

Ministry of Health Leads Interagency Preparedness Meeting on Ebola

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New Chief Justice of the Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court, Her Ladyship Hon. Madam Margaret Price Findlay

Ministry of Health Leads Interagency Preparedness Meeting on Ebola and Other Emerging Infectious Diseases



Ministry of Health holds preparatory meeting ahead of any dangers from Ebola or other emerging infectious diseases

The Ministry of Health continues to take proactive measures to safeguard the nation's borders and protect public health amid ongoing global concerns regarding Ebola disease and other emerging and reemerging infectious disease threats.

As part of these efforts, the Ministry convened a high-level interagency preparedness meeting on Monday, 1 June 2026, bringing together key stakeholders responsible for public health, border security, emergency management, and national response coordination. The meeting focused on reviewing and strengthening Antigua and Barbuda's preparedness and response framework for Ebola disease while reinforcing readiness for other infectious disease threats of public health importance.

The meeting was chaired by Perma-

nent Secretary Mrs. Stacey Gregg-Paige and brought together the Ministry's senior technical leadership, including Chief Medical Officer Dr. Kamara De Castro, Deputy Chief Medical Officer Dr. Teri-Ann Joseph, and Acting Chief Health Inspector Mr. Daryl Spencer. The discussions also included agency heads and senior representatives from the Central Board of Health (CBH), the Sir Lester Bird Medical Centre, the Antigua and Barbuda Emergency Medical Services, as well as the National Office of Disaster Services (NODS), the Department of Immigration, the Antigua and Barbuda Airport Authority, the Antigua and Barbuda Defence Force, the Royal Police Force of Antigua and Barbuda, and the Ministry of Tourism.

While there are currently no reported cases of Ebola disease in Antigua and

Barbuda and the risk of Ebola disease occurring locally remains low, the Ministry emphasized that recent international developments underscore the importance of maintaining a high level of vigilance and operational readiness. Participants received updates on ongoing preparedness activities aimed at strengthening the country's readiness for infectious disease threats and reviewed measures already in place across key sectors. Discussions also focused on the country's existing prevention, detection, reporting, and response protocols; interagency coordination mechanisms; and opportunities to further strengthen national preparedness and response capacity.

Participants reviewed current preparedness plans, examined potential response scenarios, identified operational gaps, and discussed measures to enhance coordination, communication, and resource mobilization across agencies. The meeting also provided an opportunity for participating agencies to present updates on their respective preparedness activities and to identify areas requiring additional training, equipment, or support.

The Ministry of Health, Wellness, Environment and Civil Service Affairs reaffirmed its commitment to protecting the health and well-being of residents and visitors alike and will continue to work closely with local, regional, and international partners to strengthen national health security and maintain a coordinated and effective preparedness and response framework for infectious disease threats and other public health emergencies.



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APUA, Minister Nicholas Acknowledge Fuel Leak at Former Friars Hill Facility



The Antigua Public Utilities Authority (APUA) confirms that a fuel leak has been identified involving a storage tank located at the former Friars Hill Facility.

In a statement, APUA confirmed that upon becoming aware of the situation, it immediately initiated the appropriate internal response measures and engaged the relevant authorities, including the National Office of Disaster Services (NODS), the Antigua and Barbuda Police Force, the Central Board of Health, the Development Control Authority (DCA), and other stakeholders to assess the situation and determine the most appropriate and efficient course of action.

Minister with responsibility for APUA, Melford Nicholas, who is also the constituency representative for St. John’s City East, emphasized the importance of swift action: “We are committed to ensuring the safety of our residents while addressing this leak. Our primary focus is to mitigate any potential environmental impact and safeguard the community.”

The authority is in consultation with the National Solid Waste Management Authority, West Indies Oil Company (WIOC), the Department of Public Health, the Ministry of Environment, Antigua and Barbuda Fire Department, the Public Works Department (PWD), and other agencies to coordinate efforts.

Minister Nicholas added, “Collaboration with all relevant authorities is crucial. We will leave no stone unturned in addressing this situation effectively.”

According to the statement, at this stage, investigations and assessments are ongoing. APUA remains committed to providing clear and timely up-

dates and encourages everyone to act in a safe, responsible, and environmentally friendly manner.

The Authority said it will continue to monitor the situation and will provide further updates as more information becomes available, adding that it appreciates the public’s patience and understanding as this process continues.

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been completed, attention will shift to the removal and disposal of materials used during the containment and cleanup efforts. APUA will continue to work closely with the Department of Environment, the National Solid Waste Management Authority, the Central Board of Health, the National Office of Disaster Services (NODS), and other relevant stakeholders to ensure that all cleanup and disposal activities are conducted in accordance

with the appropriate environmental and public health standards.

APUA remains committed to addressing this matter safely, responsibly, and with the continued support and guidance of the relevant agencies.

The Authority thanks the general public for their continued understanding and support and will provide further updates as response efforts progress.

Meanwhile, the Authority issued an updated statement overnight to bring more clarity to the situation.

The statement reads: The Antigua Public Utilities Authority (APUA) wishes to provide a further update regarding response efforts related to the fuel seepage identified at a storage tank located at the former Friars Hill Power Station facility.

Following continued consultations with stakeholders, arrangements have now been finalized for the transfer of the fuel from the affected storage tank. A local fuel contractor has agreed to accept the fuel, and preparations are being made to facilitate the safe removal and transportation of the residue from the site.

Containment measures implemented earlier remain in place and continue to support the safe management of the situation.

Once the fuel transfer process has




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El Niño Expected to Keep Atlantic Storms in Check

Director of the Antigua and Barbuda Meteorological Service, Dale Destin, is forecasting a potentially less active Atlantic hurricane season as the likelihood of a strong El Niño event continues to increase, creating conditions that are expected to suppress tropical cyclone development across the region.

Speaking Monday on state television, which marked the commencement of the 2026 Atlantic Hurricane Season, Destin noted that forecasts are becoming less aggressive, with the probability of an above-normal season steadily declining.

“We started at 59 percent, and we’re now down to 49 percent. It has been a while since, at this stage of the season, the forecast was calling for only a 49 percent probability of an above-normal season,” Destin said.

He added that meteorologists expect the probability to decrease further as conditions continue to evolve in the Pacific Ocean, where forecasters are closely monitoring the development of what could become a very strong El Niño.

“We’re looking at a very strong El Niño—some call it a super El Niño, others a Jurassic El Niño—but the bottom line is that the forecast is for a very strong El Niño to form,” he noted.

According to the meteorological director, El Niño events are characterised by unusually warm sea surface temperatures across the central and eastern equatorial Pacific Ocean. Historically, these events have had a significant suppressing effect on hurri-



DALE DESTIN
DIRECTOR OF METEOROLOGICAL SERVICES (AG)

cane activity in the Atlantic basin.

“Whenever there’s an El Niño, it has a suppressing effect on the Atlantic hurricane season. The stronger the El Niño, generally, the more suppressed the season becomes,” he explained.

Destin stated that El Niño creates atmospheric conditions that make it more difficult for tropical cyclones to form and strengthen. Even storms that do develop often struggle to reach higher intensities.

Among the factors associated with El Niño are increased atmospheric stability, stronger wind shear, and drier air across the tropical Atlantic. Wind shear, which occurs when winds blow at varying speeds and directions at different levels of the atmosphere, can disrupt the structure of developing storms and prevent them from organising.

“We see an increase in what we call wind shear, which makes it even tougher for cyclones to develop,” Destin noted. “The atmosphere is generally more stable, and it is also drier, so these are some of the conditions that keep storms in check.”

The presence of Saharan dust, which frequently travels across the Atlantic during the hurricane season, is also expected to contribute to the suppression of tropical cyclone activity.

“The Saharan dust is always good in terms of suppressing tropical cyclones,” Destin said. “It’s not good from a health standpoint for many people, but it is an indication of the dryness of the atmosphere and other factors that make it difficult not only for cyclones to form but also for rainfall-producing clouds to develop.”

While the reduced rainfall associated




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2026 Atlantic Tropical Cyclone Names

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Bertha	Isaias	Paulette
Cristobal	Josephine	Rene
Dolly	Kyle	Sally
Edouard	Leah	Teddy
Fay	Marco	Vicky
Gonzalo	Nana	Wilfred

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with these conditions can help limit storm formation, it can also contribute to drought concerns and reduced precipitation across the region.

Despite expectations for a quieter season, Destin cautioned against complacency, emphasising that seasonal forecasts do not predict where storms will form or travel.

“The forecast gives you an idea as to what we’re looking at, but it doesn’t tell you where storms are going to go,” he said. “The greater focus should be on preparation and being prepared for the hurricane season.”

Destin also highlighted significant advances in hurricane forecasting technology, particularly in predicting storm tracks. These improvements are expected to provide residents with more time to prepare for approaching systems.

He revealed that regional meteorological agencies are considering extending the lead times for tropical storm watches and warnings over the next two years. Under the proposed changes, tropical storm watches could be issued as much as 72 hours before anticipated impacts, while warnings could be issued 48 hours in advance.

“As it stands now, it’s 48 hours for a watch and 36 hours for a warning,” he explained. “Because of the improvement in the accuracy, especially with the track forecasting, we are now looking to increase the lead time to give persons more time to prepare and de-

cide what they’re going to do once a storm is threatening.”

