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Symbolic signing of the TCHTA Group Insurance Agreement with Caribbean Health Insurance. From left: Sergio Madinabeitia – Executive Director and Principal of Caribbean Health Holdings; Craig Archibald – Master Insurer; Hon. Kyle Knowles – Minister of Health and Human Services; Snjezana Andrews – Membership Committee Chair; Stacy Cox – CEO of the TCHTA; James McAnally – President of the TCHTA; and Pedro Villasmil, CEO of B Insurance.

TCHTA Launches Group Health Insurance for Tourism Workers

The Turks and Caicos Hotel and Tourism Association (TCHTA) has officially launched a new Group Health Insurance Initiative in partnership with Caribbean Health Insurance, a move aimed at expanding access to affordable healthcare for tourism workers, small businesses and their families.

The initiative was unveiled during a signing ceremony attended by government officials, TCHTA executives and representatives of Caribbean Health Insurance, at Beaches Resort and Spa on Tuesday, June 30.

The launch comes after the Government restructured the Treatment Abroad Programme earlier this year, limiting eligibility to Turks and Caicos Islanders and British Overseas Territory Citizens. The policy change left thousands of work permit holders and permanent residents to secure their own health insurance arrangements, prompting concerns within the tourism industry about access to affordable medical coverage.

Speaking at the launch, TCHTA CEO Stacey Cox described the agreement as more than a business partnership, calling it a commitment to protecting the people who drive the country's tourism industry.

"The signing of this agreement represents more than a business partnership. It represents a shared promise to our members that their association is committed to finding solutions that protect their businesses and, most importantly, the people who make those businesses successful," Cox said. Membership Committee Chair and TCHTA Board Director Snjezana Andrews said the programme was developed after extensive planning to address the growing need for accessible and meaningful health insurance, particularly for small businesses and workers in the tourism sector.

She noted that while the plan is available across all industries, it was designed in response to the specific needs of tourism workers and offers access to a regional net-

work of doctors, hospitals, specialists, dental and vision care providers.

Among the key features, Andrews highlighted that the plan carries no deductible, allowing members to access healthcare without significant upfront costs.

"This is more than the launch of an insurance product. This is the launch of a movement towards stronger businesses, healthier communities and a more protected workforce," she said.

Caribbean Health Insurance Executive Director Sergio Madinabeitia said the regional insurance product had been developed over the past year to provide affordable healthcare solutions tailored specifically for the Caribbean.

Unlike many international insurance plans, he said, the programme was designed without deductibles or co-payments and includes an expanding network of accredited medical facilities across the Dominican Republic, Colombia, Jamaica and other Caribbean countries.

He also announced that Jamaica was being added to the provider network as the company continues to expand its regional healthcare partnerships.

Local insurance representative Craig Archibald, who will serve as the programme's agent in the Turks and Caicos Islands, said increasing access to health insurance has long been a priority.

"It has been quite a task in getting people to understand how important health insurance is to your well-being," Archibald said, adding that he looks forward to introducing the programme to the wider community.

TCHTA President James McAnally described the initiative as another example of the association's commitment to advocating for the hospitality industry and delivering tangible benefits to its members.

He noted that while the insurance programme will eventually expand to the wid-

er community, TCHTA members will receive preferred rates.

"You need to understand why this association is so important in the Turks and Caicos Islands," McAnally said, encouraging businesses to become members.

Minister of Health Hon. Kyle Knowles congratulated the TCHTA and Caribbean Health Insurance for launching what he described as an ambitious initiative that will positively impact workers across the country.

Knowles said the government remains committed to ensuring a smooth transition as changes are made to healthcare arrangements for migrant workers and emphasized that access to quality healthcare remains a national priority.

"Healthcare is very important... everyone is entitled to high-quality care," he said.

Quizzed by the media, organizers confirmed that participation in the insurance programme is voluntary but available only to TCHTA members. Employers will determine how premium costs are shared with employees, with options ranging from full employer coverage to shared contributions.

Officials also outlined two coverage options, Coral and Pearl, with the higher-tier Pearl plan including air ambulance services for patients requiring emergency medical evacuation to overseas treatment facilities. Caribbean Health Insurance also announced plans to establish a Collaborative Telemedicine Centre in the Turks and Caicos Islands by September, allowing patients to consult regional specialists remotely before overseas referrals are made.

Minister of Tourism Zhavargo Jolly, who attended the event, praised the collaboration between the private and public sectors, saying it demonstrates how partnerships can help address challenges created by policy changes.

"There were a lot of people that were very concerned about the impact it would have on our most important sector, which is the tourism sector," Jolly said, referring to changes to the government's treatment abroad programme.

"This is us achieving a goal, filling a gap, and dealing with a potential fallout from decisions being made at the executive level."



A section of the audience

PDM Opposes 'Continued Importation of Police Leadership Roles'

By Vivian Tyson, NEWSLINE Editor-In-Chief

The People's Democratic Movement (PDM) is calling for an end to the continued importation of senior police leadership, arguing that qualified Turks and Caicos Islanders should be given a clear pathway to lead the country's police force.

In a bullet-point statement, PDM Leader Douglas Parnell said the absence of a local leadership plan is failing both officers and the public, contending that capable Turks and Caicos Islanders are being overlooked for top positions despite their service and experience. "We cannot keep importing leadership while overlooking capable Turks and Caicos Islanders in uniform," Parnell, who was elected leader of the PDM, at that party's convention on Saturday, June 27, said.

The opposition leader emphasized that the issue is not the nationality of any individual appointed to senior command but rather the lack of a structured succession plan that prepares and promotes local officers into leadership roles.

According to the PDM, succession planning should move beyond promises and become official policy, with measurable training programmes, transparent promotion criteria, and defined timelines for career advancement.

Parnell also called on the Governor and the Commissioner of Police to publicly outline their strategy for training, promoting, and advancing local officers into senior command positions.

"The people deserve a Police Force that reflects the country it is sworn to protect," the statement said, adding that stronger local leadership would contribute to a fairer

and more effective police service. The PDM maintained that the debate extends beyond any single appointment and is fundamentally about the future of policing in the Turks and Caicos Islands.

The statement concluded with the party's message: "Strong Leadership. A Fairer Force. A Safer Future."

Responding the questions from reporters at a recent news conference at the Police Headquarters during recent news conference, Commissioner of Police Fitz Bailey, emphasized that the framework for succession planning has already in laid, pointing to promising officers being sent overseas for leadership training.

He also pointed out that the force has initiated a partnership agreement with the University of the West Indies, to have officers trained in areas of leadership on

an ongoing basis, to better educate the men and woman of the organisation.



PDM Leader Doug Parnell

Experienced Law Enforcement Leader to Oversee Training and Professional Development in RTCIPF

The Royal Turks and Caicos Islands Police Force (RTCIPF) has strengthened its senior leadership team with the appointment of former Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF) Senior Superintendent of Police, Dr Terrence Bent, as Assistant Commissioner of Police for Training and Development. Dr Bent was officially sworn into office on Wednesday, July 1, during a ceremony before Her Excellency Governor Dileeni Daniel-Selvaratnam. The occasion was attended by Commissioner of Police Fitz Bailey, himself a former Deputy Commissioner of the JCF.

Also taking the oath of office was Alison Woods, who assumed the role of Inspector General.

As Assistant Commissioner, Dr Bent will be responsible for leading the RTCIPF's training and development agenda, with a focus on enhancing officer preparedness, strengthening professional standards and expanding capacity across the organisation to meet the evolving demands of modern policing.

The RTCIPF said Dr Bent brings more than three decades of policing experience, having served the Jamaica Constabulary Force for over 36 years



From left: Commissioner of Police Fitz Bailey, Inspector General Alison Woods, Assistant Commissioner of Police Terrence Bent and Her Excellency Governor Dileeni Daniel Selvaratnam

in a number of senior leadership positions. His background includes extensive experience in police training, leadership development, operational planning and organisational transfor-

mation. The force said the appointments are part of its ongoing efforts to build a modern, accountable and highly professional police service. Both posi-

tions were filled through an open and competitive recruitment process designed to attract experienced leaders capable of driving continued organisational development.

TURKS AND CAICOS DOUBLES DOWN ON LUXURY TOURISM STRATEGY

By Vivian Tyson, NEWSLINE Editor-In-Chief

While many destinations around the world celebrate record-breaking visitor arrivals, the Turks and Caicos Islands is deliberately taking a different approach.

According to Tourism, Agriculture and Fisheries Minister Hon. Zhavargo Jolly, the country's future success will not be measured by how many visitors arrive on its shores, but by the value those visitors bring to the economy and the sustainability of the tourism product.

Speaking during an interview with NewslineTCI, Jolly said the Turks and Caicos Islands must remain committed to its identity as a luxury destination and avoid the temptation of pursuing mass tourism.

"It's value over volume, quality over quantity," the minister said. "We're a high-end destination, and we get more out of less."

Jolly explained that arrival numbers alone can be misleading when assessing the health of a tourism industry. While visitor statistics remain important, he believes focusing exclusively on those figures can encourage unsustainable growth that places unnecessary strain on infrastructure, public services and the environment.

The minister noted that Providenciales already experiences significant pressures during peak tourism periods, including increased traffic congestion, higher demands on waste management systems and greater strain on airport operations.

"Our infrastructure isn't designed for volume tourism," he said. "During our peak season we see astronomical numbers of visitors come through, and that means more traffic, more pressure on the airport and more pressure on public services."

Rather than seeking dramatic increases in visitor arrivals during already busy periods, government officials are focusing on attracting travelers during slower months while encouraging higher spending among existing visitors.



JOLLY... We're a high-end destination, and we get more out of less.

This strategy, according to Jolly, allows the country to maximize economic benefits without compromising the quality of life enjoyed by residents or the experience expected by visitors.

One of the ways government hopes to achieve this goal is through market diversification.

The ministry has identified South America as a priority growth market because travelers from that region often vacation during the summer months, traditionally a slower period for the Turks and Caicos Islands. By increasing arrivals during shoulder seasons, officials believe they can create more stable tourism activity throughout the year without overwhelming

existing infrastructure.

The minister also emphasized that the country's tourism success must be tied closely to its culture, environment and people.

"We don't sell sun, sand and sea," Jolly said. "We sell experiences. We sell stories."

He argued that beaches alone are no longer enough to distinguish destinations in a highly competitive global tourism marketplace.

Instead, the Turks and Caicos Islands must continue building a brand centered around authentic cultural experiences, local cuisine, environmental attractions and interactions with residents.

According to Jolly, this approach not only strengthens the country's

appeal but also creates greater opportunities for Turks and Caicos Islanders to participate directly in the tourism economy.

"If we market Turks and Caicos around what makes Turks and Caicos Islanders special, then visitors come here expecting those experiences," he said.

The minister pointed to several initiatives already underway to support sustainable tourism growth, including the Sustainable Tourism Development and Spatial Planning Policy and the recently completed Carrying Capacity Report.

The report evaluates the limits of infrastructure and development across the islands and provides guidance for future decision-making.

Cabinet has also approved the creation of a dedicated Carrying Capacity Department that will participate in major development and policy decisions across government.

Jolly said the department will help ensure that future tourism growth remains aligned with the country's long-term sustainability objectives.

He stressed that tourism sustainability cannot simply be a slogan. "Sustainability and resiliency have to be more than words. They have to be actions," he said.

In the meantime, the minister believes the country's tourism future remains exceptionally bright.

With thousands of additional hotel rooms expected to come online over the next several years and continued international demand for luxury travel experiences, he said the Turks and Caicos Islands is well positioned for growth.

However, success will depend on maintaining discipline and staying committed to a long-term strategy.

"Our environment is a tool to make money. Our people are a tool to make money. Our culture is a tool to make money," Jolly said. "Our job is to get every person that visits here to spend as much money as possible before they leave, not simply to get more people."

Why the Commonwealth Matters Again

By Sir Ronald Sanders

Small and medium-sized states, from the most vulnerable island nations to more diversified middle-income economies, have always faced a difficult reality.

They have to navigate a world in which power is unevenly distributed and in which the decisions of larger countries can have profound consequences for their security, prosperity, and independence.

For decades, however, there was a degree of predictability in international affairs. While powerful countries exercised greater influence, there remained broad acceptance of certain principles: that sovereignty should be respected, territorial integrity protected, disputes settled peacefully, and international agreements honoured. International institutions and rules did not eliminate inequalities of power, but they helped to moderate them.

Today, that environment is less certain.

Geopolitical rivalry is intensifying. Economic pressure is increasingly used as an instrument of policy. Longstanding assumptions about alliances, international obligations, and sovereignty itself are being questioned more openly than at any time in recent memory.

For small and medium-sized states alike, these developments are especially significant—for the smallest because they magnify existing vulnerabilities, and for the medium-sized because they narrow the room for their, hitherto, independent initiative. They do not possess the military, economic, or political weight to shape international events on their own. Their prosperity depends upon stable international arrangements. Their security depends upon predictability. Their ability to pursue national objectives often rests on cooperation rather than coercion.

In a world where power is becoming more assertive and international rules less certain, the ability to build partnerships, form coalitions, and advance common interests through association may become one of the most important strategic assets for both small states and medium sized nations, such as Australia and Canada.

This is where the Commonwealth assumes renewed importance.

The Commonwealth – a voluntary association of fifty-six states from across the world – remains one of the few international organisations that brings together major developed economies, emerging powers, and small vulnerable states within a single framework. It includes countries such as the United Kingdom,



Canada, Australia, and India alongside nations from Africa, the Caribbean, the Pacific, and Asia.

At a time when states need wider partnerships and greater influence, the Commonwealth offers something increasingly rare: a forum where countries of vastly different size and power engage one another regularly and directly.

Yet the Commonwealth should not be romanticised. The Commonwealth has never been free of power imbalances within its own association. Larger and wealthier members have often exercised considerable influence over its priorities and decisions. The United Kingdom has historically played a central role in shaping the institution. Australia and New Zealand have long exercised significant influence in the Pacific. Canada, India, South Africa, and Nigeria each carry weight that smaller members cannot match.

