

CHOGM Is Here.... Finally!!!

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Local News

CHOGM Is Here....Finally!!!



Foreign Affairs Minister Hon. E.P. Chet Greene greeting Commonwealth Secretary General Hon. Shirley Botchwey upon arrival

After more than a year of intense planning and preparation for the 28th biennial Commonwealth Heads

of Government Meeting (CHOGM), activities related to this global event have already started here in Antigua

and Barbuda, host for this gathering of Commonwealth heads.

While the official dates for CHOGM 2026 are November 1 - 4, there are several related events that are taking place prior to the start date. For example, the meeting of the Commonwealth Forum of National Human Rights Institutions was held on Thursday at the Sir John E. St. Luce Conference Centre.

The two-day forum being held under the theme; "Accelerating partnerships for investment in human rights", the forum heard remarks from the Resident UK Gov-



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ernment representative, John Hamilton, as well as from the head of the Commonwealth Human Rights Unit, Justin Pettit.

Across many of the venues that will host CHOGM events, there have been hives of activity as the various sub-committees engaged in full dress rehearsals of these activities to ensure that nothing is left to chance as the expectation is that Antigua and Barbuda will put on an excellent show.

The National Performing Arts Centre, the American University of Antigua (AUA) and the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium have all been tested by the sub-committees to identify areas of weakness and which are in need of additional attention.

VC Bird International Airport has also been a scene of much activity as several heads of government arrived Thursday for the meeting. Along with these heads, the Commonwealth Secretary General, Shirley

Botchwey also arrived on Thursday and she was greeted by Foreign Minister and CHOGM Task Force Chair, E.P Chet Greene.

Thursday also saw a meeting of the more than six hundred individuals who have come forward to serve as volunteers for CHOGM. The meeting was the final major interaction between the committee Leads and the volunteers ahead of CHOGM which starts on Sunday.

One major development that will affect the thousands expected to attend the Ceremonial Parade at the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium on Sunday November 1st. Following discussions with Minister Greene with the senior officers of the police department, a decision was made to eliminate the planned 'park and ride' for that event. Patrons wishing to attend the function are advised to leave their homes early as parking will be a premium


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Happy Independence Day
From The Furniture Gallery Team
Celebrating the home we share


Local News

The AT&LU Applauds the Hosting of CHOGM 2026



The President of the Antigua and Barbuda Trades and Labour Union (AT&LU), Bernard de Nully, has applauded the Government of Antigua and Barbuda for its boldness in deciding to host the 2026 Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in St. John's. *"Antigua and Barbuda is among the smallest States in the 56-member Commonwealth; the Prime*

Minister's decision to voluntarily host the largest gathering of Heads within this global organization attests to the leader's courage, strength and determination to thrust his small state forward," the President remarked.

The decision was also taken to twin the State's 45th Anniversary of Independence with the hosting of the CHOGM from the 1st to 4th of November, 2026. Antigua and Barbuda's Independence was declared on 1st of November 1981. It became the 157th member-state of the United Nations and the 33rd Member of the Organization of American States. A completely new journey commenced for its people and the country after 1981. The AT&LU has acted as a partner in the successes of the Government of Antigua and Barbuda. Founded in 1939, or 87 years ago, the trade union was the vehicle which carried the

movement of liberation that ended oppression and degradation of the emancipated people of the twin-island state. *"Our AT&LU Political Committee published the very first political manifesto on 18th of May 1946, and it has served as the organic instrument to guide consecutive administrations up until today,"* President de Nully has repeated.

The AT&LU fought for and won adult suffrage for the majority of men and women in 1951. Successive administrations have guided the development of our Small Island Developing State (SIDS) because of the shift in power from the oppressors to the elected representatives of the people. The AT&LU can justly take credit for defining the personality of the new State. It is democratic, relies upon collective bargaining, and conducts peaceful elections periodically. Governments have changed without any crisis or violence.

The leaders of the Commonwealth have justly agreed to authorize Antigua and Barbuda to host this important CHOGM, *"rooted in pride, bounded by prosperity for all."* The AT&LU takes great pride in knowing that the renaissance that is taking place in Antigua and Barbuda flows from the great trade union that changed the circumstances and life-chances of the people of Antigua and Barbuda. Congratulations!



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FEATURING
Geoffrey Robertson AO KC
Barrister, Academic, Author &
Human rights advocate

Friday 30 October 2026
6:30 p.m.
The UWI FIC Cafeteria
RSVP:

<https://bit.ly/HadeedMemorialLecture>

Love Link Caribbean Debuts On Jamaican Television... surpasses 2.3 million views

Love Link Caribbean, the regional reality dating series filmed in Antigua and Barbuda, has reached a major milestone with its official Jamaican television debut on CVM TV on Monday, October 26, 2026. The expansion into traditional television follows the series' growing digital success, having garnered more than 2.3 million views since its September 30th debut, with the United States, United Kingdom, Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago among its leading viewing markets.

Featuring ten singles from seven Caribbean countries, Love Link Caribbean brings together diverse personalities on a journey of romance, relationships and discovery, with Antigua and Barbuda providing the setting for their experiences. The series has attracted audiences across the Caribbean and its diaspora, demonstrating the appeal of entertainment that reflects the region's people, cultures and shared experiences.

The Jamaican broadcast is particularly significant for Antigua and Barbuda, as Jamaica ranks among the destination's top three Caribbean visitor source markets. The move to CVM TV provides another opportunity to connect with Jamaican audiences, strengthen destination awareness and inspire travel through engaging, personality-driven storytelling.

As an Executive Producer of Love Link Caribbean, the Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority (ABTA) has supported the project as part of its commitment to innovative destination marketing, regional collaboration and the growth of Caribbean creative industries.

Shermain Jeremy, Director of Tourism – Caribbean and Latin America at the Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority, welcomed the develop-



ment.

“Love Link Caribbean demonstrates the exciting possibilities when tourism, entertainment and Caribbean creativity come together. It allows audiences to see their own cultures and experiences reflected on screen while discovering Antigua and Barbuda in a way that feels authentic and relatable. Jamaica is one of our top three Caribbean visitor source markets, so bringing the series to Jamaican television creates a valuable opportunity to connect with potential visitors and inspire them to experience our destination firsthand. With more than 2.3 million views already recorded,

we're seeing the potential of this approach to destination storytelling.”

For Love Link TV, the move into traditional television represents an important step in expanding the series' audience and strengthening its presence across the Caribbean. The addition of CVM TV complements the show's digital distribution, creating new opportunities for viewers to discover the series and engage with its contestants and unfolding storylines.

Donald and Jamila Watkins, Executive Producers of Love Link Caribbean, described the milestone as encouraging development for Carib-

Local News

bean-produced entertainment.

“We created Love Link Caribbean to celebrate the personalities, cultures and connections that make our region unique, while demonstrating that Caribbean stories have the power to engage audiences far beyond our shores. Reaching more than 2.3 million views and now bringing the series to Jamaican television is an exciting milestone for our team. It reflects the talent, creativity and collaboration behind this production, and we’re looking forward to introducing Love Link Caribbean to even more audiences as the journey continues.” said a Love Link representative.

Love Link Caribbean premiered on CVM TV on Monday, October 26, with a special catch-up broadcast of Episodes 1 and 2. Episodes 3 and 4 will air on Thursday, October 29, followed by regular weekly broadcasts



on Thursdays at 8:00 p.m. The broadcaster is also supporting the series through appearances on its Sunrise morning programme, featuring producers, hosts and eliminated contestants.

The series will remain available on the official Love Link TV YouTube

channel, where new episodes will continue to premiere weekly, ensuring audiences across the Caribbean and internationally can follow the journey.

The Jamaican television debut also signals opportunities for broader regional distribution, with discussions underway regarding potential broadcasts in additional Caribbean markets.

