

“Hosting CHOGM Is a Net Gain For Antigua and Barbuda,”

Story on page 2



The ribbon-cutting marking the official opening of the new National Performing Arts Centre: Left to Right: Social Transformation Minister Rawdon Turner, Prime Minister Gaston Browne, Governor General's Deputy Sir Clare Roberts, Works Minister Maria Browne and Creative Industries Minister Dwayne George

Local News



“Hosting CHOGM Is a Net Gain For Antigua and Barbuda,” Says PM Browne



Prime Minister Gaston Browne

Antigua and Barbuda will see tremendous economic activity from its hosting of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) from November 1 – 4, many of which will last long after the meeting has ended.

That’s the assessment of the country’s Prime Minister and Finance Minister, Gaston Browne, speaking on the popular *Browne and Browne* show on Point Broadcasting Network on Saturday.

“If you assume that we attract 6-thousand visitors for CHOGM and they spend an average of US\$1,000.00 each, you are looking at US\$6 million of economic activity generated in the country. Of that amount 20 percent goes to the government for taxes. So I want our people to understand that there will be a significant economic benefit for the country, other than the publicity which is something we could not pay for,” PM Browne declared.

In addition to the economic activity and the accompanying publicity, the prime minister detailed a list of sizeable donations which the gov-

ernment has received from other friendly governments and institutions that go towards off-setting the cost of hosting the event.

“The government of India donated US\$1 million to assist the government in purchasing additional motor vehicles to help transport the anticipated 6-thousand plus delegates. We have had other entities – SpaceX, the Elon Musk company, has given us about US\$1 million in value, including the donation of a Cyber-truck EV for the use by the prime minister,” he revealed.

Other donations have come from the Sustainable Management Initiative (SMI) which has also made available US\$1 million which goes towards covering some of the costs associated with the One Commonwealth Night, the concert slated for November 2, at the Sir Vivian Rich-

ards Stadium.

The prime minister identified some of the other major sponsors as the Caribbean Development Bank, the Eastern Caribbean Central Bank and others who have donated up to 100-thousand -Pounds Sterling, all of which go towards offsetting the cost of hosting the conference.

“This will be a net gain for the people of Antigua and Barbuda; most of our funds went into infrastructural development and the roads had to be fixed anyway. The roads in St. John’s, the road through Royals leading to Hodges Bay, that too had to be fixed and these will last for decades. So overall, I would say the economic value of CHOGM will be such that it would be a net benefit for the people of Antigua and Barbuda,” he stated.



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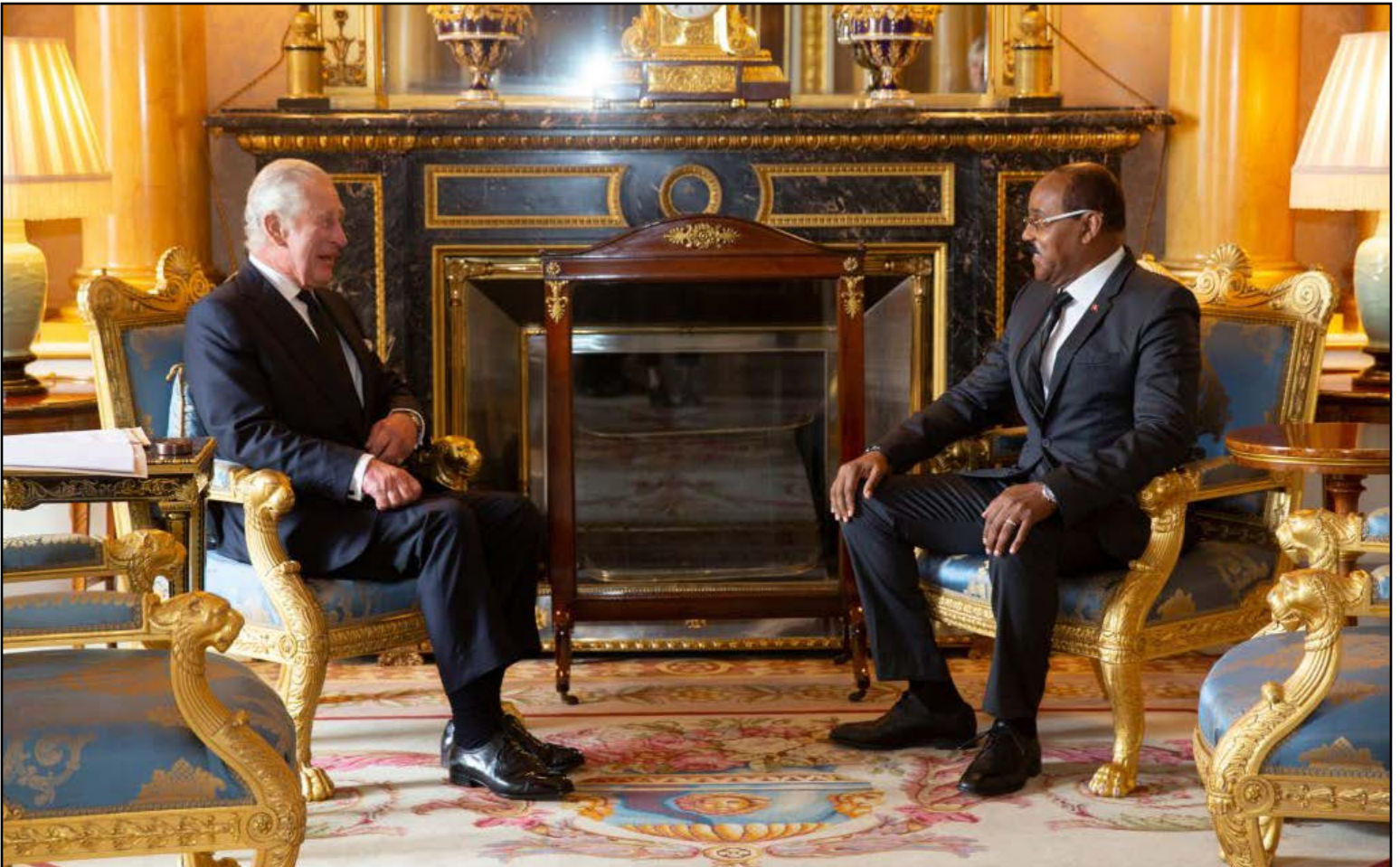
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Reparations Issue May Very Well Come Up During CHOGM 26



Prime Minister Gaston Browne a with His Majesty King Charles

Prime Minister Gaston Browne is holding talks with the UK Foreign Minister today during which he will make the case that the time has come for there be an open discussion on the issue of reparation.

The prime minister was speaking on Saturday on the Browne and Browne show when he indicated that he had raised the issue privately with the UK government and with King Charles himself.

“We have said to them that we will be a very gracious host on the issue of reparation; however, like the King himself has indicated, we feel that the time has come for us to discuss the issue of reparation in a very serious way,” he stated.

The prime minister said what he wants

to be hammered out here during the CHOGM 26, is a ‘framework’ for the discussion going forward. PM Browne also indicated that he believes strongly in the issue of reparation and feels that there ought to be a determination on the part of the UK and other European powers to come to a settlement with countries such as Antigua and Barbuda and the rest of the Caribbean which still bear the stains of the prolonged enslavement and colonization of Africans here in the Americas.

“What we want to have is a framework where we can have an apology as well as investments in areas such as education and healthcare etc. There ought to be some sort of reparatory justice for the off-springs of the people who were enslaved and dehumanized for centuries as well as for the geno-

cide of the native peoples of the region,” PM Browne remarked.

According to the prime minister there are ongoing talks between himself and the UK prime minister on this issue and he is of the view that something ‘positive’ may likely to come out of these talks.

“When he gets here, we will have a bilateral to put together a framework on how we can hammer out this issue in a non-contentious and mature manner. We are not ‘sweeping the issue under the table’, but at the same time we don’t want the issue to divide us. You would note that with the many international issues in the world around us, the Commonwealth needs to work together to resolve these sensitive issues in a mature manner,” he stated.

A Home for Our Culture: National Performing Arts Centre Opens New Chapter for Antigua and Barbuda



Prime Minister Gaston Browne has declared the opening of Antigua and Barbuda's National Performing Arts Centre as a new chapter in the nation's development, giving artists a permanent home and young people a platform to turn their talent into opportunity.

The landmark facility, officially opened on Friday, October 23, transforms the former Deluxe Cinema in St. John's into a modern centre for music, dance, theatre and storytelling, with accommodation for approximately 850 people.

The opening brought together government officials, cultural practitioners, construction teams and young performers to celebrate a project speakers described as an investment in national identity, economic opportunity and the generations who will take the stage in years to come.

"Today, we give our artists a stage, our young people a development platform and our culture a home," Browne said.

The Prime Minister said the government's ambition extends beyond providing a venue for performances. The centre, he explained, must help develop artists capable of competing internationally while creating opportunities for

acquired by the government would become a creative arts studio, while instructions had been given to acquire another neighbouring building.

The Prime Minister thanked Philip Morris International and the Government of the United Arab Emirates, which he said contributed more than \$4 million and \$800,000 respectively towards the centre.

Its ultimate value, he stressed, would be measured by the talents it develops, the opportunities it creates and the lives it touches.

