

**DRAFT
ENVIRONMENTAL
IMPACT
ASSESSMENT (EIA)
REPORT
FOR CORAL
GARDENS DUNE
REPLENISHMENT**



**DIDDY USED ALIASES FOR
'FREAK
OFFS'
IN TURKS AND CAICOS,
CASSIE TESTIFIES
IN GRAPHIC SEX
TRAFFICKING
TRIAL**

By Deandrea Hamilton |
Editor

When he booked his infamous "freak offs" in the Turks and Caicos, Sean "Diddy" Combs used an alias and dragged an unwilling girlfriend to be part of the sexual exploits reportedly staged in hotel rooms in the Caribbean hot spot; that's what came out in testimony from Cassie Ventura, the prosecution's first witness in the scandalous sex trafficking trial.

VENTURA, who dated Combs for 11 years, described a dark underworld of weekly "freak offs" allegedly arranged by the hip-hop mogul, beginning when she was just 22. Speaking in harrowing detail, she told the jury the encounters—held in locations including New York, Los Angeles, Miami, Ibiza, and Turks and Caicos—often lasted days, fueled by drugs Combs allegedly supplied: cocaine, ecstasy, and molly.

In one Turks and Caicos incident, Ventura said she was ordered into a blow-up pool filled with baby oil, testifying, "At that point, I couldn't say no... If Sean wanted it to happen, that's what was going to happen."

■ 'Freak Offs', see page 13

**GRACE BAY BEACH RANKED TOP TEN
IN WORLD'S 50 BEST BEACHES**

PROVIDENCIALES, TURKS AND CAICOS ISLANDS (May 13th, 2025) – The Turks and Caicos Islands' world-renowned Grace Bay Beach has been ranked among the top ten beaches in the 2025 World's 50 Best Beaches.

Grace Bay Beach, located on the island of Providenciales, was ranked number 10, moving up seven places from 2024's list. This prestigious recognition comes from an international panel of over 1,000 vetted travel professionals and influencers who collectively shape the global tourism conversation.

Grace Bay's crystal-clear turquoise blue waters, wide stretches of soft white sand, and peaceful atmosphere, have made it a long-standing favourite among luxury travellers, families, and couples alike. Its consistent excellence across the board — from water clarity to ease of access — helped it rise to the top of this year's global list.

"Grace Bay isn't just one of the best beaches in the world—it's part of who we are. This recognition is more than a global ranking; it's a reflection of the natural beauty and welcoming

spirit that define the Turks and Caicos Islands. We don't just offer a great beach—we offer an experience that stays with you long after you leave," said Hon. Zhavargo Jolly, Minister of Tourism.

"Grace Bay has long been known to travellers for its postcard-perfect beauty, and this year's ranking confirms its place among the planet's finest beaches," said Tine Holst, Co-Founder of The World's 50 Best Beaches. "It's the kind of beach that captures your heart the moment you

■ Grace Bay Beach, see page 31



Jamaican Murder Suspect Captured in Turks and Caicos After Illegal Entry

Providenciales, TCI — May 12, 2025

A Jamaican man wanted in his home country for a serious crime has been apprehended in the Turks and Caicos Islands after entering the territory illegally.

ACCORDING to the Royal Turks and Caicos Islands Police Force (RT&CI PF), 31-year-old Alex Anthony McDonald, a Jamaican national, was spotted on Saturday, May 10, at Sapodilla Beach in the Chalk Sound area of Providenciales.

Acting swiftly on the tip, officers from the Tactical Unit moved in and arrested McDonald. Authorities later confirmed that he had illegally entered the TCI, and he has since been charged by the Criminal Investigations Department (CID) with Unlawful Entry.

Further intelligence gathered by local detectives revealed that McDonald is wanted by the

Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF) in connection with an ongoing murder investigation.

Investigations remain ongoing, and the RT&CI PF has confirmed that it is working closely with regional law enforcement partners and Interpol to determine McDonald's full criminal background and any potential links to crimes within the TCI.

The police are urging the public to report any information related to illegal activity. Tips can be shared anonymously by calling 911, the Serious Crime Unit at 231-1842, or Crime Stoppers at 1-800-8477. The public is also encouraged to download and use the Crime Stoppers P3 app to share information securely.



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Experience Turks and Caicos Welcomes Ambergris Cay Private Island Resort to Virtuoso's Prestigious Luxury Travel Network

PROVIDENCIAS, TURKS AND CAICOS ISLANDS (May 9th, 2025) – Experience Turks and Caicos is proud to congratulate the Ambergris Cay Private Island Resort on its recent inclusion in Virtuoso's exclusive portfolio of luxury travel partners. This milestone marks a significant achievement for Ambergris Cay, a premier private island resort and vacation home destination located in the southeastern corner of the Turks and Caicos Islands.

Ambergris Cay has officially joined the prestigious Virtuoso network, becoming the second private island resort and the ninth overall resort in Turks and Caicos to be welcomed into this exclusive collection. Virtuoso is a global consortium of 2,300 preferred luxury travel providers across 100 countries, known for connecting discerning travelers with exceptional travel experiences.

By joining this elite group, Ambergris Cay now stands alongside some of the destination's most celebrated resorts, including: Amanyara, Beach Enclave, COMO Parrot Cay, Grace Bay Club, The Palms, The Ritz-Carlton, The Shore Club, and Wymara Resort and Villas in representing the destination within this global luxury travel network. This inclusion not only elevates Ambergris Cay's global profile but also reinforces Turks and Caicos' status as a premier destination in the luxury travel market.

"The Turks and Caicos Islands is firmly established as a Virtuoso Destination, and we are pleased to welcome Ambergris Cay to this prestigious network," said Mr. Paul Pennicook, Interim CEO/Consultant at Experience Turks and Caicos. "Virtuoso provides access to over 20,000 of the world's leading luxury travel advisors, enabling us to showcase the unique and enriching experiences of the Turks and Caicos Islands to an affluent travel audience globally."

Andreas Naegele, Vice President of Hospitality of Waterloo Hotel Management Limited (WHML) who owns and operates a collection of five premier resorts, expressed his gratitude for the recognition, stating "It is a true honour to be recognised as a preferred partner of Virtuoso. This achievement reflects our unwavering commitment to exceptional service and elevated hospitality. We look forward to collaborating with Virtuoso advisors to introduce their clients to our signature bespoke luxury and nature-forward experiences."

Since becoming a Virtuoso destination in 2023, Experience Turks and Caicos has actively participated in the network's prestigious events, including Virtuoso Week in Las Vegas, where over 100 travel advisors were introduced to the unique offerings of the Turks and Caicos Islands. The destination's dedication to excellence has also been recognised through its inclusion in the Top 10 Highest-Rated Virtuoso Trainings and its acknowledgment as a top training partner in Q2 2024.

For more information on Ambergris Cay and its exclusive offerings for affluent travellers, or to book a stay, visit www.ambergriscay.com or call +1.833.313.3172.

Governor Dismisses AI-Generated Rumours of UK Inquiry into TCI Governance

Deandrea Hamilton
Editor

Providenciales, TCI – Wednesday, 7 May 2025 — Governor Dileeni Daniel-Selvaratnam has strongly denied social media claims that a United Kingdom-led inquiry into governance in the Turks and Caicos Islands (TCI) is underway, describing the circulating information as both false and artificially generated.

In an official statement, the Governor's Office confirmed there is no UK inquiry related to governance issues in the territory, and emphasized the importance of relying on verified information.

"The information in question appears to be AI-generated from past media articles," the statement read. "We advise relying only on official communications for accurate updates."

The false reports, widely shared on social media platforms, suggested that the UK would deploy investigators and law enforcement officials to the TCI and other Overseas Territories beginning in June 2025. The fabricated claims pointed to alleged corruption and governance failures as justification for the supposed intervention.



The rumour triggered alarm among residents, with some interpreting the post as a sign of impending foreign control or a heavy-handed British presence in the territory.

Governor Selvaratnam moved quickly to allay public fears, calling for calm and urging citizens to exercise discernment when engaging with unverified online content.

"There is no inquiry. There is no deployment. There is no crisis," an official close to the Governor's Office added.

This incident underscores the growing challenge posed by AI-generated

misinformation, particularly in small jurisdictions like the TCI where social media can rapidly amplify unverified claims.

Officials reminded the public that any major developments involving UK-TCI relations would be formally announced through official government or Governor's Office channels.

As of now, no investigation has been launched, and governance in the Turks and Caicos Islands remains a matter of local oversight and partnership with the UK in line with existing constitutional arrangements.

Elite Fast Rope Training for Members of the Royal TCI Police Force

The Royal Turks and Caicos Islands Police Force (RT&CIPF) is proud to announce that officers from the Tactical Unit, Response and Operations, and Serious Crime have recently completed an intensive, week-long Fast Rope Training Course aimed at enhancing their capabilities in rapid deployment and high-angle operations.

This rigorous, high-level training was conducted in Exuma, Bahamas, and facilitated by the United States Drug Enforcement Administration (Tactical Helicopter Section).

Participants received hands-on instruction and real-world practice in executing rapid helicopter insertions—an essential skill for missions in environments where aircraft cannot safely land.

Fast rope training is a specialized



military and tactical technique that allows personnel to quickly descend from a hovering helicopter using a thick rope—without the use of a harness. Commonly used by elite tactical units worldwide, this method is crucial in high-stakes, time-sensitive operations such as counter-narcotics, search and rescue, and critical incident responses.

The RT&CIPF congratulates the following officers on their successful

completion of the course:

- Acting Inspector Latoya Rigby
- Constables Christopher O'Neil, Anton Ferguson, Kimberlee Markland, Tenesha Stewart, Demareo Outten, Alex Joseph, Rojay Graham, and Shan Livermore

We extend our sincere thanks to the U.S. DEA for their ongoing partnership and expert guidance, which greatly enhances our operational capabilities.





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Barbados Gears Up for the CARPHA 69th Health Research Conference

Bridgetown, Barbados. 5 May 2025. Barbados is set to host the highly anticipated 69th CARPHA Health Research Conference from 7th to 9th May at the Lloyd Erskine Sandiford Centre. The conference is hosted in collaboration with the Barbados Ministry of Health and Wellness.

This year, under the theme “Mental Health: The Hidden Pandemic” the conference will present focused sessions on mental health, non-communicable diseases, family health, as well as infectious diseases, and nutrition.

A panel discussion titled *Breaking the Stigma: Advancing Mental Health Care for Children, Adolescents and Young Adults in the Caribbean* on Day 1 will explore urgent strategies for improving the detection and treatment of mental health issues among children, adolescents, and young adults in the Caribbean. Panellists will examine the cultural stigmas, systemic gaps, and resource limitations that hinder early diagnosis and access to care.

In addition to a Special Session on Pandemic Fund and Infectious Diseases, the conference will present focused sessions on non-communicable diseases, family health, mental health, vector borne diseases, and nutrition.

A total of 87 oral papers and 86 poster presentations will highlight research findings from students, academics, and health professionals from the Caribbean region and internationally.

Local, regional and international companies and organisations will display their products and services, innovations and programmes.

“Last year, in Saint Lucia the conference drew 300 attendees, and this year an estimated 400 attendees is anticipated. This reflects the growing interest in the conference which aims to address pressing health challenges and seek actionable solutions. The combination of side meetings, oral and poster presentations, networking sessions and dialogue underscores the importance of public health research to the Caribbean,” stated Dr Lisa Indar, Executive Director of CARPHA.

The 2025 health research conference promises to be an event that fosters collaboration and encourages research to action.

For more information about the conference visit: <https://conference.carpha.org/>

Bogus Windfall: Government Warns of \$42K Scam Masquerading as Official Program



Deandrea Hamilton
Editor

NASSAU, BAHAMAS — A sophisticated online scam promising over \$42,000 in government-issued payments has triggered alarm in The Bahamas, prompting a swift and stern warning from the Ministry of Economic Affairs.

The elaborate hoax, now pulled from the internet, featured a fake Q&A-style interview with Minister Michael Halkitis — complete with doctored quotes, government-like branding, and the logo of a major national newspaper.

At the heart of the scam was a too-good-to-be-true offer: a special financial program allegedly reserved for 4,000 Bahamians, each set to receive \$3,500 BSD monthly. The phony article, disguised as a legitimate news piece, falsely claimed the initiative had government backing and featured a fabricated interview in which Minister Halkitis appeared to endorse the program.

In a press statement issued May 13, Minister Halkitis categorically denied any involvement and called the website “very likely a website created with malicious

■ *Bogus Windfall, see page 13*



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Dozens of people displaced from the Haitian communes of Mirebalais and Saut-d'Eau attend hygiene awareness sessions in Boucan Carré.

Haiti in Crisis: Children and Families Caught in the Crossfire of Gang Violence

Deandrea Hamilton
Editor

Haiti is facing an escalating humanitarian catastrophe as gang violence continues to spread across the country, forcing tens of thousands to flee and placing children at immense risk. According to the United Nations, a recent spike in armed conflict in the Lower Artibonite and Centre Departments has displaced over 66,000 people in less than two weeks — including at least 15,000 children. The displaced now seek shelter in overcrowded rural zones or makeshift sites, where access to clean water, food, and basic healthcare is dangerously limited.

BETWEEN April 28 and May 3 alone, over 16,000 people fled their homes in Lower Artibonite, with families living in precarious conditions and reliant on emergency aid. The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) is leading coordination efforts to support national authorities in addressing priority needs. In response, UNICEF has deployed mobile clinics, delivering essential pediatric care and immunization services to nearly 2,000 people. Hygiene kits and nutritional support are also being distributed to prevent further deterioration of health conditions in displacement sites.

