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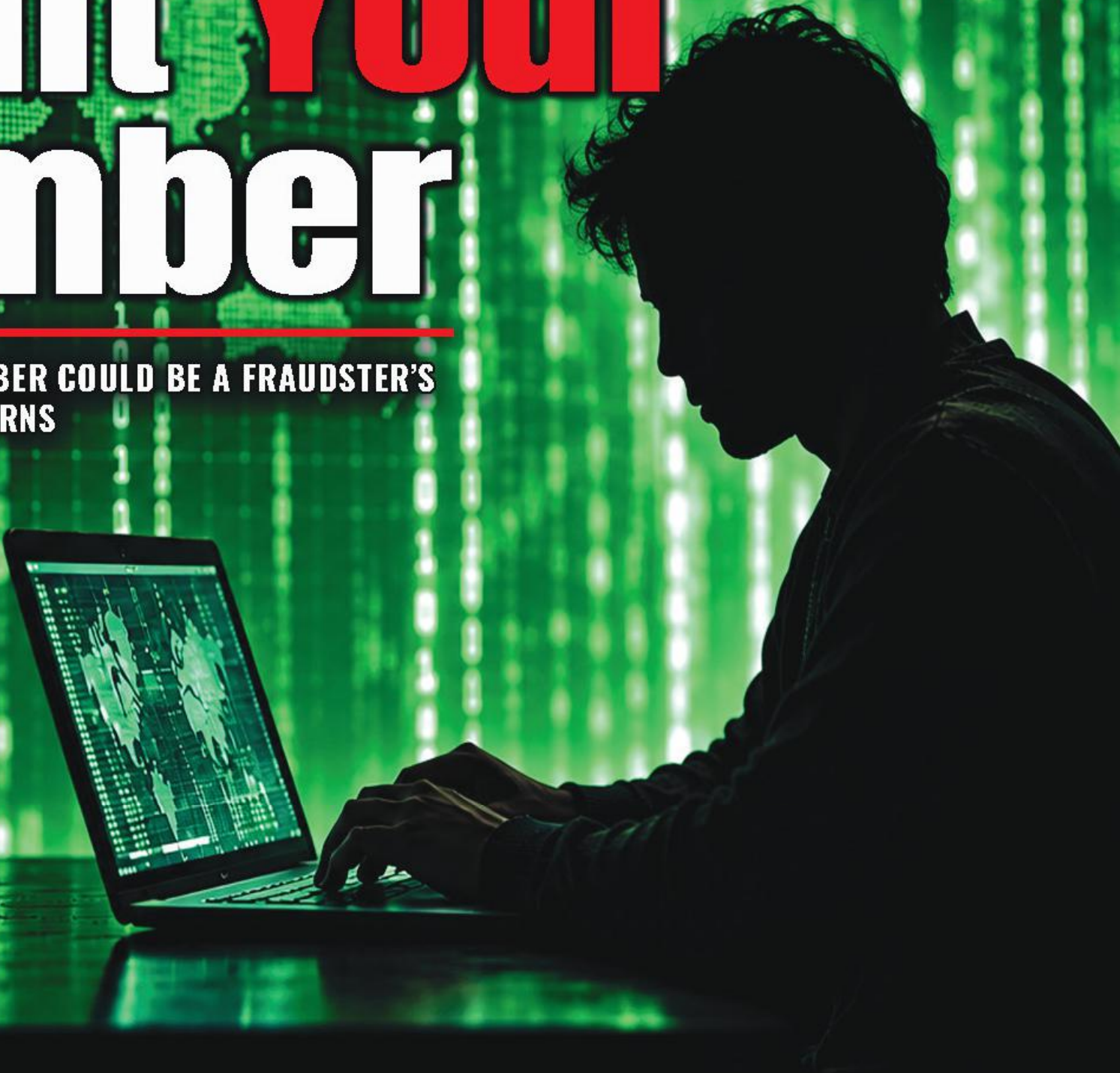


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Musgrove Outlines \$100 Million Infrastructure Programme for Turks and Caicos

By Vivian Tyson, NEWSLINE Editor-In-Chief

Minister of Physical Planning and Infrastructure Development Arlington Musgrove has outlined plans for approximately \$100 million in infrastructure investment across the Turks and Caicos Islands, including upgrades to roads, airports, ports, drainage systems and serviced land.

Speaking during the parliamentary debate on the Speech from the Throne, Musgrove said the funding would form part of the government’s proposed \$350 million borrowing programme for healthcare, affordable housing, infrastructure, waste management, climate resilience and public accommodation. He said the infrastructure allocation would support “specific, scoped projects” and be subject to Cabinet oversight, public reporting and fiscal safeguards.

“Every dollar of this one hundred million will go toward assets that outlive the loan that paid for them,” Musgrove told the House.

The minister also provided an update on the redevelopment of Howard Hamilton International Airport in Providenciales. He said an investment of up to \$30 million would fund an interim arrivals hall measuring between 30,000 and 40,000 square feet, the conversion of the existing terminal into a departure facility, additional check-in and security capacity, and improvements to airside operations.

Musgrove stressed that the \$30 million allocation was intended for immediate

and temporary works while the airport’s long-term redevelopment plan is finalised.

Responding to criticism from the Leader of the Opposition, Hon. Edwin Astwood, the minister said the government had previously explained why it did not proceed with the original procurement proposal. He said a steering committee representing multiple stakeholders had since been established to guide the project.

A draft master plan and business case for the airport development are expected to be presented to the committee this month, Musgrove said. The government is also developing a website through which residents and visitors will be able to follow the redevelopment process.

Airport improvements are also planned across the archipelago, he added.

At South Dock, Musgrove said the first phase of development had been completed and that all vessels were now using the new berth. Phase Two is expected to be completed by the end of the year.

Longer-term plans for the port include new container yards, modern cargo-scanning equipment and a fuel-discharge mooring system designed to improve fuel deliveries while protecting surrounding waters.

The minister also highlighted the government’s national roadworks programme, including \$6 million for community roads.

Projects cited in his address included completed road and solar-lighting

works in Whitby and The Bight, as well as paving in Electoral District 7. Roads identified for work included Industrial Drive, Cooper Jack Drive, Old Airport Road and routes in Kew Town.

Musgrove rejected suggestions that the government was celebrating limited road repairs, saying it accepted responsibility for the condition and continued development of roads throughout the territory.

He also detailed capital and development allocations for several islands, with \$18 million designated for Grand Turk, \$14 million for South Caicos, \$12 million for North and Middle Caicos, and \$6 million for Salt Cay.

Those investments will be supplemented by housing, utility and climate-resilience projects, he said.

Other initiatives outlined by the minister included an integrated land-information system that would bring property titles, valuations and mapping data together in one place.

The government also plans to develop serviced residential subdivisions with roads, drainage and utilities already installed. Musgrove said the initiative could reduce both the time and cost involved for families building their first homes.

Coastal-protection work is planned for Providenciales, Salt Cay and Grand Turk as part of a programme intended to strengthen vulnerable shorelines through engineering and scientific planning.

Musgrove said the projects described in his address were funded, scoped or



Musgrove stressed that the \$30 million allocation was intended for immediate and temporary works while the airport’s long-term redevelopment plan is finalised.

already underway.

Marking the 50th anniversary of ministerial government in the Turks and Caicos Islands, the minister described physical infrastructure as a lasting measure of the government’s stewardship.

“We inherited islands with a foundation,” he said. “Our duty is to build the house upon it, and to make sure it is still standing, strong and unshaken, for the generations who have not yet been born to inherit it from us.”

Registration Opens for Made in TCI 2026 and Inaugural Grand Turk Trade Expo

Tuesday, 8 September 2026: Entrepreneurs, artisans, producers, creatives and business owners across the Turks and Caicos Islands are invited to register for two major trade events taking place this November.

The Department of Trade, Industry and Fair Competition has opened vendor registration for the inaugural Grand Turk Trade Expo and the 5th Annual Made in TCI Trade Show & Exhibition.

Both events will give local businesses an opportunity to showcase their products and services, strengthen brand visibility, connect with customers and build relation-

ships with fellow entrepreneurs. They will also celebrate the creativity, innovation and talent found throughout the Turks and Caicos Islands.

Grand Turk Trade Expo

The inaugural Grand Turk Trade Expo will be held on Saturday, 14 November 2026, from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at the Victoria Public Library on Front Street, Grand Turk. Promoted under the message “One island, many businesses, endless opportunities,” the expo will provide a dedicated platform for businesses and entrepreneurs to promote their brands, engage with residents and visitors, and ex-

plore new opportunities.

Made in TCI 2026 Trade Show & Exhibition

The 5th Annual Made in TCI Trade Show & Exhibition will take place on Saturday, 21 November 2026, from 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Allegro Road in Grace Bay, Providenciales.

Now celebrating its fifth year, Made in TCI has become a leading showcase for products and services that are locally made, grown, produced, designed and developed. The event brings together businesses from multiple sectors and connects them with the wider community.

Register for Made in TCI 2026

Space is limited, and interested vendors are encouraged to register early to secure their participation.

For event news and updates, follow @madeintci on Instagram, Facebook and TikTok.

From the historic streets of Grand Turk to the vibrant heart of Grace Bay, these events will bring together the people, ideas and enterprises shaping the future of commerce in the Turks and Caicos Islands. For participating vendors, November will be a chance to share their stories, introduce their brands to new audiences and proudly showcase the talent being created across the islands.



United Kingdom Overseas Territories Minister Uma Kumaran is flanked by Her Excellency Governor Dileeni Daniel Selvaratnam (left) and Premier Hon. Washington Misick



Governor Dileeni Daniel Selvaratnam (right) updates United Kingdom Overseas Territories Minister Uma Kumaran (third from left) about pressing issues relating to TCI on the ministers visit to Kew Town. Looking on at second right is Premier Hon. Washington Misick

Geopolitical Threats Dominate UK Minister's First Visit to Turks and Caicos

Geopolitical and security threats facing the Turks and Caicos Islands topped the agenda during the inaugural visit of United Kingdom Overseas Territories Minister Uma Kumaran, as local and British officials discussed border pressures, crime and national preparedness.

Kumaran received detailed briefings from the National Security Council and senior security officials on what the government described as a range of internal, external and geopolitical threats confronting the territory. The government's statement did not identify the specific geopolitical threats or countries involved.

The talks examined progress in reducing crime and strengthening the territory's security capabilities, along with opportunities to improve intelligence-sharing, operational readiness and coordination between agencies.

Acting Commissioner of Police Kendall Grant and Lieutenant Colonel Ennis Grant, commanding officer of the Turks and Caicos Is-

lands Regiment, were among the senior officials who briefed the minister.

Kumaran also visited several communities on Providenciales, including Kew Town and Dockyard, under the watchful eyes of armed members of the Royal Turks and Caicos Islands Police Force.

She was accompanied by Premier Washington Misick, Governor Dileeni Daniel-Selvaratnam and other officials. The tour gave the visiting minister a firsthand view of communities where the government continues to confront concerns involving irregular migration, informal settlements and law enforcement.

The police presence underscored the security surrounding the minister's movements as she toured densely populated areas of the island.

Government officials said the visits were intended to give Kumaran a clearer understanding of conditions on the ground and help ensure that future UK investment in the territory's secu-

rity capabilities is aligned with its changing operational needs.

The visit comes as the Turks and Caicos Islands seeks to reinforce its ability to respond to threats that cross national borders. As a British Overseas Territory located near Haiti and other Caribbean states, the islands face persistent pressures connected to maritime security and irregular migration. However, the official statement stopped short of providing details about the scale or immediate nature of the geopolitical risks discussed. It also did not announce new security funding, personnel or equipment arising from the talks.

Beyond security, Kumaran met Misick and members of Cabinet to discuss the territory's economic growth and national development priorities. The talks explored areas in which continued cooperation with the United Kingdom could support long-term security, resilience and prosperity.

The minister also held discussions with Opposition Leader Ed-

win Astwood and members of the opposition team, giving them an opportunity to outline their concerns and priorities.

Officials described the meetings as establishing a shared foundation for continued collaboration between the Turks and Caicos Islands and the United Kingdom.

The visit also provided Kumaran with an opportunity to hear directly from political leaders, security officials and people in local communities instead of relying solely on briefings prepared for her in London.

The government said the visit reaffirmed the strength of the UK-TCI partnership and demonstrated a mutual commitment to improving security and supporting sustainable economic development.

Kumaran's stop in the Turks and Caicos Islands was the first leg of her official Caribbean programme as minister responsible for the Overseas Territories.

See related photo spread on Page 25

86 % of Parolees Complete Supervision Without Reoffending, Malcolm says

By Vivian Tyson, NEWSLINE Editor-In-Chief

Approximately 86 percent of people under probation or parole supervision in the Turks and Caicos Islands successfully complete their supervision without reoffending, Minister responsible for Public Safety Hon. Shaun Malcolm has said.

Malcolm disclosed the figure while addressing the Caribbean Association of Probation and Parole (CAPP) Conference at The Ritz-Carlton on September 2.

The conference, held from September 2 to 5, 2026, brought together probation, parole and rehabilitation professionals from across the region to exchange knowledge and strengthen approaches to community supervision, rehabilitation and reintegration.

“Today, we have some 86 percent of our clients successfully completing supervision without reoffending,” Malcolm said.

The minister said the result demonstrated how structured supervision and rehabilitation could redirect lives, prevent crime and make communities safer.

“Behind that figure are real people, real families and real communities,” Malcolm said. “It demonstrates what can happen when people are held accountable while also being given the structured interventions and opportunities necessary to change.”

He argued that rehabilitation should not be viewed as being in conflict with punishment or accountability.

“Rehabilitation is public safety,” Malcolm said. “There is sometimes a tendency to place punishment and rehabilitation on opposite sides of the criminal justice debate. I do not accept that distinction.”

He stressed that accountability, consequences for offenders, the needs of victims and the protection of communities must remain central to the criminal justice system. Effective rehabilitation, he said, requires people to confront their behaviour, understand the consequences of their actions and address the factors that contributed to their offences.

According to Malcolm, policymakers should consider not only whether a person has been punished but also whether that person is less likely to

commit another offence.

“Every individual who successfully completes supervision and does not reoffend represents a life redirected, a potential crime prevented and a community made safer,” he said. “That is not being soft on crime. That is reducing crime.”

The minister said probation and parole officers play a critical role by managing risk, preventing further victimisation and contributing directly to safer communities.

He called for an “end-to-end” approach to public safety, connecting prevention and early intervention with policing, prosecution, sentencing, corrections, probation, parole, rehabilitation and reintegration.

Malcolm placed particular emphasis on intervening early in the lives of vulnerable young people.

“We should not wait until young persons become deeply involved in the criminal justice system before we act,” he said.

Noting that most people who enter the criminal justice system will eventually return to their communities, Malcolm said authorities must consider the condition in which they return.

“Will they return with the same behaviours, the same attitudes, the same addictions and the same circumstances that contributed to their offending?” he asked. “Or will we use the period during which they are under our supervision to create a genuine opportunity for change?” Structured probation and rehabilitation services were introduced in the Turks and Caicos Islands in 2019, making the territory’s system relatively young compared with those of several other countries represented at the conference.

Since then, the government has strengthened probation services and introduced risk-assessment tools, structured rehabilitation programmes, an online case-management system and electronic monitoring. It has also expanded juvenile prevention and intervention initiatives.

While acknowledging that the territory’s rehabilitation system was still developing, Malcolm said its early results supported greater investment in community corrections.



Hon. Shaun Malcolm speaking at the Third Annual CAPP Conference

He challenged governments across the region to ensure that spending on probation, parole and rehabilitation reflects their potential to reduce crime.

“We rightfully invest significant resources in policing, border security, courts and correctional institutions, but community corrections must

also command serious policy attention,” he said.

Malcolm added that probation and parole departments require trained professionals, modern technology, evidence-based assessment tools and programmes capable of addressing the underlying factors that drive offending.



A Section of the audience at the Third Annual Caribbean Association of Probation and Parole (CAPP). Seated in front from right to left are: Her Excellency Governor Dileeni Daniel Selvaratnam, Chief Justice Yonette Cummings-Edwards, Her Excellency Governor Anya Williams and Deputy Premier Hon. Jamell Robinson.

