



China's Ambassador Zheng Bingkai (second right) and Counsellor Lei Hao (right) attended the launch of the GAC (Guangzhou Automobile Group) dealership with Courtesy Garage. Also pictured (from left) are General Manager of Courtesy Garage Ltd, Andrez Greene, Sales Manager Kimberly Scott, Chief Executive Officer Alan Bayne and Managing Director of Motorworld Group, Tariq Amjad. (GP)

New line of electric vehicles launched

Barbadians now have access to one of the world's top-selling electric vehicle (EV) brands as the country moves full speed ahead toward a green economy by 2030.

On Friday, Courtesy Garage officially launched the GAC (Guangzhou Automobile Group Co. Ltd) brand at the University of the West Indies (UWI), Cave Hill Campus, unveiling a line of electric SUVs.

"The interest in electric vehicles is definitely growing in the Caribbean," said Tariq Amjad, managing director of the Motorworld Group and regional distributor for GAC. "Barbados has some of the lowest duties in the region for electric vehicles, which makes the market even more attractive."

The launch featured four SUVs – two electric vehicles from GAC's AION brand and two gasoline-powered options – showcasing a mix of advanced features including smartwatch integration to start the engine, lock and unlock doors, and other smart technology.

Amjad highlighted GAC's global dominance in EV manufacturing, noting that the Chinese automaker produced more than two million electric vehicles in 2024, surpassing TESLA's 1.8 million units.

"We're proud to bring the leading EV brand in the world to Barbadians, and at prices that make sense. The model we're introducing here costs significantly less than similar models on the island," Amjad said.

He added that the affordability and practicality of GAC vehicles make them ideal for the region's transition to cleaner transportation.

"A GAC electric vehicle can be charged at home using a standard outlet with an industrial cable, and a full charge can last up to a week depending on usage. Not only that, but these vehicles can also power home appliances such as refrigerators and mobile devices," he explained.

As part of GAC's expansion strategy, Motorworld is already working with dealers in 15 English and Dutch-speaking Caribbean territories and plans to enter Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana in early 2026. (HH)

Call to listen to young people

Chief executive officer of Supreme Counselling for Personal Development, Shawn Clarke, is calling for open hearts and minds when reaching out to the youth.

The advocate said many of the country's youth do not emerge from environments that instill positive values, making it imperative to meet them where they are and without judgement.

"Not all young people who get involved in violent situations, or who have angry outbursts are bad young people. Some of them are just going through very bad spots, and they have never been taught how to deal with the situations. They have never been taught conflict resolution.

"We need to start listening to our young people to understand ... where they are coming from, to understand what they are going through, and then to be able to put systems in place to work with these young people to curb whatever they're going through," he said.

One of the systems which the organisation is proposing is a suspension programme, wherein they accept students expelled or suspended from school and engage them in productive activities.

"I do not believe in suspension without intervention. I do not believe that you're doing a child any favour by just sending him home for five or ten days unsupervised to



Chief Executive Officer of the Supreme Counselling for Personal Development, Shawn Clarke (left), with former protégé Nathan Yearwood. (Picture by Josué Ramírez Nelson.)

get involved with the negative elements.

"In some cases, those children come back just as they went, and in other cases, they come back worse than they went. So I believe that there needs to be suspension programmes across the country that when children are sent home from school, that they are suspended in the care of an organisation that that will have a programme in place to work with them for the reason they have been suspended, and to curb the number of suspensions that any one particular child would have," he added.

Clarke explained, however that the programme was stalled due to lack of funding from Government, meaning that some youths have been turned away from receiving the crucial care.

"This week alone, I had a call from about six different schools, including principals

wanting to send students over to us who have been suspended for a minimum of ten days.

"The reality and the hardship is that, because we are still awaiting funding from Government to be able to get that suspension programme up and running, it means that we have to be turning these young people, who are in need of that kind of service, away," he said.

The CEO made his remarks at the sideline of the **Reach One, Save One: Ignite the Change** community outreach pop-up at the Bush Hall Community Centre yesterday in Bush Hall, St Michael.

The outreach was one of several weekly initiatives where the organisation visited a community, offering a range of competitions centred on anger management, self-esteem building as well as free

15-minute psychologist consultations and discussions on strategies to curb community violence.

"We're basically asking the participants to help us with ways that they believe can be implemented to curb violence within the Bush Hall and the other surrounding communities.

"We are looking at things like anger management. You have a child that is extremely angry, what is going on? Is it really anger, or is it that your child is sad? Is it that your child is lonely? Is it that your child is hungry? And so those are some of the things that we will be discussing today," he said. (JRN)

MISSING MALE ROTTWEILER



from Indian Ground St. Peter area.

He is Black & tan with a short tail

NEUTERED

Please call Jane at 238-2364

\$1,000 REWARD