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PAGE ONE EDITORIAL

As Guyana-Venezuela border dispute heats up, the Diaspora needs to show our own...

PEOPLE POWER

Guyana is starting the month of December on Friday fraught with uncertainty. The decades-old claim by Venezuela of a large portion of Guyana -- the Essequibo Region -- will be decided, once and for all, by the International Court of Justice in The Hague on December 1.

The decision will come just two days before Venezuelans vote in a referendum to decide whether the Maduro administration should proceed with its claim on Essequiba, as they call the region.

As we explained before, this all goes back to an 1899 arbitration regarding the borders between Venezuela and Guyana. The British Empire, which owned Guyana at the time, usurped Essequibo as part of the territory of British Guiana. The Venezuelan Empire protested then, and the matter threatened to move out of the realm of diplomacy and into actual war until the Americans stepped in and offered to arbitrate.

The British, who had little tolerance for the Americans who less than 100 years before had beaten them in the 1812 war, didn't want them involved. Venezuela, however, was thrilled to go along with the plan.

While Venezuela enthusiastically agreed to abide by the decision of the arbitrator, the British reluctantly decided to do the same. To the latter's surprise, the arbitrator found in favour of the British, and because both parties had agreed that the decision would be binding, the 1899 treaty to allocate Essequibo to Guyana stood.

That's the binding treaty that Venezuela is today claiming is not valid, and Guyana is claiming should stand. The ICJ, the highest court in the world, will decide one way or the other on December 1.

Global watchers believe the ICJ will rule in Guyana's favour, as it should. But the Maduro administration in Venezuela has said it will not be guided by the ICJ's decision, but the decision of the people in the December 3 referendum.

This means that if Venezuelans vote in favour of annexing Essequibo, which is highly likely, Guyana could still see the loss of the region. After all, if it comes down to war, there is no way Guyana could stand against the might of the Venezuelan army.

This means Guyana's global allies will have to stand ready to defend the oil-rich territory. It is widely expected that the Americans will step in, though the Biden administration has been non-committal thus far. Guyana is also courting support from China and Saudi Arabia, with the hope that both countries, on which Venezuela depends highly for trade, will use diplomatic channels to discourage Maduro from his plan.

At the end of the day, it is clear that Maduro is taking his cue from what is happening in the Middle East and Russia. After all, if Israel could pursue its dubious claim on Palestine and Russia could do the same with Ukraine, then surely Venezuela could stake its own claim on territory it believes belongs to them.

War, however, is not an option here. If it happens, it will be a very one-sided battle and the end result will be a foregone conclusion before the first bullet flies.

Diplomacy, however, could provide a solution to this situation. And we call on Guyana's allies to step up to the plate and demand that Maduro abide by the 1899 binding treaty to which his country agreed.



LEADING FROM THE FRONT: Guyana President Dr Irfaan Ali is pictured in a hammock with members of the Guyana Defence Force on the front lines at the border between Guyana and Venezuela in the disputed Essequibo Region. Dr Ali said he was "so proud of our men and women in uniforms. Sharing your space and spending time with you was a rewarding experience."

Venezuela has few allies in the world today, and it could use this territorial claim to its advantage to open trade and remove economic sanctions that have crippled the country. Indeed, that might very well be what this is all about.

The Guyanese Diaspora needs to stand up for the country, and show that it is not only Venezuela that could use people power to dictate its actions.

Just like the Venezuelan people, we have a voice too.

Let's use it.

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Senior Guyana Ministers grace Berbice Chamber of Commerce fundraiser

By Dowarka Persaud

EQUALITY NEWS MEDIA

On the picturesque grounds of Ar-june's Estate in No 19 Village, Corentyne Berbice, the Berbice Chamber of Commerce orchestrated a highly successful fundraising event on Sunday November 26, 2023. The occasion graced by influential figures and major corporate sponsorships including support from Banks DIH Limited and the Sherriff Security Group, unfolded with a dual purpose.

Foremost, the gala aimed to generate funds for the construction of the new Berbice Chamber of Commerce headquarters, an institution steeped in legacy dating back to 1932. The event drew the presence of distinguished guests, including the Honourable Dr Ashni Singh, Minister of Finance and Vickram Bharat, Minister of Natural Resources. Also, other notable attendees were Clifford Rees, Chairman of Banks DIH Limited, Representatives of the Chinese Embassy, Ramesh Dookhoo and Krishnand Jaichand from the Private sector Commission and Mohendra Persaud of the Nand Persaud Company Ltd.

Samantha Reid, the Chamber's president, added a historic touch to the proceedings by being the first female president in the organization's 91-year history. In her impassioned address, she unveiled a bold vision for the Chamber's future, emphasising its commitment to assisting small businesses in the region not only to survive but thrive. Reid outlined plans for providing relevant education, skills training, and capacity building opportunities to confront the challenges ahead as she stated that most small businesses fail within their first three years of existence. She rallied past and present members, as well as seasoned business community leaders to join forces in building a more resilient



President of the Berbice Chamber, Samantha Reid, with Banks DIH chairman Clifford Rees

small business eco-system.

Expressing gratitude for the hard work and support received, Reid looked ahead to continued collaboration in achieving the organization's goals. The event blessed with intermittent rain, un-

folded seamlessly in a resort like setting, featuring a delightful array of food, premium beverages and the rhythmic charm of steel pan music that captivated the specially invited guests throughout the day.

In essence, the gala not only served its immediate fundraising purpose, but also marked the dawn of a promising future for the Berbice Chamber of Commerce.



Vikram Bharath, Minister of Natural Resources with Equality Rep in Guyana Dowarka Persaud



Banks DIH chairman Clifford Rees with Equality's Vicram Singh after Rees was honored for business acumen by the Berbice Chamber of Commerce



Guyanese DIASPORA DIGEST

 KEEPING THE DIASPORA INFORMED EDITION 55

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PRESIDENT ALI ASSURES REGIONS ONE & SEVEN RESIDENTS: 'THERE IS NOTHING TO FEAR'

President Dr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali visited communities in Regions One and Seven on November 23, 2023, to assure residents that Guyana remains committed to peacefully resolving the ongoing border controversy with Venezuela, while maintaining vigilance.

During his engagement with residents at Kumaka

that the government is doing everything in accordance with international guidelines and **"we believe that Venezuela will not act recklessly."**

The President stressed the importance of unity in addressing the border controversy and urged residents to remain alert during this time. He reiterated Guyana's commitment

for Guyanese to remain vigilant against Venezuela's propaganda designed to instill fear among the population. **"All of us as one Guyana understand clearly that Essequibo belongs to Guyana; there is no doubt about that... We have to ensure that we don't allow statements coming out of Venezuela to**



President Ali with the soldiers at the border



President Ali speaking with residents in Region One



President eating dinner with the soldiers at the border

in the Mabaruma sub-district and Kaikan in the Upper Mazaruni, President Ali underscored that Guyana is not taking anything for granted and that there is absolutely nothing to fear. He affirmed

to a peaceful resolution and urged Venezuela to adhere to international laws and work within the framework of the International Court of Justice (ICJ).

President Ali highlighted the need

drive fear among us."

While expressing the government's belief that Venezuela will not act recklessly, President Ali emphasised the need for Guyana to be unprepared. **"We have to ensure that we do**

everything within our own environment to secure our environment," President Ali stated.

The President assured residents that Guyana has the full support of international partners, including

the Commonwealth countries, CARICOM, neighboring Brazil, and other external partners, including the United States. He disclosed that in the coming days, weeks, and months, there will be greater collaboration with Guyana's international partners.

President Ali reiterated the government's commitment to protecting the country's territorial integrity and the safety of its citizens. He assured residents that the government is working closely with the Guyana Defence Force (GDF) and other relevant agencies to monitor

the situation along the border.

The President's message of reassurance was met with positive reactions from the residents. Many expressed their appreciation for the government's commitment to resolving the border controversy peacefully.

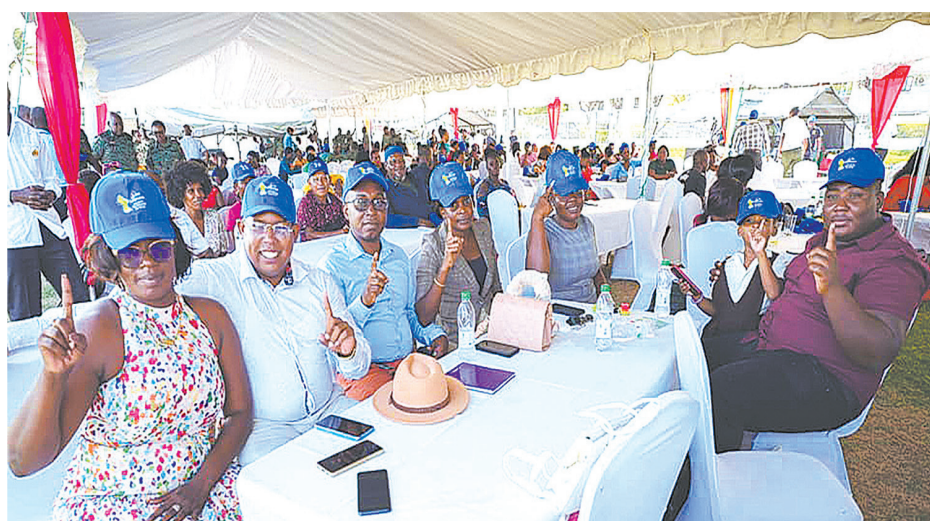
In addition to engaging with residents, the president also dined with soldiers at the border in Kaikan and hoisted the Golden Arrowhead at a section of the border with Venezuela, more than 2,200 feet above sea level.

PRESIDENT ALI HOSTS LUNCH FOR RELATIVES OF BORDER PATROL

Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, President Irfaan Ali hosted a luncheon for family members of Guyana Defence Force (GDF) personnel currently serving at the country's borders.

In his address, President Ali expressed the deep gratitude of the Guyanese people to the men and women in uniform who are diligently safeguarding the nation's borders. He emphasised Guyana's unwavering commitment to peace and stability in the Latin American and Caribbean regions, reiterating that the country has no interest in engaging in any conflict.

President Ali also urged Guyana's neighbours to fully embrace the principles of international law and abide by the outcomes of legal processes. He stressed the importance of resolving disputes through peaceful means, and upholding the



The luncheon with relatives of the Guyana Defence Force members serving at the country's borders



The luncheon with relatives of the Guyana Defence Force members serving at the country's borders

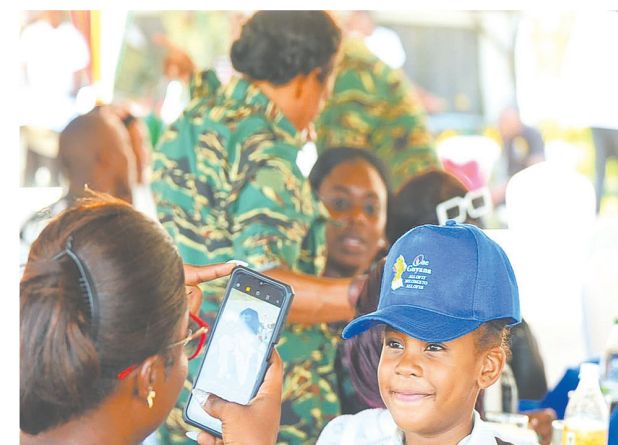
sanctity of international boundaries.

The luncheon provided an opportunity for the President to connect with the families of GDF members, offering words of encouragement

and support. He acknowledged the sacrifices made by these families as their loved ones serve on the frontlines, protecting the nation's sovereignty and territorial integrity.



The luncheon with relatives of the Guyana Defence Force members serving at the country's borders



The luncheon with relatives of the Guyana Defence Force members serving at the country's borders

OVERWHELMING REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL BACKING FOR GUYANA -AS VENEZUELA RAMPS UP AGGRESSION

Amidst Venezuela's territorial claims, and persistent threats, Guyana has been seeing increased support from regional and international bodies. This unwavering solidarity underscores the international community's recognition of Guyana's sovereignty, and its commitment to upholding international law.

President Ali, at a recent press conference, assured that his government is actively engaging international partners to address Venezuela's aggression. At a ministerial level, the foreign affairs ministry is in discussions with foreign ministers, both regionally and internationally, regarding the issue. Simultaneously, the Guyana Defence Force (GDF) is engaged in an aggressive communication strategy and information exchange with international defense counterparts.

President Ali emphasised Guyana's commitment to peace

and the peaceful resolution of the border dispute. He stated, **"We have no interest in engaging in any conflict. Our primary focus is to ensure that this region remains a region of peace. The tireless work we are doing over the last couple of weeks at various levels is not only bearing fruit, but has enabled us to strengthen our relationship with our partners, and enabled us to ensure that our partners are fully aware with every aspect of the Venezuelan controversy."**

Within the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), Guyana has found unwavering support for its territorial integrity. CARICOM leaders have consistently condemned Venezuela's actions and reaffirmed their commitment to the sanctity of Guyana's borders. This unwavering support has been instrumental in isolating Venezuela, and highlighting the illegitimacy of its claims.

On the international stage, Guyana has received strong backing from the United Nations, the Organization of American States (OAS), and other multilateral organisations. The UN Secretary-General has repeatedly called for a peaceful resolution to the border dispute, emphasising the need to respect Guyana's sovereignty and territorial integrity. Similarly, the OAS has condemned Venezuela's actions, and reaffirmed its commitment to the peaceful resolution of disputes.

In addition to the formal statements of support from regional and international organisations, Guyana has also benefited from the backing of individual countries. The United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom have all expressed their support for Guyana's sovereignty, and condemned Venezuela's actions. This diplomatic support has been crucial in strengthening Guyana's position.

GUYANESE URGED TO RELY ON OFFICIAL SOURCES THE BORDER CONTROVERSY

Speaking at a press conference, President Ali also appealed to Guyanese citizens to rely solely on official communications from the government, and state entities for any information pertaining to the ongoing Guyana/Venezuela border controversy. He emphasised the detrimental effects of sensationalised and misleading information circulating online and through other channels.

President Ali's call for caution arose from the prevalent spread of misinformation and misrepresentation surrounding the border controversy. He highlighted specific instances where doctored videos, claiming to depict border incidents, were circulated, causing unnecessary alarm among the public.



President Ali addressing the press conference

Addressing another instance of fear-mongering, President Ali clarified that recent activities undertaken by the Civil Defence Commission (CDC) in border communities were part of routine disaster preparedness exercises. These efforts were misconstrued as preparation for impending conflict, causing undue anxiety.

Regarding concerns raised about residents in border communities being urged to relocate, President Ali dismissed these claims as another instance of sensationalism and fear-mongering. He assured residents that there is no cause for alarm, and urged them to trust the government's actions.

President Ali reiterated the government's unwavering commitment to protecting Guyana's territorial integrity and sovereignty. He emphasised the ongoing work of the Guyana Police Force and the Guyana Defence Force in reassuring and safeguarding border residents. **"There is absolutely no reason to move from anywhere. The Guyana Defence Force is working very steadily and as I said before I am confident in their ability, the work they are doing and the type of discussions we are having with our partners,"** President Ali reiterated.

VP URGES CALLS FOR PEACE TO BE DIRECTED TO VENEZUELA

DR. JAGDEO: "ALL OPTIONS ARE AVAILABLE TO DEFEND OUR COUNTRY" AGAINST VENEZUELA'S AMBITIONS.

In response to growing calls for sustained peace in the region amidst heightened tensions in the Guyana/Venezuela border dispute, Vice President Dr. Bharrat Jagdeo has urged that these pleas be directed to the Nicolas Maduro government instead. **"We have never threatened the peace, Venezuela threatened the peace,"** VP Jagdeo asserted during a press conference at the Office of the President.

He elaborated that Venezuela's entire campaign, both historically and more recently, has been based on misinformation and lies, and it has now reached the point of accusing Guyana of being an aggressor.

