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### **Bringing Christmas cheer from Canada**

Food For The Poor Guyana, Food and For The Poor Canada brought Christmas cheer to to the children of Mahaicony, Guyana during the festive season.

According to the FFTP Guyana, over 150 children from the Region Five community were able to benefit from the heartwarming gesture thanks to the collaborative efforts of the local and Canadian charity, as well as generous donors Richard and Carrol Verasammy.

the Verasammy family played a



central role in the day's celebrations which saw both Richard and Carrol Verasammy making an appearance as Santa and Mrs. Claus, personally distributing gifts to the children.

Along with other members of the Verasammy family, they created long lasting memories with the children.

FFTP stated that one of the young attendees expressed her delight, saying, "This event will always be in my memory because I have never experienced something like this before." The organisation said the child's words encapsulate the joy and wonder felt by children during this special occasion.

The Christmas party was a true testament to the spirit of giving, thanks to the combined efforts of Food



### **Barbados airport achieves milstone**

The Grantley Adams International Airport (GAIA) has reached a significant milestone in its history.

Minister of Tourism Ian Gooding-Edghill reported on Saturday that the port of entry was fast becoming an international hub and statistics showed that by the end of the year, there will be a record number of visitors to pass through the airport.

"The Grantley Adams International Airport is projected to have 2.3 million passengers by the end of this calendar year. This is certainly up from the 2019 figure, which I'm advised was 2.29 million," he said, stressing that the island was experi-

encing a boom in tourism.

The minister added that Saturday was one of the busiest days at the airport in its history.

He said 8 000 visitors travelled to Barbados in a single day. Of that figure, 2 200 were air to sea transfers while the other 5 800 were stay over visitors.

""The Grantley Adams International Airport has had one of its busiest days certainly in its history. I've been advised that there are 54 flights arriving today. We have 15 wide bodies, 15 narrow bodies and 24 regional flights coming into Grantley Adams International Airport... What this tells you is that the growth we are looking for and achieving speaks volumes"

Chief executive officer of the airport Hadley Bourne said the airport was undergoing a number of initiatives to enhance the customer experience and they augured well for the increased arrivals.

See story on Page 21

### MARTINA'S CAMBIO

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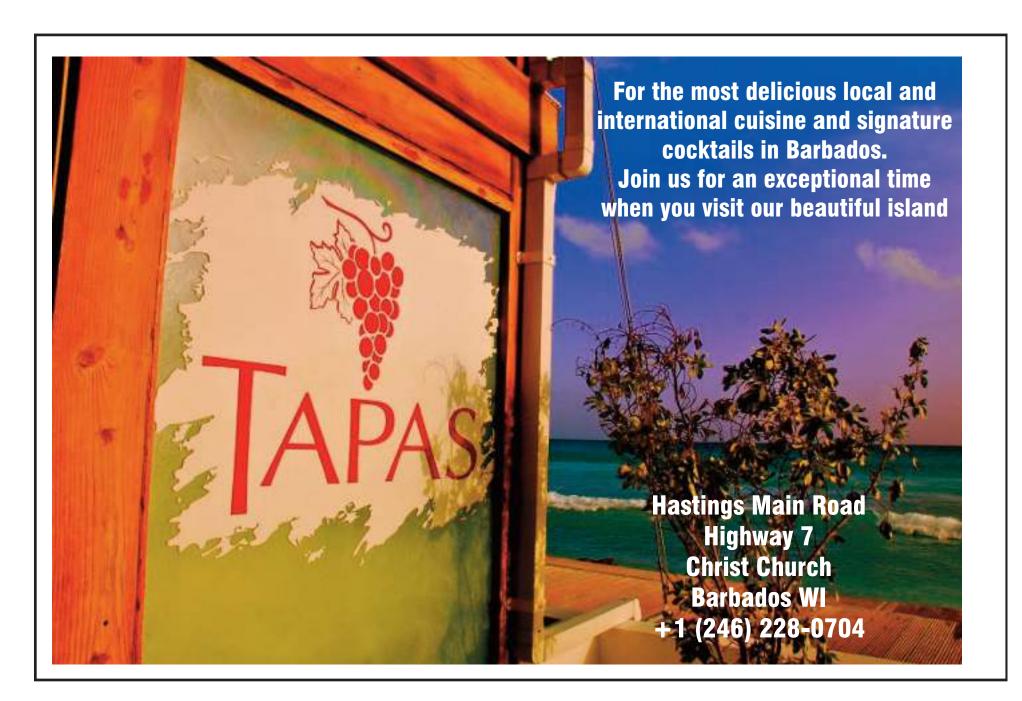


Catastrophic injury? Car accident? Slip & fall? Income disability benefits denied?

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# CLIFTON HICKEN CONFIRMED AS COMMISSIONER OF POLICE AS EXPERIENCED LEADERSHIP TAKES THE HELM





RETROACTIVE PAY, BONUSES ENSURE A
PROSPEROUS DECEMBER FOR PUBLIC SERVANTS,
JOINT SERVICES PERSONNEL



THOUSANDS IN REGIONS ONE AND EIGHT RECEIVE \$100,000 CASH GRANT



\$35,000 GRANT AND INNOVATIVE FARM ANNOUNCED FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

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PAGE 5

### **UK FOREIGN SECRETARY DAVID LAMMY CELEBRATES GUYANA'S** SUCCESS AS WORLD'S FASTEST-GROWING ECONOMY



The cocktail reception in honour of Mr Lammy

(UK) Foreign Secretary economy. Rt. Hon. David Lammy has praised Guyana's Lammy during his inaugural action, visit.

Mr. Lammy, whose economic prosperity. parents are of Guyanese heritage, the growing partnership Rockstone Village, Mr. between the UK and Lammylaunchedthe UK-Guvana. which referred to as

Kingdom world's fastest-growing

During his visit, Mr. participated remarkable economic in several activities growth, describing the aimed at strengthening country as a global leader collaboration in climate infrastructure development,

> At a community emphasised engagement he Pact Amazon Regional the Fund, a programme

sustainable livelihoods, Government of Guyana. change, combat deforestation, and protect forests in the underscores Bolivia, and Ecuador, nations, building on the UK- Guyana's

forefront, leading," infrastructure. Mr. Lammy remarked, exemplary management and its on achievement of the lowest deforestation rate in the Amazon.

The Foreign Secretary also visited the Linden-Mabura Road Project, a transformative initiative funded through UK Government grant via the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB)-administered United Kingdom Caribbean Infrastructure Fund, alongside

The "Guyana is at the investments in regional relations.

applauding the nation's Ali hosted discussions was a huge honour a maternity hospital forest with Mr. Lammy focused to be back in Guyana in Georgetown using

project and economic growth. economyintheworld, the Speaking at a State and I'm determined Amazon. The fund will deepening collaboration House reception held in **for us to grow more** benefit Guyana, Peru, between the two his honour, Mr. Lammy **together**," Mr. Lammy enhancing expressed pride in wrote in a social media connectivity Guyana's achievements post following the event. PACT's ongoing work in while showcasing the and optimism about the The Brazil and Colombia. The tangible impact of UK future of UK-Guyana highlighted

President Dr. Irfaan Guyanese parents, it the strengthening as the UK's Foreign

designed to support contributions from the partnerships in climate Secretary. This is biodiversity, the fastest-growing

> several UK-supported projects "As the son of in Guyana, including construction of steel manufactured in Yorkshire. This initiative illustrates how UK exports are contributing to Guyana's development supporting while jobs. Discussions also touched on plans to expand Guyana's main international airport, solidifying economic ties between the two nations.



Part of the engagement Rockstone Village

## **GUYANA AND QATAR EXPLORE** NEW AVENUES OF COOPERAT

Guyana and Qatar took a significant step towards strengthening their bilateral relations with the first-ever political consultation held on December 10, 2024. The meeting, hosted by the Ministry Foreign Affairs International and Cooperation, aimed to cooperation and solidify Secretary-General existing partnerships.

Foreign Robert Persaud led the the Qatari side. Both Guyana while H.E Dr Ahmed bin opportunities



Guyana's Foreign Secretary, Robert Persaud and H.E Dr Ahmed bin Hassan Al Hammadi, Secretary-General, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Qatar

the Qatari Ministry of infrastructure, Secretary Foreign Affairs, headed agriculture, and energy. delegation, delegations

explore new avenues of Hassan Al Hammadi, collaboration in various of sectors. including

for investments beyond the hospitality, biodiversity

energy sector, with a conservation, focus on real estate and healthcare support. hospitality. This aligns with the growing interest emphasised of Qatari companies commitment in Guyana's emerging economy.

political The consultation built upon the momentum generated by the visit of the Amir of Qatar, His Highness Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, to health, Guyana in September 2023. This visit resulted Qatar expressed its in several agreements, discussed intention to expand its including those related to

Both countries their

enhancing cooperation multilateral within institutions on issues of mutual interest. The successful conclusion of the first political consultation marks a promising beginning for a deeper and more strategic partnership between Guyana and Qatar.



Guyana's Foreign Secretary, Robert Persaud and H.E Dr Ahmed bin Hassan Al Hammadi, Secretary-General, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Qatar holding high-level discussions at the ministry

new era travel has emerged for Guyanese people with the launch of direct flights from Guyana to Grenada, courtesy of InterCaribbean Airways. This new route not only opens up new travel opportunities, but also strengthens the bond between two CARICOM Member States, fostering deeper collaboration and partnership.

Grenada, known as the Spice Island, is now just 90 minutes away, offering pristine wildlife, Grenada's sun, immersing in Grenada's and experiencing ecobeaches, waterfalls, and vibrant culture. InterCaribbean's for tourists seeking a this

different experience.

Guyana and Grenada share a special bond, shaped by a history of African, European, and Indigenous influences. Both nations are led by young, dynamic leaders and share a vision for the future of the Caribbean. While Guyana offers lush rainforests and exotic stunning sand, and sea are perfect rich culture and natural tourism. The DPI team for relaxation.

The it an affordable option (DPI) recently explored exploring historic sites, Island Beach Resort, as connection,



DPI was part of a 10-member team of media professionals and influencers who journeyed to Grenada

beauty. Department of the trip included end resorts like Coyaba

Highlights enjoyed visits to high-

well as the Underwater Sculpture showcasing artistic side.

village offered a glimpse Grenada's spirit between Guyana and Caribbean Grenada, including the Whether competitive fares make of Public Information savouring local cuisine, Beach Resort and Spice gun-oil, deepened the something for everyone. exploration of both nations.

Adventure seekers Park, can hike Myristic Grenada's Mountain. where breathtaking views A visit to the Nutmeg provide a chance to Museum in St Mark's connect with nature. into Grenada's spice hospitality, embedded trade and the significance in the hearts of its of nutmeg in its people, connects both economy. The parallels nations under a shared identity. seeking culinary connection to adventure, relaxation, dishes like Grenada's or cultural immersion, "oil down" and Guyana's both countries offer

## **CLIFTON HICKEN CONFIRMED AS COMMISSIONER OF POLICE** AS EXPERIENCED LEADERSHIP TAKES THE HELM

Clifton Hicken has officially been sworn in as the Commissioner of Police of Guyana, marking a historic moment for the nation. Having served as acting commissioner since 2022, Hicken is now the first Commissioner of Police to assume office after reaching the age of retirement, solidifying his leadership role in the Guyana Police Force (GPF).

The Oath of Office was administered by President Dr. Irfaan Ali, who, as Commanderin-Chief of the Armed that they bring "stability Attorney General Anil Forces, led the ceremony and clear leadership" Nandlall SC clarified at the Office of the to the GPF, which will that the Constitution 4A, President. Also sworn in enhance morale within and were top police officials the ranks and strengthen Matters Act allowed the country's Ravindradat Budhram, the force's ability to President to extend the urban Wendell Errol Watts, and Fizul Karimbaksh as Deputy commitment to following retirement age of 55, with Commissioners who is currently out of months-long his oath at a later date.

In his remarks, opposition President affirmed that



Hicken sworn in

Blanhum, protect and serve. President

of constitutional protocols Hicken continuing to Police. Simon McBean, was underscored by the serve until a permanent the jurisdiction, will take that led to Hicken's confirmation. Despite President Ali praised the Ali Opposition Leader and the Aubrey Norton and qualifications of Hicken appointment followed a subsequent legal and his constitutional challenge, w

the Prescribed Georgetown, Commissioner's Ali's beyond the standard process decision was made.

In his address, from exceptional academic professional deputies. which "There has never by been a time in the full compliance with Acting Chief Justice the law. He emphasised Roxane George SC, the significance of these appointment proceeded appointments, stating as prescribed by the law.

History of the Guyana Police Force when appointment proceeded academic excellence of Police

and **opportunity** his for development," its he remarked. He 2022-2026, aimed at highlighted the diverse modernizing the force expertise within and strengthening its the new leadership human resources. team, including law, management, and legal Commissioners, strategy, which sets them with extensive service apart from previous records, will support generations.

Clifton career spans decades, Among them: starting in 1986 as a • Ravindradat Special Constable. Over the years, he has earned promotions through the ranks to his current position, commanding key policing divisions, including which includes the largest Under area.

leadership, the professional GPF is implementing • Wendell Blanhum: Strategic Plan

The Deputy each Hicken's vision for a Hicken's reformed police force.

> **Budhram**: law graduate and seasoned leader with vast operations.

Region • Errol Watts: Known to usher in a new his for as head of the Special enforcement. Branch and in Region

Three.

A seasoned Crime Chief with a law degree and a record of solving high-profile cases.

 Fizul Karimbaksh: Head of SOCU, responsible tackling organized crime amid Guyana's growing economy.

• Simon McBean: A distinguished officer with a Master's in Global Security, having led multiple divisions.

