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Hotels fully booked for World Cup

THE International Cricket Council (ICC) Men's T20 World Cup is expected to have a major impact on Guyana's tourism and hospitality industry.

With Guyana scheduled to host several matches at the National Stadium in June, there is not a vacant room to be found in hotels.

Guyana Attorney-General, Anil Nandlall, S.C., who took part in the discussion on the ICC Cricket World Cup West Indies Bill 2024, which was eventually passed, revealed this to the National Assembly on Friday.

He said that Guyana is poised to reap significant economic and financial benefits. "Our hotels are already booked. You can't get a room now at any of the hotels for June," he said.



FIRST LADY WANTS

GAZA SUPPORT: Guyana First Lady Arya Ali, on Saturday evening, hosted a candlelight vigil in support of the Palestinian mothers affected by the atrocities in Palestine.

The vigil was held at the Kingston Seawall Esplanade, with hundreds attending. The First Lady encouraged Guyanese citizens to stand up for the humanity of the Palestinians.

"We must demand accountability from those who perpetrate these crimes against humanity," she implored.



COCONUT BOOST: Guyana Minister of Agriculture, Zulfikar Mustapha, has disclosed the remarkable surge in demand for coconuts and its by-products in Guyana, attributing it to the fruit's inherent health benefits as the cause. This surge has translated into substantial earnings for participants across the coconut-production chain, particularly coconut farmers.

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Guyanese DIASPORA DIGEST



KEEPING THE DIASPORA INFORMED EDITION 67

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President Dr Irfaan Ali interacting with the young Guyanese at the Assemblies of God Church's Youth Conference 2024



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GUYANA'S RULING PARTY DENOUNCES RACIALLY CHARGED CRITICISM OF PRESIDENT IRFAAN ALI



President Ali interacting with the young Guyanese at the Assemblies of God Church's Youth Conference 2024

Guyana's ruling People's Progressive Party (PPP) strongly condemned recent attacks on President Irfaan Ali, calling the attacks racially charged and politically motivated.

General Secretary of the PPP, Dr. Bharrat Jagdeo, addressed

the issue during a press conference on May 9, 2024 when he specifically criticised an article questioning the President's attendance at an Assemblies of God Church event, claiming it was a baseless attack on the separation of church and state.

Dr. Jagdeo accused the opposition party, People's National Congress (PNC), of clinging to outdated racial divisions. He suggested the PNC felt threatened by President Ali's efforts to promote national unity, particularly among Afro-

Guyanese Christians. **"The PNC seems to believe they have a monopoly on Afro-Guyanese support, regardless of their actions,"** Dr. Jagdeo stated. He emphasised that the President's visit aimed to connect with young people and celebrate the unifying power of faith.

Dr. Jagdeo further highlighted the President's consistent participation in religious events across faiths, including Hindu and Muslim gatherings. This, he argued, demonstrates the government's commitment to religious tolerance.

Adding to the criticism, the Minister within the Office of the Prime Minister, Kwame McCoy, released a letter criticising the opposition's focus on

irrelevant matters. He specifically addressed their scrutiny of a video showing President Ali dancing at a PPP party event.

Minister McCoy dismissed this as an attempt to politicise internal party affairs, urging the opposition to focus on more pressing issues. He stressed that the PPP is a separate entity from the government.

Minister McCoy accused the opposition of being out of touch with the Guyanese people. He praised President Ali's engagement with citizens and urged the opposition to abandon their divisive tactics and embrace national unity.

Both Dr. Jagdeo and Minister McCoy urged a shift towards more constructive political discourse, emphasising



President interacting with the young Guyanese at the Assemblies of God Church's Youth Conference 2024

the government's dedication to building a united and prosperous Guyana for all.

Minister of Public Works, Bishop Juan Edghill, delivered positive news on the construction of the government's new office complex at Houston, East Bank Demerara, during the National Assembly's 81st sitting.

"The new location is seeing ongoing work right now," Minister Edghill informed the house. **"All of the preliminary work has been completed...We are very well advanced on this project."**

These preliminary works include site clearing, equipment mobilisation, and the design plan's finalisation.

The massive 12-storey complex, being

WORK PROGRESSES ON \$15.8B STATE-OF-THE-ART GOVT OFFICE COMPLEX

constructed by Caribbean Green Building Inc., will encompass four towers designed to accommodate roughly 6,000 government staff members from various ministries and agencies.

"The new location is far more suitable and spacious to accommodate the targeted number of staff," highlighted Minister Edghill, **"while meeting all other criteria to provide services to the public in the most effective way possible."**

The new complex boasts a prime location

in a highly developed and connected area, situated approximately 1 kilometre away from the new Eccles/Haags Bosch roundabout. Minister Edghill emphasised that the 20.08-acre site, measuring 1,058 feet in length and 600 feet in width, offers ample space for the project.

An additional benefit of the new location is the significant reduction in traffic congestion and travel time it will bring. The area benefits from inter-connector roads between Ogle, East Coast Demerara, and East Bank Demerara.



An artist's impression of the \$15.8 billion government office complex

Minister Edghill revealed that \$6.6 billion has already been spent on the project, adhering to the established terms and conditions. He reassured that the

\$1 billion allocated for the project in this year's budget remains untouched.

The Ministry of Public Works is actively engaged with the

project's supervisory consultant to guarantee that the complex is constructed to meet international standards and with complete transparency.

TWO U.S NAVY F/A-18F SUPER HORNETS CONDUCT FLYOVER OF GEORGETOWN



US SOUTHCOM flyover exercise in Guyana

Two United States (US) Navy F/A-18F Super Hornets from the aircraft carrier USS George Washington flew over Guyana in a friendly exercise with the Guyana Defence Force on May 9, 2024. This collaboration, approved by the Guyana government, highlights the growing security cooperation and defence partnership between the two nations.

The USS George

Washington and its accompanying Carrier Strike Group 10 are currently transiting the region on their way to the Pacific Ocean. During this journey, the US plans to conduct joint exercises and exchanges with partner countries to improve communication, build military capabilities, and promote regional security.

This initiative

aligns with General Laura Richardson's emphasis on "Team USA's unwavering commitment" to collaborating with democracies around the world. The US Navy regularly conducts similar exercises with its partners and allies throughout the globe.

GUYANA STRENGTHENS DIPLOMATIC TIES WITH KEY APPOINTMENTS

Guyana has announced important diplomatic appointments to bolster

its relationships with Brazil, Switzerland, and Belgium. This move reflects the country's strategic approach to international relations.

Seasoned Professor Heads to Brazil: Professor Compton Bourne, with an impressive background including leading the Caribbean Development Bank and the University of Guyana, will serve as Ambassador to Brazil.

Dual Role for Dr. Ramsammy: Dr. Leslie Ramsammy, a



Dr. Leslie Ramsammy

former health minister, will take on the dual role of Ambassador to Switzerland and Guyana's Permanent Representative to the

United Nations in Geneva.

Singh Takes on Triple Duty: Sasenarine Singh, previously CEO of GuySuCo, will wear three hats: Ambassador to Belgium, Guyana's Permanent Representative to the European Union, and Guyana's Permanent Representative to the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States. His base will be Brussels.

Foreign Secretary Robert Persaud

emphasised the appointments' importance in advancing Guyana's national and foreign policy goals.



Sasenarine Singh

These positions are expected to support Guyana's growing international presence and engagement on regional and global platforms.

In a separate development, Guyana's Ambassador to China, Anyin Choo, has also been accredited as the non-resident High Commissioner to Singapore, further extending Guyana's diplomatic reach.



Compton Bourne

The Guyana Chamber of Commerce (SGCC) announced a groundbreaking Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with four key Guyanese Chambers of Commerce, marking a significant step towards stronger trade relations and enhanced business opportunities between the two South American neighbors.

This strategic partnership brings together the Berbice Chamber of Commerce and Development Association, Central

SURINAME-GUYANA CHAMBER STRENGTHENS TRADE TIES WITH REGIONAL CHAMBERS MOU SIGNING

Suriname-Chamber of Commerce (SGCC) announced a groundbreaking Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with four key Guyanese Chambers of Commerce, marking a significant step towards stronger trade relations and enhanced business opportunities between the two South American neighbors.

The MOU, signed on May 3rd at the Central Corentyne Chamber of Commerce office, establishes a collaborative network to streamline trade and investment. The agreement offers technical support and

aims to boost regional and global business development through



The officials with the signed MOUs

joint efforts. The MOU goes beyond declarations. The chambers will work together to better serve their members and attract new ones through improved services.

Guyanese businesses with opportunities in Suriname, a trade mission is planned for June 5th-9th. Guyanese enterprises will participate in targeted B2B meetings and visit the Suriname Energy Oil and Gas Summit (SEOGS), facilitating partnerships and synergies between businesses in both countries.

The SGCC will also play a role in supporting

the upcoming Berbice Expo in October by encouraging Surinamese companies to participate.

The MOU is designed to evolve and meet the changing needs of businesses and regions. This strategic alliance between chambers of commerce paves the way for strong regional collaboration, which will be key to driving economic development in Guyana, Suriname, and beyond.

A trade mission from Trinidad and Tobago was in Guyana seeking investment opportunities in various sectors. The 19-member delegation, representing 16 companies, was particularly interested in construction, information technology (ICT), and logistics.

The Guyana Office for Investment (GO-Invest) welcomed the delegation at the Pegasus Hotel in Georgetown. Senior Investment Officer John Edghill highlighted Guyana's booming economy and the numerous investment opportunities available. "The government

T&T BUSINESSES EXPLORE INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN GUYANA

is keen on several key pillars including food, energy, and climate security," Edghill explained, "so once investments align with this vision then capitalising on opportunities in Guyana becomes easy." He emphasised the government's priorities for attracting investment.

Edghill also explained the attractive incentives offered to investors in non-oil sectors. These include



Members of the visiting trade mission from Trinidad and Tobago

ownership rights, non-discriminatory treatment, and tax breaks outlined in the Investment Act 2004. He stressed the value of collaboration, suggesting

that "by marrying those things together, you bring a lot of experience, your technology... your knowledge, and I think that is a good

avenue for us to be able to jointly work as the Caribbean Community to address many of our internal concerns."

Trinidad and Tobago's High Commissioner, Conrad Enhill, applauded the mission's commitment to exploring collaboration and investment opportunities in Guyana. He saw the visit as a chance to strengthen economic ties between the two countries.

Kiran Maharaj,

President of the Trinidad and Tobago Chamber of Industry and Commerce, echoed the importance of regional cooperation. He viewed the trade mission as a testament to the strength found in working together.

Guyana is actively seeking investment from both local and international companies. The country offers a stable investment environment based on democratic principles, transparency, and accountability. This framework aims to foster rapid and sustainable economic and social growth.

PRESIDENT ALI OFFERS CONDOLENCES TO BRAZIL OVER FLOODS

In the wake of severe flooding that ripped through Brazil's Rio Grande do Sul state, President Irfaan Ali extended his deepest sympathies to his Brazilian counterpart, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva.

"On behalf of the Government and

people of the Co-operative Republic of Guyana, I wish to convey profound sympathy to the Government and people of Brazil," President Ali said in a statement released.

The heavy rainfall caused widespread

destruction and displacement, with news reports detailing loss of life.

"We are deeply saddened at the news of the loss of lives, the displacement of people and the widespread destruction caused

by severe flooding," President Ali expressed his sorrow.

The Guyanese leader offered his solidarity with the Brazilian people during this challenging time. "I am confident that the determined and resilient spirit of the Brazilian people

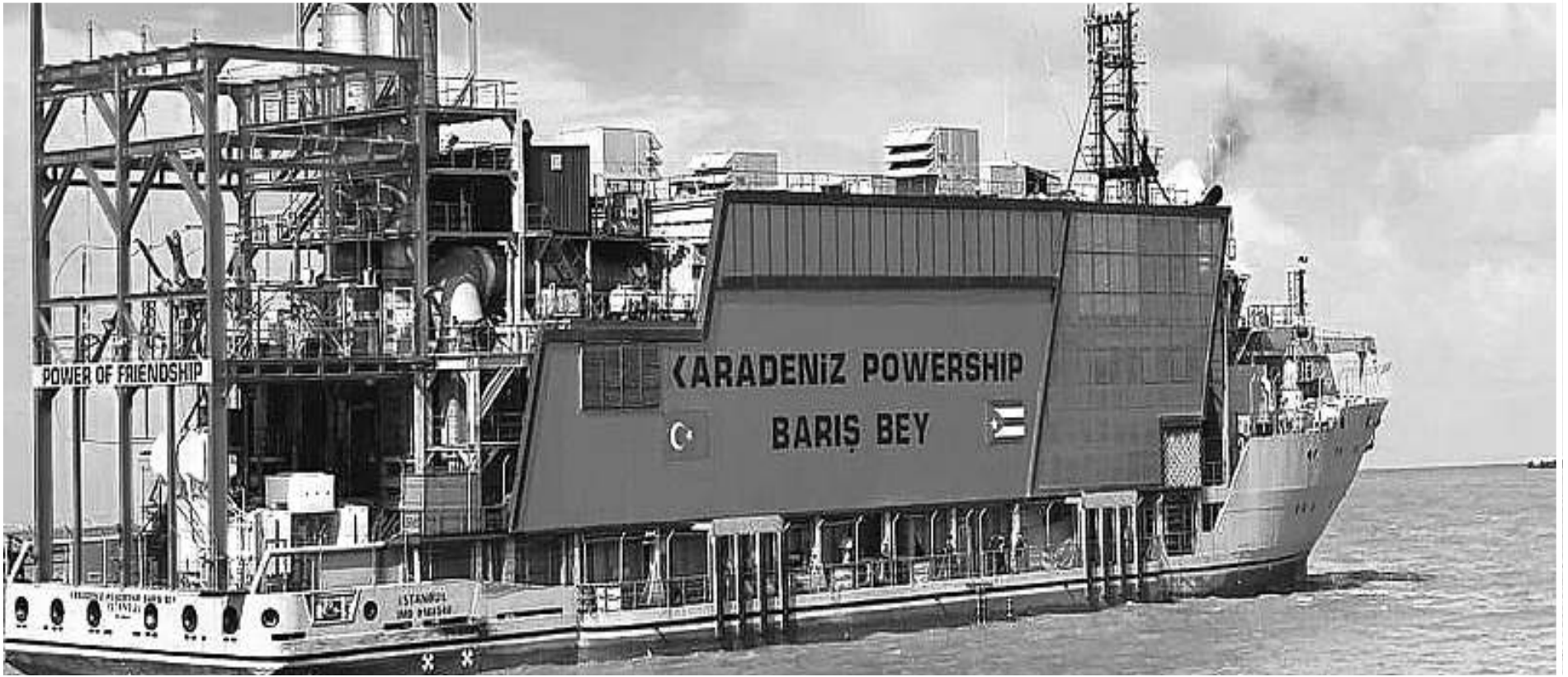


Brazil Flood

will triumph over this unfortunate tragedy," he stated,

highlighting the nation's strength in the face of adversity.

