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Guyanese Await Election Results ... Page 3 (Photo by JOAQUIN SARMIENTO/AFP via Getty Images)



Support Jamaica Week ... Page 6



Haitian MMA Winner ... Page 18

DREAMS DEFERRED?

Caribbean Students Face Rising Barriers In U.S. Higher Education ... Page 4



INSIDE

Regional News	Page 2	Food News	Page 13	Travel News	Page 16
Local News	Page 7	Health News	Page 14		
Viewpoint	Page 9	Book Reviews	Page 15		



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REGIONAL NEWS



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Here Are Some Of The Top Headlines Making Caribbean News This Week:

TRINIDAD & TOBAGO

Prime Minister Kamla Persad Bissessar has vowed to pursue a “Trinidad and Tobago First” policy over the next five years, defending her controversial support for U.S. military assets in the Caribbean aimed at dismantling drug cartels. Speaking on CNC3 television, Persad Bissessar said she makes “no apology” for backing Washington, despite accusations that her position risks fracturing CARICOM. “Trinidad and Tobago has been helplessly drowning in blood and violence for the last 20 years,” she said, noting gun smuggling and drug trafficking continue to plague the country.

She rejected criticism from former Prime Minister Keith Rowley, calling it hypocritical. “Wasn’t Rowley the same CARICOM chair who appealed to the U.S. for help stemming the flow of guns into the region?” she asked.

The Prime Minister said her administration’s foreign policy will prioritize citizens’ safety, arguing U.S. capacity to disrupt drug networks makes cooperation essential.

Venezuela has announced the deployment of 15,000 troops to its border with Colombia to fight drug trafficking, as the United States was reported to have sent two additional navy ships to the southern Caribbean as part of an

operation against Latin American drug cartels.

HAITI

The Kenya-led Multinational Security Support Mission (MSS) said it has recaptured the Télcos Station from armed gangs led by the figure known as “Izo2.”

In a statement, MSS said the joint operation with the Haitian National Police (PNH) took place in the early hours of August 25th, with forces moving “door to door to neutralize armed resistance.” Several suspects were detained, and a cache of weapons and ammunition seized.

The mission said roadblocks leading to Télcos and Kenscoff were also cleared, restoring safe passage for residents. MSS Force Commander Godfrey Otunge and PNH Director General Vladimir Paraison warned gang members that “the era of impunity is coming to an end.”

Residents were thanked for their cooperation, while aviation authorities confirmed only minor disruptions after gangs sabotaged communications at a nearby OFNAC facility.

Haiti has been gripped by violence since President Jovenel Moïse’s assassination in 2021, with gangs controlling most of Port-au-Prince. The MSS mandate, approved by the UN in 2023, is set to expire in October.

BAHAMAS

Popular social media personality Elias Fritz, better known to his more than 300,000 TikTok followers as “Jaido World”, is scheduled to return to court on November 21st to face charges of attempted murder and armed robbery stemming from a police chase earlier this month.

Fritz, 19, and a 16-year-old co-accused are alleged to have robbed Theodore Fernander of his vehicle on August 11 and attempted to kill him. Both men also face charges of firearm and ammunition possession, along with the attempted murder of two police officers. The duo were arrested last Monday after a high-speed chase ended when their vehicle crashed into a utility pole.

When they appeared before Senior Magistrate Algernon Allen, Jr., the accused were required to enter pleas to the offenses. They were remanded in custody and are set to reappear in court on November 21 for the presentation of a voluntary bill of indictment.

DOMINICA

High Court judge Justice Davidson Baptiste has refused



The United States is increasing its military presence in the southern Caribbean even more as part of President Donald Trump’s campaign to disrupt Latin American drug cartels, according to multiple U.S. officials familiar with the deployments.

bail for 57-year-old American national Jonathan Lehrer, who faces both double murder and firearms trafficking charges.

Lehrer is charged with trafficking and unlawfully importing a cache of weapons, including a Mac 11–9mm threaded barrel, multiple Glock and IWI magazines, and more than 140 rounds of ammunition. The alleged offences occurred on December 4, 2023.

His legal team argued under a certificate of urgency that the firearms charges were being used to “secure his continued incarceration” and prevent him from accessing medical care abroad, citing an earlier High Court order granting bail on medical grounds.

However, the State opposed bail, as it had in the ongoing double murder case against Lehrer and co-accused

62-year-old Robert Snyder Jr. The two Americans are charged with murdering Canadian philanthropist Daniel Langlois and his partner Dominique Marchand, whose bodies were found incinerated in a vehicle near Gallion in December 2023.

Previously, Justice Colin Williams had outlined strict bail conditions, including a EC\$1 million bond, revocation of U.S. citizenship, police reporting, and court approval for travel. Lehrer remains remanded in custody pending trial.

GRENADA

Prime Minister Dickon Mitchell has extended condolences to the family of Neilon Franklyn, one of Grenada’s youngest legislators, who died recently, after collapsing at the General Hospital. He was 25.

In a statement, the NNP hailed Franklyn’s service, saying his commitment to national development would be remembered “with deep respect.”

Franklyn resigned from the party earlier this year, stating he wished to pursue “new opportunities” to continue serving Grenada. The United Nations in Barbados had previously described him as a strong advocate for youth empowerment and regional integration.

- *Rewritten from CMC*



DID YOU KNOW?

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ALINA GARCIA
MIAMI-DADE COUNTY SUPERVISOR OF ELECTIONS

Low Voter Turnout As Guyana Awaits Election Results

There was a markedly low turnout of voters in Monday's general and regional elections in the oil-rich CARICOM nation of Guyana.

With most of the Statement of Polls now in on the Guyana Elections Commission, (GECOM), website, and the Commission as well as several international observers describing voting day as "smooth," official results may not be declared until September 4th.

Six Parties, Six Presidential Candidates

The election features six political parties vying for 65 seats in the National Assembly and 10 regional councils. The main contenders are the ruling People's Progressive Party/Civic, (PPP/C), led by President Irfaan Ali, and the opposition A Partnership for National Unity, (APNU), led by Aubrey Norton.

Other presidential candidates include US sanctioned businessman Azruddin Mohamed of the newly formed the We Invest in Nationhood (WIN), Nigel Hughes of the Alliance For Change, (AFC), Amanza Walton-Desir of the Forward Guyana Movement, and Dr. Simona Broomes of the Assembly for Liberty and Prosperity, (ALP).

Early Returns Show PPP/C Leading

An analysis of the latest SOP's on the GECOM website shows the PPP/C will likely return to power by a low margin

of the votes while the three-month plus newcomer, the WIN party, will likely be the main opposition in the country's parliament with the second highest tally of votes.

Accessibility And Complaints

GECOM meanwhile has apologized to Guyanese with disabilities who struggled to access polling sites. Despite longstanding recommendations for ramps and better facilities, some voters were still assigned to polling stations without accommodations.

GECOM is also investigating reports of a polling station that closed before the official 6 p.m. deadline. Other concerns under review include voters using Commonwealth ID cards, multiple registrants at a single address, and procedures for those without national ID cards.

Low Turn Out

Hughes of the Alliance For Change said the low voter turnout was quite a strong statement from the population, who he believes would have "rejected most of the existing parties that offered themselves and, therefore, we have to look at what might have led to the lack of interest in the



Guyanese voters voting at the Plaisance Secondary School on the East Coast of Demerara. (Commonwealth Secretariat image)

process when the country has so much money.

"A low turnout is a rejection of all of the competitors," he said.

But PPP/C general secretary, Bharrat Jagdeo said "there is a lower voter turnout than in 2020 but it's worst in some areas and the city is one of those."

APNU's Norton said that while there was a lower turnout, reports indicate that it was more prevalent in PPP areas. "The turnout is low. In our strongholds, we've seen reasonable turnout. We didn't see the kind of turnout that you would normally see in PPP strongholds," the APNU leader said.

International Oversight

More than 500 local observers and 200 international observers from CARICOM, the OAS, the Commonwealth, and other groups monitored the elections. Their

presence underscores the high stakes for Guyana, a country at the center of both an oil boom and a territorial dispute with Venezuela.

The Ethnic Relations Commission (ERC), which deployed approximately 200



A man queues to vote at a polling station during the presidential election in Georgetown, Guyana on September 1, 2025. (Photo by JOAQUIN SARMIENTO/AFP via Getty Images)

observers across the country, said it "notes that the electoral process was free, fair, and carried out in an atmosphere devoid of fear or intimidation.

"ERC Observers reported that polling stations were generally well organised, with procedures being followed, and that GECOM staff displayed professionalism and courtesy in the execution of their duties. The ERC emphasises the importance of the ballot counting and verification of Statements of Poll (SOPs) being conducted with the same level of transparency and professionalism, and the official results to be made

public within the shortest possible time."

The ERC said that in anticipation of the official results being delivered by GECOM, it is calling on all the political leaders "to appeal to their supporters to remain calm, respect and avoid actions that would build tensions in our society".

What's Next

GECOM said it aims to finalize official results by Thursday. Until then, the Commission urged citizens to remain calm, avoid misinformation, and rely only on official updates. GECOM's public relations officer, Yolanda Ward, has already said that the population should await only the official results of the elections that are likely to be released on Thursday.

"GECOM takes the opportunity once again to appeal to all stakeholders to accept only the results of the elections that are posted on GECOM's website in the form of statement of poll (SOP) to the official declarations made by ... the returning officers ... and the national results to be declared by GECOM," she said.

Ward said the publication of fake results "will be put to the Guyana Police Force for investigation."