Meanwhile, Destin noted that discussions about extending the official Atlantic hurricane season beyond its traditional 1st June to 30th November dates have largely faded. Several years ago, the issue gained attention after a series of pre-season storms formed before 1st June, but recent trends have

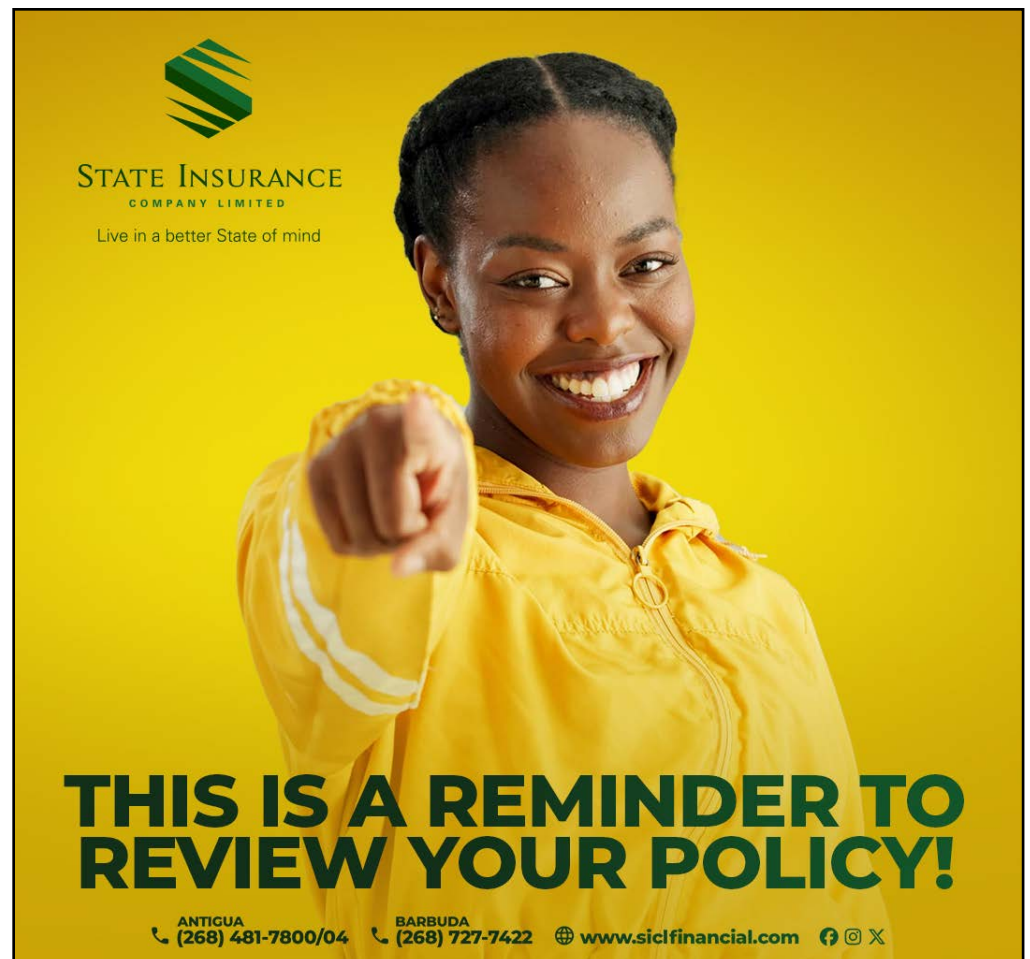
reduced momentum for such a change.

“For about six or seven years consecutively, we had pre-season cyclones. We haven’t had any for a few years now,” he said. “When we look at the number of storms that form outside the season, it didn’t make sense to extend it.”

However, he reminded the public that tropical systems can still develop outside the official hurricane season and encouraged year-round awareness.




“Persons are to be prepared for the season, but also be mindful that there can be storms outside of the season,” Destin said.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) has forecasted a total of 8-14 named storms (winds of 39 mph or higher) for the 2026 Atlantic Hurricane Season. Of those, 3-6 are forecast to become hurricanes (winds of 74 mph or higher), including 1-3 major hurricanes (category 3, 4 or 5 with winds of 111 mph or higher).



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Sir Rodney Emphasises Preparation In Hurricane Season-Related Speech

The Governor General Sir Rodney Williams has emphasised the importance of preparedness as the 2026 Atlantic Hurricane season opens.

Sir Rodney was speaking at a special church service on Sunday organized by the National Office of Disaster Services and held at the Seventh Day Adventist Church at Creekside.

The Governor General told the congregation that preparation is both a practical duty and a spiritual discipline. “We come before Almighty God acknowledging that, while we cannot control the winds, the seas, or the storms, we can prepare our hearts, our homes, our communities, and our nation.

“In Antigua and Barbuda, we know from experience that even one storm can change lives, disrupt livelihoods, and test the strength of families and communities. Therefore, this service is timely. It calls us not to fear, but to be wise; not to panic, but to prepare; not to be careless, but to be watchful



The Governor General Sir Rodney Williams

and responsible,” he urged.

He called on all residents of Antigua and Barbuda to take the matter of preparedness seriously.

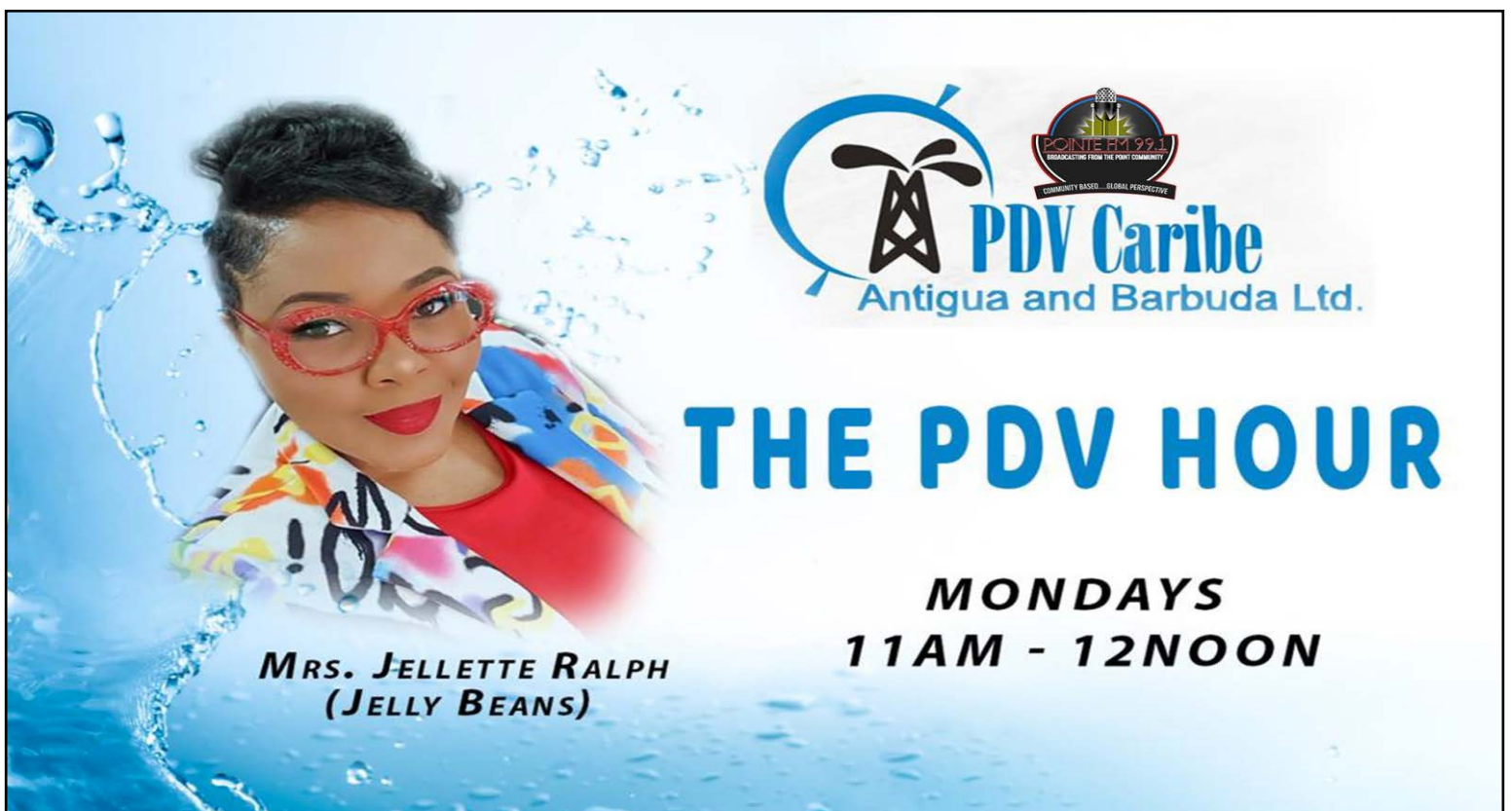
“Secure important documents. Check your supplies. Ensure that children understand what to do. Pay special at-



tention to elderly neighbours, persons living alone, and those who may need assistance in the event of an emergency.

“Preparedness is not only the responsibility of government agencies and emergency services. It is a shared responsibility, rooted in love of neighbour and care for community,” he emphasised.

Sir Rodney also expressed the nation’s thanks and appreciation to those who put their lives at risk to help others during national emergencies.

“Today, we give thanks for all those who serve before, during, and after times of emergency: the National Office of Disaster Services, the security forces, health workers, utility workers, churches, service clubs, volunteers, community leaders, and all persons who stand ready to assist when danger comes. Their work reflects courage, compassion, and national duty,” he remarked.



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NODS To Discuss 5-Year Country Work Plan With CDEMA

The National Office of Disaster Services (NODS) will engage in discussions later this week with representatives of the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA) on a 5-year country work-programme for Antigua and Barbuda.

Deputy Director of NODS, Craig Cole said the CDEMA team and his agency will begin those discussions on Friday at its American Road headquarters. He explained that the work-programme will cover all facets of disaster management related to both the public and private sectors.

