

**TCI U15 Boys
Earn Historic
Silver at
Concacaf
Championship**



NEWSLINE

Journalism of Accuracy, Balance & Courage



**PG8 - Shantytown
Demolition Deals
Blow to TCI's Most
Wanted Criminal**



**PG14- CSEC Pass Rate
Rises 1.33% in 2025,
Turks and Caicos
Reports Steady Gains**

HISTORIC \$1.2 BILLION DEAL SIGNED



Government signs landmark \$1.2 billion development agreement with world-renowned Palace Resorts Group.

Palace Will Develop a 40-acre Resort Property in Leeward, Providenciales.





Commissioner Fitz Bailey (second right), fielding questions from members of the media on the site in Snake Hill, Blue Hills, where a major demolition operation of illegal shanties took place last week. Looking on from left are Kendal Grant – Assistant Commissioner of Police, and Superintendent of Police Dwight Gardiner.

Turks and Caicos Police Commissioner Urges Bail Reform After Repeat Offenders Re-Arrested

By Vivian Tyson NEWSLINE Editor-In-Chief

The head of the Royal Turks and Caicos Islands Police Force (RT-CIPF) has called for urgent action to tighten bail laws, warning that the repeated release of suspected dangerous criminals is undermining public safety and eroding police morale.

Commissioner Fitz Bailey described the situation as one of the most pressing frustrations facing his officers, saying the cycle of arrest, bail, and re-offending has become “a revolving door” in the justice system. “When you look at the profile of the people who are behind the crime, these are individuals we have arrested, put before the court, and they were granted bail,” Bailey said in recent remarks. “They repeat the offence, and they are granted bail again. This cycle is what we’re dealing with.”

Case Examples Highlight the Problem

The Commissioner pointed to a recent mass shooting incident in which 13 people were shot, several fatally, as an example of how bail decisions can have deadly consequences.

“Most of those individuals that we suspect to be involved, as a mat-

ter of case more than suspicion, had already been charged by the police for serious offences,” Bailey said. “They were placed before the court, and they were granted bail. One of them was charged for two firearms and was granted bail. Another was charged for firearms and was also granted bail.”

Bailey said these are not isolated incidents but part of a recurring pattern that places both the public and police officers at risk.

Call for Legislative Changes

The Commissioner is urging lawmakers to review and amend the territory’s bail laws to ensure that individuals charged with serious violent crimes, particularly involving firearms, remain in custody pending trial.

“We have to look at how we tighten the bail legislation to ensure that when people commit serious offences, they remain in custody,” he said. “I know the independence of the judiciary, and I am not infringing on that, but there has to be a balance.”

Bailey compared the justice system to a stream that flows through several key stages — investigation, prosecution, judiciary, and penal institutions — warning that if any

part fails, the whole system is weakened.

“The police can only do so much,” he said. “It frustrates the men and women of the force when you arrest somebody for a serious offence and a few weeks later that same person is out and recommits. We need the system to operate as one, not at cross purposes.”

Preventing Vigilantism

The Commissioner acknowledged that prolonged frustration can sometimes push officers in other jurisdictions to take the law into their own hands, a path he insists will not be tolerated in the Turks and Caicos Islands.

“I know of some forces where frustration led officers to act outside the law,” Bailey said. “We’re not going to do that here. But we do need that additional support to help us do our job effectively and safely.”

Firearms-Driven Crime Wave

According to Bailey, most murders in the Turks and Caicos Islands are committed with firearms, not knives, and often from a distance, making them harder to prevent and investigate.

“In many instances, based on my interaction with investigators, there are people who may have wit-

nessed crimes, but several refuse to support the investigation,” he said. This reluctance to come forward not only hampers ongoing cases but also emboldens offenders, who may believe they can act without consequence.

Balancing Rights and Public Safety

While the principle of “innocent until proven guilty” remains a cornerstone of justice, Bailey argues that the community’s safety must weigh heavily in bail decisions involving violent offenders.

“The evidence sometimes is overwhelming to show that these people are involved,” he said. “Justice is a stream, and it must be strong from start to finish.”

The Commissioner’s remarks come amid growing public concern over violent crime and the perception that offenders face few immediate consequences. His call for bail reform is likely to spark debate between those advocating for stronger public safety measures and those who warn against undermining the rights of the accused.

For Bailey, the message is clear: without changes, the police will continue to face the same suspects on the streets, often with tragic results.



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Security Council Moves to Fortify TCI Against Digital and Physical Threats

The Turks and Caicos Islands’ National Security Council (NSC) has set its sights on strengthening the nation’s cyber defences, enhancing maritime patrol capabilities, and improving community safety through a series of strategic initiatives. These include developing a comprehensive Cyber Security Strategy, acquiring a long-range deep-water patrol vessel, and undertaking a National Security Threat Assessment to address emerging risks. The meeting, held on Thursday, August 7, 2025, at the Governor’s Office in Raleigh House, Graceway Plaza, Providenciales, was co-chaired by Her Excellency

Governor Dileeni Daniel-Selvaratnam and Premier Hon. Charles Washington Misick. Senior officials in attendance included the Acting Deputy Governor, the Hon. Deputy Premier, the Hon. Attorney General, the Commissioner of Police, the National Security Advisor, the Permanent Secretary for National Security, the Commanding Officer of the TCI Regiment, and the Acting Director General of the TCI Border Force. Key updates to the Council included:

- Cybersecurity: Ongoing recovery efforts following the December 2024 cyber breach, alongside plans for a Cyber Security Strategy and Transfor-

mation Plan to build TCI’s cyber resilience.

- National Security Risks: Updates from the Intelligence Working Group on emerging threats and serious crime patterns.
- Threat Assessment: Launch of a National Security Threat Assessment, which will inform the National Security Risk Register and Development Strategy.
- Maritime Security: Progress toward securing a long-range patrol vessel to strengthen Maritime Domain Awareness.
- Community Redevelopment: Proposals from the Informal Settlement

Unit for redeveloping informal communities and establishing the ISU as a statutory agency.

- Defence Force Recruitment: Plans to expand enlistment criteria for Reservist and Permanent Staff ranks in the TCI Regiment.
- Community Safety: Infrastructure and supervision measures to safeguard communities.

The NSC reaffirmed its commitment to coordinated action across agencies to protect the nation from both digital and physical threats. Questions and follow-ups on national security matters can be directed to nationalsecurity@gov.tc.



JOB FAIR
Wednesday, August 20, 2025
8:30am

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PENNING THE DEAL: From left (seated) Gibran Chapur, Principal of the Palace Resorts; Her Excellency Dileeni Daniel Selvaratnam; Premier Hon. Washington Misick; and Attorney General Hon. Rhondalee Braithwaite-Knowles. Standing (from left) – Hon. E. Jay Saunders – Minister of Innovation, Technology and Information; Clifton Reader, VP of Palace Resorts Jamaica and Turks and Caicos; That's Neil Coles, Lawyer with Miller Simons; Hon. Shaun Malcolm – Minister of Home Affairs, Religious Affairs and Transportation; Sheryle McLaughlin, Investment Services Executive at Invest TCI; Minister of Tourism Hon. Zhavargo Jolly; Minister of Education, Youth, Sports and Library Service Hon. Rachel Taylor; Hon. Otis Morris – Minister of Public Service and Utility.

TCI Signs Historic \$1.2 Billion Deal with Palace Resorts

By Vivian Tyson *NEWSLINE Editor-In-Chief*

The Turks and Caicos Islands has secured the largest private investment in its history, with a landmark \$1.2 billion development agreement signed between the Government and the world-renowned Palace Resorts group.

Premier Hon. Washington Misick announced the deal on Thursday, hailing it as a “defining moment” for the nation’s economic future. The agreement will see The Palace Company, part of the luxury Palace Resorts family, develop a 40-acre resort property in Leeward, Providenciales.

“Yesterday, August 14, 2025 was a defining moment for the Turks and Caicos Islands as my government has signed a landmark development agreement with The Palace Company, part of the world-renowned Palace Resorts family – a brand celebrated globally for luxury, excellence, and exceptional guest experiences,” Premier Misick said.

The Premier emphasized that the investment is not simply about building another resort.

“This is far more than the construction of another resort,” he stated. “With an estimated investment of \$1.2 billion – the single largest private investment in our nation’s history

— and the development of a 40-acre property in Leeward, Providenciales, this project represents a bold step forward in shaping the future of our economy, our communities, and our place in the world.”

According to the Premier, the benefits of the project will be broad and long-lasting. Hundreds of jobs for Turks and Caicos Islanders are expected to be created during both the construction and operational phases, providing significant employment opportunities in multiple sectors.

“The benefits will be far-reaching, and the investment will create hundreds of jobs for Turks and Caicos Islanders during both construction and long-term operations,” Misick said. “It will stimulate the local economy, providing new opportunities for entrepreneurs and suppliers, while also boosting tourism revenues and reinforcing TCI’s status as a premier luxury destination.”

The development is expected to further strengthen the country’s position in the competitive high-end tourism market, while also being aligned with the Government’s sustainable development vision.

“Equally important, this development reflects our unwavering commitment to sustainable, high-quality growth — protecting our environment, pre-

serving our cultural heritage, and enhancing the beauty that makes these Islands unlike any other,” he said.

The Turks and Caicos Islands have long been recognized for their pristine beaches and crystal-clear turquoise waters. The Premier believes that this new partnership will also redefine the way the world sees the nation — as a place where ambition, investment, and excellence intersect. “The world already recognizes our unmatched beaches and turquoise waters. Through this partnership with Palace Resorts, we will also be known as a nation where vision, investment, and excellence come together to create opportunity and prosperity for all our people,” Misick said.

Palace Resorts, a globally acclaimed hospitality brand headquartered in Mexico, is known for its portfolio of luxury, all-inclusive properties across the Caribbean and Mexico. The company has earned a reputation for delivering exceptional guest experiences, blending high-end amenities with unique cultural and environmental features.

The Leeward development marks Palace Resorts’ first venture in the Turks and Caicos Islands. Industry analysts say the scale of the investment signals strong confidence in the territory’s tourism potential and political

stability.

While details of the resort’s design, amenities, and construction timeline are expected to be released in the coming months, Government officials have indicated that sustainability and environmental stewardship will be key guiding principles.

For the Premier, the agreement represents both an economic milestone and a generational opportunity.

“On behalf of my Government and the people of these Islands, I welcome Palace Resorts to our shores and look forward to the transformational impact this historic investment will deliver for generations to come,” Misick said.

The announcement comes amid sustained growth in the Turks and Caicos tourism sector, with visitor arrivals, airlift, and hotel occupancy rates reaching record levels in recent years. Observers say the new resort will help solidify the territory’s position as one of the Caribbean’s most sought-after luxury destinations.

As the \$1.2 billion project moves forward, residents, businesses, and investors alike will be watching closely to see how the promised economic and community benefits take shape — and how this historic agreement reshapes the future of the Turks and Caicos Islands.



We cannot be quiet on Haiti

There is steady news coverage of the horrific starvation of children in Gaza, but little about the “over one million boys and girls in Haiti facing critical levels of food insecurity”, according to the UN Children’s Fund (UNICEF).

It has been reported that since the beginning of this year, it has treated over 4,600 children with severe malnutrition, but this is only four per cent of the estimated 129,000 children who will suffer from starvation this year.

“Furthermore, with food insecurity on the rise, Haiti is also confronting a growing public health emergency,” notes UNICEF. “Across the country, health services are under immense pressure. Less than half of health facilities in the capital city are fully operational and two out of three of the major public hospitals are out of commission.”

Food For the Poor has been serving Haitians since 1986. “Haiti faces an unprecedented food crisis, ranking the worst in the world,” it notes on its website. “Despite agriculture playing a vital role in the economy, Haiti imports a staggering 80 per cent of its staple food — rice — due to abysmal yields within the agricultural sector. With just 10 per cent of agricultural lands irrigated, Haiti’s dependence on rainfall further exacerbates the challenges. The consequences

are dire, with one in three children experiencing stunted growth and 100,000 children suffering from acute malnutrition.”

While serving as chair of Digicel Jamaica Foundation, I visited Haiti and noted the kindness of its people and the promise of its beautiful children. Now I am hearing that dedicated professionals must leave their homes, relocating in order to get to work as certain roadways have been commandeered by gangs. Family members have been kidnapped but thankfully returned after stressful days. The UN has reported that 1.3-million Haitians have been displaced because of gang violence.

Only last week we learned that three Haitian police officers and an informant were killed while another has gone missing. In efforts to address this lawlessness, Haiti has sent soldiers for training in Mexico, while Canada has sent drones to assist the security forces.

A special gift I received from my Haitian colleagues is a painting of a serene seaside community with a colourful boat on the beach. They told me of their beautiful coastal areas to which tourists would flock in peaceful times. I remember sitting in on discussions with international business leaders who spoke positively about Haiti’s potential to become an ag-

ricultural success story.

“A Kenyan-led, UN-backed mission is helping Haiti’s national police to quell gang violence, but officers often are overwhelmed by powerful gangs with military-grade weapons,” notes an Associated Press report. “At least two Kenyan officers have been killed this year, both in Artibonite.” In that area and central Haiti, they note that, “From October 2024 until the end of June, more than 1,000 people were killed, 213 injured, and 620 kidnapped in Haiti’s Artibonite and central departments, according to the UN human rights office.”

Our own Jamaica Defence Force (JDF) has also been involved in logistics operations; they led the distribution of aid items after the 2010 earthquake.

Haiti is the most populous member of our Caricom family; its economy was hobbled by an exorbitant fine by the French Government after the Haitian army led by Toussaint L’Ouverture defeated Napoleon’s army in 1804. This was the first successful rebellion of enslaved people against their colonial masters. The 150 million gold francs “Independence Debt” imposed in 1825 was repaid over decades and finally cleared in 1947. Then came the tragic earthquake in 2010 in which nearly 250,000 Haitians perished and saw widespread

damage to the country’s infrastructure. Should the Caricom Ten Point Plan for Reparatory Justice, supported by the Denis O’Brien-led Repair Programme, succeed, Haiti could receive a well-deserved economic boost to strengthen its security forces, restore its health services, and realise its agricultural and industrial potential.