Your Phone Number Could be a Fraudster’s Next Target, Bank Warns

By Vivian Tyson, NEWSLINE Editor-In-Chief

Phone number fraud is a growing threat across the Caribbean, with criminals using increasingly sophisticated tactics to steal personal and financial information. To this end, prominent banking institution, Scotiabank is warning customers to remain vigilant, protect their phone numbers and never share security codes or confidential banking details with unsolicited callers. According to the bank, one of the newest schemes that the fraudsters are applying is called ‘SIM swapping’.

In a security advisory sent to customers, the bank explained that “SIM swapping” occurs when criminals impersonate a mobile-phone owner and persuade a service provider to transfer the victim’s number to a SIM card or eSIM controlled by the fraudster.

Once the transfer is completed, criminals may intercept calls, text messages and one-time passcodes. They could then reset passwords, access personal accounts and steal sensitive information.

“Your mobile number is more than just a way to stay connected,” Scotiabank cautioned, noting that it can serve as a key to a person’s banking, email and other online accounts.

Warning signs

Scotiabank advised customers to watch

for a phone that suddenly loses service or stops receiving calls and text messages. Unexpected notifications about SIM changes, eSIM activations, telephone-number transfers or password resets are also warning signs. Customers should pay attention if they are locked out of online banking, email, social-media or mobile-wallet accounts, or if they receive alerts about transactions and logins they do not recognize. To reduce their exposure, Scotiabank advised, customers should enable multi-factor authentication and use an authenticator application instead of text-message verification wherever possible. Strong, unique passwords should also be used for important accounts.

The bank further warned customers never to share one-time passcodes, passwords, personal identification numbers or answers to security questions. Anyone who experiences a sudden loss of mobile service or detects suspicious account activity should immediately contact their telecommunications provider and financial institution using independently verified contact information. The warning highlights why a telephone number should now be treated as sensitive personal information, especially when it is used to verify identity, reset passwords or authorize access to financial accounts.

Digital fraud concerns spread across the

region

Comparable figures on SIM-swap and internet-banking fraud are not published consistently across the four markets, making it difficult to determine the full regional cost.

Jamaica has provided some of the clearest evidence of the threat. The Bank of Jamaica’s 2025 Financial Stability Report showed that deposit-taking institutions recorded 44,316 fraud incidents during the year, down 58.9 per cent from 2024. Total fraud losses nevertheless remained substantial at J\$2.4 billion, an 18 per cent reduction from approximately J\$2.9 billion the previous year.

Internet-banking fraud declined by 78.4 per cent in 2025, according to the report, but credit-card fraud rose by 29.4 per cent and debit-card fraud increased by 16.8 per cent, partly because of transactions conducted online or through applications without a physical card. The figures cover banking fraud generally and should not be interpreted as a count of SIM-swap cases.

The Bank of Jamaica had previously identified cyber-risk as a key near- and medium-term danger to the financial sector, saying deposit-taking institutions had reported a general increase in bank fraud. The central bank and Jamaica’s Financial Services Commission subsequently developed 10 cyber-resilience principles for fi-

nancial institutions.

In Trinidad and Tobago, the Central Bank brought commercial banks, police and the Financial Intelligence Unit together in October 2025 to develop strategies against fraud involving online banking and digital transactions. The initiative also focused on protecting elderly customers, whom the bank identified as particularly vulnerable. Authorities in the Turks and Caicos Islands have also reported emerging cyber-enabled schemes. The territory’s Financial Intelligence Agency said it had observed an increase in suspicious activity and transaction reports involving cyber-enabled cheque fraud, including cases in which criminals used email correspondence to deceive online users.

The Royal Turks and Caicos Islands Police Force has separately warned residents about fraudulent messages purporting to come from banks and designed to steal money or compromise banking information.

Recent public releases reviewed for this story did not provide comparable national figures for internet-banking or SIM-swap losses in Guyana, Trinidad and Tobago, or the Turks and Caicos Islands. The absence of comparable statistics does not establish that fraud is less prevalent in those markets; it means its scale cannot be reliably measured from the published data.



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Food & Beverage Manager

Job Specification:

- Achieves restaurant operational objectives by contributing information and recommendations to strategic plans and reviews; preparing and completing action plans; implementing production, productivity, quality, and customer-service standards; resolving problems; completing audits; identifying trends; determining system improvements; and implementing change.
- Meets restaurant financial objectives by forecasting requirements, preparing an annual budget, scheduling expenditures, analyzing variances, and initiating corrective actions.
- Plans menus by consulting with chefs, estimating food costs and profits, and adjusting menus.
- Controls costs by reviewing portion control and quantities or preparation; minimizing waste; and ensuring high quality of preparation.
- Maximizes bar profitability by ensuring portion control and monitoring accuracy of charges.
- Publicizes the restaurant by designing and placing advertisements; inviting food editors to review the restaurant; contacting local, regional, and national magazines with feature ideas; and encouraging local businesses to hold social events at the restaurant.

Job Requirements:

- Must be able to speak English
- Must have 3-5 years as a Restaurant Manager + management certifications
- Must have a good experience in managing diverse teams in various restaurants cuisines
- Must be able to work in a restaurant; stand for long hours and work efficiently under pressure

Salary expectations - \$57,000 - \$66,000 per annum

Guest Service Expert/ Pool & Beach Associate

Job Specification

- Greet guests upon arrival and provide a warm and welcoming atmosphere.
- Provide information about the resort’s amenities, services, and activities available at the pool and beach.
- Take food and beverage orders from guests and deliver them in a timely manner.
- Maintain knowledge of the menu, daily specials, and promotions.
- Monitor pool and beach areas to ensure safety and enforce resort policies and regulations.
- Respond to guest inquiries, concerns, and any emergencies promptly and professionally
- Assist in enforcing pool and beach rules to maintain a safe and enjoyable environment.
- Regularly inspect and clean pool deck and beach areas, ensuring they are free of debris and hazards.

Job Requirements

- Must be able to speak English
- Must have 2+ years experience in related field
- Must be able to work in customer service, stand for long hours, and work efficiently under pressure.
- Ability to stand for extended periods and lift up to 25 pounds.
- Must be comfortable working outside in varying weather conditions
- Ability to follow instructions and procedures
- Positive attitude and willingness to learn

Salary expectations - \$8.50 - \$9.00 per hour

Guest Experience Expert/Concierge

Job Specification:

- Use Intelity, Opera and Micros, Open table softwares to navigate guest stays prior to their arrival.
- Up-sell and assist in booking future stays and experiences prior to arrival
- Manage and build guest Itineraries In the GMS (Guest Management System)
- Provide seamless transition of guest onboarding to Intelity Guides to prepare for in-stay
- Build rapport and trust with all guests through direct communication via Phone and email
- Manage and navigate various calendars using Microsoft Outlook and Inter-company tools
- Interpret survey results or provide feedback on guest technology to guests
- Protect the privacy and confidentiality of all guests
- Support FO, RD and Villa teams with guest coordination
- Input new bookings into systems in a timely manner and share reports of guest stays with relevant departments as needed.
- Review and send Daily Flash reports to designated teams
- Send weekly reservation reports to Leadership
- Other work that may be assigned by management

Job Requirements:

- Detail-oriented with multi-tasking different systems
- Spa and Wellness education and training preferred
- Reservations or Communication experience preferred
- Phone etiquette training
- Experience with Microsoft programs (Excel, Word, Outlook, OneDrive)
- Experience with Opera and Intelity preferred.

Salary expectation - \$9.00 - 11.00 per hour

APPLY NOW!

Send your resume to: careers@thestrandtci.com

Interested applicants for this position listed on this ad, should also send a copy of your resume to the Labour Department located Downtown, Airport Road, Providenciales

A 1 Kilometre Warning: Why TCI Must Finally Regulate the Bush Mechanic Economy

An Op-Ed By Paladin+

Drive down certain backroads of Providenciales and you will witness a scene that should trouble every resident of these islands: a full kilometre of burnt vehicle shells, stripped chassis, twisted metal, leaking fluids, and improvised workshops repairing everything from family sedans to dump trucks. Welding sparks fly without protective gear. Paint is sprayed into the open air. Oil seeps into the soil. Children walk past it on their way home from school.

This is not a mechanic sector. It is an unregulated industrial zone growing inside our communities. And it is a warning. For years, Turks and Caicos has allowed an informal “bush mechanic” economy to expand without oversight, without zoning, without environmental controls, and without any regard for public safety. What began as a few men fixing cars in their yards has metastasized into a sprawling, unplanned automotive corridor — one that threatens our environment, our health, and our national image. We cannot pretend this is normal. We cannot pretend this is safe. And we cannot pretend this is the best we can do.

The Legal Reality: None of This Is Allowed

Nothing about what we are seeing is legal under any existing framework.

- The **Business Licensing Ordinance** does not permit it.
- The **Physical Planning Ordinance** does not permit it.
- The **Environmental Health Regulations** do not permit it.
- The **Road Traffic Ordinance** does not permit it.

Mechanics in TCI are required to operate from an approved, licensed, inspected location. Their premises must have a defined and fenced boundary, organized storage of vehicles, inventoried parts, environmental containment, proper drainage, and safe welding and painting areas. They are not allowed to spill onto public roads or convert public land into a scrapyard.

What we have instead is chaos — a kilometre long automotive graveyard that has grown simply because no one has stopped it.

The Environmental Cost

Every leaking engine block, every discarded battery, every pile of

tyres, and every open air paint job contribute to:

- soil contamination
- groundwater pollution
- toxic fumes
- fire hazards
- mosquito breeding grounds
- respiratory risks for nearby residents

We speak of sustainability. We speak of tourism. We speak of national pride. Yet we allow an environmental hazard zone to expand unchecked in the middle of our communities. This is not just unsightly. It is unsafe.

The Economic Cost

Unregulated mechanic yards:

- depress property values
- undermine legitimate businesses
- create unfair competition
- clog public roads
- increase government cleanup costs

• damage the country’s brand
Tourists may never see these areas — but investors do. Residents do. Children do. A country that cannot regulate its own industrial activity cannot claim to be serious about development.

The Regional Comparison: TCI Is the Outlier

Across the Caribbean, this problem has already been solved.

- Bahamas restricts mechanics to zoned commercial or industrial areas.
- Barbados mandates fencing, containment, and organized storage.
- Cayman enforces strict environmental and safety standards.
- Jamaica shuts down roadside operations and requires spray booths.
- Trinidad & Tobago regulates welding, painting, and scrap storage under OSHA rules.

Turks and Caicos is the outlier — not because we lack laws, but because we lack enforcement and planning discipline.

A Phased Solution Within Existing TCI Law

The good news is that Turks and Caicos does not need new legislation.

Everything required to fix this problem already exists in law.

What is missing is a structured, phased enforcement and compliance plan that respects livelihoods while restoring order.

Below is a realistic, legally grounded, three phase solution.

Phase I: Immediate Compliance and Containment (0–6 months)

Legal basis: Business Licensing

Ordinance; Physical Planning Ordinance; Environmental Health Regulations; Road Traffic Ordinance.

1. Freeze new mechanic licenses until compliance standards are met. Planning approval becomes mandatory before any licence is issued or renewed.

2. Issue formal notices to all roadside and yard based operations. Not punitively - simply informing operators of the legal requirements they must meet.

3. Define and enforce boundaries. Any operation spilling onto public roads or public land is ordered to retract immediately.

4. Environmental Health begins monthly inspections for oil disposal, battery storage, tyre piles, and paint/welding safety.

5. Road Traffic Department removes abandoned vehicles within 14 days of notice. Vehicles are tagged, logged, and relocated to a temporary government holding yard.

This phase stabilizes the situation without shutting down livelihoods.

Phase II: Structured Relocation and Zoning (6–18 months)

Legal basis: Physical Planning Ordinance; Crown Land Policy; Business Licensing Ordinance.

1. Establish designated automotive zones on Crown Land or approved private land. These zones include fencing, drainage, containment, and space for parts storage.

2. Offer subsidized lease rates for small mechanics relocating into these zones. This is not a handout — it is a national investment in order and safety.

3. Create a licensing tier system:

- o Tier 1: Mobile mechanics (no painting, no welding, no storage).
- o Tier 2: Small yards (limited storage, mandatory containment).
- o Tier 3: Full automotive shops (spray booths, welding bays, drainage systems).

4. Require relocation of high risk activities — welding, painting, engine stripping — into the designated zones.

5. Begin enforcement of roadside prohibitions with fines only after relocation options exist.

This phase transitions the sector from chaos to structure.

Phase III: Full Professionalization and Environmental Stewardship (18–36 months)

Legal basis: Environmental Health Regulations; Waste Management Ordinance; Customs Regulations.

1. Establish licensed salvage yards for end of life vehicles. Vehicles are logged, stripped, stored, and processed safely.

2. Mandate environmental containment systems for all Tier 2 and Tier 3 operations. Oil traps, drainage channels, battery cages, tyre storage racks.

3. Introduce mandatory training and certification for mechanics, welders, and painters. Not academic — practical safety and environmental courses.

4. Create a national vehicle recycling program in partnership with Customs and Waste Management. Export scrap metal. Properly dispose of fluids. Recycle tyres.

5. Launch a public reporting system for illegal dumping, abandoned vehicles, and roadside operations.

This phase elevates the sector into a regulated, professional, environmentally responsible industry.

The National Imperative

The one kilometre stretch of wreckage is not just an eyesore, it is a symbol of neglect — the kind of neglect that grows when a country refuses to define the work before it.

We are not required to finish the work. But we are absolutely forbidden to neglect it.

Clean, safe, orderly communities are not luxuries. They are the foundation of national dignity. Turks and Caicos deserves a mechanic sector that is regulated, professional, and environmentally responsible — not a scrapyard masquerading as an industry.

Our people deserve better. Our communities deserve better. And it is time we finally choose better.



Journalism of Accuracy, Balance & Courage

NEWSLINE TCI is located at
1085 Leeward Highway,
Providenciales,
Turks & Caicos Islands, BW1.

Our numbers are:
1649 348-9587
1649 242-6695
You can email us at
contact@newslinetci.com or
viviantyson@newslinetci.com

Vivian Tyson – Editorial Department



TURKS AND CAICOS ISLANDS
FINANCIAL SERVICES COMMISSION

On October 1st, 2026, a new chapter of confidence begins.

The Turks and Caicos Islands Financial Services Commission (FSC) introduces **The Shield**, a bold new visual identity that marks the strategic evolution of the Commission and reflects its growth, experience and enduring commitment to professionalism, integrity, transparency and international standards. It symbolises the Commission's role as a trusted guardian of confidence, stability and integrity within the financial services sector.

Since its establishment in 2001, the Commission has evolved alongside the financial services sector while remaining steadfast in its mission: to regulate, supervise and support a resilient, trusted and forward-looking industry. Its modern visual identity reflects this progress, presenting the FSC as a confident, accessible and internationally aligned regulator rooted in the heritage of the Turks and Caicos Islands.

Rendered in authoritative Navy and dignified Gold, **The Shield** symbolises stewardship, vigilance and clear direction, with each design element carrying deliberate meaning: the Lighthouse represents leadership and guidance; the Waves reflect the Territory's maritime heritage and global connectivity; the Flamingo embodies local character, community and accessibility; and 'EST. 2001' acknowledges the Commission's history and institutional experience.

Our emblem has changed. Our purpose has not.

The Commission will continue to protect investors, promote compliance, strengthen confidence and support responsible business.



Children being served food and refreshment at the event



Children enjoying themselves in the pool at Villa PM, where the Back-To-School Funday was held.

Miss International Turks and Caicos Hosts Back-to-school Treat for Provo Children

By Vivian Tyson, NEWSLINE Editor-In-Chief

Miss International Turks and Caicos and Jay-Shar Productions and Academy recently hosted a back-to-school fun day for majority less fortunate children in Providenciales, combining summer activities with the distribution of school supplies.

The initiative supported reigning queen Adesha Gustave's platform, which focuses on the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal of ending poverty, took place at Villa PM, located at Venetian Road in Providenciales.

Sharlene Richards, national director for Miss International Turks and Caicos and a partner in Jay-Shar Productions, said the event was designed for children who may not have had an opportunity to travel or participate in recreational activities during the summer. "We wanted to give children a safe place to enjoy a part of the summer," Richards said. "They can play with each other safely, have a good day and feel like they went somewhere."