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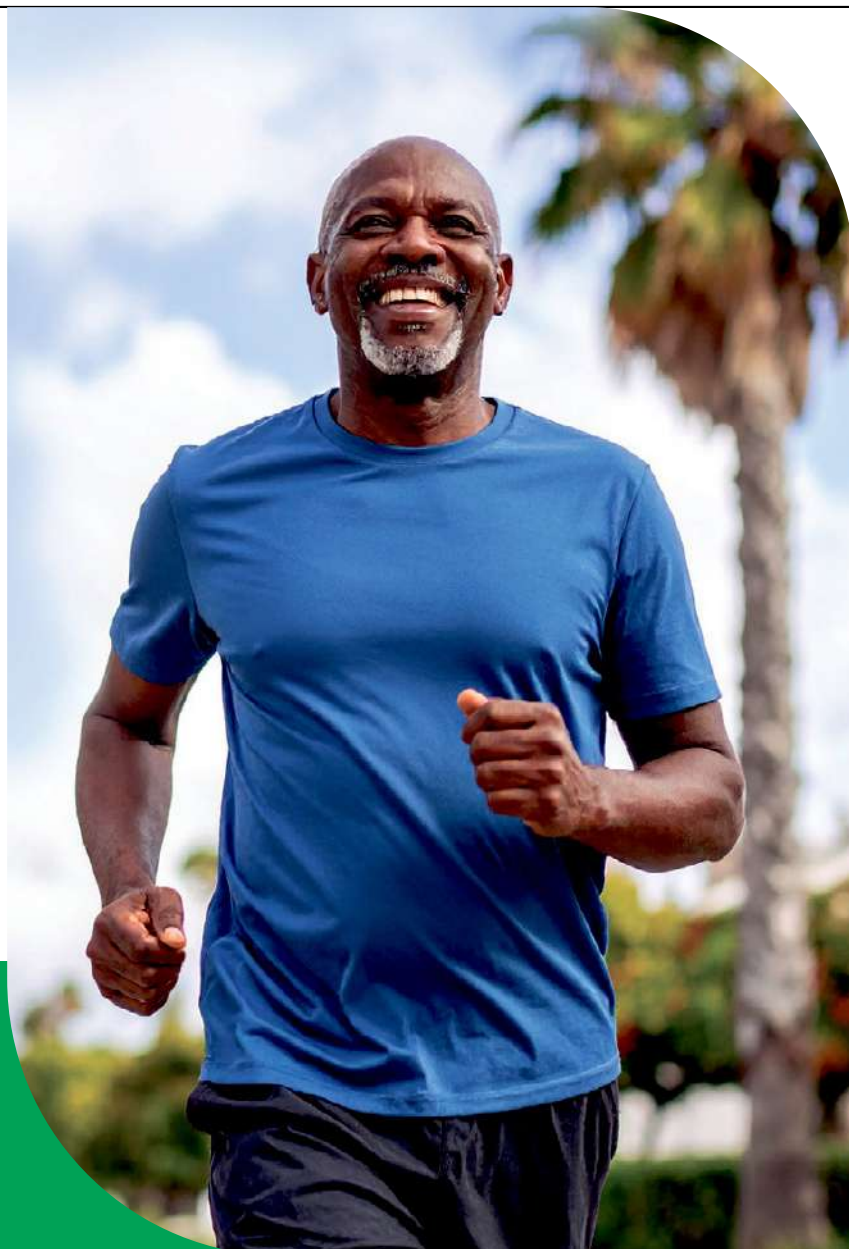


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NEWS



Dreams Deferred? - Caribbean Students Face Rising Barriers In U.S. Higher Education

BY DAVID L. SNELLING
Edited By Felicia J. Persaud

Caribbean immigrants are now facing greater challenges enrolling in U.S. colleges than any other ethnic group, as tuition hikes, new immigration laws, and shrinking financial aid programs push student enrollment into steep decline.

A new study, Challenges and Strategies for Caribbean Students Pursuing Education in the United States by Keyeria McCormick of Grand Valley State University, found that the No. 1 barrier is financial hardship. For many Caribbean-born students living at or below the federal poverty threshold, the combined costs of tuition and rising living expenses have become overwhelming. "These challenges are exacerbated by systemic inequalities in U.S. higher education, which can make it harder for Caribbean students to succeed academically and feel part of campus communities," the study concluded.

The numbers tell the story: Caribbean college enrollment dropped 10 percent in 2022, 13 percent in 2023, and 16 percent in 2024, affecting students across major universities including the University of Florida, University of Georgia, and the University of Alabama.

Lawmakers Turn Up The Heat In Florida

In Florida, a new law effective July 2025 has eliminated in-state tuition for undocumented students,

reversing a 12-year bipartisan policy. Previously, students protected under the Obama-era DACA program could qualify for in-state tuition waivers if they attended Florida high schools for three consecutive years. Now, only "citizens of the United States" or those "lawfully present in the United States" qualify.

"This is unfair to hardworking students who deserve in-state tuition, which pays off in the long run for Florida since the students often begin careers and pay taxes in Florida," said State Senator Barbara Sharief, a Democrat from Broward County.

The impact is immediate. In-state tuition at Florida community colleges averages \$3,000, while out-of-state tuition is 3½ times higher. Public universities average \$6,000 for in-state tuition, but non-resident students face bills well over \$20,000.

Florida is not alone. Dozens of states - including Massachusetts, Minnesota, and Texas - have moved to restrict immigrant tuition benefits, echoing former President Donald Trump's calls to tighten access for undocumented students. Cuts to federal financial aid programs like Pell Grants have also reduced lifelines for immigrant and minority students.



Students from the Caribbean Student's Association pose during the Activities Fair on the Daytona Beach Campus at the Embry Riddle Aeronautical University. (Photo: Embry Riddle / David Massey)

Barriers Beyond Finances

Money isn't the only obstacle. McCormick's research found Caribbean students also face academic pressure, visa complexity, and a lack of institutional support, leaving them vulnerable to higher dropout rates. "Addressing these challenges requires changes in institutional policies, expanded financial support, and more culturally aware support services," the study recommended.

The challenges weigh heavily on students from across the region - including Haiti, Jamaica, Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Dominican Republic - who already battle stigma and systemic inequality in higher education.

Advocacy Groups Push Back

Despite the setbacks, immigrant advocates are urging students not to give up. "We

know it's a hard road, but they can't give up," the National Immigrant Justice Center said in a statement. "Opportunities are there. We have to work harder to find them and get people into college."

Advocacy organizations are now pushing for inclusive financial practices, tuition support programs, and stronger campus mentorship networks tailored to Caribbean students.

McCormick's study echoed that call, concluding

that "Caribbean students need culturally responsive programming to support their mental health, financial well-being, and academic success."

Institutions, it added, must "move beyond generic international student services and invest in targeted recruitment and retention strategies," including deeper community and mentorship programs.

A Crossroads For The Future

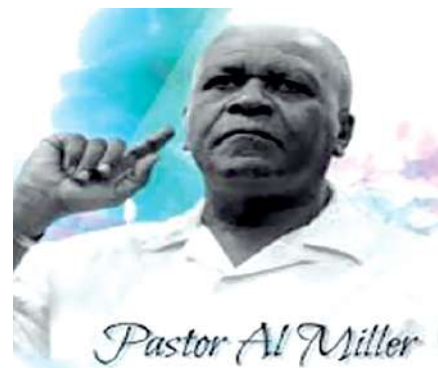
The enrollment decline signals a potential crisis for both U.S. higher education and the Caribbean diaspora communities that have long fueled its diversity. For students, the stakes are deeply personal - every tuition bill, visa hurdle, or scholarship rejection raises the risk of dropping out altogether. For lawmakers and institutions, the question now is whether they will step up with new support or continue erecting barriers that shut out the very students who could contribute most to America's classrooms, workforce, and future economy.



Jamaica First Movement Urges Voters To Mark '0' If Dissatisfied With Election Choices

The Jamaica First Movement, (JFM), on Monday launched a campaign urging Jamaicans who feel dissatisfied with all political options to still head to the polls and mark "0" on their ballots as a show of protest.

The initiative, titled "Your Vote is Your Voice," is aimed at combating voter apathy and providing an outlet for Jamaicans who say they want to participate in the democratic process but cannot support any candidate in good faith.



Reverend Al Miller of the Jamaica First Movement, (JFM), said the campaign emphasizes conscience-driven voting. (CMC image)

'Not a Wasted Vote'

The movement, led by Reverend Al Miller, said the campaign emphasizes conscience-driven voting.

"Your conscience is a gift from God, and it must be obeyed. But do not mistake a troubled conscience for permission to stay home," the JFM said in a statement. "A troubled conscience is a command to act. If you cannot vote for any candidate in good faith, you must still go to the polls and record your dissatisfaction."

According to JFM, marking "0" beside all the names on the ballot allows citizens to register their disapproval formally.

"This is not a wasted vote," the movement said. "It is a recorded statement - a data point of conviction that says, 'I was present and engaged, but the options presented did not meet the minimum standard.'"

The group said such a vote communicates a broader demand for political integrity: "I want Jamaica to win, not a party. I demand character and qualification in our leaders. I demand an agenda that protects the vulnerable and upholds human dignity. And I demand better. The current offering is not good enough."

Break With the JPP

The campaign follows JFM's recent split from the Jamaica Progressive Party, (JPP). Miller said the decision to withdraw from the alliance was rooted in differences over the movement's founding vision of national unity.

"JFM maintains its steadfast commitment to healing decades of national division by working to establish a government of national unity," the group said.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 6)

REGULATORY AND ECONOMIC RESOURCES | Division of Environmental Resources Management (RER-DERM)

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Mobilization, Not Momentum, May Decide Jamaica's September 3rd Election

BY CARIBBEAN TODAY
STAFF WRITER

With Jamaicans heading to the polls today, September 3rd, the race between the governing Jamaica Labour Party (JLP) and the opposition People's National Party (PNP) has narrowed to a statistical dead heat.

The latest Don Anderson/RJR-Gleaner poll before the election showed the PNP holding a slim 0.8-point lead - 34.7 percent to the JLP's 33.9 percent - well within the poll's margin of error. Both parties gained support since June, but the JLP registered the bigger jump, fueled by months of unofficial campaigning and a high-energy rally where Prime Minister Andrew Holness named September 3rd as Election Day.

"The deciding factor may not be persuasion, but mobilization," political analyst Helene Davis-Whyte told the Jamaica Gleaner. "This election could hinge on which party gets its base to the polls, especially with so many Jamaicans still

undecided or disaffected."

Indeed, 31.4 percent of respondents remain uncommitted, with 14.3 percent "not sure yet" and 17.1 percent saying they will not vote. For both the PNP and JLP, converting apathy into ballots will be critical.

Party Messages: Performance vs. Change

The JLP is campaigning under the theme "Choose Jamaica", pointing to nine years of economic stability, falling unemployment, and a 44 percent reduction in murders so far this year. Its manifesto promises to deepen reforms that Holness says have already transformed Jamaica:

- Economic discipline to drive debt below 60% of GDP by 2027.
- Tax reform to lower personal income tax rates toward 15% while consolidating payroll deductions.
- 25,000 new land titles annually, expanded housing loans, and continued road and infrastructure development.



Flashback – Jamaicans in line to vote at a past election.

- Education and youth support, including student loan debt reset, scholarships for STEM teachers, and expanded apprenticeship programs.
- Cheaper energy, with a push toward 50% renewable power by 2030.

The PNP, campaigning under the slogan "Time Come – Jamaica Love", insists that while macroeconomic numbers have improved, too many Jamaicans remain locked out of prosperity. Opposition Leader Mark Golding has framed the election as a choice between "stability without

quality of life" and "a new chapter of inclusive growth."

Key promises in the PNP's manifesto include:

- 50,000 low-income homes and a National Land Ownership program.
- One hot meal per day for needy students, subsidized transport, and school-based mental health units.
- Constitutional reform, replacing the British monarch with a Jamaican president and giving diaspora and Rastafari communities formal

representation.

- Lower electricity costs, including renegotiation of the JPS license and tax breaks for clean energy.
- Youth and jobs focus, with apprenticeship placements, student loan amnesty, and digital access expansion.

Anti-Incumbency vs. Track Record

The Anderson poll found that 29 percent of PNP supporters cite a desire "to get rid of the JLP" as their main motivation, reflecting strong anti-incumbency sentiment. For the JLP, the top driver is the perception that the government is "doing a good job."

With older voters leaning PNP, women leaning JLP, and young voters the most disengaged, the battleground may well come down to ground game on September 3rd.

As Davis-Whyte cautioned: "It may come down, at the end of the day, to how each party is able to get out its base."