Dr. Jagdeo expressed grave concern over seemingly sensible individuals choosing to remain ignorant of

historical facts. **"Either they have chosen to be ignorant or conveniently using misinterpretation to serve a political aim... personally, I believe it is a combination of the two,"** the Vice President remarked as he reflected on the 1899 arbitral award and the Geneva Agreement, which have long resolved the decades-old controversy.

Regarding CARICOM's unity in supporting Guyana, Jagdeo affirmed that the Secretariat has issued very forceful statements that were approved by all the heads of government. He expressed confidence that their public and private assurances will remain unchanged. **"We have the solidarity of the world on this issue,"** the Vice President maintained.

He further explained that beyond the lies,

Venezuela's campaign is aimed at mobilising domestic political bases and is also motivated by greed and jealousy.

Dr. Jagdeo condemned what he characterised as vile rhetoric from Venezuela's Vice President Delcy Rodríguez, highlighting personal attacks and lies directed at President Dr. Irfaan Ali.

He pointed out that part of the lies emanating from Venezuela included accusations of Guyana supporting the ambitions of the United States of America and facilitating the establishment of a military base in the country.

Nevertheless, the VP asserted that all options are available to defend Guyana against Venezuela's ambitions to forcibly annex Guyana's Essequibo region and derail the ongoing process before the International Court of

Justice (ICJ). **"We were never interested in military bases, but we have to protect our interests,"**

"We are not going to succumb to Venezuela's bullyism," Dr. Jagdeo declared.

GUYANA TO ENHANCE DEFENCE COOPERATION WITH US IN RESPONSE TO VENEZUELAN THREATS

Meanwhile, Dr. Jagdeo has announced that high-level officials from the US Department of Defense will be visiting Guyana next week to discuss strengthening bilateral defence cooperation in light of escalating threats from Venezuela.

The vice president



Vice President Dr. Bharrat Jagdeo

stressed the importance of maintaining peace in the region, but he also emphasized that Guyana will work with its allies, including the US, to prepare for any contingencies.

"We are going to be working on greater defense cooperation with a number of countries. We will have from the US Department of

Defense, next week, two visits to Guyana by two teams, and then several other visits in the month of December, and high-level presence representation from the Department of Defense here. We are not going to succumb to Venezuela's bullyism," the Vice President stated.

ICJ TO SOON ISSUE DECISION ON GUYANA'S REQUEST FOR PROVISIONAL MEASURES



The Guyana delegation at the ICJ hearing

The International Court of Justice (ICJ) concluded public hearings on November 14-15, 2023, in response to Guyana's request for provisional measures to prevent Venezuela from

taking actions that would prejudice the outcome of the ongoing case concerning the Arbitral Award of 3 October 1899.

ICJ President, Judge Joan Donoghue, stated that the agents of the

parties will be informed of the date on which the court will deliver its order in a public sitting. **"I shall request both agents to remain at the court's disposal to provide**

any additional information the court may require," Judge Donoghue said. **"The court will render its order on the request for the indication of provisional measures submitted by Guyana as soon as possible."**

In 2018, Guyana filed an application with the ICJ seeking to confirm the legally binding nature of the 1899 Arbitral Award, which established the boundary between Venezuela and the then-British Guiana. Despite recognising the Award for over 60 years, Venezuela abruptly disavowed it on the eve of Guyana's independence in 1966, asserting a claim to the Essequibo Region, which comprises two-thirds of

Guyana's territory.

On two occasions since the case was filed, the ICJ has confirmed its jurisdiction over Guyana's claims and announced its intention to determine the validity of the Arbitral Award and the course of the land boundary.

In September 2023, Venezuela's National Assembly passed a resolution calling for a referendum on the Essequibo claim, scheduled for December 3, 2023. Among the referendum's questions, question three seeks to ratify Venezuela's non-recognition of the ICJ's jurisdiction, while question five seeks approval for the creation of a new Venezuelan state in Guyana's Essequibo Region.

In light of the impending referendum, Guyana sought provisional measures from the ICJ to prevent Venezuela from taking any actions that would

prejudice the outcome of the case, including the creation of a new Venezuelan state in Guyana's Essequibo Region or the granting of Venezuelan citizenship to the region's population.

Guyana presented its oral arguments on November 14, and Venezuela presented its case on November 15.

The Government of Guyana remains optimistic that the ICJ will rule in its favour based on international law.

In a display of unity, Guyana's National Assembly unanimously passed a motion on November 6 reaffirming the nation's sovereignty and territorial integrity and condemning Venezuela's referendum. This motion followed extensive meetings between President Irfaan Ali and Opposition Leader Aubrey Norton.

GUYANA PREPARES FOR UNSC SEAT WITH CONSULTATIONS ON SECURITY PRIORITIES

Guyana is proactively engaging with key stakeholders ahead of its non-permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), holding discussions with representatives from the United Kingdom (UK) to explore areas of collaboration, and address common security concerns.

This engagement is part of a broader series of consultations with the five permanent members and 10 elected members of the UNSC, reflecting

Guyana's commitment to understanding and addressing the diverse perspectives and priorities of its fellow council members.

Foreign Secretary, Robert Persaud, emphasised the value of these consultations, stating, **"This type of dialogue allows us to gain insights into the views and issues we will face, enabling us to develop a more informed approach in dealing with them."**

Guyana has already held technical consultations with two permanent members of the UNSC, China and the United States, and plans to continue these discussions with France.

British High Commissioner, Jane Miller, expressed the UK's support for Guyana's upcoming UNSC tenure, highlighting the importance of exploring critical areas for a well-rounded perspective.

"Our discussions



Guyana and the UK holding technical consultations on UN security matters

encompass both procedural aspects of the UNSC and substantive issues such as food security, a priority for Guyana," Miller explained. **"We are also exploring Guyana's priorities and how we can collaborate effectively."**

Guyana's third election to the UNSC, serving a

term from January 2024 to December 2025, underscores the international community's confidence in the country's capabilities.

Under the theme "Partnering for Peace and Prosperity," Guyana's tenure will focus on five key areas: peacebuilding and conflict prevention, women, peace and security, protection

of children in armed conflict, and youth, peace, and security.

The government has reiterated its commitment to assuming this position with utmost seriousness and dedication, striving to contribute to the maintenance of international peace and security.

GUYANA SET TO HOST 2024 CARIBBEAN INVESTMENT FORUM

Guyana has been selected as the host nation for the 2024 Caribbean Investment Forum (CIF), a premier gathering of business leaders and investors aimed at promoting investment opportunities in the Caribbean region.

This announcement was made at the recently concluded two-day CIF, where Minister of Tourism, Industry, and

Commerce Oneidge Walrond represented Guyana.

This year's CIF focused on four key areas identified as having the potential to transform the Caribbean region: agricultural technology, renewable energy, ICT digital business, FINTECH, and logistics and transport. The forum featured investment villages, workshops, and roundtables dedicated



Guyana's selection as the host of the 2024 CIF reflects the country's growing prominence in the Caribbean region

to these sectors, and networking opportunities. During the

ministerial roundtable, Minister Walrond highlighted Guyana's commitment to investing in fiber-optic infrastructure to stimulate growth in the ICT sector, and enhance digital government services. This emphasis on digital transformation aligns with the forum's focus on leveraging technology to drive economic development across the Caribbean.

The CIF also showcased investment projects from across the Caribbean, attracting investors from around

the world. Panel discussions delved into the region's investment potential, providing insights into the diverse opportunities available.

Guyana's selection as the host of the 2024 CIF reflects the country's growing prominence in the Caribbean region and its commitment to fostering a vibrant investment climate. The forum is expected to attract a global audience of investors and business leaders, eager to explore the potential of Guyana and the wider Caribbean.

PM TELLS SOUTH AMERICAN DEFENCE AND FOREIGN MINISTERS THAT GUYANA COMMITTED TO PEACE

Prime Minister Brigadier (Ret'd), Mark Phillips outlined Guyana's steadfast commitment to "the peaceful settlement of disputes" and the need to uphold the principles of international law while emphasising the crucial role of regional cooperation in ensuring peace and security.

During his address to regional leaders, at the inaugural South American Dialogue Meeting between Defence and Foreign Ministers in Brasilia, Brazil. Prime Minister Phillips drew attention to the complex international landscape and underscored the necessity of inter-state collaboration to protect



Prime Minister Brigadier (Ret'd) Mark Phillips at the inaugural South American Dialogue Meeting between Defence and Foreign Ministers in Brasilia, Brazil

shared aspirations for regional safety and security.

"This defence forum offers a valuable platform for reinforcing our collective aspirations for a safe and secure region. We are inherently connected by geography, unified by culture, and interdependent in trade. It is through

this intricate network of relationships that we strive to uphold and enhance peace and stability across our region. Brazil's initiative to lead our region at this critical juncture is indeed commendable."

The Prime Minister referenced the need to follow the UN Charter and international law as a "guarantee for

peace", stressing the critical importance of peaceful conflict resolution.

"Let me reaffirm, at the outset, the Government of Guyana's commitment to the Charter of the UN, to the purposes and principles of the organisation, including the peaceful settlement

of disputes."

He explained that adherence to the tenets of the UN Charter and International Law is a "sine qua non" – a guarantee – for peace at the international and regional levels.

Prime Minister Phillips, who is a former Chief of Staff of the Guyana Defence Force (GDF), noted that as an incoming non-permanent member of the UN Security Council, Guyana stands prepared to confront existing and emerging threats to international peace and security in a principled manner.

He stressed that "no effort should be spared" to avoid conflict and ensure South America remains a "zone of peace and cooperation".

Guyana, he said, continues to condemn Russia's violation of Ukraine's sovereignty,

and expressed alarm over the crisis in Gaza.

Further, he expressed Guyana's solidarity with Haiti as he spoke about the deteriorating situation, which he described as "deeply concerning".

Turning his attention to Venezuela, Prime Minister Phillips spoke extensively about the rising tensions tied to Venezuela's long-running border controversy with Guyana, which is currently before the International Court of Justice (ICJ). He underscored Guyana's peaceful approach and stated that Venezuela's planned referendum on December 3rd jeopardises stability in the region and by challenging Guyana's territorial sovereignty, the referendum and related rhetoric pose "an existential threat" to Guyana.

GUYANA AND BRAZIL STRENGTHEN MILITARY TIES AMIDST BORDER TENSIONS

Senior military officials from Guyana and Brazil gathered in Guyana for the 26th Regional Meeting of Military Exchange, reaffirming their commitment to regional security and cooperation amidst heightened tensions at Guyana's border with Venezuela.

The meeting took place against the backdrop of Venezuela's troop buildup and planned referendum to bolster its claim over Guyana's Essequibo region, sparking concerns over potential instability. Amidst these developments, Brazil, a staunch supporter of Guyana in the border



Senior military officials from Guyana and Brazil

dispute, emphasised the importance of maintaining a secure and peaceful environment through collaborative efforts.

Brigadier Omar

Khan, Chief-of-Staff of the Guyana Defence Force, underscored the enduring friendship between Guyana and Brazil, rooted in shared democratic values and

respect for international law. He remarked that the annual meeting extends beyond military cooperation, fostering regional stability and peace.

Major General Paulo Santa Barba, Commander of the 1st Jungle Infantry of the Brazilian Armed Forces, expressed his satisfaction with the meeting, highlighting the significance of exchanging concerns, intentions, and capabilities to safeguard the region. He emphasised the interconnectedness of regional security, emphasising that issues affecting one nation can have repercussions for all.

Colonel Michael Shahoud, Commander of the 1st Infantry Battalion of the Guyana Defence Force, led the local

delegation. The meeting focused on various areas of mutual interest, including border security, operational environments, and issues arising at the Bon-Fim/Lethem border.

The Guyana Defence Force underscored that the military exchange represents just one facet of the longstanding diplomatic relations between Guyana and Brazil, dating back to 1968. The annual meeting, according to the GDF, reaffirms the commitment of both nations to collaborative efforts in ensuring regional security, peace, and prosperity.

SMALL BUSINESS BUREAU HONOURS 21 OUTSTANDING BUSINESSES

The Small Business Bureau (SBB) hosted its annual awards ceremony at Parc Rayne, East Bank Public Road, recognising the outstanding contributions of 21 small businesses in various fields. Communications Manager at the Ministry of Tourism, Industry and Commerce, Cordell McClure, reaffirmed the government's unwavering support for small businesses during the event.

McClure emphasised that the awards ceremony serves as a catalyst for

growth, motivation, and adherence to standards among small businesses. He highlighted the government's significant investments in the sector, granting approximately 2,500 grants worth over \$680 million and guaranteeing 61 loans valued at \$569 million over the past three years.

While the SBB is well-known for its grants, loan guarantees, and training facilitation, McClure underscored the broader objective of empowering small businesses to flourish.

Grants are intended to serve as a launching pad, while loan guarantees provide access to much-needed capital at competitive interest rates to fuel business expansion.

Since 2020, over 7,000 clients have received training in various areas to enhance their capacity and contribute to a more robust small business sector.

The awardees expressed their gratitude for the SBB's assistance in developing their businesses and recognising their achievements.



Cordell McClure handing over an award to a client of the SBB

GOVT REJECTS US DELEGATION'S FACT-FINDING MISSION, CITING BIASES AND LACK OF TRANSPARENCY

The Guyana government recently rejected a fact-finding mission by a delegation from the United States of America, citing concerns about the delegation's motives, and the lack of transparency in its organisation.

The government also invited the delegation to focus their attention on the multiple discrepancies that occurred under the tenure of the APNU+AFC government.

President Ali, who spoke at a recent press conference, explained that the Chairman of the delegation, Dee Dawkins-Haigler, had reached out to him regarding this engagement, but communication went blank after he provided her with several reports. "I proceeded to



President Ali addressing the press conference

send to her every single report; the Commission of Inquiry into the elections, the EU report, the CARICOM report, the OAS report, and the communication went blank."

The president also criticised the delegation for failing to conduct a rounded investigation and instead opting to engage with a few selected persons. He questioned why they did not speak to the Ethnic Relations Commission

(ERC) to see if any of those persons ever reported anything.

President Ali emphasised the need to put a stop to this kind of interference by external actors, and reiterated his commitment to building a united and ethnically diverse Guyana. He reaffirmed the government's track record of promoting unity and pledged to continue working towards this goal.

The government in an earlier statement had noted that the delegation's visit appears to have resulted from a conference organised by Rickford Burke, a Guyanese residing in Brooklyn, New York. Burke, who is wanted by law enforcement agencies in Guyana for a number of criminal

offences, is known for his "daily diet of racist rants on social media, often directed at the People's Progressive Party Civic (PPP/C) government."

The statement had expressed the government's concerns that the delegation's fact-finding mission was "politically driven and orchestrated by opponents of the government, and that its findings are predetermined." It also noted that the delegation did not seek to engage with the government or provide any information about its plans or objectives.

Instead, the government suggested that any delegation interested in conducting a fact-finding mission should focus on investigating the following:

- Fraudulent elections in 1968, 1973, 1980, and 1985;
- Massive violations of human rights and freedoms during 28

years of dictatorial rule from 1968 to 1992;

- Abuse, violence, and killings of persons opposed to the government, including the assassinations of Dr. Walter Rodney and Father Bernard Darke;
- Total mismanagement of Guyana's economy from 1968 to 1992, leaving Guyana as the second poorest nation in the Western Hemisphere;
- Widespread racial and ethnic discrimination between 1968 and 1992;
- Rampant corruption, mismanagement, and racial discrimination between 2015 and 2020;
- The loss of 30,000 jobs between 2015 and 2020;
- Flagrant, multiple attempts to fraudulently alter the results of the March 2, 2020 General and Regional Elections.

CANADIAN PARLIAMENTARIANS REASSURE GUYANA OF SUPPORT ON CRITICAL ISSUES



Foreign Secretary Robert Persaud and the Canadian Chapter of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association

The Canadian Chapter of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association has reaffirmed its support for Guyana on a range of pressing global matters.