For Antigua and Barbuda, the milestone reinforces the value of partnerships that bring together Caribbean talent, entertainment production and tourism. By showcasing the destination through stories and experiences that resonate with regional audiences, Love Link Caribbean offers a fresh approach to promoting romance tourism while contributing to the visibility and growth of the Caribbean creative economy.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

29 OCTOBER – 4 NOVEMBER 2026

THURSDAY – FRIDAY 29 – 30 OCTOBER 2026	SUNDAY 1 NOVEMBER 2026	MONDAY 2 NOVEMBER 2026	TUESDAY 3 NOVEMBER 2026	WEDNESDAY 4 NOVEMBER 2026
Commonwealth Forum of National Human Rights Institutions (CFNHRI) Biennial Conference 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Sir John E. St. Luce Finance & Conference Centre, Sir Sydney Walling Highway	Commonwealth Interfaith Service 11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. St John's Pentecostal Church House of Restoration (SJPC)	Joint Forums and Side Events Official Launch: 'Turning Shared Ambition Into Lasting Impact' 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. St John's Pentecostal Church House of Restoration (SJPC)	CHOGM Opening Ceremony and Family Photo 9:30 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. Antigua and Barbuda National Performing Arts Centre, St. John's	COMMONWEALTH FORUMS 9:30 a.m. onwards
CELEBRATING 45 YEARS OF INDEPENDENCE AND WELCOMING THE COMMONWEALTH 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Government House, Independence Drive	45th Anniversary of the National Day of Antigua and Barbuda Ceremonial Parade 6:15 p.m. – 7:15 p.m. Sir Vivian Richards Stadium, Sir Sydney Walling Highway OPEN TO THE PUBLIC	One Commonwealth Night: 'Many Voices, One Commonwealth' 8:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m. Sir Vivian Richards Stadium, Sir Sydney Walling Highway OPEN TO THE PUBLIC	COMMONWEALTH FORUMS 9:30 a.m. onwards	COMMONWEALTH YOUTH FORUM University of the West Indies Five Islands Campus
	One Commonwealth, One Team A Commonwealth Cricket Celebration 8:15 p.m. – 11:00 p.m. Sir Vivian Richards Stadium, Sir Sydney Walling Highway OPEN TO THE PUBLIC		COMMONWEALTH YOUTH FORUM University of the West Indies Five Islands Campus	COMMONWEALTH WOMEN'S FORUM American University of Antigua (AUA) Conference Centre
			COMMONWEALTH WOMEN'S FORUM American University of Antigua	COMMONWEALTH BUSINESS FORUM Sticky Wicket Cricket Ground
			COMMONWEALTH PEOPLE'S FORUM American University of Antigua (AUA) Conference Centre	COMMONWEALTH PEOPLE'S FORUM American University of Antigua (AUA) Conference Centre
			CHOGM 2026 Closing Reception 7:30 p.m. – 9:30 p.m. Copper and Lumber Store Historic Inn, Nelson's Dockyard, English Harbour	



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Celebrating **45 Years** of Independence.



Our Roots Run Deep. Our Possibilities Reach Far.

Forty-five years of Independence is a story of a people grounded in who they are, while continually reaching for what is possible.

Here at home, across Antigua and Barbuda, that spirit has carried us forward through communities and generations, rooted in pride, strengthened by resilience and open to the world.

For more than four decades, Flow has been proud to grow alongside that journey. From connecting voices across our islands and beyond, to powering the homes, businesses and ideas moving Antigua and Barbuda forward today, our role has always been simple: to make distance matter less and possibility mean more.

And as the Commonwealth gathers on our shores, the world gets to experience what we have always known, small islands can have an extraordinary reach. Rooted here. 45 years Independent. Connected everywhere. Ready for what's next.

Happy Independence, Antigua and Barbuda.

FLOW



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



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1NATIONMUSICFESTIVAL



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



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ONE COMMONWEALTH NIGHT

Many Voices. One Commonwealth

2 NOVEMBER 2026 / 8PM

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**ABSOLUTELY NO PARKING
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If parking around the stadium reaches capacity, attendees will be directed to designated
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Upon arrival, follow the directions of the CHOGM team and proceed to your designated zone.

GATES OPEN:

6 PM

SHOW STARTS:

8 PM SHARP!

SHOW ENDS:

11 PM

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OCTOBER 2026

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A Divided World: A Commonwealth Opportunity



By Sir Ronald Sanders

When Commonwealth leaders gather in Antigua and Barbuda from 1 to 4 November, they should address a question that reaches beyond their association: how can countries of different size, wealth and outlook sustain cooperation in a world increasingly driven by confrontation?

Sir Shridath Ramphal, who served as Commonwealth Secretary-General for 15 years, offered an answer worth recalling: “The Commonwealth cannot negotiate for the world, but it can help the world to negotiate.”

That insight deserves a place at the centre of this summit.

For Antigua and Barbuda, hosting the meeting is a source of pride and a considerable responsibility. The national contribution will include helping to create the conditions for frank discussion and decisions that serve the association and the wider world.

My belief in the Commonwealth has been sustained over decades of service, study and advocacy. I served on the Governing Board of its Secretariat and was a member and Rapporteur of the Eminent Persons Group whose re-

port, *A Commonwealth of the People: Time for Urgent Reform*, was presented to leaders at Perth in 2011.

We chose that title deliberately. The Commonwealth’s worth must be evident in the lives of its people.

Today, demonstrating that worth requires an understanding of what members owe each other and what they stand to gain by acting together.

Britain, Canada and Australia have interests in dependable markets, diversified economic relationships and partners across regions. India and South Africa bring productive capacity, expertise and diplomatic influence, alongside ambitions for a fairer international order. Small states, which form the majority of Commonwealth members, seek security, opportunity and a meaningful voice in decisions that affect their survival.

These interests overlap.

Even countries with substantial economies cannot secure reliable trade, stable international arrangements or diplomatic support entirely through their own power. Smaller countries contribute markets, knowledge, regional relationships and sovereign voices. They also bring experience of managing vulnerabilities that larger countries increasingly encounter themselves.

The Commonwealth provides opportunities to turn these interests into co-operation. Its diversity gives it access to perspectives that narrower groupings cannot readily assemble.

That is the significance of Ramphal’s observation.

When negotiations become trapped between established positions, countries need places where they can test ideas, understand each other’s constraints and explore possible agreements. Commonwealth consultations can help prepare that ground.

The summit’s Leaders’ Retreat offers an opportunity to begin. Heads of Gov-

ernment could identify a small number of international questions on which their different perspectives might help produce workable proposals.

Climate finance and debt are obvious candidates. Commonwealth membership includes countries seeking finance, countries providing it and countries with influence in the institutions that determine its terms. A serious discussion could establish what each requires for agreement and where compromise is possible.

Trade offers another. Members could explore how to preserve predictable trading arrangements while addressing concerns about economic security, employment and development. Such discussions would acquire international value if participating governments subsequently advanced agreed proposals in the relevant negotiating bodies.

This work requires patient diplomacy, supported by analysis and sustained contact between capitals. A declaration of support for multilateralism becomes useful when governments invest effort in making negotiations succeed.

The summit’s theme, “Accelerating Partnerships and Investment for a Prosperous Commonwealth”, provides an immediate opportunity to demonstrate that approach.

Secretary-General Shirley Botchwey’s emphasis on investment is welcome. The Secretariat’s new platform brings together more than 60 projects submitted by 20 countries. The next task is to help sound proposals secure financing and produce employment, infrastructure and economic activity.

Project preparation remains a serious obstacle, especially for small administrations. Engineering studies, environmental assessments, legal advice and financial planning can cost more than governments can readily afford.

Commonwealth cooperation should coordinate access to existing exper-

Opinion

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tise and project-preparation finance. Where gaps remain, members and their partners should agree how to fill them. Investors would gain better-prepared opportunities; countries would improve their prospects of securing investment on workable terms.

Trade cooperation should be equally practical. A business that finds a customer abroad may still lose the sale because certification is expensive, payment is difficult, transport is unreliable or its representatives cannot travel readily to conclude an agreement.

