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## Windies Women KO England

WEST INDIES women pulled off the biggest heist of this T20 World Cup and qualified for the semi-finals, against all expectation, and knocked out one of the favourites, England.

Having last beaten England in 2018, West Indies broke a 13-match

losing streak and topped Group B to set up a semi-final against New Zealand in Sharjah. That year was also the last time West Indies played in a semi-final of the T20 World Cup.

This is only the second time England have missed out on the knockouts of a T20 World Cup after being eliminated in the group stage in 2010.

West Indies will now play South Africa in the semi-finals on October 20 in Dubai.



## Barbados signs air services agreement with Qatar to encourage investment

Barbados and the State of Qatar have signed an Air Services Agreement (ASA).

The ASA gives designated airlines from both countries the flexibility to operate without directional or geographical limitations. In addition, the signing will assist in the process of enhancing the relationship between Barbados and Qatar and will facilitate greater cooperation in several areas, including tourism, capacity-building, opportunities in education, and scholarships.

It will also serve as a means of broadening the scope of engagement and the pursuit of opportunities for increased trade and investment.

Minister of Tourism and International Transport Ian Gooding-Edghill, who signed the agreement with President of the Qatar Civil Aviation Authority, Mohamed Faleh Alhajri in Doha on Sunday (pictured), said the Barbados-Qatar ASA is part of a wider initiative under Prime Minister Mia Mottley's leadership to promote greater regional air connectivity in the Caribbean while expanding international cooperation and diplomatic ties in the Middle East. Gooding-Edghill said: "This ASA marks an important step towards deepening ties between Barbados and Qatar, setting the foundation for enhanced collaboration in the aviation sector and creating new opportunities to explore air connectivity between our regions."

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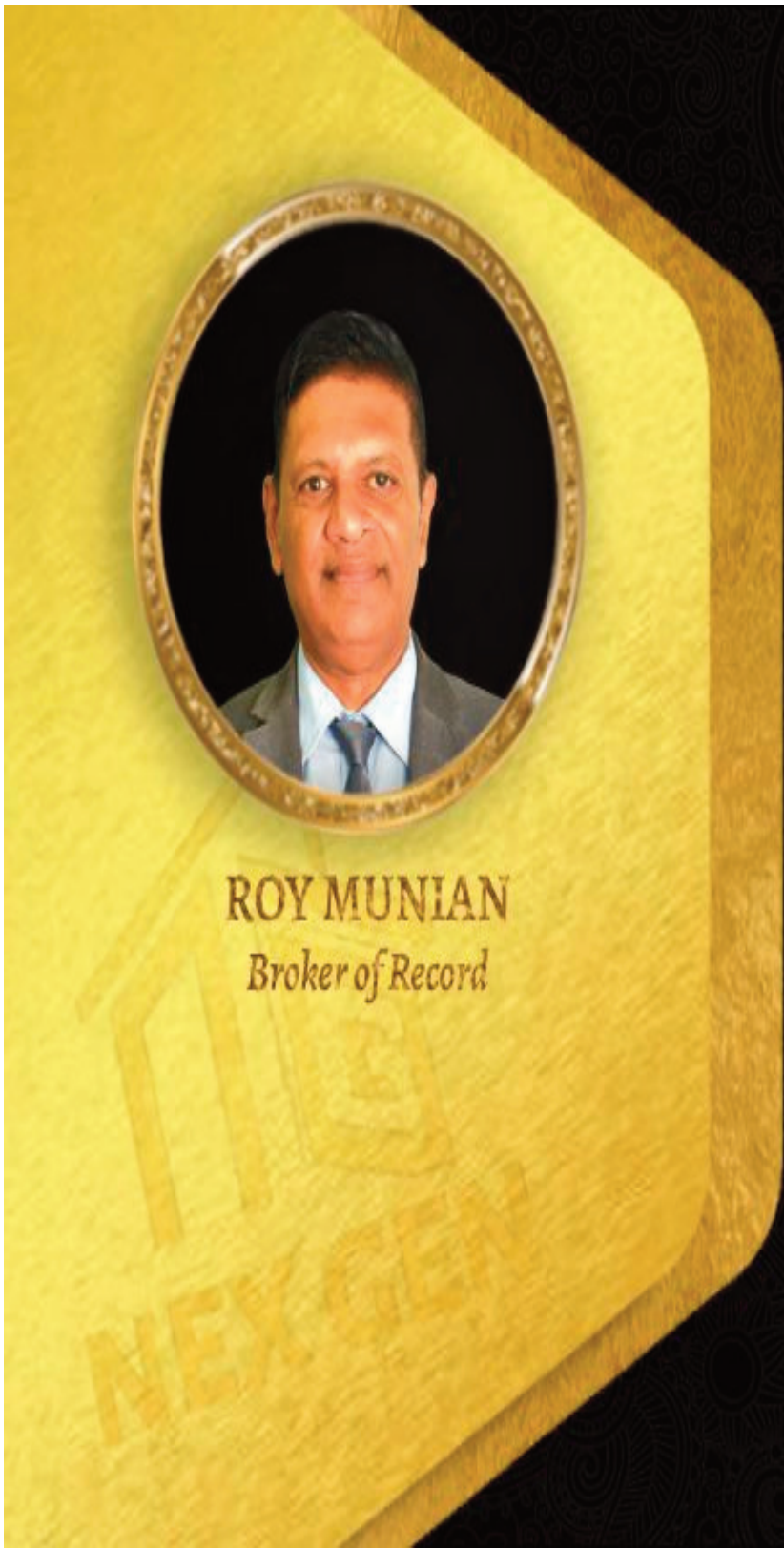
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# Guyanese DIASPORA DIGEST



KEEPING THE DIASPORA INFORMED EDITION 78

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IN SPECIAL ADDRESS TO PARLIAMENT, PRESIDENT ALI ANNOUNCES MAJOR INITIATIVES:

## \$200,000 CASH GRANT FOR EVERY HOUSEHOLD

In a historic announcement that has captured the attention of the nation, President Dr. Irfaan Ali has unveiled a \$200,000 cash grant for every household in Guyana. Valued at an estimated \$60 billion, this unprecedented move marks a major step in reducing economic disparities and improving the lives of citizens across the country.

Addressing the 12th Parliament at the Arthur Chung Conference Centre, President Ali underscored his government's steadfast commitment to addressing socio-economic gaps and ensuring that all Guyanese enjoy a higher standard of living. The initiative, which is expected to be rolled out immediately, forms part of the government's ongoing efforts to provide financial relief to citizens during challenging economic times.

### A Continuation of Support

This \$200,000 cash grant follows a series of similar measures that have characterised the Ali administration's

approach to economic relief. Since taking office, the government has distributed multiple one-off payments to support various groups, particularly those most affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, natural disasters, and economic challenges.

One of the earliest relief efforts was the **COVID-19 Relief Grant**, where each household received \$25,000 to cushion the pandemic's impact. In total, \$7.5 billion was injected into the economy through this initiative. Riverine and hinterland communities received an additional special grant of \$25,000, with \$1.2 billion distributed to these areas. Amerindian communities received a further \$1.73 billion in direct support.

In response to the devastating floods of 2021, the government swiftly acted, providing over \$7 billion in one-off payments to affected farmers, households, and businesses. This relief allowed those who had suffered significant losses to rebuild and recover. Similarly, **severed sugar workers** from the Enmore, Skeldon, Rose Hall, and Wales



President Ali addressing Parliament

estates were given a one-off \$250,000 cash grant, placing over \$1.3 billion into these communities. Sugar workers at Uitvlugt, affected by estate downtime, were also provided with a one-off payment of \$277 million.

In 2022 and 2023, **senior citizens, public assistance recipients, and people with disabilities** received \$25,000 in one-off

payments to help manage rising living costs. These targeted grants showcased the government's commitment to protecting society's most vulnerable populations, particularly as the cost of living continued to rise.

Fisherfolk were also included in the government's relief programmes, with **8,000 fishers** receiving \$150,000 each

in 2022. This support was designed to offset the challenges faced by the fishing industry due to fluctuating market conditions. Public servants have similarly benefitted, with a \$25,000 one-off payment in 2020 injecting \$2 billion into the pockets of nearly 60,000 workers. In 2021, health workers received a special tax-free bonus equivalent to two weeks'

salary, amounting to \$600 million.

The **Because We Care Cash Grant**, a hallmark initiative under President Ali's government, has provided financial support to parents of school-aged children of both public and private schools. Since its introduction, the grant has expanded from \$744 million in 2020 to **\$9.4 billion in 2024**.

## \$10,000 TAX BREAK PER CHILD FOR PARENTS

President Dr. Irfaan Ali has introduced a significant amendment to the Income Tax Act, which will allow parents to claim a \$10,000 monthly income tax deduction per child. This change is set to take effect in 2025 and is expected to provide substantial financial relief to families across Guyana.

The amendment was announced as part of the government's ongoing efforts to support families and reduce the financial burden of raising children. President Ali emphasised that this tax break will directly benefit parents, allowing them to keep more of their hard-earned income.

Under the revised tax laws, parents will be



able to claim a \$10,000 deduction for each child under the age of 18. This means that a parent with two children can reduce their taxable income by \$20,000 per month, resulting in a significant decrease in their income tax liability.

The tax deduction is expected to have a

particularly positive impact on low- and middle-income families, who often struggle to meet the rising costs of living. By reducing their tax burden, parents will have more disposable income to spend on essentials like food, clothing, education, and healthcare.

## \$10B NIS RELIEF FOR PENSIONERS

In a move to bolster the financial security of Guyana's elderly population, the government has announced a \$10 billion allocation to the National Insurance Scheme (NIS). This substantial investment aims to support those who may not have made sufficient contributions to the pension scheme, ensuring a more equitable and comfortable retirement for all.

President Dr. Irfaan Ali unveiled the allocation during a special address to the 12th Parliament, emphasising the government's commitment to the well-being of its citizens. While the specific details of the programme will

be revealed in the 2025 National Budget, the overarching goal is to provide a much-needed lifeline for elderly Guyanese who may be facing financial hardship.

The NIS plays a crucial role in providing social security benefits to the population, including old-age

pensions, disability pensions, and survivors' benefits.

However, many individuals may not have met the necessary contribution requirements to receive the full benefits. This allocation seeks to address this disparity and ensure that all elderly citizens have access to a basic level of financial support.

The \$10 billion injection into the NIS is expected to have a profound impact on the lives of countless Guyanese seniors. It will provide a much-needed safety net for those who may have struggled to save for retirement or who have faced unforeseen circumstances that have depleted their savings.



# MINIMUM WAGE TO REACH \$100K FOR PUBLIC SERVANTS BY 2025



President Ali addressing Parliament

President Dr. Irfaan Ali has announced that all public sector workers in Guyana will earn no less than \$100,000 per month by the end of 2025. Speaking at the 12th Parliament of Guyana at the Arthur Chung Conference Centre, he revealed this wage adjustment as part of the government's broader efforts to uplift public servants and promote equity in

society. **"This is how we reduce inequity in the society,"** President Ali declared, receiving strong applause from Parliament members. The salary increase is set to provide significant financial relief to public servants, many of whom have already benefitted from a range of support measures introduced by the Ali administration.

### Consistent Support for Public Servants

Since 2020, the Ali administration has introduced numerous initiatives to enhance public sector wages and benefits. In December 2020, a **one-off payment of \$25,000** was distributed to nearly 60,000 public servants, injecting \$2 billion into their pockets. A **7% salary**

**increase** followed in 2021, benefitting more than 50,000 public servants, teachers, and government pensioners. Additionally, **health workers** received a **special two-week bonus** totalling \$600 million, while members of the Disciplined Services enjoyed a **one-month tax-free bonus**, totalling \$1.2 billion in 2021.

### Boosting Disposable Income

The government's tax reforms have also had a significant impact. In 2022, the income tax threshold was increased from \$65,000 to \$75,000, releasing \$1.3 billion into the hands of workers. In 2023, this threshold was further increased to \$85,000, providing \$3.3 billion in disposable income and removing 12,000 workers from the tax net. Most recently, in 2024, the threshold was

raised to \$100,000, which benefited another 13,000 workers, adding \$4.8 billion in disposable income to the economy.

### Targeted Support for Teachers and Health Workers

Teachers and health workers have been key beneficiaries of the government's wage policies. In 2023, **5,000 health workers** and nearly **9,000 members of the Disciplined Services** saw salary adjustments that provided them with an additional \$3 billion. Teachers received **education allowances** of up to \$30,000 monthly for advanced degrees, while those in remote areas benefitted from an increased **Remote Areas Incentive (RAI)**, now set at \$23,000 monthly.

The government also negotiated a **three-year salary increase agreement** with the

Guyana Teachers' Union, which includes wage hikes of **10% in 2024, 8% in 2025, and 9% in 2026**, ensuring long-term financial growth for educators.

### Commitment to Public Sector Workers

The cumulative effect of these measures has increased the spending power of public sector workers by **\$89.5 billion** between 2020 and 2024. Vice President Dr. Bharrat Dr. Jagdeo recently emphasised the government's dedication to public servants, noting that their spending power had grown substantially due to targeted initiatives.

With the announcement of the \$100,000 minimum wage, the Ali administration continues its commitment to improving the livelihoods of Guyana's public sector workers.

# FREE UG TUITION STARTING JANUARY 2025

President Dr. Irfaan Ali has confirmed that tuition fees at the University of Guyana (UG) will be completely abolished starting in January 2025. This historic decision, announced during a special address to the 12th Parliament, will provide free university education for approximately 11,000 students and is expected to cost the government around \$8 billion.

President Ali's announcement marks the fulfillment of a promise he made in 2022 to make university education accessible to all Guyanese. Last

year, the President had outlined a gradual, step-by-step approach to achieving this. The removal of tuition fees is the final phase of that plan, which has already seen significant financial relief for students, including debt forgiveness.

Earlier in 2024, \$203.7 million in student loans were written off, benefiting 346 students in a sweeping debt cancellation. This debt wipe-out served as a precursor to the full abolition of tuition fees, which is expected to deliver life-changing opportunities for students from all walks



of life. Vice President Dr. Bharrat Jagdeo has highlighted the administration's strategic approach to this reform, contrasting it with the unfulfilled promises

of the APNU+AFC government. He noted that during the APNU+AFC's time in office, university fees were increased by 35%, a decision that left many students struggling with the burden of tuition

costs. In contrast, Dr. Jagdeo emphasised the current government's methodical and well-planned approach, which he believes will transform Guyana's education landscape.

