

THE LABOUR SPOKESMAN

St. Kitts and Nevis

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Year 69 NO. 10

BASSETERRE, ST. KITTS, W.I.

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"They [The residents] deserve to be in comfort. They deserve to have a facility that they can enjoy. And the overhaul, what you're seeing, yes, you're seeing physical work and the construction work, but it goes far beyond that. It's about the landscaping, it's about improving the staff, it's about improving the services that the Cardin Home would have to offer, and so it's a wholesome renovation, rehabilitation, especially to mark the 100th anniversary and to also to the commitment St. Kitts-Nevis Labour Party-led administration."



STORY ON PAGE 03

DESTINY DISPUTE

STORY ON PAGE 04



THE LABOUR SPOKESMAN

THE SPOKESMAN - ESTABLISHED MAY 1957

Published by: The St. Kitts-Nevis Trades & Labour Union

Ag. Editor: Precious Mills

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Editorial

Before We Judge the Dance, Let Us Understand the History

Every Carnival season, the debate returns.

Social media gets flooded with opinions with the relevant photos and videos.

Some insist today's women are "doing too much" through revealing costumes and provocative dancing while others argue that Carnival is a space for freedom, self-expression and cultural celebration.

This year has been no different. From Nevis' Culturama to Carnival festivities across the Caribbean during the Emancipation period, the discussion over bikini costumes and waistline movements has once again taken centre stage.

But perhaps we are asking the wrong question.

Instead of focusing on whether women should "do less," we should first ask whether we truly understand the significance of Emancipation and the cultural traditions that grew from it including the 'wukking up' dancing part.

Emancipation Day is far more than another public holiday. It commemorates the triumph of our ancestors over one of history's darkest chapters. Their celebrations reflected freedom, resilience and the reclaiming of an identity that slavery had tried to erase.

That identity included music, dance and celebration.

Ironically, many of the criticisms heard today mirror those made more than a century ago. Following emancipation, African-inspired dances were often condemned by colonial society as vulgar and immoral. Through a Eurocentric lens, many viewed African women as hypersexualised, failing to recognise that these dances were expressions of culture, spirituality and liberation.

Even the movement commonly known today as "whining" has deep roots in West and Central African dance traditions. The rhythmic rotation of the waist celebrated femininity, womanhood and joy long before

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it became associated with vulgarity. What some now dismiss as inappropriate was once an important expression of identity, freedom and cultural pride.

This does not mean every aspect of today's Carnival is identical to the past. Culture evolves, and there is certainly room for respectful discussion about public decency, personal values and the influence of social media. People are entitled to their beliefs, and no one should be criticised for choosing to celebrate differently or not participate at all.

At the same time, we should be careful not to judge today's celebrations without appreciating their historical foundation. It would be unfortunate if we viewed African-inspired traditions through the same lens once used by colonial society to condemn them. History reminds us that what was once labelled indecent was, in reality, a powerful expression of an emancipated people's freedom and

resilience.

Carnival has never been only about costumes or dancing. At its heart, it remains a celebration of identity, resilience and cultural expression. It is an opportunity to honour the journey of a people who refused to let their customs, music and movements be erased despite centuries of oppression.

Before we criticise the movement, let us understand its meaning.

Before we condemn the costume, let us appreciate the culture.

And before we tell today's women they should "do less," let us ensure we are not repeating the same historical misunderstandings once used to dismiss the celebrations of an emancipated people.

Perhaps if we all took time to learn more about our rich history, this annual debate would become far more informed-and far more meaningful.

Cardin Home Renovation Puts Spotlight on Workers, Staff Improvement and Rehabilitation

By: Precious Mills

BASSETTERRE, St. Kitts (Wednesday 5th July 2026)-The ongoing rehabilitation of the nearly 100-year-old Cardin Home located in St. Johnston's Village is not only transforming the care facility for the elderly and other vulnerable residents but is also placing a spotlight on expected staff improvement as well as the rehabilitation of skilled inmates from His Majesty's Prison (HMP) who are part of the project workforce.

Such details emerged during the government's media tour of key projects on Friday 31st July 2026 when Parliamentary Representative for St. Christopher Three (West Basseterre) and minister with responsibility for Public Works Konris Maynard, highlighted that the project extends beyond the construction work.

"They [The residents] deserve to be in comfort. They deserve to have a facility that they can enjoy. And the overhaul, what you're seeing, yes, you're seeing physical work and the construction work, but it goes far beyond that. It's about the landscaping, it's about improving the staff, it's about improving the services that the Cardin Home would have to offer, and so it's a wholesome renovation, rehabilitation, especially to mark the 100th anniversary and to also to the commitment St. Kitts-Nevis Labour Party-led administration."

Maynard also underscored the significance of the collaboration between the HMP and the Public Works Department, describing it as beneficial not only to the institution but also to the workers involved.

"It is important also to thank His Majesty's Prison, who is collaborating

with the Public Works Department to make this a very unique project where we can accomplish a whole host of things. One, the rehabilitation, yes, the refurbishments, yes but we also utilize the skills of persons at His Majesty's Prison, integrating an opportunity for them to further their skills even as they rehabilitate themselves, and also in collaboration with Public Works to ensure that this is a cost-effective approach to this renovation project. So this is overall a win-win for everybody, for the country, for the people it serves, for the constituency here, and just for everybody in general."

Maynard expressed gratitude to Prime Minister Drew for his support in advancing the project, recognising his roles as Minister of Health and Minister of Finance.

"...let me first thank the Prime Minister, who is actually the Minister of Health, who is also a strong driving force for this in the whole of the ministry's agenda to improve healthcare services across the entire federation of St. Kitts and Nevis, and in particular on St. Kitts," he said in part

Prime Minister and Minister of Health Dr. Terrance Drew, also highlighted the role being played by the skilled workers from His Majesty's Prison.

"It [This project] has been adopted by His Majesty's Prison so we have persons from His Majesty's Prison who are here. They are skilled workers and

so they have adopted it to refurbish it and then also to maintain it. Never again will the Cardin Home be a deteriorated institution to host the most vulnerable in our community. Those days are over."

Dr. Drew noted that the institution, which will celebrate its 100th anniversary next year, is receiving significant attention to ensure it meets modern standards.

"It's a home that of course serves the vulnerable members of our community... next year will make 100 years. However, we have taken to make sure that we refurbish this institution and make it modern."

PM Drew thanked Maynard for his strong advocacy in advancing the project.

Meanwhile, Assistant Nurse Manager at the Cardin Home Paula Francis expressed appreciation for the ongoing improvements and the collaborative effort behind the renovation.

"I would like to thank everyone for really fulfilling their promises for us, the nurses, and the residents here at Cardin Home. We are looking forward to seeing an awesome place."

Of note, works, which commenced in July 2026, include the re-roofing of the four residential wings-two female and two male-as well as extensive plumbing, electrical, carpentry, flooring, wall and window upgrades throughout the facility.

The project also involves the modernisation of key areas including the kitchen, laundry, dining and recreation spaces, physical therapy area and sick bay. Additional improvements include full fencing, enhanced security measures, and the replacement and upgrading of furniture and fittings to create a more comfortable and functional environment for residents and staff.

The Cardin Home rehabilitation project falls under the sectors of Social Care and Health.

