

Officials say the HMS Trent is there for 'joint exercises' British send warship to Guyana

A British warship will be going to Guyana after Christmas to participate in joint military exercises.

The visit comes two weeks after Guyana President Dr Mohammed Irfaan Ali and Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro signed the Argyle Declaration in St Vincent and the Grenadines (SVG) on December 14, rejecting any threat of violence in their dispute over Guyana's Essequibo region and to refrain from any escalation of the disagreement.

The two nations agreed to not escalate any controversy between them but to report any incident arising to Caricom, CELAC and Brazil. Guyana and Venezuela agreed to meet in three months in Brazil or otherwise as agreed.

A joint commission will be set up between Guyana and Venezuela on the controversy within three months.

The declaration noted Guyana's support and Venezuela's rejection of the role of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in adjudicating the dispute.

On December 1, the ICJ ruled that Venezuela should refrain from seizing the Essequibo from Guyana.

A BBC report on Sunday said the HMS Trent left its home port of Gibraltar in early December and is currently in Bridgetown, Barbados for Christmas.

After Christmas, the Trent is expected to anchor off Georgetown and conduct visits, joint activities and training with Guyana's Defence Force and other allies.

The ship cannot dock in Georgetown because its port is too shallow. The Trent is mainly used for tackling piracy and smuggling, protecting fisheries, counter-terrorism, providing humanitarian aid, and search and rescue

operations.

The Royal Navy says it is also designed for border patrols and defence diplomacy.

The decision to send HMS Trent to Guyana is part of a growing UK effort to show international diplomatic support for Guyana.

HMS Trent has a crew of 65, a top speed of 24 knots and a range of 5,000 nautical miles.

It is armed with a 30mm cannon and a contingent of Royal Marines. It can also deploy Merlin helicopters and unmanned aircraft (drones).

British Foreign Secretary Lord David Cameron said the UK would "continue to work with partners in the region to ensure the territorial integrity of Guyana is upheld and prevent escalation".

David Rutley, the Foreign Office Minister for the Americas, visited Georgetown on December 18.

At that time, Rutley said, "The UK will continue to work with partners in the region, as well as through international bodies, to ensure the territorial integrity of Guyana is upheld."

Venezuelan Foreign Minister Yvan Gil criticised the visit.

In a post on X, Gil said, "The former invading and enslaving empire, which illegally occupied the territory of Guayana Esequiba and acted in a skilful and sneaky manner against the interests of Venezuela, insists on intervening in a territorial controversy that they themselves generated."



British warship the HMS Trent

disputed territory in the Essequibo region is false.

"The Government of Guyana maintains its sovereign right to engage in any form of co-operation with its bilateral partners and does not support intervention in the internal affairs of any other state."

Ali said that was a principle honoured by responsible states in the international community.

"Any allegation that a military operation aimed at Venezuela exists in any part of Guyanese territory is false, provocative and misleading."

From December 5-7, USSOUTH-

19 Hinck Street, Robbstown, Georgetown, Guyana Best rates for US, Pounds Sterling, Canadian, Euro, TT, EC and B'dos

MARTINA'S CAMBIO

COM, the Florida National Guard and interagency personnel met with the GDF from December 5-7 as part of the US-Guyana continuing military partnership.

The meeting involved assessing the GDF's military communications network and discussing emerging threats in the cyber and 5G domains.

Last month, the US held training exercises with the Brazilian military as part of its Southern Vanguard 2024 initiative.

Brazil has deployed additional troops to its border with Venezuela as a result of the Guyana-Venezuela tensions.



Before the December 14 meeting with Maduro, Ali rejected Maduro's claim that the US Southern Command (USSSOUTHCOM) is operating in the

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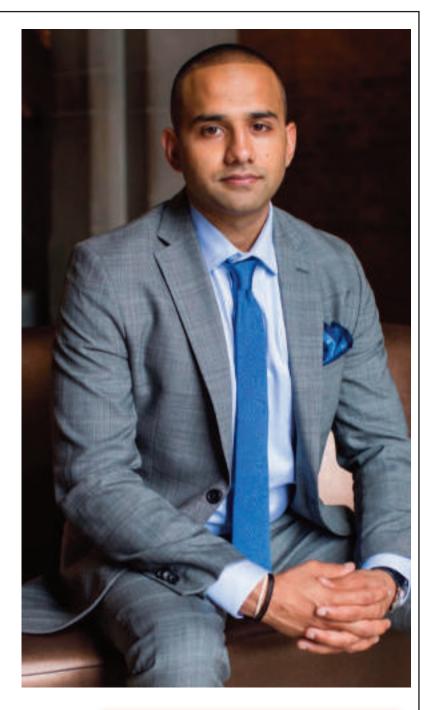
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EQUALITY NEWS



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GUYANA REINFORCES ICJ PATH FOR SETTLING BORDER CONTROVERSY



APNU-AFC LOSES BID TO OVERTURN ELECTION RECOUNT IN COURT OF APPEAL



UK, CANADA APPLAUD ARGYLE DECLARATION, UNDERSCORES SUPPORT FOR PEACEFUL RESOLUTION

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ECCLES-DIAMOND HIGHWAY RENAMED HEROES HIGHWAY

PAGE 9

FIVE FALLEN HEROES' LAID TO REST-CONTRIBUTIONS TO COUNTRY HIGHLIGHTED

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10 CHILDREN RECEIVE LIFE-SAVING HEART SURGERIES IN GIFT OF LIFE MISSION

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GUYANESE DIASPORA DIGEST

KEEPING THE DIASPORA INFORMED

UYANA REINFORCES ICJ PATH FOR BORDER CONTROVE NG



Presidents Ali and Maduro, and the regional leaders with a copy of the Joint Declaration of Argyle

In a historic meeting facilitated by the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), and the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) in Argyle, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines on December 14, 2023, President Dr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali of Guyana and President Nicolás Maduro of Venezuela reaffirmed their commitment to Latin America and the Caribbean remaining a Zone of Peace.

Following their discussions, was issued. Guyana and Venezuela declared as follows:

1. Agreed that Guyana Venezuela, 4. Noted and directly or indirectly, will not threaten or use force against one another in any circumstances, including those consequential any existing to controversies between the two States.

peaceful coexistence, and the unity of Latin America and the Caribbean.

Guyana's assertion that it is committed to the process and procedures of the International Court of Justice for the resolution of the border controversy. Noted Venezuela's assertion of its lack of consent and lack

both States will refrain, whether by words or deeds, from escalating conflict any or disagreement arising from any controversy between them. The two States will cooperate to avoid incidents on the ground conducive to tension between them. In the event of such an incident two States the will immediately

11



Prime Ministers Gonsalves and Skerrit along with the regional leaders facilitating discussions between Presidents Ali and Maduro

immediately a joint commission of the Foreign Ministers and technical persons from the two States to address matters as mutually agreed. An update from this joint commission will be submitted to the Presidents of Guyana and Venezuela within

Prime

avoidance of doubt, acknowledged the Minister contribution of his Gonsalves' role will team and regional continue even after partners who played Saint Vincent and the a crucial role in the Grenadines ceases to discussions, stating: be the Pro-Tempore "I would like to thank President of CELAC, our technical team, within the framework inclusive of all our state of the CELAC Troika actors, lawyers, expert plus one; and Prime national, regional, and Minister Skerrit's international diplomats role will continue who supported as a member of the with their expertise on today's endeavour. CARICOM Bureau.



President Ali and the Guyanese delegation meeting with regional leaders

- 2. Agreed that any controversies between the two States will be resolved in accordance with international law, Agreement dated February 17, 1966.
- 3. Committed to the pursuance of good neighborliness, 6. Agreed

of recognition of the International Court of Justice and its jurisdiction in the border controversy.

including the Geneva 5. Agreed to continue dialogue on any other pending matters of mutual importance to the two countries.

communicate with one another, the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), the Community of Latin America and the Caribbean (CELAC), and the President of Brazil to contain, reverse and prevent its recurrence.

that 7. Agreed to establish three months.

8. Both States agreed that Prime Minister Ralph E. Gonsalves, 9. Both States agreed to **Pro-Tempore** the President of CELAC, Prime Minister Roosevelt Skerrit. incumbent the CARICOM Chairman, and President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva of Brazil will remain seized of the matter as Interlocutors and the UN Secretary-General, Antonio Guterres as Observer, with the Gratitude ongoing concurrence of Presidents Irfaan appreciation posted Ali and Nicolas on Maduro. For the page, President Ali

meet again in Brazil, my gratitude to the months, or at another agreed time, to consider any matter implications with for the territory in update of the joint for hosting us." commission.

President Ali's

In a message of Facebook his

"I also extend within the next three leaders of CARICOM, CELAC, Brazil. representatives of the UN Secretary-General, the Prime Minister, and the dispute, including people of St Vincent the above-mentioned and the Grenadines

> President Ali has also expressed his heartfelt thanks to the Guyanese people for their unwavering support and show of unity.

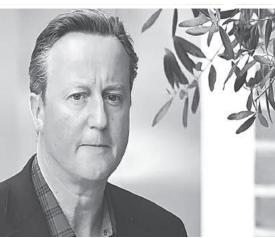
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UK, CANADA APPLAUD ARGYLE DECLARATION, DERSCORES PPORT FOR PEACEFUL

Argyle The Declaration, signed by Guyana and Venezuela their after recent meeting in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, has garnered support from key international players, easing some anxieties over the long-standing border controversy.

UK APPLAUDS VENEZUELA'S PLEDGE BUT URGES **CONCRETE STEPS**

In a statement, UK Foreign Secretary David applauded Cameron Venezuela's pledge to refrain from using force, tensions. escalating However, he emphasised the need for concrete actions to solidify this



UK Foreign Secretary David Cameron

commitment.

Cameron commended the efforts support for Guyana's of regional leaders like sovereignty, and the Prime Minister Dr. Ralph importance of respecting Gonsalves of St. Vincent international borders, and the Grenadines for stating, "The UK will promoting peace in the **continue** to work region.

He also reiterated also the UK's unwavering with our partners

to for sovereignty."

UK MINISTER RUTLEY MOBILISING SUPPORT FOR GUYANA

Overseas David Rutley, during his recent visit to Guyana announced the UK's the and international bodies. In a firm message Additionally,

interview

in the region and residence in Georgetown, military **internationally** Rutley outlined that escalation. ensure respect discussions with Brazil, Guvana's the Commonwealth, and influential UN Security Council members like Ecuador are high on the agenda. He further Affairs Canada welcomed highlighted UK's Minister for the efforts with Colombia to and Americas, Caribbean and garner regional support longstanding Territories, and pressure Venezuela for Guyana's territorial to back down.

condemned longstanding issue had Venezuela's actions as been settled over 120 diplomatic efforts by "unacceptable" and years ago and stressed CARICOM, efforts to mobilise allies respecting established Secretary-General borders to reporters, during an welcomed the recent towards regional peace. conducted agreement between at the British High Guyana and Venezuela Commissioner's in St Vincent to avoid

force and

CANADA JOINS IN WELCOMING DEVELOPMENTS

Meanwhile, Global ongoing the Joint Declaration reiterated its support integrity and respect for He emphasised the international law.

They praised the CELAC, importance of Brazil, and the UN and everywhere. viewed the meeting he as a "productive step"

GUYANA AND VENEZUELA EYE COOPERATION AFTER HISTORIC TALKS

The recent meeting Presidents between Irfaan Ali and Nicolas Maduro in St. Vincent and the Grenadines has sparked hope for a broader future of cooperation between Guyana and Venezuela.

The Argyle Declaration signed after the talks has opened a door for collaboration in areas beyond the immediate tension, Foreign Secretary Robert Persaud noted in a recent interview, offering a positive outlook on the like recent meeting.

He believes the talks not only helped de-escalate tensions surrounding the border controversy, but also laid the groundwork for **a** potential partnerships.



Foreign Secretary Robert Persaud

transnational **a primary** crime, environmental **exporter** and economic relations to efforts.

"Venezuela huge potential how we can bring community. market. For many out greater unity," commitment to good He identified areas years, we have been Persaud noted.



Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs, Mohabir Anil Nandlall, SC

The reaffirmation **rice** of peaceful coexistence, **so** Declaration, sends a **there** the two nations, but also This neighbourliness,

Persaud argues, could Argyle be a beacon of hope in misconstruing the uses of a world often marred by terms like "dispute" and conflict.

"The commitment to good reflect the current legal neighbourliness reality and align with and that we need to have the International Court peaceful coexistence, of Justice, where the and that is lacking border case is currently in some parts of the being adjudicated. world today and the fact that we have a reiterated between our two to the ICJ proceedings countries, sends a and its stance on the good signal not only border controversy. to our population of our two countries against but the wider world speculation" and urged at large," the Foreign responsible engagement Secretary noted.

Meanwhile, Attorney of Legal Anil the talks.

to misundertand the using force.

Declaration. "territory in dispute." firm He noted these simply recognising the language used by

Nandlall AG Guyana's **reaffirmation of that** unwavering commitment

He warned "reckless with the issue.

Nandlall AG General and Minister argued that the Argyle Affairs, Declaration did not Nandlall, has involve any concessions emphasised that Guyana from Guyana, but rather gained significantly from secured commitments from Venezuela to He has called out maintain a "zone of those who are attempting **peace**" and refrain from

MORE MONEY, LESS TAXES IN EARLY 2024 - DR. JAGDEO PROMISES

its eagerness to put its country. plans into action.

he explained the budget will have taxes, key elements: more two sustained

Bharrat Jagdeo, has and a dedicated focus These measures aim create more jobs, announced that the on boosting people's to put more money and generate even country's 2024 National disposable income. This in people's pockets, greater income for its Budget will be presented means more spending stimulate the economy, people." earlier than usual next on vital sectors like and improve overall year. This early timing health, education, and living standards. reflects the government's security, along with the commitment to its development of crucial social investment and supplementary development agenda and infrastructure across the increased

То Speaking at his disposable income, the assured citizens that The 2024 budget is recent press conference, government plans to there will be much more. expected to build on that increase salaries, reduce He promised additional this foundation, further employment and economic opportunities designed to keep Guyana

Vice President, Dr. and social investments throughout the nation. "safe and vibrant,

income are central to challenges expand the budget, Dr. Jagdeo prolonged and generate investments, policies, propelling

This year's budget was а substantial While economic and \$781.9 billion, with funds disposable allocated to address like the drought. Guyana's programmes development trajectory.



