Traveling to Europe just got a little harder | Page 2

St KITTS & NEVIS OBSERVER

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Friday, January 3, 2025 | *The Federation's Politically Independent News Source* | Issue #1576

Thousands ring in New Year on the road

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Brantley highlights vision for 2025

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Largest J'ouvert ever?

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Trips to UK will require electronic preauthorization effective January 8th

From next Wednesday January 8, 2025, people visiting the United Kingdom (UK) who don't need a visa for short stays (up to six months) will need an Electronic Travel Authorization (ETA), unless they already have UK immigration status. This includes citizens of St. Kitts and Nevis, and will include anyone who is changing planes at a UK airport for travel onwards to Europe, Africa, or anywhere else in the world.

Caribbean residents with a British passport or British Overseas Territory Citizens (BOTC) passport are exempt from needing an ETA. They just need to show their passport, as usual, when traveling. People who already need a visa to visit, study, or work in the UK won't need an ETA, but must still get a visa.

The ETA system is designed to make the UK safer by checking travelers in advance, similar to systems in the US and Australia. An ETA gives permission to travel to the UK but does not guarantee entry, which is decided at the border.

Non-Europeans eligible for an ETA can apply now and must have one to travel from January 8, 2025. Europeans can apply starting March 5, 2025, and need an ETA by April 2, 2025. British and Irish citizens don't need an ETA.

Applying for an ETA costs UK £10, is claimed to be easy to do online, and allows multiple trips to the UK for up to six months each over two years or until the passport expires.

BOTCs who aren't British Citizens or cannot prove their British Citizenship still face immigration checks and need the right visa to live, work, or study in the UK.

If you are traveling to Europe (for example France or Spain) and changing planes in London or any other UK airport, you will still need the authorization to use a UK airport.

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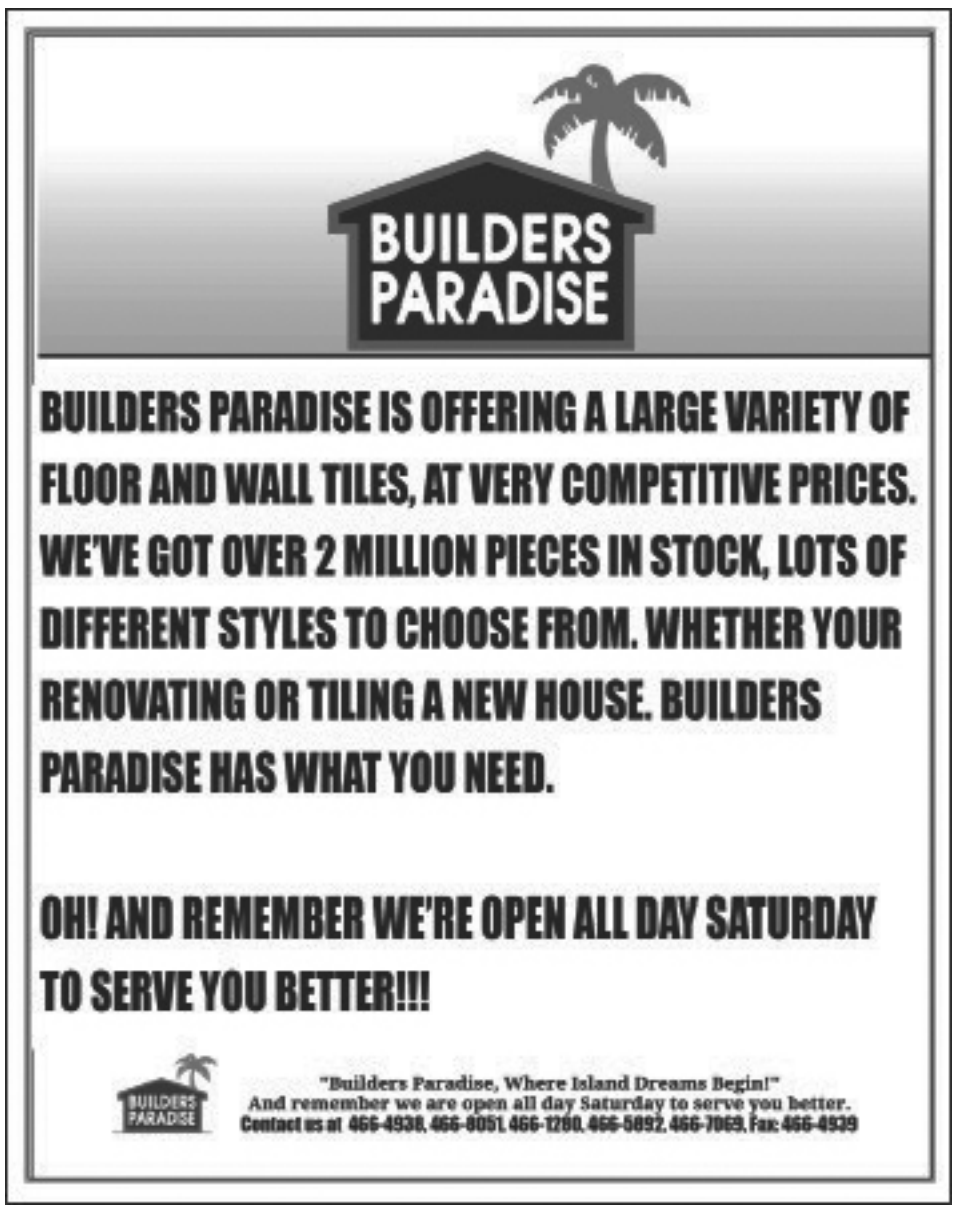

COURTESY PHOTO

St. Kitts and Nevis has recorded a significant increase in air arrivals during the Christmas and Carnival Season.

Increased arrivals boost tourism for Christmas and Carnival season

St. Kitts and Nevis has recorded a significant increase in air arrivals during the Christmas and Carnival Season, with a total of 8,335 airline passengers aboard 265 flights from December 14 to 25, 2024. This marks the highest number of passengers for this period in recent years, signalling a steady recovery and surge in interest in the twin-island Federation as a premier holiday destination.

The latest figures highlight remarkable progress compared to the 2,937 passengers recorded in 2021, showcasing the Federation's strong post-pandemic recovery. Notably, the 2024 total surpasses pre-pandemic numbers from 2017, 2018, and 2019, which recorded 7,813, 7,773 and 8,069 passengers, respectively.

Minister of Tourism, the Honourable Marsha Henderson, celebrated the milestone, attributing the growth to the resilience and enduring allure of St. Kitts and Nevis as a leading Caribbean destination. "This growth reflects the Federation's recovery and appeal, as we continue to offer visitors a unique blend of culture, hospitality, and natural beauty," said Minister Henderson.

The Christmas season, coupled with the highly anticipated Sugar Mas Carnival, has proven to be a major attraction for visitors. Festivities include vibrant street parades, calypso and pageant competitions, and traditional folklore performances, which showcase the rich cultural heritage of the islands.

The Ministry of Tourism, in collaboration with airport and tourism stakeholders, has worked diligently to ensure a seamless travel experience. Enhanced operations at Robert L. Bradshaw International Airport have been pivotal in ensuring efficiency and warmth, welcoming travelers to the twin-island paradise with ease and comfort.

