


Proudly the largest weekly Caribbean Newspaper in Canada for 40 years

Equality

MAINTAINING THE PERFECT BALANCE **\$1.00**

SERVING, CARIBBEAN, EAST ASIANS, GUYANESE, JAMAICANS, TRINIS AND MORE. 416 759 6397



TAPAS

tel: (246) 228-0704
 info@tapasbarbados.com
 www.tapasbarbados.com
 Hastings, Christ Church, Barbados
 See our ad on Page 2



VettyvelLaw

Professional Corporation
 1-- 203-Markham Rd.
 Scarborough Ontario M1B 0E6

- Real Estate Law (Residential & Commercial)
- Wills & Estates
- Corporate & Commercial Law

Rishani Vettyvel, BBA, LLB, LLM
 Barrister & Solicitor
 Direct 416 281 1544 Fax: 416 281 1544
 rishan@vettyvelaw.com



Thursday December 19 2024. Volume 42, Issue #51 www.equalitynews.ca. For advertising, call 416-281-3333



Spreading some Christmas cheer

Children from Zambia and other surrounding communities in Black Bush Polder on the Corentyne Coast were all smiles today as they received Christmas gifts from Agriculture Minister, Hon. Zulfikar Mustapha (top left).

Minister Mustapha said that despite the challenges faced, the holiday season

presents an opportunity to spread love and togetherness throughout the world.

Approximately 200 children received gifts during the exercise.

Similar exercises are planned for other parts of the region where some 4,000 children's are expected to receive gifts for the holidays.

President Dr Irfaan Ali on Tuesday evening also got into the spirit of the season when he joined hundreds of children at Patentia, West Bank Demerara, for the opening of the community's playpark, Christmas tree light-up and

toy distribution.

The President also had some good news for Guyanese people living with disabilities.

He announced that his administration will give a \$35,000 grant for those on the country's register of persons living with disabilities.

The Head of State made this announcement during a brief address at the Christmas social hosted for children living with disabilities at State House.

President Ali said: "To continue the investment and to support your lives and

with the register we have now, we are going to release this month a further \$875 million... directly to each of the persons on the register, almost 26,000 persons."

He added that what this means is that outside of the \$100,000 grant that every person above the age of 18 will be receiving across Guyana, each person on the country's disability register will receive an additional grant of \$35,000.

The country that his government is building, President Ali noted, is one that will address issues relating to persons with disabilities and ensure that they are supported.

In order to continue supporting those persons, he indicated that before the end of the year, the Minister of Human Services and Social Security, Dr Vindhya Persaud will host another series of consultations to see what new priority areas have emerged with all of the investments being made.

Fly Direct to Guyana

LOWEST PRICE

30 YEARS



TRAVEL SERVICES INC.

JANE & FINCH MALL 34-1911 Finch Av. W North York, On. M3N 2V2 Tel: 416-802-8000 Reg. 50023235

SCARBOROUGH 106-1200 Markham Rd. Scarborough, On, M1H 3C3 Tel: 416-439-4000 Reg. 04488805


MARTINA'S CAMBIO

19 Hinck Street, Robbstown, Georgetown, Guyana

Best rates for US, Pounds Sterling, Canadian, Euro, TT, EC and B'dos

Tel: 226-1933

Email: martinascambio@gmail.com,





SHARMA LAW

Catastrophic injury? Car accident?
 Slip & fall? Income disability benefits denied?

sharma@vsharmalaw.ca
 vsharmalaw.ca

HURT?
 CALL VISHAL'S DIRECT LINE
647-972-4440



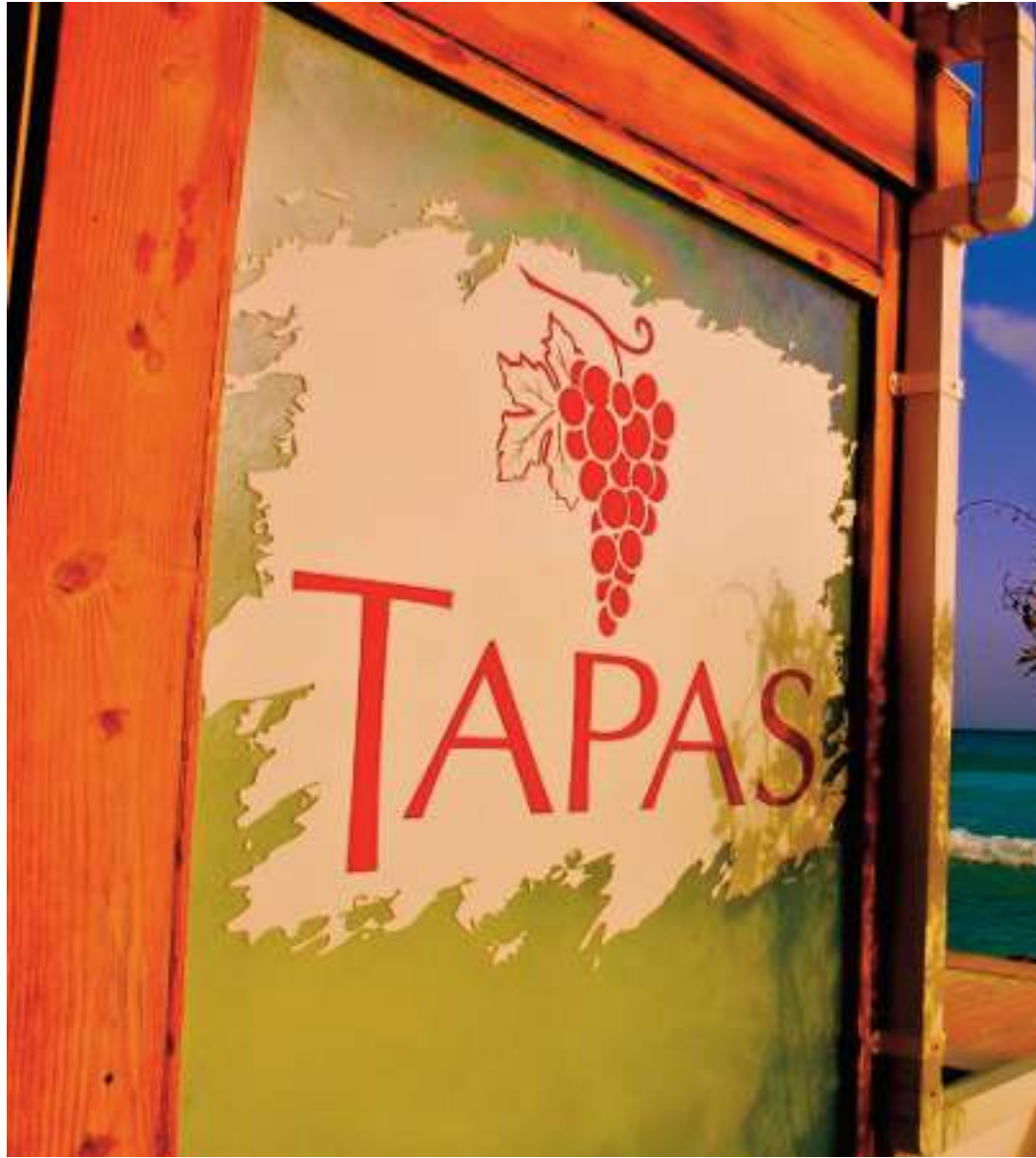


Let me simplify the Mortgage Process for you

Niraj Sharma,
Simpleway, The Mortgage Experts

647-629-3385
 niraj.sharma@simpleway.ca
 See my ad on Page 4

FSRA# 13658



For the most delicious local and international cuisine and signature cocktails in Barbados. Join us for an exceptional time when you visit our beautiful island

Hastings Main Road
Highway 7
Christ Church
Barbados WI
+1 (246) 228-0704



JEFF LAL

www.jefflal.com

PPC CANDIDATE FOR MP
BRAMPTON EAST



- ▶ Lower The Cost of Living
- ▶ Proactively Fight Auto Thefts & Crime
- ▶ Create Opportunities for Our Children
- ▶ Put Families First

**"NEW VOICE,
BRIGHT FUTURE:
TOGETHER FOR
BRAMPTON EAST!"**

PPC CANDIDATE FOR MP

BRAMPTON EAST

Freedom | Responsibility | Fairness | Respect



SCAN ME

1 BECOME A PPC MEMBER
Being a member empowers you to be a part of the democratic process choosing your PPC candidate.

2 VOLUNTEER WITH MY CAMPAIGN
Join the movement by volunteering your time.

3 SHARE WITH FAMILY & FRIENDS
The greatest support is helping us spread our PPC message.

@ /jeff.lal 9 Abacus Rd, Brampton, Ontario L6T 5B7

info@jefflal.com +1.416.892.3959

SHARMA LAW

Your Personal Injury Lawyer

A lawyer who gets to know you, so he can represent you. When you're looking for the best possible result, you need an attorney who knows every detail about you and your case. Sharma Law takes the time to get to know each and every client, so we're in the best position to represent you and your family when it matters most. Backed by proven results and experience at Ontario's highest levels of court, Sharma Law specializes in Personal Injury Law.



NO FEES UNLESS WE SETTLE YOUR CLAIM



Personal Injury

Injuries caused by the negligence of others can be physically, emotionally, and financially devastating for victims and their families. If you've been injured, you need a personal injury lawyer who knows how to fight for the compensation you deserve.



Injury Claims

- Motor Vehicle Accident Claims
- At-Fault Accident Claims
- Not At-Fault Accident Claims
- Catastrophic In-jury Claims
- Slip and Falls / Trip and Falls
- Dog Bites
- Long Term Disability / Short Term Disability
- Pedestrian Accidents

OUR COMMITMENT TO YOU

We are committed to achieving successful results for every client and case. We accomplish this by providing exceptional legal advice and strategies based on a thorough understanding of your case and your desired outcomes.

FREE CONSULTATION AND CLAIM REVIEW.

Check out our Google reviews



Available for in-person visits at your home or hospital, anywhere in Ontario. Video Conference and Office meetings available.



Hurt? Call Vishal's direct line 6479724440

sharma@vsharmalaw.ca

www.vsharmalaw.ca



Works on transmission line for 2nd power ship 80% complete

The construction of infrastructure necessary for the second power ship brought in to support the Guyana Power and Light (GPL) during the Christmas season, is proceeding apace, with the construction works for the 3.9-kilometre transmission line 80 per cent complete.

This was explained by GPL's Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Kesh Nandlall, when contacted by this publication. It had previously been reported that a double-circuit 69 kilovolt (kV) transmission line, spanning approximately 3.9 kilometres, was under construction from Ruimveldt.

This is where the second power ship is docked. The line will be connected to GPL's New Georgetown Substation, in order to facilitate the transmission of power. According to Nandlall, this process is 80 per cent completed.

The ongoing preparatory works include the construction of the transmission line by a private contractor, with the aim of delivering electricity by Christmas. Nandlall related to this publication that this was progressing well.

On December 8, consumers in sections of Greater Georgetown experienced an 8-hour interruption in electricity supply as GPL conducted preparatory works for the arrival of a second power ship. The second power ship will add to the 36-megawatt (MW) provided by an existing floating power plant in the Berbice River.

This will significantly increase the country's power generation capacity. GPL's peak electricity demand has surged to 187MW, up from nearly 100MW in recent years, driven by new housing developments, industrial facilities, and commercial investments.

The current peak demand is 187 MW, while the available capacity is 194 MW. This second power ship will



The Turkish power ship that arrived in Guyana last week

add to the 36 MW of electricity already being produced by the first floating power plant that is in the Berbice River.

Nandlall had previously told this publication that two generators with an aggregate capacity of 13 MW that were unavailable due to major overall will be back online by December 10 and 21. This he said will boost the generation

capacity in the Demerara Berbice Inter-connected System (DBIS) to 207 MW.

The arrival of this vessel comes after a contract signing last month between the Guyana power and Light Inc with the Joint Venture of Turkish-based Karpowership Global DMCC and Qatar-based UCC Energy International LLC JV, to charter a second power ship

stalled capacity of 75 MW for two years.

In the first phase, the power ship will dispatch 60 MW to the grid in approximately six weeks followed by an additional 15 MW, once works are completed on an additional transmission line. The contract requires GPL to pay the Joint Venture 8.52 US cents per Kilowatt-hour (kWh) as a monthly charter fee for the new power ship.

It also requires a monthly operation and maintenance fee of 0.98 US cents per kWh, based on electricity generated. Under the contract, GPL is also responsible for providing Heavy Fuel Oil (HFO) for the operation of the ship's generators.

The addition of the second power ship will boost GPL's generation capacity to 207 MW, ensuring reliable electricity during the holiday season and beyond. The first power ship had been deployed to Guyana in May of this year, and is currently stationed at Everton in the Berbice River.

The floating power plant has been supplying 36 MW of electricity to the DBIS. As part of that agreement, GPL had paid a US\$1 million mobilisation fee, a fee of 6.62 US cents per kWh as a monthly charter fee for the vessel, and a monthly operation and maintenance fee of 0.98 US cents per kWh based on electricity generated. (G3)



The first power ship which was brought to Guyana in May this year

with
a
total
in-

Guyana a leader in transparency, citizen engagement

AS Caribbean nations continue to make positive strides towards more transparent governance, Guyana has emerged as a leading force in advancing open government practices in the region.

With the implementation of fiscal transparency, improved access to information, and enhanced citizen engagement, Guyana is setting a commendable example for other nations in the Caribbean.

Building on recent developments, Guyana's commitment to transparency and public accountability has positioned it as an eligible candidate for membership in the Open Government Partnership (OGP), an initiative that brings together countries committed to making their governments more transparent, inclusive, and accountable to their citizens.

According to the OGP's official website: "In order to participate in OGP, governments must exhibit a demonstrated commitment to open government by meeting a set of (minimum) performance criteria across key dimensions that are particularly consequential for increasing government responsiveness, strengthening citizen engagement and combatting corruption, and an adherence to the democratic governance norms and values set in the Open Government Declaration."

Alongside its regional neighbours, including Jamaica and the Dominican Republic, Guyana's proactive efforts align with global standards for open governance. These efforts include the rigorous disclosure of public officials' assets, enhanced citizen participation in policy discussions, and access to information through various digital platforms.