The question, therefore, is not whether larger countries possess greater influence. They plainly do. The more important question is whether the Commonwealth provides opportunities for smaller states to be heard, build coalitions, and affect outcomes in ways that would be far more difficult outside the association; and, also, provides support for medium-sized nations that they now need.

The international system remains largely hierarchical. The Commonwealth, by contrast, functions primarily through relationships, consultation, and consensus. That distinction matters.

Within the association all states pos-

sess something they would otherwise lack: regular access, established networks, coalition-building opportunities, and channels through which ideas and concerns can be advanced directly to decision-makers.

While that does not create equality of influence, it provides opportunities for smaller states to amplify their voice and advance their interests. Small states have frequently exercised influence disproportionate to their size through collective action, whether on climate change, debt vulnerability, ocean governance, or broader questions of international development.

But there is another reason the Commonwealth matters today. For many years, concerns about sovereignty, territorial integrity, and vulnerability to external pressure were viewed primarily as a small states' problem. Smaller nations understood instinctively the importance of international law because they lacked the power to rely on anything else. Now, medium-sized states need to embrace it too.

The international environment is less predictable. Assumptions that once appeared secure are being questioned more openly. Longstanding understandings about borders, alliances, and international obligations can no longer be taken for granted.

The Commonwealth's commitment to sovereign equality, peaceful dispute settlement, and respect for international law therefore serves the interests of large and small members alike.

Historically, support within the Commonwealth was often viewed as

flowing primarily from larger countries to smaller ones. Increasingly, however, larger members may also see value in the collective support that smaller states can provide in defence of sovereign equality, territorial integrity, and international law.

The Commonwealth is becoming more than a forum in which stronger states assist weaker ones. It is increasingly a community in which countries of all sizes have a shared interest in preserving an international order based on rules, cooperation, and mutual respect.

Therefore, the Commonwealth's significance extends beyond development programmes, technical cooperation, or historical ties. It remains one of the few associations through which states of very different size and influence can strengthen their voice, reinforce their resilience, and work together in support of an international order in which sovereignty remains meaningful.

The Commonwealth has historically achieved its greatest successes when it has combined principle with pragmatism. The same approach is needed today.

As the international environment becomes less predictable, countries of all sizes have a renewed interest in strengthening sovereignty, peaceful dispute settlement, and international cooperation. The Commonwealth remains one of the few forums in which those interests can be pursued collectively despite disparities of power.

The Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Antigua and Barbuda this November offers an opportunity to demonstrate that relevance in practical ways and to help make the Commonwealth matter again.

The writer is Antigua and Barbuda's Ambassador to the US and the OAS and Chancellor of the University of Guyana. The views expressed are his own.

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Vivian Tyson – Editorial Department

New Experience Turks and Caicos Authority Will Strengthen Destination Marketing – Tourism Minister

By Vivian Tyson NEWSLINE Editor-In-Chief

Experience Turks and Caicos is entering a new chapter in the country’s tourism development following the passage of legislation that transforms the destination marketing organization into a statutory authority, a move government says will strengthen the promotion of the islands while ensuring tourism growth remains sustainable and rooted in local culture. Speaking during an interview with NewslineTCI, Minister of Tourism Hon. Zhavargo Jolly described the legislation as one of the most significant milestones for the tourism sector over the past year. He said the new legal framework provides greater accountability while clearly defining the organization’s role in promoting the Turks and Caicos Islands. Jolly said there has been widespread misunderstanding among residents about the purpose of Experience Turks and Caicos, with many assuming it simply replaced the former Tourist Board. However, he explained that the two entities have fundamentally different responsibilities.

“The Tourist Board was responsible for virtually everything related to tourism, from marketing and regulation to quality assurance and product development,” Jolly said. “Government recognized that these responsibilities would be more effective if they were separated.”

Under the new model, Experience Turks and Caicos will continue to function as the country’s Destination Marketing and Management Organization (DMMO), focusing exclusively on promoting the destination, while regulatory and industry oversight responsibilities are handled separately.

According to the minister, becoming a statutory authority gives government greater oversight of the organization’s strategic direction while allowing it to operate with increased accountability and efficiency.

Jolly stressed that Experience Turks and Caicos is responsible for promoting far more than hotels and resorts.

“Experience Turks and Caicos doesn’t just market one hotel or one restaurant. It markets the entire experience a traveler gets,” he said.



Tourism Hon. Zhavargo Jolly

That experience includes the country’s people, traditions, culture, natural beauty, heritage and authentic visitor experiences, all of which the government wants to place at the center of its tourism strategy.

The minister said the approach reflects international best practices, where tourism marketing and regulatory functions are managed by separate organizations to allow each to focus on its specific mandate.

As part of the transition, Experience Turks and Caicos has already begun restructuring its operations. The organization has introduced a Chief Operating Officer position and reorganized its marketing, sales and public relations divisions to improve operational efficiency and strengthen destination promotion.

Jolly also identified leadership development as one of his long-term priorities. While the organization currently operates under interim leadership, he said government intends to deliberately prepare Turks and Caicos Islanders to assume executive positions in the future. He noted that leading a modern destination marketing organization requires more than experience in the hospitality sector.

“It requires international relationships, networking and understanding the global tourism marketplace,” Jolly said, adding that future local leaders must gain exposure to international tourism organizations, trade shows and industry partners before stepping into executive roles.

He said one of his goals as Minister of Tourism is to establish a leadership pipeline that consistently prepares qualified local candidates for senior positions.

“We shouldn’t only know who our local CEO is,” he said. “We should know who our next three candidates are.”

Beyond organizational changes, Jolly said Experience Turks and Caicos is shifting its overall marketing philosophy away from relying solely on the country’s beaches and luxury accommodations.

Instead, the destination will increasingly promote authentic experiences that cannot be replicated elsewhere.

“We don’t sell sun, sand and sea,” he said. “We really sell experiences. We sell stories.”

The strategy will highlight local cuisine, cultural traditions, historical sites, environmental attractions and community-based tourism experiences designed to give visitors a deeper connection to the Turks and Caicos Islands.

Jolly said placing culture at the heart of the country’s tourism brand will not only distinguish the destination from competitors but also create new opportunities for local entrepreneurs, artists, tour operators and small businesses to participate more directly in the tourism economy.

He added that Experience Turks and Caicos is preparing to launch a redesigned tourism website that will feature local businesses, attractions and authentic experiences more prominently, helping visitors discover the islands beyond traditional resort vacations.

With the statutory authority now in place, government believes Experience Turks and Caicos is well positioned to lead the country’s tourism marketing efforts while preserving the culture, environment and identity that continue to define the Turks and Caicos Islands on the global stage.

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Deputy Premier Completes Island-Wide Graduation Tour, Celebrates Excellence Across the Turks and Caicos Islands

Deputy Premier and Minister of Immigration and Border Services, Hon. Jamell Robinson, has successfully concluded an island-wide graduation tour, attending each of the four Government high school graduation ceremonies to celebrate the achievements of the Class of 2026 and reaffirm the Government's commitment to investing in the nation's youth.

Over four consecutive days, the Deputy Premier joined graduates, educators, parents, and community members in commemorating one of the most significant milestones in the lives of hundreds of young people. The tour underscored the importance of education, leadership, perseverance, and service as the foundation for building a stronger Turks and Caicos Islands.

The tour commenced on June 29th, 2026, at the H.J. Robinson High School in Grand Turk, where graduates celebrated under the theme, "Our Journey Begins: Embracing the Road Ahead with Courage and Determination." The Deputy Premier then travelled to Marjorie Basden High School in South Caicos, where the graduating class reflected on the theme, "Turning Our Moments Into Milestones."

From there, Hon. Robinson visited Raymond Gardiner High School in North Caicos, where graduates embraced the theme, "Rising with Purpose, Rooted in Excellence." The graduation tour concluded at Clement Howell High School in Providenciales under the theme, "Unyielding in Pursuit, Unmatched in Potential."

At the Marjorie Basden High School ceremony, the Deputy Premier brought congratulatory remarks, applauding graduates for their resilience, determination, and commitment throughout their academic journey. He encouraged them to pursue their aspirations with confidence, remain grounded in strong values, and embrace opportunities to contribute positively to their community and country.

A highlight of the tour was the presentation of the inaugural Deputy Premier and Ministry of Immigration & Border Services Award for Excellence and Service at each graduation ceremony. The award recognizes a graduating student who has consistently demonstrated outstanding leadership, integrity, academic commitment, responsibility, and meaningful service within both the school and the wider community.

The award represents the first step in a broader youth engagement initiative currently being developed by the Office of the Deputy Premier and the Ministry of Immigration & Border Services. The initiative will focus on recognizing outstanding young people and creating opportunities that promote leadership, service, excellence, and positive community involvement throughout the Turks and Caicos Islands.

Speaking on the significance of the tour, Deputy Premier Hon. Jamell Robinson said investing in young people remains one of the Government's highest priorities.

"Our graduates are not only the leaders of tomorrow, they are contributors to



Deputy Premier and Minister of Immigration and Border Services Hon. Jamell Robinson (left) and Minister Education Hon. Rachel Taylor (right) presenting awards at the HJ Robinson High School in Grand Turk



Hon. Jamell Robinson presenting awards at the Clement Howell High School in Providenciales



Hon. Jamell Robinson delivering a speech at the Marjorie Basden High School in South Caicos

our nation's progress today. Whether they pursue higher education, vocational training, entrepreneurship, public service, or enter the workforce, I encourage them to strive for excellence, lead with integrity, and never lose sight of the values that define us as a people. The future prosperity of the Turks and Caicos Islands depends on a generation that is prepared to innovate, serve, and give back to their communities."

The Deputy Premier also expressed appreciation to the Ministry of Education, Youth, Sports and Culture, school principals, teachers, parents, guardians, and support staff for their unwavering dedication to nurturing and preparing the nation's young people for success.

As the Class of 2026 embarks on the next stage of their journey, they do so with more than a diploma, they carry the hopes of a nation that looks to them to become innovators, educators, healthcare professionals, entrepreneurs, skilled tradespeople, public servants, and community leaders. Their talents, character, and commitment to service will play a vital role in strengthening the

economy, preserving the country's values, and shaping a prosperous future for the Turks and Caicos Islands. The Office of the Deputy Premier remains committed to supporting initiatives that recognize excellence, cultivate leadership, and inspire young people to become active participants in the continued growth and development of the Turks and Caicos Islands.



Hon. Jamell Robinson presents awards at the Raymond Gardiner High School in North Caicos



A radiant Adesha Gustave take time for camera shortly after winning the 2026 Miss International Turks and Caicos



Newly-crowned Miss International TCI, Adesha Gustave (second right) share a photo moment with her from left: first runner-up Niyecia Thompson, third runner-up Beverly Bruno, Miss International Americas Farrah Grant and second runner-up Marie Ismerelda.

'It Feels "Unreal"

Adesha Gustave Crowned Miss International Turks and Caicos 2026

By Vivian Tyson, NEWSLINE Editor-In-Chief

Adesha Gustave says it still feels "unreal" after being crowned Miss International Turks and Caicos 2026 during the national pageant held at Brayton Hall on Venetian Road on Saturday, June 27.

Gustave emerged victorious from a field of four contestants, succeeding inaugural queen Farrah Grant. In addition to winning the coveted crown, she also captured the sectional awards for Best Gown and Best Swimwear.

Niyecia Thompson, who was named Most Photogenic, finished as first runner-up. Marie Ismerelda was second runner-up, while Beverly Bruno placed third runner-up.

Reflecting on her victory moments after the pageant, Gustave said she entered the competition simply for the experience and never imagined she would walk away as queen.

"It feels unreal. I entered this competition completely amateur," she said. "I just did it to have the experience so that I could say one

day that I did it, and I ended up winning. So that's crazy."

While excited about the opportunity to represent the Turks and Caicos Islands on the international stage, Gustave acknowledged the responsibility that comes with wearing the crown.

"It's going to be very nerve-wracking," she admitted. "I'm already a very nervous person, so I can imagine representing the entire country. But it's also going to be a great opportunity to showcase that variety, especially because of my background, and to show people in my community that they are able to step into certain rooms, reach certain heights and be in certain spaces."

Gustave also said she was humbled by the overwhelming support she received from the audience during the question-and-answer segment, which drew some of the loudest applause of the evening.

"I didn't know they were going to receive it (my response to the question) that well," she said. "I was nervous, but I just treated it like a conversation because I was

passionate about what I was saying. It felt good."

National Director Charlene Grant Richards described the event as a milestone in restoring pageantry in the Turks and Caicos Islands after years of limited activity.

"First and foremost, I wanted to create an event that brings the pageantry back into pageants," Grant Richards said. "Here in the Turks and Caicos, I realized that's been lost. People had kind of lost hope or faith in pageantry, so I wanted to go all out within my budget to deliver an event that entertained people and brought communities together."

Grant Richards said the organization also invited reigning international queens from countries represented within the Turks and Caicos diaspora to make the event more inclusive and encourage greater community participation. She praised the contestants for their dedication throughout the two-month preparation period, which included choreography, interview coaching and personal development sessions.

"We believe in quality over quantity," she said. "The girls were well prepared, respectful, humble and incredibly intelligent. I wanted them to leave feeling they had been part of something positive and had truly been treated like queens."

In the meantime, Grant Richards said Gustave's preparation for the Miss International competition will begin almost immediately.

"The real work starts now," she said. "Miss International is a holistic platform that focuses on cultural exchange, empowerment and community building. Adesha will be working on a project aligned with one of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, and we have a structured programme in place to prepare her over the coming months."

Grant Richards said the organization hopes Gustave's reign will not only result in a strong showing at Miss International but also inspire more young women across the Turks and Caicos Islands to participate in pageantry and community leadership.