With its record-breaking air arrivals and vibrant festivities, St. Kitts and Nevis continues to solidify its status as a top-tier destination for holiday and Carnival celebrations.

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Thousands celebrate Sugar Mas 53 with Grand Parade, Last Lap

By Loshaun Dixon
St. Kitts-Nevis Observer

The streets of Basseterre burst into life as thousands of revellers joined the two-day Grand Carnival Parade and Last Lap, marking the vibrant climax of Sugar Mas 53.

The Carnival, known as the Federation's premier cultural celebration, once again brought together dazzling costumes, captivating music, and boundless energy.

The Mas Bands commenced their parade on January 1, starting from the Dr. William Connor Primary School and travelling through the streets of Basseterre until 8 PM, the official closing time. On January 2, the bands began from their mas camps, parading the traditional route until the festivities officially concluded at 9 PM.

This year, the Carnival Committee ensured a timely and well-organized flow of activities, with all troupes passing the judging points by 4p.m. on the first day. The early start allowed participants and spectators to enjoy the vibrant display in an efficient and structured manner.

Shannon Hawley, Chair of the St. Kitts-Nevis National Carnival Committee (SKNNCC), expressed immense pride in the success of Sugar Mas 53, calling it a "resounding success."

"Well, I don't want to be biased, as I always am, but based on reports, the general consensus is that the entire Sugar Mas 53 season was a tremendous success," she said.

Hawley highlighted the wide acclaim for the Carnival events, including sold-out shows at Carnival Village, which returned to its traditional home with a temporary expansion. She emphasized the event's broad appeal, drawing spectators, online viewers, returning nationals, and Carnival lovers from across the Caribbean and beyond.

"We have been inundated with positive reviews from spectators, online viewers, returning nationals, and individuals who flew in specifically to participate," she said. "This Sugar Mas 53 was a tremendous success, and it could not have been achieved without the efforts and dedication of our executive team, volunteers, and all Carnival stakeholders."

Carnival also brought significant economic benefits to the Federation. Hawley noted that the high demand for accommodations, makeup artists, clothing stores, taxis, and restaurants underscored the event's importance as a cultural and tourism product.

"Carnival is a delicate balance between preserving traditional elements and ensuring it serves as a tourism product that benefits the entire community," Hawley explained. "Power Week—featuring fetes and mas—attracts Carnival enthusiasts to the island, boosting the local economy and showcasing the best of our culture."

Hawley also acknowledged the success of key events such as the Miss St. Kitts-Nevis Pageant, Calypso competitions, and Panorama, many of which were sold out.

Parade Results

The SKNNCC revealed the winners of the Grand Parade competitions, showcasing the creativity and talent of the participating bands and individuals:

- **First Parade Day Troupe to Reveal All Costumes:** Luxe Carnival – Ocean Odyssey: Mysteries of the Underworld
- **SKELEC Most Powerful Troupe:** Luxe Carnival – Ocean Odyssey: Mysteries of the Underworld (160 points)
- **Queen of the Bands:** Ultra Carnival – Nekirah Nicholls (663 points), De Market Woman
- **King of the Bands:** Ultra Carnival – Kajali Hanley-Gumbs (665 points), Papa Bois
- **Section of the Year:** Ultra Carnival – The Tale of Anansi (120 points)

The coveted Troupe of the Year title was awarded to Ultra Carnival for The Stories of the West Indies (693 points), earning them $25,000. Luxe Carnival's Ocean Odyssey, Mysteries of the Underworld claimed the 1st runner-up position with 673 points, and received $20,000. Zus Carnival was third with 528 points, earning $15,000.

COURTESY PHOTO

Luxe Carnival's Ocean Odyssey, Mysteries of the Underworld (shown above) claimed the 1st runner-up position in the Sugar Mas 53 Grand Parade and Last Lap. The entry finished just 20 points behind the overall winner, Ultra Carnival's The Stories of the West Indies. The streets of Basseterre came alive for the annual event as thousands of revellers joined the two-day Grand Carnival Parade and Last Lap, which marked the vibrant climax of Sugar Mas 53.

COURTESY PHOTO

Colorful costumes added to the festivities of Sugar Mas 53's finale.

EDITORIAL

This new year should bring a fresh beginning

The Federation of St Kitts and Nevis had a lot to give thanks for during the course of 2024. We were not hit by any major disasters, while others suffered widespread flooding, hurricanes and other forms of destruction. God spared us; not because we are worthy, but of course, because of his loving kindness towards us.

Economically, St Kitts and Nevis did not see its full potential last year. We were rocked by accusations and lawsuits from MSR Media. We saw two of our former Prime Ministers, Dr Denzil Douglas and Dr Timothy Harris, both of whom in our opinion served our country well, having unfounded allegations made by MSR against them. Also, baseless and very damning claims about our Citizenship by Investment programme. That, of course, could be one of the reasons for the drop in numbers in 2024.

As a people we need to band together, forget the differences of politics, and come up with a way forward to move the country in the right direction. What would be nice is if during the early part of 2025, all the political parties could convene to brainstorm, and come up with policies and ideas for the advancement of St Kitts and Nevis – policies that will form good economic standards.

During the last budget, Prime Minister Drew spoke about the huge deficit. We need to, basically, redouble our efforts, whether that be in the Citizenship by Investment programme or Tourism, or diversifying the economy. We need to come up with a plan, and with all hands on deck we can accomplish that.

Over in Nevis, we have Premier Brantley, who in his last budget talked about how he has been able to provide water, electricity, proper infrastructure, and the things that Nevisians have become accustomed to. Nevis has come a long way, and we believe that we have been blessed with some leaders that were serious and true to duty. It started with Dr Simeon Daniel, then Vance Amory, Joseph Parry, and now the Honourable Mark Brantley. These are Nevisians who have, throughout, been seriously committed to the task of leading Nevis to higher heights.

We hope that in 2025, we will see the coming of the renewed and rebuilt – or at least the start of the rebuilding of Nisbet Plantation Hotel, and the long spoken about Wyndham. And we hope that we might be able to see some other significant development. Because since the Four Seasons we have not had any major activities in Nevis. So, we have expectations that we will have something big for 2025.

This new year should bring a fresh beginning, where we put politics aside and make St Kitts and Nevis great.

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An 'Until then' for my beloved 'Ancient' sister

Off the Beaten Path ...

Tommy Wells
Humour columnist

As you may have guessed over the years, my mother and father lived fairly normal lives as they grew up in West Texas. They worked every day to pay the bills, scratch out a living, and root for the Houston Astros and Dallas Cowboys. They were as middle class as middle class could be.

My father was a milkman (when milk was still delivered) and a house painter. My mother was a zookeeper … she raised nine kids. Other than making a lot of really cool kids – including myself, they were pretty normal. I think it is fair to say Bobby and Faye Wells aren't going to be remembered in the history books of Texas, or be inducted into a Hall of Fame any time too soon.

Well, other than the 100-story skyscraper I have created in the corner of my mind. They've always had a place of honor there.

I have a skyscraper in my head?

Of course. Doesn't everyone? I'm sure you have a "Cool Dudes and Dudettes International Hall of Memory" that is shaped like the Astrodome in your mind, too. If yours is like mine, it's located right behind the Last National Bank of Boomer, and across the street from the big billboard that reads "Astros beat the Yankees! Who's Your Daddy?" It also has a lot of junk in there, too, because She-Who-Must-Not-Be-Made-Mad won't let me bring it home.

