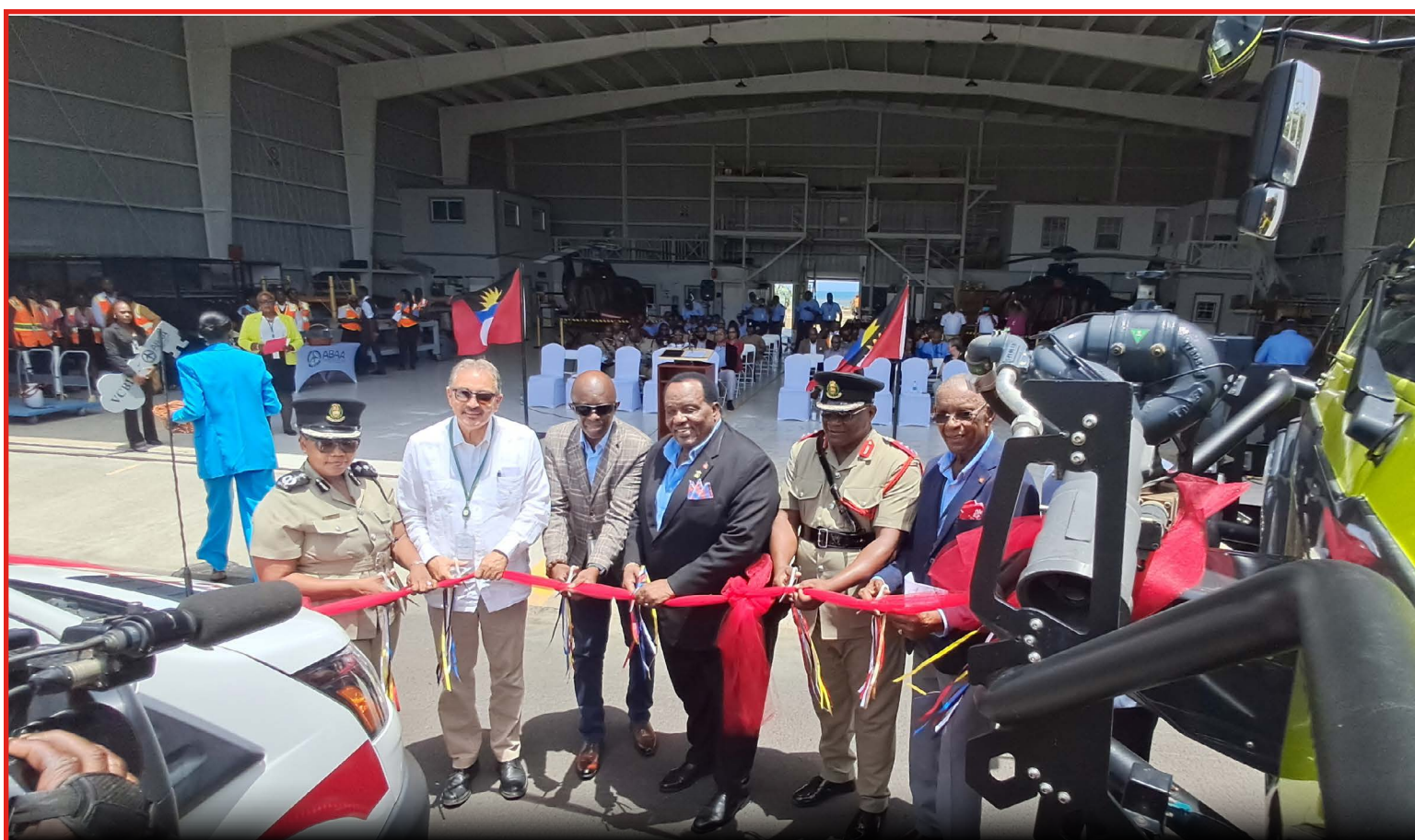


State-of-the-Art Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting Vehicles Acquired at the V.C. Bird International Airport

Story on page 2



Deputy Commissioner of Police Vivian Parker, Minister of Tourism and Civil Aviation Charles Max Fernandez, Airport CEO Curt Menal, Attorney General Sir Steadroy Benjamin and Chairman of the Antigua and Barbuda Airport Authority Rolston Potter,

State-of-the-Art Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting Vehicles Acquired to Strengthen Emergency Response Capabilities at the VC Bird International Airport



The VC Bird International Airport's emergency response capabilities received a massive boost today, as state-of-the-art Volkan Aircraft Rescue and Fire Fighting Vehicle, and EMS Ambulance were entered into service today.

A handing-over ceremony at the Calvin Ayre Hangar at the V.C. Bird International Airport commemorated the arrival of a new Volkan Lion Class ARFF 6X6, procured to significantly strengthen rescue operations and enhance safety capacity at the airport.

Along with the state-of-the-art machine, capable of holding up to 14,000 litres of water and spraying high speed projectiles tens of feet away, an ambulance was also handed over to further strengthen the airport's emergency response capabilities.

The acquisition is the result of a long-standing collaboration with Allan and Co., which has been recognized for playing an instrumental role in the development and growth of the V.C. Bird International Airport over the years.

The two Rescue and Firefighting vehicles were acquired at a cost of approximately US\$1.2 million, while an additional US\$100,000 was spent on



a fully equipped emergency medical services (EMS) ambulance to enhance emergency response procedures at the airport.

In addition to the Volkan ARFF, the government also invested in an additional high reach extendable aircraft firefighting vehicle supported by two water tankers.

The handover ceremony was attended by Minister of Tourism and Civil Aviation Charles Max Fernandez, Attorney General Sir Steadroy Benjamin,

Chairman of the Antigua and Barbuda Airport Authority Rolston Potter, Deputy Commissioner of Police Vivian Parker, Airport CEO Curt Menal, and Maureen Allen of Allen and Co.

Fernandez, the minister responsible for civil aviation, underscored the significance of the investment, noting that the safety of passengers entering the country's ports is integral to the continued growth of the aviation and tourism sectors in Antigua and Barbuda.

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"I know first-hand how tremendously busy our airport community has been and continues to be. This investment represents our continued determination to ensure that the V.C. Bird International Airport operates at the standard expected of a modern international airport," Fernandez said.

The minister stressed that while attractiveness and efficiency of the airport are important factors, they are secondary to the general safety of everyone using the terminal.

"We can attract the world's leading airlines and welcome record numbers of visitors," the minister said, "but un-

derpinning all of those achievements must be an uncompromising commitment to safety and emergency preparedness."

According to Maureen Allan of Allan and Co., The Volkan vehicle was carefully selected because of its durability and ability to withstand Antigua's natural conditions, which can be particularly damaging to certain materials.

The vehicles' operational capacity is also considered a significant addition to the airport's emergency response capabilities, allowing personnel to respond more effectively to incidents and provide immediate assistance in cases involving injuries.

Deputy Commissioner of the Police Vivian Parker, who accepted the Volkan on behalf of the police force and fire service, hailed the handover as a delivery of a promise.

"This is more than the delivery of equipment," he said, "it is the delivery of a promise – a promise to every passenger, every airline, and every citizen, that safety at the VC Bird International Airport is our highest priority."

The new Volkan ARFF 6X6 will provide the airport fire rescue services the capability, speed and technology required to respond to category nine airport operation, ensuring an immediate, professional and coordinated response.

The new equipment is expected to strengthen the airport's overall emergency preparedness while providing an added layer of protection for passengers, airport workers and other members of the airport community.



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Rawdon Turner Advocates for Minimum 15-Year Sentence for Child Abusers

Minister of Social and Urban Transformation Rawdon Turner is advocating for a minimum 15-year prison sentence to be imposed on anyone convicted of sexually abusing a child.

Turner has reiterated his concern over cases in which individuals convicted of serious offences against children receive relatively short prison sentences and later return to society.

“When you see a headline that a 50-year-old male would have abused a five-year-old child, think about that. A five-year-old child,” Turner said.

He said the severity of such offences demands a stronger response from the justice system and society as a whole.

Turner said he supports legislative changes to establish minimum sentences for offences involving the abuse of children.

The Minister acknowledged that there could be exceptional circumstances that warrant judicial discretion and said those circumstances could be clearly defined in legislation.

However, he argued that there must be a firm minimum penalty to send a clear message that the sexual abuse of children will result in significant prison time.