For Minister of Social and Urban Transformation, Hon. Rawdon Turner, who led the transformation, the opening marked the completion of a demanding undertaking that repeatedly tested the project team's resolve.



creative professionals to earn sustainable livelihoods.

"We are seeking to develop artists who can compete globally. So again, do not limit your ambitions," he urged.

He also outlined plans to expand the surrounding cultural infrastructure, saying an adjoining property already

Turner, who also chairs National Housing, spoke candidly about the scale of the assignment, recalling three occasions when he considered arranging a meeting with the Prime Minister to explain that the team might not deliver on time.

Each time, however, the workers found

a way forward.

“I had the privilege of leading this effort, but the acknowledgement belongs to the team,” Turner said.

He paid special tribute to National Housing’s workers, General Manager Cynthia Laviscount, the operations team, subcontractors, suppliers and administrative staff whose persistence carried the project through its most difficult stages.

Minister of Housing and Works, Hon. Maria Browne, described the completed centre as evidence of what happens when national vision is matched by delivery.

She said the decision to preserve and transform the old cinema reflected a belief that Antigua and Barbuda’s creative people deserved infrastructure equal to their ambitions.

“Our culture is not a side attraction to our development. Our culture is part of our development,” she said.

Browne placed the theatre alongside housing, roads and other public infrastructure as an investment intended to improve lives and widen access to opportunity.

She thanked Turner for his leadership, along with Laviscount, National Housing staff, the Works Department, technical teams, contractors and artisans.

While the centre will host the opening ceremony of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting on November 3, she emphasised that its purpose reaches far beyond that international occasion.

Minister for Sports and the Creative Industries, Hon. Dwayne George, described the approximately \$25 million facility as a permanent statement that culture is an essential pillar of national development.

He said the centre gives established practitioners the technical infrastructure their work deserves while allowing young people to step onto a national stage they can call their own.

George also placed responsibility on those entrusted with its operation, calling for professional management, careful maintenance and accountability in



the use of public resources.

Governor General’s Deputy Sir Clare Roberts situated the opening within the broader story of Antigua and Barbuda’s heritage, describing culture as a foundation of national development and the performing arts as a means of preserving history, expressing identity and imagining the future.

He said generations of artists had sustained the country’s cultural life, often without adequate facilities, and that the new centre must now help young people recognise the worth of their history, stories and talents.

Attorney General Sir Steadroy Benjamin, whose constituency includes the former cinema, welcomed what he described as a remarkable transformation of a building he had known from his youth.

He praised Turner, the architects and workers, saying the project demonstrated the government’s commitment to delivering a home for the country’s arts and culture.

Tourism Minister H. Charles “Max” Fernandez highlighted the centre’s potential to strengthen cultural tourism and bring greater activity into St. John’s.

He envisaged visitors attending performances featuring local musicians, dancers and other cultural practitioners, creating experiences that showcase An-

tigua and Barbuda while helping to support the facility’s upkeep.

Foreign Affairs Minister E.P. Chet Greene said the centre provides a significant setting for CHOGM, but its enduring importance lies in the opportunities it creates for the country’s creative sector.

He described the opening as an investment in people and called for stronger connections between cultural expression and the tourism product, alongside careful stewardship of the building.

Minister for Information, Communication Technologies, Utilities and Energy, Hon. Melford Nicholas, praised both the technical facilities and the improvement to the surrounding cityscape.

He acknowledged the work of APUA and the ICT teams in providing the communications, electricity and water infrastructure required to support the centre, saying the investment must serve the country well beyond CHOGM.

Director of Culture Khan Cordice, who witnessed the building’s transformation through successive visits, commended the collaboration among ministries, National Housing and cultural stakeholders.

He paid tribute to workers who laboured around the clock to deliver a facility capable of supporting the country’s performers and its major cultural presentations.

Delivering the vote of thanks, Laviscount offered a glimpse of the effort behind the finished building: nine demanding months, seven-day working weeks and, at times, days stretching to 18 hours.

More than 120 National Housing employees contributed in various capacities, she said, supported by designers, engineers, subcontractors, technicians, suppliers and public agencies.

Performances by young musicians, singers, dancers, the National Youth Theatre and entertainer Tian Winter demonstrated the talent the facility is intended to nurture. Senator Lamin Newton also welcomed the achievement, praising the vision and collective effort behind its delivery.

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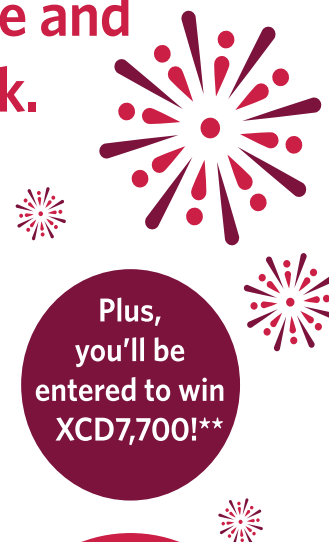
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2027
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Antigua and Barbuda Signs United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework 2027–2031

Antigua and Barbuda has achieved another significant milestone in its national development agenda, becoming the first country in the Eastern Caribbean to formally endorse the United Nations Multi-Country Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (MSDCF) for the period 2027–2031.

Prime Minister Gaston Browne signed the Framework on behalf of the Government of Antigua and Barbuda during an official ceremony held on Friday, 23rd October 2026, at the Office of the Prime Minister.

The signing ceremony was attended by Simon Springett, United Nations Resident Coordinator for Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean, underscoring the continued partnership between Antigua and Barbuda and the United Nations in advancing sustainable development, economic resilience and social progress.

Antigua and Barbuda's early endorsement of the Framework reinforces its leadership among Small Island Developing States (SIDS) in promoting sustainable development, strengthening resilience and advocating international cooperation to address the unique vulnerabilities confronting small island economies.

The MSDCF 2027–2031 establishes a strategic framework for cooperation between the United Nations development system and participating Eastern Caribbean countries, aligning international development assistance with national and regional priorities.

Of particular significance to Antigua and Barbuda is the Framework's support for implementing the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for Small Island Developing States (ABAS 2024–2034), the landmark ten-year development agenda adopted following the Fourth International Conference on Small Island Developing States, hosted by Antigua and Barbuda in May 2024.



Prime Minister Gaston Browne and Simon Springett, United Nations Resident Coordinator for Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean

The Framework is expected to strengthen the implementation of ABAS by establishing a coordinated approach to development programming, monitoring outcomes, measuring progress and ensuring greater accountability for results.

Developed through an extensive and inclusive consultative process, the MSDCF incorporates findings from the Multi-Country Analysis, national Common Country Analyses and consultations involving governments, civil society organisations and regional institutions. Its formulation also benefited from deliberations within the Joint Steering Committee.

The Framework identifies several priority areas requiring coordinated action, including economic diversification, climate resilience, social protection, citizen security and accelerated progress towards achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

It recognises that the challenges confronting Caribbean Small Island Developing States are interconnected and require comprehensive responses that strengthen national institutions, promote inclusive economic opportunities and ensure that vulnerable populations are not left behind.

A central feature of the MSDCF is its emphasis on addressing structural vulnerabilities, including economic concentration, exposure to climate-related disasters, weaknesses in data collection and management, and persistent social inequalities.

Through coordinated interventions, the Framework seeks to support more resilient and diversified economies, strengthen human capital and social systems, and improve regional capabilities in digital infrastructure, data management and climate risk reduction.

It also acknowledges the importance of overcoming financing constraints, institutional fragmentation and intensifying climate hazards that continue to affect development outcomes across the Eastern Caribbean.

To ensure effective implementation, the Framework provides for strengthened governance, monitoring and accountability arrangements through the Joint Steering Committee, Regional Steering Committee and individual Country Implementation Plans.

These mechanisms are intended to promote closer collaboration between participating governments and the United Nations, improve coordination



Prime Minister Gaston Browne and Simon Springett, United Nations Resident Coordinator for Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean

of development assistance and ensure that programmes deliver measurable benefits to citizens.

The Government of Antigua and Barbuda views the signing as an im-

portant step towards strengthening its partnership with the United Nations and mobilising technical expertise, development assistance and institutional support for national priorities.

The endorsement also complements Antigua and Barbuda's longstanding advocacy for a more responsive international development system that recognises the particular vulnerabilities of Small Island Developing States and provides practical support for their sustainable development.

By becoming the first Eastern Caribbean country to endorse the MSDCF 2027-2031, Antigua and Barbuda has reaffirmed its commitment to regional leadership, international cooperation and a development agenda that places resilience, inclusion and improved living standards at its centre.

The Framework will guide United Nations development cooperation over the next five years, supporting coordinated action to accelerate progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals in Antigua and Barbuda and across the wider Eastern Caribbean.

Midweek Deals

TUESDAYS / WEDNESDAYS

-Burger
-Medium Drink
\$19.99

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



Minister Johnson Champions Education and Entrepreneurship as Pathways to Lasting Economic Independence

Minister of State in the Ministry of Social and Urban Transformation, Hon. Kiz Johnson, has urged governments to go beyond creating opportunities and tackle the barriers that prevent vulnerable people from turning those opportunities into lasting economic independence.

Johnson made the remarks while representing Antigua and Barbuda at the XVIII Ministerial Forum for Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, held in Panama City on October 20 and 21.

