

FRIDAY 14TH AUGUST 2026 | VOLUME 10 ISSUE 14 | WWW.POINTVILLE.AG

Independence 2026 Programme of Activities Formally Launched

Story on page 2



Left to right: Designer of the 2026 Independence Logo, Gamal Goodwin, Creative Industries Minister, Dwayne George, Permanent Secretary, Dr. Clarence Pilgrim and 2026 Calypso Monarch, Young Destroyer

Photos courtesy: Wayne Mariette

Minister of Creative Industries Urges Nation to ‘Remember and Reimagine’ During Independence Celebrations



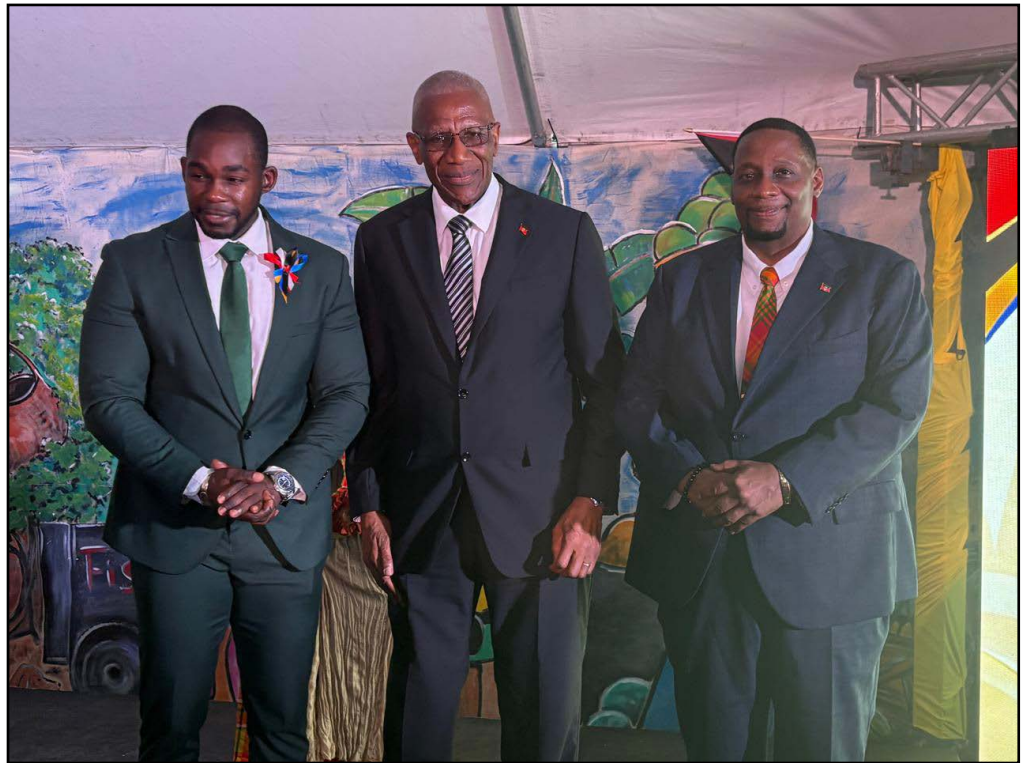
Minister of Sports and Creative Industries Dwayne George is appealing to Antiguan and Barbudans at home and throughout the diaspora to actively participate in the country's 45th Anniversary of Independence, saying the milestone should be a celebration of national identity, achievement and the country's aspirations for the future.

Launching the 2026 Independence celebrations on the lawns of Government House last evening, George urged citizens to embrace all things Antiguan and Barbudan and in so doing, remind the younger generation about the journey it took to this stage.

"I invite every citizen to become an active participant in this celebration," George said.

"Fly our flag proudly. Support our athletes. Support our artists, musicians and cultural practitioners. Support our creative entrepreneurs. Participate in our national activities. Teach our children the story of the journey that brought us here."

Minister George describes the anniversary as an important national milestone representing decades of



challenges overcome, opportunities embraced, sacrifices made and achievements recorded, adding it provides an opportunity for the country to both remember and reimagine.

"We must remember the struggles, sacrifices and achievements that brought us here. But we must also

have the confidence to reimagine what Antigua and Barbuda can become," he said.

The central idea behind this year's celebrations is Renaissance, which the Minister said represents rebirth, renewal, awakening and rediscovering the country's possibilities.



He stressed, however, that Antigua and Barbuda's Renaissance must be firmly rooted in its own identity.

"Our renaissance cannot be borrowed. It must be authentically Antiguan and Barbudan," George said,

pointing to the country's history, culture, traditions and people as the foundation for its future.

The official theme for the 45th Anniversary of Independence is "Renaissance: Rooted in Pride, Bounded by

Prosperity for All."

George said national pride must go beyond celebrating the country's culture and achievements and should translate into meaningful action.

"Pride must produce purpose. Purpose must produce action. And action must produce progress," he declared.

He told the audience that progress must be reflected in the lives of ordinary citizens, with economic growth creating opportunities, development strengthening communities and the creative industries providing pathways for talent to become sustainable enterprises and livelihoods.

He also emphasised the need to create opportunities for young people, entrepreneurs and workers.

During the launch, the official visual identity for the 45th anniversary was also unveiled.

The logo features the Frigate Bird and Antigua Black Pineapple, which George described as powerful symbols of national identity.




ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA
45TH INDEPENDENCE
CELEBRATIONS
SCHEDULE OF EVENTS



Renaissance

ROOTED IN PRIDE, BOUNDED BY PROSPERITY FOR ALL

Date	Event	Time
THURSDAY 22 OCTOBER	National Youth Rally, Special Drills and Cheerleading Competition Sir Vivian Richards Stadium	8:30 AM
SUNDAY 25 OCTOBER	National Food Fair Sir Vivian Richards Stadium	7:30 AM
	Independence Church Service Church TBC	4:00 PM
	National Schools' Panorama Sir Vivian Richards Stadium	6:00 PM
MONDAY 26 OCTOBER	National Heroes Day Wreath Laying Ceremony Heroes Park - Sir Sydney Walling Highway	10:00 AM
	National Honours Award and Reception Governor General Gardens	6:00 PM
	National Independence Business Decor Competition Starts: October 26 Ends: October 29	
TUESDAY 27 OCTOBER	Festival of Choirs St. Anthony's Secondary School	8:00 PM
WEDNESDAY 28 OCTOBER	Schools' Independence Programs Schools Across the State	
	Golden Age Gala - Celebrating Life Various Communities in Antigua and Barbuda	
THURSDAY 29 OCTOBER	Schools' Mural Reveal Antigua Recreation Grounds - South Wall	9:30 AM
	Barbuda Day Activities	
	Evening of Drama Multipurpose Cultural Centre	7:00 PM
	Independence Calypso Competition Green Lounge - Cedar Valley	8:00 PM
FRIDAY 30 OCTOBER	National Dress and Flag Day	
SATURDAY 31 OCTOBER	Distinctly Antiguan and Barbudan Festival Botanical Gardens	12:00 PM
SUNDAY 1 NOVEMBER	Independence Flag Ceremony Barbuda	7:00 AM
	Independence Ceremonial Parade Sir Vivian Richards Stadium	5:45 PM

SCHEDULE IS TENTATIVE AND SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Government Says New Prison Decision ‘Not Reactionary’ to Rising Crime

The Gaston Browne administration is insisting that its decision to construct a new prison facility in the Potworks Dam area is not a reactionary response to the recent increase in gun-related crime, saying plans for a modern correctional facility have been on the government’s agenda for some time.

Director General of Communications Maurice Merchant made the clarification during Thursday’s Post-Cabinet Press Briefing, insisting that the decision predates the current crime situation.

“It has been something on the agenda of this administration. The time is now, not only because you may want to associate it with the crime situation, but because, as you said, it has been a longstanding issue with the overcrowding at the current facility,” Merchant explained.

The approved modular facility, which will be on the site of the former Prison Farm, will be developed in phases, with the first designed to accommodate approximately 150 inmates and is expected to establish the foundation for the eventual transition away from the existing facility located on Coronation Road.

Merchant disclosed that the Government is already considering different financing arrangements for the project and has identified individuals and organisations that could potentially assist with construction.

“The government has identified a number of individuals whom they believe can assist both regionally, locally and internationally,” Merchant said.

“And that’s how government will



Director of Communications in the Office of the Prime Minister, Maurice Merchant

be moving forward to the construction of this facility.”

He indicated that further details on the financing and construction arrangements could be available as early as next week.

Modular prison facilities are not new and are utilised in many developed countries. The former Keir Starmer administration in Britain announced last year that approximately “5,000 new prison places are under construction including in the North West, South East, South West and East of England as part of Government action to keep the public safe and ensure jails never run out of space again”. They are referred to as Rapid Deployment Cells, “modular units designed to quickly add capacity”.

According to the Government of Antigua and Barbuda, the new prison facility is one component of its wider national security strategy, reiterating its call for a “frontal attack” on crime, and urging law enforcement agencies to use available resources to identify, apprehend and prosecute individuals involved

in criminal activity.

The administration also intends to strengthen the capacity of the justice and correctional systems to deal with serious and repeat offenders while ensuring that persons lawfully committed to custody can be housed in appropriate conditions.

Merchant also defended the choice of Potworks Dam as the location for the new facility, pointing to the availability of land and the area’s existing connection to correctional operations.

He dismissed concerns about the distance of the location from St. John’s, noting that Antigua’s relatively small size makes transportation manageable.

“It takes less than half an hour to get to most places in Antigua and Barbuda,” he said.

As a result, Merchant argued that transporting food, supplies and other necessities to the facility should not present a significant logistical challenge.

Cabinet has also stressed that modernisation of the prison system must go beyond simply creating additional cells.