Together, experience in represent the enforcement qualified leadership in GPF history, prepared stringent era of excellence and leadership, especially professionalism in law



President Ali, Minister of Home Affairs, Robeson Benn and other officials, alongside the newly sworn in Police Commissioner, Clifton Hicken and Deputy Commissioners

## **GOV'T STANDS FIRM ON HICKEN'S APPOINTME** CITES CONSTITUTIONAL COMPLIAN

The Government of Guyana has issued a strong response to criticisms by Opposition Leader Aubrey Norton regarding the appointment of Mr. Clifton Hicken as Commissioner of Police, reaffirming that the decision was made in accordance with the Constitution of Guyana.

In a statement released, the government emphasised that Mr. Hicken, as the most senior member of the Guyana Police Force, is "duly qualified to have been appointed Commissioner Police." It further criticised the Coalition Government's handling of appointments during its tenure, citing the sidelining of Mr. Hicken under the APNU+AFC administration.

"Upon



Police. Clifton Hicken

retirement of Mr. Government." David **Ramnarine**, statement read. Mr. Hicken was the member of and National Unity + under Alliance For Change circumstances.

The (APNU+AFC) appointment

the made not by the President but by the government Permanent Secretary most senior accused the opposition of the then Ministry of the of hypocrisy, noting that **Public Security**," the Guyana Police Force the APNU+AFC's last statement pointed out. but was deliberately appointment to the Office It added, "It is ironic capriciously of the Commissioner that 'no consultation' sidelined by the of Police occurred is Mr. Norton's cry A Partnership for on July 31, 2020, now, but when that questionable appointment "The made, the then Leader was of the Opposition

not **informed, moreover** Norton's legal atte

The also addressed Mr. appointment Norton's claims about dismissed by the High the process, affirming that legal challenge was **Government that** maintains lawfully appointed defended," in accordance with statement said. the provisions of Constitution Guyana and in due challenges and reiterated compliance Act, Cap. 27:12."

Highlighting legitimacy Opposition's history of and dismissing appointments, government reminded

**even** the public that Mr. previous legal attempt to block statement Mr. Hicken's acting consultation Court. "Mr. Norton's the appointment was dismissed by the made in full compliance High Court, and he with the Constitution. chose not to appeal dismissal. most Needless to say, any resolutely that Mr. legal challenge filed Clifton Hicken was will be vigorously

The government Article 211 of the underscored its readiness **of** to defend any legal **with** its commitment **Constitution** upholding constitutional (Prescribed Matters) principles. It concluded by reaffirming the Leader of the Hicken's appointment challenging Mr. Hicken's opposition's criticism as the unfounded.

**GUYANESE DIASPORA DIGEST** 

KEEPING THE DIASPORA INFORMED

## RETROACTIVE PAY, BONUSES ENSURE A PROSPEROUS DECEMBER

Over 50,000 public received a servants 10% retroactive salary increase, while 12,000 members of the Joint Services were awarded a one-month bonus totalling \$1.6 billion. These measures are part of the government's commitment improving the lives of workers across Guyana.

### **PAY RAISES FOR PUBLIC SERVANTS**

Public servants saw a 10% salary increase, retroactive to January 2024, included in their December salary. This marks a 35% cumulative wage hike over the past four years. To continue momentum. government has announced an additional 8% increase for 2025, part of a historic twoyear agreement with the more: Guyana Public Service Union (GPSU).

From January 2025, public servants will also



The Guyana Defence Force's Annual Christmas Lunch at Base Camp Seweyo

receive allowances for higher eight years of service will education:

Α certification holders: \$15,000 monthly.

Master's holders: monthly.

Doctoral degree 11%. holders: \$32,000 monthly.

servants will benefit even

Employees with at least of incentives to further four years of service will support public servants: see salary increases of up

qualification to 13%, while those with receive raises of up to **A** 26%.

Grades 7 to 8: Those with four years **degree** of service in their scale \$22,000 will receive monthly increments worth up to

### **ADDITIONAL** Long-serving public ALLOWANCES AND **BENEFITS**

The government is **Grades 1 to 6:** also introducing a range

Uniform

**Allowance:** Increased by \$10,000 annually for most public servants and by \$5,000 for health workers.

Îocations.

Allowance: riverine and hinterland of service members. areas, representing a 300% increase.

Boosted by 50%.

T r a v e l discipline, and Motorcar Allowances: Increased by 104%.

Dutv-Free **Concessions:** 100 annual concessions for nurses and senior health workers, prioritising long-serving staff.

Scholarships continue. also public supporting servants in furthering education and professional growth.

### **BONUSES FOR JOINT SERVICES PERSONNEL**

Further, members is H o u s i n g of the Joint Services conditions **Allowance:** \$35,000 received a one-month personnel, monthly for workers bonus totalling \$1.6 upgrading the Seweyo posted to hinterland billion. Announced by Base, one of the country's S t a t i o n President Dr. Irfaan Ali, to enhance training and \$8,000 the bonus recognises the living standards. monthly for employees in hard work and sacrifices

requires and a

selfless commitment to protecting our country and people."

The government also improving for GDF including Commander-in-Chief largest military facilities,

With these measures, the government aims to President Ali praised provide financial relief GDF ranks, saying, and long-term benefits Risk Allowance: "The job of a soldier to Guyanese workers and agility, their families.



The Guyana Defence Force's Annual Christmas Lunch at Base Camp Seweyo

## **GUYANA SUBMITS FINAL REPLY IN CASE AGAI** ENEZUELA AT INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUST

Guyana submitted its resolve the controversy two-thirds of Guyana's final written brief, titled between Guyana and territory in the Essequibo Guyana's Reply Venezuela's Counter-Memorial, to Hague. The submission international boundary, jurisdiction. was delivered personally remains by Guyana's Ambassador binding. to Belgium, Sasenarine Venezuela Singh.

case António

to Venezuela. seeks confirmation valid accepted found began boundary for over 60 case.

On December 9, selected the ICJ to and claimed more than Guyana Region.

Venezuela attempted the from the Court that the tohavethecasedismissed International Court of 1899 Arbitral Award, in 2019 and 2022, filing Justice (ICJ) in The which determined the objections to the Court's and objections were rejected Although by the Court, which overwhelming the Award and the support for Guyana's In December March 2018 after years, it rejected the 2023, in response to UN Secretary General Award on the eve of Venezuela's threats to Guterres Guyana's independence seize and annex Guyana's



The submission was delivered personally by Guyana's Ambassador to Belgium, Sasenarine Singh

territory, the Court December ordered both parties to

refrain from actions that Counter-Memorial. administration the case is resolved.

in the merits phase, during which parties submit written Reply briefs. Venezuela's addresses Venezuela's

could disturb Guyana's Venezuela will respond and with a Rejoinder by control of the area until August 8, 2025, and the Court will later set a date The case is currently for oral hearings.

Guyana remains both confident that demonstrates Guyana's the meritlessness of Memorial was filed Venezuela's challenges on April 8, 2023, and to the Arbitral Award Counter- and the boundary, and Memorial was submitted that the Court will affirm a year later. Guyana's the validity and binding 9 reply, nature of both.

## GUYANA SIGNS CLIMATE FINANCE AGREEMENTS WITH WORLD BANK

Guyana is the first country in the region to sign the updated Climate Resilient Debt Clause (CRDC) agreement. This pioneering move, coupled with the activation of the World Bank's Rapid Response Option (RRO), underscores the government's commitment to strengthening the resilience nation's against natural disasters and climate-related challenges.



Dr Ashni Singh, and World Bank Group Representative to Guyana, Diletta Doretti, displaying the agreement

The Ministry of Finance by Service, Dr.

agreements with Responsibility for signed at the Finance and the Public Ashni Senior Minister in the Singh, and World Bank Office of the President Group Representative

to Guyana, Ms. Diletta natural Doretti.

Dr. Singh highlighted events, the partnership Bank, emphasising the thinking agreements in bolstering community's against events.

significant as it allows suspend following agenda, repayments

other freeing longstanding resources for emergency to mitigate the impact between response and recovery of Guyana and the World efforts. This forward- the country's most critical role of these reflects the international related challenges. growing the country's defenses recognition of the need Rapid Response Option catastrophic for innovative financial (RRO) further enhances tools to address the Guyana's ability to access The CRDC escalating impacts of financial support quickly agreement is particularly climate change.

countries to temporarily been a vital partner in measures are timely and debt Guyana's developmental effective. supporting

disasters or initiatives such as the catastrophic Flood Risk Management up Project, which aims flooding—one of approach significant climate-

The activation of the The World Bank has ensuring that response

## THOUSANDS IN REGIONS ONE AND EIGHT ,000



Hinterland resident receiving the grant

government's implementation Region Nine, programme services of encashment ensured a smooth Democratic distribution process.

> **PROGRESS IN REGION ONE**

Over \$100,000 one-time cash residents in Region One grant initiative continues have registered for the Minister of Amerindian to uplift thousands grant, with distribution Affairs Pauline Sukhai Guyana. underway. Following its successful of Housing and Water Campbelltown village. in Collin Croal led the Special attention was the distribution exercise at given to vulnerable has Port Kaituma Secondary groups, expanded to Regions One School in the Matarkai and Eight, benefiting sub-district. He was residents aged 18 and accompanied by Keith On-the-spot Parker, Chairperson residents in Region Eight the by the Bank of Guyana Neighbourhood grant. A total of \$200 and Margaret Lambert, into the local economies Representative Region One.

More than 1,500 residents from areas received their cash importance of making along their quality of life.

### SUCCESSFUL LAUNCH IN **REGION EIGHT**

The was 16,000 received in Mahdia, Region Eight, where Minister led the distribution in including pensioners and persons living with disabilities.

Approximately 6,500 Matarkai have registered for the Council, million has been injected for and Campbelltown.

### **REGION NINE DISTRIBUTION**

grants. Minister Croal 90% of cheques have that encouraged recipients already been distributed. about ensuring that 12,000 residents in to use the funds wisely, Prime Minister Brigadier you share in the Region Seven are already emphasising the (Ret'd) Mark Phillips, prosperity of this enumerated and cheques Local nation." with purchases that enhance Government Minister Sonia Parag, supervised **PROGRESS ACROSS** the process earlier this month. Distribution points included the more than 221,000 individuals unable to Tabatinga initiative Complex, Nappi Village, for the cash grant, with enthusiastically and Hiawa Village.



Hinterland resident receiving the grant

the Prime Minister's of Mahdia, Princeville, residents in Region Finance. Vice President improving the lives of all Nine are set to benefit. Dr. Bharrat Jagdeo Guyanese. Prime **Phillips** emphasised

Close to 14,000 by the Ministry of economic resilience and Minister announced that cheque

**OTHER REGIONS** 

government's printing has begun, and commitment to national distribution is expected as far as Two Miles **NEAR COMPLETION** prosperity, stating, "I'm to start soon, targeting In Region Nine, part of a government completion by the end **is serious** of the year. Additionally, are being processed.

Dr. Jagdeo also assured that provisions have been made to In Region Four, include shut-ins and Sports residents have registered register during the initial

phases.

President Irfaan Ali announced the initiative on October 10, aimed at injecting \$60 billion into the economy to provide financial relief to households nationwide. The current phase is projected to reach 300,000 Guyanese by the end of 2024, with additional distributions planned for early 2025.

This transformative programme underscores the government's dedication to fostering

## \$35,000 GRANT AND INNOVATIVE FARM ANNOUNCED FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES



President Ali interacting with one of the attendee

to with disabilities \$875 through transformative announcement initiatives. individual registered as disabilities. living with a disability state, older.

This additional grant, agricultural

The government is benefiting nearly 26,000 intensifying its efforts registered persons, will support persons amount to approximately million. The President made during a Christmas Dr. Irfaan Ali recently celebration at State announced that each House for persons with

President will receive an additional also unveiled plans \$35,000 grant from the to establish Guyana's supplementing first innovative farm, the \$100,000 already which will be entirely allocated to all eligible operated by persons with persons aged 18 and disabilities. The farm will adopt climate-smart practices

and supply produce to wheelchairs, supermarkets, sections products from the farm. process.

Further year's end to identify were disabilities. six new buses will be commitment enhance transportation vocational this community.

Another development is the submitted specialised platform for recipients' homes. special needs education.

Minister of Human under disabilities. The Support caregivers. and Aids Programme provides access

showcasing through a simple request in

Minister Persaud Singh consultations are set noted that over 400 the increased access workshop, to take place before persons with disabilities to tertiary education challenge trained President emphasising Ali also disclosed that government's of Education, describing procured in early 2025 to education and technical transformational. training. for individuals and Additionally, for the growing involvement of society, saying they are organisations serving first time, applications for permanent disability key benefits can now be entirely upcoming launch of the online, and the shut-in Guyana Digital School, registry ensures direct which will include a delivery of benefits to

Childcare training the WIIN Services and Social Programme has also Security, Dr. Vindhya been expanded to include Persaud, highlighted the special needs education government's ongoing and early childhood initiatives to improve development, providing the lives of persons with critical support for

Ganesh Singh, to Programme Manager essential items such as of the Guyana Council

walkers, of Organisations for education, calling it a will feature dedicated aids, and prostheses lauded the progress "When education this through the and Cyril Potter College achievement," he said. to these advancements as growing recognition of

in the workforce and

which white canes, hearing Persons with Disabilities, significant achievement. someone and invites us to send training opportunities. five persons with highlighted disabilities to it's programmes they are occupied at additional priorities for year in skills like such as GOAL, the work or in school supporting persons with garment construction, University of Guyana, that is success and

> He praised the persons with disabilities Singh also noted the as valuable members of persons with disabilities finally being treated as "people."



