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**ENERGY CONFERENCE:** President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali declared open the fourth Guyana Energy Conference and Supply Chain Expo on Monday. The conference brings together industry experts, government officials, and renowned leaders for high-level discussions on the energy sector. This year's theme is: Connecting the Dots: Integrating the future.



## Hess to finance Mt Sinai Health System

THE Hess Corporation has agreed to continue its support of the monumental healthcare partnership between Guyana and the Mount Sinai Health System.

This is according to President, Dr Irfaan Ali who made this disclosure at a recent event during which he noted that building out world-class health services also includes establishing and maintaining world-class partnerships.

The Government of Guyana entered into a partnership with Mount Sinai and Hess in 2022 to help overhaul the country's entire health system.

The Head of state said: "I'm pleased to tell you that Hess Corporation has agreed to continue financing the Mount Sinai partnership for another three years."

In addition to this, President Ali indicated that through this partner-

ship, Mount Sinai will be coming to assist in the building out of a modern oncology centre here that will treat cancer.

With this, he said that they are not only looking at diagnostics but also building the facilities for treatment.

Outside of that, Dr Ali said that they are also engaging in discussions for rehabilitative care and in April, a team from Mount Sinai will be in Guyana to discuss a modular manner in which rehabilitative care centres can be built across the country.

The monumental partnership agreement was signed in July 2022 during which President Ali had indicated that transforming Guyana's health system was the target and with this in mind, the best possible allies were contacted with Mount Sinai identified as a viable partner.



**TRANSFORMING HEALTH:** Barbados is poised to transform its healthcare system with groundbreaking medical technologies, including faster cancer screening tools and portable disease testing devices, Prime Minister Mia Mottley has announced. She said discussions are underway with several global companies to bring these advancements to the island.

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**RE-ELECT**



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SEE PAGE 3 FOR MORE DETAILS

**RE-ELECT**



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|  |  |  |   |
|--|--|--|---|
| Milk Fish<br>牛奶鱼<br>Reg:\$4.59<br><b>\$3.29</b> LB             | Fresh Tuna Steak<br>新鲜吞拿鱼扒<br>Reg:\$5.99<br><b>\$4.88</b> LB | Fresh Frozen Lobster<br>冰鲜龙虾<br>Reg:\$5.99<br><b>\$4.99</b> LB | Parrot Fish<br>青衣<br>Reg:\$6.99<br><b>\$5.99</b> LB |
| Pork Side Ribs Diced<br>切粒排骨<br>Reg:\$3.79<br><b>\$2.99</b> LB | Beef Skin<br>牛皮<br>Reg:\$8.99<br><b>\$6.99</b> LB            | Lean Ground Chicken<br>鸡肉碎<br>Reg:\$3.99<br><b>\$2.99</b> LB   | Beef Tripe<br>牛肚<br>Reg:\$4.59<br><b>\$3.59</b> LB  |

PRODUCE

|   |  |   |  |
|---|--|---|--|
| Ontario Fuji Apple<br>本地富士苹果<br>Reg:\$1.79<br><b>88¢</b> LB | Green Seedless Grape<br>青提<br>Reg:\$3.99<br><b>\$1.98</b> LB | Cara Cara Orange<br>红肉甜橙<br>Reg:\$1.99<br><b>88¢</b> LB | Morocco Sweet Tangerine<br>摩洛哥大甜桔<br>Reg:\$1.99<br><b>98¢</b> LB     |
| Cauliflower<br>椰菜花<br>Reg:\$5.99<br><b>\$2.98</b> EA        | Zucchini<br>意大利青瓜<br>Reg:\$1.99<br><b>88¢</b> LB             | US Tomatos<br>美国番茄<br>Reg:\$1.99<br><b>98¢</b> LB       | Cooking Onion 10LB Bag<br>10磅装黄洋葱<br>Reg:\$5.99<br><b>\$3.88</b> BAG |

BAKERY

|   |   |   |  |   |
|---|---|---|--|---|
| Dempster White & Wholewheat Bread<br>白面包 & 全麦面包<br>Reg:\$3.99<br><b>\$2.99</b> EA | HTB Spice Bun 130g<br>葡萄干香料包<br>Reg:\$1.99<br><b>2/\$2.50</b> | Regal Fairy Cake<br>纸杯蛋糕<br>Reg:\$3.99<br><b>2/\$5.00</b> | Walker Butter Cookie<br>黄油饼干 150g<br>Reg:\$2.99<br><b>2/\$3.00</b> | Cedar Pita<br>阿拉伯皮塔饼<br>Reg:\$1.79<br><b>99¢</b> EA |
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| DelMonte Orange Juice 橙汁 2.5L<br>Reg:\$6.99<br><b>\$5.99</b> EA SPECIAL                | BOB's Bacon 培根 375g<br>Reg:\$3.99<br><b>2/\$5.50</b> SPECIAL        | Frozen Basa Fillet 鱼柳 2.4Lb<br>Reg:\$8.99<br><b>\$5.99</b> EA SPECIAL         | MP White Shrimp Headless 无头开背白虾 340g<br>Reg:\$4.99<br><b>\$3.99</b> EA SPECIAL   |
| Fresh Longan 新鲜龙眼<br>Reg:\$5.99<br><b>\$2.88</b> LB SPECIAL                            | Sugar Tangerine 金秋炒糖桔<br>Reg:\$2.99<br><b>¢98</b> LB SPECIAL        | Crown Broccoli 西兰花<br>Reg:\$1.99<br><b>¢98</b> LB SPECIAL                     | Green Pepper 青椒<br>Reg:\$1.99<br><b>¢98</b> LB SPECIAL                           |
| Fresh Salmon Fillet 新鲜三文鱼柳<br>Reg:\$10.99<br><b>\$9.99</b> LB SPECIAL                  | Fresh Red Snapper 新鲜红鸡<br>Reg:\$8.99<br><b>\$6.99</b> LB SPECIAL    | Fresh OX Tail 新鲜牛尾<br>Reg:\$9.99<br><b>\$8.59</b> LB SPECIAL                  | Beef Short Ribs 牛仔骨<br>Reg:\$6.99<br><b>\$5.99</b> LB SPECIAL                    |

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| Kopiko Instant Coffee & Cappuccino 750g-900g<br>Reg:\$15.99<br><b>\$9.99</b> EA | Cock Brand Tapioca Pearl 400g<br>Reg:\$3.99<br><b>\$1.59</b> EA | Chewy Instant Japanese Style Udon (200g x 4)<br>Reg:\$3.99<br><b>\$2.39</b> EA | Quality Besan 4LB<br>Reg:\$6.99<br><b>\$4.29</b> EA     | Kushbu Extra Long Basmati Rice 10LB<br>Reg:\$18.99<br><b>\$12.99</b> EA | Pure Crystal Beads Air Freshener 340g<br>Reg:\$2.99<br><b>2/\$3.00</b> |

HOTPOT 火锅季

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| Buenas Long Kou Vermicelli 250g<br>Reg:\$3.99<br><b>\$1.99</b> EA | Sun Butane Gas Cartridge (4 x 227g)<br>Reg:\$8.99<br><b>\$4.99</b> EA   | Special Pot For Electromagnet Stove 28cm<br>Reg:\$19.99<br><b>\$12.99</b> EA | Choysco Quail Eggs In Water 425g<br>Reg:\$3.99<br><b>\$2.59</b> EA     |
| OceanFood Crab Stick 蟹足棒 454g<br>Reg:\$4.59<br><b>\$3.59</b> EA   | Clearwater Arctic Surf Clams 400g 北极贝<br>Reg:\$8.99<br><b>2/\$15.00</b> | Best Choice Lamb Shoulder Roll 大众顶级羊肉卷<br>Reg:\$9.99<br><b>\$8.99</b> LB     | Best Choice Beef Ribeye Roll 大众顶级牛肉卷<br>Reg:\$8.99<br><b>\$7.99</b> LB |
| Fresh Watercress 西洋菜<br>Reg:\$2.59<br><b>2/\$2.98</b>             | Green Leaf Lettuce 唐生菜<br>Reg:\$2.99<br><b>2/\$2.98</b>                 | Poached Lotus Root Slice 水煮莲藕片<br>Reg:\$4.99<br><b>\$2.98</b> EA             | Enoki Mushrooms 袋装金针菇<br>Reg:\$2.99<br><b>\$1.88</b> EA                |

FROZEN & DAIRY

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| Black Tie Whiting 竹筴鱼 680g<br>Reg:\$5.99<br><b>\$3.99</b> EA | AA-1 Smelts 鲱鱼仔 200g<br>Reg:\$2.99<br><b>2/\$5.00</b>                 | AA-1 Anchovy 凤尾鱼 340g<br>Reg:\$3.99<br><b>2/\$5.00</b>     | ThaiGold Peeled Shrimp 虾中之皇虾仁 380g<br>Reg:\$8.99<br><b>\$6.99</b> EA | Bedessee Cassava 木薯 500g<br>Reg:\$2.99<br><b>\$1.99</b> EA           | Apna Taste Gulab Jamun 玫瑰奶球 850g<br>Reg:\$6.99<br><b>\$4.99</b> EA |
| TAZA Paratha 煎饼 20pcs<br>Reg:\$6.99<br><b>\$5.99</b> EA      | Nestle Parlour Ice Cream 雀巢冰淇淋 1.5L<br>Reg:\$6.99<br><b>\$4.99</b> EA | Chopped Spinach 菠菜碎 750g<br>Reg:\$2.99<br><b>\$1.99</b> EA | Bulacan Longanisa 菲式烤肠 375g<br>Reg:\$5.99<br><b>\$3.99</b> EA        | Sanford Greenshell Mussel 青口 800g<br>Reg:\$13.99<br><b>\$9.99</b> EA | Bedessee Coconut Water 椰子水 500mL<br>Reg:\$4.59<br><b>\$3.29</b> EA |

RESTAURANT

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|---|--|--|--|--|---|---|
| Redpath Fine Sugar 20kg<br>Reg:\$42.99<br><b>\$37.99</b> EA | Huy Fong Foods Ground Fresh Chili Paste (3 x 3.5L)<br>Reg:\$86.99<br><b>\$72.99</b> EA | Value Drain-Off 强力清洁剂 1L<br>Reg:\$7.99<br><b>\$5.99</b> EA | Lee Kum Kee Hoisin Sauce (6 x 1.75L)<br>Reg:\$67.99<br><b>\$54.99</b> EA | Extra Large White Eggs 180Pcs<br>Reg:\$70.00<br><b>\$57.00</b> Box | Onion(50Lb) Reg:\$32.99<br><b>\$26.88</b> BAG | Fried Fish Ball 6.6LB 黄金鱼丸<br>Reg:\$45.00<br><b>\$35.00</b> Bag |
|---|--|--|--|--|---|---|

PINOY TASTE FILIPINO KITCHEN

PINOY TASTE Catering Order: 647-608-3130

|  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| Pork Embotido 1pc<br>Reg:\$10.99<br><b>\$9.99</b> EACH | Grilled Mackerel 1pc<br>Reg:\$10.99<br><b>\$9.99</b> EACH | Pork Spring Roll 1pc<br>Reg:\$0.70<br><b>60¢</b> EACH |
|--|---|---|

Asian Cuisine 亚洲美食 (Every Day Lunch Special)

Catering Order: 647-410-7668

|   |   |  |  |  |
|---|---|--|--|--|
| Fried Chicken 5pcs<br>Reg:\$8.99<br><b>\$7.99</b> ORDER | Pancit Bihon<br>Reg:\$14.99<br><b>\$12.99</b> ORDER | Chicken Inasal<br>Reg:\$4.99<br><b>\$4.00</b> EA | Pork BBQ 1pc<br>Reg:\$4.00<br><b>\$3.50</b> EA | Vegetable Spring Roll 10pcs<br>Reg:\$4.00<br><b>\$3.49</b> ORDER |
|---|---|--|--|--|

SUSHI

SUSHI Catering Order: 416-281-1222

|  |  |                     |
|--|--|---------------------|
| Sushi Maki Tray 58pcs<br>Reg:\$36.97<br><b>\$34.97</b> ORDER | Green Dragon roll<br>Reg:\$7.99<br><b>\$5.99</b> ORDER | Sushi Full Menu<br> |
|--|--|---------------------|



# Guyanese DIASPORA DIGEST



KEEPING THE DIASPORA INFORMED EDITION 87

## CDB PRESIDENT'S VISIT STRENGTHENS GUYANA PARTNERSHIP, FOCUSES ON FUTURE COLLABORATION

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*His Excellency, President Irfaan Ali (center), Senior Minister in the Office of the President with Responsibility for Finance and the Public Service, Dr. Ashni Singh, Minister of Education, Hon. Priya Manickchand, and Region Two officials, with President of the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB), Daniel Best (second from left), at the commissioning of the new Exceptional Learners' Centre in Cotton Field.*



**ONDERNEEMING CHILDREN GET STATE-OF-THE-ART SCHOOL**

**PAGE 11**



**ONE GUYANA, MANY TALENTS!  
- GUYANA'S YOUNG STARS LIGHT UP THE STAGE**

**PAGE 13**

## CDB PRESIDENT'S VISIT STRENGTHENS GUYANA PARTNERSHIP, FOCUSES ON FUTURE COLLABORATION



Best's itinerary included tours of several CDB-funded project sites

The recent three-day visit of Daniel Best, President of the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB), to Guyana has concluded, leaving behind a strengthened partnership and a renewed commitment to collaborative development. Best's visit, which took place from February 11 to 13, involved extensive discussions with President Mohamed Irfaan Ali, Finance Minister Dr. Ashni Singh, and other key government officials. The central theme of the visit was solidifying the bond between Guyana and the CDB and identifying new avenues for cooperation in pursuit of Guyana's development goals. Best's itinerary included tours of several CDB-funded project sites, providing him with a first-hand understanding of the tangible impact of

the Bank's investments on the ground. His meetings with Minister Singh and finance ministry officials focused on the details of current projects and explored opportunities for deepening collaboration. **"Guyana values its partnership with the CDB and looks forward to continued collaboration in addressing the region's development challenges,"** Minister Singh commented following Best's appointment, underscoring the importance of the strengthened partnership. The CDB President's visit served to reaffirm the Bank's dedication to supporting Guyana's progress and facilitated a valuable exchange of ideas regarding the government's economic priorities. Discussions centred on how the CDB can further contribute to these priorities through its financial and technical assistance programmes. As a founding member of the CDB since 1970, Guyana has a long-standing and productive

relationship with the Bank. CDB funding has played a vital role in the development of Guyana's social and economic infrastructure, supporting projects ranging from schools and undertaken. Best's visit emphasised the strong and enduring relationship between Guyana and the CDB, paving the way for continued collaboration



Best's itinerary included tours of several CDB-funded project sites



Dr. Ashni Singh meeting with the new President of the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB), Daniel Best

water systems to climate-resilient roads. Among the notable projects are the recently completed Hospitality and Tourism Training Institute in Port Mourant, Corentyne, and the ongoing Linden to Mabura Road project, a landmark initiative and the largest single project the Bank has and shared success in achieving sustainable development goals. His leadership and expertise in development banking, combined with the CDB's commitment to the region, promise ongoing support for Guyana's growth and prosperity.

## REGION TWO WELCOMES FIRST SPECIAL NEEDS SCHOOL - PRESIDENT ALI ANNOUNCES TRANSPORTATION INITIATIVE



The Exceptional Learners' Centre Cotton Field in Region Two

A new Exceptional Learners' Centre, the first of its kind in Region Two, was officially commissioned by President Dr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali. The facility will serve approximately 30 learners with special needs, including those on the autism spectrum, those with disabilities, and those with special sensitivities. **"We have put aside resources in the budget and before the end of this month, the Minister of Finance will ensure that Region Two gets its bus here to transport these children,"** the President stated.

