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JULY 2024

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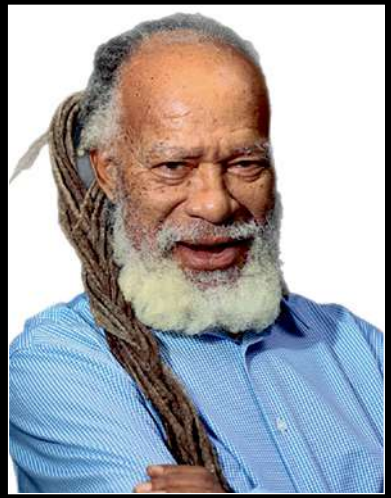
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Julian Marley, Skip Marley and Luciano set for August performance  
(Dancehallmag.com Image)

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# REGIONAL NEWS



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

### THE BAHAMAS

The Royal Bahamas Police Force is seeking public assistance to locate Taylor Casey, a 41-year-old US citizen from Chicago, Illinois, who was last seen on June 19 in the Paradise Island area.

A public Facebook page, "Find Taylor Casey," has been set up to aid in the search. According to a media statement on the page, Taylor was attending a yoga retreat in The Bahamas. She is described as a light-skinned Black woman, about 5 feet 10 inches tall, weighing 145 pounds, with brown hair and brown eyes. She often wears her natural hair covered by a durag.

Taylor's family, concerned for her well-being, has sent a contingent, including her mother, to Paradise Island and Nassau to coordinate with local authorities. Anyone with information on Taylor's whereabouts is urged to contact the Royal Bahamas Police Force at 502-9991/2 or Crime Stoppers at 328-TIPS (8477).

### JAMAICA

Jamaica Gleaner sports journalist Job Nelson, who died last month, was killed by a metal object discharged from the airbag of his vehicle, not by a gunshot as initially reported. Nelson, 53, was believed to have been shot while driving in Trench Town, Kingston, on May 21. However, a post mortem revealed that a metal object from the airbag caused his

death after he crashed his car into a utility pole. The object pierced his chest, causing fatal injuries to his lungs and internal bleeding. The post mortem was conducted at the House of Tranquility Funeral Home.

### GUYANA

A High Court judge in Guyana has ruled that ExxonMobil Guyana Limited, (EMGL), and the Attorney General of Guyana must be added as parties to a case brought by civil society activist Sherlina Nageer. Nageer is demanding disclosure of the insurance policy and parent/affiliate company guarantee for the Liza Phase 2 Project, which began on February 11, 2022, and produces up to 220,000 barrels of oil daily.

Justice Simone Morris-Ramlall determined that EMGL has a clear interest in the case's outcome, as losing the permit would result in substantial financial loss and damage. The Attorney General's involvement is also necessary due to the government's reliance on petroleum revenues from the project.

Nageer seeks to ensure that the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) discloses the insurance and guarantee lodged by EMGL to cover environmental liability. She argues that public access to these documents is crucial for verifying the EPA's compliance with its



US citizen Taylor Casey has gone missing on Paradise Island in The Bahamas. (Photo via: Find Taylor Casey/ Facebook)

responsibilities.

The High Court ordered Nageer to pay costs to the Attorney General and EMGL, amounting to GUY\$300,000 (US\$0.004 cents). The ruling addresses a preliminary point in Nageer's action initiated on January 25, 2024.

Nageer is also requesting that if the documents are not produced, the court should declare EMGL's permit for the project canceled and prohibit the EPA from issuing any replacement permit with weaker requirements.

### TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

A High Court judge has ordered Trinidad and Tobago's Immigration Division to halt the deportation of Russian national Ali

Lakupov, who fled to the country after being conscripted to fight in the Russia-Ukraine war. Justice Joan Charles placed Lakupov under an order of supervision, pausing his deportation pending the outcome of his challenge against the Minister of National Security.

Lakupov, a registered asylum-seeker, applied for asylum with the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) for resettlement in Canada upon arriving legally in Trinidad and Tobago with his wife on March 22, 2023. He fled Russia due to fear of persecution and potential death for deserting military service.

Detained since October 6, 2023, at the Immigration Detention Centre, Lakupov faced deportation for allegedly possessing extremist material, which was his Russian military ID card. Despite his attempts to leave, authorities withheld his and his wife's passports.

Justice Charles found no evidence supporting the State's claim that Lakupov was an undesirable applicant and granted him leave to pursue his claim.

### ST. VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES

Prime Minister Dr. Ralph Gonsalves has summoned senior officials of the St. Vincent and the Grenadines Police Force to a meeting following five killings in the last 10 days, bringing the year's total to 23 homicides.

Deputy Commissioner of Police Frankie Joseph will lead the meeting, as Acting Commissioner Enville Williams is overseas. Gonsalves, who is also the Minister of National Security, aims to receive a comprehensive report and discuss additional measures.

The latest victim, 63-year-old Osborne Glasgow, was shot and killed during a home invasion in the upscale Harmony Hall community. The community, home to several senior public servants, has been shaken by this rare incident.

### BELIZE

Belize has declared a state of emergency (SOE) for the second time in six months for neighborhoods in north and south Belize City to address a surge in gang-related violence. Police Commissioner Chester Williams stated that police and Belize Defense Force (BDF) members are patrolling the areas, leading to several detentions. The recent spike in shootings and murders is believed to be linked to a recent concert. Authorities have also recovered firearms and ammunition in various districts, including Cayo. The SOE includes two western communities, including Cotton Tree Village.

- Compiled from CMC News & Loop Caribbean



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# Jamaica's 'Donald Trump' Moment?

## Government's Deportation of Haitian Caregivers Sparks Controversy



Jamaica's National Security Minister Dr. Horace Chang's comments echoed sentiments similar to those of the convicted U.S. president and current Republican contender for the November 2024 elections.

BY CT STAFF WRITER

The Jamaican government's decision to deport 12 Haitian caregivers is raising questions and concerns about immigration policies and security issues in the fellow CARICOM country. This move has led many to ask whether it's Jamaica's 'Donald Trump' moment.

Jamaica's National Security Minister Dr. Horace Chang's comments echoed sentiments similar to those of the convicted U.S. president and current Republican contender for the November 2024 elections. "The people who came here were illegal migrants in our country and I have the law behind me to send them back where they came from, and they were all of questionable character," Chang told the Jamaica Observer. He added that he is now considering a prohibition order against Susie Krabacher, the founder of HaitiChildren, who organized the mission to bring the Haitian orphans to Jamaica.

The administration led by Prime Minister Andrew Holness has defended its decision to deport 12 of the 16 Haitians who arrived in Jamaica as caregivers for 59 disabled orphans. The orphans were allowed entry in March as part of a humanitarian effort led by the international charity organization Mustard Seed Communities. But is this Jamaica's Donald moment?

The Haitians were returned to Haiti at midnight last Tuesday. Speaking with the Jamaica Observer, Dr. Chang said they were sent home due to security concerns and doubts about their claims of being caregivers for the orphans.

He said that while the government initially allowed the orphans and caregivers into the country due to the crisis in Haiti, it was soon discovered that only two of the 16 were genuine caregivers.

"When we realized that 14 of the so-called caregivers were staying in breach of their conditions, absconding, and causing trouble, we had to act," Chang stated. One

individual allegedly acquired a car and was involved in various disturbances, including the disappearance of a 14-year-old orphan from the Kingston Public Hospital. "They [the Haitian caregivers] then became abusive to the people at Jacob's Ladder [where the orphans are housed], misbehaving, and when the police went there, they were hostile. So we decided, through immigration, that they were in breach of their conditions and came under false pretenses. We deported them."

Dr. Chang also mentioned that the "troublemaker" and another caregiver are still at large. However, two other Haitians, previously ordered to be deported and detained, were included in the group sent back on Tuesday night.

"The people who came here were illegal migrants, and I have the law behind me to send them back where they came from. They were all of questionable character," Chang stated. He added that he is considering a prohibition order against Susie Krabacher, the founder of HaitiChildren, who organized the mission to bring the Haitian orphans to Jamaica.

"We have refused her landing here three times and are considering a prohibition order. The entire scheme was dishonest. If not for the integrity and character of Mustard Seed Communities, a respected international Catholic charity, this would have caused significant embarrassment. The private sector and the government will help Mustard Seed to manage, but we have sent home these troublemakers," said Chang.

The police are tracking an address in the Corporate Area and a school in Ocho Rios, St Ann, as the search for the two missing caregivers continues.

Responding to reports that the situation involving the deported caregivers escalated on Tuesday, June 25th, the Jamaica Observer described how the caregivers were confined to a room "all weekend" before being taken away. A bus arrived at the Jacob's Ladder compound along with the police, signaling the end for the caregivers.

"They ordered the caregivers to get on the bus to go to Portland. The lawyer called the police, but they did not disclose the location, only that they would be brought to a facility in Portland," a source told the Jamaica Observer.

Despite human rights lawyer Malene Alleyne submitting

asylum claims for the 12 caregivers, she was unable to prevent their deportation. Alleyne described the situation as an "unprecedented scale of cruelty to humanity in Jamaica."

Meanwhile, operators of HaitiChildren insisted that the caregivers were permitted to

leave the compound and were never missing. They claimed the caregivers worked on a shift system and always sought permission before leaving.

Krabacher rejected the allegation that gangsters were among the caregivers. "Most of them worked with us for

more than 10 years. One of the deportees was a nurse who has worked with us for 17 years. They thought they were welcome. They were only doing their jobs," Krabacher told the Jamaica Observer.



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**NEWS**



# Biden Welcomes Kenyan Troops To Haiti, Commends International Efforts To Restore Stability

President Joe Biden has welcomed the arrival of the first batch of Kenyan troops to Haiti, marking the beginning of a United Nations Security Council-sanctioned Multi-national Security Support, (MSS), mission to bring much-needed relief to the country. Kenya is leading this mission to the French-speaking Caribbean Community, (CARICOM), country, which has been beset by political, socio-economic problems, and criminal violence since the assassination of President Jovenel Moise in July 2021.

The Kenyan troops, who arrived in Port-au-Prince on Tuesday, will receive support from several other countries, including The Bahamas, Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Belize, and Jamaica. Their mandate is to assist Haitian police in securing key infrastructure and combating criminal groups that control nearly all of the capital and

are responsible for widespread violence and abuses.

The United Nations has reported that over 2,500 people were killed or injured in the first three months of the year in Haiti, with more than half a million people displaced due to the spike in violence. Gangs now control at least 80 percent of Port-au-Prince and key roads, leading to severe disruptions and forcing former prime minister Ariel Henry to resign when the international airport was closed.

In a statement, President Biden highlighted the dire situation, noting that rampant gang violence has killed or harmed thousands, and widespread gender-based violence has compounded the crisis. "Over half a million people have been displaced. Nearly five million Haitians now face severe food insecurity as gangs hinder access to critical supplies," Biden said.

He emphasized that the

people of Haiti deserve safety, better lives, and democratic freedoms. "While these goals may not be accomplished overnight, this mission provides the best chance of achieving them," Biden stated. The mission will support the Haitian National Police in their anti-gang operations, build capacity for maintaining public safety, and ensure humanitarian assistance reaches those in need.

Biden also noted that the United States has collaborated with Kenya and other partners to incorporate crucial accountability and oversight measures into the mission. "I commend and am deeply grateful to all the countries



Kenyan troops disembark on arrival in Haiti on June 25, 2024. (CMC image)

that have pledged personnel and financial support to this mission that will grow to 2,500 multinational personnel," he said. The United States is the mission's largest financial contributor, providing over US\$300 million and up to \$60 million in equipment.

"We will continue our diplomatic outreach to encourage

more countries to join this effort, because what happens in Haiti matters to its neighbors, the region, and the world," Biden added.

Describing Haiti as "an extraordinary country," Biden emphasized that the people of Haiti deserve security, opportunity, and freedom. He acknowledged the significant contributions of Haitian immigrants and Haitian Americans to the United States and reiterated his administration's commitment to providing substantial security, humanitarian, and economic development assistance to Haiti.

- *Rewritten from CMC*



## Caribbean Immigrant Advocate Named Head Of NYC Mayor's Office Of Nonprofit Services

New York City Mayor Eric Adams has announced the appointment of a Caribbean-born advocate, Johnny Celestin, as the executive director of the New York City Mayor's Office of Nonprofit Services. The appointment comes during National Caribbean American Heritage Month in the U.S.

In his new role, the Haitian immigrant will lead efforts to engage and communicate with nonprofits, develop capacity-building programs to facilitate easier contracting with the city, and advance the recommendations of the Joint Task Force to Get Nonprofits Paid on Time.

"For nearly three decades, Johnny Celestin has led by example, advocating across multiple nonprofits to uplift those who need a helping hand, ensuring our social safety net catches New Yorkers most in need, and providing relief to those in his home country of Haiti," said Mayor Adams. "In this new role, Johnny will use his expertise to help nonprofits continue to deliver compassion and care to New Yorkers across the five boroughs. Together, with government and nonprofits working together, we can work to build a better, stronger city."

Celestin expressed his gratitude and commitment to the role, stating: "The nonprofit sector is critical for our city, providing essential services and enriching our communities. My experience fostering opportunity and advocating for equity at the New York City Mayor's Office of Minority- and Women-Owned Businesses has prepared me for this exciting new challenge. Together, we can ensure the office fulfills its multifaceted mission head-on, including streamlining funding access for nonprofits, promoting equity, and maximizing community impact."

Celestin brings nearly 30 years of leadership experience across various sectors, including



Haitian American Johnny Celestin is now Executive Director Of the NYC Mayor's Office Of Nonprofit Services.

his previous role at the New York City Mayor's Office of Minority- and Women-Owned Business Enterprises. He has also worked with organizations such as the Robin Hood Foundation, Atlantic Philanthropies, and the Clinton Foundation. Celestin is currently a faculty member at the Studley Graduate Program in International Affairs. He was recently the executive director of the Future Leaders Foundation (FLF) and the Centre Haïtien du Leadership et de l'Excellence (CLE), a Haitian foundation focused on identifying, shaping, and connecting Haitian leaders to build a stronger and more equitable Haiti.

Before joining CLE, Celestin served as the deputy chief of staff for Haiti's Minister of Planning, overseeing various special projects. He brings extensive leadership and international experience in administration, program management, change management, governance, leadership development, and community development. His diverse career includes roles at Accenture LLP, The Robin Hood Foundation, and The Clinton Foundation.

Celestin is also an entrepreneur, having founded several businesses and organizations, including The Black Pearl Café and 420Lenox LLC in Harlem, the Haiti Innovation Fund at Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors, the Center

for Innovation and Management in Haiti, and Black Pearl Innovation S.A. in Haiti.

He holds a master's degree in International Affairs from The New School University and a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration from Iona College. Celestin has also earned various certifications in Organizational Performance from Accenture, Leadership and Teamwork from MIT, New Communities Movement (Saemaul Undong) from Yeungnam University, and Community Development from Coady International Institute.

Celestin is a change maker, bridge builder, and engaged citizen passionate about social change and social justice. He serves on numerous boards, including CLE, SOIL (Sustainable Organic Integrated Livelihoods), and the advisory board for New School University's Graduate Program of International Affairs (GPIA). He co-hosts Le Mo-Jo show, a weekly live show aiming to inform and engage the Haitian diaspora community.

Johnny Celestin is married to Leila and is the proud father of Jenna Emily.

Mayor Adams' administration has made significant investments to support the city's nonprofit sector, including a \$741 million investment for human services workers employed by nonprofit organizations. The administration's initiatives have unlocked over \$6 billion for nonprofits and reformed discretionary contract processes to ensure timely payments.

With this appointment, Celestin is set to lead the Mayor's Office of Nonprofit Services into a new era of collaboration and impact, supporting New York City's nonprofits in their vital work for the community.

- *NewsAmericasNow.com*



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# NYC Mayor Applauds Biden's Executive Order To Help Undocumented Immigrants

BY NELSON KING

New York City Mayor Eric Adams has welcomed President Joe Biden's executive order expanding work authorization for longtime undocumented Caribbean and other immigrants. Announced Tuesday, the order allows these immigrants to work and remain in the US without fear of deportation while pursuing legal status.

Mayor Adams, along with Chicago Mayor Brandon Johnson and a coalition of 40 Cities for Action mayors, had been advocating for this change. The coalition argued that extending work authorization would provide economic benefits to the entire nation.

The executive order, praised as a bold and compassionate move, was part of Biden's broader strategy to bring relief

to cities across the country and offer opportunities to millions who have been working under-the-table jobs without legal protections.

Adams highlighted that the executive order would also bring order to the border and help reduce exploitation in workplaces. "The president's orders will bring relief to cities, create safer work environments, and allow individuals to work legally in jobs that pay living wages," Adams added.

Adams, however, did not shy away from criticizing Congress, particularly extreme Republicans, for failing to pass comprehensive immigration reform. "While President



President Joe Biden making the announcement at the White House on June 18, 2024. (Manuel Balce Ceneta/AP Photo)

Biden's executive orders will be a tremendous help, extreme Republicans in Congress have refused to pass any form of comprehensive immigration reform or appropriate the funding that cities like New York need," he said. "The time for Congress to put politics aside and reform our immigration system is now. Millions of immigrants, thousands of businesses, and a nation built by those who came to our shores ready to work for a better life demand it."

Mayor Adams also committed to ongoing dialogue with the Biden administration to extend access to work authorization for the more than 200,000 migrants and asylum

seekers who have arrived in New York City over the past two years.

Immigration advocates and officials, including Caribbean-American Congresswoman Yvette D. Clarke, also expressed their support for Biden's actions. "We commend President Biden and Vice President Harris for taking welcome action to address the needs of immigrant communities and keep families together," said Murad Awawdeh, president and CEO of the New York Immigration Coalition. "Common sense use of existing law to provide solutions is the sort of positive leadership we need to reform our immigration system."

