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FRONT PAGE OPINION

Equality expresses the Diaspora's solidarity with the people of Guyana in border claim by Venezuela

WE STAND WITH GUYANA

Publisher of Equality Newspaper and Chairman of the Equality Group of Companies – Bhaskar Sharma has expressed his organization's support to the government of Guyana, through Prime Minister – Brigadier Ret'd Mark Phillips, at this time of Venezuela presenting itself as a "clear and present danger" to the Cooperative Republic of Guyana.

During a recent meeting with the Prime Minister, Mr. Sharma opined that there is need for the Guyanese diaspora to be alerted to the serious threat facing Guyana, with an impending "referendum" to be held by Venezuela on December 3, with five questions being asked of Venezuelan citizens, including the very contentious one of the annexation of Essequibo – about two thirds of Guyana's sovereign territory based on the legal 1899 Arbitral Award.

On Monday, November 6 the ruling PPPC government led by President Ali and the

APNU/AFC opposition led by Aubrey Norton, along with Khemraj Ramjattan, Amanza Walton-Desir, Roysdale Forde and others expressed unanimous support at a special sitting of the National Assembly. Mr. Norton was unequivocal about the opposition's support, and made it clear to the government that "we've got your back"!

But he warned about the need to be ever-vigilant with stepped-up campaigns regarding keeping the public informed. He was adamant that Guyana will not cede "one blade of grass" to Venezuela. He added that regardless of the outcome of the case that is at present with the International Court of Justice (ICJ), Venezuela will not be deterred, and as such Guyana will have to be ever-ready



Equality Publisher Bhaskar Sharma with Guyana Prime Minister Mark Phillips in Guyana Parliament on Wednesday

in thwarting that bellicose republic's "bullyism" and wanting to annex Guyana's territory.

The Guyanese diaspora has an important and patriotic role to play in ensuring that the above message of "Equality News" is taken seriously and should be forwarded to all the MPs in Canada. Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has joined with the international community in expressing support for Guyana.

This gesture of support should be

highlighted by all world leaders, including the UN, USA, India, China, Brazil, CARICOM, the OAS, the EU, the United Kingdom and all peace-loving countries which are supportive of democracy and sovereignty of all nations under the international rule of law.

Being on the ground as a publication for about five decades, "Equality News" remains the only weekly voice within the Guyanese-Canadian community that can play a role in alerting its

readership about the happenings at home in Guyana and abroad.

We wish to congratulate President Ali and Prime Minister Brigadier Ret'd Mark Phillips on their recent bold representations at international forums and the OAS for their bold leadership stand.

Their patriotism remains unmatched!

God protect and bless Guyana and its peoples. Essequibo will always remain ours!

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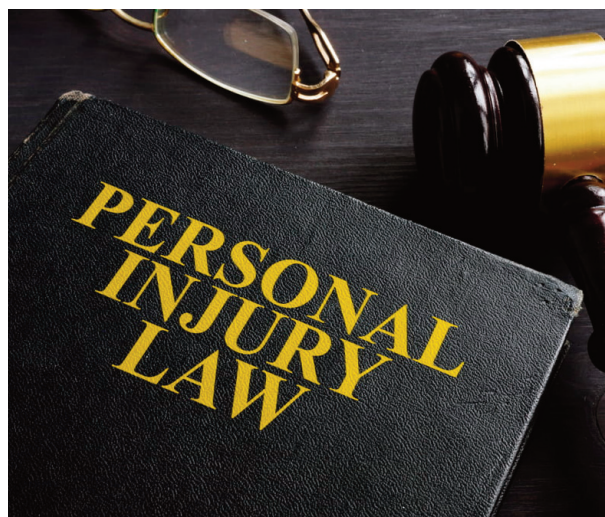
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Cardiologist under fire for calling for deportation of pro-Palestine protestors

McMaster University and Hamilton Health Sciences (HHS) are reviewing a social media comment made by cardiologist Dr. Eva Lonn after she wrote about pro-Palestinian demonstrators, "deport them all to where they came from."

Lonn, a prominent medical director and professor of medicine at McMaster, made the comment on LinkedIn in response to a New York Post article about a peaceful protest that shutdown the Brooklyn bridge in late October.

A screenshot of Lonn's comment was shared widely on social media last week, sparking outrage. An online petition demanding McMaster address Lonn's comment had more than 6,000 signatures as of Monday.

Lonn has since apologized and deactivated her social media accounts.

"I am deeply sorry for the pain my recent comments on social media have caused and wholeheartedly apologize," she posted on X, formerly known as Twitter, late last week.

"My comment ... was made in the heat of the moment and without adequate consideration of the broader implications."

Lonn said she'd been visiting family in Israel when Hamas militants attacked on Oct. 7 and she "returned to Canada deeply traumatized."

She said Monday she has deactivated her social media accounts because of the "barrage" of posts and emails after her apology, most of which were "very insulting" and some threatening her and her family with physical violence.

McMaster University said in a statement her comment doesn't align



Dr. Eva Lonn is a prominent cardiologist

with its values and is being reviewed. It did not provide more specific details citing privacy concerns. HHS, which runs the three hospitals Lonn has privileges at, said it is also looking into the incident.

National Council of Canadian

Muslims spokesperson Uthman Quick said it was "extremely problematic" for a doctor who holds a position of authority and cares for others to make that remark.

"Many people in our community were really upset — it's completely un-

acceptable and plays into a dangerous idea that there's something inherently wrong with supporting Palestinian rights or calling for a ceasefire," he said.

"If this person is your teacher or doctor, how are you supposed to feel that they think you don't belong here?"

Minimum wage needs to be at least \$20 in Ontario: study

Minimum wage in Ontario is not enough for residents to live comfortably in any part of the province, according to a new report.

According to data released by the Ontario Living Wage Network (OLWN) Monday, those living in Toronto and the Greater Toronto Area need to make at least \$25.05 per hour, which is a roughly 8 per cent jump from the rate in 2022 at \$23.15. Like last year, it remains the highest hourly living wage in Ontario.

A 'living wage' is the before-tax income an adult would need to make to cover expenses, the network said. It

said its calculations look at the expenses for three types of households: single adult, single parent with a 7-year-old child and families of four, with children aged 7 and 3.

In order to calculate the living wages, OLWN says it factored costs like food, rent, transportation, clothing and footwear, medical expenses, childcare, adult education, internet and cell phone costs, and other expenses like recreation and personal care. It also includes any applicable government taxes, transfers, and benefits.

"A living wage is an effective tool to combat working poverty by making

sure that employees can make ends meet where they live," OLWN said in its report, adding it also considers expenses related "to more than just surviving" like a modest vacation and opportunities for residents to engage with their local communities.

While the GTA boasts the highest living wage rate, Ottawa saw the largest increase year-over-year, with a 12 per cent jump, going up by \$2.35 per hour to \$21.95 in 2023.

These are the living wages across Ontario, derived from Statistic Canada's geographic concept of "economic regions":

- \$25.05/hr in the Greater Toronto Area
- \$22.75/hr in the Grey Bruce Perth Huron Simcoe region
- \$21.95/hr in Ottawa
- \$20.90/hr in Dufferin Guelph Wellington Waterloo region
- \$20.80/hr in Hamilton

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EDITORIAL & OPINIONS

The Essequibo Dispute

After years of posturing and rhetoric, Venezuela is taking the first tangible step towards claiming a large chunk of Guyana as its own territory.

And this is concerning, especially in light of world events where other countries are forcibly taking land that they claim is theirs. We've seen the bloody results in the Ukraine and Gaza, and we've also seen how powerless the world seems to stop such intrusion.

The Venezuelan Boundary Dispute officially began in 1841, when the Venezuelan Government protested alleged British encroachment on Venezuelan territory. In 1814, Great Britain had acquired British Guiana (now Guyana) by treaty with the Netherlands. Because the treaty did not define a western boundary, the British commissioned Robert Schomburgk, a surveyor and naturalist, to delineate that boundary. His 1835 survey resulted in what came to be known as the Schomburgk Line, a boundary that effectively claimed an additional 30,000 square miles for Guiana.

In 1841 Venezuela disputed the British delineation, claiming territorial delineations established at the time of their independence from Spain. Venezuela claimed its borders extended as far east as the Essequibo River—an effective claim on two-thirds of British Guiana's territory. When gold was dis-

covered in the disputed territory, Great Britain sought to further extend its reach, claiming an additional 33,000 square miles west of the Schomburgk Line, an area where gold had been discovered. In 1876 Venezuela protested and appealed to the United States for assistance, citing the Monroe Doctrine as justification for U.S. involvement. For the next 19 years Venezuela repeatedly petitioned for U.S. assistance, calling on its neighbor to the north to intervene by either sponsoring arbitration or intervening with force. The United States responded by expressing concern, but did little to facilitate a resolution.

The British Government rebuked the US half-hearted involvement in the dispute, saying that the Monroe Doctrine had no validity as international law.

In December 1895, US President Grover Cleveland asked Congress for authorization to appoint a boundary commission, proposing that the commission's findings be enforced "by every means."

The British government reluctantly agreed to allow the Border Commission to arbitrate the dispute, while Venezuela welcomed it. And when the commission finally rendered a decision on October 3, 1899, it directed that the border follow the Schomburgk Line.

That decision stands to date, and while Venezuela has been protesting ever since, it only recently re-started its claim on the territory ... because, you guessed it, the majority of the oil found in Guyana lies within the disputed Essequibo basin.

This means billions of dollars are at stake, and while Guyana is demanding that the 1899 decision be honoured, as both parties agreed to it then, Venezuela has amped up the action.

The Maduro Government in Caracas announced recently that Venezuelans will vote on December 3 in a referendum on "the rights" over the Essequibo region.

Guyana says that move is illegal, as the matter is before the International Court of Justice in the Hague, which said it will hear the matter next week (November 14).

Venezuela says it will act on the results of the referendum and not on the ICJ's decision, and if the people vote that the territory belongs to Venezuela, it will move to reclaim the land. What that move will entail is unknown, and could involve military force.

The Ali government has said that its position that the area under dispute belongs to Guyana is non-negotiable and unequivocal, as it's a fundamental right that all nations must respect.

"The time for negotiation is over. There will be no need for dialogue with Nicholas Maduro. There will be no meeting...between Maduro and President Dr Irfaan Ali. Essequibo is no bird island, no concessions through bilateral. No to invasion, annexation, and other acts of aggression," Guyanese Prime Minister Mark Phillips stated on Monday. "Let the ICJ rule. Let the ICJ be the judge and deliver a final judgment on this controversy. Essequibo belongs to Guyana and Guyanese only. Together, we will secure the triumph of justice and preserve our nation's sovereignty."

The big question now, of course, is how will the world react if Venezuela acts on its claim.

Many believe that the US Government will not stand idly by and allow it to happen, because the majority of oil interests in the disputed region are American. But there is no certainty of their involvement, given their original position.

Again, watching precedents unfold elsewhere in the world has us very concerned about what will happen in Guyana after December 3.

It does appear that the dogs of war are sniffing the Caribbean air. Let's all hope it doesn't come to that.

PM Phillips's address on the border controversy was powerful

Dear Editor,
Prime Minister, Brigadier (Ret'd) Mark Phillips is known for making eloquent speeches and he did so on Wednesday, November 1, 2023, when he addressed the Organization of American States (OAS), during an Extraordinary Special Session of the Permanent Council.

The meeting was convened at the request of the Government of Guyana to provide an update on the recent developments on the border controversy with Venezuela, which remains an enduring threat to Guyana.

In his address to members of the OAS, Prime Minister Phillips brilliantly highlighted the fact that Guyana is a peaceful nation that respects the rule of law and that Venezuela's claim to the Essequibo Region poses a direct threat to

Guyana's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

PM Phillips did not mince words when he told the OAS that Venezuela is currently building an airstrip on its border in a zone near to the Essequibo region, where it has significantly increased its military troops and military equipment.

He highlighted that while no explanation about the airstrip has been provided to the Government of Guyana, the intention of Venezuela is to increase its threats to use force to drive fear among the Guyanese population, as well as to undermine and breach international law.

Phillips, a former Chief of Staff of the Guyana Defense Force (GDF), who has in-depth knowledge of security related issues, has voiced Guyana's concerns about the planned

referendum on December 3 with five questions that seek the Venezuelan people's approval to unilaterally annex Guyana's territory, instead of complying with its international obligations to respect and accept the ruling of the International Court of Justice (ICJ).

Brigadier Phillips further informed the OAS that after nearly 11 billion barrels oil resources have been discovered in the Essequibo region, Venezuela intensified its campaign of intimidation and threats to use force to annex Essequibo and discredit the 1899 Arbitral Award.

The Prime Minister affirmed that following the 1899 Arbitral Award, a mixed Venezuelan-British Boundary Commission established a map on January 7, 1905 to demarcate the boundary between the two countries.

Venezuela agreed with the bound-

ary map, which at the request of General Juan Vicente Gomez, then President of Venezuela, was reissued in 1911 and 1917, and signed by F. Alicantara, the Venezuelan Minister of Internal Affairs.