Thirty backpacks filled with school supplies were prepared

for children through a collaboration that included Paradiso Del Mar. Any bags not distributed at the event were expected to be donated to schools in nearby communities.

Gerard Rolle, creative director of Miss International Turks and Caicos and a partner in Jay-Shar Productions, said the idea was inspired partly by his experiences seeing disadvantaged children in the Dominican Republic during his visits. "We wanted to give them a safe space where they could let their hair down, have a good time and go back to school feeling good," Rolle said.

Gustave said the event held personal significance because she grew up without many opportunities to travel or take vacations during the summer. "Being able to put on this fun day for these children now that I have this platform is something that makes me very proud," she said.

The reigning queen has also participated in other community initiatives, including a United Way-supported children's camp where she helped young participants read, distributed food and joined them



Miss International Adesha Gustave (fifth from left) share in a photo moment with organisers of the Miss International Turks and Caicos Pageant and volunteers of the back-to-school funday. At third and fourth left respectively are Sharlene Grant Richards and Gerard Rolle co-owners of Jay-Shar Productions.

in activities. She said improving literacy can help alleviate poverty by expanding access to education.

Richards said community service is central to the local Miss International organization, which aims to show that pageantry is about more than appearance and competition.

"Miss International is focused on social exchange and community building," she said. "It is about using your platform to make a positive impact."

The organization plans to collaborate with groups through-

out the Turks and Caicos Islands, bringing together the territory's diverse communities and helping to narrow social and economic disparities. Meanwhile, Gustave is preparing to represent the Turks and Caicos Islands at the Miss International competition in Japan. Rolle said he is confident she will make a strong impression on the international stage.

This will be the territory's second appearance in the competition, following its debut last year.

Ashley's Learning Center Surplus Falls as Costs Rise, Expansion Plans Advance

By Vivian Tyson NEWSLINE Editor-In-Chief

Ashley's Learning Center ended the 2025-26 school year with a \$22,129 net surplus, down nearly 70% from the previous year, as the special-needs school faced rising operating costs while preparing to expand its facilities and services.

According to Chairman Ben Avenant's annual report, total operating costs increased 8.7% to \$406,400 during the year ended July 31, 2026. Income declined 1.9% to \$450,301, while the net surplus fell from \$72,732 in 2024-25.

Payroll remained the center's largest expense at \$270,213. Maintenance and utilities rose to \$32,271, while bad debt totaled \$32,331. The report said outstanding tuition balances remained a concern and were being actively pursued.

Despite the tighter financial position, the center reported strong growth in tuition and event revenue. Tuition income climbed 59.2%, from \$51,500 to \$82,000, while event income increased from \$16,202 to \$29,530.

Donations remained the largest source of revenue, contributing \$159,221, or 35.4% of total income. The Monthly Pledge Program generated a further \$103,000, and Turks and Caicos Islands Government support programs contrib-

uted \$76,550.

Avenant described 2025-26 as a year of "consolidation, renewal and preparation for growth" for the center, which provides specialized education and support to children with additional needs.

Expansion planning was supported by the Corporate Charity Challenge, with the center seeking to add classrooms and flexible learning areas so it can accommodate more students. Repairs, painting, air-conditioning work and other improvements were also completed with assistance from Kier Hegner of KiKa Design Studios and Do It Center.

The school also appointed Deneicia Harris as its new principal during the year, which the report described as a major milestone. Recruitment efforts additionally focused on special-needs teachers and teaching assistants.

Specialist services continued through partnerships with RUBIS Turks and Caicos and the Center for Children with Special Needs in Connecticut. RUBIS supported the school's speech-therapy program, including its use of Gemini communication and developmental-learning software.

The Connecticut center continued to provide specialist guidance, staff training and annual on-site visits. According to the report, the partnership helps Ashley's teaching team apply strategies tai-



Members of the Ashley's Learning Center (ALC) Board. From left: Anasa Jervis, Kendi Jones, Angela Williams, Kier Adams, and Dr. Marcella Malcolm. Occasion was the ALC's Annual Fundraiser on April 12, 2026, at Land and Sea, Wymara. Missing are: Ben Avenant (Chair), Simita Leich, and Amy Avenant.

lored to individual students and remain connected to current research and practices in special-needs education.

Community fundraising also continued during the year. Ashley's was selected as a charity partner by Dentons TCI from a field of 16 applicants and received support through the Deputy Governor's 5K Fun Run. Its 11th annual fundraising gala and brunch, held at Land & Sea Restaurant at Wymara, raised \$6,800.

The board said priorities for 2026-27 include strengthening the school's faculty

and leadership, completing the planned expansion, broadening its educational and therapeutic services, and developing a more diverse and sustainable funding base.

Its longer-term goal is to establish a permanent, purpose-built home for Ashley's Learning Center.

"It is an ambitious goal, but the progress achieved this year and the continued generosity of our community give us confidence to pursue it," Avenant said in the report.

Swift Response Contains Early-Morning Apartment Fire in Blue Hills

A swift, coordinated response by emergency personnel prevented an early-morning apartment fire in Blue Hills from spreading, with no injuries reported.

According to reports, at approximately 2:33 a.m., the Turks and Caicos Islands Fire and Rescue Service received a report of a fire inside a one-bedroom apartment on Blue Hills Bay Road, near the Harris residence.

Firefighters arrived at the scene wearing Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus and entered the smoke-filled apartment to conduct a systematic search. They confirmed that the unit was unoccupied at the time of the incident. Crews immediately began suppression and cooling operations, bringing the blaze under control before it could spread beyond the affected apartment. The most significant damage was concentrated in the closet area, although the precise origin and cause

of the fire have not yet been officially determined.

Approximately 200 gallons of water were used during the operation. The water tanker was subsequently refilled at a nearby fire hydrant before departing the scene at approximately 3:10 a.m.

The Royal Turks and Caicos Islands Police Force and Emergency Medical Services were also on the scene, supporting the response throughout the incident.

The Honourable Shaun D. Malcolm, Minister with responsibility for Public Safety, praised the emergency personnel for their swift and professional response.

"I extend my sincere appreciation to the officers of the Turks and Caicos Islands Fire and Rescue Service for their swift and professional response to this early-morning fire. Their coordinated efforts, supported by the Police and

Emergency Medical Services, helped to contain the incident and protect the surrounding community.

"We are particularly thankful that the apartment was unoccupied and that no injuries were reported. This incident serves as an important reminder to ensure that homes are equipped with functioning smoke alarms and that residents have a clear emergency evacuation plan."

Residents are reminded never to enter a burning or smoke-filled building. In the event of a fire, they should evacuate immediately and contact 911.

Members of the public are also encouraged to test their smoke alarms regularly, avoid overloading electrical outlets and never leave potential ignition sources unattended.

The Turks and Caicos Islands Fire and Rescue Service remains committed to protecting life and property and safeguarding communities throughout the

Turks and Caicos Islands.



Photo shows a section of the house in Blue Hills that was affected by fire

NO HEALTHCARE INTERRUPTION

Government Assures no Healthcare Gap as Controversial InterHealth Agreement About to Change Hands

By Vivian Tyson, NEWSLINE Editor-In-Chief

The Turks and Caicos Islands Government is preparing to transition away from its longstanding and controversial hospital arrangement with InterHealth Canada while promising that patient care will not be interrupted.

The transition plan was outlined in the 2026–2027 Speech from the Throne, read by Governor Dileeni Daniel-Selvaratnam in Parliament on September 8, 2026, on behalf of the Turks and Caicos Islands Government.

The Throne Speech stated that the InterHealth contract is coming to an end and that a joint transition committee has been established to manage the handover.

The committee includes representatives of the Government and InterHealth Canada and is expected to oversee the transition while successor arrangements are developed.

The Government said staffing, essential repairs, critical supplies and interim financing would be addressed during the process.

“The immediate duty is clear,” the Throne Speech stated. “Clinical care and facilities services must continue without interruption while successor arrangements are put in place.” InterHealth has operated the Cheshire Hall Medical Centre in Providenciales and Cockburn Town Medical Centre in Grand Turk since 2010 under a 25-year public-private partnership.

The agreement covered the construction and operation of the two hospitals. Approximately \$124 million in financing was arranged for the original hospital project.

The agreement has remained one of the most controversial public contracts in the territory’s recent history. Questions have repeatedly been raised about its procurement, overall cost, complexity and the long-term financial obligations imposed on the public purse.

Critics have also questioned whether residents received sufficient value from the arrangement, particularly as the Government continued spending substantial sums on overseas medical treatment for services unavailable locally.

Political representatives have called at different times for greater transparency, a comprehensive review



Minister of Health Hon. Kyle Knowles

and, in some cases, the termination or renegotiation of the agreement. Concerns have also been expressed about service limitations, the availability and operation of medical equipment, and the division of responsibilities among InterHealth, the Ministry of Health and the National Health Insurance Board. The relationship deteriorated further during a payment dispute in 2026.

According to The Times, InterHealth moved to terminate the agreement in July after alleging that it had not

been paid for services for 18 months. The newspaper reported that disputed invoices exceeded \$9.3 million and that arbitration and legal proceedings had created substantial additional costs. Those allegations and figures were not detailed in the September 8 Throne Speech and remain attributed to the newspaper’s reporting.

The Government’s latest statement places its immediate emphasis on continuity of care and the establishment of a financially sustainable replacement system.

Healthcare remains one of the largest expenses in the national budget, with \$94.1 million allocated during the current financial year. Healthcare also accounted for approximately one-quarter of recurrent expenditure recorded through the end of July.

“Access is a right, but without sustainability it is threatened,” the Government said. “Reform is unavoidable.”

Under the proposed reforms, a Health Services Authority will be established to oversee primary, secondary and some tertiary healthcare.

The Health Regulations Authority, Health Professionals Authority and Migrant Health are expected to be combined into a single regulatory body.

The Government said stronger domestic capacity would be central to its healthcare strategy for 2026 to 2030. Priorities include primary and preventative care, expanded diagnostic services, improved emergency response, mental-health treatment, nutrition programmes, long-term care and services for older residents.

Changes are also planned for the Treatment Abroad Programme.

Government-funded overseas treatment will be restricted to Turks and Caicos Islanders and British Overseas Territories citizens residing in the territory. Other residents will continue to have access to domestic healthcare but will be required to secure private coverage for treatment overseas.

Previously approved cases and transitional arrangements will be protected. Eligible patients will also continue receiving overseas treatment when the specialised services they require are unavailable in the territory.

The Government said its goal is to build a health system supported by transparent provider arrangements, responsible financial controls and a properly trained workforce.

“The people must be able to reach a hospital they can trust, at a price the country can sustain,” the Throne Speech stated.



Minister of Health Hon. Kyle Knowles

A Better Turks and Caicos Islands: Learning from Bermuda's Immigration System

An Op-Ed by Bennett Williams

The Turks and Caicos Islands has developed rapidly, and immigration has played an important part in supplying the labour, skills and investment needed for that development. However, as the country continues to grow, immigration policy should also ensure that Turks and Caicos Islanders are not left behind in their own economy.

TCI's population was approximately 52,299 in 2025, according to the TCI Statistics Authority, with real GDP growth of 4.5% and unemployment of about 4%. This means we are dealing with a relatively small population alongside a rapidly expanding economy. Decisions about employment, residency and population growth can therefore have a significant long-term effect on the country.

Bermuda provides a useful example. Its 2026 work-permit policy requires most non-Bermudians to obtain permission before working. Employers must first advertise positions locally and properly consider qualified Bermudians. Bermuda currently has 48 categories of employment closed to overseas workers, while another 18 categories are restricted, meaning additional conditions apply before a foreign worker can be employed.

That is one feature I believe TCI should seriously consider strengthening.

TCI already has protections. Government guidance says a work-permit application should be made only where there is a genuine job and attempts to recruit a Turks and Caicos Islander have failed. Employers must advertise qualifying positions locally, provide salary information and demonstrate attempts to recruit Islanders.

So the problem is not simply that TCI has no local-employment protection. We already have important rules. The question is whether our rules are strong enough, targeted enough and consistently enforced.

What I believe TCI should adopt from Bermuda

1. Create a clear list of jobs reserved for Turks and Caicos Islanders. Entry-level and other occupations for which sufficient qualified Islanders are available should normally be unavailable for new overseas work permits. The categories could be reviewed annually according to labour-market data rather than being permanent.

2. Create a second list of restricted occupations. Where TCI has some



qualified people but not enough to fill every vacancy, employers should have to demonstrate serious recruitment and training efforts before receiving overseas permits. Bermuda uses both closed and restricted categories rather than treating every occupation the same way.

3. Give qualified Islanders genuine first consideration. Advertising a vacancy should not become merely a formality before an overseas employee is hired. Employers requesting a permit should document which Islanders applied, their qualifications, whether they were interviewed, and the legitimate reason they were not selected.

4. Protect opportunities for young Islanders. Bermuda has said summer employment and internships should be reserved for Bermudians. TCI could take a similar approach so our high-school graduates, Community College students and young adults can obtain their first work experience instead of being told they lack experience while entry-level jobs disappear.

5. Connect work permits to training and succession planning. When a company repeatedly employs expatriates in skilled positions, it should be required in appropriate cases to identify and train Islanders who could eventually move into those positions. Immigration should therefore contribute to developing our people rather than creating permanent dependence on imported labour.

6. Strengthen enforcement against working outside the approved occupation. Bermuda emphasizes that workers must have valid permission and comply with the conditions of their permit, with sanctions for unauthorized employment. TCI should continue improving inspections and enforcement so someone admitted for one occupation cannot simply

move into another without approval.

7. Make the system more transparent. Government could publish annual figures showing work permits by occupation, nationality, industry, renewals, refusals, local applicants and positions transitioned to Islanders. This would allow the public to judge whether immigration policy is actually serving the national interest.

8. Strengthen border and background checks. Bermuda announced further immigration measures on September 3, 2026 aimed at border security, security vetting and protecting employment opportunities. TCI, because of its size and geographic position, also needs modern information-sharing and identity-verification systems.

9. Review pathways to permanent residence carefully. Bermuda generally allows certain long-term residents to seek a Permanent Resident's Certificate after at least 20 years of ordinary residence, with other specific categories having different requirements. TCI currently provides, among its routes, a PRC pathway based on ten years of continuous legal residence subject to other requirements. These are substantial policy differences and deserve national discussion.

10. Keep immigration connected to economic need. We should never create a system that prevents businesses from obtaining doctors, teachers, engineers, specialist tradespeople, hospitality professionals or other skills genuinely unavailable locally. Bermuda itself recognizes this balance: protect Bermudian opportunities while allowing immigration to address real labour shortages and support economic growth.

Protecting our economy

A stronger system could protect the TCI economy by ensuring that more of the wages created by economic expansion go to Turks and Caicos Islanders and long-term lawful residents, while businesses retain access to skills they genuinely need.

It could also encourage companies to invest more seriously in scholarships, apprenticeships, professional development and training.

The aim should not be "foreign workers versus Turks and Caicos Islanders." Many expatriate workers have contributed significantly to building the Turks and Caicos Islands. The objective should be a system in which immigration complements the local population rather than unnecessarily replacing it.

Protecting our population and national identity

TCI is a very small territory. Immigration decisions made today can shape the size and composition of our population for generations.

Turks and Caicos Islander Status is already recognized by Government as the country's highest local immigration status, governed principally by the Constitution and the Turks and Caicos Islander Status legislation.

That makes it reasonable for Government to have a long-term population policy asking: How large should our population become? What skills do we need? How many people can our schools, hospitals, roads, housing supply and infrastructure reasonably support? How do we maintain a strong Turks and Caicos identity while remaining an open and successful economy?

Those questions should be answered through data and national planning rather than immigration decisions being considered one work permit at a time.

Immigration reform alone is not enough

There are several other areas I would place alongside immigration reform in a national plan for a better Turks and Caicos Islands: stronger technical and vocational education; affordable housing and home ownership for Islanders; better public transportation; improved roads, drainage and utilities; stronger healthcare; more investment in youth and sports; greater protection of beaches, reefs and Crown land; diversification beyond tourism; support for locally owned businesses; and programmes that prepare young Turks and Caicos Islanders for management, professional and ownership positions.

My proposed principle would be simple:

Turks and Caicos Islanders should have the first opportunity to participate in the prosperity of the Turks and Caicos Islands, while immigration should supply the skills, investment and labour that the country genuinely needs.