According to Cole...NODS is not an entity unto itself, but rather relies on input from all sectors of the society to contribute actions that relate directly to them, which are then subsumed into the overall national plan. For example, he further explained that the tourism sector will develop its own set of plans which then are submitted for inclusion into the overall country plan.

“It is important that we reach out to both the public and private sectors when we create the plan. That is why for instance, we communicated with the business sector for their input when the plan is being composed,” he stated.

In addition to the country work plan, NODS will this week launch two major projects. One is a purpose-built hurricane shelter which it intends to launch later in the week.

“All the shelters that we currently use were designed for other purposes and are re-purposed to serve as hurricane shelters. We are currently at the concept stage for a purpose built shelter for which we will seek funding to move it from concept to reality.

“Additionally, we intend to announce an expanded warehouse structure to serve the sub-region. Antigua and Barbuda serves as the focal point for the Sub-regional Warehouse Development Project. Already, we store



Deputy Director of NODS, Craig Cole

materials for the northern Leeward Islands – St. Kitts and Nevis, the British Virgin Islands, St Maarten, Montserrat and Anguilla. We have items stored here currently but we are at the point where the capacity of the current

warehouse is not sufficient to meet the needs of the sub-region. Therefore, we have the conceptual plans for a bigger warehouse with appropriate office space to be unveiled later this week,” he announced.



CHOGM
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The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Immigration invites Antiguans and Barbudans to volunteer for the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) 2026, taking place 1–4 November 2026.

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Gov't Greenlights Butterfield/CIBC Transaction, Wants Carve Out for Local Banks



Prime Minister Gaston Browne speaking on the Browne and Browne show

Prime Minister Gaston Browne says his government will approve The Bank of N.T. Butterfield & Son Limited's acquisition of CIBC Caribbean, while at the same time make representation for local banks to participate in the process.

Speaking on his radio programme the Browne and Browne Show on Saturday, days after the announcement was made that Butterfield has entered into a definitive agreement to acquire CIBC's 91.7% interest in CIBC Caribbean Bank Limited, the Prime Minister, who also has responsibility for Finance and Corporate Governance, stated that already, one local banking institution is showing interest.

"ACB [Caribbean] would have come to see me, they have indicated they have an interest. If CIBC and Butterfield are willing to coop-



erate, they are willing to be part of this ownership," he revealed.

The new arrangement will result in combined assets worth \$ US 29 billion, and is expected to "provide enhanced corporate, personal and wealth management services across their combined client bases", a statement outlined.

Prime Minister Browne explained that unlike the case of Scotiabank several years ago, the Butterfield/CIBC agreement is more of a merger rather than a sale, which does not require him to press for local banks to be granted first right of refusal.

"If they were just selling the branch as a discrete entity, we'd tell them to sell local. But it is structured differently. Notwithstanding, we're still looking for the carve out."

The head of government stressed the importance of domestic ownership, pointing to his administra-

tion's successes in this regard in the areas of banking, real estate, the hospitality sector, and state-owned companies to include West Indies Oil Company Limited, and State Insurance Company Limited. However, Mr. Browne also believes that there must be room for international businesses and their expanded services, specifically within the banking sector, "beyond what our domestic banks offer".

Meantime, employees of CIBC Caribbean in Saint John's have been told there will be no displacement. The assurance came from the Prime Minister Browne who indicated that he was assured there will be no loss of employment.

Under the new arrangement, CIBC Caribbean will retain 22% in the new company.

The agreement will likely take approximately one year before it is finalised.

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The Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court Has Named Margaret Price Findlay Its New Chief Justice

The Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court (ECSC) has announced that His Majesty King Charles III has, by letters patent, appointed Her Ladyship the Honourable Madam Margaret Price Findlay as Chief Justice of the ECSC, effective 9th April 2026.

Her Ladyship takes office following a remarkable legal and judicial career defined by exemplary service, sound jurisprudence, and an unwavering commitment to justice across the Eastern Caribbean sub-region.

As Chief Justice, she will provide vital judicial leadership and administrative oversight for the ECSC, which serves six independent Member States and three British Overseas Territories within the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS). This appointment marks a significant milestone in the pursuit of judicial excellence, regional cooperation, and the reinforcement of the rule of law in the Eastern Caribbean.

Her Ladyship's ascension to the office of Chief Justice underscores her exceptional contributions to the judiciary and her steadfast dedication to justice and regional service. We hold firm in our belief that under her leadership, the Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court will continue to exemplify the highest standards of judicial excellence and innovation.



Honourable Madam Margaret Price Findlay


 An advertisement for the radio show 'Pointe On De Streetz'. The background is yellow with a black jagged line on the right side. The title 'POINTE ON DE STREETZ' is written in large, colorful, 3D-style letters. Below it, it says 'HOSTED BY VERNON A. SPRINGER'. On the right side, the PBN logo is shown with the text 'TUE - FRI 2PM - 3PM', 'CALL: 562-3989 OR 562-2991', and a Facebook icon followed by 'POINT FM99.1'.



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Antigua Hosts Major Regional Aviation Summit as Industry Leaders Tackle Future of Air Travel



Antigua and Barbuda has become the centre of regional aviation discussions this week as top civil aviation officials from across North America, Central America and the Caribbean gather for the 14th Meeting of Directors of Civil Aviation of the North American, Central American and Caribbean (NACC) Region.

The high-level conference, being held from June 1 to 5 at the American University of Antigua, marks the first time the important aviation forum is taking place within the OECS-EC-CAA region.

The meeting has brought together directors of civil aviation, aviation regulators, airport officials, and representatives from the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO), the Eastern Caribbean Civil Aviation Authority (ECCAA), and several international aviation partners to discuss key issues affecting the future of air transportation.

Speaking during the opening ceremony, Minister of State in the Ministry of Tourism, Investment, Civil Aviation and Transportation, Michael Freeland, stressed the critical role aviation plays in the survival and development of



small island nations.

“For Antigua and Barbuda, aviation is far more than transportation. It is our connection to the world,” Freeland told delegates. “It is the bridge that drives tourism, trade, investment, family connections, and economic opportunity.”

Freeland also reflected on Antigua and Barbuda’s longstanding role in regional aviation development, not-

ing that the country once served as the base for the Eastern Caribbean Directorate of Civil Aviation during the 1960s.

“That legacy continues today through ECCAA,” he said. “It demonstrates what small states can accomplish when regional cooperation is placed at the forefront.”

Acting Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Civil Aviation, Marietta



Christian, said the conference comes at a challenging period for the aviation industry as countries continue grappling with rising operational costs, fuel prices, and emerging global health concerns.

Christian also used the opportunity to highlight Antigua and Barbuda's growing reputation as a destination for major international conferences and events, ahead of the country hosting the Commonwealth Heads of Gov-

ernment Meeting (CHOGM) later this year.

ICAO Secretary General Juan Carlos Salazar addressed delegates on the organisation's long-term strategic priorities, including its ambitious vision to achieve zero aviation fatalities and net-zero carbon emissions by 2050.

Salazar also referenced ongoing efforts to strengthen global aviation governance through amendments to the Chicago Convention, noting that mo-

mentum continues to build following recent ratifications by member states.

Meanwhile, ECCAA Director General Anthony Whittier described the gathering as one of the most important aviation meetings ever staged in Antigua and Barbuda.

"This is the crème de la crème of aviation collaboration in the region," Whittier said.

He also announced that ECCAA is expected to sign an initial aviation security agreement with Transport Canada during the conference and confirmed that the Eastern Caribbean Airport Executives Forum will be held in St. Vincent and the Grenadines this August.

The opening ceremony also paid tribute to veteran civil aviation officer Peter Abraham, who was recognised for more than four decades of service to Antigua and Barbuda, particularly in aviation security and facilitation.

Abraham, who is expected to retire officially in October, received a special plaque from Minister Freeland in recognition of his contribution to regional aviation development.



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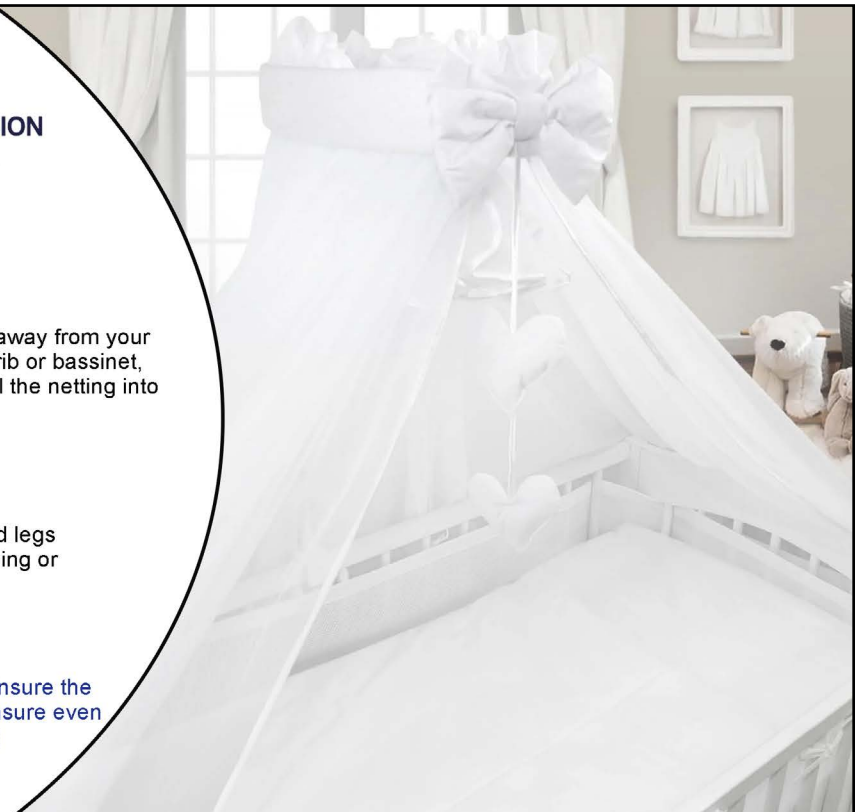
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Choose breathable, non-toxic material like polyester or cotton. Ensure the net is flame-resistant with holes of 1.2 mm - 1.5 mm or less to ensure even tiny insects cannot pass through. The World Health Organization recommends at least 156 holes per square inch.



Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) under the Next Generation Sweet Potato Set For Today

The Next Generation Sweet Potato Production in the Caribbean (NextGenSp) project has announced the commencement of Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) in the participating project countries Antigua and Barbuda, Jamaica and St. Lucia.

These discussions will be facilitated by Dr. Lisa Myers, Consultant with the NextGenSp Project. In Antigua and Barbuda, this FGDs will be facilitated on Tuesday, 02 June 2026 at the Environment Division at the Botanical Garden.

The FGDs are being conducted to generate qualitative information that will support the strengthening of sweet potato seed systems, varietal selection, climate resilience strategies, and sector development planning across the region. They are designed to gather practical insights and experiences from stakeholders involved in the sweet potato sector.

The discussions will help the project to:

- Understand current sweet potato production systems and challenges
- Identify preferred sweet potato varieties and traits
- Assess seed sourcing and clean planting material systems
- Explore production costs and climate-related challenges
- Understand gender and youth participation in the sector
- Inform future project interventions and country-level planning

The NextGenSp project is encouraging stakeholder-participation noting that the quality of the information generated will depend significantly on ensuring that knowledgeable and representative stakeholders are engaged in the process.





****FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****

Plant2Plate Antigua Backyard Gardening Competition Rescheduled to October 2026

****St. John's, Antigua and Barbuda**** – The Department of Agriculture within the Ministry of Agriculture wishes to advise participants and the public that the judging phase of the ****Plant2Plate Antigua Backyard Gardening Competition**** has been postponed and rescheduled to ****the end of October 2026****.

This decision follows valuable feedback received from backyard gardeners and members of the public regarding the timing and judging of the competition. The Ministry sincerely appreciates the constructive comments and recommendations shared and has taken these concerns into careful consideration.

Several factors contributed to the decision, including the prolonged drought conditions experienced across the country, administrative challenges, and delays in communication during the competition period. The Ministry also acknowledges that the unexpected Government General Elections impacted the availability of key personnel and resources, contributing to some of the communication challenges experienced.

In response, the Ministry has decided to restructure aspects of the programme to improve participant support, communication, coordination, and overall competition management. The additional time will also allow participants the opportunity to further develop and strengthen their gardens ahead of judging.

The Ministry remains committed to the goals of Plant2Plate Antigua and encourages all participants to continue their gardening efforts. Agricultural Extension Officers will continue to provide technical support and guidance throughout the extended competition period.

The Ministry of Agriculture thanks all participants, partners, and supporters for their patience, understanding, and continued commitment to promoting food security and backyard food production in Antigua and Barbuda.

****Plant2Plate Antigua – Homegrown Today, Food Secure Tomorrow. ****

****END****

****Issued by: ****

Department of Agriculture
 Ministry of Agriculture



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Liberty Caribbean prepared for 2026 Hurricane Season



Liberty Caribbean, the operators of Flow, Liberty Business and BTC, has confirmed its state of readiness for the 2026 Atlantic Hurricane Season, which officially begins on June 1.

With more than a century of service across the Caribbean, the company continues to strengthen its preparedness, resilience, and emergency response capabilities to support customers, governments, and communities throughout the region during periods of crisis.

The announcement follows the significant impact of Hurricane Melissa in Jamaica last year, which reinforced the critical importance of resilient communications infrastructure and rapid response capabilities across the Caribbean.

“Hurricane Melissa reminded us once again that connectivity is far more than technology. In moments of crisis, it becomes a lifeline for families, businesses, emergency responders, and governments,” said Inge Smidts, Chief Executive Officer, Liberty Caribbean.

“The lessons from that experience have further strengthened our resolve and accelerated our investments in network resilience, operational preparedness, and recovery capabilities across the region. We remain committed to ensuring our customers and communities can rely on us when it matters most.”

Over the past year, Liberty Caribbean has continued to make strategic investments to strengthen its networks and improve disaster resilience across multiple markets. In Jamaica, this included major investments in a new and enhanced mobile network, expanded spectrum capabilities, strengthened transport diversity, hardened infrastructure, backup power systems, and additional redundancy measures aimed at improving reliability and accelerating recovery.

The company has also continued simulation exercises, emergency response drills, fuel and logistics readiness planning, and cross-functional coordination efforts across all operating markets to ensure rapid mobilisation if required during the hurricane season.

“Our teams have worked tirelessly to modernize our infrastructure, strengthen operational readiness, and improve how we respond during emergencies. While no network is immune to extreme weather events, our focus remains on building stronger, smarter, and more resilient systems capable of supporting the Caribbean through disruption and recovery alike,” added Smidts.

Forecasters at the National Weather Service of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) are predicting a

below-normal hurricane season for the Atlantic basin this year.

NOAA’s forecast for the 2026 Atlantic hurricane season, which runs from June 1 to November 30, indicates a 35% chance of a near-normal season, a 10% chance of an above-normal season, and a 55% chance of a below-normal season.

The agency forecasts a total of 8 to 14 named storms (winds of 63 km/h or more). Of these, 3 to 6 are expected to become hurricanes (with winds of 75 mph or more), including 1 to 3 major hurricanes (Category 3, 4, or 5 with winds of 115 mph or more). An average season sees 14 named storms, including seven hurricanes, three of which are major hurricanes.

“We understand the responsibility that comes with serving the Caribbean. Our commitment extends beyond connectivity alone. It is also about supporting the resilience of the communities we serve and standing beside them before, during, and after times of crisis,” said Smidts.

Liberty Caribbean continues to encourage customers and businesses across the region to review their own hurricane preparedness plans and remain informed throughout the season.

From Antigua to the World: Good Humans 268 Showcasing Waste, Inclusion, and Climate Leadership



Good Humans 268 Inc. is once again taking Antigua and Barbuda to the international stage as the organization continues expanding its work in climate action, sustainability, and disability inclusion.

This week marks a major milestone for the organization as two members of the team represent the country at separate international environmental forums in Uzbekistan and Paris.

Founder and President Joshuanette Francis is attending the 8th Global Environment Facility (GEF) Assembly in Samarkand, Uzbekistan, while Logistics Coordinator Kelisha Pigott is participating in the UNESCO x Nestlé Youth Impact Closing Event in Paris, France. Together, these opportunities represent years of work, advocacy, and determination from a grassroots organization that started with a simple mission — creating opportunities for individuals with disabilities while tackling waste management challenges.

The GEF Assembly is one of the largest environmental gatherings in

the world and brings together leaders, policymakers, scientists, activists, and civil society organizations to discuss climate change, biodiversity, pollution, and environmental sustainability. The Assembly serves as a space where countries and organizations share solutions and discuss the future of environmental policy and action.

For Joshuanette Francis, attending the Assembly is symbolic of how far the organization has come. What started as a local movement has evolved into a recognized voice in regional and international discussions surrounding sustainability and inclusion.

Good Humans 268 Inc. has spent the last three years openly advocating for changes in how Antigua and Barbuda manages waste. The organization has repeatedly stated that stronger legislation, better enforcement, and public education are necessary if the country hopes to reduce landfill pressure and environmental damage.

The organization has also identi-

fied the need to rethink waste management from the source. Instead of waiting until waste reaches the landfill, Good Humans 268 Inc. believes that households, businesses, schools, and events must all become part of the solution.

This belief has led to several community-based initiatives that combine education, recycling, and environmental advocacy with disability inclusion. Through their work, the organization has demonstrated that environmental action can simultaneously create jobs, opportunities, and visibility for individuals with disabilities.

What has made the organization particularly impactful is its commitment to research and learning from other countries and systems. Over the last few months, Good Humans 268 Inc. has conducted environmental and waste management research in Antigua and Barbuda, Jamaica, Barbados, and Louisiana in the United States.

The recent Louisiana research trip allowed the organization to observe environmental initiatives and waste management systems firsthand while exploring how similar models and solutions could potentially be adapted within Caribbean communities.

The organization also confirmed plans to continue research in St. Kitts and Nevis, Grenada, Trinidad and Tobago, and Saint Lucia. The long-term goal is to gather enough information and regional insight to help shape recommendations for better waste management systems and policy reform within Antigua and Barbuda.

The urgency behind this work has become even more evident in recent years. Following several landfill fires and an oil spill that affected Antigua and Barbuda, the organization has consistently highlighted the environmental risks associated with poor



waste management practices.

However, Good Humans 268 Inc. has worked hard to approach the issue differently. Rather than focusing solely on the negative impacts of waste, the organization has also emphasized creativity, innovation, and opportunity.

Their philosophy that “waste is worth” and “waste is wealth” has become a major part of their public messaging. Through art installations, recycling drives, environmental campaigns, and educational projects, the organisation continues encouraging communities to see value in materials often thrown away.

The organization’s journey gained significant momentum in 2023 after securing USD \$50,000 through the GEF Small Grants Programme. That funding helped launch and strengthen their national recycling and waste management initiatives across schools in Antigua and Barbuda.

Since then, the Student Community Service Recycling Project has expanded significantly, engaging thousands of students throughout the

country and encouraging schools to participate in recycling and environmental education activities.

The organization’s work received another major boost when they secured USD \$8,000 through the UNESCO x Nestlé Youth Impact Programme for Environmental Sustainability and Climate Action.

The grant supported the development of an online waste management classroom aimed at educating young people about recycling, sustainability, climate change, and environmental responsibility.