PM Phillips' address to the OAS was excellent, his knowledge of the issue was superb, and his explanation was so convincing and superlative that it grabbed the attention of all the attendees, especially the Secretary General, Mr. Luis Almagro of the OAS, the US and EU ambassadors to the OAS, who explicitly and emphatically condemned Venezuela's illegal actions for escalating tensions in the region known for its peace and tranquility.

Sincerely,
Dr. Asquith Rose

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Guyana government invests over \$3.6 billion on aviation safety

ACKNOWLEDGING the significant impact of aviation on Guyana's economic development and the need to ensure secure transportation of people and goods domestically, the People's Progressive Party/Civic Government has invested \$3.6 billion in the aviation industry in the past two years.

Minister of Public Works, Bishop Juan Edghill, in recognition of International Day of the Air Traffic Controller, acknowledged the relentless efforts of these individuals in ensuring safe and efficient air travel.

He said that air traffic controllers worldwide, including those in Guyana, have a pivotal role in maintaining the safety of air transportation.

Against this historical context, the International Federation of Air Traffic Controllers Associations (IFATCA) was established 61 years ago and has since expanded to include 133 member associations, which together represent over 50,000 air traffic controllers worldwide.

The Minister said that the PPP/C government understands the importance of aviation for the economic development of the country and the importance of moving people and goods in a safe and secure aviation apparatus.

"... more than \$3.6 Billion dollars have been injected to the aviation sector in the past two years, with \$1.6 billion being spent in 2023 on the rehabilitation and maintenance of hinterland airstrips at Eteringbang, Karisparu, Paruima, Imbaimadai, Matthews Ridge and Ekereku Bottom, to make the infrastructure safer for aviation operations," the Minister said.

He pointed out that Guyana continues to witness a steady increase in aircraft movement within its airspace and new additions of airlines to the Guyanese market, the most recent being British Airways, Fly Always and Canada Jetlines.

This growth, he said, requires additional air traffic controllers to manage the country's airspace effectively and efficiently. Thus, the Civil Aviation Training School (CATS) has been given the resources to support the training programmes.

This year alone, 40 persons have benefited from training in various areas of air traffic management.

Minister Edghill said to further enhance aircraft navigation, the government introduced an upgraded Instrument Landing System (ILS) and the Automatic Dependent Surveillance Broadcast (ADS-B) System, which aim to improve operational efficiency and strengthen the air traffic control system's safety.

Minister Edghill lauds the efforts of air traffic controllers, stating, "Today, I celebrate the individual Air Traffic Controller who strives each minute to give the utmost in service to the flying public, to bring them safely to their destination."

Every day, air traffic controllers in



Public Works Minister Juan Edghill superimposed on a bird's eye view of Cheddi Jagan Int'l Airport

Guyana handle an average of 140 landings at the Eugene F. Correia International Airport, 18 offshore flights, 12 landings at the Cheddi Jagan International Airport, and 45 aircraft overflying

Guyana's airspace. Notably, from January to September this year, the international passenger movement at the Cheddi Jagan International Airport has witnessed a remarkable 13 per cent in-

crease compared to the same period last year, reaching 545,052 passengers.

These statistics, the minister said, reflect the dedication and hard work of Guyana's air traffic controllers.

Guyana a top investment destination

Guyana has seen 40 per cent economic growth over the past three years, and is projected to grow by more than 20 per cent over the next four years, according to the senior government official.

"Taken together, those developments imply that the Guyanese economy would have and will be growing by an average of more than 30 per cent annually, over seven years," Minister Singh pointed out.

He said these projections are based on current proven oil reserves and current Floating Production Storage and Offloading (FPSO) vessels that are in production.

Minister Singh reiterated that the government led by President, Dr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali is committed to advancing the country's economic landscape, even in its non-oil sectors.

"As a government, we are firmly committed to ensuring that we maintain, that we build a highly competitive non-oil economy because we're entering oil production at a time when everybody who has entered oil production had a finite horizon because their resource was finite."

He noted that the developments have brought many of the large top-tier oil and gas companies into the country such as Baker Hughes and Schlumberger.



Minister Singh interacting with attendees

"A number of those companies have said to us that they anticipate their Guyana operations becoming the hub for their regional operations, given the production trajectory and the anticipated scale of their own operations in the country," Minister Singh added.

Letters to the Editor

Guyana must draw line between treasonous expression and freedom

Dear Editor,

Where will Guyana draw the line between treasonous expression and free expression? This question is of greater import for Guyanese now as Venezuela has become alarmingly aggressive in pursuit of its border claim against us.

In terms of abstract doctrine, Title 20, Article 318 of our laws say treason condemns anyone who owes allegiance to the State who, whether in Guyana or elsewhere, who adheres to Guyana's enemies by giving them aid or comfort shall be guilty and liable to suffer death by hanging.

In my opinion, the harshness of the penalty works against the intent of the law as only the harshest of persons would wish to see someone put to death for talking without thinking of the consequences, or worse as in the case of the 'influencers', unable to comprehend the gravamen of their words and actions.

Trade Unionist Lincoln Lewis wrote "Parliament meeting to discuss Venezuela's saber rattling must also discuss the idea floated by Bharrat Jagdeo to give Venezuela passage to the Atlantic, via Guyana's territory that country is coveting."

This is Lewis' xenophobic (understandably) interpretation of what Jagdeo said; what was being shared did not originate with Jagdeo but has been a bone of contention long before Jagdeo was born. The overlapping Economic Exclusive Zones of Guyana, Trinidad, and Barbados, effectively left Venezuela without a right to a sea lane to the Atlantic.

In 1990, Trinidad signed a treaty, a delimitation of marine and submarine areas, which some experts say has implications for Guyana and Barbados. There have been numerous meetings between Guyana and Venezuela on the Geneva Agreement, at these talks much had been made of Venezuela's 'land-locked' status. When Jagdeo said 'we' in the context of border discussions, Jagdeo was referring to Guyana and to negotiations that occurred when he was in primary school; all of these discussions are part of the records held in the

Ministry of Foreign Affairs as these talks were conducted by our diplomats.

As President, in 2004, Jagdeo invoked the UNCLOS mechanism and took Suriname to the United Nations Tribunal of the Law of the Sea which led to our current maritime boundaries being settled in our favour at the Arbitral Tribunal in Hamburg, in 2007.

My main issue with Lincoln Lewis is his timing and motivation; he is using the current tension along the border to take a jab at Jagdeo and, I would ask what would be the outcome if we all behave with such selfishness at a time of national crisis?

Should I try to score points against Burnham for signing the Geneva Agreement? Was it not Burnham's greed for power at any cost that made him sign us into this quagmire? Why would Burnham have acknowledged a border dispute that was settled before he was born? And, I can point to the turning point in the relations between the two countries when David Granger called Venezuela "a monkey on our backs." That idiom was not well received by the nation that was our largest aid partner at the time (Petro-Caribe).

When Granger decided on the ICJ route, he received full public support from the PPP/C and all right-thinking Guyanese; no one chose to play petty politics. Lincoln Lewis has cost thousands of Guyanese jobs with his bluff and bluster. Rusal, who Lewis said could not live without our 'black gold' variety of Bauxite pulled out of the country because of Lewis; 800 jobs gone, Troy Resources, 375 jobs, Alcoa 3000+ jobs. The only people he never had a problem with were Omai, who gifted him a car.

Editor, we cannot make the words and actions of the less thoughtful or capable treasonous, we must however seek a balance that curtails the amount of comfort they give to the enemies of our nation. I have not given examples from the 'influencers' who have moved from being panty models to making pronouncements on matters of state because they are beneath our dignity, ig-

norance from the ignorant. I hope someone can share this simple message with them, "Now is not the time to try to score petty points and give even the slightest bit of joy to our country's enemies." Failure to comprehend may one

day force even the most liberal of us to rethink what can/should be allowed as 'free speech.

Sincerely,
Robin Singh

Guyana a peaceful nation

Dear Editor,

VENEZUELA is brewing a storm in a tea cup while Guyana briefs the international community about the actions taken by Nicolas Maduro, President of Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

The brazen, bold and bullish behaviour of a barefaced braggart, behooves diplomacy's last bastion of public bureaucracy.

Reports of increased Venezuelan military activities close to Guyana's borders has raised eyebrows and is viewed as having "the potential to incite violence and to threaten the peace of Guyana and by extension the Caribbean Region."

Essequibo, known as the "Cinderella County," is home to some 290,000 people stretching across 700 villages and communities, making a living involved in mainly agriculture industries and mining for gold and other precious minerals.

The rich Rupununi Savannahs unfolds its virgin plains and fishes of various species, including the largest sweet water fish, the Arapaima. The prestigious rainforests are pristine for their carbon credits and lumber values. Guyana's hinterland is the scenery of towering mountains unfolding her majesty to boast the likes of Mount Roraima.

Kaieteur Falls bedazzles visitors as the world's largest single-drop waterfall. Domiciling in the interior are the indigenous people, Guyana's first born original inhabitants of this land of many waters.

The response from the Venezuela's representative as "curbing illegal mining," with their equipment movement, is an affront for their military exercises at Eteringbang, Region Seven (Cuyuni-Mazaruni), and should be taken with a grain of salt and perceived as premeditated maneuvering with the ultimate intention to claim untitled land belonging to Guyana.

Guyana remains steadfast to the validity of the Arbitral Award of 1899. Venezuela pursues a claim of void and refuses to recognise that the ICJ has jurisdiction to hear this case.

Guyana's massive oil finds and selling of the recent oil blocks found in sovereign territory, only inflamed an already infuriated Venezuela to instigate a communique protesting the sales which threaten Guyana as an independent nation.

Venezuela's National Electoral Council has further undermined the security of Guyana, threatening peace and inciting violence with a planned National Consultative Referendum, slated for December 3, 2023. It purports to seek the permission of the people to simply "annexed" Essequibo by creation of a state comprising the Cinderella County.

In October 1966, the Venezuelan army seized the Eastern half of Ankoko Island situated at the confluence of the Cuyuni and Wenamu Rivers, which forms part of the boundary between Guyana and Venezuela.

A couple of days prior to Guyana becoming a Republic State on February 23, 1970, Venezuelan soldiers on Ankoko opened fire with guns and mortars on the Guyanese military outpost at Eteringbang.

The firing continued intermittently throughout the next day, but there were no reports of injuries even though buildings were damaged. Despite these military aggressions, Guyana has remained calm and sought diplomatic channels to resolve her border issue.

Harry Innis Perkins and Charles Wilgress Anderson of Great Britain and Abraham Tirado and Elias Zoro of Venezuela made up the Mixed Venezuelan-British Boundary Commissioners. The Commission drew a line passing through the island and dividing it from north to south in roughly equal parts.

The eastern part of about three-square miles falling on the British Guiana (Guyana) side of the boundary and the western part falling on the Venezuelan side. A boundary map showing these details was signed on January 7, 1905 by the Boundary Commissioners. The 1905 map was reissued in 1911 and 1917 and published under the authority of General Gomez, then President of Venezuela, and signed by F. Alicantara, the Venezuelan Minister of Internal Affairs.

Despite the border dispute, both nations have co-operated on trade, health and other sectors. For example, the Guyanese government had signed a rice compensation agreement with Venezuela in 2009 wherein Guyanese rice exports were accepted in partial payment for imports of Venezuelan oil. During the days of dictatorship under the Kabaka, many Guyanese sought refuge for greener pastures in foreign countries, including in the land of Venezuela. There was also brisk trading for foreign banned food stuff and other items.

Now we are attesting to the vice versa situation as Maduro bankrupts a once prosperous nation, leaving the food shelves empty in the supermarkets, disrupting the peaceful lives of people and impoverishing the nation as he rules by controlling the military forces. The US has frozen Venezuelan assets in the US and there is an oil embargo.

Millions of Venezuelans have been forced to flee their homeland. Refugees are arriving by the hundreds in Guyana, home to over 30,000 Venezuelans, seeking food, cloth and housing as they scramble for work in order to maintain their families, forced to live together under one roof, bundled by the dozens. Most Guyanese have left Venezuela and have already returned home since Maduro became President.

Guyana remains a peaceful nation but like Dave Martin said, Guyanese "ain't giving up no mountains, no tree, no river that belongs to we, not one blue saki, not one rice grain, not one kuras, not a blade of grass."

Yours respectfully,
Jai Lall.

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Commonwealth issues statement on border dispute: 'We stand with the people of Guyana'

The Commonwealth is an association of 56 independent and equal sovereign states, with a combined population is 2.5 billion, of which more than 60 per cent is aged 29 or under.

In a statement released on Wednesday Commonwealth Secretary-General, Patricia Scotland expressed deep concern at the 21 September decision of the Venezuelan National Assembly to undertake a referendum on the status of the Essequibo region, part of the sovereign territory of Government of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana, set for 3 December.

Speaking on the escalation the Secretary-General said, "The Commonwealth stands with the Government and people of Guyana and with our partners in CARICOM in expressing our concern over the questions in the planned referendum. "And the Commonwealth continues to stand for the rule of law and, "reaffirms its firm and steadfast support for the maintenance and preservation of the sovereign and territorial integrity of Guyana, and the unobstructed exercise of its rights to develop the entirety of its territory for the benefit of its people".

