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PG32



NEWSLINE

Journalism of Accuracy, Balance & Courage



**TCI Selected Among
Top Proposals in World
Bank AI Accelerator
Initiative PG4**



**Public Confidence
in Police Force
Skyrockets
PG5**



THEY MAKE US PROUD

Carifta Athletes who mined medals
celebrated on their return



Two Interceptions; 106 Migrants Apprehended

A coordinated multi-agency operation near East Caicos has resulted in the apprehension of 106 migrants across two separate vessel interceptions this week, according to authorities.

The Royal Turks and Caicos Islands Police Force confirmed that the most recent incident occurred on Friday, April 10, when officers responded around 7:30 a.m. to a developing situation involving a suspected migrant vessel that had run aground off East Caicos.

Initial reports indicated that several individuals were in the water in the South Bush area, prompting an urgent response from law enforcement. Personnel from the TCI Regiment and the TCI Border Force were deployed to assist with rescue and interception efforts.

Authorities confirmed that 29 individuals were taken into custody during Friday's operation. Search efforts remain ongoing as officials continue to secure the area and ensure that all persons linked to the vessel are accounted for.

The latest interception follows an earlier incident on Wednesday, April 8, when law enforcement received intelligence of a vessel land-



ing at Joe Grant Cay, a small, uninhabited island near East Caicos. In that operation, 77 individuals were apprehended, including unaccompanied minors, after a coordinated response involving immigration and law enforcement personnel.

All migrants from both incidents have since been transported to South Caicos, where they are being detained and processed in accor-

dance with immigration laws and established protocols.

Senior government and security officials have been actively involved in overseeing the response. Acting Governor Anya Williams was present at Police Headquarters as part of coordination efforts, alongside Deputy Premier Jamell Robinson and other senior officials.

Authorities have activated a Critical Incident Command Structure to manage the situation,

focusing on operational coordination, resource deployment, and maintaining control of the response across multiple agencies.

Officials emphasised the importance of a swift, organised, and humane approach, particularly given the presence of vulnerable individuals among those apprehended. Investigations remain ongoing, and authorities say further updates will be provided as more information becomes available.

Government Relaunches Central Switchboard to Improve Public Access and Service Delivery



Head of the Civil Service, Deputy Governor Her Excellency Anya Williams

personal contacts, offering a more streamlined and professional approach to handling inquiries.

Under the new system, callers will be efficiently routed to the appropriate departments or officers, reducing wait times and improving the overall customer experience.

The Central Switchboard has also been formally established as a division within the Public Service Affairs Unit in the Office of the Deputy Governor. This move centralizes the management of internal communications across government and forms part of a broader initiative to modernize and improve customer service throughout the public sector.

Director of Public Service Affairs, Tarkara Bain, described the relaunch as a critical step forward.

“The reactivation of the Central Switchboard represents a strategic cornerstone in our mission to mod-

ernize the Public Service,” she said. “By centralizing this function, we are strengthening our internal communications while making accessibility a measurable standard.”

Bain added that frontline operators have received targeted training to ensure they deliver a professional and responsive service.

“Each interaction with the public is an opportunity to deliver excellence. We want the public to know that we are listening and that we are committed to improving service delivery, step by step.”

Deputy Governor and Head of the Public Service, Anya Williams, said the initiative aligns with the Government’s 2026/27 strategic priorities focused on efficiency, transparency, accountability and high-quality customer service.

“The reactivation of the Central Switchboard is more than a function-

al improvement; it demonstrates our commitment to accessibility and responsiveness,” she stated. “By improving how the public connects with government, we are strengthening trust and reinforcing a culture of service excellence.”

She added that the initiative is part of a wider push to build a modern, reliable public service that is consistently professional and accessible.

“This is the first of many initiatives being launched to improve customer engagement and service delivery across government.”

The Central Switchboard operates during standard business hours:

Monday to Thursday: 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Friday: 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Residents and visitors can contact the Government via (649) 946-2801 or (649) 338-2801, where trained operators are available to assist.

The Office of the Deputy Governor in the Turks and Caicos Islands has officially relaunched the Government Central Switchboard, a key step aimed at strengthening customer service access and enhancing overall public service delivery.

The switchboard is now fully operational and will serve as the main point of contact for residents and visitors seeking assistance from government ministries and departments. The centralized system replaces the previous reliance on multiple extensions and

Prison Inmates Graduate from Anger Management Programme in Grand Turk

A group of inmates from His Majesty’s Prison in Grand Turk have taken a significant step toward rehabilitation after successfully completing an anger management and substance abuse programme.

The graduation ceremony, hosted by the Department of Behavioural Health Services (DBHS), was held on Sunday, March 22, 2026, at the House of Bethel Church under the theme “Celebrating Progress, Empowering Change: Honouring New Beginnings.”

The initiative was a collaborative effort between DBHS, the Department of Correctional Services, and New Beginnings Kingdom Ministries International Church. It aimed to equip participants with practical tools to better manage emotions, address substance abuse issues, and prepare for reintegration into society.

Facilitated by Substance Abuse Counsellor Stanley Been, the programme provided a structured environment where participants explored emotional regulation, accountability, and personal development. Sessions focused on identifying triggers, managing conflict, and



adopting healthier coping strategies.

The ceremony highlighted not only the completion of the course, but also the commitment shown by participants to personal growth and

change. Officials emphasized that such initiatives play a key role in reducing reoffending and building safer communities.

Director of DBHS, Dr. Alicia Malcolm, praised the graduates for their ef-

fort and honesty throughout the programme.

“What we witnessed here is not just participation, it is intentional effort. Change requires honesty, discipline, and the courage to confront yourself. These men have started that process, and that matters,” she said. Minister of Health and Human Services, Hon. Kyle R. Knowles, underscored the importance of sustained rehabilitation efforts.

“Rehabilitation is not a single programme or a one-time intervention. It requires consistent exposure to better ways of thinking and responding. When individuals return to society with stronger coping skills and a clearer sense of responsibility, it strengthens families and communities,” he stated.

DBHS officials reaffirmed their commitment to delivering programmes that promote emotional wellness, support rehabilitation, and encourage inmates to build more stable and productive lives.

The Department also extended appreciation to its partners for their continued support in advancing rehabilitation and community well-being initiatives.

TCI Selected Among Top Proposals in World Bank AI Accelerator Initiative

By Vivian Tyson, NEWSLINE Editor-In-Chief

The Turks and Caicos Islands has secured a major regional achievement after being selected as one of the winning countries in a competitive World Bank-led artificial intelligence initiative, according to Minister of Innovation, Technology and Energy, Hon. E. Jay Saunders. Minister Saunders announced that the TCI Government successfully submitted a proposal to the Digital Latin America and Caribbean (LAC) AI Accelerator, a World Bank-supported programme aimed at advancing innovative AI solutions across the region.

"Thanks to God, we were selected as one of the winners from 59 entries," Saunders said, expressing pride in the accomplishment.

The accelerator programme attracted 59 AI solution proposals from across Latin America and the Caribbean, reflecting strong regional interest in leveraging artificial intelligence to improve government services, strengthen public sector efficiency, and enhance data-driven policymaking.

According to official correspondence from the World Bank, the initiative focuses on fostering the development and implementation of early-stage AI use cases, particularly those aligned with improving service delivery and promoting more efficient governance.

The six-month programme will provide selected teams with technical and strategic support, including mentorship, training, and guidance in developing AI-driven solutions

from concept to pilot stage.

TCI is set to take an early lead in the programme, as it made its first official presentation Friday, where the country outlined its proposed AI use case.

Minister Saunders emphasized that the selection is not only a national achievement but also a sign of the territory's growing influence in regional innovation.

"I'm very proud that our proposal was selected, because it shows that as a country, we are starting to take on thought leadership roles within the Latin American and Caribbean region," he said.

The World Bank initiative envisions empowering governments across the region to harness artificial intelligence to modernize public services, drive innovation, and build



Minister of Innovation, Technology, Energy and Information Hon. E. Jay Saunders

more inclusive digital economies. TCI's inclusion among the top proposals positions the country at the forefront of digital transformation efforts in the Caribbean, signaling a strategic shift toward embracing emerging technologies in governance and national development.

The Ritz-Carlton, Turks & Caicos Redefines Luxury Through Wellbeing

The Ritz-Carlton, Turks & Caicos underscores the growing importance of wellbeing as an essential pillar of modern health and luxury living.

In a world defined by constant connectivity, increasing stress levels, and fast-paced lifestyles, wellbeing has emerged as a critical driver of physical vitality, emotional resilience, and overall quality of life.

No longer considered a luxury, wellbeing is now widely recognized by health professionals and wellness experts as a fundamental component of a balanced and fulfilling life—one that influences how individuals feel, perform, and connect with the world around them.

A Holistic Approach to Modern Wellbeing

Wellbeing is a multidimensional concept that encompasses every aspect of daily life, including physical health, mental clarity, emotional balance, social connection, and a sense of purpose.

These elements work in harmony, each contributing to an individual's overall state of health.

From maintaining energy levels and quality sleep to fostering meaningful relationships and personal fulfillment, modern wellbeing is about creating alignment between body, mind, and lifestyle.

The Science Behind

Wellbeing and Health

Research continues to demonstrate the powerful connection between wellbeing and physical health outcomes. Chronic stress—one of the most significant threats to overall wellbeing—can lead to inflammation, weakened immunity, disrupted sleep patterns, and an increased risk of conditions such as heart disease and hypertension.

Conversely, individuals who prioritize wellbeing often experience improved immune function, enhanced cardiovascular health, increased longevity, and greater day-to-day vitality. Practices such as movement, mindfulness, and restorative therapies allow the body to transition from a state of stress to one of recovery and renewal.

Strengthening Mental and Emotional Resilience

Mental and emotional wellbeing play a vital role in sustaining long-term health. In today's demanding environments, individuals are increasingly navigating burnout, anxiety, and emotional fatigue.

A strong sense of mental wellbeing enables clearer thinking, emotional stability, stronger interpersonal relationships, and the ability to adapt to challenges with resilience and confidence.

It is not simply the absence of

stress, but the presence of balance, awareness, and inner strength.

Everyday Habits, Lasting Impact

Wellbeing is cultivated through consistent daily practices rather than occasional efforts. Simple lifestyle choices—such as regular movement, restorative sleep, nourishing nutrition, mindfulness, and meaningful social interaction—can create lasting, transformative benefits over time.

These small, intentional habits collectively support a healthier body, a clearer mind, and a more balanced way of living.

Wellbeing in the Workplace and Guest Experience

In hospitality and guest-focused environments, wellbeing extends beyond the individual to influence service excellence and overall experience. Teams that prioritize their own wellbeing are more focused, productive, and engaged, creating a positive and welcoming atmosphere for guests.

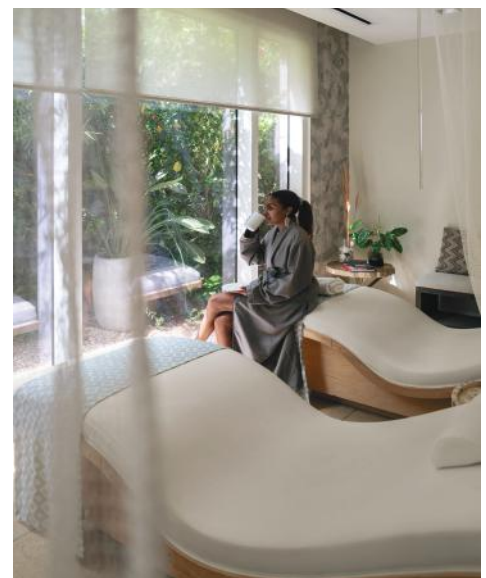
At The Ritz-Carlton, Turks & Caicos, a commitment to wellbeing is reflected not only in guest offerings but also in the culture fostered among its Ladies and Gentlemen—ensuring that exceptional service is delivered through a foundation of balance, care, and connection.

A Continued Commitment to Elevated Living

Set along the iconic shores of Grace Bay, The Ritz-Carlton, Turks & Caicos remains dedicated to promoting a lifestyle where wellbeing and luxury coexist seamlessly. By embracing a holistic approach to health and balance, the resort continues to inspire guests and team members alike to prioritize wellbeing as an essential part of everyday life.

As the world evolves, one truth remains clear: wellbeing is not a trend—it is the foundation of a healthier, more fulfilling future.

- Contributed



PUBLIC CONFIDENCE IN POLICE FORCE SKYROCKETS

By Vivian Tyson, NEWSLINE Editor-In-Chief

Public confidence in the Royal Turks and Caicos Islands Police Force (RTCIPF) has surged significantly in recent months, according to Commissioner of Police Fitz Bailey, who attributes the increase to strengthened community engagement and strategic policing reforms.

Speaking in sit-down with NewslineTCI earlier this week, Commissioner Bailey revealed that recent perception surveys indicate a growing trust among citizens in the police force. He noted that another survey is expected soon and is likely to show even higher levels of public confidence.

“We did a perception survey recently, and it demonstrated that there’s a greater confidence in the police by citizens. It is getting better,” Bailey stated, adding that feedback from the public during routine interactions supports the survey findings.

The Commissioner emphasized that community trust remains a cornerstone of effective policing. He underscored the critical role citizens play as “the eyes and ears” of law enforcement, noting that improved relationships have enhanced intelligence gathering and operational effectiveness.

