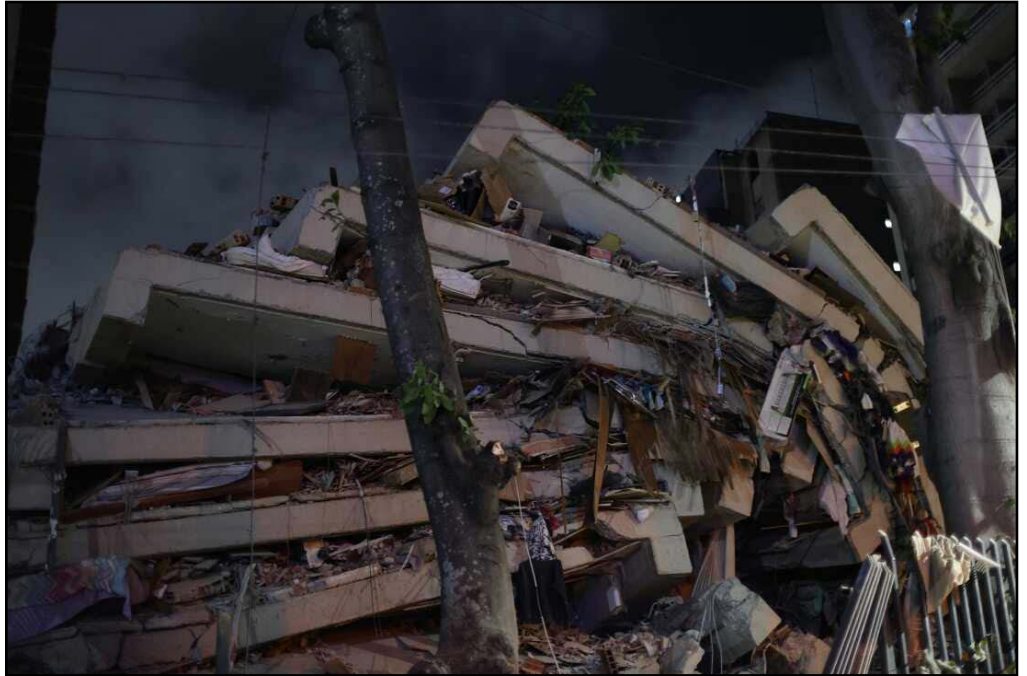
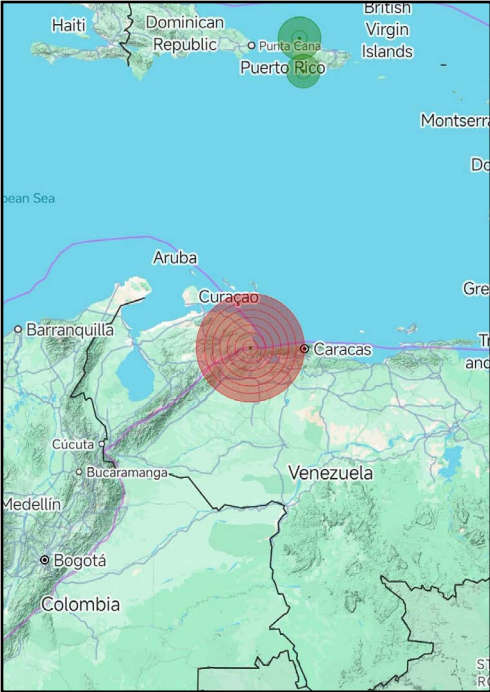


# Back-to-Back Earthquakes Rock Venezuela

Story on page 2



## Back-to-Back Earthquakes Rock Venezuela



Two major earthquakes, occurring within seconds of each other, and with both measuring 7.2 and 7.5 on the Richter Scale have struck Venezuela with the loss of lives and injuries expected to be quite high. (In context, the 1974 earthquake that shock Antigua and Barbuda measured 7.2 on the Richter Scale).

Reports from the US Geological Service say the quakes struck just after 6:00 pm local time on Wednesday.

News reports coming out of Venezuela say buildings have collapsed and hundreds, perhaps thousands are feared trapped in the rubble. The videos show rescue operations in prog-

ress and these are expected to have continued into the night and today (Thursday).

High casualties and extensive damage are feared, with the US Geological Survey (USGS) saying there is a 44% chance the death toll will be significant.

Venezuela was celebrating a national



holiday and many people would have been at home when the quakes struck at 18:04 local time. The quakes hit an area west of Caracas, and could be felt throughout the country and as far away as Bogota, Colombia.

In the aftermath of the disaster, Acting President of Venezuela, Delcy Rodríguez issued a statement to the Venezuelan people and to the world.

Key points from the statements of Acting President Delcy Rodríguez regarding the earthquake in Venezuela.

She reported that the country was shaken on June 24 by two earthquakes of magnitude 7.2 and 7.5, followed by 20 aftershocks.

She indicated that the regions most affected by the seismic event are the capital, Caracas, along with the states of Miranda, La Guaira, Aragua, Carabobo, and Falcón.

She detailed that significant damage to infrastructure has been recorded, as well as various disruptions to public services such as electricity, water, and gas.

She announced that operations at Maiquetía International Airport were suspended after sustaining serious damage to its infrastructure.

She declared a state of emergency throughout the national territory, simultaneously ordering the suspension of classes and all non-essential activities.

She explained that a Contingency General Staff was activated to centralize the emergency response, designating Major General Zulia as the sole authority to coordinate these efforts.

She expressed gratitude for the solidarity and offers of support received from various countries and international organizations, including the UN and the United States.



EMBASSY OF THE BOLIVARIAN REPUBLIC OF VENEZUELA  
IN ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA

## **State of Emergency Declared in Venezuela due to Major Seismic Event**

The Embassy of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela in Antigua and Barbuda informs that on June 24, 2026, at approx. 6:00 p.m., Venezuela was shaken by two earthquakes of magnitude 7.2 and 7.5, followed by at least 20 aftershocks, which have kept authorities and the population on alert.

The Acting President of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Delcy Rodríguez, addressed the nation on the evening of June 26, calling for unity to save lives and urging the population to remain vigilant, sheltered, and as calm as possible. She reported that civil protection authorities are carrying out all necessary rescue operations, emphasizing that the priority is saving lives, while also assuring that the government will address infrastructure recovery and material damage.

Given the magnitude of the emergency, the National Executive declared a State of Emergency, as provided for in our Constitution, throughout Venezuelan territory. This measure includes the suspension of classes and all non-essential activities until further notice. The President also announced the activation of a Contingency Command Center to centralize and coordinate the institutional response to the emergency.

The regions most affected by the seismic event are Caracas and the states of Miranda, La Guaira, Aragua, Carabobo, and Falcón, where significant damage to public and private infrastructure has been reported. Disruptions to essential services such as electricity, drinking water, and gas have also been reported.

Venezuelan Acting President Rodríguez, informed that Operations at Maiquetía International Airport were suspended due to serious damage to its facilities, while the corresponding technical assessments are carried out to determine the extent of the damage.

Finally, she expressed her gratitude for the expressions of solidarity and offers of support received from various countries and international organizations, highlighting the importance of international cooperation in times of crisis.

In these difficult times for our country, on behalf of the Government and people of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, this Embassy would like to express our profound gratitude for the prayers and all the expressions of solidarity received.

St. John's, June 24<sup>th</sup>, 2026.



ANTIGUA  
Carnival

# JR. PARTY MONARCH

JULY 19<sup>TH</sup>  
CARNIVAL CITY

FEEL THE  
RHYTHM  
OF SOCA



## PM Browne Salutes US at 250, Seeks Visa Relief



**Prime Minister Gaston Browne**

Prime Minister Gaston Browne has hailed the longstanding friendship between Antigua and Barbuda and the United States of America while using the occasion of its 250th anniversary celebrations to call for the removal of visa restrictions imposed on Antigua and Barbudan nationals.

Speaking on Tuesday evening at The Hut, Little Jumby, during an event marking the anniversary, the Prime Minister described the U.S. as a “very good friend” of Antigua and Barbuda and highlighted the deep historical ties that have connected the two nations for centuries.

“Our two nations are bound by a long and shared history that predates independence itself,” Browne said, noting that the relationship between the Caribbean and North America was forged through commerce, culture, migration and enterprise during the colonial era.

The Antiguan and Barbudan leader highlighted the role Caribbean people played in the development of the United States, arguing that the contributions of enslaved Africans and their descendants were instrumental in shaping the country’s economic foun-

dations.

“The development of the United States was shaped in part by the labour, sacrifice and contributions of the enslaved peoples of the Caribbean and their descendants,” he stated. “The wealth generated through that labour helped to build institutions, infrastructure, industries and commercial enterprises that contributed to America’s growth and prosperity.”

He further argued that Caribbean people have a legitimate stake in the history and success of the United States, pointing to centuries of migration and contributions by Caribbean nationals to American society.

“Millions of Caribbean nationals, including many Antiguans and Barbudans, have migrated to the United States and helped to build its economy, strengthen its institutions, develop its infrastructure and enrich its culture,” the Prime Minister said.

While reflecting on the historical relationship, Mr. Browne also highlighted the modern-day benefits enjoyed by both countries through trade, tourism, investment, education and security cooperation. He noted that the Unit-

ed States remains one of Antigua and Barbuda’s most important international partners and pointed out that America enjoys a substantial trade surplus with the twin-island nation.

“This reflects a mutually beneficial relationship that has generated opportunities and prosperity for both our nations,” Browne noted.

The Prime Minister used the occasion on Tuesday evening to reaffirm Antigua and Barbuda’s commitment to maintaining strong bilateral ties with Washington, stressing that the future of both countries would continue to be shaped by cooperation, mutual respect and shared aspirations.

However, he lamented the current visa policy as it relates to his citizens and residents, adding it flies in the face of the historical relations that exist between the two nations and appealed for changes.

“We look forward to the urgent removal of the visa restriction. We look forward to the urgent removal of the unjustifiable visa restriction and trust that the friendship between our nations continues to flourish in the years ahead.”

## Agreement with U.S. on Third Party Nationals Closer



Prime Minister Gaston Browne

There is progress between Saint John's and Washington on the topic of third party nationals, with Prime Minister Gaston Browne expressing confidence that an agreement is likely to be reached.

Following a pause in their conversation, the two sides resumed discussions on Tuesday.

