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Full story inside



Williams OGRAPHY

Bridge ‘crowned’, to be officially opened Sunday

President Dr. Irfaan Ali and First Lady Arya Ali joined President Donald Trump and First Lady Melania Trump at a dinner they hosted for world leaders attending the United Nations General Assembly in New York.

The US First Lady used the opportunity of hosting world leaders’ spouses to announce the launch of a new coalition on children’s well-being and artificial intelligence safety that she said she hoped they would join.

She called on her counterparts to “lead this movement in your region of the world,” to “safeguard healthy environments for our children” and to “work with me to empower children to achieve new heights across our planet.”

Mrs Trump, in an off-white Dolce & Gab-

bana cashmere pantsuit with a tan blouse, called on leaders to help impose safeguards upon the spread of new technology.

“Our nations benefit from advancements in technology — saving lives, expanding access to knowledge, connecting people, and of course, safety. Nothing comes before safety,” Mrs Trump said in a gilded Manhattan ballroom adorned with fresh flowers and tiered displays of macarons and finger sandwiches.

Mrs Ali’s presence on such a high level stage was praised by Guyanese. One noted on social media that the meeting was “so impressive... Guyana’s presence on the world stage, First Lady Arya Ali!” Another commented, “Well, good things on the way for our country, First Lady.”

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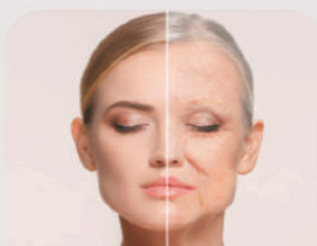
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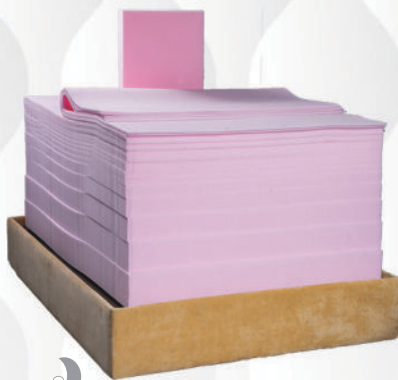
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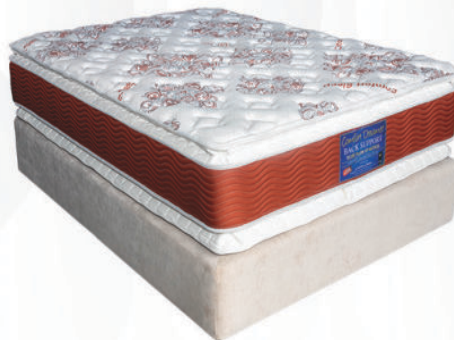
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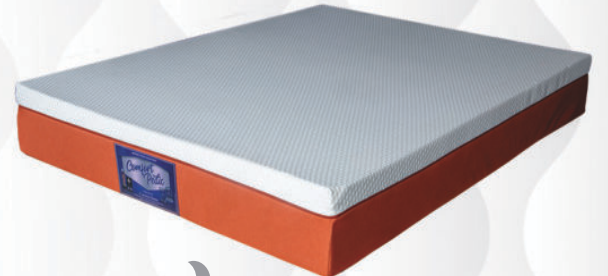
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SMEs positioned as key players in transformation of Guyana’s agro-industry

SMALL and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are set to become a driving force in the building out of Guyana’s agro-processing industry, with President Dr. Irfaan Ali pledging that they will be empowered through partnerships, technology, and financing.

The President threw the spotlight on SMEs during a recent press conference where he unveiled a strategy that links local businesses with global partners in a bid to accelerate Guyana’s position as a regional food hub.

The President said: “SMEs have an important role to play in agro-processing. That is why we are now working with those who have the technology, the investment, to work in a co-investment model with our local SMEs to ensure that we maximise the potential of our SMEs while giving them the fastest track in technology, in financing, in technical support, to build their businesses and be part of this transformation.”

The President highlighted the challenges that Guyana faces, such as technology, explaining that adopting a co-investment model with local farmers and SMEs, alongside international partners with advanced technology and expertise, will help in attaining the objective.

“So, we can either sit back and wait forever, or we can go and get those who have the technology; those who have done it and done it successfully, to come on board with us together, so that we reduce the lag time and advance the opportunity in a more rapid way.

“I think that is the best approach, and that is why the private sector is involved in this,” Dr. Ali stated.

Notably, Guyana’s agro-processing industry is rapidly growing, positioning the country as a food hub and prominent exporter of value-added products.

As a result, investors are expressing significant interest in the country’s manufacturing and agro-processing sectors, the President said during another engagement earlier this month.

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

SPECIAL DEVELOPMENT ZONES

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

“I think we have the best incentive regime for manufacturing; a very competitive regime, both on the fiscal side and look at the support on the infrastructure side; support that the government is giving, building out the infrastructure to support manufacturing. So, we are creating differ-



President Ali outlining his plans for SMEs

ent hubs. Some of these hubs will be tax-free zones to encourage investment,” President Ali said.

These zones, which will offer special tax regimes and infrastructure support, are expected to further stimulate growth in the manufacturing sector. The Enmore Development Zone in Region Four (Demerara-Mahaica) and the Wales Development Zone in Region Three (Essequibo Islands-West Demerara), the President said, are examples of these special zones that will be created to stimulate investments.

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

MAJOR AGRO-BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT HUB

During the press conference, the President did not mince his words, explaining how Guyana is moving assiduously to cement its role as a regional food production and logistics powerhouse.

It is in this regard that he announced plans to establish a major agro-business development hub, emphasising his government’s commitment to food security, agricultural innovation, and regional integration.

Not only will the project capitalise on the broader commitment to food security and infrastructural development, but it will also provide a platform to strengthen Caribbean self-sufficiency.

The President explained that agro-business development is not a policy priority, but it stands as a growth pool that could drive international partnerships and spark investors’ interests.

President Ali then pointed to the project United States (US) giant, Blumberg Grain and Logistics to develop a landmark regional food hub. Earlier this year, the Government of Guyana signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the renowned US-based company, Blumberg Grain and Logistics.

The agreement paved the way for the

establishment of a state-of-the-art regional food hub at Yarrowkabra, along the Soesdyke-Linden Highway.

The Yarrowkabra food hub, once completed, is expected to significantly boost Guyana’s export capabilities, reduce post-harvest losses to as low as 5 per cent, and provide new manufacturing and processing facilities.

It is also expected to serve as the base from which Guyana can strengthen trade across CARICOM and South America, while laying the foundation for entry into US and international markets.

The commencement of Phase One of the project took place in 2023, accompanied by an investment totalling \$187 million.

Also essential to the plans to position Guyana as a major food exporter within the region is the acceleration of production.

So, how does the President envision supporting both food security and the growth of agro-processing industries that add value to raw products before export?

President Ali stated that the government is seeking to work with megafarms and co-invest with megafarms in the local agricultural sector.

“We’re looking at 100,000 hectares of land to be converted into large-scale mega farms, looking at corn, soybean, coconut, spices and cocoa. All of this we have been able to advance,” he said.

TRANSFORMING AGRICULTURE

The agriculture sector has experienced rapid transformations in recent years through expansion, diversification and modernisation to improve its resilience and

competitiveness.

These developments are being bolstered by government support to farmers, especially to add value to crop, livestock, dairy and fisheries industries.

Earlier this year, the Ministry of Agriculture reported that Guyana has surpassed regional expectations for agricultural production, achieving approximately 88 per cent of production targets one year ahead of schedule.

In 2022, Guyana produced nearly 899,000 metric tonnes of food. By the end of 2024, that number climbed to 1.26 metric tonnes.

This increase was supported by the skyrocketing of rice yield, brackish water shrimp (which recorded a more than 1,000 per cent increase), corn and soya, and prawns.

Guyana’s ambitions are closely tied to the Caribbean Community’s Agri-Food Systems Agenda through “Vision 2030”, a strategy aimed at boosting food production, ending hunger and strengthening food security across the region.

Out of 186 countries, only Guyana produces enough food to feed all its citizens without foreign imports, according to a recent study published in Nature Food.

Nature Food had investigated how well each country could feed its populations in seven food groups: fruits, vegetables, dairy, fish, meat, plant-based protein and starchy staples.

Worldwide, the study found that 65 per cent of countries were overproducing meat and dairy, compared to their own populations’ dietary needs.

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EDITORIAL & OPINIONS

Boosting Transparency

Editorial from the Guyana Chronicle. September 29, 2025

THE Government of Guyana's decision to require body cameras for all law enforcement officers at ports of entry marks a significant step in the battle against corruption.

Starting Monday, September 29, 2025, this directive stems from a troubling extortion case at the Cheddi Jagan International Airport, where police demanded money from a passenger to return her legal belongings. This quick response shows that accountability is now essential in our security system.

The incident at CJIA is not surprising for those familiar with the ongoing corruption claims against Guyana's law enforcement. The US State Department's 2024 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report pointed out how corruption within law enforcement allows drug traffickers to evade prosecution.

Local police often drop charges or fail to investigate properly. The report emphasised that weak enforcement mechanisms at ports of entry hinder Guyana's drug control efforts. In this

context, the airport extortion case is just the latest sign of deep-rooted issues.

