

Carnival Minister Calls For Responsible Revelry

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Official opening of Antigua Carnival 2026 ribbon cutting ceremony

Carnival Minister Calls For Responsible Revelry

The Minister Responsible for Creative Industries, Dwayne George, calls for responsible behavior during the festivities marking Antigua Carnival, 2026.

Minister George was speaking on Saturday at the Opening Parade for Carnival 26 when he invited revelers to enjoy the Carnival while at the same time underscoring the importance of safety.

“I want you to put safety as a priority going forward. I want you to jam and celebrate, but to celebrate respectfully and responsibly. I want to say to the good people of Antigua and Barbuda and those from our diaspora who visiting for Carnival, that we are ready; we are feeling the rhythm, let’s get the party started,” he urged.

“Antigua and Barbuda Carnival, 2026, is now open, open for jamming. Let’s get the party rolling. We’re ready; feel the rhythm,” George extolled the gathering.

What followed was the T-Shirt Mas and Opening Parade, one of the highlights of the annual Carnival festivities.

Among the persons participating in the opening festivities was Prime Minister Gaston Browne who noted that the annual carnival was ‘off to a good start’ as he too urged revelers to enjoy the Carnival but to do so in a peaceful and respectful manner.

The remainder of the Carnival programme includes the re-scheduled Junior Carnival, which was postponed from Sunday to Wednesday due to heavy early morning showers that lasted until around midday.

On Thursday is the Caribbean Meltin’ Pot show, Friday is the Calypso Monarch Competition, Satur-



day is Panorama and Sunday is the Party Monarch competition. The Parade of Bands and the Judging of Troupes and Groups take place on Carnival Monday and Tuesday (August 3 and 4).



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More than 800 Complete Food Handlers Training

More than eight hundred persons have completed food handlers training in the three months prior to the opening of Carnival as the Central Board of Health re-double efforts to reducing the incidence of food-borne diseases.

Principal Public Health Inspector, Julianne Mannix-Galloway reported that since May, the CBH has trained some eight hundred and fourteen persons as it embarked on measures designed to keep the incidence of food-borne diseases as low as possible. "Our last training ended last Thursday as we noticed an increase in the number of persons coming forward to be trained as certified food-handlers. Recognising the importance of conducting these training sessions, we started early to ensure that those who ply their trades handling food during the Carnival season would have enough time to fully complete the training and are compliant with the requirements for being a food handler," she stated.

According to Mannix-Galloway the training started with a focus on sanitation; this speaks to the food vender keeping his/her environment clean. Another area of focus was time and temperature; this is where hot food should be kept at a temperature that keeps it healthy while cold food should be served cold. The personal hygiene of the vendor also came up. This highlights the importance of the food vendor keeping his/her hands clean at all times. They were also told of the need for clean attire for themselves as persons involved in selling food to be consumed by customers.



Julianne Mannix-Galloway

The training also covered the proper disposal of fats and oil. "We strongly discourage vendors from pouring their unwanted oils into the gutters. This only encourages rats and roaches. Vendors should pour the unwanted oil/fats back into the container and properly dispose of them at the sanitary land fill," she indicated.

Meanwhile, the CBH has deployed some ten gangs of individuals whose task is to clean up Carnival City and surrounding streets after each Carnival Event. "Persons coming into the city early Sunday morning would have noticed that the streets are clean. That's because after the Opening Parade and T-shirt mas our teams combed Carni-

val City and the streets picking up discarded items that littered the streets," she explained. Mannix-Galloway noted that had the Junior Carnival programme not canceled, there would have been a similar clear-up effort after that show.

In addition to training food handlers, the CBH decided to participate in Carnival in a more direct manner. A float organized by the CBH took part in the Opening Parade last Saturday.

The principal health inspector said the float formed part of an educational awareness campaign for the carnival season with a theme "Don't let mosquitoes Join the Carnival Celebration".



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Local News

2026 Junior Carnival Rescheduled To Wednesday: Rainy Conditions Blamed For Postponement

The Antigua and Barbuda Festivals Commission has rescheduled the Junior Carnival activities from Sunday to Wednesday afternoon (July 29) due to heavy early morning showers that lasted until midday on Sunday.

In a statement, the Commission said following careful consideration of the situation, including the impact of continued rainfall on the parade route and surrounding areas, the Commission determined that proceeding with the event on Sunday would not have been in the best interest of the children, participants, parents, spectators and the wider public.

“The safety and well-being of our children and the public remain our highest priority. Accordingly, the Commission has taken the prudent decision to reschedule the children’s Junior Carnival to Wednesday, 29 July 2026, commencing at 1:00 p.m,” the statement added.

“We recognize the significant preparation undertaken by parents, children, mas’ groups, organizers and other stakeholders and regret any inconvenience caused by this unavoidable change. We thank everyone for their patience, understanding and cooperation as we take the necessary precautions in the interest of public safety.”

The Antigua and Barbuda Festivals Commission says it looks forward to welcoming the children and the wider public on Wednesday for a safe and enjoyable Junior Carnival.





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CHOGM 26 Meets Carnival 2026



Members of the National CHOGM Taskforce's Media and Public Affairs Committee brought CHOGM 2026 to Antigua Carnival through a series of public engagement activities during the Opening Parade on July 25, 2026.

The activations included engaging spectators and parade participants in conversations about Antigua and Barbuda hosting the 2026 Common-

wealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM), capturing their reactions on camera, and conducting interviews with CHOGM correspondent Gabrielle Hamlet. The team also facilitated photo opportunities with the official CHOGM 2026 logo featuring Queen of Carnival, Zaine Frederick, Mr. Teenage, Soleil Williams, Ms. Teenage, Katherine Pimental, Logo

Designer, Chaneil Imhoff, and the Minister of Creative Industries, Hon. Dwayne George.

Throughout the parade, the team distributed CHOGM-branded promotional items, including commemorative cups and bottled water, giving patrons a memorable keepsake symbolizing Antigua and Barbuda's hosting of this historic Commonwealth event.

Local News



The activation comes off the heels of the start of the 100-day countdown and formed part of the ongoing public awareness campaign leading up to CHOGM 2026, helping to build national pride, increase public awareness, and encourage community participation in the country's preparations for welcoming Commonwealth leaders and delegates from across the globe.



