

Artists, Producers, Writers & Other Creatives Shine At Music Awards

Story on page 2



Members of Jam Band of the Year Kaution take the stage at the annual National Music Awards ceremony on Tuesday night

Creative Industry Honours Artists, Producers, Writers Et Al At Annual Musix Awards



The Ministry of Creative Industries, and the organizers of the Antigua and Barbuda National Music Awards 2025 extend heartfelt congratulations to the winners, special awardees, and nominees who were recognized for their outstanding contributions to the nation's vibrant music industry.

Tuesday evening's awards event served as a powerful celebration of the immense talent, creativity, and dedication that continue to shape the soundscape of Antigua and Barbuda.

"From seasoned musicians and arrangers to emerging artist, cultural ambassadors and contributors to the development of the industry, the 2025 honourees represent the very best of the country's musical excellence, we are proud of your contributions.

"We salute the award winners whose artistry and commitment to their craft have set new standards within the industry. As most of our awardees share, their achievements are a reflection of countless hours of dedication and a passion for music that inspires both locally and beyond," a media release from the ministry stated.

Special Congratulations to:

- ▶ Gospel Artiste of the Year- **Rashid**

Walker

- ▶ Dancehall/Reggae Artiste of the Year- **Niqko Wyld West**
- ▶ Calypsonian of the Year- **Ge'Eve Philip**
- ▶ Producer of the Year- **Andrew Smilius Dorsette**
- ▶ Soca Artiste of the Year presented by Caribbean Union Bank- **Tian Winter**
- ▶ Pianist of the Year- **Maurisha Potter**
- ▶ Arranger of the Year- **Dr. Zahra Lake**
- ▶ Steelband of the Year presented by State Insurance Company Ltd. - **Hellsgate Steel Orchestra**
- ▶ School Steelband of the Year presented by ECAB- **PMS Serenaders** (Princess Margaret School)
- ▶ Instrumentalist of the Year- **Dwight Laviscount**
- ▶ Band of the Year presented by Ravier Surgical Suites- **Kutting Edgde Band**
- ▶ Jam Band of the Year presented by KFC – **Kaution Band**
- ▶ Recording Artiste of the Year presented by ACB Caribbean- **Tian**

Winter

- ▶ Song Writer of the Year presented by KOSCAB - **Art Drastic Philip**
- ▶ MC of the Year presented by KOSCAB- **Steve "Ibis the Livest" Free-land**
- ▶ Disc Jockey of the Year presented by Cool & Smooth- **DJ Quest**
- ▶ Sound of the Year- **King Warrior Sound**
- ▶ Niche Event of the Year- **Heaven – RnB Experience**
- ▶ Large Scale Event of the Year presented by Autocraze- **Rise – DJ Jime Events**
- ▶ Song of the Year Presented by Ship to Shore – **BB Service, Soca Villian**

Special Recognition Awards

*Patrick Johnny Gomes
Just Soul*

Veron Henry

Dalma Boogie George

Dr. Renee Smith

Ogliver "Destroyer Snr" Jacobs

Vince McCoy

Patrick Edwards

James "Sly J" Simon

2025 Ricardo Drue Foundation Award
Ge'Eve Philip

Chairman's Awards

Enoch Thomas

Lifetime Achievement Award (Presented by Community First Cooperative Credit Union)

Mr. Roland Prince (posthumously)

Rupert "King Swallow" Philo (posthumously)

Junior Jagger Martin

Local News



Social Transformation Minister holds bilateral discussions with Chinese officials at CSW

Minister of Social and Urban Transformation, Rawdon Turner, is using the opportunity to attend the 70th session of the Commission on the Status of Women at the United Nations to explore opportunities to accelerate the advancement of women in Antigua and Barbuda.

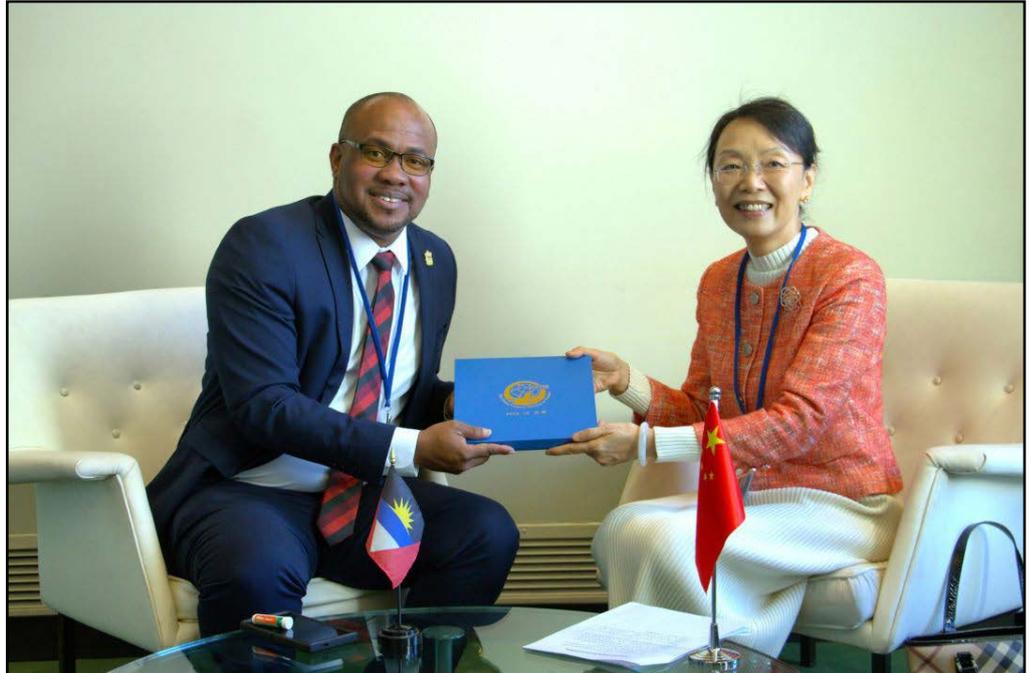
On the sidelines of the second day of the global policy forum dedicated to advancing gender equality and the empowerment of women, Minister Turner held bilateral discussions with a senior official in the Government of the People's Republic of China, Lin Yi, Vice President and Member of the Secretariat of the All-China Women's Federation.

Their talks explored various initiatives where women in Antigua and Barbuda would be able to benefit from expanded opportunities in areas such as capacity development, skills training, and entrepreneurship.

He further shared his Ministry's resolve to establish a gender-based Violence Shelter in Antigua and Barbuda, where survivors would be able to receive longer term shelter support from abusive situations. The shelter will also provide access to counselling and legal assistance and various other support and empowerment services, providing women with the necessary resources and guidance to rebuild their lives.

Voluntary organization, International Health Outreach (IHO), has been partnering with the Directorate of Gender Affairs to advance the project and Minister Turner is hoping to tap into the resources of partner governments to secure funding support.

Joining the Minister during the discussions were First Secretary in Antigua and Barbuda's Permanent Mission to the United Nations Glentis Thomas and Project Officer at the Directorate



Minister of Social and Urban Transformation, Rawdon and Republic of China, Lin Yi

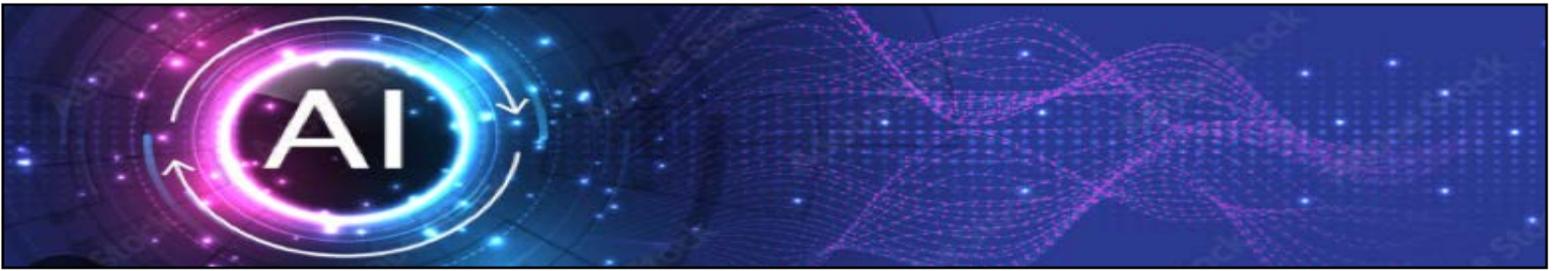


of Gender Affairs Ashlea Ambris.