Front Page Photo: Parliamentary Representative for St. Christopher Three (West Basseterre) and minister with responsibility for Public Works Konris Maynard speaks during the Government's media tour at the Cardin Home on Friday 31st July 2026. Looking on are Prime Minister Hon. Dr. Terrance Drew (immediate left) Assistant Nurse Manager Paula Francis, Director of Health Projects and Strategic Initiatives Dr. Jenson Morton and Director of Health Institutions Gardenia Destang-Richardson while skilled workers carry out roof repairs as part of the ongoing rehabilitation project. (Spokesman Snap)



Assistant Nurse Manager Paula Francis expresses appreciation for the ongoing renovations at the Cardin Home during the government's media tour on Friday 31st July 2026. (Spokesman Snap)

NRP Leader Announces Legal Action Over Destiny Project Claims

By: Spokesman Newsroom

BASSETTERRE, St. Kitts (Thursday 6th July 2026) - Leader of the Opposition Nevis Reformation Party (NRP) Dr. Janice Daniel-Hodge, has announced that she has instructed her attorney to initiate legal proceedings against Premier Mark Brantley over what she described as "false and defamatory allegations" concerning her alleged involvement in the proposed Destiny Project.

She made the announcement on Thursday 6th August 2026, while speaking live in studio at 2020 Vision Radio (102.1 FM), where she addressed what she said was the "misrepresentation" of her involvement with the project.

"For the past year, he has engaged in deliberate and calculated lies intended to convince you that I, Dr. Janice Daniel Hodge, am involved in questionable dealings regarding the Destiny Project. The Premier publicly claims that I own lands on the south side of Nevis and that I have sold them to Destiny."

Refuting the allegations, Dr. Daniel-Hodge said: "I have never owned any of the lands referenced, nor have I sold any to Destiny. There is no contract between myself and Destiny, and I have not received any millions of dollars as falsely alleged by Premier Brantley. He knows that his claims are entirely false."

Providing what she described as the factual background, the NRP Leader explained that her late father, the Hon. Dr. Simeon Daniel, owned

lands at Coxheath Estate and that the terms of his will required that the property be sold.

"My brother, Adrian Daniel, and I are co-executors of our father's estate," she said.

According to Dr. Daniel-Hodge: "In July 2024, my brother, who is employed as an attorney at law at the Premier's law firm, informed me that the Premier's wife, Mrs. Sharon Brantley, in her capacity as a real estate agent, informed him that she had an investor who was interested in purchasing these lands."

She continued: "Upon inquiry, I learned that the investor was a Mr. Brooks representing a company from the United States."

Dr. Daniel-Hodge maintained that she was not casting aspersions on her brother's actions.

"I do not cast any aspersions on the intentions of my brother, whom I'm persuaded acted in good faith, but to illustrate the nexus between Premier Brantley's long-standing involvement in what has become the Destiny Project."

She further stated that "By contract dated November 29th, 2024, the estate of the late Dr. Simeon Daniel entered into an agreement with South Nevis Limited to sell the estate lands."

According to Dr. Daniel-Hodge: "At no point did my brother indicate, nor do I have any reason to believe, that a company or development named Destiny was involved in acquiring these lands."

"In fact, Destiny only came about after the existence of the Special Sustainability Zones Authorization Act, which was passed in August 2025. We could not be aware, therefore, in November 2024, that South Nevis Limited was associated with Destiny," she added.

Turning to the legal action, Dr. Daniel-Hodge said: "Notwithstanding the foregoing, Premier Brantley continues to post false claims on Facebook alleging that I have sold and profited millions of dollars."

She disclosed that legal correspondence had already been sent.

(cont'd on next page)

FEDERATION OF SAINT CHRISTOPHER AND NEVIS
SAINT CHRISTOPHER CIRCUIT
TITLE BY REGISTRATION ACT, CAP. 10:19
A. D. 2026
SKBLRD2026/0043

LAND REGISTRY
Filed / Entered
JUL 16 2026
1:50pm
ST. CHRISTOPHER / NEVIS

In the matter of Section 144 of the Title by Registration Act, Cap. 10:19 and in the matter of an Application on behalf of **REUBEN WILSON** for the issue of a new Certificate of Title for a lot of land containing **6,959.21 square feet** situate at **Upper Monkey Hill** in the Parish of Saint Peter in the Island of Saint Christopher, to replace a lost Certificate of Title registered in **Book P2 Folio 6** of the Register of Titles for the Island of Saint Christopher

NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR REPLACEMENT OF LOST CERTIFICATE OF TITLE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that **REUBEN WILSON** of the Island of Saint Christopher but residing at present in Ohio, United States of America has applied to the Registrar of Titles for the issue of a replacement Certificate of Title in lieu of the following Certificate of Title on the basis that the said original Certificate of Title has been irrecoverably lost by misadventure, namely a Certificate of Title dated **15th January 1990** and registered in **Book P2 Folio 6** of the Register of Titles for Saint Christopher, the land contained in the said Certificate of Title being **ALL THAT** lot of land hereditaments and premises situate at Upper Monkey Hill in the Parish of Saint Peter in the Island of Saint Christopher containing by admeasurement **6,959.21 square feet** bounded and measuring as follows: On the North by lands of CHA occupied by Elizabeth Rawlins, 105.55 feet, On the East partly by lands of Frances Crawford and partly by a 10' right of way, 61.34 feet, On or about the South by lands of CHA occupied by Violet Flanders, 86.48 feet and On or about West by lands of CHA, 86.8 feet. Any person who may be in possession of the aforesaid Certificate of Title or may have information that may lead to its recovery is requested to notify Bryant & Liburd, Shear Lane, Basseterre, St. Kitts, Tel. No. (869) 465-2756/1047 or email bryantandliburd@hotmail.com, Attorneys-at Law for the Applicant.

DATED the 16th day of July 2026

Bryant & Liburd
Bryant & Liburd
Attorneys-at Law for the Applicant

Case Number :SKBHPB2026/0085

FILED
HIGH COURT
ST. CHRISTOPHER / NEVIS
(ST. KITTS CIRCUIT)

THE EASTERN CARIBBEAN SUPREME COURT
IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE
FEDERATION OF ST. CHRISTOPHER & NEVIS
ST. CHRISTOPHER CIRCUIT
(PROBATE)

Submitted Date: 31/07/2026 11:32
Filed Date: 31/07/2026 11:31
Fees Paid: 12.00

In the Estate of **LLOYD MATTHEW** late of #28 Ottley's Village Extension, in the Parish of St. Mary, in the Island of Saint Christopher, deceased.

TAKE NOTICE that an application has been filed by **KAYRINA LAWSON** of 2900 Rio Court, Unit #1, Mississauga, Ontario, Canada, Personal Support Worker, for a Grant of Probate of the Will of the above-named deceased **LLOYD MATTHEW** who died on April 15, 2024 without revoking a will bearing the date of March 14, 2017 wherein the Applicant is named Executrix.

Any person having an objection to the Grant of Probate to the Applicant shall file an objection within 14 days of the publication of this Notice.

Dated the 23rd day of July 2026.

Hadya K. L. Dolphin
Hadya K. L. Dolphin, Associate
KELSICK, WILKIN & FERDINAND
Attorneys-at-Law for the Applicant

Filed by: KELSICK, WILKIN & FERDINAND, Attorneys-at-Law for the Applicants, whose address for service is Fred Kelsick Building, Independence Square South, Basseterre, St. Kitts. Tel: +1.869.465.2645; Fax: +1.869.466.7808; Email: Law@kwfonline.com

NRP Leader Announces Legal Action Over Destiny Project Claims

(cont'd from last page)

"I engaged my attorney initially to write to Premier Brantley and also to various broadcasting entities demanding that they cease allowing the publication of these false and defamatory allegations."

She alleged that those efforts were unsuccessful, claiming "Premier Brantley has disregarded all pleas for decency and honesty and has proceeded with reckless abandonment."