**"They promised to do it in a couple of weeks when they got into office... Instead, they increased the fees by 35 per cent at UG. We said in five years we'll do this, and that's why we believe we have the capability. We plan everything,"** Dr. Jagdeo said, highlighting the administration's strategic planning and focus on making

education accessible for all.

While removing financial barriers is a critical step, the government is equally committed to improving the quality of tertiary education. Dr. Jagdeo noted that part of the government's strategy includes not only funding UG properly, but also exploring new technical training programmes. These programmes, which may be sourced from other institutions, are expected to enhance the skillsets of Guyanese students and better meet the needs of the evolving job market.

# \$10,000 HEALTH VOUCHER FOR EVERY CHILD BY 2025

President Dr. Irfaan Ali has announced a new universal healthcare voucher programme, that will provide \$10,000 to every child in the country. This initiative, set to begin in 2025, aims to fund essential medical tests for children, facilitating early detection and prevention of non-communicable diseases (NCDs).

The universal

healthcare voucher programme will benefit approximately 500,000 Guyanese children, and is expected to cost the government \$5 billion. This investment is part of the government's ongoing efforts to strengthen the nation's healthcare system and improve the overall well-being of its citizens.

By providing children with access to essential medical tests,

the programme will help to establish baseline health data and identify potential health risks early. This proactive approach is crucial in preventing NCDs, which have become a major public health concern in many countries.

President Ali's announcement builds on recent healthcare initiatives, including the Cervical Cancer Screening Programme

launched earlier this year, targeting women aged 21 to 65 years. The government has allocated \$2.8 billion for this programme, offering women \$8,000 vouchers for cervical cancer screenings.

Additionally, the government has introduced an eye-testing and spectacles programme, providing financial assistance of \$2,000 for eye tests and

\$15,000 for spectacles for individuals under 18 and over 65 years of age. This initiative is supported by a combined allocation of \$1.8 billion in the national budget.

To further assist those with chronic health issues, the government continues to provide financial support for haemodialysis treatment, granting each patient an annual sum of \$600,000.

These initiatives reflect the government's commitment to advancing healthcare services across Guyana, emphasising the importance of early detection and preventative care in reducing the burden of chronic diseases on the population.

## PRESIDENT ALI RECEIVES CARIBBEAN GLOBAL LEADER 2024 AWARD

President Ali was honoured with the prestigious *Caribbean Global Leader 2024* award at the Caribbean Global Awards ceremony held in London. The accolade recognises President Ali's exceptional dedication and leadership in promoting Guyana's development, and strengthening regional

cooperation across the Caribbean.

Selected ahead of several distinguished regional leaders, President Ali's recognition stems from his unwavering commitment to advancing Guyana's interests on the global stage. Under his leadership, the country has seen significant progress in sectors such as infrastructure, energy, and economic development, all while fostering strong diplomatic ties within the Caribbean community.

The United Kingdom-based organisation behind the awards announced

President Ali's selection in April, highlighting his visionary leadership in shaping Guyana's transformation into a critical regional player.

First Lady, Her Excellency Mrs. Arya Ali, accompanied the President at the ceremony, adding to the significance of the occasion. The award is a testament not only to President Ali's impact on Guyana but also to his influential role in guiding the Caribbean region toward a more unified and prosperous future.

It also adds to a growing list of accolades, including the prestigious Global African



President Ali with First Lady, Mrs Arya Ali

Leadership Award, which he received in Ghana in January for his strong and transformational leadership and his efforts to strengthen relations between Guyana and African nations, particularly Ghana



President Ali receiving the Caribbean Global Leader 2024 award

## GUYANESE CAN NOW TRAVEL VISA - FREE TO THE BRITISH VIRGIN ISLANDS

Citizens of Guyana can now travel to the British Virgin Islands (BVI) without a visa, that country's Premier, Dr Natalio Wheatley, announced at a press conference.

Dr Wheatley emphasised that this move will strengthen the relationship between the BVI and the Caribbean region, facilitating greater ease in travel, trade, tourism, and investments. "It underscores our shared vision of regional cooperation and opens new



More than 1,000 Guyanese currently reside in the BVI

opportunities for people-to-people exchange," he noted.

The BVI is currently working on a Memorandum of

Understanding (MoU) to further solidify the relationship between the two countries. Dr Wheatley disclosed in February that talks had progressed towards potentially signing a MoU for visa-free travel.

While the cabinet decision has been made and implementation is expected to be swift, Dr Wheatley noted that further discussions with the BVI's immigration department and the Ministry for Tourism, Culture, and Sustainable Development are necessary before

finalising the agreement.

It is important to note that more than 1,000 Guyanese currently reside in the BVI. The

introduction of visa-free travel will undoubtedly enhance connectivity and strengthen the ties between the two nations.



Visa-free travel to the British Virgin Islands

## PRESIDENT ALI'S GLOBAL SECURITY BOOK DEBUTS AT OXFORD

Guyana's President Dr. Irfaan Ali made a noteworthy academic contribution with the launch of his new

book, **"Achieving Global Security: The Caribbean Experience and Beyond"**. The book,

published by World Scientific Publishing, was unveiled at the prestigious Blavatnik School of Business at Oxford University in England.

The book delves into pressing global security issues from a Caribbean perspective, offering valuable insights for a global audience. The launch attracted a diverse group of scholars and students who were eager to learn more about the President's work, and its relevance to today's challenges.

Prior to the book launch, President Ali engaged in a thought-provoking discussion

with Oxford students. The interactive session, titled "Guyana in Transformation: The Theory of Change and Priorities", focused on Guyana's leadership strategy in managing its burgeoning oil wealth. Moderated by Professor Karthik Ramana and former Colombian President Ivan Duque, the discussion provided students with a unique opportunity to explore Guyana's development approach firsthand.

The book's launch at Oxford University highlights Guyana's growing prominence on the world stage. It is a testament to President



Prior to launching his book, the Head of State held an interactive session with students

Ali's commitment that regional perspectives can make to addressing global security issues and demonstrates the valuable contributions to global discourse.



President Ali signing a copy of the book

# GANDHI'S TEACHINGS OFFER SOLUTIONS TO GLOBAL FOOD INSECURITY - PRESIDENT ALI



Gandhi's philosophies urged the world to reflect on the ethical implications of food consumption

President Ali has highlighted the valuable solutions offered by Mahatma Gandhi's teachings to address the current global food insecurity crisis.

During the birth anniversary ceremony of Gandhi and Lal Bahadur Shastri,

preservation, concepts that are considered modern today.

The president pointed out the pressing issue of global food insecurity, stating that 800 million people go to bed hungry every night while 1.3 billion tonnes of food are wasted annually. He emphasised that everyone is contributing to this injustice and must dedicate themselves to being part of the solution.

President Ali highlighted Gandhi's foresight in recognising the systemic issues the world faces today. He noted that Gandhi's famous protest against British colonial rule in

India, the "Salt March", was a testament to his understanding of the link between food security, ethical choices, justice, self-reliance, and care for others and the earth.

**"He understood long before any of us did that food security is not simply about production. He saw that food prices were linked to ethical choices, justice, self-reliance and how we care for each other and the earth,"** the president stated.

Gandhi advocated for decentralised food production systems, emphasising the importance of self-sufficiency for

communities and nations. The PPP/C administration has been actively working to transform Guyana's agricultural sector into a major food ecosystem, encouraging youth involvement as part of the solution.

President Ali emphasised the relevance of Gandhi's philosophy in today's world, highlighting the "25 by 2025" goal as a testament to the importance of self-reliance and ethical food practices.

Gandhi's legacy of peace, non-violence, truth, and social justice continues to inspire people around the

world. His teachings offer valuable insights and solutions to address the pressing challenges of our time, including global food insecurity.

The ceremony took place at the Gandhi Statue in the Promenade Gardens in Georgetown.



President Ali delivering remarks at the celebration of Gandhi's 155th birth anniversary at the Promenade Gardens

# PRESIDENT ALI PRAISES CHINA'S IMPACT ON GUYANA

President Ali praised China for its significant contributions to Guyana's development and expansion over the decades. The head of state made these remarks at the Chinese Embassy reception celebrating the 75th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China.

China's progressive model has benefited Guyana in various areas, including infrastructure development, trade, technology investment, health, and education. Several Chinese companies are leading innovative projects in Guyana, such as the extension of the

East Coast Demerara Road Project, the new Demerara River Bridge, Joe Vieira Park, and the construction of six regional hospitals.

The 19th Chinese Medical Brigade has provided medical services to approximately 14,000 local patients, performed over 2,300 surgeries, and conducted 21 medical outreaches.

President Ali emphasised the peaceful and cooperative nature of the relationship between Guyana and China, and highlighted the shared cultural ties and decades of diplomatic relations. He noted China's vital role in Guyana's ongoing



Toasting the 75th Anniversary of the Founding of the People's Republic of China

economic growth and the significant achievements of their bilateral relationship.

**"We want this transformation to position our country as one of the most innovative and diverse**

**economies,"** President Ali said, emphasising the importance of partnerships in achieving this goal. While Guyana continues to strengthen its relationship with China, the president also stressed the need to forge new ties with other

nations to expand its global reach.

The relationship between Guyana and China encompasses military, defence, security, and intellectual partnerships. The establishment of the People's Republic of China 75 years ago marked the beginning of an extraordinary journey of transformation and progress, making China a leader among developing nations.

Chinese Ambassador to Guyana, Guo Haiyan, highlighted the ongoing innovative projects in the country and the achievements resulting from the bilateral

collaboration. She emphasised China's unwavering support for Guyana's development and expressed gratitude for Guyana being the first English-speaking Caribbean country to establish diplomatic ties with China.

As the world's largest developing country, China remains a key driver of global economic growth and a major partner for numerous countries and regions. The ceremony was attended by Prime Minister Brigadier (Ret'd) Mark Phillips, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Hugh Todd, other government ministers, and members of the diplomatic community and the private sector.

# GUYANA'S GROWING INTERNATIONAL REACH BOOSTING ECONOMIC PROSPECTS

Guyana's strategic foreign policy initiatives are enhancing the country's global standing, and opening up new opportunities for economic growth.

Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Hugh Todd highlighted the government's commitment to strengthening international visibility and engagement in a recent interview. The achievement of visa-free travel to the British Virgin Islands,

Anguilla, and the United Arab Emirates is a testament to this growing international recognition.

These agreements signal that Guyana is a reliable and attractive partner for foreign investment, paving the way for increased tourism and trade.

Minister Todd attributed these successes to the government's comprehensive foreign policy, which focuses on protecting sovereignty, strengthening regional

integration, and achieving energy, food, and climate security.

**"President Dr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali has been very strong on democracy, the rule of law, transparency, and accountability,"** Minister Todd said. **"This has improved our visibility, standing, and predictability as a democratic nation-state, making us attractive to other countries."**

Since taking office, the PPP/C

Administration has intensified its engagement with traditional partners like the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, and the European Union. Through initiatives like the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative and the CARIFORUM-EU Economic Partnership Agreement, Guyana is cementing its position as a key player in the international arena.

The government's vision extends beyond



Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Hugh Todd

traditional partnerships. Guyana is actively expanding its global footprint in sectors like energy, tourism, and infrastructure. **"We are engaging with countries in the**

**Middle East, Asia, and Africa,"** Minister Todd emphasised. **"To be a global player, your economic diplomacy must be global."**

President Ali has outlined plans to boost local production in the agriculture sector through partnerships with the Middle East and Indonesia. This strategic approach aims to meet domestic needs and position Guyana as a significant global supplier.

## EXCLUSIVE TOURISM OPERATOR ABERCROMBIE & KENT SET TO ENTER GUYANA'S MARKET

Guyana's tourism sector is set to receive a significant boost with the addition of the renowned luxury travel operator Abercrombie & Kent to the local market. This announcement was made by President Ali on his Facebook page following

a meeting with Geoffrey Kent, the founder and Chairman Emeritus of Abercrombie & Kent.

Accompanying Kent was local Wilderness Explorer Toney Thorne, while President Ali was joined by Minister of Tourism, Industry, and

Commerce Oneidge Walrond, Guyana's High Commissioner to London, Rajendra Singh, and Director of Presidential Affairs Marcia Nadir-Sharma. Abercrombie & Kent is a global leader in luxury travel,

specialising in crafting unique and enjoyable travel experiences. Their commitment to sustainable tourism aligns with Guyana's efforts to promote responsible and environmentally friendly tourism practices.

The introduction of Abercrombie & Kent into Guyana's market highlights the country's growing tourism appeal and underscores the confidence that international businesses have in the stability and growth potential of the economy. President Ali has been a strong advocate for the advancement of Guyana's tourism sector, encouraging large-scale tourism investors and operators to capitalise on the opportunities it presents.

The government has been actively investing in boosting Guyana's eco-tourism industry, combining



President Ali was accompanied by Minister of Tourism, Industry, and Commerce Oneidge Walrond



President Ali meeting with Geoffrey Kent, the founder and Chairman Emeritus of the exclusive tourism operator Abercrombie & Kent

modern amenities with natural beauty. These investments complement the country's already impressive repertoire of distinctive sights and tourism experiences. The president has emphasised the importance of increased private sector investment in further propelling this growth.

An upcoming International Business Conference (IBC) presents a prime opportunity for expanded

partnerships. The conference, co-hosted by the Suriname-Guyana Chamber of Commerce (SGCC) and the Guyana Manufacturing and Services Association (GMSA), will be held from October 15 to 17. It will focus on streamlining the ease of doing business and facilitating investments between international companies and Guyana.

## GUYANA'S TOURISM INDUSTRY SOARS TOWARDS ONE MILLIONTH VISITOR

Guyana's tourism sector is experiencing a remarkable surge, driven by strategic government initiatives and robust economic growth.

According to Ramesh Ghir, the Chief Executive Officer of the Cheddi Jagan International Airport, the country is on track to achieve a significant milestone: welcoming its one-millionth visitor by November 2024.

Ghir attributed this significant increase

in tourist arrivals to government efforts to promote Guyana as a top destination for both leisure and business travellers. Events like the CPL and Cricket Carnival have also played a crucial role in boosting the country's appeal.

