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Min. Singh on \$1.382 trillion Guyana Budget 2025 “WE HAVE DELIVERED”

Under the theme ‘A secure, prosperous and sustainable Guyana,’ Senior Minister with responsibility for Finance, Dr Ashni Singh, explained that Budget 2025 seeks to complete and exceed the People’s Progressive Party/Civic Government’s 2020 Manifesto commitments while laying the foundation of the PPP/C’s next term in office.

“We the PPP/C went to the Guyanese People in 2020 with a Manifesto that we committed to implement once given the opportunity to do so, and we were given the opportunity. Today, I am proud to join my colleagues on this side of the House to say resoundingly that we have delivered. Indeed, in many cases, we have far exceeded the commitments we gave in our Manifesto.”

Dr Singh delivered the massive \$1.382 trillion 2025 Budget in a 5-hour marathon presentation today in the National Assembly. This is a growth from the 2024 \$1.146 Budget.

According to the minister, Budget 2025 Budget 2025 comprises primarily a review of the main developments and prospects in the Guyanese economy as well as key highlights from the main policies, programmes, and projects being implemented by the Government. The proposed measure, he added, aims to promote production and productivity,

increase disposable income, and improve household and individual well-being.

“On the measures that I have announced, it should be clear that Budget 2025 contains much for everyone. Apart from all of the interventions in the social sector and the training and employment opportunities that will be generated by the Budget, the measures announced will also help stimulate more growth because they promote production and productivity. It will also improve disposable income in a very significant and tangible way. Moreover, the measures will incentivise and reward effort by recognising the value of hard work... and the measures will also contribute to production and productivity.”

Moreover, Dr Singh pointed out that the policies, programmes, and projects being implemented clearly highlight that the PPP/C Administration is doing more than has been done at any other time in the country’s history – all of which result in tangible and visible improvements in the quality of life enjoyed by the Guyanese people.

“We are building more and better roads than ever before. We are building more and better schools and hospitals than ever before. We are training more people than ever before. We are creating more jobs and better jobs than ever before. All of these result in tangible and visible improvements in the quality of life enjoyed by the Guyanese People. Our pledge to the Guyanese People is that we will continue to do more and to



Senior Minister with responsibility for Finance Dr Ashni Singh

do it better, all in the interest of their wellbeing.”

According to the Finance Minister, the aggregation of the sleuth of measures in Budget 2025 will place over \$90 billion in the hands of individuals

and businesses to promote the growth and expansion of economic activity and job creation.

- Key takeaways in the budget:
- Old age pension now at \$41,000; public assistance \$22k
 - Guyanese babies to get \$100k; Because We Care cash grant increases to \$50k
 - Income Tax Threshold moves to \$130k; PAYE, tax on over-time reduced
 - \$10,000 universal health voucher for every Guyanese
 - No VAT on agriculture machinery, generators

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“ I CAN WALK BAREFOOT ON THE BEACH AGAIN!

Local acupuncture clinic is treating the untreatable, peripheral neuropathy with incredible results!

Pain comes in many shapes and sizes. One of the most debilitating being the burning and tingling that comes with peripheral neuropathy. A disease that comes with years of shooting, stabbing pain that gradually ends in numbness, balance problems, and on occasion, amputations. A disease that was once classified as irreparable.

Michael R. of East York was facing such a fate.

“I stopped golfing. I wasn’t taking walks on the beach with my wife. I was living on gabapentin and antidepressants and everywhere I went, my doctor, the specialists, the pain institute, told me there was no cure. How are you supposed to live your life knowing that everyday brings pain and suffering?”

Peripheral neuropathy is a result of damage to the nerves, commonly caused by a lack of blood flow to the hands and feet. This causes nerves to begin to degenerate due to a lack of nutrient flow. Most peripheral neuropathy sufferers experience heightened sensitivity to touch making it almost impossible for those diagnosed to even wear shoes, much less enjoy life.

“It was like walking on sharp river rocks. I barely left my recliner,” shares Michael, whose experience is not uncommon for those diagnosed with peripheral neuropathy.

That is until he found Teresa Lau of TLC Medicine in Riverdale, Toronto. Teresa and her staff have pioneered a cutting edge, medical solution to treat neuropathy, eliminate or greatly reduce its symptoms and give people their lives back. And they’re doing it without the use of prescription medications and invasive surgeries.

“Acupuncture is incredible at restoring blood flow and stimulating damaged nerves, preventing them from dying off,” tells Teresa Lau. “We take our treatments a step further by integrating ATP Resonance Bio Therapy” which targets specific nerves in the body using microcurrent. ATP therapy is like watering a plant. This treatment will stimulate the blood vessels to grow back around the peripheral nerves and provide them with the proper nutrients to heal and repair.”

Three months later Michael is thrilled with his progress, “I can walk barefoot on the beach again!”

Success stories like Michael’s are not atypical for the staff at TLC Medicine. “We have a 90% success rate at treating neuropathy,” shares Teresa.

The number of treatments needed to allow the nerves to fully recover will vary from person to person and can only be determined after a detailed neurological and vascular evaluation. So long as you have not sustained more than 85% nerve damage TLC Medicine offers hope where there once was none.

While Michael’s peripheral neuropathy was idiopathic, meaning the cause is unknown, Teresa’s treatment can also help people whose neuropathy is caused by diabetes or chemotherapy.

“We have seen tremendous success in treating neuropathy of all types through very personalized treatments, specifically tailored to treat each individual case.”

To schedule a consultation and complete evaluation, call (416) 461 - 0581 but do so quickly because TLC Medicine is taking a limited number of new neuropathy patients.

Visit www.TLC-Medicine.ca to learn more and to take advantage of their NEW PATIENT OFFER!



Guyanese

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HISTORIC \$1.38 TRILLION BUDGET TARGETS RELIEF, GROWTH, AND PROSPERITY

\$90B EARMARKED TO EASE COST OF LIVING AND BOOST DISPOSABLE INCOME

PAGE 2

- **OLD-AGE PENSION: INCREASED TO \$41,000 MONTHLY, BENEFITING 73,000 PENSIONERS.**
- **PUBLIC ASSISTANCE: INCREASED TO \$22,000 MONTHLY, BOOSTING SUPPORT FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES.**
- **BECAUSE WE CARE CASH GRANT: INCREASED TO \$55,000 PER CHILD (INCLUDING UNIFORM ALLOWANCE).**
- **NEWBORN CASH GRANT: ONE-TIME \$100,000 FOR ALL GUYANESE NEWBORNS.**
- **INCOME TAX THRESHOLD: INCREASED TO \$130,000 MONTHLY, REMOVING 22,000 WORKERS FROM TAXATION.**
- **PAYE REDUCTION: SLASHED FROM 28% TO 25%, INCREASING DISPOSABLE INCOME.**
- **TAX-FREE OVERTIME: FIRST \$50,000 OF MONTHLY OVERTIME AND SECONDARY INCOME NOW TAX-FREE.**
- **\$13.1 BILLION FOR FREE UNIVERSITY OF GUYANA EDUCATION.**
- **\$175 BILLION TOTAL EDUCATION BUDGET**
- **\$143.2 BILLION ALLOCATED FOR HEALTH SECTOR UPGRADES.**
- **\$209.3 BILLION FOR ROADS, BRIDGES, AND TRANSPORTATION.**
- **\$104.6 BILLION TO DRIVE AGRICULTURE DEVELOPMENT.**
- **\$112.6 BILLION FOR HOUSING SCHEMES AND MORTGAGE SUPPORT.**
- **\$7.2 BILLION FOR AMERINDIAN LAND TITLING AND ECONOMIC PROJECTS.**



HISTORIC \$1.38 TRILLION BUDGET TARGETS RELIEF, GROWTH, AND PROSPERITY

- \$90B EARMARKED TO EASE COST OF LIVING AND BOOST DISPOSABLE INCOME

Historic \$1.38 Trillion Budget targets relief, growth, and prosperity

-\$90B earmarked to ease cost of living and boost disposable income

The government has unveiled its largest fiscal framework yet—a record-breaking \$1.38 trillion national budget for 2025. Presented by Senior Minister of Finance and Public Service Dr. Ashni Singh, the budget emphasises sweeping measures to reduce the cost of living, increase disposable income, and propel the nation toward sustained growth and prosperity.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS OF BUDGET 2025

SUPPORT FOR VULNERABLE GROUPS

A significant \$90 billion has been allocated to provide direct relief

to vulnerable groups, including pensioners, families, and persons with disabilities:

- **Old-Age Pension:** Increased from \$36,000 to \$41,000 monthly, injecting \$4.5 billion annually into pensioners' hands.

- **Public Assistance:** Raised from \$19,000 to \$22,000 monthly, benefiting individuals with disabilities and increasing their annual support by \$1.4 billion.

- **Because We Care Cash Grant:** Increased from \$40,000 to \$50,000 per child, benefiting over 200,000 students. Families will also receive an additional \$5,000 per child for uniforms, bringing total education support to \$55,000 per child.

- **Newborn Cash Grant:** A one-time \$100,000 grant for newborns from Guyanese mothers, providing an annual

injection of \$1.3 billion into households.

- **Universal Health Voucher:** A \$10,000 health voucher for every citizen to promote regular check-ups and healthy lifestyles.

- **Tax Relief for Families:** Starting in 2025, parents can claim an additional \$10,000 tax deduction monthly per child, further easing financial pressures.

ADDRESSING THE COST OF LIVING

To mitigate rising costs, the government has earmarked \$9 billion for targeted interventions, including reducing income taxes and offering tax breaks:

- **Income Tax Threshold:** Raised from \$100,000 to \$130,000 monthly, removing 22,000 individuals from the tax bracket and returning \$8.5 billion



- to workers.
- **PAYE Tax Reduction:** Reduced from 28% to 25%, allowing workers to take home a larger portion of their earnings.
- **Overtime and Secondary Job Tax Breaks:** The first \$50,000 of monthly overtime and secondary job income will be tax-free, costing the government \$600 million annually.

EDUCATION AND FREE UNIVERSITY

The government reaffirmed its commitment to free tertiary education, earmarking \$13.1 billion for the University of Guyana. Key investments in education include:

- \$175 billion allocated to education overall.

- \$4.4 billion for 9,000 additional scholarships through the Guyana Online Academy of Learning (GOAL).

- \$36.2 billion for new school construction.

- \$5.5 billion to expand the National School Feeding Programme.

- \$2 billion for providing reading books, workbooks, and textbooks.

HEALTHCARE INVESTMENTS

A robust \$143.2 billion has been allocated to the health sector, focusing on infrastructure, equipment, and services:

- **Hospital**

- Development:** \$28.1 billion for major hospital construction and upgrades.
- **Specialised Facilities:** \$2.9 billion for a new cancer treatment centre and \$6.5 billion for enhanced health facilities.

- billion for state-of-the-art equipment, a significant increase from \$1.3 billion in 2024.

- **Drug Supplies:** \$28 billion for essential drugs and medical supplies.

- **Telemedicine Expansion:** Services



- **Medical Equipment:** \$4.3 billion extended to remote communities with

CONT'D ON PAGE 23

US EXIM BANK'S PRESIDENT VISITS GUYANA, SIGNS TERM SHEET FOR GAS-TO-ENERGY PROJECT

US EXIM Bank President and Chair Reta Jo Lewis visited Guyana and signed a Term Sheet for a US\$527 million loan to support the country's ambitious Gas-to-Energy (GTE) project.

The signing ceremony, attended by Prime Minister Brigadier Mark Phillips, Finance Minister Dr. Ashni Singh, and US Ambassador to Guyana Nicole D. Theriot, took place at the project site in Wales.

Prime Minister Phillips underlined the transformative nature of the GTE project, stating it will be the "backbone of a stronger

economy" capable of competing on the global stage. He highlighted the project's significance as the largest undertaken by the Government of Guyana.

Finance Minister Singh echoed the Prime Minister's sentiments, emphasising the project's transformative potential and the strong US-Guyana partnership that made it possible. He noted the rapid progress made since the initial Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with US EXIM Bank in 2022, securing US\$527 million in financing within two-and-a-half years.



Prime Minister, Brigadier (Ret'd), the Honourable Mark Phillips & President and Chair of the Export-Import (EXIM) Bank of the United States, Ms Reta Jo Lewis

The bank's President Lewis underscored the project's importance for both Guyana and the United States, stating it will

"strengthen energy security, enhance environmental sustainability, and unlock economic opportunity."

She highlighted the unanimous approval of the loan by the EXIM Bank Board, reflecting the project's strategic significance.

The GTE project involves a 200-kilometer pipeline transporting natural gas from offshore oil fields to onshore facilities, including a Natural Gas Liquid (NGL) plant.

The project is expected to create jobs, reduce electricity costs for consumers, attract foreign investment, and enhance Guyana's energy security.

This agreement marks a significant step forward for Guyana's GTE project. The project is expected to play a pivotal role in driving economic growth and development in the country.

GUYANA CONDEMNS VENEZUELA'S UNILATERAL ACTIONS IN VIOLATION OF ARGYLE AGREEMENT AND ICJ ORDER



President Irfaan Ali and Venezuela President Nicolas Maduro shaking hands after the Argyle agreement on December 14, 2023

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Guyana has strongly condemned recent actions and statements by the Government of Venezuela, describing them as clear violations of the Argyle Agreement

of December 14, 2023, and the binding Order of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) issued on December 1, 2023.

In a statement released on January 6, 2025, the Ministry expressed grave concern

over President Nicolás Maduro's announcement on January 7, 2025, regarding the election of a "Governor of the Guayana Esequiba" by "the people of Guayana Esequiba."

The Ministry further

emphasised that this unilateral action violates the Argyle Agreement, which commits both countries to refraining from actions that could escalate tensions or alter the status quo in the disputed territory.

