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SWEEPING IMMIGRATION CHANGES TO COME IN A MATTER OF WEEKS, MINISTER ANNOUNCES



# PDM calls for independent investigation into US\$3.09 million police boats

News Release

The People’s Democratic Movement is calling for an independent investigation into the cost and procurement of the two newly commissioned police patrol vessels, and confirmation that both are ready for operational service. The Government has announced US\$1,351,396 for the 38-foot vessel and US\$1,739,409 for the 45-foot vessel, a combined US\$3,090,805. “Our police officers deserve safe, reliable boats. Our people deserve effective protection of our borders. And taxpayers deserve to know exactly what they received for US\$3.09 million,” said Leader of the Opposition, Hon. Edwin Astwood. A publicly available July 2023 US government procurement schedule lists the SAFE 38 Full Cabin at US\$390,875.60 and the SAFE 44 Full Cabin Inboard at US\$778,663.99. These historical prices exclude separately priced propulsion and numerous options and are not equivalent quotations for the TCI vessels. They nevertheless warrant a detailed explanation of the specifications and additional costs behind the Government’s figures. “Were these purchase prices or valuations? How much was actually paid, to whom, and for what? Were the vessels purchased directly from the manufacturer or through an intermediary? What competing quotations were considered?” Mr Astwood asked. The PDM calls for an independent procurement and value-for-money examination by the Auditor General, supported by an independent marine surveyor, with findings submitted to the Public Accounts Committee and published. The examination should cover supplier selection, contracts, invoices, equipment, freight, training, warranties, intermediaries, commissions, contract variations and payment approvals. The Government and Commissioner of Police must also confirm:

- \* Have both vessels passed their



required surveys and sea trials?

- \* Are any defects, repairs or installation works outstanding?
- \* Who signed off their acceptance and authorized operational deployment?
- \* Are trained crews, maintenance funding and spare-parts arrangements in place?
- \* When will both vessels begin active patrol duties?

“The Government found time for the ceremony. Within seven days, it should provide these basic answers and explain any outstanding work,” Mr Astwood said. “If essential testing or preparations were incomplete, why the rush to commission the vessels? Our country needs working patrol boats. Balloons, banners and backdrops cannot substitute for operational readiness.” The PDM supports strengthening the Marine Branch. That investment must deliver safe equip-

ment, dependable service and demonstrable value for money. “Disclosure is necessary, but disclosure alone is insufficient. The records must be independently examined and the findings published. If the expenditure is justified and both boats are

ready, the evidence should establish that. If shortcomings are found, they must be corrected and responsibility established. “The ceremony is over. Show us what we paid for, and show us that both boats are ready to protect our country.”

**MCINTOSH PLASTERING  
AND BUILDING SERVICES**

Providenciales

Is seeking to employ a

**STEELMAN**

Duties include: Reading and interpreting engineering drawings and blueprints for reinforcement placement; cutting, bending, and assembling steel bars and mesh; positioning and securing reinforcement steel into forms for concrete structures; welding or tying steel rods; and ensuring all framework meets structural safety standards.

Salary: \$15.00 hourly

**CONTACT: 343-9797**

BELONGERS ARE ENCOURAGED TO APPLY  
FIRST TIME

**MCINTOSH PLASTERING  
AND BUILDING SERVICES**

Providenciales

Is seeking to employ a

**MASON**

Duties include: Laying bricks, concrete blocks, and other masonry materials to construct walls, partitions, and structures; mixing mortar and concrete; reading and interpreting architectural drawings and blueprints; leveling and smoothing surfaces; and repairing existing masonry structures.

Salary: \$15.00 hourly

**CONTACT: 343-9797**

BELONGERS ARE ENCOURAGED TO APPLY  
FIRST TIME

# ROCK HOUSE

TURKS & CAICOS  
GRACE BAY RESORTS

## OPEN JOB POSITIONS

### \* SECURITY SUPERVISOR

We are seeking a proficient and enthusiastic Security Supervisor to join our team!

**JOB OVERVIEW:** The Security Supervisor is responsible for assisting with overseeing asset protection for the resort, from the protection of people and staff to the prevention of theft and inventory loss. The Security Supervisor will be responsible for assisting with developing and implementing security standards and ensuring that they are followed by all resort staff.

#### ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS:

- Conducting regular security assessment and audits to identify potential vulnerabilities and recommend appropriate solutions.
- Monitoring and analysing security systems, such as CCTV cameras, access control systems.
- Coordinating with other departments to ensure compliance with security protocols and procedures.
- Collaborating with law enforcement and emergency services in case of emergencies or security breaches.
- Maintaining accurate records of security incidents, equipment inventory, and training activities.
- Develop and implement emergency response plans and procedures.
- Maintaining accurate records of security incidents, equipment inventory and training activities. **Full time.**

#### REQUIREMENTS AND SKILLS:

- Experience as a Security personnel or similar role
- Strong multi-tasking skills
- Excellent organizational skills
- Ability to adapt to a fluid environment
- Commitment to a high level of customer service
- Strict attention to detail
- Ability to handle sensitive matters with efficiency and discretion

**Weekend and holiday work may be required.**

**SALARY \$10.00 - \$12.00 PER HOUR**  
**SERVICE CHARGE**

### \* EXECUTIVE CHEF

We are seeking a proficient and enthusiastic Executive Chef to join our team!

**JOB OVERVIEW:** The executive chef will train and manage kitchen personnel and supervise/coordinate all related culinary activities; estimate food consumption and requisition or purchase food; select and develop recipes; standardize production recipes to ensure consistent quality; establish presentation technique and quality standards; plan and price menus; ensure proper equipment operation/maintenance; and ensure proper safety and sanitation in kitchen. The executive chef may oversee special catering events and may also offer culinary instruction and/or demonstrate culinary techniques. The executive chef directly supervises kitchen personnel with responsibility for hiring, discipline, performance reviews and initiating pay increases. He/she will assist in the development of employees.

#### QUALIFICATIONS:

- Bachelor's Degree in Culinary Arts, Food and Beverage Management or Equivalent
- International culinary experience in a five star property with focuses on Mediterranean and Asian cuisine
- Candidate should have at least 5 years' experience in an Executive Chef Kitchen management capacity and excellent knowledge of current culinary trends.
- Must have experience of resort pre-opening
- Must have experience in high volume hotel business.
- Must be competent in culinary creativity as demonstrated by cooking test.
- Have strong knowledge of food cost and inventories.
- Must possess the ability to handle stressful and busy hotel.
- Candidate must have good knowledge of computers (e.g. Excel & Word).
- Clear, concise written and verbal communication skills.
- Candidate must be comfortable to speak to guests and conduct meetings.
- Must have a good understanding of cost control.
- Candidate must be a leader and a mentor.

**SALARY \$100,000.00 - \$110,000.00 PER ANNUM**  
**BONUS + SERVICE CHARGE**

**Qualified Islanders need only to apply copying applications to the Commissioner of Labour & Work Permit Board Zone 2**

**Qualified candidates should submit their Resumes to our Human Resources Department via Email: [humanresources@rockhouseressort.com](mailto:humanresources@rockhouseressort.com) or hand deliver applications at our office on #1 International Drive, Providenciales. Positions marked with an \* are currently being held by a work permit holder. **Deadline for submission: October 10, 2026****

# \$3.5 million police boats commissioned to boost border security

By Vivian Tyson, NEWSLINE Editor-In-Chief

Two new police patrol boats built at a combined cost of approximately \$3.5 million have been commissioned to strengthen border security in the Turks and Caicos Islands, boosting the country's capacity to intercept illegal migrant vessels, disrupt organised crime and respond to emergencies at sea.

Sea Guardian II and Sea Enforcer II join the Royal Turks and Caicos Islands Police Force's marine fleet as officials seek to improve surveillance and enforcement across the archipelago's waters.

Regional cooperation featured prominently at the ceremony, attended by Jamaica's Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Security and Peace, Dr. Horace Chang, and senior Jamaican police officials.

Speaking at the commissioning ceremony on Thursday, October 1, at South Bank Marina in Long Bay, Providenciales, Premier Charles Washington Misick said the vessels took 18 months to build and represented a tangible result of the government's commitment to financing national security.

He said the acquisition formed part of a broader investment in policing, defence and the justice system, with public safety essential to sustaining the country's tourism-dependent economy.

"We're investing heavily in our equipment, as I said earlier, because we refuse to ask our officers to fight modern, sophisticated security threats with outdated tools," Misick said.

The premier said the vessels would help deter smugglers, poachers and transnational criminals while protecting fishermen, coastal communities and vital economic infrastructure.

The boats will also strengthen search and rescue operations. He also pledged continued support for the marine officers who will operate the boats, recognising that equipment alone could not replace the courage and integrity required of those serving on the front line. Commissioner of Police Fitz Bailey said the new vessels would strengthen the force's ability to protect the borders and respond to the challenges posed by illegal migration.

He pointed to recent operations in which officers intercepted three



Local and Jamaican political and law enforcement personnel share a photo op in front of the Sea Enforcer, one of the two police vessels commissioned into service on Thursday, 1 October 2026. From left are: Jeremy Taylor – Director of Public Prosecution; Jamaica's Deputy Commissioner of Police Warren Christopher Clarke; Rodny Adams – Deputy Commissioner of Police; Warren Blak – Jamaica's Commissioner of Police; Fitz Bailey – Commissioner of Police for the Turks and Caicos Islands; Her Excellency Anya Williams – Deputy Governor for the Turks and Caicos Islands; Her Excellency Governor Dileeni Daniel Selvaratnam; Hon. Horace Chang – Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Security of Jamaica; Premier Hon. Washington Misick; Deputy Premier Hon. Jamell Robinson; Hon. Akierra Missick – Minister of Home Affairs; Hon. Arlington Musgrove – Minister of Physical Planning and Infrastructure Development; Hon. Kyle Knowles – Minister of Health and Human Services; and government backbencher Hon. Willin Belliard.

vessels consecutively and disrupted activity linked to another that reached shore, saying the force was improving its response.

However, Bailey stressed that the investment must be backed by proper maintenance, operating procedures and accountability for those entrusted with the boats.

"We can have as much asset as we want but if we don't take care of them it makes no sense," he said.

The commissioner linked the commissioning to wider changes within the police force, including stronger policies, professional development and training across all ranks.

He said his ambition was to leave an organisation with the internal competence and leadership needed to sustain its operations, rather than one dependent on particular personalities.

Governor Dileeni Daniel-Selvaratnam said protecting territorial waters was fundamental to national security in an archipelago where the sea connects communities and supports economic activity.

She warned that continued insta-

bility in Haiti was contributing to irregular migration across the region, with people placing themselves in the hands of organised criminal networks and undertaking dangerous maritime journeys.

Those networks, she said, could also facilitate firearms and narcotics trafficking, creating pressures that extended beyond border enforcement to public services, communities and the wider security system.

The governor said the vessels were part of a wider programme to strengthen national security, supported by coordinated work among the police, regiment and fisheries authorities.

She emphasised intelligence sharing, joint operations and investment in the training and experience of personnel as essential elements of that response.

Daniel-Selvaratnam also reported substantial reductions across major crime categories during 2026, including a significant fall in murders compared with the previous year.

"But progress must never become a

reason for complacency," she said. Chang pledged Jamaica's continued partnership in developing the Turks and Caicos Islands' security institutions, including assistance with training to strengthen marine policing.

He said effective maritime coverage was critical to protecting island territories from criminal networks using their waters for smuggling and other illicit activities.

While acknowledging Jamaica's own limitations in marine personnel, Chang said his government was willing to share training and experience as the Turks and Caicos Islands developed its capabilities.

The governor thanked Jamaica for its support, noting that cooperation extended across policing, defence, training and disaster response. Jamaican police officers continue to serve alongside local colleagues, while Turks and Caicos personnel have undertaken specialist training in Jamaica.

The ceremony concluded with a blessing of the vessels and prayers for their crews.

# Turks and Caicos to abolish PRC by investment under sweeping immigration proposals

By Vivian Tyson, NEWSLINE Editor-In-Chief

The Turks and Caicos Islands Government plans to abolish Permanent Residence Certificates (PRCs) obtained through investment as part of sweeping immigration proposals that would also lengthen the employment-based route to permanent residence and introduce tougher conditions for remaining in the country.

Deputy Premier Jamell Robinson outlined the changes during an appearance on This Is What's Up 3.0, describing the Immigration Bill 2026 as one of the most consequential measures the government expects to bring forward during its current term.

Robinson said ending PRC by investment was linked to concerns about the pace at which people were progressing towards British Overseas Territory citizenship.

"We're removing the PRC by investment as well, because that was a pathway to British Overseas Territory citizenship," he said.

The government also proposes introducing long-term residence permits lasting up to 25 years alongside homeowners' permits and other residence arrangements. Robinson did not detail the investment thresholds, application conditions or transitional provisions for the proposed changes during the interview.

For work permit holders, the most substantial change would be a new Residence and Employment Rights Certificate (RERC), creating an additional stage before eligibility for permanent residence.

Robinson explained that, under the proposed framework, a person reaching ten

consecutive years on work permits would apply for the RERC rather than proceed directly to a PRC through that employment-based route.

Applicants would be assessed using a points system covering factors such as education, income and community contributions. Robinson said the qualifying threshold would be approximately 70 per cent of about 185 available points.

Successful applicants would then have to maintain the required qualifying standard for another ten years, submitting annual returns and continuing to pay an annual fee equivalent to their previous work permit category.

A final assessment would follow that period before a PRC could be granted.

"So to get a PRC after this bill is passed, then it would take 20 years," Robinson said.

He presented the extended timetable as a way to slow progression towards citizenship and give the government greater control over population growth.

Permanent residence, British Overseas Territory citizenship and Turks and Caicos Islander status remain distinct stages in the process he described. Robinson said the overall route towards applying for Islander status could stretch to approximately 22 years, with further applications and assessments required.

Workers who reached the ten-year point but failed to qualify for the RERC, or chose not to apply, would face a mandatory break of at least 12 months outside the country. Returning would not be automatic. Robinson said anyone subsequently approved to



Robinson... "We're removing the PRC by investment..."

re-enter the labour market would restart the qualifying period from zero.

He argued that employers would therefore need to plan ahead, including identifying and training Turks and Caicos Islanders to take over positions occupied by foreign

workers.

The proposals also include closing the free-lance work permit category to new applications. Robinson said existing holders would be allowed to continue their established route towards permanent residence, while alleging that the category had been subject to abuse.

Another significant change would introduce income requirements for endorsing dependants on work permits.

Robinson said an applicant would need annual earnings of at least \$60,000 to support the first dependant, whether a spouse or child, and an additional \$12,000 for each further dependant.

He said those requirements would be assessed when applications or renewals were submitted, with insurance contribution records helping officials verify earnings.

The bill would also introduce short-term work permits allowing employment for up to six months and support digital immigration services, including biometrics and electronic processing.

Robinson said the government hoped to complete parliamentary consideration at the October 15 and 16 sitting. He acknowledged that public feedback could still lead to amendments during the legislative process.

The measures outlined in the interview remain proposals pending parliamentary approval and their applicable commencement arrangements. Robinson said implementing the new requirements across existing permit holders could take approximately a year as applications and renewals cycle through the system.

