

\$20M Injected into Road Repairs Ahead of CHOGM

Story on page 2



(Left to right) Deputy Chief Immigration Officers, Nigel Emmanuel and Maxine Lewis, Foreign Affairs and Immigration Minister, E. P Chet Greene and Chief Immigration Officer, Katrina Yearwood

Local News



\$20M Injected into Road Repairs Ahead of CHOGM

The Government has released an additional \$20 million to the Ministry of Works to accelerate road repairs across Antigua and Barbuda ahead of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in November.

Director General of Communications Maurice Merchant said Cabinet has also approved additional equipment and materials to allow the Ministry to intensify the programme, with priority being given initially to roads surrounding major CHOGM meeting venues and the routes visitors will use to access them.

The Ministry is expected to operate on a six-day work week, with overtime also being utilised to meet the tight deadline.

According to Cabinet, the Ministry of Works is taking a targeted approach because of the limited time available before CHOGM. Rather than attempting complete reconstruction of every roadway, crews will carry out resurfacing, milling, cutting and patching, depending on the condition of each road.

Works have already commenced along sections of the roadway from the Hodges Bay/SunSail area towards Anchorage, with some sections earmarked for resurfacing, while others will undergo cutting and patching.

Similar milling and patching works are being carried out along other priority corridors.

Crews will work throughout the week, with operations continuing except on Sundays.



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

Roadworks are also continuing in the English Harbour and Dockyard areas, where the Ministry is coordinating with utility providers to ensure ruptured lines are addressed before road repairs are completed.

Particular attention is also being placed on the road network and drainage infrastructure in St. John's.

The Ministry has assisted with upgrades to the drainage system near the Performing Arts Centre, with Cabinet being told that the works are approximately 80 per cent complete.

Once the drainage works are completed, the Ministry plans to proceed with resurfacing High Street.

Works will also continue on Newgate Street, including night operations where necessary, while preparations are being made to advance works on St. Mary's Street once utility works are completed.

According to, the interruption of some

road projects had been caused by the unavailability of required materials, but the new programme is expected to allow work to resume in communities across the country.

Additional supplies of sand needed for paving and patching are also being secured to help speed up the programme.

Cabinet has stressed the need for close coordination between the Ministry of Works, APUA, contractors and other agencies to ensure that road resurfacing can begin promptly once underground utility works are completed.

The Government spokesman also addressed outstanding overtime payments owed to Public Works employees.

He said significant progress has been made in reducing the number of workers awaiting payment, although the process remains ongoing because overtime claims must be verified and certified before payments can be released.

The Accounts Department at Public Works has been instructed to accelerate payments and is now working on weekends to meet deadlines established by the Ministry of Finance and Treasury.

Merchant said the Government expects the intensified road programme to deliver visible improvements ahead of CHOGM while ultimately extending the rehabilitation works to communities across Antigua and Barbuda.

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Tougher Crime Penalties Put Prison Reform in Focus

In light of the recent passage of legislation increasing the penalties for certain serious crimes and the likely increase expected in the prison population, Government is now placing greater emphasis on prison reform and law enforcement.

Prime Minister Gaston Browne told Wednesday's meeting of the Cabinet of Antigua and Barbuda that "the Government must plan accordingly" and has directed Attorney General Sir Steadroy, whose responsibilities for the prison are part of his portfolio, to develop a comprehensive plan along with officials of His Majesty's Prison, with rehabilitation and skills development at its core.

"As part of that process, Cabinet discussed the need to expand productive activity at the Prison Farm. The Prime Minister called for additional lands to be brought into agricultural production and for greater emphasis to be placed on the cultivation of food crops and the rearing of **pigs, chickens and other livestock,**" the **Cabinet Notes outlined.**

"Cabinet noted that an expanded prison agricultural programme could contribute to rehabilitation and skills training while simultaneously increasing food production and helping to reduce the cost of feeding the prison population and other public institutions," it added.

Director General of Communications



Maurice Merchant, during yesterday's Post-Cabinet Press Briefing, acknowledged the programmes are crucial for inmates, who, after serving their sentences, will reintegrate into society. He said it is necessary in order to minimise recidivism.

Government is also exploring the possibility of increasing the stipend paid to prison inmates who perform tasks outside of the confines of 1735.

"I won't mention a cost that they are paid whenever they do external work, but increase that to make them have more funds available to them upon their exit from the prison to reintegrate them successfully into society," Merchant added.

An update was also provided yesterday on the plan to construct a modular prison facility in the Potworks Dam area. Maurice Merchant told reporters

that officials are reviewing the drawings to ensure they meet the standards that are required for accommodating inmates.

"As soon as this review is completed, Government will announce a timeline on which it is expected for work to commence on the construction of this new block for the prison, which will be at the prison farm location."

Discussions were also held at the Cabinet level for more magistrates and judges to ensure that justice is dispensed in a timely manner.

Regular engagements between the ruling administration and the top brass of the Royal Police Force of Antigua and Barbuda are also deemed necessary it was stated, to ensure that law enforcement officers are adequately equipped with the tools necessary to execute their duties effectively.



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Welcome Home Antigua: New Biometric System Speeds Up Arrival Process for Returning Nationals



(Left to right) Deputy Chief Immigration Officers, Nigel Emmanuel and Maxine Lewis, Foreign Affairs and Immigration Minister, E. P Chet Greene and Chief Immigration Officer, Katrina Yearwood

Newly implemented! Citizens of Antigua and Barbuda now have an easier and more efficient route through airport immigration at both the VC Bird International Airport in Antigua and the Burton – Nibbs International Airport in Barbuda.

Thursday marked the soft launch of **Welcome Home Antigua**, a new addition to airport operations aimed at making the arrival process more convenient for citizens. Under the new system, holders of Antigua and Barbuda citizenship will no longer be required to complete an Embarkation/Disembarkation form when entering the country.

To utilize this, citizens are expected to download the mobile app, of the same name, onto their Apple or Android device. Once enrolled, biometric technology can scan and recognize the passenger's face, allowing them to pass through smoothly without endur-

ing the lengthy immigration security processes.

Chief Immigration Officer Katrina Yearwood says the new service once again makes Antigua and Barbuda a regional leader in the space. She believes that this addition, like Arrive Antigua before it, will influence other Caribbean countries to follow Antigua and Barbuda's lead.

In her words, "this will allow Antigua and Barbuda to come into the limelight in a regional capacity," noting that no other Caribbean country has introduced a similar service, and therefore Antigua and Barbuda is "leading in that domain".

Minister of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Immigration, E. Paul Chet Greene, as well as Minister for Civil Aviation and Tourism Henry Charles Fernandez, were the first to utilize the biometric system in their return from diplomatic engagements. Both hailed the initia-

tive as a meaningful step toward modernisation.

Minister Greene, in his statement, that Antigua and Barbuda is "leveling up," as the country can now declare that it provides a service "that is uniquely dedicated to Antigua and Barbuda and [its] citizens."

Minister Fernandez concurred, stating that he is proud to see Antiguan and Barbudans "once again put first". He admonished however that despite the increased usage of AI technology in various sectors, people are the driving force behind quality service. As such he stresses that all departments from airport to tourism are tasked with that responsibility.

Welcome Home Antigua will take full effect on October fifteenth, and it is expected to dramatically speed up the arrival process for locals and consequently allowing a smoother process for visitors.

Joy-Marie King Attends Important Meeting in Ecuador



Antigua and Barbuda's **Director of International Trade and National Focal Point for the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** was among a select group of sustainable development experts from Latin America and the Caribbean invited to participate in the **United Nations Global Sustainable Development Report (GSDR) 2027 Regional Consultation**.

International Trade and National Focal Point for the UN SDG's, Joy-Marie King, took part in activities related to finalizing the report at the meeting in Quito, Ecuador, from 29 September to 1 October 2026.

The regional consultation provided an important platform for experts and stakeholders to contribute **evidence, experience and regional perspectives** to the preparation of the 2027 Global Sustainable Development Report. The consultation was convened alongside the **International Mayors**

Forum 2026 and brought together a diverse community of practitioners and institutions, including representatives of governments, the United Nations system, regional institutions, academia, civil society, youth organisations and national SDGs coordination bodies.

A central focus of the consultation was to examine **what has worked, what has not worked, and, importantly, what lessons have emerged across Latin America and the Caribbean to accelerate transformative action for sustainable development.**

Discussions explored successful approaches to SDG implementation and examined the enabling roles of **effective governance, sustainable financing, science, technology and innovation, collective action and institutional capacity-building.** Participants also considered the structur-



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al, institutional and behavioural barriers that can constrain the scaling-up of successful interventions and impede transformative action.