The Caribbean Development Dynamics 2025 by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) report highlights Guyana's significant progress in these areas, noting that the country's



Guyana President Dr Irfaan Ali meeting citizens as part of his commitment to the people

commitment to strengthening democratic processes through transparency is a powerful tool for building public trust.

Public officials have acknowledged that the fight for transparent governance goes hand-in-hand with respect for human rights, which has been a critical area of focus for the People's Progressive Party/Civic (PPP/C) administration.

By strengthening human rights, the government is not only ensuring equitable growth, but also paving the way for greater social stability.

"Our democratic governance has become better, more inclusive, more participatory; we have much to celebrate, and we shouldn't be shy or


apologetic about it," Guyana's Minister of Parliamentary Affairs and Governance, Gail Teixeira said at a recent Human Rights and Anti-Corruption Expo.

Guyana has set out on an ambitious venture, and though the ministry is small, it has successfully been able to host several training programmes and workshops, all aimed at building recognition of human rights and combatting corruption.

Pointing out the links between human rights and corruption, Teixeira explained: "We felt we needed to show

the interconnection between corruption and human rights, and the way in which corruption can diminish a country's democratic institutions; programmes and work and resources that are meant for the taxpayers and the poor and the vulnerable."

Looking at Guyana's progress through a wider lens, Teixeira noted that the country has come a long way from once being one of the poorest countries in the hemisphere to now boasting of massive transformation.

On TikTok: Raul's Jewellery (Number 1 for Guyana Jewellery on TikTok)
 Mocha, East Bank Demerara
 Phone number/WhatsApp: +592-644-0543

Where Jewellery Speaks For Itself

Raul Anthony De Souza
 592.644.0543
 rauldesouza884@gmail.com

Vigilance is key for GECOM

Editorial from the Guyana Chronicle, December 15 2024

THE Guyana Elections Commission (GECOM) is the entity responsible for the administration and conduct of elections in Guyana. GECOM is headed by a Chairman and six Commissioners.

So far, it has been doing a good job in ensuring that the will of the electorate prevails. Except for the pre-1992 period when General and Regional Elections were blatantly and massively rigged in favour of the then authoritarian PNC regime, all elections since 1992 were by and large free, fair and transparent.

Prior to 1991, the Guyana Elections Commission was made up of a Chairman who was appointed by the President and one member in respect of each political party which had no fewer than five seats in the National Assembly.

The Commission had a temporary life in that a member had to vacate office within three months of the date of an election.

Electoral reform in Guyana commenced in 1990 and continued throughout the period preceding the 2001 General and Regional Elections. During that period, the composition of GECOM was changed from time to time to allow for the conduct of the October 1992 elections, the first democratically held election for close to three decades, thanks to PNC authoritarian rule. For the 1992 and 1997 elections, the Elections Commission was still a temporary institution for each election.

The present GECOM was established in May, 2000 by way of an amendment to the constitution which repealed and re-enacted article 161 of the constitution on the basis of recommendations emanating from the Constitution Reform Commission, which were ratified by Parliament.

The re-enacted article 161 restated the same mechanism for the appointment of the Commission as provided for since the 1992 general elections, but the Commission is now established as a permanent body.

All of the powers which were pre-

viously exercised by, or on behalf of the minister responsible for the preparation for, and administration of elections are now vested in the Commission.

It is no secret that prior to 1992, the Elections Commission was under the influence and control of the then ruling PNC regime, and to a large extent, facilitated the perpetuation of PNC authoritarian rule through fraudulent means.

All of that, thankfully, is now behind us, even though some indications of partisan loyalties were very much in evidence during the March 2020 General and Regional elections. The fact that elements within GECOM were unable to get their way in influencing the outcome of the elections is testimony to changing times.

Democracy and the rule of law are today much more institutionalised than was the case during the pre-1992 period, as was evident in the 2020 General and Regional Elections, when attempts were made by the APNU+AFC coalition in collaboration with 'rogue' elements from the

GECOM Secretariat to subvert the democratic process.

The above notwithstanding, there are still fresh attempts made by the main political opposition to undermine confidence in GECOM to deliver free and fair elections. Only recently, Vice-President and General Secretary of the PPP, Dr. Bharrat Jagdeo had cause to reprimand the political opposition for what he described as an 'orchestrated, audacious demonisation' of GECOM.

According to Dr. Jagdeo, this was done with the intent to destroy the credibility of GECOM in a very unfair manner by a number of fringe organisations and political parties, all with the same aim — destroying the credibility of GECOM.

The fact is that the Guyana Elections Commission has come a long way since that dark period of PNC dictatorial rule. Hence, the need for continuing vigilance by all democratic forces in and out of Guyana to ensure that the will of the electorate prevails in the forthcoming national and regional elections.

Genocide in Gaza marks International Human Rights Day

By Donald Ramotar

December 10 has been designated as International Human Rights Day. This year the world would be observing this date when we are in very grave danger and the Palestinian people are experiencing genocide at the hands of the Apartheid Israeli Regime.

More than forty-five thousand persons, seventy percent of whom are women and children, including little babies have been killed. Thousands of others are missing, presumed buried under thousands of tons of rubble and yet the carnage is allowed to continue.

These inhumane executions of in-

nocent civilians have been taking place for fourteen months already. The world seems incapable of putting a halt to this. The main reason is that Israel is being protected by the most powerful country in the world, the United States of America.

It is undoubtedly a great shame that instead of using its enormous power to protect the almost defenceless Palestinians, who have been denied the right to their own homeland, the U.S.A has chosen instead to fully support Israel by supplying arms and bombs as well as diplomatic/ political support at the United Nations and other forums.

While the situation of the Palestini-

ans is the most dire, it is not the only area where the very right to life is in great danger.

One of the most important reasons for the heavy loss of life in the Russia/ Ukraine conflict is the fact that Russia's security, has been threatened by the expansion of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) which is surrounding Russia with military bases and encouraging Ukraine to be a part of the organisation instead of being neutral.

The situation in Lebanon and other Middle Eastern countries (Syria) is indeed of grave concern. So too is the civil war in the Sudan, which is causing massive destruction, misery and an unac-

ceptable loss of lives.

The world has never been so close to a world war since 1939. Such a war today can only lead to nuclear clashes. If that should ever happen then life in the world would cease to exist.

On this occasion I call on all Guyanese and on people everywhere to let your voices be heard and call for an immediate halt to military clashes and the banning of all weapons of mass destruction, in particular, nuclear weapons.

Let us on this occasion take an active stance to protect life, the Greatest Gift of All!

Donald Ramotar is a former President of Guyana



Publisher: Bhaskar Sharma

Equalitygroup@rogers.com

Editor: Nishad Sharma

Annual subscription: \$104.00 (including postage)

Funded by the Government of Canada.



Equality News is the largest weekly newspaper serving Guyanese and Caribbean readers in Canada.

Contributors: Niraj Sharma, Freddie Kissoon,

Donald Ramotar, Cliff Rajkumar, Dr Kumar Mahabir, Dr Vishnu Bisram
For advertising in Ontario or nationally, call Marie Sharma 416-281-3333
or 647 -216 2359

View Equality News every week online (ads included)

www.equalitynews.ca

Equality News International is published by Equality News Incorporated.

104-1920 Ellesmere Road - MB# 234, Toronto, Ontario M1H 3G1

Tel: 416-281-3333, Fax: 416-759-5359, Email: EqualityGroup@rogers.com

About 85 per cent of TDSB schools are in a poor state of repair: report

Nearly 85 per cent of schools within the Toronto District School Board are considered to be “below” a state of good repair, according to the province’s Financial Accountability Office (FAO).

In a report released Tuesday, the FAO confirmed that the country’s largest school board took the top spot for the most number of buildings that were in need of rehabilitation or replacement.

As of March 31, 2024, the FAO found that provincially, about 3,037 schools, or about 63 per cent of schools, are in a state of good repair, while 1,813, about 37 per cent, were below that threshold.

“The 10 largest school boards accounted for 52 per cent of all buildings below (state of good repair) SOGR,” the report noted.

The TDSB was found to have 84.1 per cent of its buildings below a state of good repair, followed by the Thames Valley District School Board at 52.5 per cent, and the Toronto Catholic District School Board at 45.6 per cent.

The cost to bring all school buildings in the province into a state of good repair is estimated to be about \$6.5 billion, which includes about \$2.86 billion for the Toronto District School Board alone.

“Over the 10-year period, from 2024-25 to 2033-34, as school buildings continue to age and degrade, the FAO estimates that an additional \$15.2 billion would need to be spent to maintain school buildings in a state of good repair,” the report continued.

In total, about \$21.7 billion would be needed to “clear the infrastructure backlog” and continue to maintain all school buildings from 2024-25 to 2033-



TDSB schools are below a state of good repair, says the FAO report

34, the report noted.

The TDSB would make up about \$6.76 billion of that nearly \$22 billion, according to the FAO report.

“In contrast, the 2024 budget has allocated \$12.5 billion over 10 years. If funded at this level, the FAO estimates that after 10 years, the percentage of school buildings that are not in a state of good repair would increase from 37.4 per cent in 2023-24 to 74.6 per cent in 2033-34,” the report states.

“By 2033-34, the infrastructure backlog would grow from \$6.5 billion in 2023-24 to \$22.1 billion.”

The FOA report stated that about 1,781 schools across Ontario require re-

habilitation and 32 should be rebuilt.

In a report released earlier this month, Ontario’s auditor general found that TDSB school buildings are in the worst condition of all school buildings

in the province and that financial and capital resources are not consistently allocated in the most cost effective or efficient way.

Inflation drops in November

Inflation edged down slightly to 1.9 per cent in November as price growth continued to stabilize in Canada.

Statistics Canada’s consumer price index report Tuesday showed inflation was down from two per cent in October.

Shelter costs increased at a slower annual pace of 4.6 per cent, while rent price inflation accelerated to 7.7 per cent.

Grocery prices continued to grow faster than overall prices, rising 2.6 per cent from a year ago.

“Inflation decelerated slightly in November, ahead of what will be a volatile period for CPI readings thanks to the temporary reduction in GST on certain items,” said CIBC senior economist Andrew Grantham in a note to clients. The federal government announced last month it would waive the five per cent sales tax on some products between Dec. 14 and Feb. 15.

Meanwhile, he said the impact of the Taylor Swift concerts on inflation was weaker than expected.

“While there was a pop in hotel prices, there was no noticeable change in airline fares, restaurant prices or other areas,” Grantham said.

Inflation has hovered around the Bank of Canada’s two per cent target for several months now, clearing the path for the bank to lower interest rates.

The central bank’s key interest rate now stands at 3.25 per cent.

Call, Text or Email me for exclusive offers and promotions.

TELUS

Tanvir Jhutti
 Email - tanvir.jhutti@telus.com
 Cell - 647-577-4618

Equality News

Advertising That Works!

Latin America, Caribbean launch regional alliance against organised crime

THE Inter-American Development Bank on Thursday announced the launch of a regional security alliance against crime that brings together 18 governments across Latin America and the Caribbean as well as several international finance institutions.

“Security needs to be part of the solution for our economic progress,” IDB President Ilan Goldfajn told reporters ahead of the project’s launch in Barbados, saying countries worried about the cost of crime had requested the initiative.

“Organised crime has no national borders,” he said. “We’re trying to organise ourselves into a regional initiative.”

Crime costs on average 3.4 per cent of gross domestic product across the region, according to a recent IDB study, amounting to nearly 80 per cent of public budgets for education, double social assistance and 12 times research and development spending.

The IDB is providing \$1 billion in financing for projects aligned with the initiative next year, Goldfajn added, and plans to mobilise public and private donors to raise more funds.



Brazilian Ilan Goldfajn, President of the Inter-American Development Bank

The IDB said projects include the regional sharing of criminal records among alliance members, and meetings to discuss money laundering tied to illegal mining in the Amazon. Goldfajn said the plan has a strong social focus, looking to reduce communities’ vulnerabilities, as well as

strengthening police, state justice institutions and hitting financial crime.

The alliance has notable regional exceptions such as the United States, which Goldfajn said would not participate. Goldfajn said the IDB was in talks with Mexico and Colombia, two other exceptions, which could join later.

The alliance also includes the Organisation of American States, the Caribbean Community, INTERPOL, the World Bank and regional development banks.

Last year, CARICOM leaders declared violent crime a public health issue and pledged a series of measures such as regional arrest warrants, a ban on assault weapons and support for a Mexican lawsuit seeking to hold U.S. gunmakers accountable for illegal trafficking to criminal groups outside its borders.

The case has gone to the U.S. Supreme Court. Some 51 per cent of traced firearms in Central America come from the United States, according to U.S. government data, as well as 68 per cent in Mexico and 80 per cent across the Caribbean.

Guyana joins Regional Security and Justice Alliance

Guyana has strengthened its commitment to regional security and justice by officially joining the Alliance for Security, Justice, and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC).

Representing Guyana at the signing ceremony was the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Home Affairs, Mr. Andre Ally.

The Alliance was launched during the Regional Security and Justice Summit held on December 11-12, 2024, in Bridgetown, Barbados.

According to a release from the Ministry of Home Affairs, the initiative seeks to combat the growing influence of organised crime in the region through a unified, evidence-based approach.

It brings together countries and international partners to strengthen institutions, protect vulnerable communities, disrupt illicit financial networks, and mobilise resources against transnational criminal organisations.

IDB President Ilan Goldfajn during the launch pointed out the urgency of coordinated regional ef-

orts, stating that organised crime operates across borders and requires bold, collaborative action.

“The Alliance for Security, Justice, and Development will enable strategic partnerships and resource mobilisation, essential to amplify the impact of our countries’ efforts in addressing organised crime,” he said.

The Alliance’s core priorities include protecting vulnerable populations and communities most affected by organised crime, strengthening security and justice institutions to improve response effectiveness, and reducing illicit financial flows while dismantling criminal markets that empower criminal organisations.

Countries that have joined the Alliance include Argentina, Barbados, Belize, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Guatemala, Guyana, Honduras, Jamaica, Panamá, Paraguay, Perú, Suriname, The Bahamas, and Uruguay.

The Alliance has also secured the involvement of 11 major organisations, including the Organisation

of American States (OAS), INTERPOL, the World Bank, CAF (Development Bank of Latin America and the Caribbean), the Caribbean Development Bank, Caricom IMPACS, the Global Initiative Against Transnational Organised Crime (GI-TOC), the Pan American Development Foundation (PADF), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Regional Security System (RSS), and the Italo-Latin American Institute (IILA).