Meantime, the delegation of Antigua and Barbuda also engaged in a formal bilateral meeting with officials from the gender section of the Commonwealth Secretariat, to discuss plans for the upcoming Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM), taking place in Antigua and Barbuda

in November.

The discussions centered specifically around the Women's Forum, which will take place on the margins of the CHOGM Meeting and will attract the attendance of heads of states, women parliamentarians, intra-national development agencies, and civil society representatives.



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This role requires experience with Kubernetes, workflow automation platforms, and API integrations, as well as the ability to work within secure or restricted environments.

Key Responsibilities

- Develop and implement AI strategies to align with business objectives and automation initiatives.
- Build and maintain AI-driven automation workflows that support operational processes.
- Develop and manage workflow automation using platforms such as n8n or similar tools.
- Integrate AI services and internal systems through secure APIs.
- Deploy and manage containerized services using Kubernetes and DevOps practices.
- Maintain system monitoring, documentation, and operational procedures.
- Ensure systems operate in accordance with security and governance standards.

Required Qualifications

- Bachelor's degree in Computer Science, Software Engineering, Artificial Intelligence, or a related field (or equivalent experience).
- Minimum 3 years' experience in DevOps, software engineering, or AI systems development.
- Hands-on experience with Kubernetes and containerized applications.
- Experience with workflow automation platforms (e.g., n8n, Zapier, Make, or similar).
- Experience integrating AI or LLM APIs into operational systems.
- Strong knowledge of API development, REST services, and system integrations.
- Experience with version control systems (Git) and CI/CD pipelines.

Preferred Skills

- Experience developing AI agents or intelligent automation workflows.
- Familiarity with vector databases and retrieval-augmented generation (RAG).
- Experience building secure systems handling sensitive data.
- Knowledge of data protection frameworks.

Key Competencies

- Strong analytical and problem-solving skills
- Attention to security and operational standards
- Ability to translate operational needs into automation solutions
- Effective documentation and communication skills
- Collaborative approach across technical and operational teams

Selection Process

Shortlisted candidates may be required to present a technical proof of concept demonstrating their ability to design and implement AI-driven automation solutions relevant to the role.

Application Process

Applications should be submitted to hrtalentmanagement268@gmail.com no later than 20th March 2026

Local News



Minister of Foreign Affairs Affairs Participates in the Twelfth UK-Caribbean Ministerial Forum



Minister of Foreign Affairs E.P. Chet Greene participated in the Twelfth UK-Caribbean Ministerial Forum held in London on 10th

March 2026.

The Forum brought together Foreign Ministers and senior represen-

tatives from Caribbean countries and the United Kingdom to assess progress in the UK-Caribbean partnership and to discuss areas of mutual interest, including climate change, security cooperation, economic development, and regional resilience.

During discussions, Minister Greene highlighted the Caribbean's ongoing commitment to strengthening cooperation with the United Kingdom to tackle shared global and regional issues. He specifically emphasised the need for increased trade and services between the two nations, as well as the significance of the Citizenship by Investment programme. The Foreign Minister also stressed the urgent necessity for greater international ambition on climate action and better access to climate finance for Small Island De-

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veloping States.

The Foreign Minister emphasised the importance of enhanced cooperation in disaster preparedness and resilience, noting that Caribbean states continue to face increasingly severe climate-related events. He called for stronger partnerships to support early warning systems, emergency response capacity, and long-term resilience building across the region.

Minister Greene further noted that Antigua and Barbuda looks forward to welcoming leaders from across the Commonwealth later this year and expressed appreciation for the continued support from partners, including the United Kingdom, as preparations for the event advance.

The UK-Caribbean Ministerial Forum offers a crucial platform for dialogue and collaboration to strengthen economic relations and partnerships between the Caribbean and the United Kingdom. It also promotes initiatives to foster sustainable development, security, and prosperity across the region.

Minister Greene was accompanied by High Commissioner Karen-Mae Hill, Minister Counsellor, Chantal Phillip and Second Secretary within the Antigua and Barbuda High Commission, Brent Scotland.



**REGGAE
IN THE
PARK**

15

SAVE THE DATE

TUE 21 APR

UWI and Nigerian Universities Bonding



A significant outcome of the retreat held between February 10-12, was a historic MoU that will serve as the foundation for targeted, educational and academic collaboration. Together, The UWI and the CVCNU aim to strengthen global rankings and visibility; advance research and innovation; develop sustainable financing models; deepen cultural ties; and expand capacity in digital learning, artificial intelligence, and cybersecurity.

Commenting on the potential for transforming Africa-Caribbean higher education collaboration, Vice-Chancellor Beckles said, “As we mark this important moment

Vice-Chancellors Forge Transformative Partnership for Africa-Caribbean Education

In the wake of the emerging CARICOM–African Union solidarity and commitment to deep economic and cultural collaboration, The University of the West Indies (The UWI) welcomed to its Regional Headquarters in Jamaica, a delegation of 23 newly appointed Vice-Chancellors from the Committee of Vice-Chancellors of Nigerian Universities (CVCNU). Over three days, The UWI Vice-Chancellor Professor Sir Hilary Beckles and his team of five Campus Principals, three Pro Vice-Chancellors and other executives engaged the academic leaders in wide-ranging discussions central to university management, including strategic planning, global partnerships, financial efficiency and accountability, programme quality, accreditation, and university rankings.

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with our Nigerian contemporaries, we draw on shared heritage and a common vision for the future. Together, however, we are also especially pleased with the potential of this framework to become an established model that can serve as a pattern for how we explore, share knowledge and solve problems that are common to the wider African continent and the diaspora.”

Professor Andrew Haruna, Secretary General of CVCNU—the recognised umbrella body for Vice-Chancellors of Nigeria’s federal, state, and private universities—also highlighted the importance of strengthening strategic cooperation in higher education between the two regions. Emphasising the significance of this milestone as the first MOU he has signed since assuming the role of Secretary General, he remarked, “We welcome this landmark partnership with The University of the West Indies as a strategic step toward building a structured and impactful Africa–Caribbean higher education alliance. This Memorandum of Understanding moves us beyond historic ties into practical collaboration in research, digital innovation, academic exchange, and sustainable development, while strengthening global visibility and institutional capacity on both sides. It reflects our shared commitment to inclusive growth, knowledge co-creation, and a model of cooperation that can inspire broader South–South engagement”.

At the Summit, senior leaders from The UWI and the 22-member delegation of Nigerian Vice-Chancellors committed to translating their dialogue into a mutually beneficial, formal agreement and actionable programmes. Under the emergent MoU, specific areas of



cooperation will include artificial intelligence education; digital policy development and implementation; sustainable development, climate, health and energy; cultural studies; education and teaching; agriculture and environment; and technology and scientific innovation.

Caribbean and Africa-based staff, students and researchers can expect to benefit from a full range of educational and academic activities, including joint research, academic programmes and publications;

faculty and student exchange programmes; scholarships and internships; and activities aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs).

The MOU, with operational oversight by co-Coordinators Ms Sandra Maynard, Pro Vice-Chancellor Global Affairs, The UWI and Dr Sylverina Olaghere, Assistant Secretary-General, Projects, Programmes and Training, CVCNU, is in force for an initial period of three years and is renewable thereafter by mutual agreement.