The announcment was made at a Christmas celebration at State House for persons with disabilities

## KEY LEGISLATIVE CHANGES STRENGTHEN **FAIRNESS AND ECONOMIC GROWTH**

### AMENDMENTS TO LAND ACQUISITION ACT ENSURE FAIR COMPENSATION



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

In a landmark move enhance fairness and efficiency in land acquisition, the National Assembly has passed amendments to the Acquisition of Lands for Public Purposes Act. This update guarantees that property owners will receive prompt and fair compensation when their land is acquired for public projects.

Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs, Anil Nandlall, SC, highlighted the significance of these changes during the 90th sitting of the Assembly, emphasising government's commitment to fairness, national development, and respect for individual rights. \*These changes are about fairness and modernisation. The law isn't granting powers-it's new ensuring that when the state acquires land, owners are treated with respect and receive what's rightfully theirs, promptly," Minister Nandlall said.

### **KEY CHANGES INCLUDE:**

receive

Minister of Education, Priya Manickchand

compensation upon land acquisition.

 Advance Cash Payments: Property owners will receive 80% of compensation upfront, replacing the outdated practice issuing bond documents.

• E n h a n c e d The Fairness: amendments safeguard against arbitrary land acquisitions, requiring a thorough transparent and process.

Although opposition initially voiced support after consultations, they sought to delay progress by referring the bill to a • Prompt Payment: special Parliamentary Landowners will now committee. This move immediate was condemned by

**SETTLEMENTS** National The Assembly also passed

amendments to the validity suffices. Wills Act, aiming to process of verifying and executing wills. These changes are expected

rights, and promote he noted. public good. **KEY CHANGES** 

### WILLS ACT **AMENDMENT SIMPLIFIES ESTATE** Requirement: Instead of two witnesses, a single

confirming the will's Oneidge

**INCLUDE:** 

making administration faster.

Increased Flexibility: law allows for the credit, such as bills of sale acceptance of electronic and finance leases, into a signatures under specific single legal framework conditions.

Minister Education Manickchand supported reduces administrative the amendments, noting burdens, benefiting both that the changes would lenders and borrowers. reduce family help conflicts

assets such as inventory, equipment, and vehicles as collateral for loans, addressing a **Reduced Witness** challenge businesses face in securing financing.

Minister of Tourism, affidavit from a witness Industry, and Commerce, Walrond, "This explained, Streamlined bill makes credit simplify and expedite the **Probate Process:** The **more accessible by** process is expedited allowing SMEs to use by reducing steps such their moveable assets as locating witnesses, as collateral, thus estate promoting financial inclusion.

The law consolidates The mechanisms for securing known as a "security of agreement." This Priva streamlined approach

Dr. Ashni Singh, over estate Senior Minister in the Office of the President, praised the bill's potential to stimulate economic growth, create jobs, and enhance the business environment. He also noted that the legislation aligns with the government's ongoing efforts to support SMEs foster financial and inclusion.

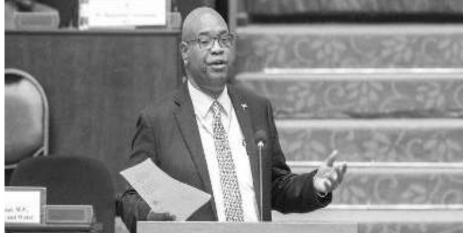
The bill received support from the opposition, recognizing its potential to unlock



Minister of Housing and Water, Collin Croal

the government as an attempt to stall. Minister of Public Works, Bishop Juan Edghill, firmly stated, "People's lives and livelihoods must come before partisan interests."

bill, The which now awaits assent by President Dr. Irfaan Ali, will streamline the land acquisition process, protect property owners'



Minister of Public Works, Bishop Juan Edghill

to significantly reduce matters. the complexity and time involved in settling estates, benefiting families across Guvana.

Attorney Ğeneral Nandlall explained that the current legislation, in place since 1910, has long to needed updating. "The and bill must be signed enterprises **be situated at the** new legislation enables future for all Guyanese. bottom of the will," SMEs to use moveable

### **NEW LAW BOOSTS ACCESS** TO FINANCING FOR SMALL **BUSINESSES**

empower small medium-sized (SMEs).

economic opportunities for emerging entrepreneurs.

These three key legislative changes mark a significant step toward strengthening the legal In a move set framework in Guyana, fairness, fostering economic growth, and inclusion. With these by the testator or the National Assembly reforms, the government someone authorised passed the Security is laying a foundation by the testator... Interests in Moveable for a more transparent, mark must Property Bill 2024. This efficient, and equitable



Minister of Tourism, Industry and Commerce, Oneidge Walrond

### **CANADA ANNOUNCES \$3M FUND TO SUPPORT YOUTH SKILLS TRAINING IN GUYANA AND THE CARIBBEAN**

Canada has unveiled **for** a significant initiative **the** to empower Caribbean **and** youth through skills inclusive, training, with Guyana **quality** Honourable Hussen, the \$3 million Caribbean stated. Future Skills Fund, which aims to build builds on Canada's Justin a workforce ready for longstanding support for highlighted the broader technological innovation Guyana's education and vision: "Canada stands and inclusive growth training programmes. with our Caribbean across the region.

Guyana's President, Canada expressed support initiative, emphasising Programme, goals. welcomes Canada's commitment **establish** a **fund** targeted will unlock for labour that **opportunities** assessments new

youth **from** pilot Caribbean with **promote** Caribbean playing a vital role. The and training. This Canada's commitment to Ahmed **partnership reflects** developing technical and Canada's **our shared vision for** vocational skills aligns Minister of International long-term, reliable with Guyana's efforts Development, **economic growth and** to create sustainable announced the launch of **success**," President Ali job opportunities and

This initiative this Earlier contributed a Dr. Mohamed Irfaan \$9.5 million to Guyana's sustainable future. his One Guyana Digital The Future Skills the Skills its alignment with the equips young people thrive and contribute country's development with the tools needed for to regional economic "Guyana a digital economy.

The Future Skills **to** Fund will provide

programmes, Canadian and partners **high-** ensuring effective education implementation. strengthen its workforce.

Prime Minister Trudeau year, partners in building resilient Development Fund will empower which **communities** development."

> This fund also reflects and support CARICOM leaders' market shared goal of advancing the and youth



President Dr Irfaan Ali with Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau at the first Canada-CARICOM Summit held in October 2023

Collaboration CARICOM institutions inequality. private sector stakeholders will ensure complements Canada's across empowerment. key challenges such as Green Economy (SAGE) unemployment, project,

The fund addresses Skills to Access the including Guyana. which

with brain drain, and gender invested \$18.75 million climate-focused in initiative workforce development region.

## DR. JAGDEO TAKES AIM AT OPPOSIT

### - PPP/C'S GOVERNANCE MODEL OUTSHINES OPPOSITION CRITICISM AHEAD OF 2025 ELECTIONS

General Secretary of the People's Progressive (PPP), Party Bharrat Jagdeo, has robustly defended his government's record, dismantling opposition claims on resource management, economic policies, and political alliances. At a recent press conference, Dr. Jagdeo reinforced the PPP/C's commitment to transparency, economic growth, and national unity, underscoring their proven ability to deliver transformative change for Guyana.

### NRF: A MODEL OF **ACCOUNTABILITY** AND **TRANSPARENCY**

Jagdeo Dr. highlighted the PPP/C's reforms to the Natural Resource Fund (NRF), comparing the current subject to parliamentary system-featuring parliamentary oversight andaBoardofDirectors—

to the opaque practices

under the APNU+AFC

administration. The PNC model designed to steal money," Dr. asserted, Jagdeo emphasising that the NRF's withdrawals are



Vice President and People's Progressive Party (PPP) General Secretary, Dr. Bharrat

scrutiny.

Responding businessman and accountability.

MINING SECTOR now governed by a clear REVITALISATION: A the imagination to the final tax on miners' legal framework and **BREAK FROM THE** link this to Dutch income from 3.5% to

**PAST** 

Dr. Jagdeo debunked to the AFC's claims that policies that had stifled Terrence Guyana's oil boom has the mining industry Campbell's criticism, Dr. caused "Dutch disease" under the Jagdeo condemned his in the mining industry, administration remarks as divisive and calling the argument reversed, racist, while reaffirming illogical. He attributed removing administration's sector challenges to tributers' tax imposed on focus on fostering unity compliance issues and miners, eliminating VAT tax evasion rather than on mining machinery, oil production. "It's a equipment, massive stretch of lubricating oil, reducing

**disease,**" he stated.

Under the PPP/C, previous were including the 10% and

2.5%, removing VAT future. on all-terrain vehicles clearance requirements and license system equipment.

"These were We sector. roll them back and national concerns. create an enabling environment policies.

### **OPPOSITION ALLIANCES: EMPTY GESTURES** WITHOUT **SUBSTANCE**

Turning to political alliances ahead elections. the 2025 opposition as "The remarked, calling their record. efforts repetitive and devoid of a coherent vision for Guyana's

Citing the PPP/C's (ATVs) and hinterland dominant performance travel, eliminating police in the 2020 elections its growing for transporting fuel in grassroots support, Dr. miners' vehicles, and Jagdeo described the abolishing the road opposition's alliances as registration political theatrics. "Our for mining **growth is a testimony** to keeping faith with policies the people," he stated, stifling the referencing the PPP/C's took ability to deliver on its decisive steps to promises and address

Dr. Jagdeo's message for was clear: the PPP/C miners to thrive," remains steadfast in Dr Jagdeo asserted, its mission to serve the contrasting his people of Guyana. From government's proactive advancing transparency approach with the in resource management opposition's restrictive to revitalising the mining sector and maintaining political strength, the PPP/C has demonstrated its commitment national development.

With the largest Congress in its history and a growing base of support, the party is poised to secure a decisive Dr. Jagdeo dismissed victory in 2025. "We recent gatherings of are ready," Dr. Jagdeo parties declared, dismissing the inconsequential. opposition as irrelevant **useless** will in the face of the PPP/ flock together," he C's transformative track

### PRESIDENT ALI STANDS FIRM ON TRANSPARENT USE OF OIL FUNDS, **SLAMS OPPOSITION ATTEMPTS TO UNDERMINE OVERSIGHT**

President Natural Resource Fund (NRF). Inalive broadcast, individuals, President Ali rejected claim expertise, are real legitimacy of the NRF.

The particularly opposition-nominated of recognising the true general public. member of the NRF motives behind these Investment Committee, narratives. with who, along

are these critics of selectively administration,

" T h e s e lacked **who** and

parliamentary out the shortcomings Act in 2021, which vastly undergo scrutiny from

Dr. the NRF committee as a Act passed by the and governance. The Irfaan Ali has strongly mere "rubber stamp." APNU+AFC government new legislation reduced opposition President Ali accused in 2019. Under the former ministerial attempting to discredit twisting the facts, using NRF Act concentrated accountability measures, government's their supposed authority power in the hands of and established an management of the to mislead the public. the finance minister, independent provided no management. the accusations from willfully eroding oversight. The formula to publish required members the legal framework used to determine deposits on time, they and groups, accusing that governs our withdrawals was opaque could face up to 10 years them of distorting **nation's progress,"** and complicated, with in prison," President Ali facts to undermine the President stated. no requirements for noted, emphasising the the transparency and "They deliberately public disclosures of shift from centralising ignore the facts and deposits. The President power to creating a President serve their personal highlighted that the more accountable and responded to criticisms, or political agendas, law was designed to transparent system. from **not the people's."** He be inaccessible and Terrence Campbell, an stressed the importance incomprehensible to the framework, every deposit

> PPP/C President Ali pointed passed a revised NRF the Consolidated Fund

the introduced stricter board transparency, to oversee the Fund's "If a parliamentary Finance Minister fails

Under the new into the NRF is published In contrast, the in the Official Gazette, government and all transfers into opposition, has labelled of the previous NRF improved transparency Parliament, the Auditor



President, Dr Irfaan Ali

President concluded by reaffirming of all citizens. that the current

General, and the Public administration is fully Accounts Committee. compliant with the "None of this was law and committed to in the previous NRF ensuring the responsible Act," said President Ali. management of Guyana's Ali oil wealth for the benefit

## **IMF COMMENDS GUYANA'S CARBON CREDIT** APPROACH AT CARIBBEAN FORUM



Senior Minister in the Office of the President with Responsibility for Finance and the Public Service, Dr. Ashni Singh pictured here with IMF's Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva during the meeting

vast

Guyana's innovative resources for economic of Finance, Dr. Ashni finance the transition innovative approach to leveraging development garnered Singh, forest praise at the recent

Fund (IMF) 2024 High Development Strategy Level Caribbean Forum (LCDS), emphasising the remarks, IMF Managing on Managing the Green country's commitment Director Transition.

brought government central and focused on strategies change and natural significant for transitioning to a disasters, and stressed resources greener economy in the the need for increased for the green energy CORSIA Caribbean region.

Senior

International Monetary Guyana's Low Carbon sources. to financial support to transition Minister mitigate these risks and highlighted

sustainable Georgieva highlighted to renewable energy as a viable pathway for action.

generating revenue to During her opening support these efforts.

Guyana's LCDS Kristalina has been instrumental specifically in generating revenue The forum, which development and its commended Guyana's through the sale of together proactive approach pioneering efforts in carbon credits, allowing officials, to addressing climate carbon credit sales, citing the country to invest in bankers, change. He underscored it as a model for other sustainable development private sector the Caribbean region's countries in the region. initiatives. The recent representatives, vulnerability to climate She acknowledged the issuance of carbon financial credits eligible for use required by airlines under the programme and further solidifies Guyana's Guyana's position as a approach global leader in climate

They highlighted the

importance of not only technical skills but also the ability to identify and address real-world

problems

through

# ONE GUYANA DIGITAL PROGRAM

Guyanese successfully completed waste the One Guyana Digital systems, Programme. This the initiative, earlier this year, has challenges. equipped participants with in-demand tech investment in development.