The situation for children is especially dire. Many are being exposed to or directly affected by violence, including forced recruitment into armed groups, sexual violence, and family separation. UNICEF and its partners are responding by establishing child-friendly spaces

and delivering psychosocial support to more than 1,400 children. Specialized case management is underway, with at least 150 high-risk cases referred to protection services.

Despite these efforts, humanitarian needs far exceed current funding. The 2025 Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan identifies over \$44 million needed for child protection alone. Yet, to date, only about \$68 million of the total \$908 million required for the entire country has been secured—just 7 percent of the target. As Haiti braces for the approaching hurricane season, the urgent call for international support has never been more critical.

Haiti's complex crisis—driven by gang control, political instability, and chronic underdevelopment—demands sustained global attention. Without swift, coordinated action, an entire generation risks being lost to violence, displacement, and neglect.

Carnival Corporation's AIDA Cruises Showcases Environmentally Sustainable Operations to Caribbean Disaster Management Agency

BARBADOS (May 14, 2025) — The Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA) gained valuable insights into sustainable cruise operations during a visit on board AIDAAbella in Barbados, as AIDA Cruises' Caribbean season comes to a close. AIDA Cruises, a Carnival Corporation & plc brand, welcomed CDEMA officials aboard to demonstrate the ship's advanced environmental management and waste reduction systems.

AIDAAbella's Environmental Officer, Sebastian Treue, provided a comprehensive briefing of liquefied natural gas (LNG) power systems on some of AIDA's ships, highlighting that the cruise line was the first in the industry to introduce a fully LNG-powered cruise ship in 2018 and has continued this standard with newer, much larger vessels such as AIDAcosma.

“This engagement with CDEMA represents an important opportunity for knowledge sharing between the cruise industry and regional experts,” said Sebastian Treue, Environmental Officer from AIDAAbella. “As we operate throughout the Caribbean, maintaining strong relationships with organizations like CDEMA is essential to our commitment to responsible tourism and regional



cooperation.”

The visit also showcased AIDA's significant reduction of single-use plastics by over 77% since 2018, advanced wastewater treatment systems and a sophisticated waste management program designed to minimize environmental impact with proper processing and disposal. AIDA's waste reduction actions also include using a color-coded system that sorts waste into 21 categories for environmentally responsible handling.

CDEMA, headquartered in Barbados, serves as the regional intergovernmental agency for disaster management in the

Caribbean Community (CARICOM). The agency coordinates emergency response and relief efforts across 20 participating states, 15 of which are destinations for Carnival Corporation's cruise lines.

By offering a firsthand look at environmental systems to regional agencies like CDEMA, Carnival Corporation reinforces its commitment to building strong relationships throughout the Caribbean, where its cruise lines including AIDA Cruises operate as responsible tourism partners.

For more information about Carnival Corporation's sustainability initiatives, visit carnivalcorp.com.

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NOAA to announce 2025 Atlantic hurricane season outlook May 22

NOAA will issue its outlook for the 2025 Atlantic hurricane season during a news conference on Thursday, May 22, at the Jefferson Parish Emergency Operations Center in Gretna, Louisiana, and virtually.

Weather Service

Cynthia Lee-Sheng, Jefferson Parish president

Matthew Rosencrans, lead hurricane season forecaster with NOAA's National Centers for Environmental Prediction will also be available for questions and interviews.

FOR IN-PERSON REGISTRATION

Media interested in attending the in-person news conference must register here [offsite link](#) by 4:00 p.m. EDT on May 20. Space is limited. For any questions, email nws.pa@noaa.gov.

FOR VIRTUAL REGISTRATION

Credentialed reporters unable to attend in person may watch a live stream of the news conference and must register at this [link](#). [offsite link](#) (For the best experience, download the Adobe Connect [appposite link](#).) Reporters attending virtually will have the ability to submit written questions during the Q&A portion of the event.

Additional resources

Hurricane safety and preparedness is critically important before the season begins on June 1. NOAA's National Weather Service provides resources to prepare for hurricane hazards and real-time updates about active tropical weather systems from the National Hurricane Center at www.hurricanes.gov.

SPEAKERS will announce the anticipated activity for the 2025 Atlantic hurricane season, factors that may influence hurricane development and provide advice for how the public can prepare for the season, which officially begins June 1 and ends November 30.

WHAT

News conference announcing NOAA's 2025 Atlantic Hurricane Season Outlook

WHEN

Thursday, May 22; 10:00 a.m. CDT / 11:00 a.m. EDT

WHERE

Jefferson Parish Emergency Operations Center, 910 3rd Street, Gretna, LA 70053

WHO

Laura Grimm, acting NOAA administrator
Ken Graham, director, NOAA's National

email: Deandrea@MagneticMediaTV.com



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INVEST TCI STRENGTHENS GLOBAL INVESTMENT TIES AT ALIS CALA 2025 HOTEL INVESTMENT CONFERENCE

Providenciales, Turks and Caicos Islands, May 15, 2025 — Invest Turks and Caicos Islands (Invest TCI) proudly participated as a Patron Sponsor at the newly rebranded ALIS CALA, a merger of the Americas Lodging Investment Summit (ALIS), Caribbean Hotel & Resort Investment Summit (CHRIS), and Hotel Opportunities Latin America (HOLA). The event was held from April 29 to May 1, 2025, at the Loews Coral Gables Hotel in Coral Gables, Florida.

ALIS CALA has rebranded as the premier hotel investment conference for the Caribbean and Latin America, emphasizing equity, development, collaboration, and regional growth. This year's event attracted over 500 delegates, including senior executives, investors, developers, and key financial stakeholders representing countries and destinations with active investment



opportunities. The agenda featured targeted breakout sessions on trending topics such as capital stack strategies, experiential tourism, investor sentiment, multi-destination travel, and emerging opportunities across the Caribbean and Latin American markets.

A key session at the event explored hotel occupancy rates across Latin America and the Caribbean, a topic of direct relevance to the Turks and Caicos Islands. The data shared provided valuable context for understanding performance trends in comparable markets and can support Invest TCI's ongoing efforts to attract strategic

tourism investments. Notable brands in attendance included IHG, Play Hotel, Carnival Corporation, Hyatt, and BCQS International, offering perspectives and presence that underscored the strength and potential of the hospitality sector in the region.

At the conference, Investment Services Executive Mr. Salik Garland delivered a compelling presentation on investment opportunities in the Turks and Caicos Islands, with a particular focus on the Family Islands and their unique potential. He outlined the diverse prospects available in sectors such as marine tourism, adventure tourism, and eco-



tourism, highlighting the untapped value these niche markets offer for sustainable development.

The presentation generated several inquiries about the Family Islands, a clear sign of rising investor interest beyond Providenciales. This growing attention supports Invest TCI's strategic objective to elevate the visibility of islands such as Grand Turk, South Caicos, Salt Cay, North Caicos, and Middle Caicos as attractive destinations for responsible investment and long-term economic diversification.

Mr. Garland also participated in the panel discussion, "A Spotlight on the Caribbean: Investment Opportunities and Challenges." The panel included representatives from the Caribbean Hotel & Tourism Association, World Hotels, Top Shelf Project Management, Invest Saint Lucia, and Hyatt Hotels Corporation. The session explored regional trends, emerging opportunities, and the shared challenges facing island economies. Mr. Garland emphasized the Turks and Caicos Islands' readiness for strategic investment and Invest TCI's commitment to regional collaboration and sustainable economic growth.

Speaking on the event, Mr. Garland stated "It was a pleasure to represent the Turks and Caicos Islands at ALIS CALA this year. The event provided a valuable platform to showcase the investment potential of our family islands and to reaffirm our commitment to attracting investment that is equitable, inclusive, and sustainable. Conferences like these are important not only to showcase our own opportunities, but also to connect with key stakeholders and stay informed on what our regional counterparts are doing. During the Caribbean investment panel, we explored the trends, risks, and opportunities shaping the region.

TCI remains a leader in high-end tourism, offering strong potential for both foreign and local investors."

Another memorable moment at the event was the announcement of the prestigious "Development of the Year" award, which was won by The Strand, Turks and Caicos. Part of the Leading Hotels of the World collection, The Strand is a luxury boutique resort located on the pristine shores of Cooper Jack Bay in Providenciales. The award was proudly accepted by Mr. John Fair, Developer and Managing Director of The Strand. This marks the third time in recent years that a development in the Turks and Caicos Islands has earned this regional recognition, with Rock House taking the title in 2023 and The Ritz-Carlton, Turks and Caicos receiving the award in 2022. This consistent recognition signals growing investor confidence in the Turks and Caicos Islands' luxury tourism market and reinforces the territory's reputation as a premier destination for high-end development.

Accompanying Mr. Garland was Marketing Support Officer, Mr. Hezron Henry, who assisted with event arrangements and engaged with investors to showcase the Turks and Caicos Islands' investment potential.

Invest TCI's presence at the event reaffirmed the agency's mission to position the Turks and Caicos Islands as a world-class investment destination. Through strategic engagement and continued visibility at high-level forums, Invest TCI remains focused on attracting quality investments aligned with the nation's development goals.

For more information on Invest TCI events, please visit www.investturksandcaicos.tc or follow us on social media at @investtci.





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Commissioner Bailey Delivers Presentation in Guyana at Caribbean Commissioners AGM

The 39th Annual General Meeting (AGM) and Conference of the Association of Caribbean Commissioners of Police (ACCP) officially commenced on Monday at the Arthur Chung Conference Centre in Guyana, under the theme “United Against Crime.”

HOSTED by Commissioner of Police Mr. Clifton Hicken of the Guyana Police Force, the conference has drawn participation from over 24 Commissioners of Police and their delegations from across the Caribbean region.

The opening ceremony was attended by distinguished guests, including His Excellency Dr. Mohammed Irfaan Ali, President of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana,



and the Honourable Prime Minister, Retired Brigadier Mark Phillips, MSS. Several regional diplomats and

security experts were also present to commemorate the occasion.

A major highlight of the

conference was a presentation by Commissioner of Police Fitz Bailey, titled “Regional Response to Stymie the Tentacles of Transnational Organized Crimes.”

Commissioner Bailey underscored the growing threat posed by transnational organized crime (TOC) networks operating across the Caribbean with alarming ease. He identified a spectrum of illicit activities—drug trafficking, human and migrant smuggling, money laundering, environmental crimes, cybercrime, and illicit firearms trafficking—that are conducted with relative impunity due to porous borders and limited regional coordination.

Commissioner Bailey stressed the urgent need for a unified regional strategy, stating that “criminals operate with no respect for judicial boundaries,” and called on member states to adopt a collective approach to combat these threats. Commissioner Bailey also addressed the types and calibers of weapons

being trafficked, methods of concealment, and the critical need for tighter regulation and accountability within courier services.

In his concluding remarks, the top cop urged member nations to support the implementation of coordinated regional roadmaps, strengthen capacities for detection, investigation, and prosecution, and launch joint operations in collaboration with international partners such as INTERPOL.

He also called for the establishment of evidence-based monitoring systems to track arms trafficking more effectively.

The week-long conference features both open and closed sessions, fostering inclusive dialogue and enabling strategic discussions.

A key objective of this year’s AGM is to enhance cross-border collaboration, disrupt transnational criminal networks that threaten regional security, and promote safer communities for all Caribbean citizens.

TCI Police Report: Double Murder Charge



Following the arrest of a suspect in the Five Cays area on Thursday, May 1, 2025, the Serious Crime Unit of the Royal Turks and Caicos Islands Police Force (RT&CIPF) has formally charged a 30-year-old male in connection with two separate murders that occurred in 2023 and 2024. RHASHAD MCKENZIE, of Five Cays, has been charged with two counts of murder.

The charges relate to the deaths

of ERVIN GLINTON and GUILENE JEAN BAPTISTE. McKenzie appeared in Court yesterday (May 8th) and was remanded to H.M. Prison-Home of the Department of Correction and Rehabilitation, pending a Sufficiency Hearing on July 4, 2025, at the Supreme Court. The accused was charged following consultation with the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP).

Baptiste, 26, of Dock Yard, was shot

and killed on August 2, 2023. Glinton, 22, of Sand Bar Street, Five Cays, was fatally shot on January 24, 2024.

At the time, officers had responded to reports of gunshots on Reece Street, Five Cays. Upon arrival, Glinton’s body was discovered. On March 03, 2025, investigators arrested GEORGE THOMAS ARTHUR Jr. of Reece Street following a police operation.

Arthur, 48, also called “Blocks”, is

currently before the Court charged with one count of conspiracy to commit murder and two counts of possession of a firearm. He is alleged to have conspired to murder Baptiste. RT&CIPF expresses gratitude to the public for their continued cooperation and assistance.

We have not forgotten the families who have lost loved ones. Rest assured, we will pursue all leads to bring closure and justice.





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Big Ticket Wins in the Historic US-UK Trade Deal: Agriculture, Autos, Steel, and a New Era of Partnership

On May 8, the United States and the United Kingdom announced a landmark Economic Prosperity Deal—one that both sides hail as a transformative moment in the “special relationship.” The agreement, unveiled on the 80th anniversary of Victory in Europe (VE) Day, represents a significant realignment in bilateral trade and industrial cooperation.

Key Outcomes of the Agreement

1. Boost for U.S. Agricultural Exports
American farmers will benefit from over \$5 billion in new export opportunities, including:

- \$700 million in ethanol exports
- \$250 million in beef and other agricultural goods

Removal of non-tariff barriers that previously restricted U.S. goods

2. Automotive Tariff Reductions
U.S. tariffs on the first 100,000 UK-manufactured vehicles imported annually will drop from 27.5% to 10%. Additional units will face a 25% tariff. Prime Minister Starmer emphasized this breakthrough during a visit to Jaguar Land Rover, saying:

“This deal means that US tariffs will now be cut from 27.5% to 10% for 100,000 vehicles every year... To get that decrease was hugely important to me.”

