

Department of Immigration Moves to Eliminate Fraud in E-Visa Applications

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Over Fifty Schools Visited In Just Over Two Weeks

Department of Immigration Moves to Eliminate Fraud in E-Visa Applications

The Department of Immigration has announced new stringent measures designed to curb what it has discovered to be the use of fraudulent documentation and measures to circumvent the established immigration procedures.

In a media release overnight, the department said it is strengthening security and verification measures for e-Visa applications and other immigration-related services following the identification of fraudulent, altered and misleading documents submitted in support of applications.

The measures are intended to strengthen accountability, protect the integrity of Antigua and Barbuda's immigration system and further safeguard the country's borders.

Chief Immigration Officer **Katrina Yearwood** said the Department is taking decisive steps to address the issue while ensuring that legitimate travellers and applicants continue to receive efficient and professional service.

"The integrity of our immigration system and the security of our borders cannot be compromised. We are strengthening our systems to ensure greater accountability and to address the submission of fraudulent or altered documentation, while continuing to facilitate legitimate travellers and applicants efficiently and professionally."



Chief Immigration Officer Katrina Yearwood

As part of the enhanced measures, the Department will introduce **mandatory registration for immigration representatives, travel agents, consultants and other persons or businesses that submit immigration applications on behalf of clients.**

Once implemented:

- ▶ Only registered representatives will be authorised to submit applications on behalf of clients.
- ▶ Registered representatives will be required to meet established eligibility and verification requirements.
- ▶ Applications may be subject to additional checks to confirm the au-

thenticity of supporting documents.

- ▶ Representatives who knowingly submit fraudulent, altered or misleading documentation may have their registration suspended or revoked and may be referred for prosecution where appropriate.

The Department is also reminding applicants that they remain responsible for ensuring that information and supporting documents submitted on their behalf are truthful, accurate and authentic. Applicants are therefore encouraged to exercise due diligence when engaging third parties to assist with immigration applications.

The strengthened measures are **not intended to impede legitimate travel or immigration applications.** They are designed to protect the integrity of the immigration process, strengthen confidence in the system and ensure that genuine applications continue to be processed efficiently.

The Department of Immigration encourages all applicants, representatives, travel agents, consultants and other stakeholders to cooperate with the enhanced measures as Antigua and Barbuda continues to strengthen the security and protect the integrity of its immigration system.



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Cabinet Considers \$3M Robotic Surgery Programme for Antigua and Barbuda

Government is exploring the possibility of introducing robotic surgery and expanding prostate cancer screening services in Antigua and Barbuda following a presentation to Cabinet last week by internationally recognised urologic oncologist and robotic surgeon Dr. David Samadi.

Dr. Samadi met with Cabinet last Wednesday—the final day of Prostate Cancer Awareness Month—to outline a proposal aimed at improving early detection, treatment and specialist surgical care for prostate cancer patients.

The specialist, who has performed more than 11,000 robotic surgeries during his career, told Cabinet that Antigua and Barbuda has an opportunity to strengthen its healthcare system by developing greater local capacity for advanced cancer treatment.

Dr. Samadi, who has experience in open, laparoscopic and robotic prostate surgery and highlighted his work in the Dominican Republic, where he helped establish a robotic surgery programme and continues to provide specialist services to patients from across the region.

He also informed Cabinet that a number of Antiguan and Barbudans have already travelled overseas to access his services. The medical specialist expressed his willingness to collaborate with the Ministry of Health and local physicians to develop a sustainable specialist programme in Antigua and Barbuda.

A major component of his presentation was the establishment of a more comprehensive national prostate cancer screening programme. This would include greater access to Prostate-Specific Antigen (PSA) testing, coupled with increased public education aimed at encouraging men to seek medical advice and undergo ap-



Dr. David Samadi.

propriate screening.

Dr. Samadi raised concern that some Antiguan and Barbudans are reaching specialist care only after their prostate cancer has become advanced. He therefore stressed the importance of earlier detection and timely intervention in improving treatment options for patients.

While explaining that PSA testing is not, on its own, specific to prostate cancer, he said it can form an important part of an assessment when interpreted by appropriately trained medical professionals.

The proposed initiative would also involve strengthening the skills and capacity of local healthcare providers through training and collaboration with specialist physicians.

Dr. Samadi also presented the possibility of introducing robotic surgical technology as part of a longer-term programme of advanced cancer care. He told Cabinet that establishing such a service would require significant investment in specialised equipment, infrastructure and training.

The robotic surgical system discussed during the presentation is estimated to cost approximately US\$2.5 million to US\$3 million.

According to Dr. Samadi, prostate cancer treatment could serve as the initial focus of the programme, but the technology could subsequently be used in a range of other surgical specialties. He also offered to assist with training local physicians and other healthcare professionals as part of the development of the programme.

Dr. Samadi suggested that establishing advanced surgical services locally could eventually reduce the need for some Antiguan and Barbudans to travel overseas for treatment and also outlined the possibility of Antigua and Barbuda eventually providing specialist surgical services to patients from other Caribbean countries.

In the longer term, he said, the initiative could contribute to the development of medical tourism, allowing the country to attract patients seeking specialised treatment.

Following the presentation and discussions, Cabinet invited Dr. Samadi to prepare and submit a comprehensive concept document and proposal for consideration by the Government.

The document is expected to outline the services that could be offered, equipment and infrastructure requirements, training opportunities for local healthcare professionals, arrangements for specialist visits and the financial and operational requirements associated with establishing the programme.

Dr. Samadi indicated that he is prepared to work alongside the Government and Antigua and Barbuda's medical community as the concept is developed.

Local News

Antigua and Barbuda Participates in Pacific Pre-COP31 in Fiji and Tuvalu



Antigua and Barbuda is participating in the Pacific Pre-COP31 meetings being held in Fiji and Tuvalu from October 5–8, ahead of the 31st United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP31) in Antalya, Türkiye.

Minister of Environment, Michael Joseph, is representing Antigua and Barbuda at the high-level climate discussions. He is accompanied by Ambassador Ruleta Camacho-Thomas, Acting Director of the Department of Environment.

The Pacific Pre-COP31 is being hosted by Australia in partnership with Fiji, Tuvalu and other Pacific partners. The official programme

Midweek Deals

TUESDAYS / WEDNESDAYS

-Burger
-Medium Drink
\$19.99

-Leg and Thigh
-Biscuit
-Medium Drink
\$17.99





in Nadi, Fiji, is being held from October 5–8, with the Leaders' Event taking place in Tuvalu and Fiji from October 5–6. The meetings are intended to amplify Pacific perspectives and priorities in the lead-up to COP31.

The participation of Antigua and Barbuda reflects the country's continued engagement in global climate discussions and its advocacy for the priorities of Small Island Developing States (SIDS), particularly in relation to climate resilience, adaptation, climate finance, loss and damage, and meaningful implementation of climate commitments.

The Leaders' Event provides participating leaders and representatives with an opportunity to see firsthand the impacts of climate change in Tuvalu, including the challenges associated with sea-level rise, while also highlighting the adaptation and resilience measures being undertaken by Pacific communities.

For Antigua and Barbuda, participation in the Pre-COP is particu-

larly significant as a fellow small island developing state facing many of the same climate-related vulnerabilities as Pacific island

nations. The country continues to advocate for stronger international action and greater access to the resources required by vulnerable states to build resilience and respond effectively to climate impacts.

Minister Joseph and Ambassador Camacho-Thomas are expected to engage with fellow ministers, government representatives and climate stakeholders throughout the programme, contributing Antigua and Barbuda's perspective to discussions that will help shape the agenda for COP31.

The Pacific Pre-COP will serve as an important platform for building momentum ahead of COP31, which will take place in Antalya, Türkiye, from November 9–20, 2026.


