

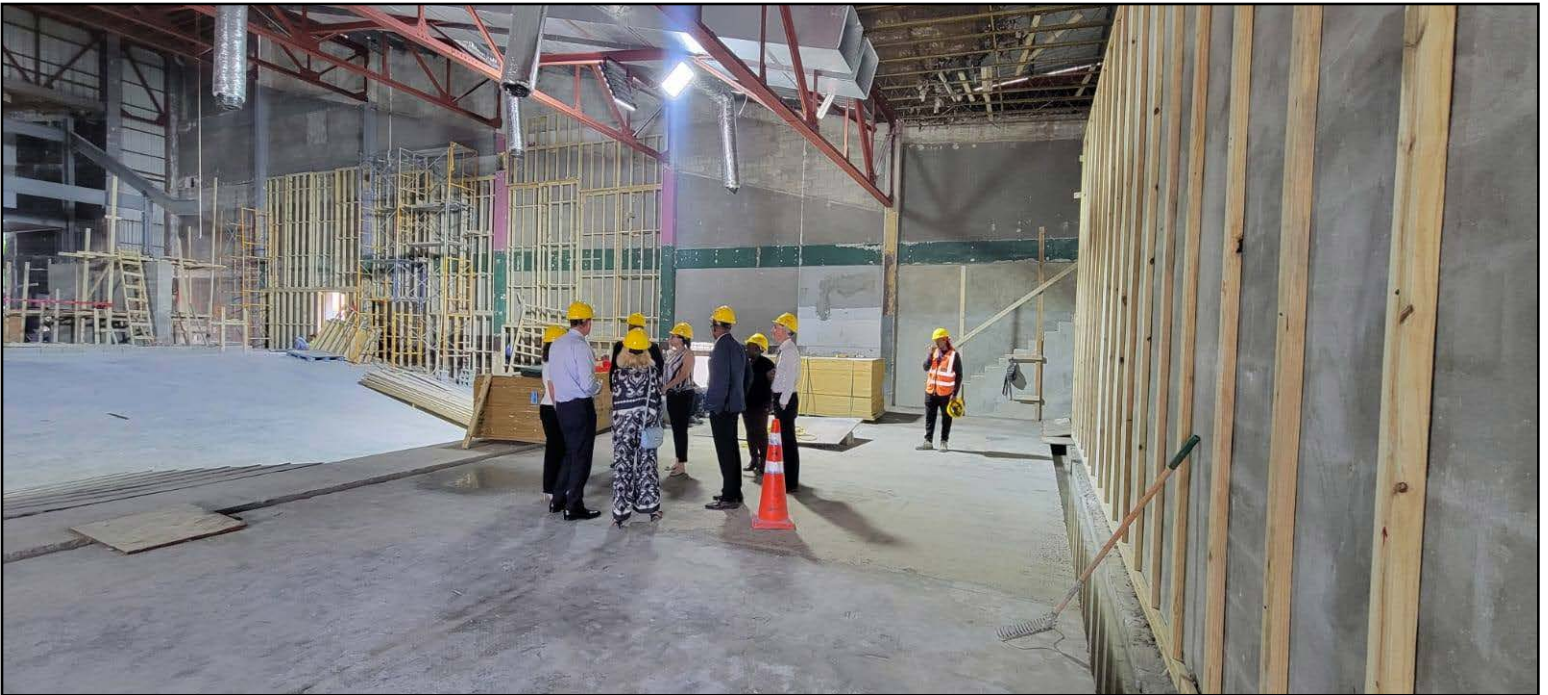
National Performing Arts Centre Will Meet Completion Deadline

Story on page 2



Prime Minister Gaston Browne (fourth from left) with Minister Rawdon Turner (second from left) and officials of PMI toured the interior of the former Deluxe Cinema that is being transformed into the National Performing Arts Centre

National Performing Arts Centre Will Meet Completion Deadline

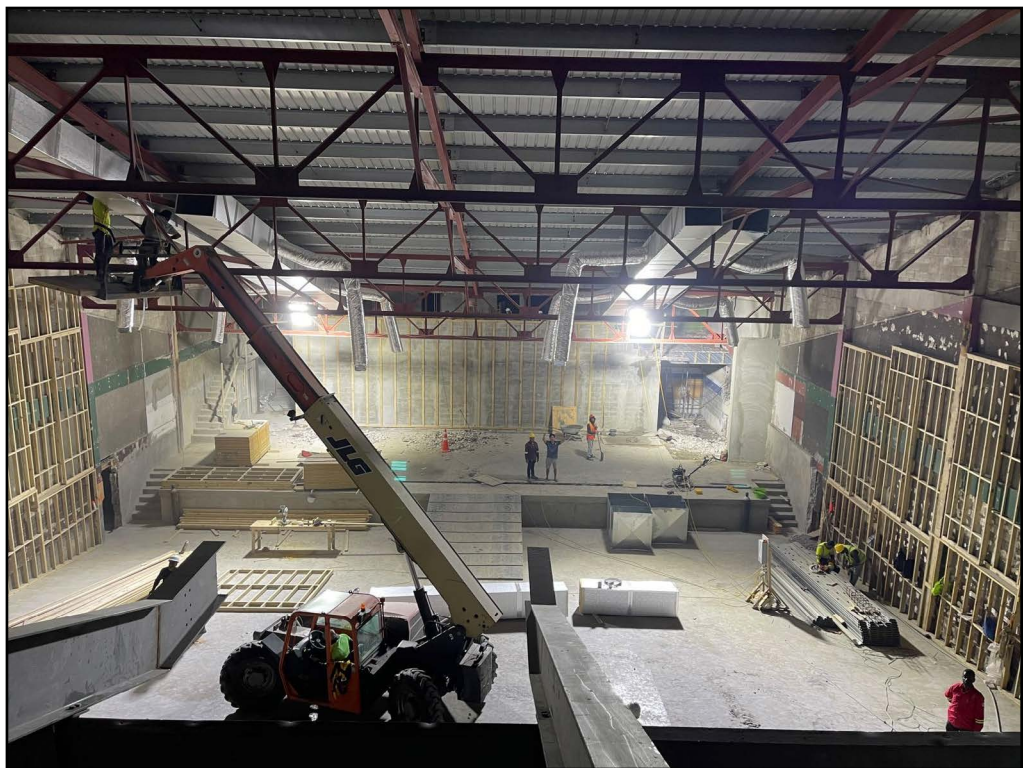


The construction work on the former Deluxe Cinema which is being transformed into the National Performing Arts Centre is on schedule to meet the September completion deadline.

That's the assessment from Chairman of the National Housing Development and Urban Renewal Company and Minister of Social Transformation, Rawdon Turner, who accompanied Prime Minister Gaston Browne on a tour of the construction site on Monday.

Minister Turner reported that the project is on schedule as he gave PM Browne every assurance that the completion deadline will be met. "The last major component remaining is the completion of the raised seating area, the Balcony, which we anticipate will be completed between the end of May or the first week of June. After that, we are moving into the finishing states; these include the completion of the floors, the inner walls and the installation of sound and lighting systems," he revealed.

According to the National Housing



Chair, a team of consultants is expected to arrive in the country later this week to get a first-hand look at the stage area and to work out the schematic for the installation of the sound and lights.

The National Performing Arts Centre will accommodate just under

nine hundred persons. It has already been earmarked to host venue for the opening ceremony for the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in November this year.

"Today, I led Prime Minister Gaston Browne, Ambassador Elizabeth

Makhoul, Consultant with PMI, and senior PMI representatives on a tour of the redevelopment project as we reviewed construction progress and timelines for delivery.

“This project forms part of our wider vision to revitalize St. John’s, modernize public infrastructure, and create greater opportunities for the creative industries in Antigua and Barbuda,” Minister Turner said in a social media post on Monday.

He disclosed that the future National Performing Arts Centre will serve as a modern venue for productions, performances, conferences, and major cultural events as the government continues transforming the nation’s capital city.

The National Housing Development and Urban Renewal Company is financing the refurbishing work on the National Performing Arts Centre.



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Antigua and Barbuda advances CHOGM 2026 preparations following successful advance visits



The Government of Antigua and Barbuda successfully hosted two diplomatic in person advance visits on 28th to 29th April and 5th to 6th May and a virtual advance visit on 11th May as preparations continue for the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) to be held in Antigua and Barbuda from 1st –4th November 2026.

The visits welcomed representatives from 26 Commonwealth countries, alongside officials from the Commonwealth Secretariat, the CHOGM 2026 Taskforce, national agencies, protocol teams, security officials, logistics leads and other key stakeholders.

Delegations received a comprehensive overview of Antigua and Barbuda's preparations to host one of the Commonwealth's most significant diplomatic gatherings. Key areas covered included protocol, accreditation, arrivals and departures, immigration facilitation, accommodation, transportation, media operations, security coordination, special events, and arrangements for the Commonwealth forums and side events.

The in person visits allowed delega-

tions to engage directly with national counterparts, meet their Liaison Officers, review operational arrangements, and raise technical matters related to their participation in CHOGM 2026. These engagements strengthened co-ordination across protocol, logistics, media, transportation and delegate services, while reinforcing Antigua and Barbuda's commitment to delivering a well-organised and welcoming Commonwealth gathering.

The virtual advance engagement ensured that all participating Commonwealth delegations have access to the relevant briefings and preparatory information.

The Honourable E. P. Chet Greene, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Immigration, said:

“These visits have allowed Antigua and Barbuda to demonstrate the advanced stage of our co-ordination, preparation and planning to host CHOGM. Welcoming the Commonwealth family to Antigua and Barbuda later this year is both an honour and a responsibility. We are working diligently to ensure that delegations are received with warmth, efficiency and

excellence as they discuss an important agenda at a critical time globally.”

Sir Vivian Richards, CHOGM 2026 Envoy, said:

“Antigua and Barbuda is preparing to welcome the Commonwealth family with the spirit that defines our people: confidence, resilience, hospitality and pride. CHOGM 2026 is more than a meeting; it is a moment for our nation to stand proudly on the world stage.”