This year's budget was a substantial \$781.9 billion

informed, Dr. Jagdeo their respective sectors, announced Each minister will outline achievements. To keep the public the progress made in

Guvanese that providing government ministers with a comprehensive will hold a series of press understanding of the conferences next week. government's efforts and

GUYANESE DIASPORA DIGEST

KEEPING THE DIASPORA INFORMED

ARGYLE DECLARATION A GREAT VICTORY FOR GUYANA - RAMKARRAN

Guvana secured a significant win at the recent it claimed Essequibo meeting with Venezuela. Prime Minister Ralph as its own, rejected the Gonsalves set the stage for "peaceful coexistence" and respect for international law, aligning with and argued that the President Ali's agenda based on the CARICOM Arbitral Award of 1899 Heads' December communique.

The talks in Argyle, St Vincent and the Geneva Agreement of Grenadines solidified CARICOM's backing for 1966 which, it has long Guyana's International Court of Justice (ICJ) path and peaceful coexistence with Venezuela. This marks a significant step forward in resolving the Essequibo controversy.

BELOW IS AN ARTICLE BY MR. RALPH RAMKARRAN, PUBLISHED BY THE GUYANA **CHRONICLE:**

Prime Minister Ralph Gonsalves publicly described the agenda for the meeting between the two Presidents as being in the interest of "peaceful coexistence," respect for international law and avoidance of the use of the threats of force. In somewhat more detail, President Irfaan Ali's understanding of the agenda for talks measures issued by the based on the was framework established Communique of by Caricom Heads of December 8, 2023. The Heads had declared support for Guyana's pursuit of a solution to and Caricom were on the the controversy through International the Commission of Jurists (ICJ), urged Venezuela to respect the conservatory measures

of the ICJ and reiterated Caricom's commitment to the Caribbean as a

international law. The Communique called for a "de-escalation of the conflict through an appropriate dialogue between the leaders peaceful ensure to co-existence. the application and respect for international law and the avoidance of the use or threats of force. President Ali in his letter of December 12 to Dr. Ralph Gonsalves proposed to: defend Guyana's sovereignty over Essequibo; argue for the resolution of the controversy by the ICJ; persuade Venezuela to observe the conservatory ICJ; propose the deescalation of the conflict by avoiding the use or threat of force; argue for respect for international Essentially, law. therefore, President Ali same page as regards the agenda for the meeting and included on that page were Caricom's support for Guyana both as regards the controversy and Guyana's reliance on the ICJ.

Venezuela was zone of peace and to on a different page. Fulminating as usual,

jurisdiction of the ICJ was abrogated by the argued, prescribed that the controversy must be determined under its terms by discussion. President Maduro also complained about the issuing of petroleum licences, and the military training conducted in Guyana jointly by the GDF and the US Army, the Southern Command, he calls it, which has been going on for many years. He did not omit his betenoir, ExxonMobil. If the Argyle Declaration were to be compared against Venezuela's positions, there can be no doubt that Venezuela's bullyism did not work and Venezuela did not get its way. Despite divided our bitterly politics, Leader of the Opposition, Aubrev Norton, welcomed the neighborliness, peaceful in Guyana of potential agreement.

Guyana succeeded in its most important objective, for which President Ali and the Guyana team must be congratulated. Venezuela's rampaging advance towards an eventual invasion of Guyana has been dramatically halted.

In the Declaration, Guyana and Venezuela declared as follows:

1. Guyana and directly Venezuela, or indirectly, will not controversy.



Ralph Ramkarran

threaten or use force fear since 1962, when against one another Venezuela declared that in any circumstances, it no longer recognized including those the Arbitral Award of consequential to any 1899, was a Venezuelan existing controversies invasion of Guyana. between the two States:

2. Any controversies Guyana's portion of the two Island of Ankoko in 1966, between the States will be resolved and subsequent acts of accordance with aggression, including in international law, the recent referendum including the Geneva and the aggressive and dated intimidatory Agreement February 17, 1966.

3. To pursue good raised justified fears coexistence, and the Venezuelan unity of Latin America adventurism in Guyana. and the Caribbean.

4. The Parties note commit Guyana's assertion that not to threaten or use it is committed to the force against Guyana process and procedures "including of the International consequential to any Court of Justice for controversies." the resolution of the border controversy and interpreted to mean Venezuela's assertion that even if the ICJ of its lack of consent rules that the Arbitral and lack of recognition Award is valid and of the International binding, Court of Justice and its is jurisdiction in the border launching any military

Guyana's greatest While

GUYANA GEARS UP FOR UN SECURITY COUNCIL ROLE WITH TRAINING PROGRAMME

its tenure. **"This training is** rights. crucial in building

Venezuela's seizure of

pursuant to it, have

The above provisions

This ought to be

prohibited

action against Guyana.

gain a comprehensive

Council's

actions

military

Venezuela

Venezuela

Venezuelan

functioning,

from

those

perfidy can drive it in any unpredictable direction, including towards the violation of any agreement, as in the cases of the Arbitral Award and the Geneva Agreement, at least it has been forced to commit itself to peace, at least in relation to Guyana.

The other parts of the Declaration provide for continuing dialogue, restraint, cooperation and establishes a joint commission and, most importantly, a group of interlocutors which includes Caricom, CELAC and the UN. Brazil will continue to play an important overall role.

This is a structure designed to maintain the peace which, in effect, protects Guyana from aggression as far as is possible within the confines that international Law permits. Those of us who have been watching Venezuela for decades have no illusions about Venezuela. We understand that Venezuela will continue with its nefarious. aggressive, schemes against Essequibo. But Venezuela now has Argyle on its back, which may or could cause it to hesitate in following its more hostile instincts. Guyana could not have asked for a better result in the circumstances. The Argyle Declaration is a great victory for the people of Guyana.

Participants also understanding of the gained insights into key thematic areas addressed and how it aligns with by the Council, such as Guvana's priorities for peacekeeping, conflict resolution, and human

The training also the capacity of our focused on Guyana's team specific priorities and ahead of assuming goals for its UNSC our non-permanent membership, ensuring Secretary and High equipped to effectively Representative for UNSC represent the country's By actively investing to the Security Council in training and capacity Guyana its Guvanese team for this commitment to making a meaningful contribution The training covered to the UNSC during approach rules positions the country and global discussions and on the world stage.



The training at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation

In United Nations Security profit Council (UNSC) starting promoting transparency

preparation team's capacity through the training permanent seat on the Council Report, a non-Affairs and International the organisation Cooperation. The January 1, 2024, Guyana and effectiveness within aimed to equip the various is actively building its the Council, conducted Guyanese team with agencies participated to processes.

at the essential for its upcoming non- training. The Security Ministry of Foreign and skills to navigate including understanding proactive and the procedural thematic complexities of of procedure, voting to effectively engage in programme the UNSC. Officials from mechanisms,

home-based seat," remarked Foreign the team is well-Affairs, Robert Persaud. interests. He expressed gratitude Report for their valuable building, support in preparing the demonstrates critical responsibility.

knowledge a wide range of topics, its two-year term. This Council's government decision - making advocate for its priorities

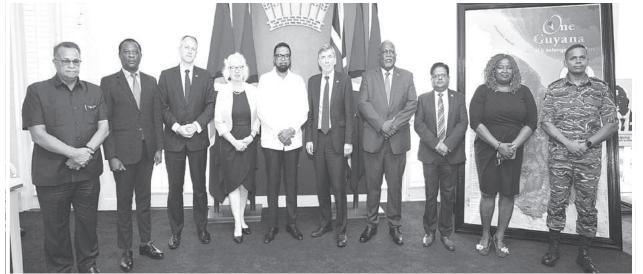
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GUYANESE DIASPORA DIGEST

PRESIDENT ALI AND UK MINISTER FOR THE AMERICAS DISCUSS EXPANDING RELATIONS

President Ali hosted a productive meeting with David Rutley, the United Kingdom's Minister for the Americas, at State House in Georgetown. The discussions centred deepening on the relationship between the two nations, particularly in the critical areas sustainable of and economic development, and security.

Mr. Rutley, representing the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), accompanied by a high-level delegation. including the FCDO's Director, Americas Robert Tinline, and the UK's High Commissioner to Guvana. HE Jane



President Ali and other government official with David Rutley and his delegation

Miller. team Minister

(Ret'd) Mark Phillips, Gouveia, Chief of Staff President Ali was Finance Minister Dr of the Guyana Defence signifies joined by a prominent Ashni Singh, Foreign Force Brigadier Omar commitment of Guyanese Affairs Minister Hugh Khan, and Director of officials, including Prime Todd, National Security Presidential Affairs Mrs bilateral Brigadier Advisor Captain Gerry Marcia Nadir-Sharma.

meeting This strong а from both sides to enhance The specific areas of

_ sustainable focus development, economic advancement, and security – suggest a desire to build upon existing partnerships, and explore new avenues for collaboration.

Guyana and the UK share a long history of diplomatic relations, and this meeting served as a positive step towards strengthening multifaceted their partnership. The highengagement level and specific areas of discussion indicate a mutual interest in promoting shared prosperity and addressing regional cooperation. challenges together.

GAS-TO-ENERGY TALKS PROGRESS AS FINANCE MINISTER MEETS US EXIM BANK HEAD

Guvana's quest for a cleaner, more affordable energy future received a boost as Senior Finance Minister Dr. Ashni Singh met with Senior Vice President David Sena of the Export-Import Bank of the United States (EXIM Bank). The meeting at the Ministry of Finance centred on securing EXIM Bank's crucial support for the nation's ambitious Gasto-Energy project.

Upon completion, transformative this project promises to revolutionise Guyana's energy landscape. It will significantly reduce electricity costs, making them more competitive businesses and for



Senior Finance Minister Dr. Ashni Singh meeting with the Senior Vice President of the Export-Import (EXIM) Bank of the United States, Mr. David Sena

households alike. This, sustainability. in turn, is expected to economic Additionally, Guyana's on heavy fossil fuels, of with aligning country's to

These discussions boost various industries, represent a continuation and contribute to overall of the strong partnership growth. between Guyana and the EXIMBank. In July 2022, project aims to lessen the two parties signed a dependence historic Memorandum Understanding the (MOU), paving the commitment way for a potential environmental US\$2 billion in funding

across critical sectors infrastructure, like energy, water and sanitation, information and communications technology, and agriculture.

The Gas-to-Energy project stands as a flagship initiative within this partnership, holding immense potential to transform Guyana's energy sector unlock further and economic opportunities. The meeting between Minister Singh and Mr. Sena signals a positive step towards securing the necessary support from EXIM Bank and bringing this transformative project to life.



The Gas-to-Energy project is advancing rapidly, with 26 km of underground onshore pipes being laid and the Marine Offloading Facility completed



GUYANA AND UAE DEEPEN PARTNERSHIP IN DEVELOPMENT CLIMATE ACTION, AND CULTURAL EXCHANGE

In а meeting at COP28, the Sheikh (UAE), and pledged to cooperation food security, energy, its technology, and cultural sustainability exchange.

This follows a visit by President, Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali, to Expo City strengthen bilateral ties of UAE His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al the importance of Nahyan.

landmark Guyana's United Arab Emirates commended Guyana's Guyana green strategy expand praised COP28's aim to across leadglobalclimateaction. crucial areas including The UAE reaffirmed commitment addressing

issues.

Both sides agreed to President, cultural development. diplomatic relations, value During a tour of they committed

pavilion, opening embassies in praised recent visits by Mohamed each other's countries. The two sides praised

and the prosperous economic the and investment relations US\$500,000 to build a between the countries, school for children with where non-oil bilateral special needs in Guyana. to trade reached US\$826 in million in 2022, a 20% agreed to collaborate climate increase, successful

cooperation.

To further solidify Dubai at the invitation in socio-economic and relations, the UAE will marks a significant soon open an embassy step in deepening the R e c o g n i s i n g headquarters in Guyana. relationship between development, Recognising of to interaction, both sides goals like sustainability, increased collaboration cooperation.

UAE officials to Guyana. Additionally, UAE pledged Both countries also showcasing for further progress, investment and well-being in their respective nations.

> This agreement



President Ali with His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, UAE President

and across various sectors the the UAE and Guyana, mutual prosperity. The hold promising potential personal with a focus on shared opening of embassies and for future growth and

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EQUALITY NEWS

KEEPING THE DIASPORA INFORMED

APNU-AFC LOSES BID TO OVERTURN ELECTION RECOUNT IN COURT OF APPEAL

has dismissed an appeal and Order 60 made filed by the APNU-AFC thereunder are against the decision unconstitutional of Chief Justice (ag) lawful and valid. The Roxane George, SC, Court also found that which dismissed Election the national recount of Petition No. 88, filed in the ballots conducted Thorne and Heston constitutional, and not in Bostwick.

GUYANESE DIASPORA DIGEST

The challenged the results of the 2020 general and regional elections in Guyana, which were won by the PPP/C. The alleged APNU-AFC that the elections were marred by irregularities, and that the national recount of the ballots was unconstitutional.

COURT UPHOLDS CHIEF JUSTICE'S DECISION

the decision of the conducting the recount. Chief Justice, finding

The Court of Appeal that the Election Laws unanimously (Amendment) Act 2001 not but the name of Claudette by GECOM was lawful, breach of the Separation petition of Powers Doctrine.

APPELLANTS FAILED TO MEET BURDEN OF PROOF

The Court found that the APNU-AFC failed to discharge the burden of proof of establishing the unconstitutionality and illegality of the Election (Amendment) Laws Act, Order 60, and the national recount of the ballots. The Court said that GECOM acted In its ruling, the within its constitutional Court of Appeal upheld and statutory powers in

ORDER 60 FOUND TO BE LAWFUL

rejected the APNU-AFC's to the legal challenges contention that GECOM to the 2020 election by promulgating Order results. The ruling also 60 usurped the lawmaking powers of Parliament. The Court reaffirms its authority found that GECOM's to conduct elections in power to issue subsidiary legislation in the form of Order 60 was exercised **REACTIONS TO THE** within the acceptable parameters. legal parameters, The and that there was government legal no trespass upon the welcomed the ruling, province of Parliament.