Bermuda's system is worth studying because it tries to make that distinction explicit. TCI already has some similar protections, but we could go further by establishing clearer protected occupations, stronger enforcement, workforce-development requirements, transparent statistics and a long-term population strategy. That would not mean closing the Turks and Caicos Islands to the world. It would mean managing growth carefully so that development strengthens our people, our economy and the future of our country.

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9-10

ABSURD! A POUND OF BUTTER! WHY?

THIS KHUDI BARI HOME IS FLOOD RESISTANT.

GREAT.

BUT WHY ARE THEY USUALLY ONLY BUILT IN PLACES LIKE BANGLADESH?

CRUMP!

BOB, THIS STORM IS EPIC! IT'S UNPRECEDENTED!!!! IT'S EXTREME!!

WHOA! OH BOY!

EVER NOTICE HOW EVERYTHING IS EXTRA-SENSATIONALIZED THESE DAYS?

I KNOW! IT'S ANNOYING!

ISN'T THIS SANDWICH EPIC? IT'S UNPRECEDENTED!!!! IT'S EXTREME!!

I DUNNO WHAT'S GOTTEN INTO YOU... BUT I'LL TAKE IT!

I KNOW NOW THAT POPEYE WON'T INCREASE ME ALLOWANCE!

I YAM SICK OF TRYIN' TO LIVE ON TWELVE CENTS A WEEK!

WHAT I NEED IS A BLASTID CAREER!

PEOPLE WIT' CAREERS NEVER GITS BROKE!

I FEEL I'M STUCK IN THE SAME OLD ROUTINE. EVERY DAY, I STAND HERE DRINKING BEER

I'VE DECIDED IT'S TIME TO MAKE A CHANGE, JACK

WHAT'S THAT, THEN?

I'M GOING TO SIT DOWN

WHAT IS THE MEANING OF LIFE?

AND MORE IMPORTANTLY...

WHAT'S FOR LUNCH?

JIM DAVIS 9-10

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NEWSLINE
COMICS

No avian species wears clothing, yet my client alone is repeatedly cited as the signifier of nudity.

Wayno® P & 4 PIRRS 9-10-26

JAYBIRD VS. SIMILE

Let's play it like this - once we enter the room, you be the good cop, and I'll be the ignored cop.

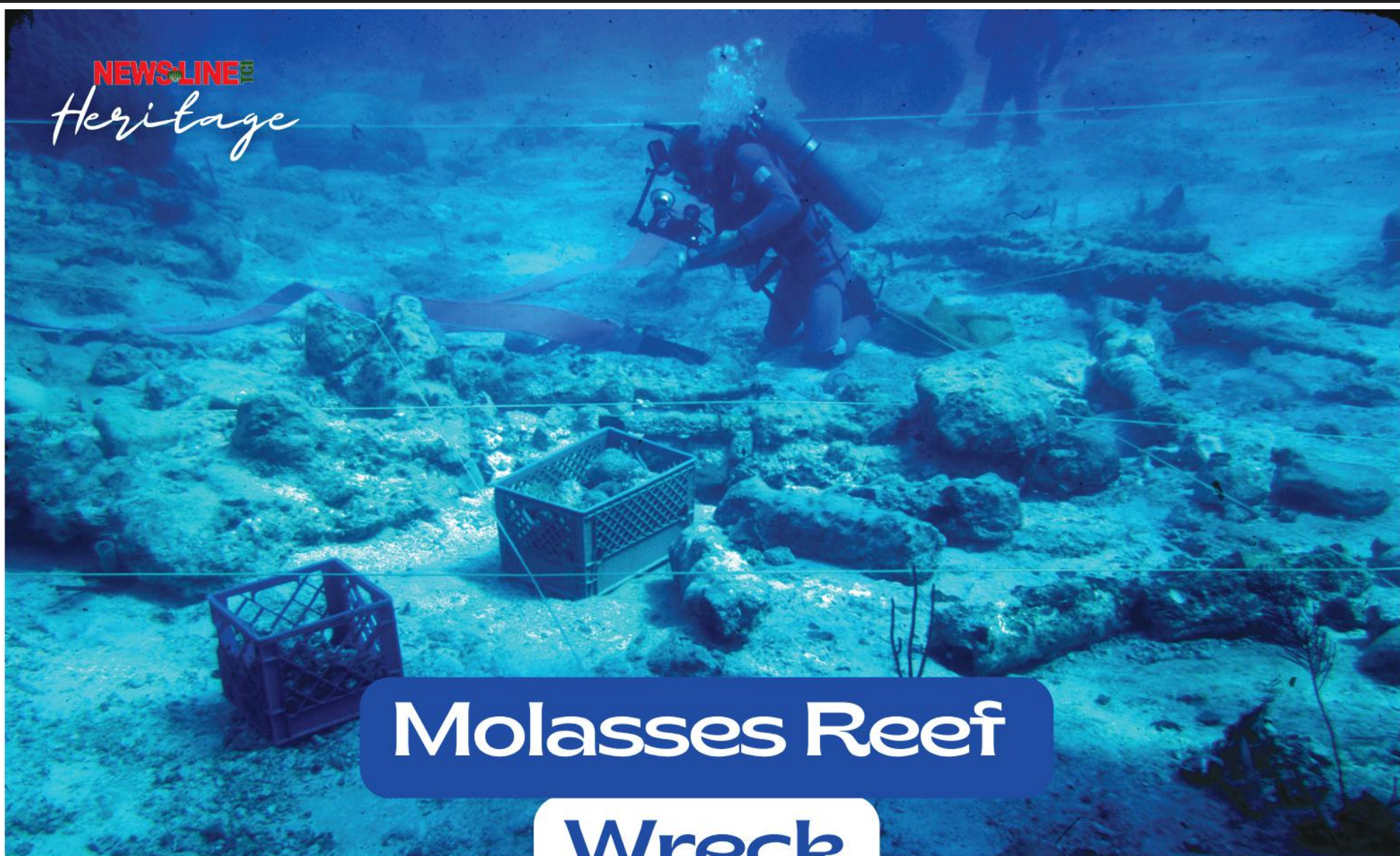
As people grow older

THEY get shorter and their TALES get taller.

© 2026 by Jack & Annie Smith

9-10

"ARE YOU BUYING OR JUST BREAKING?"



Molasses Reef

Wreck

The Molasses Reef Wreck is one of the Turks and Caicos Islands' greatest archaeological treasures. Lying beneath the waters south of the Caicos islands, it is believed to be the oldest European shipwreck ever scientifically excavated in the Americas, dating to the early sixteenth century.

Discovered in 1976 and excavated by the Institute of Nautical Archaeology during the early 1980s, the wreck provided historians with a remarkable glimpse into the Age of Discovery. Although the ship's name has never been identified, archaeological evidence suggests it was probably a Portuguese vessel built in Lisbon around 1505.

Unlike many Caribbean wrecks that have been heavily disturbed by storms or treasure hunters, the Molasses Reef site has remained unusually well preserved. Archaeologists have been able to carefully map the hull timbers, ballast stones, anchors, bronze cannons and hundreds of smaller artifacts exactly where they rested on the seabed. This painstaking work allowed researchers to reconstruct the ship's size, cargo and even the circumstances of its loss.

One of the most fascinating discoveries came from the ship's ballast—the stones carried to stabilize the vessel. Geological analysis showed that these rocks likely originated from Portugal, Spain and Atlantic islands, providing clues about the ship's previous voyages before it met its fate on the reefs of the Turks and Caicos islands.

Today, the Molasses Reef Wreck is recognized as a landmark in underwater archaeology. Rather than searching for treasure, researchers focused on preserving the site's historical value, setting new standards for the scientific study of shipwrecks around the world.

Although its crew, destination and official name remain unknown, the wreck tells an extraordinary story of courage, exploration and the hazards faced by the first European sailors crossing the Atlantic. More than five centuries later, the Molasses Reef Wreck continues to reveal new insights into one of history's most important periods of maritime exploration.

Keith, D.H., Duff, J.A., James, S.R., Oertling, T.J. & Simmons, J.J. (1984) *The Molasses Reef Wreck, Turks and Caicos Islands, B.W.I.: A Preliminary Report. International Journal of Nautical Archaeology*, 13(1), pp.45–63.
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 Lamb, W.R., Keith, D.H. & Judy, S.A. (1990) *Analysis of the Ballast of the Molasses Reef Wreck. National Geographic Research*, 6(3), pp.291–305.
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Digicel to Assess Changing Digital Landscape

By Vivian Tyson NEWSLINE Editor-In-Chief

Digicel will assess the changing digital landscape in the Turks and Caicos Islands following Starlink's entry into the market, while continuing to implement its five-year technology plan. Kern Gardiner, Country Operations Manager at Digicel TCI, said the telecommunications company intends to continue investing in its network and adjusting its strategy as the market evolves.

"Digicel's brand has always been about connecting the islands and helping people build their dreams, and we intend to continue doing that," Gardiner said during Starlink's launch event on August 27, 2026. He said Digicel will evaluate how it should position itself in densely populated areas while moving forward with its planned technological developments.

Asked about concerns surrounding Starlink's arrival and its possible effect



In this file photo, Kern Gardiner, Digicel TCI's Country Operations Manager meeting the business community and customers at the telecommunication's main office in Providenciales.

on established telecommunications providers, Gardiner said Digicel views the development as an opportunity.

"We are now at a point where we can innovate and think about how we can

create avenues for the Turks and Caicos Islands to become more connected," he said.

Starlink uses a network of low-Earth-orbit satellites to deliver internet ser-

vice, offering another connectivity option for residents and businesses, including those in areas that may be difficult to serve through conventional infrastructure.

Gardiner said Digicel would remain focused on development and making its services more accessible throughout the islands. He also promised that customers would see more of the technological work the company has been undertaking.

"We're not doing the work in the background anymore," he said.

"We're going to put it in front of our customers and let them understand why we are the number-one provider in the islands and why we are here to continue being that provider for them."

Starlink's arrival introduces a new competitor to the TCI telecommunications market, but Digicel says it intends to respond through continued investment, innovation and a stronger public presence.

Invest TCI Warns Public About Continued Impersonation Scams

Invest Turks and Caicos Islands (Invest TCI) is urging the public to remain vigilant amid continued fraudulent activity involving individuals and online accounts falsely claiming to represent the agency.

Despite previous warnings, Invest TCI continues to receive reports of impersonation attempts across Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp and Telegram. These include the creation of unauthorized Telegram accounts and groups.

The agency emphasized that the individuals operating these accounts and groups are not representatives of Invest TCI.

Members of the public should exercise caution when receiving unsolicited calls, messages or invitations to online groups from anyone claiming to represent the agency. They should also be wary of requests for payments or personal and financial information. Anyone who receives a suspicious communication should:

- Not send money or make payments in response to an unsolicited call or message.
- Never disclose personal or banking information, passwords, verification codes or other sensitive details.
- Avoid clicking suspicious links or downloading unexpected files.
- End the call or conversation instead



of continuing to engage with the individual.

Preserve evidence before blocking or deleting the account, including the telephone number, username, account name, date and time of contact, and any other identifying information.

Take screenshots of messages or conversations whenever possible.

Report the incident to Invest TCI and the relevant authorities.

Anyone uncertain about whether a communication is genuine should contact Invest TCI independently using its officially published contact in-

formation.

Suspected fraud should be reported to the Financial Crime Unit of the Royal Turks and Caicos Islands Police Force at 232-0641 or FCU@tcipolice.tc.

Reports should also be submitted to Invest Turks and Caicos Islands at 338-4772 or info@investturksandcaicos.tc.

Invest TCI said it takes the misuse of its name and identity seriously and continues to take appropriate measures to protect the public and preserve the integrity of the agency.

The public is encouraged to remain

alert and share the advisory with relatives, colleagues and others who may be targeted.

Invest Turks and Caicos Islands is the country's investment promotion agency. It works to strengthen the economy by attracting, retaining and supporting overseas investment while encouraging the growth of locally owned businesses.

The agency provides free and confidential assistance to overseas businesses seeking to establish or expand operations in the Turks and Caicos Islands. Its services include:

- Providing information about the local business environment.
- Facilitating contact with relevant government departments throughout the investment process.
- Advising investors about government incentives and concessions.
- Introducing investors to local service providers and suppliers.
- Providing guidance on work permits and permanent residency procedures.
- Offering continued support after a business has been established.

Invest TCI also administers initiatives supporting local businesses, including the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise Programme, which provides concessions and other forms of relief to eligible locally owned enterprises.

Life Line

FEATURED CHURCH

Community Fellowship Centre

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



Life line Church Directory

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

Firm Foundation Ministries International Lee Street, South Caicos. Telephone: 649-348-3581 Christ is the Answer Ministry, George Alley Off Aviation Drive, Providenciales Tel: 241-8030 One Nation Empowerment Center Church Ministry, Suite #12 Alliance Business Center, Princess Drive, Grace Bay, Providenciales. Tel: (649) 244-6194. Email: apostleyoung1952@yahoo.com. Touch of Love Ministries International Center Industrial Park, Five Cays, Providenciales Tel: 941-4903 Fax: 941-7731 Abundant Life Ministries International P.O. Box 696 Christian City, Leeward Highway, Providenciales Tel:941-941-4750 Fax: 941-4755 Anglican Church Rectory Grant Turk, Front Street, Grand Turk. Tel:946-2289 Bethany Baptist Church, Blue Hills, Providenciales Tel:941-4803 / 941-5632 / 941-5118 Church of God of Prophecy, Lower Bight, Providenciales Tel: 941-8854 Bible Study Ministries, Grand Turk Tel:946-1866 Calvary Baptist Church, South Caicos. Tel:946-3212 Harvest Bible Chapel TCI, Leeward Highway, Long Bay, Providenciales. Tel: 1649 333-2009 Email: hbctciinfo@gmail.com. https://www.harvesttci.tci. Rock of Jesus Ministry, 15 Five Cays, Safe Haven. Tel: 649-3317628 of 649-2410087	Firm Foundation Ministries International 19 Honour Lane, Behind Smart Supermarket , Providenciales. Telephone: 649-332-6240 Church of God of Prophecy, Providenciales Tel:941-3438 Roman Catholic Church, Providenciales, Tel: 941-5136 Faith Tabernacle Church of God, Providenciales, Tel:946-4073 New Testament Church of God, Orea Alley, Grand Turk Tel:946-2175 New Testament Church of God, South Caicos Tel:946-3631 Methodist Church, Grand Turk Tel:946-2352 Healing Waters Ministries, Blue Hills Providenciales Tel: 941-5867 House of Prayer Church of God, Long Bay Road Providenciales Tel: 941-8309 Kingdom Hall of Jehovah’s Witnesses, Darrell Road, Grand Turk Tel:946-2727 Mount Mariah Baptist Church, Conch Bar Middle Caicos Tel:946-6205 New Beginning Harvest Ministry, Pond Street, Grand Turk Tel:946-1759 New Testament Church of God Orea Alley P.O. Box 495 Blue Hills, Providenciales Tel: 946-1255 Airport Road, South Caicos Tel:231-2402	Firm Foundation Ministries International Waterloo Road, Grand Turk. Telephone: 649-332-624 Paradise Baptist Church, Five Cays, Providenciale Tel:941-4349 Revival Faith Center, North Backsalina, Grand Turk Tel:946-2349 Salem Baptist Church, Mission Folly, Grand Turk Tel:946-2565 Solid Rock Apostolic Ministries International, Discovery Bay Providenciales Tel: 946-5181 St. Monica’s Anglican Church P.O. Box 866 Cheshire Hall Providenciales Tel: 946-4046 Fax:946-4046;941-8499 Turks and Caicos Mission of Seventh Day Adventists, P.O. Box 803, Providenciales United Pentecostal Church, Brown’s Plaza, Leeward Highway, Providenciales Tel: 956-5852 Wesleyan Methodist Church, Blue Hills, Providenciales Tel: 946-4075; 941-4223; 941-3596 <i>Editor’s Note: If your Ministry is not listed and/or you would like for it to be part of the NEWSLINETCI Church Diary, contact us at: contact@newslnetci.com</i>
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HIGHLIGHTS OF CAPP CONFERENCE

The Third Annual Caribbean Association of Probation and Parole (CAPP) Conference took place at the Ritz Carlton Resort in Providenciales between September 2 to 5. The event brought together probation, parole and rehabilitation professionals from across the region to exchange knowledge and strengthen approaches to community supervision, rehabilitation and reintegration. The following are photo highlight of the event.