Governor General of Antigua and Barbuda, Sir Rodney Williams, attended the closing reception for both in person advance visits as well as CHOGM Focal Point High Commissioner Karen-Mae Hill, who was part of both in person advance visits.

The Government of Antigua and Barbuda expressed appreciation to all participating delegations, national agencies, technical teams, volunteers, service providers and partners supporting the planning and delivery of CHOGM 2026. Special thanks were extended to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for leading and coordinating the planning and execution of the Advance Visits.

Leader of the Opposition, Four UPP Senators Appointed

The man who will serve as the Leader of the Opposition in the House of Representatives, Jamale Pringle, has been formally appointed by Governor General, Sir Rodney Williams.

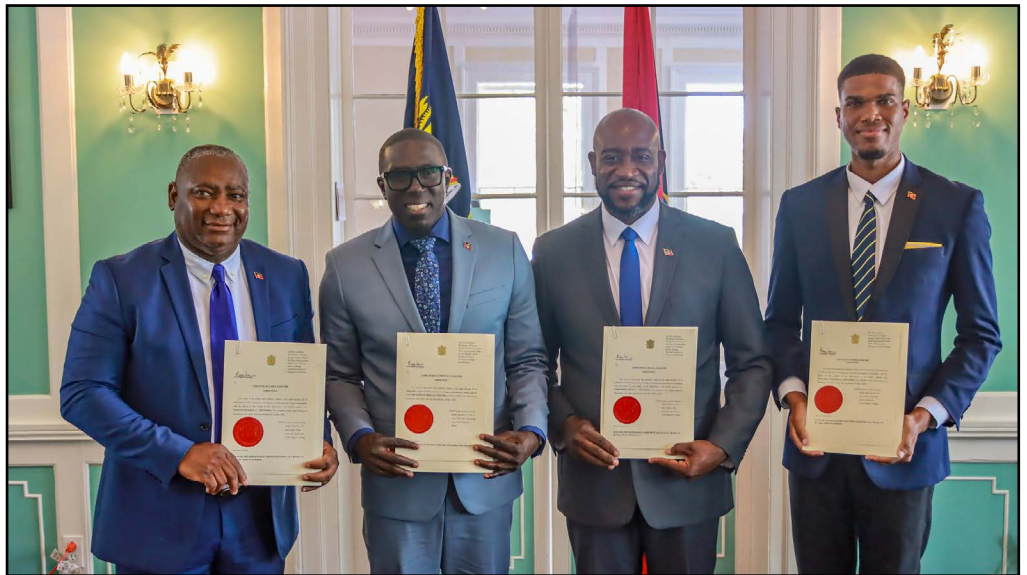
MP Pringle, was the sole member of the United Progressive Party who emerged victorious in the April 30 general elections. As such, the Governor General exercised the power granted to him under the National Constitution to appoint a Leader of the Opposition, even though MP Trevor Walker of the Barbuda's Peoples Movement was also successful in the election.

"In circumstances such as these, the Constitution of Antigua and Barbuda provides clear guidance to the Governor General regarding the appointment of the Leader of the Opposition.

"Section 79(2) of the Constitution states that the Governor General shall appoint the member of the House who appears most likely to command the support of the majority of members who do not support the Government. Where no such member appears to command such support, the Constitution further provides that the Governor General shall appoint the member who appears to command the support of the largest single group of members who do not support the Government," Sir Rodney explained. In arriving at his decision, the Governor General is allowed a fair amount of discretion in making his decision.

The opposition leader was formally sworn in at a ceremony at Government House on Monday. During that ceremony, the opposition UPP named four persons to serve in the Upper House of Parliament, the Senate.

Following the swearing in of ten government senators last Friday, on Monday it was the focus turned to the appointment of the Opposition Leader and the UPP senators. The UPP senators who were appointed by the Governor General Sir Rodney Williams



on the advice of Opposition Leader Jamale Pringle. The four new senators took their oath of office at Government House.

They are; UPP candidate in the St. John's Rural North constituency, Mal-

aka Parker, the candidate for St. John's Rural East, Ashworth Azille, Antigua and Barbuda Workers Union official, Chester Hughes and UPP Public Relations Officer, Jonathan Wehner.



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DCP Quashie Attends ACCP 40th Annual General Meeting & Conference In Suriname



DCP Louisa Quashie

Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP) Louisa Benjamin-Quashie is currently representing the Royal Police Force of Antigua and Barbuda at the 40th Annual General Meeting and Conference of the Association of Caribbean Commissioners of Police (ACCP), being held in Paramaribo, Suriname from May 11–15, 2026.

This marks the first time DCP Quashie is attending the prestigious regional conference in her capacity as Deputy Commissioner of Police.

The official opening ceremony was held on Monday at the Royal Torarica Resort in Paramaribo and brought together Commissioners of Police and





DCP Louisa Quashie (extreme left - seated) with other attendees at ACCP conference in Suriname

senior law enforcement officials from across the Caribbean region, along with government officials and heads of security agencies from Suriname.

The conference is being held under the theme: “Organized Crime: Implications for Regional Development” and will feature a series of plenary sessions, panel discussions, and strategic meetings focused on addressing transnational organized crime, firearms trafficking, cybercrime, intelligence-led policing, regional security cooperation, and the use of artificial intelligence in modern law enforcement.



The ACCP conference continues to serve as an important platform for strengthening regional partnerships, enhancing collaboration among Caribbean law enforcement agencies, and advancing collective strategies to combat emerging security threats affecting the region.

The Royal Police Force of Antigua and Barbuda remains committed to building strong regional and international partnerships aimed at improving public safety, enhancing operational effectiveness, and promoting professional policing standards throughout the Caribbean.

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CTO Secretary General Dona Regis-Prosper To Give Keynote Address At 2026 Caribbean Food Forum CTO Secretary General Dona Regis-Prosper To Give Keynote Address At 2026 Caribbean Food Forum

Dona Regis-Prosper, Secretary-General and CEO of the Caribbean Tourism Organization, will deliver the keynote address at the 2026 Caribbean Food Forum on Thursday, May 21 in Antigua.

The forum, hosted by the Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority (ABTA) and presented by Grace Foods, will take place both virtually and in-person at the John E. St. Luce Finance and Conference Center. It serves as a highlight of Antigua and Barbuda's Annual Culinary Month.

Under the theme "The Future Is Local: Caribbean Food at the Crossroads of Global Impact," the one-day gathering will bring together leaders in tourism, agriculture, culinary arts, hospitality and investment.

Regis-Prosper's keynote will examine regenerative tourism, sustainable food systems and the Caribbean's role in the global food economy, while Narendra Ramgulum, CTO's Deputy Director of Sustainable Tourism, will also speak at the hybrid event, focusing on the importance of agri-tourism and destination branding to drive Caribbean economic growth.

Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority CEO Colin C. James said the forum represents a strategic step forward for the region. "The Caribbean Food Forum is a timely and strategic initiative that aligns with our vision for sustainable tourism development," James said. "Elevating our food systems and connecting them to global opportunity strengthens the value of our destination while creating immersive cultural visitor experiences, and meaningful pathways for local and regional producers and entrepreneurs."

Registration is open until Tuesday, May 19. Participants can reg-



Dona Regis-Prosper, Secretary-General and CEO of the Caribbean Tourism Organization,

ister at https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_pC0oON-wQRsiix3jNGXyTvw or by calling the Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority at 1-268-562-7600.

The programme includes three strategic panel discussions on climate resilience, agri-tourism, diaspora engagement and food entrepreneurship. A lunch and marketplace experience will feature local producers, culi-

nary artisans and Caribbean brands, with additional sessions exploring technology, sustainability and global market access.

Donyelle Bird-Browne, USA senior business development manager for strategic partnerships and organizer of the forum, said the event aims to deliver tangible results. "CTO's participation and endorsement underscores the critical role of food systems in shaping the future of Caribbean tourism and economic resilience," Bird-Browne said.

"This platform is designed to move beyond just conversation, and bring together policy, innovation, culture, and investment to open the doors to tangible opportunities for the region."

Organizers expect the forum to produce a white paper with key recommendations and actionable roadmaps for regional collaboration.

For more information on Antigua and Barbuda Culinary Month, visit <https://www.antiguabarbudaculinarymonth.com/>.



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US Makes Clear Its Policy Regarding Immigration

Press Statement from US State Department



The United States did not participate in the International Migration Review Forum and will not support the May 8 “progress” declaration.

The United States has persistently objected to the United Nations’ efforts to advocate and facilitate replacement immigration in the United States and across the broader West. In 2017, President Trump rejected the Global Compact on Migration. The intervening years have confirmed the wisdom of that opposition.

As Secretary Rubio said, opening our doors to mass migration was a grave mistake that threatens the cohesion of our societies and the future of our peoples. In recent years, Americans witnessed first-hand how mass immigration laid waste to our communities: crime and chaos at the border, states of emergency in major cities, and billions of taxpayer dollars funneled towards hotels, plane tickets, cell phones and cash cards for migrants. Much of this was driven by UN agencies and their partners, which did not just facilitate the invasion of our country, but proceeded to redistribute our own peo-

ple’s wealth and resources to millions of foreigners from the worst corners of

the world.

There was nothing “safe,” “orderly,” or “regular” about any of this. And the costs were borne primarily by working Americans forced to compete for scarce jobs, housing, and social services. The UN has little to say about them.

President Trump is focused on the interests of Americans, not foreigners or globalist bureaucrats. The United States will not support a process that imposes, overtly or by stealth, guidelines, standards, or commitments that constrain the American people’s sovereign, democratic right to make decisions in the best interests of our country.

Our goal is not to “manage” migration, but to foster remigration.

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A – alone
 Babies should sleep alone, without sharing a bed with adults, other children, or pets. The sleep space should be free of pillows, blankets, toys, and bumpers.

B – back
 Always place babies on their back for every sleep - naps and at night. This position significantly reduces the risk of sleep-related incidents.

C – crib (or Safe Sleep Space)
 Babies should sleep in a crib, bassinet, or play pen that meets safety standards, with a firm mattress and a fitted sheet only.

