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### Ali congratulates Persad-Bissessar, Carney

Guyana President, Dr. Irfaan Ali (inset), on Tuesday, congratulated Prime Minister-elect, Kamla Persad-Bissessar, SC, and Canadian Prime Minister, Mark Carney, on their recent elections victories in their respective countries.

Regarding Trinidad and Tobago, Dr. Ali said Guyana shares a strong friendship with its sister nation, both at the bilateral level and within CARICOM.

“I, therefore, look forward to our continued collaboration to strengthen our relations and work towards our shared goals of advancing regional integration, economic development and the well-being of the people our region,” he said.

In his congratulatory message to Prime Minister Carney, President Ali said: “Canada is a long-standing friend of Guyana and we look forward to continuing to work with Mr. Carney and his government to further strengthen our strong co-operation and friendship.”



### Kamla’s UNC in convincing win in T&T

Trinidad and Tobago’s PNM government spectacularly fell to a crushing, crunching defeat to the United National Congress (UNC) at national elections on Monday. UNC political leader and Prime Minister-elect Kamla Persad Bissessar first declared victory in the 2025 general election, after it became clear that her party had not only held on to the 19 seats it had before the polls, but had gained 6 more, effectively giving it a majority in the 41 seat parliament. The UNC can also count the two Tobago seats won by its coalition partner, bringing its parliamentary total to 28. The PNM won in just 13 seats, with stalwarts like former Attorney General Faris al Rawi and Health Minister Terrence Deyalsingh losing their seats.

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# Guyanese DIASPORA DIGEST

KEEPING THE DIASPORA INFORMED EDITION 92

## PRESIDENT ALI PROMISES JUSTICE AS NATION MOURNS ADRIANNA YOUNGE - INDEPENDENT INVESTIGATION UNDERWAY, FAMILY TO NOMINATE PATHOLOGIST

PAGE 2



President Dr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali, meeting with Adrianna's grieving parents



45 BRIDGES OPEN - GAME-CHANGER FOR LINDEN-LETHEM CORRIDOR

PAGE 7



760 NEW NURSING ASSISTANTS READY TO SERVE GUYANA'S HEALTHCARE SECTOR

PAGE 10



THE SPIRIT OF EASTER, GUYANESE STYLE

PAGE 1

# SPREADING EASTER CHEER, ONE KITE AT A TIME



Across Guyana, the sky wasn't the only thing lighting up this Easter—so were the faces of children who received kites through a heartwarming national initiative. From townships to quiet villages, hundreds of kites were distributed to children in communities across the country, bringing joy, excitement, and a true sense of Easter spirit.

This annual initiative, by the government of Guyana, is more than just a festive gesture—it's a celebration of a cherished cultural tradition. By providing children with colourful kites, the programme helps preserve the

timeless custom of Easter kite flying, while also promoting unity, creativity, and national pride.

In Region Four, the effort went a step further with interactive kite-making workshops hosted in several villages. These sessions gave children the opportunity to build their own kites from scratch—designing, crafting, and decorating them with care and imagination. The workshops not only encouraged artistic expression but also connected the younger generation to a practice that has long symbolised hope, freedom, and togetherness in Guyanese culture.



# PRESIDENT ALI PROMISES JUSTICE AS NATION MOURNS ADRIANNA YOUNGE

- INDEPENDENT INVESTIGATION UNDERWAY, FAMILY TO NOMINATE PATHOLOGIST

President Ali promises justice as nation mourns Adrianna Younge - Independent investigation underway, family to nominate pathologist

The government has pledged swift and decisive action following the tragic death of 11-year-old Adrianna Younge, whose body was discovered in a pool at the Double Day Hotel in Tuschen, Region Three, on Thursday, April 24.

President Dr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali, who met with Adrianna's grieving family that evening, assured them of the government's full support.

"This evening, I had an emotional encounter with the parents, family, and friends of Adrianna Younge. I reassured them of our unconditional support, love, and prayers," he stated in a Facebook post. "I reiterated what I said earlier: every aspect of this case will be investigated comprehensively."

President Ali had earlier instructed the Commissioner of Police to assemble a special team to lead the investigation.

"We must

uncover the full truth of everything that transpired. No resource or effort will be spared," he emphasised.



Government official on the ground meeting with the parents

## NATIONAL GRIEF, SWIFT GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

Adrianna's death, which followed hours of frantic searching, has plunged the nation into mourning and sparked widespread outrage.

The President personally contacted Adrianna's mother and called for a detailed report from the Guyana Police Force (GPF) outlining all actions taken.

In response, the Ministry of Human Services and Social Security, led by Dr.

Vindhya Persaud, dispatched a team to provide psychosocial support to the family. Minister of Education and Region Three Representative Priya

Manickchand also visited the family.

"The Ministry of Education mourns with the family, community, and nation and expects answers to be forthcoming," she stated.

## VICE PRESIDENT DEMANDS TRANSPARENCY

At a press conference, Vice President Dr. Bharrat Jagdeo described the incident as a "sad day for Guyana" and stressed the need for full transparency and justice.

"We are not going to rest until we get to the bottom of this," he said, warning that any police officer involved in a coverup would face consequences.

Dr. Jagdeo also highlighted inconsistencies in the police's initial report. While the GPF claimed the hotel's CCTV system was not working, external footage reportedly showed Adrianna entering a red and black Toyota Raum (registration PSS 4684), which was later seen heading toward Vreed-en-Hoop.

"If that footage exists, it should be released immediately," he demanded.

## Police Admit Reporting Errors

Later Thursday, the GPF acknowledged its initial press release contained inaccuracies and confirmed an internal review was underway.

"The Force is reviewing internal communication processes and will investigate all actions taken by officers involved in the initial report," the statement said. "The Divisional Commander and all ranks involved will be interviewed, and

appropriate action taken to prevent a recurrence."

Police had initially claimed Adrianna was abducted by a man known only as "Orlando," but her body was later found at the same hotel where she was last seen.

## INDEPENDENT AUTOPSY AND FAMILY'S DECISION

To ensure transparency, the government invited Barbadian forensic pathologist Dr. Shubhakar Karra Paul—who assisted in the 2023

However, Adrianna's family opted to nominate their own pathologist instead.

The government has agreed to respect their decision and cover all related costs. Details about the selected expert and their method of participation—whether local or international, in person or virtual—are still being finalised.

As a result, the autopsy originally scheduled for Friday was postponed. Dr. Paul, who is in Guyana, remains available to assist if needed.

## A NATION DEMANDS ANSWERS

Public frustration over the handling of the case has led to protests and growing demands for accountability.

"This young girl should never have lost her life," said Vice President Jagdeo. "The family deserves answers."

The government continues to urge calm as investigations unfold and has pledged to provide regular updates based on verified information. Officials reiterated that the safety and protection of children remain a top national priority.



Government official on the ground meeting with the parents

Mahdia dormitory fire case—to conduct an independent autopsy alongside local experts.

# 'WE CANNOT LOSE LIVES SENSELESSLY'

- PRESIDENT ORDERS URGENT NATIONAL STRATEGY AFTER DOMESTIC VIOLENCE TRAGEDY

President Dr. Irfaan Ali has ordered the immediate rollout of a national strategy to combat domestic violence following the brutal murder of three women from the LaCruz family in Waiakabra, Soesdyke-Linden Highway.

In a statement, the President expressed deep sorrow and frustration over the killings, calling it a wake-up call for urgent action.

"We cannot continue to lose lives senselessly," he said. "Together, we must take proactive action to confront this issue."

President Ali



Government officials with families and friends of the deceased

revealed that, after discussions with Human Services Minister Dr. Vindhya Persaud

and Commonwealth Secretary-General Baroness Patricia Scotland, Guyana will launch a systematic, nationwide approach to address domestic abuse. Baroness Scotland, a global advocate on the issue, will work closely with the Ministry to strengthen and expand current efforts.

The urgency follows Wednesday night's horrific shooting, where 26-year-old Maline LaCruz, her mother Waveney (50), and her teenage sister SueAnn (16) were fatally shot. Maline's brother, Seon (23), remains in critical condition at Georgetown Public Hospital.

The shooter, identified as Maline's estranged husband Parmanand Ramdehol,



Government officials with families and friends of the deceased

later took his own life. The couple had a history of abuse and were separated at the time of the attack. They shared two young children, aged 3 and 5.

Vice President Dr. Bharrat Jagdeo also weighed in on the tragedy, calling for a thorough investigation into how Ramdehol gained access to the firearm used in the attack.

"If it was a legal weapon, he should not have had it after being charged with a brutal assault," the Vice President noted. "We need answers."

Meanwhile, Human Services Minister

Dr. Vindhya Persaud visited the grieving family, assuring them of the government's full support. The Ministry will cover funeral costs and provide long-term counseling and psychosocial support.

"This tragedy is unimaginable," Minister Persaud said. "But we are here to help the family navigate this pain and begin healing."

The Child Care and Protection Agency has also been engaged to ensure the safety and well-being of the surviving children.

## 250,000 BARREL-A-DAY FPSO REACHES GUYANA'S SHORES

The promise of increased revenue and development for Guyana took a tangible step forward on April 16, 2025, with the arrival of the ONE GUYANA Floating Production, Storage and Offloading (FPSO.) This state-of-the-art vessel, capable of processing 250,000 barrels of oil daily, will fuel ExxonMobil Guyana's Yellowtail project and contribute significantly to the nation's growing economic landscape.

Constructed by SBM Offshore, the ONE GUYANA FPSO is the fourth production vessel to arrive in Guyana, joining the Liza Destiny, Liza Unity, and Prosperity FPSOs. Its presence is set to boost the total daily production capacity in the Stabroek Block to approximately 900,000 barrels once operations commence later this year. The FPSO also boasts a substantial storage capacity of around two million barrels.



The ONE GUYANA Floating Production, Storage and Offloading

Minister of Natural Resources, Vickram Bharrat, underscored the importance of this arrival

for the nation's progress. "The arrival of the ONE GUYANA FPSO is a powerful symbol

of progress, not only in oil production, but in the continued empowerment of

our people through job creation, local business opportunities, and increased revenues that support development across Guyana," he stated in a press statement.

The government views this development as a testament to the strength of its partnership with ExxonMobil, Hess, and CNOOC, and reiterated its commitment to the transparent and sustainable advancement of the oil and gas sector for the benefit of all Guyanese.

## SEVEN FIRMS VIE FOR GAS-TO-ENERGY EXPANSION PROJECT

The next phase of Guyana's ambitious Gas-to-Energy project has attracted significant interest from both international and local firms, with seven companies submitting bids to design, construct, and operate the multi-million US dollar expansion.

The National Procurement and Tender Administration Board (NPTAB) confirmed the receipt of these bids on March 31, signalling strong momentum for the project's second stage.

The expansion, known as Phase 2, entails the development of a substantial 300-megawatt (MW)

combined cycle power plant and a natural gas liquids (NGL) facility capable of producing approximately 5,800 barrels per day (b/d). This phase is a crucial continuation of the government's strategy to bolster Guyana's energy independence and reliability, effectively doubling the new domestic gas-powered generation capacity once it comes online alongside the already progressing Phase 1.

The competitive bidding process underscores the attractiveness of Guyana's energy sector as it moves towards utilising its natural gas resources. The firms

vying for the contract represent a diverse mix of international expertise and local capacity. The bidders include Karpowership (UAE), ENKA (UK), LS Energia (USA), Andalusian Energy (USA), J&L Supplies (Guyana), and two other firms whose names were included in the initial report.

The successful completion of Phase 2 will bring the total power generation capacity under the Gas-to-Energy project to an impressive 600 MW. This significant increase from current levels is expected to provide a much more stable and modern electricity grid for Guyana, addressing

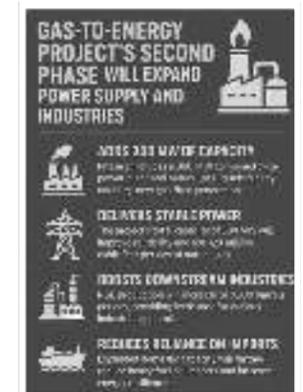
long-standing issues with power outages and load shedding that have historically impacted residents and businesses.

The combined operation of Phase 1 (300 MW) and Phase 2 (300 MW) will utilise approximately 120 million cubic feet per day of natural gas delivered via a single pipeline from ExxonMobil's Liza field in the Stabroek Block. Phase 2 is earmarked to consume 70 million cf/d, complementing the 50 million cf/d allocated to Phase 1, ensuring the full utilization of the pipeline's capacity for cleaner and more reliable power generation.

Beyond electricity,

the Phase 2 NGL facility will contribute significantly to the project's by-product output, producing around 5,800 b/d of valuable NGLs such as propane and butane. This will complement the 4,000 b/d expected from Phase 1, opening up opportunities for the development of downstream industries like fertiliser production, petrochemicals, and cooking gas supply, particularly within the planned Wales Development Zone industrial hub.

The Gas-to-Energy project, with its two phases, is also strategically aimed at reducing Guyana's



reliance on imported heavy fuel oil (HFO), thereby mitigating exposure to international price volatility and supply disruptions. The structure of the project, including a proposed 20-year power purchase agreement (PPA) that envisions the transfer of ownership to the state at the end of the contract, is designed to attract private investment while ensuring long-term national control over critical energy infrastructure.