In the first nine months of 2024, Guyana welcomed over **801,000 passengers**, representing an 18% year-over-year increase compared to the same period in 2023.



Passengers arriving at the CJIA

This growth is fueled by increased airline connectivity, with several new airlines adding routes to Guyana and offering more than 200,000 additional seats.

President Ali has been instrumental in driving the development of the tourism sector. His efforts to market Guyana to major airlines have resulted in negotiations for additional carriers to enter the market soon.

"This significant

**milestone underscores Guyana's emergence as a vibrant and attractive destination for travelers worldwide,"** Ghir noted. "The country's natural beauty, rich cultural heritage, and growing economic opportunities are attracting visitors from near and far."

## GUYANESE GOSPEL STAR WINS CARIBBEAN ARTISTE OF THE YEAR



Samuel Medas

Guyanese gospel musician, Samuel Medas, has been crowned the Caribbean Artiste of the Year at the prestigious Sterling Gospel Music Awards held in Jamaica.

Expressing his gratitude on social media, Medas said, "I'm humbled. Thank you so much to all who had a hand in this, and congratulations to my other brothers who were nominated

in this category." He also added, "For King and Country."

In an interview with the Guyana Chronicle earlier this year, Medas discussed his successes, attributing much of his growth to the power of social media. He explained how platforms like TikTok have played a crucial role in expanding his reach beyond the Caribbean.



Samuel Medas



# GUYANA'S INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS CONFERENCE ATTRACTS OVER 550 REGISTRANTS

The inaugural International Business Conference (IBC) 2024, scheduled to take place from October 15 to 17 at the Marriott Hotel, has garnered significant interest with over 550 businesses already registered.

A joint initiative between Guyana and Suriname, the IBC aims to provide networking opportunities, market intelligence, and exposure to business prospects in the region.

Dr. Peter Ramsaroop, Head of the Guyana

Office for Investment, emphasised Guyana's position as a leading investment destination. **"This conference aligns with the government's goal of making Guyana a conference destination, building capacity, and finding opportunities within the ongoing transformation projects,"** he stated at a recent media briefing.

Dr. Ramsaroop highlighted Guyana's strategic location, and

emphasised its role as a hub for economic activity in Latin America and the Caribbean. **"Investments in Guyana not only benefit the country, but also contribute to the development of the broader region,"** he said.

Suriname's Ambassador to Guyana, Her Excellency Liselle Blankendal, underscored the strong bilateral relationship between the two countries. **"The IBC serves as a platform for fostering**



Chief Investment Officer, Dr Peter Ramsaroop

**international partnerships, attracting investment opportunities, and creating avenues for sustainable development,"** she explained.

The organisers of the IBC have launched a dedicated app to share information, facilitate engagement, and provide a virtual platform for participants. The conference is supported

by the Guyana-Suriname Chamber of Commerce and the Guyana Manufacturing and Services Association.

Guyana's commitment to promoting investment is evident in its successful hosting of the International Energy Conference and Supply Chain Expo earlier this year. As the country continues to grow, such conferences play a crucial role in highlighting its investment potential to the world.

## STRICTER COMPLIANCE ANNOUNCED FOR BUSINESSES OPERATING IN GUYANA

The government is ramping up efforts to ensure that businesses operating in Guyana adhere to local regulations, thereby promoting a fair and level playing field for both local and international enterprises.

This was announced by General Secretary of the People's Progressive Party (PPP), Dr. Bharrat Jagdeo, in response to concerns about the rising number of Chinese businesses in Guyana, which some say are pushing smaller, local companies out of the market.

Dr. Jagdeo pointed out that one of the key concerns is the possibility that some



Businesses operating in Guyana

Chinese businesses may not be fully complying with local regulations, giving them an unfair advantage over smaller, locally-owned enterprises.

**"For example, a building without proper ventilation may be flagged by an inspector when a local business is selling**

**pharmaceuticals, but next door, a Chinese company is selling similar products without ventilation and faces no repercussions. The law isn't being applied uniformly,"** Dr. Jagdeo explained.

He stressed that these concerns are legitimate and that

the government is committed to balancing the benefits of foreign investment with the need to protect local businesses.

**"We have made it clear to regulatory bodies that they must enforce the law uniformly. We believe there have been instances where inspectors are induced to overlook infractions, and we are paying close attention to this issue,"** he added.

However, Dr. Jagdeo cautioned against nationality-based restrictions on business operations, noting that such an approach could lead to diplomatic

challenges.

**"If we were to block businesses based on nationality, it would lead to trade issues. For instance, China could decide**

**compliance with the laws of the country,"** he asserted.

Dr. Jagdeo also acknowledged the positive impact Chinese businesses have had on



Businesses operating in Guyana

**to stop exporting goods to Guyana in retaliation. We cannot discriminate based on nationality, but we can enforce**

the Guyanese economy, including providing increased access to goods and services for ordinary citizens.

## ECONOMIC RELIEF SHIELDING GUYANESE HOUSEHOLDS FROM INFLATION

The PPP/C Administration, under the leadership of President Ali, has introduced a series of targeted measures to shield Guyanese

households from the rising cost of living caused by global economic challenges.

According to a recent report from the Bank of Guyana, food

prices in Guyana rose by 3.2% during the first half of 2024. While domestic factors played a role, much of the increase was driven by global trends, including lingering supply chain disruptions from the COVID-19 pandemic and geopolitical tensions in Eastern Europe and the Middle East.

Addressing the nation, President Ali highlighted the global nature of the inflation crisis. He pointed out that food prices in the European Union surged from 3.5% to 7.5% between January and May 2022, while Latin America and the

Caribbean saw an 81.6% spike in food prices from January 2022 to September 2023. By contrast, Guyana maintained a relatively low food inflation rate of 3.8% in 2023.

To combat rising costs, the government implemented several measures aimed at increasing food production and providing direct financial relief to citizens. Key initiatives include the removal of value-added tax (VAT) on essential agricultural inputs such as fertilisers, pesticides, and machinery.

The government also reinstated zero-

rated status for critical household staples like wheat flour, basic breads, and oats. As a result, the Bank of Guyana reported a 19.8% increase in rice production, bolstered by the use of modern technologies, and a 153% surge in prawn production, fueled by government investment in the fishing sector.

Beyond agricultural relief, the administration focused on increasing disposable income for families through a variety of programmes. The 'Because We Care' cash grant has provided over \$22 billion to parents since 2020, while old age pensions

and public assistance have risen by 75% and 111%, respectively.

Public servants, teachers, and disciplined services personnel have also benefited from financial support. Last December, a \$25,000 one-time tax-free cash grant was distributed as part of a \$5 billion cost of living package. The 2024 budget allocates an additional \$7 billion to continue these relief efforts.

In total, the government has injected nearly \$200 billion into the economy over the past four years.



The government has increased disposable income for Guyanese by almost \$200 billion,

## GDF BOLSTERS CAPABILITIES WITH NEW HELICOPTERS

The government has made a substantial investment in bolstering its defence capabilities and fortifying its security partnership with the United States (U.S). A US\$16 million contract was signed with Bell Textron Inc., for the supply of two advanced rotary wing aircraft.

The signing ceremony was overseen by Senior Minister in the Office of the President with Responsibility for Finance and the Public Service, Dr. Ashni Singh. Also present were the U.S. Ambassador to Guyana, Nicole D. Theriot, Chief of Defence Staff of the Guyana Defence Force (GDF), Brigadier Omar Khan, and other officials.

Minister Singh

emphasised the government's significant investments in GDF, totalling almost G\$32 billion since 2020. These investments aim to improve all aspects of the Force's operations and support surveillance of Guyana's Exclusive Economic Zone. He highlighted the strong bilateral relationship between Guyana and the U.S, noting the country's substantial foreign direct investment from the USA and trade relations.

From 2021 to 2023, Guyana received US\$15.4 billion in Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) from the US, representing approximately 96 percent of total FDI over that period. Over the same period, the U.S accounted for 13 percent

of all exports from Guyana and 17 percent of all imports into Guyana, making the U.S Guyana's largest trading partner.



*The contract signing to enhance Guyana's defence capabilities and security cooperation efforts*

Ambassador Theriot expressed that this partnership reflects the core values and priorities of both countries. She emphasised that the Bell helicopters will enhance Guyana's capabilities

in disaster response, search and rescue, and overall public safety. The ambassador also highlighted the training

and maintenance support provided by Bell Textron Inc., which will bolster Guyana's ability to respond to emergencies effectively.

Brigadier Omar Khan, Chief of Defence

Staff of the GDF, noted that this agreement aligns with the government's recapitalisation efforts for the Force. He mentioned the GDF's previous experience with Bell aircraft, dating back to the 1980s. The new rotary wing aircraft will empower the GDF to conduct a range of missions, including search and rescue, disaster relief, and border security operations.

The Region Sales Manager of Bell Textron Inc., Michael Aguilar, expressed gratitude to the Government of Guyana and the GDF for their decision and underscored the company's interest in future collaborations.

The signing of the

contract goes beyond the delivery of rotary-winged aircraft; it also encompasses comprehensive training and maintenance support for these aircraft from Bell Textron Inc, ensuring that the GDF can maximise the benefits of this investment for years to come. In addition to company support for the two helicopters under contract, the U.S. Embassy, in coordination with U.S. Southern Command, approved funding for a U.S. Air Force team to provide operations, logistics, and maintenance training to the GDF Air Corps to strengthen their ability to sustain the air fleet.

## PRESIDENT ALI ATTENDS ENSIGN DISPLAY DAY AT BASE CAMP STEPHENSON

His Excellency Dr. Irfaan Ali, President and Commander - in - Chief of the Armed Forces, attended the Ensign Display Day hosted by the Guyana Defence Force (GDF) at Base Camp Stephenson in Timehri. The event showcased the skills of the Ensigns from Standard Officers Course No. 56, providing a platform for military training and public demonstration.

During the event, President Ali observed a variety of impressive skills displayed by the



*President Ali at the Ensign Display Day*

Ensigns, including drill techniques, survival tactics, rappelling, obstacle courses, and rifle handling. The demonstration highlighted the rigorous

training that new officers undergo to prepare for their roles in the GDF and other military and paramilitary services in the region.

The President was

accompanied by several notable figures, including Chief of Defence Staff, Brigadier Omar Khan, Colonel Vembu Shankar from the Indian Army, Commissioner of Police (ag) Clifton Hicken, and Director of Prisons Nicklon Elliot. Their presence underscored the importance of inter-agency cooperation and support for the armed forces.

The Standard Officers Course (SOC) was established to provide essential training not only for

GDF officers but also for personnel from various military and paramilitary forces across Guyana and other CARICOM nations. This initiative

aims to strengthen regional security and build a network of skilled officers capable of responding to diverse challenges.



*President Ali at the Ensign Display Day*

## GUYANA RENEWS COMMITMENT TO REGIONAL PEACE ON CUBANA AIR DISASTER ANNIVERSARY

On the 48th anniversary of the Cubana Air Disaster, Guyana reaffirmed



*Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Hugh Todd laying a wreath on behalf of the Guyanese people*

its commitment to maintaining peace and stability in the region. A wreath-laying ceremony was held at the Cubana Air Disaster Monument on the University of Guyana campus to honour the 73 victims of the tragic incident.

Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Hugh Todd emphasised that the last 48 years have strengthened Guyana's determination to promote peace in the region. He added that the monument serves as a sobering reminder of

the need to combat all threats to humanity.

**"We pledge to never forget the price they paid,"** Minister Todd said. **"In their honour, we shall spare no effort in the fight against terrorism and the struggle for peace, justice, progress, and freedom."**

The minister stressed the importance of upholding the principles of the United Nations Charter in the face of global conflicts. **"We must continue to encourage the**

**peaceful settlement of disputes and peaceful coexistence among states,"** he said.

On October 6, 1976, Cubana Airways Flight CU-455 was enroute from Guyana to Havana, Cuba, when two bombs exploded on board, causing the plane to crash into the Atlantic Ocean. All 73 people on board, including 57 Cubans, 11 Guyanese, and five North Koreans, perished in the disaster.

The 11 Guyanese victims were all heading to Cuba to study

medicine, engineering, and other disciplines.

In 2022, the CARICOM-Cuba Day Against Terrorism was established in memory of

the victims of the Cubana Air Disaster. This observance reaffirms the commitment of both regions to combating terrorism in all its forms.



*The 73 victims of the Cubana Air Disaster were remembered in a simple wreath-laying ceremony*

# GDF TO GET NEW HEADQUARTERS

President Ali announced that the Guyana Defence Force (GDF) will receive a new headquarters building. This strategic investment is part of the government's commitment to ensuring the GDF has the necessary resources to protect Guyana's

sovereignty.

During the commissioning parade of Standard Officer's Course Number 55, President Ali directed Chief of Defence Staff, Brigadier Omar Khan, to initiate the procurement process for the building's design.

**"This new headquarters will provide our dedicated men and women in the force with a modern and functional workplace,"** President Ali stated. **"It is a symbol of our unwavering commitment to**

**national security."**

The president emphasised the government's priority of equipping the GDF with the tools needed to protect the nation. The new headquarters will offer a more spacious and conducive environment for GDF officers to work in, enhancing their capabilities.

President Ali praised the GDF for its increased professionalism, heightened sense of purpose, and dedication to serving the nation. He highlighted the force's contributions to national development, including humanitarian aid efforts



The commissioning parade of the Standard Officers' Course number 55



The commissioning parade of the Standard Officers' Course number 55

in Grenada following Hurricane Beryl. They have the opportunity to contribute to the country's collective success.

The government is also committed to building a diverse and inclusive GDF, ensuring that all members

# \$6.9B IN CONTRACTS AWARDED TO REGION SIX CONTRACTORS

The government has awarded \$6.9 billion in contracts to 389 small contractors in Region Six for the upgrade of 400 roads across the county. This is part of the government's ambitious plan to improve infrastructure in Guyana.

Speaking at the contract signing ceremony, Vice President Dr Bharrat Jagdeo announced that an additional \$7 billion in contracts will be tendered for larger projects. He emphasised the government's commitment to expanding opportunities for contractors nationwide.



Vice President Dr Bharrat Jagdeo addressing the small contractors

**"We intend to assemble a larger pool of contractors to meet the growing demand for infrastructure projects,"** Vice President Jagdeo said.