According to the Commonwealth, the five questions approved by the National Electoral Council to be included in the referendum undermine Guyana's territorial integrity and sovereignty and their intent is contrary to international law. "Question 5 proposes the creation of Venezuelan state of Guyana Essequibo and an accelerated plan for giving Venezuelan citizenship and identity cards to the Guyanese population. International law prohibits the seizure and annexation by one country of the territory of another. The language in these questions contributes to heightened tension and is a threat to peace and stability in a member state of our Commonwealth Family and indeed in the wider Caribbean region," the Commonwealth Secretary General.

She noted that at the last meeting of the Commonwealth Ministerial Group on Guyana, held on 17 September 2023, the Group, "Reaffirmed its unwavering support for the judicial process underway before the International Court of Justice, chosen by the Secretary General of the United Nations under the 1966 Geneva Agreement, and the Group continues to encourage Venezuela to participate in the said process." The International Court of Justice (ICJ) determined in April of this year that it had legal jurisdiction over this longstanding issue and the Commonwealth says it supports the use of the ICJ to adjudicate on the matter. The referendum, to be held one month before Presidential elections in Venezuela, goes against the spirit of peaceful dispute resolution.

The Commonwealth Ministerial



Commonwealth Secretary-General, Patricia Scotland

Group on Guyana constituted in 1999 by the Heads of Government of the 56-Member countries, is composed of Antigua and Barbuda, Bangladesh, Canada, Guyana, Jamaica, South Africa, and the United Kingdom. At the Meeting, chaired by Hon Dr A. K. Abdul Momen, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Bangladesh, the Group welcomed the ruling by the International Court of Justice on the admissibility of Guyana's case before it, seeking to settle the boundaries between Guyana and Venezuela.

Meanwhile, in response to Venezuela's sinister plan to seize Guyanese territory, the Government of Guyana on Tuesday wrote the International Court of Justice (ICJ) requesting provisional measures to protect it. In its request, the government sought an order preventing Venezuela from taking any action to seize, acquire or encroach upon, or assert or exercise sovereignty over, the Essequibo Region or any other part of Guyana's national territory, pending the Court's final determination of the validity of the Arbitral Award that established the land boundary between the two States, as the final and binding nature of that boundary.

The government in a statement said Guyana has no doubt of the validity of that Arbitral Award and the land bound-

ary, which Venezuela accepted and recognised as the international boundary for more than 60 years. "Given the urgency of the matter, Guyana has asked the ICJ to schedule oral hearings on its Request at the earliest possible date in advance of December 3, 2023, the date Venezuela has fixed for its "sham referendum".

Guyana insists, as does CARICOM, the Secretaries-General of the United Nations and Organization of American States, and the entire international community, that the controversy over the validity of the Arbitral Award and the land boundary must be resolved by the ICJ which will assure a just, peaceful, binding and permanent solution to this matter, in accordance with international law.

In fact, the Government noted further that the Court itself has determined, in two separate Orders, that it has the exclusive jurisdiction to resolve this matter, and that it will do so.

"Twice Venezuela has formally objected to the Court's jurisdiction, and both times the Court overwhelmingly rejected Venezuela's objections. In the interim, pending the oral hearing on its request and the issuance of the Court's Order, Guyana urges CARICOM and the international community to continue reminding Venezuela of its obligations

under international law, including its obligation to accept the ICJ's jurisdiction, plead its case to the Court, and comply with the Court's rulings and Judgments," the statement said.

The Government of Guyana had previously issued a statement denouncing the aggressive new measures taken by Venezuela in furtherance of its territorial claim to Guyana's Essequibo Region. These new measures included a purported national referendum to ratify the Venezuelan government's apparent decision to withdraw from the present judicial proceedings in the ICJ, and proceed unilaterally to incorporate the Essequibo Region into its own national territory as an integral part of Venezuela.

Guyana properly characterized this naked threat of territorial aggression as: "nothing less than the annexation of Guyana's territory, in blatant violation of the most fundamental rules of the UN Charter, the OAS Charter and general international law." Guyana's statement added that: "Such a seizure of Guyana's territory would constitute the international crime of aggression. Following Guyana's statement, CARICOM issued a strongly worded denunciation of Venezuela's measures, fully supporting the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Guyana.

EU calls for peaceful resolution to Guyana-Venezuela controversy

In a bid to address the longstanding border controversy between Guyana and Venezuela, the European Union (EU) has taken a significant stance, insisting that the International Court of Justice (ICJ) should be the paramount venue for resolving this matter.

This pivotal declaration came from the EU's Ambassador to Guyana, René van Nes, during a press conference held Friday morning. With an air of diplomacy and unwavering commitment to international law, Ambassador van Nes stressed that the EU firmly believes in the efficacy of international law and multilateral institutions when it comes to addressing complex international disputes.

"The position of the EU here is that we strongly feel that international law and multilateral institutions are the appropriate framework for addressing international disputes," he asserted, emphasizing the importance of a cooperative, global approach.

This perspective, as Van Nes pointed out, is not isolated but resonates with numerous international partners who also advocate for the peaceful resolution of such conflicts. In a nod to the power of international collaboration, Van Nes reiterated the EU's support for the ICJ as the designated mechanism to handle this intricate border issue. "We very clearly refer to the (ICJ) as the agreed mechanism to deal with this situation, and we call on all parties to avoid anything that will escalate the situation," he emphasised, underscoring the significance of adherence to internationally-recognised means of dispute resolution.

While the Ambassador refrained from commenting on Venezuela's up-



EU Ambassador René Van Nes

coming December 3 referendum, which seeks public support for a possible annexation of Guyana's Essequibo region, he reinforced the critical message that parties must adhere to an internationally-supported mechanism for settling the controversy. It was stated too that the peaceful resolution of this complex issue remains a shared goal of the European Union and its international allies, em-

phasizing the significance of diplomacy and cooperation on the global stage.

The long-standing border controversy between Guyana and Venezuela revolves around Venezuela's claim to a significant portion of Guyana, which includes the entire Essequibo region and its offshore exclusive economic zone. Guyana initiated proceedings against Venezuela on March 29, 2018, request-

court to "confirm the legal validity and binding effect of the award regarding the boundary between the Colony of British Guiana and the United States of Venezuela, dated October 3, 1899." On November 14, the ICJ will hear Guyana's recent request for provisional measures aimed at thwarting Venezuela's controversial plan to claim Guyanese territory, Essequibo.

US senators demand probe into Exxon, Chevron takeovers

US Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, Sen. Elizabeth Warren and nearly two dozen other Democrats are demanding federal regulators probe the mega takeovers inked last month by ExxonMobil and Chevron.

In a letter on Wednesday to the Federal Trade Commission, the lawmakers warned the blockbuster Big Oil deals are likely to harm competition, risk raising consumer prices, limit US production, hurt smaller firms and suppress wages.

Exxon, already America's biggest oil company, reached a deal in October to buy rival Pioneer Natural Resources for \$60 billion. Days later, Chevron, the No. 2 US oil company, revealed plans to purchase Hess for \$53 billion. Schumer, Warren, Sens. Bernie Sanders, Amy Klobuchar and others urged the FTC to "closely review" the deals for possible anticompetitive harm and block the transactions if necessary.

In the letter, the Senate Democrats argue past mergers that helped create

Exxon and Chevron "enabled anticompetitive coordination" that hurt consumers by limiting supply of oil. "The oil-and-gas industry is still dominated by a handful of corporate giants, led by the top-two players Exxon and Chevron. Any further consolidation could harm American consumers," the lawmakers wrote.

The Senate Democrats note that Pioneer owns more drilling acreage than any other Permian producer and Exxon is also a top producer there. The combined company could pump 1.2 million barrels per day, which is more than twice the closest rival. "This deal would enable the new Exxon to dominate the Permian – the most prolific oil-and-gas field in the world and America's most important," the letter said. "If anything," the lawmakers said, the FTC should be investigating the past mergers that created Exxon and Chevron to determine if the companies "should be broken up once again." The Democrats also expressed alarm at



Chuck Schumer

Exxon and Chevron "doubling down" on fossil fuels at a time when many Americans support efforts to clean up the environment.

"By taking actions to promote competition, the FTC would also prevent the fossil-fuel industry from further subverting our democratic processes," the Democrats wrote. An FTC spokesperson confirmed the

agency received the letter but declined to comment on the issue. In response, Exxon noted that it and Pioneer represent just about 5% of US oil production combined and argued the deal would be a positive for the environment. "For all those who seek even greater US energy independence and for lower emissions, this merger represents nothing but upside for our economy and our environment given that ExxonMobil has the resources to get more out of the ground and do it at vastly improved emissions levels," Exxon said in a statement.

Chevron did not respond to a request for comment.

White House spokesperson Michael Kikukawa referred inquiries on the specific deals to the FTC but signaled broad support for strong antitrust action. "Generally speaking, this administration is committed to addressing concentration across industries and has made promoting competition a core pillar of our economic agenda," he said.

New Hess owners: Guyana is the jewel in Exxon's crown

Chevron's recent acquisition of Hess for US\$53 billion has granted the U.S. supermajor access to one of the most promising prospects in the global resources industry – Guyana's vast offshore oil reserves, as reported by the Financial Times.

The British daily newspaper highlighted in the article that there was little interest in the South American country's potential as a fossil fuel producer when ExxonMobil began exploring Guyana's waters for oil in 2008. That changed in 2015 when an Exxon-led consortium, including Hess and Chinese giant CNOOC, made a significant discovery at the Liza field, in the 6.6mn acre Stabroek Block.

It was reported that the consortium has made more than 30 significant discoveries since then, with the latest announced. The steady stream of oil output should help sustain Exxon's – and now Chevron's – crude business for decades.

"It should also transform one of Latin America's poorest nations, home to just 800,000 people. Oil output has gone from zero to 390,000 barrels a day last year. The unusually fast ramp-up could push production to 1.2mn b/d by 2027 – equivalent to about a third of Exxon's current daily production. Last year Guyana's economy grew by a record 62.3 per cent, the highest rate in the world, as the petrodollars poured in. The IMF (International Monetary Fund) expects it to expand by another 38 per cent in 2023," the media entity stated.

All of this is happening in a global context where the world is gradually shifting away from fossil fuels, and environmentalists are vocally opposing further oil and gas development. However, the investments by U.S. oil majors are positioning Guyana as one of the last petro states to emerge in the oil era – Financial Times reported.

Alistair Routledge, Exxon's Guyana president, told the Financial Times, "It is a jewel in ExxonMobil's crown. It's a significant resource. It fits very well with the execution capability of ExxonMobil."

When asked for his thoughts on Chevron's takeover of Hess, Routledge emphasized, "Clearly what's attractive to Chevron is that ExxonMobil is operating at a very high level... From first discovery in 2015 to first oil in 2019. I mean, [it's] just unheard of really to develop a new resource in a brand new basin with no existing infrastructure in



President of ExxonMobil Guyana, Alistair Routledge

that short a timeframe."

Moreover, it was stated that Wall Street analysts have hailed the Exxon-led investment in Guyana as "the best oil deal in modern history." Notably, it boasts a low break-even price of US\$25-\$35 per barrel, even as global oil prices hover above US\$90 per barrel. However, the U.S. supermajor and its Guyana project have faced criticism.

Earlier this year, ExxonMobil Corporation's Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Darren Woods, during a discussion on Tuesday at the annual S&P Global CERAWEEK conference held in Houston, Texas, boasted about "the story of success" Guyana. Woods was also proud to highlight the company's rapid pace of development in the country.

Exxon's boss and S&P Global Vice Chairman, Daniel Yergin, had a discussion on future investment strategies in the energy sector, when Yergin stated, "So let me ask you, mega projects, you did mention Guyana. I mean that's pretty incredible how fast that developed."

To this, Woods responded, "Yes it is... Yeah I mean if you look at that it's really a story of success, and I would also tell you that we are very focus as we grow that production."

Exxon's Guyana is operator and holds 45 percent interest in Guyana's lucrative Stabroek Block, which is 6.6 million acres and has 11 billion of proven barrels of oil. Hess Guyana Exploration

Ltd. Now Chevron holds 30 percent interest and CNOOC Petroleum Guyana Limited holds 25 percent interest.

Speaking about Exxon success in Guyana, Woods shared that the company was able to move from first discovery to first oil within five years, beating industry record. "We brought that like from discovery to first production in five years which is of not industry record is pretty close to it. When you think about what typically the timeframe (is), (it) typically (takes) the industry about 10 years," Exxon's CEO said.

He continued: "If you then look at what we have delivered since that timeframe, we are bringing in those ships [Floating production storage and off-loading vessels] and that production ahead of schedule, we've beaten schedule for the two ships [Liza Destiny and Liza Unity] that we've got and the third one [Prosperity] that we are working on, that is expect to beat schedule."

Woods bragged about EEPGL being able to run production, "at a higher level than we have anticipated when we made those investments and staying focused," adding that the company is also focused on, "helping reducing emissions."

