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TCI, A COUNTRY UNDER SIEGE-PG8



\$2.1 MILLION LEEWARD HIGHWAY PHASE 1 REPAIRS TO BEGIN ON NOVEMBER 1, 2024 PG14



NO PLANS TO MAKE SQUATTERS HOMELESS

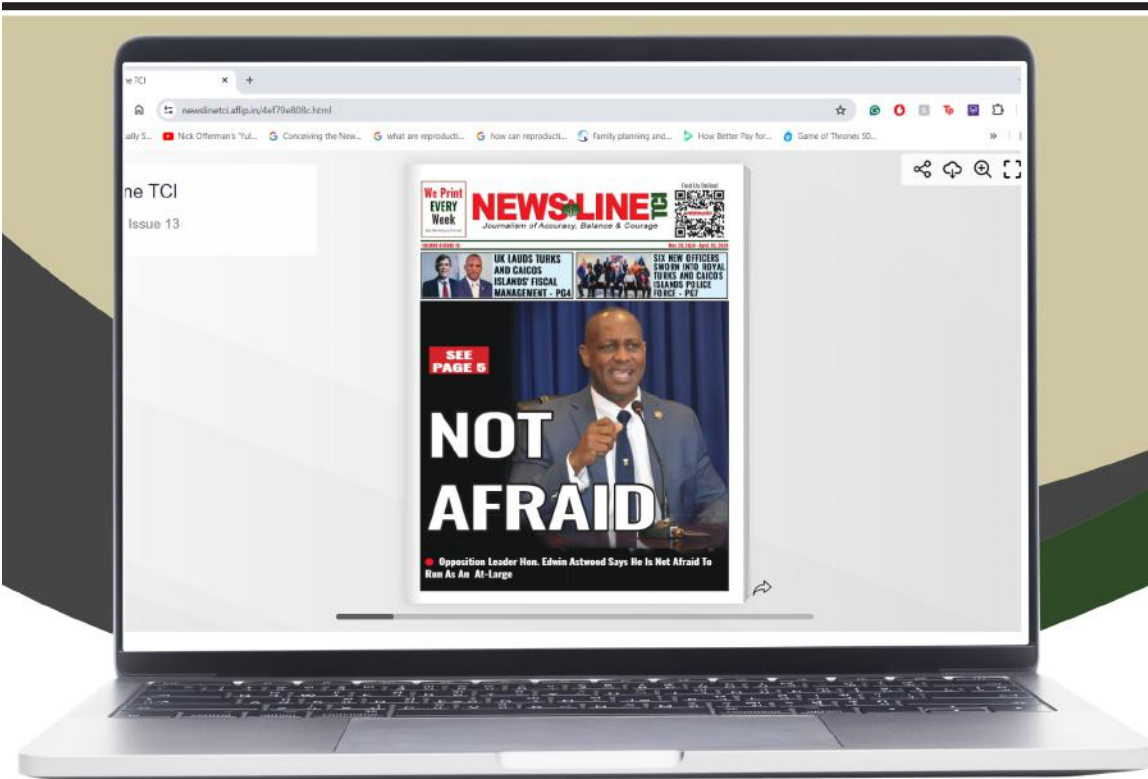
- **Informal Settlements Unit Says It Endeavors Not To Make Illegal Occupiers Of Crown Land Homeless**
- **Says Plans To Regularize Squatters Is The More Humane Thing To DO**

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SELENA GRANT'S QUEEN'S WELCOME

Selena Grant, the first runner-up at the Miss Universe Turk and Caicos recently, did the TCI proud when she was placed second at the Miss Global International Beauty Pageant in the Cayman Islands last week. She receives a queen' welcome at the Howard Hamilton International Airport in Providenciales. Also see Page 19 for more on Selena's visit.





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Government to Build By-pass Roads to Ease Leeward Highway Congestion



Minister of Physical Planning and Infrastructure Development Hon. Jamell Robinson

To address the ongoing traffic congestion on Providenciales' Leeward Highway, the government of the Turks and Caicos Islands has announced plans to create several bypass roads.

The initiative, led by the Deputy Premier and Minister of Physical Planning and Infrastructure Development, Hon. Jamell Robinson, is part of a broader strategy to improve the island's road network and reduce bottlenecks. The announcement was made during a press conference on October 16, 2024.

Minister Robinson outlined several key projects aimed at improving traffic flow and easing the daily burden on motorists using the Leeward Highway.

These initiatives, he said, are rooted in recommendations from a recent transportation study, which highlighted the need for alternate routes around key bottlenecks on the island.

New By-pass Roads and Connectivity

The government's plan includes creating new roads that connect major points in Providenciales, offering alternative routes for motorists. One of the significant projects is the connection from Aviation Drive to Cooper Jack. Aviation Drive, which was recently paved, now offers smooth traffic flow, and this new connection, according to the minister, will extend that ease of movement.

"Where you would have Aviation Drive, we are connecting that to Cooper Jack. So instead of coming up and going through the bottleneck areas, drivers will be able to bypass those points entirely," he explained.

Another alternative route highlighted is Academy Way, which connects to Aviation Drive. This road provides a useful detour for drivers looking to avoid the busy downtown traffic area, offering a smoother, less congested drive. Robinson emphasized that the development of these bypasses is essential to making the island's road system more functional and efficient.

Long Bay By-pass and Juba Sound Area Development

One of the most ambitious aspects of the government's road development plan is a proposed bypass connecting of Venetian Road – in the vicinity IGA Sports Complex - to Long Bay. This road, accord-

ing to Robinson, will feature multiple intersections that will allow drivers to connect back to the Leeward Highway, giving them options to avoid heavily trafficked areas. The new intersections will lead to roundabouts that either exist already or will be newly constructed as part of the project.

Robinson pointed out that this bypass not only serves as a traffic solution but also acts as a catalyst for future development in the Juba Sound area.

"There's a lot of undeveloped land in Juba Sound," said Robinson. "This road will encourage people who own land there to begin developing their properties. It's a beautiful ride across the Juba Sound area, and the new road infrastructure will make it much more accessible."

The four-lane road will be developed in phases and is expected to significantly reduce the traffic volume on Leeward Highway by providing motorists with multiple alternative routes to their destinations.

Millennium Highway Expansion

Another critical project outlined by Minister Robinson is the expansion of the Millennium Highway into a four-lane road. This project, described by Robinson as one of the "pride and joys" of the Public Works Department, is expected to ease traffic during the busy morning and evening rush hours, especially in the bottleneck area near the downtown roundabout and Bay Road.

The expansion will include the construction of two additional lanes, transforming the current two-lane road into a four-lane highway. The contract for this project has already been awarded, and while the exact start date is yet to be confirmed, negotiations with contractors have concluded, and the conceptual design has been finalized.

According to Robinson, the project will involve some disruption, as with all major roadworks. However, he reassured residents that the long-term benefits of the expanded highway would far outweigh the temporary inconveniences.

"There's no omelette without breaking a few eggs," said Robinson. "Once we get this going, it will significantly ease the traffic congestion that people face in the mornings and evenings."

The Millennium Highway expansion is part of a larger phased approach that will eventually see the four-lane road continue past the initial development phase. The new road will accommodate two buses, include bike lanes, sidewalks, streetlights, proper drainage, and vegetation.

Minister Robinson emphasized that the government's infrastructure projects are part of a long-term strategy to improve the road network across Providenciales. He pointed out that while these projects will involve temporary inconveniences, they are essential to ensuring that the island's road system can accommodate its growing population and the increasing volume of vehicles on the roads. **Not An Election Stunt**

The minister also took the opportunity to address any speculation that these projects were timed to coincide with the upcoming election. He clarified that the roadworks are part of the government's ongoing infrastructure development plan and will continue regardless of political timelines.

"We're just working," said Robinson. "These are the times when these projects are ready to go. And all things being considered, if we get another five-year term, we will continue to do this great work for the people of Turks and Caicos."

TURKS & CAICOS ISLANDS DIASPORA

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SCAN TO REGISTER

No Plans to Render Squatters Homeless

By Vivian Tyson, Editor-in-Chief



Member of the Informal Settlements Unit. From left - Nigel Barrow, Housing and Urban Planning Specialist; Tinielle Des Vignes-Hill, Media and Communications Specialist; Alisa Mayham Senior Administrative Officer; Justice Carlos Simons, Strategic Lead; Michelle Richardson, Logistic Lead; Tamara Forde, Leadership and Management; Perry Leon, Land Surveying Expert; Monic L. Harvey, Executive Administrator.; Gail Jeremie, Containment Specialist.

Justice Carlos Simons, Head of the Informal Settlements Unit (ISU), has sought to reassure the public that the ISU's mission is not to displace squatters or render them homeless, but rather to regularize their situation and work toward more sustainable communities.

In an open house held on October 22, 2024, at the ISU office in Laporte Plaza, Providenciales, Simons reiterated that the government's priority is to ensure that no one, particularly families, is displaced from Crown Land without support or alternatives.

This marks an ongoing effort by the ISU to clarify its mission and goals, as fears persist among many who occupy Crown Land that their homes could be demolished without warning. Simons emphasized that while illegal structures on government land will be removed, the ISU is taking a careful, compassionate approach to avoid unnecessary hardship, especially for families.

"One of our principal policies, particularly as far as Crown Land is concerned, is that no one should remain homeless," Simons stated. He added, "We are keen to ensure that no one, particularly families, are dislocated."

The ISU's vision, he explained, is to help create more sustainable communities across the Turks and Caicos Islands (TCI), not merely by removing illegal structures but by redesigning informal settlements in a way that allows for long-term growth and development.

Simons clarified that the ISU's approach to addressing informal settlements may involve creating housing standards that differ from those in other parts of Providenciales and the Turks and Caicos Islands. These standards may be less

stringent but will still provide a level of structure and safety that is absent in many informal settlements.

"We anticipate that we shall be engaged in redesigning the informal settlements to ensure that they comply with some standard. It might be a lesser standard than the other areas of Providenciales and the Turks and Caicos Islands, which comply with codes," he said.

However, Simons pointed out that unfinished houses or vacant structures on government land will be demolished. This step, he said, is necessary to prevent further illegal occupation and misuse of land. Simons also cautioned that the ISU could not offer the same guarantees to squatters on private land, as the unit's jurisdiction focuses on Crown Land.

Simons' remarks come at a time when concerns about informal settlements are growing in the TCI, particularly in Providenciales. The housing shortage has led many to settle on Crown Land or in informal areas, raising challenges for the government as it seeks to balance the need for housing with maintaining order and land use regulations.

"We will be doing our very best to ensure that persons are not unnecessarily dislocated and that the severe housing shortage in Providenciales is not made worse," Simons added, underscoring the delicate balance the ISU must maintain.

A Data-Driven Approach to Formalization
For her part, Michelle Richardson, Logistics Lead for the ISU, also spoke at the open house, explaining the ISU's ongoing efforts to collect data that will help guide its work. Richardson

revealed that the ISU is currently conducting a comprehensive Social Needs Assessment Survey. This survey is designed to collect demographic, social, economic, and geospatial data from the 50 informal settlements identified across the Turks and Caicos Islands. The information gathered will inform the ISU's decisions about how best to approach formalizing these areas.

"We will require data, scientific data, to drive this process," Richardson stated. "This survey is supposed to provide us not only demographic data in terms of who occupies the different structures, but also geospatial and topographic data."

The survey aims to give the ISU a clear understanding of who is living in the settlements, as well as the environmental and logistical challenges posed by these areas.

Richardson also highlighted the importance of collaboration between the ISU and other government agencies, such as the Crown Lands Unit and the Physical Planning Unit. She stressed that the ISU is not working in isolation and that it views its efforts as part of a broader government initiative to address housing and land use challenges.

"We do have a number of sister agencies... to ensure that this exercise is a success," she said. The ISU, Richardson explained, sees the media as a key partner in spreading accurate information and ensuring the public understands the unit's objectives. Richardson encouraged the media to help disseminate the ISU's message of regularization, sustainable community development, and minimal disruption for residents.

Will Israel also doom Kamala Harris

As the nation of Israel continues its rampage in West Asia both President Joe Biden and Vice-President Kamala Harris are unwavering in their support and in the issuance of blank cheques to the Israelis.

After almost one year of a brutal bloodletting in Gaza, which has killed in excess of 40,000 Palestinians, including close to 20,000 women and children, the Israeli Defense Force has continued a bombing programme that has already sent an estimated 7,000 Lebanese into the great beyond.

Public opinion in the US has turned against the Biden Administration as millions of Americans took to the streets in protest against the unwavering support offered to the Israelis as they engaged in a textbook case of ethnic cleansing. The moniker of Genocide Joe was attributed to President Biden after his glaring displays of political tone-deafness in the face of an atrocity which increasingly resembles genocide.

President Biden's unwavering support for Israel alienated large swathes of the coalition that normally supports the Democratic Party. Muslim Americans went on record stating that they would not forget the intransigence demonstrated by President Biden even as evidence mounted implicating Israel in numerous atrocities. The Biden Administration refused to exercise any of its leverage over Israel to ensure compliance with stated American foreign policy objectives.