Ministry of Immigration and Border Services Announces Mandatory Online Submission of Work Permit Applications Through APS Portal



Deputy Premier and Minister of Immigration and Border Services Hon. Jamell Robinson

The Ministry of Immigration and Border Services wishes to advise the public that, effective Wednesday, 1 July 2026, all work permit applications must be submitted electronically through the Application Processing System (APS).

This transition marks another significant milestone in the Government's ongoing efforts to modernise immigration and employment services, improve operational efficiency, enhance customer service, and provide a more streamlined and transparent application process.

From 1 July, paper applications for work permits will no longer be accepted. All work permit applications must be completed and submitted through the APS portal. Applicants, employers, and authorised agents are encouraged to familiarise themselves with the online platform before the implementation date and ensure they have all required supporting documentation available when submitting applications.

The APS portal can be accessed here. For the convenience of the public, APS

application stations are available at all Department of Employment Services locations across the Turks and Caicos Islands. Individuals who require access to a computer to submit their applications may utilise these designated stations during nor-

mal business hours.

The Ministry remains committed to delivering modern, efficient, and accessible public services while strengthening the integrity of the work permit application process through digital transformation.

The Brokers of Lucayna

An OpEd by Audley Astwood

Politics in Lucayna had never been for the faint-hearted. It is a place where victories are celebrated with great fanfare, defeats are rarely accepted with grace, and alliances could change overnight. In the cafés, restaurants, churches and parliamentary corridors, power in Lucayna is less about ideology than influence, perceived or real, but mostly perceived.

At the centre of the current political season stand two men whose convenient alliance intrigues and unsettles many. The first is Doo-glass Perfidy. Only a few days ago, Doo-glass emerged as leader of the One More Chance Movement (OMCM), returning to the helm of a political party he had once led before fading from prominence. His supporters hailed him as an experienced political survivor capable of rebuilding the party. His critics remember a different story.

Doo-glass fashions himself as a political strategist and some in his party have come to accept it as fact. Yet strategy, in public life, is ultimately measured by results. By that standard, his record offers little evidence of major national initiatives conceived, implemented or successfully delivered for the benefit of the country.

If he masters anything, it is not the machine of government, but the mechanics of politics and the agency of the extractive class, as is clear by his assumed position as proxy for the Mercantile Atlantic Group, an influential international investment conglomerate with significant commercial interests in Lucayna. Whether he formally represents the Group is never entirely clear. He never quite says he does, nor does he discourage others from believing it. Investors see him as politically pliable. Politicians assume he speaks for foreign capital. The ambiguity serves ev-

eryone, especially Doo-glass.

The timing was significant

The governing Progressive & Pragmatic Party (PPP), under the seasoned leadership of Karolos Mistic, has embarked on an ambitious programme of economic reform. Mistic, a patient institutionalist respected even by many of his opponents, believed Lucayna's future depends upon broadening economic opportunity.

His administration promotes policies aimed at rebalancing capital, encouraging local ownership, empowering citizens, strengthening indigenous businesses and ensuring that ordinary Lucaynans share more fully in the nation's prosperity. The reforms are welcomed by many local entrepreneurs. Some foreign investors, however, view them with caution. Within those circles, Doo-glass increasingly presents himself as the man who could protect established commercial interests while navigating Lucayna's changing political landscape.

Then came another surprise

MAR-kos Fullshift crossed the floor. For years MAR-kos had been associated with the opposition PPP, where he had cultivated an image as an ambitious lawyer and political strategist. But ideology never seemed to anchor him for very long. His latest political migration to the newly reformed OMCM under Doo-glass raised eyebrows throughout Lucayna. Some called it bold. Others called it predictable.

Among political veterans, one phrase circulated with increasing frequency.

Watch your back, and count your fingers, Doo-glass

MAR-kos holds a law degree and is a practising attorney, among the most expensive, but many question whether his legal accomplishments justified the reputation he worked so diligently to project. He prefers to stand near accomplished lawyers rather

than compete with them, often presenting himself as the strategist behind complex legal manoeuvres while others carried the burden of the actual advocacy.

His true expertise lay elsewhere

He is an influence peddler of extraordinary confidence. Though diminutive in stature, MAR-kos carries himself with towering self-belief. He could enter almost any room convinced that he is the most important person present. Friends admire his confidence. Critics describe it as a Napoleon complex wrapped in expensive tailoring.

He cultivates diplomats, investors, judicial personalities, business executives and political hopefuls with equal enthusiasm. Every introduction becomes an opportunity. Every conversation a potential transaction. He increasingly portrays himself as the principal political advocate for the foreign investor community, assuring international business interests that he alone understands the hidden mechanics of Lucayan politics.

Whether his influence matches his claims remains a matter of lively debate.

MAR-kos also nurtured another ambition. Recognition. He speaks often, sometimes too often, about the honours and distinctions bestowed by the British Crown. Those who know him joke that he imagines his name one day followed by letters such as OBE, while on especially optimistic days he seems to envision himself elevated to King's Counsel, despite a legal career that has produced more publicity than jurisprudence. Ambition, after all, required no qualification. His arrival within the OMCM delights some supporters but causes others to grow uneasy. Doo-glass spent years rebuilding his political relevance. MAR-kos spent years building his own personal relevance. Experienced observers wonder how long two men with such expansive egos could comfortably occupy the same political stage.

One seeks to regain national leadership. The other appears content to stand beside leadership, at least until a better opportunity presents itself.

Around them, Lucayna continued wrestling with larger questions. Should economic policy primarily strengthen the position of international capital? Or should government deliberately expand opportunities for Lucayan citizens to own, build and prosper? Premier Karolos Mistic insists that empowering citizens is not incompatible with welcoming investment. His government argues that sustainable prosperity requires both confidence from investors and meaningful participation by ordinary people.

Meanwhile, Doo-glass now seeks to position the OMCM as a credible alternative government and, standing just over his shoulder, is MAR-kos smiling, networking, whispering advice, cultivating influence and quietly reminding everyone that politics, like commerce, often rewards those who stay closest to power.

Whether he remained loyal for the journey ahead is another question entirely.

In Lucayna, history suggests that today's indispensable ally could easily become tomorrow's most dangerous rival.



A MODEST PROPOSAL – TCI

By Paladin

Let me talk to you straight, as if you're sitting in my living room with a cup of bush tea. We all know Providenciales has a traffic problem. What we cannot agree on is why it exists or what to do about it. So let me wade in — not timidly, not politely, but with a proposal that could actually fix the mess we're in if we had the courage to act.

Seventeen miles of contiguous roadway does not make a highway. It is simply a long road, and the speed limit needs to come down. Everyone needs to slow down. You are not on a drag strip. You are not auditioning for *Fast & Furious: Blue Hills Drift*. And yes, that includes the airport taxis racing back for the next fare. That foolishness has to stop.

Now here is where I get immodest. Let's take a hard look at the so called median running down the center of the highway. After twenty years, what do we have to show for it? Not a garden. Not a beautification project. Just a sunbaked, weed infested eyesore. So let's remove it. In its place, we build alternating tram stops along the roadway, flowing straight into Blue Hills. The space already exists; the Millennium Highway was designed for four lanes. Remove the median, adjust the sidewalks, and suddenly there is room for a tram or trolley system running down the spine of Provo.

This does not require elevated platforms, fancy walkovers, or billion dollar overengineering. It requires simple,

staggered pedestrian crossings where drivers slow down — like civilized human beings — to let people board the tram.

Each crossing must have real rules and real enforcement. Every tram stop gets a two color light system: green for drivers to proceed, red with a walk symbol for pedestrians to cross. When the red light appears, drivers stop. Full stop. No negotiation. No excuses. And because we know how people behave when they think no one is watching, each crossing gets enforcement cameras — the same type used in Canada and other countries. These cameras capture your licence plate, your vehicle, and your face. The DMV already has your email. Within three days, you receive a fine and summons. Ignore three summonses and your licence is suspended. Real change only happens when punishment is immediate and certain.

Since we are removing the lamp poles, we replace them with proper lighting on the outer edges of the road — metal poles strong enough to hold digital billboards. These screens can display hurricane warnings, accident reroutes, missing persons alerts, community announcements, holiday messages, congratulations for our athletes and ambassadors, and yes, paid advertising that sends revenue straight into the Treasury. Imagine our Miss Universe contestant returning home with her face lighting up the entire highway. That is national pride, not clutter.

Now let's talk about sidewalks — real

ones. Not the oversized slabs we have now, but right sized sidewalks that double as caps for a U shaped concrete conduit system. This trough carries stormwater to a holding pond or the ocean, prevents flooding after heavy rain, houses waterproof tubing for power, water, phone, and internet lines, and charges every private utility a monthly fee to use it. It can be built right here in TCI using simple molds and allows technicians to access lines without digging up the road every six months. One structure solves multiple problems: local manufacturing, government revenue, better infrastructure, and fewer disruptions.

Now the tram itself. To use it, you do not need cash. You buy a TCI Transit Card from a vending machine using a debit or credit card. Tap on, tap off. Eventually, the same card works for buses, water taxis, and the full mass transit network. And because we are Turks Islanders, the tram will earn its own nickname — Banana Express, Coco Loco, something playful and ours. We should embrace it, brand it, and make it an experience.

Mass movement is not new to us. Years ago, we had a bus called The Iguana that ran hourly between Turtle Cove and Grace Bay for two dollars a ride. Taxi drivers recommended it proudly. We had the seed of the idea; we simply never expanded it into an island wide system.

Once the main tram line is running, we expand into Five Cays, South Dock, Kew Town, Long Bay, Grace Bay, and Leeward. Every community becomes

connected. Every resident gains an alternative to driving. Every tourist avoids the white knuckle taxi ride of their life. Traffic slows. Accidents drop. Gasoline bills shrink. Pedestrians and cyclists stop risking their lives. And the entire island becomes more beautiful, more organized, and more modern.

When Turks Islanders travel abroad, they queue properly, obey speed limits, wait for the bus or train, and follow the rules of the road. So why can't we do the same here at home? It is not that we cannot. It is that we do not want to — until someone forces us. This project requires leadership that is part benevolent, part tyrant, because sometimes you must save people from themselves. And yes, the money. I can already hear the objections: "Paladin, this sounds expensive." Of course it is. All public works are. But if we are debating borrowing \$380 million and spending \$400 million on the airport, then surely we can allocate \$50–60 million a year to a five year capital project that fixes traffic, ends flooding, beautifies the island, improves safety, creates revenue, and modernizes our transportation system. That is not an expense. That is an investment.

So tell me — how modest is this proposal, really? Because from where I'm sitting, it sounds like common sense wrapped in courage. And if we do not start thinking boldly, creatively, and unapologetically, we will still be here ten years from now, arguing about the same traffic on the same seventeen mile "highway" that never was.

COMMON CAR COURTESY: THE MISSING INGREDIENT IN TCI'S DAILY COMMUTE

An OpEd By Paladin

Everyone in Turks and Caicos wants the same simple thing: to get where they are going with as little stress and frustration as possible. Yet every day on our roads, we see impatience, indifference, and unnecessary tension that make driving far more unpleasant than it needs to be. The solution is not complicated. It begins with something old fashioned, something simple, something we all learned as children: courtesy.

Courtesy is more than politeness. It is more than saying good morning or holding a door. At its core, courtesy is a conscious act of respect for the comfort, safety, and dignity of others. It is the recognition that we share space, share time, and share responsibility for making our community livable.

Car Courtesy is courtesy applied behind the wheel. It is the practice of driving with awareness, patience, and consideration for other motorists, pedestrians, and the overall flow of traffic. It

is the understanding that your vehicle is not just a machine; it is a moving part of a shared system. Car Courtesy means allowing a driver to merge when they have been waiting, slowing down so someone can turn safely, resisting the urge to accelerate aggressively to "beat" another car, avoiding the habit of blocking intersections, staying off your phone, and keeping traffic flowing instead of stopping to gawk at every minor distraction. These small actions have a massive impact on the daily experience of everyone on the road.

Anyone who drives in Providenciales or Grand Turk knows the frustration of trying to exit a side road onto a main thoroughfare, only to watch car after car pass without a single driver slowing down to let you in. Or the irritation of trying to turn off Millennium Highway while drivers barrel forward, refusing to give an inch. Where does this attitude come from? Why do we behave as if letting someone in is a personal loss rather than a communal gain?

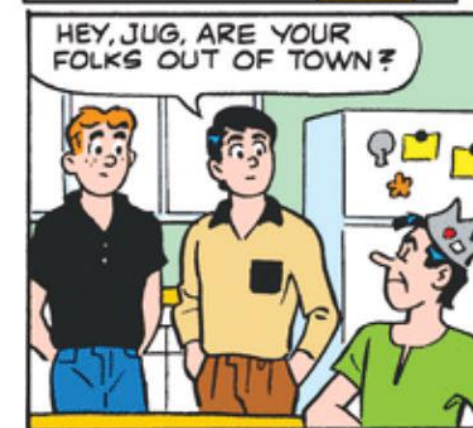
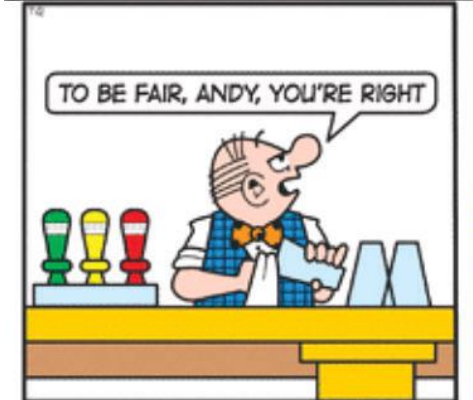
Part of the answer lies in the rapid in-

crease of vehicles across the Caribbean. Many islands, including ours, have experienced an explosion of imported cars and trucks. Traffic is heavier, roads are busier, and tempers are shorter. But some islands have adapted. Their motorists realized that the only way to survive increased traffic is to become more cooperative, not less. They embraced courtesy as a practical tool, not just a moral one.