# Government Invites Public Participation in Consultation on the Health Services Authority Bill 2026

The Government of the Turks and Caicos Islands, through the Ministry of Health and Human Services, is inviting the public and stakeholders to participate in the consultation on the Health Services Authority Bill 2026.

The Bill proposes the establishment of a Health Services Authority (HSA) as a statutory body to manage and deliver designated public health services and operate designated public healthcare facilities.

The proposed legislation establishes the legal and governance framework for the Authority and sets out how it will be accountable for the services entrusted to it.

**Key Areas of the Bill**

The Bill addresses several key areas, including:

- Establishment of the HSA as a statutory body with defined functions and powers to manage designated public health services and facilities.
- Governance and oversight, including the establishment of a Board and provisions governing its responsibilities, accountability and decision-making.
- Service delivery, including the Authority's responsibility for the management and operation of designated healthcare facilities and assigned health services.
- Financial accountability, including requirements relating to financial management, reporting, auditing and oversight.
- Transparency and integrity, including provisions concerning accountability, conflicts

of interest and the conduct of persons responsible for the Authority's governance.

- Transition arrangements, providing a legal framework for the orderly transition of designated health services from Government to the Authority.
- Employees and public officers, including provisions addressing employment arrangements arising from the transition.
- Government assets and contracts, including arrangements for the transfer, vesting or continuation of relevant property, assets, leases, contracts and other arrangements necessary to maintain services.
- Community and stakeholder engagement, including mechanisms for consultation on matters relating to health services.

The proposed HSA would operate within the Government's existing health policy and strategic framework, including the National Health Sector Strategic Plan 2024–2027.

**Public Consultation**

The Government recognises the importance of public and stakeholder participation in considering the proposed legislation. The consultation provides an opportunity for patients and service users, healthcare professionals and employees, professional associations, community organisations, private-sector partners and other interested persons to review the Bill and provide feedback.

Members of the public are particularly encouraged to provide comments on the proposed governance and accountability

arrangements, functions and powers of the Authority, service delivery, financial oversight, transition arrangements, employment matters and stakeholder engagement.

Consultation opens: September 25, 2026. Consultation closes: October 5, 2026.

The draft Health Services Authority Bill 2026 is available for public review at: <https://gov.tc/moh/images/Health%20Services%20Authority%20Bill%202026%20-Latest%20version%201.pdf>

Members of the public and stakeholders to provide their comments and recommendations by completing the online feedback form: <https://forms.cloud.microsoft/r/2Alt-cumy6J>

You may also submit your feedback by: Scanning the QR code on the attached flyer; or Visiting our Linktree page at [www.linktr.ee/healthpromotiontci](http://www.linktr.ee/healthpromotiontci)

The feedback received during the consultation period will be carefully reviewed and considered as the Government continues to refine the proposed legislation before it advances through the legislative process.

The Ministry encourages all interested individuals, organisations, stakeholders, and members of the public to participate in the consultation and contribute to the development of this important legislative framework for the Health Services Authority.

The Health Services Authority Bill 2026 and feedback submission links will also be avail-

able on the Ministry of Health and Human Services' official online platforms:

Facebook: [facebook.com/tciministryofhealth](https://facebook.com/tciministryofhealth)

Instagram: [@tciministryofhealth](https://instagram.com/tciministryofhealth)

Your feedback is important and will help shape the future of healthcare services in the Turks and Caicos Islands. We encourage all interested persons to review the Bill and share their views before the consultation period closes on October 5, 2026.



Minister of Health and Human Service  
Hon. Kyle Knowles

# Three Questions the Government Must Answer—And One Legal Solution We Can No Longer Avoid

An Op-Ed by Paladin

Turks and Caicos stands today in the middle of the largest development wave in its history. Airports, ports, resorts, cruise expansions, marinas, retail complexes—more than **US\$3 billion** in projects are in motion or under negotiation. Cabinet speeches celebrate progress. Ministers announce timelines. Developers promise transformation.

But the ordinary Turks Islander still asks the same question every month: **Why does my rent rise faster than my wages? Why do my bills grow while the country boasts of billion dollar development?**

The answer is simple: **we have no national mechanism to capture the value of development and return it to the people.** And until we build one, the math will never make sense.

Today, I ask the Government three questions—plain, direct, unavoidable. And I offer one legal solution that would finally align development with dignity.

**The First Question: Where Is the Sovereign Wealth Fund?**

The Government speaks often of “retaining more value at home.” It is a noble phrase. But value is not retained by speeches—it is retained by **law**.

Right now, Turks and Caicos has **no sovereign wealth fund**, no national investment vehicle, no legally protected account into which development profits, airport revenues, cruise fees, or concession payments are deposited for the long term benefit of Turks and Caicos Islanders.

Other small nations have done this.

- **Bermuda** uses a sinking fund to stabilize debt.
- **Cayman** uses a national reserve fund.
- **The Falklands** use a sovereign wealth fund to capture fishing revenues.
- **Norway** built the world’s largest fund from oil, ensuring future generations inherit more than depletion.

We have billion dollar development but **no national savings mechanism**.

So I ask plainly:

**What portion of the profits, fees, concessions, or tax revenues from this US\$3 billion development pipeline is being placed into a sovereign wealth fund earmarked for Turks and Caicos Islanders?**

If the answer is “none,” then the Government must say so openly. If the answer is “some,” then show us the fund, the law, the balance sheet, and the audited accounts.

Until then, “value at home” is a slogan, not a policy.

**The Second Question: Where Is the National Project Register?**

Every modern government with large

infrastructure programmes maintains a **public project register**. It is the backbone of transparency. It answers five basic questions for every project:

- 1. Who won the contract?**
- 2. How much does it cost?**
- 3. What is the funding source—loan, grant, or recurrent budget?**
- 4. When does it start and finish?**
- 5. What is the measurable benefit to the people and the country?**

Right now, Turks and Caicos has no such register.

We have announcements. We have speeches. We have ribbon cuttings. We have “ahead of schedule” and “on track” and “progress continues.”

**But we do not have the one document that allows citizens to see the truth.**

So I ask plainly:

**Where is the national project register that lists every airport, port, road, resort, marina, and public works project with its contractor, cost, timeline, funding source, and benefit statement?**

Without this, accountability is impossible. Without this, cost overruns hide in silence. Without this, delays become political fog. Without this, the people cannot judge the stewardship of their own money.

We have a Statistics Department. We have a Ministry of Finance. We have InvestTCI. We have Cabinet. We have the Auditor General.

Yet we do not have the one tool that binds them together in public view. This is not good governance. This is governance by press release.

**The Third Question: Where Are the Cost of Living Guarantees?**

The Government proudly announces:

- US\$500 million airport programme
- US\$1.18 billion Cabinet approved developments
- US\$2.57 billion under construction
- Cruise expansions
- Resort expansions
- Marina developments
- Retail complexes
- Heritage Islander incentives
- MSME support
- Family Island investment

But the ordinary Turks Islander still asks:

**How does any of this help me pay rent? How does any of this lower my electricity bill? How does any of this reduce the cost of food? How does any of this make my life better?**

The truth is hard but simple:

**There is no legal link between development approvals and cost of living improvements.**

Developers are not required to contribute to affordable housing. No law requires a percentage of project revenue to fund utility stabilization. No statute ties development concessions to wage growth. No regulation man-

dates local price impact assessments. No policy guarantees that infrastructure expansion will reduce household costs.

So I ask plainly:

**Where are the cost of living guarantees that ensure development improves the daily life of Turks and Caicos Islanders?**

If development does not reduce the burden on households, then it is not development—it is extraction.

**One Thoughtful Legal Solution: The Turks and Caicos National Prosperity Act**

We cannot continue with billion dollar development and zero dollar accountability.

So, I propose one legal instrument for consideration: *(I am convinced that this would start a debate and a better TI solution will be created, but for now here is this to begin with!)*

**The Turks and Caicos National Prosperity Act**

A single piece of legislation that creates:

- 1. The Turks and Caicos Sovereign Wealth & Infrastructure Fund (SWIF)**
  - Capitalised by:
    - o 5–10% of all development concession fees
    - o A fixed percentage of airport and cruise passenger charges
    - o A share of stamp duty from major developments
    - o Dividends from public infrastructure assets
  - Legally protected from political interference
  - Audited annually
  - Dedicated to:
    - o Affordable housing
    - o Utility stabilization
    - o Education and training
    - o Disaster resilience
    - o Long term national savings
- 2. The National Project Register (NPR)**

A mandatory public database listing:

  - Contractor
  - Total cost
  - Funding source
  - Start and completion dates
  - Change orders
  - Benefit statements
  - Environmental and social impact summaries
  - Local employment and training commitments

Updated quarterly. Failure to update triggers automatic review by the Auditor General.
- 3. Cost of Living Impact Assessments (CLIA)**

Before any major development is approved:

  - Government must publish a cost of living impact assessment.
  - Developers must contribute to a **Cost of Living Mitigation Fund** if the project increases pressure on housing, utilities, or transport.

- Concessions cannot be granted without a mitigation plan.

**4. Local Value Guarantees (LVG)**

Every major development must include:

- Minimum local employment thresholds
- Mandatory training programmes
- Local supplier quotas
- Heritage Islander equity participation where feasible
- Annual public reporting

**5. Parliamentary Oversight Committee on National Prosperity (OCNP)**

A bipartisan committee empowered to:

- Review SWIF performance
- Audit the NPR
- Monitor cost of living impacts
- Summon ministers and agencies for questioning
- Publish annual “State of National Prosperity” reports

**Courage Is the Price of Prosperity**

Turks and Caicos does not lack development. It lacks **architecture**—the legal architecture that ensures development becomes prosperity.

We do not need more announcements. We need **laws**.

We do not need more speeches. We need **structures**.

We do not need more promises. We need **guarantees**.

The National Prosperity Act would not solve every problem. But it would solve the most important one: **the absence of a national mechanism that captures value and returns it to the people.**

This is the work. This is the courage. This is good governance at its best.

And until these three questions are answered— **Where is the sovereign wealth fund? Where is the project register? Where are the cost of living guarantees?**— the people of Turks and Caicos will continue to live in a country where development rises but dignity does not.

It is time to change that.



Journalism of Accuracy, Balance & Courage

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Vivian Tyson – Editorial Department



Karen Whitt of the Hartling Group speaks at the In The Pink 2026 news conference launched, while other members of the In The Pink team look on.



The organisers and supporters of the In The Pink seize a photo moment at the launch of the 2026 edition.

# In The Pink celebrates 18 years of supporting cancer care

*Event to be held on October 10 at the Palms Resort*

By Vivian Tyson NEWSLINE Editor-In-Chief

In The Pink is celebrating 18 years of community fundraising, with organisers hoping this year's event will bring its total contribution to the National Cancer Society of the Turks and Caicos Islands to the \$1 million mark.

Speaking at a press conference, Karen Whitt of the Hartling Group explained that the upcoming event represents its 17th staging, following an interruption during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Under the theme "Divas United in Pink," the fundraiser at The Palms will bring together shopping, entertainment, a poker tournament, a silent auction and a raffle to support people affected by cancer.

Whitt said In The Pink has raised just shy of \$900,000 over its history. What began

as a small shopping event in a single suite has grown into a major community gathering, with attendance at one previous staging exceeding 1,000 people.

The idea emerged when then Cancer Society president Lucille Lightburn approached organisers about creating a different kind of fundraiser—one that would allow broad community participation. Eighteen years later, the event remains powered by volunteers, corporate supporters, donated goods and services, and members of the public.

"It takes a village to do what we do," Whitt said.

This year's shopping programme will begin with a VIP session from 6 p.m. to 7 p.m. Tickets cost \$75 and are limited to 100 shoppers. Free public admission follows from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m., with the courtyard party begin-

ning at 9 p.m.

Shoppers can expect clothing, shoes, bags and accessories, including children's items and a "Deals and Steals" room where nothing will cost more than \$5.

The entertainment programme will feature celebrity bartenders and DJ Taylo Hype, whom Whitt described as the event's first female DJ. Casablanca Casino will sponsor the Pink Poker Tournament, which Whitt said was nearly sold out, with 50 players already indicating their intention to participate.

The raffle will feature a pink Franck Muller watch valued at \$10,200. Representatives of longtime supporter Jais said its raffle raised \$50,000 last year.

Whitt emphasised that the fundraiser supports people in the Turks and Caicos Islands affected by all forms of cancer, although it is held

during Breast Cancer Awareness Month.

Funds go directly to the National Cancer Society to assist patients and families. Society representatives described support ranging from medication and accommodation during overseas treatment to hospital equipment, counselling and emotional care.

Members of the public can contribute by donating new or gently used clothing and accessories, providing silent auction prizes, purchasing raffle or VIP tickets, or volunteering. Clothing donations can be dropped off at The Palms' front desk and marked for Whitt or another committee member.

With preparations underway, Whitt said strong public interest has raised hopes for another successful year and a significant fundraising milestone.

# TCI FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE LEADS FIRE SAFETY TRAINING

Wednesday, 23 September 2026: Employees from four Turks and Caicos Islands Government departments attended a fire safety and basic firefighting training session on 22nd September 2026, led by the Turks and Caicos Islands Fire and Rescue Service. The aim of the training is to strengthen emergency preparedness and workplace safety across TCIG. The participants attended in person, while one joined virtually from Grand Turk. The session covered fire prevention, emergency response procedures, fire extinguisher safety and maintenance, and basic firefighting principles. All participants completed the practical component, gaining

hands-on experience extinguishing controlled fires using portable fire extinguishers. Attendees praised the session for its practical value, useful content, and engaging delivery. The training reflects TCI Fire and Rescue's broader commitment to Community Risk Reduction, including preparedness and partnership. Fire safety is a shared responsibility, and providing government employees with practical knowledge and hands-on experience helps to build a safer, more prepared workforce while strengthening the collective ability to protect lives, property, and government operations. The session also generated dis-



cussion around volunteerism, expanded interdepartmental training, and future fire safety initiatives as the department prepares for Fire Prevention Month in October. Interest has already been expressed in conducting additional training across the Turks and Caicos Islands.

The Turks and Caicos Islands Fire and Rescue Service welcomes the continued interest from TCIG departments and remains committed to expanding fire safety education, practical training, and collaborative preparedness initiatives across the Turks and Caicos Islands.

## C12 Capital Management General Manager, Turks & Caicos

Full-Time | Turks & Caicos Islands

C12 Capital Management, the management company for The Loren Hotels and The Loren Residences, is seeking an experienced **GENERAL MANAGER** to lead the pre-opening, launch, and ongoing operations of **The Loren Turks & Caicos**.

The General Manager will oversee hotel, residences, and restaurant operations, lead a high-performing team, deliver exceptional guest and homeowner experiences, and drive the property's financial and operational performance.

### Key Responsibilities

- Lead pre-opening planning, staffing, training, budgeting, and operational readiness.
- Recruit and develop the hotel's leadership team.
- Oversee Rooms, Food & Beverage, Spa, Engineering, Finance, Sales & Marketing, and Residential Services.
- Establish and maintain exceptional luxury service standards.
- Develop and oversee residential services and owner relations, including HOA operations and rental management.
- Drive financial performance, budgeting, forecasting, and revenue growth.
- Lead sales, marketing, restaurant, and events strategies.
- Serve as an ambassador for The Loren within the Turks & Caicos community.