As the executive director (and chief floor mopper/light bulb changer/MC of ceremonies) of the Hall, I have had the unfortunate honor of inducting many family members in their wings of my Hall for years . My parents are there. My older brothers, Danny, Butch and Bobby Joe, are there. My sister, Rita. My uncles Lloyd, Derwood, Johnny, Virgil and Walter and my precious aunt Betty, along with a kajillion cousins, friends and pets. Look, it"s basically for everyone I love and Pamela Anderson. Ummm … I know Pamela isn't family … but she gets in because she's a lifeguard and every Hall needs a qualified lifeguard who can sprint down the beach with amazing flotation devices, blonde hair and a tan to save a John and I … err, I meant some random dudes … from drowning in a teaspoon of water. Really, how inconsiderate would I be if I didn't have a lifeguard on duty?

Enough about the pool, though.

On Monday, I inducted another member into the Hall, my "Ancient" sister, Barbara.

We all knew Barbara was going to get inducted sooner or later. The doctors told us months ago that her invitation would have to be issued. We're all sad that she accepted the invite, though.

Barbara was one of the quieter members of our family. Raised in East Texas, she was the oldest of my parents' seven children. She settled into life in Ranger in the 1970s and worked hard to become a certified hairstylist and, later, the owner of several restaurants. Make no mistake about it, Barbara loved to cook … and she was good at it. More importantly, she was a great person. She had a friendly smile and greeting for everyone and worked tirelessly for years to make her family – our family – the best it could be.

Over the last few years, she even worked with me and our crazy aunt Gloria to help broadcast high school football games to our little corner of the world.

To be sure, she will be missed by all of us.

I'll miss teasing her. She didn't drink very much, but I never missed an opportunity to post a picture of a witch crashing a broom for her.

I'll miss her smile and passion.

I'll just plain old miss her.

Rest assured, Barbara probably won't be the last inductee into the Hall in my head. We all go to the Memory suite at some point. Some, like Barbara, just didn't need to accept the invitation so quickly.

Barbara raised four sons, Jerry, Michael, James and Steven. Michael, James and Steven have already been admitted into the Hall and, I'm sure, are finding things for their mother to cook for them right now. Jerry hasn't been admitted. He's got stinky feet and until he can do something about that, he's officially banned.

Goodbye, Sis. I'll be thinking of some new recipes we can cook up when we meet again.

Until then ...

Tommy Wells is a huour columnist living on the edged of the desert on Texas. Everything in this column is true, except for the parts that are made up, fabricated or are just plain old lies.

COURTESY PHOTO

J'ouvert drew unprecedented crowds to the streets of St. Kitts on December 26, cementing its place as the largest J'ouvert celebration in the island's history.

Historic J'ouvert attracts record-breaking crowds

By Loshaun Dixon
St. Kitts-Nevis Observer

In a display of culture and festivity, J'ouvert morning on Boxing Day, December 26, 2024, drew unprecedented crowds to the streets of St. Kitts, cementing its place as the largest J'ouvert celebration in the island's history.

Shannon Hawley, Chair of the Carnival Committee, expressed pride in the event's massive turnout, highlighting over 20,000 participants and spectators. "We have seen how much our national J'ouvert has grown," Hawley remarked. "With over 10 J'ouvert troupes ranging from 200 to 1,800 members, the energy on the road is simply incredible. J'ouvert has become a cornerstone of our Carnival, and this year's numbers prove that it's only getting bigger."

As the vibrant spectacle unfolded, the streets pulsated with music, dance, and a sea of colourful revelers celebrating the rich traditions of St. Kitts & Nevis. This year's J'ouvert seamlessly blended local and international influences, with participants flying in from across the Caribbean and beyond.

The festive spirit was further amplified by a historic day for tourism, as six cruise ships docked in St. Kitts, bringing a record 11,334 passengers to the island. Coupled with high hotel occupancy and a surge in returning nationals, the Carnival season has proven to be a major draw for visitors seeking to experience the island's unique blend of Christmas and Carnival cheer.

> ***'Today's remarkable visitor numbers are a testament to the growing appeal of St. Kitts as a leading Caribbean destination. The combined excitement of the Christmas and Carnival celebrations provides a unique opportunity to showcase our culture, hospitality, and breathtaking landscapes.'***
>
> **Hon. Marsha Henderson**
> **Minister of Tourism**

Minister of Tourism, the Honourable Marsha Henderson, praised the day's success.

"Today's remarkable visitor numbers are a testament to the growing appeal of St. Kitts as a leading Caribbean destination," said Minister

See J'OUVERT on Page 15 *

COURTESY PHOTO

This year's J'ouvert seamlessly blended local and international influences, with participants flying in from across the Caribbean and beyond.

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Brantley reflects on '24 achievements, sets vision for '25

By Rick Amburgey
St. Kitts-Nevis Observer

Hon. Mark Brantley, Premier of Nevis, delivered a heartfelt New Year's address celebrating the successes of 2024 and expressing optimism for 2025.

"The New Year brings with it a renewed sense of possibilities—possibilities of progress and great accomplishments for us, our families, communities, and our country. It is a time of reflection and an opportunity to commit to positive changes in our lives and in that of our beloved Nation," he said.

As he reflected on 2024, Brantley highlighted several notable accomplishments, including:

• The completion of works on the Solar Desalination Plant at Maddens.

• The opening of another international bank.

• The completion of the Oualie Water Taxi Terminal Building.

• The successful completion of the Bath and Butler's Village road projects.

• A history-making cornea transplant at Alexandra Hospital, the first of its kind in the Federation.

"Clearly, 2024 was indeed a year filled with momentous events," Brantley said. However, he acknowledged challenges faced during the year, such as sweltering heat, drought-induced water scarcity, and crop failures. "These extreme weather conditions are a stark reminder that climate change is real and represents an existential threat to all of us," he noted. "They are cautionary reminders that our stewardship of our environment is critically important. Now is the time for us to be responsible custodians of our natural environment."

Looking forward, Brantley emphasized the government's continued commitment to progress. In the budget presentation on December 3, he outlined plans to sustain growth, support entrepreneurship, and create new opportunities. Key initiatives for 2025 include:

• Continuing work on the Alexandra Hospital Project.

• Constructing 46 houses through the Nevis Housing and Land Corporation.

• Starting the Church Ground Main Road Project, connecting to the Upper Hamilton road network.

• Launching the Windsong Foundation-sponsored "Music in the Schools" Programme.

• Introducing a new programme aimed at engaging the Nevisian Diaspora to encourage them to work, retire, and invest at home.

COURTESY PHOTO
Premier Mark Brantley

Brantley pledged to foster a harmonious and inclusive society, urging everyone to contribute to building a peaceful, prosperous, and progressive St. Kitts and Nevis. "This, however, can only be achieved if we individually and collectively play our part in the project of building a peaceful, prosperous, and progressive St. Kitts and Nevis. As one people, with a shared destiny, we are intertwined and connected as members of one Nevisian and Kittitian household. Let us therefore resolve as joint heirs and stewards of this Federation to unite and work together for the common cause of national upliftment," he said.