POWER SHIP INCREASES GUYANA'S CAPACITY, BUT LONG-TERM PLANS ON HORIZON



The power ship docked at Berbice



Prime Minister Phillips and Senior Minister Singh visiting the power ship docked at Berbice

Guyanese citizens facing power cuts can expect some relief with the arrival of a new power ship. This addition is expected to provide an extra 36 megawatts of electricity, helping to reduce outages.

Prime Minister Mark Phillips personally inspected the vessel and acknowledged the government's significant investment in the project. **"This ship represents a significant**

investment by the government," Prime Minister Phillips said, commending the crew for maintaining the 22-year-old ship in **"immaculate condition."**

The 36MW power ship was secured through a rental agreement with Karpowership International. GPL confirmed a monthly charter fee of US\$6.62 cents per kilowatt-hour and a US\$0.98 cents

per kWh maintenance fee based on generated electricity.

While acknowledging the ship's importance, Dr. Ashni Singh, Senior Minister, cautioned against viewing it as a permanent solution. **"The arrival... will help but they will not solve the problem overnight,"** he explained, highlighting the government's commitment to long-term solutions like the

300-megawatt Gas-to-Energy project. Reassuringly, Dr. Singh added that there will be **"no increase in electricity bills"** despite the power ship.

With the Karpowership on track, the government is actively pursuing an

from Dr. Bharrat Jagdeo, General Secretary of the People's Progressive Party, during a press conference.

"We're exploring the possibility of adding another 30 megawatts to the system, similar to the agreement with

current demand but also allow for essential maintenance of existing units.

"With the addition of 36 megawatts, we hope to eliminate blackouts caused by power shortages," Dr. Jagdeo stated. This increased capacity will



Prime Minister Phillips and Senior Minister Singh visiting the power ship docked at Berbice

additional 30 megawatts to further strengthen the national grid. This announcement came

Karpowership," Dr. Jagdeo explained. This additional power source will not only address

cater to peak demand periods and enable the maintenance of other units within the system.

GOVT READY FOR TALKS, TEACHERS RESUME STRIKE

The Guyana Teachers' Union (GTU) has resumed strike action despite the government's commitment to ongoing discussions, according to a statement from the Ministry of Education (MoE).

The MoE expressed surprise at the GTU's decision, highlighting their continued openness to collaboration and a multi-year agreement on teachers' benefits



The March 2024 meeting between representatives of the Ministry of Education and the Guyana Teachers' Union

starting in 2024.

The Ministry reaffirmed its commitment to teachers and fostering positive communication with the GTU. The statement pointed out "dozens of actions" already taken to improve teachers' lives, but acknowledged the stalled discussions on retroactive salary increases for 2019-2023 due to fiscal constraints.

The government

remains resolute in its commitment to improving the lives of educators, emphasising their role in Guyana's development, and expressed a willingness to find a solution but indicated a focus on future agreements.

The renewed strike follows an initial five-week strike in February, where teachers demanded better pay, duty-free concessions,

and improved working conditions. Talks resumed in March but stalled when the MoE said it couldn't afford retroactive salary increases.

A recent court ruling protected teachers' salaries from being docked for participating in the February strike, but the government is appealing the decision.

PRESIDENT ALI PLEDGES BETTER LIVES FOR GUYANESE WORKERS - MATCHING SALARIES AND IMPROVED STANDARDS ON THE HORIZON



President Ali addressing the brunch

President Irfaan Ali delivered a national address on the eve of Labour Day, outlining the government's unwavering commitment to improving the lives of Guyanese workers. His message focused on both increased salaries and a broader vision of enhanced quality of life.

"The labour force can anticipate matching salaries and an elevated standard of living in the near future," President Ali declared during the live broadcast. This statement underscores the administration's aggressive pursuit of measures aimed at easing the burdens faced by working people.

Looking ahead, President Ali emphasised

a long-term vision. **"We have to manage this period going up from 2027 to 2030 carefully. And I can assure that we will have one of the most up-skilled and qualified workforce population in this**



The diverse and multifaceted workforce at the brunch

region," he explained. This focus on skills development suggests

that not only will salaries improve, but Guyanese workers will also be positioned for continued growth and prosperity. President Ali further emphasised the connection between this skilled workforce and their future rewards. **"And, that workforce and work population will see matching benefits, matching salaries, higher quality of life, better standard of living,"** he asserted.

Recognising the crucial role that workers play in Guyana's development, President Ali highlighted the importance of a comprehensive approach. **"The current quality of life should not solely be**

measured by wages but by the holistic programme and policies implemented

by the government to bring improvement to every citizen, especially the labour force," he explained.

The President then outlined a series of concrete actions already taken by his administration. These include a \$25,000 cash grant for each household, reduced interest rates, extended loan payment moratoriums, the creation of over 65,000 jobs, the restoration of joint services bonuses, and annual increases in the income tax threshold. These measures, President Ali explained, **"have significantly benefited the working class... alleviating burdens on households, allowing for more disposable income."**

Looking beyond direct financial benefits, President Ali pointed to investments in education. **"Our interventions to improve the wellbeing of public servants were not limited to wages and salaries...Close to 30,000 scholarships issued, 72 per cent of which went to women,"** he stated. This focus on education equips Guyanese

workers with the skills they need to succeed in the evolving job market.

The government's commitment extends beyond the working class. **"The government's concern extends beyond the working people to include pensioners and**

every Guyanese enjoy a prosperous future, to ensure that their lives and their family lives be transformed as our societies and communities are also being transformed," he declared.

President Ali also made the revelation as he



The diverse and multifaceted workforce at the brunch

individuals suffering from diseases such as cancer and diabetes,"

President Ali assured. Measures such as increased pensions and subsidy programmes demonstrate the government's dedication to the overall well-being of all Guyanese citizens.

President Ali concluded his address with a message of optimism. **"The task ahead of us is to continue on this trajectory, to ensure that our workers and**

addressed a gathering of a diverse and multifaceted workforce at his official residence for a brunch to commemorate International Labour Day, observed annually on May 1.

Labour Day is a day to recognise the contributions, dedication and fight for fair treatment for all workers. It is also a day to honour the efforts and achievements of workers and the labour movement.

CELEBRATING A TAPESTRY OF CULTURES

- PRESIDENT ALI EMPHASISES UNITY AND INCLUSION IN ARRIVAL DAY MESSAGE

President Irfaan Ali used his Arrival Day message to highlight the importance of multiculturalism and building a more inclusive society.

Arrival Day commemorates the arrival of various immigrant groups who have shaped Guyana's diverse heritage. President Ali acknowledged this rich history, stating, **"Arrival Day recalls the waves of immigrants... who came to our country... Their enduring legacy reminds us of the human capacity to overcome adversity and thrive in the face of challenges."**

President Ali emphasised the value of Guyana's multicultural

nature, calling it **"a priceless asset that enriches our collective human experience."** He contrasted this with the dangers of division, stating, **"In an era where divisiveness and intolerance threaten to tear apart the social fabric of nations, highlighting and celebrating our multicultural diversity makes us stronger and more united."**

The President outlined a vision for a more unified Guyana: **"By celebrating the mosaic of cultures that coexist within our communities, we not only foster a sense of belonging and inclusion but also lay the foundation for a**

more cohesive and harmonious society."

President Ali acknowledged the importance of respecting differences while

better future."

The message concludes with a call to action: **"As we mark Arrival Day 2024, let us**

of justice, equality, and compassion that define us as a nation."

Arrival Day, a national holiday in Guyana, is a time to



An artist's rendering of the SS Hesperus which brought immigrants from India to Guyana under the indentureship experiment in 1838

promoting unity: **"Regardless of ethnicity, we are all ethnic members of the human family, united by our shared aspirations for a**

recommit ourselves to the ideals of unity, diversity, and inclusion... Together, let us build a brighter tomorrow, guided by the enduring values

reflect on the country's rich cultural heritage and its potential for an even stronger future built on unity and respect for all.

Arrival Day in Guyana is a national

holiday celebrated on May 5th each year. While the initial focus was on commemorating the arrival of the first indentured labourers from India in 1838, who came to work on sugar plantations after the abolition of slavery, Arrival Day now recognises the contributions of various immigrant groups who have shaped Guyana's multicultural heritage. The day honours the spirit and hard work of immigrants who overcame challenges and significantly contributed to Guyana's development.

Arrival Day serves as a reminder of Guyana's diverse makeup and emphasises the importance of building a society that embraces differences and fosters a sense of belonging for all.

GUYANA AND JAMAICA SIGN MOU TO BOOST MEDIA COOPERATION



The signing of the MOU

Guyana and Jamaica signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to boost cooperation in media, communication, and public affairs. The agreement, emphasising the crucial role of media in shaping society, aims to strengthen knowledge sharing and build capacity in both countries.

"We are fully committed...to forging enhanced relations among sister states," said Guyana's Minister within the Office of the Prime Minister, Kwame McCoy at the signing ceremony held at the Cara Lodge Hotel in Georgetown. He highlighted the importance of innovation and adapting to new technologies for effective communication.

Minister McCoy sees the MoU as an opportunity to learn from Jamaica's media practices. "We recognise that Jamaica has different ways of doing things, and we could assess that to see which probably has greater efficiency," he said.

Underscoring the importance of objective and accurate reporting, Minister McCoy pledged government support for training media professionals. This MoU, he believes, will open doors for even more training initiatives.

Jamaica's Information Minister, Robert Nesta Morgan, stressed the need to combat misinformation within the media. "We do expect that...

different groups from Guyana and Jamaica will travel back and forth...to learn," said Morgan, emphasising the MoU's role in facilitating such collaboration.

The agreement signifies a stronger bond between the two nations. "I was at



Jamaica's Minister within the Office of the Prime Minister with Responsibility for Information, Robert Morgan and his delegation with the management of NCN

the broadcaster's office and we were very impressed by the efficiency...of the processes that you engage," Morgan remarked, highlighting Jamaica's interest in learning from Guyana's media practices.

Minister Morgan's visit to Guyana coincides with UNESCO's World Press Freedom Day celebrations. During his visit, he expressed admiration for Guyana's media scene.

"I'm very impressed by the quality of work that is being done in the private and public broadcasting sector here," Minister Morgan declared following a tour of the National Communications Network (NCN). "This is an excellent

facility. I'm seeing a very strong focus on technology and development," he said.

"We can definitely exchange ideas on how to manage the whole issue of disinformation and misinformation," he



Jamaica's Minister within the Office of the Prime Minister with Responsibility for Information, Robert Morgan and his delegation were given a tour of the NCN

Minister Morgan highlighted the Caribbean's increasing focus on technological integration within the information and communication landscape. "I think that this is one of the areas that we need to push harder on," he said, "and I believe that Guyana is leading the way in many areas, as it relates to how they are structuring their public and private media."

Envisioning potential media collaboration, Minister Morgan expressed his enthusiasm for exploring these avenues.

outlined, "and how to use social media and new media to get more information out to the people who need it."

Guyana has already taken steps to address these issues through initiatives like the Office of the Prime Minister's Media and Communications Academy, currently training its fourth cohort. Launched in 2022, the academy equips media practitioners with the skills necessary for ethical journalism and bolsters the media workforce with new recruits.

GUYANESE MEDIA CELEBRATES WORLD PRESS FREEDOM DAY WITH FOCUS ON CLIMATE CHANGE

In observance of World Press Freedom Day, the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) hosted a unique climate forum. This event served as a reminder to journalists of their critical role in disseminating accurate information, particularly when it comes to environmental issues.

Held at the Pegasus Suites and Corporate Centre in Kingston, Georgetown, the forum featured opening remarks from Minister within the Office of the Prime Minister with responsibility for Public Affairs, Kwame McCoy. Minister McCoy emphasised the cornerstone role that press freedom plays in the government's development strategy.



Minister within the Office of the Prime Minister with responsibility for Public Affairs, Kwame McCoy delivering remarks

"It is therefore not accidental that successive PPP/C Governments...have forged an enabling environment for the Guyanese media to work freely and to thrive as media practitioners," he declared. This commitment to a free press is further evidenced by initiatives like the recently launched Media

and Communications Academy, the first of its kind in the region. This training programme signifies the government's dedication to building capacity within the media fraternity.

Minister of Natural Resources, Vickram Bharrat, also addressed the forum, highlighting the crucial link between climate

awareness and press freedom. "The media fraternity must be conscious of its role in driving climate change awareness, as well as the measures being implemented to combat its effects," Minister Bharrat asserted. He stressed the importance of accurate reporting, emphasising, "As journalists, your task is to gather, is to record, and it is to report accurate and correct information. I think that is the role of a journalist."

Guyana's leadership in climate change initiatives was another key theme addressed by Minister Bharrat. He pointed to the country's landmark Low Carbon Development Strategy (LCDS) as a prime

example. This strategy prioritises rainforest preservation, investment in renewable energy sources, and support for climate adaptation efforts. "Guyana is probably one of the best examples... of countries that... has truly stood to our responsibility... ensuring that one, we keep our emission down, two, we protect our forests, and we keep

it standing," Minister Bharrat explained. He further noted that accurate reporting on these advancements can foster knowledge sharing and more effective collaboration in tackling climate change.

World Press Freedom Day, is observed annually on May 3. This year, it was held under the theme "A press for the planet: Journalism in the face of an environmental crisis".



Minister Bharrat speaking to attentive audience at Climate Forum

GUYANA RECEIVES PRAISE AT UN MEETING FOR STEADFAST SUPPORT OF PALESTINE



Officials at the meeting

Guyana's unwavering commitment to the Palestinian people was lauded by a United Nations (UN) delegation. The delegation, representing the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, commended Guyana's long history of solidarity and its recognition of the Palestinian right to self-

determination. "Guyana has received nothing but genuine affection and support for the Palestinian people in all of the meetings and engagements we have attended," declared Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations, Ambassador Riyadh Mansour. He expressed

his deep appreciation for this unwavering support and "standing with justice and the cause." Ambassador Mansour specifically highlighted Guyana's Permanent Representative to the UN, Carolyn Rodrigues-Birkett, for her "amazing work" within the UN Security

Council. He also commended Barbados and Jamaica, two fellow CARICOM (Caribbean Community) nations, for recognising Palestine as a state. News of the Trinidad and Tobago government's serious consideration of recognising Palestine as a state was also welcomed by Ambassador Mansour. He emphasised President Irfaan Ali's commitment to supporting the Palestinian cause, stating, "during a meeting, CARICOM's Chairman President, Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali assured him that 'he will do everything possible to help us in this regard.'"

