

General Elections Are Within 90-Days

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The 2026 Labour Queen contestants and the representatives of the constituencies that they will represent in the pageant

General Elections Are Within 90-Days

It is the clearest signal yet of early general elections as Prime Minister Gaston Browne indicated that general elections are slated to take place ‘within 90 days’.

The prime minister made the announcement even after he had urged his Antigua and Barbuda Labour Party to get the party machinery in place for general elections and he called on all seventeen candidates to ‘hit the ground running’ as they intensify the campaign expected within the first half of May.

The ABLP has already settled on its theme for the campaign ‘*Renaissance*’ which seeks to build on the *Next Level* achievements of the past three plus years following the 2023 general elections.

PM Browne wants the ABLP candidates to concentrate on encouraging constituents to update their voter ID Cards as many thousands of individuals are yet to complete that process.

During this week, the ministers of government are expected to be absent from their ministerial posts as they ramp up preparations at the constituency level.

The ABLP is running on its record of achievements since it took office back in 2014 when it met the national economy tinkering on the edge of collapse with high public sector debt, bank failures and an IMF loan in arrears.

Since then the government has engineered a remarkable turnaround with economic growth averaging around 5 percent annually, stability has returned to the banking sector and many nationals have benefitted from ongoing improvements in the housing stock.

The prime minister also announced that a number of major foreign direct investment projects, mainly in tourism, are soon to be completed or will start in the coming months.

PM Browne said the future prospects for Antigua and Barbuda are quite



good under the steady and capable leadership of his ABLP Administration.

Two challenges that the government continues to tackle are the water issue and the road rehabilitation. He said the production of water has been resolved but aging distribution pipes are causing the problem with the re-piping exercise well on the way. With regards

to the roads, work will commence this week on the All Saints Road starting from Townhouse going southeastward.

Discussions are underway with a Canadian firm to undertake the work, but the company needs approximately two months to mobilise. In the interim, the Cabinet has asked the Ministry of Works to commence the roadworks immediately.

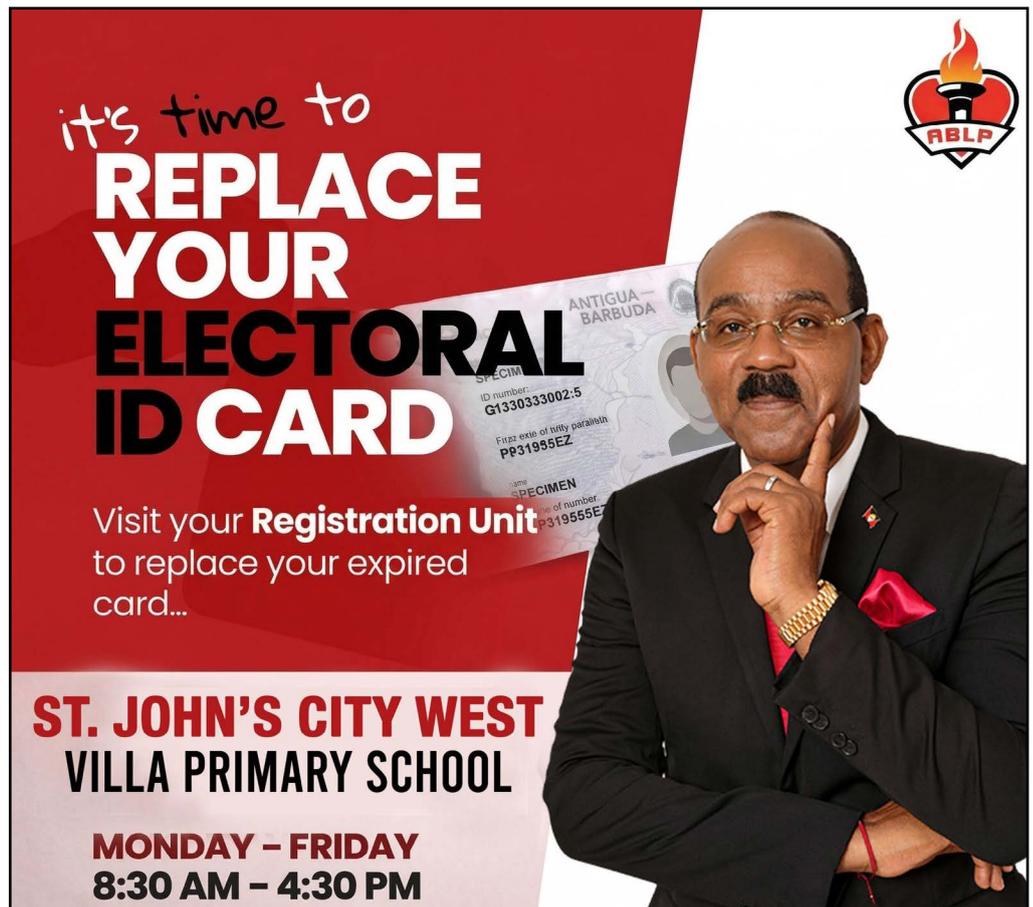
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April 12 Is Convention Day For the ABLP

With general elections expected within a few weeks, the ruling Antigua and Barbuda Labour Party is ‘crankin’ up’ its elections machinery, ‘Big Red Machine’ in anticipation of the announcement.

First up, the party has announced that it will convene a national convention on April 12, this year, when it will ratify the slate of candidates who will contest the general elections whenever they are called.

The convention will also ratify the leadership of the party ahead of the convention.

The ABLP convened a special meeting of its senior executive at its headquarters, People’s Place, on Friday night when the both the slate of 17 candidates for the general elections and the nominees for the top leadership positions in the party were endorsed.

Two candidates were introduced to the special executive meeting to be endorsed and to be forwarded to the convention for ratification.