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Carnival
2026

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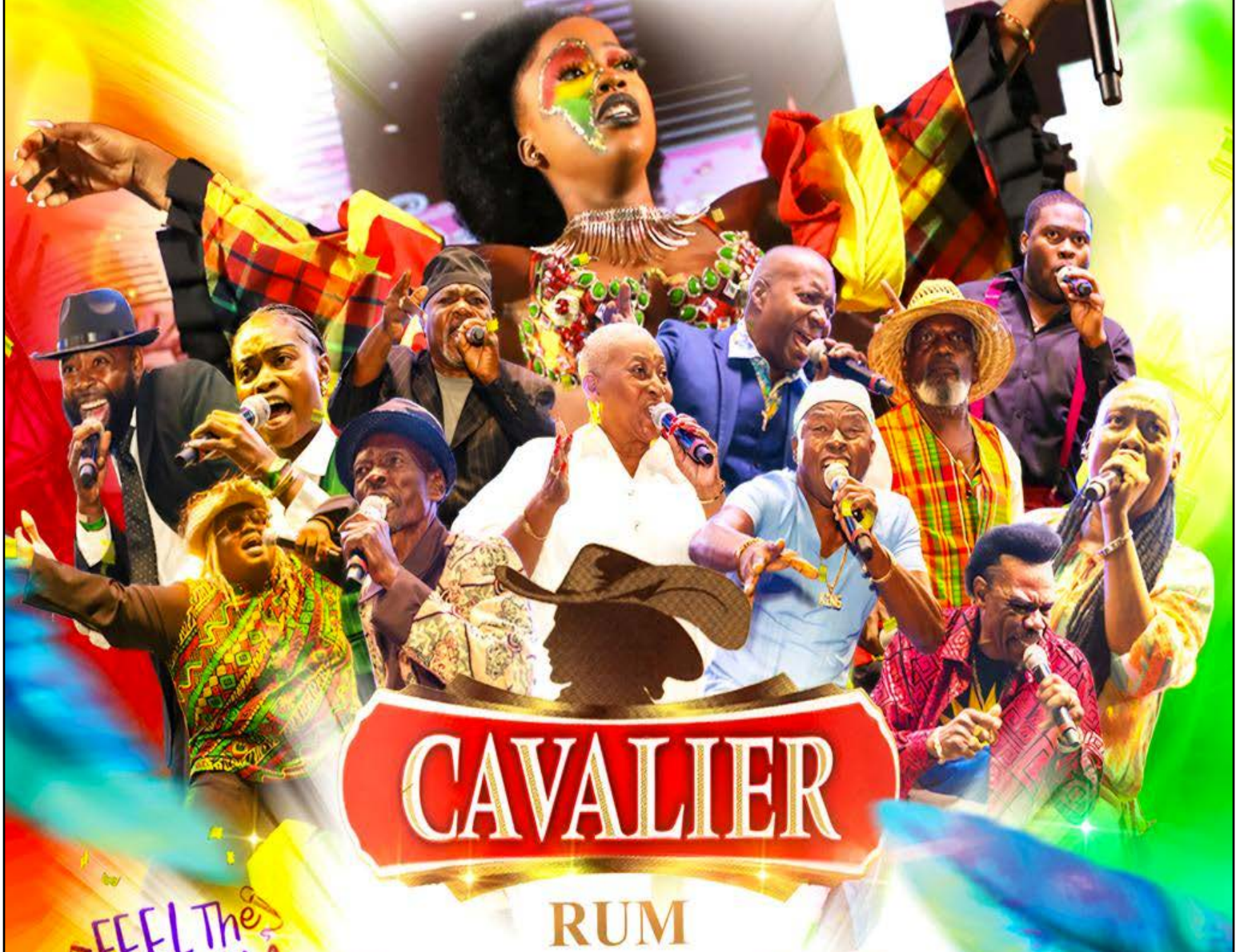
\$100

RHYTHM
ROOM

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JULY 31ST

📍 CARNIVAL CITY 8PM

Ticket \$40

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Local News

Proactive Crime-Fighting Operations Go Into Effect Nationwide



The Royal Police Force of Antigua and Barbuda continues to intensify its proactive crime-fighting efforts through a series of coordinated operations aimed at disrupting criminal activity, recovering illegal weapons, and enhancing public safety across the

country.

Over the past several days, officers attached to the CID Task Force, the Gang and Guns Suppression Unit (GAGSU), the K-9 Unit, the Forensic Evidence Recovery Unit (FERU), and other departments conducted several targeted operations, including search warrants, mobile patrols, vehicle checkpoints, and intelligence-led exercises in various communities.

During one operation in Collins, officers recovered an unlicensed firearm along with several rounds of matching ammunition.

Several other items were seized, including a Colombian passport and a cellular phone as part of the ongoing investigation. Two individuals were arrested on suspicion of Possession of an Unlicensed Firearm and Ammunition.

Additional search warrants were carried out in East Bus Station, Cashew Hill, and Golden Grove. One individual was subsequently arrested, while several items were seized, as a result of ongoing investigations.

The Police Administration wishes to remind the public that these heightened operational measures are not limited to the Carnival season. Increased patrols, intelligence-led operations, stop-and-search exercises, and the execution of search warrants will continue well beyond the festive period as part of the organization's long-term strategy to combat crime and strengthen public safety throughout Antigua and Barbuda.

The public is encouraged to remain vigilant and report suspicious activities to the police without delay.



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Police To Investigate the Circumstances Surrounding Shabazz's Death

Investigations are ongoing into the circumstances surrounding the death of 36-year-old Rashawn Shabazz, who died at the hospital, following an incident at His Majesty's Prison on Thursday, July 23rd.

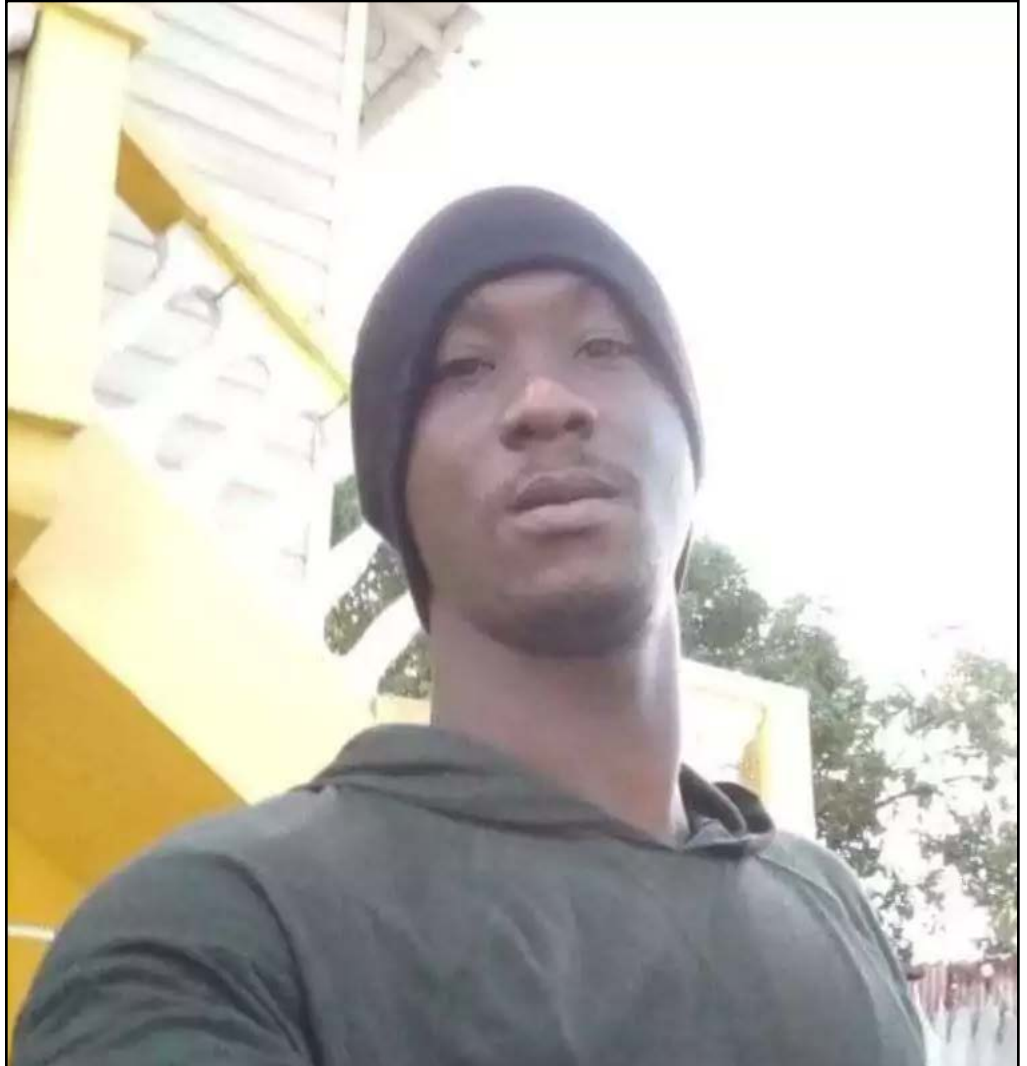
The police say preliminary investigations revealed that the prisoner became aggressive and barricaded himself inside his cell, after prison officers attempted to escort him for a scheduled medical assessment.