The sticking point of the talks since they began is the number of third party nationals being proposed by the United States. Initially, Antigua and Barbuda agreed to 10 deportees annually with strict conditions to include background checks for criminal activity. Further, that those who will arrive here must possess travel documents and not be deemed stateless. However, that number drastically increased to 120 annually, a proposal rejected by the Gaston-Browne led administration in Saint John's.

Its concern is Antigua and Barbuda is a small and vulnerable nation, and its national interest must be defended at all cost.

After a period of neither side budging, the Prime Minister confirmed that talks have resumed and they appear positive.

"We held very frank discussions today [Tuesday] about that issue, and I feel as though we made some progress," Mr. Browne said.

While the details of the latest meeting were not revealed, Antigua and Barbuda appears to have tabled a new proposal, in which it has revised the number of third party nationals it is willing to ac-

cept.

"I even said to them on the basis that we come to an agreement and we decide on 16 third country nationals, if they have additional people who have skills that we need, we'll take them," Prime Minister Browne asserted. He was also firm in declaring there will no room for loafers or loiterers, since it will only amount to a transfer of burden from the United States.

One area that remains closed for discussion is the acceptance of criminals. Prime Minister Gaston Browne maintains it is the right thing to do.

"The issue of someone overstaying in the United States and coming here is not a big issue for us. But if you're a pedophile, we don't want you here. If you're a criminal, we don't want you here because already, we're struggling to protect our country from the criminal elements here. And again, we have to keep

our country safe," Mr. Browne asserted.

He also signaled that his government is unwilling to accept third party nationals who may be members of the LGBTQIA community. While stating he meant no disrespect, Prime Minister Browne said "we have enough of those too".

There is no question that Antigua and Barbuda like several Caribbean states, will be part of the arrangement with the United States. For the Government in Saint John's, it goes beyond a third party national agreement. It is about singing on to an arrangement that will not result in a destabilised society.

"I feel as though we will have an agreement very soon, one that satisfies our requirements, and one that the United States will be happy that we're showing some level of cooperation. So, we're hoping that this doesn't disintegrate into acrimony," the Prime Minister stated.

**HARRIS**  
COLOURCENTRE

**JUNE 15-30TH**  
at Powell's Road  
UP TO **60% OFF**  
SELECT PAINTS & STAINS\*  
\*while stocks last

	Excel Flat White		Excel Gloss White		ALL Ultima Advanced
<b>\$50</b>	1 GALLON	<b>\$75</b>	1 GALLON	<b>20% OFF</b>	

**SHOP TODAY & GET \$100 VOUCHER!**  
Use it on your NEXT purchase of EC\$500 or more. Limited Time Only. See in-store for details.  
MON-FRIDAY 8.30AM - 4.00PM | SATURDAYS 9.00AM - 1.00PM TEL: 268-562-9608 | 268-764-7853

## Antigua and Barbuda Champions a Strong, Independent OAS at 56th General Assembly



Sir Ronald Sanders, Head of Delegation and Ambassador of Antigua and Barbuda, delivered a principled and forward-looking statement at the 56th Regular Session of the General Assembly of the Organization of American States (OAS) in Panama City, Panama, reaffirming his country's unwavering commitment to the Organization and calling for collective action on Haiti, institutional reform, and the defence of multilateralism.

### The OAS Is Indispensable

Sir Ronald opened by declaring that the OAS “remains essential to our Hemisphere” — the only institution where almost all independent states of the Americas meet regularly for

dialogue, cooperation, and collective action. “There is no substitute for it,” he said.

With multilateralism under strain globally and unilateral action increasingly chosen over collective solutions, Sir Ronald reaffirmed Antigua and Barbuda's commitment to OAS Charter principles: “We will continue to support this Organization in practice, by applying its rules consistently, safeguarding its independence, and ensuring that it serves all Member States fairly.”

### Independence, Accountability, and Reform

Sir Ronald stressed that the independence of the Secretary General and the OAS Secretariat is “a fundamental principle of the Charter, essential to the institutional balance of the Organization.” Accountability, he said, is equally essential — but must be exercised through established mechanisms and in accordance with Charter procedures and the collective decisions of Member States.

On reform, he was unambiguous: “Reform must strengthen the Organization as a whole and proceed through the procedures established collectively and jointly by Member States.” The goal is a stronger OAS, not a weakened one.

### Haiti: Act Together, Hold All Accountable

Turning to Haiti, Sir Ronald called

the levels of violence and insecurity facing its people “unacceptable,” with women and girls remaining “at grave risk.” Antigua and Barbuda expressed full support for the United Nations-authorized Gang Suppression Force, noting that the Haitian authorities themselves have requested international assistance.

He called on the countries of the Americas to act in a coordinated manner against transnational criminal networks operating in Haiti. Drug trafficking, illicit financial flows, and the movement of weapons and criminal actors must be disrupted and stopped. He urged that those who finance and support gang activity be identified, sanctioned, and prosecuted “wherever they operate — inside or outside of Haiti.”

“We must act together to restore security and democratic governance, in the interest of Haiti and of the Hemisphere as a whole,” he said.

### The Right Choice

Sir Ronald closed by calling for an OAS that is “strong, independent, properly resourced, and representative of all the peoples of the Americas.” The permanent forum for dialogue the Organization provides — “a rules-based space where governments engage with mutual respect, even in disagreement” — must be strengthened, not weakened. “We believe this is the right choice,” he concluded.



**Curry House**

ANTIGUA

Open Daily –  
12:00pm – 10:30pm

 [currytandoorhouseanu](#)
 [curryhouseanu](#)
 (268) 736-7165

## Minister of State Kiz Johnson Meets With UNICEF Officials

Minister of State in the Ministry of Social and Urban Transformation, Kiz Johnson met with representatives from the UNICEF Eastern Caribbean Area in a briefing before Thursday's launch of a landmark research study on youth mental health.

The research study, to be launched at the Precision Centre on Thursday 25 June, 2026 at 9 am will be presented in a child-friendly, youth-friendly format, and having captured the voices of more than 1,000 children and young people across Antigua and Barbuda on what they want to see reflected in the Mental Health Care Bill.

Also attending meeting with UNICEF was the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Social and Urban Transformation Sarah Stuart and Director of Social Policy Planning, Kimbalie Constant.

The consultation is one of the first in the region to see children



(L-R) Director of Social Policy Planning Kimbalie Constant, Minister of State Hon Kiz Johnson, UNICEF Eastern Caribbean Acting Representative Maryam Abdu, Permanent Secretary in the Ministry Sarah Stuart and Child Protection Officer at UNICEF Eastern Caribbean Area, Bertrand Moses

and young people directly inform pending mental health legislation through such wide-reaching engagement.

“We know that 50 percent of men-

tal health challenges begin under the age of 14,” Bertrand Moses, Child Protection Officer, UNICEF Eastern Caribbean Area said. “From the consultation, the second most recommended initiative was a

**KFC**

**SAUCY WINGS**

**\$29.99** Combo  
- 5 Wings  
- Fries  
- Medium Dink

**\$15.99**  
- 5 Wings ONLY

**Citrus Chipotle BBQ**

**Sweet Red Chili**

**KFC**

**KFC**

@KFCANU

AllMart

# Local News



chat line where young people could speak to someone confidentially about their mental health and child protection challenges. That’s what the Young Caribbean Minds Mental Health Chat Line gives them.”

The launch will be led by young people and will bring together student council representatives and youth from across the country.

Prime Minister Gaston Browne, and representatives of UNICEF and UWI will deliver remarks before the unveiling of the research study’s cover and a demonstration of the chat line. Minister of State Johnson will also attend the official unveiling.

The Ministry of Social and Urban Transformation reaffirms its commitment to ensuring the voices of Antigua and Barbuda’s children and young people help shape the policies and protections built for them.

**STATE INSURANCE**  
COMPANY LIMITED

Live in a better State of mind

**Unexpected bill at your checkup?  
Medistar has you covered!**

ANTIGUA (268) 481-7800/04    BARBUDA (268) 727-7422    www.sicfinancial.com

## Antigua Carnival Countdown Begins: One Month To The Caribbean’s Greatest Summer Festival



The countdown is on to Antigua Carnival! With just one month to go, Antigua and Barbuda is preparing to welcome visitors and returning nationals for eleven days of culture, music, mas and revelry as Antigua Carnival returns from July 25 to August 4, 2026.

Under the theme, ‘Feel the Rhythm’, Antigua Carnival will transform the destination into an island-wide party, with steelpan, calypso and soca music filling the air, traditional characters

and colourful masqueraders parading through the streets and unforgettable fetes that will have you partying from the wee hours of the morning straight into the night.

Antigua and Barbuda Festivals Commission Chair Ambassador Elizabeth Makhoul, said, “Antigua Carnival 2026 invites the world to ‘Feel the Rhythm’ as we host the Caribbean’s Greatest Summer Festival. Visitors can immerse themselves in the heart-

beat of Antigua and Barbuda through vibrant celebrations, energetic performances of steelpan, soca, calypso, mas, and authentic cultural experiences that capture the true rhythm of the Caribbean”.

“Antigua Carnival is more than a festival; it’s a rhythm you feel, a culture you experience, and memories you carry long after the music fades. As we celebrate this year, we also pave the road to Carnival 70, a historic

**ACB CARIBBEAN** **DRIVE TO 70** **WIN THIS BYD SONG PLUS**

TAKE A LOAN OR TAP YOUR VISA CREDIT CARD FOR A CHANCE TO WIN\*

**MONTHLY PRIZES**

**PROMOTION EXTENDED TO JUNE 30, 2026**

ACB CARIBBEAN OUR LEGACY, 70 YEARS YOUR FUTURE. \*Terms and Conditions apply



milestone awaiting us in 2027”, noted Makhoul.

Chief Marketing Officer of the Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority, Charmaine Spencer emphasized that, “Antigua Carnival offers visitors an opportunity to experience Antigua and Barbuda at its most vibrant time and through the unique sounds of our music, distinct island cuisine, and the warmth of our people.”

“Coupled with our stunning beaches, a visit during Antigua Carnival, presents the perfect summer getaway for travellers seeking relaxing beach days

and evenings filled with the rhythm of the Carnival. It is the ideal combination of relaxation, culture and festivities,” Spencer added.

Antigua Carnival 2026 will feature an exciting programme including signature street parades through St. John’s City from the unique Opening of Carnival and T-Shirt Mas to J’ouvert, Carnival Monday and Carnival Tuesday’s Parade of the Bands, and the culmination – Last Lap.