Governments should identify obstacles within their control and negotiate their removal. Willing members could begin with specific arrangements that others may subsequently join, respecting their existing regional and international obligations.

Small states must help shape this agenda. Their role includes proposing solutions, negotiating common positions and contributing expertise. Antigua and Barbuda's hosting of the summit, and Prime Minister Gaston

Browne's forthcoming stewardship as Chair-in-Office, demonstrate that leadership need not depend on population or economic weight.

Responsibility for implementation belongs to every government.

Larger members should use their influence to advance agreed Commonwealth positions internationally. All members should implement commitments, contribute according to their means and provide the Secretariat with the authority and resources required for its work.

Having served on its Governing Board, I know that ambitions eventually become questions of staff, budgets and priorities. In 2012, reflecting on the reform process after the CHOGM in Perth, I warned against confusing adoption with implementation. That distinction remains essential.

Leaders should agree on a manageable programme, assign responsibility and establish when progress will be reported. Their citizens should be able to judge what has been achieved.

The same accountability must extend

to Commonwealth values. Dependable laws, accountable government, access to justice and respect for rights support both public confidence and economic opportunity. These obligations apply to every member.

Antigua and Barbuda can provide the setting for a renewed Commonwealth bargain: each country contributes to cooperation from which all can benefit, and together they help sustain an international system in which negotiation remains possible.

Ramphal understood that the Commonwealth's service could extend beyond its membership. In today's troubled world, that is a responsibility its leaders should embrace.

They should leave Antigua with practical work agreed, responsibility assigned and a shared determination to help the world negotiate.

(The writer is Antigua and Barbuda's senior diplomat. He has served in many Commonwealth capacities and has published extensively on the Commonwealth)



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Tribute to Dr. Raj – Part 2

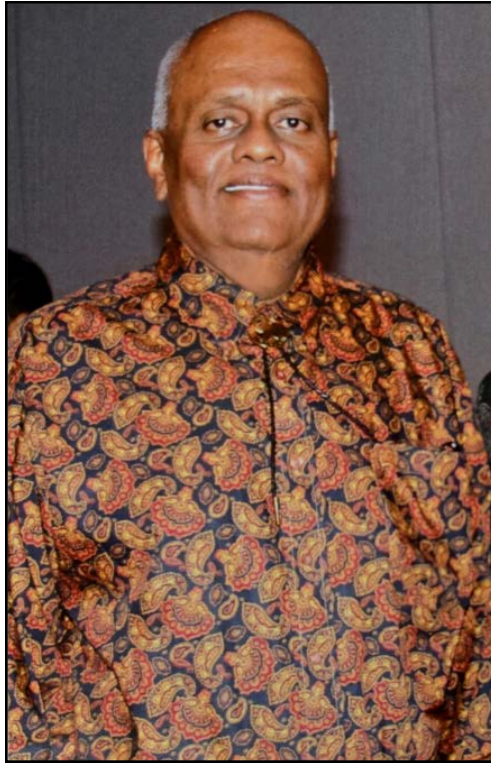
By Lennox Weston

The civil war in Sri Lanka lasted from 1983 to 2009 where over 100,000 died. The brutality and savagery experienced before and during the civil war, the sense of persecution, exclusion and denied opportunities, the civil war imposed on him, his family and fellow Tamils seemed to imbued in Dr Raj a desire to not allow those dark memories to feed and flourish.

Dr Raj instead chose deliberately and conscientiously to replace the devil and evil that men do to their fellow men, the bitterness, the cruelty, the anger the desire for vengeance, an eye for an eye that such savagery normally evokes with the cleansing power of love, kindness, sharing, helping the weak, the poor, the unconnected, helping the meek to overcome and improve their lives, to succeed to be transformed into their best version of self.

We all lose to war. A theme that Singing Sandra, David Rudder and St Lucian poet and author Alice Medard in her poem This war must End, all spoke to this mountain of violence. “The priest tired of fasting and burning incense, the choir faint from singing Amazing Grace, the grave diggers can’t find any more digging space”. Or as the Palestine poet Mahoud Darwish in his poem The War will end wrote “The war will end. The leaders will shake hands. The old woman will keep waiting for her martyred son, ...I don’t know who sold the homeland. But I saw who paid the price”.

Dr Raj shared the collective awakening against the madness and the self-destructive nature of human conflict and chose the “power of human heartbeat over destruction”. He was adamant to break the cycle of war, requires “hands of love to reach out to the next generation”. “Warlords



can control the physical battles, but the survival of people depends on real love communal harmony and preservation of human spirit”.

These are the principles that guided Dr Raj life and Antigua Barbuda benefited from a life that was well and fully lived,

Doctor Raj loved his new country, Antigua and Barbuda. He loved his food, both traditional and local. He loved his Roti he loved his goat meat. He loved the sea swimming at Fort James Beach, the waters that he chose his ashes to be scattered over. Dr Raj loved his community, he loved his clients, he loved his wife, he loved his children. He Loved his siblings, parents and extended family.

Dr Raj was strict, no nonsense, loved



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Feature

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to be in charge, he directed his children path with minute care, success was not an option, excellence was the only path. He believed education was an important key to contributing to the nation, to have a life of meaning and a greater capacity to contribute to the advancement of community and human dignity.

Dr Raj and his Wife produced two wonderful children. His son, Gopi who came to Antigua as a toddler, a graduate of St Joseph Academy is now a financial expert on Wall Street. His daughter was born in Antigua, she recently returned to Antigua as a double specialist Consultant in Internal medicine and Hospice palliative care specialist, now working at SIBMC, the beautiful and brilliant Dr Veena Vignarajah, a graduate of Sunnyside school and the Antigua Girls High School.

During Dr Raj six months of illness, it was good to see him surrounded and cared for by not only his family and official care givers but by clients who visited, kept his company and cared for him. His personal doctor and personal surgeon were also his second-generation clients and members of his research Group who became Family, Dr T'Keyah Weston and Orthopedic Surgeon Dr Jose Soler.

Dr Rag worked with his dear wife Vana in a seamless combination as both dental assistant and accounts and Office manager an unbeatable team. His wife continues to manage his dentistry which remains open on Cross Street with the same warm top-quality care serving his clients, and fittingly, Working with the lead dentist Antigua and Eastern Caribbean first national Maxillofacial surgeon and dentist and Dr Raj second-generation client, Dr Asher Benta.

Thank you to Doctor Raj's family for sharing him with us. We say on behalf of a grateful nation his life is an example we can all emulate.

To Answer King Sparrow's Question when does one become a good

citizen, we say Dr Raj was a good citizen. As we join King Short Shirt in singing with much gusto at this independence anniversary, we pledge to be a good good citizen, we remember Dr Raj and renew our pledge to our country with deep commitment, knowing we have a good example of a life well lived and contribution of Dr Raj to follow.

Dr Raj Fly with the Gods your spirit remains eternal, your job on earth was well done and we pray you are welcomed in the arms of the Almighty and by your ancestors and the ancestors of all Good Citizens of Antigua

and Barbuda who have gone to the great beyond. Antigua and Barbuda are truly grateful to have benefitted from your work and contribution to this country. We sing your praises and are proud of the contributions you made, the lives you touch, the compassion and care shown, the inspiration and assistance you provided.

Dr Raj a true ANTIGUAN, A GOOD GOOD CITIZEN, our fallen warrior, your legacy lives on. We salute you on this Antigua And Barbuda 45th independence Anniversary. SELAH! THE GANGES MEETING THE NILE.