**"We are committed to providing opportunities for more Guyanese to benefit from the country's development."** Minister of Public

Works, Bishop Juan Edghill, outlined the government's efforts to ensure transparency and accountability in the contracting process. He emphasised the importance of quality workmanship and adherence to project standards.

**"We have introduced a rating system to allow small contractors to secure deals without competitive bidding,"** Minister Edghill said. **"This will expand opportunities for more Guyanese to participate in the country's infrastructure development."**

The government's investment in infrastructure development is expected to boost economic growth and improve the quality of life for Guyanese citizens.



Small contractors signing their contracts

Those who violate these rules will face disqualification and may be barred from future projects.

# NEW TARMAc FOR DISPLACED PLAISANCE VENDORS

The government has provided a new location for vendors who were displaced due to the construction of the four-lane highway along the railway embankment. Fifty vendors from Plaisance Market have been allocated spaces on a newly constructed tarmac.

Minister of Public Works, Bishop Juan Edghill, announced the new location during an engagement with the vendors. **"We understand that the construction of the highway has caused inconvenience to many vendors, and we are committed to ensuring that their**

**livelihoods are not disrupted,"** Minister Edghill said.

The new tarmac offers ample space for vendors to set up their stalls and has better public accessibility. Vendors expressed gratitude for the government's efforts to find them a suitable alternative.

**"I am grateful for the new location,"** said vendor Celestine Blackman. **"It is more uniform and provides a better space for me to sell my fruits and provisions."**

Another vendor, Mbekia X, echoed Blackman's sentiments, saying, **"I appreciate**

**the government's initiative in providing us with a place to continue our business."**

Minister Edghill emphasised the government's commitment to a consultative approach to development. **"While we bring development and expand infrastructure, we will not stifle economic opportunities,"** he said. **"We are working to ensure that any relocation process is done in a manner that protects the livelihoods of our citizens."**

The government



Minister Edghill addressing the vendors

has urged all vendors to relocate to their designated spaces on the tarmac by Friday afternoon to avoid delays in the construction project.

## EXXONMOBIL COMPLETES GAS-TO-ENERGY PIPELINE

ExxonMobil Guyana has successfully completed the construction of the US\$1 billion pipeline for its gas-to-energy project. This significant milestone brings the company closer to realising its goal of supplying natural gas to Guyana's domestic market.

President of ExxonMobil Guyana, Alistair Routledge, announced the

completion of the pipeline at a press conference. He explained that the pipeline is now ready to transport natural gas from the company's offshore operations to the Wales Power Plant and Natural Gas Liquids (NGL) Plant.

The pipeline project involved shutting down the Liza Destiny and Liza Unity Floating Production Storage and Offloading (FPSO)



The multi-billion-dollar gas to energy power plant, which is currently under construction at Wales, West Bank Demerara

vessels for 12 days each to connect them to the risers on the pipeline. This was a critical step to ensure the safe transportation of natural gas.

While the shutdowns temporarily affected oil production, Routledge clarified that the production was not lost but merely deferred. He explained that the oil will be produced later in the life of the asset.

The gas-to-energy project is a major initiative for the Government of Guyana, aimed at reducing the country's dependence on imported fossil fuels. The project is expected to provide significant economic benefits and improve energy security.

## PRESIDENT OF EXXONMOBIL GUYANA PRAISES LOCAL CONTENT ACT

The Local Content Act has provided significant opportunities for Guyanese businesses and citizens to participate in the country's burgeoning oil and gas sector, Alistair Routledge, President of ExxonMobil Guyana stated.

Introduced in 2021, the Act defines 40 sub-sectors where a percentage of goods and services must be provided by Guyanese businesses. Routledge praised the legislation, stating that it "provides



ExxonMobil Guyana President, Alistair Routledge

another avenue for Guyanese to benefit from developments in the oil and gas sector."

Routledge emphasised the Act's

importance in ensuring that foreign companies, partner with local businesses, fostering growth and development. "I think the Act has been helpful in

encouraging new investors to come in and partner with local investors and companies," Routledge said.

The Local Content Secretariat, which manages the Local Content Register, has played a crucial role in streamlining communication between the government and ExxonMobil. As a result of the Act, local companies have earned nearly US\$1 billion to date.

The passage of the

Local Content Act fulfils the PPP/C government's promise to implement "strong local content" for Guyanese. The Act continues to open doors

for Guyanese businesses and citizens to benefit from the country's oil and gas industry.



It allows Guyanese businesses to benefit from employment and contractual opportunities



Land clearance ongoing to construct first 250 homes at Yarowkabra

The government's ambitious Homestead Programme is taking shape as land clearance commences for the construction of the first 250 low-income houses in Yarowkabra.

Located along the Soesdyke-Linden Highway, this innovative project aims to provide affordable housing solutions for single mothers.

Minister of Housing and Water, Collin Croal, recently did a site visit and expressed satisfaction with the progress made. He stated that the goal is to deliver these homes as quickly as possible and provide single mothers with a "stable and

affordable place to live."

The 50-acre plot earmarked for the project is just the beginning. A total of 100 acres has been allocated for the construction of 500 homes in this development. Minister Croal emphasised the urgency of the project, noting that, "we want to give them access to the land as quickly as possible. This is a priority for the government."

President Ali announced the housing project in June 2024, estimating its cost at \$6 billion. The project is expected to create spin-off benefits, such as employment

opportunities for residents along the highway.

One of the contractors, DuraVilla Homes, will be constructing approximately 200 of the houses. The Ministry of Agriculture is also involved, planning to establish 20 x 40 shade houses at the back of each farmstead. Additionally, coconut or breadfruit trees will be planted in the front yard, providing an opportunity for single mothers to generate income from agricultural produce.

The project is a collaborative effort involving the Office of the Prime Minister, Ministries of Housing and Water, Agriculture, Human Services and Social Security, and the Guyana Lands and Surveys Commission.

### HAURARUNI HOUSING SCHEME

Meanwhile, the government is making

## HOMESTEAD PROJECT TAKES ROOT



Infrastructure works underway at Hauraruni Housing Development

headway with the infrastructure works for the new Hauraruni Housing Scheme along the Soesdyke-Linden Highway. Minister Croal expressed satisfaction with the progress, stating that "the clearing of the land is nearing completion."

Contractors will soon be invited to submit bids for the drainage and road networks, which are estimated to cost \$900 million. This housing scheme is one of three being developed along

the highway to relocate residents from various communities.

Minister Croal highlighted the prime location of the housing

scheme, emphasising its proximity to the highway and the ongoing infrastructural developments. He explained that "the housing scheme is not too far off from the highway. It is all part of putting persons in a central location."

The project aligns with the government's affordable housing programme, which aims to provide housing solutions for Guyanese of all strata of society.



Minister Croal and Deputy Director of Projects, Intakab Indarjeet examining the housing development plan

# PROTECTED AREAS TRUST FUND GETS FINANCIAL BOOST FROM GOVT



Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Natural Resources, Joslyn McKenzie

The government is taking significant steps to bolster its efforts in biodiversity protection by finalising arrangements to contribute financially to the Protected Areas Trust (PAT) Fund. This commitment was announced by Permanent Secretary (PS) of the Ministry of Natural Resources, Joslyn McKenzie, during the 10th-anniversary celebration of the PAT Hermanston Lodge, Georgetown.

PS McKenzie emphasised the government's dedication to expanding the PAT's work and expressed satisfaction with the organisation's achievements. **"The Ministry of Natural Resources and the Board of Directors of the PAC are extremely pleased with the work that you have done,"** he said, acknowledging the challenges of managing international funding.

The Protected Areas Trust, established in 2014, plays a vital role in funding and managing the National Protected Areas System (NPAS). Through the Protected Areas Commission, PAT supports projects that conserve biodiversity and maintain ecosystem services within Guyana's protected areas.

The PAT fund, originally endowed with

US\$8.5 million, receives money from various sources, including international donors, private sector donations, and endowment fund investments. The government's financial contribution will significantly advance efforts to double the size of protected areas in Guyana.

President Ali has repeatedly reiterated Guyana's commitment to achieving ambitious biodiversity targets, including doubling

protected areas by December 2025 and protecting 30% of land and marine areas by 2030. The permanent secretary reinforced the president's vision and expressed confidence in the country's ability to meet these goals.

**"Very quickly, the goal of 17% protected areas by 2025, and then the protection of 30% by 2030 is actually going to become a reality,"** PS McKenzie said. He explained that



Attendees at the 10th anniversary celebration of the Protected Areas Trust

the ongoing mineral mapping process would enable the ministry to expand and refine intact forest coverage.

In light of President Ali's recent announcement regarding the launch of a Global Biodiversity Alliance, PS McKenzie revealed that the ministry and the PAC are actively working to bring this initiative to fruition. The alliance aims to create a market for biodiversity credits, scale biodiversity conservation debt swaps, accelerate biodiversity bonds, establish a blueprint for biodiversity taxonomies, and promote nature-positive action.



The occasion of the 10th anniversary celebration of the PAT.

# ZOO ANIMALS BENEFIT FROM NEW ENCLOSURE

The Protected Areas Commission (PAC) has unveiled a new enhancement project at the Guyana Zoological Park, in partnership with Schlumberger Guyana. This initiative aims to improve the zoo's facilities and provide a more comfortable living environment for its animal inhabitants.

Omadele "Dee" George, a PAC Board Member and President of the Tourism and Hospitality Association of Guyana, noted that the project aligns with the observance of World Tourism Day 2024.

George highlighted the significance of biodiversity protection for Guyana's tourism sector, a key driver of its



The launch of the PAC enhancement project

economic development. She emphasised that this initiative is a crucial step in the nation's efforts to conserve its natural heritage. **"Guyana's rich biodiversity is one that we boast to the world, and we are super proud of it, so it is one that we would want to**

**continue to sustain,"** she explained.

Sharlene Seegoolam, Managing Director of SLB for Suriname, Guyana, Trinidad and Tobago, and the Caribbean, expressed SLB's unwavering commitment to the preservation and rehabilitation of local

green spaces. She mentioned a similar enhancement activity facilitated by SLB in 2023, which involved tree planting, painting, and waste management initiatives.

The newly rehabilitated enclosure houses some of the Zoological Park's most treasured and vulnerable

species, including the Red-Footed and Yellow-Footed Tortoises and the majestic Jabiru Stork. **"These species are symbols of the biodiversity we are striving to protect,"** Seegoolam said. She added that the initiative aims to advance a national movement for environmental

preservation and scientific research.

**"Beyond the aesthetics, beyond the newly refurbished enclosure, this initiative is about something much larger: safeguarding biodiversity,"** Seegoolam explained. She emphasised that the rehabilitation efforts at the zoo are part of a broader transformation to establish the facility as a research and conservation center.

Earlier this year, the PAC launched a similar restoration and enhancement campaign for the Zoological Park, as part of its ongoing efforts to improve urban spaces.



Some of the attendees at the launch of the PAC enhancement project

# GOVT MAKES FOURTH NRF WITHDRAWAL IN 2024

The government has made its fourth withdrawal of US\$300 million (equivalent to G\$62.394 billion) from the Natural Resource Fund (NRF). This brings the total amount withdrawn from the NRF in 2024 to US\$1.150

billion (equivalent to G\$239.176 billion).

The withdrawal is in accordance with the Parliamentary approval granted under the Natural Resource Fund (NRF) Act 2021, as amended by the Fiscal Enactments

(Amendment) Act 2024. The total amount approved for withdrawal in 2024 is US\$1,586,150,331 (equivalent to G\$329,885,563,088).

The NRF is a sovereign wealth fund established to manage the

proceeds from Guyana's oil and gas resources. The government has been utilising the fund to support various development projects and initiatives across the country.



The NRF manages the proceeds from Guyana's oil and gas resources

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# CPL 2024 DELIVERS UP AND NEW CHAMPIONS - GU

The **2024 Caribbean Premier League (CPL)** truly lived up to its billing as “The Biggest Party in Sport”, offering cricket fans a blend of thrilling T20 cricket and rich Caribbean culture. Spanning several Caribbean nations, this year’s tournament provided an unforgettable experience, culminating in the **Saint Lucia Kings (SLK)** clinching their first-ever CPL title. Their dramatic **6-wicket victory** over the **Guyana Amazon Warriors (GAW)** in the final at **Providence Stadium**, Guyana, marked a fitting conclusion to a season filled with excitement. Beyond the cricketing drama, **CPL 2024** also served as a vibrant celebration of Caribbean culture, particularly highlighted by the **Guyana Cricket Carnival** during the knockout stages. This immersive festival featured live performances from renowned artistes like reggae superstar **Mavado**, alongside a colourful carnival parade and a regional food festival showcasing Guyanese cuisine. As the 2024 season wraps up, excitement is already building for the future. Guyana will once again host the CPL finals in **2025**, marking the fourth consecutive year the nation has hosted the tournament’s grand finale. In **2026**, the finals will move to **Barbados**, with the iconic **Kensington Oval** set to host the event for the first time.





# FORGETTABLE SEASON TO HOST 2025 FINAL, BARBADOS GETS 2026



## GLOBAL SUPER LEAGUE TO KICK OFF IN GUYANA

The Guyana Amazon Warriors will be among the five teams competing in the inaugural Global Super League, a new T20 cricket tournament set to take place in Guyana from November 26 to December 7, 2024.

The tournament, sanctioned by Cricket West Indies and backed by the government of Guyana, will feature teams from various countries battling it out for a US\$1 million prize pool. All matches will be held at the Guyana National Stadium in Providence.

The league format

will consist of a mini-league with each team playing four matches. The top two teams will advance to the final.

President

Ali expressed his full support for the event, emphasising its potential to boost sports tourism and economic

diversification. He said, "The Global Super League has the full support of the Government of Guyana as we build

a world-class sports tourism product. Cricket is part of our cultural history, it is that unifying force, part of our heritage and an integral part of our strategic objective in economic diversification with a strong emphasis on Tourism."

Sir Clive Lloyd, Chairman of the Global Super League, welcomed cricket fans worldwide to the tournament and highlighted Guyana's passion for the sport. He also thanked President Ali for his vision in bringing such an event to

the country. Lloyd said, "I'd like to welcome cricket fans from around the world to this exciting new event. The passion for cricket in Guyana rivals that of fans anywhere, and we look forward to celebrating our love of the game and our rich and vibrant country with both those visiting in person and watching from around the world."