Under the theme “Connecting Policies for Resilient Development,” the forum brought together ministers and senior officials to discuss coordinated responses to the region’s social, economic and environmental challenges.

Addressing a discussion on expanding opportunities amid uncertainty, Johnson said governments must ensure that a person’s circumstances at birth do not determine their prospects for success.

“But opportunities alone are not enough. We must equip our people with the capabilities to seize those opportunities and the assets to transform them into lasting economic independence,” she said.

Johnson pointed to Antigua and Barbuda’s Youth Education and Empowerment Programme (YEEP) as an example of why access to education must be accompanied by support that addresses the difficulties people face outside the classroom.

She highlighted the circumstances of young mothers and people whose schooling had been interrupted by poverty, family difficulties or abuse, arguing that returning



to education can require more than the offer of a place in class.

According to Johnson, YEEP has provided childcare and counselling support to help participants overcome obstacles, including parenting responsibilities and abusive relationships.

“We are not simply opening the door to opportunity. We are helping people overcome the obstacles that prevent them from walking through it,” she said.

Johnson reported that YEEP recorded an overall pass rate of 96.5 per cent in the 2026 Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate and Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examination examinations. She

said the results demonstrated the value of investing in both education and the support systems that allow people to succeed.

The minister also highlighted the establishment of The University of the West Indies Five Islands Campus in 2019 and the government’s commitment to free undergraduate tuition for eligible students pursuing their first degree.

She said these measures were helping to remove financial barriers that had historically prevented families from accessing higher education, while expanding postgraduate opportunities would support the development of skills needed for national progress.

However, Johnson stressed that pathways to improved living standards must also extend to people outside traditional academic routes.

She identified entrepreneurship as another critical avenue, linking access to affordable business financing with income generation, ownership and wealth creation.

Johnson cited the Entrepreneurial Development Fund as a means of supporting aspiring and existing business owners who have viable ideas and skills but lack the collateral or financial history required by commercial banks.

“These are not merely economic interventions. They are investments in human dignity, resilience and generational progress,” she said.

Against a backdrop of rising living costs, climate change, technological advances and global economic pressures, Johnson urged governments to prevent uncertainty from permanently limiting citizens’ futures.

St Mary's North Youth Arm Launches Inaugural Miss St Mary's North Pageant.



The ABLP's St Mary's North Youth Arm, on Saturday, launched the first ever Miss St Mary's North Pageant, presenting the four delegates in a lively affair at the Golden Grove Primary School Compound.

The four delegates will represent Jennings, Ebenezer, Bendals and Martins Village on December twelfth competing to be the first ever Miss St Mary's North.

Youth arm President Skielar Cornelius called the launch the beginning of a journey of 'growth and self-discovery' wherein the selected delegates have embarked upon.

The president stated that the pageant is an effort on the part of the Youth Arm to create a platform for young women, providing them with an opportunity for personal development and community engagement, as she encouraged them to "represent St Mary's North with pride".

The St Mary's North Youth Arm in a joint statement noted that, guided by their motto "lighting the way for tomorrow," they believe in preparing young people today to lead the country into the future.

Constituency representative, MP Dr. Philmore Benjamin offered a word of encouragement to the delegates.

Excellence, the MP stated, is not determined by appearance, rather, "it comes from how we lead, how we serve and how we inspire others".

The inaugural Miss St Mary's North Pageant will take place on December 12th at the People's Place Complex on New Gent Avenue.

The delegates are:

- Contestant #1 Shanae Peters, Martins Village
- Contestant #2 Nickel Reid, Jennings
- Contestant #3 Takiya Allen, Bendals
- Contestant #4 Tamicia Carr, Ebenezer

Members of the communities and wider Antiguan and Barbudan public are encouraged to support the four delegates as they take on this new challenge.

Two Women Sentenced to Prison for Larceny of \$4,000 Worth of Clothing



Two women who were jointly charged with stealing clothing valued at EC\$4,405 from a boutique in St. John's have pleaded guilty and were sentenced to eleven days' imprisonment.

The convicted women, 25-year-old Cleo Lemonious of Cooks Hill and 29-year-old Latoya Pilliner of Gray

Hill, reappeared at the St. John's Magistrates' Court on Friday, October 23, where they both entered guilty pleas to the charge of larceny.

The court subsequently sentenced each woman to eleven days at His Majesty's Prison, taking into consideration the time they had already spent on remand.

The charges stemmed from the theft of several articles of clothing from Hampton Boutique, located at the intersection of Market and Redcliffe Streets in St. Johns, earlier this month.

Following the court proceedings on Friday, both women were handed over to the Immigration Department.



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Antigua Carnival “Legendary 70” Takes Centre Stage at Miami Carnival 2026



The Antigua and Barbuda Festivals Commission (ABFC) has launched an ambitious four-phase marketing activation campaign at Miami Carnival 2026, positioning Antigua Carnival 2027: Legendary 70 as the Caribbean’s must-experience carnival.

In a bold departure from traditional marketing, Antigua Carnival adopted a highly targeted, consumer-focused approach, taking its message directly to one of the largest gatherings of Caribbean carnival enthusiasts in the diaspora. Through a combination of digital promotions, experiential activations, strategic partnerships and direct consumer engagement, the campaign aims to convert carnival chasers, masqueraders and revellers into future visitors to Antigua and Barbuda for the historic 70th edition of Antigua Carnival.

A Four-Phase Campaign driving

destination conversion, with **Phase 1: Win a Trip to Antigua Carnival 2027**. Running from October 1 to December 1, 2026, the Antigua Carnival social media campaign offers one lucky winner the chance to experience Antigua Carnival 2027, held from July 29 to August 4, 2027. The grand prize package includes round-trip airfare to Antigua and Barbuda, hotel accommodation, season passes to official Antigua Carnival events, access to premium fetes, the Carnival Monday and Tuesday Mas package and the J’Ouvert package. To enter, participants must follow Antigua Carnival on social media, complete the official entry form, tag friends and share campaign content using the hashtags #AntiguaCarnival, #ILoveAntiguaCarnival and #Legendary70.

Phase 2: Miami Masqueraders’ Goodie Bag Promotion. As part of a

strategic partnership with Miami Carnival and seven of its leading bands, Antigua Carnival promotional materials were included in more than 5,000 masqueraders’ goodie bags. The activation placed the Antigua Carnival message directly into the hands of revellers, ensuring maximum visibility among the core audience most likely to travel for carnival experiences.

In addition, masqueraders received exclusive discount vouchers redeemable with seven leading Antigua-based bands, offering savings of 5% to 10% on T-shirt Mas, Carnival Monday and Tuesday Mas packages and J’Ouvert experiences. These incentives offer another compelling reason for visitors to choose Antigua Carnival 2027 as their next Caribbean carnival experience.

Phase 3: High-Visibility Event Activations. Throughout the Miami



Carnival weekend, Antigua Carnival maintained a strong presence across multiple marquee events through a combination of:

- ▶ Promotional advertising on large event screens
- ▶ DJ and stage mentions
- ▶ Interactive “Legendary 70” photo opportunities
- ▶ In-fete brand engagement activations

These touchpoints created memorable interactions with thousands of patrons and showcased the energy, culture, music and excitement that have made Antigua Carnival one of the Caribbean’s premier summer festivals.

Phase 4: Road Presence Through Mas Band Branding. The final phase of the campaign extended onto the road through strategic truck-branding partnerships with Riverland Mas and Wassi One, ensuring the Antigua Carnival “Legendary 70” message remained highly visible throughout the Miami Carnival Parade of Bands.

According to **Ambassador Elizabeth Makhoul, Chairperson of the Antigua and Barbuda Festivals Commission**, the Miami Carnival activation is a critical part of Antigua Carnival’s US market strategy.

“Miami Carnival gives us direct access to the very people who live for this culture. These are the carnival chasers, the masqueraders, the travellers who plan their year around the next unforgettable experience. Our goal wasn’t simply to advertise Antigua Carnival, but to create genuine connections that inspire people to put Antigua at the top of their carnival calendar.”

“What makes this activation particularly special is that we dominated key spaces and conversations throughout the weekend, ensuring Antigua Carnival remained front and centre. Whether on screens, in goodie bags, on the road, or through direct engagement with revellers, our message was clear: Legendary 70 is not just another carnival. It is a once-in-a-generation

celebration of our culture, our people and our history. We are inviting the world to come home to Antigua and be part of that story.” Makhoul also hinted that this is only the beginning of what is expected to be Antigua Carnival’s most ambitious campaign to date. *“Miami Carnival was the first major chapter in our journey to Legendary 70. We have exciting announcements, partnerships and experiences already in development and carnival lovers can expect an official launch early next year that will set the tone for what promises to be a Legendary Carnival.”*

Antigua Carnival 2027 will run from July 29 to August 4, 2027, bringing together world-class music, mas, steelpan, pageantry, culture and unparalleled Caribbean energy under the banner of Legendary 70. As Antigua Carnival celebrates 70 years of excellence, Antigua is preparing to welcome the world to what promises to be a historic milestone.



**9TH JAN
2027
8:00PM
NIGHT ONE**



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GEN \$100 | **ROOTS ROCK REGGAE LOUNGE** **\$350**
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45 YEARS OF INDEPENDENCE
Renaissance
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SUNDAY
NOVEMBER 1, 2026



SIR VIVIAN
RICHARDS STADIUM



5:45 PM

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5 STEPS TO A SMOOTH PROCESS



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Register on the official ticketing app.