YWiL Wraps Up An 8-Week Mentorship Programme

The organisers of the Young Women in Leadership training programme are describing as ‘outstanding’ the developmental changes they have observed in the 45 participants over the course of its eight-week duration that now comes to an end.

One of the final lessons was a focus on philanthropy where in a powerful demonstration of collective giving and youth-led philanthropy, the International Women’s Day (IWD) Piggy Bank Initiative raised over EC\$1,200 in a single day in support of **Youth Arise**, a charity founded by 2026 Young Women in Leadership (YWiL) participant, Makiba Ward.

The initiative formed part of the Young Women in Leadership (YWiL) programme’s International Women’s Day activities, aligning with the 2026 IWD theme, “Give to Gain.” The YWiL participants were invited to hear presentations from three charities founded by young women, each dedicated to addressing important social issues and empowering communities, and voted to determine which organization would receive the proceeds of the IWD Piggy Bank collection. **Youth Arise** received more than 65% of the vote, reflecting strong support for the organization’s mission and impact.

The donation was formally presented by the Treasurer of CIWiL Antigua and Barbuda, Alecia Cherubin, while Desire Markham, Queen of Carnival 2024, graciously accepted the contri-



YWiL Closing Ceremony

bution on behalf of Youth Arise.

Senator Alincia Williams Grant, President of the Senate and Interim Chair of the Network of Women Parliamentarians Antigua and Barbuda (NWPAB), noted that the programme reflects the value of partnerships among CIWiL, ParlAmericas, and the Parliament of Antigua and Barbuda in strengthening leadership networks and building capacity for young women, particularly as the activities coincided with the observance of International Women’s

Day and Commonwealth Day. She further noted that “*the IWD Piggy Bank initiative highlighted the spirit of young women supporting and investing in one another’s ideas, reinforcing the belief that when women uplift each other, entire communities benefit.*”

The initiative also marked the culmination of the YWiL 2026 mentorship programme, an intensive eight-week leadership journey held from 21 January to 9 March, designed to equip young women with the knowledge,




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Desire Markham with Founder and President of Youth Arise Makeba Ward

confidence, and practical experience needed to participate in leadership and national development.

Throughout the programme, participants engaged in virtual training sessions on gender equality, feminist advocacy in Antigua and Barbuda, parliamentary processes, leadership development, and the review of cannabis legislation, complemented by in-person activities including a leadership workshop, a tour and practice session in Parliament, a gender-based violence awareness walk, an all-female parliamentary sitting, and a closing ceremony celebrating the achievements of the 2026 cohort.

The YWiL 2026 cohort also included three participants from Barbuda, in Speaker of the House, Starr George, Shaznie Beazer and Saniqua Jeffery.

Reflecting on the experience, YWiL participant Jeressa Jeremy shared, *“I am sincerely grateful to CIWiL and YWiL for this opportunity to develop my voice in general and in a parliamentary setting. This experience has reinforced my interest in the intersection of research and diplomacy, and I look forward to more opportunities to contribute to the development of our country.”*

Through initiatives such as these, the



Speaker of the House Starr George Barbuda with Interim Chair NWPAB Sen Hon Alincia Williams Grant

YWiL programme continues to nurture civic engagement, leadership de-



Desire Markham receiving YWiL donation on behalf of Youth Arise

velopment, and collaboration among the next generation of women leaders in 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.



Charity Henry Leaves for 'Elegant Mothers' Pageant In St Maarten



Former Labour Queen, Charity Henry, is leaving for St. Maarten today (Thursday) to represent Antigua and Barbuda in the BTA's 8th annual 'International Elegant Mothers' Pageant that takes place there on Sunday.

Henry, the mother of two girls, is one of six contestants who will vie for the crown in the pageant. They will compete in five categories; National Cultural Wear, Performing Talent, Evening Wear, Interview and Speech.

Brucilla Marsh of *Marsh and Marsh Productions* will be among two per-

sons who will accompany Henry to St. Maarten. The other is her mother, Shireen Gileon, who designed and created all the pieces which Henry will wear on stage for the pageant.

Marsh was also part of a team that conducted an intense training programme for Henry ahead of the pageant.

The pageant organizer who comes with many years of experience, said she believes that Henry will make Antigua and Barbuda proud because of her preparation.

The organisers, *Believe to Achieve* (BTA) say the pageant aims at 'Empowering, Uplifting and Recognising mothers both regionally and around the world', adding that it is dedicated to ensuring that this prestigious event continues to highlight culture, talent, and excellence on an international stage.

The other participants are representing Guyana, Jamaica, the Bahamas, St. Vincent and the Grenadines and host country, St. Martin/St Maarten.

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US National Pleads Guilty to Cannabis Possession



The US national who was found with 56 grams of cannabis in his possession when he arrived at the VC Bird International Airport last Saturday, pleaded guilty when he appeared in the magistrate's court on Wednesday to answer charges of possession and importation of cannabis.

34-year old Fady Aziz Saloum appeared before a magistrate and pleaded guilty to the charge of possession. The charge of importation was withdrawn by the prosecution.

The magistrate followed sentencing guidelines with a fine of \$1,000.00 that was imposed. This is to be paid within thirty days or he will face a 30-day prison sentence.

The magistrate took into account the presence of a Medical Card that indicated the cannabis was for medicinal purposes as it was prescribed to deal with anxiety and chronic back pain. The fact that the defendant cooperated with the police and the quantity of the cannabis involved also played a role in the magistrate's ruling.

He was however advised to research the relevant laws of destinations he wishes to travel to in the future to avoid similar encounters with the local law enforcement.

REGGAE IN THE PARK 15

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CLIMAXX SOUND AZERO DEGREES MARINE HEAVY LIGHTING English Harbour Antigua Rum Heineken

AT&LU Reports ‘Positive’ Outcome in Negotiations With APUA

The Antigua Trades and Labour Union is reporting that its meeting with Utilities Minister Melford Nicholas and senior management of APUA have ended on a positive note.

AT&LU President Bernard de Nully said the meeting on Wednesday went into the early evening with APUA moving on several of the union’s demands, although he declined to provide any details noting that he must first present the decisions reached to the staff of the company before an announcement is made.

“The monthly staff at APUA are demanding to be intimately involved in the negotiations and I have heard them loud and clear. This means that I must get their acceptance of the proposals before I make anything public,” de Nully revealed.

He announced that a meeting of the bargaining unit will be held on Friday afternoon at the Multi-Purpose Cultural Centre at Perry Bay when the union will hear directly from the workers.

The workers took to the streets on Monday in protest action over the slow pace of negotiations and a demand for a resolution of the longstanding



Utilities Minister Melford Nicholas and AT&LU President Bernard de Nully

problem where many workers are still awaiting their pension payments long after they have retired from APUA.

They have also been demanding a 10

percent increase in salaries.

de Nully credited Minister Nicholas for helping the two parties to reach a tentative agreement on Wednesday.

AFRICA UNITE

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POINTE FM 99.1
THURSDAYS 9PM - 11PM

In Focus: Shaquan O'Neil

Shaquan O'Neil: Paving the Way for the Next Generation of Leaders



When you look at someone like Shaquan O'Neil, you see a young leader whose journey is just beginning. From Antigua and Barbuda to the global stage, Shaquan's story isn't just about his own success; it's about creating a path for the next generation of leaders.

Shaquan's future is undeniably bright. As a member of the United Nations Youth Advisory Group, he's not only influencing global decisions, he's setting the stage for young leaders everywhere to follow. His focus is clear: empower the youth, unite the Caribbean, and create opportunities for those who will come after him.

What's most inspiring is that Shaquan isn't just about achieving his own goals; he's all about lifting others as he rises.

He's showing young people that leadership isn't about waiting for a seat at the table; it's about making room for others to join you. Shaquan is building a legacy of mentorship, making sure future leaders don't have to face the same challenges he did.