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Celebrate Everyday Heroes With Give To Jamaica Week

BY DAWN A. DAVIS

Miami-based business leader Barron Channer emigrated from Jamaica to the United States when he was just 8 years old. But he never forgot his roots, nor the love and beauty of that Caribbean island.

Today, as a philanthropist and corporate citizen, Channer is determined to give back to the country that helped shape him. Creating a pathway that could bolster the charitable spirit of the Jamaican Diaspora to contribute to the island's economic, cultural, and educational development is just one example of his altruism.

Channer is a founding Director of the Give to Jamaica Foundation, a Florida non-profit, and a member of the organizing committee for Give to Jamaica Week with the prime objective to increase the exposure of the Jamaican Diaspora to impactful charities in Jamaica.

With a launch date set for October 18-24, 2025, inclusive of Jamaica's National Heroes Day, Give To Jamaica Week will celebrate everyday heroes improving lives and communities in Jamaica.

"I come from a fairly humble family. Being poor in

Jamaica is shown in multiple ways - economically, but never poor spiritually or from the standpoint of family love," Channer told Caribbean Today recently. "As I came to the US and had the great opportunity to transition economic classes, mainly through the same kind of academic pedigree that your parents encourage you to have, it dawned on me that I had an opportunity to be helpful to people who were essentially like me, but may not have had fortune or some of the lucky breaks that I've had. And philanthropy was a way for me to be helpful to folks."

Seed Planted

This business leader's journey into philanthropy began some two decades ago as an active member of the American Friends of Jamaica, a not-for profit dedicated to supporting Jamaican charitable organizations and social initiatives. It is there as a board member where a seed was planted, one that has started to grow and with the potential to become hugely impactful as the Diaspora becomes aware of the local charities in Jamaica.

Channer explained that the Foundation is trying to create a



Jamaican students will be among those benefiting from the donations. (Contributed image)

way for people to be connected to the many meaningful charities in Jamaica and hopefully fall in love with a couple of them and then be able to contribute directly to them. The organizing committee also looked at the potential dollar amount from the Jamaican Diaspora in America that could change lives in Jamaica.

"Their capacity for annual charity is estimated around US\$1 billion given population size, income levels, and penchant for charitable donations. Jamaican charities receive an almost non-existent share of this massive charitable potential," he said. "The team at the Give

To Jamaica Foundation believe this comes down to a lack of exposure and awareness. Those in the Diaspora are generally not aware of the many impactful organizations and modern heroes who are working to improve all facets of lives and communities in Jamaica. This in a nutshell is what motivated us to organize Give To Jamaica Week."

"And so we think there are hundreds of millions of dollars that if we create the right environment and the right relationship Jamaica could benefit from that, in addition to all the things that are being done," he added. "And that's a significant sum."

Accountable

Trust has always been an issue in charitable donations worldwide. So, how will donors know that their dollars are going to the right organizations and being used for the good of the community?

"To take away any concerns

about who is behind this, nobody on our team is involved with selecting charities to participate.," Channer explained. "We have set about engaging leading foundations operating in Jamaica, those who've been giving out grants for years, and we have solicited from them nomination of charities that they have vetted and or donated to over the last three years... We are supporting organizations that are structured, established, accountable to the government of Jamaica. They have been vetted."

Additionally, said Channer, the Give to Jamaica Foundation does not take any funds from the donations. Once unavoidable third-party fees are paid, such as credit card processing fees, all donations go directly to the charities. Donations will be trackable on the website. And ultimately, the Foundation, and its auditors, will report and confirm when funds have been delivered to the charities in Jamaica. As well, funds will be treated in a way that allow for charitable treatment or tax deductibility subject to your taxes in the US.

With their motto - One Week. One People. Many Charities' - the Give to Jamaica Week will be an annual charitable event around National Heroes Day, creating a cultural tradition around this special day for all Jamaicans. Visit the website - givetojamaica.com - to register your interest or email info@givetojamaica.com.



Jamaica First Movement Urges Voters to Mark '0' If Dissatisfied With Election Choices

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4)

"This foundational vision for unity was the principle that undergirded our alliance with the JPP. A fundamental difference on this issue led to the dissolution of the partnership."

Miller also offered an apology to Jamaicans who had hoped the coalition would present a new option for political change.

"I regret raising the hopes of many who were looking for real transformation, and the inability to realize it through that political alliance," he said.

Election Landscape

The Electoral Office of Jamaica, (EOJ) confirmed that 189 candidates, including 53 women, have been nominated to contest the September 3 general election.

The ruling Jamaica Labour Party, (JLP,) and the main opposition People's National Party, (PNP), are contesting all 63 parliamentary seats. The JPP has nominated candidates in 47 constituencies, while the United Independents' Congress, (UIC), has entered seven. In

addition, nine candidates are contesting as independents across constituencies in St. Thomas, St. James, Hanover, Westmoreland, St. Catherine, and St. Andrew.

The EOJ said that 2,077,799 people are eligible to vote, with political analysts pointing to about 20 swing constituencies that could decide the election outcome.

A Call To Participation

The JFM said the "Your Vote is Your Voice" campaign is ultimately about strengthening democratic participation.

"Too often, dissatisfied voters disengage," Miller said. "But disengagement gives silent approval. Marking '0' is about showing up, speaking up, and making your dissatisfaction count."

With just days to go before Jamaicans head to the polls, the JFM is betting that its message will resonate with citizens who feel disillusioned but still want their voices heard.

- *Rewritten from CMC*



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At La Ermita, Sculptures Honor Migrants And Cuba's Patron Saint

Faith, culture, and compassion converged Friday as the Archdiocese of Miami unveiled two new sculptures at the National Shrine of Our Lady of Charity (La Ermita) in Coconut Grove, a spiritual home for generations of Cuban exiles and immigrants.

The works - "Angels Unaware" and "Be Welcoming" by Canadian sculptor Timothy Schmalz - were donated by philanthropist Miguel "Mike" Fernandez and blessed by Archbishop Thomas Wenski during a ceremony that also launched celebrations for the Feast of La Virgen de la Caridad del Cobre, Cuba's patroness.

"Immigration is not a political issue. It is part of our Christian duty," Wenski told the gathering, noting La Ermita's history as a refuge for Cubans and other migrants. The statue



The works - "Angels Unaware" and "Be Welcoming" by Canadian sculptor Timothy Schmalz - were donated by philanthropist Miguel "Mike" Fernandez.

Angels Unaware, a replica of the piece in St. Peter's Square at the Vatican, depicts a crowded boat carrying migrants across eras - from biblical times to modern refugees. Be Welcoming reinforces the call to embrace the

stranger.

For Fernandez, the placement of the sculptures at La Ermita carried special weight. "No better place than here," he said, reflecting on the shrine's role as a beacon of hope for those forced to leave their homelands.

The Archdiocese said the artworks were installed as tributes to the human dignity of migrants and as reminders of the Church's enduring mission of hospitality.

- Rewritten from CBS News



New York Attorney General Challenges ICE Courthouse Arrests

New York Attorney General Letitia James has filed legal action to block what she calls Immigration and Customs Enforcement's (ICE) "alarming practice" of arresting Caribbean and other immigrants at federal immigration courthouses.

In an amicus brief filed on August 25th, in African Communities Together v. Lyons, James urged the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York to halt new federal policies authorizing widespread courthouse arrests and abrupt case dismissals.

James said the policies "unlawfully endanger families, undermine public safety for all New Yorkers, and threaten the integrity of the justice system." She warned that courthouse arrests intimidate immigrants, deterring them from appearing in court, testifying in cases, or seeking protection from abuse.

"This unlawful policy drives families into the shadows, where fear prevents them from reporting crimes, seeking medical care, or accessing vital services," James told CMC. She cited a tragic case where a child died after parents delayed hospital care, fearing

deportation.

The attorney general stressed that immigrants - including an estimated 640,000 undocumented New Yorkers - are essential to the state's workforce and tax base. Arbitrary courthouse arrests, she argued, destabilize households, traumatize children, and burden states with the costs of emergency social services.

In 2020, James secured a ruling preventing the Trump administration from making civil immigration arrests in and around state courthouses, protections later codified under New York's Protect Our Courts Act. She said the federal government's new rules revive the same harms, this time targeting immigrants in federal courthouses.

James is urging the court to suspend enforcement while litigation proceeds, vowing she "will not stand by while New Yorkers are stripped of their rights and our courts are used for intimidation."

- Rewritten from CMC



Trinidad Leaders Honored At Lauderhill's 63rd Independence Entrepreneur Awards



In celebration of Trinidad and Tobago's independence anniversary, the City of Lauderhill honored an accomplished group of leaders from the Trinidad and Tobago diaspora for outstanding achievements in business, entertainment, culture, and community leadership. The evening culminated with the presentation of the distinguished Lifetime Icon Legacy Award during the 63rd Independence Entrepreneur Awards held Thursday night at Lauderhill City Hall.

"These exclusive awards honored the enduring excellence, legacy, and business leadership of our Trinbagonian pioneers," said Lauderhill Mayor Denise D. Grant. "The recipients not only built successful enterprises but also uplifted communities, mentored others, and preserved the values of hard work and resilience that define the Caribbean spirit."

The invitation-only ceremony recognized entrepreneurs who have operated successful businesses for more than three decades and who made lasting contributions to the

cultural and economic fabric of the community.

The celebration of Trinidad and Tobago's independence continued on Friday, August 29, with "A Taste of Trinidad and Tobago" at the Ken Thurston Inverrary Community Center, showcasing the island nation's vibrant food and cultural traditions.

Trinidad and Tobago marked its 63rd Independence Day on August 31, commemorating its independence from Great Britain in 1962. In T&T, the country's new Prime Minister, Kamala Persad-Bissessar, cancelled the 2025 Independence Day parade and fireworks displays, replacing them with a National Day of Prayer and Reflection, due to national security concerns arising from an ongoing State of Emergency (SoE) and intelligence about threats to state officials and institutions.

The government cited advice from security experts about the risks of gathering high-profile officials in one location during the current security climate.



Fall Health

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Jamaican Immigrant Among The Elite In Neuroplastic Surgery

BY DAVID L. SNELLING

Growing up in Jamaica, becoming a doctor in the United States seemed like a pipe dream for Kerry-Ann Mitchell. Despite excelling in high school, her family was financially-strapped and couldn't afford to send her to school in America.

But that didn't stop Mitchell, who decided to make it on her own, and after working several jobs as a waitress and clerk to earn money for school, her dream became well-founded.

She is now called Dr. Kerry-Ann Mitchell, a neuroplastic surgeon scientist at Ohio State University. The Jamaican immigrant specializes in rebuilding the delicate anatomy of damaged skulls.

This surgery, known as a cranioplasty, corrects the shape of the skull and lasts between two to four hours. Dr. Mitchell said she makes an incision along the skull allowing her to insert a precisely shaped clear, synthetic implant to fit the space of the missing bone.

She said the effects are life-changing for patients. "Regardless of a patient's disease or diagnosis, I want to help make

their quality of life better," she said in an Ohio State Health and Discovery research on cranioplasty.

Dr. Mitchell said the specialty of neuroplastic surgery marries neurosurgery with plastic surgery to restore the appearance and function of patients who have survived invasive operations and treatments from conditions including brain cancer, traumatic brain injuries or strokes.

