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# Guyana to International Court on Venezuela land grab: Intervene now!

*The following is a statement from the Government of Guyana on the Venezuelan government's decision to put its claim on Essequibo region to a referendum to determine whether to invade Guyana or not:*

“ONE week ago, the Government of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana issued a statement denouncing the aggressive new measures taken by Venezuela in furtherance of its groundless and unlawful territorial claim to Guyana’s Essequibo region.

“These new measures included a purported national referendum to ratify the Venezuelan government’s apparent decision to withdraw from the present judicial proceedings in the International Court of Justice (ICJ), and proceed unilaterally to incorporate the Essequibo region into its own national territory as an integral part of Venezuela.

“Guyana properly characterised this naked threat of territorial aggression as: “Nothing less than the annexation of Guyana’s territory, in blatant violation of the most fundamental rules of the UN Charter, the OAS Charter and general international law.”

Guyana’s statement added that: “Such a seizure of Guyana’s territory would constitute the international crime of aggression. Following Guyana’s statement, CARICOM issued a strongly worded denunciation of Venezuela’s measures, fully supporting the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Guyana.”

On Monday, in further response to Venezuela’s sinister plan for seizing Guyanese territory, Guyana sought the urgent protection of the International Court of Justice, by filing with the Court a Request for Provisional Measures.

In that Request, Guyana seeks from the court an order preventing Venezuela from taking any action to seize, acquire or



The International Court of Justice in The Hague, Netherlands

encroach upon, or assert or exercise sovereignty over the Essequibo region or any other part of Guyana’s national territory, pending the court’s final determination of the validity of the Arbitral Award that established the land boundary between our two states, and the final and binding nature of that boundary.

Guyana has no doubt of the validity of that Arbitral Award and the land boundary, which Venezuela accepted and recognised as the international boundary for more than 60 years.

Because of the urgency of the matter, Guyana has asked the court to schedule oral hearings on its Request at the earliest possible date in advance of December 3, 2023, the date Venezuela has fixed for its sham referendum. Guyana insists, as does CARICOM, the Secretaries-General of the United Nations and Organization of American States, and the entire international

community, that the controversy over the validity of the Arbitral Award and the land boundary must be resolved by the International Court of Justice, which will assure a just, peaceful, binding and permanent solution to this matter, in accordance with international law.

In fact, the court itself has determined, in two separate orders, that it has the exclusive jurisdiction to resolve this matter, and that it will do so. Twice Venezuela has formally objected to the court’s jurisdiction, and both times the court overwhelmingly rejected Venezuela’s objections.

In the interim, pending the oral hearing on its request and the issuance of the court’s order, Guyana urges CARICOM and the international community to continue reminding Venezuela of its obligations under international law, including its obligation to accept the ICJ’s jurisdiction,

plead its case to the court, and comply with the court’s rulings and judgments.”

In April of this year, the World Court ruled that the case Guyana brought before it seeking to affirm the validity of the 1899 Arbitral Award settling the boundaries between it and Venezuela was admissible.

This meant that the court could move forward with hearing the substantive case on its merits, of whether the 1899 arbitral award settling the boundaries of the two countries is valid and binding.

The ruling marked the second time that the international court has rejected jurisdictional objections raised by Venezuela.

Guyana moved to the ICJ with its case in March 2018, challenging the non-participating Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela over its disagreement on the legal validity and binding effect of the 1899 Award.

Venezuela maintained that the ICJ was without jurisdiction to hear the case and refused to participate in the court proceedings.

The Spanish-speaking country had claimed that it is the “sole indisputable inheritor” of the Essequibo region and the Monetary Gold Principle.

Although Venezuela had claimed that the ICJ did not have jurisdiction to hear the substantive case, it made a U-turn following the court’s December 2020 ruling on that aspect of the case. Venezuela, on that occasion, contended that Guyana had no standing in the matter. The court unanimously rejected Venezuela’s objection.

Guyana is seeking a final and binding judgement that the 1899 Arbitral Award, which established the location of the land boundary between then British Guiana and Venezuela, remains valid, and that the Essequibo region belongs to Guyana and not Venezuela.

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# GUYANA UNITES AGAINST VENEZUELAN TERRITORIAL THREAT

## - CARICOM CONDEMNS VENEZUELA'S ACTIONS



The meeting between the two sides



The meeting between the two sides

Guyana's government and opposition have united against Venezuela's attempt to annexe Essequibo territory. President Dr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali and Opposition Leader Aubrey Norton met to discuss Venezuela's threat to Guyana's sovereignty.

In a joint statement after the meeting, both leaders condemned Venezuela's "flagrant violation of the rules" and reaffirmed their commitment to the ongoing judicial process to resolve the territorial dispute peacefully, and in accordance with international law.

In a separate statement, CARICOM also expressed concerns about Venezuela's actions, and emphasised the importance of the region remaining a zone of peace.

### SEE THE STATEMENTS BELOW:

#### JOINT STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT AND LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION

His Excellency Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali, President of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana and Mr Aubrey C. Norton, MP., Leader of the Opposition met at the Office of the President on Tuesday, October 24, 2023, to discuss the existential threat by Venezuela to Guyana's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

President Ali was accompanied by Honourable Brigadier (ret'd) Mark Phillips, M.P., Prime Minister, Dr. the Honourable Bharrat Jagdeo,

M.P., Vice President, Honourable Gail Teixeira, M.P., Minister of Parliamentary Affairs and Governance and Honourable Hugh Hilton Todd, M.P., Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation.

The Leader of the Opposition was accompanied by Honourable Khemraj Ramrattan, MP., Honourable Amanza Walton Desir, M.P., Honourable Geeta Chandan-Edmond, MP., Honourable Tabitha J Sarabo Halley, MP., and Ambassador Ronald Austin CCH, Adviser.

In discussing the latest actions by the Government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela in pursuit of its spurious claim to the Essequibo territory of Guyana, President Ali and Opposition Leader Mr. Norton from the outset, agreed that Guyana's sovereignty is of paramount importance and is a matter on which the Guyanese people are all completely united.

To this end, they condemned the flagrant violation of the rule of law by Venezuela and agreed that no effort should be spared to resist that country's persistent endeavours to undermine Guyana's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

President Ali and the Leader of the Opposition agreed that the protection of the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the state must be subserved by a vigorous and comprehensive public relations programme and a proactive and robust diplomatic effort aimed at blunting Venezuelan propaganda and misinformation

as they relate to the territorial controversy generally, and the Geneva Agreement in particular.

They reaffirmed the commitment to the current judicial process that is being conducted under the aegis of the International Court of Justice and are convinced that this would finally resolve the question raised by Venezuela over the validity of the 1899 Arbitral Award.

They recalled that for more than six decades after the 1899 Arbitral Award was delivered, Venezuela treated the Award as a final settlement of the border between the two countries. To this end, it consistently recognised, affirmed and relied upon the 1899 Arbitral Award as "a full, perfect, and final settlement" of the boundary between British Guiana and Venezuela.

In particular, between 1900 and 1905, Venezuela participated in a joint demarcation of the boundary, in strict adherence to the letter of the 1899 Arbitral Award, and emphatically refused to countenance even minor technical modifications of the boundary line described in the Award. Venezuela proceeded to formally ratify the demarcated boundary in its domestic law and thereafter published official maps, which depicted the boundary following the line described in the 1899 Award.

In July 1931, Venezuela concluded a boundary agreement with Brazil that expressly confirmed the tri-junction point of the boundaries of British Guiana, Venezuela and

Brazil as described in the 1899 Award. For more than sixty years, Venezuela gave full effect to that Award, and never raised a concern as to its validity and binding legal effects.

President Ali and Opposition Leader Mr Norton determined that the questions to be posed in the Referendum to be held by Venezuela on December 3, 2023 violate the sanctity of treaties. Moreover, they are in blatant disregard of the principles of international law. In particular, question three of the set of questions to be placed before the people of Venezuela speaks to the "historical position" of Venezuela "of not recognizing the jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice to resolve the territorial controversy over Guayana Esequiba"; while question five seeks the approval of the Venezuelan people for the creation of a new Venezuelan State consisting of Guyana's Essequibo Region, to include "the granting of citizenship and Venezuelan identity card in accordance with the Geneva Agreement and international law". This is a deliberate misinterpretation of the Geneva Agreement and a clear violation of International Law.

They further underscored the fact that no Government or the people of one country has the right in international law to seize, annex or conquer the territory of another country. International law emphatically prohibits this.

They acknowledged the support by the international community

for the preservation of Guyana's sovereignty and territorial integrity and urged that Venezuela's actions be closely monitored as they pose a serious threat to the peace and security of the hemisphere.

President Ali and Opposition Leader Mr Norton agreed to keep in close consultation on this matter of national importance.

#### STATEMENT BY CARICOM

The Caribbean Community (CARICOM) notes the decision of the Venezuelan National Assembly to conduct a popular referendum on defending Venezuela's claim of the Essequibo.

CARICOM further notes that two of the questions approved to be posed in the Referendum, if answered in the affirmative, would authorise the government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to embark on the annexation of territory, which constitutes part of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana, and to create a state within Venezuela known as Guyana Essequibo.

CARICOM reaffirms that international law strictly prohibits the government of one State from unilaterally seizing, annexing or incorporating the territory of another state. An affirmative vote as aforesaid opens the door to the possible violation of this fundamental tenet of international law.

It is to be emphasised that the land and water in question — the Essequibo Region of Guyana — comprises more than two-thirds of the whole of Guyana itself.

CARICOM notes that the language of two questions approved to be posed in the Referendum seeks an affirmation and implementation of Venezuela's stance on the issue "by all means, according to/with the Law." It is open to reasonable persons to conclude that "by all means", includes means of force or war.

CARICOM earnestly hopes that Venezuela is not raising the prospect of using force or military means to get its own way in this controversy over territory. After all, it has been the long-standing position of Latin American and Caribbean countries, including Venezuela, that our region must remain a zone of peace.

Meanwhile, CARICOM insists that the Referendum proposed by Venezuela has no validity, bearing, or standing in international law in relation to this controversy; the Referendum is a purely domestic construct, but its summary effect is likely to undermine peace, tranquility, security, and more, in our region.

CARICOM reiterates its support for the judicial process and expresses the hope that Venezuela will engage fully in that process before the International Court of Justice which has determined that it has the jurisdiction in the case brought before it to determine the validity of the 1899 Arbitral Award which Venezuela questions. The Court's final decision will ensure a resolution that is peaceful, equitable and in accordance with international law.

# IDB APPROVES US\$90 MILLION LOAN TO IMPROVE GUYANA'S EDUCATION SYSTEM



Over 8,000 primary school students will benefit from the project

The Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) has approved a US\$90 million loan to improve the quality of education in Guyana. The loan will be used to build new schools, upgrade existing ones, and provide training for teachers.

A release from the Education Ministry noted that the project will benefit over 8,000 primary school students and their communities. The new schools will provide 2,610 new

primary education spaces. At least 7,341 students and 352 teachers from Grades Two to Six will receive digital devices to support their teaching and learning.

The project will also focus on improving the quality of teaching by providing professional development for teachers. The goal is to help teachers develop the skills they need to teach 21st-century skills.

In addition, the project will strengthen

the Ministry of Education's capacity to deliver improved educational services to vulnerable students, and those with special education needs. This includes developing a language policy that will guide interventions for indigenous students in the future and an inclusive education policy.

The IDB loan has a grace period of 5.5 years, an amortisation period of 25 years, and an interest rate based on SOFR.

# NEW BLOCK AT ST. WINEFRIDE'S SECONDARY AND TWO DORMS AT LEONORA SECONDARY COMMISSIONED



Inside the brand-new dormitory at Leonora, West Coast Demerara

Minister of Education Priya Manickchand commissioned the Avril Crawford Block at St. Winefride's Secondary School in Georgetown

The two dormitories at Leonora Secondary School cost \$75 million and currently house 23 students from far-flung communities in Region

regardless of their background or location.

"Children, who before today, could not get a secondary education, or had to go to Bartica, Aurora, or Anna Regina can now come here... which is easier for them and their parents. A lot of parents were reluctant to send their children so far away," she said.

Minister Manickchand also explained that dormitories are available at secondary schools across the country,

# STEWARTVILLE SECONDARY SCHOOL GETS SMART CLASSROOM



Smart Classroom commissioned at Stewartville Secondary School

Stewartville Secondary School in Region Three now has a state-of-the-art smart classroom, thanks to the government's commitment to modernising the education sector through the infusion of technology.

The smart classroom was commissioned by Minister of Education Priya Manickchand who highlighted the

importance of using technology to reach children in every region, and to lessen the disparities in the quality of education.

"This is an indication of our commitment to you that you will always come first in our priorities," Minister Manickchand told the students. "You will see that translated into actions."

The new smart classroom is equipped with an interactive board, audio system, smart cameras, and wireless television, which will allow teachers and students to connect and interact remotely. It also has motion-activated and speech-activated cameras with voice recognition to ensure effective communication.

Regional Chairman



Commissioning of the Avril Crawford Block

and two dormitories at Leonora Secondary School in Region Three.

The \$85 million Avril Crawford Block is a two-storey building with five classrooms and a modern science laboratory. It is named after one of the school's first headteachers, Avril Crawford.

Three. The dormitories have fire prevention tools and other amenities, and two dorm parents are at the facilities.

Minister Manickchand highlighted the importance of these facilities in ensuring that all students have access to quality education,

including in Regions One, Seven, Eight, Nine, and Ten.

These investments in educational facilities are part of the Government's broader plan to transform the education sector, and ensure that all Guyanese children have the opportunity to succeed.

Sheik Ayube, who also spoke at the commissioning ceremony, emphasised the importance of smart classrooms in enhancing student learning and preparing students to function in today's society.

The government has established smart classrooms at over 10 schools across Guyana over the past three years. This year, 25 more smart classrooms will be established or enhanced at secondary schools.



The smart classroom commissioned at Stewartville Secondary School

# CANADA-CARICOM SUMMIT FOCUSES ON STRENGTHENING REGIONAL COOPERATION FOR A RESILIENT FUTURE

## - PRESIDENT ALI CALLS FOR GLOBAL PEACE AND JUSTICE

In an address at the recently held Canada-CARICOM Summit Reception hosted at Ottawa's Fairmont Chateau Laurier, His Excellency, Dr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali, emphasised that the alliance between Canada and the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) extends far beyond regional development, extending to the betterment of all humanity.

Co-chaired by Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and the current Chair of CARICOM, the Prime Minister of Dominica, Roosevelt Skerrit, the summit brought together key leaders to strategise and work toward a resilient future.

Dr. Ali emphasised, "Our concern is about peace for all of humanity, justice, equity, and the removal of hate. Our concern is to end the war with peace



Regional leaders at the Canada-CARICOM Summit in Ottawa, Canada

all across the world. And we can only do so with action. If all of us stay silent, then we are just as equally guilty in the world of injustice. One of the great attributes of Canada and our region is our continuous voice on the side of justice based on principles and values."

Moreover, Dr. Ali acknowledged that both regions have embraced a set of values that have significantly influenced

their societies. He encouraged the sharing of these values and the lessons learned from their culturally diverse and tolerant societies with the rest of the world, saying, "We must no longer keep this great asset to ourselves. We have enough lessons to share with the rest of the world."

The President highlighted the mutual understanding and partnership between the region and Canada,

emphasising the importance of diplomacy and cooperation in addressing future challenges and opportunities. He stated, "Together, we will forge a remarkable alliance that serves as a testament to the power of diplomacy, cooperation, and unwavering commitment to building a better future."

Dr. Ali expressed the significance of Canada's global

standing as a voice for all. He looked forward to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's strong leadership and commitment to democracy and human integrity, noting, "Canada stands in a very significant place, globally, to speak up on behalf of everyone."

On the sidelines of the summit, President Ali held bilateral discussions with Prime Minister Trudeau, highlighting

Guyana's economic growth, its Low Carbon Development Strategy (LCDS) 2030, and its aspirations to become a global leader in food, energy, and climate security.

Dr. Ali also acknowledged the significant contribution of the Caribbean diaspora to Canada's development and the beneficial relationship it fosters, saying, "The Caribbean diaspora has played a significant contribution to the development of Canada... Our diaspora is a critical component of our mutually beneficial relationship since it ensures that the people are at the centre of our relations." He noted that the diaspora is a potential source of capital and knowledge, a fact valued and acknowledged by all CARICOM states.