President of Israel Benjamin Netanyahu made it abundantly clear that he intended to pursue his own objectives even if they conflicted with American foreign policy. President Biden was made to look like the junior partner in the American-Israeli coalition on several occasions. Some political analysts, however, posited that Biden and Netanyahu were on the same page, notwith-

standing the public sound bites suggesting divergence.

President Biden's political tone-deafness coupled with his lacklustre performance in the presidential debate against Donald Trump and clear evidence of age-induced mental fog eventually coalesced to produce a perfect storm of no confidence directed against him. A chorus of top-ranking Democrats, including Nancy Pelosi and Barack Obama, eventually were forced to do the needful and ask the president to withdraw from the presidential race.

Ironically, as Biden's political fortunes dwindled, Netanyahu's grasp on power in Israel became stronger. The shock and awe attack against Lebanon and the assassination of Hasan Nasrallah and many of Hezbollah's top generals have resulted in a surge in popularity of Netanyahu's Likud — National Liberal Movement in Israel. President Biden has been put out to pasture while Prime Minister Netanyahu has grown in stature in Israel.

The endorsement of the assassination of Hezbollah's top brass by President Biden and Vice-President Harris indicates that the Biden-Harris Administration is continuing with the policy of "fully, fully, fully" supporting Israel. As November 4 approaches, the number one question in the minds of many Democrats who have soured on Biden is whether a Harris Administration would be willing to chart a new course vis-a-vis the nation of Israel.


The ascendancy of Harris to the top of the Democratic Party's presidential ticket has been greeted with great enthusiasm by Democratic Party faithful and by the Global South. The prospects of a non-Caucasian with Afro-Caribbean and Asian roots seems to have electrified the Democratic base and derailed the Trump train that accord-

ing to the polls was cruising to an electoral victory in November.

The continued popularity of the Obamas on the American political landscape suggests that Americans of goodwill are still open to new possibilities in political leadership. Caucasian supremacy and colonial settler projects have run their course and are being challenged by the global majority. The nation of Israel is, therefore, destined to go the route of apartheid South Africa.

Harris can decide to be on the right side of history and come out openly against the atrocities being committed by Israel or she can continue to be an agent in support of Caucasian supremacy and the settler colonial project that is the State of Israel. If she can preside over the dissolution of the apartheid State of Israel then history will be very kind to her. If she chooses to follow her predecessor President Biden and go all in with Israel, then her demise will be as dramatic as President Biden's and the coming collapse of the State of Israel.

Lenrod Nzulu Baraka is the founder of Afro-Caribbean Spiritual Teaching Center and the author of *Piarco Affair*. rodneynimrod2@gmail.com.



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Vivian Tyson – Editorial Department

TCI Ranked in Top 10 Caribbean Islands in Condé Nast Traveler's Readers' Choice Awards

The world-famous Grace Bay Beach



The Turks and Caicos Islands has been celebrated as one of the Top Ten Islands in the Caribbean and The Atlantic, ranking seventh in the 2024 Condé Nast Traveler Readers' Choice Awards.

This honor was based on votes from a remarkable 575,048 readers who participated in this prestigious annual survey, reflecting the travel experiences they

recommend most.

The Readers' Choice Awards, renowned as the longest-running and most respected accolade in the travel industry, represent a benchmark of excellence, highlighting top destinations around the globe.

"We are honoured once again to be recognised as a top island within Condé Nast Traveler's Readers'

Choice Awards," said Hon. Josephine Connolly, Minister of Tourism for the Turks and Caicos Islands. "The Turks and Caicos Islands remain a staple on this prestigious list which speaks to the quality experiences our visitors enjoy. These votes are determined by them, which makes it all the more special."

Several Turks and Caicos resorts were also celebrated among the Top Resorts in the Bahamas, Bermuda, and The Atlantic. Sailrock came in at number 2, Beach Enclave at number 3, Amanyara also at number 3, Ambergris Cay at number 9, Seven Stars Resort at number 10, Wymara Resort and Villas at number 11, and Como Parrot Cay at number 14.

This latest accolade joins a list of honors for the Turks and Caicos Islands in 2024: TripAdvisor Best of the Best Reader's Choice Awards: Grace Bay- #1 Beach in the Caribbean and Best of the Best for 2024, #5 among the Top 25 Best of the Best Beaches in the world.

USA Today 10Best Reader's Choice Awards – Best Caribbean Beaches: Bambarra Beach (#2), Grace Bay Beach (#9)

World's 50 Best Beaches: Grace Bay- #1 in the Caribbean, #25 worldwide

World Travel Awards: Caribbean's Leading Beach Destination, Caribbean's Leading Romance Destination World MICE Awards: Caribbean's Best Incentive Destination (Providenciales).

The full list of 2024 Readers' Choice Awards is available on Condé Nast Traveler's website: Condé Nast Traveler.

Molo Hotels (Turks & Caicos) Ltd.

are embarking on our newest hotel development in the Turks and Caicos Islands, Providenciales, Stubbs Road. As we begin our journey, we are seeking to appoint a

Resort Executive General Manager and a Resort HR Director

to begin pre-opening preparations for these 3 unique properties that will open in succession to each other, commencing with Hotel Indigo followed by The Kimpton. The InterContinental is due for completion in late 2027. Set on Turks & Caicos' picturesque Grace Bay, visitors and locals alike will be presented with three distinct island respites:

- InterContinental Turks & Caicos: Boasting a coveted beachfront location, the all-suite property will be comprised of 59 spacious retreats offering panoramic ocean vistas
- Kimpton Turks & Caicos: The 192-room Kimpton Turks & Caicos will offer a sense of retreat at every step. In addition to its awe-inspiring shoreline setting, the property will feature two outdoor pools as well as a 2,500 square-foot spa and fitness center. An impressive six dining options will include a beachfront restaurant and bar, rooftop and poolside bars, juice bar as well as a ground floor restaurant and a lobby bar.
- Hotel Indigo Turks & Caicos: Just steps away from the InterContinental and Kimpton resorts, with 56 rooms will bring to life the Hotel Indigo brand's ethos as The World's Neighbourhood Hotel.

The successful candidates will have experience in luxury resort management in their respective areas. Interviews will take place on Island in Providenciales from Monday, 2nd December to Thursday, 5th December 2024. If you are interested in either role or would like to hear more about the roles via a Teams call, please email me or send your CV to Maxine Sutton at suttonm@molohotels.com. Salary and benefits are negotiable and will be commensurate with experience for both roles.

TCI, A Country Under Siege - Astwood



Former Deputy Premier and Minister of Immigration, Sean Astwood, has expressed grave concerns over the alarming rise in violent crime that is plaguing the Turks and Caicos Islands (TCI).

In a statement, Astwood described the current crime wave as unprecedented, with a record 40 murders committed so far this year—a devastating milestone for a nation once celebrated for its tranquillity and safety.

Astwood, who is running as an at-large candidate in the next general elections, did not mince words when describing the perilous situation in the country. He emphasized that TCI, long regarded as a peaceful Caribbean paradise, is now under siege from organized criminal elements, leaving the community in fear and shock.

“The peaceful paradise that the Turks and Caicos Islands is known for is under siege,” Astwood stated. “Our islands are facing a crime wave like nothing we have ever experienced before, and this is worrisome. As of today, we have recorded a staggering 40 murders this year—a new and devastating record for our beloved nation.”

Escalating Violence in the Turks and Caicos Islands

Astwood’s warning goes beyond statistics. He painted a grim picture of a society being torn apart by brutal acts of violence that are both unprecedented and horrific in nature. According to Astwood, recent years have seen a significant shift in the nature of crime on the islands, with incidents that include gang rapes, kidnappings, beheadings, and public executions in broad daylight.

“We are not just witnessing random acts of crime; we are seeing organized and brutal attacks that have never been part of our society,” he explained. “Over the last three and a half years, we are now facing gang rapes, kidnappings, beheadings, and broad daylight public executions—horrors we could not have imagined just several years ago.”

Astwood was adamant that this surge in violence cannot and must not be allowed to define the future of the Turks and Caicos Islands. He stressed the urgent need for comprehensive measures to tackle these rising threats to public

safety.

“This level of crime CANNOT be allowed to become the norm in the Turks and Caicos Islands,” Astwood declared. “Our once-peaceful shores are now being tainted by the blood of victims whose lives have been cut short by criminal elements that have no regard for human life or the law. These violent crimes are not only robbing families of their loved ones, but they are also robbing our nation of its sense of security and peace.”

Root Causes and Urgent Action Needed

Astwood attributed the rise in crime to a combination of internal failures and external influences. He pointed to the infiltration of organized criminal networks, fueled by illegal immigration, drug trafficking, and the proliferation of illegal firearms, as key contributors to the escalating violence.

“Our islands have been infiltrated by organized criminal networks, fueled by illegal immigration, drug trafficking, and the spread of illegal firearms,” Astwood explained. “These elements have taken root in our communities, and without urgent, decisive action, they will continue to spread their toxic influence.”

Despite the grim outlook, Astwood remains resolute in his belief that the Turks and Caicos Islands can regain control and reverse the trend of violence. He called for the government to take bold and immediate action to confront the criminal elements head-on, providing law enforcement with the necessary resources, tools, and support to dismantle these criminal networks.

A Call for Bold Leadership and Crime-Fighting Strategies

As a political candidate, Astwood has committed to pushing for strong crime-fighting strategies that prioritize the safety and security of TCI’s residents. He emphasized the need to empower the police force with modern forensic technologies, enhance border security to prevent illegal firearms from entering the islands, and establish a system of accountability that ensures that no criminal feels untouchable.

“With the support of you, the electorate, me along with my PDM colleagues will ensure restoring peace in our communities and make TCI safe again,” Astwood said. “Safe to live, safe to work, safe to send our children to school, and safe to socialize with our family and friends.”

Astwood made it clear that the Turks and Caicos Islands are at a critical turning point. Without immediate and decisive action, the future of the nation hangs in the balance. He urged the government and law enforcement to prioritize the safety and security of the people, ensuring that the wave of violence is curbed before it further destabilizes the country.

“I stand with the people of the Turks and Caicos Islands in demanding change, demanding action, and demanding justice,” Astwood declared. “Together, we can overcome this crisis and reclaim the peace that has always defined our nation. The time to act is now, and I will not rest until we have restored the Turks and Caicos Islands to the safe, beautiful paradise that we all know and love.”

Feeders Endangering Rock Iguana's Lives

Adult male Turks and Caicos Rock Iguana with internal puncture wound from bamboo skewer used in illegal feeding on Little Water Cay, National Heritage Day, 14 October 2024.
Photo: Jake Scott



FortisTCI, the energy provider in the Turks and Caicos Islands, is making significant strides in constructing the country's first utility-scale solar plus battery microgrid on its property in Kew, North Caicos. The project began last year and has reached a critical milestone with the installation of solar PV system now underway. This multimillion-dollar project marks FortisTCI's single largest investment in renewable energy. Once completed, the microgrid will have

a capacity of 1.2 megawatts and is expected to meet 30% of the energy needs for North and Middle Caicos, providing savings for customers over time as utility regulations evolve. The microgrid will be a ground-mounted solar energy system and the largest solar photovoltaic installation in the TCI.

The system will produce approximately 1.9 GWh of green energy per annum. This green production is equivalent to 132,684 US gallons

of fuel avoided or 1,400 metric tons of CO₂e avoided per annum. According to the project's timeline, solar PV installation is on track for completion this year. The battery energy storage system, which will support the solar PV system, is set for the completion early next year. The solar plus battery microgrid on Salt Cay will be launched next year. When completed, this system will provide 91% of the island's energy demand.

Introducing utility-scale microgrids is a significant step forward for the country, offering numerous benefits for consumers, the economy, and the environment. The continued integration of solar energy into the grid will reduce the reliance on fuel for electricity generation, lowering electricity costs over time as the regulatory framework adapts. Additionally, the shift towards low-carbon energy sources supports FortisTCI's commitment to reducing its carbon footprint.

FortisTCI President and CEO Ruth Forbes stated: "Our energy investment strategy is grounded in data from independent technical studies and focuses on achieving an optimal energy mix, with at least 33% renewable energy by 2040. The Twin Islands solar plus battery microgrid is a significant project in our energy transition, and we are proud of the progress made thus far.

As we advance this project, it is essential that renewable energy legislation advance in tandem to ensure alignment with the necessary utility-level investments to benefit customers and meet the country's renewable energy goals. The regulatory framework and supporting legislation governing the energy sector are crucial as they directly impact the scale, pace, and structure of renewable energy development in the Turks and Caicos Islands."

Four officers of the Environmental Health Department attend the 2024 Food and Drug Retail Food Protection Seminar

The Environmental Health Department is pleased to announce that four Officers attended the 2024 Food and Drug Retail Food Protection seminar of the Western Association of Food and Drug Officials from 24th- 27th September 2024. Environmental Health Officer Tiffany Murray and Port Health Officers Tinell Garland, Hattie Handfield and Rochelle Vanalstine-Nunes benefitted from the event, which was held in Sacramento, California. The event is held annually to assemble key officials from Environmental Health and Public Health Departments from western states including Hawaii, Arizona, Oregon, California, Colorado and Nevada.

