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**HONOURING SIR SHRIDATH:** In remembrance of the late Sir Shridath Surendranath Ramphal, family, friends, heads of state, and prominent figures gathered to honour his profoundly impactful life and legacy.

A funeral of national honor was held on Saturday, during which Sir Ramphal's ashes were interred with other Guyanese heroes in The Seven Ponds of the Promenade Gardens in his beloved homeland, Guyana.

Here, two members of the Guyana Defence Force inter his ashes at a special monument erected in honour of the late Commonwealth Secretary General, who died on August 31.



**MANUFACTURING GIANT:** Leveraging Guyana's geographic position and expanded trade relations, Guyana President Dr. Irfaan Ali (above) has outlined a vision to expand the country's manufacturing industry.

The Head of State in an interview ahead of the highly anticipated International Business Conference (IBC) emphasised the vital role the conference will play in fostering partnerships be-

tween regional and international stakeholders to drive growth and development in the sector.

"Historically, Guyana has been competitive in every area. In manufacturing, we have a very skilled workforce, a very talented workforce, and we know that we have to invest in the continuous upskilling of the workforce, and we have been doing that."

President Ali pointed out that the government has been investing in continuous upskilling of the local workforce, as well as welcoming skilled and specialised labour from abroad to complement the nation's efforts.

The Head of State further highlighted that Guyana is poised to become one of the most attractive places for manufacturing investment.

*See story, Page 21*

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# Guyanese DIASPORA DIGEST



KEEPING THE DIASPORA INFORMED EDITION 76

## THREE NEW SCHOOLS COMMISSIONED —EDUCATIONAL ACCESS FOR THOUSANDS OF STUDENTS ENHANCED

PAGE 11



President Dr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali inaugurated the state-of-the-art Yarrowkabra Secondary School, marking a major milestone in Guyana's goal of achieving universal secondary education.



GUYANA LAUNCHES NATIONAL DEFENCE INSTITUTE  
—AIMS TO BECOME A "CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE"

PAGE 3



FORMER NORWEGIAN MINISTER PRAISES GUYANA'S  
FOREST PRESERVATION AND CLIMATE ADAPTATION AS A  
'SUCCESS STORY'

PAGE 9

# GUYANA EXPANDS ECONOMIC TIES IN HIGH-LEVEL U.S. MEETINGS



Dr Singh participating in a Guyana-ExxonMobil diaspora meeting

Senior Minister in the Office of the President with Responsibility for Finance and the Public Service, Dr. Ashni Singh, recently concluded a series of key meetings in Washington, D.C., aimed at strengthening economic relations between Guyana and the United States.

Dr. Singh met with U.S. Deputy Assistant Secretary of

the Treasury, Michael Kaplan, to discuss Guyana's impressive economic growth and explore opportunities for further collaboration. He underscored Guyana's commitment to maintaining a stable macroeconomic environment to attract more U.S. investment.

In a separate meeting with USAID Deputy Administrator for Policy

and Programming, Isobel Coleman, Dr. Singh highlighted Guyana's 49.7% overall economic growth and 12.6% increase in the non-oil sector for the first half of 2024. They focused on ensuring that this growth benefits all Guyanese and explored new areas for cooperation.

Dr. Singh also engaged with U.S. Under Secretary of State for Economic Growth, Energy, and the Environment, Jose W. Fernandez, and Assistant Secretary for the Bureau of Energy Resources, Geoffrey R. Pyatt. Their discussions centred on advancing economic growth, particularly in energy security and human capital development.

Meetings with

Assistant Trade Representative for the Western Hemisphere, Daniel Watson, focused on enhancing trade and investment, with Dr. Singh reaffirming the U.S. as a key trading partner. Additionally, discussions with CAF's Executive President, Sergio Díaz-Granados, and World Bank Vice President Carlos Felipe Jaramillo addressed financing for infrastructure and economic diversification.

Dr. Singh also met with the International Finance Corporation (IFC) Regional Vice President, Alfonso García Mora, to explore increasing IFC's presence in Guyana to support private sector growth. He welcomed the World Bank's appointment of Diletta Doretti as

Resident Representative for Guyana, emphasising the importance of unified leadership for supporting the country's



Dr Singh with the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Western Hemisphere, United States (US) Department of Commerce, Ms. Isabella Cascarano, in Washington DC.

priorities.

A meeting with Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) President, Ilan Goldfajn, saw Dr.

Singh express gratitude for the Bank's ongoing support, recognizing it as Guyana's largest multilateral lender.

During his visit, Dr. Singh participated in a Guyana/ExxonMobil diaspora event, where he highlighted the unprecedented economic growth in Guyana, driven by both oil and gas discoveries and robust non-oil sector expansion. He assured the diaspora of the government's commitment to translating national prosperity into individual and community benefits while balancing immediate needs with long-term sustainability.

Guyana's Ambassador to the U.S., H.E. Samuel Hinds, also joined the delegation during this productive visit.

## DR SINGH PRAISES GUYANESE ACHIEVEMENTS AT SCHENECTADY CARIBBEAN DAY

During his four-day visit to the United States (U.S), Senior Minister in the Office of the President with Responsibility for Finance and the Public Service, Dr. Ashni Singh, addressed thousands of Guyanese at the Caribbean Day celebration in Schenectady, New York. Speaking on behalf of President Irfaan Ali and his Government, Dr. Singh expressed pride in the achievements of the Guyanese Diaspora and their contributions to their new communities.

In his address, Dr. Singh highlighted the evolving relationship between Guyanese abroad and their homeland. "The days



Dr Singh engaging with Guyanese at the Caribbean Day celebration in Schenectady, New York

when Guyanese travelled abroad and never returned to Guyana are long gone," he remarked. "Today, our Guyanese brothers and sisters have made their mark across the globe, including in cities like Schenectady, New York. We are

incredibly proud of how they have distinguished themselves."

Dr. Singh praised the success of many Guyanese who have risen to prominent positions in their adopted countries, including roles in City Councils and State Assemblies. "It fills us

with pride to see our diaspora establishing and growing their businesses, improving their well-being, and maintaining a strong connection to Guyana, despite their new homes and achievements," he said.

The Senior Minister also reassured the Diaspora of the government's ongoing efforts to transform the country. "Many of you who have visited Guyana recently would have seen firsthand the significant changes taking place. Our country is evolving, creating

new opportunities, and improving communities. We encourage you to visit more often and return to Guyana, as it will always be your home," Dr. Singh assured.

He acknowledged the challenges faced by the current administration, particularly in 2020, and



Dr Singh engaging with Guyanese at the Caribbean Day celebration in Schenectady, New York

thanked the Guyanese Americans who supported the defence of Guyana's democracy by engaging with U.S. legislators and officials.

The Caribbean Day event in Schenectady showcased the vibrant culture of the Caribbean with music, dance, and performances from Guyanese artistes such as Terry Gajraj and Adrian Dutchin, celebrating the rich heritage and contributions of the Caribbean community in the U.S.



President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali

Guyana's remarkable economic growth and transformative development projects have positioned the nation as a highly sought-after investment hub.

President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali highlighted the country's rising prominence on the world stage, emphasising its pivotal role in regional development. "We are the center of attention, and the world is watching," he stated during the recent contract signing ceremony for the US\$161 million Soesdyke-Linden Highway upgrade.

Since 2020, the government has strategically engaged international contractors

and consultants to oversee and implement mega projects. Notable examples include the construction of the new Demerara River Bridge by China Railway Construction (International) Limited, overseen by Politecnica from Italy, the upgrade of the Sheriff Street to Orange Nassau and Mahaica roads, and the

Linden to Mabura Road upgrade.

These projects are not only enhancing Guyana's infrastructure but also nurturing local managerial capacity to thrive in complex environments. "We are building the capacity to take our country forward," President Ali noted.

The significant

investments made by participating companies in training facilities demonstrate their confidence in the government's long-term strategic vision.

Minister of Public Works, Bishop Juan Edghill, emphasised the government's commitment to ensuring these projects are supervised by reputable

international firms to protect public funds and deliver high-quality work.

This strategic approach solidifies Guyana's position as an attractive investment destination and reaffirms its commitment to sustainable and impactful development.

## WORLD EYES GUYANA'S ECONOMIC GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT - PRESIDENT ALI

# GUYANA LAUNCHES NATIONAL DEFENCE INSTITUTE



President Ali at the launch of the National Defence Institute

Guyana has marked a significant milestone with the launch of the National Defence Institute (NDI), an initiative spearheaded by President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali.

The NDI aims to become a “centre of excellence” in

defence, security, and development studies in Guyana and the Americas. The institute will play a crucial role in building capacity and expertise within the nation’s security architecture, offering world-class training to stakeholders both locally and regionally.



Chief of Defence Staff, Brigadier Omar Khan

During the launch ceremony at the Arthur Chung Conference Centre, President Ali emphasised the importance of the NDI in protecting Guyana’s interests and safeguarding its sovereignty. **“Defence is no longer an option. It is an essential requirement for all those who will play a role in shaping our national defence and security architecture,”** he stated.

The institute will not only focus on academic research, but will also produce action plans and analyses on various threats and challenges facing the region. Key



Launch of the National Defence Institute

areas of focus will include migration patterns, organised gangs, disaster preparedness, climate change, cybersecurity, and security risk profiling.

A diverse range of individuals, including CEOs of various agencies and those involved in management and

decision-making positions, will benefit from training at the NDI. **“Defence is everyone’s responsibility, and that is why there will be some strategic forces and strategic certificates that are**

designed to help CEOs, to help the private sector... Guard against various threats that we will confront,” the president underlined.

The NDI will be linked to the Regional Security System (RSS), the National Defense University in Washington D.C., and the William J. Perry Center for Defense and Atmospheric Studies. The institute will be housed at the University of Guyana.



# NEW MEMBERS OF LAW REFORM COMMISSION URGED TO EXAMINE LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR SILICA CITY

President Ali has called on the newly appointed members of the Law Reform Commission to prioritise the development of a comprehensive legal framework for the Silica City project. This innovative and eco-friendly city is envisioned to be a model of sustainable urban development.

During the swearing-in ceremony for Deenawati Panday, Teni Housty, and Clarissa Riehl, President Ali emphasised the need for tailored legislation that

can support the unique vision and goals of Silica City. He explained that living in the city would require a commitment to a certain lifestyle, including a focus on environmental care.

**“Silica City is intended to be the pride of the region and the pride of Guyana,”** the President stated. He highlighted the city’s planned features, including smart homes, recreational parks, community centres, an electricity grid, and multi-specialty healthcare.



President Ali with Attorney General, Mohabir Anil Nandlall, SC; Chancellor of the Judiciary Yonette Cummings-Edwards and members of the Law Reform Commission

President Ali expressed the hope that specific legislation for Silica City would be ready before the first quarter of 2025, given the ongoing discussions with investors,

urban planners, and stakeholders. He also commended the Law Reform Commission for its efforts in modernising Guyana’s legal framework and urged the new members to address emerging challenges like artificial intelligence and climate change.

The President emphasised the importance of closing legal loopholes and engaging with the private sector to enhance the country’s competitiveness and sustainability. He recognised the

Commission’s role in ensuring that Guyana’s laws evolve in step with the changing needs of society and the demands of modern justice.

The Law Reform Commission is responsible for ensuring that the country’s laws are updated with global legislative trends. The other members of the Law Reform Commission - Emily Dodson, who serves as the Chairperson, and Lenox Shuman - were sworn in earlier.

# GUYANA BOLSTERS MPOX PREPAREDNESS AMID RISING CASES IN BRAZIL

As cases of mpox (monkeypox) continue to rise in neighbouring Brazil, the Ministry of Health has taken proactive measures to protect the country’s population.

Minister of Health, Dr. Frank Anthony, announced the formation of a national mpox committee, comprised of infectious disease specialists, to oversee the country’s response to the virus. **“When Guyana recorded the two cases during the previous outbreak, they were quickly isolated and treated,”**

Dr. Anthony stated.

To enhance the capacity of healthcare professionals, over 270 doctors participated in a recent refresher training session on mpox diagnosis and treatment. Additionally, surveillance systems have been implemented at all ports of entry to monitor for potential cases.

**“In addition to that, the national team meet regularly to assess what is going on internationally, what threat these cases pose and to make**

**sure that we are in a state of readiness,”** Dr. Anthony noted.

The Ministry of Health has also secured mpox vaccines and established criteria for identifying individuals at higher risk of infection to ensure they receive vaccinations.

Meanwhile, the ongoing dengue outbreak in Guyana has prompted the Ministry of Health to intensify its efforts. Approximately 32,000 dengue tests have been conducted so far this year, with 8,000 returning positive.

Dr. Anthony

emphasised the importance of reducing the mosquito population to combat dengue. **“The government wants every community through its Neighbourhood Democratic Council (NDC) or municipality to have a fogging machine,”** he said.

As Guyana continues to strengthen its healthcare infrastructure and preparedness, the nation remains vigilant in its efforts to protect its citizens from both mpox and dengue.



Guyana sharpens its mpox preparedness

## GUYANA'S ECONOMY SOARS DESPITE GLOBAL CHALLENGES, RECORDS NEARLY 50% GROWTH IN FIRST HALF OF 2024



Senior Finance Minister  
Dr. Ashni Singh

omy continues to experience explosive growth, defying external pressures like global inflation and supply chain disruptions. According to the country's 2024 Mid-Year Report released by Senior Finance Minister Dr. Ashni Singh, the

overall economy grew by an estimated **49.7 percent** in the first half of the year.

**"This growth in the economy has occurred even as Guyana continues to grapple with external challenges,"** Dr. Singh said, highlighting factors like **"renewed escalation in freight costs, and interest rate uncertainty."**

The good news extends beyond the oil boom. The non-oil economy also saw impressive growth of **12.6 percent** in the first half, marking the fourth consecutive year of expansion for this crucial sector. This signifies a diversified and resilient

economy beyond just oil production.

### Key Takeaways from the Mid-Year Report:

Revised full-year forecast for real GDP growth in 2024 is now **42.3 percent** overall and **11.8 percent** for non-oil real GDP.

Agriculture, forestry, and fishing industries expanded by **8.7 percent**, with rice production leading the way at **17.9 percent** growth.

Mining and quarrying sector, driven by petroleum, grew a staggering **64.3 percent**.

Manufacturing sector saw a **27.5 percent** increase,

largely due to growth in rice processing and other manufacturing activities.

Construction sector boomed with **43.7 percent** growth, fueled by both public and private investments.

Inflation remained relatively low, with consumer prices rising only **1.6 percent** in the first half compared to the end of 2023. The full-year inflation rate is now projected to be **3.2 percent**.

### Government Initiatives Credited for Success

Dr. Singh attributed this success to the government's **"aggressive efforts and unwavering implementation**

**of its policies and programmes."** These include maintaining a zero percent excise tax on petroleum products, extending freight charge reductions, expanding technical and vocational training programmes, investing heavily in energy, transportation, social infrastructure, and housing programmes.

**"These and other initiatives, along with our strong policy stance in relation to attracting and stimulating private investment, have resulted in the economy continuing to achieve extraordinary rates of real economic growth,"** Dr. Singh

said. The government remains focused on ensuring the full implementation of Budget 2024, with the primary goal of improving the lives of all Guyanese citizens.