Foreign Secretary

Robert Persaud received a courtesy call from Alexandra Mendes, M.P., Chair of the Canadian Branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association. She

was accompanied

by a delegation that included Senator Salma Ataullahjan, Rheel Fortin, M.P., Robert Kitchen, M.P., Remi Bourgault, Secretary to the Delegation, and the Speaker of the National Assembly, the Honourable Manzoor Nadir.

Foreign Secretary Persaud welcomed and expressed gratitude to the visiting delegation, highlighting the visit's contribution to strengthening the bilateral relationship between Guyana and Canada. He also noted recent regional

engagement through the 3rd Annual Canada-CARICOM Foreign Minister's Group meeting and the Canada-CARICOM Summit. Persaud emphasised the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association's significance in promoting parliamentary representative democracy in Commonwealth countries.

Persaud outlined Guyana's foreign policy priorities, including the Low Carbon Development Strategy 2023, food insecurity,

the situation in Haiti, energy security, Guyana's upcoming Non-Permanent UN Security Council seat for 2024-2025, and Venezuela's unlawful territorial claims. Regarding the Venezuela controversy, Persaud expressed appreciation for Canada's long-standing support and active role in defending Guyana's territorial integrity within the Commonwealth.

Mendes, M.P., concurred with the priorities outlined by Persaud, particularly regarding climate change, food insecurity, and the situation in Haiti. She affirmed that international law is on Guyana's side in the Venezuela controversy, and that the Government

of Canada closely follows the case before the International Court of Justice.

Senator Ataullahjan noted Guyana's diaspora population and their active contributions to Canada's cultural enrichment.

Persaud highlighted the transformative impact of the oil and gas sector on Guyana's rapid and inclusive development for all Guyanese.

The visit, facilitated by the High Commission of Canada and the National Assembly of Guyana through the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA), allowed the delegation to interact with a cross-section of Guyanese society.

US TRADE DELEGATION MEETS WITH GUYANESE COUNTERPARTS TO EXPLORE BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

A delegation from the Bilateral Chambers of Commerce, headquartered in Houston, and the Louisiana District Export Council recently visited Guyana to meet with representatives from the private and public sectors. The delegation was welcomed by

Foreign Secretary Robert Persaud, who expressed Guyana's openness for business and the government's support for developing partnerships between Guyanese and U.S. companies.

Persaud encouraged U.S. businesses to form relationships with their Guyanese counterparts,

to enhance their capacity. He also reaffirmed the government's satisfaction with the establishment of a U.S. Department of Commerce office within the U.S. Embassy in Georgetown.

Marc Herbert, a member of the U.S. Trade Delegation, thanked

Persaud for the meeting, and conveyed the delegation's enthusiasm for exploring business opportunities in Guyana.

The delegation was accompanied by Mariyam Cementwala, the Political and Economic Section Chief of the US Embassy.



The meeting between Foreign Secretary Robert Persaud and the US trade delegation from Louisiana

LATEST DEVELOPMENTS IN GUYANA'S OIL SECTOR: GUYANA CELEBRATES FIRST OIL PRODUCTION AT PAYARA FIELD



The Prosperity FPSO that is working on the Payara development

Guyana has achieved a significant milestone in its oil and gas sector with the commencement of first oil production at the Payara field, marking the operation of the third production vessel on the Stabroek Block.

A press release from the Ministry of Natural Resources noted that this achievement is a testament to the country's commitment to responsible resource management and its

start-up. The release noted that the government is currently reviewing an application for the sixth development, the Whiptail Project, submitted by ExxonMobil Guyana Limited (EMGL) and its co-venturers. Upon approval, Guyana is poised to produce over 1.2 million barrels of oil per day by 2027.

company Maxar Technologies, with assistance from the United States (US) Embassy, provides real-time monitoring of all vessels operating in Guyana's offshore waters. This includes Floating Production Storage and Offloading (FPSOs) vessels, drill ships, supply boats, and other marine vessels. The software's capabilities extend to identifying the registration of vessels



Close to 6,000 Guyanese are directly employed within the oil and gas sector

Guyana next year, will be the first of its kind in the region, enabling effective well containment in the event of a spill.

Minister Bharrat underscored the importance of having a capping stack readily available in Guyana, stating, "Not many countries, in fact there is no country in this part of the world that has a capping stack in country. Most of them are in Houston, Texas, so it makes sense, even though it costs a little more, to have that capping stack in country."

Minister Bharrat stated. "As a result, there is a scarcity of trained and qualified professionals in this field. This presents a shared responsibility for the government and the private sector to ensure that we develop the necessary expertise locally."

To address this challenge,

has responded positively to this call, sponsoring four Guyanese pursuing Petroleum Sciences studies in China for the 2023-2024 academic year.

"CPGL has committed to sending six more students in the next two years," Minister Bharrat announced. "This brings the total number of students



Construction progressing on the Port Mourant National Oil and Gas Training Centre

dedication to utilising oil revenues for the betterment of its citizens.

The Payara development, approved in September 2020, is expected to produce over 600 million barrels of oil. With the addition of the Prosperity FPSO vessel, Guyana's total oil production is anticipated to reach an estimated 620,000 barrels per day.

The Payara development joins the Liza Destiny and Liza Unity production vessels, which began operations in December 2019 and February 2022, respectively. These developments are further complemented by the ongoing Yellowtail and Uaru projects, each expected to contribute 250,000 barrels of oil per day upon their respective

GUYANA TO STRENGTHEN OFFSHORE SURVEILLANCE WITH ADVANCED SOFTWARE, CAPPING STACK

In a significant step towards enhancing maritime safety and environmental protection, the Government of Guyana has acquired advanced software to monitor offshore activities, and secured a capping stack for emergency response.

Natural Resources Minister Vickram Bharrat unveiled these developments during a press conference at the Guyana Forestry Commission complex.

The new software, procured from IT

and fishing boats, enabling the distinction between legal and illegal operations.

Minister Bharrat emphasised the software's ability to detect oil spills and quantify the amount of oil in the water. This real-time information will be crucial for prompt and effective spill response measures. Additionally, the software is supported by the company in the US, ensuring immediate notification to the relevant authorities in Guyana in case of any detected oil residue.

To further strengthen its emergency response capabilities, the government is acquiring a capping stack through the Yellowtail license. This specialised device, expected to arrive in

GUYANESE THRIVE IN OIL AND GAS SECTOR

The oil and gas sector in Guyana continues to flourish, offering a plethora of employment opportunities for Guyanese citizens. With almost 6,000 locals currently employed in the industry, Guyanese make up approximately 70% of the total workforce.

Minister Bharrat, acknowledged the significance of this achievement during the press conference. He emphasised the government's commitment to expanding these opportunities, and highlighted the ongoing efforts to build local capacity to meet the growing demand for skilled professionals.

"Oil and gas is a relatively new industry for Guyana,"



Natural Resources Minister Vickram Bharrat

the government is constructing the Guyana Technical Training College (GTRC) at Port Mourant, Berbice. This state-of-the-art facility will provide industry-level training comparable to that offered in other Caribbean nations, ensuring a steady stream of skilled professionals to meet the sector's demands.

Complementing this initiative, the government is actively engaging with companies to establish technical scholarship programmes for Guyanese students. CNOOC Petroleum Guyana Limited (CPGL)

studying petroleum engineering in China to ten. This is just one example of our efforts to build capacity both within and outside of Guyana."

Minister Bharrat also addressed the challenge faced by individuals possessing technical skills without the necessary certification, which hinders their employment prospects. The GTRC will play a crucial role in bridging this gap by providing high-quality training programmes aligned with industry standards.

GUYANA ASSURES DIPLOMATIC COMMUNITY OF TRANSPARENCY IN US\$37.5 M REDD+ CARBON CREDITS PROGRAMME



Vice President Dr. Bharrat Jagdeo addressing the briefing session at the Arthur Chung Conference Centre

Guyana has assured the international community of its commitment to transparency and accountability in the implementation of its US\$37.5 million REDD+ carbon credits programme, which aims to support sustainable development projects in indigenous communities.

Vice President Dr. Bharrat Jagdeo made these assurances during a recent briefing session at the Arthur Chung Conference Centre (ACCC). He highlighted the lessons learned from the Norway-Guyana Partnership, signed in 2009, and emphasised the importance of addressing concerns

raised by developed countries regarding the use of forests in carbon credit schemes.

The vice president stressed that the REDD+ carbon credits programme is designed to ensure that every cent allocated to Amerindian communities is accounted for, with strict financial management mechanisms in place. Separate bank accounts have been established for each village, and a special audit will be conducted to verify the proper expenditure of funds on priority projects.

Dr. Jagdeo reiterated the government's commitment to transparency and community involvement, and emphasised that 500

projects are currently being implemented in indigenous communities. He said that capacity building is a crucial aspect of the programme, empowering village leaders to develop sustainable plans, manage finances, and take ownership of their development.

“By giving leaders the responsibility of developing their villages, equipping them with plans to ensure sustainability and the ability to manage their finances, capacity is being built to properly manage the funds that are being provided,” Dr. Jagdeo stated.

The vice president's remarks were echoed by Senior Minister in the Office of the President with responsibility for Finance, Dr. Ashni Singh, Minister of Natural Resources, Vickram Bharrat, Minister of Amerindian Affairs, Pauline Sukhai, Minister of Agriculture, Zulfikar Mustapha, and National Tshao Council (NTC) Chairperson Derrick John.

GOVT TO LAUNCH SENSITISATION WORKSHOPS TO RAISE AWARENESS OF LOCAL CONTENT ACT



The Ministry of Natural Resources press conference

The Government of Guyana is set to embark on a nationwide sensitisation campaign to educate citizens about the Local Content Act, and ensure its widespread implementation.

These workshops, scheduled to begin before the end of the year, will target communities in both urban and remote areas, including hinterland regions, to highlight the immense opportunities available through the act's provisions.

Addressing reporters at a press conference, Minister of Natural Resources, Vickram Bharrat, acknowledged concerns that the Local Content Act primarily benefits businesses in Georgetown and Region Four. To dispel these misconceptions, he emphasised the government's commitment to

extending the act's reach beyond urban centers, and engaging communities across the country.

“We want to ensure that the Local Content Act is not just limited to Georgetown businesses,” Minister Bharrat affirmed. **“We will be venturing into Region Six, Region Ten, Region Two, and even the hinterland regions to explain to everyone how they can truly benefit from this legislation.”**

The minister underscored the significance of the Local Content Act, particularly for Guyana as a relatively new oil-producing nation. Its implementation demonstrates the government's proactive approach to ensuring that Guyanese citizens actively participate in

the burgeoning oil and gas sector.

Furthermore, Minister Bharrat emphasised the government's ongoing commitment to reviewing and refining the Local Content Act to maximise benefits for Guyanese. The upcoming workshops will serve as a valuable tool to gather insights into the country's available capacity, facilitating informed updates to the First Schedule of the act.

“It makes no sense to increase targets or services when we don't have the capacity in-house,” Minister Bharrat explained. **“However, we have observed that most investors coming to Guyana are seeking local partners, regardless of whether they are involved in services under Schedule One or not. So, the legislation has actually brought that positiveness to the local private sector.”**

Through these sensitisation workshops, the government aims to foster a comprehensive understanding of the Local Content Act and empower Guyanese businesses to capitalise on the opportunities it presents.

GUYANA UNVEILS AMBITIOUS ENERGY DIVERSIFICATION STRATEGY AT OLADE MEETING



Prime Minister, Brigadier (Ret'd) Mark Phillips delivering his remarks at the 53rd Meeting of Ministers of the Latin American Energy Organization

Prime Minister Brigadier (Ret'd) Mark Phillips addressed the 53rd Meeting of Ministers of the Latin American Energy Organisation (OLADE), during which he outlined Guyana's ambitious energy diversification strategy that aims to revolutionise the nation's energy landscape. PM Phillips, who

holds responsibility for Guyana's energy sector, emphasised the alignment of the energy plan with the objectives of the expanded Low Carbon Development Strategy (LCDS 2030), which seeks to foster economic and social development through a low-carbon development pathway while addressing climate change.

The government's commitment to achieving a low-carbon economy, and advancing the transition to renewable energy development was reiterated by PM Phillips, declaring it a national priority. Renewable resources from the gas industry

will also play a pivotal role in diversifying the nation's economy and ensuring energy, food, and climate security.

“We are advancing a diversified energy supply matrix to cater for Guyana's current energy needs and the rapid growth in demand anticipated in the medium and long term,” the prime minister stated.

Guyana's energy matrix incorporates hydropower, natural gas, solar, and wind resources, adding 500 megawatts (MW) of new generating capacity for residential and commercial users, fulfilling the government's pledge to provide affordable, stable, and reliable energy.

PM Phillips highlighted the progress in reviving the 165 MW Amaila Falls Project, along with new proposals and funding from the Guyana REDD+ Investment Fund for solar farms amounting to 33 MW under the GUY SOL programme.

Recognising the need for energy access in hinterland regions, the administration is committed to delivering clean, renewable power to these areas. This includes the implementation of 19 solar PV-powered mini-grids, benefiting 3,880 households and over 20,000 individuals.

“These mini-grids will contribute to essential social, healthcare, and education facilities,

raising the nation's overall installed solar capacity to more than 13 MW,” the prime minister said.

A large-scale electrification project was also highlighted, providing some 30,000 Solar PV Home Energy Systems for remote areas, bringing renewable electricity to previously unserved homes and benefiting an estimated 136,863 people in 245 communities.

Reiterating Guyana's commitment to regional energy cooperation, PM Phillips pointed to the ongoing energy collaboration among Guyana, Suriname, Brazil, and French Guiana.

The five-day OLADE meeting took place in Montevideo, Uruguay.

GUYANA LEADS DISCUSSIONS FOR AGRI FACILITY FOLLOWING SAUDI ARABIA-CARICOM SUMMIT



Leaders at the Saudi Arabia-CARICOM Summit

President Ali has announced that Guyana is leading discussions for the establishment of a multi-million-dollar facility to enhance the CARICOM region's agriculture industry. This initiative emerged as a key outcome of the recent Saudi Arabia-

commence before the end of the year. Beyond agriculture, the Saudi Arabia-CARICOM Summit fostered discussions and decisions that reinforced the Caribbean Community's relationship with Saudi Arabia. The Kingdom

the importance of establishing Saudi Arabia's physical presence in the Caribbean, noting that the Kingdom has made available its technical, ministerial, private sector, and financial resources to support the region's development.

Saudi Arabia has allocated \$2.5 billion for regional development, and has approved a number of projects for various CARICOM countries. In Guyana, these projects include a \$150 million housing development venture, and the construction of the Wismar Bridge in Linden.

President Ali emphasised the positive outcomes of Guyana's diplomatic efforts in the Middle East. He recalled facing skepticism from political scientists when embarking on this initiative, but reiterated that results are the ultimate measure of success. **"I recall when I started this journey of expanding diplomatic relationship with the Middle East there were many political scientists offering views and I respect their views. But I consistently said the result is what matters. Today in every one of our engagements we can point to direct results,"** Dr Ali stressed.

He pointed to the tangible benefits of Guyana's engagement with Middle Eastern countries, which have yielded direct results in various areas of cooperation.



President Ali with the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs and Climate Envoy, HE Adel bin Ahmed Al-Jubeir

CARICOM Summit, which was deemed a resounding success by the president.

During a press conference at the Arthur Chung Conference Centre (ACCC), President Ali revealed that Guyana has proposed a \$25 million facility to boost food production, with a focus on developing a hydroponics facility for the entire Caribbean region. The necessary studies have already been submitted, and President Ali expressed confidence that the initial phase of the project will

has committed to establishing a special window and providing preferential treatment for CARICOM nations seeking collaboration in areas beyond infrastructure, food, and energy. Cultural exchange, tourism, and private sector investment were also highlighted as priorities.

