

Global Events Impact Local Economy

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Governor General Sir Rodney Williams (second from right) joins officials of the ministry of social transformation on a visit to a centenarian as Antigua and Barbuda celebrates Centenarians Week

Global Events Impact Local Economy

An unstable global environment that has caused fuel prices to rise internationally, has had a negative impact on the anticipated economic performance for Antigua and Barbuda for the current fiscal year.

Prime Minister and Finance Minister, Gaston Browne, said he no longer believes that the country will achieve the six percent growth in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) as was forecast earlier in the year. Instead, PM Browne is revising downward the expected economic growth to about four percent.

“We were bullish initially, we were anticipating economic growth of about six percent, however, I don’t believe that we would achieve that now and we are now down to about four percent. This will still be considered as being ‘very strong’ when compared with other territories in the region where lower rates of growth are expected. Unfortunately, the geopolitical circumstances are such that factors beyond our control will depress our rate



Prime Minister and Finance Minister, Gaston Browne

of growth,” he explained.

Despite the international challenges, PM Browne is hopeful that there would be a resolution in the interna-

tional conflicts and that some measure of normality would return to global markets.

“We are hoping that these issues are resolved so that by the fourth quarter we will see an increase, or an uptick, in economic activities so that when we go into 2027 we would have a strong year,” he indicated.

According to PM Browne even at four percent, it is growth nonetheless, even while not as strong as had been earlier forecast. “That certainly is good growth for the Antigua and Barbuda economy in the context of the growth that is forecast for the other Caribbean states,” he stated.

The current strife in the Middle East especially the tensions surrounding the Strait of Hormoz have resulted in a spike in fuel prices. Additionally, since much of the world’s fertilisers pass through this critical waterway, food prices have risen exponentially as well.

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Government Says Developing A Comprehensive Sewage System for St. John's Is A National Priority

Minister of Social and Urban Transformation, Rawdon Turner, accompanied by Minister of State, Kiz Johnson, met on Tuesday with representatives of the Sustainable Markets Initiative (SMI) to discuss strategic opportunities for collaboration in advancing Antigua and Barbuda's sustainable development agenda.

The meeting, facilitated by Minister of State in the Ministry of Tourism, Michael Freeland, focused on identifying areas where the Sustainable Markets Initiative can provide support to Antigua and Barbuda, while also exploring opportunities for partnership in preparation for the upcoming Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) 2026, which will be hosted in Antigua and Barbuda later this year.

During the discussions, Minister Turner highlighted several priority areas requiring technical expertise, investment, and strategic partnerships. Among the key issues raised was the need to address longstanding challenges associated with sewage treatment infrastructure in St. John's.

"The modernization of sewage treatment systems is critical to the continued development of our capital city and the protection of public health and the environment," Minister Turner noted while outlining the Government's vision for a more resilient and sustainable urban landscape.

The Minister also emphasized the importance of creating accessible urban corridors and enhancing infrastructure to make St. John's a more disability-friendly city. He sought technical assistance and guidance on implementing international best practices that would improve mobility, inclusivity, and quality of life for residents and visitors alike.

Environmental sustainability was another major focus of the meeting.



Discussions centered on the growing concerns surrounding coastal erosion and the deterioration of beaches across Antigua and Barbuda. Minister Turner requested consultancy support to help identify practical, science-based solutions aimed at protecting the nation's coastlines and preserving one of its most valuable natural resources.

The Sustainable Markets Initiative delegation was led by Chief Executive Officer Jennifer Jordan-Saifi, who was accompanied by members of her communications team.

Jordan-Saifi welcomed the opportunity to engage with the Government of Antigua and Barbuda and expressed

the Initiative's willingness to explore avenues through which meaningful support could be provided.

She indicated that SMI would assess the areas discussed and determine how assistance could be mobilized through grant funding, concessional financing, technical expertise, or strategic partnerships.

The meeting underscored the Government's commitment to fostering international collaboration as it pursues innovative solutions to national development challenges and prepares to welcome world leaders for CHOGM 2026.

Election Report Renews Push for Media Reform and Depoliticisation

The Commonwealth Observer Group (COG) has renewed calls for sweeping reforms to Antigua and Barbuda’s media landscape, recommending the establishment of an independent media oversight body and the de-politicisation of news coverage following its assessment of the 30th April general elections.

In its report on the elections, the observer mission said the state-owned Antigua and Barbuda Broadcasting Services (ABS) should be incorporated as a state-owned entity governed by an independent board of directors. According to the Group, such a move could help address longstanding concerns regarding accessibility, fairness, editorial independence and political bias.

The recommendations echo similar proposals made by Commonwealth observer missions in both 2018 and 2023, highlighting concerns that remain unresolved despite previous calls for reform.

The Group also urged authorities to revive the dormant Antigua and Barbuda Media Congress, noting that a functioning media association could serve as an important platform for professional development, coordination among journalists and media houses, and the promotion of ethical standards across the industry.

“There is a need to depoliticise the media landscape,” the report stated, emphasising that the country’s media environment should be free, fair and inclusive. Observers further recommended the creation of an independent and adequately funded media council or monitoring body to oversee compliance with provisions of the Representation of the People Act governing equitable election coverage.

While acknowledging that media outlets generally fulfilled their responsibilities to provide voters with credible information ahead of the election, the COG found that the highly polarised





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political environment raised questions about fairness and editorial independence.

According to the report, Antigua and Barbuda's media sector includes nearly 20 radio stations, television outlets, online news platforms and social media channels. The report identified ABS as one of the country's most influential sources of information, particularly during the election period, owing to its extensive radio, television and social media reach.

However, observers noted that its coverage was largely dominated by government-related news, leading to complaints from the opposition United Progressive Party (UPP), which alleged bias and unfair treatment by the state broadcaster.

The report detailed a dispute surrounding ABS TV's "Know Your Candidate" programme. According to the COG, ABS invited candidates from all parties to participate in interviews after election writs were issued. While all Antigua and Barbuda Labour Party (ABLP) candidates accepted the invitation, the UPP withdrew from the programme after two candidates appeared, claiming the host demonstrated bias and hostility and that subsequent news coverage portrayed them negatively.

But state media's management strongly rejected the allegations, maintaining that the programme host acted professionally and that the broadcaster remained committed to balanced reporting.

The observer mission also examined the role of private media entities, noting that some outlets are widely perceived to have political affiliations. The report highlighted the influence of NewsCo, owner of The Daily Observer, Observer Radio and HITZ FM, which some stakeholders associate with the UPP. Pointe Ville Communications, which operates Pointe FM, Pointe Xpress newspaper and television services, was also identified as a significant media player.

Several stakeholders told observers that political affiliations and ideologi-

cal leanings within sections of the media contributed to imbalances in coverage and limited the representation of diverse viewpoints.

The UPP also informed the observer mission that it chose not to advertise on ABS platforms, arguing that it lacked confidence in the broadcaster's impartiality and was uncertain whether the governing party was paying for political advertising under the same conditions. Instead, it was noted that the opposition relied heavily on private media and social media platforms to communicate with voters.

Private media practitioners raised separate concerns, including alleged difficulties in securing access to government officials, particularly during the election campaign. Some journalists also reported fears of victimisation and professional repercussions it was revealed.

Despite those concerns, the COG commended both state-owned and private media organisations for their role in voter education and for helping to disseminate information from the An-

tigua and Barbuda Electoral Commission (ABEC).

The report also noted the absence of printed newspapers in Antigua and Barbuda, observing that traditional print media had historically been an important source of information for older citizens and those who do not regularly access digital platforms.

Observers further highlighted the lack of an election-specific media code of conduct and the absence of a unified national code of ethics for journalists. While constitutional protections for freedom of expression remain in place, the Group stressed that stronger professional standards and oversight mechanisms are needed to strengthen public trust in the media.