**"As we navigate the second half of 2024, our government remains firmly focused on ensuring the full implementation of Budget 2024, with the constant aim of improving the lives of every single Guyanese family and every single Guyanese person,"** Dr. Singh noted.

## GOV'T COMMITS TO INDUSTRY SUCCESS DESPITE GLOBAL CHALLENGES

Despite global setbacks earlier this year, the government is steadfast in its mission to drive growth across all sectors, President Dr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali emphasised in a live broadcast.

Discussing the Mid-Year Report, President Ali highlighted the significant hurdles faced, particularly in the sugar industry, which saw a 60% contraction due to past neglect and adverse weather. **"Revitalising the sugar industry remains a top priority,"** he asserted, noting ongoing investments in the Guyana Sugar



The government is steadfast in its mission to drive growth across all sectors

Corporation (GuySuCo). **"We are embedding seven technical experts from India to support mechanisation and transformation efforts."**

President Ali also

pointed to improvements in the current sugar crop, expected to yield 800,000 tonnes of cane, thanks to these investments. Additionally, new packaging plants at Albion and Blairmont

Sugar Estate aim to boost value-added sugar production.

Turning to the poultry sector, President Ali addressed global challenges, including new diseases and logistical issues, impacting production. **"We are taking concrete steps,"** he said, noting the introduction of modernised tunnel houses by large-scale poultry farms. **"Our goal is to achieve self-sufficiency in hatching egg production within three years and become a regional leader."**

In the rice industry,

which grew by 17.9% in the first half of the year, President Ali

**further increases in production in 2025,"** he said.



The rice industry grew by 17.9% in the first half of the year

credited government investments in drainage, irrigation, and farm-to-market roads. **"With new infrastructure and expanded acreage, we expect**

Across all sectors, President Ali reaffirmed, **"We are committed to practical solutions that ensure success in every industry."**

## GUYEXPO 2024 TO BE A SHOWCASE OF GUYANESE GROWTH



Minister of Tourism, Industry and Commerce  
Oneidge Walrond

Guyana's largest trade show, GUYEXPO, slated for November 14-17, is set to attract record crowds this year. Organisers anticipate over 100,000 attendees

and 250 booths, surpassing last year's numbers.

Minister of Tourism, Industry, and Commerce Oneidge Walrond attributed the expected increase to Guyana's strong economic growth, which has reached 49% this year alone. **"The theme of GUYEXPO reflects the diversity of businesses participating in this year's exposition,"** she stated.

Minister Walrond emphasised the government's support

for small businesses and their role in Guyana's economic development. **"GUYEXPO offers these businesses a platform to showcase their achievements,"** she said.

**"We are excited about the range of products and services that will be on display...we are committed to creating an event that reflects both, the growth and the global competitiveness of the Guyanese businesses,"** Minister

Walrond added.

Several sponsors have already signed on, demonstrating their

enthusiasm for the event. The Ministry of Tourism's dedicated staff is working to ensure that



Launch of GUYEXPO 2024

GUYEXPO 2024 meets international standards.

In addition to the business exhibits, patrons can enjoy a family-friendly atmosphere with a dedicated play area for children.

Businesses interested in participating can register from October 1-30, 2024.

# 'FREE, FAIR ELECTIONS ARE THE LIFEBLOOD OF DEMOCRACY' - PRESIDENT ALI REAFFIRMS COMMITMENT



President Ali speaking at the opening ceremony

As Guyana stands on the threshold of its 2025 general and regional elections, President Dr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali has firmly reiterated the government's unwavering commitment to the principles of democracy and the rule of law.

Speaking at the opening of the 46th Conference of the Caribbean, the Americas, and the Atlantic Region of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, the president underscored that free and fair elections are not just a procedural necessity, but the very bedrock of a robust democratic system.

**"Free and fair**

**elections are the lifeblood of our democracy,"** President Ali declared, addressing a distinguished audience at the Umana Yana in Kingston, Georgetown. **"They are the cornerstone upon which parliamentary democracy stands, ensuring that the will of the people is genuinely represented."**

Reflecting on Guyana's turbulent political history, President Ali acknowledged the country's past struggles to uphold democratic principles. He noted that these challenges, though painful, have been invaluable in shaping a stronger and more resilient democratic system. **"Guyana's political evolution has been marred by the perversion of democratic rule for almost three decades,"** he recalled. **"But those dark days have taught us vital lessons. Today, our democracy is**

**stronger because we have learned from the past."**

President Ali also highlighted the significant role of Guyana's international



PM Phillips speaking at the opening ceremony

partners, including the United Kingdom and the European Union, in supporting the country's journey toward a more transparent and accountable electoral process. **"The support of our international allies has been instrumental in restoring and safeguarding our democracy,"** he said, emphasising the interconnectedness of democratic governance

and economic stability. **"When democracy falters, so does the economy. During those years when democracy came under threat, our economy faltered, poverty deepened, and outward migration intensified."**

The president's remarks resonated with the conference's theme, "Democracy: Challenges Facing Modern Parliaments" as he warned of the direct link between threats to democracy and national security. **"Democracy is not just a political**

**system; it is the engine that drives development,"** President Ali asserted. **"We must understand that democracy is not merely a commitment—it is the force that propels our nation forward."**

Prime Minister Brigadier (Ret'd) Mark Phillips, who also addressed the gathering, echoed the president's sentiments, reaffirming the government's dedication to strengthening parliamentary institutions. **"The PPP/C Administration**

**remains steadfast in its commitment to transparency, accountability, inclusivity, and the rule of law,"** PM Phillips stated. **"We have taken concrete steps to bolster our legislative processes, foster bipartisanship, and ensure full access to parliamentary proceedings."**

The conference brought together parliamentarians and clerks from across the region.



The opening of the 46th Conference of the Caribbean, the Americas, and the Atlantic Region of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association

## GOV'T TO AMEND CYBERCRIME LAWS TO COMBAT SOCIAL MEDIA ABUSE, NOT TARGET INFLUENCERS



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

The government of Guyana, led by Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs, Mohabir Anil Nandlall, SC, has announced plans to amend the Cybercrime Act to address the growing dangers posed by social media abuse. This initiative is part of a broader effort to ensure that cyberspace remains a safe and regulated environment for all citizens.

During his weekly programme, *Issues in the News*, Minister Nandlall expressed concern over the unregulated use of social media platforms, describing them as a **"dangerous weapon"**

**that can damage reputations and hinder national progress. "It is the abuse of freedom of expression, and a government cannot stand idly by in the face of such an onslaught against its citizens,"** the Attorney General emphasised.

The Cybercrime Bill, initially passed in 2016, outlines various cyber offences, including illegal access to data, computer-related fraud, child pornography, and harassment. It was amended in 2018 to remove the controversial sedition clause. However, AG Nandlall highlighted the need

for further revisions to address evolving threats in cyberspace. **"This onslaught emanating from the social media platforms is causing public and private harm, and it will not continue without a reaction from the government,"** he stated firmly.

The Attorney General reassured the public that the Law Reform Commission is prepared to complete the necessary review before the National Assembly resumes in October. The amendments, he noted, would align with international standards and be informed by the ongoing United Nations Convention on Cybercrime. **"The amendments will be in compliance with international standards, and citizens can rest assured that their rights will be respected,"** Minister Nandlall said.

In addition to

these changes, the Law Reform Commission will review criminal procedure provisions to enable the prosecution of individuals overseas who commit cybercrimes in Guyana. This includes clarifying jurisdiction and ensuring that legal documents can be



People's Progressive Party (PPP) General Secretary, Dr. Bharrat Jagdeo

effectively served to those outside the country.

Addressing concerns and criticisms, Minister Nandlall took to Facebook to directly address the public: **"The recent announcement of greater regulation to cyberspace has generated hysteria and pandemonium**

**in certain quarters. Those who are reacting in this manner recognise that their days of using social media to destroy reputations, excite racial hostilities, engender strife, cause public mischief, and**

**arena."** Echoing these assurances, People's Progressive Party (PPP) General Secretary, Dr. Bharrat Jagdeo, clarified that the amendments are not intended to target social media influencers or ordinary citizens. Dr. Jagdeo dismissed fears that the government's plans would stifle online discourse. **"Don't buy into this hysteria that we are coming after influencers, media commentators, or ordinary citizens. It's nonsense,"** he asserted.

Dr. Jagdeo, who also serves as Vice President, emphasised that the amendments are focused on curbing illicit activities on social media platforms rather than regulating free speech. **"We believe in freedom of speech and expression,"** he reiterated.

**extort monies are quickly coming to an end."** He assured law-abiding citizens, saying, **"Once the law is implemented, it will be applied for the public good, for the benefit of all law-abiding citizens, and to bring critically needed regulation to an unregulated**

## NATIONAL FUNERAL FOR SIR SHRIDATH RAMPHAL TO BE HELD ON SEPTEMBER 14

The Office of the President has announced that a National Funeral of Honour will be held on Saturday, September 14, 2024, to celebrate the life and legacy of Sir Shridath Surendranath Ramphal, OE, OCC, GCMG, AM, who passed away on August 30, 2024, at the age of 95. The ceremony will take place at Promenade Gardens, Georgetown, starting at 15:00 hours, followed by interment at The Place of the Seven Ponds in the Botanical Gardens.

Sir Shridath

Ramphal, affectionately known as "Sonny," was born on October 3, 1928, in New Amsterdam, British Guiana (now Guyana). He was predeceased by his wife of 67 years, Lady Lois Ramphal, who died in 2019.

Renowned for his global diplomatic efforts, Sir Shridath held several prominent roles, including Assistant Attorney-General of the West Indies Federation, Minister of Justice and Foreign Affairs of Guyana, and Secretary-General of the

Commonwealth from 1975 to 1990, making him the longest-serving individual in that position. His leadership was instrumental in the international fight against apartheid in South Africa, earning widespread respect.

His contributions extended beyond diplomacy. Sir Shridath served as Chancellor of the University of Guyana, the University of the West Indies, and Warwick University. He was actively involved in global initiatives, contributing to reports

on the environment, development, and disarmament. His leadership as Chairman of the West Indian Commission resulted in the influential 1992 report, "Time for Action," which remains a key document for Caribbean development.

In his later years, Sir Shridath continued to impact international affairs. At 92, he became the first lawyer to appear virtually before the International Court of Justice, representing Guyana in a crucial border dispute with



Sir Shridath Ramphal

Venezuela.

The Office of the President has invited all Guyanese to pay their respects and honour a man whose visionary

work and tireless dedication have left a lasting mark on both Guyana and the world.

## INNOVATION TO TAKE CENTRE STAGE AT GUYANA'S ENERGY CONFERENCE AND SUPPLY CHAIN EXPO 2025



Minister of Natural Resources, Vickram Bharrat

Guyana's premier Energy Conference and Supply Chain Expo is gearing up for its fourth edition in 2025, promising a diverse range of activities

and a unique digital experience. The event, themed "Connecting the dots: Integrating the future," will take place from February 18-21 at the Marriott Hotel in Georgetown.

Minister of Natural Resources Vickram Bharrat, speaking at the launch event, emphasised the conference's role in showcasing Guyana's socio-economic and cultural strengths to a global audience. He highlighted the event's potential to attract over 7,000 delegates, feature 180+ booths, and host

70+ distinguished speakers.

"Today when we launch our energy conference, it's not only an energy conference but is a supply chain expo," Minister Bharrat stated. "Because all of these sectors are critical in building out the oil and gas sector in Guyana."

New initiatives for the 2025 conference include an energy run/walk, an essay competition in partnership with the Ministry of Education, and a "Taste of Guyana"

event showcasing authentic Guyanese cuisine. Additionally, a conference village will feature a farmers' market and arts and crafts vendors.

The conference will also introduce an innovative digital experience with the "Energy Conference Suite", featuring a dedicated app and website.

Kiana Wilburg, CEO of the conference, noted that key topics on the agenda will include a just energy transition, financing sustainable development, workforce

development, resilient supply chains, and women's advancement in energy. She also mentioned plans for parallel sessions on technical and specialised topics.

The conference aims to provide delegates with opportunities to immerse themselves in Guyana's rich cultural tapestry, including the Mashramani festivities.



Launch of the Energy Conference and Supply Chain Expo 2025

## MORE BUILDINGS ACCESSING SOLAR POWER IN REGION 1



One of the two, solar PV systems

Prime Minister Brigadier (Ret'd) Mark Phillips inaugurated two solar PV mini-grid systems in the remote communities of Karaburi and Haimacabra, Moruca, Region One. The Prime Minister expressed his delight at the commissioning,

underscoring the significance of these projects in enhancing the quality of life and promoting sustainable development in the hinterland.

"These solar projects are part of our broader plan to bridge the energy

divide between the coast and the hinterland," Prime Minister Phillips stated during the ceremony. "We recognise that energy is essential to development, and today we are fulfilling our promise to bring renewable energy solutions to our first people."

In Karaburi, the newly installed 19kW solar PV system, supported by 85kWh of battery storage, will power eight critical buildings in the village. This system complements the earlier distribution of 137 solar home systems, which have already begun transforming residents' lives by providing clean

and reliable energy.

In Haimacabra, a 21.5kW solar PV system with 94kWh of battery storage is now

operational, powering 245 solar home systems to households in the village.

Minister Phillips, "these projects are vital to fulfilling the Government's promise of inclusive development, ensuring that all Guyanese, particularly those in the hinterland, benefit from modern amenities and sustainable energy solutions."

Guyana Energy Agency's (GEA) Chief Executive Officer, Dr. Mahender Sharma highlighted the technical details of the installations and reaffirmed the GEA's commitment to expanding renewable energy access across Guyana, particularly in remote and hinterland areas.



PM Phillips commissioned two solar PV mini-grid systems at Karaburi and Haimacabra in Moruca, Region One

operational, powering seven key community buildings, including the teacher's quarters,

According to Prime



# PRESIDENT ALI CRITICISES APNU+AFC FOR 'MISGUIDED' SPENDING



President Dr Irfaan Ali

President Dr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali has sharply criticised the former APNU+AFC Coalition Administration for what he described as a "non-productive" expenditure profile. In a live broadcast, he accused the opposition

of prioritising personal gains over the needs of the people.

According to President Ali, the APNU+AFC government's excessive recurrent spending during their time in office stifled infrastructural development and economic growth. He highlighted the discontinuation of essential social programmes like the "Because We Care" cash grant, and the lack of investment in education and healthcare infrastructure.

**"The APNU+AFC government prioritised personal gain over the needs of the people,"** President Ali stated. **"Their spending profile was misguided, and it resulted in a decline in key sectors."**

In contrast, President Ali emphasised his administration's focus on capital projects, aimed at reducing the infrastructure gap and improving the lives of Guyanese. He highlighted several major development projects undertaken by his

government, including the new Demerara River crossing, the gas-to-energy project, and the nationwide enhancement of drainage and irrigation systems.

The president also accused the APNU+AFC government of mismanagement in other areas, such as the collapse of the sugar industry, the decline in the bauxite industry, and the termination of 2,000 Community Service Officers (CSOs).