Guyana Amazon Warriors will be up against four other teams in the first-ever Global Super League



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# ALLOTTEES EAGER TO BUILD THEIR HOMES IN NEW STEWARTVILLE HOUSING SCHEME



Minister of Housing and Water, Collin Croal along with landowner, Vena Arjon and her family

The first 200 landowners at the Stewartville Housing Scheme (East) in Region Three have begun identifying their house lots, marking a significant milestone in their journey to homeownership. The process was led by Minister of Housing and

Water, Collin Croal. Many of the landowners have been eagerly awaiting this opportunity for years. Vena Arjon was overwhelmed with emotions upon receiving the call to identify her house lot. **“I don’t have words to explain it. I’m feeling different**

emotions. It was really nice,” she said. Arjon, who applied for her land in 2020, noted that her family is excited to move out of their rented home and begin building their own house.

Minister Croal announced that



Landowner, Indarjeet Mangal marking his lot

infrastructural works are ongoing in the housing

scheme’s first phase, ensuring allottees have access to their lands, roadways, and drainage systems. **“We have fully allocated [lots]**

concrete strip road in Leonora or the newly completed concrete bridge in Stewartville. The ministry’s Survey Unit will continue

Stewartville West is scheduled for completion by the end of October.

The development is part of the \$7.7 billion infrastructure project currently underway at the new Stewartville Housing Scheme. In April, Minister Croal met with the contractors carrying out works in the 19 lots on East and West Stewartville. The contractors were urged to expedite their respective contracts, as hundreds of Guyanese are eagerly waiting to start building their homes.

The ongoing works include the installation of a network of pipes, drainage infrastructure, and the construction of culverts, access roads, and bridges.



Minister Croal assists a landowner

in Stewartville,” he emphasised, noting that the combination of Stewartville East and West includes over 2,100 allocations.

Residents can access the housing area via the

the lot identification process as lands become available. Two more lots in Stewartville East are expected to be available within the next three weeks, while the remaining lot in

## NEW LANDOWNERS GET SUPPORT IN SWAN EXTENSION

The government is providing support to residents who have recently been allocated leased lands at Swan Extension along the Soesdyke/Linden Highway.

Minister within the Office of the Prime Minister with responsibility for Public Affairs, Kwame McCoy, and a team from the Ministry of Housing and Water visited the area and engaged residents on the infrastructural plans for the area.

The residents received weeding machines to assist in clearing their lands



Some of the items that the residents received to aid in the construction of their home

and block moulds to make concrete blocks for constructing their homes. They will also benefit from the steel and cement subsidy through the housing ministry.

Mary Rodrigues, a resident who has commenced construction

of a temporary structure on her land, expressed her appreciation for the government’s assistance. **“I feel this is a good step that the government took to help us out in the area. Things that we could’ve spent**

our money on, for example, buying blocks, we can now make the blocks,” she said.

Susan Chichester believes that cooperation among residents will help Swan Extension develop into a modern society. **“I believe that we should use the items to the best of our abilities to build ourselves and work from where we are presently. I hope we can work together to move our little community forward,”** she said.

Minister McCoy emphasised

importance of working together to ensure timely construction of homes and the establishment of a community built on trust and unity. He encouraged the residents to establish a community block-making initiative,

stating, **“To commence that, I will also provide some slings of cement so you can start the process. I want to see you take centre stage during this period.”**

The residents received their lands in June of this year after the leases were distributed to them by President Ali.



Minister within the Office of the Prime Minister with responsibility for Public Affairs, Kwame McCoy engaging the residents

Residents of the La Bonne Intention (LBI) Housing Scheme will soon experience a heightened police presence and improved infrastructure to address concerns about petty crimes, drainage, and other community issues.

During a visit to the

## LBI RESIDENTS TO BENEFIT FROM INCREASED POLICE PRESENCE AND INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS

community, Minister of Housing and Water, Collin Croal, interacted with residents and listened to their concerns. He committed

to implementing measures to tackle these issues, including the establishment of a police outpost, improved drainage and irrigation, and additional street lights.

Residents complained about frequent robberies, poor drainage, and the absence of street lights, among other problems. Minister Croal noted that a police outpost could be established in LBI, similar to those in other neighbourhoods.

Regarding drainage,

the minister directed his team from the Central Housing and Planning Authority (CHPA) to conduct an assessment of the area and undertake necessary improvements. He also promised to install additional lights on the back road parallel to Beterverwagting (BV).

To address the issue of roaming animals, Minister Croal announced plans to meet with the Chief Executive Officer of the Guyana Livestock Development Authority (GLDA)



Minister of Housing and Water, Collin Croal engaging his staff to address residents’ issue

to discuss potential solutions. Barriers and signs will also be erected to restrict heavy-duty trucks to designated routes.

Minister Croal

encouraged residents to continue working together to develop their community and ensure transparency and cooperation among themselves.



Minister Croal interacting with one of the residents

# President Ali announces \$200,000 grant for every Guyanese

As part of his government's commitment to putting more money into the hands of citizens, President Dr Irfaan Ali on Thursday announced a sleuth of measures for Guyanese across the country including a \$200,000 cash grant for every household to cushion the burden of the current high cost of living.

The Head of State was at the time addressing, for the second time, the 12th Parliament, which just came out of its annual recess period.

During his more than three-hour marathon presentation, President Ali reflected on the initiatives put in place by the ruling People's Progressive Party/Civic (PPP/C) Administration since taking office in 2020 to bring financial relief to Guyanese and in the same breath, announced the introduction of a new series of initiatives that are aimed at safeguarding the quality of life and securing disposable income for citizens.

According to the Guyanese Leader, the one-off \$200,000 cash grant will see an injection of some \$60 billion of disposable income into the Guyanese households countrywide. "We'll begin this one-off cash grant payment to household instantaneously," he added.

This announcement, while widely welcomed by the public, sparked some concerns over the qualification for the cash grant, especially for multiple families living at the same residence as well as for tenants, whose landlords often cash in on such payouts thus leaving them with nothing.

However, Vice President Dr Bharat Jagdeo subsequently explained that the government is still working out what constitutes a "household" to benefit from the one-off cash grant. "We still have to work it through – the great detail, but we believe we can do it," he declared at a press conference on Thursday afternoon.

In cases where multiple households are living in the same building, Jagdeo said that the distributors will utilise the same process used for the COVID cash grant, that is, allocate the grants to the primary household first, and then make provisions for the secondary households if proven to be legitimate.

Jagdeo further pointed out that while the census shows there are 264,000 heads of households in the country, the government knows this number of greater. "We believe the census did not capture everyone... So, this is where it gets tricky," he stated.

According to the Vice President, the government will be utilising databases from Guyana Power and Light Inc. (GPL) and Guyana Water Incorporated (GWI) to determine who are legitimate heads of households.

Moreover, he made it clear that landlords with multiple buildings will not benefit from multiple collections, and that arrangements will be made for secondary households on the same property to benefit.

"We'll clean up that list so if you

have five metres (in your name), you're not gonna get (for all five). But assuming I'm paying for five tenants now... (after) we go through the first list and GPL's verified database, these five tenants are eligible to claim as separate households," Jagdeo explained.

The Vice President further assured that while renters will also benefit, non-nationals living/renting here will not. In fact, he pointed out that the distribution exercise will require a strict process of verification.

For hinterland communities, he noted that the verification process is less complicated since those villages are smaller and the Toshaos are in a position to give advice on legitimate households.

Nevertheless, VP Jagdeo posited that while the government is confident



President Irfaan Ali

that the economy can absorb this massive cash injection, the government in-

tends to ensure every legitimate household benefits and that the distribution is done fairly without people trying to cheat the system.

Further, Ali revealed additional measures that his government will implement to increase the disposable income in Guyanese households.

"In securing purchasing power and disposable income of our people... I now wish to announce that by the end of 2025, no public sector employee will be working for less than \$100,000 monthly. This will see the disposable income of these employees increasing by more than \$1 billion. This is how we build prosperity; this is how we reduce disparity, and this is how we build equity in the system; real action, real work, real policies – all in the interest of our people," he stressed.

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## COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY AND IICA PARTNER TO CREATE NEW NARRATIVE FOR LATIN AMERICAN AGRICULTURE



Interim Dean of Columbia's Climate School, Jeffrey Shaman, President Ali and Director General of IICA, Manuel Otero

Columbia University and the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) have forged a strategic alliance to redefine the narrative surrounding Latin American agriculture. The partnership aims to highlight the region's

vital role in global food security, environmental sustainability, and economic development.

A high-level meeting convened in New York brought together experts from various sectors, including government, academia, and the private sector, to discuss

the development of a roadmap for this ambitious initiative. Participants, including Guyana's President Dr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali, IICA Director General Manuel Otero, and renowned experts from Columbia University and other institutions, explored topics such as food and nutritional security, environmental sustainability, and energy security.

The discussions underscored the need to strengthen Latin American agri-food systems as providers of solutions to global challenges, including a growing population, political conflicts,

and climate crises. The initiative seeks to promote a more realistic vision of the region's position as a global provider of food and ecosystem services.

"Creating a new narrative for agriculture in Latin America. Resource-efficient agri-food systems for the health of people and the planet" was the central theme of the session, which coincided with the United Nations General Assembly and Climate Week in New York.

The partnership between Columbia University and IICA will focus on developing a comprehensive document that sheds

light on the true contribution of Latin American agriculture to food security, environmental balance, and global social stability. The roadmap will involve collaboration with governments, industry, and civil society at both regional and international levels.

President Irfaan Ali emphasised the importance of moving beyond traditional agricultural views and focusing on the interconnectedness between production and biodiversity preservation. The new narrative should aim to provide knowledge and understanding,

dispelling the notion of antagonism between production and the environment.

The alliance will play a crucial role in shaping global discussions on land use, deforestation, carbon capture, and ecosystem restoration. By highlighting the irreplaceable role of Latin American agriculture in a context of international instability, weakening multilateral trade norms, and growing concerns about climate change, the partnership seeks to position the region as a leader in sustainable agriculture and global food security.

## FARMERS TO BENEFIT FROM NEW SOIL TESTING FACILITY

A major step towards enhancing agricultural productivity in Guyana was taken with the commissioning of a state-of-the-art soil chemical services laboratory at the National Agricultural Research and Extension Institute (NAREI) at Mon Repos.

This \$100 million facility, funded by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), is equipped with cutting-edge technology to revitalise soil management practices and boost crop yields.

The laboratory, a key component of the Sustainable Agricultural



Minister of Agriculture, Zulfikar Mustapha and a representative from the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) at the commissioning ceremony

Development Program (SADP), will provide farmers with invaluable insights into their soil health. By analysing soil samples, farmers can make informed decisions about crop selection,

fertiliser application, and overall soil management practices. This will not only improve crop yields but also reduce the need for costly imports.

Minister of Agriculture, Zulfikar

Mustapha, said this investment will help in the achievement of Guyana's goal of reducing its food import bill by 25% by 2025. He highlighted the role of technology and innovation in driving agricultural transformation and noted the significant allocation of funds to modernise the laboratory.

**"The rehabilitation of the soil laboratory today is a prime example of how innovation and technology are at the heart of our agricultural**

**transformation,"** Minister Mustapha stated. **"We have allocated over \$57 million to completely modernise this facility."**

The new facility is equipped with advanced technology, including an Atomic Absorption Spectrophotometer (AAS), which can accurately detect elements in soil samples. This equipment will enable more precise soil analysis and recommendations for farmers.

Director General of the Ministry of Agriculture, Madanlall

Ramraj, expressed Guyana's commitment to leveraging technology to improve agricultural efficiency and reduce the manual labour burden on farmers and agriculture officers.

The IDB, through its Country Department for the Caribbean, has been a key partner in supporting Guyana's agricultural development. General Manager Anton Edmunds emphasised the organisation's focus on enhancing agricultural research and extension systems to achieve national and regional food security goals.

## REAL-TIME DATA TO ENHANCE AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTIVITY

The Ministry of Agriculture has launched the Agriculture Information System (AIS), a groundbreaking tool designed to gather, analyse, and disseminate agricultural data in real-time.

This innovative system will provide farmers, extension officers, and media personnel with access to up-to-date information, empowering them to make informed decisions and respond effectively to challenges and opportunities within the agricultural sector.

The AIS will serve

as a centralised hub, offering a clear and comprehensive picture of Guyana's agriculture industry. With improved analytical capabilities and enhanced data quality, the system will enable policymakers to make informed decisions that drive growth and sustainability.

Minister of Agriculture, Zulfikar Mustapha, emphasised the significance of the AIS in planning effectively and streamlining internal processes aimed at boosting agricultural production. "This system will guide you



Minister of Agriculture, Zulfikar Mustapha speaking at the launch of the AIS

to be more efficient," he stated. **"This will help us to identify those persons who are within the various sectors. This will ensure that the needs of the farmers are met."**

**This will enhance our decision-making capabilities."**

The AIS is part of the ministry's Sustainable Agricultural Development Programme (SADP) and is funded by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB). The initiative marks a promising trajectory for Guyana's agriculture industry towards modernisation, increased productivity, and sustainable development.

General Manager of the Country Department of the Caribbean at the IDB, Anton

Edmunds, highlighted the collaborative effort behind the AIS. **"This integrated agriculture information system enhances transparency and consistency in data management, using technology, creating a dashboard for data analysis and rehabilitating information hubs in several regions in Guyana,"** he said. **"It also brings numerous opportunities for investment and will improve outcomes for a variety of actors within this space."**

The AIS will allow the ministry to access daily reports from all extension



General Manager of the Country Department of the Caribbean at the IDB, Anton Edmunds

officers nationwide. Additionally, it will feature a farm register module, creating a comprehensive database for farmers that includes unique identifiers, contact information, geolocation, acreage, tenure type or purpose, and other pertinent information.

# PRESIDENT OFFERS LUCRATIVE OPPORTUNITIES TO REGION FIVE YOUTH

President Ali continues the roll-out of the government's new sustainable and lucrative agro-business ventures for Guyanese youth, aiming to improve their living standards.

During a meeting with over 40 young people from Region Five, the president outlined the comprehensive plan for ventures in poultry, aquaculture, and cattle rearing.