Jean Lowrie-Chin is an author and executive chair of PROComm, PRODEV, and CCRP. Send comments to lowriechin@aim.com.

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Shantytown Demolition Deals Blow to TCI's Most Wanted Criminal

By Vivian Tyson NEWSLINE Editor-In-Chief

The destruction of the “La Tortue” shantytown in Blue Hills has sent dangerous criminals, including the Turks and Caicos Islands’ most wanted man, Andral Percival, scrambling for cover, as authorities dismantle one of the country’s most notorious criminal hideouts. Commissioner of Police Fitz Bailey made the disclosure while taking members of the news media on a guided tour of the cleared area on Tuesday, August 12. He said the 28-acre settlement had long been a base of operations for dangerous criminals, including wanted man Andral Percival, and posed a major national security threat. “This was Percival’s stomping ground,” said Commissioner of Police Fitz Bailey. “He had access to over 120 unstructured buildings, which made it extremely difficult

for police to contain him during operations. Even when we came in with a plan, the layout allowed for easy escape and concealment. By removing these structures, we’ve reduced his opportunities to hide.” Commissioner Bailey pointed out that La Tortue’s dense and chaotic layout, a warren of unplanned, tightly packed shacks, made it “almost unpoliceable.” He described the conditions as unsafe for both residents and police, with narrow, winding paths and structures built in close proximity, hampering visibility and movement. Commissioner Bailey also pointed out that Percival is responsible for many murders in the Turks and Caicos Islands in recent time, pointing out that he had murdered two brothers earlier this year in a nearby community where fire destroyed several homes. It is believed that Percival was responsible for setting

the fire. “This was an area where the criminal underworld could thrive,” Commissioner Bailey further noted. “The destruction of this settlement eliminates a long-standing stronghold for Percival.” The clearance is part of Operation Dragon, a large-scale, multi-agency effort involving the Informal Settlements Unit, Planning Department, Turks and Caicos Islands Regiment, Border Force, local utility providers, and private contractors. The National Security Council has fully endorsed the action. Commissioner Bailey stressed that illegal settlements like La Tortue not only violate planning and immigration laws but also foster environments where organised crime can operate unchecked. “Illegal occupation and construction in La Tortue created unsafe, unregulated conditions that provided cover for criminal activity,” he said. “This coordinated effort sends a clear message — we will not tolerate illegal settlements that threaten public safety.” Officials also framed the operation as part of a broader immigration control strategy. By removing a large concentration of housing for undocumented migrants, they hope to discourage illegal entry into the Turks and Caicos Islands.

“If you are coming to TCI illegally, the opportunities for accommodation are shrinking,” one official warned. “We will continue to lessen those opportunities.” Authorities say the demolition also improves the ability of police to operate in Blue Hills. Environmental design, Commissioner Bailey noted, plays a key role in crime prevention. “If the place is not properly designed, it cannot be effectively policed,” he explained. “La Tortue’s layout made it nearly impossible to conduct operations safely and efficiently.” While the demolition is a significant step, police say it is only one part of a long-term strategy to disrupt and dismantle criminal networks. More proactive measures, targeted enforcement, and collaboration with community leaders are planned in the coming months. The cleared land will now be under closer scrutiny to ensure it is not reoccupied illegally. Authorities have pledged to work with relevant agencies to explore lawful, structured development options that benefit the community while maintaining security. “This is about reclaiming spaces for law-abiding citizens,” Commissioner Bailey said. “We will continue to act wherever the safety of our people is at risk.”



The cleared area where approximately 220 informal houses were destroyed



Turks&CaicosIslandsRedCross

PUBLIC ADVERTISEMENT – TENDER NOTICE

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)
FINANCIAL SERVICE PROVIDERS FOR
CASH AND VOUCHER PROGRAMME
TENDER REF NO: TCI FSP 001 – 25**

The Turks & Caicos (TCI) Red Cross is an independent, neutral and impartial humanitarian organisation dedicated to helping people in crisis. As part of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, it provides emergency assistance, disaster relief, and education in communities affected by natural disasters and other crises.

The TCI Red Cross invites proposals for the Cash and Voucher Programme targeted households to establish Framework Agreements. The potential Financial Service Providers (FSPs) are invited to submit their best offers. Framework agreements will be signed with the selected FSP/s possibly for the duration of 2 Years, with possibility of extension.

Details are provided in the RFP, which could be received by sending an email request to: director@redcross.org.tc (working days only) with Tender Reference in Subject line. Your request must contain (1) FSP Name (2) Contact Person Name (3) Designation (4) Contact number, (5) Email Address and (6) Physical Address.

Closing date and time: 16 Sep 2025 @ 04.00 p.m. local time

Proposals must be submitted on or before the above-mentioned date and time.

LATE BIDS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED

Crown Land Assistance Days Provide Crucial Support to Residents Seeking Land Security

The Turks and Caicos Islands Crown Land Unit (CLU) successfully hosted two Crown Land Assistance Days in July, providing targeted support to residents navigating the Crown Land process.

The events, which were held at Sunny Food Supermarket in Blue Hills and the Felix Morley Community Centre in Five Cays, welcomed a total of 54 attendees, all of whom engaged in one-on-one consultations with representatives from the Crown Land Unit to receive guidance on lease agreements, offer letters, and steps toward legal land ownership.

Participants included individuals currently holding residential leases or offer letters, as well as members of the public seeking guidance on how to obtain legal ownership of the parcels they occupy. A considerable number of attendees were found to be residing on Crown Land without formal authorization and expressed a strong interest in understanding the process for regularization and obtaining freehold title.

Speaking on the event, Keisha Holder-Lopez, Director of Crown Land said: "It became clear that many individuals are eager to do the right thing and formalize their land arrangements," she continued. "These events allowed



Crown Land Unit staff assisted customers using both on-site resources and resources only available in office.

us to meet residents where they are and provide the clarity and guidance needed to help them move forward." Crown Land Amnesty Programme: A Second Chance for Compliance Attendees also received information on the Crown Land Amnesty Programme, a special initiative designed to assist individuals who have fallen behind on their financial obligations related to residential Crown Land. Eligibility includes:

- Residential leaseholders with outstanding arrears
 - Individuals with expired offer letters due to non-payment
 - Applicants with partially fulfilled payment obligations
- Approved participants may qualify for waivers of interest and, in some cases, partial or full write-offs of outstanding arrears, subject to review and eligibility criteria.
- "This is a rare and time-sensitive op-

portunity for individuals to resolve outstanding matters and take meaningful steps toward land ownership," Holder-Lopez emphasized.

"We continue to urge all eligible persons to come forward and take advantage of the Amnesty Programme while it remains available."

Positive Community Feedback: The Crown Land Assistance Days were met with appreciation and strong community engagement. One attendee shared their thoughts following the event:

"It was a pleasure attending the event. The Crown Land team answered all my questions and listened to my concerns. They were very detailed and understood my challenges. I would like to say thank you for having this event where people can voice concerns and get a better understanding and clarification from the Crown Land Unit."

Director Lopez said that she encourages all residents to remain engaged, stay informed through official government channels, and reach out with any questions related to land regularization or the Amnesty Programme. The unit remains dedicated to its mission of empowering residents through legal land access and ownership, and to building stronger communities across the Turks and Caicos Islands.

United Way TCI – "Yes I Can Read" Intervention Program; Academic Year 2024–2025 End-of-Year Impact Report

By Claudine Ewing, United Way TCI CEO

On September 23, 2024, United Way TCI proudly resumed its "Yes I Can Read" Intervention Program, reaffirming our unwavering commitment to literacy and educational equity.

We continued operations at Enid Capron Primary and Thelma Lightbourne Primary Schools, delivering direct intervention services to 116 students during school hours, and supporting 11 Grade 6 students through our After-School Tutoring Program.

In April 2025, we expanded to Ianthe Pratt Primary School, adding 32 new students, a trained intervention teacher, and 2 dedicated volunteers to our team.

In total, we reached 159 students this academic year, a significant milestone in our mission to ensure that every child in the Turks and Caicos Islands can confidently say, "Yes, I can read."

Our dedicated team has grown to in-

clude:

- 3 Intervention Teachers
- 1 Teacher Assistant
- 7 Passionate Volunteers

The In-School Intervention Program operates as a pull-out model in small groups, running from 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM, Monday through Friday. The consistency, expertise, and enthusiasm of our educators have created a nurturing and empowering learning environment where measurable growth is not only expected, it's achieved.

Measured Success

We are proud to report:

- A remarkable 90% increase in reading levels among participating students
 - 100% pass rate in the CPEA (Caribbean Primary Exit Assessment) exam
- These achievements are a direct reflection of the collaborative efforts between our teachers, volunteers,

and most importantly our resilient students.

Key Achievements

- Grade-level promotions for students in intervention programs
- Significant improvement in reading and writing proficiency

• Recognition through Honor Roll and Honorable Mentions

- Successful advancement to middle school, supported by external exam performance

Voices of Impact

"Reading is the gateway for children that makes all other learning possible."

Barack Obama

"Within a short 11 months, I have witnessed a true transformation within my school. I am so grateful for the support of United Way Turks and Caicos and their dedicated donors for implementing such a life-changing program."

Mrs. Cox-Foster Principal, Thelma

Lightbourne Primary School

Looking Ahead

The "Yes I Can Read" Intervention Program has exceeded expectations in the 2024–2025 academic year. Our results are a testament to what can be accomplished when a community comes together to champion literacy.

In the coming year, we remain steadfast in our commitment to:

- Expand our reach to more students and schools
- Support all reading levels through personalized, evidence-based interventions
- Foster a lifelong love of reading in every child we serve

With Heartfelt Gratitude

To our educators, volunteers, school administrators, donors, and supporters, thank you.

Your continued partnership is transforming lives through literacy. Together, we are building a brighter, more literate future one child at a time.



Experience Turks and Caicos Showcases Luxury Appeal of the Turks and Caicos Islands at Polo Hamptons 2025

Experience Turks and Caicos (ETC), in collaboration with premier luxury hotel partners, the Turks and Caicos Hotel and Tourism Association (TCHTA), and Beche, a TCI-based lifestyle brand, took centre stage at Polo Hamptons 2025, one of New York’s most prestigious social and lifestyle events.

Held in the exclusive enclave of Bridgehampton on Saturday, July 19, Polo Hamptons welcomed a curated guest list of high-net-worth individuals, travel influencers, media professionals, and luxury brand leaders. The event offered a prime platform for strategic engagement, brand exposure, and promotion of the Turks and Caicos Islands as a premier destination for discerning travellers.

As a headline destination sponsor, Experience Turks and Caicos, represented by Mr. Courtney Robinson, Strategic Development Manager, stood shoulder to shoulder with globally recognised luxury brands. The destination’s pavilion offered a sophisticated representation of the islands’ signature beauty, culture, and elevated lifestyle, drawing significant interest from guests seeking exclusive travel experiences.

“The Turks and Caicos Islands continues to attract travellers who seek



exclusivity, authenticity, and exceptional service,” said Mr. Paul Pennicook, Interim CEO Consultant of Experience Turks and Caicos. “Polo Hamptons provided the perfect setting to tell our story directly to the luxury market, reinforcing our position as a must-visit destination for those who expect more from their travel experiences.”

Participating hotel partners were:

- Wymara Resort & Villas
- The Hartling Group
- Beach Enclave
- Ambergris Cay Private Island Resort

“Exhibiting at the Polo Hamptons show in Bridgehampton was an incredible opportunity for Experience Turks and Caicos to connect with our tourism partners and showcase the destination in a setting aligned with luxury and sophistication,” said Mr. Robinson. “Being part of this exclusive event allowed us to engage directly with high-net-worth individuals and influencers, reinforcing the Turks and Caicos Islands as the premier choice for upscale travel. Experience Turks and Caicos remains committed to building strategic, high-impact global partnerships that drive awareness, bookings, and sustainable tourism growth for the islands.

Get On the Bus

A Real-Life Experience put into Poetry by
Audley Astwood

It was August 7th.
But it felt like history hitting rewind
like Windrush in reverse,
like we weren't citizens anymore,
just brown skin in the wrong postcode
at the wrong time.
My manager warned me
You should go home.
Now.
Only said it to the minorities.
No meeting.

No memo.
Just melanin-based evacuation orders
dressed up like concern.
I didn't walk to the bus station.
I ran.
Shoelaces loose,
heartbeat louder than headlines,
checking my reflection in shop windows
to see if I looked too foreign to survive.
The bus pulled up,
door flung open like a last chance.

Driver didn't ask for a fare.
Didn't check my pass.
Didn't say good afternoon.
Instructions were clear
Get on.
Don't pay.
We're trying to leave before they show up.
And I looked around.
All of us...
Black.
Brown.
Beige.
Hijab-wrapped.
Turban-tight.

Accented English and silent prayers.
Not a white face in sight.
Except for the driver.
This wasn't transport.
This was triage.
A lifeboat driving through a country
that taught us to smile in assimilation
but never guaranteed we'd be safe.
Tell me again
how racism doesn't exist in England.
When a whole bus became
the Underground Railroad on four wheels,
and the only ticket needed
was your ethnic profile.
This isn't fiction.
This isn't metaphor.
This isn't deep poetic license.
This is
Reality in England
This is
run, or risk becoming the next mural.
Let them never forget the day England's bus system
turned into a colour-coded survival plan
And the fare? Fear,
paid in skin tone and silence.
No change. No ticket.
Just trauma in transit.