9TH JAN 2027 8:00PM NIGHT ONE

ONE NATION CARIBBEAN MUSIC FESTIVAL

ONE PEOPLE ONE LOVE

CLAUDETTE PETERS

GEN \$100 | ROOTS ROCK REGGAE LOUNGE \$350 EARLY BIRD

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ANTIGUACARNIVAL **ANTIGUAFESTIVALSOFFICIAL** **1NATIONMUSICFESTIVAL**

Antigua and Barbuda at 45: Independence won, sovereignty to be preserved



By Sir Ronald Sanders

On 1 November 1981, when the Union Jack was lowered for the last time in Antigua and Barbuda, a small Caribbean nation assumed responsibility for its own destiny. Forty-five years later, the anniversary invites both celebration and reflection on what independence has achieved, the difficulties overcome, and the challenges that remain.

Independence was neither inevitable nor universally supported when first proposed. There were genuine concerns about whether a small country, with limited resources and an economy heavily dependent on tourism and external markets, could sustain itself without Britain's protection.

Associated Statehood in 1967 brought substantial internal self-government, but Britain retained responsibility for foreign affairs and defence. Full sovereignty remained the unfinished task.

When the Antigua Labour Party returned to office in 1976, the question acquired renewed urgency. The Government argued that independence would remove obstacles to economic development, particularly access to international financial institutions and assistance from countries reluctant to provide support while Britain retained responsibility for Antigua's external affairs.

Lester Bird, then Minister responsible for Economic Development, became a leading advocate. At the ALP Convention in September 1978, he argued that independence would open opportunities for membership of the Inter-American Development Bank and direct access to development financing.

Yet the path was contested. The opposition Progressive Labour Movement questioned the country's economic readiness. Barbuda's representatives raised concerns about their island's constitutional position. These were substantial matters requiring negotiation.

The Government established an Independence Committee and undertook public consultations. Lester Bird led an education programme explaining the implications of independence and addressing concerns, including fears arising from the political upheaval in Grenada in 1979.

By the April 1980 general election, all three principal political parties supported independence, although differences remained about its terms. The ALP secured 13 of the 17 parliamentary seats. Constitutional negotiations followed at Lancaster House, with Government, opposition and Barbuda representatives participating.

The disagreements had been real, but

they did not prevent the achievement of a national objective.

On independence night, the nation's first Prime Minister Vere Cornwall Bird Snr declared: "My people, we are free this night. But freedom cannot exist without responsibility. The full burden of our freedom now rests squarely upon our shoulders."

He warned that the ultimate safeguard of independence was productivity. Without the willingness to work and develop the country's resources, political freedom could give way to renewed dependence.

That warning remains relevant.

The country that emerged in 1981 had a tiny domestic market, a narrow productive base and heavy dependence on imported goods, external investment and tourism. It was vulnerable to hurricanes, international economic fluctuations and decisions made far beyond its shores.

Yet Antigua and Barbuda has accomplished much.

Tourism has become a major international industry, supporting employment, investment and services. Airports, seaports, roads, telecommunications and public facilities have expanded. Educational opportunities have broadened, while the establishment of the University of the West Indies Five Islands Campus represents a

significant investment in the country's intellectual and professional capacity.

Antigua and Barbuda has also preserved constitutional democracy. Governments have changed through elections, political differences have been contested within constitutional institutions, and citizens have retained the right to determine who governs them.

These achievements should not be taken for granted.

There have been serious setbacks. Economic downturns, fiscal pressures and financial-sector failures have imposed substantial costs. The COVID-19 pandemic exposed the danger of excessive dependence on tourism when international travel virtually ceased.

Natural disasters have been even more unforgiving. In September 2017, Hurricane Irma devastated Barbuda, damaging or destroying most buildings and forcing the evacuation of its population.

That disaster demonstrated how quickly decades of investment and accumulated wealth could be placed at risk.

Climate change now presents one of the gravest threats to national development. Rising sea levels, stronger hurricanes, coastal erosion and prolonged droughts endanger homes, infrastructure, tourism and livelihoods.

Antigua and Barbuda has contributed negligibly to the greenhouse gas emissions responsible for global warming, yet must find substantial resources to protect itself against their consequences.

This injustice is compounded by an international financial system that frequently measures development needs by income per person rather than vulnerability.

A relatively high income classification conceals the country's exposure to disasters, narrow economic base and limited capacity to absorb repeated shocks. Consequently, affordable financing remains difficult to obtain, even when resources are urgently

needed for reconstruction and climate adaptation.

The country must therefore strengthen its own economic resilience while continuing to demand reform of international arrangements that disadvantage small and vulnerable states. National discipline and international justice are equally necessary.

Despite its size, Antigua and Barbuda has established a recognised place in the global community.

Through CARICOM, the United Nations, the Commonwealth, the Organisation of American States (OAS) and other institutions, it has defended international law, advocated the interests of small states and insisted that sovereignty must be respected regardless of military or economic power.

Now, on the 45th anniversary of independence, Antigua and Barbuda hosts Commonwealth leaders, with Prime Minister Gaston Browne assuming the Commonwealth Chair-in-Office for the next two years. For a country once uncertain whether it could sustain independence, this is a remarkable measure of progress.

But international recognition cannot substitute for national development.

Dependence on imported food, fuel and manufactured goods leaves households and businesses exposed to external shocks. Tourism cannot indefinitely carry the full burden of economic development. Greater diversification, stronger domestic enterprise, investment in skills and technology, and opportunities for young people remain essential. That task is in full swing even though the obstacles remain.

Equitable development between Antigua and Barbuda also requires continuing attention, consultation and mutual respect. Economic development and major infrastructural development have taken place on Barbuda, but National unity remains elusive. This remains work in progress.

The lesson of 1981 is instructive. Political leaders disagreed about the route to independence but ultimately accepted the objective of a sovereign

nation.

Political competition remains necessary in a democracy. But national interests must transcend party allegiance and personal ambition. Climate resilience, economic security, education, public safety and the preservation of sovereignty should unite us.

Unity of purpose does not require unanimity. Constructive criticism, transparency and accountability strengthen the nation.

The international environment has become more uncertain. Economic power is increasingly concentrated, global rules are not always applied equally, and small countries face pressures that constrain their choices without formally diminishing their sovereignty.

Independence must therefore be defended through diplomacy, economic strength, social cohesion and public confidence in national institutions.

Forty-five years ago, V. C. Bird warned that freedom without responsibility could lead to another form of dependence. That remains the nation's challenge.

Antigua and Barbuda has overcome difficulties that once caused some to question whether it could succeed as an independent state. Its achievements deserve celebration. But the true measure of independence will be whether future generations inherit a country that is more resilient, productive, equitable and capable of making its own choices.

Independence was won through determination. It has endured through resilience. Its preservation will depend on unity of purpose by all its people and all sectors of society.

That is the enduring meaning of the national motto: "Each Endeavouring, All Achieving."

(Sir Ronald Sanders is one of only two surviving members of the Antigua and Barbuda delegations to the Independence Constitutional Conference in London)

Feature



PART 5 OF 5 • NEWSPAPER SERIES

THE BRITISH MONARCHY, AFRICAN ENSLAVEMENT AND THE CASE FOR REPARATIONS

THE BRITISH ROYAL FAMILY AND THE CASE FOR REPARATORY JUSTICE



Historical accountability, international law and the responsibilities of the present

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

The historical record presented in this series challenges any account of British monarchy that treats African enslavement as a distant activity conducted solely by private merchants. Royal ships, charters, shareholders and commercial privileges helped create and sustain trafficking enterprises. Slavery-linked wealth also entered institutions and families that remained influential long after emancipation.

Recognising that history is not the same as claiming that every member of the present royal family personally committed the wrongs of the past. The question is one of institutional continuity, historical benefit and contemporary responsibility. What should institutions that endured and prospered through these systems now acknowledge and do?

For Caribbean societies, the demand for reparatory justice rests on the enduring consequences of enslavement and colonialism. Forced labour and extraction shaped patterns of land ownership, capital formation, education, public health and political power. The abolition of legal slavery did not restore the wealth taken from enslaved people or undo the structural disadvantages created by the plantation order.