### Candidate Profile

- 10-15 years' experience leading luxury hospitality operations.
- Proven experience successfully opening luxury hospitality properties.
- Experience with high-end residential hospitality.
- Strong Caribbean or island-market experience.
- Proven leadership and team-building skills.
- Experience working in an entrepreneurial, independent organization.
- Strong business acumen, integrity, and communication skills.
- Ability to manage multiple priorities in a complex pre-opening environment.

### Qualifications

- Undergraduate degree required.
- MBA preferred.

### Compensation & Benefits

- Salary: **US\$200,000-\$250,000**, plus performance bonus.
- Medical, dental, and vision benefits.
- Paid time off and holidays.



Apply with resume and cover letter via email to:  
**Email:** [marsha@misickstanbrook.tc](mailto:marsha@misickstanbrook.tc)  
**Tel:** 946-4732



**Location:**  
Turks & Caicos Islands

# Dominican Republic national sought after escaping custody

A national of the Dominican Republic escaped lawful custody on September 30, 2026, and is now being sought by the Royal Turks and Caicos Islands Police Force, according to a police wanted notice.

Police identified the man as Luis Alberto Lopez Crisostomo, 40, whose last known address was Miracle Close in Blue Hills, Providenciales.

The notice, issued on September 30, describes Crisostomo as having a medium build and a light complexion. Police have urged him to surrender at the nearest police station.

Anyone with information about his whereabouts, or information that could lead to his arrest, is asked to contact the Serious

Crime Unit or Deputy SIO Richard Partis on 649-431-2627.

Anonymous tips can also be submitted to Crime Stoppers on 1-800-8477.

Police did not provide details in the notice about the circumstances of the escape or why Crisostomo was in custody.



Luis Alberto Lopez Crisostomo, who escaped police custody

# CARICOM Food Push Could Benefit Import-Dependent TCI

By Vivian Tyson, NEWSLINE Editor-In-Chief

The Turks and Caicos Islands, which imports about 90 per cent of its food, could benefit from a renewed CARICOM push to increase agricultural production and strengthen food trade across the Caribbean.

The regional effort, under the Vision 25 by 2025+5 initiative, aims to reduce dependence on overseas food supplies while attracting investment, creating jobs and improving nutrition.

Speaking at the opening of the 20th Caribbean Week of Agriculture in Trelawny, Jamaica, CARICOM Assistant Secretary-General Dr Wendell Samuel said the region's reliance on imported food underscored the need for action.

"For a region where more than 60% of the food consumed is imported, and where some member states import up to 80% of their food, the imperative for action became undeniable," Samuel said.

For the TCI, greater regional production could create opportunities to diversify food supplies and strengthen agricultural and trade links with neighbouring Caribbean countries. Such links could also help reduce exposure to disruptions in external supply chains.

Samuel reported that regional food production increased by approximately 24 per cent between 2022 and 2024, alongside investment in farm-to-market roads, cold storage, processing facilities, renewable energy, digital agriculture and cli-

mate-smart technologies.

"Today, we can confidently say that the initiative has moved beyond aspirations and is delivering tangible results across the community," he said.

According to Samuel, the region's food import bill reached approximately US\$13.7 billion between 2018 and 2020, equivalent to about 15 per cent of regional gross domestic product.

The initiative's next phase, extended to 2030, will focus on increasing production, expanding regional trade, attracting investment, creating employment and improving nutrition. Samuel stressed that achieving those goals would require participation beyond the public sector.

"Governments cannot transform

agriculture alone," he said, calling for greater involvement by farmers, fishers, processors, private-sector investors, financiers, researchers and consumers.

For food-import-dependent economies such as the TCI, the initiative's potential benefits will depend on how increased regional production translates into accessible supplies and stronger trading relationships. Samuel said the ultimate goal is to build Caribbean food systems that are "resilient, inclusive, sustainable, and prosperous."

The 20th Caribbean Week of Agriculture ran from September 27 to October 2 at the Ocean Coral Spring Resort in Trelawny, Jamaica, under the theme "The New FACE of Caribbean Food Systems."

## Oral Health Month 2026: "Brush, Floss and Smile"

The Dental Department within the Ministry of Health and Human Services joins the Turks and Caicos Islands community in observing Oral Health Month 2026 under the theme "Brush, Floss and Smile."

Throughout October, residents are being reminded that a healthy smile begins with simple, consistent daily habits. Good oral health is about much more than appearance: it is an important part of overall health and well-being.

Oral diseases, including tooth decay and gum disease, remain significant public health concerns. When left untreated, they can cause pain, infection, difficulty eating and speaking, and can contribute to missed school days, lost work time and a reduced quality of life. Oral health is also closely connected with general health, with associations between poor oral health and conditions such as diabetes, cardiovascular and respiratory disease, as well as adverse pregnancy outcomes.

The encouraging message is that many common oral diseases are preventable.

- Residents are encouraged to take simple but important steps to protect their oral health:
- Brush teeth thoroughly twice each day using fluoride toothpaste.
- Floss or clean between the teeth daily.
- Limit frequent consumption of sugary foods and drinks.

- Encourage healthy oral hygiene habits from early childhood.
- Visit a dentist regularly for oral examinations, preventive care and professional cleaning.
- Seek dental care promptly if experiencing toothache, swelling, bleeding gums or other oral health concerns.

The Minister of Health and Human Services, Hon. Kyle Knowles, emphasized the importance of making oral health a priority for individuals and families across the Turks and Caicos Islands:

"Good oral health is an important foundation for good overall health. The simple habits we practise each day: brushing, flossing, making healthy food choices and attending regular dental check-ups can prevent many common oral health problems and help us maintain healthy smiles throughout our lives.

As we observe Oral Health Month 2026, I encourage every resident of the Turks and Caicos Islands to make oral health a priority for themselves and their families. Parents and caregivers have an especially important role in helping our children develop healthy habits from an early age. Prevention remains one of our strongest tools in protecting the health of our people.

Let us use this month as an opportunity to recommit ourselves to healthier habits because a healthier mouth contributes to a healthier individual, a healthier family and ultimately a



healthier Turks and Caicos Islands." **Activities Throughout October**

During Oral Health Month, the Dental Department will conduct activities across the islands aimed at increasing awareness, promoting prevention and empowering residents to take greater responsibility for their oral health.

Schools and communities will have opportunities to engage with dental professionals through oral health education sessions, screenings, practical demonstrations and community outreach activities. These initiatives will reinforce the importance of prevention while providing residents with practical information that can

be incorporated into their daily routines.

The Ministry of Health and Human Services encourages parents, caregivers, teachers, employers and community leaders to support the Oral Health Month campaign and help spread the message that maintaining good oral health is a shared responsibility.

A healthy smile is a reflection of a healthy life.

This Oral Health Month, take responsibility. Take action. Take pride in your oral health.

**Brush. Floss. Smile.**

Be consistent. Be committed. For a healthier you and a brighter smile.

# Who Will Protect TCI If Our Own Young People Won't?

*An Op-Ed By Audley Astwood*

There comes a time when an older generation has to speak plainly to a younger one. So, to the young people of the Turks and Caicos Islands, I want to ask a simple question: Who will protect the country you will one day lead? The Royal Turks and Caicos Islands Police Force needs people. Not just people looking for a pay cheque, but young Turks and Caicos Islanders willing to build a career while serving the communities that raised them. Policing can lead to specialised training, investigations, intelligence, marine operations, financial crime, community policing and leadership. It can give a young person responsibility, discipline and the chance to make a difference in the very communities where they grew up.

I understand why some may hesitate. Policing isn't glamorous. It means difficult hours, difficult decisions and sometimes walking towards danger while others are walking away. It means dealing with people on their worst days and accepting the scrutiny that comes with wearing the uniform. But somebody has to do it.

We can't demand safer communities, stronger borders and better policing while assuming somebody else's son



or daughter will carry that responsibility. A country cannot outsource responsibility for protecting itself indefinitely. If too few of our own young people choose policing, the responsibility doesn't disappear. It simply falls increasingly on others to carry it. And there is a deeper question here.

What happens when a country becomes increasingly dependent on people from elsewhere to perform essential roles that its own citizens are unwilling to perform? We can recruit from outside when necessary, and there is nothing wrong with that. But a healthy country should want its own

people represented in the institutions responsible for protecting it. Local officers bring something that can't simply be taught in a classroom: they know these communities, these families and these islands. They understand that protecting TCI isn't just a duty on a job description. It is protecting home.

This isn't an argument that every young person should become a police officer. TCI needs teachers, nurses, engineers, entrepreneurs, lawyers, tradesmen and professionals of every kind. But policing should be seen as an honourable career and a serious form of national service, not a job to be dismissed. So, to the young person reading this who is eligible, capable and looking for a career with purpose, consider putting on the uniform.

One day, these islands will be in your hands. The question is whether you will be ready to take responsibility for protecting them. Our generation inherited these islands from those who came before us. Your generation will inherit them from us. When that responsibility becomes yours, the question won't simply be whether someone is willing to protect TCI. It will be whether enough of us were willing to step forward and do it ourselves. This is our country. We must help protect it.

## TCI RED CROSS LAUNCHES EXCITING “WIN A KIA” FUNDRAISING RAFFLE

The Turks and Caicos Islands Red Cross said it is excited to announce its “Win a KIA” fundraising raffle, giving one lucky resident the chance to drive away with a KIA just in time for Christmas.

The raffle will raise funds for the organisation's humanitarian programmes, including disaster management, community preparedness, first aid, health and wellbeing, psychosocial support, safeguarding and youth initiatives. Proceeds will also help fund volunteer training, public education, emergency response supplies and equipment.

“This is the first raffle of its kind for the TCI Red Cross, and we are thrilled to give someone the chance to win a KIA while making a difference in our communities,” said TCI Red Cross Director Candianne Williams.

“People often think of the Red Cross when a hurricane or another emergency strikes, but our work continues throughout the year,” she continued. “We teach first aid, help families prepare for emergencies and support people through challenging times. Funds raised through this raffle will help us sustain these services throughout these islands.”

The organisation also helps people separated from loved ones restore family links, provides emotional support during difficult circumstances and addresses community needs through its thrift shop.

The winning ticket will be drawn on November 28, 2026. Tickets cost \$25 for one, \$100 for five, or \$200 for 12 and can be purchased at the TCI Red Cross

Office or the Red Hot Thrift Shop, located at Sunshine Plaza, 1005 Leeward Highway, Providenciales.

Individuals, businesses and community organisations are encouraged to purchase tickets for themselves, their employees, friends or family members, and to share the opportunity within their networks.

“Whether you purchase one ticket or a bundle, your contribution matters,” Williams added. “We invite everyone to get involved and help us reach more people across the Turks and Caicos Islands.”

For more information, members of the public are encouraged to visit the TCI Red Cross's social media pages on Facebook, Instagram and TikTok, or contact the TCI Red Cross office at 941-8056



*The Kia Motorcar that one lucky ticket-buyer stand to win*

# COVID-19 Pandemic Reckoning

*An Op-Ed by Dr. Clarence E. Pilgrim*

Six years after COVID-19 brought much of humanity to a standstill, the world has largely resumed its rhythm. Borders are busy, stadiums are full, aircraft crowd the skies, and masks have mostly disappeared.

But normality is not resolution.

The unfinished business of the pandemic is not only scientific; it is also moral, institutional, and deeply human.

More than 779 million confirmed COVID-19 cases and over seven million deaths have been reported to the World Health Organization, which acknowledges that the true numbers are higher. Against a global population of approximately 8.3 billion people, few societies escaped the pandemic's reach.

Millions survived but did not fully recover. WHO estimates that about 6% of people with symptomatic COVID-19 develop Long COVID, with some experiencing respiratory, neurological, cardiovascular, and other problems for months or years.

For them, the pandemic is not history. It still haunts the living.

I understand something of its psychological reach personally. The pandemic made my circle of friends smaller and taught me to become apprehensive of even a friendly handshake—an instinct that remains with me today. After workplace exposure, I was immediately quarantined until testing confirmed that I was free of infection.

The uncertainty, fear of becoming ill, concern about possibly exposing others, and suspicion of ordinary human contact reflected what millions experienced worldwide. COVID-19 changed more than health systems; for a time, it changed the meaning of proximity itself. A handshake, an embrace, or a conversation at close quarters became a potential source of danger.

SARS-CoV-2 continues to circulate and evolve. WHO is monitoring variants including XFG, NB.1.8.1, PQ.16.1.1, and BA.3.2. The emergency ended; the virus did not.

Neither did the questions surrounding its origin.

The guilty plea of Dr. David Morens, a former senior adviser at the US National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, has reopened difficult questions about institutional credibility. Morens admitted involvement in efforts to evade federal public-record requirements re-

lating to coronavirus research and official communications, including matters connected with a bat-coronavirus research grant involving the Wuhan Institute of Virology.

These facts do not prove that SARS-CoV-2 escaped from a laboratory, nor do they establish criminal wrongdoing by Dr. Anthony Fauci.

They do, however, establish that relevant official communications were deliberately concealed from normal transparency mechanisms.

That warrants a simple question: Why?

WHO's scientific assessment says the weight of available evidence favours zoonotic spillover. Yet important information remains unavailable, including early viral sequences, details concerning animals sold in Wuhan markets, and information about laboratory work and biosafety conditions.

The responsible position is therefore neither to proclaim a laboratory origin proven nor dismiss it as impossible.

Science should follow evidence, not defend predetermined conclusions. The same standard of evidence and transparency that should govern the origin debate must also govern how we assess the benefits and harms of vaccination.

I chose to receive the COVID-19 vaccine and a booster because I trusted the recommendations of WHO and the international public-health community.

There is strong evidence that vaccination reduced severe illness, hospitalization, and death. But acknowledging those benefits does not require denying genuine risks.

Regulators across Europe, Africa, India, and Russia broadly reached the same conclusion: vaccines provided important protection, but continuing safety monitoring was necessary. European regulators recognized rare myocarditis and pericarditis after some mRNA vaccines. African authorities monitored rare clotting disorders. India recognized thrombosis with thrombocytopenia associated with adenovirus-vector vaccines while continuing surveillance of other reported conditions. Russia issued formal contraindications and clinical guidance.

Across very different regulatory systems, the common lesson was not that vaccination was risk-free, but that benefit and risk had to be assessed together and continually.

COVID-19 vaccines provided important protection, but risk was not

zero.

It should therefore be possible to say that vaccines saved lives without pretending that no one was harmed by them. It should also be possible to recognize genuine vaccine injuries without claiming that every illness or unexplained death following vaccination was caused by it.

Those positions are not contradictory. They are the minimum requirements of intellectual honesty.

In the United States, 11,055 claims alleging COVID-19 vaccine injury or death had been filed through the federal compensation programme by July 2026. A claim is not proof of causation, and many did not meet evidentiary requirements. Nevertheless, some vaccine-related injuries have been officially recognized. Where injury is scientifically established, those affected should not disappear behind statistics.

Treat what can be treated. Rehabilitate where possible. Compensate fairly where responsibility is established.

Human dignity should never be measured by prevalence.

The same intellectual discipline applies to cardiovascular disease. WHO identifies cardiovascular disease as the world's leading cause of death, a reality that long predates COVID-19. It cannot credibly be presented as proof of widespread vaccine injury.

Yet legitimate questions remain. COVID-19 itself can affect the cardiovascular system. Long COVID may contribute to illness. Traditional risk factors and disrupted healthcare remain important. Rare vaccine-associated cardiovascular complications have also been documented.

