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Celebrating Guyana independence

The Consulate General of the Co-operative Republic of Guyana hosted a wonderful Independence Flag Raising celebration Sunday at the Scarborough Civic Center. With an attendance of over 200 members of the Diaspora, which in-cluded Mr. Osman Ali and Ms. Bibi Shariman Ali - the parents of HE Presi-dent Mohamed Irfaan Ali, the celebra-tion included a beautiful rendition of the National Anthems of Canada and Guyana by trumpeter extraordinaire Mr. Jan Morgan (member of Kobotown, 2018 Juno Award winner) . The program concluded with greetings and remarks by Honorary Consul Mr. Mani Singh who wished everyone a Happy 58th In-dependence Day on behalf of HE Presi-dent Mohamed Irfaan Ali, Vice President Bharrat Jagdeo, Prime Minis-ter Mark Phillips and the Government of Guyana.



Guyana Health Minister is new VP of WHA

Health Minister Dr Frank Anthony was on Monday elected the First Vice President at the 77th World Health Assembly (WHA) in Geneva, Switzerland.

Dr Frank Anthony at the 77th

World Health Assembly in Geneva, Switzerland

This appointment as Vice President came on the heels of the 77th World Health Assembly which is being held in Geneva, Switzerland, on May 27 to June 1.

The theme of this year's Health Assembly is, "All for Health, Health for All."

The vice president of the WHA plays a supportive and collaborative role in the governance of the Assembly, which is the decision-making

body of the World Health Organisation (WHO). Key responsibilities include the assisting of the President of the WHA in conducting meetings and ensuring that discussions proceed smoothly and efficiently.

The WHA is the decision-making body of the WHO. It is attended by delegations from all WHO Member States and focuses on a specific health agenda prepared by the Executive Board. The main functions of the World Health Assembly are to determine the policies of the organisation, appoint the Director-General, supervise financial policies, and review and approve the proposed programme budget. The Health Assembly is held annually in Geneva, Switzerland.



Dr Frank Anthony



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Guyanese

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EDITION 68

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President Dr. Irfaan Ali and government officials with NYPD First Deputy Commissioner Tania Kinsella and her team at State House. They signed an MOU to enhance cooperation with the Guyana Police Force.



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GUYANA STRENGTHENS POLICING WITH NYPD PARTNERSHIP



The signing the MoU

The Guyana Police Force (GPF) is poised for a major upgrade in its capabilities thanks to a new Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed with the New York Police Department (NYPD). This collaboration, initiated during a high-level meeting between President Irfaan Ali and NYPD's First Deputy Commissioner Tania Kinsella, a Guyanese-American, signifies a new chapter in Guyana-US security cooperation.

"With the

NYPD and their crime-fighting experience, it would be advantageous for us to learn and take our force to a much higher level," said Minister of Home Affairs Robeson Benn. The MoU aims to leverage the NYPD's expertise in various areas, transforming not just crime-fighting but also Guyana's entire legal framework.

US Ambassador to Guyana, Nicole Theriot, described the initiative as "the beginning

of a new training opportunity for Guyanese officers," aligning with the GPF's strategic plans for strengthening law enforcement. Ambassador Theriot also announced plans to develop a curriculum focused on critical areas like homicide and gender-based violence investigations, alongside community policing practices. Financial backing from the US Embassy and Department of State ensures the MoU

translates into tangible improvements.

NYPD's Deputy Commissioner Kinsella emphasised their commitment to providing Guyana with tailored support. "We are going to tailor training programs to meet the unique needs of the law enforcement here in Guyana," she pledged. This ensures the training addresses specific challenges faced by Guyanese police officers. Additionally, the MoU facilitates exchanges, with NYPD personnel visiting Guyana for training programmes and Guyanese officers travelling to New York for practical study tours.

This partnership extends beyond the police force. Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs, Mohabir Anil Nandlall, also met with Deputy Commissioner Kinsella, emphasising the importance of international

cooperation in combating sophisticated criminals. He highlighted recent legislative reforms, influenced by collaboration with US agencies, and identified specific areas where the NYPD's expertise could be invaluable, including forensics, financial investigations, and internal affairs. Deputy Commissioner Kinsella reciprocated the

enforcement officials.

President Ali expressed his satisfaction with this initiative, highlighting its potential to significantly enhance Guyana's law enforcement capabilities. Deputy Commissioner Kinsella, proud of her Guyanese heritage, viewed this collaboration as an opportunity to contribute to her ancestral homeland's



President Ali with with Deputy Commissioner Kinsella

enthusiasm, pledging development. President the NYPD's support in these priority areas and committing to continued engagement with Guyanese and US law police officers.

GUYANA WELCOMES EU-FUNDED INITIATIVE TO COMBAT TRANSNATIONAL CRIME

Attorney General, Mohabir Anil Nandlall SC MP, met with a delegation from the Europe-Latin America Programme of Assistance against Transnational Organised Crime (EL PACCTO) 2.0.

This EU-funded project aims to strengthen security and justice systems in Latin America and the Caribbean by tackling transnational organised crime. The delegation, led by Senior Executive Manager Marc Reina Tortosa, included experts on environmental crime, Caribbean affairs, and project management.

The EL PACCTO team is visiting

Caribbean nations to identify areas where they can provide practical support and capacity building in the fight against transnational crime. Their focus will be on regional collaboration, working with institutions like the Caribbean Court of Justice (CCJ), the CARICOM Implementation Agency for Crime and Security (IMPACS), and the Regional Security System (RSS).

Attorney General Nandlall welcomed this initiative, highlighting its importance for Guyana's development as a major oil producer. He emphasised the need for

a robust legal and policy framework to safeguard Guyana's interests and those of investors from criminal activity.

The Attorney General commended EL PACCTO's mission to foster cross-border cooperation in combating transnational crimes like drug trafficking, firearms trafficking, environmental crimes, cybercrime, and human trafficking.

He outlined Guyana's ongoing legislative efforts to combat organised crime, including the recently passed Anti-Money Laundering/Countering the Financing of Terrorism (AML/

CFT) Act, a proposed new Firearms Act, and upcoming legislation on cybercrime, asset recovery, and asset management.

The Attorney General stressed the value of specialist forensic auditors and training in investigating financial crimes. He suggested that EL PACCTO could assist by providing legal and forensic training for judges, magistrates, and legal professionals on these evolving areas of cross-border crime.

Equipping legal professionals with these skills would be instrumental in investigating, prosecuting, and



Attorney General, Mohabir Anil Nandlall SC MP with the delegation from EL PACCTO 2.0.

obtaining convictions against transnational criminals, according to the Attorney General.

The EL PACCTO delegation expressed gratitude for the Attorney General's insights and for identifying potential areas of collaboration. These discussions will

serve as a foundation for their meetings with other key stakeholders in Guyana, including the Ministry of Home Affairs, the Director of Public Prosecutions, law enforcement agencies, and financial intelligence units.



(L-R) Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian and President Ebrahim Raisi

His Excellency to express his deepest President Dr. Irfaan Ali took to social media of the Government

PRESIDENT ALI EXTENDS CONDOLENCES TO IRAN FOLLOWING DEATH OF PRESIDENT RAISI AND FOREIGN MINISTER

and People of Guyana to the Supreme Ruler, Government, and People of the Islamic Republic of Iran. The condolences come in the wake of a devastating helicopter crash that claimed the lives of Iranian President

Ebrahim Raisi and Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian.

The tragic incident occurred when the helicopter carrying President Raisi and Foreign Minister Amir-Abdollahian

encountered unexpected challenges shortly after takeoff, resulting in a fatal crash. Investigations into the circumstances of the crash are currently underway.

President Ali's message, shared on

Facebook, conveyed solidarity with the people of Iran during this difficult time, offering thoughts and prayers to those affected by the loss of their esteemed leaders.

GUYANA WATCHING VENEZUELA'S ANKOKO ISLAND DEVELOPMENT CLOSELY - DR JAGDEO

General Secretary of the People's Progressive Party/Civic, Dr Bharrat Jagdeo, assured that Guyana is closely monitoring developments on Ankoko Island, a disputed territory, stating **"We are very vigilant. We are watching the development. We are working with our allies on this matter,"** he stated during a recent press conference.

Ankoko Island is claimed by both Guyana and Venezuela, with Venezuela occupying Guyana's portion for



General Secretary of the People's Progressive Party/Civic, Dr Bharrat Jagdeo

decades. Media reports showed significant development on the island, including a bridge being built from Venezuela and military tanks on the island.

Dr. Jagdeo emphasised that

Guyana's main focus is to preserve its territorial integrity. He clarified that Venezuela is building the bridge on their legal portion of the island, but Guyana is concerned about the increased Venezuelan presence.

"We have made it clear and the requisite bodies have been written to, consistent with the Argyle agreement and the provisional measures announced by the ICJ [International Court of Justice]. We

have notified all the relevant partners, both multilateral and bilateral about the continued attempts by Venezuela, to build up a presence at our border in a threatening posture," Dr. Jagdeo said.

This bridge's construction violates the Argyle Agreement signed by Guyana and Venezuela on December 14, 2024, which states **"both States will refrain, whether by words or deeds, from escalating any conflict or**

disagreement arising from any controversy between them."

The 1899 Arbitral Agreement had settled the border controversy between the two countries. However, Venezuela renewed its claims to the Essequibo region in the 1960s, and these claims intensified in recent years with Guyana's oil discoveries.

Venezuela claims about two-thirds of Guyana's territory, while Guyana maintains its established borders. The matter is currently before the International

Court of Justice after the UN Good Offices Process failed.

The ICJ had previously called on both parties to avoid actions that could heighten tensions. Despite this, Venezuela's parliament went ahead and declared Guyana's Essequibo region as a Venezuelan state.

Guyana is advocating for a peaceful resolution through the ICJ and is simultaneously building international support and strengthening its military.

Guyana and Jamaica are setting their sights on a stronger economic relationship. This follows a recent meeting between Guyanese and Jamaican officials, highlighting a commitment to increased trade and investment activities in both countries.

The visit of Jamaica's Minister of Industry, Investment and Commerce, Aubyn Hill, to Guyana marks a positive step forward. Minister Hill, accompanied by representatives from key Jamaican

GUYANA AND JAMAICA AIM TO BOOST TRADE AND INVESTMENT

trade and investment promotion agencies, met with government ministers, officials, and private sector members in Guyana. These discussions delve deeper into identifying specific areas for future collaboration in export, trade, and investment.

During their discussions with Guyana's Foreign Secretary, Robert

Persaud, both sides emphasised the importance of fostering stronger trade and investment opportunities between the two nations.

The meeting underscored the need for greater collaboration, particularly between the private sectors of Guyana and Jamaica. This collaborative approach aims to leverage the

economic trajectory of Guyana and create mutually beneficial partnerships.

Foreign Secretary Persaud, reiterated the government's openness to investment. He expressed a desire to expand trade relations with CARICOM countries, with a focus on strengthening regional trade and achieving food security.



Jamaica's Minister of Industry, Investment and Commerce, Aubyn Hill meeting with Foreign Secretary Robert Persaud

GUYANESE DAIRY PRODUCTS BLOCKED FROM T&T RAISES CONCERNS ABOUT REGIONAL TRADE

Guyanese officials have expressed strong disappointment after a shipment of dairy products from a major Guyanese producer was refused entry into Trinidad and Tobago. This move has sparked concerns about adherence to the free movement of goods within the Caribbean Single Market and Economy (CSME).

The Ministry



Shipment of Guyanese milk & flavoured water blocked from entering T&T

of Foreign Affairs and International

Cooperation of Guyana released a statement, highlighting that the blocked shipment violates the free movement of goods guaranteed by the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas, the foundation of the CSME.

While Trinidad and Tobago can have import regulations, Guyana maintains the products met all requirements. The Ministry emphasised

Guyana's history of open markets for regional producers and expects the same treatment for its exports.

The issue has garnered high-level attention. Guyana's Agriculture Minister contacted Trinidad and Tobago's Prime Minister, who expressed surprise and promised to investigate. General Secretary of the People's Progressive Party,

Dr. Jagdeo, echoed the government's stance against using sanitary restrictions as trade barriers within CARICOM.

"We want fair treatment for our exports," Dr. Jagdeo stressed, emphasising that Guyana welcomes Trinidadian goods.

"We don't want to sound as though we are spoiling for a fight," he assured. "We

have a great relationship with Trinidad and Tobago..."

However Dr Jagdeo insisted, **"The way our goods...are treated across the region... the same way their goods entering the Guyanese market will be treated,"** calling for reciprocity in trade.

The Guyana Livestock Development Authority (GLDA) is currently working with its Trinidadian counterparts and the involved companies to find a swift resolution.

GUYANA, BRAZIL'S AMAPÁ STATE DISCUSS COLLABORATION ON TRADE, EDUCATION, AND ENVIRONMENT

Guyana's Foreign Secretary, Robert Persaud, met with a Brazilian delegation from Amapá State on May 20th, 2024. The two-day visit focused on strengthening ties between the regions.

Both sides explored opportunities to expand commercial interests between Guyana and Amapá.

The discussions also included collaboration on upcoming cultural events to foster people-to-people connections.

Also on the agenda was exploring partnerships in the education sector.

Foreign Secretary Persaud emphasised Guyana's dedication to maintaining close relations with Brazil at

all levels, particularly with northern Brazil. He reiterated President Ali's desire for increased cooperation on infrastructure, trade, and cultural exchange, as discussed during President Lula da Silva's visit in February 2024.

The Brazilian delegation invited Guyana to participate in Amapá's 53rd Expofeira,

a major trade fair happening from August 29th to September 8th, 2024. Additionally, they expressed interest in working together with Guyana in preparation for COP30, the UN Climate Change Conference, which will be held in Belém, Pará, Brazil in 2025.



Foreign Secretary Robert Persaud (centre) with the delegation

COURT OF APPEAL GETS MODERN MAKEOVER - NEW WING COMMISSIONED

Guyana's justice system recently received a significant upgrade with the official commissioning of a new wing for the Court of Appeal. The \$170 million project represents a major transformation for the institution, creating a more spacious and technologically advanced environment for delivering justice.

The ceremony was led by Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs, Senior Counsel Anil Nandlall. **"This is only going to be one in many transformational interventions that will take place shortly,"** AG Nandlall assured the gathering, emphasising the government's commitment to a judiciary that serves as a



The commissioned new wing of the Court of Appeal

society.

Minister Nandlall highlighted the government's ongoing partnership with the judiciary, citing numerous ongoing construction projects to expand access to justice across the country. **"There is a physical transformation taking place...We are speaking about**

across every divide in our country," he declared.