## GUYANA WELCOMES NON-RESIDENT AMBASSADOR OF SOUTH AFRICA



The accreditation ceremony

President Dr. Irfaan Ali received the Letters of Credence from the Non-Resident Ambassador of South Africa to Guyana, Her Excellency Lumka Yengeni. The ceremonial exchange marked a milestone in the relations between the two nations.

At the official ceremony at the Office of the President on

Shiv Chanderpaul Drive, President Ali highlighted the historical and cordial bilateral relations that have long existed between Guyana and South Africa. He expressed eagerness to work closely with Ambassador Yengeni in her new capacity to solidify the bonds between the two nations

further. Diplomatic ties between Guyana and South Africa were initially established in 1994. Since then, both countries have collaboratively engaged in various initiatives, fostering cooperation and understanding.

## GUYANA HOSTS US DEPUTY TRADE REPRESENTATIVE FOR TALKS

The Ninth Meeting of the CARICOM-United States (US) Trade and Investment Council was held at the CARICOM Headquarters in Georgetown, Guyana. The meeting was led by Guyana's Foreign Secretary Robert Persaud and the US Deputy Trade Representative Ambassador Jayme White.

The meeting addressed trade and investment issues pertaining to food production, labour, good regulatory practices, trade in services, and intellectual property.

On the margins of the Council meeting, Foreign Secretary Persaud and Ambassador White also met to discuss Guyana-US trade and investment-related issues.

This is a significant event for Guyana, as it demonstrates the country's growing

importance as a trade and investment partner for the US. The meeting was also an opportunity for Guyana to discuss its trade and investment priorities with the US, and to seek support for its development goals.

The outcome of the

meeting is expected to be positive for Guyana, as it is likely to lead to increased trade and investment between the two countries. This will benefit both countries, as it will create jobs and boost economic growth.



Foreign Secretary Robert Persaud greeting the US Deputy Trade Representative Ambassador Jayme White.

# GUYANA POISED TO CONTINUE OUTPERFORMING OTHER CARIBBEAN COUNTRIES IN ECONOMIC GROWTH



The reports paints a bright picture Guyana's economic prospects

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has released its Regional Economic Outlook for Guyana, and the report paints a bright picture of the country's economic prospects.

The report highlights Guyana's robust economic expansion, driven primarily by the burgeoning oil and gas sector. The IMF predicts an impressive growth rate for Guyana's economy, underscoring the nation's resilience amid global economic challenges.

The report also notes Guyana's favourable investment

sustainable growth.

The report commends Guyana for actively diversifying its economy beyond oil and gas. Initiatives aimed at strengthening sectors like agriculture, tourism, and manufacturing are gaining traction, reducing the nation's reliance on a single sector.

The IMF report also highlights the government's commitment to enhancing social services and infrastructure development. Investments in education, healthcare, and public infrastructure projects contribute to improved quality of life for the Guyanese population.

Finally, the report praises Guyana's active participation in regional forums and its expanding diplomatic relations, which are contributing to stability and prosperity in the region. These partnerships, the IMF added, are poised to open new avenues for economic cooperation, trade, and development.

climate, which has attracted a significant inflow of foreign direct investments, creating fresh opportunities for job creation and infrastructure development. These investments are playing a pivotal role in strengthening the nation's economic foundations, and enhancing the living standards of its citizens.

Additionally, the IMF underscores the government of Guyana's fiscal responsibility, which has resulted in a stable macroeconomic environment that serves as the bedrock for

# DR SINGH ASSURES IMF, GUYANA COMMITTED TO CONTINUED PRUDENT ECONOMIC MANAGEMENT

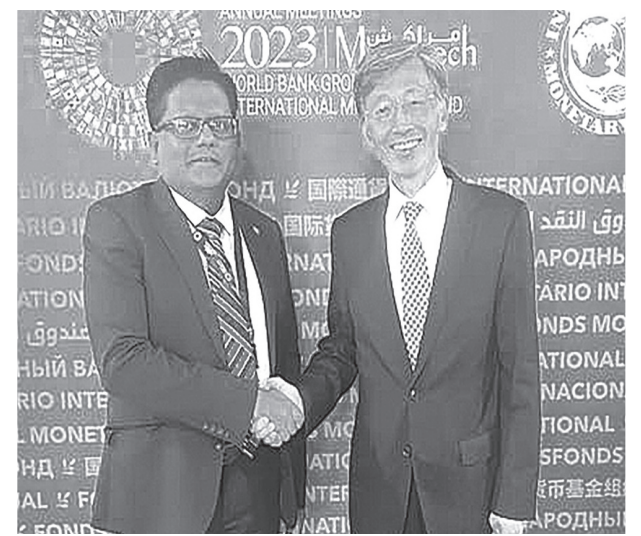
During the IMF World Bank Group's 2023 Meetings in Morocco, Senior Finance Minister Dr. Ashni Singh assured IMF's Deputy Managing Director (DMD) Kenji Okamura that the Government of Guyana is committed to continued prudent and sustainable management of the country's economy.

Dr. Singh highlighted that Guyana's economy recorded real economic growth of more than 40 percent on average per annum over the last three years, with medium-term growth projected at more than 20 per cent on an average annually.

Okamura recognised Guyana's strong economic performance and economic policy agenda.

The IMF predicts Guyana's GDP growth rate of 38.4% this year and an expected expansion of 26.6% in 2024, with double-digit growth expected in the country.

Dr. Singh reminded that Guyana has moved a long way from its unfortunate economic position in the past, when it was one of the most heavily indebted poor countries in the world. **"There was a time when Guyana's debt to GDP ratio was more than 600 percent, and it took hard work to get us from where we were as a Heavily Indebted Poor Country (HIPC) with debt to GDP exceeding 600 percent and debt service to revenue**



Finance Minister Dr Ashni Singh and IMF's Deputy Managing Director Kenji Okamura, in Marrakesh, Morocco

exceeding 100 percent to bring us to a point where our debt to GDP ratio was about 60 percent and that is before we started producing oil," Dr. Singh explained to the IMF official.

He said that the current administration has made a sustained policy effort to open up the economy and transition it from essentially an economy dominated by Government and State activity to an economy that is driven by private investment, both foreign and domestic.

Dr. Singh also reiterated Government's intention to continue to manage the economy in a prudent, sustainable manner to continue the success through among other approaches, creating a successful diversified non-oil economy. **"We are using this period to make the strategic investments that are necessary to**

ensure that in the medium to longer term Guyana is not an economy that is solely dependent on oil. We want to make sure that we have a growing, globally competitive non-oil economy so we are using this period to invest in things like infrastructure to improve connectivity with our neighbours, increase the economic space in which we are operating, and therefore lay the foundation for more trade..."

the Minister pointed. He added that the Government is working on building a road to Brazil, and a bridge to Suriname, promoting the Caribbean Economic Integration agenda under the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and fast-tracking initiatives to advance economic integration in specific areas like food security.

# PRESIDENT ALI WELCOMES NEW US AMBASSADOR, EMPHASISES SHARED COMMITMENTS

President Ali welcomed the new United States (US) Ambassador to Guyana, Nicole D. Theriot, during a ceremony at the Office of the President on Shiv Chanderpaul Drive. In the meeting with the new Ambassador, President Ali highlighted the significant shared commitments between Guyana and the US that extend beyond specific projects and encompass vital global issues such as democracy, the rule of law, and international peace.

President Ali underscored the importance of enhancing cooperation between the two countries, building a deeper relationship, and positioning both nations within the regional context. He emphasised that Guyana is actively pursuing a vision to become a global leader in areas such as food, climate, and energy security.

Speaking at the event, President Ali stated, **"We look forward to strengthening**

the ties between our countries and collaborating on issues that matter not only to Guyana and the United States but to the international community at large."

The Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Hugh Todd, and the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry, Elisabeth Harper, were also in attendance at the ceremony.



New United States of America (USA) Ambassador to Guyana, Nicole D. Therio handing over her credentials to Presidential Ali

## GOV'T INVITES REVISED PROPOSALS FOR AMAILA FALLS HYDRO PROJECT



The Amaila Falls, Region Eight is the intended site for Guyana's first largescale renewable energy project.

The Government of Guyana has reinvited Requests for Proposals (RFPs) for the Amaila Falls Hydropower Project (AFHP) under a Build-Own-Operate-Transfer (BOOT) model. The project will integrate and expand the Guyana Power and Light's (GPL) national grid capacity to include Linden, Region 10.

Interested parties must submit one proposal based on a BOOT model, which includes the construction of a hydro dam, transmission lines from Amaila to Linden, substations at the Amaila site, and upgrades and completion of roads and bridges to the site. The hydro may be re-engineered to take account of changes in turbine technology, thus

allowing more than 165 MW to be generated and transmitted.

The RFP process will be conducted in three stages:

- **Stage 1:** Pre-qualification of parties capable of undertaking the above (hydro and transmission lines/substations).
- **Stage 2:** Pre-qualified parties will be asked to provide feedback on the preliminary project structure and documents.
- **Stage 3:** Formal RFP submissions based on the final Project Structure and Contractual

documents.

**The deadline for submission of pre-qualifications is November 28, 2023.**

The AFHP was first proposed in 2011, but was put on hold by the previous government. The current government has made the development of the AFHP a priority, as it will play an important role in the country's energy mix, and help to reduce electricity costs.

The government is committed to developing the AFHP transparently and accountable. The RFP process has been designed to ensure that the project is awarded to the best qualified bidder and that the interests of the Guyanese people are protected.

## GUYANA TO FINALISE 30,000-BARREL-PER-DAY OIL REFINERY BY YEAR-END



AI-generated refinery image

President Ali has announced that the government is aiming to finalise the 30,000-barrel-per-day oil refinery in Region Six (East Berbice-Corentyne) by the end of the year.

Several bids have been submitted for the

design, financing, and construction of the refinery, which will be located at the mouth of the Berbice River.

President Ali, on a recent visit to Berbice, said that the refinery will reshape the region's economic outlook, and generate abundant

opportunities for its residents. He also said that the refinery will allow Guyana to sell different parts of crude oil to various industries, which will attract global investments.

The refinery is expected to commence operation in 2025.

The government has said that the refinery will be a major boost to the country's economy and will create thousands of jobs. The refinery is also expected to help Guyana reduce its reliance on imported fuel.

The construction of the facility is part of the government's plans to develop Guyana's oil and gas sector.

## GOV'T AWARDS OIL BLOCKS TO SIX COMPANIES AFTER BIDDING EVALUATION

The government has awarded eight of the 14 oil blocks to six different companies, as announced by Dr. Bharrat Jagdeo during a press conference at the PPP/C Headquarters at Freedom House. The awarded blocks and companies are as follows:

- **Block S3** was awarded to Sispro Inc., led by four Guyanese businesswomen.
- **Block S4** went to a consortium comprising Total Energies EP Guyana BV, Qatar Energy International E&P LLC, and Petronas E&P Overseas Ventures SDN BHD (Malaysia).
- **Block S5** was awarded to International Group Investment Inc, a Nigerian group.
- **Block S7** went to Liberty Petroleum Corporation of the US and Ghana-based Cybele Energy Limited.
- **Block S8** was awarded to the ExxonMobil, Hess, and CNOOC consortium, which



Dr. Bharrat Jagdeo

currently operates in the Stabroek Block offshore.

- **Block S10** was also awarded to International Group Investment Inc.
- **Block D1** was awarded to Delcorp Inc Guyana, Wataad Energy, and Arabian Drillers of Saudi Arabia, two Saudi Arabian companies that are incorporated.
- **Block D2** was awarded to Sispro Inc.

It is important to note that there are a total of 11 shallow water and 3 deep water blocks available; 'S' refers to blocks in shallow water, and 'D' refers to blocks in deep water.

Dr. Jagdeo mentioned that the government will enter into negotiations with the awarded companies. The companies are required to confirm their ability to pay the signing bonus, which amounts to US\$10 million for each shallow block and US\$20 million for each deep-water block. He emphasized, "We may have a situation where we may not be able to finalise with everyone."

However, Dr. Jagdeo emphasised that the government will not change the fiscal terms, and if the demands from the companies are deemed extreme, the government may opt not to proceed with those negotiations.

## GUYANA CELEBRATES 46TH OIL DISCOVERY AS LANCETFISH-2 WELL UNVEILS SUBSTANTIAL HYDROCARBON RESERVOIR

In a statement issued by the Ministry of Natural Resources, it has been revealed that the Lancetfish-2 appraisal well in the Stabroek Block has yielded a significant discovery, marking the fourth offshore discovery in Guyana for the year 2023. This latest find adds to a growing tally of discoveries, bringing the total number of discoveries from 2015 to the present to an impressive 46.

The noteworthy discoveries of 2023 thus far include Fangtooth SE-1 and Lancetfish-1, both located within the Stabroek Block, and the Wei-1 discovery in the

Corentyne Block.

However, the Lancetfish-2 discovery in the Liza Petroleum Production License area stands out as a particularly promising find, revealing an estimated 20 meters of hydrocarbon-bearing reservoir in addition to approximately 81 meters of further hydrocarbon-bearing sandstone.

This newfound

reservoir is slated for a comprehensive appraisal process, aligning with the ongoing appraisal activities related to other significant discoveries in the region. As Guyana's oil exploration and production sector continues to thrive, this latest discovery underscores the nation's growing significance in the global energy landscape

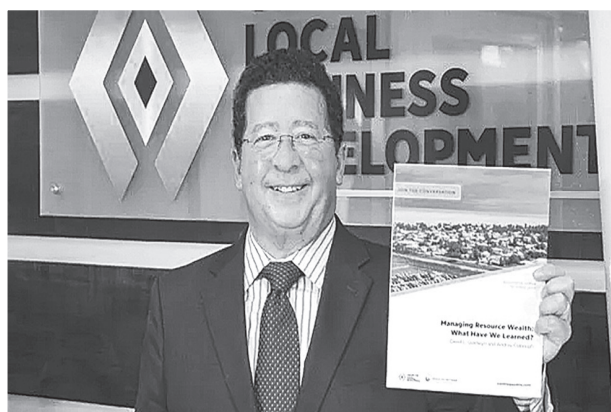




## GUYANA PRAISED FOR MANAGEMENT OF RESOURCE WEALTH

Guyana has received commendation for its stellar management of its resource wealth, specifically in the oil and gas sector from Global Educator and Policy Innovator in energy security and extractive industry transparency, David Goldwyn.

Goldwyn met with members of the local media, at the Centre for Local Business Development (CLBD), as part of its “Join the Conversation” series and observed that, **“In Guyana, I think there are tremendous reasons for hope... that’s because of the lessons learnt on how to get resource management right. The top-of-line strategies of the government are really all first-rate... create a natural resource fund, save for future generations, sequester some of those revenues; second diversify the economy, and look at**



David Goldwyn, educator and policy innovator in energy security and extractive industry transparency

**other areas that can create jobs.”**

The educator also commended the government for its strong leadership in resource management.

**“So, it’s a lot to think about. It’s important and the government understands this perfectly well to get the business right and to get things done fast and maximise those revenues for sustainable development,”** he added.

Meanwhile, Director of CLBD, Dr. Natasha

Gaskin-Peters noted that the “Join the Conversation Series” is important since Guyana now has a lot of oil resources.

She said is important to ensure that Guyana manages the resources in an efficient way so that the lives of Guyanese are improved.

The CLBD series aims to create an understanding of how countries and companies have managed resource wealth and how a growing economy can affect business in the near and distant future.

## GOVT FAST-TRACKS ACQUISITION OF PROPERTIES FOR NEW DEMERARA RIVER BRIDGE



Artist impression of the new Demerara River bridge

In the pursuit of the eagerly awaited US\$260 million Demerara River Bridge, the government is intensifying its efforts to secure around 40 privately-owned properties situated in Nandy Park and Continental Park on the East Bank Demerara, which are critical for the bridge’s landing alignment.

Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs, Mohabir Anil Nandlall, shared this development during his weekly televised programme ‘Issues in the News.’ He explained that the government is adhering to a well-established procedure when dealing with such situations, engaging property owners in a consultative exercise.

**“Our government has a clear and settled procedure by which it approaches this type of situation. We have done it many times before. We did it when we were doing the Berbice River Bridge ... the process is that we engage the residents and the owners of the properties in a consultative exercise,”** he stated.