In his keynote address, President Ali announced a significant step towards addressing transportation challenges for differently-abled children across Guyana. Special buses will soon be available in all ten administrative regions to transport children to their respective special education needs facilities. **"We have put aside resources in the budget and before the end of this month, the Minister of Finance will ensure that Region Two gets its bus here to transport these children,"** the President stated. The new centre represents a major advancement



President Ali addressing the commissioning of the Exceptional Learners' Centre Cotton Field in Region Two

the government's commitment to inclusive and equitable access to quality education. Funded through the Basic Needs Trust Fund (BNTF), a grant-funded programme by the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB), the facility is equipped with specialised amenities to cater to the unique needs of its students. President Ali emphasised the government's focus on maximising the facility's impact, announcing the integration of monthly health services

on-site to reduce the burden on parents and children. He reiterated his administration's dedication to removing barriers faced by children with special needs, enabling them to reach their full potential. **"That is why we are investing significantly in the education sector,"** he affirmed.

The President highlighted recent initiatives, such as the special needs swimming programme at the Cyril Potter College of Education (CPCE), and announced plans for its expansion. He noted the substantial increase in special education needs facilities from 13 to 27 since 2022, and pointed out that the current government has invested 600% more in education compared to the 2015-2020 period.

Caribbean Development Bank President, Daniel Best, emphasized the project's alignment with the CDB's mission of transforming

lives through inclusive, resilient, and sustainable development. **"These types of interventions and others in communities like Cotton Field help to ensure that the**



Inside the facility

**country is moving forward together,"** he said. a crucial resource for the region.

A \$94 million contract for the school's construction was awarded to Builder's Engineering & Architectural Constancy last March. Best described the school as **"more than a building,"** but a **"sanctuary of hope, acceptance and opportunity,"** representing a collective commitment to

# GUYANA PREPARES FOR GLOBAL ECONOMIC SHIFTS



President Dr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali interviewed by Kiana Wilburg, the Chief Executive Officer of the Guyana Energy Conference and Supply Chain Expo on the Energy Perspective Podcast

President Dr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali has emphasised the critical importance of Guyana's economic diversification strategy in the face of anticipated global economic shocks stemming from policy changes in the United States (US), and their impact on major economies.

Speaking on a recent Energy Perspective

Podcast, President Ali acknowledged that while Guyana is among the fastest-growing economies, it remains interconnected with regional and global markets facing numerous challenges. He noted that Guyana's economy could be affected by the US push to expand oil and gas exploration and that proactive planning is essential to ensure

long-term stability beyond oil and gas.

**"That is what we have been communicating to the Guyanese people from day one,"** President Ali stated. **"That is, we have to be responsible in the way we manage the resources from oil and gas, and that is why, it is so critical for us to pursue economic diversification and build out other segments and sectors of our economy."**

The government has been using oil revenues to expand infrastructure, health, education, housing, and other social services, and importantly, to position Guyana as a major food production hub. President Ali highlighted

concerns about rising food prices due to potential labor shortages in the US caused by immigration policies and severe weather patterns. In response, his government has heavily invested in sustainable agriculture, agro-processing, and modern farming technologies like hydroponics.

**"And all of this is not only to create local opportunities, but it is to respond to global challenges,"** the head of state explained. **"So, when we are building the economy here – it is not built in isolation of the realities globally."**

He pointed out that the 2025 national budget directly addresses these challenges by maintaining pre-COVID

freight rates for import duties, effectively reducing the economic burden on consumers. The government is also addressing bottleneck challenges on the Demerara River to accommodate larger ships. **"We are working now with the private sector to have a model that would have a long-term solution to this issue of dredging and the issue of having a draft that is consistently at low tide and high tide...so that large ships can come in,"** he disclosed.

President Ali reiterated the importance of regional collaboration, highlighting the investment in the Linden to Mabura Hill roadway, which will connect Guyana with Northern Brazil and create additional avenues for collaboration and enhanced trade opportunities.

With energy prices

expected to decrease significantly due to the gas-to-energy project at Wales, Region Three, President Ali said it's time to plan for transport and logistics development. **"We have to look at, not only the large industries, but look at all the micro and medium-sized enterprises that can be developed out of this great potential,"** he asserted, citing Trinidad and Tobago's use of oil revenues for cheap energy to develop strong manufacturing and agro-processing sectors as an example.

By enhancing food production and the manufacturing and agro-processing industries, the government aims to create wealth, jobs, and resilience against economic shocks. This topic was among several discussed in the 50-minute podcast, available on the president's official social media page.

## GUYANA TO PROACTIVELY ENGAGE UNITED STATES TO SAFEGUARD TRADE INTERESTS

Given Guyana's reliance on exports for economic growth, the government must proactively engage in diplomatic discussions with the United States (US) to protect its trade interests and those of the wider Caribbean region. This was emphasised by People's Progressive Party (PPP) General Secretary, Dr. Bharrat Jagdeo, during his weekly press conference at Freedom House.

Dr. Jagdeo explained that while larger economies like the US can drive growth through internal demand,

smaller countries like those in the Caribbean rely heavily on export markets to enhance prosperity, **"... markets for their products to enhance prosperity. That is why we have to keep our rates competitive,"** he told reporters.

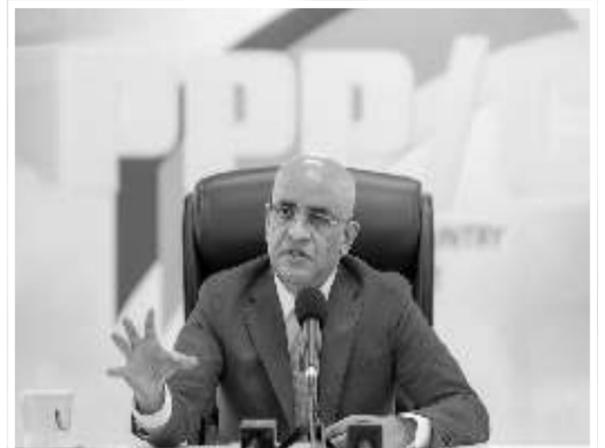
He stressed the importance of Caribbean nations ensuring their agriculture and manufacturing sectors are structured competitively to survive in the international market. While acknowledging that the previous US

administration focused on trade tensions with other major economies, Dr. Jagdeo noted that there hasn't been a direct indication of a desire to change trade terms for the Caribbean.

However, he emphasised the need for vigilance. **"We are looking at all of these issues. Clearly, we have to remain engaged with the US government in ensuring that there is for the Caribbean countries, particularly a favourable environment for our**

**trade with the US,"** he said.

Dr. Jagdeo pointed out the historical existence of special trade arrangements between the Caribbean and the US and stressed the importance of preventing their erosion. **"... it requires probably lobbyists not just for Guyana, but also for the region to engage with the new US administration to ensure that those complexities are ours or in their thinking when they announce trade policies,"** he asserted. He underscored



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

the necessity of remain a priority in US active engagement with the current US administration to ensure these trade policy considerations

## GUYANA-US MEETING FOCUSES ON EXTRADITION, CRIME

A high-level government delegation met with visiting U.S. law enforcement officials yesterday to discuss ongoing collaboration and ways to bolster cooperation on legal matters. The meeting took place in the boardroom of the Attorney General's Chambers and Ministry of Legal Affairs.

The Guyanese team was led by Attorney

General & Minister of Legal Affairs, Mohabir Anil Nandlall SC MP, and included Minister of Home Affairs, Robeson Benn, and Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Hugh Todd. The U.S. delegation comprised members of the U.S. Marshals Service and the U.S. Embassy Regional Security Office.

Discussions focused

on strengthening cooperation between Guyanese and U.S. law enforcement agencies. Key topics included enhancing mutual assistance in criminal matters and streamlining extradition processes between the two countries. Both sides reaffirmed their commitment to continued collaboration in the fight against crime.



Guyana-US meeting focuses on extradition, crime

## 2025 BUDGET APPROVED, USHERS IN CONTINUED ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION



Minister Singh with his team from the Ministry of Finance whose work were crucial to the 2025 budgetary process

The National Assembly approved the **2025 National Budget, totalling \$1.382 trillion**, after days of vigorous debate. Finance Minister Dr. Ashni Singh successfully piloted the budget, the sixth under the People's Progressive Party/Civic (PPP/C) government and his fifth since the party's return to power in 2020.

Dr. Singh presented the budget on January 17, outlining its two primary objectives: fulfilling and exceeding the commitments of the PPP/C's 2020 Manifesto and laying the foundation for the party's future term from 2025-2030. He emphasised the

government's dedication to building **"A Secure, Prosperous and Sustainable Guyana"**. Continuing the trend of previous PPP/C budgets, Budget 2025 has no new taxes. Instead, it focuses on enhancing the well-being of Guyanese citizens by increasing disposable income and improving infrastructure and social services nationwide. The government has reversed the punitive taxes implemented by the previous administration and reinstated key benefits, such as the cash grant for schoolchildren and the year-end bonus for the Disciplined Services.

Dr. Singh

highlighted the contrast between the current budget and the previous administration's policies, which included cuts to pensioner subsidies and the imposition of a 14 percent VAT on essential goods and services.

While the 2025 budget prioritises infrastructure development and major projects in health and education, it also includes measures directly benefiting citizens. Key sectoral allocations include \$175 billion for education, \$143.2 billion for health, \$112.6 billion for housing, \$104.6 billion for agriculture and food security, and \$108.7 billion for public safety

and security.

Dr. Singh criticised the opposition APNU/AFC for its record of corruption and unfulfilled promises. He dismissed their proposed plans as unrealistic and lacking concrete allocations for crucial sectors, calling their vision **"borderline insulting"** to the Guyanese people. He expressed confidence that the PPP/C government will continue to deliver on its promises.

The Income Tax Amendment Bill, also passed by the Assembly, implements several tax relief measures. These include raising the income tax threshold

from \$100,000 to \$130,000, reducing personal income tax rates, making a portion of overtime and second job income non-taxable, and allowing single parents to claim a non-taxable amount for each child.

Other significant measures within the budget include an increase in old age pension to \$41,000, a \$100,000 grant for newborn babies, a \$10 billion injection into the National Insurance Scheme (NIS) to benefit contributors with between 500 and 749 contributions, and an

increase in the "Because We Care" cash grant for students to \$50,000. President Ali recently announced the abolition of bridge tolls at the Demerara Harbour Bridge, Berbice River Bridge, and Wismar Bridge, benefiting over 50,000 daily commuters, as well as free university and technical/vocational education for 14,000 students.

Dr. Singh emphasised that Budget 2025 will benefit everyone, and stimulate growth through increased production and productivity.



### BUDGET 2025 PASSED BY THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY \$1.382 TRILLION

- 20.6 PERCENT LARGER THAN BUDGET 2024
- THE LARGEST BUDGET EVER
- FULLY FINANCED WITH NO NEW TAXES



Presented By  
**HON. DR. ASHNI K. SINGH**  
Senior Minister in the Office of the President  
with Responsibility for Finance and the Public Service

February 03, 2025

## TO \$100,000 CASH GRANT DISTRIBUTION TO SPEED UP AS DISTRIBUTION EXPANDS

Distribution of the \$100,000 one-off cash grant is set to speed up in Regions Two, Three, Four, Five, Six, and Ten, following the release of the distribution schedules.

Finance Secretary, Sukrishnalall Pasha, confirmed to the Department of Public Information (DPI) that the verification process has been progressing smoothly, with over 240,000 individuals verified out of approximately 271,000 registered since the start of the year.

Pasha highlighted the efficiency of the process, noting that last year, approximately 390,000 people were registered and verified,

with distribution now substantially complete in Regions One, Seven, Eight, and Nine.

The announcement follows assurances from People's Progressive Party General Secretary, Dr. Bharrat Jagdeo, that all eligible Guyanese will receive the grant. He emphasized the government's dedication to a seamless and efficient distribution process. Dr. Jagdeo explained that the recent passage of the \$1.138 trillion budget has made the necessary funds available to resume distribution. **"Even if the cheques were cut, you could not deliver them or get them cashed because the resources were not**

**available,"** he stated.

Dr. Jagdeo acknowledged the magnitude of the undertaking and commended the hard work of the Ministry of Finance staff. **"It takes time. It has to be done diligently and people will get their money. We're not going to be rushed to do it,"** he said.

The Committee of Supply recently approved over \$40 billion for the grant distribution, including \$30 billion allocated to the 300,000 additional citizens aged 18 and older. To date, over 121,000 Guyanese have already received their grants.



Over 121,000 Guyanese have already received their grants

# GUYANA REJECTS INACCURATE MAP OF ITS TERRITORY PRESENTED AT SURINAME CONFERENCE



The Honourable Hugh Hilton Todd, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, meeting with Her Excellency Ms. Liselle Blankendal, Ambassador of Suriname to Guyana

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation has objected to the use of an inaccurate map depicting the New River Triangle as part of Suriname. The map was included in a publication distributed by Surinamese hosts at a recent International Business Conference in Paramaribo. Guyanese representatives were present at the conference, but the Ministry clarified that their presence does not constitute acceptance of the incorrect map. Guyana was not consulted about the map's content prior to its distribution and

“would have strongly objected” had it been given the opportunity, according to a press release from the Ministry.

Guyana maintains that the New River Triangle is indisputably part of its sovereign territory. This claim is based on the legally binding 1936 agreement established by a joint British-Dutch-Brazilian Boundary Commission. The commission defined the Guyana-Suriname border, identifying the source of the Kutari River as the tri-junction point with Brazil and marking it with a monument. The agreement stipulated that the boundary follows the left bank of the longest branch of the Kutari River, placing

the New River Triangle within Guyana.

The Ministry emphasised that Guyana has consistently respected this boundary and exercised sovereignty and continuous occupation of the New River Triangle. The 1936 boundary remains the internationally recognised border between the two nations.

Despite this disagreement regarding the map, the government reiterated its commitment to maintaining strong relations with Suriname, based on mutual respect and international law. Guyana will continue to engage in discussions through established mechanisms to address any outstanding border

issues.

Following the conference and the map's distribution, the Honourable Hugh Hilton Todd, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, met with Her Excellency Ms. Liselle Blankendal, Ambassador of Suriname to Guyana, at her request.

Ambassador Blankendal highlighted the success of the International Business Conference, stating that it promoted private sector partnerships between Suriname and Guyana. She reaffirmed Suriname's commitment to the Strategic Dialogue and Cooperation Platform (SDCP) and emphasised the potential for

bilateral collaboration. Acknowledging recent media reports concerning the map, the Ambassador reiterated Suriname's commitment to advancing its partnership with Guyana.

Minister Todd affirmed Guyana's commitment to international law, respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, strengthening regional cooperation, and enhancing friendly bilateral relations within the established framework.

Minister Todd and Ambassador Blankendal also discussed the convening of the Border Commission between Guyana and Suriname.

# PM PHILLIPS HIGHLIGHTS STRONG GUYANA-CHINA TIES AT CHINESE NEW YEAR CELEBRATION

Prime Minister, Brigadier (Ret'd) Mark Phillips joined members of the Chinese Association of Guyana at the New Thriving Restaurant, Providence to celebrate the Lunar New Year and welcome the Year of the Snake.

In his address, Prime Minister Phillips emphasised the shared values between Chinese culture and Guyanese society, including unity, family, strength, and the pursuit of prosperity. **“We celebrate the contributions,**

**traditions, and values of the Chinese community that have enriched Guyana for generations,”** he stated, adding that these shared tenets are welcomed by Guyanese people due to the nation's rich multiculturalism.

The Prime Minister also noted the significance of the timing, as the Year of the Snake coincides with the 53rd anniversary of diplomatic relations between Guyana and the People's Republic of China. He highlighted

China's impressive progress in 2024, citing its economic rebound, GDP surpassing 130 trillion yuan, and advancements in innovation, sustainability, and technology, including breakthroughs in artificial intelligence, quantum communications, and space exploration.

Prime Minister Phillips reaffirmed Guyana's commitment to strengthening bilateral ties and exploring new opportunities

for collaboration, emphasising that the partnership has fostered economic growth for both nations and the global community.

He also acknowledged the invaluable contributions of the Chinese community to Guyana's development. **“To our Chinese community here in Guyana, your contributions are highly cherished and valued in all areas,”** he said, citing traditions, civic engagement, education, knowledge



The Chinese Association of Guyana event to celebrate the Lunar New Year and welcome the Year of the Snake

exchange, and cultural enrichment as key areas of impact.

# GUYANA BOOSTS TRADE AND CULTURAL EXCHANGE WITH SURINAME

Guyana is strengthening its ties with neighbouring Suriname through a new initiative focused on trade and cultural exchange. The Guyana Office for Investment (GO-Invest) recently equipped the Guyanese Embassy in Suriname with a locally made canoe, a variety of Guyanese products, and investment and export promotion materials.