Beyond physical infrastructure, the focus extends to technological advancements. AG Nandlall pointed to the implementation of e-filing and e-payment systems, reflecting the government's dedication to building a modern legal system. **"The**

judiciary and the legal profession should have no doubt about the government's commitment to working with them," he asserted. He further emphasised Guyana's position at the forefront of legal innovation within the Caribbean.

Previously housed in a converted residence, the Court of Appeal had been struggling with a space crunch. Chancellor of the Judiciary, Madam Justice Yonette Cummings-Edwards, addressed the prior limitations: **"We were literally bursting in our seams...There was no reading room for the library and hardly any facilities for our admin staff,"** she explained.

The growing number of appeals and

judges necessitated an expansion. The new three-storey wing boasts a modern courtroom equipped with cutting-edge technology, suitable for both criminal and civil cases. Additional features include administrative areas, offices, chambers for six judges, a secretariat

an assembly room for judges. An elevator is also planned for future installation.

"It is a story about resilience from a car park to a courthouse," declared Madam Justice Cummings-Edwards, highlighting the transformation and its ultimate purpose:



Inside the new wing

for the Judicial Service Commission, a lawyer's robing room, a library, a gym, a lounge, and

"having justice served in an efficient and accessible way".

The Guyanese government is making a significant investment in improving public safety with the signing of \$963.8 million in contracts for police station upgrades and construction projects.

These projects target Regions One, Three, Four, and Six, aiming to enhance police facilities and capabilities across the targeted areas.

The Imbotero Police Station in Region One will be rebuilt for \$144.9 million, along with the construction of two new wharves in Mabaruma and Morawhanna for a combined \$112 million.

Den Amstel Police Station in Region Three will see major renovations valued at \$88.9 million.

A complete

GUYANA INVESTS \$963 MILLION IN UPGRADING POLICE INFRASTRUCTURE



Minister of Home Affairs, Robeson Benn, Permanent Secretary Andre Ally, and other representatives from the ministry and contracting companies

overhaul is planned for police stations in North Ruimveldt, Betervervagting, and Mahaica in Region Four, with a combined investment of \$386.4 million. Additionally, the highway patrol base will

be upgraded to a full-fledged police station for \$121.7 million.

The Orealla Police Station in Region Six will undergo a complete rehabilitation project costing \$109.8 million.

The contracts were

signed in the Ministry of Home Affairs' boardroom between Permanent Secretary Andre Ally and the contractors in the presence of Minister Robeson Benn.

Minister Benn stressed the importance

of completing projects on time and within budget, adhering to strict quality standards. **"All projects should be completed at or within the budget. There should not be any surprises,"** Minister Benn said.

The Minister warned of consequences for non-compliance, including contract termination, as experienced with some contractors in the past. **"We terminated a few contracts last month because people didn't take us seriously,"** Minister Benn recounted. **"We were not the first government**

agency to do that. But we are coming under tremendous pressure to meet what is called the Public Sector Investment Programme (PSIP)."

Minister Benn emphasised the importance of worker safety, urging contractors to provide all necessary safety gear. He also encouraged open communication, urging contractors to report any challenges encountered during construction. **"We need open communication to ensure these projects are completed successfully,"** he said.

CCJ GRANTS GUYANA GOVT RIGHT TO JOIN FIGHT AGAINST UNLIMITED OIL SPILL GUARANTEE

The Caribbean Court of Justice (CCJ) overturned the Guyana

Court of Appeal decision, allowing the government to join ExxonMobil

and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in a legal battle over unlimited parent company guarantees for oil spills.

Previously, Guyana's High Court ruled in favour of citizens Godfrey Whyte and Frederick Collins, requiring ExxonMobil Guyana Limited (EMGL) to provide an unlimited guarantee to cover potential oil spill costs.

In a statement during his weekly programme, 'Issues in the News,' Guyana's Attorney General, Mohabir Anil Nandlall, praised the CCJ's decision. He emphasised the importance of protecting public interests in major agreements like the 2016 Production Sharing Agreement with ExxonMobil, which is crucial for Guyana's economy.

AG Nandlall argued that the government's involvement is essential to safeguard public interests, especially in such significant agreements that impact the nation's finances and development. He stressed his commitment to upholding the Guyanese people's interests in the legal battle. **"The role of the attorney general is to represent the**

public good...With the government's inclusion in this legal battle, we aim to ensure that the interests of the people of Guyana are upheld," AG Nandlall asserted.

The government intends to petition the Appellate Court for inclusion in the ongoing proceedings, demonstrating their determination to actively shape the outcome of this critical legal dispute.



Caribbean Court of Justice

GUYANA MARKS ONE YEAR SINCE MAHDIA DORM FIRE WITH MEMORIALS AND RENEWED SUPPORT FOR FAMILIES

One year after the horrific fire that claimed the lives of 20 students at the Mahdia Secondary School dormitory, Guyana held memorial services in the affected villages to remember the victims and offer continued support to their families. Prime Minister Mark Phillips attended a ceremony in Micobie village, announcing the establishment of a memorial site in Region

Eight to permanently honour the lost children. **"This is a necessary move to ensure the lives of these 20 young people will always be etched in our minds and hearts,"** he asserted. Ministers Joseph Hamilton, Oneidge Walrond, and Susan Rodrigues also joined the events in Micobie, Chenapau, and Karisparu, villages from which the victims



Scene from the memorial services

hailed. They shared messages of solidarity and highlighted the government's ongoing support for the families. "We are standing with you the families and friends not to remember the tragedy but to remember the beautiful souls," said Minister Walrond. "We must take this time to reflect on how their wonderful lives and the things they did touch us."

The government

detailed its efforts to support the families, including covering funeral expenses, providing medical treatment locally and overseas for survivors, and offering psychosocial counselling. A Presidential Commission of Inquiry was also launched to investigate the fire. Minister of Local Government and Regional Development, Sonial Parag,

commended the families' strength in facing this unimaginable loss. "We want to thank you for your bravery... We also want you to know that life can go on, using the way they lived to be able to gain strength," she

one Guyana and we owe it to these children... to demonstrate unity, to demonstrate cohesiveness," said Minister Bharrat. The Mahdia fire remains one of the deadliest tragedies in



Scene from the memorial services

expressed at a ceremony in Chenapau. Similar sentiments were echoed by Ministers Vickram Bharrat and Kwame McCoy. "We are one family, we are

Guyana's history. The memorial services served as a solemn reminder of the loss while offering a glimpse of hope and support for the families as they move forward.

GOVT PRIORITISES FAIR NEGOTIATIONS AS TEACHER STRIKE DISRUPTS EDUCATION

Guyana's education sector remains in limbo as the Ministry of Education (MoE) and the Guyana Teachers' Union (GTU) struggle to reach an agreement. The ongoing teacher strike, now in its second month, shows no signs of immediate resolution. The government has reiterated its commitment to reaching a fair agreement with the GTU to end the ongoing strike. However, a recent demand by the GTU is posing a significant challenge. The latest hurdle involves the GTU's demand for a 20% across-the-board salary increase before negotiations can resume. The government considers this request unreasonable,



One of the most recent meeting between the two sides

particularly in light of the current economic climate. **"The GTU's insistence... is duress,"** said Attorney General Mohabir Anil Nandlall in a recent interview. He further questioned the union's motives, suggesting they may be prioritising

external agendas over teachers' well-being. Minister of Education Priya Manickchand argued that negotiations should focus on achievable solutions that consider both teachers' needs and Guyana's economic reality. She pointed out that unlike many countries that

cut salaries during COVID-19 closures, Guyana continued to pay teachers throughout. **"The mask I think fell off,"** AG Nandlall stated, suggesting the union's demand for retroactive pay hikes alongside future raises undermines good faith efforts. He expressed concerns that such a measure could violate the Constitution's mandate for equal treatment across government sectors. The MoE has emphasised its commitment to teacher well-being, highlighting 39 initiatives undertaken to improve their lives. However, they insist negotiations cannot progress with the current level of pressure tactics.

"Conciliation cannot commence until the strike has ended and a state of normalcy returns," the MoE stated in a recent press release. They maintain their readiness



Minister of Education, Priya Manickchand during the press conference

to work towards a multi-year agreement from 2024 onwards, provided the GTU

acts in good faith and adheres to the grievance procedure outlined in the 1990 Memorandum of Agreement. This agreement includes a clear grievance procedure that requires good faith efforts from both sides and prohibits strikes during negotiations. The ongoing impasse continues to disrupt Guyana's education system, leaving students and parents in limbo. The government has expressed confidence that a solution can be reached through measured discussions that prioritise the well-being of Guyanese students and the long-term health of the education system. The government renewed its call for the GTU to return to negotiations and work with it to find a sustainable solution.

CXC TEAM MARKING NGSA PAPERS IN GUYANA

The Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC) has deployed a team to Guyana, led by Dr. Nicole Manning, to oversee the marking of the 2024 National Grade Six Assessment (NGSA) papers. Dr. Manning met with Guyana's Minister of Education, Priya Manickchand, along with Chief Education Officer Saddam Hussain

and Assistant Chief Education Officer/ Superintendent of Exams and Local Registrar Sauda Kadir. The CXC team is responsible for assessing and marking the Paper Two sections of the NGSA exam. Multiple-choice answer sheets, however, are being evaluated and marked in Barbados. Approximately

15,300 Grade Six students across Guyana participated in the NGSA this year. This crucial exam determines placement in secondary schools throughout the country. The CXC team will remain in Guyana for several months to ensure the entire marking process, including the review period, is completed efficiently.



The CXC delegation meeting with Minister Manickchand and team

GOVT BUILDING A SKILLED WORKFORCE - TO TRAIN 3,000 WELDERS

The government is launching a major initiative to address the growing demand for skilled welders in the country's oil and gas sector. In collaboration with the School of the Nations and the Guyana Online Academy of Learning (GOAL), the programme aims to train a total of 3,000 Guyanese.

"We are committed to ensuring that you get trained, you get the certification, and you are industry-ready," President Irfaan Ali told the participants at the



President Ali at the programme launch

programme's launch. registered for the first phase. The programme is already gaining traction This one-month programme will

provide participants with a comprehensive foundation in welding, including both theoretical and practical components.

Upon successful completion, graduates will receive a City and Guilds Certificate, a globally recognised credential.

This initial phase focuses on registration from all regions except Region One. The government plans to expand the programme to all 10 administrative regions to ensure wider accessibility.

President Ali

commended participants for taking the initiative to upskill themselves, calling it a "bold step".

He pledged government's support throughout the programme, stating, "We want to see you succeed, grow, and excel. We want to see you be the best you can be. We are going to make all the investments to ensure that you are the best you can be."

The programme strives to ensure graduates find employment upon completion.

President Ali highlighted the programme's alignment with the "One Guyana" concept, emphasising, "This is what the One Guyana concept is about, bringing opportunities for one another, lifting each other together, and opening up doors for each other."

Oil and gas companies operating in Guyana will also be involved, observing training sessions and potentially offering employment opportunities.

POWER SHIP NOW DELIVERING FULL 36 MEGAWATTS TO THE NATIONAL GRID

The docked power ship at Everton, East Bank Berbice has reached its full capacity, supplying 36 megawatts (MW) of electricity to the national grid. This significant boost is expected to reduce the service interruptions previously experienced by Guyanese citizens.

Guyana Power and Light (GPL) announced the successful completion of the capacity test on May 20th, marking the ship's full operation for the Demerara-Berbice Interconnected System

(DBIS). The ship was previously operating at a reduced capacity, reaching 35 MW on May 18th and 18 MW the week prior, due to only one engine being operational at the time.

This floating power plant, consisting of two 18 MW engines, arrived in Georgetown on May 1st and moved to Berbice on May 4th for connection to the 69 kV DBIS network. The government procured the vessel to address the increased electricity demand that led to

power shortfalls and outages nationwide.

A multi-million-dollar contract was signed by GPL with Urbacon Concessions Investments, W.L.L (UCI), a subsidiary of UCC Holdings in Qatar, in collaboration with Karpowership International, to rent the ship for two years. This rental agreement includes a US\$1 million mobilisation fee already paid by GPL, a monthly charter fee of US 6.62 cents per kilowatt hour (kWh), and a

maintenance fee of US based on generated 0.98 cents per kWh electricity.



The powership

REGION SEVEN TO SEE BOOM WITH 1,500 NEW MINING JOBS AND MORE - PRESIDENT ALI



President Ali addressing the residents at the Bartica Community Centre Ground

President Irfaan Ali delivered promising news to residents of Region Seven during a community engagement. The region is set for a significant economic boost with the creation of approximately 1,500 new jobs in the mining sector.

"The two new large mines that will come into operation

before the end of this year will see training for full-time employment of more than 700 persons," President Ali revealed. Each of these large-scale mining operations is expected to employ about 700 workers.

The President emphasised the importance of equipping residents with the

necessary skills and highlighted ongoing discussions with Bartica's mayor and regional stakeholders "to facilitate these training programmes."

This collaborative approach ensures the local workforce has the opportunity to fill these new positions.

While mining is a major focus, the government is exploring ways to diversify job prospects in the region.

"Furthermore, the government is exploring the feasibility of establishing a call centre within the region, offering additional employment prospects for young individuals," President

Ali stated. This initiative caters to a different skill set and could provide attractive career options for young people in Region Seven.

The President also addressed plans to strengthen the agricultural sector in the hinterland. He spoke of the Ministry of Agriculture's initiatives to develop large-scale programmes for honey, citrus, and sweet cassava production. "In this region, you will have between 400 to 500 new hives when you look at all the communities we are going to support," President Ali explained. These programmes aim to not only create jobs, but also enhance food sustainability and

security within the region.

President Ali acknowledged the substantial government investments already made in Region Seven. Over the past three years, these investments include over \$4.2 billion allocated to education, \$13 billion for housing and water projects, and an additional \$500 million

dedicated to agriculture. "We are going to continue to make these investments to ensure that the people of this region benefit," the President asserted. His commitment extends to ensuring residents have access to improved services and a better quality of life.