President Irfaan Ali has expressed profound sorrow following the passing of His Holiness Pope Francis, emphasising the "far-reaching impacts" of his pontificate. In a statement released to the press, President Ali extended his heartfelt condolences to the global Catholic community, including the faithful in Guyana, on the loss of their spiritual leader.

"I join the multitudes across the world in mourning the passing of His Holiness Pope Francis. His death will be deeply felt across all continents," President Ali stated. "On behalf of the government and people of Guyana, I

extend my heartfelt condolences to the global Catholic community and especially the faithful



Pope Francis

of our local diocese." President Ali noted the historic significance of Pope Francis being the first Pope from the Americas, recalling the wave of excitement that accompanied his election twelve years ago. He lauded the

Pope for initiating crucial conversations about acceptance and belonging within the Church, and for convening the recent synod, which the President believes has laid the groundwork for a "new way of being Church."

## PRESIDENT ALI PAYS TRIBUTE TO POPE FRANCIS'S "FAR-REACHING" IMPACT

Beyond his spiritual leadership, President Ali highlighted Pope Francis's simple lifestyle and his progressive views on critical global issues, including climate change, inequality, and migration. He specifically referenced the Pope's influential encyclical, Laudato Si, and its powerful message on environmental responsibility.

Quoting from the encyclical, President Ali reiterated the Pope's call for global unity: "We need to strengthen the conviction that we are one single

family. There are no frontiers or barriers, political or social, behind which we can hide, still less is there room for the globalization of indifference."

The President also acknowledged Pope Francis's compassionate advocacy for migrants and refugees, and his consistent emphasis on addressing inequality as a fundamental moral and social imperative.

"Pope Francis was a shepherd of compassion and conscience. His pontificate has had

far-reaching impacts, and assures him of a revered place in the history of the papacy and the course of human history," President Ali stated, offering his hope that the late Pope may "rest in eternal splendor."

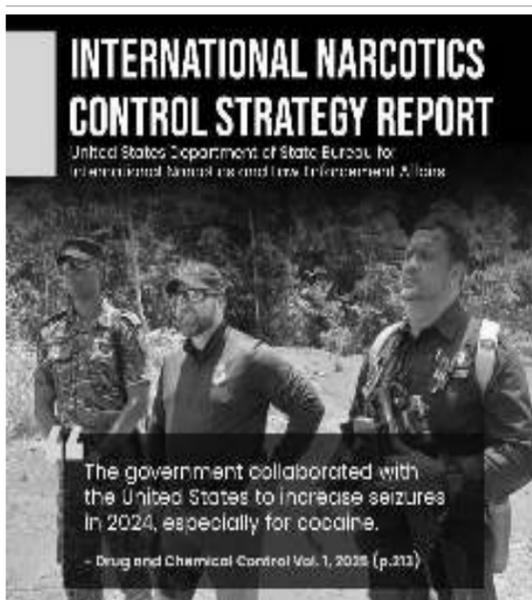
The government and people of Guyana join the international community in mourning the passing of a significant global figure, whose influence extended beyond the Catholic Church, advocating for a more just and sustainable world.

# US REPORT PRAISES GUYANA'S PROGRESS IN COMBATING DRUG TRAFFICKING

Vice President Dr. Bharrat Jagdeo has welcomed the latest U.S. Department of State's International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), which offers a positive and encouraging evaluation of Guyana's efforts in tackling drug trafficking and financial crimes.

Addressing the report, Dr. Jagdeo recognised the potential for bias in such international assessments but emphasised that the 2025 report accurately reflects the significant strides Guyana has made in its anti-narcotics operations and law enforcement capabilities.

"It was a positive report," Dr. Jagdeo said. "While these reports can sometimes reflect



biases or rely on outdated data, this one genuinely highlights the hard work we've been putting in."

The INCSR specifically commends Guyana's growing cooperation with the United States in drug

interdiction efforts. It highlights two major cocaine seizures in 2024 that resulted from joint operations between the Guyana Defence Force, the Customs Anti-Narcotic Unit (CANU), and U.S. law enforcement agencies. These operations included the

discovery of 4.4 metric tonnes of cocaine at a remote airstrip near the Venezuelan border and the interception of a semi-submersible vessel carrying 2.3 tonnes of cocaine off Guyana's coast. With a combined street value exceeding US\$195 million, these seizures represent a marked increase from previous years, demonstrating what Dr. Jagdeo called a "maturing and effective" law enforcement approach.

"These achievements often go unnoticed," Dr. Jagdeo noted, "but they clearly demonstrate the tangible progress we're making."

In response to the growing challenge of narcotics entering the country through

sea and air routes, Dr. Jagdeo explained that the government has modernised its legal framework, strengthened compliance measures, and acted decisively in cases of misconduct. He pointed to the high-profile investigation and prosecution of senior police officer Calvin Brutus, which was highlighted as a case study by the Caribbean Financial Action Task Force (CFATF).

The U.S. report also praises Guyana's 2022-2026 National Drug Strategy Master Plan, which focuses on drug interdiction, public health initiatives, and legal reforms. The launch of the National Defence Institute (NDI) in 2024, aimed at enhancing national and regional counter-narcotics

capabilities, was also noted in the report as a positive development.

Guyana's intensified efforts to combat money laundering, an essential part of its national strategy, have also received significant international recognition. The INCSR notes that the country's actions are in line with its international obligations under the Vienna Convention Against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances.

Despite the persistent challenges that remain, Dr. Jagdeo emphasised that Guyana is on a clear path of improvement, with growing international credibility for its commitment to fighting drug trafficking and financial crimes.

## SAMSUNG EXPANDS IN GUYANA WITH BRYDENS AS OFFICIAL DISTRIBUTOR

Brydens Guyana Incorporated has officially been appointed the Master Distributor for Samsung in Guyana, marking a major step forward in the availability and support of the global electronics brand in the country. The announcement was made during a special event at the Pegasus Corporate Suite's Atlantic Conference Centre in Georgetown, which also saw the launch of Samsung's latest line of intelligent appliances—the Bespoke AI Series.

Brydens Guyana

CEO Natasha Das disclosed that the company has quietly served as Samsung's Master Distributor for the past year, achieving remarkable success by nearly doubling their initial targets.

This partnership brings several benefits to local consumers, including improved product availability, enhanced marketing support, and easier access to warranties and after-sales services.

Speaking at the event, Senior Minister in the Office of the President with responsibility for

Finance, Dr. Ashni Singh, welcomed the strengthened presence of Samsung in Guyana. He noted that the inclusion of in-country service and warranty access marks a significant improvement in the retail experience for Guyanese shoppers.

Dr. Singh also pointed to the broader implications of the launch, saying it reflects the continued growth of Guyana's economy, which is increasingly attracting international brands.

"I'm sure many of us remember when owning a television

was a luxury that required years of saving," Dr. Singh said. "Today, more Guyanese families are in a position to access products that were once beyond reach."

He also called on Brydens Guyana to uphold high standards of customer service, ensuring that consumers receive not only quality products but also a world-class support experience.

The highlight of the event was the unveiling of Samsung's new Bespoke AI Series—a



The official launch of Bespoke AI smart appliances for retail in Guyana

premium line of smart appliances including televisions, refrigerators, washing machines, and microwaves. These devices feature custom-built artificial intelligence designed to improve energy efficiency and adapt to the lifestyles of individual users.

The new partnership and product launch signal a major advancement in smart home technology in Guyana, offering consumers greater convenience, accessibility, and support than ever before.

Guyana is set to officially launch its first World Trade Centre (WTC) on October 21,

2025, Chief Executive Chairman Komal Samaroo announced.

The announcement

## GUYANA'S FIRST WORLD TRADE CENTRE TO OPEN IN OCTOBER



The World Trade Centre Georgetown building is situated in Kingston

was made in an invitation extended to delegates attending the World Trade Center Association's (WTCA) 55th annual General Assembly and Global Business Forum, according to a press release from World Trade Center Georgetown.

The state-of-the-art facility is strategically located at Lot 44 High Street, Kingston, Georgetown. Notably, World Trade Centre Georgetown will be

the first and only such center within the entire CARICOM region.

In his invitation, Samaroo highlighted the opportune timing of the opening, stating, "The official opening will take place as Guyana has emerged as one of the fastest-growing economies globally, driven by its burgeoning energy sector, infrastructure development, and a robust investment climate. As a result,

this dynamic environment offers substantial opportunities for trade – both imports and exports from the country."

The press release further quoted Samaroo emphasising the regional significance of the new facility: "The opening of the World Trade Centre Georgetown signifies not only Guyana's, but the Caribbean Community's

(CARICOM) commitment to fostering international business relations as well as its desire to serve as a key player in global commerce."

The official opening event is expected to feature addresses from prominent government officials, influential business leaders, and seasoned international trade experts.

## GUYANA MAINTAINS ICJ AS SOLE FORUM FOR BORDER DISPUTE, REJECTS CHINA'S CALL FOR TALKS

The government of Guyana has reiterated its stance that the ongoing border controversy with Venezuela will be resolved exclusively through the International Court of Justice (ICJ), dismissing a recent suggestion from China for bilateral talks.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation issued a statement rejecting remarks made on April 16, 2025, by the Charge

d'Affaires of the Embassy of the People's Republic of China, who proposed "friendly consultations and negotiations" between Guyana and Venezuela.

The Ministry emphasised Guyana's consistent position that the matter is currently being adjudicated by the ICJ, a process initiated by the United Nations Secretary General in accordance with the 1966 Geneva Agreement. This agreement, established

by both nations, outlined mechanisms for resolving the border dispute, culminating in the ICJ referral.

Referencing the Argyle Declaration of December 14, 2023, the Ministry highlighted Guyana's explicit commitment to the ICJ process for resolving the long-standing border dispute. Guyana affirmed its commitment to upholding the court's authority, stating it would refrain from any

discussions that could undermine the ICJ's jurisdiction.

Furthermore, the Ministry expressed concern over the Chinese government's silence regarding Venezuela's recent announcement of its intent to hold elections on May 25, 2025, for a governor and legislative council of the "Guayana Esequiba State." Guyana views this move as a clear violation of its sovereignty and territorial integrity, as

"Guayana Esequiba" is the name Venezuela has unilaterally assigned to Guyana's Essequibo region.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation reaffirmed Guyana's unwavering commitment to the principles of international law and mutual respect in its diplomatic relations with all nations.



*The land boundary between Guyana and Venezuela was settled by a legal process of International Arbitration on October 3, 1899*

The Guyana Government has dismissed as "baseless" and "irresponsible" a BBC News article that suggested, Guyana's ties with China influenced US tariffs, and labelled the theory "egregious".

In a direct rebuttal, Georgetown pointed to the BBC's own recent reporting, which detailed a tariff calculation method entirely unrelated to a country's foreign relations.

The article in question, "Was China the reason Guyana faced higher Trump tariff?" published on April 14, 2025, by freelance journalist Gemma Handy, questioned the rationale behind Guyana's tariff rate.

It quoted a Guyanese beekeeper and social media personality who suggested "the planned high tariff showed Washington's ire ... the US is saying 'if you want our protection you need to chase the Chinese out of your country'."

In a swift response, the Government of Guyana highlighted a BBC News article published just days earlier, on April 3, 2025, titled "How were Donald Trump's tariffs calculated?" This earlier report, along with

## BBC'S CHINA-TARIFF THEORY "EGREGIOUS," SAYS GOVT, CITING OWN REPORT



*Screenshot of the article as appearing on BBC's website*

information from the US Trade Representative, clearly explained that "if you unpick the formula above it boils down to simple maths: take the trade deficit for the US in goods with a particular country, divide that by the total goods imports from that country and then divide that number by two." The government emphasised that this methodology "does not include any variable to capture the relationship of the country

concerned with any other country whatsoever."

The government stated that the speculation in Ms. Handy's article was "baseless and irresponsible," falling short of the BBC's usual journalistic standards. The government found it particularly problematic that the article seemingly ignored the publicly available information, including the BBC's own explanation of the tariff calculation methodology.

## HUNDREDS FIND JOBS AS NEW BPO CENTRE OPENS IN ENMORE

Hundreds of job opportunities have been unlocked for residents on the East Coast of Demerara and surrounding areas with the commissioning of a new, state-of-the-art business process outsourcing (BPO) centre.

Operated by VChart Services, the facility

was officially opened by Senior Minister in the Office of the President with Responsibility for Finance and the Public Service, Dr. Ashni Singh, who highlighted the government's focus on creating opportunities for young Guyanese. A job fair at the centre allowed many prospective employees

to register for positions on the spot.

VChart Services, a well-regarded company specialising in Medical Billing and Revenue Cycle Management, partners with leading healthcare providers in the United States. The Enmore location expands VChart's global network, which includes centres in India, the USA, and other parts of Guyana, where they handle primarily calling and voice functions under strict HIPAA and SOC2 compliance.

Addressing a large group of young attendees, Dr. Singh emphasised the government's commitment to growing Guyana's BPO sector. He pointed to the liberalisation of telecommunications,

following the enactment of the new Telecommunications Act after the People's Progressive Party's return to office in August 2020, as a key factor.

"One of the first things that President Ali did... was to bring into operation the new telecommunications Act," Dr. Singh explained, noting that this has significantly reduced bandwidth costs, making Guyana a more attractive location for ICT companies.

Dr. Singh also highlighted government's investments in energy infrastructure, such as the Gas to Energy project, which will improve power capacity and reliability. He stated

that these advancements, combined with Guyana's skilled youth, create a strong environment for companies like VChart. He also mentioned that the Enmore facility was initially conceptualised by President Ali during his time as Minister of Housing and Tourism.