"The people of Guyana's Essequibo region are Guyanese nationals who live in Guyana's sovereign territory. It would be a flagrant violation of the most fundamental principles of international law, enshrined in the UN Charter, for Venezuela to attempt to conduct an election in Guyanese territory involving the participation of Guyanese nationals," the release stated.

The Ministry also highlighted Venezuela's

disregard for the ICJ Order, which explicitly directed both States to avoid actions that could aggravate or extend the dispute. It condemned Venezuela's plans as a direct challenge to international law and the authority of the ICJ.

"President Maduro's statement, coupled with any actions to integrate the Essequibo region into Venezuela's administrative framework, including by calling for an election 'by the people of Guayana Esequiba' of a governor of 'Guayana Esequiba,' represents a blatant disregard for this binding Order. Such actions not only jeopardise the judicial process but also undermine

the authority of the ICJ as the principal judicial organ of the United Nations," the statement added.

The Ministry reiterated Guyana's unwavering commitment to the ICJ process and called on Venezuela to immediately halt actions that contravene the Argyle Agreement and ICJ directives.

Guyana urged the Venezuelan government to recommit to international law and peaceful dispute resolution mechanisms. While Guyana remains open to constructive dialogue under agreed frameworks, it firmly stated that unilateral actions threatening its sovereignty and territorial integrity will not be tolerated.

PRESIDENT ALI SIGNS BOOK OF CONDOLENCE FOR FORMER U.S. PRESIDENT JIMMY CARTER

President Dr. Irfaan Ali signed the Book of Condolence for the late former U.S. President Jimmy Carter on January 6, 2025, at the U.S. Embassy in Georgetown.

President Ali extended heartfelt condolences on behalf of the Government and people of Guyana to the Government and people of the United States.

President Carter,

who passed away on December 29, 2024, at the age of 100, was a globally respected statesman, a dedicated humanitarian, and a champion of democracy. His legacy of promoting human rights and fostering peace resonated deeply with the people of Guyana.

President Carter held a special place in the hearts of Guyanese



The signing of the condolence

for his significant role in advancing democracy in the country. As the founder of The Carter Center, he played a pivotal role in observing Guyana's electoral processes, ensuring free and fair elections that strengthened the nation's democratic foundations.



Vice President Dr Bharrat Jagdeo has once again called out the opposition's anti-progress criticisms of government performance in an attempt to bring relevance to their cause.

During his weekly press conference, Dr Jagdeo addressed the contention of the Working People's Alliance (WPA) that budget 2025 is a "political gimmick".

He highlighted that the opposition continues to posit baseless criticisms against the government's spending on development initiatives, ranging from infrastructure to health and housing.

Further, he said they fail to provide concrete alternatives, but appear wholly satisfied to assert generic disapproval.

DR JAGDEO DISMISSES WPA'S CRITICISM OF BUDGET 2025

"Tell us whose road not to fix. Tell us which congested highway not to widen. Tell us, if we don't spend the money on the power plant, where to get the power from. Or should we not spend money on all the water treatment plants for our people? They can't come to the details," he argued.

Dr Jagdeo assured that the 2025 budget aims to address the needs of Guyanese, leading to the further fulfillment of the ambitious commitments the government made in its manifesto.

He dismissed the assertions of the WPA as



Vice President Dr Bharrat Jagdeo Addresses members of the media at his weekly press conference

more mindless chatter that feed into their continued attempts to villainise the PPP.

Dr Jagdeo reminded that the government is focused on creating

more opportunities and uplifting the lives of Guyanese, and each budget presented during its tenure has reflected this determination.

Successive budgets

have seen massive allocations for housing, health, infrastructure and education, which are some of the key pillars in boosting the living standard in the country.

In 2024, the government passed a historic \$1.146 trillion National Budget 2024 themed "Staying the Course: Building Prosperity for All". This budget imposed no new taxes and was partially financed by revenue earned from Guyana REDD + Investment Fund (GRIF) under the original Low Carbon Development Strategy (LCDS).

On January 17, the government presented this year's fiscal plan, which will continue to prioritise sustainable growth citizen well-being and nationwide transformation.

BRUTUS' "DIVERSITY POLICY" LAWSUIT A PR STUNT - DR JAGDEO

Dr Bharrat Jagdeo, Guyana's Vice President and General Secretary of the ruling People's Progressive Party has dismissed the "diversity policy" lawsuit by embattled Assistant Commissioner of Police Calvin Brutus as a desperate publicity stunt to grab headlines.

He confirmed that the Attorney General's Chambers and Ministry of Legal Affairs have not been served with a notice, despite news of the lawsuit being reported in the media almost a week ago.

In his GY\$1.6 billion lawsuit against the state, Brutus accused the government of racial discrimination in the Guyana Police Force due to its "Diversity Policy".

"There is a claim



Popular member of the People's National Congress Reform (PNC/R) James Bond

that somewhere along the line, the PPP said we would like to see diversity in all of our institutions and across the country, and I support that because we've been open about it, we've spoken about having diversity that reflects the people of our country in every institution...

and you've seen us working towards this, So I don't see anything wrong with that," Dr Jagdeo told reporters at his weekly Freedom House press conference.

Further, Brutus claimed that he was removed from the position of acting Deputy Police Commissioner for Administration to allow for the ascension of Assistant Commissioner Ravindradat Budhram, who is Indo-Guyanese.

However, the GS poured cold water on these claims, asserting that no such directive was given, and asserted that Brutus' removal may have been due to the corruption allegations levied against him, and not racial discrimination.

Dr Jagdeo also noted

that the opposition has once again capitalised on this issue to peddle their tired racism narrative against the PPP/C government.

He said that the opposition is desperate to use race as a political tactic, even if it means overlooking Brutus' alleged corruption.

PPP Defends Guyanese Right to choose

Dr Jagdeo also defended the right of Guyanese to leave the Opposition ranks and join the PPP/C, saying that people have opted out of being associated with a 'morbid movement'.

Speaking specifically to the decision by popular member of the People's National Congress Reform



Rank of the Guyana Police Force

(PNC/R) James Bond like James Bond, who to endorse President Ali have exercised their constitutional right to freely associate with a political party of their choosing.

His party however, Dr Jagdeo said, will always support people's right to associate with a political party of their choice.

Dr Jagdeo lambasted those who vilify people



Chief Executive Officer of the Cheddi Jagan International Airport (CJIA), Ramesh Ghir

Guyana achieved a significant milestone in 2024, surpassing one million international passengers transiting

through its ports -of-entry.

According to Ramesh Ghir, CEO of the Cheddi Jagan International

GUYANA SURPASSED ONE MILLION PASSENGER MILESTONE IN 2024

Airport (CJIA), a total of 1,072,785 passengers were processed across four key entry points: CJIA, Eugene Correia International Airport (Ogle), Lethem Border Crossing, and Moleson Creek Crossing. This represents a 15% increase compared to 2023.

CJIA processed the majority of passengers,

with 826,000 travellers passing through the airport. Ogle Airport processed 72,000 passengers, while Lethem and Moleson Creek recorded 28,000 and 14,000 passengers, respectively.

This significant growth is attributed to the increasing number of airlines operating in

Guyana, leading to a 17% increase in international landings. As a result, available aircraft seating increased by 20%, offering passengers greater choice and more affordable travel options.

"Additional aircraft seating means more choice for passengers and lower ticket costs,"

Ghir emphasised. CJIA continues to play a vital role in driving Guyana's economic growth. Ongoing efforts are focused on modernising airport operations and enhancing the overall passenger experience.

GUYANA FIRST IN CARIBBEAN TO GET SCANNING ELECTRON MICROSCOPE FOR CRIME INVESTIGATION

Guyana has become the first country in the Caribbean to acquire a scanning electron microscope (SEM) for its forensic science laboratory.

The state-of-the-art, \$86 million equipment will revolutionise forensic analysis and significantly strengthen Guyana's justice system.

The SEM is a tool that is used to scan a sample's surface and produce high-resolution images. The acquisition of the equipment is a welcome addition to Guyana's crime-fighting tools.

During the unveiling ceremony at the Guyana Forensic Science Laboratory, Minister of Home Affairs Robeson Benn deemed the investment crucial in creating a safer Guyana.

"This is a very significant acquisition, and this acquisition points



Guyana has become the first country in the Caribbean to acquire a scanning electron microscope (SEM)

out our government's approach towards bringing the technology, the knowledge and the expertise in relation to matching up with our country," Minister Benn said.

To acquire this advanced technology, the government established a strategic

partnership with ZEISS, a renowned German company that specialises in optical systems and optoelectronics.

The collaboration enabled Guyana to access a vital piece of technology that will help advance the processing of forensic evidence. It means that SEM will play a key role in the investigation of crimes

and also allow law enforcement agencies to introduce forensic evidence into court proceedings.

Its microscope's high-tech features allow forensic scientists to examine details of various materials in large batches around the clock.

This capability of SEM will be particularly

useful in clearing a backlog of cold cases where gunshot residues can now be analysed.

Beyond crime analysis, the SEM can be applied to critical research in sectors such as oil and gas, food science, and healthcare.

The government also plans to train five forensic specialists to operate and maintain the equipment.

In addition, the government of Guyana is seeking to further enhance the capabilities of the Guyana Forensic Science Laboratory (GFSL) through collaboration with India.

The government will soon sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the National Forensic Sciences University of India.

This collaboration, Minister Benn explained, would allow forensic experts to come here and



Minister of Home Affairs Hon Robeson Benn at the unveiling ceremony for SEM

help in the process of clearing up crime events in a way that stands the test of courts.

Since taking office in 2020, the government has made numerous investments in improving operations at the Guyana Forensic Science Laboratory. The lab has had significant upgrades to its DNA testing capabilities, reducing the backlog of cases.

PRESIDENT ALI ANNOUNCES \$130,000 MINIMUM BASIC SALARY FOR LOWEST-RANKING JOINT SERVICES STAFF

President Dr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali announced that all joint services personnel at the lowest rank will receive a basic salary of \$130,000, a move that is aimed at addressing longstanding salary discrepancies across different agencies within the joint services.

"I've spoken to the Minister of Finance and I've asked that he ensure that every rank in the joint

services that is at a constable level be paid a minimum salary of \$130,000," President Ali stated.

The President emphasised the importance of equitable pay across all branches of the joint services, recognising their crucial role in maintaining public safety and order. He made this announcement during the handover ceremony

for 40 new Rapid Intervention Vehicles at the Guyana Fire Service Headquarters.

This initiative underscores the government's commitment to the well-being and appreciation of the joint services. In addition to the recent 10% retroactive salary increase for public servants and an 8% increase for 2025, the joint services also

received their annual one-month bonus last year, amounting to approximately \$1.6 billion.

The government has consistently invested in salary increases specifically for members of the joint services, acknowledging their invaluable contributions to the nation.



The government has consistently invested in salary increases specifically for members of the joint services

Guyana's gold production revenue saw a significant increase in 2024, driven in large by government's efforts to deploy advanced technologies to boost operations.

While production of gold itself saw a modest rise - from 432,113 ounces in 2023 to 434,067 ounces in 2024 - the Minister of Natural Resources, Vickram Bharrat, announced that the total gold revenue for the year 2024 was an impressive US\$989.9 million.

The minister said that the revenue growth spells out the sector's importance to the country's economy.



Gold Revenue increased significantly in 2024

GOLD REVENUE INCREASED BY US\$181 MILLION IN 2024

"I believe this is an encouraging sign for the sector and for the stakeholders, so much so that we are seeing now that a number of key stakeholders are expanding or restarting their mining operations, and they are also new players entering the sector," Minister Bharrat said.

He explained that in 2025 the government will continue to work with small and medium-

scale miners to increase their recovery rate.

Large-scale producers have significantly increased production, with some achieving almost 95 per cent recovery rate, according to the minister.

However, local miners have struggled with a 40 to 45 per cent recovery rate, which the government believes can be improved with the right types of investments.

Several new areas

have been allocated through lotteries in key mining districts in Regions One, Seven and Eight. This has empowered some 500 small miners with access to concessions of their in 2024.

The Guyana Geology and Mines Commission (GGMC) has also been tasked with improving its monitoring system in order to boost production and eradicate illegal mining practices.

SOD TURNED FOR GUYANA'S FIRST SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF

In its unwavering commitment to foster the development of all learners, the Ministry of Education took a historic step in Guyana's educational landscape when Minister of Education, Priya Manickchand, turned the sod to mark the commencement of construction of the country's first dedicated school for the deaf.

This landmark project, valued at G\$194,472,570, will be executed by

Superior Supplies and General Construction and is scheduled to be completed within nine months. Located in Cummings Lodge, the state-of-the-art facility will cater to 30 learners, providing a nurturing environment that celebrates and supports deaf culture. Beyond being a school, the facility will serve as a resource hub for deaf youth, fostering community connections and personal growth.

Minister

Manickchand stated, "This school is a testament to our government's dedication to inclusivity and equal opportunities for all learners." She commended the work the Deaf Association of Guyana has been doing over the years and noted that the Government is working towards establishing more inclusive spaces across the country.

Sabine McIntosh, Director of the Deaf Association of Guyana,

was present during the momentous occasion. Minister Manickchand recognised her significant contributions to the sector for more than a decade.

Meanwhile, the Assistant Chief Education Officer responsible for Special Education Needs and Development (SEND) Dr. Keon Cheung noted that the initiative underscores the Ministry's holistic approach to education, recognising the



SOD turned for Guyana's first School for the Deaf

importance of specialised support for learners with special education needs and disabilities (SEND).

He highlighted that as part of this effort, the Cyril Potter College of Education (CPCE) has incorporated deaf education into its curriculum. Deaf youth

enrolled in the SEND programme are now teacher candidates, with additional programmes being offered by CPCE's Disability Studies Department to train educators interested in teaching learners who are deaf.