Congresswoman Clarke, whose district includes many Caribbean immigrants, emphasized the significant contributions of undocumented individuals. "Undocumented Americans have come to represent an irreplaceable element of our social and economic fabric," Clarke said. "Yet, far too many have remained plagued by uncertainty surrounding their status. Thankfully, through the Biden-

Harris administration's historic action today, we are on the humanitarian path forward." Biden's new policy allows non-citizen spouses and children to apply for lawful permanent residence without leaving the country, provided they meet certain criteria. This change is expected to benefit up to half a million people. "These actions will promote family unity and strengthen our economy, providing a significant benefit to the country and helping US citizens and their noncitizen family members stay together," Biden said.

Adams concluded by urging further action and continued support for immigrant communities. "We deserve more, and we won't stop fighting for it," he declared. "President Biden and I continue to call on the United States Congress to join us in acting by passing permanent protections for Dreamers. We are optimistic that we will reach the progress undocumented individuals have long awaited."

- Edited From CMC



## Caribbean Roots Attorney Wins Brooklyn Civil Court Judge Seat

BY NELSON KING

Attorney Janice Robinson has secured a decisive victory in one of the two Civil Court Judge seats in Brooklyn's 6th Municipal Court District during the New York Democratic Primary, marking a significant win for candidates with Caribbean backgrounds in various electoral districts on Tuesday night.

Robinson triumphed over fellow Jamaican-American lawyer, Kenneth Gayle, in a two-way race. According to the New York City Board of Elections, with 98.51 percent of scanners reported, Robinson received 10,820 votes (72.27 percent) to Gayle's 3,910 votes (26.12 percent).

Robinson, a Bedford-Stuyvesant resident and a civil litigator for over 20 years, told the Caribbean Media Corporation (CMC) that she brings "a wealth of experience to the table." Born to Jamaican immigrant parents, Robinson first engaged in public service through her uncle, former New York State Assemblyman Nick Perry, now the US Ambassador to Jamaica. She is also a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., committed to community service.

In conceding, Gayle congratulated Robinson on her campaign and expressed gratitude for the support he received. "Throughout my career, I have strived to serve with integrity, impartiality, and a commitment to upholding the rule of law," he said. "This journey has been one of dedication to justice, fairness, and the principles that uphold our legal system."

In other races, Jamaican-American Anthony Beckford and Grenadian-born Sarana Purcell



Jamaican American Attorney Janice Robinson secured a decisive victory in one of the two Civil Court Judge seats in Brooklyn's 6th Municipal Court District during the New York Democratic Primary on June 25, 2024. (CMC image)

won seats as State Committee members in the 43rd Assembly District in Brooklyn. Purcell was re-elected with 3,313 votes, and Beckford was elected for the first time with 2,476 votes.

New York State Assemblywoman Bichotte Hermelyn, representing the 42nd Assembly District in Brooklyn, congratulated the winners and acknowledged the importance of the democratic process. "The Brooklyn Democratic Party is eager to work with our borough's victorious new Democratic nominees and winning incumbents," she said. "Just as importantly, I thank all the volunteers, election workers, and voters who played a vital part in this pivotal Primary."

In Queens, Caribbean-American Cassandra A. Johnson, whose mother is from Haiti, won a Surrogate Court seat in the Democratic Primary, defeating Wendy C. Li with 32,682 votes to 27,016 votes.

- Edited From CMC



# ELECTION FEVER

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**NEWS**



# Caribbean Roots, Maryland Governor Grants Historic 175,000 Pardons For Marijuana Convictions

Caribbean roots, Maryland Governor Wes Moore, has granted over 175,000 pardons for marijuana convictions, marking the most extensive state-level pardon in U.S. history. Moore stated that this decisive action aims to address the past harms caused by the war on drugs.

During a news conference, Moore, whose roots extend to Jamaica, emphasized the sweeping and intentional nature of the executive order, which will affect tens of thousands of Marylanders convicted of misdemeanors, some with multiple convictions being pardoned.

“This is the largest such action in our nation’s history,” Moore, a Democrat, said.

While the pardons will not release anyone from incarceration or automatically expunge past convictions from background checks, advocates praised the move for removing

barriers to housing, employment, and educational opportunities caused by convictions for conduct that is no longer illegal.

Recreational cannabis was legalized in Maryland in 2023 after voters approved a constitutional amendment in 2022. Moore highlighted that despite legalization, the war on drugs had disproportionately affected Black Marylanders, who were three times more likely to be arrested for cannabis than white Marylanders before legalization.

Moore underscored the need to change governmental and societal views on those affected by past policies, emphasizing that legalization alone does not undo the decades of harm caused.

Maryland Attorney General Anthony Brown praised the governor’s action, stating it was “long overdue” and highlighted its significance for racial justice, noting that African Americans



Caribbean roots Maryland Governor, Wes Moore, has granted over 175,000 pardons for marijuana convictions.

and other Marylanders of color were disproportionately impacted by the previous cannabis laws.

The governor’s office reported that the order affects over 150,000 misdemeanor convictions for simple cannabis possession and more than

18,000 misdemeanor convictions for possession with intent to use drug paraphernalia. The Maryland Judiciary will update electronic dockets to reflect these pardons within two weeks, and the state corrections department will develop a process to indicate the pardons on individual criminal records, expected to take about ten months.

The pardons absolve

individuals from the guilt of a criminal offense without requiring any action on their part. While a pardon differs from an expungement, it represents a significant step in rectifying past injustices and providing affected individuals with a chance for a new beginning.

- NewsAmericasNow.com



## Historic Hurricane Beryl Kills Two To Date And Forces Postponement Of CARICOM Meeting



Some of the damage from Beryl’s landfall in Carriacou as seen in this Facebook image. (Facebook image)

Hurricane Beryl became the earliest Category 5 hurricane on record Monday night when its winds increased to 160 mph as it barreled through the southeastern Caribbean, the National Hurricane Center said.

Beryl shatters the old record by more than two weeks - Hurricane Emily became a Category 5 on July 17, 2005. Forecasters fear that the historically busy hurricane season in 2005 could be repeated this year.

Beryl made landfall shortly after 11:10 a.m. EDT on July 1st on Carriacou, a Caribbean island belonging to Grenada, as a Category Four storm with maximum sustained winds of 150 mph.

The storm tore off roofs, triggered power outages, flooded streets, and caused storm surge flooding in parts of the Grenadines, Grenada, Barbados, and Tobago, according to the National Hurricane Center and forced the postponement of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), 47th Regular Meeting of CARICOM Heads of Government, originally scheduled for Grenada from July 3-5.

Two deaths were reported in Grenada and St. Vincent and the Grenadines as of press time with Grenada officials saying Carriacou was “flattened.” Early reports from St. Vincent suggest that the southern Caribbean island has sustained significant structural damage. Numerous homes have lost their roofs

in neighborhoods like Cane Garden, Sion Hill, Layou, Lowmans Leeward, Frenches, and Dorsetshire Hill ,the St. Vincent Times reported.

The hurricane was about 510 miles east-southeast of Isla Beata in the Dominican Republic and traveling west-northwest at 22 mph, the hurricane center said at press time. Its center was on track to move across the southeastern and central Caribbean Sea into Tuesday and is expected to pass near Jamaica today, Wednesday, July 3rd.

Beryl is forecast to weaken after reaching Jamaica, according to the hurricane center, but it’s expected to remain a hurricane in the northwestern Caribbean.

“The primary focus of the Community is now on citizen safety and security. Several Member States, including host nation Grenada, are now engaged in emergency preparations and planning to address the aftermath of the hurricane,” CARICOM said in a statement. “The Community stands ready to support our Member States which will be affected by this dangerous hurricane.”

Beryl is the strongest known hurricane to pass through this region, according to data from NOAA that dates back to 1851. Its arrival marks an exceptionally early start to the Atlantic hurricane season.

- NewsAmericasNow.com



## U.S. National Sentenced To Over 3 Years For Smuggling Firearms To Trinidad And Tobago

A U.S. national has been sentenced to three years and one month in federal prison for smuggling firearms to Trinidad and Tobago. District Judge Carlos Mendoza of the Middle District of Florida sentenced Chrissie Fier Williams, 39, of Kissimmee, Florida, after he pleaded guilty on January 2.

Court documents revealed that from January 28, 2021,

to October 4, 2022, Williams shipped packages containing concealed firearms, firearm parts, and ammunition to Trinidad and Tobago. He used fake shipping manifests and hired “straw shippers” to send the packages.

Homeland Security Investigations, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, and the

Department of Commerce’s Bureau of Industry and Security investigated the case. Assistant U.S. Attorney Dana E. Hill prosecuted the case as part of Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN), a program aimed at reducing violent crime and gun violence.

- Rewritten from CMC



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# Haitian Immigrant Appointed To White House Environmental Justice Advisory Council

BY DAVID L. SNELLING  
EDITED BY FELICIA J. PERSAUD

A Haitian immigrant is among 12 climate change leaders nationwide who were recently appointed to the White House Environmental Justice Advisory Council, (WHEJAC).

The federal advisory committee provides advice and recommendations to the White House Environmental Justice Interagency Council and the White House Council on Environmental Quality on how to address current and historic environmental injustice.

Joanne Perodin, who

currently serves as the senior director of Climate Equity at the Climate Leadership Opportunities (CLEO) Institute, a Miami, Florida-based non-profit organization working on climate education and advocacy to build climate literacy and mobilize climate action for a just, resilient future, was named to the Council last month.

She has experienced firsthand her home country's susceptibility to excessive flooding, which damaged infrastructure such as roads and bridges.

It forced the Caribbean

nation to make costly repairs and businesses had to temporarily shut down. From torrential downpours and other natural disasters, Perodin said Haiti is at a higher risk for storm surge because it lacks the resources to prepare for worst case scenarios weather-related events and resiliency in the aftermath.

She chose to pursue a career in climate leadership based on her encounter with Haiti's vulnerability to climate change which accelerates the pace of glacial melting and might have triggered the nation's worst earthquake in 2010. The earthquake killed over 220,000 people, injured over 300,000, destroyed 100,000 homes and caused about \$9 billion in damages.

Working to mitigate climate disaster for the past 15 years, Perodin was called on



Haitian immigrant Joanne Perodin is among 12 climate change leaders nationwide who were recently appointed to the White House Environmental Justice Advisory Council, (WHEJAC). (Contributed image)

to assist the United States in its fight against sea-level rise, rising temperatures, poor air quality and extreme weather conditions, all due to climate change.

In June, Perodin was picked for leading climate disaster resilience initiatives not only in the United States, but the Caribbean and West Africa.

Perodin said taking part in fighting climate change for the

United States is the pinnacle of her career. "My reaction was gratitude and appreciation, and also trust in my expertise and leadership," she said. "And value that has been acknowledged by my fellow advisory council members."

Environmental health and climate change are two concepts Perodin and her fellow council members will examine.

Sant La Haitian Neighborhood Center, a non-profit organization in North Miami which empowers the Haitian community by offering citizenship assistance, college scholarships and other community outreach programs, congratulated Perodin who once served on its board of directors.

"Our dear friend and environmental education partner Joanne Perodin was recently appointed by President Joe Biden to serve on the White House's Environmental Justice Advisory Council," Sant La said in a statement. "Congratulations, Joanne. We know that you will represent the needs of your community."



## First Haitian American Female Commissioner In Coral Springs Runs Unopposed

BY DAVID L. SNELLING

Nancy Metayer Bowen, the first Haitian American woman ever to serve on the Coral Springs City Commission, has won another term in office after running unopposed.

No other candidate qualified to challenge her for Seat 3 last month which she first won in a crowded field in 2020.

"I am humbled and honored to be re-elected to the Coral Springs City Commission with the strong support of our residents, families, and small business owners," Metayer Bowen said in a statement. "Our victory reaffirms our community's shared vision for a resilient, inclusive, and future-ready Coral Springs. I am committed to continuing our work, fostering community engagement, and advocating for policies that enhance the quality of life for all residents."

Metayer Bowen, a senior manager for energy and climate equity for Energy Solutions, unsuccessfully ran for Coral Springs Mayor in 2019 in a special election but re-bounded to win a commission seat for a four-year term.

The commissioner has focused on sustainability and environmental issues during her first term, such as creating the city's first sustainability office and pushing the city to hire its first sustainability manager.

Before entering politics, Metayer Bowen, who earned her bachelor's degree in science from FAMU and her master's in health science from Johns Hopkins University, was an advocate for community issues including environmental disaster relief and led a long-term strategic initiative- the Florida Disaster Preparedness Plan, (FDPP).

Her vision focused on



Coral Springs Commissioner Nancy Metayer Bowen. (Contributed image)

rebuilding disaster areas and community resilience in areas that are at a higher risk for flooding due to climate change. She has worked across multiple government agencies and nonprofit organizations, bringing long-term strategic expertise to programs seeking to improve environmental conditions, water, sanitation, and public health.

Metayer Bowen has been an advocate for those impacted by water crises nationwide and worked extensively in response to devastating natural disasters such as Hurricane Irma, Hurricane Michael, and Hurricane Dorian.

As a commissioner for Coral Springs, Metayer Bowen has been fostering small businesses with economic development plans and other opportunities including solar manufacturing and tech hubs. She seeks to bring these to bear in her role and intends to offer a balanced perspective while lending her voice to amplify and empower all community members to make Coral Springs better for future generations. Bowen will be term-limited in 2028.



## Miami-Dade Commissioner McGhee, WPCRA Team Up For West Perrine Economic Development

BY DAVID L. SNELLING

Watching his district get trapped into a cycle of poverty while other areas are experiencing economic resiliency, Miami-Dade County Commissioner Kionne McGhee is taking charge to lead the underserved area to prosperity.

McGhee has teamed up with the West Perrine Community Redevelopment Act, (WPCRA), to launch an economic development plan designed to expand businesses and bring new jobs to the area, and foster small business opportunities in one of the county's poorest districts.

The project hopes to pump millions of dollars into South Dade's local economy while changing the landscape of West Perrine and adjacent areas that have experienced decrepit infrastructure, descending property values and residents losing hope for a brighter future. District 9, which also includes Richmond Heights, Homestead and Florida City, have faced a series of social challenges over the years, leading to economic distress, according to McGhee.

But the WPCRA project is aimed at reversing the economic conditions for the impoverished community.

"This partnership is a testament to our commitment to revitalizing West Perrine," said McGhee, who grew up in public housing in South Miami-

Dade and went on to become an attorney and state Rep. "By investing in our community, we are laying the groundwork for a prosperous and vibrant future."

WPCRA Chairman Leviticus Gillard said the plan is foolproof. "We are excited to partner with Commissioner McGhee to bring this transformative plan to West Perrine," said Gillard. "This initiative is not just about economic growth, but also about empowering our community and fostering an environment where businesses and families can thrive."

McGhee outlined the economic development plan which targets businesses, homeownership, employment and beautification. For residential rehabilitation programs, homeowners can qualify to beautify their properties with a grant of \$10,000 and 25,000 with no match, and \$15,000 and \$35,000 for tenant-occupied properties with a 75/25 match.

Adding businesses is the cornerstone of the plan, offering up to \$150,000 for costs to move companies to the area, and the West Perrine Special Projects grant awards up to \$50,000 for community groups to make aesthetic improvements to publicly owned land including landscaping, community identification signs and public art.

McGhee said according to a recent analysis by Miami

Economic Associates, Inc, most District 9 residents are living below or at the poverty threshold, as the median household income is \$54,486, which is 81 percent of the countywide figure of \$67,263.

Moreover, the district's unemployment rate stands at 5.6 percent, significantly higher than the countywide rate of 3.3 percent.

Since he was first elected to the County Commission in 2020, McGhee has created several initiatives to bring economic stability to his district including farming and promoting tourism to harness the rich agricultural heritage of Miami-Dade; creating over 8,000 jobs through the South Dade Logistics Center and the Homestead Entertainment District aimed at generating a billion-dollar economic impact.

McGhee also secured a partnership with Costco worth \$217 million and over 300 jobs and a quarter million dollars for the community.

"We are not just creating jobs, we are building futures," said McGhee. "Our goal is to ensure that every resident of District 9 has the opportunity to succeed and thrive."

For more information on the programs and how to apply, visit the WPCRA website at westperrinecra.com or call Commissioner's McGhee office at 305-234-4938.



## Ernie Smith Is Ready To Create Another Hit

BY DAWN A. DAVIS

*"Well it mus be a duppy or a gunman. I man no find out yet. I an I so frighten. All mi dawta name I figet." ...Duppy Gunman by Ernie Smith.*

One of Ernie Smith's most popular hits, Duppy Gunman, defined this Jamaican iconic singer/songwriter's creative storytelling and musical genius. But where dis duppy come from?

According to the singer and songwriter, who was born Glenroy Anthony Smith in St. Ann, Jamaica: "I had a friend who used to live with me and help me lift and carry my equipment. One night I had just dropped him off and was on my way somewhere. But, it felt like he was still in the vehicle."

"I said to the person I was with, it feels like he's still here. And then I thought about it and said it must be a duppy," he added. "Then I thought about the times and I said, or a gunman. So, when I got home I started writing the song, and it was finished by dawn the next morning. There are always things or events that inspire you."

### INDELIBLE MARK

Indeed, Smith's hits of the 60s and 70s left an indelible mark on Jamaican musical culture. Now, six decades later, he is ready to create another hit. Working on his next album, the songwriter promises new music to please his steadfast fans, and the next generation of listeners.

Recently celebrating his 79th birthday and one-year anniversary to his new wife, Claudette, Smith took time out of his busy writing and production schedule to chat with Caribbean Today.

"I was always a writer, I remember teachers telling me that. When I was a child, I would sit on a wall somewhere reading a book while the other guys were playing cricket. I was always reading and writing, and my mother used to recite poetry to us. My father would borrow a guitar every now and again, bring it over and ask us to sing a song," Smith said of his early influences.

So, that seed planted early on eventually led Smith to a career in music. His father played guitar and bought him an instrument when he was twelve. He played guitar in the band The Vandals in Claremont, St. Ann, after leaving school, and was nicknamed 'Ernie' after Ernest Ranglin.