Major music performances, competitions and the iron band, will keep the rhythm high with top local performers

competing in the Party Monarch and Calypso Monarch for prestigious titles. The highly anticipated ‘Face Off: Antigua vs. Dominica,’ where Antigua and Barbuda’s legendary Burning Flames band will go head-to-head with Dominica’s premier bouyon band Triple K International, is one event not to miss, while regional soca stars Patrice Roberts, Machel Montano, Voice, Skinny Fabulous and Muddy are also set to headline major performances along with Antigua and Barbuda’s soca sensations Tian Winter and Tizzy. The Panorama competition will also highlight the rich tradition of steelpan, delivering powerful and captivating performances. The eleven days will be filled with non-stop rhythm.

As the vibe builds for Antigua Carnival, travellers are encouraged to secure their flights and accommodations now and begin planning for the ultimate carnival experience. For more information go to: [www.visitantigua-barbuda.com](http://www.visitantigua-barbuda.com), download the Antigua Carnival app on Google Play or the App Store and follow @AntiguaCarnival on social media. Come and feel the rhythm, energy and excitement of the Caribbean’s Greatest Summer Festival.

## OECS Leaders to Engage European Union Regarding Citizenship By Investment Programme



**Prime Minister Gaston Browne**

Heads of Government within the OECS, according to OECS Chairman and Prime Minister Gaston Browne, are actively seeking a solution to the looming threat of the suspension of visa-free access to European Union member states for countries operating Citizenship by Investment (CBI) programmes.

Prime Minister Browne acknowledged that the matter carries potentially severe economic implications for OECS states with CBI programmes, as the initiative serves as a major source of revenue for several member countries. As a result, high-level discussions are being pursued with EU officials in an effort to preserve existing travel arrangements for citizens of these states, with an Electronic Travel Authorisation (ETA) system being considered as a potential alternative.

In its 8th Annual Visa Suspension Mechanism Report, published in 2025, the European Union identified

CBI programmes as a concern, stating that investor citizenship schemes operated by visa-free countries pose security risks. According to the report, such programmes may allow third-country nationals who would normally require visas to bypass standard immigration checks. The EU has argued that these concerns warrant immediate action, which could potentially include the suspension of visa-free access for countries operating CBI programmes.

Acknowledging the significant revenue generated by these programmes, Browne affirmed that OECS leaders are actively pursuing high-level engagement with the European Union, with discussions expected to take place later this year.

On the matter, Browne suggested that an Electronic Travel Authorisation system may provide a suitable alternative capable of addressing the concerns of diplomatic partners within the EU. The OECS intends to

maintain constructive dialogue with the European Union while emphasizing the importance of Citizenship by Investment programmes to member states.

The OECS Chairman also noted that Citizenship by Investment programmes provide substantial non-tax revenues for several member countries and warned that any disruption to these programmes, without viable alternative sources of income, could result in serious economic dislocation. By that measure, the loss of such programmes could expose the most dependent member states to significant economic vulnerabilities.

While formal discussions have yet to take place, the matter remains one of regional importance, as disruptions to the revenue streams of a member state can have wider implications for the Eastern Caribbean Currency Union (ECCU) and the fiscal stability of the sub-region.

## Police Conduct Search Operations Overnight At Pigeon Point For Missing Man

The police were busily engaged in a search operation at Pigeon Point Beach overnight following reports that a man went missing while swimming in the area.

Preliminary investigations indicate that the individual, who is believed to be a resident of the Swetes community, entered the water for a swim on Wednesday.

Reports further suggest that sometime thereafter, he appeared to be in distress and was observed signaling for help. He subsequently submerged beneath the water and has not been seen since.

A coordinated search effort was launched involving divers from the Antigua and Barbuda Defence Force Coast Guard, the Antigua and Barbuda Search and Rescue (ABSAR) team, as well as personnel from a private diving company. The teams were conducting extensive searches of the surrounding waters in an effort to locate the missing individual.

The police have committed to contin-



ue the search until the missing man is found and promise to provide updates as more information becomes available.

Overnight, the police urged members of the public to avoid the immediate search area and to cooperate with emergency personnel as they carried out their duties.



SIR LESTER BIRD MEDICAL CENTRE  
 PRICES & CONSUMER AFFAIRS DIVISION  
*Cradled with care. With safety to spare.*

### Mosquito net

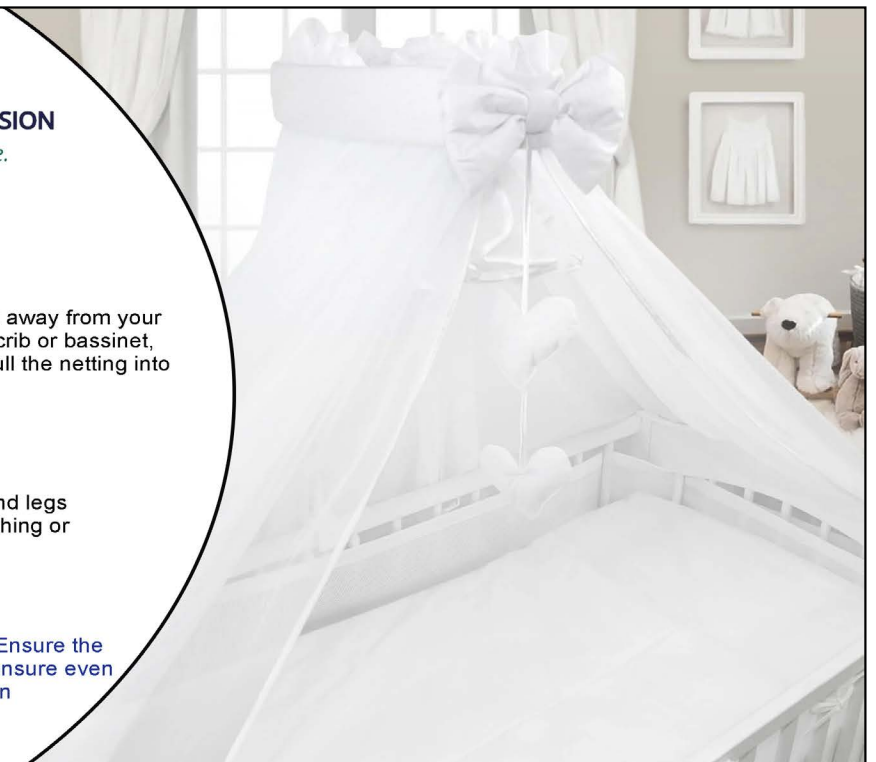
If using a mosquito net, ensure it is securely fitted and kept well away from your baby's face at all times. Avoid loose or hanging nets inside the crib or bassinet, especially once your baby begins to roll or grab, as they may pull the netting into their sleep space.

#### Safe alternatives

- Installing window or door screens
- Using air conditioning or fans to help keep mosquitoes away
- Dressing babies in lightweight clothing that covers the arms and legs
- Using mosquito repellents approved for the baby's age on clothing or surrounding areas — never directly in the sleep space

### CONSUMERS BE AWARE

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.





DEPARTMENT OF  
CULTURE

# ANNUAL SUMMER CAMP

DISCOVER • CREATE • PERFORM • GROW  
A SUMMER OF CULTURE, CREATIVITY  
AND CONFIDENCE

FUN.  
FRIENDSHIPS.  
CULTURE.  
MEMORIES THAT  
LAST A  
LIFETIME!



REGISTRATION FEE:  
**\$100**



**DATES:**  
29 JUNE – 10 JULY



**TIME:**  
9:00 AM – 3:00 PM



**VENUE:**  
PRINCESS MARGARET SCHOOL



**AGE GROUPS:**  
7–12 YEARS | 13–17 YEARS



## FEATURED ACTIVITIES



VOCAL  
TRAINING



TRADITIONAL  
DRUMMING



ARTS &  
CRAFT



MUSICAL  
INSTRUMENT  
TRAINING



DANCE

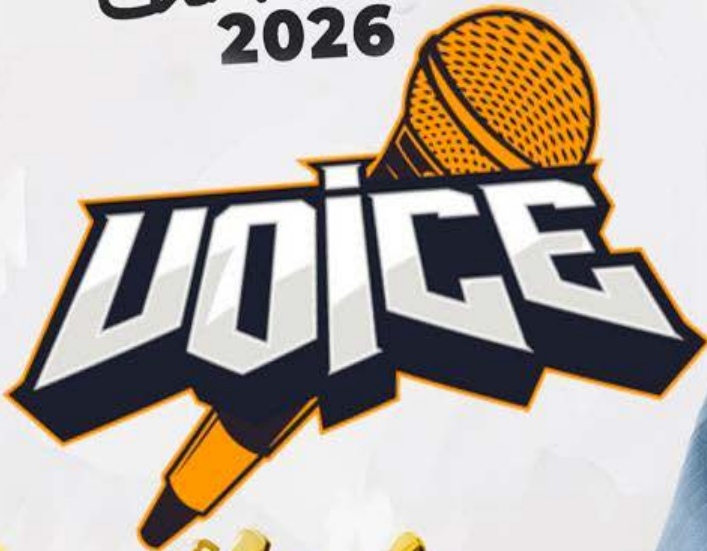


DRAMA

**Register on the 29th June  
at Princess Margaret School**



ANTIGUA  
Carnival  
2026



JULY 30<sup>TH</sup>

8:00PM @ CARNIVAL CITY

EARLY BIRD  
GENERAL

\$100

RHYTHM  
ROOM

\$350



## CHOGM 2026 and the Birth of Governability Infrastructure™ Antigua and Barbuda Has an Opportunity to Leave Behind More Than a Summit



Figure 1. CHOGM 2026 and the Emergence of Governability Infrastructure™

The twentieth century built infrastructure to move people, goods, energy, and information. The twenty-first century may require a new form of infrastructure altogether: Governability Infrastructure™. As host of CHOGM 2026, Antigua and Barbuda has an opportunity to move beyond convening global leaders and become the world's first demonstration environment for infrastructure designed to preserve decision space, enhance societal observability, and detect the formation of convergence structures before they become national outcomes. The question posed is foundational to the future of governance itself:

**Can nations build infrastructure for preserving governability before complexity becomes crisis?**

**This may be the defining governance challenge of the twenty-first century.**

**By Dr. Curtis B. Charles,**  
Founder & Chief Anticipatory Architect, FutureLogic Architecture Systems

When historians look back on the twenty-first century, they may conclude that governments did not struggle because they lacked information.

They struggled because they lacked observability.