“Director King, in her presentation to the esteemed grouping emphasised that **“For Small Island Developing States, transformative development must be anchored in resilience and informed by the realities of our vulnerability, further, we must move beyond recognising vulnerability to using evidence to shape policy, mobilise appropriate financing and accelerate implementation.”** Additionally, King added **“For Antigua and Barbuda, aligning the SDGs, the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for SIDS and our national development priorities provide a strategic pathway to translate global commitments into meaningful development outcomes, maximise the impact of limited resources, strengthen resilience and accelerate progress across multiple SDGs and economic sectors.”**

The working sessions further examined **policy coherence and alignment, implementation capacity, education and skills development, accountability, inequalities and policy trade-offs**, before turning to emerging priorities and pathways for advancing sustainable development towards 2030 and beyond.

Antigua and Barbuda’s participation provided an opportunity to contribute the **perspectives and experiences of a Small Island Developing State** to the regional dialogue, while strengthening the country’s engagement in global efforts to accelerate implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals.

According to Director King, understanding what works in different contexts - and why — is fundamental to strengthening the science-policy-society interface and developing evidence-based pathways to accelerate sustainable development.

Midweek Deals

TUESDAY / WEDNESDAYS



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-Biscuit
-Medium Drink**

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\$19.99

**-Burger
-Medium Drink**



Chief Magistrate Engages Police Officers On Customer Service and Professionalism

Chief Magistrate Ngaio Emanuel engaged police court orderlies and prosecutors at the St. John's Magistrate's Court on Thursday in an informative presentation focused on customer service and professionalism in the workplace.

The presentation addressed several important areas, including the professional execution of daily duties, appropriate interaction with members of the public, and the proper handling of sensitive matters that come before the court.

The session was well received by the officers, who welcomed the opportunity to benefit from the Chief Magistrate's experience and guidance. The officers expressed their commitment to applying the knowledge shared as they continue to improve the quality and standard of service provided to the public.



At the conclusion of the presentation,

No. 26 Constable Clinton Williams was recognized as an Outstanding Court Orderly for his exemplary work ethic, professionalism, dedication, and commitment to duty.

The Police Administration extends sincere appreciation to Chief Magistrate Emanuel for taking the time to engage with the officers and for her continued guidance and support to members of the Royal Police Force of Antigua and Barbuda.

The Administration values the strong working relationship that exists between the Police Force and the Magistracy and recognizes the importance of continued collaboration, professional development, and mutual support in strengthening the administration of justice and enhancing the quality of service delivered to the people of Antigua and Barbuda.



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 A promotional graphic for 'THE PDV HOUR' featuring a portrait of Mrs. Jellette Ralph (Jelly Beans) on the left. The background is blue with water splashes. The PDV Caribe logo is in the top right, and the show's title and schedule are in large blue and black text.

From Nursing to Public Health Leadership: Julien Kentish Returns Home with International Public Health Training



Antiguan Registered Nurse, public health practitioner and Chartered Director Julien David Kentish has returned home after completing an International Master of Public Health programme at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, bringing with him expanded expertise in public health research, health systems, policy, prevention and community health.

Kentish completed his postgraduate studies at the Braun School of Public Health and Community Medicine of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem-Hadassah, Israel, where he was the sole Caribbean student within a diverse international cohort of health professionals from countries across Africa, North America and other regions.

His return represents another step in a professional journey that has increasingly bridged clinical nursing, leadership, governance and public health.

A Registered Nurse by profession, Kentish holds a Bachelor of Science in Nursing with First Class Honours from The University of the West Indies and is also a Chartered Director, bringing together a multidisciplinary background in healthcare, business, governance and organizational leadership.



His international public health training has further expanded that foundation into areas including epidemiology, biostatistics, health promotion, research methodology, health systems, programme planning and evaluation, environmental health, health policy and population-based disease prevention.

For Kentish, however, the achievement is not simply about adding an-

other qualification to his name.

“Returning home, my focus is on application. Public health challenges cannot be addressed only when people arrive at the hospital or clinic. We have to strengthen prevention, use data more effectively, invest in healthier communities and develop systems that respond to the needs of our population before illness becomes crisis.”

Researching Childhood Obesity from



the First 1,000 Days

A major component of Kentish's graduate work focused on one of the growing public health challenges facing Antigua and Barbuda and the wider Caribbean, which is childhood obesity and the establishment of healthy behaviours early in life.

His master's research examined knowledge, attitudes and practices relating to healthy family feeding during the first 1,000 days of life, with particular attention to healthcare workers and caregivers in Antigua and Barbuda.

The first 1,000 days- spanning pregnancy through a child's second birthday-represent an important period for growth, development and the establishment of feeding and health behaviours.

Kentish's work explores how healthcare professionals and families can be better supported through culturally appropriate guidance, education and health-system interventions aimed at promoting healthier feeding practices and reducing childhood obesity risk.

The research reflects his broader philosophy that Antigua and Barbu-

da must continue moving towards a healthcare system in which prevention and health promotion stand alongside

treatment and clinical care as national priorities.



Headquarters; Antigua Barbuda Defence Force
Camp Blizard, St. George's

29 September 2026
12:00 pm; Local (Gmt-4)

NOTICE

IMPORTANT BRIEFING FOR ALL ABDF RESERVISTS

The Antigua & Barbuda Defence Force is calling on all Reservists and prospective Reservists to attend an important meeting on Saturday, 10th October 2026, at 1600 hours, at Camp Blizard.

The meeting will address upcoming ABDF activities and commitments in connection with the upcoming Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting.

The attendance of all Reservists is required.

All reservists are asked to make the necessary arrangements to be present and arrive on time.

-END-

Teachers and Students Undergo Training In Agricultural Techniques



Training continued at the Cedar Grove Primary School the second beneficiary School under the GEF SGP UNDP funded project with 10 teachers including the principal and two students participating in a capacity building session focusing on Nursery Management and Seedling Production.

The project entitled Sustainable Agricultural Community Outreach and Food Security Programme focuses on innovative technologies currently being implemented to support school gardens.

Due to the prolonged drought conditions caused by El Nino transplanting

of seedlings was delayed due to the absence of reliable adequate rainfall for irrigation. This hydroponics system requires fresh water with a low electric conductivity should be between the parameters of 0.00 -0.30.

Several seedlings such as thyme, parsley, lettuce and kale were transplanted to the hydroponics system.

Two educational institutions – the Victory Centre and the Cedar Grove Primary School - are benefiting from the project which is being coordinated by the Inter-American Institute for Co-operation in Agriculture (IICA)



Two Men Who Face Shooting and Robbery Charges Have Been Remanded to Prison

Javia Peters, 25 years old of the Pointe and 22-year-old Saquami Christian of Ottos were remanded to His Majesty's Prison after appearing before Chief Magistrate Ngaio Emanuel in the St. John's Magistrate's Court on Wednesday.

The two men were jointly charged in connection with the recent shooting at Villa and two separate robberies at Ottos.

Peters and Christian were charged with shooting with intent to murder and using a firearm in furtherance of an offence in connection with the shooting of 47-year-old Francis Dennis of Villa.

The incident occurred at approximately 3:40 a.m. on Sunday, September 27, on Gordon Street, Villa. Dennis sustained gunshot injuries during the incident and was transported to the Sir Lester Bird Medical Centre for medical treatment.

The accused were also jointly charged in connection with two separate robberies that occurred on Baxter Street, Ottos, on September 27.



In the first matter, they were charged with using a firearm in furtherance of an offence and robbery after allegedly robbing a woman of a cellular phone, SIM cards, a handbag, jewellery, cash, and other personal items with a combined value of approximately EC\$1,285.

They were further jointly charged with robbing another woman of a cellular phone, SIM card, and cash with a combined value of approximately EC\$880.

They were both remanded to His Majesty's Prison until December 2, 2026.



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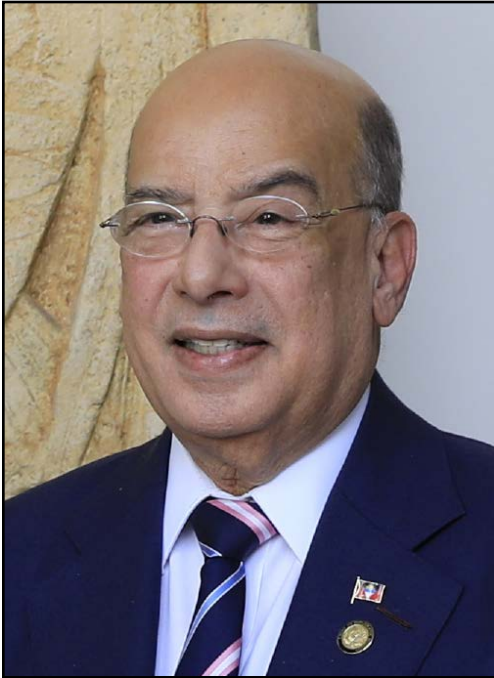


And I'm Dewey

Water works wonders.