Then according to Smith, back in the 60s when he was working at Reynolds, a bauxite mining company in St. Ann

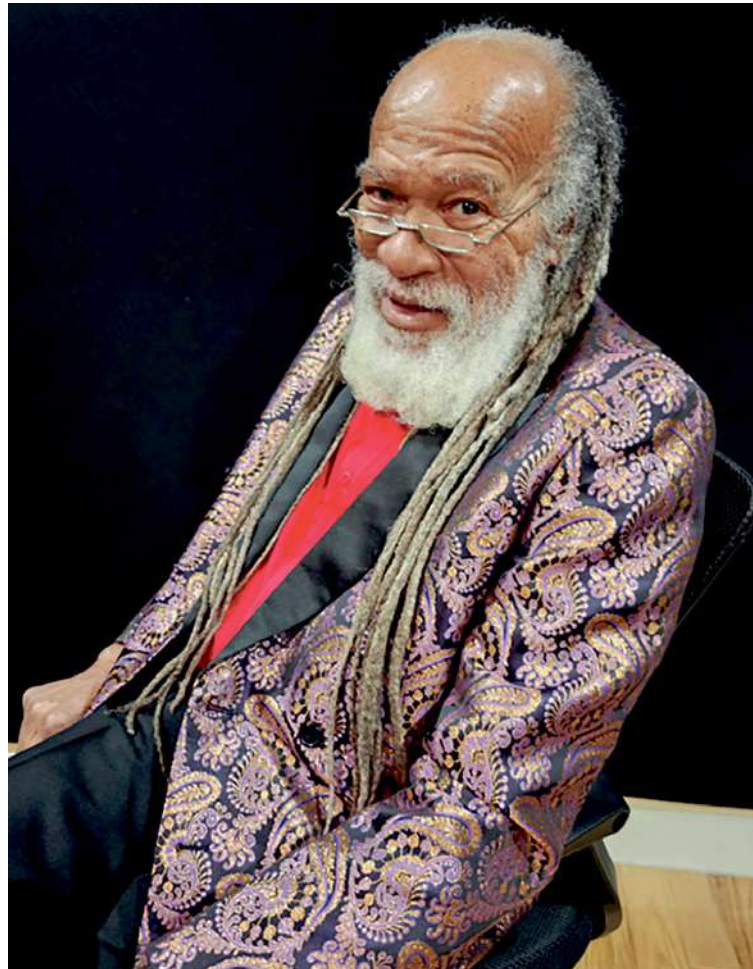
Jamaica, he decided to take a day off to pursue his dreams.

"I went to Kingston to RJR to do a radio audition; I wanted to be an announcer. It was over in 20 minutes and they said, don't call us, we'll call you," he reminisced. "Since I had the whole day off, I presented myself as a songwriter at Federal Records. And they said, there's a band coming in at two o'clock, why don't you stay and record it? And that was the birth of my first song."

That was Smith's love ballad, 'I Can't Take It,' recorded and released in 1967. It was later covered by American singer Johnny Nash and re-named 'Tears on my Pillow,' earning a number one single on the UK charts.

### WEAVE A STORY

His musical style "is just music" said the songwriter. He sings from his heart, from experiences, whatever inspires him. In fact, Smith has folk albums, gospel albums, reggae albums and is influenced by many genres.



Singer and songwriter Ernie Smith is 79 and working on a new album.



Ernie Smith and wife Claudette Bailey Smith.

"I am so eclectic. I love Keb Mo, who is very blues. I love Alan Jackson who is very country," Smith revealed.

In fact, he confessed: "When I was just starting to record I told my producers that I wanted to sing country music. And they said, If you record country music you will not make any money in this country

(Jamaica). So that's when I started to write reggae songs. My first reggae hit was 'Bend Down.' After that it was 'Ride on Sammy,' then 'One Dream,' then 'Pitta Patta.'"

In 1972, he won the Yamaha Music Festival in Japan with "Life Is Just For Living", a song originally written for a Red Stripe commercial. In 1973, he was honored by the

Jamaican government with The Badge of Honor For Meritorious Service in the Field of Music. An album, Life Is Just For Living followed in 1974 on Trojan Records.

Smith's music is timeless, leaving a lasting impression. He says it is content. "You have to weave a story," he said, you have to say something. It has to go somewhere. You can't just be repetitive, using the same chords and the same music over and over."

"My music is just my music," he added. "It's always been totally different from everything else. And that's what gives it its life."

### INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

One thing Smith is concerned about is the Jamaican music industry's losing battle with its intellectual property.

"We are not protecting ourselves properly in the business. There are ways to record the authorship of the business so that you get what's yours. People are not learning anything like that, they just want to hear themselves on the radio," he admonished.

He explained that there are writer's societies that will look out for musicians and songwriters. There are Performing Rights and Mechanical Rights, said Smith. Every time you hear your song played on radio or on TV you should get royalties. Every time a copy of your music is sold, that's Mechanical Rights. There are ways to protect yourself, but

we're not learning enough of the business, he added.

"People are going on stage and renaming other people's rhythms and claiming authorship. So, there are all kinds of mix-ups that is slowing us down in the business," he said. It is his hope that the Jamaican musical fraternity will start to work harder to protect their rights.

Now, Smith's focus is on his new album which will highlight his wide-ranging musical style and celebrate a life well-lived with a nod to his wife, Claudette who noted: "He's so humble with what he does. I don't think he realizes how important he is to Jamaican culture, and how much he has to share."

Smith credits Claudette with his resurgent inspiration: "My last wife is deceased. I was just living, surviving. And then I met Claudette. And if anybody told me I could be this happy at this time in my life, I would never have believed it."



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# While Biden Is Incoherent, Trump Remains King Liar, Including Against Immigrants

What happened to Joe Biden between the State of the Union in February and the much-anticipated CNN debate on June 27th? Biden appeared as a robotic, dazed version of himself, with his cognitive abilities and responses reduced to incoherence and absurdity, lacking the verbal pushback he needed.



**FELICIA J. PERSAUD**

By contrast, Donald “King Liar” Trump remained his usual bombastic, dishonest, xenophobic self, continuing to play the “blame the immigrants” card. Much like he did in 2016 and throughout his presidency, Trump continued his “blame the immigrants” rhetoric, avoiding direct answers and focusing on lies about his tenure and the 2020 election. His entire performance reminded me of a childhood song from Trinidadian Calypsonian Lord Nelson:

*“Yuh hear lie, King liar. Teacher Percy say if yuh tell ah lie You going to hell as soon as yuh die.”*

Here are some of the lies Trump told during the 90-minute debate about immigrants and immigration:

## False Claims on Immigrant Numbers and Criminals

Trump claimed President Biden has allowed in 18 million people from “prisons, jails, and mental institutions,” which is unfounded. “We have a border that’s the most dangerous place anywhere in the world — considered the most dangerous place anywhere in the world.”

Independent data shows that from 2021 to 2024, border officials arrested a little over 100,000 non-citizens with criminal convictions. Encounters do not equate to admissions; they often lead to expulsions, and one person may be counted multiple times.

## Linking Crime and Immigration

Trump again linked crime to immigration, a recurring Republican theme. Research consistently shows immigrants, particularly undocumented ones, commit crimes at lower rates than native-born citizens. A Cato Institute paper found that undocumented immigrants were 26% less likely than native-born Americans to be convicted of homicide, and legal immigrants were 61% less likely. Texas data from 2013 to 2022 supports this, showing lower conviction rates for undocumented immigrants than for natural-born citizens.

Despite high-profile crimes allegedly committed by undocumented immigrants, FBI statistics do not differentiate crimes by immigration status. Studies indicate undocumented

individuals are less likely than native-born Americans to be arrested for violent, drug, or property crimes. While the number of foreigners on the terrorist watch list has increased, they remain a small fraction of total migrants, with the U.S. Border Patrol encountering 169 people from the list from October 2022 to September 2023.

## Exaggerating Threats and Misleading Comparisons

Trump falsely claimed the U.S. is overrun with terrorists, describing the country as a “rat’s nest.” He said Biden “allowed millions of people to come in here from prisons, jails, and mental institutions to come into our country and destroy our country.” He disparaged Biden’s efforts to seek congressional support for border control, claiming he managed without legislation by simply closing the border. Trump misleadingly compared migrant living conditions to those of unhoused veterans, labeling them “luxury hotels.”

Trump falsely accused Biden of causing deaths by allowing migrants into the country and used nearly every question to repeat his lies.

## Immigrants Getting Social Security

Trump falsely claimed that undocumented immigrants are being put “on Social Security.”

*“They’re going to destroy Social Security. This man is going to single-handedly destroy Social Security. These millions and millions of people coming in, they’re trying to put them on Social Security. He will wipe out Social Security. He will wipe out Medicare.”*

The fact is undocumented immigrants cannot qualify for either Social Security or Medicaid and CHIP coverage. Many lawful permanent residents (LPRs or green card holders) have a five-year waiting period before they can get Medicaid and CHIP coverage. Only individuals with a work permit who pay taxes with a valid Social Security number can eventually collect Social Security, as they would have paid into the system. Undocumented immigrants, many of whom pay taxes with a valid tax-ID number from the IRS, cannot file for Social Security benefits. The Brookings Institute has noted that future U.S. population growth, including the sustainability of the Social Security trust fund, depends on immigration levels.

## Immigrants Taking Black and Hispanic Jobs

Trump also used divisive tactics, claiming that new migrants were taking “Black jobs” and “Hispanic jobs,” which received criticism for its unclear terminology.

Data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics shows that Black and Hispanic workers have seen

gains during both the Biden and Trump administrations. Under Trump, the unemployment rate for Black people fell to 5.3% in September 2019 and to 3.9% for Latinos, reaching record lows at the time. These rates dropped again under Biden, with Black unemployment hitting a new low of 4.8% in April 2023 and Hispanic unemployment reaching 3.9% in September 2022. Trump claimed: “The only jobs

he (Biden) created are for illegal immigrants and bounce-back jobs.”

## Ignoring Direct Questions

When asked if he would deport every undocumented immigrant, including those with jobs and families, Trump avoided the question, instead reverting to his xenophobic talking points and falsely linking immigration to crime.

*“Yuh hear lie, King liar. Teacher Percy say if yuh tell ah lie You going to hell as soon as yuh die.”*

**EDITOR’S NOTE:** Felicia J. Persaud is the publisher of NewsAmericasNow.com, a daily news outlet focused on positive news on the Black immigrant communities of the Caribbean and Latin America.



# DRUG TESTING FOR MARIJUANA

## Why Some Employers and Industries are Concerned



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## VIEWPOINT



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# The Scorching Truth: Extreme Heat Is A Wake-Up Call To Act On Climate Change

BY BEN JEALOUS

Are you one of the more than 100 million Americans who live somewhere that was (or still is) under a heat advisory?

As I write these words, the mercury is soaring. The world is reeling from the deadly impact of extreme heat and weather events. This is climate change in action. We are living it. And the thermometer-busting temperatures are just the tip of the (melting) iceberg.

Jocelyn Richards of Manassas, Virginia is currently staying in Maine to escape the summer heat in the South. She suffers from Chronic Inflammatory Response Syndrome (CIRS) from past exposure to mold. Heat is a major trigger for her due to Mast Cell Activation Syndrome (MCAS), a common component of CIRS.

Richards says: "Not only is the heat itself a major trigger, but heat releases VOCs [volatile organic compounds] from asphalt. It becomes unbearable to even take a walk outside or run errands because it's so difficult to breathe from the VOCs in the air. Along with other MCAS symptoms triggered by the heat like tachycardia, high blood pressure, and dizziness, it can quickly turn into a medical emergency if I'm out in the extreme heat for even half an hour."

Richards is still looking for a permanent place to reside with mild temperatures and low levels of the environmental toxins that also trigger her illness. And stories like hers are increasingly common.

A host of illnesses are caused or dangerously exacerbated by extreme heat. Air quality is generally worse during periods of extreme heat. Ground-level ozone – the main component in smog – presents one such threat. It is produced when pollutants, like those from burning fossil fuels, react with heat and sunlight. The stagnant, hot air during heat waves worsens ozone pollution.

The infamous 2022 summer heat wave in Europe is now thought to be responsible for up to 70,000 excess deaths, with ozone pollution playing a big part. Julie Nicely, an atmospheric chemist at the University of Maryland who worked on a report on the 2022 heat wave, noted the mix of conditions created by such a heat wave "is very bad for the lungs and the cardiovascular system. It's just very unhealthy."

Then there is the smoke from wildfires. In addition to the destruction they cause, wildfires are making it harder for millions of Americans to breathe. It is a problem that is getting worse with longer, hotter fire seasons – another feature of climate



change. The still-burning Post Fire northwest of Los Angeles is just the most recent high-profile fire in California to get national attention. And wildfire smoke has now become an issue for even more parts of the country. At one-point last summer, Chicago officially had the worst air quality in the world. Other major American cities across the Midwest and East Coast were similarly impacted, as smoke pollution from Canadian wildfires poured over the continent. The threat of a repeat this summer is still there. Wildfires in Canada are still raging, and experts say the 2024 season still could be as bad as or worse than last year's.

In places where wildfires occur, once the flames subside, flooding becomes a threat. According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the removal of trees and shrubs increases the speed and volume of runoff and hot fires can "create a water-repellent layer of topsoil, which further amplifies runoff volume and speed," increasing the risk of flash floods.

The heat itself dries out the ground and makes water absorption more difficult, which creates a threat of flash floods. And as the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences points out, "Warmer air holds more moisture, resulting in heavy rainfall, snowstorms, and flooding." And "warming seawater can fuel stronger, more destructive hurricanes." NOAA predicts an 85% chance of an above-normal hurricane season this year.

Beyond the threat of hurricanes along our eastern and southern coasts, inland storms are a growing threat for more and more Americans. The regions impacted by serious tornados are expanding. And once-rare derechos, another kind of incredibly destructive windstorm, are becoming more frequent.

Sadly, the list goes on. Around the world, threats from increasing temperatures include rising sea levels, food insecurity from the loss of land suitable for crop cultivation, increased risk of infectious disease outbreaks and another pandemic like COVID-19, and the extinction of pollinators that sustain the

natural life cycles on which we all depend. But although the situation is dire, we cannot give in to despair.

We must invest in climate-

It was one of Murphy's Laws that said: "If something can go wrong, it will." Well, it's the women's law that says, if something goes wrong, it's the man's fault.

Oh yes, mea culpa, mea culpa, mea maxima culpa or loosely translated from Latin: "It's my fault, it's totally my fault."

At least that's the thinking of some women who have so successfully foisted this belief upon men that many of the poor souls walk around thinking that it's true, and that they are really responsible for all the bad things that occur in the relationship.

But what if it's really true, and men are really at fault when it comes to the ills of partners who are experiencing relationship challenges? Could those women who are pointing fingers and heaping blame on men be really on to something?

But how could that be? After all "every story has three sides, his side, her side and the real side." Well, many women are convinced that men are to blame for everything that goes wrong, including the dreaded cheating.

Women cheat as much as men, if not more, but they're discovered less because they're better at it and cover their tracks well. But it must have been something that the men did that drove the women to go outside the relationship and seek fulfillment from another man?

This is true in some scenarios, for if the man neglects his woman, ignores her, doesn't appreciate her, then there's a strong possibility that she'll seek attention and emotional fulfillment elsewhere. "He doesn't even see me, never compliments me on how I look, it's as if I'm invisible."

The alarming statistics of women having multiple babies with numerous men are evident, but the response is that it's the man's fault. Plus they believe that it's payback for how men treated women over the years. So it's tit for tat, revenge, karma.

Domestic violence is the fault of men, as they are the only ones who initiate it and perpetuate it,

resilient infrastructure and support communities most affected by climate change. The more than \$1 billion investment by the Biden-Harris administration to expand shade-producing and air-cleaning tree canopies in cities across the country is one example. I was recently in Michigan with US Department of Agriculture Undersecretary Homer Wilkes to promote the many benefits of the urban forestry initiative in that state.

At the end of the day, though, when it comes to the cascade of devastation caused by rising temperatures, there can be no substitute for tackling

the climate crisis head on. First and foremost, that means hastening our transition from an economy that runs on fossil fuels to one powered by clean, renewable energy. The extreme heat and weather events we're experiencing are not only a wake-up call. They are an immediate call to action to redouble our efforts towards that transition.

**EDITOR'S NOTE: Ben Jealous is the Executive Director of the Sierra Club and a Professor of Practice at the University of Pennsylvania.**



## Men At Fault



is the belief of many women. True, the statistics corroborate this, and do give credence to what they are saying. But what about the women who are violent towards men, is that the man's fault too?

"Of course it is, for if he didn't do something to tick her off, she'd have no reason to hit him." That's the logic of some women. What about those good men who treat their women like queens, give them everything that they want and need, fulfill all her desires, and are basically as near to being a perfect partner as a man possibly can?

Whose fault is it when such a man is cheated on, disrespected and abandoned by his wife? Well, a news clip recently showed that the ex-wife of famous Brazilian football star, Kaka, left him because, as she put it: "He was too good."

"I divorced my husband because he was too perfect for me," the Brazil World Cup winner's ex-wife revealed.

"Kaka never betrayed me, he treated me well, he gave me a wonderful family, but I was not happy, something was missing,"



**TONY ROBINSON**

she was quoted in The Sun. "The problem was he was too perfect for me."

Women love bad men, rogues, cowboys, and even though they say that they want a good man, when they do get one, he's not good enough, or ironically, too good? Fortunately all women do not subscribe to the notion that it's always the man's fault. But enough do to make it worrisome for many a young man who wishes to embark on the perilous oceans of relationships.

"The people who actively find fault in others, are the same people who are completely blind to their own," says author Kristen Butler.

"And why beholdest thou the mote (speck) that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?" ... Mathew 7:5.