50th Anniversary of Ministerial Government (1976–2026) ...the Road to 1976 Series... THE WOMEN WHO HELPED BUILD A NEW NATION

PART 13

By Joan Astwood Sutton

History usually introduces political change through the names of men. It records the men who spoke from platforms, contested elections, negotiated constitutions, became Ministers and occupied the most visible positions of leadership. But political change does not occur only on platforms or inside government chambers. It also takes place inside homes, classrooms, clinics, churches, offices and communities. People who care for families, pre-serve confidence, share information, educate children, main-tain records, support public service, and hold communities together during periods of uncertainty sustain it. Many of those people were women. The story of Ministerial Government in the Turks and Caicos Islands cannot be told fully without them. Some entered public life and became part of the country's for-mal political record. Some worked as teachers, nurses, clerks, secretaries, community organisers and public officers. Others supported political and constitutional change quietly, without holding office or seeking recognition. Their contributions were not always preserved in official doc-uments. Their names did not always appear beneath photo-graphs or in newspaper reports. Yet they were present. They worked. They encouraged. They organised. They served. And they helped build the country that Ministerial Government was expected to lead.

The Work History Often Misses

When the Turks and Caicos Islands entered the era of Min-isterial Government in 1976, women were already carrying significant responsibilities throughout society. They raised children, managed households, taught in schools, cared for the sick, supported churches, and operated small businesses. They maintained family connections across islands and across borders when migration separated husbands, wives, parents, and children. The decline of the salt industry had disrupted life in Grand Turk, Salt Cay and South Caicos. Many families depended upon relatives working elsewhere. Women frequently became the steady centre of homes affected by unemployment, migration and economic uncertainty. This work was rarely described as nation-building. But that is what it was. A country cannot develop if its children are not educated. It cannot remain healthy if the sick are not cared for. It cannot preserve its identity if stories, customs, recipes, songs, skills, and family histories are not passed from one gen-eration to another. It cannot survive periods of political tension unless someone continues holding families and communities together. Women performed all of those roles. Their contribu-tion to national development did not begin when government formally appointed them to office. It began long before official recognition arrived.

Women Within the Political Awakening

The political awakening of the 1970s was sustained through relationships of trust. Discussions did not occur only in public meetings. They took place around kitchen tables, after church in shops, inside family homes and among friends. Women listened to the debates unfolding around them. They shared information, offered advice, encouraged participation and helped maintain the networks through which political ideas travelled. Some were directly involved in organising. Others made it possible for husbands, brothers, sons, relatives and friends to participate. Some offered food, meeting space, trans-portion or reassurance. Others challenged unfairness in their own workplaces and communities. Their participation did not always look like the public political activism most often preserved in photographs. Sometimes it looked like opening a door. Sometimes it meant keeping a con-fidence. Sometimes it meant passing along a message. Some-times it meant protecting a family while another member faced the risks associated with political activity. Sometimes it meant encouraging someone not to abandon the struggle. These con-tributions are difficult to measure because many occurred pri-vately. No minutes were written. No attendance records were taken. No reporter stood nearby. That absence from the official record should not be mistaken for an absence from history.

The Women Who Fed the Movement

Political movements are remembered through speeches, meet-ings and public demonstrations, but they also depended upon quieter forms of service. People gathering for long discussions and organisational work had to be fed. Behind many of those meetings were women who prepared meals, served partici-pants, and ensured the work could continue. Community recollection identifies Frances Durham, Agatha “Gatha” Butterfield, Gloria Ewing, Pearl Carter, Susan Seymour, Nola Musgrove and Alice Missick among the women who cooked for the Movement. Their contribution may not appear in official minutes, but it formed part of the practical founda-tion the organisation depended on. Cooking was not separate from the Movement’s work. It was service to the Movement. These women gave their time, la-bour, food and care, often without public acknowledgment. By feeding those who gathered, they helped sustain the people who were working for political change. Their names deserve to be remembered because history is made not only by those who speak at the meeting, but also by those whose unseen labour makes the meeting possible.

Mildred Garland-Astwood: Wherever She Saw a Need

Among the women whose lives joined politics, education and community service was Mildred Angelina Garland-Astwood. Originally from South Caicos, she settled in Grand Turk in 1974. She was a teacher and craft educator, but her teaching did not end when the school day was over. Young people came to her store not only to purchase some-thing, but to talk. She listened to their problems, advised them

about life, and took a genuine interest in what became of them. They knew her concern was genuine, and they knew it came from love. That love was returned.

Mildred married Lewis “Louie” Edwin Astwood, an organiser in the political awakening who later became the first Minister of Public Works, Utilities and Labour. Yet her place in history should not be understood only through her marriage. Family and movement recollections describe her as an activist and or-ganiser within the Black Power Movement. Birch “Pork Chops” Simmons remembered her directly as an organiser. Much of that work took place quietly. Meetings and communi-cations depended upon trust, and political involvement could expose people to criticism or suspicion. According to those rec-ollections, Mildred helped keep people connected and main-tained organisational continuity, particularly when her husband was away from the Islands. Her daily contact with people in Grand Turk and the outer islands made her a natural link within the movement.

This claim belongs to oral history and should be presented as such until surviving correspondence, membership material or contemporary records provide documentary confirmation. But oral testimony is evidence, especially when discreet work was never intended to produce a public paper trail. Mildred’s activism was only one expression of a larger instinct. When she saw something the community needed, she tried to provide it. She assisted with beauty pageants, prepared pack-ages for older adults and prisoners, taught crafts, and used her creative skills to solve practical problems. One of those solutions became a national school tradition. In September 1976, she designed a peach-and-white gingham jumper with a white blouse for her daughter, Joan, who attend-ed what was then North Primary School. Mildred felt the exist-ing uniform did not properly reflect the child’s beauty. Head Teacher Gladys Seymour admired the design and recommend-ed its adoption as the official girls’ uniform. The school later became Ona Glinton Primary School, and fifty years later the peach-and-white design remains in use. RTC’s published histo-ry of the school confirms the uniform’s origin and its fiftieth anniversary in September 2026.

Another service drew women to her. At a time when expect-ant mothers had no ultrasound machine available to tell them whether they were carrying a girl or a boy, heavily pregnant young women came to Mildred. She would gently feel the mother’s stomach and offer her prediction. Family memory holds that she was wrong perhaps twice in her lifetime. When she could not tell, she did not pretend. She said, “I am not sure about this one.” This was not a medical diagnosis and should not be presented as one. It was a remembered folk practice grounded in obser-vation, experience, and the trust women placed in her. It also reveals something important about the period: where formal services did not yet exist, communities often turned to knowl-edgeable women. Mildred raised children, taught, advised young people, helped neighbours, supported political organisation and created things that brought confidence and dignity. Her life moved easily be-tween the political and the personal because, for her, service was not divided into categories. She saw a need, and she did what she could.

Women Enter the Formal Political Record

The parliamentary record for the 1976–1980 term includes two women: Helena Jones Robinson, MBE, and Madlin Au-gusta Wynns-Potter. Election history identifies Robinson as the PDM-appointed member and Wynns-Potter as the PNO-ap-pointed member. No women contested the 1976 election, but both entered the Legislative Council as the Ministerial Govern-ment began. Their presence matters. The political structures of the period remained overwhelmingly male. The First Ministerial Govern-ment consisted of a male Chief Minister, three male Ministers, two male Parliamentary Secretaries and other male represen-tatives. Yet women were not completely absent from the for-mal institutions created under the 1976 Constitution. Helena Jones Robinson and Madlin Augusta Wynns-Potter therefore stand within the official history of that first constitu-tional term. Their presence shows that women were beginning to occupy recognised positions in the national political struc-ture even while ministerial leadership remained in male hands. Their service deserves closer historical research. Original appointment notices, legislative records, speeches, committee papers, correspondence and family archives may reveal more about what they contributed, the matters in which they participated and the challenges they faced as women serving during the early years of Ministerial Government. Their names should not simply appear in a list. They should be studied as part of the history of women’s political participation in the Turks and Caicos Islands.

Teachers Who Built More Than Classrooms

Some of the most important women in the development of the Turks and Caicos Islands never held elected office. They taught. Across the Islands, women teachers helped prepare generations of children for a country undergoing enormous change. A teacher in 1976 was not merely delivering lessons from a textbook. She was helping children imagine lives beyond the economic limitations facing their families and communities. Teachers encouraged literacy, discipline, confidence and ambi-tion. They identified promising students, assisted families and sometimes used their own limited resources to provide mate-rials children needed. They taught future Ministers, Permanent Secretaries, doctors, lawyers, nurses, business owners, craftspeople, civil servants, parents and community leaders. Their influence entered every part of national life. Ministerial Government created greater local responsibility, but the country needed educated citizens capable of carrying that responsibility forward. Women teach-ers helped produce them. Their work was constitutional in the

broadest sense because self-government requires more than political authority. It requires people who can read, analyse, administer, question, lead and participate. The classroom was therefore one of the places where the future of Ministerial Government was being built.

Nurses, Caregivers and Community Health

Women also stood at the centre of healthcare and community welfare. In small island communities, nurses frequently carried responsibilities extending far beyond a clinic or hospital ward. They cared for mothers and babies, responded to emergencies, advised families and became trusted figures within the settle-ments they served. Medical facilities and transportation were limited. Reaching another island for treatment was not always easy. Communication could be slow, and specialised care was often unavailable locally. Under those circumstances, knowl-edge, calmness and dedication mattered enormously. The women who served in healthcare helped hold communities together during illness, childbirth, injury and loss. They did not make constitutional speeches. They made Min-isterial Government meaningful in another way. They helped ensure that the expanded responsibilities assigned to local gov-ernment reached citizens as care. The same was true of women engaged in welfare, church work and informal community as-sistance. Before modern social programmes expanded, families and neighbourhoods often depended on people who quietly identified need and responded. A meal prepared for a strug-gling household, clothing gathered for children, care provided to an elderly neighbour or support offered during bereavement rarely entered government reports. But these acts strengthened the country.

Women Inside the Public Service

As Ministerial Government developed, women became in-creasingly important within government administration. They worked as typists, clerks, secretaries, teachers, nurses, librar-ians, administrative officers and departmental employees. The titles could appear modest, but the responsibilities were essential. Someone had to prepare correspondence, maintain files, record decisions, process applications, arrange meet-ings, account for public money and preserve the documents through which government operated. In many offices, women became the institutional memory of departments. Ministers and senior officers might change, but experienced employees often remained, carrying knowledge from one administration to another. They understood the files. They knew the procedures. They re-membered what had already been attempted. They knew the communities and the people seeking assistance. Their contri-bution helped provide continuity during political change. Pub-lic administration depends upon accurate records and reliable processes. The documents that historians study today often survived because an officer typed, filed, copied, and preserved them decades ago. The ordinary administrative work of women helped create the national archive.

From Participation to Leadership

The constitutional changes of 1976 did not immediately create equality between women and men in political leadership. Prog-ress came gradually. Women continued to enter Parliament, public administration and national institutions. In later years, they served as Ministers, Chief Secretaries, Deputy Governors, Attorneys General, Speakers, party leaders and, eventually, Premier. After Helena Jones Robinson, MBE, and Madlin Augusta Wynns-Potter entered the Legislative Council during the first term of Ministerial Government, other women continued opening doors. In 1984, Dr. Rosita Beatrice Missick-Butterfield became the first woman elected to the Legislative Council under Minis-terial Government. Arabella Smith also entered that Legislature as an appointed member. In 1988, Sarah Isabella Misick became the first woman elected as a PDM candidate, while Emily Augusta Saunders was also elected. Rosita Butterfield returned as an appointed member. Following the 1991 election, Arabella Smith became the first woman to hold ministerial office in the Turks and Caicos Islands, while Rosita Butterfield served as Speaker of the Legislative Council. Their service marked important steps in moving wom-en from participation in political life into recognised positions of authority. Other women followed, expanding women’s role in political decision-making. Rita Gardiner, Lillian Boyce, Karen Delancy, Karen Malcolm, Josephine Connelly and Amanda Misick were among those who continued widening the space available to women in the Legislature and public leadership. In February 2009, Hon. Lillian Elaine Boyce became the first woman sworn in as Deputy Premier and the first female dep-uty head of government. By then, the 2006 Constitution had replaced the former titles of Chief Minister and Deputy Chief Minister with Premier and Deputy Premier. Hon. Akierra Mis-sick later served as Deputy Premier after an elected govern-ment was restored in 2012. Women also reached other important positions. Sharlene Cart-wright-Robinson became the first female Leader of the Oppo-sition and the first woman to lead a major political party in the Turks and Caicos Islands. In 2016, she became the first woman to serve as Premier and the first woman to lead the Govern-ment of the Turks and Caicos Islands. That achievement did not emerge from nowhere. It rested on decades of participation by women who served before ministe-rial office was open to them, women who worked in commu-nities and government departments, and women who showed that leadership was never exclusively male. It stood upon the service of the women appointed in 1976, the women who later contested and won elections, the women who entered Cabinet, and the women who led parliamentary institutions. It also stood upon generations of women whose leadership was exercised outside formal office and whose names were not always recorded.



Mildred Astwood

The journey from women working quietly behind political change to a woman leading the Government reflects an im-portant part of the country’s broader constitutional develop-ment.

The Danger of Naming Without Evidence

Recovering women’s history requires care. Family memories, oral histories, photographs and community recollections are essential where formal records are incomplete, but remem-brance must not become guesswork. Historical honesty re-quires us to distinguish documented appointments from per-sonal testimony, family recollection and community memory. The purpose is not to create titles people did not hold, but to recognise the work they genuinely performed. That will require interviews, family papers, government records, photographs and a willingness to invite correction.

More Than Footnotes

For too long, women have appeared at the edge of political history. They are described as wives, mothers, helpers and sup-porters, while the full nature of their work remains unexplored. But a wife could also be an organiser. A mother could also be a political thinker. A teacher could also be building the intel-lectual foundation of self-government. A nurse could also be sustaining national development. A clerk could also be preserv-ing the documentary memory of the state. A woman working quietly could still be changing her country. The history of Ministerial Government must therefore be broader than the history of the men who held ministerial por-tfolios. It must include the women who helped make communi-ties strong enough to support political advancement.

Fifty Years Later

As the Turks and Caicos Islands commemorate fifty years of Ministerial Government, women should not be added to the story as an afterthought. They were already there. They were present during the political awakening. They were present in the homes where conversations took place. They were present in the schools preparing the next generation. They were pres-ent in clinics caring for the people. They were present in offices helping government function. They were present in Parliamnt during the first constitutional term. They were present in com-munities maintaining stability during uncertainty. Some became nationally recognised leaders. Many did not. But recognition does not determine whether a contribution mattered. The country was built through visible leadership and quiet service. Through public speeches and private sacrifice. Through political authority and community strength. The men of 1976 carried important constitutional responsibilities. The women carried responsibilities too. Sometimes those responsi-bilities were recognised by appointment. Sometimes they were recorded only in memory. Sometimes they were treated simply as part of everyday life. But without them, the story of national development remains incomplete. The history of Ministerial Government belongs to the wom-en who entered public office. It belongs to the women who supported political change. It belongs to the teachers, nurs-es, clerks, craftspeople, church workers, mothers, organisers, cooks, and community builders. It belongs to the women whose names appear in official records. And it belongs to those whose names we are still trying to recover. They were not standing outside the nation’s history. They were helping to build it.

This article is dedicated to the generations of women whose leadership, labour, courage and care helped shape the Turks and Caicos Islands.

About the Author

Joan Astwood-Sutton, LLB (Hons.), MA, and Certificate in Youth & Community Studies, is an author, publisher, cultural heri-tage 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, the first Minister of Public Works, Utilities and Labour under the First Ministerial Government established in 1976, and the late Mildred Garland-Astwood, a teacher, craft educator and wom-an remembered through oral history for her contribution to the political and community life of the period. Through archival preservation, oral-history documentation, and historical re-search, Joan has worked to preserve the memory and identity of the Turks and Caicos Islands for future generations.

300+ Students Feted at Sotheby's Annual Back-to-School Giveaway

Turks & Caicos Sotheby's International Realty (TCSIR) continued its commitment to the local community with its 3rd Annual Back-to-School Giveaway, welcoming more than 300 students and their families for an afternoon of celebration ahead of the new school year.