A meeting was held at the Park Square Fun City Recreation Centre, Mahaicony, bringing together representatives from the Guyana Bank for Trade and Industry (GBTI), Demerara Bank, and various agencies under the Ministry of Agriculture. President Ali explained that the government would develop five acres of land as part of the Agriculture and Innovation Entrepreneurship Programme. Additionally, he offered youth the option of



President Ali engaging youth in Region Five

joining the Onverwagt Prawns project or other burgeoning agriculture projects in the region.

"We are going to make it very compact," the president said, highlighting the potential value of these ventures. He emphasised the role of public-private partnerships and assured attendees that banks were ready to support their endeavours with preferential interest rates.

President Ali encouraged attendees to

pool their resources and invest in these projects. "Let's say you have \$500,000. Ten of you collectively have \$5 million," he said, referring to successful examples of youth collaboration in other programmes.

This initiative is part of the government's plan to create a favourable environment for youth entrepreneurship in Guyana's agricultural and food sector. Several attendees expressed their interest in

expanding their trade, and becoming more involved in the growing agro-business industry.

Chandan Rampersaud, a poultry business owner, found the meeting informative and helpful in improving his business. "I think it is very nice that small people are getting noticed and getting the help," he said.

Dason Langevine, a 35-year-old poultry farmer, shared similar sentiments, highlighting the challenge of finding a sustainable market for his produce. President Ali addressed this issue, emphasising the government's efforts to establish storage facilities, agro-processing facilities, and secure niche markets, including the lucrative global market for halal products.

Langevine expressed optimism about the government's initiatives, saying they would unlock opportunities for young

people to expand their businesses. "It is very important and I am glad that he came and spoke with the youths because there are a lot of ways we can make money," he

Dr Dwight Walrond, and Director General of the Ministry of Agriculture, Madanlall Ramraj, also spoke at the meeting, expressing optimism about the region's potential for



The youth were engaged on the multiple opportunities within the agro-business sector

said.

Minister of Agriculture, Zulfikar Mustapha, Chief Executive Officer of Guyana Livestock Development Agency,

significant agricultural development.

This meeting follows similar engagements with youth in Regions Three and Four.

# ERC, UN, AND GNBA PARTNER TO COMBAT HATE SPEECH IN GUYANA



Shaikh Moeenul Hack, Chairman of the Ethnic Relations Commission (ERC), and ERC Commissioners pose with Gerardo Noto, UNDP Resident Representative for Guyana and Suriname

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Ethnic Relations Commission (ERC) of Guyana have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to combat hate speech and build public resilience against disinformation. This partnership is particularly timely as Guyana prepares for its 2025 General Elections, a period that has historically seen a rise in ethnic and racial tensions.

Under the MoU, the UNDP will provide the ERC with technical assistance, including

the use of the advanced 'eMonitor+' system, an AI-powered tool that monitors and analyses harmful content across social media platforms like Facebook,

Instagram, and Twitter. This tool will help the ERC identify hate speech in real-time, allowing for more effective responses.

"By equipping the ERC with the tools

and methodologies to combat hate speech and misinformation, we are taking proactive measures to strengthen democracy and promote social cohesion," said UNDP Resident Representative Gerardo Noto.

ERC Chairman Shaikh Moeenul Hack echoed the importance of the initiative. "The ERC's proactive Countering Hate Speech campaign will be enhanced by the eMonitor+ tool, which will expand our ability to capture a wider range of racially and

ethnically offensive content, allowing us to respond swiftly and effectively."

In parallel with the MoU signing, the ERC, in partnership with the

speech, whether subtle or overt, has the potential to tear at the fabric of our society. Each of you has the power to be part of the solution



The signing of the MoU between ERC and UNDP

UN and the Guyana National Broadcasting Authority (GNBA), hosted a workshop at Georgetown's Pegasus Hotel. The workshop brought together media professionals, including broadcasters, political commentators, DJs, and social media influencers, to discuss strategies for countering hate speech and promoting tolerance.

Mr. Noto underscored the media's role, stating, "Hate

by raising awareness and promoting inclusion."

Ms. Latchmie Rahamat, Chairperson of GNBA, also emphasized collective responsibility: "Hate speech is a plague, and we must all do our part to combat it."

This joint initiative demonstrates a strong commitment to addressing hate speech and promoting unity in Guyana.



Participants from both traditional and non-traditional media at the workshop on countering hate speech

# NEW LABS AND AWARD FOR ST STANISLAUS

President Ali commissioned newly refurbished Physics and Chemistry laboratories and staff room at St Stanislaus College, and established a prestigious award to honour a former teacher.

The newly refurbished Physics and Chemistry laboratories, named after the late Father Herbert Feenie SJ, a former Physics and Chemistry Master, are equipped with modern facilities to stimulate the minds of students. The staff room was named after former alumnus, Richard Harford. The \$51 million project, was funded in part by the government and donations.

President Ali



The commissioning of the Father Herbert Feenie labs and Richard Hartford staff room

emphasised the importance of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) education for Guyana's development. "This investment will provide students with the tools to succeed in the 21st century," he said. To further encourage innovation and critical thinking, President Ali announced the establishment of an innovation fund. He also called on the school to integrate environmental studies into its curriculum.

The government's commitment to STEM education is evident in its investment in upgrading educational facilities and partnering with international organisations. The recent opening of the New St George's School of Sciences is another example of this priority.

In addition to the infrastructure improvements, President Ali has pledged \$500,000 annually to establish a debating and impromptu speech award in honour of the late Lorraine Meratins. This award aims to stimulate a tradition of excellence in these areas among students.

President Ali reflected on his own

time at St Stanislaus College, emphasising the profound influence it had on his life. He called on the school's administrators to create an ecosystem that fosters innovation, entrepreneurship, and environmental awareness.

The establishment of the Lorraine Meratins award is a testament to President Ali's commitment to recognising and rewarding excellence in education. It is also a fitting tribute to the legacy of a dedicated and inspiring teacher.



The commissioning of the Father Herbert Feenie labs and Richard Hartford staff room

# HUNDREDS IN MOCHA REGISTER FOR SKILLS TRAINING



Alicia Bobb a recent graduate of the GOAL Scholarship programme with a Bachelors in international business

A youth outreach event held in Mocha Arcadia saw a surge of registrations for government-sponsored skills training programmes. Hundreds of residents from the community eagerly signed up for various courses offered by the Women Innovation Investment Network (WIIN), the Board of Industrial Training (BIT), and the Guyana Online Learning Academy (GOAL).

Minister of Local Government and Regional Development, Sonia Parag, who led the event at the Mocha Arcadia Primary School, emphasised the importance of these programmes in meeting the diverse needs of the community. "These training programmes are designed to equip individuals with the skills they need to succeed in today's job market," Minister Parag stated.

The minister highlighted the growing demand for skilled workers in Guyana, particularly in light

of the country's rapid development. She emphasised the government's commitment to providing opportunities for individuals to upskill and contribute to the nation's progress.

One of the participants, Alicia Bobb, shared her inspiring journey of overcoming challenges to achieve academic success. Having dropped out of school, Bobb persevered and earned a Bachelor's degree in International Business through a GOAL scholarship.

"It wasn't easy, but I'm so proud of what

I've accomplished," Bobb said. "I'm now looking forward to using my education to empower other young women in my community."

The event showcased the government's dedication to fostering a

skilled and empowered workforce in Guyana. As the country continues to develop, these training programmes play a crucial role in ensuring that individuals have the necessary tools to seize the opportunities presented.



Minister Sonya Parag engaging participants at the event

# NEW PRACTICAL INSTRUCTION CENTRE OPENS IN FELLOWSHIP



The commissioning of the Fellowship Practical Instruction Centre

Minister of Education, Priya Marnickchand commissioned the newly rehabilitated Fellowship Practical Instruction Centre on the West Coast of Demerara,

Region Three that will benefit 400 students and enhance technical and vocational training in the region.

The state-of-the-art facility, was funded by the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB). Minister Marnickchand emphasised the importance of practical skills in today's job market. "This center plays a

crucial role in our government's vision to create educational opportunities for every child," she said.

The Fellowship Practical Instruction Centre offers training in various fields, including electrical work, woodworking, and food and nutrition. Students will have the opportunity to earn Caribbean Vocational Qualification (CVQ) certifications, which will help them find employment or start their own businesses.

The Ministry of Education is committed to strengthening

technical vocational education and training (TVET) throughout Guyana. Through the Guyana Skills Development and Employability Project (GSDEP), several

Practical Instruction Centres (PICs) and Practical Instruction Departments (PIDs) are being upgraded to support TVET across the country.



The commissioning of the Fellowship Practical Instruction Centre



## WEST DEMERARA AND PATENTIA SECONDARY SCHOOLS GET MAJOR UPGRADE

The government continues its efforts to enhance educational facilities in Region Three. It recently commissioned a \$27 million building at West Demerara Secondary School and a state-of-the-art Industrial Technology Department at Patentia Secondary School.

Minister of Education, Priya Manickchand, officially opened the two-storey building at West Demerara Secondary, which features five spacious classrooms designed to accommodate 150 sixth-form students. The new facility will support students enrolled in the Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examination (CAPE) programme, which offers subjects



The new \$27M block at the West Demerara Secondary

like Economics, Physical Education, Law, Communication Studies, and Integrated Mathematics.

Minister Manickchand emphasised that the project is part of the government's broader strategy to equip schools with modern facilities that foster academic excellence.

**"We are committed to ensuring that every**

**child has access to the resources they need to succeed. This is part of a larger plan to continue developing our schools and their capabilities,"** she said.

Addressing the students directly, the Minister encouraged them to make the most of the new resources. **"Your job now is to do well... I commit to you that this is not the end for us**

**at West Demerara [Secondary],"** she added.

As part of ongoing upgrades to the school, Minister Manickchand announced plans to construct a swimming pool and a multi-purpose court to provide students with more recreational opportunities.

In a separate event, Minister Manickchand also commissioned the newly constructed Industrial Technology Department at Patentia Secondary School, a \$17 million investment aimed at boosting technical and vocational education. The new facility will offer programmes in Technical Drawing and Building Technology to students from Grades 7 to 11, enhancing their practical skills and preparing them for

future opportunities.

**"We are committed to ensuring that every child is equipped with the skills and knowledge they need to succeed, not just academically, but as contributing members of society,"** Minister Manickchand

which was constructed by Spectre Construction and completed under the supervision of engineer Dominique Yan, is a purpose-built facility designed to improve hands-on learning. Patentia Secondary's headteacher, Ms. Lavern Carryl, praised the initiative, noting that the



The commissioning of the new block at the West Demerara Secondary

said during her remarks at Patentia Secondary.

The new department,

facility has already been well-received by both students and staff.

## 200 CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES BENEFIT FROM NEW SWIMMING POOL

A new swimming pool at the Regional Special Education Needs and Disability Diagnostic and Treatment Centre has opened its doors to 200 children living with disabilities. The pool, named after the generous donor Teddy Mohamed, was commissioned on October 5, 2024.

Minister of Education, Priya Manickchand, highlighted the importance of this initiative for the holistic development of differently-abled children. She emphasised that even if they do not become proficient swimmers, engaging



Children practising swimming at the commissioning of the Edward Mohamed Pool

in extracurricular activities can boost their confidence and well-being.

**"We are currently looking at building a pool for the Allied Arts, where they can train lifeguards and other necessary**

**personnel, not only for the pools we plan to construct for the disabled community, but also for the hotels and other establishments that will require these resources,"** Minister Manickchand said.

Teddy Mohamed, the owner of Mohamed Bookstores Associates Ltd. in Trinidad, explained his motivation for donating the funds to build the pool. His child was born with a damaged retina and the lack of physical facilities in Trinidad meant that he had to personally teach his son how to swim. This experience inspired me to assist children with disabilities in Guyana.

The pool is part of the government's ongoing efforts to improve special education in Guyana. In recent years, the government has appointed a dedicated

Assistant Chief Education Officer for Special Education Needs, developed an Associate Degree program in Special Education at the Cyril Potter College of Education, and created new spaces in classrooms across the country for children with special needs.

The government has also been working to equip the Regional Special Education Needs and Disability Diagnostic and Treatment Centre with the necessary resources, including speech therapists, psychologists, and physiotherapists.

Minister

Manickchand reiterated the government's commitment to putting Guyanese at the forefront of the country's development, especially those living with permanent disabilities. **"We are very sure as a government that with this new build out of Guyana, people will be at the forefront of our priority list. And so, our children will enjoy priority status, our women, our Amerindian and hinterland residents, everybody is going to get attention,"** she affirmed.

## OVER 1,500 TEACHERS TO GRADUATE SOON

Guyana's education sector is set to be strengthened with the addition of over 1,500 trained teachers. This significant increase in the number of qualified teachers is a result of the government's commitment to having 100% of Guyana's teachers fully trained by 2025.

Minister of Education, Priya Manickchand, made this

announcement during the commissioning of a new block at the West Demerara Secondary School in Region Three. **"That means that we have more teachers in the system. [We have] smaller classes and more expertise, but it also means that we have a higher quality of teachers in the system... We'll still have to do continuous training,"**

she said. Since the PPP/C Government assumed office in 2020, over 2,000 new teachers have been added to the education sector. In the last four years, teachers have benefited from several initiatives aimed at improving their working conditions, including the distribution of school cash grants, increased access to wages and salaries, spacious

classrooms, and additional educational resources.

The government has also signed an agreement with the Guyana Teachers' Union (GTU) to provide teachers with a 10% increase in their salaries in 2024, followed by 8% and 9% increases in 2025 and 2026, respectively.

These investments in teacher training and well-being demonstrate



Some of the 2023 graduates

the government's commitment to developing the education sector and ensuring that

students have access to quality education.

## APNU'S OIL PLAN LACKS DIRECTION, FILLED WITH EMPTY PROMISES - DR JAGDEO



General Secretary of the PPPC, Dr Bharrat Jagdeo

General Secretary of the People's Progressive Party (PPP), Dr. Bharrat Jagdeo, has criticised the recently announced oil and gas plan by the PNC/APNU, calling it vague and lacking in actionable details. Speaking at his weekly press conference at Freedom House, Dr. Jagdeo described the plan as "light on details and heavy on rhetoric."