Acknowledging the challenges that lie ahead, Brantley called for resilience and unity. "The challenges ahead should energize and reignite our love and faith in each other and in our country," he said.

Brantley concluded his address with a message of hope and determination: "Let us learn from our yesterday and work for a better and brighter tomorrow. Let us face the New Year with courage and conviction, and demonstrate, day by day, the mettle we are made of. This can only be achieved if we steadfastly commit ourselves to the great and noble task of nation building."

He added, "This will require all of us to remain focused, lift our game, and redouble our efforts. It can only be realized through a collaborative approach energized by a spirit of national unity and pride. In the year ahead, may we work in unison, as one people, to realize our individual and national goals."

SKN wins prestigious Caribbean travel awards

The Honourable Spencer Brand, Minister responsible for Water Services in the Nevis Island Administration (NIA), has hailed recent progress in a well-drilling project as a transformative milestone for the island's water supply.

The USD 3.3 million initiative, undertaken by Water and Oil Wells Services Limited of Trinidad, aims to develop nine wells across Nevis to boost the water system's capacity by over 1.5 million gallons per day.

Drilling has already been completed on two wells in the Maddens area.

Addressing the project during the NIA budget debate on December 5, 2024, Minister Brand described the results as highly promising.

"Pump testing at Maddens Well Site Number Two has been completed, yielding a return of 125 gallons per minute when pumped continuously, equivalent to approximately 144,000 gallons per day. We plan to operate it at a manageable drawdown rate of 100 to 110 gallons per minute. The water quality, at 200 parts per million, is excellent for drinking," the Minister said.

Testing at Maddens Well Site Number One has shown an even greater yield, with a safe output of 350 gallons per minute. Minister Brand noted that further adjustments, including drilling a larger hole to accommodate an 8-inch or 9-inch pump, are expected to significantly enhance the well's production.

COURTESY PHOTO
The Federation of St. Kitts and Nevis has been honoured as the Caribbean Cruise Destination of the Year and Caribbean Adventure Destination of the Year at the esteemed Caribbean Journal Caribbean Travel Awards 2025.

"This well has the potential to supply a much larger volume of water to the island," he stated, expressing optimism about the project's progress.

Looking ahead, preparations are underway for drilling at a third site in Dasents Estate, set to commence in January 2025.

In addition to well drilling, the NIA has also achieved success with its photovoltaic desalination plant in Butlers, St. James. On December 13, the plant produced its first batch of fully treated desalinated water, which was injected into the distribution network. Powered by solar energy, the plant has a capacity of 60,000 gallons per day and is expected to become fully operational soon.

"These advancements demonstrate the administration's commitment to sustainable and innovative water management solutions," Minister Brand said, adding that over the past decade, the NIA has invested approximately EC$43 million to improve water distribution, increase storage capacity, and bring additional water on stream.

Debutant Drewzy crowned Sugar Mas 53 Senior Calypso Monarch

The Sugar Mas 53 Senior Calypso Monarch Finals delivered an electrifying evening of talent and storytelling as seven finalists, along with the reigning Monarch Queen Independent, vied for the coveted title. After advancing from the Semi-Finals on December 12, the finalists brought their best to the stage, but King Drewzy emerged victorious in his first attempt at the crown.

King Drewzy captivated the audience and judges alike with his thought-provoking and emotional performances. He received an impressive score of 830 points for his efforts. His first song, Peace to Pieces, painted St. Kitts and Nevis as a shattered picture frame, urging citizens to restore unity and reclaim the nation's glory. His second song, A New Deal, focused on the challenges faced by teachers in the Federation and called for improved treatment and support for educators. The performance struck a chord, as several educators in the audience held up placards demanding change, adding to the powerful imagery of his message.

Trailing closely behind, Big Lice secured second place with 808 points. Big Lice's first-round song, Things Not Going Well, addressed the struggles of the average citizen, and drew a dramatic reaction from Prime Minister Dr. Terrance Drew, who was seen gesturing from the front row. The moment left spectators speculating whether the Prime Minister's thumbs-up signified approval or discomfort. In the second round, Big Lice performed Leader of the Opposition, a candid commentary on his personal experiences, including losing his position as a government advisor following a controversial social media incident and subsequent legal troubles.

COURTESY PHOTO

King Drewzy captivated the audience and judges alike with his thought-provoking and emotional performances.

Queen Independent, the defending champion and a four-time Senior Calypso Monarch, finished third with 783 points. Her first song, Look Inside the Home, explored the roots of crime within households, delivering a sobering message on societal issues. In her second round, she shifted to a celebratory tone with They Know Me Name, a self-affirming anthem highlighting her historic accomplishments, including her two Junior Monarch titles and her trailblazing legacy as the first female Senior Calypso Monarch.

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COURTESY PHOTO

The revellers were thoroughly entertained during the Road March competition.

Kollision Band celebrates Road March triumph with 'Keys to the City'

The vibrant streets erupted in celebration as Kollision Band claimed the coveted title of Road March Winner for Sugar Mas 53 with their hit song "Keys to the City." The announcement was made following intense competition, with Kollision Band narrowly edging out their rivals under the tiebreaker policy applied by the National Carnival Committee.

In a significant moment for carnival history, all of the top three contenders—Kollision Band, Upset Squad, and ASAP Band—had never previously won the Road March title. This year also marked a major shift, as it was the first time in years that the top three Road March positions did not feature the iconic Small Axe Band or Grand Masters Band, both of whom have dominated the competition in the past.

In a heartfelt statement, Kollision Band expressed gratitude to their supporters:

"We got the keys to de city! Thank you to all who supported us presently and throughout the years. From all of us here at the Kollision Band, we love y'all."

> ***'We got the keys to de city! Thank you to all whosupported us presently and throughout the years. From all of us here at the Kollision Band, we love y'all.'***
>
> **Statement from the Kollision Band**

Manager Shervin White shared his emotions, describing the victory as the culmination of years of effort:

"Tears of joy. Years of hard work. Finally paid off. Road March."

The competition was fierce, with the Zodiacs – Small Axe Band earning the "Best Performance" award with a staggering 345 points. Kollision Band's "Keys to the City" tied with "Aliens" by Upset Squad at 8 points, but the judges' decision ensured their place as Road March champions.

COURTESY PHOTO

One of the 'Keys to the City' is visible during Kollision Band's performance.

ROAD MARCH RESULTS

- Road March Winner: Keys to the City – Kollision Band (8 points)*
- 1st Runner Up: Aliens – Upset Squad (8 points)*
- 2nd Runner Up: Rum Shop – ASAP Band (7 points)

**Tiebreaker policy applied.*

This historic victory is a testament to Kollision Band's dedication and resilience in the world of carnival music. Their win, alongside the unprecedented achievements of Upset Squad and ASAP Band, underscores the dynamic evolution of the Road March competition, ushering in a new era for Sugar Mas celebrations.

EBJ Harmonics Steel Orchestra clinches fifth straight Panorama victory!

By Loshaun Dixon
St. Kitts-Nevis Observer

It was another night of mesmerizing steelpan music as the EBJ Harmonics Steel Orchestra triumphed once again, claiming their fifth consecutive win at the First Federal Cooperative Credit Union & The Cable Panorama competition. Performing 'Music in Jail' by Mick Stokes, the orchestra charmed the audience and judges, securing the top spot with an impressive score of 418 points.