The question therefore is not whether vaccines caused post-pandemic cardiovascular disease, but how much illness resulted from COVID infection, existing disease, interrupted healthcare, or recognized vaccine complications.

There is no credible global figure that answers that fully. The absence of an answer should encourage research, not speculation.

History also warns us that another pandemic will come. Major respiratory pandemics struck in 1889–90, 1918, 1957, 1968, 2009, and 2019. Their timing was irregular, so no responsible formula can predict the next one. But another pandemic within the lifetime of much of today's population is entirely plausible.

The true reckoning, therefore, is not

about vindicating one government, scientist, institution, or vaccine.

It is about whether humanity learns enough to protect everyone better next time—the majority who benefit from effective medical interventions, the minority who may suffer genuine harm, the vulnerable, and generations yet unborn.

Progress that protects millions while abandoning the few who are genuinely harmed is incomplete. Equally, concern for the injured cannot justify denying interventions that saved lives on a vast scale.

The higher obligation is to pursue both: protection and accountability, scientific advancement and human dignity, institutional strength and transparency.

I trusted the international public-health system enough to receive a vaccine and booster.

That trust should never require silence.

Science earns authority through evidence. Institutions earn legitimacy through transparency. Leadership earns confidence through accountability.

The dead cannot demand answers. The living can.

And before another pandemic tests humanity, we should establish what was right, acknowledge what was wrong, repair what can still be repaired, and build systems capable of protecting both the many and the few.

The next response must be not merely faster, but wiser, fairer, more transparent, and directed toward the greatest good of all.

Disclaimer

The views expressed are those of the writer.

Word count: approximately 870 words for body of Article.

P.O. Box 1570

St. John's

Antigua & Barbuda



ARCHIE, I KNOW I TOLD YOU THAT IF YOU HAVE TROUBLE WITH YOUR HOME-WORK...

...YOU COULD COME TO ME!

BUT I MEANT AT SCHOOL!

WE SHOULD BE LESS RESISTANT TO REWILDING WITH BIG ANIMALS.

THEY BRING SO MANY BENEFITS.

YES...

... BUT DRYING LAUNDRY SHOULDN'T BE ONE OF THEM.

YES!! THE LATEST MISSION IMPOSSIBLE MOVIE IS ON TONIGHT

BUT WE SAW THAT LAST YEAR IN THE THEATER

I KNOW, BUT REMEMBER, I FELL ASLEEP AND MISSED THE WHOLE THING

WELL, I HOPE YOU ENJOY IT THIS TIME!

WE ALL SHARE THE SAME FATE...THE SAME FUTURE

Z

HERE'S SUPPER, PET. I'VE TRIED OUT A NEW RECIPE AND MADE A BEEF STROGANOFF

SPLAT!

WELL, WHAT DO YOU SAY?

HELP!

LINUS, DO YOU THINK GIRLS SHOULD PLAY THE SAME SPORTS AS BOYS?

WELL, I'M NOT SURE..

THERE'S ALWAYS THE PROBLEM OF INJURY...

I HATE GETTING KILLED!

POW!

LONG-DISTANCE RELATIONSHIPS ARE SO HARD

UM, GARFIELD...

I'M RIGHT HERE

I KNOW. BUT THE PIZZERIA IS WAY ACROSS TOWN

NEWSLINE COMICS

NEVER LET YOUR PRINTER KNOW YOU'RE IN A HURRY... THEY SMELL FEAR.

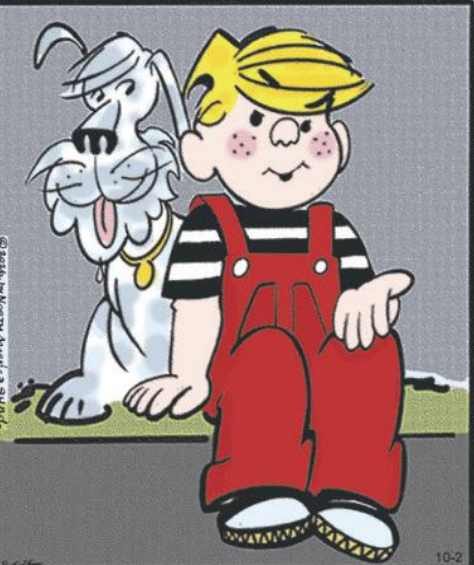
PRETENTIOUS PLURALIZING FOR DOOFI

WINDICES

BANANAE

RECORD ALBA

"This town ain't big enough for the two of us if we include all of our stuff we've accumulated that we keep thinking we'll get around to recycling, but never do!"



"IT'S EASY TO FEEL SORRY FOR YOURSELF WHEN NOBODY ELSE DOES."



NEWSLINE  
Heritage

## The John Glenn *Splash Down*

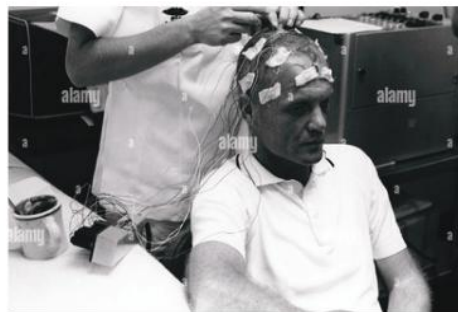
On February 20, 1962, history was made when American astronaut John Glenn became the first American to orbit the Earth aboard Friendship 7. After three orbits and nearly five hours in space, Glenn's spacecraft splashed down in the Atlantic Ocean, about 800 miles southeast of Cape Canaveral.

But what many don't realize is that this global moment in history has a direct and unique connection to the Turks and Caicos Islands.

Following his safe retrieval from the ocean by the USS Noa, Glenn was flown to Grand Turk—our very own island—where he became the first American astronaut to set foot on land after completing an orbital flight. Grand Turk served as the primary medical evaluation and debriefing site for Project Mercury, NASA's first human spaceflight program.



*John Glenn greets Vice-President Lyndon B. Johnson*



*John Glenn receiving his physical evaluation post-landing in Grand Turk*

NASA had constructed a temporary facility on Grand Turk to support the recovery of Mercury astronauts, complete with medical, technical, and communications equipment. It was here that Glenn underwent initial medical checks and made his first terrestrial steps post-spaceflight, effectively making Grand Turk the first human outpost after orbit.

Today, this pivotal moment is commemorated at the John Glenn Exhibit at the Turks and Caicos National Museum in Grand Turk, which preserves artefacts, photos, and accounts from that extraordinary day. Glenn's brief but iconic visit connects this quiet island to the intensity of the space race and the awe of cosmic exploration.

The splashdown site and Glenn's arrival on Grand Turk remain a proud chapter in Turks and Caicos heritage—a reminder that even the most remote shores can leave footprints on the stars.

# Josephine Connolly to be honoured as life patron of In The Pink

By Vivian Tyson NEWSLINE Editor-In-Chief

Former Minister of Tourism Hon. Josephine Connolly will be honoured as life patron of In The Pink in recognition of her longstanding commitment to the fundraiser and its work supporting the National Cancer Society of the Turks and Caicos Islands.

Karen Whitt of the Hartling Group, who hatched the In The Pink shopping extravaganza, which has now become a major support of cancer awareness and persons inflicted with the disease, announced the appointment during a press conference on Thursday, 1 October 2026, to launch this year's event at the Palms Resort, outlining plans for this year's event, themed "Divas United in Pink."

Whitt said Connolly has been involved since the fundraiser began 18 years ago and has remained a driving force behind its success. Her contribution extends beyond hosting a shopping room on the night of the event. Whitt credited her with promoting In The Pink throughout the year, securing donations and encouraging support for the Cancer Society.

Among her contributions was a

Kia car donated for a previous raffle.

Whitt explained that a core group of committee members agreed Connolly's sustained involvement deserved formal recognition. "We really need to recognize this commitment," Whitt said, describing Connolly's contribution to the event and its year-round preparations.

The appointment is permanent, rather than an honour that will rotate among supporters each year.

Connolly was unable to attend the press conference because she was in South Korea for a Kia convention. However, Whitt said she had joined a committee Zoom meeting from South Korea the previous week, demonstrating her continued involvement in preparations.

According to Whitt, Connolly became emotional when told of the decision and graciously accepted the honour.

"She just was so touched and so moved," Whitt said, adding that Connolly expressed her appreciation for being named an ambassador for In The Pink.

Shanice William Smith attended the press conference on Connolly's



Connolly has been involved since the fundraiser began 18 years

ly's behalf and is assisting with this year's fundraiser.

The recognition comes as In The Pink marks an 18-year history, with its upcoming event representing the 17th staging following a pandemic interruption.

Whitt said the fundraiser has generated just shy of \$900,000 for the National Cancer Society and expressed hope that this year's proceeds could bring the cumulative total to \$1 million.

The funds support patients and families throughout the Turks and Caicos Islands who are affected by cancer, helping the Society provide financial assistance and practical and emotional support.

Connolly's appointment recognises the years of work behind those contributions as organisers prepare for another evening of shopping, entertainment and community fundraising at The Palms.

## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL CANCER SOCIETY FOR BREAST CANCER AWARENESS MONTH 2026

**Dear Friends and Supporters,**

As we begin Breast Cancer Awareness Month, the National Cancer Society of the Turks and Caicos Islands joins our community and people around the world in raising awareness, sharing hope, and standing in solidarity with everyone affected by breast cancer.

This month is a time to honour survivors, encourage those who are currently undergoing treatment, remember the loved ones we have lost, and recognize the families,

caregivers, healthcare professionals and friends who walk beside them through every stage of the journey.

Awareness must also lead to action. I encourage women to know their bodies, keep regular health appointments, discuss appropriate breast cancer screening with their healthcare providers, and seek medical attention when they notice a change that concerns them.

Early detection can provide more treatment options and can im-

prove outcomes.

As a Society, we remain committed to education, advocacy and compassionate support. Throughout October, may every pink ribbon remind us that no one should face cancer alone. Let us check on one another, encourage one another and continue to build a community where hope is stronger than fear.

With hope and determination,  
Vivian E. Rigby  
President  
National Cancer Society TCI



Vivian Rigby, President of the Turks and Caicos Islands Cancer Society

Life Line

FEATURED CHURCH

# House of Prayer Ministries

This week on Lifeline Featured Church we showcase House of Prayer Ministries, located at 180 Long Bay Road, Providenciales. House of Prayer Ministries is pastored by Senior Pastor, Bishop Edwin Lightbourne and Prophetess Rev. Sandra Lightbourne.

Sunday School begins at 10:20am; Sunday Worship Service begins at 11am; Wednesday at 7pm is Midweek Service; Friday 6:30pm is the Bi-weekly Youth Meeting, and on Saturday at 6:30am is prayer meeting.

If you desire more information how to share in the worship experience, contact 649-231-4132 pr 649-941-8309. You can also follow House of Prayer Ministries on Facebook: @House of Prayer Ministries Inc or @Bishop James Lightbourne Jr.



## Life line Church Directory

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

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# ALMI FRIENDS AND FAMILY MONTH HIGHLIGHTS

During the month of September, the Abundant Life Ministries International (ALMI) Church celebrates Friends and Family Month, where members of the community are invited not only to worship but to fellowship with members of that congregation, which included a fete after church service. This year, the church invited the Royal Turks and Caicos Islands Police Force and the Department of Correction, the TCI Hospital, and the TCI Regiment and the TCI Cadet Corps. The following are photo highlights of the month-long activities.





# 50th Anniversary of Ministerial Government...Road to 1976 Series

# FROM THE PEOPLE’S DECISION TO THE FORMATION OF A GOVERNMENT

## GOLDEN ANNIVERSARY SPECIAL EDITION

On Wednesday, 29 September 1976, the people of the Turks and Caicos Islands went to the polls carrying more than the ordinary responsibility of choosing representatives.

They were voting under a new Constitution. They were deciding who would fill the eleven elected seats in the Legislative Council. They were also helping to determine who would lead the country into its first experience of Ministerial Government.

Across islands separated by miles of sea, voters entered polling stations after years of economic hardship, migration, limited opportunity and growing dissatisfaction with decisions made too far from the people they affected. Many Turks and Caicos Islanders were no longer willing to remain on the edges of their own government.

The election gave them a voice, but it did not give either political party complete control. The People’s Democratic Movement won five seats, the Progressive National Organisation won four, and two Independent candidates were elected. A majority required six seats.

The people had made their decision, but the result did not automatically produce a government. Between election day and 1 October, the elected representatives had to decide how to turn that divided result into an administration capable of governing. The first Ministerial Government was therefore born through two connected acts: the electorate’s decision and the collaboration that followed.

**The Constitution Came First**

The election did not create the constitutional system. The Turks and Caicos Islands Constitution Order 1976 had already come into operation on 30 August. That Constitution created the office of Chief Minister and established a ministerial system in which elected representatives could assume responsibility for important areas of domestic government. It provided for an Executive Council, a Legislative Council and three other ministers in addition to the Chief Minister.

This was a major advance, but it was not independence or complete internal self-government. The Governor retained substantial authority, while senior officials continued to hold important roles in administration, finance and law.

The people did not cast a separate ballot for Chief Minister. They elected constituency representatives. The Governor would then appoint the elected member who appeared able to command the support necessary to govern as Chief Minister.

That requirement became crucial after the election produced five seats for the PDM, four for the PNO and two for Independents. The Constitution had provided the legal framework, but the election result required political judgment.

**The People’s Decision**

The 1976 election was the first party-based general election held under the new constitutional arrangements. It was a contest not only between candidates, but between competing political visions.

The PDM was led by J. A. G. S. McCartney, a young organiser and activist who had become the most visible voice of a political awakening demanding dignity, opportunity and greater responsibility for Turks and Caicos Islanders. Norman B. Saunders led the PNO, an experienced public figure with his own following and a different approach to the country’s political and constitutional future.

The result gave the PDM the largest group in the Council, but not an outright majority. The PNO remained a powerful opposition with four seats and substantial public support. The electorate had not given either party unchecked authority.

Instead, it placed the two Independent representatives at the centre of the next stage.

**The Two Independent Mandates**

Daniel Williams was elected in Bottle Creek, North Caicos. Charles William “Liam” Maguire was elected in South Caicos South. Maguire had previously represented Middle Caicos in the State Council, but his 1976 mandate came from the people of South Caicos South.

Neither man had been elected as a PDM or PNO candidate. Their voters had chosen them outside the formal party lists, and that independence could not simply be erased after the count.

They were not spare votes waiting to be claimed.

Each carried a constituency mandate and the responsibility to decide how to exercise it in a Council where neither party could govern alone.

Whether they remained separate or supported one party would affect not only their constituencies, but the direction of the country. This is where the story of the election becomes the story of government formation.

**The Day After the Election**

On Thursday, 30 September, Daniel Williams joined the PDM, according to a contemporary report published in the Cayman Compass on 5 October 1976. That decision immediately changed the political arithmetic. Five elected PDM members, joined by Williams, produced the six votes needed for a working majority. JAGS McCartney could now show he had enough elected support to lead an administration.

The same report stated that Liam Maguire would vote with the PDM “because of the desires of his constituency,” while remaining an Independent. This contemporary account places the wishes of the people he represented in South Caicos within the story of his decision. It does not establish that a formal constituency ballot or resolution took place.