The Commonwealth mission concluded that a revitalised media association, stronger regulation, improved oversight and a commitment by all media entities to provide balanced coverage would contribute significantly to enhancing democratic participation and confidence in future elections.



CHOGM
ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA 2026

CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS

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.

WHY VOLUNTEER

- Provide national service
- Sharpen your skills
- Learn about different cultures
- Build professional networks
- Enhance your CV
- Boost confidence
- Forge lasting friendships

WHO CAN VOLUNTEER

Open to All Antiguans and Barbudans Over the Age of 18.

FOR INQUIRIES

Contact the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Immigration at **462-1052**

Be part of history. Volunteer today!



SCAN ME!

Governor General Visits Nation's Oldest Centenarians During Centenarian Week Celebrations

As activities for Centenarian Week 2026 continue, the nation's two oldest centenarians received special visits from Governor General Sir Rodney Williams and senior government officials in recognition of their remarkable contributions and longevity.

On Tuesday, Sir Rodney Williams, accompanied by Acting Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Social and Urban Transformation, Almira Henry, and Director of the Community Development and Citizens' Engagement Division, Dale O'Brien, visited 102-year-old Edna Chiddick of Paynters and 101-year-old Denzil O'Brien Cummins of Sea View Farm.

The visits formed part of the government's ongoing efforts to honour the country's centenarians and celebrate the invaluable role they have played in shaping Antigua and Barbuda through generations of service, resilience, sacrifice, and wisdom.

During the visits, warm conversations were shared as officials reflected on the lives, experiences, and contributions of both centenarians. Their extraordinary journeys continue to inspire younger generations and serve as powerful reminders of the strength and determination that have helped build communities across the nation.

The delegation also visited Anja's Creations, a local entrepreneur and proud supporter of Centenarian Week 2026. The business has generously sponsored birthday cakes for every centenarian celebrating a birthday during the observance, adding a special touch to the week's activities and helping ensure that each milestone is celebrated in a meaningful way.



Director O'Brien commended the partnership, noting that community involvement is essential in recognising and uplifting the nation's elderly population.

Centenarian Week 2026 continues with a series of activities aimed at celebrating the lives and achievements of Antigua and Barbuda's oldest citizens, whose legacy remains an enduring source of national pride.

Minister Freeland Inspects Potters' Multi-Sport Complex

The Potters Playing Field redevelopment project is on schedule for completion ahead of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM), with the majority of works across the multi-sport complex targeted for completion by September 30, 2026 — two months before Commonwealth heads of government convene in St. John's from November 1 to 4.

Minister of State in the Ministry of Tourism, Michael Freeland, who represents the St. George constituency in which the field is located, on Tuesday joined Karen-Mae Hill, High Commissioner for Antigua and Barbuda to the United Kingdom and CHOGM 2026 National Focal Point, for a walkthrough of the facility.

The tour was led by Prince Charles, the project's head and one of its trustees. The centrepiece of the redevelopment is a set of three hard courts — basketball, netball, and volleyball — each with its own covered stand accommodating approximately 225 spectators.

Contractor Agile Courts Construction has been engaged to resurface the courts, install lighting, apply line markings, and fit security fencing, glass wall rings, and polyvinyl nets. All lighting has already been procured and is on site awaiting installation.

The adjacent multi-purpose field, which will accommodate football and cricket, currently sits approximately 16 inches below its target grade level. Drainage infrastructure is to be installed before sodding begins, with grassing targeted for August 2026.

Completion targets across the facility are phased as follows: the stand and hard-court area by September, the pool section by October, and



baseball infrastructure around the same period.

An electrical room on the east-southern side of the complex will power lighting throughout the site, with solar infrastructure also planned.

Security and community access were also addressed during the walk-

through, with suggestions made to station a police officer in the area during peak hours given the site's use as a pedestrian shortcut to nearby schools.

The installation of seating to encourage structured community use of the space was also proposed

SLBMC Salutes Its Pediatric Emergency Team

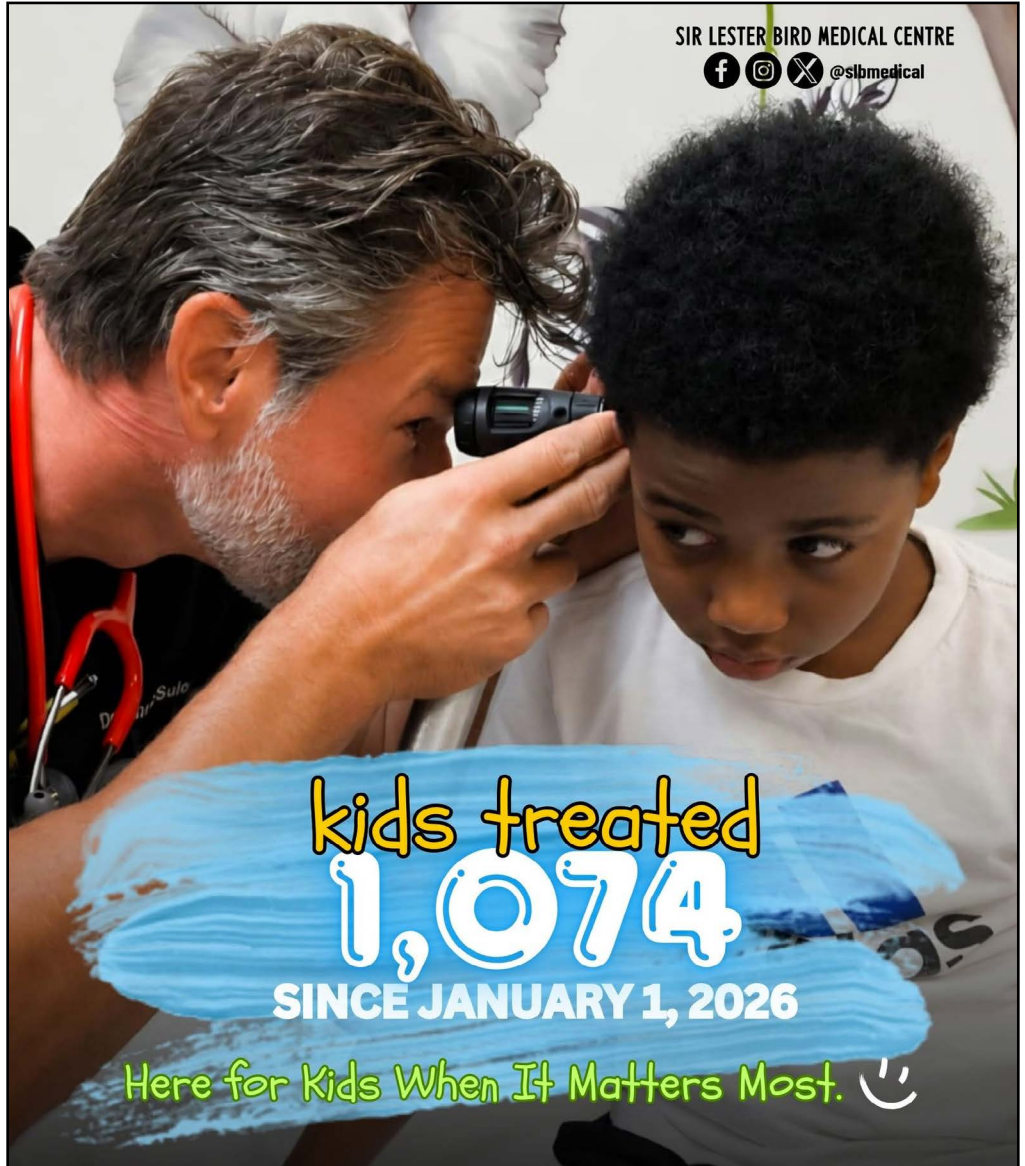
The Sir Lester Bird Medical Centre is celebrating the work of its pediatric emergency team for caring for over one thousand children over the five plus months of the year.