The contrast at emancipation remains striking. The British state paid £20 million to enslavers, while the emancipated received no equivalent compensation. The legal treatment of people as property was reflected in a settlement that rewarded owners and required many of the formerly enslaved to continue working under apprenticeship. This is a central historical grievance in contemporary reparations debates.

The CARICOM Ten-Point Plan for

Reparatory Justice articulates a programme that goes beyond a single financial payment. It addresses acknowledgement, development, health, education, cultural institutions and other forms of repair. Its central premise is that historical wrongdoing created enduring harms that demand an organised response.

International law provides important principles for discussions of remedy. In the 1928 Factory at Chorzów judg-

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2027
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ment, the Permanent Court of International Justice explained that reparation for an internationally wrongful act should, as far as possible, eliminate its consequences and restore the situation that would probably have existed without the wrong. The judgment remains influential in the general law of state responsibility.

That principle, however, does not automatically settle every legal question arising from transatlantic slavery. Claims may encounter difficult issues involving the law applicable at the time, attribution, jurisdiction, limitation and the identification of claimants and remedies. The moral and historical case and the prospects of a particular legal action must be assessed distinctly.

Dr Nora Wittmann has argued that the widespread assertion that the slave trade and slavery were simply legal in their own time is historically and legally contestable. Her work invites close examination of the laws, judgments and principles operating during the centuries of enslavement. Whether a specific claim succeeds would depend on its legal basis and supporting evidence.

Reparations need not be understood exclusively as payments to individual descendants for the personal suffering of ancestors. Claims can also concern continuing collective harms, institutional enrichment and present-day inequalities traceable to historical systems. That is why Caribbean governments and civil society organisations have placed such emphasis on negotiated programmes of repair.

The British monarchy occupies a distinctive place in this discussion. It is both an institution of historical continuity and a powerful public symbol. A serious response would begin with open access to relevant archives, acknowledgement of documented royal participation and constructive engagement with Caribbean governments and communities about appropriate forms of repair.

An apology without action risks becoming ceremonial; action without

truthful acknowledgement risks avoiding the history that makes repair necessary. Meaningful reparatory justice calls for both. It requires confronting the financial and political structures that enabled enslavement and the ways their effects have continued.

The evidence does not support excluding the monarchy from the conversation. Its historical participation in slavery-related enterprises and the

connections between slave-owning wealth and royal families warrant scrutiny, recognition and dialogue. The challenge now is to turn a fuller historical account into an equitable process of accountability and repair.

END OF SERIES.

Selected sources: *CARICOM Ten-Point Plan for Reparatory Justice*; *Permanent Court of International Justice, Factory at Chorzów (Merits), 1928*; Nora Wittmann, *Slavery Reparations Time Is Now* (2013); Hilary Beckles, *Britain's Black Debt* (2013).



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Regional News

Cuba wins UN vote against US embargo with weakest backing in 30 years

The United Nations (UN) General Assembly on Wednesday adopted a new resolution calling for an end to the US embargo against Cuba, although support for the communist-ruled island fell to its lowest level in three decades.

Nearly every year since 1992 similar resolutions have been put to a vote and passed, but support for the measure this year was markedly lower.

The resolution, which has called for lifting the economic, trade and financial embargo against the island, received 130 votes in favour, with 17 against and 25 abstentions. It was the lowest level of support since 1995.

This year's Cuban resolution included a reference to the impact of restrictions on fuel supplies to the island imposed by the United States since January.

In recent weeks, Havana accused Washington of mounting a diplomatic offensive to pressure countries into withdrawing their support for the Cuban resolution.

"The world has once again spoken out overwhelmingly against the blockade, even despite the most blatant pressure and blackmail from the US to change the course of this vote," Cuban President Miguel Diaz-Canel said in a celebratory post on X Wednesday, later adding that the US engages in "gangster-like coercion".

Speaking in New York, Cuban Foreign Minister Bruno Rodriguez accused Washington of seeking to "determine the nation's destiny" and "seize" its wealth.

In the minutes before the vote, US ambassador to the United Nations Mike Waltz denied that Cuba was under a blockade and said "the plight of the Cuban people is exclusively the fault of this corrupt communist regime".

"The reality is, today as we speak, there is no ring of US Navy warships



around Cuba. Their ports are open. In recent months, data shows that shipments have arrived," from around the world, he added.

The vote came a day after a dramatic shouting match on the floor of the UN General Assembly that at one point saw Rodriguez approach Waltz and shout, "You are a liar!" as Waltz shouted for him to back away.

Amid the interruptions, the chair briefly suspended the session and instructed both countries' representatives to return to their places.

In his speech arguing against the resolution on Tuesday, Waltz held up pictures of Cuban leaders past and present, including Diaz-Canel, wearing

luxury watches, prompting the Cuban delegation to repeatedly smack their desk in protest and interrupt.

Waltz later held up a satellite images and detailed luxury estates, boats and vacations that he claimed the Castro family and Cuban officials enjoy.

"The regime can never find enough fuel for Cuban ambulances. They can never find enough fuel for Cuban buses. But when the Castro family, the elites that are sitting at that table, want to go yachting, suddenly, it's no problem," Waltz said.

Speaking on Fox News on Wednesday after the vote, Waltz said that the previous day's debate, "got a little spicy". (AFP)

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Jamaica-born televangelist Paul Lewis sentenced to 14 years in prison



In 2009, popular televangelist Paul Lewis walked free from the Savanna-la-Mar courthouse in Westmoreland after being found not guilty of carnal abuse. Today, he is languishing in prison in the United States (US), convicted of a similar offence.

The 63-year-old Lewis, a Jamaican who came to fame when his television ministry exploded in the US in the early 2000s, making him a household name, was sentenced to 14 years in prison on Monday by Brooklyn Supreme Court Justice Jennifer Naiburg.

Lewis, who resided at an East New York, Brooklyn address, was previously found guilty in a Brooklyn Court on September 24, 2026, following a jury trial, where he was convicted of repeatedly sexually abusing a child, whose family were members of his Brooklyn church.

“Rape results in trauma that lasts a lifetime, and we will never stop seeking justice for those who have been sexually violated,” said District Attorney Eric Gonzalez, in referencing the sentencing.

“With today’s sentence, the defendant has been held accountable for this de-

plorable crime, affording the victim a measure of closure for the horror inflicted upon her as a child.”

According to the evidence that was presented against Lewis, who was the pastor of Messengers for Christ World Healing Centre in Brooklyn, between September 3, 2014 and December 23, 2014 he regularly picked up the 11-year-old child at her home, under the guise of getting food, and brought her to a location where he sexually assaulted her in his vehicle.

After one incident on February 26, 2024, the child reportedly walked into a police station and lodged a complaint against Lewis. Following an investigation, he was arrested and charged.

At the completion of his sentence, Lewis is also mandated to serve 10 years of post-release supervision.

In the case against him in Jamaica, for which he was found not guilty in June 2011, he was charged with one count of carnal abuse and two counts of indecent assault, reportedly committed against two teenage girls in Westmoreland in 2009. Jamaican travel guide.

In that case, for which he was freed, it was alleged that Lewis, who was a guest preacher at a tent in Little London, met a 15-year-old girl at one of his services and struck up a friendship with her, during which he reportedly exchanged telephone numbers with the child.

In a subsequent meeting with the girl, he reportedly invited her to accompany him on a trip to Clarendon. She reportedly accepted the offer but took her 14-year-old female friend along with her.

On their return to Westmoreland, Lewis reportedly took the girls to a hotel in Negril, where it was said that he spent the night with them. Lewis was accused of being involved in a sexual encounter with the girls that night.

A police report was filed and Lewis was arrested and charged with carnal abuse of the 15-year-old girl and indecent assault involving the 14-year-old. (Jamaica Gleaner)

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Regional News

Haiti announces new election dates as 2,000 Salvadoran troops help fight gangs

Haiti's government has announced new election dates as police and soldiers backed by the recent arrival of more than 2,000 troops from El Salvador fight gangs.