The Government intends for the new correctional system to incorporate rehabilitation and skills-development programmes aimed at reducing repeat offending and preparing inmates for productive reintegration into society.

The phased approach will allow the Government to expand capacity as required while gradually working toward the eventual closure of the ageing St. John’s facility.

Antigua and Barbuda Co-hosts Artificial Intelligence Summit at the United Nations in Geneva.

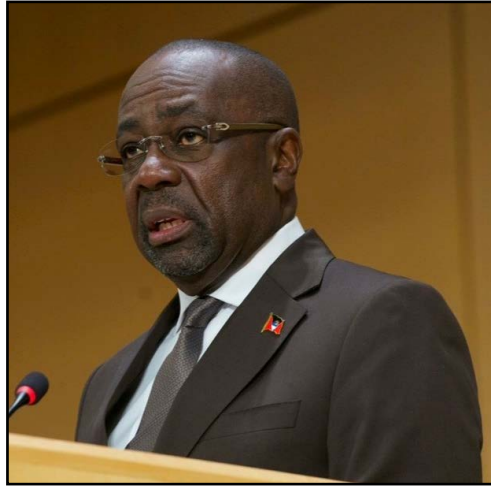
Antigua and Barbuda, in collaboration with the AI for Developing Countries Forum (AIFOD), convened its annual AI Summit at the United Nations in Geneva, Switzerland, on 12th August 2026, under the theme: “Small Takes the Lead: The Future Belongs to the Many, Not the Few.”

The Summit is a gathering of governments, international organisations, policymakers, experts, and leaders from the AI industry to examine how artificial intelligence is reshaping international affairs and to explore how smaller states can move from being primarily users and clients of emerging technologies to becoming active architects of the global AI landscape.

The Honourable E. P. Chet Greene, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Immigration, with ministerial responsibility for Artificial Intelligence, during the summit’s opening delivered the keynote address under the theme “Small Takes the Lead: From Clients to Architects of Intelligence.”

In his address, Minister Greene reaffirmed Antigua and Barbuda’s strong support for empowering small states to become “architects of the intelligence that will define our collective future”. He called for greater digital equality and meaningful representation in global AI decision-making, emphasizing that “wherever the future of AI is being written, the Global South must be present.”

Minister Greene underscored the importance of collective action as a pathway to AI sovereignty. He noted that “fifty nations of the Global South are prepared to not merely adopt a declaration but to build a permanent platform for collective negotiation.” He further stressed that “collective action is not merely strategy, it is solidarity.”



The Honourable E. P. Chet Greene, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Immigration, with ministerial responsibility for Artificial Intelligence

nectivity is disrupted, and supported by local expertise. He called for international support not as an act of charity, but as an investment in global resilience, emphasizing that “a resilient SIDS is a resilient world.”

Opening Day Two of the Summit, Joy-Marie King, Director of International Trade, addressed the strategic importance of strengthening the position of small nations within the global AI ecosystem.

King emphasised that effective participation in the global AI ecosystem requires small states to leverage collective action, strengthen their



The Minister also highlighted the particular importance of AI sovereignty for Small Island Developing States (SIDS), describing it as a matter of “survival.” He called for greater prioritisation of AI applications that can strengthen resilience, including early-warning systems, disaster response, coastal monitoring, and the blue economy.

He stressed that these critical systems “must be ours”—locally owned and governed, aligned with national laws, capable of operating when con-

technical and negotiating capacities, and develop strategic partnerships with academia, industry leaders, and international entities.

Her remarks also highlighted the importance of **regional cooperation and joint diplomatic platforms** in ensuring that small states are not merely responding to technological developments, but are strategically positioned to influence the **standards, frameworks, and partnerships** that will shape and govern the

Local News



The Honourable E. P. Chet Greene, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Immigration; Miss Joy-Marie King, Director of International Trade; and Miss Andrea Jacobs, Crown Counsel and National AI Focal Point.

future of AI.

The AI Summit aims at providing an important platform for govern-

ments, international organisations, policymakers, experts and AI industry players to examine how artificial intelligence is reshaping inter-

national affairs and to consider how smaller states can move from being primarily users and clients of emerging technologies to becoming active architects of the global AI landscape.

Antigua and Barbuda's leadership, through the Hon E. P Chet Greene reflects its commitment to ensuring that the perspectives and priorities of Small Island Developing States (SIDS) are represented in global discussions on artificial intelligence, digital transformation, innovation and emerging technologies.

Antigua and Barbuda's delegation comprises of The Honourable E. P. Chet Greene, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Immigration; Miss Joy-Marie King, Director of International Trade; and Miss Andrea Jacobs, Crown Counsel and National AI Focal Point. The summit is slated to conclude on 14th August.

Midweek Deals

TUESDAYS / WEDNESDAYS

-Burger
-Medium Drink
\$19.99

-Leg and Thigh
-Biscuit
-Medium Drink
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Sir Rodney: Independence Was Never Meant To Be A finished Product

Governor General, Sir Rodney Williams, says Independence was never meant to be a finished product handed down on November 1, 1981, but rather, Independence was like an assignment with every generation getting its share.

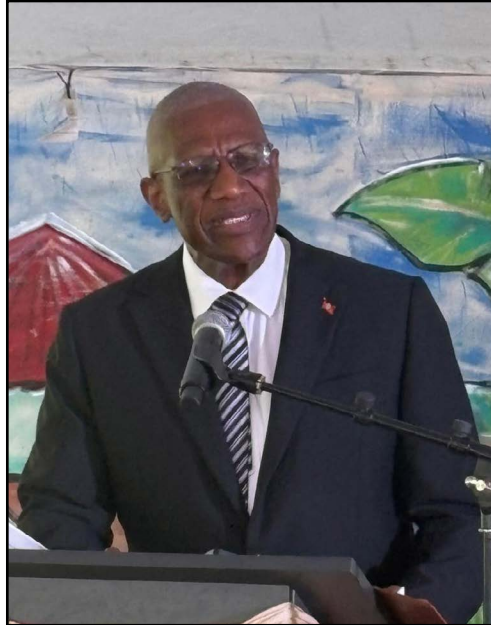
Speaking at the official launch of the programme of activities marking the 45th anniversary of Independence, Sir Rodney said every generation has to decide what to do with the share they inherited.

He noted that at 45, Antigua and Barbuda can no longer be considered as a young nation, but neither is it an old one.

“Forty-five is an interesting age. It is old enough to have memories and young enough still to have dreams. Old enough to know that progress is never inevitable and young enough to believe that tomorrow can still be transformed. So perhaps, the question for this anniversary is not dimply: how far have we come, the more important one is what have we done with what our forebears have given to us,” he remarked.

Also addressing the opening was the permanent secretary in the Ministry of Creative Industries, Ambassador Dr. Clarence Pilgrim who noted that the significance of the 45th anniversary of Independence celebrations goes beyond counting the years.

“Forty-five years of Independence is worthy of celebration. But the value of an anniversary lies not merely in counting the years. It lies in understanding what those years have taught us and how they should guide those still ahead.



Governor General, Sir Rodney Williams

“Our theme, “Renaissance Rooted in Pride, Bounded by Prosperity for All,” speaks to that responsibility: renewal grounded in confidence, heritage and shared purpose. Our national journey gives us many examples,” he observed.

Noting that public service gives a nation continuity; culture gives it identity; and achievement gives it confidence, Ambassador Pilgrim recalled many of the cultural practices of an earlier time and how helped shape not just him, but an entire generation of Antiguan and Barbudans.



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Police Intensify Crime-Fighting Operations Across Several Communities



The Royal Police Force of Antigua and Barbuda continues to intensify its crime-fighting efforts across the country, with a series of coordinated intelligence-led operations resulting in several arrests and the seizure of a firearm, ammunition, cannabis, and other items of interest.

On Wednesday, August 12, members of the Criminal Investigations Department Task Force and K-9 Unit executed a search warrant at a farm in the Parham area.

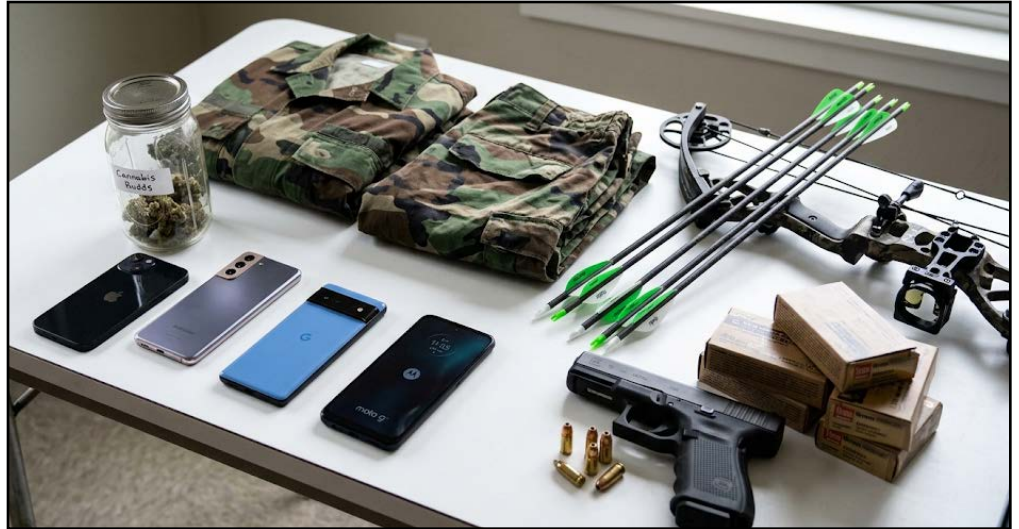
During the search, officers discovered and seized one firearm with several rounds of matching ammunition, four cellular phones, and a bow with several arrows.

Two persons who were present at the location were arrested on suspicion of unlawful possession of a firearm and ammunition and taken into police custody.