In a statement, the SLBMC said the department has cared for a total of 1,074 so far this year.

“That’s the number of children cared for through our Pediatric Emergency Department so far in 2026. Behind every number is a child needing care, a worried parent seeking reassurance, and a healthcare team working to provide support when it matters most,” the statement noted.

The country’s primary health care facility said in its statement, “Thank you to our Pediatric team for the care, compassion, and expertise they bring to every patient encounter.”

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Health has announced that the Cobbs Cross Clinic will host an HPV Screening and Vaccination Day on Saturday June 20, from 9:00 am to 2:00 pm.





ANTIGUA Carnival 2026



INTERNATIONAL



JULY 30TH

8:00PM @ CARNIVAL CITY

EARLY BIRD
GENERAL

\$100

RHYTHM
ROOM

\$350



US Visitor Dies During Scuba Diving Excursion

Police are investigating the death of a 59-year-old visitor from the United States who became unresponsive while participating in a scuba diving excursion off the coast of North Sound on Monday afternoon.

The deceased, who reportedly resided in North Carolina, was vacationing in Antigua with family members. He arrived in the country on 5th June and was scheduled to return home on 13th June.

According to police reports, the man was last seen alive around 3:15 p.m. while scuba diving in waters near Red Head and Rabbit Island. During the excursion, he reportedly became unresponsive, prompting an emergency response by those accompanying him.

He was transported to the mainland near Shell Beach, where Emergency Medical Services personnel attended to him before rushing him to the Sir Lester Bird Medical Centre for further medical treatment.

Despite efforts to save his life, a doctor at the hospital pronounced him



dead on arrival at approximately 4:36 p.m.

Police have launched an investigation into the circumstances surrounding the incident. Authorities have indicated that an autopsy will be conducted to

determine the exact cause of death.

The Police Administration has extended condolences to the family and loved ones of the deceased as investigations continue.






MINISTRY OF
HEALTH, WELLNESS,
ENVIRONMENT AND
CIVIL SERVICE AFFAIRS

Government of Antigua and Barbuda







COBBS CROSS CLINIC HPV SCREENING DAY

 SATURDAY, 20 JUNE 2026

 9:00 A.M. – 2:00 P.M.

WHO SHOULD BE SCREENED?

-  Women ages 30–65
-  Women who have never done an HPV test
-  Women who had their last HPV test five years ago
-  Women who have not done surgery to remove the entire uterus



HPV VACCINATION IS AVAILABLE

For girls and boys ages 9–26.

Protect today for a healthier tomorrow.



Early detection saves lives.

HPV screening helps identify changes that may lead to cervical cancer before symptoms develop.





ANTIGUA
Carnival
2026

MUDDY



JULY 30TH

8:00PM @ CARNIVAL CITY

EARLY BIRD
GENERAL

\$100

RHYTHM
ROOM

\$350





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11 JUNE

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JR JAM BAND &
ANTZNEST

25 JUNE

RED HOT FLAMES &
KAUTION BAND

23 JULY

VENOM X &
NEW GEN

FEEL THE RHYTHM

START AT 8 PM
REDCLIFFE STREET



CARICOM Secretariat hosts Guyana Defence Force Senior officers for security Engagement



The CARICOM Secretariat's Crime and Security Team, with the delegation from the Guyana Defence Force (GDF), Senior Command and Staff Course Number 20 (SCSC #20)

The CARICOM Secretariat recently welcomed a delegation from the Guyana Defence Force (GDF) Senior Command and Staff Course Number 20 (SCSC #20) as part of ongoing efforts to strengthen engagement with regional security institutions.

During the visit on June 4, the delegation took part in a knowledge-sharing session facilitated by members of the Secretariat's Crime and Security Programme, said a CARICOM release. It also stated that the exchange provided GDF officers with an opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of CARICOM's role in promoting and coordinating regional security initiatives.

CARICOM reports that the session was led by Programme Manager for Crime and Security, Sherwin Stephenson, and Project Officer

for Crime and Security, Mareesha Stephens. Through discussions and interactive dialogue, participants explored the Community's approach to addressing both existing and emerging crime and security issues across the Caribbean.

The release said that the officers were also briefed on the ways in which CARICOM leverages functional cooperation among Member States and regional institutions to strengthen collective responses to security threats and challenges facing the region.

Captain Stephion Gordan presents a commemorative plaque to Mareesha Stephens, Project Officer for Crime and Security, as a gesture of appreciation. Photo: CARICOM Communications

In addition to the technical discussions, the delegation

was reportedly given a guided tour of the CARICOM

Secretariat, allowing members to learn more about the organisation's structure, responsibilities and its role in advancing regional integration and cooperation.

According to the Secretariat, the visit highlighted the importance of continued collaboration between CARICOM and regional defence and security agencies. It also reinforced what the Community says is its commitment to promoting coordinated and collective strategies aimed at enhancing crime prevention, security cooperation, and regional stability. (Dominica News Online)

NOTICE

TO: Your Worship
St. John's Magistrate's Court
High Street
St. Johns
Antigua.

TO: The Commissioner of Police
Police Headquarters
American Road
St. Johns
Antigua.

Dear Sir/Madame,

Re: Notice-Application for Bottle Licence

I, Dalma Maynard Morrissey of Church Street, with registered business situate at Church Street, St. Johns, Antigua, and Barbuda DO HEREBY GIVE NOTICE that it is my intention to apply at the next sitting of the liquor licensing Court to be held at the Magistrate's Court, High Street, St. John's, Antigua on Thursday 2nd July 2026 next ensuring for a Liquor Licensing Pursuant to section (11) (5) of the Licensing (Intoxication Liquor) Act Cap 249 of the Laws of Antigua and Barbuda 1992 Revised Edition, in respect of premises known as "KA CHEN Supermarket" situated at Church Street, in the parish of St. Johns, Antigua and Barbuda.

Dated the 2nd May 2026.

SVG remains the 3rd least corrupt Caribbean nation

St Vincent again maintained its position as third least corrupt among all the states in the Eastern Caribbean, according to the Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) Country Rankings.

As reported by Transparency International for the CPI report issued in 2025, based upon an evaluation system using a total possible score of 100 points, St Vincent was ranked at #31 out of 182 nations worldwide with a score of 63.

As indicated in the Transparency International CPI Report for 2025, St. Vincent's ranking has remained the same as it was in the CPI Report for 2024.

Barbados was found to be the least corrupt country with a CPI Score of 68 and a corresponding ranking of 23; The Bahamas followed as the second least corrupt with a CPI Score of 64 and a ranking of 29, which is one spot lower than its ranking of 28 in the CPI Report for 2024.

A country's score reflects how much the public perceives corruption within their government's public sector on a 0-100 scale; with a score of 0 representing a high degree of corruption and a score of 100 reflecting no corruption.

A country's ranking represents how many other countries are less transparent than they are. Therefore, a country's ranking does not represent the actual amount of transparency or lack thereof of that particular country. (St Vincent Times)



NOTICE

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St. John's Magistrate's Court
High Street
St. Johns
Antigua.

TO: The Commissioner of Police
Police Headquarters
American Road
St. Johns
Antigua.

Dear Sir/Madame,

Re: Notice-Application for Tavern Licence

I, Maria Salome Gomez of Piggott Village, with registered business situated on St. George's Street in St. Johns, Antigua and Barbuda, DO HEREBY GIVE NOTICE that it is our intention to apply at the next sitting of the Liquor Licensing Court to be held at the Magistrate's Court, High Street, at St. John's, Antigua, 2nd July 2026, next ensuing for a Liquor Licensing Pursuant to section (11)(5) of the Licensing (Intoxication Liquor) Act Cap. 249 of the Laws of Antigua and Barbuda 1992 Revised Edition, in respect of premises known as "Yuli's Bar" Situated at St. George's Street in the parish of St. John's, Antigua and Barbuda.

