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VOLUME 6 ISSUE 22

May 31, 2024 - June 07, 2024



**\$3.1M FINANCIAL
ASSISTANCE
PROGRAMME FOR
SENIORS READY
TO GO - PG10**



**CANADIAN KITE-
BOARDER LOSES LEG IN
SHARK ATTACK - PG11**

VERY ACTIVE SEASON

- Storm Forecasters Predict Above Average Hurricane Season
- DDME Urges Early Preparation

**SEE
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Dedication of the Walter E. Cox Snr Building

The administrative building at the Howard Hamilton International Airport in Providenciales has been named in honor of Late TCI politician Walter E. Cox Snr. The dedication of the building took place on Tuesday, May 21, in front of family, friends and well-wishers. Earlier that day, the airport was dedicated in honor of former local philanthropist Howard Hamilton.



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TCI Tops Regional Premium Performing Destinations



The island topped the region in revenue per available room (RevPAR) in March 2024 with US\$1,404.42, a 6 percent increase over March 2023.

The Turks and Caicos Islands is outperforming its Caribbean counterparts as a premium class destination and in hotel occupancy.

For 2024, the Turks and Caicos Islands has emerged the top performing premium class destination in the Caribbean. Data from Forward Keys Destination Insights Caribbean Travel Trends 2024 shows that the Turks and Caicos Islands is showing the highest growth in premium class travel with a 73 percent growth for the year so far.

The data, which was shared at the Caribbean Hotels and Tourism Association's 42nd Caribbean Travel Forum in Montego Bay, Jamaica on May 20th, showed that while overseas air passenger arrivals to the Caribbean saw growth of 9 percent year-on-year in the first half of 2024, bookings in high-end cabins (First and Business Class) are substantially outperforming the market average, with growth of 39 percent compared to the same period in 2023.

Forward Keys said this demonstrates the strength of luxury travel to the region as high-yield travellers continue to seek out exclusive Caribbean experiences.

Commenting on the data, Minister of Tourism,

the Honourable Josephine Connolly, said it reaffirms the Turks and Caicos Islands' reputation as the premier luxury destination in the region. "With the best beaches in the Caribbean, including the award-winning Grace Bay Beach, and a multi-island product that offers our market diverse experiences from bone-fishing in South Caicos and diving in Grand Turk along the third largest barrier reef in the world to soaking in secluded and breathtaking beaches in Middle Caicos and exploring underground caves in North Caicos, these islands are the perfect getaway for our affluent, multi-generational market. I am proud of the strides we continue to make," she said.

With the increase in visitors, the Turks and Caicos Islands has also topped the region in accommodation occupancy. The Turks and Caicos Islands registered occupancy levels of 87 percent for the first months of 2024 with Saint Lucia at 85.5 percent and Aruba at 84.3 percent.

Data from STR shows that overall annual occupancy in the region was up by two percentage points in 2023 over 2019 at 65.6 percent, while the 74.3 percent for March 2024 was above the 70.9 percent of March 2023.

The Turks and Caicos Islands registered the second highest Average Daily Rates (ADR) in March 2024 with US\$1,614, a decrease of -5.21 percent from March 2023. The island topped the region in revenue per available room (RevPAR) in March 2024 with US\$1,404.42, a 6 percent increase over March 2023.

Stacy Cox, CEO of the Turks and Caicos Hotels and Tourism Association (TCHTA) said the performance of the hotel sector is a testimony to the strength of the destination and the marketing efforts of hoteliers.

"Our hoteliers continue to invest in marketing and promotion efforts not just for their properties but the destination. We are continually improving our products to ensure our guests enjoy a luxury experience and we have seen that pay off with the acceptance of eight properties into the Virtuoso portfolio in 2023 and the four-star rating designation for four properties by Forbes earlier this year.

"With several new properties coming on stream in the coming months and year, we are assured that the Turks and Caicos Islands will remain the premier destination of choice for our market," she said.

TCIG LAUNCHES NEW ONLINE RECRUITMENT PORTAL

The Office of the Deputy Governor and Head of the Public Service of the Turks and Caicos Islands is pleased to announce the launch of the new Turks and Caicos Islands Government Online Recruitment Portal.

The new portal <https://careers.gov.tc> has been designed to modernize the Turks and Caicos Government's recruitment process by automating the process for recruitment from start to finish; from advertisements, to the submission of applications, online shortlisting and notification to candidates on the status of their applications.

Interested applicants on visiting the site will create a user profile that will include the submission of their personal details, as well as, the upload of their application supporting documents for stor-

age for easier future use when applying for various posts across government.

Deputy Governor and Head of the Public Service Her Excellency Anya Williams in commenting on the launch of the new Turks and Caicos Islands Government Recruitment Portal stated:

"We are pleased to officially launch the Turks and Caicos Islands Government Online Recruitment Portal, careers.gov.tc, which was spearheaded by our new Business Transformation Unit as a part of our objective to not only increase access to government vacancies, but to also improve the efficiency of the application process.

As the largest employer in the Turks and Caicos Islands, we want to ensure that there is easy access to posts that exist within government and also

want to streamline our processes to ensure that the application process is a smooth and efficient process.

In the year ahead we will be recruiting a significant number of new and also existing vacant roles. We encourage persons to consider seeking employment in the Turks and Caicos Government, which following the recently implemented Pay and Grading Review, not only offers competitive salaries and well as a generous terminal benefit program, but also provides employees with the opportunity to make a direct meaningful impact on our islands.

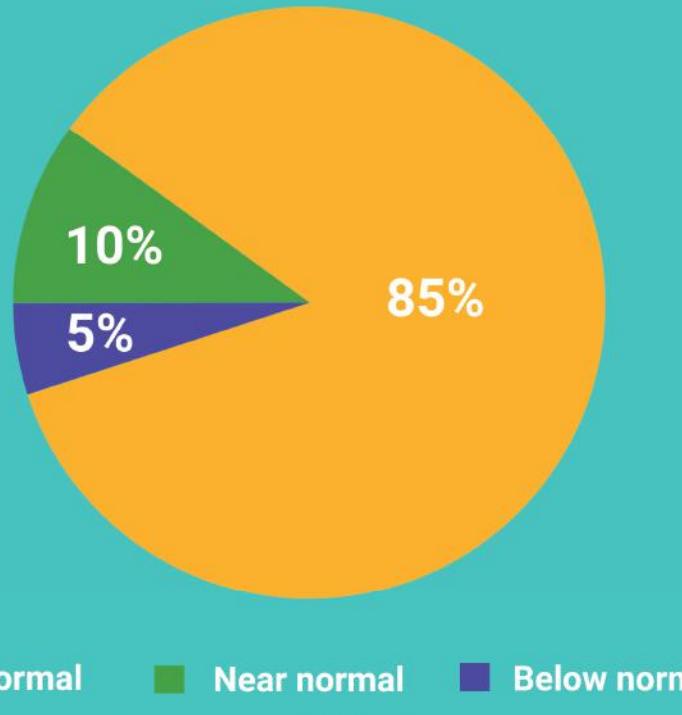
I express my profound thanks to my executive team for their work in delivering this key objective under the Office of the Deputy Governor and look forward to the positive benefit

Intense Hurricane Season Predicted

By Vivian Tyson Editor-in-Chief



2024 Atlantic Hurricane Season Outlook



Named storms

17 - 25

Hurricanes

8 - 13

Major hurricanes

4 - 7

Be prepared: Visit hurricanes.gov and follow @NWS and @NHC_Atlantic on X.

May 2024

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) is predicting an above-normal hurricane season in the Atlantic basin for 2024.

The Atlantic Hurricane Season begins June 1.

NOAA's outlook for the 2024 Atlantic hurricane season, which spans from June 1 to November 30, predicts an 85% chance of an above-normal season, a 10% chance of a near-normal season and a 5% chance of a below-normal season.

NOAA is forecasting a range of 17 to 25 total named storms (winds of 39 mph or higher). Of those, eight to 13 are forecast to become hurricanes (winds of 74 mph or higher), including 4 to 7 major hurricanes (category 3, 4 or 5; with winds of 111 mph or higher). Forecasters have a 70% confidence in these ranges.

The 2024 named storms are: Alberto, Beryl, Chris, Debby, Ernesto, Francine, Gordon, Helene, Isaac, Joyce, Kirk, Leslie, Milton, Nadine, Oscar, Patty, Rafael, Sara, Tara, Valerie, William.

The upcoming Atlantic hurricane season is expected to have above-normal activity due to a confluence of factors, including near-record warm ocean temperatures in the Atlantic Ocean, development of La Niña conditions in the Pacific, reduced Atlantic trade winds and less wind shear, all of which tend to favor tropical storm formation.

NOAA said it is strengthening its efforts to provide critical, life-saving information to the public. NOAA Administrator Rick Spinrad, Ph.D., emphasized the agency's dedication to public safety.

Dr. Spinrad highlighted two significant advancements in NOAA's toolkit for this hurricane season. First, the integration of AI-enabled language

translations aims to ensure that crucial warnings and updates are accessible to a broader audience, breaking down language barriers that could impede timely and effective communication. Additionally, NOAA has introduced a new depiction of inland wind threats in its forecast cone. This enhancement will provide a clearer understanding of potential wind impacts far from the coast, helping residents and officials in inland areas better prepare for hurricanes' far-reaching effects.

"These proactive steps are part of our ongoing mission to save lives and protect property," Dr. Spinrad said, underscoring NOAA's commitment to leveraging cutting-edge technology and improving its forecasting capabilities to safeguard communities across the nation.

As one of the strongest El Niños ever observed nears its conclusion, NOAA scientists are forecasting a swift transition to La Niña conditions. This shift is expected to significantly influence the upcoming Atlantic hurricane season.

La Niña typically reduces wind shear in the tropics, a factor that can enhance the development and intensification of hurricanes. Reduced wind shear allows storms to grow more robust and organized, increasing the likelihood of hurricane activity.

Compounding this effect, the tropical Atlantic Ocean and Caribbean Sea are currently experiencing high oceanic heat content. This abundance of warm water provides additional energy to fuel storm development, potentially leading to more frequent and intense hurricanes.

NOAA's predictions underscore the importance of

preparedness for communities in hurricane-prone regions. As La Niña sets in, the combination of favorable atmospheric conditions and abundant oceanic heat content could result in a particularly active and impactful hurricane season.

This hurricane season also features the potential for an above-normal west African monsoon, which can produce African easterly waves that seed some of the strongest and longer-lived Atlantic storms. Finally, light trade winds allow hurricanes to grow in strength without the disruption of strong wind shear, and also minimize ocean cooling.

Human-caused climate change is warming our ocean globally and in the Atlantic basin, and melting ice on land, leading to sea level rise, which increases the risk of storm surge. Sea level rise represents a clear human influence on the damage potential from a given hurricane.

There are six alphabetical lists of names that are rotated through every six years, so the names that are used in 2024 will be used again in 2030. The last time this list was used was in 2018.

The organization also has a supplemental list of storm names that will be used if alphabetic names run out. That has only happened twice in the past 15 years. Experts have previously warned that climate change could cause an increase in hurricane intensity and other severe storms.

Given these predictions and the current high oceanic heat content, the Turks and Caicos Islands Department of Disaster Management and Emergencies points that it is crucial for residents in hurricane-prone areas to take preparedness seriously and stay vigilant as the season progresses.

Sharlene Didn't Pass the Baton to Eddie

By Audley Astwood

Former premier, Sharlene Cartwright Robinson has been publicly discussing leadership transition, drawing a self-portrait of flawless leadership.

She is all for passing the baton to the next leader and even warns what goes wrong when the baton is not passed. However, a closer look reveals a clear contrast between her words and deeds, particularly about her successor within the Peoples Democratic Movement (PDM), Honourable (Hon.) Edwin Astwood.