Residents gathered at the meeting

BRAIN DRAIN TURNING INTO BRAIN GAIN

- GUYANESE PROFESSIONALS RETURNING HOME, SAYS HEALTH MINISTER



Minister Anthony and Dr Philip McPherson, during the opening ceremony of the Olmac Medical Hub in Vreed En Hoop

Guyana's healthcare sector is experiencing a positive shift, according to Health Minister Dr. Frank Anthony. He suggested a reversal of the long-standing brain drain, with Guyanese professionals returning home to contribute their expertise. **"The brain drain dilemma in Guyana**

is reversing," Dr. Anthony declared at the opening of the Olmac Medical Hub in Vreed-En-Hoop. This new facility, founded by Dr. Philip McPherson, exemplifies the trend. Dr. McPherson, originally from El Dorado, Berbice, pursued his medical career in the United

States. However, a desire to serve his home country remained strong. **"Despite his practice in the United States, McPherson had a strong desire to lend his skills in his home country,"** the Minister highlighted. He believes returning professionals like Dr. McPherson can significantly improve Guyana's healthcare landscape. **"The diaspora can leverage this knowledge to raise the bar for medical care in Guyana,"** Dr. Anthony asserted. The Olmac Medical Hub offers a variety of services, including dialysis, urgent care, and dental care. Importantly, Dr. McPherson's return isn't solely about patient care.

"We are now changing what was a brain drain to a brain gain," Dr. Anthony explained. **"Persons like Dr McPherson... are coming back, not only offering good quality healthcare, but they also would be involved in teaching."** The Minister emphasised the crucial role of mentorship in raising healthcare standards. **"Skilled mentors are integral to elevating the quality of healthcare meted out to Guyanese,"** he said. While the government invests in training and upskilling, Dr. Anthony acknowledged the current shortage of healthcare professionals. He commended

Dr. McPherson's investment, calling it a **"tremendous"** contribution. The Olmac Medical Hub's utilisation of telemedicine aligns with the government's existing efforts. Telemedicine, a two-way communication system allowing remote consultations, is being actively expanded. **"Already, telemedicine has been expanded to 25 hospitals,"** the Minister revealed, **"and the government plans to further expand it to more than 50 sites."** Dr. Anthony sees collaboration between public and private sectors as key to streamlining healthcare advancements.



The Olmac Medical Hub

AISHALTON'S NEW SURGICAL THEATRE

CONDUCTS OVER 80 SUCCESSFUL SURGERIES

Minister of Health, Dr. Frank Anthony, announced the success of the newly built surgical theatre in Aishalton Village, Region Nine. Since its opening in 2023, the facility has performed over 80 surgeries for residents. **"Even now...We still have some work that we have to do and we're committed to doing that,"** Dr. Anthony acknowledged during a recent meeting with Aishalton residents. **"Since we've put the operating theatre in place, we have been**

able to send in teams of surgeons...and they did more than 80 different surgeries

for the residents here and surrounding communities." This \$70 million



Eighty surgeries conducted at the new Aishalton theatre

government investment has significantly improved healthcare access for residents. They can now receive surgical care directly in their village, eliminating the need for long and often difficult journeys to Lethem or Georgetown. This is part of the government's overall agenda to expand health services to the hinterland, ensuring residents enjoy quality and efficient services in the comfort of their homeland, Dr. Anthony explained. The success in

Aishalton is just one part of a larger initiative. Surgical capabilities are also being introduced in other regions, including Moruca (Region One) and Kamarang (Region Seven). Additionally, plans are underway to establish mini-theatres at health facilities in Annai, Karasabai, and Sand Creek within the Rupununi region. Furthermore, Dr. Anthony highlighted a \$300 million investment over the past few years to upgrade all healthcare facilities across Region Nine.

This investment signifies the government's commitment to improving the health and wellbeing of residents in Guyana's hinterland regions. The future looks even brighter with plans to construct state-of-the-art hospitals in Moruca, Kamarang, Kato, and Lethem. These new facilities will provide a wider range of healthcare services, further improving the lives of residents in these areas.

EMT SERVICE LAUNCHED IN NEW AMSTERDAM



Fire Chief (ag) Gregory Wickham speaking at the launching of the Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) service

Residents of New Amsterdam in Guyana can now expect faster medical care during emergencies thanks to a new EMT service

launched at the New Amsterdam Fire Station. This is a big step for the region's emergency response system, according to Fire Chief (ag) Gregory Wickham. **"The Ministry of Home Affairs has been working hard to bring this service to citizens across the country,"** Wickham said. The EMT team consists of 15 members who completed a rigorous six-month training programme. **"Residents, please call us when there's**

an emergency in New Amsterdam," Wickham urged. **"The EMTs are well-trained and will provide exceptional service."** He expects this improved response system to **"save many lives"** and reduce fatalities. The service will also expand to Rose Hall and Corriverton later this year. Regional Health Officer Dr. Vishalya Sharma welcomed the launch, acknowledging the strain on the current healthcare system. **"Emergency**

rooms are nearly overwhelmed," she said. However, she expects the EMT service to ease the pressure. **"This will improve the region's health system and reduce crowding in emergency rooms,"** Dr. Sharma explained. She praised the EMTs' vital role, stating, **"They save lives and improve patient outcomes."** The new EMTs are equipped with medical gear and an ambulance to serve residents on the East Bank of

Berbice. This launch, along with a recent \$4.3 billion allocation for the Guyana Fire Service, demonstrates

the government's commitment to strengthening emergency response capabilities nationwide.



The EMTs were fortunate to receive an ambulance to execute their duties

CONSTRUCTION BEGINS IN AUGUST FOR NEW MACKENZIE-WISMAR BRIDGE



Artistic impression of the Mackenzie-Wismar Bridge

Traffic congestion and long delays on the Mackenzie-Wismar Bridge will be a thing of the past as construction on a brand new US\$35 million four-lane bridge gets underway this August. The Ministry of Public Works has confirmed that the new bridge will be built at the same spot as the existing one to ensure seamless connectivity and improved traffic flow. This landmark project, undertaken by China Railway Construction Corporation Limited, will involve constructing

a 220-meter-long precast concrete bridge equipped with essential safety features like lighting. The new bridge will boast a maximum horizontal clearance of 32 meters and a vertical clearance of 11.5 meters, providing ample space

for various types of vehicles. To ensure a smooth and efficient construction process, a temporary trestle bridge will be erected alongside the existing bridge. Additionally, a precast beam yard, a rebar processing factory, and office and living camps will be established on the east bank of the river. This strategic setup, with the precast beam yard allowing for faster construction of the bridge's frame, has the potential to significantly reduce the overall project duration. This translates to quicker relief from traffic congestion for commuters, along with enhanced construction safety and quality of both workers and

commuters. Furthermore, by locating the office and living camps on the east bank, the project aims to minimise noise and dust pollution for residents on the west bank. This approach will also allow for uninterrupted progress on the relocation of utilities and the construction of necessary road connections. The project will involve implementing traffic diversion measures to separate construction zones from public roadways. This may include creating detour roads, temporary toll stations, and emergency access routes to ensure the safety of both workers and commuters. The Ministry of Public Works will also work on carefully coordinating the relocation of identified facilities and utility services to avoid disruptions and facilitate a seamless construction process. The new Mackenzie-Wismar Bridge symbolises the government's forward-thinking approach to strengthening trade between Guyana and Brazil. By improving regional connectivity, the bridge is poised to position the area as a key player in international commerce and contribute to economic growth.

SILVER HILL MAIN ROAD TO BE REPAIRED, SPEED LIMIT IMPLEMENTED

The Ministry of Public Works is taking action to address the damaged main road in Silver Hill along the Soesdyke-Linden Highway. Following concerns raised about heavy truck traffic from nearby loam pits, Minister Juan Edghill met with residents. While an earlier attempt to designate separate lanes for residents and trucks failed, the Minister secured a commitment from loam pit operators to immediately repair and maintain the road. This includes proper compaction of the soil for better durability. **"I have gotten the operators of the loam pit to agree to do some immediate and remedial work and maintenance on the road,"** Minister Edghill stated. **"This time around they will not just put on the loam, but they will have to compact it so that we can get better access."** Looking towards a long-term solution, ministry engineers are already assessing the area for potential

alternate routes for the loam trucks, separating their traffic from the residents' main road. To address noise pollution concerns, a 15-mile-per-hour speed limit will be implemented for trucks. Additionally,

locked tailgates will be mandatory. Signage will be posted immediately, and law enforcement will be involved to ensure compliance. The Minister emphasised that failure by the loam pit operators to uphold their commitments will result in consequences, including potential suspension of operations by the relevant authorities. **"We will not hesitate to take action if they don't fulfill their agreements,"** Minister Edghill concluded.



Minister of Public Works, Bishop Juan Edghill engaging the residents

\$1.8 BILLION BEING SPENT FOR ROAD IMPROVEMENT IN LINDEN



Wayne Rodrigues

Linden, Region Ten, is experiencing a major facelift thanks to a government investment of \$1.8 billion. This

transformative initiative is rehabilitating 84 critical roads within the township, significantly improving connectivity and safety for residents. Communities like Coomacaka, Nottinghamshire, and Green Valley are among the beneficiaries. Residents are thrilled with the improvements, expressing their relief and optimism. Wayne Rodrigues, owner of Wayne's World Resort, highlighted the positive impact on his business

and the community: "The road is very much beneficial to our business and also the community..."



Madijah Bess

We appreciate it," he remarked. Madijah Bess, another resident, spoke of the dangers posed by the old roads before the upgrade. "All like how this May/June (rains) step in right about now you can't walk in Green Valley... Right now you could run and go down the hill right about now," she shared, expressing her joy about the safer conditions. Michael Juke emphasised the importance of infrastructure for development: "Developing starts with roads... you could be able to go from A to B instead of stopping off here because the road bad." He commended the improvements on specific roads, highlighting their significance for the region. This project aligns with the government's commitment to fostering socio-economic development and prosperity in Linden. By investing



Michael Juke

in infrastructure, the government is paving the way for a brighter future for the region and its residents.

GUYANESE STUDENTS TO RECEIVE \$11 BILLION IN LOAN RELIEF

Great news for Guyanese students! The government has announced a significant step towards its promise of free tertiary education, with Senior Finance Minister Dr. Ashni Singh revealing a \$11 billion student loan relief plan.

Over 13,000 Guyanese are expected to receive this relief, Dr. Singh said during a live broadcast, outlining the programme's first phase specifically targeting University of Guyana graduates.

Graduates must have benefited from a programme funded by the government's Student Loan Agency to qualify. Additionally, they must have been employed (or self-employed) in Guyana for at least three years.

Minister Singh highlighted the stark difference between this initiative and the prior administration's approach. "After 2015," he pointed out, "the APNU+AFC Government proposed travel bonds" to restrict travel for students with outstanding loans.

"This rendered fear in scores of students," Dr. Singh emphasised, calling the previous administration's approach "hostile" and a demonstration of their "colossal non-caring nature." He contrasted this with the current government's "people-centered approach" embodied by the One Guyana vision.

"President, Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali's One Guyana vision," Dr. Singh explained, "seeks to create a society where all Guyanese... have the opportunity to lead productive and happy lives." He elaborated that achieving

this vision involves "reducing inequality" and increasing access to education, healthcare, and other social services.

STUDENTS' REACTIONS: RELIEF AND OPPORTUNITY



Canisha Primo, Environmental science student

The programme has been met with enthusiasm from UG students. Canisha Primo, an Environmental Science student, sees it as a powerful tool against brain drain. "This directly combats

brain drain," she explained. "People who go to UG can now invest their efforts in the country, knowing their loans will be forgiven."

Damani Thomas, pursuing a Master's in Environmental Management, highlighted the chance to pursue further education without debt. "Graduates can focus on their studies, not how to pay back loans," he said. "This opens doors for career opportunities without the pressure of needing a high-paying job just to cover debt."

The prospect of being free from student loan burdens is a welcome change for Daryl Manawar, a Biology student. "The students would no longer have that burden on them," he expressed. "They would be so

relieved and that's a great impact on their lives."

International Relations student Talya Gray echoed this sentiment. "This is going to help students move forward without worrying about how they will pay back their loans," she said. "It's a great relief."

Corissa McClure, a UG graduate, sees the programme as an investment in Guyana's future workforce. "The government is putting more funds into the hands



Corissa McClure, graduate in Social Sciences and International Relations

of Guyanese," she explained. "This, combined with debt write-off, will help Guyana develop a more skilled and diverse workforce, crucial for our rapidly growing economy."

The government will soon release more details on how to access this first phase of the programme. This marks a significant step towards fulfilling the government's manifesto promise and aligns with President Ali's vision for a more equitable Guyana.



Daryl Manawar, Biology student

CAMPBELLVILLE SECONDARY TO GET \$90 MILLION EXPANSION TO EASE OVERCROWDING

The Campbellville Secondary School in Georgetown is getting a much-needed upgrade! Education Minister Priya Manickchand announced a \$90 million extension project during a press conference, aiming to address overcrowding and improve student accommodation.

"With six schools down, we had overcrowding, and rotations had to happen in some schools," Minister Manickchand explained, highlighting the

challenges. "It's not the most desirable place to be, but it is what had to happen in the absence of space in the classrooms."

This expansion project comes as a response to concerns raised about Campbellville Secondary's grade eight students attending half-day sessions for several months. The overcrowding is a result of ongoing repairs, extensions, and reconstructions affecting numerous schools in the

Georgetown District. Fortunately, there's good news on other fronts too. Minister Manickchand pointed to the nearing completion of several reconstruction projects including North Ruimveldt and St. Mary's Secondary Schools.

Additionally, St. George's High School, ravaged by fire in 2022, is already 75% complete. Christ Church Secondary, another fire victim from 2023, is at 35% completion, with the Minister noting the use of prefabricated

materials to expedite construction.

"Because some of it is prefab offsite, you could change from 35 to 80 per cent in a week," she explained.

Both St. George's High School and Christ Church Secondary are on track to be ready for the new school year, offering proper facilities for students.

Looking beyond Campbellville, the Minister highlighted completed extensions at East Ruimveldt



Secondary School, St. Winefried's Secondary, Queen's College, and The Bishops' High School. These expansions have increased capacity and helped alleviate overcrowding across the district.

"So, we should see less of the overcrowding and the rotation happening," Minister Manickchand concluded, expressing optimism for the future.

One month after the initial decision, the government has filed an appeal to challenge the ruling that prevents them from docking the pay of striking teachers.

The delay stemmed from Justice Sandil Kisson's written judgment not being available. However, with the 134-page document now disseminated, the Attorney General's Chambers, on behalf of Chief Education Officer Saddam Hussain, filed the appeal.

The government is also requesting a stay of execution, meaning the original ruling wouldn't be enforced until the appeal is heard. Additionally, the Guyana Teachers' Union (GTU) will be served with a summons.

Attorney General Anil Nandlall announced this development during his programme "Issues in the News." He highlighted the judge's final judgement and stated, "the way is now absolutely clear for

GOVT APPEALS COURT RULING IN TEACHER STRIKE CASE



From (L - R) Attorney General Anil Nandlall, SC, attorney Roysdale Forde, SC, President of the Guyana Teachers' Union Mark Lyte and attorney Darren Wade.

us to proceed with the appeal."