As he continues to rise, it's clear Shaquan is on the right path. He's not just paving the way for himself; he's paving the way for all of us. His journey proves that when young people unite, the future becomes unstoppable.

Shaquan O'Neil's story is just getting started. With each step, he's not just changing his own life he's changing the future for everyone who comes after him. We're all watching, learning, and preparing to rise with him.

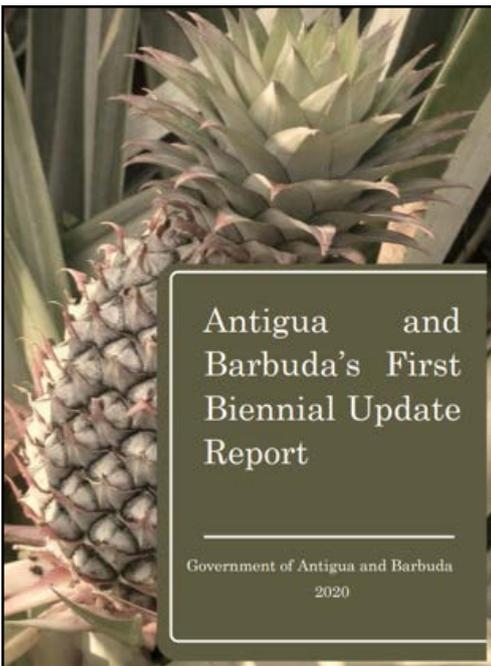


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RHYME AND RESOLVE: CLIMATE CALLS

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The Smoke We Cannot Ignore



When smoke begins rising above the hill,
 When the air grows heavy and the sky turns still,
 When the scent of burning drifts through town,
 We pause for a moment... then life slows down.
 But should it?
 Because the truth we sometimes fail to see
 Is that the landfill fire belongs to you and me.
 Not just the trucks that dump each day,
 Not just the workers who manage the waste away.
 This story did not start yesterday.
 Its roots stretch far, far away.
 Back to the 1990s and years before,

When burning waste was part of the chore.
 From 1993 into 1994 and beyond,
 The landfill fires quietly carried on.
 At Cook's Disposal Site the piles would grow,
 And sometimes flames would start below.
 Waste was burned from time to time,
 Seen then as practice of the time.
 Smoke would rise across the land,
 Polluting air across the sand.
 Neighbors watched the grey clouds climb,
 Yet records were scarce in those

early times.
 Some fires planned, some sparked unseen,
 From gases forming deep between.
 Food scraps rotted beneath the sun,
 Paper and cardboard slowly undone.
 As waste broke down without fresh air,
 A dangerous gas was forming there.
 Methane—silent, clear, and light—
 Invisible fuel for a hidden fight.
 Scientists warn that when heat grows strong,
 Methane can feed a fire for long.
 Years rolled forward, the island grew,

Tourists arrived and businesses too.
Hotels expanded along the shore,
Restaurants opened and welcomed
more.

But waste kept growing year by
year,

And by the early 2000s it became
clear

That the landfill faced a growing
strain,

As trucks kept arriving again and
again.

Between 2003 and 2006, studies
began,

To understand the waste manage-
ment plan.

Researchers noted a troubling
sight—

Methane buildup fueling fires
alight.

Recognizing change was long over-
due,

The nation began planning some-
thing new.

So in 2005 a major step was made,
A national authority came to aid.

The National Solid Waste Manage-
ment Authority took hold,

To manage the landfill and prob-
lems untold.

Systems improved and structure ap-
peared,

Yet landfill fires still returned year
after year.

On March 4th, 2022, flames broke
free,

At Cook's Sanitary Landfill by the
sea.

Firefighters battled the growing
blaze,

As heavy equipment carved soil-
filled ways.

Waste piles smoldered beneath the
ground,

As crews worked long to keep it
bound.

Even then another fire spread wide,
Scorching three acres of waste in-
side.

Tyres and metals burned that day,
Sending dark smoke drifting away.

Then came November 30th, 2023,
When another blaze ignited sudden-



ly.

Around 4:30 in the afternoon light,
Tyres caught flame and fueled the
fight.

Agencies gathered from near and
far,

To battle the blaze beneath the stars.
Still the lesson was hard to ignore—

The landfill was under pressure
once more.

Then June 9th, 2024, another alarm,
As flames again began to swarm.

Crews fought hard through heat and
rain,

As fires smoldered through waste
again.

Days passed before the flames
would fall,

Showing how stubborn landfill fires
can be for all.

But the night that many will re-
member well,

Was February 27th, 2026, when the

sirens fell.

Around 7 PM the blaze began,
A massive fire across the landfill
span.

Emergency crews worked through
the night,

Battling what some called the larg-
est fire in sight.

Smoke rose high above the land,
A warning few could misunder-
stand.

Yet the truth remains both stark and
clear—

The landfill did not fill itself here.
Hotels produce their mountains tall,

Bars and restaurants answer the
call.

Promoters host their nights of cheer,
Yet waste remains when crowds
disappear.

Shops unpack their shipments fast,
Leaving packaging piled at last.

Households toss their garbage tight,
Mixed together out of sight.

All of it travels the same long road,
Toward the landfill's growing load.

So the question Antigua must now
learn,

Is not simply why landfills burn.

But how many fires must we en-
dure,

Before our waste habits finally ma-
ture?

Because the smoke above the hill
today

Is simply the price we choose to
pay.

Until we sort what we throw away,
The landfill fires may always stay.

But if we change the path we
choose,

Reduce, recycle, and refuse—
Then one day perhaps the skies will
show

A cleaner wind where smoke once
flowed.

And the lesson written in ash and
flame

Will remind us all that we share the
blame.

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ZAMBAI AND FRIENDS

BLESS EYE

LUCIANO

THE STRAYS

THE CLIMAXX BAND

TUE **21** APR

EARLY BIRD

\$80

GENERAL

\$120

PAY MORE AT THE GATE

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)





**JULY 25
TO
AUG 04
2026**

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- | | |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
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| 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
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UWI and Nigerian universities collaborate: Vice-Chancellors build transformative partnership for Africa-Caribbean education

In 2026, as the partnership between CARICOM and the African Union continues to strengthen, The University of the West Indies (UWI) has positioned itself to play a key role in fostering new collaborations.

Recently, UWI's Regional Headquarters in Jamaica hosted a delegation of 23 newly appointed Vice-Chancellors from Nigeria's Committee of Vice-Chancellors of Nigerian Universities (CVCNU).

A UWI Five Islands media release shared that over the course of three days, UWI's Vice-Chancellor, Professor Sir Hilary Beckles, along with five Campus Principals, three Pro Vice-Chancellors, and other senior executives, engaged these academic leaders in a series of in-depth discussions. The topics ranged from strategic planning and global partnerships to financial efficiency, program quality, accreditation, and university rankings.

One of the most notable results from this gathering, held from February 10-12, was the signing of a historic Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). The UWI stated that this agreement aims to serve as a foundation for targeted collaboration across various educational and academic fields. The joint objectives include improving international rankings and visibility, advancing research and innovation, creating sustainable financial models,



strengthening cultural ties, and expanding digital learning—including areas like artificial intelligence and cybersecurity.

Vice-Chancellor Beckles expressed optimism about the potential impact of this partnership.

He remarked, “As we mark this important moment with our Nigerian contemporaries, we draw on shared heritage and a common vision for the future. Together, however, we are also especially pleased with the potential of this framework to become an established model that can serve as a pattern for how we explore, share knowledge and solve problems that are common to the wider African continent and the diaspora.”

Professor Andrew Haruna, Secretary General of CVCNU—the umbrella organization representing Nigerian university Vice-Chancellors—also highlighted the significance of this milestone. He noted that this MoU is the first he has signed since assuming

his role.