The body camera mandate is not groundbreaking; it is necessary. President Ali had already provided 5,000 body cameras to the Guyana Police Force in May 2025, stating there would be no excuses for officers without them. Traffic Chief Mahendra Singh has credited body cameras with addressing professionalism issues and ensuring officer accountability during public interactions.

The technology has effectively reduced incidents where officers face disruptions while on duty. Still, the CJIA extortion case shows that adherence to body camera protocols is inconsistent.

What makes this corruption especially concerning is its location. CJIA is Guyana's main entry point, the first impression for thousands of visitors and returning citizens. When police at our primary port engage in extortion, they harm not only the victims but also the country's reputation.

The government's zero-tolerance policy is encouraging, but it needs to lead to real consequences. The Office

of Professional Responsibility's investigation into the involved officers serves as a test for institutional integrity. In the past, some corruption cases have resulted in officers being quietly reassigned instead of prosecuted. This trend of lenient accountability has fostered public scepticism about police reform.

The rollout of body cameras must be thorough and consistent. Commissioner Clifton Hicken's directive that officers without body cameras should not conduct stops underscores the importance of this initiative. The cameras' specifications—IP67 rating for waterproofing, 256GB storage capacity, and compatibility with national surveillance networks—leave no room for excuses regarding compliance.

However, technology alone cannot fix institutional corruption. As

Deputy Commissioner Ravindradat Budhram noted, changing the culture requires better training, recruitment standards that prioritise integrity, and mandatory ethics education. The government must ensure that this body camera mandate signifies the start, not the end, of extensive police reform.

The CJIA incident serves as a clear reminder that corruption flourishes in secrecy. Body cameras provide the transparency that our law enforcement urgently needs.

Citizens deserve officers who protect them rather than extort them, and visitors should experience professionalism instead of exploitation.

The government has made a positive move—now it must guarantee that this technology becomes a solid defence against corruption at every port of entry.

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Unite in dealing with Transnational Corporations

**By Former President
Donald Ramotar**

One of the benefits that the leaders and the people of the region had hoped was that with the creation of CARICOM, the regional governments would have been acting together. This is very important since we are relatively small individually and in terms of our population. Therefore, acting on issues jointly would enhance the influence of the region internationally.

Moreover, CARICOM has the potential of increasing our bargaining

power greatly, when dealing with multi-national corporations and large countries.

This is more important at this stage in our region's development.

At this time, Guyana has become a major producer of oil and gas. Trinidad & Tobago, which has been producing oil for more than a hundred years has depleted a lot of their reserve. They are now looking for more in the deep waters. Suriname has also found oil and gas and will begin production soon. Recently in the news is that Jamaica and Grenada have joined the hunt for the

black gold.

We know that Guyana in 2016 got a very poor deal. In passing, it is still a mystery why the then government did not involve Trinidad specialists during the negotiations to begin production.

That as it may, we now have a situation where three of our countries are oil and gas producers (Guyana, T&T and Suriname). Others may join soon.

It would be in the interest of our countries individually and for the region collectively if we can work out a common regime to deal with the huge corporations that are descending on the

region. This would prevent the Oil giants from playing us off against each other.

Just as we have a Common External Tariff, we should develop a common investment regime in our natural resource sector.

This is important for Guyana and Suriname which has similar resources.

If this could be achieved then the people of our region will benefit more from our natural resources and integration in CARICOM could be deepened.



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Trump Imposes New Tariffs on Lumber, Furniture Imports from Canada

By Denise Singh
LJI REPORTER

U.S. President Donald Trump announced Monday he is imposing new tariffs on wood and furniture products, escalating his trade fight with global partners.

The measures include a 10 per cent tariff on imported timber and lumber, along with 25 per cent duties on kitchen cabinets, bathroom vanities and upholstered furniture. The tariffs take effect at 12:01 a.m. ET on Oct. 14.

The proclamation marks the first wave of new levies Trump flagged last week, which also target patented pharmaceuticals and heavy truck imports.

Trump justified the move under Section 232 of the Trade Act of 1974, claiming that reliance on foreign wood products undermines U.S. national security by threatening the domestic industry and supply chains.

His order warned that closures of U.S. mills could make the country unable to meet defence and infrastructure needs.

The tariffs will climb even higher in 2026—up to 30 per cent on upholstered wooden products and 50 per cent on cabinets and vanities—unless countries strike trade agreements with Washington.

Canada, the largest softwood lumber supplier to the U.S., will be hit hard. Canadian producers already face a combined 35 per cent in anti-dumping and subsidy duties. Ottawa has pledged \$1.2 billion in support for the industry and is seeking tariff relief as part of broader talks to update the



Canadian furniture exports could take a major hit because of the new tariffs

Canada-U.S.-Mexico Agreement (CUSMA). For Canadian exporters, the new duties could be devastating.

James McKenna, owner of Glenwood Kitchen in Shediac, N.B., said the 25 per cent tariff on cabinets could wipe out U.S. orders within

months. “Anything above 25 per cent is not doable,” McKenna said. “It will ultimately shut down the industry shipping to the United States.”

In April, after the Commerce Department opened the national security

probe into U.S. lumber imports, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce announced its opposition to any restrictions on imports of timber, lumber and their derivative products, including wood pulp, paper and cardboard.

Gov’t outlines 5 year agri agenda

Last Thursday, Agriculture Minister, Hon. Zulfikar Mustapha, met with staff from the National Agriculture Research and Extension Institute (NAREI), the Guyana Livestock Development Authority (GLDA), and the Government’s Agriculture Innovation and Entrepreneurship Programme (AIEP) as part of a series of meetings to discuss the implementation of programmes and policies for the next five years.

During the meetings, Minister Mustapha noted that while much was accomplished over the last five years, significant work remains to further expand and modernize Guyana’s agriculture sector.

At NAREI, the Minister emphasized that the Institute remains the backbone of Guyana’s agricultural innovation

system and that the work of its staff directly impacts productivity, sustainability, and rural livelihoods. He underscored that the success of the sector depends heavily on its scientific leadership and practical solutions.

While engaging staff at the GLDA, Minister Mustapha stressed that the Authority’s policies and practices must be firmly grounded in science. He highlighted the need for modernizing and expanding genetics, breeding, animal health, biosecurity, and extension services.

At the AIEP office, Minister Mustapha said that more young people are getting involved in agriculture as a result of the Government’s policies and investments, which have created access to resources and growth opportunities.



Minister of Agriculture Zulfikar Mustapha meets with stakeholders

New eco-tourism experience launched in Region Three

THE Guyana Tourism Authority (GTA) and the Ministry of Tourism, Industry and Commerce, on Saturday, joined the Wild Adventures team to launch a new experiential tourism product- Waia Green Escapes- at the Waia Lodge, Kamuni Creek, Region Three.

Ushering in World Tourism Day on September 27, 2025, under the theme “Tourism and Sustainable Transformation”, Waia Green Escapes offers a unique blend of nature exploration, and cultural immersion.

An open invitation to disconnect from the hustle and bustle of everyday life, persons can enjoy a thrilling boat ride, immersive cultural exchange, opportunities for wildlife and bird watching, scenic photo opportunities, swimming and water activities, pristine environment and sunset on the demerara river.

The activities include nature walks, trail biking, traditional indigenous fishing techniques at the landing house, creek exploration on a paddle board, or taking a refreshing swim in cool, black waters. Additionally, a sunset river cruise is also in the cards.

Director of the Guyana Tourism Authority (GTA), Kamrul Baksh, said it is evident that our tourism offering position is aligned with this year’s theme, with Waia as a microcosm of that theme.



GTA's Kamrul Baksh, Tourism Minister Susan Rodrigues and others

He noted that while destinations worldwide are clamoring on sustainability and transformational travel and rejuvenation, in Guyana, we have promoted that product and this type of tourism since the beginning.

Commending Keron Samuels and Shebana Daniels, the innovators behind this new eco-tourism experience, the GTA Director said, “We want to support individuals, businesses, that raise the level of standard of offering. I really think they’ve done it here.”

Daniels said Waia was born out of the belief that the beauty, diversity and spirit of Waia deserves to be experienced by all.

The duo has worked in the tourism

industry for years in various capacities. After returning to Guyana from Suriname, their initial idea was to find a place where time with family could be spent.

Subsequent to finding the previously forested area, the pair crafted what they wanted the Waia Lodge to look like. Sharing a deep commitment to creating opportunities for young people in the community, Daniels said they knew this initiative would bring the vision to reality.

“With the launch of the Waia Green Escapes, we’re opening the door to a collection of thoughtfully designed itineraries that go far beyond the typical tour. These are experiences, immersive,

memorable, and rooted in authenticity,” Daniels expressed, adding, “We offer the flexibility of tailoring each escape to your needs and your liking.”

Meanwhile, Minister of Tourism, Industry and Commerce, Susan Rodrigues, opined that the GTA and the hospitality sectors can be successful in the future and have the potential to be one of the main pillars of our economy as we seek to diversify and dynamize the economy.

Speaking directly on the Waia launch, Minister Rodrigues said this experience strongly supports the potential of tourism, doing more than showcasing our natural landscapes.

“We all know that tourism creates opportunities for local communities, supports small businesses, generates employment, and ensures that the benefits of tourism are shared broadly. So, by developing experience like this outside of Georgetown, we highlight the unique stories, traditions, and landscapes that make each region of Guyana special.”