The crux of the appeal appears to hinge on a legal distinction. Hussain argues that Judge Kisson didn't address the difference between a "right to strike" and a "freedom to strike" in his initial ruling. This distinction could potentially impact the legal grounds for the

government's actions. Previously, Judge Kisson deemed the government's decision to halt automatic union dues deduction as "arbitrary." This was one of the concerns raised by the GTU during the case. The judge further ruled that withholding teachers' salaries for the strike was "unlawful and unconstitutional."

INSIDE PARLIAMENT...

GUYANA GETS MODERN ARBITRATION BILL, AIMS TO BECOME CARIBBEAN HUB

Guyana is poised to become a commercial arbitration hub with the unanimous passing of a modern Arbitration Bill in the National Assembly. The bill, which outlines procedures for both domestic and international arbitration, was praised by government officials for its potential to boost the economy and create jobs.

"In this ever-expanding commercial environment, contracts are executed on a daily basis, both at the state level and in the private sector, involving billions of dollars in commercial undertakings," said Attorney General and Minister of Legal

Affairs, Anil Nandlall, SC, in defense of the bill. "This bill creates a very flexible environment," he explained, "so it allows for parties to go to arbitration by themselves."

The bill's supporters highlighted its role in modernising Guyana's legal framework. "The country's existing Arbitration Act is archaic, since it was enacted in 1916, and was only amended twice since," AG Nandlall pointed out. "This bill underwent extensive consultation with



Minister of Legal Affairs, Anil Nandlall, SC

international law firms," he added, emphasising the bill's adherence to international standards.

The legislation incorporates key provisions from the United Nations

Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL) Model Law on Arbitration, which has been endorsed by the CARICOM Secretariat for regional adoption. "Not only is the bill comprehensive," AG

Nandlall said, "but the preparation that was engaged in before the bill was brought here was also an embracing one in terms of getting the widest possible input from experts in the field."

The benefits of arbitration were underscored by both AG Nandlall and Minister of Tourism, Industry and Commerce, Oneidge Walrond. "Arbitration promises greater expediency and efficiency," AG Nandlall stated. "This will promote a greater ease of business,

eliminating excessive and protracted appeal processes," he anticipated. Walrond echoed this sentiment, lauding the bill as "a tangible step towards creating a more favourable business environment for international and local investors."

The passing of the Arbitration Bill aligns with the government's broader goal of modernising Guyana's legal system to keep pace with its growing economy.

PLEA BARGAIN COMES TO GUYANA - NEW LAW DESIGNED TO REDUCE BACKLOG, PROTECT RIGHTS

Attorney General Mohabir Anil Nandlall championed the new Criminal Procedure (Plea Discussion, Plea Agreement and Assistance) Bill of 2024 in the National Assembly, stating it "adheres to established standards of practice in the United States of America and the United Kingdom".

He added that the bill was crafted "with the best bargaining models in mind."

The bill is designed to expedite criminal proceedings and save judicial time. AG Nandlall explained it as "another form of alternative resolution...without the resort to a full-blown trial."

He emphasised the bill protects "the defendant's interest, the victim's interest, the public's interest and maintaining the principles of public morality, while at the same time ensuring

that criminal conduct is fairly and justly penalised."

The bargaining mechanism is expected to "drastically reduce the workload in the country's criminal justice system" and "allow for scarce judicial resources to be spent on cases that are deserving trials while saving billions of dollars in public funds."

"Pre-bargaining agreements...avoid



the trials, the re-traumatisation of victims, and allow for a harmonious approach to the admission of guilt

for the promise of a reduced sentence," AG Nandlall said

To ensure fairness, transparency, and adherence to individual

rights, the Attorney General outlined six key principles during plea discussions, agreements and hearings. These include ensuring the accused is not pressured into pleading guilty and has the right to consult with an attorney, and that the judge confirms the negotiations were well-informed.

Minister of Local Government and Regional Development, Sonia Parag, and Member of Parliament, Sanjeev Datadin, both voiced their strong support for the bill that was greenlighted by the House.



Minister of Public Works, Bishop Juan Edghill defending the bill

The Guyanese government has taken a major step forward in ensuring aviation safety and security with the passage of the Civil Aviation Act 2024. Approved by the National Assembly, this new legislation introduces crucial amendments to the 2018 Act, bolstering the regulatory framework governing aviation operations in

the country.

The passage of the bill signifies a commitment to collaboration. Minister of Public Works, Bishop Juan Edghill, lauded the "bipartisan cooperation" witnessed during the process. "When it comes to aviation safety and security, the National Assembly is united," he stated. This emphasis on unity underscores the collective priority placed on aviation safety, particularly as Guyana prepares for an upcoming International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) audit.

This comprehensive review will scrutinise

a wide range of areas, including legal frameworks, organisational structures, personnel licencing, operational procedures, and accident investigation protocols.

The government has taken proactive measures to prepare for the audit. Minister Edghill highlighted their engagement with ICAO and regional aviation authorities, alongside efforts to strengthen infrastructure and operational capabilities, particularly in aerodrome management and aircraft certification.

Minister within the Ministry, Deodat Indar, called the audit

"a comprehensive recertification process," underscoring the importance of adhering to international standards. "They are looking from the ground up," he said, "the entire civil aviation apparatus in Guyana is being audited."

Government Member of Parliament (MP) Sanjeev Datadin echoed the need for modern legislation. He pointed to the significant rise in passenger traffic (45% increase) and cargo volume (84% increase) since 2015.

"This amendment is essential and critical for the

improvement of Guyana's aviation sector," Datadin asserted. "Our economy is... the fastest-growing in the world... air traffic has improved by staggering proportions." The return of major carriers like British Airways and United Airlines, along

with increased service from other airlines, exemplifies this growth.

The Act incorporates 16 amendments addressing deficiencies identified in the 2018 Act. With this strengthened framework, Guyana's aviation sector is poised for a safe and prosperous future.



MP Sanjeev Datadin

MAKING HOUSING DREAM A REALITY

SINGLE MOM RECEIVES DREAM HOME THANKS TO MEN ON MISSION INITIATIVE

Nicola Fraser, a 47-year-old single mother of three from Farm, East Bank Demerara, finally has a reason to celebrate. On Mother's Day, she received the keys to her new home, built under President Dr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali's Men on Mission (MoM) initiative.

"On this Mother's Day, I am very elated to embark on this new chapter of my life," a tearful Fraser expressed during the handover ceremony. Overcoming her emotions, she recounted the challenges she faced, "I have always dreamed and longed for a home, or to own

my own house. I truly believed that I would have already had my own home, but many obstacles and illnesses prevented me from working, and derailed that plan." Despite the hardships, Fraser clung to hope. "I kept my faith and continued

praying that God would make a way and open doors for me," she shared. Her unwavering belief in a brighter future finally came true. "I am thankful that he did this through Men on Mission," Fraser expressed her gratitude. "I am utterly grateful to the president... and would like to thank all the other members."

Minister within the Office of the Prime Minister, Kwame McCoy, spoke at the ceremony, highlighting the initiative's core mission. "Men on Mission is a driving force behind fostering cooperation and empowering communities," he



Minister Kwame McCoy handing Nicola Fraser the keys to her new house



Nicola Fraser's new two-bedroom house in Farm, East Bank Demerara

Twenty families in Region One are celebrating a life-changing gift – a new home – thanks to the Hinterland Housing Programme.

The initiative, a clear demonstration of the government's commitment to improving lives according to Minister of Housing and Water, Collin Croal, has delivered 10 new homes each to the communities of Haimaruni and Warapoka.

"This is a start for you," Minister Croal told the homeowners during handover ceremonies. "You can expand on this. You now have a three-bedroom home for you and your

family."

These new homes are not just spacious but also functional. Each one features three bedrooms, a living room, a kitchen area, and a black tank for rainwater harvesting – a crucial feature in remote areas.

The programme's impact is undeniable. Mavis Austin, a 63-year-old resident of Haimaruni, beamed as she received her keys. "I feel so good," she said. "My old house will be used as a little shop now... I cannot really do the farm work

anymore." The new home provides not only comfort but also future opportunities for Austin.

Similar stories of gratitude echoed throughout the communities. "I never had any home like this before," Basil David, another Haimaruni resident, said with emotion. "This is very big. My old home did not have any rooms like this. I am happy."

The programme isn't just transforming lives; it's also injecting a much-needed boost



Beneficiary, Mavis Austin and her husband at their new house

into the hinterland economies. Minister Croal highlighted that \$39 million has been invested in each village through the programme, creating employment

opportunities and providing disposable income for residents.

For Gloria Augustus of Warapoka, the new home represents a place of peace. "When I hear

the rain, I do not have to get up and say 'Oh, we will get wet,'" she emphasised.

The Hinterland Housing Programme is still in its early stages, with 125 homes already completed in Region One and 120 under construction in Region Nine alone. Yet, the impact on the families who have already received their homes is profound. These new homes represent hope, security, and a brighter future for dozens of hinterland families.

CORE HOME INITIATIVE UPLIFTS LIVES OF FIVE FAMILIES

Five families in Region Three, West Bank Demerara, are celebrating a fresh start after receiving the keys to their brand-new core homes on May 21st, 2024. This initiative is part of the government's ongoing programme to empower vulnerable families with homeownership.

Minister of Housing and Water, Collin Croal, along with CHPA CEO Sherwyn Greaves,

presented the keys during a heartwarming ceremony. Among the recipients was Shelley

Alleyne, a mother of three from Lust-en-Rust. "It was not conditioned for my family,"



Beneficiary, Shelley Persaud receiving her keys and certificate of completion from Minister of Housing and Water, Collin Croal

Alleyne shared about her previous living situation. "I am really grateful for this home that the government has granted me. It is an honor and a blessing in disguise."

Similar emotions resonated with Rupert Alleyne of Onderneeming, who lived by the river for over two decades with his family. "It was bad since I used to live by the river," he

explained. "It was a mud flat... Now, this is a big help." Alleyne's new home offers not only security but also improved access to basic necessities.

Paul DeSouza of Lust-en-Rust spoke of his previous dwelling as being "horrible" due to constant leaks. DeSouza expressed his delight with his new home, stating, "I am now comfortable and happy."

The Core Home Support initiative is part of the \$5.8 billion Adequate Housing and Urban Accessibility Programme (AH&UAP),



Rupert Alleyne holding the keys to his new home

funded by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB). Each core home is valued at \$5 million, with a beneficiary contribution of only \$100,000. To date, 105 out of 323 houses have been successfully handed over.





Brian Kyle Tiwarie BSc Eng.
CEO



Briony -Tiwarie Gabriel BSc., MIBA
Accountable Manager

10th Anniversary Statement

As we celebrate our 10th anniversary, we reflect on a decade of innovation, growth, and unwavering commitment to excellence in the aviation industry. Since our inception, we have continuously strived to set new standards in service, safety, and operational efficiency.

This milestone year marks significant advancements for our company. We proudly unveil our state-of-the-art hangar, located at Eugene F. Correia International Airport, Ogle, East Coast, Demerara, a testament to our dedication to providing superior maintenance and storage facilities. This new addition enhances our capability to deliver top-notch service and support for our fleet and our valued customers.

In line with our vision for expansion and excellence, we have successfully acquired eight aircraft, significantly bolstering our operational capacity. This strategic investment not only expands our service offerings but also underscores our commitment to meeting the evolving needs of our customers with the latest and most reliable technology in aviation.

JAGS Aviation Inc. was the first local aviation company to purchase new aircraft in Guyana. This is testimony to the fact that our company's vision is to set high standards for domestic air transport thus supporting the efforts of the Ministry of Tourism. We also pride ourselves for acquiring an aircraft previously owned by the Queen of England, and is currently fully operational.

Our journey does not end here. With ambitious plans to acquire more aircraft such as a new Caravan to be delivered in Q3 2024, we are poised for continued growth and success. These new acquisitions will enable us to broaden our horizons, explore new markets, and deliver an

unparalleled flying experience to our passengers. We owe our achievements to our dedicated team, whose expertise and passion have resulted in many accomplishments over the past ten years and continue to drive our success every day. We are equally grateful to our loyal customers and partners for their unwavering support and trust in us.

Our country's economy has experienced significant growth over the past few years under the One Guyana initiative resulting in increased investment opportunities.

One key factor contributing to this economic growth is the government's focus on enhancing infrastructure development. As such, JAGS Aviation Inc. welcomes the opportunity to make even more investments and has already acquired the facilities for an Air Ambulance Operation with flights to Canada and the United States of America. We are now pursuing the required formalities towards making this goal a reality. As we embark on the next decade, we also reflect on the vision and dedication of our Chairman and beloved father, Brian Tiwarie OCM, A.A., who continues to demonstrate his unwavering support of the company, even though he has now passed on the mantle to his children who remain committed to pushing the boundaries of excellence in aviation.

Together, we will soar to new heights, driven by innovation, integrity, and a relentless pursuit of perfection.

We thank you for being a part of our journey

Brian Kyle Tiwarie BSc Eng.
CEO

Briony -Tiwarie Gabriel BSc., MIBA
Accountable Manager

LISTENING

PRESIDENT ALI A



With a warm smile actively listened, and attentive ear, brainstorming solutions head-recently embarked on. He also on visits to several outlined plans communities with enthusiasm, across Guyana. The providing updates on resulting pictures key developments in education, health, connection with the infrastructure, people. Residents and agriculture, eagerly shared all geared towards their concerns, revitalising local and President Ali communities.



AND LEADING GST THE PEOPLE



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CARICOM: A CARIBBEAN POWERHOUSE

- PRESIDENT ALI TOUTS REGIONAL STRENGTH AT BOOK LAUNCH



President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali along with Caricom Secretary-General, Dr Carla Barnett and author of 'Caribbean Perspective' Sandra Ann Baptiste

President Irfaan Ali emphasised the Caribbean Community's (CARICOM) flourishing role on the international scene during the launch of a book chronicling the organisation's development at the Cheddi Jagan Research Centre in Kingston, Georgetown.

"We are leading on climate in the global conversation. We are leading on forest in the global conversation and [on] finance. On peace, we are leading the conversation, and on reparative justice," President Ali asserted, highlighting CARICOM's growing influence in various

critical areas.

The book, titled "Caribbean Perspective" and authored by veteran journalist Sandra Ann Baptiste, details three decades of CARICOM's regional integration efforts.