The FDA Retail Food and Drug Seminar has been a forum for networking among participants and sharing challenges, successes and best practices regarding environmental health issues.

The seminar included state reports and panel discussions by member states and provided insight on areas of food safety monitoring and regulation, implementation of the FDA food

code, challenges in recruitment and retention of environmental health staff and the role of continuous professional development among environmental health professionals.

Notable areas of food safety discussed were:

- Unpermitted food vendors
- Regulation of cottage foods
- Creating meaningful metrics for food safety programs
- Shellfish distribution and controls
- The role of freeze-drying of foods in food safety
- Root cause analysis of hand washing violations
- Food poisoning
- Risk-based inspections and Environmental Assessments
- Technological advancements in food safety monitoring

In addition to the wide range of educational topics covered by state regulatory officials, the team interacted with State environmental

health managers and received vital information on food safety advancements, advanced inspection reporting and enhanced monitoring practices.

Honourable Shaun Malcolm, Minister of Health and Human Services, emphasised, "By equipping our officers with cutting-edge knowledge and tools, we are strengthening our ability to respond to food safety challenges more effectively. This training not only improves our inspection capabilities but ensures that we can protect public health more proactively."

The Environmental Health Department is committed to maintaining the highest standards of food safety and public health in the Turks and Caicos Islands by building capacity and ensuring our officers are kept up to date with public and environmental health advances.

For additional information, please visit the Ministry of Health and Human Services Facebook page on <https://www.facebook.com/tciministryofhealth/>.

FORTISTCI BEGINS CONSULTATION ON DRAFT RENEWABLE ENERGY AND RESOURCE PLANNING BILL



Fortis President and CEO Ruth Forbes

FortisTCI has conducted a comprehensive review of the provisions outlined in the draft 2023 Renewable Energy and Resource Planning Bill and a formal consultation process has commenced with the Turks and Caicos Islands Government (TCIG) and the Energy and Utilities Department on the Bill.

The consultation process on the draft Bill, which includes the energy provider FortisTCI, TCI Government, and independent consultant Mr. Abayomi

Carmichael, who was engaged by TCI Government to facilitate public consultation, started on Tuesday, October 8, 2024. This follows a kick-off meeting held on Wednesday, September 18, to discuss the consultation process. Additional meetings are planned over the next few months to continue formal discussions.

FortisTCI strongly supports renewable energy in the Turks and Caicos Islands. The Company believes the continued integration of renewable energy sources is necessary for the country's long-term sustainability, to diversify the energy mix, lower electricity rates over time, and reduce carbon emissions. This year alone, approximately 50% of the Company's capital budget was committed to clean and transitional energy projects, with ongoing commitments to invest in renewable energy and low-carbon energy sources.

The draft Renewable Energy and Resource Planning Bill, in its current form, aims to encourage the development and use of renewable energy in TCI. The Bill sets forth the licensing requirements for renewable energy producers and guidelines for connecting to the grid. It proposes an energy levy for solar energy producers, details licensing provisions for renewable energy installers, and addresses the roles of the Minister and the Energy and Utilities Commissioner. The Bill also includes a net billing arrangement, which enables solar energy producers to sell electricity back to the utility. Additionally, the Bill provides a framework for the development of an Integrated Resource Plan (IRP). The IRP is a strategic planning tool to forecast the country's future energy

demand and establishes the pathway and energy sources needed to meet those demands.

The current national roadmap for renewable energy integration, also called the Resilient National Energy Transition Strategy (RNETS), sets the country's target at 33% renewable energy by 2040.

FortisTCI, as the electricity supplier, has articulated its vision regarding provisions in the draft Bill to support a balanced, equitable and effective approach to renewable energy integration.

- **Role of the Public Supplier:** The Company's continued investment in renewable energy is fundamental to its obligation to serve, and to provide customers with least-cost, reliable electricity.

- **Grid Integrity and Safety:** The connection of independent solar systems to the grid should be done in a manner that preserves the integrity of the grid and ensures the continued safety of FortisTCI employees and the public. Proper protocols are vital to maintain a steady, safe and reliable power supply.

- **An Integrated Resource Planning process** should be established to determine the most cost-effective strategies for meeting customers' future energy needs. This process is key to guiding investment decisions and resource allocations.

- **Equitable Benefits for All Customers:** Those who do not install renewable energy systems should not cross-subsidize, that is, pay the associated costs, for those who do.

In addition, FortisTCI anticipates that incoming renewable energy legislation should follow sound regulatory principles and interact seamlessly with the Electricity Ordinance and related regulations.

2nd Annual Girls Empowerment Summit Set for November 09



The Girls Community Empowerment Summit, a transformative event dedicated to inspiring and equipping young girls with the skills and confidence to become strong leaders in their communities, is proud to announce its 2nd annual gathering on November 09, 2024, at the Edward Gartland Youth Center at 3pm.

This year's theme, "Girls Aim Higher, highlights the importance of cultivating leadership qualities, self-confidence, and resilience among girls aged 13 to 18.

The summit will feature keynote speakers,

interactive workshops, panel discussions, and networking opportunities designed to inspire attendees to embrace their potential and pursue their dreams.

Notable speakers will include accomplished role models from various fields, including entrepreneurs, motivational speakers, and activists who will share their personal journeys and insights into overcoming challenges.

"We believe that every girl has the power to change the world, and our summit provides them with the tools to do so," said Dr.

Cutella Talbot, Lead organizer of the Girls Empowerment Summit. "Through leadership training, mentoring, and fostering a supportive community, we aim to empower young girls to step into their full potential and become the leaders of tomorrow."

Key Highlights of the Summit Include:
Keynote Speakers: Renowned leaders and advocates who will share their experiences and strategies for overcoming obstacles.

Interactive Workshops: Hands-on sessions covering topics such as public speaking, entrepreneurship, and advocacy.

Panel Discussions: Engaging conversations featuring experts discussing the importance of female leadership and taking up space in the world.

Registration for the Girls Empowerment Summit is now open. Parents, educators, and community leaders are encouraged to help spread the word and empower the next generation of female leaders.

For more information about the summit, registration details, or sponsorship opportunities, please call 6492429897.

Are We Doing Enough?



An OpEd by Author and Motivational Speaker Sheba Wilson

The mental health crisis in the Turks and Caicos is not just a personal struggle—it is a societal issue that impacts every corner of our community.

We live in a time marked by loss, trauma, violent crimes taking the lives of our young men, families struggling with the weight of poverty, and a collective silence that keeps us from healing.

We see the signs of distress in our neighbors, in our workplaces, in our churches, yet we must ask: are we doing enough?

The Systemic Strain

The Department of Behavioral Science, tasked with supporting mental health and substance abuse, is overburdened and underfunded. Clinicians are stretched thin, resources are scarce, and there are simply not enough hands or hours in the day to meet the growing demand. These challenges raise serious questions:

☐ Are the current resources adequate for addressing our community's mental health needs?

☐ Is the government providing the necessary funding

and infrastructure to truly tackle this crisis?

☐ Are companies paying attention to the mental wellness of their employees, offering not just lip service but meaningful support?

A Shared Responsibility

But this isn't just the government's problem—it's ours. Corporations, nonprofits, the church, and every individual have a role to play.

Employers, are you paying enough attention to the warning signs when someone isn't okay? Are you fostering a work environment where mental health is a priority?

Nonprofits, are you effectively reaching those in need with accessible resources?

And church leaders, is your role limited to offering prayers, or are you also offering tangible support to the vulnerable?

Mental health isn't just a clinical issue—it is a community issue. When someone in your circle isn't okay, do you notice the signs?

Are you asking the right questions, creating safe spaces for people to speak their truth? More importantly,

when you know someone is struggling, what are you doing about it?

Signs Someone May Not Be Okay:

- Sudden withdrawal from social activities or isolation
- Consistent feelings of hopelessness or helplessness
- Drastic changes in mood or behavior
- Difficulty maintaining daily responsibilities
- Speaking about feelings of worthlessness or burdensomeness

These signs demand action. They are calls for help, often unspoken, but clear if we pay attention. When we notice, we must act. Reach out, offer support, provide resources.

What Can Be Done?

Government must commit to a mental health strategy that matches the scale of the crisis—more funding, more trained professionals, and accessible spaces for mental health care.

Employers should take responsibility for employee well-being by offering counseling services, mental health days, and ongoing support.

The Church has a responsibility beyond spiritual care—providing emotional and mental support through community engagement, partnerships with mental health professionals, and fostering a culture of openness.

What Can You Do?

As individuals, we need to educate ourselves, recognize the signs of distress in those around us, and be brave enough to ask uncomfortable questions. Friends, family members, and colleagues are often the first line of defense. If someone opens up to you, don't dismiss their feelings. Instead, guide them to the resources that can help—whether that's professional counseling, a support group, or just a trusted ear willing to listen.

And as for each of us personally, we have the responsibility to take care of ourselves. Seeking help is not a sign of weakness but a courageous step toward healing. Too often, people suffer in silence, feeling like there's no one to turn to. It's on all of us to change that narrative—to make seeking help the norm, not the exception.

The Call to Action

Are we doing enough? Perhaps not yet. But we can start today. Let's challenge the government to do more, ask corporations to prioritize mental wellness, and push our churches to offer more than just prayers. Let's make mental health a shared responsibility and take active steps to make sure no one suffers in silence. It's time to move from silence to support, from inaction to intervention. Our community depends on it.

#mentalhealthmatters #mentalhealth #mentalhealthawareness #arewedoining enough #action #doyourpart

Letter to the Editor

Hon. Robinson, Please Revisit Your Affordable Housing Policy

Dear Hon. Jamell Robinson,

I am writing to express my concerns regarding a recent video where you were informing the public that developers are now qualified to apply for crown land in the Turks and Caicos Islands.

While development can stimulate economic growth, it often prioritizes profit over the needs of our community.

Even though only Turks Islanders may be po-

sitioned to benefit, I cannot see how these policies serve the best interests of our people.

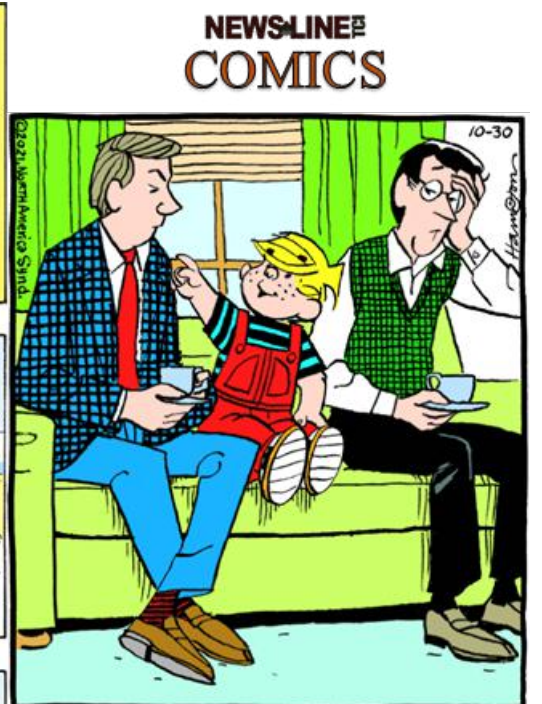
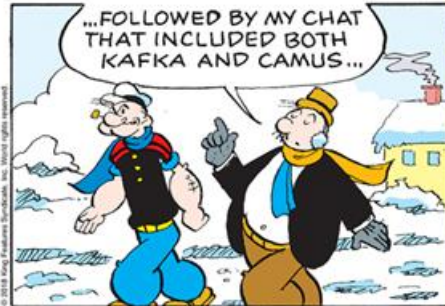
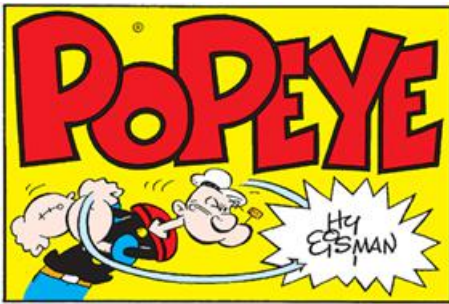
Local residents frequently feel sidelined in the decision-making process, leading to developments that do not reflect our values or address pressing issues such as affordable housing and environmental sustainability.

I urge you to consider policies that prioritize community-led initiatives and ensure that local voices are integral to land use decisions.

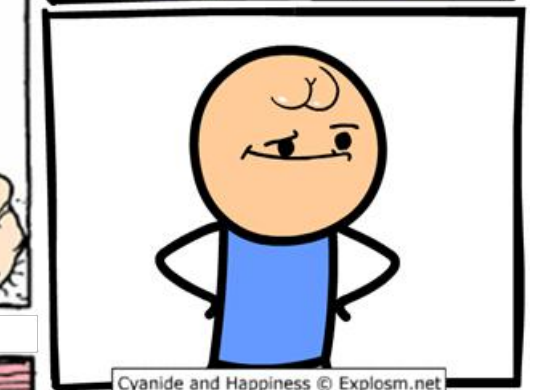
Why not partner with local bankers to work alongside our people or explore other financial routes to help our community? Such collaboration could foster sustainable development that truly benefits us all.