“There must be a starting point where we’re going to tell society, if you violate a child, someone so innocent, you must do time in prison,” Turner said. “You must be removed from the society.”

Turner pointed to existing laws that provide for severe penalties for the abuse of children under 14, adding despite those provisions, offenders in some cases receive sentences of only a few years or probation.

“The maximum penalty for abusing a child under the age of 14 years old is life imprisonment,” Turner said. “When last have you heard anyone in



Minister of Social and Urban Transformation Rawdon Turner

this country being sentenced to life for abusing a child?”

He said the apparent gap between the maximum penalties provided by law and sentences handed down in individual cases deserves public discussion.

Minister Rawdon Turner stressed that his comments were not intended as an attack on the judiciary.

“You don’t intend to disrespect the judiciary. You’re not looking for a fight, you’re not looking for a war, but you have to ask the question,” he said.

According to him the central issue must remain the protection of children and the wider public.

The Minister also raised concerns about offenders who receive what he described as light sentences, return to society and subsequently commit further offences.

He argued that stronger minimum sentences could help prevent such cycles and provide greater protection for children.

He also expressed support for the Prime Minister’s position on taking stronger action against serious crime, saying that at times it is necessary to “shock the system” to bring about change.

Turner said the severity of some child abuse cases has generated anger and frustration within the wider society.

He warned, however, that the country must act through its laws and institutions rather than allow public frustration to develop into vigilante justice.

“Before we become a society where we have vigilante justice, something has to give,” he said. “Changes have to be made.”

Turner maintains that the Executive, Parliament and Judiciary each have a responsibility to protect society.

He added that all branches of government ultimately serve the people and must respond to legitimate public concerns about crime and the protection of children.

“You can’t look in the face of your children and say, we’re not going to do all that we can to protect them.”

The Minister warned that failing to adequately protect abused children could have long-term consequences, including the possibility that some victims may themselves become abusers.

While much of the public discussion surrounding child protection focuses on sexual abuse, Turner stressed that physical abuse is also a serious problem.

He said officers from the Ministry’s social services team have visited homes following reports from teachers and other professionals concerned about the welfare of children.

In some cases, Turner revealed that children have been found malnourished, while other investigations have involved children allegedly found tied to beds and bearing scars across their bodies.

He noted that such cases demonstrate the broader scale of the child protection challenge facing Antigua and Barbuda.

Child Abuse Crisis Deepens: Over 200 Cases Reported



Minister of Social and Urban Transformation Rawdon Turner

More than 200 cases of physical and sexual abuse involving children have been recorded in Antigua and Barbuda so far this year, Minister of Social and Urban Transformation Rawdon Turner has revealed, noting that the actual number could be significantly higher because many cases go unreported.

Turner made the disclosure on state television on Tuesday morning while outlining plans for a national discussion on child abuse, which commenced with a townhall meeting last evening.

The Minister said he was shocked when he was first exposed to the statistics surrounding abuse of vulnerable people after assuming responsibility for the ministry nearly two years ago.

“As a citizen, you would see headlines in the newspaper or you may see Facebook posts over time, and you believe that you have an idea of what’s taking place in terms of abuse of our children in Antigua and Barbuda,” Turner said.

“But I can say that the public doesn’t know. We don’t understand.”

According to the Minister of Social and Urban Transformation, figures have forced him to confront what he

described as a deep-rooted problem within Antiguan and Barbudan soci-

ety.

Reflecting on the traditional saying that “the village raises a child,” he said the reality facing the country has become deeply troubling.

“We’re at the point now where the village is abusing our children,” Turner said.

He added that the country must have an honest and frank discussion about the nature and extent of child abuse and develop practical solutions to address it, arguing that existing legislation needs to be reviewed and adjusted to strengthen the response to abuse.

The Minister said the national town hall meeting was the first of a series of public discussions aimed at confronting the issue. It will be followed by smaller, focused town hall sessions in



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communities across Antigua and Barbuda.

The Saint Peter M.P. said the discussions must go beyond identifying the problem.

“We need to have a frank discussion as to what is taking place, what are the solutions, what is the plan of action to arrive at those solutions,” he argued.

He stressed that tackling child abuse cannot be left to Government alone.

“It is not a government alone to fight this issue,” Turner said, pointing to the need for families, communities, civil society organisations and other stakeholders to become part of the response.

One of the most difficult aspects of the problem he revealed is that abuse frequently occurs within the household or involves people known and trusted by the child.

He cited cases involving fathers, uncles and close family friends as examples of the types of relationships in which abuse can occur.

“This is a deep-rooted problem within our society that we need to adjust head-on,” he said.

Minister Rawdon Turner called for greater honesty as the country begins discussing the issue, pointing out that confronting uncomfortable realities is necessary if meaningful solutions are to be developed.

He also highlighted the demanding work being carried out by the Department of Family and Social Services, much of which happens away from public view.

Turner recalled receiving late-night calls from the department’s director, Feona Charles, informing him that officers were working alongside police to remove children from homes where they were being abused.

He said the ministry is frequently required to intervene in sensitive cases, sometimes at all hours, to protect children from unsafe environments.

“It’s a never-ending cycle,” Turner

said, describing the volume of work involved in protecting vulnerable children.

The Minister of Social and Urban Transformation explained that many of these interventions cannot be publicised because the ministry must protect the identity and privacy of children involved.

He revealed that the continuing exposure to traumatic cases is taking a psychological toll on the professionals responsible for responding to them, noting that members of the department have told him that they are exhausted and that counselors themselves require counseling because of the cases to which they are exposed.

The Minister stated that he has personally observed the impact that the work has had on staff.

Minister Rawdon Turner also revealed yesterday that the Govern-

ment is preparing to establish a purpose-built facility for children who have to be removed from abusive home environments.

He said the facility is being developed in collaboration with Team Island Girls, with construction expected to begin next month.

The new purpose-built facility is intended to provide a more suitable and secure environment for children removed from abusive situations.

Turner said the planned facility represents another component of the broader response needed to protect vulnerable children.

With more than 200 cases already recorded this year—and the possibility that many more remain unreported—the Minister is urging the nation to confront child abuse openly and collectively.



Final Week for School Uniform Programme

The 2026 installment of the School Uniform Grant Programme is days away from completion and officials are encouraging those who have not yet accessed the programme to do so without hesitation.

Providing an update to the *Pointe Xpress*, Coordinator Tanesha James said the initiative, which commenced on Monday 13th July, will conclude on Friday 28th August, 2026 at the Multi-Purpose Cultural and Exhibition Centre, Perry Bay.

According to James, to date, more than 21,000 vouchers have been distributed to beneficiaries.

She said parents and guardians who petitioned the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology for school transfers should visit its headquarters



Tanesha James

in the Government Office Complex to query whether the process was completed.

Further, beneficiaries who utilised the SUGP's online platform and drop box,

whether as new applicants or existing clients, are encouraged to visit the Multi-Purpose Cultural Centre, since the uniform vouchers were processed and are ready for distribution.

Except in unusual circumstances, no vouchers will be processed beyond the Friday deadline, the SUGP coordinator has advised.

The School Uniform Grant Programme provides eligible students with one set of regular school uniform throughout their primary and secondary school years.

It is one of the largest welfare initiatives for the Government of Antigua and Barbuda and has benefitted hundreds of thousands of students over its 21 years of operation.

Midweek Deals

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Government to Build Dedicated Facility for Children Rescued from Abusive Homes

The Government is expected to begin constructing a purpose-built facility in September to provide safe and appropriate accommodation for children removed from abusive and dangerous households.

Minister of Social and Urban Transformation Rawdon Turner said the new facility will offer dedicated care and shelter for children rescued from situations involving sexual abuse, physical violence and other forms of mistreatment.

“We’re going to have a purpose-built facility where we can house these individuals when we remove them from abusive situations,” Turner said.

The project is being undertaken in partnership with Team Antigua Island Girls, which raised funds to assist the Government with establishing the facility.

Turner thanked the organisation for supporting the initiative, which is expected to strengthen the country’s response to child abuse and provide a more suitable environment for affected children.

Children removed from unsafe households are currently taken to various secure locations. The planned facility is intended to create a permanent and appropriately designed space where they can be protected and supported following traumatic experiences.