Exxon CEO also shared that the company is working on the US\$2B Wales gas-to-energy project with the Government of Guyana (GoG) to bring gas onshore. He said, "We got a project

that we are working on with the Government of Guyana to bring gas onshore to back out some of their higher emission intensity power to substitute that with gas. So we lower emissions and get better more reliable power to the people that's a real win-win situation."

Guyana signed onto a Production Sharing Agreement (PSA) with the oil major, which has been heavily criticised for being lopsided and benefiting the oil company more than the country.

The 2016 deal gives Guyana an industry-low 2% royalty. Presently, Guyana shares revenue with ExxonMobil after the company deducts 75 percent towards the cost incurred to develop the resources in the Stabroek Block.

This arrangement, with the lack of ring-fencing, sees Guyana paying for projects that are yet to commence production activities. Each month bills from future producing developments are added to the list of expenses to be cost recovered by Exxon. After the 75 percent is deducted to pay back the oil company, Guyana then shares 50/50 of the 25 percent remaining with Exxon as profits. This amounts to 12.5 percent of profits from the operations.

Also, under the signed deal, Guyana has agreed to, under the taxation provisions, to pay ExxonMobil's share of Corporation and Income Tax. As such it would mean, that Guyana foregoes each year, billions of US dollars. On top of this, documentation to this effect is then provided to the US based company allowing it to not have to pay any taxes in its home country for its earnings overseas.

Though Vice President, Bharrat Jagdeo has maintained that the mere 2 percent royalty, massive tax breaks, and the absence of a ring-fencing provision, are three key flaws of the 2016 Stabroek Block PSA, his government will not seek to renegotiate the deal.

Paul Sankey, the lead analyst at Sankey Research, recently shared his perspective on the acquisition of Hess Corporation by Chevron Corporation during a segment on CNBC's 'Squawk on the Street.'

Sankey was queried about his take on this significant deal. He remarked, "Well, we know Guyana is the best asset and global oil. It's remarkable so Hess was trading as a takeover play? And the question was, can you get a high enough premium for the actually to be a consummated deal?"



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Venezuela's referendum can compromise border controversy case

Attorney General (AG) and Minister of Legal Affairs, Anil Nandlall SC has expressed concern that Venezuela's planned referendum can compromise the Guyana/Venezuela border controversy case which is before the International Court of Justice (ICJ).

Nandlall was at the time addressing the extraordinary sitting of the National Assembly on Monday on the matter of Venezuela growing aggression despite the ICJ case. The extraordinary sitting comes ahead of Venezuela's national referendum on the border claims. "Guyana is of the considered view, that the impending referendum slated for the 3rd of December, 2023 is intended to and will compromise the legal proceedings pending at the International Court of Justice, if not subvert the legal process altogether and prejudice its outcome," Nandlall said.

He continued: "anyone familiar with the court process would know that a party in a litigation has a right to seek appropriate legal remedies, interlocutory, if the other party in the litigation is taking steps that can defeat, compromise or render negatory, the legal proceedings itself and/or its final outcome.

Nandlall noted that what Guyana is ultimately seeking from the ICJ is affirmation that the 1899 Arbitral Award which established the boundary between itself and Venezuela is valid. He said it is for this reason Guyana rejects the referendum and is asking the ICJ to block it.

"So, Guyana has approached the ICJ, seeking an injunction to prevent Venezuela from taking action through



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

its provocative referendum over Guyana's territory –Essequibo. There will be a hearing on November 14... Every Court has a duty to protect the integrity of its processes and proceedings against it... In short, it has an inherent and unmitigating duty to prevent its process from abuse. Guyana is of the considered view, that the impending referendum slated for the 3rd of December, 2023 is intended to and will compromise the legal proceedings pending at the International Court of Justice, if not subvert the legal process altogether and prejudice its outcome."

Nandlall said it is for those reasons that "we are seeking the Court's protection for interim measures."

In the meanwhile, the AG said Guyana continues, resolutely, upon its reliance on International Law, and the process engaged at the International Court of Justice. "Additionally, we have been able to secure from some of the most power voices in this hemisphere, expressions of support and solidarity. These have come from the United States, the United Kingdom, the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), the Commonwealth, the Organization of American States (OAS), the European Union, Brazil, etc."

"As a Government," Nandlall continued: "we hope that the National Assembly, without its usual rancour, but speaking in unison with one voice, will send that clear and present signal

that this is not an issue upon which we are or can be divided but one on which we are unconditionally united. The existential nature of the threat at hand leaves us with no alternative.

In conclusion, Nandlall issued a cautionary admonition to all citizens.

He said: "Be careful with what you say and do, in particular in the social media. Irresponsible publications will only increase existing tensions. While we must stand strong in the expression of our patriotism, we must not commit acts which can be viewed as provocative; neither must we ill-treat our Venezuelan brothers and sisters among us. In the meantime, they are here simply to pursue a better life."

ICJ to hear Guyana border case Nov. 14

The International Court of Justice on Friday said it will hold public hearings in the Guyana v. Venezuela specifically to deal with a complaint from this country over a scheduled referendum by Venezuela to among other things seek the permission of its citizens to seize the Essequibo.

Guyana wants the court to block several questions to be answered by Venezuelans in the upcoming referendum scheduled for December 3, 2023.

The special hearing is set for Tuesday 14 November 2023 at the Peace Palace in The Hague, the seat of the Court. In a press release the ICJ said it is recalled that on 29 March 2018, Guyana filed an Application instituting proceedings against Venezuela in which it requests the Court "to confirm the legal validity and binding effect of the Award regarding the Boundary between the Colony of British Guiana and the United States of Venezuela, of 3 October 1899."

According to the ICJ the hearings

will be devoted to the Request for the indication of provisional measures submitted by Guyana on 30 October 2023. In its Request, Guyana states that "[on 23 October 2023, the Government of Venezuela, through its National Electoral Council, published a list of five questions that it plans to put before the Venezuelan people in a... 'Consultative Referendum' on 3 December 2023". According to the Applicant, the purpose of this referendum is "to obtain responses that would support Venezuela's decision to abandon [the current proceedings before the Court], and to resort instead to unilateral measures to 'resolve' the controversy with Guyana by formally annexing and integrating into Venezuela all of the territory at issue in these proceedings, which comprises more than two-thirds of Guyana" The hearings are scheduled for Tuesday 14 November 2023 10 a.m.-11.30 a.m. Oral argument (Guyana) 3 p.m.-4.30 p.m.: Oral argument (Venezuela).

Late last week the Government of

Guyana sought the urgent protection of the International Court of Justice, by filing with the Court a Request for Provisional Measures. In that Request, Guyana sought from the Court an Order preventing Venezuela from taking any action to seize, acquire or encroach upon, or assert or exercise sovereignty over, the Essequibo Region or any other part of Guyana's national territory, pending the Court's final determination of the validity of the Arbitral Award that established the land boundary between our two States, and the final and binding nature of that boundary. Guyana has no doubt of the validity of that Arbitral Award and the land boundary, which Venezuela accepted and recognized as the international boundary for more than 60 years.

Because of the urgency of the matter, Guyana had asked the Court to schedule oral hearings on its Request at the earliest possible date in advance of December 3, 2023, the date Venezuela has fixed for its sham referendum.

Guyana insists, as does CARICOM, the Secretaries-General of the United Nations and Organization of American States, and the entire international community, that the controversy over the validity of the Arbitral Award and the land boundary must be resolved by the International Court of Justice, which will assure a just, peaceful, binding and permanent solution to this matter, in accordance with international law. In fact, the Court itself has determined, in two separate Orders, that it has the exclusive jurisdiction to resolve this matter, and that it will do so. Twice Venezuela has formally objected to the Court's jurisdiction, and both times the Court overwhelmingly rejected Venezuela's objections. In the interim, pending the oral hearing on its request and the issuance of the Court's Order, Guyana had urged CARICOM and the international community to continue reminding Venezuela of its obligations under international law, including its obligation to accept the ICJ's jurisdiction.

Surinamese firm bids US\$325.4M to build Corentyne River Bridge

Dutch company – Ballast Nedam Infra Suriname (Netherlands), and Chinese firm – China Road & Bridge Corporation have both submitted bids above US\$200 million to build the Corentyne River Bridge between Guyana and Suriname.

At the recent opening of bids at the National Procurement and Tender Administration Board (NPTAB), it was revealed that Ballast Nedam Infra Suriname bid US\$325,400,000 for the contract, while China Road & Bridge Corporation bid US\$236,173,962. Another Chinese company – China Railway Caribbean Company Limited also submitted a bid but the amount was not listed.

The Corentyne River Bridge, is a project being undertaken by both the governments of Guyana and Suriname. The bridge will be constructed using the Design, Build, Finance, Operate, and Maintain (DBFOM) model. It will be done through a Public-Private Partnership (PPP) arrangement. This means that the successful contractor or joint venture will be responsible for its final design, construction, financing, operation, and maintenance.

The Ministry of Public Works said the bridge will span the Corentyne River from South Drain in Suriname to Moleson Creek in Guyana, and is slated to have a life span of 100 years.

In May 2022, the consultancy assignment for the Feasibility Study and Detailed Designs for the Construction of the bridge was awarded to WSP Caribbean, amounting to US\$2 million. The assignment included various works such as topographic assessment, hydraulic and hydrographic studies, traffic demand analysis, financial and economic evaluation, environmental assessment, and the preliminary design of the bridge and roads. The bridge will span approximately 1,100 metres in length with 22 spans measuring 50 metres each. The sub-structure will be designed to withstand minor vessel impact. The carriageway is expected to span around 10.05 metres, accommodating two lanes under regular conditions and three lanes during emergencies or controlled situations. Additionally, the bridge will feature utilities inside the box girder, which will include an inspection path width of 260 metres, among other features.

The infrastructure project holds immense potential for fostering economic growth, strengthening regional integration, and improving transportation links between the two neighbouring nations.



An artist impression of what the Corentyne River Bridge is expected to look like

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First commercial vessel docks at Vreed-en-Hoop Shorebase

The Vreed-en-Hoop Shorebase Inc. witnessed the arrival and unloading of the inaugural commercial vessel at its shore base facility.

According to a press release, the M.V. Virtuous Striker is the first commercial vessel to dock at the newly constructed man-made island. It is also registered as the longest vessel to ever enter the Demerara River Channel, at over 190 meters. Additionally, with a cargo of over 26,900 metric tonnes, it is also one of the largest payloads to ever be offloaded.

According to the Shorebase official, the docking and offloading of the vessel signify a significant achievement for the 44-acre facility, which will primarily function as a shorebase for Esso Exploration and Production Guyana Limited (EEPGL) projects.

According to the Director of Vreed en Hoop Shorebase Inc., Mr. Deygoo “We are very proud of this milestone, as it takes us closer to becoming fully operational.”

The Vreed-en-Hoop Shorebase Inc. is a joint venture between NRG Holdings Inc.—a 100 percent Guyanese-owned consortium that is the majority shareholder—and Jan De Nul, a Belgium international maritime infrastructure company.



A view of the M.V. Virtuous Striker docked on the outskirts of the man-made island at Vreed-en Hoop, Guyana



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| Battery Voltage | 48 V | Service Weight | 275 Lbs |

Charging Time: 3HR
Working Time: 6HR
Work Shift: 24HR

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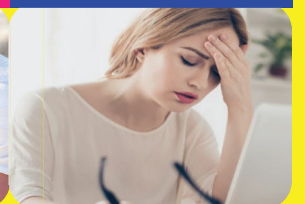
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Guyana to export fresh fruits and vegetables to Barbados

WITH Guyana setting the standard for agriculture in the Caribbean, regional leaders and their delegations continue to flock the oil-rich nation to engage in discussions and seek help/advice from government officials on how they can develop the agriculture sector in their respective regions.

In an interview, Minister of Agriculture, Zulfikar Mustapha, explained that he met with the Minister of Agriculture, Food, and National Security of Barbados, Indar Weir, and his team to discuss updates on several collaborative initiatives between Guyana and the Island of the Flying Fish.

“The meeting that I had with the Barbados delegation was a fruitful one, where we followed up on issues that we have had over time. Some of those issues are at a technical level, but I have a full team from the Ministry of Agriculture in Guyana and Barbados that is working to ensure that we remove any barriers so that we can have a smooth flow in accomplishing our goals.

“Guyana is currently helping Barbados with the shade house programme, and I am pleased to say that we have already supplied them with 12 shade houses so far, and very soon we will be supplying them with an additional 35 shade houses. Some of our technical people from Guyana will be going to Barbados to set it up for them and to also examine the types of crops that they will be planting.”

After meeting with the Barbadian Agriculture Minister and his team, Minister Mustapha said that he will be coordinating with them and assisting them to set up the programme to ensure that the island and their people successfully benefit from it. Mustapha also added that the Barbados Aquaculture Programme, which was started a few months ago, was set up by the Guyanese team, led by Mr. Simon Shaw.