Guyana's humanitarian efforts were also applauded. Local organisations raised a total of \$110.8 million in support of the

Palestinian people. Guyana's unwavering commitment to achieving world peace and its dedication to assisting international efforts to bring peace to Palestine was reiterated by Guyana's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation. Chief of Protocol, Ambassador

people." The UN Committee meeting also featured remarks from Permanent Representative of Senegal and Chairman of the Committee, Ambassador Cheikh Niang. This event serves as a testament to Guyana's strong stance in support of Palestinian rights



Scene from the inalienable right of the Palestinian People public meeting at Pegasus Hotel in Kingston, Georgetown

Ivan Evelyn, reaffirmed Guyana's "full and unwavering solidarity with the Palestinian and its dedication to promoting peace on the global stage."

GUIANA SHIELD'S FUTURE HINGES ON COLLECTIVE ACTION, PM PHILLIPS

A call to arms for the environmental well-being of the Guiana Shield eco-region echoed through the Guyana Marriott Hotel on April 29, 2024. Prime Minister Brigadier (Ret'd) Mark Phillips delivered a powerful message during the opening ceremony of the 3rd Guiana Shield Dialogue, emphasising the critical need for international collaboration.

"The power of partnerships must always be emphasised," Prime Minister Phillips declared. He urged nations to leverage the strength of cooperation "to address the root causes of environmental degradation and ensure the long-term sustainability of the Guiana Shield."

The Guiana Shield Strategic Dialogue serves as a vital platform for fostering understanding, building relationships, and promoting cooperation among the nations that share this vast eco-region. "This dialogue," Prime Minister Phillips explained, "should

address the complex challenges before the Guiana Shield and enable the achievement of the common objectives of protecting the territorial integrity of our respective nations, coordinating efforts against transnational crimes, paying coordinated attention to environmental and climate security, and coordinating efforts to secure and defend the Guiana Shield."

Beyond highlighting the importance of collaboration, Prime Minister Phillips emphasised the urgency of action. "As we gather today, I urge us all to recommit ourselves to protecting the Guiana Shield," he declared. "We must celebrate our shared heritage and protect it for generations to come."

Guyana's commitment to safeguarding the Shield is evident in initiatives like the Low Carbon Development Strategy 2030 (LCDS). Prime Minister Phillips pointed to the recent

issuance of the world's first carbon credits specifically designated for airlines participating in Phase 1 of CORSIA. These credits recognise Guyana's remarkable achievements in maintaining one of the world's highest levels of tropical forest cover and one of the lowest



Officials at the meeting

deforestation rates. "A total of 7.14 million credits were issued," the Prime Minister noted, "for conformance with ART's 'TREES' standard." Revenue generated from these credits is strategically reinvested in sustainable

development initiatives outlined in the LCDS, including funding sustainability plans within 242 hinterland communities. These plans encompass a diverse range of areas such as eco-tourism, agriculture, and infrastructure development.

Despite these positive strides, Prime Minister Phillips acknowledged the grave threats the Guiana Shield faces. Deforestation driven by agriculture and mining activities, illegal resource extraction, the impacts of climate change, habitat

fragmentation caused by development projects, and wildlife trafficking all pose significant challenges. The Prime Minister applauded existing regional efforts to combat these threats. He commended the creation of biodiversity corridors designed to

connect habitats across borders, facilitating wildlife movement and gene flow. Additionally, he acknowledged the establishment of the REDD+ for the Guiana Shield Project, a collaborative effort funded by the EU, French

Guiana, and others, that aims to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation across the region. The Guiana Shield Facility, a multi-donor fund dedicated to supporting long-term conservation efforts, also received praise from Prime Minister Phillips. Looking ahead, Prime Minister Phillips emphasised the necessity of strengthening collaboration. "To address threats," he stated, "collaboration must also strengthen to foster understanding, build relationships, and promote cooperation among our countries, aiming to achieve common objectives of territorial integrity, fighting transnational crime, ensuring environmental security, and defending the Guiana Shield."

The 3rd Guiana Shield Dialogue brought together a diverse range of stakeholders, including representatives from Guyana, France, Suriname, and Brazil.

TRAFFIC RELIEF EXPECTED BY JUNE - SCHOONORD TO CRANE HIGHWAY NEARING COMPLETION

Commuters on the West Bank and West Coast of Demerara can expect some much-needed relief by June as the new Schoonord to Crane four-lane highway is nearing completion.

"The level of traffic that is affected... will be significantly reduced." Minister of Housing and Water, Collin Croal, highlighted during a recent interview. **"That is a lot of time that it takes up in terms of traffic flow. So, we are envisaging a mid-year completion."**

The \$15.1 billion project is currently 70% complete, with

most of the divided lots progressing well according to Minister Croal. **"It is only one lot that is behind time,"** he explained, **"And we [implemented] mechanisms to bring that up and to have both night and day work being done."**

Despite the single lagging lot, construction on other sections is moving swiftly. **"One of the lots has already been completed,"** Croal noted. **"Additionally, the completion rates for some of the other lots fall within the 80s and 90s percentage brackets."**



A section ongoing works on Schoonord to Crane four-lane highway

This four-lane highway is a key piece of Guyana's ongoing infrastructural transformation. These infrastructural developments will greatly improve Guyana's transportation system, and boost economic development while creating job

opportunities.

The project, contracted in September 2022, involves the construction of an emergency lane, 4.1 kilometers of dual carriageway, road rehabilitation, medians, roundabouts, culverts, and bridges. Companies awarded contracts include VR Construction Inc., Avinash Contracting & Scrap Metal Inc., L-Heureuse Construction and Services Inc., Guy America Construction Inc., AJM Enterprise, Vals Construction, Puran Bros Disposal Inc., and JS Guyana Inc.

YOUNG PROFESSIONALS IN REGION SIX TO GET NEW HOMES SOON



An aerial view of a portion of Palmyra that is destined for massive development

Good news for young professionals in Region Six! The government is gearing up to begin construction on the first 100 homes specifically

designed for this demographic in Palmyra.

"The area is ready for the construction process to begin after many infrastructure upgrades were done," reported Minister of Housing and Water, Collin Croal. These upgrades ensure smooth access for workers and machinery, paving the way for a swift construction process.

The Palmyra homes will mirror the successful designs implemented in La Bonne Intention (LBI) and Prospect-Providence, offering

both single-flat and two-storey options.

"The project is currently in the procurement phase," Minister Croal explained to the Department of Public Information (DPI). **"Contractors are being engaged before construction begins."**

This initiative represents a significant investment in Region Six's infrastructure. Approximately \$7.6 billion has been allocated for these preparatory works, signifying the government's

commitment to developing sustainable communities. In fact, over the past two years, more than \$13.9 billion has been invested in infrastructure development for new housing projects within the region.

The Palmyra project is just one piece of the puzzle. Construction is already underway on the first 100 young professional homes at Silica City, with an additional 50 planned for Groenveldt in Region Three. Additionally, 150 medical personnel will

soon benefit from homes constructed specifically for them at Plantation York.

These initiatives, alongside the ongoing allocation of house lots, demonstrate the government's dedication to providing affordable and accessible housing solutions for all Guyanese. Since taking office in 2020, the administration has distributed over 32,000 house lots nationwide, well on track to achieve its ambitious goal of allocating 50,000 by 2025.

DIAMOND-CRAIG HIGHWAY TO SLASH COMMUTE TIMES BY YEAR-END

East Bank Demerara residents can expect a significant reduction in travel woes by year-end. The much-anticipated Diamond-Craig four-lane highway is nearing completion, promising a major boost to traffic flow in the heavily congested corridor.

"The construction of the four-lane highway...is set to be completed by the end of this year," confirmed Minister of Housing and Water, Collin Croal, during a recent interview.

This critical project, awarded in November 2023 with a budget of \$11 billion, will offer a

much-needed solution to the East Bank's notorious traffic jams. Encompassing 4.6 kilometres of asphaltic concrete roads, over 30 reinforced concrete bridges, and two roundabouts, the highway promises smoother traffic flow and shorter travel times.

The Diamond to Craig highway is a crucial extension of the existing East Bank corridor, stretching from Mandela Avenue to Great Diamond. This project complements other ongoing infrastructural advancements, including the four-lane extension on Eccles Landfill Road

and widening works on Red Road, Providence, Windsor Estate Road, and Greenfield Road.

"We are also envisaging that we will be starting work this year [on extending the road network] from Craig to Land of Canaan," Minister Croal revealed. **"That is a massive project too."** This extension, currently in the tendering stage, will further enhance accessibility and connectivity within the region.

Plans are also underway to extend the highway from Land of Canaan to Soesdyke, solidifying

the government's commitment to a robust and efficient transportation network.

Since taking office in August 2020, the government has demonstrably prioritised infrastructural

development, investing a staggering \$25.2 billion in over 23 kilometres of completed concrete roads and asphaltic highways.

These projects, including the Eccles to Great Diamond Interlink Road, Mandela Avenue to Eccles four-lane highway, Heroes Highway improvements, and the Eccles Industrial Road, have already made a significant impact on

traffic flow and economic activity.

The Diamond-Craig highway marks another major milestone in the government's infrastructure development agenda. Residents and businesses alike can look forward to a more connected, efficient, and economically prosperous East Bank of Demerara.



Ongoing works on the four-lane road from Diamond to Buzz Bee Dam (Craig)

GOVT REASSESSES OPTIONS FOR MARRIOTT HOTEL SALE AFTER BIDDER'S DEATH

The Guyana government is reevaluating its plans for the sale of the lucrative Guyana Marriott Hotel following the unexpected passing of American businessman Ramy El-Batravi, the highest bidder. General Secretary of the People's Progressive Party (PPP), Dr. Bharrat Jagdeo, addressed reporters recently, outlining the government's options.

"The government may decide to go back out [to bid] or just keep the hotel, there's no rush to conclude anything here because we're

not desperate to sell it," Dr. Jagdeo stated. El-Batravi's

company, X LLC, submitted a US\$90 million bid, the most

attractive proposal received by the National Industrial & Commercial

Investments Limited (NICIL) during the bidding process. The second highest bid came from iNtegrated Group Guyana Inc. at US\$86.1 million.

NICIL initially received bids from six different companies after soliciting proposals from interested parties. During that round of bidding, El-Batravi offered US\$65 million, while local businessman Robert Badal submitted a US\$55.5 million bid for the hotel. However, the government rejected all offers at that time, believing the property was worth more.

The construction of the Guyana Marriott Hotel, which began in 2011, was a controversial project that faced significant criticism. Despite the initial opposition, the hotel has become a resounding success story, recognised as one of the most profitable hotels globally. The Guyana government remains the sole owner of the hotel, which was financed with a US\$17.3 million loan from Republic Bank, and later restructured.



Guyana Marriott Hotel

GUYANA TOUTS PROGRESS IN OIL & GAS TRANSPARENCY

The Guyanese government is defending its record on transparency and good governance in the oil and gas industry, while simultaneously criticising the opposition party's past performance in the sector.

The Ministry of Natural Resources released a detailed statement outlining a series of measures taken to improve transparency and address shortcomings inherited from the previous administration, the

APNU+AFC coalition. The statement highlights the critical regulatory and legislative tasks neglected during the APNU+AFC's tenure, which left the country unprepared for the oil boom. It further criticised the opposition

party's "grave slip-ups" during its five years in office, specifically regarding contract management practices.

"The government is appalled to see the opposition party now attempting to take a moral high ground and lecture the government on what constitutes effective contract management," the statement declares. The current administration emphasises its commitment to strict oversight and adherence to contractual agreements, ensuring that Guyana benefits from its resources.

The statement also takes aim at the "underhanded

agreements and abysmal leadership" that characterised the APNU+AFC's handling of the oil and gas sector. Particular criticism is directed at the "lopsided oil contract" negotiated by the previous government, which allegedly restricts Guyana's ability to renegotiate its share of the profits.

The APNU+AFC coalition is further faulted for failing to address crucial issues such as establishing a Local Content Act and auditing ExxonMobil's costs. These are areas where the current government claims to have made significant strides.

In contrast, the PPP/C administration highlights its achievements in establishing a "modern

legal framework" and "improved contracts" for the oil and gas sector. Landmark projects like the Gas to Energy initiative and legislative advancements like the Petroleum Activities Act and the Local Content Act are evidence of the government's commitment to transparency and responsible resource management.

The statement also emphasised the government's efforts to strengthen environmental safeguards and ensure accountability from oil companies operating in Guyana. The introduction of two new production sharing agreements with improved fiscal terms is presented as another positive development.



A series of measures taken to improve transparency

BUREAU OF STATISTICS AND FIRE SERVICE PARTNER TO STRENGTHEN DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

The Guyana Bureau of Statistics and the Guyana Fire Service (GFS) have joined forces to improve data collection, analysis, and utilisation within the fire service. A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed on April 25th, 2024, marks the beginning of this collaborative effort.

The MoU was signed by Chief Fire Officer Gregory Wickham and Chief Statistician Errol La Cruz, with Home Affairs Minister Robeson Benn witnessing the ceremony at the Officer's Mess Hall, Eve Leary.

Through this agreement, the Bureau of Statistics will provide the GFS with technical expertise to establish efficient systems for data collection, storage, analysis, and dissemination. Training programmes on data analysis, interpretation, and best practices in using statistics will be offered to GFS staff. Additionally, 30 tablets will be provided to the GFS to support data collection efforts.

The Bureau will also assist with data digitisation and develop a data collection

framework tailored to the Fire Service's needs. This will allow the GFS to create data products that meet their public and government reporting requirements.

Errol La Cruz, Chief Statistician, expressed the Bureau's enthusiasm for collaborating with the GFS. He emphasised the importance of data and statistics in informing strategic decision-making across various levels. The Bureau, he stated, remains committed to working with all National Statistical System agencies to ensure

robust data collection, processing, analysis, and statistical production.

Chief Fire Officer Gregory Wickham

improve its capabilities in data management.

This led to a request for training from the Bureau of Statistics, which



Chief Fire Officer (ag) Gregory Wickham and Chief Statistician, Errol LaCruz with the inked agreement

explained that the GFS has already provided recognised the need to

statistical training to

58 firefighters and subordinate officers from all 22 GFS fire stations.

The MoU signing signifies a new chapter for both agencies. Chief Wickham anticipates that this collaboration will not only enhance the GFS's development but also strengthen the relationship between the two organisations. He expressed gratitude to the Bureau and looks forward to future collaborative efforts that will facilitate further development and capacity building within the GFS.

GUYANA PUSHES FOR STRONGER COLLABORATION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

The Guyana government is calling for enhanced coordination with the United Nations (UN) to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This call came during the annual meeting of the Government of Guyana and the United Nations Joint Steering Committee, co-chaired by Minister of Parliamentary Affairs and Governance, Gail Teixeira at the Herdmanston Lodge,



Minister of Parliamentary Affairs and Governance, Gail Teixeira

Georgetown. **"Here in this microcosm of the UN country team in the government,"** Minister Teixeira stated, **"we have to assess how well we are**

coordinating and collaborating, to make sure that we are all on the same page, and to ensure that the programmes are going the way we would like."