Ecuador will hold the first pro tempore presidency of the Alliance, while the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) will serve as the technical Secretariat, providing strategic support, mobilising resources, and scaling up effective interventions.

With a focus on fostering a safer, fairer, and more prosperous future for citizens across the region, Guyana stands ready to contribute to and benefit from this collaborative initiative through the implementation of sustainable policies that promote regional security, justice, and development.



Brian Tiwarie, OMC, AA - CEO



GROUP OF COMPANIES
Put Guyana First

1 & 2 MUDLOT WATER STREET, KINGSTON, GEORGETOWN, GUYANA. TEL: 592- 226-5513-4 | 226-5314-5 |
226-4113 FAX: 592- 226-5517 | 223-7421

Public sector wage bill to reach \$227B by 2025, 80% increase over 5 years

RESPONDING to the opposition's claims that the People's Progressive Party/Civic (PPP/C) Government is not doing enough to support public servants, PPP General Secretary Dr. Bharrat Jagdeo has highlighted that the wages for these workers will amount to \$227 billion by next year, reflecting an 80 per cent increase over five years.

Jagdeo, during his weekly press conference at the PPP's Freedom House, Georgetown headquarters, highlighted the substantial growth in public sector wages since the PPP was elected to office in 2020.

Referencing the achievements up to this year, he noted that the sum has increased from \$126.8 billion in 2020 to \$210.7 billion in 2024.

Jagdeo said that he has taken note of the 'hysterical reactions' coming out of the Peoples National Congress (PNC) and the Alliance For Change (AFC), and he believes the 'unfounded' criticisms are politically aimed at generating unrest among public servants.

However, in defending the government's track record, Jagdeo gave a detailed analysis, highlighting the significance of the recent 10 per cent increase in salaries and incentives being paid to the public sector.

He revealed that the Central Government's wage bill in 2020 was \$71.8 billion, and that now in 2024 it stands at \$121.4 billion with the 10 per cent increase.

"That's a growth of \$49.6 billion more per year for only those who work in Central Government," Dr. Jagdeo asserted.

Meanwhile, in public enterprises, the wage bill stood at \$16.1 billion in 2020, and it's now \$24 billion which now reflects a \$7.9 billion, or 49 per cent increase in wages.

Further, regarding statutory bodies, the wage bill in 2020 was \$38.9 billion, in 2024 and it's now \$65.2 billion. This brings the entirety of the public sector's wage bill from \$126.8 billion in 2020 to \$210.7 billion in 2024.

Jagdeo said: "That means it's \$83.9 billion more per year that the public sector is currently getting from the Government of Guyana in the past four years that we've been in office. So, this is a significant increase means that it is an increase of 66 per cent."

The PPP General Secretary rejected claims from opposition parties that the wage increases were politically motivated and designed to "buy votes".

He argued that these increases, which include not only salary hikes but also a range of allowances and benefits, were part of the government's broader effort to improve the lives of public servants and promote economic development.

Jagdeo further disclosed that those public servants whose respective unions have not yet brokered deals with the gov-



President Ali at the sod turning for the Kato Hospital

ernment will receive the 10 per cent salary increase.

"If we do not have agreements for the rest of the public servants, the 10 per cent will be paid out to those others in the public sector. So, this is something that is a great movement forward; it recognises the role that our public servants play, and it treats them with respect," the General Secretary said.

It was after talks between the government and the Guyana Public Service Union (GPSU) that President Dr. Irfaan Ali announced a 10 per cent increase in wages in 2024, and an eight per cent for 2025.

The Guyana Sugar Corporation (GuySuCo) also signed a three-year wages and salaries agreement with the Guyana Agricultural and General Workers Union (GAWU) recently, which will see sugar workers receiving a 10 per cent retroactive pay raise in 2024, an eight per cent for 2025, and nine per cent for 2026.

Already, an agreement inked between the government and the Guyana Teachers' Union (GTU) will see educators' wages increasing by 10 per cent this year, eight per cent in 2025, and nine per cent in 2026.

The 57 per cent salary increase represents the minimum increase teachers

could expect in the period. Given that the government has made various adjustments to allowances, positions on salary scales, and other benefits, many teachers will benefit from increases in excess of 57 per cent.

Several other concessions and incentives were provided for educators.

Meanwhile, despite the opposition's criticism, which labelled the wage increases as inadequate, Dr. Jagdeo remained firm in his defence, asserting that the government's actions were in the best interest of public servants and the nation as a whole.

Modern \$1B port for Charity

THE Cinderella County of Region Two (Pomeroon-Supenaam) is slated for significant economic expansion, as the government will soon sign a contract to develop a massive, modern port facility in Charity, Region Two.

According to President, Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali, this massive investments forms part of a broader initiative to position the region as an international hub for export processing, serving as a vital link between local and regional markets.

It will also tie in to the many investments being poured to advance and expand the tourism and hospitality sector of the Cinderella County.

Speaking during an outreach event in Charity on Thursday, he said, "We have awarded the contract for the construction of a modern port facility and wharf here in Charity, for almost \$1 billion."

President Ali underscored the project's importance, which he said will complement the region's expanding agriculture sector and provide a gateway for these products to reach the international markets.

The competitiveness of the region will also be boosted, aligning the productivity of the region with international markets.

Elaborating further on the project, the Head of State revealed that the port will be equipped with state-of-the-art facilities designed to handle modern shipping and logistics demands. These include the construction of a wharf, which will facilitate docking and loading of cargo.

He further explained, "It's not only about this port and wharf facility, it's about a facility of international standard, that would bring with it, other aspects of development, including a world-class packaging and storage facility."

The Ministry of Agriculture is working to develop this processing facility that will help process, package, and store products to ensure they meet international export requirements.

Local farmers will benefit significantly from this undertaking, as they can store and process their products safely and efficiently.

"The Minister of Tourism, Industry and Commerce will tell you that the Bureau of Standards will establish a footprint here to ensure that all we are producing is within international and regional certification, so our products will not be hassled into getting into other markets," the president explained.



Agriculture Minister Zulfikar Mustapha also brought smiles to children's faces by distributing toys during the visit

Agriculture Minister unveils support initiatives for farmers in North Rupununi

IN a bid to bolster agricultural productivity and improve livelihoods, Agriculture Minister Zulfikar Mustapha met with residents and farmers from Annai and Wowetta villages in North Rupununi, Region Nine, on Friday.

The outreach aimed to address farming challenges and announce government initiatives designed to enhance agricultural development in the region.

Minister Mustapha highlighted the government's increased investment in agriculture, with the sector's budget growing from \$13 billion in 2020 to \$97.6 billion in 2024. He emphasised the administration's commitment to empowering farmers and modernising the sector.

"We are producing approximately 60 per cent of the food we consume, but our president has charged us to produce more. This is why we are making investments and empowering our farmers. You, the farmers, are an important component in our food production strategy," Minister Mustapha told farmers in Annai.

To address weather-related production shortfalls, the minister announced that 60,000 lbs of cassava would be distributed in the coming week. The National Agricultural Re-

search and Extension Institute (NAREI) will also conduct soil testing and provide training in smart agricultural practices.

Farmers received a range of supplies, including Acoushi Ants bait, coconut and fruit tree seedlings, seeds, fertilizers, garden tools, and other inputs to enhance production in the village. Minister Mustapha also brought smiles to children's faces by distributing toys during the visit.

During a meeting with farmers in Wowetta, Minister Mustapha reiterated the government's dedication to agricultural expansion in the Rupununi region.

"Soon, we'll conduct several surveys in different parts of the Rupununi to determine which areas we can develop into mega farms," he announced.

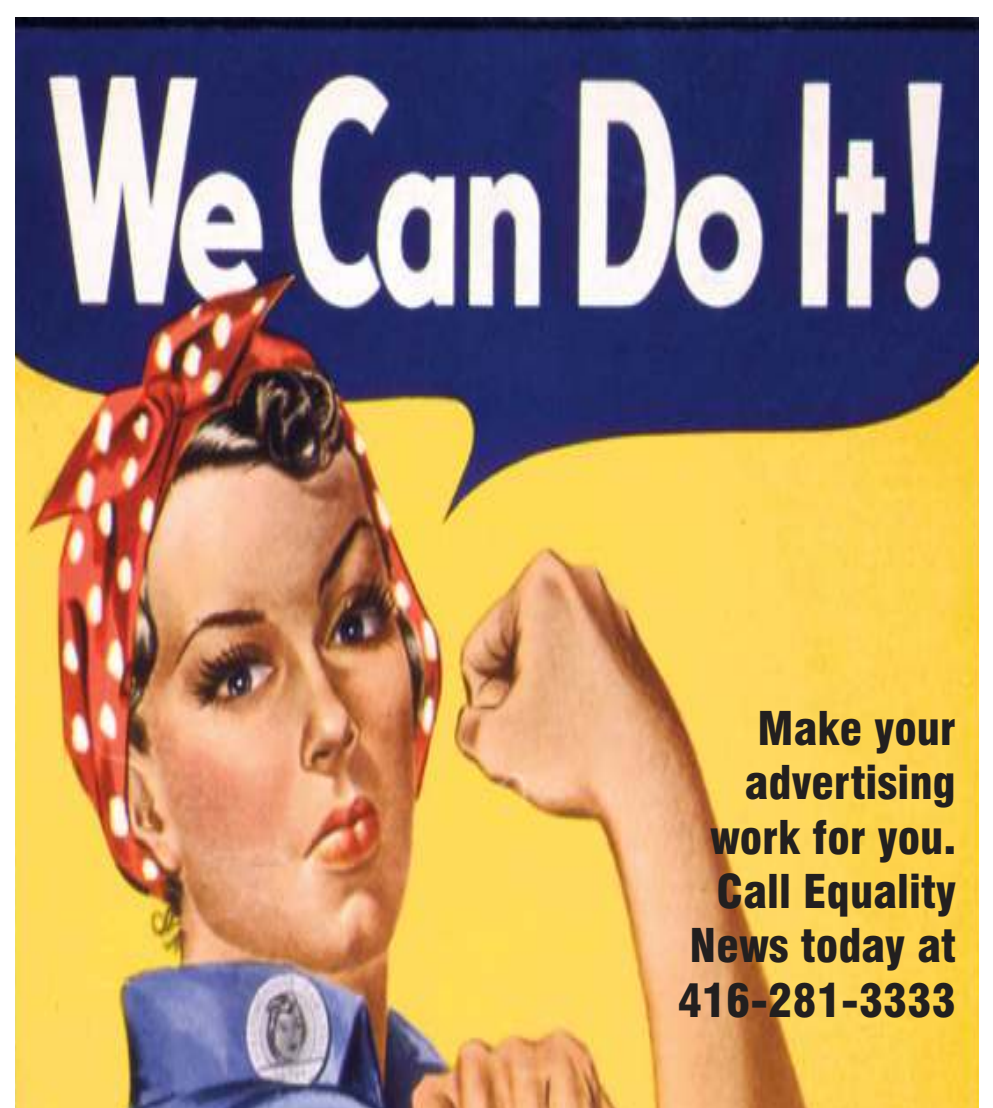
Farmers in Wowetta were also provided with seeds, seedlings, farming tools, fertilisers, and drip tape for irrigation. As in Annai, toys were distributed to children, adding a festive touch to the minister's outreach.

These initiatives are part of the government's broader strategy to make agriculture more productive and less labour-intensive. By investing in resources and infrastructure, the administration aims to boost local food

production and equip farmers with the tools and knowledge needed for sustainable practices.

Farmers in both villages expressed

continue working towards increased agricultural output, contributing to national food security goals.



**Make your
advertising
work for you.
Call Equality
News today at
416-281-3333**

gratitude for the support and pledged to

AFG avocates for restorative justice as a holistic lifestyle

ATTORNEY-GENERAL and Minister of Legal Affairs, Anil Nandlall, SC, emphasised the transformative power of restorative justice, describing it as a holistic lifestyle rather than merely a legal practice.

His remarks came on Friday during the closing session of a five-day Trainer of Trainers programme aimed at equipping 17 participants with the tools to implement restorative justice principles across Guyana.

Held at the Guyana Police Force's Officers' Training Centre, the initiative represents an effort by the government in fostering a justice system that prioritises reconciliation over retribution.

According to the Government of Canada, restorative justice refers to "an approach to justice that seeks to repair harm by providing an opportunity for those harmed and those who take responsibility for the harm to communicate about and address their needs in the aftermath of a crime."

In his address, Nandlall highlighted the urgent need for change in the traditional adversarial legal approach, advocating for restorative justice as an alternative that promotes healing, accountability, and community cohesion.

"Restorative justice is a lifestyle. What that means is that, not only in your professional output and engagements are you to use the principles and precepts of restorative justice, but you are also to do so in the conduct of your day-to-day activities as you live your life. So, a great place to practice it and



Attorney General Anil Nandlall

become, perhaps, an expert at it, is in your home," Nandlall said.

He added: "And if you begin to use it, and tell your psychology, your physiology, and your emotional system that these are the concepts you should utilise in your everyday, ordinary engagements, then it will become entrenched in your psyche and become part and parcel of your personality."

Nandlall said that restorative justice promotes dialogue, social engage-

ment, and peace, moving away from confrontation and conflict. According to him, the participants are seen as pioneers and will play a critical role in training and implementing restorative justice across the country.

"Today, you are part of history. In generations to come, it is in this little room that the 17 or 18 of you will be referred to as being part of that birthing process that produced restorative justice and made it a permanent feature of our

legal system," he related.

The Attorney-General said that restorative justice has gained traction globally. Regionally, he pointed out that the Caribbean Court of Justice (CCJ) has been a strong proponent of restorative practices.

He noted that the 2023 "Needham's Point Declaration" from the CCJ Academy of Law highlighted restorative justice as a cornerstone of modern legal systems in the Caribbean.

Nandlall highlighted that Guyana is leading the way in adopting this paradigm, supported by the legislative foundation of the Restorative Justice Act of 2022. This act has facilitated the establishment of a Restorative Justice Centre located at Lot 341 East Street, South Cummingsburg, Georgetown.