The ABLP 2026 candidates	
Gaston Browne	St John’s City West
Sir Steadroy Benjamin	St. John’s City South
E.P Chet Greene	St. Paul
Charles Max Fernandez	St. John’s Rural North
Melford Nicholas	St. John’s City East
Daryll Matthew	St. John’s Rural South
Maria Browne	St. John’s Rural East
Rawdon Turner	St Peter
Anthony Smith Jnr.	All Saints West
Randy Baltimore	St. Philip North
Michael Joseph	St. John’s Rural West
Michael Freeland	St. George
Kiz Johnson	St. Philip South
Lamin Newton	All Saints East and St. Luke
Dwayne George	St. Mary’s South
Philmore Benjamin	St Mary’s North
Kendra Beazer	Barbuda

They are physician, Dr. Philmore Benjamin, who will contest the St Mary’s North constituency in place of Sir Molwyn Joseph, who indicated to the party leadership that he does not intend to contest the upcoming elections, something he suggested during the 2023 election campaign.

The second candidate is 33-year old Kendra Chamberlain Beazer, who will be the party’s candidate for Barbuda. Both were enthusiastically endorsed by the party’s executive on Friday night and are awaiting the final ratification by the convention next month.

Meanwhile, the ABLP has

a mixture of experience and youth in the nominees for the senior leadership positions.

Prime Minister Gaston Browne, has been nominated unopposed as Political Leader, Foreign Minister, E.P Chet Greene is also unopposed as Chairman, Samantha Marshall is unopposed as first Vice Chairman, Clement Antonio is unopposed as Second Vice Chairman with Donna Chaia being nominated as a first-timer to the position of Third Vice Chairman. Abena St. Luce is the nominee for the position of Treasurer, a position her father, Sir John St. Luce held for many years previously. Mary Edwards will retain her position as the party’s Supervisor of Elections.

Long-standing ABLP General Secretary Senator Mary Clare Hurst is stepping aside and Senator Shenella Govia has been nominated to replace her as General Secretary. Senator Hurst will assume the ceremonial title of General Secretary Emeritus.



The End Of An Era: Sir Molwyn Bids Farewell To Elective Politics

After a political career spanning more than forty years, Health Minister and Member of Parliament for St. Mary's North, Sir Molwyn Joseph, has signaled that he will bring his career in elective politics to an end whenever Prime Minister Gaston Browne calls general elections, expected within a matter of weeks.

The announcement was made at a special meeting of the senior executive of the Antigua and Barbuda Labour Party at its headquarters on Friday night. Sir Molwyn received a standing ovation and thunderous applause from the large turnout of party faithfuls who showed their appreciation for a man who always exuded confidence and who showed grit and determination even at times when the party endured challenging times.

Sir Molwyn made it clear that the decision not to contest the upcoming elections was his and that he was not coerced or pushed by the leadership of the party or government. He recalled that he had made a commitment to the constituents that the 2023 general elections would have been his last, and while recent polls showed that he was ahead of the other would-be ABLP candidates, his wife and his daughter played a role in his decision-making.

"When I decided to return to Antigua after living in the United States and doing well. I wasn't sure exactly what I was going to do but I had an inclination that I had to come back to Antigua to serve and to help offer guidance to our young people. What I did not realise was that this decision would result in over forty years as a career politician. Throughout those forty plus



Sir Molwyn Joseph and Prime Minister Gaston Browne

years, I have not only gained experience but I also have a great sense of satisfaction and accomplishments," he mused.

According to Sir Molwyn, who is now at a point where most people would retire and whilst he is in 'relatively' good health and still with much vitality, he believes that this was the 'greatest decision that I have ever made'.

Regarding his successor, Dr Philmore Benjamin, Sir Molwyn said he strongly endorsed the new candidate especially after he polled second in the recent poll. Additionally, Sir Molwyn indicated that his own informal canvassing of the constituents showed that Dr. Benjamin had the best chance of success, if he Sir Molwyn was not the candidate.

On his own future, Sir Molwyn sug-



E.P. Chet Green and Sir Molwyn Joseph

gested that Prime Minister Gaston Browne indicated that he may be called upon to serve in an advisory position in a future government. For his part, Sir Molwyn said he intends to take up farming in 'a more serious' manner as he is alarmed by the food choices many persons in the society make. "As the Minister of Health, I believe that I have a responsibility to eat properly and to ensure that those around me do so as well," he remarked.

Sir Molwyn has served as minister of Finance, Tourism, Health and parliamentary secretary in the Ministry of Economic Development among his long career in government. He has only had one electoral defeat; the 2004 general elections when there was a national swing against the ABLP. He was first elected to parliament in the 1984 general elections.



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March 20th, 2026

The Chairman
Mr. Chet Green
Antigua and Barbuda Labour Party
People's Place
Nugent Avenue
St. John's
Antigua

Dear Comrade Green,

I hereby formally state that I will not be contesting the upcoming General Elections in the St. Mary's North Constituency in Antigua and Barbuda.

After careful consideration, I have decided not to offer myself as a candidate at this time. This decision was not made lightly, but comes after many years of dedicated service and careful reflection on personal commitments and responsibilities and in the best interest of the Antigua and Barbuda Labour Party.

I extend my sincere gratitude and appreciation to the leadership, membership, and supporters of the Antigua and Barbuda Labour Party for the steadfast support, camaraderie, and the trust invested in me throughout my years of service.

It has been a profound honor to serve under the banner of our great Party, working collectively to advance the principles of progress, unity, and empowerment for the people of Antigua and Barbuda. The encouragement and solidarity I have received from the Party comrades have been invaluable, and I remain deeply thankful for the opportunities afforded me to contribute to our shared mission.

As we continue to build on our legacy, I offer my full support to the Party and its future endeavors. I am confident that, together, we will continue to serve the people of Antigua and Barbuda with dedication, integrity, and purpose.

As I reflect on this journey, I do so with immense pride and gratitude. Though seasons may change, my dedication to the well-being of St. Mary's North constituents remains steadfast.

I remain committed to the continued development and well-being of the constituency and the Antigua and Barbuda Labour Party.

I sincerely express and extend my best wishes to the Antigua and Barbuda Labour Party candidates with whom I will be campaigning during the upcoming General Elections.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Molwyn Joseph', written over a horizontal line.

Hon. Sir Molwyn Joseph KGCN

Kendra Beazer Wants To Unify Antigua and Sister Isle Barbuda



Kendra Beazer

Newly selected Antigua and Barbuda Labour Party’s candidate for the island-constituency of Barbuda, 33-year old Kendra Beazer, has announced several initiatives that he wants to implement, including forging greater unity between his Barbuda and the central government in Antigua.

