and Shemar Thomas scored 11 points for Princess Margaret School.

Kadeem Simon produced 17 points, Victor Edwards had 15 points, and Dawon Edwards scored 13 points for ABCAS.

Clare Hall Secondary School prevailed 93-73 against St. Mary's Secondary School in their Senior Boys Division encounter.

Tajahron Davis produced an impressive 51 points, Jahaziel Santana sank 13 points, and Louis Ozuna scored 10 points for Clare Hall Secondary School.

Yohan Nicholas converted 45 points, and Sheldon George sank 23 points for St. Mary's Secondary School.

The Ottos Comprehensive School snatched a narrow 27-24 victory over St. Anthony's Secondary School in the Junior Boys Division.

Keon Titus sank eight points and Levi Richards scored seven points for Ottos Comprehensive School, while Kamal Mason converted 10 points and Khalil Roberts had eight points for St. Anthony's Secondary School.

Matthews leads Windies Women to consolation victory over Sri Lanka



Hayley Matthews

ST. GEORGE'S – In a final match that was high on individual brilliance but low on series impact, West Indies Women produced a dominant performance to defeat Sri Lanka Women by six wickets in the third and final One Day International at the National Stadium in Grenada on Wednesday.

Despite the victory, the hosts succumbed 2-1 in the three-match series. The day belonged to West Indies captain Hayley Matthews, who delivered a Player-of-the-Match winning knock, scoring a magnificent 100 to anchor a successful run-chase of 218.

It was a statement performance from the skipper, who ensured her team ended the series on a high note. Earlier, Sri Lanka Women opted to bat first but were immediately put on the back foot.

Matthews struck with the ball in her very first over, trapping the dangerous Chamari Athapaththu lbw for a duck. Despite the early

setback, Harshitha Samarawickrama played a sublime knock, holding the innings together with a well-crafted 70.

She found support from Hasini Perera, who chipped in with 27 and Vishmi Gunaratne, 26, but the West Indies bowlers maintained a stranglehold on the scoring rate.

Kavisha Dilhari provided a late surge with an unbeaten 45, pushing the visitors to a competitive total of 217 for seven from their 50 overs.

Matthews finished with economical figures of 2 for 33, while off-spinner Karishma Ramharack also chipped in with two crucial wickets.

In reply, the West Indies chase got off to a rocky start. Matthews watched from the non-striker's end as her top order crumbled, losing Qiana Joseph for 2 and Shemaine Campbelle for a six-ball duck, inside the first four overs to leave the home side reeling at 12 for two.

What followed was a master-class in rebuilding. Matthews was joined by the experienced Stafanie Taylor, and together they weathered the storm and then dismantled the Sri Lankan attack.

The pair put on a monumental 124-run partnership for the third wicket, shifting the momentum decisively in the home team's favour.

During her innings of 38, Taylor reached a monumental personal milestone, becoming only the second player in history to surpass 6,000 runs in Women's ODI cricket.

Her steady presence allowed Matthews to play her natural game, eventually bringing up her 10th ODI century, a testament to her dominance in the format.

After Taylor's departure, Chinelle Henry, with a brisk 32 not out, and the explosive Deandra Dottin, with an unbeaten 24 not out, finished the job with an unbeaten 49-run stand, guiding the West Indies to victory at 218 for four with four overs to spare.

While the victory was a morale booster for the home side, the post-match presentations reflected the series result. Sri Lanka's Harshitha Samarawickrama was adjudged Player-of-the-Series for her consistent performances with the bat.

For the West Indies, the final match offered a glimpse of their potential and a reminder of their class as they now turn their attention to their more familiar format, the T20 series, which will commence on Saturday. (CMC)

CWI names Windies Women squad for T20 showdown with Sri Lanka



The West Indies Women squad will be led by captain Hayley Matthews, right, as the team continues to build momentum in the shortest format. (CWI Media)

Cricket West Indies (CWI) has unveiled a dynamic 15-member squad to face Sri Lanka in a three-match Women's T20 International Series from February 28 to March 3 at the National Cricket Stadium in St. George's, Grenada.

The contest promises high-octane action as the Caribbean side ramps up preparations for the 2026 ICC Women's T20 World Cup, set to take place in the United Kingdom from June 12 to July 5.

The squad will be led by captain Hayley Matthews as the team continues to build momentum in the shortest format.

Among the exciting selections is 17-year-old Barbadian Eboni Brathwaite, who earns her maiden call-up to the Senior level following a strong showing during the recently concluded regional T20 Blaze tournament.

The aggressive top-order batter impressed the selectors with her positive strokeplay, recording a strike rate of 146 throughout the competition.

Also making their way into the T20 squad following the conclusion of the ODI series against the same opponent, are Zaida James and Mandy Mangru, replacing Ashmini Munisar and Shunelle Sawh, with Brathwaite stepping in for Realeanna Grimmond.

Head Coach, Shane Deitz, spoke on the squad's preparation for the series, especially in the context of the push towards the global tournament.