PARK

Park at any one of the designated Park & Ride locations.



CHECK IN & RIDE

Proceed to the security check area and have your ticket verified. Then board the shuttle provided.



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Enter through the designated gate where your shuttle drops you off.



FIND YOUR ZONE

Proceed to your assigned zone and enjoy the National Independence Ceremonial Parade.

PARK & RIDE LOCATIONS



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PLAYING FIELD



SEA VIEW FARM
PLAYING FIELD



PARHAM
PLAYING FIELD



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Factory Playing Grounds is reserved for supernumeraries and workers only.



PARK



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STADIUM



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Heads of Government Meeting



CHOGM
ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA 2026

TOWNHALL MEETING



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Two Events, One Commonwealth: You and Me

Antigua and Barbuda, our moment is near,
 Bring out your colours and raise up your cheer.
 Two celebrations, two dates to remember,
 Welcoming the world as we enter November.

What does this gathering mean for you and me?
 A chance to share our pride and hospitality.
 Our music, our people, our stories on display,
 Our islands helping shape the Commonwealth way.

First comes the parade on November one,
 Prepare for an evening of pride and fun.
 Get yuh flag and dan-dan, let your colours show,
 Wear your madras proudly wherever you go.

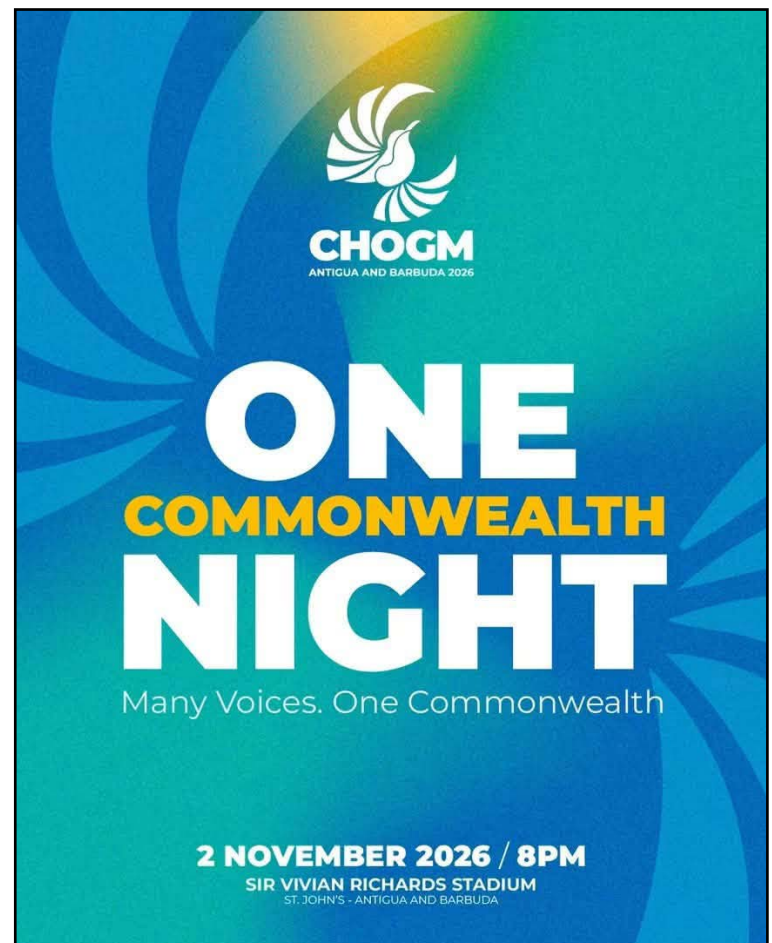
Bring out the red, the gold and the blue,
 The black and the white belong there too.
 Represent the 268 with your head held high,
 Let our nation's colours dance against the sky.

But before you gather, before you go,
 There is one important thing to know:
 Everyone must register, everyone needs their place,
 From the oldest supporter to the youngest face.

Babies and toddlers need tickets too,
 One for each person travelling with you.
 If five are coming, five tickets you need,
 Make registration your very first deed.

Then park and ride from the fields below,
 With your registration ready to show.
 Pigotts, Sea View Farm or Parham is your stop,
 Check in before boarding, don't simply turn up.

Without registration, the shuttle cannot take you,
 So complete that step before joining the queue.
 Once you arrive, let the CHOGM team guide,
 Follow directions with patience and pride.



Seating starts at three, the parade starts at six,
 Plan your journey early, avoid a last-minute fix.
 Wave your flag proudly as the evening unfolds,
 Celebrate the stories our nation holds.

Then Monday, November second, brings another delight,
 The stage comes alive for One Commonwealth Night.
 At Sir Vivian Richards Stadium, eight is the time,
 For voices and rhythms, for music and rhyme.

Feature



Admission is free, let the good news ring,
Come share the culture our performers bring.
Many voices, one Commonwealth beneath the night sky,
A celebration to lift our spirits high.

Idris Elba and Tarrus Riley join the show,
With artists whose talents cross borders and flow.
Rocky Dawuni brings Ghana into the sound,
While Falu brings India to the gathering ground.

Jah'Mila represents Canada with musical flair,
The Kanneh-Masons bring Britain's talent to share.
Scotland's National Piping Centre joins the night,
Adding its traditions to the cultural light.

And Antigua and Barbuda, our stars will shine,
With voices and rhythms distinctly thine.
Claudette "C.P." Peters and Asher Otto take their place,
With Arlen Seaton and Empress sharing the space.

Showcase Steel Ensemble brings steelpan's sweet sound,
Let its island melodies carry all around.

The CHOGM Youth Orchestra joins the celebration,
Young talent representing a proud, creative nation.

Jamilla Kirwan and Wagas Ahmed lead the way,
Welcoming the performers with their own bright display.
Leaders and changemakers will make appearances too,
But this celebration also belongs to you.

What is a Commonwealth without people at its heart?
What is unity unless we each can play a part?
From the youngest child to the elders we know,
Our welcome gives that spirit room to grow.

So bring your courtesy, your patience and your pride,
Let kindness be the neighbour standing at your side.
Keep our surroundings clean wherever you may be,
Protect the land that welcomes you and me.

November one, let flags rise bright,
November two, let music fill the night.
Two events, one people, with so much to share,
Antigua and Barbuda, let us meet the moment there.

Flow Celebrates Independence Winners



Mrs. Dulsie Watkins-Lee, winner of two tickets to Rhythms, and Shamika Hurst, winner of a \$250 Cuties Restaurant gift voucher, receive their prizes as part of Flow's Celebrate Independence 45 Promotion. The promotion formed part of Flow's celebrations of Antigua and Barbuda's 45th Anniversary of Independence.

PART 1 OF 5 • NEWSPAPER SERIES

THE BRITISH MONARCHY, AFRICAN ENSLAVEMENT AND THE CASE FOR REPARATIONS

THE BRITISH MONARCHY AND THE BEGINNINGS OF THE TRADE IN ENSLAVED AFRICANS

Queen Elizabeth I, John Hawkins and the foundations of Britain's slave-trading empire

By Dr Ahmed N. Reid | © Ahmed N. Reid | Quote responsibly



The motto on the seal of the Royal African Company (“Regio Floret Patrocinio Commertium Commercioque Regnum”: “By royal patronage trade flourishes, by trade the realm.”) captures a relationship too often pushed to the margins of British history: the close association between royal power, commerce and the trafficking of enslaved Africans.

Across the Atlantic world, European governments and merchants organised and profited from the violent displacement of African men, women and children. Portugal, Britain, Spain and France were among the largest participants. Millions were forced into captivity, transported to the coast and carried across the Atlantic under conditions that claimed immense numbers of lives. Those who survived faced plantation labour, family separation, physical violence and the deliberate denial of their humanity.

The Caribbean was central to this system. Its plantation economies depended on coerced African labour, while profits from sugar and other commodities circulated through European shipping, insurance, banking and manufacturing. Trinidadian schol-

ar Lloyd Best argued that metropolitan power was concerned not simply with land but with organising people so that wealth could be transferred outward. The organisation of enslaved labour was therefore inseparable from the accumulation of imperial wealth.

Britain's popular historical narrative has frequently given greater prominence to its nineteenth-century suppression of the slave trade than to the earlier centuries in which British interests helped build and expand it. These two histories must be considered together. The later campaign for abolition does not erase the financial and political commitments that preceded it.

The involvement of the monarchy began long before the Royal African Company. Under Elizabeth I, the voyages of John Hawkins in the 1560s helped establish an English presence in the Atlantic trafficking of Africans. Hawkins obtained backing from members of the court and wealthy investors. The crown's participation included access to ships and other resources. Historian Harry Kelsey records the use of the royal vessel *Jesus of Lübeck* in Hawkins's third voyage, which carried captive Africans across the Atlantic.

The financing arrangement was an early form of partnership between sovereign authority and private enterprise. The monarch and members of the political and commercial elite could share in the proceeds while sailors and agents conducted the voyages. Hawkins's expeditions traded captive Africans in the Spanish Americas and returned with goods and profits. Kelsey reports striking returns from the earlier voyages, including an estimate of 60 per cent for the second expedition.