Dr. Daniel-Hodge then announced: "In response, I have now instructed my attorney to initiate proceedings in the Eastern Caribbean High Court against Premier Brantley for these deceitful acts."

She maintained that she would continue with the matter through the courts.

"While I acknowledge that as a desperate man, the Premier would grasp at any available opportunity, he has no right to do so on the misguided grounds of engaging in public discourse. Brute lying is not public discourse. Misrepresenting the truth is not public discourse."

According to her: "If Premier Brantley has missed this point, he must understand that no threats, regarding what he may ask the court to impose, will deter me, and I intend to pursue my claims to the fullest extent of the law, because there comes a time when enough is enough."

Dr. Daniel-Hodge, in her address, also renewed her criticism of the proposed Destiny Project, alleging that it would not serve the interests of the people of Nevis. She claimed that the project "threaten and



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undermine the very freedoms that our forefathers fought for" and questioned who would ultimately benefit from the development.

Front Page Image: Leader of the opposition Nevis Reformation Party, Dr. Janice Daniel-Hodge, seen while making her live address on 2020 Vision Radio on Thursday 6th August 6, 2026. (Screenshot via Facebook/2020VisionRadio)

THE EASTERN CARIBBEAN SUPREME COURT
IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE
FEDERATION OF SAINT CHRISTOPHER AND NEVIS
SAINT CHRISTOPHER CIRCUIT
(PROBATE)
A.D. 2026

PROBATE NO. SKBHPB2026/0076

In the Estate of late CURTIS
NATHANIEL ARTHURTON late
of Petal Street, in the Island of St.
Christopher, deceased.

ADVERTISEMENT OF APPLICATION FOR GRANT

TAKE NOTICE than an Application has been filed by Alden Isaac of Hummingbird Development, Basseterre in the Island of St. Kitts for a Grant of Probate of the Will of the above named deceased who died on the 18th day of February, 2025 without revoking a will bearing the date of 30th day of January, 2004 wherein the applicant is named sole executor.

Any person having an objection to the grant of Probate to the application shall file an objection within 14 days of the publication of this Notice.

Dated this 6th day of July 2026

Bervis Burke
Attorney-at-Law

Filed by: Bervis Burke, Blanchette-Burke Law Chambers, Solicitors, whose address for services is No. 56 WADES GARDEN, UNIT 4 Basseterre St. Kitts, for and on behalf of the Applicants whose address for service is the same. Telephone: 1-869-767-2012; Email: Blanchetteburke.law@gmail.com

SECOND PUBLICATION

THE EASTERN CARIBBEAN SUPREME COURT
IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE
FEDERATION OF SAINT CHRISTOPHER AND NEVIS
SAINT CHRISTOPHER CIRCUIT
(PROBATE)
A.D. 2026

PROBATE NO. NEVHPB2025/0102

In the Estate of VENDELL
OCEDO WARNER late of 3541
Milford Mill Road, Windsor Mill,
Maryland 21244, deceased

ADVERTISEMENT OF APPLICATION FOR GRANT

TAKE NOTICE than an Application has been filed by Jennet Margaret Warner of 3541 Milford Mill Road, Windsor Mill, Maryland 21244, for a Grant of Letters of Administration to the applicant who is the wife of the deceased, the deceased having died intestate on the 7th day of May, 2020.

Any person having an objection to the grant of Letters of Administration to the application shall file an objection within 14 days of the publication of this Notice.

Dated this 20th day of July 2026.

Bervis C. Burke
Attorney-at-Law

Filed by: Bervis C. Burke, Blanchette-Burke Law Chambers, Solicitors, whose address for services is No. 56 WADES GARDEN, UNIT 4 Basseterre St. Kitts, for and on behalf of the Applicants whose address for service is the same. Telephone: 1-869-767-2012; Email: Blanchetteburke.law@gmail.com

SECOND PUBLICATION

ATTENTION ALL PARENTS/GUARDIANS

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Is your heart racing or skipping beats? Learn when it could be an arrhythmia

August 2026 - Have you ever noticed your heart suddenly racing or feeling like it skips a beat? Divya Korpu, M.B.B.S., with the Department of Cardiovascular Medicine at Mayo Clinic Health System in Eau Claire, Wisconsin, explains what causes these sensations and whether they can be treated.

What you’re experiencing may be an abnormal heart rhythm, also known as an arrhythmia. Arrhythmias fall into two categories: too fast or too slow. A racing heart or a skipped beat typically falls into the “too fast” category. When an abnormal heartbeat interrupts the normal rhythm, you may feel palpitations – sensations that your heart is racing, fluttering, skipping a beat – or a sense of panic. Often these symptoms are more noticeable at night or when lying down.

In younger people, typically those in their 20s to 50s, the heart may suddenly speed up from a normal rate to 180-200 beats per minute. This rapid heartbeat can cause lightheadedness, dizziness, anxiety or, in some cases, fainting.

Fast or skipped heartbeats can originate in either the upper or lower chambers of the heart. Those that begin in the top chamber are called premature atrial contractions (PACs), while those starting in the bottom chambers are premature ventricular contractions (PVCs). Although they can feel alarming, PACs and PVCs generally aren’t dangerous or life-threatening. They don’t cause heart attacks, strokes or increase the risk of death.

These irregular heartbeats may be caused by:

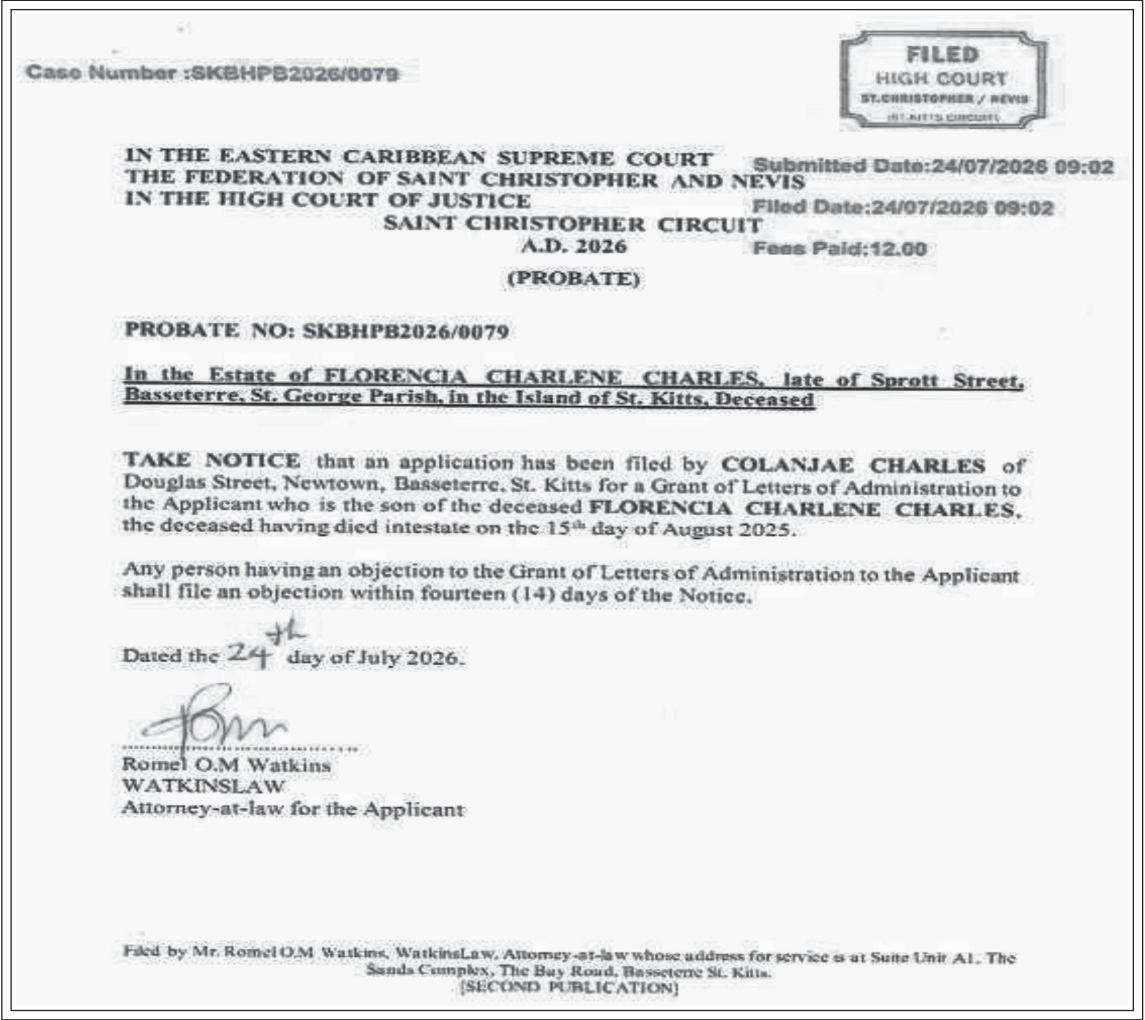
- An abnormal electric circuit that people are born with.
- Thyroid disorders.
- Hormonal changes related to pregnancy or menopause.
- Excessive caffeine or alcohol consumption.