Nine graduates demonstrating including Ali, programme's building the effectiveness in fostering interview techniques. problem-solving entrepreneurial emphasised and

The first cohort mindsets. These projects of 365 young, talented ranged from patient has management apps to management highlighting potential launched address critical societal

The government's skills, including software programme is part development, front-end of a broader strategy design, and mobile app to develop a highly skilled workforce. talented Graduates are being showcased prepared for successful their innovative projects careers through career President Irfaan development training,

President



A student presenting his project

commitment job programme graduates.

The initiative falls Ali under the Guyana Online programme is Academy for Learning expanded (GOAL)

 $g\ o\ v\ e\ r\ n\ m\ e\ n\ t\ '\ s\ and\ enables\ graduates$ to to work remotely in providing opportunities Guyana for renowned for young Guyanese, tech companies across stating that hundreds the globe. They will be of job opportunities able to earn between US resume are already lined up for \$30,000 to US\$ 40,000 annually.

> Additionally, the being to the programme, Caribbean region as the

One Caribbean Digital technology. Initiative.

Dr. Ashni Singh and the One Guyana Digital Minister of Government Sonia Parag promising precedent praised the graduates' for Guyana's future, achievements and the empowering programme's potential people to contribute to to transform Guyana's thenation's technological landscape. advancement. digital

As the first graduates Minister of Finance embark on their careers, Local Programme sets a



President Ali and the two ministers with the students

Colombian Avianca made history as its inaugural direct flight landed at the Cheddi Jagan International Airport, marking a milestone significant for air travel in Guyana. This long-awaited service is expected to enhance tourism, trade, and cultural exchange, opening new doors for collaboration between Guyana and Colombia.

The inaugural was greeted flight with enthusiasm and excitement. Upon its departure, the aircraft carried 113 passengers to explore Colombia, symbolising the beginning of a direct connection that promises

On December 11, to strengthen bilateral occasion, the Guyana (GTA) airline ties. To celebrate the Tourism

Authority passengers with tokens

to investing in airport closer reach. infrastructure to improve connectivity three weekly flights for both domestic and using an Airbus A320 international travelers. international travelers.

Guyana's aviation market new chapter in Guyana's is poised to elevate the development, bridging nation's global standing gaps between nations by making it more and fostering stronger accessible to visitors connections across the Americas brighter future. and beyond. The direct link to Colombia not

only promises to boost tourism, but also to stimulate economic growth and facilitate cultural exchange.

This latest addition presented of Guyanese hospitality. to Guyana's expanding Minister of Public aviation landscape comes Works, Bishop Juan alongside the arrival shared his of other international optimism about the carriers, broadening the new service, stating, country's connectivity.

"This will further Destinations such as strengthen bilateral Houston, St. Lucia, ties between Guyana London, Cuba, the and Colombia." He Dominican Republic, also highlighted the Grenada, and now government's dedication Colombia are within

> Avianca will operate Avianca's entry into takes off, it symbolises a for



The Secretriat has enphasised adhering to established procurement criteria, including pricing, technical capabilities, and local content plans

## NING SCHOOL GRADU COHORT OF AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL

Training School (CATS) provided by CATS meets demonstrated milestone with the and graduation of 36 students globally. various aviation disciplines. Flight Approach and

Works, Bishop Juan Edghill said. Edghill, highlighted The min the significance of this commended the excellent achievement, that CATS has recently air traffic controllers controllers acquired TRAINAIR and accreditation the **PLUS** from the International maintaining Civil Organization accreditation industry. This

The Civil Aviation ensures that the training is recognised quality

including have to go abroad international training Information to seek training, programme for and Alerting Services, because now we Cayman Islands Airport Control, will be offering the Authority. The school's Aeronautical training, and our use of the Moodle I n f o r m a t i o n **people can benefit** Learning Management Management. **from it right here** System has further Minister of Public **in Guyana,"** Minister enhanced its capabilities

The minister also training. noting work of emphasised on importance Aviation standards of safety and positive attitude and (ICAO). efficiency in the aviation conduct

CATS has celebrated a major international standards commitment to providing training conducting 14 courses "We will no longer in 2024, including an for delivering

> As the newly Guyana's graduated air traffic embark their careers, of Minister Edghill urged high them to maintain a themselves professionally.



Minister of Public Works Bishop Juan Edghill with the new air traffic controllers

**GUYANA JOINS GLOBAL A** 

Guyana joined in global (ICAO). The event, held for the modern global

Chicago, Illinois, aviation commemorated communityincelebrating the adoption of the the 80th anniversary of Chicago Convention on the International Civil December 7, 1944, which Organization laid the foundation aviation system.



Guyana participating in 80th Anniversary of International Civil Aviation

## VIATION CELEBRATION

Guyana's delegation, addressing led by Director General aviation Lt. Col. (Ret'd) Egbert including Field and Director General (CA) security. Saheed

"The on our ability to aviation. navigate challenges Col. Field.

Session of the ICAO

Council focused on global challenges, climate Deputy change, safety, and Member Sulaman, states reaffirmed their participated in the event. commitment to working aviation together to ensure a **sector's future hinges** sustainable future for

Guvana remains **collaboratively** and dedicated to contributing effectively," said Lt. to a global aviation landscape that is both The Extraordinary innovative and resilient.



Guyana participating in 80th Anniversary of **International Civil Aviation** 

within

successful

enhancing cooperation

institutions on issues of mutual interest. The

of the first political

multilateral

conclusion

GUYANESE DJASPORA DJGEST **KEEPING THE DIASPORA INFORMED** 

# IA AND OATAR EXPL

towards strengthening of their bilateral relations and political

Guyana and Qatar 2024. The meeting, existing partnerships. took a significant step hosted by the Ministry Foreign International held on December 10, cooperation and solidify



Guyana's Foreign Secretary, Robert Persaud and H.E Dr Ahmed bin Hassan Al Hammadi, Secretary-General, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Qatar

Foreign Secretary Affairs Robert Persaud led the Guyana the first-ever Cooperation, aimed to while H.E Dr Ahmed bin consultation explore new avenues of Hassan Al Hammadi, Secretary-General the Qatari Ministry of Foreign Affairs, headed the Qatari side. Both delegations opportunities collaboration in various sectors, infrastructure, health, agriculture, and energy.

Qatar expressed its intention to expand its investments beyond the energy sector, with a focus on real estate and hospitality. This aligns economy.

The

delegation,

discussed for including

consultation upon the momentum including those related to generated by the visit of hospitality, biodiversity with the growing interest the Amir of Qatar, His conservation, of Qatari companies Highness Sheikh Tamim healthcare support. in Guyana's emerging bin Hamad Al Thani, to Guyana in September emphasised political 2023. This visit resulted commitment

built in several agreements, and

Both countries their to

consultation marks a beginning promising for a deeper and more strategic partnership between Guyana and Qatar.



 $Guyana's\ Foreign\ Secretary,\ Robert\ Persaud\ and\ H.E\ Dr\ Ahmed\ bin\ Hassan\ Al$ Hammadi, Secretary-General, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Qatar holding high-level discussions at the ministry

## AIR CANADA ANNOUNCES NON-STOP FLIGHTS BETWEEN **GUYANA AND TORONTO AS PART OF MAJOR EXPANSION**

Air Canada has Jagan unveiled its ambitious Airport (GEO) and is growth strategy during set to be operated by Investor Day which includes the Boeing 737 MAX 8 launch of non-stop aircraft. The decision to flights between Toronto establish this route is in and Guyana. This move is strategy to tap into the part of a broader plan economic growth of the to add over a dozen Latin American and new destinations in the footprint.

The new will route Toronto Georgetown's

International 2024, Air Canada Rouge using Georgetown, keeping with the airline's international Caribbean markets.

Canada's Air coming years, as part of expansion is supported the airline's commitment by the addition of four to expanding its global advanced aircraft models to its fleet, including the Guyana Airbus A220, Boeing connect 787-10, Boeing 737 MAX, with and the Airbus A321neo Cheddi XLR. According to the



Air Canada to launch flights to Guyana

cooperation.

the region.

a

Schialer

Additionally, Peru will

Memorandum

of

airline, the aim is to through its primary hubs strengthen its operations in Toronto, Montreal,

Toronto positioned as its Fortaleza in Brazil. global hub. By 2030, Air in revenue and a 5-6% increase in capacity.

Cartagena, Guadalajara and markets. to Acapulco, and resuming service to Rio de

and Vancouver, with Janeiro and introducing

The announcement Canada projects annual marks a significant step revenue of 30 billion for Guyana, linking it Canadian dollars, driven directly to Toronto and by a 7–8% annual growth providing a convenient travel option business and leisure As part of its Latin passengers. This route American expansion, the is expected to further airline will also introduce enhance economic and new routes to Lima, cultural ties between Peru; El Salvador; and Guyana and Canada Colombia. while strengthening Air Additional plans include Canada's presence in the expanding its footprint rapidly growing Latin in Mexico with flights American and Caribbean

Peru is make history with the wider CARICOM region. establishment of its firstever embassy in Guyana, will serve as a marking a major step **bridge** to forward in strengthening stronger diplomatic, ties with Caribbean Community **cultural exchanges** (CARICOM). announcement made by Peru's Foreign with the broader Affairs Minister, Elmer CARICOM during Schialer, meeting in Washington, announcement D.C., with Caribbean met with enthusiasm ambassadors and heads by of mission accredited to representatives the United States.

Minister Schialer emphasised embassy's significance, Peru's describing it as a vital representation between Peru

set to Guyana, as well as the

This foster the **economic**, The between Peru and was Guyana, as well as region," a Schialer said. Caribbean diplomatic relationships. member states. attendance.

The new embassy the will also act as permanent platform for enhancing CARICOM, reflecting the reiterated diplomatic, economic, country's commitment intention to finalise the two nations. and cultural exchanges to advancing trade, and investment, and regional

Understanding (MoU) To further cement with CARICOM to ties, Minister Schialer establish a Consultation announced plans for a and Cooperation high-level visit to the Mechanism. Caribbean in 2025. This initiative is part of visit aims to promote Peru's broader strategy trade and investment to enhance political opportunities while consultations strengthening individual CARICOM

Guyana reopen its embassy in Peru first established Jamaica, expanding its diplomatic relations on diplomatic footprint in July 17, 1971, and this new development marks also a significant milestone in Peru's the partnership between

This and



Peru's Foreign Affairs Minister, Elmer Schialer

<u>Guyanese diaspora digest</u> KEEPING THE DIASPORA INFORMED

residents, the President

agriculture.

logistics.

about

that

world-class

packaging

aims



President, Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali addressing residents and farmers in Region Two

Supenaam) through a significant Manor. outreach tour.

farmers and residents offered across key communities, including Anna Regina, Dartmouth, and Charity, where he listened to their concerns and discussed various ongoing and future government initiatives. This outreach highlights the government's commitment strengthening ties with local communities ensuring and that aligned with the real needs of the people.

### ADVANCING WATER ACCESS WITH A NEW TREATMENT **FACILITY**

Onderneeming, in Region Two.

President Irfaan Ali to 90% by 2025. Once initiative is taking direct action operational, the plant integrate the region to address the needs of will deliver clean, potable into global markets just words; these are Region Two (Pomeroon- water to residents from while stimulating local tangible investments residents Supenaam to Taymouth businesses and boosting that enhance your

Highlighting

standards." the regional economy.

On December 13, the expertise in the water complements a broader these actions with the President engaged with sector, President Ali development agenda for unfulfilled Region Two, including of feedback to



Scenes from the meeting held in Region Two

uninterrupted

supply. The plant, set to reflect the government's in drainage, irrigation, investments poured into they be completed by early commitment 2025, is a significant diversifying the economy step in improving living and positioning the conditions for thousands region as an economic are

President Ali inspecting Onderneeming water treatment facility

President Ali inspected \$1.18 billion Guyana Water Incorporated

### the construction of a **MODERN PORT FOR CHARITY**

plan to expand treated facility, positioning the

development efforts are enhance the project's investments in new sustainability, ensuring hotels, a stadium, and a backup systems for state-of-the-art hospital water in Lima. These projects to powerhouse.

### **ENHANCING** DARTMOUTH'S **DEVELOPMENT**

President Ali reiterated in increasing rice yields 4,000 productivity supporting community growth. He announced farmers to take advantage productivity. significant investments of the resources strengthening the area's further productivity *further* economic foundation.

"We In Charity, President enhance agricultural said. (GWI) treatment plant. Ali unveiled plans for **productivity**. As his visit This facility is part a \$1 billion state-of- **This** is **essential** concluded, President Ali of the government's the-art port and wharf **for expanding** expressed confidence economic in

for exports and economic **region**," the President his growth. Speaking to stated.

The described the project as in Dartmouth include of this is because we year. transformative, noting upgraded its potential to support enhanced tourism, and irrigation systems, stated. "With the PPP/C to cultivate these plants, and modern shipping support for businesses, and new support, "This is not just agricultural programmes of development will clearing of lands." **about building a** such as Blackbelly sheep continue." port," he said. "It's breeding and broiler **creating** a farming. facility Ali highlighted these and coffee industries are that production includes developments as part part of a government-led directly linked to market and of the government's storage capabilities philosophy of equitable to meet international investment in every The community to improve to citizens' quality of life.

"These are not living standards," he The port project emphasised, contrasting promises the previous administration.