The sold-out event was a feast for the ears, with attendees treated to a night of sweet pan music from some of the finest steel orchestras in the region. Physical tickets and online sales were snapped up quickly, reflecting the growing popularity of the competition.

The Nevis Community Development Steel Orchestra claimed second place with 374 points, delivering a heartfelt rendition of 'Take the Oath' by King Kondris. Their performance was both powerful and inspiring, earning them well-deserved accolades from the audience.

Meanwhile, the Sugar City Steel Orchestra took third place with 372 points. Their vibrant performance of 'Sweet for Days' by Patrice Roberts showcased their skill and passion, adding to the evening's excitement.

COURTESY PHOTO

The victorious EBJ Harmonics Steel Orchestra.

The EBJ Harmonics Steel Orchestra's dominance continues to be a hallmark of the competition, as their fifth straight win cements their reputation as Panorama legends. The audience was left in awe of their artistry and the avid pan-music lovers eagerly anticipate what they will bring to the stage next year.

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St KITTS & NEVIS OBSERVER

TRAVEL

Remembering the Old West's forgotten cowtown

By Tommy Wells
St. Kitts-Nevis Observer

More than likely you've heard of Tombstone, Deadwood, Abilene and Dodge City. All are famous cow towns from the United States' Old West period. You probably haven't heard too much about the last Old West cow town, Colorado City, Texas.

A small town located in rural West Texas, Colorado City grew into a rough-and-tumble place shoirtly after its founding due to expansion of the Texas & Pacific Railroad. With the growth came the cows, gunslingers and colorful characters.

Colorado City's growth into one of the Old West's last cow towns that was featured in a 6-page spread of Wild West, a quarterly magazine published in the U.S.

In an article entitled "Requiem for a Forgotten Cow Town" written by Preston Lewis, Colorado City's growth into a Old West mainstay, complete with gambling houses, prostitution and murders, was described as "bad, bawdy and bankable" and one of the great cow towns that dotted the American landscape from 1865 to 1890. Lewis said although Colorado City isn't mentioned in the same breath as places like Abilene (Kansas), Dodge City and Fort Worth is the fact that the town originated toward the end of the Old West period in 1881. Despite its late entry, the "Mother City of West Texas" was every bit as important as its more famous cattle stops … and just as wild.

COURTESY PHOTO

Just three years after its founding, Colorado, Texas, sported a population of more than 6,000 and 28 saloons.

"The community provided not only vice and nice for area ranch hands but also supplies and building materials for regional ranches and other nascent communities in west Texas and the Texas Panhandle.

Colorado, Texas, had its beginning on Sept. 1, 1880 with the opening of A.W. Dunn's 25-by-60 foot store. It's plank walls and canvas roof would soon give rise to Texas' first boomtown. Although Dunn's store set the stage, financier Jay Gould lit the fuse on the communities' growth. Gould, fueled by investors, breathed new life into the stalled Texas & Pacific Railroad's efforts to expand tracks fromMarshall, Texas, to Sierra Blanca, near El Paso. On April 16, 1880, the tracks reached what would become Colorado City. By the time the railroad arrived, the town had already grown to have 12 businesses, five saloons, three hotels, two livery stables, two wagon yards and two restaurants, as well as three lawyers.

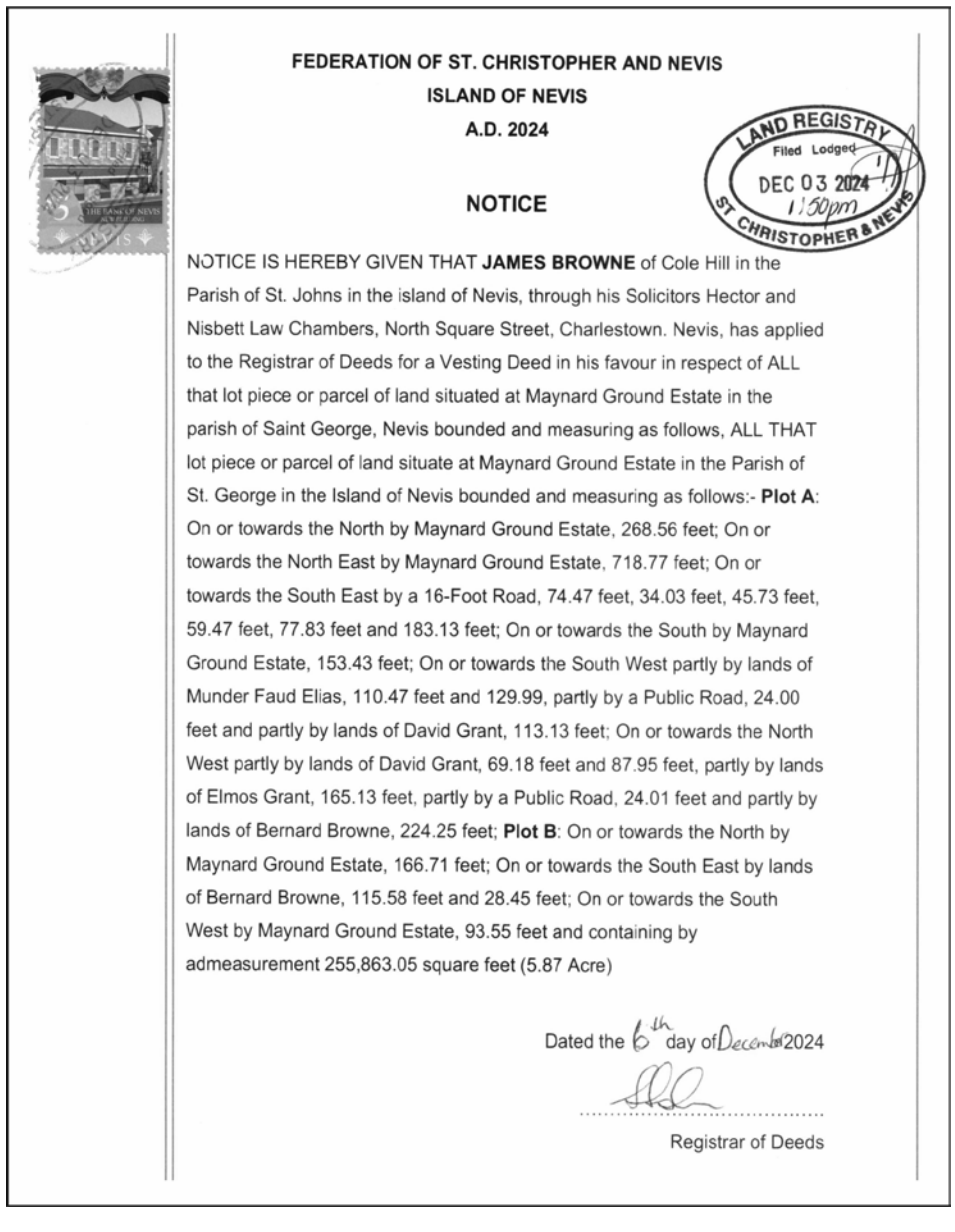
> ***'If Colorado City hadn't been so convenient to the ranches it served – at least compared to Kansas cow towns – it would have birthed a trail herd or cowhand Herodotus to chronicle for posterity its brief time in the sun. Instead, Colorado City flamed out like a West Texas sunset, spectacular in its moment.'***
>
> **Preston Lewis**
> **Wild West writer**

The community's proximity to the Colorado River – large amounts of water in West Texas was a prime consideration in the late 1800s for cattle barons – made the stop perfect. Cattlemen could water their stock from the river before loading them onto trains for shipping to markets in northern and eastern states. Before long, the new community evolved into a regional hub, shipping cattle, sheep wool and other items.