So men, don't be daunted, disillusioned or damned by those women who lay the blame squarely at your feet for everything that goes wrong. It's not always your fault.

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



# JAMAICA

# 62



Caribbean  day

## Celebrating Jamaica at 62

# Jamaica Sees 50 Percent Increase In United Airlines Flights To The Island

Jamaica's Minister of Tourism, Edmund Bartlett, has praised the significant increase in United Airlines flights to Jamaica, which has risen by over 50% since 2019. This announcement was made following a meeting between the airline's executives and the Minister and his senior team at United's World Headquarters in Chicago.

United Airlines, headquartered at the Willis Tower in Chicago, operates an extensive domestic and international route network connecting six continents from its seven US mainland hubs. The airline's senior representatives revealed that their schedule to Jamaica will increase by 15% in 2024 compared to 2023, making it the airline's largest schedule to Jamaica to date. Jamaica's Sangster International Airport (MBJ) remains a key location, ranking as the airline's 3rd largest Caribbean destination with up to 34 total weekly flights from five of its hubs.

"Jamaica continues to



Minister of Tourism, Hon. Edmund Bartlett (center), listens to Francine Henry-Carter, Manager, Tour Operators and Airlines, Jamaica Tourist Board, during a meeting with United Airlines Executives at their office in Chicago. Also pictured (L-R): Annalei Avancena, Director, International Regulatory Affairs – Americas; Tom Kozlowski, Senior Manager, Latin Network Planning; Mike LaGrand, Director, Latin & Pacific Network Planning; Donovan White, Director of Tourism; and Philip Rose, Deputy Director of Tourism, Americas. (JTB image)

be in high demand, and this increase by one of the largest US airlines proves that the partnership between the destination and the airline is strong and fruitful," said Minister Bartlett. "We pride ourselves on being one of the most connected destinations through our network of airline

partners who drive our tourism growth."

The meeting also included key tourism officials such as Philip Rose, Deputy Director of Tourism for the Americas, and Donovan White, Director of Tourism. They highlighted that the robust summer schedule from United's hubs in

New York/Newark, Houston, Washington D.C./Dulles, Chicago, and Denver reflects strong load factors for travel to Jamaica.

"To have one of the largest airlines out of the US, our main source market, increase its service says a lot about our partnership and how attractive Jamaica is as a destination," said Donovan White. "There is no doubt that our unique and authentic tourism offerings continue to attract visitors to our shores."

The Jamaica Tourist Board (JTB), founded in 1955, is Jamaica's national tourism agency with offices in Kingston, Montego Bay, Miami, Toronto, and London, and representative offices in Berlin, Barcelona, Rome, Amsterdam, Mumbai, Tokyo,

and Paris. In 2023, the JTB was declared 'World's Leading Cruise Destination' and 'World's Leading Family Destination' for the fourth consecutive year by the World Travel Awards. It also received several Travvy Awards and a TravelAge West WAVE award for its exceptional support to travel advisors.

Jamaica is renowned for its world-class accommodations, attractions, and service providers, frequently earning global recognition and ranking among the best places to visit. For more information on upcoming events, attractions, and accommodations, visit the JTB's website at [visitjamaica.com](http://visitjamaica.com) or call 1-800-JAMAICA (1-800-526-2422).



## PM Holness Highlights Jamaica's Economic Growth And Resilience In Responding To Infrastructure Shocks

Jamaica's economic growth over the last decade has bolstered its ability to respond to shocks, according to Prime Minister Andrew Holness.

"Jamaica has changed quite a bit in the last decade to the point where we are able to withstand some shocks. It's not every shock that we will be able to withstand, but if we continue to grow our economy and run our public bodies well so that they have strong balance sheets, then they will be able to respond to shocks and crises," stated Prime Minister Holness.

Addressing a meeting at the Ocho Rios Cruise Terminal in St. Ann on Friday (June 21), Holness reviewed a damaged section of the pier. In February, the cruise ship Carnival Magic damaged the breasting dolphins and the concrete berthing structure during a collision caused by rough seas.

"If this had occurred 10 years ago, the conversation would not be 'when are we going to finish,' but 'when are we going to start.' If this had happened 10 years ago, the question would not be 'how much is it going to cost,' but 'how are we going to borrow to fix it,'" Holness pointed out.

He emphasized the role of the Port Authority of Jamaica (PAJ) in ensuring the resilience of Jamaica's cruise shipping market, particularly regarding port infrastructure readiness. "The PAJ is one of our well-run public institutions, meaning that it has a balance sheet that can support the cost of resilience.

The importance of having a good economy or running a good entity, that is what gives you the ability to withstand shocks," the Prime Minister said.

Consultants are conducting necessary tests to guide the engineering repairs. "They have to study the sea floor, wave action, and the damage done to engineer the area to be stronger than it was before," he explained.

Holness encouraged those dependent on cruise shipping in the town to understand the importance of a thorough process to ensure future resilience. The damage to the structure offers an opportunity to reengineer, recraft, and expand the existing infrastructure.

He assured stakeholders of a balanced approach to restoring normalcy while developing the pier to achieve a higher level of operations. Repairs will be phased, with plans to expand the pier to prevent similar incidents in the future. The expansion could include constructing a new finger pier to accommodate larger ships, part of a five-year plan for further development.

"We understand the dislocation and impact, but we are moving as quickly as possible to get it done right," Holness assured.

The damaged berth is slated for repair over a one-year period, with scheduled vessels redirected to Reynold's Pier in the parish, and to the piers in Falmouth, Trelawny, and Montego Bay, St James.



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# Celebrating Jamaica at 62

## PM Holness Reaffirms Jamaicans' Right To Beach Access

Prime Minister Andrew Holness has reassured Jamaicans that they have the right to enjoy the island's beaches. During a tour of the Little Dunn's River attraction in Ocho Rios, St. Ann, on June 21, Holness addressed concerns about access to the natural environment.

"There is a sense that, somehow, because of the Government's attempts, through the Urban Development Corporation (UDC), to exercise some control over the property, there is an attempt to exclude the average person from being able to enjoy the natural environment that is here," he said. "I want to make it absolutely clear that every Jamaican has a right to enjoy their environment, enjoy

their beaches and their land."

Holness assured that the Government will ensure this right is realized and fulfilled. He acknowledged challenges at the location, including illegal activities, which had led to its closure due to security concerns. The attraction is now accessible to citizens twice weekly.

Plans for the management, operation, and infrastructure upgrade of the attraction were announced in January. "The policy directive given to the UDC is to develop the properties we have for the public good and benefit," said the Prime Minister. He cited the recently opened Harmony Beach Park in St. James, which offers free access and has systems for

control, order, and sanitation, allowing Jamaicans to enjoy their environment in good condition.

Minister without Portfolio in the Ministry of Economic Growth and Job Creation, Senator Matthew Samuda, emphasized the importance of uplifting Little Dunn's River and increasing access for St. Ann residents. "They feel very strongly about this beach. They are here every Saturday and Sunday, and we have seen that criminal elements from outside the parish have tried to capture this asset," he added.

UDC General Manager L. Robert Honeyghan announced that in the coming weeks and months, stakeholder consultations will be held to discuss plans for the location. "We will ensure that what we design here will meet the very best standards for the people of St. Ann and Jamaica overall," he assured.



## Jamaica's Embassy In D.C. to Mark 62nd Independence

The Jamaican Embassy in Washington is inviting all Jamaicans to join in celebrating Jamaica's 62nd Independence anniversary. The Embassy, in collaboration with active Diaspora organizations and the Jamaican community in the D.C., Maryland, and Virginia (DMV) area, will celebrate beginning with the Annual Independence Church Service, set for Sunday, July 28th, 2024, at 11 a.m. at the Sligo Seventh-day Adventist Church, 7700 Carroll Avenue, Takoma Park, MD.

JAMAICA Fest will follow on Sunday, August 18th, 2024, in downtown Silver Spring, at 1 Veterans Pl, Silver Spring, MD 20910. For a complete list of endorsed diaspora activities, visit [embassyofjamaica.org](http://embassyofjamaica.org).



## Palm Beach To Host Inaugural Jamaica Independence Fest 2024



Legendary reggae singer Marcia Griffiths is set for the inaugural Palm Beach Jamaica Independence Fest 2024.

Reggae music enthusiasts will gather in Palm Beach, Florida, for the Palm Beach Jamaica Independence Fest 2024, promising an unforgettable blend of music and culture.

Set for August 3, the festival will feature performances by Marcia Griffiths, Mr. Lxxx, Bugle, and Brother Gary. Attendees can expect an electrifying mix of folk singing, dancing, a gospel segment, a Caribbean Cultural Pageant, and a domino tournament, celebrating traditional Jamaican pastimes.

"We chose Marcia Griffiths because she is the Queen of reggae music. Her popularity from her days with Bob Marley and the I-Threes, and her renowned solo act make her a perfect fit for this event," said Bains Hinds, spokesperson for A Few Good Men Entertainment, the event's founders. "These events bring out the best in Marcia."

This inaugural event in Palm Beach aims to highlight Jamaican culture outside Jamaica. "We feel it's important to share our cultural experiences with Jamaican people who have migrated so they can reconnect with a piece of the culture they miss," Hinds added.

Second-generation Jamaicans are particularly eager to experience the cultural extravaganza reminiscent of Jamaica in the 1970s and 1980s, which Hinds calls "the true Jamaican culture."

The festival will feature several well-known artists, including Bugle, Mr. Lxxx, and local acts like Iesha Blender, daughter of the prominent singer Everton Blender. "We believe these artists represent the essence of Jamaican culture," Hinds noted.

Hinds emphasized the event's unique opportunity to showcase Jamaica's diverse culture, including national symbols, music, and food, to promote the power of Brand Jamaica. "Anyone who loves Jamaican culture will appreciate the Palm Beach Jamaica Independence Festival," he said.

Anticipation is high within the Jamaican Diaspora in Florida. "We expect a good turnout. People are excited about the reggae lineup and the cultural activities. The combined experience is generating the best response so far," Hinds concluded.



## Events To Plan For

### July 10-15: Jamaica Escape Part Deux

Date: Wed, Jul 10 - Mon, Jul 15  
Location: Iberostar Grand Rose Hall, Branch Development, Rose Hall Main Road, Little River, Montego Bay, Jamaica

### July 14-20: Reggae Sumfest 2024

Date: Sun, Jul 14 - Sat, Jul 20  
Location: Catherine Hall Entertainment Center, Howard Cooke Boulevard, Montego Bay, Jamaica

### July 17-21: JAMAICA: REGGAE SUMFEST 2024

Date: Wed, Jul 17 - Sun, Jul 21  
Location: Jamaica Transfers Onlines, P.O.#1, Skyline Dr, Montego Bay, Jamaica

### August 1-12: Jamaica Independence 2024

Date: Thu, Aug 1 - Mon, Aug 12  
Location: Hilton Rose Hall Resort & Spa, Rose Hall, Main Road, Montego Bay, Jamaica

### August 2-7: BEST WEEKEND EVER - IN JAMAICA

Date: Fri, Aug 2 - Wed, Aug 7  
Location: CV3W+JJC Ocho Rios JAMAICA, Terminal de

cruzeiros, Ocho Rios, Jamaica

### August 3: Jamaica Independence Celebration and Jerk Festival

Date: Sat, Aug 3, 11:30 AM - 9:00 PM

Location: St. Catherine Jerk Fest, 14A Forte Street, Linstead, Jamaica

### August 3: Milk & Honey Jamaica - Best Weekend Ever

Date: Sat, Aug 3, 9:00 AM - 2:00 PM

Location: Plantation Cove, Priory, Jamaica

### August 3: Celebrate Jamaica's Independence in Miramar, FL

Date: Sat, Aug 3, 1:00 PM - 9:00 PM

Location: Miramar Regional Park, Miramar, FL

### August 15-19: FAMILY FUN & JAMAICA SUN

Date: Thu, Aug 15 - Mon, Aug 19

Location: Hotel Riu Ocho Rios, Mammee Bay, Ocho Rios, Mammee Bay Road, Ocho Rios, Jamaica.



*Celebrating Jamaica at 62*

# Jamaican-American NYC Teacher Zachary Tomlinson Wins Prestigious “Big Apple Award”

BY ANDRE CLARKE

New York City special education teacher Zachary Tomlinson received the surprise of his career Thursday May 23rd when his vocational skills lesson was interrupted by administrators from his school and the school’s district to inform him that he was a recipient of the “Big Apple Award” for his stellar achievements as an educator.

Courtney Rattenbury, the principal of P373K Brooklyn Transition Center and Rachele Klainberg, the deputy superintendent of district 75, along with representatives from the New York City School’s Chancellor’s office, presented the Jamaican American with the prestigious annual prize which recognizes and celebrates New York City teachers who inspire students to, “...be their best selves, advocate for their future, model equitable learning with high expectations for the diverse and dynamic needs of all students and affirm students’ identities, unique gifts, and genius as well as partnering with families, community members, and community-based organizations.”

Tomlinson, whose name was submitted for the award by current and former parents, competed against other nominated teachers in district 75, which comprises 69 schools and programs scattered across more than 300 sites. After completing a rigorous

application process, which included an essay and interview by the superintendent’s office, Tomlinson is now a representative of his district on the New York City Public Schools Chancellor’s Teacher Advisory Council, where he has the opportunity to advance his leadership skills and expertise in the classroom through development sessions and sharing of best teaching practices. This is his second nomination and is grateful to win the award and receive recognition for all of the hard work that he puts in:

“It was God’s timing. It’s crazy that I was nominated and went through the application process and actually won something...you know, you do your work but you don’t expect to win any awards,” said Tomlinson, born to Jamaican parents in NYC.

The Caribbean-American educator, began his teaching journey 7 years ago through the Teaching Fellows program, which trains college graduates and those looking to change careers, the skills necessary to become functional teachers in the New York City school system and places them in schools of need.

Tomlinson found his home at P373K Brooklyn Transition Center, a school that’s comprised solely of students with special needs. As a special education teacher, his work might look a little different than other



Jamaican American NYC special education teacher Zachary Tomlinson, I., is the winner of the “Big Apple Award” for his stellar achievements as an educator.

educators in his field. When we spoke, he was preparing his students to take the written driver’s license test so that they can get decent paying jobs that might require driving skills, as well as work independently delivering food with companies

such as Uber Eats or DoorDash.

Tomlinson explained that the students at his school are not working toward a high school diploma or GED because of their neurological and developmental challenges, but instead receive an Advanced Skills certificate, which is a culmination of all

of the learning experiences and skills they acquire during their time in his care to become independent adults:

“Getting a chance to work at Walmart or work at Target would be a success story for our students as opposed to when me and you go to school, our teachers and parents have a dream for us to do well in school and go to college while these students, if they can secure a regular 9-5 job that’s a huge success story for them,” he said. “Knowing that, there’s different ways that you can teach these types of students and I know that there’s a lot of funding that can help us create those success stories.”

During his time so far at Brooklyn Transition Center, Tomlinson has forged special bonds with his students and now sees the world differently when it comes to people with special needs and mental health issues as they struggle to integrate into a society that isn’t always as inclusive or compassionate to them. As a part of the Teacher’s Advisory Council, Tomlinson hopes to advocate to the chancellor’s office regarding the capabilities of special needs students and what they can accomplish in society. He believes that there are even more programs that can be implemented in his district that will give them the skills to make positive contributions in our society.



## JetBlue Confirms High Demand For Jamaica

Popular low-cost carrier JetBlue Airlines has confirmed that demand for Jamaica remains high. In a meeting led by Minister of Tourism, Edmund Bartlett, and his Senior Tourism executives, JetBlue’s executives affirmed Jamaica’s popularity in several key US states.

“As part of our efforts to reengage our major airline partners and strengthen our relationships, we met with Senior Executives from JetBlue to explore strategic ways of improving our arrivals figures from the US. It is encouraging to know that Jamaica remains high on the list of destinations that JetBlue customers want to visit,” said Minister of Tourism, Hon. Edmund Bartlett.

Headquartered in the Long Island City neighborhood of Queens, New York City, JetBlue operates over 1,000 flights daily and serves 100 domestic and international destinations in the

Americas and Europe.

“Jamaica remains one of the most connected destinations in the Caribbean, a result of strategic efforts to ensure growth in our arrivals and earnings. Airlift is critical to supporting our growth strategy, and we are working to secure more seats for the destination,” added the minister.

The meeting, held at JetBlue’s New York office, forms part of the Minister’s mega multi-city marketing blitz across New York, Chicago, and Dallas. “JetBlue has been a trusted partner, and we look forward to this continued partnership to increase arrivals,” said Director of Tourism, Donovan White. Key markets in JetBlue’s routes with high demand for Jamaica include Boston, Fort Lauderdale, and New York.



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## Celebrating Jamaica at 62

# 10th Jamaica Diaspora Conference Celebrates Success With Over 1,100 Delegates

BY HOWARD CAMPBELL

The 10th Jamaica Diaspora Conference took place June 16-19th in Montego Bay, Jamaica under the theme 'United For Jamaica's Transformation: Fostering Peace, Productivity, and Empowerment.' It attracted over 1,100 delegates and was hailed as "a resounding success".

Jamaicans who live in the United States, Canada and the United Kingdom heard Prime Minister Andrew Holness and members of his cabinet address matters of concern to them, including crime, the economy and the country's transition to a republic.

In his address, Holness assured delegates that steps by his administration to fight Jamaica's perennial crime problem, are paying off.

"Our murder rate is now about 10 percent below what it was last year this time, and we experienced a similar reduction last year," said the PM. "Our strategy is to continue to push that homicide rate downwards. The number of gangs that threatened us have been basically cut in half. We have dismantled many of the violence-producing gangs."

"I am so pleased that the number of people who have been saying to me that this conference

is a resounding success, or it exceeded their expectations, or it was the best that they have ever attended, including persons who have been attending since 2004," said Minister of Foreign Affairs Kamina Johnson Smith. "They now return feeling empowered by knowledge and more sure footed about how it is that they wish to participate in national development. Not to mention the number of people who now say that they feel confident to put in place plans to start to transition, to return home."