Dr. Jagdeo argued that the plan falls short of outlining specific policy measures, emphasising

that it contains more reviews and feasibility studies than actual commitments. "It is a document that is devoid of specifics and that they would tout it... if you examine, you will see that in the 20-point plan, 12 are about feasibility plans and reviews, so, no commitment to anything," he said. "We have always argued that PNC/APNU is great at doing feasibility studies... they are great at doing nothing practically."

He further highlighted that the plan includes duplications and empty promises. "Two other paragraphs are duplications, and then some promises to do things we've already done. Of the 20 points, I will give them credit for the way it looks, nothing else," Dr Jagdeo added.

The general secretary compared the opposition's approach to the PPP's track record in government, noting that while in opposition, the PPP presented clear, detailed policy proposals and has since delivered

on many of them. "In our manifesto, we made it clear what we will do," he said, citing several key accomplishments in the oil and gas sector.

"We said we would move to auction blocks, moving away from the first-come, first-served basis on which licenses were awarded in the past - we did that. We said we would pass a Local Content Act - we did that. We said we would review the NRF - we did that. We said we would pass a new

Petroleum Activities Act, updating the 1986 one - we did that. We said we would strengthen environmental permits - we did that in every case," Dr Jagdeo noted.

He further criticised the opposition's inability to offer substantial policies, remarking that their document lacks a commitment to clear actions. "It's an elaborate con... you can write on anything, but running government is very different," Dr Jagdeo said.

## GOVT DENOUNCES UNLAWFUL ACTIONS OF NEW AMSTERDAM MAYOR

The government has condemned the suspension of PPP/C Councillor Carol Trim-Bagot from the New Amsterdam Town Council as an abuse of power by Mayor Wainwright McIntosh.

Minister of Local Government and Regional Development, Sonia Parag, told reporters that the council's decision to remove Councillor Trim-Bagot from her duties for three months was a blatant attempt to silence those who genuinely represent the interests of

residents.

"I believe he [the mayor] is seeking to supersede whatever power he believes he may have from Cap 28:01 [standing order 9(h)]. I think it is an abuse of power and we will not tolerate that," Minister Parag stated.

The minister defended Councillor Trim-Bagot, arguing that she has been proactive in her role and has the right to question the council's actions, ensure matters are handled properly, and that



Minister of Local Government and Regional Development, Sonia Parag

revenues collected are used to benefit the local community.

Minister Parag criticised the council for not following proper

procedures, as the minutes and agenda were not properly addressed. "That alone tells me that the Town Council is not doing what they are mandated to do. One of the bedrocks of the local government structure is to ensure that there is a democracy," she said.

The minister emphasised that the mayor's decision to suspend Trim-Bagot contradicts democratic principles and was not based on a fair process. She noted that the

councillor was not given the chance to speak freely, and was instead silenced by the mayor.

Minister Parag stated that the government will review the law to determine what possible course of action can be taken to address the situation. "We will peruse the laws some more and we will advise the council on its next move. But I think the suspension was unlawful and I do believe that Miss Trim-Bagot should be in the next meeting," she said.

## AUDIT LAUNCHED INTO MMA-ADA LAND ALLOCATION



Minister of Agriculture, Zulfikar Mustapha and a team of senior officers from his ministry engaging with the farmers

The Ministry of Agriculture has announced an audit into land leases awarded to farmers at the Mahaica-Mahaicony

A bary-Agriculture Development Authority (MMA-ADA) Scheme in Onverwagt, Region Five. The audit will focus on the land allocation

process over the past five years.

Minister of Agriculture, Zulfikar Mustapha, made the announcement during a visit to the MMA-ADA office following complaints from farmers about their plots being leased to others. The MMA-ADA is responsible for constructing drainage and irrigation works in Region Five and allocating state land between the Berbice and Mahaica Rivers.

"We will engage a team to conduct an audit of all the leases that were issued over the last five years, how they were issued, and who are

the persons that were given these leases," Minister Mustapha told the farmers. He also expressed concern about reports of people residing overseas renting out government-leased land, saying, "This is a practice that will not be tolerated."

The minister reiterated the government's commitment to accountability and transparency and urged farmers to report any instances of bribery or favouritism by MMA-ADA officials. He also reminded farmers of the reduced land rental and drainage and irrigation charges introduced by

the government in 2020.

Addressing misconceptions among farmers who believe they have bought the rights to the land, Minister Mustapha clarified that farmers are being

facilitated on state land.

He also announced plans to acquire an additional 15,000 acres of land for farmers, primarily in Regions Five and Six.



Residents in attendance at the meeting

# ROXANNE BURNHAM GARDENS' RESIDENTS ENJOY IMPROVED INFRASTRUCTURE



Minister of Public Works, Bishop Juan Edghill engaging residents of Roxanne Burnham Gardens, Georgetown

Residents of Roxanne Burnham Gardens and neighbouring communities are now enjoying improved road infrastructure following a \$76 million upgrade to 14 key thoroughfares. The recently completed project has improved both accessibility and safety in the area. Minister of Public Works, Bishop Juan Edghill, led a site

inspection to assess the quality of the upgrades and ensure they met the community's needs. The project encompassed 3.4 kilometers and was carried out by local community leaders and small contractors. The ministry's Special Projects Unit (SPU) is set to conduct further overlaying work.

Residents expressed appreciation for the long-awaited upgrades. Mark Cumberbatch, a long-time resident, said, **"So far this is the best road we have in this community. I like the safety precautions they have put in place with the number of speed bumps because this road is the main access road to the New Guyana school and also to the neighbouring villages. What was done here is really excellent, and I would like to see more of this happening from the government."** Kevin Brewster, another resident, shared similar sentiments and expressed the need for a playground within the area.

In addition to the

Roxanne Burnham Gardens upgrades, two vital roads within Shirley Field Ridley were rehabilitated at a total cost of \$15.6 million. Minister Edghill assured residents that the final stages of the project, including concrete curing and road markings, would be completed promptly. He also addressed the challenges of upgrading a narrow road in the area, but confirmed that a small contractor is set to address this issue with concrete resurfacing. To improve flood resilience in the area, drainage works were carried out in Lodge, Wortmanville, and Werk-En-Rust. The government's investment in infrastructure improvements in South

Georgetown has been substantial. A total of \$716 million has been allocated to repair and upgrade 126 roads, spanning a total of 33.6 kilometers. This initiative is part of the PPP/C government's broader commitment to enhancing road networks nationwide. Minister Edghill highlighted the significant

improvements executed in several key communities, including Alexander Village, East and West Ruimveldt, East and West La Penitence, Charlestown, Kitty, Lodge, and Campbellville. An assessment of North East La Penitence has been completed, and work is expected to commence soon.



Road upgrade in Roxanne Burnham Gardens, Georgetown



Santa Aratack, new community kitchen

Residents of Santa Aratack are celebrating the opening of a new community kitchen, a gift from the Men on Mission (MoM) initiative. This modern facility will provide fresh, nutritious meals to nearly 50 local nursery and primary school children. The handover ceremony was attended by Minister within the

# SANTA ARATACK COMMUNITY WELCOMES NEW KITCHEN

Office of the Prime Minister, Kwame McCoy, members of MoM, and community leaders. The new kitchen is fully equipped and will significantly improve the efficiency of meal preparation. Headmistress Muriel Patterson expressed her gratitude for the new kitchen. **"I want to thank the president for listening to us and the MoM for their support."**

Head cook Roseann Samuels shared her excitement about the new facility, stating, **"This kitchen will make my job so much easier. It has everything I need, and I feel more comfortable working here."** Raisa Williams, a community councillor and mother of two, emphasised the importance of the kitchen for working parents like herself. **"I work during**

**the day so it is kind of difficult for me to cook for my child, so it will help me a lot. They [will] provide for my child and I'm grateful for that,"** she said. Minister McCoy highlighted the government's commitment to providing essential services to communities across Guyana. He emphasised that the new kitchen and other

meal programmes play a crucial role in encouraging school attendance and academic success. **"It is our responsibility to work towards the advancement of our communities, and our country as a whole,"** he said. MoM has already launched similar initiatives in Regions Four and Nine and plans to expand to Region Six.

# ONGOING ROADWORKS IN REGION THREE SET FOR DECEMBER COMPLETION

Thousands of residents in La Parfaite Harmonie, Onderneming, Westminster, Recht door Zee, and Lust-en-Rust in Region Three can expect a significant upgrade to their road infrastructure, with all roads slated for completion by December. Minister of Public Works, Bishop Juan Edghill, made this announcement during a recent inspection of the ongoing roadworks in these communities. **"By December 31, you will see a massive**

**transformation in this area,"** Minister Edghill assured residents. Currently, 68 internal roads, spanning approximately 19 kilometres, are under construction. These roads are being upgraded to concrete, with the work being carried out by small contractors from within the communities. Additionally, the Ministry's Special Projects Unit (SPU) is handling the upgrade of 28 kilometres of main access roads to asphaltic concrete. According to



Santa Aratack, new community kitchen

Minister Edghill, having the SPU involved has helped reduce both costs and wait times for residents.

Since construction began in mid-September, work has progressed steadily. The Minister also

revealed plans to award contracts for an additional 30 roads once the current concrete roads are fully cured,

a process that usually takes 21 days. **"When we are finished, every road in this community will be completed. There will not be one outstanding road,"** Minister Edghill said. The road rehabilitation includes scarification, asphaltic concrete finishing, and clearing the shoulders of the road. Two dedicated teams are working to meet the December deadline—one focusing on road preparation and the other on applying asphalt.

# 5MW SOLAR FARM PROJECT LAUNCHED IN REGION TWO

Prime Minister Brigadier (Ret'd) Mark Phillips turned the sod for a state-of-the-art 5MW solar farm in Onderneeming, Region Two. The project, part of the government's ongoing efforts to reduce reliance on fossil fuels, aligns with its commitment to an energy mix that will benefit both residents and the environment.



The sod turning ceremony for a state-of-the-art 5MW solar farm in Onderneeming, Region Two

The solar farm, expected to generate 5 Megawatts (MW) of power, will also feature 12MW of battery storage to ensure a stable supply of electricity for the residents of Region Two. In addition, a smaller plant will be constructed in Charity, bringing the total solar capacity in Pomeroun-Supenaam to 8MW.

ceremony, Prime Minister Phillips emphasised how this project ties into the government's broader vision for sustainable energy under the Low Carbon Development Strategy (LCDS) 2030. **"This project is part of the largest solar photovoltaic initiative we've embarked on in Guyana, contributing to the goal of 33MW**

**of solar power across the country,"** the Prime Minister explained. He also noted that the solar farm is the first component of the national push toward renewable energy.

The prime minister highlighted the origins of Guyana's transition to renewable energy, which began with the 2009 Norway-Guyana agreement, under which Guyana

received \$220 million for forest preservation. These funds supported initiatives like the Hinterland Electrification Programme and preparatory work for the Amaila Falls Hydro Project. However, Prime Minister Phillips lamented that these programmes were decelerated under the APNU+AFC Administration, despite \$83 million remaining for further development.

**"Today, we are back on track with these initiatives under the PPP/C Administration. This solar farm is a major step in moving Essequibo, and by extension, Guyana, into a future powered by clean, renewable energy,"** PM Phillips

added. Kesh Nandlall, Head of the Executive Management Committee at Guyana Power & Light (GPL) Inc., described the project as the largest solar farm

**We are confident it will be completed by December 2025,"** Nandlall stated, urging contractors to meet the project timeline.

Regional Chairman Vilma Da Silva also



The sod turning ceremony for a state-of-the-art 5MW solar farm in Onderneeming, Region Two

in the country to begin construction. **"This will bring stability to the generating capacity in Anna Regina and the surrounding areas.**

praised the project as a "bold step" for the development of Region Two, highlighting the positive impact it will have on local communities.



Some of the network lines that have been installed by GPL

Residents of Kuru Kururu in Samville, along the Soesdyke/Linden Highway, are overjoyed as they prepare to receive electricity for the first time.

A technical team from Guyana Power and Light (GPL) Inc., recently visited the area to inform residents about the next steps in the electrification process. The power company has already completed

the first phase of work, which involved installing transmission lines.

President Ali had promised to ensure the community get electricity. This commitment has now been fulfilled, thanks to the efforts of GPL and the government.

Residents expressed their gratitude for the development. Councillor and resident Edris Boston said, "We

appreciate that GPL came and assessed our community so that we can get electricity. I hope all the residents get their documents in order so we can access electricity the right way."

Many residents had previously relied on solar energy, especially during nighttime. Anne Murray, Chair of the Community Development Council (CDC), noted that while solar panels were distributed, they were not sufficient to meet the community's needs.

**"It's excellent because we've been suffering without electricity for more**

**than 15 years,"** Murray said. **"Everyone wants to use their fridge and washing machine."**

Several residents already have the necessary documents



A technical team from Guyana Power and Light meeting with the residents

and will soon register for their meters at the GPL office in Georgetown. Others are still in the process of obtaining the

required documents from the Neighbourhood Democratic Council (NDC).

Michelle Drepaul, Chairwoman of the Lamaha/Yarrowkabra

**first time, electricity will be provided to this community,"** she said. **"It will benefit everyone, from students to adults."**

GPL's Project Engineer, Oscar Gravesande, explained that the agency has completed the network construction and is ready to supply electricity to the area. Now, it's up to the residents to submit their documentation.

**"After they apply, it takes about seven to 14 working days for their meter to be installed,"** Gravesande said. **"As soon as that's installed, they'll have electricity."**

NDC, emphasised the significance of the electrification programme for the community. **"For the**

## DIGITAL DIVIDE NARROWING IN THE HINTERLAND

Digital divide narrowing in the hinterland

The government's efforts to bridge the digital divide in Guyana's hinterland regions are yielding significant results. The ICT Access and e-Services for Hinterland, Poor, and Remote Communities (HPRC) Project has made substantial progress, with over \$1

billion invested in these communities to date.

Prime Minister, Brigadier (Ret'd) Mark Phillips, highlighted the project's achievements at an ICT Project Board Meeting at the Arthur Chung Convention Centre. **"Since 2020, we have moved from no hub being completed to today 120 hubs being completed and**

**connected. Over the last four years, we have progressed tremendously...More than 50 per cent of the work in terms of completing the ICT hubs was done,"** he said.