Dated the 20th April 2026.

Immigration advocates hail court rejection of Trump's 'unlawful' immigration restrictions

Caribbean immigration advocates have welcomed a ruling by a United States federal district court judge that struck down President Donald Trump's "unlawful" immigration restrictions.

The policies enacted by Trump include measures that halted asylum applications, and paused the decisions of immigration applications, work permits, green cards and citizenship applications for nationals from 39 countries, primarily from Africa and the Caribbean subject to the administration's travel ban.

In his ruling, Judge John McConnell, Jr found that the Trump administration's actions effectively made it impossible for Caribbean and other immigrants eligible for asylum to remain in the United States and violated "the immigration laws governing the responsibilities of US Citizenship and Immigration Services."

President and chief executive officer of the New York Immigration Coalition (NYIC), Murad Awawdeh, told the Caribbean Media Corporation (CMC) that "every person seeking safety, stability and opportunity deserves a fair chance to have their case heard under the law."

He said Judge McConnell "reaffirmed what we already knew: that the Trump administration violated the law, and did so with anti-immigrant malice.

"By shutting down access to asylum and preventing thousands of immigrants from receiving a decision on their immigration applications solely on the basis of which country they come from, the Trump administration acted against statute and against the rule of law.

"Their unlawful actions left thousands of families in limbo, cut people from life-saving protections, and un-



dermined the rule of law by attempting to bypass the immigration system established by Congress. We applaud

Judge McConnell's ruling, which renews faith in our legal system as fair and accountable."

But Awawdeh said while the judge's decision restores "critical pathways for many, Congress must continue fighting for policies that uphold due process, protect immigrant families, and ensure every individual is treated with fairness under the law."

Skye Perryman, the president of Democracy Forward, a legal nonprofit organisation that helped represent several immigration groups and la-

NOTICE

**TO: Your Worship
St. John's Magistrate's Court
High Street
St. Johns
Antigua.**

**TO: The Commissioner of Police
Police Headquarters
American Road
St. Johns
Antigua.**

Dear Sir/Madame,

Re: Notice- Application for Tavern License

I, Stacy-Ann Morgan of Utopia Park, Sir George Walter Highway, with registered business situate at Utopia Park, St. Johns, Antigua and Barbuda, DO HEREBY GIVE NOTICE that it is my intention to apply at the next sitting of the liquor licensing Court to be held at the Magistrate's Court at High Street, St. John's, Antigua on Wednesday 2nd July, 2026 next ensuring for a Liquor Licensing Pursuant to section (11) (5) of the Licensing (intoxication Liquor) Act Cap. 249 of the Laws of Antigua and Barbuda 1992 Revised Edition, in respect of premises known as "438 Lounge & Grill Bar & Restaurant" situated in the parish of St. John's, Antigua and Barbuda.

Dated 18th May 2026

bour unions filing the lawsuit against the Trump administration, said Judge McConnell's ruling "reaffirms a basic principle: The federal government cannot shut down lawful immigration pathways or discriminate against people based on where they come from.

"These unlawful policies caused enormous harm to families, workers, asylum seekers and communities across the country," he said.

In his ruling, Judge McConnell wrote that in view of Trump's immigration policies "many of those individuals remain without work, without legal status and without any meaningful ability to plan for their futures.

"The court is reminded of a line often repeated in discussions around immigration policy: If people wish to immigrate to the United States, they ought to 'follow the law' and 'do things the right way,'" he wrote adding "this case serves as a perfect example of immigrants doing just that."

Meantime, New York Attorney General Letitia James and a coalition of attorneys general won a lawsuit against the Trump administration for imposing an "illegal US\$100,000 fee" on all new applicants for H-1B visas, a critical programme that allows highly-trained immigrants to temporarily work in the United States.

James said H-1B recipients fill essential roles in health care, education, technology, and other fields, "contributing significantly to their states' economies and filling critical shortages of essential workers, particularly in health care".

The US District Court for the District of Massachusetts ruled in favour of James and a coalition of 19 other attorneys general that sued the administration for imposing the fee on all new H-1B applications, a massive increase over the visa's typical fees.

The court granted the coalition's motion for summary judgment, declaring the policy implementing the fee unlawful.

"Every day, thousands of people with H-1B visas serve New Yorkers as doctors, teachers, and other skilled workers. Today, a court put an end to this administration's illegal attempt to destroy this critical program and the many jobs it makes possible," said James.

"Workers with these visas contribute immensely to our state, and I will keep fighting to stop this administration's unjust and unlawful attacks on our immigrant communities," she added.

The New York Attorney General said the H-1B programme allows employers to petition to hire workers in a "specialty occupation" for a maxi-

mum of six years.

She said while H-1B visa fees have historically been just several thousand dollars, the Trump administration suddenly announced in September 2025 that a US\$100,000 fee would be imposed on all new H-1B applications.

In December 2025, Attorney General James and the coalition sued the administration to stop the fee from being implemented. The court on Monday granted the coalition's motion for summary judgment, declaring the fee unlawful and vacating the policy implementing it. (CMC)

NOTICE

**TO: Your Worship
St. John's Magistrate's Court
High Street
St. Johns
Antigua.**

**TO: The Commissioner of Police
Police Headquarters
American Road
St. Johns
Antigua.**

Dear Sir/Madame,

Re: Notice-Application for Tavern Licence

I, Winston Junior Skeete of Scott Hill, St. John's, Antigua, with registered business situate at Redcliffe Street in St. Johns, Antigua and Barbuda DO HEREBY GIVE NOTICE that it is my intention to apply at the next special sitting of the liquor licensing Court to be held at the Magistrate's Court, High Street St. John's, Antigua on Wednesday 1st July 2026 next ensuring for a Liquor Licensing Pursuant to section (11) (5) of the Licensing (intoxication Liquor) Act Cap. 249 of the Laws of Antigua and Barbuda 1992 Revised Edition, in respect of premises known as "You Only Live Once Night Club." Situated on Redcliffe Street in the parish of St. John's, Antigua and Barbuda.

Dated the 8th May 2026.

SVG transitions toward paperless customs (VSwift)

In a historic milestone for national digital transformation, the St. Vincent and the Grenadines Customs and Excise Department has officially launched the upgraded ASYCUDA World version 4.4, transitioning the nation toward a fully paperless customs environment.

The launch serves as the critical foundation for the Vincy Single Window for Trade (VSwift), a transformative initiative designed to make cross-border trade “safer, smarter, and faster”.

Implemented under the auspices of the World Bank-funded Caribbean Digital Transformation Project (CARDP) and in collaboration with the United Nations Trade and Development (UNCTAD), this fifth-generation, cloud-based platform makes St. Vincent and the Grenadines the first nation in the Eastern Caribbean to embrace this level of advanced ASYCUDA technology.

The system enables brokers, importers, and exporting companies to seamlessly lodge declarations, upload supporting documents, track application statuses, and make online duty payments from any internet-enabled device. “You can be on the beach in Bequia... simply once you have internet connectivity, you can lodge an entry as a broker,” noted Terrence Leonard, UNCTAD Program Manager.

Comptroller of Customs and Excise, Mr. Selvin Salva, emphasized the immense economic significance of the upgrade. He noted that customs collections accounted for 48.8% of the nation’s total tax revenue in 2025, exceeding its revenue mandate by \$10 million.

“From this moment forward, the business community can submit declarations online, pay duties and taxes online, [and] receive real-time notification on the status of their submission,” Salva stated, adding that this level of convenience was once only



heard of in advanced economies.

The transition systematically phases out heavily paper-based processes. Examining officers have been equipped with mobile tablets, allowing them to conduct and record physical inspections directly into the ASYCUDA system while out in the field, effectively eliminating the need for clipboards and paper declarations.