Despite her frequent emphasis on enabling new leaders, her actions tell a different story. She has maintained a high-profile presence, often overshadowing the current PDM leader, with her weekly contributions to public discourse. This glaring contradiction between her rhetoric and actions calls for a critical examination.

Robinson's Contradiction Between Words and Deeds

A clear contrast emerges from Robinson's idealised portrayal of leadership transition to its actual implementation within the PDM. Robinson's public statements often highlighted the importance of a smooth leadership transition.

It's a commendable stance that reflects a mature understanding of political cycles and the necessity of nurturing future leaders. However, her actions tell a different story. The transition to Astwood's leadership seems driven more by political necessity than deliberate mentorship and grooming. This observation shows Robinson's refusal to pass the baton to Hon. Astwood.

Leadership Requires Insight and Wisdom

Leadership demands insight and wisdom, particularly in politics. It also requires the wisdom to know when to step aside. This is a lesson many leaders have embraced.

Past leaders understand that the future of their legacies and their parties does not depend on their permanent presence. Their legacy is determined by their ability to nurture new leaders. Unfortunately, Robinson's actions suggest a departure from this understanding.

Rather than fading gracefully from the political forefront to mentor her successor, she has maintained an evident presence. She continues to overshadow the current PDM leader with regular contributions to public discourse. She is even giving interviews to foreign media on the American ammunition controversy as if she still speaks on behalf of the PDM.

Questions on Robinson's Sincerity and Effectiveness

Questions arise regarding the sincerity and effectiveness of Robinson's stated intentions. Was her public persona as a mentor and a leader who values continuity merely a pretence, or was it a genuine but poorly executed ambition? The gap between her advocacy and preparations for Astwood's succession suggests a disconnect beyond personal failure, touching on systemic issues within the PDM's culture and operational norms under her leadership.

Historical Context and Omissions

Robinson's narrative omits significant episodes that might tarnish the image of past PDM leaders. She fails to mention the political turmoil following Oswald Skippings' tenure as leader, when he also faced monumental challenges that resulted in TCI being bankrupt two years after taking office, leading to a disastrous early election for the PDM. This critical period tested the party's resilience and leadership, and its lessons seem unheeded in her public reflections.

Complexity of Robinson's Legacy

Though historic, Robinson's tenure as the first female premier concluded with the PDM suffering its most severe defeat ever, a detail noticeably absent from her narrative.

This selective recounting extends to her leadership style, which many have described as driven by vindictiveness, highlighted by the so-called "Great PDM Purge of 2016," where foundational members were unceremoniously ousted. Such actions hardly embody the gracious passing of the baton she writes about.

Adding to the complexity of her legacy is the al-

leged close rapport with the former governor, which many compared to an overly friendly alliance. This raises serious questions about her independence and leadership strength, implying a lack of assertiveness in her decision-making. This perception did little to ease concerns about her prioritising personal and political allegiances over the broader needs of the TCI. This crucial aspect is lacking in Robinson's narrative.

Commitment to Honest Leadership Transition

For a genuine leadership transition, it's not enough to talk about passing the baton; Robinson must actively prepare the next leader to take it. This involves stepping back to allow Astwood to grow and offering guidance without overshadowing. It also entails reflecting honestly on one's tenure and openly acknowledging successes and failures. This commitment to honest leadership transition is not just a suggestion; it's a necessity for the future of the PDM. The urgency for a genuine leadership transition cannot be overstated.

Integrity in Storytelling

A true leader's narrative should not merely be a highlight reel of their best moments but a candid acknowledgement of their entire career, warts and all. Only then can the lessons of the past truly enlighten the path forward for future leaders.

This integrity in storytelling is not just beneficial for historical accuracy; it's essential for fostering a political culture rooted in honesty and constructive development, another crucial aspect lacking in Robinson's narrative. The selective recounting of her tenure raises concerns about the transparency and honesty of her narrative.

It's vital to stress the importance of acknowledging successes and failures in leadership, as it not only ensures a balanced evaluation but also invokes a sense of responsibility in the audience.

Audley Astwood is a former Communications Director for the Royal Turks and Caicos Islands Police Force.





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Vivian Tyson – Editorial Department

What is an Ombudsman/Complaints Commissioner?

The Complaints Commissioner is an Ombudsman who is an official appointed to receive, investigate and report on private citizens' complaints about Government.

The word "Ombudsman" dates back to 1809 and is of Swedish origin meaning "grievance person" or "representative". It is used world-wide to designate impartial, confidential and independent offices that were created to ensure balance between the powers of government and its citizenry.

The purpose of the Ombudsman or Complaints Commissioner is to ensure accountability and encourage best practices in the delivery of public services through investigating and resolving complaints from members of the public against a public authority or institution and he or she can make recommendations to secure redress and ensure a fair settlement.

When was the Complaints Commission Established?

The Office was established in 1994 in the Turks and Caicos Islands for the purpose of assisting aggrieved persons who believe that they have suffered injustices at the hands of Public Officers employed by Government Departments and Statutory Bodies as a result of maladministration.

What does a Complaints Commissioner do?

The Complaints Commissioner **Receives, Investigates, and Reports.**

The Commissioner receives complaints from members of the public who have been aggrieved by Public Officers, Government Departments, and Statutory Bodies.

These complaints are investigated in a fair and independent manner to ascertain whether injustice has been caused by improper, unreasonable or inadequate government administrative conduct otherwise defined as maladministration.

After the completion of an investigation the Complaints Commissioner sends a report of the investigation to the person who requested the investigation and reports his or her findings along with the necessary recommendations to the relevant government agency.

Which Person or Authority Governs the Complaints Commission?

The Commissioner is wholly independent of all Government Officials and is appointed by the Governor after consulting with the Premier and Leader of the Opposition.

The office of the Complaints Commission is enshrined under Section 99 of the Turks and Caicos Islands Constitution.

"In the exercise of their functions each of the institutions protecting good governance, and any person acting on its instructions or on its behalf, shall not be subject to the direction or control of any other person or authority"

Who can file a complaint?

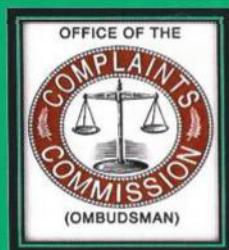
Any individual, group of persons or corporations who have been mistreated, aggrieved, or had their complaints improperly dealt with by government agencies may lodge a complaint with the Complaints Commissioner.

The Ombudsman is a small man's institution, proceedings before him are informal, speedy, and **FREE OF COST**. There is no fee for filing a complaint, nor is an Attorney at law required.

What is Maladministration?

This is the name given to a variety of failures by public officials in handling a citizen's dealings with the state. It could be any of the following listed examples, but may also include others not listed:

- ❖ Unreasonable delay in dealing with any request or application
- ❖ Abuse of power or authority
- ❖ Flawed procedures
- ❖ Failing to give reasons for decisions
- ❖ Courtesy, rudeness
- ❖ Lack of consideration for a person affected by any action
- ❖ Acting with bias, unfairness, neglect
- ❖ Incompetence
- ❖ Arbitrariness
- ❖ Failing to follow through on commitments made
- ❖ Making decisions based wholly or partly on a mistake of law or fact



Mission Statement

The Office of the Complaints Commissioner (Ombudsman) of the Turks and Caicos Islands seeks to investigate complaints of maladministration by Government Departments and Statutory Bodies as stipulated in the Ordinance, promote effectiveness and efficiency within services rendered to the community, educate persons about their rights and duties in a free and democratic society, and provide a service to the public in fairness, justice and without prejudice, so as to promote harmony and good governance in the country.

You have a Right to Complain!

YOU CAN SUBMIT YOUR COMPLAINT VIA EMAIL, LETTER OR BY COMING INTO OUR OFFICE IN PERSON.

WE ARE COMMITTED IN PARTICULAR TO:

Independence
Impartiality
Integrity
Accessibility
Professionalism
Fairness

Courage in Investigating matters in stating findings and in making recommendations

You can make your complaint privately

File your complaint with the Complaints Commissioner (Ombudsman) Today!

Phone: (649)-338-2927
Email: complaints_commission@gov.tc

TURKS AND CAICOS ISLANDS GOVERNMENT



OFFICE OF THE



INFORMATIONAL BROCHURE

"Promoting Harmony, Good Governance, and Justice"



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TONY CLARKE'S BUILDING
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GRAND TURK
TURKS AND CAICOS ISLANDS

Point Grace Resort Honors the Legacy of Mrs. Mary Higgs

Providenciales, TCI- May 24th, 2024- On April 30th, 2024, Point Grace Resort bid farewell to Mrs. Mary Higgs, who served over 21 years in various roles throughout her tenure.

Mark Durilat, CEO of Grace Bay Resorts, conveyed his gratitude in a heartfelt farewell message to Mrs. Higgs, acknowledging her graceful and elegant service to Point Grace and Grace Bay Resorts.

He remarked, "Mrs. Higgs, thank you for your unwavering dedication not only to Point Grace but also to the hospitality industry in the Turks & Caicos Islands. Your contribution has been invaluable in shaping the industry into what it is today."

During the farewell luncheon, colleagues, both current and former, reminisced about cherished memories shared with Mrs. Higgs. Former Point Grace Resort General Manager, Beverly Howell, expressed her gratitude, saying, "I do not know how I would have gotten through many of the challenges faced during my tenure if it was not for Mary being by my side."

Adelphine Pitter, one of Mrs. Higgs's children and former General Manager of West Bay Club, highlighted her mother's journey and emphasized her ability to balance work and family. She recalled fond memories of her mother's commitment to the hospitality industry, noting, "No matter how much time she committed to work, she never neglected her family."

In her farewell message, Mrs. Higgs reflected on her experiences, expressing gratitude to Mr. Durilat, Ms. Howell, and her family for their unwavering support. She encouraged her colleagues, reminding them that perseverance and determination can overcome any challenge.

Fred Khoury, General Manager, and Beryl Handfield-Charles, Human Resources Director of Point Grace Resort, extended their appreciation to Mrs. Higgs for her invaluable contribution to the resort's deep-rooted family-oriented culture.

Mrs. Charles remarked, "Mrs. Mary, your presence at Point Grace will deeply be missed. You hold so much knowledge about the history of Point Grace and are a part of the secret sauce that makes this place magical for our owners and numerous repeat guests."





Point Grace Resort Honors the Legacy of Mrs. Mary Higgs

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9



\$3.1M Financial Assistance Programme for Seniors Ready to Go



Premier and Minister of Finance Hon. Washington Misick

The Office of the Premier and Public Policy and

the Ministry of Finance, Investment and Trade wants to advise the general public that plans for the Financial Assistance Programme (FAP), aimed at supporting the elderly population within our society are underway.

The Washington Misick Administration noted that \$3.1 million in funding was approved in the current Budget Year 2024/2025, and the programme is now ready to roll out.

It pointed out that the Financial Assistance Programme, a cornerstone initiative of the Government, is a commitment to augment the social welfare of the aged in the TCI. The administration said the programme is being carefully crafted to support elderly citizens who may be facing

financial hardships.

"The Government is fully committed to ensuring the smooth implementation of the Financial Assistance Programme as promised; and to meet the originally proposed deadline for payment of the benefit in July 2024 posed for eligible individuals. The payment, when distributed will be retroactive to 1 April 2024," a release from the government said.

The press release pointed out that the government is reaffirming its dedication to fostering a society that cares for its elderly population and provides them with the assistance and resources necessary to build stronger communities where everyone can not only survive but thrive.

Canadian Kiteboarder Loses Leg in Shark Attack



A Canadian tourist, Louis Arsenault, lost his right leg following a shark attack while snorkeling in the Leeward Cut on the eastern side of Providenciales last Thursday.

Arsenault, a professional kiteboarder from Prince Edward Island, Canada, confirmed the incident on his Instagram page, sharing a photo of himself in a hospital bed post-amputation.

"Life can sure be fragile. Despite the terrible situation, I am incredibly lucky to be still here. The incident involved a shark attack while casually snorkeling with family and friends," Arsenault wrote.