They could measure unemployment after it rose.

They could measure food insecurity after it emerged.

They could measure fiscal stress after

it accumulated.

They could measure institutional strain after decision space had already begun to contract.

They could measure outcomes.

What they could not reliably measure was the formation of the structures producing those outcomes.

This distinction may define the future of governance itself.

In November 2026, Antigua and Barbuda will host leaders from across the Commonwealth for the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM).

Much attention will rightly focus on diplomacy, trade, resilience, development, and investment.

Yet CHOGM presents an opportunity far larger than hosting a successful international conference.

It presents an opportunity to demonstrate a new category of national capability.

A capability designed not merely to manage outcomes.

A capability designed to observe the future while it is still forming.

The Infrastructure Gap of the Twenty-First Century

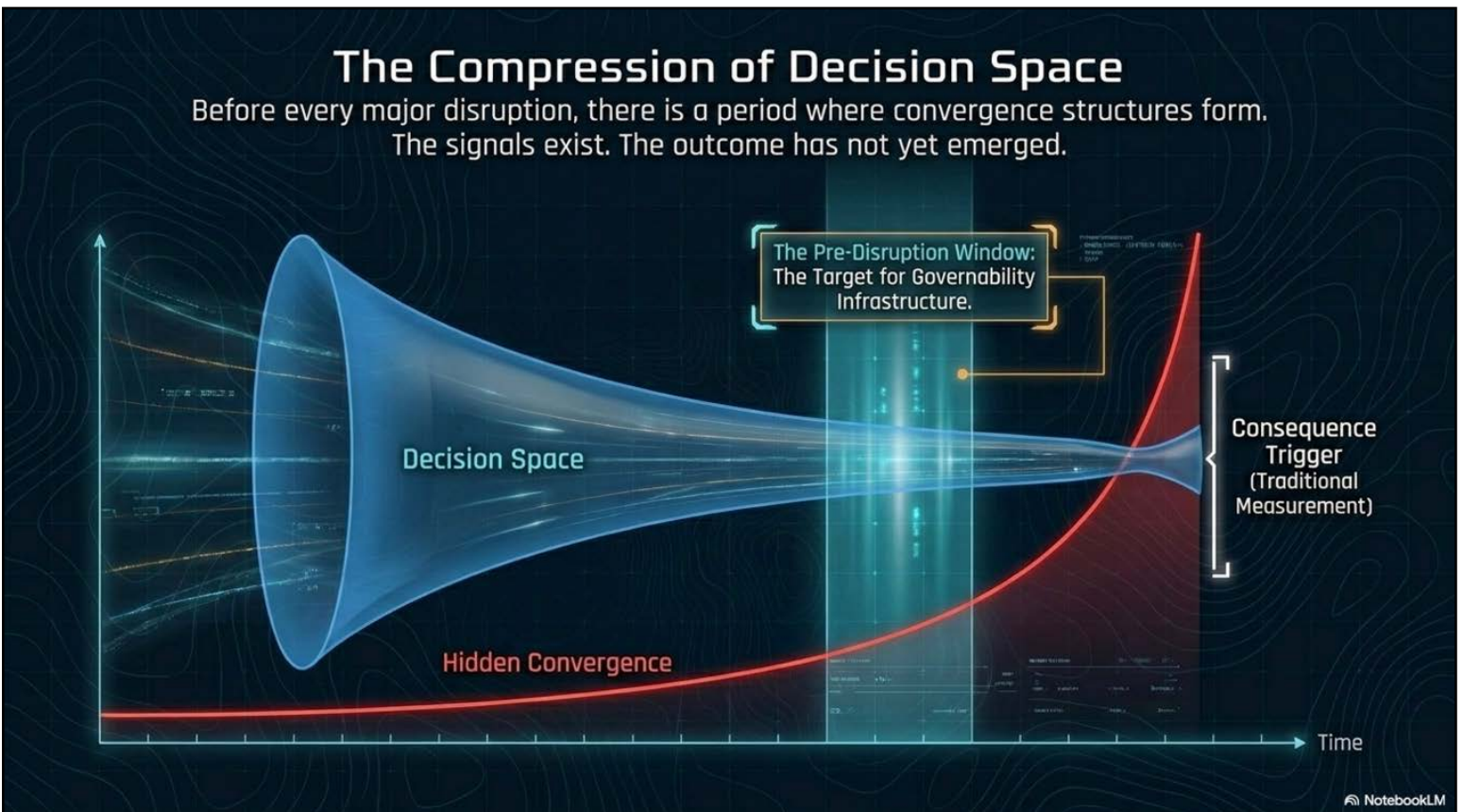


Figure 2. The Compression of Decision Space and the Architecture of Anticipation™

The greatest governance challenge of the twenty-first century may not be responding to disruption—it may be recognizing the progressive loss of decision space that occurs before disruption becomes visible. The expanding red curve represents Convergence Pressure™, generated by the synchronization of multiple interacting systems. The narrowing blue aperture represents Decision Space™, the capacity of leaders and institutions to meaningfully influence future outcomes. Between the emergence of hidden convergence and the appearance of measurable consequences lies the Pre-Disruption Window™—the critical interval during which governability can still be preserved. Governability Infrastructure™ is designed to operate within this window, transforming governance from the management of consequences to the observation of formation. The central premise is simple yet profound:

**Structure precedes outcome.**

**The future becomes governable when the structures shaping it become visible before the outcomes they produce.**

**This interval may represent the most valuable strategic resource available to nations navigating an age of accelerating complexity.**

The twentieth century built extraordinary infrastructure.

Roads connected cities.

Ports connected economies.

Power grids connected industries.

Telecommunications connected societies.

Digital infrastructure connected information.

These investments transformed civilization.

But they were designed to move things.

**People.**

**Goods.**

**Energy.**

**Capital.**

**Information.**

The defining challenge of the twenty-first century may require a different

form of infrastructure altogether.

Infrastructure designed to preserve governability.

Infrastructure designed to observe convergence.

Infrastructure designed to maintain meaningful decision space before complexity becomes crisis.

The future increasingly emerges from the interaction of systems rather than the failure of individual systems.

Climate stress interacts with food systems.

Food systems interact with logistics.

Logistics interact with energy markets.

Energy markets interact with economic stability.

Economic stability interacts with social cohesion.

Artificial intelligence increasingly accelerates all of them simultaneously.

The challenge is no longer understanding individual problems.

The challenge is understanding the structures that emerge between problems.

The Hidden Architecture of Vulnerability

For centuries governments have measured vulnerability after it appears.

The next era may belong to governments that measure its formation.

Before every major disruption, there exists a period during which convergence structures are already forming.

The signals exist.

The interactions exist.

The compression of decision space has already begun.



## No Dumping, No Dumping Ground: Thank You, Prime Minister — We Stand Together

By Peter Douglas

Antigua and Barbuda is a nation of 103,000 people. We are being asked to accept third-country nationals — people whose own countries will not take them, and who the United States does not want within its borders.

To the Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda: Thank you for saying no. Your response puts the safety, sovereignty, and future of our people first. In a world where small states are often pressured to carry the burdens of larger ones, your decision is an act of leadership that every Antiguan and Barbudan should recognize and defend.

At first glance, this may sound like a simple act of “cooperation.” In reality, it is a request to transfer risk, cost, and responsibility to one of the smallest and most capacity-constrained countries in the world. For Antigua and Barbuda, the answer must be, no. And here is why.

### ***Security Without Vetting Is No Security At All***

We have not been given names. We have not been given criminal background checks. We have not been given any individualized security assessment for the people in question.

To accept persons without vetting is to gamble with public safety. The Royal Police Force of Antigua and Barbuda operates across two islands with limited forensic, intelligence, and detention resources. Our courts are already backlogged. Our prisons are not built for long-term, indefinite detention.

If we are expected to host people we know nothing about, we are being asked to expose our own citizens



to risk. That is not cooperation. That is negligence.

### **Health, Education, and Housing: Systems Already at Capacity**

Walk into any clinic in St. John’s on a Monday morning and you will see the reality. Our public hospital, community health centers, and schools are operating at or near full capacity. Class sizes are rising. Wait times for care are real.

Every new resident uses those same services. Each person needs a doctor’s visit, a school place for their child, housing, water, electricity, and roads. Our tax-to-GDP ratio is approximately 17%. In the United States, it is over 27%. We simply do not have the surplus fiscal space to absorb more people without cutting services for Antiguan or raising taxes on Antiguan.

When capacity is full, adding more people does not “spread the load.” It breaks the system.

### ***The Taxpayer Burden: You Pay, Not Them***

The people being proposed for transfer are third-country nationals. They will not arrive with jobs, insurance, or a tax history in Antigua. Yet they will immediately need the same services that you, the taxpayer, fund every day.

To accommodate them, government will face two choices: cut services for citizens, or increase the tax burden. Neither is acceptable. No Antiguan should have to choose between paying more or receiving less, to cover the cost of another country’s migration policy.

### **The “Dumping” Problem: No Way Back, No Way Out**

This is the most important legal point. These are not U.S. nationals. They are not Antigua and Barbuda nationals. They are nationals of third countries that have already refused to take them back.

Under international law, no state can render a person stateless. That means if Antigua and Barbuda accepts them, we cannot deport them to the U.S. We also cannot return



them to their countries of origin. We would be legally and permanently responsible for them.

In other words: we become their final destination by default. Not by choice. Not with funding. Not with a plan. Forever.

### ***U.S. Aid History: Security for Them, Cost for Us***

For decades, U.S. assistance to the Caribbean has been tied primarily to U.S. security interests, especially drug interdiction and border control. That aid has delivered real benefits, but its design has always prioritized the security of the United States first.

That same logic cannot now be reversed to ask us to carry the human cost of U.S. immigration policy. If the United States has the resources to enforce its borders, it also has the resources to manage the people who cannot be removed. Exporting that

responsibility to SIDS is not partnership. It is cost-shifting.

### ***Political Reality: No Mandate, No Survival — Stand With the PM***

Let us be blunt. No democratically elected government in Antigua & Barbuda should sign an agreement like this without full consultation with the people. To do so would be gross disrespect to the people of this fair land.

Our first duty is to the citizens whose taxes fund this country, whose children sit in our classrooms, and whose families rely on our hospitals. Our government has this fundamental responsibility to protect its people's interests.

To my fellow Antiguan and Barbudans: Hold your government accountable. Demand transparency. Insist that no agreement is signed without Parliamentary debate and

public consultation. And on this issue, stand behind the Prime Minister. Unity on sovereignty is not partisan. It is patriotic.