COSTS AWARDED TO RESPONDENTS

The Court awarded costs in the sum of who participated by way of submissions.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE RULING

The Court of Appeal's ruling is a

major victory for the PPP/C government, and The Court also is likely to put an end strengthens GECOM's independence, and Guyana.

RULING

PPP/C has saying that it vindicates the party's position that the 2020 elections were free and fair.

Attorney General Nandlall applauded \$150,000 in favour of the Court's dismissal the four respondents of the election petition appeal, calling the APNU+AFC's persistent claims of electoral fraud "baseless" and "a play at wrong and strong." He emphasied the court's affirmation of



The Court of Appeal dismissed an appeal filed by APNU+AFC

Order 60's legality and GECOM's authority to in my view, should conduct the recount, never have been filed contrasting it with the in the first place, opposition's agreement and later have a case," he said. accusations of fraud, when the results did not has said that it is favour them.

He called petitions a "waste of decided whether it will time" and demanded the appeal to the Caribbean APNU+AFC accept their Court of Justice. defeat.

"These petitions, initial because they did not

The APNU-AFC disappointed with the the ruling, but has not yet

GUYANA OPENLY EMBRACES ANTI-CORRUPTION SCRUTINY, SHOWCASES PROGRESS AT EXPO

Guyana is serious Caribbean about corruption, arms. This was the EGMONT Parliamentary Affairs 2024. and Governance, Gail Teixeira, Anti-Corruption Conference Centre.

Minister highlighted Guyana's within the committee's and fishy deals. active participation in 17 agencies is a key focus, various anti-corruption the minister noted. Corruption, Inter- the

tackling Action Task Force Guyana's and (CFATF) evaluations. corruption welcomes international Positive results are showcasing scrutiny with open anticipated, even with country's commitment approval to message Minister of pending in January improvement.

delivered establishment of the Ashni Singh in his at the opening of the National Coordinating address noted that and Committee. This body Guyana is harnessing Human Rights Expo ensures Guyana meets the power of technology at the Arthur Chung its anti-corruption treaty to crack down on obligations. Building corruption, aiming for Teixeira institutional capacity a future free of red tape

Financial accountability in antifight, the continuous

Meanwhile, Senior She also noted the Finance Minister Dr.

Dr. Singh identified burdensome paperwork and forms and services, Planning



Some participants at the activity

assessments, including Minister Teixeira and physical visits as citing the successful reaping the benefits of Integrated UN Convention against also emphasised "breeding grounds examples of the Guyana online forms. importance for corruption." He Revenue Authority and He also pointed Accountin collaboration, advocated for online Central Housing and out the government's (IFMAS). Authority implementation of the electronic

Management

Financial and System

American Convention of against Corruption, and transparency,



A moment of silence for the five soldiers who lost their lives, before the panel discussion

Minister of Parliamentary Affairs and Governance, Gail Teixeira and Minister of Home Affairs, Robeson Benn in conversation

Accounting This database tracks all government financial transactions, creating an auditable trail that shows who entered, authorised, and when each transaction occurred. This level of transparency makes fraudulent activities much harder to conceal. The expo showcased progress and fostered collaboration: The

two-day event featured exhibitions, discussions, and public engagement, connecting anticorruption with human rights advancement.

GUYANESE DIASPORA DIGEST

PARLIAMENT ROUNDUP: **NATIONAL ASSEMBLY APPROVES \$25.9 B SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET FOR ACCELERATED DEVELOPMENT**



Senior Minister in the Office of the President with Responsibility for Finance, Dr, Ashni Singh tabled the Supplementary Bill

The \$25.9 а supplementary budget, various sectors, fulfilling following debate during the 70th to improve lives, and Sitting. The bill, piloted transform the nation's by Senior Finance landscape. Minister Dr. Ashni

National Singh, accelerates and Assembly has approved expands developmental worth of fertiliser in Guyanese. billion programmes across extensive government's promises

It allocates funds for

crucial areas like:

AGRICULTURE

Over \$12.3 billion Amsterdam agricultural including subsidies, support for organisations, and additional resources for drainage and irrigation This addresses farmers' employability provide \$850 million opportunities November.

HEALTH

is allocated for healthcare maintenance, equipment million infrastructure, with a procurement,

is earmarked for the Hospital. This reflects the sector, government's broader agenda to modernise the local healthcare system.

EDUCATION

PUBLIC WORKS

Some \$1 billion A total of \$3.9 billion is allocated for road and for

significant portion (\$3.3 the Transport and programmes in Regions billion) dedicated to Harbours Department, 1, 6, 7, 8, and 9, ensuring constructing the New and to support ongoing broader Regional infrastructure projects.

HOME AFFAIRS

Over \$3.9 billion is provided for various are provided to support initiatives, \$2.8 billion to bolster the Company, Over \$530 million firefighting capabilities Power and Light Inc., projects to mitigate is provided for the of the Guyana Fire and Kwakwani Utilities, the impact of El Niño. skills development and Service, particularly in along project hinterland and outlying photovoltaic demands for support and under the Caribbean areas. Additionally, \$1.3 installation under the aligns with President Development Bank loan, billion is allocated to the Government of India's Ali's commitment to enhancing educational Guyana Defence Force Line of Credit. for for defence and security support.

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

More than \$527 is allocated development

regional development.

OTHER SECTORS

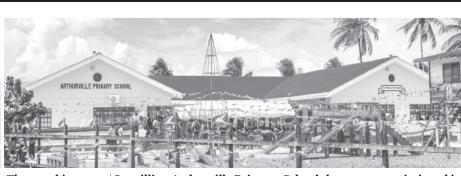
Additional resources including the Linden Electricity Mahdia with solar system

PUBLIC INFORMATION

ARTHURVILLE AND ZEELUGT PRIMARY SCHOOLS GET FURNITURE BOOST

Good news for students in Region Three! The Arthurville and Zeelugt Primary schools are set to receive new furniture and equipment, thanks to a \$31.7 million allocation approved as part of the \$25.9 billion supplementary funding by the National Assembly.

Education Minister Manickchand, Priva responding to a query Opposition from Member of Parliament Natasha Singh-Lewis, highlighted the need for the furniture and equipment at the



The spanking new \$84 million Arthurville Primary School that was commissioned in November on Wakenaam Island

Wakenaam furniture gaps.

recently commissioned never had furniture can be fully utilised, \$84 million Arthurville for the TVET lab, enhancing the learning Primary School on **computer lab, and all** experience for students. Island. the other facilities While some existing that are currently School will also benefit catered was in that nice school," from the allocation. the repurposed, the new Minister Manickchand Minister Manickchand infrastructure, but School's construction, resources will fill critical emphasised. The new recalled the school's the region didn't valued at \$152 million, furniture will ensure dilapidated "The school has these modern facilities during her visit a few the Minister explained.

The Zeelugt Primary



\$31.7M approved for furniture, equipment at Zeelugt and Arthurville Primary schools

years ago, prompting Council (RDC).

"The

and

This oversight is a commitment to its being rectified with reconstruction through the current allocation, the Regional Democratic ensuring the newly rebuilt school is estimates equipped for optimal for learning. The contract physical for the Zeelugt Primary state cater for furniture," was signed in May 2022.



In a ceremony held at the Office of the President, His Excellency President Dr Irfaan Ali accepted the Letters of Credence from the new High Commissioner of Belize to Guyana, Her Excellency Gale Miller-Garnett. The event marked a significant step in strengthening the already cordial relationship between the two Caribbean nations.

Guvana-Belize relations, several



New Belizean High Commissioner accredited

best the two countries propelling both nations for their unwavering stance" have ever shared. This towards increased support in the ongoing issuance of a statement President Ali flourishing bond, he prosperity. expressed his delight emphasised, has led The Venezuela-Guyana reaffirming controversy. territorial integrity. President border at the current state of to the development of took the opportunity He commended their The collaborative to express his sincere "forthright and between President Ali highlighting it as the initiatives aimed at gratitude to Belize strong principled and High Commissioner

Miller-Garnett extended beyond mere delving pleasantries, into potential areas of future collaboration. Among the key sectors identified for joint efforts were agriculture, tourism, climate change mitigation, energy development, and food security.

Joining President Ali were Minister of Foreign the Affairs and International Cooperation Hugh Guyana's Todd, and Ambassador Elisabeth Harper, discussions Permanent Secretary.

KEEPING THE DIASPORA INFORMED

GUYANA PARTNERS WITH CANADA ON TRAINING ITIATIVE: 2,000 GUYANESE TO LAND US\$30,000 JOBS

a promising In development for the Guyanese workforce, President Ali announced a new training initiative in collaboration with Canada that aims to equip 2,000 Guyanese with essential skills and land them jobs with a starting salary of US\$30,000 per year.

GUYANESE DIASPORA DIGEST

President Ali made the announcement at the 31st anniversary gala



President Dr Irfaan Ali and the Prime Minister of Canada, the Rt Honourable Justin Trudeau, on the sidelines of the Canada-CARICOM Summit in Ottawa in October

and dinner of the Private initiative's Sector highlighting initiative's creating will target training in Additionally, "essential top-tier well-equipped to meet trained industry demands.

To ensure

Commission, discussions have already graduates, skilled creating the pathway from training to the Guyanese economy.

success, employment.

While the initial the begun with key players focus is on skills relevant focus on in Guyana's booming oil to the oil and gas high-value and gas sector, including industry, the initiative's jobs. He emphasised ExxonMobil and other long-term vision extends that the first phase development partners. beyond this sector. major President Ali expressed skills" international companies his desire to replicate that will be certified by operating in the country the model in other areas, institutions, are being brought on potentially creating a ensuring graduates are board to absorb the sustainable pipeline of professionals a direct across various sectors of

GUYANA POISED FOR A STELLAR 2024 ON TRADE, DIPLOMACY, AND ENTERTAINMENT STAGE

declared 2024 a year of the feature address at immense significance for the 31st anniversary gala Guyana, as the nation and dinner of the Private prepares to assume Sector Commission. leadership roles on the global stage and host a flurry of high-level events.

LEADING THE CARIBBEAN

helm of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) in the new year, chairing the regional body and will bring Guyana's voice hosting a heads-of- to one of the world's most government This leadership role will making bodies, offering provide a platform for the nation a platform to Guyana to champion address global challenges the interests of the and Caribbean on a range international peace and of issues, President Ali security.

President Ali has noted while delivering

TAKING A SEAT AT THE UN SECURITY COUNCIL

From January onwards, Guyana will embark on a two-year Guyana will take the stint as a non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council. This historic opportunity meeting. important decisioncontribute to



Discussions focused on Guyana becoming the Chair of CARICOM in January 2024 and hosting the CARICOM Heads of Government Meeting in February

DIPLOMATIC HUB President announced that 2024 will see also Guyana meetings open doors for play host to a series of distinguished visitors, including leaders from strengthened diplomatic Brazil, Saudi Arabia, ties.

Canada, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Ali India, and Rwanda. These high-level economic partnerships, cultural exchanges, and

ENERGY AND ENTERTAINMENT IN THE SPOTLIGHT

The year will kickoff with the highly Guyana anticipated Energy Conference and Supply Chain Expo,

prominent attracting speakers and industry leaders. Additionally, Guyana will host the semi-finals and finals of the Caribbean Premier League (CPL) and the finals of the Women's T20 cricket tournament, solidifying its position as a premier sporting destination.

Overall, 2024 promises to be a year unprecedented of opportunities for Guyana. From leadership roles on the global stage to hosting major events and fostering closer diplomatic ties, the nation is poised for significant growth and development.





President Ali recently held discussions with a delegation from Qatar

Guyana, Georgetown, is Commission entertainment facility, tourism. paired with a modern scenic seawall.

Unveiled

The capital city of at the Private Sector Avenue, set for a major facelift dinner, this ambitious President Ali highlighted industry, the modern phase with the announcement project promises to this initiative as a boardwalk along the numerous jobs, while residents to enjoy. of a "massive" hotel, revitalise the city's key component of the seawall promises to the completed facility conference center, and waterfront and boost government's

boardwalk along the by an investment group the city's infrastructure from Qatar, will kick- off and vibrancy. by next year, and will be

а The project, funded modernise and enhance and visitors alike.

awards artery of Georgetown. the growing tourism The Urban become a popular leisure will attract tourists, Renewal Plan, aiming to destination for locals generate revenue, and This project is expected Additionally, While the hotel and to yield significant boardwalk

will offer new employment ambitious opportunities. the and President Dr. Irfaan Ali located along Carifesta conference center will economic and social entertainment facilities

central undoubtedly cater to benefits for Georgetown. will enhance the city's construction livability, creating a create vibrant public space for



ECCLES-DIAMOND HIGHWAY RENAMED "HEROES HIGHWAY"



The giant anteater at the highway roundabout

Demerara corridor has a permanent tribute to new name and a powerful the five Guyana Defence purpose. The Eccles-to- Force (GDF) soldiers Great Diamond four-lane who tragically lost their highway is now officially lives in a helicopter crash

Guyana's East Bank "Heroes Highway,"

on December 6.

President Ali led the emotional emphasised that their ceremony, declaring the children must grow up highway a testament knowing their fathers to the "life, work, and were "legends" who memories" of Brigadier dedicated their lives (Ret'd) Gary Beaton, to the nation's safety. Colonel Shahoud, Colonels Michael Charles soldier, revealing the and Sean Welcome, and unique bond he had with Staff Sergeant Jason the "chopper crew" Khan. Their names are and their unwavering now etched into the very dedication to duty. fabric of this critical infrastructure project, Highway is more than forever reminding every simply a stretch of driver of their sacrifice.

President speech with raw emotion as fortitude. The giant to he

immense sacrifice of Irfaan these fallen heroes. He Michael He shared personal Lieutenant anecdotes about each Heroes The

concrete and asphalt; Ali's it is a representation of resonated bravery, tenacity, and acknowledged the anteater at the highway



The four-lane highway

it keep their memory acknowledged minds of Guyanese.