While property owners express their willingness to relocate, the primary focus now revolves around agreeing upon fair compensation. The Attorney General explained that the property owners are being presented with various compensation options, including monetary compensation,

land allocation, house and land, and combinations thereof, depending on the property’s assessed value.

The Attorney General underscored the government’s commitment to ensure a non-confrontational process where property owners are content that they have received just market value, and adequate compensation for their properties acquired for the bridge’s public purpose.

Consultation exercises are set to continue as the multi-million-dollar Demerara River Bridge project advances. The project, awarded in 2022 to a joint venture involving China Railway Construction Corporation, China Railway Construction (Caribbean), and China Railway Construction Bridge Engineering Bureau Group, will feature a modern four-lane structure with a projected lifespan of approximately 100 years, significantly alleviating traffic challenges and fostering economic growth in Guyana’s Regions Three and Four.

## BIDS OPENED FOR CORENTYNE RIVER BRIDGE, PAVE WAY FOR ENHANCED CONNECTIVITY, ECONOMIC GROWTH



Meeting earlier this year between Guyana and Suriname officials to discuss the bridge

The Corentyne River Bridge project has taken a major step forward with the opening of bids for its construction on October 12. This marked a milestone in Guyana’s transport network, an undertaking that will create new opportunities, especially for residents of Region Six (East Berbice-Corentyne).

The bridge will connect Guyana to Suriname, facilitating

the movement of goods and people between the two countries. This will be a boon for Region Six farmers, who can transport their produce to new markets in Suriname.

Addressing a gathering in Black Bush Polder, Minister of Public Works Edghill emphasised the immense significance of this development. He highlighted the potential

for Berbice to become a hub within Guyana’s transport network, with the bridge over the Corentyne River and an enhanced four-lane highway leading to it.

In addition to the bridge, the government is also developing a deep-water harbour at Palmyra. This facility will allow for the movement of goods in and out of Brazil, providing significant advantages to local businesses.

**“In the entire Palmyra area, there is going to be a whole ecosystem that will bring about a hub of development.”**

The Corentyne River Bridge and the Palmyra deep-water harbour are part of a larger effort to improve Guyana’s connectivity with its neighbours.

## GUYANA INITIATES PROJECTS TO SUPPORT SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT AND LAND RECLAMATION

The Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) has unveiled two new projects to support the country’s sustainable forest management, and land reclamation.

A press release from the Ministry of Natural Resources noted that the first project is a National Forest Inventory (NFI), which is being implemented by the Guyana Forestry Commission (GFC). The NFI is a multi-year project that will collect data on the quantity and quality of forest produce in state forests. This data will be used to inform planning and utilisation decisions by stakeholders, as well

as to evaluate forest resources, and inform policy intervention.

The second project is a National Forest Restoration Initiative (NFRI), which is a collaboration between the GFC and the Guyana Geology and Mines Commission (GGMC). The NFRI aims to restore forests using mainly native tree species and to incorporate these activities as alternative livelihoods for forest-dependent communities.

These projects align with the Low Carbon Development Strategy (LCDS) 2030, a framework for achieving a more united, inclusive, sustainable, and

prosperous Guyana.

The NFI is expected to be completed by the end of 2023, and the NFRI will be completed within the next five years.



These projects align with the Low Carbon Development Strategy (LCDS) 2030

## \$8.8B IN CONTRACTS SIGNED FOR CONSTRUCTION OF COMMUNITY ROADS IN REGION SIX



A contractor signing the contract

The government has signed 287 contracts to construct community roads in Region Six (East Berbice/Corentyne) at a total cost of \$8.8 billion. The signing took place at the Albion Centre Ground.

The works will be carried out by 200 contractors.

Senior Finance Minister Dr. Ashni Singh said the signing was a momentous occasion, as it will see the region's construction, reconstruction, or rehabilitation of hundreds of roads. He noted that this is possible due to the responsible and prudent

management of the country's economy.

Dr. Singh contrasted the PPP/C's focus on investing in public capital assets with the APNU/AFC's emphasis on recurrent expenditure. He said that the PPP/C is committed to continue to invest in infrastructure until every street is fixed in every village in the country.

**"...and I believe that the people of the beneficiary communities are already seeing the impact of these investments,"** Dr. Singh added noting that **'many of you know, you've seen**

**me in your respective villages. I have had the privilege of going to communities and witnessing roads that previously were dams... many of them never having been in receipt of the benefit of a finished surface- and I have gone back and seen how the construction of a road where previously there was a dam, the immeasurable difference this makes to communities.'**

Minister of Public Works Bishop Juan Edghill said that the government has been able to do more than it anticipated with regard to road construction. He said this is due to the fiscal space created by the government's sound economic management.

Minister Edghill said that the PPP/C government has done more than it has promised and that the people of Guyana can be proud of their government.

## \$47.1M IN SCHOOL GRANTS DISTRIBUTED IN REGION SEVEN



\$47.1M in School Grants distributed in Region Seven

The Ministry of Education has distributed \$47,157,000 in School Grants to nursery, primary, and secondary schools in Region Seven. This grant gives schools full autonomy to purchase their resources and empowers Headteachers to become better managers of their schools.

Under the grant, teachers will be given \$4,000 per child on the Coastland and \$5,500 per child in the Hinterland per term. For schools with less than 56 students enrolled, a standard amount of \$224,000 per term will

be granted.

Deputy Chief Education Officer with responsibility for Amerindian Hinterland Education Development, Mr. Marti DeSouza, said that the grant will enable teachers to deliver the curriculum in creative and innovative ways. He explained that a list has been provided to guide teachers' purchases.

Regional Education Officer for Region Seven, Ms. Selestine La Rose Bristol, said that the initiative is a welcome one as teachers will be able to purchase the resources needed in a timely manner.

Headteachers

praised the initiative, noting that it will assist teachers in ensuring their classrooms are child-friendly, and lessons are delivered innovatively and creatively.

"This is a great initiative," said one Headteacher. "It will allow us to purchase the resources we need to create a more engaging and stimulating learning environment for our students."

Another Headteacher said, "This grant will greatly help ensure that our teachers have the materials they need to deliver high-quality instruction."

attractive destination for arbitration in relation to the Caribbean, Latin America, and even South America," the AG explained.

The government of Guyana is also in talks with the University of Guyana regarding including courses in commercial arbitration in the Bachelor of Laws degree programme, to build capacity in handling cases of this nature.

According to the Attorney General, many international and commercial agreements governing ongoing projects in Guyana contain arbitration clauses as the desired mechanism for settling disputes. However, the seat of that arbitration is outside of Guyana. The new Arbitration Bill is hoped to influence companies to change that approach and situate Guyana as the seat to do their arbitration.

The enactment of this legislation would facilitate job creation and generate revenue for Guyana.

## GOVT PROVIDES TRAINING, SUPPORT TO PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES



Participants undergoing the training

The government is providing training and support to persons with disabilities (PWDs) to help them develop skills and start their own businesses.

Some 51 PWDs from Bartica, Moruca, and Linden are currently participating in Garment Construction and Basic Computer Skills training. This training will help them develop skills in high demand in the job market and access the digital world.

Additionally, 23

PWDs are set to benefit from video and audio editing training at the Learning Lab, Mahaica. This training is designed to help PWDs develop skills that they can use to become entrepreneurs.

Upon completing the training, PWDs interested in obtaining a loan to kickstart their business will receive assistance from the ministry through the Small Business Bureau's Business Revolving Fund for PWDs.

## NEW BILL TO POSITION GUYANA AS ARBITRATION HUB

Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs, Anil Nandlall, SC, has announced that the country's new Arbitration Bill is complete and will be tabled in the National Assembly soon. The bill is expected to position Guyana as an arbitration hub.

During his weekly televised programme, Issues in the News, Minister Nandlall disclosed that the bill is based on the modern bill of the Caribbean, with significant additions to expand its depth and scope. It incorporates the key provisions of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL) Model Law on Arbitration, which has been approved by the



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

CARICOM Secretariat for implementation by member states.

The bill has also received reviews from international law firms, adding to its credibility. It permits international arbitral companies to locate in Guyana and operate under the bill. It also allows judiciary-driven arbitration and for parties to decide

between or among themselves to take their dispute for resolution by arbitration utilising the law.

The bill is expected to facilitate arbitration as a viable method of dispute resolution instead of litigation. Arbitration is a form of alternative dispute resolution that sees the parties involved in a dispute agreeing to have the case heard by one or more arbitrators entrusted with making a legally binding decision.

**"It is the hope that once we can make Guyana self-sufficient in terms of arbitration, we would be able to move to the second stage, and refine the process and the infrastructure to such an extent that we would be an**

# SUCCESSFUL FARMERS' MARKET DAY BENEFITS CONSUMERS AND FARMERS



Vendors and patrons at the farmers' market in Leonora



Rice being sold at the market in Lusignan



Vendors and patrons at the farmers' market in Lusignan

The Ministry of Agriculture recently organised farmers' market days at multiple locations across Guyana, including the National Track and Field Centre in Leonora, the Lusignan Market, and the Albion Community Centre along the Corentyne Coast. The events were met with great success, drawing enthusiastic responses from consumers, farmers, and stakeholders alike.

Bibi Bacchus shared her joy at attending the market day, emphasising the importance of the government's efforts in providing affordable prices to the public. Farmers like Govinda

strong demand from consumers. President of the Region Three Chamber of Commerce, Premendra Parsan, highlighted the significance of these farmers' market days

to alleviate the cost of living. "The people are enjoying coming and getting things reasonable because, we know the cost of living right now is very high and government is just



Vendors and patrons at the farmers' market in Leonora



Vendors and patrons at the farmers' market in Leonora

## ABUNDANT CHOICES

Consumers flocked to these market days, where they had the opportunity to purchase fresh produce at significantly reduced prices. A wide variety of commodities were on sale, including chicken, shrimp, beef, pork, eggs, coconut oil, fruits, vegetables, plants, juice, and ground provisions.

## POSITIVE FEEDBACK

Linden Clay from Stewartville, West Coast Demerara, expressed his satisfaction with the event. He noted that the initiative was beneficial for farmers and consumers, providing access to "affordable commodities." Clay hoped that such events would become a regular occurrence.

Sami, with 46 years of experience in the Parika area, initially hesitated to participate due to the bustling Leonora Market. However, the positive response from customers and their praise for the quality and pricing of the produce changed his perspective. "A lot of persons came and complimented us and our prices," Sami expressed.

Trevor Ramadin of Basdeo's Dynasty commended the initiative and was pleased with the high turnout. "The turnout has been great. I saw the first shopper come in at 5:37 am," Ramadin stated. Most of their products sold out, indicating

in uniting farmers from different regions.

## THRIVING MARKETS BEYOND LEONORA

At the Lusignan market, Abigail John, a vendor from Buxton, celebrated her second year participating in the farmers' market. She expressed her excitement and satisfaction at being a part of this initiative. "I touched down here at 4:20, my first sale was at 5:20," she said.

Visitors like Randy Abrams appreciated the reduced prices and commended the government's efforts

trying to help out the situation," he said.

Strifeana Abrams, a first-time visitor, found the prices much more affordable and praised the initiative. "I got the flyer sent to my phone and I said, you know what, go check it out. So, today is the first time actually coming to it. So far, the prices are much affordable. I like it," she said.

## GOVT'S EFFORTS TO ADDRESS PRICE CONCERNS

Minister Zulfikar Mustapha explained that the recent complaints about high commodity prices prompted the

introduction of farmers' market days. This initiative aims to stabilise prices and ensure both consumers and farmers receive fair deals. Minister Mustapha also shared his hope for regular farmers' markets across the country to curb price inflation by eliminating middlemen.

**"I am looking forward that every week now, we will have at least two farmers' markets across the country. We will be looking to ensure that consumers receive a fair price, and for farmers to receive a fair price for their produce...I am hoping that we can be able to control the prices for these across the country so that the middle men**

would not increase their prices..."

## UPCOMING FARMERS' MARKETS

Several more farmers' markets are planned for the coming weeks at different locations across the country. Kuldip Ragnauth, Deputy General Manager of the Guyana Rice Development Board, explained that these markets are part of Agriculture Month activities, and offer local producers a direct avenue to sell their products while ensuring consumers access affordable commodities.



Abigail John and a customer



Vendors and patrons at the farmers' market in Lusignan



Vendors and patrons at the farmers' market in Lusignan

## PRESIDENT ALI HIGHLIGHTS IMPORTANCE OF SELF-REFLECTION AT NAVRATRI OBSERVANCES

President Ali joined devotees at the Alexander Village Mandir in Georgetown for the eighth night of Navratri, a nine-night Hindu observance.

In his remarks, President Ali emphasised the importance of self-reflection in Hindu teachings and society as a whole. He noted that Guyana's multiethnic and diverse society can serve as a model for the world, and that religions such as Hinduism can



President Ali joined devotees at Navratri observances at the Alexander Village Mandir

shape how the world views humanity.

President Ali also stressed the importance of sharing knowledge with the younger generation. He urged devotees to pray for their leaders, who have played a role in keeping Hinduism alive.

Senior Minister in the Office of the President with Responsibility for Finance, Dr. Ashni Singh, who accompanied the president, praised the mandir's executive for

preserving the religion. He noted that the presence of young people at the mandir was a sign that the Hindu legacy would be passed down to future generations.

Navratri is a time for Hindus to come together and celebrate Durga, the mother goddess. The festival is a reminder of the importance of self-reflection and compassion, and of the role that religion can play in shaping a better world for all.

## GUYANA HOSTS FINANCIAL INVESTIGATION AND ASSET RECOVERY WORKSHOP TO COMBAT FINANCIAL CRIMES

The Attorney General's Chambers and Ministry of Legal Affairs, on behalf of the Government of Guyana, partnered with the Asset Recovery Unit (ARU) of the Regional Security System (RSS) to host a Financial Investigation and Asset Recovery Workshop in Guyana from the 9th to the 13th of October, 2023.

Several important State institutions and law enforcement agencies participated in this engagement, including the Judiciary and Magistracy, the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions, the Financial Intelligence Unit, the Bank of Guyana, the Guyana Police Force, Special Organised Crime Unit, Customs Anti Narcotic Unit, Guyana Revenue Authority, among others.

The workshop focused on the following areas: Digital Evidence, Investigative Orders: Procedural Requirements and Appropriateness, Disclosure Orders: Procedural Considerations, Restraint Orders: Procedural Considerations, Cash seizure, Re-seizure and Detention, Investigative Orders: Application, Evidential Burden and Procedure and Civil Recovery: building a Civil Recovery Case.

This is yet another demonstration of the Government's commitment to ensure that the Rule of Law prevails generally and specifically to combat all forms of criminal activities, mainly financial and organised crimes.

Hosting the Financial Investigation and Asset Recovery Workshop in Guyana is a significant development, as it demonstrates the Government's commitment to tackling financial crimes and AML/CFT/PF-type offences. The workshop also provided an opportunity for State institutions and law enforcement agencies to learn from the ARU's expertise and develop a more coordinated approach to combating these crimes.

The workshop focused on various important topics, including digital evidence, investigative orders, disclosure orders, restraint orders, cash seizure, and civil recovery. These topics are all essential for effectively investigating and prosecuting financial crimes.

The Government's commitment to addressing the deficiencies identified in Guyana's legal and AML/CFT/PF architecture is also encouraging.

Prime Minister Brigadier (Ret'd) Mark Phillips recently hosted a meeting with the Commonwealth Heritage Forum (CHF) representatives to discuss heritage preservation, sustainable development, and climate change adaptation. The fruitful discussion took place at the Prime Minister's Official Residence on Main Street, Georgetown.

Prime Minister Phillips welcomed Mr. Philip Davies, CHF's Chief Executive officer, and its Chair, Mr. Francis Maude. They were accompanied by several notable figures, including the British High Commissioner to Guyana, HE Jane Miller, Ms. Alisande Jaiserrisingh as the High Commissioner for the Day, and Ms.



Prime Minister Phillips leading the delegation on a tour of his own residence

Kassia De Santos, Programme Manager of the Caribbean and Small Island Developing States Department Americas and SIDS Directorate.

The group discussed preserving historic buildings for sustainable development and climate change, exploring collaboration with local

heritage organisations, conservation-led regeneration, and potential CHF funding in government and private sectors.