Maguire’s participation strengthened the government beyond the narrowest possible majority and brought his experience in business, tourism, development and the State Council into the administration. Voters distributed the seats; elected representatives then had to organise that power into a government. Contemporary reporting records the five–four–two election result and the decisions of Independent representatives Daniel Williams and Liam Maguire to support the formation of a PDM-led government.

**A Working Majority**

The arrangement is best described here as collaboration that created a working majority. A formal written coalition agreement has not been established in the evidence available for this article.

The PDM won five seats on 29 September. Daniel Williams’s decision supplied the sixth vote necessary for a majority. Maguire’s support further strengthened the governing arrangement, though he initially intended to remain an Independent.

These distinctions matter. The electorate returned a divided Council, and the first government emerged from the decisions made after the count. Recognising that collaboration gives the election result its full meaning.

**The First Ministerial Team**

The fiftieth anniversary commemorates 1 October 1976 as the beginning of the first Ministerial Government. J. A. G. S. McCartney became the country’s first Chief Minister, with responsibility for Home Affairs and Communications.

Lewis “Louie” Edwin Astwood became Minister of Public Works, Utilities and Labour. Oswald O’Neil Skippings became Minister of Health, Education, Welfare and Local Government. Charles William “Liam” Maguire became Minister of Tourism, Development of Industries and Resources.

Daniel Williams and Henry Leon Wilson served as Parliamentary Secretaries during the administration. Walter Ebenezer Cox, the elected PDM representative for Providenciales, was an important government member representing an island that was beginning a period of profound change.

The dates require a careful distinction. The Constitution came into operation on 30 August; the election took place on 29 September; and Williams’s alignment followed on 30 September. The anniversary recognises 1 October as the beginning of Ministerial Government, while the Legislature opened on 6 October.

The Cayman Compass report dated 5 October described the government’s installation as taking place the following day, when the Governor opened the Legislature. That contemporary wording should be acknowledged. The original appointment instruments remain necessary to establish precisely how the ministerial appointments and the later installation were dated.

The essential sequence is clear: the Constitution provided the framework, the election returned the representatives, and the post-election alignments supplied the majority from which the first administration emerged.

**Government and Opposition**

The formation of the administration did not make the PNO or its supporters disappear. Four PNO representatives had been elected, and the party formed the opposition under Norman Saunders.

That opposition was part of the new system, not an obstacle outside it. Ministerial Government required leaders who could make decisions, but it also required representatives who could question those decisions, challenge policy and present another direction to the electorate.

A truthful national history must make room for all three parts of that result.

The beginning of Ministerial Government belongs to a wider national story. It also belongs to the opposition that entered the Legislature, the Independents whose choices determined the majority, and the people whose votes created the Council in the first place.

**From Victory to Responsibility**

Once the appointments were made, celebration had to give way to work.

The new ministers inherited a country with limited revenue, inadequate infrastructure and communities separated by the sea. Salt had declined. Fishing remained important, particularly in South Caicos. Farming supported families in North and Middle Caicos. Government employment sustained many homes in Grand Turk. Providenciales had begun to develop, but no one could yet be certain that tourism would transform it into the country’s economic centre.

People wanted roads, electricity, water, schools, healthcare, communications and employment. The expectations were enormous; the money and administrative capacity were not. Only three ministers served alongside the Chief Minister, and their portfolios covered almost every important area of daily government.

The first ministers therefore entered office with both power and limitation. They could set priorities and direct important departments, but their decisions depended upon budgets, laws, public officers and the continuing constitutional role of the Governor.

Public officers now had to turn political direction into administration. Clerks prepared papers, financial officers managed scarce funds, Public Works employees built and repaired, and teachers, nurses, postal workers and other officers carried services into the communities. Families and supporters also opened homes, prepared food, organised meetings and provided the personal stability public life required.

The election had given representatives authority. Government required them to accept responsibility for what followed.

**Why the Independents Must Be Remembered**

Political history naturally places JAGS McCartney at the centre of 1976. His leadership, courage and ability to inspire a generation earned that place.

But placing one leader at the centre should not push other decisive figures out of frame.

Daniel Williams and Liam Maguire were not late additions to an already secured government. Their decisions helped secure it. Without Independent support, the five PDM members lacked the six elected votes required for a majority.

Williams’s first alignment allowed McCartney to demonstrate that he could command support. Maguire’s participation strengthened the governing partnership and brought him into the first ministerial team.

Recognising their importance does not remove their choices from historical scrutiny. It simply an acknowledgement of the numbers: five, four and two. Those numbers explain why the first government was neither the product of party victory alone nor the gift of any single individual. It emerged from an electorate that divided its support and representatives who then found a way to make government possible.

**The Full Meaning of the Anniversary**

Fifty years later, 29 September and 1 October should be remembered together, but never confused.

On 29 September, the people exercised their democratic right. They selected eleven representatives and denied both political parties an outright majority. On 30 September, the responsibility shifted to those representatives. Discussion, judgment, and political alignment produced the support needed to form an administration.

The beginning commemorated on 1 October marks



the passage from electoral choice to ministerial responsibility. Elected Turks and Caicos Islanders entered a new relationship with the people who had chosen them.

The election was the people’s decision. The collaboration was the representatives’ response. The government was the constitutional result.

That sequence is the heart of the Golden Anniversary story. Democracy is not only about winning. It requires accepting the result the people give, creating enough common purpose for government to function, and preserving the opposition’s right to challenge it. Most of all, it is about responsibility.

The people of 1976 did not vote merely to place names in a Legislative Council. They voted because they wanted their lives to change. They wanted their voices heard in decisions affecting their land, labour, schools, services and future.

The people distributed political power through their votes. Daniel Williams’s decision, Liam Maguire’s participation and the leadership of JAGS McCartney and the PDM helped organise that power into government. Together with the constitutional and administrative work required to establish the new system, their actions transformed possibility into a functioning administration.

The Constitution authorised it, the people made it legitimate, and collaboration made it possible. From that beginning came a new duty: to govern the Turks and Caicos Islands in the interest of all its people.

This Golden Anniversary Special Edition is dedicated to the people who voted on 29 September 1976; to Daniel Williams and Charles William “Liam” Maguire, whose decisions helped establish a working majority; and to every member of the first government, the opposition and the public service who accepted responsibility for making the new ministerial system work.

**About the Author**

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

She is the daughter of the late Hon. Lewis Edwin Astwood, who served as the first Minister of Public Works, Utilities and Labour when Ministerial Government began in 1976, and the late Mildred Garland-Astwood, a craftswoman, designer, activist, community adviser and mentor who contributed to the political and community life of the period.

Through archival preservation, oral-history documentation and historical research, Joan works to recover the names and stories of those whose contributions have too often remained outside the official record.



Delthia Russel-Misick (fourth from right) , First Lady of the Turks and Caicos Islands is captured with other first ladies at the UN Sidelines Forum

# TCI First Lady Calls for Global Cooperation at UN Sidelines Forum

First Lady of the Turks and Caicos Islands, Mrs. Delthia Russell-Misick, called for stronger communities and greater international cooperation during a high-level forum of First Ladies and Gentlemen held on the margins of the 81st Session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York.

The forum focused on stability, resilience and the future of communities, bringing together participants from around the world to discuss shared humanitarian and global challenges.

Drawing on the experience of the Turks and Caicos Islands, Russell-Misick urged leaders to broaden their understanding of the saying "It takes a village to raise a child," arguing that responsibility for the next generation must extend beyond national borders.

According to an official social media account of her participation, she highlighted how climate change, conflict, economic uncertainty, technology and displacement are shaping lives across countries and cultures. Her message called for compassion and cooperation that reach across those same boundaries. "In an increasingly interconnect-

ed world, the village can no longer be confined by geography," the account stated. "It must stretch across communities, countries, cultures and oceans."

Russell-Misick also highlighted the contribution small island societies can make to global discussions. Their experiences of resilience, adaptation, community and interdependence, she argued, offer valuable perspectives in shaping solutions to shared challenges.

Her participation brought the Turks and Caicos Islands' perspective to the international forum, with an emphasis on collective responsibility and the role of strong communities in creating a more secure future for children. Among the participants was Ukraine's First Lady, Olena Zelenska, founder of the Summit of First Ladies and Gentlemen Global Platform, which brings together spouses of heads of state to address humanitarian and global challenges.

The official account concluded with a message reflecting Russell-Misick's call for shared responsibility: "Our children will inherit more than the countries we leave them. They will inherit the world we leave them."



Mrs. Delthia Russell-Misick , First Lady of the Turks and TCI addresses the UN Sidelines Forum

# The Retreat officially opens in Grace Bay, celebrating local ownership and a family legacy

By Vivian Tyson NEWSLINE Editor-In-Chief

A wide cross-section of individuals on the island of Providenciales, flocked that island's tourism belt – Grace Bay – on October 1, 2026, to witness the grand opening of The Retreat Hotel.

Government officials and other individuals of prominence who went up to speak from the lectern, heaped praises on founder, who they classified as an example of Turks and Caicos Islanders taking a greater role in owning, developing and operating tourism businesses.

Premier Charles Washington Misick, Deputy Governor Anya Williams, Tourism Minister Zhavargo Jolly and Physical Planning Minister Arlington Musgrove joined family members, business partners and invited guests for the opening ceremony.

For Trevor Musgrove, the occasion marked the fulfilment of a family ambition rooted in a small hospitality business on North Caicos.

"We're not just building a hotel here, we're building legacy," he said.

Musgrove recalled helping his mother operate his father's five-bedroom beachfront bed-and-breakfast as a boy. Although the family eventually sold that property, the dream of owning and operating another hotel remained.

He said The Retreat was already welcoming its first guests, with reservations for November and December looking positive.

The development broke ground on May 8, 2025. It comprises 24 studio residences and was designed to combine individual condominium ownership with a professionally managed rental programme, according to the project's groundbreaking announcement.

Sean O'Neill, managing partner of The Agency Turks & Caicos, told guests that all units had sold before construction was completed.

He described The Retreat as the first project in Grace Bay to be developed, built, sold, marketed and run by Turks and Caicos Islanders, adding that local buyers were also among the individual unit owners. That participation, he said, extended beyond construction into ownership of the completed property. Musgrove credited his family, construction team, real estate partners and hospitality advisers with bringing the project to completion. He also thanked the government for its support, including a development agreement and concessions.



He encouraged other aspiring entrepreneurs to draw inspiration from the achievement, saying that dreams could become reality through proper planning and hard work. He noted that opportunities extended beyond hotel development into areas such as information technology and e-commerce. Williams praised the family's progress from a small North Caicos accommodation business to the new Grace Bay property. She said the development demonstrated what Turks and Caicos Islanders could achieve and expressed hope that it would inspire similar ventures.

Jolly also welcomed the investment, describing Musgrove as an example to young Islanders of the opportunities available throughout the tourism industry.

He encouraged others to study the project's approach and pursue partnerships that could help bring their own ambitions to life.

Arlington Musgrove delivered a personal tribute to his cousin Trevor and the wider family, emphasising the importance of local ownership in tourism.

"Excellence does not need an ocean view," he said. "It just needs vision." Located on Bonaventure Crescent, The Retreat is a short walk from Grace Bay Beach. According to its website, the hotel offers continental breakfast, transport to the beach by buggy, and reserved beach chairs and umbrellas for guests.

Hotel manager Layvern Daniel leads the operation. Her appointment was announced ahead of the opening, with more than 12 years of Caribbean luxury hospitality experience spanning operations, guest relations, sales and reservations. Musgrove said the team intended to deliver first-class service and establish The Retreat as the beginning of a broader hotel brand.

He announced plans to embark on another Grace Bay project in the first quarter of 2027, while describing a five-star beachfront property on North Caicos as his longer-term ambition.

For now, he urged continued cooperation and support among Islanders as the new hotel begins operations.

"We can do a lot if we decide we're going to work together," he said.





Those three words can offer reassurance. But when it comes to HIV and other sexually transmitted infections, feeling fine tells you very little about your status. You can look healthy, feel energetic and have no obvious symptoms while carrying an infection that needs treatment. That is why the growing HIV epidemic in the Philippines should get our attention here in Jamaica. According to UNAIDS, new HIV infections in the Philippines increased sixfold between 2010 and 2024. In 2024, an estimated three to four people acquired HIV every hour, with young people ages 15–24 accounting for almost half of new infections. These figures raise a question that matters just as much in Kingston as it does in Manila: How many people are going about their daily lives without knowing their HIV status? Jamaica has reason to pay attention HIV has been part of Jamaica’s public health reality for decades, and the Corporate Area has carried a significant burden. The Ministry of Health’s 2017 epidemiological

profile recorded a new HIV/AIDS case rate of 73 per 100,000 people in Kingston and St Andrew, compared with 43.9 nationally. These historical figures do not establish a new spike, but they demonstrate why HIV prevention and testing have long mattered in the capital. A subsequent national bulletin recorded 141 newly diagnosed HIV cases reported to the surveillance unit during January to March 2023. Each diagnosis represents someone who needed answers, support and access to care. We do not need to wait for another alarming headline before taking our own sexual health seriously. No symptom does not mean no infection Many people associate STIs with discharge, burning, sores or an obvious rash. Those symptoms can occur, but infections can also be present without any of them. Chlamydia and gonorrhoea, for example, can go unnoticed while causing complications, including pelvic inflammatory disease and infertility. Some STIs also increase the risk of acquiring HIV. (World Health Organization)

# HIV surge in the Philippines: A wake-up call for Jamaica

Waiting until something hurts is therefore an unreliable approach. The same applies to judging a partner’s status by appearance. Looking well cannot tell you whether someone has HIV. Testing can. Make screening part of your health routine We make appointments to check our blood pressure, blood sugar and cholesterol. Sexual health deserves a place on that list. At MDLink Diagnostic Laboratory, we encourage Jamaicans to use an annual sexual health review as an opportunity to discuss HIV and other STI screening. The tests you need – and how often you need them – depend on your age, sexual history, symptoms and exposure. Annual testing is appropriate for many people with ongoing risk, while some benefit from testing every three to six months. A new exposure, symptoms or a partner’s diagnosis should prompt medical advice sooner. The annual reminder is useful. The testing plan should still be personal. Know what “full screening” includes When booking a full STI screen, ask which infections are being tested for. There is no single test that checks for every STI. HIV requires a specific HIV test; a urine panel for other infections should not be assumed to include it. Depending on your circumstances, screening may involve blood, urine or swab samples.

Timing matters as well. Testing too soon after exposure can miss HIV during its window period, so a doctor may recommend repeat testing. A negative result must be interpreted alongside the type of test and the date of exposure. A diagnosis opens the door to care HIV treatment has transformed what it means to live with the virus. People who receive effective treatment can live long, healthy lives. Those who maintain an undetectable viral load on treatment do not transmit HIV through sex—known as Undetectable = Untransmittable, or U=U. World Health Organization That is a powerful reason to get tested and stay connected to care. If you believe you were exposed to HIV within the past 72 hours, seek urgent medical assessment for post-exposure prophylaxis, or PEP. Every hour matters; an annual screening appointment can wait, but that assessment should not. The Philippines’ experience should encourage us to ask better questions, speak more openly, and make testing easier to access. Book your Annual Full STI Screening with MDLink Diagnostic Laboratory and discuss the appropriate tests for your needs. Visit theMDLink.com or our main laboratory at 12B Premier Plaza, Kingston. Feeling well is welcome. Knowing your status gives you something more useful: information you can act on.