Traffic is not only a matter of road design or vehicle volume. It is also a matter of behavior. When drivers cooperate, traffic flows. When drivers compete, traffic jams. A simple mindset shift can transform our roads: leave home on time so you are not rushing; be courteous and let people in; keep moving and avoid distractions. In some countries, drivers follow an informal system: if one driver lets someone in, the next three cars follow suit. No honking, no complaining, no fighting — just a shared understanding that cooperation benefits everyone. If it works in cities ten times the size of Providenciales, it can work here.

This matters for TCI because until long term solutions such as better road design, improved public transport, and staggered work hours are implemented, we must rely on each other. Courtesy is the cheapest, fastest, and most effective traffic solution available today. It costs nothing. It saves time. It reduces stress. It builds community. Most importantly, it reminds us that we are not isolated drivers fighting for position; we are neighbors sharing the same small island.

We cannot wait for government policy or infrastructure upgrades to fix our daily frustrations. We can fix a large part of it ourselves, today, simply by choosing to be kinder on the road. Let someone in. Slow down. Be patient. Drive with awareness. Remember that every driver is trying to get to work, school, or home — just like you. Courtesy is not weakness. It is strength. It is maturity. It is community. And it is the only way we will make driving in Turks and Caicos a more pleasant experience for everyone.



NEWSLINETM COMICS

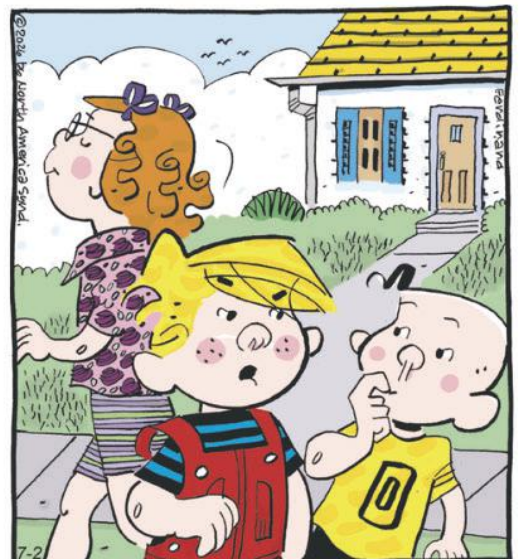
WOMEN CARE TOO EARLY



AND MEN CARE TOO LATE.



"It's REALLY hell when someone shakes us."



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PINK Flamingo



The Pink Flamingo is one of the most striking bird species found in the Turks and Caicos Islands. With its bright pink feathers, long legs, and distinctive curved bill, the flamingo is closely associated with the islands' wetlands, salt ponds, and shallow coastal lagoons. Historically, flamingos were found in large numbers across the Turks and Caicos Islands, particularly on North Caicos, Middle Caicos, and Grand Turk. These birds depend on quiet, shallow waters where they feed on small crustaceans, algae, and microscopic organisms that give their feathers their well-known pink colour.

During the early twentieth century, flamingo populations across the region declined due to hunting and disturbance of nesting grounds. As awareness of wildlife conservation grew, protective measures were introduced to safeguard flamingos and their habitats. Wetlands and coastal lagoons in parts of the Turks and Caicos Islands were later included within national parks and protected areas, helping to preserve important feeding and resting sites for the birds.

Today, flamingos remain an important part of the natural environment of the Turks and Caicos Islands. Their presence in salt ponds and wetlands reflects the ecological richness of the islands and highlights the importance of protecting fragile coastal habitats for future generations.



Carey Group Consultants with Hon. Shaun D. Malcolm.

PLANNING UNDERWAY FOR OPENING OF JUVENILE REHABILITATION FACILITY FOR BOYS

The Department of Rehabilitation and Community Supervision has taken another significant step toward the opening of the Juvenile Rehabilitation Facility for Boys by hosting consultants from the Carey Group, a United States-based organisation specialising in juvenile justice and residential rehabilitation services. The consultants were engaged to assist in developing the facility's operational model, as well as the policies and procedures that will guide its operations when it opens later this year.

During their visit, the Carey Group met with various Government Officials and other key stakeholders. The team also toured the facility and hosted a multi-agency workshop involving representatives from the Department of Rehabilitation and Community Supervision (DRCS), Education, Behavioural Health Services, Family and Children Services, Youth Affairs, Gender Affairs, the Royal Turks and Caicos Islands Police Force, and community partners. The workshop focused on developing a framework for governance, programming, staffing, behavioural management, education services,



Carey Group with Governor of the Turks and Caicos Islands, Her Excellency Dileeni Daniel-Selvaratnam.

family engagement, and reintegration planning. The Juvenile Rehabilitation Facility forms part of the Government's National Crime Prevention Strategy and will address a critical gap in services for at-risk youth. The facility will be a structured rehabilitation environment for boys who cannot be safely managed in the community and require intensive supervision and support.

Hon. Shaun D. Malcolm, Minister of Public Safety, Gender and Religious Affairs and Social Welfare, emphasised the importance of the initiative: This facility represents our commitment to ensuring that no young person is written off because of the challenges they face. For those boys whose needs cannot be safely managed in the community, we must provide a structured environment that promotes accountability, per-

sonal growth, and positive change. Our objective is to equip these young men with the skills, support, and opportunities they need to become productive members of society. The Juvenile Rehabilitation Facility is expected to commence operations later this year and will play an important role in reducing youth offending, strengthening families, and creating safer communities across the Turks and Caicos Islands.



Carey Group with Hon. Rachel Taylor, Minister of Education.

Life Line

FEATURED CHURCH

Community Fellowship Centre

This week, the NewslineTCI Featured Church spotlight shines on the Community Fellowship Center, located along the Leeward Highway in Providenciales. The Community Fellowship Center, which also operates a school- the Community Christian Academy- is led by Pastor Bradley Handfield, who is also a trained teacher. Community Fellowships Center conducts a series of activities during the course of each week, starting with Divine Service on Sunday at 9:00 AM. On Thursday and Friday between seven 7:30 AM and 6:00 AM., is early morning prayer meeting. Between Monday and Friday, at 12 noon, it conducts midday prayer meeting. Between Monday to Friday at 7:00 PM and 9:00 PM it conducts Bible study. 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>.

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

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

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

Roman Catholic Church,
Providenciales, Tel: 941-5136

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

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

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

Methodist Church,
Grand Turk Tel:946-2352

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

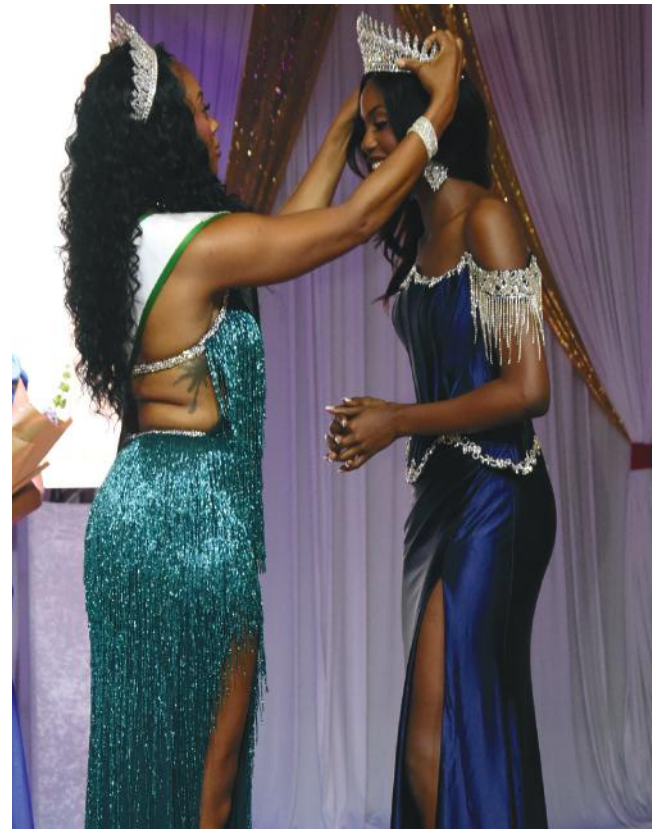
St. Monica's Anglican Church
P.O. Box 866 Cheshire Hall Providenciales
Tel: 946-4046
Fax:946-4046;941-8499

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

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

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

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



Highlights from the Miss International Turks and Caicos Islands Pageant

The Miss International Turks and Caicos Pageant concluded on Saturday, June 27, at the Brayton Hall in Providenciales, with contestant number 4, Adesha Gustave being crowned the 2026 winner. The following are photo highlights of the event.





50th Anniversary of Ministerial Government (1976–2026) Series; Road to 1976 Series...

The Voice of a Generation

PART SIX - The Rise of JAGS McCartney and the Political Awakening of the Turks and Caicos Islands

By Joan Astwood Sutton

Some leaders inherit power. Some leaders are appointed to office. And some leaders emerge because people are searching for a voice.

By the early 1970s, the Turks and Caicos Islands had entered one of the most important periods in their modern history. Economic uncertainty, outward migration, limited opportunities, and growing questions about political representation were creating new conversations throughout the country.

Across Grand Turk, Salt Cay, South Caicos, North Caicos, Middle Caicos, Providenciales, and the other islands, people increasingly asked difficult questions.

Who benefited from development? Who made the important decisions? Who represented ordinary people? And what future awaited a younger generation seeking greater opportunity and participation?

The atmosphere throughout the country was changing, and from that changing environment emerged a young man whose name would become inseparable from the political awakening of an entire generation. His name was James Alexander George Smith McCartney.

The Conditions That Produced a Leader

Great leaders rarely emerge in isolation. They are often shaped by the circumstances surrounding them.

During the late 1960s and early 1970s, many families continued to feel the effects of the salt industry's decline. Migration separated relatives, employment opportunities remained limited, and many young Islanders faced uncertainty about their future.

The constitutional changes introduced in 1969 expanded political participation, but many people still felt removed from meaningful decision-making.

Politics increasingly became connected to everyday life. It affected employment. It affected opportunity. It affected dignity. And it affected whether ordinary people believed they had a meaningful role in shaping their country's future.

Throughout the Caribbean and the wider Black world, discussions of self-government, constitutional reform, democracy, Majority Rule, labour rights, and cultural pride were shaping a new generation.

Young Turks and Caicos Islanders returning from study and work abroad brought with them broader perspectives and growing expectations for local leadership.

Many people were searching for a voice that reflected what they already felt.

The Emergence of JAGS McCartney

JAGS McCartney did not create the frustrations people experienced. Those frustrations already existed. People knew the challenges facing their communities. What made JAGS extraordinary was his ability to express those concerns with confidence and conviction.

Young, articulate, intelligent, and fearless, he possessed an unusual ability to connect directly with ordinary people. Many who knew him later recalled that his influence extended beyond speeches. He challenged fear. He challenged political passivity.

And he challenged the belief that ordinary Islanders should remain silent observers within their own country. For many supporters, JAGS became more than a politician. He became a symbol of possibility.

Challenging the Existing Order

One of the most memorable moments in JAGS McCartney's rise to prominence occurred when he publicly destroyed the existing Constitution in the Governor's presence. To supporters, the act symbolised dissatisfaction with the constitutional arrangements then in force and reflected the frustrations of a generation seeking greater political advancement. Whether viewed as a protest, a symbol, or political theatre, the incident became one of the defining images of the era's constitutional awakening.

Today, it remains one of the most powerful symbols associated with the political transformation of the 1970s. It is hoped that additional photographs, eyewitness accounts, and historical records relating to this event will continue to emerge for future generations.

A Leader the Youth Recognised

The growing support for JAGS McCartney reflected a wider awakening already taking place across the country.

Many young Islanders were embracing a stronger cultural identity, questioning inequality, discussing constitutional reform, and seeking greater participation in national life. JAGS belonged to their generation. He understood their frustrations and their aspirations. He spoke with a confidence that inspired many young people to believe that their voices mattered.

The movement, therefore, did not begin with a single speech or an individual. Rather, JAGS became the most visible expression of feelings already present throughout the Islands. He transformed private frustrations into public confidence.

The Turks and Caicos Youth Organisation

Long before Ministerial Government and long before national politics transformed the country, JAGS McCartney recognised the importance of young people.

Together with Edward "Eddie" Swann, he helped establish the Turks and Caicos Youth Organisation. The organisation provided opportunities for young people to gather, exchange ideas, and strengthen their sense of identity and community.

It demonstrated that JAGS' commitment to youth development preceded his rise to national political leadership. Although the political awakening extended far beyond any single organisation, the Youth Organisation was part of the broader atmosphere that encouraged young people to think more deeply about their country and its future. For JAGS, investing in young people was part of nation-building itself.

The Buoy and the Dream of Unity

Perhaps no symbol captured the spirit of the era more powerfully than the buoy in the Turks Island Passage. Originally installed to mark the Cable and Wireless underwater telecommunications cable, the buoy served a practical purpose.

Over time, however, many people came to associate the expression "West of the Buoy" with the perceived separation between the Turks Islands and the Caicos Islands. For many involved in the awakening, the buoy came to represent something larger. It represented unity. It represented a connection. It represented the belief that the country should never be divided by geography.