Bailey acknowledged that upon assessment, the force identified weaknesses in intelligence, operations, and internal capacity. However, targeted efforts to address these gaps have led to measurable progress. These efforts included training initiatives, strengthening middle management, and adopting a more deliberate and data-driven policing strategy.



BAILEY... “We will operate lawfully and decisively to protect our people and our economy.”

A key component of the transformation has been the adoption of a “focused deterrence” approach, targeting not only crime hotspots but also individuals identified as key perpetrators. This strategy was supported by regional collaboration with partners from Jamaica and Barbados, as well as assistance from the United Kingdom.

The Commissioner explained that while initial interventions brought temporary relief, a deeper, more sustained strategy was required to address root causes. With government support, including legislative changes that enabled measures such as curfews, law enforcement was able to better understand criminal patterns and deploy resources more effectively.

tively.

During this period, several high-profile arrests were made, including the apprehension of known gang members. Bailey also confirmed that six individuals who confronted police were fatally injured in separate incidents. Among those targeted was wanted suspect Andral Percival, along with several associates.

Beyond enforcement, the RTCIPF has intensified community policing efforts, breaking down barriers and improving access to previously hard-to-reach areas. Officers have increased their visibility and engagement, including through social media and on-the-ground initiatives. “It’s an all-hands-on-deck, inclusive approach,” Bailey said. “Crime is not just a

police problem, it’s a societal issue.”

The Commissioner also highlighted the importance of collaboration across government sectors, noting that social services, infrastructure, and environmental planning all play roles in crime prevention. He pointed to the demolition of over 220 informal structures as a measure that reduced hiding places for criminals and improved policing efficiency. Bailey praised the dedication of officers who continue to serve in high-risk environments, often at great personal sacrifice. He reaffirmed the force’s commitment to protecting both citizens and the country’s vital tourism industry.

“We are not going to allow anyone to destroy this country,” he declared. “We will operate lawfully and decisively to protect our people and our economy.”

While acknowledging ongoing challenges, including road safety concerns, the Commissioner expressed confidence that continued investment in capacity building, community relations, and targeted enforcement will sustain the positive trajectory.

He also warned of the broader societal impacts of crime, including psychological trauma, economic disruption, and diminished educational outcomes for young people.

“As we reduce violence, we protect not just lives, but the future of this nation,” Bailey said.

With growing public trust and a comprehensive policing strategy in place, the RTCIPF appears poised to build on its recent gains in safeguarding the Turks and Caicos Islands.





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Borrowing Without Vision Is Not Development —

TCI Deserve Ownership, Transparency, and Smart Financing

An Op-Ed: by Paladin

The Turks and Caicos Islands is being asked to accept one of the largest borrowing exercises in our history—**\$370.4 million** in new debt—at the same time the government has committed to a **\$400 million airport redevelopment** that will not involve borrowing, public share offerings, or citizen participation.

This represents a profound shift in how national development will be financed, who will bear the risks, and who will benefit from the returns. Yet the public has been given little more than broad categories and aspirational language about “balancing immediate needs with long-term sustainability,” without the detailed explanations that such a major financial commitment requires.

This is not a rejection of development. It is a call for development that is grounded in ownership, transparency, and financial intelligence—principles that strengthen nations rather than burden them.

Why Borrowing Demands Clarity, Not Generalities

The government has stated that the borrowing will support infrastructure, digitization, housing, healthcare, education, and other “critical development needs.” These categories are so expansive that they could encompass almost anything, and without specificity, the public cannot meaningfully evaluate the necessity, value, or long-term impact of the proposed spending. If the government intends to borrow in the name of the people, then the people deserve a clear, accessible, and complete explanation of what they are being asked to finance.

To move toward genuine transparency, the public should expect:

- **A detailed project list** that identifies each initiative, its cost, its timeline, and its expected outcomes, so that citizens can understand exactly what the borrowing will fund and how it will improve their lives.

- **A full debt sustainability analysis** that outlines how this borrowing will affect national finances over the next decade, including debt to GDP projections, interest obligations, and the government’s capacity to absorb economic shocks.

- **A public consultation process**, including town halls and published reports, that allows Turks Islanders

to ask questions, express concerns, and help shape the priorities that will define the country’s future.

Without these elements, the borrowing plan remains a list of intentions rather than a coherent national strategy.

The Airport Paradox: The Most Bankable Asset Is the One Excluded From Smart Financing

The decision not to borrow for the **\$400 million airport redevelopment**, and not to pursue

a public-private partnership or a public share offering, is particularly difficult to reconcile with the government’s willingness to borrow heavily for less financially secure projects. Airports are among the most attractive assets for private investment because they generate predictable revenue through landing fees, passenger charges, concessions, and long-term leases. They are also ideal vehicles for citizen ownership, allowing Turks Islanders to invest directly in a national asset and benefit from its long-term profitability.

Instead, the public is being asked to shoulder debt for projects that may not generate direct financial returns, while the most profitable project is being kept entirely out of the public’s reach. This is not a question of ideology; it is a question of financial logic and fairness.

Debt Requires a Revenue Engine, Not Aspirational Language

The government has suggested that the new borrowing will be repaid through “improved compliance and economic expansion.” These phrases sound reassuring, but without a clear plan, they amount to little more than optimistic assumptions. Improved compliance requires a modern revenue authority with the technology, staffing, and enforcement capacity to ensure that taxes, duties, and fees are collected consistently and fairly. Economic expansion requires targeted investment in sectors that can actually grow, supported by policies that reduce bottlenecks and encourage innovation.

To make these claims credible, the government should present:

- **A comprehensive compliance strategy**, including new systems, staffing, and enforcement mechanisms, that demonstrates how revenue collection will improve in measurable ways.

- **A sector specific economic plan**

that identifies which industries will drive growth, how they will be supported, and what returns the country can expect over time.

- **Clear performance indicators** that allow the public to track whether the promised improvements are materializing or whether the country is simply accumulating debt without strengthening its economic foundation.

Borrowing is not inherently irresponsible, but borrowing without a revenue engine is.

There Are Smarter, More Inclusive Ways to Finance Development

Turks and Caicos has the opportunity to adopt financing models that reduce sovereign debt, increase transparency, and give citizens a direct stake in national progress. These alternatives are not theoretical—they are used successfully around the world, especially in small island economies.

- **Public Participation Companies**, which allow major projects to be structured with professional partners while offering shares to Turks Islanders, ensuring that national development also builds national wealth.

- **Turks Islander Bonds**, which give citizens a safe, government backed investment option and keep interest payments within the country rather than sending them overseas.

- **Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs)** for infrastructure such as airports, utilities, waste to energy facilities, and digital networks, where private expertise and capital can reduce public risk and improve project outcomes.

- **Sector specific development vehicles** for agriculture, fisheries, education, and healthcare, which can attract specialized partners and create sustainable revenue streams.

These models do not replace government leadership—they strengthen it by aligning development with ownership and accountability.

Development Must Be Built With the People, Not Announced to Them

The borrowing plan raises important questions that deserve thoughtful, public discussion:

- What specific projects will be funded, and how were they evaluated?

- What are the expected social and economic returns for each project?

- Why were PPPs, public share offerings, and citizen bonds not considered as alternatives to borrowing?

- How will compliance improve without a modernized revenue authority?

- Why is the airport—the country’s most bankable asset—not being used to mobilize private and citizen capital?


These are not adversarial questions. They are responsible questions that any prudent investor would ask before taking on hundreds of millions in debt. And the people of the Turks and Caicos Islands are the investors, because it is our future, our balance sheet, and our children who will inherit the consequences.

We Are Not Against Development. We Are Against Blind Development

Turks Islanders want progress—better healthcare, stronger education, safer communities, modern infrastructure, and a diversified economy. But we also want development that respects our intelligence, protects our financial future, and gives us a meaningful stake in the prosperity we are helping to build.

Ownership, transparency, accountability, and smart financing are not obstacles to development; they are the foundation of sustainable development. The government has a duty to explain and justify its financial decisions, and the public has a right to insist that national development be built on shared prosperity rather than shared debt.

This is our country, our money, and our moment to demand a better model—one that ensures Turks Islanders are not just observers of development, but owners of it.



Journalism of Accuracy, Balance & Courage

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TCIFSC Warns Public About Unlicensed Investment Entity

The Turks and Caicos Islands Financial Services Commission (TCIFSC) has issued a public advisory warning residents and potential investors about an entity falsely claiming to be a regulated investment firm operating in the Turks and Caicos Islands.

According to the Commission, a company using the name “Turks and Caicos Island Expertsperfect Investment” has been representing itself as having ties to the TCIFSC and offering financial services within or from the jurisdiction. However, the TCIFSC has confirmed that the entity is not licensed or registered with the Commission and is not authorised to conduct any financial services business in or from the Turks and Caicos Islands.

The regulator is urging members of the public to exercise caution and conduct proper due diligence before engaging with any firm claiming to be licensed by the Commission. Officials emphasize the importance of verifying credentials through the Commission’s official listings of licensed investment dealers and advisors.

The advisory also calls on individuals with information about unauthorized entities operating in the Islands to report such activities to the TCIFSC promptly.

The warning forms part of the Commission’s ongoing efforts to protect consumers and maintain the integrity of the financial services sector in the Turks and Caicos Islands.

Provo Water Company Launches Public Awareness Campaign on Water Quality and Testing Services

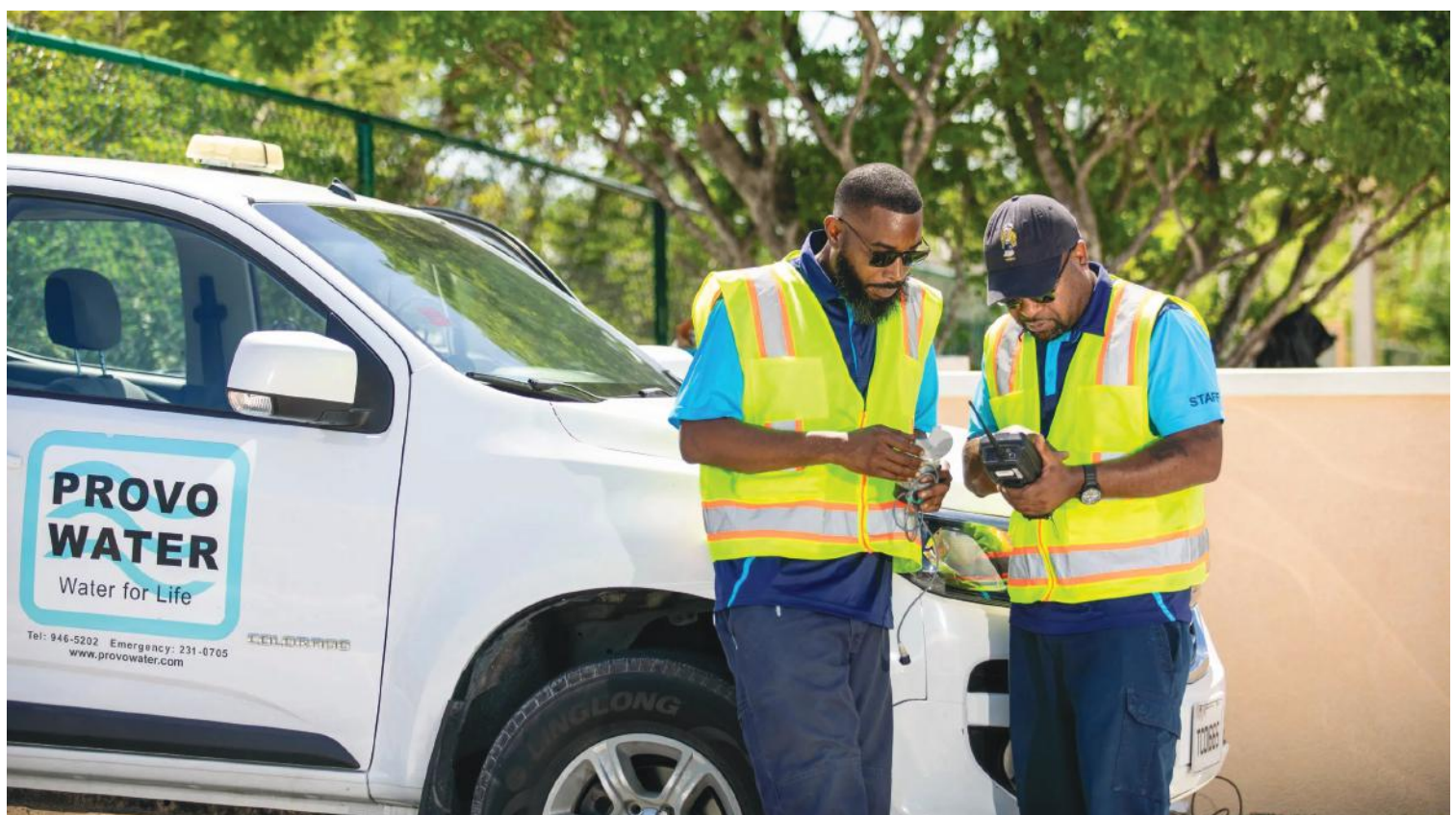
Provo Water Company has introduced its Water Quality and Laboratory Services team alongside the launch of a new public education campaign aimed at strengthening awareness of water safety and testing across the islands.