The Minister acknowledged the UN's support, particularly in civil defence strengthening, while underlining the evolving needs of a growing Guyana. She emphasised the importance of joint efforts to track programmes and ensure

they deliver desired outcomes. **"We need to make sure that these programmes are going in the way that we would like,"** Minister Teixeira said.

However, she also stressed Guyana's desire to lead its own development path. **"We do believe that, based on our knowledge and experiences, that we want to drive this process,"** she declared. **"The view of Guyanese is that we want to determine**

where we go, how we get there, and how fast we get there."

The Joint Steering Committee meeting served as a platform to assess the UN's response to regional development priorities within the framework of the UN Multi-Country Sustainable Development Framework. Discussions focused on key areas like food systems, data protection, and mechanisms for achieving the SDGs.

The Guyana Fire Service (GFS) is poised for a significant upgrade, thanks to a collaborative effort between the Guyana government and the United Kingdom (UK). Minister of Home Affairs, Robeson Benn, announced this positive development during a recent address to senior firefighters.

"We're out of discussions with the UK and Angloco; we are being retooled with a number of firetrucks and other assets," Minister Benn declared. Angloco Limited, the UK's oldest manufacturer of fire engines, will be instrumental in providing the GFS with modern firefighting equipment. This investment signifies the government's commitment to strengthening the fire service's capabilities

and ensuring a more effective response to fire emergencies.

"We have to bring the Guyana Fire Service into a better position to respond to the issues of fire in a more expert and in a more experienced way," Minister Benn emphasised. This focus on expertise and experience underscores the government's dedication to equipping firefighters with the necessary tools and training to tackle fires efficiently.

The collaboration extends beyond the UK. Discussions are also underway with Brazil to conduct a preliminary assessment of wildfires in various parts of Guyana. Minister Benn elaborated, **"I think there's the question of examining them supporting us during particular**

GUYANA FIRE SERVICE TO GET BOOST WITH MODERN EQUIPMENT FROM UK

times...In relation to having a continuous assessment of the state in relation to fires in the agriculture areas and in the forest, which we have to protect." This initiative highlights the government's proactive approach to wildfire management and its commitment to protecting Guyana's natural resources.

Minister Benn acknowledged the multifaceted challenges faced by the GFS, including the nation's ongoing development and the need for improved fire safety awareness among citizens and businesses. However, he also expressed his appreciation for the fire service's dedication,

stating, **"We are grateful for the work that the fire service has done, even during challenging circumstances."**

Looking ahead,

making sure that we make improvements everyday where we work and around each other are of great significance," he stressed. He also

support during emergencies.

Meanwhile, Chief Fire Officer, Gregory Wickham, underscored the service's commitment to adaptation and innovation.

The theme for this year's Senior Officers' Conference, **"Adapting to change, leading with innovation and resilience,"** reflects this dedication to continuous improvement.

The upcoming influx of modern equipment, coupled with ongoing training and collaboration, paves the way for a more robust and efficient GFS, better equipped to protect Guyanese lives and property.



Minister of Home Affairs, Robeson Benn and senior ranks at the conference

Minister Benn emphasised the importance of continuous improvement. **"Preparedness, readiness, energy,**

commended the Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs) within the fire service for their vital role in providing medical

GUYANA AFFIRMS SAFE, SUSTAINABLE OIL PRODUCTION INCREASES



These increases prioritise both safety and environmental responsibility

The Ministry of Natural Resources has refuted claims of unsafe oil production practices in Guyana, emphasising their commitment to environmental responsibility and operational safety.

The Ministry issued

a statement clarifying recent media reports suggesting ExxonMobil Guyana Limited (EMGL) exceeded safe production limits set by Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs).

"These increases are

stimulated through a comprehensive production optimisation process, which aims to increase efficiency through the enhancement of existing infrastructure," the Ministry explained. The ministry stressed that.

The reports allege the Payara FPSO, designed for a capacity of 220,000 barrels per day (bpd), was already exceeding the limit by producing 230,000 bpd.

The Ministry countered this claim, stating, **"The government affirmed that the increase in**

capacity was undertaken after extensive technical evaluations that ensured it can be done safely and sustainably."

It was clarified that EIA production limits represent a base case and don't account for optimisation strategies. **"EIAs are not meant to deliberate on production limits for FPSOs,"** the Ministry asserted. **"Typically, production startup begins with the base case and is gradually increased to safely optimised levels."**

Furthermore, EIAs include an annual average production optimisation oil rate,

which acts as a ceiling for these optimisations. **"These levels have not been exceeded by any optimisation events,"** the Ministry emphasised.

Addressing the rigorous monitoring procedures in place, the ministry stated, **"Each aggregated increase in production level is accompanied by a full system surveillance...over a 24-hour period."** This surveillance ensures critical aspects like process safety, pipe vibrations, and well behaviour are all operating within safe parameters.

The Ministry highlighted successful optimisation efforts on the Liza Phase 1 project, originally designed

for 126,000 bpd but is now producing 160,000 bpd after two optimisation phases. **"Similarly, both Liza Phase 2 and Payara have experienced increases beyond their original design capacities after their initial optimisation,"** the ministry added, noting that Payara's authorisation for its new capacity level is still under review.

The Ministry concluded by stating, **"These production increases are a testament to effective project management, resulting in a boost to Guyana's oil production while adhering to the highest safety and environmental standards."**

BATAVIA AND NEIGHBOURING COMMUNITIES GET BOOST - EDUCATION, LIVELIHOOD, AND INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENTS ANNOUNCED



President Ali engaging with a resident of Daag Point



Daag Point residents at the meeting

President Irfaan Ali recently embarked on a visit to several Indigenous communities in Region Seven, where he unveiled a series of investments aimed at enhancing education, livelihoods, and infrastructure.

Regarding education, President Ali announced the construction of a new \$45 million nursery school in Batavia, emphasising the government's commitment to education with an expenditure of close to \$90 million in the community alone. He also indicated that \$10.9 million will provide for much-needed repairs and maintenance to the existing primary school and \$9 million will be spent on upgrading and furnishing of teachers' quarters. Additionally, he reiterated support for the "Because We Care" cash grant programme, affirming, **"The schoolchildren in the community, like all others, will benefit..."**

In terms of livelihood and economic opportunities, President Ali announced initiatives to boost honey production, including the provision of 50 new beehives and equipment. He also unveiled plans to establish a forestry association and processing facility, leveraging the community's natural resources. Notably, Batavia has already received significant

funding from various government initiatives over the past three years.

In terms of infrastructure, neighbouring villages such as Itabali, Kartabo, and Westerbeck will benefit from improvements such as new farming equipment, road upgrades, and new bridges. Furthermore, Karrau will receive a \$35 million excavator to facilitate agricultural development, along with the establishment of a police outpost to enhance security.

President Ali emphasised the government's commitment to community development, stating, **"We are investing for you the people of Karrau."** He highlighted initiatives to promote sports, expand beekeeping, and establish citrus plantations, underscoring the administration's focus on agricultural development and food security.

Moreover, President Ali announced plans to clear 90 acres of land in River's View, Region Ten, for agricultural production, as part of the government's broader goal of reducing the food import bill and promoting self-sufficiency. He stressed the importance of investing in agriculture to achieve these objectives, noting ongoing efforts to develop agricultural infrastructure and

provide training to residents.

President Ali continues to prioritise rural development and agricultural initiatives across Guyana, and in so doing, reaffirms the government's commitment to improving the lives of all citizens through targeted investments and strategic partnerships.



President Ali at Karrau



Residents of Batavia at the meeting



Residents of Batavia



President Ali at Daag Point

The PPP: Post 32nd Congress

By **Donald Ramotar**

The removal of Marxism – Leninism and reference to the objective of building a Socialist Guyana marks a radical change in the life of the Peoples Progressive Party and indeed of the country.

At its very foundation the PPP set as its goals, first independence and eventually the building of a socialist Guyana. The meaning of a Socialist Guyana is explicit, at that stage the working class would be the dominant force in the Government.

Of course, being realistic, it was always known that our society was underdeveloped and lacked the conditions to build a socialist society anytime soon. This became even more manifest after the collapse of the Eastern European Socialist countries in the late 1980's and early 1990's. That is why at the last Congress that Dr. Jagan attended in 1994 he spoke about the building of a National Democratic State in which all the legitimate classes would be involved. For the party it was important to ensure that the working class was not dominated or placed in a disadvantageous position vis-à-vis the local and foreign capitalist class.

He spoke about developing flexible tactics but not to lose sight of the long term objectives. Thus, he uttered the famous phrase that we must learn to walk between the raindrops. He urged that the Party hold on to its principles while developing flexible tactics in maneuvering in the changed conditions.

The PPP always had in its leadership from the beginning, Marxists in prominent positions. Now that umbilical cord has been broken the Party has embraced “ideological pluralism”. And its goal is no longer socialism but one described as “pro-poor” (even though Marxism always had as an objective the elimination of poverty).

The arguments for this break are that times and circumstances have changed and Marxism is no longer relevant. That socialism is no longer the goal of the Party.

It is true that things have changed, however it does not imply



President Dr Irfaan Ali addressing the party faithful at the PPP's 32nd Congress

that Marxism has lost its relevance. In fact in the very complicated world we live in we need a socio-economic theory to guide us in the maze of complexities and Marxist methodology is still far superior than any other theory in vogue today. There is the famous axiom that “theory without practice is useless and practice without theory is blind”.

What therefore are the changes that have caused the Party's abandonment of its fundamental underpinnings?

This new position is a reflection of the weakening influence of the working class in our country's socio-economic and political life. Organised labour has been in crises for some-time now. Since 1953 the TUC was captured by the colonial masters and was turned into a force to fight against independence. It allowed itself to become more of a racist body to divide the working class. That position is still in place. Just look at the letters of the leaders of the TUC in our newspapers and you will get an eye and ear full of racism. That organization seems more interested in putting the racist, corrupt and incompetent PNC in power. Not only the objective of the working class becom-

ing the ruling class is abandoned by the TUC but the immediate economic interest has been tossed aside. The TUC is one of the main instruments that has kept the working class divided since the early 1960's. The TUC has consistently refused to democratise its rules and its leaders have become labour bureaucrats, living off the working people.

The other section of the working class mainly the sugar workers which played an outstanding role in the struggles for independence and for democracy is now literally on its back. The sugar industry is in deep crisis and has lost its position as the most important sector in the economy.

Moreover, the ideological leadership has been greatly weakened due to persons passing on and the absence of workers education which was a prominent feature of the Guyana Agricultural and General Workers Union.

The rate of the decline of the working-class influence is matched by the sharp rise of the influence of the capitalist class, both local and foreign. The local capitalists are already playing junior partners to the more powerful foreign capital.

That is reflected in the high

prominence which private capital gets from government. Their importance to the administration is often emphasized at every level of government.

Added to this is the greater attention or focus by the most powerful capitalist states on Guyana. That has its origins with the discovery of oil. The many high-profile visits from the US is a demonstration of our country's new found importance.

One of the main purposes of the embassies of those developed states is to protect and promote the interests of the huge corporations that are citizens of their own countries. Their influence in societies like ours must never be underestimated.

It is time for our working people to take stock of where they are. It seems that the struggle will be long and hard to re-establish their influence. Very important in the future will be the ideological struggle. In this new stage Marxism-Leninism has a central role to play in analysing the maze of information out there in our country and the world.

Now that the PPP has embraced ideological pluralism, this debate will grow in importance.

Donald Ramotar is a former President of Guyana

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Broccoli 西蘭花 36.00 case	Green Bean 青豆 45.00 case	Lemon 檸檬 45.00 case	Green Leaf Lettuce 生菜 45.00 case	Yellow Plantains 黃大蕉 69.00 case
Frozen Pangda Bass Fillet 鱈魚 8x4.5Lb 60.00 case	Headless White Shrimp 元氣白蝦 1.75Lb 110.00 case	Raw Shrimp 9L/11L 元氣白蝦 1.75Lb 160.00 case	Extra Large Egg 特大蛋 1.75Lb 53.99 case	Jasmine Tea Sub 茉莉茶包 20.00 bag
Container 532 容登 42.50 case	Container EP-28 容登 23.50 case	Container NG-081 容登 26.00 case	Kraft Singlefold Towels 紙巾 25.00 case	ADM All Purpose Flour 麵粉 20kg 19.99 bag
Capri Vegetable Oil 3.75L 32.99 case	VALUE Dishwashing Liquid 洗潔精 26.99 case	Lee Kum Kee Kum Chun Oyster Flavoured Sauce 李錦記蒜味蠔油 6x2.2kg 39.00 case	Lee Kum Kee Hoisin Sauce 李錦記蠔油 1.75L 48.99 case	MC-18 New Gen Eco-Friendly Redpath Sugar 白糖 20kg 22.00 case
				Monosodium Glutamate 味精 22.7kg 60.00 bag

FROZEN

SI-White Shrimp 50/60 鮮凍白蝦 400g Reg: \$6.99 4.99 ea	Fernia Squid Tentacles 1kg 魷魚絲 Reg: \$12.99 8.99 ea	Coconut Tree Frozen Banana Cake 320g 香蕉餅 Reg: \$3.99/ea 2/\$5.00	Synear Tong Yuen Series 凍圓 400g Reg: \$3.99 2.99 ea	D&C Raw Head On Black Tiger Shrimp 8/12 有頭生凍黑虎蝦 454g Reg: \$12.99 8.99 ea	Viva Sea Cleaned Baby Octopus 300g 鮮生八爪魚 Reg: \$9.99 3.99 ea
CANDA SIX Galungong 400g Reg: \$2.99/ea 2/\$5.00	Gourmet King Vegetable Spring Rolls 3000g 素菜春卷 Reg: \$5.99 3.99 ea	Assorted Fried Fish Ball 魚丸 500g Reg: \$5.99/ea 2/\$9.00	SH IQF Chopped Spinach 凍碎菠菜 750g Reg: \$2.99 1.99 ea	Pinoy Delight Red Juicy Sausage Series 450g 55件 Reg: \$9.99 6.99 ea	Yakult Probiotic Drink 400ml 益生菌飲料 Reg: \$6.99 5.99 ea

MEAT

Pork Chop 豬扒 Reg: \$3.99 2.59 lb	Pork Back Ribs 豬肋排 Reg: \$4.99 3.99 lb	Pork Eye Round 肉圓 Reg: \$3.99 2.59 lb
Beef Sirloin Tip Steak 牛柳 800g Reg: \$6.99 5.99 ea	Beef Eye Round (with cap) 原條牛柳 800g Reg: \$6.99 5.50 ea	

SEAFOOD

Fresh King Fish Steak 新鮮甘肅魚片 Reg: \$10.99 8.99 lb	Frozen Fresh Headless White Shrimp 鮮凍白蝦 1kg Reg: \$4.99 6.99 lb	Live Cat Fish 鮮凍鱸魚 Reg: \$4.99 3.59 lb
Live Mussel 生蠔 500g Reg: \$3.99 2.59 lb	Fresh Sea Bream 鮮凍海魚 Reg: \$4.99 6.99 lb	Frozen Fresh Pompano 鮮凍龍躉 Reg: \$5.99 4.99 lb

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LABOUR DAY BRUNCH CELE



President Ali on bringing balance and prosperity, hosted hundreds of Guyanese workers at a Labour Day Brunch at State House, reaffirming his government's commitment to fairness, equity, and improving the lives of all Guyanese. The President emphasised his focus on bringing balance and prosperity, with measures to increase disposable income and enhance livelihoods. Prime Minister Phillips and other dignitaries joined the celebration.