He described the experience as shocking and expressed gratitude for his survival, emphasizing his determination to face the new challenges ahead with a positive outlook.

"This will present new challenges for me, but I am incredibly positive and thankful

to be here doing well to continue living my life to the fullest," he added, referring to the ordeal as a "speed bump in the road on this journey of life."

This incident occurred almost exactly one year after another serious shark attack in Providenciales. On May 24th, 2023, Alexandra Truwit, a tourist from Connecticut, USA, lost her left foot to a shark while snorkeling near Grace Bay beach.

The kiteboarder is sponsored by the Hawaii-based kitesurfing equipment company Cabrinha, which describes him as a freestyle champion who has lived on P.E.I. his whole life. The company replied to his Instagram post, sending "positive vibes" and love to him and his family.

Arsenault was featured in a 2018 video by Cabrinha, made with support from Prince Edward Island Tourism, highlighting the best spots to kiteboard around the Island.

PDM Calls For Urgent Action To Address Lack of Banking Services on South Caicos

FORBES... The time for lip service and delay is over.



The opposition Peoples Democratic Movement (PDM) is calling on authorities to urgently restore banking services in South Caicos.

PDM Caretaker and Candidate Hyetta Forbes has expressed deep concern over the absence of a bank on the island, emphasizing that the only Automated Banking Machine (ATM) available is often non-functional.

"For far too long, the people of South Caicos have faced challenges with unreliable ATM services," Forbes stated. "The recent two-month period without a working ATM is unacceptable and demands immediate action. Words and promises are no longer sufficient; we need concrete results."

Forbes criticized the prolonged delay in restoring reliable banking services, highlighting the community's dependence on neighboring islands for basic banking needs. She stressed that this situation is both unreasonable and unjust, and called for immediate steps to address the issue.

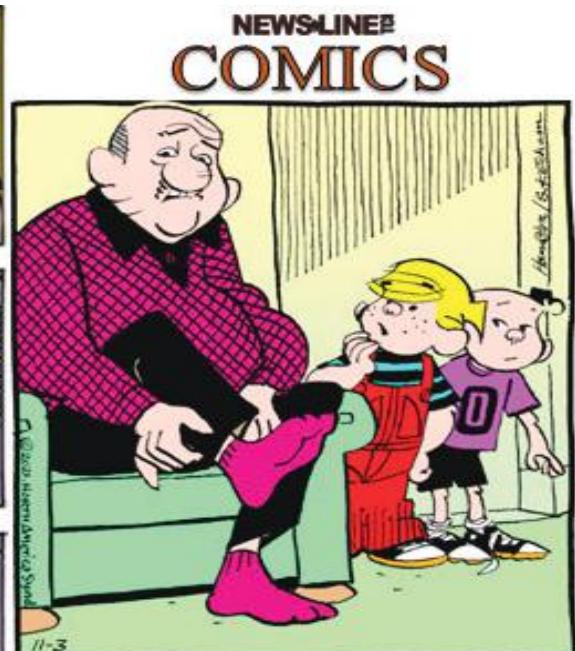
"The time for lip service and delay is over. We need tangible actions that will bring about positive change," she urged. "South Caicos is a vibrant community with hard-working individuals who deserve better."

Forbes also proposed the installation of multiple ATMs on the island to prevent future disruptions. "Having only one functioning ATM poses significant risks and inconveniences for our community. A back-up system must be in place to guarantee uninterrupted access to essential banking services, even in the event of technical difficulties."

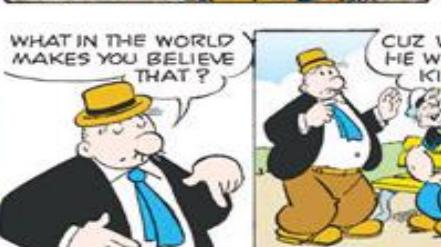
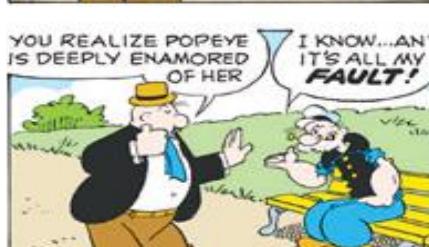
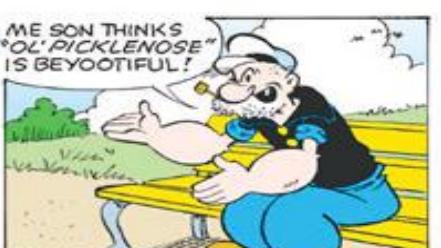
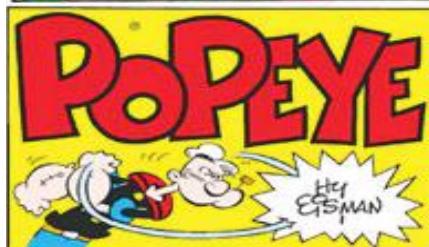
Additionally, Forbes highlighted the importance of installing an ATM at the South Caicos airport in anticipation of upcoming international flights. This, she argued, would not only cater to incoming travelers but also provide a convenient banking option for local residents.

"We must not allow our community to be left behind, deprived of the basic banking services that are readily available on other neighboring islands," Forbes declared. "I will continue to advocate tirelessly on behalf of my community until necessary actions are taken. It is your duty as elected officials to ensure the fulfillment of the promises you made."

The PDM is urging the relevant authorities to prioritize the needs of South Caicos and take immediate steps to restore and improve banking services on the island.



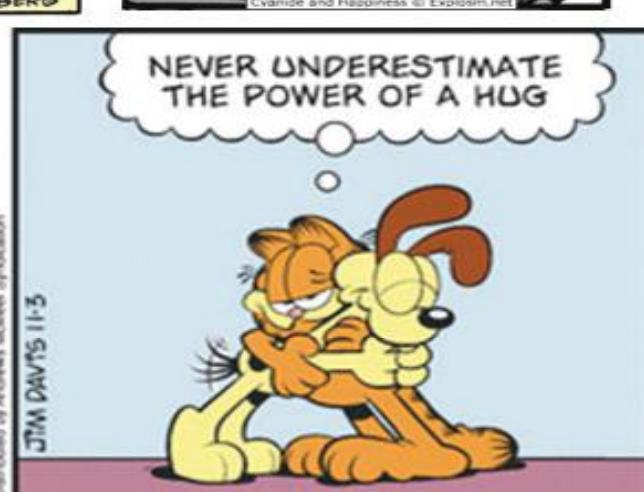
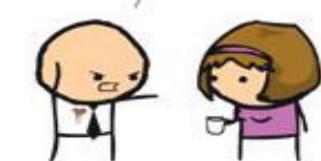
"OH, DARN IT... MY FOOT'S ASLEEP!" "SHOULD WE BE QUIET?"



YOU SPILT COFFEE ON MY NEW SHIRT!



ONE OF THESE DAYS... POW! RIGHT TO THE MOON!



NEVER UNDERESTIMATE THE POWER OF A HUG



Image: Adriana Rapolla | Flickr

BROWN Pelican

NEWSLINE
JOURNAL OF HERITAGE, HISTORY & CULTURE

Turks & Caicos is home to the Caribbean brown pelican. It is also the national bird of the TCI. They are easily identifiable by their skin pouch under the their bill. They use this pouch as a sort of 'fishing net' to swoop down and catch fish. The brown pelican was listed as endangered in the '70s because of pesticides. However, they were removed from the list when a lot of the harmful pesticides were banned.

TCI MEASLES FREE

Two cases recovered

The Ministry of Health and Human Services has announced that the two confirmed cases of measles identified on May 9, 2024, have fully recovered. To date, no further cases have been reported.

In response, the Ministry has intensified its surveillance for fever and rash cases by implementing daily reporting through sentinel sites, including both public and private sector clinics, and the hospital. This aims to ensure early detection and prompt intervention, which includes isolation, testing, and contact tracing. Suspected measles cases will undergo testing with samples sent to the Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA) for confirmation. Any new cases will be promptly communicated to the public.

To prevent further cases, the Ministry is engaging in public education through various media outlets, providing information to healthcare providers, and collaborating with international partners such as the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA), Pan American Health Organisation (PAHO), and CARPHA.

Additionally, a mop-up exercise is being conducted by the Primary Health Care Department to identify and vaccinate vulnerable individuals, especially children, who are unvaccinated or unsure of their immunization status.

Measles is a highly contagious viral disease, with symptoms appearing 10-12 days after infection. Initial symptoms include high fever, runny nose, cough, and red, watery eyes, followed

by a rash that starts on the face and spreads. Measles spreads through droplets from coughs and sneezes and can infect up to 90% of non-immune people in close contact with an infected person. Complications can be severe, particularly for children under five, adults over 30, and those with weakened immune systems. The Ministry emphasizes that the best prevention against measles is the MMR (measles, mumps, rubella) vaccine, which is safe and effective. Vaccines are provided free at government primary care facilities, and parents are urged to ensure their children's vaccinations are up to date. Those unsure of their vaccination status are encouraged to consult their healthcare provider.

Mosquito Infestation



Here are some simple steps you can take:

- **Eliminate standing water:** Check around your home and empty any containers holding water, such as flower pots, buckets, and clogged gutters.
- **Cover water storage containers:** If you have water storage barrels, ensure they are tightly covered to prevent mosquitoes from accessing them.
- **Maintain your surroundings:** Keep your yard tidy by trimming overgrown vegetation and properly dispose of all garbage/refuse. Ensure trash can lids fit tightly.
- **Use mosquito repellent:** When spending time outdoors, especially during dawn and dusk when mosquitoes are most active, use EPA-approved mosquito repellents to protect yourself.
- **Screen doors and windows:** Ensure doors and windows are fitted with screens to keep mosquitoes out of your home.



Remember, by taking these simple precautions, you can help reduce the risk of mosquito-borne illnesses in our community.

For more information and tips, contact the Environmental Health Department at (649) 338-2143 or (649) 338-2144.

Together we can make a difference.

With the recent rainfall, communities have begun to experience a surge in mosquito infestations. This has prompted the Environmental Health Department to urge residents to take proactive steps to eliminate these pests and safeguard public health, especially with the rainy season upon us. Mosquitoes breed in stagnant water and can quickly

become a nuisance. More importantly, they are carriers of serious diseases such as dengue fever, malaria, Zika virus, and West Nile virus.

The Environmental Health Department pointed out that preventing mosquito breeding is crucial to protecting oneself and community from these health risks. That department has listed steps that will prevent mos-

quito breeding, and is urging the community to adapt these practices. Eliminate standing water is one of them. According to the Environmental Health Department, residents are advised to check and empty containers, regularly checking and empty water from flowerpots, buckets, bird baths, and pet dishes.

It also advises cleaning gutters and drains, ensuring that they are not clogged. It noted also that storage containers must be securely covered, using tight lids or screens to cover water tanks and cisterns.

It also urged residents to maintain their yards, by trimming vegetation, advising that mosquitoes rest in tall grass and bushes, and so, yards must be kept well-trimmed.

The Environmental Health Department also urges management of waste, pointing out that disposing of trash should be done properly, and to keep yards free of debris that can collect water.

It also urges the use of mosquito repellants, pointing out that the insect repellent should be used on exposed skin and clothing when outdoors. It also instructs that permethrin-treated clothing and gear should be used for added protection.

The department also advised installing screens and nets. It stated that screen windows and doors ensure windows, when rightly fitted, will prevent mosquitoes from entering homes.

It also recommends the usage of bed nets, particularly in areas with high mosquito activity.

The Environmental Health Department also recommends residents should notify the authorities about large areas of standing water, so that its agents could come to treat such stagnant waters.

Arising from the heavy rainfall last Thursday, some communities still have bodies of water, which has seen an increase mosquito activities. The communities most affected are the ones next to wet land areas.