“We welcome this landmark partnership with The University of the West Indies as a strategic step toward building a structured and impactful Africa-Caribbean higher education alliance. This Memorandum of Understanding moves us beyond historic ties into practical collaboration in research, digital innovation, academic exchange, and sustainable

development, while strengthening global visibility and institutional capacity on both sides. It reflects our shared commitment to inclusive growth, knowledge co-creation, and a model of cooperation that can inspire broader South-South engagement”.

During the summit, senior leaders from UWI and the Nigerian delegation committed to turning their discussions into formal agreements and actionable programs. The scope of cooperation under the MoU covers a broad range of areas, including artifi-

cial intelligence education, digital policy development, climate change, health, energy, cultural studies, education, agriculture, and scientific innovation.

According to the release, both Caribbean and African staff, students, and researchers can look forward to a variety of collaborative activities. These include joint research projects, academic exchanges, faculty and student mobility programs, scholarships, internships, and initiatives aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs).

The MoU, managed operationally by co-coordinators Ms. Sandra Maynard, Pro Vice-Chancellor for Global Affairs at UWI, and Dr. Sylverina Olaghère, Assistant Secretary-General for Projects, Programmes, and Training at CVCNU, is initially valid for three years. It is designed to be renewable upon mutual agreement, ensuring ongoing collaboration between the two regions.

The university asserts that this partnership marks an exciting step forward in building stronger ties between Africa and the Caribbean, with education and research at its core.

As UWI's statement on the Five Islands emphasizes, it's about creating meaningful, sustainable connections that can benefit future generations across both regions. (Dominica News Online)

Gov't strengthening disaster risk financing



The Government is working to strengthen its suite of disaster risk financing instruments to safeguard against the uncertainties of natural disasters.

Accordingly, the Government intends to renew the Caribbean Catastrophe Risk Insurance Facility (CCRIF-SPC) policy in May 2026.

The administration will maintain savings in the National Natural Disaster Risk Financing (NNDRF), National Disaster Fund (NDF), and Contingencies Fund, while also seeking to renew contingent credit lines to strengthen its risk-retention capacity.

Additionally, the Government will continue to explore new instruments

to build structural resilience and mitigate potential damage from natural disasters.

Minister of Finance and the Public Service, Fayval Williams, made the disclosure as she opened the 2026/27 Budget Debate in the House of Representatives on Tuesday.

“Having these buffers against natural disasters is an important underpinning when international rating agencies assess Jamaica’s credit worthiness. Our current ratings stand at Moody’s (Ba3) with a ‘Stable’ outlook; Standard and Poor’s (S&P) at ‘BB’, also with a ‘Stable’ outlook, and Fitch at ‘BB’ – equally with a ‘Stable’ outlook,” Williams said.

“You will note that all the dates for the ratings are all after the Category Five Hurricane Melissa. This is unprecedented in Jamaica’s history, and the people of Jamaica are to be commended for the sacrifices they have made to have our international credit ratings so aligned,” she added.

The finance minister emphasised that the confidence of rating agencies and international partners in Jamaica’s creditworthiness benefits not only overseas investors but also Jamaicans at home.

“It means we have greater certainty about our economic affairs. Not every country in the world has the kind of certainty that we enjoy in Jamaica. We can wake up and know that if we have money in the bank, we can put our ATM (automated teller machine) cards in and pull out what we need without asking anybody anything,” she stated.

“We know we have the freedom of travel. We don’t have to line up if we need some foreign exchange to buy a personal item on a platform halfway around the world, and we have certainty that our children can go to school,” Williams added.

The Minister cautioned that life could become very difficult if Jamaica were to lose the faith and confidence of the global financial community.

“We have to guard these ratings and strive to make them better. These credit ratings are our oil... they are our gold,” Williams stated. (JIS News)

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Jamaica-Cuba medical partnership ends after nearly five decades amid reported contractual disagreements



The medical cooperation program between Jamaica and Cuba, which has spanned nearly five decades, has officially come to an end as of March 4, 2026.

After failing to reach a new memorandum of understanding (MOU) with Cuba, the Jamaican government announced the termination.

The breakdown appears to stem from disagreements over contractual and legal arrangements, with the Jamaican authorities citing the need to ensure compliance with national and international laws. The decision marks the conclusion of a long-standing health partnership that has significantly contributed to Jamaica's healthcare system over the years.

In response to the termination, Cuba issued a statement expressing deep regret over the move and reaffirmed its unwavering commitment to the Jamaican people.

The Cuban Foreign Ministry described the decision as unfortunate and attributed it to external pressures, specifically pointing to influence from the United States.

Though it confirmed the decision on

the part of Cuba to allow the return of its medical teams from Jamaica, Cuba's foreign ministry's statement emphasized that the termination was a unilateral action by the Jamaican government, noting, "Cuba regrets the decision of the Government of Jamaica to cease medical cooperation, yielding to pressure from the United States. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Cuba reports that, on March 4, the foreign ministry of Jamaica communicated to our embassy in that country, the unilateral decision of its Government to terminate the health cooperation agreement that has linked both nations for decades."

Jamaica's government clarified its position through a detailed statement from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade. In the statement, the Jamaican authorities acknowledged the vital role played by Cuban nurses, doctors, and technicians, who have worked with dedication and compassion.

However, they also claim that concerns about legal compliance and workers' rights prompted the review of the arrangement.

The response explained that, during the review, the Jamaican government discovered issues related to the handling of salaries and passports of Cuban personnel. Specifically, the salaries, although equal to Jamaican counterparts, were paid to the Cuban authorities in U.S. dollars rather than directly to the workers, raising legal and labor concerns under Jamaican law.

Additionally, it was found that the Cuban medical staff did not possess their own passports, which was promptly addressed once identified.

Following this discovery, the statement asserts that Jamaica sought to rectify the issues through respectful dialogue and diplomatic channels.

Beginning in July of last year, the Jamaican government engaged in formal discussions with Cuban authorities to restructure the agreement, aiming to align it with Jamaican legal standards and international conventions.

These efforts included proposals for direct salary payments to workers and ensuring that personnel could hold their own passports—measures that Jamaican authorities discovered other Caribbean nations with similar arrangements had implemented successfully.

Despite these ongoing efforts, Jamaica reported that it received no substantive response from Cuba to these proposals, neither verbally nor in writing.

"Following Cabinet discussions, a formal proposal was made in October, and this was followed up by a further formal communication in December. These efforts were reinforced by direct enquiries to both former and current Cuban Ambassadors, as well as informal engagements at the Ministerial level," read the statement.

"Unfortunately, the continued lack of response had the practical effect of preserving an arrangement that Jamai-

ca could not justify,” it continued.

In explaining the decision, the statement specified that “no programme operating in Jamaica can continue on terms that are inconsistent with Jamaican law and international conventions.”

On the part of the Cuban leadership, the decades-long collaboration was “disregarded” as a result of external pressures.

Namely, they argue that the U.S. is behind the move, which could arguably have a wide-reaching impact on the Jamaican health care system

The U.S., stated the Cuban authorities, “is not concerned about the health needs of the Caribbean brothers”.

The Jamaica Gleaner reports that according to the Cuban Ministry, “over the past 49 years, more than 8,176,000 patients have been treated; 74,302 surgical procedures performed; 7,170 births attended to and more than 90,000 lives saved.”

Additionally, since 2010, the eyesight of nearly 25,000 Jamaican nationals has been improved or restored under the umbrella of Cuba’s Operation Miracle programme.

However, this statement released by Dr. Andrew Holness’ administration seems to counter the notion that Cuba received the axe unduly as a result of outside influence, insisting, “For absolute clarity, the Government of Jamaica proposed continuation of the programme with adjustments.”

Full statement by the Jamaican government below:

Jamaica has always valued the contribution of the Cuban medical professionals who have served our people with dedication, skill and compassion. Cuban nurses, doctors and technicians from the neighbouring island are treated by the Government of Jamaica with respect, care and appreciation.