Without vision, our people will perish. Thank you for your attention to this matter. I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,
Hynetta Karen Forbes ED3 South Caicos PDM Candidate



"I'LL BE COMIN' BY YOUR HOUSE ON HALLOWEEN! MY DAD SAYS YOU HAVE SKELETONS IN YOUR CLOSET!"



Grand Turk *Lighthouse*

NEWSLINE
Journalism of Accuracy, Balance & Courage

The Grand Turk Lighthouse was built in London and assembled along the northern coast of Grand Turk in 1852. The beacon which stands at 60 feet and composes of cast iron was designed by Alexander Gordon.

In the early 19th century, many ships wrecked off the northern coast of Grand Turk, and it reached a point that shipping firms (primarily US and Bermudian) and the UK and US Governments insisted that a lighthouse be built to aid in navigation.

The Argand oil lamps and then Fresnel lens were managed by keepers for 120 years before becoming automated in 1972.

This is the only lighthouse in the Turks and Caicos Islands.

This landmark is a historic site protected by the Turks and Caicos National Trust.

GRAND TURK ISLANDS

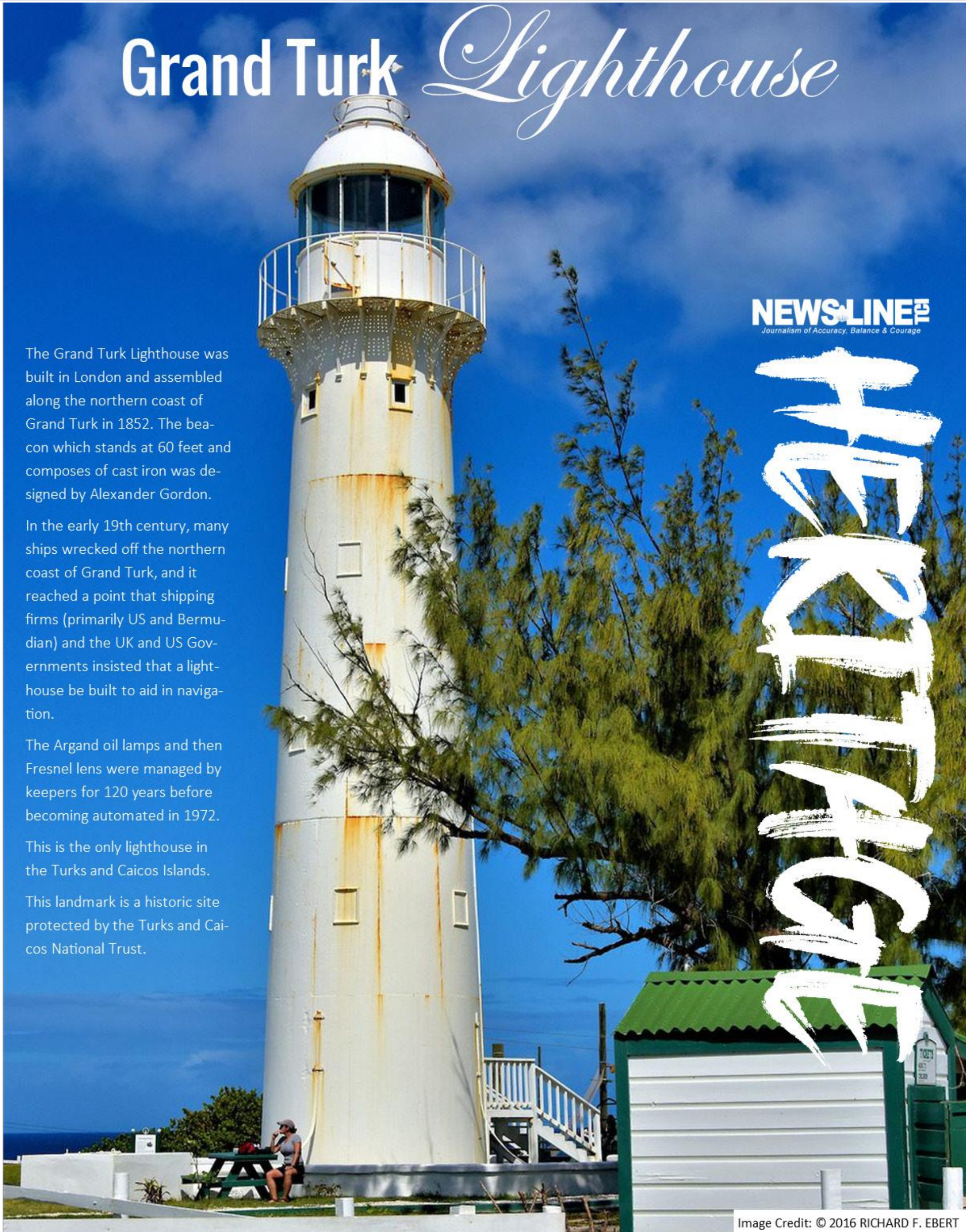


Image Credit: © 2016 RICHARD F. EBERT

\$2.1 Million Leeward Highway Phase 1 Repairs to Begin on November 1, 2024

By Vivian Tyon



Deputy Premier and Minister of Physical Planning and Infrastructure Development Hon. Jamell Robinson

The Turks and Caicos Islands government has announced the long-awaited repairs to the Leeward Highway.

Minister of Physical Planning and Infrastructure Development, Hon. Jamell Robinson, confirmed that Phase 1 of the highway's repair work, a \$2.1 million project, will begin on November 1, 2024. This announcement was made during a press conference held on October 16, 2024, in Providenciales.

This phase of the project will address the section of the highway between Suzie Turn and the Scotia Bank intersection. Both the eastbound and westbound lanes are slated to be repaired as part of the initiative, which aims to improve one of the island's most deteriorated roadways. While these improvements are anticipated to cause significant traffic disruptions, the minister emphasized the necessity of the project and asked for public understanding.

Importance of the Repairs

The Leeward Highway is one of the busiest and most vital roadways in Providenciales, used daily by thousands of motorists. Years of wear and tear, compounded by the chal-

lenges posed by heavy traffic and weather, have led to extensive damage, especially in certain sections of the road. Cracks, potholes, and uneven surfaces at certain sections of the highway have made driving conditions difficult, and motorists have frequently complained about the hazards posed by those sections.

Minister Robinson highlighted the urgent need for these repairs, noting that the government had carefully evaluated the entirety of the highway to determine which sections required immediate attention. The stretch between Suzie Turn and Scotiabank was identified as a priority due to the severity of the damage.

"Clearly, motorists across Providenciales know the concerns we have with the Leeward Highway," the minister stated. "Phase 1, which is from Suzie Turn to Scotia Bank intersection, eastbound and westbound, is due to commence November 1st. Now, the roadway work will cause some disruption, maybe even significant disruption, but it is necessary. Either we allow it to continue to deteriorate and face increasing complaints about

potholes, or we address the issue now with some temporary inconvenience," he said.

Expected Disruptions

Minister Robinson acknowledged the frustrations that residents and motorists will likely face during the repair work, particularly because the project will impact all four lanes of traffic around the intersection. However, he stressed that this short-term disruption is essential for the long-term benefit of the community.

The government is already planning to communicate extensively with the public through notices and updates from the Public Works Department, ensuring that residents are informed about detours, road closures, and changes to traffic patterns.

"We know it's going to be inconvenient for many of you, and we are sorry in advance. But these infrastructure upgrades are critical. We must either let it deteriorate further or give you a bit of disruption now so we can have improvements," the minister added.

The Leeward Highway project is part of a larger effort to revamp the road infrastructure across Providenciales and the wider Turks and Caicos Islands, improving safety, reducing long-term maintenance costs, and enhancing the overall driving experience for residents and tourists alike.

Additional Infrastructure Projects

In addition to the Leeward Highway repairs, Minister Robinson provided updates on several other critical capital projects that the government is undertaking. Among these is the long-awaited construction of a fire hall at the JAGS McCartney International Airport. Tenders for the project have been released, and work is expected to begin soon.

Similarly, the construction of a community center in Bottle Creek, North Caicos is also advancing. This project aims to provide a much-needed space for social gatherings, community activities, and events.

Other key projects mentioned by the minister include the second phase of the Norman B. Saunders International Airport development, which primarily focuses on expanding and upgrading the airport's parking lot. Furthermore, the redevelopment of Regatta Village and improvements to the South Caicos Sports Field are moving forward, with tenders closed and the review process underway.

The refurbishment of the Bambarra and Horse Stable beaches in Middle Caicos is also under review as part of the government's commitment to enhancing public recreational spaces and tourism infrastructure.

Minister Robinson reiterated that these projects represent a significant investment in the country's future and reflect the government's commitment to addressing critical infrastructure needs.

Life Line

FEATURED CHURCH

THE COMMUNITY FELLOWSHIP CENTRE



This week in Newsline Featured Church, we shine the spotlight on the Community Fellowship Centre church, located along the Leeward Highway in Providenciales. The Community Fellowship Centre, which also operates a school – the Community Christian Academy – is led by Pastor Bradley Handfield, who is also a trained teacher. Community Fellowship Centre conducts a series of engagements during the course of each week, starting with divine service on Sunday at 9a.m. On Thursday between 5a.m. and 6a.m. is early morning prayer meeting. Between Monday and Friday at 12noon is midday prayer meeting. Monday to Friday between 7p.m. and 9pm.m, is Bible study, while Youth Meeting is held on Friday.

LIFE LINE CHURCH DIRECTORY

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Bible Study Ministries, Grand Turk
Tel:946-1866

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

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

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

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

Roman Catholic Church,
Providenciales, Tel: 941-5136

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

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

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

Methodist Church,
Grand Turk Tel:946-2352

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Editor's Note: If your Ministry is not listed and/or you would like for it to be part of the NEWSLINETCI Church Diary, contact us at:contact@newslinetci.com

More Photo Highlights of the Villas At Blue Mountain Groundbreaking

The Hartling Group in collaboration with international real estate agency Sotheby's International recently broke ground for the Villas at Blue Mountain, Providenciales. The event was attended by movers and shakers of the TCI Community, including Premier Hon. Washington Misick, members of his cabinet, backbenchers and host of business leaders. NewslineTCI was there to cover the event, and the following are more photo highlights.







Natural Hair Care Tips

Use A Sulfate-Free Shampoo

You may find that many shampoos contain chemicals such as ammonium lauryl sulfate, ammonium laureth sulfate, or sodium lauryl sulfate. And they tend to cause dryness and breakage for your natural hair. It's recommended that you use a sulfate-free shampoo (and conditioner) weekly to add more moisture to your hair, while also being more gentler to your scalp. You can use the Jamaican Black Castor Oil shampoo with shea butter and apple cider vinegar, which strengthens and restores your kinky curls.

Use Protective Styles

Just like its name implies, protective styles help prevent your hair from breakage, shedding, or damage. Protective afro hairstyles you can use include wearing wigs, weaves, buns, bantu knots, braids, or twists. In cases where you make braids or twists, ensure that your hairstylist eases up on your edges too in order to reduce tension on your scalp.

Oiling Your Hair Frequently

Naturally, kinky hair needs an oil, lots of it. Oils should be part of your everyday natural routine. Oils play a key role in maintaining and ensuring that your natural hair stays healthy.

Trim Your Hair Regularly

One of your bad habits would probably be, allowing your hair to grow with all its split ends. Part of the natural hair journey is having to trim your split ends regularly. Split ends indicate hair damage and if left unattended to will continue splitting and damage the healthiness of your hair.

Sleep With A Satin Scarf Or Bonnet

Never go to bed without a satin scarf or bonnet on. It keeps your hair from tangling and breaking while you sleep. Also, invest in a smooth satin or silk pillowcase.



Miss One Nation TCI Selena Grant Receives Queen's Welcome After First Runner-Up Exploits at Miss Global International

Selena Grant, who was voted First Runner-Up at the recently-held Mills Global International is flanked by pageant organiser Alicia Swann (left) and Keisha Delancy (right)



Selena Grant, Miss One Nation TCI 2024, has made history by placing as First Runner-Up at the Miss Global International 2024 Pageant, staged in the Cayman Islands.

This remarkable achievement marks a new chapter for the Turks and Caicos Islands, as no local contestant has secured a top international ranking since Carmelita Ariza reached the top 10 at Miss Universe 1987 in Singapore.

Previous titleholders have earned accolades in individual categories such as Best Swimsuit and Ms. Congeniality at competitions like Miss Earth and Miss Universe, but Ms. Grant's success on a global stage is a first in decades for the islands. In her new crown and sash, Ms. Grant was warmly welcomed on October 17th, 2024, at the Howard Hamilton International Airport by a throng of supporters, including family members, One Nation Director – Alicia Swann, whose company assisted in the planning.

The celebration was organized by Keisha L. Delancy, CEO and Creative Director of Destination Turks and Caicos LTD in collaboration with Finbar Grant & Associates. In addition to HHIA, the organizers also received the support of Prestigious VIP, Claudine Ewing (Bambarra), Renau Destine Photography, SkyPass Fast Track, and We Funk Junkanoo courtesy of Experience Turks and Caicos. This impressive ensemble ensured the welcome was a spectacular event.