President Ali, who also serves as CARICOM's chairman, stressed the importance of ongoing development within the organisation. He encouraged member states to **"conduct and impose upon themselves the decision-making framework that will allow the body to continuously and permanently operate in an efficient manner."**

The President outlined several initiatives fostering closer ties between member states, including the ferry service connecting Guyana, Barbados, and Trinidad and Tobago; the removal of trade barriers; and shared goals for food security.

President Ali expressed unwavering confidence in CARICOM's collective success: **"There is no other option to succeed and win. CARICOM will not lose and CARICOM will not be left behind... We are going to confront the challenges of the past and the present. We are going to overcome those challenges and we are going to position CARICOM as the strongest block."**

He credited past leaders for expanding

CARICOM's global presence and emphasised the need for continued focus and policy development to ensure sustained growth.

"The maturity of CARICOM has grown enormously. The collective attribute

future to get greater respect," President Ali concluded.

The book launch ceremony was attended by dignitaries including Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Hugh Todd, members of



Officials and other attendees during the book launch

of CARICOM has grown enormously... It is this collective strength that we must deploy in the

the Diplomatic Corps, CARICOM Secretary-General Dr. Carla Barnett, and other invitees.

CANDLELIGHT VIGIL SHINES LIGHT ON SUPPORT FOR PALESTINIAN MOTHERS

First Lady Arya Ali hosted a candlelight vigil, gathering hundreds at the Kingston Seawall Esplanade to express solidarity with Palestinian mothers.



Scene from the vigil

The vigil served as a platform for the First Lady to urge Guyanese citizens to take action. **"We must act, we must speak out against the atrocities being committed in Gaza, we must demand accountability from those who perpetrate these crimes against humanity,"** she implored.

The First Lady, a human rights advocate, highlighted Guyana's ongoing support for Palestinians. **"The \$110.8 million raised recently to support humanitarian efforts in Palestine is another testament to Guyana's commitment to support our sisters and brothers..."**

Minister of Human Services and Social Security, Dr. Vindhya Persaud, also addressed the gathering. **"Guyana unequivocally stands with the people of Palestine,"** she asserted. Dr. Persaud went on to elaborate on Guyana's role as a member of the United Nations Security Council, stating, **"Guyana at the United Nations Security Council would have raised its hand consistently for justice, immediate cease fire, humanitarian aid for these people."**

The vigil transcended religious boundaries, drawing participants from diverse backgrounds. The evening featured prayers, poems offering solace, and songs intended to comfort those impacted by the crisis. This interfaith gathering signifies a unified stance of compassion and support for Palestinian mothers experiencing profound loss.



First Lady Arya Ali speaking at the vigil held at the Kingston Seawall Esplanade

Under the strong leadership of President, Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali and his 'One Guyana' vision, Guyana's remarkable economic trajectory is set to continue according to Consul General at the Consulate General of Guyana in New York, United States of America, Ambassador Michael E. Brotherson.

Brotherson was at the time addressing a Guyana Flag Raising Ceremony of the Hempstead Town Board in commemoration of the country's 58th Independence Anniversary.

Ambassador Brotherson said that since gaining its independence, Guyana has emerged as a

GUYANA'S GROWTH TO CONTINUE UNDER "ONE GUYANA" VISION- AMBASSADOR BROTHERSON

respected member of the international community and one of the fastest-growing economies in the world.

He said that the anniversary offers an opportunity to reflect on how far the country has come, and acknowledge the sacrifices of those who came before.

"Our nation's foundation was laid by the tenacity and selfless efforts of our forefathers, and to them we will always owe a debt of gratitude," he said.

Ambassador Brotherson also drew attention to Guyana's

diverse makeup, saying that this feature drives tolerance and unity.

"As a nation, we are not without our challenges, but it is these very challenges that serve to cement our resolve towards ensuring that Guyana remains a strong and unified nation. Our nation is set to achieve much more in the years ahead. This noble objective of 'One Guyana' has at its core the sustainable and equitable development of Guyana and the ultimate prosperity



Consul General at the Consulate General of Guyana in New York, Ambassador Michael E. Brotherson

of all Guyanese," he asserted.

The ambassador pointed to the advancements in health, education and infrastructure as glaring examples of the transformation underway.

He also highlighted the significant contributions of the diaspora, and encouraged them to return home to assist in the country's advancement, and capitalise on the tremendous opportunities.

"I want to take this opportunity to urge that we all, Guyanese, continue to strive to maintain and build on the freedom our forefathers fought for and always remember the many sacrifices they have made for us," he urged.

The ambassador also reminded that the government remains committed to the prosperity of all Guyanese, and will spare no effort to ensure that this vision is realised through the appropriate programmes and policies.

Ali urges banks to accelerate innovation, support economic growth

A STRONG call has been made by President Dr. Irfaan Ali to the banking sector, demanding greater innovation, proactivity, and adaptation to Guyana’s dynamic economic environment. This move is in response to the nation’s efforts to expand beyond its thriving oil industry.

During his speech at the Private Sector Commission (PSC) Annual General Meeting (AGM), which took place at the Marriott Hotel in Kingston, Georgetown, President Ali underscored the vital importance of banks in capital formation and economic development.

“The banking sector has been given one of the most dynamic platforms to support capital formation in this country.

“Yet to date, the banking sector has not responded with the speed, efficiency, reliability, and time to exploit the opportunities that are here in Guyana,” President Ali said.

President Ali highlighted the need for banks to move beyond their traditional roles of taking deposits and lending in low-risk environments.

The Head of State also underscored the importance of banks seeking out new opportunities, understanding economic trends, and creating ecosystems that support the country’s growth trajectory.

“The role of the bank is not to take deposits and to lend in a low-risk environment.

The role of the bank is also seeking the opportunity to understand where the economy is going, to create an ecosystem to support where the economy is going and to build upon what is happening in the country,” he explained.

President Ali brought attention to the fact that while certain banks are in line with government initiatives, their execution is lacking.

“Some of the banks are doing an extremely good job at following the initiative, but a very poor job at concluding arrangements...Our local private sector and local leaders are doing a tremendous job in trying to open up opportunities, especially in the non-oil sector, but the speed at which the bank has been operating and processing does not match the type of dynamism that is in the economy,” Dr Ali said.

In a call for accountability and tangible results, President Ali issued a public challenge to the banks.

He declared, “If any bank in this country can point to me, to an investor banker that is employed by the bank, that has created five or six business opportunities and developed five or six business plans to propose to the private sector, I will publicly laud that bank.”

Acknowledging the necessity for self-evaluation and adaptation, President Ali urged the banking sector to review and realign its operations.

“This is no way of being critical of anything. This is just being very frank and very open with you.

“As we confront these challenges in the new year, [we need] a new sense of purpose, a new sense of purpose in realigning our outlook in the banking sector and our management in the banking sector, to match what is required in the economy,” he clarified.

With Guyana being among the fastest growing economies in the world, President Ali has long signalled the need for a “big shift” in the business mindset of bankers and their clients for the modernisation of the sector to propel the nation’s economic advancement.






President Dr, Irfaan Ali during his address to the banking sector


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BONASIKA CREEK TO GET PROCESSING PLANT

President Ali announced a major development for Guyana's agricultural sector during a visit to Bonasika Creek in Region Three. The community, a powerhouse for ginger production, will soon have a new processing facility.

This initiative comes in response to Bonasika Creek's impressive yield of 240,000 tonnes of ginger annually. However, finding suitable markets for this volume has proven challenging. The new processing plant aims to address this by extending the shelf life of ginger through drying and crushing. This will allow farmers to access higher-value markets

and maximise their profits.

President Ali's vision extends beyond Bonasika Creek. He envisions the area as a **"processing hub,"** integrating surrounding villages into a large-scale food production system. This collaborative approach will move farmers beyond traditional methods and empower them to build lasting wealth.

"The conversation is changing," the President emphasised. **"We're going beyond just producing food. It's about storage, transportation, adding value, and reaching more markets."**

The processing



President Ali addressing the residents

facility isn't the only good news for Bonasika Creek. The government is also committed to tripling ginger production in the community and supporting the expansion of other crops like bananas, pumpkins, cassava, and plantains. This aligns with Guyana's goal of contributing to CARICOM's target of

reducing food imports by 25% by 2025.

To further enhance export opportunities, President Ali highlighted the upcoming regional ferry service operating out of Parika. This tripartite agreement between Guyana, Trinidad and Tobago, and Barbados will streamline the transportation

of Bonasika Creek's produce directly to CARICOM markets.

The President encouraged young people and women to join the agricultural revolution. The government will provide them with special programmes and support initiatives like the Agricultural Entrepreneurship Innovation Programme. This programme will focus on integrated farming on a dedicated 300-acre plot.

Additionally, the Ministry of Agriculture plans to introduce innovative projects in Bonasika Creek, including marine cage farming, prawn and shrimp farming, and honey production.

These initiatives will create a sustainable food ecosystem in the community.

President Ali's commitment to Bonasika Creek was further demonstrated by his pledge to donate a tractor and trailer, seeds, farming tools, and tillers to jumpstart the entrepreneurship programme. He also announced the construction of a fisherman's wharf by year-end.

This visit underscores the government's dedication to empowering Guyana's agricultural sector and transforming Bonasika Creek into a key player in the regional food supply chain.

GUYANA TO BENEFIT FROM NEW AVIATION TRAINING PROGRAMME WITH MALAYSIA

A delegation from Guyana, including the Minister within the Ministry of Public Works, Deodat Indar, and Lt. Col. (Ret'd) Egbert Field, Director General of the Guyana Civil Aviation Authority (GCAA), participated in the 3rd Future Aviation Forum (FAF 2024) held in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

The forum focused on the theme of 'Elevating Global Connectivity,' brought together leaders in the aviation sector to discuss collaboration, innovation, and sustainability within the

industry.

During the event, a significant Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed between the Caribbean Aviation Safety and Security Oversight System (CASSOS) and the Civil Aviation Authority of Malaysia. This MOU offers promising benefits for Guyana and other CASSOS member states, including training programmes for aviation personnel, research and development cooperation, and other aviation-related fields.

The MOU includes financial backing from the Malaysian authority to cover training programme expenses.

"We are deeply appreciative of the support provided by the Government of Malaysia," said Minister Indar. **"This collaboration is a significant step forward for CASSOS member states and something we truly value."**

The Minister also highlighted recent amendments to Guyana's Civil Aviation Act

and the government's recognition of the vital role played by CASSOS.

This new partnership between CASSOS and Malaysia is expected to

enhance the skills and qualifications of aviation professionals in Guyana and the Caribbean, contributing to a safer and more efficient aviation industry in the region.



Hon. Rohan Sinanan, Minister of Works and Transport, Trinidad and Tobago; Hon. Deodat Indar, Minister within the Ministry of Public Works; Ms Sonia Francis-Yearwood, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Works and Transport, Trinidad and Tobago; Lt. Col. (Ret'd) Egbert Field, Director General, GCAA and other officials

NEW RESEARCH STATION OPENS IN REGION ONE - TO BOOST CONSERVATION EFFORTS



New research station commissioned in Region One

Guyana's commitment to protecting its endangered wildlife took a big step forward with the opening of the Moruca and Waini Research

and Monitoring Station in Region One. This new facility is located within the Shell Beach Protected Area, a vital nesting ground for four threatened sea turtle

species.

Funded in part by the German government, the station will serve as a hub for real-time monitoring and research of marine ecosystems. It will

house key organisations like the Environmental Protection Agency, the Guyana Forestry Commission, and the World Wildlife Fund.

"This investment reflects Germany's confidence in Guyana's conservation efforts," said Robert Persaud, chairman of the Protected Areas Commission (PAC) at the commissioning. The station's location at the mouth of the Moruca River allows for close monitoring of both wildlife and human activity in the area.

The research station is also intended to be a

centre for international collaboration. Persaud highlighted Guyana's success in balancing economic development with environmental protection, citing its Low Carbon Development Strategy 2030 (LCDS) as a prime example.

"This facility is part of our protected areas system, and we want to make it a focal point for international research," he explained. "Guyana's track record in environmental stewardship has earned global recognition, and this research will be crucial."

The station is not just about protecting wildlife;

it's designed to benefit the local community as well. Persaud assured residents that research and sustainable tourism initiatives will create opportunities for economic development.

"Our government is committed to improving lives, developing resources, and preserving our environment," Persaud concluded. **"This new station is a model for sustainable development in Guyana."**

PRESIDENT ALI TOUTS PRIVATE SECTOR GROWTH, CALLS FOR COLLABORATION TO DIVERSIFY ECONOMY

President Irfaan Ali delivered a powerful message at the 32nd Annual General Meeting of the Private Sector Commission at the Guyana Marriott Hotel, urging for continued dynamism and collaboration to propel Guyana's economic trajectory.

Highlighting the private sector's critical role, President Ali remarked, **"We want you to be successful. We want the private sector to be highly successful – we support private sector development."**

He emphasised the need for a strategic partnership between the government and private entities. **"We have the raw material and this is what we are focusing primarily on,"** the President said, outlining plans to **"build all this ecosystem, building**

out the incentive regime, opening up these opportunities."

DIVERSIFICATION BEYOND OIL

President Ali made it clear that the government's vision extends beyond oil dependence. **"We have no intentions of taking our foot off the accelerator,"** he declared. **"We are driven to have the most vibrant, competitive and sustainable non-oil economy."**

This vision encompasses **"manufacturing industrial development, agro-processing, food production and value addition on minerals."** The President pointed to the positive correlations between these sectors, including sport and



President Ali addressing the meeting

tourism.

AGRICULTURE TAKES CENTER STAGE

While advocating for a multifaceted approach, President Ali designated agriculture as the cornerstone of Guyana's future. **"Agriculture is our future,"** he declared, **"and it is going to be a massive revenue earner for**

the country."

He highlighted the government's significant investments and the resulting opportunities for the private sector. Thanks to this collaboration, Guyana is **"planting a lot more and is expected to save by the end of next year, more than US\$150m on imports."**

INVESTMENT ON

THE RISE

President Ali pointed to a surge in foreign direct investment (FDI) across various sectors, including agriculture (14.7% increase), construction, transportation and communication, mining, real estate, and manufacturing.

BUILDING BUSINESSES FOR GROWTH

Looking ahead, the President emphasised the need for a robust business model to facilitate expansion for value and rapid growth of businesses. His vision centres on **"creating the wealth right here by building our capacity to make use of the opportunities."**

FINANCIAL SECTOR PARTNERSHIP

President Ali also called on financial institutions to play a more active role. **"The role of the bank is not to take deposits and to lend in a low-risk environment,"** he asserted. Instead, he urged them to understand where the economy is going, to create an ecosystem to support where the economy is going and to build upon what is happening in the country.