**"The APNU+AFC government's actions had a devastating**

**impact on the lives of thousands of Guyanese,"** President Ali said. **"Their mismanagement led to economic hardship and social unrest."**

President Ali concluded by reaffirming his commitment to delivering sustainable development and improving the quality of life for all Guyanese. He urged the opposition to focus on constructive engagement, and work together for the betterment of the country.

# OPPOSITION'S DISTRACTIONS WON'T DERAIL GUYANA'S PROGRESS - DR JAGDEO

People's Progressive Party (PPP) General Secretary, Dr. Bharrat Jagdeo, has denounced the opposition's ongoing attempts to distract Guyanese from the government's positive achievements, declaring that these tactics will not succeed.

Speaking at a recent party conference, Dr Jagdeo highlighted the government's efforts to enhance healthcare, education, infrastructure, and job creation since 2020. He accused the opposition and certain media

outlets of recycling allegations of corruption to divert attention from the progress being made.

**"These repeated narratives are deliberate attempts to prevent people from recognising how their lives have improved,"** Dr Jagdeo

said, urging citizens to compare their current situation with the hardships they faced between 2015 and 2020.

He emphasised the government's focus on real issues, like creating 60,000 jobs and spending huge sums to



A four-lane interconnector that was completed between 'Massy Road' and Greenfield Road

enhance public services. Dr Jagdeo criticised the opposition for avoiding

discussions on these successes, instead pushing scandals and

rumours. The General Secretary also called

out the APNU+AFC coalition for their history of corruption, contrasting their record with the PPP's efforts to strengthen procurement systems and prevent conflicts of interest.

**"Our development is guided by a comprehensive plan, and we've already fulfilled 90% of our commitments,"** Dr Jagdeo asserted, confident that the government's progress will not be overshadowed by opposition distractions.

# PNC'S \$6 BILLION TAX DEBT COULD RUN CITY FOR THREE YEARS - DR JAGDEO

General Secretary of the People's Progressive Party (PPP), Dr. Bharrat Jagdeo, said that the People's National Congress/Reform (PNCR) owes

a staggering \$6 billion in taxes—enough to fund the Mayor and City Council's (M&CC) operations for three years.

**"If you go at last**

**year's level, you can run the city council for three years based on taxes that the PNC alone [owes]-paying all the staff, garbage collection,**

**everything,"** Dr Jagdeo said.

Dr Jagdeo also debunked claims that the government is underfunding the municipality, stressing that the PPP government is actively improving the lives of Georgetown residents through infrastructure projects.

**"We're stepping up where the City Council has failed. In Sophia, we've awarded \$2.7 billion in contracts to improve road infrastructure. We're also installing new pumps in drainage in South Georgetown,"** he emphasised.

He further criticised



City Hall is being renovated at a cost of \$780 million by the PPP government

the opposition for its alleged corruption and mismanagement, saying, **"Councillors of the M&CC have been exposing excess corruption within the City Council.**

**This issue sheds light on the PNC and AFC's handling of institutions, revealing their impunity and arrogance."**



Georgetown City Hall has historically been the office of the mayor and city council

## GUYANA, ITC DISCUSS TRADE COLLABORATION

Minister of Tourism, Industry and Commerce, Oneidge Walrond, met with the Executive Director of the International Trade Centre (ITC), Ms Pamela Coke-Hamilton, to discuss opportunities for collaboration and trade promotion.

During the meeting, Ms Coke-Hamilton highlighted ITC's previous involvement in Guyana, particularly in the coconut and cassava processing sectors. She also praised

Guyana's leadership role in regional food and nutrition security.

Minister Walrond expressed her ministry's commitment to supporting small businesses and facilitating their access to regional markets. She emphasised the government's efforts to promote entrepreneurship and create a conducive business environment.

Both parties discussed the ITC's Gender-Response

Procurement campaign, which aims to increase women's participation in public procurement. Minister Walrond noted Guyana's similar initiatives to involve small businesses in government procurement.

In July 2024, the ITC conducted a scoping mission to explore potential projects in Guyana under the European Union-funded initiative "Strengthening nutritious and sustainable value

chains in the Caribbean through alliances." The project aligns with the EU's international partnership priorities and the CARICOM 25x25 initiative led by Guyana.

Minister Walrond is currently in Geneva to participate in the World Trade Organization's annual Public Forum. She will be a featured speaker at two-panel discussions and will also meet with the WTO's Director General, Dr Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala.



Minister of Tourism, Industry and Commerce, Oneidge Walrond with the Executive Director of the International Trade Centre (ITC), Pamela Coke-Hamilton

## GUYANA LEVERAGES PACC 2030 TO MOBILISE PRIVATE SECTOR FOR CLIMATE ACTION



Foreign Secretary, Robert Persaud

Guyana's commitment to addressing climate change is gaining momentum as the country leverages the US-Caribbean Partnership to Address the Climate Crisis 2030 (PACC 2030) to mobilise the private sector.

Foreign Secretary Robert Persaud emphasised the critical

role of private sector investment in achieving the goals of PACC 2030, which focuses on access to development financing, clean energy,



U.S. Ambassador to Guyana, Nicole Theriot

food security, and deepening collaboration.

During a recent roundtable discussion, Persaud called upon the private sector to invest in innovative solutions,

such as climate-smart agriculture, renewable energy, and nature-based approaches. He also highlighted the government's support for public-private partnerships and Guyana's transition to a low-carbon development strategy.

"The successful implementation of PACC 2030 would require greater public-private partnerships to yield more effective and efficient results for the benefit of all," Persaud stated. "The climate crisis, food insecurity, and energy insecurity affect everyone, both rich and poor."

The U.S. Ambassador to Guyana, Nicole Theriot, noted the potential for Guyana



Attendees at the Private Sector Roundtable Discussion

to advance climate resilience initiatives by leveraging existing platforms, exploring funding opportunities, and fostering private-public partnerships.

Guyana's efforts to address climate change include preserving its

vast rainforest through the Low-Carbon Development Strategy (LCDS), transitioning to renewable energy sources, and promoting food security through the regional "25 by 2025" objective.



## GOVT COUNTERS STABROEK NEWS' MISLEADING TAKE ON PRESS FREEDOM

Minister within the Office of the Prime Minister with Responsibility for Public Affairs and Information, Kwame McCoy, has criticised Stabroek News for allegedly distorting comments made by Former Jamaican Minister Robert Nesta Morgan.

In a statement issued, Minister McCoy accused the media house of misrepresenting Morgan's remarks from his recent visit to Guyana, framing them to falsely suggest criticism of Guyana's press freedom record. "Stabroek News has

sunk to a new low by selectively quoting Minister Morgan to push an agenda that misrepresents our government's commitment to press freedom," Minister McCoy said.

The Minister highlighted that the current PPP/C government has consistently worked to enhance media freedom through various channels, including regular high-level press conferences and the Access to Information Act, which has been in place for over a decade. "Our government



Minister Kwame McCoy,

has made significant efforts to facilitate media access and transparency," Minister McCoy emphasised. "The

digital media landscape in Guyana benefits from broad freedoms as long as they adhere to existing laws."

He also challenged the fairness of global press freedom assessments, arguing that they often overlook the media's role and professional conduct. "Democracy is multidimensional. Assessments should consider the full spectrum of government-media interactions, not just the government's perspective," Minister McCoy stated.

Morgan, who had previously stated



Jamaica's Former Minister within the Office of the Prime Minister with Responsibility for Information, Robert Nesta Morgan

that transparency is essential for democracy, also responded to the

misuse of his comments. "I find the story lacking context and wrong," Morgan said. "It uses my speech to create a narrative I never intended. The article should be withdrawn."

Minister McCoy called on the private media in Guyana to adhere to ethical standards and focus on objective reporting rather than political agendas. "For the sake of our democratic ecosystem, media must practice professionalism and avoid politicisation," he urged.

# DEVELOPING NATIONS CAN LEAD CLIMATE SOLUTIONS - PRESIDENT ALI



President, Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali addressing the gathering

In a recent high-level discussion at the Arthur Chung Conference Centre, President Dr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali highlighted the pivotal role that developing countries can play in addressing the global climate crisis.

Speaking at the event titled 'Restoring Ambition for International Climate and Development: Learning from Guyana's Low Carbon Development Strategy,' President Ali underscored the leadership emerging from nations in the Global South.

President Ali noted that despite significant challenges, developing countries are demonstrating leadership in climate action and renewable energy. He cited examples such as Costa Rica's conservation



President, Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali addressing the gathering

efforts and Rwanda's leadership in forest restoration. "It is not just big nations that we must analyse," President Ali emphasised. "We also have to look at what small countries across Africa, Asia, and Latin America are doing.

**These countries are showing that size does not limit leadership."**

Guyana itself has been at the forefront of climate innovation with its Low Carbon Development Strategy 2030 (LCDS2030). The strategy focuses on preserving the country's vast rainforests, investing in renewable energy, and sustainable agriculture. "The global south is proving that innovative solutions to the climate crisis can and are being driven from all corners of the world," President Ali declared.

However, he also stressed the need for more substantial international support. "Despite their flourishing leadership, the global south's efforts are being stymied," President Ali said, pointing out that promises made at climate conferences often fall short in implementation. He called for more

concessional climate financing and equitable policies to support developing nations.

Vice President Dr. Bharrat Jagdeo, who also spoke at the event, echoed these sentiments, focusing on the global challenge of deforestation. Dr. Jagdeo emphasised that high deforestation rates are driven by a lack of robust international incentives. "Deforestation and land degradation create about 16% of greenhouse gases," he noted. "There is a lack of global recognition and support for the critical role forests play in climate mitigation."

Dr. Jagdeo highlighted Guyana's efforts to prove the viability of a sustainable model for forest preservation. "The model has been proven. We can use these resources to support Indigenous communities without encroaching on

their land rights," he said, noting that Guyana's carbon credit initiative has already directed funds to support Amerindian communities.

In 2022, Guyana secured a \$750 million deal with Hess Corporation for high-quality carbon credits, surpassing earlier estimates of potential revenue from deforestation. This deal underscores the value of preserving forests over exploiting them, Dr. Jagdeo added. "The world knew that

forests played an important role, yet it was unprepared to provide the support for forested countries that it provided for other abatement solutions."

The discussion also featured insights from International Environmental Advisor and former Norwegian Minister Erik Solheim, among other key stakeholders. Senior Minister Dr. Ashni Singh and Attorney General Anil Nandlall were also in attendance.



Attendees at the high-level discussion

# FMR NORWEGIAN MINISTER PRAISES GUYANA'S FOREST PRESERVATION, CLIMATE ADAPTATION 'SUCCESS STORY'



Minister Bharrat, and International Environmental Advisor, Former Minister of Climate and the Environment, Erik Solheim

Guyana's commitment to forest preservation and climate adaptation has earned high praise from Erik Solheim, Former Norwegian Minister of Climate and Environment. During his visit to several Amerindian communities, Solheim lauded the country's achievements in protecting its rainforests, and advancing climate strategies.

"No nation in the entire world has protected its rainforest as fantastically as

Guyana," Solheim said. "This greatness does not come by itself; it comes through the hard work of the Government of Guyana and all the leaders here, many of whom are from indigenous groups."

Solheim's commendation comes 15 years after the landmark Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed in November 2009 between Guyana's former President Bharrat Jagdeo and Norway's then-Minister Erik Solheim. The agreement, which pledged up to

\$250 million to support Guyana's deforestation reduction efforts, marked a pivotal moment in the country's Low Carbon Development Strategy (LCDS).

Since the MoU, Guyana has received \$212.6 million from Norway. These funds have been used to support renewable energy projects, climate change protection, land titling for Amerindian communities, job creation, and advancements in ICT. "People cannot encroach upon the forest," Solheim noted. "The money has been used to build community centres, improve water management, and promote ecotourism, bringing both jobs and revenue to Guyana's hinterland."

Minister of Natural Resources, Vickram Bharrat, reaffirmed the government's commitment to improving indigenous

livelihoods through climate-smart initiatives. "Today, all of our hinterland communities have communication links to the coast, including Wi-Fi, and we are building new



Minister Bharrat, and the Former Minister of Climate and the Environment, Erik Solheim during their visit to Region 9

hubs to enhance connectivity and support government programmes," Minister Bharrat said.

In 2022, Guyana secured a carbon credit agreement with Hess Corporation valued at a

minimum of \$750 million through 2032. The government mandates that 15% of this revenue goes to Amerindian communities. In 2023, Amerindians received \$4.7 billion from this initiative. For 2024, the

share has been increased to 26.5%, equating to \$23.2 million. "This policy ensures equitable distribution of benefits and supports small economic projects that

generate revenue and employment for our communities," Minister Bharrat added.

Guyana's achievements in forest preservation and climate adaptation have set a global

example, demonstrating the effectiveness of committed leadership and strategic partnerships in addressing climate change.

# "YOUR FUTURE IS SECURED WITH THE PPP/C GOVT" - PRESIDENT ALI TELLS INDIGENOUS COMMUNITY



President Dr. Irfaan Ali addressing the gathering at the Amerindian Cultural Extravaganza, at the National Park, Georgetown

President Dr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali has reaffirmed the government's commitment to the prosperity of Guyana's indigenous communities. Speaking at the Amerindian Cultural Extravaganza at the National Park in

Georgetown, he assured the gathering that the PPP/C government is dedicated to improving their living standards through significant investments in various sectors.

**"We are doing an outstanding job in ensuring that by our work, by our example, by our dedication, by our policies and principles, we are honouring [you] to the greatest degree,"** President Ali stated.

Since 2020, the government has allocated nearly \$60 billion to strengthen local economies, cultural heritage, education, healthcare, and other areas in Amerindian communities. This includes investments in expanding agricultural

land holdings, supporting export-oriented ventures, and promoting honey production.

That sum is also ensuring 100% access to secondary and university education, providing scholarships, and training teachers and nurses within villages, establishing five new state-of-the-art regional hospitals, training healthcare workers, and expanding telemedicine services, improving internet access to bridge the digital divide and enhancing access to healthcare and education.

President Ali emphasised the government's dedication to the prosperity of the indigenous population and promised that

investments in their communities will remain a priority. **"We are that servant to you, whom**

**Civic,"** he affirmed.

This year, Amerindian Heritage Month is observed under

rich culture, traditions, and contributions of the Indigenous peoples of the country. This month-long event shines a spotlight on the diverse heritage of the Indigenous tribes. Festivities include cultural exhibitions, traditional music and dance performances, craft displays, food fairs, and educational programmes that highlight the history and contemporary issues faced by the Indigenous communities. The month also serves as a platform to promote the preservation of Indigenous languages, customs, and knowledge systems while fostering a sense of pride and unity among the Indigenous populations.



Attendees were treated to a night of riveting cultural performances

**you can trust, whom you can rely upon, and whom you can go to bed comfortable knowing that your future is secured with the People's Progressive Party/**

the theme: 'Many Voices, One Song. Celebrating Amerindian Heritage 2024.'

Amerindian Heritage Month is an annual celebration held in September to honour the

## MATTHEWS RIDGE RESIDENTS TO BUILD NEW AIRSTRIP

Residents of Matthews Ridge, Region One, are set to construct a new airstrip as part of the government's initiative to directly benefit communities from infrastructure projects.