In a separate incident, the police executed a search warrant at a residence in Parham and found a quantity of cannabis and a quantity of camouflage clothing.

Two persons were arrested on suspicion of possession of cannabis and taken into custody.

The police also executed a search warrant at a property in Jennings and seized a quantity of cannabis and camouflage clothing. One person was sub-



sequently arrested on suspicion of unlawful possession of cannabis.

The Police Administration said these operations are reflective of the Force's increasingly proactive, intelligence-driven and coordinated approach to confronting serious and organised criminal activity.

The Royal Police Force of Antigua and Barbuda remains particularly focused on the proliferation and unlawful use of firearms, violent crime, drug-related offences, and persons be-

lieved to be involved in serious criminal activity.

The public should therefore expect to see an increased police presence and further targeted operations in communities across Antigua and Barbuda.

Anyone with information concerning illegal firearms or other criminal activity is asked to contact the Criminal Investigations Department at 462-3913 or 462-3914, Crimestoppers at 800-TIPS (8477), or the nearest police station.

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With the assistance from: Dr. BRIAN COHEN, Dr. DANIEL CARUSO,
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Youth Week Outreach Brings Support to Communities Across

The Department of Youth Affairs, continued its observance of National Youth Week 2026 with a successful community outreach initiative that delivered essential supplies to residents across Antigua.

Youth officers visited Bolans, Jennings, Liberta, All Saints, Johnsons, Willikies, Freeman's Village, Clare Hall and several other communities, engaging residents and distributing electronic devices, stationery, adult diapers, menstrual products and other useful items.

The outreach formed part of the Ministry's efforts to take Youth Week beyond organised events and directly into communities, where young people could demon-



strate compassion, leadership and a commitment to national service.

The activity brought excitement



and encouragement to beneficiaries, while providing practical assistance to individuals and fami-



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lies with varying needs. Residents warmly welcomed the youth officers and expressed appreciation for the donations and personal interaction.

The Ministry commended the participating officers for successfully executing the outreach and ensuring that residents in communities across the island benefited from the Youth Week initiative.

The activity reflected the theme of National Youth Week 2026, “Building Intentionally: Youth in Motion,” by placing young people at the centre of positive action and meaningful community engagement.

The Ministry believes that youth development must include opportunities for young people to serve others, understand the needs of their communities and contribute directly to improving the lives of



vulnerable residents.

National Youth Week continues with additional activities intended to celebrate the achievements, talents and potential of young people while promoting youth participation in national development.

The Ministry of Social and Urban Transformation encourages members of the public to continue supporting the remaining activities and joining in the celebration of Antigua and Barbuda’s youth.



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ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA

POLICE WEEK OF **ACTIVITIES**

"United in Duty, with Technology to Serve our Community"

SEPTEMBER 2026



SUNDAY

06

SEPTEMBER

CHURCH SERVICE

📍 Spring Garden Moravian
St. John's Street

🕒 8am



WEDNESDAY

09

SEPTEMBER

SICK AND SHUT IN

📍 Police Head Quarters

🕒 10am



FRIDAY

11

SEPTEMBER

CULTURAL FOOD FAIR

📍 Rising Sun

🕒 10 am Until



SATURDAY

12

SEPTEMBER

COMMUNITY DAY

📍 Most Villages

🕒 10am



*One Force. One Community.
Stronger Together.*

Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda responds to the Joint Statement by the Caribbean Heads of Judiciary

The Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda, The Right Honourable Gaston Browne, has responded to a public statement issued on 12 August by the Caribbean Heads of Judiciary. The Prime Minister's response speaks for itself. It is published in full below:

"I have taken careful note of the Joint Statement issued on 12 August 2026, by the Caribbean Heads of Judiciary. I respect the constitutional office held by each signatory and I reaffirm, without qualification, the importance of an independent and impartial judiciary.

Judicial independence is essential to democratic government. However, it does not place judicial decisions or the administration of justice beyond reasoned public criticism. Nor does it require an elected Government to remain silent when sentencing outcomes raise serious and recurring questions about public safety, legislative policy and public confidence.

My remarks of 10 August were made in the context of grave concern, expressed by law enforcement and the people of Antigua and Barbuda in general, about firearm violence and statutory rape, in what they regard as unduly lenient sentences in some serious cases.

As Prime Minister, I have a solemn duty to safeguard the welfare of the people of Antigua and Barbuda.

My remarks did not direct the outcome of any case, seek to reopen a decided case or invite anyone to disregard an order of the court.

The Heads of Judiciary have treated my language as though it represented executive instructions against a judge.

It did not.

It was a last resort warning to bring attention to the judicial hierarchy, that if they fail to address the indiscretion and deliberate disregard of their members for the legislation on serious fire-



Prime Minister Gaston Browne

arms crimes, which provides for up to 15 years custodial sentencing; then our government may be forced to use other remedies to protect the citizenry.

To remove all doubt, there has never been any request or action by my government to remove, or reassign or deport any member of the judiciary.

Questions concerning the tenure, assignment or conduct of a judicial officer are governed by the Constitution and the law, and those arrangements will be respected.

That clarification neither withdraws nor dilutes my criticism of sentencing outcomes and institutional performance; it makes clear that my criticism is not directed at the constitutional security or personal independence of any judge.

Further, I do not accept that forceful criticism of sentencing practice is, by itself, an attack on judicial independence.

My Government has recently received a renewed and substantial parliamen-

tary mandate, having included in the manifesto placed before the electorate, a pledge to tackle firmly gun crimes, violence against women and sexual offences against children.

That mandate does not place the Executive above the law. However, it imposes a duty to protect the people, to uphold public order and to speak plainly when the public interest requires it.

Similarly, Judicial independence carries a responsibility for openness, consistency, competence and continuous institutional improvement.

The Joint Statement says that an appeal is the only lawful and legitimate way to address an unduly lenient sentence.

That is not accurate.

An appeal is a proper means of challenging or correcting the sentence in an individual case.

However, it is not the only lawful means by which a democratic society may examine systemic failure in the dispensation of justice.

Antigua and Barbuda has provided a right of appeal by the Director of Public Prosecutions against sentence since the Criminal Procedure (Amendment) Act 2004, and that power has been successfully exercised.

Whether to appeal is a matter for the constitutionally independent Director of Public Prosecutions.

It should be acknowledged that an appeal in one case, cannot by itself answer broader questions about sentencing patterns, the application of statutory penalties and sentencing guidelines, repeat offending, criminal justice, inordinate delays, rehabilitation or co-ordination among police, prosecutors, courts and correctional services.

Parliament may legislate, the Executive may propose policy and provide

resources, and the Judiciary may interpret and apply the law.

Reasoned public criticism and structured engagement among these institutions are also entirely consistent with the separation of powers.

This is not an intellectual or theoretical debate.

We are facing a serious problem. Crime and violence was deemed as a public health crisis by CARICOM heads. If not addressed urgently and concurrently by coordinated efforts, involving all branches of government, our region could descend into uncontrolled criminality, thereby undermining development.

Firearm violence threatens the right of our people to live in peace and without fear.

It harms victims and families, burdens law-enforcement agencies, weakens confidence in public institutions and places at risk the secure social and economic environment on which investment, employment and tourism depend.

Those consequences require urgency from every arm of the State.

Sentencing must take account of the governing statute, applicable guidelines and appellate decisions, guilty pleas, aggravating and mitigating factors, antecedents, time spent on remand and the totality principle.

The answer is to examine the evidence rigorously, not to dismiss the concern before it is examined.

For that reason, Wednesday, 12 August 2026 - I wrote to the Honourable Chief Justice of the Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court, Her Ladyship Margaret Price Findlay, proposing the immediate establishment of an independent committee to review sentencing for firearm and other serious violent offences, repeat offending and the operation of the wider criminal justice system in Antigua and Barbuda.

The review would analyse a defined body of sentencing data, identify any material divergence between legisla-

tive policy and sentencing outcomes, examine the causes, and recommend practical reforms.

I have suggested that the Honourable Mr Justice Adrian Saunders, former President of the Caribbean Court of Justice, be invited to chair the committee, subject to his willingness. I have also consulted the Right Honourable Sir Dennis Byron and the Honourable Mr Justice Godfrey Smith SC, the CARICOM High-Level Representative on Law and Criminal Justice.

They are both prepared to assist the committee, including by making available the considerable body of work already undertaken by Justice Smith and others.

This is a firm, constitutional and evidence-led response to a matter of urgent public importance.

If the Heads of Judiciary support constructive and collaborative engagement, I invite them to support this

initiative and to help ensure that it proceeds without delay.

Judicial independence and institutional accountability are not opposing principles.

Our Government seeks no control over the decision of any court.

It does seek a criminal justice system that is lawful, proportionate, transparent, consistent and effective in protecting the public.

Finally, I remind you that pervasive lenient sentences without extenuating circumstances, serve no useful purpose but to undermine public safety and confidence in the judiciary.

The people of Antigua and Barbuda are entitled to both an independent judiciary and a justice system that responds proactively and credibly to serious violent crime.

My Government will continue to work for both”.




 MINISTRY OF
 SOCIAL AND URBAN
 TRANSFORMATION

NATIONAL CHILD PROTECTION

TOWN HALL MEETING

A national conversation to **protect our children**,
strengthen families and build safer communities.

TUESDAY
25TH AUGUST 2026
6:30 PM

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EVERY COMMUNITY
**DESERVES
SAFETY.**

Haiti – Stop the money flow to Organised Crime



By Sir Ronald Sanders

Haiti's plight must not be forgotten because it is no longer a regular feature of international headlines. The suffering has not diminished. Between January and early June 2026, at least 2,310 people were killed, 1,106 were injured and 99 were kidnapped, according to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). It also reported that 699 women and girls were victims of sexual violence, and that almost 1.47 million people had been displaced within Haiti by May.