The Ministry of Education has invested a significant \$31.5 billion in constructing, renovating, and maintaining schools across Guyana from 2020 to 2024. This substantial investment underscores the government's commitment to providing high-quality education for all Guyanese.

BREAKDOWN OF INVESTMENTS:

- **New Construction:** \$13 billion
- **Reconstruction:** \$7 billion
- **Major Extensions:** \$8 billion
- **School Repairs:** \$2 billion

REGIONAL INVESTMENTS

- The investments have been distributed across all regions:
- Region One - \$817 million

- Region Two - \$ 3 . 6 billion
- Region Three - \$3.5 billion
- Region Four - \$8.3 billion
- Region Five - \$ 8 9 7 million
- Region Six - \$ 7 5 6 million
- Region Seven - \$2.4 billion
- Region Eight- \$1.8 billion
- Region Nine - \$2.8 billion
- Region Ten - \$825 million
- Georgetown - \$5.3 billion

EXPANDING SECONDARY EDUCATION ACCESS

The government is currently constructing



Good Hope Secondary School

37 new secondary schools nationwide to ensure universal access to secondary education.

- Region One - Hosororo, Kwebanna, Waramuri, Matthews Ridge
- Region Three- Tuschen, Nismes
- Region Four - Kaneville, Prospect
- Region Six - Orealla,

- Siparuta
- Region Seven- Phillipai, Jawalla, Issano, Karrau
- Region Eight - Micobie, Monkey Mountain, Kopinang
- Region Nine - Karasabai, Maruranau, Tabatinga, Massara, Yupukari, Katoka, Nappi
- Region Ten -

\$31.5B INVESTED IN SCHOOL INFRASTRUCTURE SINCE 2020

- Wairuni
- Georgetown - North Ruimveldt, St Mary's, Christ Church

ADDRESSING HISTORICAL DEFICIENCIES

Minister of Education, Priya Manickchand highlighted the significant increase in secondary schools' construction under the current administration. She noted that only three secondary schools existed in the hinterland regions when the PPP/C took office in 1992. While 14 additional schools were built by 2015, no new secondary schools were constructed during the subsequent period.

IMPROVING EXISTING SCHOOLS

The ministry has undertaken major extension works at several existing schools, including St. Rose's High, Bishops' High, and Queen's College, to enhance student capacity and comfort.

INVESTING IN HUMAN RESOURCES

In addition to infrastructure development, the government is prioritising the training and development of teachers. To date, 4,378 teachers have graduated from the Cyril Potter College of Education, strengthening the teaching workforce across the country.

NEW \$1.2 BILLION KANEVILLE SECONDARY SCHOOL TO SERVE OVER 1000 STUDENTS

Construction has begun on a new \$1.2 billion secondary school in Kaneville, East Bank Demerara, set to accommodate over 1000 students from the surrounding communities.

The 11-month construction project is part of the government's response to address overcrowding in schools across Region Four. The Ministry of Education is also undertaking the construction of a new secondary school in Prospect and is actively expanding and upgrading several

existing schools on the East Bank, including the Diamond Secondary School.

Minister of Education, Priya Manickchand, emphasised that the increased student enrollment and the expansion of subject offerings have led to overcrowding in many schools. She outlined the government's commitment to addressing this issue promptly and prioritising the comfort and educational enhancement of Guyana's students.

"We're significantly extending other schools on the East Bank, investing heavily in rehabilitation. However, we still require large secondary schools like Kaneville and Prospect to accommodate all our children," Minister Manickchand stated.

Beyond Region Four, the Ministry continues to enhance educational facilities across the country. Upgrades are planned for schools on



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

the East Coast, including Hope Secondary and Annandale Secondary. Furthermore, the construction of new schools is underway in Regions Eight, Nine, and other hinterland regions.

These initiatives align with the government's commitment to providing universal secondary education to every community in Guyana. Minister Manickchand reiterated President

Dr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali's administration's pledge to ensure that every child has access to a quality secondary education, regardless of their location.

33 PERSONS BEGIN OIL AND GAS TRAINING AT PORT MOURANT FACILITY

A total of 33 students have officially begun their training on the facility simulator at the Guyana Technical Training College Inc., (GTTCI) in Port Mourant, Region Six.

According to an update posted by President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali on his Facebook page, this is the largest cohort to be trained in Guyana on the simulator since its commissioning.

Following completion of the six-month programme, the students will be certified to work on Guyana's offshore Floating Production, Storage, and Offloading (FPSOs) vessels.

This landmark

venture aims to provide additional employment opportunities for youth in the growing oil and gas sector through a world-class education.

FacTor (Facility Simulator) is a secure, fully operational live process plant that replicates the functions of an actual plant.

The facility is the first of its kind in the region and is designed to provide practical training for multiple programmes, enabling trainees to practice calibration, troubleshooting and maintenance activities on these facilities.

Trainees also follow a permit-to-work system, which is aimed at ensuring the work is done safely and



Largest oil and gas cohort begins training on FacTor Simulator

efficiently.

They adhere to the same procedures and work orders required in real-life procedures aboard an FPSO, as

part of a 'Safe System of Work.'

The US\$13 million (\$2.6 billion) facility was commissioned in 2024 as the first phase

of the wider Guyana Technical Training College Inc., which is an alliance between the Government of Guyana and the Stabroek

Block coventurers – ExxonMobil Guyana Limited (EMGL), Hess Corporation and China National Offshore Oil Corporation (CNOOC).

Phase Two will see the construction of a campus that can house 150 students and administrative offices equipped with all the amenities.

Guyana is one of 10 countries with a facility of this magnitude.

In July of last year, 24 young adults graduated from the programme as certified operations and maintenance technicians, a vital skill that would enable them to work on offshore operations.

PPP NEVER SUPPORTED 2016 PSA AGREEMENT - DR JAGDEO - DISMISSES TROTMAN'S CLAIMS AS UNFOUNDED



Guyana's Oil & Gas sector continues to thrive

General Secretary of the People's Progressive Party (PPP), Dr. Bharrat Jagdeo, has strongly refuted allegations that the party secretly supported the lopsided 2016 Production Sharing Agreement (PSA).

The claim, originating from Raphael Trotman's book From Destiny to Prosperity, suggests Dr Jagdeo, as Opposition Leader, approved tax waivers in the agreement. However, Dr Jagdeo dismissed the narrative as unfounded, questioning Trotman's

reliance on an unnamed source.

"This is a desperate attempt to link us to their bad deal," Dr Jagdeo said, emphasising the PPP's strong record in the oil and gas sector, including the Local Content Law and the new Petroleum Activities Bill.

He noted that in August 2016, PPP parliamentarians had protested the lack of transparency during a late-night debate on tax waivers. The party also led calls for the full

release of the PSA, which was only made public in December 2017 after intense pressure.

Dr Jagdeo highlighted that the 2016 agreement—widely criticised for its two per cent royalty rate and tax exemptions for ExxonMobil—was signed without transparency. **"Our track record speaks for itself,"** he affirmed, contrasting the PPP's legislative measures with the coalition's actions.

OVER \$200M RECOVERED IN UNPAID WORKERS' WAGES IN FOUR YEARS

The Ministry of Labour has recovered over \$200 million in unpaid wages for workers over the past four years, including \$31.7 million in 2024 alone.

Minister of Labour Joseph Hamilton announced this at a press briefing, emphasising the government's commitment to protecting workers' rights.

Minister Hamilton revealed that several employers involved in wage theft had also committed other infractions, including employing evasion tactics

to avoid accountability. Some companies frequently changed their business names to evade conviction.

"When they rob people in 2024, next year in 2025, they change the company name to another name... a lot of these security companies, the name they started with, I can tell you is not the name they have five years, 10 years," Minister Hamilton explained.

Despite these challenges, the ministry has intensified efforts to hold such companies

accountable, recover workers' wages, and reduce the number of labour complaints.

Through targeted initiatives such as outreach programmes, seminars, and the newly launched labour app, the ministry has improved its complaint-receiving mechanisms. The app empowers workers to report issues without fear of job loss.

"This app has allowed them to make those reports so that the Ministry of Labour, Labour Department can intervene," the minister

said.

With a significant number of cases already resolved, Minister Hamilton assured workers that all remaining labour cases will be investigated and addressed.



Over \$200M retrieved in 4 years for unpaid workers

\$5.6B WORTH OF NARCOTICS SEIZED IN GUYANA IN 2024



4.4 tonnes (4,400kilos) of cocaine seized from an illegal airstrip in the dense forests of Matthew's Ridge, Region One last year

The Customs Anti-Narcotic Unit (CANU) made significant inroads against drug trafficking last year by intercepting and destroying some 6738.212 kilogrammes (kgs) of illicit substances.

The seizure represents a street value of approximately \$5.6 billion.

Minister of Home Affairs, Robeson Benn, said that 5094.67 kgs of cocaine, 1643.45 kgs of cannabis and 92 kgs of methamphetamine (meth) were seized during various operations.

According to the minister, the 4.4 tonnes (4,400 kilos) of cocaine

intercepted at Matthews Ridge in Region One last year, accounts for the majority of the seizures.

He noted too, that several unauthorised aircraft were intercepted and a number of foreign pilots are currently serving sentences.

Some 82 individuals were arrested, with 68 convicted, while 54 individuals were charged with offences relating to drug trafficking.

Although CANU achieved tremendous success last year, Minister Benn said there is need for more collaboration with Guyana's international partners to effectively

put a dent in the drug trade.

The minister believes that international stakeholders should provide more support and radar coverage to CANU and the Guyana Police Force, among other agencies.

"The demand is not in Guyana for cocaine or for marijuana in the quantities that are being produced in some place. The demand is elsewhere and we are afflicted by this demand," the home affairs minister said.

500 ADDITIONAL BODY CAMERAS ACQUIRED FOR POLICE FORCE

The Ministry of Home Affairs has procured an additional 500 body cameras for members of the Guyana Police Force (GPF) to improve interactions between the police and the public.

The goal of the body cameras is to capture digital audio-video evidence for criminal, civil, and traffic-related court cases.

They will assist in accurately documenting events and interactions, enhancing accuracy in reports and reviewing procedures and interpersonal actions

between police officers and the public.

The Minister of Home Affairs, Robeson Benn, said these additional systems will complement the over 200 cameras sourced last year, with additional purchases to be made in the future.

"We had situations where there is a questioning of the interaction between the police and the public and questions of professional behaviour and conduct," he emphasised. According

to Minister Benn, the introduction of this initiative has helped reduce instances where officers were assaulted or disrupted in the execution of their duties.

Officers will undergo training to ensure they know how to operate the cameras effectively.

Members of the Customs Anti-Narcotic Unit and the Guyana Prison Service are also being outfitted with similar cameras.

The Commissioner of Police, Clifton Hicken, warned police officers to ensure their body cameras are on when



Minister of Home Affairs Hon. Robeson Ben

they are engaging with members of the public.

This initiative is

aimed at modernising Guyana's institution and fostering

trust and confidence in the country's law enforcement agencies.

QUINDON BACCHUS FAMILY TO BE AWARDED \$24M AS PRESIDENT ALI INTERVENES

Quindon Bacchus family to be awarded \$24M as President Ali intervenes

The Government of Guyana will not appeal the Supreme Court's \$24 million award to the family of Quindon Bacchus, who was killed by law enforcement officials in 2022.

This was disclosed by Vice President Dr. Bharrat Jagdeo, who stated that President Dr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali intervened, directing that the family be awarded the sum ordered by the court.



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

"Apparently, the AG and the others were planning to appeal the judgement and the President made it clear, there should be no appeal and that the award must be paid to Quindon Bacchus and the family," Dr. Jagdeo said during a press conference.

Attorney General Anil Nandlall had previously indicated the state's intention to appeal the judgement, citing concerns about the award amount. However, following consultations,

President Ali overruled the appeal.

Twenty-five-year-old Bacchus was killed during a police operation in Haslington, East Coast Demerara, on June 10, 2022. The Guyana Police Force claimed that Bacchus was attempting to sell an illegal firearm and fired shots at an officer while trying to flee, prompting the officer to return fire.

In 2023, High Court Judge Justice Nigel Niles delivered his judgement, ordering the state to pay \$24 million in damages to Bacchus' family.

NORTH EAST LA PENITENCE HEALTH CENTRE REOPENS, ENHANCING HEALTHCARE ACCESS FOR GEORGETOWN RESIDENTS



The North East La Penitence Health centre was officially reopened

The reopening of the \$18 million North East La Penitence Health Centre marks a significant step forward in expanding access to primary healthcare for approximately 7,651 residents in the East Ruimveldt to Lamaha Park area. A ceremony commemorated the reopening of the facility, which will now offer a range of critical services, including expanded vaccination campaigns for 19 preventable diseases (such as HPV), school health screenings with corrective care, HbA1c testing for diabetes management, and infectious disease monitoring. In the coming months, the health center will be further expanded to include a

dedicated dental suite. The reopening aligns with the government's collaboration with the Pan American Health Organization, offering 115 different types of interventions at healthcare facilities nationwide. Health Minister Dr. Frank Anthony expressed satisfaction with the expanded services available to Georgetown residents. He highlighted the implementation of the HEARTS Initiative at the health centre, which focuses on the prevention and early detection of cardiovascular diseases and hypertension.

“We want to ensure that people can access the new types of medication we are using for this,”

Dr. Anthony stated, “We will make this health center one where the HEARTS initiative is done, so all the effective medication will be offered to their patients here.”

individualised, and accessible health services to all. This model aims to reduce health disparities by ensuring equitable and inclusive universal health coverage.