It pointed out that staying informed about mosquito activity in your area and being prepared with the right knowledge and tools can make a significant difference. It urges the community to follow the follow guidelines from the Environmental Health Department and take action to reduce mosquito breeding grounds.

Life Line

FEATURED CHURCH

This week on Newsline Featured Church, we highlight the Church of Christ, located in Blue Hills, Providenciales. The Church of Christ offers several opportunities for weekly worship. On Sunday at 9a.m. is Devine Worship. At 6:30p.m. is evening service. On Wednesday starting at 6:30pm is Bible Study and prayer meeting. The church is founded on Romans 16:16 – “Greet one another with a holy kiss. The churches of Christ greet you.” Its bedrock is also built on 2Corinthians 9:1-15.

The Church of Christ is pastored by Jack Phanor and Patrick Forbes.



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.

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>

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

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

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

OSETA JOLY STAGES BOYS' DAY

Oseta Jolly Primary School, on Wednesday, May 22, staged its Boys' Day Activities at the school. The event attracted many resources persons, who came in to impart their diverse knowledge to the young men. Among the entities and individuals who attended the event were Bodier Bank, the Youth Department, the Sports Commission, the Royal Turks and Caicos Islands Police Force Community Policing Unit, the Department of Health, Dental Services, Bishop Bryant Cox and Nixon Dickenson. The following are photo highlights of the event.





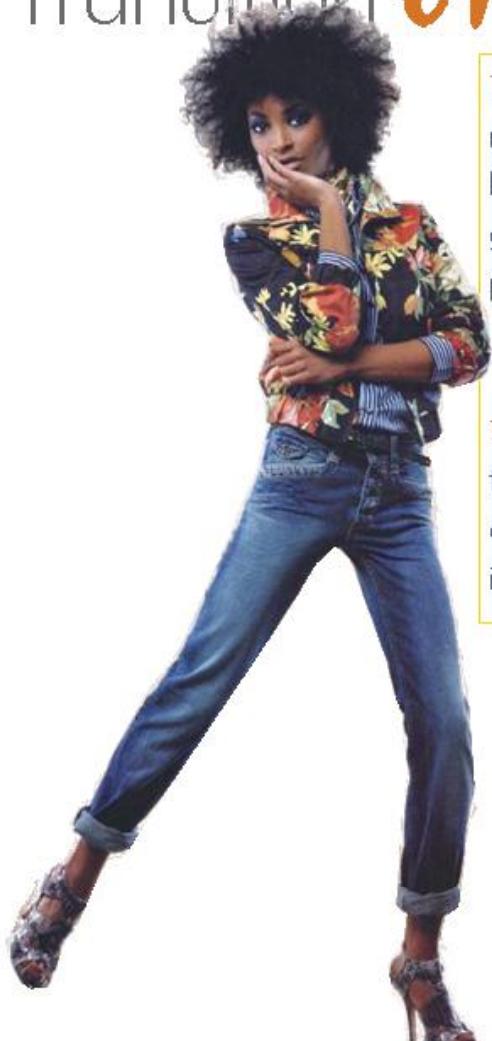
NEWSLINE
style

NATURAL HAIR 101

Welcome to SPOTLIGHT *style* where we give you your much needed weekly dose of *style* advice!

Letting a perm grow out into a natural, healthy mane is easier said than done. So, here are some tips on how to make the transition a bit easier. Thankfully, with many more women looking to embrace their natural locs, there has been an influx of products.

Transition *or* Big Chop?



Transitioning is the process of eliminating chemical treatments and allowing the hair to grow out while gradually trimming the chemically processed ends.

The Big Chop is for those who want to be natural now. It entails cutting off all of the relaxed hair and wearing a TWA (teeny weeny afro).



- If you aren't comfortable with short hair, then you can avoid that adjustment period, and the wait of growing your hair back out

- The texture of your hair will not be consistent: your roots will be curly & your ends straight
- The process of transitioning takes longer than if you just did "the big chop"

PROS

- You have a consistent hair texture
- There are no long waits to go natural

CONS

- Waiting to grow your hair longer
- Learning to deal with an entirely new texture on the spot

GOING NATURAL *tips!*



- Trash the Chemicals and use natural oils and butters instead
- If transitioning, use curls to hide your straight ends ex. Foam hair curlers
- Try out different accessories to protect your new growth ex. Scarves
- Set aside a lot of time for wash days
- Experiment with new protective hairstyles
- Keep in mind that the natural journey is not cheap!

BONUS



Remember, the decision to go natural is an extensive process. So be patient!



American Cruise Ship Visitor Avoids Mandatory 12-Year Jail Term in Grand Turk



Judge Baptiste, acknowledging the exceptional circumstances in Wenrich's case, emphasized that imposing the mandatory minimum sentence would be arbitrary and disproportionate, necessitating a departure from the standard sentencing guidelines.

Tyler Wenrich, an American tourist visiting Grand Turk, has managed to avoid the mandatory 12-year jail sentence after pleading guilty to illegal possession of two rounds of ammunition.

Wenrich's case, which has drawn significant at-

tention, unfolded in April 2024 when he was apprehended and subsequently charged. According to local authorities, Wenrich was found in possession of the ammunition during a routine security check while reembarking on a cruise ship in Grand Turk. The possession of am-

munition without a license is a serious offense in the Turks and Caicos Islands, carrying a mandatory minimum sentence of 12 years in prison. Wenrich's defense team, led Sheena Mair, had argued that the incident was an unfortunate oversight rather than a deliberate violation of the law. They highlighted his clean record and cooperative behavior during the investigation. Presiding judge Justice Davidson Baptiste, took these factors into consideration and opted for a more lenient punishment, sparing Wenrich the severe mandatory jail term.

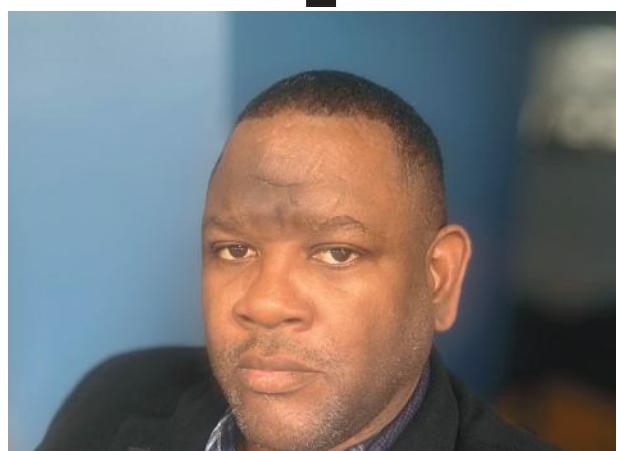
Judge Baptiste, acknowledging the exceptional circumstances in Wenrich's case, emphasized that imposing the mandatory minimum sentence would be arbitrary and disproportionate, necessitating a departure from the standard sentencing guidelines.

The prosecution was led by Clement Joseph of the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP).

Wenrich, who had already spent three weeks in jail following his charge in April, was credited with "time served" and will not have to return to jail. He was sentenced to three weeks imprisonment and fined \$9,000, which must be paid by June 2, 2024.

This case has sparked a broader discussion about the treatment of foreign visitors in legal matters and the potential need for clearer communication of local laws to tourists.

Stop Politicising Crime



ASTWOOD: Consider Honourable Washington Misick, who helped former Premier Sharlene Cartwright Robinson when he was the opposition leader.

Social Commentator Audley Astwood is urging local politicians not to use crime as a political football to score points, but rather use it as a banding tool to tackle the crime monster.

The following is Astwood's article:

"Whoever sheds human blood, by humans shall their blood be shed; for in the image of God has God made mankind" (Genesis 9:6). This powerful Bible verse shows how sacred life is. This principle is above all human divisions, including

politics. Yet, in our community, crime is often used as a political tool instead of being treated as a serious issue that affects us all.

Crime has been around for a long time, during the rule of the PNP and the PDM. Violence and murders happen no matter who is in power, proving that these tragic events are not limited to one party's agenda. It is unrealistic and dishonest for any political group to claim they can completely stop such acts. Promising that murders will stop under one's leadership is deceitful. It's a false hope that ignores the deeper, systemic issues that lead to crime.

My concerns are about much more than politicians and their supporters using crime to attack the current administration. Exploiting the pain and suffering of victims and their families is just plain wrong. This reduces these tragic events to mere talking points. This strategy shows a lack of empathy and unity to combat crime effectively. It deepens wounds and divides those who have already suffered enough.

Consider Honourable Washington Misick, who helped former Premier Sharlene Cartwright Robinson when he was the opposition leader. Misick's actions were not political moves but genuine efforts to help, regardless of political lines. This shows his strong character and understanding that issues like crime are too im-

portant for political games.

Misick's Christian values and moral integrity show that it's possible to rise above the political fight and lead with compassion and unity. His actions are a model for how politicians should behave—not as opportunists seeking to exploit tragedy for votes, but as leaders committed to protecting their communities.

As voters and citizens, we must demand that our leaders focus on real solutions to crime. These solutions should improve societal structures, enhance the justice system, and support community programs that address the root causes of crime.

Examples include community policing, better access to education and jobs, and mental health support. We need collaborative strategies that unite experts, community leaders, and policymakers in a non-partisan alliance.

It's time to reject the narrative that divides us by politicising human suffering. Let's focus our efforts on creating safer communities to live and work. By working together, I believe we can build a society that reflects good morals and ethical standards.

After all, in unity, there is strength to overcome our biggest challenges and fears. Let's honour the lives disrupted by tragedy with actions that heal, not words that divide.

Experience Turks and Caicos Celebrates Success at CHTA Caribbean Travel Marketplace 42



Experience Turks and Caicos is hailing its recent participation at the Caribbean Hotels and Tourism Association's Caribbean Travel Marketplace 42 as a tremendous success.

Experience Turks and Caicos was a Destination Partner for the annual event which took place from May 21st to May 23rd at the Montego Bay Convention Centre in Montego Bay, Jamaica this year.

The Turks and Caicos Islands delegation was led by Minister of Tourism, the Honourable Josephine Connolly, Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Tourism, Mr. Wesley Clerveaux, co-Chairman of Experience Turks and Caicos Mr. Alvin Hegner and CEO of the Turks and Caicos Hotels and Tourism Association (TCHTA), Mrs. Stacy Cox.

Experience Turks and Caicos stamped its presence with one of the largest pavilions in the Marketplace. The pavilion emphasised the multi-island destination, showcasing the beauty of the islands- South Caicos, Grand Turk, North and Middle Caicos, Salt Cay and Providenciales – with a backdrop designed by local graphics team Out of the Box Advertising. The pavilion was designed and built by Altruism Solutions Limited.

The pavilion drew a lot of attention and attracted many visitors including Jamaican Minister of Tourism, the Honourable Edmund Bartlett, Anguilla's Minister of Tourism, the Honourable Hadyn Hughes and the Bahamian Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Tourism, the Honourable Chester Cooper.



From left - Wesley Clerveaux, Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Tourism; Stacy Cox, CEO of the Turks and Caicos Hotels and Tourism Association; Minister of Tourism Hon. Josephine Connolly share lens with CHTA representatives.

Over the course of two days, the Experience Turks and Caicos team, which also included Chief Marketing Officer Ms. Trina Adams and Public Relations Manager Laura Dowrich-Phil-

lips, engaged in over 30 meetings with suppliers, media companies and airlines from all over the world eager to do business with the Turks and Caicos Islands.

Minister of Tourism, the Honourable Josephine Connolly expressed her satisfaction at the showing of Experience Turks and Caicos at Travel Marketplace.

"I am very proud of the work done by Experience Turks and Caicos to ensure the Turks and Caicos Islands was well-represented at the 42nd Caribbean Travel Marketplace. Together with several of our hotel partners, the destination had an impressive showing. Our beautiful pavilion stood out and was a clear signal that as the premier luxury destination in the Caribbean, we are investing heavily into marketing and promoting our destination to the benefit of all in the country," she said.