The annual event brought together students, parents, TCSIR agents and staff for a fun-filled afternoon designed to help children start the school year on a positive note.

Students received backpacks filled with essential back-to-school supplies, including books, pens, pencils and other classroom necessities. The afternoon also featured face painting, games, music from a live DJ and a lively dance competition. Families were treated to hot dogs, burgers and delicious ice cream courtesy of Island Scoop.

Now in its third year, the Back-to-School Giveaway has become an important part of TCSIR's community outreach, providing an opportunity for the company's agents and team members to connect with local families beyond real estate.

"Supporting the communities we serve is an important part of who we are," said Joe Zahm, President of Turks & Caicos Sotheby's International Realty. "We are proud to see our Back-to-School Giveaway continue to grow, welcoming more than 300 students this year. I am grateful to our team and everyone who contributed to making the event a success, and we wish students across the Turks & Caicos Islands a rewarding and successful school year."

The event was made possible through the collective efforts of TCSIR's administrative team, agents and participating vendors, whose support helped create a memorable afternoon for local students and their families. As the new academic year begins, TCSIR looks forward to continuing initiatives that strengthen its connection with and support for the Turks & Caicos community.



Students not only showing off their face paintings but also their backpacks



A proud parent and child with their new backpack at TCSIR's Back-to-School Giveaway.



Students enjoying the back-to-school activities



Students enjoy a sweet treat courtesy of Island Scoop.



Students enjoy the face painting booth at TCSIR's 3rd Annual Back-to-School Giveaway.



TCSIR agents and team members at the 3rd Annual Back-to-School Giveaway.

Modest 2.5 per cent economic growth projected for TCI in 2026

By Vivian Tyson NEWSLINE Editor-In-Chief

The Turks and Caicos Islands economy is projected to grow by approximately 2.5 per cent in 2026, a more modest expansion than the Government anticipated at the beginning of the year.

The economic outlook was presented in the 2026–2027 Speech from the Throne, read by Governor Dileeni Daniel-Selvaratnam in Parliament on September 8, 2026, on behalf of the Turks and Caicos Islands Government.

According to the Throne Speech, the Statistics Authority expects total economic output to reach approximately \$1.8 billion, while unemployment is forecast to remain below 4.5 per cent.

Although the economy continues to demonstrate resilience, the Government acknowledged that the pace of expansion has slowed.

Tourism has moderated, business operating costs have increased, and the international economic environment has become less certain. Pressure on global oil markets is also expected to affect domestic prices.

As a country that imports virtually all its fuel and most of the goods it consumes, the Turks and Caicos Islands is particularly exposed to external price shocks. Increases in international fuel and shipping costs are eventually reflected in electricity bills, prices at the gas pump and the landed cost of food

and household items.

Tourism and construction remain the principal pillars of the economy.

Between January and July, the territory welcomed more than 450,165 stayover visitors. That represented growth of approximately 5.4 per cent compared with the corresponding period in 2025.

The Government described the visitor increase as solid but acknowledged that it was slower than the strong tourism recovery recorded following the COVID-19 pandemic.

Nearly two million visitors travelled to the Turks and Caicos Islands last year, including cruise and stayover arrivals.

Despite the slower growth outlook, the Government reported that the public finances remained stable.

Parliament approved a balanced budget containing projected revenue of \$551.1 million and expenditure of \$550.8 million.

At the end of July, recurrent revenue stood at approximately \$195.5 million, one per cent above the approved target.

Hotel, Restaurant and Tourism Tax, import duties, stamp duty on land transactions, customs processing fees and work-permit fees accounted for about 77 per cent of that revenue.

The Throne Speech said Hotel, Restaurant and Tourism Tax collections exceeded the first-quarter target by \$6.7

million at the end of August. Recurrent expenditure through July was approximately \$152 million, or 15 per cent below budget. Healthcare alone accounted for about one-quarter of that spending.

The year-to-date operating surplus was approximately \$43.5 million, while cash and reserves stood at about \$406.7 million.

In February 2026, S&P Global Ratings affirmed the territory's A-minus sovereign credit rating with a stable outlook. The Government described the rating as evidence of continued international confidence in the management of the country's finances.

Its medium-term fiscal framework will be based on five principal areas: disciplined expenditure, resilient revenue, targeted capital investment, prudent borrowing and institutional reform. The Government said recurrent spending must not outpace sustainable revenue. New ongoing commitments will therefore have to be justified, properly costed and offset where necessary.

Revenue compliance will also receive greater attention. A Drag-Net Task Force on Revenue Collection and Compliance is expected to identify and pursue unpaid obligations owed by taxpayers, licence holders, businesses and individuals.

The Government is also considering creating a Revenue Authority that would bring

the executive management of revenue-collecting departments under one organisation with a dedicated compliance division.

Inflation is forecast at approximately 3.3 per cent, and the Government acknowledged that positive national indicators do not necessarily reflect conditions in every household.

The Cost-of-Living Relief Programme will continue, although means-testing will be tightened to ensure payments reach people who satisfy the eligibility requirements.

By August 5, more than 15,000 applications had been processed and over 10,600 applicants had been declared eligible. The Government said most beneficiaries were employed people who used the assistance to pay living expenses and utility bills.

Monthly monitoring of essential food prices will continue, along with broader cost-of-living and utility reforms.

Information gathered through the relief programme will also be used to create a database identifying vulnerable residents and their needs, allowing future assistance to be more precisely targeted.

The Government said it would monitor economic conditions and adjust its policies where necessary as the territory navigates slower growth and continuing international uncertainty.

Youth Tribunal Returns for Second Edition with Focus on Culture, History and Future Leadership

The Youth Tribunal will return for its second edition on Wednesday, 23 September 2026 at 7:00 p.m. at the Salvation Army Hall, Providenciales, bringing together young people, government representatives, private-sector leaders, community stakeholders and members of the public for an evening of youth-led national dialogue.

This year's Tribunal will explore the topic: "How Can TCI Preserve Its Culture and History While Preparing Young People to Lead the Future?" The Youth Tribunal is a youth-led, non-partisan civic engagement initiative designed to provide young people across the Turks and Caicos Islands with a professional platform to share perspectives, examine national challenges and propose practical solutions.

Interest in this year's event has been strong, with all 20 speaker spaces filled and additional applicants placed on a waitlist.

Unlike a traditional debate, the Youth Tribunal is designed to function as a youth think tank, encouraging participants not only to identify challenges, but also to present realistic recommendations, policy ideas and solutions. Following the event, key recommendations emerging from the discussion will be compiled and shared with relevant government stakeholders for consideration.

"The Youth Tribunal is about creating meaningful space for young people to contribute to the national conversation. We want participants

2026 YOUTH TRIBUNAL 2nd Edition

Date: 23 09 2026 **Venue:** THE SALVATION ARMY PROVIDENCIALES

Speakers:

- Ludemia Pierre** - Miss Teen International TCI & Youth Advocate
- Carissa Brown** - Miss Teen Universe Turks and Caicos
- Tinell Garland** - Director of Miss Teen International T&C Organization
- Labrina Barranco** - TCICC Student Guild President & Aspiring Diplomat
- Malik Robinson** - Senior Border Force Officer
- DeAjah Smith** - Sports Performance Coach Apprentice
- Seth Carter** - Patient Service Assistant
- Holly Missick** - Author & Advocate
- Faysha Diamond** - Artist
- Elijah Simmons** - Public speaker

SCAN TO REGISTER

Sponsors: H T FLEURIDOR, Grant Thornton, Master Tech, Concrete, Provo Water, Caicos Isles, MARLIN.

Your voice, Your choice, Our future.

2026 YOUTH TRIBUNAL 2nd Edition

Date: 23 09 2026 **Venue:** THE SALVATION ARMY PROVIDENCIALES

Speakers:

- Sabrina Parker** - Solicitor
- Wikenski Rene** - Entrepreneur
- Graceaniqua Harvey** - Business advisor & Illustrator / Artist
- Cristhofer Lugo** - Software Engineer
- Kendrea S. Gelcius** - Marketing & Communications
- Donisha Been** - Registration Officer II & Finance & Management Student
- Farrah Grant** - Real Estate Agent Christies Int Real Estate TCI
- Adiah Harry** - Compliance Inspector & Entrepreneur
- Raynae Myers** - Investigative Officer & Youth Parliamentarian

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MEET OUR SPEAKERS!

Your voice, Your choice, Our future.

to leave knowing that their ideas, experiences and solutions matter, and that young people have an important role to play in shaping the future of the Turks and Caicos Islands," said Christanae Lewis, Youth Tribunal Executive Committee member. The tribunal will also feature

youth hosts, cultural performances, media coverage and participation from representatives across government, business and civil society. The event is supported by a growing group of corporate and community partners, including Grant Thornton TCI and TCBC as Streaming

Partners, alongside Platinum Partners Fleuridor Architects, Concrete Insight, Caicos Isles, Provo Water and Marlin Ltd, among other supporters. Members of the public are invited to attend, with advance registration encouraged due to limited seating.



The most common bone cancers vary by age.

Bone tumors can cause symptoms such as persistent pain and unintended weight loss, or they might only be discovered when someone breaks a bone and X-rays show a lesion. Wendy Allen-Rhoades, M.D., Ph.D., a pediatric oncologist at Mayo Clinic Comprehensive Cancer Center, describes the most common bone cancers in children and adults.

A bone tumor is an abnormal growth of cells within the bone. Some bone tumors are benign, or noncancerous, and may be monitored over time. Others are malignant, or cancerous, and require treatment because they can grow, damage the bone or spread to other parts of the body.

“Hearing that an imaging test found a bone tumor or bone lesion can be frightening. Fortunately, most bone tumors aren’t cancerous,” Dr. Allen-Rhoades says. “The key is finding out exactly what type of tumor or lesion you have, so your healthcare team can recommend the right care.”

Primary bone cancer is different from cancer that has spread to the bone from another part of the body, Dr. Allen-Rhoades notes. Cancers are named for where they begin. For example, if lung cancer spreads to the bone, it’s still lung cancer, not bone cancer. Likewise, if bone cancer spreads to the lungs, it’s still bone cancer.

Pain in bones

Pain in bones, muscles or joints is common and is usually caused by conditions other than cancer. Pain that worsens, doesn’t improve, wakes you or comes with other symptoms, such as swelling, fever, weight loss or limping, deserves medical evaluation, Dr. Allen-Rhoades says.

“In children and teenagers, persistent pain shouldn’t automatically be dismissed as growing pains,” she adds. “While growing pains are common, ongoing pain that interferes with sports, school or daily activities should be evaluated by a healthcare professional.”

Persistent back pain in children is also uncommon and should be checked. Another warning sign is a fracture that occurs after little or no trauma. Some bone tumors can weaken the bone.

“Sometimes bone tumors don’t cause symptoms. Instead, they’re discovered when an X-ray or other imaging test is performed after a sports injury or another unrelated problem,” Dr. Allen-Rhoades says. “In these cases, the injury didn’t cause the tumor; the imaging revealed something that was already there.”

The most common bone cancers include:

Osteosarcoma starts in cells that form bones. It’s the most common type of bone cancer. Osteosarcoma tends to happen most often in teens

Does a Bone Tumor Always Mean Cancer? Here’s What You Need to Know

and young adults. Osteosarcoma happens most often in the long bones of the legs and sometimes the arms. Osteosarcoma treatment most often involves surgery and chemotherapy.

Chondrosarcoma usually begins in bones but can sometimes occur in soft tissue. Chondrosarcoma happens most often in the pelvis, hip and shoulder. It occurs most often in middle-aged and older adults. Chondrosarcoma treatment often involves surgery to remove the cancer. Small and slow-growing chondrosarcomas in the arms and legs are sometimes treated with a procedure to scrape cancer cells from the bone. The surgeon might apply cold gas or a chemical to kill any cancer cells that remain. The bone can be repaired with a bone graft or bone cement, if needed.

Ewing sarcoma starts in bones and the soft tissue around the bones. Ewing sarcoma mostly happens in children and young adults. It most often begins in leg bones and the pelvis. Ewing sarcoma treatment most often includes chemotherapy and surgery.

“Many benign tumors don’t require treatment and can simply be monitored if they’re not causing pain, limiting function or weakening the bone. Other benign bone tumors may require surgery,” Dr. Allen-Rhoades says. “Malignant bone tumors, however, require treatment. Depending on the type of cancer, treatment may include surgery, chemotherapy, radiation therapy or a combination.”

Innovations
Innovations such as 3D-printed models of a per-

son’s tumor and the physical structures around it often help surgeons determine the best way to remove the tumor. Proton beam therapy may be used to deliver higher doses of radiation to bone tumors without damaging healthy tissue nearby.

The cause of most bone cancers isn’t known and there is no way to prevent it. Factors that can increase risk include certain rare genetic syndromes passed through families, such as Li-Fraumeni syndrome and hereditary retinoblastoma; other bone conditions such as Paget’s disease of bone and fibrous dysplasia; and radiation therapy and some types of chemotherapy for other forms of cancer.

Because bone tumors are rare, it’s important to be evaluated by a healthcare team with experience diagnosing and treating your specific condition. Specialists including radiologists, pathologists, orthopedic surgeons and medical oncologists work together to make an accurate diagnosis and recommend the most appropriate treatment plan.

“If you’ve been told you have a bone tumor or bone lesion, try not to assume the worst. Many bone tumors are benign, and even malignant bone cancers can often be treated successfully,” Dr. Allen-Rhoades says. “If you have persistent pain, an abnormal imaging finding or symptoms that concern you, don’t ignore them. Talk with your healthcare team. An accurate diagnosis is the first step toward getting the care that’s right for you.”

- Source: Mayo Clinic

Honouring Disease Detectives Protecting Public Health in the Caribbean

CARPHA Celebrates World Field Epidemiology Day 2026

On September 7, 2026, CARPHA joined the global field epidemiology community in celebrating World Field Epidemiology Day under the theme, “Protecting Communities from Behind the Scenes: The Power of Field Epidemiology.”

Founded by Training Programmes in Epidemiology and Public Health Interventions Network (TEPHINET), World Field Epidemiology Day is a global movement that highlights the invaluable work of field epidemiologists in strengthening public health systems to detect and respond to emergencies, protect population health and advance regional and global health security.

In observance of World Field Epidemiology Day, Dr. Lisa Indar, Executive Director, Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA), shared “Field Epidemiologists are at the forefront of public health response. Whether managing outbreaks of emerging infectious diseases, responding to natural disasters, supporting vaccination campaigns, or addressing environmental and other health risks, they provide the data and expertise needed for informed public health action”.

Through CARPHA’s Caribbean Regional Field Epidemiology and Laboratory Training Programme (CR-FELTP) health sector personnel across member states are trained in applied epidemiology, disease surveillance, emergency response and public health research. This year, the updated FELTP Frontline 3.0 curriculum introduced a One Health approach, incorporating human, animal

and environmental health perspectives into field epidemiology. Integration of this approach strengthens multisectoral collaboration and promotes coordinated action, effectively equipping graduates to address complex public health issues.

“Workforce training and capacity building is an integral element of health security,” said Dr. Horace Cox, Director, Surveillance, Disease Prevention and Control, CARPHA.

“Today, we celebrate the achievements of field epidemiologists across the Caribbean and around the world who strengthen surveillance systems, support outbreak preparedness and response, and work alongside vulnerable communities. Their commitment, scientific expertise, and dedication remain essential to building resilient health systems and ensuring a safer future for all.”

The CR-FELTP is an affiliated member of TEPHINET. Through the support of international technical development partners and donors, such as, the US Centers for Disease Prevention and Control, the World Bank, the European Union, the Pandemic Fund and others, the CR-FELTP has been able to execute CARPHA’s mandate to provide public health workforce training to the Region.

“Over 530 fellows from 18 CARPHA Member States have graduated from the CR-FELTP since its inception in 2014. As silent, unsung heroes,



Celebrating the many graduates and health sector professionals in the invaluable work as field epidemiologists in strengthening public health systems within the Region.

these public health professionals stand on the forefront of response to national, regional and global health challenges,” said Dr. Laura-Lee Boordram, Head CR-FELTP, CARPHA.