Speaking with **Point Express Newspaper** moments after his candidacy was endorsed by the ABLP senior executive on Friday night, Beazer, who served as a member of the Barbuda Council for four years, said he would work diligently for greater cooperation and help to build a healthy working relationship between the Council and the central government.

“I believe that my experiences of working on the Barbuda Council and being a strong advocate for local government in Barbuda, I will rely on my history there as well as the fact that I firmly believe in dialogue and ongoing consultation between the central government and the Barbuda Council and bringing my philosophical groundings

to the table will allow me to be that bridge between the two parties,” Beazer remarked.

Beazer has tertiary level training in development and environmental policy as well as management and international business. He is a teacher at the Sir McChesney George Secondary School in Barbuda.

As the new ABLP candidate for Barbuda, Beazer said two of his main goals are the development of Barbuda as well as the development of the people of the island.

“There is much that I would wish to accomplish in Barbuda if I am elected. In essence, for me, development

is both Barbuda-centred and people-centred. I want to see the people empowered and I want to see Barbuda developed as well in terms of the infrastructure. These go hand-in-hand so that the people of Barbuda can realize their full potential,” he observed.

Beazer was endorsed by the former candidate, Knackcynta Nedd-Charles, who indicated that for family reasons, she was unable to contest the upcoming election.

Prime Minister and ABLP Political Leader, Gaston Browne, said he has had an admiration for Beazer, who was an opponent, but whose commitment and ‘fire’ were attributes that caught his attention.



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-Leg and Thigh
-Biscuit
-Medium Drink

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-Burger
-Medium Drink









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ABLP/AB&TU Name 13 Labour Queen Contestants, 2026

The Antigua and Barbuda Labour Party (ABLP) and its sister organisation, the Antigua Trades and Labour Union (AT&LU) have named thirteen young women who will vie for the coveted Labour Queen title, 2026.

The contestants were unveiled and sashed by the representatives of the eleven of the constituencies that are represented in the pageant. This took place Friday night during the special meeting of the ABLP senior executive at its People’s Place headquarters. Two of the constituencies - St. John’s Rural West and St. John’s City West are represented by two contestants each.

“The Labour Queen Pageant celebrates talent, confidence, and community representation, and it is expected to attract strong public interest as delegates prepare to showcase their abilities and represent their respective communities,” organisers of the highly anticipated Labour Queen



Pageant have stated.

The 2026 Labour Queen show takes place on May 2, 2026, at the American University of Antigua Conference Centre.

The ABLP/AT&LU Labour Queen show continues to attract a high calibre of contestants as for many, it serves as a stepping stone for the Queen of Carnival Pageant.

The 2026 Labour Queen contestants are;

1. **Jolisa Cato - St. John’s City West**
2. **Maydoria Smith - St. John’s Rural West**
3. **Jonelly Encarnacion - All Saints East and St. Luke**
4. **Nakierra Martin - St. George**
5. **Andreacia Lewis - All Saints West**
6. **Mia Griffith - St. John’s City West**
7. **Tonya Phillips - St. John’s Rural South**
8. **Treveisha Adams - St. John’s City West**
9. **Jessica Tracey - St. John’s Rural North**
10. **Julissa Stoute - St. Paul**
11. **Aliyah Andrew - St. John’s Rural East**
12. **Queenela Williams - St Mary’s South**
13. **Iszarea Lloyd- St. Philip North**

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Local News



Antigua and Barbuda Consulate in New York leads effort to strengthen ties with next generation

The Consulate General of Antigua and Barbuda in New York is embarking on an ambitious initiative geared at deepening the connections of younger generations of the diaspora with their roots while engaging them in the nation's social and economic development.

Since the attainment of Independence in 1981, the office has been responding to a broad spectrum of diaspora matters. But the Permanent Representative of Antigua and Barbuda to the United Nations Ambassador Walton Webson feels strongly that more could be done in connecting with young Antiguan and Barbudans in the US.

"It is our obligation to ensure the voices of our first, second and third generations are heard and their ties to Antigua and Barbuda are preserved and strengthened for the future, no matter how far removed they are," Ambassador Webson noted.

As a result, the team at the Consulate General is hosting its first engagement with young Antiguan and Barbudans in the Northeast, a Diaspora Networking Mixer, aimed at encouraging them to get involved in national and diaspora activities.

"This is the type of dialogue we need to foster so that we can build stronger connections, better understand the needs of our young people, and ensure that they remain engaged and connected to Antigua and Barbuda," Ambassador Webson stated, noting that "This, I believe, is an excellent first step in that direction."

The engagement will take place on Wednesday at the Jumeika Grand Restaurant at 346 Lexington Avenue from 6 to 9 pm. Besides a number of brief presentations, the event will feature the winner of popular television culinary competition, Chopped, Chef Claude Lewis, himself the offspring of Antiguan and Barbudans who moved to the US in 1980. Also present will



be Antigua and Barbuda's Director of Tourism for the United States Dean Fenton.

Ultimately, the Consulate General is working to expand its database of young Antiguan and Barbudans whose talents it would be able to ac-

cess more readily in serving the needs of the diaspora community and to connect with them more effectively.

"It's all in the interest of preserving our heritage and expanding the development of our young nation," Ambassador Webson noted.



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Rotary Club of Antigua Donates 32 HP Laptops to National Public Library

The Rotary Club of Antigua has donated thirty-two (32) HP EliteBook laptops to the National Public Library of Antigua and Barbuda, reinforcing its commitment to advancing education and digital access across the nation.

The gesture forms part of the Club's ongoing support through its Education Through Technology Programme, an initiative aimed at bridging the digital divide and enhancing learning opportunities for students and the wider community.

Cordell Josiah, Past President of the Rotary Club of Antigua and local Coordinator of the initiative, emphasized the broader impact of the outreach. "This programme is not just about providing equipment—it is about creating opportunity," he said. "Access to technology is essential in today's world, and through this effort, we are empowering individuals with the tools they need to learn, grow, and succeed."

President of the Rotary Club of Antigua, Elisa Graham, highlighted the importance of strengthening institutional capacity. "The National Public Library plays a vital role in education and community development," she noted. "By enhancing its technical resources, we are helping to ensure that it can continue to serve as a hub for knowledge, innovation, and digital inclusion."