BRAND GUYANA

The President concluded by emphasising the power of **"Brand Guyana"**. He described it as a **"recognised brand,"** a **"highly sought-after brand, a very high-value brand...."** This national brand identity presents a wealth of opportunities for the private sector to tap into.

GUYANA MEETS WITH ICAO, DISCUSSES COLLABORATION AND SAFETY STANDARDS

Guyana's commitment to aviation safety and development was on display at the Future Aviation Forum (FAF) in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia where Guyana's Minister in the Ministry of Public Works, Deodat Indar, and Director General of the Guyana Civil Aviation Authority (GCAA), Lt. Col. (Ret'd) Egbert Field, met with top officials from the International Civil



Attending the meeting (from left to right) were the ICAO Council President Mr. Salvatore Sciacchitano, Hon. Deodat Indar, Director General, GCAA, Lt. Col. (Ret'd) Egbert Field, ICAO Secretary General, Mr. Juan Carlos Salazar and ICAO South American Regional Director, Mr. Fabio Rabani.

Aviation Organisation (ICAO).

The discussions focused on Guyana's progress in complying with ICAO's safety and security standards, as well as fostering continued collaboration in aviation development. Minister Indar emphasised the government's unwavering commitment to improving aviation infrastructure and adhering to

these international benchmarks.

"Maintaining high safety and security standards is paramount in the aviation sector," Minister Indar said, highlighting Guyana's willingness to work closely with ICAO to achieve these goals.

President of ICAO, Salvatore Sciacchitano, and Secretary General, Juan Carlos Salazar,

commended Guyana's dedication to enhancing its aviation capabilities. They reiterated the crucial role ICAO standards play in ensuring a safe and secure global aviation industry.

The meeting concluded with a reaffirmation of the strong partnership between Guyana and ICAO, paving the way for continued collaboration in developing a robust and well-regulated aviation sector in Guyana.

The Guyana Prison Service (GPS) received a much-needed boost to their operations with the donation of a new speedboat and engine. This \$8 million investment, funded by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), aims to enhance travel capabilities and strengthen security, particularly along the Mazaruni River in Region Seven.

The IDB's Support for the Criminal Justice System (SCJS) programme is behind this initiative, which tackles prison overcrowding – a pressing concern in Guyana.

GUYANA PRISON SERVICE GETS SPEEDBOAT TO BOLSTER SECURITY AND EFFICIENCY

Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Legal Affairs, Adele Clarke, highlighted this purpose during the handover ceremony at the Parika Police Station. **"We're thrilled to partner with the Prison Service to improve the lives of both prisoners and officers,"** Clarke remarked. **"This boat will significantly enhance their transportation capabilities, allowing them to better**

address inmate needs."

Clarke further explained that the SCJS programme strives to improve access to justice and its delivery for those accused of crimes.

Echoing Clarke's sentiments, Director of Prisons Nicklon Elliot emphasised the positive impact on Prison Service operations. **"This is particularly helpful in the Mazaruni area, where waterways are the primary mode of transportation,"**

Elliot stated. **"The speedboat will significantly improve our response capacity at the Mazaruni Prison."**

The new vessel offers several advantages including reduced travel times. This translates to increased punctuality and attendance for prisoners attending court appearances.

It also ensures that timely medical care at external hospitals and clinics becomes more feasible for inmates.

Additionally, prison officers can conduct regular patrols more effectively.

The boat also facilitates secure movement of prisoners between locations.



The speedboat procured for the Guyana Prison Service

GUYANA CELEBRATES EUROPE DAY - HIGHLIGHTS STRONG PARTNERSHIP

Prime Minister Mark Phillips reaffirmed the European Union's (EU) status as a key partner for Guyana's development at a reception commemorating Europe Day 2024 at the Herdmanston Lodge.

"The EU is an important partner for Guyana across many areas," Prime Minister Phillips said, highlighting cooperation in trade, investment, forestry, environment, and health. He commended the EU's support for climate change initiatives and Guyana's role in forest protection.

The Prime Minister also welcomed a recent Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) which makes Guyana one of five countries partnering with the EU on forest protection. "Our relationship is built on shared democratic values and cooperation," he said.

He praised the EU's commitment to democracy and human rights, and pointed to Guyana's continued invitations to EU electoral observer missions. On security cooperation, Prime Minister Phillips

expressed Guyana's interest in technical exchanges and developing a common security strategy with the EU. He also reiterated Guyana's condemnation of the conflict in Eastern Europe and called for resolving disputes peacefully.

The Prime Minister highlighted the importance of the CARIFORUM Economic Partnership Agreement with Europe and encouraged more European companies to invest in Guyana. He acknowledged the EU's significant role in

supporting Guyana's development, including improvements in healthcare and forestry.

He also mentioned a recent collaboration focused on protecting natural resources and

fostering sustainable development in indigenous communities. The Europe Day reception underscored the strong partnership between Guyana and the European Union, with potential for continued progress in key areas.



Prime Minister, Mark Phillips at the reception commemorating Europe Day 2024

The National Assembly passed the comprehensive Sea and River Defence Bill, a modern legislation aimed at improving Guyana's defences

against rising sea levels. "The objective of this bill is not to rewrite the legislation or to introduce major policy changes, but to update and refine the

GUYANA STRENGTHENS SEA DEFENCES WITH MODERN LEGISLATION FOR RISING SEA LEVELS

legislation to meet current and future challenges," explained Minister of Public Works Bishop Juan Edghill.

The bill places specific focus on flood management, considering the vulnerability of Guyana's Low Coastal Plain to rising sea levels. "This bill will introduce a system of flood management planning to ensure all defences are properly

identified, designed, and maintained, while at the same time enhancing public participation and consultation," said Minister Edghill.

Highlighting the importance of the legislation for continued investment, Minister within the Ministry of Public Works Deodat Indar stated, "For us, on this side of the house, sea defence is a major part of the infrastructure of the

country. River defence is major part of the infrastructure."

Emphasising the need for strong sea defences for agriculture, Minister of Agriculture, Zulfikar Mustapha pointed out that the government has identified the issues faced by farmers due to flooding. "Over 1,000 acres of rice adjacent to the sea defence was flooded in 2019, and has

not been cultivated since...this is how we operate. We identify, we analyse, and we fix the problem," he said. "This bill lays the groundwork for proactive [work] to fortify our coastline... the bill acknowledges the essential value of our ecosystem and the irreplaceable benefits [to come] for our environment and communities," added the Minister.



GUYANA PUSHES FOR ELECTRIC VEHICLES AND SOLAR POWER

Prime Minister, Mark Phillips, is championing a switch to electric vehicles (EVs) and renewable energy sources like solar power. He spoke at the "EV Show and Tell" exhibition at the University of Guyana Berbice Campus, which showcased the latest EVs and solar technology available in the country.

The Prime Minister

highlighted the environmental benefits of going green. He stressed that using more renewable energy will help fight climate change and reduce Guyana's carbon footprint.

To lead by example, the government plans to buy a fleet of electric vehicles. Additionally, six EV charging stations are already operational, with more planned for

the future, including one in Berbice.

He also pointed out the financial advantages of EVs. These include free charging stations, no import duty or taxes on EVs, and tax breaks for businesses buying EVs.

Investing in renewable energy is another government priority for a sustainable future. The Prime

Minister spoke about promoting solar technology throughout Guyana, including distributing solar systems to households in hinterland and riverine areas.

"Distributing 28,000 household solar systems has improved the lives of 120,000 people in our remote areas," he said. "We plan



Prime Minister Mark Phillips in one of the electric vehicles

to distribute an additional 10,000 systems."

The Prime Minister urged attendees,

especially young people and businesses, to adopt clean and cost-effective solutions like solar power and electric vehicles.

GUYANA ENERGY CONFERENCE AND SUPPLY CHAIN EXPO WILL BE BACK IN 2025 BIGGER THAN EVER



Over 5,000 delegates expected for Guyana Energy Conference and Supply Chain Expo 2025

The Guyana Energy Conference and Supply Chain Expo is set for a grand return in 2025, aiming to attract over 5,000 delegates. The four-day event, focused on the theme "Connecting the Dots: Integrating the Future," will bring together industry

government officials, and experts for discussions on energy transition, sustainability, and regional collaboration.

The conference will be held at the Guyana Marriott Hotel from February 18-21, 2025, featuring over 180 booths and presentations from more

than 70 distinguished speakers. The focus will be on critical areas like financing sustainable development, building a future-ready workforce, and strengthening regional ties in energy and infrastructure.

This premier event has become a key platform for networking

and knowledge sharing in the energy sector since its debut in 2021. Participants can expect to gain insights from policymakers, explore investment opportunities in various sectors, and build valuable partnerships.

GUYANA MAKING STRIDES IN PRAWN PRODUCTION -PROJECT TO YIELD \$48 MILLION PER CROP

A prawn production project in Onverwagt, Region Five, is expected to generate significant revenue. Each harvest is estimated to produce



Onverwagt prawns project set to yield an estimated \$48M per crop

12 tonnes of Vannamei prawns, valued at around \$4 million per tonne, resulting in a total yield of \$48 million per crop. Three harvests are anticipated annually.

The government invested \$100 million in this project, recognising its potential to establish the country as a major player in the global aquaculture market, particularly the US\$4 billion industry.

President Ali stated,

"This is the model we want to expand across the country so that we can become a major player. All the production is geared towards exportation... We are bringing in the expertise to help support investment as part of the 25 by 2025 initiative."

The President recently visited the production site to examine the project's status. The government is bringing in specialists

from Indonesia to train locals in prawn-rearing techniques. Additionally, they plan to transition towards public-private partnerships to accelerate project development.

The 100-acre site features 10 ponds, each capable of holding 600,000 prawns in treated chlorine water. Currently, half the ponds are operational, with the rest expected to be filled by the end of

June. The first harvest is anticipated in three months.

Construction of a larvae facility is underway and expected to be completed by August. A feed mill is also planned for completion by year-end, which is expected to significantly reduce feeding costs and enhance project profitability.

GUYANA'S FISHING INDUSTRY GETS \$15M INVESTMENT IN TRACKING DEVICES

The Guyanese fishing industry is set for a major overhaul with the introduction of vessel monitoring devices for artisanal fishers.

Procured by the Ministry of Agriculture and distributed to over a dozen fisherfolk, these devices represent a \$15 million government investment aimed at revolutionising fishing practices.

"We are not only investing in the physical structure like the wharves

and so on, but we will also be putting equipment on your vessels to track you so that we can know where you are fishing and we can monitor you," said Minister of Agriculture, Zulfikar Mustapha, during a ceremony handing over the devices.

These devices go beyond simply tracking vessels. They will also monitor fish population within the ocean, enhancing not only safety but also efficiency

for Guyanese fishers.

The Minister emphasised the importance of embracing technology in the industry. "The data collected by these devices will enable the fisheries department to make informed decisions tailored to the needs of fisherfolk, leading to smoother operations within the sector," explained Dr. Haimwant Persaud, Director of Latitude Geospatial Consulting

Inc., the company supplying the devices with support from Pelagic Data Systems.

Dr. Persaud elaborated on the device's functionality: "As soon as it [the device] gets sunlight it activates and what happens, is that it starts sending a communication to the satellite. From that, the satellite reads into a data processing platform, and you start receiving statistics every ten seconds of



Director of Latitude Geospatial Inc., Dr Haimwant Persaud explaining how the device works

the movement of the vessel."

These real-time updates will allow authorities to monitor fishing grounds, track vessel locations, and assess distances from shore. An added benefit is the potential

to combat piracy by enhancing security for fishing activities within Guyana's borders.

The Ministry of Agriculture has assured that all fishing vessels in the country will eventually be equipped with these devices.

"We're building a technologically advanced model farm specifically for differently-abled people at Mon Repos," announced Minister of Agriculture,

Zulfikar Mustapha at a recent outreach. This initiative aligns with the government's strategy to empower all citizens.

"Not only will this farm provide them with a source



The model farm commissioned at Fort Wellington in Region Five last year

TECH-ADVANCED MODEL FARM FOR DIFFERENTLY-ABLED PERSONS PLANNED

of income, but it will also equip them with knowledge and skills in sustainable and integrated farming practices," explained Minister Mustapha. The farm will be equipped with a storage room, shade house, cattle pen, composting house, areas for raising small animals and chickens, and electrical and water supply systems.

The Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) is a key partner in this project. This model farm follows the successful launch of the first one in Fort Wellington in September 2023, benefiting farmers and youths in the Mahaica-Berbice district.

Minister Mustapha also revealed plans to construct similar high-

tech farms in other regions, reflecting the government's commitment to agricultural modernisation, sustainability, and food security.

In another collaborative effort, the IICA is partnering with Guyana to transform the Guyana School of Agriculture (GSA) at Mon Repos into a

Centre of Excellence. This US\$500,000 project aims to equip local and regional agriculturists with new training programs and technologies.

The Minister additionally highlighted ongoing hydroponics projects in Regions Two, Five, and Ten. These projects are on track and will be managed by young people upon completion.

SEVERAL IMPROVEMENTS COMING FOR OGLE FISHERFOLK

President Irfaan Ali met with fisherfolk operating out of the Ogle outfall on the East Coast Demerara and promised a number of improvements to ease their operations.

The President committed to dredging works at the Montrose channel to free up congestion, stating, "In about three to four

weeks...we will finish dredging Montrose."

He also pledged to construct a new ramp to assist with docking, given the challenges posed by strong currents. "We will do the ramp. If we build the ramp, you can just reel the boat up," he explained, encouraging collaboration on a trailer design for further boat

retrieval ease.

Recognising the poor condition of the access road, President Ali announced, "This road here, we have to fix it...At least we should bring it up to some crushed stone surface. We will do it through the Ministry of Public Works."

This visit comes alongside the President's

visit to the Mon Repos market, where he engaged with vendors and listened to their concerns. Minister of Local Government and Regional Development, SoniaParag, and Ministry within the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development, Anand Persaud, accompanied the President.



The president also visited the Mon Repos market, where he engaged with vendors

INVESTMENT IN DRAINAGE AND IRRIGATION:

- \$132M PROJECT BOOSTS REGION SIX, AMPHIBIOUS EXCAVATOR ENHANCES MMA-ADA OPERATIONS



The handing over of the excavator

The government is investing heavily in improving drainage and irrigation in Guyana. In Region Six, 24 water pumps were handed over to local councils, with more to come.

farmers, and potentially increase crop yields.

Minister of Agriculture, Zulfikar Mustapha, highlighted that significant investments have been made since 2020, with \$72.3 billion dedicated this year alone to upgrading the nationwide network.