# Heart disease can hide in plain sight: Don’t miss a beat’

‘Heart Disease can hide in plain sight- Don’t Miss A Beat’. This is the theme for World Heart Day 2026. The message couldn’t be clearer. Heart disease, which includes heart attacks and heart failure syndromes, is responsible for 30 per cent of deaths worldwide. This is an urgent call for all persons to take responsibility for their health. Screening for the causes of heart disease is an effective way to reduce your risk for developing heart disease. Common conditions like hypertension (detected in > 30 per cent of Jamaican adults) and diabetes may not be readily apparent in terms of how you feel but may already be setting the stage for later development of significant heart disease. Early detection and management of these common, chronic conditions can reduce your risk and prolong your life. You may also reduce your risk of developing these conditions by measures which you can start on your own with simple guidance. Adopting and maintaining a healthy lifestyle is the first step. What does this look like? This includes attaining and maintaining a healthy weight, adhering to a diet low in salt, sugar, fat and cholesterol, and enriched with healthy fats, peas and beans, vegetables and high-quality protein. Don’t practise fad diets .Take your guidance from reliable science-based sites and consult with your medical practitioner and nutritionist. You should

be exercising regularly, whether you are overweight or not, to improve the health and function of your blood vessels and heart. Well-conditioned muscles, including your heart muscle, will improve your overall level of functioning and, for older individuals, will help you to remain functional and independent for a longer time. If you have been found to have a chronic condition such as hypertension and diabetes, take heed of this and do all you can to control this well. This would mean taking prescribed medication as recommended, not missing doses or taking the medication only when you feel ill, and having regular follow-up visits with your medical practitioner to monitor your progress and control. If these conditions are well controlled, you have a greater chance of avoiding or delaying development of heart disease. Lastly, be your own advocate! Speak up and lobby for improved facilities for exercise in public spaces, for improved healthcare facilities, and for regulations which will compel suppliers to provide healthier dietary choices. Tell the authorities that you want to be able to make the right dietary choices and therefore need clear and effective food labelling which should be mandatory for all processed foods sold in our country. It is time for you as individuals to take responsibility for your own health. The heart is the engine which drives your body- don’t miss a beat!



# Stitchie: A legacy that Connected Dancehall, Gospel

Lieutenant Stitchie’s voice may have fallen silent, but the influence of the veteran deejay — who commanded respect in both secular dancehall and gospel music spheres — is expected to continue reverberating across generations.

The veteran artiste, whose given name was Cleveland “Cleve” Laing, died at Kingston Public Hospital on Monday morning, one day shy of his 61st birthday.

The news comes less than 24 hours after his wife, Sophia Laing, confirmed that the entertainer had been hospitalised with a low blood count and was receiving treatment.

His passing closes a remarkable chapter in Jamaican music — one that began in dancehall and found a path to gospel.

For distinguished cultural analyst, Professor Donna Hope, Lieutenant Stitchie’s ability to remain loved across musical boundaries was rooted not only in his talent, but also in his personality that endeared him to audiences.

Basillia Barnaby-Cuff (right), founder and director of the Sterling Gospel Music Awards, shares a moment with Sophia Laing, wife of the late entertainer during a handing-over ceremony back in 2024. Contributed

“Stitchie was loved because a lot of his songs were humorous. They were fun and they made people happy,” Hope said. She pointed to his enduring early hit Wear Yu Size, noting that the song was “digestible”, catchy and non-combative — qualities that helped establish his connection with listeners.

“Stitchie had an excellent career in dancehall and that followed him into gospel,” Hope continued. “I saw Mr Vegas made a post and I’m sure several others will as

the news spreads because a lot of the artistes he would have came up with in that era were still close to him even though they were doing different genres.”

Entertainers and government officials took to social media to pay tribute to the deejay. Among them Prime Minister Andrew Holness, Tarrus Riley and Chevelle Franklyn (who also transitioned from dancehall to gospel).

Professor Hope shared that Stitchie’s significance extended beyond his music.

“Having a relationship with secular artistes was something Stitchie did well because he understood that it was important to minister to the sheep that ought to be brought into the fold,” she said. “This loss will be felt across genres and eras. He is a part of the industry in a way few artistes were, and so he will never be forgotten.”

Basillia Barnaby-Cuff, founder and director of Sterling Gospel Music Awards, agreed.

“I think Stitchie set a beautiful example of how you can remain an influence with people even when you’re in a different season of your life,” she said. “He was able to bridge the gap between the secular and gospel. He was still able to be on stage with secular artistes, singing gospel without compromising his walk with Christ.”

For Barnaby-Cuff, that was the essence of Stitchie’s ministry — not simply preaching to people already inside the church, but allowing his life and testimony to reach those outside it.

“It is about allowing your life to minister to those you wish will come over to Christianity,” she said.

The Sterling Gospel Music Awards family



Lieutenant Stitchie at the 2019 Sterling Gospel Music Awards

shared a particularly close connection with the artiste in his later years. A few years ago, Stitchie was honoured at the awards with the KFC Big Deal Award, an occasion Barnaby-Cuff now views with gratitude.

“I am just so happy we were able to give him his flowers while he was alive,” she said. “The gospel fraternity and we here at the Sterling Gospel Music Awards are really saddened by this news.”

Even as his health deteriorated, the organisation continued to support him, raising funds towards his care in the hope that his condition would improve.

“As the body of Christ, we are so grateful that he used the latter part of his years in ministry, and that he brought so many other persons to Christ,” she said. “He truly lived a full life and, as children of God, we don’t mourn as if we don’t have hope, and so that hope is something we hold on to and that one day we will see him again in the great

resurrection.

Stitchie emerged from the competitive sound-system culture of Spanish Town in the early 1980s, working alongside artistes including Papa San and Wickerman. His breakthrough came in 1986 with the humorous Wear Yu Size, followed by songs such as Natty Dread, as his distinctive delivery and ability to connect with audiences propelled him beyond Jamaica. In 1988, he secured a recording deal with Atlantic Records, marking another significant milestone in a career that was increasingly taking him onto the international stage.

But it was his decision to walk away from secular music and embrace Christianity in 1997 that would ultimately redefine his legacy.

In 2014 he published his autobiography and among his accolades was honoured with the Order of Distinction in the rank of Officer in 2021 for his contribution to music.



Rihanna arrives at the premiere of “Smurfs” on Sunday, July 13, 2025, at Paramount Studios in Los Angeles.

A woman accused of spraying bullets at Rihanna and A\$AP Rocky’s home, hitting a trailer the celebrity couple was inside and a nursery their kids were in, was found mentally competent by a judge on Tuesday to stand trial.

Ivanna Lisette Ortiz, 36, of Orlando, Florida, has pleaded not guilty to trying to murder Rihanna and to more than a dozen other felony charges stemming from the shooting in March.

No one was injured, but bullets tore through an Airstream trailer that the singing superstar and A\$AP Rocky were in. Shots also struck the wall of a nursery where their small children were at the time.

“Criminal proceedings are reinstated,” Judge Maria Cavalluzzi said at a very brief hearing in Los Angeles County court after months of psychiatric evaluations.

Ortiz appeared behind glass in a custody area of the courtroom, wearing yellow jail

## Woman accused of shooting at Rihanna’s home is mentally fit for trial, judge says

clothes and handcuffs.

She didn’t speak during the hearing. She could get life in prison if convicted of all the charges.

There was no direct discussion of the mental evaluations in court, and case documents that include such details have been sealed.

Ortiz has been returned to the regular criminal court process, which had been suspended shortly after it began. She was ordered to appear at a hearing Wednesday.

Attorneys for both sides declined comment outside court after the hearing.

Police and prosecutors allege that Ortiz drove a Tesla up to the Beverly Hills-area property of Rihanna and her rapper partner on March 8, pointed an AR-15 style rifle out the window and fired at least 20 rounds toward the property and a neighboring house.

Investigators found bullet holes in the trailer and on the exterior wall of the home’s second-floor nursery, where the three kids

were with their nanny.

Investigators said that after her arrest later that day, Ortiz said: “I wasn’t attempting murder.”

Ortiz is charged with 10 counts of assault with a semiautomatic firearm, one for each of the people on the two properties. She’s also charged with three counts of shooting at an occupied vehicle or dwelling.

Ortiz had no prior police record, authorities said. Public records show she had been a licensed speech pathologist for more than a decade.

Authorities have not discussed a motive or described any connection between Ortiz and Rihanna. Her lawyers have not offered comment on her beyond her not guilty plea and procedural issues.

A nine-time Grammy Award winner, Rihanna has had 14 No. 1 hits on the Billboard Hot 100, including “We Found Love,” “Work,” “Umbrella” and “Disturbia.”



OPEN JOB POSITION

**DATE OPEN:** September 23, 2026

**START DATE:** ASAP

**POSITION:** Bartender

**PROPERTY:** West Bay Club

**Job Overview:** Prepare alcohol or non-alcohol beverages for bar and restaurant patrons. Interact with guests, take orders and serve snacks and drinks. Assess guests needs and preferences, and make recommendations. Mix ingredients to prepare cocktails.

**Job Requirements:**

- Minimum of 5 years’ experience
- At least 5 years’ experience working in a five-star hotel
- Mixology training certification preferred
- Hospitality training certification/certificate

**This position is currently held by an expatriate worker. Qualified Islanders need only to apply copying applications to the Commissioner of Labour & Work Permit Board Zone 2**

**Salary Range:** \$10.00 per hour

**DATE OPEN:** September 23, 2026

**START DATE:** ASAP

**POSITION:** Server

**PROPERTY:** West Bay Club

**Job Overview:** The server is responsible for delivering exceptional service and ensuring a positive dining experience for guests. Strong communication, multitasking, and problem-solving skills are essential, as servers must efficiently manage multiple tables and anticipate customer needs.

**Main duties:**

- Welcome guests as they arrive, escort them to their table, and provide them with menus.
- Collect payment on all sold items and operate a cash register.
- Serve guests in a friendly and helpful manner.
- Keep tables, chairs, and dining areas clean and organized. Clear dirty dishes promptly and reset tables for new guests.

**This position is currently held by an expatriate worker. Qualified Islanders need only to apply copying applications to the Commissioner of Labour & Work Permit Board Zone 2**

**Salary Range:** \$8.00 per hour

**DATE OPEN:** September 23, 2026

**START DATE:** ASAP

**POSITION:** Housekeeper (2)

**PROPERTY:** West Bay Club

We are looking for a professional Housekeeper able of attending to our facilities with integrity and attention to detail. The goal is to create a clean and orderly environment for our guests that will become a critical factor in maintaining and strengthening our reputation.

**Main Duties:**

- Perform a variety of cleaning activities such as sweeping, mopping, dusting and polishing
- Protect equipment and make sure there are no inadequacies
- Ensure all rooms are cared for and inspected according to standards
- Notify superiors on any damages, deficits and disturbances

**This position is currently held by an expatriate worker. Qualified Islanders need only to apply copying applications to the Commissioner of Labour & Work Permit Board Zone 2**

**Salary Range:** \$8.00 per hour

**DATE OPEN:** September 23, 2026

**START DATE:** ASAP

**POSITION:** Houseman

**PROPERTY:** West Bay Club

We are looking for a professional Houseman able of attending to our facilities with integrity and attention to detail. The goal is to create a clean and orderly environment for our guests that will become a critical factor in maintaining and strengthening our reputation.

**Main duties:**

- Perform a variety of cleaning activities such as sweeping, mopping, dusting and polishing
- Ensure the common areas are cared for and inspected according to standards
- Protect equipment and make sure there are no inadequacies
- Check stocking levels of all consumables and replace when appropriate

**This position is currently held by an expatriate worker. Qualified Islanders need only to apply copying applications to the Commissioner of Labour & Work Permit Board Zone 2**

**Salary Range:** \$8.00 per hour

**DATE OPEN:** September 23, 2026

**START DATE:** ASAP

**POSITION:** Financial Controller

**PROPERTY:** West Bay Club

**Requirements:** The Financial Controller is responsible for the overall management of all finance, accounting, purchasing, and MIS (Management Information Systems) functions at the property. This position plays a critical leadership role in safeguarding company assets, strategic financial planning and budgeting, and ensuring strict compliance with internal controls, policies, and procedures.

**Key Responsibilities:**

**Financial Management & Compliance**

- Oversee daily finance operations including accounting, budgeting, payroll, procurement, and IT.
- Ensure compliance with internal controls and established company procedures.
- Safeguard all assets and monitor financial risk.
- Coordinate internal and external audits and ensure timely submission of statutory reports.

**Strategic Planning & Budgeting**

- Lead the preparation of the annual operating budget and monthly forecasts.
- Provide financial analysis and strategic recommendations to senior leadership.
- Monitor financial performance against budget and provide variance analysis.

**Team Leadership & Collaboration**

- Lead and manage the Finance, Purchasing, and IT departments.
- Coordinate with department heads to align accounting procedures with operational requirements.
- Coach and develop team members to enhance performance and maintain service standards.

**Qualifications & Requirements:**

- Bachelor's Degree in Accounting, Finance, or Business Administration; equivalent experience may be considered.
- Minimum 7 years of hospitality accounting experience, with 3 years in international assignments preferred.
- At least 5 years as an Assistant Director of Finance or 2 years as Director of Finance in a luxury hotel, resort, or club of similar size or larger.
- Prior condo-hotel or residential accounting experience is a strong plus.
- Demonstrated experience managing purchasing and IT functions in a resort environment.
- Strong people management and leadership skills with the ability to motivate and guide cross-functional teams.

**Core Competencies:**

- Exceptional communication and interpersonal skills
- Advanced mathematical and accounting knowledge
- Strong analytical and critical thinking skills
- High computer literacy, especially in financial systems and hotel software
- Ability to interpret business regulations, professional publications, and develop staff through structured training
- Adaptable to change, comfortable with new challenges, and able to meet deadlines in a dynamic environment

**This position is currently held by an expatriate worker. Qualified Islanders need only to apply copying applications to the Commissioner of Labour & Work Permit Board Zone 2**

**Salary Range:** Dependent upon experience

**DATE OPEN:** September 23, 2026

**START DATE:** ASAP

**POSITION:** Housekeeping Supervisor **PROPERTY:** West Bay Club

**Job Overview:** The Housekeeping Supervisor will assist and provide support in all areas of departmental operations. The Housekeeping Supervisor responsibilities include organizing team member's shifts, training and motivating team members and checking private and public areas for tidiness.

**Main duties:**

- Train Housekeepers and Housemen on cleaning and maintenance tasks and assist with overseeing staff daily.
- Check rooms and common areas, including stairways, elevators and guest areas, for cleanliness.
- Assist with scheduling shifts and arranging for replacements in case of absences.
- Assist with establishing and educating staff on cleanliness, tidiness, and hygiene standards
- Motivate team members and assist with resolving any issues that occur on the job.
- Participate in large cleaning projects as required.
- Ensure compliance with safety and sanitation policies in all areas.

**This position is currently held by an expatriate worker. Qualified Islanders need only to apply copying applications to the Commissioner of Labour & Work Permit Board Zone 2**

**Salary Range:** \$13.00 per hour

**DATE OPEN:** September 23, 2026

**START DATE:** ASAP

**POSITION:** Accounts Manager

**PROPERTY:** West Bay Club

**Job Overview:** The **Accounts Manager** is responsible for overseeing and managing the financial operations of the resort, ensuring accuracy, transparency, and compliance with all financial policies and regulations. This role supports Financial Controller in maintaining effective financial controls, preparing reports, managing budgets, and ensuring timely and accurate processing of all financial transactions. The Accounts Manager also supervises accounting staff, assists with audits, and provides financial insights to support management decision-making and overall business performance.