The initiative, spearheaded by Dr. Peter Ramsaroop, Guyana's Chief Investment Officer, is a collaborative effort



Dr. Peter Ramsaroop, Guyana's Chief Investment Officer and Guyana's Ambassador to Suriname, H.E. Virjanand Depoo

between GO-Invest and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation. The official

presentation was made to Guyana's Ambassador to Suriname, H.E. Virjanand Depoo.

During the presentation, Dr. Ramsaroop highlighted Guyana's recent developments, including the significant bauxite discoveries shared with Suriname, estimated at 1.5 billion tonnes. He emphasised Guyana's commitment to modernise existing industries and explore new avenues for economic growth.

Dr. Ramsaroop underscored the immense potential of Guyana's energy sector, particularly the anticipated benefits of

bringing gas onshore, which is projected to halve energy costs and stimulate a new manufacturing sector. He also hinted at the imminent announcement of a new deep-water port, further enhancing the nation's infrastructure. He reiterated President Irfaan Ali's “One Guyana” vision, assuring that the wealth generated from these developments will be shared nationwide.

GO-Invest is actively supporting local manufacturers of all sizes by facilitating

the export of their products to international markets. Through strategic partnerships, investment facilitation, and trade promotion, the agency aims to increase the global visibility of Guyanese goods and create new opportunities for local businesses. This initiative with Suriname reflects Guyana's ongoing efforts to expand its presence in regional markets, promote locally made products, and cultivate stronger economic partnerships

## PPP/C'S HOUSING POLICY DELIVERS 40,000 LOTS; APNU/AFC FAILED - PRESIDENT ALI



President Ali addressing the progress in the housing sector under his administration

President Dr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali has reaffirmed that the PPP/C government's housing and land policy applies stringent conditions to all, with less than 10% of the total land developed for housing going to private developers.

In a live broadcast, he emphasised that all lands allocated by the government, regardless of the recipient, are subject to strict guidelines. He explained

that breaches of these agreements could lead to repossession by the Central Housing and Planning Authority (CHPA), ensuring fairness and accountability for all.

The President was responding to claims made by Nigel Hughes, leader of the Alliance for Change (AFC), regarding land allocations in Ogle, East Coast Demerara. He stressed that since 2020, the government has significantly boosted

investment in the housing sector, focusing on infrastructure, land allocation, and regularisation, and benefiting citizens from all walks of life.

**"We have allocated vast acreages of land to ordinary Guyanese, while less than 10% is reserved for private developers,"** President Ali said. He pointed out that the government uses a cross-subsidisation model, where funds from private land sales help support the construction of affordable housing for low- and middle-income families.

The President also provided details on the government's agreements with private developers, including conditions such as full payment before land transfers, the completion of infrastructure within 18 months, and the

completion of residential constructions within three years. Under these agreements, developers are required to pay \$30 million per acre, with 30% of the amount due upfront.

In contrast, President Ali highlighted the failures of the previous APNU/AFC government, particularly in land and housing transactions. He exposed controversial deals made in the months leading up to the 2020 elections, where lands were sold or leased at far below market value. In some instances, no payments were collected, and agreements were finalised without public tenders or interest expressions.

Forexample, in 2020, 23 land transactions were finalised just before the elections, with minimal payments and no conditions met. Several deals were signed

after the government lost power in 2020, with only 10% of the total purchase price paid for lands valued at billions. Some transactions allowed leases for as low as \$12,000 monthly, without the necessary protections for the state. The APNU/AFC government sold land to **"friends, family, and PNC supporters,"** leaving the country at a disadvantage, President Ali said. He also criticised Hughes, noting that his firm participated in some of these questionable transactions.

In comparison, the PPP/C government's housing policies have ensured the allocation of over 40,000 house lots and the regularisation of numerous squatter settlements. Between 1993 and 2015, the PPP/C administration allocated more than 115,000 lots, while in

the past four years, over \$240 billion has been invested in housing. This has resulted in the construction of more than 3,000 homes, benefiting over 128,000 families.

The government has also implemented initiatives like the Homestead Programme at Yarrowkabra, which will provide 500 housing units for single parents from Region Ten. This year alone, over \$135 billion has been allocated to further boost the housing sector.

**"This is not by accident. It's the result of a well-thought-out land policy and sound resource management,"** President Ali concluded, reaffirming the government's commitment to ensuring affordable housing for all Guyanese.

## GUYANA AND UK EXPLORE EXPANDING BILATERAL TRADE RELATIONS

Guyana and the United Kingdom are eager to maximise the potential of their bilateral trade relations. This was the key takeaway from a meeting on January 30, 2025, between Foreign Secretary Robert Persaud and Paul Whittingham, Deputy Director for Trade for Development at the UK's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO). Whittingham was accompanied by UK High Commissioner to Guyana, Her Excellency Jane Miller.

Whittingham,

who was in Guyana for the CARIFORUM/UK Sub-Committee on Development Cooperation, expressed the UK's interest in exploring trade drivers within the Caribbean region to stimulate growth, economic diversification, and enhanced development cooperation. He also highlighted the UK's focus on sustainable trade practices through climate measures like carbon pricing, and the UK government's willingness to support developing countries in

multilateral rule-setting. Foreign Secretary Persaud acknowledged the significant growth in trade between Guyana and the UK in recent years, emphasising the potential for further expansion. He stressed the importance of technology transfer in achieving this goal. Persaud outlined Guyana's strategy to become a regional leader by developing a knowledge and service-based economy, noting the substantial government investments in key sectors such as tourism,

digitalisation and e-services, health, and climate services.

Both parties recognised the opportunity to explore new avenues for enhancing trade and agreed on the need for greater awareness of existing trade mechanisms. They also emphasised the crucial role of the business sectors in both countries in fully utilising these mechanisms to unlock the full potential of the bilateral trade relationship.



Foreign Secretary Robert Persaud and Paul Whittingham, Deputy Director for Trade for Development at the UK's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

## PRESIDENT ALI CONDEMNS MEDIA SILENCE ON DAVID HINDS' 'RACIST' COMMENTS TOWARDS AFRO-GUYANESE

President Dr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali has sharply criticised the media for remaining silent over derogatory comments made by Working People's Alliance (WPA) Leader, David Hinds, aimed at Afro-Guyanese. During his recent broadcast of Politics 101, Hinds launched a scathing attack on Afro-Guyanese

who support political parties outside of his own ideology, calling them "lick bottoms," "house slaves," and "sellouts." In his address, President Ali expressed his deep disappointment over the inflammatory rhetoric, emphasising the unjust and divisive nature of Hinds' remarks. He also lamented the silence from the media,

which he argued reflects a selective outrage by journalists and social commentators, especially when it comes to individuals opposing the ruling People's Progressive Party/Civic (PPP/C).

**"What an injustice coming from people who inherit the party of Walter Rodney, a nationalist, a true**

**Guyanese, a patriot, a man who fought for every Guyanese,"** President Ali said, referring to the legacy of the WPA's founding figures. He accused the opposition of trying to exploit racial divisions to further their political agenda.

President Ali also criticised what he described as a **"selective**

**approach to outrage,"** questioning why media attention is often reserved for certain issues while ignoring harmful rhetoric.

Minister of Public Affairs, Kwame McCoy, also condemned Hinds' comments, labeling them as reflective of the divisive and toxic ideology being pushed by the opposition,

specifically the A Partnership for National Unity (APNU).

In addition, the Association of the People of African Descent (APAD) voiced its condemnation of Hinds, asserting that all Guyanese, regardless of race, have the right to align with any political party of their choice without facing derogatory insults.

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## GUYANA LAUNCHES 10-YEAR E-PASSPORT WITH ENHANCED SECURITY FEATURES

Guyanese travellers now have access to a cutting-edge passport valid for 10 years, featuring advanced electronic security measures. The Ministry of Home Affairs announced the official launch of the new passport, emphasising its role in providing a safer and more convenient travel experience.

Effective February 10, 2025, applicants visiting the Central Immigration and Passport Office can choose between a five-year passport for \$6,000 and the new 10-year e-passport for \$12,000. Applications submitted



10-year Guyanese passport launched with electronic features

on or before February 7, 2025, will be processed for the older passport version. Applications from February 10 onwards will receive the

new document.

The new passport reflects President Dr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali's vision for a modern Guyana, where citizens benefit from rapid digital transformation and improved service delivery. A key feature is an embedded electronic chip, enhancing identity protection and verification. The application process now includes biometric enrollment, such as fingerprinting, for all applicants. These upgrades align with international standards for secure travel documents, facilitating smoother border

crossings worldwide.

Beyond its technological advancements, the new passport boasts a vibrant and creative design, embodying the government's "One Guyana" theme of cultural celebration and unity.

The Central Immigration and Passport Office is currently reviewing the process for replacing lost or damaged passports. In the meantime, the existing policy remains in effect. The Ministry is also developing an online application system to allow remote applications, reducing



Image of the passport the need for in-person visits and long wait times.

## MUNICIPAL AIRPORTS PLANNED FOR BERBICE AND LETHEM

The government is exploring the possibility of building municipal airports in Berbice and Lethem, similar to the Eugene F. Correia International Airport, to meet growing business demands and improve regional interconnectivity.

President Dr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali emphasised the need for a municipal airport in Berbice to support the region's expanding economic landscape during a recent appearance on

the Energy Perspectives Podcast. He explained that these potential investments aim to address a significant infrastructure gap.

Dr. Ali highlighted several major developments unfolding in Berbice, including the construction of the Palmyra Multi-purpose Stadium, the new four-lane Berbice River Bridge, and the establishment of the Berbice Deep Water Port. **"We have plans of bringing the second gas development to**

**Berbice, Region Six. That is going to be massive. That will have a number of off-takers, maybe a huge industrial zone. We will have massive investments. We'll have power plants, so that will create a whole ecosystem by itself,"** he explained. He also noted the ongoing collaboration between Guyana and Suriname for the construction of a bridge across the Corentyne River.

The President also reiterated the



A plane taking off from the Lethem airstrip

government's plan to improve connectivity with Brazil through several paved road projects and stressed the potential of

Lethem. **"We have to develop another municipal airport in Lethem because there is tremendous potential there."**

Regarding Linden, President Ali said the government is investing in transforming the mining town into a service hub for mining, forestry, and bauxite.

He expressed enthusiasm about the numerous infrastructural projects underway across all regions of Guyana, aimed at boosting economic expansion, connectivity, and agricultural yield.

President Dr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali has announced that all of Guyana's ports-of-entry will be equipped with world-class scanners by the end of 2025. This initiative is part of the government's broader push to digitise immigration services and is being implemented in partnership with the United States.

Speaking on an episode of the Energy Perspective Podcast, President Ali explained that the scanner installation programme will require legislative amendments, including stringent penalties for security breaches, which will be handled through the Ministry of Legal Affairs.

The scanner initiative complements the ongoing rollout of electronic gates (e-gates)

## WORLD-CLASS SCANNERS FOR ALL GUYANA'S PORTS-OF-ENTRY



The Cheddi Jagan International Airport is one of Guyana's ports of entry

at the Cheddi Jagan International Airport (CJIA). These e-gates, currently in the testing phase, promise to revolutionise travel by offering faster check-

in times, smoother security screenings, and a more convenient overall experience for passengers.

President Ali the

importance of public education and awareness programmes to familiarise travellers with the new e-gate process. **"It also requires our human**

**asset, and I had a discussion with Ramesh (Ghir), the CEO (of CJIA) to be more proactive in educating, otherwise, people can be frustrated,"** he said.

He reiterated the government's vision of a system that ensures accountability and transparency, highlighting the investment in technological solutions to eliminate human bias. **"We want to build systems that work, systems that are modern, systems that add to accountability and transparency,**

**and systems that enable us to drive the economy forward,"** the President stated.

In line with the government's digital transformation agenda, the Ministry of Home Affairs is also working to introduce an online application system for Guyanese passports.

This will streamline the application process and reduce wait times for citizens.

# GAS-TO-ENERGY PROJECT DISPUTE HEADS TO NEXT STAGE

A dispute regarding Guyana's landmark 300 MW Gas-to-Energy (GTE) project has moved to the next stage of its resolution process. The government and the contractor, Lindsayca/CH4, initially referred the matter to the Dispute Avoidance and Adjudication Board (DAAB) on September 19, 2024. The DAAB issued its ruling on January 31, 2025.

While the specifics of the DAAB's ruling remain confidential due to agreed-upon rules,

both parties now have 28 days to decide whether to refer the decision, or any part of it, to arbitration. This arbitration process would represent the next step in resolving the dispute.

The government, in a press release has indicated that it will consult with its partners, including ExxonMobil, which executed certain aspects of the project on the government's behalf. Legal and technical advisors will also be involved in determining the best path forward.

Despite the ongoing dispute, the government reiterated its commitment to completing the GTE project as quickly as possible, adhering to contractual specifications. The project is crucial for bringing the power plant and the Natural Gas Liquids (NGL) plant into operation, delivering significant benefits to the Guyanese people.

The government emphasised the project's potential to double the country's



The project is crucial for doubling the country's electricity generating capacity

electricity generating capacity, meeting the rising demand and cutting electricity costs for consumers by an estimated 50 percent. This reduction in energy costs is expected to stimulate industrial growth, enhance the

competitiveness of the manufacturing and other energy-intensive sectors, and create numerous employment and entrepreneurial opportunities.

Beyond electricity generation, the GTE project promises to lower the cost of LPG cooking gas for both households and businesses. It also aims to achieve domestic self-sufficiency in LPG, with a substantial surplus available for export. This will not only reduce foreign currency expenditures on imports but also generate export revenue, strengthening the country's balance of payments and bringing broader macroeconomic benefits.

# ONDERNEEMING SOLAR FARM PROJECT AHEAD OF SCHEDULE

Construction of the large-scale solar farm at Onderneeming is progressing rapidly, with the contractor aiming for completion ahead of the December deadline. This initiative, under the Guyana Utility Scale Solar Photovoltaic (GUYSOL) programme, promises significant benefits for Region Two, providing clean energy to homes, businesses, and communities.

Programme Coordinator Amir Dillawar provided an update during a recent site visit, noting substantial progress in civil works, including site clearing, levelling, and near completion of internal road construction. The 15-

acre site, previously lightly forested, required two months of clearing before construction could begin.

Currently, the project is in the pile driving phase, with nearly 1,000 of the required 3,000+ piles already driven. Dillawar explained that pile driving is a 24/7 operation, with over 100 piles being driven daily. Installation of the mounting structure has begun, and all equipment, including solar panels, has arrived in Guyana for installation.

The Onderneeming site will generate five megawatts of power, connecting with a smaller three-megawatt plant with battery systems

in Charity. Together, these plants will provide eight megawatts of solar photovoltaic power to the



Ongoing work on the mega solar farm at Onderneeming

Pomeroon-Supenaam region. Dillawar emphasised that this is the largest and most advanced solar farm

project in Essequibo. He expressed optimism for completion by mid-year, well ahead

of the contractual deadline. "They are pushing very hard to finish ahead of the schedule," Dillawar

assured.

Kesh Nandlall, Head of the Executive Management Committee of the Guyana Power and Light Inc., (GPL), explained that the Essequibo region's peak demand is about 10 megawatts, making this project a significant boost to generation capacity. GPL is also adding three 1.6 MW generators within the next three to six months and two 1.5 MW Caterpillar generators within the next two weeks.

The GUYSOL programme also includes training initiatives, with 50 women to be trained in solar PV installation and maintenance through a paid apprenticeship

programme, and 20 other individuals to be trained in renewable energy management and technology. The project has already provided employment opportunities for local women, including Denise Tull, a mother of four, who expressed her pride in being part of the project and the positive impact it has on her family.

This solar farm is a key milestone in Guyana's transition to a greener future, aligning with the government's Low Carbon Development Strategy 2030, which promotes the use of natural resources while protecting Guyana's forests.