Minister of Health Dr. Frank Anthony spoke about potential collaborations between the BPO sector and healthcare, particularly in areas like medical transcription for digital health initiatives. "There are lots of connections between what we're doing right now in the health sector and what is happening, or what would happen in this facility," Dr. Anthony said, emphasising the

job prospects for young people.

VChart Services Guyana's CEO, Mr. Vinayak Shankar, who travelled from India for the opening, noted that the company's journey in Guyana began in 2001. He outlined the company's goal to establish Guyana as a prominent global hub for back-office services and thanked the government for its ongoing support.

Dr. Peter Ramsaroop, CEO of the Guyana Office for Investment (GO-invest), encouraged the young people to seize this opportunity with determination, highlighting the government's investment in creating such avenues for their professional growth.



*The commissioning of a new, state-of-the-art business process outsourcing (BPO) centre at Enmore*

# 40 DESIGNERS PREPARE FOR ORIGINS GUYANA DEBUT

The inaugural Origins Guyana Fashion Festival is gearing up to showcase the diverse talents of 40 designers, including 31 local creatives and nine international participants. Set to take place from May 2 to 4 in Georgetown, the festival promises a vibrant display of fashion spanning African and Indian-inspired designs, Indigenous wear, contemporary styles, jewellery, and other unique specialty lines.

In anticipation of the landmark event, Minister of Tourism, Industry and

Commerce, Oneidge Walrond, met with the participating designers at the Railway Courtyard. She underscored the festival's significance in elevating local talent and positioning Guyana as a serious contender

in the regional and international fashion industry.

**"Guyana is brimming with untapped talent and creativity. The Origins Fashion Festival is a platform**

**to elevate our designers, empower creatives, and spotlight Guyana as a serious player in the regional and international fashion industry,"** Minister Walrond stated.

Beyond the runway presentations, the festival will also feature a series of industry-focused workshops aimed at building capacity within Guyana's creative sector. These workshops will cover topics such as fashion illustration, design, the role of artificial intelligence in the

creative economy, and professional makeup artistry.

Enthusiasm is high among the designers preparing for their debut at the Origins Guyana Fashion Festival. Fashion illustrator and designer Roberto Teekah shared his inspiration at being part of the event alongside both emerging and established names in the industry. Salina Cruickshank, founder of Sally's Stitch Fix, expressed her honour in participating in what she considers a milestone moment in her career.

With rehearsals already underway, the final preparations are being made for what promises to be a spectacular showcase



*The meeting with the designers*

of Guyanese and international fashion talent.

The Origins Guyana Fashion Festival is being supported by the Government of Guyana as part of its broader strategy to foster the growth of the local fashion industry and provide increased visibility for Guyanese creatives.



*The meeting with the designers*

# GUYANESE ARTISTES GET GOLDEN TICKET TO SHARE STAGE WITH VYBZ KARTEL



*The meeting with the designers*

Two talented Guyanese artistes are on the cusp of a career-defining opportunity: sharing the stage with international Dancehall superstar Vybz Kartel. This exciting collaboration is a direct result of a partnership between the government

of Guyana and the artiste's management, promising invaluable exposure for homegrown musical talent.

The genesis of this opportunity lies in Vybz Kartel's recent visit to Guyana, when he met with President Irfaan Ali and a group of local

musicians. Impressed by the talent and eager to contribute to the growth of the nation's music industry, Kartel pledged to feature local artistes during his highly anticipated upcoming performance scheduled for May 24. He also signalled his interest in potential future collaborations.

To ensure a fair and transparent selection process, the government has announced open auditions for local singers and performers. One male and one female artiste will be chosen based on specific criteria, granting them the once-in-a-lifetime experience of sharing the stage

with the internationally acclaimed Dancehall superstar.

On April 18, the Arthur Chung Conference Centre buzzed with anticipation as Minister of Tourism, Industry and Commerce, Oneidge Walrond, and Minister within the Office of the Prime Minister responsible for Public Affairs, Kwame McCoy, addressed enthusiastic aspiring artistes.

Minister McCoy reiterated the Government's unwavering support for the creative industries, highlighting existing initiatives such as grants for recording studios. He underscored the

immense potential of Guyana's music industry to become a significant economic contributor, urging artistes to refine their craft for both local and global appeal.

Minister Walrond outlined the Government's broader vision for nurturing and developing the local music industry. She emphasised the critical importance of creating pathways for international exposure and collaborations, with the ultimate goal of establishing Guyanese artistes as recognised talents on the world stage. **"We are stronger as a collective, and this initiative helps**

**bring us together as creatives and artistes,"** Minister Walrond stated.

The selection process is now underway, requiring all interested artistes to submit samples of their work. A shortlist of 10 finalists will be invited to a crucial final audition, where the top two performers will be selected for the extraordinary chance to perform live with Kartel. This golden ticket represents a significant step forward for Guyana's music industry, offering a unique platform for local talent to shine on an international stage.

# GUYANA CREATES BUZZ AT WORLD EXPO IN JAPAN

Guyana has made a strong debut at the World Expo 2025 in Osaka, Japan, attracting an estimated 22,000 visitors to its national pavilion on April 13. Under the theme "Sustainability through Innovation: Guyana's Low Carbon Journey", the South American nation is effectively showcasing its vision for a sustainable and inclusive future on the global stage.

The Guyana booth quickly became a popular attraction at the Expo, captivating a diverse international audience with its

immersive displays. These exhibits vividly brought to life Guyana's untouched rainforests, its rich biodiversity, and its globally recognised eco-tourism offerings. Visitors were particularly drawn to the pavilion's comprehensive look at Guyana's innovative approach to development.

A central highlight of Guyana's presentation is its internationally acclaimed Low Carbon Development Strategy 2030 (LCDS 2030). Through engaging and interactive presentations, the pavilion showcases

key transformational projects central to this strategy. These include the ambitious development of Silica City—envisioned as a modern and climate-resilient urban center—and the Amailla Falls Hydropower Project, a flagship initiative poised to drive Guyana's transition towards clean, renewable energy sources.

Guyana's presence at Expo 2025 will further feature an official National Day Celebration on April 27. This event will offer Expo attendees an authentic taste of Guyanese culture,

featuring traditional music, vibrant dance performances, diverse culinary offerings, and creative works from talented Guyanese artists. Minister of Tourism, Industry and Commerce, Oneidge Walrond will deliver remarks during the celebration, also highlighting the country's expanding portfolio of investment opportunities across various key sectors.

The coordination and execution of Guyana's participation in Expo 2025 are being spearheaded by the Ministry of Tourism, Industry and Commerce, the Guyana Tourism Authority, and various other stakeholders. The Guyana Office for



*Guyana has made a strong debut at the World Expo 2025*

Investment is also an integral part of the delegation and will maintain a presence throughout the six-month Expo period to engage with potential investors and address investment-related inquiries. The Ministry has been actively preparing for this significant global event for several months.

Held every five years,

the World Expo serves as one of the world's largest global gatherings, providing a crucial platform for nations to exchange innovative ideas and solutions aimed at shaping a better future for all. Expo 2025 in Osaka is running from April 13 to October 13 under the overarching theme "Designing Future Society for Our Lives."

## \$800M ROAD UPGRADES END DUST AND MUD WOES IN REGION NINE VILLAGES

For residents of Karaudarnau, Nappi, Shulinab, and Awarewaunau in Region Nine, the long-standing challenges of dusty dry seasons and muddy rains are nearing an end. A significant \$800 million government investment is transforming daily life through the upgrade of internal laterite roads to smooth asphaltic concrete. In a community-driven approach, residents themselves

selected the most impactful locations for the roadworks, ensuring the project directly benefits thousands across various Amerindian villages.

The positive impact is already evident in Shulinab (population of approximately 480). Village Councillor Brandon Felix explained to the Department of Public Information (DPI) how the new roads are benefiting the community, particularly schoolchildren who previously struggled with muddy conditions.

**"Today, with this road, I say it is very helpful to the community, especially with the school children going to school,"** Felix noted, expressing appreciation for the government's increased focus on hinterland development. Karaudarnau, home to 1,092 residents, has experienced a similar transformation. Toshao Apollos Issacs described the previous **"terrible"** road conditions, with mud hindering schoolchildren and dust affecting businesses.

He hailed the asphalt upgrades as a **"game changer"** that will boost tourism and farm-to-market opportunities, fuelling economic growth.

Resident Berlinda Xaviar emphasised the significant improvement in her daily life. **"Before, we had a lot of dust... that would cause accidents, but now when you ride, everything is just clear. My kitchen used to be dusty, and my little business was affected. Now everything is just**

**good,"** she stated.

These road upgrades signify a broader government initiative to integrate hinterland villages into the national development agenda, enhancing connectivity and access to opportunities in education, health, business, and tourism. This effort is further supported by the government's \$7.2 billion allocation in the 2025 budget aimed at enhancing the welfare of Amerindian communities.



Road upgrades in Shulinab, Region Nine

## 45 BRIDGES OPEN

### - GAME-CHANGER FOR LINDEN-LETHEM CORRIDOR

Years of travel constraints and logistical hurdles along the Linden-Lethem corridor are set to become a distant memory with the grand opening of 45 newly constructed bridges. The \$7.7 billion investment, commissioned by Prime Minister Mark Phillips and Minister Juan Edghill, marks a pivotal moment, set to unlock the significant economic potential of Guyana's hinterland.

The ambitious project includes 32 concrete bridges along the Kurupukari-Lethem stretch and 13 more on the Linden to Mabura

Road corridor. This enhanced network provides a vital link between Northern Brazil and the Atlantic Ocean via Port Georgetown, promising smoother trade and transportation.

Prime Minister Phillips emphasised the crucial role of these bridges in the government's commitment to improving connectivity between the hinterland and the coastland. He stated that the improved infrastructure will ease travel and spur growth in key sectors like agriculture and tourism throughout the region.

The impact is already being felt, with Lethem's Deputy Mayor Indira Singh hailing the completion, especially the Pirara Bridge, as a solution to long-standing challenges for residents and businesses. She anticipates a surge in economic activity and increased visits to Lethem. **"It is such a relief for our local businesses. It has been so many years of struggle for residents of Lethem,"** she noted.

During a consultation at Iwokrama, Prime Minister Phillips reaffirmed the government's dedication

to bridging the development gap and ensuring equal access to resources.

Minister Edghill highlighted that the bridges are key to the government's strategy for hinterland development and economic interconnectivity. He predicts increased traffic and numerous economic opportunities for local communities.

Looking ahead, Minister Edghill announced plans to pave the entire Linden-Lethem corridor, improving safety and travel. He noted ongoing work on the initial



45 newly constructed bridges along the Linden-Lethem corridor

121 kilometres and plans for the next 127 kilometres, affirming, **"This corridor is the key link to Guyana's economic boom and development. That is why we**

**are aggressively pursuing it."**

The project, with a 25-year lifespan for the bridges, was carried out by several local contractors.

## KWAKWANI AIRSTRIP UPGRADE PROGRESSING

The rehabilitation of the vital Kwakwani airstrip is progressing steadily, reaching the 60 percent completion mark just one month after the government's commitment to the \$248 million project.

Minister of Public Works Bishop Juan Edghill provided the update, assuring residents that despite earlier weather-related delays, the upgrade remains on track to significantly improve access to the key mining and logging village in Region Ten.

While persistent rainfall had previously

posed challenges to the construction schedule, Minister Edghill recently conveyed his confidence to Kwakwani residents that improving weather conditions would allow for an acceleration of work to ensure the project's timely and safe conclusion within its five-month timeframe.

The Minister also commended the Kwakwani local council for their proactive measure of installing a fence around the airstrip, a step that will help secure the site and prevent interference from animals.

Addressing



Minister of Public Works Bishop Juan Edghill and engineers inspecting the Kwakwani Airstrip

concerns raised by the parliamentary opposition regarding the structural integrity of a pipe located beneath the airstrip's surface, Minister Edghill clarified that the

Ministry's engineers had thoroughly inspected the pipe. Their assessment revealed that only the exposed ends showed signs of rust, while the main body of the pipe remained structurally

sound. **"Nobody is building the airstrip under a rotten pipe,"** Minister Edghill firmly stated, dismissing the opposition's assertions.

The Public Works Minister also took the opportunity to address previous criticisms of the project, alluding to claims that asphalt was being laid on mud. **"It is the same kind of people who say that we were putting asphalt on mud in Kwakwani...I have been asking people to tell the rest of the country what kind of soil we got here in Kwakwani,"** he remarked, challenging the accuracy of such statements.

Minister Edghill emphasised the unwavering focus of

the PPP/C government on delivering tangible development to the people of Guyana and affirmed that they would not be swayed by what he termed **"small talk."** **"We got an agenda, and that is to bring development to the people of Guyana,"** he asserted.

Construction work on the 2,500-foot-long by 50-foot-wide Kwakwani airstrip is being carried out by Associated Construction Services and remains on schedule for its five-month duration. The upgraded airstrip is anticipated to significantly enhance connectivity, facilitate the movement of goods and people, and further support the economic activities of the crucial Kwakwani region.

