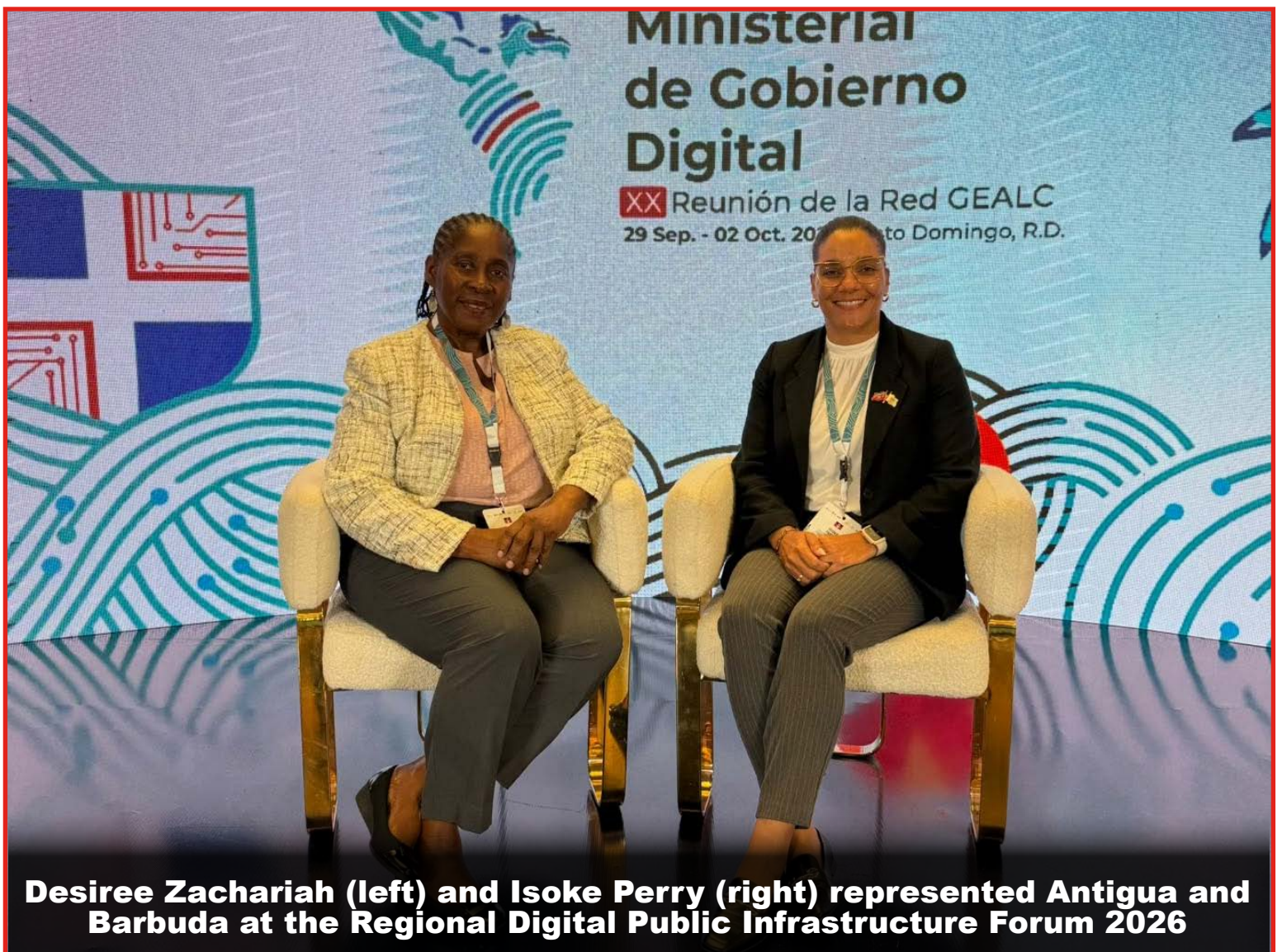


Antigua and Barbuda to be At the Centre of Global Discussions After CHOGM

Story on page 2



Desiree Zachariah (left) and Isoke Perry (right) represented Antigua and Barbuda at the Regional Digital Public Infrastructure Forum 2026

Antigua and Barbuda to be At the Centre of Global Discussions After CHOGM

From November 1 – 4 this year, Antigua and Barbuda will host the biennial Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting with meetings taking place at venues spread across much of Antigua.

Already, more than five thousand overseas have registered to participate and some have already arrived on the island as the VC Bird International Airport is now a buzz of activities with local teams on hand to welcome the guests and taxi operators being among the first group of nationals to benefit directly from this economic bonanza.

But for Prime Minister Gaston Browne hosting CHOGM is a major achievement for Antigua and Barbuda for the significant economic impact and much more.

“What is also evident here is that Antigua and Barbuda, one of the smallest independent nations in the world is exercising global leadership. We will be the ‘chair’ in office for the next two years, thereby literally, providing leadership for some 56 states, including some middle power countries such as Canada, Australia, the United Kingdom and even the world’s most populous country, India,” PM Browne remarked.

The prime minister noted that CHOGM represents 2.7 billion people, a third of the world’s population and that Antigua and Barbuda was not just hosting these nations; it is providing leadership.

“What is happening at this CHOGM, unlike others in the recent past, is a re-invigorating of the Commonwealth, thus making the grouping more relevant and this is especially important when you look at what is happening with multilateralism globally. It is a situation where countries are becoming more insular and multilateralism is under threat,” he observed.



Prime Minister Gaston Browne

According to PM Browne Antigua and Barbuda has signaled to its partners within the Commonwealth that the organization has to become more consequential; to be a force for good, a force for global stability going forward.

“If 56 nations can conjoin their efforts knowing that they represent one third of humanity, then clearly, they have enough influence, and enough trade and economic influence to make a difference,” he declared.

The Antigua and Barbuda leader also wants to see more intra-Commonwealth trade and he said he is looking forward to having a final communique that is consequential and not be a bland statement saying nothing.


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Antigua and Barbuda Receives Medals for CHOGM and 45th Anniversary Celebrations

High Commissioner Karen-Mae Hill met recently with Edward Hilary Davis of Vaughtons, a British manufacturer of medals, badges and ceremonial insignia, who agreed to deliver medals for the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) 2026 and Antigua and Barbuda's 45th Anniversary of Independence.

The CHOGM and Independence medals were designed by Vaughtons' Head of International Sales and Partnerships, Edward Davis, in close consultation with the Antigua and Barbuda High Commission in London. The CHOGM design incorporates the Commonwealth badge, Antigua and Barbuda's Coat of Arms, the colours of the national flag and colours represented across Commonwealth flags.

This year marks 45 years since Antigua and Barbuda gained independence. To commemorate this important national milestone, Vaughtons has produced a limited number of 45th Anniversary of Independence medals. These will be presented to representatives of visiting governments and to Antiguan and Barbudans during the celebrations.



Karen-Mae Hill and Edward Hilary Davis of Vaughtons

The Independence medals' ribbons display all six colours of the Antigua and Barbuda flag. The obverse features the national Coat of Arms, surrounded by the national motto, "Each Endeavouring, All Achieving." The reverse depicts the main islands of Antigua and Barbuda alongside the dates 1981–2026.

High Commissioner Karen-Mae Hill said:

"These medals will be lasting mementos of an important year for An-

tigua and Barbuda: our hosting of CHOGM and the 45th anniversary of our Independence. Their designs bring together symbols of our national identity and our shared Commonwealth ties. We are particularly pleased to have negotiated the production of these medals at no cost to the Government of Antigua and Barbuda. I am grateful to Vaughtons and to Edward Hilary Davis for working closely with the High Commission to create medals that reflect these important occasions."



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Local News

Minister Johnson Pushes for Caribbean Financing Bloc, Warns Disaster Aid Must Reach Islands Faster

Minister of State in the Ministry of Social and Urban Transformation, Kiz Johnson, has called for a dedicated approach to financing for small Caribbean states, warning that delayed assistance and broad economic eligibility measures can undermine their recovery from disasters.

Representing Antigua and Barbuda at the XVIII Ministerial Forum for Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, Johnson urged international partners to recognise the distinct vulnerabilities of small island economies when allocating support.

The forum, held in Panama City on October 20 and 21 under the theme “Connecting Policies for Resilient Development,” brought together ministers and senior officials to discuss the region’s development challenges.