3. Steel and Aluminum Relief
The deal eliminates tariffs on British steel and aluminum, ending longstanding trade frictions. Starmer noted this move “will protect British businesses and save thousands of skilled, well-paid jobs.”



4. Life Sciences and Pharmaceutical Supply Chains

The UK's life sciences sector receives vital assurances, while the U.S. gains secure pharmaceutical

supply chain access, reinforcing mutual health security.

5. Aerospace Collaboration
U.S. aerospace manufacturers

will benefit from preferential access to high-quality UK components, strengthening bilateral industrial resilience.

6. Broader Market Access and Regulatory Alignment

- Streamlined customs for U.S. exports
- Expanded procurement opportunities in the UK
- Mutual commitments on labor, environment, and intellectual property

A Shared Vision for Economic Renewal

Starmer framed the agreement as a direct response to economic pressures and a vote of confidence in global partnerships:

“We are sending a message to the world that Britain is open for business... with the US today, India on Tuesday, and the EU next week.”

He also emphasized a new tone in global diplomacy:

“We don’t storm off, we stay in the room, and we negotiate... Acting in the national interest.”

President Trump echoed similar sentiments, calling the deal “a great deal for America” that ensures “unprecedented access to UK markets” and levels the playing field for American producers.

Looking Ahead

This agreement represents more than a list of tariff changes—it is a political signal of stability and renewal. As Starmer concluded:

“Jobs saved. Jobs won. But not job done.”

Both leaders hinted at further negotiations to deepen cooperation in technology, services, and innovation—potentially paving the way for a comprehensive 21st-century transatlantic trade framework.

Fittingly, the deal was sealed on VE Day—a symbolic nod to 80 years of allied partnership, now reinforced by economic prosperity as a defining pillar of that relationship.

Dentons to combine with leading law firm Griffiths & Partners in the Turks and Caicos Islands

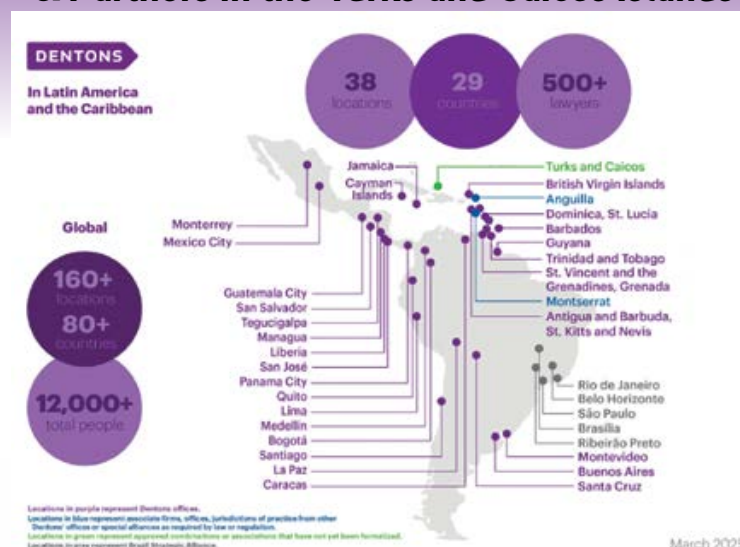
March 17, 2025 - Dentons, the world's largest global law firm, is announcing today its intention to combine with a leading law firm in the Turks and Caicos Islands, Griffiths & Partners. The combination would further strengthen Dentons' presence in Latin America and the Caribbean and enhance the Firm's ability to serve clients in the region's rapidly growing economy.

With this addition, Dentons will become the first and only global law firm to establish a presence in the Turks and Caicos Islands.

Griffiths & Partners is a leading provider of legal services, and coupled with Dentons' global reach, the combined firm will be able to deliver services to clients not only in the Turks and Caicos Islands but across more than 160 locations in over 80 countries worldwide.

Griffiths & Partners has been involved in the jurisdiction's most high-profile civil and commercial litigation over the past decade. Its expertise spans key practice areas, including Banking and Finance, Corporate and Commercial, Dispute Resolution, Family Law, Real Estate and Trust and Private Client Services.

“Our combination with Dentons represents a new chapter for our



firm and our clients,” said Conrad Griffiths KC, Senior Partner of Griffiths & Partners. “The combination will enhance our ability to serve clients

with the same dedication and local expertise they trust while also providing them access to Dentons’ unparalleled global reach.”

“Griffiths & Partners’ strong reputation and deep-rooted expertise make them an ideal combination partner for Dentons in this important

market,” said Kate Barton, Global CEO of Dentons. “Their commitment to client excellence aligns perfectly with Dentons’ approach. This combination will enable us to offer clients insights into the business landscape of Turks and Caicos, ensuring we meet their needs both locally and globally.”

Griffiths & Partners is a leading full-service law firm in the Turks and Caicos market. The firm's lawyers are consistently highly ranked in Chambers and Legal 500.

“Dentons’ strategy focuses on partnering with firms that share our commitment to excellence and our client-centric approach,” said Paloma Gomez, CEO of Dentons’ Latin America and the Caribbean Region. “Our combination with this outstanding firm in Turks and Caicos strengthens our unmatched coverage in Latin America and the Caribbean, allowing us to provide seamless, high-quality legal services to our clients wherever they do business. With their deep local expertise and our global reach, we look forward to delivering even greater value to our clients across the region.”

Following approval by the partners, the combination with Griffiths & Partners is expected to launch in the coming months.

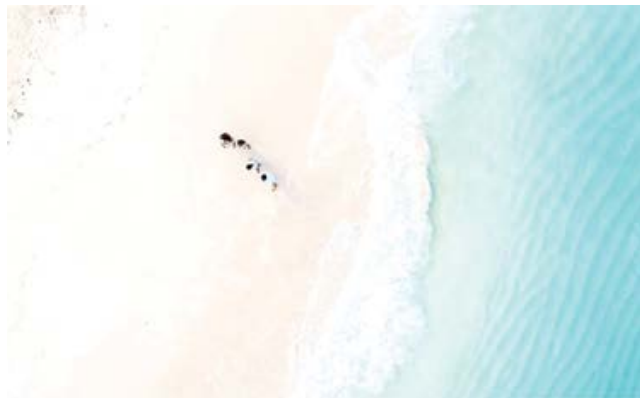
DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA) REPORT FOR THE ROMANZA ON GRACE BAY

The Draft Environmental Impact Assessment Report – for the Romanza on Grace Bay Townhouses and Condominium Development Project – PR16739, 60900/258, Grace Bay, Providenciales, Turks and Caicos Islands has been finalized and is available online for public review at:

<https://www.gov.tc/planning/images/docs/PR16739.pdf>

The Environmental Impact Assessment Report was submitted in accordance with Section 44 (1) b of the Physical Planning Ordinance. Comments on the EIA report can be sent to the Department of Planning via email to planningconsultation@gov.tc or Environmental Compliance Manager, Garry Mclean- gmclean@gov.tc or in writing to the Department of Planning, Emily House, Leeward Highway, Providenciales, or at South Base, Grand Turk on or before Monday, June 09th, 2025.

A Public Consultation on the EIA will be held on Thursday, May 15th, 2025 at 5:00p.m. – 6:30p.m. at the Department of Planning, Emily



House, Leeward Highway, Providenciales, Turks and Caicos Islands. All interested persons are invited to attend to air their views, have their

concerns addressed, and have their questions answered. This is your opportunity to add your voice to the discussion.

'Freak Offs'

continued from page 1

Prosecutors revealed Combs used aliases like "Frank White" and "Frank Black" when booking hotel rooms for these encounters in the territory.

Ventura described being physically and sexually abused, forced to find escorts—sometimes via Craigslist—and comply with rigid demands, including specific lighting, clothing, and even nail polish. She said Combs often recorded the events and threatened to release the footage if she disobeyed him. "I felt disgusting and

humiliated," she said, recalling one instance where escorts urinated on her at Combs' direction.

The most disturbing moment came when jurors were shown still images from the freak offs. Many appeared visibly stunned.

A now-infamous 2016 video showing Combs assaulting Ventura in a hotel hallway was tied to one such incident. She claimed she tried to flee a "freak off" before her movie premiere but was beaten and left with a black eye. When asked how often he threw her to the ground,

she replied, "Too many to count."

Cassie and Combs ended their relationship in 2018. She is now married and appeared at trial visibly pregnant, supported by her husband in court.

The trial continues today with Ventura's cross-examination. Prosecutors must prove racketeering and sex trafficking charges. Combs, who has denied all allegations, faces life in prison if convicted.

It remains unclear if any witnesses from Turks and Caicos will be called to testify.

Bogus Windfall

continued from page 6

intent." The Ministry emphasized that neither the Minister nor any government agency is connected to the claims being circulated.

"This message was not sent out by the Minister nor is he in any way affiliated with this group or any services they claim to be offering," the statement read. "We strongly advise members of the public to avoid submitting any personal information or making payments to this website."

The fraudulent site not only exploited the Minister's name and likeness but also leveraged the brand of The Nassau Guardian, one of the country's oldest and most reputable newspapers, to boost credibility. The result was a dangerously convincing piece of disinformation that has since been flagged and removed — but not before circulating widely on social media.

Government officials are urging residents to report any suspicious links or ads they encounter and to be cautious of offers that require payment or the submission of sensitive personal information. The matter has been referred to the Royal Bahamas Police Force for further investigation.

The Ministry is also advising Bahamians who may have interacted with the scam to take immediate corrective action, including changing passwords and contacting their banks or relevant authorities.

"We encourage the public to remain vigilant and always verify information through official sources before taking any action," the Ministry urged.

This latest incident underscores the evolving sophistication of online scams in the region and highlights the importance of digital literacy and healthy skepticism when encountering sensational claims — particularly those promising unearned wealth.



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The 5"Ps"

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Responsible owners provide suitable shelter that protects animals from extreme weather conditions and ensures their comfort and safety.

- Provide adequate nutrition

Animals should receive a balanced and nutritious diet appropriate for their species, age, and health requirements.

- Provide clean water

Access to clean and fresh water is essential for all animals to stay hydrated and healthy.

- Provide regular veterinary care

Responsible owners schedule regular check-ups with a veterinarian to ensure their pets' health, vaccinations, and prevent illness.

- Provide exercise

Animals need opportunities for physical activity and mental stimulation to prevent boredom and promote overall well-being.



agriculture@gov.tc



The Department of Agriculture TCI

Dominica and USVI Lead Growing List of Sponsors for Caribbean Week in New York 2025

NEW YORK (May 10, 2025) – The Nature Island of Dominica and the U.S. Virgin Islands – Naturally in Rhythm – have been confirmed as title Platinum Sponsors of Caribbean Week in New York (CWNY 2025), the flagship event of the Caribbean Tourism Organization (CTO) in North America. Taking place from June 1-6, 2025, at The Westin New York at Times Square, CWNY continues to build momentum with strong support from a growing number of CTO member countries and tourism partners.

This year's impressive lineup of sponsors also includes:

- Gold Sponsors: Antigua and Barbuda, The Bahamas, Bermuda
- Silver Sponsors: St. Kitts, Sandals Resorts International
- Bronze Sponsor: Anguilla, Barbados

The expanding sponsorship base reflects a united regional commitment to amplify the Caribbean's global presence and underscores the strategic importance of CWNY as a platform for tourism development, investment, and cultural diplomacy.

"Caribbean Week in New York

is more than a celebration — it's a strategic convergence of our region's top minds and markets," said Dona Regis-Prosper, Secretary-General and CEO of the CTO. "We're encouraged by the growing support from our members and partners, which shows the value they see in this marquee event."

Under the theme "Caribbean Resilience: Crafting Tomorrow's Tourism," the 2025 edition will spotlight the dynamism and diversity of the region through a series of high-impact events, including:

- Sessions on Artificial Intelligence and Hospitality Innovation
- The launch of the CTO Reimagine



Plan

- Media Marketplace and Caribbean Media Awards
- Caribbean Women's Leadership Dinner and Awards
- Forums on airline and cruise connectivity
- Sessions on the Orange Economy and creative industries
- A next-generation showcase for

Caribbean youth

- An Allied Member session on emerging markets
- The relaunch of CTO's Hospitality Assured Program
- The Caribbean Cultural Showcase, a consumer event celebrating the region's music, art and flavors

remains the premier regional tourism event in the U.S., drawing government officials, travel professionals, media, diaspora leaders, and Caribbean enthusiasts together to shape the future of the industry.

For more information or to get involved, visit www.caribbeanweek.com.

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IBERIA STUFFED SQUID
WHILE STOCKS LAST

Turks and Caicos Golf Association Dominates Caribbean Classic for Historic Three-Peat as Champions

Casa de Campo, Dominican Republic - History was made on the greens of Casa de Campo as the Turks and Caicos Islands Golf Association (TCIGA) secured an unprecedented third consecutive championship at the 29th annual Caribbean Classic Golf Tournament, held from April 29th to May 2nd, 2025.

THIS remarkable achievement underscores a significant surge in the prominence of golf within the Turks and Caicos Islands, a success largely attributed to the strategic team assembled by Sean Wilson, Head Professional at the esteemed Royal Turks and Caicos Golf Club.

A strong contingent of 48 golfers proudly represented the TCIGA, competing fiercely across both the Men's and Women's divisions. Their enthusiastic participation was duly rewarded with victories in the men team category.

Hon. Rachel Taylor, Minister of Sports, Turks and Caicos Islands stated "On behalf of the Government and the people of the Turks and Caicos Islands, I extend heartfelt congratulations to our national golf team for their outstanding achievement at the 29th Caribbean Golf Classic. Securing a third consecutive victory is a testament to the team's dedication, skill, and the growing stature of golf in our nation.