The system also introduces automated risk-configurable selectivity rules, which allow low-risk cargo to clear much faster, optimizing the department’s security resources. Future modular rollouts will include a revolutionary e-commerce module for courier packages. This will allow customers to pay fees online before packages even arrive on the island, putting an end to long queues at courier companies. Electronic certificates of origin are also being piloted, utilizing QR codes to verify authenticity and build regional trust.

A core feature of this digital modernization is the integration of 22 Partner Government Agencies (PGAs)—including Plant Protection, Animal Health, the Police Force, and the Ministry of Health—into a single digital

ecosystem.

As an interim measure before the dedicated VSwift single-window portal takes over entirely, key agencies have been provided with direct ASYCUDA accounts to issue vital approvals electronically. This ensures that clearance processes remain fully digital from day one, acting as a single gateway for the trading community.

Officials heavily stressed that the success of this digital shift relies on human adaptability. Chryslin Goldborn Harry, National Project Officer for VSwift, noted that success requires a shared commitment to doing things differently, along with comprehensive training for users and the private sector.

“Technology alone does not transform a system. People do,” remarked Comptroller Salva, highlighting the cultural shift toward a transparent, service-oriented trade environment. By removing the friction from trade and reducing clearance times, officials are confident that the new system will boost the nation’s global competitiveness, attract investment, and drive the Vincentian economy for generations to come. (St Vincent Times)

Air Canada pilot accused of flying for 17 years without correct licence



A former Air Canada pilot is accused of flying thousands of passengers on commercial flights without a proper licence for 17 years, officials say.

Police said the pilot, 59-year-old Geoffrey Wall from Ontario, was discovered to have been flying with forged credentials since he was promoted to captain in 2009. He now faces several fraud-related charges.

Air Canada said the pilot was immediately removed from duty once the false documents were discovered last year. "The company voluntarily reported the matter to Transport Canada," the airline said.

The airline said passenger safety was never at risk, noting that all pilots undergo competency training every six months.

Deputy Chief Nick Milinovich of Peel Regional Police said Wall had been flying with Air Canada for 27 years, beginning his career in 1998.

The pilot allegedly had been misrepresenting his credentials since 2009 when he was promoted to the position

of pilot-in-command, or captain, police said.

For that role, pilots are required to have an airline transport pilot licence (ATPL), which is obtained partly by passing a series of written exams.

"This is very similar to a doctor that is licensed to practice family medicine, but is doing brain surgery in their office," said Milinovich.

For the last 17 years, police said Wall flew several types of Boeing aircraft and a total of 900 domestic and international flights, and earned millions of dollars in salary - all allegedly without the proper credentials.

Officials said the alleged fraud was discovered last year during a routine evaluation when inconsistencies were flagged with the accused pilot's licence documentation, prompting an investigation by Transport Canada, Canada's federal transport department.

Peel Regional Police, a force in the Toronto-area, then began a criminal investigation into Wall that included a search warrant and an analysis of the

licence, which police said they determined was forged.

Wall was charged on 1 June with a total of seven counts, including fraud, forging documents and possession of counterfeit mark.

Air Canada said the pilot was fully trained with a valid commercial pilot licence, but did not have the ATPL required to operate as captain under Canadian regulations.

In its statement, the airline added it "takes this matter with utmost seriousness", and said that it completed an audit of its pilots and found no other issues with non-compliance.

Asked why Wall's alleged fraud went for years undetected, Milinovich noted that offenders can become "very good" at "deceit and trickery".

"It is not uncommon for fraud to continue for years and years," he said. "Eventually it catches up to you, and that's when we get involved."

Wall is due to appear in court on 29 June. (BBC)

Murder of Lyhanna, 11, enrages France and turns up heat on government



France's government is under mounting pressure over the murder of an 11-year-old girl whose alleged killer had several times been denounced to police as a sex offender.

More than 60,000 people took part in protests across the country on Monday following the killing of Lyhanna, many demanding the resignation of Justice Minister Gérald Darmanin – one of the senior members of the government.

There is fury because the suspect – 41 year-old Jérôme Barella – had been reported to police last August by the mother of a 10-year-old called Rosa, who alleged he had sexually abused her daughter on several occasions.

Medical evidence confirmed she had been abused, and yet not once in the nine months since the complaint was filed was Barella questioned by investigators.

In the eyes of an angry French public, had the suspect been at least contacted by police he would have known he was being watched and that may have prevented Lyhanna's death.

Lyhanna's body was found last

Thursday at a farm around 10km (6 miles) from the town of Fleurance in south-west France, where she was last seen at the end of school six days previously.

Barella, who is the father of a friend of Lyhanna, was taken into custody three days after her disappearance.

He has denied any involvement in her death but has admitted taking her in his car to a local swimming pool. When he was questioned by an investigating judge he refused to answer any questions.

It has since emerged that he was named in several other cases of alleged sexual abuse in recent years, which should have made the Rosa case a priority - but did not.

Rosa's mother has now announced through her lawyers that she is filing a lawsuit against the state and against Darmanin for their responsibilities in the affair.

Darmanin, a leading figure in the Renaissance party that generally supports President Emmanuel Macron, has agreed that the Lyhanna case revealed "shocking and unacceptable failings in the services of the state", but he has ruled out res-

ignation.

He and the government find themselves caught between an increasingly incensed public and a justice system whose magistrates and prosecutors refuse to be made scapegoats.

The Higher Magistrature Council (CSM) said it "deplored the discredit being thrown on thousands of magistrates" because of the affair, which was being "instrumentalised by people who have decided in advance that magistrates are the guilty parties".

The CSM said magistrates, who in the French system direct police in the conduct of a criminal investigation, lacked the financial and manpower resources to do their work correctly.

But, speaking before a Senate committee on Tuesday, Darmanin said resources were not the problem in the Lyhanna affair.

"What is missing in this story is not a new law; it's not more money; it's not better IT. It's the need to prioritise allegations of rape," he said.

"The principle of precaution should have been applied to take Mr Barella out of circulation and determine whether the allegations against him were true. We had all the elements. Nine months later it is quite incomprehensible that he was never taken into custody," Darmanin said.

The minister has told state prosecutors to review some 70,000 complaints of sexual abuse on minors that are still awaiting treatment.

Prime Minister Sébastien Lecornu has also promised to toughen a law on child protection currently going through parliament, so that serial rapists face potential life terms in jail, rather than a maximum of 20 years. (BBC)

300 migrants bound for UK kidnapped and threatened with kidney removal

More than 300 migrants heading to the UK last summer were kidnapped, tortured and threatened with forced organ removal, the BBC has learned.

The young men, all from Iraqi Kurdistan, were captured in Libya by a militia who demanded a ransom of \$5,000 (£3,700) from each of their families, and threatened to harvest the captives' kidneys if payment was not made promptly.

We have spoken to some hostages who have since been released, and seen photo evidence suggesting that forced operations did take place.

The former captives showed us evidence of torture, and said they had been kept in cramped conditions, with nearly 180 people sharing a cell.

At least one hostage is known to have died, and it is unclear how many remain captive.

The militia was supposed to be guiding the migrants through Libya to the Mediterranean coast. However, a dispute over payment had broken out with the Iraqi Kurd people-smuggler, Noah Aaron, who had organised the



migrants' journey.

Aaron is now serving a 10-year prison sentence in France for separate money laundering and smuggling offences.

Details of the kidnappings emerged during a recent BBC investigation into another smuggler, Kardo Jaf, which led to his arrest last month.

The two smugglers are believed to have worked together in the past. Both are from the town of Ranya in Iraqi Kurdistan - a region "riddled with ac-

tive smuggling networks", according to a report by the UK think tank, Chatham House.

In February, a BBC investigative team was making inquiries about Jaf in Ranya, when they were approached by a local man who said his son had been one of the men held.

The man told the BBC that Aaron's smuggling gang had charged his family thousands of dollars for organising the journey to the UK, which would



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AROUND THE WORLD



involve travelling through northern Africa, then across the Mediterranean into Europe.