The reopening marks a crucial step in expanding access to primary healthcare within the capital city

Primary healthcare emphasises community-based care, providing continuous,

CONSTRUCTION TO BEGIN ON NEW CAMPBELLVILLE HEALTH CENTRE IN FEBRUARY

Construction of a new \$831 million Health Centre in Campbellville, Georgetown is set to commence in February, Georgetown Public Hospital Corporation's (GPHC) CEO, Robbie Rambarran announced during a press briefing. The new facility will provide residents of Campbellville and surrounding areas with access to quality and efficient healthcare services, including digital x-rays, ultrasounds, and electrocardiograms (ECG). Notably, the health centre will feature an asthma bay, aiming to reduce the influx of asthma patients to the GPHC. To facilitate construction, the current health centre will be temporarily relocated to a nearby building for approximately one month. The project is anticipated to be completed within 12 months.

In light of the deteriorating condition of the Kitty Health Centre, a decision has been made to merge its services with the new Campbellville Health Centre. Furthermore, Rambarran announced that the waiting area at the Festival City Health Centre has been expanded to accommodate a larger number of patients.



Campbellville Health Centre

\$46M MATERNAL WAITING HOME COMMISSIONED IN MABARUMA



Mabaruma Maternal Waiting Home opens

Expectant mothers and relaxation before childbirth. The facility caters to pregnant women from remote communities in their third trimester (34 weeks or more). Equipped with 12 beds, a kitchen, dining area, washroom, a delivery room, and an on-call room, the home ensures that high-risk mothers, and those with complications have access to specialised care, minimising the risk of maternal and neonatal mortality. This is the second maternal waiting facility in Region One, following the commissioning of a similar facility in Moruca. With this addition, the government has now established eight such facilities across Guyana. Health Minister Dr. Frank Anthony emphasised the

government's commitment to providing high-quality maternal care nationwide. “This reflects the very nature of the PPP/C Government. All of our policies are geared toward enhancing the lives of our people,” Dr. Anthony noted. He highlighted the positive impact of a similar facility in Region Nine in reducing maternal mortality.

Dr. Anthony urged the public to fully utilise the services offered at the facility to prevent pregnancy complications. He also announced the upcoming installation of a new \$80 million Simen digital X-ray machine at the Mabaruma Regional Hospital, expanding healthcare services for residents. Regional Chairman Brentnol Ashley described the opening of the maternal waiting home as a significant milestone in improving healthcare access and creating hope for mothers and their communities in Region One.



A section of the commissioning ceremony for Mabaruma Maternal Waiting Home

THREE HEALTH POSTS RECOMMISSIONED IN REGION ONE

Three health posts in Region One – Kamwatta, Arukamai, and Imbotero have been recommissioned, providing improved access to healthcare services for over 1,000 residents.

Kamwatta Health Post underwent significant renovations, including a new fence and the installation

of solar panels, at a cost of approximately \$14 million. Arukamai Health Post, with its \$15 million upgrade, will serve over 300 residents, offering a range of services including chronic disease treatment, family planning, vaccination programmes, and adolescent healthcare. Imbotero Health Post,

upgraded at a cost of \$16 million and serving 410 residents, is now equipped with telemedicine capabilities.

Residents expressed their gratitude for these improvements,

said Asif Emmanuel, a Community Health Worker (CHW) at Kamwatta. **“It was in a deplorable state, the walls had holes. You couldn’t take the patients in the room since you were**



Imbotero Health Post

Dr Frank Anthony who recommissioned the facilities, stressed the government’s commitment to improving health infrastructure across the country, particularly in remote communities. He highlighted the substantial investments made in recent years, with the budget allocated for infrastructure improvements increasing from \$100 million in 2022 to \$500 million in 2024.

Dr. Anthony encouraged residents to take advantage of available training opportunities in the health sector, such as becoming community health workers (CHWs), nursing assistants, medex, and professional nurses. He stressed that this will further enhance the capacity of the healthcare system in the region.



Ceremonial cutting of the ribbon for Arukamai Health Post



\$14M spent on newly recommissioned Kamwatta Health Post

highlighting the reduced need to travel long distances for basic healthcare.

“When I started to work here in 2019, it was not as nice as it is presently,”

seeing through the walls. I am glad that the health post is in a better state because of the Government of Guyana and the Ministry of Health.”

Minister of Health,

\$39B SPENT ON POWER AND PROGRESS IN 2024

The government invested \$39 billion in 2024 to enhance Guyana’s energy capacity and improve the reliability of the national grid. Key projects included the construction of the Wartsila and Columbia power plants, alongside targeted efforts to connect households to the grid and support vulnerable populations.

Prime Minister Brigadier (Ret’d) Mark Phillips highlighted these achievements during his year-end press briefing at the Arthur Chung

Conference Centre. He noted that \$10.7 billion was allocated to the Wartsila 46.5-megawatt dual-fuel power plant at the Garden of Eden generating complex, while the Columbia power plant on the East Coast of Demerara, costing \$4.1 billion, added 30 megawatts to the grid. These initiatives have bolstered the national electricity supply, and improved reliability and enabled the integration of renewable energy sources.

The government

also spent \$24.1 billion on fuel assistance to maintain consistent energy generation and \$852.6 million to subsidise electricity costs for 28,420 pensioners nationwide, reducing their financial burdens and increasing disposable incomes.

Additionally, 912 households gained access to electricity for the first time in 2024, significantly enhancing the quality of life for residents in Regions Four and Six. This effort connected 500 homes in Samville, 153

in Crabwood Creek, and 259 in other areas served by the Demerara-Berbice Interconnected System (DBIS).

The expansion of Guyana’s total electrical generation from 207 megawatts to 267 megawatts accommodated the growing demand spurred by a housing and construction boom and commercial development. New solar farms, mini-grids, and two power ships, generating 96 megawatts collectively, contributed to the increase. Smaller



Prime Minister, Brigadier (Ret’d) Mark Phillips and Minister within the Office of the Prime Minister with responsibility for Public Affairs, Kwame McCoy giving an update on the electricity

projects, including 1.2 megawatts at Anna Regina and 450 kilowatts at Wakenaam, further supported the energy sector’s growth.

Prime Minister Phillips noted that, despite a peak national demand of 205 megawatts, the government maintained a surplus,

ensuring uninterrupted power supply. These advancements align with broader energy initiatives, such as the Amaila Falls Hydropower Project and the gas-to-energy project, which are expected to generate surplus energy to meet domestic needs and provide financial relief for households.



Taruka Village utilised its Presidential Grant to purchase an internet system for education and social purposes

In 2024, the Government of Guyana invested over \$395 million in development projects within Amerindian communities through the Ministry of Amerindian Affairs’ Presidential Grant initiative. This

significant investment empowered thousands of Amerindians by improving their livelihoods and fostering community development. Village Councils, empowered with direct funding, implemented

projects,

OVER \$395M INVESTED IN AMERINDIAN DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS IN 2024

projects prioritised by their communities. The Ministry of Amerindian Affairs provided essential technical support and monitoring to ensure successful project execution.

“Our focus is on tangible, community-beneficial projects where people feel a sense of ownership,” stated Minister Pauline Sukhai.

The grants supported a diverse range of projects,

including construction of guesthouses in emerging tourism hubs like Paruima, expansion of ginger cultivation, boosting livestock and poultry rearing, and provision of essential farming implements.

Also covered were improvement of basic infrastructure through the construction of jetties, footpaths, bridges, and fencing for farms and playfields, the establishment of village shops for community development, and the

creation of block-making enterprises, and the development of small fuel services.

These projects have not only boosted economic stability within Amerindian communities, but also created valuable employment opportunities for youth, ensuring a sustainable income source.

Since assuming office in 2020, the government has significantly increased the allocation for Presidential Grants,

aligning with its 2020-2025 manifesto. This increase has provided a substantial boost to smaller villages, with funding per village now ranging from \$1 million to \$2 million or more annually.

In addition to the Presidential Grants, Amerindian villages also benefited from significant funding through the Amerindian Development Fund (ADF) and the Low Carbon Development Strategy (LCDS) 2030.

PRESIDENT ALI REAFFIRMS COMMITMENT TO REGION TEN'S DEVELOPMENT, ANNOUNCES NEW HOUSING INITIATIVES



President Ali addressing residents in Victory Valley

Mohamed Irfaan Ali reaffirmed his government's commitment to the development of Region Ten during a recent visit to Linden, highlighting substantial investments made in the region since 2020.

Addressing a gathering of Lindeners in Victory Valley, President Ali announced plans to regularise

land ownership for an additional 1,000 residents, bringing the total to 1,800 regularised lots in 11 priority areas, including Ituni and Amelia's Ward.

"We are going to work on regularising and giving another 1,000 titles to persons living here, and we are going to work to find the land so we can meet the demand," he said.

The President emphasised the significant investments made in the region, particularly in the housing and public works sectors. **"From 2020 to now, in order to give and deliver to you housing and house lots, we invested more than \$5.8 billion here in Linden, more than**

600 per cent than the last government invested in all of their five years in office," he highlighted.

In 2024, under the miscellaneous roads programme, \$7.6 billion was invested in Region Ten, resulting in the construction of 535 roads, with most contracts awarded to local contractors. Since 2020, a total of \$96 billion has been expended to enhance the region's infrastructure, including the Linden to Mabura Road network and the Soesdyke to Linden highway.

"In the whole five years of the APNU+AFC, they spent less than 0.3 per cent of what we are spending in public works for your development," the



President Ali addressing residents in Victory Valley

The government also plans to conduct a reassessment of the Victory Valley community to identify areas not susceptible to flooding for land regularisation and ownership grants.

Furthermore, plans are underway to build a boxing gym, a community centre, and a basketball court to foster stronger community

opportunities for local residents.

President Ali emphasised his government's unified and inclusive approach to leadership and appealed to Lindeners for their continued support.

"You have never given us the political responsibility here in Linden and Region Ten. All we seek is not power. We seek

your support so that we can win here and get the political responsibility to show you what good, committed, selfless leadership can bring to your region. I am asking for political responsibility by your support, not political power," the President said.

President Ali was accompanied by Minister of Housing and Water, Collin Croal; Minister of Public Works, Bishop Juan Edghill; Minister within the Ministry of Public Works, Deodat Indar; Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Hugh Todd; and Minister of Culture, Youth and Sport, Charles Ramson Jr.

Residents of Mahdia and surrounding areas in Region Eight now have improved access to justice with the opening of a state-of-the-art magistrates' court. The \$220 million facility, featuring modern amenities and living quarters for staff, replaces the previous cramped and inadequate court space within the police station.

The new facility, built on three acres of land, will expedite the resolution of civil, criminal, and family disputes, addressing the backlog of cases that previously hindered access to justice.

MAHDIA GETS NEW MAGISTRATE'S COURT

The court boasts a range of modern amenities, including public waiting areas, audio/visual recording facilities, air conditioning, space for probation offices, a child-friendly room, and a library and resource centre.

Senior Magistrate Clive Nurse emphasised the positive impact of the new court, stating, **"Access has become more convenient, less expensive, and readily available in the footsteps of**



New state-of-the-art magistrates' court commissioned in Mahdia

residents of Region Eight." Judiciary (ag) Madame Yonette Cummings-Edwards highlighted

the government's commitment to staffing the court with local personnel, ensuring that Mahdia benefits from the new facility.

Attorney General Mohabir Anil Nandlall underscored the significance of this development, stating it is part of a broader government initiative to expand access to justice across the country. He pointed to several other ongoing court construction projects, including those in Providence, La

Parfaite Harmonie, and Mabaruma, representing a significant investment in the country's legal infrastructure.

The government is not only focusing on physical infrastructure but also on modernising the judicial system. The introduction of an electronic court case management system at the Diamond/Grove Magistrate's court signals the move towards a more efficient and paperless system.

PRESIDENT ALI ORDERS NEW POLICE OUTPOST FOR ENTERPRISE



President Ali addressing residents at a community meeting along the East Coast of Demerara

President Dr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali, during a community engagement, ordered the establishment of a

new police outpost in Enterprise, East Coast Demerara,

The outpost, staffed with three officers and equipped with an all-terrain vehicle, will enhance community security.

"Let us get an outpost here," the President instructed senior officers at the meeting.

President Ali acknowledged residents' concerns about personal security, stating that the government will also install CCTV cameras and improve

street lighting in the community.

During the engagement, residents expressed concerns about various issues, including land ownership, water supply, and infrastructure.

In Dazzle Housing Scheme, President Ali addressed concerns raised by residents of the community's cooperative society regarding land ownership. He assured residents that the government is ready to assist with regularisation and infrastructure development once the

cooperative society is prepared.

Residents expressed their appreciation for the government's ongoing development initiatives, highlighting improvements in road infrastructure, support for small businesses, and enhanced social services.

"Life has been better," said Carl Anthony, a Dazzle resident, noting increased government support for small businesses.

Kwesi Douglas, another resident, emphasised



A resident raising his concern

the significant improvements in road infrastructure, which have eased transportation and improved emergency response times.

"A lot of times we've been struggling to get here and there and so forth, especially where emergency cases are

concerned. We're very grateful that the roads are being done so that those can be facilitated," Douglas said.

Residents expressed optimism about the future, anticipating further improvements in their lives through continued government initiatives.

Guyanese ready to take on greater roles in oil and gas industry

SINCE Guyana's enactment of the Local Content Act in December 2021, the country has witnessed transformational changes in its workforce and economy.

This monumental legislation was created to ensure that citizens and local businesses reap significant benefits from the burgeoning oil and gas sector. Notably, it has created opportunities in as many as 40 categories of work.

This development has not only trapped more oil revenues within the economy, but also provided a foundation for capacity building among Guyanese workers.

Although lauding the Local Content law as a ground-breaking tool, former Chairman of the Private Sector Commission (PSC), Director of the Vreed-en-Hoop Shore Base Inc. (VESHI) and prominent businessman, Nicholas Deygoo-Boyer, called for an expansion of its scope.

In an interview on a recent episode of the Energy Perspectives Podcast, Deygoo-Boyer expressed his firm belief that Guyanese workers and companies are well equipped to take on more substantial roles within the oil and gas sector.