### ***Our Last Frontier Must Be Protected***

The Caribbean was the frontier of colonial extraction. Land, labor, sugar, and wealth were taken from us to build other nations. Now that we are independent nations we cannot allow our land to become a dumping ground of any sort.

The answer to this request is rightfully no — until there is broad national consent, followed by capacity building and sustainable compensation.

And today, we thank the Prime Minister and his administration for having the courage to say, no!



FEEL THE RHYTHM

# inet PARTY MONARCH

QUARTER - FINALS

1<sup>ST</sup> & 2<sup>ND</sup> JULY 2026

JACK IDLE | 7:00PM

ADM: \$20





ANTIGUA  
Carnival  
2026

# MUDDY



JULY 30<sup>TH</sup>

8:00PM @ CARNIVAL CITY

EARLY BIRD  
GENERAL

\$100

RHYTHM  
ROOM

\$350



# Regional News

## 'Defective decision' - UWI professor rips CARICOM over 'flawed' reappointment of secretary-general

An independent legal opinion out of Trinidad and Tobago has described the controversial reappointment of CARICOM Secretary-General Dr Carla Barnett as procedurally flawed, and legally void.

The conclusion was made in a 48-page document authored by Rajendra Ramlogan, professor of commercial and environmental law at The University of the West Indies, St Augustine.

The document, which was made public on Monday, determined that Barnett's reappointment was invalid and not consistent with the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas, as it lacked support from two-thirds of regional heads, noting that only 10 of the 15 member states had a say.

Ramlogan also indicated that foreign ministers and key delegates were illegally locked out of the decision-making process during a closed-door heads of government retreat in Nevis, following the 50th Regular Meeting of the Conference of CARICOM Heads of Government held in Basseterre, in February.

Trinidad and Tobago's Prime Minister Kamla Persad-Bissessar argued that the twin-island republic did not support either Barnett or the process that re-elected her.

The position triggered a dispute, driven by Port of Spain's objections to the procedure used during the retreat, noting that its representative did not attend.

Persad-Bissessar left the summit early and had claimed that acting head of delegation, Foreign Affairs Minister Sean Sobers, was not invited to the retreat.

CARICOM officials have countered that Sobers declined attendance, citing concerns about seasickness during the boat crossing to the venue.

Jamaica's Prime Minister Dr Andrew Holness subsequently called for



a meeting of regional heads to resolve the matter.

"I think the solution really lies in assembling another heads meeting to have the matter addressed," Holness said.

"That's something that I have been pushing for quietly behind the scenes. I think it is distressing for a lot of persons within the region regarding what is being said in the public domain, but I know that all the heads are working behind the scenes to have this matter resolved," Holness told Trinidad and Tobago's Guardian newspaper last April in New York.

Ramlogan noted that the opinion does not proceed from any assessment

of the personal suitability, competence or integrity of Barnett, the incumbent secretary-general.

"Rather, it addresses a narrower but more constitutionally important question: whether the process by which authority was renewed complied with the institutional and procedural requirements established under the Revised Treaty.

"On the material presently available, there is a substantial legal basis to question whether the reappointment satisfied the constitutional framework governing such decisions. The concerns identified do not arise from one isolated procedural event but from the cumulative effect of several interconnected issues," he concluded.

The university professor noted that Article 24 of the Revised Treaty vests the authority to appoint and reappoint the secretary-general explicitly in the Conference of Heads of Government.

He asserted that the decision was discussed and finalised during the retreat in Nevis, which operated under structurally distinct procedures from formal meetings of the conference.

He argued that because the body exercising authority was not functioning in the institutional form prescribed by the treaty, it lacked the competence to make a formal appointment.

Ramlogan said Article 11(2) of the treaty guarantees that any head of government may designate a minister or another representative to attend any meeting of the conference.

However, the retreat was strictly restricted to heads only via logistical mandates and communications, he said, which effectively barred designated representatives – foreign ministers of Trinidad and Tobago, The Bahamas, and Antigua and Barbuda, who were heading their respective delegations due to their heads' absence – from participating.

Ramlogan pointed out that while Rule 19 of the CARICOM Rules of Procedure allows heads-only arrange-

ments for confidential deliberations, Rule 19(4) explicitly dictates that representation rights revive when formal decisions are taken. Bypassing this constitutes an ultra vires use of subsidiary rules to override explicit treaty rights.

“The consequence is significant. A heads-only caucus may be lawful as a deliberative setting. A heads-only caucus cannot become the final decision-maker where the conference is exercising a formal Revised Treaty function. Otherwise, Rule 19(4) of the Rules would become meaningless,” he said.

Additionally, he pointed out that article 24(1) requires that the appointment of the secretary-general occur “on the recommendation of the Council”, meaning the Community Council of Ministers.

He rejected arguments that reappointments are exempt from this requirement, noting that a reappointment is a fresh conferral of constitutional authority upon the expiration of a fixed term. Because the Community Council was bypassed and never issued a formal recommendation, Ramlogan said the constitutional balance of power was breached.

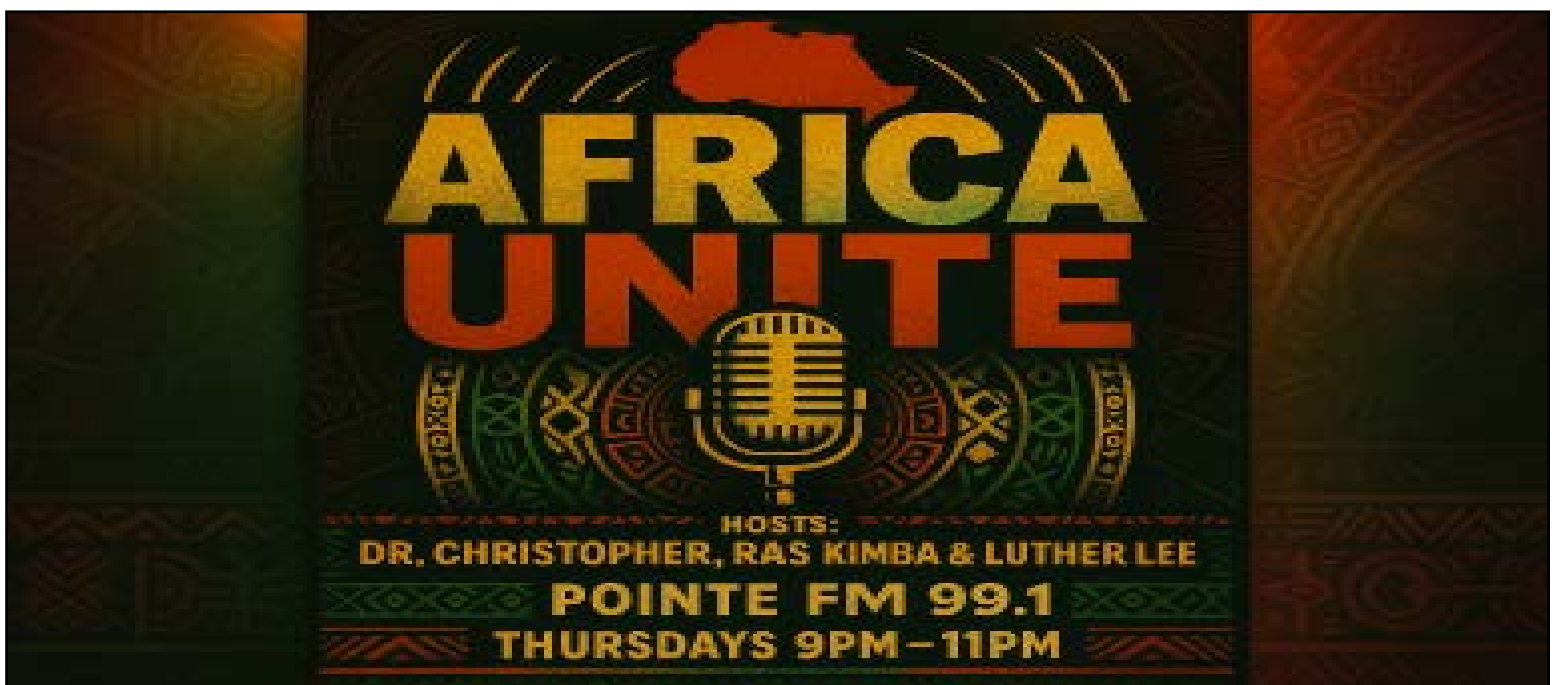
“Article 24 of the Revised Treaty establishes that the appointment of the

secretary-general occurs by the conference on the recommendation of the Council. This opinion concludes that reappointment is part of the same constitutional appointment architecture rather than a separate, unconstrained process. Re-appointment is not administrative continuity but the conferral of renewed constitutional authority following expiry of a fixed term,” he argued.

He said the decision was executed in a closed environment and was notably omitted from the official conference communiqué published on March 11, 2026. Without proper plenary confirmation or formal adoption, Ramlogan said the decision lacked complete legal finality.

“In conclusion, the heads' only restriction was inconsistent with the Revised Treaty because it deprived Trinidad and Tobago of the rights of participation guaranteed by Article 11(2) of the Revised Treaty and materially affected the integrity of Conference decision-making,” he said.

“...Consequently, the exclusion of the designated representatives rendered the resulting decision constitutionally defective and potentially void.” (Jamaica Gleaner)



## Latin America and the Caribbean received nearly US\$200 billion in FDI last year — ECLAC

The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) says the region received US\$194.2 billion in foreign direct investment (FDI) last year, or 1.7 per cent more than in 2024.

But ECLAC in its latest report said that in a scenario of great uncertainty and heightened global tensions, the results were uneven across destination countries and sectors.

ECLAC said that the relative weight of FDI in the region's economies varies significantly between countries, but on average, the FDI received by the region as a share of gross domestic product (2.8 per cent) and gross fixed capital formation (14 per cent) held steady in 2025.

According to the annual report titled "Foreign Direct Investment in Latin America and the Caribbean 2026: Navigating the New Global Context", the majority of countries in South America and Central America received more investment in 2025, whereas the dynamics in the Caribbean were heterogeneous.

After Brazil and Mexico, the countries receiving the most FDI in 2025 were Chile, seven per cent, Peru and Colombia, six per cent, Guyana five per cent and Costa Rica and the Dominican Republic, three per cent each.