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Local News

St. John's Rural East Community Centre Is the Next Stop for the Prime Minister's Vision Initiative

The Ministry of Health has announced that the popular, Prime Minister's Vision Initiative continues its community-based roll-out with the programme now operating from the St. John's Rural East Community Centre over the next two weeks.

In a statement, the ministry said the Initiative has been moving to different locations to serve residents across the country, in collaboration with RestoringVision, the main sponsor of the programme.

According to the statement, as part of this week's schedule, the initiative is serving residents in the Clare Hall and surrounding areas but the Clare Hall Health Centre does not have the adequate space required to accommodate the various stages of the vision programme, including participant registration, vision screening, the selection of reading glasses and the distribution of glasses.

"As a result, the St. John's Rural East Community Centre has been selected as the venue for the programme for the next two weeks, beginning Monday, October 5.

The decision is intended to ensure that sufficient space is available to facilitate the programme efficiently and to provide participants with a comfortable and organised experience throughout the registration, screening, glasses selection and distribution process," it revealed.

It said residents are encouraged to visit the St. John's Rural East



RestoringVision Ministry of Health, Wellness, Environment and Civil Service Affairs

PRIME MINISTER'S VISION INITIATIVE

In collaboration with the Ministry of Health, Wellness, Environment and Civil Service Affairs and RestoringVision.

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OCTOBER 5TH TO 16TH, 2026

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OCTOBER 19TH TO 23RD, 2026

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FRIDAYS: 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM

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Please bring a valid national photo ID.

Additional clinic locations will be announced periodically.

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Community Centre during the two-week period to access the services being offered through the initiative.

The Prime Minister's Vision Initiative is being implemented by

the Ministry of Health in collaboration with RestoringVision to expand access to vision screening and reading glasses for eligible residents across Antigua and Barbuda who are 40 years and over.

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- Submissions must include the final logo in PNG and PDF formats-in both full-color and black-and-white (monochrome) versions-along with the editable source file.
- Include a short description explaining your design concept and how it reflects the theme *Bring our culture, Shape our identity*

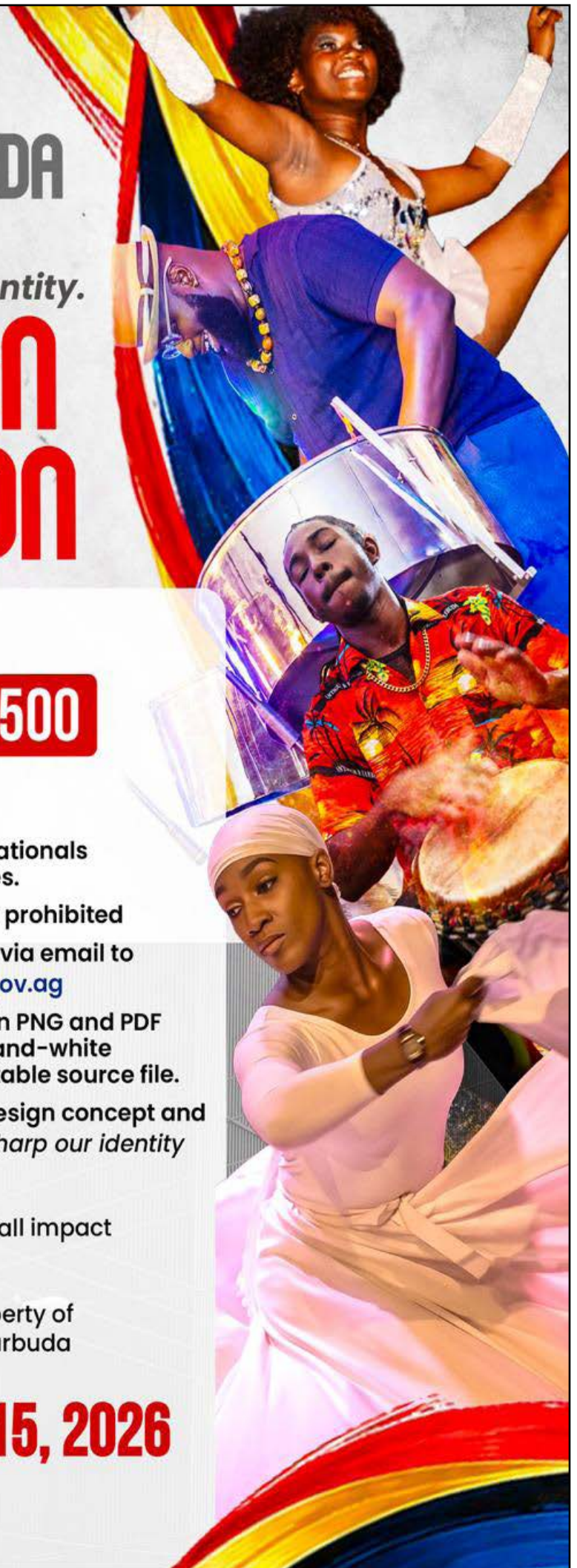
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SUBMIT BY OCTOBER 15, 2026



Over Fifty Schools Visited In Just Over Two Weeks



The schools' outreach programme launched by the National Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) Task Force, has visited more than fifty government and private secondary and primary schools across Antigua.

Since its launch on September 21, team members from the Outreach Initiative have visited schools all across Antigua...from Old Road in the South, to Freetown and Wilkies in the East and Five Islands and Greenbay primary schools in the west. They have also visited schools such as Cedar Grove Primary and St. Nicholas in the north.

"We have been very strategic in our approach to the school visits; what we have done is that we identify schools in a particular region, say for example the south, and then we visit up to five different schools in that area. That's how we have been able to maximize on the visited as we identify an area and cover as many schools as we can in one day. We have to credit Joshua Francis of Good Humans 268 who has been a driving force behind the programme as who herself, has visited all fifty plus schools in the programme so far," revealed Everton Barnes, Co-Lead for Media and Public Affairs Com-

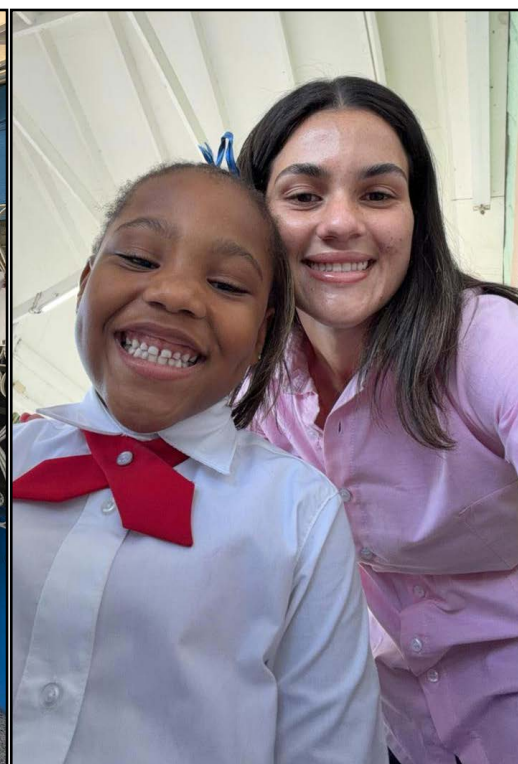
mittee of the National Task Force, and who himself has visited most of the schools covered so far.

During the visits, team members explain what is the Commonwealth, its composition, and the fact that it is a voluntary grouping of 56 nations, many of whom are former British territories. The significance of CHOGM is also highlighted, and depending on whether the students are from primary schools or secondary schools, the presenting is done in a manner that they can all understand and follow.

The feedback from both students and teachers have been over-

Local News

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whelmingly positive as even teachers has commented on the fact that they too have learnt something from the presentations.