It is widely known that the United States Government has publicly raised concerns about the operation of the

medical programme globally, including a denial of access to travel documents, restricted freedom of movement and salary payment matters. The Government considered it necessary to review the existing arrangements to ensure compliance with domestic and international legal obligations. Other countries in the region have done the same.

Following the review, it was confirmed that there were no issues with treatment on the job, accommodation, leave entitlements or freedom of movement in Jamaica. It however revealed two issues which required immediate attention.

Among the concerns identified was the fact that Cuban personnel were not in possession of their own passports. Once that was brought to the Government’s attention, immediate steps were taken to correct it. The issue was raised with Passport, Immigration and Citizenship Agency as well as the Cuban authorities locally to ensure that all personnel were allowed to hold their passports.

More fundamentally, the Government also discovered that salary payments for Cuban medical personnel, while calculated at the same level as their Jamaican counterparts, were being made by Jamaica to the Cuban authorities in US dollars. The only payments made directly by the Government of Jamaica to the personnel themselves, were overtime payments. Even more concerning, there was no contractual provision specifying what share of those salary payments was to be paid to the workers. That arrangement raised serious concerns under Jamaican labour and tax laws as well as under international labour conventions.

The Government chose the path of respectful engagement and quiet diplomacy.

Beginning in July of last year, Jamaica commenced formal discussions with the Cuban authorities aimed at restructuring the arrangement to ensure compliance with Jamaican law and international conventions, which require

that workers be paid directly and have control of their travel documents.

Following Cabinet discussions, a formal proposal was made in October, and this was followed up by a further formal communication in December. These efforts were reinforced by direct enquiries to both former and current Cuban Ambassadors, as well as informal engagements at the Ministerial level.

For absolute clarity, the Government of Jamaica proposed continuation of the programme with adjustments. It remains disappointed that despite these repeated efforts, no substantive response was ever received whether verbally or in writing from Cuba.

At the same time, Jamaica became aware that other Caribbean countries had arrangements under which Cuban medical personnel were paid directly. That made it even clearer that a lawful and transparent alternative was possible.

Unfortunately, the continued lack of response had the practical effect of preserving an arrangement that Jamaica could not justify. Given our legal obligation, our duty to ensure fairness to workers in Jamaica and the need for compliance with our own laws and international conventions, the Government ultimately concluded that continuation on the existing terms was untenable.

Jamaica’s position is therefore clear we value the contribution of Cuban medical personnel we respect the Cuban people, and we remain committed to cooperation. However, no programme operating in Jamaica can continue on terms that are inconsistent with Jamaican law and international conventions.

The Government of Jamaica is disappointed that the Cuban government has chosen to withdraw their medical personnel when all that is required is for them to agree to terms which they have already accepted with other Caribbean countries. (Dominica News Online)

EU and UK demand Israel stop surge in West Bank settler violence since Iran war

The European Union and United Kingdom have demanded that Israel halt a surge in violence by Jewish settlers against Palestinians in the Israeli-occupied West Bank that has taken place since the start of the country's war with Iran.

Six Palestinians have been killed during attacks by settlers across the West Bank over the past 11 days, according to the United Nations.

The UK said it was appalled by the killings, while the EU said the level of settler violence was unacceptable. Both urged Israeli authorities take action to ensure accountability and prevent further attacks.

The Israeli military condemned the violence and said it was working to bring those responsible to justice.

Israel has built about 160 settlements housing 700,000 Jews since it occupied the West Bank and East Jerusalem - land Palestinians want, along with Gaza, for a hoped-for future state - during the 1967 Middle East war. An estimated 3.3 million Palestinians live alongside them.

The settlements are illegal under international law.

On Sunday, three Palestinians were killed during a settler attack on the Palestinian village of Khirbet Abu Falah, north-east of Ramallah.

Witnesses told the Reuters news agency that dozens of settlers raided the village before dawn that day. When residents confronted them, including by throwing stones, armed settlers arrived and opened fire, they said.



The Palestinian health ministry said two residents - Thaer Hamayel, 24, and his cousin, Farea Hamayel, 57 - were both shot in the head and killed.

A third resident, Mohammed Murra, 55, suffered a cardiac arrest and died in hospital after inhaling tear gas that was fired by Israeli security forces, according to medics.

The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) said security forces were dispatched to the area following a report of Palestinians being attacked by Israeli civilians near their homes, and that they acted to disperse those involved. It added that a criminal investigation had been opened.

On Saturday, Amir Shanaran, a 28-year-old man, was shot dead by settlers and his brother, Khaled, 34, was seriously wounded on their land in Wadi al-Rakhim, near Susya in the South Hebron Hills, according to the Palestinian health ministry.

The head of the nearby Tuwani village council told AFP news agency that settlers entered Palestinian homes in the area and attacked the Shanaran family.

The IDF said soldiers and

police were dispatched to the scene after reports of a violent confrontation between Israelis and Palestinians. Initial information indicated that a reserve soldier opened fire, it added, without identifying him as a settler.

The previous Monday, settlers shot and killed two brothers - Mohammed Azem, 51, and Fahim Azem, 47 - during an attack on the village of Qaryut, which is located between Ramallah and Nablus, according to the Israeli human rights group B'Tselem.

Another Israeli rights group, Yesh Din, said 109 separate incidents of settler violence, included shootings, physical assaults, property damage, and threats, had been reported in 62 Palestinian communities during the first 10 days of the war with Iran.

"These criminal and deadly attacks are carried out with the backing of the state and almost complete impunity, advancing Israel's objective of forcibly displacing Palestinians and annexing the West Bank," Yesh Din warned.

The Palestinian Authority's Vice-President, Hussein al-Sheikh, said on Sunday that

the attacks constituted "a major escalation of settler terrorism" and called on the international community to take "serious punitive measures" against the perpetrators.

The commander of the IDF's Central Command, which is responsible for the West Bank, insisted it saw the incidents "with the utmost severity".

"There will be zero tolerance for civilians who take the law into their own hands," Maj Gen Avi Bluth said. "We are working together with all security agencies to quickly reach those responsible and bring them to justice."

He added: "Especially at a time when the IDF is striking our bitter enemies, Iran and Hezbollah, with a firm hand - we cannot allow reckless internal violence to undermine the rule of law and the security of the region."

The British consulate-general in Jerusalem said in a statement that the UK urged the IDF to match its statements with "swift, thorough investigations and accountability for those responsible". "Settler violence which terrorises communities must be stopped," it added.

The EU's spokesperson, meanwhile, warned that "impunity for such acts risks provoking further violence", and urged the Israeli government to "abide by its obligations under international law to protect the Palestinian population in the occupied territory". (BBC)

Germany to release part of oil reserve amid Mideast war



Germany will release part of its oil reserve as global energy costs soar as a result of the Middle East war, Economy and Energy Minister Katherina Reiche said Wednesday.

This should help bring down the global oil price, Reiche said, noting that fellow members of the International Energy Agency (IEA) were also struggling with rising prices.

“The International Energy Agency therefore asked its member states yesterday evening to release oil reserves amounting to 400 million barrels,” Reiche said.

“We will comply with this request and make our contribution,” she told a Berlin press conference.

Asked exactly which sorts of oil products would be released, Reiche could not say but said a total of 2.4 million tons would come out of the reserves.

Germany’s current total reserves amount to about 19.5 million tons, economy ministry spokeswoman Susanne Ungrad said at a later regular

press briefing.

Petrol stations in Germany would meanwhile be obliged to limit their price rises for petrol and diesel to one per day, Reiche said.

Past energy crises had shown that costs at the pump tended to rise rapidly with the oil price, but fall more slowly.

“We have therefore decided to limit the frequency of price changes,” Reiche said. “Petrol stations are only allowed to increase their fuel prices once a day. But price reductions are allowed at any time.”

The IEA requires its members to maintain oil reserves at all times that correspond to at least 90 days of their net imports.