Residents with their tank

Residents of the Prime Minister with Responsibility for Information and Public Affairs, Kwame McCoy, addresses long-standing water access challenges in these communities. Previously, residents relied on rainfall and often had to fetch water from creeks, a

particularly difficult task during dry periods. The new tanks have been described as a "blessing" by many, significantly easing their daily struggles. Pensioner Clement Hackett described the daily hardship of water collection, noting the community's dependence on rainfall and the arduous task of fetching water from the creek. "So now when we get rain, this here [the tank] will assist in giving us more water, so we are thankful for it," he shared.

# MOBLISSA AND LONG CREEK RESIDENTS BENEFIT FROM NEW WATER TANKS

His sentiments were echoed by other residents, including pensioners, single mothers, caretakers, and business owners. Michael Hernandez, who lives miles from the nearest water source, expressed his gratitude, explaining the challenges of living near a very small creek. "In that area there [where we live], we have a very small creek so the black tank will benefit us [a lot]," he said.

Single mother of two, Bernadine Debiden, explained the difficulty of accessing water for her family. "For me to get water I have to go till by the creek and it's a good way... it's a great help because I'm a single mom. I have two kids and the water problem is really hard so the tank will come in good use," she told DPI.

Local farmers also welcomed the initiative, recognising the potential for increased agricultural productivity. "We are thankful for the tank," said Khamwatie Manbodh. "We are thankful for every little assistance

we are getting as farmers. We need this boost." Elizabeth Miguel, a farmer for 10 years, also expressed her appreciation for the timely assistance.

During the distribution, Minister McCoy emphasised the government's commitment to improving citizens' access to essential services.

To date, over 100 households along the highway have benefited from the distribution of water tanks.

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## GUYANESE BUSINESSES SECURED US\$743M IN OIL AND GAS CONTRACTS IN 2024

Guyanese businesses are reaping substantial rewards from the oil and gas industry's supply chain, with US\$743 million spent on local suppliers in 2024, according to Finance Minister Dr. Ashni Singh. This dispels initial concerns that the Local Content Act might discourage foreign investment.

Dr. Singh, during his budget presentation, revealed that this US\$743 million expenditure encompassed procurement, employment, and skills development for Guyanese nationals. Of that total, an estimated US\$612 million was spent within the 40 designated service

areas outlined in the Local Content Act. Significant spending included US\$92 million on construction, US\$88 million on laydown yard facilities, US\$34 million on accommodation, and US\$26 million on ground transportation. This brings the total procurement value from Guyanese companies and individuals to over US\$1.5 billion since the Act's implementation in 2021. The remaining US\$131 million supported local employment and training initiatives.

The Local Content Act has proven instrumental in prioritising the use of Guyanese products and services while ensuring local workforce

development. The Local Content Secretariat's reports show a steady increase in investment within the 40 designated sectors, rising from US\$440 million in 2022 to US\$532 million in 2023, and now US\$612 million in 2024. This growth is reflected in the over 1,000 Guyanese businesses registered in the Local Content Register, the official database for verifying eligible suppliers to the petroleum sector.

Local capacity has expanded significantly, particularly in fabrication services. The ongoing development of a fabrication workshop at the Vreed-en-Hoop Shorebase, which commissioned its

first phase in January 2024, will enable local manufacturing of key industry components. Notably, three Guyanese firms are set to provide fabrication services for the construction of the Jaguar FPSO. Local machining suppliers have also begun producing premium downhole drilling accessories.

While the Act designates 40 specific service areas, it doesn't limit Guyanese businesses to those sectors. Locals have successfully expanded into areas such as offshore painting, offshore construction, and GIS services.

Dr. Martin Pertab, Director of the Local



*The Local Content Act has proven instrumental in prioritising the use of Guyanese products and services while ensuring local workforce development*

Content Secretariat, emphasised the impact of these developments: **"The figures speak for themselves; Guyanese businesses are no longer on the periphery of the oil and gas sector, but are firmly embedded within its supply chain."**

Continued investment in skills development, infrastructure, and service capabilities ensures that Guyana's local content framework continues to evolve, creating long-term opportunities for its people beyond revenue generation.

## GOVT REAFFIRMS TRANSPARENCY IN OIL BLOCK LICENCING PROCESS

The government has reaffirmed its commitment to transparency in the ongoing oil block licencing process, following recent media reports suggesting a lack of information sharing. The government launched a licencing round for open acreage in 2022, making fiscal terms, technical and financial requirements, and draft Petroleum Agreements (PSAs) publicly available to potential bidders.



The bidding process, which included blocks in both deep and shallow waters, resulted in eight

blocks receiving bids. These bids underwent a rigorous review, adhering to international

best practices and the criteria outlined in the bid round documents. The most sustainable and responsive bidders were then shortlisted and engaged, with this information being made public.

The government in a press release issued by the Ministry of Natural Resources refuted claims of secrecy surrounding the process, asserting that it has been transparent and included ongoing public engagement. They

clarified that the most substantially responsive bidders have been publicly announced, and the process is currently in its final stages, with formal awards expected soon. A press event will be held to mark the signing of the PSAs, ensuring continued public awareness.

While the process is still underway for all blocks, the government anticipates completing and signing at least four PSAs in 2025. These include blocks S4

(awarded to a consortium of TotalEnergies, Qatar Energy, and Petronas), S5 and S10 (awarded to International Group Investment Inc.), and S7 (awarded to Cybele Energy).

The government acknowledges the significant public interest in the oil and gas sector and reiterated its dedication to developing the industry transparently and for the benefit of all Guyanese. They encourage the public to visit their website (<https://petroleum.gov.gy/>) for further updates and information.

Minister of Public Works, Bishop Juan Edghill, has reassured employees of the Demerara Harbour Bridge Corporation (DHBC) that their jobs are secure when the new Demerara River Bridge becomes operational. Addressing concerns raised by Opposition

## DHB EMPLOYEES WILL NOT LOSE THEIR JOBS WHEN NEW BRIDGE COMES INTO OPERATION

MP David Patterson in Parliament, Minister Edghill emphasised the government's commitment to its employees. **"This caring government**

**will not throw any of them to the curb because of a new bridge,"** he affirmed.

Minister Edghill confirmed that he had already spoken with DHBC employees about the matter earlier this year, highlighting the valuable skills, particularly welding expertise, possessed by the corporation's staff. He explained that their services will continue to be needed, and that relocation and repurposing of the existing bridge will involve their expertise. He stated

that the government will engage with the workers and their union at the appropriate time to ensure a smooth transition.

In other bridge-related news, the government announced the elimination of tolls at the Berbice Bridge and the Wismar/Mackenzie Bridge in 2025. To facilitate this change, subsidies for the privately owned Berbice Bridge will increase significantly, from \$215.2 million in 2024 to \$1.015 billion in the 2025 budget. Minister Edghill clarified that

this increased allocation accounts for projected traffic growth and the shift to a toll-free system, and is not related to any increase in tolls. He emphasised that the government is keeping faith with the people of Guyana by maintaining the current toll rates.

The Berbice Bridge currently sees an average of 400,000 vehicle crossings monthly, totalling approximately 4.4 million annually, with a projected increase of 2.84%.

The government has allocated \$450 million for the maintenance of the

existing DHB, including the procurement of anchor chains, deck plates, a patrol boat, post rehabilitation, and dredging works.

Minister Edghill dismissed concerns that the bridge would become obsolete, stating that it will be repurposed and moved to another location when necessary. **"The Demerara Harbour Bridge will not be scrap iron,"** he asserted, emphasising that the maintenance investment ensures the bridge remains functional for future use.



*DHB employees will not lose their jobs when new bridge comes into operation*

## ONDERNEEMING CHILDREN GET STATE-OF-THE-ART SCHOOL

A new \$154 million primary school has been commissioned in Onderneeming, Region Two. The project, funded by the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) and the government under the Basic Needs Trust Fund 10th Programme, was awarded to Builders Hardware and General Supplies, with E & A Consultants Incorporated as consultant.

Minister of Education, Priya Manickchand, along with Senior Minister Dr. Ashni Singh, Regional Chairperson Vilma De Silva, and CDB President Daniel Best, officiated



The commissioning of the new school

the ribbon-cutting and plaque unveiling ceremony.

Minister Manickchand highlighted Guyana's historical strength in literacy and the government's renewed commitment to universal education, especially with the

country's new wealth. She emphasized the ongoing investment in schools and dormitories to improve access to quality education and the importance of parental involvement. Teacher training, she added, remains a key priority. Senior Minister Singh reiterated the

government's dedication to education, calling it the most important investment. He underscored President Ali's commitment to secondary school completion for all Guyanese children and highlighted the expansion of secondary schools, the construction of new primary and nursery schools in underserved areas, and the aggressive rollout of special needs education programs. He also noted the positive impact of the government's cash grant initiative for schoolchildren.

CDB President Best called the school's opening a significant

milestone and a testament to President Ali's commitment to human capital investment. He emphasised education as the most effective tool for poverty reduction and national development. **"This is what development is all about—ensuring**

**children have opportunities,"** he stated.

Regional Chairperson De Silva expressed her delight with the new school and noted the significant transformation underway in Region Two across various sectors.



Inside the new facility

## COTTON FIELD SECONDARY SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION BREAKS GROUND ON ESSEQUIBO COAST

Minister of Education, Priya Manickchand, officially launched the construction of the new Cotton Field Secondary School on the Essequibo Coast on February 12, 2025. This significant investment in education infrastructure underscores the government's commitment to modernising the country's learning environment.

The project, awarded to Builders Hardware, General Supplies, and Construction through the National Procurement and Tender Administration Board

in accordance with the Public Procurement Act, represents a G\$1,798,137,760 investment. The new school will feature modern classrooms, administrative offices, sports facilities, and other essential amenities designed to provide a well-rounded educational experience for students in Cotton Field and surrounding areas.

During the groundbreaking ceremony, Minister Manickchand emphasised the importance of investing in education for Guyana's future. She

stressed the vital role of community involvement in the project, urging parents, community members, and teachers to actively monitor the



The ground breaking for the construction of Cotton Field Secondary School

construction progress. **"This is your school. This is our school.**

**And I expect your full involvement,"** she stated. Minister Manickchand encouraged stakeholders to observe the posted

bills and ensure the project meets the desired quality and timeline.

Addressing the students directly, Minister Manickchand expressed her hopes for their success. **"I want you to give your best. I want you to do your best,"** she urged. She highlighted the future benefits of the new school, including trained teachers, well-equipped labs, and conducive learning spaces.

The construction of the Cotton Field Secondary School is expected to be completed within 18 months, targeting August 2026. A 12-month defects liability period will follow completion. G\$179,813,776 has

been allocated for the project's mobilisation phase, covering site preparation and material procurement.

The Ministry of Education and the Government of Guyana are dedicated to expanding and modernising the education system, ensuring that Guyanese children have access to high-quality facilities that support their academic and personal development. The Cotton Field Secondary School project is a testament to this commitment, contributing to the nation's sustainable growth and development.

## US\$4.9M STATE-OF-THE-ART HEALTH SCIENCES FACULTY BUILDING TAKES SHAPE AT UG



Construction advancing on the new Faculty of Health Science

Construction is progressing on a new, state-of-the-art Faculty of Health Sciences building at the University of

Guyana's Turkeyen Campus. Funded by the World Bank and being constructed by Shandong Hi-Speed Dejian Group Co. Ltd.,

the facility represents a significant investment in Guyana's health education infrastructure.

The sod-turning ceremony took place in November 2023, with construction expected to be completed within 15 months.

The modern facility is designed to address the growing demand for high-quality health education and research opportunities in Guyana. It will provide an enhanced learning environment for students, incorporating

the latest educational technology to promote interactive learning. Key features of the new building include a Microbiology Laboratory with a wet prep room, an Anatomy Laboratory, a Haematological/Biochemistry Laboratory, a Research Laboratory, a Skills Laboratory, and eight classrooms.

Minister of Education, Priya Manickchand, had emphasised the project's importance in enhancing the education sector. She

noted that the expansion will not only provide more comfortable accommodation for current medical students, but also allow for increased enrollment, enabling more eligible students to pursue medical degrees. Minister Manickchand highlighted the potential for improved healthcare services in hinterland communities, as the expanded programme will lead to more doctors being trained annually.

Minister of Health, Dr. Frank

Anthony, had also welcomed the project, aligning it with the Ministry of Health's broader efforts to transform Guyana's health sector. He stated that the increased student intake at the College of Medical Sciences will translate to a greater number of medically trained professionals entering the healthcare system, strengthening its capacity to serve the Guyanese population.

# Guyana's coconut sector flourishes: 2,000 acres to be cultivated in 2025

WITH coconut proving to be one of the most profitable crops in Guyana and globally, Ricky Roopchand, Managing Director of Hope Coconut Industry, has announced a significant milestone for the local coconut industry. One of the first batches of Brazilian Green Dwarf seedlings, imported into Guyana in December 2022, is set to begin production this year, marking a major step forward in the country's agricultural development.

Roopchand expressed satisfaction with the positive feedback received from coconut farmers who have planted the Brazilian Green Dwarf Coconut and eagerly anticipate its production. Due to overwhelming demand, the nurseries are currently out of stock of these high-yielding seedlings. As a result, additional seed nuts have been ordered from Brazil and are expected to arrive in April 2025 to replenish the nurseries.

"Coconut is part of the food chain, and all of us are interconnected, regardless of the sector we work in. Whether it is energy, food production, or oil and gas, we must all contribute to our respective fields. Farmers in Guyana are now in a prime position to take advantage of the opportunities provided by the government," Roopchand stated.

While acknowledging the economic



Coconut farmers

benefits of the oil industry, Roopchand emphasised the importance of agriculture as a sustainable source of income. "Oil is flowing now, but we cannot solely depend on it, as it is a finite resource. Agriculture, on the other hand, is here to stay, and it is satisfying to see our progress in this field," he added.

The coconut industry has already achieved its goal of cultivating 1,000 acres in 2024. Looking ahead to 2025, Roopchand revealed plans to expand production to 2,000 acres to meet the increasing demand for high-yielding co-

conuts. To support this expansion, the Ministry of Agriculture, the National Agricultural Research and Extension Institute (NAREI), and Hope Estate are collaborating to import additional seed nuts from overseas.

Currently, Guyana faces a limited supply of seed nuts due to the high demand for coconut water. Roopchand disclosed that efforts are underway to source approximately 120,000 seed nuts, both locally and internationally, to meet industry needs. "To produce 100,000 seedlings for 2025, spanning the allo-

cated 2,000 acres of land, we need 120,000 seed nuts to account for a 20 percent loss after germination," he explained.

Most of these seed nuts will be sourced from Brazil, as the Brazilian Green Dwarf Coconut is in high demand and has performed exceptionally well under Guyana's climatic conditions.

The introduction of the Brazilian Green Dwarf Coconut is expected to drive intensive research and significantly impact the local coconut industry. This was highlighted by Minister of Agriculture Zulfikar Mustapha, Country Representative for the Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI) Jhaman Kundun, and General Manager of Hope Estate, Ricky Roopchand, in their discussion.

Minister Mustapha underscored the growing significance of coconut cultivation, stating that the crop has become increasingly lucrative on the global market. He described the latest advancements as a potential "game changer" for the industry, especially given the current trajectory of the non-traditional agricultural sector in Guyana.

The minister further elaborated on the benefits of the Brazilian Green Dwarf Coconut, describing it as a "three-year, high-breed coconut."