Its symbolic removal reflected a simple idea:

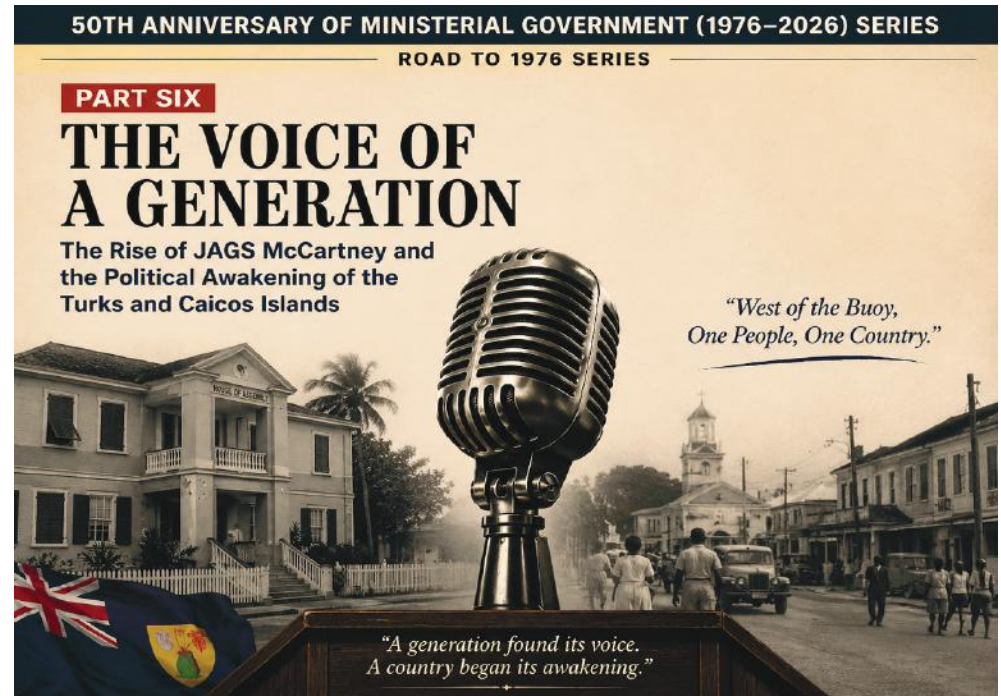
One Country;

One People;

One Future.

More Than One Movement

Later research, oral histories, and United



Nations records have demonstrated that the political awakening of the 1970s was far more complex than some later accounts suggested.

During discussions with the United Nations Visiting Mission in 1980, JAGS McCartney referred to activists involved in the wider awakening as among the "few groups" seeking to raise ordinary people's awareness of their rights. Those words remain historically significant. They suggest that the awakening involved multiple layers of activity. Some discussions occurred publicly. Others occurred quietly. Some organised through youth spaces and social gatherings. Others worked behind the scenes.

According to oral recollections preserved by Lewis "Louie" Edwin Astwood and others, some of the more sensitive discussions took place privately during a period when political activism carried considerable risks.

The awakening therefore extended beyond any single organisation, building, or leader. Yet within that wider movement, JAGS McCartney emerged as its most recognisable voice.

The Circle Around the Voice

Although history rightly remembers JAGS McCartney as the central figure of the awakening, he did not stand alone.

Among the most important relationships of the period was the friendship and working partnership between JAGS McCartney and Lewis "Louie" Edwin Astwood.

While JAGS increasingly became the public voice of the awakening, Astwood played an important organisational role within trusted circles surrounding the movement.

Together, they helped provide both leadership and structure during a period of growing national confidence. Many others also contributed.

Among those remembered within the broader story are:

Earl "Super C" Ingham, Mildred Garland-Astwood, Hubert James Jr., Nathaniel "Bops" Francis, Helena Jones Robinson, Sir Edward Wood, Mary Wood, Arthur Tatem, Minnie Tatem, Kenneth Carter, Marjorie Carter, Alexander Carter, Beatrice "Teacher Bea" Carter, Maurice Emmanuel "Moses" Carter Sr., Valeria Kennedy-Houseman, Raphael Graveley, Donald Smith, and many others.

Some contributed publicly. Others worked quietly. Many never sought recognitions. Yet together they helped create the atmosphere in which political transformation became possible.

The Legacy of Belief

Perhaps JAGS McCartney's greatest gift was his ability to make people believe that change was possible. For many young Islanders, he represented courage, dignity, confidence, cultural pride, and hope. His message reflected what many ordinary people themselves had begun to feel:

That the Turks and Caicos Islands deserved greater opportunity, stronger representation, constitutional advancement, and a larger role in determining their own future. By the middle of the 1970s, the political awakening that had begun quietly throughout the Islands was becoming increasingly visible. A generation had found its voice. And at the centre of that awakening stood JAGS McCartney. The movement was no longer merely a conversation.

It was becoming a force that would soon reshape the political history of the Turks and Caicos Islands.

To be continued...

About The Author

Joan Astwood-Sutton, LLB (Hons.), Master's in Publishing, and Certificate in Youth & Community Studies, is an author, publisher, cultural heritage researcher, museum founder, storyteller, and historical preservation advocate in the Turks and Caicos Islands. She is the Founder and Director of the Hon. Lewis Edwin Astwood Research Library, Museum and Learning Facility, dedicated to preserving the political, cultural, and historical legacy of the Turks and Caicos Islands.

She is the daughter of the late Hon. Lewis Edwin Astwood, who served in the first Ministerial Government established under the 1976 Constitution, and the late Mildred Garland Astwood, both of whom were closely connected to the political and community movements of the 1970s. Through decades of archival preservation, oral history documentation, and historical research, she has worked to preserve the memory and identity of the Turks and Caicos Islands for future generations.



Grant Noble

Island House LVM Donates \$30,000 to United Way's Literacy Programme for Children Across Turks & Caicos

ibly important. These islands are home, and supporting local children is something I feel strongly about," Grant added.

Together, Island House LVM and Grant Noble will have donated \$34,560, directly funding reading intervention, specialist teaching, and essential learning resources.

A lasting commitment to giving back The company continues to encourage guests to get involved, recognising that small actions can create meaningful change when combined and is exploring additional ways to integrate giving into the guest experience, including:

Optional guest donations via final bills

A "Pack for Purpose" programme encouraging guests to bring books and educational supplies

Island House LVM also supports wider community and environmental initiatives, including the annual TCI Coastal Cleanup.

Island House LVM encourages guests, partners, and the wider community to support United Way Turks

& Caicos.

Island House LVM is a luxury villa rentals and management company based in Providenciales, Turks & Caicos Islands, specialising in bespoke villa experiences and exceptional property care. Founded in 2020 by international hotelier Grant Noble, the company combines the service standards of a five-star resort with the intimacy and individuality of a private home.

With a curated portfolio of luxury villas across Grace Bay, Long Bay and Leeward, Island House LVM delivers personalised, immersive stays supported by a dedicated team of hospitality professionals. From private chefs and wellness experiences to seamless concierge and guest services, every detail is tailored to create meaningful, memorable stays.

Built on a philosophy of connection, authenticity, and respect for the local community, Island House LVM works closely with villa owners, guests, and trusted local partners to deliver exceptional experiences while supporting the Turks & Caicos Islands.

Island House LVM, a local luxury villa rentals and management company based in Providenciales, is proud to highlight its continued commitment to giving back to the community through its support of United Way TCI "Yes I Can Read" programme. Over the past 3 years, Island House LVM and its founder, Grant Noble, have donated over \$30,000, sponsoring eight children to improve their reading skills.

Having lived in Turks & Caicos for over 20 years, Grant Noble considers the islands home and cares deeply about the local community. After attending a local United Way event, he learned that not all local children have access to basic literacy, a reality he had never previously questioned. Seeing the impact firsthand strengthened his commitment to helping local children succeed.

Grant Noble commented, "Every child deserves access to education and the opportunity to learn to read. If a child can read confidently, it opens up opportunities that will stay with them for life."

Addressing a Critical Literacy Gap Data from the Education Department revealed that 60% of students - over 1,000 children - were reading at least three grade levels below expectation.

United Way's "Yes I Can Read" programme tackles this through targeted in-school and after-school interventions, delivering measurable results:

90% increase in reading levels

All students improved by at least two reading levels

Strong progression into higher reading levels

Students advancing to middle school as fluent readers

These outcomes reflect not just academic progress, but increased confidence and long-term opportunity.

Supporting Children Through Targeted Intervention

Grant Noble has sponsored children through the programme for the past two years and continues to do so, supporting two children annually. This year, Island House LVM is also sponsoring two additional children, doubling the overall contribution. "Giving back to a community that gives so much to all of us is incred-





The ribbon-cutting to officially commission the Beaches Welcome Center. From left are: Curtis Lee, Hotel Manager; Phildreka Campbell, Learning and Development Manager; Patricia Talbot, Restaurant Manager; Javain Campbell, Diamond Team Member; James McAnally, Regional Managing Director; Deryk Meany, General Manager; Owenta Coleby, Human Resources Manager; Tanya Swann, Executive Assistant Manager Treasure Beach Village; and Dr Anya Malcolm-Gibbs, Director of Special Education Needs Services.



Pastor Eric Johnson, also known as 'Chef Cookie', invoking God's presence on proceedings.

Beaches Turks and Caicos Opens New Welcome Center for Team Members

By Vivian Tyson NEWSLINE Editor-In-Chief

Beaches Turks and Caicos officially opened its new Team Member Welcome Center on Monday, June 29, marking a significant investment in employee well-being and reaffirming the resort's commitment to creating an exceptional workplace for its more than 2,400 team members.

The purpose-built facility serves as a central hub where employees can relax, recharge and access essential services before and during their workday. The Welcome Center houses Human Resources and Learning & Development offices, modern locker rooms, an expansive air-conditioned dining facility, and spaces designed to foster connection among staff. Future additions are expected to include banking services and other employee conveniences.

Opening the ceremony, Executive Assistant Manager Tanya Swann described the Welcome Center as "a massive milestone" and tangible proof of the company's commitment to its employees.

"The company has created the space to give their team members a dedicated place to relax and recharge," Swann said. "Whether you are visiting the HR or Learning & Development team, grabbing a cup of coffee, taking a well-deserved break or



catching up with colleagues, this center is for you."

Regional Managing Director for the Northern Caribbean and Curaçao, James McAnally, reflected on the years of planning that brought the project to life. He noted that as the resort expanded over the decades, employee facilities had become scattered across the property, prompting the need for a centralized space that matched the quality of the guest experience.

"We thought about what we could call this place, and I think Welcome Center was the perfect name," McAnally said. "It's our commitment to welcome team members every day into a space

they're proud of, comfortable in, and where they can enjoy a dining room that is second to none." McAnally added that while the opening represents "Beaches 2.0," even more improvements are planned as part of the resort's ongoing employee development strategy.

General Manager Deryk Meany described the Welcome Center as the beginning of a new chapter for the resort's workforce.

"This is your home away from home," Meany told employees. "You spend more time here than at your usual homes, and today we talk about the future. This is just the start of an amazing journey."

Meany highlighted several features of the new facility, including a 400-seat, air-conditioned dining area with an expanded menu offering vegan options, fresh fruits and vegetables, smoothies on Wednesdays, and themed meals designed to enhance the employee experience. Plans are also in place to introduce an ATM and MoneyGram services, allowing staff to conduct financial transactions without leaving the resort. Following remarks from management, Human Resources Manager Owenta Coleby, McAnally, Meany, Swann, Patricia Jennings-Talbot and Diamond Team Member of the Year Javeen Campbell officially cut the ribbon, opening the facility to employees.

Long-serving Assistant Bar Manager Pauline Brooks, who has worked at Beaches Turks and Caicos since 1997, praised the improvements, saying the transformation has been welcomed by employees across the resort.

"You can see the joy on the team members' faces," Brooks said. "Everything is different. It is totally different, and the team members are happy. This upgrade is excellent."

Brooks also credited the resort for providing long-term career opportunities, training and employee benefits throughout her nearly three decades of service.



Study reveals that 1 in 8 apparently healthy adults unknowingly carries a serious genetic risk

• *The study found that 13% of people with no symptoms or significant family history have DNA variants associated with serious diseases.*

When Mayo Clinic researchers sequenced the genomes of 484 seemingly healthy adults, they found that about 13% carried a serious, previously unrecognized genomic risk — conditions those patients did not know about and that standard care would likely miss. Nearly all participants, 98.6%, had at least one genetic finding, and for most, the results called for monitoring. The study, published in *Genetics in Medicine*, also takes a closer look at what it takes to turn those findings into the proper follow-up care.

Among the 13%, the actionable findings pointed to serious risks, including hereditary breast and ovarian cancer; Lynch syndrome, linked to colorectal cancer; cardiomyopathy; long QT syndrome; and amyloidosis.

“These are people traditional testing based on symptoms or family history would not identify,” says Dr. Konstantinos Lazaridis, the Carlson and Nelson Endowed Executive Director of the Center for Individualized Medicine and

senior author of the study. “This study helps define the blueprint for integrating genomic insight into care at scale — turning information into decisions that can change the trajectory of disease.”

From discovery to care

Identifying the risk, it turns out, is the easiest part. Acting on it is far more complex. Nearly every case required clinical interpretation, documentation and communication. This work fell largely to genetic counselors, who reviewed results, prepared individualized summaries and helped guide next steps for patients and care teams.

“Genetic counselors are often the first people to share this kind of information with patients,” says Jessa Bidwell, a certified research genetic counselor and first author of the study. “There can be surprise, anxiety, devastation, and at times relief at finally having an explanation. Our role is to meet people in that moment and help them understand what their health risks might be, based on the genetic finding, and their personal and family history.”

Most participants with actionable findings followed through, completing re-

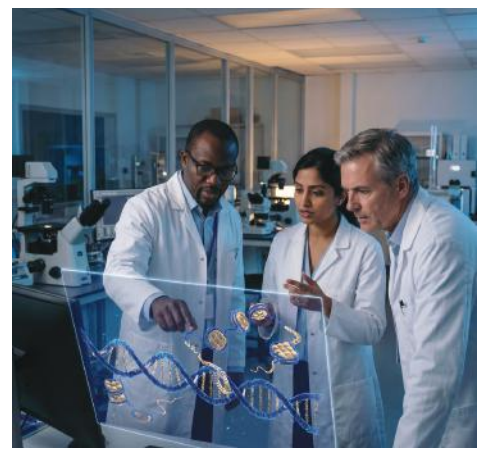
ferrals and connecting with primary care specialists. Yet fewer than half had a documented conversation with a primary care professional after receiving results — underscoring how difficult it remains to integrate genomic findings into routine care.

The study positions predictive genomic screening as both a clinical opportunity and a systems challenge. The science exists. Researchers and clinicians are still building the infrastructure to act on it consistently.