Several former Miss Turks and Caicos titleholders were also in attendance, adding to the grandeur of the moment. Among them was Wife of The Premier Mrs. Delthia Russell Missick, who presented Ms. Grant with a stunning floral arrangement, symbolizing the pride and joy of the nation.

"I was truly surprised," shared Ms. Grant. "I feel incredibly grateful and honored to receive such overwhelming love and support from my country. Bringing this title home for the Turks and Caicos and showcasing our islands to the world is an indescribable feeling."

Ms. Grant's family members, equally proud, joined the celebration with balloons, a custom-made welcome sign made possible by Bambarra, and their own floral gifts. Meanwhile Ms. Grant's siblings and mother, Lakisha Grant, joined via video call, as numerous onlookers and HHIA staff gathered to share in the joyous occasion, offering hugs and well wishes. The homecoming event also featured appearances by Honourable E.J. Saunders, Drexwell Seymour, and Director of Miss One Nation TCI, Ms. Alicia Swann.

The excitement concluded with a private luncheon at the luxurious Wymara Resort, attended by Ms. Grant's family, loved ones, and sponsors. Ms. Grant later that evening made an appearance at the Island Fish Fry where she danced

and took pictures with islanders and travelers. Reflecting on her experience, Ms. Grant expressed her intention to maintain strong connections with her fellow pageant contestants. "This competition was unique in how it established a deep bond between us. We've created a sisterhood, and I've already invited them to visit Turks and Caicos, just as they've invited me to their countries."

Looking ahead, the beauty queen plans to take a step back from competitions to focus on her platform, which centers on empowering youth through education, community service and creative arts. She is in the process of starting her own non-profit "Barbra's Lighthouse", affectionately named after her late Grandmother Barbra Francis. The project will focus on a number of youth issues and feature a board of young leaders. Ms. Grant is particularly passionate about integrating technology into schools across the Turks and Caicos Islands, a mission she aims to advance in the coming months.

Selena Grant worked closely with pageant coach and stylist Romell Phillips as well as Crissy Pratt, who also served as her coach.

Noah's Ark was listed as Grant's main sponsor. She was also sponsored by PS O'Brien Consulting, Brand Designer Kari Hamilton, who created the national costume, Robert Greenwood from Christie's Realty.

Sandals/Jamaica Host Largest Travel Advisor Group in the Caribbean



Andrew Holness (second right), Prime Minister of Jamaica; Jamaica Minister of Tourism the Hon. Edmund Bartlett (right); SRI Executive Chairman Adam Stewart (second left); and Gary C. Sadler (left), shared the morning with local Jamaican entertainers and artisans just outside the Montego Bay Convention Center.



Travel Leaders' Stephen McGillivray addresses the crowd during the Jamaica Love Showcase.

Family-owned and operated Sandals Resorts, the Caribbean's most awarded luxury all-inclusive resort company, made an impressive case for its home country of Jamaica recently, welcoming nearly 1,000 attendees to its Jamaica Love Showcase, where Andrew Holness, Prime Minister of Jamaica applauded the resort brand on its far-reaching impact, "Sandals represents the best example of Jamaica fulfilling its potential." The prime minister in his keynote address also announced that new airports, roadways and other infrastructure will better connect the island for visitors. The Jamaica Love Showcase is part of a week-long event from October 13-20 aptly named the

"Sandals Jamaica Love Tour 2024," and is immersing travel advisors and partners into the celebrated island's beauty, safety and limitless opportunity, with a diverse itinerary that includes comprehensive Sandals Resorts and Beaches® Resorts tours, Island Routes excursions, Sandals Foundation activities, and exclusive networking events.

The Jamaica Love Showcase Designed to demonstrate the crucial connections between public and private sectors that create the foundation for successful tourism, the unprecedented Jamaica Love Showcase welcomed hospitality executives, international media and more than 700 travel advisors to the Montego Bay Convention

Center on October 16th.

A vendor market of local artisans, music by the Silver Birds steel drum orchestra, and culinary displays reflecting signature dining experiences from across the resort portfolio set the tone for the Jamaica-centric event. Speakers from the highest echelons of government took the stage including Hon. Prime Minister Holness, US Ambassador to Jamaica N. Nick Perry, and Jamaica Minister of Tourism the Hon. Edmund Bartlett. Strategic partners, including executives from American Airlines, Air Canada Vacations, Travel Leaders, the Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association (CHTA), the American Society of Travel Advisors (ASTA), and the Association of Canadian Travel Agencies (ACTA), also addressed the audience with compelling insights and a bright path forward for the destination. Adding to a dynamic lineup of speakers, two resonating thought leadership panels highlighted innovations in hospitality, sustainability, continued team member engagement and more.

"Jamaica's tourism is everybody's business, an intertwined ecosystem that brings farmers and taxicab drivers, travel advisors and prime ministers, fishers and pilots together as one," said Sandals Resorts Executive Chairman Adam Stewart, who also serves as an Ambassador/Special Investment Envoy for Tourism for Jamaica.

"The story of Sandals is the story of Jamaica... to always, together, work toward better. That is at the heart of our superbrand and forged in our homegrown values of hard work, exceeding expectations and trust in those who lift you up, who believe in you. That is the lasting legacy of my father, the late Gordon "Butch" Stewart, who taught me to cherish relationships with those who care as much as you do, who share your dreams of better and who will complement your gifts with their own," said Stewart.

A Lasting Relationship with Travel Advisors Opening remarks were delivered by Gary C. Sadler, OD, Executive Vice President of Sales & Industry Relations at Unique Vacations, Inc. (UVI), an affiliate of the worldwide representative of Sandals Resorts and Beaches Resorts, who spoke about the importance of travel advisors in the brand's success.

"Travel advisors are the single most effective tool in changing hearts and minds and most importantly, moving the needle," said Sadler. "We know that informed advisors, prepared with firsthand knowledge and experience, are the ambassadors for this moment. They have the trust of their clients and this event was designed to empower them further, giving them the tools they need to promote Sandals Resorts and Beaches Resorts in Jamaica confidently and passionately."

Following a group Reading Road Trip experience earlier in the week, Chairman's Royal Club travel advisors attending the Jamaica Love Tour surprised their hosts with an \$81,000 USD donation to the Sandals Foundation on the Jamaica Love Showcase stage.

Accuracy and Advocacy

One of the key themes woven throughout the conference was aligning perception with reality when it comes to the success of Jamaica and the safety of visitors in Jamaica.



An array of local entertainers, including Jamaican singer-songwriter Christopher Martin, energized the crowd with performances and special surprises throughout the showcase.

“There is only one Jamaica,” said Stewart. “Jamaica is having a moment. It’s an extraordinary moment. Our unemployment is at 4.5% right now. Our debt to GDP [ratio] has been cut in half...Our national reserves are 3x higher than they were while I was growing up. The Jamaica brand has never been bigger. Jamaica is a rockstar Caribbean Island and has never hit harder.”

During his address, Hon. Prime Minister Holness ensured that his administration is working hard to reinforce that Jamaica’s brand is a safe, secure, sustainable, and seamless destination.

“There are so many things that are happening in Jamaica that have not yet made it into the consciousness of the world, so that Jamaica is properly placed and positioned in the minds of our tourists, visitors, and people who would want to do business with us,” said Hon. Prime

Minister Holness. “Our friends in the tourism and travel industry who are here are very important partners in us achieving our goals. It’s important that when advisors bring visitors to Jamaica, it’s clear they are not just helping the hotels. The dollar of that visitor is making its way into the pocket of a family that will benefit, grow and develop.”

Major Tourism Infrastructure Unveiled
Received with great fanfare, Hon. Prime Minister Holness also announced the incredible investment the destination is making in the island’s infrastructure, most notably with a new international airport in Negril, a new terminal at Sangster International Airport in Montego Bay, improvements to the Norman Manley International Airport in Kingston, and building new roads on the southeastern coast to better

connect the island, which will create an entirely new dimension of tourism in Jamaica.

Investment in Jamaica is Investment in the Future Summarizing the impact of the day, Jamaica Minister of Tourism Hon. Edmund Bartlett was frank.

“This is perhaps the single most immersive tourism, thought leadership summit, that Jamaica has ever had. And it is important that it happens now. And it is important that it is happening to the number one indigenous product of the Caribbean, Sandals Resorts International,” Minister Bartlett.

“I felt what it means to regenerate, to reimagine, to reposition, to reconcile, and to create, in fact, the renaissance, that will move Sandals and Jamaica tourism to the next level.”

Since Sandals Montego Bay opened its doors in 1981, the brand has continued to invest in Jamaica, developing programmes such as the Sandals Corporate University to uplift and prepare rising hospitality talent, to the Sandals Foundation, the brand’s philanthropic partner aimed at improving the lives of Caribbean communities where the brand operates — and, most importantly, Sandals’ expansive development and continued innovation in the hospitality space that keeps Jamaica one of the most visited destinations in the world.

“Always, we move toward better,” said Stewart. “This is Sandals 2.0 – a new chapter built on innovation, deeper connectivity, and the same commitment to excellence that’s always set us apart. Together, with our incredible partners and the community that inspires us, we’re continuing to build Brand Jamaica.

“This gathering is a testament to the connectivity between our organization, government and our travel partners in the private sector, demonstrating that together, we can affect significant and meaningful change in our beloved destination, recognizing Jamaica for its beauty, convenient accessibility, affordability, safety and endless possibilities. Jamaica is here and ready for you now.”



Sandals Resorts’ Chief Experience Officer Jessica Shannon led discussions on the state and future of sustainability in the Caribbean, the company’s commitment to investing in its people, and the wider impact of its role in the island’s Linkages Council.

How exercise can help in breast cancer treatment



Regular exercise is an important part of being as healthy as you can be. In fact, being physically active can reduce your risk of developing breast cancer.

If you have been diagnosed with breast cancer, exercise can reduce the risk of a recurrence of the disease, and also help ease the treatment's troubling side effects, such as fatigue, pain, depression, and lymphedema.

Experts say that exercise is safe during and after all breast cancer treatments, as long as you take any needed precautions and keep the intensity low.

Breast medical oncologist Dr Jennifer Griggs says exercise improves mood, energy level, and overall health during breast cancer treatment. "Many people believe that during treatment for breast cancer you should take it easy.

That is obviously true, because you do not want to exert your energy in doing things that are not important. However, being inactive is not going to help you. You will lose muscle mass, strength and flexibility. Stay as active as you can, within the limits of your energy level," Griggs said.

She says exercise can help you reduce fatigue, especially during treatment with chemotherapy and after surgery, when a patient's energy is depleted. In addition, exercising in natural light, she said, is recommended. "You will find that some days you are more tired than others, so you have to be kind to yourself and to your body," she said.

The key, she said, is that you do not have to exercise all at once. You can break it up into 10-minute segments and fit it into your daily life. "If you have been inactive before breast cancer, now is a great time to start. You should stay as active as you can during treatment. Beneficial exercises you can do include aerobic and flexibility exercises, strength training, and balance exercise," Griggs said.

Exercise can help you maintain or build muscle mass and be stronger. As most people age, they tend to lose muscle and gain fat. Chemotherapy and hormonal therapy medicines can suddenly throw you into early menopause. The decrease in oestrogen that comes with menopause is linked to decreased muscle mass. Strength training exercises can help make sure you increase lean muscle mass and reduce body fat.

Exercise can help improve mobility. Scar tissue that forms after breast cancer surgery, reconstruction, or radiation can make your arm and shoulder muscles feel tight. If

you do not use your arm and shoulder as much after treatment, the muscles in those areas also can lose flexibility. Over time, careful stretching exercises can improve the range of motion in the arm and shoulder.

For many people, the hardest part of exercising is sticking to a steady routine. Once the initial enthusiasm wears off, you may find yourself making excuses not to exercise. However, Griggs recommends that even after surgery, people should continue to exercise.

"How soon you start, what type and how much physical activity you do after surgery will depend on the type of surgery you have had, your recovery, and your fitness level before your surgery.

Many people feel well enough to go for a short walk a few days after surgery, but others need longer to rest. Build your physical activity levels up gradually, and remember, it may take time to return to the level of activity you were doing before your surgery," Griggs cautioned.

Chemotherapy affects people in different ways. Some people have very few side effects and are able to continue with their usual activities. Others feel extremely tired or unwell and unable to carry on as usual. This can be frustrating if you want to be physically active.

There will be times when you do feel able to do some type of activity. Gentle exercise, such as walking, can boost your energy, help make you feel less tired, and improve your mood. It may be possible to continue with other types of physical activity, such as yoga.

Talk to your doctor about any activities you would like to do while you are having treatment. They can tell you which of them are suitable.

Why Do We Sneeze?



Some sneezes are meant to clear irritants from our nasal passages. However, some people sneeze for more unusual reasons.

We all know the feeling: It usually starts with a peculiar tickle in your nose, quickly building to an explosive and satisfying blast out of your mouth and nose. But why do we sneeze?

As it turns out, sneezing is your body's way of getting rid of visible or microscopic allergens, viruses, and irritants, says Matthew Purkey, MD, an ear, nose, and throat doctor practicing in Hoffman Estates, Illinois for Duly Health and Care.