President Ali underscored the summit's significance in deepening CARICOM's ties with Saudi Arabia and establishing a collective presence in the region. He emphasised



Leaders at the Saudi Arabia-CARICOM Summit

PRESIDENT ALI URGES EU BUSINESSES TO EXPLORE GUYANA'S INVESTMENT POTENTIAL



President Ali and the EU Delegation at the Guyana Marriott Hotel

President Ali called on a visiting European Union (EU) business delegation to seize the vast investment opportunities that Guyana has to offer.

Addressing a forum held at the Marriott Hotel in Georgetown, President Ali highlighted the country's substantial investment potential, particularly in healthcare, agriculture, tourism, and new technologies. The event marked the beginning of a three-day EU Global Gateway Economic Mission to Guyana, bringing together representatives from 23 companies across various industries.

President Ali emphasised that Guyana's trade with the EU has soared in recent years, with total trade reaching US\$11 billion between January 2017 and September 2023. Notably, trade grew by a staggering 778% between 2021 and 2022, from US\$614 million to US\$5.4 billion.

Guyana's remarkable economic growth, averaging over 43% in the past three years, far surpassing the global

average of 2.3%, provides an opportune time for EU businesses to invest. This growth has been driven by the discovery of significant oil and gas reserves, with Guyana poised to produce at least one million barrels of oil per day by 2027.

The head of state underscored the government's commitment to creating a policy agenda and framework that positions Guyana as an attractive investment destination. **"What we're seeking to do is to create competitive advantages within Guyana, so that you can relocate your services here or expand your services here to better compete and get access to those markets,"** he stated.

He pointed to the growing trend of European companies partnering with local institutions to enhance healthcare facilities and establish Guyana as a regional hub for medical services. **"This is the place we want to be if we are to create a healthcare system that is second to none,"** President Ali

asserted. Guyana's immense tourism potential was also highlighted by the President, who described Guyana as **"the world's best ecotourism destination."** He encouraged EU businesses to capitalise on this untapped market, warning that delaying investment could lead to missed opportunities.

"This event today must reset not only the relationship but reset your own strategic thinking on what we can offer you here in Guyana, how we can present a platform for your own businesses to expand and develop," he told the delegation.

To foster investments in various sectors, the government has implemented a zero-percent corporate tax policy and incentives, creating an attractive environment for foreign investors. Over the three days, the delegation had the opportunity to engage with key sector heads and private sector bodies to explore further investment opportunities.

HOUSING FOR ALL: FIVE MORE FAMILIES BENEFIT FROM CORE HOMES IN REGION THREE



Five more families benefit from core homes in Region Three

The Government of Guyana's housing drive continues to make a positive impact on the lives of citizens, as five more families in Onderneeming and Lust-en-Rust, Region Three, received the keys to their new core homes.

The Core Home initiative, part of the Adequate Housing and Urban Accessibility Programme (AHUAP), aims to improve the living conditions of vulnerable families. Minister of Housing and Water, Collin Croal, personally handed over the keys to the delighted beneficiaries.

Nicola Thompson, a mother of two, expressed her overwhelming joy at finally owning a home. She had struggled to secure a loan from banks due to her limited income, but the government's intervention through the Core Home initiative made her dream a reality. **"I am so overwhelmed and excited all together because I have waited so long, since 2018 for my home,"** the emotional mother expressed.

Enduko Glenmore and his wife, who previously lived in a small, makeshift shelter, were also overjoyed to receive their new home. Glenmore expressed gratitude to the government and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) for making homeownership possible for him. **"Before I was living in this little place here, and even sometimes I would sleep in my workshop,"** Glenmore explained.

Desmond Cheong, whose previous home

was prone to flooding, was thrilled to have a safe and secure place to call home. He expressed his gratitude to the government and all those involved in the programme. **"I am really grateful for this house,"** Cheong said.

Tricia DaSilva, a mother of three, was also among the beneficiaries. She moved into her new home almost immediately, thankful for the government's support.

Condica Eastman and her family are eagerly awaiting the opportunity to move into their new home, which represents a significant improvement from their current living situation at her grandparents' house.

Minister Croal congratulated the beneficiaries and reiterated the government's commitment to providing better living conditions for its citizens.

In addition to the keys, each beneficiary received a Certificate of Inspection. The core homes feature two bedrooms, a kitchen, and washroom facilities. Engineers from CH&PA's Projects Department and staff of the Community Development



One of the newly constructed roads in the Parfaite Harmonie Housing Scheme

Department oversee the construction to ensure they meet the IDB's specifications.

\$900M INVESTED IN PARFAITE HARMONIE HOUSING SCHEME INFRASTRUCTURE

Approximately \$900 million has been expended to construct several thoroughfares and drainage structures in the Parfaite Harmonie Housing Scheme, West Bank Demerara. This significant financial investment also falls under the AHUAP.

During his recent visit to Region Three, Minister



Five more families benefit from core homes in Region Three

Croal highlighted the importance of this project for the Parfaite Harmonie community. He stated, **"Here over on the West Bank of Demerara, within the Parfaite area, under this project, we have spent close to about \$900 million for a number of streets [and] street lamps, as well as drainage networks."**

To ensure efficient service delivery to the rapidly growing community, Minister Croal announced a

tripartite agreement between the Ministries of Local Government, Public Works, and the Central Housing and Planning Authority (CHPA) for the execution of several ongoing infrastructural works.

In addition to infrastructure improvements, the AHUAP programme has also constructed over two dozen core homes in Parfaite Harmonie. Minister Croal explained, **"Part of the parameter of the project allowed for the beneficiaries to go through a system, an application process where they had to wait for a while. So**

over here we have constructed about 30 core homes."

He also mentioned that the beneficiaries for the remaining core homes have already been identified, and construction is progressing swiftly.

The AHUAP programme's impact extends beyond Parfaite Harmonie, with ongoing projects for core home construction along the East Coast of Demerara and within the Diamond/Grove, East Bank area. In 2021, the programme's coverage expanded to include 19 communities on the East Coast of Demerara, reaching Victoria.

HOUSING MINISTRY INVESTS OVER \$12 BILLION IN EAST COAST INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

Meanwhile, the



Five more families benefit from core homes in Region Three

government is making significant investments in infrastructure development on the East Coast of Demerara, with over \$12 billion allocated to ensure that more than 5,000 allottees can access their land and commence construction.

time they finish for this year, it's better because if you think the amount of work we have this year was a lot, wait till you see next year."

The minister further highlighted the government's



Construction of a road that will service the development of the community

Minister Croal recently embarked on a site visit to monitor the progress of ongoing infrastructure works at Plantation Hope, Enterprise/Non Pareil, Good Hope, Lusignan Phase 1 and 2/Two Friends, Success, and Le Roussovenir.

Accompanied by members of the media, Minister Croal engaged with contractors to assess the status of various projects and emphasise the importance of timely completion. He expressed satisfaction with the overall progress, noting that favourable weather conditions have contributed to the efficient execution of works.

"Contractors have no excuse right now for delays, save and except those that are out of their control," Minister Croal stated. **"I'm trying to implore them that the earlier they finish or by the**

ambitious plans to expand infrastructure development on the East Coast, drawing parallels with the rapid development witnessed on the East Bank of Demerara.

"In another two years, East Coast is going to mirror East Bank because to access the inner part of the land you won't have to necessarily drive in from the main road. We will have another connecting road that comes to Foulis/Enmore," he explained.

The ongoing infrastructure projects encompass land clearing, installation of road networks, drainage systems, bridges, and pipe networks, laying the foundation for future residential communities on the East Coast.

GUYEXPO RETURNS AFTER SEVEN-YEAR HIATUS – SHOWCASES GUYANA’S ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION



GuyExpo returns after seven-year hiatus



GuyExpo returns after seven-year hiatus



GuyExpo returns after seven-year hiatus



GuyExpo returns after seven-year hiatus



GuyExpo returns after seven-year hiatus



GuyExpo returns after seven-year hiatus

GuyExpo 2023, Guyana’s largest trade and investment exposition, has returned after a seven-year hiatus, providing a platform for businesses to showcase their products and services while highlighting the country’s remarkable economic transformation.

The exhibition, themed “Transforming Guyana Through Investment, Innovation and Resilience,” aligns with the government’s vision for economic diversification and sustainable growth.

Exhibitors expressed their excitement about the opportunity to connect with potential customers and demonstrate their innovative products. One such exhibitor, Irene Bacchus-Holder of Amazon Authentics, has been participating in GuyExpo since its inception in 1995 and is thrilled to showcase her latest creations. “I’m happy that GuyExpo has restarted so that we could be able to showcase our new products and also try to secure new markets for existing products.”

Other exhibitors, such as Twins Manufacturing and Water Drop Guyana, are using the event to introduce their businesses to the public. Sayyid Ferouz, a manager at Twins Manufacturing, emphasised the company’s commitment to healthy and sustainable products, while Eishael Canterbury of Water Drop Guyana highlighted the

importance of access to clean water.

GuyExpo also provided an opportunity for entrepreneurs like 18-year-old Sheridan Dyal to showcase their talents and business acumen. Dyal, the founder of ‘Teen Hustle,’ was excited to inspire others with her entrepreneurial spirit. “As an adult who just turned 18, I felt it was important to make my mark on the scene as an adult and bring my business out and let everyone know that a teen is hustling to do her thing hence the name ‘Teen Hustle,’” she stated.

Prime Minister Brigadier (Ret’d) Mark Phillips, underscored the significance of GuyExpo in showcasing Guyana’s economic transformation and attracting new investments. “GuyExpo is just not a reflection of where we are but a glimpse into where we are headed. Our economic trajectory is not merely about growth, but also it is about qualitative transformation,” the prime minister stated.

He highlighted the growth of non-traditional sectors such as tourism, hospitality, transportation, construction, and logistics, as well as the expansion of ICT as a driver of productivity and innovation.



GuyExpo returns after seven-year hiatus



GuyExpo returns after seven-year hiatus



GuyExpo returns after seven-year hiatus



GuyExpo returns after seven-year hiatus



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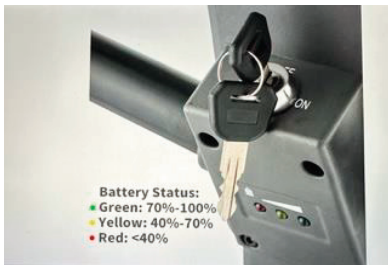
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The International Court of Justice in The Hague, Netherlands

ICJ to rule on December 1 on Guyana's ask for prevention

The International Court of Justice (ICJ) is set to deliver its ruling this Friday, December 1, 2023, on Guyana's request for provisional measures to prevent Venezuela from proceeding with its planned referendum in its current form, which contains questions that threaten Guyana's territorial integrity.

The court, situated at the Peace Palace in The Hague, Netherlands, issued notices on Tuesday morning, indicating that Judge Joan E. Donoghue, the President of the ICJ, will announce

the orders during a public hearing.

Guyana is seeking from the court an order preventing Venezuela from taking any action to seize, acquire, 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 1899 Arbitral Award that established the land boundary between the two states and the final and binding nature of that boundary.

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Angostura Lemon Lime & Bitter
750 ml

2/3⁰⁰



Jamaican Pride Coconut Milk
400 ml

69[¢]



Shavuot Cerasee Tea
24 Bags

1⁹⁹ each



Karibena Honey
1 kg

6⁹⁹ each



National Giant Hardo Bread
907 g

3⁹⁹ each



National Banana or Plantain Chips
Assorted 45 g

3/2⁵



Pure Cane Raw Demerara Sugar
500 g

99[¢] each



Choice Table Salt
1 kg

69[¢] each



Benjamin's Rose Water
480 ml

3⁹⁹ each



Heinz Tomato Ketchup
1 L

44[¢] each



Grace Vienna Sausage
Assorted 130 g

99[¢] each



Dunya Harvest Butter Beans
425 g

89[¢] each



Mr. Goudas Yellow Corn Meal
2 kg

2/4⁵⁰



Nupak Green Lentils
10 lbs

11⁹ each



Laurentide Windshield Washer Fluid
3.78 L

44⁹ each



Windsor Ice Melt Salt
10 kg

39⁹ each



Comet Cleanser With Bleach
400 g

99[¢] each



TMPR Alcohol Solution
473 ml

1⁹ each

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Frozen US Premium Grade Easy Cook Trim Oxtail



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Frozen Boneless Mutton Leg Meat



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Fresh Beef Kidney



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Salted Beef Short Ribs



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Frozen Snapper Steaks



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\$5.99
 lb as is

Fresh Doctor Fish



\$6.99
 lb as is

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 lb

Fresh Jamaican Banana



1.99
 lb

Dry Coconut



2.99
 ea

Fresh Seedless Sorrel AVAILABLE



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 Sunday 9 am to 8 pm

Sheppard Ave. E.
 Danforth Food Market
 651 Markam Rd.
 416-439-6397



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 Saturday 9 am to 9 pm
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GUYANA TOPS CARIBBEAN AT CSEC AND CAPE EXAMS

Guyana has once again emerged as the top performer in the Caribbean for both the Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate (CSEC) and the Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examination (CAPE). This remarkable achievement is a testament to the dedication of Guyanese students, and the unwavering support of their teachers.

Alex Muntaz of the Anna Regina Secondary



Alex Muntaz



Naresh Jagnanan

School topped the entire Caribbean at this year's CSEC examination, securing an impressive 23 Grade One passes and four Grade Two passes. Muntaz also received the prestigious award for the most outstanding Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) student in the region.

Guyana's exceptional performance continued at the CAPE level, with Naresh Jagnanan of Queen's College claiming

the title of top Caribbean CAPE student. Jagnanan also excelled in the Business Studies subject, earning the coveted award for the most outstanding student in this field.

The country's success extends further, with Abigail Stephanas and Nailah Rahaman, both from Queen's College, garnering the accolades for most outstanding Science student and most outstanding Humanities student, respectively.

Additionally, Siddiq Gafar of the ISA Islamic School earned the recognition for most outstanding Business student at the CSEC level.

Guyana's outstanding performance across these examinations is a source of immense pride for the nation. The country has secured four out of the seven available awards, demonstrating the strength and resilience of its education system.

KHUSHAL SINGH IS UG'S 2023 VALEDICTORIAN - OVER 3500 STUDENTS GRADUATE

The University of Guyana (UG) held its 57th Convocation exercises from November 9 to 18, 2023, marking a significant milestone in the institution's history. This year's Convocation was particularly special as UG celebrated its 60th anniversary under the theme "Consistently We Rise, Changing the World in Infinite Ways."

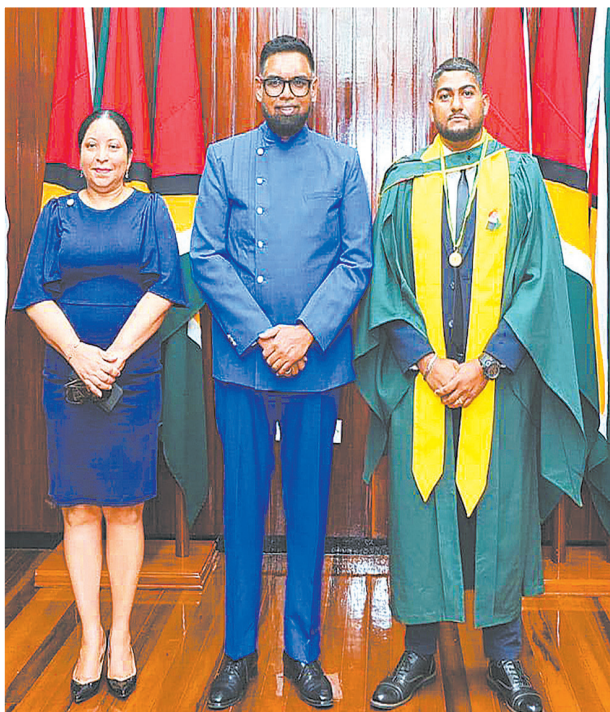
Among the highlights of the Convocation was the graduation of the largest batch of students – some 3,500 students in the university's history and the recognition of outstanding students, including Khushal Singh, who emerged as the 2023 valedictorian. With a perfect GPA of 4.0, Singh completed a Bachelor's Degree in Public Management and captured both the President's Medal for the Best Graduating Bachelor's Degree Student and the Prime Minister's Medal for the Best Graduating Student with a Degree of Public Management.