The Provisional Electoral Council said late Wednesday that the first round of general elections will be held next year on July 18 and the second round on October 4.

Haiti has not held elections in more than a decade and is run by an unelected prime minister. The presidency has been vacant since President Jovenel Moïse was killed in 2021.

The council said it expects to publish the final candidate list, including those running for the presidency or the Senate, by mid-January 2027, with May 20 marking the end of voter registration.

The first round of elections was initially scheduled for this December 13, but was delayed by gang violence in Haiti's central region and in Port-au-Prince.

Four aviation technicians from El Salvador working with a UN-backed gang suppression force went missing on October 18 in the capital after coming under attack.

In response, Salvadoran President Nayib Bukele sent more than 2,000 troops to Haiti to help rescue the four technicians, who the Haitian government says were abducted.

El Salvador's Ministry of Foreign Affairs said in a statement late Wednesday that Bukele had spoken with Haitian Prime Minister Alix Didier Fils-Aimé about the security operation to rescue the technicians.

Meanwhile, Haiti's government issued a statement saying the two leaders are reinforcing cooperation within the framework of the UN-backed gang suppression force.



Experts have questioned exactly what role the Salvadoran troops are playing in Haiti.

Romain Le Cour, head of the Haiti Observatory at the Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime, said their rules of engagement, chain of command, objectives and duration "remain opaque".

He questioned what kind of coordination they might have with the gang suppression force, Haitian police and Vectus Global, the private security firm founded by former US Navy SEAL and Blackwater founder Erik Prince.

"Are we witnessing yet another model of deployment, parallel to the multilateral framework? The role of the United States, which supported and facilitated this deployment, also deserves scrutiny," he said.

He said the number of Salvadoran troops in Haiti will surpass that of personnel in the gang suppression force.

"What does that mean for its authority, its coherence and its future?" he

wrote.

Le Cour and others also raised concerns about the safety of Haitian civilians caught in a gun battle between Haitian gangs and the international forces.

On Wednesday, Doctors Without Borders issued a statement calling on "the authorities and all parties involved to spare civilians and ensure access to health care facilities for all the wounded and sick, without distinction."

The aid agency said it treated 30 patients injured by gunfire or drone explosions from October 18-26, and that it took some of the wounded several hours to reach hospitals run by Doctors Without Borders.

"Roads and bridges are blocked, and any travel is extremely risky," said Davina Hayles, Doctors Without Borders head of mission in Haiti.

"In a capital city where the health care system has collapsed and many facilities are closed, it is essential to ensure there is access to functioning health care facilities like ours." (AP)

Dozens killed in country's second deadly rail crash this year



A high-speed train slammed into another that had stopped on the tracks in Spain Wednesday, killing at least 68 people and injuring dozens in the second deadly rail collision this year.

The regional government of Castilla La Mancha confirmed the death toll and said another 58 people were receiving medical treatment at hospitals. Rescue workers searched the wreckage throughout the day for survivors and bodies.

The collision came just nine months after another deadly crash involving high-speed trains operated by the same two companies in southern Spain in January.

"Today, all of Spain is grieving," Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez said from the crash site, where he announced that his government would declare three days of national mourning.

Sánchez called for increased safety measures to restore confidence in a high-speed rail system that was once a source of national pride.

"It is unacceptable for a country like Spain to suffer two high-speed rail accidents in the same year," said Sánchez, who faces a national election on November 29.

Spain's rail system operator ADIF said the crash occurred Wednesday morning in the central province of

Toledo, involving two high-speed trains carrying hundreds of passengers and heading south in the same direction from Madrid to Seville.

A train operated by the state-owned RENFE company struck the rear of another train operated by private company IRYO that was stopped. The collision derailed two carriages on the tail of the IRYO train and the front of the RENFE train.

Samy Paul, a British tourist, described the shock of the impact to The Associated Press after being rescued from the RENFE train.

"Suddenly, everything started falling apart. Bang! We fell down," he said. "We realised carriage two,

International

AROUND THE WORLD



carriage one, all gone, all smashed. There was blood all over.”

David Gómez, a construction worker, was working nearby when he heard the crash and ran to help, he told the newspaper El País.

“People were trying to get out through the windows We cut through some fences to access the area and treated people with the first-aid kits we had brought until emergency services arrived,” he said. “As I was trying to pull a young woman out, there was a piece of a leg.”

Rail service was suspended between Madrid, Ciudad Real and Andalusia.

Spain’s Transport Minister Óscar Puente said that the crash was caused by what he called the “inexplicable” order from a central command centre for Spain’s trains after a security system had failed. He said the train engineers were not to blame.

Puente said that, at 8:30 a.m., the security system on a stretch of 63 kilometres (39 miles) stopped working because of a computer malfunction, causing all trains on that stretch to stop. But the central command told the RENFE train to start running again without any speed restrictions, and it ended up colliding with the stopped IRYO train at 8:53 a.m.

Puente said that the train should never have been told to start moving again, since there was still a “stop signal” active on that line. And, if it had, at least it should have been told to go at reduced speed.

Authorities were still studying information to see how fast the train was going, but it could have been at 200 kph (124 mph) for that stretch of the track, Puente said

“I am not attributing responsibility to anyone, I am just stating the facts,” Puente said.

Everything went flying when the

trains collided, a passenger said.

The crash, which occurred in a flat stretch surrounded by olive fields in between the towns of Urda and Los Yébenes, left carriages shredded into bits of metal and other material, scattering debris down a gravel slope.

Passenger Ignacio Relaño was travelling on the RENFE train. He told state broadcaster TVE that the train had stopped momentarily on the line before it started again and then crashed into the IRYO.

“We all felt the train abruptly slowing down and then the impact,” he said. “The car leaned to one side like it was about to tip over. I hit my nose,

everything went flying, luggage, cell phones. Everything shook.”

Authorities said 397 passengers were in the RENFE train and 147 passengers in the IRYO train.

Ambulances and medical helicopters made trips to and from the site, while unscathed survivors were put on buses. A military emergency brigade was deployed to help.

Spain’s King Felipe VI also visited the crash site.

“We share in the grief of the families and loved ones of those who lost their lives, and we send our heartfelt support to the injured and all those affected,” Spain’s royals said in a statement. (AP)



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2 college students found dead after going missing during Colorado hike

Two Colorado college students have been found dead after going missing during a hiking trip in the Rocky Mountains last weekend when a heavy snowstorm hit, authorities said.

The bodies of Kaden Matsuda, 19, of Ridgway, Colorado, and Jackson Donlon, 20, of Queensbury, New York, were found Wednesday afternoon in a basin of West Apostle Mountain, about 100 miles (160 kilometers) southeast of Aspen, the Chaffee County Sheriff's Office said in a statement posted on social media.

They left Colorado Mountain College Leadville's campus on Friday, telling family and friends they planned to hike up Ice Mountain, a nearly 14,000-foot (4,270-meter) peak near West Apostle Mountain that requires technical climbing, the sheriff's office said. They were expected back by Sunday, but college staff reported them missing on Monday morning.

The sheriff's office said the causes of their deaths were under investigation, but foul play was not suspected. Authorities said they would not offer theories on what may have happened until autopsies are completed.

"Our heart aches for Kaden and Jackson's family and friends," Sheriff Andy Rohrich said in the statement Wednesday night. "We are very proud of our team's efforts to find them before this weekend's coming storm. Although this is a gut punch, our prayers were answered that we would find Kaden and Jackson, allowing some closure for the family."

Rohrich said in a phone interview Thursday morning that the men's bodies remained in the basin and officials were waiting for gusty winds to calm so a helicopter crew could fly to the site to retrieve them.

About 60 search and rescue volunteers, aided by helicopters, drones and dogs, searched for the two men.

The helicopter crew on Tuesday discovered a tent collapsed under the



snow with their sleeping bags, a stove and clothing near a lake northwest of Ice Mountain — but the students were nowhere to be found.