Prime Minister Phillips praised Guyana's efforts to preserve historical buildings, and supported the CHF's objectives and initiatives

to preserve the nation's rich heritage.

As a unique highlight of the meeting, Prime Minister Phillips led the delegation on a tour of his own residence, which received the distinguished classification as a heritage site earlier this year.



The opening of the three-day Financial Investigation and Asset Recovery Workshop

This commitment demonstrates that the Government is serious about combating

financial crimes and protecting the financial system.

Overall, hosting the

Financial Investigation and Asset Recovery Workshop in Guyana is a positive development

that will help strengthen the country's ability to combat financial crimes.



President Ali touring the exhibition at the Agri-Investment Forum and Expo



The official launch

# CARIBBEAN NATIONS FORGE AGRICULTURAL ALLIANCES AND INNOVATION

## - AT GUYANA'S REGIONAL AGRICULTURAL INVESTMENT FORUM AND EXPO

The third Regional Agri-Investment Forum and Expo in Guyana showcased many exciting developments and partnerships aimed at advancing agriculture, technology, and food security in the Caribbean region.

Over three days, at the Arthur Chung Conference Centre, the event brought together diverse stakeholders, including 150 exhibitors, over 80 agro-processors, and investors, farmers, government officials, and more, all rallying behind the theme of "Investing in Vision 2025."

### UNITING FOR VISION 25 BY 2025

President Dr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali spearheaded the event, emphasising Guyana's commitment to become a leader in food security. He called for increased collaboration between Guyana and the broader Caribbean region to realise Vision 25 by 2025, a bold plan to reduce the region's food import bill by 25 percent by 2025.

President Ali urged regional institutions like the Caribbean Development Bank to realign their programmes to support this vision. "They have to re-organise their programme portfolio to provide greater investment to bring the regional commercial banks together, to deploy their private sector window with a regional commercial bank," he stressed.

He called for strategic planning to ensure responsible, people-driven development that addresses climate, food, and energy security.



Scene from the opening ceremony

He also revealed Guyana's plans to establish a national information platform to empower farmers with data-driven insights, ensuring informed agricultural decision-making.

### CALL FOR INVESTMENT AND INNOVATION

Vice President Dr. Bharrat Jagdeo addressed a critical aspect of achieving Vision 25 by 2025, and called for increased investment in infrastructure, innovation, and technology within the agriculture sector.

He stressed that achieving a 25% reduction in the region's food import bill by 2025 requires a more substantial commitment from governments and the private sector.

He asked, "How will we achieve a 25 per cent cut by 2025 if we don't invest?" "It requires money to achieve that ... the goals are important, but they have to be supported by the policy environment and investments both by the public and private sectors to

achieve," he answered.

Dr. Jagdeo urged governments to consider fiscal incentives for the agriculture sector and highlighted the importance of integrating new technologies, all while emphasising climate resilience and adaptation.

### IMPORTANCE OF INVESTMENT

Agriculture Minister Zulfikar Mustapha underlined the significance of investments in agriculture's growth and transformation.

He highlighted progress since the last Agri-Investment Forum,

citing advancements in various sectors, including soya and corn production, shade house technology, coconut industry expansion, livestock, poultry, mutton production, and fisheries.

Minister Mustapha emphasised the pivotal role of agri-business in enhancing food security, modernising agricultural practices, improving value chains, and leveraging technology and innovation.

### HYDROPONICS PROJECT FOR YOUTH EMPLOYMENT

The expo also marked the launch of a US\$4.5 million hydroponics project to create jobs for over 300 young people. The project, funded by ExxonMobil Guyana, HESS Corporation, and CNOOC through the Greater Guyana Initiative, focuses on sustainable agriculture methods suitable for Guyana's tropical climate.

President Ali, who launched the project at the Expo, said that it is a "true demonstration of unlocking an equal set of opportunities for youths in Regions Two, Five, and Ten."

He added that the project will link the output of the farms directly to the markets, and that the beneficiaries will be trained in marketing, packaging, and promotion.

Dr. Ali urged the beneficiaries to be fully dedicated to the project, as they are on their way to becoming "investors, entrepreneurs, and innovators in Guyana's agri-food system."

He also highlighted that two other projects are underway to support the initiative and include all sections

of society. One project is creating the world's most innovative farm for persons with disabilities. The other project is to ensure that 50% of new farms in Guyana are owned by youths and women by 2030.

### GUYANA AND CANADA COLLABORATION

Meanwhile, President Ali announced a partnership with Canada to train at least 3,000 young people in various tech fields to address the technological and innovative aspects of agriculture, reflecting the commitment to preparing the workforce for the future.

This initiative aims to prepare young people for future jobs, and boost Guyana's workforce while fostering bilateral relations with Canada.

### GUYANA AND CUBA SIGN MOU FOR FOOD SECURITY

Guyana and Cuba signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to collaborate on forestry and agriculture, focusing on agriculture and vegetable...

Cont'd on page 14



A US \$4.5M hydroponics programme was launched for youths of Regions 2, 5 & 10



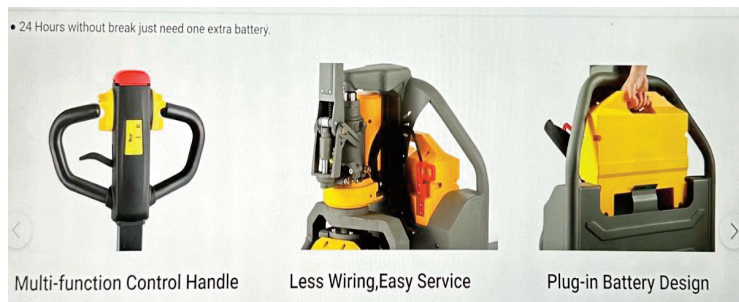
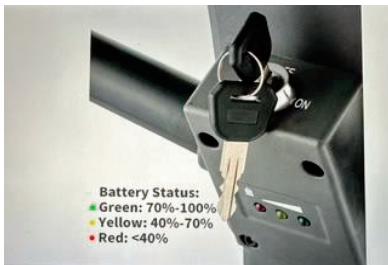
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MODEL# BLION-EW1500



Electric Pallet Trucks	
Type	BLION-EW1500
Serial No	
Pallet Capacity	3300 Lbs
Lift Height	7.5 inch
Weight Without Battery	258.5 Lbs
Battery Capacity	20 Ah
Allowed Battery Weight	16.5 Lbs
Battery Voltage	48 V
Service Weight	275 Lbs



## Guyana gov't to opposition: put differences aside on border issue

MINISTER of Parliamentary Affairs and Governance, Gail Teixeira, has called for Opposition Chief Whip, Christopher Jones, to work in the national interest and unite in order to set aside a date for the National Assembly's extraordinary session.

This session is aimed at considering a motion on the ongoing Guyana-Venezuela border controversy, which is currently before the International Court of Justice (ICJ).

"I therefore ask that due to the urgency and national importance of this matter that we do not "split hairs" and proceed with the understanding of the meeting of His Excellency, the President and the Honourable Leader of the Opposition that an Extraordinary sitting be held as soon as possible," Minister Teixeira said.

Adding: "Notwithstanding, I am prepared to meet you tonight at my office 7:30 p.m. or tomorrow at 11:00 a.m. at my office to discuss the date for the Extraordinary sitting."

In response to a letter by Jones, she maintained that the subject-matter of the previous meeting between the Opposition and the Government was to brief the Leader of the Opposition, Aubrey Norton, and his delegation on the existential threat by Venezuela to Guyana's sovereignty and territorial integrity, and a unanimous commitment to the process to resolve the controversy through the ICJ.

The minister then stated that there

was an agreement to hold an urgent extraordinary sitting of the National Assembly, which would deal with the recent developments in Venezuela with regards to the referendum planned for December 3, 2023.

She underscored that at no point in the meeting was there an agreement that there needed to be an agreed date between the government and opposition before the sitting was called.

"It was agreed that this sitting would be held as soon as possible and within the first week of November. Further, Minister Todd, as deputy Chair, and Minister of Foreign Relations and International Cooperation, would convene a meeting of the Foreign Relations Committee to brief the members," Minister Teixeira said.

She added: "With regards to Foreign Relations Committee I am advised that the understanding was an extraordinary sitting should be held at "the earliest", with no date being set nor was there any decision that the Chief Whips must meet to agree on a date."

In its most recent claims, the Spanish-speaking country has stated that it will be holding a "consultative referendum" on December 3 ahead of the ICJ's ruling on the matter.

In April of this year, the World Court ruled that the case Guyana brought before it, seeking to affirm the validity of the 1899 Arbitral Award settling the boundaries between it and Venezuela was admissible.

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# HIGHLIGHTS FROM GUYANA'S REGIONAL AGRI-INVESTMENT FORUM AND EXPO









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Lucozade Energy Glucose Drink Orange 380 ml

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Supligen Instant Breakfast Beverage 250 ml

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2/2.50



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1.69 each



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Delphi Honey From Greece 1 kg

7.99 each



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2/\$2



Heinz Ketchup 1 L

4.49 each



Diana Spicy BBQ Sauce 500 ml

1.99 each



Pickapeppa Original Sauce 148 ml

3.30 each



Maxwell House Instant Coffee Original Roast 150 g

3.49 each



Brunswick Sardine Hot Pepper Only 106 g

1.69 each



Dunya Harvest Butter Bean 425 g

89¢ ea.



Grace Hominy Corn 400 g

2/\$2



Robin Hood All Purpose Flour 1 kg

2/5.50



Bedessee's Carbolic Soap 125 g

3/2.20



Bath & Body Hand Soap Assorted 400 ml

89¢ each



Puresst Klean Bowl Cleaner 50 g

89¢ each



TMPR Alcohol Solution 473 ml

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**Grown From Australia**  
**Free Range Goat**



**\$449**  
lb Frozen

**Frozen Boneless Mutton Leg Meat**



**\$549**  
lb

**Lightly Fat Trimmed Best Quality Easy Cook Oxtail**



**\$699**  
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**Burned Goat Head**



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bag

**Fresh or Frozen Goat Tripe**



**\$299**  
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**Salted Alaskan Cod Fillet**



**\$899**  
Lb as is

**Frozen Headless Bangamary**



**\$499**  
Lb

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**Fresh Large Chicken Feet**



**\$149**  
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**Exceldor Fresh Chicken Leg Quarters**



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18 kg box  
With Purchase of 2 cases or More Thursday To Sunday Only Or 3.06 kg for Over 18 kg Box

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**Fresh Brazilian Red Snapper**



**\$699**  
lb as is

**Fresh Doctor Fish**



**\$699**  
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**Fresh Parrot Fish**



**\$599**  
lb as is

**Fresh Red Grouper**



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**Dry Coconuts**



**249**  
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**Fresh Jamaican Yellow Yams**




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**Fresh Cooking Bananas**



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South  
289-298-0399



**Store Hours**  
Monday-Friday 9 am to 9 pm  
Saturday 8 am to 9 pm  
Sunday 9 am to 7 pm

# CARIBBEAN NATIONS FORGE AGRI

Cont'd from page 11



Guyana Signs MOU with Cuba

...products, livestock, beekeeping, and more. This partnership will support Guyana's food security goals and boost agricultural production. The MoU was signed by the Director General of the Agriculture Ministry, Madanlall Ramraj, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry, Delma Nedd, and Cuban Ambassador to Guyana, Jorge Francisco Soberón Luis. Ramraj highlighted that Guyana has several hectares of land that are largely undeveloped for beekeeping, which offers enormous potential for the growth of the apiculture sector. This will enable Guyana to meet the 25 by 2025 initiative by increasing its honey production for Guyana to become agricultural methods to transform the agricultural food systems in the region towards full commercialisation. Ramraj also highlighted that Guyana will be signing a technical assistance agreement with the Cuban Company,



Launch of the bio-fortified rice variety

Secretary of the Ministry, Delma Nedd, and Cuban Ambassador to Guyana, Jorge Francisco Soberón Luis. Ramraj highlighted that Guyana has several hectares of land that are largely undeveloped for beekeeping, which offers enormous potential for the growth of the apiculture sector. This will enable Guyana to meet the 25 by 2025 initiative by increasing its honey production for Guyana to become agricultural methods to transform the agricultural food systems in the region towards full commercialisation. Ramraj also noted that Guyana is forming partnerships with nations that possess some of the greatest CATEC- Labiofam, to boost the honey industry in Guyana.

## NEW BIO-FORTIFIED RICE



President Ali touring the exhibition at the Agri-Investment Forum and Expo

### VARIETY

A notable achievement during the expo was the launch of a new bio-fortified rice variety, G18-113, which is high in zinc content. This rice, developed through conventional breeding, is set to contribute significantly to food security, and health in Guyana, and the wider region.

It is anticipated that Guyana will produce 847,000 metric tonnes of rice by 2025, and the new bio-fortified variety is expected to play a significant role in this increase.

Prime Minister, Brigadier (Ret'd), Mark Phillips underlined that, over the years, Guyana's rice sector has proven to be sustainable, creating jobs for rural communities, while significantly advancing the nation's agricultural sector and food security goals.

Annually, the government spends over \$300 million on research and

development to increase yields, as well as output in the rice industry. This includes the introduction of the bio-fortified rice variety.

"This rice is a good economic choice for farmers as it possesses excellent early vigour, a good plant type and high yield potential, (68 tonnes per hectare). This will contribute to the economic growth of the country through preferential prices and increased market prices," PM Phillips stressed.

Meanwhile, Guyana and the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) announced plans to establish a Centre of Excellence for Studies in Agriculture, with a focus on innovation and resilience.

The transformed Guyana School of Agriculture will house this center, providing advanced training for youths in the region, and a "Situation Room" will offer real-time data for farmers to make informed decisions.

### AGRI STUDIES CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE



Students at the expo

## AGREEMENT SIGNED TO PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE IN GUYANA

H&L Agro, a Jamaican company, and Agricultural & Public Health Solutions (APSOL) signed an agreement to further develop and sustain the agricultural sector in Guyana.

Through the cooperation, APSOL will now distribute H&L goods, such as potting soil, in the Guyanese market. APSOL offers farmers and plant enthusiasts seedlings, seeds, pesticides, and specialised agricultural assistance.

H&L Agro and APSOL support Guyana's strategic programme



The signing of the agreement

and Vision 25 by 2025 to improve energy efficiency, agricultural sustainability, food security and safety, and the advancement of the agricultural sector. During the signing ceremony, Jagnarine Singh, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the National Agricultural

Research and Extension Institute (NAREI), underscored that the government will support the two companies by providing the

necessary assistance. He commended the companies for embarking on the significant partnership and added that it is an opportunity to share experiences and drive the 25 by 2025 matrix.

Olive Downer Walsh, Deputy Chief Executive Officer (DCEO) of H&L Group, highlighted that partnership is integral to the company. She stated that the company is not just about getting the products sold, but also about working together to achieve the president's vision.

Alvin Parag, Managing Director

of APSOL, said it is imperative to sustainably manage the abundance in Guyana and the Caribbean for future generations. He stated that the company's responsibility to the nation is to offer safe products, and that all its activities will be geared towards sustainability and aligned with the president's vision.

The agreement is expected to create job opportunities in Guyana to help educate farmers, on how to use the products.

# Crime is T&T's biggest problem

By Dr Bhoendradatt Tewarie

The biggest problem in Trinidad and Tobago is violent crime, murders and home invasions. The severity of these, affects everything else.

Crime is a problem throughout the Caribbean and, it will not just go away without deliberate strategic actions and interventions. Jamaica, by making targeted interventions, is beginning to see a reduction in homicide and violent crime. The Jamaican government is claiming, 12% reduction. Jamaica in the past, had surpassed every other Caribbean country except Haiti, in gangs, guns and violent crime. So it is clear that progress can be made if government and the forces of law enforcement align things properly.

The Trinidad and Tobago government needs to summon the will to mount an action plan led by the police and, actively supported by other arms of the military and sovereignty establishment, to contain and reduce criminal violence in Trinidad and Tobago. A concerted effort is required, which demands cooperation and collaboration between, Police, Army, Coast Guard, Customs, Prisons, Immigration and the political directorate.

Guns are not manufactured in Trinidad and Tobago. They come in illegally in coastal areas not watched by the Coast Guard or, corruptly, through Customs.