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Other People's Wars, Caribbean Bills



By Sir Ronald Sanders

The Caribbean did not start, or participate in, the war involving the United States, Israel and Iran, nor the other continuing conflicts in the Middle East. Yet millions of Caribbean people are paying a price for them every day.

They pay it at petrol stations, in electricity bills, at supermarkets and through the public finances of governments trying to shield their populations from costs over which they have little control.

Most CARICOM countries have depended on imported petroleum products for decades. Their governments understand the consequences when international prices rise. They also know how limited their capacity is to absorb them.

But the effects differ within the Caribbean Community.

For most members, higher petroleum prices drain foreign exchange, increase inflation and strain government finances. However, for Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago, higher prices are also increasing energy export earnings and public revenues.

Nonetheless, people in both countries also face rising food, freight and other

costs.

UN Trade and Development, UNCTAD, reported that the initial Middle East shock sent oil prices surging by more than 60 per cent and natural gas prices more than doubling in a matter of days.

UNCTAD subsequently reported that Caribbean households continued to experience higher fuel and electricity costs even as international oil prices eased. This is because a fall in the international price does not immediately reverse costs already working their way through shipping, distribution and retail systems.

Oil enters the price of almost everything. Higher energy and freight costs increase the price of food, medicine, construction materials and the operation of businesses.

Governments face understandable pressure to reduce fuel taxes, subsidise electricity or provide other relief. But each intervention costs money. Countries carrying high debt and facing expensive borrowing cannot indefinitely absorb increases generated abroad.

The injustice is plain. Small Caribbean states do not determine the military decisions that produce these shocks. Yet their people bear part of the bill.

The Community should now examine how its own resources and trading relationships can reduce that burden.

Guyana's Government projects approximately US\$5.97 billion from the sale of its share of oil production and a further US\$508 million in royalties in its 2026 Mid-Year Report, substantially above the original Budget estimates.

Those resources belong to the Guyanese people. After generations of hardship and outward migration, they are entitled to better infrastructure, education, health care and living standards. No one should begrudge that entitlement.

Trinidad and Tobago also receives revenue relief from higher energy prices, while bearing the cost of imported refined fuel and measures to protect

consumers. Production constraints and higher fuel-import costs, however, limit the benefit.

An important consideration in all this is that CARICOM countries are customers for the goods that both economies produce. Trinidad and Tobago's provisional official figures record approximately US\$864 million in exports to CARICOM excluding mineral fuels in 2024, accounting for almost two-thirds of its total merchandise exports to the Community.

Guyana also has an established interest in Caribbean markets, particularly for its agricultural products. Those markets matter to its farmers and businesses and to its ambition to diversify beyond petroleum.

But when households in CARICOM countries must spend more on electricity and transport, they have less to spend on other goods. When businesses face higher operating costs, their capacity to purchase and invest is weakened. These pressures threaten demand for goods from Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago. Helping neighbouring economies withstand the shock therefore serves the commercial interests of regional suppliers.

For Guyana, there is also a diplomatic and security interest.

Venezuela's claim to the Essequibo region makes sustained CARICOM solidarity particularly important. Its interim President, Delcy Rodríguez, has expressly stated that Venezuela will not recognise the International Court of Justice's eventual ruling, despite participating in the proceedings.

Guyana pursued judicial settlement after the UN Secretary-General selected the Court as the means of resolving the controversy under the 1966 Geneva Agreement. CARICOM's support for Guyana's territorial integrity and that process must remain firm in conduct as well as declarations.

Every small Caribbean state has an interest in upholding international law and resisting territorial claims pursued

through pressure or threats. The support of CARICOM countries for Guyana rests on these principles. However, closer economic cooperation would give that solidarity additional practical strength. Guyana has sound reasons to help its neighbours through this crisis.

A Community whose members see their prosperity and security as closely connected will have stronger interests in standing together.

What, then, can be done?

Regional fuel trade already exists. Trinidad and Tobago's storage, trading and distribution operations supply CARICOM markets, despite the closure of the Petrotrin refinery. Guyana exports crude internationally but still imports refined petroleum products. Its Government is considering refinery and storage developments that could eventually serve the wider Community.

Crude oil offshore is not usable fuel at a Caribbean power station or petrol pump. Connecting production to regional needs requires commercially viable refining, storage, shipping and distribution arrangements.

CARICOM should assess collectively how existing supply relationships can be strengthened, storage expanded and

emergency arrangements coordinated. It should examine whether collective purchasing or carefully designed longer-term contracts could improve bargaining power and supply reliability.

Such arrangements cannot remove exposure to international prices, which respond to supply, demand and market expectations. Their costs and benefits should nevertheless be assessed, with financing proposals, a timetable and clear responsibility for implementation. Any arrangements must respect existing contractual obligations and provide measurable benefits to suppliers and consumers.

Renewable energy must remain central to this effort. The region has sunshine, wind, water and geothermal resources, alongside Guyana's expanding petroleum production, Trinidad and Tobago's energy expertise and Suriname's offshore prospects. Financing, geography, small markets and the high cost of capital have constrained their development.

The present crisis should strengthen the determination to overcome those constraints. Oil and gas can support energy security during the transition. Every unit of renewable electricity that displaces imported fossil fuel, and

every improvement in energy efficiency, reduces exposure to the next price shock.

But these measures will take time. Governments facing immediate pressure on essential services and development spending also need access to affordable financing.

Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago should consider a programme of loans on concessional terms to their CARICOM neighbours, within their means and with clear safeguards. Such financing should help stabilise economies, protect essential social services and sustain investment in development.

The question is whether countries with the capacity to help are willing to do so before economic hardship deepens. For Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago, helping their neighbours would protect markets for their exports and strengthen regional relationships that serve their own prosperity and security. Now is the time to act.

(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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The man who turned Guyane towards the Caribbean

TRIBUTE . HOMMAGE

Gabriel Serville, Guyane's bridge builder

*Le bâtisseur de ponts
nous a quittés*

Julian Rogers

President, Collectivité Territoriale de Guyane . 1959 to
2026



Julian Rogers · Sep 30, 2026

All week, Caribbean leaders had stood at the UN rostrum and spoken of the region as a family, a sovereign bloc, a community bound by shared geography, shared vulnerability, and shared ambition. Gabriel Serville, President of the Collectivité Territoriale de Guyane, was one of the architects of that family's expansion. Two days after the last of those speeches, on Wednesday 30 September, he died at the age of 67.

In July, at Gros Islet in Saint Lucia, the image that travelled furthest from the CARICOM summit was a handshake. On 7 July 2026, Serville signed the agreement that made French Guiana the eighth Associate Member of the Community.

He had been ill for some time, and spent long months away from home for treatment. That he lived to put his name to that agreement feels, in hindsight, like the completion of a life's ar-

gument. Serville believed that Guyane belonged to its neighbourhood, not only to Paris, and he spent his presidency proving it.

The road to that signing was long. French Guiana first approached the Community in 2012, when the then Regional Council President, Rodolphe Alexandre, met Secretary-General Irwin LaRocque in Georgetown to discuss terms of association. The conversation stalled, as such conversations often do, somewhere between Cayenne, Paris and Brussels.

Serville revived it with fresh urgency after his election in July 2021. Fourteen years after that first approach, the matter closed in a single week. Martinique's associate membership took effect on 16 June 2026, and its leaders took their seats at the Heads of Government meeting on 5 July. Two days later, Guyane followed. For the first time in its 53-year history, the Community had crossed into the French Caribbean.

Serville came to politics from the classroom. He taught mathematics, became a headteacher, and generations of former pupils remember him as demanding but fair. He served as mayor of Matoury, was elected to the French National Assembly for Guyane's first constituency in 2012, and founded the Péyi Guyane movement in 2018 before winning the presidency of the territorial collectivity.

The teacher never left him. He argued that Guyane's future had to be read from its map: a South American territory on the Guiana Shield, bordering Suriname and Brazil, a short hop from Georgetown and Port of Spain, yet so often governed as though it were an island off Brittany. Serge Letchimy of Martinique, his companion on the road to CARICOM, counted him among the builders. It is the right word.

We should be honest about what associate membership is and is not. It gives Guyane a seat at the table, not a vote. Trade, foreign affairs and free move-



— TRIBUTE . HOMMAGE

Gabriel Serville, Guyane's bridge builder

Le bâtisseur de ponts nous a quittés

caribbeanbridges.substack.com

Julian Rogers

ment remain matters for Paris and Brussels, and every commitment the territory makes must sit within French and European law. Sceptics will say this makes the seat ornamental.