In addition to Singh, several other outstanding graduands received special awards, including:

• Dhanraj Baljit: Prime Minister's Award for the best graduating student in the School of Medicine

• Keon Heywood and Marleysa Bishop: Council of the University Prize for attaining at least a "Pass with Credit" and making significant contributions to University activities

• Shedella Hodge: Dennis Irvine Award



President Ali with Khushal Singh and the Vice Chancellor of UG, Prof. Paloma Mohamed Martin

for making the greatest contribution to UG's cultural life

• Ruth Manbodh: Chancellor's Medal for being The Second Best Graduating Bachelor's Degree Student

• Sarah Hannah Grannum: The Pro-Chancellor's Medal for being the best graduating Law student at UG

• Moses Rover: University of Guyana Students' Society (UGSS) Award for attaining at least a "Pass with Credit" and making outstanding contributions to University activities

• Feryal Khan: The Campus Award for The Best Graduating Student at any of the Campuses other than the winner of the President's Medal

The 2023 Convocation ceremonies also saw several new academic programmes producing

graduates for the first time, including:

• Bachelor of Science in Food Science

• Bachelor of Science in Petroleum Engineering

• Master in Communication

• Master of Education in Early Childhood Development

• Master in Strategic Development Studies

Meanwhile, several distinguished individuals were honoured with Honorary Doctoral Degrees in recognition of their outstanding contributions to various fields.

• Baroness Dr Valerie Amos: A British-Guyanese scientist and politician who served as the first black woman Director-General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) from 2010 to 2017. She has also held prominent positions in



Singh receiving the President's Medal for the Best Graduating Bachelor's Degree Student

the UK government, including Science Minister and House of Lords Leader.

• Dr CCH Pounder: An Emmy Award-winning Guyanese-American actress known for her versatile performances in films and television series, including "Avatar," "The X-Files," and "ER."

• Dr Bernadette Persaud: A Guyanese visual artist who has gained international recognition for her vibrant and thought-provoking installations, sculptures, and paintings. Her work explores themes of identity, memory, and history, and has been exhibited in galleries and museums around the world.

• Dr Keith Waite: A Guyanese flautist and folklorist who has dedicated his life to preserving and promoting Guyanese folk music. He has documented hundreds of songs and performed extensively both locally and internationally.

• Dr Jeanette and Dr Richard Allsopp: A renowned Caribbean

linguist duo has made significant contributions to the study of Caribbean languages and creoles, authored numerous books and articles, and developed educational resources.

• Dr. Frank Woon-A-Tai: An internationally-acclaimed karateka who has achieved the rank of 8th Dan in Shotokan karate. He is the founder of the Guyana Karate Federation and has been a pioneer in the development of karate in Guyana and the Caribbean.

• Dr Kenneth Singh: An international shipping magnate and UG alumnus who has made significant contributions to the maritime industry.

He is the founder and chairman of the Ken Singh Group, a leading international shipping company, and has been a major supporter of UG and other educational institutions in Guyana.

• Dr Abdool Sattaur Gafoor:

• Joseph "Reds" Perreira: A veteran sports commentator who has been a prominent voice in Guyanese sports for over four decades. He is known for his passionate and insightful commentary, and has covered numerous international sporting events, including the Olympics and the Cricket World Cup.

• Rohan Kanhai: A legendary Test cricketer who played a key role in Guyana's cricket success during the 1960s and 1970s. He was known for his elegant left-handed batting and his calm demeanor under pressure, and is considered one of the greatest Guyanese cricketers of all time.



Some 3,500 University of Guyana (UG) students

Finance Minister assures visiting British Trade delegation... Guyana is open for business

SENIOR Finance Minister, Dr. Ashni Singh, on Tuesday, welcomed and assured another visiting British Trade Mission currently in Guyana seeking investment and business opportunities, that Guyana remains open for business with its rapidly growing economy.

The Minister was at the time meeting with the group of British entrepreneurs led by British High Commissioner to Guyana, Jane Miller, at the Guyana Marriott Hotel in Kingston, Georgetown.

The Mission is a collaborative effort between the British High Commission, the Caribbean Council, the British Chamber of Commerce and the Georgetown Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GCCCI), with the aim of increasing trade and investment between the United Kingdom and Guyana.

“This level of interest by international companies in Guyana is not new and it is not surprising. It reflects the recognition across the world and across companies worldwide of the opportunities that exist in Guyana in a rapidly growing economy.

“We in Guyana, remain open for business, we welcome companies from around the world investing in Guyana and doing business in Guyana, and with Guyanese companies, and in this regard, it is my privilege to welcome the companies that are represented here to share with them a little about recent economic developments and economic prospects ahead in Guyana,” Dr. Singh told the Mission.

The Senior Finance Minister, while also addressing the media, updated the visiting Mission about some of the sectors in the country currently ripe for investment and business opportunities, adding that previous Missions had already recorded an extremely strong success rate with the British High Commissioner.

Some 50 per cent of the companies in previous British Trade Missions have already concluded at least one transaction in Guyana and are doing business in the country.

“That is a phenomenal success rate,” Dr. Singh posited, adding: “Here again, that does not come as a surprise to me. It reflects the phenomenal level of business opportunities here in Guyana...and we look forward to productive engagements with them over the next couple of days.

“I will say too that an important part of their visit to Guyana will be beyond the conversations with government representatives like myself, direct engagements with the private sector-what we call the business-to-business segment because ultimately the real business is going to be done when they speak with their counterparts and potential counterparts in Guyana.”

Guyana and the United Kingdom



Dr Ashni Singh with members of the British Trade delegation

have a longstanding relationship grounded in diplomatic and political ties as well as economic ties through investment and trade, people and culture. Under President Ali’s One Guyana vision, the government is also

committed to leveraging the skills and investment potential of the Guyana Diaspora in the United Kingdom as it continues to implement its aggressive development agenda.

Guyana has already collaborated

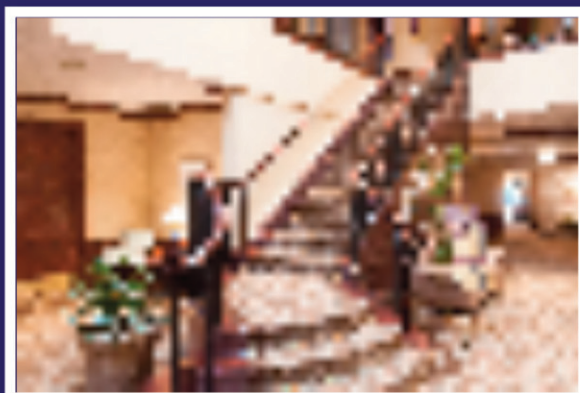
with the UK Caribbean Infrastructure Fund with the latter providing US\$66 million towards the US\$190 million Linden to Mabura road project.

The two-lane highway between Linden and Mabura Hill forms part of the arterial link between Linden and the Lethem Highway and links Georgetown to the Brazilian border. Additionally, through the UK Export Finance (UKEF) the Government of Guyana is constructing a pediatric and maternal hospital. The building and equipping of the state-of-the-art hospital will cost 149 million pounds.

Meanwhile, co-operation programmes/projects between Guyana and the UK also include the Diamond Diagnostic Centre, the Lethem hospital, the Leonora Cottage Hospital, the Mabaruma Hospital and the Paramakatoi Hospital.

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Communications Specialist and Head of the Communications Department at the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Joel Ally



Deputy Chief Executive Officer (DCEO) at the National Communications Network (NCN), Michella Abraham-Ally



Graphic Designer at the Department of Public Information (DPI), Shaquelle Plato



Marketing Officer at the National Insurance Scheme (NIS), Nickishaw Khan

The Guyana Online Academy of Learning (GOAL) scholarships programme has provided a valuable opportunity for many individuals to pursue higher education and enhance their professional skills. Some 425 Guyanese are now the holders of a master's degree from the India-based Jain University in various disciplines, through the programme.

The scholars have shared their experiences, and expressed their gratitude for the transformative impact it has had on their lives.

Michella Abraham-Ally, Deputy Chief Executive Officer (DCEO) at the National Communications

Network (NCN), completed her MA in Public Policy and Administration through the GOAL initiative. Despite the challenges of balancing work and studies, she persevered and achieved her academic goals. Abraham-Ally attributes her success to her commitment, discipline, and the support of her family. **"It definitely took some commitment and adjustment...My family would have to come and jerk me back to wake [up] and pay attention."**

Nickishaw Khan, Marketing Officer at the National Insurance Scheme (NIS), graduated

with a master's degree in Digital Marketing and E-commerce. She found the programme to be enriching and aligned with her interests in innovative marketing strategies. Khan's studies have directly benefitted her own online skincare business, enabling her to better understand consumer behaviour and leverage new technologies.

Joel Ally, Communications Specialist and Head of the Communications Department at the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), pursued an MA in Journalism and Mass Communication. With over 12 years

of experience in the broadcasting sector, Ally felt compelled to further his education and enhance his skills. He successfully navigated the challenges of balancing work, family commitments, and the programme's demands, ultimately emerging as a top performer. **"As a working professional, it was especially challenging after a hard day's work to muster the fortitude to engage in classes late at night due to the time difference between Guyana and India. Additionally, having a young family, specifically two**

posed additional challenges," he expressed.

Shaquelle Plato, Graphic Designer at the Department of Public Information (DPI), completed his MBA in Digital Marketing and E-commerce. Plato acknowledged the challenges of juggling work and studies but emphasised the importance of perseverance and determination in achieving one's goals. He expressed his desire to continue pursuing his education and developing his professional expertise. **"It's hard for me to settle after achieving any one goal. I'm still**

young and I have a lot to do and learn... Furthering my studies is still in the cards, but later."

The GOAL scholarship programme has demonstrated its transformative power in empowering individuals to pursue their academic aspirations and advance their careers. The graduates' stories serve as an inspiration to others seeking to enhance their knowledge and skills through higher education. With continued funding, the programme is poised to impact even more lives and contribute to Guyana's overall development.

EDUCATION MINISTER URGES CXC TO EXPAND CLIMATE CHANGE EDUCATION, INCORPORATE REGIONAL BENEFITS OF OIL AND GAS AND AGRI DIVERSIFICATION

At the 3rd Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC) Ministerial Summit 2023 in Bridgetown, Barbados, Guyana's Education Minister, Priya Manickchand, emphasised the need for more in-depth and relevant education on climate change consequences, and the benefits of Guyana's oil and gas and agriculture diversification to the region.

Minister Manickchand highlighted Guyana's ongoing efforts to transform education through robust curriculum reform, ensuring that education is practical and addresses the needs of the population. She



Ministers of Education, Kay McConney (Barbados), Nyan Gadsby-Dolly (Trinidad and Tobago), Sharie De Castro (BVI), Priya Manickchand

acknowledged the challenges faced by the region in educational transformation, including competing interests for budgetary allocation and reduced funding from

international financial institutions.

To better meet the needs of individual countries, Minister Manickchand suggested that CXC utilise statistics to inform its curriculum development. She also encouraged CXC to continue reviewing and updating its existing programmes, citing the introduction of E-testing as a positive example of progress.

"We have different countries with different needs...It's important for us to begin the transformation robustly... Transformation has begun everywhere else. We don't want to be left behind in the region," she added.

Guyana's educational transformation efforts include the development of a renewed set of courses for Grades One to Four in core subjects, with over 3,500 teachers trained in their implementation. Additionally, a renewed nursery curriculum focusing on play-based learning has been piloted in 35% of schools.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the government transformed the education system to provide distance learning opportunities, utilising technology-infused learning to minimize learning loss. Guyana Learning Channel (GLC) coverage in the hinterland has increased to 85%, with

plans to reach 100% by the end of the year.

Guyana's implementation of smart classrooms in many schools has further facilitated distance learning. The education minister emphasised the importance of teacher training and continuous professional development, requiring each teacher to engage in at least 40 hours of professional development annually.

The CXC Ministerial Summit, themed 'Reimagining educational reform towards transformative agility,' provided a platform for policymakers to discuss and strategise for the future of education in the Caribbean region.

GUYANA SET FOR SPECIALISED TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE UNDER \$5.3 M USAID PROJECT

Guyanese farmers are poised to receive specialised technical assistance under a \$5.3 million Caribbean Agricultural Productivity Improvement Activity (CAPA) project funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

Agriculture Minister Zulfikar Mustapha recently met with a USAID team to discuss priority areas for the project.

During the meeting, Minister Mustapha emphasised the significant progress made in the agricultural



Minister of Agriculture, Zulfikar Mustapha along with the team from USAID. Also pictured is MoA's Director General, Madanlall Ramraj

sector over the past three years and Guyana's commitment to achieving the 25 by 2025 Initiative of increasing food production by

25% by 2025. He also highlighted the government's plans to construct a food terminal before the end of 2023 to facilitate Guyana's

role as a regional food distributor. **"We have a lot of room to collaborate and I know USAID has been a valuable**

partner over the years. We are seeing a lot of positive results from what we started when we took office in 2020. Those results are very promising for us in terms of food security," he emphasised.

USAID's CAPA project aims to support the development of three specific value chains in Guyana: turmeric, coconuts, and cherries. The project will provide technical assistance to farmers to increase production, and improve quality, as well as support input suppliers and enhance agricultural lending capacity.

Minister Mustapha welcomed USAID's support for the development of Guyana's spices sector, particularly

in Region One, which has been designated as the country's spice region. He noted the potential for increased production of ginger, black pepper, and nutmeg, and the construction of processing facilities in Region One to support these industries.

The CAPA project is a five-year initiative that will provide hands-on training to communities, cooperatives, agribusinesses, and educational institutions across Guyana. It is a key component of USAID's collaboration with CARICOM to strengthen regional food security and promote sustainable agricultural practices.

GUYANA ACHIEVES 100 PER CENT PASS RATE FOR TURTLE EXCLUDER DEVICE INSPECTION

Guyana has achieved a 100 per cent pass for the Section 609 Turtle Excluder Device (TED) Inspections for the first time. The achievement comes after proactive initiatives from the Administration to improve marine conservation and compliance within the nation's seabob industry.

"I am happy to indicate that we have achieved a 100% pass rate for the Section

609 Turtle Excluder Device Inspections," Minister of Agriculture, Zulfikar Mustapha said, speaking at the launch of Guyana's National Action Plan to eliminate illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing. **"This is very good for us in Guyana, as it demonstrates our commitment to sustainable fishing practices,"** he added.

The Section 609 Turtle Excluder Device

Inspections are part of the United States National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) efforts to protect sea turtles. TEDs are a type of fishing gear that allow turtles to escape from shrimp nets.

The Guyana Seabob Fishery received conditional Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) accreditation in 2019. The MSC is a non-profit organisation

that sets standards for sustainable seafood.

"The 100% pass rate for the Section 609 Turtle Excluder Device Inspections is a testament to the hard work of the Guyanese government and industry," MSC's Head of Communications, Kerry Cochrane. **"This is a major step forward for the sustainability of the Guyana Seabob Fishery,"** he added.



Guyana is now the fourth country in the world to achieve a 100% pass rate

The Guyana Seabob Fishery is the world's top exporter of seabob shrimp. The goal is to make Guyana a leading exporter of Atlantic seabob shrimp, while protecting the stock's long-term security, and boosting personal wealth

in the rapidly growing tourism and oil and gas industries.

Guyana is now the fourth country in the world to achieve a 100% pass rate for the Section 609 Turtle Excluder Device Inspections.

COMPREHENSIVE NATIONAL ACTION PLAN UNVEILED TO COMBAT IUU FISHING

In a significant step towards safeguarding its fisheries resources, Guyana has launched a comprehensive national action plan to combat illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing. The plan, unveiled at the Ministry of Agriculture's head office in Georgetown, outlines a strategic framework for enhancing fisheries monitoring, control, surveillance, and enforcement.