On Monday, the team visited the Baptist Academy Secondary and Primary Schools, the Lutheran School, and Minoah Magnet Primary. On Tuesday, the visits con-

tinue with stops at the Princess Margaret School, Grace Christian Academy, Wesleyan Junior Academy, Better Chance Primary and the Adele School.

In her presentation, Francis, who is very active in environmental issues, promotes the concept of recycling by displaying a national

flag with the discarded bottle caps being used to depict the different colours.

She also emphasized novel ways in which teachers may incorporate aspects of the CHOGM into the curriculum, particularly in areas such as mathematics, English and geography.

Antigua and Barbuda Joins Caribbean Tourism Talks in Guyana



SOTIC 26
STATE OF THE TOURISM INDUSTRY CONFERENCE
OCTOBER 5-9, 2026 — GUYANA



SPEAKER

**Hon. Charles
"Max"
Fernandez**

Minister of Tourism, Civil Aviation
Transportation and Investment
Antigua and Barbuda




the sector.

The conference is also providing a platform for regional stakeholders to explore strategies to build resilience, drive innovation and sustain the growth and development of Caribbean tourism.

Antigua and Barbuda and other stakeholders are expected to assess emerging opportunities and challenges facing the industry, while seeking approaches that can support long-term

Antigua and Barbuda is among Caribbean destinations represented at the 2026 State of the Tourism Industry Conference (SOTIC), being held in Georgetown, Guyana.

Tourism Minister Charles Fernandez is leading Antigua and Barbuda's delegation, which includes Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority Chief Executive Officer Colin C. James, Chief Marketing Officer Charmaine Spencer, and Junior Minister of Tourism Janica Adams.

The delegation is participating in discussions with regional tourism leaders, industry partners and other stakeholders on the future direction of the Caribbean's tourism sector.

SOTIC 2026 is being held under the theme "Tourism Futures: Smart, Sustainable, and Inclusive."



Discussions are examining how Caribbean destinations can harness smart technology, sustainable practices and inclusive growth strategies to strengthen the tourism industry and improve the outcomes and yields generated by

competitiveness and ensure that the benefits of tourism extend across Caribbean economies, all in an effort to shape the region's tourism future.

Antigua and Barbuda Delegation Participates in NCD Training in China



Antigua and Barbuda was represented at a Training Workshop on Non-Communicable Disease (NCD) Prevention and Control for Developing Countries, held in Beijing, China, from September 10–23, 2026.

The training was sponsored by the Ministry of Commerce of the People's Republic of China and organized by the Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention (China CDC).

The four-member delegation comprised Samantha Moitt, Chief Nutrition Officer, Ministry of Health; Dr. Akweta Alexander, Medical Doctor, Sir Lester Bird Medical Centre; Caryl Michael, Matron, Hannah Thomas Hospital; and Patrice Defoe, Senior Clerk, Medical Benefits Scheme.

The two-week programme included lectures, visits to health centres and

hospitals, study tours, health demonstration areas, and cultural experiences. Participants were exposed to China's approaches to NCD prevention and control, including strategies addressing cardiovascular diseases, cancers, chronic respiratory diseases, diabetes, and major NCD risk factors.

A key focus of the training was the Healthy China 2030 Initiative, particularly the use of surveillance data to identify health priorities, guide interventions, and monitor progress. Participants also explored innovative approaches to health-care delivery, including the use of artificial intelligence (AI) to support outpatient services, monitor vital signs, and provide patients with reminders related to medication and healthy lifestyle practices.

For the Antigua and Barbuda dele-

gation, the experience highlighted the importance of long-term planning, strong surveillance systems, innovation, and the effective use of data to guide health priorities.

While recognizing the differences between China and Antigua and Barbuda in population size, resources, and economic circumstances, the delegation noted that the experience demonstrated how sustained development can be achieved through a clear plan, consistent implementation, and regular review of progress.

The knowledge and experiences gained are expected to contribute to ongoing efforts to strengthen NCD prevention, management, surveillance, health promotion, and the use of technology within Antigua and Barbuda's health system.

ABCF THANKS NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS AS ROAD TO ABU DHABI 2028 BEGINS

Federation recognizes coaches, administrators, Government partners and supporters whose collective effort enabled Antigua and Barbuda's historic Samarkand campaign

The Antigua and Barbuda Chess Federation has extended its formal appreciation to the national and international partners whose support helped make the country's participation in the 46th FIDE Chess Olympiad in Samarkand, Uzbekistan, possible. The delegation returned with four Open Team match victories, a historic first appearance by an Antigua and Barbuda Women's Team, three newly earned FIDE titles and two near-podium performances in Group E. ABCF President Dr. Hannibal M. Fleming said the results reflected a collective effort involving players, captains, coaches, administrators, families, employers, Government agencies, regional organizations, sponsors and volunteers.

SPECIAL RECOGNITION FOR WOMEN'S TEAM DEVELOPMENT

The Federation gives special recognition to Past President Chester Grant for his diligent work in assembling Antigua and Barbuda's inaugural Women's Olympiad Team. Grant's efforts helped transform the Federation's objective of fielding a national women's team into a historic reality and created the foundation upon which the players, captain and trainers prepared for the Olympiad. ABCF also extends special thanks to Seymore Smith for the extensive coordination he provided behind the scenes. His follow-through and attention to the administrative and logistical requirements of organizing an international delegation contributed significantly to the successful execution of the Samarkand campaign.

"Past President Chester Grant deserves special recognition for his diligent work in assembling our first





3 NEW FIDE TITLES

Antigua & Barbuda returns from Samarkand with three new international titles

 VENDIZ CHARLES Candidate Master (CM)	 ATEILA BOBB Woman FIDE Master (WFM)	 CHERRY-ANN BENJAMIN Woman Candidate Master (WCM)
Vendiz Charles:  4/9	Ateila Bobb:  8½/11	Cherry-Ann Benjamin:  5/10


Three titles earned at the 46th FIDE Chess Olympiad



Samarkand, Uzbekistan • 2026

ANTIGUA & BARBUDA CHESS FEDERATION

Source: ABCF Olympiad press release facts.

Women's Olympiad Team. We also sincerely thank Seymore Smith for the additional coordination he carried out behind the scenes. Both made im-



Antigua & Barbuda Chess Federation

PEOPLES
CULTURE
STRATEGY
DISCIPLINE
BRIGHTER
TOMORROWS

TEAM ANTIGUA & BARBUDA IN SAMARKAND

— A landmark Olympiad campaign —

 3 new FIDE titles earned	 Historic first Women's Olympiad team	 Open Team: 8 match points
 Women's Team: 8 match points	 Open Team recorded 4 match victories	 Both teams finished competitively in Group E

Open Team and Women's Team both completed the Olympiad with 8 match points.

46th FIDE Chess Olympiad | Samarkand, Uzbekistan | Sept 16–27, 2026

Prepared from ABCF Olympiad press release facts.

portant contributions to this collective effort.” — Dr. Hannibal M. Fleming.

INTERNATIONAL TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT

ABCF thanks officials of the Confederation of Chess for America, also known as CCA or FIDE America, and the FIDE Commission for Women's Chess for their guidance and support. The Federation also recognizes the Queen's Gambit Challenge for assisting developing federations in expanding women's participation and preparing national women's teams for international competition. Special appreciation is extended to WIM Deborah Richards-Porter and IM Juan Armando Röhl Montes for training and preparing Antigua and Barbuda's Women's Team. ABCF also thanks GM José Eduardo Martínez Alcántara for preparing the Open Team for the technical and psychological demands of the 11-round Olympiad.

“Their expertise, encouragement and willingness to invest time in our players helped the delegation approach the Olympiad with greater confidence, structure and competitive readiness.” — Dr. Hannibal M. Fleming.