Meanwhile, the Mahaica-Mahaicony Abary- Agricultural Development Authority (MMA-ADA) received a new \$110 million amphibious excavator to improve drainage and irrigation works within their area. This new machine is suited for working in wetlands and

will be used for dredging, vegetation removal, and other projects.

Minister Mustapha emphasized the importance of the new equipment, stating it will allow the MMA-

ADA to better manage the Onverwagt scheme, a massive agricultural area. He noted the improvements have allowed for nearly 85,000 acres of rice to be planted this season, with

a target of 100,000 acres for the next.

These investments in drainage, irrigation, and equipment are aimed at improving agricultural productivity and farmer livelihoods in Guyana.



Some of the pumps that were handed over to the NDCS in Region Six

SHADE HOUSE PROJECT TO BOOST PEPPER PRODUCTION IN CRABWOOD CREEK

Following a recent visit to Crabwood Creek, the government has launched a shade house project to support local pepper farmers. This initiative aligns with the

country's plan to become a leading Caribbean food hub, as highlighted by Agriculture Minister Zulfikar Mustapha.

"We want to work along with the small

farmers," Minister Mustapha stated during the project's launch at Skeldon Estate. "We will give the materials for the shade house. We will help you guys to construct it, give you the designs. I believe the size will be 25 by 34."

The project will initially assist 100 farmers in constructing shade houses, each designed to accommodate around 400 pepper plants.

The Ministry of Agriculture has partnered with the Umami agro-processing facility, which exports



Some of the farmers that will benefit from the shade house project

peppers to Europe and other markets. This ensures a steady market for the farmers' produce.

Peppers are a fast-growing crop, allowing

farmers to generate frequent income. According to Minister Mustapha, each plant is expected to yield approximately nine

pounds of pepper weekly.

The National Agriculture Research and Extension Institute (NAREI) will collaborate with farmers to construct the shade houses and cultivate the peppers.

This shade house project is part of a larger government initiative to support agriculture. Since 2020, over 450 shade houses have been constructed, creating employment opportunities for hundreds of young people through the Agriculture and Innovative Entrepreneurship Programme.



Minister of Agriculture Zulfikar Mustapha speaking to the farmers at the Skeldon Estate

GUYANA AND UK PARTNER TO BOOST TOURISM INDUSTRY

A key meeting held at the Guyana Marriott Hotel Georgetown on May 13, brought together tourism stakeholders from Guyana and representatives from the Confederation of Tourism and Hospitality (CTH) of the UK to collaborate on propelling Guyana's tourism sector to new heights.

The event kicked off with opening remarks from Mr. Keon Smith, Training Director of ActionINVEST Caribbean Inc. (ACI), emphasising the importance of collaboration and training for tourism's growth. Dr. Vishnu Doerga, Chairman and Business Development



The meeting at the Guyana Marriott Hotel

Director of ACI, echoed this sentiment, detailing collaborative efforts among the Tourism and Hospitality Association of Guyana (THAG), ACI, and CTH.

Mrs. Dee George, President of THAG,

expressed gratitude to CTH for their ongoing support and highlighted the crucial role of continuous industry training. She reaffirmed THAG's commitment to inspiring and training students for successful

hospitality careers.

Mr. Steve Beckworth, Director of Marketing and Business Development at CTH, presented informative sessions outlining CTH's initiatives to enhance hospitality industry skillsets, supported by ACI. Currently offering a Level 3 Foundation in Tourism and Hospitality, CTH announced plans for new courses focused on practical skills: Level 2 Housekeeping, Level 2 Restaurant/Bar Services, and Front Office. These courses aim to equip students with job-ready skills, boosting their career prospects.

The event also saw Mr. Beckworth present awards to CTH's first

Gold Employers in Guyana. This programme connects trained students with potential industry employers. The recognised Gold Employers are: Guyana Marriott Hotel Georgetown, Evergreen Adventures, Grand Coastal Hotel, and Ramada Georgetown Princess Hotel. These esteemed THAG member establishments were recognised for their outstanding contributions to the industry.

The well-attended event, featuring managers, leaders, strategic partners, and educational organisations, signifies a significant step

forward. By fostering strategic partnerships and offering high-quality training, Guyana and the UK are poised to strengthen Guyana's tourism and hospitality landscape.



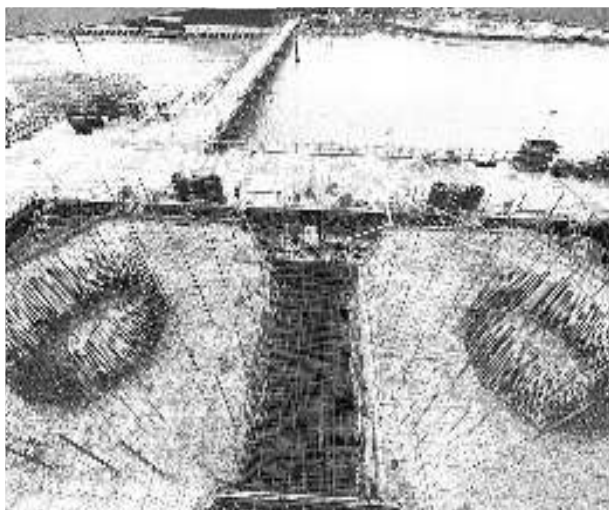
Eduardo Reple, General Manager of the Guyana Marriott Hotel Georgetown, receiving the certificate as a Gold Employer

WORK MOVING APACE ON US\$260M DEMERARA RIVER BRIDGE

Minister of Public Works, Bishop Juan Edghill, recently announced that the US\$260 million bridge over the Demerara River is moving ahead full steam.

"The bridge is moving," Minister Edghill emphasised during an interview with the Department of Public Information (DPI). **"The last report that we had is from the consultant, we are at 43.4 per cent in terms of completion. Works are moving apace, everybody is seeing that."**

This new bridge promises to alleviate the long traffic delays and



Current progress of the bridge

congestion that have plagued commuters for years. The current Demerara Harbour Bridge closure will also be a thing of the past.

The new bridge boasts several

improvements over its predecessor. It will accommodate vehicles of all sizes and weights, with a speed limit of 80 kilometres per hour. In contrast, the Demerara Harbour Bridge can only

handle vehicles travelling at 32 kilometres per hour.

Motorists and residents on both sides of the Demerara River can expect uninterrupted commute. The new bridge design eliminates the need for bridge retractions, a frequent source of delays. The bridge ensures passage for all vessels with a clearance of six meters above the water.

This first-of-its-kind bridge in South America is engineered for longevity. The structure is designed to serve Guyana for at least 100 years.

The bridge is being constructed by China

Railway Construction of State Highway and (International) Limited, with Italian company Politecnica overseeing the process.

The bridge adheres to the American Association

of State Highway and Transportation Officials' standards, guaranteeing a modern and safe infrastructure project connecting Regions Three and Four.



Current progress of the bridge

15 PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES GAIN VALUABLE TECH SKILLS IN GOVT INITIATIVE



Persons Living with Disabilities undergoing the training

The Guyanese government is making strides towards inclusion and economic

empowerment for people with disabilities (PWDs) through a new computer skills training

programme.

Spearheaded by the Ministry of Human Services and Social Security's Disability Unit, this initiative has equipped 15 participants with the skills they need to thrive in the digital age. The eight-day course at the Vryman's Erven Training Centre in Region Six covered essential topics like typing, troubleshooting, and internet navigation.

The programme's goal is to empower participants to navigate the digital world confidently, utilise technology effectively, and access vital information. This initiative aligns with

the government's commitment to supporting vulnerable populations by providing essential services, information, and resources to individuals with disabilities.

This programme adds to the government's ongoing efforts to equip PWDs with valuable skills. Over 172 individuals have already benefited from similar initiatives through the Ministry's Learning Lab. The future looks bright, with plans to expand these training courses to reach PWDs in Regions One, Three, and Nine.

The diverse curriculum offers a range of courses, from

basic computer skills to specialised training like JAWS (Job Access With Speech) for the visually impaired, and even vocational training in garment construction. To ensure a successful learning experience, class sizes are capped

at 15-18 participants, allowing for personalised attention. This inclusive approach reflects the government's dedication to empowering all citizens, regardless of ability, to lead fulfilling and productive lives.



Persons Living with Disabilities undergoing the training

ORONOQUE TO GET \$53 MILLION TRAINING CENTRE AND LABOUR OFFICE

Great news for residents of Oronoque, Region One! A new \$53 million technical training centre and labour office is coming their way.

This project signifies a first for the area, offering residents a range of skill training programmes and essential labour services. Construction is expected to be completed within six months, with the facility boasting a modern design and features similar to those being built in Corriverton and New Amsterdam.

The centre will

focus on practical skills training, including welding, fabrication, and joinery, ensuring graduates meet the Caribbean Vocational Qualifications (CVQ) standards. The land for the project was provided through a collaborative effort between the Ministry of Housing and Water and the Regional Democratic Council (RDC).

An additional benefit is the assignment of a dedicated technical officer from the Board of Industrial Training (BIT) to the area. This signifies

the government's commitment to ongoing support and development.

The project doesn't stop there. As a sign of things to come, 20 residents from Canal Bank and Sebai have already begun a four-month programme to become licenced small engine technicians. Upon completion, these individuals will be equipped with valuable skills to pursue entrepreneurial opportunities and generate income.



Minister of Labour, Joseph Hamilton, and other officials at the sod-turning ceremony for a training centre in Oronoque, Region One

PRESIDENT ALI PUSHES FOR FASTER COMPLETION OF KEY PROJECTS IN REGION THREE



President Ali inspecting the infrastructure developments in the region

President Ali visited Region Three on Monday to inspect progress on critical infrastructure projects, urging contractors to accelerate their work.

SCHOONORD-TO-CRANE HIGHWAY TOPS PRIORITY

LIST

The President placed a strong focus on the ongoing construction of the \$11.8 billion Schoonord-to-Crane four-lane highway. This major development aims to significantly reduce traffic congestion on

the heavily used West Bank and West Coast Demerara corridors.

The project, awarded in September 2022, involves multiple contractors including VR Construction Inc., Avinash Contracting & Scrap Metal Inc., and L-Heureuse Construction and Services Inc. President Ali emphasized the need for all parties to collaborate effectively to meet the mid-year deadline for completion.

Divided into 12 sections, the highway will feature several key elements: An emergency lane, 4.1 kilometres of

new dual-carriageway road, 2.4 kilometres of rehabilitated existing roads, medians separating traffic, two roundabouts, 11 reinforced concrete culverts, and 36 pre-stressed bridges.

PRESIDENT SATISFIED WITH PREFABRICATED HOMES PROJECT

President Ali also inspected pre-fabricated homes under construction by Modular Builds Guyana Inc. at Leonora, West Coast Demerara. He expressed satisfaction with the progress of this project.

These homes, measuring approximately 20x30 feet, offer two bedrooms, a living room, a kitchen area, and a bathroom. They come equipped with modern features like stainless steel

security doors and fire-resistant insulation.

The President additionally reviewed the construction of two-bedroom concrete homes undertaken by the Ministry of Housing and Water. This housing programme not only provides affordable housing options but also creates employment opportunities in the area.



President Ali inspecting the infrastructure developments in the region

The government is taking decisive action to address squatting in Plantation Fitz Hope, also known as Amelia's Ward Phase Four, while simultaneously providing much-needed housing solutions.

"We cannot have the work being held up. We must proceed to put people into their homes," said Sherwyn Greaves, CEO of the Central Housing and Planning Authority (CHPA).



An Aerial view of the Fitz Hope housing area

LINDEN TO GET OVER 500 HOUSE LOTS THIS YEAR AS GOVT TACKLES SQUATTING

This comes after the identification of eight informal structures obstructing infrastructure development in the area. CHPA's recent assessment will determine whether relocation is necessary to facilitate the allocation of over 500 house lots planned for Fitz Hope in 2024.

Previously, ownership documents were provided to over

160 former squatters in the area. There are currently 424 designated house lots ready for allocation.

"We want persons to move into their new homes and we want them to sign their legal documents so they could have the security of tenure to go to the banks and start building their homes," Greaves emphasised.

The government's

firm stance against new squatting areas is bolstered by the ongoing house lot allocations happening nationwide. Efforts are underway to acquire additional lands for allocations in Region Ten, with land clearing already in progress at Plantation York. This upcoming development will see the construction of homes specifically designed for young professionals.

"There are a lot

of exciting things for Linden," said Greaves. "We [will] continue the progress in this area."

This positive development comes on the heels of a substantial investment of \$505.8 million allocated in 2022 for the Amelia's Ward Phase Four housing area's infrastructure programme. Further upgrades were also completed in Wisroc in 2023.

\$185 MILLION IN CONTRACTS SIGNED FOR CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURAL WORKS IN REGION TWO

Guyana's infrastructure push is in high gear, with Region Two (Pomeroon-Supenaam) receiving a significant upgrade. Six contracts totalling \$185 million were signed for critical projects aimed at enhancing residents' lives.

This initiative aligns with the government's commitment to swift implementation of its

infrastructure agenda as outlined in Budget 2024. Regional Executive Officer, Susanah Saywack, led the signing ceremony, solidifying these vital projects.

Key projects include:

- **New Wharf at Charity:** A \$16 million contract awarded to Triple P Construction
- **Paved Roads and Bridge:** Cross Street Vilvoorden will

benefit Pomeroon farmers with a brand-new wharf.

- **Improved Farmland Access:** Guycan Investment will receive over \$44.9 million to complete phase two of upgrades on the Devonshire Castle access dam, enhancing durability with compacted loam.
- **Paved Roads and Bridge:** Cross Street Vilvoorden will

be transformed from a mud dam to a concrete structure for over \$22 million, while a new \$25 million bridge will improve access to previously isolated lands.

Modern School Construction:

A state-of-the-art, two-story primary school with a modern seven-unit sanitary block will be built at Mainstay/

Whyaka. K&J Persaud Contracting Service will execute this \$49 million project.

Muscle Street, Johanna Cecilia, will be paved with concrete for \$25.9 million.

These investments in infrastructure promise to improve access to markets and farmlands, enhance educational opportunities, and create a more connected and livable Region Two.



The signing of the contract



Guyana has been invited to attend the upcoming Group of Twenty (G20) Summit in Brasilia, Brazil

in October, and will advocate for forest conservation and greater incentives for forested-rich countries.

GUYANA TO CHAMPION FOREST CONSERVATION AT UPCOMING G20 SUMMIT

The G20 Summit is the meeting between the Heads of State or Governments of the member countries, who represent around 85 per cent of the world's GDP, more than 75 per cent of world trade and around two-thirds of the world's population

Dr. Bharrat Jagdeo,

Guyana's Vice President, will represent the country at the summit. He has a history of environmental activism and will propose a "menu approach" for countries to choose from when it comes to receiving compensation for forest conservation. This approach could include

carbon credit and public funding.