Eddy Edwards of South Florida, attended his third conference as a representative of the Jamaica Hi-5 Foundation and Jamaican Jerk Festival USA Inc. He was generally pleased with what he heard.

"The positive dialog between the members of the Diaspora and government as it relates to the Constitution and the move to becoming a Republic," Edwards noted. "The main point is that this process can only be successful if both the government and the Opposition are aligned and present a united argument to the public." In terms of commerce, he is pleased with the government's Jam-Dem virtual platform, an initiative with the International Organization for Migration and Planning Institute of Jamaica.



Rose-Marie Lewis, (right), a member of the South Florida delegation to the June 16-19 Jamaica Diaspora Conference in Montego Bay, with Jamaica's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Kamina Johnson-Smith.

This database of Jamaican groups and companies can be accessed through the ministry of foreign affairs website, mfaft.gov.jm.

Jam-Dem also has a 'Out of Many Roots' engine, which allows Jamaicans abroad to trace their lineage through the Registrar General's Department.

"There are several business opportunities in Jamaica, where members of the Diaspora can invest and contribute to the growth and development of the country," Edwards added. Rose-Marie Lewis, also of South Florida, made her 10th appearance at the Jamaica Diaspora Conference. For her, the most striking aspect was the number of young delegates at the event.

"When we are in leadership positions, we need to be at the stage where we pass the baton and do not hold on to power. We have to prepare the young people to take over," she noted.

Lewis, who is involved in a number of outreach programs in rural Jamaica, was encouraged by health officials' assurance that it will be easier to access medical supplies being shipped from the US.

"Mr. Courtney Cephas, who works with (health) minister (Christopher) Tufton says that they are making it easier for a better transition to Jamaica," she added. "Too many times we contribute (supplies) and customs is a deterrent in clearing the goods, so I'm glad the ministry of health is doing more to facilitate the process."



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## Celebrating Jamaica at 62

### Indiana Musician Rich Hardesty Releases New Album "Jahmerican" In Jamaica

BY HOWARD CAMPBELL

A frequent flier to Jamaica since the early 1990s, Indiana born Rich Hardesty is consumed by the country's culture. On June 2 in Negril, he released 'Jahmerican,' his latest album.

The set has a whopping 50 songs, many inspired by the Caribbean country. Hardesty, a singer/guitarist, was joined by locals at Pirates Dock Bar in the resort town, one of his favorite haunts.

"It was important to launch 'Jahmerican' in Jamaica because I was given that nickname by my Jamaican friends in Negril back in the day," he told Caribbean Today. "There are 50 songs on this project, and they all have been influenced by Jamaica... salt, sea, sand, and island of the spices," he explained. "The island of Jamaica and its people have shaped me over my career."

Hardesty's laid-back sound is similar to that of Jimmy Buffett, the free-spirited American musician/businessman who was also a regular visitor to Jamaica. 'Jerk Chicken and Red Stripe', 'Caribbean Cowboy,' and 'Make Love to Reggae,' are some of the original songs on 'Jahmerican,' while Hardesty also covers reggae standards



Indiana born musician Rich Hardesty, with guitar, at the June 2, 2024, launch of his album, 'Jahmerican,' in Negril, Jamaica. (Contributed image)

such as Bob Marley's 'Who The Cap Fit,' Tyrone Taylor's 'Cottage in Negril,' and The Melodians' 'By The Rivers of Babylon.'

Hardesty discovered Jamaica through Spring Break, the annual summer event that attracts American college students to the country to wind down after exams. He embraced Jamaican culture through countless return trips and has recorded songs with musicians including drummer Sly Dunbar, percussionist Bongo Herman and Julian Marley.

"I consider this my second home and the people of Jamaica

are my family," said Hardesty. "I am fascinated with its culture. When I am in Jamaica, I am the happiest, I can be the best version of me when I am with the good vibes."

Several celebrities have lived in Jamaica. The most famous was country legend Johnny Cash, who owned a home in Montego Bay; R&B singer/bassist Larry Graham also lived in that tourist mecca while Wyclef Jean, Rod Stewart, former heavyweight boxing champion Lennox Lewis and actor Leon, are frequent visitors.



### Mentorship Academy Unveiled



Dr. Sandra Colly-Durand and Minister of State in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, Alando Terrelonge at the June launch. (JIS image)

The inaugural Jamaica Diaspora Mentorship Academy (JDMA) was officially unveiled on June 19th, during the final day of the 10th Biennial Jamaica Diaspora Conference at the Montego Bay Convention Centre in St. James.

Conceived by Dr. Sandra Colly Durand, a Global Jamaica Diaspora Council member and Education Sector Leader, and supported by the Ministry of Education and Youth, the JDMA aims to nurture the next generation of Jamaican leaders through dedicated mentorship and professional development opportunities.

Operating under the banner

'Jamaica Diaspora Empowers Tomorrow One Mentee at a Time', the JDMA seeks to bridge the gap between seasoned Diaspora professionals and emerging talents in Jamaica.

Dr. Colly Durand, speaking at the unveiling, highlighted her passion for the project and its goal of leveraging expertise from abroad to benefit Jamaican students. "This initiative is about paying it forward. We are not asking for money, just the sharing of expertise to empower Jamaican youth," she stated. Initially planned to engage 62 mentors and mentees in honor of Jamaica's 62nd Independence

anniversary, the JDMA has already exceeded expectations with 91 mentors volunteering. Dr. Colly Durand anticipates rapid expansion, aiming to reach over 200 mentees within the year. She also expects that mentees who migrate will become mentors themselves within five years.

The academy's objectives are to cultivate skills, expand networks, and provide invaluable insights across various fields crucial for personal and professional growth. Mentees will benefit from tailored mentorship experiences aligned with their career aspirations, while mentors will contribute directly to Jamaica's socio-economic development.

"The JDMA is excited to harness the expertise and passion of the Diaspora community to empower and develop young Jamaicans," Dr. Colly Durand stated.

The official launch of the JDMA is scheduled for September 2024, marking a new chapter in mentorship and educational advancement in Jamaica. For more information about the Jamaica Diaspora Mentorship Academy, email [gjdceducation@gmail.com](mailto:gjdceducation@gmail.com).

- Rewritten from JIS News



### Jamaican Born Mr. Easy's "Drive Me Crazy" Celebrates 22 Years As A Dancehall Classic



Mr Easy nails his vocals on diverse releases, ranging from Lover's Rock to festive Dancehall and Latin Club. (Contributed image)

Mr Easy's iconic Dancehall hit "Drive Me Crazy" celebrates its 22nd anniversary, continuing to define the genre's sound worldwide. The song remains a global favorite, from arenas to TV and film placements.

"I knew there was something special about 'Drive Me Crazy' when I recorded it," says Mr Easy, born Ian Dyer, who immigrated with his family from Jamaica to Flatbush in Brooklyn, where he completed his education. "Yet, I am humbled by the heights the record has reached."

Produced by Tony "CD" Kelly on the infectious "Buy Out Riddim," "Drive Me Crazy" captures the essence of Dancehall's Golden era. Mr Easy's extraordinary vocals adorn the pulsating riddim, commanding listeners to groove fearlessly or sing along.

To mark the 22nd anniversary of "Drive Me Crazy," Mr Easy secured its placement in the acclaimed drama series "Grime Kids," now on BBC Three. The series follows the coming-of-age journey of five Black London teenagers in the late 90s, navigating inner-city challenges to make it in Grime music.

"This is a big achievement for me," says Mr Easy. "The longevity of 'Drive Me Crazy' is a testament that good music has no expiration and that Dancehall has a viable place in today's music landscape. I am proud of the song and can't think of a more rewarding TV placement than 'Grime Kids.'"

The celebration continues on the road, with summer shows planned in New York, Maryland, Virginia, D.C., Oklahoma, and more to be announced. From a slew of classics to his new banger "Dirty Dancer," produced by DJ Baby Bang, Mr Easy proves his

timeless appeal and knack for rocking every stage show. His songwriting matches his stellar vocals.

The "Drive Me Crazy" effect is massive! In a viral video, NBA star Russell Westbrook of the LA Clippers is seen dancing and singing the Dancehall classic word for word.

Comments poured in from fans, DJs, and artists. DJ Moneyd said, "Bro, I don't play a Dancehall set at any gig for any crowd without dropping this classic," while legendary Stone Love selector Geefus gave the post his "trafffffffffffc" stamp of approval.

"Long live 'Drive Me Crazy'.....here's to 22 more years of the classic," says Mr Easy. "Grateful for Russell Westbrook and all fans, DJs, fellow artists, and influencers who have supported the song."

Mr Easy is one of Dancehall's signature voices, with staples on every DJ's playlist. Whether it's "Drive Me Crazy," "Rain Again," "Murder," "Bashment Time," "Silent Killer," "Strangest Thing," or one of his many other classics, Mr Easy leaves an indelible mark on Reggae and Dancehall music and culture.

"Drive Me Crazy" was also featured in the film "After the Sunset," starring Pierce Brosnan, Selma Hayek, and Don Cheadle, while "Bashment Time" was featured in the cult classic "Belly."

Mr Easy's musical journey continues with a string of new red-hot selections. In addition to "Dirty Dancer," he is enjoying success with "Suffering" (Feat. Vazasha, Knowledge Records) and "You Belong Into My Life" (Stingray Records).





# Celebrating Jamaica at 62

## St. Ann Community Gets Wi-Fi Service

Residents of Glasgow Lodge district in Murray Mountain, St. Ann, are the latest beneficiaries of the Universal Service Fund's (USF) community Wi-Fi service, launched on Friday, June 21. This new Wi-Fi hotspot allows up to 200 residents to connect simultaneously using smartphones or tablets, free of charge, marking the fifth such installation in South West St. Ann.

The launch represents a significant advancement in digital access for rural communities in St. Ann and across Jamaica. Principal of Murray Mountain Primary and Infant School, Glendon Brown, praised the initiative, highlighting its substantial benefits for the children, with around 90 percent hailing from the community. "I must commend all the parties involved in the selection of the location for such an initiative. It's a great one," Mr. Brown said. He stressed the importance of responsible internet use and urged parents to monitor their children online.

Resident Simone Ferguson shared her enthusiasm for the new Wi-Fi service, emphasizing its benefits for the community, particularly for school children who cannot afford mobile data. She expressed gratitude for the

Wi-Fi and hoped for further installations to expand internet access in the area.

State Minister in the Ministry of Finance and the Public Service, Hon. Zavia Mayne, noted that Glasgow Lodge should be proud to be among the first communities in the constituency to receive this technology. As the Member of Parliament for the area, Mr. Mayne encouraged residents to protect and value the new infrastructure, which has the potential to enhance their quality of life and educational opportunities. "This community Wi-Fi installation now forms part of the community infrastructure. It is important [and] I am saying to you that there is a value in putting this apparatus here. Let us focus on the positives, let us use it in a positive way," Mr. Mayne said.

The Community Connect Wi-Fi Programme aims to increase internet access across Jamaica's 63 constituencies, fostering greater digital inclusion. To date, 189 communities have benefited from the ongoing project, with more communities set to be connected in the future.

- Rewritten from JIS News



## Jamaica Launches Two Groundbreaking Platforms to Enhance Diaspora Engagement

Members of the Jamaican Diaspora are being encouraged to sign up for government business missions as the Ministry of Industry, Investment, and Commerce prepares to engage with non-traditional markets starting this month.

Since last year, the Ministry has spearheaded a series of export and investment business missions to the Caribbean, United States, Canada, and London.

"This year, we're focusing on non-traditional markets. Next month, we're targeting Latin America, including Mexico, Colombia, Costa Rica, and El Salvador. At the end of August into early September, we will head to Nigeria, Ghana, Rwanda, and Sierra Leone," advised Jamaica Promotions Corporation (JAMPRO) President, Shullette Cox.

She made these remarks during a panel discussion on Monday (June 17) titled 'Jamaica Open for Business: Transforming Investment and Enterprise in Jamaica through Diaspora Engagement,' at the 10th Biennial Jamaica Diaspora Conference at the Montego Bay Convention Centre in St. James.

Cox explained that business missions have a two-fold objective.



Jamaica Promotions Corporation (JAMPRO) President, Shullette Cox addressing delegates. (Contributed image)

"We're not just promoting Jamaica as an attractive investment destination. We are also bringing businesspeople from Jamaica to connect with counterparts in those countries, aiming to export to those territories or develop business partnerships," she stated.

This year's Diaspora Conference, held from June 16 to 19, was themed 'United for Jamaica's Transformation: Fostering Peace, Productivity, and Youth Empowerment.'

- Rewritten from JIS News



## Denbigh Agricultural Show Gears Up For 70th Staging

The upcoming Denbigh Agricultural, Industrial and Food Show is drawing a record number of potential exhibitors, announced Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries, and Mining, Floyd Green.

"We are already seeing a 20 percent increase in exhibitor interest compared to last year. Denbigh is looking extremely good," Green said at the launch of the event's 70th staging at the Hi-Pro Ace Supercentre in White Marl, St. Catherine on June 21. Scheduled from Sunday, August 4 to Tuesday, August 6, at the Denbigh Show Grounds in May Pen, Clarendon, the Denbigh Show is the largest agricultural exposition in the Caribbean. It has attracted over 100 exhibitors, featuring a wide range of agricultural booths and seminars.

"Denbigh showcases our progress in agriculture and provides a platform for agricultural excellence. It's a place to learn about modern agriculture trends, support our farmers, and enjoy family-friendly



Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries, and Mining, Floyd Green at the June 21st launch. (JIS image)

entertainment," said Minister Green.

He praised the island's farmers for their resilience in ensuring sector growth despite the drought, noting that local onion production is at an all-time high. Green added that the Government will continue to provide incentives to promote growth in agriculture

and related industries.

The Denbigh Agricultural, Industrial and Food Show is poised to be a significant event, highlighting advancements and excellence in agriculture.

- Rewritten from JIS News



## LATAM Airlines Perú And Jamaica To Restart Lima-Montego Bay Route In December

LATAM Airlines Perú and Jamaica are excited to announce the restart of the Lima-Montego Bay route, subject to government approval, beginning on December 1, 2024. This direct flight to Montego Bay, located in northwest Jamaica, will take just under 5 hours and will be operated with Airbus A319/A320 aircraft. It is projected that the route will serve 45,000 passengers in its first year of operation.

The carrier will operate on Thursdays, Saturdays and Sundays. Edmund Bartlett, Jamaica's Minister of Tourism, expressed enthusiasm: "We are delighted with the resumption of service by LATAM Airlines that reaffirms our commitment to enhancing connectivity and

tourism growth in this key region. This initiative marks a pivotal moment for Jamaica as we expand our reach within the Latin American market, leading to increased arrivals and earnings for Jamaica's economy."

Manuel van Oordt, CEO of LATAM Airlines Peru, remarked: "This year, LATAM Peru celebrates 25 years of operation in the country. Being able to resume a route with broad tourist projection is a way for us to continue supporting the development of the country."

Donovan White, Jamaica's Director of Tourism, added: "This new flight option will open the door for more Latin American travelers to experience the rich culture, breathtaking landscapes,

and warm hospitality of Jamaica. We are committed to providing an enriching travel experience, ensuring that every visitor enjoys the true essence of our island's warmth and vibrancy."

Jamaica is renowned for its rich array of attractions and activities for all interests. Visitors can explore the stunning Dunn's River Falls, hike in the Blue Mountains, dive in Negril's crystal-clear waters, or enjoy the vibrant nightlife and music scene in Kingston. Additionally, Jamaica offers unique cultural experiences, such as visiting museums and historical sites, and tasting the delicious local cuisine, famous for its jerk chicken and Blue

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 8B)

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# Celebrating Jamaica at 62

## Diaspora Nationals Honored

Five Diaspora-based Jamaicans have been honored with the prestigious 2024 Governor-General Achievement Awards (GGAA), in recognition of their exceptional contributions to Jamaica and the Global Diaspora.

The awardees are Steve Getten and Mark Henry from Canada; Dr. Pearl Ann Jarrett from the United Kingdom (UK); Dr. Dahlia Ann Blake from the United States (US); and musician Roy 'Gramps' Morgan of Morgan Heritage fame.

The awards were presented by Governor-General, Sir Patrick Allen, during an official ceremony on June 19th at the Montego Bay Convention Centre in St. James, marking the conclusion of the 10th Biennial Jamaica Diaspora Conference. Jamaica's Ambassador to the US, Her Excellency Audrey Marks, also participated in the award presentation.

The GGAA, presented biennially to Jamaicans residing in the UK, US, or Canada, recognizes individuals who have demonstrated significant and active service towards the development of their communities and Jamaica. The awards are given in two categories: persons aged 18 to 35, and those aged 35 and over.

In his remarks, the Governor-General thanked the recipients for being ambassadors



Governor-General, Sir Patrick Allen with honorees: Steve Getten and Mark Henry from Canada; Dr. Pearl Ann Jarrett from the United Kingdom (UK); Dr. Dahlia Ann Blake from the United States (US); and musician Roy 'Gramps' Morgan of Morgan Heritage fame. (JIS image)

and role models for Jamaica, highlighting their tireless and selfless work that has contributed to Jamaica's stellar image on the international stage as a global powerhouse.

"Today, we pay special tribute to the recipients for their dedicated service. These are individuals of substance whose stories are not just inspiring but a testament to the human spirit," the Governor-General said. "What we are learning is about persons of perseverance, a snapshot of their journey, as there is so much more."

He encouraged the awardees to continue to be guided by the words of the National Pledge: "to

continue to stand up for justice, brotherhood, and peace, working diligently and creatively, to think generously and honestly, so that Jamaica may, under God, increase in beauty, fellowship, and prosperity, and do her part in advancing the welfare of the whole human race."