Kelisha Pigott has played a leading role in coordinating the project and is now representing the organization in Paris at the programme’s closing event. According to the official UNESCO invitation letter, the event brings together 100 youth project leaders from around the world to celebrate climate action and sustainable development initiatives.

For the organization, having representatives in both Uzbekistan and Paris at the same time is a reminder

that local action can have global impact.

Good Humans 268 Inc. continues to prove that even small island organizations can contribute meaningfully to international conversations on sustainability and climate resilience. More importantly, the organization continues ensuring that individuals with disabilities are included in those conversations and recognized as leaders within environmental movements.

As the organization continues to grow, its mission remains clear — build a more sustainable future, create opportunities for individuals with disabilities, and inspire a generation to see the beauty and value hidden within waste.

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Joshuanette Francis

Founder and President, Good Humans 268 Inc.

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Regional News

Tragic End to Search For 10-yro Caldon Robeiro

The extensive search for a missing child came to a heartbreaking conclusion on Monday morning, June 1, 2026, when the body of 10-year-old Caldon Robeiro was discovered along the coastline in the Gorse area.

The young boy, a resident of Park Hill was reportedly found by a civilian amidst accumulations of sargassum on the shoreline.

The grim discovery follows a desperate multi-day search operation initiated after Caldon went missing at sea over the weekend.

On Saturday afternoon, May 30, Caldon had gone to the beach for a routine swim with a group of friends off the shores of Colonarie, which is a common recreational activity in the community.

The group reportedly encountered difficulties in the water; while the other children managed to return to the shore safely, Caldon tragically disappeared. A distress call and missing person report were issued at approximately 3:30 p.m. that day.

In response to his disappearance, the



St. Vincent and the Grenadines Coast Guard mounted a frantic rescue mission, supported by emergency personnel and civilian volunteers

However, the search crews faced immense, compounding challenges. Recovery efforts were heavily restricted by a combination of deteriorating weather conditions and fiercely rough seas. Furthermore, the presence of a

hazardous ground reef in the coastal waters of Colonarie made navigating the area exceedingly dangerous for the first responders.

The exact circumstances surrounding the drowning remain under investigation by relevant authorities, with the friends who were swimming with Caldon actively cooperating with the police. (St Vincent Times)



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CSEC underperformance creating STEM crisis for Jamaica

Jamaica is facing a growing science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) education crisis as only 6,000 of the 30,000 students sitting Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate (CSEC) examinations annually are achieving the qualifications needed to enter the country's tertiary institutions.

Dr Kevin Brown, president of The University of Technology, Jamaica (UTech), said the limited number of students is creating intense recruitment competition among Jamaica's universities and teachers' colleges.

"We have a little crisis emerging," said Brown, while addressing the launch of UTech's third annual Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics Summer Camp at the institution's Western Campus last Wednesday. "We have a situation where 30,000 high schoolers take CSEC. Thirty thousand sounds like a big number; it is a big number, but only 6,000 get five passes with maths and English included."

"Now here is the challenge: UWI wants some, UTech wants some, and CMU wants some. We are all fighting over the 6,000," he stated, referencing The University of the West Indies and the Caribbean Maritime University.

Brown further noted that local tertiary institutions, including public universities, private universities and teachers' colleges, largely require applicants to obtain five CSEC subjects inclu-



sive of mathematics and English.

"The teachers' colleges want some because if you go on any of our websites, there are over 15 tertiary institutions in Jamaica. Many of them are teachers' colleges, and we have public and private universities. They all said they want five CSEC maths and English," he explained.

He added that the figures point to a weak educational pipeline that could threaten Jamaica's development.

"UTech alone wants 3,000. That's half the amount that's qualified, so you have a pipeline issue," he said.

Brown also noted that while another estimated 5,000 students may attain five CSEC subjects without passing either mathematics or English, the country is still left with a significant number of young people outside the formal tertiary education system.

"It means you have 24,000 [left]. Where do they go? Some might go to HEART, some might go find a job, but you now have a wide and large number of [youth] who are not in tertiary education. That's a scary

thought."

Brown said that the strengthening Jamaica's STEM pipeline is critical if the country hopes to build a modern, technology-driven economy.

"For Jamaica to become a STEM country, which is the ambition, it has to pivot towards Maths, not for you to count your money, but to ensure that we have students who are mathematicians who will then use maths as a foundation to become scientists, to become technologists, to become engineers," he said.

According to Brown, mathematics remains central to most STEM careers.

"Engineering, and I'm from that field, is applied mathematics. Most chosen career paths in STEM are underpinned by mathematics," he said.

Brown also expressed concern about the widening academic performance gap between boys and girls, noting that girls continue to outperform boys throughout the education system.

"When you look at the performance of girls across the education system, whether it is from basic school to

primary schools, you look at the PEP results, the CSEC results, CAPE results, girls are outperforming boys at every level," he said, in explaining that programmes such as the STEM Summer Camp are designed to engage students through hands-on learning and practical exposure to science and technology.

"The good thing about boys is that they like what we do here at the STEM camp, the hands-on education, the tinkering, and the ability to really see the mathematics in an applied environment," he said. "A robot moving around is all about coordinates, and there's a lot of maths behind it, but for a young boy or girl, the robot is bringing to life the STEM without teaching them the pure maths."

Brown also made an appeal to corporate Jamaica to continue supporting the initiative, stressing that the programme is intended to strengthen the country's future workforce and national development goals.

"You are not sponsoring a programme for UTech. You are sponsoring a programme for Jamaica. UTech is Jamaica's national university, and you are giving us the funding and the support because you want to see Jamaican students – not UTech students, Jamaican students – do better and to allow this country to have that STEM pipeline. The wider ambition here is to make Jamaica better," he said. (Jamaica Gleaner)

SERIAL KILLER STAYS PUT - Judges uphold 66-year term for eight-murder killing spree

Convicted serial killer Kemar Thompson, whose bloody 2014 crime spree claimed eight lives in three separate incidents across St Catherine, will remain behind bars for at least 66 years and seven months before parole considerations.

This follows the dismissal by the Court of Appeal of his challenge to the sentence imposed by the Home Circuit Court, which he argued was manifestly excessive.

In a ruling affirming the life sentences, the appellate court concluded that although the sentencing judge made several procedural and methodological errors, the punishment was neither excessive nor disproportionate given the “exceptional gravity” of the crimes.

“The sentencing judge properly and correctly exercised her discretion in imposing the consecutive sentences, given that the murders took place on separate occasions.

“In all the circumstances, the aggregate minimum pre-parole period of 66 years and seven months does not offend the ‘totality principle’ and is commensurate with the gravity of the appellant’s criminal conduct across separate and devastating episodes of extreme violence,” the judges stated in the written judgment published last Friday.

Thompson, who was 23 at the time of the murders, killed eight men in less than three months between August and October 2014 in what the court described as escalating and calculated acts of violence.

The first killing occurred on August 4, 2014, when Carlton ‘Selly Selly’ Blake was gunned down in Bog Walk, St Catherine. Evidence presented to the court revealed that a witness heard the words “now or never” moments before Thompson pulled a firearm and shot Blake in broad daylight.

Just over two months later, Thompson and armed accomplices carried out a deadly ambush along Highway 2000, targeting a vehicle transporting approximately \$1.5 million intended for China Harbour Engineering Company construction workers. Three men were murdered during the robbery, while an in-

nocent truck driver, who happened upon the scene, was also killed.

Ten days after the highway massacre, Thompson launched another attack in Pineapple Lane, Bog Walk, where three men were fatally shot in what he later described as reprisal killings.

The St Catherine higgler was handed eight life sentences in July 30, 2019 after pleading guilty to the murders along with robbery and gun charges.

The Court of Appeal noted that Thompson showed little remorse for the killings, expressing regret for only one victim. According to a social enquiry report, he claimed that many of the deceased were connected to a community don and had posed threats to him or his relatives.

In a judgment delivered by Justices Marcia Dunbar Green, Nicole Foster-Pusey and Georgiana Fraser, the court found that the sentencing judge, failed to properly apply the structured sentencing approach established in previous appellate decisions.

The judges also noted that insufficient explanation was provided regarding sentencing ranges, starting points, and the balancing of aggravating and mitigating factors. Additionally, the statutory guilty plea discounts had been improperly applied to all the murders, although Parliament had expressly excluded deductions after the first murder in a series.

The appellate judges also found that pre-trial custody credits had been incorrectly calculated across overlapping indictments.

Despite these findings, the court conducted its own assessment and concluded that the sentences were not manifestly excessive, although one of the three minimum parole periods imposed, 17 years and seven months, 40 years, and 26 years and seven months, was “notably lenient”.

The judges stressed the extraordinary seriousness of the offences, highlighting the use of firearms, execution-style killings, multiple victims, public attacks, and Thompson’s apparent lack of remorse.

The court also upheld the consecutive

sentencing structure which had been applied, finding that the murders occurred on separate occasions and reflected escalating criminality warranting distinct punishment. Both the 17 year and the 26 year sentences had been ordered to run concurrent but consecutive to the 40 year sentence.

Thompson’s attorney, Oswest Senior-Smith, however, had argued that the sentencing judge had “materially departed” from established sentencing principles by failing to adequately identify sentencing ranges, explain starting points, or properly weigh mitigating factors such as Thompson’s youth, lack of previous convictions, guilty pleas, cooperation with investigators, and prospects for rehabilitation.

Senior-Smith also argued that Thompson spared the State significant judicial resources by pleading guilty to eight murders and two additional offences, avoiding multiple murder trials and sparing witnesses and relatives further trauma.

Senior-Smith further contended that the judge improperly calculated the discounts for the guilty pleas and erred in ordering consecutive sentences, resulting in what he described as a manifestly excessive aggregate sentence.