Turner said officers from the Family and Social Services Division frequent-



Team Antigua Island Girls

ly accompany police officers when children must be removed from homes where they are being sexually or physically abused.

Some interventions take place during the early hours of the morning and require social workers to remain with the children while they undergo medical examinations or are relocated to safety.

The minister said the frequency and severity of the cases are placing considerable emotional and professional pressure on social workers, counselors and other frontline personnel.

He previously revealed that some em-

ployees have reported feeling exhausted and needing counselling themselves because of the traumatic cases they regularly encounter.

The announcement comes as the Ministry reports that more than 200 cases of physical and sexual abuse involving children have been recorded in Antigua and Barbuda since the beginning of 2026.

Turner has warned that the true number could be significantly higher, citing professional estimates that three cases may go unreported for every case brought to the authorities’ attention.



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FLOW

Press Release

Flow CPL Partnership Connects Young Cricketers with Antigua and Barbuda Falcons



ST. JOHN'S, Antigua and Barbuda (August 25, 2026) – Young cricket enthusiasts at the Exceptional Heights Summer Camp had the opportunity to learn from members of the Antigua and Barbuda Falcons during a special player engagement at the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium.

The activity formed part of Flow's We Live For This Summer Campaign and its partnership with the Republic Bank Caribbean Premier League (RBL CPL), bringing young fans closer to the players and the game they love.

Antigua and Barbuda Falcons Coach Paul Nixon, along with players Karima Gore, Anderson Mahase, Jahmar Hamilton and Alzarri Joseph, joined campers for an interactive cricket session featuring batting, bowling and fielding drills. The players shared practical tips, demonstrated techniques and encouraged the young participants throughout the session.

"Cricket has a special place in the hearts of people across Antigua and Barbuda, and our RBL CPL partner-



ship gives us an opportunity to bring that excitement directly into our communities," said Shand Merchant, Marketing Manager at Flow Antigua and Barbuda. "It is about more than watching the game. We want young people to connect with the players, learn from them and see what dedication, teamwork and passion can achieve."

Tiffany Joseph, Head of the Exceptional Heights Summer Camp, said the experience offered lessons that

extended beyond the cricket field.

"Having our campers interact with professional cricketers and learn directly from them was an incredible experience. Beyond developing their cricket skills, opportunities like these help build confidence, teamwork and discipline. We are grateful to Flow and the Antigua and Barbuda Falcons for making it possible."

The Exceptional Heights Summer Camp supports children through activities focused on personal development, teamwork and healthy

lifestyles. The Falcons' visit added a memorable sporting experience, giving campers direct access to professional players and coaches competing at the highest level of Caribbean T20 cricket.

Through its RBL CPL partnership and We Live For This Summer Campaign, Flow continues to create experiences that connect Caribbean communities with the sport, players and moments they love.

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AUTO MECHANIC

The Antigua Public Utilities Authority (APUA) invites applications for the position of Auto Mechanic within the Vehicle and Equipment Maintenance Workshop (V&EMW). The successful candidates will be responsible for inspecting, diagnosing, repairing, and maintaining motor and light heavy-duty vehicles and off-highway equipment to ensure they operate safely and efficiently. The role involves performing routine maintenance, troubleshooting mechanical and electrical issues, and providing quality customer service.

Key duties include:

- Inspect vehicles to identify mechanical, electrical, and safety issues.
- Diagnose engine, transmission, brake, steering, suspension, and electrical system problems.
- Perform routine maintenance such as oil changes, tire rotations, wheel alignments, and fluid checks.
- Repair or replace faulty parts including engines, transmissions, brakes, batteries, and exhaust systems.
- Use diagnostic equipment and computerized testing tools to identify vehicle faults.
- Test-drive vehicles before and after repairs to ensure proper operation.
- Maintain accurate service records and repair documentation.
- Follow workplace safety procedures and use tools and equipment correctly.
- Communicate repair recommendations and estimated costs to customers or supervisors.
- Keep the workshop clean, organized, and compliant with safety standards.

The successful candidate MUST possess the following:

- High school diploma or equivalent; certification/diploma in Automotive Technology is an asset.
- Proven experience as an Auto Mechanic or Automotive Technician.
- Strong knowledge of vehicle systems, maintenance and repair procedures.
- Proficiency in using diagnostic tools and automotive repair equipment.
- Strong mechanical, technical, diagnostic and troubleshooting skills.
- Excellent problem-solving, attention to detail and time-management skills.
- Strong communication and teamwork skills.
- Physical stamina and manual dexterity.
- Valid driver's license.

Interested persons are asked to apply in writing to:

RE: Auto Mechanic

The Human Resources Manager - Antigua Public Utilities Authority
Cnr. High Street & Independence Drive, PO BOX 416
St. John's, Antigua

OR email - hr@apua.ag

Deadline for application is Thursday 3rd September, 2026

**** Only suitable applicants will be acknowledged ****

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Let The Conversation Begin



By Hon. E.P Chet Greene

The recent exchange between the Government of Antigua and Barbuda and the Commonwealth Magistrates' and Judges' Association (CMJA) represents a pivotal moment for our region. The escalating crisis of violent crime and the public anxiety over sentencing outcomes have been discussed in hushed tones, or worse, reduced to partisan point scoring. The correspondence between yours truly and CMJA Secretary General Dr. Karen Brewer has done the region an immense service by elevating this discourse to a plane of seriousness and responsibility that it has long deserved.

Prime Minister Gaston Browne must be commended for opening what is undeniably a difficult but necessary conversation. By voicing the deep seated frustrations of a public weary of firearm violence and what many perceive as unduly lenient sentences, he shined a spotlight on a systemic issue that parliaments and citizens across the Caribbean are grappling with. While the Prime Minister did

himself no favors by referencing an unnamed judge, his subsequent clarification, ruling out any executive action against judicial officers and reaffirming that all matters of tenure and conduct are governed by the Constitution, was a critical step. It demonstrated that while the concern is legit-

imate, the methods for addressing it must remain within constitutional bounds. His historical performance and the consistent commitment of Antigua and Barbuda to the rule of law obviously resonated with the CMJA, allowing for the sober review of my letter and moving the conversation be-



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yond inflammatory headlines.

Equally, the Commonwealth Magistrates and Judges Association must be commended for capturing the essence of the Prime Minister's public lamentation. By responding with a focus on constitutional principles and practical solutions, rather than mere condemnation, the CMJA has shown a path forward. Their response is, undoubtedly, a masterclass in constructive engagement. Their offer to publish my letter alongside their own statement is an act of transparency that will allow for an expanded readership and generate the kind of robust, informed discussion that is essential for a healthy democracy.

What is most instructive for all of us and what I implore the Antigua and Barbuda population and the wider Caribbean civilization to take onboard, is the tone and content of the CMJA's reply. They did not retreat into defensive posturing. Instead, they opened a door to cooperation, offering training to our judiciary and inviting our Government to send representation to a judicial conference in Jamaica. These are not the actions of an organization seeking to shut down a debate but of one seek-

ing to enrich it. This is not about winning or losing an argument; it is about finding workable, principled solutions to a regional crisis.

There is no value in gloating or in re-litigating the statements issued by our local Bar Association or their OECS counterparts. That is the politics of the past. What is instructive and what must be taken onboard by all of us, is the responsible, forward looking approach of the CMJA. Their actions augur well for our region, signaling a meeting of the minds and a willingness to let ideas contend.

Let the conversation begin. Let us talk about sentencing guide-

lines, judicial training, the right of appeal and the evidence led reforms that are necessary to protect our citizens without compromising judicial independence. As the Prime Minister rightly noted, the principles of judicial independence, constitutional government and public safety are not opposing forces; they are mutually reinforcing pillars upon which our civilization rests.

It is a difficult but important conversation. Let us all as citizens, governments and judiciaries participate in it with the seriousness, responsibility and respect it deserves.

Let the conversation begin!



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FAO urges stronger investment in Latin America and Caribbean agrifood systems



The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) is calling for increased and more coordinated investment in agrifood systems across Latin America and the Caribbean, as countries seek to address food insecurity, climate risks and financing gaps in rural areas.

The call followed a two-day regional meeting in Santiago on August 18 and 19 that brought together about 70 representatives from governments, development banks, financial institutions, international organizations, the private sector and family farming groups.