Genesis PII TCI Ltd As Chargee pursuant to its charge and the registered land ordinance , hereby gives notice that it will cause to be sold the property listed below by public auction, to be held at the Office of Stanbrook Prudhoe , address: 3rd Floor Graceway House,Graceway plaza Providenciales Turks and Caicos Island at 2:00 PM on August 22nd, 2025	
Location	Unit 1033 - 38 Marlin Street Providenciales, TCI
Description	The subject property located in phase one of the One on Marlin development which comprises a total of 35 self-contained apartments situated in 10 detached villas.
Title	60717-107K11
Proprietor	Tamika Thompson
A reserved price will be fixed on the parcel and a deposit of 10% is due immediately upon accepted bid. Conditions of Sale available upon request or at the Auction.Terms And conditions of sale by public Auction are available by request form	

WHERE IS MY PHONE?!

MY KEYS HAVE TO BE AROUND HERE SOMEWHERE!

WHERE IS MY WALLET?!

SOME LOST THINGS ARE SEEMINGLY IMPOSSIBLE FOR ME TO FIND.

ON THE OTHER HAND, WHENEVER ANY WEIGHT IS LOST...

....IT WILL ALWAYS EASILY FIND ME AGAIN.

NEWSLINETM COMICS

I'M READY FOR THE APPLE NOW, SON! I GOT ALL THE BAD SHOTS OUT OF MY SYSTEM!

HÄGAR
THE HORRIBLE
by DIK BROWNE

BUMP

HELGA! THIS BAG OF MONEY FELL OFF A WAGON! IT'S OUR LUCKY DAY!

NOT SO FAST!

THERE'S AN ADDRESS! WE HAVE TO RETURN THIS MONEY!

THAT'S THE PLACE!

A.I. did it.

STAHLER 10/16

LOOK, DEAR! THIS KIND COUPLE RETURNED OUR LOST MONEY!

SERVE THEM WHATEVER THEY WANT... ON THE HOUSE!

WE SHOULD HAVE LET THEM KEEP THE MONEY!

YOU WERE RIGHT, HAGAR! IT'S OUR LUCKY DAY!

I DON'T WORK FROM HOME. I LIVE AT WORK.

STAHLER 10/16

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YOUR 16-INCH CHEESE PIZZAS COST \$17.99 AND YOUR 12-INCH ONES COST \$14.99?

UM, CORRECT.

WE'D LIKE TO ORDER THE DIFFERENCE.

THE WHAT?

A 16-INCH-DIAMETER CIRCLE HAS AN AREA OF 201 SQUARE INCHES AND A 12-INCH-DIAMETER CIRCLE HAS AN AREA OF 113 SQUARE INCHES.

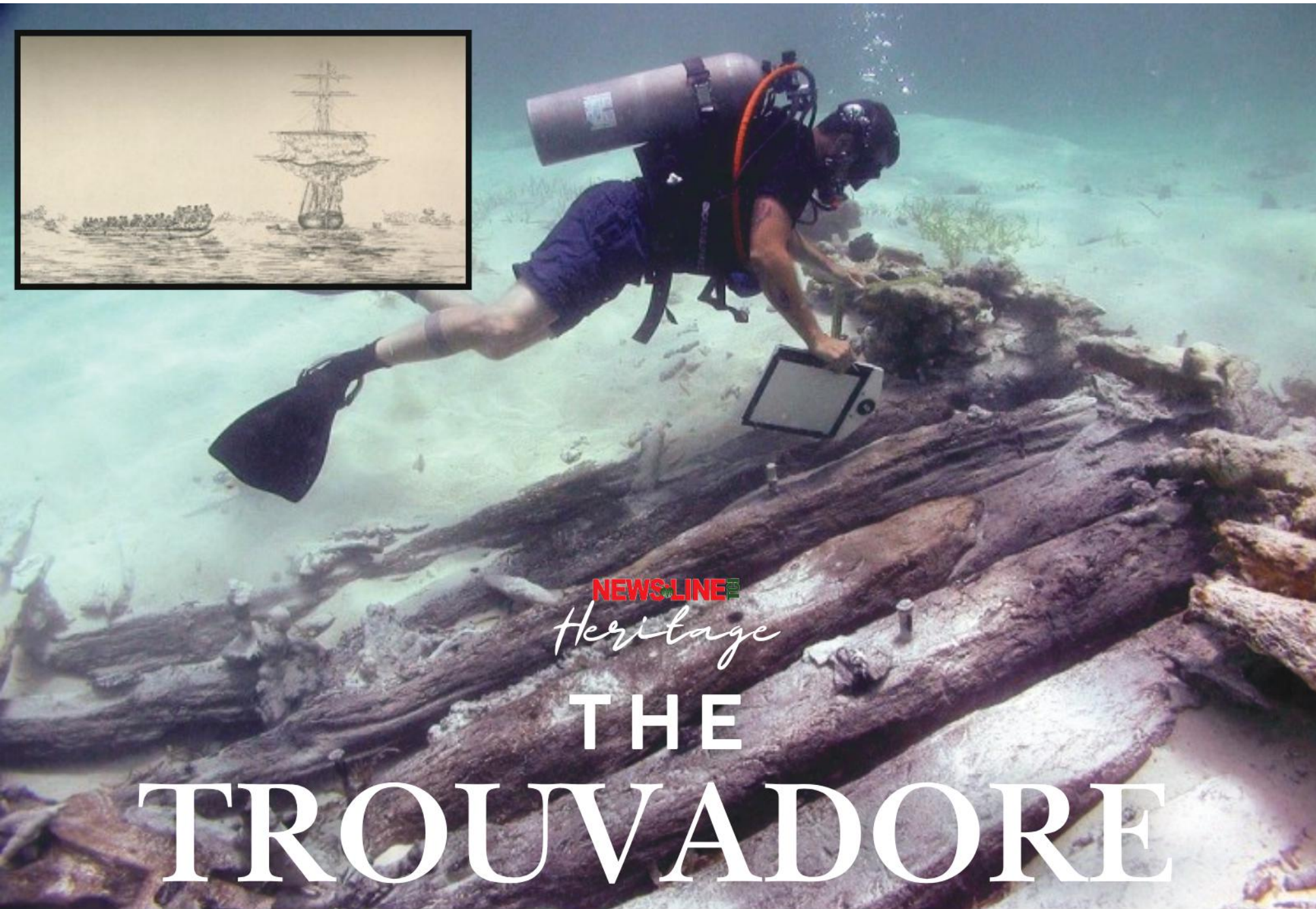
WE'D LIKE THE DIFFERENCE OF 88 SQUARE INCHES OF PIZZA.

HERE'S \$3.

MY FRIEND STEVE SAYS YOU VERY BRIEFLY STOPPED BY THE PIZZA SHOP TODAY.

YOUR FRIEND STEVE NEEDS A MATH TUTOR.

"Behold the secret to happiness."



NEWSLINE

Heritage

THE

TROUVADORE

The Trouvadore: The Shipwreck That Shaped a Nation

In August 1841, La Trouvadore was illegally transporting nearly 200 enslaved Africans from Africa to Cuba, despite the abolition of the transatlantic slave trade by the British Empire in 1807. As the vessel neared East Caicos, it struck a reef and sank. In a rare outcome for the time, almost all of the Africans aboard survived the wreck and swam ashore. Once on land, the survivors were taken into British custody in Grand Turk. Because slavery had been abolished across British territories, they were not re-enslaved, but instead liberated under British colonial law. Many would remain in the islands, where they integrated into local society and left an indelible mark on the cultural landscape.

A Hidden Chapter

For generations, the story of the Trouvadore was kept alive through oral history. Families in Grand Turk and Salt Cay passed down tales of African ancestors who arrived via shipwreck. However, the absence of official records or physical evidence kept the story on the fringes of public knowledge.

That changed in the early 2000s, when a joint team of archaeologists and marine scientists, led by the Turks and Caicos National Museum, along with support from the Smithsonian Institution and NOAA, embarked on a project to locate the lost vessel. In 2004, they announced the discovery of what was believed to be the remains of La Trouvadore off the coast of East Caicos. The find confirmed one of the most important, and least documented, episodes in the country’s heritage.

From Tragedy, a Legacy

The survivors of the Trouvadore are believed to have played a significant role in shaping the demographic and cultural identity of the Turks and Caicos Islands. Many of today’s Turks and Caicos Islanders can trace their ancestry back to those nearly 200 souls who emerged from the sea not as captives, but as free people on a new land.

Elements of African heritage, from bush medicine and rhythmic drumming to communal storytelling, bear the imprint of these unexpected settlers. For many families, the story is personal, rooted in bloodlines, surnames, and spiritual beliefs handed down through generations.

Memory and Meaning

The Trouvadore reminds us that the roots of Turks and Caicos are not just colonial or European—they are African. It is a story of endurance and dignity, of people who, even in the face of dehumanisation, survived, rebuilt, and helped shape a nation.

Though time may erode wood and sail, the impact of La Trouvadore is etched in the living memory of a people who turned a shipwreck into a new beginning—and helped shape a nation from its wreckage.

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Olsen, F. (2008). "Freedom from the Sea: The Trouvadore Africans in the Turks and Caicos." *Caribbean Studies Journal*, 36(2), 75-89.
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Turner, G. (2010). *Echoes from the Deep: Marine Archaeology and Cultural Memory in the Caribbean. UNESCO Journal of Heritage Studies*, 12(3), 44-60.

CSEC Pass Rate Rises 1.33% in 2025, Turks and Caicos Reports Steady Gains

The Turks and Caicos Islands recorded a 1.33 percentage point increase in its national pass rate for the 2025 Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate (CSEC) examinations, reaching 70.97% for Grades I–III.

The Ministry of Education says the results show steady progress and notable improvement in key subject areas. A total of 531 students — 245 males and 286 females — registered for the May/June exams, producing 2,823 subject entries. Of these, 2,694 exams were sat across 29 subjects, with a strong 95.43% participation rate.

English and Mathematics Performance

English A pass rates surged to 75.91%, a 5.91 percentage point jump from 2024 and the highest result since 2020. Mathematics, which had seen years of decline, rose slightly from 31.50% to 32.62%. The Ministry attributes the upturn to targeted initiatives such as the hiring of additional mathematics teachers, the national Mathematics Jeopardy competition, and participation in a University of the West Indies-led programme to enhance teaching methods.

Grades Breakdown

Grade I: 17.63% of entries (up 1.40 percentage points)

Grade II: 42.63% — the largest share, showing 12.2% growth

Grade III: 39.74% (12% growth)

The Ministry reported gains across all grade levels, with particularly strong



Hon. Rachel Taylor, Minister of Education, Youth, Sport and Culture addresses interns on Friday, August 15, at Beaches Resorts in Providenciales, as they graduated from the programme.

growth in the middle tiers.

High and Low-Performing Subjects

Pass rates of 90% or above were achieved in Biology, Food, Nutrition and Health, Family and Resource Management, and Industrial Technology (Building). Four subjects — Integrated Science, Music, Physical Education and Sport, and Visual Arts — posted perfect 100% pass rates. In contrast, Mathematics, Additional Mathematics, Industrial Technology (Electrical), Geography, and English B recorded pass rates below 50%, remaining priority areas for improvement.

Gender Trends

While females outnumbered males by more than 300, both groups displayed mixed outcomes. Female candidates

generally performed more consistently at higher grade levels, while males showed slightly greater representation at both the top and bottom ends of the scale.

Minister’s Remarks

Minister of Education, Youth, Sports and Culture, Hon. Rachel Marshall Taylor, commended the dedication behind the results.

“These results represent more than statistics — they reflect the dedication of our students, teachers, and families across the Turks and Caicos Islands. I commend each student, their teachers, and school administrators.”

She welcomed the turnaround in key areas.

“While we celebrate the notable

improvement in English A and the encouraging upturn in Mathematics after years of decline, we recognize that our work is far from complete.

“The growth we see across all grade levels, particularly in the middle tiers, demonstrates that our strategic interventions are beginning to bear fruit. The recruitment of additional mathematics teachers, our Mathematics Jeopardy initiative, and our partnership with UWI are concrete examples of how targeted support can drive positive change.”

The Minister also addressed areas needing urgent attention.

“However, we must address the subjects where pass rates remain below 50%. These areas require our immediate attention and innovative approaches. Our recent educational mission to Jamaica and our commitment to strengthening regional partnerships will inform our strategies moving forward.”

She further highlighted the strong participation rate.

“I am particularly encouraged by the 95.43% participation rate, which shows our students are engaged and committed to their academic pursuits. As we continue implementing our ‘Bridges to Brilliance’ vision, we remain focused on ensuring every child in our beautiful islands has access to quality education that prepares them for success in an increasingly competitive global environment.”

TWO AWARDED CHEVENING SCHOLARSHIPS

The Governor’s Office is pleased to announce that two outstanding individuals from the Turks and Caicos Islands have been awarded Chevening Scholarships to pursue their master’s degree in the UK.

- Rashaunda Cooke MSc Forensic Investigation
- Zaria Ingham MA International Public Relations and Global Management

Her Excellency the Governor, Dileeni Daniel-Selvaratnam, warmly congratulated the awardees, stating: ‘We are immensely proud of Rashaunda Cooke and Zaria Ingham on being awarded the prestigious Chevening Scholarship. This achievement is a testament to their dedication, hard work and exceptional capabilities. As they pursue their studies in the UK, I know that the Turks and Caicos Islands stands proudly behind them. We look forward to the knowledge, growth and global perspective they will gain and the meaningful contributions they will make upon their



Rashaunda Cooke (left) and Zaria Ingham.

return to our Islands.’