Jamilla Kirwan Returns to The Senate As The Independent Member

Jamilla Kirwan will return to the Senate following her re-appointment as Independent Senator by the Governor General, Sir Rodney Williams.

The Constitution provides for the Governor General to appoint a single senator in the Upper House in his own discretion.

Kirwan will receive her letters of appointment and be administered the oath at a ceremony slated for Government House on Tuesday.

She previously served in the Senate following the resignation of then Independent Senator Kiz Johnson. She is a communications specialist attached to the Calvin Ayre Group.



Labour Day Cheerleader Winners Announced

The Antigua and Barbuda Labour Party has announced the names of the winners of the Cheerleaders' competition held during the annual march on Labour Day, May 4.

Coordinator of the event, Sharilyn James said the overall winner's prize went to the group out of St Philip North, First-runner up went to St. John's City East with the third place going to St. Mary's South.

The winner cheerleader group received a cash prize of \$1,500.00, 1st runner up, \$1,000.00 and third runner up, \$500.00.



The competition continues to grow with more and more of the constituencies training and preparing cheerleader groups to represent them in the competition.



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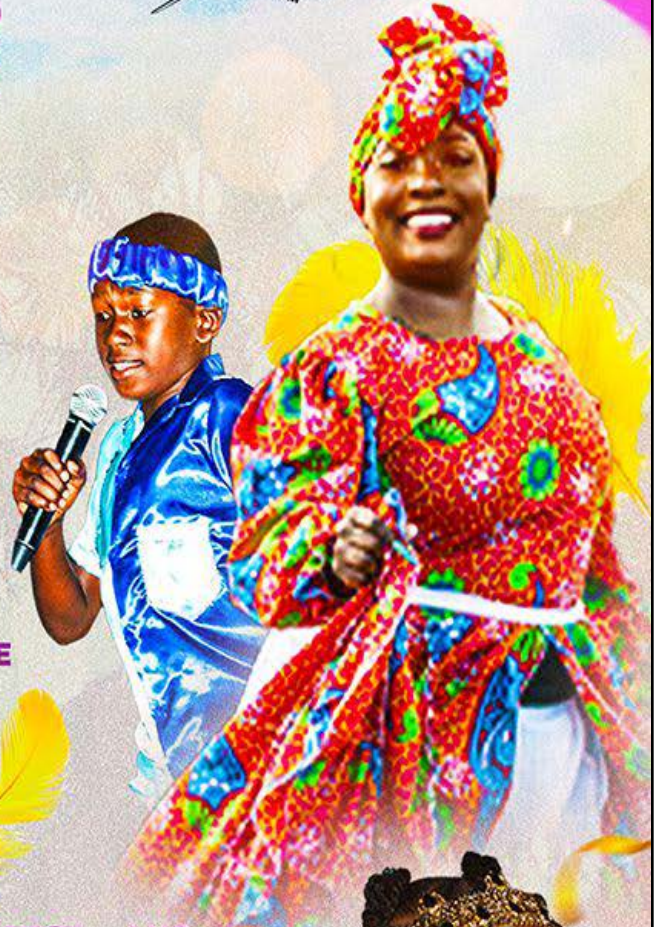
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4. Drawing will take place on **Wednesday, 13th May, 2026** on ABS Television Live to determine the 10 (ten) successful applicants.
5. For additional information, please feel free to contact the AT&LU at Tel: 1 (268) 462-0090/562-2501

Vilonique Chalmers

Testimonial on the AT&LU Scholarship Offer



Vilonique Chalmers

(Shop Steward for the WIOC Friar's Hill Service Station)

My name is Vilonique Chalmers and I am a shop steward for the West Indies Oil Friar's Hill Service Station Ltd, formerly Larrys. I wish to take this time to show my appreciation to the Antigua and Barbuda Trade and Labour Union (AT&LU) for the sponsorship that I was provided with to pursue professional studies. I did the Project Management Course at the University of the West Indies Global Campus. It was something new to me, but I challenged it and got through successfully. So, I am encouraging everyone to take that leap of faith and try one of these courses that they are being offered.

Once again, thanks to the AT&LU, I appreciate it.

Commentary

Why Elections Are Rarely Won on Election Day- What leadership, strategy, and Caribbean experience teach us about outcomes.



By Garfield Joseph, MBA

Like many Antiguans, I spent part of Sunday listening to *The Big Issues* as commentators and texters reflected on the recent general election. The discussion touched on familiar themes—momentum, messaging, leadership, voter mood, organisation, and whether events late in the campaign truly changed the outcome.

Listening carefully to that discussion, I was struck by how closely it mirrored conversations I have had over the years in boardrooms, classrooms, and publicsector meetings. Across sectors, the same question keeps recurring: are outcomes decided at the last moment, or long before anyone realises it?

An uncomfortable truth emerges when we reflect honestly on both business and politics: **most elections are decided long before the ballots are cast.**

The same is true in business, sport, and everyday organisational life. Outcomes are rarely accidental. They are usually the product of **strategy**, applied over time, and made real through **leadership**.

The Supermarket Lesson

Every supermarket in Antigua and Barbuda operates under broadly similar conditions: heavy dependence on

imports, rising costs, thin margins, and a small market where reputation travels quickly. Customers value trust, familiarity, and reliability—often as much as price.

A supermarket owner who pretends they are operating in Toronto or Miami will fail quickly. The successful ones start by accepting reality and then make deliberate choices about how they will compete.

That process is called strategy. Stripped of jargon, it simply means **making clear choices under real-world constraints.**

Strategy Always Starts with Reality

In strategic management, the first rule is brutal honesty: you do not get to choose your environment—you only get to respond to it.

Across the Caribbean, we have seen both businesses and political movements struggle when they ignored economic anxiety, underestimated fatigue, or assumed loyalty without earning it. Strategy has a way of exposing denial.

There Are Only Three Ways to Compete

Whether in business or elections, there are only three primary ways an organisation can compete.

One is to **win by efficiency or stability**—offering lower risk, predictability, or reassurance. Another is to **win by being meaningfully different**—standing for values, ideas, or capabilities others do not offer. **The third is to win by focus**—serving a specific group better than anyone else.

A supermarket in Antigua learns quickly that it cannot realistically win by being the cheapest. Its strategy must be built around difference or focus—trust, service, and local relevance.

The same logic applies to elections. You cannot be the voice of stability and radical change at the same time. You cannot be everything to everyone.

Trying to do so usually results in confusion—and voters, like customers, are remarkably quick at sensing confusion.

Supporting Actions Are Not Strategy

One of the recurring themes raised during postelection discussions is activity: rallies held, money spent, messages repeated. But activity is not the same as strategy.

In supermarkets, promotions, digital ordering, supplier arrangements, and efficiency drives matter—but they do not explain why customers choose one store over another. In elections, rallies, slogans, social media campaigns, and advertising serve the same purpose. They support a strategy; they do not replace it.

Many Caribbean elections have been lost not because people failed to work hard, but because there was motion without direction—noise without strategic clarity.

Leadership Is the Bridge Between Strategy and Reality

Strategy does not live on paper. It lives—or dies—through leadership.

Effective leaders tell the truth about reality, make hard choices, accept tradeoffs, and maintain discipline under pressure. They align people and institutions around a clear direction and resist the temptation to chase every new distraction.

Across the Caribbean, the difference between success and failure—whether in government, business, or public institutions—often comes down to leadership consistency. When leadership wavers, strategy unravels.

Lessons from Around the Caribbean

From Jamaica to Barbados, Trinidad to St. Lucia, experience across the region shows a similar pattern. Momentum without strategy fades. Clear

positioning, supported by disciplined leadership, tends to grow stronger over time.

In small societies like ours, memory is long. Trust accumulates—or erodes—over years, not weeks.

Back to Antigua: The Quiet Lesson

Antigua and Barbuda's recent election, like those before it, was not shaped only by electionday speeches or lastminute mobilisation. It reflected deeper forces: longterm perceptions, trust built or lost, strategic clarity or confusion, and leadership consistency.

This is not about praise or blame. It is about understanding how outcomes are formed.

A Final Thought

Whether one is running a supermarket, leading a business, teaching a

class, or participating in public life, the lesson is the same:

Strategy determines direction. Leadership determines whether strategy lives or dies.

Elections, like businesses, are rarely won at the last moment. They are usually won—or lost—by decisions made long before anyone notices.

Understanding that may not change the past, but it can help persons and businesses to improve their performance over time.

About the Author

Garfield Joseph is the Executive Director of a public sector organization in Antigua and Barbuda, where he serves as the senior operational leader

responsible for translating government policy, strategy, and national objectives into daytoday action. His work spans strategic execution, financial oversight, stakeholder engagement, and advising senior decisionmakers on economic and development matters.

He has also served as an Adjunct Lecturer at the University of the West Indies Five Islands Campus, where he taught capstone courses in Business Strategy and Policy and Business, Government and Society. With experience across both the public and private sectors, he writes frequently on investment, entrepreneurship, and longterm decisionmaking, with a particular interest in helping ordinary people understand complex issues in practical, accessible ways.

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Statement from the Embassy of Cuba in Antigua and Barbuda



On May 1st, millions of Cubans across the island marched together to denounce, with one voice, the genocidal economic, financial, commercial, and energy blockade imposed by the U.S. government. Washington's response to this demonstration in defense of sovereignty was swift. That same day, accompanied by Secretary of State Marco Rubio, the current occupant of the White House signed a new executive order with further measures aimed at further strangling the Cuban economy and people. As if that weren't enough, he accompanied this decision with renewed threats of military aggression against a small but dignified country like Cuba. "As soon as we're done with Iran, we'll take care of Cuba," President Donald Trump declared.

The executive order of May 1st represents an extraordinary escalation of US aggression against Cuba. It is a criminal act, in flagrant violation of international law, the principles and Charter of the UN, and numerous UN resolutions. It signifies a qualitative expansion of the blockade by incorporating the application of additional (or secondary's in the terms of the executive order) sanctions against entities in third countries that operate or have operated in Cuba. This dimension surpasses the extraterritorial effect of the blockade as it has been seen until now.