The meeting, titled “Investing in Agrifood Systems in Latin America and the Caribbean,” focused on developing a roadmap to move beyond financial inclusion toward larger-scale investments capable of generating greater impact in rural territories.

Latin America and the Caribbean is a major contributor to global food production but remains highly exposed to climate-related risks. To this end the

FAO suggests that financing for agrifood systems is still insufficient and fragmented compared with the scale of the region’s needs and opportunities.

“Latin America and the Caribbean is a global agrifood powerhouse, but 32 million people still suffer from hunger, and nearly 70% of food producers face barriers to accessing formal finance,” said Rene Orellana Halkyer, FAO Assistant Director-General and Regional Representative for Latin America and the Caribbean.

He said the region has an opportunity and a shared responsibility to turn its agrifood potential into investments that strengthen food security, climate resilience and rural development.

Chilean Agriculture Minister Jaime Campos Quiroga, who attended the closing session, said financial solutions should reflect differences in the scale of production, territorial conditions and the challenges farmers face.

Participants identified five broad pri-

orities for strengthening financing for agrifood systems in the region.

One key recommendation was to move away from isolated projects and develop territorial investment portfolios that combine production, value chains, infrastructure, connectivity, technical services, markets and financial instruments tailored to local conditions.

The meeting also stressed the importance of strengthening human and organizational capacity in rural communities through financial education, technical assistance, business management and collective organization.

Another priority was the creation of stronger partnerships among governments, development banks, financial institutions, cooperatives, businesses, investors, universities, international cooperation agencies and local organizations.

Climate action was also placed at the center of investment decisions. Par-

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Participants called for the development of investment portfolios supporting sustainable production, ecosystem restoration, resilient infrastructure, improved water management and wider access to agricultural insurance.

The meeting further emphasized that small and medium-sized family farmers, their organizations and rural communities should be central to the new investment agenda. Participants proposed financial solutions that combine

financing with technical assistance, information, risk management, market access and partnerships.

The Santiago meeting also contributed to a broader regional discussion on building local financial ecosystems capable of supporting producers, co-operatives, rural organizations and agrifood businesses.

Regional and international organizations represented included the Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization, CARICOM, the World Bank, the MERCOSUR Specialized Meeting on Family Farming and the Office of the UN Resident Coordinator.

The dialogue concluded with a call for a new generation of investments that can combine productivity, financial inclusion, climate resilience and territorial development, while strengthening cooperation between public and private actors to expand financing opportunities in rural areas.



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Key duties include:

- Supervise daily workshop operations, staff assignments, workflow, productivity and turnaround times.
- Coordinate preventive and corrective maintenance of vehicles and equipment in accordance with APUA service standards.
- Diagnose, inspect, repair and maintain mechanical, electrical and other vehicle systems using appropriate diagnostic equipment.
- Ensure completed work meets quality, safety and technical standards through inspections and testing.
- Maintain accurate maintenance records and submit required workshop performance reports.
- Ensure the workshop, tools and equipment are safe, clean, organized and compliant with APUA procedures.

The successful candidate MUST possess the following:

- Diploma or certification in Automotive Technology, Mechanical Engineering or a related field.
- Minimum of 5 years' progressive experience in vehicle/equipment maintenance; supervisory experience is an asset.
- Strong technical knowledge of diesel and gasoline engines, hydraulics, electrical systems and diagnostics.
- Proven leadership and team management skills, with the ability to motivate and develop staff.
- Strong problem-solving, planning and organizational skills, with the ability to manage competing priorities effectively.
- Strong commitment to workplace safety standards and compliance.
- Excellent oral and written communication and customer service skills.
- Proficiency in maintenance recordkeeping, digital tracking systems and reporting.
- Familiarity with APUA operational policies and public sector procurement processes is an asset.

Interested persons are asked to apply in writing to:

RE: Auto Mechanic

The Human Resources Manager - Antigua Public Utilities Authority
Cnr. High Street & Independence Drive, PO BOX 416
St. John's, Antigua

OR email - hr@apua.ag

Deadline for application is Thursday 3rd September, 2026

**** Only suitable applicants will be acknowledged ****

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A vibrant poster for the Antigua Carnival 70th Anniversary. The background features a collage of carnival performers in elaborate feathered costumes, dancing and celebrating. The central logo is a stylized, colorful emblem with a star and a flag. Below the logo, the text 'ANTIGUA Carnival' is written in a bold, pink, sans-serif font, with 'Carnival' in a script font. Underneath, 'THE CARIBBEAN'S GREATEST SUMMER FESTIVAL' is written in a smaller, black, sans-serif font. The '70' is large and stylized, with a blue and white pattern. At the bottom, the dates 'JULY 20TH - AUGUST 3RD 2027' are written in a large, bold, pink, sans-serif font. Social media icons for Facebook and Instagram are at the very bottom, followed by the text 'ANTIGUA CARNIVAL' and '@ANTIGUAFESTIVALSOFFICIAL'.

ANTIGUA
Carnival
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Legendary **70**

JULY 20TH - AUGUST 3RD 2027

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St Kitts announces successful water drilling project

The St Kitts and Nevis government says its multi-million dollar (One EC dollar=US\$0.37 cents) ground water drilling project has recorded a major breakthrough following the successful drilling of a new groundwater well in Saddlers, north of here.

It said that the Saddlers well is the first to be drilled under the project being undertaken by St Kitts Water Services Department, in collaboration with the Trinidad and Tobago-based Water and Oil Well Services and technical specialists.

The programme forms part of the government's broader strategy to expand water production and move St Kitts towards reliable 24-hour water service island-wide.

The government said that the Saddlers site was prioritised following extensive airborne surveying and hydrogeological assessments that identified 17 prospective drilling locations across St Kitts, with the wider exploration programme focusing heavily on communities that have historically experienced intermittent water service.

Drilling at Saddlers has now been completed, with the well reaching a total depth of approximately 640 feet after encountering the water table at roughly 500 feet. The project team is currently conducting safe-yield testing to determine the amount of water that can be sustainably extracted from the source over time.

The government said that initial testing has already produced approximately 175 US gallons of water per minute and project manager Joshua Ross has described the Saddlers well as "a very promising well," noting that the projected output represents an exceptional volume of water from a single groundwater source.

The authorities say that once the permanent pump is installed and final testing is completed, work will advance on construction of the pump house, in-



stallation of associated infrastructure and connection of the new supply to the existing water distribution system.

"The additional supply is expected to significantly strengthen water availability for Saddlers and surrounding communities, including Harris' Village, Lavington and Belle Vue. Officials have also indicated that, because of the volume of water anticipated from the well, the new supply could potentially be redirected to support other neighbouring areas when required," the government said in a statement.

"The significance of the find is underscored by the fact that the existing source supplying the Saddlers area currently produces approximately 50 gallons per minute. The new well therefore has the potential to add several times the volume currently being supplied to the area and substantially improve the resilience of the local water system," it added.

Chief water engineer Landrith Isaac said that the groundwater programme is being implemented alongside other major investments in water infrastructure, including the Basseterre Desalination Plant, which was commissioned in February 2026 and added approximately two million gallons of water

per day to the national supply.

According to Isaac, these interventions are designed to work together as part of a coordinated national approach to increasing production, improving interconnectivity between water systems and ensuring that communities across St Kitts have access to a dependable supply.

"Everything has to work together to ensure that everyone gets a 24-hour supply," Isaac said, further indicating that once the new groundwater wells are completed and integrated into the system, St Kitts is projected to achieve approximately 99.9 per cent 24-hour water service coverage.

The drilling programme is expected to continue over an estimated period of approximately 18 months, subject to geological conditions encountered at the respective locations.

"The government of St Kitts and Nevis remains committed to addressing long standing water challenges through sustained investment and a structured, multi-pronged approach aimed at delivering reliable, sustainable and ultimately 24-hour water service to communities across St Kitts," the statement said. (CMC)

Caricom employs external law firm to deal with re-appointment of secretary general



The 15-member Caribbean Community (Caricom) grouping has employed the services of a regional law firm to present its response to the challenge by Trinidad and Tobago's Prime Minister Kamla Persad-Bissessar regarding the reappointment of Caricom Secretary General, Dr Carla Barnett.