“We have also discussed the black belly sheep programme, and I am pleased to relate that I was told by the delegation that we will receive another 283 black belly sheep from them by the first quarter of next year. That will bring the count to 1,000 black belly sheep received from Barbados. The programme will be rolled out shortly, physically, so that we can increase the number of sheep and create that brand that both President Ali and the Prime Minister, Mark Phillips, would have wanted us to work on,” Minister Mustapha stated.

He also noted that arrangements are

in place with the Guyanese farmers to ensure that a variety of fresh fruits and vegetables will be exported to Barbados. The agriculture minister explained that Guyana currently exports small quantities of fruits and vegetables to Barbados now; it will be done on a much larger scale.

While Guyana is helping Barbados in this sector, the Agriculture Minister said, “We are leading the charge in the Caribbean when it comes to agriculture, and we are working with the leaders of many of these islands to ensure that we assist them to develop their sector.”

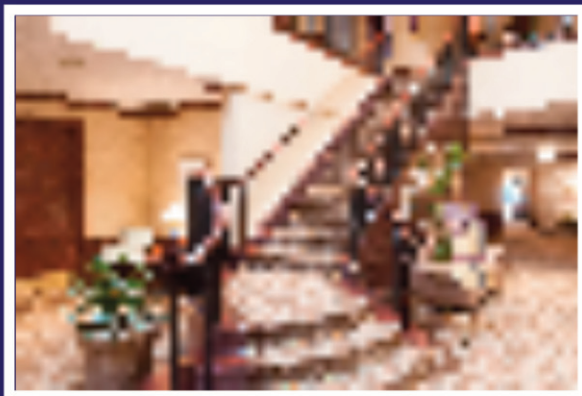


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Private Sector urged to help address power outages in Guyana

IN light of the recent announcement by the Georgetown Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GCCI) regarding the nation's frequent power outages and load shedding as a hindrance to business operations, Minister within the Ministry of Public Works Deodat Indar held a meeting with private sector representatives on Monday to discuss the government's involvement in addressing the matter.

In light of the widespread effects of frequent power outages, Kester Hutson, President of GCCI, told Guyana Chronicle that they were satisfied with the talks held with Minister Indar.

"Everyone in Guyana is affected by GPL, but through this meeting, we were better able to understand why and what's causing these problems. Commercial businesses as well as residents have the same issues and are frustrated, but businesses are losing more, especially with the low shedding," Hutson said.

Despite the understandable public frustration with GPL and the current state of affairs, he is imploring the nation to display patience as the government is diligently working to ensure the country has an upgraded grid capable of handling the load.

"We are all frustrated, but let us try and be understanding in this situation. We are living now in a country that is rapidly developing in every aspect of in-



Minister within the Ministry of Public Works Deodat Indar

frastructure, businesses, and other developments, and that will most naturally put pressure on our current system. We had to also consider the damages that are caused to the GPL power lines, but we are happy that Minister Indar has explained the situation to us better so that we can fully understand what is happening," he related.

According to Hutson, Minister Indar explained that the People's Progressive Party Government (PPP/C) in-

vested US\$27.5 million in 2022 to purchase 17 generator sets, which will generate a total of 28.9 megawatts of power.

Additionally, he stated that the engines will reach Guyana on November 22 and are anticipated to enhance GPL's generation capability on December 15. While the nation eagerly anticipates the 2025 culmination of the 300 MW gas-to-energy initiative, the minister conveyed that GPL is already strategising

to tackle forecasted demand surges for 2024.

Hutson emphasised, "Once again, we would like to express our gratitude to Minister Indar and the government of Guyana for ensuring that we are back to normalcy by mid-December. It is easy to assume what isn't happening and what is, but we are better informed, and we appreciate it."

Speaking at a press conference at the GPL boardroom in Kingston recently, Minister Indar said: "Many times, persons say that the management at GPL is incompetent because of challenges such as blackouts or other known shortcomings. I believe these individuals are qualified, and they know their job. These issues we are experiencing are way beyond the control of management."

In addition, he mentioned that GPL has encountered heightened obstacles due to power supplies and wires being harmed, frequently interrupted by traffic accidents. To satisfy the rising demand, the utility company is presently reviewing unsolicited offers and predicting an average peak demand of 236 MW by 2024.

Minister Indar emphasised the importance of the meeting with GCCI, as it grants business communities a glimpse into the government's approach to resolving electricity problems in Guyana.

Scores of Guyanese benefit from NIS' NY outreach

RELIEF has graced scores of Guyanese in New York because of the three-day outreach by the National Insurance Scheme (NIS) to resolve any outstanding issues.

This outreach was done in fulfilment of a recent commitment made by President Dr. Irfaan Ali. It was hosted in New York, United States of America, from November 4 to 6, 2023.

"I'm happy that Minister Ashni Singh [decided] to do an outreach here in Queens [New York]," said one of the beneficiaries.

Further, Bernadette Smart-Davis lauded the approach, and was elated that help was being provided.

Meanwhile, another beneficiary expressed relief about the approach, and said that the outreach was evidence of how much the president cares for Guyanese, no matter where they are.

The three-day outreach to the US was led by the General Manager of the NIS Holly Greaves. She said that the objective of the outreach was to listen to persons and get an understanding of the issues that are affecting Guyanese in the Diaspora.

These issues will be resolved before December 31, 2023, according to her.



Scene from the NIS outreach in New York

The outreach formed part of the government's proactive efforts to resolve pending cases within the NIS, and provided an opportunity for Guyanese in the Diaspora to interact directly with the Scheme to have their issues addressed, and questions answered.

Only recently, President Ali announced the establishment of a specialised secretariat, and a projectised format within the NIS to expedite the resolution process of pending claims.

"I wanted to address this issue; this is an issue that we want to fix, and we want to make every effort, in a specialised, projectised manner to get this fixed before the end of the year," the Head of State emphasised.

Senior Finance Minister Dr. Ashni Singh, while delivering remarks recently at the Scheme's 54th Anniversary ceremony, appealed to the staff to raise the standards of their operation, and to deliver efficient services to ensure that all NIS matters are dealt with

in a timely and professional manner.

Dr. Singh also urged the NIS to recommit themselves to ensuring a more efficient and respected entity, going forward. The minister further said that the government is firmly committed to the Scheme, and to ensuring its viability.

A priority of the government when it assumed office in 2020 was to address the complaints received from contributors to the Scheme, with pending claims at the time amounting to 14,000, as at November 2020.

In support of this effort, the government, at Cabinet level, undertook a series of nationwide outreach sessions that took the services of the NIS to the citizens, with 12 sessions held in Regions Two (Pomeroon-Supenaam), Three (Essequibo Islands-West Demerara), Four (Demerara-Mahaica), Five (Mahaica-Berbice), Six (East Berbice-Corentyne) and 10 (Upper Demerara-Berbice).

Over 1,300 persons across the country have benefitted from these sessions, and many of them are in receipt of Old Age Pension after waiting for a number of years. Additionally, all inherited 14,000 pending claims have been resolved.

Guyana Group supports global calls to lift US Embargo on Cuba

THE Guyana-Cuba Solidarity Movement (GCSM) has joined the chorus of voices at the United Nations General Assembly, urging the United States to lift its longstanding economic, commercial, and financial embargo on Cuba.

GCSM President, Halim Khan, emphasised the urgent need for the removal of these crippling restrictions that have been in place for more than six decades.

The Cuba-sponsored resolution, which calls for the elimination of the embargo and the removal of Cuba from the U.S. list of state sponsors of terrorism, received overwhelming support from 187 countries. Israel and the United States were the only nations to vote against the resolution, while Ukraine chose to abstain.

Speakers at the General Assembly highlighted the severe impact of the embargo on Cuba's economy, development, and access to essential resources, including medicine and food. They voiced their strong support for ending the embargo and emphasised the importance of fostering better relations between the United States and Cuba.

Decades of appeals and mobilisation have underlined the urgency of lift-

ing the Cuban blockade, given the immense suffering and harm it has caused to the Cuban people. Khan stressed that this embargo affects not only Cuba's economy but also its human development and access to fundamental resources, making it a matter of human rights and dignity.

He explained that the international community has consistently called for the removal of these restrictions, and the consequences for Cuba's ability to acquire basic necessities and conduct international banking operations are deeply concerning. "Cuba, known for extending its friendship and solidarity to nations in need, now seeks support from the world in ending this unjust embargo."

The humanitarian and economic concerns related to the Cuban embargo continue to draw attention, with a growing call for international solidarity to bring an end to this long-standing issue.

Khan shared the global sentiments of many, stressing the necessity of lifting the embargo and allowing Cuba to fully engage with the international community on equal terms.

"It is a plea for justice, dignity, and the right to access essential resources, as



GCSM President Halim Khan

the world watches and waits for the global community," the GCSM President United States to heed the calls of the highlighted.

Region One households get solar panels

MORE households from various communities in the Mabaruma sub-district, Region One now have access to solar power, as 499 solar photovoltaic (PV) home systems were distributed over the weekend.

Some 38 households in Koberimo received solar panels with accessories; 30 in Sacred Heart, 79 in Smith Creek, 25 in St Dominic's, 96 in St Anslem, 55 in Three Brothers, 48 in Tobago, 28 in Unity Square, and Hobo Hill received 100 solar systems.

Toshao of St Dominic's Doreen Fraser expressed that the distribution of these panels means a lot to her community, as it will be utilised for many purposes.

"My people have been waiting for it. My residents would be happy for the rest of the year," Toshao Fraser told the Department of Public Information (DPI).

She added that it is wonderful that government continues to deliver on its manifesto promises.

Richard Anthony from Unity Square shared, "We don't have the current system unless we use generator. Now, the solar panel will give everybody light in the village... They will feel happy."

Beneficiary Dellon Williams expressed similar sentiments. "This solar panel would make a real difference. It will bring development, especially, to the children who will have to study late at nights especially when there is no

electricity."

During the distribution exercise, Minister of Housing and Water, Collin Croal reaffirmed that government continues to implement policies and programmes while investing huge sums to ensure that Amerindian communities continue to transform.

"We want every village to develop but also to have economic impact... This a massive investment across the country. It is intended to ensure that the opportunities that are created for those on the coastland are provided to you in the hinterland," Minister Croal empha-



Minister of Housing Collin Croal

sised.

He also noted that these communities would benefit further from the Local Carbon Development Strategy (LCDS) funds, presidential grants, among other initiatives.

The distribution is part of the government's project to provide 30,000 solar panels to riverine and hinterland communities in order to close the gap between the hinterland and the coast.

The minister was joined by Regional Chairman, Brentnol Ashley and other officials. (DPI)



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Preity Zinta: awarded for her remarkable contributions to Bollywood

Preity Zinta to get honorary doctorate from Birmingham University

A Bollywood actress is set to receive an honorary doctorate in recognition of her contribution to the industry.

Preity G Zinta will be presented with the degree from Birmingham City University (BCU) in India next year.

The 48-year-old is also set to join West Midlands mayor Andy Street in the city on 4 and 5 November as part of Diwali celebrations.

Mr Street said he was "excited" she would lead celebrations, in her first UK appearance in more than a decade.

Her visit to Birmingham coincided with the city's India Film Festival which closes on Friday.

Ms Zinta's forthcoming doctorate was a testament to her "remarkable contributions" to "Bollywood and her philanthropic endeavours", Mr Street said.

"I am absolutely delighted to welcome Preity G Zinta to Birmingham and our vibrant region."

Professor David Mba, vice chancellor of BCU, said he was "thrilled" and hoped to work with Ms Zinta to explore "exciting opportunities" spanning from Indian cinema to entrepreneurship.

"This is an exceptional moment for our dedicated staff, aspiring students, and for the dynamic city of Birmingham and the wider West Midlands region," he said.



ARIES (March 21 - April 20): You may feel a bit irritated at something that is going on in your neighborhood but don't waste time brooding about it. The injustices of the world will still be there tomorrow as they were yesterday and are today. Focus only on what makes you happy.

TAURUS (April 21 - May 21): Some people will disapprove of what you are up to but you are in no mood to take their criticisms to heart, still less to actually change your ways. You believe in yourself 100 per cent and if others cannot see you are special they must be blind.

GEMINI (May 22 - June 21): Make it a priority to rearrange your schedule so you have more time for the things that matter most to you. Some of your work colleagues may be unhappy that they have to do more for themselves but a bit of hard work won't hurt them too much.

CANCER (June 22 - July 23): You know beyond a shadow of a doubt that you have what it takes to be the best at what you do and with so much cosmic activity working in your favor you won't hesitate to strive for success. Nothing is beyond you if you want it enough.

LEO (July 24 - Aug. 23): Cosmic activity in the domestic area of your chart will encourage you to make changes that on most other occasions you would avoid for fear of stirring up opposition. You don't care if others agree with you or not, you care only that they do as you say.

VIRGO (Aug. 24 - Sept. 23): Your way with words will get you into some interesting situations over the next few days but make sure you know how to get out of them too if the need arises! Maybe you should temper your sense of adventure with a large dose of common sense.