Johnson argued that grouping small Caribbean states with larger Latin American countries can obscure significant differences in resources, economic structures and capacity to withstand crises.

She proposed that the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) establish a steering committee to help ensure small Caribbean island states are considered as a distinct bloc when assessing resilience and financing needs.

The proposed committee would help international partners better understand the circumstances of smaller territories and the urgency of financial support following disasters.

Johnson stressed that securing funding commitments was only part of the challenge.

“The point remains that it’s not only about financing for resilient development... but it’s about the timely re-



ceipt of those monies and further the equitable distribution of the same to ensure that financing reaches those that it is intended to reach,” she said.

She warned that small developing states have limited room within their national budgets to absorb major shocks and finance the recovery needed after a catastrophe.

Private financing alone, she argued, was insufficient to repair economies following disasters, making responsive international support essential.

Johnson also challenged the reliance on gross domestic product and income per capita to determine eligibility for financing, calling for assessments that reflect each country’s circumstances.

“There needs to be a more nuanced deep dive into each country; an ap-

proach that looks beyond such measures,” she said.

Her intervention highlighted the vulnerability of small, service-based economies to disasters, including hurricanes and earthquakes, and the need to strengthen preparedness before crises occur.

Representatives from St. Vincent and the Grenadines and the British Virgin Islands also voiced similar concerns, reinforcing the call for greater recognition of small Caribbean states’ financing needs.

Johnson urged UNDP and other development partners to prioritise islands with relatively small populations in their planning, with support systems capable of responding quickly when governments and communities need assistance.

Ministry of ICTs Representatives Participate in Regional Digital Public Infrastructure Forum 2026



The Ministry of Information Communication Technologies (ICTs), Utilities and Energy was represented at the recently held Regional Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) Forum 2026, in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic.

Representing Antigua and Barbuda were Iroke Perry, Director of eGovernment, and Desiree Zachariah, Manager of Business and Data Analysis. Their participation formed part of the region's wider engagement on strengthening digital government, advancing digital public infrastructure, and exploring innovative approaches to public service delivery.

The forum brought together government representatives, international development partners, technology specialists and digital policy experts to examine how countries can develop secure, interoperable and inclusive digital systems. Discussions covered digital identity, digital payments, data exchange, cybersecurity safeguards, digital public goods, verifiable credentials, government interoperability and the financing of digital infrastructure.

Participation in the forum provided an opportunity for the Ministry to explore

streamline processes for individuals and businesses accessing services across multiple government departments.

These approaches are particularly relevant as Antigua and Barbuda continues to modernize public administration and explore opportunities to make government services more accessible, efficient and responsive to the needs of the public.

The participation of Perry and Zachariah also highlights the importance of integrating digital service delivery with effective data management and analysis.

Experiences shared at the forum may help inform approaches to data standardization, information sharing, digital service planning and performance monitoring. Better coordination and use of government data can support evidence-based decision-making, im-



approaches that could support Antigua and Barbuda's ongoing digital transformation priorities, including strengthening eGovernment services, improving the management and use of government data, and enhancing coordination among public-sector institutions.

A key area of discussion was digital interoperability, which enables government systems to exchange information securely and efficiently. When appropriately implemented, interoperable systems can help reduce duplication, minimize repetitive paperwork and

prove operational efficiency and help departments identify service gaps and opportunities for improvement.

For Antigua and Barbuda, stronger digital public infrastructure has the potential to support a more coordinated public service and improve the experience of citizens, residents and businesses. Potential benefits include fewer unnecessary visits to government offices, reduced duplication of information, faster processing of applications and improved access to government ser-

Local News

vices where digital options are available.

Realizing these benefits will require appropriate planning, institutional readiness, investment, workforce development, and strong safeguards for personal information and cybersecurity.

Presentations on the Dominican Republic's digital government initiatives, including its interoperability architecture and the Soy Yo RD verifiable credentials initiative, provided examples of how digital public infrastructure principles can be applied in practice.

Exposure to these experiences creates opportunities for Antigua and Barbuda to assess relevant approaches, exchange knowledge with regional and international partners, and explore potential avenues for technical assistance and collaboration.

The discussions also underscored that successful digital transformation requires more than technology. Effective governance, appropriate legal and regulatory frameworks, sustainable financing, skilled personnel, cybersecurity and public trust are all important to the responsible and sustainable implemen-



tation of digital solutions.

The Ministry recognizes that digital transformation is not simply about introducing new technologies; it is about improving how government operates and how people access public services.

Continued engagement with regional and international partners can help strengthen the Ministry's capacity to evaluate emerging digital solutions and identify opportunities aligned with Antigua and Barbuda's national development priorities. Lessons from such

engagements may also inform future initiatives to improve public-sector coordination, strengthen data governance, build digital skills and deliver more responsive services.

The Ministry of Information Communication Technologies (ICTs), Utilities and Energy remains committed to supporting the advancement of a secure, efficient, inclusive and citizen-centred digital government for Antigua and Barbuda.

Midweek Deals

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



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Lady Williams Presents \$15,000 Cheque to Support Antigua and Barbuda Community Players Ahead of CHOGM Performances



Her Excellency Lady Sandra Williams, on behalf of the Halo Foundation, recently presented a cheque for \$15,000 to Rudolph Davis, Head of the the Antigua and Barbuda Community Players to assist the cultural group with preparation for their upcoming CHOGM performances.

Speaking at the presentation at Government House, Lady Williams expressed her support for the Community Players and reaffirmed the

importance of nurturing artistic talent that reflects the culture and spirit of Antigua and Barbuda to visiting delegations and international partners. She also stressed the importance of preserving culture and the arts, and not eradicating traditional art forms in favour of new-fangled performances.

The Community Players were recently received under the patronage of Governor General, Sir Rodney Williams and Lady Williams in

this, their 75th year of existence—a milestone celebrated by the continued strength of the group's traditions and its ongoing contribution to the country's cultural life.

For a period of time, the group was also led by Dame Yvonne Maginley, who served as Director General of Tourism for Antigua and Barbuda, as well as Musical Director of the Community Players from 1957 onwards. She was widely recognized for advancing the nation's cultural, folk and tourism offerings. Dame Maginley was also the immediate career superior of a young Lady Williams, whose then professional training included conference and incentive tourism in Austria. Lady Williams later pursued a Master's degree in Tourism Management from the University of Surrey through competitive Commonwealth Scholarships.

With CHOGM performances approaching, the \$15,000 contribution will help the Community Players to finalize rehearsals and intensify preparation and production needs, as they continue to share the richness of Antiguan and Barbudan performance arts with the world.



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Heads of Government Meeting



CHOGM
ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA 2026

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Opinion

How important is the power play in T20 Cricket? Can a TEAM win with a slow power play batter?



BY LENNOX WESTON

In T20 cricket, teams that win or out-score their opponents in the power play, which is the first six overs of a T20 match, go on to win the match approximately 72% of the time.

Secondly, if a team loses three or more wickets during the power play, that team goes on to lose the match 70 % of the time.

West Indies statistics show that the West Indies have passed 45.5 runs in the first six overs of the power play in 60% of their recent T20 matches with an average Power play score of 49.3 runs. The West Indies Men's Cricket Team has an overall T20 International win percentage of 45% across all opponents who are full ICC member nations.

Power play batting strike rates in T 20s among ICC full member teams range from 109 to 136. That is from 6.54 to 8.16 run rate per over. The top teams like South Africa, West Indies and England have an average power play run rate of about 8 to 8.8 runs per over. That is scoring from 48 to 53 runs in the Power Play.



The over all average power play strike rate for ICC full member countries are as follows, For South Africa the power play strike rate is 135.9 For the West Indies power play strike rate is 133.9, England 133.2, Australia 132.3, India 128, Ireland 122, New Zealand 120, Bangladesh 119, Pakistan 115.2. Sri Lanka 109.8. Afghanistan 109.6. Zimbabwe 108.8.

Across all ICC Full Members, the Minimum Power Play score typically hovers around 45 to 48 runs, which is 7.5 to 8 runs per over depending on pitch conditions and match situations.

Recently the T20 power play has seen a surge in aggressive batting changing the requirements of power play batters. India now leads T20 Power play run rate charts among full member nations with an aggressive rate of 10.86 followed closely by England 10.5 to New Zealand 10.16, Australia 10.16

Ireland and the West Indies have also increased their rates while South Africa, Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Zimbabwe fall a bit behind. The Power Play Strike Rate for Pakistan Is 7.52. Afghanistan is 6.58. and Zimbabwe 6.48.