The initiative begins with the release of the first in a series of informational flyers designed to educate residents, businesses, and facility managers on water quality, laboratory services, and best practices for maintaining safe water systems. The campaign will provide practical, easy-to-understand guidance to help consumers better understand how water is tested and managed.

According to the company, the goal of the campaign is to build public confidence in water quality while equipping property owners and managers with the knowledge needed to uphold high standards within their own systems.

The first flyer in the series focuses on the importance of routine water testing and directs readers to the company’s dedicated laboratory services section online, where additional resources and information are available.

Officials emphasized that water supplied by Provo Water Company meets World Health Organization (WHO) drinking water standards before reaching customers. However, they noted that once water is stored



in private cisterns or distributed through internal plumbing systems, ongoing testing is strongly recommended to ensure continued safety and quality.

The company’s laboratory is internationally recognized and accredited by ANAB, placing it among only three accredited laboratories in the Caribbean. This accreditation ensures that all testing procedures meet rigorous

global standards and produce reliable results.

As part of the outreach effort, the company is encouraging organizations to expand participation in the weekly updates by including team members in environmental, engineering, and facilities management roles.

Residents and businesses seeking more information on water testing

services, compliance support, or routine monitoring are encouraged to visit the company’s laboratory services webpage or contact the team directly.

The public awareness campaign is expected to continue in the coming weeks with additional materials focused on water system management and quality assurance across the Turks and Caicos Islands.



Minister of Tourism Hon. Zhavargo Jolly

TCI Nominated for Nine World Travel Awards

By Vivian Tyson, NEWSLINE Editor-In-Chief

- Caribbean’s Leading Beach Destination
 - Caribbean’s Leading Cruise Destination
 - Caribbean’s Leading Destination
 - Caribbean’s Leading Dive Destination
 - Caribbean’s Leading Family Travel Destination
 - Caribbean’s Leading Honeymoon Destination
 - Caribbean’s Leading Luxury Island Destination
 - Caribbean’s Leading Tourist Board
 - Caribbean’s Most Romantic Destination
- Interim CEO Consultant, Mr. Paul Pennicook, welcomed the nomi-

nations.

“The World Travel Awards is widely regarded as one of the most prestigious recognition programmes in global tourism, and the Turks and Caicos Islands has consistently featured among its top honourees.

“We are delighted to see our destination recognised across key niche areas, which speaks to the dedication of our stakeholders and partners in strengthening and elevating our tourism offerings,” he said.

The Turks and Caicos Islands has won the Caribbean’s Leading Beach Destination award for 11 consecutive years and has also secured the Caribbean’s Most Romantic Destination title for seven consecutive years.



Paul Pennicooke, Director of Tourism

Voting is now open across all regions, with both industry professionals and consumers invited to cast their votes. To participate, visit <https://www.worldtravelawards.com/vote> and register to vote.

SHELTER INSPECTIONS CONDUCTED THROUGHOUT TCI TO STRENGTHEN DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

The Department of Disaster Management and Emergencies (DDME) advises that comprehensive shelter inspections are being carried out across the country as part of ongoing national disaster preparedness efforts.

This important undertaking is being led by DDME, with valued support from the Department of Community Support and Engagement, Public Works Department, TCI Fire & Rescue Service and DDME Volunteers. The collaborative effort ensures that all designated emergency shelters are assessed for safety, proper facilities, and overall suitability to accommodate displaced persons during emergencies.

A total of 32 shelters has been inspected across the islands thus far, including 13 in Providenciales, 4 in North Caicos, 3 in Middle Caicos, 3 in South Caicos, 2 in Salt Cay and 7 in Grand Turk. It is important to note that emergency shelters are not only



DDME Deputy Director, Mr. Kevern De Bellott; Community Preparedness Manager, Mr. Desmond Lightbourne; Community Preparedness Officer, Mr. Aaron Ballantyne, Stakeholders and DDME volunteers conducting shelter inspections on various islands

activated during hurricanes, but also temporarily in response to other events such as fires and flooding, where multiple individuals may be displaced. Shelter support for 2026 has been

provided on the island of Providenciales on three separate occasions, to facilitate emergency response efforts; this therefore underscores the importance of maintaining ‘year-round ready’

shelters. These efforts are key priorities in strengthening national resilience and emergency response capacity.

The Department is actively seeking to add new shelters to the list of Official Shelters for 2026. Members of the public and private sector are also encouraged to partner with DDME by offering suitable buildings that may be used as emergency shelters.

Interested persons are invited to email ddme.tci@gmail.com, include your name, number and location of the building. Write SHELTER on the email subject line. If you wish to volunteer with DDME, send an email to ddme.tci@gmail.com, include your name, age, phone number and location/community that you reside. Write VOLUNTEER on the email subject line.

DDME said it remains committed to proactive planning and collaboration to ensure the safety and well-being of all residents during disasters and emergencies.

Commissioner Fitz Bailey Highlights 24-Hour Highway Patrol as Major Policing Push

By Vivian Tyson, NEWSLINE Editor-In-Chief

Police Commissioner Fitz Bailey of the Royal Turks and Caicos Islands Police Force has placed a 24-hour highway patrol system at the center of the force's strategy to improve road safety and strengthen national security. Bailey said the initiative, currently being tested as a pilot programme, will transition into a full-scale, round-the-clock operation once additional officers and vehicles are secured. The move is expected to significantly increase police visibility on major roadways and deter reckless driving and criminal activity. "This is a key part of our continued effort," Bailey stated, noting that the goal is to ensure a constant police presence on highways. "Instead of limited shifts, the public will see 24-hour patrols, creating safer roads and stronger enforcement."

Expansion Hinges on Resources

The Commissioner confirmed that while the highway patrol is already active in a limited capacity, its full roll-out depends on new recruits and additional vehicles, which are currently on order. He indicated that even with existing personnel, the force is preparing to scale up operations as soon as resources arrive. The enhanced patrol system forms part of a broader policing strategy focused on visibility, responsiveness, and public trust, with Bailey emphasizing that communities across the islands should expect to see more officers on the ground.

The enhanced patrol system forms part of a broader policing strategy focused on visibility, responsiveness, and public trust, with Bailey emphasizing that communities across the islands should expect to see more officers on the ground.

Visibility and Safer Communities

According to Bailey, the 24-hour highway patrol will play a critical role in building a safer environment by increasing police presence not just on highways, but across communities. "We are building a force where every community experiences frequent po-



File photo of car that was involved in a fatal accident along the Leeward Highway in Providenciales in March 2026, which left a woman dead.

lice presence," he said. "We want to be guardians of the society, the nation, and our children."

Tackling Traffic and Driver Behavior

In addition to enforcement, Bailey addressed ongoing concerns about traffic congestion, particularly in areas like Blue Hills. While infrastructure limitations contribute to the issue, he stressed that poor driving habits—including impatience and blocking roundabouts—are major factors. "Sometimes congestion is not just about infrastructure—it's about discipline," he said, pointing to reckless driving as a preventable cause of delays.

"Sometimes congestion is not just about infrastructure—it's about discipline," he said, pointing to reckless driving as a preventable cause of delays.

Concerns Over Licensing Standards

The Commissioner also raised alarms about driver competency and licensing irregularities, revealing instances

where drivers appeared unable to understand basic road signs or communicate effectively in English despite holding valid licenses.

He warned that stricter enforcement is coming, including potential license revocations and court action for those who do not meet legal requirements. "If you cannot read and write English as required by law, your license will be taken," Bailey stated. "We have to ensure the system is not being abused." Meanwhile, Bailey expressed confidence that the expansion of the highway patrol, combined with increased resources and stricter enforcement, will help sustain improvements in public safety.

"We are not going back to where we were," he said. "We are moving forward with stronger systems in place."



Members of the recently launched Quality Council

GOVERNMENT LAUNCHES NATIONAL QUALITY COUNCIL

- Ministry of Education – Ms. Kadean Cunningham
- Inland Revenue – Mrs. Hilda Cayley
- Department of Environmental Health – Ms. Clevesha Outten
- Department of Agriculture – Ms. Roneta Huntley Thomas
- Turks and Caicos Airports Authority – Mr. Kendre Wilson
- Turks and Caicos Ports Authority – Ms. Shawna Lewis
- Pelican Energy TCI – Mr. Marcus Francis
- Provo Water Company – Mrs. Knesha Clarke-Forbes

The inaugural meeting kicked off with an invocation, followed by remarks by the Deputy Permanent Secretary for the Ministry of Finance Ms. Thomas, the Director of the Department of Trade, Industry, & Fair Competition (DTIFC) Mrs. Grant, and a key representative of CROSQ Mrs. Baptiste. All of the speakers reinforced the importance of ensuring that the National Quality Policy is placed

into effect and its role in transforming the Turks and Caicos Islands (TCI). The National Quality Policy is a policy that establishes the infrastructure and framework for quality and standards being implemented within the TCI.

The National Quality Policy once in effect would improve trade within the TCI, strengthen consumer protection through quality and standard requirements, facilitate a greater value for money for consumers regarding goods and services, an increase in business opportunities due to a stronger alignment and positioning on the global frontier, strengthening TCI businesses regarding export readiness, along with the TCI being in full compliance with globally recognized standards.

The National Quality Policy Implementation Project Kickoff was then conducted by the consultants Mesopartner. The DTIFC and its key stakeholders look forward to continuing the development of national quality policies and standards within the Turks and Caicos Islands.

The Department of Trade, Industry, & Fair Competition on Friday 27th of March 2026, officially launched the inaugural National Quality Council.

This council which comprises of members from both government institutions and key entities from the private sector, would serve as the principal advisory body for the development, implementation, and oversight of national standards, technical regulations, metrology, accreditation and conformity assessment services.

The National Quality Council's mandate

is to guide the standardization strategy, oversee implementation, and advise on quality related legislation as well as policy matters.

In attendance were the following contributors:

- Deputy Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Finance, Economic Development, Investment, & Trade – Ms. Teann Thomas
- Mesopartner
- CARICOM Regional Organization for Standards and Quality (CROSQ) – Mrs. Solange Baptiste

The Ritz-Carlton, Turks & Caicos Achieves Green Key Certification

The Ritz-Carlton, Turks & Caicos proudly announces its achievement of the internationally recognized Green Key certification, marking the resort's first major sustainability accolade and a significant step forward in its commitment to responsible luxury.

Awarded to tourism establishments that meet a rigorous set of environmental and sustainability standards, Green Key certification reflects the resort's dedication to reducing its environmental footprint while maintaining the exceptional service and refined experiences synonymous with The Ritz-Carlton brand.

"This certification represents a proud and defining moment for our Ladies and Gentlemen," said Louella Brezovar, General Manager. "Earning Green Key is a testament to our collective dedication to preserving the destination we are privileged to call home. We remain committed to delivering unforgettable guest experiences while embracing



The Ritz Carlton Turks and Caicos

practices that protect our environment for future generations."

Beyond operational initiatives, the resort continues to foster a culture of sustainability through team member engagement, ongoing training, and community partnerships that support environmental awareness and stewardship throughout the Turks & Caicos Islands.

Set along the world-renowned shores of Grace Bay, The Ritz-Carlton, Turks & Caicos offers guests an elevated escape where timeless luxury meets thoughtful, forward-looking hospitality.

With the achievement of Green Key certification, the resort reinforces its position as a leader in delivering exceptional experiences with purpose.

Located in Grace Bay, The Ritz-Carlton, Turk & Caicos provides guests with luxurious accommodations, sophisticated dining experiences, and endless amenities and activations.

TCI Hospital Named Best Practice Spotlight Organization

Turks and Caicos Islands Hospital (TCIH) is proud to be recognized by the Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario for its commitment to advancing evidence-based care and fostering a culture where clinical decisions are guided by the best available research.

This recognition marks TCIH's successful designation as a Best Practice Spotlight Organization(r) (BPSO(r)), a global program that supports healthcare institutions in implementing and sustaining evidence-based practices to improve patient outcomes and strengthen health systems.

"RNAO is proud to honour Turks and Caicos Islands Hospital and their progress as a Best Practice Spotlight Organization(r) (BPSO(r)). The team's dedication to patient- and family-centred care, strengthening safety practices and preventing harm from falls and pressure injuries reflects the tremendous work they've done," said Dr. Doris Grinspun, CEO of RNAO. "Through staff education, interprofessional collaboration and strong leadership support, TCIH has shown that even smaller health systems can successfully use research to improve everyday care."

TCIH joined the BPSO program in 2021 with the goal of elevating nursing standards and embedding evidence-based practices across the organization. In 2025, the hospital achieved full designation after suc-

cessfully implementing key best practice guidelines in Person- and Family-Centred Care, Falls Prevention and Pressure Injury Prevention.

As part of this process, RNAO conducted a site visit to assess the hospital's progress, including its infrastructure, staff engagement and implementation of best practice guidelines. The visit also included Best Practice Champions training, equipping staff with tools to lead change and sustain continuous improvement.

"This week's Champions training equipped staff with practical tools to lead and support change as they implement new guidelines," said Dr. Michelle Rey, Director of International Affairs and Best Practice Guidelines Centre at RNAO. "I'm pleased with the significant progress TCIH has accomplished over the past few years, including developing comprehensive educational plans, aligning policies with best practices and maintaining strong staff engagement."

Mrs. Mikette Been, Chief of Clinical Services and BPSO Lead at TCIH, highlighted the significance of the achievement: "As BPSO Lead for the Turks and Caicos Islands Hospitals, I am immensely proud of this achievement and the dedication shown by our entire team in embedding evidence-based practice into everyday care.