Dr Jagdeo once received an award from the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) for his fight to preserve forests and combat climate.

Guyana's Low Carbon Development

Strategy (LCDS2030) will be a key talking point. This strategy outlines how Guyana can achieve economic development while simultaneously protecting its forests and biodiversity. Guyana hopes this model can be used as an example for other forested countries.

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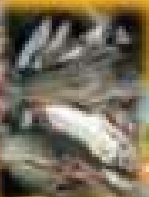
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- CRAB
- SMOKE FISH



3160 EGLINTON AVENUE (1 BLOCK WEST OF MARKHAM ROAD)

GUYANA MAKES CASE FOR FOREST CONSERVATION AT UN FORUM

Guyana's Minister of Natural Resources, Vickram Bharrat, took centre stage at the recent 19th UN Forest Forum, and called for a shift in valuing forests, stating "the entire world benefits from the ecosystem services provided by forests." He argued that traditional approaches aren't enough, highlighting that "too often, maintaining forests has not been a valuable choice for communities or countries."

Minister Bharrat offered Guyana's Low Carbon Development Strategy (LCDS) as a



Minister of Natural Resources Vickram Bharrat addressing the UN Forest Forum

solution, saying "this approach has enabled Guyana to conclude transactions of almost US\$1 billion in payments for the climate services provided by Guyana's forests." He pointed out reinvestment in green initiatives, explaining "the monies earned

from climate/forest services are invested in sustainable climate change adaptation and mitigation measures."

While acknowledging challenges with financing, Minister Bharrat argued for a mixed approach, stating "It is a false argument to say all finance should be public or all finance should be market-based." He criticised broken promises, saying "It is sad to see how many forest countries are working so hard to safeguard forests, yet time after time, are let down by those who promised finance for that work."

Despite this, Guyana remains committed. "Guyana is pleased to have made the progress we have, underpinned by our LCDS," declared Minister Bharrat. He concluded with a powerful message: "The world needs to face up to the fact that forests need to be valued for the ecosystem services they provide... far more progress is needed urgently." Guyana's leadership highlights their unwavering commitment to sustainable solutions.

EU AND GUYANA JOINING FORCES FOR SUSTAINABLE TIMBER INDUSTRY

The European Union (EU) and Guyana are gearing up for a significant leap in transparency and sustainability within the timber industry. EU Ambassador to Guyana, René Van Nes, announced the imminent launch of a digital wood tracking system during a Europe Day celebration.

Guyana is one of the three countries worldwide that has both a forest partnership and a forest law enforcement governance and trade partnership with the EU.

This partnership paves the way for the new system, replacing

the outdated paper-based tracking method. "With a digital system, the Guyana Forestry Commission can track wood products in real-time," the Ambassador explained. "That makes the whole system extremely transparent, so there is a very good chance that Guyana can maintain its very low deforestation rate."

The digital system offers a wider scope for the Guyana Forestry Commission's monitoring capabilities. It will allow them to track timber production,

processing, and trade more effectively. This initiative forms part of a broader EU-Guyana partnership focused on forest preservation and sustainable forestry practices. However, "The collaboration extends beyond timber," Ambassador Van Nes pointed out, introducing the EU's Global Gateway Initiative. This initiative aims to support Guyana's development in new sectors such as health, water management and renewable energy.

The Ambassador shed light on a

particularly exciting prospect: Guyana producing its own pharmaceuticals. "Through this initiative, the EU hopes to help the country develop a regulatory framework for the manufacturing of pharmaceuticals here", he said.

Expressing optimism for the future, Ambassador Van Nes concluded, "We hope to see Guyana in the future producing pharmaceuticals to meet its own needs, the needs of the region and maybe



European Union (EU) Ambassador to Guyana, René Van Nes

even global needs." Discussions on bringing this vision to life are already underway. This collaboration signifies a promising step towards a more sustainable and diversified future for Guyana, with the EU playing a key role in supporting these advancements.

PRIME MINISTER PHILLIPS LAUDS CONFUCIUS INSTITUTE'S 10 YEARS OF PROMOTING CHINA-GUYANA TIES

Prime Minister, Mark Phillips, commended the Confucius Institute at the University of Guyana (CIUG) for

a decade of fostering cultural exchange and strengthening ties between Guyana and China.

"This milestone speaks volumes to the commitment of the University of Guyana and its partners who jointly established this institute ten years ago," Prime Minister Phillips remarked at the CIUG's 10th-anniversary ceremony at the Education Lecture Theatre (ELT) at the University of Guyana's Turkeyen Campus. "Through their efforts, we see, ten years later, the far-reaching benefits of education, cultural exchange, and the fostering of mutual

understanding between our two great nations." Established in collaboration with Dalian University of Foreign Languages (DUFL) and Hanban, the CIUG has become a central location for Guyanese to learn Chinese language and culture. Prime Minister Phillips emphasised the institute's role in providing a platform for students and professionals to connect with China.

The Prime Minister acknowledged the long-standing relationship between Guyana and China,

especially appreciating China's investments in infrastructure, technology, and initiatives like the CIUG. He stressed the importance of cultural exchange in fostering understanding and growth beyond economic and political cooperation.

Prime Minister Phillips pointed out the significance of language learning in today's world, where international collaboration and multiculturalism are crucial. He highlighted how proficiency in multiple languages opens doors to educational

opportunities, career advancement, and personal growth. The Prime Minister reaffirmed the government's commitment to supporting initiatives that promote cultural exchange. He recognized the vital role such connections play in national development and global harmony.

The ceremony included the Prime Minister's wife, Mignon Bowen-Phillips, China's Ambassador to Guyana, Guo Haiyan, and the University of Guyana's Vice-Chancellor, Paloma Mohamed-Martin.



PM Phillips at CIUG 10th Anniversary

WORLD CUP TROPHY ARRIVES IN GUYANA, PRESIDENT RALLIES FOR WINDIES VICTORY

The prestigious ICC Men's T20 World Cup trophy landed in Guyana, greeted by President Irfaan Ali at State House. The tournament kicks off on June 1st in the US, with Guyana's National Stadium hosting its first match on June 2nd. President Ali issued a rallying cry to the Caribbean, urging them to unite behind the West Indies team. **"With a collective voice, we can inspire our boys to lift the trophy,"** he declared. His confidence stems from the team's talented players



The prestigious ICC Men's T20 World Cup trophy is in Guyana

and their historical dominance in Twenty20 cricket. President Ali also emphasised the importance of the Caribbean's vibrant atmosphere and passionate crowds for a successful tournament. The President wasn't alone in welcoming the trophy. Minister of Culture, Youth and Sport Charles Ramson Jr., cricket legend Ramnaresh Sarwan, and current West Indies players Kevin Sinclair, Tagenarine Chanderpaul, and Tevin Imlach were also present at the ceremony. While the official ceremony focused on the upcoming tournament, First Lady Arya Ali added a heartwarming touch. She brought joy

to the children at the Hope Children's Home by arranging a meeting between June 1st and 29th. Guyana will be



First Lady Arya Ali and the local cricket stars and the children

with the ICC Men's T20 World Cup trophy and local cricket stars. A total of 45 matches will be played across the

a key player, hosting a semi-final and five group-stage matches, including two featuring the West Indies.



President Ali and his sons with the trophy

GUYANA AND SAUDI ARABIA FOOTBALL FEDERATIONS SIGN MOU

The Guyana Football Federation (GFF) announced a significant partnership with the Saudi Arabian Football Federation (SAFF) after signing a two-year Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on May 16. This is the first-ever MoU between the two nations and aims to bolster Guyana's football development across various sectors. The agreement, signed by GFF President Wayne Forde and SAFF President Yasser Al Misheal, covers a wide range of areas including marketing, sports facilities, coach development, referee training, and youth football programmes. Collaboration will also extend to women's football, futsal, beach soccer, sports science, and sports medicine. Forde expressed his enthusiasm for the partnership, stating it's another step towards providing

Guyanese players with opportunities to compete at the highest level. He highlighted the MoU's potential for cultural exchange and capacity building, particularly in sports science, youth development, infrastructure, and women's football. This MoU follows Guyana's participation in the historic FIFA Series held in Saudi Arabia two months ago. The Golden Jaguars, Guyana's national



(L-R) Wayne Forde - President GFF and Yasser Al Misheal - President SAFF

team, delivered a strong performance, including a 4-1 victory over Cambodia. The series,

featuring teams from various confederations, allows for international exposure and connection building. The GFF plans to collaborate with the SAFF in arranging international friendlies for both the women's and youth national teams in the coming months. This partnership holds promise for significant development in Guyana's footballing landscape.

GUYANA GEARS UP FOR CRICKET WORLD CUP WITH PASSAGE OF ICC BILL

The National Assembly of Guyana unanimously approved the International Cricket Council (ICC) Cricket World Cup West Indies Bill, paving the way for the smooth running of the highly anticipated tournament. Minister of Culture, Youth and Sport, Charles Ramson Jr., explained the Bill's purpose. **"The Bill seeks to harmonise the provisions as part of our international commitments to host these matches."** **"It is a privilege to have the World Cup come to the West Indies,"** Minister Ramson declared. **"We**



Minister of Culture, Youth and Sport, Charles Ramson Jr (centre)

are looking forward to a successful game and hosting of the tournament." He emphasised the significance of Guyana's role, especially considering the involvement of the United States as a co-

host. **"The country's ability to host and the region's ability to host is now under different circumstances and challenges,"** he stated. **"This legislation signals**

Guyana's intention for this tournament and sends a very important signal about putting into place a developmental pathway for Guyana to be a world-class destination for international events." **Key provisions of the Bill** • The Minister has the authority to designate Cricket World Cup (CWC) venues and related areas, as well as declare match periods. • Cricket West Indies (CWI) will have control over the designated venues during match periods, with exceptions for

public health authorities. • CWI is solely responsible for ticket sales and distribution. • The Guyanese government can issue work permits related to CWC activities. • The Minister has the power to create regulations for the Act and modify its schedules. Minister of Home Affairs, Robeson Benn, addressed security measures. **"There are a number of security protocols that we need to have in place,"** he said. The Bill outlines these protocols, including the prohibition of unauthorised entry and exit from stadiums; police officers' authority

to request names and addresses from suspected offenders; a \$5 million fine for anyone caught illegally selling tickets; and prohibition on using Cricket World Cup tickets for commercial promotions or competitions without CWI's written approval. Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs, Anil Nandlall, expressed his full support for the Bill. With its passage, Guyana is now well-equipped to co-host the ICC Cricket World Cup West Indies and create a memorable experience for players and fans alike.



Guyanese
DIASPORA DIGEST

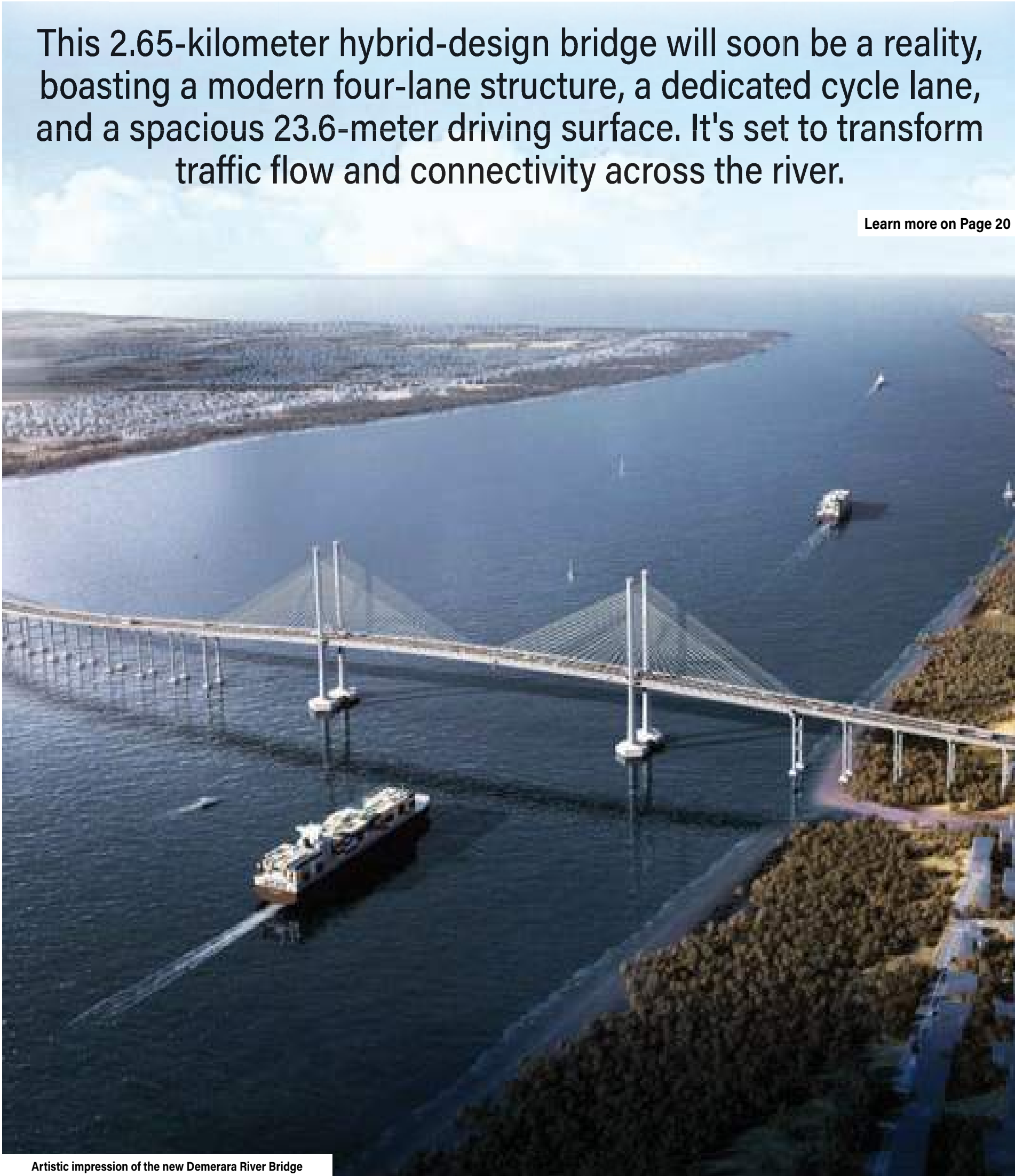


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