This accomplishment not only brings pride to our islands but also inspires our youth to pursue excellence in sports.

Let us celebrate this momentous victory and look forward to continued success in the years to come."

"This three-peat victory truly reflects the growing passion and increasing involvement in golf within the Turks and Caicos," commented TCIGA President Fraser Dods. "To bring home the coveted George Noon Cup for the third year running, after nearly three decades of competition, fills us with immense pride for Turks and Caicos golf."

The team's dominant performance stemmed from unwavering determination and exceptional play across all flights and categories. The men's team clinched the prestigious Robert Grell Trophy. This near clean sweep across all team divisions highlights the burgeoning depth of talent within the TCIGA membership.

The Caribbean Classic, organized annually by the Caribbean Golf



Association, unites golfers from its twelve member countries. The tournament features both individual and team competitions, with each participating nation fielding an unlimited number of players who compete over three days, playing eighteen holes each day.

Having captured the George Noon Cup in 2023 for the first time in 27 years of participation in 2023, 2024 and now again in 2025, Team Turks and Caicos once again amassed the highest overall points, solidifying their reign as champions. This three consecutive victory marks a significant milestone for sports in the Turks and Caicos Islands and for the burgeoning golf community.

Individual Stars Shine Brightly Beyond the collective triumph, individual brilliance shone through from several TCI golfers. Andrea Todd delivered a stellar performance to win the ladies' Flight 1. On the men's side, Kurt Rivers, Jamie Gray, Dale Hodgkins, Simon Dobbs, Steven Kendrew, and Mark Fulford all showcased impressive form.

Their individual successes were crucial in bolstering the team's overall victory.

"This incredible team performance speaks volumes about the dedication and talent we have within the TCIGA," stated Mark Fulford, Vice President of the TCIGA. "To witness such commitment and skill across all divisions is truly inspiring and signals a very bright future for golf in the Turks and Caicos."

Looking to the Future: Building on a Legacy of Success Jarrett Forbes, TCI Director of Sports, expressed his optimism for the future of the sport. "This victory underscores the tremendous potential for golf in the Turks and Caicos," he noted. "We are eager to encourage more young people in our islands to embrace this fantastic sport."

Sean Wilson, Head Golf Professional at Royal Turks and Caicos Golf Club, echoed this sentiment. "This is a truly monumental achievement for TCI golf," he said. "Bringing home trophies in two out of three divisions is a testament to the hard work and dedication of the TCIGA executive and all its players."



Special thanks goes to Royal Turks and Caicos Golf Club, and the hard work of golf professionals Ashley Gravett and Justin Simmons in bringing so many more new golfers into the sport.

President Fraser further commented that "Summer kids golf camps are a great way for children to receive a fun introduction to the game. These summer clinics run in June and July and all are welcome to attend and get a taste of the fastest growing sport in TCI"

This third consecutive victory at the Caribbean Classic establishes a new and impressive legacy for golf in the Turks and Caicos Islands.

The TCIGA is managed by a dedicated volunteer executive committee comprising Fraser Dods (President), Mark Fulford (Vice President), Denise Douglas (Secretary), Dale Hodgkins (Treasurer), Andrea Todd, and Roberto Stipa. Through their collective efforts and the growing enthusiasm of TCI golfers, the future of the sport in the region looks exceptionally promising.

The Caribbean Classic remains a highlight on the Caribbean Golf calendar, bringing together amateur golfers from twelve nations, including the Turks and Caicos, Puerto Rico, Guadalupe, the Bahamas, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, Dominican Republic, Barbados, the Cayman Islands, Martinique, St Lucia, and the USVI.



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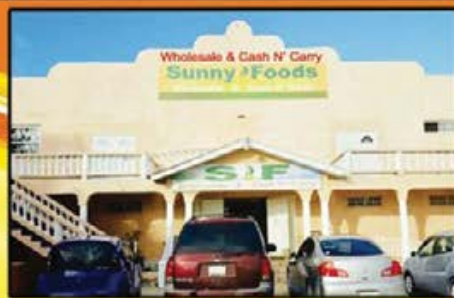
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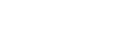
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NEW COMMANDER FOR THE ROYAL BAHAMAS DEFENCE FORCE

NASSAU, The Bahamas -- The Royal Bahamas Defence Force (RBDF) has new leadership. Commander Dr. Raymond King, with 38 years of RBDF service, passed the baton to Captain Floyd P. Moxey during an official ceremony held at the Royal Bahamas Defence Force Coral Harbour Base on Thursday, May 8, 2025. Captain Moxey assumed the position of ninth Commander Defence Force.

In attendance were Governor General, Her Excellency the Most Hon. Dame Cynthia Pratt; Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, the Hon. Philip Davis; Minister of National Security, the Hon. Wayne Munroe; cabinet

ministers, senators, justices and senior government officials.

Prime Minister Davis thanked Commodore King for his long service and said that Commodore King has been an outstanding contributor to the nation and wished him well in his future endeavors. He commended Commodore King for leading the nation through several crises, including Hurricane Dorian, unrest in Haiti, and the COVID-19 Pandemic.

He welcomed Captain Moxey and said that he epitomized the essence of what a public servant should be.

"Captain Moxey is, in many ways, what public service ought to look like -- not glamorous, not boastful, but honest, professional, thoughtful," said Mr. Davis. "He started out as a marine mechanic in Mangrove Cay, Andros, worked his way up across 40 years of service, mastering technical operations, legal frameworks, and the complex workings of a national security policy." The Prime Minister said that history was also being

made as for the first time ever, the new Commander will be supported by two deputies, both of whom are females.

Outgoing Commander King thanked his staff, colleagues and family for their support over the course of his career. "As I exit the highest office in this distinguished military, I do so with a sense of pride in the work that we have accomplished together," he said, describing his leadership style as defined by professionalism, fairness, and service to the public." Delivering a personal tribute was his wife, retired Force Chief Petty Officer Fredricka King, who serenaded him with the hit, "Never Enough" from The Greatest Showman musical.

Commander Moxey noted his work began immediately with addressing the fleet, which is currently running at just 65 percent capacity -- far below the 85 percent target.

"Our operations must be intelligence-driven and forward-looking," he said. To this end, he pledged to boost patrol rotations, set up small boat stations in key locations, and ensure personnel are well-supported and mission-ready.

Plans were also announced to introduce a family support event and expand welfare programmes. An anonymous feedback system, he said, will give marines and staff a safe channel to raise concerns, reinforcing internal transparency and trust.

"To strengthen capabilities,

the RBDF will pursue long-term maintenance contracts, adopt a predictive supply model, and invest in training for pilots, mechanics, and unmanned aerial vehicle operators." He confirmed that four new safe boats will soon be commissioned, stationed alongside coastal radar systems to expand surveillance coverage.

"The growing instability in Haiti, where gang violence and political turmoil have displaced tens of thousands, has pushed regional governments -- including The Bahamas -- to bolster border controls and intelligence operations." Consequently, Commodore Moxey said the RBDF will deepen partnerships with regional allies like the Turks and Caicos Islands, focusing on intelligence sharing and formal agreements to better manage migrant activity.

He added that a new entry of 150 personnel in May will help address manpower needs.

Commodore Moxey is a distinguished Bahamian military professional and legal expert, with over four decades of experience in various agencies including the Royal Bahamas Defence Force, the Office of the Attorney General, and the

Ministry of National Security.

Born in Mangrove Cay, Andros, he joined the RBDF in January 1982. He earned a Bachelor of Laws (LLB Hons.) in 2008 from the University of Wolverhampton and a Certificate of Legal Education from the Eugene Dupuch Law School in May 2011. Four months later, he was called to the Bahamas Bar and was subsequently seconded to the Office of the Attorney General.

In 2017, Commodore Moxey returned to the RBDF and became Staff Officer, Legal Affairs. In October 2021, he was appointed Legal Counsel to the Ministry of National Security. He is an active member of Saint Francis Xavier Cathedral. Married to Theresa Sturup, Commodore Moxey is the proud father of three children -- Marcus, Maurice and Theresa, and a proud grandparent.

The ceremony also included Medal Presentations, Three Cheers/ Gun Salute for the outgoing Commander and Inaugural Salute to the incoming Commander, the Presentation of Sword and Commander Defence Force Pennant, and a March Past. The RBDF Band provided entertainment.

A reception followed on the grounds.





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Two 18 Year-Olds Cleared of Charges in Police Shooting case

Wednesday, May 14, 2025 – Turks and Caicos Islands

Two 18-year-old men who had been accused of shooting at police and ramming a police vehicle in Kew Town, Providenciales, have been formally cleared of all charges and released from custody.

THE incident occurred on February 2, 2025, and left a tactical police officer seriously injured. The officer, who was briefly hospitalized, was unable to return to full duties for several weeks. Eagle Legal News has confirmed he is now on light duty as he continues his recovery.

The accused—Kean Wilson and Jael Rigby—were arrested and charged with multiple firearm-related offenses. On March 4, they were remanded to His Majesty's Prison pending further legal proceedings.

However, during a Sufficiency Hearing held on Friday, May 9, 2025, the Honorable Chief Justice ruled that the evidence brought forth by law enforcement and the prosecution was insufficient to proceed to trial. As a result, both young men were discharged and released from custody.

This ruling effectively ends the case against the pair, who had faced serious allegations including assaulting law enforcement officers and use of a firearm during the commission of a crime.

Wilkie Arthur

Court Correspondent

Eagle Legal News Network

(For inquiries, advertisements, sponsorships, or donations in support of this growing media network, contact us at 342-3407.)



DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA) REPORT FOR CORAL GARDENS DUNE REPLENISHMENT

The Draft Environmental Impact Assessment Report – for Coral Gardens Dune Replenishment – PR 16651, 60812/57, Penns Road, Grace Bay, Providenciales, Turks and Caicos Islands has been finalized and is available online for public review at:

<https://www.gov.tc/planning/pr-16651>

The Environmental Impact Assessment Report was submitted in accordance with Section 44 (1) b of the Physical Planning Ordinance. Comments on the EIA report can be sent to the Department of Planning via email to planningconsultation@gov.tc or Environmental Compliance

Manager, Garry Mclean- gmclean@gov.tc or in writing to the Department of Planning, Emily House, Leeward Highway, Providenciales, or at South Base, Grand Turk on or before Monday, June 09th, 2025.

A Public Consultation on the EIA will be held on Thursday, May 29th, 2025 at 5:00p.m. – 6:30p.m. at the Department of Planning, Emily House, Leeward Highway, Providenciales, Turks and Caicos Islands. All interested persons are invited to attend to air their views, have their concerns addressed, and have their questions answered. This is your opportunity to add your voice to the discussion.



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Women-Led Organizations in Crisis: UN Warns of Widespread Shutdowns Amid Funding Cuts

Deandrea Hamilton
Editor

A new report from UN Women, released this week, reveals a deepening crisis for women-led and women's rights organizations operating in some of the world's most fragile settings. Based on a global survey conducted in March 2025 that reached over 400 organizations across 44 countries, the findings paint a stark picture: 90% of respondents report that recent funding reductions have directly impacted their operations, and nearly half say they are at risk of shutting down within six months.

THESE organizations—often on the front lines in conflict zones, disaster-stricken areas, and regions of acute poverty—provide lifeline services to women and girls, including access to income support, food distribution, healthcare, legal aid, and safe spaces. The threat of closure is not only a setback for women's rights—it's a humanitarian



emergency in the making.

When women and girls lose access to these services, the risks escalate dramatically. Gender-

based violence, exploitation, early marriage, transactional sex, and unsafe migration become increasingly common coping

strategies. The report highlights that marginalized groups—migrants, refugees, Indigenous women, older women, women with disabilities,

and LGBTQ+ individuals—will be the hardest hit. These communities already face barriers to accessing mainstream humanitarian aid and will now confront even greater exclusion and danger.

The funding cuts have also intensified competition, with 62% of surveyed organizations reporting a struggle to secure increasingly scarce resources. A staggering 77% predict a significant decline in the number of operational women's rights NGOs in the coming months. Yet despite the growing challenges, these organizations are not retreating.

In the face of adversity, women-led groups are demonstrating resilience and ingenuity. Many are pursuing new donors, diversifying funding streams, and engaging in strategic planning and advocacy. There's a mounting push for long-term sustainability models that reduce dependence on external funding and strengthen grassroots capacity.

Still, the need for urgent international support is clear. As crises multiply—from armed conflict to climate disasters—cutting off funding to women-led organizations risks silencing some of the most effective and trusted voices in humanitarian response.

As the UN warns, the global community must act swiftly to protect these organizations—not just for their sake, but for the countless women and girls they serve.

ED6 Constituency Funds Invested in Youth Development at A. Louise Garland Thomas High School



Investing in our youth, investing in our future. This month's ED6 constituency allowance is dedicated to A. Louise Garland Thomas High School—empowering students, strengthening our community.



Credit and Debit Card Payments Now Accepted at Grand Turk Office

Grand Turk, Turks and Caicos Islands, 8th May 2025 – The Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) in Grand Turk is pleased to announce that effective immediately, customers can now make payments using credit and debit cards at our office.

This new payment option reflects our ongoing commitment to improving service delivery, increasing convenience, and modernizing our operations. By introducing card payments, we aim to reduce wait times, streamline the payment process, and enhance the overall customer experience.

Card payments will be accepted for all standard DMV services, including:

- Driver's licenses and renewals
- Vehicle registration and licensing
- Public Service Vehicle (PSV) fees
- Dealer and operator licensing
- Other applicable DMV-related transactions

Cash and cheque payments will continue to be accepted at the Government's Treasury for those who prefer traditional methods.