Foreign Criminal elements can be involved in drug trafficking and human trafficking aligned with partners in TT and, therefore, the Immigration Department, has a key role in protecting the country. The fight needs to be taken to the gangs with military back up, along with coordination among various law enforcement entities. This is critical at this time when crime is becoming overwhelming and seems difficult to contain. The country may need help to bring the range of connected problems under control to create a better outcome and the TT government should ask for international help because they need it.

Any crime solution in my view, requires a fierce, concerted attack on gangs, guns, drugs as part of a corrupt network of alliances.

It requires international cooperation and coordination to close the loopholes in Caribbean border security

It requires honest government committed to the public good to address corruption which feeds into crime and supports a crime industry.

It requires a recognition of what the persistence of economic inequality does to Caribbean societies and how it helps to justify and breed criminal activity

It requires a serious look at our education system where failure of the secondary school system to manage students between the ages of 12 to 16, is providing recruits to gangs and gangsterism.

It requires reform of the public service apparatus, Customs, Immigration, the Criminal Justice System, Prisons and Law Enforcement. These have, it seems, been compromised.

Moreover, it requires economic strategies that fuel growth, jobs and in-

comes and a reduction of the social welfare establishment and a political patronage industry of make work programmes that often finances gangsters.

We need a prosperity strategy for TT based on non energy exports, which puts the oil and natural gas industry behind us even as we explore options with Venezuela, Guyana, Suriname, close neighbours to us. Such a dual track strategy is a necessity now.

The State is too involved in the economy and what we need is massive surge of private investment which moves us up the value chain in manufacturing and services, and which integrates us into the evolving global value chain. Trinidad and Tobago graduates about 5000 people in their 20s and 30s, annually from the tertiary and University sector and that is a talent pool that will wither or migrate if it does not find opportunities commensurate with its aspirations at home.

There is a pervasive feeling that gangs, corruption, and criminal activity are protected by the powerful in government and politics, in the criminal justice system and in law enforcement. This feeling is pervasive because nothing else can explain the inaction, the absence of results and violent crime as a persistent growth industry.

The answer of the Minister of Finance in the 2024 budget is 1000 additional police recruits and a budgetary allocation of \$6.912 billion TT dollars (just over \$1 b Canadian) but it is clear that the problem is not the number of officers, because Trinidad and Tobago has about 10 000 active police officers for a population of 1.4 million, if one includes special reserve police. This is quite a high ratio. And the solution is not just money.

The Opposition Leader has put forward a number of proposals to address crime in her budget contribution, but government and opposition are soon to meet to see if they can come to agreement on a series of jointly supported measure, so we wait to see if those talks will yield anything.

Crime in Trinidad and Tobago is so out of control now, that it needs a whole of government/ whole of society approach, which takes an integrated action approach to a set of interconnected problems. On the one hand, Trinidad and Tobago needs comprehensive strong arm approach to gangs; but it needs as well, a range of targeted economic and social interventions to deal with inequality of opportunity and growing economic disparity. The country needs precision interventions at the level of individual schools and we must as a society demand a comprehensive attack on corruption and complicity wherever these exist, or else, meaningful solutions will continue to elude us.

## KAMLA, SUCCESSION AND WINNING

The political crisis that we are in, in Trinidad and Tobago is bigger than the current leaders. Bigger than Keith Rowley and Kamla Persad Bisessar if they care to admit it. So for me the issue is not personality, nor the individual, Kamla Persad Bisessar. She was a good Prime Minister, but it is clear that she also did things that have caused a loss of confi-

dence in her leadership.

The first crisis is really a nation in crisis. It is that 30 continuous years of PNM rule, under Eric Williams followed by George Chambers, plus 7 years under Patrick Manning and nearly a decade under Keith Rowley have not created a viable economy beyond oil and natural gas, nor a social model beyond subsidies and transfers, with an over bloated, unachieving State bureaucracy, unprofitable State enterprises and political dependency based on handouts to the dispossessed without a plan for citizen empowerment.

The second is that various versions of the UNC have done little to shift that model and create genuine conditions for structural transformation and economic and social sustainability because they were perhaps too afraid of the political backlash, maybe lacked the ideological clarity and were not bold enough to take strategic risks that would shift policy and trigger change to achieve more desirable outcomes. Or maybe structurally it was too demanding and difficult for essentially one term governments.

Sixty years of independence has, therefore, brought Trinidad and Tobago to where it is now, still overdependent on fossil fuel energy, at a time of global insistence on cleaner energy, its own energy resources dwindling, a steady depletion of foreign reserves and a rising debt profile, slow non energy export expansion, high food import bill, low food security and import substitution, foreign exchange shortages, a significant loss of GDP, growing economic disparity, low labour market participation, violent crime and a reduction in standard of living for middle class, working poor, unemployed and marginalized.

People have lost faith, therefore in the traditional parties and their approach to governance. So any of the traditional parties winning an election now means no win at all for the citizenry and no win for better governance either. This raises the question-- is it leadership alone or, the structure of the traditional two party system, as well? And personality does matter, but is that the enduring factor?

Third parties have tried to break this two party dominance or duopoly, (ONR 1981 and COP 2007) were unsuccessful. And this is where coalitions of various types

(NAR 1986, UNC/ DAC 1997, Peoples Partnership 2010) have tried to disrupt the traditional duopoly. But while coalitions have won, they have failed to last.

Moreover, none of the new political parties in this round, seems to have captured the popular imagination nor summoned the popular will. Although it is not conclusive, we see evidence of this in this year's (2023) local government election.

So the electorate in Trinidad and Tobago is faced with an existential crisis of choice. They are wary of the traditional parties on good governance and shared economic prosperity, they know that third parties find it near impossible to achieve victory on their own, and if they become part of a coalition, do not last, and they are disappointed with coalitions of various types, so now with

all options exhausted they do not know what to do.

The cry for a change in leadership in the UNC is from those locked in the traditional two party paradigm. They feel that Rowley and the PNM are so resented now, that a new leader of the UNC can cause a change of government. The focus of the two main parties is winning. For PNM it is retaining power for UNC it is getting back into power. But the electorate is unsure that either party would make a positive difference in governance or indeed solve the deep economic and crime crisis in which the country now finds itself. The PNM has had 9 years, what will they do different with another five? They have no solutions. What decisive solutions are the UNC proposing? What is the key governance problem that they have identified? What is transformative and inclusive in their economic strategy that can inspire?

So Kamla Persad Bisessar has had a long run, she did better than the PNM in the last local government election and won a kind of reprieve, which she is trying to bolster with formation of a coalition with known political personalities. But the truth is that both PNM and UNC did badly in the polls. The PNM hard core did not come out, the UNC hard core did. Yet 70% of the population did not vote and the voter turnout was 4% lower than the last local government election in a situation where resentment of the governing party was at an all time high.

Mrs Bisessar seems to have lost her magic with the electorate. Just as Rowley has. It is difficult to see who can bring that magic back to the UNC, assuming the PNM has run its course. So for the UNC leadership change is necessary because partisan thinking is of the view that Kamla Persad Bisessar cannot win another national election to form a government. Those outside narrow Party circles, raise anxieties about whether she can hold the country together given the massive deterioration in economic, financial, sociological, social and political circumstances. But if some one were to succeed her, he or she will have to offer something more than "we change Kamla" to win. And that new leader will need to convince the country that he/ she can govern well with the UNC, around a vision that generates credibility and a team that offers competence to govern.

The issue is beyond Kamla Persad Bisessar as a personality in my view; it is beyond a successor leader, and winning now. It is who and what has the where withall, know how and do how, to begin economic recovery, bring crime under control and begin a strategic process of structural economic transformation with less government, more investment, technology driven jobs, decent incomes and greater prosperity and opportunities that are shared and spread throughout the population so that citizen independence and democracy can be strengthened. In other words, the current crisis requires more than personality or personalities.

What is needed is a transformation leader that is capable of navigating an entirely new frontier.

## PM PHILLIPS HIGHLIGHTS REGION SIX'S ECONOMIC POTENTIAL AT BERBICE EXPO

In his keynote address at the 17th annual Berbice Expo and Trade Fair, Prime Minister Brigadier (Ret'd) Mark Phillips underscored the diverse resources of Region Six, emphasising the region's potential to develop into an economic powerhouse.

Region Six is Guyana's third largest region, with an area of 36,234 square kilometers. It is traditionally recognised as one of Guyana's

primary agricultural heartlands and the country's second most popular region.

**"If this region can be conceived in terms of its vastness, and diversity of resources, then it will be evident that Region Six has the potential to develop into an economic powerhouse,"** Prime Minister Phillips said.

He highlighted the region's potential to transform into a major economic tourism



President Ali interacting with vendors at the expo

destination and a hub for fabrication, manufacturing, and agro-processing. He emphasised that public investments have already begun acting as a catalyst for the revitalisation of the economy.

**"Our government, the government that I am a part of, is reigniting the economic engines of this region. Through significant investments in infrastructure, we are laying the groundwork for economic**

**expansion,"** he said.

One of the major projects planned for the region is bridging the Corentyne River, which will facilitate the movement of people and goods between Guyana and Suriname. In addition, there are plans for widening the Corentyne Highway and constructing a modern aerodrome.

The agriculture sector is also undergoing revitalisation through investments in fertilisers, drainage and irrigation infrastructure, and funding for new

industries and crops. The Rose Hall Sugar Estate was also reopened.

Overall, the prime minister emphasised that the government is committed to accelerated development, fulfilling the promise made to Guyanese. He said that the government's programmes and projects are designed to

Phillips was joined by Minister of Tourism, Industry, and Commerce, Oneidge Walrond, Chairman of the Private Sector Commission, Komal Singh, and President of the Central Corentyne Chamber of Commerce, Leekah Rambrich.

The four-day event was held under



President Ali interacting with patrons at the expo



Prime Minister Phillips interacting with patrons

bring development in a wholesome and holistic manner.

Prime Minister

the theme, 'Fostering Sustainable Economic Growth and Food Security.'

## PRESIDENT ALI COMMISSIONS NEW RECREATIONAL PARK IN CORRIVERTON

President Ali officially commissioned the Corriverton Entertainment Park in Region Six. The \$125 million park is part of First Lady Mrs. Arya Ali's National Beautification Project aimed at enhancing public spaces.

The park features a parking lot, a designated play area for children, walkways, benches, and washroom facilities, among other amenities. It is designed as a family-oriented space, prioritising comfort and

safety for everyone.

The president said the aim is to integrate the park into the country's tourism offerings, especially with the upcoming construction of the Corentyne River Bridge with Suriname.

He also underscored the government's commitment to bolstering regional infrastructure through substantial investments. These include the construction of the Berbice Stadium, expanding the four-lane

highway, establishing a manufacturing hub, new hotels and malls, and developing a housing area in the Palmyra area.

Additionally, the president stated that the energy sector will also find a solid footing in the region with the establishment of a deep-water port.

Meanwhile, Minister of Public Works Bishop Juan Edghill emphasised that the park's creation addresses the more compassionate development aspect.



The new recreational park in Corriverton, Region Six

He noted that while building roads, defence structures, and bridges is essential, prioritising people's happiness,

health, well-being, and relaxation is equally crucial.

The commissioning ceremony was attended

by hundreds of residents, who interacted with the president and cabinet ministers.

## 'CUT ROSE' PROJECT TO BE EXPANDED COUNTRYWIDE



Locally grown roses from the 'Cut Rose' Project at NAREI

The Cut Rose Project, a successful initiative to create employment and income opportunities for women and single

parents, will be expanded nationwide.

Minister of Agriculture Zulfikar Mustapha announced

that the Guyana Marketing Corporation (GMC) will collaborate with the National Agriculture Research and Extension Institute (NAREI) to provide marketing assistance for the project.

"GMC will provide some marketing assistance too, because we have been targeting single parents and females especially. We are hoping that we can have more of these people participate in the

project because this has been providing valuable help regarding their income. We are seeing more income generation from these vulnerable groups now," Minister Mustapha noted.

The project will also be replicated in the regions to produce roses there.

**"We have increased the number of roses that we have been producing. I'm hoping that we can expand it more in**

**the new year. For example, we will put more shade houses in that area to provide them right across the country,"** Minister Mustapha said.

The Cut Rose Project has earned over \$4 million for the first half of 2023, with NAREI selling the roses for \$500, and they could be resold at up to \$2500.

Minister Mustapha said the project's success shows that Guyana has the potential to embark

on new crops, such as high-value crops like lettuce, cauliflower, and others.

Expanding the Cut Rose Project nationwide is a positive development that will benefit women and single parents by providing them with employment and income opportunities. It also represents Guyana's potential to embark on new crops and lead agriculture in the Caribbean.

# REGION TWO INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES GET SOLAR FARM



Prime Minister, Brigadier (Ret'd), Mark Phillips commissioned the solar farms

Prime Minister, Brigadier (Ret'd), Mark Phillips commissioned four solar mini-PV farms in the indigenous communities of Tapakuma, Capoey Mission, Wakapau, and St Monica Karawab in Region Two. The farms will provide clean, reliable energy to these communities, and are part of the government's commitment to equitable development and transition to renewable energy sources.

The farms include battery energy storage systems, and

35-kilowatt PV system, costing \$33 million, will supply electricity to 15 facilities, including a school, a health center, and an ICT hub.

The Prime Minister said that the projects demonstrate the government's dedication to equitable development for all Guyanese by transitioning from fossil fuels to renewable energy sources. This shift aligns with the Low Carbon Development Strategy (LCDS) 2030.

He also spoke of the government's people-centered approach,

**We want to ensure that you get better electricity, better water, better ICT connectivity, better roads, better medical facilities, better school facilities, and we are working overtime... and that's why you hear terms like transformational development, accelerated development."**

The solar farms are expected to aid in the overall development of the indigenous communities. PM Phillips also discussed the government's other sustainable energy initiatives, including the distribution of 30,000 solar panel systems to hinterland communities, the implementation of the gas-to-shore project, and plans to seek investments for the Amaila Falls hydro project.

In addition to the commissioning, Phillips addressed concerns affecting residents from the communities, including water quality, transportation, road rehabilitation, ICT, farming, electrical grid connectivity, education, and hinterland scholarships. He made several interventions, including a \$500,000 donation to assist Tapakuma Village farms.

focusing on designing and implementing projects that bring development to local communities. **"We believe that as a government, our plans, our projects and programmes that we design, once properly delivered, can improve the lives and livelihood of the people of Guyana.**



The solar farm in Mission Capoey boasts a 41.5-kilowatt system; while Tapakuma's solar mini-PV farm provides residents with a 21-kilowatt system

# HUNDREDS OF FAMILIES IN POTARINAU, KATU'UR, BITOON RECEIVE SOLAR SYSTEMS



Some 30,000 households in the hinterland, rural, and riverine communities are expected to benefit

Hundreds of families living in Potarinau and its satellite villages – Katu'ur and Bitoon, South Central Rupununi, Region Nine are accessing reliable and affordable electricity after receiving solar photovoltaic (PV) systems along with accessories.

In Katu'ur, approximately 45 households received, while 355 families in Bitoon are benefitting from the government's solar home system initiative, which provides a 150-watt system for energy generation.

Minister of Amerindian Affairs Pauline Sukhai, accompanied by Regional Chairman, Brian Allicock, delivered the systems during her official visit to the region.

In her address to residents of Potarinau, Minister Sukhai reiterated that the distribution exercise signals a commitment made specifically for Amerindians, ensuring that their communities

are developed. **"The panels are coming from the PPP/C Government and it's a programme that we started a long time ago...if you take care of your panel, it can last up to 25 years,"** Minister Sukhai explained.

With Guyana undertaking massive transformation owing to the government's aggressive development scheme, opportunities are being created and Amerindian youths have the choice to grab these chances of improving their livelihoods.

**"The government is creating the opportunities. We are building this nation and you have to put some attention to yourselves and your children,"** Minister Sukhai emphasised

Meanwhile, Regional Chairman Allicock said the residents are content with the solar panel initiative that is being rolled out in their communities.