"When our upper airway, especially our nose, senses a foreign substance that is potentially harmful, we sneeze in response to expel the substance back out," he tells Health.

So sneezing is a protective mechanism. But how come it can feel so satisfying, and why do sneezes often happen in a row? And is there any way to

prevent a full-blown sneeze when you sense one is coming? Here's what you need to know.

What happens when we sneeze?

A sneeze starts when an irritant enters your nose, says Dr. Purkey. There, the invader becomes entangled in nose hair, stimulating nerve endings, which sends a message to a part of the brain stem called the medulla. The medulla controls important yet involuntary functions like breathing, digestion, and heart rate.

Once the nerve signals reach the medulla, the brain initiates a physical response that involves closing your eyes, taking a deep breath, relaxing the muscles in your throat, and then forcing air, saliva, and mucus out your nose and mouth—all in a few seconds.

All sneezes begin and end the same way, but everyone has their own signature sneeze; a person's sneeze is almost as unique as their voice. Why? It

has to do with individual differences in lung capacity and the unique structure of your nose, throat, and mouth, Hascalovici says.

What causes sneezing?

Sneezes happen for many reasons—and not all of them make sense. In general, when we feel a tickle in our nose it's likely due to a foreign body entering our sinuses. According to the National Library of Medicine, common triggers for sneezing include, environmental irritants, like smoke, perfumes, and air pollution; allergies, caused by pet dander, pollen, or dust mites; infections like the common cold, COVID-19, and the flu; dry air, which irritates mucous membranes in the nose; peppers—including black pepper and chilli pepper—which contain a substance called piperine that irritates nasal passages. (It's also what gives pepper its pungent taste.)

Beyond the sneeze triggers listed above, there are more peculiar ones, too. Some people sneeze after sex, according to the Sexual Medicine Society of North America.

While it's not entirely known why this happens, it may be because both sneezing and sexual arousal are controlled by the autonomic nervous system, which controls involuntary reactions, per the National Library of Medicine.

Additionally, in a fairly rare phenomenon coined "snatiation"—a combo of "sneeze" and "satiating"—some people sneeze after a large meal, Heather Moday, MD, an immunologist in private practice in Maine, tells Health.

People can also sneeze when suddenly exposed to bright light or while looking directly at the sun. Called photic sneeze reflex, this reaction is somewhat of a mystery. Research does indicate that it is at least partially genetic, Jacob Hascalovici, MD, a neuroscientist and chief medical officer at digital health care platform Clearing, tells Health.

- Health.com

Liam Payne's family await post-mortem reports to take body home from Argentina



Liam Payne

Following the One Direction star's tragic death in Buenos Aires on October 16, at age 31, Argentinian newspaper Clarín, claims his body could remain in Argentina for 10 to 15 days. Once toxicological tests have been performed, Payne's remains will be available to his family for return to the UK.

The British Embassy said: "We are supporting Liam Payne's family and are in contact with local authorities." The Strip That Down singer died from "multiple traumas" that caused "internal and external bleeding". The singer plunged from a third-floor balcony at the Casa

Sur Hotel in Buenos Aires, and preliminary autopsy findings reported by the Daily Mirror newspaper found the result was consistent with his 10-metre fall.

Toxicological and anatomical-pathological studies of blood and urine will determine any traces of drugs.

Police found a bottle of whiskey, a lighter, and a white powder in the room, as well as medications, including clonazepam, which is used to treat epilepsy, panic disorders or involuntary muscle spasms, and energy pills.

A notebook and Payne's passport were seized and handed over to investigators, as well as a phone that may have

belonged to the former boy band member and will be checked for messages.

Police described "total disorder" in the room, with various things broken. They earlier said they had been called to reports of an "aggressive man who could be under the influence of drugs or alcohol".

Emergency services previously said Payne had died instantly. Buenos Aires emergency services chief Alberto Crescenti told The Sun: "Our role was to head there quickly, give medical attention, and try to resuscitate him, but his injuries were incompatible with life.

"Based on what the team saw, there was apparently a cranial fracture and extremely serious injuries that led to his immediate death."

Audio from the two calls made by the hotel's head of reception to emergency services also circulated online, with the employee admitting that staff were "worried" a guest would put their life at risk.

In the first call, he said: "We have a guest drunk with drugs and alcohol. When he [them, gender not clear in conversation] is conscious, he is breaking everything in the room..."

"We have a guest who is destroying everything in his room. We need someone to come."

After the line went dead, he called back and said: "We need you to send someone urgently because I don't know if the guest's life is in danger."

"They must be in a room that has a balcony. And, well, we're a little bit worried he'll do something, that he'll put his life at risk."

Payne's body was found in the hotel's inner courtyard at around 5 p.m. local time.

TMZ.com reported that witnesses stated Payne had been "acting erratic" in the lobby of the hotel, with the outlet publishing statements suggesting the singer had smashed his laptop and had to be taken back to his room.

'Warriors' album features Lauryn Hill, Shenseea, Busta Rhymes



Lauryn Hill

The perilous journey home – it's a tale as old as The Iliad. Now it's a dynamic concept album starring hip-hop legends, Broadway belters and, of all things, the New York subway system.

Warriors, built on the 1979 cult classic movie, is an inventive song cycle by Hamilton mastermind Lin-Manuel Miranda and Pulitzer finalist Eisa Davis, an album that has deployed musical talent brilliantly to tell another story of going home, at the intersection of musical theatre

and popular music.

The movie – born from a book by Sol Yurick – follows the street gang the Warriors as they make their way from The Bronx to their home turf of Coney Island in Brooklyn while being hunted by rivals gangs and cops. The subway is almost a character, the main mode of transport, acting as the city's artery.

Miranda and Davis have kept the bones of the story but made strategic changes in genders, like making the Warriors all women, played by theatre vets Kenita Miller, Sasha Hutchings, Phillipa Soo, Aneesa Folds, Amber Gray, Gisel Jiménez, Jasmine Cephas Jones and Julia Harriman. They all give it an extra buzz, beautifully emotional in just a few words.

Surrounding them is an astonishing list of artistes playing various parts – Lauryn Hill, Nas, Busta Rhymes, Billy Porter, Ghostface Killah, RZA, Marc Anthony, Colman Domingo, Cam'ron, Shenseea and Joshua Henry, among them. In some inspired casting, James Remar and David Patrick Kelly – both veterans of the movie – are recast here as cops.

"This is the sound of something being born," Chris Rivers thrillingly raps at the top of the album and he has the honour of representing The Bronx. Don't you want to hear Nas repping Queens and Busta Rhymes as Brooklyn? The album is worth streaming alone just for that. Or for the chance to hear Hill sing "Can you dig it?" Miranda and Davis offer a musical journey along

with their narrative one – the sounds of salsa, ska, agro-rock, boy band, pop, old-school rap and even K-pop. Spanish and Korean mixes with the English. It's a diverse buffet, reflecting New York.

Some of the 26 tracks are fragments, some hushed, others fully formed and some hysterical, as with We Got You, a seductive love song delivered by a male gang wearing cardigans. Quiet Girls – featuring a fierce Porter – is a feminist anthem and A Light or Somethin' is a gorgeous love song for our times. The three part finale is a gloriously messy, eight-minute ride through a eulogy, a struggle and then grace.

Warriors is a portrait of a mean, tough city with determined residents bound together by frustration with their transit system. "Takin' a train to a boat to another train?!" the gangs sing in unison and astonishment on I Survive the Night, an electric opening number that's a theatrical setting of the table.

Trains rattle, doors close – we even hear underground announcements from Bernie Wagenblast, who voices the city's real subway system – across a rich soundscape that includes the rattling of spray paint cans and the crackling of fire. It shares with Miranda's previous stage works – In the Heights and Hamilton – an unabashed love of New York (There's even mentions of hot dog joint Gray's Papaya). The creators have said they have no plans for a stage version and you can hear why: It's all on the album already.

Another certification for Omi, as 'Hula Hoop' is certified silver in the UK

Entertainer Omi



Hula Hoop, the second single issued from Omi's gold-selling debut album *Me 4 U*, has reached a new milestone.

On Friday, October 11, the song became his second silver-certified single in the United Kingdom by the British Phonographic Industry, after it exceeded 200,000 units in sales and streaming figures.

"Hula Hoop was a collaborative effort between myself and the record label (Ultra Music) at the time. So big up to Jenson Vaughan, he's the producer," Omi told *Observer Online* on Saturday in an interview.

He added, "Hula Hoop is kind of similar in texture, a similar vibe to *Cheerleader*. It's identifiable. Once you hear the vocals, you know that it's Omi."

Hula Hoop was a commercial success in Europe. Even though it didn't chart in the United States, it made the top 10 on major charts in Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Hungary, Slovakia, South Africa, Spain and Sweden.

In the United Kingdom, Hula Hoop raced to #75.

The song has been certified multiple times including 2x platinum in Sweden and Canada, platinum in Australia and Denmark, and gold in Italy, Germany, Mexico and New Zealand.

Omi's previous silver certification was for the collaboration *I Found a Girl* which features British boy band *The Vamps*. That song peaked at #30 in the UK in 2016.

Etana, Billboard King team up for new single



Entertainer Etana

International recording artiste and two-time Grammy nominee Etana is once again in the spotlight with her new single *Mirror*.

Produced by renowned hitmaker Kemar McGregor, also known as the *Billboard King*, the song is a hard-hitting dancehall track on which Etana delivers powerful lyrics aimed at her detractors, boldly stating: "Dem a watch me and me nah study dem."

The music video, which premiered recently on *Worldstar Hip Hop* and *Hollywood Unlocked*, is already creating waves across platforms. It takes viewers on a visual journey, complementing the song's message of resilience and self-reflection.

Both McGregor and Etana are known for setting trends, and as one of the few Jamaican female artistes to be nominated for a Grammy, Etana has consistently pushed boundaries. Her work with McGregor on this track showcases her authenticity and versatility.

Speaking about the release, Etana remarked: "Look into the *Mirror*," urging fans to reflect on their own lives as she continues to make bold statements through her music.

Etana is a two-time Grammy nominee known for her distinctive voice and empowering messages in her music. She is a trailblazer in the reggae and dancehall world.

McGregor has, for over two decades, produced numerous hits that have topped charts globally. He is known for his ability to craft timeless tunes that resonate with audiences.

JASMINE MALCOLM APPOINTED AS EXECUTIVE ADMINISTRATOR



Jasmine Malcolm as the Executive Administrator for the Ministry of Public Safety and Utilities.

Ms. Malcolm began her career in the Public Service in October 2010, at just 18 years old, as a Teacher at The Enid Capron Primary School. Within a year, she was promoted to Competition Committee Leader, where she excelled in training and mentoring students for various competitions and events.

In September 2019, Ms. Malcolm shifted her focus to the Department of Youth Affairs, taking on the role of Youth Officer for Providenciales. In this capacity, she was responsible for the planning, execution, and management of National Youth Programmes, Events, and National Youth Week. Her friendly nature, strong work ethic, and ambition allowed her to build effective collaborations with government departments and NGOs, all devoted to supporting the youth of the Turks and Caicos Islands.

In 2023, Ms. Malcolm became the Sports Events Coordinator at the TCI Sports Commission where she played a vital role in organizing and executing National Sporting Events across all educational institutions in the Turks and Caicos Islands.

Ms. Malcolm graduated from the Turks and Caicos Islands Community College in 2010 with a certificate in Early Childhood Education through the University of the West Indies Open Campus and later graduated as the Salutatorian of her class with an Associate's Degree in Education in 2018. Additionally, she holds a course certificate in the Fundamentals of Project Planning and Management from the University of Virginia's Darden School of Business and is currently pursuing her Bachelor's Degree in education through an online program.

Most recently, she completed the inaugural Administrative Excellence Training designed for Heads of Secretariats and Executive Administrators across various ministries of the Turks and Caicos Islands Government.

Speaking on her new role, Ms. Malcolm expressed her gratitude, stating, "I am profoundly thankful to God for this opportunity. I believe my knowledge and extensive experience have equipped me with the requisite skills for success in the position of Executive Administrator. I wish to express my appreciation to my family, whom I refer to as my village, for their unwavering support and encouragement. I extend my gratitude to the Turks and Caicos Islands Government for entrusting me with this role. I aspire to enhance every environment I touch, and my intention remains unchanged in this new position. Thank you once more."

In support of Ms. Malcolm's appointment, Deputy Governor and Head of the Public Service H.E. Anya Williams remarked, "I am genuinely delighted to welcome Ms. Jasmine Malcolm into her new role as Executive Administrator. Throughout her impressive career, Jasmine has consistently demonstrated her passion for public service and commitment to enhancing the lives of the youth in our community. Her leadership capabilities, combined with her deep understanding of the specific needs of our society, uniquely position her to excel in this role. I am confident that her innovative ideas and collaborative approach will lead to significant advancements within the Ministry of Public Safety and Utilities. We look forward to her contributions and are excited for the positive impact she will undoubtedly make. Congratulations Ms Malcolm on your new role."