This was not merely a story of individual merchants acting independently of the state. The crown could provide ships, political legitimacy and access to privileged networks. Royal support made risky ventures more feasible and signalled that the exploitation of Africans was compatible with the ambitions of the English state.

Ahmed N. Reid • The British Monarchy and African Enslavement • Part 1 of 5

For Caribbean societies, recovering this history matters. Reparatory justice requires an account not only of who carried out enslavement but also of who authorised, financed and benefited from it. Scholars including Eric Williams, Hilary Beckles and Verene Shepherd have traced the relationship between African enslavement, British wealth and Caribbean underdevelopment. Their work challenges the notion that slavery belongs to a closed and disconnected past.

Elizabeth I's role did not constitute the full machinery of the later British slave-trading empire. It did, however, establish an important precedent: royal resources and commercial ambition could be combined in ventures built on the captivity of Africans. Under the Stuart monarchs, that precedent would be institutionalised on a far larger scale.

NEXT WEEK: The Stuart kings and the Royal African Company.

Selected sources: Harry Kelsey, Sir John Hawkins: Queen Elizabeth's Slave Trader (2003); Eric Williams, Capitalism and Slavery (1944); Hilary Beckles and Verene Shepherd, Trading Souls (2007); SlaveVoyages, slavevoyages.org.



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ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA 45TH INDEPENDENCE CELEBRATIONS SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

SUNDAY
18
OCTOBER

Independence Church Service

Precision Center

4:00 PM

THURSDAY
22
OCTOBER

National Youth Rally, Special Drills and Cheerleading Competition

Sir Vivian Richards Stadium

8:30 AM

SUNDAY
25
OCTOBER

National Food Fair

Sir Vivian Richards Stadium

10:00 AM

National Schools' Panorama

Sir Vivian Richards Stadium

6:00 PM

MONDAY
26
OCTOBER

National Heroes Day Wreath Laying Ceremony

Heroes Park – Sir Sydney Walling Highway

10:00 AM

National Independence Business Decor Competition

Starts: October 26

Ends: October 29

TUESDAY
27
OCTOBER

Voices in Harmony - Festival of Choirs

St. Anthony's Secondary School

8:00 PM

WEDNESDAY
28
OCTOBER

Schools' Independence Programs

Schools Across the State

Island Treasures Gala - Golden Age

Casa Palmadita

THURSDAY
29
OCTOBER

Barbuda Day Activities

Evening of Theatre

St. Anthony's Secondary School

7:00 PM

FRIDAY
30
OCTOBER

Independence Calypso Competition

Green Lounge – Cedar Valley

8:00 PM

National Dress and Flag Day

SUNDAY
1
NOVEMBER

Independence Flag Ceremony

Barbuda

7:00 AM

Independence Ceremonial Parade

Sir Vivian Richards Stadium

5:45 PM



ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA

45 YEARS OF INDEPENDENCE

Renaissance

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SCHEDULE IS TENTATIVE
AND SUBJECT TO CHANGE

PAHO warns of childhood lead poisoning risks in the Caribbean

The Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) is urging Caribbean and other countries in the Americas to strengthen efforts to detect and prevent childhood lead poisoning, warning that exposure to the toxic metal often goes unnoticed despite its potentially irreversible health effects.

Marking International Lead Poisoning Prevention Week, observed from October 18 to 24, PAHO said children can be exposed to lead in their homes and communities without displaying symptoms, even as it affects brain development and long-term health.

The regional health agency said an estimated 815 million children worldwide, or one in three, are affected by lead poisoning.

It warned that there is no known safe level of lead in the blood, noting that even low concentrations can contribute to reduced intelligence, behavioural difficulties and learning problems.

In Latin America and the Caribbean, studies indicate that approximately 30 per cent of children tested had blood lead levels exceeding five micrograms per decilitre, while nearly seven per cent recorded levels above 10 micrograms.

PAHO said lead exposure is also linked to nearly 200,000 deaths annually in the region, while the World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that more than 3.5 million deaths globally were attributable to lead exposure in 2023, primarily from cardiovascular complications.

“Lead poisoning is preventable, but we cannot prevent what we do not identify,” said PAHO technical adviser on chemical safety, Francisco Sánchez Otero.

He said stronger surveillance and improved identification of exposure sources were essential to protecting children before irreversible harm occurred.



PAHO identified mining, industrial activities, informal recycling of lead-acid batteries, lead-based paints and lead-glazed ceramics among the major sources of exposure in the region.

Children may also ingest or inhale lead through contaminated dust, soil, water and food.

The agency expressed concern that limited testing and surveillance in several countries continue to hamper efforts to identify affected populations and prevent exposure.

It said it is assisting Caribbean and other countries in strengthening laboratory testing, blood lead monitoring, environmental surveillance and regulations governing hazardous products.

PAHO is also supporting measures to improve drinking water safety, phase out lead-containing paints and promote safer battery recycling.

The agency noted that WHO introduced an initial module of its PREVENT Technical Package on Lead Poisoning Prevention in May, with the full framework expected in 2027.

PAHO said coordinated action across the health, environment, education and industrial sectors was critical to reducing exposure and protecting children from long-term harm.

“By linking surveillance data to targeted interventions, countries can move beyond documenting lead exposure to preventing it, protecting children from irreversible harm,” PAHO said. (CMC)

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El Salvador troops arrive in Haiti to search for missing colleagues



At least 100 members of El Salvador's special forces have arrived in Haiti following a warning by President Nayib Bukele for those responsible for abducting four Salvadoran soldiers last week to release them immediately.

The troops arrived Thursday to assist in the search for their colleagues, who have been missing since Sunday, amid a warning that another 100 Salvadoran soldiers could be sent to Port-au-Prince in the coming days.

El Salvador has deployed military personnel as part of the United Nations authorised Gang Suppression Force (GSF) in Haiti, whose mission is to neutralise gangs in Port-au-Prince, secure infrastructure, protect civilians, and support humanitarian aid alongside Haitian forces.

On October 18, armed members of the Chèn Méchan and 400 Mawozo gangs ambushed an armoured vehicle carrying the four Salvadoran soldiers in the Santo area of Croix-des-Bouquets as they returned from a supermarket.

The attackers hit the vehicle with gunfire and explosives, forcing the men to flee before losing contact. The area where the attack took place is a

known gang stronghold near Port-au-Prince where armed groups control an estimated 70 per cent of the territory.

President Bukele has called on the gangs to release the men saying they are not combatants, but "aeronautical technicians working as part of our mission in Haiti, an international mission.

"Our team consists exclusively of pilots and technical personnel; their primary role is to carry out medical evacuations and save lives, not to wage war. Yet, you abducted them in a cowardly manner while they were returning from buying provisions at a local supermarket."

He said El Salvador has launched a military operation to rescue them and their soldiers have "only one objective, to ensure that our four compatriots return home safe and sound."

He issued a warning to the gang leaders that the response will be "nothing compared to what awaits you if you do not release the four hostages, safe and sound.

"And do not mistake our words for empty threats. We have dealt with gangs in El Salvador before, and we

are fully capable of doing the same with you. There is still time to avoid this.

Return our four compatriots to us, safe and sound, and everything will go back to the way it was before the abduction. The decision is in your hands."

The soldiers have not yet been released or found.

Meanwhile, the United Nations Friday reported that armed violence continues to drive displacement in the French-speaking Caribbean Community (Caricom) country.

"According to the International Organization for Migration (IOM), more than 7,000 people have fled Petite-Rivière in Artibonite over the last four days, while more than 3,000 others have been displaced in the commune of Arcadia in the West Department," said Stéphane Dujarric, the spokesman for the UN Secretary-General, Antonio Guterres.

He told the daily UN press briefing that in Artibonite, the latest displacement adds to an already "worsening situation that we tell you about almost every day.

"More than 17,000 human beings were displaced in that department alone last month, with many families finding refuge within the community, staying with host families, as movements within towns remain severely disrupted due to ongoing insecurity. We and our partners are working with local authorities to monitor the situation and assess urgent needs."

Dujarric said that humanitarian needs, as it should be obvious to all, continue to grow.

"The 2026 Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan for Haiti is only 49 per cent funded. More money is needed, and that is rather urgent," he said. (Jamaica Observer)

Regional News



Caribbean ex-PMs call for end to Cuba embargo

On the 66th anniversary of the United States (US)-imposed embargo on Cuba, 11 former heads of government in the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) have written an open letter to nations around the world, urging them to support a resolution before the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) this week.

The letter urges all member states to vote overwhelmingly in favour of the resolution, which calls for consideration of the necessity and desirability of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba.

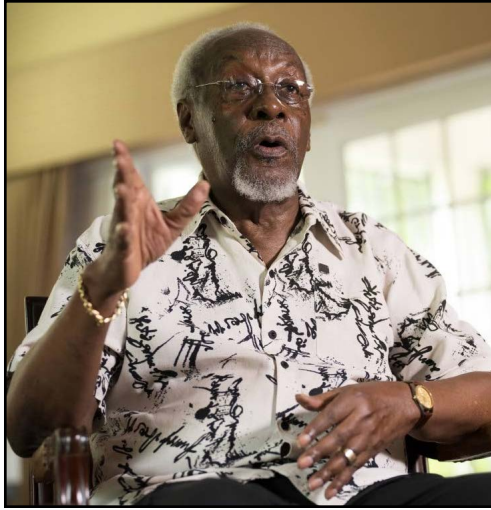
The letter states that the US action “is contrary to international law and every civilised precept of life and living”.