Minister of Public Works, Bishop Juan Edghill, announced the project during an outreach, emphasising the importance of community involvement. **"The president and the cabinet felt that since it is a major project, whatever we do must bring significant and direct benefits to the people**

**of the community,"** he stated.

The new airstrip, **estimated to cost \$800 million,** will replace the existing deteriorating DBSD surface with a climate-resilient concrete pavement. Measuring 4,000 feet in length and 80 feet in width, it will accommodate larger aircraft like the Beechcraft, potentially leading to reduced airfares.

Minister Edghill highlighted similar community-driven projects in other villages, including a concrete road in Whitewater

and an upcoming road in Waramuri. These projects are being executed by residents themselves to ensure that the economic benefits remain within their communities.

**"These infrastructural projects must also bring economic development to the people in the area, and that is the policy direction we are going,"** Minister Edghill emphasised.

The minister reiterated the government's commitment to empowering and

improving the lives of citizens and communities through direct involvement in developmental initiatives.

**Baramita airstrip to get footpath for safety**

In addition to the Matthews Ridge airstrip project, the minister also announced plans to improve safety at the Baramita airstrip. A footpath gate will be installed to restrict unauthorised vehicles and pedestrians on the runway.

During a visit to the community, Minister Edghill highlighted

the dangers posed by unauthorised vehicles and pedestrians on the runway, which have raised alarm among pilots. **"Oftentimes they are really put at risk because either vehicles are on the runway or people are on the runway and it's really difficult for them in terms of safety,"** he said.

Additionally, the government has allocated \$5 million to the Village Council to repair the damaged roads around the airstrip, caused by heavy rains. This initiative is part of a broader effort to empower citizens and involve them in local development.



Minister of Public Works, Bishop Juan Edghill engaging residents of Matthews Ridge, Region One



New High Commissioner of Canada to Guyana, HE Sebastien Sigouin

## CANADIAN HIGH COMMISSIONER SEBASTIEN SIGOUIN BEGINS TENURE IN GUYANA

President Dr. Irfaan Ali warmly welcomed the new High Commissioner of Canada to Guyana, His Excellency Sebastien Sigouin, during a formal ceremony at the Office of the President. The occasion marked the presentation of Letters of Credence by the Canadian diplomat, signifying the beginning of his official tenure in the Guyana.

In his remarks, President Ali praised the "exceptional

relationship" between Guyana and Canada, highlighting the strong bonds forged through a shared culture, mutual values, and a commitment to democratic principles. He emphasised that the bilateral relationship extends beyond mere trade, investment, and collaborative projects, reflecting a profound connection between the two nations and their peoples.

Since the



New Canadian High Commissioner to Guyana accredited

establishment of diplomatic ties on May 26, 1966, Guyana and Canada have cultivated a dynamic and multifaceted relationship. The exchange of credentials signifies a continued commitment to strengthening these ties and exploring new avenues for collaboration.

# THREE NEW SCHOOLS COMMISSIONED - EDUCATIONAL ACCESS FOR THOUSANDS OF STUDENTS ENHANCED



The commissioning of the new Yarrowkabra Secondary school



The school, equipped with modern laboratories, caters for over 1000 students.

In a significant boost to the education sector, the Government of Guyana has commissioned three new schools: Yarrowkabra Secondary School, Zeelugt Primary School, and St Gabriel's Nursery School. These facilities, located in diverse regions of the country, represent a key part of the government's commitment to providing world-class education and improving

along the Soesdyke/Linden Highway. This \$790 million facility offers a wide range of educational opportunities, including 11 departments focused on entrepreneurial, STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics), and TVET (Technical and Vocational Education and Training) skills. Speaking at the commissioning

for, then there will be a mismatch," President Ali remarked. He also addressed the government's support for single-parent households, asking, "How do we ensure that economic and financial burdens do not prevent a single-parent household from sending their children to school?"

The new school is equipped with 35 classrooms, three science laboratories, eight grade seven smart classes, a main lecture hall, technical and vocational education labs and a library. It caters for over 1000 students.

### ZEELUGT PRIMARY SCHOOL: MODERN EDUCATION FOR OVER 600 STUDENTS

In the Zeelugt community, the newly constructed \$152 million primary school has opened its doors to



The new state-of-the-art Zeelugt Primary School on the East Bank of Essequibo

infrastructure across Guyana.

### YARROWKABRA SECONDARY SCHOOL: A NEW HUB FOR OVER 1,000 STUDENTS

The Yarrowkabra Secondary School, now officially open, is set to serve more than 1,000 students from villages

ceremony, President Irfaan Ali stressed the importance of investing not only in facilities but also in the human resources required to maximise educational outcomes. "We can have the best facilities, but if we do not invest in the human resources needed to achieve the results we're aiming



President Ali with students inside the Zeelugt Primary school

over 600 students. The modern facility replaces an old wooden structure and includes a kitchen, library, computer room, auditorium, and 15 classrooms. This marks a substantial improvement over the temporary religious buildings that students previously relied on for their education.

During the school's commissioning, President Ali reaffirmed the government's commitment to improving educational

### FOR EARLY LEARNERS

In Queenstown, the St Gabriel's Nursery School has been inaugurated, providing 161 early childhood learners with a new, spacious learning environment. This modern facility, costing \$460 million, replaces the old, overcrowded building and is part of the government's broader effort to enhance early childhood education across the country.

well, a school's administration that is interested in more than just turning up every day," she stated.

The new St Gabriel's Nursery School includes 10 classrooms with modern amenities, capable of accommodating 161 pupils and 13 staff members.

These three new schools reflect the government's comprehensive approach to improving education in Guyana. They are part



The new St Gabriel's Nursery school

standards nationwide. "We are committed to having every school in our country repainted, fixed, and equipped with the necessary facilities," he said. The president also announced plans for every school to have a multi-purpose tarmac, emphasising, "We are not only building new schools but also setting new and improved standards for your children."

To complement the new infrastructure, the government is heavily investing in teacher training, ensuring that the region's growing number of trained educators can deliver high-quality education.

### ST GABRIEL'S NURSERY SCHOOL: A FRESH START



Minister Manickchand with students at the new St Gabriel's Nursery school

Minister of Education Priya Manickchand, who officiated at the school's opening, highlighted the government's significant investments in early childhood education. "This is the level where we're investing significantly to make sure our children are getting the foundation they need," she said. The minister also emphasised the importance of a strong partnership between the government, schools, and parents in achieving a world-class education system. "This is a partnership... a government that cares about your children doing

of a nationwide effort, which has seen 42 new nursery schools and 18 new primary schools built since 2020.

By investing in both infrastructure and human resources, the government aims to provide students across the country with the tools they need to succeed. As President Ali noted during the Yarrowkabra Secondary School's commissioning, "Our vision is to create an environment where every child, regardless of where they live, can access the highest quality education right in their own region."

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Spanish Onion 大洋葱 <b>30.00 case</b>	Carrot 紅萝卜 <b>30.00 case</b>	Green Pepper 25lb 青椒 <b>30.00 case</b>	Green Leaf Lettuce 綠生菜 <b>32.00 case</b>	Broccoli 西蘭花 <b>34.00 case</b>
Green Onion 蔥 <b>38.00 case</b>	Lemon 檸檬 <b>38.00 case</b>	Yellow Plantains 黃大蕉 <b>75.00 case</b>	Avocado 牛油果 <b>82.00 case</b>	Lime 青檸檬 <b>85.00 case</b>
Frozen Pangas Fillet 魚片 8x3.5LB <b>60.00 case</b>	Headless White Shrimp 无头白蝦 21/25 10x4L B/case <b>200.00 case</b>	Frozen Galungong 凍蝦 20x40/400g <b>50.00 case</b>	Extra Large Egg 特大雞蛋 30x40/400g <b>53.99 case</b>	Diamond Brand Dried Red Chili 鑽石牌紅椒 5LB <b>20.00 bag</b>
Container 532 容登 <b>44.00 case</b>	Container NG-093 容登 <b>33.00 case</b>	Container NG-081 容登 <b>23.00 case</b>	Kraft Singlefold Towels 抹布 <b>25.00 case</b>	ADM All Purpose Flour 麵粉 25kg <b>19.99 bag</b>
Capri Vegetable Oil 菜油 1.8L <b>31.99 case</b>	VALUE Dishwashing Liquid 4x4L 洗潔精 <b>26.99 case</b>	Lee Kum Kee Kum Chur Oyster Flavoured Sauce 李錦記蒜茸鮮味蠔油 6x2.2kg <b>39.00 case</b>	Lee Kum Kee Hoisin Sauce 李錦記蠔油 1.75L <b>48.99 case</b>	NG-18 New Gen Eco-Friendly Redpath Sugar 紅糖 20kg <b>22.00 case</b>
				Monosodium Glutamate 味精 22.7kg <b>60.00 bag</b>

GROCERY

OREO M&M Cookies Dusted Popcorn 1.9kg 餅乾 Reg: \$3.99 <b>3.99</b>	Mazda Corn Tortas 玉米片 21kg Reg: \$2.99 <b>1.99</b>	Buckon Juice Drink Series 果汁 1L Reg: \$2.99 <b>1.99</b>
Cheong Cheong Pen Sauce 椰菜汁 500ml Reg: \$2.99 <b>4.59</b>	All NO MOTO MSG 0g 鮮味粉 300g Reg: \$2.99 <b>5.88</b>	KIM TUI HAP Oriata Special Miso 味噌 550g Reg: \$2.99 <b>1.79</b>
Buenas Coconut Gelatin 椰菜汁 340ml Reg: \$2.99 <b>2/\$3.00</b>	San Mig (Ung n) (in) Colormix 300g 咖啡 Reg: \$2.99 <b>3.99</b>	Eagle Brand Medicated Oil 鷹標萬金油 100g Reg: \$2.99 <b>3.99</b>

FROZEN

THAI GOLD Headless Frozen Shrimp 2L/25 无头白蝦 380g Reg: \$10.99 <b>6.99</b>	BF Cut, Decaled Bangus Milkfish 400g 牛奶魚 Reg: \$6.99 <b>5.99</b>	SH Basa Steaks 540g 基利魚排 Reg: \$3.99 <b>2.99</b>	SH Atlantic Mackerel 油魚 Reg: \$2.99 <b>2.59 lb</b>	SH Basa Fillet 400g 基利魚柳 Reg: \$2.99/ea <b>2/\$5.00</b>	AA-1 Moonfish 500g 月魚 Reg: \$2.99 <b>1.99</b>
Qualy Pak Squid 22Lb 魷魚 Reg: \$10.99 <b>8.99</b>	Ferna Frozen Octopus 凍章魚 550g Reg: \$12.99 <b>8.99</b>	Golden Saba Steamed Bananas 150g 球球香蕉 Reg: \$3.99/ea <b>2/\$7.00</b>	Viva Sea Sea Fish 340g 海魚 Reg: \$7.99 <b>5.99</b>	Kam Nien Jan Chinese Style Sausage Series 375g 臘腸 Reg: \$6.99 <b>5.99</b>	Bulacan Smoked Round Scad Fillets 1kg 煙燻魚 Reg: \$3.99/ea <b>2/\$7.00</b>

MEAT

Pork Chop 豬排 Reg: \$3.79 <b>2.79 lb</b>	Pork Back Ribs 豬排 Reg: \$4.99 <b>3.99 lb</b>	Pork Eye Round 豬肉 Reg: \$3.59 <b>2.59 lb</b>
Beef Rib Eyes 牛柳 Reg: \$9.99 <b>8.59 lb</b>	Chicken (Gross Weight) 凍雞 Reg: \$5.99 <b>4.59 lb</b>	

SEAFOOD

Frozen Fresh Head-on White Shrimp 凍鮮白蝦 1kg Reg: \$4.99 <b>3.99</b>	Frozen Fresh Pompano 凍鮮立網 Reg: \$5.99 <b>4.99</b>	Fresh Whole Tuna 新鮮金槍魚 Reg: \$4.99 <b>3.99</b>
Fresh Whole Salmon 新鮮三文魚 Reg: \$2.99 <b>3.99 lb</b>	Live Blue Crab 生藍蟹 Reg: \$6.99 <b>4.99 lb</b>	Fresh Sea Bream 新鮮海魚 Reg: \$3.99 <b>6.99 lb</b>

# AMERINDIAN HERITAGE - A VIBRANT SHOWCASE

The Amerindian Heritage Craft and Cuisine Exhibition, held at the Sophia Exhibition Complex, was a vibrant celebration of Amerindian culture and a platform for businesses to thrive.

From the intricate beadwork of Leomie Willis to the handcrafted arrows and bows of Duncan Albert, the exhibition showcased the diverse talents and skills of Amerindian artisans. Matapee, a business specialising in dresses inspired by Amerindian patterns, added a touch of modern elegance to the event. The Amerindian Heritage Month exhibition, offered a colourful and engaging experience for visitors while providing a valuable opportunity for businesses to grow.





# THE MONTH EXHIBITION

## CULTURE AND COMMERCE





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Grace Creamed Coconut 141 g

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Benjamin's Browning 140 ml

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Grace Mackerel In Tomato Sauce Assorted 155 g

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Clover Leaf Tuna in Water Assorted 170 g

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Mr Goudas Red Kidney Beans 4 lb

5.99 each



Cedar Yellow Corn Meal #40 907 g

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Strongmor Garbage Bags 40's

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# Delicious Jamaican Dish

**Frozen Easy Cooked Trimmed Oxtail**



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**\$3.99**  
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**Grown From Australia Free Range Goat Meat**



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**Burned Cow Feet**



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**Salted Beef Short Ribs**



**\$5.99**  
lb

**Salted Large Cod Fish**



**\$6.99**  
lb

**Frozen Large 21/25 Headless White Shrimps 500 g**



**9.99**  
Each

**Frozen Fu Yang Cooked Cocktail Shrimps 500 g**



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**Fresh Large Chicken Feet**



**\$1.99**  
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## Fresh Seafood Catches

**Fresh Yellow Tail Snappers**



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**\$6.99**  
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Fri.-Sat. 9 am to 9 pm  
Sunday 9 am to 6 pm

**Store Hours**  
Monday-Friday 9 am to 9 pm  
Saturday 8 am to 9 pm  
Sunday 9 am to 7 pm

# NEW ST. GEORGE'S STUDENTS THRILLED BY ACADEMIC OPPORTUNITIES IN MEDICAL SCIENCES



Minister Manickchand at the St. George's School of Sciences

The St. George's School of Sciences officially welcomed its first cohort of students for the 2024-2025 academic year, marking a significant milestone in Guyana's education landscape. This specialised institution is designed to prepare students for careers in the medical sciences, offering them a unique pathway to achieve their

aspirations. Students expressed excitement and optimism about the new opportunities the school provides. Kezia Dutchin, a Grade Seven student, shared her enthusiasm, saying, "It was very exciting! I was a little nervous, but it was okay. Today, we just got some key tips about the school and all the rules of the

school." Jonathan Alert, another Grade Seven student, was equally enthusiastic about the learning environment at St. George's. "I like how the classroom is put together, the teachers are very nice, and I am excited about the type of subjects that I get to learn," Alert stated.

Reneka Singh, who aspires to become a doctor, highlighted the school's focus on medical sciences as a key reason for her excitement. "I love this school because I would like to become a doctor, and it has lots of things that I like... I got to meet new friends, and there are computers, and I like to use computers," she said.