Based on the tent's location, Rohrich

said it appeared Matsuda and Donlon changed plans and were aiming for the 13,597-foot (4,144-meter) West Apostle Mountain, instead of Ice Mountain. He said the location of the bodies indicated they were well into a hike when they died.

Friends and family described both as experienced hikers and climbers.

The sheriff's office said their climbing equipment was not in their dorms, tent or vehicle, suggesting they left their tent prepared for a technical climb. Trash inside the tent indicated they had eaten before starting their hike, officials said.

Matsuda was studying to become a wildland firefighter, and Donlon was studying to become a mountain guide, Rohrich said.

Authorities had been concerned that aerial searches could be limited in upcoming days because of poor weather that was expected to begin Friday. (AP)

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Pope to meet with survivors of clergy abuse during upcoming trip to LATAM



Pope Leo XIV will meet with survivors of clergy sexual abuse during his upcoming trip to Latin America (LATAM), which will take the American pope to Uruguay, Argentina and Peru, the Vatican said on Tuesday.

The Vatican statement didn't say when the encounters would take place or where, but said "several meetings are planned", suggesting more than one encounter. The November 6 to 17 trip is going ahead as planned despite Leo's October 13 lung cancer surgery which had put the trip in question.

Continuing the practice of his two recent predecessors, Leo met with

abuse survivors in June in Spain and most recently in France. Ahead of the French trip, the Vatican confirmed the meeting ahead of time rather than after it took place, as had been the previous practice.

"These meetings reflect the pope's desire to express his solidarity with those who have suffered, and continue to suffer, as a result of this violence, to work with them to build paths to healing that are accessible to anyone in need, and to ensure that the Church is a safe and spiritually healthy place that lives out and communicates the Gospel," according to a Vatican statement on Tuesday

Leo spent two decades as a mission-

ary priest in Peru, and he saw firsthand the effects of abuse on victims. He was the designated bishop in the Peruvian bishops conference to hear from victims of an influential but abusive movement, the Sodalitium Christianae Vitae.

The former Cardinal Robert Prevost was then instrumental in Pope Francis' decision in 2025 to suppress the movement.

Francis' native Argentina, for its part, has had a wretched reckoning with abuse and victims there have been demanding action from the Vatican, including to address cases in which Francis was personally involved. (AP)

Rangers maintain winning start in ABFA's First Division League



Players of the Ottos Rangers FC

The Ottos Rangers, who were relegated from the Premier Division last season, maintained their winning start to their campaign upon their return to competition in the Antigua and Barbuda Football Association's (ABFA) First Division League.

The Ottos Rangers made it three wins in a row with a 2-0 triumph over Five Islands FC at the Keithley Sheppard Recreational Park in St. John's on Wednesday.

Junior Benjamin's second-minute strike gave the Ottos Rangers a one-nil lead at halftime, and Shemarah Andrew sealed the win with a 68th-minute conversion as Five Islands FC lost for the third time in as many matches.

There was a win for Bolans FC in the

ABFA's Second Division League on Wednesday.

Bolans FC claimed their second win in as many matches after being awarded a 3-0 victory via default against the Young Warriors FC, which was unable to field a team for their encounter at the Sea View Farm playing field.

After being relegated from the first division last season, Bolans FC launched their campaign in the second division with a 9-0 drubbing of Herberts FC in their opening encounter.

Ironically, the Young Warriors were awarded a 3-0 victory via default against the Cedar Grove Blue Jays, who failed to show up for their opening match at Sea View Farm.

After both teams lost their previous

two matches, Wadadli United FC and Herberts FC battled to a 3-3 draw in their third-round encounter at the Golden Grove playing field.

Zenworth Thomas scored the opening goal in the second minute to put Herberts FC ahead.

But Avante Warner snatched the equalizer with a strike in the 11th minute, and goals by teammate Amadil Prince in the 16th minute and John Archibald in the 22nd minute gave Wadadli United a 3-1 lead at halftime.

Ajay Barthley produced a double-conversion with goals in the 59th and 66th minutes to equalize and salvage a draw for Herberts FC.

Sports News

ABSF names team for OECS Swimming Championships in St. Lucia

The Antigua and Barbuda Swimming Federation (ABSF) has selected the national team to compete in the 34th Annual OECS Swimming Championships in St. Lucia next month.

Antigua and Barbuda will be represented by a full 34-member squad to defend their title at the sub-regional event, which is scheduled to take place at the Rodney Heights Aquatic Centre in Gros Islet, St. Lucia, from November 6 to 8.

This prestigious event will be held under the sanction of the St. Lucia Swimming Federation (SSF).

Antigua and Barbuda are ready to defend their title against the region's top swimmers, hailing from 10 other countries.

The 34-member team was carefully selected based on their qualifying times achieved at the recently concluded 11th ABSF Invitational Championships, with five alternates also named to the roster.

List of Swimmers for the 2026 OECS Championships: Girls 8 & Over Whitaker Gold and Hannah Gauducheau; Boys 8 & Over Toby Bento and Jordan Holborough; Girls 9 to 10 Isabel Nicholas, Charlotte Gold, Anna Sukumaran, and Kaia Belle; and Boys 9 to 10 Jalen Weste, Akasion Sheppard, and Chris Oribia.



Madisson MacMillan

Girls 11 to 12: Kaylee Warner, Alyssa Watkins, Elizabeth Sukumaran, and Jordin Howell; Boys 11 to 12: Christopher Walter; 13 to 14 Girls: Anya Degannes, Willow Zreibi, and Tori Hosam; and 13 to 14 Boys: Alessandro Bazzoni, Jamie Tranter, N'yriq Weste, and Tristan Nicholas.

15 to 17 Girls: Madisson MacMillan, Selah Wiltshire, Elianna Spencer, and Paradise Carlisle; 15 to 17 Boys: Antoine Christian and Jai Sindhi; 18 & Over Girls Anisa Lewis and Devon Wuilliez; and 18 & Over Boys Jadon



Alessandro Bazzoni

Wuilliez, Manav Sindhi, and Neil Noronha.

The alternate swimmers are Kaylee McKie, Mila Bento, Major Emanuel, Stephen Gardner, and Nathaniel Gold.

The team will be led by Manager Kem Warner; Head Chaperone Andrea Roberts-Nicholas; Chaperone Andriette Sheppard; Chaperone Kara Ann Spencer; and Chaperone Jason Weste.

Head Coach Wayne Mitchell will be supported by assistant coaches J'air Smith and Terrel Bruno.



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Francis named in Caribbean squad for CHOGM Under-23 match

Antiguan Tanez Francis have been named in the Caribbean squad in the Commonwealth Future Stars Under-23 10-overs-a-side match against the Wider Commonwealth at the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium on Sunday, November 1, as part of the 2026 Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM), “One Commonwealth, One Team – A Commonwealth Cricket Celebration”, presented by Hamilton Reserve Bank.

The celebration will bring together Heads of Government, emerging young cricketers, and communities 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.

This historic event is being hosted by Cricket West Indies (CWI) in collaboration with the Government of Antigua and Barbuda and the Commonwealth Secretariat, with support from its event sponsors Trivandi, Khalili Foundation and Sustainable Markets Initiative.

Dominica’s Stephan Pascal will captain a 12-member Caribbean squad, which brings together one emerging player from each of twelve Caribbean Commonwealth nations – Antigua and Barbuda, The Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, and Trinidad and Tobago – with players aged between 18 and 22.

Antigua and Barbuda’s Tanez Francis and Barbados’ Shaquan Belle, both 18, are the youngest members of the squad, with Francis set to represent the host nation on home soil.

Pascal, 21, will lead a group that also



Tanez Francis

includes Guyana’s Mavendra Dindyal, St. Lucia’s Tarrique Edward, St. Vincent and the Grenadines’ Ethan Gibson and the Bahamas’ Antonio Harris, all 22.