The route would pass through Libya, a country with a “huge vacuum of government”, according to Anthony Dunkerley, a UN adviser who has investigated human trafficking there.

Much of Libya is controlled by rival militias, and smuggling networks rely on their co-operation.

We learned that, during the summer of 2025, successive groups of migrants who had flown into Libya from Iraqi Kurdistan were taken to a guarded compound and imprisoned.

The militia then demanded \$5,000 for each hostage, claiming Aaron had failed to pay it for a previous deal. If the money was not delivered quickly, families were warned, payment would be taken “with a kidney”.

The Libyans also sent photos and videos of the hostages, many of which were distressing or violent. In one, a young man was filmed while being told he was being taken to a doctor to have his kidney removed.

The local man who approached us in Ranya said he had paid the ransom.

His son was among 110 hostages flown home in January, on a plane organised by the Iraqi government. However, he showed a photo he said his son had sent while in captivity, displaying a raw scar they feared was from a forced organ removal.

Within a short time of speaking to this man, dozens more people came forward, many showing similar phone pictures.

Kidnapping for ransom has been widely documented along migration routes through Libya. Criminal groups are able to exploit limited state control in some areas, says Dunkerley, making investigations and prosecutions particularly challenging.

Many of the hostages have now been released. Some families paid the ransom promptly, but Kurdish authorities suspect other hostages may have paid with their internal organs.

The BBC spoke to some of those who had returned to Ranya.

One young man said he had been tortured by having his leg burned. He rolled up his trousers to show the scars.

A 16-year-old boy said he had been one of 178 kept in a tiny cell: “We

didn't see the Sun for six months.”

It was so cramped, he said, that everyone had to sleep sitting up. All the prisoners shared a single toilet, and those who took too long would be beaten.

Food consisted of one piece of bread per day, the hostages' families told the BBC - but only if they paid the captors extra money.

Despite the risks, the flow of illegal migrants from Iraqi Kurdistan to Europe has not stopped, according to Hemn Merany, a senior official at the Kurdistan Regional Government's Ministry of the Interior.

He has urged the returned hostages to tell friends and family about their horrific experiences, he says, to discourage them from setting out on the same journey.

But he tells the story of a father whose son died in Libya after a suspected forced organ removal. At the funeral in Ranya, the man discovered that two of his son's cousins had recently left for Europe.

“The very sad part of this business is we do not learn,” says Merany. (BBC)

Mrs. Jелlette RALPH
(JELLY BEANS)

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Rescuers comb rubble after death toll in Philippines earthquake climbs to 37

Rescuers searched the rubble on Tuesday of a collapsed building in the southern Philippine city of General Santos, the worst hit by a powerful earthquake that has killed at least 37 people and injured hundreds, to reach two people still believed to be trapped inside.

Regional fire officer Edgar Tanawan, who is leading the operation, told Reuters two people had been pulled out alive from the commercial building, housing a grocery store and other businesses, but a third was found dead. Scanners have so far detected no signs of life from the remaining two, he added.

“It’s difficult to accept, as a mother, that my son is still trapped there,” said Dioslinda Deluvio, distraught as she waited outside the building for news of her son. “I don’t know... it’s very hard to accept.

“My only call is to have him retrieved today so we can be at peace,” said the 65-year-old mother.

The 7.8-magnitude quake, which triggered tsunami warnings across several countries, struck early on Monday morning about 12 miles off the coast of Sarangani province, with tremors felt strongly across Mindanao and as far as the city of Manado, 260 miles away on the Indonesian island of Sulawesi.

Officials said they hoped the death toll would not rise further as search and rescue operations continued, with more than 400 people injured and four still missing.

Scenes of devastation were visible in parts of General Santos, which is home to more than 700,000 people and now under a state of calamity, with several buildings collapsed



and debris strewn across streets beneath a tangle of toppled power lines and utility posts.

Philippine disaster officials scoured damaged buildings to assess damage and worked to restore power and water for the thousands of residents affected by the disaster. The quake came eight months after the country suffered its deadliest tremor in 12 years, when a shallow 6.9 magnitude quake hit off the central island of Cebu, killing 79 people.

The Philippines experiences hundreds of quakes each year and sits on tectonically complex parts of the Pacific “Ring of Fire,” a seismically active belt stretching from South America to the Russian Far East.

Schools, which had just reopened on Monday after a long break, remained closed as authorities checked the condition of school buildings, thousands of which sustained minor to severe damage, Rafaelito Alejandro, head of the office

of civil defence, told DZBB radio.

A video shared by one school of the moment the quake struck showed a large group of children sitting on a floor swaying violently from side to side, some hugging teachers, before they fled en masse as a makeshift shelter collapsed behind them.

The Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) recorded 23 strong aftershocks, with the strongest measuring magnitude 6.7, forcing some residents to spend the night in evacuation centres and tents.

In General Santos and Sarangani, patients were treated in makeshift tents as officials worked to ensure hospitals were safe, Health Secretary Teodoro Herbosa told DZBB, adding the restoration of power was critical as outages limited access to sensitive and sophisticated treatments needed by patients. (Reuters)



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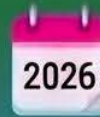


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JUNE 15, 2026



WHAT IS EXPECTED OF YOU AS A PARADE MARSHAL

As a Parade Marshal, you play a vital role in ensuring the safety, order, and success of our parades as a representative of the Antigua and Barbuda Festivals Commission.

CORE OPERATIONAL DUTIES

- **Crowd Control** – Keep spectators behind designated boundaries, identify high-risk areas, and prevent overcrowding.
- **Parade Flow Management** – Ensure bands move at a consistent pace, maintain spacing, and prevent congestion.
- **Participant Support** – Provide directions, assist lost or distressed participants, and refer to medical or support services when needed.
- **Communication** – Maintain radio contact, report incidents clearly (what, where, who), avoid unnecessary chatter and follow instructions promptly.
- **Emergency Support** – Report emergencies immediately, assist within your level of training, create space for responders, and help keep everyone calm.



WHAT YOU WILL RECEIVE

- ✓ **Mandatory training**
- ✓ **Official apparel and identification**
- ✓ **Meals and refreshments**
- ✓ **Operational experience in event management and public safety**



OPERATIONAL CONDUCT

- Be visible, alert, and positioned strategically.
- Use clear, calm, and assertive communication.
- Act early to prevent issues rather than react.
- Stay within your assigned zone unless directed otherwise.



CODE OF CONDUCT

- Treat everyone with respect and professionalism.
- Remain impartial, fair, and courteous at all times.
- No alcohol, drugs, or anything that may impair you while on duty.
- Do not engage in arguments or physical confrontation.
- Escalate issues to security, police, or your supervisor.
- Always wear your official ID and apparel.



HEALTH & SAFETY

- Stay hydrated and wear appropriate clothing and footwear.
- Take scheduled breaks.
- Report any health concerns immediately.
- Follow all safety instructions and signage.



BEFORE, DURING & AFTER THE EVENT

Before: Attend training, understand your duties and zone, collect all equipment and ID.

During: Perform your duties diligently, follow instructions, and stay focused.

After: Assist with crowd dispersal, report incidents/observations, and return all issued equipment.

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**HIGH-ENERGY
SOCAROBICS
SESSION**



**COOL
DOWN &
STRETCH**

**SUNSET
SOCAROBICS**

**WITH
DANCERBOYSHAN**

**MUSIC BY
DJ KAVITY**

Quarter-finals set for Primary School Cup football championship



Players of the St. Peter's Academy School football team which won the Primary School Cup title on Friday, June 20, 2025. (File photo)

The battle for supremacy will resume this week with the commencement of the knockout stage of this year's Ministry of Sports Cool & Smooth/JOMA Caribbean Primary School Football Cup Championships.

The quarter-finals in both the girls' and boys' competitions will take place after the completion of matches in the round-robin group and preliminary stage of the competitions.