These figures should disturb the conscience of every nation. They also

point to a truth that governments must now confront. Force alone cannot restore order. The gangs' money, weapons and trafficking routes must be cut off, and those who finance, supply and protect them must be pursued.

Armed gangs retain effective control over large parts of Port-au-Prince. They have also pushed into important roads, ports, coastal areas and commercial routes. Their operations extend beyond terrorising communities. They control movement, extort money, seize goods and impose their own authority where the Haitian State is absent or too weak to resist them.

In July, UNODC put the matter plainly before the United Nations Security Council. Haiti's crisis, it said, should not be regarded as a security crisis alone. It is also a governance crisis sustained by organised crime.

A security crisis might be answered largely by superior force. A governance crisis driven by organised crime requires much more. It requires action against extortion, kidnapping, arms and narcotics trafficking, money laundering, corruption and the people who provide political protection. It also requires courts, prosecutors, prisons and police institutions capable of enforcing the law.

No one should misunderstand this argument. The United Nations-authorised Gang Suppression Force is

necessary. The Haitian authorities requested it, and people living under gang rule cannot be left defenceless. Yet, by July, just over 1,000 personnel had been deployed. That is 4,500 less than the approved number. The Force requires the personnel, financing, equipment and logistical support necessary to carry out its mandate.

But the Force cannot do everything. It may recover a road, a port or a police station. It cannot, by itself, stop new weapons arriving, identify those laundering the proceeds of crime or prosecute the people who finance and protect the gangs. If those networks remain untouched, gang leaders will be replaced, weapons will be replenished and lost territory will be reclaimed.

This was the concern I raised as the Ambassador of Antigua and Barbuda at the OAS General Assembly in Panama in June. We called for coordinated hemispheric action to disrupt drug trafficking, illicit financial flows and the cross-border movement of weapons and criminals. We also urged governments to identify, sanction and prosecute those who finance or materially support the gangs, whether they operate inside Haiti or beyond its borders. UNODC's subsequent assessment reinforced the urgency of that position.

Haiti's record of financial enforcement is particularly troubling. UNODC reports that the country's financial intelligence unit received 1,254 sus-



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picious transaction reports between 2019 and 2024. Only 19 were sent to the judicial authorities. None resulted in a conviction. The United Nations sanctions list for Haiti contains only nine individuals and two entities, both of them gangs. Canada, the United States, the United Kingdom and the European Union have sanctioned a wider group of political and economic figures. Even so, the wider networks have not yet been systematically investigated and punished.

The OAS General Assembly has called for intelligence-sharing and customs cooperation to stop weapons and money reaching the gangs. It has also supported SECURE-Haiti and closer coordination with the United Nations and CARICOM.

CARICOM continues to support the Gang Suppression Force, provide humanitarian assistance and encourage political dialogue through its Eminent Persons Group. CARICOM IMPACS and the Caribbean Firearms Roadmap have also improved regional cooperation against firearms trafficking.

However, these efforts remain divided among security assistance, political dialogue, humanitarian relief and weapons control. There is still no clearly identified body bringing together the financial intelligence officers, customs authorities, coast guards, firearms investigators, anti-narcotics agencies and prosecutors needed to pursue the networks as a whole.

What is required now is a practical ar-

rangement joining the Haitian authorities, the OAS, CARICOM and UNODC in a common effort against the transnational organised criminal networks sustaining the gangs. Its work should combine financial intelligence, customs information, firearms tracing, maritime surveillance, anti-narcotics activity and prosecutorial cooperation. It should map financial and commercial links, trace seized weapons and ammunition, scrutinise suspicious cargo and maritime movements, prepare evidence for sanctions, support joint investigations, and pursue the freezing and lawful recovery of criminal assets.

Source and transit countries have a particular duty. The weapons and ammunition that sustain Haiti's gangs are overwhelmingly drawn from external supply chains. Haiti cannot police cargo controls at foreign ports, trace money through foreign financial centres or prevent diversion before weapons enter illicit supply chains. Outbound cargo screening, tighter oversight of shippers, systematic weapons tracing and investigation of diverted legal purchases cannot be left to Haiti alone.

Sanctions should not end with the men who hold the guns. Where reliable evidence establishes involvement, they should also reach the people who buy the weapons, arrange their shipment, conceal criminal proceeds or use political and commercial influence to protect the gangs.

Such action must be lawful and precise. Financial measures should be

directed at identified persons, businesses and transactions, with proper safeguards and due process.

While external assistance is vital in this process, Haitian institutions must be bolstered. Haiti's specialised judicial units for financial crimes must become fully operational. Investigators, prosecutors, judges, prison authorities and anti-corruption bodies need protection, resources and technical support. Financial intelligence must produce investigations; investigations must produce cases; and convictions should lead to the recovery of criminal assets.

The problem is no longer a lack of diagnosis. UNODC has provided it. The OAS and CARICOM have recognised important parts of it. What is still lacking is coordinated execution. Force can create the time and space in which Haiti might recover. But if the people who finance, arm, transport and protect the gangs remain untouched, the Haitian people will be made to endure the same cycle again.

The international community must therefore act decisively to disrupt the financial network that illegally sustains the gangs. Stopping the violence requires stopping the money that empowers it.

(The writer is Antigua and Barbuda's Ambassador to the US and the OAS. He is also Chancellor of the University of Guyana. The views expressed are his own)



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Regional News

Caricom education ministers meeting in Guyana

Caribbean Community (Caricom) education ministers began a two-day meeting in Guyana on Wednesday amid concerns as to whether or not the education system is providing every learner with the foundation and confidence required to think critically and challenge the status quo.

Guyana's education minister Sonia Parag, who is chairing the meeting being held under the theme 'Educating for life, purpose and Caribbean progress,' said the theme calls for considering education beyond the acquisition of knowledge or the preparation of children to succeed at examinations.

"It challenges us to consider whether our education systems are giving every learner the foundation and confidence required to think critically, challenge the status quo, and ultimately, the ability to adapt to a constantly changing world," Parag said.

Parag said that education skills in the current environment must also include all forms of learning, such as technical and vocational education, apprenticeships, industry-based training, and talent development.

The 52nd meeting of the Council for Human and Social Development on Education will deliberate on several matters including micro-credentialing, assessments across the region, enhancing the mathematics programme for primary and secondary schools, and advancing teachers, teaching and the teaching profession in the Community.

Caribbean Community (Caricom) Secretary-General, Dr Carla Barnett said ministers would be aware that there is a growing demand for tech-



nical, vocational and digital skills in the region, as she placed emphasis on technical and vocational education and training (TVET).

"TVET is, therefore, once again being seen as a strategic investment in the Region's resilience and competitiveness. It develops skills essential to advancing digital transformation, and enabling the transition to a green and climate-resilient economy, as well as driving the innovation and productivity that underpin sustainable economic growth," she said.

Barnett said that as Caricom seeks to respond to the increasingly complex and rapidly evolving global environment, it is becoming ever more apparent that the education sector must be able to equip learners of all ages with the competencies and capabilities required to thrive personally and contribute meaningfully to national and regional development.

"Education, as we know, is far more than the acquisition of knowledge. A good education also prepares persons to lead meaningful lives, contribute to their communities, and shape the future for generations to come," she said.

Barnett said that the agenda before

the meeting is intended to support the objective of nurturing lifelong learners and developing critical thinkers who are adaptable, digitally competent and creative problem-solvers, and who are active contributors to national and regional development.

"Caricom has built a strong regional architecture for skills development. Our qualifications frameworks and the Caribbean Vocational Qualifications (CVQs), promote common standards, competency-based certification and facilitate the free movement of skilled workers. Through the Caribbean Association of National Training Agencies (CANTA), we have been strengthening collaboration and quality assurance across national training systems, while the Caribbean Examinations Council has expanded its coverage to include technical and vocational education," Barnett said.

She said together with the University of the West Indies' growing focus on professional certification and industry engagement, these institutions are working to build the skilled workforce needed for the Caribbean's future competitiveness. (CMC)

U.S. eyes ports, road, housing contracts in Guyana – Deputy Secretary of State



The United States (U.S.) Deputy Secretary of State Christopher Landau has disclosed that American companies are expected to compete for opportunities in infrastructure, including ports, roads and housing as the country look to deepen its involvement in Guyana's economic development.

Landau made the remarks during a visit to Georgetown, where he met with President Irfaan Ali and discussed economic development, security and counter-narcotics cooperation between Washington and Georgetown.

Speaking after his meeting with President Ali, Landau highlighted that Guyana is at a stage of development where infrastructure is needed to support further economic growth. He noted, "I think the two areas that we focused on today with President Ali are the economic area where Guyana is at a stage in development where it needs infrastructure as the foundation for further economic growth."

He also said discussions with President Ali covered projects across the country, including Berbice, Lethem and the Demerara region.

Landau underscored that Guyana's energy resources could be leveraged to support development in other sectors. "It has obviously tremendous value resources in terms of energy, which is the foundation of all economic development and we want to partner with Guyana to leverage those resources into a whole variety of economic development in many areas," Landau said.

The U.S. official, who was accompanied by American businesses during his visit, said that areas being considered include ports, roads, commercial development, sporting facilities and housing.

"We want to see ports that allow goods to come in, roads that allow those goods to be transported throughout the country and the region. We'd like to see more stores and stadiums and all the things that the people of Guyana want, including

housing," he said.

The Deputy Secretary of State also highlighted Guyana's strategic importance to the U.S. adding, "The United States is here to say we want to be part of the story of Guyana's future development and prosperity."

Landau also underscored that there are many areas the two countries can collaborate to improve the quality of life for Guyanese. He described Guyana as a key strategic partner for the U.S. and said Washington was eager to support the country's development. "We see Guyana as a key strategic partner, and really I am here to signal that the United States is very eager to partner with Guyana and that we have really identified Guyana as one of the major up-and-coming countries of the world at this point in time," he said.