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

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

Key priorities of the WGC include:

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

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



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

If you have any questions feel free to get in touch:  
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GROCERY

|   |   |   |
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| Kuroro Panko 227g 麵包糠<br>Reg \$4.99<br><b>1.99 ea</b>             | UPC Spaghetti Sauce 義大利麵醬<br>Reg \$3.99<br><b>3.99 ea</b>             | Super Q Cornstarch Sticks 玉米粉<br>Reg \$1.99<br><b>1.29 ea</b>       |
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RESTAURANT SPECIAL

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| Green Onion 蔥<br><b>28.00 case</b>               | Chinese Carrot 中國紅蘿蔔<br><b>30.00 case</b>                       | Peled Garlic 蒜頭<br><b>30.00 case</b>                              | Green Leaf Lettuce 青生菜<br><b>30.00 case</b>        | Lemon 檸檬<br><b>38.00 case</b>                                  |
| Frozen Panko Bata Fillet 魚排<br><b>65.00 case</b> | Headless White Shrimp 白蝦<br><b>190.00 case</b>                  | Head On Shrimp 有頭蝦<br><b>115.00 case</b>                          | Extra Large Egg 特大蛋<br><b>58.99 case</b>           | Heinz Tomato Ketchup 番茄醬<br><b>59.99 case</b>                  |
| E-Pack Wrap \$14 包裝紙<br><b>20.00 case</b>        | Convenience Rolls 10.5x15 包裝紙<br><b>15.99 case</b>              | Clear Garbage Bags 35x47 X-Strong 100PCS 垃圾袋<br><b>20.99 case</b> | Squid Brand Fish Sauce 和風魚露<br><b>29.99 case</b>   | ADM All Purpose Flour 麵粉<br><b>19.99 bag</b>                   |
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| Frozen Fresh Pompano 冰鮮美鯧<br>Reg \$3.99<br><b>4.99 lb</b>        | Frozen Fresh Headless White Shrimp 冰鮮白蝦<br>Reg \$7.99<br><b>6.99 lb</b> | Fresh Frozen Lobster 新鮮大龍蝦<br>Reg \$3.99<br><b>3.99 lb</b> |

# THREE NEW SCHOOLS RISE

Construction is underway for three new secondary schools in Regions One, Three, and Nine, representing a significant investment in Guyana's educational infrastructure. These projects will provide improved access to education for approximately 1,650 students and underscore the government's commitment to ensuring that every child has the opportunity to reach their full potential.

## WARAMURI SECONDARY, REGION ONE

Construction is underway for the new Waramuri Secondary School, a \$326 million investment that will provide 350 students with access to quality education closer to home. The facility will feature modern classrooms, science labs, a library, and sports facilities.



## TUSCHEN SECONDARY, REGION THREE

The \$864.7 million Tuschen Secondary School is taking shape, promising to accommodate over 800 students. This one-flat facility will include 24 classrooms, labs, a TVET center, a canteen, a multi-purpose hall, and outdoor recreation areas.



## KARASABAI SECONDARY, REGION NINE

The largest of the three projects, the \$1.7 billion Karasabai Secondary School will serve approximately 500 students and include a dormitory. The facility will house a main teaching block, modern science labs, TVET centers, a combined home economics and cafeteria area, teachers' quarters, and an outdoor forecourt.



*The government aims to ensure that every child has access to quality secondary education, and these new schools are a crucial step towards achieving that goal. The Ministry of Education is spearheading these projects as part of an effort to expand secondary education opportunities in historically underserved areas. These projects not only provide educational opportunities but also create jobs and stimulate local economies.*

# ONE GUYANA, MANY TALENTS! - GUYANA'S YOUNG STARS LIGHT UP THE STAGE



The National Cultural Centre buzzed with excitement as children from across the nation showcased their talents in the finals of the National Children's Mashramani Competitions 2025. The theme, "Expressing Our Culture and Creativity as One Guyana," came to life through dynamic performances.

Young performers captivated audiences with vibrant dances, energetic calypso, and creative costumes, each reflecting Guyana's rich heritage. Handcrafted costumes and intricate designs highlighted the diversity and artistry of Guyanese culture. The lively atmosphere was filled with cheers and applause, celebrating the children's hard work and dedication.



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Lawrence Ave. E.

**Store Hours**  
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Saturday 9 am to 9 pm  
Sunday 9 am to 7 pm

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Danforth Food Market  
1225 Dundas St.  
Dixie & Dundas  
Mississauga  
905-949-9990  
Cawthra Rd.  
Dundas St. E.  
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Fri.-Sat. 9 am to 9 pm  
Sunday 9 am to 6 pm

Stafford Dr.  
Danforth Food Market  
144 Kennedy Road  
South  
289-298-0399  
Kennedy Rd. South  
Glidden Rd.  
Rutherford Rd. South

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

# DIAMOND TO BUZZ BEE DAM HIGHWAY NEARING COMPLETION; PRESIDENT ALI URGES FASTER PACE



President Ali engaging the supervising engineers

The Diamond to Buzz Bee Dam highway project is rapidly approaching completion, with President Dr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali urging contractors to accelerate their work to meet the March deadline. During a site visit, President Ali

received an update from engineers overseeing the project and emphasised that no extensions will be granted.

**“We have no intention of having these projects extend beyond the completion date,”** the

President stated. This section of the highway represents the third phase of the larger project, following the Mandela to Eccles and Eccles to Diamond segments. It will create a crucial link between Georgetown and Soesdyke, offering commuters alternative routes to Linden via the Soesdyke/Linden Highway and to the Cheddi Jagan International Airport in Timehri.

The Diamond to Buzz Bee Dam project, divided into six lots, involves the construction of over 30 reinforced concrete bridges, 8.6 kilometers of reinforced

concrete highway, and two roundabouts. The project has a total contract value of nearly \$11 billion and is being executed by several contractors, including GuyAmerica Construction, VALS Construction, China

Railway First Group Co. Ltd, NABI, and H. Nauth and Sons Contracting Services.

The larger highway project continues beyond Buzz Bee Dam, with contracts of \$80.4 billion awarded for the Buzz Bee Dam to Land of Canaan

section and \$40.5 billion for the Land of Canaan to Soesdyke segment.

President Ali instructed contractors working on the Buzz Bee Dam to Land of Canaan extension to establish a separate alignment for material transport. This measure aims to protect the newly completed Diamond to Buzz Bee Dam roadway from unnecessary wear and tear.

Budget 2025 has allocated funding for further road expansion projects, including the continuation of the Linden to Mabura Road and the expansion of the Schoonord to Crane Highway.



Ongoing roadwork at the Diamond to Buzz Bee Dam Highway

# WORK PROGRESSING ON GOVT OFFICE COMPLEX

Construction of the new Government Office Complex (GOC) at Haags Bosch, Eccles, Region Four, has reached 10% physical completion, according to a project update released on February 3, 2025 by the Ministry of Public Works. While the project is in its foundational stages, some delays in design and procurement have been encountered.



The project is in its foundational stages

The \$15.87 billion design-build contract, awarded in December 2022, will result in four twelve-story office towers capable

of accommodating approximately 6,000 government employees. The complex will also feature a helipad meeting international standards

and a Central Utilities Building housing backup power generation, water treatment, and ICT systems. The project aims to consolidate

government offices, enhance operational efficiency, and showcase Guyana’s commitment to sustainability through energy-efficient design and EDGE certification.

Construction commenced on February 23, 2024, and is scheduled for completion by August 24, 2026. While 34% of the project timeline has elapsed, several key milestones have been achieved. Legal and preliminary activities are complete, master plan and concept designs are finalised, and foundation and

structural designs are in place. Geotechnical investigations for three of the four towers are complete, with the fourth ongoing. Land grubbing and sand filling have also been finished.

Currently, work is progressing on several fronts. Piles and structural steel procurement are underway. For the helipad, 50 piles are on-site. The Central Utilities Building has seen the completion of all pile installations, and foundation civil works have begun. For Towers

1 and 2, a combined 121 piles are on-site, and pile installation for Tower 2 has commenced.

Despite these advancements, the project faces challenges. Design packages for MEP (Mechanical, Electrical, and Plumbing), Fire Life Safety, and External Works are lagging, and procurement delays are impacting certain project components. The project update indicates that despite these challenges, work is progressing on the foundational stages of the complex.

# GOVT TO ASSIST AUBREY BARKER RESIDENTS WITH RELOCATION FOR ROAD EXPANSION PROJECT

The expansion of Aubrey Barker Road from two to four lanes has encountered a hurdle as homes built on government reserves are obstructing progress. Minister of Public Works, Bishop Juan Edghill, met with the affected homeowners

and confirmed that none has legal titles or transport for the land. He assured residents that the government will work closely with them to minimise disruption while ensuring the project’s completion.

Residents were advised that if they do

not have a pending housing application, they will need to apply. The government, in collaboration with the Ministry of Housing and Water, will then provide support for their relocation.

Minister Edghill told the Department of Public Information (DPI) that all affected residents have expressed their willingness to cooperate with the government. **“All of the residents that we have engaged are willing and ready to work with the government on finding a solution without exception. All, without exception,”** he

emphasised. He also noted that an individual, later identified as not being part of the affected group, attempted to create conflict during the engagement.

Minister Edghill stressed the importance of the road expansion project, stating, **“This Aubrey Barker Street expansion will extend all the way to Ogle and become a crucial thoroughfare for improving traffic flow. There is also a major housing development at the back of Cummings Lodge.”** He reassured the public that despite the rapid infrastructure development, the well-



Residents of Aubrey Barker Road

being of Guyanese citizens remains a priority.

Stall owners operating along the roadway were also informed of their upcoming relocation. A section of the government reserve

currently used for storage will be upgraded into a tarmac to accommodate the displaced vendors, similar to the relocation process used in Plaisance.



Minister of Public Works, Bishop Juan Edghill and engineers enaaaina residents of Aubrey Barker Road

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# \$11.4B WEST DEMERARA HOSPITAL TO DELIVER ADVANCED CARE CLOSER TO HOME



President Ali addressing the sod-turning ceremony

A groundbreaking ceremony was held for a new \$11.4 billion state-of-the-art hospital in Region Three, marking a significant advancement in healthcare for residents of the West Demerara area. President Dr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali officiated the event, emphasising the project's importance in improving the quality

of life and prosperity for all Guyanese.

The new facility will replace the existing 79-year-old West Demerara Regional Hospital and offer a comprehensive range of services previously unavailable in the region. With over 150 beds, the hospital will feature four operating theatres, intensive care units (ICUs) for adults, and specialised neonatal and pediatric ICUs. Advanced diagnostic capabilities, including MRI and CT scans, will also be available on-site. Wards will be designed with patient privacy in mind.

President Ali highlighted the comprehensive nature of the new hospital, noting the

inclusion of outpatient clinics specialising in endoscopy, ear, nose, and throat, dermatology,



The turning of the sod for the new hospital

ophthalmology, internal medicine, dialysis, gynecology, ECG, ultrasound, and cardiology. A dedicated digital imaging department will house the MRI and CT scanners. Currently, residents must travel to Georgetown for these

specialised procedures. Once the new hospital is operational, patients will receive timely

evaluations and life-saving procedures, such as stent replacements, closer to home.

Health Minister Dr. Frank Anthony underscored that these healthcare improvements are not limited to Region

Three. The government has plans to build new hospitals in Regions One, Seven, Eight, and Nine, along with a state-of-the-art Maternal and Child Health institution at Ogle on the East Coast of Demerara and another new hospital in Region Six. Minister Anthony emphasised that the government is exceeding its manifesto promises and fundamentally changing the quality of healthcare

delivery across Guyana.

Regional Chairman Inshan Ayube welcomed the development, noting the rapid growth of Region Three.

The hospital is slated for completion in 2028 and will be constructed by a consortium of China CAMC Engineering CO. Limited (CAMCE) and Sinopharm Int'l (China Sinopharm International Corporation).



An artist's impression of the hospital

# REVISED LAWS OF GUYANA EXPECTED BY MID-YEAR

The revised edition of the Laws of Guyana is expected to be completed by June 2025, according to an update provided by the Regional Law Revision Centre Inc. (RLRC). RLRC Manager/Legislative Publisher, Yolande Dash, met with Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs, Mohabir Anil Nandlall, SC, MP, and members of the Law Revision Commission of Guyana to discuss the ongoing law revision exercise.

The current edition of the Laws of Guyana, known as the Purple Volumes, was published in 2012. The RLRC is currently working on a data capture, law revision, and



The meeting to discuss the ongoing law revision exercise

consolidation project covering the period from 2012 to 2022.

Dash emphasised the importance of the project for Guyana and pledged continued engagement with the local Law Revision Commission to provide guidance and support.

Attorney General Nandlall reiterated the government's commitment to the timely completion of the revised laws while ensuring a thorough review and consolidation



Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs, Mohabir Anil Nandlall, SC, MP, and members of the Law Revision Commission of Guyana

process. He also discussed with Dash the possibility of ongoing training for members of the local Law Revision Commission by the RLRC to ensure continuous revision of the Laws of Guyana.

The Law Reform

Commission of Guyana, established under the Law Revision Act, Cap. 2:02, is responsible for preparing, publishing, and maintaining the Laws of Guyana.

Thirty-nine members of Guyana's security forces and related agencies participated in a week-long training course hosted by the William J. Perry Center for Hemispheric Defense Studies in conjunction with the National Defence Institute (NDI).

# GUYANESE SECURITY OFFICIALS PARTICIPATE IN PERRY CENTER TRAINING COURSE

The course, titled "Security and Defense Policy," was held at the Police Training Centre in Georgetown.

Dr. Randolph Persaud, Director of the NDI, stated that the curriculum covers a broad spectrum of topics crucial to modern security challenges, including civil-military relations, maritime security, crisis management, emerging technology and critical infrastructure protection, human rights, and procurement. The course utilises a variety of learning methods, combining lectures, table-top exercises, and open

discussions to maximise participant engagement.

The course was directed by Dr. David Spencer, with additional instruction provided by Perry Center faculty members Professor Celina Realuyo, retired Colonel Glyne Grannum of Barbados, and Dr. Román D. Ortiz. Dr. Randolph Persaud (NDI) and Lieutenant Colonel Jose Ferreira (Guyana Defence Force - GDF) also contributed as faculty members.

Participants represented a cross-



A graduate receiving their certificate

section of Guyana's security apparatus, including members of the GDF, the Guyana Police Force (GPF), the Customs Anti-

Narcotics Unit (CANU), the Guyana Revenue Authority (GRA), the Prison Service, and the Guyana Fire Service.



Forty security officials complete National Defence Institute training course

## GECOM GETS \$7.3B FOR 2025 ELECTIONS, PLANS EXTENSIVE VOTER EDUCATION AND TRAINING

President Irfaan Ali has delivered a strong message to the management of the Guyana Sugar Corporation (GuySuCo): meet 2025 production targets or face a leadership shakeup.

Speaking during the live broadcast of In the Seat, the President underscored his government's commitment to accountability and reviving the ailing sugar industry, which remains a cornerstone of Guyana's economy.

Acknowledging the significant challenges stemming from years of mismanagement under the previous administration,

President Ali emphasised that underperformance will no longer be tolerated.

**"We sat down with them [GuySuCo management] and supported their investment plan to restore factory efficiency. I made it very clear—if the targets for the 2025 first and second crops are not met, heads will roll,"** the President warned.

The government has allocated billions to modernise the sector, including mechanising production and upgrading facilities. For 2024 alone, \$6 billion was earmarked in the national budget



Approximately 19,000 individuals will be trained to play pivotal roles in the election process

to enhance operational efficiency and improve production. Packaging plants are being built at Albion and Blairmont Estates to shift toward value-added products.

Despite these efforts, the industry faces hurdles tied to the closure of four

sugar estates in 2017 by the previous coalition government, a move that devastated communities and displaced 7,000 workers. The Rose Hall Estate alone lost 2,500 jobs, while closures also affected Blairmont and Albion.

President Ali reiterated that the government's investment in the sector is not merely about economics, but about safeguarding families and communities. **"Revitalising sugar is not just a financial project; it's an economic lifeline for thousands of Guyanese,"** he asserted.

To ensure success, the government plans to bring in technical expertise to address inefficiencies. President Ali emphasised that the administration will support efforts to increase productivity, but there is zero tolerance for continued

underperformance. The ultimatum marks a turning point in the government's strategy to restore GuySuCo's viability. While the administration remains committed to reviving sugar as a vital economic pillar, the President made it clear: failure to deliver results will have serious consequences for management.

This decisive approach signals that the government is unwilling to allow past mismanagement to undermine its efforts to rebuild a stronger, more resilient sugar industry for Guyana.

## DR. JAGDEO ASSERTS NO STATE FUNDS WILL BE USED FOR PPP'S 2025 CAMPAIGN

Dr. Bharrat Jagdeo, General Secretary of the People's Progressive Party (PPP), has firmly dismissed accusations from Volda Lawrence, a member of the PNC/R, that funds approved in the 2025 budget are intended as "slush funds" for the PPP's political campaign.

At a press conference, Dr. Jagdeo made it clear that the PPP will not rely on state funds for its campaign, revealing that the party is already working on a financial framework to independently secure the necessary resources for the upcoming General and Regional Elections.