While West Indies is 9.06 and Bangladesh is 8.06 and South Africa, it is

7.43.

Specific overall win percentages and records for the West Indies against ICC Full Member teams in T20 Cricket show the following.

Afghanistan. 11 matches 16 lost five wins.

Australia 27 matches 11 won loss 16.

Bangladesh. 22 matches, won 12, lost 8.

England 39 matches, won 19, Lost 19.

India 35 matches. Won 12, lost 22.

Ireland Nine matches, won 4 lost 3.

New Zealand. 25 matches. Won 6 lost 13.

Pakistan 24 matches, won 4, lost 17.

South Africa 33 matches won 17 lost 16.

Sri Lanka 21 matches, won 10 lost 11.

Zimbabwe 4 matches. Won 3 lost 1.

If West Indies men cricket team wants to improve their winning ratio in T20 cricket, they must increase their strike rate in the power play and increase the number of times they win the power play.

The average winning score batting first for Full ICC Members is an in-

Opinion

structive indicator of what is required to win T20 games. They are as follows, England 195 runs, South Africa 190 runs, Australia 185, West Indies 180, Pakistan 175, Sri Lanka 165, Bangladesh 155.

In the IPL the average winning score batting first is 217, in the ILT20 it is 175, in the BBL, the Big Bash League, it is 175. In the Hundred 100 balls, average winning score for teams batting first is 160.

This means if West Indies men T 20 team wants to dominate all teams, the West Indies team must score at least 200 runs batting first and against India playing in India the West Indies must score at least 250 runs batting first.

These totals have implications for the scores required in the power play since the data demonstrates that winning the power play guarantees winning the T20 matches 70 % of the Time.

To develop a batting plan starting first with a target of 250 runs if one wants to beat India in India, the first requirement is to win the power play. With data showing India scores at 10.8 in their power play batting, West Indies must score at a rate of at least 11 per over in the power play or hitting at least 66 runs in the power play. This

means West Indian power play batters must score at a rate of 183. That is the required minimum rate for power play batters to win the power play against India which would allow West Indies to win at least 70% of the matches against India.

If the West Indies score 66 runs in the power play, they will have to score at 13.1 for the remaining 14 overs to score 250 runs to win the match. This means the strike rate of batters would have to increase to 216.7 for the remaining 14 overs of the match.

For other ICC full team members, a first innings' score of 200 by the West Indies would allow the West Indies team to dominate these opponents, whose over rate during power play is 8.8 with a strike rate of 146.7 and an average power play score of 53 runs.

With a total target score of 200 the West Indies team would have to score at least 54 runs to win the power play and 147 runs over the next 14 overs, an over rate of 10.5 and a strike rate of 175 To win against these other teams.

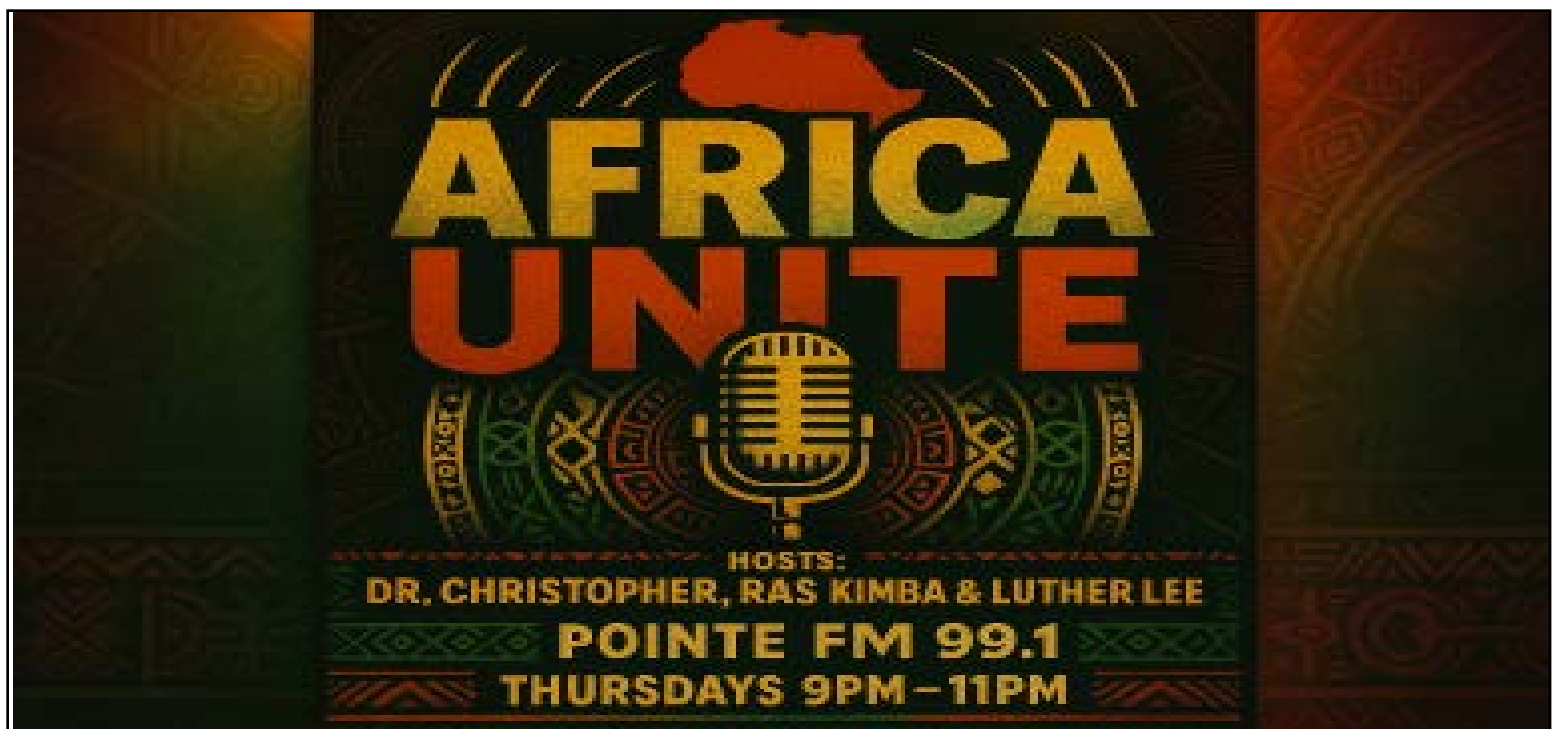
This is the requirement of West Indies T20 batters if they are going to win the power play and matches against opponents 70% of the time.

If a batter scores below the target rate

during the Power play, it puts pressure on other batsmen to score even faster which increases the risk of batters getting out. In both scenarios above for a power play batter who fails to meet the minimum targets required to win the power play they would have to increase their strike rate to over 200 if the winning target is 200 and by over 250 if the winning target is 250 to catch up on a slow power play start,.

Winning the power play is an important indicator of which team will win the match. To win the power Play batters have specific strike rates they must attain. A slow start in the power play is extremely difficult to catch up, requiring sustained high strike rates, not normally seen in T20 matches.

In the modern T20 game there is no room for slow power play batters. In modern T20 it is extremely difficult to catch up on a slow power play start. The statistics are clear that teams that lose the power play lose 70% of the matches. West Indies T20 team with a 45 %-win rate would have to improve their power play over rate to over 9 runs per over against ICC full members and over 11 runs per over against India in India if they want to win at least 70% of the matches.



PART 2 OF 5 • NEWSPAPER SERIES

THE BRITISH MONARCHY, AFRICAN ENSLAVEMENT AND THE CASE FOR REPARATIONS

THE STUART MONARCHY AND THE ROYAL AFRICAN COMPANY



Royal charters, shareholders, ships and the human cost of the trade

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

Royal investment in the trafficking of Africans expanded under the Stuart monarchy, which ruled Britain from 1603 to 1714. The arrangements combined sovereign authority with private capital: royal charters granted privileges to companies, while members of the court and other investors acquired financial interests in the trade. The Crown also benefited from taxes and the commercial expansion associated with plantation slavery. [12]

In 1660 Charles II granted a charter to the Company of Merchant Adventurers trading to Africa. Reorganised in 1663 as the Company of Royal Adventurers Trading in Africa, the enterprise included among its principal sponsors Prince Rupert and James, Duke of York, who later became James II. Its charter conferred exceptional privileges, including a monopoly and authority to seize vessels and goods operating contrary to its patent.