ATES GUYANESE WORKERS



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Milo Malt Chocolate Drink Mix 900 g **6.99 each**



Grace Parboiled Rice 8 kg **14.99 each**



Coco Cool Coconut Water 520 ml **99¢ each**



Grace Tropical Rhythm Nectar Assorted 1 L **1.99 each**



Karibena Honey 1 kg **6.99 each**



3 Crown Peppermint Tea 20's **2/2.50**



Grace Virgin Coconut Oil 500 ml **5.99 each**



Campa Baking Powder 400 g **1.69 each**



Fruit of Life Pure Lime Juice 946 ml **2/\$3**



Lou & Nicky's Pure White Vinegar 4 L **2/\$5**



Grace Chicken Vienna Sausage Assorted 130 g **2/2.50**



Garden Patch Peas and Carrots 398 ml **1.39 each**



Creation Food Plantain or Peanut Porridge 150-200 g **1.99 each**



Cedar Adzuki Beans 450 g **2/\$3**



Bath and Body Hand Soap Assorted 400 ml **89¢ each**



Sunlight Dishwashing Liquid Lavender 562 ml **2/\$5**



Old Dutch Liquid Bleach 1.27 L **2/\$3**



Super Kill II Roach and Ant Killer 170 ml **5.99 each**





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<p>Salted Alaskan Pollock Fish</p>  <p>\$4.49 lb</p>	<p>Frozen Fu Yang Headless Tiger or White Shrimp 400-500 g</p>  <p>\$9.99 ea</p>	<p>Fresh Turkey Wings</p>  <p>\$1.99 lb</p>	<p>Fresh Large Chicken Feet</p>  <p>\$1.99 lb</p>	<p>Fresh Exceldor Chicken Leg Quarters</p>  <p>7.49 ≥ 18 kg box <small>With Purchase of 2 cases or More Thursday To Sunday Only</small></p>

Fresh Seafood Catches

<p>Fresh Yellow Tail Snappers under 1/2 lb size</p>  <p>\$4.99 lb as is</p>	<p>Fresh Golden Groupers 3-5 lb</p>  <p>\$6.99 lb as is</p>	<p>Fresh Strawberry Grouper 1-3 lbs</p>  <p>\$9.99 lb as is</p>	<p>Fresh Whole King Fish</p>  <p>\$7.99 lb as is</p>	<p>Fresh Mutton Snappers 6 lb Plus</p>  <p>\$7.99 lb as is</p>
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PPP CONGRESS CHARTS NEW COURSE FOCUSED ON GROWTH AND UNITY



President Ali and Dr Jagdeo at the conference

Guyana's People's Progressive Party (PPP) held its 32nd Congress, selecting a new Central Committee through elections. President Irfaan Ali secured the most votes, becoming the party's top leader within the committee.

removing references to Marxism-Leninism and socialism from the party's constitution. While Dr. Jagdeo clarified this doesn't disregard their history or working-class focus, it signals a move towards embracing a broader range of ideologies. Dr. Jagdeo said, "...that does not mean that we give up on our history or the working-class ideology," highlighting the party's dedication to promoting development and unity across the country.

President Ali, meanwhile, highlighted the positive developments Guyana has experienced under the PPP/C government. He contrasted this with the challenges faced under the previous administration, criticising policies that burdened citizens and stifled economic growth. "The previous government's economic policies resulted in a downward spiral that left thousands of Guyanese without opportunities," President Ali pointed out. He specifically mentioned the imposition of new taxes and the adverse impact

These achievements align with the congress's theme: "Strengthen the Party, Defend Guyana, Unite Our People for Progress and Prosperity."

With a record-breaking number of attendees, the congress showcased the party's unity and dedication to Guyana's progress.

DR JAGDEO REELECTED AS GENERAL SECRETARY

The new Central Committee and held its first meeting on May 7 at Freedom House. During this meeting, Dr. Bharrat Jagdeo was unanimously re-elected as the General Secretary.

The newly formed committee also elected 18 members to its Executive Committee, including prominent figures like President Irfaan Ali, Zulfikar Mustapha, and Anil Nandlall. Mustapha was re-elected as Executive Secretary, while President Ali retained his position as Finance Secretary. The remaining Secretary positions will be filled at the next Central Committee meeting.

Dr. Jagdeo, in his address, commended the outgoing Central Committee members for their contributions and highlighted the success of the 32nd PPP Congress. He praised the Congress's scale, diversity, and productive discussions, emphasising its focus on

PEOPLE'S PROGRESSIVE PARTY
32ND DELEGATES AND OBSERVERS CONGRESS
RESULTS OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE ELECTIONS
MAY 4, 2024
ARTHUR CHONG CONFERENCE CENTRE

NO.	LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	TOTAL	RANK
1	ALI	IRFAAN	2318	1
2	JAGDEO	BHARRAT	2155	2
3	MUSTAPHA	ZULFIKAR ZULFI	2129	3
4	BHARRAT	VECKRAM OUTAR	2146	4
5	TEIXEIRA	GAIL	2105	5
6	DEBORA ALI	INGLI	2023	6
7	CRIVAL	COLLIN DAVID	1792	7
8	MURPHY	KENNETH	1731	8
9	NANDLALL	ANIL	1670	9
10	SUBUDH	PAULINE	1685	10
11	MOHTA	SHYAM	1616	11
12	KARUNA	ROSEY	1592	12
13	WESTFORD	JENNY ROSE	1485	13
14	MUSTAPHA	NEEL	1467	14
15	PERSAUD	ANAND	1392	15
16	ANTHONY	FRANZIS	1306	16
17	BROWN	SARAH	1240	17
18	HUSSAIN	ZAHARA	1224	18
19	TAFARUQI	FAIZAL M.	1221	19
20	MOHAMMAD	BRYAN	1215	20
21	PRESTON	MARION VASINI	1160	21
22	ROBINSON	CHARLES	1085	22
23	SINGH	KARL	1115	23
24	CHONG	PAUL	1111	24
25	SINGH	CLAYTON	1028	25
26	RAMOTAR	ROSEALY	1075	26
27	MOHAI	HTHACK	982	27
28	ASHLEY	BRYAN DE PAUL	910	28
29	FERAT	HITABANUMAR	915	29
30	RAMSARAN	HUGHES GONDO	889	30
31	ASTOR	SUE HUGHES GONDO	890	31
32	KAMBISDON	NEELASH	872	32
33	MURPHY	NASHA	849	33
34	ROHILL	CHRISTOPHER JAMES	745	34
35	CHANDRAPAT	INDRANIL	700	35

PEOPLE'S PROGRESSIVE PARTY
32ND DELEGATES AND OBSERVERS CONGRESS
RESULTS OF THE CANDIDATE MEMBER ELECTION
MAY 4, 2024
Arthur Chong Conference Centre

NO.	LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	TOTAL	RANK
1	DEB	DEODAT	1317	1
2	THOMAS	NEAL	1011	2
3	ABDULLA	JASON	886	3
4	FORSYTHE	ANDREW	786	4
5	PETERS	BJORN LANCEBALL	668	5

The results from the elections



President Ali engaging with a member at the congress

Following a close race, Vice President and General Secretary of the party, Dr. Bharrat Jagdeo came in second. Other prominent figures like Zulfikar Mustapha and Gail Teixeira were also elected to the 35-member committee. Additionally, five non-voting members were

growth and further expansion plans in his speech, outlining a vision for the party's future. "The PPP is committed to growth and we have plans for further expansion in the coming year," Dr. Jagdeo stated. A noteworthy decision involved

on ordinary citizens. In contrast, President Ali pointed to the PPP/C's accomplishments like job creation, reviving industries like sugar and bauxite, and improvements in infrastructure, education, healthcare, and economic stability.

critical issues and well-organised logistics. their ongoing support for the PPP and its initiatives.

He further expressed his gratitude to party members, supporters, volunteers, and others who contributed to the congress's success and



Part of the gathering at the conference

Guyana cops, NYPD sign agreement to boost crime-fighting efforts

TO enhance crime-fighting capabilities and respond to complex situations, the Guyana Police Force (GPF) and the New York City Police Department (NYPD) on Monday signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for training partnerships.

In brief remarks during the simple ceremony held at the GPF headquarters in Georgetown, Home Affairs Minister Robeson Benn emphasised the need for police transformation to address complex issues of crime and improve community engagements.

The agreement was signed by US Ambassador to Guyana Nicole Theriot; First Deputy Commissioner of NYPD Tania Kinsella; Deputy Commissioner of Police ‘Admin’ Calvin Brutus; and Minister Benn, who expressed gratitude for the opportunity to work with the NYPD.

Kinsella, in her address, said that the training programme will be tailored to address the unique law enforcement needs in Guyana.

She said: “We are so excited to share our experiences and our best practises with the Guyanese Police Force. We want to help them tackle similar challenges in their communities and make Guyana safer too.”

Additionally, a curriculum will be crafted to enhance the adoption of law enforcement training best practises, including homicide and responding to gender based violence, and community policing responses.

“As we move forward, I see a future where our partnership only grows stronger and we freely exchange knowledge and experience for the greater good of New York City and Guyana,” Kinsella said.

During this week, the NYPD commissioner and her delegation will meet with key government and civil society stakeholders, Ambassador Theriot said, noting that these engagements will see a stronger partnership to support the local police.

“It will foster a more inclusive criminal justice system, and it will further attract international investment as Guyana rapidly grows, transform and diversifies its economy,” she added.

The NYPD will return to Guyana within a few months to commence the training programme, and a cadre of officers will travel to New York later this year to participate in the practical study tour at the NYPD’s training facility.

The Ambassador further said that the programme is an additional “tool” to address crime, violence, and illicit trafficking.

She emphasised the US’ commitment to deepening partnerships with Guyana to address shared security challenges. Prior to the signing ceremony, the delegation had met with Guyana’s President Dr. Irfaan Ali.



The visiting NYPD delegation meeting with President Dr, Irfaan Ali and other key government officials

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SIXTH GRADERS CONFIDENTLY TAKE ON NGSА 2024



Over 15,000 eager Guyanese students participated in the exams

Over 15,000 eager Guyanese students participated in this year's National Grade Six Assessment (NGSA) on May 2 and 3, marking their journey to secondary education. The assessments covered core subjects: English Language, Mathematics, Social Studies, and Science.

The Department of Public Information (DPI) spoke with students from various Georgetown primary schools who expressed a mix of nervousness and excitement for the exams. Khadijah Andrews, a student at Stella Maris Primary, showcased her confidence: **"I am kinda nervous but I am pretty excited at the same time... I studied hard for my examinations."**

While some students expressed apprehension, like Kadasi Fernandes from Stella Maris who admitted, **"I feel joyful but I am kinda worried a little bit**

about Science," the overall sentiment was one of preparedness.

Students highlighted effective study routines and a strong support system. Rose Thompson

determination despite her nerves: **"I prepared by studying late at nights... I want to go to Queen's College."** Meanwhile, Gabriel Gray from Rhema Global



Minister of Education, Priya Manickchand interacting with NGSА students

from North Georgetown Primary spoke of a well-structured study schedule, while Lydia Henry from the same school emphasised the valuable educational content available on the Guyana Learning Channel (GLC).

Akeela Millington, a student from Redeemer Primary, displayed

Academy offered words of encouragement to his peers, emphasising, **"This is just some regular exam. It does not determine your entire future."**

MEALS AND SUPPORT PROVIDED

The Ministry of

Education ensured a supportive environment for the exams, successfully providing meals and support to the students. This initiative ensured students across the country were well-nourished and focused during these crucial tests.

"When you are dealing with 15,000 kids and a large number of caterers... and more than 500 locations, you will get some hiccups," acknowledged Minister of Education, Priya Manickchand, in a Facebook live broadcast. **"I am very happy that the programme was successful, where we had problems, we are reviewing to make sure those never reoccur,"** she emphasised.

Despite minor challenges, Minister Manickchand highlighted the programme's success and the impressive turnout for this year's NGSА. **"The attendance clearly shows good management in the education sector, even after COVID-19 wrecked parts of the learning system,"** she stated.

The Minister pointed to a 95% attendance rate as evidence of the Ministry's efforts. **"We are retaining more children in the system... [And this has] to do with some of our measures,"** she explained. These

measures likely encompass various initiatives the Ministry has implemented in for all primary school students over the past two years. These efforts, along with the NGSА



Meals provided for the students

recent years.

One such initiative is the literacy and robotics programme launched in February 2023. This programme provides "intensive remedial intervention to fast-track the learner's literacy skills, especially their ability to read," according to the Ministry.

Additionally, the government has procured textbooks

meal programme, demonstrate the Ministry's commitment to providing equitable access to education and the tools students need to succeed.

The NGSА marking process has already begun, and anxious students and parents can expect results to be available on or before July 5th.



Minister of Education, Priya Manickchand interacting with NGSА students

GOVERNMENT TECHNICAL INSTITUTE CELEBRATES WOMEN IN TRADES WITH "JILL OF ALL TRADES" EXHIBITION



A scene from the exhibition

The Government Technical Institute (GTI) hosted a dynamic exhibition, aptly titled "Jill of All Trades." Held under the theme "Promoting Females in Technical Education," the event celebrated the

impressive achievements and capabilities of women in various technical and vocational fields.

Jill of All Trades served as a beacon of inspiration, showcasing the invaluable

contributions of women in traditionally male-dominated industries. Students from across the coast packed the GTI campus in Georgetown, witnessing firsthand the extraordinary talent, innovation, and expertise that women bring to engineering, information technology, automotive technology, culinary arts, fashion design, and construction.

The event featured a keynote address by Assistant Chief Education Officer-Technical, Ms. Marcia Paddy-Andrews. Ms. Paddy-Andrews

highlighted the Ministry of Education's aim to inspire future leaders and innovators by showcasing the multifaceted talents of women in these technical and vocational

fields. She emphasised that the exhibition serves as a testament to the Ministry's unwavering commitment to fostering diversity, equality, and excellence in both education and the

workforce.

Beyond the inspiring message, the exhibition provided an immersive experience for students. Engaging live demonstrations and discussions took place at various booths, offering students the opportunity to gain valuable insights, exchange ideas, and network with professionals in these fields. This interactive format provided a firsthand look at the exciting possibilities that technical and vocational education can offer for young women.