"There's only five neuroplastic programs in the entire country, and only three of those treat civilian populations," she said. "We have developed expertise for particularly complex patients."

Dr. Mitchell said it was a long road to reach her dream career. She had to finish four years of college, four years of graduate school, four years of medical school and six years for residency. Then, she had to pass the difficult American Board of Plastic Surgery Written Exam.

"You can't even imagine the tremendous relief and pride and happiness going through me right now," she said in a social media post. "I can't even begin to tell you the blood, sweat, tears



Jamaican immigrant, Dr. Kerry-Ann Mitchell. (Photo courtesy of Ohio State University)

and sacrifices that have gotten me to this point."

Mitchell's family has deep roots in Jamaica. Born and raised in Gibraltar in St. Ann, Jamaica, Mitchell was the daughter of a housewife and an auto body repairman.

While attending high school, she saved money for college by working as a waitress at BiBiBips Bar and Grill in Ocho Rios, Jamaica.

"Every morning, I would wake up at 5 a.m., walk almost a mile to catch the bus from Gibraltar to Moneague, then another one to Ocho Rios, and an hour and a half later be at work by 7:30 a.m.," she said.

Mitchell later worked as a clerk for a local construction company owned by businessman Andy Chin. She said she arrived in the United States in 2021 with \$300 to her name and an

academic scholarship, earning both a medical degree from Stanford University and a PhD in neuroscience from the University of Utah.

She went on to complete a neuroplastic surgery fellowship at Johns Hopkins University. Mitchell said a cancer-stricken elderly man piqued her interest in plastic surgery. She said the cancer covered his face and left him disfigured.

Mitchells said the reconstructive plastic surgeon performed a high-risk operation which allowed him to have a face again, even if he has less time to live.

"I vividly remember the case that made me want to become a plastic surgeon," she said. "Even if he has only six months or a year to live, he probably wants to have a face while he's alive."

Now a mother of two and an accomplished surgeon, Mitchell has received accolades such as the American Medical Association Outstanding Scholar Award and the Benedict College Board of Trustees Award.



Haitian-Born Entrepreneur Breaks Ground On \$30 Million Real Estate Project In Dominican Republic

BY DAVID L. SNELLING

For the past six years, Haitian-born entrepreneur Marcus Boereau has been a busy man. From running his own real estate development company and demonstrating his singing talent across the globe, to motivating aspiring entrepreneurs at seminars, Boereau is spreading his wings.

His latest real estate development project in the Dominican Republic adds to the entrepreneur's pipeline of multi-million-dollar luxury complexes. Last month, Boereau, founder and CEO of IMAR Ventures, launched TAMAN, a \$30 million luxury real estate development set to transform the residential landscape in Punta Cana, a tourist hub and much talked about resort.

According to a press release, TAMAN is a 144 upscale apartment complex and among the first proposed residential developments in La Rinconada. "This is not just another project in Punta Cana," Boereau said in the statement. "It's a demonstration of our faith in development and its incredible potential."

Construction is being led by the esteemed Dominican firm Verges & Asociados, (VAC), with technical oversight by ASPECT. A leading national insurer will provide



Haitian-born entrepreneur Marcus Boereau. (Photo courtesy of Facebook)

comprehensive risk coverage, ensuring quality and security throughout the development process.

During the groundbreaking ceremony, Boereau emphasized that TAMAN is more than just a construction project, it's a long-term vision rooted in confidence in Punta Cana's continued growth.

"TAMAN is also the first development to begin construction in La Rinconada, having secured all the necessary permits," Boereau noted, adding that the thoroughness of the Dominican Republic's permitting process is "a positive sign of institutional responsibility." According to his bio, Boereau, a native of Port-au-Prince-Haiti, who speaks eight different

languages, launched IMAR Ventures several years ago to create business opportunities for Caribbean people in the real estate business.

A real estate career spanning 15 years, Boereau has developed a multi-national network from all over the Caribbean and Latin America as well as Asia.

In the past 12 months, Boereau has steered hundreds of partners in making key investments and decisions worth an estimated \$50 million and ensured financial stability in the Dominican and Haitian real estate sector. But Boereau has been criticized for investing less in his home country. With most of his multi-million dollar real estate developments in the Dominican

Republic and Latin American, Haiti, where gang violence is spiraling into chaos, has been left out.

Boereau told Black Enterprise, that Haiti fails to offer basic security, functional infrastructure, enforceable contracts, and a somewhat predictable regulatory environment.

As a former director of Facilitation Operations at the Center for Investment Facilitation, (CFI), Boereau worked for 5 years in foreign direct investment in Haiti and made relations between China and Haiti.

A former president of the Association of Former Scholars of Taiwan in Haiti, he was part of the first wave of Mandarin teaching in Haitian schools and universities, including his former school.

Boereau, who once resided in the Republic of China, also demonstrated his singing and dancing talents on Taiwan Idol several years ago. He was the first foreigner to be among the finalists of a Singing Contest in China of more than 5,000 participants

Boereau also travels the globe to speak to aspiring entrepreneurs and outlining a blueprint to help them achieve their goals.



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The Billion-Dollar Deportation Business You're Paying For

When an Avelo Airlines jet lifted off from Mesa, Arizona this spring, it wasn't bound for a vacation hotspot. It was flying detainees under a new deportation deal with the Department of Homeland Security, (DHS) - a contract Avelo entered as a sub-carrier for CSI Aviation, the private broker at the center of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's deportation flight network.



FELICIA J. PERSAUD

That flight is one piece of a sprawling, taxpayer-funded machine where airlines, prison companies, tech firms, and logistics outfits make billions detaining, moving, and tracking immigrants. And with Congress' "One Big Beautiful Bill" pumping roughly \$165 billion into DHS over four years, the corporate winners are lining up.

Deportation Flights: CSI, Avelo, and GlobalX

DHS' air operations rely on CSI Aviation, which has long provided private charters, medical flights, and federal air services. The current no-bid contract to CSI is worth at least \$78.1 million over six months, with the potential to climb to \$162.2 million, according to USA Spending.gov. The agreement's stated purpose: "Provide daily scheduled large aircraft & special high-risk charter flights to facilitate ICE's enforcement and removal of operations of illegal aliens."

CSI Aviation CEO Allen Weh, his daughter, and his wife have been major campaign contributors to the current president.

Avelo now flies some of those missions - an unprecedented role for a consumer airline. Another sub-carrier, GlobalX, handles about 70% of DHS flights, according to Tom Cartwright of Witness at the

Border. His logs show that as of July, total deportation flights reached 1,214, up from 1,187 in June - a new record. GlobalX announced a five-year contract in August 2024 worth \$65 million per year.

These flights operate daily, often far from public view.

The Detention Heavyweights

Then there are the corporations raking in massive profits from running private immigration prisons.

GEO Group: In February, ICE awarded GEO a \$1 billion, 15-year contract to reopen the 1,000-bed Delaney Hall in Newark, NJ. The company reported \$636.2 million in second-quarter revenue this year as ICE bed use jumped from 15,000 to 20,000.

CoreCivic: Restarted the 2,400-bed South Texas Family Residential Center in Dilley under a new ICE agreement, which could yield \$180 million annually at full capacity. It also won approval to reopen a shuttered prison in Mason, Tennessee as an ICE site, with a new contract worth \$30-\$35 million annually for its 600-bed facility. This deal runs through August 2030, with extension options.

Acquisition Logistics LLC: Awarded a U.S. Army contract on July 18 to establish and operate a 5,000-bed short-term detention facility in El Paso, Texas. Initially reported at \$231.8 million, the Department of Defense later confirmed the cumulative value at \$1.24 billion.

Akima Infrastructure Protection: Holds a \$163.4 million contract through 2029 to operate DHS' migrant detention facility at Guantánamo Bay. The Virginia-based company has over 40 subsidiaries and more than 2,000 U.S. government contracts.

The Digital Wall

Beyond fences and flights, billions more go to surveillance and biometrics. The new law

steers \$6 billion+ into border surveillance and \$673 million into biometrics.

Palantir: Building ImmigrationOS, a cross-agency data hub for ICE, under a \$30 million contract to provide "near real-time visibility" on self-deportations.

Anduril Industries: Awarded \$41.86 million by DHS Customs and Border Protection for autonomous surveillance towers under the SBIR program.

LexisNexis: Powering facial

recognition and data pipelines; one ICE deal is worth \$22 million.

Public Money, Private Profit

These contracts are paid from public funds - yours. The Newark GEO deal locks taxpayers into 15 years of private detention costs. Fort Bliss will be the largest ICE facility in U.S. history, built by a little-known contractor with minimal detention experience.

For corporations, it's a growth market. For the public, it's a question of priorities. Should

billions in taxpayer dollars underwrite an expanding web of detention centers, deportation flights, and surveillance systems - especially in an immigration system plagued by due-process concerns and human-rights complaints?

Felicia J. Persaud is the publisher of NewsAmericasNow.com, a daily news outlet focused on news about Black immigrant communities from the Caribbean and Latin America.



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Pretty Privilege

Remember the evil queen from the fairy tale who would constantly gaze at her mirror and ask the question: "Mirror, mirror on the wall, who is the fairest of them all?"



TONY ROBINSON

Then on the male side there was Narcissus from Greek mythology, who was so obsessed with his looks that he would constantly stare at his reflection in a pool - until one day he leaned over too far, fell in, and drowned.

Being pretty, beautiful, gorgeous, ravishing, has been at

the forefront of our consciousness from the dawn of civilization. And true, different cultures have different standards and measures of beauty.

People who are deemed to be pretty seem to get certain privileges - a foot in the door, an advantage, so to speak. Hence the term, Pretty Privilege.

A pretty privilege will get some women hired for a front desk job at a luxury hotel or any such establishment that interacts with the public. Very few firms will hire a woman who looks like a troll to be their receptionist at the front desk in their lobby. It's an unfortunate but harsh reality; for even though the not-so-pretty woman is equally qualified for the

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 10)

VIEWPOINT



The World Has Gone Silent On The Horrors In Gaza - That Is The Tragedy

BY SIR RONALD SANDERS

I was sitting in my dentist's chair, one of the few events in which, while my mouth was open, I could not speak.

Even as she worked methodically, my dentist spoke close enough to my ear that her words were unmistakable. "The tragedy of Gaza," she said, is that the world is in a state of "collapse of compassion." Indeed, psychology and behavioral economics researchers have documented this. Simply put, suffering in others, witnessed frequently, produces a kind of immunity in the mind.

This can be the only explanation for why people around the world are not expressing outrage vociferously at the brutal and inhumane suffering and indiscriminate deaths of people, including children, from hunger and malnutrition in the prison that the Israeli government and its military forces have created in Gaza.

Since March 17-18th, Israeli air, land, and sea strikes - followed by expanded ground operations - have killed and wounded tens of thousands of civilians, flattened hospitals, schools and homes, and forced more than 1.9 million people (about 90 per cent of Gaza's population) from their neighborhoods, often several times over. Displacement orders now blanket roughly 282 km² - over four-fifths of the territory - leaving families to shelter in half-destroyed buildings or open fields with little protection.