She stressed that building on the success of indigenous community tourism, Waia Green Escapes demonstrates how initiatives led or supported by local communities can enrich our tourism offerings and provide memorable experiences for visitors.

Guyana Consulate in Toronto marks National Day of Reconciliation

By Andrieko Basir

On September 30, 2025, the Guyana Consulate in Toronto hosted a special celebration to mark the conclusion of Amerindian Heritage Month. The event also coincided with Canada’s National Day of Reconciliation, observed on the same day, making the occasion one of unity, recognition, and respect.

In attendance were First Nations representatives, members of the Guyanese Diaspora community, the Honorable Consul General Mani Singh, Consul General, staff of the Consulate, and special invitees. The gathering paid tribute to the in-

valuable contributions of Guyana’s Amerindian brothers and sisters, honoring their heritage, traditions, and resilience.

The program featured poems and short speeches delivered by participants, who were recognized and celebrated for their contributions to the event. Sarah Browne Sadick, Minister of Amerindian Affairs of Guyana joined via Zoom to share her reflections and encouragement.

The event served not only as a commemoration of Guyana’s Amerindian heritage but also as an opportunity to reaffirm bonds of solidarity with Indigenous peoples in Canada.



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Canadians barred from buying tickets if Blue Jays face Yankees in NY

Planning a trip to New York next week in hopes of seeing the Blue Jays clinch a post-season series for the first time since 2016?

Getting tickets might not be so easy.

Canadian residents are barred from buying tickets to the Jays' potential American League Division Series matchup next week at Yankee Stadium.

The AL East-winning Jays are skipping Major League Baseball's wild-card round and advancing directly to the AL Division Series. They'll host the winners of the best-of-three wild-card series between the New York Yankees and Boston Red Sox, which starts Tuesday.

The Jays and their New York rivals finished the regular season on Sunday with the same record of 94 wins and 68 losses. Toronto claimed the division crown by holding the tiebreaker over the Yankees.

On Tuesday, Oct. 7, the ALDS will move from Toronto to either the Bronx or Boston for Game 3.

However, fans logging on to Ticketmaster to buy tickets for Game 3 or a potential Game 4 in New York are being met with a message warning that sales are "restricted to residents of New York, New Jersey, Connecticut and Pennsylvania."

The Ticketmaster message says residency will be based on the buyer's credit card billing address. Sales to fans from outside those four states "will be cancelled without notice and refunds given."

A Yankees representative told



Yankee stadium will not allow Canadians to buy tickets to any games if the Jays play there

CBC News the policy, which allows sales to residents of only four states, is meant to fight ticket scalping.

The policy also applies to the wild-card round. Red Sox fans have voiced their anger on X.

"Hey @MLB this is kind of ridiculous," one user posted on X Monday afternoon.

"Bunch of scare bears," wrote Brian "Rear Admiral" McGonagle, a Boston-based producer of the Spittin' Chiclets hockey podcast.

Canadian-based Blue Jays fans won't face the same issue if the Red Sox beat the Yankees and advance to face Toronto in the next rounds.

A Red Sox representative said in

an email "we do not limit purchase eligibility at Fenway Park."

It's not the first time Canadian sports fans have been banned from buying playoff tickets to games in the U.S. In 2023, Canadian residents were barred for 24 hours from buying tickets to the Toronto Maple Leafs' second-round playoff series in Florida.

Neethan Shan elected in Scarborough byelection

By Denise Singh

LJI REPORTER

A familiar face is heading back to Toronto City Hall.

Neethan Shan, who represented the former ward of Scarborough-Rouge River almost eight years ago before Premier Doug Ford reduced the number of city councillors in Toronto by half, is the new councillor-elect for Ward 25, Scarborough-Rouge River.

Shan won the byelection with just under 27 per cent of the vote, beating his next closest opponent Anu Sriskandarajah by about 1,800 votes, according to unofficial results posted by the City of Toronto online.

"People know that I have a track record of doing things, that I'm a hard worker. I've been on the ground," Shan, a former Toronto District School



Neethan Shan: advertised in Equality News

Board chair, said on Monday night.

"I'm not somebody who distances myself. I do

things, so that resonated with people."

Shan is vowing to "build capacity" across the different neighbourhoods in his ward," adding that his constituents will "find a voice through me."

He replaces Jennifer McKelvie, who vacated the seat when she was elected as the new Liberal MP for Ajax last spring. In 2018, McKelvie narrowly unseated Shan, winning in Scarborough-Rouge River.

Coun. Ausma Malik along with Mayor Olivia Chow attended Shan's event tonight, offering their congratulations to the newest member of council.

"(Neethan) will champion the needs of people in Scarborough, whether it be building more homes that people can afford, making life more affordable, better city services," Chow said.

In total, 20 candidates were vying for the seat.

Shan will hold the seat until the next municipal election in October 2026.



President, Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali imakes a dash back to his crease during a cricket match on Saturday

Ali announces major initiatives to elevate indigenous athletes into national sports

TO ensure that indigenous athletes have access to opportunities in Guyana’s national sports arena, President, Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali has announced several new measures for them in cricket, football, and volleyball.

He made the announcement when he joined athletes and spectators for day four of the 2025 Heritage Games on Saturday.

The president recently returned from the 80th General Assembly of the United Nations in New York.

For far too long, indigenous youth have not had equal opportunities to represent the Golden Arrowhead, the president acknowledged, noting their skills and potential to represent Guyana nationally.

To address this, he said,” I’ve asked Minister Charles Ramson, of course, Sarah, and Jacobs, to ensure

that our indigenous communities are given an equal chance to represent the Golden Arrowhead in all of our national sports.”

Already, the head of state said he has instructed the Guyana Cricket Board (CGB) to include a national indigenous team in its competitions and trials.

Retired West Indies Captain Ramnaresh Sarwan has been appointed as the mentor and coach for indigenous talent in cricket.

Similarly, former West Indies cricketer and coach Roger Harper will lead the development of women’s cricket, with special focus on indigenous communities.

“He [Sarwan] will be responsible for working with our indigenous boards and groups to select the first indigenous cricket team that will come into the national cricketing infrastruc-

ture and be part of those trials,” President Ali said.

President Ali has given similar directives to the Football Association and the Volleyball Federation to ensure indigenous teams are included in their structures.

As the government moves to install new basketball courts in schools, the future basketball stars will be created.

In addition to equipment handovers for football, volleyball, and cricket, President Ali said by the end of the year Indigenous teams will compete in national tournaments, stressing that this is part of the ‘One Guyana’ vision, where there are equal opportunities for every citizen.

Noting that indigenous youth have excelled in education, health, and other areas, the president told the athletes, “I’m confident that you will also

excel in different sports disciplines.”

President Ali was joined by the Minister of Natural Resources, Vickram Bharrat; Minister of Culture, Youth and Sport, Charles Ramson Jr; Minister within the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport, Steven Jacobs; Minister of Labour and Manpower Planning, Keoma Griffith and the Minister of Amerindian Affairs, Sarah Browne-Shadeek.

More than 800 indigenous athletes from the 10 administrative regions are participating in the Heritage Games. (DPI)

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Health Minister Urges Guyanese To Take Cardiovascular Health Seriously

In a recent address for World Heart Day 2025, Guyana’s Health Minister, Dr. Frank Anthony, delivered a wake-up call to every citizen in relation to the global cardiovascular diseases (CVDs) reign as the leading killers in health crises.

In his statement, the minister stated that CDVS claim nearly 17 million lives each year with Guyana and the multiple instances of heart attacks, strokes, and other cardiac events remaining among our top ten causes of death. However, Dr. Anthony also reassured that many of these deaths are preventable or at least postponable, by tackling known risk factors: tobacco use, excessive alcohol, poor diet (too much salt, sugar, fat), sedentary lifestyles, and air pollution.

Dr. Anthony also laid out what the government is doing and what each Guyanese can do. At the national level, Guyana has adopted the Pan American Health Organization/World Health Organization (PAHO/WHO HEARTS) programme, aimed at more effective diagnosis and management of hypertension and related cardiovascular risks. Already, 247 health facilities around the country are onboard, and the plan is full coverage by 2026.

New national guidelines for cardiovascular disease prevention, detection, and treatment have been rolled out, giving doctors, nurses and health workers up-to-date tools. On the funding side, between 2020 and 2024, the minister notes that over 9,715 patients have received financial assistance (to the tune of GYD 4.2 billion) for cardiac procedures, dialysis, cancer care, joint replacements, and more. The beneficiary count has steadily



Guyana’s Minister of Health Dr Frank Anthony

climbed: 772 in 2020, 1,519 in 2021, 2,319 in 2022, 2,476 in 2023, and 2,629 in 2024

Still, Dr. Anthony stressed that more young people are being diagnosed with heart disease, undercutting the complacent myth that heart disease is only a concern for seniors, urging all citizens to get at least 150 minutes of physical ac-

tivity weekly, eat a balanced diet rich in fruits and vegetables, quit tobacco, moderate alcohol, know your numbers — blood pressure, cholesterol, blood sugar to manage stress and also get enough rest. “The power to protect our hearts does not rest solely in medicine or procedures, but in the choices we make every day,” he relayed.