The top four teams in each of the two zones at the end of the preliminary stage have qualified for the Girls Primary School Cup quarter-finals, which will take place on Wednesday (today).

Five Islands, Old Road, Bendals, and Jennings primary schools advanced from Zone A, while Buckley's, J.T. Ambrose, Pigotts, and New Winthorpes primary schools qualified from Zone B.

In the quarter-finals at Golden Grove, Five Islands will take on J.T. Ambrose at 3:30 pm, and New Winthorpes will

face Old Road at 4:30 pm.

In the other two matches at Buckley's, Bendals will tackle Pigotts at 3:30 pm, and Jennings will clash with Buckley's at 4:30 pm.

Meanwhile, the top two teams in each of the three groups as well as the two best overall third-place finishers in the Boys' Primary School Cup have qualified for the quarter-finals, which will take place on Friday.

Defending champions St. Peter's Academy advanced to the quarter-finals after finishing as one of the two best third-placed teams in the group stage.

St. Peter's Academy, which won the title for the first time last year by beating New Winthorpes Primary 1-0 in the final, finished third in Group C. Also advancing are unbeaten Group C winners J.T. Ambrose Primary and Parham Primary, which finished in second place.

Last year's losing finalists, New Win-

thorpes Primary, confirmed their spot in the quarter-finals by playing unbeaten to win Group B.

Villa Primary and T.N. Kirnon Primary also advanced to the quarter-finals from Group B. Villa finished second, while T.N. Kirnon Primary advanced as the other best third-place finishers.

Unbeaten Group A winners, former champions Five Islands Primary, and second-place finishers Old Road Primary are the other teams to secure their spots and complete the line-up in the quarter-finals.

In the quarter-finals at Buckley's, Five Islands will face Parham at 3:30 pm, and Old Road will tackle J.T. Ambrose Primary at 4:30 pm.

In the other matches at Golden Grove, T.N. Kirnon will meet Villa Primary at 3:30 pm, and St. Peter's Academy will clash with New Winthorpes Primary at 4:30 pm.

Police win Thursday League T20 competition



Police have been crowned as the new champions of the Antigua Commercial Bank (ACB) Caribbean Parish League Sir Vivian Richards Thursday League competition.

Police captured the title in the T20 contest by pulling off a 37-run victory over PIC Insurance Liberta Blackhawks in the final.

Police made 183 for eight, with Kenrick Scott hitting 44 and player of the final Deran Benta getting 40.

Elvis Weaver bagged three for 28, and Teran Payne claimed two for 19.

In reply, the Liberta Blackhawks were dismissed for 126, with Ar-jahni Fredericks cracking 43.

Vincent Shadrach snapped up three for 11, Deran Benta claimed two for 20, and Trevorson "Jango" Atley captured two for 21.

The fourth and final competition of the 2026 Parish League domestic season will commence this weekend.

The Parish League teams will battle in the Dave Joseph Limited Overs Championship.

NOTICE

**TO: THE LICENSING MAGISTRATE
MAGISTRATE'S COURT
HIGH STREET
ST. JOHN'S
ANTIGUA**

**TO: COMMISSIONER OF POLICE
POLICE HEADQUARTERS
AMERICAN ROAD
ST. JOHN'S
ANTIGUA**

**NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR A RETAIL LIQUOR LICENCE
FOR BUSINESS
REGISTERED AS
"CANDY QUEEN DISTRIBUTOR"**

I, CECELING LYNETTE SAYGON, DO HEREBY GIVE NOTICE that it is my intention to apply at the next sitting of the Liquor Licence Court to be held at the Magistrate's Court, High Street, St. John's, Antigua on Monday 6th July, 2026 next ensuing for a (retail) License in respect of premises known as "Candy Queen Distributor" situated at Paynter's in the parish of George's Antigua pursuant to section (11) (3) of the licensing (intoxicating Liquor) Act Cap 249 of the Laws of Antigua and Barbuda, Revised Edition 1992.

Dated the 1ST day of June 2026

Lynette Saygon

268-720-8611

CWI names squad for T20 series against Sri Lanka in Jamaica



Players of the West Indies T20 team

Cricket West Indies (CWI) has announced the 15-member squad for the three-match T20 International series against Sri Lanka, scheduled for June 11 to 14 at Sabina Park in Jamaica.

This series marks the West Indies' first T20 assignment since the team's strong showing in the ICC Men's T20 World Cup in February and March and forms an important part of long-term preparations for the 2028 edition in Australia and New Zealand.

Exciting young batting talents Ackeem Auguste and Jewel Andrew of Antigua, along with all-rounder Shamar Springer, are the three changes to the squad that featured at the global event in India and Sri Lanka, where the "Men

in Maroon" fell just short of reaching the semi-finals.

Antiguan fast bowler Alzarri Joseph was not considered for selection as part of workload management plans and will continue his training and preparation ahead of the two-match Test series being held in Antigua.

Head Coach Daren Sammy believes the series offers an excellent opportunity for the players to entertain home supporters while showcasing an exciting brand of cricket.

"This series is an important one for us as it's our first since the World Cup in India, where the team played with passion, fight and the togetherness that West Indies cricket is built on. Our fo-

cus now is to build on those foundations, continue growing as a team and make our fans proud with the way we compete against Sri Lanka."

Shamar Joseph, who returned home ahead of the third ODI against the Sri Lankans due to personal reasons, is expected to return ahead of the series on June 9.

West Indies T20 Squad: Shai Hope (captain), Jewel Andrew, Ackeem Auguste, Roston Chase, Matthew Forde, Shimron Hetmyer, Jason Holder, Akeal Hosein, Shamar Joseph, Brandon King, Gudakesh Motie, Rovman Powell, Sherfane Rutherford, Romario Shepherd, and Shamar Springer.

Williams makes a winning comeback in doubles at Queen's Club



Serena Williams of the United States, hits a return as she and playing partner Victoria Mboko of Canada play against Nicole Melichar-Martinez of Canada and Erin Routliffe of New Zealand during their first round doubles match at the Queen's Club tennis championships in London, Tuesday, June 9, 2026. (AP)

LONDON (AP) — After nearly four years away from professional tennis, Serena Williams showed she still has plenty of power to her game as she made a winning return at Queen's Club on Tuesday.

The 44-year-old Williams hit service winners of up to 120 mph and some ferocious winners as she teamed up with 19-year-old Canadian Victoria Mboko to win their opening doubles match at the Queen's Club grass-court tournament.

Williams and Mboko beat third-seeded duo Nicole Melichar-Martinez and Erin Routliffe 7-6 (2), 6-2 in Williams' first professional match since the 2022 US Open. They next face Leylah Fernandez and Laura Siegemund in the quarterfinals.

As if to punctuate that she's back, Williams served out the first-round match with two aces followed by a service winner.

"It was so fun. I had so much fun playing with Victoria," Williams said in an on-court interview. "We've never played together but it just felt so natu-

ral playing with her."

Later, though, Williams gave herself a modest grade in her post-match news conference.

"A C-minus," Williams said, before cutting herself some slack. "With all the elements, considering coming back on grass is probably not the easiest surface. ... Grass, four years. Overall, I think it was decent."

Perhaps more than decent, given the quality of the opposition. Routliffe is a two-time US Open champion in doubles and Melichar-Martinez has made the doubles final at both Flushing Meadows and Wimbledon.

Sure, Williams' performance was uneven, and at times it looked like she may have lost half a step. But it was clear she can still compete at a high level.

Even Williams seemed to be surprised at the quality of her rapid-reaction backhand winner at 4-4 in the first set, laughing as she high-fived Mboko. Her teenage partner was clearly impressed.

"I thought she was moving great," said Mboko, one of the rising stars on the WTA tour who is already ranked No. 9 in singles. "There was that one shot you hit, remember, you were on the run, on the backhand, and I was like, 'Oh, my gosh, she's got it.'"