These new measures, reflects the worrying and dangerous insistence of

the US on imposing on all countries, their companies, organizations, and individuals, the obligation to comply with the economic blockade against Cuba, force them to join the criminal and open economic war that is having such a negative impact on the lives of more than 10 million Cubans living on the island. It seeks to impose by force the will of the US government over the sovereign prerogatives of each state.

For Cuba, this represents an immense danger, adding to the existing blockade that has been in place for over six decades and the energy blockade implemented in January of this year. In an increasingly interconnected and interdependent world, no country, large or small, regardless of its level of economic development, has demonstrated the capacity to manage its economy and ensure its survival under conditions of forced disconnection and total isolation from the international economy, which is precisely the aim of the US aggression against Cuba.

The US government is using every means possible to promote a scenario of total collapse in the economic and social living standards of the Cuban population, in a way that the White House can be able to sustain their slanderous campaign of portraying Cuba as a failed state, and to justify a military aggression as a supposed "humanitar-



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ian and liberating action.” In addition, the US government, and especially its Secretary of State, insists on repeating continuously, the lie that Cuba represents a danger to US national security. Cuba is not an enemy of the United States. Cuba is a peace-loving nation that poses no threat to U.S. national security. Anyone who says otherwise, is either lying dishonestly, demonstrating ignorance, or hasn’t seen a map to understand that Cuba is not, and cannot pose, a threat to the United States

We are striving to prevent an escalation of tensions and to convince the United States of the error of its plans for aggression. That is why we are also warning of the real dangers of a U.S. military operation against Cuba, which would have unimaginable consequences in terms of loss of life and the destruction of years of work and effort by our people. Furthermore, its harmful impact would extend far beyond Cuba’s borders, directly affecting the other countries in our region.

The draconian measures of collective punishment against the noble Cuban people will only achieve their intended destructive effect if the US succeeds in intimidating and enlisting the rest of the world in this criminal policy. Their impact will depend on the position each country takes: whether to comply with the unilateral US executive order and leave its citizens, organizations, and businesses unprotected, or to defend its sovereign prerogatives and the right to engage in commercial, economic and collaboration relations with Cuba according to its own will.

Cuba calls upon the governments and peoples of the world to raise their voices in a sovereign manner and denounce the attempts by the US government to try to subjugate a small nation through genocidal policies of economic and social strangulation, and to unequivocally reject the threats to impose its imperial interests of domination by the use of military force.

The recent economic measures adopted by the Trump Administration, will not bring about the surrender of Cuba that the US seeks, just as the constant

threats of military aggression will not achieve it. Cuba is not, nor will it ever be another US possession; it will not become a US neocolonial domain. Cuba will fight at whatever cost is necessary to fully protect its rights as a sovereign state, free from any US tu-

telage or domination. There should be no doubt whatsoever that Cuba and its rebellious people will surely exercise, to the fullest extent, the sacred right to self-defense enshrined in the UN Charter.



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*Delivery of course subject to availability of tutor and required number of students **Page 2**

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Flow urges Caribbean focus on fair digital contribution from global tech giants

As demand for streaming, social media, cloud services and digital content continues to rise across the region, Flow is encouraging a wider Caribbean discussion on how major global technology companies can more meaningfully support the infrastructure that powers the online experience of millions of consumers.

According to Flow, the discussion was raised by Stephen Price, vice president and general manager of Flow, during a recent regional panel discussion on utilities regulation and resilience at the Organization of Caribbean Utilities Regulators Conference.

Price said Caribbean consumers are among the most enthusiastic adopters of global digital platforms, using them daily for communication, business, education and entertainment. However, he noted that the networks carrying that growing traffic require constant investment, upgrades and protection—particularly in island states with higher operating costs and increased climate vulnerability.

“The Caribbean has embraced the digital world in a major way, and consumers benefit greatly from the platforms and services now available to them,” said Price. “At the same time, we must also consider how the infrastructure that makes all of this possible continues to be strengthened and sustained.”

He said telecom operators across the region continue to invest heavily in fibre networks, mobile capacity, resilience systems and rural expansion,



often while managing the realities of smaller populations, dispersed geography and weather-related risk.

“In markets like ours, building and maintaining world-class networks requires significant commitment and long-term capital,” Price said. “That is why the conversation around fair contribution is both timely and important.”

He further noted that the revenue measures announced by Minister Fayval Williams to capture tax revenue from online digital services, could be a method used by regional governments to support universal access, and that once implemented by the Ministry of Finance, could become a model for the entire region to support the growth of the Caribbean’s digital ecosystem.

Price stressed that the discussion is not about limiting innovation or discouraging global investment, but about ensuring the digital ecosystem remains balanced, inclusive and pre-

pared for future growth.

“We welcome innovation, competition and the many opportunities these services bring,” he said. “What we are advocating for is a practical conversation on shared responsibility—where those benefiting most from network demand also help support the continued evolution of those networks.”

He added that any approach should be guided through partnership among governments, regulators and industry stakeholders, with a regional lens that reflects the Caribbean’s unique realities.

“The Caribbean will always be stronger when we move together,” Price said. “A coordinated regional approach can help create fair, modern frameworks that protect consumers, encourage investment and support long-term digital development.”

Price noted that as technologies such as AI, smart devices and immersive content increase data demand even further, strengthening digital infrastructure will become even more critical to national competitiveness.

“The future economy will run on connectivity,” he said. “Ensuring that our networks remain strong, resilient and ready for what comes next is in everyone’s interest.”

Flow said it remains committed to partnering with public and private stakeholders to advance digital progress, expand access and help shape a stronger connected future for Jamaica and the wider Caribbean. (Jamaica Observer)



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Mexico eyes Tobago route: Ambassador pushes for direct flights



AS he demits office, the final project for Mexican Ambassador to Trinidad and Tobago, Víctor Hugo Morales Meléndez, is the introduction of direct flights between Mexico and Tobago.

During a visit to Tobago a few months ago, Morales Meléndez said part of a discussion with Tobago House of Assembly Chief Secretary, Farley Augustine, included attracting more Mexican tourists to Tobago.

“We were talking about the possibility of attracting more Mexican tourists because Mexicans like to know new places, new adventures, new activities and Tobago offers many possibilities for Mexicans, so it’s necessary to have, if it’s possible, direct flights from, for example, Cancun to Tobago,” said the Ambassador during an interview with Express Business at the Embassy in Port of Spain.

In this regard, Morales Meléndez said this was why negotiations of a bilateral aviation treaty with Tobago and the Mexican government are ongoing.

“We hope we advance in this possibility because it’s about culture; it’s very important for us to promote the Mexican culture here in T&T. We have had the last two years, a Mexican concert, it was amazing. The first was with the Philharmonic Orchestra of T&T in NAPA last year, with a mariachi group,” he recalled. Morales Meléndez said there were many activities in Tobago, especially for Mexicans, as he said they are curious, adventurous people by nature. “There are many activities to do in Tobago. Before the independence of the United States, Tobago established the first natural park, the Tobago Main Ridge Forest. That place is incredible. I saw many international visitors watching birds, for example, which is important, it’s relevant as a tourist attraction,” he said.

The Ambassador continued: “There are also many waterfalls in the park that can attract hikers. Tobago also has some of the most beautiful beaches in the Caribbean. Pigeon Point is really amazing. What is also important is the

historical heritage in Tobago, which is Fort George; the view from there is so nice. It’s incredible.” Morales Meléndez noted the drop in exported products from T&T to Mexico such as ammonia and gas and something like that stressed the need for more product sharing between the two countries to boost a T&T presence in Mexico and vice versa.

“We are working very hard for that. We have a strong presence and approach with the different chambers, not only industrial and commercial chambers here in T&T, but also very relevant companies in T&T to have the possibility to buy and sell more goods and services in T&T, also in Mexico.”

The Ambassador also reflected on the work he did in the T&T agricultural landscape. He said the project included Mexico, the Food and Agriculture Organisation and Caricom. “We improved the situation in 13 Caribbean countries, including T&T, in order to improve the aquaculture and the hydroponic systems,” he said.

Morales Meléndez said this was one of the most significant projects he’s done in his four years as ambassador here. “I think it was the implementation of the project of Caribbean resilience for Mexico, FAO and Caricom, because we were very close to the people...the producers of aquaculture. We visited different aquaculture farms to talk to the people about how to use what was implemented,” he highlighted.

This was only the first part of the project, though, as he noted that this extended beyond farms and schools, which also benefited from the investment in local aquaculture.

“I think it was amazing. It’s visiting schools and applying the hydroponic systems with young people in order to teach them. It was secondary school

Regional News



students, and they asked, ‘Why is this important? What is aquaculture?’ I think this was relevant to introduce new agricultural methods with technology.” In addition to agriculture, Morales Meléndez highlighted that the establishment of a Geospatial Observation Centre (GOC), which was a collaborative initiative between the Government of Mexico and The University of the West Indies (The UWI), St Augustine.

Morales Meléndez also commended T&T on its strict democratic practices. “To me, to observe the development of the (general) election, it was a very positive surprise for me. I understand that T&T has a strong democracy, and that is very important. And in the world, maybe not many people know this, but when you are around the world, and if you talk about Latin American, Caribbean states, they say, ‘Okay, maybe they don’t have democracy or real democracy.’ But here it’s impressive how you implement all the proceedings for the election, the results, the acceptance of the new Prime Minister, the results being released immediately and the process of the change of power. It was really impeccable,” he said.

Pointing to the 60th anniversary of bilateral relations between T&T and Mexico, Morales Meléndez said this was an opportunity to rethink the relationship, particularly around political dialogue, given the geopolitical situation.

“The situation in the hemisphere is changing, but we need to talk about that. It’s necessary to equilibrate our visions and positions; also, here in the Caribbean, a lot of things are changing, particularly in the presence of the US Army. I think the political dialogue is relevant between Mexico and T&T as they are both Caribbean States and it’s relevant to have international co-operation.” Before it became one of the largest manufacturing countries in the world, Mexico was a predominantly oil and gas-dependent nation.