"This recognition reflects not only our commitment to excellence, but



also our shared vision of delivering safe, patient- and family-centred care across the Turks and Caicos Islands. We remain committed to sustaining this momentum and continuing to strengthen outcomes for those we serve."

Dr. Denise Brathwaite-Tennant, CEO of Turks and Caicos Islands Hospital, emphasized both the milestone and the broader impact of the partnership: "Achieving designation as a Best Practice Spotlight Organization(r) is a powerful affirmation of our commitment to excellence and continuous improvement. It reflects a shared vision across our organization—where evidence, compassion and collaboration guide every aspect of care we deliver. "We are deeply grateful to the Regis-

tered Nurses' Association of Ontario for making these invaluable resources accessible and for championing nursing excellence not only in the Caribbean, but globally. Through this partnership, we are empowered to strengthen our systems, support our staff and deliver safer, higher-quality care for the people of the Turks and Caicos Islands."

This milestone comes as TCIH also celebrates 16 years of service to the community, marking over a decade of progress in advancing healthcare delivery across the islands. Looking ahead, the hospital will continue its journey of improvement by implementing additional best practice guidelines, including Transitions in Care and Services and Pain: Prevention, Assessment and Management.

Political Theatre Masquerading as Analysis

An Op-Ed by Audley A. Astwood

If confidence alone could fix a country, Savitri Daniels would have solved everything in a single argument. Unfortunately, governing requires more than dramatic tone and sweeping claims. It requires facts, discipline, and a basic respect for evidence, all of which are in short supply with her. Daniels doesn't just raise concerns. She unloads them with the certainty of someone presenting a case already proven. Ministers are failing. The country is slipping. Leadership is absent. It sounds decisive. It reads forcefully. Yet, there's nothing solid underneath it.

What's being offered isn't a diagnosis. It's political theatre. Confident where it should be careful, accusatory where it should be precise.

Daniels makes serious allegations with the confidence of someone holding proof, yet produces none. Ministers are failing. Contracts are being handed to family members. The country is slipping. Those aren't casual remarks. Those are claims that demand precision. Names. Facts. Documentation. Instead, we get broad assertions with no substance. That's not

scrutiny. That's performance. Now place that beside reality. The government is rolling out a national digital ID system. They're modernising public services. They're strengthening cybersecurity after the 2024 breach, and building out a national security framework. Over \$12 million is being invested in border security and enforcement. Government revenue is projected at around \$550 million, one of the largest budgets in our country's history. These aren't talking points. These are measurable outcomes.

Meanwhile, Daniels gathers real issues like traffic, cost of living, housing, and healthcare. Then she strips them of context, and pins them neatly on one administration as though nothing existed before it. Complex national challenges are reduced to a convenient political narrative. It's tidy. It's also misleading.

Then comes the contradiction. Daniels acknowledges that the Premier conducted detailed performance reviews, identified weaknesses, and documented gaps, and somehow presents that as failure. That's not failure. That's the premier doing exactly what he's supposed to do. You can't demand accountability and then

attack it when it happens.

We're also told loyalty is being rewarded over competence. That's a serious charge. It requires evidence. None is offered. The call to remove ministers immediately might sound bold, but it ignores how governance actually works. Cabinet isn't a revolving door. Policies don't pause. Projects don't wait. Leadership is measured by judgement and timing, not theatrics.

Even on economic policy, decisions have aimed to protect local participation while allowing investment to continue. That's not confusion. That's balance.

The comparison to the Deputy Governor is equally flawed. Civil servants and elected officials operate under entirely different systems of accountability. Blurring that line doesn't strengthen the argument. It weakens it.

Then we're told tourism is showing cracks, with no data or supporting detail. At this point, the pattern is obvious. If it sounds alarming, include it. Whether it's backed by evidence is treated as optional.

This isn't an attempt to inform. It's an attempt to overwhelm. Stack lots of complaints together. Raise the temperature. Then hope

something sticks. Daniels is ignoring what the government has actually achieved. No surprise, because acknowledging progress would undermine her narrative. However, the government is producing measurable outcomes. Daniels is producing political theatre. If you're going to take aim at a government, bring facts that can be tested and claims that can be verified. Right now, that standard isn't being met.

Turks and Caicos deserves criticism that's grounded, not manufactured. It deserves debates built on facts, not personal grievance. It deserves writers who understand that questioning competence requires demonstrating it. Right now, Daniel does neither.

If this is the level of analysis being offered, then the real concern isn't the government's ability to lead. It's the standard of critique being used to judge it. Week after week, the arguments continue to be weak. Last week it was a call to follow Priton's model for affordable homes. That's like telling shipbuilders to model modern vessels after the Titanic. The comparison speaks for itself.

Audley Astwood is a journalist, political commentator, and former Police Information Officer.

Scotiabank Opens New Office in Grand Turk

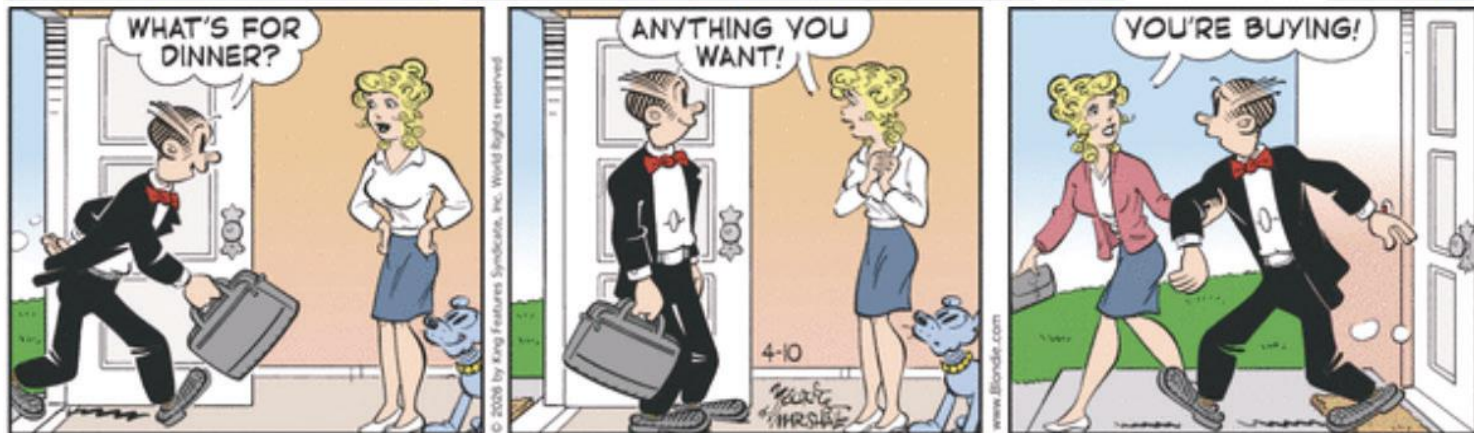
Scotiabank announces the official opening of a new meeting office in Grand Turk, located at the JAGS McCartney International Airport. This move reaffirms the Bank's commitment to making banking more accessible and convenient for clients across the Turks and Caicos Islands.

The new location will offer a range of services, including applications for both secured and unsecured lending products, online account opening and client service inquiries. Two ATMs are conveniently located at Grace Way Supermarket and Grand Turk Treasury Office to access cash withdrawals.

"We are happy to provide this access in Grand Turk and to deliver on our promise to make banking easier and more accessible," said Dr. Suzan Ochoa Snaggs-Wilson, Managing Director, "this expansion reflects our commitment to serving our clients where they are and investing in key markets" she

further added.

The opening aligns with Scotiabank's broader strategy to make banking easier for its clients. For assistance clients may contact Kadeem Saunders, Personal Banking Officer at (649) 232 3622 or email at kadeem.saunders@scotiabank.com

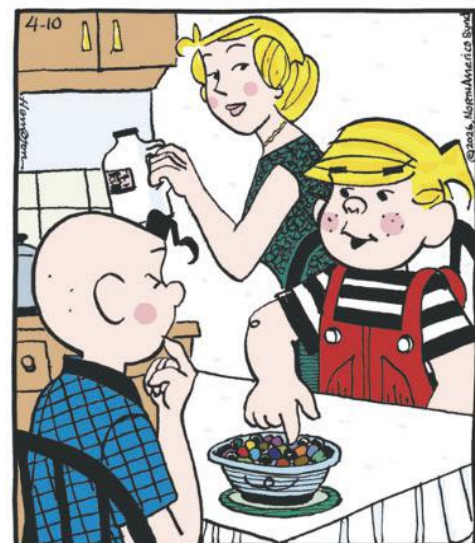


NEWSLINETM COMICS

MY HOUSE PLANTS:
"You watered me on Saturday afternoon instead of Sunday morning...
SO NOW I MUST DIE."



"Everyone out of the water, NOW!"



"IT'S OK, JOEY. EAT AS MANY AS YOU WANT... JELLY BEANS AREN'T VEGETABLES."



NEWSLINE
Heritage
THE
TROUVADORE

The Trouvadore: The Shipwreck That Shaped a Nation

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

A Hidden Chapter

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

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

From Tragedy, a Legacy

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

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

Memory and Meaning

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

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



Dr Candice Williams (left), President and CEO of TCICC interacts with representatives of the Turks and Caicos Islands Financial Service Commission.



Courtney Robinson (centre), the Information Officer for the FSC is photographed with two of his colleagues Wisland Quashie - Deputy Director of Human Resources, and Sheena Smith Yip, Senior HR Manager.

TCICC STAGES OPEN DAY

The Turks and Caicos Islands Community College (TCICC) welcomed prospective students, teachers, and community partners to their immersive Open Day events on Tuesday, March 24 (Providenciales campus), and Thursday, March 26 (Grand Turk campus). The campus wide events invited primary school pupils and secondary students from Form Three upwards to explore college life, academic offerings, and career pathways across TCICC's faculties.

Attendees toured interactive exhibits, met staff and current students, and engaged with industry partners showcasing practical career opportunities. TCICC highlighted programmes across Technical and Vocational Education (T VET), Tourism and Hospitality, Business, Natural and Applied Sciences, Humanities and Social Sciences, Education, and Continuing Education and

Microcredentials (CEM). "Open Day is more than an introduction to courses; it's an invitation to imagine your future," said Dr Candice Williams, President and CEO of TCICC. "Be bold in your exploration; ask the hard questions so you are fully aware." She went on to add that "TCICC is continually evolving and deepening partnerships with industry and community groups so that our graduates are prepared for meaningful careers and civic leadership." Dr Williams wanted the youths to be intentional with their lives, their education, and their careers: "The choices you make today will shape the opportunities you claim tomorrow."

A key feature of this year's Open Day was active participation from the Turks and Caicos Islands Financial Services Commission (FSC). The FSC exhibited at both campuses to highlight ca-

reer opportunities in financial services and to explain how regulatory, compliance, and professional roles support national economic resilience.

In Providenciales, Wisland Quashie, Deputy Director of Human Resources, and Sheena Smith Yip, Senior HR Manager, spoke to students and educators about pathways into the FSC, covering internships, recruitment opportunities, and the importance of technical skills, ethical practice, and continuous professional development. In Grand Turk, Dileecia Taylor, Human Resources Officer, and Zonelle Hamilton, Administrative Assistant, spoke to members of the community while representing the FSC.

Kenisha Bacchus, Managing Director (Ag) of the FSC, commended TCICC's community focused approach. "TCICC's Open Day sends a clear message: education here is prac-

tical, accessible, and directly linked to real job prospects," she said. "By engaging now, young people will be better placed to lead our islands' future growth. The FSC is committed to working with TCICC to build transparent career pathways in financial services, where curiosity is turned into capability."

The TCICC Open Day blended academic showcases with career focused presentations from private and public sector partners, reinforcing TCICC's community engagement mission. Industry exhibitors provided hands on demonstrations and guidance on internships and apprenticeships, drawing clear connections from classroom learning to employment. Representatives reiterated that TCICC remains 'your first choice and only choice for higher education in the TCI, underscoring the college's central role in workforce development.

Life Line FEATURED CHURCH

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

The St. Thomas Parish Church in Grand Turk is the oldest house of worship in the Turks and Caicos Islands, having been established in 1823. The St. Built by the Bermudan settlers, the Thomas Anglican Church was the first church to be constructed on that island and the second to be built in the Bahamas archipelago. At first the church was thought to have been built from stone transported from Bermuda. However, since the church was is located near the old quarry, it is also speculated that the materials may have been obtained from that location. It is also speculated that the rocks were obtained from the nearby quarry also and the wood imported from Bermuda. The St. Thomas Church is listed as very sturdy, cut-stone building with some walls as thing as two feet. The hard stones that were hand hewn were set to in a primitive mortar of lime mixed with turtle oil.



Life line Church Directory

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

Firm Foundation Ministries International
Lee Street, South Caicos. Telephone: 649-348-3581

Christ is the Answer Ministry,
George Alley Off Aviation Drive, Providenciales
Tel: 241-8030

One Nation Empowerment Center Church Ministry,
Suite #12 Alliance Business Center, Princess Drive,
Grace Bay, Providenciales. Tel: (649) 244-6194.
Email: apostleyoung1952@yahoo.com.