Caricom chairman and St Lucia's Prime Minister Phillip J Pierre told a news conference on Monday that his recent visit to Port of Spain where he met with Prime Minister Persad-Bissessar was "very cordial".

"Basically, the prime minister wanted an update. I went to give an update on the advisory opinion ... and what was the state of play on the opinion that the government of Trinidad and Tobago requested on the appointment of the secretary-general of Caricom.

"As you know that the government of Trinidad and Tobago agreed that they wanted an advisory opinion from the Caribbean Court of Justice (CCJ) on the appointment of the secretary-general. So we went to update each other. I updated her as to where we were as Caricom and she updated me as to what the government of Trinidad and

Tobago was doing in terms of asking for that opinion. It was a very cordial meeting," Pierre told reporters.

Pierre said that Trinidad and Tobago has prepared its position "and Caricom will review it through its counsel and I want to tell you that the secretary-general of Caricom and the counsel of Caricom have excused themselves from the process.

"They're not involved in the process at all. Neither the secretary-general of Caricom nor the counsel of Caricom is involved in the process. The process has been handled by external counsel.

"Caricom has employed external

counsel so we want to ensure that the whole process is transparent. So Caricom's secretary-general is not involved nor is the counsel of Caricom not involved either."

He said where the parties are at now, is that the external counsel that Caricom has employed "has all the documents, all the precedents as it relates to the appointment of secretary-general and the Trinidad and Tobago government will present its case to the judges".

He gave no indication as to when that would occur.

Caricom leaders at their summit in St Lucia last month had agreed to seek an advisory opinion from the CCJ after both Trinidad and Tobago and Jamaica had written to them regarding the procedure used on re-appointing Barnett, the first woman to ever hold the post of Caricom secretary general.

Trinidad and Tobago said then that its objection to the reappointment of "is neither personal nor political" and in her 22-page letter to the regional leaders, Prime Minister Persad-Bissessar also noted that Port of Spain's position "is not directed towards any individual," but rather "it concerns the legality of the process adopted, the integrity of our institutions and the faithful observance of the constitutional framework established by the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas".

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Regional News

She said that her administration “does not accept the process by which the secretary-general was purportedly reappointed, and consequently, is unable to recognise the validity of the purported second term of the secretary-general.

“I wish to be very clear: our position is not held to create division within the Community, but to preserve the constitutional order upon which the legitimacy and credibility of Caricom ultimately depends.

“Regional unity cannot rest upon expediency and irregular practices masquerading as precedent. It must rest upon adherence to the rules which every member state has freely accepted and undertaken to uphold,” Persad-Bissessar wrote in her letter.

Late last month, the Trinidad-based CCJ said it was not in receipt of any official request for an advisory opinion from Caricom regarding the re-appointment of Barnett.

“While the Court is not yet in receipt of any official request for an advisory opinion from Caricom, it takes note of the information in the public domain that such a request may be forthcoming,” the CCJ said.

The CCJ said that within 14 days of receipt of a request for an advisory opinion, the Registrar of the Court shall serve copies of the request to all member states and the secretary general of the Caricom.

“Any entity which has been served shall be entitled to make written submissions to the CCJ within 42 days of being served,” it said adding that “in accordance with its internal procedures, an advisory opinion will ordinarily be issued no later than six months after the hearing”.

Pierre told reporters that Persad-Bissessar, who has had a rocky relationship with the 15-member-regional integration grouping since her party was returned to government in April last year after a 10-year absence, “reaffirmed her belief in Caricom.

“So I was very pleased that she did

that. So we’re looking forward to working together,” he said, adding “as you know, Caricom doesn’t have a unified external affairs policy, it nev-

er had,” Pierre said, adding that he expects each Caricom country to deal with its own external affairs. (CMC)



Around 40 dead in gang attack near Haiti's capital

Gang members attacked displaced people huddling inside a church near Haiti's capital, killing around 40, some of them execution-style, the mayor told AFP on Monday.

"We have counted around 40 bodies. Searches are continuing. Some people are still missing" after the attack Sunday night in the town of Kenscoff in the hills above the capital, its mayor Massillon Jean said.

He described "a night of terror" in a town plagued for months by gang violence.

Jean said that among other places the assailants targeted a site housing people who had already fled violence.

"The bandits raided a displaced persons camp located in a church. They executed several people. There are fatalities and dozens of wounded. Some people were abducted by the criminals," Jean said.

In a statement issued after the attack, the office of Prime Minister Alix Didier Fils-Aime expressed "deep compassion" for the bereaved families and all the victims.

The government also announced that reinforcements would be sent to restore security in the area.

Kenscoff, a mountainous municipality southeast of the Haitian capital,



has for several months been the scene of clashes and incursions by armed groups seeking to expand their control.

Haiti, the poorest country in the Americas, has for years suffered from chronic political instability, natural disasters, corruption and violence from powerful gangs that carry out rampant killings, rapes, looting and kidnappings. The gangs control much of the capital city.

Nearly 1.5 million Haitians are currently displaced in a country of about

11 million, and more than five million are facing severe food insecurity, according to UN figures.

The crisis worsened in early 2024, when gangs launched a wave of violence that forced the unelected prime minister to resign.

Haiti has not held any kind of election since 2016. Its last president, Jovenel Moise, was assassinated in July 2021 and not replaced.

A general election is scheduled for December of this year. (AFP)

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Regional News

Caribbean urged to prepare for hotter, drier conditions as El Niño intensifies



Governments, businesses, farmers and households across the Caribbean are being urged to step up preparations for potentially severe climate extremes as El Niño strengthens and threatens to intensify the hot and dry conditions already affecting parts of the region.

In a news release on Tuesday, the Caribbean Institute of Meteorology and Hydrology (CIMH) and the University of the West Indies Climate Studies Group Mona (UWI CSGM) warned that the region should remain particularly vigilant as August to October marks the peak of the Caribbean's heat season.

The unusually dry conditions are also raising concern because the region is expected to enter its climatological dry season around November. Current forecasts indicate that below-normal rainfall could persist into 2027, while potentially record-breaking heat could develop during the next heat season, particularly from March through May.

Dr Cedric Van Meerbeeck, climatologist at CIMH, said El Niño conditions in the Pacific strengthened rapidly from weak levels around May 2026 to moderate levels by July. Monitoring data now point to further rapid intensification, with forecasts showing a high likelihood of very strong El Niño conditions between October and December 2026.

The conditions are also expected to persist into the peak of the Caribbean dry season in March 2027.

Historically, El Niño has been associated with severe droughts across the region, including those experienced in 2009–2010 and 2014–2016. It can also increase the risk of extreme humid heat, wildfires and marine heatwaves, which can contribute to coral bleaching, according to Dr Van Meerbeeck.

He said similar combinations of extreme heat and other climate impacts were recorded during the exceptionally hot years of 2010, 2023 and 2024.

Areas already experiencing drought, particularly in the Eastern Caribbean, could face slower recovery of water resources during the peak of the wet season between September and October or November 2026.

Forecasts through at least October also point to a widening area of below-normal rainfall stretching from the Guianas in South America across the Lesser Antilles and into the Greater Antilles. At the same time, the region is expected to experience an increase in the number of days with hot spells.

The combination of reduced rainfall and increased evaporation could result in drought conditions across much of the Windward and Leeward Islands and the ABC Islands, as well as parts of the Greater Antilles, including Jamaica and Hispaniola, and portions of The Bahamas by October or November 2026.

These conditions could continue into

Regional News

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early 2027 and expand across the region, raising concerns about accumulated water deficits and an increased risk of wildfires.

El Niño is generally associated with quieter Atlantic hurricane seasons, a pattern that has been evident during the 2026 season so far. The season has had a relatively quiet start, with three weak and short-lived named storms in the Gulf of Mexico and one storm in the North Atlantic that remained far from land. CIMH's early-August 2026 Atlantic Hurricane Season Activity Outlook found strong evidence that the remainder of the season could produce fewer storms than an average year.

However, Dr Van Meerbeeck stressed that a quieter hurricane season does not eliminate the threat of significant impacts.

"The risks signalled by the science earlier this year are now beginning to materialise," said Professor Michael Taylor, co-director of UWI CSGM. "We are seeing an emerging climate disaster whose impacts combine heat, drought and marine extremes. Unlike a hurricane, the impacts will continue

to build over months. However, that should not lessen the urgency or scale of our preparations. We must respond to the unfolding slow-moving crisis with the seriousness we bring to other major climate threats, since what we do now determines the options available to us later."