The DMV encourages all customers to take advantage of this new service and thanks the public for their continued cooperation and support as we work to serve you better.



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theLaw & theCourts



A Father's tears: Grieving the Loss of a Second Son to Gun Violence

Monday, 12 May 2025 – Turks and Caicos Islands

A family in Kew Town, Providenciales, is once again plunged into mourning after losing a second son to senseless gun violence—this time on the eve of Mother's Day.

The victim, 33-year-old Cyrilido Smith, was socializing with a group of men outside an apartment complex in a quiet residential area when unknown gunmen opened fire just before midnight. Residents contacted Eagle Legal News, describing the sound of rapid gunfire from what they believed were high-caliber weapons.

Moments later, calls flooded in reporting a man lying motionless on the ground, while another nearby could be heard crying out in pain. When our news team arrived, the scene was heart-wrenching. Cyrilido's mother and relatives were already wailing in anguish. Despite police efforts to comfort her, the grieving mother insisted on seeing her son's body.

What she said next was chilling.

"This is my second child to be killed, and I've still heard nothing from you all (police) about my first child's murder over a year ago," she cried—referencing the Dragon Bar killings on Leeward Highway, 1 February 2024, in which her youngest son was one of the victims.

Her words echo a painful reality many families in the Turks and Caicos Islands know all too well: no updates, no closure, no justice.

Eventually, officers allowed the father to view his son's body, lying in a pool of blood. His grief was visceral.

"He looked just like me," the father sobbed. "He was my favorite boy." The mother, overwhelmed, was supported by relatives as she collapsed in tears.

One of Cyrilido's brothers arrived on scene and had to be restrained by police. He broke through the police tape in anguish, crying:

"Leave me alone, man! That's my brother! This is the second time! Oh Lord, this hurt so much!"

The weight of the family's sorrow was overwhelming. Out of respect, our crew stopped filming.

Cyrilido Smith was remembered by both parents as a quiet, respectful man who worked in the hospitality sector. He had lived at the family home all his life and had no criminal record. Though he struggled with alcohol after the death of his younger brother, his parents emphasized that he was never violent or involved in wrongdoing.

"This is unbelievable. Two of my boys... gone," the father said softly. "He was a decent child. Not caught up in foolishness."

Cyrilido reportedly had no children, but Eagle Legal News has received calls from individuals claiming a woman may be pregnant with his child.

If confirmed, yet another child in Turks and Caicos will grow up without a father.

We will continue to follow this developing story and provide updates as they become available.

Wilkie Arthur

Investigative Journalist

Eagle Legal News Network

(Feel free to contact us at phone number #3423407 for advertisements, sponsorships, or donations in support of this growing media network.)



Governor Calls for Bold, Community-Led Policing in Crime Fight

Providenciales, TCI – Governor Dileeni Daniel-Selvaratnam has issued a strong call for data-driven, intelligence-led and community-based policing to combat rising crime in the Turks and Caicos Islands. In remarks delivered at the recent swearing-in of Commissioner Fitz Bailey, the Governor underscored the urgent need for reform, accountability and strategic collaboration across agencies and borders.

"OUR response to crime must be strategic, data-driven, intelligence-led and collaborative—across agencies, across borders and above all, with the communities we serve," the Governor said, addressing law enforcement officers and regional dignitaries.

She warned that criminal networks are becoming more sophisticated, and that the TCI is at the "sharp end" of regional security threats. Against that backdrop, she outlined a vision for the Royal Turks and Caicos Islands Police Force as an institution rooted in fairness, strengthened by public trust, and driven by results.

"We must be unforgiving in our zero-tolerance approach to misconduct," she added. "Wearing the badge must continue to be a source of pride, not of power or privilege."

Governor Selvaratnam praised Commissioner Bailey for his record of modern, community-focused leadership and said his appointment marked a critical moment for the country's law enforcement strategy. While the ceremony took place two weeks ago, her words continue to resonate amid ongoing public concern about violent crime and border security.

Quoting from the Bible and invoking the moral arc of justice, the Governor emphasized that effective policing must be grounded in integrity, humility and service.

With regional police leaders from Jamaica and The Bahamas in attendance, the event signaled a united front against shared threats—and a new chapter in the push for a safer, more resilient Turks and Caicos Islands.

Police Investigate Fatal Shooting in Kew Town, Second Man also hit

Deandrea Hamiltonian
Editor

Police in the Turks and Caicos Islands are investigating a double shooting that occurred late Saturday night, resulting in one fatality and one man injured.

According to a statement from the Royal Turks and Caicos Islands Police Force (RT&CI), the first shooting was reported around 11:12 p.m. on May 10 in the Kew Town area. Officers responded to gunshots heard near Harmony Close and discovered a man suffering from gunshot wounds at Cerasie Close. Emergency medical services were called, but the victim—identified as 33-year-old Cyrilido Smith of Kew Town—was pronounced dead at 12:16 a.m.

While securing the scene, police located a second man nearby who had also sustained injuries. He was transported to a medical facility for treatment. His condition was not disclosed in the statement.

Shortly after, at approximately 11:25 p.m., officers responded to a second



report of gunfire at Ralph Close in the Blue Hills area. There, they found a 20-year-old man inside a house with apparent gunshot wounds. He was also taken for medical treatment. Authorities did not release his name or details on his condition.

Police have not confirmed whether the two incidents are connected and

are urging anyone with information to come forward. Tips can be submitted anonymously by calling Crime Stoppers at 1-800-8477 or using the P3 mobile app. The Serious Crime Unit is also reachable at 231-1842.

The RT&CI extended condolences to the family and friends of Mr. Smith.

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The 7 Habits of Happy Families; Stronger relationships, more laughter, and deeper connection—here's how.

Dr. Justin Coulson
HappyFamilies.com

As I have surveyed and worked with thousands of families over the years, there are a small handful of habits that I see parents practice that make their families happy. And they are astonishingly powerful.

IN this article I will share those habits by describing the principle, discussing how it works in practice, and offering a provocation to get you thinking.

1. Assume Positive Intent

Principle: Your children are not actually trying to ruin your life. They're trying their best with limited skills and resources. Sometimes they can be clumsy. They only have their 'L' plates on.

In Practice: When your child does something upsetting, pause before reacting. Ask yourself, "What need is my child trying to meet?" Then, address the need rather than just the behaviour. "I can see you're frustrated. Let's figure this out together."

Provocation: We wouldn't assume your colleague intentionally sabotaged a project, yet we're quick to believe our children are orchestrating psychological warfare against us. Your child isn't a criminal mastermind plotting your demise. They're just hungry, tired, or struggling to communicate. The fastest way to turn a good kid bad is

to treat them like they already are.

2. Laugh Together

Principle: Shared joy creates bonds that withstand life's challenges.

In Practice: Have family movie nights with comedies. Share funny stories. Play ridiculous games. Create inside jokes. Laugh at yourself when you make mistakes. Make silly faces, tell dad jokes, and celebrate the ridiculous moments of family life.

Provocation: Most families spend more time coordinating schedules than creating memories. The average household shares fewer than 20 minutes of laughter per week, yet we wonder why everyone feels disconnected. If your family hasn't had a proper belly laugh together in the last few days, your family culture is in critical condition.

3. Fix Things Fast

Principle: Conflict is inevitable; prolonged disconnection is optional.

In Practice: Be the first to apologise, especially if you're the parent. Name what went wrong. Take responsibility for your part. Ask what would help. End with physical connection. A hug, high five, or fist bump resets everyone's nervous system.

Provocation: Your silent treatment isn't "teaching them a lesson." Nor is yelling or threatening. It's teaching them that love is conditional. Every hour of unresolved tension between you and your child is rewiring their brain to expect conditional acceptance in future relationships. Your pride isn't worth the therapy bills they'll have later.

4. Stay Close

Principle: Children of all ages are



biologically wired for connection with their parents.

In Practice: Create daily rituals of connection: bedtime stories, morning cuddles, after-school check-ins. Sit on their bed for five minutes at night. Drive them to school when possible. Find small ways to connect throughout the day that show you're thinking of them.

Provocation: Your child's push for independence is a façade. Behind it is a child desperately hoping you won't believe the act. While you're respecting their "independence" by backing off, they're interpreting your distance as abandonment. Your children need you more, not less – they just need you differently as they grow. They want your involvement in a supportive, not a controlling way.

5. Listen Fully

Principle: Being heard creates

security and builds trust.

In Practice: Put down your phone when your child speaks. Make eye contact. Ask follow-up questions. Reflect back what you hear. Don't immediately jump to solutions or lectures. Sometimes say, "Tell me more about that."

Provocation: If your screen time report shows more hours on social media than minutes of eye contact with your children, you're outsourcing the most important relationship they have right now to someone or something else. Your child will remember exactly zero of your "important" emails or Instagram reels, but they'll never forget the times you chose your phone over their story.

6. Create Meaningful Traditions

Principle: Family rituals create stability and identity in an

unpredictable world.

In Practice: Establish weekly family nights, seasonal celebrations, birthday traditions, or Sunday dinners. They don't need to be elaborate – consistency matters more than complexity. Even simple traditions like Sunday morning pancakes create anchors of belonging.

Provocation: In a culture where kids construct identity through screens and peers, your family traditions are fighting for your children's sense of self. Without these shared experiences, your family becomes little more than roommates who occasionally share Wi-Fi. The traditions you neglect creating today are the memories your children won't have tomorrow.

7. Have the Hard Conversations

Principle: Children need parents who are brave enough to discuss difficult topics.

In Practice: Create an environment where no question is off-limits. Talk about bodies, relationships, disappointments, and fears in age-appropriate ways. Don't wait for the "perfect moment." Use everyday opportunities to address important topics briefly and naturally.

Provocation: Your discomfort with difficult conversations doesn't make them unnecessary. It makes them urgent. The conversations you avoid having with your children will be filled by Google, YouTube, or the kid on the bus with wildly inaccurate information. If you won't have these conversations, someone else – or something else – will, and you probably won't like their curriculum.

Fleming Fund projects launched with CARPHA, UKHSA and PAHO to fortify the Caribbean's fight against Antimicrobial Resistance

Bridgetown, Barbados. 6 May 2025 - On Monday, 5 May 2025, health leaders, development partners and regional stakeholders gathered at the Hilton Barbados Resort to launch two synergistic, landmark, regional projects under the United Kingdom (UK) Government's Fleming Fund and jointly implemented by the Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA), the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), and the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA). The goal is to strengthen the Caribbean's ability to combat the global crisis of antimicrobial resistance (AMR).

AMR occurs when microbes evolve to resist treatment, making infections harder to cure. In 2019, AMR caused 1.27 million deaths and contributed to nearly five million more—surpassing HIV/AIDS and malaria. Caribbean small island and developing states face added risks due to limited lab infrastructure, transport delays, and uneven access to antibiotics. The project, 'Strengthening Antimicrobial Resistance Response in the Caribbean', led by PAHO is designed to upgrade microbiology laboratories in ten countries (Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, and Montserrat). It will also enhance capacity at the Best-dos-Santos Public Health Laboratory in Barbados.

The Caribbean Antimicrobial Resistance Alliance (CARA), a

partnership between UKHSA and CARPHA, forms part of CARPHA's wider integrated AMR Programme aimed at enhancing the region's capacity to detect and respond to antimicrobial resistance. Through this initiative, CARPHA is strengthening its regional laboratory network, expanding diagnostic capabilities, and improving the collection and use of AMR data. The project will support Member States by expanding reference laboratory services in Trinidad and Tobago, Jamaica, and Saint Lucia, and establishing a digital, region-wide surveillance platform. CARA also promotes regional coordination and best practice sharing, helping to align national efforts and policies to ensure timely, data-informed responses to antimicrobial resistance.

Speaking in support of the launch, Professor Dame Sally Davies, UK Special Envoy on Antimicrobial Resistance noted that AMR is a global emergency that demands urgent action. "The collaboration between UKHSA and CARPHA, supported by the Fleming Fund, is a powerful testament to our shared commitment to tackling this crisis head-on. By enhancing lab capabilities, improving surveillance, and building workforce expertise, we are taking decisive steps to protect the health of Caribbean communities and beyond. Together, we can make a lasting impact in the fight against AMR."



Ashley Dalton, Minister of State for Public Health and Prevention (UK Department of Health and Social Care) highlighted "Antimicrobial resistance is one of the most serious and complex health challenges facing our world. The government is combating AMR through the Fleming Fund and advancing our national action plan, development models and surveillance systems. Our partnerships with the Caribbean Public

Health Agency and Pan American Health Organisation are a vital for safeguarding public health and ensuring the effectiveness of life-saving treatments for future generations."

Dr. Rhonda Sealey-Thomas, Assistant Director of the Pan American Health Organization noted the strong history of collaboration to address pressing public health challenges. "AMR remains a top priority for PAHO. We are actively working with an organization-wide approach on several important initiatives in this area, from surveillance to infection prevention and control, water and sanitation, food safety, access to and the appropriate use of antimicrobials and supporting our Member States in the implementation AMR National Action Plans under a One Health approach."

"Through CARA, we are strengthening our laboratory

systems, expanding regional surveillance, and building a coordinated One Health approach to ensure that Caribbean countries are better equipped to detect, monitor, and respond to resistant infections, highlighted Dr. Lisa Indar, Executive Director of CARPHA. She stressed that AMR is one of the most serious and complex health challenges facing our region. "This collaboration reflects our shared commitment to safeguarding public health and securing the effectiveness of life-saving treatments for future generations," Dr Indar outlined.