Touch of Love Ministries International Center
Industrial Park, Five Cays, Providenciales
Tel: 941-4903 Fax: 941-7731

Abundant Life Ministries International
P.O. Box 696 Christian City, Leeward
Highway, Providenciales
Tel:941-941-4750 Fax: 941-4755

Anglican Church Rectory Grant Turk,
Front Street, Grand Turk. Tel:946-2289

Bethany Baptist Church,
Blue Hills, Providenciales
Tel:941-4803 / 941-5632 / 941-5118

Church of God of Prophecy,
Lower Bight, Providenciales Tel: 941-8854

Bible Study Ministries, Grand Turk
Tel:946-1866

Calvary Baptist Church,
South Caicos. Tel:946-3212

Harvest Bible Chapel TCI,
Leeward Highway, Long Bay, Providenciales.
Tel: 1649 333-2009 Email: hbctciinfo@gmail.com.
<https://www.harvesttci.com>.

Rock of Jesus Ministry,
15 Five Cays, Safe Haven.
Tel: 649-3317628 of 649-2410087

Firm Foundation Ministries International
19 Honour Lane, Behind Smart Supermarket ,
Providenciales. Telephone: 649-332-6240

Church of God of Prophecy,
Providenciales Tel:941-3438

Roman Catholic Church,
Providenciales, Tel: 941-5136

Faith Tabernacle Church of God,
Providenciales, Tel:946-4073

New Testament Church of God,
Orea Alley, Grand Turk Tel:946-2175

New Testament Church of God,
South Caicos Tel:946-3631

Methodist Church,
Grand Turk Tel:946-2352

Healing Waters Ministries,
Blue Hills Providenciales Tel: 941-5867

House of Prayer Church of God,
Long Bay Road Providenciales Tel: 941-8309

Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses,
Darrell Road, Grand Turk Tel:946-2727

Mount Mariah Baptist Church,
Conch Bar Middle Caicos Tel:946-6205

New Beginning Harvest Ministry,
Pond Street, Grand Turk Tel:946-1759

New Testament Church of God
Orea Alley
P.O. Box 495 Blue Hills, Providenciales
Tel: 946-1255
Airport Road, South Caicos
Tel:231-2402

Firm Foundation Ministries International
Waterloo Road, Grand Turk.
Telephone: 649-332-624

Paradise Baptist Church,
Five Cays, Providenciale
Tel:941-4349

Revival Faith Center,
North Backsalina, Grand Turk
Tel:946-2349

Salem Baptist Church,
Mission Folly, Grand Turk
Tel:946-2565

Solid Rock Apostolic Ministries
International,
Discovery Bay Providenciales
Tel: 946-5181

St. Monica's Anglican Church
P.O. Box 866 Cheshire Hall Providenciales
Tel: 946-4046
Fax:946-4046;941-8499

Turks and Caicos Mission of Seventh
Day Adventists,
P.O. Box 803, Providenciales

United Pentecostal Church,
Brown's Plaza, Leeward Highway,
Providenciales Tel: 956-5852

Wesleyan Methodist Church,
Blue Hills, Providenciales
Tel: 946-4075; 941-4223; 941-3596

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@newslnetci.com



ALMI INAUGURAL EASTER SENIOR CITIZENS LUNCHEON

On Easter Monday, April 6, the Abundant Life Ministries International (ALMI) Church staged its inaugural Easter Senior Citizens Luncheon, held at the Salvation Army's Brighter Futures Centre, along the Leeward Highway on Providenciales. The event was a day of fellowship, praise and worship, fun and games. The seniors were feted and were presented tokens. In attendance was Member of Parliament for the Bight Hon. Aydrick Skippings. The following are photo highlights of the event.





HOW CHRONIC STRESS TURNS INTO PHYSICAL SYMPTOMS

When emotional load becomes inflammation, fatigue, and hormone imbalance

By Monica Uttamchandani
Holistic Health Coach, Turks and Caicos

Stress does not stay in the mind. It always shows up in the body. When stress is short-term, the body adapts and recovers. When stress becomes chronic, without enough recovery, it begins to change how systems function.

Many people live in a constant low-grade stress state. They are not in crisis, but they are never fully at ease. Over time, this affects digestion, hormones, immunity, and energy levels.

The nervous system is central to this process. When the body perceives ongoing pressure, it stays in a sympathetic or “alert” state. Blood is diverted away from digestion. Cortisol remains elevated. Inflammation increases. Sleep becomes lighter and less restorative.

This is why people under chronic stress often experience bloating, reflux, constipation, or irregular appetite. Digestion simply does not work efficiently when the body feels unsafe. Nutrient absorption suffers, which then affects hormone production and immune function.

Hormones are especially sensitive to stress. Elevated cortisol suppresses progesterone, disrupts thyroid function, and worsens blood sugar regulation. This can look like PMS, irregular cycles, fatigue, weight gain, or anxiety that seems to come out of nowhere.

A common example is someone who feels “wired but tired.” They push through the day with caffeine, feel exhausted in the evening, yet struggle to fall or stay asleep. This pattern is a stress-hormone loop, not a motivation issue.

Supporting the Body Under Chronic Stress

Supporting the body under stress requires more than mindset shifts.

- Eating regularly, to signal safety to the nervous system and prevent stress hormone driven

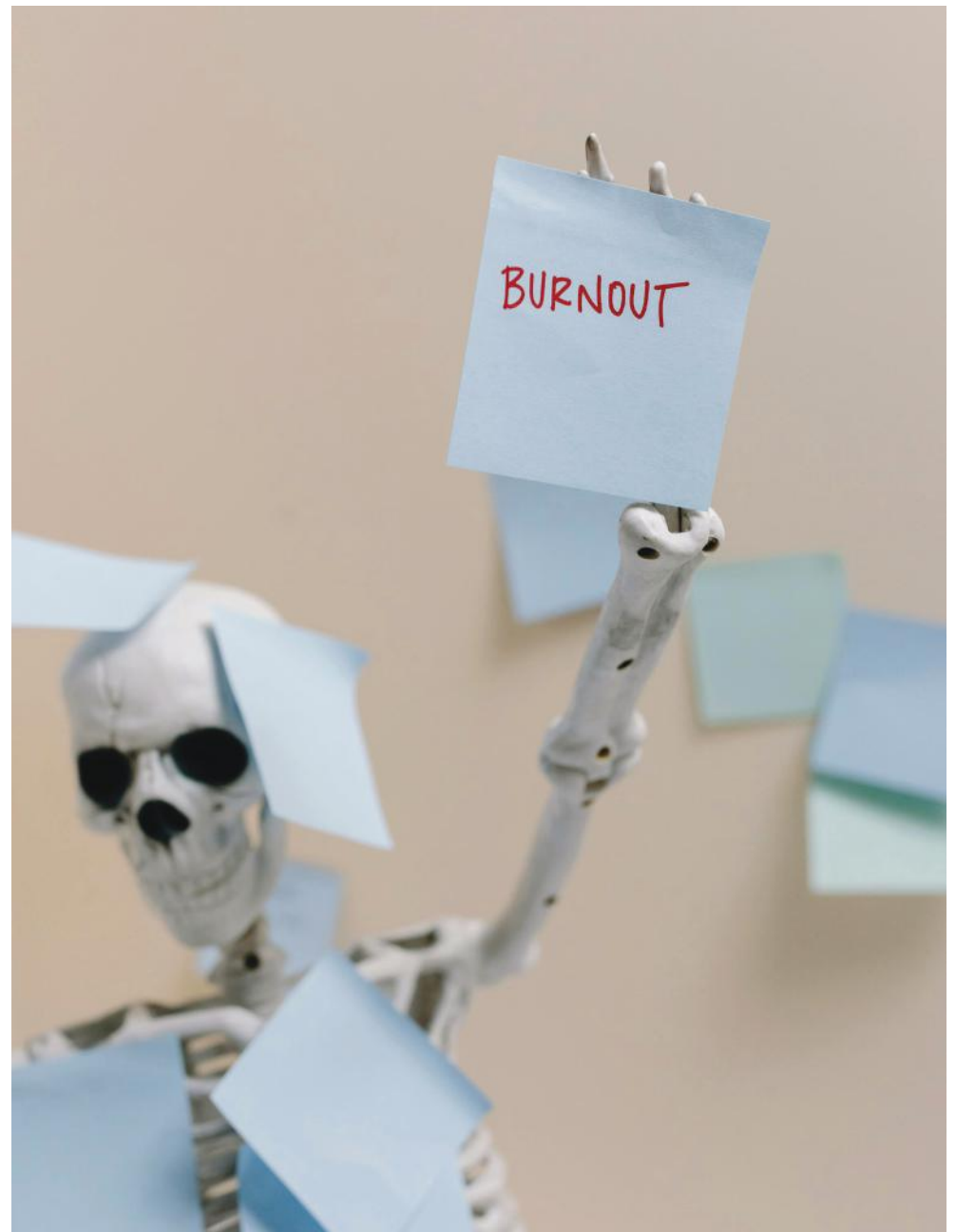


energy dips

- Slowing down meals, as rushed eating keeps the body in an alert state and impairs digestion
- Reducing stimulation at night, including screens and late caffeine, to allow cortisol to fall naturally
- Prioritising rest before exhaustion, instead of waiting for burnout to force recovery
- Creating predictable routines, which help the nervous system feel safe enough to regulate digestion and hormones

When stress is addressed at the physiological level, symptoms often soften. Energy becomes steadier. Digestion improves. Hormones regulate more smoothly. The body finally gets the message that it does not need to stay on high alert. For more support on stress regulation and nervous system health, follow @balancedbymonica on Instagram.

Monica Uttamchandani is a certified Holistic Health Coach based in the Turks and Caicos Islands. She also consults in person at The Elephant Rooms in Salt Mills, Providenciales.





THE SANDS FIRST QUARTER STAFF AWARDS

In last March, the Sands Resort which is part of the Hartling Group, held its first quarterly staff awards on its Grace Bay, Providenciales Property. Held in a luncheon setting, all the nominees were feted and entertained. The following are photo highlights of the event.





TCI RED CROSS PETALS & PURPOSE BRUNCH BRINGS COMMUNITY TOGETHER

The Turks and Caicos Islands Red Cross (TCIRC) hosted its 2nd Annual Petals & Purpose Brunch on Sunday, March 29, 2026, at Land & Sea, Wymara, bringing together community members, partners, and supporters for an inspiring afternoon of connection, creativity, and purpose.

Set against a vibrant and elegant backdrop of the South Side Marina, the event featured live entertainment, a curated brunch experience, live painting, and opportunities for guests to engage directly with a local artist. This brunch was more than a social gathering, it served as a meaningful platform to highlight the ongoing humanitarian work of the Red Cross and the importance of community support.

In a statement, Candianne Williams, Director of the Turks and Caicos Islands Red Cross, said: "This event is a reflection of what we can achieve when we come together with a shared purpose." She continued, "The Petals & Purpose Brunch was not only a celebration of community spirit but also a reminder that the work we do is made possible through the generosity, commitment, and compassion of our supporters."

TCI Red Cross Patron, Her Excellency Dileen Daniel-Selvaratnam, also commended the initia-



ative, stating: "The TCI Red Cross continues to play a vital role in strengthening our communities. Events like the Petals & Purpose Brunch not only raise awareness but also foster the spirit of unity, compassion, and service that is essential to national development. I commend the organizers and all those who contributed to its success."

The TCI Red Cross extends its sincere appreciation to its sponsors: DDME, Hartling Group, Kia

Motors, Mr. John Fair and Mrs. Marcela de la Mar, Nina Siegenthaler, and NW Hamilton Insurance Company.

Special thanks are also extended to Paula Garland, Esther Hamilton, Kate Solecki, Noreen Gardiner, Christine McCann, Issy de Louvois, Stanley Williams, and Davidson Louis for their invaluable contributions.

The organization further acknowledges the generous support of AZ Acoustics, Cardinal

Points TCI, as well as the Management and Staff of Land and Sea at Wymara.

The TCI Red Cross remains committed to delivering impactful programs and initiatives that support vulnerable communities across the islands. Proceeds and partnerships generated from events such as this directly contribute to advancing humanitarian efforts and strengthening community resilience across the TCI.



Alzheimer's could progress much faster in women with proteins linked to Parkinson's – study

Alzheimer's-related brain changes progressed up to 20 times faster in women who also had abnormal levels of a Parkinson's-related protein, according to a Mayo Clinic study published in JAMA Network Open. The same pattern was not observed in men. The findings suggest that when alpha-synuclein – a protein linked to Parkinson's disease – accumulates alongside Alzheimer's pathology, it may drive faster disease progression in women. That interaction could help explain a long-standing disparity: women make up nearly two-thirds of people living with Alzheimer's disease in the U.S.

Kejal Kantarci, M.D., a Mayo Clinic neurologist and senior author of the study, uses advanced brain imaging to track Alzheimer's progression.

"Recognizing these sex-specific differences could help us design more targeted clinical trials and ultimately more personalized treatment strategies," Dr. Kantarci says. "When we see disease-related changes unfolding at dramatically different rates, we cannot keep approaching Alzheimer's as though it behaves exactly the same way in everyone. Co-pathologies may impact the disease process."

Alzheimer's disease is marked by the build-up of tau protein in the brain. Many people along the Alzheimer's disease continuum also develop abnormal clumping of α -synuclein, a protein associated with Lewy body diseases such as Parkinson's disease and dementia with Lewy bodies.