### **SUPPORTING FARMERS WITH A** \$2 BILLION BOOST

President announced a doubling of the government's include agricultural support agricultu budget to \$2 billion, modernising is delivering critical relief infrastructure, results, as costs. The initiative establishing value-added and production includes subsidies for rice and productivity. cash crop farmers and significant investments to and roads.

and create better production. livelihoods for farmers," President

Region

roads, believe in the region drainage and its people," he acres of land is required small Government and your with the government to

President coconut, citrus, cocoa, be established to ensure

administration's cocoa plants to be commitment to equitable delivered for increased investments and holistic growth. "All productivity by next

An additional 300 the story offset related costs for

Furthermore, Efforts to expand the production facility will



President Ali inspecting Onderneeming water treatment facility

initiative to transform access In Anna Regina, Region Two into an

Key expanding into support agricultural targeted facilities to enhance increased.

A c c o r d i n g congratulate sector are reaping investment.

For government's from 5.5 tons to 6.1 tons coconuts and 10,000 admiration. focus on increasing per hectare as evidence citrus plants have and of effective interventions. been delivered to the developments President Ali urged Pomeroon to boost agriculture

infrastructure, provided, stressing the 5,000 acres that is the region with regional agriculture, and social importance of using already impoldered, and programmes aimed at land efficiently to drive we are going to markets, according to oundation. gains. "We are not 2,500 acres more the want to sitting back. We are coming months, that in visit **explained**.

In addition, the cocoa sustainable Two's are being revived and generations to come. water access from 52% Region Two as a key hub opportunities in this potential and reiterated renewed, with 10,000

President Ali also Ali economic powerhouse. revealed that initiatives million was invested dredging lands, Pomeroon River and seeing positive to farmers facing rising supporting farmers, and has been prevented

to our President Ali, farmers too, because farm-to-market the region's agriculture making use of this "These policies positive results, and seeing the expanded designed to more resources will farming production, enhance productivity be pumped to expand to the extent that we have instance, brought the market. the approximately 1,000 almost 1,000 tons explained. acres of coconut are of plantain from the He highlighted the under cultivation in *Pomeroon*. These are stop in Dartmouth, government's success the Pomeroon. Around historic numbers," high-yielding **he expressed** 

are not accidental but "In addition to the deliberate efforts to align international *impolder* the head-of-state.

Throughinvestments infrastructure, open up more land investing in assets is 7,500 acres of land agriculture, and social for farming, invest that enhance your that will be placed in programmes, President for farming, invest that ennance your interest lands, and ability to thrive," he active production," Ali's administration President Ali is reshaping Region Two into a vibrant and region, **expanding** expressed confidence and coffee industries ensuring progress for

# My greatest aspiration is for a united and prosperous Guyana: Ali

PRESIDENT Dr Irfaan Ali signalling that his aspiration is for a united and prosperous Guyana, has noted that the People's Progressive Party/Civic (PPP/C) administration has made significant strides in promoting inclusivity and reducing division in Guyana.

The Head of State made these remarks during the most recent airing of "In the Seat", where he indicated that Guyanese are seeing for themselves the tremendous growth and opportunities that abound and are reaping the bene-

Going back, President Ali said that when one looks at some of the communities across the country where historically there would be resistance for PPP/C leaders or a PPP government, this has been completely wiped out.

These he said are areas where one would have thought in the past were so resistant that they would not even allow it.

Against this backdrop, the Head of State noted that he is humbled by the love and support that citizens across the country and across every community show to him as President and to the PPP/C administration.

"They're believing now and they're seeing for themselves the

changes that are taking place in the community, they can't be easily fooled or misled anymore," he said.

President Ali further reiterated that citizens are witnessing for themselves the successes and opportunities coming

With this, he added that his government will stay focused and continue its investment in the human capital of the country.

"I believe that we just have to stay focused, invest in the people, put the people first, invest in the human capital development of every citizen," he affirmed.

Speaking of some of these programmes that have been implemented to invest in the development of Guyana's human capital, he highlighted the nursing programme where anyone who wants to become a nurse with the basic qualifications can be trained free of cost while receiving a salary and guaranteed employment upon completion.

Further, President Ali spoke of the hospitality institute, the nearshoring programme and several other initiatives to have Guyanese trained and engaged.

Giving another example of a successful programme, he highlighted the



Irfaan Ali

implementation of the block-making project for the youths of Leopold Street. He noted that many persons thought this was a farcical thing.

"Today, those young persons went through training. They started blockmaking, they're now building homes... they have a whole company called Leopold Incorporated... so that is the type of changes taking place," President Ali added.

Further, he indicated that the his-

torical approach of division by the opposition has very little weight today as he added that there is a tremendous underestimation by that faction as to the capacity of the population to reason things for themselves and to be analytical in their own way and make decisions that are beyond race and beyond what community they are from.

He added, "So the indicator would it's all over there, when you go to all these community facilities that are being built, when you go to the sea wall and see Guyanese of all walks of life, all integrated, you know, it is fully an amazing feeling to me because I believe my greatest aspiration, is for united and prosperous Guyana."

Lamenting on the support the PPP/C administration has garnered over the past four years, President Ali expressed his belief that this is going to be reflected hugely in the votes in 2025 polls.

"We're going to win the elections with a huge margin and that is not being egotistical in any way; that is being honest... I'm humbled with the love and support that the people across every community are giving us, giving me, giving the People's Progressive Party/Civic," he added.



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: <u>1-800-317-0804</u>





# PRESIDENT AND MINIST CHEER ACROS



President Dr. Irfaan Ali and his government brought the holiday spirit to communities across Guyana this Christmas season. From flipping the switch on dazzling village Christmas trees to hosting festive luncheons and sharing meals, their presence brought warmth and joy to thousands.

Children in various communities were especially delighted as the President and his ministers personally handed out toys, ensuring that every child felt the magic of the season. These activities underscore the administration's commitment to fostering togetherness and spreading cheer during this special time of year.

The vibrant lights, heartfelt meals, and smiling faces captured in these moments reflect the true essence of Christmas—unity, generosity, and joy.

















**GUYANESE DIASPORA DIGEST** 

KEEPING THE DIASPORA INFORMED

# RS SPREAD CHRISTMAS COMMUNITIES

























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each































# **RIGHTS AND ANTI-CORRUPTI**



Minister of Parliamentary Affairs and Governance, Gail Teixeira during a panel discussion

G u y a n a 's democracy. unwavering commitment to human rights and the Minister fight against corruption the took center stage at the commitment Conference Centre.

Organised Ministry and Anti-Corruption (December 9) and International Human Rights Day (December 10), offering a platform reflection for on Guyana's significant progress in these critical areas.

Prime Minister Brigadier (Ret'd) Mark Phillips led the opening emphasising session, the inseparable link safeguarding between human rights and tackling corruption. This honouring international whistleblowers, officials, civil society Nations, groups, and international International, organisations celebrate the strides "Human rights are structure.

Prime to at the Arthur Chung of nationality, gender, and ensuring that no equality," ethnicity, or religion. one is left behind," Teixeira remarked. by "Human rights are the Prime Minister of the foundation of stated. He pointed to key initiatives like the Solar democracy in 1992. Parliamentary Affairs **justice**, **equality**, government initiatives, Home Systems Project, Dr. Singh highlighted over Governance, and democracy," the such as the enforcement which has expanded the enactment of key from an analysis and democracy, and democracy and democracy and democracy and democracy and democracy and democracy, and democracy and democr observance of He further highlighted laws, the protection of communities, and the modern Day Guyana's dedication to

Turning to the development. He underscored that and corruption erodes public communities. achieve fairness and issue, reaffirmed transparency. "Fighting for wo government's corruption is about Guyana,

governance framework.

protecting



Stakeholders at the event

government those with the United acquired and a in ensuring not just ideals we iustice, equality, and principles we live by," and

and assets, as Amnesty pivotal steps in building the transparent

Minister

Prime Minister Phillips Gail Teixeira, echoed respected. emphasised, stressing these sentiments, that these values are highlighting integral to the country's government's "rights- Office of the President, resilient institutions based" approach to discussed issue of corruption, pointed out that critical the Prime Minister areas such as housing, noted its corrosive access to clean water, effects on democracy, and education have seen the rule of law, and notable improvements, economic development. particularly in rural Indigenous "The trust in institutions, right to housing hindering efforts to is a fundamental particularly women. 40% our homeowners are Human Rights and Anti- protecting the rights of institutions, securing women, a significant Corruption Expo, held all Guyanese, regardless economic growth, step toward gender

> She also spotlighted the anti-corruption energy access in remote legislation, including ministries, ICT Access & E-Services regulations, for Communities Project, rights which bridges the digital and and rural areas.

Minister protection programmes rights targeting populations, including the elderly, children, and persons with disabilities. These initiatives provide crucial support, helping reduce poverty and landmark event brought agreements, such as efforts to recover illicitly improve living standards. She further discussed government's and commitment to Human Rights Watch. accountable governance empowering Indigenous communities, ensuring of their rights to land, governance that upholds strive for; they are Parliamentary Affairs cultural heritage, and Governance, decision-making

the Senior Minister in the it's about building She institutional

corruption is not just Dr. Ashni Singh, about passing laws; Guyana's that can uphold reforms, **those laws**," Dr. Singh



The event united diverse stakeholders in Guyana to commemorate Anti-Corruption Day

Minister pointing to the country's said, emphasising the restoration of efforts in reform. financial and and vulnerable corruption

transformation since importance of bipartisan

The expo featured 40 booths government agencies, international the organisations, providing Hinterland establishment of human vital information on commissions, human rights and antistrengthened corruption initiatives. divide between urban parliamentary oversight. Panel discussions further These reforms, he offered stakeholders the Teixeira explained, are vital to opportunity to share also emphasised the reinforcing Guyana's insights and discuss the importance of social commitment to human importance of collective anti- action in safeguarding rights efforts. human "The fight against combating corruption.



The Human Rights and Anti-Corruption Expo

# EW BOOK EDUCATES CHILDREN ON



The book helps children understand their rights and how to stay safe

The

Ministry of to educate children schools across all 10 domestic Human Services and about safety, healthy administrative regions of enhance emotional and not only as a resource Security has relationships, and their Guyana. These sessions physical well-being, and for children, but also

and Strong Together.

This book simplifies the key help when needed. provisions of Guyana's New Family Violence sensitive readers,

The Sexual Offences where children interactive sessions in primary mission

of a new book titled Safe how to recognise signs of violence, protect children's themselves, and access

addressing topics Act, making it accessible in a relatable and and engaging for young straightforward manner, particularly Safe and Strong Together primary school students. fosters an environment and Domestic Violence informed and confident Policy Unit spearheaded about their rights. The the initiative, conducting initiative aligns with the broader reading government's violence.



The book helps children understand their rights and how to stay safe

combat vulnerable groups.

The book serves introduced an initiative rights through the launch aimed to teach children ensure the protection of as a catalyst for open

discussions about safety empowerment within families schools.

# Grantley Adams International Airport marks significant milestone

The Grantley Adams International Airport (GAIA) has reached a significant milestone in its history.

Minister of Tourism Ian Gooding-Edghill reported on Saturday that the port of entry was fast becoming an international hub and statistics showed that by the end of the year, there will be a record number of visitors to pass through the airport.

"The Grantley Adams International Airport is projected to have 2.3 million passengers by the end of this calendar year. This is certainly up from the 2019 figure, which I'm advised was 2.29 million," he said, stressing that the island was experiencing a boom in tourism.

The minister added that Saturday was one of the busiest days at the airport in its history.

He said 8 000 visitors travelled to Barbados in a single day. Of that figure, 2 200 were air to sea transfers while the other 5 800 were stay over visitors.

""The Grantley Adams International Airport has had one of its busiest days certainly in its history. I've been advised that there are 54 flights arriving today. We have 15 wide bodies, 15 narrow bodies and 24 regional flights coming into Grantley Adams International Airport... What this tells you is that the growth we are looking for and achieving speaks volumes."

Chief executive officer of the airport Hadley Bourne said the airport was undergoing a number of initiatives to enhance the customer experience and they augured well for the increased arrivals.

He added that the neighbouring Concorde experience was reopened for the past six weeks as well to take the load off the main terminal at the GAIA.

Another significant development was the number of direct flights from the United States (US) to Barbados.

Statistics from January to September this year showed that there were 509 673 stayover arrivals and 176 614 were from the US alone, which made the US surpass the United Kingdom as the number one source market for Barbados for the first time since 1994.

The minister said he was pleased that six American-based carriers flew into Barbados on Saturday as well. One of them was a re-inaugural flight from Delta airlines direct from the JFK New York airport. That flight, which landed around 2:30 p.m., brought a full capacity of visitors — 160.

During a media briefing at the airport, Gooding-Edghill said measures were being put in place to ensure

tourists spent more money during their stay here.

"We are also focusing on how we can encourage customers to spend more when they are in Barbados. We have a number of exciting programmes which at the appropriate time will be revealed to the country," he added.

US-AID general development director of the US Embassy Steven Fonderiest said he was pleased about the improved airlift connectivity between the two states.

Captain of the Delta flight Mark Nagel said he and his crew were happy to provide an important service to Barbados, adding that the trip went smoothly.



Passengers arrive ast Grantley Adams Airport on a Delta flight

# 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.



**GUYANESE DIASPORA DIGEST** 

## NEW INITIATIVE AIMS TO PROMOTE SA EARNING ENVIRONMENTS FOR CHI

reaching an estimated

20,000

and

governments of Guyana and Canada have joined forces to enhance the well-being of children, particularly those in vulnerable groups.

A new project, titled "Promoting Safe and Healthy Learning and *Living Environments* Migrant for and Host Communities in Guyana's Hinterland and Selected Coastal *Areas*", aims to improve access to safe living and learning conditions for migrant children and in hinterland those



New plan launched to promote safe living, learning for migrant and hinterland children

communities.