Dr Natalie Wright, Head of UK Overseas Territories Programme and CARA project lead at UKHSA said: "AMR is an urgent global public health and development threat, affecting all countries and regions. Sustained action is required to curb inappropriate use of antibiotics, the main driver of AMR. "Through this programme our goal is to build sustainable systems that promote data sharing, support clinical decision-making, and create lasting resilience to the threat of AMR. The work we do today will lay the foundation for a healthier, more secure future."

Bringing remarks on behalf of the Prime Minister of Barbados, H. E. Mia Amor Mottley, who chairs the Global Leaders Group on Antimicrobial Resistance, Chief Medical Officer of Barbados, Dr Kenneth George ■ Fleming Fund, see page 35



TEACHERS FETED

BY *Sandals*

RESORTS INTERNATIONAL

MONTEGO BAY, May 13 (JIS):

More than 750 teachers from St. Ann, St. Mary, St. James, Negril and the South Coast were feted by Sandals Resorts International (SRI) on May 7 as part of the annual Teachers' Day celebrations.

DESIGNED to recognise the invaluable contributions of teachers to the wider society, each region, through the

Sandals and Beaches brands, crafted its own unique programme to honour the educators, culminating in vibrant events filled with entertainment, camaraderie and gratitude.

The Ocho Rios Region, comprising Beaches Ocho Rios, Sandals Royal Plantation, Sandals Ochi, and Sandals Dunn's River, hosted more than 400 teachers from educational institutions in St. Ann and St. Mary, including basic, primary, special education, high schools, and community colleges at the Pearly Beach facility, Ocho Rios,

St. Ann.

Festivities in Ocho Rios featured beach games that fostered teamwork and camaraderie among educators, many of whom met for the first time in a relaxed, seaside setting.

Prizes such as six weekend stays at any Sandals or Beaches Resort in Jamaica, grocery baskets from Best Dress Chicken, and surprise giveaways kept the excitement high.

The South Coast region celebrated with 162 teachers with its own engaging programme, while Negril hosted 80 teachers, and Montego



Bay welcomed 115 educators. Each region dedicated time for teachers to relax, connect, and enjoy Jamaica's natural beauty.

"The celebrations were not only about fun but also recognition. Teachers enjoyed several beach games that promoted teamwork and friendship, reflecting the importance of collaboration in education. The presence of the North East Regional Health Authority (NERHA) added an educational element with its 'Know Your Numbers' programme, engaging teachers in environmental awareness activities," Sandals Regional Public Relations Manager, Lyndsay Isaacs, noted.

"Prizes were a major highlight of the day. Teachers had the chance to win weekend stays at any of Jamaica's Sandals or Beaches Resorts, grocery baskets, and other surprises. These rewards served as a token of appreciation for their dedication and hard work," she added.

For her part, General Manager at Sandals Ochi Beach Resort,

Carol Bourke, said teachers are the cornerstone of a thriving society.

"Their dedication to shaping minds and nurturing future generations is invaluable. It was both an honour and a privilege to host and celebrate these outstanding educators with a day of well-deserved enjoyment, camaraderie, and appreciation," she added.

Teachers also expressed their gratitude for the celebrations, praising Sandals for the thoughtful gesture and contribution to education over the years.

"This day means so much to us. It's wonderful to be recognised and appreciated in such a special way," said Lime Hall Basic School teacher, Stephanie Simms, who won a weekend for two at a Sandals property.

Her colleague teacher from Reaching Stars Basic School in St. Ann's Bay, Tracey-Ann Byfield, said: "We're thrilled with the incredible activities – far beyond what we anticipated."



Millions around the World are getting set to Celebrate Haitian Flag Day in a Monumental way

Deandrea Hamilton
Editor

While there is no official global count of participants, it's estimated that over 3.5 million Haitians living outside Haiti will commemorate Haitian Flag Day on May 18, 2025, alongside the nearly 12 million residents of Haiti itself, according to online sources.

HAITIAN Flag Day, observed annually on May 18, celebrates the creation of the Haitian flag in 1804 during the Haitian Revolution. The day is marked by parades, cultural festivals, and community gatherings both in Haiti and across the global Haitian diaspora.

In the United States, cities with significant Haitian populations host major celebrations. Brooklyn's Haitian Culture Day Parade and Festival attracts over 10,000 attendees annually, featuring music, dance, and Haitian cuisine. Similarly, Miami's Little Haiti Cultural Complex hosts events showcasing Haitian music, dance, and art.

In London, celebrations are listed for Sunday, May 18, 2025 at Pavilion Hall, located at 25 Avenue Road, South Norwood Lakes, London, SE25 4DX, starting at 3:00 PM. Organized by the Haitian Heritage Group UK, this gathering aims to honor Haiti's Flag Day—a significant occasion commemorating the creation of the Haitian flag in 1803 during the nation's fight for independence from France. The event will feature cultural performances, music, and community activities celebrating Haitian heritage and pride.



Tickets are priced at £8.00 and must be purchased in advance.

These events not only honor Haitian heritage but also strengthen community bonds and cultural pride among Haitians worldwide.

Not to be outdone, Paris, France is set to host a significant Haitian Flag Day celebration on Sunday, May 18, 2025. The event, known as the Caribbean Flag Festival, is expected to draw over 1,000 attendees, highlighting the vibrant Haitian community in the city.

Haitian Flag Day Celebrations in Canada are many. We begin in Montreal, Quebec which is home to one of the largest Haitian communities in Canada, will host multiple events including Haitian Flag Day Fest Montreal which is organized by Natyf TV; its to be held on Saturday.

There are also cultural displays like the one in Alberta to commemorate

the 222nd Haitian Flag Day with a celebration on Saturday, May 17, 2025, at the Hellenic Banquet Hall. The event will feature cultural performances, music, and community engagement. It's hosted by the Haiti Association of Calgary.

Canada will also colour the Falls. In a symbolic tribute, Niagara Falls will be illuminated in red and blue, the colors of the Haitian flag, on May 18, 2025, from 10:15 AM to 10:30 PM. This gesture honors Haitian Flag Day and the contributions of the Haitian community in Canada.

Some of Haiti's most famous people are: Toussaint Louverture – Leader of the Haitian Revolution, instrumental in Haiti becoming the first Black republic and the first country to abolish slavery; Jean-Jacques Dessalines – Founding father of Haiti; declared the country's independence in 1804 and became its first ruler; Henri Christophe – Key general in the revolution and later King of northern Haiti and Catherine Flon – Credited with sewing the first Haitian flag in 1803. On the music and art scenes: Wyclef Jean – Grammy-

winning musician, producer, and former member of The Fugees. A strong advocate for Haiti; Michaëlle Jean – Former Governor General of Canada (2005–2010), born in Haiti; Emline Michel – Acclaimed Haitian singer known as the "Queen of Haitian Song"; T-Vice – Popular Haitian band known for their impact on compas music and unforgettable, the iconic sound that helped catapult Salt-N-Pepa to fame—especially their breakout hit "Push It"—was significantly shaped by Haitian-American Hurby "Luv Bug" Azor.

Actors and Entertainers from Haiti include: Jimmy Jean-Louis – Haitian actor known for roles in Heroes, Fat Girls, and international films and Garcelle Beauvais – Actress, model, and TV personality, known for The Jamie Foxx Show and The Real Housewives of Beverly Hills.

Haiti is also proud of these Intellectuals and Writers: Edwidge Danticat – Renowned Haitian-American author of Breath, Eyes, Memory and The Dew Breaker and Fränkétienne – Influential writer, poet, and playwright; pioneer of the

spiralisme literary movement.

On the list of most notable athletes with Haitian roots are: Naomi Osaka – While primarily identifying as Japanese-Haitian, the tennis star often acknowledges her Haitian roots and Jeff Louis – Haitian footballer who played for several European clubs and the national team.

An honourable mention in the sports category has to be NBA superstar Stephen Curry, who has won multiple championships as leader of the Golden State Warriors. Curry's mother is Haitian-born.

A recent famous addition to the long list of accomplished people from Haiti, is the newly elected Roman Catholic pontiff, Pope Leo XIV whose Haitian-American heritage is making social media rounds.

ave Haitian heritage, highlighting the diverse and far-reaching influence of the Haitian diaspora.

Haiti has long been an influence on the world, and though the republic has many times fallen into disarray, there is no denying its impact and indomitability.

It is the world's first successful slave revolt, leading to the first independent Black republic. Haiti, which shares the island of Hispaniola with the Dominican Republic in the Caribbean region, is also credited with inspired liberation movements across Latin America and the Caribbean and is the first country to permanently abolish slavery.

It is home to the largest fortress in the Western Hemisphere: Citadelle Laferrière and we are so in love with its music, Kompa and its food including Griot.

We wish the people of Haiti well as the nation of millions pushes past the current darkness, and it is very dark, to embrace the steady light of a new life that can be crafted with faith, focus and help from family and friends.

Happy Haitian Flag Day - "Lavi se pa blanch — men li toujou bèl" - which means life isn't perfect, but life is beautiful!



TCI Governor Commends Law Enforcers and Regiment at TRADEWINDS 25 Closing in Trinidad

By Deandrea Hamilton,
Editor
Her Excellency the Governor
of the Turks and Caicos
Islands, Dileeni Daniel-
Selvaratnam, has praised the
nation's law enforcers and
the TCI Regiment following
their participation in the
prestigious TRADEWINDS 25
regional security exercise,
which concluded in Trinidad
and Tobago on Tuesday.

THE closing ceremony, held in the twin-island republic, marked the end of two weeks of rigorous, multinational training involving over 1,000 personnel from 26 nations. The Governor expressed immense pride in seeing the Turks and Caicos Islands Regiment stand shoulder to shoulder with regional and international forces in a demonstration of unity, resilience, and preparedness.

"TRADEWINDS 25 has once again proven the critical value of collaboration among our regional

partners," said Governor Daniel-Selvaratnam. "I am proud of the professionalism and dedication shown by the TCI Regiment and our law enforcement representatives. Their efforts continue to bolster national and regional security."

Her Excellency joined other high-level dignitaries for the closing, including Admiral Alvin Holsey, Commander of U.S. Southern Command; Hon. Wayne Sturge, Trinidad and Tobago's Minister of National Security; and Air Vice Marshal Darryl Daniel, Chief of Defence Staff of the Trinidad and Tobago Defence Force (Coast Guard). Diplomats from across the Caribbean and the Americas were also in attendance, underscoring the global importance of the TRADEWINDS initiative.

The TRADEWINDS 25 exercise, hosted this year by Trinidad and Tobago, aimed to strengthen the collective capacity of regional partners to respond to humanitarian crises, natural disasters, and security threats. For the Turks and Caicos Islands, participation was not only symbolic but strategic—demonstrating the territory's growing capacity in defence and regional



cooperation.

The Governor highlighted that involvement in TRADEWINDS enhances the TCI's readiness in areas such as search and rescue, border security, and disaster response. She also commended the close collaboration between the Regiment and law enforcement agencies, including the Royal TCI Police Force, in preparing for and engaging in this international exercise.

"Regional security is only as strong as our weakest link," she emphasized.

"By investing in our people, our capabilities, and our partnerships, we ensure the Turks and Caicos Islands remains a resilient and respected contributor to Caribbean stability."

TRADEWINDS 25 concludes as one of the largest iterations of the exercise to date, leaving a legacy of stronger regional ties and enhanced operational capabilities.



Aquila Managing Partner Melanie Colpitts with Ed Limon, cofounder of Winged Whale Media, at Seatrade in Miami last month

As Uncertainty Grows, Aquila Doubles Down on Destination Training

MIAMI (May 12, 2025) — As the cruise tourism industry navigates global economic recalibration and rising geopolitical uncertainty, the Aquila Center for Cruise Excellence is doubling down on its mission: training Caribbean destinations to deliver exceptional guest experiences, no matter the climate.

At Seatrade Cruise Global 2025, Aquila Managing Partner Melanie Colpitts emphasized the growing importance of workforce development as a strategic advantage. "When travelers are more selective with their spending, it's the destinations that consistently deliver excellence that will stand out," said Colpitts.

With the energy on the show floor buzzing, Aquila led strategic conversations focused on future-proofing the Caribbean's tourism product through long-term training investments. From cruise line executives to destination decision-makers, the message was clear: quality training pays off.

Aquila, a leading training partner for the cruise industry for more than 15 years, unveiled new initiatives at the conference, including immersive VR-based programs developed in collaboration with Winged Whale Media. The team activated a dynamic takeover of the Florida-Caribbean Cruise Association (FCCA) booth, hosting live demonstrations, mini-training sessions, and interactive activities that illustrated how technology can enhance both the visitor experience and community capacity.

Product development and sustainability were front and center in this year's training dialogue. "Destinations want to build experiences that are not only memorable but meaningful and sustainable," said Colpitts. "It's about enriching the guest journey while protecting and celebrating the culture and communities that make the Caribbean so special."

With global economic uncertainty on the rise, Aquila is urging destinations not to retreat but to double down on service delivery. "Even if arrivals dip, we must exceed expectations for guests. That kind of experience drives powerful word of mouth — and training is the foundation," added Colpitts.

As the official training partner of the FCCA, Aquila remains committed to raising performance standards across the Caribbean and Latin America, equipping destinations with the skills and tools to compete — and win — on the global stage.

Grace Bay Beach

continued from page 1

arrive — calm, welcoming, and genuinely unforgettable."

As the Turks and Caicos Islands continues to grow as a world-class destination, this recognition further positions the islands as a must-visit location for travellers seeking beauty in nature, five-star service, and unforgettable seascapes.

To view the full list of The World's 50 Best Beaches 2025, visit: <https://worlds50beaches.com/top-50-worlds-best-beaches>

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"IF YOU'RE NOT SHOPPING AT SAM'S CLUB YOU'RE PAYING TOO MUCH!"