Humanitarian aid has all but vanished. After nearly 80 days of a siege that barred food, medicine and fuel, only a small trickle of UN and NGO trucks has been allowed

in by the Israeli government and its military forces - and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees, (UNRWA), has not delivered a single shipment since March 2nd.

Of 323 planned aid convoys in June, 154 were denied, 30 impeded, and only 97 fully facilitated. As people converged on militarized distribution points in Rafah and Deir al-Balah, they faced deadly risks: by 25 June, at least 549 civilians had been killed and more than 4,000 injured simply trying to reach food.

The desperation that led to this risk, even in the face of missiles and bullets, and the resulting wanton deaths, challenge humane understanding.

In clinics overwhelmed by trauma, malnutrition has reached record highs. Between January and May 2025, the United Nations Children's Fund, (UNICEF) recorded an average of 112 children admitted each day for severe malnutrition. Meanwhile, a four-month fuel ban threatens to shut down 40 per cent of Gaza's drinking-water facilities that are still operating; without generators, these taps will run dry within weeks. Nearly half of essential medicines - heart drugs to antibiotics - are already out of stock, and another fifth will vanish within two months.

On the ground, every day is a struggle to survive. Women and girls bear an added burden. Observers from the UN Human Rights Office describe "scenes of chaos" at the few remaining food sites, where long queues leave the elderly, the disabled and children exposed to harassment and abuse. The United Nations Population Fund, (UNFPA) reports that lack of food and cooking fuel has become a tool of coercion in some

households. At the same time, the daily chore of fetching water or firewood exposes women to violence and exploitation.

At the international political level, inertia and inaction rule the day, as governments jockey over their national and their allies' national interests.

The UN Security Council sees more concern and more calls for action by its non-permanent members than from the five veto powers, each of which can block united action.

Finally, on 30 July 2025, foreign ministers gathered at UN Headquarters "with Gaza smoldering," and Secretary-General António Guterres warned the situation was "at a breaking point" as they pledged to revive the two-State solution; that is, a recognized State of Palestine and a recognized State of Israel, both within secure borders.

However, beyond conditional recognition pledges - from Canada, the UK, France, and other EU

states that tie Palestinian statehood to a ceasefire, hostage releases and elections - there has been no sustained global pressure to open corridors, rebuild infrastructure or protect civilians.

Media coverage has dwindled, diplomatic visits have waned, and headlines have shifted elsewhere.

If the two-state vision is to be meaningful, it must be backed by deeds, not just declarations.

The international community must insist on immediate, unhindered humanitarian corridors, establish a transparent reconstruction trust to fund homes, schools, and hospitals, deploy a stabilization force to protect civilians and aid workers, and empower a reformed Palestinian Authority to restore basic services and security.

Neither Israel nor Hamas, which continues to hold hostages, can have matters their way, and the rest of the world should collectively tell them so, fearlessly and forcefully. CARICOM Governments, collectively and to

their credit, have done so.

Silence in the face of suffering is a form of violence. The facts on the ground - documented by UNRWA, OCHA, UNICEF and OHCHR - are too stark to ignore. People are now scouring the dirt for food.

It is a tragedy that the people in Gaza are being killed and are also dying from starvation, malnutrition and lack of medicines. But the greater and real human tragedy is that the world is in a state of "collapse of compassion", quietly looking away. It is time for the world to speak up, or Gaza will weigh heavily and permanently on the conscience of mankind.

EDITOR'S NOTE: The author is the Ambassador of Antigua and Barbuda to the United States and the OAS, and Dean of the OAS Ambassadors accredited to the OAS.

- CMC



(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9)

job, it's the gorgeous one who will get employed.

Having a pretty privilege will get some women noticed by men and even get them married too. A rich man will spot a beautiful waitress in a restaurant and whisk her away and marry her. But here's the caveat, if she has nothing else to offer, then that pretty privilege will expire, and he'll move on to another pretty face. Remember, pretty women are a dime a dozen, and as the saying goes: "For every beautiful woman out there, there is some man who got tired of her."

There are some men who like having pretty women to profile

Pretty Privilege



with. Arm candy they call them - so sometimes the pretty privilege will work in her favor.

Still, looks without substance mean nothing, and there are countless pretty women who are miserable, unhappy and alone without any meaningful relationship, for it's only their looks that they have to rely on.

A pretty privilege will let a woman sweep a man off his feet and drive some men so insanely jealous that he can't stand it if anyone else looks in her direction. This usually happens to men who aren't used to having a pretty woman - so when they do happen to get one, it's as if he's struck gold.

What about the men though, what about the pretty boys, do they get pretty privilege too? Well, not so much as far as looks go, even though a handsome man may get the initial nod over an ugly man in some situations. But if that ugly man has money, then he's suddenly extremely handsome and appealing.

But looks aren't that essential for men, as there are many male movie stars who are in high demand for their acting ability and not for their looks. Morgan Freeman isn't a handsome man, yet he's arguably one of the greatest actors ever.

Most female movie stars have

to be beautiful though, and it's the pretty privilege that got them cast in the starring role.

What a man needs though, is charisma, allure and sex appeal. It's called the 'Kavorka' from the Seinfeld TV series, the lure of the animal that draws women to those men. And that's why some men who aren't particularly handsome, still manage to have a history of beautiful women.

In contrast, have you ever noticed how some men are as handsome as Adonis, built like Samson, but can't keep a woman? That's because they have no allure, no appeal, no Kavorka. All they have is money to attract and hopefully hold the woman. But without it, he has nothing. That's why many rich men are cheated on by their wives; the money alone isn't enough.

So, women will get a pretty privilege, while men will have that lure or a money privilege. Whatever gets you in the door; the trick is to make the most of it once you get in.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Tony Robinson is an independent contributor to Caribbean Today and the views expressed here are his own. He can be reached at seidoIyard@gmail.com for feedback.



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From Billboard Stardom To Federal Prison: Sean Kingston's Stunning Fall From Grace

Jamaican American rapper Sean Kingston, once a global pop phenomenon with hits like 'Beautiful Girls' and 'Take You There,' is now serving time in a Florida federal prison after being sentenced to 42 months behind bars in connection with a US\$1 million fraud scheme.

Kingston, born Kisean Paul Anderson, was remanded to the Federal Detention Center in Miami after U.S. District Judge David S. Leibowitz handed down the sentence on August 15th. Prosecutors said the 35-year-old leveraged his fame and celebrity lifestyle to defraud vendors across South Florida, securing luxury goods he never intended to pay for.

The Fraud Scheme

According to trial evidence, Kingston and his mother, Janice Eleanor Turner, orchestrated a scheme between late 2023 and early 2024 that targeted sellers of high-end items, including:

- A bulletproof Cadillac Escalade worth US\$160,000.
- Over US\$500,000 in custom jewelry and luxury watches.
- A 232-inch LED television system.
- Thousands of dollars in bespoke furniture and electronics.

Prosecutors said Kingston invited vendors to his lavish Broward County mansions, using his music fame to secure their trust. Once deals were struck, Turner allegedly produced fraudulent wire transfer receipts, convincing sellers that payments had been made. In reality, the transfers never cleared.

"The defendants used fame as a weapon," prosecutors said in court. "What appeared to be opportunity for small businesses turned into financial loss and betrayal."

A Family Affair

Turner, 62, whom prosecutors described as the "mastermind" behind the fraudulent paperwork, was sentenced last month to five years in federal prison. It was not her first conviction - she previously served time in 2006 for bank fraud.

In her plea for leniency, Turner said her only intention had been to "keep her son afloat in a difficult industry," but the court was unmoved. She was also ordered to serve probation and pay restitution.

Kingston's Response

Kingston, who collaborated with the likes of Justin Bieber, Nicki Minaj, and Chris Brown, expressed regret in a short statement before sentencing. "I've learned from my actions,"



Sean Kingston, born Kisean Paul Anderson, is now in the Federal Detention Center in Miami. (Johnny Louis / Getty Images file)

he said, as Judge Leibowitz delivered the ruling.

Fame, Image, and Collapse
Kingston's story is a stark example of the dangers

of maintaining a celebrity image when the money dries up. Once hailed as the face of a new wave of Caribbean-American crossover music, he sold millions of records and performed at sold-out arenas. His 2007 debut single 'Beautiful Girls' topped the Billboard Hot 100, while follow-up hits like Eenie Meenie with Justin Bieber made him a household name.

But behind the scenes, prosecutors said, Kingston was sinking under debt while still projecting an image of lavish wealth. Industry insiders describe the case as a cautionary tale.

"Too many artists are trying to keep up appearances when the checks stop coming," one former music executive told reporters. "Behind the scenes, it's debt, fake flexing, and sometimes

crime."


Legacy In Question

For fans, the downfall of Sean Kingston is both shocking and tragic. Once celebrated as a Caribbean-American success story - bridging pop, reggae, and hip-hop- he now finds his legacy clouded by scandal. His hits still rack up millions of streams online, but his name is as likely to appear in a courtroom headline as on a playlist.


Whether Kingston can rebuild his career after prison remains to be seen. What is clear is that the boy who once sang about "Beautiful Girls" now faces the harsh reality of a prison cell, a broken reputation, and a reminder of how quickly fame can fade.



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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT



New Caribbean Music To Know

Caribbean music fans have major releases to look forward to – on the reggae, dancehall and soca scene. Here are some you should know of.

Spice “Slow Motion”



Spice drops new single.

Spice joins forces with British Romanian social media star Lavbbe on “Slow Motion,” a high-energy single produced by Shaggy and Shane Hoosong for VP Records and Ranch Entertainment. Blending Spice’s fiery deejaying with Lavbbe’s melodic vocals, the track is designed as an electrifying dancefloor anthem. Its music video, directed by Meeks + Frost and filmed at London’s Roller Nation, also premieres Friday. The release follows Spice’s blockbuster hit “Go Down Deh,” which recently surpassed 300 million Spotify streams.

Beres Hammond and Tanya Stephens “Love Story”

On the reggae front, Beres Hammond delivers “Love Story,” his first studio



collaboration with singer-songwriter Tanya Stephens. Produced by Arthur Wale for Free Willy Records, the duet is a soulful ode to rekindled romance, weaving timeless storytelling with Hammond’s signature warmth. Stephens called the experience “the pinnacle of all pinnacles” in her career.

Both singles dropped worldwide on August 29th.

12-Year-Old Ignites With Bounty Killer & Richie Stephens



Jamaican Canadian rising star Jazmin Headley with Richie Stephens, I., and Bounty Killer, r.

Jamaican Canadian rising star Jazmin Headley is turning heads with her latest reggae release “The Fire Inside,” featuring none other than dancehall legend Bounty Killer

and reggae icon Richie Stephens.

At just 12 years old, Jazmin is proving she’s a voice to watch. Her new single pairs youthful fire with seasoned artistry, blending Stephens’ soulful vocals and Bounty’s commanding delivery into what the Warlord himself calls a “musical masterpiece.”

“When you carry a fire inside, no one can shatter your dreams,”

Bounty shared while in Toronto, marking his first visit to the city in 20 years. Stephens added: “It’s a powerful song filled with emotional depth and an empowering message.”