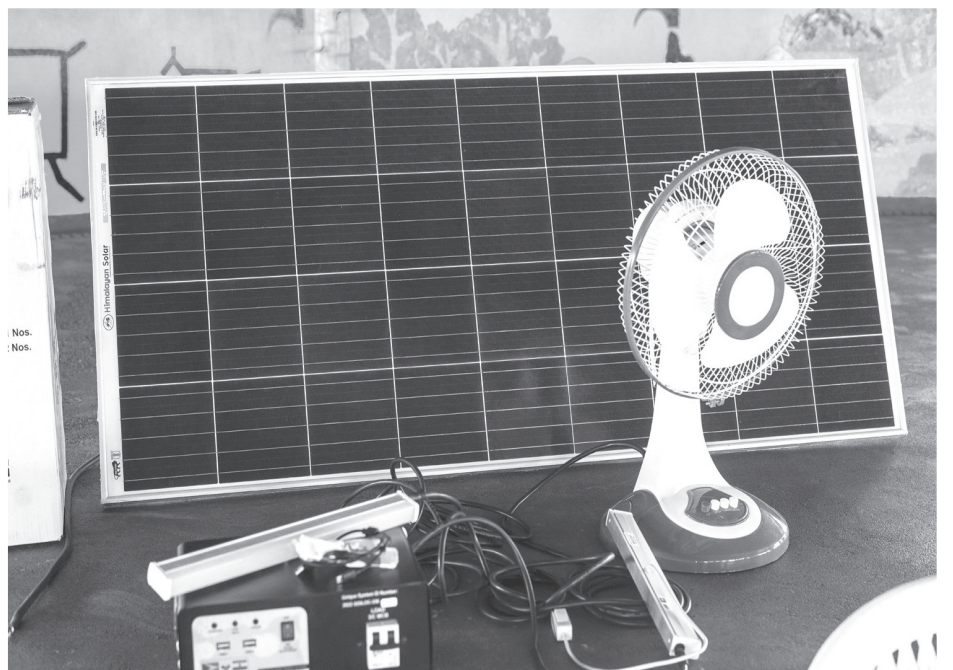
The 150-watt solar

systems will ensure that families residing in these remote communities are energy-secured, depending less on petroleum sources of energy that are deemed unaffordable in these areas.

Some 30,000 households in the hinterland, rural, and riverine communities are expected to benefit from the Solar Home Systems Project.

Over the past weeks, villages including Annai Central, Kwatamang Kumu, Quarrie - satellite villages of St Ignatius, Karasabai, Achiwuib, Rupunau, and Karaudaranau received the solar PV systems that were delivered by several ministers of government

The government has signed a US\$7.2 million credit agreement with the Government of India, facilitated by the Exim Bank for the supply and delivery of these solar PV systems to these communities.



The 150-watt solar systems will ensure that families residing in these remote communities are energy-secured

## GUYANA HOSTS CARIBBEAN WATER AND WASTEWATER ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE



The opening of the conference

The 32nd Annual Caribbean Water and Wastewater Association (CWWA) Conference and Exhibition themed “Accelerating Change in the Water, Wastewater, and Solid Waste Sectors,” brought together delegates and exhibitors from across the Caribbean region, over five days to discuss and share best practices on how to address the region’s water challenges and enhance water security.

In his opening remarks at the Marriott Hotel, Georgetown, Prime Minister Brigadier (Ret’d) Mark Phillips emphasised the importance of the conference in light of the current El Nino weather pattern, which is threatening water security and food supply in the region. He called on Caribbean leaders and the private sector to

work together to tackle the challenges ahead, and ensure a sustainable and prosperous future for the generations to come.

“By integrating climate resilience into our water strategies and policies, we can safeguard our communities, ecosystems and the future of our planet,” the Prime Minister said. “Only through

concerted and sustainable efforts can we truly make a difference, ensuring a more secure and resilient future for all.”

In addition to climate change, the conference addressed other key water challenges facing the Caribbean region, such as ageing infrastructure, limited water resources, and pollution. Delegates also had the opportunity to learn about, and discuss the latest technologies and solutions for addressing these challenges, as well as to share best practices and experiences from their own countries.

The CWWA Conference and Exhibition is a valuable opportunity for Caribbean stakeholders to come together and work towards a more sustainable and water-secure future for the region.



Part of the gathering

## GOVT CALLS ON BROADCASTING STAKEHOLDERS TO DELIVER RESPONSIBLE CONTENT

The government of Guyana is calling on broadcasting stakeholders to deliver responsible content that is free from misinformation, disinformation, and incitement to violence.

Minister within the Office of the Prime Minister with responsibility for Public Affairs, Kwame McCoy, made the call at a stakeholders’ forum at the Hermanston Lodge. He emphasised the critical role of broadcasting entities in Guyana, and urged them to uphold the highest standards of responsibility.

“We try to work with our broadcasters, but then as we think about where we need to be as a society and how much improvement we need in relation to our broadcasting landscape, you as individual



Minister within the Office of the Prime Minister Kwame McCoy delivering remarks at the Stakeholders’ Engagement and Development Session

broadcasters must think of how exactly I can contribute to this particular responsibility of mine and development,” Minister McCoy said. “So that we can operate at the highest level in our society.”

Minister McCoy also acknowledged the Guyana National Broadcasting Authority (GNBA) for engaging stakeholders to elevate broadcasting standards.

He expressed concern over recurrent lapses by broadcasters, despite ongoing notifications of infractions. He reminded them of their duty to educate, inform, and entertain responsibly, and cautioned against misleading narratives on sensitive issues.

“We have a responsibility to our people to make sure that whatever we educate them on, we inform them about and we entertain them with, are stuff that they can grow from, that can edify them, that could take them up intellectually,” Minister McCoy said.

He assured continued government support for GNBA and affirmed the commitment to achieving and maintaining the highest broadcasting standards for the people of Guyana.



Part of the gathering at the Stakeholders’ Engagement and Development Session

## LABOUR MINISTRY INAUGURATES \$8.4M OFFICE TO SERVE ECD RESIDENTS

The Ministry of Labour in Guyana has taken a significant step forward in enhancing accessibility by inaugurating a new \$8.4 million office in Better Hope along the East Coast of Demerara (ECD).

Minister of Labour, Joseph Hamilton who presided over the commissioning, emphasised the government’s commitment to easing service access for citizens. He noted that the office is a testament

to the government’s three pillars of training and re-training, human development, and worker protection.

Essential services, including the Co-operative Society and the Board of Industrial Training (BIT), will now be available at the extended branch. Previously based in Georgetown, officers from these services will now facilitate informative sessions and training directly with ECD residents.

Minister Hamilton affirmed the commitment of personnel, stating that the office must serve the people, and that there will be no excuse.

The labour minister urged employees to be available in the office, and actively engage with communities, spreading awareness about the services offered.

Efforts are ongoing to include the Central Recruitment and Man Power Agency (CRMA) among the services offered.



Inside the new office



# GUYANA AIMS TO BOOST STANDING THROUGH DIPLOMATIC MISSION EXPANSION

In a recent meeting with heads and officers in charge of Guyana's Diplomatic Missions, President Ali outlined plans to expand the country's global reach, and enhance its standing on the world stage. He emphasised the need for these missions to align their activities and physical spaces with the nation's priorities.

President Ali specifically highlighted the promotion of Guyana's tourism potential, and investment opportunities as key focus areas. The overarching goal is to project a unified and standardised image of



President Ali with heads and officers in charge of Diplomatic Mission

Guyana globally. He stressed the importance of innovation and modernisation in

keeping pace with the rapid changes on the global stage. Moreover, the

President reiterated his government's ambitious objectives, aiming for Guyana to

become a global leader in climate, energy, and food security by 2030. Additionally, they aim

to be recognised as a significant net provider of health and education services.

During the meeting, President Ali was accompanied by Prime Minister Brigadier (Ret'd) Mark Phillips, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Hugh Todd, Foreign Secretary Robert Persaud, several Cabinet Ministers, Chief-of-Staff of the Guyana Defence Force Brigadier Omar Khan, and Police Commissioner (acting) Clifton Hicken, among other high-ranking officials.

# MOUS SIGNED TO BOOST PROTECTED AREAS' SUSTAINABILITY

The Protected Areas Commission (PAC) of Guyana signed two Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) with the Tourism and Hospitality Association of Guyana (THAG) and the Guyana Marine Conservation Society (GMSC) to stimulate the sustainability of Guyana's protected areas. The MoUs were signed during a ceremony held at the bandstand in the Botanical Gardens, Georgetown.

Foreign Secretary Robert Persaud, noted

that at least 18% of Guyana's landmass is under the protection of the PAC, and that the organisation is keen on achieving some of the country's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). He said the move is a form of exploration on how the government can expand those protected areas, increasing it to 30% as soon as possible. "Having this type of MoU would allow us to move quickly and much more effectively and more inclusively," the foreign secretary stated.

PAC's Commissioner, Jason Fraser, said the agreements reflect a shared vision of the three organisations to foster collaboration and partnership in the development and management of tourism within Guyana's protected areas.

THAG's President, Omadele George, stressed that it is imperative for the three organisations to work together in building a sustainable Guyana. She deemed the agreement signing as a lucrative approach that

would meet the demands of the country's tourism sector.

Meanwhile, the Chairman of GMSC, Marie Correia, also alluded to the established relationships. She said the MoU will allow them to formalise a synergistic agreement that will allow them both to continue their conservation efforts, especially concerning their marine and coastal environments.

Apart from building sustainability and strengthening conservation and



Foreign Secretary Robert Persaud, Commissioner of PAC, Jason Fraser, and President of THAG, Omadele George

management, these MoUs will enhance public awareness of the country's natural

heritage, promote new and improved tourism, and increase the flow of revenue.

# FIRST LADY SPONSORS MAMMOGRAMS FOR 222 WOMEN



First Lady Arya Ali handed over vouchers for the 222 women

Acknowledging that early detection can reduce the risk of breast cancer, the Office of the First Lady, through a partnership with Dr Balwant Singh Hospital, is providing free mammograms for 222 women who cannot afford the service.

First Lady Arya Ali handed over the

vouchers to the founder of the Guyana Cancer Foundation, Bibi Hassan, at a dinner hosted at State House for cancer patients, survivors, healthcare workers, and other partners leading the fight against breast cancer.

"These will be made available through the Guyana

Cancer Foundation and the Guyana Cancer Society," the First Lady explained. "So, I hope this affords women who want to get screened but cannot afford it to do so. And I hope this serves as an encouragement to other women, including some

of us right here today, to get our mammograms."

She also urged attendees to encourage their families and relatives to get mammograms to reduce their risks.

Minister of Health Dr. Frank Anthony commended the First Lady for organising the

event to raise awareness and noted that the government is procuring three mammogram machines that will aid in early detection. The machines will be installed at various healthcare facilities to lower cancer incidence locally.

"With breast cancer, the government is working on doing several things, including creating more access to mammograms," Dr. Anthony said. "This month, we have a partnership with several private sector institutions, including Balwant Singh Hospital, Mercy, and the

Cancer Institute, and we have been giving out vouchers to ensure that women who want to do a mammogram can have that access."

Additionally, a telepathology programme will be launched by next month at the Georgetown Public Hospital Corporation (GPHC) in collaboration with the Mount Sinai Health System.

Dr. Anthony also emphasised the need for women and men to get vaccinated to prevent cervical cancer, one of the leading cancers among women in Guyana.

Pinktober 2023 is themed "Many Hands, Caring Hearts."

# MAHDIA COI: UNVEILING TESTIMONIES AND GOV'T'S RESPONSE

As survivors, parents, and education officials take the stand to share their stories and insights, the ongoing Presidential Commission of Inquiry (CoI) into the tragic Mahdia Secondary School dormitory fire reveals the government's response to the crisis, and the extensive support provided to those affected.

## SURVIVORS AND PARENTS TESTIFY

Four children who survived the deadly fire, and a few parents provided testimonies. Due to the sensitivity of information disclosed in some testimonies and the age of the children, the hearings were conducted in private.



Carlet Williams, the House Mother testifying

## DORM MOTHER TESTIFIES: GOV'T'S SUPPORT SATISFACTORY

Carlet Williams, the dorm mother of the Girls' Dormitory, affirmed that the

government's support during the Mahdia fire crisis was entirely satisfactory. Minister of Tourism, Industry, and Commerce, Oneidge Walrond, was assigned to her family to ensure they received the necessary assistance. Financial support was provided, and a care package was given to her injured daughter.

Williams' testimony aligns with the government's commitment to aiding the Mahdia fire victims and their families.



Amanda Peters-Nedd testifying

## FORMER ENGLISH DEPT HEAD TESTIFIES

Amanda Peters-Nedd, a former head of the English department at the school, testified about the support her family received following the tragedy. Financial and psychological aid was provided to her 19-year-old son, Derick Nedd Jr, and her husband, Derick Nedd. She also received free accommodation at a hotel while her son

was being treated at the Georgetown Public Hospital Corporation (GPHC).

Peters-Nedd's son continues to receive counselling at the hospital's psychiatric clinic, another form of government support. She noted that eight of the deceased students were from her son's class.

When asked about additional government support, Peters-Nedd mentioned, "The minister provided us with financial assistance the day he was evacuated from Mahdia."

Peters-Nedd and her family had volunteered to go to Mahdia to address the teacher shortage in the area, with her husband serving as a housefather. They both continue to receive counselling from a psychiatrist at the GPHC.

## EDUCATION MINISTRY'S SIGNIFICANT INVESTMENT

The Ministry of Education allocated nearly \$79 million to address the aftermath of the tragedy. Chief Education Officer (CEO) Saddam Hussain disclosed that the ministry promptly provided emergency assistance of \$100,000 to affected families. Over \$34 million was expended on air transport for bringing out parents, children, and the

deceased. Additionally, the ministry spent over \$12 million on accommodating parents and family members in various hotels. Approximately \$7 to \$8 million were utilised for body storage and pre-funeral arrangements at Memorial Gardens.

Hussain also mentioned that the ministry responded to the families' specific requests. Many family members had limited communication upon arriving in Georgetown, so they were provided with cellphones. The families expressed a desire for commemorative T-shirts for the funerals which the ministry facilitated.



Chief Education Officer (CEO) Saddam Hussain testifying

## GOV'T'S SINCERE EFFORTS TO HONOUR THE VICTIMS

CEO Saddam Hussain emphasized that the government hosted the national candlelight vigil on May 23 as a way to reflect on the tragedy, not for publicity

or image management. Ministers participated out of genuine sadness and a desire to comfort those affected. Hussain assured that no ministers sought photo opportunities with the students, and the media was advised to approach the matter respectfully.

Hussain clarified that the vigil was intended to pay respects to the deceased children and was not meant for the affected students who were admitted to the Georgetown Public Hospital Corporation (GPHC). However, the students expressed their desire to attend and pay their respects to their colleagues.



Former Permanent Secretary of the Home Affairs Ministry, Mae Thomas testifying

## GOV'T'S EFFORTS TO EQUIP FIRE STATIONS PRECEDING MAHDIA FIRE

Mae Toussaint Jr Thomas-Meerabux, the former Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Home Affairs, testified that the government ensured the Guyana Fire

Service (GFS) had the necessary firefighting tools prior to the Mahdia fire in Region Eight. Minister of Home Affairs Robeson Benn took measures to equip all fire stations across the country with the required tools.

Thomas-Meerabux recalled Minister Benn's commitment to obtaining the necessary equipment through supplementary or cabinet requests. The minister ensured that fire trucks were fully equipped to battle fires and made efforts to secure funding for the fire service's needs.

The Commission of Inquiry is chaired by Major General (Ret'd) Joe Singh, with commissioners attorney Kim Kyte-Thomas and Derrick John, Chairman of the National Tshaos Council. In May, 19 girls and a five-year-old boy lost their lives in the fire, reportedly started by a young student who has since been charged with 20 counts of murder.

The CoI's scope includes investigating the events leading to the dormitory fire, its cause, and the actions taken to provide care, medical attention, and support to the victims and their relatives. The commission is expected to make recommendations to prevent the recurrence of such tragedies.

# BUXTON GETS \$33M POST OFFICE



Prime Minister, Brigadier Mark Phillips with the staff in front the new post office

A new \$33 million post office was commissioned at Buxton along the East Coast Demerara. The new structure replaces the old building that was demolished in March 2022.

Prime Minister

Mark Phillips, who commissioned the new post office, said it is a living monument to the Guyana Post Office Corporation's (GPOC) commitment to serve all Guyanese in their communities. He also said that it is a testimony

to the government's commitment to modernise the facilities, and services offered by the GPOC.

The new post office is designed to cater to the needs of senior citizens, and persons living with disabilities, who

depend heavily on postal services.

The GPOC has reaffirmed its commitment to continue transforming its services to citizens, including international clients. Postmaster General Karen Brown said

that the post office must be willing to take calculated risks when looking for partners and business endeavours, and modernising to address the underlying economics of the network.