The charter also expressly assigned a portion of the proceeds of seizures to the sovereign. In the wording reproduced in the colonial state papers, one “moiety” was to be for the company and “the other moiety” for “his Majesty, his heirs and successors.” This is documentary evidence of the Crown’s institutional, not merely symbolic, place in the undertaking.

The original manuscript estimates that the Company of Royal Adventurers earned £100,000 annually from sales of enslaved people, while its dealings in gold and other merchandise yielded still more. These monetary estimates and modern equivalents should be checked against the underlying records before publication.

Financial problems, aggravated by the Second Anglo-Dutch War, contributed to reorganisation. In 1672

the Royal African Company (RAC) was chartered, receiving extensive English trading privileges along the West African coast. The company could establish forts and holding facilities, maintain armed forces and exercise coercive authority in support of its commercial operations.

The RAC was a joint-stock company: investors bought shares and anticipated returns from the trade. James, Duke of York, served as its governor. The manuscript identifies Charles II, James II and William III among royal investors or beneficiaries. It also records William III’s purchase in 1690 of £1,000 in RAC stock from Edward Colston, then deputy governor.

The numbers reveal the scale of the institution. Records show 653 RAC voyages between 1672 and 1731, with 187,133 Africans embarked and 148,748 disembarked. The difference—38,385 people—indicates the appalling mortality recorded in this calculation

The wider royal-chartered companies were implicated in still greater loss of life. The Company of Royal Adventurers is credited with 105 voyages, 27,489 Africans embarked and 20,747 disembarked. The South Sea Company is shown with 118 voyag-



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es, 41,923 embarked and 34,865 disembarked. Taken together, the three companies total 256,545 embarked and 204,360 disembarked—a difference of 52,185 who perished during the voyages.

For 1680–1689, RAC embarkations are 76,536 out of an estimated 260,564 Africans trafficked across the Atlantic: 29.4 per cent. William A. Pettigrew describes the RAC as the single institution that shipped more enslaved Africans to the Americas than any other over the period under study. The scale of these operations explains why the company was central to Britain's rise as an Atlantic slave-trading power.

Commercial privileges were reinforced by state power including the Royal Navy's protection, at various stages, of company shipping and coastal facilities, and its role in coun-

tering resistance. The precise scope of naval operations varied over time; nonetheless, royal charters, armed forts and military protection all demonstrate that this commerce cannot be understood as a purely private undertaking.

The shareholders and beneficiaries extended well beyond the royal household. Dr Reid identifies the philosopher John Locke, royal servant Tobias Rustat and Bristol merchant Edward Colston. Colston's public commemoration became a major controversy when protesters toppled his statue in 2020. These cases illustrate how the proceeds of trafficking could be converted into prestige, philanthropy and civic power.

Historian K. G. Davies estimated the RAC's capital value in 1702 at £1,101,050. The original article supplies a present-day equivalent, but

such conversions vary greatly according to the measure employed. The company's wealth and influence were concentrated among prominent metropolitan investors. Its monopoly weakened after the political upheaval of 1688 and changes to the trading regime at the end of the century.

The loss of monopoly did not bring an end to royal involvement in trafficking. Instead, a new commercial and diplomatic structure emerged under Queen Anne, George I and George II. The historical evidence from the Stuart period is clear: **royal authority helped organise, protect and profit from a trade that inflicted enormous suffering on African men, women and children.**

NEXT WEEK: Queen Anne, the South Sea Company and the profits of enslavement.



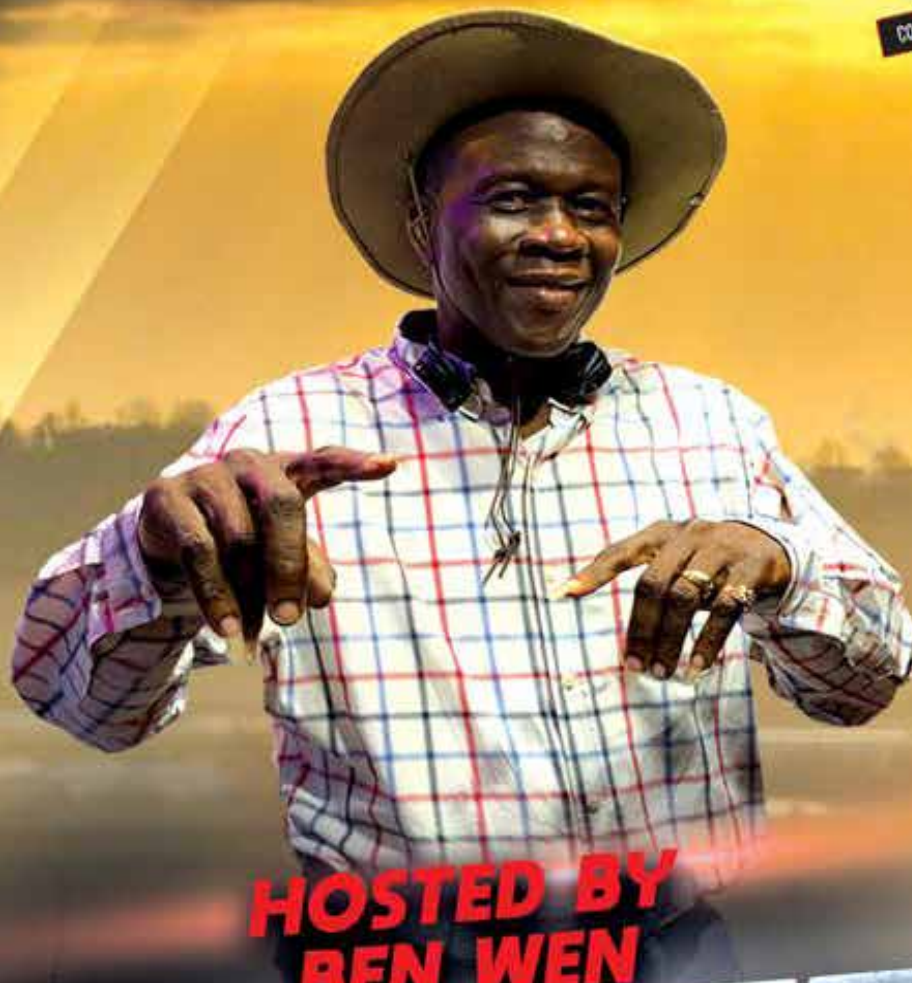
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ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA 45TH INDEPENDENCE CELEBRATIONS SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

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

ROOTED IN PRIDE, BOUNDED BY PROSPERITY FOR ALL

SCHEDULE IS TENTATIVE
AND SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Regional News



Health concerns cited as Canadian cannabis floods SVG



Defense attorney Grant Connell, who has represented individuals on marijuana charges for decades, has raised public health concerns regarding imported Canadian cannabis and cannabis resin (hashish) entering the coun-

try.

Connell voiced his warnings following two recent court cases involving charges of trafficking and importation of foreign cannabis and cannabis resin, with additional cases expected to

follow.

He cautioned that while the influx of imported products is growing, the chemical processes used in their production and their ultimate health effects remain completely unknown.

According to Connell, a market surplus in Canada has enabled suppliers to export cannabis to St. Vincent and the Grenadines at highly competitive rates.

However, he stressed that affordability comes with significant risks to local consumers. To illustrate the potential dangers, Connell noted a specific case where a recreational smoker consumed the imported cannabis and required medical attention at a doctor's office.

The attorney also criticized the local cultural mindset that favors foreign products over domestic ones. (St Vincent Times)

US Coast Guard makes multi-million dollar cocaine haul off Puerto Rico

The United States Coast Guard says it seized 489 pounds of cocaine valued at approximately US\$5.5 million and detained three men following the interception of a suspected drug-smuggling vessel in the Caribbean Sea.

The Coast Guard said the drugs were offloaded at its base in San Juan, where the suspects, two Dominican Republic nationals and a Chinese national, were handed over to federal authorities for further investigation.

The seizure followed the interception of a high-speed vessel north of Isabela, Puerto Rico, during a routine maritime patrol.