The track follows a milestone year for Jazmin, who made her film debut in MGM’s *The Fire Inside*, the critically acclaimed biopic of boxing champion Claressa Shields. Starring Ryan Destiny and directed by Academy Award-nominated cinematographer Rachel Morrison, the movie gave Jazmin her first taste of the global spotlight—now extended through music.

Released via VPAL Music, the single is already resonating with fans for its uplifting lyrics and cross-generational collaboration, bridging the gap between Jamaica’s musical past and its

future.

Soul Marley Drops Holy Father

Rising reggae and Afrobeat fusion artist Soul-Rebel Marley



Soul-Rebel Marley in a scene from the video for his second single, “Holy Father.”

has unveiled the official music video for his second single, “Holy Father,” released earlier this summer via his Tek Time Productions label in partnership with Tuff Gong International. Directed by Martyn Watts, the cinematic visuals take viewers on a spiritual journey through Ethiopia’s historic rock-hewn churches of Lalibela. The video blends ancient ritual, mythic symbolism, and Marley’s soulful performance to create a deeply transformative viewing experience.

The production features cameos from Marley’s brothers Skip Marley and Saiyan Marley, as well as Fr. Amde Hamilton – a founding member of The Watts Prophets and Ethiopian Orthodox priest who famously delivered one of the eulogies at Bob Marley’s 1981 funeral in Kingston, Jamaica.

“I give thanks to the Most High for the support of my family and everyone behind the camera in the making of the ‘Holy Father’ video,” said Marley. “The experience was amazing and I’m excited for the massive to see it.”

Soul-Rebel Marley has been praised for his ability to

build on reggae’s foundational sounds while introducing fresh influences. His debut single “Loving Jah” reimagined traditional reggae with a modern twist, while “Holy Father” ventures into Afrobeat territory, delivering a pulsating, spiritual exploration of faith and heritage.

The “Holy Father” video is now streaming on Tuff Gong TV’s YouTube channel.

Machel Montano Drops “Fling It Up” Video



Trinidad’s own Machel Montano, the undisputed “King of Soca,” has released the official video for “Fling It Up” featuring Nigerian superstar Davido. Directed by Fresh Juice and filmed during Trinidad Carnival 2025, the video showcases the vibrant energy of Carnival while fusing afrobeats and soca.

The single already landed on Billboard’s U.S. Afrobeats Songs Chart earlier this year and is one of the highlights of Montano’s latest album, *One Degree Hotter*.

- NewsAmericasNow



Caribbean Pride Shines At 58th West Indian American Day Parade

Flags of the Caribbean rippled in the breeze as thundering bass, feathers, and glitter transformed Eastern Parkway in Brooklyn, NY, into a sea of color for the 58th annual West Indian American Day Parade on Labor Day, Sept. 1st.

The Labor Day tradition, which draws more than a million revelers, capped a weekend of Carnival festivities celebrating Caribbean heritage and culture. This year’s theme, “Vive Le Carnivale,” honored the parade’s enduring



People attend the West Indian Day Parade in Brooklyn, New York, USA on September 1, 2025. (Photo by Selcuk Acar/ Anadolu via Getty Images)

place in Brooklyn life. Politicians turned out in



New York City mayoral candidate Zohran Mamdani at the breakfast during the kick-off ceremony of the West Indian American Day Parade and Carnival in Brooklyn, New York on September 1, 2025. (Photo by Nazli Zeynep Karabulut/Anadolu via Getty Images)

full force, including incumbent Mayor Eric Adams, Democratic Assemblyman Zohran Kwame

Mamdani, independent challenger Andrew Cuomo, and Republican contender Curtis Sliwa. All marched alongside steel bands, costumed revellers, and community organizations, eager to connect with Caribbean voters.

While past years have seen violence – including a fatal shooting last summer – police maintained a heavy presence.

Metal barricades lined the route,

a helicopter hovered overhead, and officers patrolled to ensure safety.

For most, the mood was jubilant. The day began with J’ouvert, a pre-dawn ritual of paint and powder rooted in emancipation from slavery, setting the tone for a parade that blended history with celebration. Floats dedicated to various islands rolled past Grand Army Plaza, the Brooklyn Museum, and thousands of families lining the streets.

From first-time attendees to longtime participants, the parade reaffirmed its status as one of the city’s largest and most joyous street parties, uniting generations of the Caribbean Diaspora and their neighbors in a vibrant showcase of pride, music, and resilience.



Recipe Corner

This month we spotlight on two famous dishes from Trinidad & Tobago and Belize, as both countries mark their independence anniversaries on August 31st and September 21st, respectively.

Trinidad Callaloo: A Hearty and Flavourful Vegan Dish

Trinidad Callaloo vegan-style is a delicious way to



enjoy a healthy and flavourful Caribbean dish during the

Lenten season or anytime you're craving a plant-based meal. Pair it with your favourite sides for a comforting and nutrient-packed feast that's sure to satisfy.

INGREDIENTS

- 2 cans 400 ml coconut milk
- Water
- 6 cloves garlic
- 1 bunch dasheen leaves or 2 pounds Spinach baby leaves work best
- 1 lb okra
- 1/2 onion sliced
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
- 3 sprigs of thyme
- 1 green habanero or scotch bonnet pepper add any pepper you like
- 1 teaspoon vegan butter

INSTRUCTIONS

- If using the dasheen leaves, separate leaves from stems.
- 1 bunch dasheen leaves or 2 pounds Spinach
- Thoroughly wash leaves and

strip the stems. Tear leaves apart with hands into smaller pieces. Chop stems into about 2 inches length.

- If using Baby Spinach, wash and set aside.
- 2 cans
- Cut okra
- 1 lb okra
- Chop onions and garlic and set aside.
- 1/2 onion sliced, 6 cloves garlic
- Add all the ingredients including, whole pepper, into a medium pot over medium heat.
- 1 green habanero or scotch bonnet pepper
- Bring to a boil and then allow to simmer for 20 mins or until the okra seeds turn pink.
- Taste and season with salt & pepper if necessary.
- 1 teaspoon salt, 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
- When the callaloo is done the leaves and okras should be tender and there should be enough liquid to blend the ingredients. If not add a little

warm water to bring to a soup consistency.

- Add some butter. (optional)
- 1 teaspoon vegan butter
- Remove from heat and allow



to cool for 15 minutes before blending.

- Using a hand blender, blend the callaloo until all the ingredients are pureed.

Notes: Serve with rice, potato salad, boiled provisions, coleslaw, pigeon peas and macaroni pie.

Fried Jacks From Belize

Belizean delicacies - fried jacks - are deep fried dough pieces that can be shaped in squares, circles or triangles. They are like salt bakes in Guyana and similar to bake in Trinidad or Johnny cake in Antigua. They are usually served at breakfast with refried beans,

eggs, cheese, bacon or ham and fresh fruits. Here's what you will need to make it.

INGREDIENTS

- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- 3 teaspoons baking powder
- 1 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 tablespoon vegetable shortening
- 1 1/2 cup water
- Vegetable oil for frying

METHOD

- Sift flour, baking powder and salt in a bowl.
- Add shortening into a flour mix. Add water, a little at a time, to make a soft, but not sticky dough.
- Divide dough into two rounds.
- Let rest for 15 to 20 minutes.
- Lightly flour countertop.
- Roll dough out to about 10 to 12 inches round.
- Cut lengthwise into 2 to 3-inch strips and then crosswise to desired size.
- Make sure the oil is very hot for fluffy jacks.
- Fry on each side until golden brown.
- Drain off excess oil on paper towel and serve with eggs, bacon etc.

Antigua & Barbuda Serves Up Island Flavors At Taste Of Tennis 25th Anniversary

Antigua and Barbuda brought bold Caribbean flavors to Manhattan recently, at the 25th anniversary of Taste of Tennis, dazzling guests with inventive island bites, English Harbour Rum tastings, and a showcase of the nation's vibrant food culture.

Held at Aqua New York in the Flatiron District, the culinary celebration featured a menu by Chef Claude Lewis, a Chopped champion with Antiguan roots. Lewis reimagined traditional island dishes with flair: jerk chicken with plantain waffles and vanilla maple glaze, panko-crusted fungee bites with Scotch bonnet rémoulade, goat water shooters with roti crumble, and spiced rum cake squares. Each dish offered guests a journey through Antigua and Barbuda's rich culinary heritage.

Paired with premium pours of English Harbour Rum, the experience transported visitors



L-R: Canadian Tennis Pro Vicky Mboko, Chef Claude Lewis, former US Open Singles Champion Sloane Stephens, and Arah Robins, U.S. Marketing & Public Relations Executive, Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority at the event. (Contributed image)

straight to the twin-island paradise. "Taste of Tennis was an incredible opportunity to showcase the soul of Antigua and Barbuda - our bold flavors and authentic culture," said Dean Fenton, U.S. Director of Tourism.

The event previewed the islands' upcoming Culinary

Month in May 2026, which will feature Restaurant Week, the new Food, Art & Beverage Festival, and the popular Eat Like a Local program, solidifying Antigua and Barbuda's status as a Caribbean culinary destination.

Rapper Opens New Sunday's Eatery In Fort Lauderdale

South Florida rap star Trick Daddy has opened a second location of his popular soul food restaurant, Sunday's Eatery, this time in Fort Lauderdale.

The new sit-down spot at 2010 NW Sixth St. on Sistrunk Boulevard officially launches Saturday, Aug. 30, joining the flagship location in Miami Gardens that debuted in 2019.

The restaurant, which specializes in Southern and Caribbean dishes like fried ribs, baked turkey wings, catfish, mac and cheese, and combread, is inspired by the soulful Sunday dinners of Trick Daddy's childhood.

"We're trying to bring employment and good food to the Black community," the rapper said. "Sometimes we profit a little, sometimes none. The goal is to pay bills, feed kids, and keep people happy."

Trick Daddy, best known for hits like "Take It to da House" and "Let's Go," says he is a daily presence at Sunday's, often jumping in the kitchen to help prepare orders before stepping out to meet customers.

Alongside the restaurants, he now hosts a weekly YouTube cooking show, "B—, I Got My Pots!" featuring guests like comedian Mike Epps and musician Ky-Mani Marley. He's also working on a cookbook of soul food recipes, set for release later this year. The expansion reflects both his growing food ventures - including a YouTube cooking show and an upcoming cookbook - and his commitment to affordable dining in historic neighborhoods.

For menus and more details, visit SundaysEatery.com.



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HEALTH NEWS



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Gang Violence, Lack Of Cancer Treatment In Port-Au-Prince Force A Difficult Journey And Death

BY DAVID L. SNELLING

The audio of Jean Fritz “Presnel” Dieu, who was battling an aggressive form of cancer in Haiti, sent to Flying High 4 Haiti founder and president Ines Lozano, is another example of the acute impact the escalating gang violence has on the embattled Caribbean nation.

Tormenting the country, gangs prevented Dieu from undergoing chemotherapy on several occasions. “I can’t get out,” Dieu could be heard saying in the audio with the thunderous sounds of gang fighting in the background.