The CAN\$3 million 40,000 children under project will target 50 four communities across parents or caregivers. Regions One, Two, Additionally, 50 coastal Seven, Eight, and Nine, communities will benefit

Services

Persaud, childhood development. needs. "We want children the that and are

and

from the initiative.

said, during a Project education, Committee **gender** Steering Grand Coastal Hotel, our

The ministry is working Minister of Human to launch an early Social childhood policy and Security, Dr. Vindhya develop a curriculum, highlighted with a particular focus the importance of early on children with special

High Commissioner ensure that these of Canada to Guyana, receive H.E. Sebastian Sigouin, **interventions** emphasised the project's they require potential to create a **geared** more just and equitable to enter a formal future for Guyana. education arena," she "By focusing on this collaboration, the (PSC) meeting at the and support for Indigenous East Coast Demerara. people, migrants,

and those in remote communities, are creating a more just, equitable, and sustainable world for current and future generations," he said.
U N I C E F 's

Representative Guyana and Suriname, Nicolas Pron, reaffirmed organisation's commitment to child rights and its partnership with the Government of Guyana.

The project, which commenced in 2021, is expected to continue until 2026. Through health, two governments aim to equality, make a lasting impact on the lives of countless children in Guyana.



Some of the other services that are offered by the Ministry of Human Services and Social Security to eradicate gender-based violence

significant strides in Security, combating violence, with a 33% positive development **people** reduction in murders in 2024. Minister

related during a recent event.

Human acknowledged

## SIGNIFICANT DROP IN DOMESTIC **VIOLENCE-RELATED DEATHS**

started with all of our explained. measures, there was While the minister more responses are Centres. that forthcoming. But this

the number of cases does not mean that trains

reporting hotline, the iMatter app,

The CAN initiative of services, including

is still concerning, the we should sit around, members to respond to and police reporting. reduction is a significant we still have work gender-based violence, step forward. "When we to do," the minister while the 914 hotline emphasised

Hope The **or** maybe because and the Hope and Justice Justice Centres offer a comprehensive range

community counselling, legal aid,

Minister Persaud provides 24/7 support government's She attributed this for victims. The iMatter commitment to creating an increase in cases decrease to various app offers a confidential a safe environment for at first. Now, there measures implemented platform for reporting all. She urged victims Guyana has made Services and Social has been a decrease, by the ministry, including violence and will soon of domestic violence Vindhya and this may be as the Community Advocate provide access to legal to report incidents and domestic Persaud, announced this a result of more Network (CAN), the 914 and counselling services. utilise the available and resources.

The Ministry of Human Services and Services Social Security working to strengthen Persaud, harassment in Guyana. A legislation. "This bill is by held on at the Arthur **hold** Chung Centre (ACCC), to discuss **remain** the draft Protection from **neutral.**" Harassment Bill.

and Social **society** is Security, Dr. Vindhya Guyanese." underscored Conference accountable, **gender-** defines are committed "unwanted"

for

legal protections against the importance of the has been influenced six months. legislation from public consultation was **designed to be robust**, countries like Trinidad to provide protection individuals and Tobago, Jamaica, and compensation to and and South she said. as "unwelcome" and workplaces, educational social settings.

Minister of Human to creating a safer It outlines penalties for all perpetrators, including fines of \$1 million and The draft bill, which imprisonment of up to

The bill is expected Africa, victims of harassment, harassment particularly

W HUB HONOURS



Stakeholders at the consultation

behaviour. institutions, and other ministry aims to have the upcoming year.

The legislation passed in the

Social Security, launched the Golden senior citizens. Hub Generation in

The Ministry of Victoria, an initiative Human Services and aimed at celebrating and has empowering the nation's

The community-

## based programme, the brainchild of Minister ceremony,

of Human and Social Dr. Vindhya Persaud, programme, stating, designed to enhance and brain games will seeks to combat "Golden as a tribute the quality of life for promote mental acuity. isolation and honour the invaluable contributions of Guyana's elderly because there are workshops, games, and such as introductory population. The hub many will provide a platform generations in this connections and share computers, and internet for seniors to connect room and hub, so in experiences. access resources, and across Guyana, aging there will be participate in a variety of we are going to be monthlyyoga, taichi, and

Minister Services Persaud another, all the communities

During the launch generations hubs."

The emphasised Generation Hub offers a Weekly puzzles, memory Security, the significance of the diverse range of activities exercises, book clubs, **different** group outings to foster classes on smartphones,

creating these golden light aerobics sessions

to improve physical Golden health and flexibility.

use to help seniors To promote active navigate the digital age.



Minister of Human Services and Social Security, Dr Vindhya Persaud and members of the ministry alongside two centenarians

**GUYANESE DJASPORA DJGEST** 

**KEEPING THE DIASPORA INFORMED** 

## LOCAL CONTRACTORS SCORE BIG INDEN AND BARTICA

Local contractors in Linden and Bartica are set to benefit significantly from a series of major infrastructure projects. Hundreds of contracts have been awarded to local businesses to upgrade roads and drainage systems in both regions.

In Linden, additional contracts worth \$76.7 million have been signed for development, road complementing the 325 contracts valued at \$4.2 billion awarded earlier. These projects aim to improve connectivity, reduce travel time, and enhance the overall quality of life for residents.



The contract signing exercise in Linden

Edghill, government's the commitment empowering

Minister of Public Contractors can access Works, Bishop Juan up to 30% of their highlighted contract sum upfront.

To address flooding to concerns, 46 contracts local have been awarded for contractors and easing drainage improvement their financial burden. projects. The government

systems by employing the process. 20 individuals and allocating two excavators are to the region.

In Bartica, 61 small opportunities contractors have been stimulate awarded contracts totalling \$122 million for road rehabilitation. This historic initiative is aimed at empowering local contractors and improving the town's infrastructure.

The contracts, ranging from \$1.8 million to \$2.5 million, will fund the upgrade of 61 roads, with the goal of completion by the end of December 2023. The government has provided an upfront

is also investing in the payment of 50% of the growth maintenance of drainage contract sum to expedite respective

Both expected create numerous job and inclusive growth economic initiatives.

regions. government's The projects focus on communityto based development and is evident in these



The contract signing ceremony in Bartica

# **NEW FOREST TO JOIN NATIONAL**

Residents of New Singh, Region Six, will soon visit to the community, This initiative is being and the demands of enjoy electricity for the emphasising first time, as part of the transformative nature of the Guyana Power and economy. He assured Government's ongoing this milestone. to expand

Service,

thanks to a government-

hinterland's

sector.

outreach

Rupununi

ensuring

productivity

sustainable land use.

transforming the

During a two-day

to

Minister of Agriculture

farming

North

villages,

increased

and

shared East Canje, announcement during a President Dr. Irfaan Ali. expectations of citizens

> Dr. Singh

this under the leadership of capacity to meet the the implemented through Guyana's

energy infrastructure to encouraged residents to Singh highlighted key they can switch on their underserved and remote areas.

See the electrification of New Forest not merely Senior Minister in as an energy project, lives nationwide. Dr. Singh also discussed the Singh also discussed the With Responsibility Government's broader significant investments for Finance and Public electricity to a set the electrification of government initiatives lights before Christmas. Dr. Singh and New aligning with President for the further urged the community to use electricity responsibly.

This development initiatives lights before Christmas. Forest residents, Ali's directive that no during which the lack community should be electricity responsibly.

This development as a major concern. The electricity.

Minister had committed for Finance and Public strategy to improve lives made in GPL to enhance follows Dr. Ashni in every community the power company's engagements

expanding Light (ĞPL). residents that efforts During his visit, Dr. are underway to ensure



Senior Minister in the Office of the President with Responsibility for Finance and the Public Service Dr. Ashni Singh meeting with residents of New Forest

previous Minister had committed between to addressing this issue,

Fund for Agricultural across Development Farmers (IFAD) Region Nine are set through the Hinterland to see unprecedented Environmentally growth as they gain Sustainable Agricultural access to advanced Development (HESAD) agricultural tools and resources. critical

# driven initiative aimed



Minister Mustapha while handing over agricultural inputs to farmers from Annai

Mustapha Zulfikar handed over a \$3 million Multispectral project, will provide Massara Mavic drone to the Regional data on soil nutrients, villages. Agriculture Department. moisture, crop health, staple crop in the region, underscored environmental cutting-edge and The drone will aid farmers conditions-key in soil testing, crop optimising yields. health monitoring, and agriculture, precision

### \$5M FOR CASSAVA **EXPANSION**

In addition to the technological boost, The drone, funded Minister Mustapha the government announced a \$5 million and the International grant to expand cassava

production across other and Cassava, a is a cornerstone of hinterland food security and economic activity. while drive this expansion.

**ADDITIONAL SUPPORT FOR** LIVESTOCK AND

### **POULTRY**

To strengthen farming, livestock Development Authority for ruminants, resources to improve plant nurseries. production.

underscored the developed in Annai government's focus on to supply crops for diversifying agriculture the Farmers will also receive challenges like wildlife markets, boosting both seeds, seedlings, tools, cassava sticks and other interference. Farmers production and income and pest control inputs planting materials to received 60 rolls of barb for the community. wire and chain link mesh to safeguard crops and livestock.

**AGRO-PROCESSING** revealed

### **AND NEW PROJECTS**

the Guyana Livestock minister unveiled plans large-scale cultivation (GLDA) will provide training with the Purple leading in agriculture breeding animals for Sweet Potato Farmers' in CARICOM. For cattle, swine, and small Group, facilitated by the us to maintain this alongside New Guyana Marketing position, we must artificial insemination Corporation (GMC). A harness services. Poultry farmers shade house will also be **potential of every** will also benefit from constructed to support region," the minister

Meanwhile, a 10-Minister Mustapha acre farm plot will be Rupertee, school feeding addressing programme and local distributed

### **MEGA-FARMS ON** THE HORIZON

Minister Mustapha what they need to thrive. ambitious

plans to identify lands for mega-farms across In Kwatamang, the the Rupununi, enabling agro-processing of crops. "Guyana is the emphasised.

Across Annai, Wowetta, Kwatamang, Surama, Yakarinta, and Massara. Minister Mustapha fertilizers, to farmers, underscoring the administration's commitment equipping farmers with

## **RESTORATIVE JUSTIC PRACTITIONERS TRAIN**



Judy Lall

of 17 this A group individuals, trained in restorative justice, is poised to offers an alternative reform Guyana's legal to traditional punitive system. After completing measures, "Trainer of Trainers" reconciliation. refresher course, these involving dedicated professionals offender and the victim, are ready to implement it aims to repair the harm

transformative newly approach to justice.

Restorative justice focusing rigorous five-day on rehabilitation and By both the

caused by the crime and potential of restorative that restorative justice within the community. Guyana's legal landscape. commitment to fostering innovative approach is particularly effective for minor, non-violent offences, allowing offenders to make amends and avoid the stigma of a criminal record.

The training, conducted by renowned international mediator Dr. Dianne Williams, also included an emotional intelligence workshop equip participants with the necessary skills to navigate complex situations and support those involved in the restorative justice process.

**Pastor** practice. his enthusiasm for the **approach** 

enhance aligns with her lifelong "Restorative justice unity and peace. "As a

relationships justice to



the

correction,

country

promote resolution,

restitution," he stated.

teacher, shared her belief

Judy Lall, a retired

**Omattie Madray** 

Wendell circle, allowing me practiced restorative play a crucial role in Jeffrey, a participant to be more involved justice, albeit without educating the public with a background in in what I do. With the formal label. By and criminologyandreligious government support, expanding its reach, restorative expressed we can spread this we can create a more practices throughout the

across just and positive country.

and society," she asserted. The government has

and been actively promoting restorative justice as a key component of its legal reform efforts. Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs Anil Nandlall highlighted Needham's the **Point** Declaration, which emphasises importance the of implementing restorative justice across Commonwealth Caribbean. Guyana, he noted, is leading the region in this regard.

With the establishment of restorative justice offices in several regions and the training of stakeholders, various Guyana is wellpositioned to embrace transformative this approach. The newly bringstheprocessfull teacher, I've always trained trainers will implementing justice

Ministry The of Human Services and Social Security is working to strengthen legal protections against



Minister of Human Service and Social Security, Dr Vindhya Persaud speaking at the consultation meeting on the draft copy of the Protection from Harassment Bill

## **NEW LEGISLATION TAKES STEPS** TO CURB HARASSMEN

harassment in Guyana. A public consultation was held on at the Arthur Conference Chung Centre (ACCC), to discuss the draft Protection from Harassment Bill.

Minister of Human and Social Services Security, Dr. Vindhya Persaud, underscored the importance of the legislation. "This bill is designed to be robust, hold individuals accountable,



Stakeholders at the consultation

to creating a safer six months. society for Guyanese."

legislation from particularly South and defines "unwanted" behaviour. upcoming year. It outlines penalties for

**gender-** perpetrators, including she said. fines of \$1 million and We are committed imprisonment of up to

The bill is expected to provide protection The draft bill, which and compensation to been influenced victims of harassment, countries like Trinidad workplaces, educational and Tobago, Jamaica, institutions, and other Africa, social settings. harassment ministry aims to have the "unwelcome" and legislation passed in the

# **NEW, SECURE PENSION BOOKS BEING**

The Ministry of Human Services and Social Security has initiated the distribution of 2025 Old Age Pension (OAP) books. The ministry aims to complete the process by January 31, 2025.

Due to the discovery of unauthorised pension books in circulation, the ministry has redesigned the books with enhanced security features. This led to a delay in the distribution process.

"We sincerely apologise for the delay...we had to



2025 pension and permanent disability books distribution in Region Nine

accountability, Social Security, and prevent any change the security recurrence of this

feature on the book to issue," said Minister **ensure transparency**, of Human Services and Vindhya Persaud.

To facilitate

pensioners. their residences. serve Pensioners are required to present their National of Identification (ID) card Disability Books has also and previous pension book to receive their new book.