However, Crown counsel Kimberly Dell-Williams, who appeared with Tasha Powell, maintained that despite flaws in the sentencing methodology, the punishment imposed was appropriate given the scale and brutality of the offences.

She acknowledged that while the sentencing judge did not fully adhere to the structured sentencing methodology required by law, the murders qualified as capital murders under the Offences Against the Person Act because of Thompson’s prior murder conviction arising from the first killing.

Consequently, she argued that the law permits life sentences with substantial minimum parole periods for multiple murders of this nature. (Jamaica Gleaner)

Atlantic hurricane season officially begins with below-normal forecast, but vigilance is urged

The 2026 Atlantic Hurricane Season officially begins today, June 1, and will run through November 30, according to Marshall Alexander, Acting Director of Meteorology.

Mr. Alexander noted that the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) is predicting a below-normal season this year, with a 55 percent chance of 8 to 14 named storms, 3 to 6 hurricanes, and 1 to 3 major hurricanes forming across the Atlantic Basin.

Despite this outlook, Mr. Alexander cautioned against complacency. “Our history has shown us that it only takes one storm to make for a very dangerous and devastating season,” he said, recalling the severe impacts of Tropical Storm Erika and Hurricane Maria, which caused catastrophic flooding, landslides, destruction of infrastructure, and loss of life and livelihoods in Dominica.

He emphasized that the island remains highly vulnerable to hazards such as flash flooding, river overflow, landslides, rockfalls, strong winds, rough seas, and coastal damage due to its mountainous terrain and location within the hurricane belt.

The public is being urged to stay informed through official sources, including the Dominica Meteorological Service, via radio, the website at www.weather.gov.dm, and social me-



dia platforms on Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp.


“Preparedness, early action, communication and coordination remain our strongest defenses during the hurricane season,” Mr. Alexander said. He added that the forecast for a below-normal season should not alter the way residents prepare, stressing: “It only takes one.”

NOAA’s forecast for the 2026 Atlantic hurricane season is built on climate models, satellite data, and analysis of large-scale atmospheric and oceanic patterns. The agency projects a 55 percent chance of below-normal activity, estimating 8 to 14 named storms, 3 to 6 hurricanes, and 1 to 3 major hurricanes. A strengthening El Niño is expected to increase wind shear in the

Atlantic, suppressing storm formation, while warmer-than-average ocean temperatures could counteract that effect.



NOAA integrates advanced tools such as AI-based models and next-generation satellites to monitor sea surface temperatures, wind patterns, and atmospheric moisture. The forecast is produced collaboratively by the Climate Prediction Center, National Hurricane Center, and Atlantic Oceanographic and Meteorological Laboratory, with the outlook presented as probabilistic ranges rather than precise predictions.

While the season is expected to be quieter than average, NOAA emphasizes that preparedness remains essential, as even one storm can be devastating. (Dominica News Online)



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Five patients recover from Ebola in DR Congo and leave hospital

Health authorities in the Democratic Republic of Congo are celebrating after five patients, who had Ebola and now recovered, were allowed to leave hospital.

The current outbreak is suspected to have killed almost 250 people. But those infected can get better and officials stress that people should seek medical help if they believe they have contracted the virus.

On Sunday, there was a ceremony for a group of four nurses who were discharged from a hospital in Bunia, the provincial capital of Ituri, the epicentre of the outbreak.

“You are living stories that this outbreak can be stopped,” World Health Organization (WHO) chief Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus told the four on a visit to Bunia.

“We were really demoralised because we knew that at some point... we were going to die. That was it... I’m telling you, if you have never been isolated, you will not know that it’s not easy,” Nurse Etienne Ezo told the Reuters news agency as he reflected on his experience.

The first survivor, a laboratory worker, to have recovered left hospital last week.

Health workers are on the frontline in the battle against the spread of the virus and are often the most at risk.

“It pains me to see health workers who have already died because of Ebola while serving others... this is the risk which comes with the profession, but your commitment and coming back again to serve means a lot,” Tedros told the four nurses, three men and one woman, at Sunday’s ceremony where they all received certificates recognising their recovery.

“This encouraging milestone bears witness to the effectiveness of field interventions: early detection, medical care, contact tracing and community engagement,” DR Congo’s Institute of Public Health wrote on social media.



Its director, Dr Mwamba Kazadi, described the recoveries as a victory worth celebrating, adding that early detection and strong care make a difference.

Tedros has called on communities to work with medical staff after some residents attacked health centres over strict burial rules. The bodies of those suspected of having died of Ebola are not allowed to be handled by grieving relatives, regulations which clash with local traditions.

In a joint statement with the Congolese government on Sunday, he said local communities are “at the heart of the solution” and that “success” in their response depends on their trust and engagement.

“Persistent challenges include early detection and isolation of cases, contact tracing, safe and dignified burials, robust infection prevention and control in health facilities, and strong community awareness.

“The Government and WHO call on all communities to continue adopting protective behaviours, including regular hand hygiene, early care seeking in health facilities, and sharing accurate information.”

There are now more than 1,000 suspected Ebola cases in the DR Congo, and at least 246 deaths. Neighbouring

Uganda has reported nine confirmed cases and one death.

But in some affected areas, there is a sense of normality. In Bunia, schools and markets are open as people continue to go about their daily activities. The current outbreak - the 17th in DR Congo’s history - is caused by the Bundibugyo species of Ebola, which has no approved vaccines, though some are being worked on now.

While cases are concentrated in DR Congo’s Ituri, North and South Kivu provinces, and some in Uganda’s capital Kampala, people have also been tested outside of Africa.

Health officials in Brazil said on Saturday that they were investigating two suspected Ebola cases in São Paulo state.

Meanwhile, protests have erupted in the Kenyan town of Nanyuki over US plans to construct an Ebola quarantine facility for American citizens at an air base.

Residents marching through the streets say the facility may expose local people to infection and an outbreak of the virus. There have been no recorded cases of Ebola in the country.

Last week, a Kenyan court suspended the plans over the risks it presented to the public. (BBC)

Judge to decide if a key hearing for the man accused of killing Charlie Kirk will be public



A Utah judge is set to decide Monday whether to bar reporters and the public from parts of a key upcoming hearing in the case of the man accused of killing Charlie Kirk.

Tyler Robinson's defense has asked Judge Tony Graf to restrict access to the preliminary hearing on July 6-10, when prosecutors must show they have enough evidence to warrant a trial. It will mark the most significant presentation of evidence to date in a case that has so far focused on matters of media access.

Defense attorneys also have requested to seal dozens of exhibits that prosecutors plan to introduce at the July hearing, arguing they could

taint the jury pool before a possible trial.

Robinson's lawyers have tried to guard against media coverage that they say sometimes misrepresents their client as his case has drawn tremendous public attention. The 23-year-old from southwestern Utah is charged with crimes including aggravated murder in the Sept. 10 assassination of Kirk on the Utah Valley University campus.

Prosecutors intend to seek the death penalty if Robinson is convicted. He has not yet entered a plea.

Prosecutors have argued that the preliminary hearing should remain open, but they agreed that media

should be restricted from viewing or copying some exhibits that could be used in a future trial. They plan to introduce forensic analyses, surveillance video, recordings of witness statements, autopsy findings and alleged messages from Robinson admitting to the crime.

Authorities have said DNA consistent with Robinson's was found on the trigger of the rifle used to kill Kirk, the fired cartridge casing, two unfired cartridges and a towel used to wrap the rifle. Prosecutors also have said Robinson left a note for his romantic partner that read, "I had the opportunity to take out Charlie Kirk and I'm going to take it." (AP)

Malaysia enforces ban on social media accounts for children younger than 16

Malaysia on Monday began enforcing rules barring millions of children younger than 16 from having social media accounts, joining a global effort to tighten online safety protections for young users.

The rules require social media platforms with at least 8 million users, including Facebook, Instagram, TikTok and YouTube, to implement age-verification systems and block users under 16 from creating accounts.

Malaysia's Communications and Multimedia Commission said Monday that age verification for existing users will be rolled out progressively over the next six months.

Users identified as under 16 will have a month to download or transfer their data, including photos and videos, before any restrictions, suspensions or other actions are applied, it said in a statement.

Companies that fail to comply could face penalties of up to 10 million ringgit (\$2.5 million). But parents whose children manage to bypass the law will not be penalized.

The government said the measures are aimed at protecting children from harmful content, cyberbullying and platform features designed to encourage excessive use.

Other countries including Australia, Brazil and Indonesia have introduced or announced age-based restrictions or requirements for children's access to social media. Countries including Britain, France, Spain, Denmark, Thailand and South Korea are also studying or developing similar approaches.



The regulator said the rules are not intended to prevent children from accessing digital technology.

"These measures help strengthen the protection of children in the online environment, while providing added reassurance to parents in navigating increasingly complex digital risks," it has said.

Platforms are required to improve user safety, discourage excessive use and take action against underage accounts and harmful content.

Technology companies have yet to detail how they will comply with Malaysia's new requirements.

Clara Koh, Meta's director of public policy for Southeast Asia, had cautioned in April that Malaysia's blanket under-16 ban could backfire by driving teenagers away from protected apps and into unregulated corners of

the internet.

She said Meta has launched "teen accounts" for those under 18 that limits contact, screen time and exposure to inappropriate content.

Malaysia's curbs come as governments face growing pressure to address concerns about social media's impact on children's mental health and online safety.

In March, a U.S. jury ordered Meta and YouTube to pay millions of dollars in damages in a case alleging that platform design features contributed to harm suffered by a young user.

Kuala Lumpur parents Saravanan Ganasan and Jayaradha Veerasamy — whose children are 12 and 15 — approve of the changes. They already banned their children from using social media, believing minors lack the psychological capacity to cope with it.