Dieu was a leader at a school in Ile-a-Vache, an island in southern Haiti, and was building an art center there when he succumbed to cancer last month, leaving behind a wife and four children.

The 42-year-old was venerated as a hero in Haiti, not only for his work in his native country but his courageous cancer fight amid the deadly gang violence that forced him to travel for hours for treatment.

Haitian gangs blocked the roads leading to the hospital in Port-au-Prince, which was the only cancer treatment center in the Capitol. Lozano’s humanitarian aid organization based in Key Biscayne, Florida, which built the school, raised the money for Dieu’s travel

and cancer treatment which is estimated at \$19,000.

She said Dieu had to travel by boat from Ile-a-Vache and then a motorbike through rugged mountains to get to his chemotherapy session in Port-au-Prince.

“It was hard traveling by boat and motorbike going through a war zone for his chemo,” Lozano told the Caribbean Today. “He was very weak. It took about six hours to get to Port-au-Prince and another six hours to come back home.”

Lozano said she hasn’t visited Haiti since 2021 due to the gang violence but hired volunteers in the Caribbean nation to help Dieu during his bout with cancer. Dieu was first diagnosed with cancer in 2021, a tumor on his neck that grew the size of a soccer ball. After months of chemo, the tumor disappeared but returned two years later.

But this time, the cancer was so aggressive that he needed radiation therapy but no hospital or clinic in Haiti offers the procedure. Dieu was granted a humanitarian visa to the Dominican Republic for radiation treatment which included a series of blood transfusions.

Lozano, who visited Dieu while hospitalized in the Dominican Republic, said he was stabilized for about a month but collapsed and died. “He was very weak and the doctors were devastated,” she said.

In addition to supporting Presnel’s treatment, Flying High for Haiti used the funds raised to repatriate his body so his children could say their final goodbyes and bury their father. The journey was especially difficult for his wife, Yvonne, who traveled with his casket along dangerous roads in gang-controlled areas.

However, the main road to Port-au-Prince was blocked by gangs halfway there, forcing her to abandon the attempt to return his body to his home in Ile-a-Vache. His coffin now resides in a mausoleum in Savien, a territory controlled by gangs.

Lozano said she met Dieu in Haiti and convinced him to work for the school in Ile-a-Vache for impoverished kids. Lozano said the school currently enrolls 35 kids, is tuition free and provides scholarships. Some students went on to study law and nursing in the Caribbean nation.

She said Dieu was the catalyst for social change in Haiti and was building the arts center for citizens to demonstrate their talents. “He was an amazing person,” Lozano said. “Everyone loved him.”

Access to healthcare in Haiti has been difficult as of late, as the



The late Jean Fritz “Presnel” Dieu, I., and Flying High 4 Haiti founder Ines Lozano. (Contributed image).

gangs took over several hospitals, forcing evacuations including the University Hospital of Mirebalais, which was treating 35 patients.

The hospital and St. Francis de Sales Hospital provided free cancer care before the gang violence shut down their operations. Lozano said Dr. Joseph Bernard, an oncologist from Miami who also treats cancer patients in Haiti, opened up several private clinics in Port-au-Prince but not enough to meet the demands of treatment for cancer patients.

Some forms of cancers are in advanced stages and medical equipment is scarce. In Dieu’s case, only the Dominican Republic offers that kind of life-saving cancer treatment. “It’s been very rough,” said

Bernard, who treated Dieu in Port-Au-Prince.

Bernard said the healthcare system in Haiti is mainly held by the private sector and the NGOs involved in this sector. The public system has a lot of deficiencies, while the private sector is not accessible to most Haitians.

“Regarding cancer treatment, a lot needs to be done in order to provide optimal care, especially improving surgical care and bringing back radiation therapy,” he said.

Bernard said during a 10-year span, he has treated more than 5000 patients with cancer, mainly breast cancer, cervical cancer and colorectal cancer.

Lozano launched Flying High 4 Haiti following the 2010 devastating earthquake. She accompanied her husband, who was a reporter, covering the effects of the natural disaster and she fell in love with Haitians and their culture.

But it was the kids who won her heart and started the school in an isolated area where they would have to travel miles for an education.

“Haiti is a wonderful and beautiful place,” Lozano. Flying High 4 Haiti is continuing to raise funds for Dieu and his family. For more information or to donate, visit flyinghigh4haiti.org.



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A Journey Of Discovery

BY DAWN A. DAVIS

Her latest book for children up to 8 years, Edwidge Danticat's *Watch Out for Falling Iguanas* is a delightful read for curious little ones. With Rachel Moss' colorful illustrations that will draw any child in, the story takes the reader on a journey of discovery.

This picture book explores the phases iguanas go through based on environmental conditions. Told through the eyes of young Leila who lives in Miami with her parents and grandmother, the heartwarming story takes us through Leila's

day from the moment she steps outside on her way to school.

It's an unusually cold day in Miami and her Grandma Issa, who is bundled up in a warm robe, warns Leila to "watch out for falling iguanas." A curious statement indeed, she muses, not thinking anything of it. She gets in the car with Mama and Papa and they take off for school.

It's not long before she sees other creatures, a hen and her chicks crossing the road, a peacock with its beautiful feathers all fanned out for all to see. These are the sights she is used to; even falling

coconuts from the tall slender coconut trees that dot virtually everywhere in Florida. But she has never heard of falling iguanas before.

With all these sightings, her curiosity is heightened as she enters school. And lo and behold, her teacher takes the class on a walking tour around the park in a teaching lesson about iguanas.

Cold-Blooded

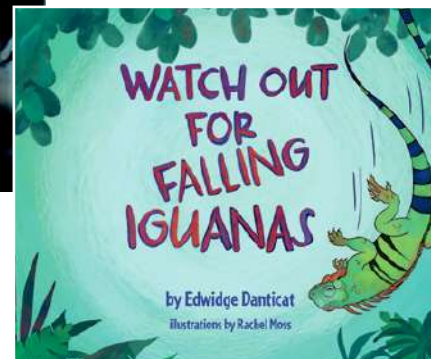
She learns that they are cold-blooded reptiles belonging to the family of lizards that need sun and warmth to stay warm and keep the blood flowing in



Author Edwidge Danticat, I. and her book *Watch Out for Falling Iguanas*, r.

park that evening. It's warmer now, and the iguanas are back in the trees and scurrying about on the ground as usual. Together they delight in the life of these beautiful tropical creatures.

Sensitively told with enough detail to enlighten and spark



A Moving Perspective Of The Caribbean's First People

BY DAWN A. DAVIS

You don't know a true Caribbean paradise until you've read Jamaican poet and novelist Olive Senior's *Paradise Once*. Set in the



Author Olive Senior, I. and her book *Paradise Once*.

pre-Columbus era village of Maima on the beautiful Caribbean island of Cuba, this once untouched, unspoiled, and vibrant Taíno community thrived on the land that gave them physical and spiritual sustenance.

According to historical sources the Taíno (meaning 'the Good People') came to the islands (Cuba, Jamaica, Puerto Rico, Hispaniola [now Dominican Republic and Haiti], the Bahamas, and some of the lesser Antilles) from South America between 600 and 900 AD and brought their seafaring, artistic, and farming skills with them. These powerful Taínos displaced the original inhabitants in the Caribbean - the Ciboney, primarily hunter-gatherers.

The cycle continued with the arrival of Christopher Columbus on the pristine Caribbean islands bringing with them diseases and violence that marked the beginning of the end for the Taíno.

They came, they conquered, they enslaved, they converted, they burned, they killed - destroying the will of a people. As it is in history, there were those from within who sold their souls to the invaders helping to bring down this once thriving nation of Taíno people. Senior weaves in historical references

that paints an authentic picture of greed, power, and the rape of a land's natural resources. It indeed is the story of the Caribbean, and Africa, carved out, traded, and taken over by the Spaniards then various European empires.

The Chosen

We are introduced to the peaceful village of Maima through the perspective of its playful children, teenage boys realigning themselves for manhood, and young girls about to step into womanhood.

The chief, the elders, the herbal medicine experts take us on a journey of life in times of peace protected by the gods of earth and sky. But, after the massacre there were survivors, and among those few there were the chosen.

Each character carefully imbued with traits that signify their role in the community, the author builds this tragic yet fascinating tale that not only educates readers, but also elicits a range of emotions - from pride to anger. We hear the voices of our ancestors through the stories passed down from Taíno elders. The parallel history of the transatlantic slave trade is also threaded through this book, as all who were 'the other' came under the domination of those who came on big ships from across the seas.

Paradise Once is indeed a story of survival. But it is also a tale of longing, a yearning for balance in a world that has changed forever by our own hands as foretold in its pages.

"Our age represents the first time that human beings will be the agents of our own destruction... In the long run, few of our people will survive. Yet the heart will continue to pump our blood into the veins of our conquerors, so that in tens of tens of tens of time, our spirit will rise again in a people who will proudly say, I am Taíno."

It is said that the Taíno

vanished completely. However, this is not so, for their blood still courses through those who survived - the Maroons, Freedom Fighters! This is our story told through the eyes of the First People who experienced *Paradise Once*. Available on Amazon and at fine bookstores everywhere.

BOOK: *Paradise Once*

AUTHOR: Olive Senior

PUBLISHER: Akashic Books

PUBLICATION DATE:

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TRAVEL NEWS



Jamaica Expands Airlift With More Seats And Flights Ahead Of Winter Season

Jamaica is set to strengthen its position as one of the world's most accessible island destinations over the next six months with expanded air service and increased seat capacity across its three major airports.

From September 2025 through February 2026, scheduled seat capacity is projected to grow by 4.4 percent compared to the same period last year, according to official tourism data. The expansion covers Sangster International Airport in Montego Bay (MBJ), Norman Manley International Airport in Kingston, (KIN), and Ian Fleming International Airport in Ocho Rios, (IFIA).

Montego Bay, the island's busiest gateway, will record a 5.6 percent rise in scheduled seat capacity and an 8.5 percent increase in departures year over year. Kingston will see a more modest 1.3 percent boost in capacity alongside a 3.1 percent rise in departures, while Ocho Rios is expected to post the sharpest growth- a 37 percent jump in capacity.

"This expanded airlift reflects Jamaica's continued

growth as a leading global tourism destination," said Jamaica's Minister of Tourism, Edmund Bartlett. "Our airline partners across North America, Europe, and the Caribbean recognize the demand for our island's world-class offerings and have responded with more seats, more gateways, and more convenience for travelers. This puts us firmly on track to meet our 5x5x5 growth targets." Boost From North America and Europe

In North America, U.S. service will expand from key gateways including Baltimore/Washington International Airport and Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport, while Canadian travelers will benefit from new WestJet flights out of Edmonton, Alberta.

Across the Atlantic, Jamaica secured its first direct Lisbon-Montego Bay flights on World2Fly Portugal, adding to the island's growing roster of European routes. Regional connections have also been enhanced, with LIAT now operating about three weekly flights between Kingston and Montego Bay.