"The law has certainly helped. I am happy with what the law has done for us because, coming from where we came



Nicholas Deygoo-Boyer — wants an expansion of the scope of the Local Content law

from—which was, 'You will never,' 'You cannot,' 'There is no capacity,' these sorts of phrases—and when you're coming from that perspective, you just want to get in. Now that we have a law in place, and it has protected 40 areas,

and we're in these areas, we want to expand. Now, we need to adapt and refine too the situation that has happened," he said. He acknowledged two main criticisms: "fronting," a practice which undermines the law's intent and the need to

expand the 40 protected areas. Fronting refers to the practice of listing Guyanese individuals as executives to meet local participation requirements, while in reality, they hold little to no significant ownership or influence in the company.



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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

If you have any questions feel free to get in touch:
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Morito Egg Nog Cookies 雞蛋牛奶餅乾 Reg: \$1.99 2/\$3.00	M.Y. San Soy Flakes Cracker 蘇打餅乾 Reg: \$2.99 1.99 ea	Unifly Strip 麵粉條 500g Reg: \$1.99 1.99 ea
Chin-Sai Hot Soy Sauce 醬油 500ml Reg: \$2.99 1.59 ea	Ag-Niger Pork 臘肉 500g Reg: \$3.99 3.59 ea	Lao Han New Shrimp Sauce 泰國蝦醬 500g Reg: \$8.99 6.88 ea
SW Spaghetti Sauce 義大利醬 1L Reg: \$4.99 2.59 ea	Suka Finlake 500ml 蘇打汽水 Reg: \$1.99 4.59 ea	McCormick Assorted Flavoring 調味粉 20ml Reg: \$3.99 2/\$5.00
W Golden Jackfruit In Heavy Sauce 金寶蓮 500g Reg: \$2.99 1.59 ea	Green Coconut Water 椰子水 500ml Reg: \$1.99 99¢ ea	Cung Ding Instant Rice Noodle Series 方便麵 400g Reg: \$3.99 2.88 ea
Lamb Kee Dried Bean Thread 蠔油蠔油 500g Reg: \$4.99 2.88 ea	Bamboo Tree Vietnamese Rice Paper Series 越南米紙 500g Reg: \$2.99 1.88 ea	Sa Fortune Potable Gas 爐氣 罐裝 Reg: \$2.99 15.99 ea

RESTAURANT SPECIAL

Cucumber 黃瓜 17.00 case	Broccoli 西蘭花 23.00 case	US Tomato 美國番茄 25.00 case	Lemon 黃檸檬 170kg 25.00 case
Spanish Onion 大洋葱 28.00 case	Green Onion 蔥 28.00 case	Napa 結菜 30.00 case	Red Pepper 紅椒 15Lb 32.00 case
Head Lettuce 蓮生菜 39.00 case	Frozen Panga Basa Fillet 凍魚 800Lb 60.00 case	Headless White Shrimp 無頭白蝦 21.25/100Lb case 190.00 case	Thailand Black Tiger Shrimp 泰國黑虎蝦 11.25/50Lb 185.00 case
Extra Large Egg 特大海蝦 1.25Lb 58.99 case	Delicious Hot Chili Garlic Sauce 蒜香辣椒醬 300Lb 65.00 case	Aroy-D Coconut Milk 椰漿 4000ml 45.99 case	Heinz Tomato Ketchup 番茄醬 4.2Lb 59.99 case
Container NG-015 各種 33.00 case	Container NG-081 各種 23.00 case	Squid Brand Fish Sauce 鮑魚牌魚露 1.25Lb 29.99 case	ADM All Purpose Flour 麵粉 20kg 19.99 bag
Capri Vegetable Oil 菜油 1.2L 31.99 case	WALU DeWashing Liquid 洗潔精 4x4L 26.99 case	Lee Kum Kee Kum Chun Oyster Flavoured Sauce 李錦記蒜蓉鮮味蠔油 1.25Lb 39.00 case	Lee Kum Kee Hoisin Sauce 李錦記蠔油 1.25Lb 48.99 case
		NG-18 New Gen Eco-Friendly Packaging 1.25Lb 22.00 case	Monosodium Glutamate 味精 20.7kg 60.00 bag
			Redpath Sugar 白糖 50kg 31.99 bag

MEAT

Pork Belly 豬腩 Reg: \$5.20 4.29 lb	Beef Back Ribs 牛腩骨 Reg: \$5.99 4.59 lb	Best Choice Skirt Beef Roll 大牛腩肉 Reg: \$3.99 7.59 lb
Frozen Cow Tongue 牛舌 Reg: \$6.99 5.99 lb	Value Chicken 平過雞 Reg: \$12.99 11.99 ea	

FROZEN

THAI Gold Frozen Peeled & Deveined Shrimp 蝦仁 31.25/350g Reg: \$10.99 6.99 ea	Quality Pak Squid 魷魚 2.2Lb Reg: \$10.99 8.99 ea	Wua Sea Golden Pempang 金邊魚 4.5Lb Reg: \$4.99 3.99 lb	BF Out DeSealed Bangus Milkfish 牛軋魚 1.25Lb Reg: \$6.99 4.99 ea	Golden Saba Shred Steamed AA-1 Bullet Tuna 小吞拿 600g Reg: \$3.99/ea 2/\$5.00	2/\$7.00
Coconut Tree Frozen Vegetarian Roll 椰菜雞肉卷 4.5Lb Reg: \$5.99 3.99 ea	Large Brown Egg 大黃蛋 30/ea Reg: \$12.99 10.99 ea	The Laughing Cow Series 歡樂牛 135g Reg: \$3.99 2.99 ea	James Chicken Wing BBQ Sauce 雞翅 800g Reg: \$10.99 7.99 ea	SH Black Tiger Shrimp 黑虎蝦 400g Reg: \$9.99 7.99 ea	Kam Yen Jan/Wing Wing Chinese Style Sausage Series 金邊臘腸 500g Reg: \$6.99 4.99 ea

SEAFOOD

Fresh Muller 新鮮魚 Reg: \$3.99 2.99 lb	Fresh Skate Wing 新鮮魚翅 Reg: \$3.99 2.99 lb	Frozen Fresh Headless White Shrimp 凍鮮白蝦 500g Reg: \$3.99 6.99 lb
Frozen Fresh Pompano 凍鮮龍躉 500g Reg: \$3.99 4.99 lb	Fresh Frozen Lussler 新鮮凍魚 500g Reg: \$3.99 3.99 lb	Fresh Chinese Milk Cow Cakes 新鮮牛奶餅 500g Reg: \$3.99 4.99 lb

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Lou & Nicky's Lemon Juice
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Sunday 9 am to 6 pm

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Saturday 8 am to 9 pm
Sunday 9 am to 7 pm

PRESIDENT ALI PLEDGES SUPPORT FOR ECD COMMUNITY-LED AGRICULTURAL INNOVATION



President Dr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali addresses crowd in Buxton East Coast Demerara

President Dr. Irfaan Ali has announced transformative agricultural projects in Melanie Damishana, Buxton, and Strathspey on the East Coast of Demerara, emphasising his government's commitment to people-centered development.

MELANIE DAMISHANA

The President revealed plans to develop several acres of land in Melanie Damishana for an agricultural innovation

programme tailored to residents' priorities. During a community outreach at the May 26 Nursery Complex, he also pledged to improve drainage infrastructure, expand the nursery school, provide a welding plant for skills training, and enhance community spaces and rehabilitate the playground through the First Lady's Office.

Buxton

In Buxton, the Government will collaborate with farmers, women, and youth groups to transform 25

acres of land into a major pork production hub. The initiative will introduce smart agricultural



Strathspey residents engage President Ali

practices and create economic opportunities. Additionally, plans include establishing a sewing project, and developing a learning resource centre for youth training and mentorship.

STRATHSPEY

Strathspey residents will benefit from a sustainable beekeeping project, with the Government providing 50 beehives, safety equipment, and training through NAREI. The project aims to empower young people and women while boosting agricultural productivity.



Strathspey residents engage President Ali

President Ali reiterated his administration's goal of empowering Neighbourhood Democratic Councils (NDCs) nationwide to deliver essential services effectively. Investments will target sanitation, security, and infrastructure upgrades.

Recently, the President visited several East Coast Demerara communities, emphasising the importance of community engagement in shaping Guyana's development.

PRESIDENT ALI IMPRESSED BY EBD HYDROPONICS FARM, ENCOURAGES YOUTH TO EMBRACE MODERN AGRICULTURE



President Ali at the CV Farm

President Dr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali expressed amazement at the innovative use of hydroponics technology during an unscheduled visit to CV Farm at Kuffy Koker Dam, Friendship, East Bank Demerara.

The president commended the farm owner for pioneering a remarkable project that successfully cultivates a large number of high-value herbs and vegetables. He believes this fully automated farm exemplifies Guyana's potential for advanced agricultural practices, particularly in leveraging technology to revolutionise food

production. "We will further support this. This



Agricultural yield at the CV Farm

is exactly what we wanted," President Ali said.

President Ali highlighted his administration's strides in boosting productivity and diversifying crops over the past four years. He emphasised the government's readiness to provide all necessary resources to strengthen the agricultural sector and position it as a key driver of national growth.

Recognising the

growing importance of agricultural innovation, the President acknowledged the potential for critical collaboration with experienced agriculturists to train young people in modern techniques. He encouraged individuals to take advantage of training sessions offered by the Ministry of Agriculture's National Agricultural Research and Extension Institute (NAREI).

The government continues to promote the use of state-of-the-art technology to modernise the regional agricultural system, boost food production,

faster harvest cycles, and water conservation.

In March 2024, the Guyana School of Agriculture (GSA) received a first-of-its-kind greenhouse from



President Ali at the CV Farm at Friendship Village, East Bank Demerara

and ensure food security. This strategy aims to lower the high cost of food imports locally and in the Caribbean.

Hydroponics farming offers numerous benefits, including a soil-free controlled environment, year-round cultivation, optimised nutrient delivery, space efficiency, reduced pest and disease infestations,

Global Affairs Canada (GAC), equipped with hydroponics and aquaculture facilities. This conservatory will play a crucial role in imparting knowledge of climate-resilient agriculture production, a sustainable safeguard for food security while also creating jobs.

President Ali congratulates Trump, looking forward to working with USA

PRESIDENT, Dr Irfaan Ali, while extending warm congratulations to the 47th President of the United States, Donald J Trump on his inauguration, emphasised the importance of further strengthening the long-standing relations between Guyana and the United States.

President Ali, in a Facebook Post, wrote: “Congratulations to President Donald J Trump on your inauguration as the 47th President of the United States of America. As you begin a new chapter of your leadership and service, I extend best wishes on this great responsibility.

“The Government of Guyana looks forward to working closely with you and your administration to forge stronger ties between our two nations in the years ahead.”

President Trump was sworn in as the 47th president of the United States at the Capitol Rotunda. As he outlined his priorities for trade, immigration, and national security in his inaugural address, Trump declared that “the golden age of America” was beginning.

United States companies have invested over US\$15 billion into Guyana over the last four years, solidifying the South American nation’s status as a top destination for international investments.

US Assistant Secretary of State for Western Hemisphere Affairs, Brian Nichols, had highlighted this achievement during a press briefing last year, reaffirming the tangible outcomes of the strategic partnership between the two countries.

“The strategic elevation of our relationship with Guyana, the fastest-growing economy in the world, provides further proof that these partnerships produce results,” Nichols said while commending the bilateral efforts that have strengthened Guyana’s economy and defence capabilities.

The multi-billion-dollar investment is part of a broader collaboration between the US and Guyana, which includes partnerships with US companies, robust defence co-operation through the US Southern Command, and support for key sectors such as oil and gas, tourism, and infrastructure.

Since 2021, US companies have been involved in major projects, from ExxonMobil’s offshore oil developments to luxury hotel investments such as Four Points by Sheraton, and Hyatt Place.

These initiatives align with Guyana’s rapid economic transformation, and are supported by the People’s Progressive Party/Civic (PPP/C)-led government’s push to develop a diverse range of industries, including healthcare, education, and renewable energy.

More recently, in a significant step towards advancing its energy infrastructure, Guyana officially signed a loan agreement with the US Export-Import (EXIM) Bank for its ambitious gas-to-

energy (GTE) project.

The contract was officially signed at the GTE project site at Wales, West Bank Demerara, where the US EXIM Bank’s President and Chairperson, Reta Jo Lewis highlighted the significance of the project which aims to reduce the cost of electricity, enhance energy security and promote environmental sustainability.

Jo Lewis said: “Together, we are taking bold steps to strengthen energy security, enhance environmental sustainability and unlock economic opportunity.”

She further pointed out that this multimillion-dollar collaboration is just the first of many, emphasising the long-standing relationship between Guyana and the US.



Donald Trump takes the oath of office on Monday

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OVER \$369M IN VEHICLES, VESSELS DISTRIBUTED TO AMERINDIAN VILLAGES IN 2024

Residents of Amerindian villages across Guyana are now enjoying improved transportation within their communities, thanks to the investment over \$369 million in land and water transport last year.

The funds were made available by the government through the Ministry of Amerindian Affairs, under its annual Amerindian Development Fund (ADF) initiative.

“This investment has had a positive impact in the villages

that have benefitted and whether you are in One, Seven, Eight or Nine, the investment in land and water is always critical,” Minister of Amerindian Affairs Pauline Sukhai underscored.

According to the minister, villages situated along rivers, received a total of 43 boats and outboard engines, ensuring safe travel for residents and school-age children.

Meanwhile, 19 minibuses were procured for several purposes,

including taking children to school.

Eight pickups, 35 all-terrain vehicles, nine lorries and one canter were also procured for various purposes.

While \$263 million was invested in land transportation, more than \$106 million was spent on water transportation.

Minister Sukhai noted that safe travel remains a priority for the government and investments will continue to be made for those living in the hinterland.