President Ali also used the occasion highlight the often-overlooked

roundabout stands as contributions of the a powerful reminder of GDF, expressing his deep these qualities, just as the respect and admiration inscribed names beneath for their service. He the alive. Steel structures at sacrifices they make by both ends of the highway spending more time will further solidify their protecting the nation place in the hearts and than with their own families.

HEROES HIGHWAY A BREATH OF FRESH AIR FOR EBD COMMUTERS

The Highway, а lane artery stretching from Eccles to Great Diamond, is a breath **businesses:** of fresh air for East transforming daily commutes from highlighted the tricklebreezy journeys.

hour blues:

Neville Lyttle, a motorcyclist who used to beaprisoner of rushhour, rejoice: now navigates the road in a mere 10 minutes. driver, is reaping the exclaims, his voice times. "My passengers

Heroes have experienced the four- highway's magic.

boon Α for

Candasi Thomas, Bank Demerara (EBD) a vendor who has residents and beyond, witnessed the road's their construction firsthand, congested nightmares to down effect. "The traffic flows smoothly now," she says, "everyone's No more rush moving, and business beams, his eyes twinkling gas," he enthuses. "My come at the perfect Highway, it seems, is is picking up."

Taxi drivers

Joshua Jones, a taxi "It's a breeze," he benefits of faster travel echoing the sentiment are happy, and I'm of countless others who getting more jobs," he



Chevon Favorite

with satisfaction.

Time saved is money saved:

Ronald Adamson, the progress: motorcyclist living in Grove, tells a tale of businessman, applauded efficiency. "I cut back the timing of the heroes: on time, mileage, and highway's opening. "It's

Neville Lyttle

is now down to 15!"

100

Chevon Favorite, a



business."

Heroes The



Candasi Thomas

30-minute commute time," he declares. "The living up to its name, traffic is manageable, not just by honouring and it's leading to the fallen, but by serving Businesses laud a smoother flow of as a symbol of progress and a tangible promise of a more efficient and A tribute to fallen connected future for the people of Guyana.





Completed infrastructural works in the community of Enmore, East Coast Demerara

of Unit (SPU) has been Residents Haslington and Enmore hard at work, fulfilling along the East Coast a pledge made by Vice Demerara can rejoice. President Dr. Bharrat The Ministry of Public Jagdeo to rehabilitate Works' Special Projects their deteriorating roads.

Following Road, Last Street, and community engagements Steel Bridge Road are where voiced concerns about wider, making life easier accessibility issues, the for residents. SPU swung into action. They prioritised the is currently undergoing projects based on each a similar facelift. Five community's ensuring gets a fair share of the and Enmore Old Road improvements. In the is already complete! whopping 1212.6 meters. November Between 23 and December 7, represent the four community roads g o v e r n m e n t 's covering a total distance commitment to boosting

residents now smoother and

Meanwhile, Enmore needs, roads - Second, Third, everyone Fourth, and Fifth Street, – are being treated Haslington, to asphaltic concrete transformation upgrades, totalling a

These projects and

of 694.5 meters received connectivity comprehensive economic activity in the

Sideline region.

Road, Nursery School

а

makeover.

Completed infrastructural works in the community of Haslington, East Coast Demerara

KEEPING THE DIASPORA INFORMED

<u>GUYANESE DIASPORA DIGEST</u>

RESIDENTS REJOICE GEORGETOWN



Rehabilitated road in Georgetown

Residents a of Queenstown, Kingston are celebrating potholes and becoming to a comprehensive

much-needed waterlogged in the rainy Alberttown, makeover. Their streets, season, are now smooth and once riddled with and accessible thanks

by President Ali.

tour by the President and the work began. himself. Back in November, he visited echoed these sentiments. these communities and "Potholes heard firsthand the everywhere," struggles residents faced recalled. " It caused an with their dilapidated effect on the people. roads. Taking action Even when the cars are immediately, he tasked passing, they splash the Ministry of Public water on you," Ashton Works' Special Projects stated. Unit (SPU) with tackling the issue.

Residents Rudolph Seecharan of thoroughfares

Alberttown are thrilled Kingston, Queenstown, with the transformation. and Alberttown boast "The roads were a smooth, new surface. bad!" he exclaimed. He SPU Head Colin Gittens said, rain turned them explained the process. rehabilitation project led into swamps. But after "We resurfaced the the President's visit, roads with asphaltic The project was things changed quickly. concrete born from a listening Contracts were awarded, addressed drainage

Jermain

But now, Barrack Fort Street, Street, like and numerous other in

and issues with smaller Ashton contractors."

The new roads have were a renewed lifespan of 20 he years.



WATER ACCESS SET FOR MAJOR UPGRADE BY 2025 - EBD RESIDENTS TO BENEFIT FROM 24-HOUR TREATED WATER

Minister of Housing and Water, Collin Croal, during his recent inspection of water treatment plants across the East Bank of Demerara (EBD), reaffirmed the government's commitment to providing Guyanese with 24/7 access to treated water by 2025.

The Guyana Water Incorporated's (GWI's) five-year strategic plan (2021-2025) aims for a 90% treated water rate on the coast by 2025. coastline, Charity to Moleson more years to ensure residents are set for Creek, we're striving that we achieve that," round-the-clock treated to household to treated water," Minister Croal emphasised.

we must have 100 overhaul,



GWI is working with a five-year strategic plan from 2021 to 2025, with the overall aim of having 90 per cent of treated water by 2025

water to households, storage tanks, doubling and similarly in the accessibility hinterland. That is capacity. It will also be our objective, that is interlinked with our target that we are Diamond facility "Across the entire trying to achieve and enhanced efficiency. from we have about two connect every the housing and water water with the addition minister affirmed.

At present, the the per cent access of a new well and two wider coverage.

and the for

Golden of a new well doubling plant's output. Covent Garden plant This well will also be "On the coastland, is undergoing major interlinked with the featuring Diamond system for

Grove

East Bank residents to benefit from 24-hour treated water

the Further, Caledonia plant is Caledonia project is part undergoing a complete of the ministry's massive transformation a refurbished storage seven new treatment tank, a new storage plants by 2025. Three facility, three filter are already underway in systems, and a new well Region Four (Caledonia, scheduled for next year. Cummings This ambitious project Bachelor's Adventure), will provide 24/7 treated while five more are out water to communities to tender, closing in from Soesdyke to Garden January 2024. of Eden.

In addition, The with initiative to construct Lodge,

Minister Croal highlighted the ministry's broader goals, targeting 100% water access for both the coastland and the hinterland. "We have two years left to make this vision a reality, and the work you see here exemplifies our unwavering commitment," he declared.

CRASH TRAGEDY, HELICOPTER :**(0)||**2 ゴモ =:1



Chief-of-Staff Brigadier Omar Khan, along with other key members of the Force's recently welcomed US Ambassaor Nicole Theriot on a courtesy call

territorial Weeks a nation that the Guyana country's after helicopter Defence Force (GDF) integrity. devastating crash claimed the lives has "regrouped" and The crash occurred of five soldiers, Guyana's remains committed on December 6, 2023, Army Chief, Brigadier to its primary mission as Colonel Michael Omar Khan, assured the of safeguarding the Shahoud and his team

visit troops stationed dedication to duty, along the western border stating, "We are tough amidst tensions with as soldiers...But we Brigadier Venezuela over the also, each of us, have expressed his hope for Essequibo region. Along alone times to reflect a stronger relationship with Colonel Shahoud, on these losses." the tragedy took the lives of pilot Lieutenant soldiers, Brigadier Khan He highlighted their Colonel Michael Charles, declared, "These men interdependent Lieutenant Colonel Sean have given excellent stating, "We Welcome, (R'td) Gary Beaton, and This is the hallmark government, but we Warrant Officer Class 2 of military service use that budget to Jason Khan.

annual dinner and gala country and people from the private of the Private Sector safe. We do that sector, and we use Commission, Brigadier every single day." He our resources to Khan expressed gratitude affirmed that their protect you and your for the outpouring of lives were not lost in businesses." support. He emphasised vain, stating, "They

between the GDF and

Honouring the fallen the Brigadier service to the nation... a budget from the

on Khan. – doing what is acquire resources, Addressing the 31st necessary to keep the goods and services

were on their way to the soldiers' unwavering **died for a just cause.**"

private

ahead.

sector.

roles,

have

Khan

Looking

THURSDAY DECEMBER 28 2023

FIVE FALLEN HEROES' IBUTIONS TO COUNTRY HIGHLIGHTED

In a week etched "Michael in sorrow, Guyana bid was an extraordinary farewell to the five **individual**," President brave servicemen who Ali stated. "He did perished in a helicopter ordinary things in crash while serving extraordinary ways... their country. From I know Michael Lieutenant Michael Charles's **I consider him a** exemplary leadership to **brother. I listened** Warrant Officer Jason to his wise counsel, Khan's fearless spirit, [and] I marvelled each hero left an indelible at the spectacular mark on the nation.

Lieutenant camera." Colonel Michael Charles: Remembered photography earned him as aviator, mentor, and with his artwork to be humanitarian, Charles' displayed permanently dedication to Guyana in the National Museum. spanned over 40 years.

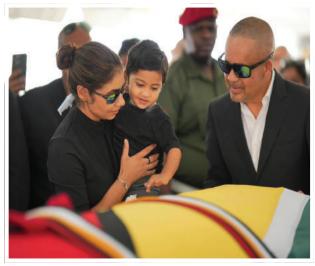
highlighting exemplary and unwavering commitment to safeguarding the nation's territorial integrity.

Charles Colonel Charles personally; images that he produced with his

Charles' passion for a seasoned a posthumous tribute, Colonel Charles was President Ali lauded at the helm of the him as a "brother, helicopter when it went friend, and legend," down in the dense jungle his while delivering supplies service to troops at the border.

Lieutenant Colonel Michael Charles











Shahoud: Described as and a "tower of strength" patriot," and shoulder", Shahoud for many young soldiers. was commended for his fierce loyalty, level- his commitment headed leadership, and discipline and dedication empathy.

Colonel Michael Welcome: A "selfless disciplined Welcome "reinforcing served as a role model President Ali praised to to national security. President Ali recalled Welcome's pursuit of excellence, and passing leaves a void, but loyalty. his bravery and vision and will continue to inspire. "Hewasaforwardhis thinking man. Our and his nation is poorer individual, but for the unrealised influence Lieutenant he could have had on Sean shaping the future,"





Cont'd on page 14





Shahoud's dedication academic to the Arau community, earning both a Bachelor's demonstrating his love and Master's degree, and compassion for showcased his desire the people of Guyana. to further contribute Shahoud's memory will to national defence forever be a symbol and development. His of nationhood unwavering **"Brave** men women will be inspired by example, son will grow up for his passing, and and be proud of his this is why we are father," the president crestfallen at his said. Col. Shahoud was demise. The grief we Commander of the 1st bearis not only for the Infantry Battalion, and loss of a remarkable an attorney-at-law.

Colonel



THURSDAY DECEMBER 28 2023

EQUALITY NEWS





The young victims of the deadly Mahdia fire

Mahdia Col report to be handed over to President

THE Presidential Commission of as well as its causes. Inquiry (CoI) into the Mahdia dormitory fire which claimed the lives of 20 children in May of this year, has competed its report and is expected to soon hand its findings over to President, Dr. Irfaan Ali.

This was confirmed by the CoI's Secretary Javed Shadick on Sunday.c

The CoI is chaired by retired Chief of Staff of the Guyana Defence Force (GDF), Major-General Joe Singh, and includes Chairman of the National Toshaos' Council (NTC) Mr. Derrick John, and Attorney-at-law Ms. Kim Kyte-Thomas.

The CoI ToRs (Terms of Reference) outlined that the commission would investigate and report on the events leading up to the dormitory fire,

LUX MORTGAGE

Additionally, the CoI was also tasked with examining the actions taken to provide care, medical attention, and support to the injured and deceased and their relatives in a timely manner.

The commission is also expected to make recommendations for necessary measures to prevent similar tragedies from occurring in the future.

On May 22, the country was plunged into mourning after a fire that authorities said was maliciously set, ravaged a secondary school girls' dormitory in Mahdia. At the time of the fire, 56 of the girls were present, as three had gone home to their families for the weekend. The children housed at the 'dorms' came from the communities of Karisparu, El Paso, Micobie, and Chenapau.





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MORIGAGE ALLIANCE

British warship sails into Guyana for joint exercises

GUYANA and the United Kingdom (UK) are set to engage in joint military activities to promote capacity building, according to a report from the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) on Sunday.

According to the BBC, the UK's Ministry of Defence confirmed that the HMS Trent would be deployed to Guyana to facilitate joint exercises after Christmas. It is also being done as a show of support for Guyana, which recently faced threats from Venezuela over an ongoing controversy which is before the International Court of Justice (ICJ).

Owing to the growing tensions, Presidents Dr. Irfaan Ali and Venezuela's President Nicolas Maduro had met at the Argyle International Airport in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, where there was a commitment to peace.

The meeting was facilitated by the Prime Minister of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Ralph Gonsalves, and was observed by Brazil, CARICOM, and a UN Under-Secretary-General.

This historic meeting culminated in what is now known as the "Argyle Declaration," an 11-point agreement which addresses matters consequential to the border controversy, including the fact that Guyana holds firmly to its position that the substantive case is before the International Court of Justice (ICJ).

Guyana, while remaining committed to peace, also has a responsibility to protect its exclusive economic zone



and sovereignty from any potential harm. So local leaders have assured stakeholders that the government's intention is to pursue defence co-operation with allies and strengthen its military capacity for issues purely defensive in nature. This also aligns with international norms, emphasising a defensive posture.

The UK initiative is, therefore, another effort geared at enhancing Guyana's defence capacity.

The BBC quoted the Ministry of Defence spokesperson as saying: "HMS Trent will visit regional ally and

HMS Trent, an offshore patrol vessel

Commonwealth partner Guyana later this month as part of a series of engagements in the region during her Atlantic Patrol Task deployment."

"HMS Trent has a crew of 65, a top speed of 24 knots and a range of 5,000 nautical miles. It is armed with 30mm cannon and a contingent of Royal Marines. It can also deploy Merlin helicopters and unmanned aircraft," the BBC reported.