After several attempts to have the matter peacefully resolved failed, the prison authorities requested police assistance.

The inmate reportedly continued to resist and threaten officers, resulting in the use of non-lethal measures to remove him safely from the cell.

He was subsequently transported to the Sir Lester Bird Medical Centre, where medical personnel immediately attended to him. Despite efforts by medical staff to resuscitate him, he was pronounced dead at approximately 11:37 a.m.

The Police Administration extends sincere condolences to the family of Rashawn, and reassures them that a full inquiry will be carried out into the incident.



Rashawn Shabazz





Queen Zaine Frederick to Represent Antigua and Barbuda at Miss Caribbean Culture Queen Pageant

Antigua and Barbuda's newly-minted Queen of Carnival 2026, Zaine Frederick is set to represent the country at the Bank of Nevis Miss Caribbean Culture Queen Pageant on Monday, 3 August 2026, in Nevis.

Frederick, who also holds the title of Miss St. John's Rural West, will compete against nine delegates from across the Caribbean in four judged categories: swimsuit, talent, evening wear, and interview.

A business graduate, athlete, and entrepreneur, Frederick holds a bachelor's degree in business management with a concentration in Entrepreneurship. Guided by faith, determination,

and a passion for empowering others, she has consistently demonstrated excellence, leadership, and a commitment to personal and community development.

Minister responsible for Creative Industries, Dwayne George, extended his best wishes to Zaine, expressing confidence in her ability to make the nation proud. "On behalf of the Government and people of Antigua and Barbuda, I extend my heartfelt congratulations and best wishes to Queen Zaine Frederick as she represents our nation on the regional stage. Carry the Antigua and Barbuda flag with pride, confidence, and grace, knowing that an entire nation stands behind you."

Chair of the Antigua and Barbuda Festivals Commission, Ambassador Elizabeth Makhoul, also congratulated Frederick. "Once again, the Antigua and Barbuda Festivals Commission congratulates Zaine on capturing the coveted Queen of Carnival 2026 title. We are proud to support her as she embarks on this exciting regional journey, and we reaffirm our commitment to assisting her in every way possible.

The ABFC is urging the public to send messages of encouragement, share in her journey, and proudly show their national support as Queen Zaine Frederick carries the Antigua and Barbuda flag onto the Miss Caribbean Culture Queen stage.

Eight Steel Orchestras Set for State Insurance Panorama 2026

Eight steel orchestras will compete for the national Panorama title at Carnival City on Saturday 1 August, as Antigua Carnival 2026 unfolds under the theme “Feel the Rhythm.” The Antigua and Barbuda Festivals Commission along with Title Sponsor, State Insurance Company Limited, today confirmed the official order of appearance and tune selections..

Harmonites Steel Orchestra opens the night with King Swallow’s 1988 classic “Fire in De Back Seat,” arranged by Aubrey “Lacu” Samuel and captained by Alston Davis. Halcyon Steel Orchestra brings the competition to a close with Ricardo Drue’s “Bet,” arranged by Lorenzo Hodge under captain Dwayne Mussington.

This year’s selections span close to four decades of Antiguan and Barbudan music, reaching from King Swallow’s 1988 calypso to Claudette “CP” Peters’ 2026 release “Pan Man Play.” Dr. Zahra Lake, who both arranges for and captains Pandemonium Steel Orchestra, is the lone female arranger in this year’s competition. Behind the scenes, tuner and builder Veron Henry has prepared instruments for six of the eight competing orchestras.

“Panorama is the one night in the Carnival calendar where the country hears what a full year of work inside a panyard actually sounds like,” said Cleofoster Harris, Deputy Director of the Antigua and Barbuda Festivals Commission.

The official order of appearance is as follows:

Order	Steel Orchestra	Tune of Choice	Sung by	Arranger	Tuner / Builder	Captain
1	Harmonites Steel Orchestra	Fire in De Back Seat (1988)	King Swallow	Aubrey “Lacu” Samuel	Eustace Harris	Alston Davis
2	West Side Symphony	Stand Up for Antigua (2016)	King Onyan	Oren Peters	Veron Henry	Eugene Davis
3	Panache Steel Orchestra	Pan Man Play (2026)	Claudette “CP” Peters	Malik Smith	Veron Henry	Maurisha Potter
4	Original Steel Orchestra	Pan Man Play (2026)	Claudette “CP” Peters	Jerel Jarvis	Veron Henry	Elvis Wetherill
5	West Indies Oil Co. Gemonites Steel Orchestra	Bet (2016)	Ricardo Drue	Johnny Gonsalves	Veron Henry	Joseph Henry
6	Pandemonium Steel Orchestra	Mad Mad Mad (2010)	Claudette “CP” Peters	Dr. Zahra Lake	Veron Henry	Dr. Zahra Lake
7	Caribbean Union Bank Hells Gate Steel Orchestra	Bet (2016)	Ricardo Drue	Khan Cordice	Veron Henry	Keith Athill
8	Halcyon Steel Orchestra	Bet (2016)	Ricardo Drue	Lorenzo Hodge	Dudley Dickson	Dwayne Mussington

The Commission commends the musicians, arrangers, tuners, builders, captains and support teams whose year-round commitment sustains the steelpan art form in Antigua and Barbuda.

State Insurance Company Limited Panorama 2026 takes place at Carnival City, St. John’s, on Saturday 1 August 2026. Tickets are EC\$40 and are available at Ticket Outlets Islandwide and the Ticketing App. Antigua Carnival 2026 runs from 25 July to 4 August.

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Antigua Carnival



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A vibrant, colorful poster for the Antigua Carnival Rhythm Court. The background is a bright blue sky with white clouds, confetti, and a large, stylized sunburst logo in the center. The sunburst logo features a black silhouette of a person with arms raised, surrounded by colorful rays. Below the logo, the text "ANTIGUA Carnival" is written in a playful, pink font, with "THE CARIBBEAN'S GREATEST SUMMER FESTIVAL" in smaller black text underneath. To the right, a speech bubble contains the text "FEEL THE RHYTHM" in a colorful, bubbly font. The main title "RHYTHM COURT" is written in large, bold, pink and blue letters with a white outline. Below the title, a pink box contains the dates "MON JULY 27TH AND WED JULY 29TH" and the time "TIME 11AM UNTIL". Below the box, a location pin icon is followed by the text "CARNIVAL CITY". At the bottom, the text "DJs: DJ TENNY | DJ CRUMPZ | DJ EZ-P" is written in bold, black letters. Below this, the text "VIBES: WARRI AND DOMINO" is written in large, bold, black letters, followed by "WIN: \$1,000 DAILY UP FOR GRABS!" in bold, black letters. At the very bottom, the text "LOCAL FOOD | GAMES | MEET FRIENDS | COMMUNITY VIBEZ" is written in pink, followed by "COME FOR THE VIBEZ, STAY FOR THE RHYTHM." in black. The background of the poster shows a crowd of people at a carnival, with a large, colorful tent visible on the right.