The project has seen the completion of 120 ICT hubs, with another 30 expected to be completed by November. The government has also

allocated \$120 million for the maintenance of these hubs in 2025.

To ensure broadband internet connectivity in these communities, the government has approved the purchase of 1,000 Starlink devices.

While acknowledging the project's accomplishments, the Prime Minister urged the project board to redouble their efforts to achieve full connectivity in these communities.

Project Manager Ronald Harsawack outlined other key



Prime Minister, Brigadier (Ret'd) Mark Phillips, highlighting the project's achievements

achievements, including the completion of 118 photovoltaic installations and the training of 129 ICT hub managers.

These investments in ICT are part of a broader

strategy to promote digital inclusivity and ensure that hinterland, poor, and remote communities can enjoy the same level of connectivity as those on the coast.



President Ali addressing the gathering

## PRESIDENT ALI URGES GUYANESE TO OVERCOME NEGATIVITY THROUGH FAITH AND KNOWLEDGE

President Mohamed Irfaan Ali reaffirmed his administration's commitment to prioritising the well-being of all Guyanese, emphasising that the government's true success lies not in financial wealth but in its dedication to serving

humanity. The President highlighted that every policy and decision of the PPP/C Administration is aimed at improving the lives of citizens across the country.

**"The teachings of this great faith, which entail serving humanity, are the principles by which this government operates. We ensure that people are at the core of everything we do,"** President Ali stated during a Navratri service at the Better Hope Mandir on the East Coast of Demerara.

The President attributed many of the government's successes to the guiding principles

of faith, which he believes have helped them achieve various goals for the benefit of Guyanese. He expressed his pride in leading a government that works tirelessly to uplift humanity and ensure a brighter future for the younger generation, as well as better opportunities for senior citizens.

**"I am pleased to lead a government that is working every single day for the upliftment of humanity, so that your children can have a better future and the older folks in our society can have greater benefits,"** he remarked.

President Ali also

noted that religious ceremonies, like the one held for Navratri, offer an opportunity for self-reflection and spiritual growth. He urged citizens to overcome negative thoughts through knowledge and faith, stating that a more knowledgeable society is better equipped to face challenges.

**"Negativity must be overcome not only through personal strength, but also through knowledge. That is why coming out during this period is so important,"** he explained, encouraging those present to deepen their understanding of their faith and live according to the

teachings of their religious texts. The President believes that a unified society, strengthened by faith and knowledge, will be more resilient in the face of adversity.

As such, he urged attendees to become more intertwined with their beliefs, and work together for the common good.



President Ali at Navratri at the Better Hope Mandir

## FREE SCREENINGS REDUCE FINANCIAL BURDEN FOR GUYANESE

With the elimination of screening costs through government vouchers, Guyanese are being encouraged to take advantage of the free cervical cancer and eye testing programmes.

The eye testing and spectacles programme has seen significant uptake, with over 23,000 tests conducted and 18,753 spectacles issued so far. Eligible individuals, aged 18 and under or 65 and older, can receive a \$2,000

voucher for eye screening and a \$15,000 subsidy for spectacles.

**"Even if you've had your eyes tested before, there's no harm in getting a checkup and a new pair of glasses,"** said Dr. Bharrat Jagdeo, General Secretary of the People's Progressive Party, during a press conference. **"This programme also helps us identify those who may need**



Over 23,000 eye tests vouchers distributed

more specialised eye care."

The government has allocated \$840 million for eye tests and \$995 million for spectacle subsidies in the national budget.

For cervical cancer screening, approximately 60,000 vouchers have been distributed. Dr. Jagdeo urged women to redeem them promptly. **"This is a crucial step in combating cervical cancer,"** he said. **"We have the potential to**

reach over 300,000 beneficiaries."

The programme offers \$8,000 vouchers for cervical cancer screenings, which can be used at participating medical institutions. With a budget of \$2.8 billion, the government aims to make these essential healthcare services more accessible to all Guyanese, particularly those in rural areas.

## CHILDCARE PROFESSIONALS ENHANCE THEIR KNOWLEDGE ON CHILD PROTECTION LAWS



Minister of Human Services and Social Security Dr Vindhya Persaud addressing members of the symposium

knowledge and skills of childcare personnel in handling child abuse cases.

Organised by the Ministry of Human Services and Social Security, the event brought together representatives from various government agencies, legal professionals, and law enforcement.

Minister of Human Services and Social Security, Dr. Vindhya Persaud, highlighted the pivotal role of Guyana's legal framework in safeguarding children. **"It's crucial that those involved in the referral**

**pathway understand the procedures, operating guidelines, and laws governing child abuse cases,"** she emphasised.

The Childcare and Protection Agency Act of 2009 mandates that all matters concerning children be addressed promptly and without prejudice, prioritising the child's well-being. Guyana's adherence to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child further reinforces the nation's commitment to protecting children's rights.

Dr. Persaud underscored the



Persons attending the symposium

importance of collaboration among all sectors involved in childcare. **"Regardless of your position, whether central or regional, cross-**

collaboration is essential to address child abuse issues effectively across the country," she urged the participants. The Childcare

Protection Agency has successfully handled over 2,700 child abuse cases, providing vital support, counseling, and schooling to survivors nationwide.

A symposium held at the Arthur Chung Convention Centre aimed to bolster the

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# PRESIDENT ALI ENGAGES GUYANESE DIASPORA IN LONDON



Scene from the engagement



Scene from the engagement



Scene from the engagement



Scene from the engagement



Scene from the engagement

President Ali, along with First Lady Arya Ali and Minister of Tourism, Industry and Commerce, Oneidge Walrond, connected with members of the Guyanese diaspora at the Hilton Hotel in London.

President Ali highlighted the government's ongoing efforts to drive development in Guyana, and encouraged the diaspora's involvement in the nation's progress. The event also provided an opportunity for open dialogue on key issues and future initiatives.

The meeting fostered a sense of unity and pride, as



Scene from the engagement



Scene from the engagement



Scene from the engagement

# GUYANA WELCOMES NEW UN RESIDENT COORDINATOR AND PHILIPPINE AMBASSADOR

President Ali welcomed newly appointed United Nations Resident Coordinator, H.E Jean Njeri Kamau, during a ceremony at State House. The President

accepted Ms. Kamau's Letters of Accreditation, highlighting the government's commitment to advancing key areas such as harmony, women and youth empowerment.

In his remarks, President Ali emphasised that his administration aims to position Guyana as a global leader in various sectors, including food security, energy, and climate resilience. He reiterated the government's dedication to championing democracy and the rule

of law as fundamental principles guiding its efforts.

Additionally, President Ali also accepted the Letters of Credence from the Ambassador of the Republic of Philippines, H.E Joseph Angeles. Discussions between the two leaders revolved around enhancing collaboration in agriculture, aquaculture, and human resource development, which are vital for both nations.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs



President Ali with the United Nations Resident Coordinator, HE Jean Njeri Kamau at State House



President Ali accepting the Letters of Credence from the Ambassador of the Republic of Philippines, HE Joseph Angeles

and International both ceremonies. Cooperation, Hugh Todd, was present at





# Guyanese DIASPORA DIGEST

KEEPING THE DIASPORA INFORMED EDITION 78

## FIRST FAMILY CHEERS ON WARRIORS



The Caribbean Premier League (CPL) cricket tournament ignited a frenzy of excitement across Guyana as fans flocked to stadiums to witness thrilling matches on September 20, 21, 22, and 25. The Guyana Amazon Warriors, the home team, dominated, securing impressive victories over the St. Kitts and Nevis Patriots, Antigua and Barbuda Falcons, and Barbados Royals. Beyond the cricket, the CPL matches transformed the stadium grounds into a festive atmosphere with local food, live music, and a carnival-like vibe. The tournament attracted passionate cricket fans and prominent government officials alike, showcasing Guyana's enthusiasm for the sport.



# Guyana leading the charge to achieve food security in the region

The following is a statement from Guyana’s Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the UN, Geneva, Dr. Leslie Ramsammy on the occasion of World Food Day 2024:

“AS Guyana joins countries and citizens around the globe to observe World Food Day 2024, Guyana’s food production and overall agriculture production have increased significantly.

“Since 2020, Guyana has led CARICOM’s 25 x 25 Initiative to increase local food production. Guyana can feel proud that we led effectively the drive to reduce food imports by CARICOM. As of today, we can feel relatively confident that by World Food Day 2025, the goal of 25 per cent reduction in food imports into CARICOM will be attained. Already, the reduction is approximately 18 per cent.

“But even as Guyana and CARICOM have reasons to be optimistic, our countries are vulnerable to natural disasters. Guyana faces climate change challenges such as floods, droughts, changing patterns of precipitation, rising sea level, sea acidification, intrusion of salt water into irrigation systems.

“CARICOM countries also face the same problems. But in addition, CARICOM countries face hurricane challenges. Beryl recently caused several of the countries to lose significant parts of their GDP.

“Climate change is real. Our CARICOM countries mostly have to pay for damage, destruction and lost lives that CARICOM contributed little to nothing towards.

“In spite of the many constraints, Guyana and CARICOM can be proud that we continue to make gains in food security.

“At the same time, FAO estimates reveal that a growing number of people, almost 750 million faced hunger in 2023 and 2.8 billion people around the world could not afford a healthy diet in 2022.

“Our own Region – Latin America and the Caribbean – in 2022 had 183M people who could not afford a healthy diet.

“Even more worrying, the average cost of a healthy diet has risen to almost \$US4 per day per person. In Latin America and the Caribbean, the average cost was US\$4.60.



Dr Leslie Ramsammy

“Analysis of food cost clearly shows that countries that import more food have a higher average of cost for a healthy diet. This is a concern for CARICOM. Guyana and Belize are CARICOM countries that produce more than 50 per cent of their food needs. Some of the CARICOM countries import as much as 80 per cent of their food needs. In addition, intra-regional imports between our countries are significantly less than imports from outside of the region.

We must change this dispensation.

“On World Food Day 2024, Guyana’s President, HE Irfaan Ali is leading the drive to ensure that Guyana strengthens its status as a food secured country. Consider this one example, since 2020, Guyana has increased its agriculture budget by greater than 800 per cent.

“The result is that infrastructure to mitigate the risks of flood and droughts are being dramatically transformed. In addition, research is improving paddy seeds quality leading to higher yield and greater resistance to pests and environmental factors such as increased water salinity, introduction of new crops and genetically more productive livestock.

“Guyana’s Permanent Mission in Geneva is proud of Guyana’s efforts in improving agriculture and food production. We are confident that on World Food Day 2025, Guyana’s ledger will demonstrate impressive improvement in ensuring the right to food is met for all citizens. The Mission congratulates President, Dr. Irfaan Ali, the Minister of Agriculture, Honorable Zulfikar Mustapha and the Government.”



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


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

Key priorities of the WGC include:

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




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



To find out more about World Guyanese Congress and our goals and priorities. Scan the QR code, or visit [www.wgc-org.com](http://www.wgc-org.com)

If you have any questions feel free to get in touch:  
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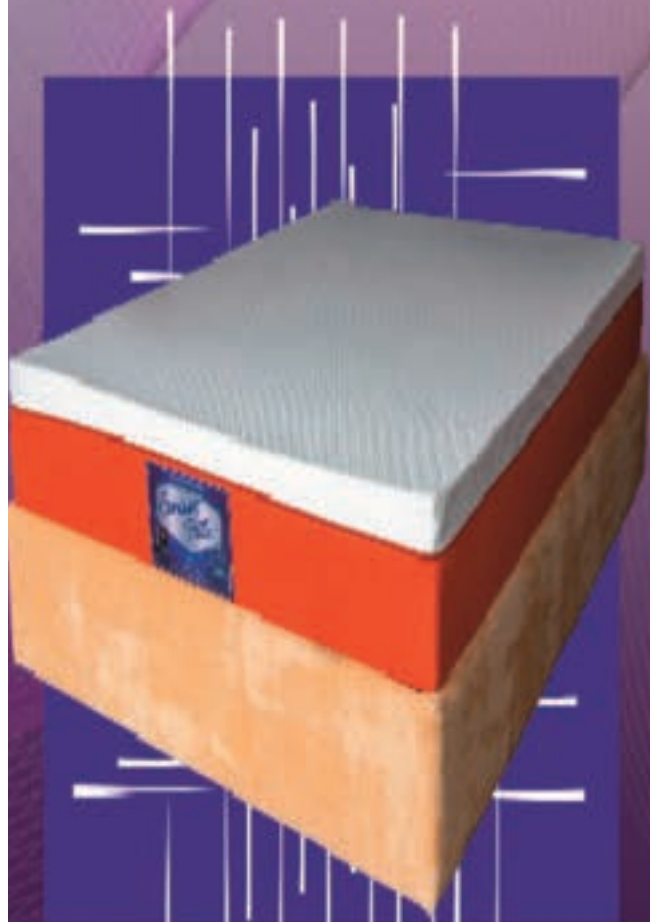
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Save the Dates



**Events**  
*Calendar*

October - December 2024



**October**

- 1 CPL Eliminator Match
- 1 CPL Party in Linden & Berbice
- 2-6 Regional Food Festival
- 2 CPL Qualifier 1
- 2 CPL Party in Linden & Berbice
- 3 Pan-on-the-beach Concert
- 3-5 Caribbean Content Creators and Influencers Summit
- 4 CPL Qualifier 2
- 4 CPL Party in Linden & Berbice
- 5 Super Concert
- 6 CPL Cricket Finals
- 6 Cricket Finals after party
- 6 Essequibo Drags Racing
- 8-9 2nd Regional Investments & Capital Market Conference
- 18-21 Berbice Expo
- 19 Conference on Hindu issues in the Caribbean & Diaspora
- 26 Monster Mash Halloween Fair and Fundraiser
- 27 Tapas Rum & Wine
- 30 Diwali Motorcade
- 31 Diwali - 'Festival of Lights'

**November**

- 1-30 Tourism Awareness Month
- 10 Circuit Racing Series 3
- 12 Entrepreneurship Conference
- 14-17 GuyExpo
- 16-17 Tourism Month Golf Putting Contest
- 16-17 Nature & Savannah Linden Hike
- 23 FumaCon 2024
- 24 Chutney Show Washiba Resort
- 25-30 Pakaraima Mountain Safari

**December**

- 13-15 Main Street Christmas Village
- 25 Christmas
- 26 Boxing Day

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