The Office of the Deputy Governor has appointed

Minister Knowles Celebrates International Print Day with CGIS Team



Minister Kyle Knowles (third from left) with members of the Print Team Minister Knowles Celebrates International Print Day with CGIS Team

special occasion to recognize the tremendous contributions of the printing industry and all the talented individuals who bring the world of print to life," said Minister Knowles.

Minister Knowles added: "I take this opportunity to acknowledge and thank the small but mighty Department within my Ministry – the Customer and Government Information Services (CGIS) for all that they do on a daily basis to meet the Government's printing needs. Your dedication and craftsmanship keep this timeless form of communication thriving."

He pointed out that print is not just ink on paper, but is also the tangible expression of creativity, information, and culture.

"On this day, we honor the innovation, passion, and skill that each of you brings to the printing industry. Your efforts not only support commerce and communication, it helps businesses grow, stories to be told, and ideas to be shared.

"Whether you're on the press, in pre-press, or handling finishing, your skills shape communication and innovation in ways that touch us all. Thank you for your expertise, craftsmanship, and commitment to excellence in every print run.

"The Ministry of Public Safety and Utilities joins me in wishing you a wonderful and inspiring International Print Day," Minister Knowles continued.

Minister of Utilities and Public Safety has hailed the CGIS Team on International Print Day, which

was observed on 23rd October 2024. "Today, we celebrate International Print Day, a

Jamaicans in US pulling out the stops for a Harris victory over Trump



US Vice President and presidential candidate Kamala Harris

While admitting to some nervousness about the tightness of the presidential race, Jamaicans in the United States are going all out to help Democratic candidate and Vice-President Kamala Harris across the finish line ahead of Republican Donald Trump.

Many Jamaicans are travelling outside their home state to campaign for Harris in the so-called battleground states where Americans say the election is historically won. These include Pennsylvania, Michigan, Wisconsin, Georgia, Arizona, North Carolina, and Nevada.

Roy Davidson, head of the Caribbean American Cricket Club of Los Angeles and former head of the National Association of Jamaican and Supportive Organizations, said many people from within the Jamaican and Caribbean communities in California “have been deployed in the states of Georgia and North Carolina to help the Harris campaign”.

Jamaicans have also left from New York and other states to assist the campaign elsewhere. Most notably Pennsylvania, considered as the most crucial state, where get out the vote, knocking on doors, and raising money for Harris have been the main activities.

Stafford Grant, a Pennsylvania-based former member of the Jamaica Defence Force said, “I have no qualms she is going to win. We have the numbers and the votes, the important thing now is for us to execute our ground game with the use of technology to help her achieve victory.”

Grant is among a number of Jamaicans and Caribbean nationals who formed Caribbean American United in Support of Harris, who is of Jamaican heritage, soon after she became the presumptive Democratic nominee for president in July this year.

He said that although it was a tough race in Pennsylvania, “the contest here is very close, but with the level of the ground work that is be-

ing undertaken, there is a strong feeling she will prevail”.

“There is even evidence that some Republican-leaning voters are leaning towards and have already voted for her, as early voting has started in the state,” he said. “The enthusiasm remains high and I am confident that the vice-president is going to win, though I do acknowledge that it is real tight, and is getting tougher.

“However, we [Jamaicans] are pulling out all the stops. The emphasis now is getting out the votes and we are working hard in this regard,” said Grant.

Joan Edghill who hosts a weekly programme on CRR FM radio in Florida said that while she “is a little nervous, the enthusiasm among Democrats seems to be even higher now as we get closer to the November 5 election”.

She said other Jamaicans and herself “have been encouraging large scale mail-in and early voting and are using technology to reach people to get to the polls. A lot of emphasis is also being placed on younger first-time voters to help them understand what is at stake”.

Edghill noted, too, that some among the Jamaican community are showing a preference for Donald Trump, but that even then the enthusiasm towards this election and for getting the vice-president elected “is more than has been shown in the recent past”.

A handful of Jamaicans who the Jamaica Observer identified as Republicans declined to comment.

In Florida, retired real estate broker Juliet Matadeen is among those who remain optimistic that Harris will win, saying, “She is working hard and I think her policies are resonating with the voters.”

Former officer with the Department of Correctional Services (DCS) Clarence Brown said he believes Harris has performed and continues to perform well and thinks that she can win.

He worries, though, that she is being affected by too much sexism, classism, and even racism, a concern he had expressed shortly before she was formally nominated as the Democratic Party’s standard-bearer.

Covington resident and former educator Hyacinth Davis said she continues to see a high level of support for Vice-President Harris within the African and other ethnic communities here. “There is also an increase intensity in early voting and an engagement at all levels; such as on the streets and in grocery stores,” she added.

While acknowledging that there were some unfavourable issues facing the vice-president, such as less than full support among black males, Davis said she still remains confident of a Harris victory.

Retired Adjunct Professor Raymond Rhoden told the Observer that while he is “cautiously nervous”, he thinks Harris will defeat Trump. “She has shown that she is capable of leading the country and I think she has put forward a series of policy initiatives that will benefit all Americans,” he argued.

Sadie Campbell, the long-standing president of the Jamaica Progressive League (JPL), is among those who are cautiously optimistic of a win by Harris, though she, too, has expressed some level of nervousness, causing her to not “watch the TV news and the polls too much”.

Patrick Williams who heads the Jamaica Awareness Association of California noted that “there is a strong possibility she will pull [it] off as hope remains strong amid a strong level of enthusiasm”.

He said the Jamaican and Caribbean communities on the West Coast are very active. Two New York-based Jamaican residents — former Jamaica Constabulary Force member Dwight P Bailey and a secretary, Carlene McIntosh — have both expressed confidence that Harris will prevail in the election.

New Indonesia President Subianto swears in 109-member Cabinet



Front row, from left, Indonesia's President Prabowo Subianto (third left) poses for a group photo with newly-appointed ministers during the swearing-in ceremony of the new cabinet at Merdeka Palace in Jakarta, Indonesia on October 21, 2024. -AP Photo/Achmad Ibrahim

Newly inaugurated President Prabowo Subianto swore in Indonesia's largest Cabinet since 1966 on Monday, with 109 members representing his pledge for a strong government.

He announced the lineup late Sunday and named his Cabinet of ministers, vice ministers and head of national agencies the "Red and White Cabinet," referring to the colours of Indonesia's flag.

Subianto became the eighth president of Southeast Asia's largest economy on Sunday.

The Cabinet of Subianto's predecessor, Joko Widodo, had 34 ministers and head of government agencies.

Subianto's Cabinet is the largest since 1966 when Indonesia's first President Sukarno formed a lineup of 132 ministers in an extremely tense political situation after a failed 1965 coup. The so-called Dwikora Cabinet 2 was dismissed a month later.

Subianto has said earlier that he needs a strong administration, even though analysts said that his "fat" Cabinet would bloat the bureaucracy.

"I want to create a strong government that would unite

our multicultural society and diverse political interests," Subianto said before inviting more than 100 people for interviews at his residence last week. "It must be a big coalition, and some will say my Cabinet is fat."

The Cabinet features politicians from a coalition of seven parties who supported his victory in the February election, and figures allied with Widodo's Cabinet, who were reappointed to continue their jobs under Subianto's presidency. Analysts said the move was a political reward to Widodo for the latter's tacit support in the election.

Subianto was sworn in with his new vice president, 37-year-old Surakarta ex-Mayor Gibran Rakabuming Raka. He chose Raka, who is Widodo's son, as his running mate, with Widodo favoring Subianto over the candidate of his own former party. The former rivals became tacit allies, even though Indonesian presidents don't typically endorse candidates.

Subianto was a longtime rival of the Widodo, who ran against him for the presidency twice and refused to accept his defeat on both occasions, in 2014 and 2019.

But Widodo appointed Subianto as defense chief after his

reelection, paving the way for an alliance despite their rival political parties. During the campaign, Subianto ran as the popular outgoing president's heir, vowing to continue signature policies like the construction of a multi-billion-dollar new capital city and limits on exporting raw materials intended to boost domestic industry.

Backed by Widodo, Subianto swept to a landslide victory in February's direct presidential election on promises of policy continuity.

Subianto reappointed nearly half of Widodo's Cabinet members, including Finance Minister Sri Mulyani Indrawati, making her the first person to hold the ministry under three different presidents.

Indrawati, 62, who has served as the executive director of the International Monetary Fund and managing director of the World Bank, is one of Indonesia's longest-serving finance ministers, having held the post for long stretches under Presidents Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono and Joko Widodo.

She has earned considerable respect in international circles, particularly for her reforms of the chaotic Indonesian taxation system and her role in steering Indonesia through the global financial crisis and the COVID-19 pandemic.

"We regularly consulted with each other to discuss strategies for strengthening the Finance Ministry and the state finances to support his programs," Indrawati told reporters after meeting with Subianto last week.

Other ministers from Widodo's Cabinet include Interior Minister Tito Karnavian, Trade Minister Zulkifli Hasan, Energy Minister Bahlil Lahadalia and State-Owned Enterprises Minister Erick Thohir.

Subianto has announced an ambitious goal of increasing annual economic growth to 8 per cent by the end of his five-year term, and embarking on an ambitious spending program, including an increase in defense spending, hikes in civil servants' salaries, and a program to give 83 million children free meals.

Coleby-Davis files criminal libel complaint against woman over Facebook claims



Minister of Energy and Transport JoBeth Coleby-Davis

Minister of Energy and Transport JoBeth Coleby-Davis has filed a complaint with police accusing a woman

of criminal libel over comments she made about the Elizabeth MP on Facebook.

Coleby-Davis told The Nassau Guardian that she has also instructed her attorney to file a civil suit against the woman.

In a letter sent to Commissioner of Police Clayton Fernander this week, Coleby-Davis wrote that the allegations posted on social media are an attempt to smear her public image. She asked for police action to be taken against the Facebook user.

The individual runs a Facebook page where she streams video content. In a video posted to Facebook, the woman made several allegations against Coleby-Davis and others.

Coleby-Davis' attorney, Owen Wells of McKinney, Turner & Co, also wrote to Fernander requesting action against the woman on his client's behalf.

"We write to formally request an investigation into and the commencement of criminal libel charges pursuant to the Penal Code against [the woman] for the malicious publication of defamatory statements concerning our client on social media," Wells wrote in a letter dated October 15, 2024.

"We trust the necessary action will be taken to ensure that the individual is held accountable under the laws of the Commonwealth of The Bahamas."

In 2021, a private investigator was arrested and charged with criminal libel over messages he allegedly shared on social media making serious allegations about Prime Minister Philip Brave Davis, who was leader of the Official Opposition at the time.

However, that case was dismissed in August 2021 for want of prosecution after Davis failed to show up to court for a second time.

According to the Penal Code, a person convicted of intentional libel is liable to two years behind bars.



TCAAA Kicks Off Season with Successful Rotary Road Race

New Zealand win Women's T20 World Cup for first time



New Zealand's team poses with the trophy after winning the ICC Women's T20 World Cup 2024 final match against South Africa at Dubai International Cricket Stadium, United Arab Emirates.

New Zealand won the Women's T20 World Cup for the first time, beating South Africa by 32 runs on Sunday after a standout performance from Amelia Kerr with bat and ball.

South Africa's chase was held to 126-9 in 20 overs at the Dubai International Cricket Stadium in reply to New Zealand's 158-5 in the final of the 18-day tournament.

The White Ferns added to their one-day title at the 2000 Cricket World Cup and became the first New Zealand team to win a T20 World Cup, with the men's team – the Black Caps – yet to achieve this feat.

South Africa were also seeking to become a first-time T20 champions. It was a second successive heartbreak for South Africa, after they had lost the 2023 final on home soil to six-time champions Australia.

After South Africa captain Laura Wolvaardt won the toss on Sunday and opted to bowl, Kerr top scored for New Zealand with a 38-ball 43. Brooke Halliday hit 38 runs in 28 deliveries and opener Suzie Bates scored 32 in 31. Nonkululeko Mlaba took 2-31 in four overs for South Africa.

South Africa made a strong start to its chase, reaching 51-1 in 6.5 overs but never really threatened afterwards, reaching the halfway stage of their innings at 64-3.

Wolvaardt top scored for South Africa with a 27-ball

33.

Kerr took 3-24 in her four overs, including Wolvaardt's wicket.

Kerr was named player of the match and also player of the tournament, finishing with a record 15 wickets in six games.

"I am a little bit speechless and so stoked to get the win, considering what this team has been through. It's what dreams are made of," the all-rounder said. "The wicket was pretty good and I thought 140-plus would get us in the game. It was an outstanding contribution from everyone to finish the job."

Both teams fielded an unchanged side from their semifinal wins where South Africa stunned defending champions Australia in the first semi by eight wickets on Thursday, while New Zealand beat West Indies in the second semifinal by eight runs on Friday.

New Zealand had previously finished runners-up, losing to England in 2009 and Australia in 2010.

The White Ferns were on a losing 10-match run prior to this World Cup, but showed a brilliant turn of form to reach the final for the first time in 14 years, with only one league stage loss through the tournament.