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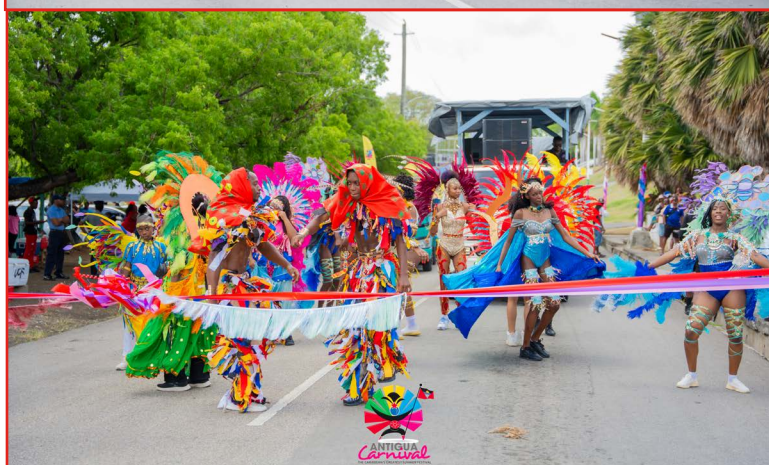


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Photo Essay



Photo Essay





MACHEL MONTANO

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JULY 30TH

8:00PM @ CARNIVAL CITY

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EMANCIPATION WATCHNIGHT 2026

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Regional News

Jamaican woman wanted by FBI in US\$32 million COVID relief funds scam returned to the US

A Jamaican woman who was listed on the Federal Bureau of Investigation's (FBI) most wanted fraudster list for her alleged role in a scheme that fraudulently obtained more than US\$32 million in federal COVID-19 relief funds returned from Jamaica on Saturday to the United States to face federal charges.

Forty-one-year-old Elaine Escoe, was charged by indictment in 2025 with conspiracy to commit wire fraud, conspiracy to commit money laundering, and multiple substantive counts of wire fraud and money laundering.

After a federal arrest warrant was issued in May 2025, Escoe reportedly failed to appear for her court appearance and fled to Jamaica.

Acting on information developed by the FBI, local authorities captured Escoe after receiving a tip.

She was returned to South Florida on Saturday through the coordinated efforts of the FBI, the US Marshals Service, the US Department of State's Diplomatic Security Service Regional Security Office at the U.S. Embassy in Kingston, the Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF), and the JCF Jamaica Fugitive Apprehension Team.

"This most wanted fraudster allegedly obtained tens of millions in COVID-19 relief, stealing critical resources from legitimate businesses during a national crisis," said Acting Attorney General Todd Blanche. "She fled the country believing she could escape justice but ultimately could not. Those who exploit taxpayer-funded programs will be held accountable by this Department of Justice, no matter how long it takes or where they attempt to hide."

"Elaine Angene Escoe's arrest and return to the United States demonstrates that no one is beyond the reach of American justice," said Assistant Attorney General Colin M. McDonald of the National Fraud Enforcement Division. "This most wanted fraudster faces charges stemming from a multi-million-dollar scheme to defraud taxpayer-funded COVID-19 relief pro-



grams. The fraud division will continue to vigorously prosecute those who steal from the American people," he added.

For his part, FBI Director Kash Patel said, "The historic success of the 'Most Wanted Fraudster' list continues as the FBI and our partners just captured our fourth most wanted fraudster in five weeks, and yet another high value target returned to the U.S. by this FBI".

He added that, "Elaine Angene Escoe, on the run since May of 2025, was captured in Jamaica while living under a fake identity of 'Harley Newman' – and returned to the United States today to face justice. She is charged for her alleged involvement in a conspiracy to commit wire fraud and money laundering – connected with a scheme to fraudulently obtain over \$32 million in federal COVID-19 relief funds. Escoe brings the number of high value targets returned by the FBI to over 30 just since June."

According to court records, Escoe and her co-conspirators submitted or caused the submission of fraudulent applications seeking more than \$32 million in Paycheck Protection Program (PPP), Restaurant Revitalization Fund (RRF), Shuttered Venue Operators Grant (SVOG), and Economic Injury

Disaster Loan (EIDL) funds. The applications falsely represented the existence, payroll, revenue, and operations of purported businesses to qualify for and maximize federal relief funding.

To support the fraudulent applications, the conspirators reportedly created fake tax documents, fabricated bank records, and other false financial records that lenders and program administrators relied upon in approving loans and grants.

Some applications were reportedly submitted on behalf of businesses controlled by the conspirators, while others were submitted for third parties in exchange for substantial kickbacks — sometimes as much as 50 per cent of the loan proceeds. The fraud proceeds were subsequently laundered among the conspirators.

Escoe is the last remaining defendant charged in the scheme. Following a December 2025 trial, Alfred Davis, Cher Davis, and Latoya Clark were convicted by a federal jury. James McGhow and Gino Jourdan previously pleaded guilty. Alfred Davis was sentenced to 235 months' imprisonment, Cher Davis to 87 months, Clark to 70 months, Jourdan to 46 months, and McGhow to 42 months. (Jamaica Observer)

Ghana invites Ex SVG PM to serve on global council for reparatory justice



Dr. Ralph E. Gonsalves, the former Prime Minister of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, has been invited to serve as a member of the newly formed Global Advisory Council on Reparatory Justice.

This invitation follows a high-level consultative conference held in Accra from June 17 to 19, 2026, which focused on the next steps for United Nations General Assembly Resolution A/RES/80/250 regarding the trafficking of enslaved Africans and racialised chattel enslavement.

The conference brought together heads of state, ministers, jurists, and representatives from the African diaspora to address the legacy of enslavement.

During these deliberations, participants adopted the Accra Next Steps

Commitments, a strategic framework designed to strengthen trans-continental cooperation and coordinate a global programme of action for reparatory justice for Africans and people of African descent.

The Global Advisory Council was established as a high-level body of current and former leaders, scholars, and eminent personalities. Its mandate includes providing strategic leadership and political guidance to advance the global reparatory justice agenda while guiding the implementation of the landmark United Nations resolution.

In a formal letter to Gonsalves, Ghanaian Minister of Foreign Affairs Samuel Okudzeto Ablakwa recognized the former leader's distinguished statesmanship and his

long-standing contribution to Caribbean integration and reparatory justice. Minister Ablakwa stated that Dr. Gonsalves' leadership and experience would make an invaluable contribution to the council's work and help strengthen the international partnerships required to move the agenda forward.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ghana, acting as the council's secretariat, is expected to provide further details regarding the inaugural meeting and the council's programme of work in the near future.

Gonsalves was officially notified of the invitation through a letter of appreciation transmitted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines on July 21, 2026. (St Vincent Times)

Regional News



Vincy threatened with detention for blasting InterCaribbean's service

Vincentian filmmaker Akley Olton has come forward with a harrowing account of his experience at the Grantley Adams International Airport on Friday night, describing an environment of “oppression” and silence at the hands of InterCaribbean Airways staff.

The incident occurred following a series of flight cancellations that left numerous passengers stranded for an entire day without updates. When Olton began recording the scene and “speaking up” for himself and fellow travelers, he claims the situation escalated into a confrontation with airline personnel.

According to Olton, staff members presented him with a chilling ultimatum: delete the video footage of the incident or be barred from boarding his flight. Olton further alleges he was threatened with detention and that the doors to the aircraft were physically closed on him to prevent his departure.

“I turned around and I said to her, ‘Let the people go. You could oppress me, but let the people go,’” Olton recounted, describing a chaotic scene where other passengers began to “scream” and “go crazy” as the airline attempted to silence the filmmaker.

The reported mistreatment of a prominent Vincentian creative comes just days after the Government of St. Vincent and the Grenadines (SVG) held a high-profile ceremony at Argyle International Airport to celebrate a deepening partnership with InterCaribbean Airways.

The event featured the unveiling of an aircraft branded with the SVG national flag, which Prime Minister Dr. Godwin Friday described as a “flying ambassador” for the nation.

The government is reportedly paying USD \$50,000 dollars equivalent



to approximately 135,000 dollars in Eastern Caribbean currency, to have an advertisement on the tail of an InterCaribbean Airways aircraft.