THANKS TO GOVERNMENT AND NATIONAL PARTNERS

ABCF extends special appreciation to the Honourable H. Charles Fernandez, Minister of Tourism, Civil Aviation, Transportation and Investment, for supporting Antigua and Barbuda's international representation. The Federation also thanks the Board of Directors, management and staff of the Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority for their assistance and for recognizing the value of international sport in strengthening the country's visibility and global profile. Special appreciation is further extended to the Honourable E.P. Chet Greene, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Trade

and Barbuda Affairs, and his Ministry for supporting Antigua and Barbuda's representation internationally. The Federation acknowledges team captains Julian Piper and VP-Christine Joseph for their leadership, player management, welfare support and co-ordination throughout the delegation's travel and participation. ABCF also thanks its Executive members, players' families, employers, supporters, Government agencies and corporate partners for the financial, administrative and personal support that enabled the delegation to represent the nation.

ROAD TO THE 47TH OLYMPIAD BEGINS

The Federation will now begin preparations for the 47th FIDE Chess Olympiad, scheduled for Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, from October 28 to November 11, 2028.

ABCF plans to build on the Samarkand experience through stronger domestic competition, structured development pathways for junior, women's and elite players, continued support for the country's newly titled players, expanded programmes for women and girls, greater access to international coaching and a phased Chess in Education strategy.

“The Road to the 47th FIDE Chess Olympiad in Abu Dhabi begins today. We will begin training and preparing immediately, using the lessons, confidence and international experience gained in Samarkand to advance our performance at the next Olympiad. Our objective is not merely to return. We intend to return stronger, better prepared and ready to compete for greater honours. Samarkand showed that our players can earn international titles, secure important victories and compete within reach of the category podium. We must now convert that experience into a disciplined two-year development programme that raises the standard of both teams.” — Dr. Hannibal M. Fleming

The Road to Samarkand has ended.

The Road to Abu Dhabi begins today.

The world must rise up with a single voice against all forms of terrorism.



By Sergio Martinez Gonzalez. Ambassador of the Republic of Cuba in Antigua and Barbuda.

In December 2022, the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), together with Cuba, agreed to establish October 6 as CARICOM-Cuba Day against Terrorism. This decision serves as a tribute to the victims of the brutal terrorist attack against a Cuban commercial airliner, an event known worldwide as the “Barbados Crime.”

On October 6, 1976, Cuban-born terrorists based in South Florida, trained and under the orders of the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), bombed a plane of Cubana Airline in mid-flight, killing 57 Cubans (including the young members of the national fencing team who were happily returning to their families after winning the gold medal in fencing at the Central American and Caribbean Games), 11 Guyanese, and 5 citizens of North Korea. The perpetrators of this crime were never brought to justice and lived freely until the end of their days

under the protection of the U.S. government—the same government that cynically uses the pretext of fighting terrorism, to try to impose its imperialist interests on the rest of the world.

Cuba, a victim for over 60 years of all kinds of terrorist actions promoted by the United States that have left more than 3,000 families grieving, has maintained an unquestionable principled stance against the use of any act or type of terrorism as a means to achieve political, religious, or any other objectives, regardless of its origin. The island is part of the 19 international conventions on terrorism and incorporates this rejection into its legal and constitutional framework.

Terrorism remains one of the most terrible scourges facing humanity today. But in combating it, here can be not double standards. The terrorist attack on the Twin Towers in New York, attacks against Christian congregations, synagogues, or Muslim mosques are just as reprehensible, as the criminal acts of state terrorism where bombs are dropped on schools, killing hundreds of innocent children and threatening to destroy an entire civilization; or when simple fishermen are murdered with impunity in our Caribbean waters; or when the Israeli government, with the full support of the United States, carries out a genocidal policy of mass extermination against the entire Palestinian population.

It is also an act of state terrorism the cruel policy of collective punishment imposed by the US government on the entire Cuban people for over 60 years. This policy has been aggravated by the draconian energy blockade and others measures adopted by the current administration of Donald Trump, aimed at causing maximum hardship and suffering to the more than 10 million inhabitants of the largest of the Antilles. It is paradoxical and cynical that the United States government designates Cuba as a state sponsor of terrorism and includes it on an arbitrary and unilateral list, without any mandate from international organizations, when any impartial observer can determine which government actually encourages, supports, and tolerates terrorism and which country confronts and combats it, while also having been a victim of this scourge for over 60 years.

Combating and denouncing the scourge of terrorism is precisely what the political leaders of CARICOM and Cuba had in mind when they designated October 6 as the “CARICOM-Cuba Day Against Terrorism.” As we commemorate the 50th anniversary of the “Barbados Crime,” let us once again raise our voices against all forms of terrorism, and especially against state terrorism. Only by putting an end to these barbaric acts the international community would be able to preserve peace and, in doing so, preserve humanity.

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– Proverbs 19:17*



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Together, We Can Build A Stronger, More Caring Community! ♥



Regional News

Gonsalves defends CARICOM S.G but warns reform is unlikely



Delivering the 5th Distinguished Owen Arthur Memorial Lecture at the University of the West Indies (UWI) Cave Hill Campus, veteran Caribbean statesman Dr. Ralph Gonsalves addressed criticisms surrounding the CARICOM Secretariat and the governance framework of the regional integration movement.

Addressing public dissatisfaction over the pace of regional integration, Gonsalves described the CARICOM Secretariat as “much maligned” while operating within what he termed a “ramshackle governance and administrative apparatus”. He emphasized that the Secretariat cannot be held responsible for implementation delays, as it possesses no independent authority beyond what is explicitly conferred by the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas and decisions taken by the Conference of Heads of Government and ministerial councils.

Gonsalves expressed deep skepticism that CARICOM will establish a supranational executive body—similar to the European Commission—capable of enforcing rules

and imposing sanctions on member states. He noted that an executive CARICOM Commission focused on CSME implementation is unlikely to materialize due to a persistent psychological “islandness” and an “addiction to the doctrine of the pristine Westphalian nation state” among member states.

Because CARICOM operates strictly as a community of sovereign nations relying on intergovernmental unanimity and consensus, policy decisions remain tied to national political wills rather than centralized enforcement mechanisms.

Gonsalves highlighted recent institutional friction within the community, citing the contention surrounding the reappointment of the CARICOM Secretary-General. He noted that because the traditional political process temporarily broke down, a request was submitted to the Caribbean Court of Justice (CCJ) for a non-binding advisory opinion.

While acknowledging the court’s authority, Gonsalves warned against turning to the judiciary to resolve

political disputes, cautioning that it is “a dangerous thing... to put in the hands of unelected judges political questions for resolution”. He insisted that political compromise and consensus must remain the primary mechanism for resolving internal CARICOM matters.

Despite these governance limits, Gonsalves argued that significant progress can still be achieved. Rather than focusing exclusively on an elusive single economy

structure, he outlined concrete steps to optimize CARICOM’s existing framework, including:

Upgrading and enhancing the structure and function of the CARICOM Secretariat.

Instituting automaticity of financing for CARICOM, its organs, and regional institutions such as CDEMA, CARPHA, and IMPACS to ensure predictable resourcing.

Strengthening popular participation by reviving the Assembly of Caribbean Community Parliamentarians to provide a democratic institutional base.

Advancing full freedom of movement and functional cooperation in air and sea transport, energy, climate action, culture, and regional security.

Gonsalves concluded that while administrative reviews occur periodically, CARICOM will continue conducting business through intergovernmental negotiation and compromise, remaining the central political expression of Caribbean civilization. (St Vincent Times)

Nutrien to shut down Trinidad Nitrogen plant indefinitely



Nutrien Ltd. (TSX and NYSE: NTR) announced on Monday that it will indefinitely shut down its Trinidad Nitrogen operations at the Point Lisas Facility following an extensive review of strategic alternatives and engagement with relevant stakeholders.