According to the Coast Guard, an HC-144 Ocean Sentry aircraft from Air Station Miami detected the suspicious vessel and alerted authorities in San Juan, who dispatched the cutter Winslow Griesser.

The cutter's crew intercepted the vessel, seized the

cocaine and detained the three men aboard.

"We are proud of our Coast Guard watchstanders, our aircrew and the cutter Winslow Griesser crew for achieving a successful interdiction," said Commander Matthew Romano, chief of response at Coast Guard

Sector San Juan.

He said the operation underscored the effectiveness of cooperation among law enforcement agencies in intercepting narcotics shipments and disrupting criminal networks operating in the region.

The Coast Guard said the seizure formed part of the Homeland Security Task Force initiative, established under Executive Order 14159, which targets drug cartels, transnational criminal organisations and human smuggling and trafficking networks.

The suspects remain under investigation. (CMC)

Jamaica faces UN scrutiny - Advocates say proposed gun sentence hike a step in wrong direction as country faces human rights test

The Advocates' Association of Jamaica (AAJ) is raising concern over the announcement of a proposed increase in the mandatory minimum sentence for illegal gun possession to 20 years. The revelation came on Sunday on the eve of a human rights country review by the United Nations (UN).

The current mandatory minimum sentence for illegal possession of a firearm is 15 years.

The UN Human Rights Committee's 146th session is currently under way in Geneva, Switzerland, from October 19 to November 6, and is reviewing Jamaica, Austria, Rwanda, and Cameroon.

Jamaica was last reviewed in 2016.

AAJ President Tamika Harris told The Gleaner that the proposal made by the National Security Council (NSC) raises serious constitutional concerns.

Citing the case of Tafari Morrison and the King, she noted that the Privy Council decision recognises that mandatory sentences may, in certain circumstances, amount to inhumane or degrading punishment.

"We all want to see an end to gun violence, but increasing mandatory minimum sentences while denying judges the discretion to consider individual circumstances is deeply concerning. The question is not whether gun crime should be punished severely, but whether justice is served by compelling a judge to impose 20 years' imprisonment, even where that sentence is grossly disproportionate," she said.

"Specifically, Section 13.6 of the Jamaican Constitution, containing the Charter of Fundamental Rights and Freedoms, provides that no person shall be subjected to torture or inhumane or degrading punishment or other treatment. So, yes, while in Tafari Morrison, that specific case, they did not think that sentence was so inhumane. The case still established that



in certain circumstances it can be. And I'm saying that if you move from 15 to 20, you're moving closer to the inhumane and degrading punishment," Harris added.

She said any mandatory minimum sentence must include a fail-safe

clause to allow a judge to maintain some discretion and not be forced to pass a sentence knowing it is manifestly excessive.

The NSC also disclosed that under proposed amendments to the Firearms Act, a new criminal offence will be created for adults who groom children to use, store, transport, or acquire illegal guns.

Prime Minister Dr Andrew Holness, who chairs the NSC, said the move is to send "a strong signal against illegal guns and those who promote them, while making sure the law is fair to the most vulnerable".

"Make no mistake, this administration is drawing a line in the sand against gun crime, and we are determined to eliminate the gun culture from our society," he said.

The issue of the mandatory minimum sentence under the Firearms Act is among several being raised by human

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Regional News



rights advocates with the UN Human Rights Committee, a body of 18 independent international experts examining how Jamaica is implementing the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the committee's previous recommendations.

The collaborative report being examined by the committee was crafted by Jamaicans for Justice (JFJ), the Jamaica Environment Trust, the Equality for All Foundation, Stand Up for Jamaica, the Caribbean Vulnerable Communities Coalition, and the Jamaica Youth Advocacy Network.

They have asked the committee to recommend that Jamaica consider amending the Firearms Act so that a sentencing judge may depart from a mandatory minimum where the interests of justice require it, including by revisiting the requirement that the minimum be imposed before an appeal can remedy the situation.

While acknowledging that some progress has been made in the last decade, JFJ Executive Director Mickel Jackson said Jamaica still has some way to go to achieve a satisfactory level of human rights protection.

"In terms of the priority issues here at JFJ, we looked at the right to life [and] police use of force, so within the report, we made note of the increase in fatal shootings the country has recorded in the past decade," Jackson told The Gleaner on Sunday.

She noted that since the last review, the lowest annual figure for fatal police shootings was 86 in 2019. There have, however, been significant increases, with the figure jumping to 311 in 2025. The year-to-date figure for 2026 is comparable to that for 2025.

"Not that we are saying that every fatal encounter was unlawful, but the absence of body-worn cameras continues to be an issue of concern for us. The fact that we have several families that have reached out to JFJ to indicate that they have a different account of what may have taken place is an area of concern," Jackson pointed out.

She said that while body-worn cameras were not a panacea, they would help provide an independent account of events.

"It's just for concrete recommendations to be made and for the Jamaican Government to accept these recommendations and move with alacrity."

One of the main calls that the groups are making is for the Government not only to fully fund the Office of the Public Defender but also to expand its role to include that of a National Human Rights Institute. Jackson said the call was originally made in 2016 and that the Government had committed to looking into it.

"It's one of the main recommendations that we are making and we hope

the UN body will agree, too," Jackson said.

Jackson said that significant strides had been made since 2016, pointing to the Integrity Commission Act in 2017, the Children Diversion Act in 2018, which became operational in 2020, the move to repeal the Uncontrollable Child Provision and the reduction in homicides.

"So that is significant progress made in the last 10 years. While we see that progress, we still have a far way to go. While we have made significant strides we believe that the Government should examine the human-rights violation issues that still remain and move to address them in short order," Jackson stated. (Jamaica Gleaner)



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US Ambassador rejects claims of unequal partnership with Guyana

United States Ambassador to Guyana Nicole Theriot has dismissed suggestions that Washington dominates its relationship with Georgetown, insisting that the partnership is based on mutual respect and shared benefits.

“It is a partnership – 50/50 absolutely. There is no dominance. It is very, very much a partnership,” Theriot told reporters.

“We feel like we benefit from our relationship with Guyana, hopefully, as much as they benefit from us. It’s a true partnership in every sense of the word,” she added.

Her comments follow the signing this week of a Joint Declaration for an Enhanced Defence Partnership between the two countries, aimed at strengthening military cooperation and Guyana’s defence capabilities.

Theriot, who said she assisted in drafting the agreement, described security cooperation as a critical component of bilateral relations.

The declaration provides for sustained US defence expertise, multi-domain training and joint military exercises with the Guyana Defence Force (GDF) as part of efforts to modernise the country’s defence infrastructure.

The ambassador’s remarks also follow a recent CNN interview in which President Irfaan Ali faced questions about the balance of the Guyana-US relationship.

Ali defended the partnership, saying it was rooted in shared values and priorities, while pointing to the involvement of several international energy companies, including ExxonMobil, Chevron and China’s CNOOC, in Guyana’s oil and gas sector.

He said the country’s energy investments were diversified and not limited to American interests.

In a separate statement, Ali described



the defence declaration as another milestone in Guyana’s longstanding relationship with Washington.

He said the agreement was critical to safeguarding Guyana’s sovereignty

and territorial integrity and reflected the importance both countries attached to security in Guyana and the wider Western Hemisphere. (CMC)

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Nigeria evacuates Ebola patient to Switzerland

The only confirmed case in Nigeria of Africa's latest deadly Ebola outbreak was evacuated Monday by air from Abuja, the capital, to Switzerland, where she has citizenship.

The patient, the 42-year-old wife of a Swiss embassy staff worker based in Abuja, had been travelling in Uganda with her husband before returning to Nigeria.

Her condition was "much improved, stable, conscious, communicating, and her clinical laboratory test results closing towards baseline", said Nigerian health minister Muhammad Ali Pate in a statement.

"This does not mean she is not still infectious," he added.

Fifty-three of the patient's contacts have been identified by the Nigerian health authorities.

The patient's husband has also been evacuated to Switzerland, World Health Organization chief for Africa Mohamed Janabi said.

"With the evacuation of the patient and her husband, Nigeria currently has no Ebola cases," Janabi wrote on X, adding the patient was now "clinically stable" after Nigeria "successfully managed her through the acute phase



of the illness".

Nigerian authorities last week said the patient's condition had at one point deteriorated into "multi-organ failure".