“We, the undersigned former heads of state and government of the Caribbean Community, strongly and unequivocally urge all nations to vote in favour of the Resolution on October 28, 2026, at UNGA.”

The letter is signed by Freundel Stuart, former prime minister of Barbados; Said Musa and Dean Barrow, former prime ministers of Belize; Keith Mitchell and Tillman Thomas, former prime ministers of Grenada; Donald Ramotar, former president of Guyana; Kenny Anthony, former prime minister of St Lucia; Bruce Golding and PJ Patterson, former prime ministers of Jamaica; Keith Rowley, former prime minister of Trinidad and Tobago; and Ralph Gonsalves, former prime minister of St Vincent and the Grenadines.

According to the letter, “every year since 1992, UNGA has been adopting overwhelmingly a resolution on this subject. Yet, the USA has been ignoring the clear voice of the international community, the requisites of international law, and the most elemental of civilising principles.

“The vote on this UNGA Resolution this year is more urgent and important than ever before. In recent months, the US government has further ramped up its illegal embargo against Cuba in an attempt to starve the Cuban people into submission through the imposition of



third-party sanctions against any government or entity which grants, sells or transports energy products, including gasoline and diesel, to Cuba. Surely, such US conduct is inhumane, and undoubtedly contrary to international law.”

The letter continues: “Accordingly, it is imperative that the blandishments and pressures currently being deployed by the USA to derail and defeat the proposed UNGA Resolution must be resisted. The US embargo continues to be a threat to hemispheric and international peace and security; the embargo is a brazen violation of Cuba’s right to sovereignty and independence; the embargo derogates from the most elemental human rights of a people established and declared by international law. The unilateral, coercive actions of the USA against Cuba represent the law of the jungle, and can in no way be justified by the Charter of the United Nations or any other source of international law

and justice.”

It concludes with a reminder that “Cuba is not a threat to any nation or any person on planet Earth”.

“Let us all contribute to the healing of the hemispheric fracture between the United States of America and Cuba by supporting the UNGA Resolution on October 28, 2026. Let us all stand with Cuba and humanity on this matter.”

The US has maintained an embargo against Cuba for 66 years, dating back to October 1960. It was first introduced by the administration of US President Dwight Eisenhower and strengthened by US President John F. Kennedy in 1962, following the failed Bay of Pigs invasion aimed at overthrowing Cuban President Fidel Castro.

Decades later, the administration of US President Barack Obama relaxed some restrictions, but they were tightened again under President Donald Trump.

Days ago, US media reported that a Florida judge had signed an arrest warrant for Raúl Castro, the younger brother and successor of the late Fidel Castro as Cuba’s president.

The warrant is connected to the younger Castro’s alleged role in the 1996 shoot down of civilian planes.

Raúl Castro, 95, led Cuba for 10 years before stepping down in 2021, making way for the country’s current president, Miguel Díaz-Canel.

The decades-long embargo has contributed to severe economic hardship in Cuba, which has a population of about 11 million. (Jamaica Gleaner)

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Regional News

PAGE 27

1,300 Jamaicans were deported last year, including nearly 500 for violent and drug offences – ESSJ



Sixty Jamaicans were deported last year, including 52 from the United States (US), for the offences of murder, manslaughter or attempted murder, according to the latest Economic and Social Survey Jamaica (ESSJ).

The ESSJ is an annual publication by the Planning Institute of Jamaica which provides comprehensive data, reports, and analysis on the country's economic, social, and environmental developments.

The 2025 ESSJ revealed, too, that 95 Jamaicans were deported for gun-related offences, 134 for offences related to wounding assault or battery, 171 for drug possession and 64 for crimes related to fraud or false documents.

Sixty-three Jamaicans were deported for sex-related crimes.

A total of 610 Jamaicans were deported last year, including 376 from the US and 184 from "other countries", for illegal entry, overstaying their time or illegal

re-entry, the ESSJ revealed.

A total of 1,317 Jamaicans were involuntarily returned to their homeland in 2025, including 967 from the US and 255 from other countries.

Seventy were from Canada and 25 from the United Kingdom

The number of Jamaicans deported from the US last year is almost twice the 486 who were returned the previous year. (Jamaica Gleaner)



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Tests show Pope Leo won't need further treatment for cancer

Pope Leo XIV will need no further treatment for lung cancer after tests confirmed the disease was localised, the Vatican said Wednesday.

Leo, 71, had part of one lung removed last week in the first major health event of his 17-month pontificate. The surgery confirmed he had adenocarcinoma, the most common type of lung cancer. Leo was discharged from Rome's Gemelli Polyclinic on Saturday, four days after surgery, and said he would gradually resume his activities.

The pope's personal physician, Dr Luigi Carbone, and his surgeon, Dr Stefano Margaritora, said the final tests on tissue removed during the surgery confirmed the diagnosis and that the cancer had not spread.

"A subsequent oncology assessment confirmed that no further treatment is necessary," the doctors said in a statement.

The pope had the lower section, or lobe, of his right lung removed to try to ensure that all the cancer was removed.

Additional treatment is offered for patients whose cancer has spread, such as into the lymph nodes, or who have certain other signs that their cancer might be particularly aggressive. Surgery often can be enough when tumours are caught very early, such as when someone has an X-ray or other scan that shows a spot long before it's large or causing symptoms.

The pope appears to have had one of those "incidental findings", a nodule in his lung spotted during another exam. In an interview with Vatican News on Saturday, Margaritora, the chief thoracic surgeon at Rome's Gemelli hospital, confirmed that the nodule was found by chance during routine abdominal examinations, and that the pope had not been experiencing any symptoms.

"The statements suggest that this is a Stage I lung cancer for which surgery is highly effective and expected to be



curative," said Dr Stephen Liu, a lung cancer expert at Georgetown's Lombardi Comprehensive Cancer Center. He said the lack of further treatment suggests a relatively small cancer, and that it had not spread to lymph nodes.

The pope carried on business while in the hospital, including a call with Russian President Vladimir Putin, and has appeared strong in two public appearances at the Vatican since his surgery: the traditional Sunday blessing from a window overlooking St Peter's Square and Wednesday's longer audience in the square, greeting the faithful from around the world.

"Thank you! Thank you for the sup-

port of your prayers," Leo said during the audience.

His next major engagement is an ambitious November 6 to 17 trip to Uruguay, Argentina and Peru.

Margaritora told Vatican News that there was "no clinical reason" to prevent the trip, which includes a dozen flights, two helicopter rides and high altitude stops.

The pope had revealed that a nodule would be surgically removed during the traditional Sunday blessing on October 11, in an unusually transparent disclosure broadcast on live television that broke the tradition of secrecy surrounding papal health issues. (AP)

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Meta ordered to pay New Mexico \$25 billion for deceiving users about privacy on Facebook



A judge on Wednesday ordered Meta to pay New Mexico US\$25 billion after a jury found the company liable for deceiving users about privacy on Facebook, marking the biggest fine ever against the tech giant.

Facebook's deception was intentional and executives consistently misled users about how the platform worked, state District Court Judge Francis J. Mathew wrote in his ruling.

"Facebook promised users that they (the users) controlled their data. This was false," he said.

Jurors in September found Meta liable for over 43 million violations of New Mexico consumer protection laws for making misleading public statements about how it handled users' personal data. The case was brought after political consulting firm Cambridge Analytica harvested Facebook data to generate targeted political ads during the 2016 election season.

The award will serve as a warning to tech companies that New Mexico will hold them accountable, state Attorney General Raúl Torrez said at a news conference

"This judgment should be a signal, an unambiguous message, to Silicon Valley," he said.

Meta said the ruling and Torrez's office's approach to enforcement "makes it all but impossible to do business in the state of New Mexico".

"At its core, this lawsuit seeks to impose a tax on speech to enforce new rules for what people can say online. We are confident we will prevail on appeal," C.J. Mahoney, the company's chief legal officer, said in a statement.

The Menlo Park, California company has a market value of US\$1.8 trillion and brought in more than US\$200 billion in revenue last year. Company shares traded 2 per cent higher after Wednesday's announcement, and it

was scheduled to report its quarterly earnings later in the day.

In August, Meta reached a settlement with nearly all states and territories — except New Mexico and Florida — to pay US\$18 billion and add stronger child-safety measures to its Facebook and Instagram platforms.

The settlement ended a trial over teen social media addiction and resolved a pivotal case years in the making that sought to hold the tech giant accountable for the role its platforms played in undermining children's mental health. The effort targeted features designed to grab young people's attention.

New Mexico didn't join the multi-state settlement, choosing to go after the company on its own.

The director of a non-profit that supports stronger policies towards corporations said US\$25 billion is "a drop in the bucket for Meta", but demonstrates that people want accountability.

"Right now, they are rolling out Muse, an AI assistant encouraging people to trust it with everything from their bank accounts to their medical information," added Nidhi Hegde, executive director of the American Economic Liberties Project. "Which is why we need more enforcers with courage and laws with actual teeth to rein them in."

At the trial, attorneys for the state cited a 2010 Washington Post op-ed in which Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg wrote that the company didn't sell user data.

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International

AROUND THE WORLD



“You have control over how your information is shared,” Zuckerberg said. “We do not and never will sell any of your information to anyone.”