The vessel, according to the BBC report, is expected to anchor off the capital of Guyana, Georgetown, and conduct visits, joint activities and training with the country's navy and other allies.

Further, it was reported that the vessel is mainly used for tackling piracy and smuggling, protecting fisheries, counterterrorism, providing humanitarian aid, and search and rescue operations, but the Royal Navy says it is also designed for border patrols and defence diplomacy.

According to the BBC, the decision to send HMS Trent to Guyana is part of a growing UK effort to show international diplomatic support for Guyana.

Guyana to fortify defence capabilities

IN a strategic move to bolster its national security, Guyana will significantly increase investments in its military.

This was according to General Secretary of the People's Progressive Party (PPP), Dr. Bharrat Jagdeo, who during his weekly press conference, highlighted that more funds will be directed towards enhancing defence capabilities in collaboration with international allies. This will be reflected in the 2024 budget, which will be presented early. commitment to peace.

The meeting was facilitated by the Prime Minister of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Ralph Gonsalves, and was observed by Brazil, CARICOM, and a UN Under-Secretary-General.

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"When we found out that we were losing over \$100 million per year in illegal fishing in our exclusive economic zone, we made commitments to make sure that we can purchase radar capability and other capability as well as intercept capability," he said.

This, he clarified, is not geared towards hostile actions but rather

"We have to spend more now on the defence...ensuring that we grow our capability to protect this country," Dr. Jagdeo said.

He underscored that the primary objective is to bolster Guyana's security apparatus in a defensive capacity, clarifying that there are no intentions to launch attacks on any nation, including Venezuela.

The General Secretary referenced recent discussions between Presidents Dr. Irfaan Ali and Venezuela's President Nicolas Maduro at the Argyle International Airport in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, where there was a President Ali and President Maduro have also committed to maintaining a "zone of peace," as talks continue.

"We made it clear in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines that our engagement with our international partners is to build capacity of a defensive nature," Dr. Jagdeo said.

He dismissed any assertions that Guyana harbours "aggressive" intentions and assured that the focus is on safeguarding the nation's sovereignty.

The General Secretary highlighted the significance of defence co-

Bharrat Jagdeo

operation with allies and pointed out that the investments in the military would be purely defensive in nature.

"We will continue to pursue defence co-operation with our allies purely in a defensive capacity to ensure that our country is capable, with our partners, of defending itself," he affirmed.

One of the key drivers behind the increased investment in defence, according to Jagdeo, is the protection of Guyana's exclusive economic zone. policing the exclusive economic zone and asserting sovereignty over the nation's territory.

The General Secretary assured stakeholders that the government's strategic approach aligns with international norms, emphasising a defensive posture.

"It's not to attack Venezuela or anyone else. It's purely defensive in a defensive capacity. So, once we signed the agreement, we still have to ensure that we continue on this task," Dr. Jagdeo said.

He related that the increased allocation for defence reflects the People's Progressive Party Civic' (PPP/C) government's commitment to fortifying the nation's security infrastructure in collaboration with international partners. HURSDAY DECEMBER 28 2023

EQUALITY NEWS







KEEPING THE DIAS

Govt's Toy Drive and Christmas Cheer











THURSDAY DECEMBER 28 2023



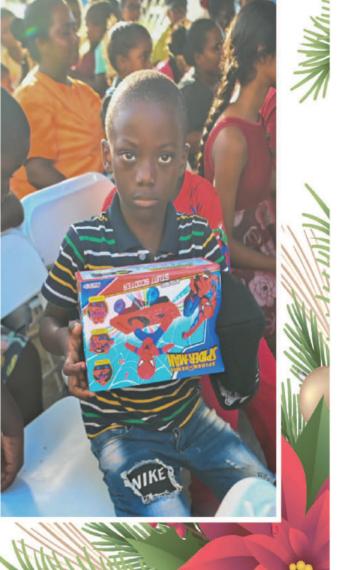
Children Parties bring across the Nation













THURSDAY DECEMBER 28 2023

EQUALITY NEWS



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Delicious Jamaican Dish



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GUYANESE DIASPORA DIGEST

KEEPING THE DIASPORA INFORMED

FIVE FALLEN HEROES' CONTRIBUTIONS TO COUNTRY HIGHLIGHTED Cont'd on page 11









the president said.

Lt. Col. Welcome, was the "fearless patriot" and Commanding Officer of **"Guyanese version** the Reserve Battalion. **of Rambo**," Khan He has also held several embodied the spirit of a key positions, including dedicated soldier. Commander Troop of the 31 Special described him Forces Squadron and "sublimed Intelligence/Operations **superb**" in his military Officer.

Gary Remembered for his Guyana was limitless, distinguished service **he was on a mission** and class, Beaton rose to protect Guyana through the ranks to when he died," the become a Brigadier. president observed. President Ali lauded his exemplary conduct, and despite the dedication to building expressed understanding trust and confidence and pride in his sacrifice within communities.

any circumstance to including his skills dictate his behaviour, as a sportsman and his attitude or his dedication service, he rose improvement, paint a above every single picture of a remarkable challenge and that is individual. His service worth That is an example call of duty as he played of how we should roles as a Storeman in conduct ourselves," 31 SF Sqn, a Regimental the head of state noted. Quarter Master in the Beaton's for led him to various Certificate in Electrical leadership including Commander Government Technical Engineer Corps and Institute. Officer Commanding of the Coast Guard. His ceremonies, a common numerous decorations, thread including the Border unwavering dedication Defence Medal, stand to duty, selfless service, as a testament to his and courage in the outstanding career.

Warrant Officer Sean **Class II Jason Khan:** A

President Ali as and skills and driven by a love for Guyana. "Jason Brigadier (Ret'd) Khan was a son of Beaton: Guyana, his love for

Khan's family, grief, for the nation. His "He didn't allow multifaceted character, to selfcelebrating. extended beyond the passion Intelligence Corps, engineering and recently earned a positions, Installation at the









Across the five emerged: face of danger. These fallen heroes, though mourned, will forever be remembered as pillars of Guyana's national security and symbols of bravery for generations to come.

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President Ali's Christmas message:

We are committed to peace

Message from Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali, President of the Co-operative Republic of Guyana, on the occasion of Christmas 2023:

"On behalf of the First Lady and our family, I extend heartfelt greetings for a joyous, holy and peaceful Christmas to all Guyanese at home and abroad

I want to especially remember, at this time, our loyal and brave men and women in uniform, including those who are patrolling our borders and our waters, and who are unable at this time, because of the call of duty, to be at home with their families. I thank them and all others for the sacrifices that they are making in the cause of peace.

Christmas is a special period on the Christian calendar. It celebrates the birth of Jesus Christ.

According to the biblical narrative, Jesus was born in Bethlehem, in a simple stable. This modest beginning is considered symbolic of the humility and accessibility of God's love.

Christmas holds profound significance for Christians worldwide, serving as a reminder of the transformative power of love, compassion, and hope. For Christians, the birth of Jesus was a fulfilment of the prophecy of the Prophet Isaiah, who foretold that: "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder: And his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace."

Christ's birth was a ray of hope – a hope that transcends the darkest of times. This child, Jesus, born in a manger, would grow to be a symbol of love and peace.

Peace remains the great aspiration of human civilisation. Unfortunately, today, in many parts of the world, including in Bethlehem, where Christ was born, peace is threatened by the shadows of war and conflict.

I invite all to pray for an end to the suffering wrought by conflict.

In the ongoing story of our nation, we have often faced adversity. It is in times of such challenges that we can draw strength from the manger. The nativity reminds us that greatness can emerge from the humblest beginnings and that even in the face of despair, hope can be found.

Prince of Peace: Let us embody his teachings by reaching out to the less fortunate in our midst. Let us extend a helping hand to those in need. Let us support those who are feeling the weight of loneliness, offering them the warmth of our friendship and understanding. Let us embrace all those, without exception, who are grieving the loss of loved ones or grappling with misfortune.

Let us also spare a thought and reserve an act of caring for those who are sick and ailing. Through these and other acts of kindness, both collectively and individually, we honour Christ.

As we send Christmas greetings to all of Guyana, we must, for a moment, understand the challenges and the circumstances that our country withstood during this year.

In all our challenges, in the loneli-

most was our love for our country, our patriotism, nationalistic fervour, our love for each other, our unity, and our commitment to each other and our country. This is the year we dug deep and renewed that love and commitment for our country and each other.

So, as we move in this season, I cannot help but remember our heroes – our five heroes who today stand tall in the history book of our country and this region. Their sacrifice is a lesson and a guide to us. Let us all come together in strength and unity, love and peace, as we build a stronger, more prosperous Guyana for all of us.

As we do this for Guyana, let us not forget that we have a responsibility too, to call upon all those who are involved in war, all those who continue to use conflict and war and force as a

est of moments, what stood out the means of bringing peace, let us ask them to halt their action and give peace a chance. Let us stop the slaughter of children and women across the world, the slaughter of children and women in Palestine, and acts of terrorism. We must stop it.

> We must find a way to resolve these conflicts and bring peace to those families because peace around the world depends on each of us as a country, as individuals and as citizens of the world.

> Let us not allow this season to go without a recommitment from each of us as we seek to build a stronger, safer, fairer and more prosperous world.

> May the warmth of Christmas engulf all of us and keep us safe during the holidays. I wish you and your loved ones a blessed and peaceful Christmas."

Our Family Caring for Yours

From the flowers on the front lawn to the paintings on the walls, we at Ogden's always consider the comfort and needs of the families that we serve first. We offer services and products that are meaningful and fit comfortably within your budget. Just some of the ways that we as a family care for yours. Family owned and operated since 1948.



The story of Bethlehem teaches us that hope is not contingent on favourable circumstances but rather on the will to rise above adversity.

Guyana today is rising to confront its challenges and bring peace and prosperity to our country. Guyana remains wedded to the ideal of peace, peace within our nation and peace with all our neighbours.

May the teachings of Jesus inspire us to foster unity in our diverse nation, to overcome the challenges that lie ahead, and to build a future filled with promise and peace.

As we celebrate the birth of the





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GUYANESE PUBLIC SERVANTS GET CHRISTMAS CHEER WITH SALARY INCREASES AND BONUS

OVER \$13 BILLION INJECTED INTO THE ECONOMY TO STIMULATE COMMERCIAL ACTIVITIES

public disciplined services, and and old-age pensioners government pensioners received grants in Guyana received a \$35,000 and \$25,000 welcome present – a 6.5% salary payments, totalling over increase backdated to \$13 billion, are expected January 2023. This to stimulate economic announcement, made by activity Dr. Ashni Singh in their extra income. December, ensures that these essential workers increase, specific groups have a boost to their disposable income just in time for the holiday season.

A release from the Ministry of Finance noted that public servants also received

More than 54,000 a one-off tax-free cash servants, grant of \$25,000, while teachers, members of the persons with disabilities • D i s c i p l i n e d of Christmas respectively. These across the Senior Finance Minister country as people spend • Teachers: Graduate

> Beyond the general received additional benefits:

• Health workers: Over 5,000 healthcare professionals received a \$1.5 billion salary adjustment announced in December 2022.

- Services: 8,000 members saw their salaries adjusted, increasing their disposable income by a total of over \$1 billion annually.
- teachers were moved to the maximum of their salary scale, benefiting over 4,000 with an additional \$1 billion annual cost. They also received increased education allowances based on their degree level and a boost to the remote stated that Dr. Singh



Over \$13 Billion was injected into the economy to stimulate commercial activities

emphasised that salary

increases are just one

part of the government's

Guyanese.

to

lives

other

commitment

highlighted

initiatives like:

of

improving the

areas incentive.

INVESTING IN GUYANESE WELL-BEING: The release

Reviving the "Because We Care" cash grant for school children. **Providing pensioners**

with a water subsidy. Removing taxes on

various commodities. Resuming the onemonth tax-free bonus for

the disciplined services. Affordable housing

initiatives with reduced interest rates.

"We take a holistic and comprehensive view of well-being," Dr. Singh explained. "People want a better income, but they also want decent roads, He good healthcare, and a decent pension for their parents."

GUYANA PLUGS INTO THE FUTURE: FIRST PUBLIC EV CHARGING STATIONS UNVEILED

In for moment transportation, Guyana Carbon unveiling of its first of transportation sector. six publicly accessible charging stations.

Brigadier (Ret'd), Mark **energy** Phillips, led the ceremony motor vehicle users beginning, according to at the Amazonia Mall in **can transition from** Prime Minister Phillips. Providence, kicking off a using gasoline or He announced plans three-month trial period **diesel vehicles**," the to request funding for for these six pioneering Prime Minister said. additional charging stations.

landmark Agency (GEA) as part of coast. Travellers can clean the government's Low now recharge took a major step towards Strategy 2030, aims to Jagan an electric vehicle (EV) encourage a shift away Airport, Giftland Mall, future with the official from fossil fuels in the Little Rock Suites in

"We encouraging Prime Minister, **use of renewable** office in Georgetown. sources...

This \$39.3 million located stations offer budget, with a focus on initiative, spearheaded convenience for EV expanding the network by the Guyana Energy users across Guyana's to regions like Linden,

their Development vehicles at the Cheddi International New Amsterdam, S & **are** R parking lot in Parika, more and outside the GEA's

This is just the The six strategically stations in the 2024



Prime Minister Mark Phillips at the charging stations at the Amazonia Mall in Providence

the adoption of EVs, This,

facilitating seamless EV eliminated the 14% VAT travel across the country. on new electric vehicles To further accelerate under four years old. coupled with government has the Prime Minister's

assurance of competitive pricing ("At \$80 per kilowatt-hour), aims to incentivise Guyanese embrace this to environmentally friendly transportation option.

Beyond encouraging individual EV use, this project holds broader significance. It signals Guyana's commitment to e-mobility development, showcases potential business opportunities in the sector, and demonstrates the market's readiness for an electric future.