Due to ongoing natural gas constraints and uncertainty, this was determined to be the optimal path to enhance free cash flow and return on invested capital.

Nutrien previously implemented a controlled shutdown of the facility on October 23, 2025, in response to port access restrictions and a lack of reliable and economic natural gas supply that reduced the free cash flow contribution of the Trinidad Nitrogen operations over an extended period of time.

“We greatly appreciate the contributions and dedication of our Trinidad team and are committed to managing the transition responsi-

bly and safely,” said Dean Perkins, Senior Vice President, Upstream, Nitrogen and Proprietary Product Operations.

There will be no impact to Nutrien’s 2026 Nitrogen sales volume

guidance as the company assumed no production from its Trinidad Nitrogen operations. Nutrien remains well positioned to meet customer demand for nitrogen and grow volumes from its North American Nitrogen assets through reliability improvements and low-cost debottleneck projects.

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Regional News



CCJ to sit in Saint Lucia for the first time



The Trinidad-based Caribbean Court of Justice (CCJ) will host one of its travelling sittings in Saint Lucia for the first time in its 21-year history.

The sittings will be held on Tuesday, October 7 and Wednesday, October 8, 2026, marking the opening of the 2026/2027 judicial year.

These travelling sittings have previously been held in Barbados, Belize, Guyana, and Jamaica. They allow the CCJ to sit and conduct court proceedings in any country that is a party to the Agreement Establishing the Caribbean Court of Justice.

Saint Lucia became the fifth Caribbean Community (CARICOM) member state to accede to the CCJ's Appellate Jurisdiction in 2023.

Sittings held throughout the region are intended to allow citizens to see the Court at work as part of its mission to provide "accessible, efficient and substantive justice for the people and states of the Caribbean Community".

According to a release from the CCJ, the sittings can also reduce travel costs for attorneys and litigants. CCJ President, Justice Winston Anderson, asserted that the sittings enable "the people of the region to see us, interact with us, and realise that we are in fact their kith and kin, and part and parcel of the fabric of their society".

While in Saint Lucia, the full sev-

en-member CCJ Bench will hear three matters originating from Saint Lucia, Guyana, and Belize, respectively, while also delivering judgments in two matters from Belize.

The public can view a livestream of the sittings on the CCJ's website, social media platforms, and YouTube channel. Information on the matters to be heard is also available in the Schedule of Court Sittings on the CCJ's

website.

Additionally, the Court will pay courtesy calls on Acting Governor-General Felix Finisterre; Prime Minister Philip J. Pierre; Chief Justice of the Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court, Margaret Price Findlay; Attorney General Leslie Vincent Mondesir; and Leader of the Opposition Allen Chastanet. (St Lucia Times)



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Florida seeing largest dengue outbreak in continental US in decades



Florida's current dengue outbreak appears to be the largest in several decades in the continental United States.

State health officials reported last week that more than 250 locally acquired cases of the mosquito-borne disease have been tallied so far this year. The vast majority of them were in Hillsborough County, home to Tampa.

Federal health officials say their data on dengue outbreaks is limited. But available information from state health departments and medical journals suggests the Florida outbreak marks the most cases in a calendar year for any state since at least the 1940s.

Puerto Rico is consistently hit hard by dengue, with numbers much higher than what's seen in any of the 50 states. But in the continental US, Florida usually gets the most locally transmitted cases. The state's previous worst year was 2023, when just under 200 locally spread cases were reported.

Officials in Hillsborough and surrounding counties have declared local emergencies, and workers in the Tam-

pa area are spraying day and night to tamp down the population of disease-transmitting mosquitoes.

Dengue is caused by a virus spread by a type of mosquito.

Many infected people don't get sick, but some experience fever, flu-like symptoms and – notoriously – aches. It's been nicknamed "breakbone fever" for the excruciating pain some people experience. Severe cases can cause bleeding, shock and death.

There has been one dengue death in Florida this year – an elderly Tampa woman on September 4.

There are four types of dengue virus, simply known as 1, 2, 3 and 4. When someone is first infected, their body builds antibodies against that type for life. If they get infected with another type of dengue, the antibodies from the first infection may fail to neutralise the second type – and actually can help the virus enter immune cells and replicate. That's made it difficult to develop an effective vaccine.

Most people in the Tampa area don't have prior immunity to any form of

dengue, said Dawn Wesson, a Tulane University expert on dengue and other diseases spread by mosquitoes.

The warm-weather mosquitoes that spread dengue live in Florida and some other hotter US locales, but experts say they have been expanding their geographic reach because of climate change.

For decades, most continental US infections were found among people who caught the virus while travelling internationally, along with locally acquired cases in Puerto Rico.

But in 2009-2010, Key West, Florida, reported the first dengue cases acquired in the continental US outside of the Texas-Mexico border since 1945.

The largest outbreak of dengue in any US state since then occurred in Hawaii, where 264 locally acquired cases were reported over a six-month span in 2015-2016. The Tampa-area outbreak, which first came to light in July, is already on the verge of surpassing that.

Across the world, more than 2.2 million infections and nearly 1,200 deaths have been reported this year, according to the World Health Organization.

There have been nearly 1,900 locally acquired US cases this year, most of them in Puerto Rico, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Florida tends to get a lot of dengue in part because the state receives a lot of travelers who have been to Puerto Rico or other places where the disease is present, Wesson said.

Usually most cases are in southern Florida, around the Miami area. It's hard to say what's happening in the Tampa area this year, but the surge may be at least partly related to travel patterns, she added.

Locally acquired cases in Florida

International

AROUND THE WORLD

have actually surpassed travel-associated cases, by a count of 252 to 245 as of last week. But it's close, and at least 13 Hillsborough County cases were diagnosed in travelers, according to the state.

Traditionally, the CDC would be highly visible in a situation like this, but it hasn't been this time, Wesson noted.

The US public health agency has to be invited in by state officials, however, and Florida officials have not asked for CDC disease investigators to come in, CDC spokesman Jason McDonald said. The agency has provided US\$800,000 in assistance to the state health department, he added.

The current outbreak is centered just north of Tampa, and workers have been spraying to kill mosquitoes. They also have been checking properties for pooled water, including in tires, where mosquitoes might breed.

People in an outbreak area can take their own steps for protection, experts say.

The virus-carrying mosquitoes can bite any time of day, so it's important for people in an outbreak area to apply EPA-registered insect repellents containing active ingredients like DEET, experts say.

Wear loose-fitting, long-sleeved shirts and long pants to cover the skin and make it harder for mosquitoes to bite. Staying indoors, behind screens or in rooms with air conditioning will also lessen the chances for a bite.

Those steps are especially important just after sunrise and around sunset, when mosquitoes tend to be most active, researchers say.

People should also check their property and get rid of any pooled water where mosquitoes might breed.

Climate conditions and persistent mosquito populations will likely make local dengue outbreaks a more frequent problem, Wesson said.

"There's a good chance that this is the new normal," she said. (AP)



Nearly 1,500 nationals repatriated from Malaysia as UN warns of risks

Nearly 1,500 Myanmar nationals who were sent back from Malaysia arrived in the country's largest city on Sunday, despite warnings from the United Nations refugee agency and rights groups that conditions for return remain unsafe.