Janabi last week warned that Africa was facing a "complex" Ebola outbreak, with the virus now present in the west, east and centre of the continent.

The outbreak of the Bundibugyo strain of the virus, for which there is no vaccine or specific treatment, has

been ravaging the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which has recorded more than 4,600 deaths since May.

Health authorities in Nigeria, Africa's most populous country, successfully stemmed a previous Ebola outbreak a dozen years ago.

But some experts are worried about how much the illness could have spread in the time between the woman's arrival on October 3 and her diagnosis, announced October 20. (AFP)



Chris Brown avoids jail over UK nightclub brawl



American R&B singer Chris Brown avoided jail when sentenced by a UK court Monday after pleading guilty to a public order offence during a 2023 brawl at a London nightclub.

The former boyfriend of music sensation Rihanna was handed an eight-month jail sentence suspended for a year — meaning he will not be imprisoned unless he commits another offence during the period.

Brown, 37, who was wearing a black face mask and black cap when he arrived Monday at Southwark Crown Court in London, had admitted to affray during an appearance in July.

“Violence of this kind in a crowded nightclub is serious. It creates an obvious risk, not merely to the person against whom it is directed, but also to others,” judge Tony Baumgartner said, handing down the sentence.

Prosecutors had accused him and co-defendant Omololu Akinlolu, also a

US national, of carrying out “a vicious and unprovoked attack” in a crowded nightclub “where Brown used a glass bottle as a weapon to strike the victim’s head twice”.

The guilty plea avoided a trial on several other charges, including attempting to cause grievous bodily harm with intent and possession of an offensive weapon, namely a bottle.

Brown, who has sold tens of millions of records worldwide, had earlier denied those charges.

All of the allegations relate to an incident at Tape, a private members’ club in central London, on February 19, 2023, while Brown was touring the UK.

The victim was struck several times with a bottle before being pursued, punched and kicked.

The singer is known for mid-2000s hits such as “Kiss, Kiss”, as well as a

litany of legal troubles including a felony conviction for assaulting Rihanna in 2009.

Brown rose from a local church choir in Virginia to sudden fame with his rich R&B voice before turning to rap.

He was convicted of having beaten then-girlfriend Rihanna before the 2009 Grammy Awards, forcing the pop star to miss the annual gala.

In 2012, Brown was involved in an altercation at a New York nightclub with members of hip hop star Drake’s entourage, during which French basketball player Tony Parker suffered an eye injury after being hit by a thrown glass bottle.

Two years later, Brown pleaded guilty to assaulting a fan in Washington.

Akinlolu, 40 also pleaded guilty to affray over the London incident. He was sentenced to four months’ imprisonment suspended for a year. (AFP)

Brazil's Lula defies odds to clinch poll victory against Flavio Bolsonaro



Brazil's leftist President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva pulled off a dramatic comeback on Sunday as he clinched election victory against right-wing senator Flavio Bolsonaro, who trounced him in the first round.

With Lula's victory, Brazil staved off a conservative wave that has seen numerous countries — such as Argentina, Chile, Colombia, and Peru — all shift right, backed by US President Donald Trump.

The leftist icon, who turns 81 on Tuesday, defied all projections to win an unprecedented fourth term.

According to official results, he won 51.7 percent of the votes to 48.2 percent for Flavio Bolsonaro, son of former far-right president Jair Bolsonaro, who had entered election day

confident with his lead in the polls.

Since the first direct election following the end of Brazil's dictatorship in 1989, no candidate who lost the first round had gone on to win the second.

Fireworks and vuvuzelas rang out in Rio de Janeiro, while thousands of people dressed in red, the color of Lula's Workers' Party, streamed into the streets of Sao Paulo to celebrate.

In a video posted to social media, the president appeared jumping for joy, wearing red, star-shaped glasses, at a hotel in Sao Paulo, where he is scheduled to speak to the press later.

Flavio Bolsonaro, who is in Brasilia, has yet to react.

In Cinelandia Square, in the heart of Rio, Lula's supporters were moved to tears.

Julio Canelo, 42, a lawyer hailed a victory for "the entire democratic spectrum."

"It was the result of the people mobilizing, in the streets and online," he told AFP.

The left swung into action with massive rallies after the first-round defeat, declaring "Never Again Bolsonaro" and revamping a lacklustre social media strategy.

The abstention rate decreased from the first round, falling from 21 percent to 19 percent.

A bitter campaign marred by scandals and mudslinging laid bare the deep divisions that have remained in the country of over 200 million people over the past decade.

Lula heads into a fourth term with a

country divided, with almost half of the nation having rejected him, desperate for change.

Flavio Bolsonaro, 45, pitched himself as more moderate and jovial than his father and managed to galvanize conservatives as well as less ideological voters fed up with crime, the high cost of living and a sense of stagnation.

“We’re in a deep hole, things are dire. People can barely afford to eat — buying meat is out of the question,” said Tereza Cristina Ramos, a 68-year-old retiree, who voted in Rio de Janeiro.

After a campaign marred by scandal and mud-slinging, Sunday’s vote plunged into chaos after a last-minute Supreme Court ruling extending voting by two hours, at the request of Lula who said buses had been pulled from circulation in various cities, barring citizens from voting.

Lula’s re-election marks another remarkable comeback for the man who grew up dirt poor in the northeast, in a family of illiterate farmers.

He rose to the presidency as a working-class hero, taking office for the first time in 2003. He was re-elected in 2006.

Revered for social welfare programs that lifted millions out of poverty, Lula made a dramatic return to office in 2022 elections after a corruption scandal saw him jailed for over 18 months.

The charges, annulled on procedural grounds, have continued to haunt him.

In his third term he has overseen a drop in inflation and unemployment, and lifted millions out of hunger, but many voters who turned to Flavio Bolsonaro felt gloomy about their economic situation and fed up with crime.

After a campaign marked by fear-mongering on both sides — many voters reported choosing what they

considered the lesser evil.

Already one of the world’s oldest leaders, Lula will be 85 by the end of his new term in 2030.

He will thus have spent 16 years in power, following his first stint as president from 2003 through 2010.

Lula is also facing a hostile Congress dominated by the right.

His options are constrained by the economic outlook, with growth expected to slow.

He has also come under renewed pressure to confront rampant securi-

ty problems in a country plagued by criminal factions that sow terror in working-class neighborhoods.

The president’s campaign leaned heavily on the theme of sovereignty in the face of commercial and diplomatic pressure from Trump’s United States.

Voters must “choose a country where the flag is respected,” he said, his raspy voice more hoarse than ever after a tireless campaign. He accused his rival of wanting to “govern with the American flag.” (AFP)



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Celebrations in Serbia after veteran ruler Vučić loses election to student-led protest movement



Serbia's long-standing leader Aleksandar Vučić has admitted defeat to a student-led protest movement in snap parliamentary elections.

Celebrations erupted as crowds descended on the centre of Belgrade, Novi Sad and other cities.

The student movement was formed less than two years ago in response to a railway station disaster blamed on corruption and negligence, but fought the election with candidates from a cross-section of Serbian society.

"It is clear we have lost these elections," right-wing populist leader Vučić said as he conceded. With 97% of polling stations counted, Serbia's election commission said the students had won 2.24 million votes and the former ruling party 1.67 million.

The students had secured 52.65% of the vote, while Vučić's Serbian Progressive Party (SNS) was on 39.2%, according to its preliminary figures late on Monday morning.

Vučić had spent two terms as presi-

dent and could not seek a third term, so was leading his Serbian Progressive Party (SNS) with the aim of returning to the post of prime minister, which he left in 2017.

He called the snap elections after two years of protests triggered by the collapse of a canopy in front of Novi Sad station which killed 16 people.

The Student List's lead candidate Ilija Srdanović told BBC Serbian: "This will be a free state."

He said the anti-corruption movement, which had attracted anti-government voters across Serbia, hoped to "free the country from tyranny".

There were celebrations on the streets of the city, with people dancing and chanting "victory", cars honking, and fireworks set off. "Serbia is free," one student told the BBC. "It's a miracle."

During a celebration speech, Student List candidate Radomir Sačić said Serbians had shown "no obstacle was greater than their will", Reuters reported. "No force can forever overpower a

people who have decided to take their destiny into their own hands," he added.

Amid scenes of people dancing in the streets Belgrade, Selena Lebovic said the result was "really fabulous".