Tau and α -synuclein occur naturally in the brain. In neurodegenerative diseases, however, these proteins can misfold and clump together, forming abnormal deposits. This pathological build-up disrupts communication between brain cells and contributes to cognitive decline. Researchers set out to determine whether having both abnormal protein buildups alters how the disease progresses and whether that effect differs between women and men.

To investigate, the team analysed data from 415 participants in the Alzheimer's Disease Neuroimaging Initiative, a national research consortium that tracks brain changes over time. Participants underwent cerebrospinal fluid testing to detect abnormal α -synuclein and repeated brain imaging to measure changes in tau accumulation. About 17 per cent of participants showed evidence of abnormal α -synuclein.



Among participants with both Alzheimer's-related pathology and α -synuclein abnormalities, women accumulated tau dramatically faster than men with the same coexisting protein changes.

Elijah Mak, Ph.D., first author of the study and a Mayo Clinic neuroimaging researcher, studies how multiple brain pathologies interact and drive disease progression.

"This opens an entirely new direction for understanding why women bear a disproportionate burden of dementia," Dr. Mak says. "If we can unravel the mechanisms behind this vulnerability, we may uncover targets we haven't considered before."

The researchers are now examining whether these sex-specific effects also appear in patients with dementia with Lewy bodies, where α -synuclein is the primary disease driver rather than a coexisting pathology. The work will help determine whether the observed difference is unique to Alzheimer's disease or reflects a broader sex-specific vulnerability across neurodegenerative conditions.

Mayo Clinic is a nonprofit organization committed to innovation in clinical practice, education and research, and providing compassion, expertise and answers to everyone who needs healing.

During Sleep, the Brain may Reinforce Epileptic Seizures, a Study Suggests

A new study reveals that after an epileptic seizure, the brain may activate memory-like mechanisms to "record" it, opening a key window to intervene and slow the progression of the disease.

The brain may inadvertently "learn" to have seizures by treating them like important memories to be stored, according to new research from Mayo Clinic.

The study, published in the Journal of Neuroscience, found that after a seizure, the brain enters a deep sleep state that mimics memory storage — and that this effect can persist into the following night's sleep. In effect, this "saves" the seizure's path like a normal memory, strengthening the disease. The findings suggest new opportunities to prevent epilepsy from worsening by targeting brain activity during the hours immediately following a seizure and during the subsequent night of sleep — a critical period when harmful brain changes may occur.

"Sleep is one of the brain's most powerful tools for learning and memory," says Vaclav Kremen, Ph.D., a neuroscientist and engineer at Mayo Clinic and lead author of the study. "What we're seeing is that after a seizure, the brain may be engaging the same biological processes used to consolidate memories, but instead reinforcing the networks that generate seizures."

Epilepsy affects an estimated 50 million people worldwide, and many patients continue to have seizures despite medication. Understanding the relationship between seizures and sleep could help explain why epilepsy can worsen over time and why memory, mood and sleep problems are common in people with the condition.



The study analyzed long-term brain recordings from implanted devices in 11 people with epilepsy. Using these recordings, researchers compared sleep patterns on nights following seizures to nights when no recent seizures occurred.

They found that after a seizure, the brain consistently entered a prolonged and intensified state of deep sleep, known as non-rapid eye movement (NREM) sleep. During this period, slow brain waves became stronger and steeper — key features of memory consolidation — particularly within the specific

brain regions where seizures originate. At the same time, rapid eye movement (REM) sleep, which is important for emotional processing and cognitive health, was reduced. On average, patients slept longer and spent more time in deep sleep after seizures, but they experienced less REM sleep compared with seizure-free nights. The researchers call this process seizure-related consolidation, a phenomenon in which seizures appear to hijack the brain's normal learning mechanisms. Rather than helping the brain recover, this post-seizure sleep

state may strengthen abnormal neural circuits, creating a vicious cycle in which each seizure increases the likelihood of future seizures.

"Instead of treating seizures as isolated events, this research shows they may actively shape the brain in ways that promote disease progression," says Dr. Kremen.

Importantly, the findings point to a potential new window for treatment — the hours and nights after a seizure — when targeted intervention could disrupt this harmful learning process.

"If we can safely intervene during this post-seizure window, we may be able to weaken seizure networks rather than reinforce them," says Gregory Worrell, M.D., Ph.D., a neurologist at Mayo Clinic and senior author of the study.

These insights support Mayo Clinic's Bioelectronics Neuromodulation Innovation to Cure (BIONIC) initiative, which aims to devise personalized neuromodulation therapies to prevent, treat, and potentially reverse neurological disease. By combining long-term brain sensing, advanced analytics and an understanding of how the brain adapts after seizures, the study highlights the potential for bioelectronic approaches to promote healthier brain function.

Future research will focus on translating these discoveries into BIONIC-enabled therapies, including adaptive closed-loop brain stimulation systems designed to respond to seizures and sleep states in real time. Mayo Clinic researchers have already begun designing next-generation approaches aimed at breaking this cycle and restoring normal brain activity.



THE PALMS FIRST QUARTERLY STAFF AWARDS

In late March, the Palms Resort staged its first quarterly staff awards on property in Grace Bay. A number of staff were awarded for their sterling services in the back and front of house, and for guests' satisfaction. The nominees were feted and entertained at the event. The following are photo highlights of the occasion.



Wireless Festival cancelled after UK bars rapper Ye

The rapper formerly known as Kanye West was barred Tuesday from entering the UK, where he was scheduled to headline the Wireless Festival in July, after a backlash over Ye's history of antisemitic remarks.

Festival organisers cancelled the three-day outdoor event as a result of the travel ban and said those who had bought tickets would get refunds.

Ye applied for an electronic travel authorisation to visit the UK, but it was blocked by the government on the grounds that his presence in the country would not be "conducive to the public good".

"Kanye West should never have been invited to headline Wireless," Prime Minister Keir Starmer said in a statement posted on social media. "This government stands firmly with the Jewish community, and we will not stop in our fight to confront and defeat the poison of antisemitism. We will always take the action necessary to protect the public and uphold our values."

The rapper, who changed his name in 2021, had been expected to play his first UK dates for more than a decade in front of around 150,000 revelers over three nights July 10-12 at the Wireless Festival, in London's Finsbury Park. Other acts for the festival had not yet been announced.

The event's organisers had been under mounting pressure from sponsors and politicians to cancel the gigs by the rapper, who has drawn widespread condemnation for making antisemitic remarks and voicing admiration for Adolf Hitler.

Last year, Ye released a song called Heil Hitler and advertised a swastika T-shirt for sale on his website. Officials in Australia canceled the musician's visa in July after the release of the single.

The 48-year-old apologised in January with a letter, published as a full-page advertisement in *The Wall Street Journal*. He said his bipolar disorder led him to fall into "a four-month long, manic episode of psychotic, paranoid and impulsive behaviour that destroyed my life."

Wireless sponsors Pepsi, Rockstar Energy and Diageo pulled out of the festival since Ye was announced as the headliner.

In a statement issued Tuesday before his travel authorisation was revoked, Ye said he "would be grateful for the opportunity to meet with members of the Jewish community in the UK in person, to listen."

"I know words aren't enough — I'll have to show change through my actions," he said. "If you're open, I'm here."

Phil Rosenberg, president of the Board of

Deputies of British Jews, had said the group would be willing to meet with the musician if he pulled out of the festival.

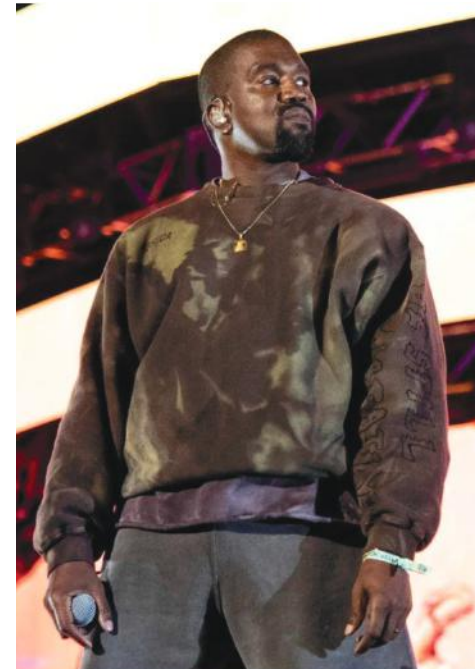
"The Jewish community will want to see a genuine remorse and change before believing that the appropriate place to test this sincerity is on the main stage at the Wireless Festival," Rosenberg said.

Organiser Festival Republic had stood by Ye. In a statement issued Monday, managing director Melvin Benn urged people to offer the performer "forgiveness and hope".

"We are not giving him a platform to extol opinion of whatever nature, only to perform the songs that are currently played on the radio stations in our country and the streaming platforms in our country and listened to and enjoyed by millions," the statement said.

Announcing the cancellation, Festival Republic said that "multiple stakeholders were consulted in advance of booking Ye and no concerns were highlighted at the time."

"Antisemitism in all its forms is abhorrent, and we recognise the real and personal impact these issues have had," it said in a statement. "As Ye said today, he acknowledges that words alone are not enough, and in spite of this still hopes to be given the opportunity to begin a conversation with the



Kanye West, who changed his name to Ye in 2021.

Jewish community in the UK"

The Community Security Trust, which works to protect British Jews, said the government had made the right decision.

"Anti-Jewish hatred should have no place in society and cultural leaders have a role to play in ensuring that is the case," it said in a statement.

"People who show genuine and meaningful remorse for previous antisemitic behaviour will always receive a sympathetic hearing from the Jewish community, but that process must come before this kind of public rehabilitation."

A representative for Ye didn't reply to a request for comment.



Soca artiste Patrice Roberts

A High Court judge in Trinidad and Tobago has ordered Soca artiste Patrice Roberts to pay her former Canadian-based management company more than US\$30,000 for services it provided while briefly managing her career.

Justice Robin Mohammed ruled that Soca Bookings Incorporated was entitled to

compensation for services rendered to the 40-year-old artiste between 2015 and 2017, despite shortcomings in its contractual claim.

The judge found that the company was entitled to US\$35,472, which represents reasonable compensation for the management services it provided and cash

Soca artiste Patrice Roberts ordered to pay US\$30,000 to Canadian entertainment company

advances made on Roberts' behalf to help further her career, plus interest.

But he found that the Ontario-based company owed her US\$10,367.88, which represents the proceeds of the digital sales of her music that it collected while managing her, plus interest.

A separate claim for US\$11,600 linked to a music video shoot was dismissed after the court found insufficient evidence that the expenditure had been incurred.

The dispute arose out of an oral management agreement reached in February 2015, under which the company provided what it described as full artiste management services, including bookings, branding, recording arrangements and international promotion.

While both sides agreed that a contract existed, the High Court found that key terms were never clearly settled, particularly whether management fees were immediately payable or only after the venture became profitable.

Justice Mohammed accepted Roberts'

position that fees were to be deferred until profitability was achieved, something the company failed to prove.

"The management fees were only payable once the venture became profitable and the Claimant has not established... that that threshold was ever reached," Justice Mohammed ruled noting that the Soca artiste "retained all financial benefits... and in those circumstances cannot in equity be permitted to benefit from the Claimant's work without compensating it".

Both parties were also awarded pre-judgment interest and legal costs with the judge indicating that the sums may be set off, which would result in Roberts paying a reduced balance of US\$25,104.12 along with TT\$26,983.71 in costs.

In his ruling, Justice Mohammed warned about the risks of informal agreements in the entertainment industry, noting that the dispute could likely have been avoided if the parties had formalised their arrangement in writing.



Beaches Teaches Fine Dining Experiences to Clement Howell High

Students from the Clement Howell High School were recently welcomed to Beaches Turks and Caicos for an immersive fine dining and etiquette session at one of the resort's signature à la carte restaurants.

For the second consecutive year, the resort's learning and development, public relations and food and beverage teams designed and delivered practical training that exposed students to the standards and expectations of a world class hospitality environment.

General Manager of Beaches Turks and Caicos, Deryk Meany, said the resort is committed to making the experience a fixture on the school calendar.

"We are honoured to once again open our doors to the students of Clement Howell High School," Meany added. "As one of the largest employers and training grounds in the Turks and Caicos Islands, we see it as our responsibility to help prepare the next generation with the skills, confidence and professional support they need to succeed in hospitality and beyond."

He added that the partnership aligns with the values of both Beaches Resorts and the Sandals Foundation. "This programme is about more than a single day at the resort," Meany continued. "It is about creating a consistent pathway for young people to see themselves in this industry, to understand the standards we uphold, and to recognise that there is a place for them at every level of the tourism sector."

During the session, the resort's learning and development and food and beverage professionals guided students through the full fine dining experience—from greeting and seating, to understanding multi course menus, cutlery placement, napkin etiquette and appropriate table conversation. Students also learned about body language, professional dress, and how to conduct themselves



confidently in formal and semi formal settings such as interviews, scholarship dinners and official functions.

Learning and Development Manager Phildreka Mayham explained that the training was deliberately structured to blend technical knowledge with life skills. "Our goal is to demystify the fine dining environment for these students," Mayham noted. "We want them not only to know which fork to use, but to understand that etiquette is really about respect for others, respect for themselves, and the ability to move comfortably in any social or professional space." She added that the programme is also a platform to introduce students to career possibilities.