EXXONMOBIL FUELS UP FOR THIRD CONSECUTIVE YEAR AS TITLE SPONSOR OF GUYANA ENERGY CONFERENCE

the

Global energy leader Guyana xonMobil

<u>GUYANESE DIASPORA DIGEST</u>

has revved up its commitment to Guyana's burgeoning energy sector by signing on as the title sponsor for the third consecutive year of the Guyana Energy Conference and Supply Chain Expo, set for February 19-22, 2024, at the Marriott Hotel.

unwavering This support underscores ExxonMobil's dedication to fostering dialogue, company noted. It added **undeniable** sponsorship role signifies commitment



The conference assembles a powerhouse lineup of industry experts, policymakers, and foreign officials to benefit local and international entrepreneurs

conference's critical role robust growth of the to in driving advancement local energy sector and and modernisation and within the industry.

Alistair Routledge, Guyana." and collaboration within President of ExxonMobil the dynamic energy and Guyana, is stated as themed supply chain landscapes, saying, "Our continued Transformation that the company's title of our unwavering lineup of industry its recognition of the contributing to the and foreign officials of the

sustainable entrepreneurs. development

The signal assemble a powerhouse event.

of ExxonMobil Guyana will conference, discussions, "Fueling invaluable Kurt

benefit

to experts, policymakers, Chief Executive Officer tailored Conference, present

local

international

"We are honoured prospects, facilitating to have ExxonMobil network building and **Guyana as the title** operational expansion. sponsor for the Interested parties third year in a row. and individuals can **Their unwavering** visit the website www. **commitment** is a guyanaenergy.gy testament to the download and complete significance our shared goals form before February 10, in advancements and registration for both collaboration within in-person and virtual

expressed his elation. branding and exposure

play a key role in shaping ExxonMobil'sleadership, sharing the conference offers insights, exciting sponsorship exhibition and and contributing to the opportunities for other are available for those a release from the sponsorship is an Modernisation," aims to overall success of the companies in Platinum, seeking to showcase their Diamond, Gold, and businesses alongside the Baboolall, Silver categories. These main conference. packages exceptional

to of the sponsor registration promoting 2024. General delegate the energy sector." participation is B e y o n d on the website. participation is also open

> Furthermore, packages

SALARY INCREASES: DR. JAGDEO URGES CRITICS TO CONSIDER FULL ECONOMIC PICTURE, NOT JUST NUMBERS

People's Progressive Party Civic's (PPP/C's) Secretary, General Dr. Bharrat Jagdeo, defended the government's 6.5 percent salary increase for public servants, arguing that critics are missing the bigger picture.

He emphasised the need for responsible fiscal management, balancing increases with economic sustainability and future revenue streams.

Dr. Jagdeo stressed that salary increases must be grounded in a comprehensive such approaches led to revenue. He cautioned considering and projected income. He basing decisions on managing speculation, highlighting expenses, past instances where with the influx of oil combined salary bill of



Guyana has 54,000 public servants with a combined salary bill of \$87 billion

analysis of the economy, financial instability in against splurging, as finances other countries.

warned against the importance of Dr. Jagdeo pointed out recurrent that Guyana has 54,000 especially public servants with a

\$87 billion.

Whileacknowledging efforts to improve working conditions and raise salaries, Dr. Jagdeo stressed the need to consider all Guyanese, not just public servants. He pointed out the government's initiatives like subsidised housing, electricity, and tax cuts, totalling \$40 billion, benefitting all citizens.

Additionally, We Because

government public contributions, you have a duty to their fiscal all the people too, responsible



PPPC's General Secretary, Dr. Bharrat Jagdeo

the management is crucial. who are not public Care Salary increases must be servants, who work, grant, old age pension, balanced with the need to who contribute to and part-time jobs invest in infrastructure, national wealth, who programme further aim support all citizens, pay taxes. They also to increase disposable and ensure long-term have to benefit from income, and improve financial sustainability **the treasury.** And living standards. for Guyana's future. how do you get them Dr Jagdeo's message "...when you run a to benefit? You have He acknowledged problems in the future. was clear: While the country, you have to think about that values to take care of your too." servants and public servants, but

NEW HAVEN MERCHANT BANK LAUNCHES \$25 MILLION FUND TO FUEL GUYANESE SME BOOM AND ATTRACT GLOBAL INVESTORS

The New Haven Merchant Bank (NHMB) is making a bold move to turbocharge Guyana's economy with a \$25 million fund dedicated to empowering Small Medium-sized and Enterprises (SMEs). This initiative dubbed a "gateway for global investors," aims to unlock Guyana's vast economic potential and entrepreneurs.

Floyd



Owner, New Hayven Merchant Bank, Floyd Haynes

createawin-winsituation either invest through the pivotal role financial for both investors and the fund, which in institutions like NHMB turn will invest in play in connecting Havnes, the business or you investors with promising NHMB owner, envisions can invest directly ventures. the fund as a catalyst for **into business**," he growth. "Investors can explained, highlighting agriculture

Haynes identified

it could lead to budget

as

particularly government **Breadbasket of the** businesses to qualify. Caribbean."

NHMB's extends Guyana's with AFRIEXIM Bank, you're they aim to attract **for** international investors growth," by offering access to declared, a economy. "AFRIEXIM the best investment

fertile will provide us a destinations in the ground for investment, \$15 million which world." thanks to favourable we can then lend policies, to local businesses excitement, a recent and initiatives under the in Guyana," Haynes International Monetary PPP/C administration. announced, emphasising Fund (IMF) report He expressed confidence the need for strong predicts in Guyana reclaiming financial records and growth to reach a its historic title as "The capable management for staggering 59.5% this

Guyana's the vibrant Guyanese is probably one of

Adding to the Guvana's year, with potential stable to even surpass this ambition political environment estimate. With NHMB's beyond and oil discoveries are \$25 million fund and its borders. making it a magnet AFRIEXIM partnership, Through a partnership for investment. "If Guyana is poised to **looking** experience an economic exponential boom fueled by local Haynes entrepreneurship and "Guyana global investment.

RMERS AND AGRO-PROCESSORS EMPOWERED

The Small Business International first "Envision Equity" reach new markets. workshop.

This two-day event, Executive held at the Ramada Mohamed Princess Hotel Providence, specifically workshop's targeted working farming processing, providing them with access to loans, **President's** grants, and valuable for market knowledge.

Bureau (SBB) and the from Regions Two, specialised workshop processing plan, their the Alliances for Coconut Trade Three, Four, Five, Six, is designed to equip facilities, and teach them Industry Development Centre (ITC) teamed and Ten attended the agro-processors how they can access in the Caribbean. It up to empower farmers workshop, aiming to with the tools and guaranteed financing is sponsored by the and agro-processors in learn how to expand knowledge they need in a much easier and European Union and Guyana, launching the their businesses and to succeed."

in emphasised individuals with the and agro- agriculture in Guyana.

"We take the very

The workshop The SBB's Chief offered a comprehensive Officer, approach, including one- Raymond Ibrahim, on-one sessions with echoed this sentiment, and the representatives from the highlighting in coconut vision for promoting (GBTI), and Republic industry. Bank.

vision one workshop will the industry back to what

practical Ibrahim posited.

ITC

Over 40 participants Ibrahim stated. "This plan, develop their agro- is a programme called manner," CARIFORUM but it is being administered by the

Coordinator ITC in collaboration with Trotz the Caribbean Research Development the Institute (CARDI). There alignment SBB, ITC, Guyana Bank workshop's role in are several aspects of President's for Trade and Industry revitalising the coconut the programme which include marketing and "The purpose of this that's why we are here "So, this one-on- programme is to raise today," Trotz explained. The "Envision **agriculture** help them (farmers) to it was in the 50s, 60s and Equity" workshop marks seriously," develop their business to modernise it...There a significant step towards



Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Small Business Bureau, Mohamed Ibrahim

empowering farmers and agro-processors in Guyana. By providing funding, access to expert guidance, and market knowledge, this initiative paves the way for sustainable growth and prosperity within the agricultural sector.

GUYANA PUMPS \$200 MILLION INTO MANGROVE RESTORATION

Guyana is doubling down on its commitment to protecting its precious mangroves, investing a whopping \$200 million in restoration projects throughout 2023. This green-grey infrastructure approach combines natural and engineered solutions to safeguard the country's low-lying coastline, home to over 90% of its population and vital agricultural lands.

Efforts in Regions Two, Four, Five, and Six have added significantly to Guyana>s already impressive mangrove cover, now exceeding 21,000 hectares. This approach utilises natural mangroves, against buffers erosion, alongside

Matthews transformation with a district's education, and sports across the region. development.

significant the This upliftment government's inauguration the commitment its citizens, ensuring Community that even communities Matthews Ridge benefit basketball, from initiatives.

and Croal, recently handed through the first tranche over a new ambulance of \$21 million allocated and minibus to the from Carbon Credit community, highlighting Funds, the government's focus the on enhancing access to commitment



Opening of the Mangrove Centre

engineered sea defences Phillips resilience.

During the opening highlighting ceremony of the \$60 soon-to-be-launched 200 million tons of million centre at the National Action Network. Agricultural Research and Institute (NAREI), not

Ridge transportation and vital in Region One is services. This addition experiencing a major brings the Matarkai subambulance \$51 million investment fleet to three, ensuring flowing into healthcare, better medical coverage

Bevond healthcare, community reflects witnessed the of а football to new and improving the lives of basketball court at the Centre remote ground. Additionally, like sports equipment for football, development and cricket, along with maintenance tools, Minister of Housing were also provided. Water, Collin These resources, funded demonstrate government's

mangrove Management carbon emissions.

Extension mangrove restoration Network, will develop only Prime Minister Mark the coast, but also seek to

emphasised contributes to carbon for maximum coastal the importance of sequestration, with just collaborative initiatives, a 1% reduction in loss the estimated to prevent

> He stressed that Management Action protects **interventions** integrate



(Ret'd) Mark Phillips

mangroves into the have to be the hub landscape to ensure for food production. that all Guyanese And if we have continue to enjoy the to be the hub, we use of this valuable have recreational space," that he highlighted.

Minister of Agriculture, prepare to fight the Zulfikar underscored the critical change...so that we role mangroves play can once again be in both environmental the breadbasket of protection and economic the Caribbean...," he " Mangrove prosperity, Guyana the potential "breadbasket of the provide critical nurseries that Caribbean."

"We, in Guvana,



Minister of Agriculture, Zulfikar Mustapha

to ensure we restore the mangroves so Meanwhile, that Guyana can Mustapha elements of climate calling stressed.

Mangroves also for marine life.

MATTHEWS RIDGE GETS AMBULANCE, SPORTS FACILITIES, AND MORE



Minister of Housing and Water, Collin Croal handing over the bus and other items to the community

empowering development projects. Brentnol acknowledged community's

democratic Regional Chairman, like the Community development. Ashley, Development Council the (CDC) in driving these Sharon past positive changes. revealed the government's focus council's commitment the remaining

local on supporting local to continued support organs for Matthews Ridge's CDC Chairperson,

Phillips, plans for to neglect and praised Ashley emphasised the further utilisation of \$30

million from the Carbon Credit Funds. Projects including a blockmaking initiative and a new kitchen at the nursery school are on the horizon.

Furthermore, Matthews Ridge is witnessing various other ongoing infrastructure upgrades. The Ministry of Public Works is constructing concrete roads and bridges, while electricity network expansion and a new distribution water system address longstanding infrastructure challenges.

166 GIRLS CODE THEIR WAY TO SUCCESS

The Guyanese Girls

unit's Code Programme plans renerated the commitment to fostering to expand in 2024, Guyana's ICT sector bringing its empowering through education curriculum to even more and awareness. He regions and offering girls commended the girls a hands-on, physical for their dedication learning experience. and highlighted the With the theme "Digital program's aim to bridge Skills for Life," the the gender gap and programme is preparing equip young women a new generation with essential skills of young women to for success in the ever- become game-changers evolving tech landscape. in the exciting world of consultant technology. ICT outstanding Loren Lorick Four and Sarran encouraged the for the first three groups participants - Aaliyah Naitram Baboolall. The graduates to embrace the Tomika tokens were coordinated face-to-face. Wallace, Aliana Porter, by programme training boundless opportunities within the ICT sector and This hybrid approach and Ariel Craig - were consultant/specialist congratulated them on top Dave Sarran. their accomplishments. Shahrukh Hussain, Looking ahead, across locations and special tokens sponsored Director of the Industry PUBLIC INFORMATION the Guyanese Girls

Code Programme has celebrated its latest batch of graduates, empowering 166 young women aged 12 and over with valuable skills in coding, robotics, micro-bit technology, and even video game development.

E.

Running from July to October, the programme welcomed girls from across seven regions - 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 10 - with a diverse mix of participants eager to explore the world of technology.

Delivered in four cohorts, the initiative maximised flexibility by



166 girls complete Guyanese Girls Code Programme

offering online sessions and conducting the final Andrews, cohort ensured accessibility recognised as and engagement for girls performers and received circumstances.

by USA-based Guyanese and Innovation Unit,



<u>GUYANESE DIASPORA DIGEST</u>

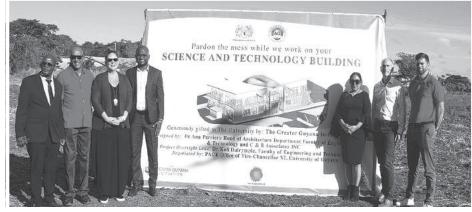
UG BREAKS GROUND ON NEW SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY BUILDING

The University of Guyana (UG) and the Greater Guvana Initiative (GGI) celebrated а milestone on major December 15, with groundbreaking the ceremony for a new stateof-the-art Science and Technology Building.

This project promises to significantly enhance UG's capacity to educate, and equip future generations of engineers and scientists.

The 15,000 sq. ft. building will house new labs, classrooms, and offices, creating a cuttingedge environment for learning and research.

The project aims to double the number of engineering graduates within three years, addressing the growing skilled demand for



Senior officials of the UG and GGI at the site of the new Science and Technology building

booming economy.

New labs disciplines be strengthening offerings in STEM fields like water and energy will support UG's efforts sustainability.

shared by the Faculty in 2024. of Engineering and

professionals in Guyana's Technology (FET) and of a larger US\$2.1M, the Faculty of Earth and five-year collaboration and Environmental Sciences between UG and GGI, will (FEES), introduced, collaboration UG's innovation.