Bauxite production to increase by 400,000 tonnes this year

BAUXITE PRODUCTION TO SURGE

Guyana’s bauxite sector is set for remarkable growth, with production expected to rise by 400,000 tonnes in 2025. This follows a 250,000-tonne increase in 2024, marking a strong recovery for the industry.

President Irfaan Ali attributed this resurgence to his government’s decisive actions, reversing the significant declines experienced under the APNU+AFC administration between 2015 and 2020, which saw a 40% drop in production and the loss of half the sector’s jobs.

“Since the PPP/C Civic assumed office, a number of steps were taken by our government to reduce costs, broaden product range, and increase production because that was the important thing

for us. We had to build back the sector,” President Ali stated during a recent broadcast.

The President pointed to critical investments by BOSAI Mineral Group, including plans for a \$470 million aluminum plant and a solar energy system to reduce operational costs.

The President highlighted new investments by BOSAI Mineral Group, including a planned \$470 million aluminum plant and a solar energy system to lower operating costs.

“At the end of 2024, we had an increase of 250,000 tonnes. And this year, we’re looking at a further increase of 400,000 tonnes. Our exports for 2024 are projected at US\$163 million,” the President highlighted, adding that more than 500 jobs were

created in 2024, with similar growth expected in 2025.

The recovery of the bauxite sector, he noted,

Opposition Must Answer for Forestry and Bauxite Decline

President Ali

He underscored the devastating effects of their policies, which led to the loss of jobs, reduced production, and



Bauxite production to increase by 400,000 tonnes this year

has been especially important for Region Ten, a community heavily impacted by the previous administration’s lack of support.

also criticised the APNU+AFC for their mismanagement of key sectors, including forestry and bauxite, during their tenure.

higher costs for small operators.

Under APNU+AFC, forestry exports dropped by 35%, employment fell from 22,000 to

14,000, and fees for small and medium loggers increased by 118%. Similarly, the bauxite sector saw massive job cuts and no infrastructural investment, leaving it in disrepair.

“They want to run from their record, but the facts are clear. The APNU+AFC Government crippled Guyana’s economy, while the PPP/C has worked tirelessly to rebuild and move the country forward,” he stated.

The President reaffirmed his government’s dedication to sustainable development, emphasising their efforts to support the 30,000 families reliant on these critical sectors. He highlighted his administration’s proactive approach to creating jobs, fostering growth, and ensuring long-term sustainability.

In 2024, the Ministry of Labour significantly increased workplace safety inspections, conducting a record 1,381 checks across the country. This surpasses the annual target by 68% and represents a substantial increase of 481 inspections compared to the previous year.

“Preventing workplace accidents and fatalities is paramount,” emphasised Minister of Labour, Joseph Hamilton, during a press briefing. **“One death is too many.”**

The Ministry prioritised high-risk workplaces, conducting 673 inspections. While workplace fatalities unfortunately increased by 45.4%, the ministry achieved a 5% reduction in non-fatal accidents.

To enhance safety measures, the ministry conducted numerous seminars and site visits. A key achievement was the inspection of nine oil production facilities, including

drill ships and FPSOs. This demonstrates the ministry’s commitment to ensuring safety in the burgeoning oil and gas sector.

“Before 2020, our occupational safety and health (OSH) officers lacked the expertise for inspecting these complex offshore facilities,” Minister Hamilton acknowledged. **“Today, we have a team of nearly a**

dozen trained officers capable of conducting comprehensive safety inspections on FPSOs and drill ships.”

While the law mandates health and safety committees in workplaces with 19 or more employees, Minister Hamilton urged all workplaces, regardless of size, to prioritise workplace safety.

RECORD NUMBER OF WORKPLACE INSPECTIONS IN 2024



1381 workplace inspections conducted in 2024

PRESIDENT ALI UNVEILS EXTENSIVE PLAN TO MODERNISE GUYANA FIRE SERVICE- HANDS OVER 40-VEHICLE FLEET

President Dr. Irfaan Ali unveiled a 10-point plan to modernise the Guyana Fire Service (GFS) and enhance fire safety across the country.

“This is more than an investment in firefighting equipment; it is an investment in the safety and well-being of our people,” President Ali stated.

To underscore this commitment, the President officially handed over a historic fleet of 40 rapid intervention vehicles to the GFS, the largest single investment in the service’s history. These vehicles, equipped for various fire-related emergencies, will be deployed to Neighbourhood Democratic Councils nationwide.

The 10-point plan outlines key areas for improvement, including:



President Ali officially handing over the 40 vehicle fleet to the GFS

1. **Modernising the Legal and Regulatory Framework:** Enhancing laws and regulations related to fire safety.
2. **Improving Institutional Frameworks:** Strengthening coordination within the GFS and with other agencies.
3. **Prioritising High-Risk Areas:** Identifying and addressing areas with high fire risks.
4. **Improving Public Awareness:** Enhancing public education and awareness on fire safety.
5. **Enhancing Emergency Response Mechanisms:** Investing in strategically located fire stations, fire tenders, and community-based first response systems.
6. **Modernising Equipment and**

Infrastructure: Equipping the GFS with modern firefighting equipment, specialised tools, and state-of-the-art personal protective gear.

7. **Improving Forest Fire Response:** Enhancing the service’s capability to respond to and manage forest fires.

8. **Prioritising Monitoring and Evaluation:** Implementing robust monitoring and evaluation systems.

9. **Developing Human Resources:** Investing in training and development for firefighters.

10. **Supporting Firefighter Welfare:** Prioritising the welfare and well-being of firefighters.

11. **“The public**

is entitled to a service that is not only responsive but proactive, capable of swiftly addressing fires, accidents, and emergencies with precision and effectiveness,” the President stated.

advancements will set a new standard for operational efficiency, personnel training, and community engagement in fire safety.

“These investments reflect a forward-thinking approach, ensuring



President Ali and officials with EMT at GFS HQ

12. The unveiling of this plan coincides with the construction of the GFS’ state-of-the-art headquarters. Together, these

that our firefighting capabilities are equipped to meet the growing challenges of a modern society,” President Ali stated.



Director of Youth in the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport and Pandit Suresh Singh was sworn in as a Member of Parliament (MP)

NEW MP SWORN IN

Director of Youth in the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport and Pandit, Suresh Singh was sworn in as a Member of Parliament (MP) during the 91st Sitting of the National Assembly on January 17.

Singh, a candidate from the People’s Progressive Party Civic top list, filled the seat of former government MP

Dharamkumar Seeraj who is now Guyana’s High Commissioner to India.

The Guyana Elections Commission (GECOM) confirmed Singh as the new MP on January 17.

A dedicated volunteer with a long history of service in the party’s youth arm, Singh brings a wealth

of experience to the National Assembly.

Before his role in the ministry, MP Singh taught Mathematics at the secondary level for 11 years.

Singh holds a Master of Science Degree in Education (Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment) from Walden University; a Bachelor’s Degree in

Education, majoring in Mathematics from the University of Guyana and a Trained Teacher’s Certificate, majoring in Mathematics from the Cyril Potter College of Education (CPCE).

\$28.3B PLAN DEVELOPED TO ADDRESS GAPS IN WATER NETWORK, HOUSING EXPANSION

The government has developed a \$28.3 billion strategic investment plan to further guide the water sector from 2025 to 2028.

The plan aims to address gaps in the water network, and support the expansion of the housing programme.

This was announced by the Minister within the Ministry of Housing and Water, Susan Rodrigues. The initiative will be executed under Phase II of the Coastal Water Treatment Infrastructure Programme (CWTIP).

It will see the drilling of 15 new wells, the construction of four surface water treatment plants and two iron removal plants. Three in-line filters will also be installed.

Close to 254,000 people will benefit from this initiative.

Minister Rodrigues said construction of five large treatment plants totalling \$12 billion will also begin this month. The undertaking is another component of the CWTIP Phase II. It is being funded by the Caribbean Development

Bank (CDB).

As part of the CWTIP Phase One that was initiated in 2021, several large water treatment plants are under construction at Onderneeming, La Parfaite Harmonie, Parika, Wales, Bachelor’s Adventure, and Cummings Lodge.

A total of 127,500 residents will receive improved water supply when these projects are completed in March 2025.

Water treatment plants are being upgraded at Pouderoyen,

Vergenoegen, Better Hope, Mon Repos, Friendship, Eccles, Covent Garden, Grove, Cotton Tree, New Amsterdam and Port Mourant.

These projects are expected to end by the first quarter of 2025 and will benefit over 34,000 residents.

The third installation of over 200 kilometres of new transmission mains, is expected to be completed by June 2025.

Works are ongoing to remove iron content from 18 small treatment plants that will benefit



Water Treatment Plant

over 75,000 residents across Regions Two, Four, Five and Six.

Minister Rodrigues said the government’s

promise of delivering 90 per cent treated water coverage is measurable.

NEW NATIONAL HOUSING POLICY TO ENSURE SAFE, WELL-SERVICED HOUSING OPTIONS

The Ministry of Housing and Water is developing a comprehensive national housing policy to ensure affordable and adequate housing for all Guyanese families.

Minister Collin Croal made this announcement during the ministry's year-end press conference, where he emphasised the policy's focus on raising living standards by providing safe and well-serviced housing options nationwide.

A consultant is currently drafting the policy document, which

will be submitted to the ministry shortly. Following cabinet's approval, the policy will be presented to parliament for adoption.

The policy development involves a comprehensive review of existing Central Housing and Planning Authority's housing programmes, policies, and processes. Stakeholder consultations have been conducted, and feedback is being incorporated into the policy framework.

In parallel, the ministry is developing a "Strategy for Informal Settlement, Upgrading

and Prevention" to address squatting across the country. This strategy aims to advance regularisation exercises, and prevent further growth of informal settlements.

The first phase of this strategy, a 100% analysis of the issue, has been completed and will be presented to cabinet this month. A pilot programme for this strategy will be implemented in Region Three before expanding to other regions.



New housing policy being developed



One of the low income homes completed

The government has invested significantly in homeownership, allocating approximately \$12.5 billion since 2020 to construct over 1,865 houses across the coast.

Housing and Water Minister Collin Croal announced this during his ministry's year-end press conference, emphasising

the government's commitment to providing accessible homeownership for all Guyanese.

"We are not leaving anyone behind," Minister Croal stated. **"Every segment of our population has an opportunity for equal access to homeownership."**

These completed houses cater to various income levels, including low, moderate, middle-income, young professionals, and core homes.

In 2024 alone, a substantial \$4.3 billion was invested, resulting in the completion of over 550 houses. This empowers over 550 families with more stable and secure futures.

Furthermore, 1,724 houses are currently under construction and are expected to be completed by mid-2025.

Hinterland Housing

The government has also prioritised housing development in the hinterland, investing over \$750 million in the Hinterland Housing Programme.

The 2024 budget allocated \$1 billion for the completion of 400 houses in Regions One, Seven, Eight, and Nine. Over 100 of these houses have already been handed over in Regions One and Nine, with ongoing efforts to complete the remaining units.

Steel and Cement Subsidy Programme

To further support

CATEGORIES OF COMPLETED HOUSES

- 867 - Low Income Homes Completed
- 398 - Moderate Income Homes Completed
- 138 - Middle Income Homes Completed
- 330 - Young Professional Homes Completed
- 82 - Core Homes Completed

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homeownership aspirations, the government offers a \$225,000 voucher subsidy to cover the cost of cement and steel for foundation construction.

Over \$370 million has been expended on

this programme, with 1,478 vouchers issued across the country. Region Four received the highest number of vouchers (476) with an investment of \$119 million.

GOVT ON TRACK TO EXCEED 50,000 HOUSE LOT DISTRIBUTION TARGET

The government is on track to surpass its target of distributing 50,000 house lots by 2025. In 2024, a record-breaking 10,791 house lots were allocated nationwide, exceeding the year's target.

Housing and Water Minister Collin Croal made this announcement during the ministry's year-end press conference. He highlighted that 46% of allocations were made to women, demonstrating the government's commitment to gender equality.

To date, 40,290 residential lots have

been allocated under the current administration. Region Four accounted for the highest number of allocations (61%), followed by Region Three (22%).

The majority of allottees (53%) were under 35 years old, while 32% were between 36 and 50.

The government prioritised affordability, with 72% of allocations going to low- and moderate-income earners.

Minister Croal underscored the government's commitment to exceeding the 10,000



Since 2020, more than 75 new housing areas have been established nationwide

house lot allocation target for 2025, stating that efforts are underway

to acquire additional land to meet growing demand.