# REGION NINE EDUCATION CAPACITY SOARS WITH OPENING OF TWO NEW SECONDARY SCHOOLS - SEVERAL MORE ON THE WAY

President Irfaan Ali has ushered in a new era of educational opportunity in Region Nine (Upper Takutu-Upper Essequibo) with the commissioning of the Katoka Secondary and Yupukari Secondary Schools. This significant development directly addresses the long-standing issue of “primary tops” – inadequate secondary education within primary schools due to the historical lack of dedicated secondary institutions in the hinterland.

The newly established schools will collectively enrol 465 students (265 at Katoka, 200 at Yupukari), a crucial step towards the government’s commitment to universal



The commissioning of the schools

secondary education for all Guyanese children, regardless of location.

At the commissioning ceremonies, President Ali emphasised that educational investment goes beyond infrastructure, highlighting the substantial progress in teachers’ training and support. Region Nine currently boasts 491 trained educators, with 473 in training. He also announced an increase

in teachers’ stipends to a full monthly salary, recognising their vital role. **“It is because of the investment we have made to ensure that your children have access to secondary education that gives them the basis on which they can now enter the teaching profession,”** President Ali affirmed.

Katoka Secondary features modern facilities, including home

economics, IT/smart classrooms, and science labs. It has 12 secondary teachers (10 trained) and new teachers’ quarters.

Yupukari Secondary will serve students from Yupukari and neighbouring communities, reducing the need for long commutes or boarding.

comprehensive education agenda, citing investments in infrastructure, trained teachers, textbooks, and daily meals. She then announced a major expansion: additional secondary schools are under construction in Karasabai, Tabatinga, Maruranau, Nappi, and

Maruranau, Nappi, Massara – seven secondary schools in one Irfaan Ali term. **“Since the first set of people settled here, this region only had four schools... Now, in just five years, we’re adding seven more,”** Minister Manickchand stated.

This expansion will create 2,500 new secondary school seats in Region Nine, offering students unprecedented opportunities for secondary and higher education. The commissioning of these two schools, with seven more on the way, signifies a transformative boost in educational capacity and access for the region, paving the way for a brighter future.



The commissioning of the schools

Minister of Education Priya Manickchand underscored the government’s

Massara. **“We’re building schools in Karasabai, Tabatinga,**

## BAMIA PRIMARY SCHOOL ON TRACK FOR SEPTEMBER OPENING

The long-awaited Bamia Primary School is nearing completion and is poised to welcome students for the start of the September 2025 academic year.

Recent inspections conducted by Regional Executive Officer (REO) Dwight John, alongside regional authorities and Project Consultant Rudolph Anthony of E&A Consultants Inc., have confirmed that the modern educational facility is in its final

stages, with only minor electrical, lighting, and plumbing work remaining.

This flagship project for Region 10 is an expansive new school designed to cater to the growing student population of the area. It will feature 44 classrooms, a fully equipped gymnasium, an auditorium, a science laboratory, a music room, a library, smart classrooms, and modern restroom facilities, all

geared towards providing a comprehensive and contemporary learning environment.

The construction contract for the school was awarded to St8ment Investment Inc., in November 2021. The project faced several setbacks during its construction phase, including challenges related to labour shortages, increased material costs, and unfavourable weather conditions, which led

to adjustments in the original timeline.

However, these hurdles have been overcome, and the project is now on the verge of handover. Kerwin Bollers, representing St8ment Investment Inc., conveyed his satisfaction with the progress, stating, **“We are proud to have brought this project to its final stage and look forward to officially handing it over to the Region**



Bamia Primary is in the final stage of completion

**and the young minds who will benefit from it.”**

The Bamia community has eagerly anticipated the opening of this new school, which is expected to significantly elevate the learning environment and enhance access to

quality education for children in Bamia and the broader Region 10. The state-of-the-art facilities hold the promise of a transformative educational experience for the students who will walk through its doors.



Students sitting the 2025 National Grade Six Assessment

The 2025 National Grade Six Assessment (NGSA) saw a remarkable 98 percent turnout of registered pupils across Guyana, the highest attendance rate recorded since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, according to Minister of Education Priya Manickchand.

Speaking at the end of the first day of

the crucial secondary school entrance examination, Minister Manickchand expressed her satisfaction with the strong participation. Out of the 15,813 pupils registered, 15,497 were present to write the exams, based on data from 99 percent of schools nationwide.

**“I am happy to say and I am very pleased**

**about this...that’s 99 per cent of our schools that we have data for – 15, 497 children turned up to write on day one that represents a 98 per cent attendance of all our students,”** the education minister stated.

Region Five demonstrated the highest level of participation, with an impressive 98.8 percent attendance rate. The NGSA also saw the participation of 115 special education needs pupils and 91 pupils who opted to write the

examination in Spanish, a version introduced last year to cater to a wider range of students.

Minister Manickchand expressed optimism for improved overall results in this year’s NGSA, attributing the high turnout to strategic investments and interventions by the Ministry of Education. These initiatives include the provision of school feeding programmes for public schools and comprehensive stationery packages for all NGSA candidates, ensuring they had the

necessary tools for the examination.

Furthermore, the Minister highlighted the significant provision of required textbooks to all public-school students and the increased training of teachers to enhance the quality of education delivery. These factors, she believes, have played a crucial role in encouraging and enabling such a high level of participation in the 2025 NGSA.

Results for NGSA will be released on or before June 26, according to Minister Manickchand.



Hot lunches were served to all the students sitting the exams

## 760 NEW NURSING ASSISTANTS READY TO SERVE GUYANA'S HEALTHCARE SECTOR

A new model of healthcare training has yielded impressive results, as the Ministry of Health on April 15, 2025, graduated its first batch of over 760 Nursing Assistants under a hybrid learning programme.

This innovative approach, combining online and practical instruction, is now providing a much-needed influx of skilled personnel to Guyana's expanding healthcare system.

The twelve-month programme equipped the trainees with the necessary knowledge and practical skills to support the country's growing healthcare demands. The graduation ceremony, held at

the National Cultural Centre, celebrated the dedication and hard work of these individuals, who represent a significant strengthening of Guyana's healthcare workforce. The programme boasted an



763 nursing assistants expand the health sector

87% completion rate, with graduates ready to serve communities across the nation.

Delivering the feature address, Minister of Health Dr. Frank Anthony urged the graduates to view their achievement as a starting point for a fulfilling career in nursing or the broader

healthcare field. "So, as you graduate here today, there are lots of expectations, lots

of hope, and lots of opportunity. You are the one who would have to make the best of what you are given," Dr. Anthony stated.

He further emphasised the critical importance of empathy in their interactions with patients. "One of the characteristics that we want all our nursing assistants to have is empathy because...you have to feel what the other person is feeling when they come for care... if you understand that and work with them with that kind of compassion, then it makes a big difference," the Minister posited.

Dr. Anthony affirmed that this investment in training human resources is directly linked to the government's substantial investments in healthcare infrastructure aimed at building a world-class healthcare system. He outlined the ongoing construction of six new 75-bed regional hospitals in Diamond, Enmore, No. 75, Lima, De Kinderen, and Bath Settlement, with modern healthcare equipment which will serve tens of thousands of Guyanese.

Additionally, a 256-bed pediatric and maternal healthcare facility is under construction at Ogle, East Coast Demerara, and the New Amsterdam hospital will see a newly



Minister of Health Dr. Frank Anthony

constructed facility, including a medical school in collaboration with the University of the West Indies, featuring advanced facilities such as five operating theatres (including one for cardiac surgeries), 24-hour accident and emergency services, digital X-rays, and CT scanners. Plans are also underway for the construction of four new hospitals in Regions One, Seven, Eight, and Nine.

## FREE TUITION SPARKS ENROLLMENT SURGE AT UNIVERSITY OF GUYANA

The University of Guyana (UG) is preparing for a dramatic increase in enrollment for the 2025/2026 academic year, with applications flooding in at a rate of over 1,200 per week. This surge follows the government's landmark decision to abolish tuition fees for all degree, diploma, and certificate programmes—effective January 1, 2025.

With the application deadline set for May

16, university officials are urging prospective students, including those awaiting their CSEC and CAPE results, to apply early to secure a spot. Many programmes have limited quotas, and the rush to benefit from free tertiary education is setting the stage for a record intake.

The tuition-free policy—one of President Dr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali's key manifesto commitments—is

expected to immediately benefit more than 11,000 current students and broaden access to higher education for thousands more.

"Tuition is free from January 1, 2025, for all new and continuing students enrolled in Diploma, Bachelor's, Master's and PhD programmes offered by the University of Guyana," the institution reaffirmed in



President Ali with students at the recently opened UG School of Medicine

a recent statement. This initiative builds on the momentum of the Guyana Online Academy of Learning (GOAL) scholarship

programme, which has already enabled 29,000 Guyanese to pursue tertiary education. Together, these efforts are transforming Guyana's educational landscape—removing financial barriers, expanding opportunities, and empowering a new generation of learners.

As the country embraces this historic shift, the University of Guyana is poised to welcome a more diverse and dynamic student population—ushering in a bold new era for higher learning in Guyana.



The site assessment

After extensive efforts, the fire that ravaged a section of Amelia's Ward in Linden has been successfully contained, Prime Minister Brigadier (Ret'd) Mark Phillips has confirmed. Speaking to residents in the mining town following a site assessment, the Prime Minister assured the community of their safety while noting that the focus has now shifted to suppressing residual smoke lingering in the

area.

"I am here to tell the people that the government will leave no stone unturned in trying to bring relief to all the people who are affected," Prime Minister Phillips stated during a radio interview.

Accompanied by Minister of Public Works Juan Edghill and representatives from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Civil Defence

Commission (CDC), the Guyana Fire Service (GFS), and Guyana Water Incorporated (GWI), the Prime Minister emphasised the government's commitment to the affected population.

PM Phillips highlighted that the EPA and GFS are actively monitoring the smoke situation and have prepared relocation plans for residents should the smoke concentration worsen. "We continue to encourage the use of protective masks and if the smoke becomes more concentrated, we will have to

relocate individuals to shelters," he added.

Minister Edghill commended the Guyana Fire Service for their ongoing management of the incident. He detailed the significant resources mobilised by the government, including bulldozers and truckloads of sand, to combat the blaze. "There is nothing more that can be done that is not done," Minister Edghill asserted, assuring residents that they would not be neglected.

A key strategy in containing the fire involved the creation of a wide ditch around the

affected area, effectively pushing trees inward to create a natural firebreak. The efforts of public-spirited citizens, such as Andrew Forester, in assisting with the emergency response were also acknowledged.

EPA's Executive Director Kemraj Parsram explained that the presence of natural gas in the area had intensified

the fire. He confirmed that the agency is actively monitoring air quality, particularly for carbon monoxide levels. While some residents, including those with respiratory conditions like asthma, reported experiencing discomfort, Parsram indicated that smoke levels had not yet exceeded international health standards.



The site assessment

# THE SPIRIT OF EASTER, GUYANESE STYLE A TIME FOR FAITH

Across Guyana, Easter began with solemn and uplifting church services. Communities gathered to commemorate the death and resurrection of Christ, filling churches with hymns, prayers, and messages of hope and renewal. These services—whether held in grand cathedrals or humble village churches—are a cornerstone of Easter observance in Guyana, reflecting the deep-rooted faith and communal spirit that define the season. They offered a moment of reflection and unity before the weekend's vibrant festivities unfolded.



# From Despair to Hope...

## Conquering Peripheral Neuropathy

...with TLC Medicine



To quote the New York Times, "Chinese medicine proves itself where Western medicine fails."

"Acupuncture has been treating complicated, chronic conditions such as neuropathy for thousands of years," shares Teresa.

"I start with a foundation based on this time-tested science and my decade of clinical experience. I then tailor treatments based on a number of factors. This includes the severity of your neuropathy, how long you've had it, whether or not there are any underlying factors, things of that nature," explains Teresa.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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# THE SPIRIT OF EAST

## RODEO FEVER IN LETHEM

As Easter weekend progressed, Lethem once again roared to life with the Rupununi Rodeo 2025—a spectacular annual celebration that blends adrenaline-pumping rodeo action with rich cultural traditions. What began decades ago as a modest gathering at the Triple R Ground has transformed into a four-day national spectacle, drawing thousands from across Guyana and beyond. This year’s event offered something for everyone—from the lively Farmer’s Market and the elegance of the Mr. and Miss Rupununi Ranchers Rodeo Pageant to the thrilling competitions of bull riding, bronc riding, calf roping, and horse racing. Local entertainment, spirited contests, and the ever-present Rupununi charm made the rodeo unforgettable. Beyond the fun, the event also provided a major economic boost, with local businesses thriving during this festive season. The presence of notable guests underscored the rodeo’s importance as a hallmark of Guyana’s Easter celebrations.



# R, GUYANESE STYLE

## BARTICA ON THE WATER

While the Rupununi echoed with excitement, Easter weekend energy also pulsed through Bartica, home to Guyana's oldest and ever-evolving regatta. Thousands descended on the riverside town to enjoy a thrilling mix of sport, spectacle, and pageantry. Golden Beach came alive with the roar of powerboats, while Mora Point hosted high-energy grass track races. The athletic competitions and challenging River Swim showcased homegrown talent, while the Miss Bartica Regatta Queen pageant added a touch of glamour. Year after year, the Bartica Regatta proves its enduring appeal—cementing its status as a premier Easter attraction and a vibrant showcase of Guyana's sports tourism potential.



## LINDEN BY THE LAKE

Not to be outdone, the scenic Blue Lake in Region Ten came alive on Easter Monday as thousands gathered for the much-anticipated One Guyana Easter Fest, hosted by the government.