The St. George's School of Sciences represents a new chapter in specialised education in Guyana, providing students with a second pathway to develop and pursue their interest in the sciences. The school hosted an orientation on its first

ministry. Minister Manickchand emphasised the potential of the students, reminding them of the rigorous selection process that led to their placement at St. George's. She noted that the school aims to be on par with

opportunities for students to explore their interests. "What we plan is not only an education for your children but also to attach them to different places where they can decide what they have an interest in... We have brought in a team of teachers and they too will twin with Queen's," Minister Manickchand noted.

The opening of St. George's School of Sciences comes two years after the previous St. George's High School was destroyed by a fire in July 2022, marking a significant step forward in providing quality education to students with a passion for the sciences.



Aspiring Doctor, Reneka Singh, Grade Seven Student

morning, attended by Minister of Education Priya Manickchand and other officials from the Queen's College, offering a comprehensive education and numerous

## STATE-OF-THE-ART SCHOOLS COMING TO PHILLIPAI AND OREALLA

The educational landscape of Guyana continues to undergo significant transformation with the construction of two new secondary schools in Regions Seven and Six.

The Phillipai Secondary School, valued at \$275,230,000, is being built in Region Seven. Minister of Education, Priya Manickchand, officially launched the project, highlighting the government's commitment to providing accessible and quality education for all.

"We want to ensure that your children learn,"

Minister Manickchand said, emphasising the importance of the School Feeding Programme. "Our research shows that you cannot learn on an empty

stomach." The new school will feature modern facilities, including classrooms, a library, and administrative spaces, to cater to the

needs of approximately 240 students. The project is expected to be completed within eight months.

In Region Six, the Orealla Secondary School is also under construction. This G\$198,866,010 investment aims to provide a modern and well-equipped learning environment for approximately 180 students. The facility will feature six classrooms, four specialized laboratories, and a library.

Minister Manickchand emphasised the



The ceremonial sod turning event to mark the construction of the Orealla Secondary school

government's commitment to providing students with improved access to quality education and opportunities for future success. "The new school is a key component of this effort," she said.



The ceremonial sod turning event to mark the construction of the Phillipai Secondary school

Education Minister Priya Manickchand recently visited Hosororo Secondary School in Region One to inspect the progress of the \$2.6 billion construction project. The school, once completed, will offer a modern learning environment for students and teachers in the region.

The new school will accommodate over 500 students with its 29 classrooms. Key features include a fully equipped science centre, a TVET centre with industrial and home economics labs, and a student dormitory. These

facilities are designed to provide students with the necessary resources to excel in STEM fields and prepare for careers in technical disciplines.

Minister Manickchand expressed her satisfaction with the project's progress, emphasising the government's commitment to ensuring quality education for all children, regardless of their location. She stated, "This project

is a testament to our dedication to providing students in Region One with the same high standards of education as those in coastal communities."



## \$2.6 BILLION HOSORORO SECONDARY SCHOOL TO FEATURE STEM LABS AND TVET CENTRE



The Hosororo Secondary school project

# Special development zones coming as foreign investors eye Guyana

GUYANA'S agro-processing industry is rapidly growing, positioning the country as a food hub and prominent exporter of value-added products. As a result, investors are expressing significant interest in the country's manufacturing and agro-processing sectors.

This is according to President Dr. Irfaan Ali, who during a press engagement with stakeholders from the upcoming International Business Conference (IBC) pointed out that the government has made significant investments and policies to support the growth of the productive industries.

Dr. Ali highlighted that now investors from the Middle East and the United States are showing a strong interest in manufacturing and agro-processing.

"The ease and access to markets is becoming much simpler, less bureaucratic. So all of this combines itself to give us an enormous platform, a competitive platform for investment in manufacturing, especially supporting small manufacturers and medium size, focusing on agro processing, focusing on technology, focusing on machining," the Head of state said.

These, he stated, are the initiatives that are 'propping up' the local economy and unlocking enormous potential.

"We are creating a food hub in Guyana, a regional food hub, also points to the fact that we are serious about Guyana becoming a major food exporter, not raw material, not only looking at the raw production, but adding value to that production. So we are expanding acreage in terms of cultivation, so we'll have the yield. We are adding technology to it, so volume will be there. It is now converting that volume into finished value added product."

Citing the growth of the local the dairy industry, Dr. Ali pointed to private sector investments that have seen the industry generating \$US45 million.

The government, he stated, has been working to create an enabling environment, creating both backward and forward linkages to expand industries such as dairy and poultry production.

"For example, in the poultry sector, for all poultry, meat product, processed meat products, sausage plants, then working backwards, to have the soybean and corn for feed production, and it's the same thing for aquaculture. We want to become a net exporter of prawns, a net exporter of meat and also poultry. So there's tremendous potential, and we are working on converting this potential into reality."

The President highlighted Guyana's competitive incentive regime and the government's ongoing work to establish special investment zones across several regions, including Regions Nine (Upper Takutu-Upper Essequibo), Region Six (East Berbice-Corentyne) and Region 10 (Upper Berbice- Upper Demerara).

"I think we have the best incentive regime for manufacturing, a very competitive regime, both on the fiscal side and look at the support the infrastructure, support that government is giving, building out the infrastructure to support manufacturing. So we are creating different hubs. Some of these hubs will be tax free zone to encourage investment."

These zones, which will offer special tax regimes and infrastructure support, are expected to further stimulate growth in the manufacturing sector.

The Enmore Development Zone in Region Four and the Wales Development Zone in Region Three, the President said, are examples of these special zones that will be created to stimulate investments.

"All of this will come under a spe-



President Irfaan Ali

cial investment regime that will go to Parliament and outline clearly that these areas will have special and differential treatment, because we want to stimulate the growth and expansion in those areas," The President said.

The President also highlighted the importance of bilateral trade agreements within the wider region, highlighting the ease of now doing business in Guyana.

He further urged local businesses, especially those in the manufacturing sector, to capitalise on the upcoming event to forge stronger partnerships.

"This gives you an opportunity to build that local partnership, the local private sector. They have the know-how, they understand the market, they understand the culture and the foreign companies have the technology."

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# WEST DEMERARA TO GET NEW HOSPITAL



An artist impression of the regional hospitals being constructed by the government

President Dr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali announced plans for a new, modern regional hospital in West Demerara, Region Three, during the commissioning of the Zeelugt Primary School. The hospital is intended to provide world-class healthcare services to the region. President Ali highlighted the significant improvements made to the existing West

Demerara Regional Hospital over the past four years. **“In the first four months of 2021, they did 16 surgeries. In the first four months of 2024, they did 585 surgeries,”** he said. This expansion of services has led to a significant reduction in referrals to the Georgetown Public Hospital Corporation (GPHC).

**“The referrals to Georgetown Hospital in the first four months of 2020 were 208. The referrals to Georgetown in the**

**first four months of 2024 is 106,”** President Ali stated. **“That tells you of the qualitative care and the difference in the qualitative care.”**

The West Demerara Regional Hospital has undergone upgrades, including a new mortuary and equipment for laparoscopic surgeries. Surgical services have also expanded to round-the-clock availability.

However, President Ali acknowledged that the hospital’s capacity has been stretched due to the region’s economic

growth. **“It does not meet the modern, efficient, reliable needs of the citizens of Region Three,”** he said.

To address this, the government will launch tenders for the new facility in the coming weeks. President Ali emphasised the government’s commitment to improving the lives of citizens through investments in healthcare infrastructure.

# GOVT TO TRAIN 13 PERSONS AS DENTAL LAB TECHNICIANS

The government has launched a training programme to develop 13 young people as Dental Laboratory Technicians, aiming to significantly boost dental services in the country. This initiative marks the first such programme in 15 years.

Several trainees expressed their excitement and aspirations to join the dental field. Shania Butters stated, **“I feel great. I have wanted to be in the dental field since I was a child, and this programme has allowed me to start that.”** Kacy Bowen shared similar sentiments, expressing his intention to

continue his studies after completing the programme.

Narria Simon, a participant from St. Cuthbert’s Mission, highlighted her interest in the creative aspects of dentistry and her goal of becoming a dentist within the next five years. **“I joined this programme because it allows me to bring out the creative side ...in a health care setting. I also chose this programme because I see myself as a doctor in the next five years. So, after finishing this programme, my goal is to attend the university to gain my degree in dentistry,”**

he stated.

The programme will qualify individuals to fix and repair dental prostheses and other devices. Minister of Health Dr. Frank Anthony emphasised the importance of this training in building a modern health sector.

He noted the government’s significant investments in improving services at the Cheddi Jagan Dental School, including advancements in imaging technology and an expansion of dental clinics. Dr. Anthony highlighted the increased accessibility of dental care due to these improvements and the growing number of dental professionals



Minister of Health with senior Dental personnel and the trainees

being trained.

The Minister stressed the need for qualified dental laboratory technicians to provide essential

services and ensure quality dental care is available throughout Guyana. He emphasised the government’s commitment to investing

in infrastructure and training to achieve this goal.

# GOVT WORKING ON DEVELOPING NATIONAL ANTIMICROBIAL RESISTANCE STRATEGY

The Ministry of Health (MOH), in collaboration with the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) and the World Health Organization (WHO), convened a two-day National Workshop on Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) at the Ministry of Health’s boardroom.

AMR, a growing global health threat, occurs when bacteria, viruses, fungi, and parasites become resistant to antimicrobial medicines. To address this challenge, the MOH is working to develop a comprehensive National AMR strategy.

Speaking at the

workshop, Minister of Health, Dr Frank Anthony, emphasised the urgency of addressing AMR. **“AMR significantly impacts the delivery of healthcare services,”** he stated. **“To build a robust healthcare system, we must consider all relevant factors, including AMR.”**

Nathalie El Omeiri, Advisor for AMR National Action Plans at PAHO/WHO, highlighted the importance of developing a national strategy to combat AMR. **“A well-crafted strategy can help countries like**

**Guyana effectively address this pressing public health issue,”** she said.

Participants from the Ministry of Health, PAHO/WHO, and other relevant organisations

attended the workshop, contributing their expertise to the development of the

national strategy. The workshop focused on discussing the current state of AMR in Guyana, identifying key priorities, and exploring potential solutions.

The development of a National AMR strategy is a crucial step in Guyana’s efforts to combat antimicrobial resistance and ensure the continued effectiveness of essential medicines.



Minister of Health Dr Frank Anthony addressing the workshop

# ESSEQUIBO'S TRANSFORMATION UNDERWAY - DR. SINGH HIGHLIGHTS REGION 2'S ECONOMIC GROWTH

Region Two, historically known as the 'Cinderella County' of Guyana, is emerging as a shining example of economic growth and transformation. Speaking at the Essequibo Chamber of Commerce and Industry's (ECCI) Annual Agro and Trade Exposition on August 31, 2024, Senior Minister in the Office of the President with Responsibility for Finance and the Public Service, Dr. Ashni Singh, assured residents that Region Two is on the brink of unprecedented prosperity.

**"In this era of transformation and prosperity for our country, Essequibo's hour has finally arrived,"** Dr. Singh declared, drawing an analogy to

the Cinderella fairytale. **"Just as Cinderella became the star of the show, Essequibo is poised to capture the attention of everyone, becoming the most beautiful of all our regions."**

Dr. Singh highlighted the government's aggressive investment in Region Two across various sectors, including agriculture, education, and tourism. Notable projects include the construction of two agro-processing facilities used by local farmers to produce and package condiments like green seasoning and pepper sauce, as well as the dredging of the Pomeroon River to improve drainage and irrigation. The government has also invested heavily in



Dr Singh examining the local products showcased at the exposition

education, building new schools like the Abram Zuil Secondary School, and supporting the academic success of Essequibo's students.

**"We must make no mistake that economic developments in the rest of the country will generate prosperity in every other region,"**

Dr. Singh stated, emphasising that Region Two's natural beauty and rich resources make it a key player in Guyana's future. **"Today, you have Guyanese persons travelling from every region to visit Region Two, whether it's to go to Mainstay, Capoey, or to simply enjoy the Essequibo Coast."**

Complementing the government's efforts, the private sector has also been instrumental in Region Two's development. During the exposition, Dr. Peter Ramsaroop, Chief Investment Officer and Agency Head of the Guyana Office for Investment (GO-Invest), discussed the acceleration of President Ali's Vision 2030 for the region. Highlighting investments like the construction of four new luxury hotels valued at \$2.2 billion, Dr. Ramsaroop noted that these projects will add 147 hotel rooms and create over 100 jobs in the region, significantly boosting the local economy.

**"The Guyana Office for Investment is happy to facilitate**

**these investments that will transform the tourism experience of visitors to the Essequibo Coast,"** said Dr. Ramsaroop. **"These hotels are a big boost to the tourism and hospitality sector, complementing President Ali's efforts to increase quality accommodation by some 2,000 rooms by 2025."**

The Essequibo Coast is not only attracting tourism investments, but also enhancing its status as a food-producing capital. Local companies, supported by Export Guyana, showcased their products at the exposition, highlighting the region's potential for agro-processing and export.

## SBB LAUNCHES RESOURCE CENTRE FOR ENTREPRENEURS



The resource centre is located at the SBB's head office at Lot 1, La Penitence, Georgetown.

The Small Business Bureau (SBB) has established a new resource centre to provide essential support to entrepreneurs in Guyana. The centre, located at the SBB's headquarters in La Penitence, Georgetown, offers a range of services, including access to information, printing facilities, and

personalised business advice.

According to Mohamed Ibrahim, SBB's Chief Executive Officer, the initiative was launched in response to feedback from numerous small businesses. **"They need some type of resource centre, somewhere they can go and get readily available**

**information,"** Ibrahim explained.

The centre offers free access to business advisors who can provide guidance on registering businesses, dealing with government agencies, and general insurance matters. Entrepreneurs can also schedule time to use the centre's facilities and receive personalised support.

To better understand the needs of small businesses, the SBB is also developing a comprehensive database. In addition, the

bureau continues to offer training programmes and has trained staff of over 1,000 businesses across the country.

The SBB is committed to fostering the development and growth of small businesses, including through programmes like the Green Business Technology Fund, the Youth Entrepreneurial Skill Training Programme, and the SBB MarketPlace.

## YOUNG ADULTS GAIN HOSPITALITY SKILLS THROUGH SWIFT PROGRAMME

Seventeen young adults have successfully completed the Student Work and Internship for Tourism (SWIFT) programme, a valuable initiative designed to equip them with essential skills for the tourism and hospitality industry.

The programme, organised by the Tourism and Hospitality Association of Guyana (THAG), provided participants with the opportunity to intern at six leading establishments: Ramada Georgetown Princess Hotel, Wanderlust Adventure Tours, Dagron Tours, Caribbean Inn Inc., Grand Coastal

Hotel, and Maggie's Catering Inc.

During the certificate ceremony on August 30, several participants shared their positive experiences and highlighted the skills they gained.

Justin Mars, who interned at the Ramada Georgetown Princess Hotel, expressed his gratitude for the opportunity. **"I chose to participate in SWIFT to gain practical experience before entering the workforce,"** he said. **"The experience was invaluable."**

Shavalle February, another participant,

noted that the internship boosted her confidence and interpersonal skills. **"Interacting with new people every day was challenging at first, but I quickly adapted and learned to thrive in the fast-paced environment,"** she shared.