Germany has so far tapped its strategic oil reserve three times, once during the Gulf War of 1990-1, after Hurricane Katrina hit United States (US) oil rigs in 2005 and then again in 2011 when the war in Libya disrupted oil exports.

While Germany’s gas supply was secure thanks to Norwegian and US supplies, Reiche said, “the situation regarding oil supplies is tense” worldwide and impacting especially large Asian economies.

“The markets are clearly reacting with extreme sensitivity at present because no one knows how long the Strait of Hormuz will remain impassable, how long the war in the region will continue, or whether facilities will be hit,” she said.

Oil prices surged more than five per cent in early trading Wednesday and markets have see-sawed since the end of last month, when the United States and Israel attacked Iran, killed its supreme leader and plunged the Middle East into war.

Iran has vowed to close the Hormuz Strait, a vital sea lane, to shipping of countries it considers allied with the United States and Israel. The strait normally carries about 20 per cent of the world’s oil and gas supplies. (AFP)

Floods and landslides kill 30 in southern Ethiopia



At least 30 people have been killed in floods and landslides triggered by heavy rainfall in the Gamo Zone of southern Ethiopia, local officials have said.

Authorities reported that most people had died in highland areas, where saturated slopes gave way after days of intense rain. Officials have urged residents in vulnerable areas to take precautions.

Torrential rains have unleashed widespread flooding across East Africa in recent days. Dozens have also died in neighbouring Kenya.

Forecasters say storms are becoming more intense in the region, partly due to climate change.

The Southern Ethiopia regional state governor offered his condolences to the affected families. “On behalf of myself and the regional government, I express my deep sorrow over the loss of 30 lives due to landslides and floods in the highlands of Gamo Zone caused by heavy rains,” Tilahun Kebede said in a statement on Facebook late on Tuesday.

Officials said the disaster followed sustained rainfall in surrounding districts.

The town of Arba Minch and neigh-

bouring areas have experienced continuous downpours for two days, causing widespread damage to homes, infrastructure and farmland.

Authorities have warned that further flooding and landslides remain possible.

Mudslides have blocked key roads and several bridges have been flooded, prompting calls for the public to remain vigilant. Emergency teams are monitoring the situation.

Over the past two decades, numerous studies have documented a rise in both extreme wet spells and prolonged dry periods across East Africa.

Scientists have repeatedly cautioned that human driven climate change is making severe weather events - such as intense, long-lasting downpours - more frequent and more severe.

More than 229 people, including rescuers, were killed by a landslide in the neighbouring Geze Gofa Zone in July 2024. (BBC)

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Woman charged with attempted murder after shooting at Rihanna's home

A 35-year-old woman from Orlando, Florida has been charged with attempted murder following a shooting at the home of pop superstar Rihanna, prosecutors said.

Ivanna Lisette Ortiz is accused of firing a semiautomatic rifle at the singer's Los Angeles mansion at 13:15 local time (21:15 GMT) on Sunday.

No one was injured in the shooting. Ortiz is being held on bail set at \$1.875m (£1.395m), facing a possible life sentence.

Police are investigating the motive for the attack that took place while Rihanna and her rapper partner A\$AP Rocky were at the home, the BBC's US news partner CBS reports.

Ortiz has been accused of driving up to the front of the house and firing the weapon multiple times at it, before fleeing.

Her white Tesla was located about eight miles (12km) from the singer's home at the Sherman Oaks Galleria shopping centre, where the woman was taken into custody.

"Opening fire in any populated neighbourhood is extremely dangerous, puts lives at risk and will be fully prosecuted," Los Angeles County District Attorney Nathan J. Hochman said.



Prosecutors noted that there were people in Rihanna's home as well as the property adjacent to it at the time of the shooting.

"This careless violence will not be tolerated in our community. Such shooters will find their next destination to be our jails and prisons," Hochman added.

Ortiz faces multiple other charges including ten felony counts of assault with a semiautomatic firearm and three felony counts of shooting at an inhabited dwelling or camper.

According to CBS, the LAPD has found a series of posts on her social media mentioning Rihanna.

In one post on X, Ortiz wrote: "Are you there? ... say something to me directly instead of sneaking around like you talking to me where I'm not at."

Video from the singer's address shows suitcases being wheeled away on the day after the shooting.

The Barbados-born celebrity, whose full name is Robyn Rihanna Fenty, rose to prominence in the 2000s with hits like Pon de Replay and Umbrella.

She shares three children with partner A\$AP Rocky, who last February was found not guilty of firing a gun at a former friend, in a trial that saw Rihanna bring her two sons to court. (BBC)



Sports News



OCS among winners in school basketball league



Coach Oslyn 'Pigeon' Gregory speaks to the players of the Ottos Comprehensive School during a timeout in a previous encounter in the Mini Boys' Secondary Division in the Cool and Smooth Inter-School Basketball League at the JSC Sports Complex on Tuesday, January 20, 2026. (File photo)

The Ottos Comprehensive School (OCS) was among the winners in the latest round of matches in the Cool and Smooth Inter-School Basketball League at the JSC Sports Complex on Tuesday.

The Ottos Comprehensive School continued their successful campaign in the Mini Boys Secondary Division by coasting to a 32-15 victory against St. Joseph's Academy.

Levi Richards shot a game-high 20 points for Ottos Comprehensive School, while Jude Bailey scored seven points for St. Joseph's Academy.

There was success as well for Greenbay Primary School and Clare Hall Secondary School. Greenbay

Primary romped to a commanding 24-6 victory over Mary E. Pigott Primary in the Mini Boys Primary Division.

Daniel Perez sank eight points, and Josue Rose converted six points for Greenbay Primary, while Ezekiel George scored four points for Mary E. Pigott Primary.

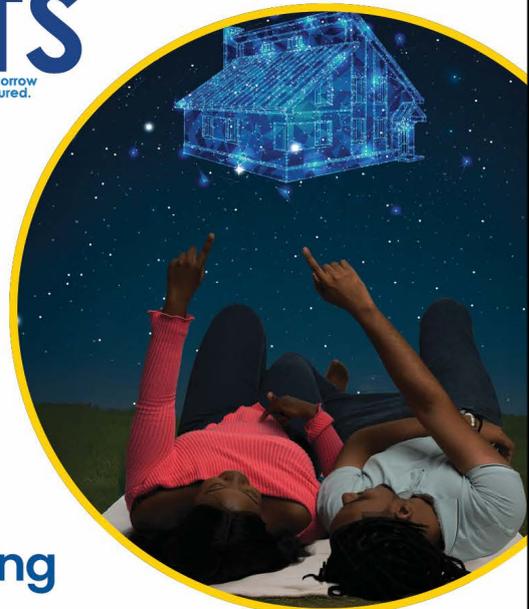
Clare Hall Secondary School snatched a narrow 58-56 victory over Antigua Grammar School in the Senior Boys Division.

Tajahron Davis shot a game-high 39 points, and Jahaziel Santana sank 10 points for Clare Hall Secondary School. Raheem Sawyer converted 16 points, and Joshua Joseph scored 10 points for Antigua Grammar School.



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Gunners extend unbeaten run in Division 2 basketball league



The Old Road Daggers and Navigators 2 recorded wins in the Antigua and Barbuda Basketball Association's (ABBA) Second Division League on Tuesday evening.

The Old Road Daggers shot their way to their sixth win in eight matches by snatching a narrow 69-66 victory over Michael Joseph Phoenix in the second game of a double-header at the JSC Sports Complex.

Devea Aaron produced 20 points, 13 rebounds, and five steals; Wester Batista Perez sank 14 points and claimed seven rebounds; and Rafiki Harris chipped in with 11 points, six assists, six steals, and five rebounds for the Old Road Daggers.