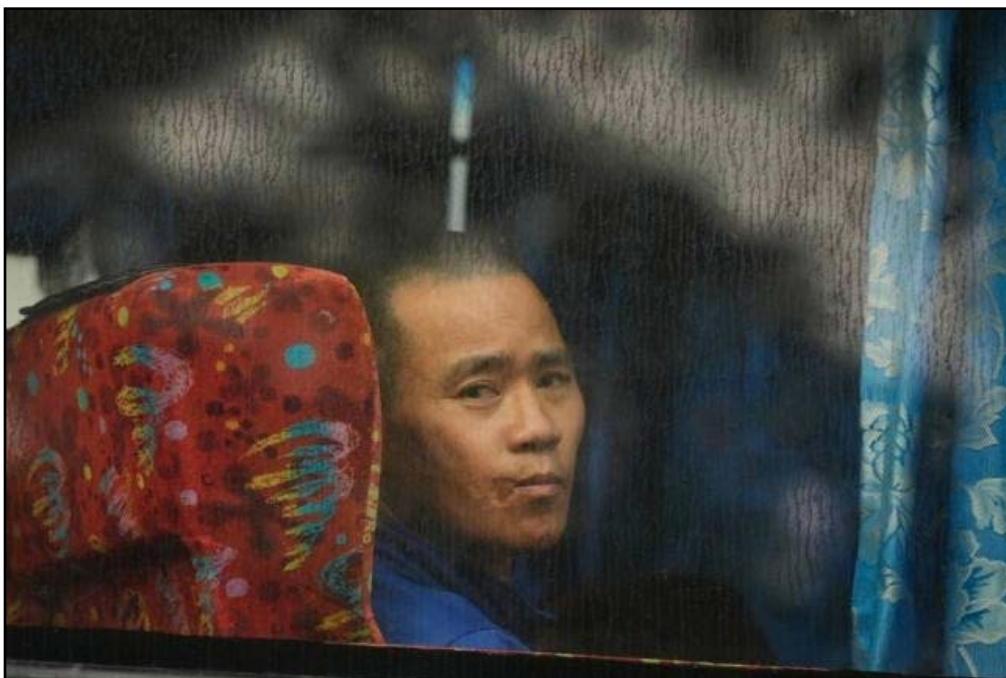
Myanmar has been in turmoil since the military seized power from the elected government of Aung San Suu Kyi on February 1, 2021, triggering widespread opposition and plunging large parts of the country into conflict.

The returnees, including 86 women, had been convicted of staying illegally and committing other immigration violations in Malaysia, according to reports from Myanmar state media. They were transported from Malaysia aboard two navy warships and a hospital ship last Tuesday. They arrived in Yangon early Sunday, according to Nay Lin Tun, a regional government minister.

The returnees are among 5,000 Myanmar nationals who will be repatriated in stages from Malaysia, where another 10,388 Myanmar nationals were being held at immigration detention centres, according to Malaysia's Home Ministry.

The UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and rights groups have criticised the repatriation, saying the security and humanitarian situation in parts of Myanmar remains volatile and that returnees could face persecution and forced military conscription in an active war zone.

"Under international law, the Government of Malaysia is obligated to uphold the principle of non-refoulement and prevent the return of individuals to situations where they face a real risk of persecution, torture, or other serious human rights



violations," Kelley E. Currie, the UN special rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar, said in a statement. "In my assessment, the risk of refoulement in the present circumstances is substantial."

It was unclear whether any of the returnees were members of the minority Muslim Rohingya community, which faces persecution in Myanmar and has been denied citizenship.

Myanmar Foreign Ministry official Han Win Aung told The Associated Press that the repatriation involved "genuine citizens".

Malaysia is home to about 215,600 refugees and asylum seekers registered with the UNHCR, including about 126,000 Rohingya, who make up one of Southeast Asia's largest refugee communities. Despite hosting them, Malaysia is not a party to the UN Refugee Convention, and treats refugees as undocumented migrants.

Min Aung Hlaing, the leader of Myanmar's military-backed government who was sworn in as president in April, is expected to visit Malaysia this month to discuss refugee and migrant issues. (AP)

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Spanish PM Sánchez calls early election after housing protests



Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez has called an early election for 29 November after recent defeats on legislation aimed at addressing the country's housing crisis.

Speculation about a snap election had been building over the weekend after parliament rejected two decree laws put forward by the minority government to protect tenants in the rental market.

The eviction of an 87-year-old woman from her home after she was unable to afford a sharp rent rise has sparked nationwide protests and increased pressure for housing reform.

In a televised address on Monday, Sánchez said that to push reforms through he needed "a broader progressive majority" that can "overcome the resistance of the elites".

Housing has not been the only is-

sue causing problems for Sánchez's leadership in recent months, with his party having been caught up in numerous corruption scandals and facing pressure on other cost-of-living issues and immigration.

"We have made mistakes and have not achieved everything we had set out to do," Sánchez said, acknowledging there were still "a lot of prob-

lems to solve, particularly in the areas of inequality, of public services and access to housing".

Sánchez's left-wing coalition government is made up of his ruling Socialist party and junior partner the Sumar alliance, and does not have a majority in parliament.

Spain was not due to hold a general election until the summer of 2027 at

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the latest.

Sánchez has been prime minister since June 2018. His Socialist party finished second in the last election, in 2023.

Although the conservative People's Party won the most seats, it fell short of a majority.

Sánchez remained in power after striking agreements with left-wing parties and securing support from Catalan and Basque nationalist and pro-independence groups.

Most opinion polls suggest the conservatives are likely to emerge as the largest party in the next election. However, they would be expected to need the support of the hard-right Vox party to form a government.

Speaking after Monday's announcement, the leader of the People's Party, Alberto Núñez Feijóo, said: "At last, Spaniards will be able to decide".

The opposition leader said it would not be "just another election", but a chance for voters to choose between "decline or change, lies or change, incompetence or change, division or change, corruption or change". On Saturday, tens of thousands of people took to the streets in cities including Madrid, Valencia and Barcelona, calling for greater protections for tenants.

Maricarmen Abascal, 87, became a symbol of Spain's housing crisis

when she was forcibly evicted from her Madrid home on 23 September.

A legal glitch allowed her landlord to raise her rent from €500 (£428; \$572) to €2,650. It was later lowered to €1,650 - still €300 more than her monthly pension.

She was removed on a stretcher from her apartment of more than 70 years, and was later admitted to hospital.

Her lawyer has since said she will be able to return to her home, but the incident has prompted widespread anger over housing.

The left-wing coalition government responded with two decree laws in an effort to defuse the protests.

The first included the suspension of evictions of vulnerable tenants until 2030, a two-year extension to rental leases due to expire before 2028, tax increases for tourist apartments, and a restriction on the purchase of residential properties by what the government calls "vulture funds".

The second decree was more controversial, because it included the automatic renewal of rental contracts, a major demand of many on the left and the tenants' organisation Sindicato de Inquilinas.

The political right argued the government's attempt to intervene in the housing market would have led to fewer homes being rented and would

have raised prices further.

Juan Bravo of the People's Party said last week "housing doesn't get cheaper with decrees, it gets cheaper with more homes".

Sánchez's leadership has been marred by numerous corruption scandals in recent months.

In April, his wife Begoña Gómez was charged with corruption after a two-year criminal investigation.

She is accused of using her relationship to advance her private career - allegations she denies, and which have been dismissed by Sánchez as a right-wing attempt to undermine his coalition.

In May, police raided the Socialist party's headquarters in Madrid as part of an investigation into allegations an operative was paid to carry out a misinformation campaign. The party has denied the allegations.

And in June, Sánchez's former transport minister, José Luis Ábalos, was jailed for 24 years after he was found guilty of being involved in a network that received kickbacks from the sale of face masks during the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Spanish prime minister also came under scrutiny for his handling of the Ceuta migration crisis over the summer, when tens of thousands of people entered the territory from Morocco without authorisation. (BBC)

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Flydubai co-pilot planned to crash plane into Tel Aviv airport or building, reports say



The co-pilot accused of trying to hijack a flydubai plane planned to crash the aircraft into Tel Aviv's Ben Gurion airport or a tower block in the Israeli city, US and Israeli reports suggest.

The Omani national was a "lone wolf" extremist, according to the reports.