“It has been a privilege to work with these individuals and see how their skills and competencies have contributed to the health of the Region”. The Agency proudly celebrates the graduates of

the CR-FELTP and recognises field epidemiologists across the Caribbean and around the world. Today we honour our unsung heroes working tirelessly behind the scenes to safeguard communities and protect the health of the Region. For more information on the CR-FELTP see more here. For more information on World Field Epidemiology Day visit TEPHINET’s website here.

Koffee makes waves with 'Ova So'

By the time the sun began its descent over Wickie Wackie Beach on Friday, the shoreline had taken on a different kind of rhythm.

Waves rolled quietly towards the sand, the evening breeze moved easily through the gathering and, against the picturesque backdrop of sea and sky, a specially invited crowd waited for Koffee to give them a taste of what comes next.

There was no sprawling concert stage or sea of thousands demanding her attention. Instead, the Grammy-winning artiste chose intimacy — a fitting setting for a musical reintroduction that appears to be unfolding on her own terms.

At the centre of Friday's gathering was Ova So, Koffee's latest single and another breadcrumb on the road towards her highly anticipated new album, due in October. The track was unveiled as part

of a series of mini pop-up shows the reggae star has been using to reconnect with audiences ahead of the project, turning each appearance into both a performance and a preview of the musical chapter she is preparing to open.

For an artiste whose career once moved at whirlwind speed — from breakout sensation to Grammy winner and international stages in just a few short years — this latest chapter feels less like a race back into the spotlight and more like a carefully paced return. At Wickie Wackie, there was room for the music to breathe, for Koffee to meet her audience up close and, for one evening, allow a select few inside the world she has been quietly creating.

"I think this is one of the songs dem weh me original fans dem ago love because I think it has a similar style to some of my earlier work like

Raggamuffin, using oldies samples and

stuff like that," she shared.

That familiarity, however, should not be mistaken for an indication that the forthcoming project will remain in one musical lane.

"There's different energies that you'll experience on the album, different genres, different feels of the music, and I think overall fans can expect a pretty cool, chill experience," Koffee said.

Koffee's latest musical exploits come after a brief hiatus, but as she readies a new project the entertainer is promising consistency. She outlined that her time away from the music scene allowed her to prepare herself mentally for the re-emergence she's now experiencing.

"Fans can expect more presence and consistency from me," she said. "I can definitely say that the time I took off the scene, I rejuvenated myself, refreshed myself, and just made sure my mind



Koffee connected with fans in an intimate and personal setting at Ova So, a pop-up appearance, which took place at Wickie Wackie on Friday.

was in the right place to take on the road again."

"I think I'm doing the best I've been doing my entire life, and I'm looking forward to experiencing even more and better," she added.

New James Bond feature film to première at GoldenEye

A new feature documentary exploring the life, imagination and enduring legacy of James Bond creator Ian Fleming — titled *Ian Fleming and the Curse of James Bond* — will première at GoldenEye, Fleming's former Jamaican home, during the 80th anniversary year of the villa's construction.

Directed by Adam Low, the film examines Ian Fleming's life, imagination and legacy beyond the legend of 007, considering the contradictions, pressures and fascinations that shaped both the man and the charged literary world he created.

The Film première Weekend, set for November 19 to 22, forms part of GoldenEye's wider 80th anniversary celebration, honouring the villa's origins, its connection to Fleming's work, and its continuing role as a destination for writers, artists, musicians, travellers and Bond admirers. The Première Weekend will bring guests from around the world to the place where Fleming's daily writing ritual helped launch the Bond phenomenon. The programme includes a screening at PlayScape, a cocktail party with members of the film's crew at the GoldenEye villa, with a Jamaican jazz band, a classic Jamaican BBQ and Ian Fleming-themed morning breakfasts. Together, the events offer guests a rare opportunity to experience the film in the setting most closely associated with Fleming's creative life.

BIOGRAPHY, PLACE AND MYTHOLOGY

GoldenEye is the former home of author Ian Fleming in Oracabessa, Jamaica. Fleming purchased the site in 1946 (it was formerly a donkey racetrack) and built the villa as his island retreat, where he went



James Norton, assistant producer; David Gross, executive producer; Minister of Culture, Gender, Entertainment and Sport, Olivia Grange; Adam Low, film director; Barbara Blake-Hannah, cultural liaison; and Martin Rosenbaum, producer, are all smiles after their meeting.

on to write the James Bond novels and stories. Today, GoldenEye is operated by Island Outpost as a distinctive Jamaican property that preserves the spirit, history and natural beauty of its place.

"Fleming built GoldenEye as a place where he could write, and every James Bond novel was written here. Eighty years later, it remains the spiritual birthplace of Bond. To screen a film that looks so closely at Fleming himself, during GoldenEye's 80th year, is very special," said Chris Blackwell, Founder, and Marika Kessler, CEO, Island Outpost.

Presented at GoldenEye by Gross Media, the première weekend brings together biography, place and mythology in a setting deeply connected to the Bond story. "GoldenEye's enduring legacy as a centre of Jamaican art and creativity is rare

and compelling," said David M. Gross, the film's executive producer. "So much new has originated here and radiated outward — through music, painting, literature and the performing arts. Our film invites a new generation to come to Oracabessa, St. Mary, to understand that legacy and be inspired by it."

"In making the film, I was determined to put Jamaica at the centre of the story," said Adam Low, the film's director. "Even the Bond books not set there are infused with the island's atmosphere, landscape and history. By including Jamaican voices — from Fleming's longtime garden-er Ramsay Dacosta to novelist Marlon James, as well as Minister of Culture Olivia 'Babsy' Grange whose relative Aunt Violet was Fleming's house manager — the film shows how deeply Jamaica shaped

Fleming's imagination and the world of Bond."

"As Minister Grange says in the film, 'Jamaica is the star of the Bond films,' and the documentary makes a compelling case that without Jamaica, there would be no James Bond," said Adam Low, underlining the Jamaican connection. The perspective of the film deepens the première's connection to GoldenEye by positioning Jamaica not simply as Fleming's retreat, but as a defining creative force behind Bond's settings, sensibility and mythology."

The film's opening sequence features a moving benediction in the Rastafari tradition by author, journalist and cultural liaison Barbara Blake-Hannah, while driving along the vibrant streets through Oracabessa, St. Mary, en route to GoldenEye, with Desmond Dekker & The Aces' legendary rocksteady and reggae track 007 (Shanty Town) on play.

"By weaving together Jamaican voices, landscapes and history, the documentary underscores the island's central place in both Fleming's imagination and the continuing cultural life of 007," said film editor Joanna Crickley.

Commissioned by Sky Arts in the UK, the film is produced by Embankment Films and Lone Star Productions, in association with Night Train Media and Gross Media Inc. Gross Media is a media company founded by David M. Gross that works with distinctive heritage companies and cultural brands to create entertainment events, films, new products and sensory experiences.

- **Jamaica Gleaner**



Rajae Shirley (left) and Talleta Gregory were crowned male and female winners of the Saint International Fashion Face of the Caribbean at AC Hotel on August 29, 2026.

Rajae Shirley, a 25-year-old resident from the hilly community of Thompson Town in Clarendon, and 17-year-old Ascot High School sixth-form student Talleta Gregory of Portmore were last Saturday night chosen as Fashion Face of the Caribbean Male and Fashion Face of the Caribbean Female, respectively, in the Saint International Fashion Face of the Caribbean competition. The finals of the competition, which saw 45

females and 38 males competing for the titles, took place inside the ballroom of the AC Hotel in New Kingston. During the event, nine designers showcased 10 collections in the segment dubbed ‘Riddim Runway Fashion Collections’ and which was sponsored by the Ministry of Culture, Gender, Entertainment and Sport. Designers included UK-based Jamaican designer David Newell, Kaydian Nicely, Janseen

Saint International crowns male and female Fashion Face of the Caribbean winners

Graham, Lucien Harrison, Tamia Carey, Errice Alicia, Nina Levy, Shades of Africa, and Andre Shirley. And when it came down to the announcement of the winners, you could feel the tension in the air. “I honestly did not expect to win, but I knew for sure that my presence in the competition would make an impact because of my confidence. Everyone else had time to prepare their outfits, while my clothes were actually purchased by my wife on the same day of the event,” Rajae told the Jamaica Observer post-event. Rajae, who said he felt unprepared, had decided to withdraw from the competition due to financial and personal challenges. “I felt a bit unprepared and out of place. So coming back on the day of the competition after the Saint coordinator called and told me that Mr Peters requested my presence, I decided to show up, be myself, and give it my best,” he shared. He recalled that when his name was announced as the winner, it made him reflect

on events leading up to the finals. “My mind immediately went back to what Mr Peters had said to me that very same morning. For about three mandatory sessions leading up to the event, I was not present because my daughter had gotten sick and was in the hospital. At that point, I had decided to withdraw from the competition because of the personal difficulties I was facing, and I was still without a sponsor. “Then, on the very same day of the event, they had secured a sponsor. I came to Kingston for prejudging, and when I arrived, he told me very firmly that I must never give up on myself and that he believed in me. He said I should give it my best shot because this could be a life-changing moment for me and my family. So when my name was called, all of those words came back to me. I couldn’t help but think about everything that had happened just to get me there. It was a very emotional and unforgettable moment for me,” he said. Rajae said that it was his wife who encouraged him to enter the competition.

China boycotts Asian Art Festival over Taiwan Exhibition name

A group of Chinese artists is boycotting a major art exhibition in South Korea over the organisers’ plans to use the name ‘Taiwan Pavilion’ for an exhibition of works by Taiwanese artists. China considers self-governing Taiwan to be part of its territory and rejects the island’s claim to sovereignty. Beijing generally refers to Taiwan as “China’s Taiwan region.” China’s Foreign Ministry on Thursday criticised the South Korean organisers of the biennial Gwangju Biennale, one of Asia’s most prominent art exhibitions, saying the organisers have “stubbornly clung to the wrongful practice, allowing China’s Taiwan region to participate under a designation that is completely incompatible with its status”. Spokesperson Guo Jiakun said China hopes the South Korean government will uphold its political commitment to the “one China” principle through concrete action. The Chinese artists said the same day that they were withdrawing from the festival, which opens Saturday and runs through mid-November. The ‘Taiwan Pavilion’ is one of about 25

small national and institutional galleries to be operated separately from the biennale’s main exhibition site, under its so-called Pavilion Project. “The organisers of the Gwangju Biennale used an incorrect name for China’s Taiwan region over its participation in the exhibition, causing a political issue to spill over onto the realm of art,” Chinese curator Ruan Yuelai told reporters through an interpreter. “The Chinese exhibition team cannot accept this and unanimously agreed to withdraw from the exhibition to express our strong protest.” As of Friday afternoon, the Chinese participants had not yet removed their paintings, sculptures and other works originally planned to go on display in the ‘China Pavilion’. The festival organisers apologise for the ‘confusion’ Taiwan’s Ministry of Culture said in August that Taiwan had planned to exhibit under the name ‘Taiwan Pavilion’ but protested that organisers changed it to “National Taiwan Museum of Fine Arts Pavilion.” The art festival said Wednesday that it



Attendees participate in the opening ceremony of the Gwangju Biennale in Gwangju, South Korea, on March 31, 2021.

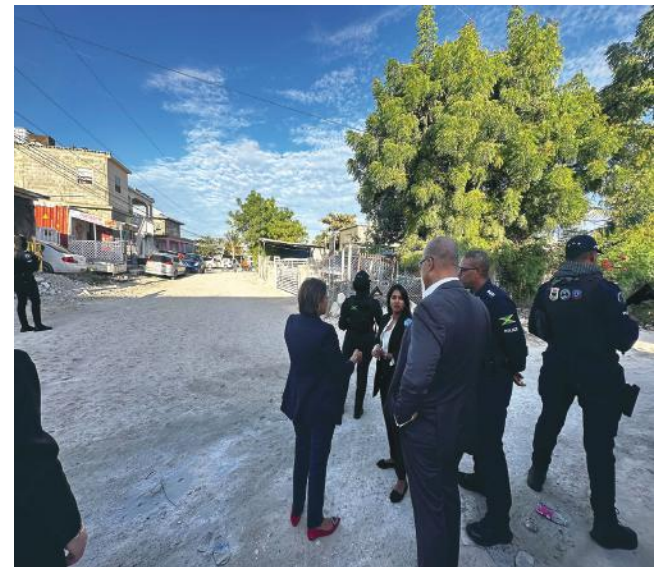
“deeply apologises for causing concerns and confusion” to those involved in its “Pavilion Project,” and said there had been differences with the Taiwan museum over the naming issue. Organisers said they signed a contract with the National Taiwan Museum of Fine Arts over its participation, so they thought Taiwanese artists would exhibit under the museum acronym, “NTMoFA”. They said the Taiwanese museum later insisted on the name “Taiwan Pavilion,” and said they felt pressure to accept the name. Earlier in the week, China also warned of consequences for Taiwan after the island’s foreign minister attended a diplomatic forum in the island country of Palau. In May, China pressured an African country to exclude Taiwanese activists from an international human rights conference.

It’s unclear whether the Chinese protest would trigger a major diplomatic spat with South Korea, which is now ruled by a liberal government which wants to improve ties with China, the country’s biggest trading partner. South Korea’s foreign ministry said the naming decision was made by a non-governmental entity and has nothing to do with the government. It said South Korea hopes the latest issue won’t affect relations and cooperation between the two countries. Taiwan is a self-ruled island, but China claims it as part of its territory. The two sides split after a civil war in 1949. Beijing has stepped up its pressure on Taiwan, poaching diplomatic allies. The island now has only 12 diplomatic allies around the world.



Highlights of Uma Kumaran's Visit

United Kingdom Overseas Territories Minister Uma Kumaran made her first official visit to the Turks and Caicos Island this past week, to discuss a range of pressing matters, including border geopolitical security. While in the Turks and Caicos, Kumaran met with Governor Her Excellency Dileeni Daniel Selvaratnam, Premier Hon. Washington Misick and members of his cabinet, and also members of the Opposition. The following are photo highlights of her visit.



Trump sets off Global Panic after map Suggests large-scale US takeover

Officials in Mexico, Iceland and Denmark fire back after Trump posts trollish threat to annex all of North and Central America

In a post on Truth Social, Donald Trump envisioned all of North and Central America under the U.S. flag, an image that quickly triggered a major diplomatic incident and fractured already-frayed relationships as the president pursues his imperial ambitions.

Iceland's Prime Minister Kristrún Frostadóttir publicly condemned Trump's map — which drapes the continent in red, white and blue — as an "insult" to the nation.

"We should just be clear when it comes to it," she said Tuesday. "There is nothing funny or normal about making fun of the sovereignty of states, especially today when it is not a given."

The image, which was posted without any further explanation or comment from the president or other administration officials, expands Trump's increasingly trollish threats to annex sovereign neighbors and allies by throwing the U.S. flag over more than two dozen nations and territories.

Trump's post — wrapping Central American nations and Caribbean islands in the U.S. flag, along with Canada, Mexico, Greenland and Iceland — has also drawn public rebukes from top officials in Denmark and Mexico, where President Claudia Sheinbaum said her country's sovereignty "is non-negotiable."

Donald Trump posted an image without further explanation showing all of North and Central America draped in the US flag

Iceland's Foreign Minister Þorgerður Katrín Gunnarsdóttir summoned U.S. Ambassador Billy Long to her office on Monday to "convey a clear message that the image was wholly inappropriate," according to a statement. "There was a reason to call the ambassador to a meeting and present a very clear message on our part that this was completely unacceptable," she added Tuesday.

"I have been repeatedly advised by within the American administration that we should perhaps not take the current U.S. president literally, but we should take him seriously," Gunnarsdóttir said. "That is exactly what we are doing and emphasizing that Iceland is sovereign, it is an independent state that is responsible for its own destiny."



Donald Trump posted an image without further explanation showing all of North and Central America draped in the US flag (@realDonaldTrump/Truth Social)

Danish Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen also told reporters on Monday that "the Greenlandic government and the Greenlandic people have said again and again that they do not wish to be American."

"We can certainly repeat that message today," she said.

Danish Foreign Minister Lars Løkke Rasmussen called Trump's post "disturbing."

"It's obviously a sign that the U.S. president still harbors some kind of maximalist vision in his own mind," Rasmussen told the national broadcaster DR on Tuesday. "We need to rein that in."