To support the integration of restorative justice, he said the government is in the process of establishing offices for restorative justice offices in all regions. These offices will work alongside probation offices to address cases referred by magistrates.

He had previously stated that restorative justice applies to non-violent offences, such as minor interpersonal conflicts, which constitute a significant portion of cases in the magistrates' courts.

Meanwhile, Dr. Dianne Williams, International Mediator and Mediation Coach and Licensed Trainer of Trainers, explained that this group of participants were "handpick" by the Restorative Justice Centre to receive a refresher course.

The World Guyanese Congress (WGC) is a federally incorporated non-partisan global organisation that represents the interests of citizens of Guyanese heritage around the world. The organisation focuses on the successful development of our communities globally with an emphasis on leadership development and collaborative activities in diaspora communities to strengthen the community worldwide.

The organisation is headquartered in Toronto, Ontario, Canada and led by a Chairman and Executive Committee supported by an Advisory Council and various Committees as well as a Board of Governors that acts as ambassadors for the organisation. It has nine national and regional chapters:

Key priorities of the WGC include:

- Build a globally cohesive community with a focus on youth and women in business and civic leadership worldwide.
- Support social entrepreneurship and civic engagement in communities around the world.
- Engage diaspora communities in the social and economic development of Guyana.

World Guyanese Congress
5200 Yonge Street, 2nd Floor
Toronto, Ontario, Canada M2N 5P6



To find out more about World Guyanese Congress and our goals and priorities. Scan the QR code, or visit www.wgc-org.com

If you have any questions feel free to get in touch:
Email: mail@wgc-org.com
Telephone: [1-800-317-0804](tel:1-800-317-0804)



United Kingdom eyeing major infra-structural initiatives with Guyana

UNITED Kingdom's (UK) Foreign Secretary, David Lammy, is set to champion a significant infrastructure deal aimed at boosting collaboration with British construction businesses while supporting the expansion of Guyana's primary international airport.

This was according to a release from the UK's Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office on the heels of Lammy's first official visit to Guyana and the Caribbean since assuming his role as Foreign Secretary back in July 2024.

The British official of Guyanese parentage, arrived in Guyana last Thursday, and on Friday visited Ogle, East Coast of Demerara, where construction is ongoing on the country's premier maternity hospital. The facility is being constructed using steel manufactured in Yorkshire.

This underscores how UK exports are improving Guyana's healthcare provision, while creating jobs back in Britain to help build the foundations of a stronger economy.

Back in November, Guyana's President, Dr. Irfaan Ali had announced that there are some very exciting projects in the pipeline as trade between Guyana and the UK was reaching new heights.

"We have some very exciting projects that are being examined now that we hope will be accelerated. There are some very exciting projects in the pipeline, not only in infrastructure, shipping and logistics, but importantly we have exciting news with British investment in agriculture, tourism, logistics and transport services, all of which are coming into place," President Ali had said.

He added that with KLM (Royal Dutch Airlines)'s entrance into the Guyanese market, a lot of issues that



President Dr. Irfaan Ali and United Kingdom's (UK) Foreign Secretary, David Lammy at State House

are humbugging trade will be removed.

The airline will commence flights between Guyana and the Netherlands from June 4, 2025, offering customers connection to 21 destinations in the United Kingdom, and 142 additional destinations beyond Amsterdam.

"This is not a competition; this is creating and expanding markets. As we get more airlifts coming into Guyana, we need to look at the value-related chain. For example, what are the high-value products that we can get into British markets as close to fresh as possible," he said.

SUCCESS

**Find it in an Equality ad
Call 647-216-2359**

TradeLogix Inc

BLUE LION
www.tradelogix.ca

EMAIL: SERVICES@TRADELOGIX.CA
PHONE: 416-938-8779

MODEL# BLION-EW1500

Electric Pallet Trucks CE	
Capacity	3300 kg
Height	7.5 m
Weight	258.5 kg
Speed	16.5 km/h
Max. Lift	270 kg

Battery Station
- Model: 2000-10000
- Power: 400-700W
- Input: 100V

Multi-function Control Handle

Loss Wiring Easy Service

Plug-In Battery Design

Guyana first in the region to secure updated World Bank debt-management 'tool'

THE government continues to manage Guyana's debt in a prudent and sustainable manner, while also ramping up efforts to improve and build the country's resilience to climate change.

As efforts are made to proceed further in this direction, Senior Minister in the Office of the President with Responsibility for Finance and the Public Service, Dr Ashni Singh signed a Climate Resilient Debt Clause (CRDC) Agreement with the World Bank at the Ministry of Finance, along with an agreement for the activation of the World Bank's Rapid Response Option (RRO).

The CRDC is a debt-management tool that allows for the deferral of debt payments for up to two years should Guyana experience a natural disaster such as flooding.

Guyana is the first country in the region to sign the updated CRDC and this has now taken place following intense lobbying by the government for the bank to include appropriate climate-change phenomena such as floods, droughts and public health emergencies unique to this country's circumstances.

Should the country experience such a disaster and once the CRDC is activated, it will also reduce the burden on government resources to finance disaster response and recovery efforts.

The second agreement signed with the World Bank is the Rapid Response Option (RRO) which, if activated, would see existing resources quickly repurposed for emergency response should there be a crisis such as a natural disaster, health shock or conflict event.

Guyana, in such a situation, can repurpose up to 10 percent of its undisbursed balances in its Investment Project Financing and Programme for Results (PforR) operations per year for quick disbursement.

During the signing, Dr Singh explained that 'notwithstanding Guyana's improved economic circumstances in recent years, we continue to



Finance Minister Ashni Singh signed a Climate Resilience Debt Clause, Rapid Response Option agreements

be a country that is extremely vulnerable to climate and other potentially catastrophic events,' as he recalled that the country has over time experienced multiple episodes of flooding including in 2005, noting that the floods had devastated Guyana's economy and posed damage in excess of 60 percent of GDP.

The Senior Minister added, "The bank has been partnering with us on building our resilience to natural disasters and to catastrophic events and not least, of course, is the support for the Flood Risk Management Project, amongst others. But increasingly too, the international community as well has recognised the importance of instruments that can respond more effectively to exogenous shocks, extreme climatic events or other natural disasters and catastrophes."

Signing on behalf of the bank was World Bank Group Representative to Guyana Ms Diletta Doretti who underscored the significance of the signing as she lauded the finance minister for his intense lobbying efforts and for pointing out when he pe-

used the agreement months before, that the CRDC needed to include natural disasters relevant to Guyana as it catered only for hurricanes and earthquakes.

It can be recalled that in July this year as well Dr Singh presented to Parliament two amendatory loan agreements, including one which amended the Export Finance Facility Agreement dated June 14, 2022, between the Co-operative Republic of Guyana, represented by the Ministry of Finance as the Borrower and UK Export Finance as the Lender, and the UniCredit Bank Austria AG as the Agent and Arranger, for an amount of EUR 161,016,949.15 for the Guyana Paediatric and Maternal Hospital Project.

This Amendatory Agreement facilitated the inclusion of a Climate Resilient Debt Clause into the original Agreement with Guyana being one of the first countries to adopt the CRDCs directly as part of its loan agreement with the UK Export Finance.

This government's effective debt-management practices over the

past years have contributed to a large decline in the country's debt ratios over a sustained period. It can be recalled that Guyana's debt-to-GDP ratio declined from over 600 percent in 1991 to 27 percent in 2023; while in 1992, about 90 cents of every dollar of revenue earned was used to make debt-service payments.

Today, this has been significantly reduced to about six cents of every dollar.

Noteworthy for the country has been the International Monetary Fund's (IMF) 2023 Article IV Report for Guyana, which placed the country in a positive light, indicating that the risk of (overall and external) debt distress remains moderate, with debt dynamics improving significantly with incoming oil revenues.

The IMF also commended the government for its commitment to maintain debt sustainability and a balanced growth path through moderating fiscal impulses over the medium-term, while continuing to address development needs. (Ministry of Finance)

BMO  **Bank of Montreal**

Mortgage Financing.
Simple and convenient.

416-819-2874
stenson.arul@bmo.com
bmo.com/ms/stensonarul

Stenson Arul
Mortgage Specialist

“Ask me how
I can help.”



Base Camp Seweyo hosts landmark Soldiers' Day with presidential visit

BASE Camp Seweyo recently came alive with a historic celebration as the Guyana National Reserve (GNR) hosted its inaugural Soldiers' Day, highlighted by the first official visit of President and Commander-in-Chief, His Excellency Dr. Mohammed Irfaan Ali.

The event, attended by Chief of Defence Staff, Brigadier Omar Khan, MSS, senior officers from across the Force, and distinguished guests, marked a milestone in the history of the base. The day blended military tradition with festive warmth, as troops showcased their talents through poetry, dramatic performances, and displays that captured the spirit of the season and the unity within the GNR.

In his keynote address, President Ali commended the soldiers for their unwavering dedication. "Today's celebration is a testament to the extraordinary commitment of our men and women in uniform. You are the highest form of representation of patriotism and what it means to be a national figure," he said.

The President also announced a significant welfare package for military personnel. The \$1.6 billion initiative benefits 12,000 servicemen and women, including a one-month bonus and a \$100,000 cash grant. He further pledged his government's commitment to developing Base Camp Seweyo, a declaration that was met with enthusiastic applause from the troops.

Brigadier Khan, in his address, highlighted the unique bond that defines the military community. "The GNR is not merely a military unit; it's a family bound by shared purpose and dedication," he said. He emphasised that the troops' service ensures that families across Guyana can celebrate the holidays in peace and security. "These celebrations strengthen the connections that enable us to serve effectively in both times of crisis and



Commander-in-Chief, Dr. Mohammed Irfaan Ali shared out the traditional Christmas supplies on Soldiers' Day

peace," he added.

Commandant of the GNR, Lieutenant Colonel Lloyd Souvenir, also lauded the troops, describing them as professionals and patriots. He noted the critical role of the GNR as a military reserve, ready to support the regular army whenever required.

The day's festivities concluded with a traditional Christmas lunch, providing an opportunity for camaraderie among ranks. Senior officers joined troops for shared meals and conversations, fostering a sense of unity and mutual respect.

This landmark Soldiers' Day

served as a powerful reminder of the balance between military discipline and the human connection that underpins the Guyana Defence Force. The event left the troops with cherished memories and a renewed commitment to their mission of serving the nation with pride and purpose.

Gov't accelerates progress toward access to clean water

MINISTER within the Ministry of Housing and Water, Susan Rodrigues, has reaffirmed the government's commitment to ensuring equitable access to clean, potable water for all Guyanese, with a focus on achieving full coverage in the hinterland by 2025.

Speaking during a recent outreach in Block 42, Linden-Region 10, Minister Rodrigues highlighted significant advancements under the People's Progressive Party Civic (PPP/C) government.

Currently, 94 percent of the hinterland regions have access to clean and safe water, a remarkable increase from just 45 percent in 2020 when the PPP/C took office. Minister Rodrigues noted that the government's efforts are

aligned with Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 6, which aims to provide universal access to clean water and sanitation by 2030.

"In Guyana, the government has stipulated that by 2025, we should have 100 percent access to water in the hinterland regions," Rodrigues stated. "By next year, we will achieve 100 percent access, ensuring that no one is left behind."

Since August 2020, the government has invested \$700 million to provide clean and safe water for over 27,700 residents of Linden and its surrounding areas. Recent projects include the construction of a \$40 million well at Bamia, bringing potable water to 200 homes for the first time, and the

installation of a new well in Amelia's Ward to support the region's expanding housing developments.

In Rockstone, residents now enjoy consistent access to drinkable water following the installation of a new well. Additionally, water treatment plants have been rehabilitated and expanded to enhance distribution networks and improve the delivery of clean water.

Highlighting the government's innovative approaches, Minister Rodrigues announced a \$100 million project underway in West Watooka to provide access to water for over 5,000 residents. Due to unique geographical challenges, the project will filter surface water from a local creek, trans-

forming it into a reliable water source for the community.

"We had to get creative at West Watooka," Rodrigues explained. "We are using the same creek that residents rely on, filtering the water to ensure it is safe and accessible for everyone."

Minister Rodrigues emphasised that every region in Guyana will benefit from these initiatives as part of the government's broader agenda to uplift hinterland communities and ensure equal access to resources.

"The PPP/C government has always prioritised the needs of Guyana's indigenous and hinterland communities," she said. "These investments reflect our dedication to improving the quality of life for all Guyanese."

Region Nine now boasts sophisticated energy system

PRIME Minister, Brigadier (Ret'd) Mark Phillips officially commissioned the 0.7 MW Moco Moco Hydropower Plant on Friday, marking a transformative milestone for Region Nine's energy landscape.

He emphasised the project's pivotal role in bridging the energy divide, a cornerstone of the government's commitment to equitable development under its "One Guyana" vision.

"This is another example of us delivering on our promise to bridge the development divide. More particularly, what we're doing is bridging the energy divide," he said.

The Prime Minister underscored that the symbolic and practical significance of revitalising this long-dormant facility represents a broader effort by the government to ensure that all regions, including hinterland communities, benefit from its broader developmental agenda particularly its pursuance of an energy mix which features renewable energy at the fore.

"You're making history," the Prime Minister declared, "because, for the first time in our country's history, we have a hydro-power plant, solar farm, and diesel generators working together to provide energy, and this is happening for the first time in Region Nine right here."

The Prime Minister detailed how the newly recommissioned hydropower plant, now contributing 0.7 MW of power, integrates with Region Nine's existing energy infrastructure.

The region now boasts a sophisticated energy system, combining the hydropower plant with a 1 MW solar farm and 2 MW diesel generators, delivering a total capacity of 3.7 MW. This capacity is set to increase to an impressive 5.2 MW by February 2025, with the addition of the Kumu Hydropower Plant.

"In Lethem, at your maximum capacity right now, you are only using two megawatts. You will have almost two-and-a-half times the amount of electricity that you can use right now. This is the development that we're talking about; bridging the divide, the development divide, and we have successfully bridged the energy divide with this one project," the PM said.

The Prime Minister reaffirmed the government's dedication to the Low-Carbon Development Strategy (LCDS) 2030, and reminded of the ambitious goals for renewable energy adoption.