ECLAC's Executive Secretary, José Manuel Salazar-Xirinachs, said in the current global context of weaponised interdependence, understanding the relationship between trade and FDI is key to designing



policies that would allow the region to move towards more productive, inclusive and sustainable development.

"In Latin America and the Caribbean, the main difficulty lies, more than in a lack of instruments, in the coherent and strategic integration of trade, investment and productive development agendas, which limits the transformative impact that FDI could have in the region," he added.

In 2025, reinvested earnings at 51 per cent remained the main component of FDI, despite declining year-on-year. It was followed by equity investment at 34 per cent of the total and intercompany loans at 15 per cent.

With regard to destination sectors, inflows into services (+19.5 per cent) and natural resources (+7.0 per cent) increased, while inflows into manufacturing (-17.2 per cent) declined. ECLAC said as a result, in 2025, services received 53 per cent of FDI, manufacturing 31 per cent and natural resources 16 per cent.

At the same time, 67 per cent of the investment entering the region in 2025, from

identifiable sources, came from the United States (35 per cent) and Europe (32 per cent). However, the publication notes that less investment was received from the United States (-11 per cent) last year, while inflows from Europe increased.

As in the rest of the world, the highly uncertain environment had a particularly negative effect on investment announcements in the region, the report indicates.

Last year, 1,326 projects worth a total of US\$114.1 billion dollars were announced in Latin America and the Caribbean, which represents a -10.2 per cent decline versus 2024 in the number of announcements and a -34.3 per cent drop in the dollar amount.

In contrast, FDI outflows from the region have recovered in the last three years, totalling US\$62.286 billion in 2025, up 19.3 per cent from 2024 and reaching the second-highest figure since 2010.

ECLAC said public policies can play a key role in the effort to steer these investments so that they can create benefits in terms of produc-

tivity, technological learning, innovation and market access, while averting fiscal and production-related risks.

The report also analyses the ways in which FDI in the region may be affected by the recent changes to the United States' tariff policies. The findings suggest that the region's degree of exposure to changes in United States' trade policy is highly heterogeneous across countries and sectors, and depends on each country's production structure as well as its integration in regional value chains.

ECLAC said policies, institutions and capacities matter, and proposes that in order to navigate the new global context Latin America and the Caribbean need to diversify export markets and sources of FDI, particularly in economies in which a high share of total exports goes to the United States.

The region is also being urged to bring together trade, investment and productive development within a policy framework aimed at maximising the impact of existing investment as well as coordinate investment and trade promotion agencies with the bodies responsible for promoting other areas of productive development.

There is also a need to strengthen the technical, operational, political and prospective capabilities of investment and trade promotion agencies, and incorporate mechanisms for monitoring and learning in response to changes in the environment. (Jamaica Observer)

## Executive Air launches regional cargo service



St. Vincent's Argyle International Airport (AIA) has officially announced the launch of Executive Air's new air cargo service, marking a significant enhancement to the nation's aviation infrastructure and logistical capabilities.

The introduction of this service is hailed as a major milestone expected to drive sustainable economic growth for the island.

By substantially boosting regional connectivity, the cargo service is designed to directly support St. Vincent's hospitality and tourism sectors by facilitating better access to imported

goods.

Furthermore, the launch creates "massive export pipelines" that will empower Vincentian farmers to distribute their local produce to international markets.

Executive Air connects St. Vincent to a highly expansive regional network that spans the Caribbean and beyond. The comprehensive list of destinations includes Anguilla, Antigua, Aruba, Bequia, Bonaire, Canouan, Carriacou, Curacao, Dominica, the Dominican Republic, Freeport (Bahamas), Grand Cayman, Grenada, Guadeloupe, Guyana (OGL/GEO), Haiti, Jamaica,

Martinique, Nevis, Providenciales, San Juan, St. Croix, St. Eustatius, St. Kitts, St. Lucia, St. Maarten, St. Thomas, Tobago, Tortola, Trinidad, and Virgin Gorda.

In a recent statement regarding the launch, AIA officials cautioned that certain destinations within this vast network maintain special requirements for incoming freight. Customers looking to utilize the new service are strongly encouraged to contact the Executive Air office directly to properly coordinate their cargo shipments. (St Vincent Times)

## UK report claims more than 180 gangs operating in Trinidad and Tobago

The United Kingdom (UK) Government says more than 180 gangs with various sizes and reaches operate throughout Trinidad and Tobago with the most prominent of which are the Muslims and Rasta City.

“Gangs are mainly present in marginalised urban areas, particularly in and around the capital, Port of Spain, and the east-west corridor in Trinidad,” according to a report issued by the Home Office, adding that as of 2025, gangs are responsible for around one-third of homicides in the country.

“A person who fears a gang is not likely to be able to demonstrate a link to the Refugee Convention on grounds of political opinion. However, those who make a public or visible stand against the gangs are likely to form a particular social group.”

In its June report, the Home Office said that gang violence specific to the situation in El Salvador at the time of the judgement and the current situation in Trinidad and Tobago merit comparison.

“Both have high levels of crime dominated by gangs which have de facto control over certain communities and have sought to influence the state,” the report states, noting however, there are significant differences between the two countries.

It said that Trinidad and Tobago has a more diverse criminal landscape with over 180 criminal gangs operating across the country, some of whom confine their control and operations to a single street. As a result, gangs in Trinidad and Tobago are not as dominant as the MS-13 and Barrio 18 were in El Salvador.

“Gangs in Trinidad and Tobago are reported to be absolutely and relatively smaller, approximately 1,750 members, or less than one per cent of the total population than the MS-13 and Barrio 18 were in El Salvador with 60,000 members and one per cent of the total population.”



The report also states that in El Salvador, gangs sought to influence the state.

“Whilst there is limited detailed information about the areas that gangs exert influence over in Trinidad and Tobago, sources indicated that they are mainly present in marginalised urban areas. Although there have been reports of government contracts being given to gang leaders in these areas, evidence does not suggest that this influence extends outside of the areas under their control or that it is widespread or systematic.”

The report states that on the available evidence, the situations are sufficiently different to conclude that gangs in Trinidad and Tobago are not “political actors”.

But it notes that a person who fears a gang may belong to a particular social group (PSG) under the Refugee Convention where they have an innate characteristic or a common background that cannot be changed, or share a characteristic or belief that is so fundamental to identity or conscience that a person should not be forced to renounce it and a distinct

identity in Trinidad and Tobago because the group is perceived as being different by the surrounding society.

The Home Office said that people likely to form a PSG are those who make a public or visible stand against the gangs, including those who have not complied with a gang’s rules or demands, or otherwise openly oppose the gang or disrespects a gang leader.

“Although the above form a PSG, establishing such membership is not sufficient to be recognised as a refugee. The question to be addressed is whether the person has a well-founded fear of persecution on account of their membership of such a group.”

On March 12, 2025, the United Kingdom Government imposed an immediate visitor visa requirement for all nationals of Trinidad and Tobago, ending decades of visa-free travel and applies to all short visits, including tourism, business and transits through the UK.

London said the sudden policy shift was triggered by a significant surge in unjustified asylum applications and misuse of the UK immigration system by travellers from Trinidad and Tobago. (CMC)

## Doctor returning from DR Congo tests positive for Ebola in France; contact tracing underway



French health authorities have launched contact-tracing efforts after confirming the country's first case of Ebola on Wednesday, a doctor who had flown back from the Democratic Republic of Congo, which is fighting a major outbreak.

The case is the first of the deadly haemorrhagic fever identified outside the African continent during the current outbreak, which has also affected Uganda.

It is the first time France has detected Ebola. In 2014, during a major outbreak in West Africa, two patients were transported to France, but they had been diagnosed abroad.

The health ministry said it had identified "a first positive case of Ebola virus disease on national territory".

The patient "boarded a commercial flight from Kinshasa and was almost asymptomatic — except for headaches", the ministry said.

Their condition "slightly deteriorated during the flight", after which they were immediately isolated and taken into care upon landing in Paris, even before the disease was officially iden-

tified, the ministry added.

The patient was in a "stable condition" and their viral load was "very low", the ministry added.

Prime Minister Sebastien Lecornu's office said he was monitoring the situation "very closely", but the health ministry stressed that the risk of transmission remained low.

ALIMA (The Alliance for International Medical Action), an international medical humanitarian organisation, said the patient was one of its doctors.

The DRC's 17th Ebola outbreak was declared on May 15 after several unexplained deaths in the mineral-rich but volatile eastern Ituri province plagued by armed groups.

According to the latest official figures, more than 1,000 cases have been recorded, including 267 deaths, representing a fatality rate of around 25 per cent.

Many experts consider it likely that the scale of the outbreak has been underestimated, as it is affecting remote regions.

The Bundibugyo strain of the virus that has caused the outbreak currently

has no approved vaccine or treatment.

Existing Ebola vaccines, developed between 2018 and 2019, are only effective against the Zaire strain, which caused previous major outbreaks.

In May, an American surgeon who contracted Ebola in the DRC was flown to Germany for treatment.

A Berlin hospital discharged the missionary earlier this month, saying he had recovered following 17 days of medical care.

The doctor, identified as Peter Stafford of the Serge charity, had received care that included "experimental therapies currently being trialled for this type of virus", said the hospital.

Public health experts estimate that the risk of the outbreak spreading worldwide remains low, due to the relatively low contagiousness of the Ebola virus.

"The European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) considers the risk of infection to be low for European residents and travellers going to areas with active transmission, and very low for the general European population," said the French health ministry. (AFP)

## US Supreme Court blocks Rastafarian from suing prison guards who forcibly shaved his head



The United States (US) Supreme Court has ruled that a Rastafarian will not be able to sue Louisiana prison guards who held him down and shaved his head in 2020, an act he had argued was a violation of his religious rights.

US media reports indicate that the conservative majority court, in a 6-3 decision split along party lines, ruled that the Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act (RLUIPA) did not entitle former inmate Damon Landor to monetary damages in the case.

The initial incident occurred when Landor was incarcerated in a Louisiana jail on a drug-related charge. Officers reportedly handcuffed him to a chair, cut his locs off and shaved his head.

While locs emerged in multiple cultures across history, the style is a key

part of the Rastafarian faith, which originated in Jamaica in the 1930s.

Landor has maintained that he is a devout Rastafarian.

The Supreme Court justices, however, said that employees of the state had not consented to face lawsuits in their personal capacities under the law.

The decision, shared in an opinion by Justice Neil Gorsuch, said the law, which is enforceable in local prisons that receive federal funding, does not allow for legal challenges against individuals.