Just three years after its founding, there were 75 businesses in town, including 28 saloons, a mule-driven streetcar service, a zoo and a racetrack.

Within a month of the T&P's arrival, Colorado began developing its name as a rough and tumble place when the city's first killing – by three Texas Rangers in the Nip & Tuck Saloon. In the May 16, incident, cattleman William P. Patterson was killed by Rang-

See OLD WEST on Page 11 *



FEDERATION OF ST. CHRISTOPHER AND NEVIS
ISLAND OF NEVIS
A.D. 2024

LAND REGISTRY Filed Lodged DEC 03 2024 1:50pm ST CHRISTOPHER & NEVIS

NOTICE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT **JAMES BROWNE** of Cole Hill in the Parish of St. Johns in the island of Nevis, through his Solicitors Hector and Nisbett Law Chambers, North Square Street, Charlestown. Nevis, has applied to the Registrar of Deeds for a Vesting Deed in his favour in respect of ALL that lot piece or parcel of land situated at Maynard Ground Estate in the parish of Saint George, Nevis bounded and measuring as follows, ALL THAT lot piece or parcel of land situate at Maynard Ground Estate in the Parish of St. George in the Island of Nevis bounded and measuring as follows:- **Plot A**: On or towards the North by Maynard Ground Estate, 268.56 feet; On or towards the North East by Maynard Ground Estate, 718.77 feet; On or towards the South East by a 16-Foot Road, 74.47 feet, 34.03 feet, 45.73 feet, 59.47 feet, 77.83 feet and 183.13 feet; On or towards the South by Maynard Ground Estate, 153.43 feet; On or towards the South West partly by lands of Munder Faud Elias, 110.47 feet and 129.99, partly by a Public Road, 24.00 feet and partly by lands of David Grant, 113.13 feet; On or towards the North West partly by lands of David Grant, 69.18 feet and 87.95 feet, partly by lands of Elmos Grant, 165.13 feet, partly by a Public Road, 24.01 feet and partly by lands of Bernard Browne, 224.25 feet; **Plot B**: On or towards the North by Maynard Ground Estate, 166.71 feet; On or towards the South East by lands of Bernard Browne, 115.58 feet and 28.45 feet; On or towards the South West by Maynard Ground Estate, 93.55 feet and containing by admeasurement 255,863.05 square feet (5.87 Acre)

Dated the 6th day of December 2024

Registrar of Deeds

COURTESY PHOTO

Beginning next Wednesday, January 8, 2025, people visiting the United Kingdom (UK) who don't need a visa for short stays (up to six months) will need an Electronic Travel Authorization (ETA), unless they already have UK immigration status.

TRIPS

Continued from Page 2

However, certain individuals are exempt from obtaining an ETA:

• British and Irish Citizens: Individuals holding British or Irish citizenship do not need an ETA to enter the UK.

• UK Visa or Immigration Permission Holders: Those who possess a valid UK visa or have permission to live, work, or study in the UK (including settled or pre-settled status, or right of abode) are exempt from the ETA requirement.

• British Overseas Territories Citizens (BOTC): Travelers with a BOTC passport are not required to obtain an ETA.

• Residents of Ireland Traveling from the Common Travel Area: Individuals legally residing in Ireland and traveling to the UK from Ireland, Guernsey, Jersey, or the Isle of Man are exempt from needing an ETA.

• Dual citizens of the UK and any other country do not need to apply for electronic pre-authorization provided that they travel on a current UK passport.

OLD WEST

Continued from Page 10

ers – Corporal J.M. Sedberry, Private Jeff Milton and Private L.B. Wells. The shooting set off a firestorm.

The incident was recently brought to stage by Heart of West Texas Museum curator Mary McMullen as part of the Gunslingers & Ghosts play in April. McMullen's play was held in the historic Colorado City Opry House.

Lewis said gunfights were so common in the young town that one newspaper flippantly described one incident as "There was, as the 'boys say, a six-shooter play at the Favorite saloon on Oak Street last night, but nobody was hurt."

Lewis also touched on the rise of legendary lawman Dick Ware and his role in helping curb violence in the community by forming a rumored alliance with west end kingpin "Uncle Charlie" Johnson, who controlled activities including prostitution and gambling.

In 1883, the community was reported to have accounted for more than $10 million in business transactions (more than $300 million in present-day dollars) and sported a population of about 6,000.

Just two years later, however, the city would begin declining. Droughts, harsh winters, declining cattle prices and the emergence of regional railroads that allowed cattlemen to find closer options for transporting their goods hit the town hard. The town's economic decline affected its population as many left. By 1890, the once boisterous town had just 1,582 residents.

The town's quick rise and decline probably played a role in the reason many don't remember Colorado City as part of the Old West cattle towns.

"Perhaps if Sheriff Ware and vice king Johnson hadn't colluded to curb violence, Colorado City might have developed a more flamboyant reputation and ensured its place among the Old West's famed cattle towns," Lewis wrote. "Or maybe if Colorado City hadn't been so convenient to the ranches it served – at least compared to Kansas cow towns – it would have birthed a trail herd or cowhand Herodotus to chronicle for posterity its brief time in the sun. Instead, Colorado City flamed out like a West Texas sunset, spectacular in its moment but soon replaced by another, more boisterous cow towns."

GOVERNMENT OF ST KITTS AND NEVIS

MINISTRY OFEDUCATION

ENHANCING LEARNING CONTINUITY AND INCLUSION PROJECT

Installation of Network Routers, Network Switches and Wireless Access Points

INVITATION TO BID – SUPPLY OF WORKS

The Government of***Saint Kitts and Nevis***(GOSKN)has received financing from the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) in an amount equivalent to ***US$4,155,000M*** towards the cost of the **ENHANCING LEARNING CONTINUITY AND INCLUSION**Project and intends to apply a portion of the proceeds to eligible payments under this contract.Payment by CDB will be made only at the request of ***GOSKN*** and upon approval by CDB, and will be subject, in all respects, to the terms and conditions of the Loan Agreement. The Loan Agreement prohibits a withdrawal from the Loan Account for the purpose of any payment to persons or entities, or for any import of goods, if such payment or import, to the knowledge of CDB, is prohibited by a decision of the United Nations Security Council taken under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations. No party other than***GOSKN***shall derive any rights from the Loan Agreement or have any claim to the proceeds of the Loan.

The ***Education Management Information Systems Department, Education Planning Division***is the Executing Agency for the Project, and the ***Ministry of Education***, is responsible for the overall implementation of the project. The***Ministry of Education***intendstoinvite sealed bids from eligible and qualified bids for the supply of Installation of network routers, network switches and Wireless Access Points. The bidder may bid for any individual Lot or any combination of Lots:

(a) Lot 1 –Public Secondary Schools
(b) Lot 2 –Public Primary Schools

The bidding process is conducted according to the procedures specified in***the Procurement Procedures for Projects Financed by CDB (January,2021), as published on CDB's website***and is open to all bidders from eligible countriesand is open to all bidders from eligible countries.