Families from across the region converged in a vibrant display of unity, while the skies overhead filled with colourful kites of all shapes and sizes—many of which were gifted to children upon arrival. Kayaking added a splash of adventure, while the festivities on land included a spirited cooking competition, fun games, and family-friendly activities. Minister of Public Works, Bishop Juan Edghill, hailed the event as a resounding success. "People from across the region gathered here as one big family, celebrating Easter and engaging under the banner One Guyana," he said, noting the significance of the celebration in promoting inclusivity and national unity.



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# THE SPIRIT OF EASTER, GUYANESE STYLE EASTER KITES TAKE FLIGHT

Following a weekend of lively celebration, Easter Monday brought a joyful change of pace. Across Guyana, the skies came alive with the timeless tradition of kite flying. Despite the occasional rain shower, families flocked to parks, seawalls, and open fields, sending kites of all shapes and colours aloft. From intricate, artistic designs to simple homemade creations, the sky was filled with colour and cheer.

This beloved tradition, celebrated nationwide on Easter Monday, beautifully captures the spirit of togetherness and joy that defines Easter in Guyana—offering a bright and colourful finale to a weekend of faith, culture, and shared celebration.



# Vietnam: Fifty Years since the End of the War, reflections on Gaza

By Donald Ramotar  
former Guyanese President

On April 30, the democratic and patriotic forces the world over would celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the great victory of the Vietnamese people for national and social liberation. This was the culmination of more than three decades of armed struggle. The Vietnamese people had to confront some of the most powerful imperialist forces.

That struggle began since the second world war when Japanese imperialism invaded Vietnam. The people, led by the Workers Party, later to become the Communist Party of Vietnam, began an armed struggle to rid their country of a Japanese colonialism.

Immediately after the war, the French, which had colonised Vietnam but had left it during the war returned to re-possess their "prized possession." However, the people were in no mood to be re-colonialised.

They finally managed to end French colonialism in 1954 with their victory at Diem-Bien-Phu.

It was then the United States, which had emerged from the Second World War as the most powerful state, entered the fray to continue to oppress the Vietnamese people. Their motivation was to "stop communism" due to the high prestige of the Soviet Union in defeating Hitlerite Fascism.

The cost of the war was horrendously high. There are no exact figures of the amount of Vietnamese, civilians and soldiers who died. It varies between one and two million people.

More than that, the Vietnamese people faced a tremendous bombardment. More bombs were dropped on Vietnam than were dropped in the second world war. The US in particular used chemical weapons on the population causing enormous ecological damage as well as human sufferings. Two of the (in)famous bombs that was used regularly was "agent orange" which destroyed forests and rice fields and poisoned the land. Even today many babies are being born deformed and with other illnesses due to the massive use of those horrible chemicals.

The other that was used were napalm bombs which burned the flesh off the people.

The United States lost fifty-eight thousand three hundred persons (list of names at the Washington Memorial). Millions of dollars in military hardware were destroyed on both sides.

However, the victory was so decisive that it took the US eight years before resuming invading and attacking other countries. In 1983, under the Regan administration tiny Grenada was invaded.

Today, we are observing this event at a time when wars are raging in many places. Indeed, the National Liberation struggle of the Palestinian people has now degenerated into a genocide. Israel is clearly doing its darndest to kill all Palestinians.

This is being done openly and with impunity. The people in Gaza are being bombed daily. The targets are mainly children and women. They are not only bombed but snipers kill indiscriminately.

In the process, health and other emergency workers are being killed, this is to ensure that no medical facilities are

available for the thousands of injured.

Now there is a deliberate policy to starve the people to death. No food, or medicine is allowed into the Gaza. Water and electricity have been disconnected, and all infrastructure are destroyed. The Israeli arm is even targeting machinery such as bull dozers to prevent the Palestinians people from removing rubble caused by Israeli/US bombs thereby causing those trapped to die.

It is hard to imagine anything more cruel than what is happening in Gaza. It is fascism on steroids.

This is happening as the whole world watches, appearing helpless. It was very different during the Vietnam war.

An important reason for the Vietnamese people's victory (even at a very high cost) was international solidarity. Millions of people in most of the countries took to the street to stand with the people of Vietnam.

In that period too, the contribution of the socialist countries, the Soviet Union, China, GDR, Czechoslovakia, Cuba provided great assistance to the heroic Vietnamese people which allowed the fighters not only to withstand the attacks, but they struck very decisive blows to the invaders/occupiers.

Today, the imperialist states have taken full control of the mass media. They have a deliberate policy to block out news from the area. Nothing of the plight of the Palestinians people could be found in CNN, MSNBC, the BBC and other corporate media.

Many countries and political parties that were vocal during the Vietnam war are now deafeningly silent. Now the fear of what the US would do to them, what sanctions would be applied by the US if Isreal is criticised, is the greatest concern of many of the leaders today.

The only country that is reported to be helping the oppressed Palestinians is

Iran. However, it is no match for the US, UK and other NATO countries that keep Israel killing machine well supplied.

Tangible solidarity is being given by the Houthis in Yemen. Indeed, it is very heroic for Yemen is very poor, but they have emerged as the conscience of humanity. They are facing death with a heroism incomparable in history.

The ongoing genocide by Israel, supported by the US is not only doing damage to the Palestinian people but to all of us in the world. It is dehumanising us and forcing us to accept the criminality of the rich and powerful states.

As we celebrate the victory of the Vietnamese people on April 30, 1975 and the subsequent socio-economic progress that it has made since that date, let us recall the strength of international solidarity and demand that the Palestinian people have the right to live in their own state to determine their own destiny. Palestine will win eventually!

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# OVER 2,600 GUYANESE CLOSER TO HOMEOWNERSHIP IN REGIONS THREE AND FOUR

The dream of homeownership has become a tangible reality for over 2,600 individuals in Regions Four and Three following recent housing outreaches conducted by the Ministry of Housing and Water.

A significant two-day 'Dream Realised' event on April 11 and 12 saw 1,600 people in Region Four allocated house lots along the East Coast corridor, while an additional 1,000 residents in Region Three received land at the Wales Housing Development on April 14.

The Region Four allocation exercise, led by Minister of Housing and Water Collin Croal and Minister within the ministry, Susan Rodrigues, took place at the Arthur Chung Conference Centre in Liliendaal. The 1,600 house lots were distributed across the Success, Chateau Margot, Le Ressenouvenir, and Felicity Phase II Housing Schemes. Minister Croal assured recipients that they would be able to access their lands well before the end of the year, following the completion of ongoing infrastructural works for which contracts have already been awarded and contractors are

mobilising. These new families, allowing them to achieve homeownership



The Dream Realised exercise in Region Three

networks, green spaces, recreational facilities, and other essential amenities.

Minister Croal highlighted the government's significant progress in developing new housing areas, noting that 86 new areas have been established nationwide since 2020, with 37 of these located in Region Four. He further stated that the ministry has developed 9,000 acres of land in Region Four with the aim of allocating 25,000 house lots.

Minister Rodrigues emphasised the transformative impact of the government's housing programme, stating that it has "restored hope for thousands of Guyanese

and creating generational wealth."

She acknowledged the high demand for housing in Region Four, describing it as "a bit more technical" to address the backlog. However, she assured that the government's commitment extends beyond its manifesto promises, driven by the goal of improving the quality of life for all Guyanese.

In a significant step towards legal landownership, over 500 certificates of title were also distributed during the Region Four outreach to individuals from various communities including De Endragt, Non Pariel, and Cummings Lodge. These documents empower recipients to access

loans from local banks to begin construction on their homes. The ministry reported that 10,443 individuals signed agreements of sale between January 2024 and March 2025, initiating the process for their titles.

Further support was extended to nearly 70 homeowners in Region Four who received financial assistance through the steel and cement subsidy programme, enabling them to commence building their homes.

Meanwhile, in Region Three, Ministers Croal and Rodrigues spearheaded a similar housing drive at the regional housing office in Pouderoyen, West Bank Demerara, where 1,000 persons received land at the Wales Housing Development. Minister Croal acknowledged the approximately 10,000 pending housing applications in Region Three and assured residents that the ministry is accelerating efforts to clear this backlog, with all applications before December 31, 2024, expected to receive allocation letters by the end of July.

The government has invested \$10.5 billion in infrastructure works at the Wales Housing

Scheme to ensure timely access to lands for allottees. Minister Croal noted that the first phase of these works is already complete. To date, over 9,424 house lots have been allocated in Region Three, with

Plantation Meten-Meer-Zorg Phase II, enabling them to secure financing for home construction. The ministry has processed over 18,316 land titles and transports nationwide, with 3,926 for Region Three.



The allocation exercise at the Arthur Chung Conference Centre in Liliendaal.

approximately 2,900 at the Wales development.

Minister Rodrigues reiterated the government's consistent commitment to its housing programme, aiming to deliver over 50,000 house lots within five years. She highlighted the progress made, contrasting it with the perceived failures of the housing programme under the previous administration.

Adding to the progress in Region Three, 768 land titles were made available for persons allocated lands at

Furthermore, 37 landowners in Region Three received steel and cement vouchers, injecting \$8.3 million into the local economy through this housing support initiative. To date, Region Three has received over 214 such vouchers, totaling \$53.5 million in support.



## GUYANESE IN QATAR RECONNECT WITH HOME AS MINISTER PARAG SHARES NATIONAL UPDATES

Minister of Public Service Sonia Parag met with the Guyanese diaspora in Qatar to provide an engaging update on Guyana's sweeping development agenda. Her visit coincided with her participation in the Earthna Summit, hosted by the Qatar Foundation.

Speaking to a gathering of enthusiastic Guyanese, Minister Parag outlined how the government, led by President Dr. Irfaan Ali, is balancing rapid economic progress with sustainability and climate action.

"We want to ensure that we remain strong, even after oil is gone," she stated, highlighting



Scene from the engagement

major initiatives such as the Gas-to-Shore project and the Amaila Falls Hydropower Project. These, along with wind and solar investments under the Low Carbon Development Strategy 2030, aim to provide reliable and affordable

energy. She also shared President Ali's vision of Guyana becoming a food and energy hub for the Caribbean, supported by strategic investments in agriculture, tourism, and infrastructure. On education,

Minister Parag reported that over 30,000 scholarships have been awarded nationwide. The education cash grant, restored and increased to \$55,000, is directly supporting families. Expanded internet access is also transforming learning and healthcare through online education and telemedicine in remote areas.

At the local government level, all Neighbourhood Democratic Councils (NDCs) are being equipped with excavators, firefighting pickups, and garbage trucks. Their annual subventions have increased from \$5M to \$30M, while

municipalities now receive \$50M—up from \$10M.

"We want to empower our communities to serve

ground upgrades are planned nationwide.

By the end of the event, many attendees expressed renewed pride and interest in returning



Scene from the engagement

the people," Minister Parag said, adding that road and community

home more often to witness Guyana's progress.

## 10,000 HOUSE LOTS IN MOLESON CREEK & 1,600 MORE ACROSS REGION SIX IN THREE-YEAR HOUSING PUSH

Thousands of families in Region Six (East Berbice-Corentyne) have reason for optimism as the government unveiled ambitious housing and infrastructure plans aimed at transforming the region.

The centerpiece of the initiative is a project to develop 10,000 house lots in Moleson Creek over the next three years, a key component of a broader strategy to establish the area as a significant economic hub. This long-term vision is being immediately supported by the allocation of 1,600 additional house lots across the region to address the existing



Young professional homes under construction in Region Six

backlog of applications.

President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali announced the Moleson Creek housing development during a community engagement in Skeldon, emphasising its integral role in the region's economic transformation. The initial phase of this

ambitious plan includes the construction of a modern four-lane highway connecting Palmyra to Moleson Creek, with works expected to commence shortly.

Further bolstering the economic prospects of Region Six, the government is investing

in a new farm-to-market road to provide access to over 9,000 acres of farmland. This initiative is specifically designed to benefit former sugar workers, facilitating their transition into large-scale agriculture. Additionally, plans are underway for an all-weather trail linking Moleson Creek to Siparuta, which is projected to open up thousands of additional acres for food production.

Addressing the immediate housing needs of the region, Minister within the Ministry of Housing and Water, Susan Rodrigues, announced that 1,600 pending applications for

house lots across Region Six will be processed during outreach events scheduled for April 25 and 26 in Providence/Glasgow. This effort signifies a substantial step towards clearing the existing housing backlog. President Ali underscored the government's significant commitment to the area, highlighting that the 10,000 house lots planned for Moleson Creek build upon the over 2,200 house lots already allocated in Region Six since 2020, in areas including Fort Ordance, Williamsburg/Hampshire, Numbers 75 and 76 Villages, Hogstye, and Moleson Creek.

Minister Rodrigues

had previously assured residents of the government's dedication to resolving the housing backlog, stating that all applicants who applied for a house lot on or before December 31, 2024, will receive their allocation letters before the end of this year.

This comprehensive housing and economic development drive is underpinned by substantial infrastructure investments exceeding \$15 billion across various housing schemes in Region Six. Alongside land allocation and road construction, the government is actively engaged in building homes, with 200 low-income houses already completed and hundreds more under development in areas like Fort Ordance and Palmyra.