The ministry has also integrated the registration process for the government's \$100,000 cash grant with pension book distribution. Special sections at distribution sites are dedicated this to purpose.

smoother process, the Homebound pensioners commenced. ministry has organised will have both their grant distribution sites and set registration and book committed to ensuring up a system to efficiently delivery conducted at a smooth distribution

> The distribution pensioners 2025

The ministry process and keeping informed Permanent through regular updates.



2025 pension and permanent disability books distribution in Region Nine

Children in Region Eight are stepping into a brighter future as the government continues its mission to bring quality education to hinterland communities. With the commissioning of the new Campbelltown Primary School, 48 pupils from Grades One and Two no longer have to endure a threemile trek to the nearest school.

Campbelltown Primary officially School, by commissioned Minister of Education their primary education Campbelltown's youth. Manickchand, Priya a significant marks in addressing educational accessibility. Plans are already in was unveiled at the Monkey motion for an extension



The commissioning in Campbelltown

accommodate their within own community.

To further enhance Manickchand learning, a new library commissioned school, stocked with a Nursery School. This

in next year's budget, diverse range of books, allowing the school to including storybooks, pupils educational materials, The newly opened from Grades Three to and reference texts. This Six by September 2025. initiative aims to boost This will ensure that literacy and inspire a children can complete love for reading among

> In a neighbouring community, Minister Mountain

new facility provides School. a secure and spacious environment for 49 than just a building; Construction Service, is nursery pupils, laying it's a life-changing on track for completion strong early childhood for education.

The minister inspected ongoing construction at the \$208.2 million Monkey Mountain Secondary School, which will soon serve over 250 students from Monkey Mountain, Taruka, and Tuseneng. Equipped with state-ofthe-art laboratories, an Information Technology lab, a library, teachers' quarters, and a dormitory for students also Taruka and Tuseneng, the the new facility will quality alleviate overcrowding at and be competitive projects at Micobie and Paramakatoi Secondary on a national level."

"This is more to K's Trucking foundation **investment**," Minister within nine months. Manickchand remarked. It is part of a broader

The project, awarded



The commissioning in Monkey Mountain

"It ensures children initiative to construct 16 from **can stay in their** secondary schools across villages, education, including

**access** hinterland regions, ongoing Kopinang.

## THE BISHOPS' HIGH SCHOOL RECOGNISED AS MODEL CVQ INSTITUTION

Bishops' The High School has been School designated a model itself institution for Caribbean (CVQ) The Qualification programme by Caribbean Examinations technical programmes Council (CXC), following that align with industry a rigorous evaluation standards and meet the process.

This recognition underscores technical and vocational through education.

The Bishops' High distinguished through the comprehensive approach Vocational to CVQ implementation. school has the developed robust requirements of CVQ prestigious Levels 1 and 2.

Collaboration with mentorship. the school's commitment local industries provide to providing students students with valuable school has high-quality real-world experience in workshops, field trips, and industry



The Bishops' High School recognised as model Caribbean Vocational Qualification Institution

Further,

modernising equipment. workshops and its laboratories, industry Dr. they meet

safety standards and the provide students with invested the necessary tools and

Deputy Chief ensuring Education Ritesh Tularam

commended its stating, ensure the successful success. implementation of qualifications.

The Amsterdam Multilateral Bishops' High School School as a model CVQ dedication, institution in Guyana, **"This** demonstrating recognition reflects country's commitment leadership's to providing students **strategic approach to** with diverse pathways to

The CVQ programme the CVQ programme." is a competency-based He emphasised the framework that provides Ministry of Education's students with industryvision for every student recognized qualifications to graduate with both across the Caribbean academic and vocational region. It emphasises practical skills and The Bishops' High prepares graduates for Officer School joins the New successful careers in a globalized economy.

Guyana's workforce Joseph is gearing up for the commended Recent ceremonies saw 327 emphasising programmes offered by **uplift** your Training (BIT).

Outback in Canje, where they market. certified in

future with a new wave graduates for acquiring of skilled professionals. the skills needed to David certification enter the workforce, that individuals from Regions their journey was just Two and Six graduating beginning. "You are from various technical now equipped to lives the Board of Industrial and contribute to your communities," A total of 134 Minister Hamilton said, graduates from Region urging them to diversify Six were celebrated their skills to remain at a ceremony held at adaptable in today's Adventures rapidly changing job

The BIT's efforts highlighted Welding, Refrigeration, have been crucial in expanding employment years ago," he noted. Cosmetology, IT, Agro- preparing the workforce opportunities, stressing processing, and more. for Guyana's booming that technical skills graduates from Region

the oil and gas industry.

Regional Chairman opportunities Armogan **now** 

Hamilton, sectors connected to the essential as industries rapidly evolve. have were



134 persons graduate from BIT programmes in Region

Minister of Labour, economy, particularly in training had become Two were honoured in collaboration with the

the **unheard of just a few** 

In addition, 193

at a ceremony at the First Lady's office. Sarah Essequibo Institute, delivered empowering "The Citing a global shift in a clientele." Another **you** the labour market, she graduate, urged graduates to stay Rooplall, "Technical like the ones you've certification acquired are essential given modern economy," my own business." she explained. Mrs. Ali importance of platforms 12,800 upskilling.

Among women the Cosmetology dominated fields. programme, launched

Technical Stevens, a Cosmetology where graduate, shared her First Lady Mrs. Arya excitement: "I now feel an **confident** enough message to start my own on continuous learning. business and build Jevanjalie expressed adaptable and commit her newfound passion to lifelong learning for entrepreneurship, **skills** stating, has me the for success in our confidence to start

Over the past four also emphasised the years, BIT has trained individuals, like BIT and technical 60% of whom are institutes for ongoing women, supporting the government's goal of the breaking gender barriers graduates, 45 young and empowering women completed in traditionally male-

## **EW COHORT OF 200+ PROFESS**

Over 200 individuals and training programmes, fortifying graduates, drawn from Assistant courses. the Ministry of Health's Training ongoing investment in healthcare needs. building a world-class healthcare system.

Programme, Anthony Training excelling in courses the such as Assistant, Dentex, their X-ray

programme health services. The Assistant and Pharmacy

Minister of Health Clinical and Technical Dr. Frank Anthony Programme assured the graduates and the New Amsterdam of employment, with School of Nursing, placements across the represent the nation's country to address

Meanwhile, students graduated from A total of 82 students the New Amsterdam from all 10 administrative School of Nursing in regions, including two Region Six, including from the Belize Defence 92 nursing assistants, including Clinical and Technical and 20 midwives. Dr. highlighted government's are Pharmacy commitment professional **of** Technician, development, with plans services as we build professionalism in their seen dramatic increases

Environmental to launch specialised new achieved Georgetown and New technologies,

have graduated from Health Assistant. The nursing programmes in introduce advanced impressive pass rates, Amsterdam to train strengthen our health Education Chandroutie

**hospitals**, roles. the country's capacity including 100% in the professionals for state- **infrastructure**," Dr. Persaud-Bahadur lauded to deliver high-quality Environmental Health of-the-art facilities, Anthony stated. He the significant growth in facilities, Anthony stated. He the significant growth in new health centres,

Deputy Director **and** of Health

in graduation rates.

The government's Sciences commitment healthcare extends beyond training, with upgraded facilities, and advanced equipment transforming service delivery. The upcoming hospital at Number 75 Village, set to replace Skeldon Hospital, will serve nearly 40,000 residents.

> "This is a very exciting time to be in healthcare," Dr. Anthony emphasised. "With more trained and modern people of Guvana."



Minister of Human Services and Social Security, Dr Vindhya Persaud cutting the ribbon at the launch of the Guyana Central Authority

the Village.

"These graduates evolving critical **expansion** the to **the** 

new urged the graduates to training capacity, noting professionals Force, completed the 31 professional nurses, hospital at Number 75 pursue further education that the number of and embrace the rapidly pharmacy assistants has **infrastructure**, to field, importance **healthcare** compassion

medical nearly doubled, while are building a system emphasising laboratory technicians that truly serves the of and environmental and health workers have

**NEW HEALTH ADMIN BUILDING AND** TRAINING CENTRE OPENS IN LETHEM



\$45M health administration building commissioned in Region Nine

Lethem, significant healthcare training in the region. its infrastructure with the a new \$45 million health emphasised administrative building importance and training centre.

art facility, fully funded roof. "One of the things have all the people in building. It will also over

Health consolidating regional we administer these regional

regional

the administration at help to observe all of one place," Minister the clerical functions for trainees and health Anthony noted.

streamline pointed out. will communication, coordination, and the of the building offers the delivery of healthcare an open space ideal services. Moreover, the for training sessions, proximity of the building a c c o m m o d a t i n g to the Lethem Regional approximately Hospital will facilitate better management and collaboration between the two facilities.

Dr. Cerdel McWatt, the Region's Health Officer, highlighted Region by the Government of that we thought the positive impact of Nine, has received a Guyana, is set to enhance was important was the new building on upgrade healthcare delivery and to house all of the the region's healthcare health system. "This unit Minister officials under one now represents a recent commissioning of Dr. Frank Anthony roof. As you know we structured approach the are offering a number for the entire region of of services and when because all of the

of the region," the officials. This centralisation regional health officer

annex building of the Infectious Disease Centre. Furthermore, a new dormitory adjacent to the building will provide accommodation

training space in the

This investment in healthcare infrastructure The upper floor demonstrates government's commitment improving healthcare access and quality in



\$45M health administration building commissioned in Region Nine

heads students. This is a all regions of Guyana, the

This state-of-the- health officials under one services, we need to will be in this one significant improvement including the remote previous areas like Region Nine.



Launch of the 592 Health Digest

Guyana advanced public health literacy with the launch of the 592 Health Digest, an innovative publication designed empower citizens with accurate, timely health information. The digest addresses key health concerns while promoting preventive care and healthier lifestyles.

The inaugural edition of the 592 Health Digest covers a wide

range of topics, from diseases, making it a including valuable resource for physicians combining gap between healthcare evidence-based, professionals and the easy to understand. general public.

A distinguished team is renowned health and scientific to the 592 Health Digest. success stories knowledge with practical Their expertise ensures advice, the magazine that the information

> The magazine

committed mental health to chronic of healthcare experts, addressing the unique challenges faced by Guyanese. people of all ages. By researchers, contributed By highlighting local promoting lifestyle choices, the 592 strives to bridge the provided is reliable, Health Digest aims to and inspire positive change within communities.

## HOREBA

en-Hoop on the Demerara River year, respectively. to assess its progress project, which spans 44 bolster

President Dr. Irfaan acres, has completed petroleum Ali visited the Vreed- phases one, two, and It will support critical Shorebase three in June, August, offshore Inc. (VEHSI) facility and December of this including

and development. The base is designed to of emergency response Guyana's tools



Part of the site visit

industry. operations, subsea equipment installation, The VEHSI shore storage and preservation like capping stacks, and the local fabrication of equipment such as Pipeline End Terminations (PLETS) and Flowline End Terminations (FLETS).

During presentation at the facility, officials informed President Ali of the shore base's potential Proposed container port, and to Guyana. dry dock, which would



Part of the site visit

President

for further expansion. significantly enhance its commended the progress creating additions operational capacity and and underscored the positioning Guyana as a include a fuel terminal, economic contribution importance of such key player in the global projects in driving energy sector. Ali industrial development,

# \$800M ALLOCATED FOR ROAD UPGRADES

The government in communities Region Nine. investment underscores **every** infrastructure improving hinterland areas.

Villages to Benefit Breakdown The roadworks will span the communities \$149.3 million will be of Nappi, Shulinab, used to upgrade roads Karaudaunau, and from laterite to durable Awarewaunau, asphaltic concrete. a pivotal marking moment in advancing \$67.8 million allocated, earmarked, undertaken connectivity and boosting with works executed by local economies.

Minister of Public Contracting Service. Bishop Juan made an address to residents Beerdat Harrinandan.

Nappi Village, has committed \$800 stating: "This wave million to upgrade of infrastructural internal roads in several development across prioritises internal This **roads** to ensure community, administration's **especially** in dedication to enhancing hinterland, reaps the and benefits of national lives in **progress.**"

Projects

Nappi Village:

Theodore Faria General Incorporated.

the Village: \$55.6 million with asphaltic concrete, with dust and wear. maximum benefit to development. announcement during in upgrades, handled by



Minister of Public Works, Bishop Juan Edghill alongside the Toshao and villagers of Nappi, Region Nine

Shulinab Village: \$74.8 million accessibility.

Karaudaunau replace laterite roads despite dust and improving road collaborative

Edghill and Minister by G and M Construction praised Nappi residents identify priority areas for marking a significant for their efforts in upgrades. All projects aim to maintaining local roads significantly reducing He highlighted the the people, ensuring

Awarewaunau durability, safety, and involving Toshaos, village councils, engineers, contractors

"We want every challenges dollar spent to bring for inclusive national process satisfaction with

these transformative interventions," Minister Edghill assured residents.

Ministry of The Public Works will provide unpriced bills of quantities to the communities, ensuring residents play an active role in the upgrade process. "This is the standard we are delivering across everyvillage, whether in the hinterland or the coastland," the minister emphasised.