Adrian Carnegie shot a game-high 24 points and grabbed 10 rebounds; Garry Harrison sank 21 points and snapped up 19 rebounds; and Shalom Bloodman chipped in with 11 points, 12 rebounds, and seven steals for the

Phoenix, who lost for the sixth time in 10 games.

The Navigators 2 notched up their second win in seven matches by pulling off a 55-48 victory over the EZ Fit Flyers 2 in the opening game of Tuesday's double-header.

Raheem Sawyer shot a game-high 27 points; Henry Dorsette sank 14 points and claimed six rebounds; and Tristan Thibou grabbed 17 rebounds and scored four points for Navigators 2.

Gabrielle DeSuza sank 15 points, Tyrese White converted 10 points, and Royal Samuel produced eight points, 22 rebounds, and five steals for EZ Fit Flyers 2, who suffered their seventh loss in eight games.



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Sports News



MINISTRY OF SPORTS

Schools Netball Competition

Result of matches in Inter-Schools' Netball League

The Ministry of Sports Inter-Schools' Netball League continued with matches in the 13 and under primary division at the YMCA Sports Complex on Tuesday.

Buckleys Primary School romped to a 7-1 victory over TN Kirnon Primary School. Goal shooter Kayle Boothe sank seven of her 12 attempts for Buckleys Primary School.

Goal shooter Kayle Boothe sank four of her five attempts to lead Buckleys Primary to a 4-0 victory against Nelvie N. Gore (Willikies) Primary School.

JT. Ambrose Primary prevailed 4-2 against Nelvie N. Gore Primary School. Goal shooter Beau Edwards converted all of her four attempts for JT. Ambrose Primary, while goal shooter Kenecia Cummings scored two of her five shots for Nelvie N. Gore Primary School.

But Nelvie N. Gore hit back to record wins against Liberta and Golden Grove primary schools. Nelvie N. Gore Primary snatched a 7-6 victory over Liberta Primary.

Goal attack Amaya Nicholas convert-

ed all of her six attempts for Nelvie N. Gore Primary. Goal attack Germia Isidore sank four of her five shots, and goal shooter Sallayanna Ferris scored two of her three shots for Liberta Primary School.

Nelvie N. Gore Primary also claimed a 2-0 victory against Golden Grove Primary School.

Goal shooter Gabrielle Charles scored two of her three attempts to lead Freemans Village Primary to a 3-0 victory over Old Road Primary School.

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Iran cannot participate in World Cup, minister says

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — Iran's sports and youth minister said it's "not possible" for the country to take part in the World Cup after the United States killed its supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, in its ongoing war.

The attacks killed the Islamic Republic's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei and triggered a region-wide conflict. Iran was expected to take part in the World Cup that will be held across North America in June, but Iranian Sports and Youth Minister Ahmad Donyamali told state television that his country's soccer team players are not safe in the USA, according to a video of the interview posted Tuesday.

"Due to the wicked acts they have done against Iran — they have imposed two wars on us over just eight or nine months and have killed and martyred thousands of our people — definitely it's not possible for us to take part in the World Cup," he said.

The 48-team World Cup will be held in the U.S., Mexico and Canada from June 11 to July 19.

"Our children are not safe and, fundamentally, such conditions for participation do not exist," Donyamali said.

"Given the malicious actions they have carried out against Iran, they have forced two wars on us over eight or nine months and have killed and martyred thousands of our people. Therefore, we certainly cannot have such a presence."

More than 1,300 Iranian civilians have been killed since the USA and Israeli airstrikes began on February 28, according to Iran's UN ambas-



Iranian players stand silent as their national anthem is played before a match with England.

sador Amir Saeid Iravani.

Iran are grouped with Belgium, Egypt and New Zealand. All three of their Group G matches are scheduled to take place in the USA, two in Los Angeles and one in Seattle.

Iran is scheduled to play in Inglewood, California, against New Zealand on June 15 and Belgium on June 21 before finishing group play against Egypt in Seattle on June 26.

Iran, who dominated the Asian qualifying rounds to qualify for the tournament in March last year, was the only nation missing from a FIFA planning summit for World Cup participants held last week in Atlanta.

There was no immediate comment from the Iranian Football Federation or world soccer's governing body FIFA.

FIFA regulations state that any team that withdraws from the tournament "no later than 30 days before the first match" will be fined at least 250,000 Swiss francs

(\$320,800).

Iran had selected Tucson's sprawling Kino Sports Complex as the team's base camp and 18 months of preparation hang in the balance with a potential economic hit in Arizona.

There is also the question of tickets to World Cup games involving Iran. Should Iran boycott the tournament, Iranian fans who bought tickets for eye-watering prices may be tempted to sell them on the huge resale market.

FIFA said Tuesday night that it anticipates Iran's national team will be allowed to come to the United States. Last week, US President Donald Trump said, "I really don't care" if Iran takes part in the 48-nation tournament.

FIFA President Gianni Infantino said he met with Trump on Tuesday night "to discuss the status of preparations" for the tournament and received assurances that Iran would be permitted to come to the USA.

Attacking Saints crush Jennings United in Premier Division

The Attacking Saints consolidated their ninth-place position in the Antigua and Barbuda Football Association's (ABFA) Premier Division League with a commanding win in their latest match on Tuesday.

The Attacking Saints claimed their sixth win in 16 matches with a 4-1 drubbing of Jennings United at the ABFA Technical Center.

All the goals came in the second half, in which Rick Gordon broke the deadlock by converting a penalty kick in the 49th minute to put the Attacking Saints ahead.

Two quick goals by Carl Osbourne in the 63rd minute and Obafami Poyette in the 67th minute propelled the Attacking Saints to a three-nil lead.

Shemar Walters scored a consolation goal for Jennings United in the second minute of added time before Poyette scored for the second time of the match with a strike in the fifth minute of added time to seal victory for the Attacking Saints.

The result allows the Attacking Saints to remain in ninth place on goal difference with 19 points. The Jennings United remains second from the bottom of the 12-team standings with six points after crashing to their 14th defeat in 16 matches.

Meanwhile, leaders Five Islands dropped crucial points in a one-nil defeat to the Swetes Vipers FC in the ABFA's First Division League on Tuesday.

Kimoi Alexander scored the only goal of the match to give the Swetes Vipers FC their victory. The result allows Five Islands FC to remain at the top of the First Division with 35 points after suffering their third defeat in 18



Players of the Attacking Saints starting XI

matches.

The Swetes Vipers FC jumped from sixth to third place by advancing to 29 points after securing their eighth win in 17 matches.

Golden Grove FC and Willikies FC also recorded wins in their latest matches in the First Division League on Tuesday.

Golden Grove notched up their eighth win in 17 matches with a 3-1 victory against the Cedar Grove Blue Jays at Golden Grove.

Darryl Samuel scored in the 25th minute and teammate Alex Ashton had a 36th-minute conversion to give Golden Grove FC a two-nil lead at halftime.

Kareem Martin scored for the Cedar Grove Blue Jays with a strike in the 73rd minute, and Adonijah Dyett wrapped up victory for Golden Grove FC by converting a penalty kick in the 83rd minute.

The result allows Golden Grove FC to jump from eighth to seventh place

with 27 points. The Cedar Grove Blue Jays remain second from the bottom of the 14-team standings with 11 points after slumping to their 12th defeat in 17 matches.

Willikies FC claimed their seventh win in 17 matches by also pulling off a 3-1 victory over FC Master Ballers at Willikies.

Teejay Roberts produced a conversion in the 20th minute to give FC Master Ballers the lead, but his teammate Jaydean Brown scored an own goal in the 27th minute to equalize for Willikies as both teams finished the first half deadlocked at 1-1.

Willikies FC secured victory by scoring twice in the second half via goals by Dejzmatch Christian in the 63rd minutes and Khadeel Greene in the 71st minute.

The result allows Willikies FC to stay in ninth place by advancing to 23 points, while FC Master Ballers remain in the cellar with nine points after losing for the 12th time in 17 matches.