If symptoms are infrequent and don’t interfere with daily activities, people often learn to live with them. However, if they become bothersome, medication may help suppress the extra heartbeats.

One way to slow a sudden racing heart is by performing a vagal maneuver, which can help interrupt the abnormal rhythm. Vagal maneuvers include bearing down like you are having a bowel movement, blowing into a straw with one end closed, clearing your ears as you might on an airplane, dipping your face in ice-cold water or taking a cold shower.

Evaluation

However, these are temporary fixes. If symptoms persist, patients may be referred for further evaluation, such as an



electrophysiology study and possible catheter ablation. During this procedure, catheters are threaded through veins in the groin and guided to the heart. Doctors use specialized wires to find where the arrhythmia is coming from. Then energy is delivered via the catheter to eliminate the abnormal circuit.

Ablation is usually done under twilight sedation and typically is a same-day procedure. Patients need someone with them for 24 hours, should avoid driving for 24 hours and shouldn’t lift anything heavy for a week to let the groin incisions heal. After that, they can resume their normal activities.

PACs and PVCs are most common in younger people. For older adults, the most common fast rhythm is atrial fibrillation (AFib) or atrial flutter. These are different types of heart rhythms which become increasingly common with age.

AFib can cause irregular heartbeat, palpitations, chest discomfort, lightheadedness, dizziness, fatigue and sometimes passing out. Some people have no symptoms, and the condition is discovered during routine care or procedures.

Common causes of AFib include untreated sleep apnea, excessive caffeine, binge drinking or overconsumption of alcohol, thyroid disorders, and hormonal changes. In a small group of patients, spicy foods may trigger AFib.

Treatment for AFib

Treatment options include:

- Medication to control fast heart rate.
- Medication to control heart rhythm.
- Catheter ablation.

Ablation for AFib is done under general anesthesia. It’s a minimally invasive procedure in which doctors access the heart through the groin and target areas on the left side of the heart responsible for triggering or sustaining the abnormal rhythm. Traditionally, two types of energy - radiofrequency (heat) and cryoablation (cold) - have been used for ablation.

Most recently, a new, nonthermal option – pulsed field ablation – has been introduced. This energy source selectively targets heart muscle cells. This reduces the risk of serious or life-threatening damage to the surrounding structures, such as the esophagus and the phrenic nerve, which controls the

diaphragm and breathing.

Recovery after ablation is similar regardless of the energy source used, including about one week of limited activity.

During AFib, blood can pool in the heart, form clots and cause a stroke. Depending on individual risk factors, patients are often prescribed a blood thinner once they’re diagnosed with atrial fibrillation or atrial flutter, even after undergoing ablation. If they’re not able to tolerate blood thinners, a permanent device may be implanted in their heart to seal off the left atrial appendage, where most clots form, to reduce the risk of stroke.

If you’re experiencing a racing heart, noticing skipped beats or symptoms of an irregular heart rhythm, consult with your healthcare professional or a cardiologist to determine whether further evaluation or treatment is needed.

About Mayo Clinic

Mayo Clinic is a nonprofit organization committed to innovation in clinical practice, education and research, and providing compassion, expertise and answers to everyone who needs healing. Visit the Mayo Clinic News Network for additional Mayo Clinic news.



St. Kitts Culinary Month 2026 Wraps 10th Anniversary Edition with a Full Calendar of Signature Tastings, Fixed-Price Restaurant Menus, and Island-Wide Street Food

The month put local food businesses of every size in front of residents and visitors



Basseterre, St. Kitts (05 August 2026) — St. Kitts has closed out its 10th anniversary Culinary Month, capping a month-long, island-wide celebration of food and hospitality that ran across signature events, fixed-price restaurant menus, and roadside and street vendors throughout July.

What began a decade ago as a single Restaurant Week has evolved into a 31-day showcase anchored by two signature ingredients, Carrot and Passionfruit, that appeared in everything from juices and cakes to sauces, desserts, and cocktails on fixed-price menus across the destination throughout July.

The month opened with *Rooted in Passion* at Splash Courtyard, Royal St. Kitts Hotel, a tasting showcase that doubled as a fundraiser for the Federation's culinary team ahead of their upcoming regional representation, and continued through the St. Kitts Tasting Showcase at Eco Park, two rounds of *Flavors by Carambola*, St. Kitts Grill Fest, Cook, Sip & Glamp at Park Hyatt St. Kitts, Serendipity's Children's Home Charity Dinner, and Taste at Twilight at Orchid Bay.

"Culinary Month has become one of the clearest examples of how tourism creates opportunity beyond the hotel gate," said the Honourable Marsha T. Henderson, Minister of Tourism.



"Ten years ago, this began as a single week celebrating our restaurants; today it is a month-long calendar that reaches our farmers, our fishers, our roadside vendors, and our entertainers, all while inviting the world to taste what makes St. Kitts distinct. From our culinary team's *Rooted in Passion* event to the everyday special menus our restaurants put together this July, this is exactly the kind of tourism growth we set out to build: one that is shared," Minister Henderson said.

Rooted in Passion opened the month on 10 July at Splash Courtyard, Royal St. Kitts Hotel, as a tasting showcase that doubled as a fundraiser for the Federation's culinary team ahead of their upcoming regional representation, setting a tone of purpose that carried through the rest of the calendar.



The **St. Kitts Tasting Showcase** brought vendors and chefs together at Eco Park on 12 July, giving small food businesses a shared stage at one of the island's most family-friendly venues.



Flavors by Carambola offered visitors two dedicated evenings on 16 and 23 July, centered on Carambola's own menu and serving as a clear sign of the appetite for restaurant-led experiences.



At the month's midpoint, **St. Kitts Grill Fest** took over the Frigate Bay Lawn on Saturday, 18 July, debuting a regional format that drew grill teams from Anguilla, Barbados, St. Kitts, Nevis, and Grenada to compete alongside local grill masters. Team Grenada: Andre Church, Jaylill Bernard, Wyll Smith, and Shackera Ackie claimed the inaugural Regional Grill Fest title.