Minister Zulfikar Mustapha emphasised the crucial role of the fishing industry in providing food, jobs, and trade for both Guyanese citizens and the global population. He underscored the importance of



A section of the launch of Guyana's national action plan against IUU fishing

sustainable fishing practices, and highlighted the inclusive, adaptable, and innovative nature of the action plan, which aligns with the sustainable development goals for the fisheries sector.

The minister further emphasised Guyana's commitment to combating IUU fishing

and other forms of transnational organised crime linked to fisheries.

"We firmly believe that sustainable fishing starts with us... Guyana's National Plan of Action ensures that there is a strategic framework involving government, industry, and

international cooperation to combat IUU fishing and other forms of transnational organised crime linked to fisheries," Minister Mustapha emphasised.

The action plan outlines measures to improve vessel monitoring, traceability,

and port controls, aligning with the recommendations of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), which estimates that IUU fishing activities result in the loss of 11 to 26 million tonnes of fish annually, with an economic value of US\$10 to \$23 billion.

Chief Fisheries Officer, Denzil Roberts, lauded the action plan as an essential tool for sustainably managing Guyana's fishery resources. He acknowledged the detrimental impact of IUU fishing globally, regionally, and within Guyana's waters.

Aiesha Williams, Country Manager of the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) Guianas, emphasised that IUU fishing is a global challenge that requires a multifaceted approach

involving governance, enforcement technology, and stakeholder engagement. She commended Guyana's efforts to address this critical issue, and underscored the importance of industry participation in effectively combating IUU fishing.

The development of the action plan was a collaborative effort involving the fisheries department, the Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism (CRFM), the World Wildlife Fund, FAO, and other government agencies. Representatives from French Guiana, Suriname, and the Maritime Administration Department (MARAD) were also present at the launch.

PRESIDENT ALI MEETS WITH MIAMI UNIVERSITY TEAM ON SILICA CITY DEVELOPMENT

President Ali convened a meeting at State House with an executive team from the University of Miami and other stakeholders involved in the development of Silica City. The university delegation was led by its President, Dr. Julio Frank.



President Ali with an executive team from the University of Miami and other stakeholders

The meeting focused on the ongoing collaboration between the University of Miami and the Government of

Guyana in developing a master plan for Silica City, a flagship urban development project aimed at transforming

Guyana's landscape. Discussions also explored opportunities for further academic development initiatives

in Guyana. In attendance were Minister of Housing and Water, Collin Croal; Minister within the

Ministry of Housing and Water, Susan Rodrigues; Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Central Housing and Planning

Authority, Sherwyn Greaves; Director of Presidential Affairs, Marcia Nadir-Sharma; and representatives from the Guyana Innovation Group.

Silica City, envisioned as a smart and eco-friendly urban center on the Linden Soesdyke Highway, holds immense potential for Guyana's economic and social advancement.

GOVT OFFICIALS AND CHENAPOU VILLAGE LEADERS COLLABORATE ON SUSTAINABLE MINING SOLUTIONS

A ministerial team led by Minister of Natural Resources, Vickram Bharrat and Minister of Amerindian Affairs, Pauline Sukhai visited Chenapou Village in Region Eight to engage with residents on responsible mining

The meeting with village leaders, and residents resulted in a collective commitment to curb illegal mining activities within the Kaieteur National Park Protected Area (KNPPA), and to completely relocate miners from

team and villagers agreed to collaborate on identifying productive mining areas within village lands. To facilitate this transition, all mining operations are expected to be relocated by the end of the year. Recognising the



Minister of Natural Resources Vickram Bharrat addressing the residents



Residents at the meeting

practices. This meeting followed an earlier discussion between a village delegation and Vice President, Dr. Bharrat Jagdeo.

the protected area to designated village lands. While acknowledging the illegality of mining within the protected area, the ministerial

economic situation of the villagers, the Government is committed to finding a long-term solution for mining in the KNPPA. As

a first step, the Minister of Natural Resources has instructed the Guyana Geology and Mines Commission's Geo Services Department to return to the village within two weeks to conduct prospecting activities and identify productive areas on village lands. Additionally, the Minister pledged to identify five mining blocks outside of village

lands for allocation to Chenapou miners and, if necessary, provide support for developing access to these identified blocks. The meeting also served as an opportunity for the Ministers to address concerns raised by residents, including discussions on continued support for development projects. Moving forward, both the Ministries of

Natural Resources and Amerindian Affairs will collaborate with the Chenapou village to develop additional livelihood opportunities, focusing on forestry, tourism, and agriculture. Infrastructure upgrades will also be implemented to complement investments in these new sectors.

PRESIDENT ALI DELIVERS ON PROMISE TO REGION 10 RESIDENTS - HUNDREDS RECEIVE WATER TANKS



The tanks were delivered to five communities

Hundreds of residents in Region Ten are now enjoying easier access to clean water,

thanks to the distribution of 210 black water tanks to five communities. The delivery of these tanks is

a fulfilment of a promise made by President Ali during a recent cabinet outreach to the region.

The tanks were distributed to the following communities: 50 tanks to 58 Miles, 15 tanks to 47 Miles, 5 tanks to 37 Miles, 100 tanks to Coomacka Mines, and 40 tanks to Ituni. These tanks will provide residents with the ability to store safe and clean water for household use, alleviating the water challenges they have been facing. The distribution of the tanks was a collaborative effort among the Ministries

of Public Works and Housing, and the Guyana Water Incorporated (GWI). Minister of Public Works, Bishop Juan Edghill, delivered the water tanks to the residents of Coomacka Mines. The residents expressed their gratitude to the government for its swift response in providing relief. Eloise Oselmo, a 70-year-old resident, said, "It is very beautiful because it will give me a lot of water. I have small drums but this will be more accommodating for us because we live on a hilltop where we can't get water, so I

am so grateful and thankful for it." Another resident, Esther Gaskin, said, "It's going to help us a lot because we live all the way on the hill, but we don't get water there, not even to water the plants or cook, and we have to travel far to bathe. So, I want to say thanks for these tanks." In his brief remarks to the residents, Minister Edghill reiterated the government's commitment to providing essential services to all Guyanese.

HR PRACTITIONERS INTEGRAL TO BOOSTING PUBLIC SERVICE - PM PHILLIPS

Prime Minister (PM) Phillips emphasised the critical role that personnel practitioners play in developing effective strategies to boost service delivery, during the opening ceremony for the Annual Personnel Practitioners Workshop at the Arthur Chung Conference Centre.

The PM said that effective human resource management encompasses efficient planning, recruitment, training, employee engagement, diversity, and inclusion, among other factors. **“It is important that every employee at every level understands the mission, and once they understand the mission, everyone focuses on the**



Prime Minister, Brigadier (Ret'd) Mark Phillips and Minister of Public Service, Sonia Parag with the attendees of the Personnel Practitioners Workshop

mission, our mission is to build an effective and efficient public service for the delivery of public goods and services in an efficient and effective manner

to all the people of Guyana,” he said.

Against the backdrop of a growing economy, with a Gross Domestic Product (GDP) set to feature further double-digit growth in the

coming years, Guyana must have practitioners capable and efficient in managing this growth. **“If the public service is not properly managed, it affects the delivery of**

service,” PM Phillips asserted.

He urged all in attendance to place emphasis on developing robust workforce planning strategies to organise current and future demands, as well as to identify gaps and formulate strategies to overcome them.

According to the PM, the provision of central services to the public, and the adequate delivery of these services hinge on the motivation and capabilities of the personnel. Therefore, it is up to the personnel practitioners to communicate effectively with their employees, as well as provide incentives to promote quality performance.

Meanwhile, Minister of Public Service, Sonia Parag, highlighted that the workshop aims to sensitise practitioners on their responsibilities, and discuss innovative strategies to boost service delivery in the

public service. **“It is very critical to have at least once a year, those who turn the wheels of government be able to have the opportunity to speak on what they know, to gain exposure on what they do not know, and to learn as they progress in how they can better be able to function in their jobs, as well as to give service that is expected of them. You are the ones who will make the rest of the public service give the kind of service that is expected by the public. You are expected to give a service of excellence, not a mediocre service,”** she told the gathering.

The workshop was held under the theme: “Strengthening the Public Service through Human Resources Management”.

NEW DOCTORS ENCOURAGED TO SEIZE OPPORTUNITIES IN LOCAL HEALTHCARE SYSTEM

In a keynote address to Guyana’s newest cohort of 34 medical doctors, Senior Minister in the Office of the President with responsibility for Finance, Dr. Ashni Singh, emphasised the tremendous opportunities that lie ahead for young doctors in Guyana’s healthcare system.

He urged them to embrace these opportunities, and contribute to the transformation of the country’s medical landscape.

“You are entering the medical

profession at a time when we are investing more heavily than we have ever invested in our medical facilities [and] any other time in our country’s history,” Dr. Singh asserted. **“I want to say to you that the question of whether or not we have a world-class public and private healthcare system in Guyana, 10, 15, or 20 years from now, literally rests in your hands. And that is a very serious responsibility.”**

Addressing the graduates at their

graduation ceremony at the University of Guyana’s School of Medicine, Dr. Singh highlighted the government’s unwavering commitment to providing the necessary health infrastructure, and innovative technology to meet the needs of the population. He emphasised that the continuous investments in the sector are creating an environment conducive to world-class healthcare delivery.

Dr. Singh also underscored the privilege of entering the medical profession at



Senior Minister within the Office of the President with responsibility for Finance, Dr Ashni Singh addressing the new doctors

a time when facilities and equipment are significantly improved compared to what previous generations endured. He encouraged

the new doctors to capitalise on these advancements and strive for excellence in their practice.

Acknowledging the

challenges that may arise as they embark on their professional journey, Dr. Singh urged the graduates to approach every situation with professionalism and unwavering commitment to their oath of service. He reminded them that their dedication and expertise will play a pivotal role in shaping the future of Guyana’s healthcare system.

Congratulating the graduates on their remarkable achievement, Dr. Singh recognised the culmination of years of hard work and dedication that led to this milestone.

50 PATIENTS RECEIVE FREE JOINT REPLACEMENT SURGERIES

In a collaborative effort between the Georgetown Public Hospital Corporation (GPHC) and the Women Orthopaedist Global Outreach (WOGO) Mission, 50 patients have received free joint replacement surgeries, alleviating their pain and improving their quality of life.

During a media conference, GPHC’s Chief Executive Officer (ag), Dr. Navindranauth Rambaran, highlighted



The visiting team from the WOGO Mission and doctors of GPHC

the significance of this partnership in providing world-class care to

patients. He emphasised that these surgeries, which previously cost

around \$200,000 per patient, are now being offered free of charge,

eliminating a significant financial burden for many individuals.

Orthopaedic Surgeon, Dr. Kaalshwar Ramcharran, reiterated the positive impact of this initiative, noting that joint replacement surgeries have been performed in Guyana for the past 20 years with continuous improvements in both primary and revision procedures. He emphasised that the government’s decision to make these surgeries free has provided much-needed relief to patients struggling with financial

constraints.

With a backlog of 779 patients awaiting joint replacement surgery, the WOGO Mission has made a significant dent in this number by performing 50 surgeries in a single weekend. Dr. Ramcharran acknowledged the need for continued efforts to address the remaining backlog, and expressed gratitude for the support of the WOGO Mission and other similar projects, such as the Gift of Life Pediatric Cardiac Surgery, which is scheduled for December.

ENHANCING INFRASTRUCTURE AND CONNECTIVITY

ECD ROAD PROJECT: RESIDENTS ASSURED THEY WILL NOT BE FORCIBLY DISPLACED



Minister Edghill speaking with a resident

Residents living along the Railway Embankment on the East Coast of Demerara who may be affected by the Government's "East Coast Road Project" have been assured that they will not be forcibly evicted from their homes or businesses.

Minister of Public Works, Bishop Juan Edghill, made this assurance during a recent walkabout and engagement with residents and farmers along the earmarked project route. The Minister initiated the

engagement, according to Minister Edghill, was to discuss viable solutions for those who may need to relocate and to provide support for farmers whose farmlands will be affected by the project.

"We will work with you to find new homes or businesses, and we will provide you with the necessary support to make the transition as smooth as possible," he said.

The Ministry's entourage was accompanied by



A newly paved road in Foulis, ECD

face-to-face meeting with residents as he walked along the Embankment Road, accompanied by engineers and technical officers from the ministry who were taking measurements of properties and assessing potential encroachments on government reserves.

"We are not here to throw people out of their homes or businesses," Minister Edghill said. **"We are here to work with you to find solutions that are fair and equitable for everyone."**

The primary objective of the

teams from Beston (Consultancy Firm) and China Railway First Group (CRFG-Contractor). Similar engagements have been held with residents and vendors at Plaisance, Cummings Lodge to Lusignan, and at Enmore. Other meetings were held with residents from Belfield to Anns Grove, and with farmers from Hope to Unity.

The East Coast Road Project is a major infrastructure initiative that will see the widening and improvement of the road from Ogle to

Mahaica. The project is expected to significantly improve traffic flow and reduce congestion along the ECD corridor.

RESIDENTS LAUD INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT IN EAST COAST COMMUNITIES

Residents of several communities along the East Coast corridor have expressed their gratitude

to have to wear long boots, now you can wear slippers. You can [now] dress and come out because it used to flood in the village."

Echoing Haywood's sentiments, Rohit Rambarran of Foulis emphasised the broader benefits of the improved roads. **"It is a very good gesture for the community,"** he stated. **"It helps a lot**

bad, and now we have a good road here and we are thankful for that," he remarked.

These infrastructure improvements align with the government's efforts to foster connectivity and economic activities within the East Coast corridor. They also fulfil the government's manifesto pledge to enhance infrastructure and improve the lives of citizens across the country.

and surrounding areas.

Regional Executive Officer, Kerwin Ward, commended the work of the government in ensuring that opportunities are made available to local contractors. He noted that the region has seen significant transformation in recent years, and that the new contracts will further contribute to its development. **"The transformation of this region has been awesome. For the past two to three years, you can see the development in Bartica."**

Town Councillor Jermaine Joseph echoed these sentiments, expressing his gratitude for the upcoming work in the Potaro area. He highlighted the long-awaited nature of these projects and the positive impact they will have on



Minister of Public Works, Bishop Juan Edghill, engineers and technical officers along the route

for the much-needed road rehabilitation efforts undertaken by the Ministry of Public Works' Special Projects Unit. These upgrades fulfil a commitment made by Vice President Dr. Bharrat Jagdeo during his last visit to the areas.

Shanty Haywood, a resident of Enterprise, remarked that the paved roads are significantly improving access to schools and workplaces. She added, **"I think it's very nice, especially for the school children and the people who are working. I'm glad for the work they're doing. First, you used**

with transportation and school and many other ways. It is very good that we have a smooth road, you know what I mean."

Businessman Sharine Channan of Enterprise lauded the contractor's work and the positive impact on the community's ambience. **"It is a good job that the contractor put out, and it is so nice to be in the community, it brightened up,"** he observed.

Prim Charran, another resident of Foulis, reflected on the transformative change brought about by the infrastructure upgrades. **"The road was very**

REGION SEVEN RECEIVES \$1.3 BILLION FOR ROAD PROJECTS

Seventeen (17) contracts totalling \$1.3 billion were signed for the rehabilitation of over 27 kilometers of roads in various parts of Region Seven. This significant investment in infrastructure development is expected to boost the region's economy, and improve



Road works in Enterprise, ECD

the lives of residents.

The rehabilitation works will cover a range of roads, including the Bartica/Potaro Road (Phase One, Miles Three-Four), the main access roads at Dagg Point (Phase Two), Issano (Phase Two), Mora Point, and several other internal and main access roads.