"By 2030, there'll be greater use of renewable energy in Guyana," he said, adding:

"Most of the energy; more than 50 per cent of our energy, by 2030, will come from the sun, will come from hydro (from water), will come from

wind, as much as possible, less energy from fossil fuel, more from mother nature."

Further demonstrating this commitment, the Prime Minister announced the Cabinet's recent approval of four new solar mini-grids for the communities of Yupukari, Nappi, and Awaruwaunau in Region Nine (Upper Takutu-Upper Essequibo) and Paramakatoi, in Region Eight (Potaro-Siparuni).

And, speaking of driving the economic growth in the region through the energy that is now available, Prime Minister Phillips urged the residents of Region Nine to capitalise on the opportunities created by the high levels of electricity.



The 0.7 MW Moco Moco Hydropower Plant

Our Family Caring for Yours

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



416-293-5211

4164 Sheppard Avenue East
Scarborough, Ontario M1S 1T3

www.ogdenfuneralhome.com

DFM

Danforth Food Market

www.danforthfoodmarket.com

We're simply the best West Indian store in town.



Dunn's River Parboiled Rice 8 kg

11⁹⁹ each



Valentino Non Alcoholic Wine Assorted 750 ml

2/\$5



Grace Jamaican Ackee 540 ml

7⁹⁹ each



Caribbean Delight Salted Alaskan Pollock Fillet 284 g

3/7⁹⁹



Sorrel Fizz Carbonated Beverage 300 ml

1³⁹ each



Power Malt Extra Energy 330 ml

2/\$1



Lucozade Energy Glucose Drink Orange Only 380 ml

1⁹⁹ each



National Deluxe Cream Crackers 112 g

89¢ each



Benjamins Browning 140 ml

1⁹⁹ each



Nupak Coconut Milk 398 ml

99¢ each



Rogers Lantic White Granulated Sugar 2 kg

2⁹⁹ each



Home Choice Soup Mix assorted 45 g

99¢ each



Geisha Sardines 425 g

2⁰⁰ each



Creation Food Veggie Chunks assorted 200 g

1⁹⁹ each



Nupak White Corn Flour 10 kg

26⁰⁰ each



Grace Corn Meal 2 kg

2/5⁵⁰

DFM

Five Location To S

HOLIDAY EATING STARTS HERE

Grown From Australia
Free Range Goat Meat



\$4.99
lb Frozen

Jamaica's Choice Double Smoked Turkey, Chicken or Ham



Available From
\$3.99
lb

Fresh Chicken Drumsticks



\$1.39
lb

Large 30-40 Headless White Shrimp 500 g



\$9.99
lb

Fresh Flamingo Chicken Leg Quarters



4.99
≥18 kg box
With Purchase of 2 cases or More Thursday To Sunday Only

Line, Yellow Tail or Red Snappers Under 1/2 Lb



\$5.99
lb as is

Fresh Doctor Fish



\$7.99
lb as is

Fresh Baby King Fish



\$8.99
lb as is

Fresh Jamaican Yellow Yams



4.99
lb

Fresh Jamaican Dasheen



5.99
lb

Season's Sweetings

Holiday Store Hours

Friday	December 20th	9:00 AM to 9:00 PM	Friday	December 27th	9:00 AM to 9:00 PM
Saturday	December 21st	9:00 AM to 10:00 PM	Saturday	December 28th	9:00 AM to 9:00 PM
Sunday	December 22nd	9:00 AM to 8:00 PM	Sunday	December 29th	9:00 AM to 7:00 PM
Monday	December 23rd	9:00 AM to 9:00 PM	Monday	December 30th	9:00 AM to 9:00 PM
Tuesday	December 24th	9:00 AM to 9:00 PM	Tuesday	December 31st	9:00 AM to 9:00 PM
Wednesday	December 25th	Christmas Day Close	Wednesday	January 1st	New Year Day Close
Thursday	December 26th	9:00 AM to 7:00 PM Mississauga Location Except	Thursday	January 2nd	Open 9:00 AM to 9:00 PM

Five Locations To Serve You Better

Specials in Effect Thu. Dec. 19th until Wed. Dec. 24, 2024

Though we strive for accuracy in both copy & illustration, unintentional error may occur, we reserve the right to correct any error. Specials Available While Quantities Last. We reserve the right to limit quantities.

North York Location 3701 Keele Street North York, Ont. 416-398-8123	Etobicoke Location 301 Silverstone Dr. Etobicoke, Ont. 416-3740-9870	Mississauga Location 1225 Dundas Street Mississauga, Ont. 906-949-9900	Brampton Location 144 Kennedy Road Brampton, Ont. 647-7604574	Brampton Location 144 Kennedy Road Brampton, Ont. 647-7604574
-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Serve You Better






LOTUS

Funeral and Cremation Centre Inc.

121 City View Drive
 North of Belfield Road, East side of Highway 27
 647-547-8188 www.lotusfuneralandcremation.com



Seating for more than 500+ guests!

Crematorium inside our building!



CHARLIE'S CATERING SERVICE

Brought to you by Charlie's Caribbean Cuisine

The finest taste of the Caribbean
Dine in or Take out & Catering

For CATERING Inquiries, call:
 905-949-0663



WE CATER FOR ALL OCCASIONS INCLUDING:
 • Corporate Events • Weddings and other Social Events

Not sure how much food you'll need?
WE CAN HELP YOU!

We will suggest the right amount of food to maximize the value of your dollar
 So you'll have enough food and pay less and have less waste

Full Catering for Hindu religious ceremonies including 7 curry
 Cooked with organic vegetables and spices

We Guarantee
 you'll love our food, that's why we are willing to give a free taste test to prove that our food is great.

WE CATER TO ALL YOUR CARIBBEAN NEEDS.

All meats halal, pork free environment

Delivery to the GTA available

3055 Hurontario St. Mississauga, L5A 2G9
www.charliescaribbeancuisine.com

Serving the community for over 30 years you can rest assured that your order will be made fresh and with the highest quality ingredients possible.

charliescaribbeancuisine@hotmail.com

LAW OFFICE

CHET SHARMA

B.A., B.S.W. (Hons), LL.B.
Barrister, Solicitor & Notary Public

GENERAL PRACTICE

Immigration Law
Criminal Law
Divorce & Family Law

Office: 416-285-1550
Res: 416-284-9191



150 Lawson Road, Toronto
ON M1C 2J4

Chet Sharma
B.A., B.S.W. (Hons), LL.B.



ADS IN EQUALITY WORK!



SG AUTO WORK

Stanley G. (Lead Technician)

416-285-5875
sgautowork@hotmail.com

1940 Ellesmere Rd. Unit 14
Scarborough, ON. M1H2V7

- AC Services
- Brakes
- Electrical Systems
- Engine Repair
- New & Used Tires
- Steering
- Suspension
- Transmission Repair

Spreading Xmas cheer

In the true spirit of the holiday season, Senior Minister in the Office of the President with Responsibility for Finance and the Public Service, Dr. Ashni Singh (pictured) joined hands with the Salvation Army (Guyana Division) on Monday to bring smiles to the faces of the vulnerable and elderly during their annual Christmas Hamper Distribution.

Held at the Salvation Army headquarters on Alexander Street, Georgetown, the event brought together senior citizens and individuals in need, highlighting the organization's enduring commitment to serving Guyanese communities.

Speaking at the event, Minister Singh emphasized the government's strong partnership with the Salvation Army, which has spanned several years and contributed to critical social and civic initiatives.

He noted that the administration, led by President Dr. Irfaan Ali, fully supports such programmes as part of its broader mission to ensure that every citizen feels included in Guyana's ongoing transformation.

CHARLEY'S CARIBBEAN CUISINE

For all your catering needs

1158 Morningside Ave, Scarborough
(at Morningside)

(416) 282-8608

Fabulous authentic Guyanese food. We can't make this for these prices. (Grandma is from Berbice Guyana and knows country Guyanese food - even she will eat it!) Try the dhal puri and okra / shrimp.

Come savor a savory meal at Charley's Caribbean Cuisine



Not sure how much food you need? We'll help you suggest the right amount of food to minimize your cost.

Pork free halal foods. Catering for Hindu religious events, as well as all Caribbean events.



PARTY TRAYS AVAILABLE!

Infrastructure, hospitality training key for Guyana's tourism growth

The British High Commissioner, Jane Miller, underscored the vital role of infrastructure development and hospitality training in advancing Guyana's tourism sector to global prominence.

During this week's episode of the Energy Perspectives Podcast, Miller emphasised these two key areas in enhancing tourism development in Guyana.

She noted that significant strides are already being made in improving infrastructure, which is crucial given the high costs and challenges associated with accessing interior areas.

"Firstly, it would be about infrastructure. We are already seeing that being developed, so I think that it is really important. It is very expensive to get into the interior, and I think the way in which infrastructure is being improved it will become more accessible."

The diplomat also stressed the importance of training, particularly in hospitality. She explained that it is essential to create opportunities for people to understand and deliver world-class hospitality, ensuring that services in these areas meet international standards.

"I think the other thing is training. It's about really improving opportunities for people to understand hospitality and what world-class hospitality looks like," she remarked. "Training is really going to be important. It will really nail Guyana as a real global eco-destination."

Miller noted the rapid growth of Guyana's tourism sector. In Georgetown, the capital city, she said there is a significant rise in the construction of new hotels, reflecting the growing demand from business and leisure travelers. Meanwhile, in the interior regions, she said there is a notable increase in the establishment of lodges and eco-tourism destinations.

The Guyana government is making significant investments in the



British High Commissioner to Guyana Jane Miller

tourism sector, recognising its potential as a driver of economic growth. Major initiatives include the development of eco-tourism destinations in the hinterland and enhancing infrastructure to support sustainable travel.

In Georgetown, the surge in new hotels reflects a focus on accommodating increasing numbers of international visitors, spurred by the country's oil boom. Additionally, partnerships with indigenous communities aim to promote authentic cultural experiences while empowering local livelihoods. Through strategic marketing campaigns, policy support, and capacity building, the government is position-

ing Guyana as a top-tier tourism destination in the region.

The year 2024 has seen a significant expansion in tourism infrastructure.

A total of 26 bed-and-breakfast properties have been approved, and 15 new tourism experiences have been introduced, expanding the offerings beyond Georgetown and into communities across the country. This growth is not only benefitting Georgetown but also various regions of Guyana, where new tourism ventures are creating jobs and driving economic development.

Currently, Guyana has 3,300 hotel

rooms; an additional 1,000 rooms are scheduled to become available in 2025, with a further 800 rooms to be added by 2026.

This expansion is part of the government's broader strategy to boost tourism, and support the country's growing appeal as an international destination. The new hotel rooms will help accommodate the influx of tourists drawn by Guyana's expanding tourism offerings.

Moreover, the establishment of a Tourism and Hospitality Training Institute has been on the cards for several years now. In January 2024, the sod was turned for its construction.

Roll out of \$100K cash grants begins

THE Minister of Amerindian Affairs, Pauline Sukhai, on Monday, launched the highly anticipated \$100,000 cash grant distribution in Mahdia, Princeville, and Campbelltown, Region Eight (Potaro-Siparuni).

This initiative, supported by the Ministry of Finance and the Bank of Guyana, is part of President Dr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali's broader efforts to promote economic empowerment and alleviate financial challenges for Guyanese families, particularly in remote and hinterland communities.

The \$100,000 cash grant reflects the government's commitment to leveraging the nation's burgeoning oil revenues to provide direct economic benefits to its citizens. This initiative will inject over \$60 billion into the economy, boosting household income, fostering local business growth, and enabling investments in education and entrepreneurship. The initiative is one of several measures introduced to improve the standard of living, including the removal of taxes on essential services and the abolition of tuition fees at tertiary institutions starting January 2025.

The distribution process was praised for its efficiency, with local communities expressing gratitude for the timely support. Beneficiaries highlighted the grant's potential to cover pressing needs, from household expenses to small business investments, underscoring its transformative potential for vulnerable populations in these areas.

The initiative aligns with President Ali's vision of eq-



The \$100K grant distribution began in Region Eight, ensuring that every Guyanese benefits from the nation's growing wealth. This launch marks a step forward in the government's strategy to create a more inclusive economy, bridging gaps between urban and rural regions while addressing income inequality.

**ADVERTISING
in EQUALITY
NEWS
WORKS!
TRY IT
TODAY.
416-281-
3333**

Exxon: Guyana ‘achieving in a decade what took others 50 years’

GUYANA’S oil journey has rapidly transformed into one of the fastest production ramp-ups in modern energy history.

Within just a few years, the country has gone from producing no oil to positioning itself to achieve one million barrels per day (bpd) by the early 2030s, a feat that took decades for oil-producing giants like Brazil and Angola.

This unprecedented journey was spotlighted during ExxonMobil’s Corporate Plan Update and Upstream Spotlight, where ExxonMobil Guyana’s Development Manager Drew Bishops offered an interesting analogy: Guyana’s oil success is like a five-star restaurant.

“I’m often asked, ‘What is the secret sauce in Guyana? Is the discovery just that good?’ What I tell them is they have the wrong paradigm entirely. Guyana’s success is more like a Michelin-star restaurant,” Bishops said.

In December 2019, Guyana made its historic entry into oil production with the Liza Destiny floating production, storage, and offloading (FPSO) vessel. In just five years, ExxonMobil and its partners, Hess Corporation and CNOOC, have turned the Stabroek Block into one of the world’s most promising oil provinces.

The Stabroek Block, located approximately 120 miles offshore Guyana, covers an area of 6.6 million acres (26,800 square kilometres).

Bishops highlighted the scale of this achievement, noting, “Five years ago, there was no production in the country; we plan to achieve one million barrels per day production in just over a decade from first discovery. For comparison, achieving this milestone in Brazil or Angola took 50-plus years.”

The secret to this success, according to Bishops, lies in ExxonMobil’s ability to manage a mix of complex ingredients: The geological and technical challenges presented by the Stabroek Block’s vast and varied reservoirs.

“It covers the same area as the State of Massachusetts; in addition to the sheer size of the block, you have to consider this map in cross-section. There is a complex, three-dimensional challenge with unique reservoirs being developed at different depths,” Bishops related.

So far, ExxonMobil has developed 10 reservoirs, and by the time its eighth project is online, that number is expected to grow to 40.