Eligible countries are member countries of CDB.Bidders are advised to review the relevant eligibility criteria detailed in Section 4 and conflict of interest provisions in Section 5 of the***Procurement Procedures for Projects Financed by CDB (January 2021), as published on CDB's website***

Firms whether applying individually or in the form of a Joint Venture, shall:

(a) be legally incorporated or otherwise organised in and have their principal place of business in an Eligible Country.

(b) be more than fifty (50) percent beneficially-owned by a citizen or citizens and/or a bona fide resident or residents of an Eligible Country, or by a body corporate or bodies meeting these requirements, as far as the ownership can be reasonably determined; and

(c) shall have no arrangement and undertake not to make any arrangement whereby the majority of the financial benefits of the contract, i.e. more than fifty (50) percent of the value of the contract, will accrue or be paid to sub-contractors or sub-consultants that are not from an Eligible Country.

Eligible bidders will be required to submit full qualification information with their bids establishing their eligibility to bid and qualification to perform the contract if the bid is accepted. Qualification requirements include, inter alia:business certificate of incorporation, evidence of completion of similar provision of works.

Bidding and qualification information are to be submitted in the English Language on the prescribed forms inserted in the Bid Documents. Submissions that do not provide the information required or that do not demonstrate the prospective supplier's ability to perform satisfactorily, will not qualify and will not be considered for further evaluation.

Bid documents will be available for first inspection at the first address below, from ***23rd December 2024.*** Requests may be madeby writing to kertney.thompson@moe.edu.kn. Written applications must be clearly marked: "Request for Bid Documents for **the Installation of Network Routers, Network Switches and Wireless Access Points** Project". The documents will be promptly dispatched, but under no circumstance will GOSKN***or the Education Planning Division,Ministry of Education***, be held responsible for late delivery, loss or damage to the documents.

Hard copies of Bids must be submitted in sealed envelopes, with the name and address of the bidder, and be clearly marked "Bid for Supply of ***Installation of network routers, network switches and Wireless Access Points*** –**ENHANCING LEARNING CONTINUITY AND INCLUSION** Project" and must be delivered to the second address below no later than ***2pm Atlantic Standard TimeJanuary 31, 2025***. Bids will be opened publicly immediately after the deadline for submission of bids, in the presence of Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the first address below. Qualification information only must be submitted simultaneously to the third address below.

Each bid must be accompanied by Bid-Securing Declaration.Late bids will be rejected.

GOSKN /Ministry of Education reserves the right to accept or reject any bid, and to annul the process and reject all bids, at any time prior to award of contract, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected prospective bidder(s) or any obligation to inform the affected prospective bidder(s) of the grounds for ***GOSKN /Ministry of Education action***. GOSKNwill not defray any costs incurred by any bidder in the preparation of bids.

(1) ***Kertney Thompson*** Ministry of Education, Stanford Building Golden Rock Basseterre, St. Kitts kertney.thompson@moe.edu.kn 869-467-1106/1110	(2) ***Kertney Thompson*** Ministry of Education, Stanford Building Golden Rock Basseterre, St. Kitts kertney.thompson@moe.edu.kn 869-467-1106/1110
(3) Caribbean Development Bank **Email**: procurement@caribank.org	

COURTESY PHOTO

Vybz Kartel leads first wave of artistes set to perform at the St. Kitts Music Festival this June. The event will be held at Warner Park Stadium.

Vybz Kartel leads first wave of Music Festival artistes

The 27th annual St. Kitts Music Festival is set to return in grand style from June 26-28, 2025, and the first wave of announcements has revealed that among the dynamic lineup of regional and international stars is the legendary Jamaican dancehall artist Vybz Kartel, promising to bring electrifying energy to Warner Park Stadium.

Joining Vybz Kartel on the star-studded roster are R&B powerhouse Jennifer Hudson, dancehall sensation Shenseea, Soca hit-makers Kes The Band, Afrobeats star Ayra Starr, and more. Additional confirmed acts include AkaiiUSweet & Tobap, Dejour, and the Kollision Band. Festival organizers have teased that more big names will be unveiled in the months ahead.

The festival promises a celebration of diverse musical genres, including Soca, Reggae, Hip Hop, R&B, and more. It has solidified its reputation as one of the Caribbean's premier music events, attracting thousands of music lovers from across the globe.

"The St. Kitts Music Festival is a cornerstone of our island's cultural and economic landscape," said Marsha T. Henderson, Minister of Tourism. "As we welcome visitors to our shores, we aim to connect them not just with world-class performances, but with the heart of St. Kitts, through music, culinary experiences, traditions, and hospitality. The festival is a vital part of our summer tourism, and we are thrilled to usher in another incredible year."

Beyond the music, festival-goers can immerse themselves in a variety of activities, including lunchtime concerts, beach parties, boat rides, and more. This multi-day event not only celebrates music, but also showcases the vibrant culture and natural beauty of St. Kitts.

Kelly Fontenelle, CEO of the St. Kitts Tourism Authority, expressed her excitement for the upcoming festivities. "We're excited to kick off the Summer of Fun with one of the Caribbean's most anticipated musical events. The St. Kitts Music Festival is more than just a concert—it's a celebration of everything that makes the island special. As we continue to grow our tourism offerings, we look forward to seeing visitors return to the island for this unforgettable experience."

Traveling to St. Kitts is convenient, with non-stop flights available from major U.S. cities. Visitors can fly with American Airlines from Charlotte (CLT), New York (JFK), and Miami (MIA); Delta Airlines from Atlanta (ATL) and JFK; JetBlue from JFK; and United Airlines from Newark (EWR).

> ***'As we welcome visitors to our shores, we aim to connect them not just with world-class performances, but with the heart of St. Kitts, through music, culinary experiences, traditions, and hospitality.'***
>
> **Marsha T. Henderson**
> **Minister of Tourism**

Festival-goers are encouraged to stay updated on additional announcements and event details by visiting the St. Kitts Tourism Authority's official website at www.stkittstourism.kn.

As the countdown begins, excitement builds for the 2025 St. Kitts Music Festival. With its impressive lineup and immersive cultural experiences, this year's event promises to deliver memories that will last a lifetime. Don't miss the chance to be part of this extraordinary celebration!

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Sports

Weekes, Claxton represent St. Kitts in WI U-19 women's team for World Cup

Cricket West Indies (CWI) has announced the participation of the West Indies U-19 Women's team in the ICC Under-19 Women's T20 World Cup, set to take place in Malaysia from January 18 to February 2, 2025. Among the squad members are Aaliyah Weekes and Jahzara Claxton, two talented players from St. Kitts.

The tournament, featuring 16 teams from around the globe, marks a significant step in the development of women's cricket in the Caribbean. The West Indies team, led by captain Samara Ramnath and vice-captain Asabi Callender, has been preparing rigorously through training camps and tours.

In Group A, West Indies will compete against India, Sri Lanka, and host Malaysia. Their opening match is scheduled for January 19 against India, followed by games on January 20 and 25.

The squad departs for Malaysia on January 1 and will participate in a pre-tournament camp and two warm-up matches before the group stage begins.