The minister further urged households to talk about heart health, parents to model good habits for their children, communities to rally around wellness, and the government to keep pushing policies that make healthy living more accessible and affordable to every Guyanese.

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

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

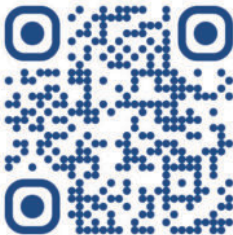
- Key priorities of the WGC include:
- Build a globally cohesive community with a focus on youth and women in business and civic leadership worldwide.
 - Support social entrepreneurship and civic engagement in communities around the world.
 - Engage diaspora communities in the social and economic development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

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



To find out more about World Guyanese Congress and our goals and priorities. Scan the QR code, or visit www.wgc-org.com

If you have any questions feel free to get in touch:
Email: mail@wgc-org.com
Telephone: [1-800-317-0804](tel:1-800-317-0804)



Guyana-born US school superintendent loses job after ICE arrest

Dr. Ian Andre Roberts, who until recently served as Superintendent of Des Moines Public Schools, has had his licence revoked and is no longer head of the district following his arrest by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) on September 26, 2025.

Roberts, described by ICE as a “criminal illegal alien from Guyana,” was taken into custody during a targeted enforcement operation in Iowa, United States. At the time of his arrest, he was in possession of a loaded handgun, \$3,000 in cash, and a fixed-blade hunting knife.

According to ICE Des Moines, Roberts attempted to flee when approached by officers, speeding away before abandoning his vehicle near a wooded area. He was later located with assistance from the State Patrol and taken into custody.

Roberts’ arrest has raised serious questions about how he came to lead Iowa’s largest public school district while lacking work authorisation and



Dr Ian Andre Roberts

having a final order of removal issued by an immigration judge in May 2024. ICE noted that he had been living in the U.S. since 1999, when he entered on a student visa.

He also faces existing charges for weapons possession dating back to February 2020. Federal law prohibits individuals without legal status from possessing firearms and ammunition, and the investigation into how Roberts obtained the handgun is being referred to the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF).


“This suspect was arrested in possession of a loaded weapon in a vehicle provided by Des Moines Public Schools after fleeing federal law enforcement,” said ICE ERO St. Paul Field Office Director Sam Olson.

“This should be a wake-up call for our communities to the great work that our officers are doing every day to remove public-safety threats. How this illegal alien was hired without work authorisation, a final order of removal,


and a prior weapons charge is beyond comprehension and should alarm the parents of that school district.”

Roberts had previously stated that he was born to immigrant parents from Guyana and spent much of his childhood in Brooklyn, New York.



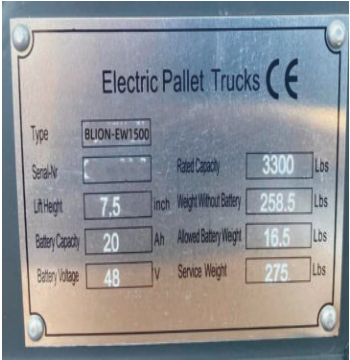




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GuyExpo 2025 to showcase Guyana’s vast economic potential

THE Ministry of Tourism, Industry and Commerce, on Monday, officially launched GuyExpo 2025, under the theme, “Transformation Through Entrepreneurship and Innovation”, at the Arthur Chung Conference Centre, Liliendaal.

This year’s expo is set for November 13 to 16, 2025, at the National Exhibition Centre, Sophia, Georgetown.

Now the longest sustained exhibition in the Caribbean, GuyExpo largely showcases locally produced goods and services, featuring regional businesses, while also allowing business associates to meet, network and negotiate with international companies, and showcase their skills, talent, and creative works.

Minister of Tourism, Industry and Commerce Susan Rodrigues in her remarks at the launch stated that the vision for GuyExpo 2025 is not simply to sustain its legacy, but to reimagine and elevate it, while also ensuring this national tradition remains relevant to the dynamism of our economy, and preserving its core identity.

The essence of GuyExpo, she said,

remains unchanged.

According to her, “It is a platform to showcase Guyana’s vast economic potential, a meeting place for manufacturers, agro-processors, service providers, consumers and investors.”

The tourism minister noted that GuyExpo is a space where innovation, ingenuity and enterprise converge, and where businesses, both large and small, can present their ideas to a national, regional and global audience.

The fact remains that GuyExpo continues to be a family-friendly event, where learning, networking, cultural expression and entertainment can take place.

Highlighting what lies in store for GuyExpo 2025, the minister underscored that Guyana’s remarkable achievement in food security and sustainability will be a major highlight of the exposition.

She revealed that on entering the expo, patrons will be greeted by a captivating centerpiece, that is, a striking representation of a breadbasket.

“This powerful symbol reflects

Guyana’s longstanding reputation as the breadbasket of the Caribbean,” she explained.

Additionally, the ministry plans to introduce several new features designed to strengthen GuyExpo’s impact. Most notably is the creation of a dedicated space for businesses and investors to engage in serious conversation about collaboration and expansion.

Noting that Guyana stands at the

forefront of opportunity with double-digit growth in the non-oil sector, Minister Rodrigues said that to fully realise this potential, local businesses must initiate conversations with both local and global partners.

With support from Guyana Office for Investment (GO-Invest), GuyExpo 2025 will feature a strong business to business networking component.



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Women-led company awarded contracts for two oil blocks

BREAKING barriers in the oil and gas sector is women-led Guyanese company Sispro, which has secured two oil blocks, Minister of Natural Resources Vickram Bharrat has disclosed.

Sispro is among four companies expected to sign their first Production Sharing Agreements (PSAs) with the Guyana Government next month.

During an interview on the ‘Starting Point Podcast- the Oil and Gas Edition,’ the minister spoke about this historic milestone and said: “I’m very proud that it’s a Guyanese company, especially our women folks, getting involved in the oil and gas sector.

“It shows that we’re expanding the way we think and taking risks and want to be involved in the oil and gas sector is commendable.”

The PSAs have been updated, the minister said, to ensure that there are better benefits for Guyanese and improvements for shallow water and deep-water development offshore Guyana. He stressed that negotiations had to be conducted with the companies that submitted bids.

He explained that the government wanted a unified PSA.

“We wanted a PSA that will be signed by all companies,” Minister Bharrat said, noting that the government wanted to create an agreement that was “world class.”

Already, the government has made contact with the companies that secured the oil blocks and looks forward to signing the agreement in October.

“We have already made contact with those companies. They know themselves by now, so we’re looking to sign that agreement in October with those four companies,” the minister said.

Further, he noted that the government may very well have to look at the PSA for near-shore or onshore development if the possibility presents itself in the future.

The minister emphasised that Sispro’s involvement reflects the government’s commitment to expanding opportunities for women and young people in the sector.

Back in 2023, the government closed its first offshore licensing round

with six companies bidding on eight of the 14 blocks offshore. Of those, six companies were awarded oil blocks. One of the companies, Sispro Inc., secured two blocks.

There is a minimum of US\$10 million for the exploration licence for shallow-water blocks, while in the deep-water blocks, there is a minimum of US\$20 million for the exploration licence.

Sispro Inc. was awarded oil blocks S3 and D2.

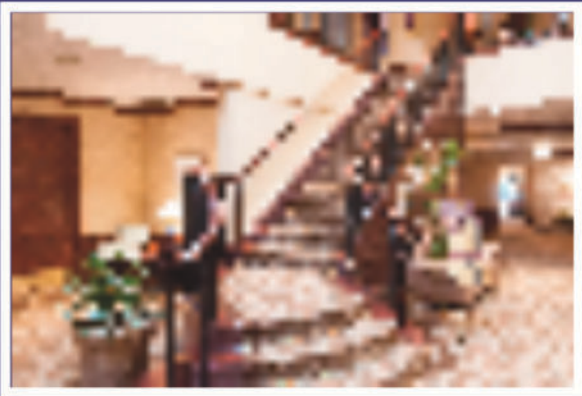


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each



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940 ml

1³⁹
each



Grace Hot pepper
Sauce
170 ml

1⁹⁹
each



Kingsford's
Corn Starch
454 g

1⁷⁹
each



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or Chunk Light Tuna
assorted 170 g

2/^{\$3}



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Lima Beans
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The crowns being installed on the iconic river bridge

Demerara River Bridge tower gets its Cacique Crown of Honour

ANOTHER milestone was achieved at the new Demerara River Bridge on Monday, as one of the twin towers (P-34, south) was crowned with a design inspired by the Cacique Crown of Honour (C.C.H.), Guyana’s second-highest national award.

When both towers are completed and illuminated, the crowns will stand as cultural markers of national pride, blending heritage with modern engineering and adding a distinctive signature to the country’s skyline.

During a site visit last Thursday, workers were observed assembling the steel structures that will cap the towers.

Project Manager Patrick Thompson said that the crown’s design was conceptualised by the project’s architects and fabricated overseas.

“In a synopsis, the tower crown has a height of about a two-storey building, so it’s fairly tall, very strong. It’s a steel structure. It was fabricated

in China, but it’s being put together on the ground here in Guyana,” Thompson said.

The new US\$260 million bridge, being constructed by China Railway Construction Corporation Limited, represents one of the most transformative infrastructure projects in Guyana’s modern history.