In the local divisions, Ricardo "Smurf" Stewart took pork, Michael "Jangeezy" Browne fish, Kyla Huggins chicken, Dave "Mugsey" Martin lobster, and Tyrone "Granny" Browne the newly added baby back ribs category, with Cleon "Pappy" Francis, Jacqueline Rose, Michelle Bridgewater, Cleavon Chumney, and Marlene

(cont'd on next page)

Government Extends Temporary Relief Measures To Cushion Rising Fuel And Shipping Costs

Basseterre, St. Kitts — August 04, 2026 — Cabinet Secretary, Dr Marcus L Natta, during the July 28 Post-Cabinet Briefing, announced that the Government of Saint Kitts and Nevis will extend its temporary support and relief programme through September 30, 2026, reaffirming its ongoing commitment to protecting households and businesses from the rising cost of living.

Earlier this year, the government introduced the programme to cushion the impact of increasing living and operating costs, a response to higher international fuel and shipping prices driven by ongoing geopolitical tensions in the Middle East and their ripple effects on global supply chains. As part of the initiative, Cabinet approved a series of temporary fiscal measures for the period April 30 to July 31, 2026, aimed at reducing the cost of imported goods and easing inflationary

pressure on fuel prices across the economy. Following guidance from the Ministry of Finance, Cabinet has now approved an extension of the programme from August 1 to September 30, 2026, on the same terms and conditions currently in effect.

The extension will continue to provide:

- A 50 percent reduction in the Excise Tax applicable to eligible gasoline;
- A 50 percent reduction in Customs Service Charges on gasoline; and
- The exclusion of shipper surcharges from customs tax and duty calculations.

While the relief measures had initially been set to expire on July 31, 2026, continued volatility in international fuel markets and shipping costs, driven by ongoing geopolitical developments, has prolonged the inflationary pressures affecting consumers and businesses across the Federation. In light of this, the government has taken the prudent step of extending these measures to ensure that residents and businesses continue to receive meaningful relief during this period of global economic uncertainty.

The extension is expected to provide targeted relief to consumers and businesses, support continued economic activity, and help moderate the impact of higher fuel and shipping costs on the domestic economy.

The government remains committed to closely monitoring global economic conditions and will continue to take timely, responsible action to safeguard the wellbeing of the people of Saint Kitts and Nevis.

St. Kitts Culinary Month 2026 Wraps 10th Anniversary Edition with a Full Calendar of Signature Tastings, Fixed-Price Restaurant Menus, and Island-Wide Street Food

(cont'd from last page)

Ramsey as runners-up. The day also featured a kids' zone, food and beverage vendors, local artisans, live entertainment, and giveaways.



The following evening, **Cook, Sip & Glamp** turned Park Hyatt St. Kitts into a night of cooking demonstrations and pairings, matching the island's luxury hospitality with its culinary storytelling.

On 25 July, Culinary Month's community focus came through most directly at **Serendipity's Children's Home Charity Dinner**, where proceeds from the evening supported the children's home, a reminder that the month is built to give back as much as it is to celebrate food.



"What made this tenth edition special was its range," said Kelly Fontenelle, Chief Executive Officer of the St. Kitts Tourism Authority.

"In a single month, visitors could support our national culinary team at Rooted in Passion, meet vendors at Eco Park, sit down to restaurant-led evenings at Carambola and Orchid Bay, watch our grill masters welcome regional competitors at Frigate Bay, and give back at the Serendipity charity dinner. Every one of those experiences keeps visitors on the island longer and keeps spending in the hands of our restaurants, our vendors, and our communities. That is our growth strategy playing out in real time," Fontenelle said.

Alongside the signature events, participating restaurants across St. Kitts ran fixed-price Culinary Month menus built around Carrot and Passionfruit throughout July, giving residents and visitors a reason to try kitchens they might otherwise pass by. That same spirit carried through to the island's roadside and street vendors, who sold traditional dishes such as goat water, conkies, Johnny cakes, saltfish, black pudding, and sugar cake throughout the month. Together, the restaurant menus and vendors extended Culinary Month's reach well beyond its ticketed events, putting money directly into the hands of local restaurant owners, cooks, and roadside vendors across the island.

The Culinary Month wrap-up follows a run of summer tourism programming for St. Kitts, coming on the heels of the St. Kitts Music Festival, and reflects the destination's ongoing push to grow shoulder-season visibility for local restaurants, vendors, and producers.

DR Congo river boat under quarantine for Ebola after five deaths

Emery Makumeno
BBC Africa, Kinshasa



Reuters A man with a megaphone has his back to the camera. The words "Stop Ebola" are visible on the back of his jacket. He is calling to a boat full of people wearing orange life jackets. Reuters The Yingfeng?2 was intercepted on the Congo River before it could reach Kinshasa Congolese authorities are carrying out Ebola and cholera screening for all 255 passengers aboard a boat intercepted on the Congo River.

The Yingfeng?2 - operated by a Chinese company - was halted near Bende Bende port, some 65km (40 miles) upstream from the capital,

Kinshasa.

Health Minister Roger Kamba said screening was being carried out as a precautionary measure after a

passenger with fever and diarrhoea, who had got off at an earlier stop, had died in hospital. A further two adults, a three-year-old child and a

newborn have also died.

Teams from the health ministry and the World Health Organization (WHO) have boarded the boat and set up a mobile lab to conduct tests.

"For now, no-one has tested positive, and it is likely no one will be positive after 21 days of incubation has elapsed," Kamba told reporters.

The vessel departed Kisangani, DR Congo's third largest city, about two weeks ago, the BBC understands.

Ebola cases have recently been reported there, with at least four deaths.

Kamba added there had been no Ebola cases in Mongala Province - where the passenger who died disembarked - contrary to earlier reports.

The boat travelled more than 1,700km downstream towards Kinshasa before being intercepted.

Security services have been instructed to quarantine the Yingfeng?2 offshore in line with WHO standards to prevent potential spread of the virus into the capital. Public health teams remain on standby to act once the boat is secured.

The country has been grappling with its 17th Ebola outbreak since 15 May. It has been caused by the rare Bundibugyo species of the virus, which had not been seen for more than a decade.

There are no drug treatments that specifically target Bundibugyo, nor does it have a vaccine, although the first human trials for one are currently under way in the UK.

Three months since the outbreak was declared, infections and deaths continue to rise.

Official figures show that there have been 3,973 confirmed cases and 1,801 deaths - the second deadliest Ebola outbreak.

There are currently more than 17,000 people under monitoring after coming into contact with Ebola cases, 674 patients in isolation or treatment across five provinces, and 776 recoveries, according to authorities.

In Kinshasa, preparations for a possible Bundibugyo response are intensifying, with surveillance and rapid-response capacity being reinforced at Maluku, the city's main entry point.

Officials have reiterated that the measures are precautionary, but they underline the gravity of the situation.

US reports first two deaths linked to 'explosive diarrhoea' outbreak

Kwasi Gyamfi Asiedu



Universal Images Group via Getty Images A person washing lettuce under running water. Universal Images Group via Getty Images

Michigan health officials have confirmed the first two deaths linked to the ongoing cyclospora outbreak, a parasitic infection spread through contaminated food or water that can cause severe diarrhoea.

The two individuals had "significant underlying health conditions that may have been impacted by cyclosporiasis and dehydration", state health authorities said.

The foodborne illness has spread to 45 states, with nearly 7,000 laboratory-confirmed cases reported nationwide, according to the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

While the outbreak has infected thousands of people, the CDC says deaths from cyclosporiasis are far from common, as it is "not usually life-threatening".