A scene from the exhibition

PPP/C REJECTS RACISM CLAIMS

General Secretary of the People's Progressive Party/Civic (PPP/C), Dr. Bharrat Jagdeo, has addressed allegations of racial bias, and in so doing took the opportunity to highlight various government initiatives aimed at empowering Afro-Guyanese citizens.

Speaking at a recent press conference at Freedom House, Dr Jagdeo explained, "So, you have now, through the GOAL, GROW, BIT and WIIN programmes, over 20,000 Afro-Guyanese of the 50,000 people who are being trained..."

This statistic highlights a significant



General Secretary Dr. Bharrat Jagdeo

investment in skills development for Afro-Guyanese communities. He further elaborated, "More than 20,000 Afro-Guyanese who did not have any scholarship or training programme in 2020 now, under this government,

were trained." Dr. Jagdeo also addressed the issue of historical perceptions. "The PPP had really suffered greatly as a result of the 'whisper campaign,' falsely portraying that they are racists and only concerned about the

advancement of one group of Guyanese," he explained. He further asserted that the opposition party, APNU/PNC, "thrives on racism which is the only tool that it has to mobilise people."

The General Secretary contrasted these claims with concrete actions taken by the PPP/C government. "The strategic policymaking and the government's progress belied that position," he declared. Dr. Jagdeo elaborated on this point, stating, "We have taken a deliberate strategy. In opposition, we pointed this

out...And now in government, we intend to tackle that issue frontally. That means confronting the groups that are really racists in this country."

The press conference also provided a platform to showcase specific programmes. Dr. Jagdeo highlighted the "Get Ready for Opportunity to Work (GROW)" initiative. "We have had close to 5,900 persons under the GROW programme who have qualified," he stated, emphasising that "3,000 of those are Afro-Guyanese and 366 are from Sophia. And half of

them have gone off to tertiary education."

Another key initiative, the Guyana Online Academy of Learning (GOAL), was also discussed. Dr. Jagdeo pointed out, "Since its commencement in 2021, the GOAL... has successfully fulfilled its objective of providing over 20,000 tertiary-level scholarships to Guyanese from every region." He further noted that "today, 27,000 Guyanese, of which more than half are Afro-Guyanese, are on GOAL studying for universities degrees, free of cost."

LAING AVENUE RESIDENTS GET VOUCHERS FOR HOME IMPROVEMENTS

Dozens of Laing Avenue residents are expressing their relief and excitement after receiving vouchers to improve their homes. The initiative, spearheaded by the Ministry of Housing and Water, aims to uplift the living standards of homeowners in the community.

Thirty-two (32) residents received vouchers valued \$250,000 each, along with an additional \$100,000 to cover labour costs. The distribution ceremony, held at St. Pius Primary School, was a beacon of hope for

many. Andrew Christian, a beaming beneficiary, wasted no time outlining his plans. "I feel fantastic," he shared. "I will be doing the roof, bedroom walls, and the window frames. If possible, I will do some painting."

Ron Johnson, another grateful resident, expressed his dire need for repairs and his appreciation for the government's assistance. "I am thankful for the little help that the government is giving us," he stated. Johnson can now finally purchase the necessary building

materials to address the issues plaguing his home.

Ann Braithwaite echoed similar sentiments, highlighting the specific repairs she intends to make with the grant.

For 72-year-old Brenda Hopkinson, the impact is particularly significant. "When rain falls, the whole place does flood out," she explained. "I am glad that my place is getting this help which will go a long way. I am grateful for that since I am an elderly person." Thanks to the voucher



Recipient of the Laing Avenue housing grant

programme, Hopkinson can now fix her door, buy zinc sheets, and address other critical repairs, improving the overall

condition of her home. Minister of Housing and Water, Collin Croal, provided an update on the programme's

progress. "This programme has seen an overall investment of over \$31.5 million in vouchers to date," he revealed. A total of 122 vouchers have been distributed thus far, with 211 households ultimately slated to benefit once the verification process is complete.

This initiative builds upon earlier distributions. In January, 60 residents received their first round of vouchers, followed by another 30 in February. The programme itself was announced by Vice President Dr. Bharrat Jagdeo in July 2023, with a designated budget of \$50 million for house improvements in Laing Avenue and Yarrow Dam.

'WE WON'T BE RUSHED TO COVER UP CORRUPTION' -TEIXEIRA - AS SHE DISMISSED OPPOSITION'S ACCUSATIONS ON PAC MEETINGS



Minister of Parliamentary Affairs and Governance, Gail Teixeira

Minister of Parliamentary Affairs and Governance, Gail Teixeira, hit back at accusations from the opposition regarding the Public Accounts Committee (PAC). In a

press release, Teixeira emphasised that media outlets were repeating "unfounded assertions" from opposition members.

"Much liberty is given to conclusions accusing the Government members," Minister Teixeira stated, "but regrettably for the critics, the functioning of the PAC in the 12th Parliament has not been diminished in comparison to the 10th and 11th Parliaments."

Minister Teixeira pointed to previous statements by herself

and Public Works Minister Juan Edghill detailing the number of PAC meetings held across different Parliaments. She argued that this information, "was obviously overlooked."

The current focus of the PAC, Minister Teixeira explained, is the examination of government agencies under the previous APNU+AFC administration based on the Auditor General's reports. She criticised media outlets for ignoring "the number of violations of the Procurement Act, missing documents,

the refusal or non-cooperation of former officials" during these examinations.

"In fact," Minister Teixeira highlighted, "the PAC had issued two reports and met more frequently now than it did in the 10th and 11th Parliaments." She compared this to the 11th Parliament's PAC, chaired by President Irfaan Ali, which issued three reports in 44 meetings.

Minister Teixeira further rejected opposition calls for the removal of government ministers from the

PAC. "Those were Mrs Volda Lawrence and Mrs Valerie Patterson," she said, referencing two government ministers who sat on the PAC under the APNU+AFC.

"The key problem, though, is unavoidable," Minister Teixeira asserted. "The APNU and AFC were unable to effectively manage the government... because of widespread corruption." She argued that the PAC's work exposed these issues, and vowed, "I have no intention of resigning...

regardless of how much willful haste the Chair and opposition exercise... in an effort to hide the corruption."

Minister Teixeira concluded by emphasising the PAC's role in holding the government accountable. "Government members of the PAC will spare no effort to evaluate the annual accounts," she declared, "since the opposition's haste will only serve to intentionally harm the interests of the Guyanese people."

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY CONSIDERS SWEEPING LEGISLATION

The 81st sitting of Guyana's National Assembly saw several significant bills introduced to reform the justice system, extradition procedures, and government structure.

Among those bills are:

- Criminal Law Overhaul:** The Criminal Law Procedure

(Paper Committals) Bill proposes replacing preliminary inquiries with a paper-based review system. Evidence and arguments from both prosecution and defence would be submitted in writing, eliminating the need for in-person hearings.

- Enhanced Extradition:** The Fugitive Offenders

(Amendment) Bill seeks to broaden the scope of admissible evidence in extradition cases. This includes accepting "records of evidence" that may not be traditionally allowed under Guyanese law. The bill outlines the specific requirements for such evidence to be admissible.

- Expanding the Constitution**

Reform Commission: The Constitution Reform Commission (Amendment) Bill proposes increasing the commission's membership from 20 to 21 and potentially granting the president the authority to appoint a member.

- Military Restructuring:** The Defence Act Amendment

Bill seeks a name change, replacing "Chief of Staff" with "Chief of Defence Staff."

These proposed legislative changes represent a substantial push for reform across Guyana's legal and government systems. The coming debates and discussions in the National Assembly will be crucial in shaping the future of these critical areas.



Minister of Parliamentary Affairs and Governance Gail Teixeira

ATTORNEY GENERAL REJECTS OPPOSITION'S LOCAL GOVT ACT AMENDMENTS



Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs, Mohabir Anil Nandlall

Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs, Mohabir Anil Nandlall, S.C., rejected amendments proposed by the opposition to the Local Government Commission Act during a National Assembly session on May 9, 2024 on the grounds that subsidiary legislation cannot contradict the Constitution.

The proposed amendments, presented by Opposition MP

Ganesh Mahipaul during Private Members' Business, would require the Local Government Commission to seek recommendations from local government councillors before taking action.

The Attorney General argued that such a change would violate Article 226 (1) of the Constitution, which guarantees the independence of commissions from

"direction or control of any other person or authority." He further pointed to Section Three of the Local Government Commission Act itself, which echoes this constitutional protection.

AG Nandlall also highlighted that the act, passed in 2013, previously received support from the then-opposition (now the current opposition) who emphasised the

importance of the commission's autonomy.

"The commission's autonomy and independence must not be interfered with at all," AG Nandlall quoted the opposition's past position. **"Today, they come to interfere with and dilute the very independence,"** he added.

The Local Government Commission plays a

crucial role in regulating and staffing local government bodies. It handles matters like hiring, firing, and resolving disputes within these entities.

The Attorney General's stance upholds the commission's constitutional independence and prevents potential conflicts with the supreme law of the land.

OPPOSITION MP WITHDRAWS MISLEADING STATEMENT ABOUT TEACHERS

On May 9, 2024, Member of Parliament Maureen Philadelphia apologised to the National Assembly for making false claims in January about the Ministry of Education.

During budget debates, Ms. Philadelphia, an APNU+AFC parliamentarian, alleged that unqualified teachers were graduating from

the Cyril Potter College of Education (CPCE). These accusations were disputed by Education Minister Priya Manickchand.

Speaker of the National Assembly, Manzoor Nadir, requested that Ms. Philadelphia provide evidence to support her claims. No evidence was presented.

Ms. Philadelphia had



Opposition Member of Parliament, Maureen Philadelphia making her apology

previously apologised via email to the Speaker and reiterated her apology during the Assembly session.

"Mr. Speaker... I do want to say too that my email still stands and I do withdraw the comment," Ms. Philadelphia stated.

This incident is not an isolated case of opposition members retracting

unsubstantiated claims in Parliament.

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Education has achieved a significant milestone with 99% of teachers trained or undergoing training.



GUYANA ADVANCES DEVELOPMENT AGENDA WITH NEW LOAN AGREEMENTS

The Government tabled several contracted loan agreements before the National Assembly on May 9, 2024, signifying continued investment in the country's development.

Finance Minister Ashni Singh presented the agreements, emphasising the government's commitment to responsible borrowing to fund public sector initiatives. Guyana's successful debt management strategy was highlighted, with the debt-to-GDP ratio falling

from over 600% in 1991 to 27% in 2023.

The loan agreements include:

- Inter-American Development Bank (IDB):** US\$30 million to support a policy-based reform programme focusing on human services, including the digital transformation of the ministry, strengthening senior citizen pensions, empowering people with disabilities, and promoting gender equality.
- International Development**

Association (IDA): US\$35 million to enhance policies for human capital accumulation, aiming to recover learning losses and improve access to quality education, while building a more responsive education system.

- Government of Canada (through IDB):** CAN\$120 million to support Guyana's budget and social protection priorities, including combating human trafficking, gender-based violence, and women's economic

empowerment. This loan features a climate-resilient debt clause for emergencies.

- Bank of China: Supplemental Agreement and Account**

Supervision Agreement for a Euros 160.85 million loan partially financing the New Demerara River Bridge project, a key infrastructure initiative to reduce traffic



congestion.

- UniCredit Bank Austria AG (Swedish Export Credit Agency):** EUR 135 million to design, build, and equip a new hospital campus in New Amsterdam, aiming to improve healthcare access and life expectancy in Region Six.

These agreements align with the government's agenda to improve social services, education, healthcare, and infrastructure.

Finance Minister Singh reiterated the PPP/C government's commitment to transparent debt management and a brighter future for all Guyanese.

GUYANA SEEKS INVESTMENT AT HOUSTON OFFSHORE TECHNOLOGY CONFERENCE



The Minister was presented an instrument by the City of Houston to welcome Guyana's participation at the OTC

Minister within the Ministry of Public Works Deodat Indar led a trade delegation to the Offshore Technology Conference (OTC) in Houston, Texas where he promoted investment opportunities in Guyana to potential investors at the Bilateral Chamber.

Minister Indar highlighted Guyana's economic transformation

and energy strategy, and discussed topics related to attracting foreign direct investment. He shared the stage with retired US Army General Wesley Clark, a former NATO Supreme Allied Commander and presidential candidate.

Following the Bilateral Chamber event, Minister Indar attended a "Guyana Night"

reception. Houston's Mayor Pro-Temp Martha Castex-Tatum presented an instrument to the Minister, welcoming Guyana's participation in the OTC. The reception was hosted by Guyana's Honorary Consul General for the Southwest United States, Lutfi Hassan.



Minister Deodat speaking at the Bilateral Chamber in Houston, Texas

INVEST NOW IN GUYANA'S SECURE FUTURE -FOREIGN SECRETARY

Foreign Secretary, Robert Persaud, has sent a clear message to investors: your money is safe in Guyana. Despite an ongoing border controversy with Venezuela, Persaud assured existing and potential investors that their investments are secure.

"We have always maintained that Guyana is safe,

stable, and is a certain place to have investments." Persaud told the Department of Public Information (DPI).

Persaud emphasised that Guyana's case regarding the border dispute is strong and enjoys international backing. With support from every member of the United Nations, Guyana's position

is gaining global recognition.

This stability, according to Persaud, is a major reason for Guyana's booming economy – the world's fastest-growing according to the Foreign Secretary. "There is not a single day in which you see investors both local and international looking at opportunities and

seeking them here in Guyana," Persaud said, highlighting the constant interest in Guyanese opportunities.

For potential investors, Persaud's message is clear: "the time is now." He urged them to capitalise on the rapid development and emerging opportunities in Guyana.

The Foreign Secretary also

highlighted the supportive role of the Guyana Office for Investment (Go-Invest) in facilitating investment and fostering investor confidence.

Persaud concluded by reiterating the government's unwavering commitment to creating a resilient environment that benefits both local and foreign investors. With a robust economy and strong international backing, Guyana is positioned to be a secure and



Foreign Secretary Robert Persaud

profitable destination for investment.

The Guyana Civil Aviation Authority (GCAA) held a symposium at the Pegasus Suites and Corporate Centre in Kingston, Georgetown, focused on improving aviation safety, and ensuring the well-being of pilots and air traffic controllers, with an emphasis on maintaining optimal medical fitness.

Lt. Col. (retd) Egbert Field, Director General of the GCAA, underscored the critical role of aviation medical assessments. "Aviation medical is the most important

item I believe for an aviator," he stated. "We cannot work in the aviation industry without a medical, whether it be a first-class, second-class, or

third-class medical, whichever your

license requires." Beyond the importance of medical fitness, the symposium offered guidance on maintaining health and identifying potential medical conditions. Director General Field also announced plans for future events aligned with International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) standards, including safety and engineering symposiums.

Dr. Mark Williams, a

medical doctor affiliated with the aviation sector, delivered presentations on the human factor in aviation. He emphasised the influence of physical, physiological, psychological, and psychosocial factors on incidents and accidents. Dr. Williams highlighted a startling statistic: "73 percent of accidents result from pilot error," underlining the importance of ongoing interventions and training to mitigate risks.