Agriculture is expected to be among the sectors most vulnerable to the changing conditions. Reduced rainfall combined with higher temperatures can increase crop losses, threatening food security and rural livelihoods, particularly for subsistence farmers.

Rain-fed agriculture is of particular concern in areas where longer and more frequent dry spells are forecast, including Belize and Jamaica. The health sector could also face increased pressure, including risks linked to water quality and availability, vector-borne diseases and heat-related illnesses.

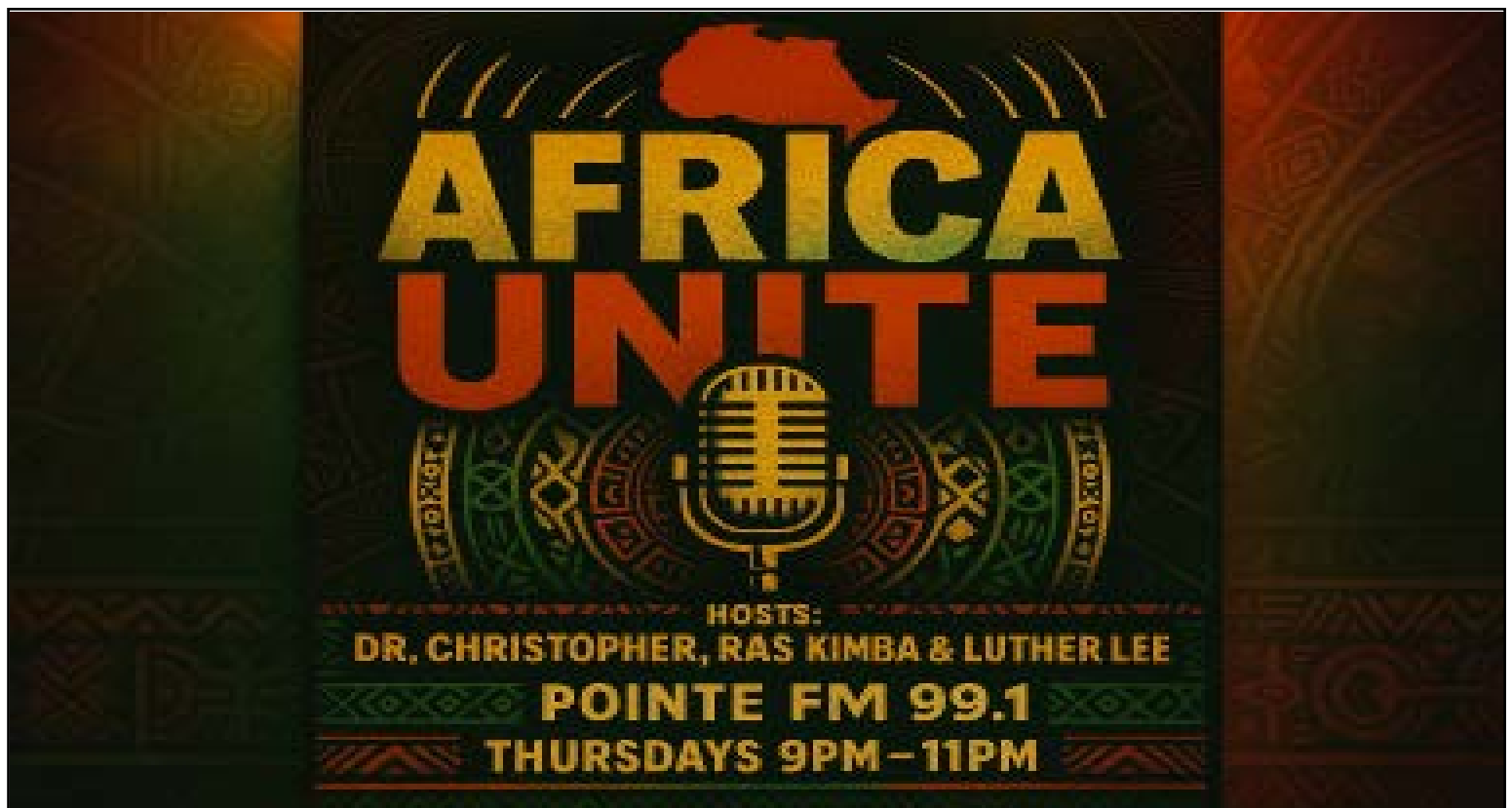
Water and energy systems may come under additional strain as demand for cooling rises. Countries that depend heavily on hydroelectricity or freshwater-cooled energy production could be particularly vulnerable.

The tourism sector may also feel the effects as hotels and other tourism facilities face increased demand for cooling and freshwater, while visitors and workers are exposed to prolonged periods of heat and dry conditions.

The Caribbean's dependence on imports means climate-related disruptions outside the region could also affect food supplies, trade and the cost of goods. Governments are being urged to assess potential risks to supply chains, transportation networks and major trade routes.

Previous droughts have disrupted operations at the Panama Canal, an important transit route for goods entering the Caribbean and reaching ports along the eastern coast of the United States.

Food production in some of the region's traditional source markets could also be affected by climate conditions, potentially creating additional pressure on regional food security and increasing the cost of living, the release said. (Jamaica Observer)



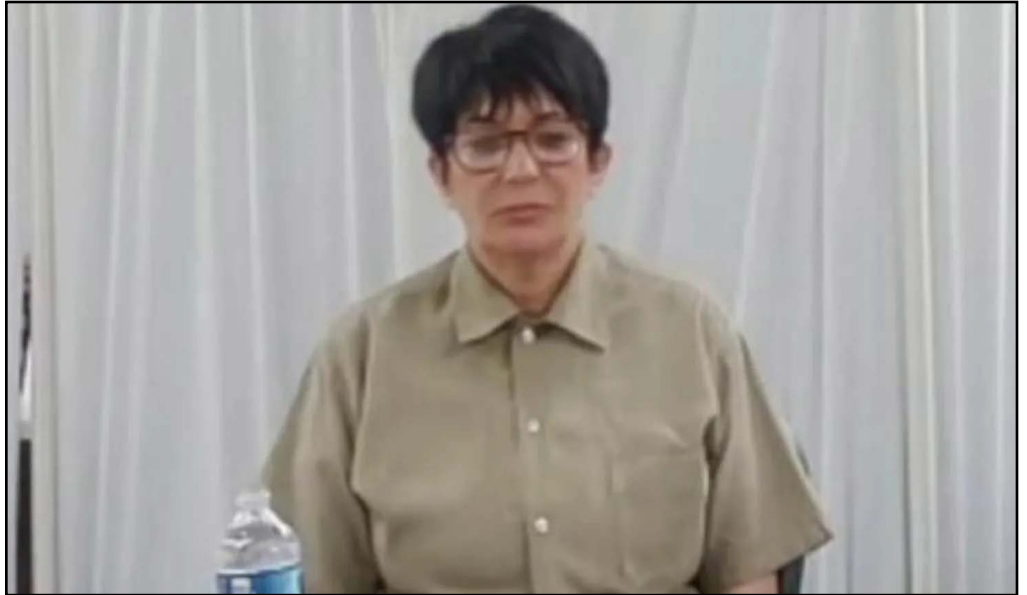
US judge rejects Ghislaine Maxwell's 'frivolous' appeal against conviction

Ghislaine Maxwell's latest bid to overturn her sex trafficking conviction has been rejected by a US judge, who dismissed her claims as "frivolous" and "meritless".

The 64-year-old is serving a 20-year prison sentence for her role in procuring girls for the late sex offender Jeffrey Epstein after being found guilty in December 2021.

Maxwell had appealed against her five felony convictions, claiming her constitutional rights had been "violated in multiple respects".