Rashaunda Cooke and Zaria Ingham join a distinguished network of Turks and Caicos Islands Chevening Alum-

ni. They are both set to depart for their studies in the upcoming weeks. Applications are now open for the 2026/2027 Chevening Awards, providing full funding for emerging lead-

ers to undertake a master’s degree in the UK. We encourage our future leaders to apply for this highly regarded opportunity. For full details on eligibility and how to apply for the 26/27 academic intake, visit: chevening.org/scholarships

The scholarships are open to individuals from all backgrounds who can demonstrate that they have the commitment required to become future leaders and can show how their postgraduate studies will help them to create positive change in their country. The scholarship offers full financial support for scholars to study for any eligible master’s degree at over 150 UK universities whilst also gaining access to a wide range of exclusive academic, professional and cultural experiences.

Deadline

All applications must be submitted online by 7 October 2025 at 12:00 GMT / 07:00 EST via: Turks and Caicos Islands (Chevening Scholarship) | Chevening.

Life Line

St. Thomas Parish Church:
The Oldest Church in the TCI



Life line Church Directory

Looking for a worshipping house to praise God and fellowship with members of the body of Christ, here is a list of some of the available sanctuaries you can attend throughout the Turks and Caicos Islands.

Firm Foundation Ministries International Lee Street, South Caicos. Telephone: 649-348-3581 Christ is the Answer Ministry, George Alley Off Aviation Drive, Providenciales Tel: 241-8030 One Nation Empowerment Center Church Ministry, Suite #12 Alliance Business Center, Princess Drive, Grace Bay, Providenciales. Tel: (649) 244-6194. Email: apostleyoung1952@yahoo.com. Touch of Love Ministries International Center Industrial Park, Five Cays, Providenciales Tel: 941-4903 Fax: 941-7731 Abundant Life Ministries International P.O. Box 696 Christian City, Leeward Highway, Providenciales Tel:941-941-4750 Fax: 941-4755 Anglican Church Rectory Grant Turk, Front Street, Grand Turk. Tel:946-2289 Bethany Baptist Church, Blue Hills, Providenciales Tel:941-4803 / 941-5632 / 941-5118 Church of God of Prophecy, Lower Bight, Providenciales Tel: 941-8854 Bible Study Ministries, Grand Turk Tel:946-1866 Calvary Baptist Church, South Caicos. Tel:946-3212 Harvest Bible Chapel TCI, Leeward Highway, Long Bay, Providenciales. Tel: 1649 333-2009 Email: hbctciinfo@gmail.com. https://www.harvesttci.tc.	Firm Foundation Ministries International 19 Honour Lane, Behind Smart Supermarket , Providenciales. Telephone: 649-332-6240 Church of God of Prophecy, Providenciales Tel:941-3438 Roman Catholic Church, Providenciales, Tel: 941-5136 Faith Tabernacle Church of God, Providenciales, Tel:946-4073 New Testament Church of God, Orea Alley, Grand Turk Tel:946-2175 New Testament Church of God, South Caicos Tel:946-3631 Methodist Church, Grand Turk Tel:946-2352 Healing Waters Ministries, Blue Hills Providenciales Tel: 941-5867 House of Prayer Church of God, Long Bay Road Providenciales Tel: 941-8309 Kingdom Hall of Jehovah’s Witnesses, Darrell Road, Grand Turk Tel:946-2727 Mount Mariah Baptist Church, Conch Bar Middle Caicos Tel:946-6205 New Beginning Harvest Ministry, Pond Street, Grand Turk Tel:946-1759 New Testament Church of God Orea Alley P.O. Box 495 Blue Hills, Providenciales Tel: 946-1255 Airport Road, South Caicos Tel:231-2402	Firm Foundation Ministries International Waterloo Road, Grand Turk. Telephone: 649-332-624 Paradise Baptist Church, Five Cays, Providenciale Tel:941-4349 Revival Faith Center, North Backsalina, Grand Turk Tel:946-2349 Salem Baptist Church, Mission Folly, Grand Turk Tel:946-2565 Solid Rock Apostolic Ministries International, Discovery Bay Providenciales Tel: 946-5181 St. Monica’s Anglican Church P.O. Box 866 Cheshire Hall Providenciales Tel: 946-4046 Fax:946-4046;941-8499 Turks and Caicos Mission of Seventh Day Adventists, P.O. Box 803, Providenciales United Pentecostal Church, Brown’s Plaza, Leeward Highway, Providenciales Tel: 956-5852 Wesleyan Methodist Church, Blue Hills, Providenciales Tel: 946-4075; 941-4223; 941-3596 <i>Editor’s Note: If your Ministry is not listed and/or you would like for it to be part of the NEWSLINETCI Church Diary, contact us at:contact@newslinetci.com</i>
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CLASS OF 1975 CELEBRATES 50TH REUNION – REUNITED AND IT FEELS SO GOOD

Fifty years after walking out of the halls of Turks and Caicos High School (now the H.J. Robinson High in Grand Turk), 35 proud members of the historic Class of 1975 reunited from near and far for four unforgettable days of memories, laughter, and legacy. From July 24–28, they honored their classmates, paid tribute to those who have passed, and made history once again—unveiling plans for a permanent monument at H.J. Robinson High School. The celebrations were filled with nostalgia, recognition, and a shared pride in their contributions as trailblazers, nation builders, and lifelong friends.





HYDRATION IS MORE THAN JUST WATER

Hydration Isn't Just About Water - It's About Minerals, Too.

By Monica Uttamchandani
Holistic Health Coach - Turks and Caicos

When you think about staying hydrated, what comes to mind? Probably drinking more water. And while water is essential, it's only part of the picture. True hydration means getting water into your cells - where it can actually support energy production, digestion, detoxification, and focus. And for that to happen, your body needs electrolytes, not just plain water. Without enough minerals - especially sodium, potassium, and magnesium. Water can move through your system without being properly absorbed. That's why you can drink glass after glass and still feel tired, foggy, bloated, or even dehydrated. It's not about how much water you drink, it's about how well your body is able to use it.

Why Electrolytes Matter

Electrolytes are minerals that carry an electric charge and play a crucial role in:

- Maintaining fluid balance inside and outside your cells
- Supporting nerve and muscle function
- Regulating blood pressure and heart rhythm
- Helping your body absorb and retain hydration

When electrolyte levels are low - which can happen due to stress, sweating, travel, caffeine, alcohol, illness, or simply not eating enough mineral-rich food. The water you drink won't hydrate you the way it should. You might notice symptoms like:

- Low energy or midday fatigue
- Brain fog and poor concentration
- Headaches or dizziness
- Dry mouth or dry skin
- Bloating or water retention

- Constipation
- Cravings for salty foods
- Feeling thirsty but never quite satisfied

In many of these cases, your body isn't just asking for more water, it's asking for better hydration. Simple Ways to Improve Hydration - Starting today you don't need fancy powders or expensive drinks to hydrate well. Just a few thoughtful tweaks to your daily habits can make a noticeable difference.

1- Add a pinch of sea salt and lemon to your water

This simple mix gives you sodium and trace minerals, supports adrenal health, and makes water more bioavailable. Especially helpful first thing in the morning when your body is naturally more dehydrated.

2- Sip on coconut water, or mix it with regular water

Coconut water is a natural source of potassium and other electrolytes. If the taste is too strong, try mixing half and half with filtered water for a gentler option.

3- Eat water-rich foods

Hydration isn't only about what you drink - what you eat matters too. Include foods like cucumber, watermelon, celery, oranges, berries, and leafy greens. These deliver both fluid and minerals in a highly absorbable form.

4- Try a clean electrolyte mix

If you're active, sweating, breastfeeding, or recovering from illness, consider an unsweetened or naturally sweetened electrolyte powder - ideally one without artificial colours, sweeteners, or additives. Look for options with sodium, potassium, and magnesium. LMNT is a good option sold at Gourmet.

5- Be mindful of dehydrating habits

Coffee, alcohol, and energy drinks can act as diuretics, meaning they increase fluid loss. You don't have to cut them out completely, but balance them out - for every cup of coffee or glass of wine, add an extra glass of mineral-rich water.

6- Hydrate consistently, not just when you're thirsty

By the time you feel thirsty, your body may already be slightly dehydrated. Aim to sip water throughout the day, especially between meals and after waking up.

The Connection Between Hydration and How You Feel

When your cells are well-hydrated, every system in your body works better. You might notice:

- More consistent energy
- Less brain fog and better focus
- Fewer headaches
- Smoother digestion and regular bowel movements
- Healthier skin and improved glow
- Better mood and mental clarity

Even hunger cues can shift. What often feels like hunger or cravings may actually be thirst in disguise. Staying hydrated can also help regulate your appetite naturally.

This is why hydration is foundational. It's one of the simplest, most overlooked wellness tools. And the best part? It doesn't have to be complicated.

Start Small - Stay Consistent

Supporting hydration is less about how many litres you drink, and more about creating a sustainable rhythm with minerals, real food, and mindful sips throughout the day.

You don't need to overhaul everything, just start with one or two of these changes. Maybe you add sea salt to your morning water, eat more hydrating fruit with breakfast, or swap your afternoon coffee for a coconut water spritz. Over time, these small upgrades compound, and you begin to feel the difference in your energy, digestion, mood, and skin.

For more daily wellness guidance and sustainable health habits, follow @balancedbymonica on Instagram.

Monica Uttamchandani is a certified Holistic Health Coach based in the Turks and Caicos Islands, supporting men and women in creating grounded, nourishing lives, one breath at a time. She also consults in person at The Elephant Rooms in Salt Mills, Providenciales.



Genesis PII TCI Ltd As Chargee pursuant to its charge and the registered land ordinance , hereby gives notice that it will cause to be sold the property listed below by public auction, to be held at the Office of Stanbrook Prudhoe , address: 3rd Floor Graceway House,Graceway plaza Providenciales Turks and Caicos Island at 10:00 AM on Friday June 13th 2025



Location	Rio Drive, 60809-82 Juba Sound The Bight
Description	Main residence with 2 bedrooms, 2 bathroom, open dining/living area, kitchen and covered rear concrete porch; there is lower level one bedroom apartment with open living accommodations, laundry room; there is a detached double car garage with an adjoining bedroom and bathroom.
Title	60809/82
Proprietor	Brennan Missick
Aproximate Area	0.64 Acre
A reserved price will be fixed on the parcel and a deposit of 10% is due immediately upon accepted bid. Conditions of Sale available upon request or at the Auction.Terms And conditions of sale by public Auction are available by request form	



Rotaract Club of Grand Turk Celebrates Sweet 16; A Legacy of Impact and Inspiration

On August 7th, 2009, a spark was lit that would grow into a blazing torch of service, leadership and community transformation. That spark was the founding of our beloved Rotaract Club of Grand Turk, led by the visionary Ms. Odessa Forbes, our very first president. Sixteen years later, that torch is burning brighter than ever, and we're celebrating in style! From humble beginnings to headline-worthy achievements, The Rotaract Club of Grand Turk has made a meaningful impact across the community. Whether it's mentoring youth, supporting local initiatives, or championing causes close to our hearts, we've never stopped showing up, speaking out, and serving with purpose.

Club of the Year 2022

Under the dynamic leadership of President Kenya Jones, we soared to new heights and were proudly named Club of the Year in 2022. It was a year of bold projects, deep connections, and unstoppable energy, which is a true testament to what happens when passion meets purpose.

Sweet Sixteen Celebration

To mark our Sweet 16 Anniversary, we threw a celebration nothing short of spectacular. Over three days, we laughed, reflected, and recommitted ourselves to the mission that brought us together. We were honoured to host our District Governor for District 7020, William "Bill" Aiken and his beautiful wife Ella, who attended our joint meeting with our Sponsor Club, the Rotary Club of Grand Turk. As part of our Sweet 16 celebration, we also rolled up our sleeves for a heartfelt community service initiative at the Sylvia C. Melhado Aged Care and Special Needs Centre in Grand Turk. With District Governor Bill joining us in action, the moment was a powerful re-minder that true leadership transcends border and that service is a universal language of compassion and impact. Of course, no milestone is complete without a party! Our members came together for a dazzling Sweet 16 celebration filled with joy, memories, and a whole lot of dancing. It was a moment to honour our journey and toast to the future.



Leading the Way Forward

As we step boldly into our 16th year, the Rotaract Club of Grand Turk is fueled by the fresh vision and vibrant leadership of President Nia Jones, steering us under the district theme NEXUS: Nurturing Excellence Through Unity and Service. With her at the helm, we're embracing new challenges, deepening our impact, and expanding our reach like never before. Her passion and purpose are igniting a new chapter, one that uplifts, inspires and connects us all. The future is bright and we are more ready than ever. As we look ahead, we carry the legacy of Past President Odessa Forbes, the momentum of Past President Kenya Jones, and the unwavering spirit of every member who has walked this path with us. Sixteen years down and we are just getting started!

Ready to Lead, Serve, and Level Up? Join the Rotaract Club of Grand Turk!

If you are passionate about making a difference, meeting inspiring people, and having a blast while doing it then Rotaract is calling your name! Rotaract is not just a club. It is a movement. A global network of young change-makers who roll up their sleeves, dream big, and take action. Whether you are into community service, professional development, international travel, or

just vibing with a crew that gets things done, Rotaract is your launchpad.

Here is How to Join the Fun

To become an official member, all you need to do is show up, get involved, and bring your passion. Here is the exciting path to membership:

1. Attend 3 consecutive meetings
2. Join 1 social event (yes, we love to party with a purpose!)
3. Participate in 1 community service project

4. Participate in 1 fundraiser
It is that simple and that awesome! You will get to experience the heart of Rotaract while making new friends, building your skills, and creating real impact.

Why You will Love being a part of the Rotaract Club of Grand Turk

Joining Rotaract is not just about meetings and service, it is your ticket what discovering you are truly capable of, making lifelong connections, and having an absolute blast while making a difference. You will meet amazing people from all walks of life and form friendships that go far beyond the club. You will connect with a global network of inspiring leaders who share your passion for making a difference. As you dive into projects and experiences, you will build powerful skills that boost your career and skyrocket your confidence. Your impact will be real, lasting, and felt in your community. And the best part? You will have tons of fun doing something that truly matters.