Morales Meléndez said the switch came after the massive price dips in the

80s and 90s. “In the first years of the 1990s, the oil reserves were depleted, and we said it was risky to depend on oil and gas then. Then we said we have many possibilities to change our model, firstly because we are neighbours with one of the most important economies in the world; we share a border with the United States,” he said.

Morales Meléndez noted that it was easy to tap into the nearby US markets-California, Texas, among others-the country just needed to attract

more foreign direct investments.

Now, its top exports include vehicles (US\$166.5 billion in 2023), electrical machinery (US\$103.4 billion), and general machinery (US\$93.5 billion).

The country also manufactures its own auto, aviation and computer parts for export. Morales Meléndez said the hope is to manufacture an entire aircraft in Mexico. (Trinidad Express)

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Dated the 26th day of April, 2026

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Ricky Howe
268-722-3934

.....
Jennifer Peters
770-6537

Peace plea: Gonsalves urges Guyana, Venezuela to accept ICJ decision on Essequibo

LEADER Caribbean statesman Dr Ralph Gonsalves is hoping that Guyana and Venezuela will abide by the decision of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) on the decades-old Essequibo dispute that at times threatened to spill over into military action.

Gonsalves, the former prime minister of St Vincent and Grenadines who brought then Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro and Guyanese President Irfaan Ali together in December 2023 as tensions heightened between both countries over the disputed oil-rich border region, shared his thoughts on the matter at last week's sitting of the Jamaica Observer Press Club.

"I am hopeful that whatever the result of the ICJ, that both sides will abide by the determination of the ICJ. But even after there is a determination by the ICJ I would expect that there would be discussions between Venezuela and Guyana for matters which arise out of the decision," Gonsalves told

Observer editors and reporters.

"I don't know what all the dimensions of the ruling of the ICJ would be but I can envisage that if there is any matter which is left undecided, that it may well still call for conversations," he added.

Last Monday, the ICJ opened a week of hearings between the two countries over the row.

Guyana's Foreign Minister Hugh Hilton Todd opened the proceedings, telling ICJ judges that the case had "an existential quality for Guy-



ana" with more than 70 per cent of its territory at stake.

"For the Guyanese people, it is tragic even to think about having our country dismembered by stripping from us a vast majority of our land, together with its people, its history, its traditions and customs, its resources and precious ecology," Todd said.

However, last Wednesday Venezuela's representative, Samuel Reinaldo Moncada Acosta, dismissed that argument.

"The characterisation by Guyana of an alleged threat to its territorial integrity or to its sovereign territory constitutes a flagrant misinterpretation, a deliberately misleading presentation of both facts and law," Acosta told the United Nations' top court.

He argued that Venezuela's historical rights to the Essequibo "are inalienable" and the South American country "is determined to defend them peacefully".

Caracas and Georgetown have been wrangling over the region since the 1800s, with the dispute intensifying after ExxonMobil discovered massive offshore oil deposits

a decade ago, giving Guyana the largest crude oil reserves per capita in the world.

Guyana currently administers the Essequibo region which comprises more than two-thirds of that Caricom member State and is home to 125,000 of its 800,000 citizens.

However, neighbouring Venezuela claims the territory, which runs roughly along the western side of an eponymous river over an area of 62,000 square miles.

The ICJ has been asked to rule on the validity of the border established between the two countries in 1899 under British colonial rule.

Venezuela argues that the border should be drawn in accordance with a later document from 1966 signed before Guyana gained its independence.

It says that the Essequibo River, located much farther east than the current border, is the natural frontier, as it was in 1777 under Spanish colonial rule.

In 2023 when Maduro started sabre-rattling over the disputed region, Gonsalves, who at the time was St Vin-

cent and the Grenadines prime minister, arranged a summit between the Venezuelan president and his Guyanese counterpart at Argyle International Airport in St Vincent.

Both leaders signed what was labelled the Argyle declaration in which they agreed to avoid any use of force directly or indirectly in the dispute.

However, in 2024 the Venezuelan Parliament approved a Bill to make Essequibo Venezuela's 24th state. But that move was rejected as invalid by Guyana and other nations.

Venezuela subsequently announced it would include the region in gubernatorial elections on May 25, 2025, prompting Guyana to approach the ICJ for relief.

Venezuela has insisted that the ICJ has no power to rule on the case, and last week Acosta reiterated that position in his testimony to the court.

Noting Venezuela's stance on the jurisdiction of the ICJ, Gonsalves said Caricom is hoping that the matter will be settled peacefully.

He said he is willing, if asked, to act as interlocutor between both countries.

"What I want to see is peace between two important neighbours, and what I want to see is that justice is determined in accordance with the principles of international law adjudicated," Gonsalves said.

The court's decisions are binding, but it has no power to ensure that they are upheld. (Jamaica Observer)

Gas price pledge: Middle East tension won't cause Jamaicans to pay more for LNG, says Excelerate President Kobos

THE spike in oil prices sparked by the conflict in the Middle East is not expected to affect the price of liquefied natural gas (LNG) in Jamaica based on contracts now in place with the island's prime supplier Excelerate Energy.

The World Bank Group has projected that oil prices will this year hit their highest level since Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2022, as the war in the Middle East sends severe shocks through global commodity markets.

According to the World Bank Group, overall commodity prices are forecast to rise 16 per cent in 2026, driven by soaring energy and fertiliser prices and record-high prices for several key metals.

Jamaica has not been spared, with prices at the gas pumps now some 20 per cent higher than when the conflict started on February 28.

But in an exclusive interview with the Jamaica Observer, president and chief executive officer of Excelerate Energy Steven Kobos said local entities have seen stability in the price of LNG and this will remain.

According to Kobos, the price volatility in oil is a reminder that LNG is affordable when entities contract for it right away.

"Our business model is to be operationally as flawless as possible, have the highest possible reliability, and then we simply believe in doing what we say we will do. We have contracted prices for LNG for our customers and that's what we have been delivering at," said Kobos.

"We haven't tried to take their LNG and run with it to another market. We have been doing what we say we will do. So, frankly, the price that people are paying right now is no higher because of the war," added Kobos.

He pointed out that entities which go out in the spot market now to buy LNG would pay more because markets that



are feeling the need with the absence of all those Persian Gulf volumes are driving the price up, but that is not impacting the price here in Jamaica.

"We have contracts, we are honouring those contracts, and the price of those contracts is not impacted by this [war in the Middle East]," said Kobos.

He noted that while the Title Transfer Facility (TTF) — the primary benchmark index for wholesale natural gas prices in Europe — is skyrocketing, based on the war, that will not happen in Jamaica.

Kobos said while what is happening in the Middle East is important globally, Excelerate remains committed to its goal of providing energy security to countries, just as it is trying to provide energy security for Jamaica.

He said fears that Excelerate could divert LNG earmarked for Jamaica to another country, where it could be sold at a higher price, are unfounded.

We will not... because — and you may find this hard to believe — but as a company we like to be boring, and we like to be reliable. Some people say boring is the new sexy, because that's who we are," said Kobos who pointed out that he has already told the Jamaican Government that Excelerate is a reliable partner and has challenged people to speak with governments in

the countries in which it has operated for years who will confirm this.

Kobos pointed out that Excelerate was quick on the ground in Jamaica after Hurricane Melissa hit last October, working quietly to provide relief and support as although it is an American company, which operates all over the world, it sees itself as a Jamaican firm.

"We want to support the markets we are in when they face extraordinary circumstances, that's how you prove yourself. We believe strongly that you are judged by your deeds, not by your words, and it was obvious that we wanted to act and be judged by our actions, not by our words.

"We were fortunate we had other assets that happened to be in the Caribbean and we were able to immediately load up relief supplies in Panama on the

Excelerate Shenandoah, covered its decks and sailed it into Kingston with relief supplies. All told, we mobilised more than US\$1.3 million of funding and relief supplies and we had it in the country very quickly," said Kobos.

He added that Excelerate considers itself part of the Jamaican community with a responsibility to provide support in times of need. (Jamaica Observer)

US and French nationals test positive for hantavirus after leaving ship



An American and a French national who have returned to their home countries having left a cruise ship hit by a deadly outbreak of hantavirus have tested positive, authorities say.

In total seven cases of hantavirus linked to the MV Hondius have been confirmed, with two other cases suspected, the World Health Organization (WHO) said on Monday.

The US health department said a second American national on the repatriation flight had also shown mild symptoms, adding that both passengers had travelled back in “biocontainment units out of an abundance of caution”.

French Health Minister Stéphanie Rist said a woman was isolating in Paris and her health was deteriorating, with 22 contacts traced.

Three passengers have died after travelling on the ship, two of whom were confirmed to have had the virus.

The WHO said the person who is believed to have been the first to be infected in the outbreak died before he could be tested.

Two other British nationals with confirmed cases are currently being treated in the Netherlands and South Africa.

Hantaviruses are usually carried by rodents, but human transmission of the Andes strain - which the World Health Organization (WHO) believes was contracted by some of the Dutch ship’s passengers while in South America - is possible.

Symptoms can include fever, extreme fatigue, muscle aches, stomach pain, vomiting, diarrhoea and shortness of breath.

Officials say the risk of a major outbreak is very low.

More than 90 passengers of the MV Hondius ship, currently docked in Spain’s Canary Islands, are being repatriated.

In its latest update from Tenerife on Monday, Spanish officials said 54 passengers and crew were still on board the ship. Spanish Health Minister Mónica García said six of those were passengers: four Australians, one Briton and one New Zealander.

Some 22 people would disembark the ship to fly to the Netherlands on Monday, she said - including the Australians who had been expected to be flown home directly but whose plane could not be guaranteed to arrive on time.

The MV Hondius was then expected to leave for the Netherlands later on Monday, she said.

Four Canadian passengers, meanwhile, have landed in Victoria, British Columbia, on Sunday evening after taking a chartered flight from Tenerife to Bagotville, Quebec. Authorities said they would be self-isolating and monitored for at least three weeks.