Director of the National Public Library, Ryllis Mannix, expressed sincere appreciation for the donation. "We are extremely grateful to the Rotary Club of Antigua for this generous contribution," she said. "These laptops will significantly improve our ability to serve the public, particularly students and researchers who rely on our services for access to information and technology."

The Rotary Club of Antigua continues to champion initiatives that support education, youth development, and community empowerment throughout Antigua and Barbuda.







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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, Rivers by Quintessence (Redcliffe Quay), Roti King, Quintessence Variety Plus (QV+, Friars Hill Road)







Police Raise Concern Over Youth Involvement in Gambling and Other Immoral Activities

The Police Administration is expressing serious concern over the growing involvement of youths in immoral and unlawful activities, particularly gambling in public spaces.

During routine mobile patrols conducted on Thursday, 19 March, officers attached to the Criminal Investigations Department (CID) Task Force carried out extensive patrols across several communities within St. John's and its surrounding areas.

At approximately 12:45 p.m., police officers responded to suspicious activity at the East Bus Station Terminal, where a group of young men, reportedly dressed in school uniforms, were observed engaging in what appeared to be gambling under a shed.

Upon approach of the police, the individuals fled the scene on foot.

A subsequent search of the area resulted in the recovery of two school bags, which are now in police custody pending further investigations.

The Police Administration views this development with grave concern, particularly as it involves school-aged youths. Such behavior not only contravenes the law but also exposes young individuals to environments that can negatively influence their development and future.

The police are making a strong appeal to parents, guardians, educators, and the wider community to take a more active role in guiding and monitoring the activities of young people.

The Police Administration further advises that patrols will be intensified, especially in and around areas where youths are known to congregate after school hours.

The police will remain vigilant and proactive in addressing any form of unlawful or inappropriate behavior.

The cooperation and assistance of the



public are essential in helping to curb this growing concern. Anyone with information related to such activities is encouraged to contact the Criminal In-

vestigations Department at 462-3913 or call the Crimestoppers anonymous hotline at 800-TIPS (8477).



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Local News



Governor General attends Mini Global Rally Prize Giving

The Governor General Sir Rodney Williams officiated at the prize giving ceremony for the McIntyre Mini Globe Race.

The presentation took place in Antigua and Barbuda, the official start and finish point of the historic race, where fifteen determined sailors embarked from the National Sailing Academy on their solo journey around the world and returned to complete the challenge.

Sir Rodney noted that Antigua and Barbuda is proud to have played a central role in this remarkable endeavour, highlighting that Mr. McIntyre's commitment to accessible, grassroots ocean racing has made the Mini Globe Race possible.

He further emphasized that the event serves as a powerful reminder of Anti-



Governor General of Antigua and Barbuda, Sir Rodney Williams, presents the award to the winner of the McIntyre Mini Globe Race, Mr Renaut Stitelmann, with founder Don McIntyre looking on. Photo credit - Andrew Ackroyd/MGR 2025-26

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Canadian National Arrested with Over \$200,000 Worth of Cannabis at Airport

The police have arrested and charged a Canadian national in connection with the importation of a significant quantity of cannabis at the V.C. Bird International Airport.

At approximately 4:00 p.m. on Saturday, 21 March, officers attached to the Narcotics Department, along with members of the K-9 Unit and the Customs Enforcement Unit, conducted a joint drug interdiction operation at the airport.

During the operation, the officers were alerted to a silver suitcase belonging to 23-year-old Semand Vivian Shammo Aljndo of Canada, who had arrived in Antigua on Air Canada flight AC1832 from Toronto.

The search revealed a total of twenty-six (26) vacuum-sealed packages containing the controlled drug cannabis. The packages were seized, and the suspect was taken into custody and transported to Police Headquarters for further investigations.

The substance amounted to twenty-six (26) pounds with an estimated street value of \$208,000.00 ECC.

He is expected to be charged in connection with drug-related offences.



The Royal Police Force of Antigua and Barbuda continues to intensify its efforts at all ports of entry to combat the illegal importation and trafficking of controlled substances.

The Police Administration is also reminding the public that strict enforcement measures remain in place to de-

ter and prosecute persons involved in drug-related activities.

Anyone with information related to drug trafficking or other criminal activities is encouraged to contact the Narcotics Department or call the Crimestoppers anonymous hotline at 800-8477.

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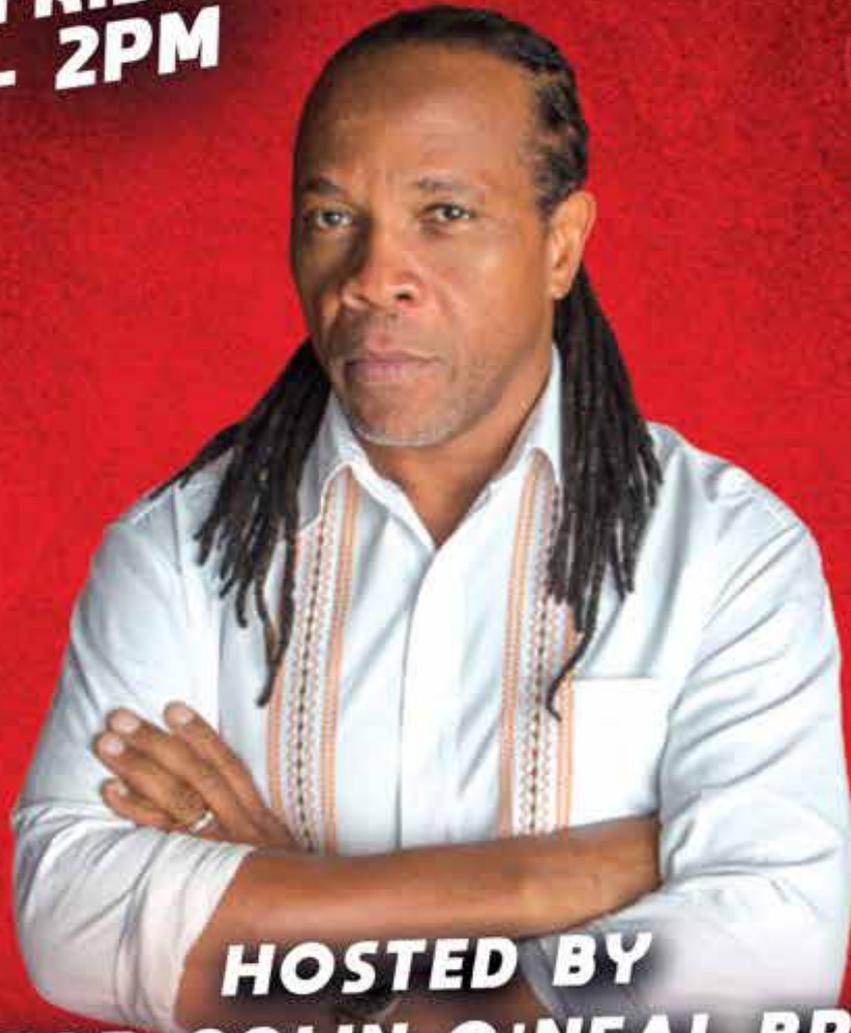
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Regional News