Serville knew the limits and pressed on regardless, because in this region symbols have a habit of becoming structures. Under his leadership, French Guiana became in 2026 the first French territory to join the Carib-

bean Telecommunications Union as an associate member, a practical step on the connectivity that binds our economies. He strengthened ties with Suriname, Guyana and Brazil, and backed the return to Guyane of Kalina ancestral remains held in French national collections since 1892. Each was a thread tying the territory more closely to the people and places around it.

His death leaves a duty on both sides. For Cayenne, the task is to keep the seat warm and use it, sending ministers and officials to every table where Guyane is now entitled to sit. For CARICOM, it is to treat its newest associate members as partners rather than curiosities, and to find the practical files where cooperation can prove its worth: energy, health, digital infrastructure, food security, and the space economy at Kourou.

A bridge is only as good as the traffic that crosses it. Gabriel Serville built one. The finest tribute the region can pay him is to use it.

Repose en paix, Président.

Julian Rogers is founder and publisher of Caribbean Bridges.

Caribbean Bridges by Julian Rogers .
julian@caribbeanbridges.com

#GabrielServille #Guyane #French-Guiana #CARICOM #Caribbean-Bridges



THE MASK OF THE LIE FALLS OFF COMPLETELY.

The new unilateral coercive measures approved by the US government, in addition to further reinforcing the strangulation of Cuba as a policy of punishment against an entire population, once again unmask the US Secretary of State and the rest of his anti-Cuban clan, who have not tired of repeating the lie that their genocidal policy of economic warfare is only directed against the Cuban government and its companies, and not against the private sector that they claim to support, or what they call “the average Cuban.”

The freezing and confiscation of bank accounts belonging to entrepreneurs and owners of private MS-MEs held in North American banks and their branches in other countries, besides being an act of blatant piracy, seeks in practice to paralyze all activity in this sector, which has an ever-increasing weight and impact on Cuba’s economic and commercial management, especially after the implementation of important economic and social transformations that the country has been developing, and thus cause maximum suffering to its people.

For the Secretary of State and his group of haters, the hardships inflicted on more than 10 million Cubans by the total and criminal energy blockade are not enough. This blockade, along with other draconian measures, has prevented more than 98,500 scheduled surgeries (12,000 of them pediatric) from being performed due to a lack of resources and energy in operating rooms. Thirty-four thousand pregnant women have been unable to receive essential prenatal ultrasounds, and 67,000 chil-



dren’s immunization schedules are not up to date—both indicators in which Cuba has historically been at the forefront worldwide. The fuel shortage affects patients who need dialysis, and newborns requiring special care, where a machine without electricity can stop supplying oxygen, becoming a death sentence for a baby.

Also under pressure and threats from the United States, incompatible with free trade, several companies and shipping lines have withdrawn from Cuba. As a consequence of the persecution of our imports, more than 7,000 containers with essential cargo such as food, medicine, solar energy equipment, and other vital goods, are being held in Caribbean ports, and none of the companies operating in the region dare to defy the imperial prohibition.

What does the impact of this architecture of sanctions mean in the homes of every Cuban? It means food spoiling during prolonged blackouts. It means parents fanning a baby to help him sleep. It means a child doing homework by

candlelight. It means containers of medicine that never arrive. It means water pumps that stop working, forcing millions of people living in apartment buildings to carry buckets of water upstairs. When we talk about collective punishment against a country, it doesn’t just mean barrels of oil or containers being prevented from reaching Cuba. We need to consider the impact this has on those who daily walk the streets: a grandmother, a mother, a father, children at a school. These aren’t numbers; they are human lives.

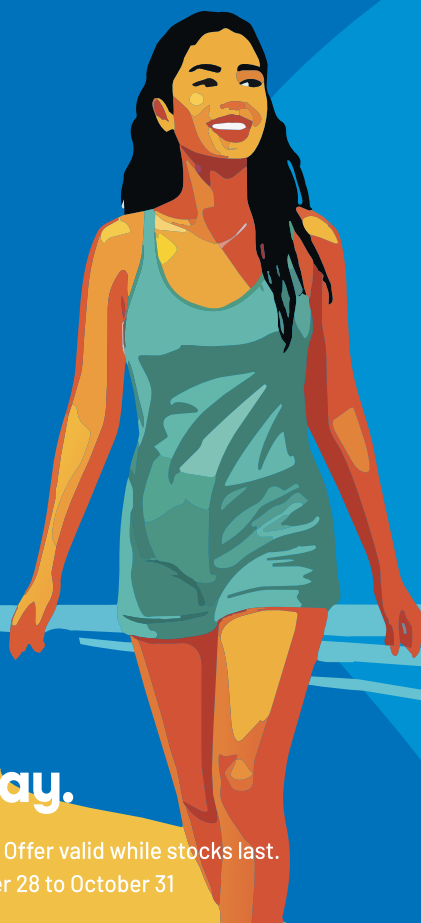
The Trump Administration, and especially its Secretary of State, like good students of Nazi Germany’s ideologue Joseph Goebbels, tirelessly repeat the same lie: that the small island of Cuba is “a threat to the national security of the largest military superpower with the largest number of nuclear weapons, the United States,” and that Cuba “is a failed state.” In this way, they try to justify their genocidal policy against the Cuban people. They try, as the renowned American historian Howard Zinn said, to make “the abominable appear benign.”

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Regional News

FAO calls for faster action on C'bean food security

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) says the 20th staging of Caribbean Week of Agriculture (CWA), which got under way on Monday in Trelawny, is not only a milestone but also a call for the region to move more quickly from commitment to implementation.

“The Caribbean is advancing an ambitious transformation agenda. Countries are working to strengthen food security and nutrition, increase production and trade, reduce import dependency, and build resilience to climate and economic shocks,” said FAO Assistant Director-General Rene Orellana Halkyer.

Addressing the opening ceremony, he said the region also faces the growing burden of unhealthy diets and non-communicable diseases.

“These challenges are connected, and our response must be connected as well. The regional commitment to 25 by 2025 plus five gives this agenda renewed political momentum.

At the same time, FAO is working with CARICOM member states to translate that ambition into coordinated policies, investment, capacity, and results across the agri-food value chain.”

Halkyer said the FAO was aligning its support under a single subregional framework rather than through isolated projects, connecting production, trade, investment, resilience, and nutrition under a shared vision of more efficient, inclusive, resilient, and sustainable agri-food systems.

He said the organisation is also pursuing a practical competitiveness agenda across the region by strengthening trade capacity with CARICOM; supporting business matchmaking with the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Ag-



riculture (IICA) and the CARICOM Secretariat to expand market opportunities; and advancing digital agriculture, climate-smart technologies, improved water management, soil analysis, crop and pest management, traceability, certification, and market access.

“Together with the stronger regional value chains and greater private-sector participation, we are helping to expand production in agriculture and fisheries and deliver better results for Caribbean producers, agribusinesses, and consumers.”

Halkyer said such transformation also requires direct attention to the vulnerabilities of Caribbean small-island developing states.

Climate change and extreme weather events, he noted, continue to affect agricultural production, fisheries, rural livelihoods, and food security.

“FAO is supporting countries to place resilience at the centre of investments and public policies, building practical evidence, strengthening technical capacities, and scaling

solutions across the subregion.

“The same political logic applies to animal health, food safety, and preparedness. FAO is bringing together technical cooperation in these fields and regional coordination through work supported by the Pandemic Fund, One Health simulation exercises, and Caribbean participation in global efforts against transboundary animal diseases.”

The senior FAO official said these efforts strengthen surveillance and regional capacity before crises occur. He added that food security also means ensuring access to affordable, nutritious, and diverse foods.

“We are connecting nutrition, local production, and public procurement, including through school feeding programmes that can improve children’s nutrition while creating more stable demand for local farmers, fisherfolk, and agri-food enterprises.

“Farmers and fisherfolk must remain at the heart of this transformation. Policies, technologies, and investment will matter only if they

Regional News

PAGE 21

improve livelihoods, strengthen businesses, and create opportunities for the people who produce our food. So must young people and women.”

Halkyer said the FAO is supporting their participation, innovation, and leadership, including through the World Food Forum Youth Action Initiative and the expansion of its national chapters across the subregion.

He said these initiatives are helping to make Caribbean agriculture more productive, profitable, innovative, and attractive to a new generation.

“Regional cooperation is, therefore, not optional. It is the condition for scale. We are precisely strengthening partnership with this view among governments, CARICOM, regional institutions, other United Nations agencies, and the private sector so that countries can draw on complementary expertise, share knowledge, mobilise investment, strengthen markets, expand trade, and build supply chains that are better prepared for shocks.”

Halkyer said the success of CWA would ultimately be measured by what follows, adding that experiences already emerging across the region provide strategic reference points for a shared Caribbean pathway that can be adapted, scaled, and connected across the subregion.

CWA is being held under the theme ‘The New F.A.C.E. of Caribbean Food Systems’, highlighting four key priorities: food security, agri-business, climate-smart technologies, and export expansion.