ExxonMobil Guyana’s Development Manager Drew Bishops

Each development requires a unique approach. For example, Hammerhead, the company’s seventh project, contains rock formations that allow fluids to move 100,000 times more easily than shale formations in the US Permian Basin. However, its heavy crude oil presents unique processing challenges.

Conversely, Longtail, another major development, offers a completely different dynamic.

“Longtail can’t decide if it wants to be gas or liquid. Lots of gas helps with recovery, and we’re going to use that gas to recycle it like a sponge. Repeatedly pulling the liquids out of the reservoir. Dry gas in, oil rich gas out.

Very light, high quality liquid produce that looks more like gasoline than what you put in your car,” he said.

ExxonMobil’s success in Guyana isn’t just about geology; it’s about execution and technology-driven innovation. The company’s use of 4D seismic technology is a prime example.

This advanced imaging technique allows ExxonMobil to track fluid movement in real time, enabling them to identify untapped reserves, and optimise well placement.

“In this real-life example, you can see water, which is blue, and gas, which is red, displacing the oil, which is yellow, in the reservoir. And you can also see where the oil is not moving, making a perfect target for a new well

to capture the oil that would have otherwise been left behind,” Bishops explained while pointing to a 4D seismic map.

Looking ahead, ExxonMobil has an aggressive expansion strategy focused on maximising value through tiebacks, new discoveries, and further exploration. Bishops pointed out that about one-third of the Stabroek Block still lacks 3D seismic data, leaving vast potential yet to be tapped.

“This map shows where we see this potential coming from... discovered undeveloped resources near our existing facilities... new resources brought back to those existing assets, increasing and extending our oil production,” he stated.



Home for sale:
 Chesney/Kilroy Corentyne Berbice.
 3rd bedroom has ensuite and a walkout private balcony, 3 toilets, central air, 2nd floor laundry room, computerized water filter, automatic gate and garage opener Canadian built, new perkins generator no blackouts ready to move in and start dwelling, concrete yard. For more information contact via WhatsApp: +592 657 7217 Or call: +1 (905) 595-1813






Hussain blended tradition and innovation in his performances

Remembering Zakir who became Indian music's global ambassador

Zakir Hussain, the legendary tabla virtuoso and global ambassador of Indian classical music who has died aged 73, leaves behind a timeless rhythmic legacy that will inspire generations.

A child prodigy, he collaborated with Indian classical icons like Ravi Shankar, Ali Akbar Khan, and Shivkumar Sharma and global musicians like John McLaughlin and George Harrison.

Born on 9 March, 1951, in Mahim, Mumbai, he was the eldest son of Ustad Allarakha, one of history's most iconic players of the tabla - a pair of traditional Indian hand played drums.

Hussain's journey, from a child prodigy to an internationally celebrated percussionist, was a masterclass in balancing tradition and innovation.

Hussain's life revolved around rhythm from the very beginning.

The sound of the tabla was his first language, his earliest "words". By the age of 12, he was already performing globally, accompanying stalwarts like Pandit Ravi Shankar and Ustad Ali Akbar Khan during his teenage years.

While rooted in the Hindustani classical tradition, Hussain possessed an insatiable curiosity that propelled him to explore other genres, leading to ground-breaking collaborations across the world.

In 1973, he co-founded Shakti with guitarist John McLaughlin, a group that fused Indian classical music with jazz and Western traditions, creating a new global sound.

Over five decades, Shakti evolved, featuring luminaries like violinist L Shankar, percussionist Vikku Vinayakram, and mandolin maestro U Srinivas.

Their first studio album in 46 years, *This Moment*, won the Grammy for Best Global Music Album in 2024, marking a fitting finale to their 50th-anniversary tour. Hussain's virtuosity on the tabla was pivotal to Shakti's success and to the global appreciation of Indian rhythms.

Zakir Hussain's contributions extended far beyond Shakti.

He was a key collaborator in Planet Drum and Global Drum Project, both with Grateful Dead drummer Mickey Hart, earning him Grammy Awards in 1991 and 2008.

He worked with banjo maestro Béla Fleck

and bassist Edgar Meyer on the Grammy-winning *As We Speak* (2024), further cementing his status as a pioneer of cross-genre collaborations. He also collaborated with musicians as diverse as Yo-Yo Ma, George Harrison, Van Morrison and Billy Cobham, bringing Indian classical music to global audiences.

His ventures like *Tabla Beat Science*, a fusion of Indian classical music with electronic and world music, and orchestral works such as *Peshkar* for the Symphony Orchestra of India showcased his unrelenting drive to innovate while respecting his roots.

"The moment you think you're a maestro, you are distancing yourself from the others," Hussain told *Rolling Stone India* magazine earlier this year. "You have to be part of a group, and not dominate it."

This philosophy made him not only a consummate artist but also a lifelong learner and mentor.

Hussain's flamboyance and speed and precision of his performances earned him widespread admiration.

The *New York Times*, in its review of a 2009 jazz performance at Carnegie Hall, described his artistry as embodying "an impish strain of virtuosity".

"He's a fearsome technician but also a whimsical inventor, devoted to exuberant play. So he rarely seems overbearing, even when the blur of his fingers rivals the beat of a hummingbird's wings."

His accolades are as numerous as the beats he crafted. A recipient of the Padma Bhushan and Padma Shri, Hussain was also a National Endowment for the Arts National Heritage Fellow in the United States. He delighted audiences at prestigious venues like Carnegie Hall and collaborated with jazz legends, Western classical orchestras, and Carnatic music maestros.

Despite his global acclaim, Hussain remained deeply connected to his Indian roots. His early years in a modest chawl - large tenement complexes - in Mahim shaped his values.

"For the first three-and-a-half years of my life, we all lived in one room that had no toilet. We had to use the common toilets," Hussain once said.



ARIES (March 21 - April 20): You will meet someone rather exotic over the next 24 hours, someone you would usually be inclined to cross the street to avoid. On this occasion though you will sense that they are going to be of great importance in your life, so get talking.

TAURUS (April 21 - May 21): You need to break free of routines that have been holding you back and the best way to do that is to tell friends and colleagues that you will no longer be following their lead. They will be disappointed, of course, but you must be your own boss.

GEMINI (May 22 - June 21): Don't be afraid to try something new today, even if you cannot see how it will benefit you in the future. You are at your best when you take the initiative and make things happen, so don't sit back and wait for life to come looking for you.

CANCER (June 22 - July 23): A family matter that has been causing some concern will come to a head today and the good news is it won't be half as stressful as you had feared. Most likely it was nothing more than a misunderstanding, one that can easily be ironed out.

LEO (July 24 - Aug. 23): Surround yourself with people who are positive about life and who inspire you to do more and do better. Usually you are the one who motivates others but even a Leo needs a lift now and again and you will get a big one today.

VIRGO (Aug. 24 - Sept. 23): An unexpected event will throw you off your stride today but you won't be on the defensive for long. The good news is that the more it shakes things up the more opportunities it will create for you to prosper. Don't be slow to react.

LIBRA (Sept. 24 - Oct. 23): While this is certainly one of the better phases of the year for creative endeavors the cosmic cycle is already beginning to shift and soon you will have to devote more time and attention to family matters. That's good. You can be just as creative there too.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24 - Nov. 22): Someone you are close to will do something out of the ordinary, maybe even shocking, today and your first reaction will be to ask "Why?" Maybe a better response would be to ask "Why not?" There is no cosmic law that says they must follow the rules.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 23 - Dec. 21): You will get the VIP treatment wherever you go and whatever you do today and if you are smart you will take full advantage of it. As the Sun nears the end of its journey through your sign occasions like this may become a bit rarer.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 - Jan. 20): Don't waste time trying to convince friends and loved ones that what you are planning will work and that they should fully support you because they probably won't - and you don't need their help anyway. You've got the momentum to go it alone.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 21 - Feb. 19): It's a good thing that you enjoy surprises because they will be arriving in waves over the next few days. Being the adventurous sort you won't hesitate to get your surf board out and ride those waves in whatever direction they choose to take you!

PISCES (Feb. 20 - Mar. 20): If you keep your wits about you today you will most likely gain financially, but the opposite is true as well: if you allow your attention to wander, even for a minute, you could end up paying out more cash than you take in. You must stay focused.

**Our
advertising works!
Try a low cost ad in
Equality News and reap
the benefits of the only
print weekly newspaper.
Call 647-216-2359 for
rates**

Antigua & Barbuda named first official 'Wellness Destination'

Antigua and Barbuda has been honored as the first destination worldwide to receive the 'Wellness Destination' designation from the Wellness Tourism Association (WTA).

According to the WTA, a Wellness Destination is defined as "a geographical area that fosters and promotes wellness as an integral part of life within the community and the region's economy." This recognition highlights the nation's commitment to integrating wellness into its culture and economic framework.

The title was awarded after the country successfully met the WTA's nine-point Wellness Destination checklist, developed in 2019, to evaluate locations aspiring to become hubs for wellness tourism.

The criteria is designed to ensure that wellness is deeply integrated into the community and local economy, prioritizing both physical and mental wellbeing.

The association hopes that by recognizing locations like Antigua & Barbuda, more regions will be encouraged to adopt similar wellness practices, further shaping the future of wellness travel.

Anne Dimon, WTA president and chief executive officer (CEO), said: "As wellness tourism continues to grow, it's



Antigua's pristine beaches offer natural beauty and tranquility

crucial that travelers understand the experiences and offerings available at each destination."

"The WTA's check-list provides a foundation for any region that aspires to be recognized as a true Wellness Destination, ensuring both visitors and locals benefit from the experience."

Colin C James, CEO of the Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority, added: "We're incredibly excited and honored to be named as a Wellness Destination by the WTA."

With pristine beaches, lush landscapes and peaceful environments, Antigua and Barbuda offers a perfect blend

of natural beauty and tranquility.

"This designation allows us to further solidify our position as a premier destination for wellness tourism, offering a variety of rejuvenating experiences tailored to the needs of today's wellness traveler," James said.

Tobago's push for greater self-governance axed in parliament

A new attempt to grant Tobago greater self-governance has been defeated in what local politicians have described as a significant setback.

Tobago has long sought more control over its political and economic affairs. Despite having its own house of assembly, the island has pushed for a larger share of the national budget and the ability to pass its own laws.

On Monday, a bill aimed at increasing the powers of Tobago's house of assembly was introduced to parliament after years of political negotiations. However, opposition members blocked the bill, citing concerns raised by Farley Augustine, head of the Tobago government and leader of the Tobago People's Party.

Augustine, who has been advocating for a "federal-type" system, criticized the government's proposed amendments, calling them "inconsequential nonsense." He expressed frustration over the focus on changing the titles of Tobago's leaders, rather than addressing key issues such as creating a real federal system, defining the island's boundaries, and granting the island the authority to pass laws on matters affecting its people.

In a Facebook post, Augustine accused the government of "majoring in minors" by ignoring these important issues. He pledged to take his fight for the island's autonomy to the international stage, planning to submit a formal complaint to the United Nations.

Tobago's proposals had garnered support from the government, including T&T Prime Minister Keith Rowley, who expressed shock at the opposition to the bill. Rowley noted that the bill had been the result of extensive consultations with various stakeholders, including legal experts and representatives from both the ruling and opposition parties.

Senator Ancil Dennis, the Tobago Council's political leader from the ruling People's National Movement (PNM), emphasized that the bill reflected the will of the people of Tobago. He highlighted that the proposed legislation would have increased Tobago's share of the national budget from 4.03% to 6.8%, an increase of approximately \$1.5 billion (nearly US\$221 million). Dennis also pointed out that the bill would have eliminated the need for Tobago's legislation to pass through central government scrutiny, granting Tobago more legislative independence.

"The bill that failed would have put us in a position where Tobago could pass its own laws and simply seek the president's assent, similar to the process in the UK," Dennis explained. "It's extremely disappointing that after years of hard work and numerous consultations, we are still unable to achieve these crucial improvements for Tobago."



Farley Augustine is head of the Tobago government

UK commits £10 million to Grenada's green energy transition efforts

The United Kingdom has announced a £10 million funding package to support Grenada's Geothermal Energy Development Project, aimed at exploring and harnessing the island's geothermal energy potential. The announcement was made by UK Minister for Latin America and the Caribbean, Baroness Chapman, during a meeting in St. George's, the capital of Grenada.

This investment is focused on resource testing, including the drilling of exploratory wells, to assess the potential for geothermal electricity generation in Grenada. The project aims to help the country reduce its reliance on fossil fuels, contributing to a more sustainable energy future that is powered by locally sourced renewable energy.

Baroness Chapman highlighted the project's significance, stating that it would lower energy costs for households and businesses, which would be a major boost to Grenada's economy. Additionally, the shift to geothermal energy is expected to reduce carbon emissions, aligning with global goals for climate change mitigation.

This initiative is a crucial step toward sustainable energy development for Grenada, supporting the country in its efforts to transition to cleaner energy and lessen its environmental impact.

Grenadian Prime Minister Dickon



The announcement was made by UK Minister for Latin America and the Caribbean, Baroness Chapman

Mitchell expressed his gratitude for the UK's support in funding Grenada's Geothermal Energy Development Project. He emphasized the significance of the investment, stating, "This funding will allow us to assess the geothermal potential of Grenada and take further steps towards building

a clean, sustainable, and more affordable energy system." Prime Minister Mitchell's remarks underscore the importance of this initiative in helping Grenada transition to renewable energy. The geothermal project aligns with the country's broader goals of reducing reliance on fossil

fuels and advancing energy sustainability while also ensuring energy becomes more affordable for households and businesses. The funding not only marks a significant step in Grenada's energy transformation but also demonstrates international collaboration in promoting climate-friendly energy solutions.

Grenada elects country's first female political leader

Delegates attending Grenada's main opposition New National Party (NNP) convention on Sunday elected Emmalin Pierre as the party's first woman leader.

Pierre previously served as the party's Public Relations Officer before her historic elevation, while Norland Cox was chosen as the new deputy leader.

The convention, held on December 15 at the St. Andrew's Anglican Secondary School, marked a significant shift for the NNP, which had been led by Dr. Keith Mitchell since 1989. Mitchell, who took over leadership from the late Herbert Blaize—the party's first leader—will now serve as the NNP's Chairman. Gregory Bowen, the former deputy political leader, has transitioned to the role of Deputy Chairman.