Cuba's power grid collapses leaving it without electricity for 3rd time this month

Cuba began restoring its energy system on Sunday, a day after a nationwide collapse of the entire grid left millions of people in the dark for the third time this month.

Some 72,000 customers in the capital, among them five hospitals, had electricity again early Sunday, according to a report from the state-run Electric Union and the Ministry of Energy and Mines, but it's only a fraction of Havana's total population of approximately 2 million.

In Havana and provinces such as western Matanzas and eastern Holguin, local power microsystems were set up to supply the most vital centres. Residents in some areas of the capital told The Associated Press that power returned during the early morning hours.

Cuba is currently facing an unprecedented energy crisis. Its ageing grid has drastically eroded in recent years, but the government has also blamed the outages on a US energy blockade, after President Donald Trump in January warned of tariffs on any country that sells or provides oil to Cuba.

His administration is demanding that Cuba release political prisoners and



move toward political and economic liberalization in return for a lifting of sanctions. Trump also has raised the possibility of a "friendly takeover of Cuba."

Another reason Cuba has been struggling with dwindling oil is the removal by the US of Venezuela's former President Nicolás Maduro, which halted critical petroleum shipments from the nation that had been a steadfast ally to Havana.

President Miguel Díaz-Canel has said the island has not received oil from foreign suppliers for three months. Cuba produces barely 40% of the fuel it needs to power its economy.

Daily blackouts have a significant impact on the population, whose lives are disrupted by reduced work hours, lack of electricity for cooking and damage to household appliances, among many other consequences. (AP)



ICE agents detain multiple suspects in St. Croix raid as US immigration crackdown spreads its reach



Earlier today, On March 19, 2026, Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents carried out a forceful raid in Christiansted, St. Croix, detaining multiple individuals in the parking lot of a Jiffy Mart.

Video footage from the scene showed tactical teams moving quickly to subdue suspects, some of whom resisted arrest.

Agents responded with physical control techniques including tackles, ground pins, and rapid handcuffing, bringing the situation under control without reports of serious injuries.

The raid was part of a broader nationwide crackdown that has already resulted in more than 45,000 detentions since the beginning of the year. Federal officials have emphasized that immigration enforcement applies across all jurisdic-

tions, including U.S. territories, and that resistance will be met with decisive action. They say the operation in St. Croix underscores the administration's commitment to extending enforcement everywhere, reinforcing its message of "no sanctuary, no excuses."

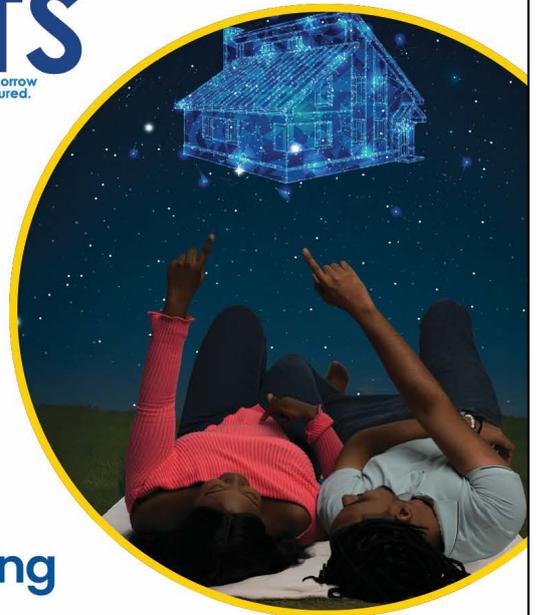
Reaction to the footage, which was posted online by an immigration enforcement tracker, was swift. Supporters of stricter border policies praised the raid as a clear demonstration of law and order, while critics raised concerns about civil liberties and the humanitarian impact of mass detentions. Compared to past operations, however, online criticism of this particular raid was relatively muted.

The St. Croix operation highlights the growing reach of federal immigration enforcement. (Dominica News Online)



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Regional News



Historic Milestone: First major commercial charter flight from St. Kitts to Abuja, Nigeria



In a significant milestone for South-South cooperation and regional integration, the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) has announced its support for the first large-scale commercial charter flight originating from the Caribbean directly to the African continent.

The initiative was organized by Aquarian Consult Limited, said an OECS media release.

On March 21, 2026, the historic flight departed from Robert L. Bradshaw International Airport in St. Kitts.

The aircraft carried a high-level delegation of over 100 passengers, comprising prominent business leaders, government officials, and cultural icons representing eight Caribbean na-

tions.

The flight traveled directly to Nnamdi Azikiwe International Airport in Abuja, Nigeria, arriving on March 22.

According to the release, this flight marks more than a simple transit route; it symbolizes a new phase in economic diplomacy, often referred to as “Reverse Middle Passage,” emphasizing economic empowerment through direct connectivity. By eliminating traditional, lengthy layovers in Europe or North America, the OECS is asserting its direct link to the African continent.

The milestone also serves as the official kickoff for the Afri-Caribbean Investment Summit (AACIS), organized by Aquarian Consult. The summit is scheduled to take place at the Bola

Ahmed Tinubu International Conference Centre in Abuja from March 23 to 28.