Moreover, he also spoke about the memorandum of understanding the two countries signed on security and counter-narcotics cooperation. He noted that the agreement was aimed at strengthening efforts to combat organised crime and drug trafficking in the region.

"Organised crime has been increasing in this area. This is a tricky neighbourhood, and the United States faces the same security threats from these organised criminal groups as does Guyana," he said. Landau added that Washington wants to ensure that criminal groups and drug smugglers do not establish roots in Guyana.

Landau's visit follows the announcement by the U.S. Department of War that it has struck an US\$85.5M equity investment deal to acquire and expand a bauxite mine in Guyana, part of a broader effort by Washington to break China's grip on critical mineral supply chains. (Kaieteur News)

Regional News

MV Barima tragedy... Paper trail contradicts Edghill's claims as records show repeated warnings before disaster

A paper trail of internal maintenance logs, stamped requisitions, and urgent technical reports spanning nearly a year has exposed as false statements made by Minister of Public Works Juan Edghill, confirming that maritime authorities were repeatedly warned of systemic mechanical failures prior to the July 18 disaster that claimed over 100 lives.

According to the Department of Public Information (DPI), Minister Edghill, during a press briefing on July 20, dismissed allegations that the vessel was unfit for sea, asserting, "There was no report of any kind that suggested the vessel was unseaworthy. It was in line for dry docking in keeping with the schedule."

Screengrab of the reported issues on the MV Barima developed within the first quarter of this year by Shore Chief Engineer, Corwin Stephen.

However, official internal correspondence sent directly to the Chief Mechanical Engineer (CME) and the Transport and Harbours Department (T&HD) Marine Office in Kingston tells a drastically different story. A review of the records identified 20 complaints of engine-related issues and eight generator-related failures, all stamped and signed by the Shore Chief Engineer and the vessel's captain, and addressed to the Marine Superintendent.

In the wake of these disclosures, Kaieteur News understands that maritime authorities convened an emergency meeting Wednesday morning. Despite the clear paper trail, there has been no official acknowledgment of the reports by the Ministry, even as leaked monthly documents compiled by Corwin Stephen during the first quarter of 2026 reveal that critical defects were routinely left ignored.

Among the unaddressed failures documented in official logs was an ongoing issue from January 2024, in which

Serial No.	Defects on the M.V. MA LISHA	Date Defects Occurred	Job can be done by who	Date Maintenance work was done on the vessel	Remarks
1.	Engine room bilge pumps Port and Starboard isn't pumping out water from dry space tanks. Valves to be removed.	January 1, 2024 to [REDACTED]	GPI dockyard		Valves to be removed in the dry space tanks.
2.	Electrical Sensor for Cargo Crane damaged (needs to be replaced and installed).	January 1, 2024 to [REDACTED]	Has to be sourced		New Sensor has to be sourced.
3.	Six (6) Valves to be removed from the Ballast tanks.	January 1, 2024 to [REDACTED]	GPI Dockyard		Noted, Valves got stuck in the close off position in the ballast tank causing pumps not to suck water out of the tanks.
4.	Large fan for the cold room freezer defective.	January 1, 2025 to [REDACTED]	Needs to be purchased from supplier		New fan has to be installed.
5.	Port and Starboard main engine control in wheelhouse is malfunctioning	May 23, 2025 to [REDACTED]	Private Technician		The codes need to be installed to program the control for them to function properly.
6.	Number 3 C 7.1 generator out of service due to extensive damage to parts on the engine.	December 1, 2025 to [REDACTED]	Macorp		Parts need to be sourced for the continuation of repairs
7.	Port Side General Service pumps motor burn in the generator room.	October 21, 2025 to [REDACTED]	Contractor Jerry		Motor is being rewired and service.
8.	Number 1 generator out of service due to a broken connecting rod that broke out through the sump while generator was	[REDACTED] to [REDACTED]	Macorp		Parts need to be sourced to do a complete overhaul.

the port and starboard engine room bilge pumps were unable to pump water from the dry space tanks due to stuck valves.

During the same period, six valves in the ballast tanks remained jammed closed, preventing pumps from drawing water, while the cargo crane's electrical sensor sat broken awaiting sourcing. By early 2025, additional defects had piled up without repair, including a defective cold room freezer fan and malfunctioning main engine controls in the wheelhouse that required private technical programming.

Engine room failures escalated fur-

ther into late 2025, with the number three generator remaining out of service due to extensive internal damage, the port general service pump motor burning out, and the number one generator suffering a completely broken connecting rod that burst through the engine sump. In every instance, the column designated to record completed maintenance was left entirely blank.

In January 2026, Job No. B4/26 requested an urgent replacement turbo-charger for the port main engine because the unit was actively throwing oil during operation, alongside orders for a new Hiab engine fresh water

Regional News

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pump leaking through its seal. Requisitions filed in late 2025 reveal that an aftercooler kit and a six-cylinder exhaust manifold kit had to be requested for the port's main engine under Job No. B4/25.

Additional handwritten records detail leaking fuel lines requiring urgent mechanical intervention, a complete lack of engine room ventilation causing extreme ambient heat, and repeated instances of main engine exhaust pipes breaking and spewing toxic gases directly into the machinery spaces. Auxiliary power was similarly crippled, with logs noting the number three generator leaking all its cooling water, the number two generator shutting down due to failing batteries, and the number one generator suffering fluctuating current, shorting starter wires, broken pump blades, damaged bearings, and sheared head studs.

These entries mirror a broader chronology of documented failures aboard the MV Barima leading up to its final voyage. In March 2026, crew members filed urgent requisitions for submerged water pumps and welding equipment for onboard repairs. Earlier, in January 2026, Chief Engineer P. Seepersaud issued a stark warning that the main engine fuel lines were "heavily corroded and can break at any time while the vessel is in operation," alongside orders for a replacement turbocharger that was actively throwing oil.

Reports dating back to late 2025 further detail an inoperable VHF communication system, failing GPS navigation power, degraded emergency batteries, and main engines running at dangerously overheating temperatures between 197°F and 203°F. Crucially, logs from November 2025 confirmed a broken exhaust line leaking toxic gases directly into the unventilated engine room, while records from August noted shutdowns caused by sheared head studs and broken pump blades.

The 87-year-old vessel ultimately capsized on the evening of July 18 off the Essequibo coast while enroute from

Georgetown to Port Kaituma, Region One, leaving 73 confirmed dead, 76 rescued, and at least 30 others missing. Captain Kevin Price, Chief Mate Rondell Dwayne Roberts and Goods Superintendent Delon Granderson have

since been charged in connection with the disaster, while the government has announced a Commission of Inquiry and requested experienced entities to salvage the sunken wreck for physical examination. (Kaiteur News)



Iran rejects Trump claims of US control over Hormuz as 'lies'

Iran's military on Thursday rejected as "lies" remarks by US President Donald Trump claiming control of the Strait of Hormuz, saying the strategic waterway was fully under Iranian control.

"The false claims of the United States that ships are passing through the Strait of Hormuz normally ... are nothing more than lies and fabrications," said Ebrahim Zolfaghari, the spokesperson for Iran's central military command, Khatam-al Anbiya.

"The Strait of Hormuz is, as in the past, under the complete management and control of the Islamic Republic of Iran, and no commercial ship or tanker without the permission and supervision of the powerful Iranian armed forces has had and will have the possibility of safe passage through this strait," he said in a video carried by state television.

Iran has kept control of Hormuz, a vital energy conduit, since the outbreak of the war in the Middle East on February 28, requiring vessels to obtain permission and pay transit fees before using the waterway.

In a Wednesday Truth Social post, Trump claimed that the US "has total control over the Strait of Hormuz. I THINK WE WILL KEEP IT!"

"Our Naval Blockade is being called, by everyone, 'A WALL OF STEEL,' and there is nothing Iran can do about it," he added.

"Today, you see that the Strait of Hormuz is under the management and control of the Islamic republic, and our country continues on its path in complete security," said Hossein Taeb according to state television.

Iran's top diplomat Abbas Araghchi on Thursday said the US makes miscalculations in regard to the waterway.

"The U.S. has long miscalculated due to intelligence failures. Case in point:



The war on Iran. Now, an even bigger miscalculation on the Strait of Hormuz," he said on X.

Iranian parliamentarian and member of the national security commission Behnam Saeedi said the strait is closed to US and Israeli ships.

"Ships belonging to the Zionist regime will not have the right to pass through the Strait of Hormuz under any circumstances, whether in war or peacetime," he told state TV, add-

ing that "US military ships will also be barred from passing through the Strait".

Iran and Oman have been in talks to establish a new route through the strait, but negotiations have not yet been finalised.

Tehran, however, says even if the talks produce a new route, that would not on its own open the waterway unless the US meets Iran's demands. (AFP)

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Defense in Charlie Kirk's killing say shooter should not get death penalty, hit 'intended target'

The man charged with killing Charlie Kirk shouldn't get the death penalty because the shooter "hit the intended target" and no one else was endangered when the conservative activist was shot from a rooftop at an event in Utah last year, his lawyers said.

Defendant Tyler Robinson's attorneys say the bullet traveled above the crowd of several thousand people at Utah Valley University on Sept. 10 and "there were no threats to others." Whether the shooting endangered the crowd is a key issue: Prosecutors cited the risk that other people could have been harmed as an aggravating factor under state law that makes Kirk's killing a capital crime.

"The only evidence presented supports that the bullet traveled above, not through, the crowd," defense attorneys wrote in documents filed late Tuesday as the defense tries to block the case from proceeding to trial.