But a New York judge flatly rejected the appeal, describing it as "lengthy and rambling". (BBC)



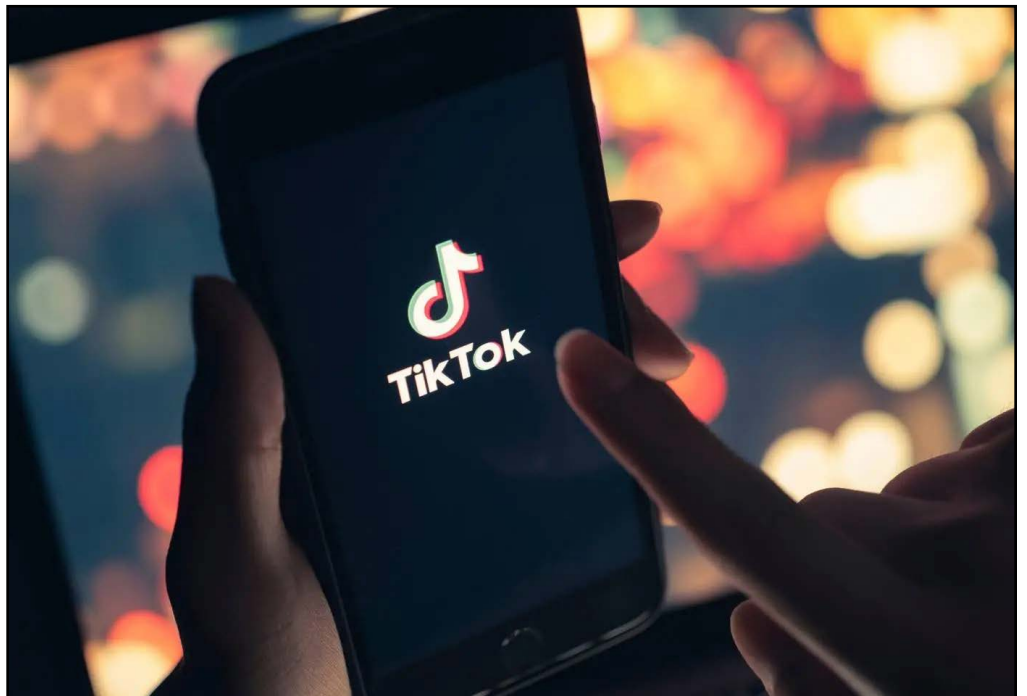
Brazil fines TikTok US\$30m over child data management

Brazil's National Data Protection Agency (ANPD) said Tuesday it had imposed a fine of nearly US\$30 million on TikTok for "irregularities in the processing of data belonging to children and adolescents".

In addition to the fine of 153.7 million reais (US\$29.9 million), the agency ordered parent company ByteDance to "delete the data collected in violation of regulations".

TikTok has committed to "implementing a compliance plan to improve the protection of children and adolescents", the ANPD said.

The agency this month also ordered the suspension of popular streaming platform Discord after a teenage girl was allegedly encouraged to take her own life during a broadcast. (AFP)



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Kidnappers release video showing hundreds abducted from Nigerian mosque



Kidnappers have released a video of what appears to be a large group of people being held captive by armed men in a forested area in Nigeria.

The video emerged on Sunday, two days after gunmen abducted as many as 600 worshippers during Friday prayers at a mosque in Dekera village in Nigeria's north-central Niger state.

The incident comes as Nigeria prepares for presidential elections in January, with security likely to be high on the agenda due to a wave of mass kidnappings for ransom across the north of the country.

Dekera village residents have reported that gunmen took people away in simultaneous raids on several communities.

In the video, posted on Facebook and WhatsApp and circulating widely, children can be heard crying. A gunman speaking in the Hausa language

speaks directly to families of the captives, telling them to identify relatives.

"These are all your people," the gunman says.

News agencies reported that they could not verify the exact date or location where the video was filmed. However, no older version of the video has been found posted online before Sunday.

Residents, including Abdulmutallib Muqaddas Dindi, were able to confirm the identities of some of the hostages.

"We have identified our elders, relatives, and some of us have seen their wives and children in the video," he said.

Police and state authorities have not responded to requests for comment.

Amnesty International has urged Nigerian authorities to secure the release of the worshippers, warning of the

growing threat posed by mass abductions in northern Nigeria.

State Commissioner for Information and Orientation Obed Nana told the Anadolu news agency that an operation is under way to "assess the situation, track the attackers, and facilitate the rescue of the abducted worshippers".

Mass abductions for ransom have become common in parts of northwestern and north-central Nigeria, with armed gangs frequently raiding villages, schools and highways and holding abductees until the gangs are paid large sums of money.

Increasingly, the gunmen are targeting communities further south, beyond hot spots in the north.

As he prepares for the election, President Bola Tinubu has faced growing criticism over lax security. (Al Jazeera)



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SEPTEMBER

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🕒 10am



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11

SEPTEMBER

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August 25, 2026

PUBLIC ADVISORY: FIRE AT COOKS SANITARY LANDFILL

The **National Solid Waste Management Authority (NSWMA)** wishes to advise the general public that a fire is currently affecting the **Cooks Sanitary Landfill**.

As a result of the fire, smoke, ash and other airborne debris may be carried into surrounding communities depending on wind conditions. Residents, motorists and businesses in affected areas are therefore strongly encouraged to take the necessary precautions to minimize exposure.

Members of the public are advised to:

- Keep windows and doors closed where smoke or airborne debris is present.
- Limit unnecessary outdoor activity in affected areas.
- Avoid direct exposure to smoke, ash and airborne particles.
- Keep children, elderly persons and individuals with respiratory sensitivities indoors as much as possible where conditions are affected.
- Exercise caution when travelling through areas where smoke may reduce visibility.
- Follow any additional guidance issued by the relevant health and emergency authorities.

The NSWMA is actively addressing the situation and will continue to monitor conditions at the landfill.

We ask the public to remain vigilant and take the necessary precautions while operations are underway. Further updates will be provided as information becomes available.

The National Solid Waste Management Authority thanks the public for its patience, cooperation and understanding.

Thomas fails to medal at Junior Caribbean Cycling Championships

Antigua and Barbuda Elite Thomas failed to finish among the top performers at the 2026 Junior Caribbean Cycling Championships (JCCC) in Belize on August 22 and 23.

Elite, who was accompanied by his father and team manager Timothy Thomas, finished 15th among a field of 19 cyclists in the juvenile road race.

Elite Thomas completed the 62.4-kilometer Juvenile Road Race in a time of two hours and 11 minutes.

The Juvenile Road Race was won by Ahmaad Cherrington of Belize in one hour, 56 minutes, and 45 seconds.

Dylan Eiselt of Bermuda took second place in one hour, 58 minutes, and 24 seconds, and fellow Bermudan Jens Drea finished in third place by clocking one hour, 58 minutes, and 51 seconds.

Devyn Major of Belize won the junior male road race, which covered a distance of 93.6 kilometers, in a time of two hours, 50 minutes, and 52 seconds. Keith Enwright Jr. of Belize claimed second place, and Ryan Thompson of the Cayman Islands finished third.

Elite Thomas finished eighth among a field of 11 cyclists in the Juvenile Individual Time Trial over a distance of 15 kilometers. Thomas clocked a time of 24 minutes and 46.20 seconds.

Ahmaad Cherrington of Belize also won the Juvenile Individual Time Trial in 20 minutes and 41.24 seconds. Dylan Eiselt of Bermuda came second in 21 minutes and 23.72 seconds, and Matthew Briggs-Legall of Barbados finished third.

Ryan Thompson of the Cayman Islands won the Junior Male Individual Time Trial over a distance of 20



Elite Thomas

kilometers in 26 minutes and 03.44 seconds.

Bermuda's Jacob Wright took second place in 26 minutes and 44.95 seconds, and Jonah Kelly of Barbados claimed third place.

Ella-Marie Young of Trinidad and Tobago and Alexis Lasley of Barbados both captured two titles in the women's competition.

Young won the female juvenile road race in one hour, 58 minutes, and 52 seconds. Barbados' Laila McIntyre came second ahead of compatriot Victori Bourne, who captured third place.

Young also secured the title in the

juvenile individual time trial in 26 minutes and 35.18 seconds. Ali Banfield of Barbados claimed second place ahead of fellow Barbadian Victori Bourne in third place.

Lashley captured the junior women's road race in two hours, eight minutes, and 43 seconds. Fellow Barbadian Jenais Johnson came second, and Irene Baki of Belize finished in third place.

Lashley also won the junior women's individual time trial in 23 minutes and 30.18 seconds. Irene Baki of Belize took second place ahead of compatriot Lianni Choto, who secured third place.