New Mexico officials sought fines of US\$35 billion to US\$40 billion, arguing the company would only change if its stock price were impacted.

Meta’s lawyers, meanwhile, asserted that the state failed to prove the company made misleading statements and that content moderation actually harmed people in New Mexico. They wanted the company to pay US\$3.4 billion at most, and said an award many times larger would be unconstitutional.

Although interest would accrue on the penalty during the appeal process, Meta could succeed in reducing the number of violations for which it is found liable.

The US\$25-billion award far exceeds a US\$5-billion fine the Federal Trade Commission levied against Facebook in 2019.

Peter Ormerod, an associate law professor at Villanova University, was surprised by the size of the New Mexico judgment because previous legal settlements over Cambridge Analytica were much lower.

“It comes out to about US\$12,000 per person in New Mexico,” he said. “It’s quite unlike anything else we’ve seen.”

Under the New Mexico Constitution, fines for violating consumer protection laws go towards education spending. It could take years for the state to get the money while the company appeals.

The trial focused on accusations Facebook deceived users about a breach stemming from a third-party personality quiz that harvested data from roughly 87 million profiles and sold it to Cambridge Analytica. The now-defunct firm’s clients included Donald Trump’s 2016 presidential campaign.

Attorneys for New Mexico argued that the state’s entire population was deceived, and that Facebook allowed misinformation or violent content to proliferate.

Meta’s lawyers argued the state failed to prove people were harmed by deceptive statements. Zuckerberg, in a video deposition, denied that Facebook profited off harmful content and said the company had to balance free speech with content moderation.

In a partial win for the company, jurors rejected assertions that Facebook made false claims about removing harmful content, including misinformation about the COVID-19 pandemic.

Meta lawyers said it has changed policies since the lawsuit was filed in 2021 and catches and removes an esti-

mated 99 per cent of content violating its standards.

This story was updated to correct the spelling of the judge’s last name.

Associated Press reporter Matthew Brown and Technology Writer Barbara Ortutay contributed to this report. Schuettler is a corps member for The Associated Press/Report for America Statehouse News Initiative. Report for America is a non-profit national service programme that places journalists in local newsrooms to report on under-covered issues. (AP)

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New York's archdiocese and alleged victims of clergy abuse agree to \$800 million legal settlement, second largest in US history



The Archdiocese of New York covers the city's boroughs of the Bronx, Manhattan and Staten Island as well as seven counties to the north of New York City and is home to about 300 churches, more than 150 parochial schools and 2.5 million Catholics.

In his email to clergy, Hicks said that if church members ask about the settlement, "please let them know that much progress has been made."

"We are on the verge of being able to please God, bring some measure of healing and reconciliation to all victim-survivors," he wrote.

The Archdiocese of New York and attorneys for about 1,300 parishioners who claim that they were sexually abused by clergy have agreed to an \$800 million settlement of their legal claims.

It is the second-largest settlement agreement involving a Catholic archdiocese in the United States (US).

Archbishop Ronald Hicks sent an email Saturday to clergy confirming the settlement after attorneys for the survivors of alleged abuse announced it.

The agreement will not be final until the parties sign it, Hicks noted.

The signing is scheduled for the week of November 6.

The largest settlement of sexual abuse claims in the US is by the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, which agreed in 2024 to pay \$880 million to 1,000 alleged victims, in addition to \$740 million in claims it had previously paid.

In June, the Archdiocese of San

Francisco agreed to a US\$395 million settlement of some 500 lawsuits filed over clergy abuse and in December 2025, a federal judge approved a settlement in which the Archdiocese of New Orleans agreed to pay at least US\$230 million to abuse victims.

The agreement with the New York archdiocese would end more than seven years of lawsuits.

The parties agreed to a framework for an agreement in May that required everyone who filed a claim to sign off.

"The unanimous agreement of survivors who filed claims against the Archdiocese of New York marks a powerful moment in the pursuit of justice," said Jeff Anderson, an attorney representing people who filed more than 1,000 claims against the Catholic Church in New York State.

"Through their courage, sacrifice, and determination, survivors have helped bring about a reckoning and a meaningful step toward accountability."

"This agreement will also allow the archdiocese to turn its full attention once again to its mission of preaching the Gospel, healing the sick, caring for the poor and needy, welcoming the stranger, and educating our children."

A New York law enacted in 2019 allows survivors of child sexual abuse to file lawsuits against their abusers and institutions that shielded them until they turn 55.

People who had already turned 55 when the law was enacted also were given until August 2021 to file lawsuits, no matter when the alleged abuse occurred.

"This is an extraordinary achievement for the survivors," said Trusha Goffe, an attorney at Anderson's law firm.

"The survivors remained resolute through years of litigation to reach this monumental settlement." (AP)

Sri Lanka provides medical help and repatriates 40 Iranian sailors stranded in the Indian Ocean

Sri Lanka has responded to a distress call and provided medical help to 40 Iranian sailors from ships anchored close to the island's waters before repatriating them to Tehran, a spokesperson said Sunday.

The sailors were brought to the island's southern port of Galle on Saturday after Sri Lankan authorities received a distress call seeking medical help, said Thushara Rodrigo, the foreign ministry spokesperson.

He said he doesn't have details about which ships the sailors came from. He said they were transported to the shore by vessels arranged by the Iranian Embassy and local shipping agents. The ministry handled the immigration and institutional formalities.

After initial medical treatment, they left Sri Lanka early Sunday, added Rodrigo.

The Iranian oil tankers have been anchored off Sri Lanka for the past several months after the U.S. resumed its naval blockade of the Strait of Hormuz, leaving dozens of Iranian vessels stranded and unable to return home.

The plight of these sailors has been a growing issue over the past weeks after Sri Lankan authorities acknowledged that there were 19 ships stationed about 24 nautical miles from its coast and that they have reported



shortages of food, water and fuel.

Two weeks ago, the Sri Lankan government said it had no immediate plans to help the ships, saying that Sri Lanka will put its national interest first before considering any help, and the companies that supply ships are aware of possible secondary sanctions from the United States.

This latest development comes nearly seven months after a U.S. torpedo attack sank Iranian naval ship IRIS Dena, killing 87 sailors.

The ship was returning home after taking part in a naval exercise on in-

itation from India. A second Iranian ship was brought to a Sri Lankan port after its crew reported technical problems.

The wounded sailors who were treated in Sri Lankan hospitals and those rescued from the second ship were safely repatriated back to Iran.

Sri Lanka is emerging from an economic crisis and both the U.S. and Iran are crucial trading partners. The U.S. played an important role in assisting with an International Monetary Fund bailout deal and helping the agricultural sector to avert a food crisis. (AP)

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A vibrant poster for the Antigua Carnival 70th Anniversary. The background features a collage of carnival performers in elaborate feathered costumes, with a central focus on three dancers. The Antigua Carnival logo, a stylized bird with a star and the national flag, is positioned above the main title. The text 'ANTIGUA Carnival' is prominently displayed, followed by 'THE CARIBBEAN'S GREATEST SUMMER FESTIVAL'. Below this, 'Legendary 70' is written in a large, decorative font. The dates 'JULY 20TH - AUGUST 3RD 2027' are shown in a bold, pink font. At the bottom, social media handles for Facebook and Instagram are provided.

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Sports News

Grenades and Bullets advance to semi-finals of ABFA Knockout Cup

Defending champions Sandals and APUA Inet Jennings Grenades and Auto Craze Pigotts Bullets advanced to the final four of the Antigua and Barbuda Football Association's (ABFA) pre-season knockout competition on Saturday evening.

Both teams secured semi-final berths by recording wins in the first two quarter-final matches in the ABFA Knockout Cup at the ABFA Technical Center.

The top-seeded Jennings Grenades crushed ninth seed Freemans Village Scorpions 6-0 in the second game of

Saturday's double-header.

Obafemi Poyotte had a double conversion with strikes in the 11th and 27th minutes as the Grenades surged to a four-nil lead at halftime. The other two goals in the first half were scored by Barrington Blake in the 23rd minute and Troy Jules in the 45th minute.

The Grenades wrapped up the match by scoring two more goals in the second half via conversions by Elijah Whyte in the 67th minute and Yosbel Reyes in the 70th minute.

The third seed Auto Craze Pigotts Bullets prevailed 2-0 over sixth seed Potters Tigers in Saturday's opening game.

Malcolm Stewart scored in the 14th minute to give the Pigotts Bullets a one-nil lead at halftime, and Sujae Mcbean added a second with a 51st-minute conversion to seal the win.

The winners of the quarter-finals will advance to the semi-finals, which will be played at the same venue on Saturday, October 31.



Players of the Sandals and APUA Inet Jennings Grenades



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COOL & SMOOTH SECONDARY SCHOOLS' FOOTBALL LEAGUE 2026

PMS stay unbeaten in defense of school boys under-14 title

The Princess Margaret School (PMS) maintained their unbeaten start in defense of their title in the Under-14 Boys Division League in the Ministry of Sports Cool and Smooth JOMA Caribbean Schools Football League on Friday.

The Princess Margaret School claimed their third win in four matches by pulling off a 3-1 victory against last year's second-place finishers at the ABFA Technical Center.

Teejay Hodge had a double conversion with strikes in the fourth and 35th minutes, and Aiquan Scott scored in the third minute for Princess Margaret School.