**Main duties:**

- Oversee daily accounting operations, including accounts payable, accounts receivable, and payroll.
- Prepare and analyze financial statements, management reports, and forecasts.
- Support budgeting, cost control, and financial target monitoring.
- Ensure compliance with financial regulations, internal controls, and company policies.
- Supervise, train, and support the accounting team.
- Review financial transactions, reconciliations, and journal entries for accuracy.
- Provide financial insights to department heads to support operational efficiency.
- Assist with internal and external audits and maintain accurate documentation.
- Maintain confidential and accurate financial records.
- Support the Director of Finance in improving financial systems, policies, and procedures

**Requirements:**

- Bachelor's degree in Accounting, Finance, or a related field.
- Minimum of 3–5 years of accounting experience, preferably within the hospitality industry (hotel or resort experience is an asset).
- Proficiency in accounting software (e.g., QuickBooks, Opera PMS, or similar) and advanced knowledge of Microsoft Excel.
- Ability to manage multiple priorities and meet tight deadlines.
- Strong leadership and communication skills with the ability to work collaboratively across departments.
- High level of integrity and confidentiality when handling financial information.

**This position is currently held by an expatriate worker. Qualified Islanders need only to apply copying applications to the Commissioner of Labour & Work Permit Board Zone 2**

**Salary Range:** \$48,000 per annum

**DATE OPEN:** September 23, 2026

**START DATE:** ASAP

**POSITION:** Strata Engineer

**PROPERTY:** West Bay Club

**Job Overview:** The Strata Engineer is responsible for overseeing the maintenance, safety, and efficient operation of the resort's buildings, facilities, equipment, and common areas. The position coordinates repairs, preventative maintenance, contractors, and engineering activities to ensure the property remains safe, functional, and well maintained while supporting the needs of owners, residents, and guests.

**Main duties:**

- Responsible for overseeing the maintenance, operation, and upkeep of the resort's buildings, infrastructure, and common areas.
- Coordinate preventative and corrective maintenance to ensure facilities, equipment, and systems remain safe, functional, and well maintained.

- Monitor engineering projects, repairs, contractors, and service providers to ensure work is completed efficiently and to required standards.
- Support compliance with health, safety, building, and environmental regulations.
- Manage engineering-related budgets, supplies, equipment, and maintenance records.
- Work closely with property management, owners, and other departments to address maintenance concerns and ensure effective communication.
- Lead and support the engineering team, providing guidance, training, and oversight of daily activities.
- Respond promptly to building or equipment issues and implement practical solutions to minimize disruption to residents and guests.

**Requirements:**

- Minimum 3–5 years of experience in engineering, facilities, or property maintenance, preferably within a resort or luxury hospitality environment.
- Strong knowledge of building systems, electrical, plumbing, HVAC, and general maintenance.
- Experience supervising maintenance teams and coordinating contractors.
- Ability to respond to maintenance issues and emergencies in a timely and professional manner.

**This position is currently held by an expatriate worker. Qualified Islanders need only to apply copying applications to the Commissioner of Labour & Work Permit Board Zone 2**

**Salary Range:** \$46,000 per annum

**DATE OPEN:** September 23, 2026

**START DATE:** ASAP

**POSITION:** Training Manager

**PROPERTY:** West Bay Club

**Job Overview:** The Training Manager will be a part of the Human Resources team with responsibility for planning, supervising the efficiency and effectiveness of training held on property. The Training Manager will facilitate different training accreditations and examinations as needed to ensure that team members can get the required certification to perform at a higher standard. The Training Manager will also assist with Human Resources functions and initiatives as needed.

**Main duties:**

- Implement departmental strategies and action plans in accordance with the resort's vision.
- Assist with organizing and conducting interviews as needed.
- Monitor and evaluate training program's effectiveness, success and ROI periodically and report on them
- Manage training budget
- Provide opportunities for ongoing development
- Resolve any specific problems and tailor training programs as necessary
- Maintain a keen understanding of training trends, developments and best practices

**Requirements**

- Bachelor's Degree or equivalent certification in Human Resources or Hospitality Management
- Professional certification in Training & Development, Adult Learning, HR, or Hospitality is an advantage.
- Training certifications such as Train-the-Trainer, Facilitation, or instructional design are preferred
- A minimum of 5 years' experience in Human Resources, Training or any similar role
- Minimum 2–3 years of experience in employee training, learning & development, HR, or organizational development.
- Experience developing and delivering training programs for Guest Services, Housekeeping, Food & Beverage, Engineering, Pool & Beach and other hotel departments.

**Belongers only need to apply**

**Salary Range:** Dependent upon experience

**Interested persons can contact our Human Resources Department no later than October 8<sup>th</sup>, 2026**

**@ (649) 946-8550 Ext. 7500**

**Email: [humanresources@thewestbayclub.com](mailto:humanresources@thewestbayclub.com)**

**Providenciales, Turks and Caicos Islands, British West Indies**

# Jamaica Defence lawyers push for gun law reform

The Advocates' Association of Jamaica (AAJ) and Jamaican Bar Association are dismissing what they described as "narratives being peddled" to distort their campaign for amendments to the Firearms (Prohibition, Restriction and Regulation) Act. Chief among them, they say, is the notion that the groups want to do away with the statutory mandatory minimum sentences of 15 years under the act, which took effect in 2022.

"Nothing could be further from the truth," King's Counsel Peter Champagne declared at a press conference yesterday as defence lawyers withdrew their services in criminal courts islandwide to push the Government to take their concerns seriously.

The withdrawal of service is expected to continue today, but will be limited to the island's Gun Courts, with AAJ President Tamika Harris indicating that the lawyers will be "unrelenting" in their advocacy.

"We are not politicians. We are not looking for votes. What we are looking for is a better Jamaica; a Jamaica where we can be proud. Our justice system has to be judged in relation to the international society, and what we are doing right now is breaching people's rights," she said.

Stating that the groups recognise the "supremacy of Parliament", Champagne stressed that defence lawyers are not seeking to remove the mandatory minimum sentence, but are advocating for judges to be able to exercise discretion in exceptional cases.

"All we are asking for is for fairness and equity as it relates to the most vulnerable among us," he said.

Currently, he said, a judge who is of the view that a particular case warrants a prison term of less than 15 years cannot impose one. Instead, a certificate has to be issued – as outlined in Section 42K of the Criminal Justice Administration Act – and then the "long road" begins to the Court of Appeal for a review and determination of sentence.

"What happens in the interim? The person is in custody or the person may be fortunate enough to be on bail, and that matter is not heard within a matter of weeks. It is heard

months and months later," Champagne said.

He pointed to an instance where a licensed firearm holder in his early 60s brought a slide from the United States to fix a defective part of his licensed firearm. The man, he said, was also given a spring by the gunsmith to attach to it.

But he was subsequently charged for trafficking component parts under Section 33 of the act, and is currently serving a mandatory 15 years prison sentence at hard labour.

In other cases, Champagne said individuals are convicted for having imitation firearms in their possession, even if they were not used to commit any crimes.

He said the law also discourages individuals from pleading guilty to charges as they are no longer incentivised to do so.

The lawyers also argue that the act is ambiguous in its treatment of children, as there is no clear delineation between them and adults in relation to sentencing.

"Never before in Jamaica's legal history has there been a position where a particular legislation has had a convergence of views. That is to say the Office of the DPP (Director of Public Prosecutions) – the chief prosecutors – are saying there is a problem with the act in some respects. The judges – the chief justice no less – have pointed out some issues with the legislation, and the defence Bar is now saying that," he said.

"The act was designed and should be intended for criminals – persons who have access to illegal firearms, who go rob and plunder and rape, [give them] 15 years or even more. But in this situation, as it presently is, it cannot be fair, it cannot be just, it cannot be right," he added.

King's Counsel Pierre Rogers contended that the act creates an environment where the good suffers for the bad. One, he said, is "repugnant to justice".

"What justice requires is that each person's case be determined on its own merits and on its own facts. The notion of a straight jacket, which is imposed not merely on the accused persons – because they are all lumped together – is inconsistent with notions of justice," he said.



Christopher Townsend (second right), Tamika Harris (right), president of Advocates' Association of Jamaica, along with several other attorneys-at-law during silent protest last week.

The Firearms (Prohibition, Restriction and Regulation) Act, 2022 regulates and control the circulation and use of firearms and ammunition in Jamaica to maintain public safety and security.

Prime Minister Dr Andrew Holness has credited it as one of the measures responsible for Jamaica's crime rate reduction.

Murders are down 23 per cent so far this year, following a 43 per cent decline last year, while violent crime has also recorded double-digit reductions.

Justice Minister Delroy Chuck has also declared that the act is "clearly working", and that we cannot at this time change it.

However, Champagne pointed out that gun cases before the court were trending down before the implementation of the act. In 2019, he said, there were 508 gun cases before the courts, which fell to 403 in 2021. In 2024, two years after the act was implemented, there were 363 cases. However, he said that number then increased to 389

cases in 2025.

"So, when persons put forward the narrative that the 'reduction' is as a result of the legislation, that really is not being truthful or candid in terms of a complete picture, and we need to examine that," he said.

Champagne further outlined that the legislation has a review period of five years, a clause he described as "particularly telling".

"It's not something that is common in legislation generally, so what it means is that there may have been a recognition that perhaps initially, there was a need to be very extreme," he said.

Instead of ignoring the issues being raised by the lawyers, he said the Government should engage in meaningful discussions so that the review period is not further delayed.

"It's not about defending criminals; it's about trying to ensure that persons who are not fit for prison, don't end up there," he said.

# US tightens sanctions on Cuba

The United States (US) announced Tuesday a tightening of sanctions against Cuba, clamping down on certain financial transactions and travel by US citizens to the Communist island.

The sanctions, announced by the Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC), prohibit indirect financial transactions with sanctioned Cuban entities, particularly those linked to the security apparatus and to Gaesa, the Cuban military's economic conglomerate.

OFAC has banned so-called U-Turn transactions, which allowed US banks to process dollar payments related to Cuba provided that the origin and destination were outside the United States and did not involve American citizens.

The new regulations remove authorisation for US banks "to open and maintain accounts solely in the name of a Cuban national who is an independent private sector entrepreneur."

Access to the US banking system for private



In this file photo Residents carry containers while queuing for potable water from a water tanker in a neighbourhood of Matanzas, Cuba, on August 6, 2026. Recurring water shortages and power outages have forced many residents of Matanzas to rely on water deliveries and public water distribution points

entrepreneurs had been authorised during Democrat Joe Biden's 2021-2025 presidency as part of measures aimed at supporting Cuba's nascent private sector.

The new regulations also limit categories of travel that were permitted for US citizens under President Barack Obama (2009-2017).

ISSA directs schools to use football gear for two seasons, cuts provision for U14/U16 competitions

Cultural exchange or "people-to-people" trips as well as business conferences and meetings will now require authorisation.

Relations between Washington and Havana have worsened since President Donald Trump returned to power in January 2025.

The Republican leader says Cuba, located just 150 kilometres (93 miles) from Florida, represents an extraordinary threat to the United States.

Since January, Washington has imposed a de facto oil embargo on the island of 9.4 million people, plunging the country into a deep economic and energy crisis.

# CHASING THE TOP SPOT



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# Man City lodges 'comprehensive' appeal after guilty verdict in financial rule-breaking scandal

Manchester City has lodged a "comprehensive" appeal, the club confirmed on Friday, following the publication of a report by an independent commission detailing large-scale financial rule-breaking by the Premier League giant in one of English soccer's biggest scandals.

"The club's firm position," read a short statement from City, "is that, on multiple grounds, the opinion contains clear material errors, of law, principle and fact and is unsafe."

City has protested its innocence throughout the long-running case, which dates back to 2018 and reached a milestone on Tuesday, when the Premier League published a verdict saying the Abu Dhabi-controlled club was "guilty of all charges related to serious breaches" of the competition's financial rules from 2009-18.

City has yet to receive a punishment. According to the Premier League, potential sanctions could be a reprimand, fine, points deduction or, in the worst case, expulsion from the competition. No team has ever been expelled from English soccer's top flight.

City officials said they would lodge an appeal and that was filed on Thursday evening, the club said, ahead of Friday's deadline.

"The club is innocent of the accusations made by the Premier League and a comprehensive body of irrefutable evidence exists in support of all of its positions, relating to this case," City said, using language from previous statements on the case.

## THE APPEAL HEARING SHOULD BE OVER WITHIN 12 WEEKS

Premier League regulations state that the chair of the three-person disciplinary commission that found against City now has to appoint a new appeal board. That also will consist of three people, one of whom "shall have held judicial office", the league's rules state. The appeal board will then schedule a hearing that should finish within 12 weeks after the appeal is filed, and cannot exceed five consecutive days.

That will be addressed in a separate, confidential hearing with the commission and there has been no word whether sanctions can be imposed before the decision of the appeal is reached.

The Premier League has only said its intention is that the process is concluded "as soon as possible".

## CITY'S \$1B RULE-BREAKING USING 'SHAM' COMMERCIAL DEALS, ACCORDING TO COMMISSION

City was found to have systematically broken the Premier League's financial rules for nearly a decade in what the competition's chief executive, Richard Masters, described as the most significant disciplinary case in the league's history.

The investigatory panel found that City artificially inflated its revenue – using



what the league has called "sham" commercial deals – by more than \$1 billion from 2009-18 to circumvent financial fair-play rules that restricted rival clubs, and allowing City to buy some of the best players in the world.

That was the foundation of a long and unprecedented period of success in which City changed the landscape of the world's most popular soccer league, with the northwest club winning eight league titles from 2012-24.

City committed almost all of the 115-plus violations, the commission found: 80 from 2009-18 for alleged financial misdeeds and another 35 from 2018-23 for allegedly not cooperating with the investigation.

## SOURCE OF SPONSORSHIP COULD BE FOCUS IN APPEAL

City is likely to focus part of its appeal around the issue of how its Abu Dhabi-based sponsorship deals were funded.

The commission found that sponsors in Abu Dhabi only paid 119.25 million pounds (\$158.4 million) of the 949.94 million pounds (\$1.26 billion) stated in club accounts, with the remaining 830.69 million pounds (\$1.1 billion) being paid by the Abu Dhabi United Group, the private company of Sheikh Mansour bin Zayed Al Nahyan that bought City in 2008.

Sheikh Mansour is a member of the United Arab Emirates' ruling family.

City contended that "no part" of the deals were funded by the ADUG and that, instead, the Abu Dhabi govern-

ment – which owned the sponsors – had helped to fund the deals "from time to time". And so in City's opinion, that source of extra funding was misunderstood, the commission wrote.

The panel rejected that explanation by City as untrue, concluding it was "concocted well after the event" to disguise the source of funding.

In an internal video to City staff – obtained by broadcaster Sky News – City chief executive Ferran Soriano said: "The whole Premier League case against us is based on a single false accusation: that the owner's personal money was somehow and secretly put into the club via some sponsors from Abu Dhabi. This is just not true."