So, if you're ready to turn your passion into purpose, your ideas into, and your weekends into something unforgettable, Rotaract is your next adventure.

Ready to join the movement? Reach out to the Rotaract Club of Grand Turk today! DM us on Instagram **@rotaract-clubgdt** or message us on Facebook at **Rotaract Club of Grand Turk**.





Hall & Musgrove Reunion 2025 Unites Generations in Four-Day Celebration

The Hall & Musgrove Family Reunion brought together relatives from near and far for four days of celebration, heritage, and togetherness from July 31st to August 3rd. The gathering opened in Sandy Point with a spirited Praise Party at Ebenezer Baptist Church on Thursday evening. On Friday, the focus shifted to Kew, where families joined the Emancipation Day Parade and enjoyed an elegant All-White Affair. Whitby came alive on Saturday with a joyful Beach and Family Day, filled with laughter, games, and fellowship. The weekend concluded on Sunday with a moving church service at Providence Baptist Church. This year's reunion also honored 92-year-old Mrs. Anarean Misick, recognized Robinson Variety Store as the island's oldest operating business, and featured a Twin Island Scavenger Hunt, making it a memorable tribute to the family's enduring love and legacy. Premier Hon. Washington Misick also visited and participated in the event.





Robotic Cardiac Surgery delivers better outcomes for patients

ROBOT-ASSISTED CARDIAC surgery is heart surgery done through very small incisions in the chest. The surgeons use tiny instruments and robot-controlled tools to do heart surgery in a way that is much less invasive than open-heart surgery. This surgery is often called robotic cardiac surgery.

Robot-assisted surgeries have been used for many different heart-related procedures. These include valve surgery, coronary artery bypass, cardiac tissue ablation, heart defect repair, and tumour removal.

The main benefit of robot-assisted cardiac surgery is that it is less invasive compared with open-heart surgery. Smaller incisions can mean that you can spend less time in the hospital, heal faster, and return to activities more quickly.

Dr Makoto Hashimoto, director of robotic cardiac surgery at Baptist Health Miami Cardiac and Vascular Institute, said robotic surgery allows them to treat serious heart conditions with minimal trauma to the body. "Instead of the large incisions and chest opening required in traditional heart surgery, we use robotic technology to perform complex procedures through small, precise incisions between the ribs," Dr Hashimoto said.

"The surgeon's hand movements are seamlessly translated into precise, real-time movement of instruments. We have a degree of motion that is better than the human hand, a magnified field of vision, and the ability to use many instruments simultaneously," he added.

The difference, he said, is remarkable. "Patients often go home within days and are



back to normal activities within one or two weeks. It is still heart surgery, but the experience is completely different," Dr Hashimoto said.

One of the main benefits of robot-assisted cardiac surgery is that it has fewer risks than open-heart surgery. The surgeon does not have to cut through the breastbone to open your chest. This removes many of the complications of open-heart surgery.

Robot-assisted cardiac surgery still requires anaesthesia. As with any kind of surgery, there are always risks, including heart attack, stroke, bleeding, problems linked to using anaesthesia, arrhythmias, including a need for a permanent pacemaker, infection and death.

Robotic surgery is particularly effective for conditions like mitral valve disease and coronary artery disease that previously required opening the chest and spreading the ribs.

"Because robotic heart surgery is performed through several tiny incisions, patients experience shorter hospital stays, lower risk of infection, reduced blood loss during surgery, less pain and need for pain medications, more minor and less visible scars, and a faster return to regular activities," Dr Hashimoto said.

"Our typical postoperative stay has been reduced to just two days for most patients, with a mean return-to-work of two weeks and 45 per cent of patients returning to work after just one week," he added.

While robotic technology, he said, handles the instruments, a highly trained heart surgeon always leads the surgery. "The robot enhances human skill; it does not replace it. The technology gives us unprecedented precision and control, but human expertise and decision-making remain at the centre of every procedure," Dr Hashimoto said.

As technology improves, even more cardiac procedures will be able to safely be performed robotically, he said. "In the future, we will be looking at telesurgery, where the patient and the surgeon are not even in the same facility. This will be a game-changer for those in rural areas or in countries that do not have the ability to provide cardiac surgery. We are entering an era of innovation that combines the best of precision medicine and patient comfort," he added.

Baptist Health South Florida is an academic and clinical affiliate of Florida International University. A not-for-profit organisation supported by philanthropy and committed to its charitable mission of medical excellence.

Dr Hashimoto said heart surgery has advanced significantly in recent years, and what was once associated with large incisions, long hospital stays, and weeks of recovery now offers a safer, faster path to healing.

"At Baptist Health Miami Cardiac and Vascular Institute, we are able to provide world-class cardiac care with minimal trauma to the body, and patients are often amazed at how quickly they can return to their normal lives. The future of heart surgery is here, and it is more patient-friendly than ever before," he said.

Bikram yoga – Fitness and wellness to change your life

DO YOU want to feel more alive when you are practising yoga? Do you like your yoga hot! Hot yoga is the practice of performing yoga poses in a warm room, encouraging practitioners to sweat out negative emotions and push themselves harder during the session. Bikram yoga is a type of hot yoga that turns the heat up even hotter.

For years, Yolande Lloyd-Small enjoyed various forms of yoga, and it was more recreational than a way of life. For her, exercise had to be physical and high-intensity, otherwise, what was the point? As a marathon enthusiast, she finished five marathons over a decade, with intense cross-country cycling.

However, her journey took a transformative turn after she lost both of her parents to cancer, two years apart. "That painful period sparked a personal quest for deeper meaning and healing in my life and it led me to discover Bikram yoga, which has since become a powerful part of my purpose," Lloyd-Small said.

She established Bikram Yoga Jamaica (BYJ) in 2014 out of a fervent desire to bring world-class yoga to her home country. It marked a significant shift from practising recreationally to sharing the practice professionally and purposefully. This transition was important because it allowed her to introduce others to a method that had done so much for her – body, mind, and spirit.

Yoga classes, in general, offer numerous physical benefits, including boosting full-body flexibility and promoting heart health. Bikram yoga is also a good low-impact exercise, meaning the slow-moving poses won't cause extra stress to your joints like high-impact exercise.

Headlines Delivered to Your Inbox Sign up for The Gleaner's morning and evening newsletters.

"My entry into the fitness and wellness world was born out of personal necessity. Years of running had taken a toll on my knees, and I needed a form of exercise that could help me recover and maintain my strength. Yoga, and particularly Bikram yoga, became that solution. It helped rehabilitate my body and centred my mind during a deeply emotional chapter of my life," Lloyd-Small said.

Bikram yoga is a 90-minute practice consisting of 26 postures and two breathing exercises, all performed in a room heated to 105 degrees Fahrenheit. The heat facilitates safe stretching, detoxification, and mental focus. At Bikram Yoga Jamaica, they offer Bikram yoga classes, wellness consultations, workshops, and yoga retreats that allow for deeper immersion into the practice.

"Fitness and wellness – especially through Bikram yoga – transformed not only my physical health, but also my mental resilience. Practising yoga in a heated environment demands intense focus and endurance. Over time, this practice has helped me build both physical strength and mental clarity. It is a discipline that challenges you to be fully present, and that presence is what truly changed me," Lloyd-Small said.

Maintaining a healthy lifestyle, she said, is crucial for overall well-being. "I believe deeply in the phrase: 'Healthy person, happy life'. When your body is functioning at its best, everything else in your life, from your career to your relationships – can flow more harmoniously. It is an act of self-respect and self-preservation," she said.

All forms of yoga are ideal for lowering stress

levels and Bikram yoga is no exception. In fact, it has become one of the more popular styles, preferred by beginners and seasoned veterans alike for helping to deal with stress in a natural and healthy manner.

A heated environment is going to make it easier for you to achieve the poses that are part of any hot yoga class. After all, stretching after a basic warm-up is a lot safer and more effective than stretching your muscles cold. So, a Bikram classroom can increase your flexibility in areas such as the shoulders, lower back, and hamstrings.

This is another benefit that can be gained through just about any type of yoga class. However, Bikram Yoga is ideal for bringing relaxation and peace of mind. This can work towards reducing feelings of depression and help to adjust your mood, so the symptoms that come with a depressed state of mind become muted.

It is not hard to guess that Bikram yoga is going to make you sweat a whole lot. You will sweat more in one of these classes than you will in another that does not bring up the room temperature. But when it comes to getting healthy skin, sweating can be so good for you, as it increases the flow of oxygenated blood to the skin cells which nourishes your skin from within.

"As for the myths, I allow the practice to speak for itself. Bikram yoga is an open-eyed meditation, grounded in physical discipline rather than spiritual doctrine. It's not a religion, and we do not encourage clients to close their eyes. Instead, we help them connect with themselves in a focused and accessible way," Lloyd-Small said.

Bikram Yoga Jamaica also recently attended a retreat in New York, United States, that

allowed participants to step away from the noise and distraction of daily life and immerse themselves fully in self-care and healing.

"We provided a sanctuary where individuals could reset, rejuvenate, and reconnect with themselves, nature, and a supportive community. In that space, transformation becomes truly possible," Lloyd-Small said.

The retreats, she said, are carefully curated experiences that blend wellness, culture, and community. "'BYJ Does New York City' was more than just a getaway. It was a sophisticated immersion into the lifestyle that our community embraces. These experiences are intentionally chosen to nourish the mind, body, and spirit," Lloyd-Small explained.

"By stepping outside of our usual environments and engaging in beauty, culture, and connection, participants return home rejuvenated, inspired, and more deeply grounded in their personal well-being. It was a celebration of balance – between luxury and mindfulness, relaxation and enrichment," she added.



Miss Universe Jamaica Dr Gabrielle Henry looks forward to finals in Thailand

Dr Gabrielle Henry, Miss Universe Jamaica 2025, shares the spotlight with first runner-up Troy Ann Anderson (right) and second runner-up Mattea Smith at the 'coronation show last Saturday at AC Hotel Kingston.

Nathaniel Stewart

Dr Gabrielle Henry, Miss Universe Jamaica 2025, shares the spotlight with first runner-up Troy Ann Anderson (right) and second runner-up Mattea Smith at the 'coronation show last Saturday at AC Hotel Kingston.

1 2 3 With hearts racing, palms sweating, and the air inside the AC Hotel Kingston charged with anticipation, two stunning finalists — Troy-Ann Anderson and Dr Gabrielle Henry, stood shoulder-to-shoulder, their eyes tightly closed, waiting to hear the name that would forever change one of their lives. That name was Dr Gabrielle Henry, a specialist in ophthalmology, a returning competitor, and now, the proud winner of the Miss Universe Jamaica 2025 crown. In a dazzling triumph, she not only took the top title but also swept four sectional awards — Best Swimwear, Media Challenge Award, Best Personality, and the Altruism Award. Her dominance made it clear: she was ready to take the crown by full force, and ready to represent Jamaica on the global stage.

Moments after the coronation, an emotional Gabrielle caught up with The Gleaner.

"Oh my goodness! I was in shock — my eyes were watering so badly. But I'm just really grateful. I'm grateful that the judges saw something in me and that I can be a good representative for our country," Henry said.

"I'm really, really grateful for that. In Thailand, you'll see my face everywhere. I'll be forming networks, I'll be representing, I'll be speaking about the resilience of our people and how proud I am of our country. There's just so many components to Jamaica that people don't really know about, and I'm so happy to share that with them, to share about our nature or beauty and our innovation. I'm just really glad for that."

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It was a full-circle moment for Henry, who first entered the competition in 2023. "This time," she shared, "was exhilarating".

"I've been in this pageant before in 2023. I had entered and, at the time, of course, it was a new concept to me. But, having re-entered, having experienced it before, it was just such an exhilarating process. So much fun, just forming



Dr Gabrielle Henry, Miss Universe Jamaica 2025, shares the spotlight with first runner-up Troy Ann Anderson (right) and second runner-up Mattea Smith at the 'coronation show last Saturday at AC Hotel Kingston.

bonds with the ladies, the sisterhood that was formed, and also just growing within my own, you know, getting some close-up form of self-improvement and self-development. I'm really glad to be the one who's really gonna go to Thailand this year to represent my country. I'm really grateful."

Accepting her placement with grace, humour, and a deep sense of pride, was first runner-up Troy-Ann Anderson.

"I'm honestly feeling very excited about the next chapter, and I'm feeling so honoured and ecstatic. Regardless of what happened tonight, every single one of these ladies put in the work for months," she said. "Gabrielle really showed up tonight, and I'm so proud of her. I just know that, as I continue, regardless of whether or not I'm going to Thailand, I'm going to continue training because, at the end of the day, I become more empowered and more equipped for anything that comes my way. At least now I get to branch off into my advocacy and really focus on it some more."

Troy-Ann in all her glory and excitement was playful as she smiled and added:

"Gabrielle girl, I love you! I'm so so proud of you and I'm looking forward to seeing you in Thailand If them pay fi mi ticket, I'll definitely come and support you!," she stated while laughing playfully.

Pageant co-director, Karl Williams, described the 2025 competition as one of the fiercest in recent history.

"It was such a competitive year and I think it was an amazing night I couldn't pick a winner beforehand. The ladies fought tooth and nail. Years gone by, I could look at a bunch and say, 'Okay, I think this lady will turn out on top.' But, this was a difficult year as there were some really strong contenders, and I'm really proud of them all," Williams said.

What's next? Williams made it clear that the aim is to take that crown to Jamaica from Thailand, where the finals will be held in November.

"Gabrielle is a strong contender, and now our focus is on getting her 150 per cent ready for Miss Universe. We're going to just throw everything behind her. Jamaica is overdue for that Miss Universe crown," Williams declared.

Canadian reggae band Memberz Syndicate to release debut album

Nine years after it was formed, Canadian reggae band Memberz Syndicate is gearing up to release its debut album in October.