**"We don't need state funds to fund our political campaign,"** Dr Jagdeo said, directly refuting Lawrence's allegations, adding, **"we are already making plans to raise the funds and ensure all of our campaign materials are in place."**

Lawrence, who had raised concerns in the National Assembly, claimed that the 2025 budget contained large sums earmarked for electoral campaigning, pointing to substantial increases in the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Local Government. She cited

specific increases of \$321 million under programme 402 of the Ministry of Education and \$1 billion under programme 405, as well as a \$300 million increase under programme 131 for the Ministry of Local Government.

Dr. Jagdeo, however, clarified that the funds in question were not for electoral purposes but for critical national projects. He explained that the increase in the Ministry of Education budget would fund important literacy and mathematics interventions and the expansion of the One Guyana Digital School initiative. The \$300



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

million allocated for the Ministry of Local Government, he said, would go toward establishing new landfill sites, not political campaigning.

Dr. Jagdeo stressed

that the allegations are completely baseless. **"If we're promising world-class education, we have to ensure that we can deliver on it. Yet, Volda Lawrence**

**thinks that this is a slush fund."** He added that, the facts don't support that.

The PPP leader also drew a stark contrast between the current government's transparent budgeting process and the previous APNU+AFC coalition's handling of election-related funds. He pointed out that in the lead-up to the 2020 elections, the APNU+AFC coalition spent an astounding \$419.5 billion without parliamentary approval, a clear violation of the constitution.

In contrast, Dr. Jagdeo underscored that the funds approved in the 2025 budget have been thoroughly debated, scrutinised, and approved by the National Assembly.



Former CEO of the Central Housing and Planning Authority Sherwyn Greaves

The People's Progressive Party's (PPP) General Secretary, Dr. Bharrat Jagdeo, issued a stern warning, stressing that the government will not tolerate the reckless vilification of public

office holders for cheap political gain.

Addressing allegations made against several government figures without credible evidence, Dr. Jagdeo condemned such smear campaigns, calling them a deliberate attack on individuals' reputations.

Dr. Jagdeo specifically addressed the resignation of Sherwyn Greaves, the former Chief Executive Officer of the Central Housing and Planning Authority (CHPA), who stepped down citing "personal reasons" after facing online accusations. The allegations centred on Greaves allegedly acquiring property

## GOVT REJECTS RECKLESS VILIFICATION OF PUBLIC OFFICIALS

in New York, with insinuations of violations of the U.S. Foreign Corrupt Practices Act (FCPA).

During his weekly press briefing at Freedom House, Dr. Jagdeo reiterated the government's zero-tolerance stance on corruption in public office. He affirmed that any public official found breaking the law would face consequences, but also pointed out that the government had engaged Greaves, who assured them that all his property

transactions were legal and transparent.

Greaves contributed significantly to the government's goal of allocating 50,000 house lots, helping thousands of families. **"But they want to run him down because they perceive him close to the PPP,"** Dr. Jagdeo said.

Dr. Jagdeo made it clear that the government would not conduct investigations based on baseless social media posts, especially

when they come from individuals with questionable motives.

**"... through innuendos and lies, they gave the impression that there was corruption under the PPP,"** Dr. Jagdeo declared. **"We have established robust systems to safeguard the country's resources,"** he emphasised.

The PPP General Secretary condemned opposition figures for their impulsive and vindictive attacks,

calling out the hypocrisy of those who had been relentless in their public defamation of Greaves, only to feign surprise when he chose to resign.

Dr. Jagdeo emphasised the government's commitment to transparency, integrity, and protecting the reputations of its officials, despite the opposition's continued efforts to destabilise and vilify public servants for political purposes.

# PRESIDENT URGES MILITARY VIGILANCE AHEAD OF UPCOMING ELECTIONS

As Guyana prepares for its General and Regional elections later this year, President Dr. Irfaan Ali, also Commander-in-Chief of

the Armed Forces, has called on the military to remain vigilant against any attempts to disrupt the electoral process.

During the opening of the Annual Officers' Conference at Camp Ayanganna, President Ali emphasised that while no unrest is anticipated, the Defence Force must be ready to act if necessary to uphold stability and protect democracy. He assured that the military's professionalism would be upheld, and members were free to vote according to their conscience.

**"Guyana's**

**democracy depends on free, fair, and peaceful elections,"** President Ali said. **"We will ensure no force—internal or external—will disrupt the will of the people."** He reaffirmed the military's duty to maintain national security, emphasising that elections must occur in an environment free from violence, intimidation, or disruption.

The President's comments come in the wake of the 2020 elections, which were marred by attempts to derail the process, resulting in a five-month

delay before Dr. Ali and the PPP/C took office.

Brigadier Omar Khan, Chief of Defence Staff of the Guyana Defence Force (GDF), also reaffirmed his troops' readiness. In his address, Brigadier Khan stated that the GDF remains vigilant and committed to defending the nation against current and emerging threats. He highlighted the strategic focus for 2025, particularly on integrating combat services and strengthening the GDF's adaptability and agility.

**"The people of Guyana deserve**

**a Defence Force that can serve and defend the nation,"** Brigadier Khan said. Despite challenges, he stated that the Defence Force, remain resolute in our mission to protect Guyana from both internal and external threats, including **"ongoing territorial disputes with our western neighbour."**

The GDF's Annual Officers' Conference, focused on enhancing the force's operational capabilities to better address future challenges and ensure national security.



President Ali greeting the ranks



# AG ACCUSES OPPOSITION OF USING BIOMETRICS DEBATE AS DISTRACTION AHEAD OF 2025 ELECTIONS

Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs, Anil Nandlall, SC, has accused the opposition of using the ongoing biometrics debate as a diversionary tactic, suggesting it is intended to distract from their likely loss in the upcoming 2025 General and Regional Elections.

During his weekly televised programme, *Issues in the News*, AG Nandlall pointed out that despite numerous claims and objections being processed by the Guyana Elections Commission (GECOM), the opposition has failed to lodge any objections,

raising questions about the validity of their frequent complaints over biometric voter identification.

**"Over 4,000 transactions took place in GECOM's most recent claims and objections cycle, and not a single objection came from the opposition,"**

AG Nandlall said, emphasising that this silence contradicts their vocal demands for biometric identification. He questioned why, if the system was so flawed and open to manipulation as they claim, not one objection or claim had



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

been submitted by the opposition.

The opposition has long called for the

introduction of biometric voter identification, citing concerns over voter fraud and alleged

irregularities during the 2020 elections. However, as Nandlall pointed out, they have yet to provide concrete evidence to substantiate these claims.

AG Nandlall suggested that the opposition's calls for biometrics are merely a smokescreen to cover up their weak position ahead of the 2025 elections. **"If the system is so corrupt and easily manipulated, why can't they prove even a single case of fraud? Not one objection despite thousands of transactions — it's clear that their**

**accusations are unfounded."**

He also noted that in January, GECOM's Chairperson, retired Justice Claudette Singh, ruled that making biometric identification a mandatory requirement for voting would be unconstitutional, further reinforcing the legitimacy of the current system.

The attorney general's comments serve to intensify the ongoing political debate over electoral reforms, with both sides preparing for a highly anticipated election year.

# PRESIDENT ALI CHALLENGES TRANSPARENCY INTERNATIONAL'S CORRUPTION RANKING, CITES POLITICAL AGENDAS BEHIND REPORT

President Irfaan Ali has rejected the latest Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) from Transparency International (TI), which ranked Guyana 92nd out of 180 countries with a score of 39 out of 100. Speaking in a live broadcast, Ali criticised the report for lacking empirical evidence and being influenced by a **"jaundiced narrative"** from opposition figures.

The president questioned the objectivity of the CPI, which he argued is based on perceptions rather than concrete data. He pointed to the previous APNU+AFC

administration's tenure, during which, he claimed, illegal actions such as the occupation of office after a no-confidence motion and the unauthorised expenditure of over \$600 billion took place. Despite these issues, the previous government received a higher ranking from TI.

**"They got a higher ranking for that, the worst period in the history of our country. [Now], more persons are ticketed. More persons are prosecuted... but we score less. What nonsense is this?"** President Ali asked.

He further

highlighted that his administration has made progress, citing a 97% project implementation rate compared to the 89% under the former government. He also criticised some of TI's sources, specifically mentioning Fred Collins, a former critic of the government, who had previously filed a lawsuit against the Environmental Protection Agency, and Dr. Rishi Thakur, a former member of the AFC who later joined APNU.

**"These are the persons who the perception indicators are relying**

**on,"** the president said. He questioned how the previous administration, which he claimed had attempted to conceal a US\$18 million signing bonus from ExxonMobil, could receive a higher CPI ranking.

While affirming his government's commitment to transparency and accountability, President Ali contrasted the TI report with positive assessments from other international bodies.

He emphasised that while his government is committed to transparency, TI's perception-based report contrasts with positive



President Dr. Irfaan Ali

assessments from other international bodies. President Ali pointed to awards such as the Caribbean Financial Action Task Force's Best Regional AML/CFT Case Award, the UNFCCC's Champion of Transparency Award, and the IMF's

commendations for Guyana's improved fiscal transparency. **"These are based on facts, not perceptions,"** he said, stressing that his government values evidence-based assessments, especially with the 2025 general elections approaching.

# 15,000 FAMILIES TO GET HOUSE LOTS BY MID-2025

The government has announced plans to allocate over 15,000 house lots and develop 20 new housing areas across Guyana by June 2025. Housing Minister Collin Croal made the announcement during his presentation at the 2025 budget debate in the National Assembly, emphasising the government's commitment to homeownership for Guyanese families.

**"We will allocate an additional – a minimum of 25,000 house lots this year**

**of which over 15,000 will be accomplished before June of this year... Every house lot distributed represents the hope for a family,"** Minister Croal stated.

The new housing areas will be spread across all the administrative regions excepting Region Eight and will include essential amenities such as roads, recreational spaces, drainage, and electricity. The initiative aims to address the significant demand for housing lots, with a particular focus on the

East Coast of Demerara in Region Four, where the government plans to construct at least 1,000 houses this year.

This ambitious plan is part of a larger investment in Guyana's housing sector, which has totalled \$240 billion over the past four years. Minister Croal highlighted the government's responsible management of budgetary allocations, stating, **"We have laid a solid foundation from 2020 to 2024 by being prudent stewards of the**



An aerial view of the new Two Friends Phase II housing development, East Coast Demerara

**budgetary allocations made to the ministry of housing and water."**

Since August 2020,

the government has distributed over 40,000 residential house lots to families across various income brackets, with

over 500 allocated already in 2025. This progress puts the government on track to exceed its 50,000-house lot target by the end of 2025.

Since 2020, 85 new and existing housing areas have been developed in locations such as Balthyock, Amelia's Ward, Charity, Yarrowkabra, and Palmyra. The government has earmarked \$112.6 billion to further advance developments in the housing sector, underscoring its dedication to providing affordable and sustainable housing for all Guyanese.

## LINDEN RESIDENTS RECEIVE LAND TITLES AND SALE AGREEMENTS, MOVING CLOSER TO HOMEOWNERSHIP

Over 275 Linden residents in Region Ten are now closer to owning their own homes after receiving land titles and sale agreements. A two-day outreach at the Watooka Guest House saw 150 residents receive certificates of title and 125 receive agreements of sale.

The distribution was led by Minister of Housing and Water, Collin Croal, and Minister within the ministry, Susan Rodrigues. The recipients were allocated lands at Amelia's Ward Phase Four/Conception Fitz Hope, a



A land title being presented to a recipient

scheme where over 400 allocations have been made.

The government is making significant investments in the area, including a \$127.5 million injection in 2024 for road construction

to improve access. Lot identification is also currently underway.

Minister Croal emphasised the significance of this step, stating that it fast-tracks the residents' journey toward homeownership

and provides stability for their families. **"We are now at a point where you, your family and children have somewhere that you can call your own... Your advancement in**

**your future therefore starts now,"** he said. He reaffirmed the government's commitment to improving the standard of living for all citizens.

Minister Rodrigues

announced that the region will see further housing developments this year as the government works to acquire more land to meet the housing demand. This includes the regularisation of at least 800 lots in areas such as Siberian, Silver Hill, Coomacka, New Harden, West Watooka, Plantation Wismar, Blocks 'E' and 'F' of Canvas City, Green Valley Block 'F', Amelia's Ward Block 43, and Ituni.



A land title being presented to a recipient

## SINGLE MOTHER OF FIVE RECEIVES NEW HOME THROUGH MEN ON MISSION INITIATIVE

Shelly Doodnauth, a single mother of five from Angoy's Avenue, New Amsterdam, has received a new, furnished three-bedroom home, thanks to the President Dr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali's Men on Mission (MoM) initiative.

Doodnauth, a part-time worker, had been struggling to maintain

her previous home, which had fallen into disrepair and become unsafe for her family. She expressed immense relief that her children now have a comfortable and secure place to live.

The new home was presented to Doodnauth by Minister of Agriculture Zulfikar Mustapha, who reiterated

the government's commitment to improving the lives of vulnerable groups through homeownership and other support measures. **"Not only in Region Six but in every single region across this country, we are having houses like these being delivered to vulnerable groups,"** Minister Mustapha stated.

He praised the efforts of the New Amsterdam cluster and corporate sponsors involved in the project, encouraging other businesses to participate in the initiative. Minister Mustapha also highlighted the ongoing

transformation in various sectors, including housing, education, and health, which will benefit all Guyanese in the long-term.

Regional Chairman David Armogan noted that several vulnerable families in the region have benefited from new homes through the MoM initiative in recent years.

**Men on Mission Programme to expand, 52 new homes planned**

The MoM programme is poised for significant expansion in 2025, thanks to a \$700 million budgetary allocation. A substantial portion of this funding, \$395 million, will be dedicated towards

constructing 52 homes for vulnerable individuals nationwide.

The funding was approved as part of the \$12.1 billion budget for the Office of the President.

to hundreds more. Thousands participated in educational and motivational programmes designed to empower men to become compassionate, healthy, and functional leaders.



Cutting of the ceremonial ribbon for the new house

In 2024, MoM provided housing for 50 individuals and offered housing assistance

The 2025 funding will allow MoM to expand these services and reach more communities.



The new house given to Shelly Doodnauth from Angoy's Avenue in Region Six

## NEW SHIPPING MERGER TRANSFORMS GUYANA'S PORTS WITH MODERN CRANES



The two cranes, named Atlas and Hercules

Guyana's port operations have received a major upgrade following the merger of two leading companies, John Fernandes and Muneshwar, to form Cranes Guyana. The joint venture, which brings together decades of expertise and capital, has officially launched two cutting-edge mobile harbor cranes, "Atlas" and "Hercules," in a bid to modernise the country's ports. The US\$14 million project, financed with support from the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), saw the acquisition of two cranes with impressive specifications. Each crane boasts a 125-tonne lifting capacity and a 49-meter operating range. This significant investment is set to

revolutionize cargo handling, reducing delays for vessels that previously lacked onboard cranes and expediting port operations overall.

President Irfaan Ali, speaking at the commissioning ceremony, praised the partnership and expressed his continued support for initiatives that foster collaboration between the private sector and international institutions. **"This joint venture is proof that when businesses join forces, they don't just grow – they prosper,"** he said. He also urged the private sector to embrace more cooperative approaches, emphasising the benefits of forming local and international partnerships to drive

competitiveness.

In addition to the cranes, the President highlighted the importance of this investment for local content, emphasizing the role of Guyanese businesses in the

and constraints on vessel size due to the Demerara River's navigability, but reassured the public that these issues would be addressed with capital investments outlined in the 2025 budget.

Phillip Fernandes,

responsible for designing and constructing the required infrastructure.

Robin Muneshwar, Executive Director of Muneshwar and Director of Cranes Guyana, praised the partnership's shared vision, which he said was rooted in the belief that national development comes first. **"We each recognized that there was a common good bigger than any one of us,"** Muneshwar stated, positioning the merger as a model for the Guyanese private sector.

The new cranes are expected to play a vital role in enhancing Guyana's ability to accommodate increasing international trade and improve port efficiency in the years ahead.