At the commissioning ceremony, several outstanding staff of the GPOC were honoured, as

well as the top performing Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate (CSEC) student of the St Rose's High School and the first, second, and third winners of the Universal Postal Union's international letter writing competition.



The post office

# PRESIDENT, CABINET MINISTERS CONDUCT PRODUCTIVE TWO-DAY BERBICE VISIT



Baracara meeting

President Irfaan Ali, along with several members of his Cabinet, recently conducted a comprehensive two-day visit to Berbice, engaging with residents and addressing critical community concerns. The visit was marked by a series of meetings with local residents to address pressing issues, and foster meaningful dialogue.

The meetings commenced at the Schepmoed Primary

focusing on re-opening the town's sugar estate. He emphasised that the revival of the Rose Hall Estate, like other estates in Guyana, goes beyond sugar production, as it opens doors for residents to support their families. President Ali commended the unwavering support and sacrifices made by the estate's workers, assuring them of the long-term viability and sustainability of the sugar industry.



Port Mourant meeting

School, where residents from communities along the East Bank of the Berbice River gathered to engage with the nation's leadership. There, President Ali and his team tackled various challenges affecting farming communities, such as land clearing, drainage and irrigation, and the ambitious project of paving the over 25 kilometre stretch of road leading to these communities. The Head of State also took the opportunity to hold regional officials accountable for their roles and responsibilities, urging a more proactive approach.

Subsequently President Ali met with residents from Rose Hall,

President Ali and his team then connected with hundreds of youngsters from Whim, Rose Hall, and Port Mourant at the Port Mourant Community Centre. During this meeting, the President presented sports gear to several clubs and generously gifted two high-quality lawnmowers to the communities. Moreover, he announced upcoming bidding opportunities for enhancing grounds in Region Six, underscoring the government's commitment to promoting sports and recreational facilities.

**\$985M INVESTED IN AGRICULTURE AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

## IN MANCHESTER/ LIVERPOOL

The visit extended to Manchester and Mibicuri (Black Bush Polder) communities, providing a valuable opportunity for President Ali to interact with residents and address their concerns directly.



Blackbush, Mibicuri meeting

At Manchester, President Ali announced that the area has benefited from \$985 million worth of investments in agriculture and infrastructure development.

The government has implemented 29 projects in Manchester, with an investment exceeding \$185 million. These projects include the distribution of fertiliser and seedlings to cash crop farmers, the subsidised sale of fruit trees, and extension visits.

The government has also invested more than \$800 million in roads in the Manchester/ Liverpool area. This year, 30 more roads will be completed.

President Ali also pledged support to establish two shade houses, enabling high-value production and providing young farmers with the resources necessary to thrive in the agriculture industry.

## INVESTMENT IN BLACK BUSH POLDER ROAD NETWORK, SEA AND RIVER DEFENCES

At Black Bush Polder, Minister of Public Works Juan Edghill, disclosed that 13.7 kilometres of the main access road has been completed,

and before the end of this year, another \$900 million will be expended to fund two other sections of the road.

The government has also awarded contracts for constructing an additional 286 roads in Region Six, including many in Black Bush Polder. In addition,

approximately \$650 million is being expended to maintain sea and river defences, including new works in Region Six for this year. The government is also considering the construction of a municipal airport at Palmyra to accommodate the expansion happening there.

## INVESTMENT IN BARACARA VILLAGE TO BOOST AGRI

President Ali also visited Baracara and announced that the government would invest in machinery to prepare 400 acres of land for red bean production. The government will also invest in a large solar freezer to allow for the storage of fish.

President Ali also emphasised the importance of encouraging young people to be innovative. He said the goal is to open up natural areas for aquaculture, thereby increasing production and moving away from relying solely on seasonal catches.

To support the revival of the livestock industry, the president revealed that the community will receive five heifers and two high-breed rams. Work will also be carried out at two major creeks



Rosehall meeting

to assist residents and farmers further.

Further, each household in the village will benefit from the government's '30,000 solar home systems' project.

The government had also undertaken significant work on one of the major access canals in the community. Since then, residents have reported earning \$10 million due to the clearing of that canal.

Accompanying

President Ali on the outreach were several key Ministers, including the Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs, Anil Nandlall; Minister of Agriculture, Zulfikar Mustapha; Minister of Housing and Water, Collin Croal; Minister of Public Works, Juan Edghill; Minister of Culture, Youth, and Sport, Charles Ramson Jr; and Minister within the Ministry of Local Government, Anand Persaud.

# 120 REGION FIVE RESIDENTS BENEFIT FROM GOVT'S EYECARE PROGRAMME



A total of 120 residents spanning different age groups were the beneficiaries

The Ministry of Human Services and Social Security continued its transformative eyecare programme at Bush Lot, Region Five. The initiative, which was conceived by Minister Dr Vindhya Persaud, has touched the lives of thousands of Guyanese by providing them with free eye tests and spectacles.

Some of the residents who received spectacles said that they were very grateful for the assistance, as they would not have been able to

afford them otherwise. The Ministry of Human Services and Social Security has partnered with several reputable eyewear services to carry out eye tests and provide spectacles to residents of the community.

Persons interested in receiving eyewear can do so by providing the Difficult Circumstances Unit (DCU) with a quotation from a reputable eyeglass store that liaises with the ministry.

# GPHC CELEBRATES GROUNDBREAKING LAPAROSCOPIC SURGERIES AND TRAINING

Georgetown Public Hospital Corporation (GPHC) is celebrating a remarkable achievement, as it recently hosted a groundbreaking day of successful laparoscopic surgeries and training sessions in collaboration with the Caribbean Association of Endoscopic Surgeons (CaSES).

During this extraordinary event, renowned regional surgeons and professors from CaSES performed four minimally invasive laparoscopic surgeries. Three of these surgeries were conducted for the first time at GPHC, and one marked a historic first for Guyana, signifying a significant milestone in modern medicine.

The surgeries included:

- **Laparoscopic Cholecystectomy with ICG Technology:** A groundbreaking surgery that introduced ICG technology for the first time in Guyana, representing a major leap in healthcare innovation.

- **Roux-en-Y Gastric Bypass:** This procedure was



The event provided an invaluable opportunity for participating surgeons to receive training

performed at GPHC for the first time, offering new hope to patients needing gastric bypass surgery.

- **Tip Inguinal Hernia Repair:**

A procedure to repair the right inguinal hernia, utilising laparoscopic technology, was conducted for the first time at GPHC.

- **Laparoscopic Hysterectomy:**

This surgery involves the removal of the uterus using laparoscopic technology.

These significant surgeries were broadcast live from the operating theatres to a training room at the Institute of Health Science

Education (IHSE), enabling participants to witness and learn from the surgeons. The experienced surgeons provided detailed narration throughout the procedures, creating a valuable educational experience for all involved.

This remarkable day served as a prelude to the 11th Conference of the Caribbean Association of Endoscopic Surgeons (CaSES) hosted in Guyana. The conference brought together leading experts and medical professionals to exchange insights, share advancements, and discuss best practices in endoscopic surgery.

The success of these laparoscopic surgeries and the training provided by CaSES 2023 represent a

significant advancement for modern medicine in GPHC and Guyana. By embracing laparoscopic techniques, patients can expect reduced pain, fewer wound complications, quicker post-operative recovery, shorter hospital stays, and a faster return to their regular lives and work routines.

Furthermore, this event offered an invaluable opportunity for participating surgeons from across the Caribbean and Guyana and residents of the GPHC/IHSE General Surgery Program to receive training in basic laparoscopic suturing. All participants received certificates, recognising their commitment to advancing their skills and providing enhanced patient care.

# GREEN BENCH INITIATIVE TO PROMOTE MENTAL HEALTH IN SCHOOLS



Minister of Health, Dr. Frank Anthony

The government, through the Ministry of Health's Adolescent Health Unit, has launched its "Let's Talk Green Bench" initiative in schools to promote mental health and well-being among the younger population.

Twenty-five green benches will be installed at 25 schools across Guyana. These benches will be a safe space for students to go and have conversations on issues that are affecting them without feelings of stigma or discrimination. Students can also scan the barcode on the benches to access information on mental health.

The initiative was launched on World Mental Health Day under the theme: "Mental Health is a universal Human Right."

Minister of Health, Dr. Frank Anthony emphasised that stigma and discrimination still pose a challenge to mental health efforts; hence there is a need for more awareness. "If people feel that they are being stigmatised, they won't want to seek assistance; and if they'll be discriminated against, they won't access the services being offered."

So, we need to destigmatise and ensure people don't feel discrimination so that we can offer services to people who need them," he stated.

He noted that as more attention is placed on mental health, better diagnoses and treatment for persons with mental health conditions are carried out.

The Deputy Representative of UNICEF Guyana and Suriname, Mr Irfan Akhtar, explained that the colour green is used to raise awareness and reduce mental health stigma by encouraging students to talk openly.

PAHO/WHO Representative Dr Luis Codina added that psychiatric hospitals worldwide are closing since mental health issues are being addressed at the community level.

The programme is being implemented collaboratively by the Ministries of Health and Education, the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), the Pan American Health Organisation/World Health Organisation (PAHO/WHO), and Desert Flower Guyana.



Students can also scan the barcode on the benches to access information on mental health.

# DENTAL SCHOOL TO BE TRANSFORMED INTO MAIN REFERENCE CENTRE FOR DENTISTRY

The Cheddi Jagan Dental School in Georgetown, is being modernised and transformed into a reference center for dentistry. The Ministry of Health is investing in infrastructure, equipment, and training opportunities for health professionals to improve the quality of dental services in the country.

The initiative was announced by Minister of Health, Dr. Frank Anthony, at the opening of the annual Dentex Convention for Dental Extenders hosted at Regency Suites, Georgetown. "We desire that this is going to become the major reference

centre for dentistry in the country. And, we are going to put in some innovations because ... we are still doing some things in a very primitive way, meaning old-fashioned. The technology we have has gone past what we have there and we're still not upgraded," he said.

He said the government is committed to improving services in each medical area, and transforming the sector into a world-class healthcare system.

Dr. Anthony emphasised the need for continuous training and retraining of professionals to maintain



Minister of Health Dr. Frank Anthony

the standards. He urged attendees to advance their studies and refresh their minds with the newest information and technology critical to modernising services. He also encouraged

them to use all resources provided by the ministry to improve their skill sets to avoid human errors in service delivery.

The Principal Dental Officer of the Cheddi Jagan Dental School, Dr. Marvin Monzie, revealed that 102 professionals participated in the conference.

The transformation of the Cheddi Jagan Dental School into a reference center for dentistry is a significant development for Guyana. It will improve the quality of dental services available to the public and help to attract and retain qualified dental professionals.

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# GUYANA PLEDGES SUPPORT TO CRICKET WEST INDIES



President Ali greeting CWI President Dr Kishore Shallow

President Ali has pledged support to Cricket West Indies (CWI) for the redevelopment of cricket in the Caribbean through infrastructural development, cricket programmes, and commercial opportunities.

President Ali met with CWI President Dr. Kishore Shallow at State House in Guyana on October 13, 2023, to discuss the partnership. CWI Director of Cricket, Miles Bascombe; CWI Independent Director, Manniram Prashad; and owner of Guyana Amazon Warriors, Dr. Ranjisinghi "Bobby" Ramroop, were also present.

President Ali reiterated his commitment to establishing a partnership with CWI to improve the overall performance of West Indies cricket. One of the primary objectives will be to establish a High-

Performance Centre in Guyana to service cricketers from across the region.

President Ali also expressed his intention to work with Dr. Shallow to advance the popularity and growth of the sport on multiple fronts in the Caribbean. He emphasised the importance of collaboration between parties interested in advancing cricket's development at every level.

**"I believe strongly that defining our product as distinct from other regions and countries is critical in the rebranding and repositioning of CWI globally. Such a plan must incorporate the culture, people and natural beauty of our region,"** the president said.

Dr. Shallow praised President Ali for Guyana's investments in cricket thus far, and

recognised the potential of collaborating with Guyana. He stated that President Ali's commitment to cricket is evident with the major investments to stage the magnificent cricket festival, including the CPL finals in Guyana. He also emphasised that for West Indies teams to be iconic again, it is imperative that there is considerable collaboration between CWI and governments in the region.

Guyana has successfully hosted the last two Caribbean Premier League (CPL) finals. The country's cricket festival, culminating with the CPL final, is emerging to be a regional calendar event.



# CONSTRUCTION OF NEW AMSTERDAM SPORTS STADIUM PROGRESSING



MacKenzie Sports Ground, Linden

The New Amsterdam sports stadium construction is progressing rapidly, according to Minister of Culture, Youth, and Sport, Charles Ramson Jr. The stadium is expected to be completed within the next few months and will have FIFA standard lights, making it capable of hosting international matches.

The stadium is being built to withstand weather conditions, and facilitate different sports, including cricket.

The material for the synthetic track has been purchased and is awaiting installation. However, the area has to be asphalted first, which will take about two to six weeks, depending on the weather. Once the asphalt

is cured, the synthetic track can be installed.

## LINDEN MCKENZIE SPORTS GROUND

Meanwhile, the Linden McKenzie Sports Ground is undergoing a major transformation, with infrastructural works progressing smoothly. The project aims to elevate the ground into an all-sports facility, catering to various sports, with a special focus on football and cricket.

Significant milestones have already been achieved, with the installation of international standard stadium lights and the completion of the upgrade of the plain

surface, installation of underground pipes, flood drainage catchment basin, and herringbone perforated pipes.

The next phase of work will involve the construction of stands and players' pavilions. Contracts have already been advertised for tender and are currently in the evaluation stage.

The government has shown unwavering support for sports development, earmarking approximately \$250 million for the enhancement of sports grounds across the country. This investment not only revitalises sports infrastructure, but also creates opportunities for youths to engage in meaningful activities and pursue their sporting passions.

The new stadium being built at Mackenzie will complement the \$179 million synthetic track being laid at the Bayroc Community Centre ground in Wismar. These initiatives will modernise the nation's sports facilities and provide athletes with world-class training grounds.

# MASSARA VILLAGE DIVES INTO NEW SWIMMING POOL

Massara Village in Region Nine, Guyana, is now home to a new \$2.5 million swimming pool, thanks to supplemental funding provided by the government in 2022.

The pool, which measures 25 meters by 20 meters and took over a month to construct, was built in the village's sports complex. It will be used for both swimming competitions and tourism.

Toshao Lenny Moses said the need for the pool arose after the village was tasked with hosting the schools' swimming competitions. "I submitted a pool for my priority project," he explained.

Since its construction, the pool has already been used for the inter-school championships between Massara and Yakarinta villages.

Moses said the pool will also be used to boost

tourism in the region. "After this, it will be handed over to the sports club of which I am also the vice chairman. So, our next step is to move on to a tourism-based platform and so this pool will be a part of our package," he explained.

Currently, lights are being erected around the pool, while stalls and seating arrangements are expected to be installed soon. Plans are also underway to host various

programmes during the evenings to create a conducive and relaxing environment for visitors.

"In July 2022 during the National Toshao Council Conference, President Dr Mohammed Irfaan Ali had announced that a \$3 billion supplementary budget would be presented in the National Assembly to further aid in the financial support of Amerindian communities," Moses noted.



The 25 m X 20 m pool which took approximately over a month to be constructed



CWI Director of Cricket, Miles Bascombe; CWI President Dr Kishore Shallow; owner of Guyana Amazon Warriors, Dr Ranjisinghi 'Bobby' Ramroop; and CWI Independent Director, Manniram Prashad

# PRESIDENT ALI: ROSE HALL ESTATE'S REVIVAL, A TESTAMENT TO A GOVT THAT BUILDS

President Dr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali has toured the Rose Hall Sugar Estate in East Berbice Corentyne (Region Six), which had been shut down by the former APNU+AFC government in 2017, leading to the termination of hundreds of workers.

Under President Ali's leadership, the factory is now deemed the most productive sugar factory in Guyana, with grinding engines functioning at an efficient capacity and some 1,200 workers rehired.

President Ali described the revival of the estate as a testament to the stark contrast between a government that builds and one that destroys. He recognised the management and staff of the Guyana Sugar Corporation (GuySuCo), as well as the union, for



President Ali examining the sugar produced at the factory

the role they played in revitalising the sugar industry.