The Minister delivered the feature presentation for the Turks and Caicos Islands destination briefing before a cadre of media representing 50 international publications. In her presentation, Minister Connolly spoke about the destination's record-breaking arrivals for the year and the impending introduction of new airlift into South Caicos and Grand Turk.

Mr. Alvin Hegner, co-Chair of Experience Turks and Caicos said with the DMMO fully functional, it was important to communicate to the travel community that the business of tourism in the Turks and Caicos is in capable hands.

"Our showing at Caribbean Travel Marketplace gave many a boost of confidence in our brand and we held meetings with several businesses in the tourism and travel space who are eager to partner with us as a result. The Turks and Caicos Islands continue to be the go-to destination for thousands of visitors and we are continuing to develop our product to ensure we deliver value for money," he said.



Tourism Minister Hon. Hon Josephine Connolly being interviewed by travel writer Janet Silvera



The Hartling Group Team at the CHTA Marketplace



Minister of Tourism Hon. Josephine Connolly delivers an address at the CHTA Caribbean Travel Market



The Villa Del Mar team at the CHTA Marketplace



Alvin Hegner, Alvin Hegner, co-Chairman of Experience Turks and Caicos being interviewed by one of the many television stations at the event

The Turks and Caicos Islands representation was enhanced by the presence of our hotel partners - The Hartling Group, Sail Rock Resort, Salterra Resort and Spa, The Tides, Villa Del Mar, The Strand, Seven Seas Resort, Royal

West Indies Resort and Ocean Club Resort. The 42nd Caribbean Travel Marketplace is said to have had a record participation of 1200 delegates from 50 countries and saw 1,274 appointments scheduled.

Mental health vs mental illness



MENTAL ILLNESS is not caused by ghosts or demons and should be treated like all other health problems, such as diabetes. Mental illness can occur due to several factors, such as chemicals imbalances, traumatic experiences, substance abuse, and a family history of mental illness.

Mental health, according to Margo O'Sullivan, clinical mental health counsellor, is a state of well-being where persons experience joy and peace of mind. Persons, she said, have positive thoughts towards self and life and one's ability to succeed.

"Persons can cope with everyday stresses of life, manage stress and cope well with change and challenges. They can also work productively towards achieving their goals, and interact well with others," O'Sullivan said.

Mental illness, on the other hand, is a group of illnesses associated with distress that may impact a person's thoughts, feelings, perceptions and behaviour. Mental illness can affect work, social or family activities and personal relationships.

NEGATIVE THOUGHTS ABOUT SELF AND LIFE

"Persons experience feelings of despair, pain and sorrow. They may have negative thoughts about self and life, and may have suicidal or self-harming thoughts. They may

also be unable to cope and problem-solve, feeling hopeless, and might self-harm. Person affected by a mental illness may develop an impaired ability to work or work productively, and they may become withdrawn from family and friends," O'Sullivan said.

In 2019, one in every eight, or 90 million people worldwide, were living with a mental disorder, with anxiety and depressive disorders the most common. Also referred to as 'mental disorders', 'mental health disorders' or 'mental health conditions', it involves significant disturbances in thinking, emotional regulation, or behaviour.

"Not all persons living on the streets have a mental health disorder; some are homeless. Persons of any age, gender, race and economic status can be affected. Therefore, persons should not be stigmatised, but should be treated with respect and dignity," O'Sullivan said.

Mental health is the foundation for emotions, thinking, communication, learning, resilience, hope and self-esteem. Mental health is also key to relationships, personal and emotional well-being and contributing to community or society. Mental health is a component of overall well-being and it can influence, and be influenced by, physical health.

According to O'Sullivan, many people who have a mental illness do not want to talk about it. However, mental illness is nothing to be ashamed of as it is a medical condition, just like heart disease or diabetes, and mental health conditions are treatable.

"We are continually expanding our understanding of how the human brain works, and treatments are available to help people successfully manage mental health conditions," O'Sullivan said.

Mental illness does not discriminate; it can affect anyone regardless of your age, gender, geography, income, social status, race, ethnicity, religion/spirituality, sexual orientation, background or other aspects of cultural identity. While mental illness can occur at any age, three-fourths of all mental illness begins by age 24.

EMOTIONAL DISORDERS

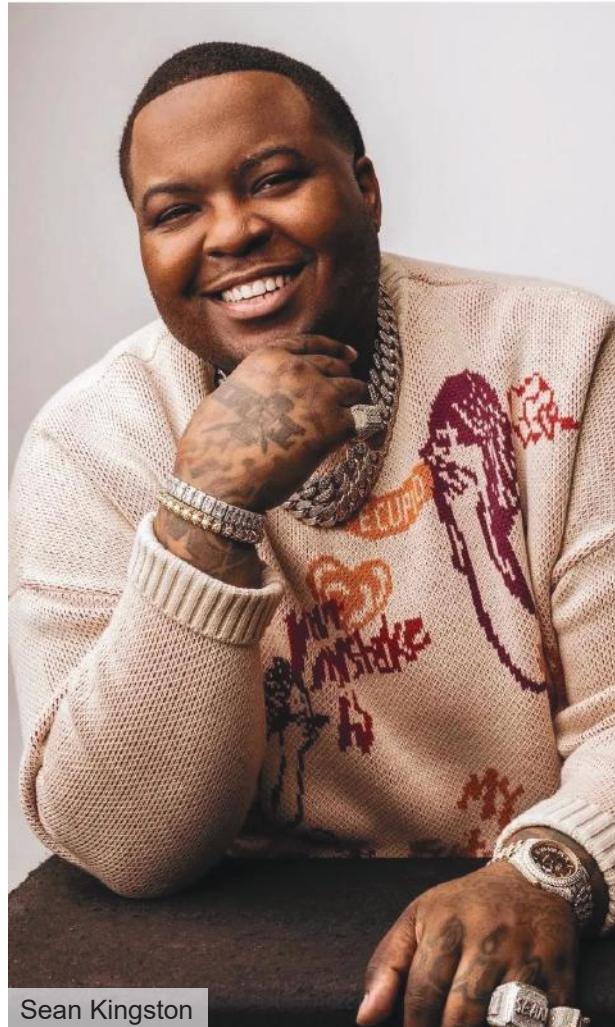
Common mental illnesses include anxiety disorders, depressive disorders, behavioural and emotional disorders in children, bipolar affective disorder, dissociation and dissociative disorders, obsessive compulsive disorder, eating disorders, paranoia, post-traumatic stress disorder, psychosis, and schizophrenia.

Mental illnesses take many forms. Some are mild and only interfere in limited ways with daily life, such as some phobias (abnormal fears). Other mental health conditions are so severe that a person may need care in a hospital. Similar to other medical illnesses, the optimal ways to provide care depend on the illness and the severity of its impact. "The diagnosis of a mental disorder is not the same as a need for treatment. Need for treatment takes into consideration how severe the symptoms are, how much the symptoms cause distress and affect daily living, the risks and benefits of available treatments and other factors," O'Sullivan said.

Mental health treatment is based upon an individualised plan developed collaboratively with a mental health clinician and an individual and family members, if the individual desires. It may include psychotherapy, medication or other treatments. Often, a combination of therapy and medication is most effective. Complementary and alternative therapies are also increasingly being used.

Self-help and support can be very important to an individual's coping, recovery and well-being. Lifestyle changes, such as good nutrition, exercise, and adequate sleep with good sleep hygiene, can support mental health and recovery. A comprehensive treatment plan may include individual actions, for example, lifestyle changes, support groups or exercise that enhances recovery and well-being.

Rapper Sean Kingston agrees to return to Florida, where he and mother are charged with \$1M in fraud



Rapper and singer Sean Kingston waived his right to fight extradition in a California court and agreed to be turned over to authorities in Florida, where he and his mother are charged with committing more than a million dollars worth of fraud.

Kingston, 34, did not make a public court appearance but signed papers agreeing to skip extradition hearings, representatives from San Bernardino courts and sheriff told The Associated Press.

He remained in a Southern California jail Tuesday afternoon, but sheriff's officials will coordinate with the Broward County Sheriff's Office to return him to Florida, sheriff's spokeswoman Mara Rodriguez said in an email.

Kingston was arrested Thursday at Fort Irwin, an Army training base in California's Mojave Desert where he was performing.

His mother, 61-year-old Janice Turner, was arrested the same day, when a SWAT team raided Kingston's rented mansion in Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

Kingston and Turner have been charged with conducting an organised scheme to defraud, grand theft, identity theft and related crimes, according to arrest warrants released by the Broward County Sheriff's Office. The warrants

allege they stole money, jewellery, a Cadillac Escalade and furniture.

The Jamaican American performer had a No. 1 hit with "Beautiful Girls" in 2007 and collaborated with Justin Bieber on the song "Eenie Meenie."

Robert Rosenblatt, an attorney for Kingston and his mother, had said Friday that they planned to waive extradition, saying they looked forward to addressing the charges in a Florida court and "are confident of a successful resolution."

Emails sent to Rosenblatt for further comment Tuesday were not immediately answered.

The warrants in the case say that from October to March they stole almost \$500,000 in jewellery, more than \$200,000 from Bank of America, \$160,000 from the Escalade dealer, more than \$100,000 from First Republic Bank, \$86,000 from the maker of customised beds. Specifics were not given.

Kingston, whose legal name is Kisean Anderson, was already on two years' probation for trafficking stolen property.

His mother pleaded guilty in 2006 to bank fraud for stealing over \$160,000 and served nearly 1.5 years in prison, according to federal court records.

Nicki Minaj to 'make it up' to fans after missing show following arrest



Nicki Minaj attends The Metropolitan Museum of Art's Costume Institute benefit gala celebrating the opening of the 'Sleeping Beauties: Reawakening Fashion' exhibition in New York on

May 6. Last Saturday, she tweeted that on way out of Netherlands the

Nicki Minaj attends The Metropolitan Museum of Art's Costume Institute benefit gala celebrating the opening of the 'Sleeping Beauties: Reawakening Fashion' exhibition in New York on May 6. Last Saturday, she tweeted that on way out of Netherlands the police told her they found marijuana in her bags.

The military constabulary at the airport said a 41-year-old American woman had been arrested for exporting 'soft drugs'.

Nicki Minaj is "working non-stop" to get her Manchester gig rescheduled after it was cancelled due to her arrest in the Netherlands.

The Anaconda rapper was forced to axe her gig at the city's Co-Op Live arena on Saturday, just half an hour before she was supposed to be on stage after being held at Amsterdam's Schiphol Airport on suspicion of possession of soft drugs and met with fans after arriving in the UK on Sunday.

Footage posted online showed Nicki saying: "I love you... and I'm so sorry."

Sources say that the 41-year-old artiste is des-

perate to "make it up" to those who had paid for the gig by performing on another date.

A tour insider told The Sun newspaper's Bizarre column: "Nicki is in pieces and knows her fans have badly been let down. She knows her British fans spent a lot of money on coming to that show and her team is working non-stop to get it rescheduled.

"Nicki understands why they are upset and she is so determined to make it up to them.

"She likes to speak to her fans on a personal level. Nicki wants to make it right."

The star revealed on social media that she had spent between five and six hours in a jail cell and suggested that she had been deliberately targeted by the police.

Nicki wrote on X: "Please, please, please accept my deepest and most sincere apologies. They sure did know exactly how to hurt me today but this too, shall pass. They've been doing this over and over and over and over again, and I've tried so hard to not discuss it b/c you guys deserve to just get the good stuff. I hate involving you in anything that isn't for entertainment purposes only."

Carlene Davis thrills St Lucia Jazz and Arts Festival



Pastor Donnie McClurkin with Carlene Davis at St Lucia Jazz & Arts Festival's Kingdom Night on May 8.

Gospel artiste Carlene Davis left the audience requesting an encore at the St Lucia Jazz & Arts Festival's Kingdom Night on May 8.

The widely attended event was held at Pigeon Island National Landmark.