The NNP's leadership election was long overdue, having been delayed for approximately two years. However, the process was overshadowed by allegations of unfairness and lack of transparency, raised by former Assistant General Secretary Peter David. David, who had been one of two candidates vying for the leadership, announced his withdrawal late Saturday, citing concerns over the integrity of the process.

"They have built a barricade for the way forward. Their divisive machina



Emmalin Pierre is the party's first woman leader of a major political party in Grenada

tions have left me with little option but to withdraw myself from tomorrow's proceedings, as a delegate or even an observer," David said in a statement broadcast via his Facebook page.

In a passionate address, David signaled that his withdrawal was not the end of his political journey. "Democ

racy's time has come. Decency's time has come. Honesty's time has come. I say to you — Tonight is not the end of anything. It is the beginning of everything," he said, thanking supporters who had encouraged him throughout his campaign.

The NNP, which was formed in the

early 1980s by a coalition of small political parties, has played a central role in Grenada's post-revolution political landscape. The party notably contested and won the island's first election following the collapse of the People's Revolutionary Government in October 1983.

Trinidad PM denies making country available to US for Venezuela incursion

Prime Minister Dr. Keith Rowley of Trinidad and Tobago has dismissed a recent newspaper story suggesting that Port of Spain had signed an agreement with the United States allowing U.S. forces to be deployed in Trinidad and Tobago in the event of a “conflict” in Venezuela. Rowley strongly refuted the claims made by the article, calling it false and misleading. He emphasized that no such agreement had been signed and that Trinidad and Tobago would not permit foreign military forces to operate in the country without proper authorization.

This statement comes amid ongoing regional tensions, particularly surrounding the political situation in Venezuela. Trinidad and Tobago has maintained a neutral stance on the issue, aiming to avoid being drawn into any potential conflict involving its neighbor. Rowley’s clarification aims to reassure the public that the government’s foreign policy and military decisions are in the best interest of national sovereignty and security.

“I had to say this today, this had to be responded to by the leadership of this country, to put to bed where there is disquiet because this article could have far-reaching consequences, not based on fact, not based on any serious research, not based on any understanding of the issue that you are trying to address,” Rowley told a news conference.

“Where did you get it from that we are in a position to make Trinidad and Tobago available to the United States for troops against Venezuela? This is a serious matter. If a country is making its territory available for another country to stage military action against that country, that is a serious matter.

“And if I don’t come here today as Prime Minister and denounce this irresponsibility. If you were in Venezuela what would you think? What would you think? And if you are in Venezuela where Trinidad and Tobago are negotiating with you all kinds of important matters, but making its territory available for American incursions in the event that it is determined that Venezuela has instability, what would you think,” Rowley told reporters following the weekly Cabinet meeting.

Newsday newspaper reported Thursday that National Security Minister Fitzgerald Hinds signed off on five agreements with the United States on December 10, two of which can allow the US Department of Defense to deploy forces to the oil-rich twin-island Republic in the event of a “conflict” in Venezuela.

The paper quoted a December 10 statement issued by the US Embassy in Trinidad stating that Rowley, Hinds as well as Energy Minister Stuart Young,



T&T Prime Minister Keith Rowley

Finance Minister Colm Imbert, and Foreign Affairs Minister Dr Amery Browne met and held talks with US diplomatic and navy officials on security, energy, cybersecurity and human-rights issues.

Earlier this week, defence and security leaders from the Caribbean met in Trinidad to exchange ideas, experiences, and perspectives on regional collaborative efforts to address security challenges in the 21st century.

The 2024 Caribbean Nations Security Conference (CANSEC) on Wednesday was also attended by United States Navy Admiral Alvin Holsey, the Commander of the US Southern Command (SOUTHCOM).

According to the US Embassy statement issued on December 10, United States Ambassador Candace Bond and Admiral Holsey met with Rowley and other government ministers for discussions “on security, energy, cybersecurity, and human rights cooperation.”

It said at the meeting, Ambassador Bond, Admiral Holsey, and Rowley celebrated the successful conclusion of negotiations on a Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA), which will facilitate interoperability between the two countries’ armed forces; the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative Technical Assistance Field Team (CBSI-TAFT); and the Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement (ACSA).

The SOFA is an agreement that allows for military-to-military engagement.

The United States and Trinidad and Tobago have had a SOFA agreement since 2007.

The new SOFA will bring the agreement in line with US and TT laws and will have no expiration date unless renegotiated, according to the US Embassy.

The ACSA is a formal logistics mechanism that allows the US Department of Defense to exchange logistic support, supplies, and services directly between eligible countries and international organisations.

The embassy statement said that Ambassador Bond and Admiral Holsey also congratulated Rowley for Trinidad and Tobago’s accession to the Treaty of San José and the SOUTHCOM Human Rights Initiative.

“Trinidad and Tobago’s leadership in implementing this framework for security cooperation demonstrates its potential as the cornerstone of peace and security in the Caribbean, and has opened the door to unprecedented and unequalled opportunities for defense cooperation between Trinidad and Tobago and the United States,” she said.

For his part, Admiral Holsey is quoted in the statement as saying “the United States is committed to providing expertise and resources to enhance Trinidad and Tobago’s security capabilities, and these agreements deepen strategic collaboration on a host of issues.”

In the front page story on Thursday, Newsday said that it understood that “Cabinet approved the SOFA at its meeting on December 7 and the document was sent to attorneys for the Department of Defence (DoD), the National Security Minister, the Attorney General and the TT Defence Force for final “scrubbing” before being signed on December 10,” it said, adding that “this agreement will take effect on January 1, 2025.

“The renegotiations included clarification of the language used in the agreement, including that it allows for civilian employees of the DoD to qualify for immunities. The agreement does not cover contractors employed with the DoD. It also makes allowances for DoD

law-enforcement officers to carry firearms while deployed in TT and for driver’s permits for those employees, the paper reported, adding “In the event of a conflict on TT’s doorstep in Venezuela, the US can also deploy troops to TT for a possible response by enacting the SOFA. As the southernmost country in the Caribbean, TT is mere miles away from Venezuela. Its closest point is Cedros”.

The newspaper said that Guyana has also signed a SOFA with Washington.

“While Newsday has not seen the current agreement, the SOFA signed in 2006 between Guyana and the US allows for DoD military and civilian employees to be granted status equal to US Embassy staff; be allowed to enter and leave Guyana with their US Government IDs; have their driver’s permits – issued in the US – accepted for use in Guyana; be authorised to wear their US-issued uniforms in Guyana; and be permitted to bring weapons into Guyana based on their orders, among other provisions.”

The newspaper said that the “ACSA agreement, also signed on December 10, provides a similar opportunity for US troops to be deployed to TT to respond to conflicts in Venezuela”.

But, Rowley told reporters that he was “disturbed” at the newspaper article, particularly when it is well known that Trinidad and Tobago does not interfere in the internal affairs of countries and is a leading player in ensuring that the Caribbean remains a zone of peace.

“I know there are people in this country...who would like our initiatives to bear no fruit and to come to naught. But this is going too far. This is going too far.”

He said Trinidad and Tobago and the United States enjoy good relations.

Rowley said that apart from the US, Port of Spain also relies on other Western countries including the British and French to help in the event of natural disasters or transnational criminal activities.

“This is a normal day’s work in Trinidad and Tobago, why would that be transmitted on the front page of a newspaper, misrepresenting the fact that this has to do with Trinidad and Tobago making its territory available when in fact it is the opposite.

“We don’t countenance, one, a breach of the peace in the region and two, we will not facilitate any such thing and our actions speak louder than our words on this matter,” Rowley said, adding that when the article was printed “immediately the entire CARICOM (Caribbean Community) becomes concerned because it is so far from what Trinidad and Tobago represents.

JLP rejects 'lies and misinformation' about trillions missing from gov't

The governing Jamaica Labour Party (JLP) has firmly rejected what it describes as "mischief and blatant lies, propaganda" regarding claims that trillions of dollars are missing across various government ministries.

Spokesperson for the JLPs Communication Taskforce, Marlon Morgan commented that the claims are "propaganda being spread by PNP members and supporters, and a few of their surrogates in civil society."

"The PNP and a few of their surrogates in civil society who have been spreading misinformation are very much aware that what we have is a situation which was initially flagged in 2012/2013 when the PNP was in office where various expenditures were not subjected to an external audit by the Auditor General. These funds are not unaccounted for or missing. It is unbecoming of PNP surrogates to use the traditional and social media space to falsely suggest otherwise," Morgan stated.

He explained that government ministries receive annual allocations approved by Parliament for their operations and are required by law to prepare Appropriation Accounts at the end of each financial year. These accounts, which outline actual spending against Parliament-approved budgets, must be submitted to the Auditor General within four months of the financial year ending.

Morgan acknowledged that some ministries have yet to finalize these accounts for auditing but assured the public that Jamaica's financial management system remains rigorous.

"The public can rest assured that based on rigorous accounting procedures and protocols, as well as systemic checks and balances in the Government's financial management system, including a requirement that each Ministry's expenditure is accompanied by appropriate payment vouchers and other supporting documents, there are no missing or unaccounted for public funds," he said.

He emphasized that the current JLP administration is committed to resolving delays in the preparation and certification of Appropriation Accounts.

"Ministries have been directed to build capacity and prioritize their Appropriations Accounts so as to secure the Auditor General's certification as soon as possible. The Jamaica Labour Party recognises and readily appreciates that protracted delays in the preparation and certification of Appropriation Accounts require action and is not keeping. We are moving to fix the long-standing problem."

Reiterating the JLP's position, the statement concluded that any suggestion of missing public funds is "false and irresponsible," urging stakeholders to refrain from spreading misinformation that could harm Jamaica's reputation locally and internationally.

The JLP's statement follows a recent review of the auditor general's re-



JLP spokesperson Marlon Morgan

ports on 16 government entities conducted by the Jamaica Accountability Meter Portal (JAMP) which revealed that \$3 trillion in Jamaican public spending remains unaccounted for over a six- to 11-year period.

Following the report, Jamaica's Minister of Finance and the Public Service, Fayval Williams, emphasized that the funds have not gone missing but

rather reflect delays in submitting appropriation accounts, which compare actual expenditures against Parliament-approved budgets.

"These accounts are critical to good governance and transparency," the Minister said. "We will work with the Ministries involved to ensure the timely completion of these reports to the Auditor General's standards."

The Minister clarified that many of the outstanding accounts stem from fiscal years 2012/2013 to 2015/2016, creating challenges for subsequent administrations to address the accumulated backlog.

Minister Williams also sought to reassure Jamaicans about the mechanisms in place to ensure accountability in public spending.

Jamaica to remove tax on tips for tourism workers

The Government of Jamaica is looking to reform labor-market arrangements in the tourism sector, with a plan to eliminate taxes on tips and ensure that 100 percent of gratuities are paid directly to workers in the hospitality industry, according to Minister of Tourism Edmund Bartlett.

Highlighting the need for a restructuring of the tourism labor market, Bartlett, speaking on the eve of the winter tourist season that began yesterday, stated that these changes would help create a more professional and equitable system for workers in the sector.

"The reform will include professionalizing the industry by training, certifying, and classifying workers, with remuneration tied to their skill levels and qualifications," Bartlett stated. "This approach mirrors the public sector's merit-based classification system, ensuring equity and guaranteeing opportunities for qualified workers to access top positions within the industry."

A key component of the proposed reforms is ensuring that gratuities and tips directly benefit workers. Minister Bartlett emphasized that gratuities, which are currently charged as service fees on rooms, dining, and other services, should be fully allocated to employees in the hospitality sector. This change aims to ensure that workers receive the full benefit of the gratuities intended for them.

"The gratuity, which has been instituted as a service charge exclusively for the workers, we insist, must be paid to the workers, and if this was so, the salary levels within the industry, certainly, the take-home pay of the worker would easily be twice what it is," Bartlett argued. "We are insisting that the gratuities be paid to the workers, and that we will remove



the tips from the taxable income areas so that all tips to the tourism workers will be tax free."

Bartlett's announcement follows several months of protest action by tourism workers, which included strikes at various hotels. Employees have consistently voiced concerns over low wages, long working hours, and the lack of formal contracts. Gratuities are typically charged as a percentage on services and are paid to workers, while tips, which are voluntary payments made directly by visitors, are often collected and distributed among employees.

Colleagues mourn T&T MP after she and her 2 children die in fire

Trinidad MP Lisa Morris-Julian is being remembered as a kind, caring and helpful woman who dedicated her life to serving people, her community and her country.

Morris-Julian, 48, died in a tragic early-morning fire at her Farfan Street, Arima home on December 16, which also claimed the lives of two of her children.

Police say the fire began at around 5.30 am while eight people were at home.

Morris-Julian's body was found in a bedroom on the eastern side of the house with her youngest child, six-year-old Jesiah Julian.

The body of her eldest, Xianne, 25, was found in another bedroom on the northern side of the house.

Eyewitnesses said the fire made the roof collapse, trapping Morris-Julian as she tried to escape with her son.

Morris-Julian's other two children and her sister escaped without injury.

Her husband Daniel Julian was injured and is warded at the Arima hospital along with Edward Allen, the boyfriend of one of her daughters.

Julian was moved to the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) to prevent infections to his burns.

The fire was extinguished by firefighters from the Arima, Tunapuna, and Port of Spain Fire Stations, but left the home completely gutted.

Within hours of her tragic death, hundreds of people gathered and wept nearby as they paid their respects, tried to offer words of comfort to her family and looked at the burnt structure.

Moments after the caution tape was removed – and the dozens of fire officers, police officers and soldiers left – Morris-Julian's burgesses moved nearer to the house, speaking in hushed tones and with tear-filled eyes as they stared at the burnt walls and broken windows.

A group of women gathered nearby said Morris-Julian was always willing to do what she could to uplift the community and improve other people's lives.



MP Lisa Morris-Julian and her son Jesiah who also died in the fire

“She was a beautiful woman and the best mayor! She was always going from people to people. She was a godly and loving person. Words can't express how I feeling,” said an elderly woman who stood sobbing as she spoke.

Another woman, named Rose, added, “She was always there, ready and willing to help, if you go and talk to her. It's a sad time for Arima.”

Another woman, standing in her work uniform, with tear-streaked cheeks, said she was on her way to work when she received the news, and came straight to Morris-Julian's home.