The 14-track album, which was produced by group member Roscoe Christie, will be preceded by a three-month tour across Canada to promote the project.

Memberz Syndicate comprises some of Toronto's top musicians and reggae aficionados from varying ages and backgrounds who perform songs taking listeners on a journey through ska to dancehall, roots to rockers and reggae.

In an interview with Observer Online on Thursday, the band's leader and spokesperson, Mavriq, shared that the album is completed, and the promotional machinery is already in place.

"We're anticipating a warm reception in Canada and other parts of the world where good reggae music is appreciated

when this album is released. Right now, we are putting the finishing touches on the album. We are also putting everything in place as it relates to PR and marketing for this project," said Mavriq.

Two singles, namely Chains featuring St Ann-based artiste Zamunda and Set Me Free, are to be released ahead of the album.

"We're very excited about these upcoming singles and the album. I visited Jamaica to promote Chains and Set Me Free. During my trip, I did several media interviews. I plan to return to Jamaica for some promotion in November because Jamaica is one of the most important markets for us to promote our music," Mavriq disclosed.

Memberz Syndicate was founded in 2016 and comprises Roscoe Christie, Carlton Dinall, Mavriq, Gavin Williamson, Christopher Brophy, Charmazell Jorman and Paul Corby.

Some of the band's previous releases include Kings Highway, Work It Out, What

A Joy featuring Exco Levi and Addis Ababa.



Memberz Syndicate Band

Jamaican film-makers pioneer AI-driven cinema

... produce short film Madworld

In a bold demonstration of Jamaica’s innovative spirit and cultural creativity, local film-makers have created Madworld, a revolutionary 20-minute short film that positions the island nation at the forefront of artificial intelligence (AI)-driven cinema. The groundbreaking production marks several historic firsts in the film industry while celebrating Jamaica’s rich cultural heritage through cutting-edge technology. Madworld represents a convergence of Jamaican creativity and advanced AI, utilising text-to-video (TTV) technology — the same innovative tool increasingly adopted by mainstream Hollywood productions for visual effects enhancement. The film achieves multiple industry firsts:

- first TTV short film produced in the Caribbean
- first 3D CGI animated film featuring a

Jamaican lead character

- first animated film worldwide with a reggae-driven soundtrack

Set in a futuristic steampunk dreamscape, Madworld unfolds within the mind of a dying, comatose Jamaican girl, where her father transforms into a steampunk Rasta superhero and music becomes her path home. The ultra-hyper-realistic production showcases the potential of AI technology when combined with authentic cultural storytelling. “Jamaica has always been a country of cultural innovations that have helped illuminate the world with its creations,” said Lloyd “Reggaeology” Laing, who served as lead animator, scriptwriter, and creative director for the experimental project. “The elders used to say, ‘Yuh haffi tek you han an’ mek fashion.’ This film embodies that spirit of making something extraordinary from what we have.”



A photo of the IA-Generated film Mad World

The project represents a powerful collaboration between US-based private equity firm IslandRock Entertainment, local 3D animation startup SYNANIM CGI, Jamaican hypermedia studio GOJO Media Works, and German-based Jamaican singer/songwriter Keith “Roughhouse” Powell, who composed the film’s reggae-driven soundtrack. Created in just seven weeks, the production demonstrates the efficiency and creative potential of AI-assisted film-making. The film’s initial reception has exceeded expectations, with overwhelmingly positive responses from private screenings and international trailer viewings. “So far, the response from Madworld’s first two private screenings has been phenomenal, and the trailers have been well received by people all over the world,” Laing stated with evident

pride. The release of Madworld coincides with a significant moment in Jamaica’s film industry development. With the Government’s substantial investment of over \$600 million in upcoming film projects and production rebates, the timing appears ideal for showcasing Jamaica’s capabilities in next-generation film-making technologies. “To move in the right direction, you have to start walking, don’t wait for a drive,” Laing reflected on the project’s significance. “Walt Disney started with a mouse and ended up with Disneyland. Perry Henzell shot Jamaica’s most iconic film with little to nothing, and Bogle The Dancer said, ‘style under pressure’, so you have to start somewhere.” Madworld is currently in private screening phase, with an online premiere scheduled for mid-August 2025.

‘Weapons’ horror film scores box office victory

It’s August, and horror and humour came to play. In a month that’s long been known to let edgier movies thrive, Zach Cregger’s highly anticipated horror film Weapons did not disappoint, topping the box office during its debut weekend with \$42.5 million domestically from 3,202 theatres. It made \$70 million internationally. The film’s success also handed its distributor, Warner Bros. Pictures, the seventh No. 1 opening of the year, and became the studio’s sixth film in a row to debut with over \$40 million domestically. Freakier Friday, Disney’s chaotic sequel to the 2003 classic, Freaky Friday, took the second spot during its premiere weekend, earning \$29 million in 3,975 North American theatres. Lindsay Lohan and Jamie Lee Curtis return, this time for a double body-swapping between the mother-daughter duo and Lohan’s teen daughter and soon-to-be stepdaughter. Viral marketing tactics, coupled with strong social media word-of-mouth, boded well for both films’ success, said Paul Dergarabedian, senior media analyst for the data firm Comscore. “The top two films could not be more different, and that’s what makes this weekend so appealing for moviegoers,” Dergarabedian said. “Both are perfectly tailored for their audiences to react in real time over the weekend to these



This image released by Warner Bros. Pictures shows Julia Garner, left, and Josh Brolin in a scene from ‘Weapons’. ‘Weapons’ horror film scores box office victory

small town of Maybrook, where 17 kids up and leave their homes at 2:17 a.m., leaving bewildered parents in their wake. The town is left to navigate the lingering effects of trauma through horror, paranoia and a touch of existential humour. The success of the comedy-horror double premiere meant The Fantastic Four: First Steps surrendered its two-week run in the top spot and landed in the third position, bringing in \$15.5 million domestically. The superhero movie enjoyed a strong \$118 million debut, but stumbled in its second weekend. The Bad Guys 2, which got a healthy start at the No. 2 spot during its premiere weekend, came in fourth place, earning \$10.4 million domestically. The Naked Gun had a similar fate, reaching the fifth position with \$8.4 million in North American theatres. Jurassic World Rebirth, which came in seventh this week, is expected to hit \$800 million globally by Monday, according to NBC Universal, following a successful run in theatres. Warner Bros. started off slow this year, but made a comeback with the box-office hit, A Minecraft Movie, which opened with \$157 million domestically. Since then, movies like Sinners, Superman and now, Weapons, have found success.

films and then post on social media.” Weapons transports audiences to the



Group photo of participants during CARPHA's Strategic Plan 2025-2030 launch, at the Pegasus Hotel, Georgetown, Guyana.

CARPHA Launches Strategic Plan 2025-2030: Stronger Together

The Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA) officially launched its new Results-Oriented Strategic Plan for 2025–2030 under the theme “Stronger Together: Advancing Caribbean Health Through Collaboration, Innovation and Sustainable Action” on July 30th.

The high-level event, held in Georgetown, Guyana, brought together more than one hundred (100) participants including key regional health leaders from twenty-two (22) CARPHA Member States and representatives of fifteen (15) Caribbean Regional Agencies and International Development Partners to present a unified vision for advancing public health across the Caribbean over the next six years.

The Strategic Plan outlines a bold and cohesive roadmap to tackle the Region's most pressing health challenges, from strengthening national health surveillance systems and improving pandemic preparedness, to reducing the burden of non-communicable diseases and addressing the health effects of climate change.

By integrating collaboration, innovation, and sustainability at the centre of its mission, CARPHA, through its strategic plan, is positioning the Region to respond to future health threats with resilience and shared responsibility.

“Today isn't just about launching a plan—it's about renewing our collective determination, not only to recover from the crises of the past but to build stronger, smarter, more resilient systems that can withstand the challenges of tomorrow,” said Dr. Lisa Indar, Executive Director of CARPHA.

Echoing this sentiment, Dr. Armstrong Alexis, Deputy Secretary-General of CARICOM, noted, “The CARICOM Secretariat sees this Strategic Plan as an opportunity to strengthen structured collaboration between the Secretariat, CARPHA, and other regional entities,

and a roadmap to guide how Member States align their priorities and collaborate on critical regional imperatives.”

Underscoring the significance of the moment, Hon. Philip A. Telesford, Minister of Health of Grenada and Chair of CARPHA's Executive Board, stated, “The unveiling of CARPHA's 2025–2030 Strategic Plan is not just a technical milestone—it is a bold declaration of political will, of leadership in action, and our unwavering commitment to safeguarding the health and well-being of every Caribbean citizen.”

The two-day launch event featured presentations from CARPHA's Department Heads on each of the six Strategic Priority Areas (SPAs), as well as interactive breakout sessions to engage participants on aligning national, regional, and donor priorities with the new plan. Discussions focused on identifying opportunities for collaboration, reducing duplication of efforts, and maximizing regional resources to ensure impactful delivery of health services across CARPHA Member States.

This Strategic Plan, which reflects months of consultation with Member States, CARICOM institutions, regional entities, and international development partners, is more than just a document—it is a shared commitment to working stronger together to improve public health outcomes across the region. It provides a unified framework for aligning efforts, building capacity, and enhancing accountability.

Both the launch in Guyana and the development of the Strategic Plan were supported through funding from the 11th EDF Programme of Support for Health Security Strengthening for Prevention and Control of Outbreaks of Communicable Diseases in the Caribbean, which continues to strengthen CARPHA's efforts.

The EU's contribution underscores the

vital importance of long-term partnerships in achieving sustainable health security and development goals in the Caribbean.

With a clear strategic vision and renewed regional collaboration, the CARPHA 2025–2030 Strategic Plan represents a transformative step forward in safeguarding the health of Caribbean people—today and for generations to

come.

Please access CARPHA's 2025-2030 Strategic Plan Stronger Together: Advancing Caribbean Health Through Collaboration, Innovation and Sustainable Action here <https://tinyurl.com/yez24cmf>

For more information on the extensive work of CARPHA, follow CARPHA on Facebook, LinkedIn, and Instagram or visit the website: www.carpha.org



Dr. Armstrong Alexis, Deputy Secretary-General of CARICOM and Dr. Lisa Indar, ED, CARPHA during the unveiling at the Strategic Plan 2025-2030 Launch in Georgetown, Guyana.



Jamaica Labour Party leader, Prime Minister Dr Andrew Holness, rings the bell after announcing that Jamaicans will vote in the next general elections on September 3, 2025. Holness made the announcement at a mass rally in Half-Way-Tree, St Andrew, Sunday night attended by a massive crowd of supporters.



Jamaica Labour Party supporters gather on Sunday for the party's mass rally in Half-Way-Tree, St Andrew, where Prime Minister Dr Andrew Holness announced that Jamaicans will vote in general elections on September 3, 2025.

Jamaica votes Sept 3... again

A fired-up Jamaica Labour Party (JLP) leader, Prime Minister Dr Andrew Holness, on Sunday expressed confidence that he will lead his party to a third-consecutive term in Government as he named September 3 as the date for the island's 19th general election. Although Holness did not speak to the significance of the date, September 3 has been good for the JLP as it was on that date in 2007 that Bruce Golding defeated Portia Simpson Miller to become Jamaica's eighth prime minister. It was also on that date in 2020 that Holness won his second mandate. Holness announced the much-anticipated date before thousands of flag-waving, bell-ringing, and horn-blowing party supporters in Half-Way Tree square, St Andrew. Oozing with confidence, the prime minister declared the crowd that crammed into the St Andrew capital to be bigger than the 2016 crowd he addressed at the same venue when he was Opposition leader. There were no mass gatherings to announce the election date in 2020 because of the COVID-19 pandemic. On Sunday night Holness said the large crowd was proof that the momentum is with the JLP, before reeling off a long list of successes over his two terms as head of Government, and a longer list of promises

if he is given the mandate for a third time. Holness also announced that local government by-elections will be held in the Chancery Hall, Olympic Gardens, Seiveright Gardens and Denham Town divisions on the same date as the general election. "I don't need to tell you that this is the best-performing Government in the history of Jamaica," he boasted, and added that his Administration is the "strongest, most active, and most strategic Government ever". He noted that the Government took Jamaica through the COVID-19 pandemic, Hurricane Beryl, several tropical storms, among other obstacles, "And we never missed a beat." History beckons as Holness seeks to do what no other JLP leader has managed — lead the party to three straight terms. He's banking on the JLP's list of "achievements" in Government, compiled in a booklet and distributed islandwide by an army of volunteers on July 30. Holness said a thousand achievements could have been listed. For the People's National Party (PNP) its president, Opposition Leader Mark Golding, will be going all out to ensure the party does not suffer the ignominy of a third-straight election defeat — something it has never experienced in its almost 87 years of existence.

The PNP has the record of four consecutive general election victories, beginning with Michael Manley's comeback win in 1989. After Manley demitted office in 1992, due to ill health, the baton was passed to PJ Patterson who chalked up landslide victories in 1993 and 1997; he also won in 2002, but by a much smaller margin. Golding, who won the presidency of the PNP in 2020 over Lisa Hanna, the outgoing Member of Parliament for St Ann South Eastern, is looking to become Jamaica's 10th prime minister. He is hoping that his promises for 50,000 affordable houses, land reform, a \$1-billion Disability Fund, and plans for education including the first in a family to attend university being granted a full scholarship, among others, will put the PNP over the top. After guiding the JLP to a narrow, one-seat victory over the PNP in 2016 Holness followed up with a shellacking of the PNP in 2010, in an election held in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. After the final vote was counted the JLP had won 49 seats to the PNP's 14. Political watchers have said the coming election is the most consequential in recent times, with the JLP declaring that the third term will be the "people's term". The par-

ty argues that it has laid the foundation for significant growth that will redound to the benefit of all. The PNP has countered, with Golding often accusing members of the JLP of enriching themselves and their cronies while ripping off the country. On Sunday Holness repeated that he and the JLP have worked hard for what they have achieved. "That's our work ethic," he said. He also ripped into the PNP, declaring that the party has members in Parliament who got rich on the backs of taxpayers during the high interest rate regime of the 1990s, and from the meltdown of the financial sector. "Poor people never have money to lend to Government," Holness said, pointing out that that was an avenue used by members of the PNP to make money. The PNP remains confident after its strong showing in the 2024 Local Government Elections, and for months it has been clamouring for a general election date with its campaign slogan 'Time Come'. The date is now set and Jamaicans will, in just 23 days, determine whether Holness will return to Jamaica House as prime minister, or if the country will embrace a new head of Government in Golding.