"We are all crying, and what to say. We couldn't believe that it would be so easy," she told Reuters.

Vučić made his announcement at the headquarters of his Serbian Progressive Party (SNS) in the capital Belgrade.

The centre of Novi Sad - the northern city that triggered the student-led protests - was crowded. "Everything is going to get better now," David Vasić, one of those celebrating, told BBC Serbian.

The Student List - which has no obvious leaders and whose members are not used to politics - had attracted anti-government voters across Serbia.

It decided to field candidates to the 250-member parliament from across Serbian society including doctors, ac-

tors, academics and sports personalities.

“This is not an ordinary election victory, this is an avalanche that has wiped out an authoritarian regime and entire political scene,” said Nebojša Vladislavljević, professor of political science at the University of Belgrade.

There were now two big political groups in Serbia, and the Student List had “absolute legitimacy” to govern for the coming years, he told BBC Serbian.

The anti-corruption movement campaigned on a manifesto that included purging officials who broke rules cracking down on protesters, stopping party loyalists from leading public enterprises, and freeing the public broadcaster of political control.

Vučić and the SNS party have repeatedly denied corruption.

Vučić, who backed Serbia’s candidacy for the European Union while refusing to impose sanctions on Russia over its full-scale invasion of Ukraine, had pledged to increase pensions and public sector salaries, and investment in state healthcare.

Kremlin spokesperson Dmitry Peskov praised Vučić’s contribution to relations with Russia and hoped “the new political force” in Belgrade would understand that co-operation with Moscow was in Serbia’s interests: “But, as you know, it takes two to tango.”

His defeat was welcomed by Hungary’s prime minister, Péter Magyar, who said he was delighted to hear from the Student List’s leaders “how much strength our victory in April had given them”. Magyar’s party ended 16 years of Viktor Orbán rule, while Vučić’s SNS party had been in power since 2012.

Reuters Ilija Srdanović, who is first on the electoral list of the Student List, celebrates in Belgrade. Photo: 26 October 2026 Reuters

Ilija Srdanović, Student List’s leading candidate, pictured during celebrations late on Sunday

European Commissioner for Enlargement Marta Kos said “a new chapter can begin for Serbia. The door to the EU is open, and we are ready to move forward together”.

Earlier in the day, long queues were seen outside polling stations in cities and towns across Serbia.

This was also the case outside booths in a number of countries with sizeable Serbian communities - including Slovenia’s capital Ljubljana, Germany’s Munich, and Los Angeles and Chicago in the US.

In France, Serbian voters waited in line in heavy rain in Paris.

The election was held amid high tensions across Serbia, with police sealing off streets around the Republic Electoral Commission (RIK) in Belgrade.

Attention will now turn to who will lead the Student List as prime minister. Presidential elections are due to take place in December, with parliament speaker Ana Brnabić currently filling the role in a caretaker capacity. (BBC)



A vibrant poster for the Antigua Carnival 70th Anniversary. The top half features three dancers in elaborate costumes with large, colorful feathered headdresses. Below them is the Antigua Carnival logo, which includes a stylized bird and the text "ANTIGUA Carnival". Underneath the logo is the tagline "THE CARIBBEAN'S GREATEST SUMMER FESTIVAL". The bottom half of the poster features the text "Legendary 70" in a large, stylized font, followed by "JULY 20TH - AUGUST 3RD 2027" in a bold, pink font. At the very bottom, there are social media icons for Facebook and Instagram, with the text "ANTIGUA CARNIVAL" and "@ANTIGUAFESTIVALSOFFICIAL" respectively.

Sports News

ECAB and APUA stay unbeaten in business volleyball league



The Eastern Caribbean Amalgamated Bank volleyball team

The Eastern Caribbean Amalgamated Bank (ECAB) and APUA Inet have maintained their unbeaten run in the Antigua and Barbuda Amateur Volleyball Association's (ABAVA) Business League Championship.

ECAB, which finished in the runners-up position in the business volleyball league for the past three successive years, claimed their fifth successive win with a 2-0 victory over the Media at the indoor stadium at the YMCA Sports Complex on Saturday evening.

ECAB prevailed 25-16, 25-18 against the Media, who slumped to their third

defeat in five games.

ECAB claimed their fourth win with a 2-0 victory over the Royalton. ECAB coasted to victory, winning 25-10, 25-19, as the Royalton slumped to their third loss in four games.

APUA Inet, which won back-to-back championships in 2022 and 2023, notched up their fourth consecutive win by pulling off a 2-1 victory over Nate's Photography.

APUA Inet won a tight opening set 26-24 before Nate's Photography leveled the match by taking the second set 25-19. However, APUA Inet bounced back to claim the deciding set 24-22 to

win the keenly contested affair in the mixed-team competition.

It was the first defeat suffered by Nate's Photography after winning their previous three games.

Sandals recorded their third win in five matches with a 2-0 victory over Zamine Enterprises. Sandals prevailed 25-21, 25-13 over Zamine Enterprises, who tumbled to their fifth loss in as many games.

Sandals claimed their second win with a 2-0 victory over 77 Bus Service. The Sandals produced an efficient performance to secure their 25-17, 25-18 victory over the 77 Bus Service.

The University of the West Indies (UWI) recorded their second win in four matches with a 2-0 victory over 77 Bus Service.

The University of the West Indies prevailed 25-0, 25-21, over the 77 Bus Service, which lost for the fourth time in as many encounters.

The Media notched up their second win by pulling off a 2-1 victory over Zamine Enterprises.

Zamine Enterprises took the opening set 25-23 before the Media recovered to win the match by taking the next two sets, 25-13 and 15-6.



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CWI set to deliver cricket celebration for 2026 CHOGM



Cricket West Indies (CWI) is set to deliver the “One Commonwealth, One Team – A Commonwealth Cricket Celebration,” a special cricket showcase presented by Caribbean-based Hamilton Reserve Bank (HRB), forming part of the programme for the 2026 Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in Antigua and Barbuda next month.

This event will be hosted in collaboration with the Government of Antigua and Barbuda and the Sustainable Markets Initiative, with support from its event sponsors.

The celebration will take place on Sunday, November 1, at Sir Vivian Richards Stadium, following Antigua and Barbuda’s Independence Day celebrations.

The event will bring together heads of government, emerging young cricketers, communities and invited guests in an evening designed to celebrate the Commonwealth’s shared connection to cricket while bringing the theme of CHOGM 2026 — “Accelerating Partnerships and Investment for a Prosperous Commonwealth” — to life through sport.

Inspired by the legacy of Antigua and Barbuda’s national hero and cricket legend Sir Vivian Richards, the celebration will use cricket as a platform to demonstrate the power of partner-

ship, friendship, leadership, teamwork and shared purpose.

In his statement at the official launch in London, UK, Sir Vivian said, “Cricket has always been much more than a game across the Commonwealth. It is a shared language that brings people together across nations and generations.

“I am delighted that, as we welcome the Commonwealth to Antigua and Barbuda, cricket will help bring the spirit of CHOGM 2026 to life – celebrating friendship and teamwork and creating opportunities to work together as one team.

“Sport reaches more than four billion fans worldwide, giving it a rare ability to shift behaviour and mobilize people at scale, and cricket holds a unique place within the Commonwealth. The ‘One Commonwealth, One Team’ series demonstrates how that reach translates into practical action – by bringing stakeholders together to turn sustainability ambitions into concrete action and inspire more resilient, inclusive and prosperous communities.”

The programme will feature two showcase matches under the banner “One Commonwealth, One Team.” There will be a special fixture between Caribbean heads of government and heads of government from the wider Commonwealth, followed by

the Commonwealth Future Stars Under-23 10 over-a-side match, bringing together emerging cricket talent from across the Commonwealth.

CWI President Dr. Kishore Shallow said the organisation is honoured to play a central role in delivering an event that reflects the longstanding relationship between cricket and the Commonwealth.

“Cricket occupies a unique place within the Commonwealth. It has travelled across generations and borders, creating connections between people and nations and becoming part of the social and cultural fabric of many of our countries,” said Dr. Shallow.

“‘One Commonwealth, One Team’ celebrates that shared heritage while looking forward. By bringing leaders of Government and young cricketers together on the same field, we are creating an opportunity to celebrate where we have come from, while highlighting the importance of investing in the people and partnerships that will shape the Commonwealth’s future.”