The contrast between the government’s “bold declaration” of partnership and Olton’s experience has sparked immediate backlash. While officials like Tourism Minister Dr. Kishore Shallow have emphasized that reliable air access is an essential pillar for the business community and citizens, Olton’s account suggests a breakdown in basic service and respect for passenger rights.

“InterCaribbean need to do better,” Olton stated, vowing never to fly with

the carrier again after his experience. As the government continues to promote its “flying ambassador,” many are now questioning the human cost of a partnership that has seen significant national branding used by an airline accused of silencing its own passengers.

The Prime Minister’s office has previously highlighted four pillars for economic generation, including the “creative industries”. However, the alleged “oppression” of one of the nation’s filmmakers at a regional hub suggests that the government’s “flying ambassador” may be delivering a message far different from the one intended. (St Vincent Times)

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Guyana appoints experts tasked with investigating ferry capsizing that killed dozens



Guyana's government on Sunday appointed a group of international experts to investigate the recent sinking of a state ferry that killed dozens of passengers in the country's worst maritime disaster on record.

The 87-year-old MV Barima capsized in Atlantic waters on June 18 after it departed the capital, Georgetown, en route to Port Kaituma, an Indigenous community near Venezuela.

Authorities have said they believe 179 passengers were aboard, but divers so far have found only 73 bodies, with another 76 people rescued. International teams are still trying to recover the vessel so experts can inspect it.

President Irfaan Ali said in a state address Sunday that the investigative team has been given widespread powers and is expected to operate independently.

Belize's former attorney general, Phillip Godfrey Smith, was appoint-

ed chairman of the five-person team tasked with the investigation, including whether professional negligence is to blame. Other members include an attorney, a naval architect and maritime experts from Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago.

Local authorities have so far arrested three people, including the rescued captain, who was accused of testing positive for marijuana, along with another crew member.

Ali said the team will be asked to scrutinize the "passenger management including embarkation, manifest preparation, the possible overcrowding of the vessel, the storage of cargo, the availability and use of life saving equipment and adherence to passenger safety requirements."

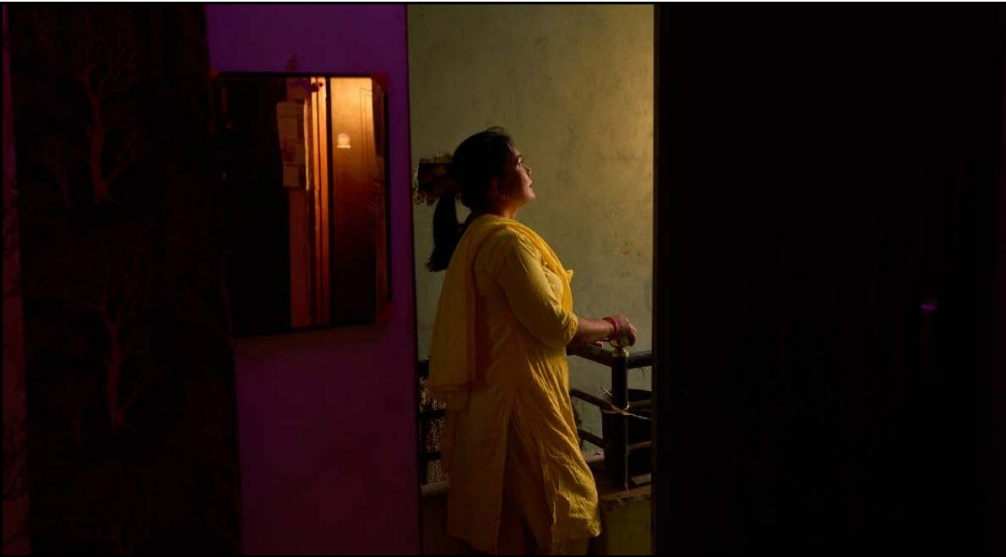
Dozens of people rescued after clinging to debris for hours have claimed that the ferry was overloaded with passengers and cargo including vehicles

and large pallets. They also asserted that the MV Barima was taking in water but that crews had dismissed this as "normal."

Ali said his administration wants the commission to determine whether there were "any acts of negligence, misconduct, dereliction of duty and other failures by any individual, entity or institution contributed to or caused the disaster, including neglect of its condition, maintenance history, sea tides, functioning navigation and communication equipment and other operational factors."

Ali said authorities hope the commission will recommend institutional and operational reforms as well as any other measures necessary to strengthen maritime safety, "improve emergency preparedness and response and reduce the likelihood of similar tragedies occurring in the future." (AP)

Sex work or starve - Aid workers in Nepal left jobless by USAID cuts turn to sex work to survive



She paces the side of the darkened highway in central Nepal, just enough light from the trucks roaring past to illuminate her painted face to the men rolling in on rickshaws and motorbikes. She knows that every stranger who pays for her body could end her life. But she also knows their money is the only thing preventing her death.

This spot, littered in condom wrappers and fringed by jungle, is familiar to her. Rubi Lama once came here not as a sex worker, but as an aid worker who helped sex workers.

For nine years, Lama – who is transgender – had devoted her life to conducting HIV outreach in Nepal's marginalized communities, including the LGBTQ+ sex workers who wait by this highway each night. But after the United States slashed its foreign aid funding last year, Lama and more than 280,000 aid workers worldwide found themselves out of a job.

Much has been written about the devastating impacts the US foreign aid cuts have had on the millions of people the funding once helped. Far less is known about the impacts on the helpers themselves.

In impoverished Nepal, where a conservative culture leaves openly transgender people with few legal job options, the impact on aid workers' lives was particularly crushing. Starving and scared, Lama and around 100 other LGBTQ+

aid workers left jobless by the funding cuts have turned to sex work to survive, walking the streets alongside the very people they once fought so hard to help.

The public health implications are vast. With the US funding cuts also eliminating access to HIV prevention medication in Nepal, health experts fear a spike in HIV prevalence among the surging ranks of sex workers, as well as members of the LGBTQ+ community.

On the side of the highway, the night is a cacophony of blaring horns and the shouts of drunken men. Lama, 28 years old, softspoken and shy, walks quietly among them, equal parts desperation and dread. Beyond her fear of HIV is her fear of violence, which she and nearly all her former colleagues who have taken to the streets have endured.

She'd give anything to go back to the nonprofit where she once cared for society's most vulnerable. Now she is the one in need of care, but there is no one left to provide it.

It is 11 p.m. and she's had two customers so far, who each paid her US\$3. Rent and food this month will cost her US\$80.

And so, her slight frame nearly swallowed by the shadows, she waits.

Just a few minutes down the road, in Lama's old office, stickers bearing the logo of the US Agency for International Development still cling to laptops that lie unused on barren desks, and to the

empty condom distribution containers collecting dust.

This is the headquarters for the formerly USAID-funded non-governmental organization called Friends Hetauda, which offered HIV testing, counseling and prevention services to central Nepal's LGBTQ+ community. All of that ended in January 2025, when US President Donald Trump froze funding for USAID, once the world's leading donor of humanitarian assistance. Trump later dissolved the agency after calling it a waste of money, even though the US spent just one per cent of its budget on foreign aid.

The Blue Diamond Society, an umbrella organisation for NGOs like Lama's former employer, received 85% of its funding from USAID and was staffed largely by people who were themselves gender and sexual minorities. They served as counselors, health assistants, data collectors and outreach workers. They ran 20 clinics across Nepal, dispensing antiretroviral medication to people with HIV along with PrEP, a medication taken by HIV-negative people to prevent infection. They offered free HIV tests along with condoms and lubricant, which reduce the risk of HIV transmission.