Onelicia Ramsammy, who interned at Herdmanston Lodge, emphasised the importance of developing strong communication and organisational skills. **"I assisted in coordinating events, scheduling appointments, and ensuring that my boss was always**



THAG representatives alongside the participants of the SWIFT hospitality programme

**informed,"** she explained. THAG's Executive Director, Oslyn Kirton, underscored the programme's significance in addressing the growing

demand for skilled workers in the tourism and hospitality sector. **"We recognise the industry's labour shortage and the need to prepare young people for future**

**opportunities,"** she said. **"SWIFT is a crucial step in building a strong and qualified workforce."**

Kirton also announced plans to expand the SWIFT programme in partnership with the Ministry of Education, further strengthening Guyana's capacity to meet the needs of its thriving tourism industry.



# \$150 MILLION INVESTMENT FOR MOCHA/ARCADIA ROAD DEVELOPMENT

The government has announced plans to invest \$150 million in road development and other initiatives to support the farming activities of the Mocha/Arcadia community.

During a visit to the community, Minister of Agriculture, Zulfikar Mustapha, Minister of Local Government and Regional Development, Sonia Parag, Minister within the Ministry of Public Works, Deodat Indar, and Minister within the Office of the Prime Minister, Kwame McCoy unveiled the development plans and



Ministers and residents walking through the community

addressed residents' concerns. The new investment will ensure the completion of seven roads, including the extension of Nelson Street and Plantation Prosperity, and the continuation of Palm

Street and Morning Glory. Contractors from the community will be hired to carry out the work, with guidance from the Ministry of Public Works.

In addition to road improvements, the community will also receive a tractor pump for land drainage and 27 internal drains will be cleared and lifted.

To support local farmers, the government will provide planting materials and technical support. **"For us to be successful, you the farmers have to be successful that is why**

**we are making these kinds of allocations,"** Minister Mustapha stated.

The government's investment in Mocha/Arcadia is part of a broader effort to ensure food security and improve the quality of life for residents in the community.

Arcadia is part of a broader effort to ensure food security and improve the quality of life for residents in the community.



The Ministers engaging the residents



Ongoing restorative works on Lusignan road, East Coast Demerara

Residents of Victoria, East Coast Demerara, will soon benefit from substantial road improvements following new rehabilitation projects announced by Minister of Public Works, Bishop Juan Edghill. During a recent site inspection, Minister Edghill emphasised the government's dedication to enhancing local infrastructure.

**"These upgrades are part of a larger**

**initiative to improve roads across villages,"** Minister Edghill said. **"Our aim is to address current deficiencies and modernise road networks nationwide."**

The rehabilitation will cover 18 road lots in Victoria, focusing on both the Eastern and Western sidelines. The Eastern sideline, stretching 2.36 kilometres, is estimated to cost around \$174 million,

while the Western sideline, extending 2.9 kilometres, is projected at \$227 million. The new designs will incorporate geo-cells for improved road stability and replace timber bridges with more durable materials.

A phased procurement approach will be used to involve local contractors and expedite the work. **"By dividing the project into lots, we aim to engage more local businesses and speed up completion,"** Minister Edghill explained.

The Minister also highlighted the commitment to creating job opportunities for local residents. **"Supporting**

**our communities through these projects is crucial,"** he added.

In related news, urgent repairs are underway on the main access roads in Lusignan and Coldingen, also on the East Coast. These roads have been severely damaged by heavy trucks involved in large housing developments. Minister Edghill, who recently visited the affected areas, stressed the need for immediate repairs due to the extensive deterioration caused by trucks straying from designated routes.

To address this, contractors are working around the clock to fill craters and smooth

the roads. Effective immediately, all heavy trucks must use the Railway Embankment to prevent further damage. This new directive, which excludes smaller vehicles like canters, buses, and cars, aims to protect the infrastructure and

minimize disruption to residents.

**"The ongoing damage to roads and bridges has reached an unacceptable level,"** Minister Edghill stated. The police are assisting in enforcing this new route requirement to ensure compliance.



Ongoing restorative works on Lusignan road, East Coast Demerara

# DE KINDEREN, DEN AMSTEL RESIDENTS TO START TRAINING FOR BLOCK MAKING INITIATIVE

Residents of De Kinderen and Den Amstel in Region Three are set to receive training in block making, empowering them to contribute to the growing construction sector and generate income.

The project, initiated by President Ali, is part of the Community-based Employment Stimulation Project. Minister of Housing and Water, Collin Croal, held a consultation with residents to discuss the initiative and its potential benefits.

Kevin Dundas, a prospective participant, expressed enthusiasm



Residents at the meeting

for the programme, highlighting its potential to provide opportunities for youth in the community. **"We can sell our blocks locally and even supply the ministry, creating a cycle of expansion,"** he said.

Colin Henry,

another resident, praised the initiative, noting its importance in developing the skills of young people. **"This is a great opportunity for young people to earn money and start their own businesses,"** he added.

Minister Croal

emphasised the project's success in other regions, such as Region Four, where communities like Tiger Bay, North Ruimveldt, Sophia, and the Guyana Prison Service have benefited. The training will include practical block making and entrepreneurship training, ensuring participants are equipped to maximise business opportunities.

The Central Housing and Planning Authority will provide initial investment for the production of 1,800 blocks, with the goal of sustainable growth and continuity. The Guyana

National Bureau of Standards will ensure the blocks meet the required standard, while the Guyana Revenue Authority and the Small Business Bureau will collaborate to support the project.

Overall, the block making initiative is expected to provide valuable skills, employment opportunities, and economic benefits to the residents of De Kinderen and Den Amstel.



Minister Collin Croal engaging residents about the project



# 500 WEST BANK FAMILIES RECEIVE HOUSE LOTS

Over 500 families from the West Bank of Demerara have realised their dream of homeownership following the distribution of house lots in Wales.

The "Dream Realised" housing lot exercise was led by Minister of Housing and Water, Collin Croal, and Minister within the Ministry, Susan Rodrigues.

The land allocations are part of the government's ambitious plan to deliver 10,000 house lots by the end of the year and 50,000 by 2025.

Many of the



Minister Collin Croal handing over a land document

recipients expressed their gratitude for the opportunity to own their own homes. Delissa Neblett, a mother of two, shared her excitement: **"I'm so lucky to have gotten through today. Renting has been tough, and I'm**

**very thankful for this opportunity."**

The government has invested over \$6 billion in clearing the lands and developing the infrastructure at Wales. Minister Croal assured the recipients that they will be able to identify

their specific plots by the first quarter of 2025.

**"Wales will be a commercial and industrial hub that can create employment opportunities,"** he emphasised.

In addition to housing development, the government is also working on the gas-to-energy project in the Wales Development Zone. This project is expected to reduce electricity costs by 50% and create jobs.

The community will also benefit from improved access to potable water, with 90%

of residents expected to have access to treated water.

Minister Rodrigues highlighted the importance of these efforts in empowering families and ensuring a brighter future for

Guyana. **"We want future generations to be better off than we are, and I'm proud to be part of a ministry that provides people with the opportunity to do that,"** she stated.



Minister Susan Rodrigues handing over a land document

# DE ENDRAGT RESIDENTS RECEIVE LAND TITLES AFTER DECADES OF WAITING



AG Nandlall addressing residents of Leeds

Forty residents of De Endragt have finally received their land titles after decades of waiting. The land documents were handed over by Minister of Housing and Water Collin Croal, Minister of Agriculture Zulfikar Mustapha, and Chief Executive Officer of the Central Housing and Planning Authority (GHPA) Sherwyn Greaves.

**"This is five decades of occupancy that our president has fixed for you. Many of you, your parents were the original occupiers of this area. You are the next generation; you are the inheritors. But certainly, what you are going through in terms of uncertainty, [for] your children, their future is now**

**secured,"** Minister Croal told the residents.

Many of the recipients expressed their gratitude to the government for securing their land ownership. Euston Johnson, who has been occupying his land since 1985, said, **"I want to thank Minister Croal and President Ali for making this possible."**

Sooklall Persaud, another recipient, emphasised the importance of the land title for his family's future. **"We waited a long time for this. We have children, and now we can pass this down to our children,"** he said.

**Leeds Village residents on path to land ownership security**

Meanwhile, over 300 families in Leeds Village

are on the verge of receiving long-awaited Certificates of Title for their lands, thanks to the government-led land regularisation initiative.

The Ministry of Legal Affairs and the Guyana Lands and Surveys Commission (GLSC) held

surveys soon, a crucial step in verifying land boundaries and resolving any disputes.

Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs, Anil Nandlall, SC, emphasised the significance of this initiative, stating,

**across the country receive their rightful land titles."**

Residents of Leeds Village have expressed immense gratitude for the government's efforts.

The land regularisation process is part of a broader government initiative to streamline land ownership and transfer in Guyana. By providing clear titles, the government aims to empower citizens, improve access to credit, and stimulate economic development.

The land regularisation initiative in Leeds Village is expected to be completed within the next 90 days. Once the surveys are finalised, residents will be able to apply for their Certificates of Title.



Sooklall Persaud and Surumattie Singh Ramsingh receiving their land title

a community meeting on August 31, to outline the process and timeline for the project. Land surveyors will begin conducting occupational

**"This is President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali's vision, and we are committed to ensuring that thousands of families**

# GOVT TO CRACK DOWN ON ILLEGAL LAND SALES BY NDCS AND MUNICIPALITIES

The government has vowed to take action against Neighbourhood Democratic Councils (NDCs) and municipalities engaging in the illegal sale of public lands.

Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs, Mohabir Anil Nandlall, SC, highlighted the seriousness of the issue during his weekly programme, "Issues in the News." **"The information which**

**we have received is that several NDCs are selling lands... The councillors themselves are buying these lands and other members of the public,"** he stated.

For approximately two years, the government has been receiving reports of NDCs and municipalities illegally renting and selling reserved government



These actions are in violation of the Local Government Act and are punishable by law

lands without proper authorisation from the Ministry of Local

Government and Regional Development. These actions are in

violation of the Local Government Act and are punishable by law.

Despite previous warnings from the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development, the illegal land sales persist. In response, the government intends to report the matter to the police for investigation and prosecution. **"Persons will be charged and placed before the courts..."**

**And the sales will be not recognised by the state,"** Minister Nandlall noted.

Both sellers and buyers involved in these fraudulent activities will be liable for prosecution. The government's firm stance on this issue sends a clear message that such illegal practices will not be tolerated.

# GUYANA'S 4TH ANNUAL INNOVATION CHALLENGE CALLS FOR MORE YOUNG INNOVATORS

Prime Minister Mark Phillips reaffirmed the government's commitment to fostering innovation, particularly among the nation's youth, at the conclusion of the 4th Annual Innovation Challenge.

Speaking at the closing ceremony, he emphasised the importance of creating an environment where young people can thrive, and contribute to Guyana's technological advancement.

"We have intensified our efforts to provide environments where young people can reach their full potential," the Prime Minister said. "Our aim is to develop a

generation of young leaders equipped with the skills and knowledge to build a stronger, more innovative Guyana."

The Prime Minister highlighted government initiatives to promote innovation, including expanded STEM education, increased funding for research and development, and hands-on learning opportunities. He stressed the government's belief in inclusivity and the role everyone, regardless of age or background, plays in shaping the country's future.

"This year's theme, which revolved around Guyana's

transportation system, served as a unique platform for our local talent, particularly young



The annual Innovation Challenge is a movement that calls on individual to contribute to the growth and development of Guyana through innovation

men and women, to showcase their technological skills through innovation," he added.

Addressing the 11

participating teams directly, Prime Minister Phillips said, "I view all of you as winners because you will



The annual Innovation Challenge is a movement that calls on individual to contribute to the growth and development of Guyana through innovation

leave this event with some form of personal incentive, whether it be skills development, networking

opportunities, portfolio building, problem-solving experience, career opportunities, or exposure to new technologies."

The Prime Minister also highlighted the importance of public-private partnerships in driving innovation and national development. He praised SBM Offshore Guyana's commitment to supporting the country's digital landscape and encouraged other private sector entities to follow suit.

"Our government will continue to contribute to creating a knowledge-based digital society by investing in its human capital, facilitating

ICT economic growth, promoting awareness, and providing the relevant infrastructure to make Guyana a technologically competitive nation," he said.

To bridge the digital divide, the government is investing in internet connectivity through the Lower Earth Orbiting (LEO) Satellite initiative. Prime Minister Phillips emphasised that the Innovation Challenge is more than just an event; it's a movement that encourages individuals to contribute to Guyana's growth and development through innovation.

# GUYANA LAUNCHES FREE ONLINE TRAINING FOR TOURISM AND BUSINESS



Under the leadership of President Irfaan Ali ministries across the country have partnered with Coursera under the Guyana-Coursera National Training Initiative.

The Ministry of Tourism, Industry & Commerce (MoTI&C) and the Guyana Tourism Authority (GTA) have joined forces to launch a new online training platform designed to empower Guyanese in the tourism and business sectors.

The Coursera

Entrepreneurship, and Competitiveness Training Platform offers a curated selection of courses aimed at addressing critical skill gaps within these industries.

"This training programme is a fantastic opportunity for Guyanese from all walks of life," declared,

Minister of Tourism, Industry and Commerce Oneidge Walrond. "By participating in these courses, individuals can gain the knowledge and skills necessary to thrive in the evolving tourism and business landscape."

Minister Walrond further emphasised

the government's commitment to fostering a culture of continuous learning and development.

The platform features a range of tourism-specific courses designed to enhance service delivery and contribute to Guyana's growing tourism industry.

"These courses are specifically designed to equip our tourism workforce with the skills they need to deliver exceptional service and play a vital role in the expansion of tourism in Guyana," said Kamrul Baksh, Director of the Guyana Tourism Authority.

Mr. Baksh encouraged all stakeholders within the tourism sector, including individuals and businesses, to take advantage of this valuable opportunity to build capacity and improve the quality of service provided to visitors.

The platform boasts a variety of courses covering essential topics such as: Sustainable Tourism, Promoting Environmental Public Health (University of Copenhagen,) Sustainable Transportation Networks & Streetscapes (Johns Hopkins University,) and Sustainable Buildings,

& Green Construction (Johns Hopkins University)

Business and Competitiveness Courses are also available on the platform, catering to those seeking to enhance their entrepreneurial skills.

Registration for the Guyana Coursera Training Platform is now open. Interested individuals can explore course offerings at: Tourism Courses: <https://bit.ly/3WQzwon> and Business and Competitiveness Courses: <https://bit.ly/4dvsxGX>

For further updates, you can follow the Guyana Tourism Authority on Facebook.

Join the movement to transform the future of Guyana's tourism and business sectors by enrolling in these free online courses today!

# A PROMISE FULFILLED - TWO REGION 1 COMMUNITIES RECEIVE BOATS FOR STUDENT TRANSPORTATION

Minister of Education, Priya Manickchand, recently fulfilled a promise made during a previous outreach by President Dr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali to improve educational infrastructure in hinterland communities. Two boats, each equipped with a 15-horsepower engine, were handed over to the communities of Arukamai and Hobidia.