National Reference Lab being restored and strengthened to ensure quality and reliability of health data and early warnings of health threats

NASSAU, The Bahamas -- In an effort to strengthen the public health system in the country, the Ministry of Health and Wellness and the Inter-American Development Bank facilitated the signing of an estimated \$2 million contract for the National Reference Laboratory.

THE contract signing ceremony was held during a press conference at the Ministry of Health and Wellness on Meeting Street on Monday, May 5, 2025.

The agreement was entered into with Scorpio Construction Ltd., following a competitive bidding process. The project is being carried out in partnership with the IDB for Health System Strengthening.

"Today marks an important milestone for my ministry's ongoing efforts to strengthen the public health system of The Bahamas," said Minister of Health and Wellness the Hon. Dr. Michael Darville.

The reference lab will be located at the former Mortgage Corporation Building on Russell Road in Oakes Field and will provide accessible services in New Providence.

Dr. Darville pointed out that in the aftermath of Hurricane Dorian in 2019, healthcare facilities sustained an estimated \$37.7 million in damage.

With construction of new ones, and renovations to healthcare facilities throughout the country, the ministry is focusing on three main



areas:

resilience to natural disasters; sustainability and energy efficient design incorporating EDGE "green building" certification; and adequate design for infectious diseases.

Joana Pascual, IDB Group Chief of Operations/The Bahamas underscored the importance of IDB's support in such undertakings.

"The health programme is an important aspect of the IDB's portfolio in The Bahamas," she said.

Through two investment loans, one non-reimbursable grant, and one non-reimbursable technical cooperation totalling approximately \$65 million, she said that the bank is pleased to support the Government of The Bahamas and The Ministry of Health.

"Through the Health Systems Strengthening Programme of The Bahamas, we will finance renovations to the National Reference Lab (NRL)," she said.

And added, "While labs are essential to providing diagnostic information -- data on the efficacy of treatment plans, indications of improvements in patient outcomes,

early warnings of public health threats -- the National Reference Lab is the central mechanism for ensuring quality and reliability of those results."

Signatories to the contract were Colin Higgs, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Health and Wellness and representative, Scorpio Construction Ltd.

Boost in Flights from Canada to The Islands of The Bahamas this Summer and Fall

NASSAU, Bahamas (8 May 2025) - The Bahamas Ministry of Tourism, Investments & Aviation announces new and expanded airlift options from Canada making it easier than ever for Canadian travelers to experience the beauty and culture of the islands.

Air Canada is introducing new, nonstop flights from Ottawa Macdonald-Cartier International Airport (YOW) and Halifax-Stanfield International Airport (YHZ) to Nassau's Lynden Pindling International Airport (NAS) this winter, with the addition of weekly flights starting Friday, 5 Dec. 2025 through 10 Apr. 2026.

Commencing on 20 June through 29 Aug., Air Canada will resume weekly nonstop flights from Montréal-Pierre Elliott Trudeau International Airport (YUL) to Nassau's Lynden Pindling International Airport (NAS). Operating every Friday, the Airbus A220 seasonal service will provide additional fast and convenient service to the excitement of Nassau and Paradise Island.

Air Canada will continue to provide service from Toronto's Pearson International Airport (YYZ) to Nassau's Lynden Pindling International Airport (NAS) six to seven times per week.

Air Canada Vacations' flights from Toronto's Pearson International Airport (YYZ) to Georgetown, Exuma (GGT) is also scheduled to resume November 2025 through April 2026.

"Air Canada continues to demonstrate their commitment to expanding air travel from Canada to The Bahamas," said Hon. I. Chester Cooper, Deputy Prime Minister



and Minister of Tourism, Investments & Aviation. "It also reflects the eagerness of Canadians to travel to The Bahamas.

We look forward to welcoming even more visitors from eastern Canada, to experience the warmth of our people, beauty, and culture of our islands this summer, next fall, and beyond."

Sunwing Vacations also announced that their seasonal flights from Toronto Pearson International Airport (YYZ) to Grand Bahama International Airport (FPO) will be extended to year-round weekly service as of this summer.

Sunwing will also continue to operate their nonstop flights from Montréal-Pierre Elliott Trudeau International Airport (YUL) to Grand Bahama International Airport (FPO) on a year-

round basis, with weekly Saturday flights.

Latia Duncombe, Director General, BMOTIA added: "Canada remains a priority growth market for The Bahamas, and the expansion of the airlift by our longstanding partners reflects the sustained demand for our destination. These enhanced routes from key Canadian cities strengthen our connectivity, improve accessibility, and support our broader strategy to drive year-round visitation across the islands."

In addition to the Montreal/Nassau route this summer, Canadians can also opt for the nonstop charter offered by Club Med (every Tuesday through 29 July), to experience their all-inclusive Columbus Isle Resort on San Salvador.

For the latest travel information and inspiration, visit www.bahamas.com.



CABINET APPROVES UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE BENEFIT FOR NIS CONTRIBUTORS

KINGSTON, May 14 (JIS):

Cabinet has approved the introduction of the unemployment insurance benefit, which will be added to the suite of provisions under the National Insurance Scheme (NIS).

The new benefit will serve as a guaranteed safety net for all employees who contribute to the NIS, except for self-employed persons.

Additionally, work is under way to establish the requisite legal and institutional frameworks to implement this important national support system.

"One of the key lessons from the COVID-19 pandemic is the urgent need for a system that supports workers who lose their jobs, helping them to remain financially stable while seeking re-employment," Minister of Labour and Social Security, Hon. Pearlme Charles Jr., said during his 2025/26 Sectoral Debate presentation in the House of Representatives on Tuesday (May 13).

Meanwhile, the Government has taken a decisive step to strengthen the nation's social security framework by implementing the Social Protection for Increased Resilience and Opportunity (SPIRO), a US\$20-million initiative supported by the World Bank.

■ **CABINET APPROVES**, see page 35



Non-profit seeking corporate and community support to close financing gap for country's newest national park

BNT to Host Fundraiser for Seahorse National Park in Eleuthera

May 12, 2025 - Nassau, Bahamas

The Bahamas National Trust (BNT) is seeking to close the financing gap for the initial development of the country's newest national park by hosting a fundraiser in Eleuthera on May 28.

Officially declared on September 7, 2023 after nearly a decade of outreach and petitioning, Seahorse National Park (SNP) at Sweetings Pond and Hatchet Bay Caves in Eleuthera protects what is believed to be the densest population of seahorses in the world. It also protects the historic Hatchet Bay Cave - one of the longest cave systems in The Bahamas.

This latest addition to The Bahamas' national park system has the potential to become a world-renowned national park and a blueprint for sustainable recreation and tourism. To date, advancement activities have been funded through the success of the BNT's 2024 Pig Roast event, which raised \$162,000 towards the \$500,000 estimated to be needed to facilitate the park's initial development.

These activities have included purchasing and installing a mobile structure to act as the BNT's temporary park office; clearing pathways and areas for trails and parking; and installing gates.

The next steps, according to BNT Director of Parks Ellsworth Weir, are to purchase and install solar panels, install running water, and pave the parking area.

"We've made a lot of headway since last year and you can definitely see the progress," said Weir. "There's been a lot of work done, but we just need to get to the finish line. Right now it all comes down to funding. That's where this fundraiser comes in."

The Seahorse National Park Fundraiser will be a cocktail event held in Governor's Harbour, Eleuthera at the Buccaneer Club on May 28, 2025. Tickets are \$125 per person and can be purchased online at www.bntevents.com or in person at the Buccaneer Club. Attendees will enjoy live music, a silent auction with incredible prizes, an open bar, and hors d'oeuvres.

The public can participate in the special auction by bidding on incredible items like Bahamian artwork,

■ *Seahorse National*, see page 35



Technological Skills Take Center Stage in Future of Jobs Report

Deandrea Hamilton
Editor

The World Economic Forum's Future of Jobs Report 2025 reveals a sharp pivot in employer expectations toward technological and human-centric skills. Over the next five years, AI and big data are forecast to see the fastest growth in importance, underscoring the rapid digital transformation reshaping global industries. Following closely are networks and cybersecurity, along with a general rise in demand for technological literacy.

HOWEVER, it's not just technical skills gaining traction. Employers are placing increasing value on creative thinking, as

well as socio-emotional strengths like resilience, flexibility, agility, curiosity, and a commitment to lifelong learning. These competencies reflect a growing need for workers who can adapt quickly, think critically, and remain engaged amid change.

Also ascending in importance are leadership and social influence, talent management, analytical thinking, and environmental stewardship. These skills point to a future workforce that must not only manage innovation but also guide teams through complex transitions, including those driven by sustainability imperatives.

In contrast, traditional cognitive and physical skills are showing signs of decline. Reading, writing, and mathematics are projected to see a small net decrease in relevance. More notably, manual dexterity, endurance, and precision — long staples of many industrial roles — are expected to drop significantly in value, with over 24% of employers anticipating reduced importance. This marks a historic low for these physical abilities, which

have consistently trended downward in previous reports but now show a net negative shift.

Sector-specific insights highlight how the demand for AI and big data is near-universal, with more than 90% of top industry respondents forecasting increased use, except in Agriculture, Forestry, and Fishing (70%) and the Accommodation, Food, and Leisure sector (69%). Resilience and adaptability are especially vital in traditionally less tech-centric industries, while creative thinking is surging in importance in Insurance, Education, and Telecommunications.

Environmental stewardship is also gaining ground, particularly in Oil and Gas and Chemicals, reflecting broader sustainability goals. Meanwhile, physical skills are declining most in Energy, Chemicals, and IT Services, with decreases above 39%.

Overall, the report paints a clear picture: the future workforce must combine digital fluency with adaptive, human-centered skills to thrive in a rapidly evolving job landscape.

Scotia Wealth Management named Best International Private Bank at the Euromoney Private Bank Awards 2025

New Providence, The Bahamas, May 13, 2025 — Scotia Wealth Management has been recognized with the Best International Private Bank award at the Euromoney Private Bank Awards for 2025. This award recognizes Scotia Wealth Management's excellence in delivering industry-leading wealth management services across the Bahamas.

"We are very honoured that Scotiabank has been recognised with this prestigious award that highlight our focus on delivering a globally consistent, client-centered approach to wealth management throughout our international footprint. Our clients have benefitted from a total wealth approach, allowing them to access private banking, wealth lending, investment advisory and trust services. These awards reflect the dedication of our team, the strength of our solutions, and our commitment to deliver the best to our clients for over 65 years in The Bahamas. Through Enriched Thinking - our client-centred philosophy, we align our clients' goals with our local and global expertise to create tailored investment plans and solutions to help them reach



their long-term goals." — Gerardo Escrucia, Regional Head Private Banking, Scotiabank.

Our Scotia Wealth Management teams are committed to being our clients' most trusted financial partner across wealth management services and throughout our international

footprint. We continue to grow and evolve our innovative Total Wealth Approach, which provides a consistent client experience across our core markets in Mexico, Peru, Chile, Jamaica, the Cayman Islands and the Bahamas.

"I am very proud of our team of

specialists who continue to deliver value through our client-centred approach," said Raquel Costa, Senior Vice-President, International Wealth Management at Scotiabank. "These awards highlight our global focus on the client experience and our continued drive across our

international footprint to develop tailored plans and solutions to help our clients meet their long-term goals."

The Euromoney Private Bank Awards recognize the best in private banking and wealth management across the globe, identifying the banks that can best demonstrate how they have excelled in providing their clients with the best possible advice, service and solutions.

Scotia Wealth Management was presented with the following awards in Latin America and the Caribbean:

- The Bahamas' Best International Private Bank
 - The Cayman Islands' Best International Private Bank
 - Jamaica's Best International Private Bank
 - Latin America's Best for Fund Selection
 - Canada's Best for Succession Planning
 - Mexico's Best for Family Office Services
 - Peru's Best for Digital Solutions
- For more information about Scotiabank's wealth management The Bahamas solutions, please visit bs.scotiabank.com/scotia-wealth-management.html

Seahorse National

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handcrafted seahorse jewelry, island tours, luxury escapes, and more. Tickets do not need to be purchased to bid. Auction items can be viewed and bid on at <https://www.32auctions.com/snpfundraiser>.

BNT Executive Director Lakeshia Anderson-Rolle said: "With this special event, we're calling on the community to help us realize the potential of Seahorse National Park and build a lasting conservation legacy that benefits Eleutherans especially, but Bahamians as a whole. This remarkable natural gem is poised to bring unmatched value to local communities, and it deserves our commitment and protection. We've no doubt that with public and corporate support, we'll achieve our vision for Seahorse National Park and be that much closer to reopening it for public use and

enjoyment."

Since its declaration, Seahorse National Park has been temporarily closed to the public to allow the BNT to conduct critical scientific assessments, monitoring, infrastructure development, and strategic planning to guide the sustainable management of the park and its resources. The organization hopes to soon reopen access to the public. This fundraiser will play an important role in making that happen.

Seahorse National Park spans 548 acres and has many unique natural features that are popular attractions. Once it's reopened, the BNT plans to work alongside the Bahamas Agricultural & Industrial Corporation (BAIC), local farmers, and other stakeholders - including a developing Park Advisory Committee - to implement programs and infrastructure that

will benefit both locals and visitors, such as an area for a local farmers market and a floating dock.

The BNT remains committed to taking a science-based, sustainable approach for the development of Seahorse National Park and the preservation of its natural beauty and resources, and invites the public to support this endeavor through the upcoming Seahorse National Park Fundraiser. To learn more about this event, visit <https://bntevents.com/>.

To learn more about the BNT's role in managing national parks, protecting wildlife, and informing environmental policy, please visit its website: www.bnt.bs and follow its various social media channels: Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube.