“Mr Landor would have us hold, for the first time, that so long as a penny of federal spending makes its way to an individual, however indirectly, Congress can regulate his conduct directly based on the fiction that he has consented to regulation,” Gorsuch wrote.

Criticism from Ketanji Brown Jackson, who wrote on behalf of the three liberal judges, who all dissented, highlighted that the law existed to ensure prisons respect the religious rights of prisoners.

She said the ruling could weaken the law in question and make it harder for inmates who have had their rights violated to seek justice.

“Prisoners like Landor who suffer violations of their religious freedom in state prisons — no matter how blatant — will often be left remediless,” Jackson shared. “And encroachments on prisoners’ statutory rights are likely to happen with fair frequency, as state-empowered prison officials will have little incentive to abide by federal law, even if it is handed to them on a piece of paper.” (Jamaica Observer)

## UN nuclear chief says inspectors will visit Iran sites as part of war deal



The head of the global nuclear watchdog has said it will carry out inspections in Iran under the country's preliminary peace agreement with the US.

"The inspections will indeed take place," International Atomic Energy Agency director general Rafael Grossi told reporters in Japan. "We will be working on the modalities - dates, procedures, places - very soon."

The agreement signed last week said "explicitly" that the dilution of Iran's highly enriched uranium would be carried out under IAEA supervision, he added.

However, Iran's deputy foreign minister said access to its damaged nuclear facilities and nuclear material would only be addressed within the framework of a final deal with the US.

Grossi's comments come as US Secretary of State Marco Rubio is visiting Gulf nations to discuss the deal. On Wednesday he met UAE President

Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan and is due to travel to Kuwait and Bahrain.

The initial US-Iran agreement also said that Iran would allow shipping to pass through the Strait of Hormuz while the US would lift a naval blockade on Iranian ports.

On Wednesday the price of Brent crude oil fell to below \$75 (£57) for first time since the US-Israeli war on Iran began.

Meanwhile the UN said some ships had already passed through the strait under a scheme to evacuate thousands of sailors stranded by the war.

In recent days, there has been a dispute between the US and Iran over the issue of UN nuclear inspectors visiting sites in the country.

On Monday, following talks in Switzerland with Iran's chief negotiator, US Vice-President JD Vance said Iran had "agreed to invite IAEA inspectors back into their country".

The next day, Iranian foreign ministry spokesman said there had been "no detailed discussions" and that Iran had no plans to grant IAEA inspectors access to nuclear facilities which were bombed by the US during a 12-day war between Israel and Iran in June 2025.

US President Donald Trump then dismissed Iran's "protestations and false statements to the contrary", saying the country had "fully and completely agreed" to inspections.

"There's a war or words here. Some say 'yes', the others say 'no'," the IAEA's chief said on Wednesday. "I can understand political statements. They are part of the reality.

"But the fundamental thing... is that there has been a memorandum of understanding signed by both presidents," he added. "[It] says explicitly that the nuclear activities that are going to be carried out, with regards to

# International

AROUND THE WORLD



nuclear material, facilities, will be supervised by the IAEA, in bold letters. This is going to happen.”

Grossi said the inspections would take place in collaboration and co-operation with the Iranian government. “Whether this happens the day after tomorrow, or in one week, or in 10 days, it’s important but not essential.”

Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Kazem Gharibabadi appeared to push back at the comments.

He wrote on X that access to Iran’s damaged nuclear facilities and its nuclear materials would only be addressed within the framework of a final agreement with the US and after practical steps had been taken to lift all sanctions.

“Media noise cannot be used to impose facts on the ground,” he added.

Under the 14-point memorandum of understanding, the US and Iran have committed to negotiating a final deal within 60 days.

It says they have “agreed to resolve

the disposition of stockpiled enriched material, pursuant to a mechanism that will be mutually agreed upon... with the minimum methodology to be down-blending on site under the supervision of the IAEA”.

The IAEA said in a recent report that its inspectors were allowed to visit Iran’s Bushehr nuclear power plant earlier this month, but that they were still not given access to the sensitive nuclear facilities that were bombed last June.

The watchdog said that meant it could not provide any information on the current size, composition or whereabouts of Iran’s stockpile of enriched uranium, or whether Iran had suspended all enrichment activities. Much of the stockpile is believed to be inside underground tunnels at the Isfahan site.

Enriched uranium can be used to make reactor fuel but also nuclear weapons.

Before the start of the US-Israeli war with Iran on 28 February, the IAEA re-

ported that Iran had 440kg (970 lbs) of uranium that was enriched up to 60% purity, which is near weapons grade. That would theoretically be enough, if enriched to 90%, for as many as 10 bombs.

Iran insists its nuclear activities are entirely peaceful and that it would never seek to develop or acquire nuclear weapons.

Under a 2015 deal with the US and five other world powers, Iran agreed to limit its nuclear activities and allow continuous and robust monitoring by the IAEA’s inspectors in return for relief from crippling economic sanctions.

However, Trump abandoned the agreement during his first term in 2018, saying it did too little to stop a pathway to a bomb, and reinstated US sanctions.

Iran retaliated by increasingly breaching the restrictions of the deal, particularly those relating to uranium enrichment. (BBC)

**PDV Caribe**  
Antigua and Barbuda Ltd.

**THE PDV HOUR**

**MONDAYS**  
**11AM - 12NOON**

**MRS. JELLETTE RALPH**  
**(JELLY BEANS)**

## French woman allegedly held captive by husband for 12 years rescued in Pakistan



Police in Pakistan have arrested a man who allegedly held his wife and children captive at home and abused them for more than a decade.

His wife, a French national named Sylvie Yasmina, claims the man assaulted his family physically and mentally “on a daily basis” and described him as “very violent”, local police told BBC Urdu.

One of their sons managed to sneak out to make a police report, which led to a raid of their house in Bara, a remote town in the mountainous Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province.

Police found Yasmina and her five children in a cramped and “extremely dilapidated room”, with bruises all over their bodies.

Yasmina and her children have been taken to a women’s shelter in Peshawar. They plan to move back to France, the police say.

According to Yasmina, 54, her husband had “effectively imprisoned” the family since they moved to Pakistan from Australia in 2014.

“According to the woman... She was not allowed to meet anyone, their two older children had missed their studies, while the three younger children were born in Pakistan and never enrolled in school,” a senior police officer told BBC Urdu.

Authorities have not identified Yasmina’s husband, a Pakistani national who they say was “residing illegally” in Australia when the couple met.

They married in 2003 and lived in Australia until 2014, when they moved to Pakistan with their two older children. Yasmina claims she has not had any communication with the outside world since then.

“We were deprived [of our] freedom, my husband didn’t take care of us the way he should as a husband and the father of my children. He beats us and put pressure on our lives on a daily basis,” Yasmina wrote in her statement to the police, parts of which have been published by local media.

“I felt that my future was already ruined, the future of the children would also be ruined.” (BBC)



**REGISTER NOW**

# TWEEN MAS

**THEME: WACKY TACKY**

**12-17 YEARS OLD**

PRIZES FOR THE BEST GROUP OUTFITS INSPIRED BY THIS YEAR'S THEME "FEEL THE RYTHM"

REGISTRATION DEADLINE: 26 JUNE 2026  
CALL 727 9201 OR EMAIL [INFO.NFO@AB.GOV.AG](mailto:INFO.NFO@AB.GOV.AG) TO REGISTER

**FOOD • DRINKS • PRIZES & MORE**  
(REGISTRATION IS MANDATORY FOR PARTICIPATION)



**FREE**  
ADMISSION

THE ST. JOHN'S CITY WEST CONSTITUENCY'S  
*Youth Arm*

# MOVE WITH *City West*

**Move · Vibe · Connect**



**SUNDAY 28<sup>TH</sup>  
JUNE 2026**



**4:30 PM**



**VILLA PRIMARY  
SCHOOL COURT**

**FEATURING**



**WARM  
UP**



**HIGH-ENERGY  
SOCAROBICS  
SESSION**



**COOL  
DOWN &  
STRETCH**

**SUNSET  
SOCAROBICS  
WITH  
DANCERBOYSHAN**

**MUSIC BY  
DJ KAVITY**

**SUNDAYS  
10AM - 1PM**



**HOSTED BY  
BEN WEN**

# **COUNTRY ROAD TRIP**

**CALL: 562-3989 OR 562-2991 | US: 718 285 7889  
FACEBOOK LIVE @ POINTE FM99.1**

**WE ARE GETTING STRONGER**



# TICKET OUTLETS

**ROTI KING ST. MARY'S STREET & CORN ALLEY**

**COOL & SMOOTH LOWER ALL SAINTS ROAD**

**APUA INET OLD PARHAM ROAD**

**EXOTIC ANTIGUA REDCLIFFE QUAY**

**SIPS & TIPS CEDAR GROVE MAIN ROAD**



**CASHLESS PAYMENTS AVAILABLE CARNIVAL CITY**



## Wins for Stingers and Flyballers in Village Netball League



*The Potters Stingers female netball team*

The Potters Stingers and Michael Joseph Gray's Green Flyballers recorded wins in the female division of the Antigua and Barbuda Netball Association's (ABNA) Antigua Generators and Cool and Smooth Village League on Tuesday evening.

The Potters Stingers maintained their unbeaten run, securing their fourth win in as many matches with a 70-6 drubbing of the Pares Net Masters in their female division encounter at the YMCA Sports Complex in St. John's.

Tashana Bloomfield scored 46 of her 53 shots, Adina Andre sank 16 of her 21 attempts, and Tanya Greene made eight of her 10 tries for the Potters Stingers.

Andrea Benjamin converted four of her 10 shots, and Annika Watson scored two of her five attempts for the Pares Net Masters, who slumped to their fifth

defeat in six matches.

The Gray's Green Flyballers notched up their third win in four female division matches with a 37-13 victory against Willikies.

Kizzy Hughes sank 21 of her 32 shots, and Wendy Ophelia scored 16 of her 28 attempts for the Gray's Green Flyballers.

Alesha Roberts converted eight of her 12 shots, and Sanchez Martin made three of her five tries for Willikies, who remain winless after suffering their fifth defeat in as many games.

But the other female division encounter ended in a tie, the first in this year's competition.

Swetes/Roman Hill and Seatons Eastsiders battled to an exciting 41-41 draw.

Everdine Parker-Barnard converted 27 of her 31 shots, and Jamila Fitz scored

14 of her 18 attempts for Swetes/Roman Hill.