At Mayo Clinic, that infrastructure is beginning to take shape through an initiative called Precure. Genomic screening is one part of that initiative, which aims to detect disease earlier by combining genetic data with other biological signals.

Predicting disease before it begins

Most diseases don’t arrive without warning. They begin with small shifts in genes, molecules, proteins and immune signals that develop over time, often years before symptoms appear. Precure is Mayo Clinic’s enterprise-wide effort to detect those early signals and intervene sooner. Powered by advanced computing and artificial



intelligence (AI), the initiative currently focuses on five organ systems — the brain, heart, kidneys, liver and lungs — studying conditions such as Alzheimer’s disease, heart failure and chronic liver disease to better understand how they emerge and progress.

The work draws on expertise from across Mayo Clinic and is supported by Mayo Clinic Platform, which brings together large-scale patient data and advanced computing to enable scientists to study disease across populations.

“Precure is one example of a moonshot for human health at Mayo Clinic,” says Dr. Lazaridis, who leads the initiative. “It reflects Mayo Clinic’s commitment to move medicine beyond treatment and toward lasting wellness.”

Precure is part of Mayo Clinic’s Bold. Forward. strategy to Cure, Connect and Transform healthcare. The genomic screening study is an early demonstration of what that looks like in practice: science that doesn’t wait for disease to announce itself, and a system already being built to act on what it finds.



The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is investigating a multistate outbreak of *Listeria monocytogenes* infections that has been linked to meats sliced at deli counters. According to the CDC, 34 people across 13 states have been infected with the outbreak strain. Of those, 33 have been hospitalized, and two deaths have been reported—one in Illinois and another in New Jersey.

Health officials say interviews with infected individuals indicate a strong link

to deli-sliced meats. Among 24 people interviewed, 23 reported eating meats sliced at deli counters before becoming ill. Thirteen people said they had eaten deli-sliced liverwurst, and seven identified the product as Boar’s Head brand. Investigators also found that an unopened package of Boar’s Head liverwurst tested positive for *Listeria monocytogenes*. Whole Genome Sequencing (WGS) is underway to determine whether the bacteria found in the product matches the strain re-

CDC Investigates Multistate Listeria Outbreak Linked to Deli-Sliced Meats

sponsible for the outbreak. Officials are continuing to investigate whether additional deli meat products may also be affected.

The CDC is urging consumers not to eat recalled deli products. Anyone who has purchased the affected items should discard them or return them to the store for a refund. People at higher risk of severe illness—including pregnant women, older adults, and individuals with weakened immune systems—should avoid eating meats sliced at deli counters unless they are reheated to an internal temperature of 165°F or until steaming hot.

Consumers are also advised to thoroughly clean refrigerators, food containers, and any surfaces that may have come into contact with sliced deli meats. Anyone who develops symptoms of *Listeria* infection after recently eating deli-sliced meats should contact a healthcare provider.

Businesses that received recalled products are encouraged to follow strict food safety measures, including cleaning and sanitizing deli areas, discarding opened sliced meats and cheeses, and following USDA-FSIS guidelines to help prevent *Listeria* contamination.

Listeria is a foodborne bacterium that can cause invasive listeriosis, a serious infection that spreads beyond the digestive system. While pregnant women often experience mild flu-like symptoms, infection during pregnancy can lead to miscarriage, stillbirth, premature delivery, or life-threatening illness in newborns.

For others, symptoms may include fever, muscle aches, headache, stiff neck, confusion, loss of balance, and convulsions. Severe illness typically develops one to four weeks after consuming contaminated food, although symptoms can appear as early as the same day or as late as 70 days later.



From left: YG Marley, Selah Marley and Zion Marley on stage at the recent BET Awards

Ding Dong leads Rock representation at 2026 BET Awards

As the entertainment industry gathered to celebrate black excellence at the 2026 BET Awards, Jamaican dancehall proudly had a seat at the table through international hitmaker Ding Dong, who stood as the night's leading representative for the genre.

While reggae and dancehall continue to influence music, fashion, and culture worldwide, representation at premier events like the BET Awards and BET Experience re-

mains vital. Visibility creates opportunities—not only for artists, but also for the executives, producers, media personalities, and creatives working to elevate Caribbean culture on the global stage.

Also representing the Caribbean throughout BET Awards weekend were media executive and CODA Founder & CEO Lexi Chow, comedian and media personality Pretty Vee, producer DJ Mac, and Crash Dummy.

Reggae was also represented through the Marley legacy as YG Marley, Selah Marley, and Zion Marley joined an all-star tribute honouring their mother, Lauryn Hill, who received the inaugural Living Legend Icon Award for her extraordinary contributions to music and culture.

The Caribbean's presence extended beyond Jamaica, with Trinidadian actor Rob Riley also attending, highlighting the region's growing influence across music, film, television, and entertainment.

For Jamaica, Ding Dong's appearance carried particular significance. As one of dancehall's most

recognisable global ambassadors, his presence ensured the genre remained visible on one of entertainment's biggest stages.

"Representation is about more than walking a red carpet," said Chow. "It's about building relationships, opening doors, creating opportunities, and making sure Caribbean talent has a voice in the global entertainment industry. As black culture continues to shape the world, the Caribbean has always been a driving force behind that influence. Moments like the BET Awards remind us that showing up, being present, and occupying these spaces truly matters."

Caribbean mourns soca icon Oscar B, dead at 57

The Caribbean music fraternity is mourning the loss of one of its most beloved entertainers.

Celebrated Tobagonian soca icon Oscar B, born Oscar Dennis Benjamin, died on Sunday, June 28 after complications related to a stroke he suffered earlier in May. He was 57.

In a poignant twist, his passing came just hours before the Tobago Family & Friends Healing Concert, a benefit event organised at the Shaw Park Cultural Complex to help raise funds for his medical treatment. Instead of a fundraiser, the gathering became an emotional celebration of his life, with fellow musicians, friends and devoted fans paying tribute to a man whose music had soundtracked Caribbean carnivals and festivals for decades.

Oscar B leaves behind a legacy that stretches far beyond his native Tobago.

He first emerged as a promising vo-

calist with the Signal Hill Alumni Choir before rising to regional and international prominence as the charismatic lead singer of the legendary Byron Lee and the Dragonaires in Jamaica. His infectious stage presence, booming vocals and boundless energy made him one of the band's stand-out performers during an era when the group dominated stages across the Caribbean, North America and Europe.

Over a decades-long career, Oscar B became synonymous with the joyful spirit of soca, delivering crowd-pleasing anthems that remain staples at carnivals and fêtes throughout the region.

Whether performing before thousands at Carnival or electrifying audiences on international stages, Oscar B possessed a rare ability to unite people through rhythm, celebration and unmistakable Caribbean energy. His death marks the end of an era for



Tobagonian music and leaves a void in the wider Caribbean entertainment landscape.

Though his voice has been silenced, the music that made generations dance will continue to echo through festivals, sound systems and Carnival

celebrations for years to come.

Oscar B is survived by his family, friends and countless fans across the Caribbean and the diaspora, who will remember him not only as a gifted performer but as one of the enduring voices of soca music.



Her Excellency Dame Cynthia "Mother" Pratt, Governor-General of the Commonwealth of The Bahamas

Bahamian Governor-General to Headline TCI National Prayer Breakfast

The National Prayer Breakfast, organized under the auspices of the Ministry of Public Safety, Gender and Religious Affairs, and Social Welfare, led by Hon. Shaun Malcolm, will bring together government officials, religious leaders, members of the diplomatic corps, the private sector, and the wider community for a morning of worship, reflection, and national unity. This year's theme, "Faith in Our Journey, Hope for Our Future," is inspired by Jeremiah 29:11 and reflects the nation's journey over the past five decades while looking ahead with optimism and purpose. Governor-General Pratt, affectionately known throughout The Bahamas as "Mother" Pratt, is expected to deliver a keynote address centered on faith, servant leadership, resilience, and the role of spiritual

values in national development. Her participation underscores the close historical and cultural ties shared between The Bahamas and the Turks and Caicos Islands. The 2026 National Prayer Breakfast carries added significance as it forms part of the official observance of the 50th anniversary of Ministerial Governance, celebrating the evolution of democratic leadership and the enduring partnership between faith and public service in shaping the nation's progress. The annual event continues to serve as one of the country's premier national observances, offering an opportunity for leaders and citizens alike to seek God's guidance and blessings for the future of the Turks and Caicos Islands while reaffirming the values of unity, hope, and service.

Her Excellency Dame Cynthia "Mother" Pratt, Governor-General of the Commonwealth of The Bahamas, will serve as the keynote speaker at the 2026 Turks

and Caicos Islands National Prayer Breakfast, a landmark event commemorating 50 Years of Ministerial Governance in the Turks and Caicos Islands.



Shakem Charles, Trevor Watkins, Courtney and Hu Prospere

TCI TOP MODEL CELEBRATE COVER MODELS IN GRACE BAY

(Discover Turks and Caicos, 2026). Family, friends, partners and fashion enthusiasts were invited to celebrate their achievements. Attendees enjoyed an elegant evening featuring large billboards of the covers displayed around the room, alongside copies of the issues available to take home. The event provided aspiring creatives and fashion lovers with an opportunity to meet the models, pose for photographs and take away tangible examples of local talent and publication. The organisers extend their thanks to Paolo Patitucci, CEO and Founder of Gruppo Perfetto TCI Ltd, for hosting the event at Cocktail Perfetto, and to Arian Louis, Director of Human Resources and Community Outreach at Grace Bay Car Rentals, for facilitating the evening. Their support helped

create an inspiring platform for the next generation of creatives in the Turks and Caicos. Dr Courtney Robinson, Founder and Executive Producer of TCI Top Model, said, 'I could not be prouder of Shakem, Hu and Trevor. Their dedication and professionalism showcase the promise of our burgeoning industry. There is still work to be done, but tonight confirms that, with the support of our partners and community, we are laying the foundations for a thriving fashion and creative-arts scene in the Turks and Caicos. These magazines are a vivid reminder that creativity, beauty and talent flourish here.' Copies of the Summer 2026 issues of Times of the Islands and Discover Turks and Caicos 2026 are available at newsstands at local retailers.

The organisers of TCI Top Model hosted "Cover Model", a meet-and-greet on Friday 26 June at Cocktail Perfetto, The Hub, Grace Bay. The event offered guests the chance to meet three cover models, Trevor Watkins, TCI Top Model 2026; Shakem Charles, TCI

Top Model 2025; and Hu Prospere, 1st Runner-up, TCI Top Model 2025 — all of whom have appeared on editorial and magazine covers within the past nine months: Shakem (Times of the Islands, Fall 2025); Trevor (Times of the Islands, Spring 2026); and Hu



An aerial rendering of the Loren property



A rendering of the Loren Resort

The Loren Difference: Where Beachfront Luxury Meets Marina Living

For decades, luxury real estate in the Turks & Caicos Islands has been synonymous with beachfront living. Expansive stretches of white sand, crystal-clear waters, and iconic ocean views have established the destination as one of the Caribbean's most sought-after residential markets.

Today, however, the definition of luxury ownership is evolving.

Discerning buyers are seeking more than a beautiful home. They are looking for communities that complement the way they live- where exceptional residences are paired with meaningful experiences, personalized service, and effortless access to the water.

Increasingly, marina-oriented communities are becoming one of the most desirable segments of luxury real estate worldwide. From South Florida to the Bahamas and the Mediterranean, buyers are choosing residences that offer direct access to boating, yachting, fishing, diving, and life on the water.

The Loren Residences at Turtle Cove brings this global lifestyle to Turks & Caicos in a way few developments can.

Unlike traditional waterfront communities, The Loren offers a rare combination of beachfront luxury and private marina living, allowing owners to enjoy two distinct waterfront experiences within one extraordinary destination.

Whether beginning the morning with a walk along the beach, enjoying an afternoon aboard a yacht from the marina, or ending the day with waterfront dining overlooking Turtle Cove, residents experience the very best of island living from every per-

spective.

Currently under development on the historic site of the former Third Turtle Hotel, The Loren will feature a private marina with slips accommodating vessels from 30 to 130 feet, offering seamless access to the North Shore and the surrounding cays. Owners will be able to step from their residence to their vessel and spend the day fishing, diving, snorkeling, or exploring the turquoise waters that define the Turks & Caicos Islands.

Yet the experience extends far beyond boating.

As a globally recognized luxury hospitality brand, The Loren is creating a residential community where resort-inspired living becomes part of everyday ownership.

Concierge services, exceptional dining, thoughtfully curated amenities, and personalized experiences are designed to make every visit effortless. CAMP by The Loren already offers a glimpse into this hospitality philosophy, introducing residents and visitors alike to the level of service and lifestyle that will define the future community.

Turtle Cove itself has long been one of Providenciales' most established waterfront destinations. For generations, it has served as the heart of the island's boating community, bringing together anglers, divers, charter operators, and yachting enthusiasts. The Loren builds upon that legacy while introducing a new standard of luxury and hospitality.

As Turks & Caicos continues to attract discerning buyers from around the world, purchasing decisions are increasingly driven by lifestyle rather



Joe Zahm, Head of Turks and Caicos Sotheby's International Realty

than location alone. Buyers are investing in experiences, community, convenience, and the quality of everyday living.

The Loren reflects this evolution. By combining beachfront living, private marina access, luxury hospitality,

and an exceptional ownership experience, it introduces a new vision of waterfront living- one that embraces every aspect of the island lifestyle.

At The Loren, you do not have to choose between the beach and the marina. You can enjoy both.

Beijing dismisses US concerns, says Jamaica partnership founded on mutual gains

China has rejected remarks made by United States (US) ambassadorial nominee Kari Lake, defending its 53-year relationship with Jamaica by highlighting more than US\$2.1 billion in investments, extensive trade, and recent disaster assistance as evidence of a partnership that benefits both countries. The statement follows comments made last week by Lake during her appearance before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, where she indicated that, if confirmed, she would seek to limit China's influence in Jamaica.