ABAVA extends congratulations to Antiguan volleyball officials

The Antigua & Barbuda Volleyball Association (ABAVA) has expressed congratulations to three officials who successfully completed coaching courses recently.

Raenor Sharpe and Joelle Thomas successfully completed the Eastern Caribbean Volleyball Association (ECVA)/BVI FIVB Level One Volleyball Coaches Course in Tortola, British Virgin Islands, from August 17 to 21.

Fellow Antiguan Delron Frederick and Chadiya Martin successfully completed the 2026 ECVA National Volleyball Referees Course in the British Virgin Islands on August 16.

During the ECVA/BVI FIVB Level One Volleyball Coaches Course, participants from national federations of the ECVA received a valuable opportunity to strengthen their coaching knowledge, sharpen technical skills, and build greater capacity within volleyball across the region.

Participants got a chance to teach a drill, participate in classroom sessions, and take quizzes, putting new coaching skills into practice throughout the course, which was conducted by facilitator Coach Rick Bevis of Canada.

Coach Bevis has a long career as an educator and coach, with expertise in coaching education, sport leadership, and educational sport psychology.

His applied research and scholarship focus on the youth sport experience, and he has coached at all levels, from grassroots to high performance, in Canada and internationally, both indoor and beach volleyball.

Delron Frederick and Chadiya Martin's participation in the ECVA National Volleyball Referees Course brought together officials from across the region for a three-phase training programme designed to raise the standard of officiating in volleyball.

The course is a three-phase training programme designed to raise the standard of officiating in volleyball.



Raenor Sharpe, right, and Joelle Thomas

The three-stage course includes on-line sessions from July 21 to August 6, classroom instruction on August 10 and 11, and practical, on-court training from August 12 to 16.

The other participants represented Dominica, St. Kitts & Nevis, St. Maarten, Grenada, St. Lucia, St. Vincent & the Grenadines, Montserrat, St. Eustatius, the British Virgin Islands, Bermuda, and Anguilla.

The course was led by instructors Brian Charles and Reginald Williamsburg.

The ABAVA said, from virtual learning sessions to hands-on practical training in the BVI, Frederick and Martin have shown dedication and discipline in taking this important step forward in their officiating journey.

ABAVA applauds their achievement and their continued commitment to raising the standard of volleyball officiating in Antigua and Barbuda. This is a win for the sport and for the nation," the ABAVA added.

The ABAVA also said it is an important achievement for Sharpe and Thomas in their coaching journeys and the continued development of volleyball in Antigua & Barbuda.



Delron Frederick, left, and Chadiya Martin

"Their successful completion marks another important step in strengthening the technical capacity of volleyball in Antigua & Barbuda. The knowledge, skills, and experience gained through this course will not only contribute to their individual development as coaches but also to the continued growth of our athletes and the sport at home," the ABAVA stated in a media release.

"The ABAVA also extends warm congratulations to all participants from across the region who successfully completed the course. Your commitment to learning and developing the game is an investment in the future of Caribbean volleyball.

"We are proud to see Antigua & Barbuda represented and continuing to invest in the development of our volleyball family. Investing in our coaches means investing in the future of the sport."

Sports News

Serena Williams is back at the US Open, playing mixed doubles



Serena Williams of the United States reacts to a winning point during a women's doubles match against Marta Kostyuk of Ukraine and Peyton Stearns of the United States at the Cincinnati Open tennis tournament in Mason, Ohio, on Monday, Aug. 17, 2026. (AP)

NEW YORK (AP) — Serena Williams is back at the US Open for her first match at the Grand Slam tournament since 2022, playing mixed doubles alongside defending men's singles champion Carlos Alcaraz.

Williams and Alcaraz were slated to face one half of the reigning women's doubles champions, Erin Routliffe, and Lloyd Glasspool in the first round on Tuesday.

They are one of the star-studded duos

in the second year of the new-looking mixed doubles event, with Aryna Sabalenka and Novak Djokovic also participating together.

Returning to tennis earlier this year at 44, Williams is not planning to play singles at the US Open. Nevertheless, she and Alcaraz have an opportunity to add another title at Flushing Meadows to their respective resumes.

Williams has 10 US Open championships. She also has six in women's

singles, two in women's doubles with sister Venus and one in mixed doubles, with Max Mirnyi in 1998.

Alcaraz has won the men's singles tournament twice, including four years ago when Serena initially stepped away from the sport.

Following the first round and quarterfinals on Tuesday, the mixed doubles semifinals and final are slated to take place on Wednesday night, with the winners getting a US\$1 million prize.

A Chinese humanoid robot sets a new 100-meter sprint record



Official extinguish the fire to a Humanoid robot after hitting the barrier at the end of the 100m race during the World Humanoid Robot Games in Beijing, Tuesday, Aug. 25, 2026. (AP)

BEIJING (AP) — A Chinese humanoid robot set a new 100-meter sprint record of 8.86 seconds in Beijing on Tuesday, beating its robot competitors — and the fastest recorded human time.

The race was part of China's World Humanoid Robot Games, an Olympic-style competition now in its second year in Beijing.

The event is also a showcase for China's rapid advances in robotics amid an intensifying technology rivalry with the United States of America (USA).

The previous robot record of 9.39 seconds had been set just three days earlier, on Saturday.

For comparison, the men's 100-meter world record is 9.58 seconds, set by Jamaican sprinter Usain Bolt in 2009.

The record-breaking robot fell after crossing the finish line and crashing into a padded barrier, with sparks flying from its waist.

The Games features over 1,300 competitions include more than 2,000 robots in 51 events like running, long jump and table tennis, as well as ball-

room dancing.

Unlike the traditional Olympics, the robots also compete in teams in real-world scenarios, including household tasks, hotel services, and emergency response.

“‘Housekeeper’ and ‘caregiver’ robots are still in the pilot and validation phase,” China's official newspaper People's Daily said on Monday, “(but) challenges are precisely where the focus of development lies ... China's robotics industry is evolving toward higher quality and innovation.”

ECVA welcomes Antiguan **Tori-Ann Browne** as new lead regional scorer



Tori-Ann Browne

Antiguan official Tori-Ann Browne has been elevated to the position of Lead Regional Scorer of the Eastern Caribbean Volleyball Association (ECVA).

Browne achieved the position after joining fellow Antiguan Vanessa Burke and Rawle Lee in a three-member Antigua and Barbuda team in officiating in the 2026 ECVA Senior Men's & Women's Volleyball Championships in Tortola, British Virgin Islands, from August 12 to 16.

As lead regional scorer, Browne will ensure the accurate recording, management, verification, and reporting of all official match scores and statistical information during ECVA competitions.

The role supports the technical delegate, referees, and competition director in maintaining the integrity and efficiency of tournament operations.

Browne's journey with volleyball began on the court, playing for Scotiabank in the Antigua and Barbuda Amateur Volleyball Association (ABAVA) Business League competition, and

she was hooked from the first whistle.

That love for the game led her to join Jets Volleyball Club, where she plays as a middle blocker, and she has gone on to take up a management role with High Flyerz Volleyball Club.

Browne's path into the technical side of the sport came via the **Volleyball Information System (VIS)**, a digital data management and statistical software platform created by the Interna-

tional Volleyball Federation (FIVB).

In learning VIS, Browne was first introduced to fellow Antiguan Orson James, who is a representative of the ECVA that serves on the NORCECA Commission as a member of the Technical, Statistics, and Visualization Committee.

The technical, statistics, and visualization role focuses on transforming raw data into actionable, strategic, and easily understandable insights for decision-making.

From there, Browne's drive to do it all took over. She wanted to be involved in both VIS and scoring, and whenever tournaments were short on volunteers, she was always the one available to step in.

That reliability paid off. She was invited to assist James at a tournament in St. Kitts, and it was there that James and the VIS team put her forward for the lead scorer role.

Over the years, working closely with VIS, she learned the ins and outs of taking stats and scoring, experience that ultimately led her to achieve the position as the lead regional scorer of the ECVA.

"We're happy to welcome an addition to our team who will help make the work more efficient," said supervisor Orson James.

Browne shares that enthusiasm, saying, "This is a great opportunity, and I'm looking forward to making the scoring top-notch. On the ECVA level, I assist where I can, troubleshoot and resolve any issues, and I plan to work closely with the technical team to make every tournament a success."