President Ali addressing the commissioning

construction of the necessary port infrastructure. He acknowledged existing challenges, such as limited waterfront land and the role of CEO of John Fernandes and Director of Cranes Guyana, reflected on the merger's significance, noting that the local companies were

## LOCAL CATERING CONSORTIUM EYES TWO-YEAR EXPANSION

President Dr. Irfaan Ali met with the members of Guyanese Achieving Enterprises, a consortium of 17 local food catering companies, at State House. During the meeting, the consortium shared its achievements and outlined its plans for growth and development over the next two years.

The group highlighted their efforts to expand and improve their services, with a vision to further contribute to the local



President Ali meeting with Guyanese Achieving Enterprises, a food catering consortium, at State House.

economy and enhance the catering industry in Guyana. President

Ali expressed strong support for their proposals and

conveyed optimism about the potential for the consortium's

growth, emphasising the important role that local businesses play in the country's development.

A key outcome of the meeting was a verbal agreement to establish a formal catering and restaurant association. This new association aims to provide a platform for collaboration, support, and advocacy for the industry, further boosting the sector's development.

Mr. Martin Pertab, Head of the Local

Content Secretariat, who was also present at the meeting, underscored the importance of local content and the government's commitment to fostering the growth of homegrown businesses.

The establishment of the catering and restaurant association is expected to strengthen the industry and improve its overall capacity, ultimately contributing to the continued economic development of Guyana.

## ESSEQUIBO FERRY SERVICE TO EXPAND

President Dr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali announced significant investments in ferry services for the Essequibo Coast during the commissioning of the Badrinaath Aashram. Recognising the region's growing economic demands, the government is actively working to procure two new ferries to enhance connectivity and support development.

President Ali stated that a team of technicians and specialists are engaged

in procuring a new ferry service specifically for the Essequibo region. This new ferry will boast increased capacity for both passengers and vehicles, improving transportation links between Essequibo and other regions. The President emphasised that this investment reflects the government's proactive approach to development and its commitment to supporting the region's growth.

Furthermore, President Ali revealed

that efforts are underway to acquire another ferry to service the Northwest route. This initiative follows the successful 2023 launch of the MV Ma Lisha, a partnership with the Indian government, which significantly enhanced transportation, trade, and tourism between Georgetown and the North West district. **"Since we have launched that, the production has come back. The market has come back, and the demand for the ferry**



Another ferry is to be procured for the Essequibo region to meet growing economic demands

service has increased exponentially, and now we have to get another one," he explained.

To expedite the process, Cabinet has requested a team of

engineers to develop cost estimates for the new Northwest ferry. These investments in ferry services demonstrate the government's dedication to improving infrastructure and

connectivity on the Essequibo Coast, facilitating economic growth and enhancing the quality of life for residents.

# UPGRADED MONTROSE PUMP STATION TO BENEFIT THOUSANDS OF ECD RESIDENTS

A newly rehabilitated 200-cusec pump station has been commissioned at Montrose, East Coast Demerara (ECD), bringing improved drainage and irrigation (D&I) services to over 3,549 acres of land, and thousands of residents. Agriculture Minister Zulfikar Mustapha officially commissioned the upgraded facility. The \$226.7 million investment will benefit approximately 920 households and 400 acres of residential area in communities including Montrose, East Coast Demerara (ECD), Better Hope, Vryheid's Lust, and Plaisance. Minister Mustapha emphasised the pump station's importance in the government's broader development agenda, particularly its contribution to rural revitalisation and agricultural diversification. "Pump stations



The pump will benefit approximately 920 households and 400 acres of residential area

such as these aid in our overall goal of rural revitalisation and agricultural diversification, designed to increase farmers' incomes," Minister Mustapha explained. "The investments we are making today lay a solid foundation for a thriving agricultural sector that will contribute significantly to our nation's economic prosperity for years to come." The commissioning highlights the government's increased focus on enhancing D&I infrastructure. Minister Mustapha noted the significant rise in investment in the sector, from \$8.4 billion in 2019 to \$72.3 billion in 2024, representing a 760% increase since the government took office in 2020.



Four mini excavators were handed over to NDCs in Region Five

push to enhance drainage and irrigation (D&I) systems across Guyana continues with the distribution of mini-excavators to various Neighborhood Democratic Councils (NDCs). Recently, the Industry/Plaisance NDC on the East Coast Demerara received a mini-excavator to improve internal drainage within its

Minister Zulfikar Mustapha handed over the equipment at the NDC's office, reiterating the government's commitment to developing a comprehensive national drainage system and mitigating flooding, especially in vulnerable areas like the East Coast. Minister Mustapha explained that while the NDIA focuses on larger

# NDCS GET EXCAVATOR TO BOOST DRAINAGE EFFORTS

canals and primary systems, the excavators will allow NDCs to effectively clear internal drains. He urged Vanessa Benn, Acting Chairperson of the Industry/Plaisance NDC, to develop a structured work program, prioritise critical areas, and keep residents informed of planned activities. The government will cover technical and maintenance costs, fuel, and provide an operator, while the NDC will supervise the work and identify areas in need. This distribution is part of a larger initiative. "This will be almost 35 excavators we are giving out to various NDCs," Minister Mustapha said. He added that more NDCs on the East Coast, East Bank, Regions Five and Six will receive excavators soon, following previous distributions in Regions Two and Three. The initiative has already seen significant progress in Region Five (Mahaica-Berbice). Four NDCs in the region—Blairmont/Zeelust, Naarstigheid, and Bath/Woodleypark—received mini-excavators, each valued at approximately \$14 million. This brought the total number of excavators distributed in Region Five to ten, representing a \$56 million investment by the government and equipping all NDCs in the region. Minister Mustapha emphasised that these machines are for community use only and not for private projects. He reiterated the government's commitment to

empowering local government authorities and developing a comprehensive drainage system nationwide, highlighting the NDIA's crucial role in managing water resources for both agricultural and residential areas. He also noted that the government plans to equip all local government authorities in Guyana with mini-excavators by the end of the year to improve internal drainage systems in communities nationwide.

# RADIO'S ENDURING IMPACT ON GUYANESE SOCIETY CELEBRATED ON WORLD RADIO DAY



Minister McCoy, NCN's CEO Neaz Subhan and Chairman Raymon Cummings viewing the Radio Corridor of Recognition

Guyana marked World Radio Day on February 13 with celebrations at the National Communications Network (NCN), honouring veteran broadcasters and reflecting on the medium's profound contribution to the nation's development. Minister within the Office of the Prime Minister with responsibility for Public Affairs, Kwame McCoy, emphasised radio's crucial role in disseminating information and fostering an informed citizenry. "Radio is truly that type of medium that has helped our

society, and has helped over many years to transform our society," Minister McCoy stated during the NCN event. The celebrations featured the unveiling of the Radio



Four mini excavators were handed over to NDCs in Region Five

Corridor of Recognition (RCR), showcasing vintage radio equipment and its evolution, alongside programmes highlighting radio's history, the eight regional stations, broadcasters, and listener feedback. Minister McCoy reiterated the government's commitment to supporting radio broadcasting, underscoring its importance for freedom of expression and democratic values. Guyana currently has 22 radio stations serving the nation.

Veteran broadcasters with over six decades of experience shared their memories of radio's transformative journey in Guyana. Ron Robinson, a broadcaster for nearly 60 years, recalled the "creme de la creme" of professionals who established exceptionally high standards. Robby Reis reminisced about the era when radio was Guyana's primary source of electronic entertainment and information, particularly during the absence of television. He described the rigorous broadcaster audition process, which included stringent educational requirements, language proficiency tests, and voice assessments. The broadcasters acknowledged the vast differences between radio broadcasting then and now, attributing the changes to technological advancements. Despite these changes, they agreed that radio continues to have a significant impact on people's lives in countless ways. Following his address, Minister McCoy unveiled the RCR plaque and toured the exhibition with NCN Chairman Raymon Cummings, Directors Alfonso De Armas and Phyllis Jackson, CEO Neaz Subhan, NCN staff, students from nearby schools, and other invited guests. The World Radio Day celebrations served as a powerful reminder of radio's enduring legacy and its continued relevance in the digital age.



## PRESIDENT ALI AND VICE PRESIDENT JAGDEO LEAD DISCUSSIONS ON NATIONAL BEAUTIFICATION INITIATIVE



The meeting with the landscapers in preparation for the Government's Beautification Initiative

President Dr. Irfaan Ali and Vice President Dr. Bharrat Jagdeo held discussions with landscapers as part of the government's ambitious Beautification Initiative aimed at transforming the nation's landscapes. The initiative will extend beyond Georgetown, focusing on enhancing public spaces,

including tree and flower planting in communities, along new highways, and at new schools and hospitals. The government's target is to plant 50,000 flowering and exotic plants and trees along the coast and in the capital city of Georgetown over the next five to seven years.

The project, coordinated by the Protected Areas Commission (PAC) in collaboration with the Guyana Forestry Commission (GFC), the Ministry of Public Works, and the National Agriculture Research and Extension Institute (NAREI), is a significant effort to beautify the nation and preserve its cultural heritage. President Ali stated in his brief address. The discussions also involved Foreign Secretary and Chair of the PAC board, Mr. Robert Persaud, and Head of the PAC, Mr. Damian Fernandes, along with members of their team. In addition, President Ali has

partnered with the King Charles III Foundation to enhance the aesthetics of Georgetown, with plans to introduce cycling and walking lanes and cover open canals, further improving the city's appearance and recreational offerings. These developments are expected to foster greater cleanliness and create additional spaces for public health and well-being. Since 2020, the government has rolled out several projects that have already transformed the local landscape. Notable initiatives include the beautification of the Kingston Seawall, which was carried out in collaboration with the

Ministry of Public Works and the Office of the First Lady, benefiting citizens, especially children. Walkways have also been created along Vlissingen Road and Lamaha Street, providing safe, enjoyable spaces for the public. A major upcoming project is the transformation of the National Botanical

Garden and Zoo on Vlissingen Road. All these efforts align with the Low Carbon Development Strategy (LCDS) 2030, which focuses on sustainable development that prioritises environmental protection while accelerating progress.



The meeting with the landscapers in preparation for the Government's Beautification Initiative

## GEORGETOWN MARKETS SET FOR \$2.7B OVERHAUL

The Parliamentary Committee of Supply has approved over \$2.7 billion for major upgrades to several Georgetown markets and the city's drainage network. This funding falls under the Georgetown Enhancement Project, part of the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development's \$41.9 billion allocation for 2025. The upgrades will target Bourda Market, Bourda Green, East La Penitence Market, Stabroek Market, and East Ruimveldt Market. A key component of the



Bourda market

project is the potential construction of a two-storey building at Bourda Green to provide vendors with improved and more secure trading spaces. Minister of Local Government and

Regional Development, Sonia Parag, explained that this initiative is a direct response to vendors' requests for better facilities. "The vendors indicated that they wanted a proper space they

can utilise...and we wanted to maximise the space," she stated. Of the \$2.7 billion, \$2 billion is earmarked for drainage network improvements. The remaining funds are allocated as follows: \$40 million for design and consultancy for the Bourda Green upgrade, \$260 million for phase one construction of Bourda Green, \$50 million for East Ruimveldt Market rehabilitation, \$100 million for East La Penitence Market rehabilitation, and \$200 million for Stabroek

Market rehabilitation. Beyond Georgetown, funds have also been allocated under the Community Infrastructure Improvement Project for market rehabilitation and construction in areas like Port Kaituma, Rose Hall, Mon Repos, and Rosignol. Additionally, \$800 million has been allocated for the construction of a cultural market in Palmyra, Region Six, which will serve as an educational and talent-showcasing hub. Minister Parag also addressed the ongoing challenge of solid waste management, reiterating the government's commitment to improving the system and promoting a

cleaner environment. Since taking office, the government has established 13 landfill sites across the country, with plans to create new sites in Regions One, Two, Three, Four, Five, Six, Nine, and Ten in 2025. To further enhance waste management capacity, all Neighbourhood Democratic Councils (NDCs) and municipalities will receive compactor garbage trucks this year. This support complements the annual grants provided to these local bodies since 2021: \$5 million for NDCs and \$18 million for municipalities.



Minister Kwame McCoy addressing pathway workers at Kuru Kuru Training College

National Pathway Workers (NPW) are vital to the maintenance and development of their communities, performing crucial roles in schools, health centers, and other government facilities. This was the message from Minister within the Office of the Prime Minister with Responsibility for Information and Public

Affairs, Kwame McCoy, during meetings held at Kuru Kuru Training College and Friendship Secondary School. Minister McCoy met with NPW members to hear their concerns, addressing issues such as payment systems, work schedules, and equipment. He emphasised the importance of their work, stating, "The role you play at your community level should never be taken for granted... This is something you should be proud of." He encouraged the workers to participate in the ongoing development of their country and communities,

## PATHWAY WORKERS PRAISED FOR COMMUNITY ROLE

highlighting the programme's success in providing employment opportunities, particularly for women working outside their homes for the first time. Minister McCoy urged them to take advantage of educational opportunities offered by the Women Innovation and Investment Network, Guyana Online Academy of Learning, or the Board of Industrial Training to enhance their skills and pursue permanent employment. "Do not limit yourself to the opportunities that

avail themselves to you...There is nothing stopping anyone here or elsewhere from striving for betterment and upward mobility," he added. Minister McCoy stressed the importance

of biannual meetings to discuss challenges and improvements for the NPW programme, noting that this model is unique globally and has attracted interest from other countries. Launched by the PPP/C government in

2022, the programme employs 15,283 people, providing them with 10 days of work per month for a \$40,000 salary. A total of \$12.7 billion has been allocated in the 2025 budget for the Community Enhancement Workers and National Pathway Workers programmes. During the meetings, residents also received information on new and existing budget measures designed to mitigate the effects of the rising cost of living and improve livelihoods.



Pathway workers at the meeting at the Kuru Kuru Training College

## NEW AMSTERDAM, BERBICE GAINS STATE-OF-THE-ART SKILLS DEVELOPMENT AND CERTIFICATION CENTRE

The Board of Industrial Training (BIT) officially opened its new office and Skills Development & Certification Centre in New Amsterdam, Berbice, on Tuesday, February 11, 2025. The facility marks a significant investment in skills development and certification for the region.

The commissioning ceremony was attended by government officials,

regional leaders, and BIT staff, including Minister of Labour, the Joseph Hamilton, who delivered the keynote address. Minister Hamilton highlighted the government's commitment to training and development, noting that 2,571 Region Six residents have benefited from 109 training programmes over the past four years, representing a \$185 million investment.

He emphasised the inclusive nature of these initiatives, with 1,410 male and 1,230 female participants. BIT Chief Executive Officer, Mr. Richard Maughn, spoke to the organisation's growth and the increasing recognition of its programmes. He stressed BIT's dedication to accreditation, ensuring that training programmes are recognised both locally

and internationally, thereby expanding opportunities for graduates. The two-story, 4,000 square foot facility is designed to meet Caribbean Vocational Qualifications (CVQs) standards, providing ample space for training and certification programmes. The centre's establishment is a key component of the government's strategy to decentralise

training opportunities and promote regional development, ensuring that Guyanese citizens are equipped to participate in and benefit from the nation's economic growth.

The new facility



The new facility

training opportunities are equipped to and promote regional development, ensuring that Guyanese citizens are equipped to participate in and benefit from the nation's economic growth.



GOAL aims to provide scholarships to Guyanese for online, tertiary-level programmes

The Guyana Online Academy of Learning (GOAL) has announced new partnerships with Atlantic Technological University (ATU), Ireland, and the New Guyana School (NGS), in collaboration with

Ubicua Technology, Guyana, expanding its tuition-free scholarship offerings for 2025.

This collaboration will provide Guyanese with access to a wide range of professional certificates, diplomas, bachelor's, and master's programmes. The available fields of study include Applied Fire Safety Management, Biopharmaceutical Processing, Bioprocess Engineering, various Engineering disciplines (Bridge, Electronic & Computer, Geotechnical & Structural, Road & Transport, Road Engineering & Design,

## GOAL EXPANDS SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMME WITH TWO NEW PARTNERS

Road Maintenance Engineering & Management, Road Safety Audit & Engineering), Healthcare Analytics, Mechanical and Electrical Quantity Surveying, Professional Skills for High-Performance Sport, Quantity Surveying, Real Estate Development and Valuation, and Precision Agriculture and Construction Technology.