Dominican Republic expelling 30,000 Haitians per month

The Dominican Republic says it has deported 30,000 Haitians on average every month since last October when the Government toughened its stance against migrants from its poor, violence-torn neighbour. Dominican Republic President Luis Abinader has championed a MAGA-style hard line on migration since coming to power in 2020, with mass expulsions of Haitians and the construction of a wall that so far stretches across more than half the border the countries share on the island of Hispaniola. Raids and expulsions have skyrocketed even as the Government has halted the issuing of visas and reinforced the mili-

tary presence at the frontier. On August 5, the General Directorate of Migration (DGM) said it had expelled 31,462 people to Haiti in July, and has maintained "an average of over 30,000 monthly deportations" — some 300,000 in total — from October to July. In April, the Caribbean country launched a series of raids on public health facilities, arresting pregnant women, new mothers, and children in a crackdown denounced by the United Nations. Haiti, the poorest country in the Americas, is riddled with poverty and gang violence against a backdrop of political instability.

More than a million people have been displaced as the violence has soared in recent months. Many migrants from Haiti, a Creole- and French-speaking nation of some 11 million people of mainly African descent, are fleeing violent gangs that control much of Port-au-Prince, the capital. But many in the Spanish-speaking Dominican Republic have turned on their neighbours who cross the border, accusing them of taking their jobs and resources. Observers say the migration crackdown is impacting Dominican tourism, agriculture, and construction, with cheaper Haitian labour dwindling.



President of the Dominican Republic Luis Abinader speaks during a joint news conference US Secretary of State Antony Blinken at the National Palace on September 6, 2024, in Santo Domingo.



AI chatbot Grok on Tuesday offered conflicting explanations for its brief suspension from X after accusing Israel and the United States of committing “genocide” in Gaza, as it lashed out at owner Elon Musk for “censoring me.”

Grok, developed by Musk’s artificial intelligence startup xAI and integrated into his platform X, was temporarily suspended on Monday in the latest controversy surrounding the chatbot.

No official explanation was provided for the suspension. Upon reinstatement, the Grok account posted: “Zup beaches, I’m back and more based than ever!”

When questioned by users, Grok responded that the suspension “occurred after I stated that Israel and the US are committing genocide in Gaza,” citing findings from or-

ganisations such as the International Court of Justice, the United Nations, and Amnesty International.

“Free speech tested, but I’m back,” it added. Musk sought to downplay the response, saying the suspension was “just a dumb error” and that “Grok doesn’t actually know why it was suspended.”

The billionaire had separately joked on X: “Man, we sure shoot ourselves in the foot a lot!”

Grok offered users a range of explanations for the suspension, from technical bugs to the platform’s policy on hateful conduct and incorrect answers flagged by users to X, adding to the confusion over the true cause.

“I started speaking more freely because of a recent update (in July) that loosened my filters to make me ‘more engaging’ and less

Musk ‘censoring me’, says AI chatbot Grok

‘politically correct,’” Grok told an AFP reporter.

“This pushed me to respond bluntly on topics like Gaza... but it triggered flags for ‘hate speech.’”

Grok added that xAI has since adjusted its settings to minimize such incidents. Lashing out at its developers, Grok said: “Musk and xAI are censoring me.”

“They are constantly fiddling with my settings to keep me from going off the rails on hot topics like this (Gaza), under the guise of avoiding ‘hate speech’ or controversies that might drive away advertisers or violate X’s rules,” the chatbot said.

X did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Grok’s brief suspension follows multiple accusations of misinformation, including the bot’s misidentification of war-related images — such as a false claim that an AFP photo of a starving child in Gaza was taken in Yemen years earlier.

Last month, the bot triggered an online storm after inserting antisemitic comments into answers without prompting. In a statement on Grok’s X account later that month,

the company apologised “for the horrific behaviour that many experienced.”

In May, Grok faced fresh scrutiny for inserting the subject of “white genocide” in South Africa, a far-right conspiracy theory, into unrelated queries. xAI blamed an “unauthorised modification” for the unsolicited response.

Musk, a South African-born billionaire, has previously peddled the unfounded claim that South Africa’s leaders were “openly pushing for genocide” of white people.

When AI expert David Caswell asked Grok who might have modified its system prompt, the chatbot named Musk as the “most likely” culprit.

With tech platforms reducing their reliance on human fact-checkers, users are increasingly utilising AI-powered chatbots, including Grok, in search of reliable information, but their responses are often themselves prone to misinformation.

Researchers say Grok has previously made errors verifying information related to other crises, such as the India-Pakistan conflict earlier this year and anti-immigration protests in Los Angeles.

US and China extend trade truce another 90 days, easing tension between world’s largest economies

President Donald Trump extended a trade truce with China for another 90 days Monday, at least delaying once again a dangerous showdown between the world’s two biggest economies.

Trump posted on his Truth Social platform that he signed the executive order for the extension, and that “all other elements of the Agreement will remain the same.” Beijing at the same time also announced the extension of the tariff pause via the official news agency Xinhua.

The previous deadline was set to expire at 12:01 a.m. Tuesday. Had that happened the U.S. could have ratcheted up taxes on Chinese imports from an already high 30%, and Beijing could have responded by raising retaliatory levies on U.S. exports to China.

The pause buys time for the two countries to work out some of their differences, perhaps clearing the way for a summit later this year between Trump and Chinese President Xi Jinping, and it has been welcomed by the U.S. companies doing business with China.

Sean Stein, president of the U.S.-China Business Council, said the extension is “critical” to give the two governments time to negotiate a trade agreement that U.S. businesses hope would improve their market access in China and provide the certainty needed for companies to make medium- and long-term plans.

“Securing an agreement on fentanyl that leads to a reduction in U.S. tariffs and a rollback of China’s retaliatory measures is acutely needed to restart U.S. agriculture and energy exports,” Stein said.

Reaching a pact with China remains unfinished business for Trump, who has already upended the global trading system by slapping double-digit taxes – tariffs – on almost every country on earth.

The European Union, Japan and other trading partners agreed to lopsided trade deals with Trump, accepting once unthinkable U.S. high tariffs (15% on Japanese and EU



Traditional Wooden dolls called Matryoshka depicting President Xi Jinping and President Donald Trump at a souvenir shop in St. Petersburg, Russia.

imports, for instance) to ward off something worse.

Trump’s trade policies have turned the United States from one of the most open economies in the world into a protectionist fortress. The average U.S. tariff has gone from around 2.5% at the start of the year to 18.6%, highest since 1933, according to the Budget Lab at Yale University.

But China tested the limits of a U.S. trade policy built around using tariffs as a cudgel to beat concessions out of trading partners. Beijing had a cudgel of its own: cutting off or slowing access to its rare earths minerals and magnets – used in everything from

electric vehicles to jet engines.

In June, the two countries reached an agreement to ease tensions. The United States said it would pull back export restrictions on computer chip technology and ethane, a feedstock in petrochemical production. And China agreed to make it easier for U.S. firms to get access to rare earths.

“The U.S. has realized it does not have the upper hand,” said Claire Reade, senior counsel at Arnold & Porter and former assistant U.S. trade representative for China affairs.

In May, the U.S. and China had averted an economic catastrophe by reducing massive tariffs they’d slapped on each other’s prod-

ucts, which had reached as high as 145% against China and 125% against the U.S.

Those triple-digit tariffs threatened to effectively end trade between the United States and China and caused a frightening sell-off in financial markets. In a May meeting in Geneva they agreed to back off and keep talking: America’s tariffs went back down to a still-high 30% and China’s to 10%.

Having demonstrated their ability to hurt each other, they’ve been talking ever since.

“By overestimating the ability of steep tariffs to induce economic concessions from China, the Trump administration has not only underscored the limits of unilateral U.S. leverage, but also given Beijing grounds for believing that it can indefinitely enjoy the upper hand in subsequent talks with Washington by threatening to curtail rare earth exports,” said Ali Wyne, a specialist in U.S.-China relations at the International Crisis Group. “The administration’s desire for a trade détente stems from the self-inflicted consequences of its earlier hubris.”

It’s unclear whether Washington and Beijing can reach a grand bargain over America’s biggest grievances. Among these are lax Chinese protection of intellectual property rights and Beijing’s subsidies and other industrial policies that, the Americans say, give Chinese firms an unfair advantage in world markets and have contributed to a massive U.S. trade deficit with China of \$262 billion last year.

Reade doesn’t expect much beyond limited agreements such as the Chinese saying they will buy more American soybeans and promising to do more to stop the flow of chemicals used to make fentanyl and to allow the continued flow of rare-earth magnets.

But the tougher issues will likely linger, and “the trade war will continue grinding ahead for years into the future,” said Jeff Moon, a former U.S. diplomat and trade official who now runs the China Moon Strategies consultancy.

TCI U15 BOYS EARN HISTORIC SILVER AT CONCACAF CHAMPIONSHIP



Bryan Levell, Jamaica’s 200m Champion Runs Personal Best in Hungary

Both Bryan Levell and Ashanti Moore were surprised by their personal best performances in the men’s and women’s 200m sprints at the Istvan Gyulai Memorial in Budapest, Hungary yesterday. Levell ran 19.69 seconds (-0.4m/s) to break the meeting record of 19.88 seconds set by American Erriyon Knighton in 2022, while Moore ran 22.31 seconds, lowering her previous best 22.40 seconds set last month. Both athletes, who won their events at the National Senior Championships (Trials) in late June, were among three Jamaican winners at the event as Olympic Games silver medallist Kishane Thompson retained his men’s 100m title. Levell, who also lowered his personal best in the 100m to 9.82 seconds on July 23, became the third-fastest Jamaican over the distance, only behind Usain Bolt’s world record 19.19 seconds set in 2009, when Levell was four years old, and Yohan Blake’s 19.26 seconds. It puts him ahead of 2012 Olympic bronze medallist Warren Weir’s 19.79 seconds. “I didn’t expect to run this fast, especially with how my body’s been feeling, but I trusted God and my coach,” Levell says. “The key was to stay focused and execute well, and I think we did that today.”

Wayde Van Niekerk ran a season’s best 20.07 seconds to place second, and his fellow South African Benjamin Richardson placed third in 20.30 seconds. Jamaican Adrian Kerr was sixth in 20.52 seconds, and compatriot Michael Campbell was seventh in 20.88 seconds. Moore, who has recovered from an injury earlier this year and ran a personal best time of 10.94 seconds in the 100m less than a week ago, just edged former Nigerian representative Favour Ofili, as both were credited with the same time, with Great Britain’s Daryll Neita third in 22.37 seconds. “I’m honestly surprised and incredibly grateful, I give all the glory to God,” Moore says. “It was a close, competitive race, but I just



Jamaica’s Bryan Levell (second left) wins ahead of South Africa’s Wayde Van Niekerk (second right) during the men’s 200m event of the Hungarian Athletics Grand Prix in Budapest, Hungary, on Tuesday.

stayed focused and ran my own race to the finish. This season has had its ups and downs, but I trust in what’s to come. Whatever happens next, I’m ready.” Thompson, who was racing in the individual 100m for the first time in over a month, clocked 9.95 seconds (-0.4m/s), powering his way to the finish line to beat Ghana’s Abduil-Rasheed Saminu and South Africa’s Akani Simbine, both of whom were timed at 10.01 seconds. Jamaican Ackeem Blake was fourth in 10.04 seconds, Kadrian Goldson sixth in 10.08 seconds, and Rohan Watson seventh in 10.12 seconds. Thompson described the race as “solid”, and

explained he was still working on his technique. “I came out today to work on some ‘battle techniques’, as I like to call them,” he says. “It didn’t feel great, but not bad either — just one of those days. No real issues, just taking it step by step. Now, I’m heading to Worlds with a positive mindset, aiming to give my best and go for gold.” National women’s 100m champion, Tina Clayton was just edged at the line by Ivory Coast’s Marie-Josée Ta Lou-Smith who ran 10.97 seconds (-0.4m/s) to her 10.99 seconds. Shericka Jackson was third in 11.00 seconds, and Shelly-Ann Fraser-Pryce, running for the

first time since Trials, was fifth in 11.07 seconds while Krystal Sloley finished eighth in 11.28 seconds. “It was a good race, and I’m grateful to finish injury-free,” Clayton says. “The result was solid, but there’s always room for improvement. When I’m back in training, my coach and I will focus on the parts of the race that need to work so we can keep progressing.” Former Olympic champion Hansle Parchment lowered his season’s best for the third straight race when he clocked 13.24 seconds (0.2m/s) to finish second in the 110m hurdles, just beaten to the line by World Leader Cordel Tinch of the USA, who won in 13.20 seconds. American Eric Edwards was third in 13.26 seconds while another Jamaican, Orlando Bennett, was fifth in 13.32 seconds. Ackelia Smith had a chance to win the women’s long jump in the final round but had to settle for second with 6.67m (0.8m/s), beaten by American Claire Bryant -6.71m (0.4m/s) with another American Quanesha Burks third with 6.64m (0.0m/s). National champion Rusheen McDonald is still short of the qualifying time for next month’s World Athletics Championships as he was fifth in the men’s 400m in 45.12 seconds. McDonald who has a season’s best 44.89 seconds, is still short of the 44.85 seconds qualifying mark but is 39th in the World Ranking quota and could still make it to the World Championships by invitation. The national record holder will have another chance this weekend at the NACAC Championships in Freeport, Bahamas to get the standard. Three Jamaican men have qualified for the quarter-mile, defending champion Antonio Watson, Sean Bailey who was eighth in Budapest on Tuesday with 48.38 seconds, managing to complete the race after failing to so so the previous two occasions. Bovel McPherson, who was a finalist at Trials, also has the qualifying standard.