The Palace Company and Government of Jamaica break ground on Moon Palace The Grand – Montego Bay. (Moon Palace image)

"We are seeing healthy increases to our airports from diverse markets," said Donovan White, Jamaica's Director of Tourism. "These additional seats

ensure Jamaica remains well connected to both our top source markets and emerging gateways, while giving visitors more travel options than ever before."

Record Tourism Earnings

The expanded airlift follows a record-breaking 2024, when Jamaica welcomed 4.3 million visitors and generated \$4.3 billion in tourism earnings. The United States remains the island's largest source market, accounting for about 75 percent of stopover arrivals, with strong growth also reported from Canada and Europe.

With the winter season approaching, officials say the additional capacity positions Jamaica to sustain its momentum and further solidify its reputation as one of the Caribbean's most sought-after destinations.



U.S. Expands Enhanced Passenger Processing For Returning Travelers

American travellers returning home may notice a faster, more streamlined experience at Customs, thanks to a new process being rolled out by U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP).

The system, called Enhanced Passenger Processing, (EPP), is now in use at 14 major airports across the country - including Orlando, Atlanta, Charlotte, Dallas-Fort Worth, Denver, Los Angeles, Chicago O'Hare, Seattle-Tacoma, Minneapolis-St. Paul, and most recently, Nashville International Airport.

CBP says the technology is designed to confirm travellers' identities before they even reach an officer, cutting down wait times and making re-entry to the U.S. smoother.

"It confirms who you are before you even reach an officer, saving time for you and allowing us to focus on real threats," the agency explained.

How It Works

Upon arrival, U.S. citizens are photographed using automated

biometric capture technology. That image is then matched against the traveller's passport or government-issued ID, verifying identity while also running compliance and eligibility checks in real time.

According to CBP, the system eliminates manual data entry, freeing officers to focus on higher-risk cases while law-abiding travellers benefit from faster processing and shorter lines.

The technology is touchless, and CBP officers remain on hand to assist or guide passengers through the process. Importantly, travellers who prefer not to use EPP may opt out by informing an officer and proceeding through the traditional Customs process.

What Travelers Can Expect

- For frequent flyers, the benefits are clear:
- Shorter wait times at Customs.
- Faster connections for passengers with onward flights.
- Less congestion in arrival halls during peak travel periods.

LaFonda D. Sutton-Burke, CBP's director of field operations in Chicago, noted during the Minneapolis-St. Paul rollout earlier this summer: "Travelers arriving at MSP will feel the benefits of this new technology - shorter wait times, faster processing through Customs, and the improved ability to make connecting flights."

Where It's Available

Nashville International Airport became the latest airport to join the program in August, following Minneapolis-St. Paul's June launch. While major hubs such as Orlando, Atlanta, and Los Angeles are already on board, Miami International Airport has not yet introduced EPP for U.S. citizens.

As more airports adopt the system, CBP says travellers can expect smoother re-entry and fewer bottlenecks, especially during the upcoming holiday travel season.



World's Largest Hummingbird Sculpture Unveiled In Montego Bay

Visitors to Montego Bay's Hip Strip now have a striking new landmark to admire: the world's largest hummingbird sculpture, perched on the façade of the award-winning S Hotel Montego Bay.

The 46-foot installation, depicting Jamaica's national bird - the Doctor Bird - was commissioned by hotelier Christopher Issa and designed by acclaimed sculptor Scheed Cole. With its dazzling plumage and flowing tail, the massive piece captures the bird mid-flight, symbolizing Jamaica's spirit of resilience and pride. Constructed from fiberglass, polystyrene foam, and sheet

metal, the sculpture took three months to build and is so large it could fit 10 people inside its hollow frame. Visible along much of the coastline, it is set to become a must-see attraction for selfie-seekers and art lovers alike.

The unveiling is part of S Hotel's cultural revival of Jimmy Cliff Boulevard, which also features an Art Walk of murals



The installation is part of S Hotel's broader cultural revival of Jimmy Cliff Boulevard. (Contributed image)

celebrating Jamaican icons.



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SPORTS NEWS



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Carrying Haiti's Pride - Thad Jean Becomes First Haitian PFL Welterweight Champion



Thad 'The Silverback' Jean following his August 1, 2025 victory. (Contributed image)

BY HOWARD CAMPBELL

Whenever Thad Jean steps into a Mixed Martial Arts, (MMA), cage, he carries the pride of Haiti with him. That pride swelled on August 1st, when he defeated fellow American Logan Storley by unanimous decision to win the Professional Fighters League, (PFL) Welterweight Tournament. Although he was born in

South Florida, the 27-year-old Jean never shies away from acknowledging his Haitian roots. Nicknamed 'The Silverback,' he dedicated his victory last month to the people of his parents' homeland, which has been ravaged by decades of political turmoil and more recently, gang violence. MMA - which comprises various martial arts techniques such as striking, grappling and

submission - attracts thousands of fans across the United States. For Jean, winning a title in a sport that has risen astronomically in the last 10 years, made his win last month even more special. "Mixed Martial Arts is a super-fast-growing sport, there's so many big names in Mixed Martial Arts since I started out," he told Caribbean Today. "To be the first Haitian

to win such a prestigious title, that puts me as a part of history in a sport that's growing so fast, and that's an honor." Jean was raised in Broward County, the sixth of seven children in a Christian family. His father is pastor at a church with a large Haitian congregation, which helped shape his appreciation for the country's culture and history. After a promising football career was ended by a knee injury, Jean was encouraged by one of his brother's friends to get into Mixed Martial Arts. One of the fighters he admires most is Conor McGregor of Ireland, one of MMA's biggest names. "He has the same mindset as me. If it's something you want, go for it as much as you can," said Jean. That attitude has earned

him an unbeaten record of 11 wins, which started in August 2021 with a win over American Sage Philippe. A series of impressive bouts made Jean one of the favorites for the PFL Welterweight Tournament which he won by beating Storley of South Dakota in five rounds in Atlantic City, New Jersey. Now that he is a title holder, Jean is aware of contenders lining up to challenge him. He is unfazed. "I like that there is a target on my back, I like the fact that people want my title because they notice me now. They want to study my game," Jean noted. "I don't want any cushion fights; I don't want to fight regular guys. I want to fight guys who have 'the best' attached to their names." ✨

Curaçao And Trinidad & Tobago Crowned Champions At Caribbean Volleyball Championships

Curaçao and Trinidad & Tobago are the new kings and queens of Caribbean volleyball after thrilling victories on the final night of the 2025 Caribbean Volleyball Championships at the Kendal Isaac Gymnasium in Nassau. In the men's final, Curaçao silenced a raucous Bahamian home crowd with a straight-sets victory (25-21, 25-23, 25-16) to clinch their first regional title. The opening sets were fiercely contested, with The Bahamas pressing hard, but Curaçao's composure



Trinidad & Tobago pose for a team photo after winning the women's title at the Caribbean Volleyball Championships in the Bahamas. (Photo: CVC)

under pressure and precision in execution proved decisive. After edging the hosts in the second set, Curaçao

raised their level in the third, dominating with powerful serves and impenetrable (CONTINUED ON PAGE 19)



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NOW ENROLLING!

Jamaica Bags 15 Medals At Junior Pan Am Games



Racquil Broderick won gold for Jamaica in the men's discus at the Junior Pan American Games.

Jamaica closed out the 2025 Junior Pan American Games with an impressive 15-medal haul, capped by a record-breaking performance in the men's discus on the final day of competition.

Rising star Racquil Broderick delivered a standout performance, throwing 61.79 metres to win gold and set a new championship record. Broderick had already eclipsed the previous mark of 61.08m in the second round before extending his lead, becoming the second Jamaican

at the meet to etch his name in the record books. Earlier in the week, Jasauna Dennis smashed the men's 400m record with his winning time of 45.56 seconds, lowering the previous best of 45.59 set in 2021.

Broderick's teammate Christopher Young also impressed in the discus, claiming silver with a throw of 59.34-m, while Brazil's Mateus Torres settled for bronze (58.73-m).

Jamaica's medal rush on the final day also included Sabrina Lyn's silver in the women's

100-m breaststroke, Colin McKenzie's bronze in the men's 100m breaststroke, and Tyler Tracey's bronze in the men's 74-kg freestyle wrestling.

Medal Tally and Rankings

Despite a slow start in track and field - failing to medal over the first two days - Jamaica rebounded strongly, finishing with four gold, four silver, and seven bronze medals, placing fifth overall in track and field.

- Cuba topped the athletics table with 13 medals (8 gold, 3 silver, 2 bronze).
 - Canada followed with 15 (7 gold, 7 silver, 1 bronze).
 - Colombia secured 14 (7 gold, 4 silver, 3 bronze).
 - Mexico led in total count with 19 (4 gold, 5 silver, 10 bronze).
- Jamaica's strong finish underscored the depth of its young talent pool, with record-setting performances and podium finishes across both track and field and aquatic disciplines.

- Rewritten from CMC



Curaçao And Trinidad & Tobago Crowned Champions At Caribbean Volleyball Championships

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 18)

blocking to seal a commanding win.

"We deserve this. We played really hard. We have great players. We executed to the T, so I'm really, really happy to finally get this one," said team captain Raygid Isenia, brimming with pride after lifting the trophy. Women's Final: T&T's Stunning Comeback

In the women's championship clash, Trinidad and Tobago staged a dramatic comeback to dethrone defending champions Barbados in a tense four-set battle.

After dropping the opening set 23-25, T&T regrouped and rallied to take three consecutive sets (25-23, 26-24, 31-29) in front of a roaring Nassau crowd. The finale was an epic, stretching deep into extra points as both sides traded blows in a contest that tested endurance, nerves, and willpower.

For T&T captain Delicia Pierre, the triumph was the realization of months of preparation and determination.

"It's just wonderful knowing that this is what we set our mind to, to come here and do it, and it came into fruition," Pierre said. "It's really a great feeling to see it come to life."

A Night of New

Champions
With Curaçao claiming the men's crown and Trinidad &

Tobago the women's, the 2025 edition of the championships will be remembered as a turning point for Caribbean volleyball, showcasing the rising depth

and competitive spirit of the region's game.

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West Indies Stars Climb ICC Rankings After Series Win Over Pakistan



Windies fast bowler Jayden Seales

West Indies cricket received a major boost recently as several standout performers surged up the latest MRF Tyres ICC Men's Player Rankings, released Wednesday, following the thrilling ODI series victory over Pakistan.

The most eye-catching leap came from 22-year-old fast bowler Jayden Seales, whose sensational spell of 6-18 in the series decider dismantled Pakistan's batting order and powered the hosts to a 2-1 triumph. His career-best performance catapulted him 17 spots to a personal high of 19th place in the ODI Bowling Rankings, marking his arrival as one of international cricket's rising forces.

Seales wasn't the only bowler to shine. Off-spinning all-

rounder Roston Chase moved up seven places to 67th, reflecting his growing consistency and value with the ball.

On the batting side, skipper Shai Hope continued to anchor the lineup with trademark composure. His unbeaten 120 in the series finale not only secured victory but also lifted him two places to seventh in the world batting rankings, cementing his reputation as one of the format's most dependable run-scorers.

The collective gains underscore a West Indies side on an upward trajectory, with both established leaders and emerging talents making their mark on the global stage.

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