The West Indies and Antiguan legend Sir Vivian Richards will serve as Honourary Manager of the Caribbean team, a role that places one of the game’s greatest figures alongside the region’s emerging talent on one of the biggest stages of their young careers.

His involvement reflects the celebration’s wider aim of connecting generations through cricket, with the game’s greats helping to guide and inspire the next wave of Caribbean

talent.

Pascal said leading a side drawn from across the region is a proud moment for him.

“To captain a team made up of players from twelve Caribbean nations is a huge honour, and an opportunity that I will cherish,” said Pascal.

“Having Sir Vivian Richards as our manager makes it even more special. He is someone every young cricketer in the Caribbean grows up hearing about, and we want to make him proud on the ground that carries his name. We may come from different islands, but on Sunday we will play as one team.”

The Under-23 match will follow the special Heads of Government fixture and turn the spotlight to the next generation, reflecting the celebration’s

“Play for the Future” message and the importance of investing in young people as future leaders and contributors to Commonwealth development.

The members of the Wider Commonwealth Under-23 squad will soon be announced.

Caribbean Under-23 Squad: Stephan Pascal (captain), Shaquan Belle, Mavendra Dindyal, Tarrique Edward, Tanez Francis, Ethan Gibson, Antonio Harris, Tayshaun Moses, Kirsten Murray, Tamarie Redwood, Kunal Tilkani, and Abdul Toppin. Honourary Manager: Sir Vivian Richards.

Two wins for Antiguans at FIFA World Cup and 8v8 Festival

Antigua and Barbuda's young Bena Boys picked up their first two wins on Thursday 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 prevailed 2-1 against the East African country, the Comoros, in the semi-finals and claimed a 3-0 victory over the British Virgin Islands in the quarter-finals of Tier E in the tournament stage of the competition on Thursday.

Following the opening round-robin group qualification phase, the tournament stage consists of six parallel tiers (Tiers A through F), featuring knockout rounds (Round of 32, Round of 16, and Quarter-finals) and consolation brackets so that every team keeps playing until the final match-day on October 30 at the Hovsan Community Complex.

Antigua and Barbuda lost 6-0 to Mongolia in the Tier E Round of 16 and was beaten 5-1 by Hong Kong in the Tier E Round of 32 on Wednesday.

Antigua and Barbuda finished at the bottom of Group AA, which featured five teams, in the qualification stage after playing to a 3-3 draw with New Caledonia in their final encounter on Monday.

Antigua and Barbuda's young Bena Boys lost their other three matches in Group AA.

Antigua and Barbuda lost 10-0 against top team Northern Ireland, suffered a 4-0 loss to Lebanon, and was beaten 3-2 by Burkina Faso in their other Group AA matches.

The inaugural FIFA Under-15 Boys Tournament involves each eight-member team playing 40-minute matches.



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

NOTICE

TO: THE LICENSING MAGISTRATE
Magistrate's Court
High Street
St. John's
Antigua

TO: COMMISSIONER OF POLICE
Police Headquarters
American Road
St. John's
Antigua

NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR A TAVERN LICENCE FOR BUSINESS REGISTERED AS "ZUZU"

I, Janine Chalita, DO HEREBY GIVE NOTICE, that it is my intention to apply at the next sitting of the Liquor Licence Court to be held at Magistrate's Court, High Street, St. John's Antigua on Tuesday 5th January, 2027 next ensuing for a Tavern Licence in respect of premises known as "ZUZU" situated at Cedars Plaza, Langford in the Parish of St. John's, Antigua pursuant to section (11) (5) of the Licensing (Intoxicating Liquor) Act Cap 249 of the Laws of Antigua and Barbuda, Revised Edition 1992.

Dated the 29th day of October, 2026
Janine chalita
268-779-9099



Richie's Shooterz take lead in business league playoff finals

In a repeat of last year's finals, losing finalists Richie's Shooterz have taken the lead against cup-holders Board of Education (BOE) in the Cool and Smooth Antigua and Barbuda Basketball Association's (ABBA) Business League Playoff Championship deciders.

The second-seeded Richie's Shooterz took the early advantage by soaring to a 68-61 victory over top-seed Board of Education in Game 1 of the best-of-five finals at the JSC Sports Complex on Wednesday evening.

Richie's Shooterz were led by Steven Matthew, who produced 18 points. Kwame Braithwaite sank 14 points, and Cohen Desouza and Jaheem James each converted 13 points for Richie's Shooterz.

Adonis Humphreys shot a game-high 20 points, and Daniel Perez scored 14 points for the Board of Education.

The Board of Education, which won the round-robin league title for the second successive year, will resume their quest for a back-to-back playoff title when they clash with Richie's Shooterz in Game 2 of finals at the JSC Sports Complex on Saturday evening at 7:30.

Richie's Shooterz are seeking to do much better than their second-place finish in this year's round-robin league by overcoming the Board of Education in the finals and capturing the playoff title.

NOTICE

TO: THE LICENSING MAGISTRATE
 Magistrate's Court
 High Street
 St. John's
 Antigua

TO: COMMISSIONER OF POLICE
 Police Headquarters
 American Road
 St. John's
 Antigua

NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR A RETAIL LICENCE FOR BUSINESS

REGISTERED AS **"MIGHTY SAVINGS GROCERY"**

I, DILLON NURSE, DO HEREBY GIVE NOTICE, that it is my intention to apply at the next sitting of the Liquor Licence Court to be held at the Magistrate's Court, High Street, St. John's Antigua on Tuesday 5th January, 2027 next ensuing for a Retail license in respect of premises known as "MIGHTY SAVINGS GROCEY" situated at Santana Building, Kentish Road in the Parish of St. John's, Antigua pursuant to section (11) (5) of the Licensing (Intoxicating Liquor) Act Cap 249 of the Laws of Antigua and Barbuda, Revised Edition 1992.

Dated the 29th day of October, 2026
 Dillon Nurse
 268-724-4930

Winning start for Antiguans in Battle of the Isles netball tourney



The Antigua and Barbuda senior national netball team

Antigua and Barbuda's senior national team got off to a winning start in the 2026 Battle of the Isles Tournament (BOIT), which is being held in St. Maarten from October 28 to November 1.

The Antiguans launched their campaign in the seven-team round-robin tournament with a commanding 71-7 victory over Saba at the LB Sports Auditorium in Phillipsburg on Wednesday.

Erverdine Parker-Barnarde produced 46 points from 54 shots, Joy Shaw sank 16 of her 31 attempts, and Tashana Bloomfield scored nine of her 14 tries for Antigua and Barbuda.

Tevonille Dunchie converted four of her eight shots, and Nicole Wil-

liams scored three of her eight attempts for Saba.

Host St. Maarten secured a 31-14 victory over St. Eustatius in the opening match of the tournament following the official opening ceremony on Wednesday.

St. Eustatius rebounded to snatch a narrow 26-23 victory over Anguilla in the most competitive match on the opening day.

The Commonwealth of Dominica also got off to a winning start, securing a 48-33 victory over St. Kitts and Nevis in the other opening-day encounter.

A 13-member team is representing Antigua and Barbuda at the tournament. The head coach is former national goal shooter Jamila Fitz-

Akiel Hazelwood is the assistant coach, Sanchez Martin is the team manager, and Durand Meade is the official to provide primary care.

This year's tournament is commemorating its 10th anniversary, bringing together teams from across the region for a celebration of competition, unity, and netball.

The 2026 Battle of the Isles is being held under the theme "Where Islands Compete, Unity Shines, Legacy Lives," with the event also highlighting the slogan "One Game, Many Is-

lands, One Passion, Stronger Together."

Organizers are also using the tournament to honour the legacy of the competition while looking ahead to its future, as participating islands converge in St. Maarten.

Antigua and Barbuda's participation is providing the selected players with an opportunity to compete against teams from other islands while representing the country on the regional stage.

The tournament is expected to combine high-level netball competition with the celebration of regional sporting connections as Battle of the Isles commemorates a decade of bringing island teams together.