Michigan's health department did not provide further details about those who have died.

The state is at the epicentre of the current outbreak and its records show more than 11,000 cases and 193 hospitalisations, although many have not been laboratory-confirmed.

The heat-loving parasite infects the intestines and is transmitted through faecal contamination.

Past outbreaks have occurred when people consumed fruits or vegetables irrigated with water contaminated by faeces.

The CDC recommends washing all produce under running water, including those that are labelled as pre-washed.

But washing alone might not be enough to rid produce of the parasite. Cooking produce to a temperature of at least 70°C (158 °F) can kill the parasite, the agency recommends.

Officials have linked this year's widespread outbreak to lettuce imported from Taylor Farms in Mexico, a key supplier for many food establishments in the US.

US fast-food chain Taco Bell said it has removed lettuce from the supplier from its menu. Taylor Farms itself announced a voluntary recall of lettuce sourced from central Mexico.

UK health officials too have warned about the outbreak following recent cases contracted by returning travellers.

Outrage as Ugandan football captain beaten to death in street gang attack

Wycliffe Muia
BBC News



SC Villa A close-up of David Owori at a press conferenceSC Villa David Owori was attacked by suspected robbers outside his home in Kampala, police say

Ugandans are mourning the death at 27 of one of the country's best-known footballers after he was beaten by suspected robbers near his home in the capital, Kampala.

Police said David Owori was fatally assaulted after resisting an attempt to

steal his mobile phone and other belongings, prompting an outpouring of grief and renewed public anger over violent crime in Uganda.

Owori captained Sports Club (SC) Villa, the Uganda Premier League record champions, where he played both

as a right-back and midfielder. He also represented the country's national team - the Cranes.

"We have lost more than a player - we have lost a leader, brother and friend," SC Villa said in a statement.

Witnesses said a group of attackers hit the footballer with paving stones on Tuesday night before robbing Owori of his belongings and fleeing, leaving him unconscious.

SC Villa spokesperson Asan Kasingye told journalists that Owori was targeted just outside his home in Makindye, a Kampala suburb.

"The player was ambushed by thugs as he approached his home, leaving him with life-threatening injuries before he was rushed to the medical facility," Kasingye said.

Owori was rushed to a nearby medical clinic and then transferred to a private facility in the city, but he died of his injuries on Wednesday.

Local police spokesperson Rachael Kawala said detectives were pursuing leads to identify those responsible.

"The scene of the incident has been documented and processed to ensure that all relevant evidence is collected and preserved," Kawala added.

Owori's murder has sent shockwaves across Uganda, with the football community, including fans and teammates, and politicians demanding justice.

Tributes are continuing to pour in for the defender, who was popularly known as Colgate.

The Federation of Uganda Football

Associations (Fufa) described Owori as "a true leader on and off the pitch".

"David was not just a footballer. He was both a leader and an inspiration to a generation," it said in a statement.

The national side, the Cranes, said the team had lost a football star who "carried the hopes" of Uganda.

Parliament on Wednesday observed a minute's silence in honour of Owori and called for a quick investigation.

The versatile player, renowned for his tactical discipline and ability to feature across midfield, returned to SC Villa in 2023 - after two years in Europe - for a second spell. At the time of his death, he was among the longest-serving members of the current squad.

He helped lead the high-profile team to their first league title in 20 years securing a record 17th top-flight crown in 2024.

His influence on and off the pitch earned him a contract extension until January 2027 with the team.

Owori also featured in the national team during the 2021 Africa Cup of Nations qualifying campaign and was regarded as a strong contender for future call-ups to the Cranes.

His death has triggered anger on social media, with many Ugandans questioning the level of violent crime in Kampala and calling for tougher action against criminals.

The killing comes just weeks after the death of another Ugandan sports star - rugby international Sydney Gongodyo - who was also fatally attacked by a mob in Kampala

Jetstar introduces fees for carry-on luggage in overhead lockers

Helen Livingstone - Sydney



Getty Images The tail and nose of two Jetstar planes on the runway at Sydney International AirportGetty Images Jetstar's announcement was met with anger from some on social media

Australians have responded with a mixture of outrage and support after budget airline Jetstar announced it would start charging for the use of overhead lockers.

From February the airline is scrapping its 7kg (15.4lb) limit on hand luggage. Instead all passengers will be allowed a smaller

bag that can fit under the seat in front and the option to pay for space for a larger bag in the overhead locker and priority boarding.

The move comes after "extensive research and feedback" and is similar to the policies of other low cost airlines, Jetstar said.

It was met with a mixed response by social media users, with some asking whether the airline would also start charging customers to use the toilet.

In a statement Jetstar said prices for overhead luggage would start at A\$25 (\$18; £13) for shorter flights such as Launceston to Sydney, but could vary. A flight from Cairns to Tokyo for example would cost A\$52.

A spokesperson for Jetstar

told the BBC that the prices quoted were a "fair example" of what customers would have to pay for the hand luggage but that prices could rise "based on demand" and so could not be guaranteed.

When the BBC looked at flights from Sydney to Osaka the price quoted for carry-on was \$60 each way.

The airline would no longer routinely weigh passengers' bags before boarding but asked that customers' keep their bags to 10kg in weight so they could lift it themselves, Jetstar said.

"The change follows extensive research and feedback from customers and crew who consistently identified having bags weighed at the gate and struggling to find room in overhead lockers as the more stressful parts of the airport experience," Jetstar said.

Jetstar CEO Stephanie Tully said the changes would "make better use of overhead locker space, streamline boarding and help more flights depart on time."

Other low cost airlines such as Britain's EasyJet and Ireland's RyanAir have similar policies.

But the move was met with anger from some on social media.

"Minimum of \$25 to use an overhead locker in the plane. What next? A fee to use the toilet?" one user posted.

"We pay for food and drink, the seat and checked baggage already... what's next... \$10 for the use of soap and toilet paper in the bathroom?" another asked, while one wrote: "I don't get it. Airlines encourage you to take less stuff, hand luggage only to save costs, then they turn around and slug you for it."

Nevertheless, some users were supportive of the changes saying they were "about time" as too many large suitcases in overhead lockers routinely left "No room for a jacket or hand bag".

"Sick of people with several bags taking all the space. This is what happens when you are selfish and inconsiderate. We all get punished," another person posted.



OECS Boosts Sea Moss Industry with High Impact Training in St. Vincent and the Grenadines

OECS Press Release
06/08/2026

The Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) Commission, in collaboration with the Government of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and the Caribbean Biodiversity Fund (CBF), has successfully concluded a specialized three-day capacity-building workshop aimed at transforming the local sea moss industry into a cornerstone of the national blue economy.

Held from July 21–23, 2026, at the Union Island Secondary School, the initiative brought together farmers, entrepreneurs, and government officials to elevate local production to international food safety and business standards. The workshop represents a key component of the Caribbean Regional Architecture for Biodiversity (CRAB) Project, funded by the CBF with support from the Agence Française de Développement (AFD) and Le Fonds Français pour l'Environnement Mondial (FFEM).



Hon. Conroy Huggins

Addressing participants, the Hon. Conroy Huggins, Minister of Fisheries for Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, emphasized that sea moss cultivation is a priority focus area for the administration.

"Sea moss globally is a billion-dollar industry. Our focus has to be quality with efficiency,"

stated Minister Huggins, noting that the government is currently amending the Fisheries Act to provide a stronger legislative framework for the sector while

bolstering regional food sovereignty and community resilience following Hurricane Beryl.