Completing the programme, doctors Clairmont Waddell and Chetram Budhu addressed the impacts of hypoxia and alcohol within the aviation industry.

All medical professionals present stressed the paramount importance of maintaining optimal health and safety practices among aviation professionals.



GCAA Director General Lt. Col. (retd) Egbert Field during the Aeromedical Symposium

GUYANESE HEALTHCARE WORKERS EXCEL IN GLOBAL HEALTH E-LEARNING PROGRAMME

Seventy-five public health and clinical practitioners were recognised for their dedication to improving global health knowledge. They received certificates after completing the University of Washington Global Health E-learning Programme, facilitated by the Pan Caribbean Partnership against HIV and AIDS (PANCAP).

The programme covered crucial areas like policy development, leadership, and economic evaluation in global

health. Highlighting the importance of continuous learning, Guyana's Health Minister, Dr. Frank Anthony, congratulated the graduates: "Let me extend congratulations to all of you for taking this course...If we don't keep ourselves updated constantly then we can have problems."

Minister Anthony emphasised the government's commitment to

advancing clinical practices. "This will help you to widen your horizon and to be able to better perform at whatever job you are doing in the ministry," he stated, underscoring the importance of ongoing professional development.

The programme has trained over 499 individuals since 2021. Chargé d'affaires of the United States Embassy, Adrienne Galanek, commended

the initiative. She highlighted USAID's investment of \$189 million since 2004 to support HIV initiatives

in Guyana. Galanek also praised PANCAP's role in promoting best practices for HIV control

in the Caribbean.

PANCAP, the regional mechanism coordinating the Caribbean's HIV response, operates under the Caribbean Regional Strategic Framework on HIV/AIDS 2019-2025.



A total of 75 public health, clinical practitioners excel in global health E-learning programme

GOVT COMMITS TO FAIR COMPENSATION FOR PETER'S HALL RESIDENTS AFFECTED BY DEMERARA BRIDGE CONSTRUCTION



Minister Edghill speaking with DPI

Minister of Public Works, Bishop Juan Edghill, has assured residents of Peter's Hall that the government is committed to protecting their interests during the construction of the New Demerara River Bridge.

"The Government

of Guyana must obey the constitution of Guyana and the commitment to all the people of Guyana," Minister Edghill emphasised in an interview with the Department of Public Information (DPI).

His comments addressed concerns raised in a video alleging that the government was coercing residents to sell their properties.

"This is an ongoing process and following the law," Minister Edghill continued. **"So somebody who got ugly and exult themselves in a very ridiculous manner to get public sentiments and get some likes on social media does not stop the developmental agenda of the government."**

The Minister highlighted that all procedures surrounding land acquisition for

public projects are strictly legal. He pointed out that properties earmarked for the bridge construction were officially published in the official gazette on April 6.

"The lands in the Peter's Hall area have now become vested in the state of Guyana, enabling progress in the construction of the bridge," he explained.

Minister Edghill elaborated on the extensive consultations that took place with residents over the past two years. These efforts aimed to ensure transparency and address any concerns regarding compensation

and relocation.

"Residents were provided with comprehensive compensation packages, including residential or commercial lands at Garden of Eden and Farm," he said. **"They also received financial assistance for dislocation costs and temporary accommodation ensuring all welfare needs are prioritised."**

On May 7, notices of eviction and property demolition were issued to residents.

"Every effort was made to accommodate varying needs,

with legal counsel provided to safeguard residents' interests," Minister Edghill noted.

However, he added that in cases where agreements could not be reached, the government will resort to the court system to ensure compliance with legal requirements.

"A court of competent jurisdiction will determine compensation amounts in instances where residents and the government cannot reach an agreement," the Minister concluded.

NURSES APPLAUDED FOR SERVICE, ENCOURAGED TO EMBRACE CHANGE

Guyana's Nurses Week witnessed a focus on both honouring veteran nurses, and preparing the profession for the future.

At the recent Nurses and Midwives Council of Guyana's awards ceremony, Health Minister, Dr. Frank Anthony, delivered a forward-looking message to nurses with over 30 years of service.

"The way that we are practicing medicine is going to change drastically in Guyana," Dr. Anthony declared to the nurses gathered at Cara Lodge in Georgetown. **"It has already been changing over the**

years...very soon, if we are not there in some aspects as yet, a lot of what we will be doing, people from surrounding areas, countries will be looking to Guyana as an example."

The Minister emphasised the importance of continuous learning to keep pace with the evolving healthcare landscape. **"We need to train people to offer these types of care,"** Dr. Anthony stated, highlighting the Continuing Nursing Education programme and proposing a **"Nurses Research Conference led by**

nurses themselves" to foster knowledge sharing.

Guyana's ambitious healthcare expansion plans, including 13 new hospitals, prioritise specialised training for nurses. **"If we are going to provide better cardiac care, we need cardiac specialisation, or cardiac nurses,"** Dr. Anthony explained, emphasising the need for critical care nurses and specialists in various areas.

Recognising the nurses' dedication, Dr. Anthony proposed making the award ceremony an annual event. He urged a shift



Jude Paul

in perspective, stating: **"We need to train people to people to offer these types of care."**

Meanwhile, another ceremony at the Ministry of Health's head office celebrated exceptional nurses.

Several awardees spoke to the Department

of Public Information about their motivation for serving the people. Midwife Jude Paul, stationed at Aishalton, highlighted his passion for serving women and children in remote



Dexter Bourne

areas. With nearly two decades of experience, Paul encouraged others, particularly men, to consider midwifery. **"Anything is achievable with dedication and hard work,"** he shared, **urging future generations to "aim for the stars."**

Dana John, also from Aishalton, transitioned from teaching to nursing due to the critical need for healthcare workers in her village. **"Seeing patients improve and delivering babies" bring her immense satisfaction,** John noted. **"Knowing I made a positive impact is a joyous moment,"** she added.

Dexter Bourne, a nurse from Mabaruma,

found his calling caring for his sick mother. Currently pursuing his Registered Nurse qualification, Bourne expressed his deep affection for the nursing profession and encouraged young men to join. **"I love the nursing career; I would not trade it for anything,"** he declared, emphasising his love for Guyana and its people.

Neisa Kanhai, a nurse at the Bartica Regional Hospital, highlighted the dedication of the



Neisa Kanhai

nursing profession and advocated for greater recognition of nurses' service.

These celebrations coincide with International Day of Nurses and Midwives, observed on May 12, under the theme "Our Nurses, Our Future, The Economic Power of Care".



U.S. STRENGTHENS DEFENCE TIES WITH GUYANA

Major General Julie Nethercot, Director of Strategy, Policy, and Plans for U.S. Southern Command (SOUTHCOM), visited Guyana from May 6 to 8. Her visit highlights the growing importance of the United States (US)-Guyana defence and security partnership.

During her visit, MajGen Nethercot met with Guyana Defence Force (GDF) Chief of Staff, Brigadier Omar Khan during which discussions centered

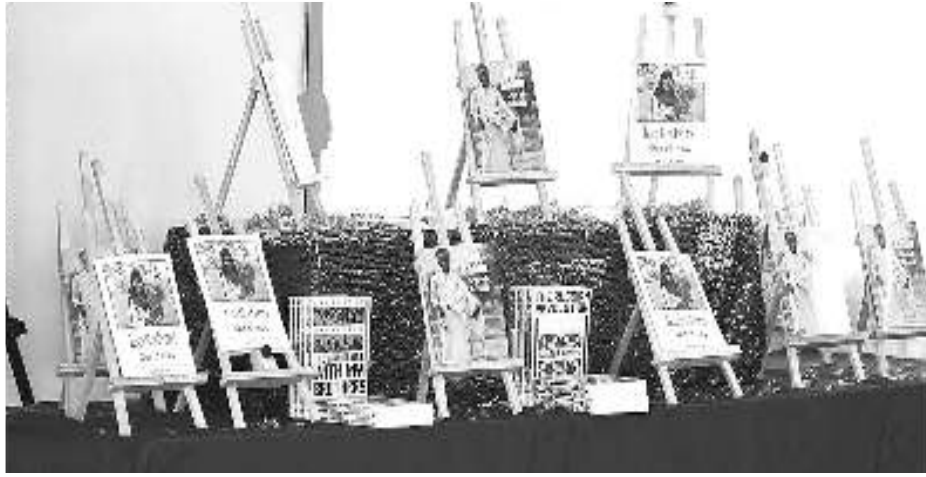
on ongoing security cooperation initiatives, with particular focus on advancing technological capabilities for the GDF.

This marks MajGen Nethercot's second visit to Guyana, demonstrating the U.S' commitment to supporting the GDF's modernisation efforts. The U.S aims to strengthen regional security through improved interoperability, deeper information sharing, and joint military exercises.



Major General Julie Nethercot, Director of Strategy, Policy, and Plans for U.S. Southern Command (SOUTHCOM)

GOVT TO RAMP-UP LITERACY EFFORTS WITH INTENSIFIED PROGRAMME BY SEPTEMBER



'Laksmi Out of India' and 'Kofi Badu Out of Africa' books on display

The Guyanese education system is set for a significant boost, with the Ministry of Education (MoE) announcing the launch of an intensified literacy programme by September. This initiative aligns with the government's ambitious goal of ensuring every child becomes a fluent reader by Grade Four.

"We are trying to

ensure that you have all the resources you need so that you could be readers who understand what they read and then [be] change agents in this country," declared Minister of Education, Priya Manickchand, during a recent event. This emphasis on comprehension underscores the programme's aim to

cultivate not just readers, but critical thinkers and future leaders.

The programme's launch coincided with the introduction of the late Dr. Walter Rodney's books, **"Laksmi Out of India"** and **"Kofi Badu Out of Africa,"** into the school system. These books are expected to provide valuable lessons and promote harmonious

living among students.

Minister Manickchand expressed her gratitude to Dr. Rodney's wife and daughter, Patricia Rodney and Asha Rodney, for collaborating with the MoE to re-edit, complete, and provide reprint rights for the books.

The Minister also unveiled other key plans for the education system, including reforms in how nursery and primary levels are integrated and how students transition between grades. She emphasised the crucial role of teachers in conducting assessments to identify students who may require additional reading support.

"And so, if you don't know anything else, Social Studies and Science, they must leave your

classroom reading at the appropriate age level. And they must leave your school reading and understanding," Minister Manickchand stressed.

To foster a love for reading, the government will be procuring storybooks for all primary schools nationwide. This initiative aims to create a fun and interactive learning environment for students. Teachers will also be implementing designated reading times, where students will be required to read a specific number of books and write reports on them.

These developments come on the heels of the MoE's launch of two primary textbook series in March, designed to enhance literacy and problem-solving skills.

Over the past two years, the government has also ensured all primary school students have access to necessary textbooks.

"We are in the process of buying secondary books for secondary school children," Minister Manickchand revealed. **"We believe the contents of those books are important and they will help us. They will be a good support to move us along our academic journey."**

The implementation of these policies aligns with the government's overarching objective of not only providing quality education, but also achieving universal access to secondary education by 2025.

EDUCATION MINISTRY MODERNISING TVET PROGRAMMES TO MATCH JOB MARKET NEEDS

The Ministry of Education is making a significant move to ensure graduates from Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) programmes have the skills for which employers are seeking. The ministry announced a new initiative to align TVET programmes with current and future labour market demands, impacting both secondary and post-secondary education.

A press release from the Ministry noted that a key part of this project is a comprehensive tracer study. This study, conducted in

partnership with the Council for TVET, will track graduates from various vocational programmes for one year after they finish their studies. Researchers will assess their employment status and the quality of education they received.

The tracer study will include graduates from secondary school vocational programmes like the Secondary Competency Certificate Programme (SCCP) and the Caribbean Vocational Qualification (CVQ) programme. It will also encompass graduates from Guyana's public TVET institutions at the



This effort will ensure Guyana's TVET sector stays relevant

post-secondary level.

To ensure a thorough investigation, the Ministry has partnered with Groupe Cayambe, a well-

respected consulting firm. Cayambe will conduct surveys, focus groups, and individual meetings with relevant stakeholders to gather a

well-rounded picture.

The Ministry emphasised the importance of public participation in this project. Stakeholders

are encouraged to contribute and provide contact information for their organisation's focal point by reaching out to Deputy Chief Education Officer (Technical) Dr. Ritesh Tularam at dceo.technical@moe.gov.gy +592- 231-8815.

The Ministry expresses its appreciation to all stakeholders who support and cooperate in this initiative. Their efforts will ensure Guyana's TVET sector stays relevant and effectively prepares graduates for success in the ever-changing job market.

GUYANA POLICE FORCE WELCOMES NEW IMMIGRATION CONSTABLES

The Guyana Police Force has bolstered its Immigration Department with the graduation of 24 new constables. The official ceremony, held on May 7, at the Officers' Training Centre in Georgetown, marked the culmination of Course 1/2024 coordinated by Sergeant Hoosein.

These new recruits hail from various regions across the country, and will be deployed to

different immigration offices and ports-of-entry.

Woman Superintendent Sonia Herbert, and Director of the Guyana Police Force's Academy, expressed confidence in the graduates' ability to make significant contributions. She commended their commitment during training and urged them to maintain that dedication in their new

positions.

Other officers present at the ceremony included Assistant Superintendents R. Clarke and T. Benn, Woman Assistant Superintendent D. Pollard, Inspector Newton, Inspector Gomanie, Woman Inspector Adams, and various other ranks.



Guyana Police Force graduates 24 new Immigration Officers

NEW ROAD OPENS UP ACCESSIBILITY FOR ANNANDALE RESIDENTS



One of the newly constructed roads within Annandale village

Residents of La Reconnaissance Annandale on the East Coast Demerara are celebrating a significant improvement to their community with the completion of a new road on Fifth Street, West. This government-led initiative is a testament to its commitment to transforming Guyana's infrastructure and enhancing the lives of its citizens.

A recent visit by the Department of Public Information (DPI) to several villages within the Mon Repos/Lusignan markets.

This development is reducing traffic congestion significantly on both the public road and the railway embankment.

Hameraj Panday, a resident of Annandale, highlighted the convenience of the new road, particularly in avoiding congestion at the Annandale and Lusignan markets.

"Previously, if someone was heading east, they would have to head to Lusignan and then turn around and that was an issue during the peak hours," he explained. The new thoroughfare, which now connects with the railway embankment, has significantly reduced traffic congestion, especially during peak hours.

Another resident, Tony Dhanraj, spoke about the challenges residents faced before

the road's construction. The previous road was not only in a dilapidated state, but also very low-lying. "Now it has been elevated to approximately 18 inches," he noted.

Seamattie Parbo expressed her gratitude to the government for the improved road infrastructure. "For a very long time, we haven't gotten such good roads," she remarked. She emphasised the positive impact on residents' daily lives and the longevity of the newly constructed roads. "The road before was very bad, it had lots of holes that used to cause damage to some of the residents' vehicles. But now it's good and we will have this for a very long time," Parbo expressed.