The United Arab Emirates' attorney-general has said the co-pilot attempted to carry out a "terrorist act" on flight FZ1073 from Dubai to Tel Aviv last Wednesday.

He attacked and wounded the captain with the emergency crash axe kept in the cockpit before being overpowered by passengers. Another crew travelling on the plane was able to land it in Saudi Arabia.

Israel's prime minister has said the co-pilot underwent "Islamist radical indoctrination" and the captain, passengers and a second crew prevented "a 9/11 disaster".

More details about the co-pilot of the flydubai flight – whom multiple reports have named as Hamam al-Hammami – emerged over the weekend as he continued to be questioned in the UAE, with Israeli representatives being updated.

Israeli media cited sources with

knowledge of the probe as saying the co-pilot told investigators that, having attacked Capt Smit Machchhar, he intended to continue flying the plane as normal into Israeli airspace and receive landing clearances from Ben Gurion airport.

He then planned to crash the Boeing 737 MAX – with more than 180 passengers on board – into the airport or into a tower block in central Tel Aviv, in the style of al-Qaeda's 11 September 2001 attacks in the US, according to the reports.

The sources are quoted as saying he was most likely to have acted alone rather than on behalf of a radical organisation or foreign government.

The co-pilot also reportedly told investigators that he had intended to hijack and crash a previous flight to Tel Aviv but changed his mind because he knew someone on board.

There was no immediate comment from Emirati or Israeli authorities.

UAE Attorney-General Hamad al-Shamsi said on Saturday that his country's investigations would establish the full circumstances, motives and any links related to the incident, and that the results would be announced upon their conclusion.

Questions are also being asked about major security lapses, including how the attacker was recruited by flydubai and given clearance to fly a plane filled with Israelis to Tel Aviv.

Regional officials said the co-pilot was barred from flying by Oman's national carrier, Oman Air, and moved to an administrative job because of concerns about his extremist views.

He was later hired by UAE-based flydubai after undergoing standard security checks that did not examine his background for potential signs of radicalisation, according to the officials.

Israeli aviation regulations also state that pilots who are citizens of countries without formal diplomatic relations with Israel, like Oman, are not permitted to operate flights to the country.

Regional officials told the Associated Press on Sunday that Emirati authorities had shared with Israel a list of passengers and crew ahead of flight FZ1073's departure.

Israel's Shin Bet domestic security agency said the transport ministry was responsible for vetting such lists from foreign airlines.

But Transport Minister Miri Regev said her ministry was not given passenger and crew lists, and that security oversight for flights operated by foreign airlines fell under the remit of the Shin Bet and the Mossad foreign intelligence agency.

Israel's Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, has told the head of the National Security Council to review "all security aspects regarding foreign civil aviation to Israel".

Australian authorities are investigating the co-pilot's links to Australia. Sources have told local media that he studied there between 2015 and 2017. (BBC)

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Sports News

Aruba beat Anguilla again in CONCACAF Nations League



Aruba's Justin Peterson (#12) celebrates with teammate Alljereau Mercera (#16) after scoring the winning goal for Aruba in their third match in Group B of League C in the CONCACAF Nations League at Sir Vivian Richards Stadium in Antigua on Sunday, October 4, 2026. (Photo courtesy of CONCACAF)

Aruba moved back to the top of Group B in League C in the 2026/27 Confederation of North, Central America, and Caribbean Association of Football (CONCACAF) Nations League with their third win in Antigua on Sunday night.

After securing a 2-0 win in their first-round meeting, Aruba scored two late goals to snatch a 3-2 victory against Anguilla in their second-round clash at the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium in North Sound.

Aruba took an early lead via Carlito Fermina's right-foot strike from within the box in the seventh minute.

Nathaniel Owen unleashed a powerful strike from the edge of the box to snatch the equalizer for Anguilla in the 39th minute.

Antonio Fleming beat Aruba's goal-

keeper with a header in the 77th minute to give Anguilla a 2-1 lead, which they held until the final moments of extra time.

Aruba's substitute forward Alljereau Mercera snatched the equalizer in the third minute of added time (93rd minute) to make it 2-2. Moments later, defender Justin Peterson scored with a powerful strike to snatch victory for Aruba.

The result means Anguilla finished their Nations League campaign at the bottom of Group B of League C without any points after losing all four round-robin matches.

Their third win in as many matches allows Aruba to maintain their unbeaten run and move to the top of Group B in League C with nine points, three ahead of second-placed

and host Antigua and Barbuda.

Aruba and Antigua and Barbuda will meet in a top-of-the-table clash in the final match of the three-team round-robin group competition at the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium on Tuesday at 7 pm.

Aruba required a draw in the final match, while Antigua and Barbuda must win Tuesday's encounter to win Group B of League C.

The group winners will gain promotion to compete in League B in the next edition of the CONCACAF Nations League.

The group winners will also remain in contention to secure a berth into the CONCACAF Gold Cup, which will be held in June and July next year.



Richie's Shooterz join BOE at the top of Business Basketball League

Last year's losing finalists, Richie's Shooterz, maintained their perfect run to join defending champions, the Board of Education (BOE), as the only unbeaten teams and joint-leaders of the 2026 Cool and Smooth Antigua and Barbuda Basketball Association's (ABBA) Business League on Sunday evening.

Richie's Shooterz notched up their eighth win in as many matches, the same record as the BOE, by overpowering Sandals 71-55 in the feature match of a triple-header at the JSC Sports Complex.

Steven Matthew shot a game-high 21 points, Cohen Desouza sank 20 points, Jaleyle Joseph had 12 points,

and Tavarus Benta scored 11 points for Richie's Shooterz.

Selassie Braithwaite and T-Shawn Lewis each converted 13 points, and Keroi Lee scored 11 points for Sandals, who lost for the second time in nine encounters.

Former champions Antigua and Barbuda Transport Board (ABTB) claimed their sixth win in nine games by snatching a narrow 64-63 victory over APCMOL in the second game on Sunday.

Lindsay McDonald shot a game-high 17 points, Elijah Charles converted 13 points, and Marlon "Buju" Charles scored 12 points for the Transport Board.

Sergio Symister converted 11 points, and Takeem Martin and Akeem Davis each scored 10 points for APCMOL, who suffered their third defeat in nine games.

The Curtain Bluff Resort recorded their sixth win in 10 outings by pulling off a 57-53 victory over Anjo Wholesale in Sunday's opening game.

Webster Baptista sank 16 points, and Javonte Daley scored 11 points for Curtain Bluff Hotel.

Yohan Nicholas produced 16 points, and Nathan Matthew converted 13 points for Anjo Wholesale, who slumped to their fourth defeat in eight games.


 An advertisement for 'Pointe On the Streetz'. The background is orange with a cracked texture. On the left, the text 'POINTE ON THE STREETZ' is in large, 3D, multi-colored letters. Below it, 'HOSTED BY VERNON A. SPRINGER' is written in black. On the right, there is a logo for 'PBN' (Pointe Broadcasting Network) with a radio tower icon. Below the logo, it says 'TUE - FRI 2PM - 3PM'. Further down, it says 'CALL: 562-3989 OR 562-2991' and 'POINT FM99.1' with a Facebook icon.

West Indies women beat Zimbabwe to win T20 series

The West Indies women produced a dominant run chase to defeat Zimbabwe women by eight wickets in the second T20 International at the Harare Sports Club in Zimbabwe on Monday and claimed an unassailable 2-0 lead in the three-match series.

Young Barbadian opener Eboni Brathwaite smashed a rapid 57 from just 23 balls, and Realeanna Grimmond hit 23 not out from 16 balls to propel the West Indies women to victory at 108 for two in 9.1 overs after restricting Zimbabwe to 106 for seven off their 20 overs.