"For me, it is good to know that your audience was blessed and enjoyed your presentation, but

most of all it is always that lives are changed because of the message of the gospel and that God be glorified," she told the Jamaica Observer.

Davis reeled through the 45-minute set delivering songs such as Handful of Salt, Nothing But The Blood, One

Day At A Time, Goodness of God, Days of Elijah, and This Island. When she hit My Forever Friend, the audience erupted with cheers and applause. She flowed through the set with well choreographed dancing and singing from her musical trio of Latoya, Michelle and Alicia, while musicians Dave "Primetime" Green and the Right Band with Gregory Palmer on keyboards, Dale Brown on bass and Chris on guitar, offered energetic and well arranged musical accompaniment.

Much to Davis's delight, when she left the stage, the crowd kept singing Yahweh — her closing song — with lighters and phones illuminating the venue from a thrilled audience. She would return to join them for a last "Hallelujah", as they say.

She said that the entire experience will forever be etched in her memory.

"The highlight from my set is hard one to pinpoint. From beginning to end they were so amazing, with the audience singing, dancing, hands uplifted, and praising God, with their phone alight under dimmed lights. Let's not forget my backing vocalists and musicians who delivered an excellent set," she said.

Other performing ministers included Jamaica's Marvia Providence and Pastor Donnie McClurkin, who closed the night.

Shenseea drops Never Gets Late Here

Rapper Shenseea



Romeich Major, co-manager for Jamaican star Shenseea, says her sophomore album Never Gets Late Here, which was released today, showcases her talent on a global scale.

"There's a lot more difference in the album [compared to the first one], but it's just the same versatility of Shen. She has a little more of the culture in this album more than anything else, but she still kept it on an international reggae/dancehall level," Major told the Jamaica Observer's Splash. The project features collaborations from Masicka and Di Genius, Coi Leray, Anitta, and Wizkid.

Never Gets Late Here comes a little over two years after Shenseea's début album, Alpha.

R U That, a track on the album which featured rapper 21 Savage, debuted on four major Billboard Charts in 2022. It reached #37 on Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Airplay, #25 on Rap Airplay, #34 on Mainstream R&B/Hip-Hop Airplay, and #36 on Rhythmic Airplay Top 40.

According to Major, the release date for the second album was "chosen by God". In the meantime, he has been working his magic to spread the word about the body of work.

"We're doing the average marketing, which is social media, 'in the streets', interviews, and all ah dem stuff deh. We had a wow factor last week, where one of my containers were wrapped with the album cover on both sides. I haven't seen anyone do that in Jamaica, but, you know, we're the marketing gurus, so we keep pushing," he said.

Shenseea, whose given name is Chinsea Lee shot to stardom in 2016 with Loodi featuring Vybz Kartel. Since then she has been on an upward trajectory with hot international collaborations and achievements.

The artiste has been under Major's mentorship and management since the very beginning of her career.

He said that, thanks to her dedication, she has played a huge role in the direction of her success. "It's just like any business that has difficulties. Being an artiste isn't easy, especially a female artiste from Jamaica. But we always work and push things, and nuh really watch no face. She is one of those people that you would call 'silent and deadly'... She just does everything and then the world sees it," Major reasoned.

In the meantime, he is encouraging music lovers to support the project.

"Support unuh artiste, support the country, support the brand. Everybody — from the Government to the people in the streets — stream the album, support the album, buy the album. A our people," he told the Observer.

SANDALS RESORTS OPENS ITS 18TH RESORT IN SAINT VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES



In an intimate ribbon cutting ceremony commemorating Sandals Resorts' entry into the largely undiscovered destination of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, the only Caribbean born superbrand welcomed its first guests to a nature-forward experience brimming with island inspiration and stirring 'Sandals Firsts'.

Witnessed by government officials, Sandals executives, guests and resort team members, an emerald green ribbon, representative of the island's flag and lush surroundings, was cut signaling the official opening of Sandals Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

Executive Chairman of Sandals Resorts International Adam Stewart, spoke on what the opening of the hotel chain's 18th resort meant for the brand, the island and the Caribbean at large. "This is a multi-generational act in the making that began with my extraordinary father Gordon 'Butch' Stewart and Prime Minister Gonsalves many years ago. They flirted heavily about flying the Vincy flag not only here but in all the other islands across the Caribbean that Sandals has its operations.

"Little did we know that 43 years later the Sandals brand would grow from one 99-room hotel in Montego Bay to a top 500 brand known on the world stage as a super brand. The only Caribbean born commercial super brand known across the United States, Europe and Canada with over 84% brand penetration and recognition," he shared.

He expounded further on what he dubbed the Sandals Effect, a confluence of things that happen when Sandals comes to town.

"First and foremost, we market the destination, both St. Vincent and the Grenadines. The land-

scape that makes up this incredible archipelago will benefit. Directly and indirectly for linkages, tour operators, taxi operators, restaurateurs, musicians, farmers, fishers, entrepreneurs, hardware store operators, the entire ecosystem and connectivity we plan to make sure that the entire world knows."

With Sandals' expansion to the island, airlift has increased exponentially with more availability on the horizon. According to Adam Stewart, numerous airlines have adjusted their schedules in anticipation for the demand.

"American Airlines used to fly twice per week to and from the Argyle Airport, since April the airline has increased to four times per week and is expected to have daily flights by the end of 2024. Air Canada and Virgin have increased their airlift with JetBlue and United Airlines now flying to the island for the first time. Nationals and visitors will have the opportunity to fly more conveniently and we will continue to grow," expressed Stewart.

The resort, in May 2024, is expected to host some 300 top travel advisors from around the world, the largest contingent of international travel professionals to ever visit Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

Dr. The Honourable, Ralph Gonsalves, Prime Minister of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, in his main address added further credence to the impact Sandals has on his country and the CARICOM community. "During COVID, unemployment went up, there was a decline in economic activity in the region.

At the time we also had volcanic eruptions, Sandals came to us with a proposal to recruit Vincentians and send them to their resorts across

the Caribbean to be trained. We had to evacuate 20,000 persons with some in shelters for four to six months.

Along came a friend in Sandals who said they could ease some of the pressure providing opportunities for 500 people and these little things talk to me about partnership. This might have been small for Sandals but it was a huge thing for us in the condition in which we found ourselves and I want to thank Sandals and Adam."

"It is an understatement really to call Sandals a brand. It has become an existential part of our Caribbean civilization. This civilization is tailor-made for tourism and Butch Stewart has helped to shape this aspect of the material to help sustain us. I think that when the history of the 20th into the 21st century is written, there would be a towering place for this legend," The Hon. Gonsalves continued.

In honour of the late Gordon 'Butch' Stewart, Prime Gonsalves in opining that the relationship he enjoyed with the late founder made him "one of us" shared a remarkable plan to celebrate his memory and contributions to tourism and economic development in the region.

"The government of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines had indicated to Sandals that we will build the road coming to the entrance of the hotel. Having built it, we will call it the Gordon 'Butch' Stewart Boulevard," the Prime Minister announced proudly to stirring applause from the audience.

Sandals Saint Vincent and the Grenadines offers 301 rooms and suites across 50 lush-laden acres, authentically embracing its Saint Vincent location with an experience that is as thoughtful as it is meticulously local.

Cases of bacterial disease rise in Brazil's flooded south

Aerial view of flooded streets in the Navegantes neighbourhood of Porto Alegre, Rio Grande do Sul state, Brazil on May 4, 2024.



RIO DE JANEIRO, Brazil (AFP)—Brazilian authorities on Tuesday reported an increase in cases of leptospirosis, a bacterial disease transmitted by rats, in the flooded south, parts of which have been under water for a month.

According to the latest figures from the Rio Grande do Sul State Health Secretariat, five people are confirmed to have died from the disease, while another nine deaths are being investigated.

Authorities have recorded 124 cases, and are verifying 922 others.

The state of Rio Grande do Sul has been battered by rain for weeks, and flooded rivers have transformed the streets of towns and cities into putrid, murky rivers.

The latest official figures, excluding leptospirosis deaths, show that 169 people have died and 53 are still missing.

Some 600,000 people have been displaced. Leptospirosis is spread via the urine of infected animals, such as rodents and livestock, which contaminates soil or water. The bacteria can survive for weeks, and outbreaks in humans often take place after heavy rain or flooding. Symptoms can appear from two days to four weeks after exposure, and are similar to that of the flu or dengue, such as headaches, fever and chills.

More serious cases can affect the liver or kidneys.

Brazilian authorities have set up a laboratory to test for suspected cases, and have implemented a vast social media prevention campaign.

"Have you been digging in the mud or walking through flood water and have symptoms of leptospirosis? Go to a health post," said Arita Bergmann, health secretary of Rio Grande do Sul, in a video on Instagram.

"Treatment cannot wait, do not stay at home waiting for it to pass, because it can develop into a serious illness," she added.

Peru's president accused of bribery in Rolexgate scandal



Peru's President Dina Boluarte looks on during Summit Address and Invitation to APEC Peru 2024 at the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Leaders' Week in San Francisco, California, on November 15, 2023. Peruvian Attorney General Juan Carlos Villena, charged President Dina Boluarte on May 27 before Congress, for the alleged crime of bribery in the context of the luxury watch scandal known as Rolexgate

Peru's attorney general on Monday accused President Dina Boluarte of accepting bribes in the form of Rolex watches, in the latest twist of a corruption scandal shaking her unpopular government.

Attorney General Juan Carlos Villena said that her receiving the luxury items from a governor amounted to accepting bribes.

Villena "presented a constitutional complaint against Dina Boluarte as the suspected author of passive corruption," his office said on X, formerly Twitter.

The scandal erupted in March with the discovery of a trove of undeclared luxury Rolex watches and jewelry in the president's possession.

Boluarte told prosecutors last month the Rolex watches had been loaned by a friend, the regional governor of Ayacucho, Wilfredo Oscorima. She is being investigated on suspicion of "passive corruption" for receiving improper benefits from public officials.

The attorney general's accusation, presented to Congress, does not amount to an indictment because the president has immunity while in power.

Prime Minister Gustavo Adrianzen criticised the accusation as "persecution" of Boluarte.

"This is nothing more than an example of the systematic persecution in fiscal matters that is carried out against the president in an improper, unconstitutional and illegal manner," Adrianzen told television Canal N.

A congressional committee must now debate the accusation before the whole chamber does so. Ultimately, it would be up to the courts to decide whether to put her on trial after her term ends in July 2026.

The president, who has an approval rating of 12 percent according to an Ipsos poll, does not have or lead a party in Congress, requiring her to secure backing from conservatives.

Peru suffers from chronic political instability and has had six presidents in the past eight years.

Boluarte took office in December 2022, replacing left-wing president Pedro Castillo, who was impeached and imprisoned for unsuccessfully trying to dissolve Congress. She was his vice-president.

In 2023, prosecutors opened an investigation in which she stands accused of "genocide, homicide and serious injuries," for the deaths of more than 50 protesters during a crackdown on demonstrations demanding she resign and call fresh elections.

Guyana records significant reduction in child, maternal mortality

President, Dr. Irfaan Ali



OWING to critical investments in the health sector, Guyana has seen a significant reduction in child and maternal mortalities, President, Dr. Irfaan Ali has said. The Head of State made that disclosure on the eve

of Guyana's 58th Independence Anniversary on Saturday, while addressing a mammoth gathering at the Mackenzie Stadium, Linden, Region 10. With the aim of improving the population's life expectancy rate, investments are being made to modernise the healthcare system, advance public health education and collaborate with partners to develop a healthcare system that is second to none.

"The investment we are making has also seen a reduction in child mortality. Child mortality is now 13 per every 1,000 births, when as compared to 19 in 2019."

He added: "This is testimony; this is qualitative analysis and qualitative examples of how the policies and expenditure of the government are working to make the lives of Guyanese better."

The Head of State further revealed that maternal mortality is at the lowest it has ever been in the history of the country.