## GUYANA SHARES SOCIAL JUSTICE PROGRESS AT UN, ADVOCATES FOR FAIR AI ACCESS

Addressing the 4th Session of the Permanent Forum on People of African Descent, Guyana's Minister of Labour, Joseph Hamilton, outlined the country's strides in social justice and called for equitable access to artificial intelligence as part of the global reparatory justice agenda.

Minister Hamilton emphasised that Guyana's development path is anchored in inclusivity, aiming to bridge social and

economic divides, especially for Afro-Guyanese and other historically marginalised communities.

"We have embarked on a transformative agenda that is changing both our economic landscape and our approach to equity," he said, highlighting key national initiatives.

In the area of education and human resource development, Minister Hamilton noted that thousands



Minister Joseph Hamilton leading Guyana's delegation to the 4th Session of the Permanent Forum on People of African Descent at the United Nations Headquarters in New York

of Guyanese have benefited from the Guyana Online Academy

of Learning (GOAL), receiving fully-funded online scholarships. The

government has also introduced free tertiary education and expanded access to technical and vocational training, while maintaining annual school cash grants for children from nursery to secondary levels.

He also highlighted the launch of a Digital Academy to prepare citizens for the evolving tech landscape, especially as Guyana embraces artificial intelligence.

On housing, Minister Hamilton reported that more than 44,000 house lots have been distributed in the last four years, benefitting over 200,000 people—43% of whom

are women. Subsidies and low-interest mortgage options have made homeownership more accessible, regardless of ethnicity.

Turning to technology, Minister Hamilton stressed the importance of narrowing the global digital divide. "AI must be part of the conversation on reparatory justice," he stated, calling for fair and inclusive digital development.

Guyana, he concluded, will continue to push for digital justice as it works to build a more equitable and resilient future for all its people.



Attorney General Anil Nandlall

Attorney General Anil Nandlall has announced that over 400 families in Ann's Grove, a historically Afro-Guyanese village, are set to receive their land transports by the end of this year. This initiative aims to formalise land ownership within the community, where residents have occupied land without official titles.

The Attorney General's announcement



Minister of Labour Joseph Hamilton

was made during his 'Issues in the News' commentary, where he addressed claims of government infringement on land rights. AG Nandlall emphasised the current administration's commitment to granting legal ownership to long-term land occupants, particularly within Afro-Guyanese communities.

Highlighting Ann's Grove as a key example, AG Nandlall described it

as a "slave village without a title" now undergoing regularisation under the PPP/C government. He also indicated that three other predominantly Afro-Guyanese villages on the West Coast of Berbice are part of a similar land titling process.

These announcements follow statements made by Vincent Alexander, Chairman of IDPADA-G, at a recent UN forum, where he accused the government of seizing "ancestral land." AG Nandlall dismissed the legal standing of "ancestral land" in

Guyana and underscored the government's active role in providing legal security through land title distribution.

AG Nandlall also accused Alexander and the opposition of misinforming the public, asserting that more people are becoming aware of the facts. He criticised the previous administration's record on addressing land issues in Afro-Guyanese communities. "They were in government from 2015 to 2020, they cannot point to any grouping of Afro-Guyanese, in any village, that they

have done something substantial for," he stated.

Minister of Labour Joseph Hamilton also strongly refuted Alexander's accusations of Afro-Guyanese marginalisation, calling them "nonsensical" and "divisive." He stated that Alexander's narrative lacked basis in reality and that Afro-Guyanese are increasingly rejecting IDPADA-G's claim to represent them. "Vincent Alexander and IDPADA-G have assigned themselves that they are the

spokespersons for Afro-Guyanese, and daily, thousands of Guyanese are saying to them, 'you go to hell, you don't speak for me'," he stated.

Minister Hamilton defended the government's inclusive development policies, citing the free tuition at the University of Guyana as a benefit to all Guyanese, including Afro-Guyanese. He also clarified that the absence of an Afro-Guyanese commissioner in the ERC delegation to the UN forum was due to a last-minute declination.

# DR. JAGDEO WEEKLY BRIEFINGS:



Vice President Dr. Bharrat Jagdeo

## APNU+AFC COALITION 'BOUND TO FAIL' — PPP/C STANDS FIRM ON DEVELOPMENT RECORD

Vice President Dr. Bharrat Jagdeo said the collapse of coalition talks between A Partnership for National Unity (APNU) and the Alliance For Change (AFC) was inevitable, citing the opposition's focus on "sharing spoils" rather than building a united vision for the country.

At a press conference held at Freedom House,

AFC Executive David Patterson confirmed that the parties failed to agree on a consensus candidate but left the door open for a possible last-minute deal before Nomination Day. Dr. Jagdeo was skeptical, suggesting political pressure could push the AFC back into APNU's arms.

**"When they go on the ground and realise nobody is listening to them, they might try to crawl back within the APNU fold,"** he remarked.

## PPP/C EMPHASISES

**projects. They're designed to deliver real benefits for all Guyanese. What comparable plan does the opposition have?"** he asked.

Since returning to office in 2020, the PPP/C has launched numerous infrastructure and social programmes, including the gas-to-energy project, the new Demerara River Bridge, and wide-ranging financial support such as cash grants and increased pensions.

## "We've been on the ground" — Dr. Jagdeo defends outreach initiatives

Responding to criticisms that the government's countrywide community outreaches are election gimmicks, Dr. Jagdeo reaffirmed that PPP/C officials including President Irfaan Ali, have been consistently engaging with citizens since 2020.

He cited a recent presidential outreach in Berbice, where nearly

with communities.

Dr. Jagdeo also criticised opposition parties, particularly APNU+AFC, for what he described as "seasonal appearances" limited to election cycles.

"We've been on the ground every year—2020 through to 2024. Even during the height of COVID-19, we never stopped. Which other

rehabilitation of 34 playgrounds from Agricola to Cummings Lodge as evidence that City Hall has failed to deliver.

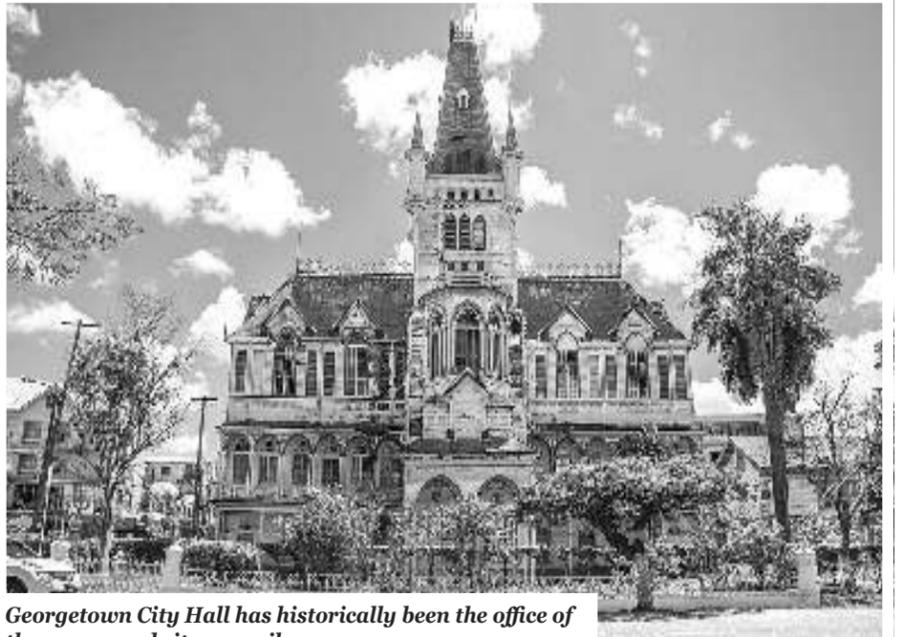
**"If you look closely, the argument that Georgetown isn't receiving enough funds doesn't hold up,"** he said.

Dr. Jagdeo further revealed that the council

City Hall.

**"Our government remains committed to transparency, accountability, and getting things done. That's the clear difference between us and what's happening at the council,"** he noted.

## PPP/C RECEIVES OVERWHELMING



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



President Ali leading a team on a massive outreach across Region Six in July of 2021

Dr. Jagdeo, who is also the General Secretary of the governing People's Progressive Party/Civic (PPP/C) responded to the AFC's announcement that it will not contest the 2025 General and Regional Elections in coalition with APNU after negotiations reached a deadlock.

**"They see government as an opportunity to share spoils,"** Dr. Jagdeo stated. **"That is why it was bound to fail—because if you're focused on spoils, then you're driven by selfish, corrupt interests."**

## STRONG TRACK RECORD AND VISION

Dr. Jagdeo contrasted the opposition's internal disunity with the PPP/C's consistent delivery on its development agenda. He pointed to the government's long-term planning through frameworks such as the Low Carbon Development Strategy (LCDS) 2030, the National Development Strategy, and the Poverty Reduction Strategy.

**"These create the macro vision behind our programmes, and**

1,000 concerns were raised—more than half of which were resolved within 24 hours.

**"This isn't dysfunction—it's a sign of a government that listens,"** Dr. Jagdeo said. **"Even when we can't solve every issue immediately, we take the time to meet people face-to-face. That's what matters."**

He noted that these engagements have evolved to address more localised issues—such as drainage, land disputes, and personal grievances—indicating deeper, ongoing dialogue

political party can say that?"

He pushed back against media claims that the outreaches are disorganised or performative, calling such assessments "elitist" and disconnected from the realities of grassroots governance.

**"We prefer to be in the villages, talking to people, rather than sitting in Georgetown sipping coffee and pontificating about development,"** he said.

## CITY HALL MISMANAGED, NOT STARVED OF FUNDS

Dr. Jagdeo also rejected claims by the Georgetown Mayor and City Council (M&CC) that the central government has been starving the capital of financial support. Instead, he accused the PNC/R-controlled council of chronic mismanagement and failing in its basic duties.

He cited the government's direct intervention in traditionally municipal responsibilities like waste collection, drainage, and the

has not audited its accounts for several years and accused it of leasing out prime municipal properties to companies affiliated with the PNC. One such company, Maikwak, reportedly owes over \$6 billion in unpaid taxes, equivalent to two years of the council's budget.

**"This one company, a holding firm for PNC properties, never paid any taxes. That's why the debt ballooned to over \$6 billion, and now, in 2025, they're pretending they don't even own the property,"** he stated.

He dismissed recent PNC/R calls for a "modern taxation system" as a veiled attempt to impose more taxes on ordinary citizens to finance political campaigns.

"This isn't new. They did the same in places they controlled—like New Amsterdam where residents faced arbitrary tax hikes."

According to Dr. Jagdeo, claims of central government neglect are a smokescreen to deflect attention from years of poor management and internal corruption at

## PUBLIC INPUT FOR NEW TERM INITIATIVES

Dr. Jagdeo, announced a strong response to the party's call for public input, with over 100 written submissions and 1,500+ WhatsApp messages. Suggestions covered a wide range of issues, from foreign policy and economic development to local concerns like drainage, garbage collection, and livestock pasture maintenance. Dr. Jagdeo confirmed key responses:

- Continued cash grants and pension increases.
- Reduced vehicle taxes.
- Upgraded sports facilities.
- Ongoing plans for improved drainage and flood control.

Other popular suggestions included relocating small industrial operations, creating designated business zones, and improving healthcare efficiency and public service digitisation. Dr. Jagdeo emphasized that the feedback aligns with the PPP/C's ongoing development plans and vision for the new term.

# YUPUKARI AND SATELLITE VILLAGES RECEIVE MAJOR DEVELOPMENT BOOST



The engagement with the residents

President Irfaan Ali has unveiled a substantial development package for Yupukari and its satellite villages—Fly Hill and Kaicumbay—in Region Nine, aimed at improving lives across these remote North Rupununi communities.

During a series of community meetings, the President outlined initiatives across key sectors such as transportation, infrastructure, housing, healthcare, and employment. A major highlight is the imminent procurement of two minibuses to improve transportation for Yupukari and surrounding villages.

In Fly Hill, a deteriorating timber bridge will be replaced with a durable concrete structure, and the three-kilometre road to

Katoka Junction will be upgraded.

To address emergency medical needs, an ambulance will be stationed in Yupukari, where residents often face challenges due to the area's distance—up to 70 kilometres—from Lethem.

In Kaicumbay, a new housing scheme will be launched through the Ministry of Housing and Water to support homeownership. As part of a broader plan to construct 1,000 core homes in the region, all 516 households will also receive black tanks to support rainwater harvesting.

To tackle unemployment, President Ali announced the rehiring of more than 70 Community Support Officers (CSOs) previously laid off,

and the inclusion of community policing members in the National Pathway Workers Programme. The agricultural sector will also benefit, with the government pledging one bag of fertiliser per acre of cultivated land.

“These are not just plans on paper; these are active projects already underway or budgeted for,” the

President said, noting that over \$450 million has been invested so far in infrastructure across the three villages—excluding social support initiatives.



The engagement with the residents

Additional North Rupununi communities—Massara, Yakarinta, Toka, Kwaimatta, and Aranaputa—are set to benefit from wide-ranging projects targeting connectivity, agriculture, education,

and livelihoods. In Massara, two kilometres of road will be constructed from the Secondary School to improve access for students and residents. Toka's internal road network will also be upgraded. A phased road project to link Massara and Yakarinta will begin this year, addressing a long-standing need for better connectivity.