The 10th Biennial Jamaica Diaspora Conference, held from June 16-19 under the theme 'United for Jamaica's Transformation: Fostering Peace, Productivity and Youth Empowerment,' served as a pivotal platform for engaging the Jamaican Diaspora in national development and societal progress. The event

brought together members of the Diaspora, stakeholders from various sectors, and local leaders to explore synergistic strategies that address key challenges and harness opportunities for

transformative change.

- *Rewritten from JIS News*



## LATAM Airlines Perú And Jamaica To Restart Lima-Montego Bay Route In December

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6B)

Mountain coffee.

Investment in Jamaica's tourism industry has reached new heights, with existing hotel companies expanding their presence and new investors ready to build new properties. "These developments signify expansion and demonstrate our commitment to offering world-class hospitality experiences to visitors from around the world," added Minister Bartlett.

Several construction projects are underway, adding thousands of additional rooms. Princess Resorts will add another 1,000 rooms; Grand Palladium Lucea will expand with 1,000 additional rooms; and the Wyndham brand will re-emerge in Jamaica with the construction of Viva Wyndham, featuring nearly 1,000 rooms north of Negril. Progress continues on the 1,100 rooms at Hard Rock in Montego Bay, and Secrets is expanding with over 100 new suites. A significant new resort with 1,285 rooms is also planned for the island's tourism

capital.

Tourism development continues in Trelawny with major hotel brands like Harmony Cove, Planet Hollywood, and the expansion of the H10 resort. Bahia Principe in St. Ann is undertaking a multifaceted expansion project that includes villas, condominiums, hotel rooms, a PGA-certified golf course, a fishing village, and housing for tourism workers, all using a broadly environmentally sustainable development approach. Secrets will develop a 700-room hotel in St. Ann as well.

LATAM Peru celebrates 25 years of operations this year, currently operating 18 domestic routes and 32 international routes. The Montego Bay operation will be added to its network alongside flights to Rosario (Argentina) and Curitiba (Brazil) by the end of the year.

Airline tickets for the Lima-Montego Bay route are expected to be available in the coming days.



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# Jamaican Reggae Stars To Perform At Paris Olympics Event

BY CT STAFF WRITER

It's not just Jamaican athletes who are set to take over the Paris Olympics this summer. Reggae stars Julian Marley, Skip Marley, and Luciano will as well.

The three are set to headline the Jamaican Day Mega-Reggae Event on August 9th in Nanterre, Paris. The event, organized by the Government of Jamaica, is part of an effort to promote cultural diplomacy and make a significant impact in Paris, according to Entertainment and Culture Minister Olivia "Babsy" Grange.

Grange made this announcement during her presentation in the Sectoral Debate in the House of Representatives last week, where she also revealed that gospel singer Kevin Downswell will perform at another event two days later. "We will use the opportunity of Paris 2024 to



Luciano is among the Jamaican acts set to bring reggae to the Olympics this August.

engage in cultural diplomacy," Grange said. "We will partner with the city of Nanterre to stage Jamaica Day on Friday, August 9, culminating in a mega reggae concert featuring Julian Marley, Skip Marley, and Luciano."

"And then on August

11, we will partner with the CRC Church in Paris to stage Jamaica Praise featuring Kevin Downswell. We're hitting Paris by storm," the minister added.

During this period, the twinning of Nanterre and Spanish Town, the former capital

of Jamaica and the birthplace of artists such as Chronixx, Koffee, Papa San, Lady G, Govana, and D'Angel, will be finalized. The Mayor of Nanterre and the Mayor of Spanish Town will sign a partnership agreement, initiating a mutually beneficial relationship between the two cities.

More than 1,000 Jamaicans reportedly live in France. Nanterre, home to the Paris La Défense Arena, one of the Olympic stadiums for Paris 2024, will host the swimming events and Water-Polo finals of the 2024 Olympic Games.

Nanterre, with nearly 100,000 residents, is known for its solidarity, cosmopolitan nature, and strong sporting culture. It boasts high-quality infrastructure, more than 11,000 licensees and practitioners, and a professional basketball club in the French first division, which

has won the European Cup twice.

In December last year, during the launch of Rebel Salute, French Ambassador Olivier Guyonvarch declared France as the No. 2 reggae country globally. Sixteen reggae music festivals have been announced in various French cities between June and August this year.

These include the four-day La Nuit de l'Erdre in Nort-Sur-Erdre featuring Sean Paul, the Sun Ska Festival featuring The Wailers and Burning Spear from August 2 to 4, the Nomade Music Festival featuring Julian Marley in Anglefort, and the No Logo Festival in Fraisans featuring Kabaka Pyramid from August 9 to 11.

The Olympic Games will run from Friday, July 26th, to Sunday, August 11th.



## Kingsley Cooper's Life To Be Celebrated At University Chapel Of The West Indies

BY HOWARD CAMPBELL

Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, a number of Jamaican fashion models made their names overseas on the runway or on glossy publications such as Essence. They all had Kingsley Cooper to thank for their success.

The 71-year-old Cooper, co-founder of Pulse Model Agency, sadly died on June 18th at a hospital in Kendall, South Florida. Details of his death were not disclosed by his family, but Cooper was flown to Miami after reportedly suffering severe abdominal pains. His life will be celebrated on July 15th at the University Chapel of the West Indies, Mona campus of the UWI in Kingston, Jamaica.

Born in Kingston, Cooper and fellow attorney Hilary Phillips, started Pulse in 1980 to promote Jamaican fashion. That decade saw the rise of models like Kimberley Mais, who became a sensation in Japan as the face of the popular Kirin beer.

Another major success was Althea Laing, winner of Pulse's Miss Jamaica Fashion Model title in 1985. That year, she graced the cover of Essence Magazine, which was also a shot in the arm for Cooper's company.

Lois Samuels, Jaunel McKenzie, Nell Robinson and Alcia Burke are other models who did well for Pulse. Mais, winner of the 1991 Miss Jamaica Universe title, told the Gleaner newspaper that Cooper was a visionary.

"Mr. Cooper was a pioneer in developing Jamaica's models



Kingsley Cooper: 1953 – 2024

and the modelling industry in Jamaica," she said. "In the early days, we never knew where this would go – if this could be developed into a livelihood. He was very supportive of me and saw the potential in me that I never saw in myself. Dreams came true because of him."

Jamaica's prime minister Andrew Holness also hailed Cooper. "His pioneering work as founder of Pulse Model Agency in the 1980s was the catalyst that placed Jamaica front and centre of the lifestyle sector locally and overseas," Holness said.

"Kingsley's astute business sense saw him transforming Pulse into an investment and lifestyle brand with significant regional impact, creating products such as Caribbean Model Search, Caribbean Fashion Week, among others and later listing the investment company on the stock market, which saw its entry into real estate and other ventures."

For film-maker Lennie Little-White, a longtime friend of Cooper's, his triumphs exceeded fashion.

"When I returned to Jamaica (during the early 1970s), it was in the middle of the nationalistic fervour to create indigenous commercial institutions that would empower black Jamaicans," Little-White reminisced. "He encouraged me to go deep in film and television production while he soon deserted his law practice to develop his penchant for entertainment and fashion. Kingsley was proud to create a platform at Pulse to empower young black men and women to become world-famous fashion models. His pinnacle was the creation of Caribbean Fashion Week."

In addition to Pulse, Cooper was franchise holder for Miss Jamaica Universe and founder/organizer of Caribbean Fashion Week which was first held in 2001. He also promoted Reggae Superjam which featured acts such as Peter Tosh, Dennis Brown and Chaka Khan. Pulse's real estate projects including the restoration of Villa Ronai as well as the expansion and development of the lifestyle community at both Trafalgar Road and Villa Ronai, inclusive of boutiques, hotels, shops, offices, residencies, restaurants, spa and event venues. Cooper was awarded the Order of Distinction, Jamaica's sixth-highest honour, in 2007.

He is survived by his partner Romae Gordon and children Safia and Cole.



## Singer Tasha T Celebrates Jamaica's Positive Image Despite Travel Advisories



Singer Tasha T, born in Canada to Jamaican parents, has released 'Jamaica, It Nice.'

BY HOWARD CAMPBELL

In April, 2023 when the US State Department issued a travel advisory warning Americans against travelling to Jamaica due to "crime and medical services," singer Tasha T was incensed. The image they projected was not the Jamaica she knew.

It inspired the singer, born Natasha Whyte to Jamaican parents in Canada, to write 'Jamaica, It Nice,' which was released last year. She also filmed a video in Kingston, the country's capital, to reinforce the positive side of her parents' homeland.

"I wanted to encourage the people abroad, that regardless of what you hear about Jamaica it is still nice," said Tasha T. "The culture, the people, the food, the activities, the music and most of all the vibes and energy of the Jamaican people are unique and valuable. Therefore, despite the struggles, the Jamaican

people always find ways to uplift themselves in every way possible and spread joy and happiness."

Jamaica remains at Level 3 on the US State Department Travel Advisory rankings, which means citizens should "reconsider travel" to Jamaica while the government of Canada advises nationals to "exercise a high degree of caution" if travelling there. But that has not stopped people like the Toronto-born artist from visiting the country.

Tasha T says her mother, who is from rural St. Catherine parish, ensured she and her five siblings had a strong sense of Jamaica in their Canadian home. A Rastafarian, she played the music of roots icons like Bob Marley, Dennis Brown, Burning Spear and Marcia Griffiths which helped make them culturally aware.

At age 12, Tasha T made her visit to Jamaica, which celebrates

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 12A)

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT



# “McBee” Triumphs At American Premiere In Jamaica, Queens In Caribbean American Heritage Month

Broadway World Award winner David Heron and the cast of Alwin Bully’s “McBee” are celebrating the success of the play’s American premiere, which took place on Sunday, June 23rd, at the Jamaica Performing Arts Center, (JPAC), in Jamaica, Queens, New York.

The play, produced and directed by Heron, was presented as a one-night-only staged reading in tribute to its playwright, the late Alwin Bully, and as a special cultural event celebrating New York City’s annual Caribbean American Heritage Month festivities.

A large and enthusiastic audience filled JPAC for the first-ever performance of Bully’s play on American soil, culminating in a standing ovation that lasted several minutes. The star-studded cast was led by Amazon Prime “Harlem” star Luke Forbes and “How Stella Got Her Groove Back” actress Denise Hunt. They were joined by Jerry Benzwick, Lincoln Brown, Dianne Dixon, Emilio Evans,

Gerard Joseph, Miranda Melhado, Mitzie Pratt, and James Duke Walker.

Producer-director Heron, who won the 2023 Broadway World Award for Best Supporting Performer for his role as Caliban in The Colonial Theatre of Rhode Island’s “The Tempest,” joined the cast as a last-minute replacement for an actor who withdrew days before the production. The performance was preceded by a Caribbean Cuisine Reception in collaboration with Golden Krust Restaurant, and free tea sampling by sponsors Kendel Instant Ginger Teas.

Anita Bully, the widow of the late Dominica-born playwright Alwin Bully, welcomed the audience with a brief onstage address, accompanied by their son Brent. She explained that for her late husband’s, “McBee” was not just an adaptation, but an extension of Shakespeare’s original “Macbeth.”

“It is a retelling and



Cast Of McBee on June 23, 2024, in Jamaica, Queens, NY. (Ian Buddington image)

reworking in much the same manner that Shakespeare handled the original story from Holinshed’s Chronicles,” she said. “Alwin did not try to rewrite Shakespeare’s poetry. His intention was to give the story a Caribbean immediacy while maintaining the original intent.”

Anita Bully also spoke

about the recently formed Alwin Bully Foundation, which aims to continue his vision of providing training for promising young individuals in the visual and performing arts.

Heron shared his experience of being mentored by Bully, recounting how the first two plays he wrote – “Ecstasy” and

“Intermission” – were developed and prepared for production through a staged reading process led by Bully and his theatre company, The Company Limited, in Jamaica in the 1990s.

“Thanks largely to Alwin’s vision, new playwrights had the opportunity to have their work showcased and chosen for a staged reading presentation produced by The Company Limited, with a professional cast and director,” he said. “I owe much of my early success as a playwright to Alwin, who spent many hours motivating and guiding me as I honed the scripts.”

“McBee” follows the story of Caribbean political power couple Allan and Alice McBee (played by Luke Forbes and Denise Hunt). After Allan receives a prophecy from three Rastafarians that he is destined to become the nation’s Prime Minister, he and his wife devise a bloody plan to make it a reality, with explosive consequences for themselves and their country.

Heron described Sunday night’s performance as “The second coming of McBee,” expressing hope that the play will find its way into the right hands for a fully mounted production. “There is simply nothing else out there quite like it, and it deserves to be seen as far and wide as possible,” he stated.

Other sponsors of Sunday night’s premiere event included The True Tribute Organization, IMC Media, and Results Promo and Marketing.

- Newsamericasnow.com

## Singer Tasha T Celebrates Jamaica’s Positive Image Despite Travel Advisories

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11A)

its 62nd year of independence on August 6.

“Since then, I’ve been visiting Jamaica very often during the summer, staying with my family in Kingston,” she said. “The fondest memories I have of Jamaica are the vibes of my people in our community and the music playing in the streets every night. In addition, sitting with my uncle Lloyd aka Hoppy T, for hours everyday writing songs and being educated about Jamaican music, culture and its history.”

Jamaica It Nice is co-produced by Tasha T and Michael Nugent.

Despite the travel warnings, Jamaica welcomed over four million tourists in 2023, an increase of 23.7 percent over the previous year. A statement from the Jamaican government revealed that tourism earned a record \$4.265 billion last year.



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## Jamaican Launches Vodka Made From Yam

A Jamaican national has come up with a unique vodka, that is set to take the market by storm.

Wait a Bit Vodka, a premium small-batch vodka crafted in Jamaica, entered the market last month, with a unique twist according to the Jamaica Observer. Made from select yellow yams grown by small farmers in the mountainside town of Wait a Bit, Trelawny, this vodka boasts a blend of local spring water from the Cockpit Country. Gluten-free and exceptionally fresh, Wait a Bit Vodka promises a high-quality spirit while supporting local farming initiatives.

Wait a Bit Distillers was founded by principal Lincoln Nicholson with a vision to produce premium quality spirits infused with authentic Jamaican flavors. The goal is to showcase these unique flavors to the world, starting with their flagship product, Wait a Bit Vodka. The ingredients for Wait a Bit Vodka are locally sourced, primarily within a 10-mile radius of the distillery in Trelawny. This proximity ensures freshness and supports the local farming community.

Wait a Bit Vodka is set to hit

the market in late June 2024. It will be available at select retailers, offering consumers a taste of Jamaica's finest small-batch vodka. True to its artisanal nature, Wait a Bit Vodka is crafted in small batches, with every aspect, including the packaging, done by hand. This attention to detail highlights the brand's commitment to quality and craftsmanship.

The distillery's first major breakthrough came after a tasting session with a well-known spirits company, which praised the high quality of the vodka. This endorsement has been a significant boost for the brand. The response to Wait a Bit Vodka has been overwhelmingly positive. Consumers appreciate the fresh taste and the use of locally sourced ingredients, which support small farmers in Jamaica.

Wait a Bit Distillers aims to grow its brand internationally, making Wait a Bit Vodka known for its exceptional quality and unique Jamaican yellow yam base. The journey has not been without challenges, especially with engineering works and operating in rural Jamaica. However, the company has embraced these



Principal Lincoln Nicholson of Wait a Bit vodka.

hurdles, embodying the spirit of patience reflected in its name, Wait a Bit.

Jamaicans are encouraged to support Wait a Bit Vodka, a product made from locally grown yellow yams by hardworking farmers. The brand's focus on quality and its roots in the local community make it a premium choice in the market.

- NewsAmericasNow.com



## HCC Urges CARICOM To Implement Trans Fat Regulations By 2025

As the December 2025 deadline approaches, the Healthy Caribbean Coalition, (HCC) and several stakeholders are urging CARICOM policymakers to implement evidence-based regulations to protect citizens from Industrially Produced Trans Fats, (iTFA). These harmful food contaminants are linked to heart attacks and strokes, leading causes of death in the region.

During a recent webinar, titled "Caribbean Mobilising to Eliminate Industrially Produced Trans Fats," hosted by the HCC and partners, it was noted that iTFAs are prevalent in many commonly consumed packaged foods in the Caribbean. In 2022, Caribbean policymakers committed to eliminating partially hydrogenated oils (PHOs), the main source of iTFAs, from national and regional food supplies by December 31, 2025. However, no CARICOM country has yet enacted legislation to eliminate PHOs or limit iTFA in foods.

Dr. Rasheed Perry, a PhD Researcher at New York University, presented findings from research conducted in Jamaica, revealing that one-third (33.8%) of the food products analyzed contained iTFA. Additionally, 104 out of 168 products labeled as trans-fat free were found to contain trans fats, underscoring the need for validation of manufacturers' labels.

Maisha Hutton, Executive Director of the HCC, emphasized that TFA regulation is a highly cost-effective and feasible policy measure. She reinforced civil society's role in building public demand for iTFA regulation. Ms. Helen Royer, Director of Human and Social Development at the CARICOM Secretariat, highlighted the necessity of collaboration among all stakeholders, including civil society, the private sector, and government, to raise awareness of the dangers of industrially produced trans fats and build support for regulatory policies.

Dr. Didacus Jules, Director General of the OECS, underscored the significance of regional cooperation, stating that

iTFA regulation is an important opportunity for the region to prioritize public health. He added that this regulation could catalyze accelerated policy changes across the region.

Dean Chambliss, Caribbean Subregional Programme Director at PAHO, noted that implementing policies to ban PHOs and industrial trans fatty acids aligns with global health standards and ensures compliance with trading partners' mandates. He emphasized that such policies will reduce the burden of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) in the Caribbean, decrease healthcare costs, and lower economic losses due to productivity decline from related illnesses.

Dr. Heather Armstrong, Head of the Chronic Disease and Injury Department Surveillance at CARPHA, reaffirmed CARPHA's commitment to supporting the Interagency Committee tasked with monitoring and coordinating the implementation of the 6-point Policy Package for promoting healthy diets and food security in the Caribbean.