Opener Beloved Biza hit 35 off 35 balls, and fellow opener Kelis Ndhlovu and Chipso Mugeru Tiripano each made 25 for Zimbabwe. West Indies seamer Jahzara Claxton captured three for 14.

After restricting Zimbabwe to a below par total, the West Indies women attacked from the outset and raced to 50 inside four overs. Despite losing two wickets during the powerplay, Brathwaite's explosive innings ensured the required target was quickly brought under control.

Zimbabwe made a steady start after batting first, reaching 35 without loss from the six-over powerplay.

The hosts moved past 50 in 8.4 overs before losing momentum through the middle and latter stages of their innings. At the halfway point, Zimbabwe were 61 for one, with Beloved Biza on 21 and Chipso Mugeru Tiripano on 14.

The West Indies tightened their grip as the innings progressed, restricting the scoring rate while regularly breaking through. Zimbabwe eventually reached 100 in 18.1 overs but could only add six more runs for the rest of their innings.

In reply, the West Indies immediately put Zimbabwe under pressure in reply,



West Indies women opener Eboni Brathwaite celebrate after achieving her half-century in the second T20 International against Zimbabwe women at the Harare Sports Club in Harare, Zimbabwe, on Monday, October 5, 2026. (Photo courtesy of Zimbabwe Cricket)

racing to 50 in just 3.6 overs.

Brathwaite was the driving force behind the explosive start. She reached her half-century from only 20 deliveries, striking three fours and five sixes on the way to the milestone.

The West Indies finished the powerplay on 69 for two, meaning they had already scored almost two-thirds of the required runs despite Zimbabwe claiming two wickets.

Brathwaite eventually departed for a spectacular 57 from 23 balls, an innings featuring three fours and six sixes at a strike rate of 247.83.

There was little opportunity for Zimbabwe to recover. West Indies brought up 100 in only 8.3 overs before completing an emphatic victory.

The two teams will meet in the final match of the T20 series at the same venue in Harare on Wednesday.

Ireland coach wants UEFA to keep team apart from Israel after contentious games



Irish players bow their heads during Israeli national anthem before the UEFA Nations League soccer match between the Republic of Ireland and Israel in Backa Topola, Serbia, Sunday, Oct. 4, 2026. (AP)

Ireland coach Heimir Hallgrímsson wants UEFA to keep Ireland and Israel apart in future competitions after their contentious Nations League games.

The teams drew 1-1 in Ireland's "home" game in Backa Topola, Serbia on Sunday, a week after Ireland's 3-0 win in Israel's "home" game in Debrecen, Hungary.

The buildup to both matches was fraught, with the Ireland players coming under pressure not to play the games because of Israel's actions in Gaza, Palestine.

The enmity between the sides grew after the Irish players wore black armbands and bowed their heads during the Israeli national anthem before the first match. They repeated the gesture for the second match, when the Israel players wore black armbands for the victims of the Oct. 7, 2023 attacks.

Hallgrímsson told Ireland's nation-

al broadcaster RTÉ afterward that he thinks UEFA should keep the sides apart in future.

"There is obviously a big support for Palestine in Ireland. There are not many countries that support Palestine as much as Ireland does," Hallgrímsson said.

"I wouldn't wish any national team to go through what we have gone through these two weeks, so maybe UEFA just needs to step in and do something."

Calls in Ireland to boycott the games against Israel started as soon as the Nations League draw pitted the countries against each other in February. Israel's visit to Dublin would likely have triggered large protests and posed a major security challenge for the local police.

The FAI, which had filed a motion the previous November calling on UEFA to ban Israel from club and international competitions, resisted calls for a

boycott, arguing the team could be hit with punishing sanctions by UEFA. Ireland is co-hosting the 2028 European Championship with England, Wales and Scotland.

In June the FAI said it was moving Ireland's home game to Serbia for "operational reasons" and that no fans would be present. Israel was already playing its home games in Hungary because of the war.

Relations between Ireland and Israel will not have improved following their meetings on the field. Tempers boiled over at times Sunday and there was a clash before half-time when Ireland fitness coach Damien Doyle said

he was spat at by an Israeli player.

"There's been a lot of those incidents that could have escalated," Hallgrímsson said. "We were clever enough to stop it before it went too far. I felt it was kind of the intention to try to intimidate us and make us do something stupid."

An Israeli journalist stated at the pre-match press conference the day before that the Irish players had called the Israeli players "monkeys" during the previous match, leading to an immediate rebuke from Irish communications officer Kieran Crowley, who said it was "a lie" and ended the press conference.

Ireland forward Adam Idah, who is Black, was allegedly racially abused by a small number of Israeli fans present during the first match.

VIP returns to winning form in IBSC Tape Ball Classic

VIP returned to winning form during the latest round of matches in the LL Supply IBSC Tape Ball Classic.

After their unbeaten start to the competition was ended by Grill Box in their previous outing, VIP returned to winning form by recording their fourth win five matches with a crushing 115-run victory over TG Welding & Fabrication Underdogs at the Powells playing field.

VIP won the toss and batted, scoring 235 for nine off their allotted 20 overs. Kofi James slammed 76, and Elroy Francis Jr. struck 75. Orandel Boston bagged three 17, Tyree Moore took two for 31, and Hughon Tonge claimed two for 38.

In reply, TG Welding & Fabrication Underdogs crashed to 120 all out in 13.1 overs. Kief Baltimore scored 33, and Hughon Tonge got 24. Kadeem Josiah claimed two for 13, and Ozan Williams captured two for 27.

It was the third consecutive loss in five matches for TG Welding & Fabrication Underdogs after winning their opening game, with the second being rained out.

The Dredgers recorded their third win in five matches by securing a 73-run victory over Hanse on Security in a match, which was reduced to 15 overs per side due to a late start that was caused by wet pitch at the Rising Sun playing field.

Tanez Francis struck an unbeaten century to propel the Dredgers



Tanez Francis of Dredgers hits an unbeaten century against Hanse on Security to claim the Player of the Week Award during the latest round of matches in the LL Supply IBSC Tape Ball Classic.

to 201 for four from their 15 overs after losing the toss and being sent in to bat. Francis smashed 126 not out, which included 13 sixes and four fours. JQuan Athanaze got 39, and Rahkeem Cornwall captured two for 35.

In reply, Hanse on Security was restricted to 128 for seven from their 15 overs. Kerry Mentore hit 33, and Kadeem Phillip struck 26. Mike France took two for 18, and Javaughn James claimed two for

27 as Hanse on Security tumbled to their second defeat in six matches.

Grill Box claimed their fourth win in six matches by snatching a two-run victory against Easy Picking Mix Up Stars at Powells.

Grill Box made 140 all out in 14.2 overs after winning the toss and opting to bat. Kenrick Scott hammered 87. Bryan Bailey captured four for 44, and Karl Simon picked up three for 38.

In reply, Easy Pickings Mix Up Stars fell just short of their victory target, slumping to 138 all out in 18 overs. Rennick Esprit hit 26, and Peter Bellafante got 23.

Steve Martin snapped up four wickets for seven runs, and Gregson Merrick claimed three for 38 as the Easy Pickings Mix-Up Stars plummeted to their fifth loss in as many matches.

After losing all four previous matches, Jakes Invincibles recorded their second consecutive win by pulling off a six-wicket victory against PMS in a game reduced to 15 overs at Rising Sun.

PMS crashed to 92 all out in 14.1 overs after winning the toss and opting to bat. Eusi Kingston scored 18. Blain Thomas bagged three for 18, and Zach Thomas took three for 23.

Zach Thomas hit 50 as Jakes Invincibles wrapped up victory by scoring 96 for four in 8.4 overs. Walter Carr picked up two wickets for six runs for PMS, who succumbed to their third loss in five matches.