Healthcare services will be strengthened with two ambulances—one for Massara Health Centre and another for Annai Hospital. Kwaimatta will receive a boat with a 15-horsepower engine to assist with student and resident transport. Efforts to boost food security and economic resilience include investments in shade houses and the distribution of tillers, seedlings, pesticides, fertilizers, and four bee hives to farmers. In Kwaimatta, 36 households currently without access to water will receive tanks. Massara will also supply clay bricks

Kwaimatta, Aranaputa, and Rupertee—have already benefited from approximately \$650 million in government investments across agriculture, education, health, and infrastructure.

To support youth development, the government distributed sports gear across the villages, including cricket equipment, footballs, volleyballs, nets, and stumps. President Ali was accompanied by Minister of Natural Resources, Vickram Bharrat; Minister of Education, Priya Manickchand; and Minister within the Ministry of

Aranaputa will benefit from internal road repairs, while a new bridge will be built to connect Toka and Kwaimatta. A pontoon will also be delivered to Massara within two months to boost river transport.



The engagement with the residents

To further ease transportation across the region, the government will expand the vehicle fleet with two buses, a canter truck, and an all-terrain vehicle (ATV).

for the next phase of Housing and Water, the Lethem Housing Support Programme. President Ali noted that six villages—Massara, Yakarinta, Toka,

Housing and Water, Susan Rodrigues—underscoring the administration's multi-sectoral approach to regional development.

## GUYANA DOUBLES DOWN ON INDIGENOUS WOMEN'S RIGHTS MINISTER SUKHAI OUTLINES SWEEPING REFORMS AND PROGRESS AT UN INDIGENOUS FORUM



Guyana delegation at the forum

Guyana is making bold strides to uplift Indigenous women, with strong political backing and real investment. This was the clear message delivered by Minister of Amerindian Affairs, Pauline Sukhai as she addressed the 24th Session of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues.

Speaking during the dialogue on the

rights of Indigenous women, Minister Sukhai shared concrete results. “Thirty years ago, Indigenous women had little voice in national leadership. Today, they make up 39% of female parliamentarians in Guyana,” she declared. “We're not just talking empowerment—we're delivering it.”

The government's approach is rooted in action. Through targeted entrepreneurship and apprenticeship programmes, 63% of participants are Indigenous women—receiving training in agriculture, ecotourism, and traditional livelihoods. At the same time, health services in Amerindian communities are expanding with new infrastructure, telemedicine, and financial support for cancer screening and universal care.

Education is another key pillar. Indigenous women now benefit from tuition-free university and technical education, plus fully funded international scholarships. More schools are being built in remote regions, while ICT connectivity is

improving access and opportunity.

Clean water access—long a challenge in hinterland areas—is also being tackled head-on. With 91% of Indigenous villages now connected to safe drinking water, the government aims for full coverage by 2025.

Minister Sukhai also underscored tough new laws to protect Indigenous women from violence. The recently passed Family Violence Act strengthens protections and ensures accountability for abusers.

“Empowerment

requires both political will and resources,” Minister Sukhai said. “Guyana is fully committed to making Indigenous women equal partners in national development.”



Guyana delegation at the forum

## \$2B FERTILISER SUBSIDY FOR FARMERS

The government will provide a \$2 billion fertiliser subsidy to support the agriculture sector, President Dr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali announced at a recent community engagement in Parika, Region Three.

The subsidy will ensure that farmers receive one bag of fertiliser for every acre of farmland. The funds will be disbursed shortly.

This initiative follows the government's recent distribution of \$2.7 billion to rice farmers to

offset losses due to falling international market prices. President Ali challenged other nations to match Guyana's level of intervention in support of farmers. **"Point to one other country that would have intervened in such a way when the market prices collapsed,"** he said

President Ali stated that between 2020 and March 2025, Guyana exported almost 2 million tonnes of rice, valued at over US\$1 billion. He

attributed this success to the government's commitment to rice farmers.

He contrasted the current administration's support with the actions of the previous coalition government, which he said neglected rice farmers and their financial difficulties. **"The same government that promised \$9,000 per bag, instead of giving that when the banks were taking away their land and**



\$2B fertiliser subsidy to support farmers

**machinery, they were told that rice is private business,"** he reminded. President Ali noted that his government, upon taking office in 2020, engaged commercial banks to

reschedule loans for rice farmers.

The government has also invested in drainage and irrigation improvements, including the deployment of excavators to Hubu and

Ruby in Region Three. President Ali announced that two more excavators will be deployed to these communities, and two mobile pumps will be procured by the end of the year.

## ESSEQUIBO RICE FARMERS GET FERRY TOLL RELIEF



The meeting with the rice farmers

In a swift response to concerns raised by rice farmers, the government has waived all ferry tolls for vehicles transporting paddy and rice on the Essequibo Coast.

Agriculture Minister Zulfikar Mustapha

announced the immediate measure, highlighting its role in easing the financial burdens faced by producers in the region following recent consultations.

Minister Mustapha

explained that this decision, reached after discussions with Vice President Dr. Bharrat Jagdeo, millers, and other stakeholders, acknowledges the higher transportation costs faced by Essequibo Coast farmers. Effective from April 22, truck drivers moving paddy or rice to and from mills will no longer incur ferry charges.

**"Truck drivers who are transporting paddy or rice will no longer have to pay to cross on the ferry... With this intervention, the farmers will have to**

**benefit, and the cost for transportation will be reduced,"** Minister Mustapha emphasised.

Beyond the ferry toll waiver, Minister Mustapha outlined other government efforts to support Essequibo Coast rice farmers. These include addressing long waiting times at mills through agreements with local millers and a new buyer from Region Three to increase paddy intake and clear existing backlogs. He also noted that a local miller anticipates resolving operational issues within the week.

Looking to the future, the government is exploring the feasibility of establishing drying facilities on the Essequibo Coast to help farmers reduce post-harvest losses due to spoilage. Minister Mustapha indicated that an assessment would be conducted for a facility with a capacity of approximately 500,000 bags of paddy.

Minister Mustapha

also reaffirmed the government's commitment to ensuring a minimum price of \$4,000 per bag of paddy for farmers and actively pursuing additional international markets for Guyana's growing rice production. He also confirmed the upcoming availability of previously announced fertiliser assistance for the second crop.



The meeting with the rice farmers

## LANDING SITES ON ESSEQUIBO COAST GETTING UPGRADES

Agriculture Minister, Zulfikar Mustapha met with fisherfolk from the Essequibo Coast to discuss their concerns and outline upcoming infrastructural upgrades to their landing sites. This engagement followed a commitment made by Vice President Dr. Bharrat Jagdeo to address the needs of the fishing community.

Minister Mustapha highlighted the Ministry of Agriculture's ongoing Wharf and Landing Enhancement programme, which aims to modernise facilities for fisherfolk. He specifically addressed the request from the Devonshire Castle fisherfolk for a shed and washroom facilities, stating that the Fisheries Department has been asked to provide an estimate for these works. He emphasised the



Minister Mustapha's meeting with fisherfolk from the Essequibo Coast

significant increase in budgetary support for the fisheries sector over the past four years, reflecting the government's commitment.

The Minister underscored the importance of consulting with the fisherfolk throughout the planning

process. **"Before we build these facilities, we have consultations with the people who are expected to benefit so that we can work together to have the most suitable outcome. We will not build these**

**facilities where we want to build them. We want to build it where the majority of the fisherfolk want them to be built,"** he explained.

Minister Mustapha also noted that President Irfaan Ali has directed the rehabilitation and upgrade of all major landing sites and wharfs. He detailed the progress of this initiative, which has already resulted in the construction and installation of essential amenities like sheds, washrooms, water facilities, lighting, and security at various locations.

**"Our President visited several areas where fisherfolk operate**

**and instructed that a programme be developed to upgrade these facilities. We've since built and installed sheds, washrooms, water facilities, lighting, and security at these facilities. Since that programme started, the needs of**

**the fisherfolk have increased, and we will continue to develop these facilities,"** Minister Mustapha affirmed, signalling the government's continued focus on improving working conditions for fisherfolk nationwide.



Minister Mustapha's meeting with fisherfolk from the Essequibo Coast

# WEST DEMERARA RESIDENTS WELCOME PLANS FOR ENHANCED COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Residents of West Demerara have enthusiastically welcomed President Irfaan Ali's ambitious development plans for the region, particularly the proposed establishment of a 24/7 football training centre, the upgrade of a children's recreational park, and significant infrastructural improvements.

During a recent community meeting at the West Demerara Secondary School, President Ali outlined his government's vision, detailing initiatives directly aimed at enhancing residents' lives, and fostering youth development.

The announcement of a dedicated, around-the-clock accessible football training centre was particularly well-received by local sports enthusiasts. This facility aims to nurture the talents of young footballers in the region by providing a dedicated space to hone their skills. The Regional Democratic Council (RDC) has been directed to identify a suitable location for



President Ali delivering the feature address at the West Demerara Secondary School

the centre, with the government committed to covering all associated costs. As President Ali stated, the aim is to develop the "talents of local youth" through this initiative.

Families in Phoenix Park also welcomed the

news that their local park will be modernised into a vibrant recreational space designed for children and young people. This upgrade promises to create a safe and enjoyable environment for leisure activities, with works expected to commence later this year. These facilities will complement the modern stadium being constructed in the region with support from the Qatari Government, further boosting the area's sporting and recreational infrastructure. "These are the things that we are embracing," President Ali affirmed, emphasising the "holistic future, comprehensive support system that

stimulates the growth of families, individuals, and our country."

Beyond these community-focused projects, President Ali also detailed significant infrastructural investments for Region Three. A key component of this plan is the construction of new bridges between Schoonord and Parika, part of a substantial \$27 billion investment in the region's infrastructure. The initial phase will see the construction of 16 bridges with a \$10 billion allocation, set to begin later this year. These improved connections are expected to unlock significant land for housing and agricultural development. President Ali noted that this investment will "open up tens of thousands of acres of land for new housing development and even agricultural production."

The imminent completion of the new Demerara River Bridge is also anticipated to spur further development on the West Bank, with plans for new housing



Scene from the community engagement

schemes and high-value residential areas. Moreover, the region is strategically positioned to become a major manufacturing and agribusiness hub once the gas-to-energy project becomes operational, promising long-term economic benefits and job creation. According to President Ali, the region is "poised to become a manufacturing and agribusiness hub that will drive long-term economic transformation."

In the healthcare sector, residents can look forward to a new state-of-the-art hospital in De Kinderen, alongside the modernisation of the West Demerara Regional Hospital.

These investments in health infrastructure underscore the government's commitment to the well-being of the region's population.

These development plans build upon ongoing investments in the region's education sector, with upgrades and expansions to nursery, primary, and secondary schools, reflecting the government's "people-centered development approach." These public sector initiatives are being further supported by private sector investments, including a new fertilizer plant and the development of a port in Vreed-en-hoop.



President Ali engaging members of the community



The meeting in Goed Fortuin

Residents of Goed Fortuin, Region Three, can anticipate a significant boost in community safety with the imminent installation of street lights and security cameras throughout the Neighbourhood Democratic Council (NDC). This announcement was made by President Irfaan Ali during a public engagement at the Goed Fortuin Community Ground.

Addressing the community directly, President Ali emphasised the government's commitment to creating safer environments for all Guyanese. He

stated that the "safe community, safe country project will be expanding even more within this NDC and you will have your street lights." This commitment aims to improve visibility during night time

hours, thereby deterring criminal activity and enhancing the overall sense of security for residents.

Further bolstering these efforts, President Ali announced the strategic placement of security cameras at key locations within Goed Fortuin. These cameras will provide real-time surveillance, assisting law enforcement in monitoring public spaces and responding effectively to any security concerns.

Residents at



The meeting in Goed Fortuin

## GOED FORTUIN TO GET STREET LIGHTS, SECURITY CAMERAS



The meeting in Goed Fortuin

the meeting warmly received the President's announcement, expressing optimism that these measures will contribute to a greater sense of well-being and security within their neighbourhood. The focus on proactive safety measures aligns with the government's broader

agenda to create safer communities across Guyana.

In addition to these immediate safety enhancements, President Ali also outlined a range of other development initiatives for Goed Fortuin, including upgrades to infrastructure and the

establishment of an e-learning center.



DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INFORMATION

# WORK TO SOON START ON PARIKA STELLING'S TRANSFORMATION TO INTERNATIONAL PORT



The meeting in Hydronie

The highly anticipated transformation of the Parika Stelling into a major international port facility is set to commence well before July, President Irfaan Ali announced during a community engagement at the Hydronie Market in Region Three.

**"On May 2nd, the Expression of Interest for an important project will close,"** President Ali stated. **"We are going to launch the first phase of converting Parika Stelling**

**into a port that will ship directly to the region. We hope that construction on the first phase will commence long before July,"** he affirmed.

According to President Ali, the upgraded port will revolutionise Guyana's export capabilities by enabling direct shipment of goods throughout the Caribbean. This streamlined process is expected to significantly bolster regional trade and create new economic opportunities for local producers and shippers.

**"What is that project? It is one of the most transformative projects for these islands, Parika and for every single farmer and shipper,"** President Ali emphasised, highlighting the project's significance for the region.

Prior to this major upgrade, the government

has already invested some \$46.6 million in rehabilitating the Parika Stelling. These initial upgrades have improved docking facilities for regional ferries, expanded parking areas, and streamlined speedboat operations along the Essequibo and Demerara River routes.

President Ali further outlined that substantial investments will be made in crucial infrastructure to support the expanded port facility. This includes the establishment of customs and immigration offices, a modern fire service station, a modern coast guard presence, and an upgraded police service within the area.