Natasha Deterville-Moise

Echoing this strategic focus, Natasha Deterville-Moise, Officer in Charge of the OECS Economic Development Unit, highlighted that the initiative directly implements the OECS Food and Agriculture Systems Transformation (FAST) Strategy by supporting producers.

"Not only to grow more but to grow smarter, and not only to participate in markets but to compete successfully in increasingly demanding regional and international value chains."

To achieve these goals, the comprehensive program delivered intensive, practical instruction designed to strengthen the entire value chain. Technical modules focused heavily on Post-Harvest Food Safety and Quality Assurance, equipping farmers with Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) principles and Sanitation Standard Operating Procedures

(SSOPs) necessary to access high-value export markets. Complementing this technical rigor, business management sessions provided producers with financial tools for cost-of-production analysis, record-keeping, and strategic planning to transform seasonal farming into sustainable, generational wealth.

The practical focus resonated deeply with local business owners and participants eager to professionalize their operations. Ronita Oliver, Founder of Ocean Remedies, noted,

"I find the session very useful and timely as I'm in the process of creating SOPs, HACCP, and good manufacturing practices for my business to make sure that I'm compliant and sustainable."

Another workshop participant reinforced the shift in mindset, sharing that the training inspired producers to

"Not think of this industry as a hobby, but as a business... that we could line ourselves up to be on the international market."

Beyond immediate commercial gains, the initiative prioritized long-term sustainability by actively engaging the next generation. Youth participant Kylan Oliver, who works alongside her mother at Ocean Remedies and aspires to become a marine biologist, shared how the program deepened her commitment

to the sector:

"While mommy is doing the sea moss and we're helping, it makes me want to become a marine biologist even more because of the sea. I feel like the sea is where I belong."

This milestone in Union Island forms part of a broader, coordinated regional effort to standardize the sea moss value chain across OECS Member States, following earlier successful training sessions in Grenada (January 2026) and Dominica (April 2026). By replicating these rigorous technical and business standards throughout the region, the OECS and its partners are ensuring that Caribbean sea moss solidifies its reputation as a premium, high-quality superfood capable of capturing a significant share of the global market.



Deputy Premier and Minister of Culture in the Nevis Island Administration, the Honourable Eric Evelyn

Minister Evelyn thanks stakeholders for making Culturama 52 a resounding success

NIA CHARLESTOWN, NEVIS (August 06, 2026)- Deputy Premier and Minister of Culture in the Nevis Island Administration (NIA), the Honourable Eric Evelyn, has expressed heartfelt appreciation to everyone who contributed to Nevis Culturama 52, while describing this year's festival as "a tremendous success."

"In my estimation, I think Culturama 52 was indeed a tremendous success. Practically all of the shows, the quality of the shows were extraordinary. We had pretty good attendance at practically all of the shows.

"We have been seeing over time, over the past few years, improvement in terms of the start time of the shows, we've seen improvement in terms of management, and overall, I am very pleased with Culturama 52. So I want to say a very big thank you and a hearty thank you to all who made C52 the tremendous success that it was," he stated.

Reflecting on the conclusion of the festival, celebrated July 23 to August 04 under the theme "Our Heritage Proud and True: It's Culturama 52," Minister Evelyn commended the organisers, participants, sponsors and patrons whose collective efforts ensured another memorable celebration of Nevisian culture and heritage.

"I would like to take this opportunity to heartily congratulate all of the winners

from the various shows, pageants and other activities for Culturama 52," Minister Evelyn said. "As I say congratulations to the various winners, I would also like to say thank you to all who participated, the winners and all

(cont'd on next page)



(top) Porsha Precious Perkins and Keznambi Archibald of Charlestown Primary School, Republic Bank Mr. & Miss Talented Youth 2026 and (bottom) Mighty Zen, Junior Kaiso Monarch 2026



(l-r) Mia Alexander (Caribbean Lottery), Bank of Nevis Miss Culture Queen 2026 and Kairo, TDC Senior Kaiso Monarch 2026

Minister Evelyn thanks stakeholders for making Culturama 52 a resounding success



(l-r) Kadijah Mulley, National Bank Miss Culture Swimwear 2026 and Devaughn Browne, National Bank Mr. Kool 2026; Ras Brown & Rocco Dan, National Bank Power Soca Monarch 2026; and Adowah, National Bank Groovy Soca Monarch 2026

(cont'd from last page)

of the other persons who took part in these competitions. Of course, unless you take part, we cannot have a successful Culturama, we cannot have successful events."

The Minister also expressed gratitude to the festival's sponsors, revellers, vendors, patrons, the Culturama Committee and everyone who played a role in the staging of Culturama 52.

Minister Evelyn further noted that the festival was relatively free of accidents and incidents and thanked revellers and all those who participated for their good behaviour throughout the celebrations, which helped ensure a safe and enjoyable festival for all.

The Culturama Committee also expressed appreciation to the hundreds of individuals and organisations whose talent, dedication and support contributed to the festival's success. The committee congratulated all

winners, runners-up and participants across the various competitions, recognising the troupes, bands and masqueraders who brought the streets of Charlestown to life with creativity, colour and cultural pride. It also thanked the designers, volunteers, sponsors, patrons and artists whose contributions helped make the Street Parade, Grand Parade and the overall festival a memorable celebration of Nevisian culture, creativity and heritage.

Among the major winners of Culturama 52 were Mia Alexander (Caribbean Lottery), who captured the Bank of Nevis Miss Culture Queen 2026 title; Kairo, crowned TDC Senior Kaiso Monarch; Adowah, who secured a back-to-back victory as National Bank Groovy Soca Monarch; Ras Brown & Rocco Dan, winners of the National Bank Power Soca Monarch competition; Mighty Zen, Junior Kaiso Monarch; Oualie Rhythms Steel Orchestra, winners of

the National Bank Panorama competition; Kadijah Mulley, National Bank Miss Culture Swimwear 2026 and Devaughn Browne, National Bank Mr. Kool 2026; Porsha Precious Perkins and Keznambi Archibald of Charlestown Primary School, winners of the Republic Bank Mr. & Miss Talented Youth Pageant; and Zaine Frederick of Antigua and Barbuda, who was crowned Bank of Nevis Miss Caribbean Culture Queen 2026.

In the Street Parade competition,

David Dynasty won the Folklore category, Back in De Good Ole Days captured the Ole Mas title, U 2 Young 2 Know Bout Dis won the Float category, and Four Seasons Whisper of Oualie claimed top honours in the Fantasy category.

The festival concluded with DVX Reloaded being declared the 2026 Road March Champion for "Sugar Daddy", bringing the curtain down on another vibrant celebration of Nevisian culture, music and tradition.





Four-Goal Hero Sharema Blake Fires Honda Newtown United To Dominant Victory

Basseterre, St. Kitts – Sharema Blake delivered a sensational attacking display on Sunday, netting four goals—including a blistering first-half hat-trick—to lead league leaders Honda Newtown United to a convincing 6-2 victory over defending champions Mapau Cayon Rockettes as the second round of the 2026 Elvis Star Browne Women's League got underway.

Blake wasted little time making her mark, scoring three goals in a devastating six-minute spell in the 10th, 14th and 16th minutes to put Newtown firmly in command. Her clinical finishing left the defending champions chasing the game early, although Olujede Bridgewater pulled one back before halftime to give the Rockettes a glimmer of hope.

Mapau Cayon Rockettes started the second half brightly when Jasonna Williams found the back of the net to reduce the deficit. However, Honda Newtown United quickly regained control of the contest.

Zonia Marshall extended Newtown's advantage in the 71st minute before Christi-Anne Mills added another in the 82nd minute. Blake then completed her remarkable afternoon with her fourth goal of the match in the 84th minute, sealing an emphatic 6-2 triumph.