“I know Lisa a while. We had a good relationship, and when I heard the news I couldn't believe it. I thought I should come to make sure and see how her family is doing.”

She added, “Lisa cared for the burgesses and the people of Arima. Her aim was always to uplift Arima. She even lived in the heart of Arima. That shows you how connected she was to the community.”

Several of Morris-Julian's cabinet colleagues were seen crying outside the gutted home as Communications Minister Symon de Nobriga described her as a sister and “one of the loveliest human beings I have ever met.”

Education Minister Dr Nyan Gadsby-Dolly was inconsolable as she wept with a handkerchief over her eyes, her body heaving as she cried, while Planning Minister Penelope Beckles-Robinson and another woman supported her.

De Nobriga said the turnout of cabinet colleagues, MPs and Arima residents spoke volumes about the person she was and how people felt about her.

“I am broken today. I have lost not just a colleague, I have lost a sister. I think we are all just here to lend support to the people who are important to her, to lend support to each other and whatever we can do, we just want to be around.”

Recalling their time together as local government officials, he said he al-

ways considered her a mentor.

He said her death has hit the party hard.

“Lisa was an example (of service to country) for me. I think that if you ask any of her colleagues, any of her constituents, any of the burgesses of Arima from her time as mayor, I think that they would agree with that.

“It obviously will be a great loss for us, as a party, and as a team. It's a massive gap that is that has opened and I don't think there are words that you could come up with, that I could come up with, to express exactly how profound that loss is.”

He said the government has already begun considering how it can help and what protocols may be in place for her funeral. “It is not too early for us to be contemplating (how we can help), but it is most definitely too early to for us to speak on it.”

PNM stalwart and former Arima mayor and MP Ashton Ford said he admired Morris-Julian's humility.

Deputy T&T Commissioner cleared of charges

DEPUTY T&T Commissioner of Police Suzette Martin has been cleared of a dangerous driving charge.

On December 16, a notice of discontinuance signed by Director of Public Prosecutions Roger Gaspard, SC, was formally filed in the Port of Spain District Court.

On Monday evening, Gaspard confirmed that he exercised his authority under section 90 of the Constitution.

Martin appeared before Senior Magistrate Maureen Baboolal-Gafoor on December 17, when the magistrate formally discharged Martin and dis-

missed the matter.

“The court having seen the notice of discontinuance...the matter is hereby dismissed.”

No reason was given for the discontinuance.

ACP Wayne Mystar laid the charge against his colleague in October 2023, when she was head of the Professional Standards Bureau (PSB).

The charge related to an incident that took place around 8.30 am on April 18, 2023, on the Priority Bus Route (PBR) in the Croisee, San Juan.

A 14-year-old student was crossing the road to get to school when he

was allegedly struck by an unmarked police vehicle driven by Martin. The victim suffered fractures to his foot.

The Police Complaints Authority (PCA) investigated and Martin was charged via summons and ordered to appear in court.

When she did, she pleaded not guilty and her attorneys asked for her case to be determined expeditiously.

Attorney Jagdeo Singh noted at that hearing, “This case has reached you in strange circumstances. This file was closed by police investigators in clear, unmistakable, and unimpeachable terms.”

Martin remained head of the PSB, the unit that investigates misconduct allegations against police officers, as police regulations did not require her to be suspended pending the outcome of the case. In March, the House of Representatives approved Martin's appointment as a deputy commissioner.

Former commissioner James Philbert and Darren Mitchell also represented Martin. Deputy DPP Giselle Ferguson-Heller represented the Office of the DPP.

Mitchell commended the DPP and Ferguson-Heller for their “demonstration of justice and independence.

'Visionary leader' Chris Dehring appointed new CWI CEO

SportsMax founder Chris Dehring has been appointed the new CEO of Cricket West Indies (CWI).

CWI made the announcement on December 16.

As the former manager and director of the 2007 International Cricket Council World Cup held in the Caribbean, Dehring is no stranger to roles of high managerial importance in West Indies cricket.

"A visionary leader with an extraordinary track record in finance, sports management, media, and telecommunications, Dehring is uniquely positioned to steer CWI into a bold new chapter of growth and development," a CWI media release said.

The release said Dehring was chosen from a competitive pool of over 50 candidates from Afghanistan, Australia, Afghanistan, Europe, India and the Caribbean region.

"Dehring's appointment is the culmination of a meticulous, meritocratic process which included independent experts. His selection reflects CWI's steadfast commitment to attracting top-tier talent to lead West Indies cricket," the release said.

CWI president Dr Kishore Shallow said Dehring's appointment was in line with CWI's main goal of recruiting exceptional leadership to strengthen its mission.

"Chris Dehring represents the best of the best – an innovator, strategist, business magnate and passionate advocate for West Indies cricket. His return as an executive at West Indies cricket signals the dawn of an exciting new era as we work to reclaim our position as a dominant force in world cricket," Shallow said.

The release said Dehring's previous work with CWI had cemented his status as a game-changer for cricket in the Caribbean, and with the execution of the 2007 World Cup, it said, "Dehring delivered one of the most complex and successful multi-nation sporting events in the Caribbean's history."

Dehring said West Indies cricket holds a special place in his heart.

"As a unifying force and a symbol of pride for our region, I am honoured to return to an organisation that holds great significance to our people," Dehring said.

"Together with the CWI team and stakeholders, I am committed to driving innovation, fostering talent, and reigniting the passion for West Indies cricket, both at home and globally."

Last July, speaking as a guest on the Mason and Guest Show in Barbados, Dehring said the Windies brand was losing its potency in the world game.

It was, he said, "no longer a relevant force, unfortunately."

"It's something we grew up loving. We all have an emotional attachment to it.



New Cricket West Indies CEO Chris Dehring

"But if we look at it objectively, chances are, in the T20 game or in the One-dayers, (TT) could probably muster enough resources to promote their national team far more and use it more efficiently than the West Indies can use whatever money the TT government and

the private sector is giving Trinidadian cricketers for the West Indies team."

Former CWI CEO Johnny Grave stepped down in October from the role, which he had held for seven years.

Lynford Inverary, who was appointed CWI chief operating officer on

September 28, has been acting CEO since Grave's departure. Dehring will begin his tenure on February 1, 2025, and will be based at CWI's headquarters at the Coolidge Cricket Ground in Antigua, where he is expected to lead the organisation's operational objectives.

Daren Sammy takes reins as coach of WI Test team

WEST INDIES white-ball coach Daren Sammy has been given a new portfolio by Cricket West Indies (CWI), as the St Lucian will take over the reins of the Test team from April 1, 2025, replacing current Test coach Andre Coley.

The announcement was made by CWI director of cricket Miles Bascombe at the CWI's quarterly press conference in St Vincent on Monday. The decision to appoint Sammy as Test captain was agreed upon by the CWI board of directors in a meeting in St Vincent on Sunday.

Bascombe commended the work Sammy has done with the West Indies' white-ball teams. And while the contract of the former International Cricket Council (ICC) Twenty/20 World Cup captain was coming to an end at year's end, Bascombe said the opportunity was there to give Sammy his rewards and allow him to transfer his responsibility to a different environment.

"The contract of the current red-ball coach (Coley) will end ahead of the next series in the upcoming World Test Championship cycle. Daren's current contract ends at the end of this month, so in the process of renegotiating Daren's renewal, we definitely saw the opportunity – given the success he has had with the white-ball teams – to try to extend that to the Test team for the upcoming World Test Championship cycle," Bascombe said.

"I want to congratulate Mr Sammy. We have been quite impressed with the way he has charted a course for our white-ball teams, and he's guided them toward consistency of performance, and that's exactly what we want to see in our Test team."

Bascombe said Coley served well in his time at the helm and noted the board's decision didn't reflect on the lat-



West Indies head coach Daren Sammy.

ter's ability as a coach.

"I mentioned Andre Coley is a competent coach. This decision is no way about his competence necessarily. This is about the opportunity we have, given what Daren has been able to do with the white-ball teams," Bascombe said.

"It's the same player pool, the same staff and he has shown us he basically...he was able to implement a process and move us into a direction we want to go. It's about capturing that opportunity and having him do that across all formats."

We are OPEN during Public Holidays-CHRISTMAS 公众假期圣诞节照常营业

Any purchase over \$30 or \$50, get a 2025 calendar FOR FREE! 单笔消费满\$30, 送2025年台历一个! 单笔消费满\$50, 送2025年挂历一个!



SUPERKING SUPERMARKET

鴻發超市



Special Offers Effective: Friday Dec.20 To Thursday Dec.26, 2024



VEGETABLE & FRUIT

Grid of vegetable and fruit items with prices. Includes Sweet Onion, Mustard, Zucchini, Eggplant, Shanghai Bok Choy, Chinese Broccoli, House Tomato, Celery, Green Bean, Lemon in Bag, Red Pepper, Romaine Lettuce, Papaya, Grape Tomato, Pomegranate, Blueberry, China White Meat Pomelo, Sugar Bro Apple, Dragon Fruit, Pineapple, Watermelon, and Gift Set Blueberry Orange.

GROCERY

Grid of grocery items with prices. Includes Nestle Lenter Earl Tea, Sparkling Non-Alcoholic Celebrating Drink Series, Jamaica Prime Dry Serrano, Mr. Gooden Sweetened Condensed (Wholesome), Bulacan Coconut Spiced Saging, Bulacan Sugar Palm Fruit In Syrup, White King B Baking Mix, Bulacan Cornstarch Starch, Philippine Flour Side Headed, Grace Dry Soup Mix Series, Grace Dry Lima Beans, Nutrament Energy Drink, Bulacan Fruit Cocktail, Cook Pineapple Series, Angel Homestead Sweetened Thick Creamer, UFT Banana Sauce, Bulacan Banana Chips, and Jack 'n' Cream Filled Chocolate Cookies Series.

RESTAURANT SPECIAL

Grid of restaurant special items with prices. Includes Cucumber, Zucchini, Sweet Onion, Spanish Onion, Green Onion, Carrot, Broccoli, Lemon, Head Lettuce, Green Pepper, Frozen Pangda Basa Fillet, Headless White Shrimp, Thailand Black Tiger Shrimp, Extra Large Egg, Huy Fong Chili Garlic Sauce, Any-D Coconut Milk, Heinz Tomato Ketchup, Container NG-093, Container NG-081, Kraft Singlefold Towels, ADM All Purpose Flour, Monosodium Glutamate, Capri Vegetable Oil, VALLE Dishwashing Liquid, Lee Kum Kee Kum Chun Oyster Flavoured Sauce, Lee Kum Kee Hoisin Sauce, NG-18 New Gen Eco-Friendly Packaging, and Redpath Sugar.

FROZEN

Grid of frozen items with prices. Includes Thai Gold Headless Frozen Shrimp, SANFORD Greenshell Mussels, Qualy Pak Squid, Seafood Lower Red Fish, SH Squid Rings, Roma Squid Tentacles, SH Tilapia, Thailand Raw Black Tiger Shrimp, Bulacan Shredded Young Coconut, Back To Snow Crab Cluster, Uncooked Chinese Style Pork Choy, and Young Banana Leaf.

MEAT

1635 Lawrence Ave West, North York ON, M6L 3C9 Tel: 416-241-8988

SEAFOOD

MON - SUN 9AM - 9PM, OPEN 7 DAYS A WEEK www.superking.ca

Although We Strive For Accuracy in Both Copy & Illustration, an occasional Error May Occur. We Reserve The Right To Correct Any Error. Specials Available While Quantities Last. We Reserve The Right To Limit Quantities. Design and advertisement by Promozz Solutions. Tel: 416-773-1028



PETE'S REAL ESTATE

IS IN BUSINESS OVER 40 YEARS

We can sell your property for the best price on the market

- PROPERTY MANAGEMENT
- PROPERTY SALES & RENTALS
- REAL ESTATE VALUATION

A Complete Real Estate Service:

- ✓ Buying
- ✓ Selling
- ✓ Rentals
- ✓ Tax Compliance

Contact: 223-6218, 623-7805, 656-5544

B HALAL MEAT (BAKSH)

EAST & WEST INDIAN GROCERIES

416-261-8564

FRESH FRUITS & VEGETABLES

FROM THE CARIBBEAN

- BORA
- EGGPLANT
- SAINI
- SQUASH
- PUMPKIN
- WIRI WIRI PEPPER
- HOT PEPPERS
- OKRA
- MARRIED MAN
- THYME
- FROZEN KATAHAR
- COCONUT CHOKA
- EDDOES
- SPIKE MANGO
- GINEP
- GOLDEN APPLE
- AWARA



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)

#1 For Quality



Comfort Sleep Inc.
Sleep on... Dream on...

Scan Me



Comfort-Pedic
Memory Foam
Mattress



Comfort Foam
Mattress



Comfort Custom
Luxury



Tel: +592 233-2657 | + 592 233-3013 | +592 233-3024 | WhatsApp: +592 618-1078

Address: 49 Eccles Industrial Site, EBD, Guyana

Email: info@comfortsleep.gy | Website: comfortsleep.gy



ONE GUYANA CHRISTMAS

Village & Supermarket

Merry Christmas

HAPPY NEW YEAR

Dec 2-31, 2024

Main Street, G\town

The One Guyana Supermarket - Holiday Convenience at its Best

Santa and His Elves Experience

Live Entertainment

Food and Beverages

Arts and Craft

Christmas Gift Items



JAGAN DENTAL CENTRE

TAKING CARE OF All Your Dental Needs

Dentists: Dr. Clive R. Jagan, Dr. Shane A. Jagan, Dr. Kyle V. Jagan, Dr. Ian N. Jagan

We at JDC have one objective in mind: To make sure you get the professional and personal attention you deserve. So be ready for a relaxed and pain free dental experience.

11 Lamaha and Light Streets,
Georgetown, Guyana
Tel: (592) 226-0400
e-mail: info@jagandentalcentre.com
www.jagandentalcentre.com

CLINICAL SERVICES OFFERED:

- Teeth Whitening
- Laser Dentistry
- Cosmetic Dentistry
- Implantology (Implants)
- Endodontics (Rootcanals)
- Prosthodontics (Dentures, Crown & Bridge, Veneers, etc.)
- Pedodontics (Kiddy Dentistry)
- Periodontics (Gum Surgeries, Deep Scaling, De-pigmentation, etc.)
- Oral Surgery (Extractions)