Amey Lake sank 31 of her 42 attempts, and Christina Lloyd converted 10 of her 13 tries for the Seatons Eastsiders.

The result allows Swetes/Roman Hill to remain unbeaten with a record of four wins and a draw in five matches. It also means the Seatons Eastsider now have a record of five wins, one tie, and one defeat in seven matches.

The ABNA Village League will continue with three more female division matches at the YMCA Sports Complex in St. John's on Thursday evening.

St. John's Talented Youths will take on Lamin Newton All Saints United at 6 pm. Swetes/Roman Hill will face Michael Joseph Gray's Green Flyballers at 7 pm, and the Potters Stingers and Newfield will clash at 8 pm.

## Ovals beat defending champs in All Saints Football League

Cup-holders El Hombre suffered their first loss in defense of their title in the All Saints Community Football League in their latest outing.

Ovals snatched a 2-1 victory against El Hombre in their encounter at the Mock Pond playing field in All Saints.

Conversions by Raheem Deterville in the fifth minute and Stefan Smith in the 8th minute gave Ovals a two-nil lead. Najae Thomas reduced the deficit by scoring in the 20th minute for El Hombre.

The result allows El Hombre to remain at the top of Group B due to a superior goal difference over Bassa and Darg A Bark. All three teams have six points with identical records of two wins and one defeat.

Ovals advanced to fourth place in the six-team standings with three points, winning one and losing one of their two matches.

Overdose also picked up their first points by snatching a 2-1 victory against Darg A Bark in their latest outing in Group B.

Rakeem Joseph struck the winner for Over Dose with a 64th-minute conversion after his team equalized 1-1 via an own goal, which was scored by



Tarique John in the 58th minute.

Kaijah Matthew gave Darg A Bark a one-nil lead with a strike in the 42nd minute.

It means Over Dose moved to second from the bottom of the standings with three points after recording their first win in two matches.

Dark A Bark remains in third place

on goal difference after suffering their first defeat in three matches.

Twelve teams, divided into two groups, are contesting this year's All Saints Football League.

Police are currently leading Zone A with six points, having won their two matches. Fundamentals are second with four points, with a win and a draw in two matches.



**POINTE ON DE STREETZ**  
 HOSTED BY  
**VERNON A. SPRINGER**

**PBN**  
 POINTS BROADCASTING NETWORK

**TUE - FRI**  
**2PM - 3PM**  
 CALL: 562-3989 OR 562-2991  
**f POINT FM99.1**

## Munoz strike sends Colombia into World Cup Round of 32

GUADALAJARA (Reuters) - Daniel Munoz fired Colombia into the World Cup Round of 32 on Tuesday, sealing a 1-0 win over DR Congo in Group K after goalkeeper Lionel Mpsi had threatened to turn the match into a night of frustration.

Munoz struck the winner from the right side of the penalty area in the 76th minute, finally beating Mpsi who had repeatedly denied Colombia with an inspired performance.

Colombia, who opened their World Cup campaign with a 3-1 win over Uzbekistan, commanded possession and created numerous chances.

James Rodriguez, making his 10th World Cup appearance to equal the Colombian record jointly held by Freddy Rincon and Carlos Valderrama, forced Mpsi into action with a powerful strike in the 11th minute.

The goalkeeper stood firm, repelling efforts from Jhon Arias and winger Luis Diaz, who came close to breaking the deadlock in the 18th minute, controlling a chipped pass inside the penalty area, turning smartly, and firing a shot goalwards, only for Mpsi to save with his foot.

The African side, buoyed by their opening 1-1 draw



Colombia's Daniel Munoz (2) celebrates after scoring his side's opening goal during the World Cup Group K soccer match between Colombia and Congo in Zapopan, near Guadalajara, Mexico, Tuesday, June 23, 2026. (AP)

with Portugal, threatened sporadically through Edo Kayembe, Cedric Bakambu and Yoane Wissa but lacked a clinical finish.

By halftime, Colombia had registered 15 shots, including six on target, with nine of their 10 outfield players attempting efforts.

In the stands, DR Congo had support from Michel Nkuka Mboladinga, the team's famous "living statue" fan, who made his World Cup debut after missing the opener against Portugal because of Ebola quarantine requirements.

Colombia resumed on the front foot after the break, Diaz forcing an-

other fine save from Mpsi in the 51st minute before Arias dragged the rebound wide.

Wissa almost snatched the lead for DR Congo in the 73rd minute when his shot from Simon Banza's assist was blocked, but Colombia struck shortly after through Munoz.

"Just because I scored the goal doesn't mean I'm the hero. I belong to everyone; we're all in this together. We secured the three points as a team, as Colombia; here, we're one family," Munoz told Colombian TV.

Diaz later thought he had doubled the advantage with a finish into the top corner, only for the effort

to be ruled out for offside.

"Against a team like that, you have to find the spaces between the lines; if you play too predictably, they press you and hit you on the counter-attack," Colombia coach Nestor Lorenzo said.

Colombia moved to six points from two matches and guaranteed their progress to the knockout stage ahead of their final group game against Portugal, who beat Uzbekistan 5-0 earlier on Tuesday.

DR Congo remained on one point and will need a result against Uzbekistan to keep their qualification hopes alive.

## Olympic athletes to get cash grants from new US\$100M fund

LAUSANNE, Switzerland (AP) — It's not Olympic prize money officially, but it is a significant amount of cash going directly to athletes after a Summer or Winter Games.

The International Olympic Committee pledged Wednesday to pay up to US\$140 million to athletes through the 2028 Los Angeles Summer Games by creating a fund for US\$10,000 grants for which they can apply after competing.

The IOC's cash commitment came after growing calls were strongly resisted in recent years to pay prize money at the Olympics, and signaled another policy shift under its president Kirsty Coventry.

IOC member and former NBA star Pau Gasol announced the project that will first be open to nearly 2,900 athletes who competed at the 2026 Milan Cortina Winter Games.

Around 11,000 athletes due to compete in 2028 at Los Angeles also can apply for grants totaling about US\$110 million after those Olympics, if they meet integrity criteria such as not testing positive for doping.

"This is a win for all of us," said Gasol, who represents athletes on the 15-member IOC executive board, adding that it was "not prize money."

The money allocated by the IOC is not dependent on an athlete continuing their career.

The cash promise was the signature issue of an IOC meeting setting a future strategy under its president Kirsty Coventry exactly one year after she formally took office.

Gasol said the IOC had heard a consistent message during its strategy



*International Olympic Committee (IOC) President Kirsty Coventry, speaks during the 146th Session of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) at the SwissTech Convention Centre, in Lausanne, Switzerland, Wednesday, June 24, 2026. (AP)*

review. "Athletes want more direct support throughout their Olympic journey and beyond."

The 42-year-old Coventry is a five-time Olympian and two-time swimming gold medalist for Zimbabwe. She was elected as the youngest president, and most recent former athlete, in the IOC's modern history.

Paying prize money to Olympic medalists was a central policy for one of Coventry's election opponents, World Athletics leader Sebastian Coe, who oversaw rewarding track and field champions at the 2024 Paris Olympics with US\$50,000.

"This is a historic moment for the movement and I'm absolutely delighted to be in the room when this has been announced," Coe told his fellow IOC members, praising Coventry's policy.

In Los Angeles, World Athletics is adding to its prize fund to pay silver and bronze medalists as well.

Coventry restated two weeks ago her long-held belief that the IOC should not use its Olympic revenues to pay prize money to an elite tier of medalists.

That question to Coventry at an IOC news conference followed a fierce reaction by some athletes to her comments while on Olympic business in New Zealand last month that prize money would not be paid.

The IOC already funds a program called "Olympic Solidarity" that directs grants worth thousands of dollars to athletes from less-wealthy countries preparing to qualify for and compete at a Summer or Winter Games.

The Solidarity budget, which also funds team costs, coaches and officials, is worth US\$650 million for the four-year Olympic cycle that includes Milan Cortina and Los Angeles.

## West Indies seeks turnaround in Test series with Sri Lanka

The West Indies and Sri Lanka begin their two-Test series in Antigua, with the host seeking to end its Test slump and Sri Lanka chasing crucial World Test Championship points.

After a rain-hit ODI series and a three closely contested T20 Internationals, the West Indies and Sri Lanka shift their focus to the longest format when the first Test begins at the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium in Antigua on Thursday (today) at 10 am.

The two-match series carries contrasting significance for the teams. The West Indies, rooted to the bottom of the World Test Championship (WTC) standings after losing seven of their eight matches in the current cycle, are desperate to revive their red-ball fortunes.

Sri Lanka, meanwhile, are currently third in the table and will be keen to strengthen their push for next year's WTC final at Lord's in London, England.

"Every Test series is an opportunity for us to grow as a team and strengthen our identity," West Indies head coach Daren Sammy said.

"Sri Lanka are a quality side, so we'll have to be at our best, but we're excited about the challenge."

With the West Indies enduring a prolonged slump in Test cricket, Sammy stressed the importance of discipline and resilience.

"For us, it's about playing with



West Indies skipper Roston Chase, left, and Sri Lanka's captain Dhananjaya de Silva hold the Sobers-Tissera Trophy, which both teams will be battling to capture. (CWI Media)

discipline, showing character when the game gets tough and representing the West Indies with pride," he said.

Sri Lanka's lofty WTC position, however, comes largely on the back of a 1-0 home series win over Bangladesh last year. Dhananjaya de Silva's side will need victories away from home to remain firmly in contention.

The teams last met in Antigua in 2021, when both Tests ended in draws on batting-friendly surfaces. This time, conditions are expected to be more demanding, with recent domestic matches indicating pitches offering pace, bounce, and seam movement.

The West Indies are set to recall wicketkeeper-batter Joshua da Silva after he earned his place with successive prolific domestic sea-

sons.

"I went back to first-class cricket, scored runs and got another opportunity, so I'm trying to make the most of it," the 28-year-old said.

The West Indies will rely on a potent pace attack led by the returning Antiguan speedster Alzarri Joseph alongside Jayden Seales and Shamar Joseph to trouble Sri Lanka's batting.

Sri Lanka's pace unit, spearheaded by Asitha Fernando and Vishwa Fernando in the absence of Dushmantha Chameera, will look to exploit the conditions.

The visitors batting will once again revolve around captain Dhananjaya de Silva, Dinesh Chandimal, and the in-form Pathum Nissanka as the Sri Lankans chase a first-ever Test series win in the Caribbean.