The heads of government match will provide a unique and informal opportunity for leaders from the Caribbean and wider Commonwealth to share the cricket field in a spirit of friendship and camaraderie. The fixture will emphasise participation, mutual respect and the bonds that connect Commonwealth nations through cricket.

The evening will then turn its attention to the next generation during the Commonwealth Future Stars Under-23 ten-overs-a-side match, which will showcase emerging cricket talent and reinforce the importance of investing in young people as future leaders, innovators and contributors to Commonwealth development.

The concept for “One Commonwealth, One Team” is built around three interconnected messages: Play Together, Play for Progress and Play for the Future.

Sports News

Three Antiguan in Windies A squads to face England A

Three Antiguan have been selected in the West Indies A team to face England A in a white-ball series in St. Kitts and Nevis next month.

Wicketkeeper/batsman Jewel Andrew, all-rounder Karima Gore, and leg-spinner Micah McKenzie were named in the West Indies A team squads, which were recently release by Cricket West Indies (CWI).

Keacy Carty and Alick Athanaze will captain West Indies A in the One-Day and T20 legs of the home series against England A, with Cricket West Indies (CWI) naming squads for eight matches in St. Kitts & Nevis from November 1 to 16.

Carty will lead the 15-member One-Day squad and Athanaze the 13-member T20 squad. The series opens with three T20 matches at the Conaree Cricket Ground from November 1 to 4, followed by five One-Day (List A) matches at Warner Park and Conaree from November 7 to 16.

The One-Day squad has been picked with the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup Qualifier, which begins in February, as the immediate priority, and the World Cup in October 2027 beyond it.

For players outside the senior side, these five matches against England A are the main opportunity to press their case before the Qualifier squad is named.

The West Indies have al-



Karima Gore

ready qualified for the 2028 ICC Men's T20 World Cup through their Super 8 finish at the 2026 tournament, and these matches begin identifying the players and roles for it.

Athanaze, an emerging leader within the West Indies set-up, has the most international experience in the T20 group. He is joined by four players from the senior squad – Vitel Lawes, Jewel Andrew, Quentin Sampson and Kamil Pooran – all with the opportunity to sharpen their skills and game awareness in the format.

Carty, the most experienced player in the one-day group, will get the chance to show his leadership while gaining important match time before selection for the Qualifier.

Kevin Wickham had been in line for a place in the one-day squad before his maiden Test call-up for the series in Bangladesh. His move up opens the way for West Indies Academy player Rivaldo Clarke, who captained

the Academy to a 2–1 win over the Sri Lanka Emerging XI in their three-match 50-over series in June.

CWI Director of Cricket Miles Bascombe said, "The Qualifier in February is the most important assignment of our 50-over year, and we are treating it that way. Our aim is to win it and take that form to the World Cup in October.

"These One-Day matches are a big part of how we choose the players to do that, and the T20 matches start the work for 2028. Ottis Gibson knows what international cricket demands. We've asked him to give every player clarity about their role, to tell us who is closest to stepping up, and what each player needs to work on to give them the best chance when they do."

Kittitian Mikyle Louis, who has played 10 Tests, joins the group throughout the series as a development attachment, working on his white-ball game within the

high-performance environment.

Ottis Gibson, the West Indies fast bowling consultant and a former West Indies head coach, will coach the side, supported by batting coach Rohan Nurse and spin bowling coach Nikita Miller.

West Indies A T20 Squad vs England A: Alick Athanaze (captain), Jewel Andrew, Zachary Carter, Shadrack Descarte, Keon Gaston, Karima Gore, Joshua James, Vitel Lawes, Zishan Motara, Jakeem Pollard, Kamil Pooran, Quentin Sampson, and Stewart Thompson.

West Indies A One-Day Squad vs England A: Keacy Carty (captain), Kevlon Anderson, Jewel Andrew, Alick Athanaze, Jediah Blades, Rivaldo Clarke, Shadrack Descarte, Jyd Goolie, Vitel Lawes, Kirk McKenzie, Micah McKenzie, Shaqkere Parris, Jakeem Pollard, Shamar Springer, and Osahane Thomas.

Development Attachment: Mikyle Louis. Team Management Unit (TMU): Head Coach Ottis Gibson; Assistant Coach (batting) Rohan Nurse; Assistant Coach (spin bowling) Nikita Miller; Assistant Coach (fielding & wicketkeeping) Jamal Smith; Physiotherapist Ashley Stephens; Strength & Conditioning Coach Hance Richards; and Performance Analyst Keshava Ramphal.

Barbuda set for three nights of basketball shootout and showdown

Basketball fever is set to sweep across Barbuda as the Independence Committee, in collaboration with the Barbuda Basketball Association, prepares to host the highly anticipated Basketball Knockout and 3-Point Shootout in Codrington from October 29–31.

Five teams will contest the knockout competition with the matches slated to start at 7 o'clock each night.

Vikings, Saving Grace, South Side Ballers, Young Ballers, and Veterans are expected to take center stage, bringing their competitive spirit, shooting skills, and determination to the court as they battle for bragging rights and a share of the excitement surrounding this special sporting event.

The three-point shootout will place a premium on accuracy, confidence, consistency, and composure under pressure, while the knockout competition promises an exciting atmosphere for players and supporters alike.

With an EC\$3,000 cash prize on offer, the stakes will be high as the participating teams look to make their mark.

Beyond the competition, this initiative represents an opportunity to celebrate local basketball talent, strengthen community bonds, and promote unity, sportsmanship, and healthy competition through the love of the game.

Patrons can also enjoy food and drinks on sale, with Striker Sound providing entertainment throughout the three-night spectacle.

The partnership between the Independence Committee and the Barbuda Basketball Association demonstrates



the importance of community collaboration in creating sporting opportu-

nities and bringing people together through basketball.


 268 736 7165

Open Daily -
7:00am - 11:30pm



 Thursdays, 7:30pm - Karaoke
 Saturdays, 8pm - Live Band
 Breakfast served from 7:30am
 Games Night - COMING SOON!

Semi-finals line-up completed in ABFA Knockout Cup



A starting XI of the Garden Stars FC

The semi-finals line-up in the Antigua and Barbuda Football Association's (ABFA) pre-season knockout competition was completed on Sunday evening.

Second-seed Aston Villa Lions and fifth-seed Garden Stars claimed the last two semi-final berths by winning their respective matches in the quarter-finals at the ABFA Knockout Cup at the ABFA Technical Center.

The Villa Lions recorded a 4-1 victory over 10th-seed John Hughes FC in the opening game of Sunday's double-header.

Goals by Kerron McKenzie in the third minute and Judah Christian in the 36th minute gave the Villa Lions a two-nil lead. Lashaine Ormsby re-

duced the deficit for John Hughes FC by scoring in the 45th minute, giving the Villa Lions a 2-1 lead at halftime.

The Villa Lions scored two more goals in the second half to extend their lead and wrap up their victory. Jahlanie Barzey had a 54th-minute conversion, and Te'rique Smith scored the final goal in the second minute of added time.

The Garden Stars surged in the final four by coasting to a commanding 5-1 victory over 20th-seed Jets Football Academy in Sunday's second and last quarter-final encounter.

Ngozie Harvey scored in the ninth minute and Gerique George produced a 33rd-minute conversion to give Garden Stars a two-nil lead.

Ivan Grant reduced the deficit for Jets Football Academy with a conversion in the fourth minute of the first-half added time, as Garden Stars led 2-1 at halftime.

Garden Stars pressed home their advantage by scoring three second-half goals to seal their victory. Tarek Chares had a 63rd-minute conversion, Joshua Samuel scored in the 71st minute, and Tequan Anthony converted a penalty kick in the 90th minute.

The Villa Lions and Garden Stars joined defending champions Sandals and APUA Inet Jennings Grenades and Auto Craze Pigotts Bullets in the semi-finals.

Grenades and Bullets secured semi-final berths by recording wins in the first two quarter-final matches in the ABFA Knockout Cup at the ABFA Technical Center on Saturday.

The top-seeded Jennings Grenades crushed ninth seed Freemans Village Scorpions 6-0 in the second game of Saturday's double-header.

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

The semi-finals will be played at the ABFA Technical Center on Saturday, October 31. The Jennings Grenades will face Garden Stars, while the Villa Lions will take on the Pigotts Bullets.