LIBRA (Sept. 24 - Oct. 23): You appear to be in one of your all-or-nothing moods at the moment and while it might take you a long way on the work front it could cause some trouble at home. Try to recognize that other people's needs are not always the same as your own.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24 - Nov. 22): The whole world could be lined up against you now and you would still back yourself to win. With that kind of confidence at your disposal there is precious little you cannot accomplish, so set your sights high then aim to fly even higher.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 23 - Dec. 21): It may be true that a friend or loved one is keeping something from you but don't let them see that it is frustrating you. Act as if you don't have a care in the world and before you know it they will let you in on the secret.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 - Jan. 20): This is a good time to get involved in group activities of a creative nature and an even better time to sign up to a cause that aims to make the world a better place. Before 2023 is over it will have become a central part of your life.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 21 - Feb. 19): You will come face-to-face today with the kind of situation you usually go out of your way to avoid. This time though there will be no escape – you must confront what is going on and do what you can to transform something bad into something good.

PISCES (Feb. 20 - Mar. 20): If you want to change your life for the better now is the time to stop daydreaming about it and get down to some serious work. Plan your transformation with care between now and the end of the year, then really go for it in 2024.



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Guyana on Venezuelan claim to Essequibo: Our position is non-negotiable

MAINTAINING Guyana's ownership of the Essequibo territory, Prime Minister Brigadier (Ret'd) Mark Phillips said Guyana's stance on the border controversy with Venezuela is non-negotiable.

The Guyanese leader joined several of his government and opposition colleagues in defending the country's border at an extraordinary sitting of the National Assembly on Monday.

PM Phillips, who opened his speech in Spanish, asserted that Essequibo belongs to Guyana.

He further went on to say that Venezuela's claim to two-thirds of Guyana's territory is unequivocal, and with the Bolivarian Republic continuously issuing threats, the time for dialogue or action outside of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) has long passed.

"The matter is before the International Court of Justice; time for negotiation is over. Mr. Speaker, there'll be no need for any dialogue with Nicolás Maduro. There will be no meeting; not now, between Maduro and President Dr. Irfaan Ali [on this topic]," he affirmed.

Venezuela has continuously laid claim to Guyana's Essequibo Region, despite the 1899 Arbitral Award, which has established a "full, perfect and final" settlement of the boundary between Guyana and Venezuela.

In its most recent attempt to thwart the Rule of Law, the Nicolás Maduro Government plans to put forward a referendum on Guyana's Essequibo.

However, the Guyana Government has sought the intervention of the World Court. A hearing into this matter is set for next week, while an impending case on the border controversy itself is still ongoing in the Court.

"Our history is lined with the origins of our Indigenous Peoples who have inhabited our lands for generations, and the subsequent arrival of the Africans, Indians, Chinese, Por-



Prime Minister Brigadier (Ret'd) Mark Phillips and Opposition Leader Aubrey Norton

tuguese, and Europeans as a result of the Atlantic Slave Trade. Mr. Speaker, our sovereignty over this territory means everything to our people, whose ancestors made Guyana their home. Our position is non-negotiable, and this is a fundamental right that all nations must respect," Prime Minister Phillips said.

Other officials have since spoken out, saying that Venezuela's claims and increased military activity at the border will have grave consequences on the country's Indigenous population.

The claims, which PM Phillips has described as baseless, have seen the increased division of not only two nations that could build together but also their peoples.

"We're witnessing decades of division among our people, resulting in social fragmentation stemming from

contradictory narratives. This, in turn, has adverse effects on economic development and investments between our neighbouring nations; it is a conflict that incites geopolitical tension that can affect regional stability and international relations," the Prime Minister said.

He maintained that both Venezuelans and Guyanese are collateral damage in the midst of the controversy.

Meanwhile, throwing his support behind the government, Opposition Leader Aubrey Norton said: "Our ancestors; those who were here before Columbus; those who came from Europe, Africa, and India fought hard, in difficult circumstances to create a human landscape which allowed us, over more than 350 years, to make Guyana what it is today... It is our inheritance, and we will do everything to

protect it."

Despite their political differences, he said that both the government and the opposition have taken a united stance in rejecting Venezuela's claims. Testimony of this was the successful passage of a Motion reaffirming Guyana's position on the matter. The Motion was tabled in the National Assembly by Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Minister Hugh Todd.

"Politically, we have fought for years, but one reality we should be proud of is that throughout the history of our country, we have always been united on the Guyana- Venezuela territorial controversy," Norton said.

While maintaining Guyana's respect for international law, Norton said: "Venezuela always comes up with some scheme to try to get our territory," so the government has to examine other avenues of safeguarding the country's border.

He further called for a proper registration system for Venezuelan migrants who enter Guyana across the border, as well as increased awareness of the controversy.

"The territorial controversy must be in our schools, studied by our academics at the University, must be part of the discussions of the Trade Unions, NGOs, the Private Sector, and within every segment of our society, regardless of which Party is in power," Norton said, noting that he does not foresee Venezuela moving away from its claims, even if the ICJ rules in favour of Guyana.

Norton also suggested that the Guyana Defence Force (GDF) be recapitalised.

No time for silence: Kissoon

AS members of the National Assembly on Monday rose to support a motion for the House to reaffirm Guyana's recognition and acceptance of the 1899 Arbitral Award as a full, perfect and final settlement of the boundary between Guyana and Venezuela, several members called for the international community to speak up in this regard and show their support.

One such member was Deputy Speaker, Dr Asha Kissoon, who in her maiden address on a motion in the Assembly, said that the issue cannot go on and is one of urgency that should be treated as such.

"An issue such as this requires us to stand united and I must say that I am very happy to see that government and opposition are working together on this. We as the parliamentary joiinder also lend our voices and our support," she said.

Further, Dr. Kissoon expressed gratitude to international partners who have thus far added their voices to the

matter in support of Guyana. She, however, used the opportunity to call on others to lend their voices as Guyana stands on the side of the Rule of Law.

"There is no time for silence. We require our international partners to speak out, to speak up and to support Guyana as we stand on the side of the law," she said.

The Deputy Speaker added that Guyana will continue along the legal lines and will not back down on this matter.

Meanwhile, also calling on the international community to support Guyana was Leader of the Alliance for Change, Khemraj Ramjattan, who said that he hopes that the government with the support of the opposition will ensure that the diplomatic work that is done meets that target of ensuring that Guyana can garner the support of everyone in the world on this matter.

He added: "We are one step there almost because we have done the international Rule of Law method of carrying it to the International Court of Justice..."

Surinamese doctors go on strike for better wages

Suriname Health Minister Amar Ramadhin says he is surprised that medical doctors associated with the Association of Regional Health Service Doctors (VRA) have initiated a strike over salary increases and the late payment for their services.

The striking doctors have taken a firm stance, deciding to limit their services to only emergency cases. This measure underlines their frustration with the persistent delays in payment from the State Health Insurance Fund (SZF).

With financial pressures mounting, the physicians have expressed their dissatisfaction and the difficulty these delays cause in fulfilling their own financial responsibilities.

Amidst growing pressure, the doctors have demanded the release of their overdue October salaries by midnight on Friday.

Failure to comply, they warn, will

lead to intensified strike actions.

However, health Minister Amar Ramadhin has rejected the doctors' demands for a 150 per cent salary hike as unrealistic and unfeasible.

Ramadhin maintains that the demands made by the VRA are not tenable, emphasizing that it is the Regional Health Service (RGD) that should be intervening, not his office.

Despite the deadlock, Ramadhin insists that since negotiations are still in progress, the VRA has no grounds to embark on a strike, a view supported by other officials in the public health sector.

The public health administrator has echoed the minister's sentiment, pointing to the ongoing negotiations as a reason the VRA should abstain from any strike action.

The administration appears to be holding firm to the process, emphasizing dialogue over disruption, even as



Strike action in Suriname

the medical practitioners signal their absence of a swift resolution. readiness to escalate their protest in the

CARIBBEAN ROUNDUP

T&T Communications firm hit by data breach

In a significant cybersecurity incident, Trinidad & Tobago's Telecommunications Services (TSTT) has experienced a severe data breach. The breach has resulted in the exposure of personal data belonging to over a million citizens, including the nation's Prime Minister, Dr. Keith Rowley.

Critical personal identifiers such as Dr. Rowley's identification card, driver's permit, and passport numbers were among the information compromised.

The breach at TSTT has led to 6 gigabytes of personal data being disseminated on the dark web.

This data encompasses 1.2 million names and has alarmingly been downloaded more than 13,000 times, raising significant privacy and security concerns.



In response to the breach, Marvin Gonzales, the Public Utilities Minister, has taken a firm stance, calling for an independent investigation into the cyberattack.

TSTT said some of the data had been accessed from a legacy system, which is no longer being used but contains data that is, in many instances, no longer valid.

Jamaica PM's office hit by cyberattack

The Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) in Jamaica says it has been the subject of a cyberattack.

The OPM says a team of cybersecurity experts from the Cyber Incident Response Team (Ja-CIRT) and the Major Organised Crime and Anti-Corruption Agency (MOCA), is assessing the extent of the attack.

The OPM is seeking to assure the public that all efforts are being made to protect the personal information of its staff and stakeholders. The OPM said it takes the security of its systems and data very seriously and is working diligently to address the situation.

The OPM also said the Government's operations have not been affected by this incident.

Caribbean leaders discuss cybersecurity with OAS

The Organization of American States (OAS) says it has collaborated with the California-based Cisco Systems, Inc. in conducting the second Regional Meeting of the Cybersecurity Innovations Councils (CICs) in which participants from the public and private sectors, civil society, and academia from the Americas, including the Caribbean, discussed the promotion of innovation, awareness-raising among citizens and dissemination of best practices in cybersecurity.

Cisco Systems, Inc., commonly known as Cisco, is a multinational digital communications technology conglomerate headquartered in San Jose, California.

On Friday, the OAS said the two-day meeting, held at its headquarters, consisted of a series of panels and keynote talks where experts discussed the state of cybersecurity in the region and how to work collaboratively to improve the capacities of member states in terms of cybersecurity.

"Representatives from the private sector and the implementation community, shared their experiences with the aim of finding synergies among multiple stakeholders to help countries prevent, respond to, and recover from cyberattacks," said the OAS.

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Golding, Hanna call for resignation of JA Foreign Minister over Gaza

President of the People's National Party, Jamaica's opposition party, Mark Golding, and spokesperson on Foreign Affairs Lisa Hanna have called for the resignation of Foreign Affairs Minister Kamina Johnson Smith following Jamaica's absence from a United Nations vote which called for a "humanitarian truce" in the Gaza Strip.

In a recent radio interview, Hanna questioned why the government "continues to hide behind a cloak of mystery" in relation to the ongoing war between Israel and Hamas, where some 10,000 Palestinians have been killed.

"This particular resolution was just asking for something very simple – protect the human rights and legality; give the humanitarian ceasefire to help the people during this very difficult time. And we did not vote for it. We were missing," she said.

"I don't know how you can have that on your hands. And quite frankly, I think the minister needs to perhaps do the honorable thing. If you can miss such a serious vote, perhaps you no longer need to be the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade. I am calling on her to resign over this," Hanna declared.

Her sentiments were echoed by the party leader Golding on Sunday, who called Jamaica's no-show at the UNGA vote "a disgrace."

"Over 3,000 children have died in Palestine because of the bombing and the blockade and the withholding of



Lisa Hanna and Mark Golding

basic necessities of life from the people, and the Jamaican government refused to vote on that in accordance with what CARICOM decided to do [as well as] the vast majority of countries in the world.

"I say it is a disgrace, and Comrade Lisa Hanna has called for the resignation of the minister of foreign affairs for what has happened in this instance, and I say, 'time come' for that too," Golding said

during a PNP meeting.

On October 27, a total of 120 countries voted in favor of the non-binding United Nations resolution which called for a "humanitarian truce" in Gaza.

Some 12 CARICOM states, including Trinidad, Barbados, Antigua, Bahamas, and St. Lucia voted in favor. Haiti abstained, while Jamaica did not cast a vote.

Following backlash from Ja-

maicans locally and overseas, as well as other global citizens, Minister Kamina Johnson-Smith clarified that a technical cross in communication led to Jamaica's representative not voting. She said Jamaica wants a 'peaceful resolution' to the war, despite not casting a vote.

Countries and humanitarian groups around the world have marched in protest of the Israeli attacks and called for an immediate ceasefire.

Jamaicans march in support of Palestine

On Saturday, scores of Jamaicans took part in a 'March for Palestine,' in protest of the ongoing war between Israel and Hamas.

The protest, which was organized by the Left Alliance for National Democracy and Socialism (LANDS) movement in Jamaica, was held in downtown Kingston to show solidarity with the state and people of Palestine.

LANDS also had specific requests from the Jamaican government including that they disclose state deals with Israel, an official condemnation of Israel's actions, to cut diplomatic ties with Israel, and to officially recognize the state of Palestine.

The Jamaican government has come under fire recently for its absence from the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) vote which called for a resolution.