In its statement early on Monday, the US Department of Health and Human Services said all 17 US citizens on Sunday’s flight would undergo “clinical assessment” at a medical facility in Nebraska. A British national living in the US was also repatriated alongside them.

Seven other US passengers had already returned home and were being monitored in their home states.

Before the American case was confirmed, WHO head Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus warned that the decision by the US not to follow his organisation’s guidelines over the hantavirus outbreak “may have risks”.

The WHO has recommended 42 days of isolation for those leaving the MV Hondius.

But Dr Jay Bhattacharya, the acting head of the US Centers for Disease Control (CDC) said he did not want to cause public panic, insisting that human-to-human transmission was rare and it should not be treated like the Covid virus.

Cruise ship passengers were pictured wearing blue gowns, bouffant caps, and medical face masks as they disembarked on Sunday at the port of Granddilla de Abona in Tenerife.

On Sunday, a plane carrying 20 British nationals arrived in the UK.

The passengers flew into Manchester Airport on a chartered flight from Tenerife and were taken to Arrowse

International

AROUND THE WORLD



Park Hospital in Wirral, Merseyside, to isolate for 72 hours. None of them have reported symptoms.

In Spain, 14 Spaniards flown to Madrid now face mandatory quarantine at a military hospital. Another two evacuation flights are scheduled for Monday afternoon.

A separate flight with 26 passengers and crew - including eight Dutch nationals - arrived in the Netherlands on Sunday.

Earlier on Monday, Ukraine said four of its citizens would remain on board the MV Hondius as part of the crew to ensure the ship's transfer to the Netherlands. Upon arrival, the foreign ministry said, they would be expected to quarantine at a medical facility.

Another Ukrainian national was expected to leave the ship as part of the partial crew evacuation on a flight to the Netherlands.

At present, no signs of illness have been recorded among the Ukrainians, the ministry added.

In a video message released on Monday by Oceanwide Expeditions, which operates the MV Hondius, the captain said the crew's thoughts were "with the ones that are now longer with us".

Jan Dobrogowski also said that "the past few weeks have been extremely challenging to us all", while praising the patience, discipline and kindness shown on board the vessel.

During her update, the Spanish health minister also said that one of the police officers involved in the ongoing repatriation operation had died of cardiac arrest.

Map showing the route of the cruise ship MV Hondius across the South Atlantic Ocean with a timeline of incidents. The ship departs Ushuaia, Argentina on 1 April. On 11 April, the first passenger dies at sea. The route continues north east toward Africa. On 24 April, the wife of the deceased passenger is flown from St Helena to South Africa. A marker near South Africa notes: 26 April, a woman dies in

Johannesburg; 27 April, a second sick passenger is flown to hospital. On 2 May, another passenger dies onboard. On 3 May, the ship arrives at Cape Verde. A final note says the ship has arrived in Tenerife on 10 May. The route is shown as a red line with arrows and black dots marking key locations.

An elderly Dutch man was the first passenger who died on board the MV Hondius on 11 April. He had earlier developed symptoms - but is considered a probable case as no tests have been carried out.

His wife - a 69-year-old woman - left the ship on the island of St Helena on 24 April and flew to South Africa. She died two days later in a clinic in Johannesburg.

A German woman died on board the cruise ship on 2 May.

The two women are both confirmed cases.

The MV Hondius departed Argentina's southern city of Ushuaia on 1 April, and is currently docked at the port of Grandilla, southern Tenerife. (BBC)



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Moscow marks Victory Day with a scaled down Red Square parade under tight security

Russian President Vladimir Putin said Saturday that the conflict in Ukraine is nearing its end after he oversaw a military parade on Red Square commemorating the defeat of Nazi Germany in World War II, a show that didn't include heavy weapons for the first time in nearly two decades.

Security was tight in Moscow as Putin and several foreign leaders attended the parade, which was scaled down even as a US-brokered three-day ceasefire eased concerns about possible Ukrainian attempts to disrupt the festivities.

Putin, in power for more than a quarter-century, has used Victory Day, Russia's most important secular holiday, to showcase the country's military might and rally support for his military action in Ukraine, now in its fifth year.

Speaking at the parade, Putin hailed Russian troops fighting in Ukraine, declaring that they "face an aggressive force that is armed and supported by the entire bloc of NATO," and are fighting for a "just cause".

"Victory has always been and will be ours," Putin said, as columns of troops lined up on Red Square.

Talking to reporters later, he accused Western "globalist elites" of arming Ukraine to defeat and break up Russia and declared that "I think the matter is coming to an end".

But in a notable shift this year, the parade took place without tanks, missiles and other equipment put on display every year since 2008, aside from a traditional flyover of combat jets.

Officials explained the change of format by the "current operational situation" and the threat of Ukrainian attacks. The authorities also ordered



restrictions on all mobile Internet access and text messaging services in the Russian capital on Saturday. Putin told reporters after the parade that it didn't feature heavy weaponry because the military needs it on the battlefield in Ukraine.

For the first time, Saturday's parade featured troops from North Korea, a tribute to Pyongyang that sent its soldiers to fight alongside Moscow forces to repel a Ukrainian incursion into Russia's Kursk region.

Russia declared a unilateral ceasefire for Friday and Saturday, while Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy announced a truce that was supposed to begin on May 6, but neither held as the parties traded blame for continuing attacks.

Fears about the festivities' security eased Friday, when US President Donald Trump announced that Russia and Ukraine have bowed to his request for a ceasefire running Saturday through Monday and an exchange of prisoners, declaring that the break in fighting could be the "beginning of

the end" of the war.

Zelenskyy, who said earlier this week that the Russian authorities "fear drones may buzz over Red Square" on May 9, followed up on Trump's statement by declaring Red Square temporarily off-limits for Ukrainian strikes and mockingly permitting Russia to hold its Victory Day celebrations on Saturday, a move that the Kremlin shrugged off as a "silly joke".

Putin told reporters after the parade that Trump offered to broker a ceasefire after Russia informed the US and others that it would launch a massive missile strike on the centre of Kyiv fraught with collateral damage if Ukraine attempts to disrupt Saturday's festivities.

"We just described the situation to our friends, colleagues and partners: We don't have any intention to exacerbate or worsen relations with anyone, but it could happen because all control and decision-making centres in Kyiv are located close to diplomatic missions," Putin said. "When we started such a dialogue with the

US administration, we warned them about this, pointed out the possible consequences and asked them to do everything necessary to ensure the security of their diplomatic mission.”

He noted that Russia immediately welcomed Trump’s offer that was driven by humanitarian motives and “respect to our common victory over Nazism”.

Putin has used Victory Day celebrations to encourage national pride and underline Russia’s position as a global power. The Soviet Union lost 27 million people in 1941-45 in what it calls the Great Patriotic War, an enormous sacrifice that left a deep scar in the national psyche and remains a rare point of consensus in the nation’s divisive history under Communist rule.

Russia’s bigger and better-equipped military has been making slow but steady gains along the more than 1,000-kilometer (over 600-mile) front line. Ukraine has hit back with increasingly efficient long-range attacks, striking Russian energy facil-

ities, manufacturing plants and military depots. It has developed drones capable of reaching targets over 1,000 kilometres (more than 600 miles) deep into Russia, far beyond its capabilities before 2022.

Zelenskyy has proposed to meet with Putin to negotiate a peace deal, but dismissed the Russian leader’s suggestion that he come to Moscow. On Saturday, Putin said he could meet with Zelenskyy in another country, but only to endorse a comprehensive accord.

“A meeting in a third country is also possible, but only after a peace treaty aimed at a long-term historic perspective is finalised,” Putin told reporters. “This should be a final deal, not the negotiations.”

Malaysia’s King Sultan Ibrahim Iskandar, Laos President Thongloun Sisoulith, Kazakhstan’s President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, Uzbekistan’s President Shavkat Mirziyoyev and Belarus’ authoritarian leader Alexander Lukashenko attended the fes-

tivities in the Russian capital.

Putin hailed the foreign guests who attended the parade for “personal courage”, noting that they had decided to come to Moscow before the ceasefire brokered by Trump defused security concerns.

Prime Minister Robert Fico of Slovakia, a European Union member, laid flowers at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier memorial just outside the Kremlin walls but stayed away from the Red Square parade. German Chancellor Friedrich Merz criticized Fico’s trip, saying, “I deeply regret this, and we will discuss his visit to Moscow with him.”

Speaking at a meeting with Putin in the Kremlin, Fico bemoaned what he called a new “Iron Curtain” in Europe that hampered trade, and emphasized the importance of Russia’s energy supplies to Slovakia. Putin hailed the Slovak leader for conducting a “sovereign” foreign policy and honouring the memory of fallen Red Army soldiers. (AP)

Spain says final hantavirus ship evacuees to take plane to Netherlands

The final 22 people to leave a cruise ship hit by a deadly hantavirus outbreak will take a plane to the Netherlands on Monday rather than evacuate in two separate flights, Spain’s health minister said.

“In the end, the flight to the Netherlands will also take the citizens who are on the Australian flight,” Monica Garcia said. She added that Australian authorities “can’t guarantee the arrival on time” of their plane. (AFP)



Trump calls Iran response to US proposal to end war 'totally unacceptable'



President Donald Trump has dismissed Iran's response to US proposals to end the war as "totally unacceptable".

Iran's semi-official Tasnim news agency said Tehran's proposal, sent via Pakistan, which has served as a mediator, included an immediate end to the war on all fronts, a halt to the US naval blockade of Iranian ports and guarantees of no further attacks on Iran.

A ceasefire meant to facilitate talks to end the war launched by the US and Israel in February has been largely observed, despite occasional exchanges of fire.

Earlier this week, Trump repeated that the war in Iran will be "over quickly".

But Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said that Iran's stockpile of enriched uranium must be "taken out" before the war against Iran can be considered over.

"There's still enrichment sites that have to be dismantled," Netanyahu said in an interview on CBS's 60 Minutes show.