"It is now 96 per 10,000 deliveries. [That is] 96 per 10,000 compared to 170 per 10,000 in 2017," Dr Ali said.

The government is placing specific emphasis on further decreasing those numbers and improving the level of care with the construction of the Guyana Paediatric and Maternal Hospital, at Ogle, East Coast Demerara.

In 2021, it was reported that the government was examining a maternal and children's hospital that would offer specialised care to Guyanese.

Health Minister, Dr. Frank Anthony, had disclosed that talks were underway with bilateral partners to construct the facility.

In 2022, the sod for a EUR\$149 million (GUY\$31.9 billion) Paediatric and Maternal Hospital was turned.

The facility will have 256 beds, will cover 24,000 square metres gross floor area and will have an imaging suite which will include CT scans, X rays, and Magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) scanning equipment.

The hospital will also have a modern laboratory which will focus on conducting sophisticated testing.

The hospital is being built by VAMED Engineering, which was appointed by the Government of Austria. Headquartered in Austria, VAMED Engineering is a global provider for hospitals and healthcare facilities.

The company has implemented more than 1,000 projects across the globe, operating in 100 countries on five continents. They have provided high-end services for more than 820 health facilities.

In Latin America and the Caribbean, they have done projects in Trinidad and Tobago, Bolivia and Haiti. The hospital in Guyana is expected to take two years to be completed.

The new facility is expected to not only serve Region Four but will be a Level Five referral centre for women and children of all regions in Guyana, who are referred for specialised healthcare not available in their region.

The three patient care groups that will be referred to the hospital will be maternal mothers, neonatal care and paediatrics.

Currently, the Georgetown Public Hospital Corporation (GPHC) is Guyana's only referral hospital.

Gangs Extort Hefty Sums



Oropouche East MP: Dr Roodal Moonilal

TRINIDAD - OROPOUCHE East MP Dr Roodal Moonilal says too many business owners were being faced with extortion threats from gangs and this was happening mainly in Central Trinidad and along the East-West Corridor.

"We have extortion by gang members, asking businessmen in Central and along the East-West

Corridor for as much as \$30,000 per month for protection. And when they refuse to do this families are exposed to kidnapping, murder, shot," he said.

Speaking on Sunday during the United National Congress' weekly media briefing, he called on

the TTPS to establish a specialised unit to deal with extortion by gangs.

He said the issue of home invasion also needed to be addressed by the Government, who did not seem to understand how prevalent this had become.

He also said this country's electronic monitoring system had collapsed.

The People's Partnership government had invested in resources, passed laws and implemented regulations to deal with electronic monitoring, he said, adding that, 12 years later, the law had not been properly implemented.

"I have a report on the adequacy and effectiveness of the Electronic Monitoring Unit out of the Ministry of National Security, managed by (National Security Minister Fitzgerald) Hinds. In a report, they have done...to be submitted to the Parliament they speak of a crisis of staff. Imagine 12 years later they cannot fill basic positions such as a shift monitoring supervisor, liaison officer, investigator and others," he said.

He said the delay in this country's criminal justice system was not because of attorneys, but the Government's failure.

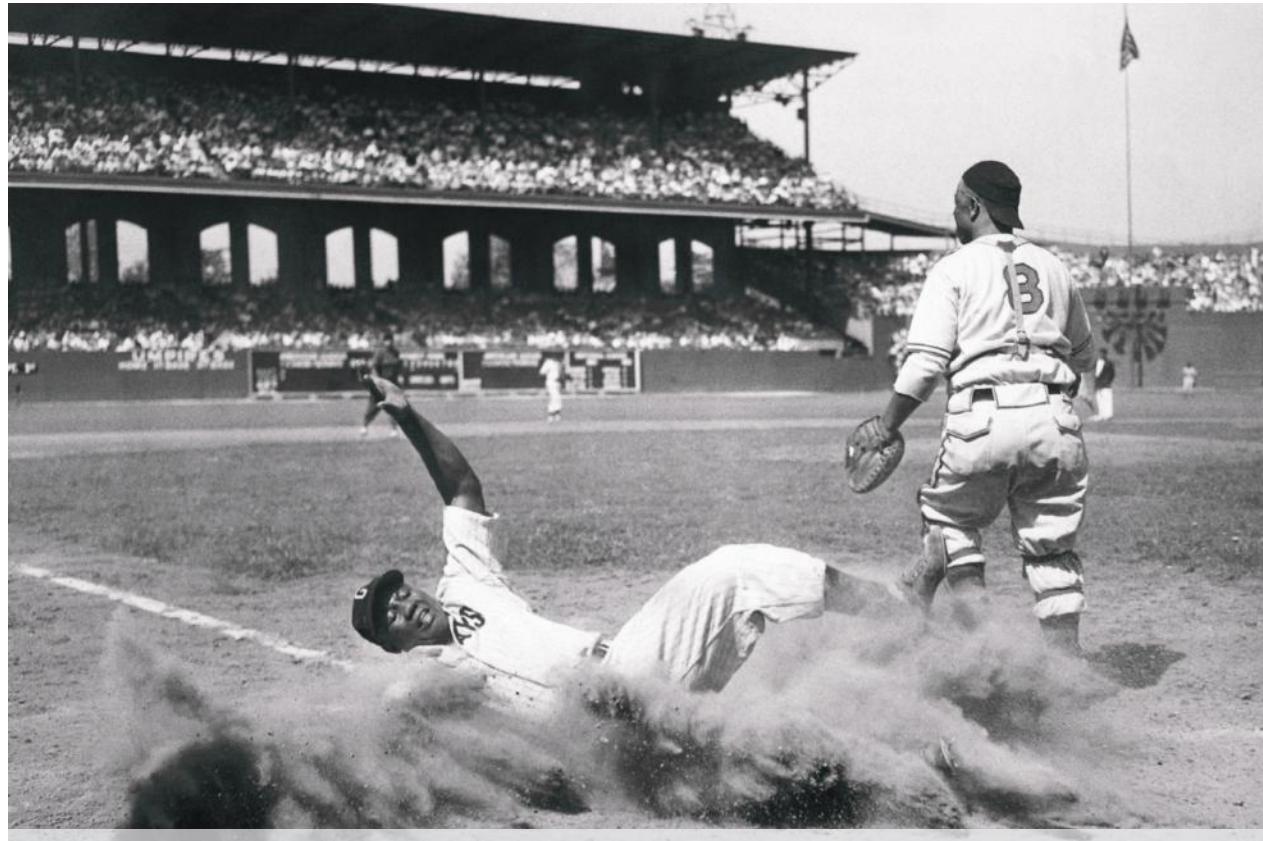
"Yes, there are delays in the criminal justice system, but bail is a procedure that one gets with conditions...Bail by itself is not dealing with criminal conduct in that way," he added.



BOAT CLUB GLORY

TCI Boat Club copped the trophy for being the most Spirited Team

Negro Leagues statistics to be officially integrated into MLB historical record



Josh Gibson slides into home during the East-West All-Star Game of the Negro Leagues at Comiskey Park in Chicago, on August 13, 1944. With his statistics set to become officially part of MLB records, Gibson will be the league's new career leader in batting average, slugging percentage and OPS

Telling the story of baseball without the Negro Leagues would paint an incomplete and narrow picture of America's pastime. Baseball's history is finally getting a revision.

Negro Leagues statistics will officially become part of Major League historical record on Wednesday. The move comes more than three years after Major League Baseball announced it would be elevating the Negro Leagues to major-league status.

The more than 2,300 players who played in the seven iterations of the Negro Leagues from 1920-1948 will be integrated into MLB's database. The Special Baseball Records Committee of 1969 voted to include the American League, National League, American Association, Union Association, Federal League and Players' League but did not give the Negro Leagues major-league status.

"It's a big day," Negro League Museum president Bob Kendrick told Yahoo Sports on Tuesday. "The great thing about it is that we've been saying that quite a bit over recent days and weeks as it relates to the Negro Leagues. ... This is the result of a lot of intensive effort by some incredible historians and researchers who have completely dedicated themselves to trying to do something that people thought probably wasn't possible."

USA Today's Bob Nightengale first reported the news.

"We are proud that the official historical record now includes the players of the Negro Leagues," MLB commissioner Rob Manfred said in a statement. "This initiative is focused on ensuring that future generations of fans have access to the statistics and milestones of all those who made the Negro Leagues possible. Their accomplishments on the field will be a gateway to broader learning about this triumph in American history and the path that led to Jackie Robinson's 1947 Dodger debut."

The Negro Leagues statistical review committee, comprised of baseball historians, Negro League ex-

perts, former players, researchers and journalists, reviewed data, box scores, statistics and additional information uncovered by Seamheads, RetroSheet and the Elias Sports Bureau.

"We looked for historians, statisticians, and stakeholders who all could be expected to have concern that MLB would get the process and the product right," John Thorn, MLB's official historian and chairman of the Negro Leagues statistical review committee, told Yahoo Sports this week. "We were not looking for 'like minds' but instead potentially contentious ones."

What does it mean for great MLB statistics? One of the biggest questions baseball fans and onlookers will likely have is how has MLB determined what statistics can be used. The Negro Leagues statistical review committee went through decades of box scores and data to find statistics from what was considered league play. The Negro Leagues' schedule usually ran between 60-80 games with another 40-60 games coming in the form of exhibitions. Statistics from what was known as "barnstorming," or exhibition games, will not be counted toward MLB record totals.

Similar to how MLB determines qualifiers for statistical leaders, a similar formula was used to decide which players qualified for MLB leaderboards.

Negro Leagues legend and Baseball Hall of Famer Josh Gibson will become MLB's single-season record holder in batting average (.466 in 1943), slugging percentage (.974 in 1937) and OPS (1.474 in 1937). Gibson, who played for the Pittsburgh Crawfords and Homestead Grays, also becomes MLB's career leader in all three categories. The previous records for slugging and OPS in a season were both held by Barry Bonds. Gibson's career batting average of .372 passes Ty Cobb for the all-time lead, while his career slugging percentage of .718 and OPS of 1.177 take over the previous leader in both categories, Babe Ruth.

Former Negro Leagues players who played in the major leagues, including Willie Mays, Minnie Miñoso, Larry Doby, Jackie Robinson and numerous others will also have their Negro Leagues statistics integrated and updated. The statistics will continue to be reviewed and updated as more data and information is uncovered.

Among some of the stat updates:

Mayes' hit total goes to 3,293, up 10 with stats from his 1948 season with the Birmingham Black Barons. Miñoso joins the 2,000-hit club, gaining 150 hits from his time with the New York Cubans.

Jackie Robinson's 49 hits with the Kansas City Monarchs raises his hit total to 1,567.

Satchel Paige boosted his win total to 125 with his 28 Negro League victories.

In accordance with the rules set by the SBRC in 1969 that states, "For all-time single-season records, there will be no asterisks or official signs shall be used to indicate the number of games scheduled."

New Negro Leagues record holders and additions on MLB leaderboards will not include an asterisk.

MLB will pay tribute to the Negro Leagues on June 20 in a regular-season matchup between the San Francisco Giants and the St. Louis Cardinals at Rickwood Field in Birmingham, Alabama. Rickwood Field, which was the home of the Birmingham Black Barons, is considered the oldest professional ballpark in the U.S.

Giving the Negro Leagues history a mainstream voice

The oral history of the Negro Leagues has lasted for over a hundred years, with players like Gibson becoming larger than life. As new data, documents, box scores and information has been gathered, it has given more tangible evidence to the stories that have been shared.

Kendrick has been one of the biggest advocates for the Negro Leagues being recognized by Major League Baseball and informing old and new fans on the impact the Negro Leagues had on baseball's history.

"No sport holds onto its history the way baseball does," Kendrick told Yahoo Sports on Tuesday. "It is by far the most romanticized sport of them all, and it's a sport where we constantly compare the stars of the past with the stars today. And the unified efforts that we've embarked on over the last several years, and I'll go back to last year with the inclusion of the Negro Leagues into MLB The Show 23 [video game], these things have given the Negro Leagues history a mainstream voice."