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The couple ban unsupervised scrolling on TikTok and Instagram. Devices are kept out of bedrooms, screen time is limited to common areas, and their son is not allowed to lock his phone with a password.

“Exposure is what we fear,” Saravanan said. “The wrong kind of exposure will do damage to the mind.”

Aadhavan Saravanan, 15, said he believes he would be addicted to social media if allowed full freedom. “Social media is, like, a luxury and it’s not a necessity,” he said.

The couple said the restrictions have forced their children to develop offline life skills. Instead of scrolling, Aadhavan reads books in a backyard mango tree and repairs broken household appliances, while their daughter cooks and does crafts.

“A lot of parents are very scared that children get bored,” the children’s mother, Jayaradha, said. “But boredom is actually very good because they start thinking out of the box.”

But Shaun Hew, who lives in the Kuala Lumpur suburb of Cheras, feels the new restrictions go too far.

Hew believes social media offers an outlet for his children to spend time productively, as long as there is proper adult oversight. His 11-year-old son uses platforms to learn cooking and his daughter, 14, uses YouTube for exam revision.

He worries a sudden cutoff could cause teenagers to rebel and find unregulated ways to bypass internet blocks.

Some critics contend that Malaysia’s move could increase the risks of data privacy breaches and expand state surveillance.

“It is very much following the trend but in a way that is raising alarms due to requiring a government ID for age verification,” said Benjamin Loh, social science lecturer at Monash University in Malaysia.

Loh also said experiences elsewhere suggest that age-based restrictions

have yet to prove consistently effective. Without penalties on parents, families can easily bypass the law by creating accounts for their children, he said.

“This is a major gap that unless regulators are willing to fix, will result in the law having little effect in stopping children from using social media,” he added. (AP)



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Brazil investigates possible Ebola cases amid scramble to contain outbreak

The World Health Organization's top doctor has traveled to the Ebola hot spot to help bring the unfolding crisis under control as authorities in Brazil said they were looking into two suspected cases.

Meanwhile, the International Rescue Committee, a global humanitarian aid, relief and development non-governmental organization, warned that the outbreak is likely significantly larger and more advanced than official figures suggest because of delayed detection and poor contact tracing.

"With only 20% of contacts currently being traced, health authorities are struggling to identify and isolate new chains of transmission," it said in a statement Monday.

World Health Organization Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, who traveled over the weekend to the capital of the eastern province of Ituri in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and ground zero of the current outbreak, said those who contract the virus could survive the strain of the disease.

"Even without vaccines or specific therapeutics, people can survive Ebola disease caused by the Bundibugyo virus if they receive timely healthcare and seek treatment as soon as symptoms appear," he said in a post on X on Monday after visiting a newly opened Ebola treatment facility in Bunia on



Sunday.

On Sunday, WHO announced that four nurses who were being treated for Ebola have been discharged from a hospital in Bunia after recovering from the disease. A laboratory worker had also recovered earlier this week, the agency said, bringing the total number of people who have recovered from the virus in Congo to five.

In an op-ed in the Financial Times on Sunday, Dr. Jean Kaseya, director-general of the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention, said more than 1,100 suspected cases are being investigated in Congo and neighboring Uganda as of Saturday, with the two countries having reported 263 confirmed cases and 43 confirmed deaths.

WHO reported the same number of confirmed deaths Sunday, but said there were 291 confirmed cases between Congo and Uganda. Those numbers stood at 128 confirmed cases and 18

deaths a week ago, according to the WHO tracker.

"We must move at the speed of the epidemic," Kaseya wrote in the op-ed, adding that "the risk of regional spread is already happening."

Health officials and medical workers are facing "persistent challenges" in containing the outbreak, a joint statement issued by the Congo government and WHO said, including early detection and isolation of cases, contact tracing, and safe and dignified burials of the victims.

Last month, WHO declared the outbreak caused by the rare Bundibugyo version of the virus in Congo and Uganda a public health emergency of international concern, although it does not meet the criteria of a pandemic emergency.

The outbreak, the third-largest since Ebola was discovered half a century ago, is outpacing the global response, as doctors in the region are playing

catch-up, and fear and anger over the growing health crisis among local communities has at times turned violent.

"Never before has an Ebola outbreak recorded so many cases so soon after its declaration," Doctors without Borders (Medecins Sans Frontieres) said in a statement Saturday. "Like everyone in the affected areas, MSF teams are witnessing a response that has not yet caught up to the rapid spread of the epidemic," the statement said, as it called for more medical staff and testing on the ground.

Meanwhile, health authorities thousands of miles away are probing whether the deadly strain had reached their shores.

In Brazil, a man with a suspected case of Ebola in Sao Paulo tested positive for meningitis. Another suspected case emerged in Rio de Janeiro, where the patient tested positive for malaria, local health authorities said Sunday. In neither case does the diagnosis rule out the possibility of Ebola, they said.

In Italy, protocols for a suspected case of Ebola were triggered in Sardinia's capital, Cagliari, for a man who had flown back from Congo on Saturday with some symptoms, but the health ministry said Monday that he had tested negative. (NBC)

West Indies Academy squad embarks on development tour of Sri Lanka

A 16-member West Indies Academy squad has departed the region for a reciprocal tour of Sri Lanka from June 3 to 27, 2026, where the team will face the Sri Lanka Emerging Players in a multi-format series designed to further strengthen the region's player development pathway.

It follows the visit by the Sri Lanka Emerging Team to Antigua in 2025, where the sides competed in two four-day matches, which ended one game apiece, and three One-Day matches, with the Academy coming out on top 2 to 1.

Once again consisting of two four-day and three 50-Over matches, this tour represents another significant investment in the development of the next generation of West Indies cricketers, offering players the opportunity to gain valuable overseas experience and adapt to challenging subcontinental conditions against quality opposition.

The squad features a strong blend of emerging regional talent, with thirteen members being regular participants in the Academy programme, including Johann Layne, Jediah Blades and Zishan Motara, each having already represented the region at the senior level.

With Akeem Auguste being selected for the West Indies Senior Team and Carlon Bowen-Tuckett being unavailable for selection (personal reasons), emerging players Kevlon Anderson, Shaqkere Parris and Johann Jeremiah have been afforded the international developmental experience opportunity.

Guyana Harpy Eagles Head Coach Ryan Hercules will join the Academy coaching staff as an Assistant Coach for the tour, adding further experience and support to the management unit.

Academy Head Coach Ramesh Subasinghe spoke about the objectives for the tour.



Players of the West Indies Academy. (CWI Media)

“Our Academy objective is simple, to develop players into the next level of their careers, and tours like this play a key part in that journey. Sri Lanka has historically been one of the toughest places for West Indian teams. This tour represents the perfect platform to immerse our brightest emerging talent in conditions that will truly test and shape them.

“Last year we hosted a highly competitive home series against Sri Lanka in Antigua, and four players from that squad have since gone on to represent the West Indies senior men's team, with many others earning regional franchise and CPL opportunities.”

CWI's High-Performance Manager Dwain Gill highlighted the significance of the tour as part of the organisation's wider player development strategy.

“This tour is an extremely important component of our long-term development pathway programme as we continue to invest in the future of West Indies cricket. Opportunities like these allow our emerging players to experience competitive international envi-

ronments, adapt to unfamiliar conditions and further develop the technical, tactical and mental skills required at the highest level of the game,” said Gill.

The squad will travel to Hambantota for the four-day series before moving to Colombo for the white-ball leg of the tour, with all matches being played under standard ICC playing conditions.

West Indies Academy Squad: Rivaldo Clarke (captain), Kevlon Anderson, Ryan Bando, Jediah Blades, Giovonte Depeiza, Mavendra Dindyal, Nathan Edward, Damel Evelyn, Amari Goodridge, Johann Jeremiah, Shaqkere Parris, Mbeki Joseph, Johann Layne, Zishan Motara, Kelvin Pitman, and Raneico Smith.

Team Management Unit: Don Ramesh Subasinghe (head coach); Rohan Nurse (assistant coach); Ryan Hercules (assistant coach); Shanique Peters (physiotherapist); Hance Richards (strength & conditioning coach); and Clint St. Hill (manager).

Green City and E. Harbour wins ABFA Playoffs Series



Players of the Green City FC starting XI

The Green City FC and English Harbour FC have won their respective three-team round-robin playoff series to retain their status to compete in next season's Antigua and Barbuda Football Association's (ABFA) domestic league competitions.

Both teams secured draws in the final match of their respective three-team round-robin playoff series at the ABFA Technical Center on Sunday evening.

Green City and Swetes Vipers battled to a 1-1 draw in the final encounter in the Premier/First Division Playoff Series.

Premier Division side, Green City FC, salvaged their draw via an equalizing own goal, which was scored by Ne-Quan Tanner in the 86th minute.

The Swetes Vipers appeared on course for victory after Kimoi Alexander gave them a one-nil lead by scoring

the opening goal in the second minute.

But the Swetes Vipers were unable to maintain their lead and composure in the later stages of the match in which they were reduced to 10 men with the expulsion of Lyndon Goodwin, who received a red card in the 84th minute.

It went from bad to worse two minutes later, with Tanner converting the own goal, which allowed Green City to salvage a draw and win the playoff.

The two teams finished with four points from their two matches, both securing wins against SAP FC, which was the other First Division team in the playoff series.

However, Green City won the playoff by virtue of scoring more goals than the Swetes Vipers, thus maintaining their right to compete in the Premier Division instead of being relegated to the First Division next season.

English Harbour and Police FC also battled to a 1-1 draw in the final encounter in the First/Second Division Playoff Series.

Both goals were scored minutes apart in the first half, with Jahwa Harvey putting English Harbour ahead via a 32nd-minute conversion, and Jamarly Galloway snatching an equalizer for Police with a strike in the 34th minute.