According to Iranian state media, Tehran's proposal includes a demand for compensation for war damage and an emphasis on Iranian sovereignty

over the Strait of Hormuz.

On Sunday, Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian did not directly reference Tehran's proposal but said: "We will

never bow our heads before the enemy, and if talk of dialogue or negotiation arises, it does not mean surrender or retreat."

Trump posted on Truth Social: "I have just read the response from Iran's so-called 'Representatives.' I don't like it - TOTALLY UNACCEPTABLE."

US news outlet Axios reported that the one-page, 14-point US memorandum includes provisions such as a suspension on Iranian nuclear enrichment, the lifting of sanctions, and restoring free transit through the Strait of Hormuz.

It cited two US officials and two other sources - all unnamed - whom it described as briefed on the issues. These sources were reported as saying that many of the terms laid out in the

NOTICE



Antigua and Barbuda Diabetes Association
 P.O. Box 3322, email: diabetesassociation268@gmail.com.
 Tel: 268-764-5096
 St. John's, Antigua

Notice is hereby given of the **Annual General Meeting** of the Antigua and Barbuda Diabetes Association to be held on **Wednesday, May 13th, 2026, 5:00 pm** at the **Auditorium of Sir Lester Bird Medical Center**.

AGENDA

1. Call to Order
2. Prayers
3. Welcome remarks
4. Apologies for absence
5. Adoption of Agenda
6. Minutes of AGM 2025
Correction
Adoption
Matters Arising
7. Reports
Treasurer's Report
 - Audited Financial Statements
 President's Report
8. Questions and answers
9. Any Other Business
10. Adjournment

International

AROUND THE WORLD

memo would be contingent on a final agreement being reached.

Iran has continued to block the strategic strait, prompting a rise in world oil prices. Normally about 20% of the world's oil and liquefied natural gas passes through the strait.

The US, for its part, has been enforcing a blockade of Iranian ports to exert pressure on Tehran to agree to its terms - a move that has infuriated Iran.

Israeli and US forces began massive air strikes on Iran on 28 February. A ceasefire in the Iran war came into effect last month.

In his CBS interview, Netanyahu also said he wanted to "draw down to zero" American financial support for Israel's military.

"We receive \$3.8 billion a year. And I think that it's time that we weaned ourselves from the remaining military support," he said, adding: "Let's start now and do it over the next decade."

Iran has warned its neighbours about complying with US sanctions.

Military spokesman Mohammad Akraminia said vessels passing through the Strait of Hormuz would face "severe consequences" if they did not co-operate with Tehran first, Irna news agency reported.

Akraminia said Americans "will never be able to turn this vast expanse in the northern Indian Ocean into a real blockade by covering it with their fleet".

The US has a significant military presence across the Gulf, with bases in Qatar, Bahrain, Kuwait, the UAE, Saudi Arabia and Oman

It was announced on Saturday that the British Royal Navy was sending a warship to the Middle East, where it could join an international mission to safeguard shipping in the Strait of Hormuz.

UK Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer, who together with French President Emmanuel Macron is championing the shipping mission, has said it would only take place once fighting in the re-

gion ends.

In response, Iran on Sunday warned of a "decisive and immediate response" to any French or British deployments in the strait.

Macron then said that France had "never envisaged" a naval deployment but rather a security mission that would be "co-ordinated with Iran".

Iran has also retaliated against Arab allies of the US in the Gulf.

The UK's Maritime Trade Operations Centre (UKMTO) - which monitors international shipping routes - said a bulk carrier had been "hit by an unknown projectile" about 23 nautical miles (43km) north-east of Doha in Qatar, causing a small fire but no casualties.

Iran's Fars news agency later cited an unidentified source as saying that the vessel had been "sailing under the US flag and belonged to the United

States".

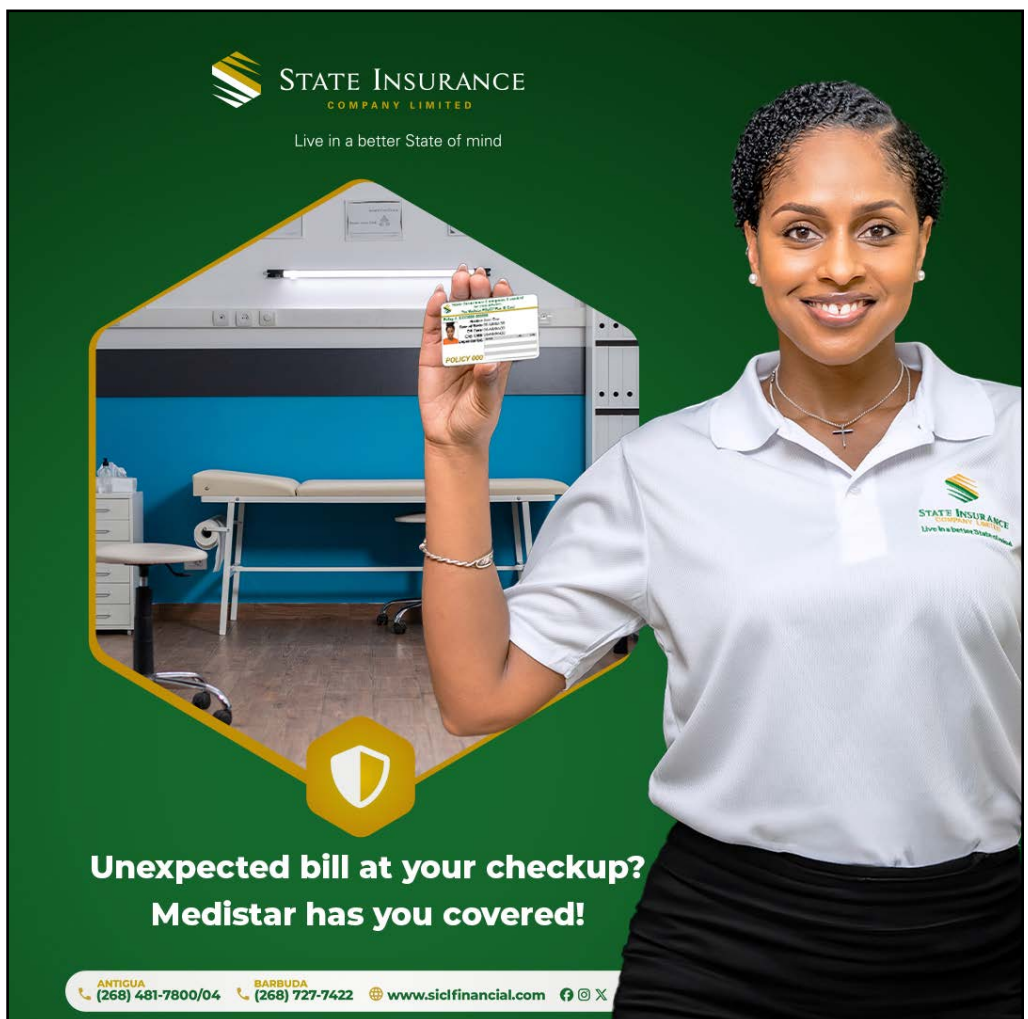
Also on Sunday, Kuwait said drones had entered its airspace and that the military had "dealt with them".

Hours later, the UAE said its air defences had intercepted two drones coming from Iran.

Defence ministers from more than 40 nations will meet on Monday to discuss UK-led plans to protect shipping in the strait.

John Healey and his French counterpart Catherine Vautrin will co-chair the meeting, where the coalition partners are expected to outline how they might police maritime traffic once hostilities cease.

Trump wrote in a Truth Social post on 6 May that if Iran did not agree to a deal, "the bombing starts, and it will be, sadly, at a much higher level and intensity than it was before". (BBC)



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WE ARE GETTING STRONGER

Lions to defend Super40 title in final against Empire Nation



The New Winthorpes Lions team, the 2025 ABCA Super40 Cup Champions.

Caribbean Motor Works (CMW) New Winthorpes Lions will defend their title in the Antigua and Barbuda Cricket Association's (ABCA) Super40 Championship in the final against Empire Nation.

It will be a repeat of last season's final when the Lions claimed their maiden title with an eight-wicket win against Empire Nation in the championship decider at New Winthorpes.

Both teams advanced to this year's Super40 final by recording wins in their respective semi-finals on Sunday.

The Lions maintained their unbeaten run in the 40-over contest by snatching a two-wicket victory against PIC Insurance Liberta Blackhawks at New Winthorpes.

The Blackhawks were dismissed for 145 in 29.2 overs after being sent in to bat. O opener Rahkeem Cornwall top-scored with 32 off 22 balls, while Orandel Boston grabbed four for 27.

The Lions achieved victory by scoring 149 for eight in 30.5 overs. O opener

Tyrone Williams Jr. struck 42, while Rahkeem Cornwall claimed four for 38.

Empire Nation cruised to an eight-wicket victory over the Pigotts Crushers at the Keithley Sheppard Recreational Park. The Crushers were bundled out for 120 in 25.1 overs. Captain Uri Smith hit a top-score of 29.

Dhari Francis bagged three for 12, captain Justin Athanaze took three for 30, and left-arm seamer Yanique Watley claimed three for 39.

Dhari Francis hit an unbeaten half-century to guide Empire Nation to victory at 123 for two in 13.4 overs. Dhari Francis slammed 51 not out off 33 balls, including six fours and three sixes. He shared a 79-run opening stand with his brother Tanez Francis, who scored 37 off 26 balls, with three fours and two sixes.

The top four teams at the end of nine round-robin matches in the preliminary stage advanced to the semi-finals. The

New Winthorpes Lions topped the standings with a perfect 36 points by winning all nine matches, which culminated with a crushing 224-run victory over the Jennings Tigers in Jennings.

The Lions made 308 all out in 38.5 overs. Alzarri Joseph slammed an unbeaten 73 off 35 balls, including seven sixes and four fours. Tyrone Williams Jr. struck 63, Jermaine Otto cracked 42, and Demari Benta scored 39. Shane Burton captured three for 46, Hughan Tonge took three for 53, and Glenton Williams claimed three for 55.