Spanning 2.6 kilometres, it will link Region Three to Region Four, providing round-the-clock, toll-free access.

The four-lane, cable-stayed structure is designed to last 100 years and accommodate vehicles of all sizes, travelling at up to 80 kilometres per hour.

Once operational, it is expected to benefit over 50,000 commuters daily and deliver an estimated \$3.5 billion in annual savings by eliminating toll fees and reducing fuel consumption and travel time.

President Dr Irfaan Ali will on Sunday commission the Bridge.

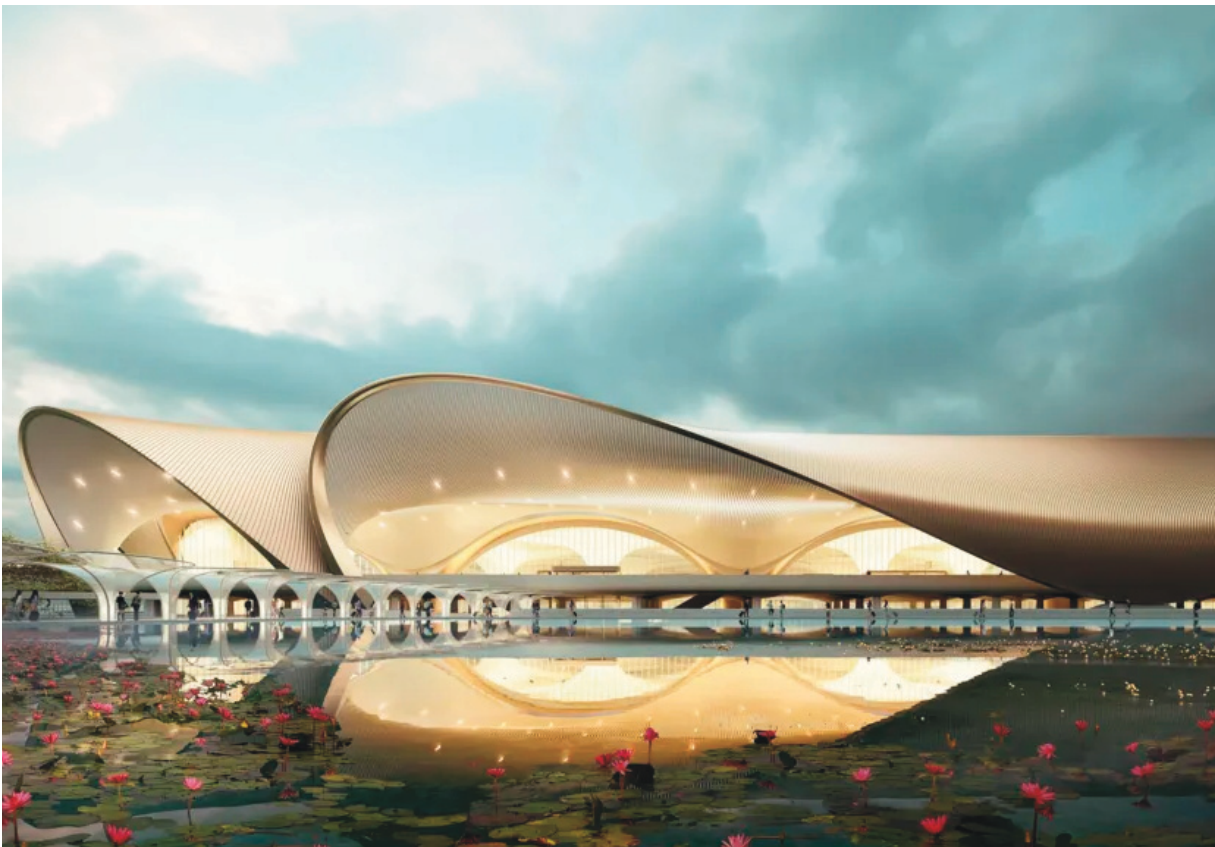
Once illuminated, the crowns will stand as cultural markers of pride, blending heritage with modern engineering and etching a distinctive symbol into the skyline.

Load testing conducted last week confirmed that the bridge possesses

satisfactory stiffness and ample reserve load-carrying capacity, ensuring durability and safety for decades to come.

President Ali is expected to reaffirm the significance of the project as part of his government’s commitment to modernising Guyana’s infrastructure, enhancing connectivity and supporting national development

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The airport is spread across over 1,100 hectares

Mumbai's new airport faces traffic woes as it takes on Singapore and Dubai

For a first-time visitor, landing in India's financial capital Mumbai can be quite an experience. At approach, as the flight cuts across the Arabian Sea and flies past the mangrove marshes, the great metropolis emerges - swarming with railway tracks, towering skyscrapers and the dense habitation of Asia's largest shantytown pressed tightly against the airport's periphery wall.

For years, aviation experts have flagged the dangers and inefficiencies of operating an over-worked airport right in the middle of such an urban setting, with buildings obstructing the flight path and safety and operational constraints preventing pilots from using the intersecting runways at once.

But a long overdue alternative is finally on the horizon.

After numerous delays and impediments, the Navi Mumbai International Airport (NMIA) is set for inauguration soon and expected to get operational in the coming months.

The airport will "significantly ease congestion" in India's financial capital, Arun Bansal, the CEO of Adani Airport Holdings Limited, the operating company, said.

"The current airport has hit its capacity of 55 million passengers annually. There's already demand for an additional 20 million and we are set to meet that at Navi Mumbai," said Mr Bansal.

While numerous connectivity, integration and policy related hurdles still need to be ironed out, the airport's opening will turn a significant new chapter in India's aviation ambitions.

The current airport has hit its peak capacity of handling 55 million passengers annually

Spread over 1,100 hectares and located some 40km (24 miles) from the old commercial centre of Mumbai, the sprawling new airport is connected to the island city by India's longest sea-bridge. It has two parallel runways and will eventually handle 90 million passengers per year, following subsequent phases of expansion.

"NMIA will make Mumbai the first large Indian city to operate two airports - a demonstration of the growing importance of India as an aviation market with rapidly increasing passenger and air traffic," said Shukor Yusof of Singapore-based Enadu Analytics.

The sector has seen double-digit growth in the

last four years - outpacing most other regions in the world. Indian airlines have placed orders for some 1,900 new aircraft, a thousand of which are expected to be delivered in the next five years, making such infrastructure critically important to accommodate this new fleet.

Adani says NMIA will be India's first fully digital airport that's been "designed and developed specifically to become a hub airport" with advanced technology for check-in, security, baggage and boarding drastically reducing turnaround times and facilitating easy transfers.

It has already announced a partnership with India's largest and newest carriers, Indigo and Akasa Airlines, who are launching new routes. And Air India has committed to flying to 15 cities from the airport, gradually scaling up operations, including flights to international destinations.

Given how starved Mumbai's current airport is for capacity, analysts expect strong uptake for NMIA's parking slots from airlines looking to launch new routes.

But major challenges are expected as operations commence in the coming months.

Given how far the airport is, its location could be a significant inconvenience to passengers - both when taking flights to and from NMIA, and especially when using it for connecting flights.

It can easily take between two and three hours to reach the airport from certain suburbs of Mumbai.

A direct 20-minute metro line between the old and the new airports is likely to become a reality only after a few years. In the interim, NMIA is planning to provide electric buses at regular intervals for passengers with connections.

"This is not ideal," says Alok Anand, a Bengaluru city-based aviation consultant, but it is typical of many projects in India where supporting infrastructure follows, rather than being built in tandem.

"Until last mile connectivity is fixed, I don't foresee anyone landing at one airport and traveling to the other to catch another flight," Mr Anand says.

It's probably why, for now, both the existing and the new airport will handle domestic and international traffic.



ARIES (March 21 - April 20): Although you may want to help a friend get past their current dark mood you must be careful in case some of that mood rubs off on you. Turn the situation around by laughing at their concerns – with luck your laughter will rub off on them.

TAURUS (April 21 - May 21): Start early and finish late today and make sure you get the most from every minute in between. From the moment you wake until the moment you fall asleep, most likely exhausted, act as if the world is depending on you.

GEMINI (May 22 - June 21): With the Sun and Mercury moving through the most dynamic area of your chart this is a special time for you, but don't fall into the trap of thinking you are so special that you can do as you please. The universe might not agree with you.

CANCER (June 22 - July 23): You always go out of your way to assist family members but sometimes you also need to stand back and let them figure out life for themselves. Give a loved one a pointer in the right direction today but insist they put in the hard yards themselves.

LEO (July 24 - Aug. 23): The best way to deal with someone who is getting on your nerves is to find something for them to do that will keep them away from you for long stretches of time. Hopefully they will fall for it and leave you in peace.

VIRGO (Aug. 24 - Sept. 23): If you need to make money fast you may be tempted to follow up an idea that came to you a while back but which you rejected at the time as unlikely to work. Maybe now you are desperate you can find creative ways to make it work.