The week-long event has brought together more than 600 delegates, including agriculture and fisheries ministers, farmers, fisherfolk, policymakers, researchers, private-sector representatives, development partners, and youth from across the Caribbean to advance discussions on the future of regional food systems. (CMC)



Regional News



Mustique Company accused of importing white staff to exclude Vincentians

Opposition Leader Dr. Ralph Gonsalves has launched a direct critique against the leadership of the Mustique Company, accusing the firm of systematically recruiting “white people from Europe” and the United Kingdom for senior management positions, thereby creating an artificial “glass ceiling” against qualified Vincentian nationals.

Speaking on Star Radio broadcast, Gonsalves clarified that while he is not accusing management of racism or expressing anti-British sentiment, he is highlighting the objective reality of an increasing reliance on European and British expatriates over capable local professionals.

Gonsalves stated that since the recent change of government, the company’s management has accelerated the importation of foreign workers from “Caucasian territory” and non-Vincentian regions to fill technical and managerial roles.

Gonsalves noted that executive and supervisory tiers are increasingly populated by “hired hands who come from overseas almost entirely white people from Europe”. Explaining his phrasing, he remarked: “I’m not saying that they’re racist. I’m just describing the fact of white... I’m not anti-British. I’m just saying that they are British”.

He criticized the attitude of certain imported supervisors toward local employees, observing that some overseas hires act condescendingly under the mistaken belief “that because they have a white skin that somehow that give them greater affinity to the homeowners”. Gonsalves explicitly contrasted these imported managers with the island’s wealthy international homeowners, whom he commended for treating local staff with respect and showing no racial or class contempt.

He pointed out significant pay gaps, noting that foreign hires from the UK and Europe receive higher salaries as well as housing allowances that are routinely withheld from Vincentian candidates applying for identical po-



sitions.

Gonsalves cited several concrete examples where qualified Vincentians were either sidelined or face potential displacement by overseas recruits.

Highlighting an upcoming managerial appointment at Air Adelphi, the company’s aviation subsidiary operating twin-engine aircraft, Gonsalves noted that two local aviators, Gregory Williams and Everett Bess, applied for the top role. Despite their extensive civil aviation experience, Gonsalves stated that management plans to import an individual from the UK who cannot match the local captains’ capabilities. He urged Prime Minister Godwin Friday to intervene and deny a work permit for the foreign applicant.

Gonsalves referenced Paul Cyrus, describing him as a highly skilled national who managed Atley Hall before joining the Mustique Company, only to be set aside in favor of an overseas hire brought in from the UK.

Recalling his time as Prime Minister, Gonsalves noted that he previously blocked a work permit for a UK candidate to ensure local accountant Steven Joachim was promoted to Financial Controller. Looking ahead to Joachim’s retirement, Gonsalves advocated for Sabrina Brewster Dixon, a senior Vincentian finance and auditing professional to succeed him, calling for her to become the first woman and first visibly Black woman to serve as Financial Controller for the company.

Gonsalves called on the government and the Ministry of Labour to enforce national employment laws firmly by refusing work permits for foreign applicants whenever qualified Vincentians are available.

He asserted that he will continue to monitor employment practices on Mustique to ensure local workers are protected from unfair career barriers and workplace marginalization. (St Vincent Times)

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International partners to help Caricom operationalise digital health strategy

The Guyana-based Caribbean Community (Caricom) Secretariat says the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and the World Bank (WB) will partner with Caricom to operationalise the Caricom Digital Health Strategy.

In a statement, it said the agreement was reached during last weekend's 53rd Meeting of the Caricom Council for Human and Social Development (COHSOD)—Health, held in Washington under the theme “Transforming Caribbean Health: Resilience, Innovation and Regional Action”.

According to the Secretariat, the commitments by the international organisations came as ministers reaffirmed the mandate to develop a Caricom Digital Health Strategy through a Caricom-led, member state-driven process.

It said the ministers underscored the importance of digital health in transforming health systems, including stronger service delivery, primary health care, workforce management, public-health surveillance, civil registration, health financing, and evidence-informed decision-making.

“They emphasised that the strategy must build on existing regional and national frameworks, systems, and investments, ensuring member states remain central to its development. Caricom health ministers also discussed practical approaches to universal health coverage, sustainable financing and opportunities for regional cooperation, with further commitments from the World Bank, PAHO, and UWI-HEU to support these efforts,” the statement said.

It said that the meeting was also attended by officials from the Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA), the University of the West Indies (UWI), and the Healthy Caribbean Coal-



tion (HCC), as well as international partners like the Global Fund, PAHO and the World Health Organization (WHO).

“Together, leaders articulated a clear

vision for the future: a Caribbean health architecture that is more connected, resilient, equitable, and sustainable,” the statement said. (CMC)

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Regional News



UN chief condemns mass killing in latest gang attack in Haiti

United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres on Wednesday condemned the latest gang attack in Haiti that left at least 11 people dead and several others injured in Gros-Morne's third communal section on Monday.

Among those killed were four members of the same family who were transporting a sick woman to hospital when they were caught in a violent crossfire. Three suspected members of the Kokorat San Ras armed gang were fatally wounded.

Interim Mayor Hubert Cénéac, said the killings followed a confrontation between the Kokorat San Ras gang and a Sri Lankan contingent of the Gang Suppression Force (GSF) in the nearby Savane Longue communal section.

He said security forces raided the area to clear a stretch of the national road linking the Northwest and Artibonite departments, where the armed group had set up a checkpoint to extort drivers and passengers.

On Monday, the United Nations Security Council voted to extend the mandate of the 5,500-strong GSF for six months as Haiti prepares for elections in December.

"I can tell you that the Secretary-General condemns the reported gang attack on Monday in Gros-Morne, which is one of the communes in that department, which reportedly left at least 11 people dead," said Stéphane Dujarric, the spokesman for the Secretary-General.

"This horrific attack is another reminder of the heavy toll that gang violence continues to take on Haitians living in areas under the control or just under the influence of armed gangs," he said, adding, "it also underscores the urgency of strengthening security efforts in Haiti".



Dujarric said this includes the full deployment of the GSF, "which is there in Haiti in support of the Haitian National Police, as well as we need to improve the broader efforts to address the drivers of violence and instability that we have seen in Haiti.

"According to our colleagues at the Human Rights Office, more than 3,000 human beings were killed in Haiti between January and June of this year," Dujarric said, adding "we and our partners continue to provide food, healthcare, psychosocial support, and emergency cash assistance.

"However, humanitarian needs continue to outpace available resources. As you can imagine, more funding is needed."

Meanwhile, Haiti's Catholic Bish-

ops have, in a statement, said that the French-speaking Caribbean Community (Caricom) country's "descent into hell causes us increasing alarm every day.

"The general situation is deteriorating before our horrified eyes: on one hand, the alarming advance of armed groups occupying our neighbourhoods and the surge in kidnappings—which traumatise our families and disrupt the functioning of schools and universities; and on the other, the spectacle of failing governance, unable to restore public peace or protect the population."

The bishops say that Haiti is "facing profound confusion, a glaring lack of leadership, and an absence of long-term vision.

"The population has been left to fend for itself. The horrific Kenscoff massacre remains fresh in everyone's minds, and the blood of the victims cries out to heaven for justice," they said.

A brutal gang attack on the farming community of Kenscoff on August 23–24, 2026, left at least 47 to over 164 people dead and dozens kidnapped, according to the authorities. (CMC)

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Pennsylvania records a fifth measles death as the nation endures its worst year since 1991



Pennsylvania health officials reported a fifth measles-associated death Wednesday as the U.S. endures its worst year for the disease since 1991.

The Pennsylvania Department of Health said the person was from Lancaster County and was unvaccinated. The state did not provide any further information about the person who died. Lancaster County's coroner, Dr. Stephen Diamantoni, said that his office did not handle the death and that state officials have not provided him with any details.

The state's other deaths have included an 18-year-old resident of Mifflin County, in the center of the state; a 40-year-old woman from Jefferson County, a rural area in western Pennsylvania; and two infants in Lancaster County, in the southeastern part of the state.

None of them were vaccinated, according to the state health department. The infants were too young for vaccinations, according to current recommendations.

The U.S. has now seen eight reported measles-associated deaths in the last two years — more than the combined total of reported deaths over the previous three decades.

Pennsylvania's measles outbreak continues to grow, with 943 illnesses reported so far this year across 39 counties. The measles-associated deaths are the first reported in the state in 35 years, state officials say.

The nation eliminated the domestic spread of measles in 2000 by maintain-

ing high vaccination rates, but they have fallen in recent years to below the 95% coverage needed to prevent outbreaks. Meanwhile, measles infections have been surging in recent years.