Power-packed batting

New Zealand rode on a power-packed batting performance. Despite losing Georgia Plimmer for nine runs, Bates and Kerr played attacking cricket to defy

the Proteas bowling. New Zealand scored 43-1 in the power play.

Bates hit three fours and Kerr struck four boundaries as they put on 37 off 35 balls for the second wicket. Mlaba provided the breakthrough, bowling Bates in the eighth over with the score just past 50. Nadine de Klerk further pegged New Zealand back by trapping skipper Sophie Devine leg before wicket for six. Kerr, however, kept the momentum going with her highest individual score of the tournament as the 100 came up in the 15th over.

Halliday then stepped on the accelerator, smacking three fours, while Maddy Green (12 not out in six balls) also hit her team's only six as New Zealand finished with a par-plus score.

Runs dry up

In reply, Wolvaardt started well – she hit five fours – and put on 51 off 41 balls with Tazmin Brits for the first wicket.

South Africa's chase seemed to be on track when Fran Jonas (1-28) got the first breakthrough as Brits was caught at long on for 17.

The runs dried up immediately as South Africa scored eight off the next 14 balls and the pressure told. Wolvaardt tried to hit a boundary off Kerr's first ball and was out caught at mid-off instead, sparking huge celebrations in the Kiwi camp.

South Africa lost regular wickets afterwards. Kerr also sent back big-hitting Anneke Bosch for nine runs.

Marizanne Kapp was out caught for eight, as New Zealand didn't miss anything in the field. The middle order didn't come through for South Africa at all, reduced to 97-6 in 15.1 overs.

Rosemary Mair picked up 3-25 in her four overs, while Eden Carson finished off proceedings with the last over to crown the tournament's new champions.

"I let myself dream last night about what it would be like to hold the trophy. It is hard to put in words what it means to this group of players, including myself, and for New Zealand cricket as well," Devine said. "The great thing about this group is we have known what we have been trying to achieve for the past 18 months.

"Results didn't go our way but we knew we were building in the right direction."

Mason Greenwood to speak with England boss before making Reggae Boyz switch—reports



Mason Greenwood starts process to switch allegiance to Jamaica

Mason Greenwood plans to speak to England head coach Thomas Tuchel to ascertain his chances of

being a part of the national team, before making a decision about switching his allegiance to Jamaica, according to media reports.

The Sun reported that while Tuchel will not take over the England team until January 1, Greenwood is hoping that a change of bosses could see him representing the team on a senior level.

However, according to reports, if this is not possible, the Olympique Marseille star plans to accept Reggae Boyz coach Steve McClaren's invitation to play for Jamaica.

It was reported in August that Greenwood began the process of switching allegiances to the Reggae Boyz; however, it was not confirmed that this was completed.

According to The Sun, the 22-year-old's international future has been in limbo following the attempt-

ed rape, assault and coercive behaviour charges he faced in January 2022. The charges have since been dropped.

The Sun reported that a source told them that Mason is aware of his chances of playing for England but his hope is to play in the World Cup.

"Mason knows his chances of playing for England again are very slim. But he wants to check with the FA and Tuchel now he has been appointed, to see what they think. He is determined to play at the highest level and that means the World Cup. So if England don't want him, he'll switch to Jamaica and try and get to the 2026 World Cup that way," the source reportedly told SunSport.

Greenwood qualifies to play for the Reggae Boyz through his Jamaican-born father.

Jamaica last qualified for the World Cup in 1998.

Coach Glen Mills calls for strong intervention after Paris letdown



Boxing is set to return to The Bahamas. The "Courtyard Brawl" featuring some of the top young up-and-coming boxers in the country going up against each other, is set for Friday, November 22 at Fusion Superplex.

After witnessing a less-than-expected medal haul at the Paris Olympics in the summer, Racers Track Club Head Coach Glen Mills believes track and field in Jamaica could decline significantly if the Jamaica Athletics Administrative Association (JAAA) does not improve how it governs the sport.

The island took home six medals during the games in the French capital with four coming from field events. It was Jamaica's lowest medal tally since the 2004 Athens Games and the first time since the 2000 Sydney Olympics in which no Jamaican finished with a gold medal in the sprints.

Mills, who guided the career of sprint legend Usain Bolt, says he wasn't surprised by many of the outcomes and says the JAAA needs to act quickly.

"We have to pay attention to what happened in Paris and what happened in the recent World [Under 20] because they are showing the cracks and symptoms that exist that need urgent attention if we do not intend to fall into the quagmire that West Indies cricket has gotten itself into," he said at a UWI-led symposium.

"I remember, as a youngster when I used to listen to cricket, it was as if West Indies was unbeatable in any form of the sport and they had a tremendously long reign but I don't think any attention was being paid to the weaknesses of what was needed for the continuity to perform at a high level," he added.

Mills, now, is concerned that a comprehensive review hasn't been done by the JAAA.

"I have not heard any attempt to have a commission of inquiry, or whatever you want to call it, into what were the problems and the causes of such a dramatic drop in our medal earnings. The standard that we have been able to maintain for several decades means this sudden drop requires attention," he said.

"If we listen to Stephen Francis, myself and a number of players in the game, we have been pointing out and crying out for things to be attended to, but it has been falling on deaf ears. Especially a couple of interviews I've listened [to] with Stephen Francis, a number of things he pointed out years ago is now beginning to affect us significantly."

Mills says the leadership of the JAAA doesn't seem

to value the opinions of those involved in the sport. "I can't recall us being summoned to any kind of forum where all the top coaches of the clubs are involved in a frank and clear discussion with the administration. Most of it has been through interviews and informal talks and discussions, so we find very little attention has been given to the points raised, so we continue to have the divide between what we think is in the best interest of the sport and the athletes, as against what the association thinks."

Mills says the coaches and leaders of the track clubs locally must have a greater say in the track and field programme.

"There needs to be a greater interworking relationship or connectivity between the coaches, the club administrators who are the persons on the ground involved in working with the athletes and whatever campaign or programme to earn additional medals or increased performance; they have to be a major part in whatever planning and programme that is going to be developed.

"Too often, the executives of these associations do not involve the membership in their day-to-day work and planning. Yes, they're the executive body and must lead but you cannot have that disconnect because you will not have the kind of cooperation and unity of purpose that is necessary for success." He also believes the JAAA needs a drastic overhaul with the growth of the athletics globally," he said.

Bahamian boxing fans are asked to get ready for the 'Courtyard Brawl'



Boxing is set to return to The Bahamas. The "Courtyard Brawl" featuring some of the top young up-and-coming boxers in the country going up against each other, is set for Friday, November 22 at Fusion Superplex.

The event, set for Friday November 22 at Fusion Superplex, is set to pit some of the top young up-and-coming boxers in the country against each other.

"If you think you're tough enough, prepare yourself for a unique boxing event on Friday November 22," said event promoter Tommy Stubbs.

The show, which will feature five fights between young boxers from the red team, managed by Meacher 'Major Pain' Major, and the blue team, managed by Jermaine 'Choo Choo' Mackey, is presented by Bahamas Events & Sports and Fusion Superplex. Major and Mackey are former Bahamian boxing champions and regional box-

ing champions as well.

The 10 fighters will compete in five weight classes, including one female division. There's also an open invitation for 40 fighting contenders of all weight classes.

Each match will be three rounds of two minutes each.

Interested fighters for this boxing entertainment may register at the website www.bahamasevents.com or via WhatsApp at (242) 421-9783.

No boxing experience is required for this boxing showcase of the year.

Each fighter will be provided with standard protective gear, boxing gloves, trunks and shoes.

Led by Stubbs, who promoted two 'Pain & Glory' professional cards with Major and Brazilian Roger Rosa, event organizers will assess the fighters from the tryouts and select 10 fighters to compete on the red and blue teams.

All 10 finalists will share over \$2,000 in prize money and medals will be presented to each of the winners. The winning side will receive the 'Courtyard Brawl' championship belt.

This special event has been endorsed by the Bahamas Boxing Commission. Other activities being planned include fight betting, ring girls' competition, beer drinking and pizza-eating contests.

Admission for the event is set at \$20 for standing room, \$40 for preferred seating and \$50 for VIP which includes a drink. Tickets could be purchased at the Fusion Superplex Box Office.

Clement Howell High Crowned 2024/25 High School Football Champions



The victorious Clement Howell High



The beaten finalists Elite High School

Clement Howell High School (CHHS) emerged as champions of the 2024/25 Inter-High School Football Competition, defeating Elite High School 2-1 in a thrilling final held at the National Stadium on Saturday, October 19.

The game kicked off with both teams eager to claim the coveted title. CHHS took control of the first half, creating several scoring opportunities. Their persistence paid off in the 21st minute when Dadsly

Desir found the back of the net, giving CHHS a 1-0 lead heading into halftime. The second half began with renewed energy from both sides. EHS struck back early in the half when Israel Stanley scored in the 43rd minute, leveling the score at 1-1. Stanley's goal injected life into the EHS side, and the match intensified as both teams fought for dominance.

However, CHHS quickly regained their

lead just six minutes later when Sonlay Aimes delivered the decisive blow in the 49th minute, scoring what would be the match-winning goal. Despite EHS's efforts to equalize, CHHS's defense held firm, ensuring the scoreline remained in their favor until the final whistle.

The match saw two yellow cards issued. Jordan Louis of CHHS in the 24th minute and Steve Robinson of EHS in the 46th minute.

The third-place playoff between Maranatha Academy (MA) and Alice and Leonard Glenmore Tomlinson High School (ALGTHS) was settled by default. MA failed to show up for the match, resulting in ALGTHS claiming third place by forfeit. In a symbolic gesture, ALGTHS took to the field with referees and kicked the ball into an empty net, securing their third-place victory.

Dane Ritchie, Technical Director for the Turks and Caicos Islands Football Association, expressed heartfelt thanks to everyone who played in the success of this year's competition. The Sports Commission team was lauded for their efficient organization of the tournament, despite facing challenges along the way.

A special note of appreciation was given to the Match Commissioners for their role in ensuring that the games were conducted smoothly and efficiently, as well as to the referees who managed the matches with professionalism and fairness.

Ritchie also acknowledged the dedication for their time and effort into preparing their teams for the competition. He thanked their commitment and passion for developing young football talent, which he said were evident throughout the tournament.

The technical director also extended thanks to the administrative and support staff of the participating schools, who consistently provided support to their teams, also thanking the players for their performances.

The tournament saw an array of talent on display, promising a bright future for football in the Turks and Caicos Islands. The media was not forgotten, with appreciation expressed for their role in promoting the event, sharing the schedule, and broadcasting the results.

TCAAA Kicks Off Season with Successful Rotary Road Race



(Under 13 girls with President Edith Skippings)



(from left) Adonia Dorlus, Love Joesph and Melique Evans take time for a photo following the medal presentation



President of the TCAAA Edith Skippings pose for the Camera with some of the primary school participants in the meet

On October 17, 2024, the Turks and Caicos Islands Amateur Athletic Association (TCAAA) launched the 2024-2025 athletic season with an exhilarating Rotary Road Race, which saw 74 enthusiastic athletes competing. The event offered both a 5K and a 3K race, catering to participants of all skill levels, from experienced runners to those new to competitive racing. The race began near Venetian Road, with its scenic route adding to the excitement of the day.

Spectators lined the streets, cheering on the athletes as they wound their way through picturesque landscapes. The event culminated at the TCI National Stadium, where the finish line awaited.

The race attracted a diverse range of participants, from seasoned competitors to first-timers, all eager to test their endurance and enjoy the camaraderie. The TCAAA was proud of the turnout, which included 76 participants from both primary and high schools. Remarkably, every participant finished their race, a testament to the dedication of the athletes and the supportive atmosphere fostered by the Association.

The Road Race set a high bar for the athletic season, reflecting the growing interest in competitive running in the Turks and Caicos community. The event also celebrated school participation, with Thelma Lightbourne Primary School Coach, Mr. Hardware, sharing his pride in his athletes, who claimed first and second place in the Under 13 girls cat-

egory. He was particularly impressed with one young athlete's progress, noting that she had only been training for a few weeks.

Love Joseph, who took first place in the Senior Boys (Under 19) division, shared his excitement about the race. "Today was the first race of the season, and I set a new personal best of 20:19 in the 5K. It was a great start, showing me that my consistency is paying off," he said.

Oseta Jolly Primary School Coach, Kenesha Thompson, celebrated her team's dominance in the Under 11 category. "We took first, second, and third place for the boys, and our girl came third. I'm very happy with the team's performance," she said.

TCAAA President Edith Skippings expressed her delight at the successful start of the season. "I'm very pleased with the participation of the student-athletes and the schools. This Road Race was a great way to open the season, and we're looking forward to more successful events in the coming months," she said.

With the Rotary Road Race setting the stage, the TCAAA is eager to continue promoting health, fitness, and community spirit through upcoming events. The strong turnout and positive atmosphere bode well for the rest of the season, promising more thrilling competitions and opportunities for athletes to shine.

The participating schools were Clement Howell High, Louis Garland Thomas High, Oseta Jolly Primary, Precious Treasure International School, Enid Capron Primary, Thelma Lightbourne Primary, Raymond Gardiner High School and Charles Hubert James Primary, and British Collegiate.