Strategic aspects of this historic journey include strengthening regional economic and diplomatic ties, especially between the OECS and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). This direct flight establishes a primary corridor for future trade and cooperation. Moreover, reducing travel time from over 30 hours to a direct transatlantic route demonstrates the commercial viability of permanent, direct air links between the Caribbean and Africa.

Delegates participating in the summit will engage in high-level bilateral discussions focused on agricultural innovation, blue economy initiatives, cultural exchanges, and investment opportunities that could transform regional relations.

Aisha Maina, Managing Director of Aquarian Consult, emphasized the significance of the flight, stating, “We are no longer just dreaming of a bridge between our two regions; we are flying over it,” says Aisha Maina, Managing Director of Aquarian Consult. “This flight isn’t just carrying people; it’s carrying the future of Afri-Caribbean trade, tourism, and shared prosperity. This is a victory for the OECS and the entire Global Africa family.”

Further information about the AACIS and the charter flight can be found at www.aquarianconsult.com/aacis/charter-flight. (Dominica News Online)

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Iran threatens to close Strait of Hormuz and hit power plants after Trump's 48-hour ultimatum

Iran and the allied Lebanese militant group Hezbollah stepped up attacks on Israel on Sunday as the United States and Iran threatened to target critical infrastructure in the war in the Middle East, now in its fourth week.

Iran said the Strait of Hormuz, crucial to oil and other exports, would be "completely closed" immediately if the U.S. follows up on President Donald Trump's new threat to attack its power plants. Trump late Saturday set a 48-hour deadline to open the strait. Iran's parliament speaker said Tehran also would retaliate against U.S. and Israeli energy and wider infrastructure.

Israeli leaders visited one of two southern communities near a secretive nuclear research site struck by Iranian missiles late Saturday, with scores of people wounded. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said it was a "miracle" no one was killed.

He also claimed Israel and the U.S. were well on their way to achieving their war goals and asked the world for more support. The aims have ranged from weakening Iran's nuclear program, missile program and support for armed proxies to enabling the Iranian people to overthrow the theocracy.

The developments signaled the war, which the U.S. and Israel launched Feb. 28, was moving in a dangerous new direction, despite Trump's comment last week he was considering "winding down" operations. It has killed over 2,000 people, rattled the global economy and sent oil prices surging.

Hezbollah claimed responsibility for an airstrike that killed a man in northern Israel, while Lebanese President Joseph Aoun called Israel's targeting of bridges in the south "a prelude to a ground invasion." (AP)



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A strike on a hospital in Sudan killed at least 64 people, WHO says

At least 64 people were killed, including at least 13 children, in a strike on a hospital in Sudan’s western Darfur region last week, the World Health Organization said Saturday.

The strike on the Al Daein Teaching Hospital in East Darfur on Friday also injured at least 89 people and rendered the hospital non-functional, Tedros Ghebreyesus, the head of the WHO, said on X.

Sudan slid into chaos in April 2023 when a power struggle between the military and the rival paramilitary Rapid Support Forces exploded into war throughout the country.

The RSF has blamed the military for the strike on the hospital.

The army has denied the attack, but two military officials said the strike was targeting a nearby police station. They spoke on the condition of anonymity as they were not allowed to discuss the matter openly.

The devastating war has killed more



than 40,000 people, according to U.N. figures, but aid groups say that is an undercount and the true number could be many times higher.

The WHO has said that over 2,000 people have been killed in attacks on medical facilities since the start of the

war.

“Enough blood has been spilled. Enough suffering has been inflicted. The time has come to de-escalate the conflict in Sudan,” said Ghebreyesus. (NBC)

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More than 400 TSA officers have quit since shutdown began



More than 400 Transportation Security Administration workers have quit since a partial government shutdown that began on Feb. 14 has left them working without pay, the Department of Homeland Security said.

Funding was shut off to DHS over demands by Democrats for reforms at Immigration and Customs Enforcement and Customs and Border Protection following alleged abuses and the fatal shootings of two U.S. citizens by federal agents in Minneapolis earlier this year.

There has also been a national callout rate of 10% at TSA on more than half the days of the last week, Lauren Bis, acting assistant secretary for public affairs at DHS, said Saturday in response to questions.

TSA, which is under DHS, has around 65,000 employees. Of that number, 50,000 are front-line officers who are responsible for security at the nation's airports.

Of the TSA officers who quit during the shutdown, almost half have over

three years of experience and a third have over five years, the agency said.

Some TSA workers have expressed fears about unpaid bills and worse because they aren't being paid. Anthony Riley, a 58-year-old married father of three who has been working without pay for weeks, told NBC News earlier this month that he faces possible eviction and the specter of being homeless.

There have been increased wait times — and frustration — at airports due to the shutdown.

The highest nationwide callout rate during the shutdown came on Friday, at 10.22%, a DHS spokesperson said.

John F. Kennedy International Airport in New York City had a callout rate of 29.5% on Friday, and Houston Intercontinental Airport had a rate of 36.6% the same day, the spokesperson said.

In the U.S. Senate on Saturday, a Democratic bill to fund just TSA workers but not the rest of DHS

failed to get the 60 votes needed to advance. The 41-49 vote was along party lines.

On Friday, Senate Democrats voted down Republicans' efforts to pass a bill to fully fund DHS.

Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer and House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries, both Democrats from New York, have called for reforms at ICE.

In February they outlined the reforms they want to see, which include an end to what they called indiscriminate arrests, a prohibition on ICE officers wearing masks, and an end to what they said was racial profiling by the agency.

The administration has blamed Democrats for the shutdown, calling it the "Democrat DHS shutdown."

President Donald Trump in a post on Truth Social threatened to send ICE to airports.

Funding for ICE, which is part of DHS, has not been cut off during the shutdown. That agency received \$75 billion in additional funds from the "big, beautiful bill," the president's major legislative package that was passed and signed into law last year.

Joe Smollen, who was flying out of Newark Liberty International Airport to San Diego on Saturday, said he went to the airport a couple of hours early just in case. He said he hopes Congress reaches a deal.

"I think it's unfair to citizens to have to put up with it," Smollen said.