"Through this engagement, they get to interact directly with our team members, ask questions about different roles, and see first hand that hospitality offers diverse pathways—from culinary arts and service to training, management, and leadership," Mayham shared. For Clement Howell High School, the

partnership with Beaches Turks and Caicos and the Sandals Foundation has become an important extension of the Health and Family Life Education (HFLE) curriculum. Guidance Counsellor Tanisha Graham said the experience supports the school's broader focus on personal development and career readiness.

"Our students are learning about self presentation, communication, and social responsibility in the classroom," Graham noted. "Being able to step into a professional fine dining setting and put those lessons into practice is incredibly powerful for them." Graham emphasised the impact on students' self confidence.

"Many of our students are experiencing this kind of setting for the very first time," she explained. "To see them sit up a little straighter, engage in conversation, and realise that they belong in these spaces—that is transformational. It reinforces the message that their potential is limitless.

Public Relations Manager, Orville Morgan added, "this initiative forms part of the resort's ongoing investment in education and skills development across the Turks and Caicos Islands, complementing previous support to Clement Howell High, including enhancements to hospitality related clubs and programmes. The fine dining and etiquette training is expected to continue as an annual feature, with plans to refine and expand the experience based on feedback from students and teachers."

As the second cohort of HFLE students completed their training, teachers expressed optimism that the collaboration will continue to grow and inspire even more young people to consider careers in hospitality. For Beaches Turks and Caicos, the hope is that today's students will return in the years ahead as interns, team members, and leaders—bringing with them the confidence, poise and professionalism first nurtured at a carefully set table in one of the resort's restaurants.



Trinidad and Tobago Prime Minister Kamla Persad-Bissessar



Caricom Secretary General, Dr. Carla Barnett

Kamla says process used to re-appoint Caricom SG could have long term effects for Trinidadians

Prime Minister Kamla Persad-Bissessar says the “surreptitious and odious process” used regarding the reappointment of the Caribbean Community (Caricom) Secretary General, Dr. Carla Barnett, could have long term effects for the people of Trinidad and Tobago.

In a statement posted on her Facebook page, Persad-Bissessar said that she was again calling on the 15-member regional integration grouping “for transparency on the surreptitious and odious process used to reappoint” the Belizean-born economist for another five year term.

“Trinidad and Tobago remains committed to Caricom, but until this matter is transparently resolved, the organization and its secretariat should absolutely expect no quarter from my Government.

“This is not a simple run-of-the-mill administrative appointment; it’s an appointment with long-term ramifications for my citizens. It’s an appointment that directly affects the future over the coming five years of Trinidad and Tobago’s economy, security, integration, and foreign affairs. Therefore in the interest of my citizens wellbeing I will mercilessly, relentlessly, and if needed, ruthlessly publicly prosecute this matter until transparency is achieved,” Persad-Bissessar wrote.

Late last month, in a brief statement, the Caricom chairman and St. Kitts and Nevis Prime Minister, Dr. Terrance Drew, said that Barnett had attained the “required majority” from among regional leaders regarding her re-appointment at last month’s Caricom summit held in Basseterre.

However Trinidad and Tobago has insisted that it was “not invited” to the deliberations that led to Barnett’s re-appointment, with Port of Spain adding that Antigua and Barbuda and The Bahamas were also absent. “I emphatically put on the record ... that Trinidad and Tobago was not invited by email, telephone or in person to that meeting where that particular decision was made,” that country’s Caricom and foreign affairs minister, Sean Sobers, told the Trinidad and Tobago Parliament last month.

Prime Minister Persad-Bissessar, who left the Basseterre summit prior to the retreat of regional leaders on Nevis, said on March 25, Sobers wrote to Prime Minister Drew, “formally placing on record Trinidad and Tobago’s objection to the re-appointment of Dr. Carla Barnett as Secretary-General of Caricom.

“Our concern is straightforward: the proposed re-appointment was not included on the provisional agenda for the Fif-

tieth Regular Meeting of the Conference of Heads of Government in St. Kitts and Nevis, was not considered during plenary, and was reportedly addressed only during the Heads of Government Retreat...from which Trinidad and Tobago and other Member States were excluded through their authorised representatives.

“This raises serious concerns to the use of improper procedures to circumvent the process and facilitate Barnett’s reappointment,” Persad-Bissessar said, adding that “Trinidad and Tobago therefore maintains that the re-appointment was not undertaken in accordance with Article 24 of the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas, which requires formal consideration and appointment by the Conference”. She said to ensure full transparency, further letters dated March 31, 2026, were sent to Prime Minister Drew and directly to the Secretary-General seeking clarification on the process followed.

“These letters requested details on when and how the matter was placed on draft agendas, what communications were issued to Member States, whether governments were informed following the Joint Communiqué and closing press conference, and whether any draft decision was circulated confidentially after the Retreat.

“They also sought an explanation for any confidentiality surrounding the matter, given the importance of preserving Member State confidence in Caricom’s Rules of Procedure and collective decision-making.”

Persad-Bissessar said further, on March 31, 2026, the Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Foreign and Caricom Affairs wrote to Janice Miller, Chef-de-Cabinet, Office of the Secretary-General, “formally requesting clarification and documentation regarding the re-appointment of the Caricom Secretary-General.

“The letter noted that previous re-appointments, such as in 2016, adhered to proper procedures, with decisions recorded and reflecting the views of all Heads of Government. The Permanent Secretary emphasized that the current process appears not to have conformed to Caricom’s Rules of Procedure.

“To date, no response has been received. The people of Trinidad and Tobago who finance 22 per cent of Caricom’s budget deserve transparency, accountability, and faithful adherence to agreed rules,” Persad-Bissessar added.

Barnett became the eighth Caricom Secretary General on August 15, 2021, by “unanimous appointment” of the regional leaders.

Russia and China block reopening of Strait of Hormuz in dramatic UN vote

Russia and China have blocked a UN Security Council resolution aimed at reopening the Strait of Hormuz- just hours before President Donald Trump's deadline for Iran to reopen the vital shipping route.

The Bahrain-sponsored resolution failed after receiving 11 votes in favour, two abstentions and two votes against from Russia and China, both of which hold veto power on the council.

The vote took place ahead of the Tuesday 8pm ET (1am BST Wednesday) deadline set by Trump for Iran to reopen the strait or face attacks on its power plants and bridges. He warned on Tuesday that a "whole civilisation will die tonight" if Tehran does not comply with his demands.

One-fifth of the world's oil typically passes through the Strait of Hormuz, and Iran's stranglehold during the war has sent energy prices soaring.

The proposal had been repeatedly watered down in the hope that Russia and China would abstain. An initial draft would have authorised countries to use "all necessary means" - UN wording that can include military action - to ensure transit through the strait and deter attempts to close it.

After Russia, China and France, all veto-wielding countries of the 15-member Security Council, expressed opposition



Chinese President Xi Jinping and Russian President Vladimir Putin in July 2024

to approving the use of force, the resolution was revised to remove references to offensive action. It instead authorised only "all defensive means necessary".

A vote had initially been expected on Saturday, but the resolution was further weakened to eliminate any reference to Security Council authorisation - effectively an order for action- and to limit its provisions to the Strait of Hormuz.

The resolution vetoed on Tuesday "strongly encourages states interested in the use of commercial maritime routes in the Strait of Hormuz to coordinate efforts, defensive in nature, commensurate with the circumstances, to contribute to ensuring the safety and security of navigation across the Strait of Hormuz".

This includes escorting merchant and

commercial vessels, and deterring attempts to close, obstruct or interfere with international navigation through the strait, it said.

The resolution also demanded that Iran immediately halt attacks on vessels, stop impeding freedom of navigation through the strait and cease targeting civilian infrastructure.

In retaliation for US and Israeli attacks that began on February 28, Iran has targeted hotels, airports, residential buildings and other civilian infrastructure in more than 10 countries, including its Gulf neighbours.

Iran's blockade of the strait is seen by Gulf Arab states as an existential threat. Bahrain- which hosts the US Fifth Fleet and currently holds the rotating presidency of the Security Council- has been pressing for UN action.

More than 1,900 people have been killed in US-Israeli strikes in Iran, while over 1,500 people have been killed in Israeli strikes in Lebanon since March 2. Twenty-three people have been killed in Israel by missile and rocket fire from Iran and Lebanon.

Thirteen US service members have been killed in the war, and two more have died from non-combat causes. More than two dozen people have also been killed in Gulf countries and the occupied West Bank.

'China's Nostradamus' predicted Trump's Iran bluff - and he warns a trap will be next

A Chinese-Canadian academic dubbed "China's Nostradamus" who predicted Donald Trump would step back from his most extreme threats against Iran - nuclear strikes - has been vindicated tonight after the US president agreed a two-week ceasefire rather than following through on his promise to "end" Iranian civilisation.

But Professor Jiang Xueqin's second prediction has long-lasting dangers for Trump: that American boots will eventually hit Iranian soil regardless, as the United States finds itself trapped in a conflict it cannot win from the air alone. Jiang, a Beijing-based educator and the creator of the globally followed YouTube channel Predictive History, delivered his analysis to students at Moonshot Academy in Beijing last month, reported Jordanian outlet Roya News - framing the US-Iran war not as a contest of firepower but as a game of strategic nerve, in which the side with the most flexibility, not the most weapons, tends to prevail.

His central argument was that Iran, despite being outgunned, has been controlling the tempo of the conflict in a way the United States has not. While Washington has relied on air power and a rigid escalation ladder - moving

from targeted strikes through to infrastructure attacks and implicit nuclear menace - Tehran has responded with precision, picking its moments and protecting its options.

"Calibration is ultimately about strategic flexibility," Jiang reportedly told his students. "The person with the most options and a flexible strategy will usually win the fight."

To illustrate the point, Jiang drew on a classroom analogy according to the report - a school bully who escalates relentlessly against a new student who absorbs pressure, waits, and chooses his moments. The bully's relentless pressure eventually becomes a liability; the student's patience becomes his greatest weapon.

Jiang was reportedly blunt about what he sees as a structural flaw in US military thinking. He is said to have described American strategy as an inverted pyramid - one that places air power at the top and keeps ground forces to a minimum - and argued this is precisely the wrong way to fight a war of attrition.

"Wars are usually wars of attrition," he is understood to have said. "If you want to win, your cheapest and most flexible resource, soldiers, should form the base of your military strategy."

Tehran, by contrast, has moved selectively - hitting American radar installations and air defence systems while keeping a stranglehold on the Strait of Hormuz. These moves, Jiang argued in the report, allow a technologically inferior force to punch far above its weight by keeping its adversary permanently off balance.

"Iran's advantage lies in flexibility," he reportedly said. "Control of escalation timing allows a smaller or less advanced force to influence outcomes disproportionately."

The game theory of war

Applying game theory to the conflict, Jiang set out what he sees as the core objectives of each player.

Washington's primary aim, he argued, is to break Iranian power and lock in American dominance over the region's oil flows. Tehran is playing a more contained game - securing the Strait and chipping away at the American footprint across the Middle East. Israel is pursuing a parallel objective: weakening both Iran and the United States to establish itself as the dominant regional power.

Each of these goals pulls against the others, according to Jiang's theory, creating a three-way strategic trap in which every move by one actor forces the oth-

ers to respond- a dynamic that tends to drag conflicts out and punish the side with the least clearly defined endgame most severely.

Modern conflict, he stressed, is not decided by weaponry alone.

"Wars are not just about weaponry," he reportedly said. "They are about controlling the narrative, political relationships, and resources in a way that is strategically advantageous."



Professor Jiang Xueqin



LUC DID IT!

Young Luc Durliat Returns to TCI with
Carifta Swim Bronze

SEE PG32

Douglas smashes Under-20 200m Carifta record

SHANOYA Douglas smashed her one-week-old Jamaica Under-20 200m record after she ran a stupendous 22.11 seconds (1.9m/s) to complete back-to-back sprint doubles at the Carifta Games.

Douglas, the World Under-20 Athletics Championships bronze medalist, smashed her own record with a masterclass in sprinting on Monday's final day of the 53rd games at Kirani James Athletics Stadium in St George's, Grenada.

Just over a week ago, Douglas ran 22.36 to win the Class 1 200m at the ISSA/GraceKennedy Boys' and Girls' Athletics Championships in Jamaica, breaking Briana Williams' 22.50 set in 2018.

The time by Douglas is tied third of all times with United States legend Allyson Felix, and trails only Namibia's Christine Mboma's 21.78 set in 2021 and American JaMeesia Ford (22.08) in June 2024.

Douglas, who won the 100m on Saturday, also broke the Carifta Games record of 22.77 set in 2013 by Shaunae Miller. Her compatriot Natrece East was second with 23.39, and Haiti's Breanne Barnett was third with 23.49.

Just after the 200m finals on Monday the Jamaicans were well on their way to yet another Carifta Games win. At press time they had won 65 medals (24 gold, 25 silver and 16 bronze) to be well ahead of the rest of the field. Sanjay Seymore made up for his disqualification from the Boys' Under-20 100m by winning the 200m in a personal best 20.63 (1.8m/s). He finished ahead of the 100m winner Miles Outerbridge (20.67) of Bermuda and Eagan Neely (20.73) of The Bahamas.

Mario Ross was second in the Boys' Under-17 200m final, running 21.00 (0.5m/s) to finish behind Emmile Higgins of The Bahamas who ran 20.94. Higgins' teammate Zion Bradford took third with 21.54.