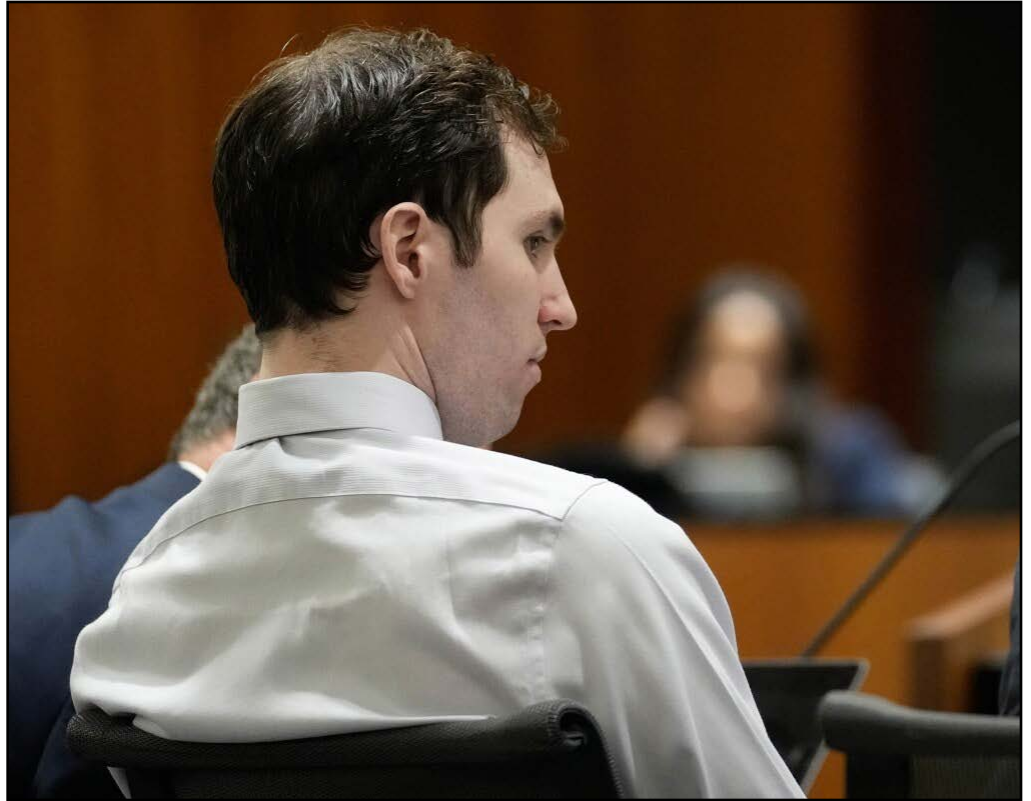
Prosecutors have said numerous people were within a "zone of danger" around Kirk, where a stray or ricocheting bullet could have hurt anyone close to the victim.

The defense lawyers also disputed claims that Robinson targeted Kirk over his political views. Prosecutors allege Robinson told his roommate that he killed the activist because he "had enough of his hatred." But the defense said that was not enough to prove what motivated Robinson, after searches of his apartment, computers and telephone failed to produce anything beyond that one statement.

Prosecutors last month during a week-long hearing presented what they call "overwhelming" evidence against Robinson, including DNA tests that tie him to the suspected murder weapon and apparent confessions by the defendant.

His attorneys questioned the reliability of the DNA tests and other evidence. They didn't offer any alternative theories for Kirk's assassination, and made no mention of DNA in Tuesday's filing.

Robinson is charged with aggravated murder and has not yet entered a plea. He turned himself in a day after Kirk



was killed.

His defense attorneys previously tried to get the death penalty taken off the table after prosecutors were found to be in contempt of court for talking about the case to the media. State District Judge Tony Graf rejected that request.

In documents filed last month, prosecutors said the fact that Robinson loaded his rifle with four bullets showed that he knew he could miss Kirk, "thereby putting others in danger."

But defense attorneys said "it is just as likely that the shooter did not believe he would miss."

Robinson faces possible sentence enhancements if prosecutors can prove he targeted Kirk because of his politics. They contend that Kirk's strong opposition to same-sex marriage and gender transitioning stood in contrast to Robinson, who was in a romantic relationship with a roommate, Lance Twiggs. Twiggs told investigators that he had been considering transitioning around the time that Kirk was killed, according to prosecutors.

Twiggs also told investigators that

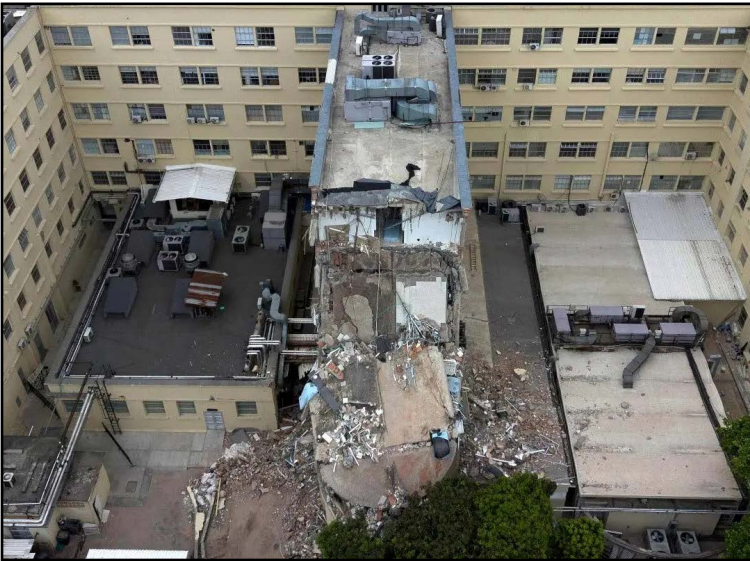
Robinson sometimes talked about politics, including President Donald Trump. Yet Twiggs said he never heard Robinson talk about Kirk before the shooting. The defendant also did not talk much about gender issues or LGBTQ+ rights, Twiggs said. The AP emailed Twiggs' attorney seeking comment.

Closing arguments in the preliminary hearing are scheduled for Sept. 1. Graf will then decide if the case can go to trial and on what charges. Lawyers for Kirk's family have asked Graf to make his decision by or on Sept. 1 so the case can proceed.

Prosecutors have until Aug. 18 to respond to the latest defense arguments. The Associated Press left telephone and email messages with the Utah County Attorney's Office seeking comment.

Preliminary hearings typically don't last so long. Legal experts said the slow pace reflects a cautious approach by Graf, the large volume of evidence and a desire by prosecutors to disprove conspiracy theories around the case. (AP)

Colombia enters 'final phase' of quake search as toll hits 265



Colombia's earthquake rescue efforts entered what officials called the "final phase" on Wednesday, as rescuers searched for signs of life beneath collapsed buildings before the critical first 72 hours came to an end.

The magnitude 7.4 quake, the strongest to hit Colombia this century, has killed 265 people, injured more than 3,500 and left almost 500 missing, according to local authorities.

In Cali and Pereira, emergency crews prepared to work through a third night with their bare hands, cranes and sniffer dogs, stopping not to rest, but to listen for signs of life.

Colombia's newly installed president has declared the disaster an "economic emergency" and announced three

days of national mourning.

"We will do what is necessary," president Abelardo de la Espriella said in a statement, vowing to "emerge again as a country and as a society".

According to official figures, more than 11,000 dwellings have been destroyed and thousands of families have been rendered homeless.

Many have already spent consecutive nights outdoors, either because their homes were damaged or because they feared aftershocks.

Many Colombians have mobilised to help, bringing water, food and supplies to affected neighbourhoods, while long lines formed outside blood donation centres. (AFP)