Addressing US lawmakers, Lake said she would work to "... ensure that Jamaica continues to choose transparency, sovereignty, and partnership with the United States over dependence on actors whose interests do not align with our shared values".

Responding yesterday, China's embassy in Kingston said Beijing has consistently been, and will remain, "good friends and good partners for equality, mutual benefit and common development" with countries across Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC).

The embassy added that openness, inclusiveness, and mutually beneficial cooperation continue to define relations between China and LAC nations.

"China always respects the people of LAC countries and commits to equal treatment and mutual benefit. Our cooperation does not target any third party and should not be subject to interference by any third party," the embassy said in an emailed statement to *The Gleaner*.

According to the embassy, the 53-year diplomatic relationship between China and Jamaica stands as an example of "equal-footed

interaction" and "mutually beneficial cooperation for win-win results" between nations of different sizes.

It noted that bilateral trade between the two countries surpassed US\$1.4 billion in 2025.

Chinese enterprises have also invested more than US\$2.1 billion in Jamaica, the embassy said, generating upwards of 40,000 direct jobs, with more than 80 per cent of employees recruited locally.

The embassy also highlighted several Chinese-supported developments, including the Hugh Lawson Shearer Building at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, the Western Children's Hospital, and the North-South Highway, describing them as lasting symbols of the friendship between both countries.

It further cited the Confucius Institute at The University of the West Indies (UWI), Mona, saying it has helped more than 2,000 Jamaicans acquire Chinese language skills, while over 3,000 Jamaicans have benefited from scholarships and exchange programmes initiated by China.

"After Jamaica was hit by Hurricane Melissa, China promptly provided financial assistance and emergency supplies to the island. The deployment of the Chinese Navy hospital ship *Ark Silk Road* and a Chinese team of medical experts provided humanitarian medical services to 7,563 local patients, leaving a lasting mark in the history of bilateral friendship.

"Through practical cooperation, our two countries have translated our friendship into tangible benefits for our two peoples," the embassy stated.

During a two-day Caribbean visit in March

2025, which included stops in Jamaica, Guyana, and Suriname, US Secretary of State Marco Rubio criticised what he described as China's "predatory practices".

Rubio argued that China frequently promises funding for projects that are never completed, relies on imported labour instead of hiring local workers, and ties projects to loans that recipient countries struggle to repay.

"What we have seen all over the world is that China comes in and says 'Here's a bunch of money' for a project they never build. They bring their own workers to do work. They don't hire the locals. They bring their own workers and oftentimes it comes attached with a huge loan that can never be repaid and now they hold it over your head forever," Rubio said.

He also claimed Chinese state-backed companies often underbid competitors because of government subsidies before later increasing costs after securing contracts.

"That's our concern. Our concern is unfair practices where they come in, their government-subsidised companies underbid everybody because they are subsidised. But then they come back and charge you whatever they want because now they've got the contract. So, these are the things that we remain very concerned about and not specifically about Jamaica but in general," the US' top diplomat added.

At the Senate hearing, Lake echoed those concerns, saying one of her priorities would be "countering China's growing economic influence less than 500 miles from our shores". However, the Chinese embassy said US President Donald Trump's visit to China for talks with Chinese President Xi Jinping in May



China's President Xi Jinping

2026 represented a new phase in efforts to build a constructive China-US relationship based on strategic stability.

The embassy also urged Washington to honour recent bilateral understandings, arguing that stable relations between China and the United States are essential to global well-being and require a constructive, long-term commitment.

"The resources of LAC belong to the people there; the path of LAC countries should be chosen by their people, and the choice of friends is a decision for LAC countries alone," the embassy asserted.

UN Secretary-General António Guterres urges world leaders to keep promises to Haiti

Before leaving Port-au-Prince after a visit of solidarity, the U.N. chief criticized international inaction while urging Haitians to lead the country's path out of crisis.

During his visit to Haiti on Tuesday, June 16, United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres criticized the international community's inaction and urged Haitians not to miss the opportunity to pull out of the multidimensional crisis.

Speaking at a press conference in Pétion-Ville before departing the country, Guterres said Haitians should know they are not alone and that the world cannot continue to turn away from the country's suffering.

"Haiti cannot wait," Guterres said. "The greatest shame is not the gang violence, but indifference — that of a world that has looked away for far too long."

His remarks amounted to one of the strongest criticisms yet from a senior international official of the global response to Haiti's crisis. For years, Haitian leaders, civil society organizations and humanitarian agencies have warned that international pledges have often failed to translate into meaningful action.

Humanitarian response plans have repeatedly fallen short of funding targets and security assistance has arrived slowly or not at all; promised support for international security missions has lagged behind urgent needs, and efforts to help restore democratic institutions have yielded limited results. As gangs expanded their territorial control,

many have accused the international community of reacting too late and doing too little to help address the country's deteriorating security, political and humanitarian conditions.

Guterres was received by Prime Minister Alix Didier Fils-Aimé and met with representatives from various sectors of Haitian society, as well as people displaced by violence. The U.N. chief described Haiti as facing the most severe humanitarian crisis in the Western Hemisphere and one of the fastest-deteriorating situations in the world.

According to Guterres, gang violence has killed more than 2,300 people and injured more than 1,100 others in Haiti since the beginning of 2026. Approximately 6.4 million people — more than half the country's population — now require humanitarian assistance, up from 5.5 million two years ago, Guterres said. Nearly 1.5 million people have also been displaced by violence, the highest number ever recorded he said citing UN figures.

The crisis continues to worsen

One of the latest outbreaks of violence reportedly occurred on June 13 in the Belekou neighborhood of Cité Soleil slum, where armed clashes between rival gangs left more than 30 people dead, according to local organizations.

The organization Combite pour la Paix et le Développement (CPD)—French for Togetherness for Peace and Development—expressed concern on X, reporting that the

violence erupted during a rare procession originating in the nearby neighborhood of Wharf Jérémie following Haiti's World Cup match against Scotland.

Women and children continue to bear a disproportionate share of the crisis, Guterres said.

More than 20 women and girls were subjected to sexual violence each day on average during the first quarter of 2026, he remarked. He also noted that gang recruitment of children has tripled over the past year, with some estimates suggesting that as many as half of all gang members are minors.

"Gangs are terrorizing the country, and for too many Haitians, each day is a struggle for survival," Guterres lamented. "This is absolutely intolerable. It must stop."

Progress remains possible, Guterres says

Despite the grim realities, Guterres said there are signs that progress remains possible.

He pointed to the recovery of several neighborhoods in Port-au-Prince, the return of the Council of Ministers to the National Palace after more than three years and the potential impact of the recently deployed Gang Suppression Force (GSF).

Guterres said the force represents an opportunity to reduce violence and restore state authority, but warned that success will require stronger international backing.

"Haiti is not asking for charity," he said. "It is asking the international community to keep



U.N. Secretary-General António Guterres speaks during a press conference in Pétion-Ville, Port-au-Prince, at the conclusion of his solidarity visit to Haiti on Tuesday, June 16, 2026. Photo by Juhakenson Blaise /*The Haitian Times*

its promises."

The secretary-general called on donor countries and international partners to provide the resources needed to strengthen security efforts and expand humanitarian assistance. At the same time, he stressed that the responsibility for rebuilding Haiti ultimately rests with Haitians themselves.

"The opportunity that exists today may not come again. I am counting on Haitian leaders to seize it," Guterres added.

"It is for Haitians, and Haitians alone, to chart the path forward. Our role is not to act in your place, but to stand by your side."

Source: *The Haitian Times*

Beyond the Cap & Gown: Caribbean Women Building Businesses, Wealth & Legacy

As graduation season unfolds across the Caribbean, a different kind of success story is emerging, one did not define solely by academic degrees, but by women stepping boldly into entrepreneurship, leadership, and economic empowerment.

At the recent From Vision to Velocity 2026 leadership conference, one of the most powerful moments was the graduation celebration for the 10th cohort of the Positioned to Propel Success Academy (PTPA).

Founded in 2016 by Business Strategist Shelly Ann Aquí Solomon, the academy was created to address a growing challenge across the region: talented Caribbean women entrepreneurs struggling with visibility, branding, leadership, monetization, and consistent revenue despite having valuable businesses and skills.

This year's graduates represented a powerful cross-section of Caribbean entrepreneurship, including:

- Medical practitioners
- Financial professionals
- Publicists and Branding experts
- Hair, beauty, and wellness entrepreneurs
- Stylists and image consultants

- Administrative and specialty service providers

These women are not simply building businesses, they are building confidence, leadership capacity, financial independence, and legacy.

At a time when conversations around women empowerment and economic growth are dominating the regional landscape, the Positioned to Propel Success Academy represents a growing movement of Caribbean women choosing entrepreneurship as a pathway to ownership, sustainability, and long-term impact.

Unlike traditional programs, PTPA combines mentorship, branding, marketing, business fundamentals, visibility strategy, leadership development, and real-world implementation, guided by successful professionals teaching from lived entrepreneurial experience rather than theory alone.

At the core of the academy is Shelly's signature philosophy, "Life By Design: The Feminine Method," which encourages women to build businesses intentionally and sustainably while creating lives aligned with purpose, leadership, and fulfillment.

With over two decades of entrepreneurial experience, Shelly has built multiple businesses, mentored entrepreneurs across the region, and established herself as a respected leadership voice and community builder within Caribbean entrepreneurship. Most recently, through From Vision to Velocity 2026 and related initiatives, over TT\$50,000 in developmental scholarships were invested

back into the community through access to mentorship, branding, marketing, coaching, financial guidance, and entrepreneurial education.

As the Caribbean continues to evolve economically and socially, one message is becoming increasingly clear: The future of Caribbean entrepreneurship is female, leadership-driven, and being built far beyond the traditional classroom.



US Navy SEALs headed to T&T as Government intensifies war on crime

Prime Minister Kamla Persad-Bissessar has revealed that elite United States Navy SEAL personnel are being deployed to Trinidad and Tobago as part of an expanded security partnership aimed at strengthening border protection and disrupting criminal networks. Speaking with the Express on the country's ongoing fight against crime, Persad-Bissessar said advance members of the specialised military unit are already in Trinidad and Tobago preparing for a broader deployment that will support local security forces.

According to the Prime Minister, the SEAL teams will work alongside the Trinidad and Tobago Defence Force and Coast Guard, providing training, operational support and expertise in border security, drug interdiction and internal security operations.

She also announced that additional vessels from the United States are expected to arrive in the coming months, further boosting maritime surveillance and enforcement capabilities.

Persad-Bissessar said recent intelligence reports indicate a decline in the volume of narcotics entering Trinidad

and Tobago from South America, although drug trafficking remains a concern along several coastal corridors, particularly in southern and central Trinidad.

She identified the Caroni-to-Marabella coastline as one of the country's most vulnerable areas, citing criminal activity within coastal communities and regions covered by mangroves.

The Prime Minister maintained that border security has improved significantly over the past year, pointing to increased Coast Guard patrols and the restoration of radar operations.

She credited the country's law enforcement agencies for disrupting gang activity nationwide, while acknowledging that challenges remain with petty crime, financial fraud and domestic violence.

Persad-Bissessar also praised Police Commissioner Allister Guevarro, awarding him an "A" grade for his performance during his first year at the helm of the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service.

"The Commissioner has performed very well," she stated.

The Prime Minister further disclosed that United States intelligence agencies have been assisting local authorities by identifying individuals and businesses allegedly linked to drug trafficking and money laundering operations. She said actions have already been taken against some of those identified through restrictions involving access to US territory and financial institutions.

In addition, she noted that American agencies are assisting with physical and digital security upgrades at ports and airports as part of broader efforts to strengthen national security infrastructure.

Persad-Bissessar argued that similar support had been available to the previous administration but was not pursued.

Looking ahead, she said Government intends to continue investing in crime-fighting initiatives, including expanding staffing levels within the Inland Revenue Division and modernising tax administration systems to improve oversight of financial crimes and illicit economic activity.

The Prime Minister is currently in the United States, where she attended the funeral of her brother-in-law, Michael L. Ahamad. During her absence, Minister of Works and Infrastructure Jearlean John is serving as Acting Prime Minister.



Persad-Bissessar said recent intelligence reports indicate a decline in the volume of narcotics entering Trinidad and Tobago from South America

PELICAN ENERGY LEAGUE HEATS UP

SWA SHARKS REGISTERS 8-0 WIN OVER PROVO UNITED



The SWA Sharks Under 16 Boys Team, which defeated Provo United 8-0

SEE PG32

LeBron James to Leave Lakers After Eight Seasons, Pursue Historic 24th NBA Season

NBA superstar LeBron James is expected to part ways with the Los Angeles Lakers after eight seasons, with reports indicating he plans to continue his career with another franchise.

According to multiple U.S. media outlets, James' agent, Rich Paul, informed the Lakers that the four-time NBA champion will not return for the upcoming season. The decision allows the organization to proceed with its offseason roster planning.

Should James sign with another

team, he would become the first player in NBA history to compete in a 24th season, further extending one of the most remarkable careers in professional basketball.

Since joining the Lakers in 2018, James has helped lead the franchise to the 2020 NBA championship while adding to his legacy as the NBA's all-time leading scorer.

Following the reports, the Lakers released a statement expressing gratitude for James' contributions, calling him one of the greatest athletes of all time. The organization



praised his influence both on and off the court, saying his impact will remain a lasting part of the franchise's history.

Earlier this month, James added another accolade to his decorated career after being named TIME mag-

azine's "Athlete of the Century" as part of the publication's inaugural TIME100 Sports issue. The honor recognized his record-setting longevity, championship success, and global impact both within the sport and beyond.

Sammy Hails Reifer for Windies' Batting Revival After Record Test Triumph

West Indies head coach Darren Sammy has credited batting coach Floyd Reifer for playing a pivotal role in the team's recent batting resurgence following the Caribbean side's historic victory over Sri Lanka in the opening Test.

The West Indies ended a wait of nearly two-and-a-half years for a Test victory with a commanding innings-and-217-run win on Sunday, powered by a record-breaking batting display.