Dayoo Babulal echoed these sentiments, highlighting the need for rehabilitated roads in the village and thanking the government for fulfilling its commitment to infrastructure development. "We

have to thank the government for what it is doing because this road was in a really bad state before," he said. "I just hope the people will use it with care and in the right manner," Babulal added in a plea for responsible use of the new road.

These road construction projects are a collaborative effort between the Ministry of Public Works and the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development.

Jagroop, Chairman of the NDC, highlighted the government's significant investment in village development within the

NDC's jurisdiction over the past three years. "For instance, in my area, there are a lot of roads that are being constructed. Some have already been completed while others are still undergoing construction," he explained.

He assured residents that additional road projects are on the horizon. The Ministry of Public Works is conducting ongoing assessments to address further infrastructure needs within the Mon Repos/La Reconnaissance area.



Hameraj Panday speaking about the newly built road in the community

OVER 190 SQUATTERS RELOCATED TO NEW HOMES THIS YEAR, GOVT PLEDGES CONTINUED PROGRESS

The Ministry of Housing and Water has announced significant progress in addressing squatting concerns, with over 190 families relocated to permanent homes thus far in 2024.

"Currently, we are dealing with the relocation of the persons on the East Bank River Dam... and for that, we are about 60 per cent complete," reported Minister of Housing and Water, Collin Croal, during the ministry's recent 'Dream Realised' housing drive. "We have

provided lands on the East Bank which are in a prime location."

Minister Croal highlighted these achievements at the Arthur Chung Conference Centre (ACCC) in Liliendaal. The Ministry has been actively engaged with squatters since 2021, with a focus on communities along the East Bank of Demerara sea dam, including Herstelling, Farm, Covent Garden, Prospect, Diamond, Grove, and Friendship.

"We had the issue at Success," Minister



Some of the homes in Great Diamond which were handed over to former squatters

Croal acknowledged. "I am happy to say that that is now something of the past. We have addressed the Success squatting area."

These relocations have resulted in a marked improvement in living standards for the affected families, who now have better access to essential services and amenities.

The Minister

emphasised the government's zero-tolerance stance on new squatting areas. "We have been diligently addressing squatting issues in multiple areas through targeted measures," Minister Croal declared.

Last month, a positive step forward was taken in Amelia's Ward Phase Four, where 167 former squatters signed agreements of sale,

paving the way for them to receive certificates of title. Residents expressed their appreciation, noting that these documents offer greater stability and open doors to new opportunities, such as accessing loans for home improvements or business ventures.

The Ministry is actively working to acquire land in Region Ten to address squatting concerns in areas like

Coomacka, Silver Hill, and West Watooka.

These initiatives align with the government's ambitious goal of delivering 50,000 house lots by 2025, and Minister Croal assured the public that they are well on track to achieve this target.



Beneficiary, Indranie Gafoor at her new home in Great Diamond

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SOESDYKE JUNCTION TO TIMEHRI ROAD FOR FOUR-LANE UPGRADE



Minister of Public Works, Bishop Juan Edghill and ministerial engineers inspecting roads along the Soesdyke Timehri area, East Bank Demerara

The government has announced plans to transform the two-lane road from the Linden/Soesdyke Junction to the Timehri Police Station into a four-lane carriageway.

Minister of Public Works, Bishop Juan Edghill, in a recent interview with the Department of Public Information (DPI) said this initiative highlights the government's commitment to tackling traffic congestion, and

improving overall traffic flow along this vital route.

The expansion project builds upon the momentum of the ongoing US\$75.8 million Good Success to Timehri road project, already underway. This project itself represents a significant milestone, being the first of its kind in Guyana to employ a design-build contract model.

With a substantial US\$1.227 billion investment from the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), this combined effort is poised to significantly bolster Guyana's transportation

infrastructure.

During a recent site inspection, Minister Edghill emphasised the importance of meticulous planning for the expansion. "We were examining the possibility... and looking at the relocation of utilities to accommodate the widening of the carriageway," he explained. This proactive approach ensures a smooth and efficient construction process with minimal disruption.

The project will be carried out by China Road and Bridge Corporation (CRBC), with expert supervision from Sheladia Associates

Incorporated. This reputable American consulting firm brings its renowned infrastructure development expertise to the table.

Spanning a distance of 23 kilometers, the initiative encompasses not just the road widening but also the rehabilitation of bridges and culverts. Modern safety features will be a key component, with designated lanes for pedestrians and cyclists, concrete drains, LED street lights, thermoplastic road markings, and comprehensive traffic signage all planned for implementation.

With a projected

timeline of three years, the project aligns with the IDB's overarching programme to fortify climate-resilient road infrastructure. This focus on resilience ensures the upgraded roadway can withstand future challenges and serve the Guyanese people for years to come.

The expansion of the Soesdyke Junction to Timehri Police Station route, coupled with the ongoing Good Success to Timehri project, signifies a major stride towards a more efficient, safer, and more user-friendly transportation network on the East Bank of Demerara.

PARIKA MARKET REHABILITATION BACK ON TRACK

Major rehabilitation efforts have resumed on the Parika Market, a project that aims to restore normalcy for vendors and provide a safer, more modern trading environment.

Regional Chairman Sheik Ayube, speaking with the Department of Public Information (DPI) indicated that the remaining tasks focus on completing the market's infrastructure. "They are doing the fencing, casting the concrete mixture. After that the government will be putting in the stalls," Mr. Ayube explained.



The Hydronie Market where works are nearing completion

concrete mixture. After that the government will be putting in the stalls," Mr. Ayube explained.

The new and improved Parika Market will offer a spacious and well-equipped space for vendors. It will have

approximately 108 stalls (with final stall sizing to be determined,) two food courts on the upper floor, a market office on the ground floor, ample parking, sanitary facilities, and electronic surveillance for security.

"The two contractors have indicated that these major works are scheduled to be completed within a two-month timeframe," said Mr. Ayube, providing a timeline for the project's conclusion.

This rehabilitation project follows a fire

incident in February 2023 that displaced vendors.

The government responded by rebuilding the market and providing temporary vending spaces in the interim.

Chairman Ayube also provided an update on the Hydronie Market, another project in Region Three: "The Hydronie Market is nearing completion, with minor works expected to be finished within the next two weeks... The contractor has 12 days to complete it. They have to demarcate the spots for stalls and they have to complete the roof."

The completion of

these markets will be a welcome development for both vendors and customers. These modern facilities will provide a clean, safe, and improved environment for everyone involved.

Just recently, Minister within the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development, Anand Persaud, visited these markets to assess construction progress. This investment in market infrastructure reflects the government's commitment to upgrading facilities across the country. The 2024 national budget allocated \$1.3 billion to expedite the rehabilitation.

EDUCATION MINISTER REFUTES NIGHT SCHOOL CLOSURE CLAIMS, TOUTS GOVT'S EDUCATION PROGRAMMES

In a strongly worded letter published in the newspapers, Minister of Education Priya Manickchand rebutted claims by Vincent Alexander that the government closed night schools in Sophia and Kildonan.

"The Government never ran night schools in Sophia and Kildonan," Minister Manickchand stated in the letter. "[The Sophia night school] was run by a non-governmental group called the Sophia Community Development Association

(SOCDA)." Minister Manickchand went on to highlight the government's commitment to education access, pointing to the creation of the Guyana Online Academy of Learning (GOAL) programme. "That programme has provided scholarships for more than 25,000 Guyanese to study in over 18 Universities locally and across the world," she said.

The letter further detailed the establishment of the "Get Ready for Opportunities

to Work" (GROW) programme, which offers second-chance education opportunities for those who dropped out of school. Minister Manickchand emphasised the programme's success, stating, "In the two years since its birth, the Irfaan Ali led Government has granted 5,887 scholarships to students so that they may get that second chance."

Minister Manickchand then contrasted the government's approach with that of the previous

administration led by Alexander's party. "His government did not believe in and/or could not imagine nor implement a program like GOAL or GROW for mass public benefit of people from all over Guyana," she wrote.

The Minister concluded by criticising Alexander's tactics, stating, "Bellyaching with falsities in the newspapers, whining about Jagdeo daily, making everything about race and ethnicity has never worked to change lives."

Minister Manickchand challenged Alexander's record, saying, "It would have been useful and beneficial if Mr. Alexander's concern for people

had manifested in his service over at the Ministry of Education producing even a single like program to benefit the people of this country."



Minister of Education Priya Manickchand

GUYANA GEARS UP FOR WORLD-CLASS ICC T20 WORLD CUP EXPERIENCE

Cricket fans, rejoice! Guyana is primed to deliver an unforgettable ICC Men's T20 World Cup experience, with world-class facilities and exciting events on the horizon.

Steve Ninvalle, Director of Sport, Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport, assured the nation of Guyana's readiness during a recent live engagement. **"We have been able to bring [the pitch] up to the standard where it is acceptable and where matches could be played,"** he declared. This confirmation guarantees that both the National Stadium and practice



President Ali and Minister of Culture, Youth and Sport Charles Ramson Jr visiting the National Stadium

venues will meet the highest international standards.

Director Ninvalle further emphasised ongoing efforts to finalise any remaining works before the official venue handover.

The wait for tickets is over. From May 2, fans across the Caribbean, particularly in Guyana,

started purchasing tickets to witness this prestigious cricketing spectacle.

While tickets to the finals are unavailable, Damon Leon, Head of Public Relations and Communications for the ICC Men's T20 Cricket World Cup West Indies 2024, shared some exciting alternatives.

"Opportunities to witness the semi-finals in Guyana are open, particularly through the party stand," he revealed. Fans can also secure tickets for other matches across the West Indies at the Guyana Cricket Board (GCB) office or via the official website, tickets.t20.com.

The box office caters for eager fans, operating on weekdays from 10:30 am to 6 pm and Saturdays from 10 am to 4 pm. Leon assured fans of ample ticket availability, especially for key matches, including the West Indies' opening game on June 2. **"There are**

sufficient tickets... We will be able to meet that demand," he reassured.

Adding to the pre-tournament buzz is the highly anticipated trophy tour, kicking off on May 22. According to Andrew Tyndall, Director of National Events, "The tour will showcase the iconic trophy across Guyana for two days." Fans can expect media engagements, photo opportunities at iconic landmarks, a culminating parade, and a mini-concert – all designed to build anticipation for the upcoming matches.

From world-class facilities to engaging events, Guyana is all set to leave an indelible mark on the Caribbean cricketing landscape. The ICC Men's T20 World



The prestigious ICC men's cricket World Cup trophy

Cup 2024 promises to be a historic event, and Guyana is ready to be a part of it!

CARICOM Chairman and Guyanese President Irfaan Ali, has urged member states to explore joint legislation aimed at improving cricket governance across the Caribbean.

Delivering a virtual address at the opening ceremony of the inaugural CARICOM Regional Cricket Conference, President Ali emphasised the importance of a unified approach. **"We have to have common legislation across all countries in the region, and the same level of governance reform,"** he stressed.

The conference, held under the theme **"Reinvigorating West Indies Cricket – A Symposium for Strategic Collaboration and Innovation,"** is a critical step towards addressing the challenges plaguing Caribbean cricket.

President Ali pointed to a decline in fan

CARICOM CALLS FOR JOINT CRICKET LEGISLATION TO REVIVE REGIONAL GAME

interest and the need for a complete overhaul of the cricketing ecosystem. **"We are losing fans,"** he stated. **"The loss of ownership, lack of talent, lack of responsibility...these are the things that are real, and they require institutional rearrangement, governance rearrangement."**

He further argued that a lack of investment in talent development and weak institutional support have contributed significantly to the current state of affairs.

"The global system of cricket conspired against us in their rules and regulations," President Ali lamented. **"We were known for fearsome fast-bowling and elegant stroke-play, real fast-**

bowling, and then the system was changed. The rules were changed to deny us of this brand of cricket. And we allowed the rule to change without protest."

The President outlined a multi-pronged approach for revival, including increased funding for the sport, improved management on and off the field, and more robust policies to support cricketing infrastructure, particularly within schools.

He underscored the unique appeal of Caribbean cricket, highlighting its "excitement and thrills" and the immersive experience it offers when combined with the region's rich cultural heritage. **"We don't need to change this,"**



The overall aim is to chart a course for West Indies cricket to reclaim its former glory

he urged. **"We need to master this. We need to expand this as our brand."**

President Ali emphasised the broader societal impact of cricket. **"Cricket is not only played on the field in this region, cricket is played in the hearts of our people, it is played to encourage positive living,"** he said. **"We have to look at the entire cricketing ecosystem**

if we are to address the issues of cricket in the Region. Cricket is linked directly to our economies, linked to our tourism product."

Echoing President Ali's sentiments, the Chair of the CARICOM Prime Ministerial Sub-Committee on Cricket, Dr. the Hon. Keith Rowley, Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago, expressed unwavering commitment to the

sport's resurgence. **"We do not intend to give up on cricket,"** he declared. **"We intend to defend cricket and we intend to play cricket at the highest level, and we will get back to the top."**

The symposium aimed to get regional leaders to work collaboratively to find solutions and chart a course for West Indies cricket to reclaim its former glory.

GUYANA TARGETS NORTH AMERICAN ECOTOURISTS WITH MEDIA FAMILIARISATION TOUR



Part of the fam tour

The Guyana Tourism Authority (GTA) recently hosted a week-long tour for North American media representatives, showcasing Guyana's stunning landscapes and exciting adventure activities. This initiative aimed to boost Guyana's profile as a premier ecotourism destination and foster connections between media and local communities.

The visiting journalists will create content specifically tailored for their audiences, raising awareness about Guyana's unique offerings. The itinerary, spanning April 25th to May 2nd, included immersive experiences at various locations such as Waikin Ranch, Caiman House, Yupukari Village, and the awe-inspiring

Kaieteur Falls. This media tour follows the appointment of Emerging Destinations in January to represent Guyana in the North American travel market, particularly the United States and Canada. These regions represent a key source of tourists seeking authentic cultural experiences, breathtaking nature, and adventure

opportunities. The market representatives will work throughout the year to strengthen Guyana's presence in North America, fostering connections between international tour operators, travellers, and Guyanese tourism businesses.



*Guyanese*

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OVER \$1 B TO PAVE WAY FOR ROAD UPGRADES IN REGION NINE

The dusty roads of Guyana's remote Region Nine are set to see a major transformation. In a significant boost for hinterland development, the government has announced a \$1.1 billion investment to rehabilitate key thoroughfares across the region.


This substantial allocation marks a turning point for residents, businesses, and communities yearning for improved transportation links.

This investment is a strategic move aimed at unlocking the vast potential of Region Nine. By enhancing transportation networks, the government is paving the way for a more prosperous future for the region. Improved roads will translate to smoother movement of goods and people, fostering economic growth through increased trade and market access.




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