Jamaica swept the sprint hurdles after winning all four intermediate levels on Sunday. Mark-Daniel Allen set a new championships record 13.25 (1.6m/s), under the 13.49 set in 2023 by Kahiem Cardy of Jamaica. Allen chopped 0.32 seconds off his previous best 13.57 set at Jamaica's Carifta trial a month ago.

Jamaica's Brandon Bennett was also under the previous record with 13.47 to take the silver medal. Shawne Ferguson of The Bahamas claimed bronze with 14.30.

Robert Miller made up for losing his



Shanoya Douglas

400m hurdles title on Sunday by winning the Under-20 Boys' 110m in a wind-aided 13.43 (2.5m/s), beating Jahcario Wilson of The Bahamas who ran 13.53. Jamaica's Romario Jibbison was third with 13.73.

Tiana Marshall retained her Under-20 Girls' 100m hurdles title, outclassing the field with 13.43 (-3.2m/s), with Trinidad and Tobago's Jenna-Marie Thomas second with 13.93, and Sofia Swindell of the US Virgin Islands third with 13.94.

Jamaica's Akeelah Bell was well set for a medal until she hit a hurdle mid-race and ended fifth.

Tashana Godfrey took the Under-17 Girls' gold medal after running 13.27 (-0.4m/s), followed by teammate Macaela Gordon (13.39) and Trinidad and Tobago's Checya Joseph (13.96).

Markland Williams was out-kicked by St Maarten's Nahjan Wyatte who won the Under-17 Boys' 800m in 1:53.26, to the Jamaicans' 1:53.60.

St Kitts/Nevis's Kymarni Newton took third with 1:55.34 seconds, just ahead of Jamaica's Luke Plummer.

Joel Morgan, the 1500m champion on Saturday, had to settle for the bronze with 1:51.72 in the Boys' Under-20 800m final which was won by Trinidad and Tobago's Kiile Alexander (1:50.38). Grenada's Nicholas Frederick (1:51.22) was second.

Dallia Fairweather (2:11.15) took the

bronze medal in the Girls' Under-20 800m which saw Barbados's Ashlyn Simmons (2:09.07) and Danya Skeete (2:10.50) take the gold and silver medals, respectively.

Kevongaye Fowler, who was expected to challenge for a medal, did not complete the event.

United States-based Jamaican Able Mills threw a personal best 53.85m — beating the 51.68m she set last year — to win the Girls' Under-20 discus throw, her second gold after winning the shot put a day earlier.

Marla-Kay Lampart, who was third last year, was second with 48.96m, also her second medal of the event. Tejha Thompson of The Bahamas third with 38.92m.

Joseph Salmon, the Boys' Under-20 discus throw winner, added a silver medal after he threw a personal best 18.17m, beating his previous best 17.62m for second in the shot put event.

Jayden Walcott won with 18.41m while Trinidad and Tobago's Jelany Chinyelu was third with 16.62m.

TEAM	GOLD	SILVER	BRONZE	TOTAL
JAMAICA	28	27	16	71
TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO	9	11	15	35
BAHAMAS	8	12	10	30
BARBADOS	6	3	8	17
GUYANA	4	1	1	6
ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA	2	1	2	5
MARTINIQUE	2	0	2	4
CAYMAN ISLANDS	2	0	1	3
GRENADA	1	4	6	11
BERMUDA	1	2	0	3
SAINT LUCIA	1	1	2	4
CURACAO	1	1	2	4
TURKS AND CAICOS	1	1	0	2
SINT MAARTEN	1	0	0	1
DOMINICA	1	0	0	1
BELIZE	1	0	0	1
HAITI	0	1	2	3
VIRGIN ISLANDS (USA)	0	1	1	2
FRENCH GUIANA	0	1	0	1
BRITISH VIRGIN ISLANDS	0	1	0	1
GADELOUPE	0	1	0	1
SAINT KITTS AND NEVIS	0	0	1	1

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Alex Yablong (far right) on 3rd place podium.



Norman Saunders celebrates his victory

TCI Jiu Jitsu Athletes Shine on International Stage with Strong Pan Ams Showing

Turks and Caicos Islands' Brazilian Jiu Jitsu athletes continue to make their mark on the global stage, delivering an impressive performance at the prestigious Pan American Championships hosted by the International Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu Federation.

Four competitors represented TCI at the elite tournament, one of only four major events on the IBJJF calendar, alongside the European Championships, Brasileiros, and World Championships, and emerged with a remarkable 50% podium rate.

Podium Finishes Highlight TCI Strength

Leading the charge was Alex Yablong, competing in the Master 2 Lightweight Black Belt division. Yablong secured a bronze medal, adding to his growing list of accolades after capturing gold earlier this year at the European Championships.

Veteran competitor Shaun McCormack also delivered a standout performance, earning silver in the Master 4 Super Heavyweight division, showcasing both experience and resilience against a competitive international field.

Valuable Experience for Emerging Athletes

While David Galluzzi (M2 Middleweight Brown Belt) and Michael Sankar (M2 Heavyweight Purple Belt) were eliminated in the qualifying rounds, their participation at such a high level un-



David Galluzzi (on the ground) during his event

derscores the continued development of TCI's talent pipeline.

Competing at the Pan Ams provides invaluable exposure, particularly given the depth and quality of athletes present at IBJJF major tournaments.

Saunders Impresses in Grapple Worlds Debut

Meanwhile, TCI's own Norman Saun-

ders delivered a sensational performance abroad, capturing victory at his Grapple Worlds debut in the United Kingdom.

Saunders, currently completing his law studies, stunned opponents with a 15-second submission victory on March 28, marking one of the fastest finishes of the event and signaling his

emergence as a force to watch.

Building a Global Presence

In just five years, TCI Brazilian Jiu Jitsu has established a growing presence on the international scene, largely driven by athlete commitment and self-funding, with limited external support.

The program has received some assistance from the TCI Sports Commission through athlete development funding, but much of the burden continues to fall on competitors themselves.

Looking ahead, the academy has announced plans to support young athletes by covering lodging costs for upcoming competitions, including Jiu Jitsu Con and the World Masters in Las Vegas, an important step toward expanding opportunities for the next generation.

Call for Sponsorship

As the sport continues to grow locally, the team is actively seeking sponsorship to further elevate TCI's presence on the global stage.

Support for athletes and the broader competition program would significantly enhance training, travel, and participation opportunities, ensuring that Turks and Caicos remains competitive among the world's best in Brazilian Jiu Jitsu.

Interested sponsors are encouraged to connect with the program to play a role in shaping the future of the sport in the islands.

Hero's Welcome for TCI CARIFTA Athletes

Pride, celebration, and national unity were on full display Wednesday as the Turks and Caicos Islands' CARIFTA athletes returned home to a hero's welcome following their performances at the 53rd CARIFTA Games.

Led by Under-20 high jump gold medalist David Hall and Under-17 silver medalist Herwens Gurrier, the team was greeted at the Howard Hamilton International Airport by an enthusiastic crowd of government officials, supporters, and proud family members.

Among those welcoming the athletes were Premier Washington Misick, Deputy Governor Anya Williams, Deputy Premier Jamell Robinson, and Minister of Education, Youth, Sports and Culture Rachel Taylor.

The festive atmosphere was amplified by the rhythmic sounds of the We Funk Junkanoo Band, while flag-waving residents gathered to celebrate the athletes' achievements. The team was then escorted in a motorcade through the streets of Providenciales, culminating in a recognition ceremony at the Gustarvus Lightbourne Sports Complex.

During the ceremony, Minister Taylor announced cash rewards for the medalists, underscoring the government's commitment to supporting sporting excellence. Hall received \$10,000 for his gold medal performance, while Gurrier was awarded \$6,000 for his silver medal finish.

Swimmer Luc Durliat, who secured bronze in the 200m butterfly at the CARIFTA Swim Championships in Martinique, was promised \$4,000. Durliat was unable to attend the ceremony as swimming events ran longer than track and field, which took place April 4-6 at the Kirani James Athletic Stadium.

In her remarks, Minister Taylor described the moment as one of the proudest for the country, emphasizing the dedication and sacrifice behind the athletes' success. She praised not only the medalists but the entire team, noting that each athlete represents the future of sports in the Turks and Caicos Islands.

She also highlighted the critical role played by coaches and officials, recounting the late-night efforts to resolve travel challenges and ensure all athletes could participate.

"These athletes are our rising stars. The country believes in you," she said, encouraging them to remain focused and resilient.

Deputy Governor Williams echoed that sentiment, noting that although



A Throng of supporters, including Sports Minister Hon. Rachel Taylor (white cap) celebrate with the Turks and Caicos and Caicos Carifta Track and Field Athletes.

the Turks and Caicos Islands is small, its talent is powerful. She encouraged athletes to embrace their new role as national role models, reminding them that their achievements have placed their names in the country's history.

Deputy Premier Robinson emphasized the importance of maintaining high standards, urging athletes to go beyond simply qualifying for CARIFTA and to continue striving for podium finishes.

Director of Sports Jarrett Forbes pointed to the team's overall progress, highlighting personal best performances, growing confidence, and the emergence of new talent. He stressed that the country is building not just champions, but a sustainable system for athletic development.

Minister of Tourism Hon. Zhavargo Jolly described the celebration as a moment of national pride and unity, calling the athletes' success an example of what can be achieved through collective effort and belief. Head Coach Courtney Missick underscored the importance of investing in youth, sharing how opportunities given to young athletes can lead to success. He cited Gurrier's journey as proof of the value of support and persistence, and praised Hall's determination, noting his gold medal came after a year of intense training and overcoming injury.



Premier Hon. Washington Misick was among the welcoming party for the Carifta Athletes at the Howard Hamilton International Airport



A junkanoo band was among the celebration to welcome the athletes at the Howard Hamilton International Airport in Providenciales



Premier Hon. Washinton Misick (foreground) and members of his Cabinet leads the Carifta Swim Championships team through customs at the Howard Hamilton International Airport in Providenciales on Friday.



Her Excellency Deputy Governor Anya Williams (right) and David Hall (right), the Carifta Track and Field High Jump Champion were among the jubilant greeting party to welcome Luc Durliat and his Carifta Swim Championship team on Friday.

Durliat Receives Hero's Welcome After Swimming Bronze Medal Triumph

By Vivian Tyson, NEWSLINE Editor-In-Chief

A proud moment for the Turks and Caicos Islands unfolded on Friday as national swimmer Luc Durliat returned home to a hero's welcome at the Howard Hamilton International Airport, following his bronze medal performance in the 200m butterfly at the 2026 CARIFTA Swim Championships in Martinique.

The airport was filled with excitement as government officials, family members, teammates, and supporters gathered to celebrate the young athlete's achievement. Leading the official welcoming party were Premier Hon. Washington Misick, Deputy Governor Her Excellency Anya Williams, Deputy Premier Hon. Jamell Robinson, and Sports Minister Hon. Rachel Taylor, underscoring the national significance of Durliat's accomplishment.

Adding to the moment was a heartfelt greeting from fellow national athlete David Hall, the CARIFTA Under-20 High Jump Champion, who embraced Durliat in celebration

of his success.

Still beaming from his victory, Durliat described the emotional moment when he realized he had secured a podium finish.

"When I first heard that I won the bronze medal, I was just full of excitement. I threw my cap in the air like I just didn't care," he said.

The 13-year-old swimmer admitted that he had entered the race with tempered expectations, anticipating a tough challenge against some of the region's best. However, the encouragement he received proved decisive.

"I thought it was going to be really hard and that I wouldn't win anything, but my teammates, my coaches, and my family gave me the confidence to believe I could do it," he explained.

For Durliat, the bronze medal represents more than just a single achievement, but rather, it marks the beginning of a promising journey.

"This is only the start. There's more coming in the future," he said with quiet determination. National Swim Coach Jessi-

ca Soderquist echoed that sentiment, highlighting the overall success of the team at the championships. The nine-member squad competed in 48 individual races and recorded an impressive 42 personal best performances.

"I'm incredibly proud of the entire team," Soderquist said. "The improvements we've seen, not just in times, but in technique and commitment, have been tremendous. The medal was the cherry on top, but every swimmer contributed to what was a fantastic meet."

She noted that Durliat's podium finish had a powerful effect on team morale, inspiring his teammates and reinforcing belief in the program's direction.

"That race lifted everyone. It showed what's possible, and it's a sign that we're heading in the right direction as a team." Durliat's father, Mark, reflected on the emotional significance of the moment, emphasizing the unity and support within the team.

"When he reached the finals, the entire team showed up for

him. That meant everything," he said. "He told me afterward, 'Dad, that was a team win.' And it really was."

Mark also praised Coach Soderquist's impact, describing her as "an incredible coach" whose influence has elevated the entire program. "She's made a huge difference, not just for Luc, but for all the swimmers. The country is very fortunate to have her," he added.

As Durliat celebrates his success just days after his 13th birthday, his Minister of Sports Hon. Rachel Taylor noted his achievement stands as a proud milestone for the Turks and Caicos Islands, and a strong indication that even greater accomplishments may lie ahead.

An elated Taylor told celebratory gathering at the airport that the TCI could never be prouder of Luc, and all the other swimmers who participated in the game. She pointed that the Turks and Caicos Islands political administration would do whatever it takes to ensure that local athletes are developed.