In November, international health officials will meet to determine if the U.S. and Mexico have lost their measles-free status.

The problem has been years in the making, as fewer kids get routine vaccines

because of parental waivers, healthcare access issues and rampant disinformation. More recently, Trump administration health officials, including Health Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr., have questioned and sown doubt about the established safety of vaccines at an unprecedented level while also defunding local efforts to improve vaccination rates. (AP)



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Too early to say if Iran involved in Dubai-Tel Aviv flight attack, Israeli PM says

It is too early to say if Iran had any involvement in an attack by a pilot who stabbed another pilot and tried to take over a flight from Dubai to Tel Aviv, Israel's prime minister has said.

The Flydubai plane plunged more than 17,000ft (5,200m) two hours into its journey on Wednesday, before passengers and crew overpowered the attacker and retook control to land safely.

The stabbed pilot, Indian national Captain Smit Machchhar, is in hospital in a stable condition, and has been hailed a "true hero" by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

One passenger, Yaniv Hayun, described how he put the attacker, who was trying to disable the plane, in a chokehold before other passengers helped pin him down.

The alleged attacker, who was arrested in Saudi Arabia, is expected to be transferred to the United Arab Emirates (UAE), where the plane took off



from, Netanyahu told Fox News.

Asked whether there was any indication as of now of Iran's involvement, he replied: "It's too early to say". He added that the pilot was "now being investigated in Saudi Arabia".

The UAE's chief prosecutor said on Thursday an investigation had been launched into the incident, including if there was any link to "terrorist" activity.

Meanwhile, he and India's leader Narendra Modi called stabbed pilot Machchhar a "hero".

"Despite being stabbed and seriously injured, he fought back, resisted, opened the cockpit door, and enabled passengers and crew to overpower the attacker - preventing a catastrophic mid-air disaster," Netanyahu wrote on X.

Modi praised the pilot's actions, writing on X: "In the face of the gravest danger and despite being seriously injured, he showed immense courage and an unwavering resolve to protect



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the lives of others.”

Israeli President Isaac Herzog told the BBC it was “an amazing, heroic event of resilient people who work together”.

“There was a huge miracle and huge bravery and we are grateful to the Indian pilot who was such a hero,” he said to Radio 4’s Today programme on Thursday.

Netanyahu told CNN Israel did not have any warning or advance intelligence about the incident on the plane, which was flying 174 people to Israel.

Preliminary findings from a separate Israeli investigation, suggest that the alleged attacker intended to crash the plane, an Israeli security source told BBC Arabic.

The source said the investigation - led by Israel’s intelligence agency Mossad - interviewed passengers after they arrived in Tel Aviv to establish what had happened on the plane.

Two hours later, the 17,000ft drop in altitude was reported on the plane tracking website Flightradar24 and minutes later the plane signalled an emergency code - squawk 7700 - before switching it to a squawk 7500 code reporting a hijacking.

Around 20 minutes after these codes were signalled, the plane started its manual descent for landing into Saudi Arabia. Less than an hour later, the

plane returned to squawk 7700.

Eyewitness accounts and a statement by Netanyahu confirmed one of the pilots had stabbed the other and, according to the Israeli prime minister, “apparently tried to crash” the aircraft.

Israeli Defence Minister Israel Katz called it an “attempted jihadist terror attack”, without giving any details.

Meanwhile, US President Donald Trump said he had spoken with Netanyahu, and said it seemed as though the attacker was “perhaps a terrorist” or there were other reasons behind the attack.

One passenger, Hayun, described how he and others on the flight had restrained the attacker.

“The pilot who was stabbed was simply very close to the door, so it was hard for us to open it,” Hayun said in a video posted on social media by the prime minister’s office, but before the stabbed pilot collapsed, he was able to open the door.

Yaniv said he put the attacker, who was trying to disable the plane, in a chokehold before other passengers helped pin him down.

He added that he “pulled the controls” of the plane and after it levelled out, another pilot took over control.

Airline Flydubai confirmed two on-duty crew travelling on the flight landed the plane.

Zvika Meness, another passenger, told Israeli public broadcaster Kan News that he and other passengers tied the attacker up “with his own zip ties and with the multimedia headphones”.

He said: “There are children and families here who have been through a very severe, highly traumatic event.”

The passengers, who were almost all Israeli, were taken to Tel Aviv on another flight later on Wednesday.

They were greeted at the airport by crowds of onlookers playing music, singing, dancing and waving Israeli flags.

A number of people were “very emotional and crying as they came off the plane,” a paramedic from Israel’s ambulance service told the BBC.

Flydubai said “an altercation occurred in the flight deck” and the flight was “successfully secured by on-duty Flydubai crew travelling on the flight, who diverted and landed the aircraft safely at Tabuk airport”.

All of the airline’s flights to and from Israel will be suspended during the investigation, a spokesperson said in a statement.

“Our immediate priority is to ensure the ongoing safety, health, and wellbeing of all passengers and crew members involved in this incident and support the official investigation,” they added. (BBC)



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Pandora opens \$150 million Vietnam jewelry factory powered by renewable energy



Danish jewelry company Pandora has opened the world's largest fine-jewelry crafting facility in Vietnam, a \$150 million factory powered entirely by renewable electricity and using 100% recycled gold and silver.

The expansion highlights a broader challenge for the jewelry industry: reducing the environmental footprint of precious metals while meeting growing demand for jewelry. Using recycled gold and silver can reduce the need for newly mined metals, but experts say making that shift requires reliable supply chains and greater transparency.

The new facility in Ho Chi Minh City in southern Vietnam will produce up to 60 million pieces of jewelry a year, increasing the company's manufacturing capacity by 50% while cutting its carbon footprint by 17%, CEO Berta de Pablos-Barbier told The Associated Press.

"We are leading the way and we really hope that the rest follow," she said.

After 37 years in Thailand, Pando-

ra wanted to expand its manufacturing base to increase flexibility and strengthen supply-chain resilience, Pablos-Barbier said.

She said that it chose Vietnam for its skilled artisans who can meet Pandora's standards for craftsmanship, its business environment and its strong infrastructure.

Access to renewable energy infrastructure to power factories is increasingly an "important factor" for Pandora and other Danish companies, Lina Gandløse Hansen, Denmark's ambassador to Vietnam, said.

Pandora's Vietnam facility, with 7,000 workers, will be powered entirely by renewable electricity from the sun and wind, with solar panels installed on its rooftops and plans to work with local solar farms, the company said.

It is also across the road from the \$1 billion factory that toymaker Lego opened in 2025, where it says it makes toys without adding planet-warming gases to the atmosphere.

Vietnam has rapidly expanded renewable energy and had Southeast Asia's largest installed solar and wind capacity at the end of 2024. But the country still relies heavily on coal to power its fast-growing economy, making it important for manufacturers to shift toward cleaner electricity as Vietnam works toward net-zero emissions by 2050.

Manufacturing makes up a fifth of Vietnam's GDP and consumes half the energy it uses. There are plans to phase out its coal power plants by 2040.

Pandora's commitment to using recycled gold and silver was a "big deal," said Saleem H. Ali, who leads the program on critical minerals and inclusive energy transitions at the United Nations University.

He said gold is especially easy to recycle and unlike metals such as copper, it does not break down or rust. Silver can also be recycled, although it can tarnish and needs to be cleaned.

"That is why it is so valuable. We still have gold from the ancient Egyptians, in pretty good shape," he said.

The Danish company switched to using 100% recycled silver and gold for new jewelry in August 2024.

Its factories receive small grains of refined metal from recyclers in Europe and Asia, sourced from items ranging from medical equipment to old cutlery, said Pandora's chief sustainability officer Mads Twomey-Madsen.

It also means finding suppliers, smelters or refiners that use only recycled material. There's also a risk that some could add newly mined material into the mix, Ali said. "That

involves a lot of auditing.”

Pandora began changing its wider supply chain five years ago by adopting standards set by the Responsible Jewellery Council, an industry group that promotes responsible practices including on human rights, workers’ rights and environmental impacts, Twomey-Madsen said. The company uses independent auditors, he said.

He said the ultimate goal is for the entire supply chain, including the energy-intensive process of heating and separating metals from other materials to remove impurities, to be powered by clean energy.

Recovering valuable metals from discarded products and other waste is a challenge, Twomey-Madsen said.

The world is producing more e-waste than ever — 62 million metric tons in 2022, projected to grow to 82 million metric tons by 2030, according to a report by the United Nations’ International Telecommunications Union and research arm UNITAR. Much of this is processed informally, where workers can be exposed to toxic substances while recovering valuable metals such as gold and silver.

More than 1,000 harmful substances have been found in e-waste or produced when it is improperly recycled, including lead, mercury, cadmium and other toxic chemicals, according to the World Health Organization.