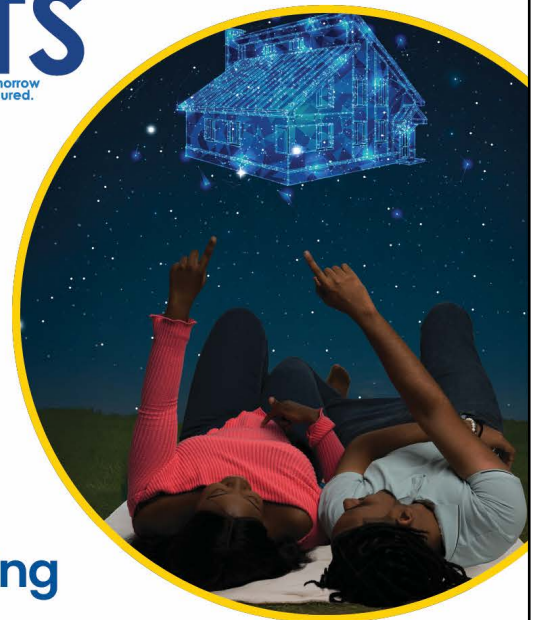


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SAT 8 AUG	SKNP		v		TKR	7:00 PM	ST VINCENT
SUN 9 AUG	ABF		v		SLK	7:00 PM	ST VINCENT
TUE 11 AUG	JKM		v		BR	7:00 PM	JAMAICA
WED 12 AUG	SLK		v		SKNP	7:00 PM	ST LUCIA
THU 13 AUG	JKM		v		GAW	7:00 PM	JAMAICA
FRI 14 AUG	SLK		v		ABF	7:00 PM	ST LUCIA
SAT 15 AUG	JKM		v		TKR	7:00 PM	JAMAICA
SUN 16 AUG	SLK		v		BR	7:00 PM	ST LUCIA
TUE 18 AUG	JKM		v		SKNP	7:00 PM	JAMAICA
WED 19 AUG	SLK		v		GAW	7:00 PM	ST LUCIA
THU 20 AUG	ABF		v		SKNP	7:00 PM	ANTIGUA
FRI 21 AUG	SLK		v		JKM	7:00 PM	ST LUCIA
SAT 22 AUG	ABF		v		TKR	7:00 PM	ANTIGUA
SUN 23 AUG	ABF		v		GAW	7:00 PM	ANTIGUA
TUE 25 AUG	ABF		v		BR	7:00 PM	ANTIGUA
WED 26 AUG	TKR		v		SLK	7:00 PM	TRINIDAD
THU 27 AUG	SKNP		v		JKM	7:00 PM	ST KITTS
FRI 28 AUG	TKR		v		BR	8:00 PM	TRINIDAD
SAT 29 AUG	TKR		v		GAW	7:00 PM	TRINIDAD
SUN 30 AUG	SKNP		v		ABF	7:00 PM	ST KITTS
MON 31 AUG	TKR		v		JKM	5:00 PM	TRINIDAD
TUE 1 SEP	SKNP		v		BR	7:00 PM	ST KITTS
WED 2 SEP	TKR		v		ABF	7:00 PM	TRINIDAD
THU 3 SEP	SKNP		v		SLK	7:00 PM	ST KITTS
FRI 4 SEP	GAW		v		JKM	7:00 PM	GUYANA
SAT 5 SEP	BR		v		TKR	8:00 PM	BARBADOS
SUN 6 SEP	GAW		v		SKNP	10:00 AM	GUYANA
SUN 6 SEP	BR		v		SLK	7:00 PM	BARBADOS
TUE 8 SEP	GAW		v		ABF	7:00 PM	GUYANA
WED 9 SEP	GAW		v		SLK	7:00 PM	GUYANA
THU 10 SEP	BR		v		SKNP	7:00 PM	BARBADOS
FRI 11 SEP	GAW		v		TKR	7:00 PM	GUYANA
SAT 12 SEP	BR		v		JKM	8:00 PM	BARBADOS
SUN 13 SEP	BR		v		GAW	7:00 PM	BARBADOS
WED 16 SEP	ELIMINATOR - 3 RD v 4 TH					7:00 PM	BARBADOS
THU 17 SEP	QUALIFIER - 1 ST v 2 ND					8:00 PM	BARBADOS
FRI 18 SEP	QUALIFIER 2 - WINNER ELIMINATOR v LOSER QUALIFIER 1					7:00 PM	BARBADOS
SUN 20 SEP	FINAL					7:00 PM	BARBADOS

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SAT 5 SEP **BT**  **V**  **TKR** **3:00 PM**

SUN 6 SEP **JE**  **V**  **GAW** **2:00 PM**

THU 10 SEP **TKR**  **V**  **JE** **10:00 AM**

SAT 12 SEP **TKR**  **V**  **GAW** **10:00 AM**

SAT 12 SEP **BT**  **V**  **JE** **3:00 PM**

SUN 13 SEP **GAW**  **V**  **BT** **2:00 PM**

WED 16 SEP **PLAYOFF** **2ND V 3RD** **10:00 AM**

THU 17 SEP **FINAL** **2:00 PM**



WCPL



Invaders and Starlings get mixed results at invitational tournament



Invaders men's volleyball team

Invaders and Starling endured mixed fortunes on the opening day of the invitational tournament, which is being hosted by the Antigua and Barbuda Amateur Volleyball Association (ABAVA) in conjunction with the visiting Starling Volleyball Club of Trinidad and Tobago in Antigua this week.

Both Invaders and Starling recorded a win and a loss in their two matches on Day 1 of the tournament at the indoor stadium at the YMCA Sports Complex on Wednesday evening.

The Invaders suffered a 2-1 loss to Mixed Club in their opening affair, going under 25-19, 20-25, and 7-15.

The Invaders hit back to pull off a hard-fought 2-0 (32-30, 25-22) victory over the University of the West Indies

(UWI).

The visiting Starlings Volleyball Club launched their campaign with a 2-0 (22-25, 20-25) loss to Dynasty.

But the Starling volleyballers rebounded to record a 2-0 (25-23, 25-23) victory over Chargers Velocity.

The Trinidadian visitors are going head-to-head with local teams over four days of friendly competition, bringing together athletes across different levels for some good Caribbean volleyball, new connections, and plenty of action on court.

ABAVA club teams, the University of West Indies, Dynasty, Starz, Mixed Stars, Invaders, and Velocity, will engage Starlings in the friendly volley-

ball tournament.

Four matches are being played on each day of the tournament. Matches start at 5 pm daily, admission is free, and drinks will be on sale.

The invitational tournament will continue with the round-robin matches on Friday.

Starz will meet Dynasty at 5 pm, Mixed Team will clash with Chargers Velocity at 6 pm, Starlings will take on the University of the West Indies at 7 pm, and Invaders will face off against the Chargers Velocity in the day's final encounter at 8 pm.

The tournament will culminate with two championship finals and a presentation ceremony on Saturday.

Another win for Antigua Ballers in MDBA youth invitational tourney

Defending champions Antigua Ballers made it two wins in as many games on the second day of the 3rd Annual Mahijah Davis Basketball Academy (MDBA) Youth Summer Splash Invitational on Wednesday evening.

The Antigua Ballers put together the tournament's most explosive offensive performance of the day, defeating the Dadli Ballers 101-37 in the second game of a double-header at the JSC Sports Complex.

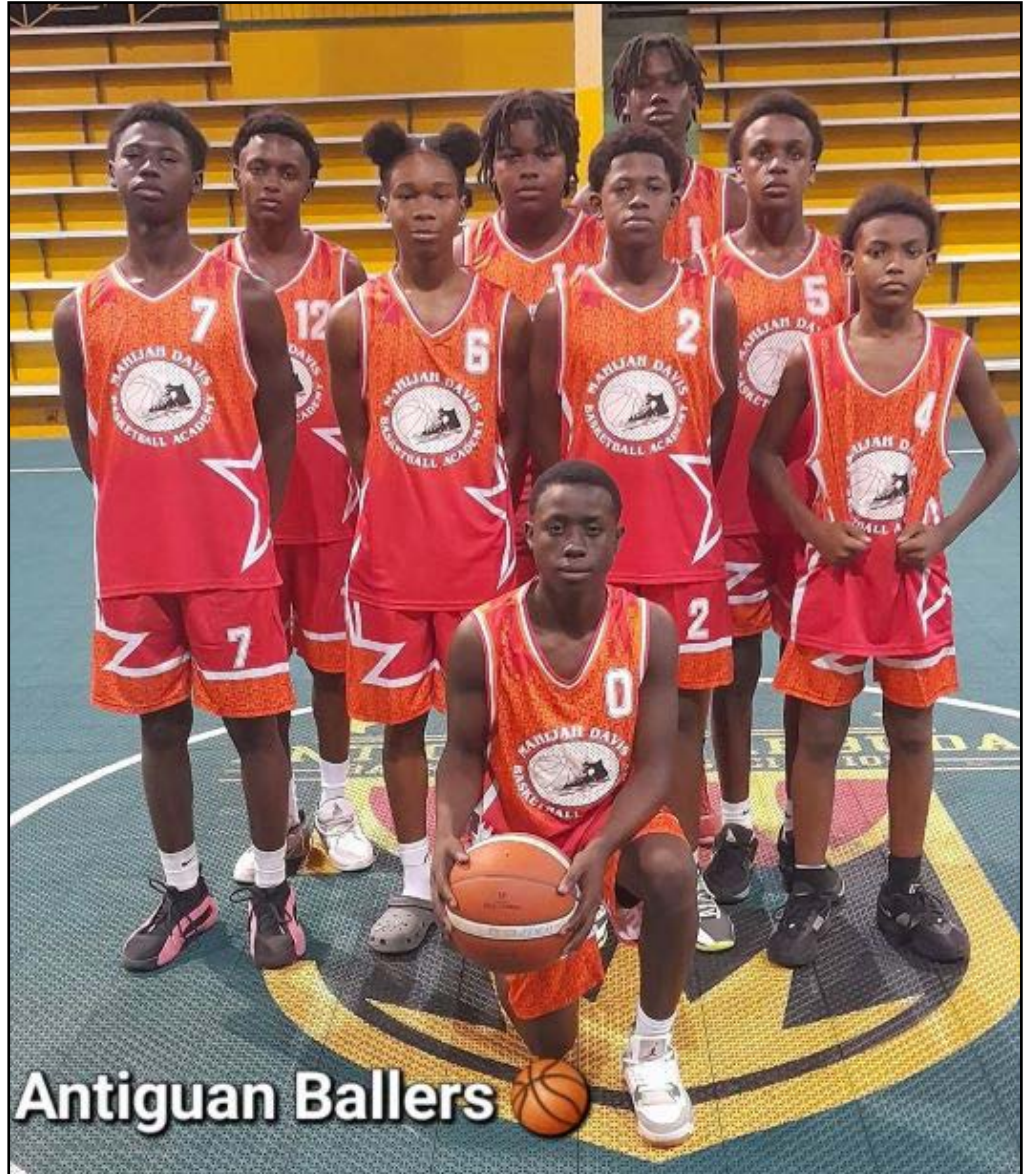
Yohan Nicholas sank 22 points to lead the offensive firepower of the Antiguan Ballers.

Nathan Matthew converted 15 points, Zende Dorsette got 13 points, Jahaziel Santana produced 12 points, Iczjairie Sebastian had 11 points, and Erieha Joseph scored 10 points for the Antigua Ballers, who pulled off a 69-60 victory over the Wadadli Elites in their opening encounter.

Derek Perez and Noah Massiah each converted 11 points for the Dadli Ballers, who suffered their first loss after recording a 70-63 victory over the KCBA Knights of Grenada in their opening game.

The KCBA Knights rebounded from their opening-game loss to produce a dominant performance to claim their first win with a commanding 83-46 victory over Junior Spanish Lava in the first encounter on Wednesday.