The victory preserves Honda Newtown United's perfect record this season and extends their lead at the top of the standings to 18 points, six clear of nearest challengers MFCR Old Road United Lady Jets and Mapau Cayon Rockettes, who remain tied on 12 points.

Meanwhile, two other Match Week 6 fixtures were awarded by default after teams failed to appear.

For the third time this season, Baley Construction Security Forces United forfeited their scheduled fixture, handing MFCR Old Road United Lady Jets three points by default. Hector and Associates Hotspring Bath United also forfeited their match against S L Horsford St. Paul's United Sparks, earning the newcomers their first points of the campaign.

In accordance with the competition's Rules and Regulations, both Bath United and Security Forces United have each been deducted six points for every forfeited match. The adjustment lifts St. Paul's United Sparks into fourth place on three points, strengthening their push for a playoff berth. The 2026 Elvis Star Browne Women's League continues on Saturday, August 8, with matches at the National Bank Group Technical Center.

Caption: Newtown United women remain atop the Elvis Star Browne Women's League table

Oleg Kovalev - South East Peninsula

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Infantino sorry for errors but stays Fifa president



Fifa president Gianni Infantino is seen before the World Cup 2026 Group D match between Australia and Turkey

Image source, Getty Images

Gianni Infantino was first elected Fifa president in 2016

By: Dale Johnson, Football issues correspondent, Dan Roan, Sports editor and Jack Skelton, BBC Sport senior journalist

Published BBC Sport

Gianni Infantino has apologised for "errors" he made in controversial plans to sell off stakes in competitions to private investors, but will remain Fifa president after receiving the backing of senior executives in a meeting in Morocco.

Infantino summoned members of the management board to Fifa's Africa office in Rabat on Wednesday following mounting criticism of his aborted proposals, with world football's governing body releasing a statement of support four hours after the meeting ended.

European football's governing body Uefa said at the weekend that it has lost confidence in Infantino, calling the Fifa Forward Enterprise (FFE) proposal a "shabby, back room, opaque deal".

Much criticism has come from within Fifa, including secretary general Mattias Grafstrom, who was at Wednesday's meeting. In an internal memo sent to Fifa staff on Tuesday, he wrote that the situation is "a sad and reproachable series of events".

However, in a statement following the meeting, Grafstrom and the management board "reaffirmed their full support" for Infantino as president.

Infantino and Grafstrom also sent a signed letter - seen by the BBC - to Fifa's vice-presidents, council and 211 member associations saying they "sincerely apologise" for their errors and "commit to them not happening again".

The two were pictured attending a Women's Africa Cup of Nations match together in Rabat after the meeting.

Infantino had offered all associations \$40m (£30m) if they backed a proposal for private investment in its tournaments, including the men's and women's World Cups, through a new subsidiary, FFE.

Fifa said that during Wednesday's meeting "mistakes" regarding FFE were "acknowledged", saying it was "not the intention" for the Fifa council and members association to "feel excluded from the process and that the process should have been handled differently".

The governing body added it "acknowledged that errors were also made after the proposal was leaked to media" - with the Times breaking the story of Infantino's plan on 28 July.

However, the statement also said the organisation "will no longer tolerate any attacks on its integrity, good governance and due process and will take all necessary measures to protect and safeguard its name and reputation".

Earlier, Fifa denied a story in the Times that Infantino had promised Morocco it will host the 2030 World Cup final in exchange for its support.

Fifa said it was a "false and misleading" claim and that a decision on where to hold the final, with the tournament also hosted by Spain and Portugal, will be made "in due course".

Internal support after more criticism

Infantino will hope that this begins to draw a line under the latest, and perhaps biggest, controversy that has beset his 10-year tenure.

However, this show of support from Fifa executives followed yet more stinging criticism of the Swiss.

Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney, whose country hosted the recent World Cup with the United States and Mexico, said he no longer had confidence in Infantino.

Former Barcelona, Real Madrid and Portugal winger Luis Figo, who ran for the Fifa presidency against Infantino's predecessor Sepp Blatter in 2015 before withdrawing, called on him to immediately resign.

Figo said: "Infantino has debased the office that he promised to elevate.

"It is too late to save his dignity but it is not too late to save football."

But Infantino, 56, looks set to fight for re-election for a fourth term.

Rivals have until 18 November to put their names forward to stand against him, with the election to be held at the Fifa Congress in Morocco in March 2027.

A candidate requires 106 votes from Fifa's 211 members to win.

Uefa, however, may well have other ideas.

At the weekend, European football's governing body said it had lost confidence in

Infantino's leadership and threatened legal action against Fifa.

Earlier this week several member associations - including Wales, with England set to follow suit - withdrew support for his re-election.

Fifa also said that although "mistakes were made, everything that was done was done in full compliance with the Fifa regulatory framework". It added it felt the outcomes of the meeting will "strengthen Fifa's governance" and "restore confidence in the organisation".

It is unlikely that such statements and the approval of a group of executives will dampen Uefa's anger.

How could Uefa react?

Uefa has been quick to react to every twist and turn ever since Infantino's FFE plan emerged.

From the initial rejection of FFE, to the seismic moment when all 55 member associations threatened to boycott Fifa's competitions, through to the effective vote of no confidence.

But Uefa has a problem, and it is not an insignificant hurdle to overcome.

Since Infantino performed his U-turn, only Concacaf as a confederation has criticised the Fifa president. But, unlike Uefa, it did not go as far as to say it had lost confidence in him.

While the Asian confederation did reject the plan, there has been no blanket statement since Infantino aborted it.

Uefa has a great deal of power, but it cannot realistically overthrow Infantino on its own. It needs more global support.

Outside of Europe, so far only Jordan - one of a handful of the 211 member associations not to have signed a letter of support for Infantino's re-election before this controversy - have publicly called for him to go.

The list of countries who have underscored their support is much longer - admittedly from within Infantino's firm power base in Asia and Africa.

In recent days Egypt, Morocco, Niger, Mauritania, DR Congo and the Philippines have all backed Infantino.

Such countries have benefited from funding via Infantino's Fifa Forward programme, the forerunner to FFE, to the tune of \$8m (£5.94m) in each three-year cycle.

Uefa has to find a way to persuade such countries that another presidential candidate can offer the same financial programmes, but with greater transparency and reform.

Infantino, however, already has their loyalty.

How can Infantino turn things around?

All the other recent controversies could not touch Infantino - from the way Saudi Arabia won the hosting rights to the 2034 World Cup, to US President Donald Trump's Fifa Peace Prize, to Folarin Balogun's escape from suspension at the World Cup.

This time, an attempt to sell off a slice of the commercial and ticketing rights of Fifa's competitions was a step too far for many.

Not simply because of the optics of such a move, but also that it was kept secret from other senior members of the Fifa hierarchy and that the beneficiary of the deal would have been Joshua Kushner - the brother of Jared Kushner, Trump's son-in-law.

So Infantino had bridges to build with those closest to him, not just with the 211 national associations.

Carlos Cordeiro, Infantino's senior adviser on global strategy and governance, quit over the plan.

Others who were critical opted not to tender their resignations, such as Grafstrom, chief of global football development Arsene Wenger and chief operating officer Kevin Lamour.

It is likely there will be others within the corridors of power at Fifa who kept their counsel.

On top of this, Infantino may also have to map out - or could offer - a route for reform.

This may involve putting additional checks and balances in place that would make it impossible for such a plan to be devised and presented in this way again.

Perhaps he could shelve his plans for a 64-team World Cup? Or offer to open up Fifa's cash reserves?