The two teams finished with four points from their two matches, both securing wins against Kelton Dalso Real Blizzard FC, which was the other Second Division team in the playoff series.

However, English Harbour FC won the playoff by virtue of scoring more goals than Police FC, thus maintaining their right to compete in the first division instead of being relegated to the second division next season.

Seatons Stingers off to winning start in ABNA Village Netball League



The Stingray Seatons Stingers on parade during the march pass to launch official opening the Antigua and Barbuda Netball Association's Antigua Generators and Cool and Smooth Village League in Seatons Village on Sunday, May 31, 2026. (Photo courtesy of the ABNA)

The Seatons Stingers got off to a winning start in the Antigua and Barbuda Netball Association's (ABNA) Antigua Generators and Cool and Smooth Village League on Sunday.

The Stingers launched their campaign in the female division of the Village League with a commanding 53-9 drubbing of Pares in the opening encounter at the Seatons Netball Court.

Shakora Prince sank 30 of her 46 tries, Christina converted 21 of her 31 attempts, and Sonya Drew scored her two shots for the Seatons

Stingers.

Andrea Benjamin sank four of her seven attempts; Annika Watson converted three of her nine tries; and Lucian Smith scored two of her five shots for Pares.

The match was preceded by an official march past and opening ceremony to start the 2026 ABNA Village Netball League.

Teams are competing for supremacy in the female and mixed divisions. Nine teams have been confirmed to contest the female division.

They are Willikies, Seatons, Pares,

All Saints, Swetes/Roman Hill, Gray's Green, Potters, Antigua Talented Youths, and Newfield.

Teams from Willikies, All Saints, Swetes, and Gray's Green are contesting the mixed division.

The ABNA Village Netball League will resume with matches at the Seatons Netball Court on Tuesday evening.

All Saints will take on Michael Joseph Gray's Green Flyballers in a female division affair at 7 pm, and Willikies will clash with Potters in a mixed division encounter at 8 pm.

CWI puts the region's emerging pace talents to the test in Antigua

Twelve of the region's fast-bowling talents will take part in a High-Performance Fast Bowling Assessment Camp from June 1 to 11 at the Coolidge Cricket Ground in Antigua as part of Cricket West Indies' commitment to strengthening capacity and supporting player development across the Caribbean.

The primary objective of the programme is to identify and assess the region's pool of resources across both red-ball and white-ball disciplines through structured challenges and measurable evaluation of speed, technique, skill execution, physical robustness, and problem-solving ability.

The camp will be led by former West Indies fast bowler and world-renowned bowling coach Ottis Gibson, who was recently appointed to the role of Fast Bowling Consultant.

Supporting him will be former West Indies fast bowler Jerome Taylor, one of the region's emerging coaching talents who continues to contribute to player development initiatives within the CWI system.

Gibson spoke on what he is seeking to achieve over the 10-day period.

"I'm excited and honoured to be working with this developing generation of fast bowlers across the region. The main objective is to enhance and maximise the potential of the players we have, which will ultimately benefit West Indies cricket in the long run.

"I've been very impressed with the talent and resources I've seen so far during my time here. There are several promising players who



CWI Fast Bowling Consultant Ottis Gibson, right, conducts a session with some West Indies fast bowlers. (CWI Media)

stand out in terms of their physicality, height and strength. What they now need is the capacity, determination, and desire to consistently bowl fast."

CWI High Performance Manager Dwain Gill said the camp represents an important step in strengthening the region's bowling depth and future succession planning.

"This camp is a strategic component of our wider High-Performance strategy to strengthen the regional fast bowling pipeline and ensure we continue building depth across all formats of the game," Gill said.

"We want to identify bowlers who demonstrate the technical skill, physical capabilities, tactical awareness and mindset required to compete at the international level, while also providing targeted support to accelerate their development within the CWI system."

The High-Performance Fast Bowling Assessment Camp underscores CWI's ongoing investment in developing a sustainable pipeline of elite fast bowlers capable of succeeding across all formats at the international level.

High-Performance Fast Bowling Assessment Camp Participants: Khari Campbell (Jamaica Scorpions), Joshua Cepal (St. Lucia High Performance Centre), McKenny Clarke (Windward Volcanoes), Joshua James (Trinidad & Tobago Red Force), Anderson Phillip (Trinidad & Tobago Red Force), Jakeem Pollard (West Indies Academy), Ojay Shields (Jamaica Scorpions), Ramon Simmons (Barbados Pride), Nial Smith (Guyana Harpy Eagles), Javier Spencer (Leeward Islands Hurricanes), Oshane Thomas (Leeward Islands Hurricanes), and Gilon Tyson (Windward Volcanoes).

CWI names ODI Squad for the first 2026 home series



Players of the West Indies one-day international team. (CWI Media)

Cricket West Indies (CWI) has announced its 15-member squad for the highly anticipated three-match One Day International (ODI) series against Sri Lanka, scheduled for June 3 to 8 at Sabina Park in Jamaica.

The series comes at the start of a crucial stage in the West Indies campaign for automatic qualification to the 2027 ICC Men's ODI World Cup.

Led by captain Shai Hope, the "Men in Maroon" team will also be aiming to extend their unbeaten home ODI series streak to five consecutive victories, with the last triumph coming against Pakistan in August of last year.

The squad sees the return of fast bowler Alzarri Joseph, who had been sidelined since July 2025 due to a back injury, along with Gudakesh Motie who missed the series away to New

Zealand back in November.

Following his impressive performances during the recent ICC Men's T20 World Cup, Shimron Hetmyer has been reintegrated into the West Indies ODI setup as part of CWI's strategic build-up towards the 50-Over World Cup in October and November next year. He will join the squad ahead of the third and final encounter.

Head Coach Daren Sammy says the team's strong recent form at home has boosted confidence ahead of the series against a formidable opponent.

"Sri Lanka are a disciplined and skilful ODI unit, especially in conditions that demand patience and smart cricket. For us, this series is about setting the standard, intensity in the field, clarity with the bat, and consistency with the ball. We want to play fearless

but intelligent cricket and continue building the identity we believe West Indies cricket should represent," Sammy added that.

"In our desire to make home a fortress in ODI cricket, I want the team to win moments consistently rather than relying on individual brilliance which we have stressed for the last 18 months."

The squad arrived in Jamaica on Sunday, May 31, following the conclusion of the 10-day training camp at the Coolidge Cricket Ground in Antigua.

West Indies ODI Squad Against Sri Lanka: Shai Hope (captain), Ackeem Auguste, John Campbell, Keacy Carty, Roston Chase, Matthew Forde, Justin Greaves, Shimron Hetmyer, Amir Jangoo, Alzarri Joseph, Shamar Joseph, Gudakesh Motie, Sherfane Rutherford, Jayden Seales, and Shamar Springer.

Grenadian Red Walters wins OECS Cycling Championship

Red Walters of Grenada captured the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) Cycling Championship, which was held in conjunction with the Antigua and Barbuda Workers Union (ABWU) Invitational Road Race on Sunday.

Walters secured the OECS title by winning the Elite Male Class ahead of Antiguans Jyme Bridges and Tahje Brown in the 59-mile race, which took place across the northern parts of Antigua.

Walters clocked the overall fastest time, completing the course in two hours, 21 minutes, and 40.79 seconds. Bridges took second place, while fellow Antiguan Tahje Browne recovered from a fall to claim third place.

Walters also clinched the title in the ABWU Invitational by winning the Elite Male Class. Bridges once again secured the runner-up position ahead of compatriot Robert Marsh, who claimed third place.

The same cyclists won the other categories in both races, which were held simultaneously.

Lone competitor Sage Williams of St. Vincent won the Cadets 11-14 Class with a time of one hour and 10 minutes.

The Juveniles Class was won by William Meyerer of Grenada by clocking one hour, 29 minutes, and 34.20 seconds. Elite Thomas of Antigua claimed second place.

Eldon Farquharson captured the title in the Sports Class in a time of one hour, 49 minutes, and 57.35 seconds. Dexter Simmons claimed second place, and Carl Thomas finished in third place.



Red Walters, third right, and his Grenada team after capturing the title at Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States Cycling Championship, which was held in conjunction with the Antigua and Barbuda Workers Union (ABWU) Invitational Road Race on Sunday, May 31, 2026.

Anguilla's Craig Emmanuel secured the Masters B Class by crossing the finishing line in two hours, 11 minutes, and 49.90 seconds. Patrick Niles of Anguilla took second place, and Paul Smith came third.

The Masters A Class was won by Samuel Talbot of the British Virgin Islands (BVI) in a time of two hours and 52.11 seconds. Desron Bynoe of St. Vincent finished in second place, and Jason Adams of Antigua came in third.

Tristan Viechweg of Grenada captured the title in the Junior Male Class by clocking two hours, 37 minutes, and 41.44 seconds. Kamari Ruan of Anguilla came in second, and Ephraim Hughes-Hodge of Anguilla finished in third place.

Last year's winner, Kohath Baron of Dominica, was unable to retain his title in the ABWU Invitational. Baron,

who contested the Elite Male Class, finished in fourth place.

A total of 48 cyclists participated in the event. Cycling teams from host Antigua and Barbuda, Anguilla, Dominica, the British Virgin Islands, Grenada, St. Lucia, and St. Vincent took part in the event, which was hosted by the Antigua and Barbuda Cycling Federation.

The OECS Cycling Championships and the Antigua and Barbuda Workers Union Invitational Road Race was held with the support of the government of Antigua and Barbuda and the National Olympic Committee.

The event was supported via sponsorship from the Antigua and Barbuda Workers Union, APUA Inet, Heritage Hotel, Paradiso Water, Sign Pro Antigua, Subway, Sign Plus, and HG Paints and Maritime Supply.