LIBRA (Sept. 24 - Oct. 23): Although the Sun in your sign makes all things possible you must not fall into the trap of trying to do everything. Select just two or three goals and focus on those to the exclusion of everything else. Focus your energy, don't waste it.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24 - Nov. 22): If you go out of your way to assist someone in need today the universe will come to your aid later on when it's you who needs a helping hand. No deed, be it good or bad, is ever truly forgotten, so always do the right thing.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 23 - Dec. 21): The more others tell you that you need to give ground the more you will dig in your heels and refuse to budge. The only danger is that some of your more sneaky rivals could insist that you do the opposite of what they really want.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 - Jan. 20): Someone in a position of authority thinks highly of your abilities and will do what they can to promote you. All that is required of you is that you live up to your claims of what you are capable of – so don't make those claims lightly.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 21 - Feb. 19): Cosmic activity in the most adventurous area of your chart means you are going places. But don't head off into the wide blue yonder without some kind of plan. Know where it is you want to end up, even if you don't yet know what route to take.

PISCES (Feb. 20 - Mar. 20): Don't go overboard in your efforts to declutter your life. There are so many things you no longer need but if you junk it all in one go you could regret it later on. Get it done by the end of the year, not the end of the week!

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A&B signs visa waiver agreements with Ghana, Kenya, and Benin

Antigua and Barbuda capped a busy and productive week at the 80th United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) by strengthening ties with countries across the globe, including key partners on the African continent.

On the margins of the high-level meetings in New York, the Government formalized three separate visa waiver agreements with the Republic of Ghana, the Republic of Kenya, and the Republic of Benin. The agreements were signed by Antigua and Barbuda’s Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Hon. E.P. Chet Greene, alongside Ghana’s Minister of Foreign Affairs His Excellency Samuel Ablawka, Kenya’s Cabinet Secretary for Foreign Affairs His Excellency Dr. Musalia Mudavadi, and Benin’s Minister of Foreign Affairs His Excellency Olushégun Adjadi Bakar.

Minister Greene also extended a formal invitation to Ghana, Kenya, and Benin to participate in the 2026 Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM), which Antigua and Barbuda will proudly host. The gathering will provide an opportunity to advance collaboration across the Commonwealth, with small states and



Antigua and Barbuda’s Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Hon. E.P. Chet Greene

Global South priorities at the forefront of the agenda.

“These agreements symbolize our commitment to building bridges across the Atlantic, fostering stronger partnerships, and ensuring that our peoples benefit from greater mobility, opportunity, and shared prosperity,” Greene said.

He added that such agreements are key to boosting trade, tourism, and cultural ties, underscoring the shared history and common purpose between the Caribbean and Africa.

Ed Bartlett to retire from politics after current term

Jamaica’s long-serving Minister of Tourism, Edmund Bartlett, has announced that he will retire from representational politics at the end of the current parliamentary term, bringing to a close a distinguished career spanning more than four decades in public service.

Bartlett, who turns 75 in December, revealed his decision during an interview on Nationwide at Five on Wednesday. “As Minister, I work at the behest of my Prime Minister, and I’m always willing to give the service as my health and my capacity allows,” he said. “Within the frame of all of this, however, and I recognize that there’s a time lag for everything, so I’m excited about saying to you that yes, this will be my last full term. But I want it to be understood that I have a job to do and we’re going to finish that job. And when we finish, we’re going to pass on to the next generation of those who will do better than we have done.”

Bartlett has served as Member of Parliament for East Central St. James since 2002, after previously representing Eastern St. Andrew from 1980 to 1993. He first became Minister of Tourism in 2007 under the Bruce Golding-led Jamaica Labour Party administration and returned to the portfolio in 2016 under Prime Minister Andrew Holness, where he continues to serve.



Jamaica’s long-serving tourism minister Ed Bartlett

During his tenure, Bartlett has been credited with transforming Jamaica’s tourism sector into a global model of growth and resilience. Under his leadership, the country rebounded strongly from the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, welcoming 4.3 million visitors in 2024 and generating approximately US\$4.35 billion in tourism earnings. He also established the Global Tourism Resilience and Crisis Management Centre, the first of its kind, to help the global industry confront issues such as climate change, natural disasters, and pandemics.

Earlier this year, Bartlett received the Premio Excelencias (Global Excellence) 2024 award at the FITUR international tourism trade fair in Madrid, Spain, recognizing his career-long commitment to sustainable tourism and his influence on the global stage. He has also been honored by the United Nations World Tourism Organization for his leadership in promoting inclusive and resilient tourism practices.

Looking ahead, Bartlett said he intends to help prepare his successor before stepping aside. “We have worked very hard in the industry. We’ve built new areas, and we are looking at new areas for the future,” he said. “I intend to complete my work, and when I’m finished with that completion, then I would have trained and built capacity to embrace and carry through the work to high heights and greater depths.”

Bartlett’s planned retirement marks the end of an era for Jamaica’s tourism industry, which has consistently broken visitor arrival and revenue records under his stewardship.

Trinidad and Tobago backs US military presence in Southern Caribbean

Trinidad and Tobago on Friday reiterated its support for the United States military presence in the southern Caribbean, saying it has been “very effective in inhibiting the innumerable activities of drug cartels within our country.”

Kamla Persad-Bissessar, Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago, told the 80th session of the United Nations General Assembly that the Caribbean can no longer be seen as a safe backwater free from violent criminal networks. “The notion that the Caribbean is a ‘zone of peace’ has become a false ideal,” she said. For too many in the region, peace is “an elusive promise glimpsed, never grasped.”

Persad-Bissessar used stark statistics to underline the scale of the problem. She noted that in 2024 Trinidad and Tobago, a nation of 1.4 million, recorded 623 murders — 41 per 100,000 — of which more than 40 per cent were gang-related, driven by narcotics and firearms. Over the last 25 years the country has experienced more than 10,000 murders — equivalent, she said, to losing 1 per cent of the adult population.

On the subject of recent US actions in the region, Persad-Bissessar said President Donald Trump’s comments on “the relentless narco- and human trafficking, organized crime and illegal immigration” “are correct.” She welcomed legal immigration, but warned that “illegal immigration neglects all checks and balances and will only create long-term disorder,” arguing that many who enter illegally “will not assimilate into their adopted societies — inevitably leading to greater poverty, crime and cultural antagonism.” “This, then, is not phobia or hyperbole; it is simply the stark, naked truth,” she said.

Persad-Bissessar also argued that tightened protections at the United States southern border have rerouted criminal flows into the Eastern Caribbean, and voiced gratitude for the US military presence in the southern Caribbean for helping to inhibit drug cartels in Trinidad and Tobago. She warned that unless forceful and aggressive actions are taken, “evil drug cartels will continue their societal destruction,” believing affected nations will unreservedly subscribe to morals and ethics “which they themselves blatantly flout.” “We will fight fire with fire within the law,” she affirmed.

“That is why we willingly supported the international security alliance announced by US Secretary of State Marco Rubio, involving the US and several countries in South America to combat drug-trafficking in the hemisphere,” she added.

The United States has deployed an amphibious squadron to the southern Caribbean as part of its effort to address threats from Latin American drug cartels, along with additional assets as-



Kamla Persad-Bissessar addressing the UNGA last week

signed to US Southern Command. Persad-Bissessar has publicly defended recent US strikes on suspected drug-carrying vessels, saying she had “no sympathy for traffickers” and that the US military should “kill them all

violently” — comments that have drawn international attention.

Highlighting the regional stakes, Persad-Bissessar warned that multilateralism is under strain and that coordinated international action is needed to

protect stability and citizens across the Caribbean. “For too many in the Caribbean region, peace is not daily life but an elusive promise glimpsed, never grasped and in its absence, our citizens pay a terrible toll,” she said.

Jamaica PM calls for war on Haitian gangs

Jamaican Prime Minister Andrew Holness used his address to the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) on Friday to demand a coordinated international response to Haiti’s spiraling security crisis and the flow of illegal guns and drugs destabilizing the Caribbean.

Speaking during the 80th Session of the UNGA in New York, Holness warned that “transnational criminal networks involved in cybercrime, arms and narcotics trafficking, and people organizing violence and destabilising institutions, are an existential threat to sovereign states.” He said the situation in Haiti underscores how these networks fuel gang violence, undermine governance, and threaten regional stability.

“Jamaica has made significant progress in tackling gangs and reducing our homicide rate by more than 50 per cent in recent years,” Holness said. “But we know that, unless these networks are totally dismantled, our gains remain fragile. This is why we call for nothing

less than a global war on gangs, a coordinated international campaign to cut off the flow of weapons, money, and the influence that sustains them.”

Holness urged full implementation of the UN Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons, and called on major arms-exporting countries to tighten export controls, strengthen end-use monitoring, and enforce rigorous post-delivery verification. He said Jamaica welcomes cooperation to interdict drug-trafficking vessels “provided that such operations are carried out with full respect for international law, human rights, and with the coordination and collaboration of the countries of the region.”

The prime minister also pressed for greater support for the Multinational Security Support Mission in Haiti, praising Kenya’s leadership but cautioning that “the situation remains dire.” As current chair of the Caribbean Community

(CARICOM), Jamaica has helped lead regional efforts to restore peace and constitutional order in Haiti, Holness said, adding that the UN Security Council must move quickly on the Secretary-General’s recommendation for a more robust hybrid mechanism.

“Once stability is restored, the international community must help rebuild democratic institutions, ensure free and fair elections, expand humanitarian relief, and invest in infrastructure to support long-term stability,” he said. “Haiti’s recovery requires sustained global support.”