The modern building Corporation. to achieve international Professor The building will be accreditation for the FET Mohamed

The project is part importance

fostering comprising ExxonMobil and Guyana, CNOOC Petroleum, and Hess

Vice-Chancellor Paloma -Martin, underscored the of the

facility, stating, "This Geology." a very significant moment...I like to thank GGI. that, "the new building They have really will have many positive stood with university."

Country Routledge, engineering." Allistair noted, "We are in this great position where the building includes we have also been architects and engineers able to set aside funds from UG and CB and to support these Associates. kinds of projects."

Project Oversight Lead building after Brigadier explained that the Gary Beaton, a graduate project provides for the of the FET and one of retrofitting of the existing the five GDF officers who Faculty of Engineering tragically lost their lives and Technology facilities recently. to address issues and adapt to new learning introduce the "Five approaches. He said, Heroes Award" in "Our labs are in dire honour of all five fallen need of upgrade... servicemen, recognising **This project will allow** outstanding for the expansion who of the existing FET servicemen, or reserves. laboratory and add new expanded labs for Petroleum and

KEEPING THE DIASPORA INFORMED

Budding Engineer would Kezia Chinian observed the impacts on students as they seek to develop E x x o n M o b i l's their careers in science, Manager technology and

The design team for

The University plans Dr. Kofi Dalrymple, to name a wing of the

will UG also students officers. are

HUNDREDS OF GUYANESE EMPLOYED THROUGH NATIONAL JOB BANK INITIATIVE

the Caribbean were in gathering, Guyana for a four-day and knowledge programme on the recently Information (EMIS). This to collaborative regional nations with allocation. valuable insights into implementing similar Caribbean,

exchange educational data. It like teacher quality, success. focused provides country's makers with valuable and resource utilisation. hurdles Guyana faced launched insights into various Education Management aspects of the education delegation was eager to and the strategies used System system, allowing them understand the technical to overcome them. effort decisions about policy, EMIS. They delved into visit, the delegates met in discussions and is

Across countries systems for enhanced are grappling with the the The EMIS, launched their education systems. given insights into the and

managing, approach needed to of EMIS, including the analysing address critical issues resources required for decision- student performance, The make informed aspects of Guyana's functionalities, the underlying technology. They also examined schools

Ten education in October 2023, is EMIS can provide them planning, funding, officials from across a powerful tool for with the data-driven and implementation

They learnt about the visiting during implementation.

> Throughout their Ministry and Guyana's of Education, visited actively participated



Scene from the four-day knowledge exchange programme

aimed to equip other planning, and resource the system's features, with key officials from workshops to share best its commitment practices and lessons regional collaboration learned.

sharing By development using EMIS to gain expertise and experience education management. challenge of improving process, and were firsthand experience, with its Caribbean counterparts, Guyana

demonstrating to and educational its advancement.

GITC EQUIPS 163 PERSO **SKILLS FOR GUYA** ECONOMY

Guyana's industrial landscape is evolving, and the Guyana Industrial Training Centre (GITC) is ensuring its graduates are equipped to meet the demand.

One hundred sixtythree graduates of the centre including 62 upskilled Guyana Defence Force ranks, received certificates in plumbing, and motor National Cultural Centre through this world is responsible in various technical fields, ready to contribute to growth.

The received in data electrical welding, making,

GITC's 56th graduation and prize-giving ceremony

vehicle repairs.

Prizes were awarded the country's economic to the best graduating and Joseph most improved students encouraged graduates to ensure that you will certificates highlighting operations, importance of dedication and contribute to their Hamilton proffered. installation, and continuous learning country's success. furniture at the 56th graduation **"You are as worthy** masonry, and metalwork engineering, ceremony hosted at the what will take you be

(NCC).

Labour the for financial stability viable," prize-giving as anyone else... the

knowledge. So, you future endeavours, and Minister have to be able to use lauded the continued noted. Hamilton your knowledge to efforts of the GITC. graduates in each programme, leverage their knowledge **become economically** Education Minister Dr. graduates

disciplined

their Deputy Officer further Ritesh emphasised graduates' strategic role Academy of Learning He also encouraged in Guyana's emerging (GOAL) programme. to socio-economic and landscape, urging

opportunities and create new possibilities. "The opportunities are numerous before us; maximise them. Navigate your pathways and create new possibilities, because you are now strategically positioned to make that lifechanging contribution to your beautiful country - Ğuyana," Dr Tularam

to

He encouraged Chief graduates to explore learning Tularam opportunities through the the Guyana Online

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10 CHILDREN RECEIVE LI HEART SURGERIES IN GIFT ISSION ()] =



Ten young patients, aged 8 months to 16 years, received life-altering heart surgeries

In a testament to medical international collaboration, Georgetown Hospital Corporation (GPHC) and Gift of Life International (GOLI) celebrate the remarkable succumbed to postsuccess of their second surgery complications, mission's legacy,

paediatric mission of 2023. Ten young patients, aged and GOLI extend 8 months to 16 years, their received heart surgeries, tackling family during this some of the most **difficult time**". complex cases the team has ever faced, GPHC note, stated in a press release. overall

to 8, an international noted. The remaining medical team, driven nine by unparalleled skill their and compassion, gifted embody the triumphs these children a chance of teamwork and at a healthy future. unwavering dedication. While challenges were Post-operative the immense, nine patients vital Public are now on the mend, was their bodies and spirits exceptional expertise by strengthened. Tragically, the combined GOLI and the youngest patient GPHC teams.

cardiac the release stated. It added "GPHC deepest life-altering condolences to the

Despite this solemn the mission's impact is From December 4 undeniable, the release patients. with vibrant smiles, care, for recovery, provided with

Furthering the 20



Twenty GPHC nurses completed the Congenital Heart Disease Training programme

GPHC nurses completed in Disease them with vital skills to for years to come. continue saving lives in future missions. the This

Moving investment that GPHC and GOLI

professional remain steadfast in their the Congenital Heart d e v e l o p m e n t commitment: advancing Training strengthens Guyana's paediatric cardiac care programme, equipping paediatric cardiac care in Guyana, nurturing healthcare professionals, forward, and providing hope for release stated every child in need.

HEALTH MINISTER PRAISES TEXILA UNIVERSITY'S HOSTING **OF SUCCESSFUL COMMUNICABLE DISEASES CONFERENCE**

Texila University for Diseases, providing a education. valuable platform for learning and exploring lauded the conference several communicable various aspects infectious while advancements healthcare technology crucial and research.

The themed "Communicable impact on healthcare. and expressed optimism Diseases in Caribbean: Update and Recent in the fight against Advancement", was a infectious diseases and attracted a diverse resounding

American Minister of Health, Dr. with TAU to further (TAU) Frank Anthony, who elevate the country's recently held its fourth called it "revolutionary" healthcare standards. International Conference for its contribution Communicable to medical students' focused on the Ministry

Dr. of for providing medical diseases, diseases students with a unique HIV/AIDS by 2030. Dr. showcasing opportunity to delve Anthony in into research and gain the ministry's successful about communicable of conference, diseases and the He emphasised the about achieving this Regional importance of research ambitious target. success, pledged the Ministry of range of participants, drawing praise from the Health's collaboration including regional and

The conference also of Health's ambitious Anthony goal of eliminating including highlighted information implementation comprehensive their prevention programmes

The two-day event



The university's students and lecturers in attendance at the conference

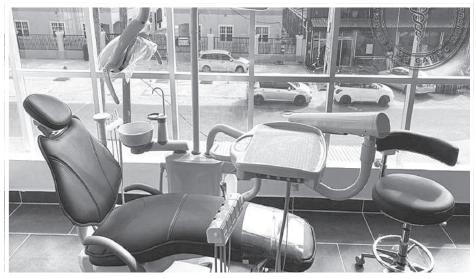
international medical healthcare professionals, of conference presentations а

experts including: featured communicable diseases new on on healthcare systems in treatment. variety of topics, the Caribbean; effective

recent strategies for preventing in infectious diseases, advancements in the and controlling the students, diagnosis and treatment spread of infectious communicable diseases; and the role of and policymakers. The diseases; the impact of research in developing vaccines and

GPHC UPGRADES DENTAL CA RE AT KEY HEA

The Georgetown Hospital Public



Health Centre Enmore

and approach to ensuring Polyclinic, the highest standards

Corporation (GPHC) embarking on a is transformative journey in dental care with the recent upgrade of services at two flagship health centres: Campbellville Health Centre and Enmore Polyclinic.

significant This investment in state-ofthe-art infrastructure and cutting-edge equipment underscores unwavering GPHC's commitment to delivering accessible and top-tier healthcare, the hospital said in a press release.

The expanded dental services, available from

Advanced dental chairs were installed at the centres

8:00 AM to 4:00 PM, Monday to Thursday, and that the procurement GPHC's dedication to 8:00 AM to 3:30 PM on and Fridays, mark a pivotal advanced dental chairs of healthcare innovation. moment in elevating the at both health centres overall dental service have already begun to remarkable experience.

The release stated patient care, showcasing installation of staying at the forefront In addition to the upgrades vield positive impacts on at Campbellville

the release highlighted of healthcare for the extending further installing edge dental at two health centres. These to announce strategically GPHC's of

healthcare coverage. City further exemplifying proactive GPHC's

that the GPHC is communities it serves. Gerron Parker, the its commitment by spokesperson for GPHC, cutting- expressed his delight al chairs at the advancements, additional stating, "We are thrilled these placed advancements in dental chairs aim to broaden services, a testament to the reach of quality our ongoing commitment dental care, reinforcing to enhancing healthcare mission standards for the comprehensive communities we serve."

The release stated It was noted that that GPHC will continue continuous efforts are working tirelessly to underway to initiate initiate dental services dental services at Festival at Festival City Polyclinic Polyclinic and and Industry Health Industry Health Centre, Centre in the near future.

EQUALITY NEWS

GUYANESE DIASPORA DIGEST

GUYANA GEARS UP FOR AQUACULTURE BOOM WITH \$90 MILLION MEGA-FARM

for a major leap in its both aquaculture sector with responsibility the construction of a economic opportunity. \$90 million state-of- Operations the-art farm in Borlam, strategically Berbice. This ambitious away from residential project, spanning 1,000 areas, while the on-site acres of brackish water, processing facility will aims to significantly minimise noise, dust, increase the country's and unpleasant odours. production of fish and This commitment to shrimp, contributing to sustainability its food security goals with Guyana's broader and potentially placing vision for responsible it as a regional leader in development. the industry.

the Protection (EPA) noted that the It plans to purchase fish

Guyana is poised farm's design prioritises environmental and are placed aligns

industry. Beyond its own A press release from production, the farm Environmental will act as a hub for Agency local economic growth.



Berbice to get \$90M aquaculture farm, processing facility

along the Corentyne highlighted. Coast. supporting over 100 valuable

and shrimp from existing opportunities in the and distribute products, brackish water farms region, the release not only from the megafarm, but also from other orting The processing local farms, opening small facility adds another up wider markets in businesses and creating layer of economic Guyana, the Caribbean, employment potential. It will package and even internationally.

Notably, the release state that the facility will utilise fresh water for cleaning, eliminating the need for table salt and making the shrimp more appealing for export.

ambitious This project is just the first step in Guyana's aquaculture expansion plans. The government is actively exploring replicating this model in other parts of the country, recognising the significant economic and food security benefits it offers.

MORAIKOBAI VILLAGE GETS MACHINERY BOOST FOR DEVELOPMENT



Senior Finance Minister Dr. Ashni Singh handed the items to the Moraikobai Village Council

Moraikobai Village Ashni Singh, handed but the village council.

The of President Ali during further the first post-pandemic the National Council communities.

Moraikobai has been village economy. in Region Five received granted \$46 million Leveraging a significant boost for its from this allocation, strategic location development as Senior which will not only fund the Mahaicony River, Finance Minister Dr. the new machinery, Moraikobai stands to also over a mini excavator works on upgrading the government initiatives and a front-end loader to crucial trail connecting across multiple sectors. the equipment village with Linden in empower the village and fulfils a commitment Region 10. Dr. Singh unlock its full potential, Toshaos commitment to conference, Moraikobai's progress, new machinery marks where \$3 billion was highlighting a range a tangible step towards allocated for priority of other interventions this vision. projects in Amerindian aimed at fostering a dynamic and competitive

its on kick-start benefit from various indigenous These initiatives aim to emphasised ensuring a brighter government's future for its residents.

The delivery of the

MAHAICONY RICE FARMERS GET RELIEF FROM WATER WOES - MINISTER MUSTAPHA PLEDGES ACTION



temporary Α rotation system might be implemented to ensure all farmers have access to water.

The Minister



Minister of Agriculture, Zulfikar Mustapha

Mahaicony, water woes due to the be extended dry period and additional resources sigh of relief. Agriculture the right bank farmers. Minister Zulfikar address their concerns. The minister situation.

Rice farmers in committed that two battling existing pumps will optimised, and saline water intrusion, like a water truck from can finally breathe a GuySuCo – will be serve Further, the Guyana Mustapha visited the Rice Development Board area, and pledged (GRDB) will conduct immediate action to four daily salinity tests to keep track of the

explained that long-term solution on the card includes the construction of Hope-like canals in Regions Five and Six.

The ministry is exploring modifying the irrigation system to ensure continued water access, while a rotation system to distribute water equitably among all farmers is under consideration.

National The Drainage and Irrigation Authority (NDIA), GRDB, and Mahaicony, Mahaica, Agricultural Abary Development Authority (MMA/ADA) will closely monitor the situation

Farmers at the meeting

and provide ongoing Approximately support. 40,000 acres of rice A follow-up visit by are cultivated in the Minister Mustapha in Mahaicony area alone. a few weeks will assess Across the country, the effectiveness of roughly 190,000 acres implemented solutions have been prepared for and address any further rice cultivation. concerns.