In 2024, the government acquired over 4,980 acres

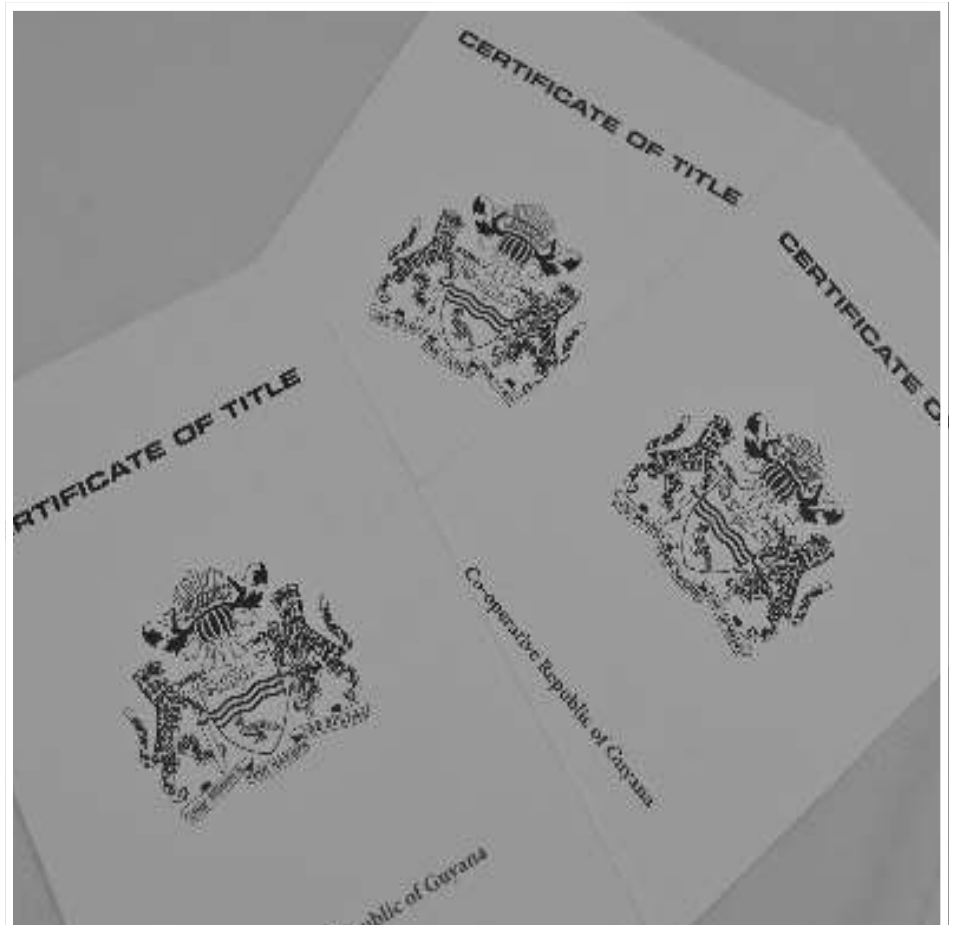
of land for housing development. Nineteen new housing areas were developed throughout the year, including Wales in Region Three, Good Hope, La Bonne Intention, Two Friends, Lusignan, Non Paniel, and Enterprise in Region Four, Waterloo in Region Five, Palmyra in Region Six, Amelia's Ward-Fitz Hope in Region Ten, and Yarrowkabra and Hauraruni along the Soesdyke-Linden Highway.

Since 2020, the government has established over 75 new housing areas nationwide, a significant increase compared to the previous administration, which developed only three new housing areas between 2015 and 2020.

OVER 2,500 GUYANESE TO RECEIVE LAND TITLES THIS MONTH



Minister of Housing and Water Collin Croal presenting a land title to a beneficiary



Certificates of title

More than 2,500 Guyanese will soon receive official land titles, confirming their legal ownership of their property. Housing and Water Minister Collin Croal made the announcement during the ministry's year-end press conference, emphasising the government's commitment to expanding homeownership across Guyana. **"We've processed over 14,710 land titles to date,"** Minister Croal stated. **"Close to 2,500 titles are currently at the Land Registry awaiting finalisation. These will be available for distribution this month."** This development will significantly benefit residents in Region Three, many of whom recently received land allocations. Land titles empower citizens enabling them to secure loans from local banks for home improvements, business ventures, and other endeavours.

Minister Croal highlighted the collaborative efforts of the ministry's legal department with agencies like GuySuCo, NICIL, GLSC, and MMA to streamline land title processing and transfer. The current administration has demonstrated a strong commitment to addressing land ownership issues. In 2024 alone, over 7,118 titles were processed, a 13% increase compared to the previous year. This surpasses the 7,730 titles processed by the previous government over a five-year period (2015-2020).

The government has announced plans to significantly expand its land regularisation programme in 2025, aiming to provide thousands of residents with legal ownership of their property. Minister of Housing and Water, Collin Croal, revealed during a year-end press conference that numerous regions will benefit from this initiative, with a particular focus on Region Four.

In Region Four, over 700 families residing in areas such as Vigilance, Coldingen, De Endragt, and Enmore, along with 43 lots in Success and 209 in Mocha Arcadia, are slated to receive land titles.

Other regions set to benefit include:

Region Two: 35 lots at Lima Sands Housing Scheme and 60 at Walton Hall.

Region Three: 59 lots at Plantation Best Reserve.

Region Six: 57 lots at Belvedere North and Hampshire.

Region Ten: 77 lots in Ituni, 30

at New Harden, 154 at Coomacka, 47 at Siberian, 25 at Silver Hill, 93 at West Watooka, 150 at Blocks 'E' and 'F' of Canvas City, 53 at Block F Wismar, and 39 at Green Valley Wismar.

This initiative builds upon the government's successful efforts in 2024, where six squatting areas were regularised, benefiting 583 families. Since 2020, a total of 17 areas have undergone regularisation, providing legal ownership to over 1,570 families.

The government believes that providing secure land ownership will significantly improve the living standards of residents by facilitating access to essential services and empowering them to invest in their properties.

OVER 700 REGION FOUR FAMILIES TO RECEIVE LAND TITLES



In 2024, 583 informal lots were allocated while six squatting areas were regularised

NEW WISMAR/MACKENZIE BRIDGE CONSTRUCTION PROGRESSES

The construction of the US\$35 million Mackenzie-Wismar Bridge in Linden, Region Ten, has reached more than 30 percent completion. President Dr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali recently led a site visit to assess the project's progress.

This mega project, undertaken by China Railway Construction Corporation Limited, involves building a four-lane, 220-meter-long precast concrete bridge equipped with essential safety features such as lighting and sidewalks. Construction commenced on April 8, 2024, and is projected to be finalised on April 7, 2026.

To facilitate transport during construction,

a temporary trestle bridge has been erected, ensuring uninterrupted passage for emergency vehicles and vessels.

The next phase of the project will focus on the pile foundation.



President Ali engaging the contractors on the bridge progress

Installation of the drilling platform is scheduled to begin soon, followed by pile construction

in early February. Pile foundation works will proceed around the clock to meet deadlines. Construction of the girder fabrication yard, a crucial component of the project, is set to

commence in March. All preliminary designs and surveys have been completed, and



Construction of the new bridge progressing adjacent to the old structure

detailed design revisions are currently underway. Temporary facilities for workers and equipment have been established, and materials for the pile foundation are expected to arrive on-site shortly.

In addition to the bridge, the Ministry of Public Works will oversee the construction of access roads and a roundabout to improve

connectivity. President Ali has instructed the ministry to expedite these works through tenders, and emphasised the importance of timely completion.

Addressing a large gathering of residents, President Ali said that, beyond the bridge, the government is investing billions in infrastructure to transform Linden's

landscape and enhance the livelihood of its residents. He highlighted the increased frequency of government visits to the region in recent months compared to the previous administration's tenure, emphasising the government's commitment to working with the people for their development.

The president also toured the MacKenzie Sports Ground to assess progress on its transformation into a modern sports facility. International-standard stadium lights have already been installed, and significant progress has been made in constructing spectator stands and pavilions for athletes.

SEVEN INTERNATIONAL COMPANIES SHORTLISTED FOR NEW BERBICE RIVER BRIDGE CONSTRUCTION

The government is progressing with plans to construct a modern Berbice River Bridge, aiming to modernise infrastructure and stimulate economic growth in Region Six.

Following a competitive tender process, seven international companies have been pre-qualified to design, build, and finance the new bridge. These companies were selected from a pool of nine initial applicants, including prominent players such as China Road & Bridge

Corporation, Ashoka Buildcon Limited, and China Railway Construction Caribbean Limited.

Minister of Public Works, Bishop Juan Edghill, announced that the pre-qualified companies will now be invited to submit price proposals for the project.

To facilitate construction, the government has already acquired 50 properties along the proposed bridge alignment.

President Dr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali unveiled plans for the

new Berbice River Bridge last year, envisioning a modern structure similar to the upcoming Demerara River Bridge, which is expected to be completed by the end of this year. The new Demerara River Bridge, a US\$260 million project, is anticipated to significantly improve traffic flow and unlock development potential in Region Three.

The government is also undertaking the construction of a new US\$35 million bridge to replace the existing one-lane crossing between



The present structure connecting the western bank of Berbice at D'Edward Village in Region Five with its eastern bank at Crab Island in Region Six

Wismar and MacKenzie in Linden. This project will enhance connectivity

and support the growth of the manufacturing sector in the region.

Mobilisation efforts for the reconstruction of the US\$161 million Soesdyke-Linden Highway is progressing with the gathering of resources, equipment, and personnel underway at key locations along the route.

According to Ron Rahaman, Head of the Works Services Group at the Ministry of Public Works, survey work is nearing completion, and clearing and grubbing along the highway alignment is nearly finished as well.

The upgraded highway will span 72.42 kilometers, featuring two lanes and incorporating

roundabouts at Soesdyke in Region Four and Linden in Region Ten. Ten bridges and six culverts will also be reconstructed to enhance safety and quality standards. The project is scheduled for completion by September 4, 2026.

This significant investment will strengthen connectivity between Region Ten and the hinterland with Regions Three, Four, and Seven, fostering



The current Soesdyke-Linden Highway

opportunities for growth in agriculture, tourism, and housing.

In August 2023, President Irfaan Ali had emphasised the project's critical role in the country's economic growth and sustainability, particularly for Region Ten.

The reconstruction is being undertaken by a joint venture between Namalco Construction Services Ltd. (Trinidad) and GuyAmerica

Construction Inc., (Guyana). Al-Habshi Engineering Consultants and CB& Associates Inc., will oversee the construction process.

This project is part of a broader US\$200 million agreement signed with the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) in May 2023. The original Soesdyke-Linden Highway was constructed between 1966 and 1968 and opened to traffic in 1969.

MOBILISATION WORKS UNDERWAY FOR SOESDYKE-LINDEN HIGHWAY RECONSTRUCTION

PHASE TWO OF THOMAS LANDS ROAD RECONSTRUCTION TO START SOON

Construction on the second phase of the Thomas Lands Road upgrade is set to begin soon. This phase will involve upgrading an additional 600 meters of the road to accommodate heavy traffic flow, particularly during peak hours.

Similar to the first phase, the second phase will feature an asphaltic concrete surface and utilise geocell

construction material to stabilise the roadbed. A dedicated pedestrian walkway will also be included to enhance safety.

The estimated cost for the second phase of the project is \$813 million.

During an inspection of the road, Minister of Public Works, Bishop Juan Edghill, assured that measures would be implemented to

minimise inconvenience for commuters, while ensuring access for essential services like the Civil Defence Commission (CDC) and the Guyana Defence Force (GDF).

“Traffic might not be two-way, but it will flow to some extent because we know that road is an important artery,” Minister Edghill stated. **“Everybody is going**

to have access, but at the same time, we have to endure the little inconvenience that this development may cause for the long-term benefits.”

Project Engineer, Kester Hinds, noted that the first phase of the Thomas Lands Road project, spanning from Albert Street to Camp Street, is nearing completion.

The reconstruction



Phase One of the Thomas Lands Road

of Thomas Lands Road was deemed necessary due to significant sinking on the western section, closer to the National Park, which posed a major traffic hazard.

Upon completion, the upgraded road will provide commuters with safe and efficient access to facilities in the area.

The government is prioritising public engagement as it embarks on a series of major road reconstruction projects in Georgetown. Minister of Public Works, Bishop Juan Edghill, visited several project sites, emphasising the importance of community input and cooperation during the construction phase.

The minister met with residents, introduced the contractors for each project, and addressed potential temporary inconveniences during

GOVT ENGAGES RESIDENTS AS MAJOR ROAD RECONSTRUCTION PROJECTS BEGIN IN GEORGETOWN



Minister of Public Works, Bishop Juan Edghill, visited several major access roads in Georgetown to be reconstructed

construction.

The following road projects are set to commence:

- **Aubrey Barker Road (South Ruimveldt):** 620m, \$773,134,300
- **Sussex Street (West of Cemetery Road):** 685m, \$515,805,750; 1100m, \$1,117,646,100
- **Sussex Street (Cemetery Road to Mandela Avenue):**

\$1,010,822,500

- **Princess Street (Cemetery Road to St. Stephen's Street):** 1070m, \$694,443,300; 730m, \$556,059,750
- **Homestretch Avenue (Phase 2):** 620m, \$174,371,650
- **Conversation Tree Bypass (Eastern Section):** 1110m, \$1,520,584,650
- **Conversation Tree**

Bypass (Western Section): 1150m, \$1,054,847,650

• **Carifesta Avenue (Phase 2):** 1500m, \$1,498,949,050

These projects are expected to significantly improve traffic flow, enhance safety, and reduce travel times for residents. Additionally, they will create employment opportunities within the city.

DIAMOND/GROVE TO GOOD SUCCESS ROAD UPGRADE TO BENEFIT RESIDENTS LONG-TERM

Public Works Minister Bishop Juan Edghill assured residents of Grove and surrounding areas that the \$3 billion road restoration project from Diamond/Grove to Good Success, East Bank Demerara will bring significant long-term benefits, including reduced commute times and increased economic opportunities.

Addressing residents at the Grove Primary School, Minister Edghill acknowledged

potential short-term inconveniences during the three-month project. However, he emphasised that these will be outweighed by long-term gains for businesses, residents, and the community.

“The inconveniences we’ll face for a few months will lead to greater benefits for businesses, residents, and everyone concerned,” Minister

Edghill stated. **“As a government, we prioritise stakeholder engagement in all development projects.”**

The Minister highlighted that the Grove/Diamond area is a focal point for major infrastructure development, contributing to the advancement of Guyana’s overall road network. Alternate routes, including roads

and bridges, have been made available for residents and commuters during construction.



Minister of Public Works, Bishop Juan Edghill, visited several major access roads in Georgetown to be reconstructed

The 1.6-kilometer project scope includes road upgrades and improvements to existing drainage networks. All work will adhere to safety protocols, and dust suppression measures will be implemented throughout the construction period.

The contract for the project has been awarded to six contractors: SSS Professional Engineering Services Inc., Shereaz Bacchus General Contractor, Khemraj Nauth Inc., Sawa Investments Inc., Japarts Construction Inc., and Ivor Allen.