The funding cuts shut down the society's services, leaving more than 1,200 clients without access to PrEP medication and 262 of the group's 350 staffers without work.

All 15 aid workers-turned-sex workers interviewed by the AP recognise the risks.

One, who is HIV positive, says she lives in fear of transmitting the disease, yet still hits the streets nearly every night to stave off starvation.

Most of the workers spent months trying to find other jobs, frequently being rejected the moment the employers realized they were transgender. Many have been forced to have unprotected sex with clients. Nearly all have faced violence, including gang rape.

None see a way out. (AP)

France and Spain battle wildfires as more than 250,000 people are forced to flee homes

France sent a hulking military cargo plane to dump tonnes of flame retardants as it battled raging wildfires on Saturday and slashed the final stage of the Tour de France to redeploy security personnel to the blazes that forced tens of thousands of people to flee their homes.

The latest wildfires in southern Europe this week have displaced more than 250,000 people, including some 70,000 people who were evacuated in central Spain. One man died in Manises, the municipality reported on its Facebook page, the first death so far in the blazes.

In France, the giant A400M transporter swooped in low, its long plume of ochre-colored retardant trailing over drought-hit woodlands in the southwest as fire crews on the ground fought flames that authorities feared could spread toward the wine region city of Bordeaux.

Race organisers and the Paris police department announced a truncated 21st and final stage on Sunday for the three-week Tour, France's most famous annual sporting event, reflecting the immense strain that two large fires in the southwest are causing for emergency services.

Tour riders will race Sunday inside Paris, rather than starting from Thoiry, west of the capital, on a circuit of 89 kilometers (55 miles) — down by a third from the 133-kilometre (82.5-mile) route that had been planned. Part of the race's security detail will instead "reinforce the response efforts in the areas affected by the wildfires," according to the statement announcing the "exceptional measures made necessary by the situation."

With winds expected to shift in a west-to-east direction on Saturday



afternoon, potentially driving flames closer to Bordeaux, fire crews and authorities were digging trenches, using retardants and taking other blaze-blocking steps, French Interior Minister Laurent Nunez said, predicting a "long and very difficult" battle.

He said the fire was about 30 kilometers (20 miles) west of the city and lost some of its intensity overnight. The prefect of the Gironde region that includes Bordeaux said the blaze grew into "a firestorm" on Friday after igniting earlier this week and cautioned that it "remains dangerous" even though firefighters were making progress.

The government mobilized soldiers to join fire crews and was rushing in 1.5 million face masks to protect against choking smoke.

Authorities ordered people between the fire and Bordeaux to evacuate, including from parts of the city's western suburbs and other towns and villages.

Prime Minister Sébastien Lecornu described the fires as unprecedented and said the Gironde blaze became so strong on Friday that it had begun generating its own winds. Firefighting teams were being reinforced with the addition of hundreds of soldiers and breathing masks to filter out potentially noxious smoke particles were being rushed to those exposed, Lecornu said.

In Bordeaux, authorities took in thousands of evacuees, offering them food and shelter in an exhibition center, and the city's mayor said it could be equipped to welcome as many as 10,000 people if that became necessary. The city's airport said it remained open but that its bus and tram services were suspended.

Evacuation orders were sent with special alerts to mobile phones, instructing people to leave, Gironde prefect Sophie Brocas said. She said the fire had destroyed about 140 homes in the region.

The French military A400M transport plane, specially converted for

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fire-fighting, was a heavyweight new tool in the battle. It joined at least 18 other water- and retardant-dropping aircraft and helicopters that Nunez said were deployed in the Gironde region, working in rotation in the smoke-filled skies.

The virulence of the French and Spanish wildfires, fueled by high temperatures and the long-term effects of climate change, caught fire crews and authorities off guard.

Firefighters in Spain said the blazes spread so fast and violently that they could not be tackled head on. In France, some people even fled by boat when flames swept through touristic towns on the Atlantic coast.

"We've never seen anything like this," said Javier Organista, a resident of El Tiemblo, west of Madrid, where fire charred a famed chestnut grove. "When we saw the flames coming into our town, surrounding us, leaving us with practically no way out, all the neighbors joined together to try to stop its advance."

"It's just really sad," he said.

Spain deployed 2,600 firefighters, police and other emergency personnel to two blazes west of Madrid, backed by 19 water-dumping aircraft and helicopters.

France deployed 1,400 firefighters to the Gironde fire and hundreds of others to another wildfire further south in the Landes region. Dozens of firefighters suffered injuries, authorities said amid panic scenes with townsfolk fleeing by car and police went door to door to tell people to leave.

Successive heat waves that hit unusually early and hard this year, baking Europe with record-shattering high temperatures, have turned forests and scrublands into tinderboxes.

Fires have burned 130,000 hectares of forest already this year in Spain, up from an annual average of

100,000 hectares over the past decade, Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez said Saturday as he visited a command post west of Madrid.

He said more favorable weather Saturday offered "a window of opportunity" for fire crews to bring the blazes under control. Madrid's regional government said the fires decreased in intensity as winds and temperatures dropped.

The fatality reported on Saturday

occurred in Manises, part of the wildfire-affected region of Valencia.

Other European nations were helping, with Italy, Greece, the Netherlands, Portugal, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Sweden, Slovakia, Germany and Switzerland already providing or expected to deploy water-dumping planes and helicopters to the Spanish and French fire fronts. (AP)

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The suspect in the deadly Berlin Pride attack is killed in a confrontation with police

The suspect in the deadly Berlin Pride attack that left one person dead and 29 injured was shot and killed by police during a confrontation on Sunday in a suburb of the city, authorities said.

Abdul Ballout, a German citizen with Lebanese roots, was killed following a search that lasted nearly 24 hours after the attack in downtown Berlin. Prosecutors said he had previously sought to join the militant Islamic State group.

Ballout was suspected of driving a van into a crowd near Berlin's Pride festival Saturday night before apparently stabbing others with a machete in what authorities believe was an Islamic extremist terror attack.

Interior Minister Alexander Dobrindt said the attack occurred a few hundred meters (yards) from a party near the Brandenburg Gate that was supposed to close out the city's Pride festival.

Ballout was tracked down around 6 p.m. Sunday at a garden in Spandau, a Berlin suburb, the city's police department wrote on X. They said he apparently ran toward officers with a sharp instrument, and police fired at least one shot. He died at the scene.

Ballout was born in Germany, the minister said. His mother was naturalized in 2002, three years before he was born.

Ashley Jump, a 26-year-old U.K. resident, had traveled to Berlin for Saturday's Pride parade but had left the celebrations before the attack. They returned Sunday to leave flowers at a memorial near the crime scene in support of the LGBTQ+ community.

"They'll never erase us, we'll never be gone," they said. "As long as humanity has existed, we've existed. And as long as humanity exists, we will exist. We will not be removed."

Ballout traveled to Lebanon in 2025 with the goal of going to Syria to join the Islamic State group, Berlin prose-

cutors said Sunday.

There, he made contact with several people who were presumed members of the militant group — or at least he believed them to be, prosecutors said. He was arrested in Lebanon last year and sentenced by a military court to three months' imprisonment for offenses including incitement to religious and sectarian conflict.

He returned to Germany after completing his sentence, where he was arrested at the Berlin airport.

In May, a juvenile court in Berlin convicted Ballout of preparing a serious act of violence endangering the state, as well as publishing Islamic State propaganda on his Instagram account and other charges, prosecutors said.

The court handed down a suspended sentence of 1 year and 10 months in youth custody, which Berlin prosecutors had appealed.