**“How sweet is the count of victory, how**

**sweet is the sound of progress, how sweet is the sound of the People’s Progressive Party Government.**

**“From hopelessness to hope, from destruction to fortune. This is the difference between a government that builds and a government that destroys,”** he emphasised.

He assured that the government will spare no effort in ensuring that the sugar industry is viable, sustainable, and resilient for Guyana's long-term future.

Close to 4,000 hectares of land in Canje are being developed for cane harvesting to process at the Rose Hall Estate. President Ali mentioned that since 2021, over 2,150 hectares have been used for cane harvesting, while more than 1,400 hectares are yet to be put back into production.

The government has allocated \$1.195 billion to support the reopening of the estate, which will cover the purchase of new equipment and the rehabilitation of older machinery. Recently, the National Assembly

approved supplementary funding of \$1.510 billion to facilitate the rehabilitation of 1,572 hectares of land at the

Albion, Blairmont, Rose Hall, and Uitvlugt estates.



President Ali touring the factory



President Ali interacting with one of the workers

## GUYANA'S PROACTIVE APPROACH TO FOOD SECURITY CONTINUES TO GARNER REGIONAL, INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION



Minister of Agriculture, Zulfikar and IFAD's Country Director, Maija Peltola

The International Fund for Agricultural Development's (IFAD) Country Director, Maija Peltola, recently praised Guyana's proactive approach to food

security, and its efforts to increase interventions to provide farmers with more access to local and regional markets for their agricultural produce.

Peltola made the remarks during a community outreach in Karrau, Region Seven. She noted that Guyana's numerous efforts to develop its economy sustainably have garnered recognition and appreciation on a worldwide scale.

**“So, I know there are very big efforts to increase, substantially, food exports...The government is, first, looking at its people and improving food security in the country. And then, looking to exporting that produce,”** Peltola pointed out.

The government is advancing important projects to support higher agricultural

output, productivity, and diversity, while improving the livelihoods of its people.

Although logistics has been a bit tricky in Guyana, Peltola added, **“The government has been constructing roads, bridges and basic infrastructure to get the Guyanese produce, first, to the local market and then also to the broader Caribbean market.”**

**“There is also the Ministry of Agriculture, the national premier of the food system transformation. So, the pathway the UN [United Nations] and IFAD support is very important. As such, I see every time that I come to**

**Guyana where I visit the communities in different regions, I see that something is going on and people are producing more. Also, they are more aware of the value of the Guyanese produce and farming products,”** she noted.

Importantly, Peltola further highlighted the linkage between the local agricultural produce to the national school feeding programme.

**“Within this school feeding programme, IFAD together with FAO... and the sister organisations in the united systems, we are working together with the government to link the local produce of the**

**farmers to the school feeding programme so that Guyanese school children can eat local and very nutritious food,”** she added.

Peltola and other IFAD representatives also met with Minister Mustapha. The discussion was centred on how government and IFAD can partner to improve agricultural development in the hinterland regions.

IFAD is an international financial institution and a specialised agency of the UN that seeks to combat hunger and poverty in rural areas of developing nations.

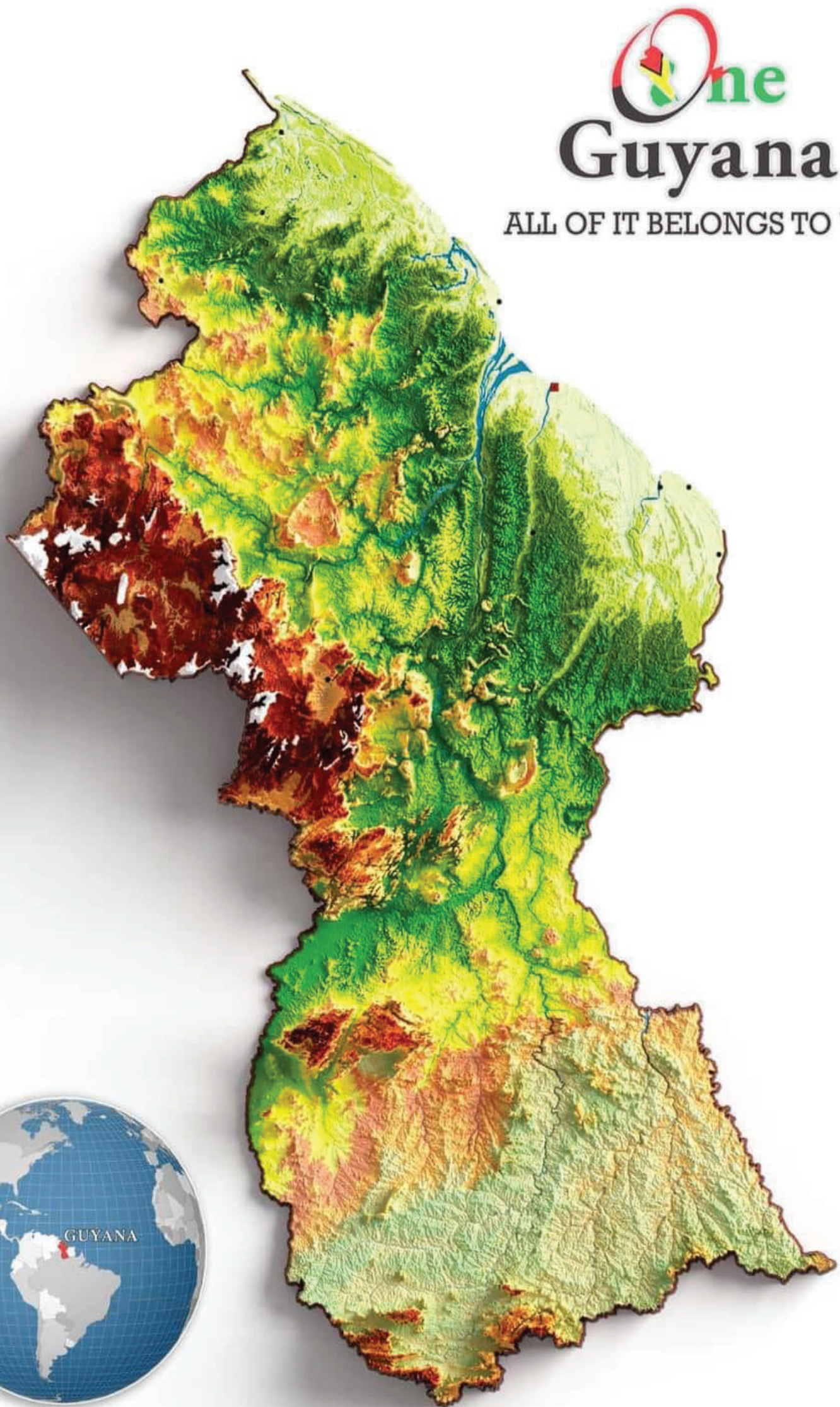




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Avocado 牛油果 Reg: 1.59 99¢ ea
Bartlett Pear 长青啤梨 Reg: 1.59 99¢ lb
Frangrant Pear 香梨 Reg: \$2.59 1.99 lb
Green Grape 青提 Reg: \$3.99 2.99 lb
Spanish Kaki Persimmon 西班牙高身柿 Reg: \$25.99 19.99 case

GROCERY

Mr. Noodles Instant Noodle (beef/chicken) 24X85g 方便面 (牛肉-鸡肉) Reg: \$10.99 7.99 ea
Realemon Lemon Juice 柠檬汁 945ml Reg: \$3.99 2.59 ea
SW Pineapple Chunks In Extra Light Syrup 540ml 糖水菠萝 Reg: \$1.99 99¢ ea
Dalina Jackfruit Chips 菠萝蜜片 100g Reg: \$2.99 1.88 ea
Golden Apple Broad Bean 金苹果莲花豆 466g Reg: \$5.99 3.99 ea
Trung Nguyen G7 Coffee 咖啡 12X18g Reg: \$4.99 2.88 ea
Vifon Instant Noodle Series 60g 速食面系列 Reg: \$2.99 1.88 ea
Acecook Oh! Ricey Rice Noodles 500g 沙河粉 Reg: \$3.99 2.59 ea
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Cucumber 长青瓜 15.00 case
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Broccoli 西兰花 23.00 case
Spanish Onion 洋葱 23.00 case
Green Onion 葱 28.00 case
Celery 西芹 35.00 case
Andy Boy Head Lettuce 圆生菜 38.00 case
Yellow Plantains 黄大蕉 73.00 case
Frozen Panga Basa Fillet 8x3.5LB 鱼柳 60.00 case
Headless White Shrimp 无头白虾 21/25 4x6lb/case 150.00 case
TYJ Spring Roll Pastry 8.5' 春卷皮 20 shts x40 pkts 55.00 case
Frozen Vegetable Spring Roll 25g 40 pc x10 boxes 素菜春卷 35.00 case
Extra Large Egg 箱装大鸡蛋 53.99 case
Container S32 容器 46.50 case
Container LF-28W 容器 28.50 case
ADM All Purpose Flour 面粉 20kg 21.99 bag
Monosodium Glutamate 味精 22.7kg 60.00 ea
Capri Vegetable Oil 蔬菜油 1.6L 41.99 case
Bamboo Chopsticks 竹筷子 30x100pcs 60.00 case
Squid Brand Fish Sauce 箱装鱿鱼标鱼露 28.00 case
Lee Kum Kee Kum Chun Oyster Flavoured Sauce 6x2.2kg 李锦记海鲜味蚝油 39.00 case
Lee Kum Kee Hoisin Sauce 1.75L 李锦记海鲜酱 53.00 case
NG-18 New Gen Eco-Friendly Packaging 一次性餐盒-018 28.00 case
Redpath Sugar 白糖 20kg 30.99 bag

Y & Y 3 Minute Chow Mein 454g 如意牌三分炒面 Reg: \$2.99 1.88 ea
Japanese Green Tea Tokuyo 400g 玄米茶 Reg: \$5.99 3.99 ea
Classic Series Guava Candy 番石榴夹心糖 350g Reg: \$2.99 1.88 ea
Bin-Bin Rice Crack Original Flavor 150g 宾宾米菓 Reg: \$2.99 1.88 ea
Kung-Fu Soy Sauce 1L 味王功夫酱油 Reg: \$5.99 3.99 ea
Lamkee Dried Bean Thread 圆枝腐竹 340g Reg: \$5.99 3.59 ea
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Huy Fong Chili Paste 3.5L 素辣椒酱 Reg: \$29.99 24.99 ea

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Greenshell Mussels 800g 新西兰半壳青口 Reg: \$12.99 8.99 ea
Kababayan Hasa Hasa Indian Mackerel 500g 印度鲭鱼 Reg: \$3.99 2.99 ea
Healthy Lifestyle Anago Kabayaki 9oz 鳗鱼 Reg: \$11.99 4.99 ea
Sarangani Bay Bangus Milkfish 800g 原条牛奶鱼 Reg: \$1.99 6.99 ea
BF Cut Descaled Bangus Milkfish 400g 牛奶鱼 Reg: \$6.99 4.99 ea
Ferma Frozen Octopus 750g Reg: \$13.99 7.99 ea
Fairlife Milk Series 1.5L 牛奶 Reg: \$5.99 5.29 ea
Gay Lea Butter Series 454g 黄油 Reg: \$8.99 5.99 ea
SH Raw White Shrimp 白虾 8/12 908g Reg: \$19.99 14.99 ea
Bulacan Grated Cassava 木薯粉 454g Reg: \$1.99 2/\$3.00
SH Frozen Fresh Durian 急冻榴莲 Reg: \$4.99 3.77 lb

MEAT

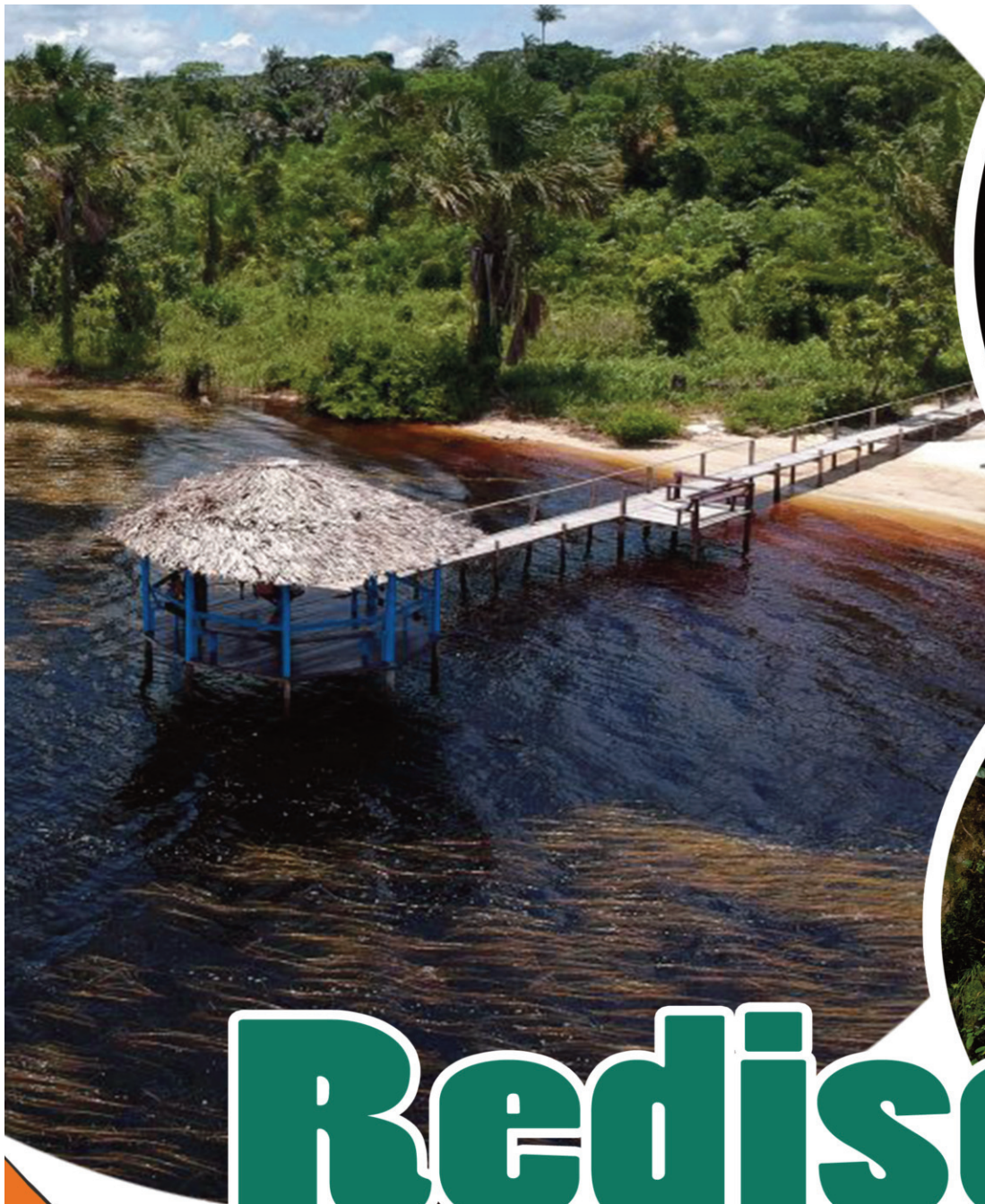
Pork Ham Steak 猪腿扒 Reg: \$2.99 1.99 lb
Beef Back Ribs 牛排骨 Reg: \$3.99 2.99 lb
Beef Short Ribs AAA 嫩牛仔骨 Reg: \$5.99 4.99 lb
Best Choice Sliced Lamb Roll 大众羊肉卷 Reg: \$8.59 7.59 lb
Chicken Leg Meat 鸡腿肉 Reg: \$4.59 3.59 lb

SEAFOOD

Fresh Porgys 新鲜海立鱼 Reg: \$3.99 2.99 lb
Fresh Atlantic Salmon Fillet 新鲜大西洋三文鱼柳 Reg: \$11.99 9.99 lb
Fresh Atlantic Salmon Steak 新鲜大西洋三文鱼扒 Reg: \$8.99 6.99 lb
Live Blue Crab 生猛蓝蟹 Reg: \$5.99 4.99 lb
Frozen Fresh Head-on White Shrimp 冰鲜有头南美虾 Reg: \$5.99 4.99 lb

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