Ali, the critical minerals expert, said that artisanal gold mining — when individuals or small groups extract gold using simple tools — was now the largest cause of mercury pollution worldwide. Miners in poor countries may use the toxic metal to separate gold from other materials, harming people and the environment.

He said there have been efforts to improve gold sourcing, but tracing gold remains difficult. South Asia, in particular, has high demand for gold

and jewelry sellers often don’t ask where their gold comes from.

“Once it gets melted, it’s very hard to track it,” he said.

Twomey-Madsen said that the company hopes its commitment to buying recycled metals will show suppliers that there is a growing market for the materials. He added that Pandora initially paid a premium for recycled gold and silver, absorbing the higher cost and investing with suppliers to build a more reliable supply chain

for the materials.

Making jewelry is far less emissions-intensive than sectors such as aviation or cement. But he said a switch by the entire industry switching to recycled gold and silver could prevent about 58 million metric tons (63.9 million U.S. tons) of carbon dioxide from entering the atmosphere each year.

“That is comparable to the entire emissions of New York City,” he said. (AP)



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US death row inmate survives execution attempt after two lethal injections



Tennessee death row inmate Christa Pike has been taken to hospital after an attempt to execute her by two lethal injections failed, her lawyer says.

Her legal team filed an emergency motion to halt the convicted murderer's execution as it was happening, saying: "Ms Pike has lost consciousness and still has a heartbeat and is audibly snoring."

One of her attorneys told the BBC that Pike, 50, was now "being provided life-saving measures" in hospital after two syringes of pentobarbital had been administered.

Pike was sentenced to death in 1996 for the murder of 19-year-old Colleen Slemmer. Her execution was the

subject of a last-minute legal battle.

This culminated in the US Supreme Court allowing the lethal injections to go ahead.

Pike was 18 when she and her then-boyfriend, Tadaryl Shipp, beat, tortured and killed 19-year-old Slemmer, whom they had met at a job training camp for troubled teens.

Slemmer's mother May Martinez was among those who wanted the execution to take place. Speaking to NBC News after Wednesday evening's events, she said: "It was a mess."

The attempted execution took place at Riverbend Maximum Security Institution in Nashville at about 20:00 local time (01:00 GMT on Thurs-

day).

Pike was given two doses of the chemical pentobarbital, and the curtain in the witness room was closed twice, the AP news agency reported.

Media were at some point asked to leave, the news agency said.

AP added that Tennessee's execution protocol calls for a secondary set of drug syringes in case the person being put to death does not die after the first set. But it does not spell out what happens if the subject is alive after the second set.

In a statement reported by US media, Tennessee Governor Bill Lee said he had ordered "a comprehensive, third-party review to determine exactly what occurred". He said

the year's last remaining execution would not go ahead as planned.

The attempted execution of Pike was not the first in the state in 2026 that did not unfold as planned. The execution of Tony Carruthers, who was convicted of kidnapping and murdering three people in 1994, was postponed in May after staff were unable to find a vein to administer a lethal drug.

The Tennessee Department of Correction has said it stands by all the actions it took during the attempted execution of Pike.

"The Tennessee Department of Correction followed every step of the State's lawful, established execution protocol approved by the Attorney General's Office," department spokesperson Dorinda Carter told the Tennessean newspaper.

"The lethal injection chemical in the protocol has consistently been effective, and the protocol does not allow for additional procedures beyond what was carried out this evening. Christa Pike has been transported to an off-site medical facility," she said.

Pike's legal team said in a statement to the Tennessean newspaper: "Tonight the State of Tennessee once again failed to carry out a lawful execution.

"We take no pleasure in being right, but the concerns raised by Ms Pike proved to be true: difficult vein access, blown veins, degraded pentobarbital, no emergency medical care available when things inevitably go wrong, all under a protocol that remains veiled in secrecy."

Pike's lawyers filed an emergency motion to stay her execution and provide medical care after the lethal injection was apparently botched.

District Judge Clifton L Corker issued a ruling noting that "medical personnel have begun to administer medical care as requested in the mo-

tion".

Dr Joel Zivot, a professor at the Emory University School of Medicine who told the BBC he had been retained by Pike's legal team as a medical expert, said she likely never achieved a sufficient blood level of pentobarbital to cause apnoea and cardiovascular failure during the attempted execution.

"It's very possible that as a consequence of the delay of the beginning of resuscitation she will have a brain injury," Zivot said in an email.

The attempted capital punishment went ahead after multiple last-minute legal challenges by Pike's lawyers failed.

The US Supreme Court had thwarted two separate efforts to stop the lethal injection.

Late on Wednesday, America's highest court overturned a reprieve granted by a lower court earlier in the day. The lower court had granted a pause, saying it needed more time to consider the arguments in Pike's case.

The Supreme Court had previously dismissed an appeal by Pike's lawyers, who had argued the jury did not get the chance to weigh mitigating evidence of Pike's documented history of childhood sexual abuse, before they sentenced her to death in 1996.

The defence said that for years, the state of Tennessee had argued in court that she lied about being sexually abused as a child.

But at a recent hearing about her execution method, the state said it did not dispute that she had suffered sexual abuse and rape.

Tennessee's governor denied a clemency request this week from Pike, the only woman on the state's death row.

In her clemency petition, Pike said

that she intended to beat Slemmer, not kill her, but that she was unable to "put the brakes on".

"I was a mentally ill 18-year-old kid," she said in a statement. "It took me numerous years to even realise the gravity of what I'd done. Even more to accept how many lives I affected. I took the life of someone's child, sister, friend. It sickens me now to think I had the ability to commit such a crime."

The murder in 1995 created a media frenzy in Knoxville, Tennessee, after Colleen was found with an inverted pentagram - a symbol that is associated with satanic groups - carved into her chest. Pike has denied carving the symbol herself.

Before the killing, Pike had accused Colleen of insulting her and trying to steal her then-boyfriend.

Two other residents at the camp later testified that Pike had bragged about the murder before and after, and showed them a piece of Colleen's skull.

Pike's boyfriend and co-defendant Shipp was 17 at the time so spared the death penalty under state law. He remains in prison.

Martinez, Slemmer's mother, said at the weekend that she had waited decades to see Pike's sentence carried out.

She told AP that a group helped raise funds for her and her husband to travel from Florida to Tennessee to witness the execution.

"Not a day goes by, or a minute goes by that I do not think about Colleen. Holidays are the worst," Martinez said.

Since 1976, when the Supreme Court resumed the death penalty, only 18 women have been executed in the US, compared to 1,663 men. That is about 1% of all US executions. (BBC)

Round of 16 set in ABFA pre-season knockout cup



Players of the Aston Villa Lions team

The last three teams have advanced to the Round of 16 in the Antigua and Barbuda Football Association (ABFA) pre-season knockout tournament.

Second-seed Aston Villa Lions FC, seventh-seed Green City FC, and 11th-seed Ottos Rangers FC booked their spots into the next stage after winning their opening matches in the Round of 32 of the ABFA Pre-Season Knockout Cup on Thursday.

The Villa Lions crushed the Liberta Blackhawks 6-1 at the Fort Road playing field.

Green City FC recorded a 3-0 victory over Police FC at the Keithley Sheppard Recreational Park. Ran-

jae Williams scored the opening goal in the 14th minute to give Green City a one-nil lead at half-time.

Rick Gordon doubled the lead with a strike in the 48th minute, and Shaquille Watkins scored a third goal in the 56th minute to wrap up Green City's victory.

Shemarah Andrew scored twice to propel the Ottos Rangers to a 4-0 victory over Bendals FC at the Keithley Sheppard Recreational Park.

Andrew had conversions in the 14th and 62nd minutes, while the other goals were scored by Roderick Williams in the 20th minute and Zabuda McCoy in the 25th minute.

Already through to the Round of 16 are top-seed and defending champions Sandals and INET Jennings Grenades, third-seed Pigotts Bullets, and fourth-seed Old Road FC.

Also advancing to the final 16 are fifth-seed Garden Stars, sixth-seed Potters Tigers, eighth-seed Greenbay Hoppers, and ninth-seed Freemans Village Scorpions.

Completing the Round of 16 are 10th-seed John Hughes FC, the Young Lions of Old Road, Jets Football Academy, English Harbour FC, Willikies FC, and Parham FC.



Wins for Curtain Bluff and ABTB in Business Basketball League

There were wins for Curtain Bluff Hotel and former champions Antigua and Barbuda Transport Board (ABTB) in the 2026 Cool and Smooth Antigua and Barbuda Basketball Association's (ABBA) Business League on Wednesday evening.

The Curtain Bluff Resort recorded their fifth win in nine outings with a 104-73 drubbing of Christos in the second game of a double-header at the JSC Sports Complex.