The webinar featured insightful presentations from experts. Professor Alafia Samuels of the Caribbean Institute for Health Research (CAIHR) at UWI Jamaica, and Technical Consultant on the HCC iTFA project, highlighted the health impacts of TFAs and the importance of engaging with food manufacturers to eliminate PHOs. She stressed the need for Caribbean food manufacturers to offer iTFA-free products, already banned in most high-income countries.

With many large Caribbean food manufacturers already removing TFA from their foods to comply with trading partners' mandates, HCC and partners are calling for a multi-sector, multistakeholder coalition to work towards a TFA-free Caribbean for all.

- Rewritten from St. Vincent Times



## Get Ready For A Mango Festival In Fort Lauderdale

Get ready for a mango extravaganza as the Island SPACE Caribbean Museum in Fort Lauderdale, FL. The Museum will host its inaugural Island SPACE Mango Festival on Sunday, July 7, 2024, from noon to 6 PM. This vibrant event will celebrate the beloved mango, offering a unique opportunity for attendees to indulge in various mango varieties, explore mango-based products, and learn about cultivating mango trees.



A collection of East Indian mangoes, ripe and ready to enjoy. (Photo: D. Mullings)

The festival promises a delightful day for mango enthusiasts and families. Attendees can sample and purchase a wide array of mango varieties, savor mango-based culinary delights, and discover innovative beauty products made from this tropical fruit.

### Festival Highlights:

**Mango Sampling and Sales:** Guests can taste and purchase diverse mango varieties, each with a unique flavor profile.

**Mango-Based Products:**

Explore an array of delicious mango-infused foods, such as breads, tarts, cakes, preserves, chutneys, ice cream, and sweets. Beverages like juices and smoothies, as well as home and beauty products like lotions, candles, soaps, and oils, will also be available.

**Workshops on Mango Cultivation:** Participate in informative workshops led by horticultural experts, offering practical tips and techniques on growing and caring for mango trees.

### Community Engagement:

Attendees are invited to bring mangoes from their homes or regions and share their mango stories with other patrons.

Mandy Laguerre, manager of Island SPACE Caribbean Museum, expressed her excitement about the festival, stating, "The Island SPACE Mango Festival is a celebration of the beloved mango and its cultural significance in the Caribbean. We are thrilled to provide a platform where the community can come together to enjoy, learn about, and appreciate the many uses and benefits of this incredible fruit."

### Event Details:

Date: Sunday, July 7, 2024  
Time: 12:00 PM – 6:00 PM  
Venue: Island SPACE Caribbean Museum, 8000 W. Broward Blvd, Suite 1202, Plantation, FL  
Price: Adults \$15 pre-sold, \$20 at the door; children 12 and under \$10  
Tickets: Available at [islandspacefl.org/mangofest24](http://islandspacefl.org/mangofest24)



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Peter A. Webley  
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Can We Talk?

# HEALTH NEWS



## 1.8 Billion People At Risk Due To Rising Physical Inactivity Globally

The World Health Organization, (WHO), has issued a warning that an estimated 1.8 billion people globally are at risk of disease due to insufficient physical activity. New data reveals that nearly one-third (31 percent) of adults worldwide did not meet recommended physical activity levels in 2022. This alarming trend of physical inactivity has increased by about five percentage points since 2010.

In the Americas, including the Caribbean, inactivity rates are even higher at 36 percent. The WHO cautions that if this trend continues, inactivity levels could rise to 35 percent by 2030, derailing efforts to meet the global target to reduce physical inactivity by that year.

The WHO recommends that adults engage in at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity or 75 minutes of vigorous-intensity physical activity per week. Lack of physical activity increases the risk of cardiovascular diseases, type 2 diabetes, dementia, and



Get moving is the message from the WHO. (iStock.com/kali9 image)

cancers such as breast and colon cancer.

The study, conducted by WHO researchers and academic colleagues and published in The Lancet Global Health journal, found the highest rates of physical inactivity in high-income Asia Pacific (48 percent) and South Asia (45 percent). Inactivity levels in other regions ranged from 28 percent in high-income Western countries to 14 percent in Oceania.

“These findings highlight

a missed opportunity to reduce cancer, heart disease, and improve mental well-being through increased physical activity,” said Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, WHO Director-General. “We must renew our commitments to increasing physical activity levels and prioritize bold actions, including strengthened policies and increased funding, to reverse this trend.”

Globally, physical inactivity is more common among women

(34 percent) than men (29 percent). In the Americas, 41 percent of women are inactive compared to 30 percent of men. Additionally, people over 60 are less active than younger adults, emphasizing the need to promote physical activity among older populations.

“Physical inactivity is a silent threat to global health, contributing significantly to chronic diseases,” said Dr. Rüdiger Krech, Director of Health Promotion at WHO. “We need innovative ways to motivate people to be more active, considering age, environment, and cultural background. Making physical activity accessible, affordable, and enjoyable can reduce non-communicable diseases and create a healthier,

more productive population.”

Despite the concerning results, the study indicates some improvements in nearly half of the world’s countries over the past decade. Twenty-two countries are on track to meet the global target of reducing inactivity by 15 percent by 2030 if current trends continue.

The WHO urges countries to enhance policy implementation to promote physical activity through grassroots and community sports, active recreation, and transport measures such as walking, cycling, and using public transportation.

- *Rewritten from CMC*



## Guyana Health Authorities Warn About Counterfeit OZEMPIC

Health authorities in Guyana have issued a warning against the use of falsified drugs to treat diabetes, specifically targeting counterfeit batches of OZEMPIC (semaglutide) that may be

circulating locally.

The Analyst-Food and Drug Department (GA-FDD) alerted the public based on information from the World Health Organization (WHO) regarding three falsified batches of OZEMPIC detected in Brazil, the United Kingdom, and the United States between October and December last year. These fake medications infiltrated regulated supply chains.

Guyana is among the countries potentially affected. The counterfeit batch number LP6F832 is unrecognized, and the combination of batch number NAR0074 with serial number 430834149057 does not match genuine manufacturing records. Additionally, while batch number MP5E511 is genuine, the product with this number is falsified.

The use of falsified OZEMPIC poses serious health risks, as incorrect dosages, contamination with harmful substances, or unknown ingredients can result in ineffective treatment or even life-threatening conditions due to its subcutaneous injection administration.

The GA-FDD emphasized that OZEMPIC (semaglutide) is not registered in Guyana and should not be marketed or used locally. Consumers are reminded that using unregistered medicines without GA-FDD approval is unsafe.

Healthcare professionals and the public are urged to report any suspected adverse events related to the use of these falsified medicines to the Government Analyst Food and Drug Department or to the product’s manufacturer, distributor, wholesaler, or retailer.

- *Rewritten from CMC*



### CITY OF PLANTATION NOTICE OF FUNDS AVAILABLE

June 30, 2024

The City of Plantation anticipates the availability of approximately \$722,443 through the State Housing Initiatives Partnership (SHIP) to be used for its owner-occupied minor home repair assistance program.

Funding is available for income-eligible Plantation residents needing assistance with non-luxury health and safety repairs, and code violations (i.e. Roofs, Windows, Doors, Electric, and other non-luxury repairs/replacements). Once funds are completely committed, the City will close the program until additional funds become available.

Description	SHIP Minor Home Repair Program
TOTAL REVENUE	\$722,443

Program Income Limits Effective - April 18, 2024

Below is the maximum income limit, adjusted for household size.

Household Size	MAXIMUM INCOME LIMIT 80% of Area Media Income
1	\$59,150
2	\$67,550
3	\$76,050
4	\$84,450
5	\$91,200
6	\$98,000
7	\$104,750
8	\$111,555

#### Application Period

Applications will be available for pick up at Minority Builders Coalition (MBC), 499 NW 70 Avenue, Suite #114, Plantation, FL 33317 beginning Monday, August 5, 2024, through Friday through Friday, August 30, 2024, from 9:00am until 5:00pm.

For more information regarding Minor Home Repair programs, please call or email Edlyn Griffith, City of Plantation, 954-414-7871, [egriffith@plantation.org](mailto:egriffith@plantation.org), or Janice Hayes, Minority Builders Coalition at 954-792-1121, x25, [Janice.hayes@minoritybuilders.org](mailto:Janice.hayes@minoritybuilders.org).

For information regarding Purchase Assistance/Down Payment Assistance programs, please call Broward County Environmental Protection and Growth Management Department, Housing Finance Division at 954-357-4900 or visit [Broward.org/Housing](http://Broward.org/Housing)

## BACK TO SCHOOL



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# These Caribbean Airlines Are Expanding Flights To The Caribbean



AA is set to fly from Charlotte to St. Vincent and the Grenadines starting Dec. 7th

American Airlines is adding new routes and increasing flights to the Caribbean in time for a winter warm-weather escape. The airline will introduce eight new flights, including a new route to La Romana in the Dominican Republic. This daily flight from Miami will start on December 5, operated by an Airbus A319, making American the only US airline to fly directly to La Romana.

Brian Znotins, American's senior vice president of network and schedule planning, stated: "Customers will have more reasons to choose American than ever before for nonstop fun in the sun this year. We are excited to continue growing our network to the region with

more flights this winter to the Caribbean and Latin America than any other US carrier ever." American Airlines' additional new routes this winter include:

- **Charlotte to St. Vincent and the Grenadines:** Saturday-only service starting Dec. 7 on a Boeing 737
- **New York to Barbados:** Daily service starting Nov. 5 on a Boeing 737
- **New York to St. Lucia:** Saturday-only service starting Dec. 7 on a Boeing 737
- **New York to St. Maarten:** Saturday-only service starting Dec. 7 on an Airbus A319
- **New York to Saint Vincent**

and the Grenadines: Saturday-only service starting Dec. 7 on a Boeing 737

• **Philadelphia to Barbados:** Saturday-only service starting Nov. 9 on an Airbus A321

• **Philadelphia to Costa Rica:** Saturday-only service starting Dec. 7 on a Boeing 737

Frontier Airlines is also expanding its services to include a new route from San Juan (SJU) to St. Croix (STX), starting in April 2024.

Meanwhile, Sun Country Airlines has announced

new non-stop flights from Milwaukee Mitchell International Airport to Punta Cana, Dominican Republic, and Montego Bay, Jamaica, as part of its winter schedule. These flights will operate from mid-December 2024 through early April 2025.

• **Punta Cana Flights:** Starting December 26, 2024, initially running twice per week, with an increase to four times per week from January 23, 2025, until April 7, 2025.

• **Montego Bay Flights:** Commencing January 25, 2025, operating twice a week until April 5, 2025.

The expansion of flight services by these major airlines underscores the growing demand for Caribbean travel, promising more convenience and options for travellers looking to enjoy the region's warm weather and vibrant culture.

- NewsAmericasNow.com



## Grenada Increases Fines And Jail Time For Undeclared Firearms

The Grenada Parliament has given the green light to legislation amending the existing fines and imprisonment for visitors who fail to declare a firearm to a Customs officer.

Legislators approved an amendment to the 1968 Firearm Act resulting in a fine of EC\$50,000 (One EC dollar=US\$0.37 cents), an increase of 4900 per cent from the previous EC\$1000 fine.

In addition, anyone convicted of a crime under the legislation could also face the possibility of spending six

months in jail, up from three months. The amended legislation goes into effect from August 1st this year.

Leader of Government Business, Phillip Telesford tabled the amendment with Finance Minister Dennis Cornwall calling on travellers and visitors to do the "right thing" because the government is prepared to build more prison space to imprison all those who violate that law.

"I am not saying that increasing the fines and jail time will solve the problem, some may argue that it will increase

the population in the jail but I believe Mr Speaker even if we have to build more prison space to deal with those who believe they can get away with anything that they do illegally and make a living out of it we want them to know that this will not be permitted," said Cornwall, adding that the Dickon Mitchell government is adopting a zero tolerance policy for firearm related offenses.

- CMC News



## Caribbean Airlines Wins Best Airline Staff Service Award

Caribbean Airlines, the leading airline in the Caribbean, has been honoured as the Best Airline Staff Service in Central America & Caribbean at the prestigious 2024 World Airline Awards. The awards ceremony took place on June 24, 2024, at the iconic Fairmont Windsor Park.

Hosted by Skytrax, the international air transport rating organization, the event celebrated the best in the airline industry. Garvin Medera, CEO of Caribbean Airlines, expressed his gratitude and pride in the team's achievement, stating: "This award is a testament to the dedication, passion, and hard work of our entire staff. At Caribbean Airlines, we focus on creating memorable travel experiences by delivering exceptional service with the genuine warmth and friendliness that is synonymous with the Caribbean spirit. Being recognized by our passengers and industry peers as the best in staff service is a significant honour, and it fuels our commitment to continue exceeding our customers' expectations."

Edward Plaisted, CEO of Skytrax, congratulated Caribbean Airlines on their achievement, saying: "We congratulate Caribbean Airlines on this fabulous achievement

of being named as the Best Airline Staff Service in Central America & Caribbean at the 2024 World Airline Awards. This service and hospitality accolade should be a source of pride for the Management and Staff of Caribbean Airlines."

### The 2024 World Airline Awards

The World Airline Awards are wholly independent and impartial, established in 1999 to provide a global customer satisfaction study. Travelers worldwide participate in the largest airline passenger satisfaction survey to determine the award winners, making the awards highly esteemed in the aviation industry.

The online customer survey ran from September 2023 to May 2024, with invitations sent to previous respondents. The survey was available in multiple languages, including English, French, Spanish, Russian, Japanese, and Chinese. Over 100 nationalities participated in the 2023/2024 survey, with 21.42 million eligible entries counted. All survey entries were rigorously screened to ensure validity, and more than 350 airlines were featured in the final results.



## Make Plans For This Food Festival

Celebrity chefs like Marcus Samuelsson, Daniel Boulud, and Dario Cecchini. Bartenders like Marv the Mixologist. Food Network stars Amanda Freitag, Carla Hall, Maneet Chauhan, and Geoffrey Zakarian. World-class art in a special showcase.

There's no Caribbean festival quite like The Bahamas Culinary & Art Festival, which returns to the Baha Mar resort in Nassau from Oct. 22-27.

This year's event will also feature the return of the FUZE Art Expo, led by Baha Mar's executive director of art and culture. "Going into our third year, our goal is clear – to continue to uplift our culinary and arts artisans, furthering Baha Mar's commitment to enrich our Bahamian community and

provide world-class offerings for our guests and residents," said Graeme Davis, President of Baha Mar, in a statement to Caribbean Journal. "The Bahamas Culinary & Arts Festival is the ultimate platform to do just that, and this year's programming will be truly spectacular."

The festival is packed with exciting events, from the legendary Truffle Dinner hosted by Boulud to a beach party at the SLS.

Samuelsson himself closes out the event with Marcus After Dark, a late-night event at his Marcus Gardens venue at the resort.

There's also a Culinary Expo with chef demos and interactive cooking sessions featuring Food Network personalities.

This festival reinforces Nassau Paradise Island's position as the region's premier culinary destination.

"I participate in a number of festivals and events throughout the year, and The Bahamas Culinary & Arts Festival is one of my favourites," said Marcus Samuelsson. "There really is no other event that brings such an incredible group of culinary and beverage talent together with renowned artists for an immersive opportunity to experience the flavours, culture, and soul of the island."

- Rewritten from CaribJournal





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SCAN ME

**SPORTS NEWS**



# Jamaica's Men's 4x400m Team Misses Olympic Qualification, Shericka Jackson And Others Shine At National Championships

Jamaica will miss the men's 4x400-m at the Olympic Games for only the second time since 1948 after failing to qualify via a special relay organized on Sunday's final day of the JAAA national championships at the National Stadium.

The Jamaican team needed to run faster than 2:59.12, the time set by 16th ranked Zambia, but the fastest of the three teams could only manage 2:59.87. The absence of newly minted national champion Deandre Watkin and JeVaughn Powell, who was third in the 400m final on June 28th, significantly impacted the attempt. Powell reportedly injured a toe, while Watkin, who ran a personal best of 44.48 seconds, was unavailable.

Jamaica had already failed to qualify twice at the World Athletics Relays held in Nassau, Bahamas, in early May, and again at the NACAC New Life Invitational in the Bahamas in mid-June, where they could only manage 2:59.73.

Despite the efforts and

support of an expectant crowd, the Jamaica 'Gold' team of Reheem Hayles, Sean Bailey, Malik James-King, and Tarees Rhoden ran 2:59.87. The Jamaica 'Green' team of Demar Francis, Kimar Farquharson, Zandrion Barnes, and Anthony Cox ran 3:02.73, and the Jamaica 'Black' team of Assinie Wilson, Karayme Bartley, Bovel McPherson, and Shemar Palmer ran 3:09.13. A team from St. Vincent and the Grenadines finished fourth in 3:24.35.

**WINNERS**

In other news, Shericka Jackson completed her third straight Jamaican national women's sprint double by taking the 200m in a season's best 22.29 seconds (1.6m/s) at the JAAA National Championships at the National Stadium on Sunday. Jackson, who came from behind to win the 100m on Friday, did just enough to secure the win and her place in the 200m at the Paris Olympics.

Young Jamaican sprinter Tia Clayton aims to win her first

global medal at the prestigious event. Clayton delivered a stellar performance in the semi-finals of the women's 100m competition on June 28th, clocking a massive personal best time of 10.86 seconds. She continued her impressive form by racing to 10.90 in the final on Friday, finishing just behind her training partner Shericka Jackson, who won the event in 10.84.

Sprinter Kishane Thompson expressed confidence in his performance in the men's 100m final at the JAAA National Championships on Friday, June 28th, indicating that his best performances are still ahead this season. Thompson, coached by Stephen Francis at MVP Track and Field Club, clocked a world-leading time of 9.77 seconds to



A member of Jamaica's Men's 4x400-m team reacts after the missed qualification. (Jamaica Star image/Instagram)

secure victory.