A total of 120 countries voted in favor of the non-binding resolution which called for the "humanitarian truce" in Gaza. Some 12 CARICOM states, including Trinidad, Barbados, Antigua, Bahamas, and St. Lucia voted in favor. Haiti abstained, while Jamaica did not cast a vote.

But Minister of Foreign Affairs Kamina Johnson-Smith later said Jamaica wants a 'peaceful resolution' to the war, despite not casting a vote.



A scene from Saturday's protest march in Jamaica

Saturday's march is just one of hundreds that have taken place across the globe to show solidarity with Palestine and demand an end to the war.

The armed conflict between Hamas-led Palestinian militant groups and Israeli military forces began on October 7 with a Hamas attack on southern Israel that killed 1,400 Israelis and took 200 others hostage in a single day.

Israeli military forces retaliated with extensive strikes against targets in the Gaza Strip. The death toll from Israeli bombardments in the Gaza Strip has risen to 9,500, with well over half of them women and children. UNICEF described the war as a "graveyard" for children. Human rights groups have said Israel is collectively punishing Palestinians for "the actions of a few."

T&T students welcome chance at studying at US, Canadian schools

“We want our students to be able to dream big and see the opportunities they have for the future.”

This from teachers who brought students to the 20th annual College Fair at Hilton hotel in Trinidad on Saturday.

The event was jointly hosted by the US Embassy and the Canadian High Commission ends today.

There were 22 schools present from the US and 32 from Canada. And estimated 8,000 people were expected to visit the fair.

Speaking to reporters, Malabar Secondary teacher Antonia Wall said she wanted her students to get the opportunities she did after attending the college fair in 1995.

“It was because of that fair I attended a university in Florida. That’s where I met my school and the spark flew. The community they came from is a rough area and we wanted to stir in them the desire to dream big, expect more. So I believe by taking students to a college fair, just like it did for me, it will stir that on the inside for them.”

She said they had received donations for transportation and snack boxes, and she was grateful to those who gave the students the opportunity to have a brighter future.

Fyzabad Composite School teacher Raeshad Ali said he brought 20 of his form five and six students.

“I brought my students to the College Fair because I thought it would be a great opportunity for them to get to

know other universities and programmes they offer, that could align to the areas they want to do in the future.”

The students present said they were there to get information on various topics. One girl said she was interested in computer science and wanted to find out what programmes were being offered, and what the requirements were. A boy said he was interested in engineering, and had attended the fair in 2022 as well to see what options were available. Another girl said she was there to expose herself to opportunities outside of TT.

Chelsea James, 16, from Malabar Secondary said the students were interested in seeing what the colleges in the two countries were like.

“We want to find out about the different types of colleges, and to see what we could learn about how to get into those colleges. I want to get into more material types of colleges, on the coasts, because I want to get into the Coast Guard.”

One student said he wanted to study psychology outside of TT and hoped to come back to do something to help the country, although he wasn’t exactly sure what that would be. Another said he had completed his undergraduate degree in physics at UWI, and wanted to do postgraduate work abroad. He said he came to the college fair for information he couldn’t find on the websites of the colleges he was interested in.

Fifteen-year-old Zadi Pascall said she was still in form three and came to



Canadian High Commissioner Arif Keshani (l) at the College Fair in Trinidad

get an insight into what the process was like.

“I’d like to see what colleges there are and to get an idea for my future. I’m looking at the medical field, I’m doing chemistry, physics and biology, the sciences.”

Presentation College student Matthew Indardao said he wanted to learn what scholarships were available and what testing scores he needed to get into them. He was interested in computer science and wanted to go to university in Texas.

US Ambassador Candace A Bond said informational sessions on how to apply to schools and how to fund entry, among others, would be available on the embassy’s website.

“It’s a great opportunity to learn about studying abroad. Coming to study in the US makes sense as you have shared cultural ties, history, you are native English speakers, and the rigour of the TT educational system prepares students to be able to study in the US. The colleges here are of all types, from community colleges to research institutions.

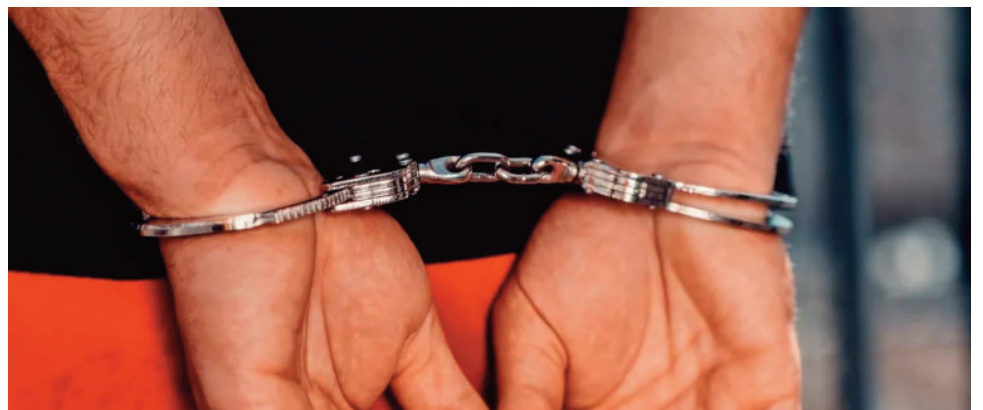
“The fact that you have invested in the educational system here for so long means you have some great students who are competitive for the US higher educational system.”

Canadian High Commissioner Arif Keshani echoed Bond’s statements, saying it was no secret that students from TT are truly high-calibre.

80 arrested in lottery scam crackdown in Jamaica

In a concerted effort to combat lottery scamming, Jamaican law enforcement agencies have detained over 80 suspects through focused initiatives this year.

These operations have not only disrupted the scamming activities but have also led to the confiscation of various items associated with the illicit practice.



Reports are that the assertive actions in regions such as St. James and Westmoreland have made a significant impact on local crime figures.

Assistant Commissioner Clifford Chambers shared with Radio Jamaica News that St. James, in particular, has observed a notable reduction in major criminal activity, with a decrease of 18 per cent compared to the previous year’s data.

This downtrend encompasses a 7 per cent reduction in murder rates and a 9 per cent decrease in shooting incidents.

Chambers said that Westmoreland mirrors this trend with a sharp decline in violent crimes. The area has wit-

nessed a considerable decrease in murders and a similar reduction in shootings by 9 per cent.

The ripple effect of the targeted operations against lottery scamming extends beyond the immediate arrests.

Assistant Commissioner Clifford Chambers highlighted an 11 per cent overall reduction in major crimes within the Area One Police Division.

This equates to over 107 fewer incidents than what was reported in the preceding year, signaling a significant breakthrough in law enforcement efforts. These results mark a stark contrast to the previous year’s figures, where 68 individuals were apprehended for lottery scamming.

Caricom agrees to start exploring trade with Africa

T&T MINISTER of Trade and Industry Paula Gopee-Scoon led a delegation to Guyana for the second AfriCaribbean Trade and Investment Forum, in Georgetown, Guyana.

The trade minister met with executives of Afrieximbank on the bank's work in the region and potential opportunities for collaboration in the future.

The visit and the participation in the forum were part of Trinidad and Tobago's efforts to explore trade opportunities for trade with Africa.

During the meeting with Afrieximbank, exploratory discussions on potential trade and investment opportunities were held with Dr Amany Asfour, president of the Africa Business Council and CEO of Evergreen Egypt United, on fish farming, processing and trade.



T&T Minister of Trade Paula Gopee-Scoon

At the forum, Guyanese president Dr Irfaan Ali highlighted its importance as a space for the two regions to discuss solutions to the challenge of integrating and trading. He said regional governments were ready to facilitate and challenged the private sector to come together to unblock the problem of transport between regions.

Barbadian Prime Minister Mia Mottley and St Lucian Prime Minister Philip J Pierre both said there were many benefits that would come out of deeper collaboration between the regions, and Dr Carla Natalie Barnett, Secretary-General of the Caricom Secretariat, said while trade is a mere US\$500 million, she was encouraged by the many ITC studies which demonstrated significant potential for trade on both sides.

Answers sought after JA stops trading in TT\$

Trinidad business groups on Monday asked why the Bank of Jamaica (BOJ) took a decision last Friday to temporarily suspend the exchange of TT dollars at its banking counter.

In a statement on November 3, the BOJ announced the temporary suspension would take effect from Monday.

The BOJ said it was owing to a review of the existing arrangement for the repatriation of TT dollars.

The suspension will remain in effect until further notice.

The bank advised people seeking to exchange TT dollars to take note of the development and plan their currency exchange accordingly.

In a further statement on Monday, the BOJ said the temporary suspension was owing to the fact that the TT Central Bank "to which this currency is repatriated, has suspended arrangement for the repatriation of TT dollars until further advised."

The BOJ promised to advise of any further developments.

T&T Central Bank officials were unavailable for comment on Monday.

Greater San Fernando Chamber of Commerce president Kiran Singh said the development came as a surprise to the business community.

"This decision, regardless of how temporary, can have an immediate negative impact on confidence in the TT dollar."

Singh said, "Although significant trade payments are made in US dollars, if reasons are not forthcoming as to why such a decision was taken, it can have further deleterious effects on our economy."

He added, "Clarification should be sought at the inter-governmental levels on why such a sudden decision was implemented."



The Bank of Jamaica: suspended trading in TT dollars until further notice

In a statement, the TT Chamber of Industry and Commerce said the matter needed "further explanation and clarification."

While it did not have sufficient information on the matter, the chamber was certain that Government would contact its counterparts in Jamaica to resolve the matter.

The chamber respected the decision of the BOJ as the Jamaican government's banker and financial agent.

In a statement, the Confederation

of Regional Business Chambers (CRBC) also called for clarification on the matter.

The CRBC wondered if the temporary suspension was owing to a large number of local businesses attempting to purchase US dollars, by using TT dollars to purchase Jamaica dollars at a competitive rate "since this currency is in free float."

The CRBC was concerned whether the development could have implications for Caricom intra-regional trade

and the workings of the Caricom Single Market and Economy (CSME).

CRBC president Vivek Charan said, "I am hoping the decision by the BOJ does not affect our trading relations with Jamaica nor the balance of Caricom as a whole."

He suggested that the Prime Minister and Finance Minister Colm Imbert hold bilateral talks with their Jamaican government counterparts to find "an immediate amicable solution to resolve this problem."

West Indies spinner Sunil Narine announces international retirement

Trinidad and Tobago and West Indies star spinner Sunil Narine announced his retirement from international cricket on Sunday.

In an Instagram post, Narine, 35, brought to an end his decorated international career with West Indies, which spanned eight years.

The right-arm, mystery spinner also confirmed that the ongoing CG United Super50 Cup will be his last for TT as he continues to expand his lucrative T20 franchise career across the globe.

“I appreciate it has been over four years since I last played for West Indies, but today I am announcing my retirement from international cricket,” Narine wrote in his post.

“Publicly I am a man of few words but privately there are a few people who have given me unwavering support throughout my career and helped me realise my dream of representing West Indies and to you I express my deepest gratitude.”

He last played for WI in a T20 international in August 2019. Narine made his debut in a One-Day International match in December 2011 and went on to

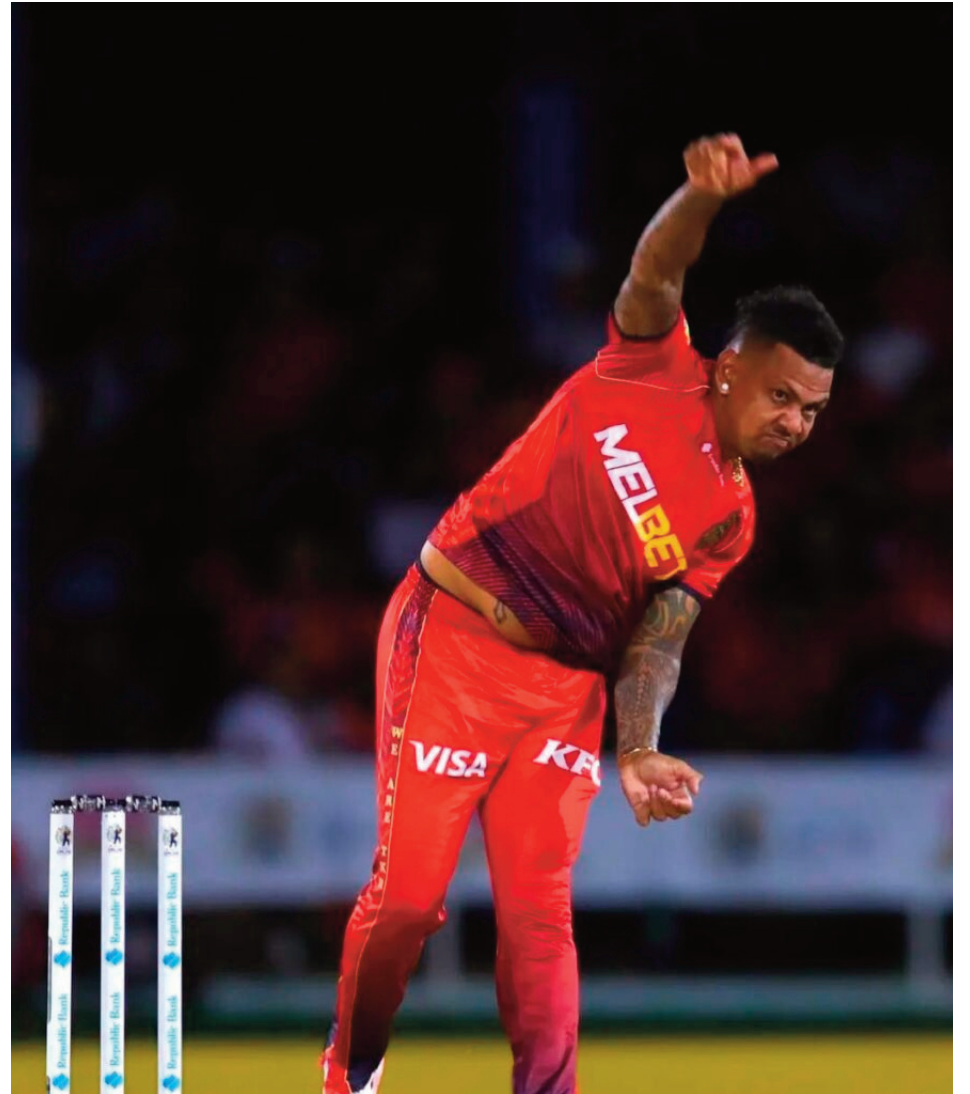
represent the Windies in 122 international matches, which included six Tests, 65 ODIs and 51 T20s.