In remarks at a press conference on Monday, Sheinbaum referred to the U.S. as a "country that is not doing well, that is not leading with power."

In a subsequent post on X, she wrote: "In the month of the homeland, we reaffirm that Mexico is neither, nor will, be a colony or protectorate of any foreign country. Proudly we are a free, independent, and sovereign nation."

Trump's post was among dozens on his Truth social over Labor Day weekend, including at least eight images showing the state of New Mexico changed to "New America" and an AI-generated clip that depicts the president repeatedly beating Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney with a hockey stick.

Natalie Harp, one of the president's top aides who is increasingly in con-

the backseat as he keeps the U.S. at war with Iran and entangles the U.S. in tariff wars with key trading partners.

The Trump administration has also deposed and arrested Venezuelan leader Nicolás Maduro and assumed control over the nation's oil industry, killed more than 200 people on alleged drug-running boats throughout the Caribbean and Pacific, and levied intense economic pressure on Cuba with an eye towards toppling its communist government.

Arctic states have increasingly been on edge after Trump threatened U.S. control of Greenland and after he mistakenly called the island "Iceland" when speaking about his ambitions for the Danish autonomous territory. Iceland is a NATO member, but Trump's gaffe spurred its left-leaning coalition government to move swiftly on a referendum on whether the country should return to negotiations on whether to become a member of the European Union.

Voters rejected the measure last month. Thousands of Icelanders, meanwhile, have signed a petition urging the prime minister to reject Long — Trump's former IRS commissioner — as U.S. ambassador after he joked about the nation becoming the 52nd U.S. state. Long later apologized.



United State President Donald Trump

NYC Mayor Mamdani releases 9/11 records showing officials misled New Yorkers about air quality around Ground Zero

New York City has released more than 170,000 pages of previously undisclosed records about air quality following the September 11, 2001, attacks, showing city officials at the time knew conditions around Ground Zero were unsafe to breathe despite repeated assurances to the public.

Mayor Zohran Mamdani announced the release at a news conference Tuesday. “As the years pass and the human toll grows, we reckon with the cost of September 11th whenever another New Yorker is stolen from us too soon,” Mamdani said. “Now, close to 25 years later, more people have died from 9/11-related illnesses than were killed on the day itself.”

At least 140,000 people from all 50 states have enrolled in the World Trade Center Health Program, and 49,000 have been diagnosed with certified WTC-related cancers, according to the 9/11 Memorial. Mamdani said Tuesday that more people are eligible for assistance than are currently enrolled, including residents who lived near the site but have not received outreach and those who live outside of New York.

Cancer wasn’t covered when Congress created the health program in 2011. It was added in 2012 — only after a fight by advocates and a study showing elevated cancer rates among New York firefighters

at Ground Zero.

The documents contain a fraction of the air quality reports taken at Ground Zero, but they also include crucial internal memos, including what became known as the “Harding Memo” sent to then-Deputy Mayor Robert Harding, which revealed city officials anticipated thousands of possible lawsuits due to the 9/11 air exposure and the lack of proper safety equipment. The memo also outlined legislative alternatives to limit the city’s legal liability.

“People got sick because the leaders they trusted lied and told them they were safe to breathe in toxic air,” Mamdani said. When asked whether the yearslong delay in releasing the documents was a “cover-up,” the mayor said, “This was multiple mayoral administrations refusing to release documents that New Yorkers were owed.”

Mamdani appeared alongside 9/11 families and Jon Stewart, a longtime advocate for increased transparency and resources for first responders and survivors.

“There was poison in the air, and on the ground, and in the window sills, and in your air conditioners and covering your pets and your clothes, and it stayed there for months. Everyone knew. Now it’s very clear that the city knew as well,” Stewart said.

Karen Klingon, who lost her brother af-



Smoke rises from the rubble of the World Trade Center on September 13, 2001, as crews search for survivors and victims from the terror attacks two days earlier.

ter 9/11, attended the news conference Tuesday. Her brother, Robert Klingon, lived a five-minute walk from the World Trade Center when the towers came down and was treated through the World Trade Center Health Program, she told CNN. In 2018, he collapsed on the street and learned he had a brain tumor. He died two years later, Klingon said.

“I think there wasn’t just lack of transparency; there was a lack of regard for people, and I find that very disturbing,” Klingon told CNN. “Also, my brother was a lawyer and had a very acute sense of justice and injustice, and he would have certainly been appalled by the injustice of the lack of transparency and the lack of concern for people who are still suffering.”

A searchable portal will provide access to the documents, and the city is expected to add more material on a rolling basis in the coming months, officials said Tuesday. Every document published in the portal will be available for view and download at no cost.

The disclosure is expected to give the public a better understanding of how the city responded following the collapse of the World Trade Center as officials raced to restabilize Lower Manhattan and re-open the area.

The documents were among 68 boxes stored in a city government office that were discovered last year and are being released ahead of Friday’s 25th anniversary of the attacks, according to city officials.

For years, survivors and first responders — including many who were sickened from exposure to toxins in the air — have called for more transparency and demanded the release of the documents. The advocacy group 9/11 Health Watch had sued the city for release of the records. CNN has reached out to the group for comment.

Nearly 3,000 people were killed on 9/11, but thousands more — including first responders who spent months working at the site — have since died from 9/11-related cancers and other illnesses.

Buckingham Palace Comments as the Jamaican Government Seeks to File Slavery Reparations Petition

Buckingham Palace issued a statement following reports that Jamaican officials are seeking to lodge a petition via King Charles over slavery reparations.

Members of Jamaica’s National Council on Reparations arrived in London over the weekend and reports revealed that they intended to ask the King to refer questions to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council over the transatlantic slave trade.

“We understand the Jamaican government is seeking a petition to be heard before the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council,” a Buckingham Palace spokesperson said today. “The process for seeking a petition is to lodge it with the Judicial Committee so that referral under section four of the 1833 Act can be considered. We also understand the Jamaican representatives will be received by the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office for bilateral discussions.”

King Charles is Head of State in both the

UK and Jamaica. Jamaican politicians have taken steps to remove the British monarch as the country’s head of state, but the process has yet to happen. Currently, King Charles is a politically neutral figurehead in Jamaica, the same role he has in Britain.

The move by Jamaican officials is the latest in a long-running campaign by Caribbean and African nations calling for reparations from countries that were enriched by the transatlantic slave trade. In March this year, the UN General Assembly voted to recognize the enslavement of Africans as “the gravest crime against humanity.” Successive UK Governments have repeatedly said they will not pay reparations for Britain’s role in the slave trade.

T&C understands that Buckingham Palace has been working closely with Jamaica’s Governor General—the King’s representative in the country—to ensure the petition is correctly lodged. It will not be handed to the King, who is

in Scotland right now anyway, but to the Registrar of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council.

On the issue of the transatlantic slave trade, the Palace added, “His Majesty has on many occasions expressed his personal and wholehearted commitment to promoting greater understanding around the issue of slavery and finding ways to address historic wrongs for the benefit of communities today.

As he stated in a landmark speech to Commonwealth Leaders: ‘I understand, from listening to people across the Commonwealth, how the most painful aspects of our past continue to resonate...none of us can change the past. But we can commit, with all our hearts to learning its lessons and to finding creative ways to right inequalities that endure.’”

Per the Guardian newspaper, this petition was first announced last year with the aim of getting the King to use his authority to ask questions described as

critical to progressing Jamaica’s reparations claims.



King Charles is Head of State in the UK and Jamaica.



MOMENTUM BUILDING

TCI PREPARES TO HOST CONCACAF NATIONS LEAGUE

SEE PG32

CIBC Caribbean Walk for the Cure Celebrates Milestone 15th Year on October 3

CIBC Caribbean and the National Cancer Society of TCI are gearing up for the region's largest cancer fundraising and awareness event celebrating the 15 years, Walk for the Cure.

The route starts from IGA Gourmet continuing to International School and back on Saturday, October 3, 2026, at 5:30 am.

More than 200 people were estimated to have attended last year's walk, and organisers are hoping to see the number climb to 300-plus this year. President of National Cancer Society of TCI, Vivian Rigby said "Our main goals are to bring awareness, increase public knowledge about cancer prevention and early screening". Further adding that the survivors are their number one priority and wants the community to know that the NCS will always be there to assist.

As excitement builds for this year's walk, official Breast Cancer Awareness Walk merchandise is now available for purchase. Supporters can purchase a \$20 walk



shirt or a \$40 combo package which includes a walk shirt, hat and tote bag.

Representatives of CIBC Caribbean will join the National Cancer Society of TCI at Graceway IGA

each Saturday from 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. through September 26 giving members of the community an opportunity to get their gear ahead of the big day. Additional opportunities to purchase shirts

will be available for CIBC Caribbean customers at the branch during working hours.

The National Cancer Society of TCI is looking ahead with great anticipation to having its own headquarters, which would allow them to broaden their involvement and support within the community. CIBC Caribbean encourages everyone to come out on October 3, wear walk shirts and help make year 15 of the annual Breast Cancer Awareness Walk one of the strongest yet.

This walk represents the strength of a community united by a cause. It is an opportunity to walk together in solidarity and celebrate survivors, honour loved ones, stand alongside those currently facing breast cancer and raise support to make a meaningful difference in the lives of the individuals and families affected. Every step raises awareness; every shirt shows support and every person who joins strengthens the fight against cancer.

Bunny Shaw nominated for women's Ballon d'Or

Jamaican superstar forward Khadija "Bunny" Shaw has been shortlisted for the prestigious women's Ballon d'Or award following an impressive season in the Women's Super League (WSL).

The 29-year-old Manchester City player is among 30 players nominated for the award, which is cele-

brating its 70th anniversary.

The winner will be announced at a ceremony in London on October 26. Shaw has already copped the Professional Footballers' Associations Women's Player of the Year and the WSL Football's Player of the Season awards after a superb performance last season that saw her lead Man



City to its first-ever domestic double.

She scored 21 goals in 22 appearances to win her third consecutive WSL golden boot, as Man City won both the league and FA Cup. Shaw is the first player to win three WSL golden boots, moving clear of two-time winners Vivienne Miedema and Sam Kerr.

Among the other nominees is Shaw's captain Alex Greenwood, Arsenal forward Alessia Russo and two-time winner Alexia Putellas from Barcelona.

Barcelona's Aitana Bonmati, who has won the award for the past three years, is absent after missing a large chunk of the season with a broken leg.

A Strong Summer: Greater Possibilities Ahead

By Jarrett Forbes,
Director of Sports/ CEO of the TCI Sports Commission

This has been an incredibly active, if not historic, summer for sport in the Turks and Caicos Islands. National teams across multiple disciplines, basketball, football, athletics, cricket, aquatics, darts, sailing and wakeboarding, represented our country. We competed at major events including the Commonwealth Games and the Central American and Caribbean Games, alongside a number of regional championships and other international competitions. At home, summer sport programmes across several islands (GDT, SXC, NXC, PLS), engaged hundreds of children, more than 200 young people registered for the fifth season of the Police Action League, and more than 150 young basketball players participated in the inaugural Trevor Ariza Skills Clinic and Impact Weekend. We also opened new funding opportunities for athletes and national sport federations through the Athlete Development Fund and Sport Support Programme.

There were some very encouraging performances along the way. Our senior men's basketball team returned to international competition after 22 years and finished with a 3–1 record, fielding one of the youngest teams in the competition. Across several sports, 16- and 17-year-old athletes competed against experienced senior competitors. We saw athletes advance to finals at major Games, while some of our newer disciplines gained valuable international experience.

When you consider the age of many of these athletes, there is plenty to be encouraged about. As we reflect on such an active period, however, I simply want to say thank you!

To our national sport federations, thank you for your commitment to developing your sports, preparing national teams and creating opportunities for our athletes to compete. To our coaches, officials, administrators and volunteers, thank you for giving your time and expertise to sport and to the development of our athletes.

To our parents and families, thank you for the sacrifices you make and the support you provide throughout the journey.

To Corporate TCI, thank you for in-

vesting in our athletes, programmes and national teams. Your partnership will continue to be important as we work to create greater opportunities for our athletes.

To the Turks and Caicos Islands Government, thank you for the continued investment in sport and for supporting the programmes, facilities, organisations and athletes that represent our country.

To my team at the Turks and Caicos Islands Sports Commission, thank you for your commitment to serving our sporting community and supporting the athletes, federations and programmes entrusted to us.

And to our athletes, thank you for representing the Turks and Caicos Islands with pride. Every competition provides another opportunity to test yourself, gain experience and better understand what is required at the next level.

Earlier this summer, we brought many of these stakeholders together for our National Athlete and Sport Ecosystem Symposium. A major part of that discussion centred on developing clearer athlete pathways and better connecting the different parts of sport in the Turks and Caicos Islands and what we have seen this summer should give us confidence in what is possible.

We have talented young athletes. We have national sport federations committed to developing their sports. We have coaches and volunteers willing to serve, families making sacrifices, government investing, and a private sector increasingly willing to support sport.

The next step is to connect these efforts even better.

That means working together to build clearer pathways within each sport, strengthening coaching and technical capacity, expanding development opportunities and creating the conditions for talented athletes to progress from participation to national representation and, ultimately, high-performance competition.

There is still a great deal of work ahead, but there is also a great deal to build upon, and this summer gave us a good indication of both.

Now let's continue to build on this momentum as we work together to continue moving sport forward in the TCI.

Up next the Turks and Caicos Islands School Sport (TCISS) seasons. See you there!





Momentum Builds as TCI Prepares to Host Concacaf Nations League

By Vivian Tyson, NEWSLINE Editor-In-Chief

Momentum is building across the Turks and Caicos Islands in anticipation of the 2026–27 Concacaf Nations League, as the territory prepares to welcome two regional opponents for six international matches between September 23 and October 6.

The Turks and Caicos Islands men's national team will compete against Montserrat and the British Virgin Islands in League C, Group A. All six matches in the group will be staged at the TCIFA National Academy in Providenciales, with kickoff scheduled for 3 p.m. each match day.

TCI will open its campaign against Montserrat on Wednesday, September 23. The national team will return to action on Tuesday, September 29, when it faces the British Virgin Islands. The two neighbouring territories will meet again on Sunday, October 4, before TCI completes its group-stage schedule against Montserrat on Tuesday, October 6.

The complete schedule is:

- Wednesday, September 23: Turks and Caicos Islands vs Montserrat
- Saturday, September 26: Montserrat vs British Virgin Islands
- Tuesday, September 29: British Virgin Islands vs Turks and Caicos Islands
- Thursday, October 1: British Virgin Islands vs Montserrat
- Sunday, October 4: Turks and Caicos Islands vs British Virgin Islands
- Tuesday, October 6: Montserrat vs Turks and Caicos Islands

The fixtures form part of the fifth edition of the Concacaf Nations League, which will



A file photo of Turks and Caicos Islands Football Team (blue) tackling Guyana National Team

run from September 2026 through March 2027. The regional competition provides national teams across North America, Central America and the Caribbean with regular competitive matches and opportunities for promotion between its three leagues.

League C features nine national teams divided into three groups of three. Group A consists of Montserrat, Turks and Caicos Islands and the British Virgin Islands.

Antigua and Barbuda, Aruba and Anguilla will contest Group B, while Group C comprises Saint Martin, the Bahamas and the United States Virgin Islands.

Each League C team will play its two group opponents twice during the September–October international window, giving every country four match-

es. Games will be held at centralized venues, a format designed to reduce the travel demands placed on participating associations and support the efficient delivery of the competition.

The three League C group winners and the best second-place finisher will advance to the League C Championship. Those four teams will also earn promotion to League B for the next edition of the Nations League, according to Concacaf's official competition format.

Hosting all six Group A fixtures will place the Turks and Caicos Islands at the centre of regional football for two weeks. It will also give local supporters several opportunities to watch international football and rally behind the national team on home soil.

As preparations intensify, organizers are appealing to members of the community to volunteer on match days. Assistance is needed in security, media, logistics and organization, concessions and sales, gate operations, and VIP/VVIP services.

People who can assist with only one fixture are also encouraged to volunteer. All volunteers must report to the TCIFA National Academy by 2 p.m., one hour before the scheduled kickoff.

Interested persons should forward their names and contact numbers to Monae Gooden at mgoodentcifa@gmail.com, call 1-649-333-2290, or contact the organizer directly.

The dates, venue and kickoff times are confirmed in the official Concacaf match schedule.