## ENGLISH SOCCER'S GOVERNING BODY MAKES FIRST COMMENTS IN CASE

On Friday, the Football Association – the governing body of soccer in England – expressed concern that the "integrity" of the game had been affected by the scandal.

In its first reaction to the case, the FA said: "The independent commission's decision has significant implications for the integrity of the game. We are carefully considering the decision and its implications and will take action where appropriate."

The FA added that it would "continue to monitor developments closely" and would not comment further because proceedings were ongoing.

## BRITAIN'S TAX AUTHORITY URGED TO WEIGH IN AS BURNHAM CLARIFIES COMMENTS

The City case is currently a soccer disciplinary proceeding, not a criminal investigation. On Thursday, a cross-party committee of lawmakers called on Britain's tax authority to assess the case.

The chair of the Treasury Committee, Dame Meg Hillier, wrote to the permanent secretary of Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC), saying: "While I acknowledge that taxpayer confidentiality may inhibit what you can disclose, I would welcome reassurance from HMRC that you are seized of the importance of these issues and the public interest in the case."

In another example of the widespread impact of the scandal involving City, British Prime Minister Andy Burnham has been repeatedly asked his view on the issue.

On Wednesday, Burnham said he would be "really concerned" to lose City's ownership from English soccer, saying they had been a "huge partner in the building of modern Manchester" and of City as a global force, while also saying he was not getting involved in the process. Burnham was formerly the mayor of Manchester.

On Thursday, Downing Street sought to clarify that the prime minister viewed the ruling as "serious and there can't be any suggestion that anyone is above the rules".

"If wrongdoing is established, those responsible should face the appropriate consequences," Burnham's office said in a statement, which stressed that the independent process was ongoing.

# TCIFA invites primary schools to register for November football competitions

The Turks and Caicos Islands Football Association (TCIFA) is inviting all primary schools to register for its 2026 Inter-Primary Schools Football competitions, scheduled for November, with separate Under-12 boys/co-ed and girls divisions. Schools are encouraged to enter teams in the U12 Boys/Co-Ed Primary Schools Football Competition and the U12 Girls Primary Schools Football Competition. The association said schools unable to field a full girls' team can include

their female players in the boys/co-ed competition, with no additional limitations or restrictions on girls' participation. Schools that received uniforms for the previous competition are being asked to reuse those kits this year. Uniforms will be provided for teams participating in the U12 girls' competition. Registration is being conducted through two separate online links circulated by the TCIFA. The first is for the boys/co-ed competition,

while the second is for the girls' competition. The invitation follows other efforts by the association to expand opportunities for young female footballers. On June 13, 2026, the TCIFA launched an Under-8 and Under-10 girls' league with support from the FIFA Women's Development Programme. The initiative also included a coaching course that trained 18 aspiring coaches to lead football activities in schools and communities. School football development has

also been supported through FIFA's Football for Schools programme, launched locally in September 2023. According to the TCIFA, the programme reached 15 primary schools and three high schools, providing teacher training, footballs and learning resources combining football activities with social skills development. The notice for the November competitions did not specify match dates, venues or a registration deadline.

# CARIBBEAN UNITED BEHIND INFANTINO

The Jamaica Football Federation (JFF) will not be alone in backing FIFA President Gianni Infantino with fellow Caribbean associations of Trinidad and Tobago, British Virgin Islands, Antigua and Barbuda, and St Kitts and Nevis also on board. Infantino recently completed his tour of the Caribbean at the weekend with many critics believing the trip was used to try to secure votes as he seeks to remain FIFA president for another four years ahead of the body's congress in Morocco in March. Infantino, 54, has led FIFA since 2016 and has faced increased scrutiny over the past few months after his controversial plan to sell stakes in FIFA competitions, including the men's and women's World Cup, to private investors. This plan was eventually scrapped last month after widespread backlash. Infantino's recent Caribbean visit was his second in a matter of weeks after attending the Caribbean Football Union Presidents' Meeting in the Dominican Republic. He was advised prior by his FIFA vice-president and Concacaf President Victor Montagliani to stay away from the event. His first stop was in Kingston on Friday where he met with JFF officials, including President Michael Ricketts, and attended the Reggae Boyz's 3-2 win over Guatemala in the Concacaf Nations League at the National Stadium. As the Jamaica Observer reported on Sunday, the JFF will back Infantino in the upcoming elections with the board of directors in favour of him staying. Ricketts told the Observer in August that he would support Infantino, giv-

en what he describes as massive support he's given to football, particularly in the Caribbean. Ricketts reiterated his support for Infantino after his one-day visit to the island. "I think Infantino has done so very well for football globally," he said. "I remember when I got into football as the president, the support from FIFA was medial to say the least. It has been a lot better now and we are just very grateful and we are looking forward to further improvements so that we can impact not just football but the social well-being of every boy and girl who plays the sport." Also in Kingston during Infantino's visit was Trinidad and Tobago Football Association (TTFA) Kieron Edwards who also attended the game on Friday. Trinidad's senior men's team played Haiti at Sabina Park a day before. In 2020, FIFA appointed a normalisation committee to manage the TTFA's affairs due to serious financial issues. However, it was lifted in 2024 with Edwards being named president. Edwards says FIFA has helped to reshape football in his country. "FIFA is our largest supporter when it comes to our infrastructure," he said. "Even our leagues, when we look at our women's league now, [it's a] full professional league, playing for seven months for the year, over 12 teams. That was only [possible because of] the continued support of FIFA in terms of our games. When it comes to the support of FIFA in terms of growing football, not just in Trinidad and Tobago but across the Caribbean and Concacaf, it's been tremendous so far."

Edwards says he has no doubts that the TTFA will be backing Infantino at the elections next year. "We would have given President Infantino our full support and we have not wavered with that. Things do come up, changes, you have to have discussions, you have to have dialogue but the support is there 100 per cent behind the President always." British Virgin Islands (BVI) Football Association president Avanell Morton has also thrown his support behind Infantino. Infantino visited BVI on Saturday and opened the new BVI Technical Centre, which was funded by FIFA. "What more can he do? He's doing a fantastic job already. He's doing a fantastic job in the entire region," Morton said. The Antigua and Barbuda Football Association (ABFA), led by President Ickford Roberts, is also in favour of Infantino staying on as president. Infantino visited the island on Saturday and met with Roberts and Prime Minister Gaston Browne, who announced that a new football stadium would be built with FIFA support. "[Infantino's] transformative policies, from ground-breaking investment in grassroots infrastructure to the historic expansion of World Cup access, have elevated the aspirations of emerging football nations into attainable realities," the ABFA said in a statement recently. "By listening with genuine humility and acting with decisive conviction, he has forged a legacy of inclusivity that transcends the sport itself, affirming that every nation, regardless of size, deserves equal voice and fair opportunity on

the world stage." Infantino also visited St Kitts and Nevis on Saturday, where he attended the launch of a new technical centre with St Kitts and Nevis Football Association President Atiba Hattis president giving his support. Infantino could have as many as 25 Caribbean votes behind him if all of the region's FIFA member associations support his bid. No one has signalled intentions to challenge Infantino with nominations closing on November 18, but it's understood that Montagliani is seen as a credible opponent who would receive the backing of Europe (UEFA) and the Asian Football Confederation.



FIFA President Gianni Infantino (left), Antigua and Barbuda Prime Minister Gaston Browne (centre), and Antigua and Barbuda Football Association President Ickford Roberts after a meeting at the Prime Minister's Office in St John's, Antigua, on Saturday.

# Road Dogs Announces October Registration for Run of Nations 2027

October 13, 2026, is the registration opening date for the Road Dogs Running Club's Run of Nations 5K/10K, according to its promotional flyer, as preparations begin for the event scheduled for January 23, 2027, in the Turks and Caicos Islands.

The announcement gives prospective participants a date to mark ahead of the January race, which will offer both five-kilometre and ten-kilometre distances. Organisers are also inviting sponsorship and collaboration inquiries as they prepare for the next edition of the club's signature event.

Under the slogan "It's More Than a Run. It's an Experience!", the flyer presents the Run of Nations as a gathering built around running and shared community spirit. Its colourful display of national flags and a large group of participants reinforces the event's cultural theme.

The race will follow the inaugural Run of Nations, held in Grace Bay on January 17, 2026. A contributed report published by NewslineTCI said more than 250 people attended that event, which combined competitive racing with a celebration of the different communities represented in the islands.

The first edition also supported Potcake Place K-9 Rescue through fundraising, according to the report. That community contribution added another dimension to an event whose appeal extended beyond finishing



*Members of the Road Dogs Running Club*

times and race results.

On the competitive side, Andres Davila won the inaugural men's 10K in 44 minutes and 41 seconds, while Lynn Robinson finished first in the women's 10K. Daniel Redmond and Eunice Missick topped the men's and women's 5K categories, respectively, NewslineTCI reported.

The upcoming event comes as Road Dogs works to strengthen its place within the territory's athletics community. NewslineTCI recently reported that the club had joined the Turks and Caicos Amateur Athletic Association,

giving it a formal connection to the national athletics structure.

That affiliation forms part of the club's stated ambition to improve the standard of its road events and align its development efforts with World Athletics standards. The report also outlined plans to attract more than 500 runners to the January 2027 edition, including visitors and running enthusiasts from overseas.

For the forthcoming race, the flyer places particular emphasis on early awareness, urging the public to save the January date and scan a QR

code to stay informed. The code offers a way for interested participants and supporters to follow further announcements as preparations continue.

The two advertised distances give entrants a choice of race length as they consider their fitness, preparation and plans for the January sporting event.

Businesses and organisations interested in sponsorship or collaboration can contact the club at RoadDogsTCI@gmail.com. The flyer also lists two telephone numbers for inquiries: +1 (649) 343-9582 and +1 (649) 245-5466.

The promotional material does not specify the venue, starting time, entry fees or registration procedure. Those details will be important for runners arranging their participation, especially anyone planning travel for the event.

There is also a discrepancy in the published registration information. While the supplied flyer states October 13, 2026, earlier online coverage gives October 1. Prospective participants should confirm the opening date directly with Road Dogs or follow the updates linked through the flyer.

With the January race date announced, the club's immediate focus is on building participation and securing support for an event that brings competitive running and community celebration together.

## Caicos Cyclery offers bike rental discount for Salt Rakers mini triathlon

Caicos Cyclery is advertising bike rental discounts of up to 50% for participants in the Salt Rakers Aquatic Club Mini-Triathlon, giving competitors who need a bicycle an option ahead of the October 31 event.

The club's second annual mini triathlon is scheduled for Saturday, October 31, 2026, beginning at 8 a.m. at The Bight Park in Grace Bay, according to NewslineTCI. The event will combine swimming, cycling and running, with entries open to beginners, experienced athletes and relay teams.

The bike rental promotion, outlined in a flyer, directs participants to Caicos Cyclery in Grace Bay, Providencia-

les. It urges competitors to book early because bicycles are limited. Rental prices and conditions for receiving the discount are not specified.

The competition will feature four age divisions: 9-10, 11-15, 16-18, and 19 and older. Participants can enter individually or compete through team arrangements, including two- and three-person relays.

Led by Benneth Williams, Salt Rakers Aquatic Club is using the event to encourage wider participation in triathlon and promote healthy living. Organisers also hope it will help identify promising athletes who could represent Turks and Caicos in future regional and inter-



# TCI Target Six-point Finish as Hosts Chase Nations League Top Spot

By Vivian Tyson, NEWSLINE Editor-In-Chief

Turks and Caicos Islands are gunning for all six points from their remaining two Concacaf Nations League matches as they seek to turn home advantage into a first-place finish in League C Group A. The hosts face the British Virgin Islands on Sunday, October 4, before closing their group campaign against Montserrat on Tuesday, October 6. Both matches will be played at the TCIFA National Academy in Providenciales, the venue for the group's entire programme. TCI opened with a 2-0 defeat to Montserrat on September 23, with Ashley Boatswain scoring both goals for the visitors, in the 41st and 69th minutes. Turks and Caicos did not score in that encounter. The hosts responded with a 3-0 victory over the British Virgin Islands on September 29. Billy Forbes opened the scoring in the ninth minute, Junior Paul doubled the lead in the 52nd, and Forbes completed his brace in the 74th to seal TCI's first three points.

Forbes is now among four joint leading scorers in Group A, each with two goals. Montserrat's Boatswain, Lyle Taylor and Brandon Barzey share that position. Taylor scored twice in Montserrat's first win over BVI, while Barzey netted once in each of their two meetings. Montserrat have set a demanding pace, following their opening victory over TCI with 3-0 and 2-0 wins against BVI. They lead with nine points, seven goals scored and none conceded. TCI have three points and a goal difference of plus one, while BVI remain without a point after three matches. Two victories would bring Turks and Caicos level with Montserrat on nine points, but the winning margins would determine whether the hosts could take first place. Concacaf separates teams level on points by overall goal difference, followed by total goals scored.

A 3-0 win over the British Virgin Islands followed by a 2-0 victory against Montserrat would be enough for TCI to finish top. Those results would give the hosts a final goal difference of plus six, com-



Sebastian Turbyfield pulled off a spectacular save in the Turks and Caicos Goal against Montserrat in their opening encounter in the Concacaf Nations League. Turbyfield came on as a second half substitute after first-string goalkeeper Samuel Harvey fell ill.

Photo: Vivian Tyson

pared with Montserrat's plus five. If TCI beat BVI by only one goal, they would need to defeat Montserrat by at least three goals to finish ahead on goal difference. A two-goal victory over BVI followed by a two-goal win against Montserrat would leave the teams level on goal difference, making total goals scored the next deciding factor. These scenarios are calculated from the current standings. Sunday's encounter therefore carries a double responsibility: secure the three points and build the strongest possible platform for the finale. BVI's record of eight goals conceded without scoring offers encouragement, but TCI cannot afford complacency. Any dropped points would end their chances of finishing above Montserrat. The BVI victory also offers a useful attacking lesson. TCI's first two goals came from deliveries from the left, suggesting that creating space out wide and finding teammates inside the penalty area could again be productive. Forbes'

finishing and Paul's contribution give the hosts something concrete to build on.

However, pursuing a bigger winning margin must be balanced with defensive discipline. Every goal conceded would increase the task against Montserrat, making a clean sheet potentially as valuable as another goal at the other end. Montserrat will provide the sterner examination. Their three successive clean sheets underline the challenge of breaking them down, while their spread of goals across Boatswain, Taylor and Barzey shows that TCI must contain several attacking threats. A draw in the final meeting would be enough for Montserrat to secure first place. TCI must create more than they managed in the opening defeat while protecting themselves against counterattacks. Sharp finishing, careful use of possession and defensive organisation will be essential if the hosts are to overturn that result.

The schedule adds another chal-

lenge. TCI play their final two matches just two days apart, while Montserrat's previous outing was October 1. The leaders have a longer recovery period before the finale, placing added importance on the hosts' substitutions and management of player workloads. Even if six points do not deliver first place, they could still prove valuable. The three group winners and the best second-placed team will earn promotion to League B and qualify for the new League C Championship. Finishing on nine points would strengthen TCI's bid for the runners-up berth, although their fate would depend on results in the other groups.

With home support behind them, Turks and Caicos have an opportunity to finish strongly. Their immediate task is to beat BVI again, then produce an improved performance against Montserrat. To turn their six-point target into a group-winning finish, they must combine victories with the right winning margins.