Altogether, he has 165 (21 Test, 92 ODIs and 52 T20Is) international wickets for the maroon. His last Test was in 2013 while he had not played an ODI after 2016. Narine helped West Indies to their first T20 World Cup title in 2012, a first World Cup win across formats since 1979. In that competition, Narine scalped nine wickets.

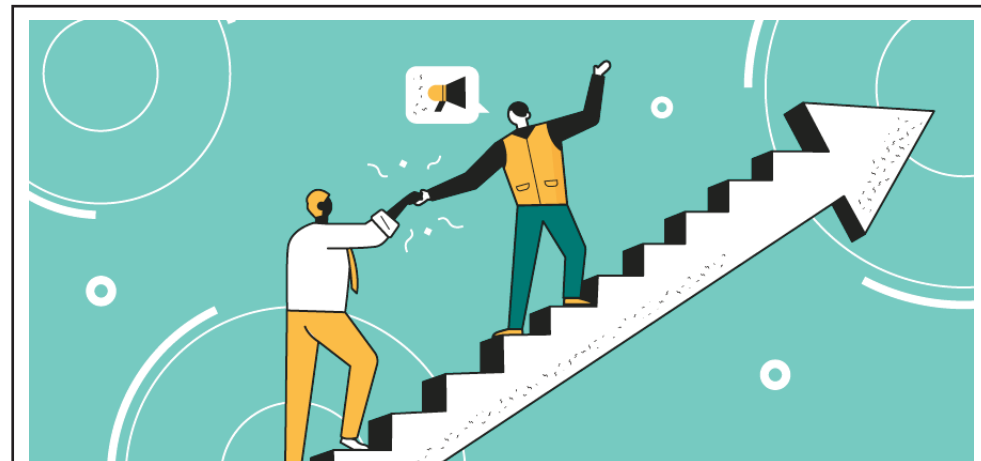
Domestically, he played for Queen’s Park Cricket Club. Narine also has 65 first class wickets, 182 List A scalps and 525 T20 wickets to his name.

Reflecting on his illustrious career, the Knights Riders’s franchise representative thanked his family, and in particular, his father, the late Shadeed Narine, for inspiring and encouraging him to keep striving for excellence in the gentleman’s game.

“There are a few people who have given me unwavering support throughout my career and helped me realise my dream of representing West Indies and to you, I express my deepest gratitude,” he added.



Sunil Narine: ends decorated career with West Indies



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- * GINEP
- * GOLDEN APPLE
- * AIWARA



FRESH ONTARIO MEAT

LAMB * GOAT * CHICKEN * DUCK
RED HEN * ROOSTER

ALL MEATS ARE 100% HALAL



AND MANY MORE
AVAILABLE

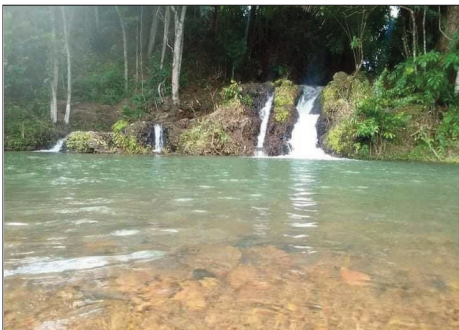
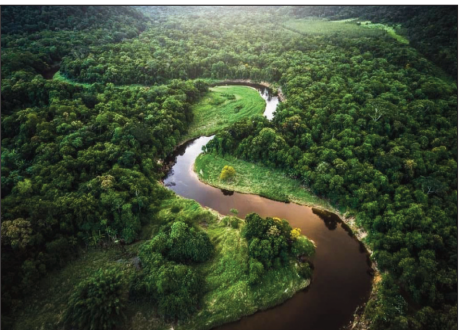
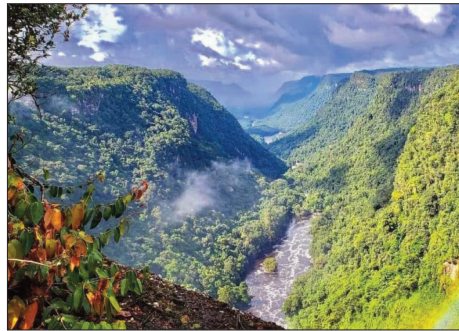
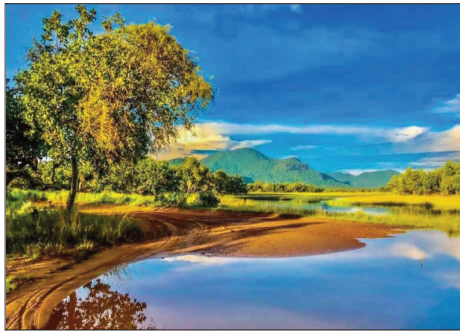
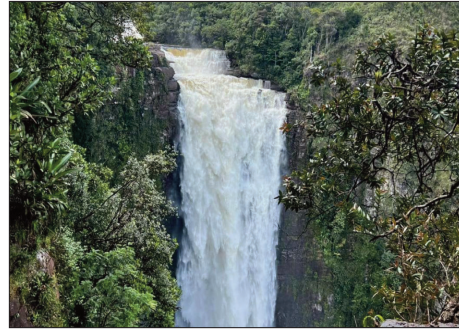
FRESH & FROZEN SEAFOOD

- GILLBAKA
- GREY SNAPPER
- CATFISH
- BANGAMARY
- BUTTERFISH
- HASSA
- WHITE BELLY SHRIMP
- BLACK SHRIMP
- CRAB
- SMOKE FISH



3160 EGLINTON AVENUE (1 BLOCK WEST OF MARKHAM ROAD)

ONE GUYANA NOW - 2024 CALENDAR



| JANUARY | | | | | | |
|---------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| Su | M | Tu | W | Th | F | Sa |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 |
| 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 |
| 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 |
| 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | | | |

| FEBRUARY | | | | | | |
|----------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| Su | M | Tu | W | Th | F | Sa |
| | | | | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 |
| 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 |
| 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | | |

| MARCH | | | | | | |
|-------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| Su | M | Tu | W | Th | F | Sa |
| | | | | | 1 | 2 |
| 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
| 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 |
| 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 |
| 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 |
| 31 | | | | | | |

| APRIL | | | | | | |
|-------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| Su | M | Tu | W | Th | F | Sa |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 |
| 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 |
| 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 |
| 28 | 29 | 30 | | | | |

| MAY | | | | | | |
|-----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| Su | M | Tu | W | Th | F | Sa |
| | | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 |
| 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 |
| 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 |
| 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | |

| JUNE | | | | | | |
|------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| Su | M | Tu | W | Th | F | Sa |
| | | | | | | 1 |
| 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 |
| 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 |
| 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 |
| 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 |
| 30 | | | | | | |

| JULY | | | | | | |
|------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| Su | M | Tu | W | Th | F | Sa |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 |
| 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 |
| 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 |
| 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | | | |

| AUGUST | | | | | | |
|--------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| Su | M | Tu | W | Th | F | Sa |
| | | | | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 |
| 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 |
| 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 |

| SEPTEMBER | | | | | | |
|-----------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| Su | M | Tu | W | Th | F | Sa |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 |
| 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 |
| 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 |
| 29 | 30 | | | | | |

| OCTOBER | | | | | | |
|---------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| Su | M | Tu | W | Th | F | Sa |
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 |
| 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 |
| 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 |
| 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | | |

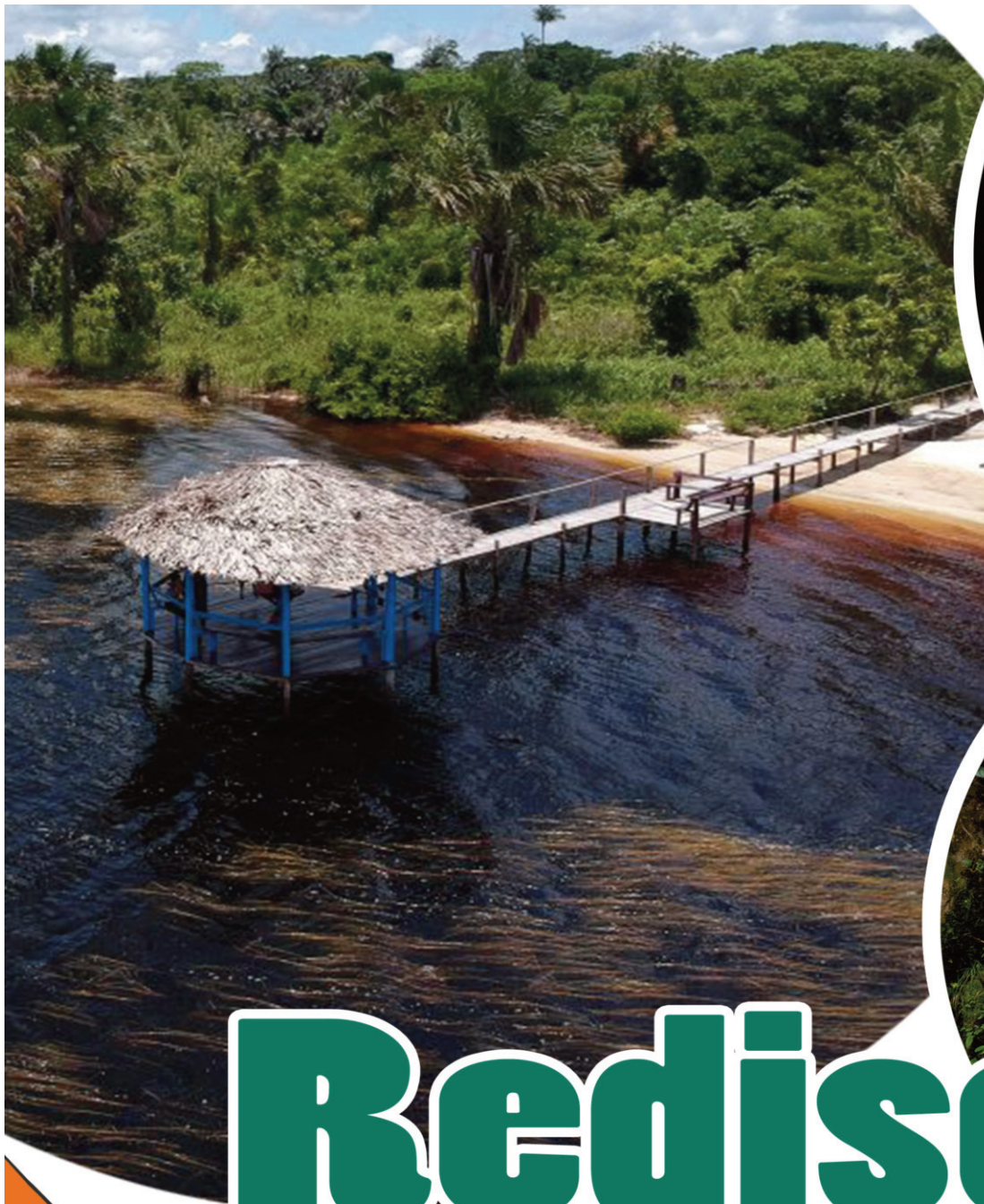
| NOVEMBER | | | | | | |
|----------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| Su | M | Tu | W | Th | F | Sa |
| | | | | | 1 | 2 |
| 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
| 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 |
| 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 |
| 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 |

| DECEMBER | | | | | | |
|----------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| Su | M | Tu | W | Th | F | Sa |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 |
| 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 |
| 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 |
| 29 | 30 | 31 | | | | |

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VACATION

SCAN FOR MORE



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