GUYANESE DIASPORA DIGEST

74 NEW FIREFIGHTERS JOIN RANKS, **BOOSTING GUYANA'S EMERGENCY RESPONSE**



Capacity of Guyana Fire Service boosted with 74 new firefighters

firefighters Centre, West Coast He Demerara.

urged to serve with protecting the nation. distinction during a graduation ceremony. Home

The Guyana Fire Minister Robeson Benn seeing in the service. acknowledging Service (GFS) received a expressed optimism that We will continue to current monopoly on crucial boost as 74 new the new recruits, along **identify by reviewing** such graduated with new strategies **performance**, However, he stressed after an intensive 11-week and equipment, will engagement, training programme at significantly improve the **discipline**, to find the expansion hinges on the the Leonora Training service's responsiveness. best of you because firefighters' highlighted impressive pass rate and of critical importance Hailing from across emphasised the critical to our country," further outlined plans for the country, they were role firefighters play in Minister Benn noted.

> perhaps the highest the GFS's rescue and challenges in those Affairs **pass rate that we are** support

and that the **the work that you do is** and continuous learning.

Minister Benn also and "This is also revealed plans to expand addressing longstanding

their crucial tasks. achieving this dedication Minister Benn new fire stations in Parika Vreed-en-Hoop, capabilities, areas. Additionally, he



Minister Benn and Chief Fire Officer (ag) Gregory Wickham with some of the awarded firefighters and other personnel from the GFS Training Centre

mentioned new fire equipment to to shine within their enhance the service's communities and bolster effectiveness.

Chief Fire Officer teams. (ag) Gregory Wickham reminded the graduates ceremony of the importance of awards for outstanding integrity, respect, and performance, unwavering discipline. Ja'el Yarris earning the He encouraged them to coveted title of Firefighter utilise their newfound Overall.

acquiring skills and enthusiasm existing firefighting

> graduation The also saw with

NEW INITIATIVES ANNOUNCED TO TACKLE FE



Minister of Human Services and Social Services, Dr Vindhya Persaud with British High Commissioner to Guyana H.E Jane Miller during the walk

16 days After 11 with a community walk it. to honour the victims of this devastating crime.

Femicide, the killing the dedicated to raising of a woman or girl commitment to stopping awareness and combating specifically due to her femicide through targeted femicide, the Ministry gender, remains a serious programmes, of Human Services and issue in Guyana, but the and services. One key Social Security's campaign government is taking initiative is the Spotlight culminated on December concrete steps to address Initiative, a collaborative

Minister Dr. Vindhya that Persaud,

government's facilities, model with stakeholders has earned emphasised international recognition for its comprehensive feature," approach.

"Our model has comprehensiveness," a referral pathway, in the coming year. highlighting the response."

The services, 914-hotline and Imatter counselling." app connect victims with seeking help.

holds

Minister more Persaud announced, "so than the previous country's even if you cannot Domestic been make a call, you can Bill." commended for its reach out." This app, are also underway for providing legal counsel the Harassment Bill, stated Minister Persaud. and resources, is set to be further strengthening the "We recently added a valuable tool for victims legal framework around

Families of victims need for a collective were acknowledged as activism culminated in crucial allies in the fight a powerful reminder government against femicide. "The of the diverse forms has also implemented Ministry can never violence against women various programmes to **replace the support of** can take, encompassing directly support victims loved ones," Minister physical, sexual, financial, of femicide, including Persaud noted, "but we child, and digital abuse, financial aid, shelter strive to provide safe alongside counselling, **vouchers**, **shelter**, verbal, domestic, and legal support. The survival kits, and elder abuse. Additionally,

Looking trained personnel to Minister Persaud unveiled marriage, reproductive navigate the process of exciting initiatives like the coercion, and neglect upcoming Family Violence were highlighted as forms "The Imatter app Bill. "This bill holds of violence requiring will be upgraded people accountable," attention.

Urologist at the

Georgetown Public

Rajendra Sukhraj

Hospital Corporation, Dr

individuals Violence Consultations gender-based violence.

The 16 days of emotional, and discriminatory abuse, ahead, sexual harassment, early

as they can worsen the

disease. He encouraged

and

options

even

possibilities.

LOCAL HEALTHCARE SYSTEM EQUIPPED TO HANDLE **ALL STAGES OF PROSTATE CANCER, DOCTOR ASSURES**

Guyanese men can Health's rest assured that the Matters" programme. country's healthcare investments in sector.

Dr. Sukhraj, a Urologist at treatment." Hospital (GPHC), on the Ministry of care.

"Health Dr. system is well-equipped emphasised that GPHC is readily available in newer medications and to diagnose and treat is prepared to handle all the public healthcare advanced technological any stage of prostate stages of prostate cancer, system, and importantly, services cancer, thanks to the stating, "It is crucial it is free of cost. He become accessible." This government's significant that if we diagnose further explained that continuous development the **men**, we should for advanced stages, in the healthcare system be able to offer excellent Rajendra them the necessary options like hormonal treatment options in the the Georgetown Public statement comes as a and injections are also Corporation relief to many men who available at GPHC to men diagnosed with recently may have concerns about control the cancer. addressed this concern access to specialised

Dr. Sukhraj clarified future that surgery for stage- greater Sukhraj one prostate cancer He stated, "Over time, His therapies, quality tablets, years to come. Dr.

will also treatment offers hope for improved Dr. Sukhraj urged

prostate cancer to avoid Sukhraj self-proclaimed or mentioned that the homemade medications,



emphasised the importance of early detection. He advised men between the ages of 40 and 50 to get screened, highlighting that early detection significantly increases the chance of successful treatment, and ultimately saves lives.

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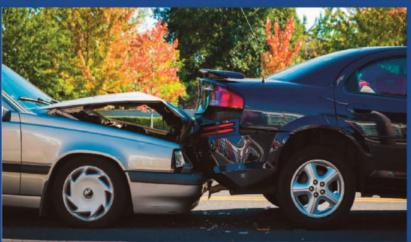




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THURSDAY DECEMBER 28 2023

KEEPING THE DIASPORA INFORMED

MARRIOTT HOTEL NEGOTIATIONS PROGRESSING STEADILY

government The has assured the public negotiations that surrounding the sale of the Kingston Marriott Hotel are progressing steadily, with careful attention being paid to securing the best possible outcome for the nation. While American businessman Ramy El-Batrawi, the highest bidder with an offer of US\$90 million, has expressed some concerns about the pace, Vice President Dr. Bharrat Jagdeo emphasises that thorough due diligence is crucial in such a significant transaction.

"We understand **El-Batrawi's** Mr.



Marriot Hotel in Kingston

eagerness to finalise are paramount in the deal," stated Dr. ensuring the long-Jagdeo, at his recent term benefit for press conference, "but Guyana. NICIL, the transparency and government agency meticulous scrutiny responsible for the

negotiations, to secure the most industry. advantageous terms for our nation."

were submitted for **transparency** the hotel, with initial unwavering," offers falling expectations. Guyanese Consequently, is currently engaged mind." in detailed discussions with as financial feasibility, a significant role in

is sustainability, diligently evaluating potential contributions and understands the **all aspects of the offer** to Guyana's tourism potential

"Our commitment sale. to Previously, six bids accountability short Jagdeo of the government's "We will keep the the informed throughout thorough due diligence, bidding process was re- the process, and the government aims to opened, resulting in Mr. we assure you that ensure that the Marriott El-Batrawi's revised bid the final decision Hotel sale generates and the Integrated Group will be made with positive outcomes for Guyana Inc.'s offer of the nation's best the country, fostering US\$86.1 million. NICIL interests firmly in economic growth and

The both parties, acknowledges that the examining factors such Marriott Hotel plays

and Guyana's tourism sector, economic benefits of a successful However, it **public** emphasizes that and safeguarding national **is** interests through Dr. responsible negotiations reiterated. remains the top priority. By prioritizing **people** transparency and

contributing to a brighter government future for all Guyanese.

GUYANA'S 2022 CENSUS NEARING COMPLETION - PRELIMINARY REPORT EXPECTED IN MID-2024

The anticipated results of the importance Guyana's 2022 Census thoroughness are inching closer, with accuracy. preliminary report expected to reach the at the time responding individuals to provide government by second quarter of 2024. Opposition Senior Minister in the of Parliament Annette Dedicated verification Office of the President, Ferguson, concerning and mobile enumeration Dr Ashni Singh, provided the mechanisms in place teams are this update during the to facilitate maximum working in recent session of the coverage, as well as the areas, while a call center National Assembly.

Dr. emphasised the ongoing efforts to achieve 100% of coverage, ensuring no implemented one is left uncounted. measures to ensure a total While the desire for a swift Enumerators

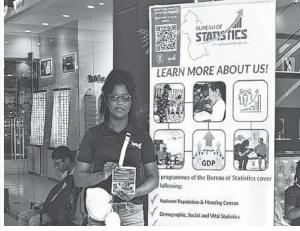
highly completion, he stressed households

the to questions posed by their Singh date for the exercise. The

Statistics has several thorough acknowledging everyone is counted. temporary

multiple of times, leaving calland back cards for missed contacts. An online The minister was feedback platform allows information Member for potential visits. actively remote projected completion assists in identifying and reaching out to Bureau uncounted individuals.

Further to ensure coverage, of 2,811 census visit personnel were hired,



Census publicity outreach

encompassing coordinators.

Individuals

roles believe they were missed such as enumerators, can reach out to the supervisors, and regional Bureau of Statistics via WhatsApp or telephone and addressing the needs who at 701-8700 or 701-

Alternatively, 8701. they can fill out an online form at https:// statisticsguyana.gov.gy/ ninja-forms/9aov9/ to ensure they are included in the final count.

Once finalised, the census data will offer invaluable insights into the demographic landscape of Guyana, informing future policy decisions and public resource allocation. The comprehensive report, expected by the end of 2024, will be a crucial tool for understanding of the nation's citizens.

PING PONG PADDLES UP! NATIONWIDE SCHOOLS TABLE TENNIS CHAMPIONSHIPS LAUNCHED

The Guyana Table Development, unwavering a catalyst for talent at both national and supporting community Tennis (GTTA), in collaboration Priya with the Ministries of Education and Culture, Youth and Sport, and with the generous sponsorship of CNOOC Petroleum Guyana Limited (CPGL), has officially launched CNOOC-GTTA the Nationwide National School's Table Tennis Championships. This exciting initiative promises to ignite a passion for the highlighted sport in young Guyanese, programme's alignment for all children to reach for training, orientation, and unearth the next with the Ministry's their full potential, and instilling life-long generation of table vision of ensuring every both academically and skills that will elevate the XiaoXiang, expressed athletes to showcase tennis champions. in the auditorium of before the National Centre for She Education Resource the

Association Minister of Education, commitment to investing identification and international levels. Manickchand, in education, and development,

fostering The event received youth

development and ment, empow



Part of the launching ceremony

student experiences athletically. During the launch the benefits of sports graduating. Godfrey emphasised envisions government's championships

GTTA the higher

the providing opportunities a comprehensive system President, of table tennis in in Munroe, Guyana, leading to significant as and sustainable growth commitment

international support acknowledging from the Embassy of potential the People's Republic programme to nurture of China in Guyana, future champions, and represented by Charge contribute positively to de Affaires, Counsellor the Guyanese society. Huang Rui.

most popular sports, held across support for the sport's Georgetown efforts.

sponsoring initiative. performance He emphasised their to

the of this

The \$4M Recognising table programme will see tennis as one of China's regional competitions eight and their longstanding regions, encompassing and development in Guyana, locations across Guyana. he commended the It is expected to run organisers for their from December 2023 to February 2024, offering CPGL President, Lui a platform for young profile and marketability the company's pride their talent and compete this for national glory.

KEEPING THE DIASPORA INFORMED

<u>GUYANESE DIASPORA DIGEST</u>

A NIGHT OF GRIEF AND GRATITUDE







Under the sombre theme Our Fallen Heroes," Guyanese gathered at Lieutenant the Guyana National Sean Welcome and Staff Stadium, at Providence Sergeant Jason Khan. There to remember the five were two survivors. brave soldiers who lost their lives in the tragic words, he reassured the helicopter crash.

Minister Phillips, and will continue to stand other officials joined with you...May their families, friends, and souls rest in peace." colleagues in a poignant GDF Chief of Staff, evening of shared grief Brigadier Omar Khan, and gratitude.

Prime Phillips, visibly moved, the officers' passing. shared his deep personal He pledged increased connection to the fallen support for their highlighting families. officers, his military service alongside Lieutenant night, tributes poured Colonel Charles and Brigadier songs, dances, and (Retired) Gary Beaton. spoken word poems He declared them **"the** painted vivid portraits of **best, the crème de la** the fallen warriors. Their crème," stressing their lives, their service, their unwavering commitment sacrifice - etched forever and bravery.

The other three "Honouring soldiers who perished were Colonel Michael Shahoud, Colonel,

With heartfelt icopter crash. grieving families: "We President Ali, Prime are all with you. We

acknowledged the Minister immense void left by

Throughout the Michael in - poignant stories, in the hearts of a nation.













Georgetown bustles with last-minute Christmas shoppers



The air in Georgetown crackles with a potent mix of festive anticipation and last-minute frenzy as Christmas descends upon the city. With only seven days until the big day, families and friends weave through bustling markets, department stores, and street vendors, determined to fill their baskets and hearts with holiday cheer.



















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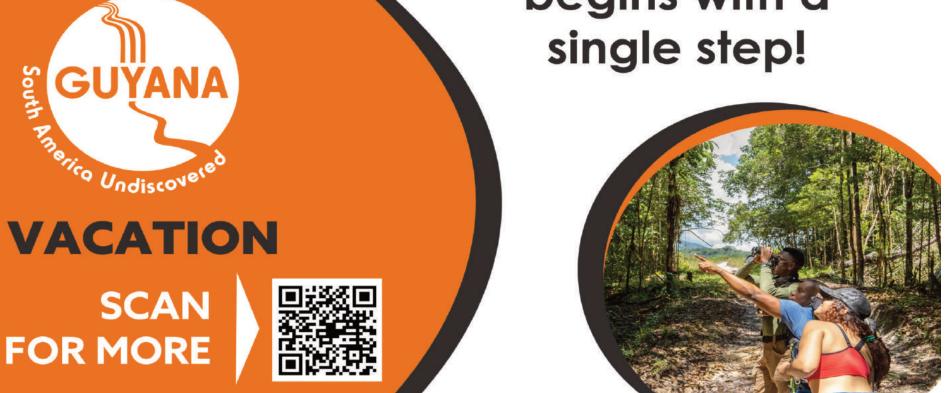
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