"And these poor people who work here, they're very, very diligent in what they do, we need them," Smollen said. "And it's unfair that they would be singled out like that." (NBC)

Red Hawks outlast All Saints Slam in Division 1 League



JSC Red Hawks recorded a narrow six-point win over All Saints Slam in the Antigua and Barbuda Basketball Association's (ABBA) First Division League on Saturday evening.

The Red Hawks claimed their fifth win in 10 matches by pulling off a 95-89 victory over All Saints Slam at the JSC Sports Complex.

Bryce Smith sank 24 points and snatched 12 rebounds, and Kymani Powell converted 24 points and claimed eight rebounds to lead the Red Hawks.

In support, Andre Burnett produced 20 points, 10 assists, and nine rebounds, David Mubagwa sank 15 points, and Nickon McGregor scored 10 points for the Red Hawks.

Rolantae Knowles shot a game-high 24 points, Andrew Daigle sank 20 points and snatched 10 rebounds, and Takeem Martin converted 19 points and grabbed 17 rebounds for the All Saints Slam, who lost for the ninth

time in 11 games.

Da Project claimed their fifth win in nine encounters with a 107-58 drubbing of the Navigators.

T-Shawn Lewis sank 21 points and snatched five rebounds; Malik Moore converted 20 points; and Amare Browne scored 13 points as the main performers for Da Project.

In support, Cornell Greenwood provided 12 points, 10 rebounds, and six steals; Donte Trimmingham produced 11 points, nine rebounds, and five assists; and Terry Dawkins scored 11 points and claimed seven rebounds for Da Project.

Tyreke Lewis converted 14 points and claimed five rebounds, Baldwin Anthony sank 13 points and grabbed 15 rebounds, and Henry Dorsette scored 13 points and snatched five rebounds for the Navigators, who remain at the bottom of the eight-team standings after suffering their 10th defeat in as many games.

Defending champions EZ Fit Flyers and Lava Smoke Elite Stingerz also secured wins in their latest outings in the First Division League.

The Flyers claimed their seventh win in nine matches by soaring to a 103-75 victory over All Saints Slam.

Point guard Daniel Perez sank 22 points, TJ Williams produced 18 points, seven rebounds, and six assists; Kwame Brathwaite converted 15 points; Javonte Daley scored 13 points; Xavier Meade had 17 points, seven rebounds, and seven assists; and

Nicholas Moore chipped in with eight points and 11 rebounds for the Flyers.

Takeem Martin shot a game-high 25 points and grabbed 15 rebounds; Andrew Daigle sank 13 points and snatched seven rebounds; Javon Simon converted 12 points; and Rolantae Knowles scored nine points for the All Saints Slam.

The Elite Stingerz secured their sixth win in nine games by pulling off a 110-106 victory in overtime against the JSC Red Hawks in Thursday's second encounter.

Joshua Minner produced 31 points, seven rebounds, and six assists, and Keroi Lee sank 26 points and grabbed 16 rebounds to lead the Stingerz to overtime victory after both teams were deadlocked at 96-96 at the end of regulation time.

In support, Brycen Thomas had 22 points, seven assists, and five rebounds, Humroy Wright scored 15 points, and Steven Matthew converted 12 points for the Stingerz.

Cohen Desouza shot a game-high 34 points and grabbed 13 rebounds, and Bryce Smith sank 19 points and snatched 11 rebounds to lead the Red Hawks.

In support, Mario Davis contributed 16 points, 11 rebounds, and six assists; Andre Burnett had 13 points, nine assists, and five steals; and David Mubagwa chipped in with 11 points, eight assists, and seven rebounds for the JSC Red Hawks.



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Hoppers narrow gap on leaders Five Islands in First Division



Players of the Greenbay Hoppers football team

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

The Greenbay Hoppers moved within a point of Five Islands by recording their 12th win in 17 matches with a 2-0 victory against Golden Grove FC at Golden Grove.

Tamorley Thomas scored in the 16th minute to give the Greenbay Hoppers a one-nil lead. Khimani Cox doubled their advantage with a 72nd-minute conversion to seal the win.

The result allows the Greenbay Hoppers to advance to 37 points, one adrift of Five Islands, who have played 19 matches. Golden Grove FC remains in eighth place on goal difference with 27 points after losing for the seventh time in 18 matches.

Parham FC lost ground on the front-runners after battling to a 2-2 draw with Willikies at the ABFA Technical Center.

Phil Nicholas gave Willikies a one-nil lead at halftime with a 30th-minute conversion. Dale Gardner scored an equalizer in the 52nd minute, and teammate Jahvante Harriet gave Parham FC a 2-1 lead with a 68th-minute conversion.

But Willikies FC was able to salvage a draw via a late equalizer, which was scored by Zahdeir Forde in the 88th minute.

The result allows Parham to remain in fifth place on goal difference with 32 points after securing their fifth draw in 18 matches. Third-placed SAP FC and fourth-place Swetes Vipers FC also have 32 points from 18 matches.

It also means that the Willikies FC

will remain in ninth place by advancing to 24 points after salvaging their third draw in 18 matches.

The Freemans Village Scorpions also dropped crucial points in a 1-1 draw with English Harbour at Freemans Village.

Tafari Looby scored in the 20th minute to give the Freemans Village Scorpions a one-nil lead at halftime. Shadaeki Fredericks draws English Harbour level by scoring the equalizer in the 49th minute.

The result allows the Freemans Village Scorpions to drop into sixth place on goal difference with 32 points after securing their fifth draw in 17 matches.

English Harbour FC remains in 10th place by advancing to 18 points after salvaging their third draw in 18 matches.

Sports News



Third-place finish for St. Anthony's Jr Boys in school basketball league

St. Anthony's Secondary School (SASS) has clinched third-place honours in the Junior Boys Division in the Cool and Smooth Inter-School Basketball League.

St. Anthony's Secondary School secured the bronze medals by pulling off a hard-fought 34-30 victory over Antigua Grammar School at the JSC Sports Complex.

Joshua Henriquez sank eight points, and Zende Dorsett scored seven points for St. Anthony's Secondary School.

Taje Amon converted eight points, and Javon Gordon and Dajon George each scored seven points for Antigua Grammar School.