Roadworks are set to to commence shortly, stride in realising the government's vision

the Kurupukari to Lethem Minister project, has

transformative was announced by of Nappi. Public of been Works, Bishop Juan Construction



The completed Pirara Bridge

The Pirara Bridge, completed ahead of Edghill, during a visit to The key component of schedule. This milestone the Amerindian village project aligns with the

> by Built international standards, remote communities. the Pirara Bridge is one of 32 concrete constructed bridges constructed benefit along the Kurupukari- communities, including Lethem corridor. The Iwokrama, bridge is now open to Carmudi, significantly Junction, traffic, improving travel times Yakarinta, and accessibility for Landing, Point Ranch, thousands of commuters Hunt Oil, and Pirata. The heading to Lethem and corridor also facilitates beyond.

operational, riverbank fortification. market.

completed government's vision Vals to develop Guyana's to hinterland and connect

The newly bridges numerous Surama, Massara Annai, Gunip travel to Lethem, a While the bridge is crucial hub for commerce ongoing and tourism, connecting works include site clean- Guyana to Brazil and the up, landscaping, and wider South American



Minister of Public Works, Bishop Juan Edghill inspecting the completed Pirara Bridge

the Pirara the also invested in 13 to essential services, major bridges along and stimulate economic the Linden to Mabura growth in the region. Road. Together, these

addition to infrastructure projects Bridge, aim to reduce travel government has times, improve access

## SECOND POWER SHIP HERE-TO BE OPERATIONAL SOON

and Light Incorporated between GPL and the Kesh Nandlall, assured (GPL) has confirmed Joint Venture of Turkish- that the project is on that the second power based acquired strengthen the country's based UCC Energy ongoing, and there's electricity supply, will International LLC. be fully operational and connected to the national ship will contribute docked, and we are grid before Christmas.

The Guyana Power of a two-year agreement Chief Executive Officer, Karpowership track. to Global DMCC and Qatar-



The second Power Ship in Guyana's waters

(MW) power ship arrived expected once an plant in the Demerara River additional transmission River, on December 10 as part line is completed. GPL's increasing

75-megawatt the full 75MW capacity

"The works are a lot to be done. The Initially, the power **power ship is already** 60MW to the grid, with working around the clock to meet the Christmas deadline," Nandlall stated during a recent interview.

Preparatory works, including construction the 3.9-kilometre transmission line, are progressing as planned.

The addition of this second power ship will complement the existing 36MW floating power plant in the Berbice significantly Guyana's



Ongoing works to connect the second Power Ship to the Grid

power capacity. With peak on the urgency of electricity demand now addressing the rising at 187MW—up from electricity nearly 100MW in recent "New housing areas years due to new housing with hundreds of developments, industrial houses are being facilities, and commercial added to the grid, investments—this along with industrial expanded capacity is and essential.

This in line Minister Dr.

generation Singh's recent remarks demand. commercial investments, such as initiative is hotels, factories, and with Finance processing plants. Ashni all of which are

driving skyrocketing electricity demand," Dr. Singh stated.

Additionally, confirmed Nandlall that two generators currently undergoing major overhauls, with a combined capacity of 13MW, will return to service. This will bring the total generation capacity of the Demerara-Berbice Interconnected System (DBIS) to 207MW.

The second power ship's contribution will ensure a reliable power throughout the holiday season and beyond. further supporting government's the commitment to meeting the country's growing energy demands.

## MAHDIA GOES SOLAR, MOCO MOCO TURNS **TO HYDRO FOR RELIABLE ENERG**

hinterland Two communities in Guyana embracing now renewable energy as Mahdia in Region Eight and Moco Moco in Region Nine benefit from transformative solar and hydropower projects. These initiatives mark steps in significant sustainable advancing energy and improving the lives of residents.

Mahdia, In newly commissioned 0.65-megawatt solar photovoltaic



The commissioning iof the Moco Mococ plant

a kind in the region, is Bank (IDB), integrates Region

now operational. The seamlessly with Mahdia's \$362.41 million project, mini-grid funded by the Inter-

The Mahdia solar farm

farm, the first of its American Development system through a 1,500 kWh back online, providing battery storage system. sustainable This setup ensures a after years of inactivity. consistent power supply, Complemented by a 1 reducing diesel use by MW solar farm and 2 309,681 litres annually, MW diesel generators, each year.

Prime lauded the impact, stating, 2025. "This solar farm

ensures reliable and Phillips affordable **energy** the for the community commitment while driving local renewable **economic growth.**" through The facility is expected Carbon fueling supporting services, and enhancing by the decade's end. quality of life for over 3,000 residents.

Meanwhile, in Nine, the 0.7 MW Moco Moco Hydropower Plant is energy cutting carbon emissions the plant forms a robust by 672,561 kilograms, energy system that and saving \$80.5 million reduces reliance on fossil fuels. Plans for the Kumu Minister Hydropower Plant are (Ret'd) Mark Phillips set to boost the region's expected

> Prime Minister

to generate 935 MWh Strategy (LCDS) 2030, local produce. of electricity annually, projecting that over 50% businesses, of Guyana's energy will farm to Moco Moco's essential come from clean sources hydropower

The increased the energy supply is also dedication to sustainable

emphasised industries. Residents are government's encouraged to embrace to economic opportunities, energy such as starting cottage the Low industries to reduce Development wastage and add value to

From Mahdia's solar plant, these projects showcase government's



The commissioning of the Mahdia solar farm

to project's capacity to 5.2 MW by regional development, empowerment particularly agriculture and small

drive energy and economic in hinterland communities.

### ESSEQUIBO TO GET MORE POWER 4.5MW TO BE ADDED BY 2025

to receive a significant power boost, with an Ali

highlighted expansion is part of the investment under the the President recalled. government's broader previous administration. plan to ensure a reliable "And I said that we investments,

Region Two is set supply for all Guyanese. **more capacity and we** 11.3 megawatts of power, President Dr. Irfaan **are going to invest in** with peak demand at 8.5 the **the transmission and** megawatts. To further additional 4.5 megawatts region's previous energy **distribution and we** enhance the region's of electricity to be added challenges, which were **are going to invest in** energy infrastructure, to the grid by 2025. This exacerbated by a lack of **off-grid solar-farm**," the government will add an additional 1.5 As a result of these megawatts by the end Region of 2024, bringing the and sustainable energy are going to invest in Two currently enjoys total to 12.5 megawatts.

Additionally, 3 more 2025.

To ensure efficient Onderneeming. power government the also upgrading in transmission to improve the region's supply for the future. infrastructure.

To complement these megawatts will be added efforts, a state-of-the-art by the first quarter of 5-megawatt solar farm is under construction in distribution, combined with a smaller is plant in Charity, this investing heavily solar power initiative will the provide an additional and 8 megawatts of clean distribution network. energy to the region, This includes a significant ensuring a reliable \$300 million investment and sustainable power **GUYANESE DIASPORA DIGEST** 

KEEPING THE DIASPORA INFORMED



The new laboratory facility and administration building at GNBS

The Guvana National Bureau of Standards (GNBS) has significantly upgraded its capacity to enhance the country's standards and quality infrastructure with the inauguration of a new, state-of-the-art laboratory facility and administration building.

Officially opened by President Irfaan Ali, the US\$12 million facility is equipped to provide standards cutting-edge ensuring that Guyanese and products and services He international the of tests, consumer certification, product and calibration.

President emphasised importance



The cutting of the ribbon for the new US\$12M laboratory and administration facility

in driving growth services, economic competitiveness. highlighted government's standards. The modern commitment to investing laboratory is designed in key agencies like the to conduct a wide range GNBS to strengthen the including country's position in the protection, global market.

"This new facility will enable the GNBS to play a Ali crucial role in promoting the quality and innovation across various sectors, from agriculture manufacturing and beyond," said President Ali.

> Minister of Tourism, Industry, and Commerce Oneidge Walrond noted that the facility will benefit micro, small, medium-sized and enterprises (MSMEs) by providing them with the tools and resources they need to succeed. "By ensuring that products



Unveiling of the plaque by President Ali, Minister of Tourism, Industry and Commerce Oneidge Walrond and Country Representative of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) Lorena Solorzano Salazar

and services international standards, over 500 standards, Minister Walrond.

enhanced capabilities,

meet will now be able to offer protecting ensuring that Guyanese consumers and fostering products and services trust in the market," said meet the highest quality standards. This will not The GNBS, with its only boost consumer

### **GUYANA'S CHIEF INVESTMENT OFFICER ELECTED TO LEAD CARIBBEAN INVESTMENT PROMOTION AGENCY**

Dr. Ramsaroop, has been elected as the its Agencies (CAIPA). This transition, with recognises development and Dr. Grenada attracting foreign Corporation (GIDC.) direct investment.

CAIPA, a regional Ramsaroop

Guyana's to promoting investment with Investment Promotion marked a leadership energy, significant appointment Ramsaroop succeeding blue economy, economic is also the CEO of the both Ramsaroop's expertise Development investments to

> In his new role, Dr. prosperity across aims

Peter organisation dedicated align CAIPA's initiatives CARICOM'S CAIPA Chief Investment Officer, in the Caribbean, held objectives, focusing on Directors includes: Annual General sustainable investment • President: Dr. Peter • Director new President of the Meeting on December in key sectors such Caribbean Association of 11, 2024. The meeting as climate resilience, Dr. tourism, manufacturing, Guyana's Ronald Theodore, the ICT. He emphasises the growing role in the outgoing President, who importance of fostering foreign direct Investment investment and local drive economic growth and the to region.

The newly elected • Director Board of

Ramsaroop, Guyana Office for Investment

agriculture, • 1st Vice President: • Director Kaye-Ann Ms. Greenidge, Invest Barbados

Mr. Stanley Jacobs, St. Kitts Investment **Promotion Agency** 

• **Director 1:** Mr. Sekou InvesTT. Alleyne, Trinidad and Tobago

Ishmael Quiroz, BELTRAIDE, Belize

3: Ms. Jeanette Bonet, CINEX, Curação

4: Ms. Kendaree Burgess, Bermuda **Business Development Agency** 

• 2nd Vice President: • Ex-officio Member: is well-positioned to Development and Corporation (GIDC)

> With Dr. Ramsaroop Caribbean region. at the helm, CAIPA



Chief Investment Officer, Guyana Office for Investment, Dr. Peter Ramsaroop,

Mr. Ronald Theodore, continue its mission of Grenada Investment promoting investment economic development in the

Minister within the Ministry of Public Works, Deodat Indar during his address at the annual awards ceremony

Minister has called on citizens including to play an active role in transportation, safeguarding Guyana's trade. He emphasised the

## prosperity. Speaking

the Georgetown at Chamber of Commerce and Industry's (GCCI) annual awards ceremony at the Marriott Hotel, Minister Indar emphasised the need for a collective effort to maintain and improve the country's infrastructure and natural resources.

The minister within highlighted the the Ministry of Public government's significant Works, Deodat Indar, strides in various sectors, housing,



The event was held at the Marriott Hotel

importance of fostering drive development. a positive and solution-

Minister

the country's growth and Indar development, stating, oriented mindset to also urged citizens to "If we want to grow address challenges and actively participate in as a country we can't

just want to grow as a country where you see physical things [growth in] ourselves."

The government's initiatives, such as the housing programme, trade agreements, and infrastructure development, aimed at improving the lives of Guyanese and attracting investment. By working together, the government and citizens can ensure a sustainable and prosperous future for Guyana.



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KEEPING THE DIASPORA INFORMED

**GUYANESE DIASPORA DIGEST** 

## V HOME, A NEW BEGINN

A family of six from offers a Meten-Meer-Zorg, upgrade from their provide a secure and Region Three, has seen previous, their lives dramatically living conditions. The four children to grow up. improve with homeownership environment. became a reality when First Lady Arya Ali the

tailor-made to meet government for their

the family, which includes

Lisa family's The new home, First Lady and the financial stability. family's needs, support. She emphasised

significant that the new home will inadequate nurturing space for her

To further assist the completion of their new an elderly woman with a family, the government three-bedroom home. disability, can now enjoy plans to construct a The long-awaited dream a safe and comfortable chicken coop behind the house. This initiative Reddy, will enable the family to sole start a small business, handed over the keys to breadwinner, expressed providing them with a the \$15.3 million house. deep gratitude to the source of income and



New home transforms Region Three family's life



The interior of the house



First Lady Mrs Arya Ali giving one of the children a Christmas present



The interior of the house



First Lady, Mrs Arya Ali and the Reddy Family



First Lady, Mrs Arya Ali and the Reddy Family



The interior of the house

The Guyana Tourism Authority (GTA) hosted a thrilling Junior Cooking Showcase, where talented young chefs from Regions Five, Six, and Nine competed for culinary supremacy. The event aimed to inspire the next generation of culinary professionals and promote Guyana's burgeoning tourism industry.

The young chefs were challenged to prepare dishes using local and international for ingredients, showcasing prowess. their creativity and skill.



Chef Kester Robinson and Chef Eon John providing guidance to the students (right to left)

culinary **the** their

designed with "I

both praised the participants giving the students benefit The competition was **this programme to flavours**," said Chef **in the culinary arts**, judged by renowned chef **highlight our local** Robinson. "This will these young chefs Kester Robinson, who ingredients while also help them develop the have the potential to

to diverse palates and impact." meet international standards."

The event was also not only attended by British High the culinary talent of Commissioner Jane Miller, who emphasised importance the culinary skills and the growing demand for talented chefs in Guyana's hospitality industry.

"Cooking is life skill that can everyone," opportunity said Miller. "Whether experiment it's cooking at home international or pursuing a career

**skills needed to cater make a significant** Guyana's youth,

The GTA's Junior the Cooking highlights industry.

also contributes to development of Showcase the country's tourism



Participants preparing their dishes



## PALMYRA MULTI-PURPOSE STADIUM TAKES SHAPE IN BERBICE

The highly anticipated Palmyra Multi-Purpose Stadium in Berbice is steadily progressing, bringing new opportunities for sports, culture, and entertainment to the region. Once completed, the state-of-the-art facility will host a range of activities, from international cricket matches to community events, showcasing Berbice as a vibrant hub for development.

This transformative project is part of the government's broader commitment to enhancing regional infrastructure and fostering talent. As construction advances, residents eagerly anticipate the stadium's opening, which promises to energise the local economy and inspire a new generation of athletes.







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