Fleming Fund

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thanked the Fleming Fund Project for supporting national and regional efforts on AMR. "Barbados has made strides in AMR Surveillance working towards full reporting to the Quadripartite Global Integrated System for surveillance of antimicrobial resistance and antimicrobial use. As some of you may be aware of the WHO/PAHO Designation of the Best-Dos Santos Public Health Laboratory as a Regional Influenza Centre, reflecting our commitment to global health standards and enhancing our capacity to respond to infectious diseases. In the next few months, we will be working with PAHO to have a similar type of designation on AMR to ensure the Best Dos Santos Public Health Laboratory can indeed be a leader in AMR within the region." Dr George noted.

The UKHSA plays a critical role in the CARA project, sharing best practices, aligning laboratory protocols, and coordinating the roll-out of training programmes designed to strengthen laboratory capacity, antimicrobial stewardship, and AMR data analysis across the Caribbean. By bridging national and regional efforts, the projects jointly reflect a unified Caribbean commitment to protecting public health, ensuring responsible antimicrobial use, and building long-term resilience against future infectious threats.

CABINET APPROVES

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Mr. Charles Jr. noted that SPIRO, which was launched last year, represents a transformative shift in social governance, with three strategic pillars – the creation of a unified Social Protection Information System (SPIS), supporting the introduction of

unemployment insurance, and modernising of the Labour Market Information System (LMIS).

"The project is already generating impact through comprehensive assessments led by expert consultants, aimed at overhauling

labour market services," he stated.

The Minister further indicated that there will be upgrades to the Electronic Labour Exchange (ELE) and LMIS, which will enhance the digital infrastructure for employment services.

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'MOTHERS, A SELFLESS TREASURE'

URBAN RENEWAL HOLDS PRE-MOTHER'S DAY LUNCHEON CELEBRATION

NASSAU, The Bahamas -- The Ministry of Housing and Urban Renewal held a Pre-Mother's Day Luncheon to the theme, 'Mothers, a Selfless Treasure,' honouring 17 women named 'Mother of the Year,' from 17 Urban Renewal Centres.

THE celebration was held on Thursday at Fox Hill Community Centre. Minister of Housing and Urban Renewal, the Hon. Keith Bell and Mrs. Ann Marie Davis of the Office of the Spouse of the Prime Minister addressed all in attendance, stating the many qualities of a mother, congratulating them, and wishing them a Happy Mother's Day. Entertainment for the occasion was provided by Bishop Lawrence Rolle, the Urban Renewal Dance Academy and the Royal Bahamas Police Force Pop Band.

(BIS Photos/Patrice Johnson)



Sagikor Group Jamaica Renews Multi-Million Dollar Investment in Innovation Lab with UTech

J\$125 MILLION SPENT SINCE INCEPTION

Kingston, Jamaica – Sagikor Group Jamaica (“Sagikor”) has signed a memorandum of understanding with the University of Technology, Jamaica (UTech), recommitting to the Sagikor–UTech Innovation Lab, based on the University’s Papine campus.

THE renewal marks the continuation of a collaboration between industry and academia that began in 2020, aimed at nurturing technological innovation, mentorship, and research-driven development in Jamaica. Under the renewed agreement, Sagikor will invest J\$25 million annually to fund the Lab’s operations, including personnel costs, equipment, and research activities.

At the MOU signing, President and CEO of Sagikor Group Jamaica, Christopher Zacca, described the initiative as a “living, evolving hub of possibility” that reflects the Group’s long-term vision for a more innovative and future-ready Jamaica. He said, “the Sagikor–UTech Innovation Lab was born out of a mutual desire to move beyond talk and into action—to create a space where bright minds could co-develop practical solutions to real-world financial and health challenges. We did not simply sign an agreement; we activated a platform.”

Since its inception in 2019, Sagikor has invested J\$125 million into the initiative, demonstrating its deep commitment to driving innovation through education and strategic partnerships. This continues with



the new MOU, with a commitment of about J\$25 million dollars annually, over three years.

The Sagikor–UTech Innovation Lab has seen several high-impact outcomes:

Five (5) student interns evolving into full-fledged software developers and IT infrastructure specialist;

- Cutting-edge prototypes influencing internal digital tools at Sagikor;

- And a growing pipeline of research aligned with real-world health and financial challenges.

President of the University of Technology, Jamaica (UTech), Dr. Kevin Brown, expressed his appreciation for the longstanding partnership between Sagikor and UTech, noting its impact on students. He added, “This relationship has significantly benefited our students, and I look forward to the continued expansion

of the innovation lab.”

The partnership over the years has also seen the execution of the Sagikor/UTech Innovation Challenge, with the 2025 staging ending in April. Annually, students design creative solutions, including those tackling health insurance accessibility and AI-powered financial literacy, showcasing the depth of talent and ingenuity emerging from the Lab.

“We look forward to more innovative and scalable solutions coming out of this partnership, which stands as an example of the critical approach we must take as a country to support our young people and help boost economic growth.”

As Sagikor and UTech enter this new phase of partnership, both institutions remain committed to scaling impact, empowering talent, and building a stronger innovation ecosystem in Jamaica.



(L-R) Roger Blum, Muriel Wiltord, Glenn Heilbron and Monique Macaire-Spratt at Cruise 360 in Fort Lauderdale

Martinique Showcases Unique Cruise Appeal and Growing Accessibility at Cruise360

FOR LAUDERDALE, FL (May 11, 2025) – The Martinique Tourism Authority delivered a compelling case for the French Caribbean island’s expanding cruise market during a well-attended morning session at Cruise360, held at the Greater Fort Lauderdale/Broward County Convention Center last month.

Led by a seasoned trio of tourism professionals, the presentation — themed “Sail Away to Martinique’s Hidden Treasures” — highlighted the island’s cultural richness, port diversity, and increasing accessibility by air and sea. The seminar was held in collaboration with American Airlines and targeted travel advisors and cruise industry stakeholders eager to tap into new and enriching Caribbean experiences for their clients.

Muriel Wiltord, Director of the Americas at the Martinique Tourism Authority (MTA), whose decades-long leadership has been pivotal in shaping the island’s North American outreach, underscored the strategic importance of airlift in growing Martinique’s homeport capabilities. Pointing to robust connections through Miami, she stated: “The accessibility of Martinique from the United States is facilitated by American Airlines, providing seamless travel options between Fort-de-France and Miami, with convenient connections at Miami International Airport.”

Monique Macaire-Spratt, MTA’s U.S. Manager for Marketing, Administration, Cruise & Water Sports, offered a detailed overview of Martinique’s visitor experience. She spotlighted the island’s UNESCO biosphere reserve designation, iconic sites like Mount Pelée, and Creole cultural traditions.

Macaire-Spratt emphasized Martinique’s wide array of accommodations — including a renovated Club Med, boutique hotels, luxury villas, eco lodges, and transparent “bubble” hotels — and spoke to the island’s investments in accessibility, including electric transport for mobility-impaired cruise passengers. “We make sure that if you have clients who have wheelchairs or who have problems walking, we have electric vehicles that will come at the gangway to meet with them if they need to,” she explained.

Cruise industry veteran Roger Blum, serving as Martinique’s cruise tourism consultant, focused on the island’s impressive maritime infrastructure. “For an island of its size, Martinique actually has eight unique cruise ports. Two of them (Pointe Simon and Les Tourelles in Fort-de-France) are where the biggest ships in the world can dock, and the other six of them are unique, different types of boutique anchorages that really cater to the smaller luxury and ultra-luxury ships.”

He guided attendees through Martinique’s range of port experiences, from the historic city of Saint-Pierre in the north to the yachting hub of Le Marin in the south, and shared insights on the growing number of luxury lines including The Ritz-Carlton Yacht Collection, Seabourn, Regent, Silversea, and Oceania that now include Martinique in their itineraries.

The presentation also featured Glenn Heilbron, Channel Sales Manager with American Airlines, who discussed the airline’s nonstop Miami–Fort-de-France service and its alignment with cruise itineraries. “Passengers can travel by air into the island and then take a cruise there and backwards also,” he noted, emphasizing seamless connectivity across U.S. gateways.

Attendees received curated destination materials and were invited to engage further with Martinique’s offerings on the trade show floor. The session ended with a call to action: embrace Martinique’s trade tools and specialist program to unlock a hidden gem on the Caribbean cruise map.

13 Guadeloupean Students Visit Dominica to Deepen Understanding of Kalinago History and Culture

Roseau, Dominica – Thirteen second-year high school students from Maison Familiale Rurale Education Orientation Lamentin (MFR Lamentin) in Guadeloupe have arrived in Dominica for a five-day educational exchange focused on the Kalinago people—Dominica’s Indigenous community. The initiative forms part of their Caribbean history curriculum and aims to foster deeper understanding and appreciation of the region’s rich and often overlooked Indigenous heritage.

This immersive experience, coordinated by Black Island Girl Multimedia, is designed to educate students on the Kalinago people’s contributions, traditions, and resilience, both past and present. By bringing students directly into contact with the Kalinago Territory, this program seeks to reshape the way Caribbean history is taught, centering authentic narratives and challenging historically inaccurate portrayals.

During their stay, students will engage with several cultural leaders including:

- Anette Sanford, Dominica’s first female Kalinago Chief

- Hon. Cozier Frederick, Minister for Environment, Rural Modernisation, Kalinago Upliftment, and Constituency Empowerment

- Earlson Matthew, Chief Cultural Officer of Dominica

The itinerary also includes several heritage sites and cultural experiences. They will participate in a traditional Kalinago naming ceremony, culinary experiences with locally made cassava and other traditional foods, and visits to



historical and natural landmarks such as the Indian River, Fort Shirley, and Titou Gorge.

Educators from MFR Lamentin have extended a heartfelt invitation to members of the Kalinago community and cultural experts to meet with the visiting students. “We would be honoured if you could spare some time to engage with our students and share your perspectives on the significance of the Kalinago civilization in both historical and contemporary contexts,” said Mahailiah Mellow, teacher and development officer from the delegation. “Your expertise and leadership would greatly enrich the students’ understanding and appreciation of this vibrant and enduring culture.”

This exchange not only represents a powerful educational moment but also contributes to the ongoing efforts to preserve and promote Kalinago heritage across the Caribbean.

Black Island Girl Multimedia is a media and communications company founded by Jael Joseph, a Dominican-Canadian journalist, media producer, and cultural storyteller. The company is dedicated to

amplifying underrepresented Caribbean voices, reshaping narratives around Caribbean identity, and telling stories that center Black and Indigenous perspectives particularly those often excluded from mainstream historical accounts.

Black Island Girl Multimedia focuses on:

- Documentary production and multimedia storytelling; “Territory”, a documentary on the Kalinago people won Best Short Doc in 2023 at The Caribbean Tales International Film Festival in Canada.

- Cultural preservation through digital media, podcasting, and live events

- Education and advocacy, especially around Caribbean history, heritage, and the experiences of women, migrants, and Indigenous peoples

- Event partnerships that align with social justice, cultural upliftment, and regional empowerment

The name “Black Island Girl” is both a declaration of identity and a mission: to represent the richness, resilience, and reality of Caribbean life through creative media rooted in truth and lived experience.



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First-Ever Child Safeguarding Intergenerational QUIZ INSPIRES UNITY & ACTION

IN THE TURKS AND CAICOS ISLANDS

Providenciales, Turks and Caicos Islands – Monday, 12 May 2025: On May 8, 2025, the Department of Social Development, under the Ministry of Home Affairs, Religious Affairs, and Transportation, proudly hosted a Child Safeguarding Intergenerational Quiz at Beaches Turks and Caicos. This groundbreaking event transcended the boundaries of a typical competition, serving as a heartfelt call to action. It encouraged participants to deepen their understanding of child protection systems, principles and practices within the Turks and Caicos Islands while reflecting on their shared responsibility in safeguarding and ensuring the well-being of children.

THE quiz brought together a vibrant mix of students, educators, and professionals from diverse backgrounds across the Turks and Caicos Islands. With its blend of education and engagement, the event fostered a greater awareness of child protection principles, teamwork, and community commitment. Seven spirited teams—Protectors United,

Champions of Change, Safeguarding Heroes, Awareness Avengers, Hope Defenders, Child Rights Warriors, and Helping Hands Ambassadors—participated, each with four members: one primary school student, one high school student, and two adults representing various sectors.

In a display of knowledge and teamwork, Team Awareness Avengers

emerged victorious. Comprising Nurse Geraldine Gomez from the Department of Behavioural Health Services, Ms. Regena Little, Principal of the SNAP Centre, Eli Adams from Shining Stars Preparatory School, and Jeffica Forbes from Clement Howell School, the team dominated the preliminary, semifinal, and championship, becoming the first champions of this landmark event. The second and third places were claimed by the Hope Defenders and Child Rights Warriors, who represented the islands of North and Middle Caicos.

Director Forbes of the Department of Social Development and Welfare expressed heartfelt pride in the success of the event, emphasising its significance in uniting the community around a vital cause. She announced plans to make the Child Safeguarding Intergenerational Quiz an annual tradition, envisioning an even broader reach. The future editions will extend invitations to a wider



selection of schools, including private institutions, alongside participants from the public and private sectors, NGOs, and community members. “As our devotion to strengthening families and protecting children continues to be realised,” Director Forbes shared, “it is important for me to emphasise that child safeguarding awareness activities and trainings are ongoing efforts throughout the year.

This commitment aligns with our mission to foster a zero-tolerance community against child abuse.”

The Department extends its deepest gratitude to all participants, supporters, and stakeholders who made this historic event possible. Together, we have taken a meaningful step forward in creating a brighter, safer future for the children of the Turks and Caicos Islands.



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