Webster Baptista shot a game-high 23 points, and Javonte Daley sank 16 points for Curtain Bluff Hotel. In support, Najee Simon converted 14

points, Tyrese White had 13 points, and Kareem Edwards scored 12 points for Curtain Bluff Hotel.

Bruce Whyte sank 22 points, Javon Simon got 20 points, and Kwame Huntley scored 12 points for Christos, who remain winless after suffering their seventh defeat in as many games.

The Transport Board claimed their fifth win in eight games by cruising to a commanding 74-27 victory over the Antigua and Barbuda Union of Teachers (ABUT) in Wednesday's opening game.

Lindsay McDonald shot a game-high 25 points, and Marlon "Buju"

Charles and Jodahlia Constant each scored 13 points for the ABTB.

Iba Hodge scored 12 points for the Antigua and Barbuda Union of Teachers, who lost for the eighth time in nine games.

The Business Basketball League will continue with a triple-header at the JSC Sports Complex on Saturday.

Christos will face Anjo Wholesale at 6:30 pm, defending champions Board of Education will meet the Philippines at 7:30 pm, and the Antigua and Barbuda Union of Teachers will take on Richie's Shooterz at 8:30 pm.


 An advertisement for ACB Caribbean mortgages. The background is red with a white geometric pattern at the bottom right. On the left, the ACB Caribbean logo is above a house icon with a key. In the center, the text 'MORTGAGES DESIGNED JUST FOR YOU' is in large white and yellow letters. Below this, there are three icons: a house with a heart, a document with a checkmark, and a gear. To the right of these icons are the offers '50% off legal fees' and '100% Financing'. On the far right, there is a photo of a smiling family (a man, a woman, and a child) and the text 'Apply today.' in large yellow letters. Below the photo are social media icons for Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and LinkedIn.

Sports News

APUA Telecoms stay unbeaten in defense of business league title

APUA Telecoms maintained their winning start in defense of their title in the 2026 JOMA Caribbean Ministry of Sports Business Football League Championship during the latest round of matches.

APUA Telecoms claimed their third consecutive win with a 1-0 victory against Sandals in their Group 2 clash at the Keithley Sheppard playing field. It was the first loss for Sandals after winning their previous two matches.

The Galley Bay Ballers also extended their unbeaten run to stay at the top of Group 2 by recording their fourth consecutive win with a 3-1 victory over the American University of Antigua (AUA) FC at the Keithley Sheppard Park. AUA FC remains winless after suffering their third defeat in as many games.

The Sir Vivian Richards Stadium claimed their second win in three matches after being awarded a 3-0 victory by default over National Housing Development (NHD) Legends, who failed to show up for their match at the Keithley Sheppard Recreational Park. It was also the third loss in as many matches for the NHD Legends.

The Central Housing and Planning Authority (CHAPA) Warriors made it three wins in a row in Group 3 by snatching a 2-1 victory over the Jolly Harbour Stingers at the Jennings playing field. It was the third defeat in four matches for the Jolly Harbour Stingers.

The Antigua and Barbuda Airport Authority (ABAA) rebounded from their first loss in a 1-0 defeat to the CHAPA Warriors to record



Hermitage Bay Strikers

their third win in four games with a 3-0 victory over His Majesty's Prison (HMP) United at the Radio Range playing field. It was the second defeat in three matches for HMP United.

The Department of Immigration extended their unbeaten run in Group 3, securing their third consecutive win with a 3-1 victory over National Housing Development (NHD) Full Experience at the Golden Grove playing field.

NHD Full Experience remains in the cellar of Group 3 without any points after crashing to their fourth defeat in as many encounters.

The 2024 champions, Hermitage Bay Strikers, which finished third last year, maintained their unbeaten start in Group 4, recording their third win in four matches with a 4-0 drubbing of KOSCAB Powerade FC at Jennings. KOSCAB Powerade FC lost for the third time in as many games.

Jack Idle claimed their second win

in three matches with a 2-0 victory over Public Works Department (PWD) FC in their Group 4 affair at Golden Grove.

Royalton Chic notched up their second win in four matches by snatching a 3-2 victory over Cocos Hotel in another Group 4 encounter at Golden Grove.

Keyonna Beach Hotel extended their unbeaten run to remain at the top of Group 1, securing their third consecutive win with an 8-1 drubbing of the Antigua and Barbuda Transport Board (ABTB) at Jennings.

Jumby Bay Resort claimed their second win in four matches by pulling off a 1-0 victory against Postal Services at Radio Range.

The National Housing Development (NHD) Demolition Squad and the University of the West Indies (UWI) Frigate Bird FC played to a 1-1 draw in the Group 1 encounter at Radio Range.

CWI welcomes Barbados's high performance centre initiative



Cricket West Indies (CWI) has welcomed Prime Minister of Barbados, Hon. Mia Amor Mottley's call for greater investment in cricket and her commitment to the development of a High-Performance Centre (HPC) in Barbados.

The Prime Minister's comments came following the conclusion of the 2026 Caribbean Premier League Final at Kensington Oval, where she highlighted the importance of sustained investment in sporting infrastructure and confirmed that funding for a high-performance centre is moving forward.

CWI sees the proposed facility as an important step in strengthening the region's cricket infrastructure and an opportunity to complement the High-Performance Centre currently being developed by the regional body at its Headquarters at Coolidge in Antigua.

Chief Executive Officer Chris Dehring said investment in high-performance infrastructure has become increasingly important as cricket's major

nations continue to strengthen the environments in which their players are developed.

"The global cricket landscape has changed, and the investment being made in high-performance infrastructure, sports science and recovery facilities and technology is raising the bar on player development. All constituents of West Indies cricket need to build that capacity in order to give our cricketers at every level the chance to properly develop their skills," he said.

"We therefore welcome Prime Minister Mottley's vision and her recognition of the need for meaningful investment if the region is to build on its proud legacy and create new opportunities for the next generation."

Dehring said CWI's own HPC development in Antigua is being designed with a similar objective; that of creating a modern environment where players have state-of-the-art facilities, technology, expertise and support systems required to perform at the highest level.

"West Indies cricket needs investment in modern training and development infrastructure. These facilities are key components of a re-engineered player production pipeline and ecosystem.

"Our goal is to establish a network of High-Performance Centres across the Caribbean, connected by technology and a common vision. That will be transformative for West Indies cricket and expand the opportunities for our players as the global game continues to expand."

The development of complementary high-performance facilities across the region can strengthen the pathway from emerging talent to the senior level, while also creating opportunities for collaboration among national cricket boards, governments, coaches, sports scientists and other specialists.

CWI said it looks forward to continued dialogue and collaboration with stakeholders across the region as the Caribbean explores new opportunities to invest in the future of West Indies cricket.

Final of School Knockout Cup will take place on Friday



Nafisa Quashie of AGHS

The finals of both girls' and boys' divisions of the Ministry of Sports Cool and Smooth JOMA Caribbean School Boys Knockout Cup will be contested at the ABFA Technical Center on Friday (today).

The Princess Margaret School will clash with the Antigua and Barbuda College of Advanced Studies (ABCAS) in the boys' division final at 6 pm.

Princess Margaret School ad-

vanced to the final by snatching a 2-1 victory against Antigua Grammar School at the Golden Grove playing field on Wednesday.

R o s h a u n Samuel had a 22nd-minute conversion, and Mario Lewis scored in the 61st minute for Princess Margaret School. Tafari Loo-by scored for Antigua Grammar School with a strike in the 47th minute.

A B C A S booked their spot in the championship decider after prevailing 3-2 in a penalty shootout against the Harrison Center after both teams battled to a goalless draw at the end of regulation in the first semi-final at the Keithley Sheppard Recreational Park last week Friday.

The Antigua Girls High School (AGHS) and Princess Margaret School will clash in the girls' knockout final on Friday at 4 pm.

Both teams advanced to the championship decider after securing wins in the semi-finals on Wednesday.

Nafisa Quashie struck a hat trick to propel AGHS to a 6-1 drubbing of Pares Secondary School at the Keithley Sheppard Recreational Park.

Quashie had conversions in the 37th, 64th, and 66th minutes. Yanelis Martin converted twice with strikes in the fifth and 18th minutes, and Skii Hazelwood scored the other goal in the 13th minute for AGHS.

Alair Elmes scored a consolation goal in the 14th minute for Pares Secondary School.

Princess Margaret School recorded a 4-0 victory against Clare Hall Secondary School in their semi-final at the Golden Grove playing field.

Clare Hall made a bad start with Xaurria Edwin scoring an own goal in the third minute of play.

Princess Margaret School scored three more goals with conversions by Kavita Cordice in the 25th minute, Karmellia Hughes in the 27th minute, and Rolesha Humphreys in the 45th minute.

Friday's finals will be preceded by the official march past and opening of the 2026/27 secondary schools' football league at the ABFA Technical Center at 3 pm.