Speaking at the handover ceremony,

Minister Manickchand emphasised the importance of accessible transportation for students in remote areas. This is a significant step towards ensuring that every child, regardless of their location, has the opportunity to access quality education. These boats will not only improve student attendance, but also contribute to the overall development of these communities.

The boats were generously donated by the Regional Democratic Council (RDC) of Region One. Regional Chairman Brentnol Ashley expressed his gratitude for the government's support.

The Toshao of Arukamai also expressed appreciation for the new boats, noting that they would significantly ease the challenges faced by students in the communities. Minister

of Housing and Water, Colin Croal was also present at the ceremony.

The handover of the boats is part of the government's broader plan to enhance education infrastructure across Guyana. By providing students with reliable transportation, the government aims to improve school attendance and academic performance.



These boats will provide essential transportation for students in remote areas, enhancing access to education

## REGIONS 5 AND 6 FARMING COMMUNITIES RECEIVE BOOST WITH ESSENTIAL TOOLS

In a move to bolster agricultural production and support local farmers, the government has distributed essential farming tools and livestock to 12 farming groups in Regions Five and Six. Led by Agriculture Minister Zulfikar Mustapha, the initiative was met with widespread appreciation from the farming communities.

Minister Mustapha emphasised the government's commitment to transforming Guyana into a major food hub. Further, the distribution aligns with the government's vision of alleviating the challenges

faced by farmers and increasing agricultural production, he stated.

The distribution included a range of equipment such as tillers, cutlasses, shovels, and pumps. Minister Mustapha highlighted the significant growth of Guyana's agriculture sector, which now contributes 28% of the country's non-oil GDP. "We want Guyana to be a food hub," he declared. "Our continued support for the agriculture sector is part of our commitment to ensuring a robust economy and contributing to the country's



12 farming groups received essential agricultural inputs from the Minister of Agriculture, Zulfikar Mustapha

development."

The distribution programme, which began in 2023, has already reached several regions, including Regions One, Two, Seven, Eight, and Nine. Minister

Mustapha assured that the initiative would be extended to all regions, including Regions Three, Four, and East Coast. "We will reach every area to provide these essential tools," he

promised.

Beyond providing farming inputs, the government plans to collaborate with farmers to expand crop cultivation and support livestock farming. This

effort is part of a broader vision to make Guyana and the Caribbean region self-sufficient in agricultural production.

Addressing other community concerns during his visit, Minister Mustapha reaffirmed the government's dedication to improving health and public infrastructure.

Under the leadership of President Dr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali, Guyana is making significant strides toward agricultural self-sufficiency. With ongoing support for farmers and investments in the sector, the country is poised for continued growth and development.

## MON REPOS FISHERMEN TO GET NEW FACILITIES

The government is set to invest over \$350 million to enhance fishing facilities in Mon Repos North, East Coast Demerara, Minister of Agriculture, Zulfikar Mustapha, announced during a land title distribution exercise.

The investment is a result of a previous visit to the area by President Ali. "Over \$350 million will be

expended to enhance your landing site," Minister Mustapha stated. "We will build a ramp for the boats, fix the entire revetment, and put in place a shed for shade."

These improvements are expected to benefit approximately 100 boat operators in the area. The minister also announced plans to build

stalls near the landing site to facilitate direct sales between fisherfolk and consumers.

"What we experienced is that the fishing boats are selling to the trucks, and when they go to the markets, people are paying double the price," Minister Mustapha explained. "Going forward, at these landing sites,

we will be building stalls and we are encouraging people to come to the landing sites to purchase fish so that the fisherfolk can get a better price and the consumer can enjoy a better price as well."

Fishing is a major economic activity in Mon Repos, supporting around 500 people. In addition



President Ali was accompanied by Minister of Agriculture, Zulfikar Mustapha during his previous visit to Mon Repos

to the infrastructure improvements, the government also plans to construct an access road and dredge the waterway to address the challenges faced by boats due to shallow waters.

## GOVT COMMITTED TO ENSURING SAFE MINING OPERATIONS AT MARUDI

The government has reaffirmed its commitment to ensuring safe and sustainable mining operations at Marudi Mountain in Region Nine.

During a recent meeting with the Rupununi Miners Association (RMA), Minister of Natural Resources Vickram Bharrat emphasised the government's priority on responsible mining practices that benefit all stakeholders.

Before 2020, the Marudi mining site experienced a period of closure due to environmental concerns and financial constraints. The government has facilitated the restart of small-scale mining in Marudi, addressing environmental concerns and illegal mining.



Minister of Natural Resources, Vickram Bharrat, meeting with the Rupununi Miners Association in Marudi, Region 9

Minister Bharrat encouraged miners to work together, and support each other.

"There is no issue with mining in Marudi. The only issue we have in Marudi is that our miners need to work together, and to start cooperating with

each other and to start supporting each other," the minister asserted.

He continued, "We always said that if mining is going to happen in Marudi, it must benefit everyone, including the indigenous people, including

the villages in Deep South."

He highlighted the importance of safe mining practices, including environmental protection and community engagement. The government is also open to examining possibilities for women's participation in mining.

"What I can promise you is...if more women want to go and mine, then we will support it. The women who are here, if you want to form a little group, a little association, call yourself the Rupununi Women Miners Association... we may be able to assist you with land to mine but I can't promise you that it will be Marudi," the natural resources

minister stated.

Mining is a significant contributor to Guyana's economy, employing approximately 30,000 people. The government aims to ensure that mining operations in Region Nine are conducted properly and benefit the region's economic development.

Elections for the RMA leadership will be held next month, and the government is exploring ways to improve gold recovery in the area. Community leaders from Aishalton Village and Awarewaunau participated in the meeting.



Minister of Natural Resources, Vickram Bharrat, meeting with the Rupununi Miners Association in Marudi, Region 9

# TASK FORCE TO OVERSEE SAFETY REGULATIONS AT CREEKS FOLLOWING TRAGIC DROWNING

In response to the tragic drowning of two young girls at a creek on the Soesdyke-Linden Highway recently, an emergency meeting was held to address safety concerns at local creeks and waterway facilities.

Key figures in the meeting included Minister of Culture, Youth & Sports, Charles Ramson, Minister of Home Affairs, Robeson Benn, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Tourism, Sharon Roopchand-Edwards, and representatives from the Guyana Tourism Authority (GTA), Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Maritime



Creek operators are to implement immediate safety measures

The Task Force will consist of government officials, private sector representatives, and other stakeholders. Its immediate focus will be on enforcing safety standards, including mandatory signage, lifeguard presence, and

Administration (MARAD), and the Ministry of Labour. Minister Ramson announced that a Task Force will be established shortly to ensure compliance with safety regulations at these recreational sites.

emergency response plans.

Minister Benn emphasised the urgent need for improved safety measures, stating, "We need to enhance the safety culture in Guyana. Depth gauges and life rings should be installed at these sites." He stressed that there would be zero tolerance for non-compliance.

Minister Ramson highlighted the necessity of basic safety standards, saying, "To operate a successful business, you have to protect people. There's no excuse for not having these minimum standards

in place." He urged operators to assess their training needs and assured government support for necessary improvements.

Permanent Secretary Roopchand-Edwards called for formal registration of operators to align with national tourism goals, ensuring responsible business practices.

In response to the incident, the GTA's licencing team visited creeks along the Soesdyke-Linden Highway to assess safety standards and provide support. The GTA will fast-track the development of critical safety guidelines and

launch a public awareness campaign. Additionally, comprehensive Health, Safety, Security, and Environment (HSSE) assessments will be conducted.

Creek operators are urged to implement immediate safety measures and register with relevant authorities to avoid legal repercussions. Visitors are also advised to follow safety protocols and heed all signage.

For more information, contact the GTA at [info@guyanatourism.com](mailto:info@guyanatourism.com) or call 219-0093/6.

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# RETIRED EDUCATORS LEAD MATH INTERVENTION IN GUYANA



Minister of Education Priya Manickchand

A new initiative aimed at improving mathematics education in Guyana has been launched, featuring a team of retired educators as "Math Monitors". The Ministry of Education introduced the programme on September 10, 2024, targeting 50 schools

nationwide. Minister of Education Priya Manickchand emphasised the critical importance of mathematics education, and the government's commitment to addressing the challenges it presents.

The Minister expressed optimism that the pass rate for mathematics in the 2025 national examinations would reach at least 40%, a substantial increase from the 34% recorded in 2023 and 31% in 2024. She attributed this confidence to the anticipated impact of the new initiative.

The Math Monitors, seasoned educators with

extensive experience, will play a pivotal role in the initiative. They will visit classrooms to ensure that teachers are effectively delivering the mathematics curriculum and that lessons are progressing according to schedule. "Head teachers, deputy heads, heads of departments, and teachers are the most crucial components of this programme, along with the monitors," Minister Manickchand highlighted.

To support the initiative, the Ministry of Education will provide schools with additional resources, including



A section of those in attendance

textbooks, graph books, scientific calculators, geometry sets, and past papers. A dedicated hotline, 736-MATH, has been established to address any concerns or requests for assistance.

Minister Manickchand also announced the integration of technology into the initiative. "We

are fully utilising technology to blend traditional and online learning. There will be mathematics lessons twice a week, or more if needed, on the learning channel at scheduled times," she explained. "Additionally, online quizzes and lessons will be accessible

on the learning channel's YouTube page."

The launch of the Mathematics Intervention Initiative follows a directive from President Dr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali to implement immediate remedial measures in schools nationwide.

# EDUCATION MINISTRY LAUNCHES PRIMARY SCHOOL LIBRARIES TO BOOST LITERACY

The Ministry of Education has launched a new initiative to establish well-resourced libraries in primary schools across Guyana. The initiative aims to provide students with access to a diverse range of reading materials in multiple languages, fostering a love of reading and supporting the development of literacy skills.

Minister of Education Priya Manickchand stressed that literacy is a foundation for success.



Books provided through the Ministry of Education's Primary School Libraries initiative

"By making these books available to our children, we are not only investing in their academic future, but also in the development of their imagination and self-

confidence," she said.

The libraries will feature popular literary works such as Nancy Drew, The Hardy Boys, Harry Potter, The Babysitters' Club, The Chronicles of Narnia, Captain Underpants, The Diary of a Wimpy Kid, and more.

The establishment of school libraries marks a significant step towards fostering a love of reading and life-long learning among learners. The Ministry of Education seeks to equip schools

with comprehensive library resources to promote multilingual education and foster mutual understanding and peace.



Books provided through the Ministry of Education's Primary School Libraries initiative

# DEMERARA RIVER BRIDGE CONSTRUCTION MOVING AHEAD

The construction of the New Demerara River Bridge is about 70% complete, with discussions underway to remove utilities obstructing the project's pathway.

Minister of Public Works Bishop Juan Edghill provided an update on the project, emphasising the importance of expediting

its completion. He outlined strategies for initiating works in the Peter's Hall area, which requires the relocation of utilities by GTT and Guyana Power and Light Inc.

The hybrid cable-stayed, beam-girder concrete bridge is being constructed by China Railway Construction (International) Limited

(CRCCL). It is designed to meet AASHTO standards and will span 2.6 kilometers, connecting Nandy Park on the East Bank of Demerara to La Grange on the West Bank.

The bridge will have four lanes, shoulders, and a median, with a total width of 23.6 meters. It is designed to accommodate

Handymax vessels passing underneath and will have a minimum horizontal width of 210 meters.

When completed, the bridge will significantly enhance connectivity and support the economic growth of Region Three. It is expected to serve Guyanese for at least 100 years.



Ongoing works on the New Demerara Bridge



Once the new bridges are completed, commuters will no longer pay tolls

General Secretary of the People's Progressive Party, Dr. Bharrat Jagdeo, has firmly defended the government's decision to

eliminate tolls on major bridges, emphasising the significant financial relief this will bring to ordinary citizens.

Speaking at the

## TOLL-FREE BRIDGES TO BRING BIG SAVINGS FOR ORDINARY GUYANESE - DR JAGDEO

commissioning of the Schoonord to Crane Highway, President Dr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali announced that once the new Demerara River Crossing, Berbice River Bridge, and Wismar-Mackenzie Bridge are completed, commuters will no longer need to pay tolls.

**"It's not monkeys crossing these bridges; it's our**

**people,"** Dr Jagdeo stated during a press conference. **"Everyone will benefit from this, including those who oppose us, like Norton."**

The US\$260 million Demerara River bridge, slated for completion by the end of 2024, is a key part of the government's plan to ease traffic congestion and improve connectivity between

Regions Three and Four. Current tolls range from \$40 for motorcycles to \$700 for motor lorries, with cars and minibuses paying \$200.

In Region Ten, the upcoming Wismar-Mackenzie bridge, expected to be completed by 2026, will also be toll-free. Additionally, the government is negotiating to acquire the Berbice Bridge, with

plans to eliminate its tolls as well.

Dr Jagdeo dismissed claims that the move was autocratic, affirming that it was a well-considered decision made in the best interest of the people. **"Governments work for the people, and this initiative is a testament to that commitment,"** he added.

# NEW HEALTH CENTER OPENS IN SWAN

A new health centre was officially opened in the community of Swan on the Linden-Soesdyke Highway. The facility, which cost approximately \$40 million to construct, will provide basic health services to residents of Swan and surrounding areas.

Minister of Health Dr. Frank Anthony

commissioned the health centre, noting that it will eliminate the need for villagers to travel to neighbouring villages for medical care. Services offered include prenatal care, diabetes and blood pressure testing, HPV testing, and dental services.

Dr. Anthony emphasised the

government's commitment to enhancing Guyana's healthcare system by constructing new health facilities nationwide. He highlighted the ministry's ongoing collaboration with communities across the country to ensure access to adequate healthcare services.

By early 2025, six new hospitals will be opened in Diamond, Skeldon, Enmore, Bath, De Kinderen, and Anna Regina. These investments will further improve the quality of healthcare in these regions.

In the first half of 2024 alone, the government spent over



The new Swan Health Centre

\$44 billion to ensure the nation's health system is intact and able to provide high-quality care.



The current state of the ground

President Ali announced that the Camptown football ground in Campbellville would undergo significant renovation to enhance its facilities for the community. During a visit to the area, the

president engaged with residents and athletes, listening to their concerns and pledging government's support for their well-being.

**"We want to ensure that the work is completed**

**within the next six weeks,"** President Ali stated, outlining plans for fencing, drainage improvements, and additional pavilions. He also committed to providing cricket gear to the newly formed Camptown Cricket Team.

Residents expressed their gratitude for the government's commitment to improving the community's infrastructure, which had been a longstanding concern. Minister of

Culture, Youth, and Sport Charles Ramson Jr accompanied President Ali during the visit, emphasising the government's dedication to providing world-class sporting facilities for the youth.

President Ali further demonstrated this commitment by meeting with members of the Guyana Cycling Federation to discuss plans for improving the sport of cycling. He pledged government support for the association

during the upcoming November Caribbean Elite Cycling Championships in



President Ali with the media and community leaders at the Camptown Ground in Georgetown

## CAMPTOWN FOOTBALL GROUND TO GET MAJOR UPGRADE

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# PRESIDENT ALI EMPOWERS 67 YOUTHS WITH DUAL-FACETED HOUSING AND AGRIBUSINESS VENTURES



President Dr Irfaan Ali engaging young sportsmen from Georgetown during an impromptu breakfast meeting

President Ali has launched a transformative initiative, empowering 67 young people from Georgetown and Region Three with new opportunities in housing and agriculture. In two recent engagements, President Ali outlined plans that aim to foster economic growth and create wealth for these young participants.