The crowd loved it too, from the moment Williams stepped onto the court on a sunny but windy afternoon.

Williams received a standing ovation as she made her entrance, by far the loudest cheer of the day at the Andy Murray Arena, even from a crowd that had earlier watched British players Emma Raducanu and Katie Boulter secure wins in the singles tournament at the HSBC Championships.

It was Williams' first appearance at Queen's Club, which is nestled among residential blocks near Hammersmith in west London. The club, which held its first championships in 1881, did not stage a women's tournament for more than 50 years before the WTA tour returned to the venue in 2025.

Williams is also set to play doubles at the Berlin Open in Germany next week. But even after a winning return, she remains undecided when it comes to whether to extend her comeback to Wimbledon, which starts June 29.

"It's just a day at a time," Williams said. "I still have a little time to decide, and they have been great about giving me that space and time to decide."

Williams had not competed since bidding farewell at the 2022 US Open. At the time, she said she didn't want to use the word "retiring" and instead declared that she was "evolving" away from tennis.

Williams won 23 Grand Slam singles titles, including seven at Wimbledon, before stepping away from the game. She also added 14 Grand Slam doubles titles, including six at Wimbledon — all with her older sister Venus Williams.

Remembering Important Players - RIP



By: Ras Wadada

Over the last four years the football World lost some of the Greatest players to have graced the Promised Land of World Cup football and lifted the most coveted Cup in World sports.

Gone to the 'Land Beyond' are: Brazilians, Edson Arantes do Nascimento/King Pele (1958,1962 and 1970)) died at age 82, December 29th, 2022, Jair da Costa (1962) died April 2025 at 84 yrs.) and Mario Zagallo (1958,1962,1970 and 1994) left on 05-01-2024, 92 yrs.

West Germany's Franz 'The Kaiser' Beckenbauer (1974 and 1990) transitioned on 07-01-2024, 78 yrs., Bernd Holzenbein (1974) died 15-04-2024, 78 yrs. and Andreas Brehme (1990) departed 22-02-2024, 63 yrs.

England's 1966 heroes, Sir Bobby Charlton and Sir George Cohen. Sir Bobby left us 10 days short of his 87th birthday on October 11th,2023,



while Sir George departed on December 23rd, the day after the 2022 final in Qatar.

Argentine Cesar Luis Menotti who coached Argentina to its first world cup title in 1978 also left us on 24th May, 2024 at the age of 85.

Other notable players who also graced the 'Promise Land', but did not lift the Coveted Cup, and have departed over the last 4 years are:

1990 Golden Ball and Golden Boot winner, Italy's Salvatore Schillaci who left on September 18, 2024 at 59 yrs. Compatriots, Gianluca Vialli was added to the list when he departed on January 6, 2023 at age 58 and Gigi Riva of the 1970 finalist who died January 22, 2024 at 79 years.

Dutch 2-time finalist (1974 and 1978) Johan Neeskens who died on 7th October, 2024 at 73 years old.

West Germany 3, United Germany 1



By: Ras Wadada

For quite some time, a false narrative has been imposed upon the football world and for reasons unknown there is seemingly no effort to correct this misinformation, even at the highest level of governance.

When the first World Cup tournament was staged in Uruguay in 1930 there was no Germany among the 13 countries assembled for the auspicious start. The Germans however participated in the 2nd and 3rd editions played in 1934 and 1938 in Italy and France respectively.

After the 2nd World War and a hiatus of 12 years, competition in

the World Cup returned and was hosted by Brazil in 1950. Again, there was no Germany in attendance, but the 5th edition that followed in Switzerland in 1954 witnessed the emergence of West Germany as a separate Nation.

The West Germans would go on to compete in every subsequent World Cup finals until the 1990 edition played in Italy. During the 10 editions they featured in they captured three titles, 1954, 1974 and 1990. They also contested the finals in 1966 versus England, 1982 against Italy and 1986 versus Argentina, all in losing efforts.

Most importantly, in 1974 the East German nation also qualified

for the 10th World Cup finals and in fact defeated West Germany 1-0 in a group stage match up. The West Germans, led by the late Franz Beckenbauer, would however go on to lift their 2nd title

As of 1994 to present there has been no East or West Germany, just United Germany. In 8 consecutive editions they have reached 2 finals, losing 0-2 to Brazil in Japan in 2002 and winning in 2014 after a hard fought 1-0 win over Argentina in Brazil. Add to the 8 finals, the 1934, 1938 and 2026 editions and United Germany have 11 finals' appearances.

Dredgers and Survivors win softball cricket titles



Dredgers captured the ABSCA Men's 30-Over championship.



Wayne's Electrical Services Survivors captured the St. John's Cooperative Credit Union (SJCCU) 15-Over title. (Photos courtesy of the ABSCA)

Dredgers and Wayne's Electrical Services Survivors surged to title honours after dethroning the defending champions in their respective competitions in the 2026 Antigua and Barbuda Softball Cricket Association (ABSCA) domestic season.

The Dredgers captured the ABSCA Men's 30-Over championship by pulling off a three-wicket victory over defending champions Marcko Inc. Buckley's 3Js in the final at Rising Sun on Sunday.

The Buckley's 3Js were dismissed for 142 in 25.1 overs. Steve Martin struck 38, Kenrick Scott hit 28, there was a contribution of 27 extras, and Demari Benta scored 18.

Player of the final Tyrone Williams Jr. grabbed three for 24, D'hari Francis took two for 13, and Vaughn Charles claimed one for 20.

Tyrone Williams Jr. struck a half-century to propel the Dredgers to victory at 143 for six in 25.2 overs. Tyrone Williams Jr. slammed 52, including four fours and three sixes.

Tanez Francis hammered 45, and Mervin Higgins chipped in with 10. Richie Thomas claimed three for 42, Rodney Williams took two for 34, and Demari Benta picked up one for 27.

The Survivors captured the St. John's

Cooperative Credit Union (SJCCU) 15-Over title by coasting to an eight-wicket victory over defending champions Alzarri and Sharon Joseph North Sails Antigua Female Flyers in the final at Rising Sun.

Player of the final, Terez Parker, smashed an unbeaten half-century as the Female Flyers were restricted to 92 for four off their allotted 15 overs.

Parker hammered 61 not out, including seven boundaries. Leukelle Pelle claimed one for 14, and Gale Lee picked up one for 19.

The Survivors wrapped up the victory by scoring 94 for two in 12 overs. Joan Samuel hit an unbeaten 34, which included four boundaries. Grace Persaud also made 34, and Kimberly Anthony scored 13. Makada Hector captured one for 16.

The successful teams and top individual performers in both competitions were rewarded with prizes during a presentation ceremony after the completion of both finals.

Dredgers' captain, Mervin Higgins, collected the 30-Over championship trophy from ABSCA President Mandy Weatherhead.

Steve Martin of Buckley's 3Js claimed the Most Valuable Player Award. Mar-

tin also captured the award for the most runs by scoring a total of 250 runs in the men's competition.

His teammate Rodney Williams won the award for the most wickets, with a total of 12 scalps. Charanlall Ramjohn of Buckley's 3Js claimed the award for the best bowling figures of five wickets for nine runs in four overs against PMS.

Melvin Charles of Rackaman Construction Strictly Business secured the award for the highest individual score, which was a knock of 79 against Buckley's 3Js.

Weatherhead also presented Survivors' captain Sacha Michael with the championship trophy of the SJCCU 15-Over Competition.

Terez Parker of Female Flyers captured the Most Valuable Player Award in the women's competition. Parker also claimed the awards for the most runs, which is 127, and the highest individual score of 66 runs.

Akida Francis of Female Flyers and Chemique Benjamin of Bravos Wholesale and Distributors Jennings Rockets shared the award for the most wickets with five scalps each. Francis also claimed the award for the best bowling figures.