Thaj Marshall led all scorers with an outstanding 27-point performance, while Aiden Francis added 20 points



Antiguan Ballers

and Trey Phillip contributed 18 points as the Grenadian offensive attack proved difficult for Junior Spanish Lava to contain.

Joel Montilla converted 14 points for

Junior Spanish Lava, who lost for the second time in as many games.

Junior Spanish Lava suffered a 119-33 defeat to the Wadadli Elites in their opening encounter.



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T&T and Barbados remain unbeaten in U-19 women's tourney

Table leaders Trinidad and Tobago and second placed Barbados have set up a mouthwatering clash in the final preliminary round of the Rising Stars Under-19 Women's Championship after winning their respective matches in Antigua on Wednesday.

T&T romped to their fourth straight win after rolling over the Leeward Islands Women by eight wickets, while Barbados edged Jamaica Women by six runs in a thrilling contest.

At Coolidge Cricket Ground, Trinidad and Tobago Women sealed their spot in Saturday's final by crushing the Leeward Islands Women by eight wickets in a lopsided contest.

Spinner Samara Ramnath continued her impressive wicket-taking form, with her four-wicket haul helping to bundle out the Leeward Islands for just 50 in 16.2 overs, after they elected to bat first.

Ramnath, who entered the penultimate round of matches as the leading wicket taker with 15 wickets, ran through the Leeward Islands' lower order, ending with the impressive figures of four wickets for three runs from 2.2 overs, while her spinning partner Brianna Harricharan grabbed three for 15.

The Leeward Islands never recovered after Harricharan claimed the wickets of captain Aaliyah Weekes, opener Zara Skerritt and Cquinya Dasent, to reduce them to 23 for five after nine overs.

Skerritt and Lois George, who both scored 12, and Kerranique Skeete, who made 10, were the only batters to get into double figures.

T&T then breezed to 52 for two in 13.2 overs to complete their fourth win in as many matches, with Amrita Ramtahal scoring an unbeaten 17.

T&T will meet Barbados Women for bragging rights in their final preliminary match on Friday, with both sides already assured a spot in the final.

At Ball Beef in Liberta, defending champions Barbados Women were made to fight until the last ball to secure a tense six-wicket victory over Jamaica Women.

After being sent in to bat, Barbados Women compiled 102 for eight in their 20 overs.

It was a far cry from their impressive batting performance in the previous round that saw them rack up a record breaking 206 for two against the Leeward Islands Women.

This time around, they were led by Zaniya Bruce's knock of 30 off 35 balls, with Jamis Morris-Alleyne, who contributed 10 runs, being the only other double-digit contributor. The pair added 44 runs to help rescue their team after they had slipped to 21 for three early on.

Jamaica Women did themselves no favours by gifting Barbados Women 23 extra, inclusive of 16 wides. Dav-ehjah Brown (3 for 10) and Brianna Plummer (2 for 20), were Jamaica Women's best bowlers.

Jamaica Women then fell agonisingly short in their run chase, finishing on 96 for nine at the end of their allotted 20 overs.

They too were assisted by Barbados' 25 extras, but they shot themselves in the foot with five of their nine batters being dismissed by the run out route.

Adanya Baugh hit an unbeaten 14, Sashane Ricketts scored 13, with Shamara Hall and Zariah Blair each scoring 10 runs.

It was Barbados' third win in four matches and carried them to nine points – one less than T&T – with one round of matches to go.

Fletcher, bowlers lead Patriots to victory over Kings in CPL



Andre Fletcher

A measured and classy unbeaten 48 from Andre Fletcher was enough to hand the St. Kitts and Nevis Patriots their first win of the Republic Bank Caribbean Premier League (CPL) 2026, as they defeated the Saint Lucia Kings by five wickets on Wednesday night.

Fletcher was handed a relatively comfortable chase after the Patriots bowlers restricted the Kings, who won the toss and opted to bat, to 155 for eight off their 20 overs at the Daren Sammy Stadium in St. Lucia.

Pacer Jason Holder bagged three for 20 and Saurabh Netravalkar grabbed three for 32 to lead a stand-out performance from the Patriots attack.

Netravalkar and Holder had the new ball on a string in the early stages, striking twice in the first half of the powerplay, including the dismissal of opener Andreis Gous for four.

Kamil Pooran, playing just his

second match at this level, led the Kings' fightback, with one of their brightest prospects, Jewel Andrew, joining him at the other end.

Pooran slammed 54 off 30 balls, and Andrew struck 58 off 42 balls, as the pair combined for an 82-run partnership for the third wicket to steady the innings.

While they never quite exploded, their composed approach put the Kings in a position to attack in the latter stages. Pooran smashed seven fours and three sixes in recording his first half-century in T20 cricket.

The partnership was finally broken when Pooran was brilliantly run out by Wanindu Hasaranga, who produced a direct hit from deep cover.

Andrew then tried to carry the innings on his shoulders, producing an excellent knock that included four sixes and two fours. However, Andrew's teammates crumbled around him as the platform he and Pooran

had built quickly disappeared.

The final five overs produced just 22 runs for the loss of five wickets, leaving the Kings well short of an adequate total.

The Patriots approached their chase cautiously before Kyle Mayers, who struck 32 off 16 balls, got a feel for the pitch and the bowlers and began to shift through the gears.

He put the Patriots firmly in pole position, hitting three sixes and three fours, before some clever bowling from Maheesh Theekshana brought his innings to an end.

From there, the Patriots continued their conservative approach, maintaining a run rate just above a run a ball, with Fletcher, who faced 41 balls and hitting three fours and a six, calmly working the ball around and taking the impetus.

Theekshana, who finished with two for 22, and Roston Chase then looked to put the squeeze on the Patriots in the middle overs, much like they had successfully done against the Antigua & Barbuda Falcons a few nights earlier.

Whenever the Patriots appeared ready to take control, the spin duo pegged them back, with Kevin Wickham (19) and Jason Holder (10) both falling into their trap.

However, once Chase and Theekshana had been seen off, the Kings' bowlers struggled to find the same control, allowing Fletcher to calmly guide the Patriots home to a comfortable five-wicket victory.

The Kings return home on Friday to face the Antigua and Barbuda Falcons, while the Patriots travel to Jamaica to take on the Jamaica Kingsmen at Sabina Park next Tuesday.

Disappointing start for Antiguan men at ECVA Senior Volleyball Championships

Defending back-to-back men's champions, Antigua and Barbuda, have made a dismal start in defense of their title at the 2026 Eastern Caribbean Volleyball Association (ECVA) Senior Volleyball Championships in Tortola, British Virgin Islands.

The Antiguan men have lost their first two matches in the men's tournament, which is being held simultaneously with the ECVA Senior Women's Championship, in Road Town, Tortola, from Wednesday, August 12, to Sunday, August 16.

Antigua and Barbuda crashed to a 3-0 (25-11, 25-20, and 25-22) loss to St. Vincent and the Grenadines in their second encounter in Pool A of the men's tournament on Thursday.

It was the second win for the Vincenians, who opened their campaign with a 3-1 win over Grenada, prevailing 25-21, 25-23, 23-25, and 25-18.

The Antiguan men suffered a 2-3 loss to St. Lucia in their opening encounter in the senior men's tournament on Wednesday.

Antigua and Barbuda's men got off to a poor start against the St. Lucians in their opening Pool A encounter, losing the first set 21-25. But the Antiguan men hit back to take a 2-1 lead by winning the next two sets, 25-23, 25-21.

However, the Antigua and Barbuda men were unable to close out the match to secure victory, instead slumping to defeat as the St. Lucians rebounded to level the match at 2-2 with a 25-18 victory in the fourth set.

The St. Lucians then wrapped up their win over the Antiguan men by pulling off a 15-10 victory in the fifth and deciding set.

Dominica made it two wins in a row in the men's competition. The Dominicans crushed Anguilla 3-0 (25-14, 25-19, 25-13) in their second game on



Players of Antigua and Barbuda (red and black) and St. Vincent and the Grenadines compete in the Eastern Caribbean Volleyball Association Senior Men's Volleyball Championships in Tortola, British Virgin Islands, on Thursday, August 13, 2026. (Photo courtesy of the ECVA)

Thursday.

Dominica edged Bermuda 3-1 (25-19, 25-22, 22-25, 25-21) in a tightly contested battle in their opening encounter on Wednesday.

The standout results of the opening day came on the tournament's own home court, where Anguilla's men defeated host nation BVI 3-2 (23-25, 25-16, 24-26, 25-10, 13-15) in a five-set thriller that had the crowd on its feet until the final point.

The BVI came out strong and twice pushed the match to the brink of victory, but the Anguillians held their composure to close out a decisive fifth set, denying the hosts a winning start on their own court in the day's most compelling match.

But Antigua and Barbuda got off to a winning start, romping to a 3-0 victory over Grenada as Day 1 of women's competition at the 2026 Eastern Caribbean Senior Championships delivered three contrasting results in Tortola.

Antigua and Barbuda produced the day's most emphatic performance,

sweeping Grenada 25-15, 25-18, and 25-14. The Antiguan men came out swinging and never let up, controlling the match from the first set, while the Grenadians struggled to find their rhythm against a relentless Antiguan attack.

The standout result of the day saw defending ECVA senior women's champions St. Lucia falling to Bermuda 3-2 (25-18, 14-25, 21-25, 25-13, 10-15) in a nail-biting five-set thriller.

The match swung back and forth with relentless intensity throughout, and the Bermudans held their composure in the decider to hand the reigning champions an opening-day loss.

Anguilla's women opened their campaign with a hard-fought 3-2 win over Dominica (25-18, 13-25, 25-20, 8-25, 16-14), the third five-set match of the day. Both teams traded sets through the early stages before Anguilla edged ahead in a tight decider to close out the win.

Bermuda's women notched up their second win with a 3-0 (25-22, 25-22, 31-29) victory over Dominica on Thursday.