Meanwhile, Bryan Levell completed four days of top-quality sprinting by running a personal best of 19.97 seconds (1.3m/s) to win the men's 200m on Sunday's final day of the JAAA National Championships at the National Stadium.

Nickisha Pryce retained her women's 400m title on Sunday's final day of the JAAA national championships, running 50.01 seconds in the finals at the National Stadium. Pryce, who

broke the national record earlier in June with a time of 48.89 seconds, is seen as a medal contender at the Olympic Games in Paris.

Ackera Nugent broke the national record in the 100m hurdles on Sunday, storming to a brilliant 12.28 seconds (0.5m/s) to win at the JAAA National Championships at the National Stadium. Nugent will be joined by two-time World Champion Danielle Williams and 2019 World Championships finalist Janeek Brown on the Olympic team.

And World Championships gold medalist Tajay Gayle was awarded third place in the men's long jump on Saturday at the JAAA National Championships after Shawn-D Thompson's final round jump of 8:30m was confirmed to be a foul. Gayle, with a best mark of 8.18m (0.6m/s), will join winner Carey McLeod and Wayne Pinnock to contest the event at the Paris Olympics.



# This Haitian Immigrant Will Represent Her Country At The Olympics

Haitians have something positive to cheer about in the midst of all the bad news that features daily globally on the crime and gang violence in the Caribbean country.

Lynnzee Brown of Haiti performs her floor routine during Women's Qualification at the Artistic Gymnastics World Championships-Antwerp 2023 at the Antwerp Sportpaleis on October 2nd, 2023 in Antwerp, Belgium. She is now heading to Paris 2024. (Photo by Tim Clayton/Corbis via Getty Images)

Penn State women's

gymnastics assistant coach and Haitian immigrant Lynnzee Brown earned a universality place qualification from the Olympic Games Tripartite Commission and will represent Haiti in women's artistic gymnastics competition at the 2024 Paris Olympic Games.

Brown will compete in her very first Olympics this summer in Paris following her previous outings on the global stage at the 2023 Artistic Gymnastics World Championships in Antwerp this past September, as well as multiple Pan American competitions within the last



Lynnzee Brown

year. When she steps foot in the gym in Paris, she will become the first Haitian gymnast ever to compete in the Olympic Games. She will begin competition in the women's qualification

round, slated to begin July 28.

"I'm trying to think of what to say but I honestly have nothing that feels good enough," Brown said. "I'm grateful for this journey and

those that have supported me through it. I am honored that the Haitian federation is supporting me through this process, and I look forward to seeing what the next generation of athletes will do."

The former Denver standout gymnast joined Penn State's coaching staff in the summer of 2023 following an incredible career as a Pioneer. She was a ten-time WCGA Postseason All-American, a co-National Champion, and a two-time AAI Award finalist during her collegiate career. In her first season with the Nittany Lions, Brown and her fellow Penn State assistant coaches were named the WCGA North East Region Assistant Coaches of the Year following Penn State's phenomenal 2024 campaign.

"We are so excited for Lynnzee," said head coach Sarah Brown. "Making the Olympics was one of the first goals Lynnzee and I talked about when we connected last year, and I couldn't be more proud of the work she has put in to turn her dream into reality. Being named the first Haitian gymnast to ever compete in the Olympics is a tremendous accomplishment, and we look forward to watching her compete for her country in Paris!"

- NewsAmericasNow.com



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# Top Jamaican Coaches Slam JAAA and JOA Ahead Of Paris Olympics

Renowned Jamaican born athletics coaches Stephen Francis and Glen Mills have publicly criticized the Jamaica Athletics Administrative Association, (JAAA), and the Jamaica Olympic Association, (JOA), for what they describe as gross incompetence and insufficient support for the country's track and field athletes, potentially jeopardizing their participation in the upcoming Paris Olympic Games.

Francis, known for his no-nonsense approach, lambasted the JAAA for its handling of the men's 4x400m relay team's qualification efforts in an interview with Sports Max. He expressed frustration over the country's recent failed attempts to qualify, with the team of



Coach Stephen Francis, l., and Coach Glen Mills, r. have both slammed the JAAA and the JOA.

Reheem Hayles, JeVaughn Powell, Kimar Farquharson, and Tarees Rhoden clocking 2:59.75 at the NACAC New Life Invitational in the Bahamas, falling short of

Zambia's 2:59.12 set in March.

This marks Jamaica's third unsuccessful attempt at qualification following previous failures at the World Athletics Relays in May. Currently,

France and Zambia occupy the final qualifying slots, with Jamaica racing against time to secure a place before the June 30 deadline. Failure to qualify would be a historic absence for Jamaica from the men's 4x400m relay at major championships.

Francis criticized JAAA President Garth Gayle for appointing individuals lacking senior athletics expertise, arguing that the country's reliance on school principals and high school coaches for senior team decisions leads to poor outcomes. He also proposed solutions for qualification, suggesting the scheduling of a 4x400m relay during the National Senior Championships from June 27-30, involving international teams to facilitate the qualification effort.

Meanwhile, Mills voiced his discontent in a separate interview with Sports Max, with the JOA's decision to allocate only 14 slots for team officials to the JAAA for the Paris Games, despite Jamaica expecting to field at least

60 track and field athletes. Mills, who has attended nine Olympics, called the allocation "woefully inadequate" and argued for an increase to 21 officials, given the logistical needs of managing such a large team.

Mills emphasized the critical need for adequate support staff, including coaches, therapists, and doctors, to ensure the athletes' optimal performance. He underscored Jamaica's significant contributions to the Olympic movement and urged the JOA to reconsider its decision. JAAA President Gayle confirmed ongoing but unsuccessful efforts to negotiate an increase in the allocation.

It remains to be seen if Francis' and Mills' suggestions will be heeded by the country's athletics governing bodies to secure Jamaica's participation and success in the men's 4x400m relay and broader Olympic events.

- NewsAmericasNow.com



## Reggae Boyz Coach Calls It Quits



Heimir Hallgrímsson has resigned as coach of the Reggae Boyz.

Heimir Hallgrímsson has resigned as coach of Jamaica's national senior men's football team, the Jamaica Football Federation, (JFF) announced late Sunday. The announcement came hours after the Reggae Boyz ended their Copa America campaign

with a 3-0 defeat to Venezuela, resulting in three consecutive losses and no points. According to the JFF, Hallgrímsson communicated his decision to resign to the president and players earlier on Sunday. "Hallgrímsson came to Jamaica over two years ago and has worked diligently to elevate the standard of the national team. The JFF and the wider Jamaica have greatly benefited from Coach Hallgrímsson's tenure," the JFF stated. "The JFF would like to thank him for his contributions, and we appreciate his commitment to the team. We wish him success in his future endeavours," the federation added. The JFF's technical committee will now begin the search for a replacement ahead of the Concacaf Nations League and the

next round of FIFA World Cup qualifying games.

- *Rewritten from the Jamaica Observer*



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On **Sunday, May 2, 2021, at approximately 9:25 p.m.**, the above-pictured victim/pedestrian began crossing at **SW 184 Street and SW 112 Avenue, Miami, Florida**, when the subject vehicle, a **Hyundai silver in color**, struck and killed him. The driver of the subject vehicle fled the scene without rendering aid and/or reporting the crash.

**SUBJECT VEHICLE DESCRIPTION: HYUNDAI SILVER IN COLOR. NO OTHER INFORMATION AVAILABLE AT THIS TIME.**

Anyone with information on the above **HIT & RUN FATALITY**, the whereabouts of the subject vehicle and/or its driver is requested to contact Miami-Dade Police Department Traffic Homicide Detective J. Childers at (305) 471-2425. If you wish to remain anonymous, then contact Miami-Dade County Crime Stoppers at the following:

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ISSUE DATE: 5/11/2021 RN SUPERVISOR: Sgt. Francisco Armendariz MDPD C/N PD210502138114

If this flyer aids in your investigation in any way, please advise Deborah Simons, I.A., of the South Florida Homicide Clearinghouse at 305-471-2400.

# SPORTS NEWS



## West Indies Aim For Historic Test Series Victory In The UK After 36 Years

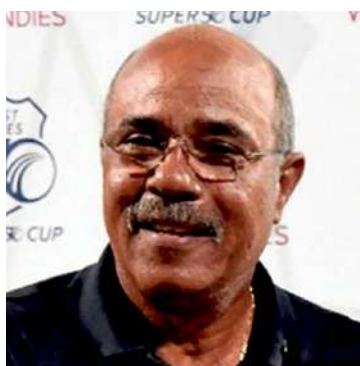
BY HOWARD CAMPBELL

Fresh off of their elimination in the ICC World Cup Super 8 round, the West Indies cricket team is currently in the United Kingdom where they are playing three Test matches and are determined to win their first Test series in that country in 36 years.

In 1984, 40 years ago, the Windies demolished England 5-0 in arguably the most dominant showing in Test history. Led by Clive Lloyd of Guyana, they convincingly won matches at Edgbaston, Lord's, Headingley, Old Trafford and The Oval. The 'Blackwash' softened the disappointment of 1983 when they lost the one-day World Cup final to India at Lord's.

Lloyd, 39 years-old at the time, was still in good form as a batsman. His squad included fellow batsmen Vivian Richards of Antigua, Gordon Greenidge and Desmond Haynes of Barbados, Richie Richardson of Antigua, Larry Gomes and Gus Logie of Trinidad and Tobago, and wicketkeeper/batsman Jeff Dujon of Jamaica.

The vaunted four-pronged fast-bowling attack comprised Malcolm Marshall and Joel Garner from Barbados, Michael Holding of Jamaica and Antiguan Eldine



Former West Indies player Jeff Dujon reminisced of the tour 36 years ago.

Baptiste. Roger Harper of Guyana was the off-spinner.

In an interview with Caribbean Today, Dujon said the 1984 tour saw the West Indies at the peak of their powers. "We played to win, and our attitude was different than England's, they played not to lose. 5-0 happened because of the attitude we had and the great cricket we played," stated Dujon, who scored 101 in the fourth Test at Old Trafford.

Greenidge, the opening batsman who was raised in England, scored most runs (572) for the West Indies including two centuries. Gomes also ticked off two hundreds, scoring 400 runs. Although he had a below par tour, Richards tallied 250 runs in seven innings, scoring a century and

half-century.

Garner, who played for Somerset in the English County Championship, was the most successful bowler with 29 wickets in the five Tests. Next best was Marshall, who played for Hampshire, with 24 wickets in four Tests, including a devastating seven for 53 (bowling with a broken thumb) in the second innings at Headingley when England were routed for 153 in their second innings.

At the time, the West Indian community in the UK had grown considerably since the Empire Windrush ship took the first wave of Caribbean nationals there in June, 1948. They still faced widespread racism, which made their support for the West Indies team even more critical. "We got so much support everywhere we went, it was tremendous. You would have people come up to us and say, 'Listen, if yuh don't win, we can't go to work tomorrow,'" Dujon recalled.

The West Indies also defeated England 5-0 at home in 1986 and dominated their rivals throughout the 1980s. Since their 4-0 victory in 1988, they have not won a Test series in the UK. On their previous tour of the country, they lost the three-Test series 1-2. They are looking to change that this month.

West Indies will play a three-day warm-up match against a County Select XI at Beckenham from July 3rd. The first Test against England then starts on July 10th at Lord's, which will be James Anderson's farewell as an England player. The second begins on July 18th at Trent Bridge, and the third on July 26th at Edgbaston.

West Indies Test squad: Kraigg Brathwaite (capt), Alick Athanaze, Joshua Da Silva (wk), Jason Holder, Kavem Hodge, Tevin Imlach, Alzarri Joseph (vice-capt), Shamar Joseph, Mikyle Louis, Zachary McCaskie, Kirk McKenzie, Gudakesh Motie, Kemar Roach, Jayden Seales and Kevin Sinclair Development player: Isai Thorne



## Elaine's Out



Elaine Thompson-Herah has been ruled out of competing at the Paris 2024 Olympic Games with an Achilles injury. (David Ramos/Getty Image)

Jamaican sprinting legend Elaine Thompson-Herah, the two-time defending Olympic champion in the 100 and 200 meters, will miss the Paris Olympics after withdrawing from the Jamaican Olympic Trials due to an Achilles injury.

Thompson-Herah, who turns 32 on Friday, has been struggling all year. At the Prefontaine Classic in May, she was outpaced by Sha'Carri Richardson, finishing last with a time of 11.30 seconds while Richardson won in 10.83 seconds. A couple of weeks later, she finished last again (11.48 seconds) at the New York City Grand Prix and had to be carried off the track due to a foot injury, raising concerns about her readiness for the Jamaican trials.

These concerns were validated when Thompson-Herah revealed on Instagram that she sustained "a small tear on my Achilles tendon." She wrote, "Funny enough, I got back home with a strong mindset to keep pushing and prepare for my national trials and another shot at my third Olympics, but the leg wouldn't allow me to."

Jamaica has dominated the women's 100 meters in the last four Olympics. If not for Allyson Felix's gold in 2012, Jamaica would have held the last five Olympic golds in the 200

meters as well.

Thompson-Herah's absence will weaken Jamaica's sprinting team in Paris, benefiting the U.S. team. However, Jamaica still has formidable sprinters like 37-year-old Shelly-Ann Fraser-Pryce, who has three Olympic gold medals, and Shericka Jackson, the dominant 200-meter sprinter. A new Jamaican star could emerge in Paris.

The U.S. team is sending Sha'Carri Richardson, Melissa Jefferson, and Twanisha Terry to Paris in the 100 meters. Tamari Davis will join them in the 4x100 relay, forming a formidable quartet. Jamaica, the defending Olympic champion in the 4x100 relay, will face strong competition from the Americans.

Even with a healthy Jamaica, Richardson, who has been the best in the world this year, was expected to be a significant challenge. Now, she has one less Olympic champion to worry about.

The women's 200-meter portion of the U.S. Olympic Track and Field Trials starts Thursday. Richardson will compete, along with Gabby Thomas, the reigning bronze medallist in the 200 meters, and NCAA champion McKenzie Long.





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# Will The Growth Of US Cricket Impact The West Indies?

BY DR. BASIL SPRINGER

From the mid-late 1970s to the early 1990s, the West Indies Cricket team was the strongest team in the world in both red-ball and white-ball. However, this dominance has not been sustained. At times, our performances have trended towards the depths of despair for fans. With the advent of the cricket in the US, this performance may be impacted further.

This fluctuating performance can be due to several factors: financial investment, marketing approaches, infrastructure, pitch curators, operating logistics and coaching systems. All of these factors need improvements. The growth of the Gentleman's game in the United States presents opportunities and challenges for the sustainability and resilience of West Indies cricket. I have been closely monitoring this development. It has the potential to significantly reshape the cricketing and socioeconomic landscape in our region.

The United States, with its vast population and diverse immigrant communities, represents an untapped market for this game. The sport's increasing popularity there, driven by the success of Major League Cricket (MLC), can



The US cricket team made it to the Super 8 round of the ICC World Cup but failed to move into the top four round.

substantially boost its global profile. This burgeoning interest can positively impact West Indies cricket in several ways.

Firstly, the expansion of cricket in the U.S. (with the T20 Cricket World Cup) can increase financial investment in the sport. The commercial potential of the U.S. market is enormous. As cricket gains traction, we can expect more sponsorship deals, broadcast rights agreements, and merchandise sales. This influx of capital can benefit West Indies cricket. It will enhance collaborations and shared investments, facilities, coaching contracts and player development programs.

Secondly, the growth of cricket in the U.S. can provide West Indies players more opportunities to compete at

a higher level. Establishing a professional league like MLC can serve as an additional platform for our players to showcase their talents and gain valuable experience. This exposure can help bridge the gap between domestic and international cricket. It will foster a new generation of West Indies cricketers better equipped to compete on the world stage. Challenges for West Indies Cricket

The rise of cricket in the U.S. could lead to a talent drain, with young Caribbean cricketers potentially being lured by the financial incentives and lifestyle offered in the United States. This could weaken the talent pool available for West Indies cricket if not managed carefully.

Moreover, the West

Indies Cricket Board (WICB) must proactively engage with U.S. cricket authorities to ensure mutual benefits. They should develop & nurture Strategic partnerships, exchange programs, and joint ventures. This will help both regions flourish without one overshadowing the other.

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Dr. Basil Springer GCM is a Change-Engine Consultant. His email address is basilgf@marketplaceexcellence.com. His columns may be found at www.nothingbeatsbusiness.com/basil-springer-column and on www.facebook.com/basilgf



## This T&T Star Secures Paris Olympic Berth With Dominant Performance

Trinidad and Tobago star Jereem Richards secured his place at the Paris Olympic Games with an impressive victory in the men's 400-m at the NAAA National Championships on June 29th. Competing at the Hasely Crawford Stadium in Port of Spain, Richards showcased his prowess, clocking 44.72 seconds to win the event and earn his Olympic berth. His performance was well ahead of his competitors, with Jaden Marchan finishing second in 46.30 seconds and Shakeem McKay taking third in 46.62 seconds.

In the men's javelin, 2012 Olympic gold medallist Keshorn Walcott reaffirmed his dominance with a winning throw of 85.22m. Walcott, who has been a stalwart in the event for Trinidad and Tobago, displayed his experience and skill, ensuring his spot on the

Olympic team once again. The women's 100-m final saw Leah Bertrand of Simplex Athletic Club clinching the title with a time of 11.18 seconds. Sole Frederick, also of Simplex, finished second in 11.43 seconds, while Akilah Lewis of Concorde Athletic Club took third place with 11.50 seconds.

In the men's 100m final, Devin Augustine emerged victorious with a time of 10.21 seconds. Jonathan Farinha was a close second, clocking 10.23 seconds, and Kion Benjamin finished third in 10.38 seconds. Tyra Gittens, the lone competitor in the long jump, established a mark of 6.47-m.

- *Rewritten from SportsMax*



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