To directly benefit local farmers, funding will be allocated towards constructing a state-of-the-art storage and processing facility, incorporating cold storage capabilities. This infrastructure will

significantly extend the shelf life of agricultural produce, allowing farmers to access broader markets and reduce post-harvest losses.

In a move to boost the tourism sector, President Ali revealed that the upgraded port will also be equipped

**we can have boats utilising the marina to support the tourism sector,"** he explained.

Funds for this transformative initiative have already been earmarked within the Ministry of Public Works' \$9.9 billion river

**manifesto. We are working beyond the confines of the manifesto. We don't see ourselves bounded only by those commitments,"** he asserted. **"We are looking for every opportunity to give more to the people within the financial and economic framework of our country."**

The transformation of the Parika Stelling is poised to be a key driver of economic growth in Region Three, adding to the range of ongoing major projects including the Vreed-en-Hoop Shorebase, the Gas-to-Energy initiative, the industrial hub at Wales, extensive housing developments, and critical road and drainage infrastructure. These combined efforts are positioning Region Three as a major engine of national development.



The meeting in Hydronie

to accommodate cruise liners, opening up the scenic Essequibo tourism circuit to international visitors. **"The investments that we are making in the port facility will also bring with it a marina... so that**

**transport budget. President Ali stressed that these development efforts surpass the commitments outlined in the government's manifesto. "We have fulfilled completely every single promise that we made in that**

## WOMEN AND FIRST TIMERS AMONG 293 AWARDED REGION SIX ROAD CONTRACTS

A government initiative to upgrade road networks across Berbice has seen 293 small contractors in Region Six awarded contracts for enhancement projects. The agreements, signed at the Berbice High School, are valued at \$15 million or less per project and aim to improve infrastructure and empower local businesses in numerous communities.

Notably, a significant number of female contractors were among the awardees, marking a positive step towards greater inclusivity in the construction sector. Yasmin Khan of Imran's Trucking, a first-time contractor, praised



A significant number of female contractors were among the awardees

the government's effort to involve small businesses in national infrastructural development, expressing her enthusiasm to contribute.

The signing process

was overseen by Minister of Public Works Bishop Juan Edghill, who commended the strong participation of women and urged all contractors to deliver high-quality work on schedule. **"This**

**creates economic empowerment for women across Guyana,"** Minister Edghill stated, highlighting their past successes.

Of the 293 contractors, over 150 are first-time recipients. Minister Edghill emphasised the importance of efficient time management for all, with a project completion target of July this year. He also stressed that substandard work would not be accepted, asserting that **"the standard**

**of excellence must remain the same"** even with increased participation at the small contractor level.

These community road enhancement

projects are expected to significantly improve road networks throughout Berbice, benefiting residents and boosting local economic activities.



A significant number of female contractors were among the awardees

## PUBLIC WORKS PROGRAMME CREATED 5,000 JOBS IN FIVE MONTHS IN REGION SIX

The Ministry of Public Works' ambitious infrastructural development programme has emerged as a significant driver of employment in Region Six (East Berbice-Corentyne), generating approximately 5,000 job opportunities between November 2024 and March 2025.

This substantial employment boost was



Minister of Public Works Bishop Juan Edghill inspects road works in Region Six, back in February

highlighted by Minister of Public Works, Bishop Juan Edghill, during a community engagement

at the Albion Sports Complex.

Minister Edghill informed residents

that the extensive road construction and other infrastructure projects undertaken in the region throughout 2024 were pivotal in creating these jobs. He noted that approximately 612 road contracts were awarded to local contractors, with each project requiring a workforce of at least five individuals directly employed by the contractor.

Furthermore, the Public Works programme has had a cascading effect on the local economy, leading to numerous indirect employment opportunities. These include jobs for truckers transporting materials, suppliers of sand and concrete, and providers of hardware and other construction necessities. Minister Edghill

emphasised the positive economic impact, stating that the **"circulation of money in the community is what is making a difference in improving the lives of people."**

The Minister also announced that an additional 409 road contracts are slated for award to local contractors in the near future, signalling a continued commitment to infrastructure development and sustained job creation in the region.

# PRESIDENT ALI ADDRESSES HUNDREDS OF REGION SIX RESIDENTS' CONCERNS DURING OUTREACH

President Irfaan Ali concluded a dynamic two-day outreach in Region Six (East Berbice-Corentyne), engaging thousands of residents in packed meetings and resolving hundreds of individual issues on the spot. The outreach demonstrated both responsiveness to citizens' needs and major development initiatives poised to transform the region.

Accompanied by ministers and other

## US\$285M BERBICE PORT PROJECT TO CREATE 1,000 JOBS

President Ali announced the imminent sod turning of the US\$285 million Berbice Port project. Led by Muneshwers Limited and John Fernandes Limited, it will create 1,000 jobs and drive economic growth.

**"[They] want to turn the sod in the coming weeks,"** the President said. **"This**



project. A modern four-lane, high-span bridge across the Berbice River will remove toll burdens. This is part of a wider infrastructure transformation, including the US\$604 million Palmyra to Moleson Creek road project.

An AI data centre, national cultural market, malls, private hospitals, a new stadium, and expanded entertainment facilities are also planned.

**"We are building a future for you. All of these projects are linked and aligned to a vision that will create opportunities across sectors,"**

## BERBICE'S ONE GUYANA DIGITAL SCHOOL TO BE LAUNCHED SOON

Region Six will be among the first to benefit from the One Guyana Digital School initiative, launching before May. The digital learning platform will offer 24/7 education access.

**"Every single child will be in a learning environment 24-7, and you will have the Digital School right here in Berbice,"** the President affirmed.

The digital school will complement traditional schools, ensuring equitable access. It's part of a strategy to prepare youth

hospitality and tourism institute.

## NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR REGION SIX SINGLE MOTHERS

President Ali announced a major empowerment initiative granting 50 acres of land to 500 single-parent families for hydroponic farming, with government support.

**"We are creating 500 new small enterprises for these communities,"** the

**the training and the protective gear, we are going to help you start a honey production business so you can [access] opportunities,"** the President promised.

A presidential task force will lead the rollout, collaborating with the NDC and RDC.

**"This group will work directly with me to go into every one of those communities and to break down the power struggle,"** President Ali said.



government officials, and technical teams from agencies like NIS, GPL, and GWI, President Ali addressed community and personal concerns. With outreach tents across locations, over 1,000 issues—mostly land, utilities, and insurance—were raised. Remarkably, over half were resolved during the outreach.

## will be an investment of US\$285 million and will create 1,000 jobs."

The Berbice Port will complement a deep-water port, with Bechtel finalising plans. This dual-port strategy will unlock opportunities in transportation, logistics, construction, and real estate, supporting Guyana's second gas



President Ali said.

Region Six's healthcare is also seeing significant investment with two new state-of-the-art hospitals in New Amsterdam and Skeldon.

for the digital economy, including a new nursing and medical school.

The University of Guyana's Tain Campus will expand, offering medicine, dentistry, pharmacy, law, engineering, and oil and gas programmes.

**"If we have to put in the labs, [then] we will put in the labs. We are going to make the investments to ensure it happens, and every child in this region can aspire to be the best they want to be,"** he said.

Port Mourant will become a technical training hub with nursing schools and a



President stated.

This follows a similar project in Essequibo and expands brackish water shrimp production in Berbice.

An agri-business initiative targeting 200 single mothers in Port Mourant—Johns NDC will offer shade houses and opportunities in honey production, poultry, dairy, and swine farming.

**"We are going to give you, not only**

**"We are not a party of lords... we are a party of service, a party of servants for the people, from the highest to the lowest level."**

Housing applicants from before December 2024 will receive allocations this year. Infrastructure work is ongoing, with 400 young professional homes in Palmyra and 300 in Port Mourant.



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# GUYANA EARNS FIVE MEDALS AT 52ND CARIFTA GAMES

Guyana's young athletes brought home five medals from the 52nd CARIFTA Games held in Trinidad and Tobago, marking another proud moment for the nation on the regional athletics stage.

This year, Guyana fielded its largest-ever contingent at the Games — 42 athletes — a clear signal of growing investment and participation in athletics. Though the medal count fell short of last year's haul of eight medals from a smaller 23-member team, the performances reflected increasing



Ebo McNeil won bronze in the Boys' U-17 3000m

depth and promise within Guyanese sports.

### Medal Highlights

- **Gold:** Tianna Springer

delivered Guyana's standout performance with a commanding victory in the Girls' Under-20 400 meters.

- **Silver:** Malachi Austin earned silver in the Boys' Under-20 400 meters, adding to the country's sprinting success.
- **Bronze:** Rodel Greene captured bronze in the Boys' Under-20 triple jump with a personal best of 15.50 meters.

- **Bronze:** Attoya Harvey secured a bronze in the Girls' Under-20 1500 meters.

- **Bronze:** Ebo McNeil added to the tally with bronze in the Boys' Under-17 3000 meters.

**Strong Showings Across Events**  
While not all athletes medaled, several delivered commendable performances:

- The Girls' Under-17 4x400m relay team finished seventh (4:09.26), and the Boys' team came sixth (3:26.46), reflecting growing coordination and teamwork.

- Middle-distance hopefuls Javon Roberts and Kaidon Persaud placed fifth and sixth in the Boys' Under-20 800 meters with times of 1:52.53 and 1:52.56, respectively — narrowly missing the

- podium.
- In the Boys' Under-17 800 meters, Bryson Anderson took sixth (2:01.16).
- Jamie Fraser and Marquez Miggins placed sixth and ninth in the shot put with throws of 13.35m and 12.77m.

- Walton Alleyne was the only Guyanese finalist

in the 200 meters, clocking 21.60 seconds for seventh place.

- Nathaniel Samaroo finished tenth in the discus throw (38.30m).

- David Williams wrapped up Guyana's competition with a seventh-place finish in the U-17 long jump (6.63m).



Rodel Greene won Guyana's fifth medal



Tianna Springer celebrates another 400m gold at the CARIFTA Track and Field Championships

## WE LIFT DELIVERS DUAL CELEBRATION OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

The National Aquatic Centre in Liliendaal buzzed with empowerment and achievement as the fifth edition of the WE LIFT exposition concluded a successful three-day run, simultaneously celebrating the thriving spirit of women entrepreneurs, and the graduation of skilled individuals from vital technical and vocational programmes.

From April 11 to 13, WE LIFT 5 served as a dynamic hub for over 350 women-led businesses, providing a crucial platform to showcase their diverse products and services, engage with hundreds of patrons, and forge



I-ology Shop showcasing its locally made teas and products

valuable networking connections.

The exposition proved to be a significant catalyst for growth, particularly for budding entrepreneurs like Malissa of the I-ology Shop, who reported a substantial boost in brand awareness and customer engagement just three months after

launching her health and wellness business. Similar positive sentiments echoed across the exhibitor floor, with returning and first-time participants alike, such as Mariah Lawrence of 'Dainty Blooms', highlighting the invaluable market exposure and customer feedback received. The vibrant atmosphere of the expo was further enhanced by live cooking demonstrations, celebrating Guyana's rich culinary tapestry.

Adding another layer of success to the WE LIFT 5 event was the graduation ceremony of 163 individuals — 102 women and 61 men — from a range of

technical and vocational courses offered through the Ministry of Human Services and Social Security's Women's Innovation and Investment Network (WIIN) and the 'Mpower' initiative. This significant event, a key highlight of the exposition, recognised the graduates' acquisition of internationally certified skills in high-demand trades such as carpentry, electrical installation, welding, and plumbing, certified by City and Guilds and Nations Inc.

Minister of Human Services and Social Security, Dr. Vindhya Persaud, lauded the achievements, emphasising the critical role of both entrepreneurship and technical skills in driving Guyana's economic progress. Addressing the graduating cohort, Minister Persaud highlighted the importance of their internationally recognised certifications in a competitive job market and urged

them to capitalise on the burgeoning opportunities within the nation's construction sector. She also commended the women entrepreneurs for their innovation, branding prowess, and the clever incorporation of Guyanese culture in their business names and packaging, noting the remarkable growth of the WE LIFT initiative from 75 participants in its first year to over 350

training, and lauded the fruitful collaboration with the Ministry and City and Guilds in developing essential skills among Guyana's youth. She encouraged the graduates to maintain their collaborative spirit as they embark on their careers.

Looking ahead, the Ministry of Human Services and Social Security has set an ambitious goal to train an additional 1,000



Exhibitor showcasing her locally made pepper sauces and seasonings

this year. Pamela O'Toole, Director of Nations University Inc., expressed pride in the institution's role in hosting the technical

individuals in an expanded selection of technical and vocational disciplines this year, building on the success of the WIIN and Mpower programmes.



Marissa Lawrence of Dainty Blooms interacting with a customer



# Guyanese DIASPORA DIGEST

KEEPING THE DIASPORA INFORMED EDITION 92

## BUILDING BONDS OVER DOMINOES

During his recent outreach to Region Nine, President Irfaan Ali took time to connect with residents in Lethem through a lively game of dominoes. The friendly match brought laughter, camaraderie, and a strong sense of community as the President joined "the guys" in this beloved pastime. While in Katoka, he also shared a bike ride around the area with locals. These simple yet meaningful moments served as a reminder that leadership goes beyond formal settings—it's about listening to people and building bonds with the community.



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- H.E. , Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali, President of the Co-Operative Republic of Guyana.



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