Delroy Jacobs, CEO of Builders' First Choice Construction company and one of the contractors, expressed his appreciation for the government's commitment to infrastructure development in the region. He believes that the new contracts will bring much-needed improvements to Bartica

the community.

Minister Edghill, urged the contractors to complete their projects promptly, and to deliver durable and sustainable infrastructure that will benefit residents for years to come. He emphasised the importance of working with the community to minimise any potential conflicts.

These contracts add to the government's ongoing efforts to improve road infrastructure across Guyana. In recent months, contracts have been signed for road rehabilitation projects in Regions One, Five, Six, Eight, Nine and Ten.



\$1.3B in contracts signed for Region Seven roads

FIRST LADY HIGHLIGHTS IMPORTANCE OF WOMEN'S EDUCATION, AND ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

First Lady Arya Ali delivered the keynote address at the opening of the Caribbean Gender Empowerment Forum in Georgetown where she emphasised the importance of advancing education and economic empowerment for women as critical pillars of gender equality, economic growth, and human progress.

Mrs. Ali acknowledged that gender equality is a fundamental human right and a key driver of sustainable development. She

highlighted the disproportionate impact of crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic and climate change on women and girls, underscoring the urgency of addressing gender inequality.

Education, Mrs Ali asserted, is a fundamental right and a powerful tool for empowering women and girls. She pointed to the government's Menstrual Hygiene Initiative, which has benefited over 30,000 schoolgirls, as an example of a successful initiative



First Lady, Arya Ali delivering the keynote address

to address barriers to education for girls. "Our intervention in this particular area must therefore be bold and so nothing less than transformational

will be necessary to ensure we truly equip our girls for the future," the First Lady Ali stated.

The First Lady also stressed the importance of economic empowerment for women, noting that unleashing their economic potential can lead to significant economic growth. She called for collective action to build upon existing gender equality initiatives, and accelerate progress towards achieving Sustainable Development Goal 5 on

gender equality.

The Caribbean Gender Empowerment Forum is a collaborative effort between the Government of Guyana, the Atlantic Council, UN Women, and the European Union-United Nations Spotlight Initiative. The forum aims to bring together policymakers, experts, and civil society organisations to discuss and implement strategies for advancing gender equality in Guyana and the Caribbean.

TILAPIA HATCHERY AT TIMEHRI PRISON REAPING MAJOR SUCCESS

The tilapia hatchery at the Timehri Prison has once again proven to be fruitful, producing close to 200 pounds of red tilapias in recent months. This initiative, undertaken by both staff and inmates, provides an additional source of food for the prison population.

The tilapia hatchery was established last year, with the second large-scale harvest of

tilapias occurring in April 2023. According to Director of Prisons (ag) Nicklon Elliot, the project exemplifies the Prison Service's efforts to identify new avenues for inmates to develop or discover new skills and talents.

Assistant Superintendent of Prisons Roddy Denhart, Officer-in-charge of the Timehri Prison, highlighted that the

initiative expands the range of projects available to inmates, providing them with more opportunities to acquire valuable skills that can be utilised upon their release from the correctional facility.

Beyond its contribution to the self-sufficiency of the Timehri Prison, the red tilapia hatchery also plays a role in Guyana's broader goal of achieving

food security. This aligns with CARICOM's objective of reducing the region's food import bill by 25% by 2025, a goal that Guyana is actively pursuing.

The tilapia project is one of several agricultural initiatives undertaken by the prison system, including vegetative and poultry farming. Recently, the prison service harvested over 200 pounds of bora and boulangier, and also produced close to 400 kilograms of meat and about 840 trays of eggs.



Tilapias from the prison service initiative

LOCAL TOUR GUIDES AND OPERATORS COMPLETE WILDERNESS FIRST RESPONDER TRAINING

Twelve local tour guides and operators recently completed a three-day Wilderness First Responder Training exercise, equipping them with new knowledge and skills to provide first aid and safety assistance to their clients in remote wilderness environments.

The training was facilitated through a collaborative effort among the Guyana Tourism Authority (GTA), the Guyana Defence Force (GDF), and the Brazilian Army. It specifically targeted individuals already involved in the tourism industry, particularly those operating in the Rupununi area, a popular destination for adventure tourism activities.

Manager of Training and Licensing at the GTA, Tamika Inglis,



Tour Guides and Operators engaged in three-day Wilderness First Responder Training

explained the rationale behind the training: "Because most of our tourism product is in the Rupununi area, we thought it was necessary for our tour guides, though some of them do come from Georgetown and do provide city tours ... we thought it was necessary to have them do this training, which is necessary

because when they go into the fields and they have persons, there is always going to be an incident and we want them to be prepared."

The training, led by Lieutenant Emmanuel Trotman and Asford George, focused on foundational elements such as rope and knot tying, pacing techniques, and compass navigation in both daylight and

nighttime conditions. Participants also gained

proficiency in crafting improvised shelters using natural materials found in the jungle.

Furthermore, the training covered improvised techniques for constructing floating rafts, river crossing with rope assistance, sourcing water, creating fire, and identifying diverse jungle edibles, including both meats and fruits.

To apply their acquired skills, participants engaged in obstacle navigation

and survival techniques during an overnight stay in the jungle. This hands-on experience solidified their understanding of wilderness first aid and safety procedures.

A total of 30 local tour guides and operators are now equipped with the knowledge and skills to confidently handle emergency situations and provide first aid assistance to their clients in remote wilderness settings.



Tour Guides and Operators engaged in three-day Wilderness First Responder Training

POLICE FORCE HEIGHTENS PRESENCE TO SAFEGUARD CITIZENS DURING CHRISTMAS SEASON



Police officers directing traffic

The Guyana Police Force (GPF) has announced a robust Christmas Policing Plan to safeguard citizens, and maintain public safety during the upcoming holiday season, which is expected to witness

increased commercial activities, and public movement. The plan, unveiled at the Police Officers' Mess in Eve Leary, emphasises collaboration between the GPF and various stakeholders, including

the private security sector, to effectively manage the anticipated surge in activity. Commissioner of Police (ag), Clifton Hicken, highlighted the significance of partnerships in ensuring

public safety during the festive period. **“For the Christmas season, we are going to continue working with our stakeholders,”** he stated. **“The private security fraternity, they are going to be working in conjunction with the police. Of course, they are going to increase their presence based on locations that are established.”**

The comprehensive plan encompasses a range of measures to mitigate crime and improve traffic flow across the country, effective from November 15, 2023, to January 15, 2024.

Key initiatives include:

1. Increased foot patrols, static anti-crime patrols, and vehicular patrols in hotspot areas to deter criminal activities and maintain a visible police presence.
2. Augmented fixed point deployments along major thoroughfares to enhance traffic management and prevent congestion.
3. Roving motorcycle and motor vehicle patrols to provide additional surveillance and address traffic violations.
4. Dedicated traffic ranks assigned to each region to ensure effective traffic management and coordination.
5. Implementation of a double-lane system at the Demerara Harbour Bridge twice daily or as needed to alleviate traffic congestion, particularly from December 24 to December 31.
6. Restriction of motor lorry traffic on the East Bank Public Road from 7:00 am to 9:00 am on weekdays

7. Prioritisation of criss-cross patrols for persons entering or exiting Guyana through the Cheddi Jagan International Airport (CJIA) to expedite their travel.
8. Utilisation of the National Stadium tarmac at Providence as an emergency parking area for large vehicles to reduce bridge congestion.
9. Dissemination of road closure updates and necessary announcements through radio, television, and social media to inform the public.
10. Ongoing public awareness programmes across the country to ensure that all plans, routes of travel, and safety information reach the target audience effectively.

SERIOUS CRIMES DECREASED BY 17.8 PER CENT IN 2023 - CRIME CHIEF

The Guyana Police Force has recorded a 17.8% decrease in serious crimes from January 1 to November 2023, when compared to the same period in 2022. This is a significant achievement and is a testament to the Force's revamped and proactive policing strategies.

The Crime Chief, Wendell Blanhum at the Police Officers' Mess at

Eve Leary, said there were 1,149 offences relating to serious crimes recorded in 2023, compared to 1,329 in 2022. This translates to 248 fewer crimes being recorded for the year.

Statistics illustrate that robbery offences recorded a 15% decrease; robbery under arms saw a 23% decrease; robbery with violence 33% decrease; larceny from

the person decreased by 33% while an 11.6% decrease was recorded for rape offences for the year.

Moreover, the most prevalent offence which is break and enter and larceny recorded a 15% decrease, while there were no recorded offences of kidnapping in Guyana for the year.

Serious crimes were most prevalent in



Crime Chief, Wendell Blanhum

Regional Division 4A (Georgetown) and the deputy commissioner

explained that this can be linked to the area being a commercial hub and largely populated.

However, Region Two (Pomeroon-Supenaam) recorded the lowest crime rate at 1.60 per cent followed by Region Five (Mahaica-Berbice) at 2.00 per cent.

“The Guyana Police Force continues to be proactive in combatting firearms-related matters, by aggressively cracking down on illegal networks that supply guns to criminals,” the Crime Chief

underscored.

Additionally, the Force seized 1,425 kilogrammes (3,141 lbs) of cannabis, the largest quantity confiscated within the past five years. As a consequence of these seizures, a total of 188 persons were charged and placed before the court.

Meanwhile, 14 police ranks were charged with varying criminal offences for the same period, demonstrating the Force's commitment to accountability and transparency.

GUYANA POLICE FORCE COMPLETES 'TRAIN THE TRAINERS' PROGRAMME



Commissioner of Police (Ag), Clifton Hicken with the officers that underwent the training

The Guyana Police Force (GPF) has successfully concluded a comprehensive three-day 'Train the Trainers' programme, marking a significant step forward in enhancing the capacity

of its senior officers. Facilitated by the Justice Education Society (JES), this pioneering initiative aims to equip senior officers with the skills and knowledge to effectively train and

mentor their colleagues, fostering a culture of continuous learning and improvement within the force.

At the closing ceremony, Commissioner of

Police (Ag), Clifton Hicken, commended the participants for their dedication, and commitment to professional development. He emphasised the crucial

role of training in shaping the future of the GPF, stating, **“You are going to champion the movement and the direction of the Guyana Police Force.”**

Commissioner Hicken also underscored the importance of improving service delivery to the public, highlighting the need for enhanced presentation skills and a modern approach to policing. He reiterated the force's commitment to equip all ranks with the necessary tools to execute their duties effectively, and in a manner that aligns with contemporary policing practices.

The 'Train the Trainers' programme marks a departure from the traditional ad hoc training methods

employed by the GPF in the past. By adopting a structured and comprehensive approach to training, the force is laying the foundation for a more professional, well-equipped, and responsive police force.

Commissioner Hicken expressed his gratitude to the JES representatives, Lisa Thompson, Country Representative, and Janise Gray, Retired Chief Superintendent and Police Expert Consultant, for their expertise and dedication in facilitating the programme. Their contributions have undoubtedly enriched the training experience and equipped the participants with valuable skills and knowledge.

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GUYANA ENDORSES UNICEF'S DECLARATION ON CHILDREN, YOUTHS, AND CLIMATE ACTION

In a significant move, Guyana has endorsed the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) Declaration on Children, Youths, and Climate Action, demonstrating its unwavering commitment to building a sustainable future for its younger generations. This decision aligns perfectly with the country's commemoration of World Children's Day under the theme: Investing in our future means investing in our children through climate action.

During a special event held at State House, Prime Minister Brigadier (Ret'd) Mark Phillips emphasised the government's crucial

role in safeguarding and empowering Guyana's youth to become responsible stewards of the environment. He underscored the urgency of prioritising climate action to ensure the preservation of the planet for future generations.

"Our children are the lifeblood of our nation, and their well-being is inextricably linked to the health of our environment. As a nation, we are committed to thriving in a climate-resilient Guyana, where our children can be proud of their heritage and equipped to face the challenges that lie ahead," he asserted.



First Lady Arya Ali

Echoing the importance of investing in measures to safeguard the planet for future generations, First Lady Arya Ali underscored the government's unwavering support for child welfare initiatives.



Prime Minister Brigadier (Ret'd) Mark Phillips signing the declaration

"Our office, and by extension, the government stands ready to support efforts aimed at protecting the welfare of children. Education plays a pivotal role in this endeavour; therefore, I commend UNICEF and its partners for raising awareness about the climate crisis among our children

and empowering them to be part of the solution," the First Lady affirmed.

The historical commitment made by world leaders in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, remains a cornerstone for advocating and protecting children's rights globally.

U N I C E F Representative of Guyana

and Suriname, Nicholas Pron, reaffirmed UNICEF's dedication to collaborating with stakeholders to ensure the protection of children worldwide.

The event also provided an engaging platform for children to participate in various activities, including painting, fostering a sense of environmental stewardship from an early age.

LOCAL WOMEN HAVE MORE OPPORTUNITIES NOW THAN EVER – MINISTER RODRIGUES

Minister within the Ministry of Housing and Water, Susan Rodrigues, delivered an inspiring message at the Woman Evolve Finance Meets Fashion event, highlighting the unprecedented opportunities available to women in Guyana today.

The event, a collaboration between RESYSCO and Sha Sha Designs, aimed to empower and inspire women to achieve success in the business world. It was held at the Marriott hotel in Georgetown.

"Women have

always dared to challenge the status quo," Minister Rodrigues asserted. **"We just have to find the courage and today, we are fortunate to be living in a period in our history where we have boundless opportunities. It's up to us now to make the most of it, here in Guyana."**

She emphasised that Guyana's rapidly growing economy presents a wealth of opportunities for women to establish themselves in the business realm. **"I believe that this is perhaps the best time**

to be a woman and Guyanese," she stated. **"We are living in one of the fastest-growing economies in the world. Opportunities are endless, and we just have to find our niche, we just have to find what inspires us, and we have to go after it."**

Minister Rodrigues underscored the government's efforts to create an enabling environment for women entrepreneurs. **"Today in our society, you see a lot of women in business,"** she explained. **"That's because as a**

government we have tried to foster a healthy business climate. We can't run the business for you or bring the business to you, but we can ensure that the business climate is right for you to operate your businesses, and we can attract investors, and attract opportunities here for women to exploit."

She also commended women's resilience throughout history and acknowledged the struggles they have overcome to achieve their current position. **"If we can appreciate our history and our struggle to get to this place where we are today – the suffragette movement – we now**



A Section of the gathering at the Woman Evolve Finance Meets Fashion event at the Marriott Hotel

have the right to vote, to open a business, start a career, we can choose whether we want to be mothers or not."

Minister Rodrigues emphasised the importance of women supporting one another and the concept of "sisterhood." She encouraged successful women to "pay it

forward" and empower their fellow women to achieve their goals.

The Woman Evolve training and networking programme aimed to provide professional accounting support services, promote sound business practices, and enhance financial decision-making among Guyanese women-owned businesses.

VISUALLY IMPAIRED MUSICIAN RECEIVES PIANO KEYBOARD FROM GOVT

Urios Collins, a talented visually impaired musician from Albouystown, was presented with a new piano keyboard by Minister within the Office of the Prime Minister with Responsibility for Public Affairs, Kwame McCoy. This gift came just one week after Collins made a request for the instrument to Vice President Dr. Bharrat Jagdeo during a recent meeting in Laing Avenue.

Minister McCoy, during the simple handover ceremony,



Minister Kwame McCoy handing over the piano keyboard to Urios Collins

highlighted the government's prompt response to the needs of its citizens. He stated, **"After you asked the Vice President for assistance, we immediately procured this keyboard and brought it to you so that you could further expand on your talent and advance the delivery of your talent as well."**

McCoy emphasised the government's commitment to supporting individuals who are determined to succeed. He remarked, **"We are truly invested in people, education, and other things that will vastly enhance people's lives and make them better. In your case, we really commend you for your continued support and contribution to local music. And**

so, we want to make sure that we could support that venture of yours."