The team is guided by head coach Robert Samuels, Assistant Coaches Shane Brooks and Tremayne Smart, and supported by a dedicated management unit.

COURTESY PHOTO

Aaliyah Weekes (left) and Jahzara Claxton (shown at left receiving her jersey in the photo on the photo on the right) were selected to the West Indies' U-19 Women's team in the ICC Under-19 Women's T20 World Cup, set to take place in Malaysia from January 18 to February 2.

West Indies Under-19 Women's Squad

The following is a look at the West Indies' women's U-19 team for the World Cup.

- Captain: Samara Ramnath
- Vice-Captain: Asabi Callender
- Abigail Bryce
- Kenika Cassar
- Jahzara Claxton
- Denella Creese
- NaiJanni Cumberbatch
- Erin Deane
- Amiah Gilbert
- Trisha Hardat
- Brianna Harricharan
- Amrita Ramtahal
- Selena Ross
- Kristen Sutherland
- Aaliyah Weekes

Reserves: Dicoreya Collymore, Krisanne Howell, Aneisha Miller, Danellie Manns, Laurene Williams.

West Indies U-19 Women's Group Stage Match Schedule

Jan. 19: West Indies vs. India

Jan. 20: West Indies vs. Sri Lanka

Jan. 25: West Indies vs. Malaysia

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The Eastern Caribbean Civil Aviation Authority (ECCAA) is inviting applications from suitably qualified professionals to fill the position of:

Director – Finance and Administration

For more information on the employment opportunity and details for submission of applications, please visit the following websites www.eccaa.aero or www.oecs.int.

To apply, email your application to spoyotte@eccaa.aero.

Application deadline is 6th January 2025.

Please note only shortlisted candidates will be contacted.

Contact us in St. Kitts or Nevis:

St. Kitts Office
Basseterre, St Kitts, W.I.
Tel: (869) 466 4994
Fax: (869) 466 4995
observnv@gmail.com
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thestkittsnevisobserver.com

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Hamilton, Nevis, W.I.
Tel: (869) 469-5907
Fax: (869) 469-5891
observnv@gmail.com
observnv@sisterisles.kn

COURTESY PHOTO

A sea of colourful revelers celebrating the rich traditions of St. Kitts & Nevis made their way down the street as part of the parade.

J'ouvert

Continued from Page 5

Henderson. "The combined excitement of the Christmas and Carnival celebrations provides a unique opportunity to showcase our culture, hospitality, and breathtaking landscapes."

The Carnival festivities continued with the Grand Parade on January 1 and 2, and provided another highlight of the season. "The Parade is the spectacle that sells our Carnival," noted Hawley. "It's what most people fly in to celebrate, and we're thrilled to showcase our vibrant culture on such a grand scale."

St. Kitts has prepared extensively to accommodate the influx of visitors, offering a range of attractions from historical landmarks like Brimstone Hill Fortress and the St. Kitts Scenic Railway to craft markets and cultural showcases. Local businesses and vendors have seized the opportunity, benefiting from the economic boost brought by the Carnival season.

The festive spirit was further amplified by a historic day for tourism, as six cruise ships docked in St. Kitts, bringing a record 11,334 passengers to the island.

As the island continues to celebrate, the Ministry of Tourism said that it remains committed to ensuring a sustainable and authentic experience for all visitors. With its mix of culture, history, and scenic beauty, St. Kitts is thriving as the Caribbean's premier destination for Carnival and holiday cheer.

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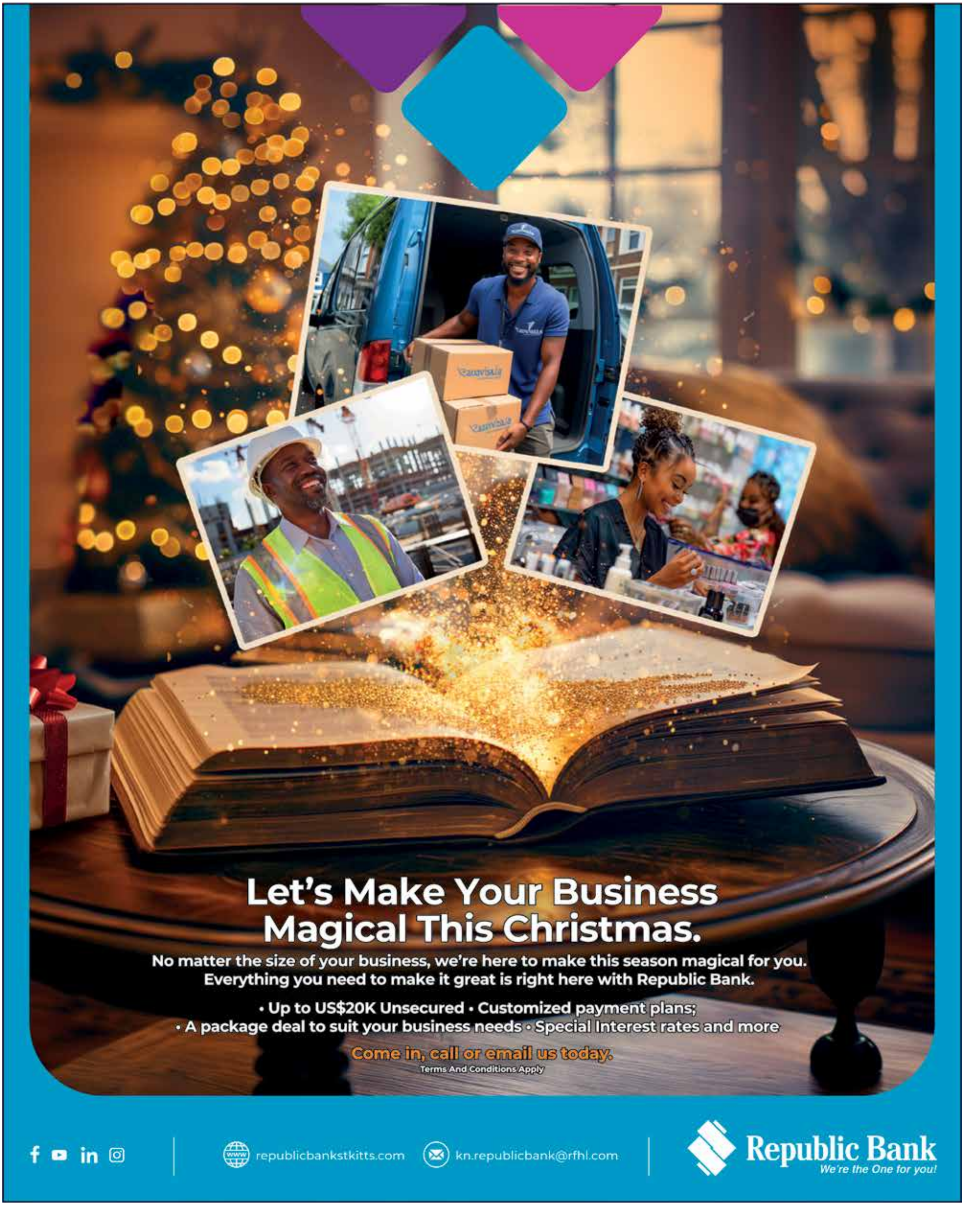
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