In reply, the Jennings Tigers crashed to 84 all out in 19.4 overs. Glenton Williams hit 29, while Orandel Boston grabbed six for 14.

Empire Nation finished second in the 10-team standings with 30 points after recording their sixth win in nine matches with a six-wicket victory over the Liberta Blackhawks at Ball Beef in Liberta.

The Pigotts Crushers beat Tertiary Institutions and Schools by eight wickets at Pigotts in their last outing in the preliminary stage to clinch third place over the Liberta Blackhawks after both teams finished with 22 points each.

The Bethesda Golden Eagles crushed the WES Rising Sun Spartans by 89 runs at Bethesda, while the All Saints Pythons prevailed by five wickets over the Bolans Blaster at Mock Pond in All Saints in the other ninth-round matches.

Da Squad continue to dominate ABAVA Women's D-1 League

Defending champions Cool and Smooth/Joma Da Squad have continued their title defense in dominant fashion in the Antigua and Barbuda Amateur Volleyball Association's (ABAVA) Women's Division 1 League.

Da Squad, who are the reigning four-peat champions, claimed their fifth win in as many games with a 3-0 victory against the Royal Cruisers at the indoor stadium at the YMCA Sports Complex. It took Da Squad an hour and 15 minutes to prevail 25-19, 25-15, and 25-17 against the Royal Cruisers, who remain in the cellar of the seven-team standings after losing for the fifth time in six matches.

Fifth-placed Vernon G. Edwards Limited High Flyerz recorded their third win in six games with a hard-fought 3-2 victory over former perennial champions Theatric Lighting and JOMA Stoneville in the Men's Division 1 League. It required two hours and 10 minutes for the High Flyerz to prevail 27-25, 25-22, 28-30, 16-25, and 15-11 over

Stoneville, who remain in fourth place after suffering their second defeat in five games.

The University of the West Indies (UWI) has advanced to third place in the Men's Division 1 Championship.

The UWI men claimed their fourth win in six games by snatching a 3-2 victory over Gwava and N18 Construction Invaders during a keenly contested encounter.

It took the UWI men two hours and 13 minutes to secure their 22-25, 25-21, 25-27, 25-17, and 15-8 victory over the Invaders, who remain in fifth place in the eight-team standings after suffering their fourth defeat in six encounters.

Renegades recorded their first win in five matches by pulling off a 3-1 victory over TOA Media and MKUU Tours Chargers Velocity in a bottom-of-the-table clash in the men's Division 1 league.

It took the seventh-placed Renegades an hour and 29 minutes to claim their 25-19, 25-21, 18-25, and 25-22 victory

over the Chargers Velocity, who remain in the cellar after crashing to their sixth defeat in as many games.

The Chargers Falcons extended their unbeaten run to four matches to remain at the top of the Women's Division 2 development league.

The Chargers Falcons claimed their fourth win in as many games with a 2-0 (25-20, 25-19) victory over Schools, who remain in the cellar after losing for the third time in the same number of matches.

The TOA Media and MKUU Tours Chargers Eagles 2 consolidated their second-place position in the five-team women's Division 2 league with a 2-0 victory over the Hidow Caribbean Starz 2.

It took the Chargers Eagles 2 just 44 minutes to complete their 25-14, 25-22 victory against Starz 2, who remain in third place after losing for the second time in three games.



The Da Squad women's volleyball team

World Cup debutant Curaçao parts with coach

WILLEMSTAD, Curaçao (AP) — World Cup debutant Curaçao parted company with coach Fred Rutten on Monday amid reports Dutch veteran Dick Advocaat is returning to the team he led through qualifying.

The uncertainty around the smallest nation by population ever to qualify for a men's World Cup comes less than five weeks before a testing opening game against Germany in Houston.

Rutten took the job in February after the 78-year-old Advocaat stepped down citing his daughter's health issues.

Under Rutten, the team lost two

warmup games in March — against Australia and China, both in Australia — with players reportedly wanting Advocaat back.

"I regret how things unfolded but I wish everyone the best," Rutten said in a statement posted by the Curaçao soccer federation. He previously coached Dutch clubs Twente, PSV Eindhoven and Feyenoord, and Schalke in Germany.

The federation is expected to hold a news conference on Tuesday. Curaçao is joined by Ghana, Morocco and Saudi Arabia in changing coaches since the World Cup draw in December.

Curaçao is an autonomous territory of about 156,000 people in the Caribbean within the Netherlands kingdom. The team relies almost entirely on players born and raised in the Netherlands.

The team also will play Ecuador in Kansas City and Ivory Coast in Philadelphia at the first 48-team World Cup. The expanded format gave three extra guaranteed entries to CONCACAF.

Advocaat took his native Netherlands to the quarterfinals at the previous World Cup in the United States, in 1994, and coached South Korea at the 2006 edition in Germany.



Curaçao's coach Fred Rutten watches during their international friendly soccer match against Australia in Melbourne, Australia, Tuesday, March 31, 2026. (AP)

Knicks bury 76ers to reach East finals for 2nd straight year



New York Knicks' Karl-Anthony Towns, from left, goes up for a shot against Philadelphia 76ers' Tyrese Maxey and Joel Embiid during the first half of Game 4 in a second-round NBA basketball playoffs series in Philadelphia on Sunday, May 10, 2026. (AP)

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — Jalen Brunson, Josh Hart and the New York Knicks are back in the Eastern Conference finals, tying the NBA postseason record with 25 3-pointers in front of a raucous crowd rooting for the road team and rolling past the Philadelphia 76ers 144-114 on Sunday to sweep the second-round series.

Deuce McBride started in place of the injured OG Anunoby and hit seven 3-pointers, going 4 for 4 in the first quarter when the Knicks had another record with 11, and scored 25 points. Brunson had 22 points and Hart and Karl-Anthony Towns each scored 17 in the Knicks' latest lopsided playoff victory.

The Knicks' 19.4 point-per-game margin of victory is the largest through two rounds since the playoffs went to 16 teams in 1984.

The Knicks advanced to the East fi-

nals for the second straight season and will play the winner of the Cleveland-Detroit series. The Pistons lead 2-1.

The Knicks last season reached the conference finals for the first time in 25 years before losing to Indiana. The Knicks then fired coach Tom Thibodeau and replaced him with Mike Brown, who has guided them to seven straight playoff wins, starting with the last three games against Atlanta.

"Our guys tried to take it to another level with their focus on the details and their energy and effort level," Brown said. "That's a lot of the reason why we're playing pretty good basketball."

The 76ers were greater failures in trying to stop the Knicks on the floor. Game 4 was a laugher from the tip, with the Knicks using the 3-point arc as a starting point for their personal pop-a-shot game.

With Knicks fans on their feet and exclaiming "Deuuuce," McBride hit one, two, three, four — four! — 3-pointers in succession for a 20-6 lead and the Sixers were already on their heels. McBride became the first Knick (since play-by-play tracking began in 1997) to hit four 3s in the first quarter of a playoff game. New York's 3-point records were just heating up.

Brunson added two in the period (six total) to help make the Knicks 11 of 13, which tied the NBA mark for most makes in a quarter.

The Knicks totaled 18 3s in the first half to score 54 points off

the long ball, compared to 57 total for the 76ers. Overall, that was an 81-57 lead and helped power the Knicks toward their first best-of-seven series sweep since the 1999 East semis against Atlanta.

The Knicks scored 80-plus points in the first half twice in five road playoff games this season. The second half was a mere formality, and the Sixers are headed home after a gutsy 3-1 series comeback to beat Boston in the first round.

"The energy was a big gap between their energy and our energy, I thought," Sixers coach Nick Nurse said.

Joel Embiid ended another injury-riddled season with 24 points, Tyrese Maxey had 17 and the Sixers still have not advanced out of the second round since 2001.

Ottos advance to semi-finals in ABBA's Division 1 Playoffs



Players of the Daryll Matthew Ottos huddle during a Division 1 game at the JSC Sports Complex. (Photo courtesy of the ABBA)

Fourth-seed Daryll Matthew Ottos has advanced to the semi-finals in the Antigua and Barbuda Basketball Association's (ABBA) First Division Playoff Championship.

Ottos booked their spot in the semis by securing a 2-0 win over the fifth-seeded Cuties Ovals Ojays in their best-of-three first-round series with a narrow 74-73 victory in Game 2 at the JSC Sports Complex on Sunday evening.

Nick Strawter shot a game-high 22 points and claimed seven rebounds; Danny Perez sank 18 points and grabbed 10 rebounds; Ziven Clarke converted 15 points; and Christian Walker scored 10 points and snatched 10 rebounds for Ottos.

Jabiri Smith produced 18

points, seven rebounds,



2026 ABBA Division 2 league champions Cedar Grove Gunners

and five assists; Kareem Edwards sank 17 points; Jalen Owens converted 16 points and snatched nine rebounds; Rolontae Knowles scored 12 points; and Jere-

miah Maldonado chipped in with eight points and 13 rebounds for the Ovals Ojays.

Ottos will face reigning three-peat champions and top seed EZ Fit Flyers in the semi-finals.

The Flyers, who won the league title for the third consecutive year last month, gained a bye into the playoffs semi-finals after the eighth-seeded Navigators forfeited their best-of-three first-round series 2-0.

Meanwhile, league champions and top seed, the Cedar Grove Gunners, have booked their spot in the

first-round series with a commanding 69-47 victory over eighth-seed Navigators 2 in Game 2 on Sunday.

Shawn Thomas sank 17 points and grabbed 27 rebounds; Keady Martin had 15 points and nine assists; Kim Casey provided 12 points, five rebounds, and five assists; Sergio Symister converted 11 points and claimed seven rebounds; and Tyras Grayman produced nine points, 19 rebounds, and five steals for the Gunners.

Raheem Sawyer shot a game-high 21 points and

semi-finals of the ABBA Division 2 Playoff Championship.

The Gunners claimed a 2-0 win in their best-of-three

claimed five steals, Adrian Francis converted nine points, and Tristan Thibou chipped in with seven points and seven rebounds for Navigators 2.