During a meeting with 27 athletes from Georgetown, President Ali presented a dual-faceted initiative designed to improve both housing and agricultural

opportunities. The plan involves the athletes participating in a modern agricultural venture by investing in a tunnel house designed for poultry farming. The President explained that each participant would contribute approximately \$300,000 toward a \$50 million facility equipped to house around 45,000 chickens. This facility is expected to generate annual net revenue between \$20 to \$25 million.

Similarly, in a subsequent meeting with 40 youths from

Region Three at Pyramid Restaurant and Pub, La Jalousie, West Coast Demerara, President Ali introduced a comparable plan. The young people will collectively invest in a high-tech poultry production facility, contributing \$500,000 each, while the bank provides an additional \$40 million in financing. This \$50 million facility will enable the youths to own and operate a \$100 million business venture, producing about 45,000 chickens per batch.

**"This opportunity allows you to build net worth, bring in new income, and expand your household income without disrupting your existing revenue stream,"** President Ali emphasised.

Recognising the vital role of financial institutions, President Ali urged the banks to support these youth-driven ventures by

offering interest rates as low as 4.5% through a special agribusiness loan programme. **"We want to encourage the banks to respond in a way that will bridge the divide, remove the barriers, and make it flexible, easier,"** the President stated.



President Dr Irfaan Ali engaging young sportsmen from Georgetown during an impromptu breakfast meeting

In addition to the agricultural initiative, President Ali addressed the housing needs of the young participants. He announced a special home ownership initiative in Region

Three aimed at making home ownership more accessible for low to moderate-income youths. The plan includes a cross-subsidisation approach, where the government will assist in covering part of the home costs, with the remaining amount treated as investment

and emphasised the government's commitment to youth development and home ownership.

The initiative has been met with enthusiasm from the participants. Selwyn Robertson, a beneficiary from Georgetown, expressed his gratitude, stating, **"The initiative he came up with in such a short space of time and gave you an entrepreneurial place, I think it is good."**

Kevin Dundas, a youth from Region Three, praised the government's proactive approach, saying, **"These projects are very good to tap into as young people. We are not only looking at farming as just traditional, but it is also a business, now that we're in a modern system."**

capital to support the mortgage.

Minister of Agriculture, Zulfikar Mustapha, and Minister of Housing and Water, Collin Croal, echoed the President's sentiments,

**tens of millions of dollars again, additional money into the community,"** President Ali explained. **"But more importantly, it will let these leaders know that we value their service, that we recognise their service, that we acknowledge their service."**

The part-time jobs initiative, implemented by the Office of the Vice President in 2022, has received a significant allocation of \$10 billion in the 2024 budget. The initiative is a key measure designed to alleviate unemployment and provide additional income opportunities for thousands of citizens across Guyana.

## CSOS TO RECEIVE INCREASED STIPEND TO MATCH PART-TIME WORKERS

President Ali announced that Community Service Officers (CSOs) would receive a significant stipend increase, bringing their earnings in line with part-time workers under the government's initiative.

Speaking at the Amerindian Cultural Extravaganza 2024, President Ali emphasised the need for equity and fairness across all regions of the country. **"I want to say to you that with immediate effect, we want the stipend for CSOs to**

**be the same as our part-time workers,"** he stated. **"It will match the \$40,000 that they're getting, because there must be no difference in our approach."**

The CSO programme, part of the Youth Entrepreneurial and Apprenticeship Programme (YEAP), was reinstated in 2020 and employs nearly 2700 CSOs. The government has allocated \$1.2 billion to the programme in the 2024 budget.

The programme creates jobs for



CSOs are also involved in various community development projects, such as building infrastructure

indigenous youth, particularly in rural areas where employment opportunities may be limited. CSOs receive training in various areas, including community development,

environmental conservation, and leadership. These skills help them build their careers and contribute to their communities. CSOs are also involved in various community

development projects, such as building infrastructure, promoting education, and addressing social issues.

Meanwhile, in addition to the stipend increase, the government has expanded the part-time jobs programme to include toshaos, who now receive an additional allowance of \$40,000. There are also plans to extend this programme to senior councillors and community development leaders in Amerindian communities.

**"This will release**



The commissioning of new Practical Instruction Department (PID) in Mabaruma, Region One

## REGION 1 STUDENTS BENEFIT FROM NEW VOCATIONAL TRAINING FACILITY

The Ministry of Education has officially commissioned the new Practical Instruction Department (PID) at the North West Secondary School, a significant development for vocational training in Region One.

The PID aims to enhance educational opportunities for

students in the region by providing specialised training programmes in technical and vocational fields. The facility will equip students with practical skills and certifications necessary for various trades and professions.

Minister of Education Priya Manickchand highlighted the

importance of the PID in providing students with more opportunities. **"We're investing in education, we're going to bridge gaps and opportunities will be created,"** she said.

The PID will offer five occupational areas: furniture making, motor vehicle repairs, electrical

installation, commercial food preparation, and home management. Students can earn a CVQ Level I certificate and continue their education to achieve higher qualifications.





# Guyanese DIASPORA DIGEST



## GUYANESE MAKE HISTORY AT NYC LABOUR DAY PARADE



**A HISTORIC MOMENT FOR THE GUYANESE DIASPORA!** Minister of Tourism, Industry and Commerce, Oneidge Walrond and Minister within the Ministry of Housing and Water, Susan Rodrigues and Walrond joined NOMADS Carnival Band, the first Guyanese band to march in the New York City Labour Day Parade. The vibrant display showcased the nation's rich culture and the community's pride.





## Heritage Day celebrations in Kawartha Lakes

The organizers of Heritage Day celebration at 12 Courtland Road Cobocnk Kawartha Lake Ontario Canada are happy to report that this year Heritage Day celebration was a success.

The weather was amazing, and the attendance was magnificent with Guyanese of different backgrounds and denominations who turned out in their numbers to celebrate with our Amerindian brothers and sisters.

Joining this year's celebration were members of the Metis tribe from Northern Ontario. The Honorary Consul General of The Cooperative Republic of Guyana in Toronto, Mani Singh gave brief remarks and stressed the importance of celebrating our First Nation achievements, under the One Guyana banner.

He encouraged all in attendance to continue to contribute to Guyana's development in whatever way possible.

The Honorary Consul General commended the Heritage Committee for the work they are doing in showcasing Guyana to the diaspora and the wider world in promoting our rich culture and diversity.

Present at the celebration were mem-

ber of staff from the Guyana Consulate as well as members of the Association of Concerned Guyanese (ACG).

The CG placed an honor on one of the elders of the Arawak tribe from Guyana, Mr. De Camp. He also presented tokens of appreciation to the executives of the Heritage Day celebrations committee.

A wide variety of Guyanese delicacies were available to be enjoyed, including pepper pot and cassava bread; Piwari, fly, ahee sugar cake, egg ball, cassava pone, poluri and many more. There were activities for everyone including the kids, with a sack race, egg and spoon race and dancing competitions.

The culmination of the event saw several patrons thanking the committee members for organizing such a well planned and executed Heritage Day. An early venue will be identified soon for next year's celebration. Planning will commence shortly.

This has been the fourth year since the Heritage committee is organizing Heritage Day in different areas in Ontario, Canada.

## British Businesses urged to capitalise on Guyana's economic growth

IN a passionate call to action, British High Commissioner to Guyana, Jane Miller, OBE, urged investors to seize the abundant opportunities in Guyana at the official London launch of the British Chamber of Commerce in Guyana (BritCham Guyana) last Wednesday.

Since the discovery of vast oil reserves off the coast of Guyana in 2015, Miller pointed out that the country has been one of the fastest-growing economies globally.

"Guyana is on the map and it's thanks to many, many people; thanks to the oil. People are beginning to recognise this incredible country. It is the most incredible country and I really do encourage those of you who have not been there to go and invest and go and find out more about it," she said to an audience of business executives, investors, government officials and diplomats.

With Guyana rapidly emerging as a global economic powerhouse, driven by its expanding oil and gas sector, Miller emphasised that the timing could not be better for British businesses to invest.

The diplomat outlined the favourable business climate in the South American nation, highlighting its pro-investment policies, and it is burgeoning energy and non-oil sectors.

"The GDP [Gross Domestic Product] has quintupled since 2015. Last year's economic growth was 38.4 per cent and the IMF [International Monetary Fund] is projecting that the next three years, it will be 20 per cent or more. What incredible economic growth, and this brings up amazing opportunities. And importantly, that growth isn't only in the oil sector, it is also in the non-oil sectors," she said.

She highlighted three key advantages for British investors, considering Guyana. For instance, Miller noted that in addition to the country's booming economy, it is an English-speaking country with a legal system largely based on English law. As such, this makes it easier for British investors to navigate business dealings, legal frameworks, and contracts without significant language or legal barriers. She also noted that Guyana benefits from the United Kingdom Export Finance (UKEF), a UK government initiative that helps British companies invest overseas by offering financing and insurance options. According to the High Commissioner, the British government has significantly boosted this financing for Guyana from £715 million to £2.5 billion in the past year, signalling strong confidence in the country's economic potential. The diplomat also highlighted that there is visa-free travel between Guyana and



Jane Miller

the UK as well as direct flights.

She pointed out that Guyana is the UK's top trade partner in the Caribbean, with bilateral trade between the two nations reaching £1.8 billion in 2023.

"The time is now. Come and see Guyana. You wouldn't understand the incredible opportunities in Guyana until you come into the country, meet the people and actually see what's going. New bridges, new roads, new hospitals, new schools, new housing... you name it.

"It's all happening at the moment and it's super exciting. Come now. There is competition. Everybody is coming into Guyana. Just in the last few months, three new embassies have emerged in Georgetown. Everybody is coming to invest..." Miller added.

She also offered some practical advice for investors interested in Guyana. She recommended that investors connect with key organisations like BritCham, the Georgetown Chamber of Commerce (GCCCI), the Private Sector Commission (PSC), and the Guyana Office for Investment (GO-Invest).

These bodies, she noted, can provide valuable insights, partnerships, and support for businesses looking to establish or expand in Guyana. She encouraged participation in trade missions, which provide opportunities to explore the market, meet local business leaders, and gain firsthand knowledge of investment opportunities in Guyana. In addition, Miller suggested that investors take extra time to experience Guyana's natural beauty. With 85 per cent of the country covered in tropical rainforest, she said Guyana boasts incredible wildlife and biodiversity.

BritCham is a professional business support organisation working to protect, promote and encourage trade and commerce between Guyana and the United Kingdom and, in so doing, improve the quality of business opportunities across Guyana and the UK.

# Guyana's Constitution remains most advanced, democratic in the region: AG

ATTORNEY-GENERAL and Minister of Legal Affairs, Anil Nandlall, S.C. has said that Guyana's Constitution is and remains one of the most advanced and democratic constitutions in the region.

He made those remarks during a previous broadcast of his live show, 'Issues in the News,' where he addressed contentions made about Guyana's governance system.

Vehemently rejecting a categorisation that Guyana's governance structure is akin to an autocracy, he said that Guyana's Constitution is not only democratic but stands as one of the most advanced and liberal in the Caribbean.

Guyana, like many other democracies, operates under a well-established constitution that has been scrutinised and even praised for its democratic framework.

This Constitution, he said, establishes a contract between the state and its citizens, outlining how the government will function, how its leaders are elected, how public funds are managed, and how the government is held accountable.

"The constitution of a country is that principal document, that basic document of the state that establishes a contract between the state and the citizens. It outlines how the state will be managed, how the state will be governed, and by whom," Nandlall said.

Further, Nandlall related that



Minister of Legal Affairs and Attorney General, Anil Nandlall, S.C.

Guyana's Constitution meets all international requirements as it relates to constitutions that govern other countries like the United States, India, Canada and South Africa, among others.

"All these countries have constitutions that are similar to ours. In fact, I

will advance the proposition that Guyana's Constitution is more liberal, is more democratic, and is more advanced than any other in the Caribbean and I can debate that at any forum," he posited.

Nandlall reasoned that no one could look at Guyana's constitutional

and legal architecture and advance the contention that the architecture is somewhat undemocratic or autocratic.

Against this backdrop, it can be said that the government has also forged ahead with the modernisation of the country's constitution with several new pieces of legislation passed since the People's Progressive Party/Civic Government entered office in 2020.

He said: "...this government from 2020 to now, we have passed more laws than any other country in the Caribbean."

While the Attorney-General reiterated this point, he said that this fact while it refers to the English-speaking Caribbean can possibly be extended to the entire Commonwealth.

At the end of 2023, it was noted that Guyana's legislative framework is and has been experiencing significant changes since the PPP/C assumed office in 2020, all of which is aimed at promoting modernisation.

At that time, it was reported that approximately 78 bills had been passed in the National Assembly.

The Minister of Parliamentary Affairs and Governance, Gail Teixeira at the end of 2023 told members of the press that what the government has been bringing crucial pieces of legislation that are transformational, thus modernising the legal framework of the country.

## Guyana prepares to tackle gender-based crimes

THE Justice Education Society (JES), through the Strengthening Justice for Women, Girls, and Indigenous Peoples in Guyana Project, funded by the Government of Canada, launched a Data Quality Assurance workshop aimed at enhancing the skills of the Guyana Police Force (GPF) in managing data related to sexual and gender-based crimes.

The training took place at the Officers' Training Centre (OTC), Camp Road, Georgetown, on Tuesday and was attended by key representatives from both the GPF and international partners.

Deputy Commissioner of Police (Administration) (ag), Ravindrat Budhram, in his remarks at the opening ceremony, highlighted the pivotal role of data collection in improving decision-making processes within the force.

He emphasised how accurate and reliable data has allowed the GPF to strategically deploy patrols and human resources, ultimately contributing to more effective policing.

"Data collection is one of the methods utilised by the Guyana Police Force, and worldwide, in making key



A section of gathering at the Data Quality Assurance workshop

data-driven decisions. We use data to enable us to deploy our patrols and human resources more efficiently," Deputy Commissioner Budhram said.

He also urged the participants, many of whom have prior experience in data management, to leverage this workshop to further enhance their skills and improve service delivery in addressing gender-based crimes.

"Most of you are trained in the field already, but this training will enhance your service delivery to the re-

spective stakeholders and more so the organisation that you are a part of," he added.

In attendance at the workshop were Justice Education Society Country Representative and Project Director, Lisa Thompson, and Senior International Representative Officer from the Canadian High Commission, Tariq Williams.

Facilitating the workshop was JES Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning Expert, Martine Chase, who

led participants through sessions designed to strengthen their data collection, storage, and management techniques, ensuring that data on sexual and gender-based crimes is accurate and actionable. The initiative forms part of ongoing efforts to improve justice for women, girls, and Indigenous peoples in Guyana, by building the capacity of key institutions such as the Guyana Police Force to respond more effectively to crimes related to gender-based violence.

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- 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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