Amir Jangoor led the charge with a magnificent 233, while captain Roston Chase narrowly missed a double century with 194. The pair combined for a monumental 401-run sixth-wicket partnership, the highest ever for that wicket in Test cricket, as the hosts amassed 626 for nine declared, their first Test innings exceeding 600 runs since 2012.

Speaking during an interview on Tuesday, Sammy praised Reifer's unwavering commitment, insisting the batting coach deserved recognition for the team's steady improvement despite facing criticism during difficult periods.

"It's a combination of Floyd Reifer and the willingness of the players, the work ethic of the players. We're here to prepare them as coaches, but buying into the preparation,



West Indies Head Coach Darren Sammy

the different aspects and techniques and areas of improvement, and committing to the work," Sammy said.

"But I have to single out Floyd Reifer for that. He gets a lot of flack when we're not batting well, the cameras focus on him all the time, but he has never faltered. He's been strong in his messaging, his work ethic is amazing, and he continues to put in the work with the batters, so I'm going to give him his flowers."

Sammy said the team's recent batting success was the result of a sustained process rather than an

overnight transformation, pointing to improvements across both Test and One-Day International cricket. "Just seeing in the Test arena and even in the One-Day International format as well, the amount of hundreds we've had over the last three years; it's been slow, but it's progress and that's what we're about, trying to build on progress," he said.

The emphatic victory and record-breaking performances have provided fresh optimism for the West Indies, with Sammy confident the team's commitment to preparation and continuous improvement will continue to yield results.



West Indies Batting Coach Floyd Reifer

Candia Ewing Named Future Leaders in Football Participant

By Vivian Tyson, NEWSLINE Editor-In-Chief

Following a competitive application and interview process, Candia Ewing, TCIFA Acting General Secretary, was selected as one of just eighteen emerging female leaders from National Associations, Confederations, and Sport-for-Development organizations across Mexico, Central America, the Caribbean, and Germany to take part in the seventh edition of the Future Leaders in Football (FLF) Program, held in Mexico City from June 10–15, 2026, during the opening week of the FIFA Men's World Cup 2026.

The prestigious leadership initiative, organized by the German Football Association (DFB) in partnership with Volkswagen and the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH (GIZ), brought together emerging female leaders to strengthen leadership capacity, advance gender equity, and foster collaboration across the global football community.

Since its inception in 2021, the FLF Program has empowered more than 100 women from around the world by providing leadership development opportunities, fostering international collaboration, and advancing gender equity within football. The 2026 edition focused on the Concacaf region and created a unique platform for participants to exchange ideas, strengthen professional networks, and develop the skills necessary to influence the future of the game.

Ewing's participation marked a significant achievement for both her and the continued development of football leadership within the Turks and Caicos Islands. Throughout the week-long program, participants engaged in leadership workshops, discussions on overcoming structural barriers facing women in football, and practical Sport-for-Development sessions that demonstrated football's power as a tool for social change and gender equity.

The program featured an impressive lineup of speakers and football leaders, including FIFA Chief Football Officer Jill Ellis, CONCACAF Chief Commercial Officer Heidi Pellerao, Liga BBVA MX Femenil President Mariana Gutiérrez, UEFA Vice-President Laura McAllister, and Andrea Rodebaugh, Director of Women's National Teams at the Mexican Football Association. Participants benefited from their expertise, insights, and experiences while gaining practical knowledge and valuable tools to advance into leadership positions within the sport.

Dr. Holger Blask, DFB General Secretary, opened the program, underlining the importance of empowering women in football: "The FLF aligns with the DFB's commitment to advancing gender equity in football and strengthening international cooperation through such initiatives. Through the program, its leadership lessons and practical application into the sporting context, we equip the participants with the right tools to advance into leadership positions within football. Each woman brings the ambition and potential to the table to influence the game of tomorrow and we're looking forward to seeing this unfold in the future."

DFB main partner, Volkswagen, has support-



L-R Laura McAllister (UEFA Vice President) and Candia Ewing

ed the program from the very beginning - and for good reason: "Programs like 'Future Leaders in Football' show how sport connects people around the world and creates valuable networks. For Volkswagen, it is a key priority to foster exactly this kind of exchange and to jointly drive positive and sustainable societal change. That is why we are supporting the program with full conviction for the seventh time," said Gerd Voss, Head of Volkswagen Sports Communications.

The FLF project partner, the GIZ, added: "Future Leaders in Football impressively demonstrates the potential that the 'Sport for Development' approach can unlock. Through the strategic combination of sports education, and personal development, young people strengthen their leadership skills, take on responsibility, and drive positive change in their communities. Girls and young women, in particular, gain new opportunities for participation, self-determination, and social engagement", Axel Caldas, Project lead GIZ.

In addition to the expert sessions, the FLF included a cultural program designed to complement the learning experience. Participants watched the opening match of the World Cup at a public viewing in the city, explored Mexico City on a guided walking tour, and experienced local traditions. A particular highlight was a session with Lucha Libre fighter Kathrin Zeiske, who encouraged participants to "fight like a girl," followed by jointly watching a live Lucha Libre event at Arena México.

At the heart of the program were the participants themselves, who shaped the week through their openness, determination, and mutual support. By creating a safe and empowering space, they uplifted one another and built lasting connections that extend far beyond the program.

Reflecting on the experience, Ewing described the program as a transformative milestone in both her personal and professional development:



Candia Ewing (second left – front row) share lens with other participants and officials



Candia Ewing (centre) and other individuals participate in the Future Leaders in Football (FLF) Program, held in Mexico City

"Firstly, I would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank Concacaf for nominating me and giving me the opportunity to go through the interview process. That initial step meant a great deal to me and made this entire journey possible. This was the first time I had ever experienced a leadership program of this nature, and it was truly a life-changing experience," said Ewing. "It has completely reshaped the way I understand leadership. Leadership doesn't belong to certain positions or personalities. Over the course of the week, the realization that leadership is much more personal than that was cemented. It is about authenticity, self-awareness, and the ability to use your own voice in a meaningful way."

"What stayed with me most was the feeling of being in a space where I was genuinely seen, heard, and valued. It is not something I take for granted. Being surrounded by women from across the world who shared similar passions, struggles, and ambitions created a deep sense of belonging for me. I felt completely comfortable showing up as myself."

"One of the most defining moments of the entire program was the discussion with UEFA Vice-President Laura McAllister. Beyond her achievements, there was a real

connection. In that moment something shift in me. It was the moment I truly believed that people like me belong in these spaces too. That realization was powerful and emotional, and it changed the way I see my place in leadership and my place in the game."

"The program also gave me a deeper understanding of my own leadership style. I left Mexico City feeling more grounded, more confident, and more certain about the value I bring. I also left with lifelong connections, new skills, and a renewed commitment to growing the game in the Turks and Caicos Islands."

The FLF Program aligned closely with TCIFA's ongoing efforts to promote inclusivity, leadership development, and greater representation of women in football administration, coaching, officiating, and governance. Ewing's participation further reinforced the Association's commitment to supporting the next generation of football leaders and ensuring that women continue to play a central role in shaping the future of the sport. As football continues to evolve globally, initiatives such as the Future Leaders in Football Program remain vital in breaking down barriers, fostering diversity, and empowering women to take on leadership and decision-making roles within the game.



Hayley Williams



Ezekiel Martin



Gabrielle Martin

Swimming Trio to Represent TCI at PanAm Aquatics

Hayley Williams, Gabrielle Martin, and Ezekiel Martin will travel to Ibagué, Colombia, to represent the Turks and Caicos Islands at the PanAm Aquatics Swimming Championships, scheduled for July 8–13, 2026. The delegation will attend under the Turks and Caicos Islands Swim Federation, with Mr. Lincoln Martin serving as Head Coach and Mr. Bennett Williams, President of the Turks and Caicos Islands Swim Federation, serving as Team Representative. This championship is an important opportunity for our swimmers to compete at a higher level and gain valuable experience against athletes from across the Americas.

The PanAm Aquatics Swimming Championships Ibagué 2026 is a major continental swimming event that brings together top swimmers from North America, South America, Central America, and the Caribbean. The event provides a strong platform for athlete development, technical growth, and international exposure. For a small island na-

tion such as the Turks and Caicos Islands, participation in this championship is an important step in building the future of competitive swimming.

federation.

This trip will also support the growth of our coaching and administrative capacity. Mr. Lincoln Martin will guide the athletes

Attending the PanAm Aquatics Championship will help our swimmers gain confidence, understand the level required for regional and international success, and return home with greater motivation to continue improving. It will also help inspire other young swimmers in the Turks and Caicos Islands to work hard and aim for future national representation.

We are proud of this delegation and grateful for the opportunity to represent the Turks and Caicos Islands on the international stage. This participation is not only about competing, but also about learning, growing, and helping to strengthen the foundation of swimming in our country.

We wish Hayley Williams, Gabrielle Martin, Ezekiel Martin, Coach Lincoln Martin, and Team Representative Bennett Williams every success as they prepare for Ibagué 2026. Their journey represents progress, teamwork, national pride, and hope for the next generation of swimmers.

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The PanAm Aquatics Swimming Championships Ibagué 2026 is a major continental event that brings together top swimmers from across the Americas. It provides a strong platform for athlete development, technical growth, and international exposure.
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Hayley, Gabrielle, and Ezekiel have shown commitment, discipline, and continued improvement through training and competition. Their selection to travel to Colombia reflects their dedication to the sport and the ongoing development work being done through Salt Rakers Aquatic Club and the national

during training and competition, while Mr. Bennett Williams will assist with team representation, communication, federation duties, and overall team support. The championship will also provide opportunities to observe international standards in competition management, coaching, and athlete preparation.



The Teachers FC Female Under 16 Team



SWA Sharks FC Player of the Match #7 Exavier Carry

SWA Sharks, Teachers FC and Academy Eagles Secure Impressive Pelican Energy League Victories

By Vivian Tyson, NEWSLINE Editor-In-Chief

The Pelican Energy TCIFA Under-16 League delivered another exciting round of fixtures as the boys' and girls' divisions produced entertaining contests, standout individual performances and plenty of goals.

Girls U16 – Teachers FC Edge Cheshire Hall FC

Teachers FC continued their impressive campaign with a hard-fought 2-1 victory over Cheshire Hall FC in Match #6, on Monday, June 29 at the TCIFA Field located at Venetian Road in Providenciales.

After taking a 1-0 lead into the half-time break, Teachers FC doubled their advantage early in the second half before Cheshire Hall responded with a goal of their own to keep the contest alive.

Forward Briangelis Meises delivered a Player of the Match performance, scoring both goals for Teachers FC in the 20th and 51st minutes. Cheshire Hall FC pulled one back through Abigail Contreras, who found the net in the 46th minute.

The match was played in excellent spirit with no cautions issued.

Players of the Match for Teachers FC was #10 Briangelis Meises, while the Cheshire Hall FC player of the match was their #15 Cristina Dar-

gain.

Boys U16 – Teachers FC Blank Cheshire Hall FC

In the Boys division, Teachers FC produced a commanding second-half display to defeat Cheshire Hall FC 3-0 in Match #7, header on Saturday, June 27 at the TCIFA playing field.

Leading 1-0 at halftime thanks to Fritzson Filama's 24th-minute strike, Teachers FC added two late goals through Robert Wildjems (56') and Idelyn Gardiner (58') to seal a convincing victory.

Both teams received one yellow card during the contest. Teachers FC's Duffson Charles and Cheshire Hall FC's Kensley Asseicus were cautioned in the 56th minute.

The Players of the Match for Teachers FC was their #11 Idelyn Gardiner, while the Player of the Match for Cheshire Hall FC was their #8 player Scott Kommalapate.

Girls U16 – SWA Sharks FC Claim Narrow Victory

In Girls Under 16, Match #5, SWA Sharks FC earned a hard-fought 1-0 victory over Cheshire Hall FC.

After a scoreless first half, Winzaria Lefrance scored the decisive goal in the 47th minute to give the Sharks all three points. The match featured the tourna-

ment's first dismissal when Cheshire Hall's Amora Rowe received a yellow card in the 38th minute before being shown a red card.

Players of the Match for SWA Sharks FC was their #5 Wineiris Nunez, while the Cheshire Hall FC player of the match was their #15 Christina Dargain

Academy Eagles Soar Past Beaches FC

Academy Eagles FC staged a strong second-half comeback to defeat Beaches FC 3-2 in Match #8, in the Boys Division.

The teams were locked at 1-1 at halftime after Morvens Joseph opened the scoring for Academy Eagles in the 26th minute before Sonderley Castely equalized a minute later.

Castely gave Beaches FC the lead with his second goal in the 36th minute, but Academy Eagles responded brilliantly. Hareph Sainttus leveled the match in the 46th minute before Wilson Charles netted the match winner in the 59th minute.

Beaches FC's Dudley Mintus received a yellow card for unsporting behaviour in the 60th minute.

Players of the Match for the Academy Eagles FC was their #7 Morvens Joseph, while the Beaches FC equiv-

alent was their #7 Sonderley Castely

SWA Sharks FC Run Riot Against Provo United SC

SWA Sharks FC Under 16 Boys delivered the most dominant performance of the weekend, overwhelming Provo United SC 8-0 in Match #9.

The Sharks were relentless from the opening whistle, with Waldens Derisse opening the scoring in the third minute before adding his second in the 43rd. Kerry Dave doubled the advantage in the seventh minute, while Exavier Carry struck twice in the 13th and 57th minutes. Samuel Desronvil also bagged a brace with goals in the 22nd and 58th minutes. The eighth and final goal came from Diamond Ralph in the 60th minute, following a correction to the original match report.

SWA Sharks' only caution went to Kerry Dave, who received a yellow card during the contest.

Players of the Match for the SWA Sharks FC: team was their #7 player Exavier Carry, while for Provo United SC their MVP was their #9 player Juan Sebastien.

Another round of games was scheduled to take place on the week, but at news time, none of those scores was available.