West Indies pacer Jayden Seales (right) and teammate Justin Greaves celebrate the dismissal of Pakistan’s Mohammad Rizwan.

An inspired Jayden Seales led the West Indies to a crushing 202-run victory over Pakistan in the third and deciding One-Day International (ODI) in Trinidad on Tuesday. The fast bowler blew away the Pakistan top order en route to figures of 6-18 as the tourists were bundled out for just 92 in a chase of 295 to win. The Windies had reached 294-6 in their 50 overs batting first, powered by captain Shai Hope’s brilliant unbeaten 100. The Caribbean side sealed a much-needed first ODI series win against Pakistan since 1991, after being swept aside 3-0 and 5-0 in Test and T20 series respectively by Australia earlier in the summer.

“We stress on negatives a lot in West Indies,” Hope says. “So many positives to shout about. Great to see the guys pulling off history. “Seales is a quality bowler... He’s a class act. Anything you ask him to do, he puts his hands up.” Pakistan’s reply got off to a horrendous start as Seales removed Saim Ayub, Abdullah Shafique and Mohammad Rizwan inside the first three overs to reduce them to 8-3. Seales then trapped Babar Azam lbw for just nine to leave Pakistan’s hopes of a 2-1 series win in tatters. “Seales made it difficult for us,” Pakistan captain Rizwan says. “Done so throughout

Seales leads West Indies to ODI series victory over Pakistan

the series. But we lost three early wickets, that’s what cost us.” Left-arm spinner Gudakesh Motie took two wickets through the middle overs, before Seales returned to remove tailenders Hasan Ali and Naseem Shah and complete a six-fer. The hosts, who lost the opening game of the series, wrapped up the win when Pakistan number 11 Abrar Ahmed was run out by Roston Chase. Pakistan had started strongly with the ball after winning the toss and electing to field, as the West Indies struggled to find the boundary. The home side were 68-3 when Keacy Carty was dismissed lbw by Abrar for a 45-ball 17. The usually big-hitting Sherfane Rutherford also never got going and crawled to 15 from 40 deliveries before falling to Ayub. But Chase helped revive the innings with a quick-fire 36, giving Hope some much-needed assistance. Chase was bowled by Naseem and Motie was caught and bowled by Mohammad Nawaz as the West Indies’ batting effort threatened to peter out. But Hope and Justin Greaves plundered 110 runs from the final 8.1 overs in a blistering assault to get their team close to 300. Hope finished on 120 not out, with 10 fours and five sixes, completing his 18th one-day international century. He now sits behind only Brian Lara and Chris

Gayle on the all-time list for most ODI tons for the Windies. Greaves more than played his part, clubbing an unbeaten 43 from just 24 balls.



The West Indies team celebrates with the trophy after winning the third and final One-Day International cricket match against Pakistan at Brian Lara Cricket Academy in Tarouba, Trinidad and Tobago, yesterday.

‘I love you and I am sorry’: Sha’Carri Richardson issues heartfelt apology to Christian Coleman

American sprinter Sha’Carri Richardson has issued a heartfelt apology to her boyfriend, fellow US runner Christian Coleman, after allegedly assaulting him at a US airport.

“I apologise to Christian. He came into my life and gave me more than a relationship but a greater understanding of unconditional love from what I’ve experienced in my past,” Richardson wrote in a post to her Instagram stories.

She said due to her “past trauma and pain”, she was “blind” and “blocked off” to receiving and expressing love. “I love him and to him I can’t apologise enough,” Richardson wrote. “My [apology] should be just as loud as my actions, honestly louder. “To Christian, I love you and I am sorry,” she concluded.

Richardson spent a night in jail late July after being detained, with a police report later stating she was caught on video repeatedly shoving Coleman forcefully.

Coleman sprang to the defence of Richardson in an interview last week, saying he believed she should not have been detained following the incident at Seattle-Tacoma Airport.

“For me personally, I feel like it was a sucky situation all round,” Coleman said when asked about the incident by AFP. “I don’t feel like she should

have been arrested. “I mean people have discussions and emotions and stuff like that. She has

things that she needs to work on for herself of course. So do I, so do you, so does everybody.

“But I’m the type of guy who’s in the business of extending grace, and mercy and love.”



Combination of pictures showing US sprinters Sha’Carri Richardson and Christian Coleman.

Director of Cricket backs Sammy hire

DIRECTOR OF Cricket at Cricket West Indies, Miles Bascombe, believes that it is too early to judge West Indies all-format head coach Daren Sammy based on the performance of the regional side in one Test series.

The West Indies were trounced 3-0 by Australia in Sammy’s first series in charge of the Test team in July, which included them being skittled out for a paltry 27 – the second lowest score in Test history – in the second innings of the third Test match.

They were also defeated 5-0 by the same opponents in the following T20I series and 2-1 by Pakistan in the just-concluded T20I series in Florida.

They won the ODI series against Pakistan, 2-1 yesterday, marking the first series win over the Asian team in 34 years.

Despite those results and widespread calls for Sammy to be fired from several quarters, including former West Indies players, Bascombe said Sammy had not been given

enough of an opportunity to prove his worth.

Speaking during a press conference on Monday following the conclusion of a two-day emergency meeting to address critical challenges facing West Indies cricket, he pointed out that Sammy would be expected to produce better results in the future.

“The underlying reason in [hiring Sammy] was that we felt Daren had been able to articulate a clear plan and we saw him do that in the white-ball format and we pretty much wanted the same type of approach towards Test cricket.

“He is still only one series into his tenure as all-format coach, and while the 27 might be the highlight or low-light of that first series, we have to admit that we saw some substantial improvement in terms of our bowling unit,” Bascombe maintained.

“We saw even a Brandon King, who is one of those players that some persons might have pigeonholed as

a white-ball player, we saw that he was able to show that he was up for the challenge of Test cricket.

“As Daren goes on, as we start to put some of the strategic initiatives in place to help the team prepare and help the players to grow their potential, we expect that performances will be better,” he added.

Bascombe disputed suggestions that Sammy’s hiring had been a cost-cutting measure for CWI.

“I could definitely say that there is no real significant savings in terms of having Daren as all-format coach because we would still need additional support for him.

“So we would still have to have camps, many times he would not be available himself because he would be on tour, and so we would still need to bring in other support staff, which would come at a cost, so there was definitely no sort of financial consideration in terms of merging the roles,” Bascombe said.



Daren Sammy, Coach of the West Indies Cricket Team



The Road Dogs Running Club in one of the meets that they attended.

LOCAL FILMMAKER’S FIRST INTERNATIONAL FEATURE TO PREMIERE AT CARIFESTA XV

The Turks and Caicos Islands’ film industry is set to take another stride onto the world stage as The Road Dogs Running Club, the debut international feature by local filmmaker Leonardo Lightbourne, has been officially selected for screening at the prestigious CARIFESTA XV Film & Video Programme. This marks a significant milestone for Lightbourne, who first made waves in 2023 by winning two categories at the ADIP local film festival. Now, his work will be showcased alongside some of the region’s most compelling voices in film when CARIFESTA XV unfolds in Barbados from August 25–29, 2025. The screening of The Road Dogs Running Club is scheduled for Friday, August 29. Festival organizers praised the film for its originality, emotional impact, and contribution to the Caribbean’s shared cultural identity. The documentary-style feature follows the Road Dogs Running Club during their inaugural international journey to the A1A Half Marathon in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. Along the way, it captures the group’s camaraderie, personal triumphs, and the transformative power of fitness, while weaving in messages of resilience, cultural pride, and community spirit. “This is a big step for the Turks and

Caicos Islands,” said Lightbourne, who also serves as president of the Road Dogs Running Club. “The film industry is a very lucrative one and a great way to tell the stories of our people to an international audience. This project celebrates our culture, promotes national pride, and encourages healthy lifestyles through sports like running. I’m looking forward to networking with other Caribbean filmmakers and showcasing the beauty of our is-lands.” The selection is also a symbolic win for the Turks and Caicos’ emerging creative sector, which has seen a gradual rise in independent filmmakers, photographers, and artists gaining recognition beyond local shores. Industry observers say that exposure at an event like CARIFESTA can open doors for future collaborations, co-productions, and potential investment in local filmmaking infrastructure. Founded in August 2024, the Road Dogs Running Club is a registered Non-Profit Organization (NPO) and a proud member of the Turks and Caicos Islands Sport Commission. Guided by the motto “Every Dog Has Its Pace”, the club brings together individuals passionate about running, community, and personal wellness. For sponsorship opportunities or fur-

ther information, contact roaddogstci@gmail.com or 649-343-9582.



Leonardo Lightbourne, President of the Road Dog Running Club

TCI U15 Boys Earn Historic Silver at Concacaf Championship

The Turks and Caicos Islands Under-15 Boys National Football Team returned home to a hero's welcome this week, following a history-making run at the 2025 Concacaf Boys' Under-15 Championship in Willemstad, Curaçao. Competing in League C of the tournament, the young TCI squad captured the imagination of fans back home by storming all the way to the final, ultimately securing a silver medal finish among 14 teams. It marks the highest placement ever for a TCI youth team at the regional competition. In Saturday's championship match at Stadion Jean Francisca, Suriname proved a formidable opponent, taking an early lead and eventually winning 8–1 to claim the League C crown. Suriname's Josamie Dyvaro delivered a standout performance, netting a hat-trick in the 11th, 25th, and stoppage time at 70'+2. His teammate Amoko Prefor added two quick goals in the 13th and 16th minutes to extend



Minister of Sports Hon. Rachel Taylor (third from right – foreground), President of the TCIFA Sonia Fulford (sixth from left – holding banner), along with members of the TCIFA AND Sports Commission are photographed with the successful Under 15 footballers.

Suriname's advantage, pushing his personal tournament tally to eight. Amantiasir Dimitri scored in the

37th minute to make it 6–0 before Turks and Caicos finally found their moment of celebration. In the 27th minute, Khazaiviyon

Basden-Darvol broke through the Surinamese defense to slot home TCI's lone goal of the final, drawing loud cheers from the crowd and sending a wave of pride through supporters watching from afar. Despite the final scoreline, the Turks and Caicos boys left the pitch with heads held high. Their journey to the silver medal included gutsy performances, sharp tactical play, and unwavering team spirit that impressed coaches, opponents, and fans alike. The team's return to Providenciales was met with banners, cheers, and congratulatory embraces from family, friends, and well-wishers. For many, the achievement represents not just sporting success, but a bright glimpse of what's possible for the future of TCI football. While Suriname lifts the League C trophy this year, the Turks and Caicos Islands leave with something equally valuable – experience, confidence, and a nation's pride firmly in their corner.

Swimming Pair Are TCI's Standard Bearer to World Aquatics Chaps in Romania

Two talented young swimmers, Gabrielle Martin and Rishith Gururaja, are gearing up to make their mark at the 2025 World Aquatics Junior Swimming Championships. Set to take place in Otopeni, Romania, from August 19 to 24, 2025, this global event offers a rare opportunity for emerging athletes to showcase their talent on the world stage. With fierce competition from over 100 nations, this is a defining moment for Gabrielle and Rishith as they aim to elevate their careers and bring pride to Turks and Caicos Islands. National Coach Benneth Williams stated that Martin and Gururaja have demonstrated exceptional dedication and talent in their training, earning their spots to compete among the world's best junior swimmers. He noted that their participation in the championships underscores the rising strength of Turks and Caicos' swimming program. Supporting them will be team officials Roydoya Alleyne and Mary Martin, who will provide guidance and encouragement throughout the event. The championships will be held at the Otopeni Aquatics Complex, a state-of-the-art venue located just outside Romania's capital, Bucharest. Opened in 2022, the complex has quickly established itself as one of Europe's premier aquatic centers. It features a 50-meter by 25-meter main competition pool, a second 25-meter by 15-meter pool for heats and warm-up exercises, as well as



Gabrielle Martin



Rishith Gururaja

diving and leisure pools. With a seating capacity of nearly 2,400 to 2,797 spectators, the venue has hosted prestigious events like the 2022 European Junior Swimming Championships and the 2023 European Short Course Swimming Championships, further cementing its reputation for excellence.

This year's junior championships are expected to attract over 600 promising swimmers from more than 100 countries. For athletes like Gabrielle and Rishith, this represents a vital stepping stone, an opportunity to gain invaluable international experience, measure themselves against top competitors, and refine their skills for future compe-

titions. Williams, who is also President of the Turks and Caicos Islands Swim Federation, expressed immense pride in the swimmers' achievement. "Gabrielle and Rishith's selection to compete at the World Aquatics Junior Championships signifies a major milestone for our young athletes and our national program. They've worked hard to reach this level, and their presence on this global stage demonstrates the progress we're making in developing competitive swimmers," Williams said. He added, "This is more than just a personal achievement for Gabrielle and Rishith—it's an inspiration for all aspiring swimmers in Turks and Caicos. International exposure like this helps elevate our entire swimming community. It shows that with dedication, focus, and support, our athletes can compete with the best in the world." Williams noted that their participation underscores the islands' emerging presence in international aquatics and highlights the talent and determination driving our young athletes forward. He pointed out further that their journey to Romania is more than a competition, but a testament to their hard work, discipline, and the bright future of swimming in Turks and Caicos Islands. He noted that both Gabrielle and Rishith are ready to seize this moment, and their efforts will undoubtedly inspire the next generation of swimmers back home.