Success as well for Clare Hall Secondary School, which prevailed 13-11 against Ottos Comprehensive School in the Senior Girls Division.

Nyeema Edwards sank five points, and Kira Hunte and N'Kira George each scored four points for Clare Hall Secondary School. Serenity Colbourne converted nine points for Ottos Comprehensive School.



St. Anthony's Secondary School's junior boys basketball team. (Photo courtesy of the Cool and Smooth Inter-School Basketball League.)

Ottos Comprehensive School celebrated success in the Mini Boys Secondary Division by coasting to a commanding 40-23 victory over Antigua Grammar School.

Levi Richards sank 13 points and Malil Simons scored 11 points for Ottos Comprehensive School, while Derrick Perez shot a game-high 18 points for Antigua Grammar School.

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Real Blizzard go third in Second Division League

Kelton Dalso Real Blizzard has moved to third place after their latest match in the Antigua and Barbuda Football Association's (ABFA) Second Division.

Jayden Martin and Amos Christian each scored twice as Real Blizzard notched up their 11th win in 16 matches with a 4-1 victory over Herberts United FC at New Winthorpes on Friday.

Martin struck twice with conversions in the eighth and 35th minutes to give Real Blizzard a two-nil lead at halftime. Christian scored in the 57th and 73rd minutes to give Real Blizzard a four-nil advantage.

Herberts United FC were reduced to 10 men in the 53rd minute, with the expulsion of Stanley Walters, who was expelled after receiving a red card. Clive Sansculotte scored a consolation goal for Herberts United FC with an 82nd-minute conversion.

The result allowed Real Blizzard to remain unbeaten and jump from fourth to third place on goal difference with 38 points, the same as the second-placed Young Lions of Old Road, who have played 15 matches.

Sea View Farm FC dropped from third to fourth place with 35 points from 15 matches. Herberts United FC remains second from the bottom of the 20-team standings with four points after succumbing to their 12th defeat in 14 matches.

North Coast Academy Ju-



Players of the Real Blizzard football team

niors advanced from seventh to fifth place on goal difference by securing their 10th win in 17 matches with a 3-1 victory against JSC Progressors at the St. Johnstone's Village Stadium.

The JSC Progressors made a poor start to the game when they were reduced to 10 players in the sixth minute with the expulsion of Catchet Harris, who received a red card.

Roshan Samuel scored his first of two goals in the 14th minute, and Ajabe Rae produced a 28th-minute conversion to give the North Coast Academy Juniors a two-nil lead.

Markland Wright scored in the 38th minute to reduce the deficit for the JSC Progressors, but Samuel restored the North Coast Academy two-goal advantage by scoring his second goal of the match in the 72nd minute to seal his team's victory.

The result allows the North Coast Academy Juniors to advance to 32 points, the

same as sixth-placed Blackburn Palace, who have played 16 matches.

The JSC Progressors remain in 17th place with seven points after crashing to their 12th defeat in 15 matches.

Jermain Meade scored twice as Fort Road FC consolidated their position in eighth place by recording their 10th win in 16 matches with a 6-0 drubbing of the CPTSA Wings at Fort Road.

Meade had conversions in the 84th and 86th minutes. Alren Lewis scored the opening goal in the sixth minute, and Deon Lavonn's 33rd-minute conversion gave Fort Road FC a two-nil lead at halftime.

The other two goals for Fort Road FC were scored by Shaquille Perry in the 62nd minute and Isean Graham in the 85th minute.

The result allows Fort Road FC to remain in eighth place on goal difference by advancing to 31 points, the

same as seventh-placed Police, who have played 14 matches.

The CPTSA Wings remain in 10th place with 21 points after crashing to their fifth defeat in 16 matches.

Tyjerne Simon scored twice as Glanvilles FC moved from 14th to 13th place by claiming their fifth win in 14 matches with a 5-1 victory against Earthquake FC at Glanvilles.

Simon had conversions in the fifth and 12th minutes but squandered a chance to achieve a hat trick when he missed a penalty kick in the 67th minute.

The other goals for Glanvilles FC were scored by Demaro McKenzie in the eighth minute, Roshaun Martin in the 21st minute, and Jordon Raymond in the 67th minute.

Ajay Barthley scored a consolation goal in the 63rd minute for Earthquakes FC, who finished the match with 10 players after Omari Nacinmento received a red card and was expelled in the 85th minute.

Glanvilles FC also ended the match with 10 men with the expulsion of Roshaun Martin, who received a red card in the 85th minute.

The result allows Glanvilles to advance to 16 points, while Earthquakes FC remains in 16th place with eight points after crashing to their 12th defeat in 16 matches.

United extends lead atop of Premier Division League

Defending back-to-back champions All Saints United have increased their lead at the top of the Antigua and Barbuda Football Association's (ABFA) Premier Division League.

All Saints United moved nine points clear of Sandals and APUA Inet Jennings Grenades at the top of the Premier League by recording their 15th win in 18 matches with a 3-0 victory against the Garden Stars FC in the second game of a double-header at the ABFA Technical Center on Saturday.

Vaughn Jackson scored twice, including a 21st-minute conversion that gave All Saints United a one-nil halftime lead. Jackson got his second when he scored the third and final goal for All

Saints United in the 83rd minute to seal their victory.

Leroy Graham scored the second goal for All Saints United in the 60th minute.

The result allows All Saints United to remain at the top of the 12-team standings by advancing to 47 points. The Jennings Grenades, who have three games in hand, are currently in second place with 38 points from 15 matches.

The Garden Stars remain in seventh place with 22 points after suffering their sixth defeat in 18 matches.

The Potters Tigers consolidated their sixth-place position by securing their seventh win in 17 matches with a 2-0

victory against the bottom team, Sir Molwyn Joseph Jennings United, in Saturday's opening game.

Following a goalless first half, Javorn Benjamin broke the deadlock by scoring the Tigers' opening goal in the 52nd minute.

Keon Greene doubled their advantage by converting a penalty kick in the 87th minute to wrap up the victory for the Tigers.

The result allows the Potters Tigers to remain in sixth place by advancing to 26 points. The Jennings United FC remains at the bottom of the standings with six points after crashing to their 16th defeat in 18 matches.



A starting XI of the All Saints United football team