While security dominated his remarks, Holness also linked Haiti’s instability to broader structural challenges, including climate change and inadequate global financing. He noted that Jamaica remains committed to achieving net-zero emissions by 2050 and called for developed nations to honor climate funding pledges, warning that small island states face “disproportionate impacts.”

Barbados PM calls on world leaders to protect small nations

Barbados Prime Minister Mia Amor Mottley delivered a forceful address to the United Nations General Assembly on Friday, warning that the survival of small states and the prospects for global peace hinge on preserving a rules-based international system now under strain from war, inequality, and the climate crisis.

“Countries of different sizes, capacities and cultures can only survive in the world in which we live if we maintain a rules-based system,” Mottley said. “The law of the jungle does not guarantee any of us a future or a liveable planet.”

Mottley cautioned that a “crisis of truth” is eroding institutions that once safeguarded order and prosperity. She said disinformation is undermining trust between citizens and governments, turning news, science, and law into “a tawdry spectacle.”

“When we lose shared truth, our countries and our global society lose their center of gravity,” she declared, warning that fairness and trust are fraying in ways that threaten stability.

Addressing ongoing conflicts, the Barbadian leader reiterated her support for peace in Ukraine but urged world leaders not to overlook other humanitarian crises. “The world must not ignore the horror in Sudan and...it must not ignore the horror in Gaza,” she said.

Mottley called for the release of hostages and condemned disproportionate attacks on Palestinians, appealing for urgent humanitarian funding. She said \$66 million is needed for Gaza’s children and \$200 million for Sudan over the next three months to provide food, water, and health care.

Turning to the climate emergency, Mottley urged governments to act with “honesty and urgency,” welcoming recent international court opinions affirming states’ obligations to curb emissions. She proposed a binding global methane framework to slow temperature rise, stressing that “the fossil fuel industry is not the enemy – it is the emissions.”

To finance a global green transition, she called for mobilizing \$1.3 trillion annually by 2035, while criticizing the chronic underfunding of climate finance and the “grossly under-capitalised” Loss and Damage Fund.

“If we are to be protected by a



Mia Mottley addressed the UN General Assembly last week

rules-based system, then we must step up to the plate and provide the funds to bridge the gap to deliver the results that we desire,” she said.

Linking climate and development to broader governance, Mottley insisted that the UN Security Council must reflect today’s multipolar world. “You cannot ask us really to show up for family photos and votes when you need them and then exclude us from the fam-

ily’s decision making. As if you are the grown-ups and we are the children,” she told fellow leaders.

Mottley closed with a vivid image of a young Palestinian girl in Gaza carrying her sister through rubble, describing her as “the ultimate picture of hope and resilience.”

“If a six-year-old can push past the physical and emotional pain and still find hope that there is a better moment

ahead of her, then we, with much more and with an obligation to many more, must summon that same will,” she urged. “The world needs it now more than ever.”

Her speech underscored Barbados’s growing role as a moral voice for small island states and developing nations confronting intertwined crises of conflict, climate change, and global governance.

Bahamas credit rating upgraded

S&P Global Ratings has upgraded The Bahamas’ long-term foreign and local currency sovereign credit ratings to ‘BB-’ from ‘B+’, citing stronger economic performance and steady fiscal management.

The outlook remains Stable, reflecting confidence in the country’s ability to maintain recent economic gains.

The September 26 rating action comes as The Bahamas posts stronger-than-expected growth driven by robust tourism and increased investment across the Family Islands. “The stronger economy, propelled by strong cruise tourism and large-scale investment projects, and the government’s tax compliance efforts have helped reduce the fiscal deficit and contained the sovereign’s debt burden,” S&P said.

The agency credited several key factors for the upgrade:

Stronger economic performance, with GDP expanding 3.4% in 2024 and projected to grow 2.1% in 2025, aided by

improved data collection from the Bahamas National Statistical Institute.

Record tourism arrivals, reaching 11.2 million visitors in 2024 and 6.3 million in the first half of 2025.

Fiscal improvements, as the deficit narrowed to 1.3% of GDP in FY 2023/24, returning to pre-pandemic levels.

Energy sector reforms aimed at strengthening the finances of Bahamas Power and Light and other public entities.

S&P also highlighted the government’s commitment to fiscal discipline, noting that refinancing risks have eased and projecting public debt to fall to 66.3% of GDP by the end of 2025, down from 77.8% in 2020.

Looking ahead, the agency expects GDP growth to remain solid and align with peers of similar development levels, provided the government maintains prudent fiscal policies.

Usain Bolt statue illuminated for World Heart Day 2025 in Jamaica

The iconic Usain Bolt statue at the National Stadium was illuminated on Thursday, September 25, to kick off Jamaica’s observance of World Heart Week 2025, culminating on World Heart Day on September 29.

The initiative promotes cardiovascular health awareness and encourages Jamaicans to adopt heart-healthy lifestyles.

Minister of Culture, Gender, Entertainment and Sport, Hon. Olivia Grange, who attended the lighting ceremony, described the event as a symbolic reminder of the heart’s essential role in daily life.

“This occasion is reflective of an athletic career that has been a light to the world, and a lighting up that brightens the focus on one of the body’s most important organs, the heart,” she said.

Minister Grange highlighted the urgency of this year’s World Heart Day theme, ‘Don’t Miss a Beat’, stressing that preventing heart disease is not a distant goal but a necessity today.

“Preventing heart disease is not a future goal but a necessity—right here, right now—to save lives. It also encourages global participation in campaigns and activities aimed at reducing premature deaths from cardiovascular disease,” she stated.

The Minister further underscored the link between heart health and daily life, particularly in sports performance. “Being here at Statue Park at the National Stadium, we are reminded that a healthy heart is a prerequisite for sports performance,” she said.

Minister Grange urged Jamaicans to let the illuminated statue serve as inspiration: “Let this statue, bathed in light, inspire us to make our hearts stronger, our communities healthier,



Celebration of World Heart Day in Jamaica

and our nation brighter.”

She also commended the Heart Foundation of Jamaica for its ongoing efforts to raise awareness and promote preventative measures. “Your work, no doubt, contributes to the saving of lives and a healthier Jamaica overall. I wish the Heart Foundation of Jamaica every

success in this World Heart Week and beyond,” she said.

World Heart Day, a global initiative led by the World Heart Federation, aims to increase awareness of cardiovascular disease, the leading cause of death worldwide. In Jamaica, the observance expands into a week-long

campaign featuring public engagement activities, coordinated by the Ministry of Health and Wellness in partnership with the Heart Foundation of Jamaica, and supported by a broad coalition of stakeholders including private sector partners, health professionals, educators, and community leaders.

JCF reports mid-year surge in suicides in Jamaica

Jamaica has recorded a troubling mid-year surge in suicides even as overall numbers for 2025 remain lower than last year, according to new data released Sunday by the Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF).

Between January and September, the country logged 44 suicides — a 16.9 per cent decrease from the 53 cases recorded during the same period in 2024. But the JCF warned that the decline masks a worrying pattern, with suicides rising sharply in recent months.

“Suicides were consistently lower in the first six months of 2025 compared with 2024, but the second half of the year has seen a reversal,” the JCF said in a statement. July recorded eight suicides, a 33 per cent increase over July 2024, while August and September posted respective increases of 20 and 25 per cent.

The JCF also highlighted a geographic shift in the data. Last year, spikes were seen in St James, St Eliza-



beth, St Catherine South, and St Thomas. This year, however, St Catherine North has emerged as a hotspot, with four cases reported in July alone.

“This underlines that suicide is not a uniform national issue, but often re-

fects localised socio-economic or community pressures,” the statement noted.

Gender disparities remain stark, with men making up the overwhelming majority of cases. However, police said there are signs of a slight uptick in sui-

cides among women. The warning follows last week’s death of 26-year-old Tyra Spaulding, a former Miss Universe Jamaica contestant, who was found hanging in her home. Police are investigating her death as a suspected suicide.

“This signals the need for urgent gender-sensitive interventions, as women’s experiences with self-harm often differ and may be linked to domestic, relational, and social factors,” the JCF said, calling suicide a “broader public health and social challenge” rather than solely a policing matter.

The force urged public health agencies, social workers, educators, community leaders, and faith-based groups to strengthen outreach and counselling services to stem the trend.

A total of 67 suicides were reported in Jamaica in 2024, the highest figure since 2000, when 77 cases were recorded. Previous years saw 66 cases in 2023, 63 in 2022, and 50 in 2021.

Grenada announces changes to Cuban medical missions after US pressure

The Grenadian government has announced a series of “important changes” to the Cuban medical missions, following a request from the United States to review the long-running initiative.

In a statement, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs said the new measures are aimed at strengthening the administration and oversight of the programme. The announcement came after high-level talks in Havana earlier this month, led by Foreign Affairs, Trade and Export Development Minister Joseph Andall and Health Minister Philip Telesford.

According to the statement, Grenada and Cuba agreed that all Cuban professionals serving in the country will now operate under conditions equal to those of their Grenadian counterparts. “The Government of Grenada expresses its appreciation to the Government of Cuba for its cooperation in the matter and for agreeing to the changes,” the release said, while also acknowledging Washington’s role in raising the issue.