The court said it took Ballout's months of pre-trial detention in Germany and Lebanon into account. It also said it considered that Ballout

VACANCY

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Caribbean Premium Motors Ltd., one of Antigua & Barbuda's leading automotive dealerships, is seeking an experienced and dynamic **Heavy-Duty Superintendent** to provide strategic and operational leadership for its Heavy-Duty Service Division.

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Interested applicants should submit a cover letter, detailed résumé and the names and contact information of **two professional referees**.

Deadline for the receipt of applications is August 7, 2026.

Email applications to: Acting.officer@gmail.com

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had confessed to the crimes, appeared to distance himself from the militant group and no actual threat had ever materialized.

He was released from detention pending the appeal.

According to police, a white van drove into the Tiergarten park around 10 p.m. and hit several people before colliding with a tree. The closing party at the Pride festival, known as Christopher Street Day, was ongoing at the time next to the Brandenburg Gate, a short distance away. The party followed a parade with some 80 trucks that had made its way through downtown Berlin earlier in the day.

The attack did not occur at the festival, along its route or at the closing party. Rather, the violence took place a few hundred meters (yards) away on a track in the Tiergarten park. The van drove into a crowd that was likely a mix of festivalgoers and other locals or visitors.

Police said a woman was killed.

On Sunday afternoon, hundreds of

mourners gathered at a memorial at the iconic gate. They hugged each other and laid down flowers, candles, rainbow flags and homemade signs, including a cardboard one that said: "the only thing more powerful than hate is love."

Hundreds of thousands had come to Berlin to celebrate on Saturday, though it's unclear how many were still at the festival by late evening. It's one of Europe's largest LGBTQ+ celebrations.

"We are simply stunned by what happened," said Andre Lehmann, a top official with the main national LGBTQ+ association, LSVD+. "This suspected attack hits the heart of the queer community."

"I would like to say this to Christopher Street Day participants here in Berlin but also across Germany: Don't let yourselves, let us not let ourselves, be intimidated," he said. "These acts have only one purpose: They aim to divide our society. They want to take away from us the most important thing we have: Namely our openness and our freedom."

Dobrindt said he expected security measures at other major events in Germany, including Pride events elsewhere, to be reviewed and if necessary significantly boosted.

Berlin has seen Islamic extremist attacks before. In December, 2016, a rejected asylum seeker from Tunisia plowed a hijacked truck into a Christmas market, killing 13 people and injuring dozens. He was killed days later in a shootout in Italy.

In February last year, a Spanish tourist was stabbed and seriously wounded at Berlin's Holocaust Memorial, an attack that saw a Syrian man convicted in March and sentenced to 13 years.

This week, Amsterdam will be hosting World Pride alongside its own annual Pride celebrations. Mayor Femke Halsema said authorities and organizers "are closely monitoring the security situation" after the Berlin attack but aim to prevent any extra measures getting in the way of celebrating freedom and love. (AP)

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Brazil's government denies visas to US officials over upcoming elections



Brazil's Foreign Ministry said on Saturday it denied visas to two United States State Department officials who sought to travel to the South American nation next week, in the latest political barb between the two countries.

The move became public after The Washington Post reported the Brazilian government saying the officials, Riley M. Barnes, an assistant secretary, and Samuel Samson, a deputy assistant, wanted to cast doubt on the upcoming October elections in Brazil.

A spokesperson for Brazil's foreign office said Barnes and Samson requested visas on July 20 and they were denied Friday. He did not disclose the reasons behind the decision.

Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva will bid for reelection against Senator Flávio Bolsonaro, whose family has many ties with the Trump administration.

Senator Bolsonaro and his brother,

Eduardo, visited US officials in Washington, including U.S. President Donald Trump, in late May.

Shortly afterward, the Trump administration classified Brazil's biggest drug-trafficking groups — First Command Capital and Red Command — as foreign terrorist organisations, a move Lula opposes.

The Trump administration also imposed an up to 37.5% tariff hike on thousands of Brazilian exports, which came into force Friday.

The US government claims the South American nation has unfair competition practices and fails to stop forced labour practices — both accusations rejected by the Lula administration as an attempt to sway the election to Senator Bolsonaro.

The US State Department said Barnes and Samson planned to go to Brazil July 27-30 to meet government officials, religious leaders and others

about “election integrity,” religious freedom and freedom of expression. The department, in response to a query from The Associated Press, called it a routine visit and said that “any insinuation of a ‘ploy’ to undermine a democratic nation's election is a baseless lie.”

Former Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro has for years fed concerns about the country's electronic voting system, without providing any evidence for his claims.

He is now serving a 27-year prison sentence at home for an attempted coup. He has long insisted that the machines, used for a quarter-century, are prone to fraud.

His son, Senator Bolsonaro, has recently repeated some of these claims, although he steered clear of them on Saturday when his Liberal Party confirmed him as a presidential candidate in São Paulo. (AP)

Willock reaches finals in Masters Division in ABDA draughts tourney

The nation's top player, Bernard "Premier" Willock, has advanced to the finals in the Masters Division of the Antigua and Barbuda Draughts Association's (ABDA) Cool and Smooth Invitational Tournament at the Gray's Green Community Basketball Court, also known as Knockle Block.

Willock booked his spot in the final, which will be contested on Monday, by trouncing St. Clair Josiah 6-0 in the semi-finals on Thursday.

It was the third win for Willock in the round-robin contest in the Masters Division after securing his second victory with a 5-2 triumph over Anthony "Tony" Gomes in his final outing in the preliminary stage.

In the final, Willock will face the winner of the other semi-final between Anthony "Tony" Gomes and Marvin "Bruce" Gray, which will be played on Monday.

Gray booked his place in the semi-finals by recording his first win in his three round-robin matches with a 7-1 drubbing of St. Clair Josiah.

Meanwhile, Amakusa Jeremiah and Theodore "Freddy" Jervier will clash in the final of the Seniors Division on Monday.

Jeremiah, who has played unbeaten in the tournament, booked his spot in the final by winning his last two matches in the preliminary stage to finish with four wins and a draw in the round-robin phase.

Jeremiah crushed Jervier 9-0 in his final preliminary stage encounter after completing a 7-1 victory over Tion "Hard GT" Grant.

Jervier advanced to the final by beating Eustace "Zocio" Samuel in sudden death in the semi-final after both players had battled to a 4-4 draw.

Jervier also prevailed 6-3 over Samuel in the round-robin preliminary



Bernard 'Premier' Willock

stage.

mony on Monday, starting at 6 pm.

The tournament will climax with the final matches and prize-giving cere-

Xclusive Ballaz capture Gray's Green Football League title



Players of the Xclusive Ballaz football team

Xclusive Ballaz have captured the title in the Gray's Green Community Football League.

Xclusive Ballaz secured the title by snatching a 3-2 victory over FC Hollywood in the final at the Keithley Shepard Recreational Park.

Raheem Deterville, Akeem Isaac, and Qwami Byers scored for Xclusive Ballaz, while the goals for FC Hollywood were converted by Tyrique Tonge and Rick Gordon.

Both teams secured their spots in the championship decider by recording wins in the semi-finals.

FC Hollywood snatched a 2-1 victory against Hothead & Friends, while Xclusive Ballaz recorded a 2-0 victory over Nat Pan My Team (NPMT) in the semi-finals.

Xclusive Ballaz dominated the individual awards, which were presented to the top performers at the end of the competition.

Players of Xclusive Ballaz captured the awards for the best defender, midfielder, and striker.

Jomo Andrew was named the best defender, Lee-Andre Nicholas claimed the accolade for the best midfielder,

and their teammate Raheem Deterville captured the prize for the best striker.

Peter Dessey of FC Hollywood secured the best goalkeeper award.

Twelve teams contested the Gray's Green Community League, which was organized by the Empire Football Club.