Collins, expressing his heartfelt gratitude for the government's intervention, stated, **"I would really like to thank the government, especially the Vice President and Minister Kwame, for this keyboard. This presentation was really fast because it was only last week, I asked the Vice President for this. I received a call Friday and here I am with it today."**

Collins explained that the keyboard would significantly enhance his "one-man" band, allowing him to sing and play whenever he desires.

PRESIDENT ALI CALLS FOR GLOBAL PEACE ON REMEMBRANCE DAY

In honour of the fallen heroes of World Wars I and II, President Irfaan Ali has made a heartfelt plea for global peace. He urged an end to the ongoing conflict between Palestine and Israel, and called for a ceasefire in all struggles for social justice, human dignity, and freedom from oppression.

Speaking at the Remembrance Day wreath-laying ceremony at the Cenotaph Monument, Georgetown, President Ali emphasised the importance of peace as a tribute to the sacrifices made by those who fought in the world wars. He stated, **“The least the world can do in honour of those who sacrificed ultimately in the two world wars is to**



The Remembrance Day wreath-laying ceremony at the Cenotaph Monument

return every corner of this world to a position of peace...to return hostages held against their will, and to cease fire on every land in which men, women, and children especially are killed and awakened by the sound of bombs.”

President Ali commended the valiant men and women who gave their lives in

the wars and urged Guyanese to follow their example of resolve and perseverance in creating a peaceful world.

The Remembrance Day ceremony was attended by government officials, veterans from the Guyana Legion, members of the diplomatic corps, and the joint services, who gathered to pay homage to the fallen soldiers



The Remembrance Day wreath-laying ceremony at the Cenotaph Monument

and auxiliaries of the two wars. The ceremony commenced with a military parade, followed by a presidential salute, the sounding of the last

post, and two minutes of silence to honour the fallen.

President Ali laid the first wreath, followed by Prime Minister Phillips;

Speaker of the National Assembly, Manzoor Nadir; Chief of Staff of the Guyana Defence Force, Brigadier Omar Khan; President of the Guyana Veterans Legion, Lt Col (Ret'd) George Gomes; and other officials.

Remembrance Day, also known as Poppy Day, is observed annually to honour those who fought and died in France, Egypt, Belgium, East Africa, and elsewhere during World War I (1914-1918) and World War II (1939-1945). In Guyana, Remembrance Day is observed on the second Sunday of November, while other Commonwealth countries observe it on November 11.

PM PHILLIPS PLEDGES \$2 MILLION TO GUYANA VETERANS LEGION

In a display of unwavering support for Guyana’s veterans, Prime Minister, Brigadier (Ret'd), Mark Phillips, made a significant \$2 million donation to the Guyana Veterans Legion (GVL) during its Annual Remembrance Day ceremony.

The contribution, presented at the GVL headquarters on Carifesta Avenue, reflects the government’s deep appreciation for the sacrifices and contributions of veterans who have served Guyana with distinction. Prime Minister Phillips personally donated \$1 million and presented an

additional \$1 million on behalf of His Excellency, President Irfaan Ali.

In a further gesture of solidarity, the Prime Minister announced a \$100,000 donation to each surviving veteran on behalf of the President, along with a commitment to provide continued assistance to the widows of deceased servicemen.

Speaking at the ceremony, the Prime Minister emphasised the importance of honouring veterans, asserting that recognising and supporting them is a collective responsibility. He highlighted their unwavering dedication,

both on the frontlines and in serving their communities, and commended their contributions to building a nation founded on **“compassion and service.”**

The Prime Minister also underscored the crucial role of remembrance, emphasising the need to preserve veterans’ legacies, and pass their stories of sacrifice onto future generations. He urged all Guyanese to become custodians of these stories, ensuring that the sacrifices made by veterans are never forgotten. **“May we carry**

forward the torch of remembrance, not just today, but every day as a testament to our vision for peace, unity, an enduring spirit of service to Guyana.”

Prime Minister Phillips commended the GVL for its 97 years of unwavering service in honouring and supporting veterans and their families. He praised the organisation’s dedication to preserving the memories of these officers and soldiers, and applauded its members for fostering a culture of honouring veterans and their widows.

F u r t h e r



The Remembrance Day wreath-laying ceremony at the Cenotaph Monument

d e m o n s t r a t i n g the government’s commitment to veterans, Chief-of-Staff of the Guyana Defence Force, Brigadier Omar Khan,

pledged \$1 million on behalf of active GDF members. The Guyana Police Force also made a substantial contribution of \$500,000 to the GVL.

PRIME MINISTER URGES GUYANESE TO EMBRACE RENEWABLE ENERGY AND HEALTHY LIVING AT CARICOM ENERGY MONTH KILO WALK

Prime Minister Brigadier (Ret'd) Mark Phillips, reaffirming the PPP/C government’s dedication to a clean energy future, called on Guyanese citizens to become “energy champions” at the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Energy Month Kilo. He emphasised the importance of adopting sustainable practices and healthy lifestyles to achieve a climate-resilient future for the Caribbean region.



Scene from the walk

The prime minister highlighted the government’s efforts to bridge the energy

divide in hinterland and riverine communities through the distribution of solar panel systems

and hydropower initiatives. As part of this commitment, the government is providing 30,000 160-watt solar panel systems to each household in 242 communities across Guyana, bringing renewable energy to approximately 140,000 Guyanese.

A d d i t i o n a l l y, the government has implemented mini-hydro projects in the indigenous communities of Kumu and Moco in Region Nine

(Upper Takutu-Upper Essequibo) and invested heavily in establishing charging units in Regions Two, Three, Four, Five, Six, and at the Cheddi Jagan International Airport (CJIA).

CARICOM Energy Month, celebrated under the theme “Accelerating Innovation and Driving Electrification,” aims to raise awareness about sustainable energy and promote healthy lifestyles among citizens. The five-kilometre Kilo Walk, organised by the

CARICOM Secretariat and the Guyana Energy Agency with support from the Caribbean Bank Development Bank (CDB) and the Caribbean Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (CCREEE), commenced at the CARICOM Secretariat and concluded at the National Park in Georgetown.



Guyanese DIASPORA DIGEST



Essequibo is we own

The phrase “Essequibo is we own” has become a ubiquitous slogan in Guyana, emblazoned on banners, bumper stickers, and even everyday conversations. This powerful declaration reflects the unwavering belief of Guyanese citizens in their ownership of the Essequibo region.





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Mustard 大芥菜 Reg: \$1.99 1.39 lb	Head Lettuce 圆生菜 Reg: 2 for \$5.00 2/\$3.00	Cauliflower 椰菜花 Reg: 2 for \$7.00 2/\$5.00	California Oranges 加州橙 Reg: \$1.79 1.29 lb	Red Delicious Apple 红苹果 Reg: \$1.79 1.29 lb	Anjou Pear 青圆啤梨 Reg: \$1.79 1.29 lb
China Honey Pomelo 中国蜜柚 Reg: 2 for \$7.00 2/\$5.00	Kiwi Basket 盒装奇异果 Reg: \$3.99 Fri. to Sun. Only	Persimmon (Jumbo) 柿子 Reg: \$3.99 2.99 pk	Red Seedless Grape 无核小红提 Reg: \$3.99 2.99 lb	Spanish Kaki Persimmon 西班牙高身柿 Reg: \$23.99 19.99 box	

RESTAURANT SPECIAL

Green Pepper 25Lb 青椒 19.00 case	Broccoli 西兰花 23.00 case	Green Onion 葱 24.00 case	Garlic In Case 箱装蒜头 50X3PCS 24.00 case
Green Leaf Lettuce 唐生菜 27.00 case	Andy Boy Head Lettuce 圆生菜 44.00 case	Lemon 黄柠檬 50.00 case	Avocado 牛油果 66.00 case
Yellow Plantains 黄大蕉 68.00 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 素菜春卷 25g 40 pc x10 boxes 35.00 case	Extra Large Egg 箱装大鸡蛋 53.99 case	Container S32 容器 41.50 case	Container LF-28W 容器 27.00 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 16L 39.99 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 李锦记锦珍鲜味蠔油 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 24.00 case
Redpath Sugar 白糖 20kg 32.00 bag			

FROZEN

SH White Shrimp 51/60 鲜冻白虾 400g Reg: \$6.99 4.99 ea	Viva Sea White Baby Shrimp 小白虾 300g Reg: \$6.99 2.99 ea	Nova Era Custard Tarts 蛋挞皮 450g Reg: \$6.99 4.99 ea	Choysco Frozen Grated Yam 454g 紫薯刨 Reg: \$3.99 2.99 ea	Coconut Tree Frozen Sliced Lemongrass 227g 冻香茅 Reg: \$2.59/ea 2/\$3.00	Shark Fish Brand Frozen Featherback Fish Paste 七星鱼肉 400g Reg: \$5.99 4.59 ea
Luxury Crab Meat 400g 蟹肉 Reg: \$26.99 19.99 ea	Bulacan Coconut Milk 椰奶 454ml Reg: \$3.99 1.99 ea	SH Atlantic Mackerel 池鱼 Reg: \$2.99 1.99 lb	Ferma Red Fish 750g 红鱼 Reg: \$7.99 5.99 ea	Buenas Smoked Round Scad 227g 烟熏圆鳕鱼 Reg: \$6.99 2.99 ea	Salm'n Steaks Vege 1200g Reg: \$27.99 20.99 ea

GROCERY

Tang Orange 2.2Kg 橙味饮料 Reg: \$9.99 6.99 ea	Arizona Green Tea 680ml 绿茶 Reg: \$1.79 1.09 ea	Planters Cashews Series 腰果系列 200g Reg: \$5.99 3.99 ea
3 Crown Herbal Tea 花草茶 20 tea bags Reg: \$1.79 99¢ ea	Maggi Magic Sarap 96g Reg: \$2.99 1.88 ea	Mama Sita's BBQ Marinade 350ml 烧烤腌料 Reg: \$3.99 1.99 ea
Bun Tuoi Fresh Rice Vermicelli 1Kg 越式米粉 Reg: \$4.99 2.99 ea	JHC Crab Paste With Soya Bean Oil 200g 大蟹膏 Reg: \$5.89 3.79 ea	Huy Fong Sriracha Hot Chili Sauce 714ml 是拉差香甜辣椒酱 Reg: \$8.59 5.99 ea
Grace Chicken Vienna Sausages Series 130g 鸡肉香肠系列 Reg: \$1.39 89¢ ea	Grace Coconut Milk Powder 50g 椰奶粉 Reg: \$0.99/ea 3/\$2.00	Bedessee Coconut Milk 椰奶 400ml Reg: \$0.99 69¢ ea
Datu Puti Combo Soy Sauce & Vinegar 1L 酱油&醋 Reg: \$6.99 3.99 ea	Bulacan Coconut Sport Strain in Syrup 椰子糖浆 340g Reg: \$3.99/ea 2/\$5.00	Royal OX Longkou Vermicelli 500g 龙口粉丝 Reg: \$2.99 1.88 ea
Kadoya Pure Sesame Oil 163ml 八角麻油 Reg: \$4.99 2.99 ea	Aji-nong Pork 400g 猪肉 Reg: \$1.99 1.39 ea	Mama Instant Noodles (Chicken) 90gX20 妈妈即食面 (鸡肉) Reg: \$19.99 13.99 ea

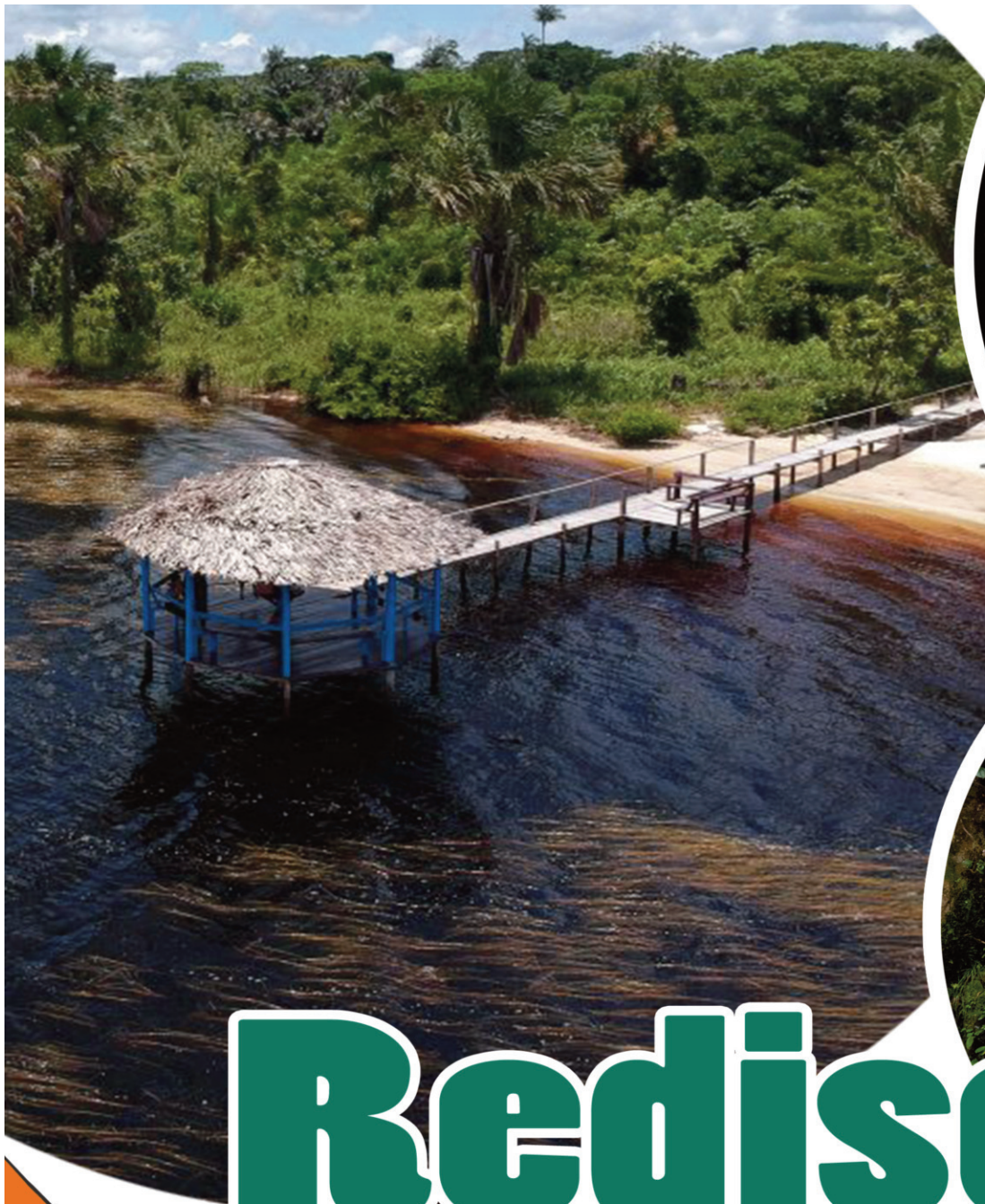
MEAT

Pork Chop 猪肉排 Reg: \$3.39 2.39 lb	Pork Back Ribs 猪肉排 Reg: \$4.99 3.99 lb	Pork Eye Round 肉眼 Reg: \$3.59 2.59 lb
Beef Rib Eyes 肥牛 Reg: \$7.99 6.99 lb	Chicken Leg 鸡腿 Reg: \$1.99 1.29 lb	

SEAFOOD

Fresh Atlantic Salmon Steak 新鲜大西洋三文鱼扒 Reg: \$8.99 6.99 lb	Fresh Chinese Yellow Croaker 新鲜大陆黄花鱼 Reg: \$5.99 3.99 lb	White Shrimp 冰鲜有头南美白虾 Reg: \$5.99 4.99 lb
Fresh Atlantic Salmon Fillet 新鲜大西洋三文鱼柳 Reg: \$11.99 9.99 lb	Live Mussel 生猛青口 Reg: \$2.99 2.59 lb	Fresh Porgys 新鲜海拉鱼 Reg: \$3.99 2.59 lb

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