Minister of Public Works, Bishop Juan Edghill, contractors and residents inspecting the extent of work at Third Avenue, Diamond

A vital road expansion project has commenced in Diamond, East Bank Demerara, aimed at

improving accessibility and safety for residents and commuters.

The project involves the expansion of First

Avenue by approximately 900 metres at a cost of \$309 million. This expanded road will serve as an alternative route for commuters during other ongoing road upgrade projects in the area.

Meanwhile, Third Avenue is being widened to include rest areas on both sides, allowing drivers to stop without

obstructing traffic flow. This \$113 million project is expected to be completed within eight months, and is anticipated to improve the drainage system in the area.

During a site visit, Minister of Public Works, Bishop Juan Edghill, met with residents and contractors to outline the work plan

and expectations. He emphasised the importance of public engagement and cooperation throughout the construction period, warning against mistreatment of residents.

Project Engineer, Kester Hinds, explained that the projects on First and Third Avenues will be interconnected. A

new bridge will connect a road currently under construction near the Guyoil Gas Station to First Avenue, enhancing accessibility for commuters.

The road expansion projects in Diamond are expected to significantly improve traffic flow and enhance the overall quality of life for residents in the area.

MAJOR ROAD EXPANSION PROJECT LAUNCHED IN DIAMOND

GOAL SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMME SURPASSES TARGET, EMPOWERS THOUSANDS OF GUYANESE

Guyana Online Academy of Learning (GOAL) scholarship programme has exceeded its initial target, awarding 29,758 scholarships to Guyanese citizens since the current government took office. This surpasses the initial pledge of 20,000 scholarships outlined in the PPP/C's manifesto.

The GOAL programme provides Guyanese with the opportunity to pursue a wide range of academic pursuits at foreign universities at no cost, including degrees, master's degrees, doctoral studies, and postgraduate diplomas.

The programme has surpassed its initial target, demonstrating the government's commitment to expanding educational opportunities for all Guyanese.

Some 21,436 scholarships have been awarded to women, while 8,322 have been granted to men.

REGIONAL REACH

Scholarships have been distributed across all regions of Guyana, ensuring equitable access to higher education.

- Region One - 814
- Region Two - 2,702

- Region Three - 4,431
- Region Four - 13,002
- Region Five - 1,842
- Region Six - 2,983
- Region Seven - 918
- Region Eight - 605
- Region Nine - 700
- Region Ten - 1,761

THE GROW INITIATIVE

In addition to GOAL, the Get Ready for Opportunities to Grow (GROW) programme has empowered 6,914 young people who were unable to complete high school. This programme provides participants with the opportunity to

obtain high school-level qualifications, such as the GED and SCQF Level 6, enabling them to pursue further education at tertiary institutions.

Minister of Education Priya Manickchand highlighted the significant impact of these initiatives, stating that 80% of individuals who completed the GROW programme are now pursuing degree programmes at foreign universities.

The GOAL and GROW programmes represent a significant investment in the human capital of Guyana. By providing access to



Minister Of Education Priya Manickchand.webp

quality education and contributing to skills development the nation's overall opportunities, development. these initiatives are empowering individuals

TEACHING WORKFORCE BOLSTERED AS THOUSANDS GRADUATE FROM CPCE

Guyana's education sector has seen a significant boost in recent years, with a remarkable 4,378 teachers graduating from the Cyril Potter College of Education (CPCE) over the past four years. This substantial increase in the number of qualified educators has significantly improved the quality of education delivered to students across the country.

Minister of Education Priya Manickchand highlighted this achievement at a press



Teachers Training to boost Guyana's Education delivery

briefing, emphasising training programmes. typically graduated only 535 teachers annually. The government has

made significant strides in improving access to teacher training, particularly for teachers in the hinterland regions. Previously, hinterland teachers were required to pursue a six-year degree programme, significantly impacting their ability to continue teaching while studying. Recognising this disparity, the government has made the degree programme more accessible, enabling hundreds of hinterland teachers to earn their degrees.

has also implemented significant incentives to attract and retain qualified teachers. Teachers with doctoral degrees now receive an incentive of \$32,000 per month, while those with postgraduate and master's degrees receive \$7,000 and \$22,000 per month, respectively. The incentive for hinterland teachers has also been increased from \$9,000 to \$23,000 per month.

The government

In a significant step towards bridging the digital divide, the government completed 146 Information and Communication Technology (ICT) hubs in the hinterland in 2024. These hubs, equipped with solar power and high-speed internet, are transforming lives in remote communities.

The Hinterland Connectivity Project, with a US\$11.1 million investment (66% of the total US\$17 million), has not only established these hubs, but also trained local personnel in their management and maintenance.

Beyond the hubs, the National Data Management Authority (NDMA) invested \$1.05 billion to connect 215

GUYANA BRIDGES DIGITAL DIVIDE WITH 146 MORE HINTERLAND ICT HUBS



ICT hub in Kimbia

communities with high-speed internet using Low Earth Orbiting (LEO) technology like Starlink. This initiative provides access to essential online services, education platforms like the Guyana Online Academy of Learning (GOAL), and numerous online opportunities.

Prime Minister Mark Phillips stressed the transformative nature of these initiatives, highlighting the significant improvement in internet connectivity across the country.

Furthermore, the Industry and Innovation Unit has provided ICT training to over 1500 individuals, including students and persons with disabilities. The "Girl Code" initiative, specifically, has empowered 150 young women with coding skills, fostering a passion for technology and

innovation.

These combined efforts are equipping Guyanese citizens with the digital skills and

knowledge necessary to thrive in the rapidly evolving digital economy.



ICT training at a hinterland ICT hub

GUYANA'S ATHLETES AWARDED 537 MEDALS IN 2024

Guyanese athletes won 537 medals across various regional and international tournaments in 2024.

This achievement Minister of Culture, Youth and Sport, Charles Ramson Jr, said, represents a 296 per cent increase when compared to the 167 medals achieved in 2023.

The sport minister said these achievements reflect a significant investment by the government to improve athletes' skills.

He said that there was a 100 per cent increase in participation in 102

tournaments in 2024. In 2023 by contrast, athletes competed in just 51 international tournaments.

Minister Ramson said that more than 800 athletes across numerous competitive sports, participated in regional and international tournaments in 2024.

The ministry has implemented crucial measures to enhance the support that athletes are entitled to. This includes mandatory consultations with teams before the schedules for games are finalised.

"We said that we

will never allow our athletes to have a bad experience again after a team was stranded in a country. Now, teams and their associations have to meet with us to make sure that they have the necessary preparations," the minister emphasised.

Minister Ramson added that this major accomplishment is the result of a healthy level of collaboration by the government with Guyana's sports academy, sports associations and athletes.



Minister of Culture, Youth and Sport, Charles Ramson Junior speaks about Guyana's achievements in sports for 2024

NEW STRATHAVON YOUTH CENTRE OFFERING SAFE SPACE AND SUPPORT



Ministry Of Human Services and Social Security Dr Vindhya Persaud addresses attendees

A new youth centre opened its doors, providing a vital resource for children in Strathavon and surrounding communities. Funded by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), this centre offers a safe and supportive environment where young people can access a range of services and activities.

The centre provides access to professional

counsellors specialising in trauma, grief, and family reconciliation.

Children can utilise computers for internet research, and explore a diverse selection of books to foster a love of reading.

The centre offers a variety of board games and sports equipment to promote physical activity and social interaction.

Minister of Human Services and Social

Security Dr. Vindhya Persaud announced plans to establish 10 more similar centres across the country, with continued support from UNFPA.

Minister Persaud emphasised the critical importance of providing safe spaces for children after school hours as these allow children to complete their homework, address social concerns, and

develop to their full potential.

This initiative is a collaborative effort between the Ministry of Human Services and Social Security and the Family Enhancement Services Section (FESS). The Strathavon center follows the successful opening of the first youth-friendly centre in Region Ten in 2024.

WORK ADVANCING ON STADIUMS ACROSS GUYANA



Work progressing on the Anna Regina Stadium in Region Two

The MacKenzie Stadium which is under construction in Region Ten is the most advanced of the five being built by the government through the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport.

Minister of Culture, Youth and Sport, Charles Ramson Jr,

said the construction of the MacKenzie stadium is progressing smoothly, with most of the major works already completed. He said the ministry is working closely with contractors to finish the remaining tasks. He explained that while the installation

process itself will not take much time, there might however be minor delays due to shipments arriving on time.

Contracts for the stadium's fence, parking lot, and the site screen, have already been awarded.

BAYROCK SYNTHETIC TRACK

The Bayrock Synthetic Track in Region Ten is another major project underway in Linden.

The installation of the track has been completed, but minor works need to be completed.

Minister Ramson further explained that both stands are going to be completed within the next few months.

The minister further stated that construction of the parking lot is currently underway and is anticipated to be completed within the next month.

The fence is expected to take about three months to complete, while the players' pavilion contract is expected to be awarded

shortly.

NEW AMSTERDAM SYNTHETIC TRACK

In Region Six, work is also ongoing on the New Amsterdam Synthetic Track.

The consultant for the installation of the synthetic track will be visiting Guyana this month for the process to begin.

PALMYRA STADIUM

Turning his attention to the Palmyra Stadium, Minister Ramson acknowledged that there have been shipping delays affecting the delivery of various materials.

Despite these challenges, he reaffirmed the ministry's commitment to completing the sports

facility.

ANNA REGINA STADIUM

The Anna Regina Stadium in Region Two is also nearing completion.

Minister Ramson revealed that the initial contractors for the players' pavilion were terminated due to delays.

However, a new contract has since been awarded for completion of the construction of a revetment and establishing proper drainage and irrigation systems.

These projects are expected to be completed within three to four months, the minister said.

The ministry remains optimistic that the stadium at Anna Regina will be completed by mid-2025.

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HISTORIC \$1.38 TRILLION BUDGET TARGETS RELIEF, GROWTH, AND PROSPERITY

- \$90B EARMARKED TO EASE COST OF LIVING AND BOOST DISPOSABLE INCOME

CONT'D FROM PAGE 2

\$852 million allocated for training and system enhancements.

INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT

The budget dedicates \$209.3 billion to road and bridge infrastructure, aiming to enhance connectivity and boost economic

- growth:
- \$20.2 billion for the new Demerara River Bridge.
 - \$5 billion each for the Corentyne and New Berbice River Bridges.
 - \$53.2 billion for community road upgrades.
 - \$12.9 billion for the Linden to Mabura Road, including 45 bridges.

AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SECURITY

To solidify Guyana's role in regional food security, \$104.6 billion has been allocated to agriculture, including:

- \$13.3 billion to revitalise the sugar industry.
- \$1.7 billion for livestock development.
- \$800 million for agro-processing.
- \$73.2 billion to upgrade drainage and irrigation systems.



HOUSING AND SOCIAL SERVICES

Housing: \$112.6 billion to expand housing schemes and provide affordable loans with a raised mortgage ceiling of \$20 million.

Social Services: \$58.5 billion to support senior citizens, child protection programmes, and persons with disabilities.

AMERINDIAN AND CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

Amerindian Development: \$7.2 billion for land titling, economic projects, and

the Community Support Officer programme.

Culture and Youth Development:

\$3.6 billion to foster creativity, preserve heritage, and empower youth through training and skills programmes.

OTHER MEASURES

Removal of VAT on agricultural equipment and electricity generators, saving businesses \$1.2 billion.

Continuation of the \$100,000 national cash grant programme, with \$30 billion allocated for 2025.

Maintenance of excise tax removal on petroleum products, costing \$90 billion annually.

Extension of freight cost reduction, costing \$6 billion.

A BUDGET FOR GROWTH AND PROSPERITY

Presented under the theme "A Secure, Prosperous Future for All", Budget 2025 underscores the government's commitment to reducing economic pressures, empowering citizens, and building a more equitable society. Through targeted investments across critical sectors, this landmark budget is set to transform the lives of Guyanese while ensuring sustainable national development.





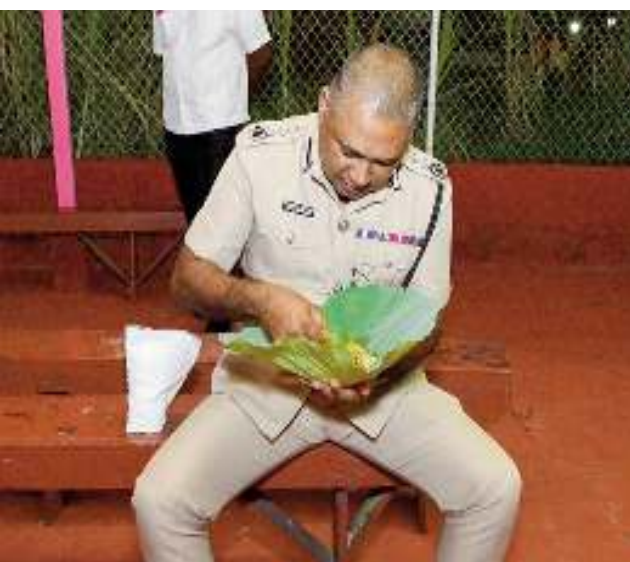
Guyanese DIASPORA DIGEST

KEEPING THE DIASPORA INFORMED EDITION 85

PRESIDENT ALI ENJOYS SEVEN CURRY



His Excellency President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali took some time out to enjoy some delicious Seven Curry at the Non Pariel Mandir. Minister within the Ministry of Housing & Water Hon Susan Rodrigues also took part in the festivities.





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USE ONLY OFFICIALLY LICENSED TOURISM BUSINESSES AND GUIDES

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.

For further inquiries, please contact the Authority via email at info@guyanatourism.com or WhatsApp at +592 638 5128.

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- Periodontics (Gum Surgeries, Deep Scaling, De-pigmentation, etc.)
- Oral Surgery (Extractions)