The Dickon Mitchell administration underscored that the Cuban Workers Programme has played a vital role in supporting Grenada, particularly in the delivery of healthcare. “The Government and people of Grenada are grateful for this support,” the statement continued. At the same time, the government emphasized its commitment to strengthening national health capacity through training, scholarships, and incentives to expand the cadre of Grenadian professionals working in the system.

The announcement follows a move by the U.S. State Department in August



Cuban medical brigade that assisted COVID-19 patients in the Caribbean

to impose visa restrictions on African, Cuban, and Grenadian officials — and their families — over what it described as complicity in Cuba’s medical mission scheme. Washington alleges that the program exploits medical professionals by sending them abroad at high prices while the Cuban government retains most of the revenue, depriving Cubans of essential medical care. Caribbean leaders have strongly rejected that characterization,

arguing the missions provide much-needed health services to the region and beyond.

“The United States aims to support the Cuban people in their pursuit of freedom and dignity and promote accountability for those who perpetuate their exploitation,” the State Department said in its August statement. It urged governments to pay doctors directly rather than, in its words, “the regime’s slave mas-

ters.” Earlier this month, Washington imposed visa restrictions on Grenada’s Finance Minister Dennis Cornwall. Still, Grenada’s government stressed that both St. George’s and Havana remain committed to their long-standing relationship, agreeing to continue addressing matters of concern through diplomatic channels.



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Daren Sammy: Injury to Joseph leaves big hole in Windies attack

West Indies head coach Daren Sammy has conceded that losing Shamar Joseph to injury is a major blow to the Caribbean side’s hopes as they embark on a daunting two-Test series against India.

The 26-year-old paceman, who has rapidly emerged as one of world cricket’s most feared fast bowlers, was ruled out on Friday with an undisclosed injury. His absence robs the West Indies of their spearhead, who only months ago dismantled Australia with a breathtaking haul of 22 wickets in three Tests at an average of just 14.95. In only 11 Tests, Joseph has already captured 51 wickets, including four five-wicket hauls, at 21.66 apiece.

The loss is particularly crushing as the West Indies chase a feat that has eluded them for more than 40 years — a Test series victory in India.

“Shamar is a big blow,” Sammy admitted. “Watching him play in the CPL final and bowl at 145 kilometers per hour, I was really hoping he would be here. What he’s done in Test cricket, especially how he bowled against Australia, he was our leading wicket-taker and the go-to man for captain Roston Chase. But yes, that’s something we can’t control.”

Joseph’s misfortune has opened the door for 23-year-old Barbadian

seamer Johann Layne, a tall and promising quick who has yet to don the maroon cap at Test level.

Sammy acknowledged that Layne is not yet the finished article but insisted the youngster has the tools and the temperament to seize the moment.

“Johann Layne is a young fast bowler, tall, had a good first-class season and very talented,” Sammy explained. “The work that we saw him put in during the camp in Barbados before the Australia series and during the series itself was impressive. (Ravi) Rampaul has been working very closely with him. He is not a Shamar Joseph, but he has an opportunity to create his own legacy when he gets an opportunity.”

Despite the loss of their talisman, Sammy reminded that West Indies’ bowling strength has been their greatest asset in recent times. Against Australia, their attack claimed all 60 wickets across three Tests — proof of its potency.

“Our bowling line-up over the last series took 60 wickets in three Test matches, and you don’t win Test matches if you can’t take 20 wickets,” the coach said firmly. “The challenge now is to replicate that standard in India, even without Shamar.”

With Joseph sidelined, the burden



Shamar Joseph — sidelined

shifts to the remaining attack — and to a debutant eager to announce himself on cricket’s grandest stage.

Sampson crowned breakout star of CPL 2025

Cricket West Indies (CWI) has lauded Quentin Sampson after the 22-year-old was named Breakout Player of the 2025 Republic Bank Caribbean Premier League (CPL), capping a sensational debut season with the Guyana Amazon Warriors.

The hard-hitting right-hander wasted no time making his mark on regional cricket’s biggest stage. In eight matches, Sampson piled up 241 runs at an average of 40.16 and a strike rate of 153, repeatedly rescuing his side in pressure situations. His standout knock—a fluent 76 that powered the Warriors to victory—showcased both his fearless strokeplay and his calm temperament under fire.

While Sampson walked away with the award, he was far from the only youngster to turn heads in this year’s tournament. Ackeem Auguste impressed for the St. Lucia Kings with a sparkling 73 against the Warriors, while Navin Bidaisee’s crafty spin earned him seven wickets for the St. Kitts & Nevis Patriots at a miserly economy rate of 8.04. Rising names such as Jediah Blades, Nathan Edward, and Karima Gore also announced themselves, underscoring the rich depth of talent emerging from the region’s player development pathways.

Many of these players, including Sampson, first seized their opportunity in the CWI Breakout



Quentin Sampson receives his cheque as the CPL’s Breakout Star

League earlier this year, where standout performances earned them CPL contracts. Their transition from developmental cricket to the high-intensity franchise stage has been heralded as a promising sign for West Indies cricket.

CWI’s Director of Cricket, Miles Bascombe, praised Sampson and his peers for grabbing their chances with both hands.

“Quentin’s performances, as well as those of

others this season, are both pleasing and encouraging for West Indies cricket,” Bascombe said. “They have shown that our emerging players can step up and deliver when they are given the opportunity.”

With his debut season now in the books, Sampson stands as a shining example of the new generation’s potential—young, fearless, and ready to carry the torch for West Indies cricket on the world stage.





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Nepal shock West Indies with first-ever win over full member

West Indies cricket was left reeling on Saturday after suffering a humbling 19-run defeat to rank outsiders Nepal in the opening T20 International of the Unity Cup at the Sharjah Cricket Stadium.

Tasked with chasing a modest 149 for victory, the Caribbean side once again saw their batting collapse under pressure. Only Navin Bidaisee offered real resistance with a topscore of 22, as the Windies limped to 129 for nine from their 20 overs. The defeat handed Nepal their first-ever victory against a Full Member nation and a priceless 1-0 lead in the three-match series.

Nepal's captain and Player-of-the-Match, Rohit Paudel, described the result as both monumental and deeply personal. His 38 anchored the innings, before his bowlers dismantled the West Indies batting.

"I think it feels great, especially after a long wait to beat a Test-playing country," Paudel said. "It finally came in a historic series where we hosted it in the UAE. I want to dedicate this Man-of-the-Match award to the martyrs who lost their lives in the Gen-Z protest in Nepal. The last month has not been great for us, so if we can give



West Indies captain congratulates his Nepalese counterpart on the win

a little bit of happiness to the people of Nepal, I think that would be great."

Earlier, Jason Holder and Navin Bidaisee had combined to limit Nepal to 148 for eight after the Windies opted to field. Holder snatched 4-20 while Bidaisee bagged 3-29, as Nepal recovered from 12 for two to post a competi-

tive total.

Paudel and Kushal Malla (30) steadied the innings in a 58-run stand before both fell in quick succession. Gulshan Jha (22) and Dipendra Singh Airee (17) chipped in late runs that ultimately proved vital.

In reply, the West Indies began brightly when Kyle Mayers drove the first ball of the innings to the boundary. But his joy was short-lived—run out brilliantly by Kushal Bhurtel's direct hit from extra cover moments later.

Debutant Ackeem Auguste struck a brisk 15 before falling to Nandan Yadav, sparking a devastating collapse. From a promising 32 for one, the Windies slumped to 76 for six in the 15th over.

Paudel himself snared Jewel Andrew for five, Lalit Rajbanshi deceived Amir Jangoo (19), Keacy Carty was needlessly run out for 16, and Holder perished cheaply to Bhurtel.

Though Fabian Allen (19), captain Akeal Hosein (18 off nine) and Bidaisee fought to revive the innings, the damage was already done. Nepal's bowlers and fielders held their nerve to script one of the greatest moments in their cricketing history.

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9th Deep Jale - Indian Heritage Site, Palmyra
10th Inter-School Rangoli Competitions - Guyana National Stadium
10th Deep Jale - Guyana National Stadium
11th Deep Jale - Anna Regina Town Council Lawns, Essequibo
11th East Bank Motorcade - Guyana National Stadium
12th Deep Jale - Logwood Main Road, Enmore, ECD
12th West Coast Berbice Motorcade - Bath Comm. Centre
12th Lower Corentyne Motorcade - Rose Hall Comm. Centre
12th Upper Corentyne Motorcade - Port Mourant Comm. Centre
12th Upper Corentyne Motorcade - Tagore High School Ground
13th Deep Jale - Parika Turn - East Bank Essequibo
14th Inter-School Rangoli Competitions - Rama Krishna School
15th - 18th Deep Jale - Kitty Seawall Roundabout
15th Inter-School Rangoli Competitions - Abram Zuil Secondary
15th Inter-School Rangoli Competitions - Tagore High School
16th Inter-School Rangoli Competitions - Central C'tyne Secondary
16th Inter-School Rangoli Competitions - Berbice High School
16th Inter-School Rangoli Competitions - Hope Secondary School
16th Inter-School Rangoli Competitions - West Dem. Secondary
16th Essequibo Motorcade - Anna Regina Car Park, Essequibo
17th Rangoli Utsav - Kitty Seawall Roundabout
17th West Coast Motorcade - Oceanview Mandir Compound, WCD
19th Grand Motorcade - LBI Community Centre Ground, ECD
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