The league was sponsored by the parliamentary representative for St. John's Rural West, Honourable Michael Joseph; Top Speed Construction; I Love Electrics; Justin Car Wash; and Smith's Trucking.



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Sports News

LeBron moves Philly up, but OKC and Spurs remain NBA favourites



Los Angeles Lakers' LeBron James, center left, goes up for the shot against Philadelphia 76ers' Joel Embiid, center right, during the second half of an NBA basketball game in Philadelphia on December 7, 2025. (AP)

NEW YORK (AP) -- The parity era in the NBA seems like it could continue. At least, that's what oddsmakers and bettors appear to believe after LeBron James' latest decision to join the Philadelphia 76ers.

New York's championship run last month capped a season that extended an unprecedented run of NBA parity, with eight different franchises winning titles in the last eight seasons — Toronto in 2019, James and the Los Angeles Lakers in 2020, Milwaukee in 2021, Golden State in 2022, Denver in 2023, Boston in 2024, Oklahoma City in 2025 and now the Knicks.

There's at least a reasonable chance now that the run of new champions will continue in 2027, with reigning Western Conference champion San Antonio, Minnesota, Detroit, Cleveland, Miami — and, of course, Phil-

adelphia now among the teams with the best odds right now of hoisting the Larry O'Brien Trophy next June.

James' decision moved Philadelphia into the upper tier of favorites — but not the highest tier.

Most major sportsbooks and prediction markets are clear: Teams are going to have to get through Oklahoma City and San Antonio to get out of the West. The Thunder, as of Sunday — and a lot will likely change in the next 10 months or so — would still be considered a slight favourite to win the NBA title in 2027, barely ahead of the Spurs.

That shouldn't be a surprise: The Thunder are led by two-time Most Valuable Player Shai Gilgeous-Alexander and have a proven championship core, while the Spurs have unanimous Defensive Player of the Year Victor

Wembanyama as the centerpiece of a young team that took huge strides in 2025-26 and should only get better.

This is the James impact: He's got Philadelphia right there with defending champion New York. The Knicks and 76ers have the third and fourth-best championship odds — in some order, depending on the site — according to most books and prediction markets.

The good news for the Knicks is that they are right where they were entering last season, not quite the favourites but ahead of just about everybody in the league when it comes to title odds.

The good news for the 76ers: They're going to have their best entering-the-season odds since probably 2019-20.

Some of the Celtics' decisions this summer — particularly the trading of Jaylen Brown to Philadelphia — have faced serious criticism. Bettors don't seem to mind, perhaps mindful of how the Celtics exceeded many expectations last season.

Boston is firmly the No. 5 choice right now according to most books and markets, not quite there with the Thunder, Spurs, Knicks and 76ers, but leading the rest of the pack.

Juergen Klopp starts Germany coach job with talk of resigning

Jürgen Klopp made a punchy start to his new job as Germany coach Friday, laying out red lines he'd consider resigning over, even before his turnaround effort with a squad which failed yet again at the World Cup.

In a combative first news conference, the ex-Liverpool manager warned the German media he'll quit if he believes they're intruding on his family's privacy.

He also hinted Germany could be his last job in coaching and admitted he hasn't been an avid follower of international games.

Klopp was the German federation's top target and now he's signed a contract through to the 2030 World Cup. At his presentation Friday, he said it was "a big honour" to take the job and signaled it could be his final role as coach.

Klopp said he would be prepared to leave without any severance pay if it doesn't work out, or if criticism becomes overwhelming, and threatened to resign if the media doesn't "leave my family in peace."

"Jürgen Klopp has no career after the national team," he said. "Ideally, this will be the highlight of my career, my life, my working life. I will put everything into it that I possibly can."

He replaces Julian Nagelsmann, who resigned amid heavy criticism after Germany's loss to Paraguay meant it failed to reach the last 16 of a men's World Cup for the third time in a row.

Klopp indicated he believed Nagelsmann and England's coach Thomas Tuchel had been treated unfairly in the media.

"I'm doing the job even though



Newly appointed head coach of the German national soccer team Juergen Klopp attends a news conference at the headquarters of the German Football Association DFB in Frankfurt, Germany, Friday, July 24, 2026. (AP)

I've heard how you treated Julian, although I've heard how England treats Tuchel," he said, without specifying what exactly he thought was the problem.

It is Klopp's first coaching job since he left Liverpool in 2024 citing fatigue. He said he was "recharged" in comments while in talks over the Germany job.

Klopp signaled he plans to make some surprising squad selections and said his mission isn't just to win games, but to bring back a buzz around the team.

The man known for thrilling "heavy metal football" at Liverpool, Klopp was Germany's preferred candidate as soon as Nagelsmann quit.

Over weeks of talks, the 59-year-old German — 20 years older than Nagelsmann — stayed in the United States as a World Cup pundit for a German-language broadcaster.

The federation also held talks with

the Red Bull group, where Klopp spent the last year and a half as "head of global soccer" advising its worldwide group of soccer clubs.

German federation president Bernd Neuendorf said there wouldn't be a typical release fee paid to Red Bull for Klopp. Instead, the federation pays one million euros (\$1.14 million) to a Red Bull-linked charity and has agreed to hold three national team games in the eastern city of Leipzig, where Red Bull backs the city's Bundesliga club team.

Klopp faces a tough introduction to his first national team job with four Nations League games in 11 days against the Netherlands, Greece and Serbia in late September and early October. The first major milestone will be the 2028 European Championship.

Germany hasn't won a knockout game at a World Cup since beating Argentina in the 2014 final.



Benna Boys lose opener to Mexico in CONCACAF U-20 Championship

Mexico's midfielder Santiago Sandoval, right, celebrates after scoring his team's third goal against Antigua and Barbuda national in the CONCACAF Under-20 Men's Championship at the Estadio Cuauhtemoc in Puebla, Mexico, on Friday, July 24, 2026.

Antigua and Barbuda's Benna Boys got off to a losing start in their campaign in the finals of the CONCACAF Under-20 Men's Championship in Puebla, México, on Friday.

The young Antiguan under-20 national team was beaten 3-0 by host and defending champions Mexico in their Group B opener at the Estadio Cuauhtemoc in Puebla, Mexico.

Hugo Camberos opened the scoring for Mexico in the 12th minute by converting a penalty kick, which was awarded by VAR after Antiguan defender Ivan Grant put in a strong tackle that made contact with the ball before connecting with the Mexican attacking player.

The Mexicans doubled their lead just 10 minutes later when **Santiago**

Sandoval's terrific through ball found Camberos, who slid it across the box for **Francisco Valenzuela** to tap it in.

Mexico added one more before half-time as Sandoval pounced on a poor clearance to score his second goal of the match in the second minute of added time in the first half.

The **2026 CONCACAF Under-20 Championship** kicked off with **Costa Rica** earning a one-nil victory against **Guatemala** in the opening Group B encounter on Friday.

Keyner Hernández broke the deadlock to give Costa Rica the lead in the 77th minute, with a long-range strike from the second-half-substitute slotting in at the bottom-left corner.

Antigua and Barbuda's next match in Group B will be against Guatemala

on Monday at 7 pm. Mexico will continue their title defense against Costa Rica in their second match on Monday at 10 pm.

The young Benna Boys will face Costa Rica in their final group stage match on Thursday, July 30.

Of the Caribbean nations present, only Jamaica, Cuba, and Haiti stand alongside Antigua and Barbuda.

Cuba is competing in Group A alongside El Salvador, Haiti, and the United States, while Jamaica is contesting Group C alongside Canada, Honduras, and Panama.

The tournament is a qualifier to the FIFA Under-20 World Cup, which will be jointly hosted by Azerbaijan and Uzbekistan in 2027.