"With this being a World Cup year, this T20 series provides valuable preparation with that tournament firmly in mind. We had a strong campaign two years ago and have continued to play quality T20 cricket since then, so the group is excited about what lies ahead."

Several players return in strong form from the Women's Premier League (WPL), further strengthening the squad's firepower.

"Three of our players have returned from the WPL in good form, and we're expecting meaningful contributions from them," said Deitz.

"Some of our younger players will also have opportunities to showcase their skills in the T20 format, including Eboni Brathwaite from Barbados on her first tour with the senior team. She demonstrated plenty of power hitting in regional and Under-19 cricket, and we're eager to see her bring that same intent and freedom to this series."

Deitz also highlighted the continued development of fast-rising all-rounder Jahzara Claxton, who impressed on debut last year.

"Last year's debutant, Jahzara Claxton, also possesses a skill set well suited to T20 cricket, and this will be another important opportunity for her to make an impact. Overall, this series is an important step in our World Cup build-up, and we're ready to play an exciting brand of cricket for the fans here in Grenada."

This series is expected to provide a good gauge of the regional side's current positioning, with Sri Lanka being ranked seventh in ICC Women's T20 cricket and West Indies just ahead in sixth, the series is expected to be fiercely competitive.

West Indies Women T20 squad: Hayley Matthews (captain), Chinelle Henry (vice-captain), Aaliyah Alleyne, Eboni Brathwaite, Shemaine Campbell, Jahzara Claxton, Deandra Dottin, Afy Fletcher, Jannillea Glasgow, Shawnisha Hector, Zaida James, Qi-ana Joseph, Mandy Mangru, Karishma Ramharack, and Stafanie Taylor.

Team Management Unit: Head Coach Shane Deitz; Team Manager Sheena Gooding; Assistant Coach Ryan Austin; Assistant Coach Damien Wright; Assistant Coach Shane Dowrich; Physiotherapist Ashley Stephens; Strength & Conditioning Coach Hector Martinez Charles; Performance Coach Dr. Nadine Sammy; and Media & Content Officer Nicholas Maitland.

Sports

FRIDAY 27TH FEBRUARY 2026

ANTIGUA & BARBUDA
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West Indies lose to South Africa at T20 World Cup



West Indies Jason Holder, left, and Romario Shepherd added a record eighth-wicket partnership in their Super Eight match against South Africa during the ICC T20 World Cup in Ahmedabad, India, on Thursday, February 26, 2026. (AP)



Ryan Rickelton and Aiden Markram, right, put South Africa firmly on course to victory against the West Indies during their Super Eight match at the ICC T20 World Cup in Ahmedabad, India, on Thursday, February 26, 2026.

AHMEDABAD (Reuters) - South Africa are on the verge of securing their place in the semi-finals of the Twenty20 World Cup after captain Aiden Markram's unbeaten knock of 82 led them to a commanding nine-wicket win over West Indies in Ahmedabad, India, on Thursday.

Markram and Quinton de Kock's 95-run opening partnership helped South Africa chase down a target of 177 with 23 balls to spare, going to the top of Group One in the Super Eights with four points, having also beaten defending champions India on Sunday.

The West Indies, who beat Zimbabwe in their previous game, will face India on Sunday in a battle to reach the semi-finals.

"Whether I'm captain or not, opening is a responsibility... we try to make sure the team gets off to a good start especially on wickets like this and hope to continue this," Markram said.

Put in to bat first in Ahmedabad,

West Indies were struggling at 43 for four in four overs, as Kagiso Rabada, who took two for 22, dismissed Shai Hope (16) and Shimron Hetmyer (2) before Lungi Ngidi got Brandon King (21 off 11 balls) caught by keeper De Kock and Roston Chase nicked it onto his own leg stump.

Ngidi, who finished with three for 30, also dismissed Rovman Powell, and in the 11th over Matthew Forde was caught trying to hit Corbin Bosch, who claimed two for 31, down deep backward square, with the two-time champions looking close to a collapse at 83 for seven.

But Jason Holder (49) partnered with Romario Shepherd, adding 89 runs for the eighth wicket to give West Indies a fighting chance. Unbeaten Shepherd scored 52 from 37 balls, helping West Indies post 176 for eight.

South Africa began their chase with Markram hitting Matthew Forde towards point for four, and

De Kock hit Shamar Joseph for two sixes in the sixth over to end the powerplay at 69 without losing any wickets.

De Kock, who hit 47 off 24 balls, fell to Roston Chase in the eighth over, but it did nothing to slow down South Africa. Markram completed his half-century in 27 balls, and Ryan Rickelton, who struck 45 not out off 28 balls, hit Chase for three sixes within four balls to get his team to 155 for one in 14 overs.

Markram, who hit four sixes and seven fours to score 82 from 46 balls, ended his player-of-the-match innings as he began, with a boundary to bring up the winning runs, as South Africa reached 177 for one in 16.1 overs.

"Everything will not be easy. The way we play our cricket, there will be a loss, the aim was to get it out early. Next game will be a quarter-final," West Indies captain Shai Hope said, referring to their make-or-break clash with India.