"What we've found is that young baseball fans not only want to learn about the Negro Leagues, but they've fallen in love with the Negro Leagues. And as a museum, a cultural institution, that's exactly what we wanted to have happen."

Tuesday's news amplifies another baseball chapter that was once ignored. The additions of Negro Leagues statistics to MLB historical record does not take away from MLB history. It simply adds. The history of baseball can continue to be told in a more complete and broader way as new generations of fans learn about the game.

"I believe that the past is a living, breathing thing that informs every present moment," Thorn said. "No sport is more attuned to its history and its heroes of old than baseball, and now we have a chance to tell the story of the game, and the nation, inclusively."

McCoy replaces injured Holder in Windies final 15



West Indies fast bowler Obed McCoy bowls in the final game of three-match T20 International series against South Africa at Sabina Park yesterday.

WEST INDIES' bid to win their third ICC Men's Twenty20 World Cup and become the first team to do it on home soil hit a snag when all-rounder Jason Holder was ruled out of the tournament because of an injury.

Cricket West Indies (CWI) did not specify the injury or the length of recovery time the 32-year-old Barbadian will require but indicated that left-arm fast bowler Obed McCoy will be his replacement in the final 15-member squad for the global showpiece, starting on June 1 in the Caribbean and the United States.

All the teams in the World Cup named provisional squads earlier this month and had until Saturday to make changes, after



which they will require approval from the technical committee of the tournament. According to the CWI media release announcing the final squad, Holder suffered the injury during his five-match stint for Worcestershire in the English County Championship in April-May.

"Jason is an experienced player in our set-up," lead selector Desmond Haynes, the former Barbados opener and West Indies captain, said.

"His absence will undoubtedly be felt both on and off the field. We look forward to having a fully fit Jason with us again soon." Haynes added: "While it is unfortunate

to lose a player of Jason's calibre, we are confident in the abilities of Obed McCoy. "Obed has shown remarkable skill and promise in his performances, and this opportunity will allow him to further showcase his talent on the international stage. We believe he will bring a fresh and dynamic energy to the squad."

McCoy is part of the West Indies side that beat South Africa 3-0 in a three-match, Twenty20 International warm-up series that came to an end yesterday exclusively at Sabina Park in the Jamaica capital of Kingston.

McCoy was the top wicket-taker for West Indies 'A' on their tour of Nepal in April-May when he collected eight wickets in five matches at an average of 18.

McCoy will add a tinge more experience to a pace-bowling attack led by vice-captain Alzarri Joseph and Guyanese rookie Shamar Joseph, with newly crowned IPL champion, Andre Russell and fellow all-rounder Romario Shepherd for support.

Rovman Powell (captain), Alzarri Joseph (vice-captain), Johnson Charles, Roston Chase, Shimron Hetmyer, Shai Hope, Akeal Hosein, Shamar Joseph, Brandon King, Obed McCoy, Gudakesh Motie, Nicholas Pooran, Andre Russell, Sherfane Rutherford and Romario Shepherd.

Fabian Allen, Andre Fletcher, Matthew Forde, Kyle Mayers and Hayden Walsh Jr.

Jamaica to host inaugural Carifta Gymnastics Championships

PRESIDENT OF the Jamaica Gymnastics Association, Nicole Grant, is pleased the country will be hosting the inaugural Carifta Gymnastics Championships set for November 29-30 at the National Indoor Sports Centre.

"We are elated, very happy to be the first country within this region to host the Carifta Gymnastics Championships. Carifta has been around for many years but gymnastics hasn't been part of it and because of the technicality of the sport, we had worked with the Pan American Gymnastics Union (PAGU) in order to organise this meet," she stated.

Grant said the decision for Jamaica to host the Carifta Games came on account of the successful staging of last year's Pan American Hopes tournament.

"Since we hosted the Pan American Hopes tournament last year, we were seen as a country that has the capability of hosting tourna-

ments of this level and therefore we were given the nod. There were three other countries in the running to host the tournament, which included Trinidad and Tobago, Barbados, and Bahamas," Grant added.

While it's early days yet, Grant explained that she can already confirm the participation of at least five countries with complements of 20 to 30 athletes.

"At a minimum, each country is expected to bring about 20-30 athletes. We're not entirely sure about all the participating countries, at this time, but can confirm for Trinidad and Tobago, Barbados, Bahamas, Bermuda and the Cayman Islands."

Jamaica's team, coached by Mladen Stefanov, will begin their preparation next month.

Overseas training camps

The team is expected to have two overseas training camps, in Canada and China, to fine-

tune their work leading up to the tournament. "The kids will be travelling to China at the end of June until the end of August. This is courtesy of the bilateral agreement between both ministries of sports and is the final leg of China-Jamaica camp. Then, the higher level of gymnasts that we have locally will go to Canada for a four-week camp to also prepare for the tournament."

According to Grant, the National Indoor Sports Centre will require little to no work to be ready to host a championship of this magnitude.

"As far as we know it has been in good standing from the first time we hosted the Caribbean Gymnastics Championships back in 2016. When we were preparing to host the Pan American Games last year, we didn't have any major preparation of the venue as we were able to bring the equipment and set up, which was seamless."

TCIFA Members Attend CONCACAF 39TH Ordinary Meeting



On Saturday, May 25th, Concacaf held its 39th Ordinary Congress at the Palais des Sports et de la Culture in Le Gosier, Guadeloupe.

The event was attended by Presidents and delegates from all 41 Concacaf Member Associations, Concacaf Council Members, and im-

portant guests from the global football family. The Congress provided an important opportunity to look back on a very successful 2023 that included the delivery of important competitions, including a record-breaking Gold Cup, a third edition of the Concacaf Nations League and an entirely new men's club ecosystem.

The impact of hugely important Member Association focused capacity building initiatives and funding programs, including the Executive Mentorship Program and the One Concacaf Program – for which investment to all Member Associations continues to increase – was also highlighted, as was the ongoing roll-out of the Coaching Convention, which is supporting Associations in the development and delivery of their coach education programs.

The TCIFA said it thanks the Concacaf family for acknowledging and paying tribute our late female coach Gillian Vernice and late national player Rascari Cox.

SWA Sharks FC Triumphs Over Teachers FC in Thrilling Futsal Match



Futsal competition.

The match was a rollercoaster of emotions for both teams, with the lead changing hands multiple times. Teachers FC started strong with Sendia Marcel scoring the first goal of the match in the 5th minute. However, SWA Sharks quickly responded with a goal from Jovaini Genus in the 8th minute, leveling the score.

Marcel struck again in the 9th minute, giving Teachers FC a brief lead. Not to be outdone, SWA Sharks' Maniska Destiny found the back of the net in the 17th minute, equalizing once more. The excitement continued to build as Winzaria Lefranc scored for Teachers FC in the 16th minute, but Vanessa Joseph of SWA Sharks showcased her prowess by scoring twice, in the 20th and 29th minutes, giving SWA Sharks a 4-3 lead.

The tension peaked when Wanderlis Medina scored for Teachers FC in the 29th minute, tying the match at 4-4. The decisive moment came in the 40th minute when Vanessa Joseph completed her hat-trick, sealing a dramatic 5-4 victory for **SWA Sharks FC**.

Goal Scorers:

SWA Sharks FC:
Jovaini Genus - 8'
Maniska Destiny - 17'
Vanessa Joseph - 20', 29', 40'

BY Vivian Tyson Editor-in-Chief

Teachers FC:

Sendia Marcel - 5', 9'
Winzaria Lefranc - 16'
Wanderlis Medina - 29'

In another game played on Thursday, Academy Eagles FC and Cheshire Hall FC battled to a 2-2 draw.

Academy Eagles FC took an early lead with a remarkable performance from Amika Jackson, who scored twice in quick succession. Jackson's first goal came in the 5th minute, followed by another in the 7th minute, putting Academy Eagles in a commanding position.

However, Cheshire Hall FC responded with determination. Shekina Smith narrowed the gap with a goal in the 11th minute. The equalizer came shortly after, with Erisdiana Medina finding the back of the net in the 15th minute, leveling the score at 2-2.

Despite both teams' efforts to secure a winning goal, the match ended in a stalemate, reflecting the competitive balance between the two sides.

Goal Scorers:

Academy Eagles FC:
Amika Jackson - 5', 7'
Cheshire Hall FC:
Shekina Smith - 11'
Erisdiana Medina - 15'

SWA Sharks FC edged out Teachers FC with a narrow 5-4 victory in the latest round of the Turks and Caicos Islands Football Association

TCI BOAT CLUB TURN HEADS AT BVI POKER RUN

The We Funk Junkanoo Bank played a series of lively music as they welcome home the TCI Boat Club Members, who participated in the BVI Poker Run.



Tourism Minister Hon. Josephine Connolly (in purple bottom) led a welcoming party for the TCI Boat Club Member, who returned to the country with a trophy from the BVI Poker Run held in Virgin Gorda.

The Turks and Caicos Islands Boat Club returned home to much fanfare after winning the Founders Award for exhibiting the Best Team Spirit at the just-concluded British Virgin Islands Poker Run at the 20th Annual Poker Run Virgin Gorda in that country.

The 23-member strong made a spirited showing in the tournament, which even saw one member winning second place in his event.

Asa Williams, member of the TCI Boat Club, told reporters on their arrival on Tuesday, that the Turks and Caicos Islands was well represented at the event.

"We had 23 participants from the Turks and Caicos Boat Club that went. We had 23 hands, each of us bought a hand. One of our members got second place overall in the Poker run," Williams said.

Williams, himself, won a raffle, the prize of which was a 60-inch television, which he donated back to the raffle to raise money for the local track team in Virgin Gora to participate in a Miami meet.

"We're a community-based establishment. We give back to the community in all of our events. So why not do the same for this one? Even though we were not home...we're visi-

By Vivian Tyson Editor-in-Chief

tors in the country, but we still want to help the community on as best we can," Williams said.

He said the TCI team competed with three boats, pointing out that it was good to see that all their boats were flying the TCI flag.

"Every stop, we stopped we were recognized and received, so we won the Founders Award for that," Williams continued.

For Williams, returning home with a trophy, "Means that our 10th anniversary TCI Boat Club Poker Run, which is going to be July 26th to 28th, is going to be bigger and better than ever before. We're looking for major support from the community."

He continued; "If you have a boat, if you have a friend that have a boat, if you don't even have a boat, you charter a boat, come out and participate."

Williams told reporters that the winning team of the Virgin Gorda event has indicated their intention to participate in the TCI Poker Run. "They said that they will be here in July to participate in our poker run. So, we got to find boats to put them on too," Williams continued, saying further that with the expectation that the USVI Poker Run Champions down to participate in the local event, has given the tournament international flavor.

"It means now that we have, international recognition, and we're going to have international participants, and we just hope to continue growing and growing as we go with this," he said.

Williams pointed out that TCI Poker Run has been donating to many charities in the Turks and Caicos Islands.

"The poker run usually donates towards the Kidney Foundation, but we also donate to the children's home, we donate to diabetes, and the Child Abuse Foundation," Williams said. Minister of Tourism, Hon. Josephine Connolly, who was on hand to greet the returning TCI Boat Club Members, had high praise for the boaters.

"I want to congratulate the TCI Book Club on behalf of my government for job well done," Connolly said. "We really appreciate what you all have done. What I can say is that Turks and Caicas has a lot of talent. You just need an opportunity to do it."

She continued: "And I'm so happy that you were able to compete with our Caribbean neighbors. Well done. And I can assure you of our support from my department for all your future endeavors."

Connolly pointed out that after learning of TCI Boat Club's achievements at the tournament, she had to arrange for deserving welcoming party to greet group.

"It's supposed to be a quicker arrangement, but you know I love my people in the Turks and Caigas Islands. And I think they deserve the best welcome," Connolly said.