GOAL stated that these partnerships reinforce its commitment

to accessible and flexible higher education, ensuring Guyanese across all administrative regions can earn internationally recognised qualifications. ATU and NGS are among 10 new academic partners joining GOAL in 2025. The other new institutions are: Universidad Catolica De Murcia, Spain; Western State University, California, USA; QualiTest Inc. Medical Laboratory,

Guyana; West Africa South America Alliance Inc., Guyana; Accountancy Training Centre Inc., Guyana; MJM Accounting and Management Institute, Guyana; Cacique Inc., Guyana; and ARKA JAIN University, India. The application portal for the 2025 intake is now open. Interested individuals can visit [www.goal.edu](http://www.goal.edu) to explore programme options and eligibility criteria from a total of 27 local and international

universities. The deadline for applications is February 28, 2025, at 11:59 PM. Further information is available on the GOAL website.

Launched in 2021 by the Guyanese government, GOAL aims to provide scholarships to Guyanese for online, tertiary-level programmes through partnerships with reputable international universities.

## TWO NEW HEALTH FACILITIES COMMISSIONED IN REGION TEN

Two new health facilities, the Muritaro Health Post and the Blueberry Hill Health Centre, have been commissioned in Region Ten, representing a combined investment of \$52 million and a major boost for local healthcare.

The \$23.7 million Muritaro Health Post will

serve over 400 residents, providing services such as maternal and child health, chronic disease management, family planning, vaccination programmes, school and adolescent health services, and general outpatient care. Critically, the facility also offers telemedicine capabilities, enabling

consultations with doctors and specialists when needed.

The Blueberry Hill Health Centre, a \$28.3 million investment, is equipped to deliver a similar range of primary healthcare services.

Health Minister, Dr. Frank Anthony, emphasised the government's

commitment to ensuring quality healthcare access for all Guyanese, regardless of location. He highlighted the nationwide effort to construct and rehabilitate health infrastructure. **“Over the last three years, we have built close to 25 new health centres and posts across this**



Blueberry Hill Health Centre

country,” Dr. Anthony residents to utilise the stated, noting several new facilities. such projects in Region Ten. He encouraged

In a significant move to improve breast cancer screening, Health Minister, Dr. Frank Anthony, commissioned a state-of-the-art mammogram machine at the Linden Hospital Complex (LHC). This marks a major advancement in healthcare access for residents of Region 10 and surrounding areas.

Previously, mammography services were only available at the Georgetown Public Hospital Corporation (GPHC). The new machine at LHC

## LINDEN HOSPITAL GETS NEW MAMMOGRAM MACHINE, BOOSTING BREAST CANCER SCREENING



Mammogram Machine commissioned at Linden Hospital Complex

eliminates the need for residents to travel long distances for this crucial screening.

Dr. Anthony stressed the importance of early detection in reducing cancer-related deaths. **“For many years, we have spoken about the need for a structured cancer programme, and now we are taking the necessary steps to implement it,”** he stated. **“By placing mammography machines in every**

region, we are making it easier for individuals to access screening services.” The Health Minister highlighted the government's dedication to improving cancer care through timely diagnosis and treatment. **“If we are going to improve survivability, we must ensure early detection and swift intervention,”** Dr.

Anthony added. He also noted significant improvements in biopsy result turnaround times, from over a month to just three to seven days.

The Linden Hospital Complex is the first of four locations slated to receive a mammogram machine, with other units to be commissioned soon.

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# ‘Country’s revenue going right back to every Guyanese’: President Ali

AS the government continues its efforts to transform the health sector and increase access to medical care, especially in hinterland communities, President, Dr. Irfaan Ali has blazed the opposition for attempting to run away from its sordid track record.

During a live broadcast, the President discussed the upwards trajectory of the health sector, especially after inheriting one from APNU+AFC that had limited investments.

In the last three years, 25 new health centers and posts were built, he said, adding: “These are the type of investments that we are making... investments not for 2025, but investments to 2028.”

The government has launched a number of initiatives that prioritise the well-being of all.

For instance, the spectacle and eye testing programme that aided countless citizens. From early detection of vision problems to financial relief for low-income families, this programme has been lauded by many.

According to President Ali, in 2024 there were 68,320 eye tests completed and almost 55,000 of those individuals were given spectacles, all free of cost.

Compare this to under the former coalition government, which was in office 2015-2020, only 16 cataract surgeries were completed at Port Mourant’s National Ophthalmology Hospital.

Under the Ali-led administration 3,665 surgeries have been completed at the same hospital, he noted.

The President reminded the nation: “They (APNU+AFC) shut down the facility. Can you imagine that between 2015 and 2020? These are the statistics that the APNU /AFC hides from can’t account for their period in government, they’re not transparent in accounting.”

Dr. Ali then said: “Today, any citizen from any region who requires cataract surgery does that free of cost at the Port Mourant Hospital.”

Taking a look at how audiology has also improved, the President spoke on how citizens are able to seek assistance.

He said that in 2019, the programme benefited only 647 people, and under the APNU+AFC people had to pay \$65,000 each for their hearing aid.

However, under the PPP/C, in the last four years alone, more than 4,000 persons benefited from hearing aids, which are free of cost.

“Here is where the revenues of the country is going. Going back to our people. Going back to create world-class healthcare services. World-class education services. These are the results that they cannot accept. They cannot appreciate it,” Dr. Ali said.

While the opposition continues to resort to its habitual tendencies, the President said that the PPP/C can point to its achievements.

He said: “We can speak about real results, about the investment we are making in the health care system, the future plans that we have for the health care system, and the type of results that is generating.”



President Irfaan Ali

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# GOVT EXPLORING SUPPORT FOR RELIGIOUS LEADERS' DEVELOPMENT

President Dr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali announced that the government is in discussions to provide support for the development of pastors, pandits, and imams in Guyana. He made the announcement during the commissioning of South America's largest Lord Shiva statue at the Badrinaath Aashram on the Essequibo Coast.



New squash doubles court at the National Racquet Centre on Woolford Avenue and Camp Road

“We may have to collaborate with

the religious leaders will support their and find institutions development, and through which we we are committed to

doing that, because faith and spirituality are essential pillars of a grounded nation,” President Ali emphasised. He explained that the goal is to ensure the continued richness and diversity of Guyana's religious landscape.

The President also spoke about the significance of the Aashram and the collective effort behind its establishment.

He stated that the deeper values such as Aashram strengthens a faith, consciousness, and sense of belonging and reconnecting with one's connection, representing heritage.



Part of the gathering

## GUYANA OPENS FIRST PUBLICLY FUNDED DOUBLE SQUASH COURTS IN CARIBBEAN



New squash doubles court at the National Racquet Centre on Woolford Avenue and Camp Road

President Irfaan Ali described the commissioned a new \$68 million, state-of-the-art double squash court facility at the National Racquet Centre. This international-standard facility is the first of its kind in Guyana and the first publicly funded squash facility in the Caribbean region. It will support the development of young players and enable Guyana to host local and international tournaments.

described the commissioning as a collective achievement, and highlighted the importance of squash to national pride. “National pride is the most important ingredient for national unity, and national pride and national unity, are the fixed aspect of the equation in building national prosperity,” he stated.

He challenged the notion that national

prosperity is solely measured by economic indicators, asserting that true prosperity includes overall quality of life, health, and wellness. He emphasised that sports, beyond winning prizes, is a crucial tool for a healthier and stronger society, aligning with national development goals. He believes that providing spaces for young people to connect and support each other can reduce public health expenditures.

President Ali tasked the Guyana Squash Association (GSA), with government support, to integrate squash into all regions, ensuring accessibility for a wider population. “If we have persons who use this sport discipline to eat better, to exercise and to live

healthy lifestyles, the economic derivative from that, in terms of public health expenditure... brings weighty benefit for the country itself,” he explained.

Minister of Culture, Youth and Sport, Charles Ramson Jr., encouraged athletes to maximise the opportunity and elevate Guyana's global standing. He noted that the sports ministry invested \$27 million in constructing the physical infrastructure and \$41 million in internal fittings. He acknowledged the financial challenges faced during construction, but emphasised President Ali's strong support in making the facility a reality. “We haven't nicked a dime on this or shortchanged

on what we are delivering to the investment underlines



It will support the development of young players and enable Guyana to host local and international tournaments

squash fraternity and the people ... and it's because of both his [President Ali] love for the sport and the importance that sport plays in the country,” the minister expressed.

National Sports Commission (NSC) Chairman, Steve

the government's vision and commitment to position Guyana as a sporting hub regionally and internationally. He announced that similar state-of-the-art facilities for table tennis and badminton will be commissioned in the coming months.

## REGION THREE TO GET MORE SPORTS FACILITIES

President Dr. Irfaan Ali has announced a further \$400 million investment to upgrade sports infrastructure in Region Three. Speaking at an engagement with cricket and football clubs at the Leonora Track and Field facility, President Ali emphasised the government's commitment to developing sports as a key pillar of national growth.



The meeting at the Leonora Track and Field Centre

He noted that approximately \$406 million was spent in the region last year on upgrading and expanding community grounds, and that the government is investing

not only in physical infrastructure, but also in opportunities for young people to showcase their talents. While acknowledging the

progress made, President Ali recognised the need for further development and announced the additional investment to improve more grounds in the region.

Responding to requests from athletes, particularly footballers and cricketers, for better lighting, President Ali announced that 22 communities will benefit from proper lighting for their sports grounds this year. “Every single NDC will see one of their grounds with lights to facilitate the training,” he emphasised.

The President stated that community grounds

are being developed not just for sports, but also as safe, family-friendly spaces for recreation. He also announced that the government will collaborate with former national cricketers and footballers to mentor and nurture young athletes in various communities. He encouraged youths to participate in and contribute to these development initiatives.

During the engagement, the President distributed sports gear to football and cricket clubs.

Over the past four years, significant investments have been made to improve sports

infrastructure, including upgrading grounds, installing lights, and providing other necessary facilities. Budgetary allocations for the sports sector have

increased substantially, with \$8 billion allocated in the 2025 National Budget, of which \$2 billion is designated for upgrading 450 sports grounds.



The meeting at the Leonora Track and Field Centre



# Guyanese DIASPORA DIGEST

KEEPING THE DIASPORA INFORMED EDITION 87

## PALMYRA MULTI-PURPOSE STADIUM TAKING SHAPE



Construction is progressing rapidly on the Palmyra Multi-purpose Stadium in Region Six. This significant investment in sports infrastructure will provide a modern venue for a variety of athletic competitions and community gatherings, offering new opportunities for residents and athletes in the region. The stadium promises to be a source of pride and a catalyst for sports development in Region Six.



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"It's because of these personalized treatment programs that we're seeing such incredible results!"

Four months after treatment, Norah is back at work and thriving.

"Being back at work isn't even the most exciting part," exclaims Norah. "Not only was I able to attend my son's wedding, but I could walk down the aisle! It was the most magical moment and I have Teresa to thank for it. To think I might've missed that." Norah held back tears.

If you've recently been diagnosed with peripheral neuropathy, regardless of its cause, it's time to call Teresa and the staff at TLC Medicine.

Call (416) 461-0581 to schedule your very own comprehensive consultation or visit [TLC-Medicine.ca](http://TLC-Medicine.ca) to take advantage of their new patient offer, a \$40 consult (normally \$240).

*"It's as though I'm stepping from razor blade to razor blade."*

*"It feels like my feet are under attack by fire ants."*

*"Like I'm walking on wet paint with rolled up socks."*

And you're in this type of pain all the time.

"It's relentless, keeping you up at night and preventing you from doing even the most mundane tasks. Things I used to take for granted, like wearing shoes, going grocery shopping. Two of my three children were getting married last year, I wasn't even sure I was going to be able to attend their weddings," shares Norah W.

Norah was diagnosed with peripheral neuropathy in 2015, a degenerative condition affecting almost 5% of people over the age of 55.

"My doctor sat me down and said, 'Norah I'm sorry to tell you this, but you have peripheral neuropathy. I'm going to prescribe you gabapentin to manage the discomfort but overall, neuropathy is untreatable.'

My first thought was, 'we can cure cancer but you can't stop my feet from hurting?' It felt like a cruel joke."

While neuropathy can be caused by a number of things including diabetes and chemotherapy, over 23% of neuropathy cases are classified as idiopathic. In layman's terms, the cause is unknown. This was the case with Norah.

"Basically every question I had was met with an 'I don't know.' It was depressing to say the least."

Eventually, Norah was forced to quit her job because the numbness had started to set in and prevented her from driving.

Fortunately for Norah, she would attend a health fair featuring TLC Medicine and the work they were doing to treat peripheral neuropathy.

"I thought it had to be a sham," Norah shares. "After so many specialists told me there was no hope, here was this acupuncturist saying she had a 90% success rate in treating neuropathy! I just had to call and I can't begin to tell you how grateful I am that I did."

Teresa Lau, founder of TLC Medicine, says that cases like Norah's are incredibly common. "Almost all of my neuropathy patients have been told at one point or another that there is no hope. I like to think I specialize in offering hope."

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## Building Ontario's Economy

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## Protecting Workers

President Trump's tariffs will devastate Ontario's economy. We'll do whatever is necessary to protect people's livelihoods, including by investing tens of billions of dollars to keep people working. We'll provide funding for impacted businesses to retool so that they can attract new customers and meet payroll. We'll invest more in building infrastructure to create jobs and retrain workers to find new opportunities.



## Keeping Us Competitive

We're fighting the job-killing Liberal carbon tax and urging the federal government to cut red tape and streamline approvals to get big things built, including speeding up construction of new and upgraded nuclear power plants and critical mineral projects in the Ring of Fire region in Northern Ontario. We'll keep lowering the cost of doing business to make Ontario the most competitive place to invest and create jobs.



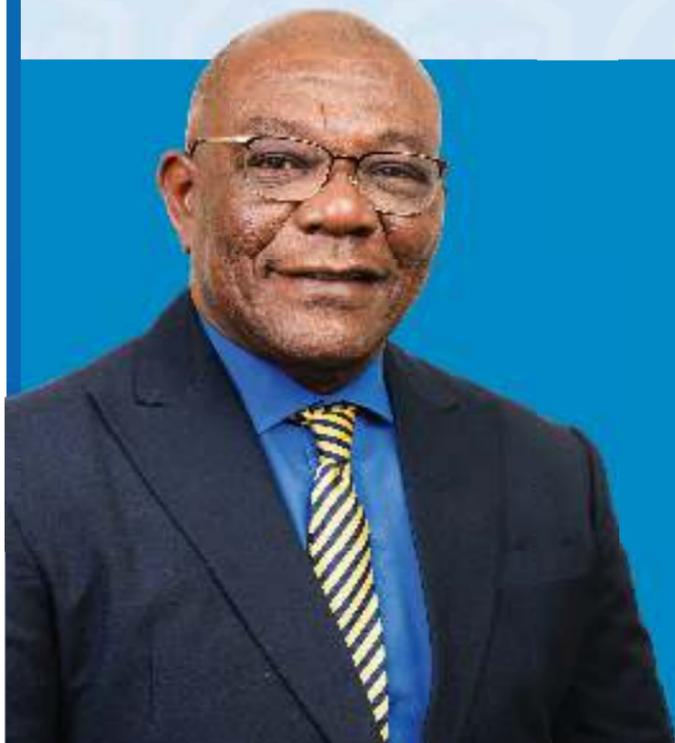
## Cleaning Up Our Streets

We're protecting families and children by banning drug injection sites near schools and daycares and clearing out encampments from public parks with new investments in shelters. We're cracking down on violent and repeat criminals and building new jails to keep them behind bars.



## Delivering Better Care

We're investing over \$1 billion more to connect everyone in Ontario to a family doctor and primary care, alongside \$50 billion to build 50 new and upgraded hospitals. We're leading the largest medical school expansion in a decade to train more doctors. We've made it more convenient to connect to care, with over two million visits to local pharmacies for common ailments, saving you time.



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The Guyana Tourism Authority is issuing an urgent reminder to book tour experiences exclusively with licensed tourism operators when visiting Guyana.

A complete list of officially licensed businesses is available on the Guyana Tourism Authority's Facebook page.

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