T'andre James scored a consolation goal in the 12th minute for the Antigua Grammar Schools, whose unbeaten start in the competition was ended after suffering their first loss in four matches.

The Antigua Grammar School and PMS entered Friday's clash with identical records of two wins and one draw in their previous three matches.

The Antigua and Barbuda College of Advanced Studies (ABCAS) claimed their second win in as many matches in the Under-20 Girls Division.

After launching their campaign with a 7-0 drubbing of Clare Hall Sec-

ondary School (CHSS) in their opening match, ABCAS notched up a 3-1 victory against Ottos Comprehensive School (OCS) in their second encounter.

The goals for ABCAS were scored by Aliah London, Abigail McDonald in the 14th minute, and Mia Lake in the 27th minute.

Kengenique Armstrong scored a consolation goal in the 55th minute for Ottos Comprehensive School, which tumbled to their second loss in as many matches after suffering a 5-0 defeat against the Antigua Girls High Schools in their opening encounter.



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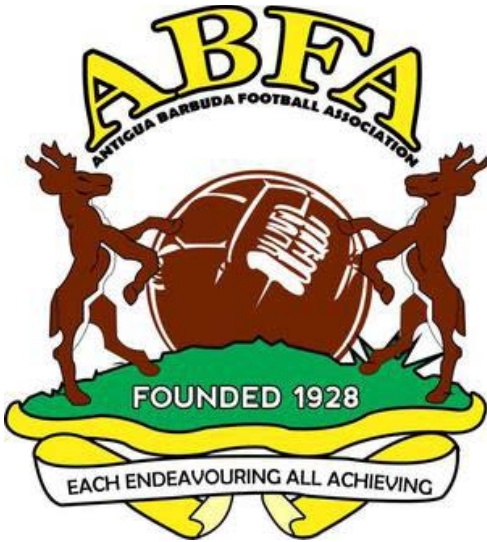


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Sports News



More success for Urlings in ABFA's Second Division League



The Urlings Golden Stars recorded their second straight win in the Antigua and Barbuda Football Association's (ABFA) Second Division on Friday.

After launching their campaign with a 3-1 victory over CPTSA Wings, the Urlings Golden Stars romped to a commanding 5-2 victory against Fort Road FC at the Fort Road playing field.

Caden Williams scored twice for the Urlings Golden Stars with conversions in the 46th and 73rd minutes. The other goals for Urlings were converted by Devlyn Williams in the second minute, Derrick Pryce in the ninth minute, and Anthony Tomlin in the 37th minute.

Jahquan Davis scored both goals for Fort Road FC with strikes in the sec-

ond and 30th minutes. It was the first loss in two matches for Fort Road.

Sea View Farm FC made a winning start to their campaign in the ABFA's Second Division in impressive fashion.

Azari Edwards struck a hat trick, and Zafique Drew scored twice as Sea View Farm kicked off the new season with a 7-0 drubbing of the Liberta Blackhawks at the Sea View Farm playing field.

Edwards had conversions in the 21st, 47th, and 56th minutes, while Drew scored in the 24th and 32nd minutes. The other goals were converted by Kenya Hughes in the seventh minute and Nigel Graham in the 47th minute.

Point Westham FC claimed their second successive win by snatching a 1-0 victory against Bethesda FC despite being reduced to 10 men in the first half of their encounter at the Fort Road playing field.

After Tishidi McCoy received a straight red card and was expelled in the 31st minute, teammate Anderson Herbert snatched the winner for Point Westham FC by scoring the only goal of the match in the 42nd minute.

It was the first defeat for Bethesda FC after salvaging a 1-1 draw with Fort Road FC in their opening encounter.

The Ottos Rangers, who were rele-

gated from the Premier Division last season, maintained their winning start to their campaign upon their return to competition in the ABFA's First Division League.

After launching their campaign with a 3-1 victory over English Harbour FC in their season opener, the Ottos Rangers made it two wins in a row with a 2-0 triumph over Willikies FC at the Radio Range playing field in Ottos.

Zabuda McCoy scored both goals on either side of halftime with strikes in the ninth and 89th minutes as Willikies FC lost for the second time in as many matches.

After pulling off a 2-1 victory over Five Islands FC in their opening match, Empire FC recorded their second win with a 5-2 drubbing of SAP FC at the ABFA Technical Center.

Marckens Dorisca and Kamali Looby each scored twice for Empire FC. Dorisca scored in the 17th and 84th minutes, while Looby had conversions in the 47th and 59th minutes. Nickado Lindsay scored the other goal for Empire FC with a 46th-minute conversion.

Collin Grigg scored in the 46th minute, and Tyrique Tonge produced a 51st-minute conversion for SAP FC. It was the first defeat for SAP FC, who played to a 2-2 draw with Parham FC in their opening encounter.

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BOE and Richie's Shooterz take leads in business league playoff series

Cup-holders Board of Education (BOE) and last year's losing finalists Richie's Shooterz take one-nil leads in their respective semi-final series in the Cool and Smooth Antigua and Barbuda Basketball Association's (ABBA) Business League Playoff Championship on Saturday evening.

Both teams won Game 1 of their best-of-three semi-final series at the JSC Sports Complex.

The top-seeded Board of Education continued their title defense by surging to a commanding 70-55 victory over fourth seed APCMOL in the second game of Saturday's double-header.

Daniel Perez sank 16 points, Danny Perez converted 15 points, Warren Bogle had 13 points, and Xavier Meade scored 10 points for the Board of Education.

Akeem Davis converted 13 points, and Olivee Morris scored 12 points for

APCMOL.

The second-seeded Richie's Shooterz notched up a 78-55 victory against sixth-seed Curtain Bluff Resort in Saturday's opening game.

Richie's Shooterz were led by Kwame Braithwaite with 18 points and point guard Tavarus Benta with 15 points.

In support, Steven Matthew sank 12 points, Cohen Desouza converted 11 points, and Nickon McGregor scored 10 points for Richie's Shooterz. Javonte Daley produced 16 points for Curtain Bluff Resort.

Newcomers Curtain Bluff Resort and APCMOL booked their spot in the semi-finals by winning the last two matches in the quarter-finals.

The sixth-seed Curtain Bluff Resort created the first upset to advance to the playoff semi-finals by pulling off a 64-61 victory over the third-seeded

Antigua and Barbuda Transport Board in the quarter-finals.

Javonte Daley produced 14 points, Webster Baptista and Shalom Bloodman each converted 11 points, and Naje Simon scored 10 points for Curtain Bluff Resort.

Ishaan Peets sank 18 points, Lindsay McDonald had 14 points, and Raymond Dickenson scored 12 points for the Antigua and Barbuda Transport Board.

Fourth seed APCMOL clinched the final berth into the playoff semi-finals by surging to a commanding 75-58 victory over fourth seed Sandals in the last match in the quarter-finals.

Amare Browne produced 19 points, Takeem Martin sank 14 points, Olivee Morris had 12 points, and Sheldon Abrams scored 10 points for APCMOL. Keroi Lee shot a game-high 21 points for Sandals.



The Board of Education basketball team

Three losses for Antiguanans at FIFA World Cup and 8v8 Festival



The Antigua and Barbuda national youth team at the 2026 Under-15 Boys FIFA World Cup and Festival in Baku, Azerbaijan. (ABFA)

Antigua and Barbuda's young Benna Boys have lost their first three matches in Group AA at the Under-15 Boys FIFA World Cup & 8v8 Festival, which is taking place in Baku, Azerbaijan, from October 22 to 31.

Antigua and Barbuda, competing in the five-team round-robin completion in Group AA, crashed to their third loss in as many matches with a 10-0 defeat against top team Northern Ireland at the Hovsan Community Complex on Sunday.

Michael Mulholland recorded a hat trick with conversions in the 21st,

29th, and 32nd minutes. Dara Donnan and Alfie Davidson each scored twice.

Donnan scored the first two goals of the match with strikes in the third and 12th minutes, while Davidson had conversions in the 14th and 19th minutes.

The other three goals for Northern Ireland were scored by Calum Evans in the 13th minute, Shea Donnelly in the 17th minute, and JB Camlin in the 33rd minute.

The Antiguanans also lost to Lebanon and Burkina Faso at the inaugural FIFA Under-15 Boys Tournament, which in-

volves each eight-member team playing 35-minute matches.

Antigua and Barbuda suffered a 4-0 loss to Lebanon in their second encounter on Sunday. The goals were scored by Marc Hajj in the fourth minute, Adam Kammoun in the 16th minute, Ralph Hamdan in the 30th minute, and Tarek Chamaa in the 31st minute.

Antigua and Barbuda lost 3-2 to Burkina Faso in their opening Group AA fixture on Saturday. Sinaly Gueye, who scored twice, produced his first goal in the second minute to put Burkina Faso ahead.

Allan Henry equalized for Antigua and Barbuda with a strike in the fifth minute. Burkina Faso regained the lead via an

eighth-minute conversion from Bas-sirou Zong.

Kawanie Atherly scored in the 33rd minute to make it 2-2 as Antigua and Barbuda equalized for the second time in the match. But Gueye scored his second goal of the match in the 35th minute to snatch victory for Burkina Faso.

Antigua and Barbuda will face New Caledonia in their final match in Group AA on Monday (today).