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Thursday April 16 2026. Volume 44, Issue #16

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## 'Plane crashes after hitting capybara

THE Guyana Civil Aviation Authority (GCAA) has confirmed that a runway excursion incident occurred on Tuesday evening at the Eugene F Correia International Airport, Ogle, involving a Beechcraft 1900 aircraft operated by Trans Guyana Airways.

According to a press release, the aircraft, bearing registration number 8R-GAQ, was completing an in-bound flight from Suriname to Guyana when it departed the runway surface upon landing.

There were 14 persons on board at the time of the incident. There are no reported injuries, however, but the nose gear of the aircraft was damaged. The preliminary reports suggested that this was caused by wildlife breaching the runway during landing.

According to reliable sources, the aircraft hit a capybara that ran across the runway at the point of landing. The GCAA has immediately launched a formal investigation into the circumstances surrounding the incident in accordance with established civil aviation safety protocols



## Ali warns of 'pandemic of misinformation'

PRESIDENT Dr Irfaan Ali has warned that genuine understanding in society is being steadily eroded by a "pandemic of misinformation", digital addiction, and a collapsing capacity for critical thinking.

Addressing the Rotary Club of Georgetown's Annual World Understanding and Peace Dinner at the weekend, Dr Ali said the world is now grappling with a crisis in how people form judgments and make sense of reality, as distorted information and endless online distractions overwhelm traditional habits of reflection and reason. "How do we create a true understanding of the world, a true understanding of a problem, a true understanding of our society when we have this real problem before us? That is why concepts like data sovereignty, information sovereignty, are becoming real," the President said.

He pointed to the United Nations' own characterisation of misinformation and disinformation as a "global pandemic".

Against this backdrop, Dr Ali said concepts such as data sovereignty and information sovereignty are no longer abstract policy phrases but "real" and urgent solutions that must be strengthened.

Using a vivid example, he reasoned how algorithm-driven feeds quickly identify a user's interests and then bombard them with similar content.

This exposure, he warned, is "critically linked to understanding", because it fragments attention and encourages impulsive reactions.

The result, the Head of State argued, is not just lost productivity but a worsening mental health crisis and a population less capable of sustained focus.

"There is no ability to develop critical analysis. It's about your attention span to absorb information and in real time, to use your own ability to analyse that information that you receive, because of this pandemic; we are losing that critical analysis ability," he said.

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# Carney: Fuel tax break coming

By Milan Maharaj  
LJI REPORTER

The federal government has announced a temporary suspension of the federal fuel excise tax on gasoline and diesel, a measure intended to reduce fuel costs for consumers and businesses which have spiked as of late.

The announcement was made April 14 by the Prime Minister, stating that the tax will be suspended beginning April 20, 2026, and remain in effect until September 7, 2026.

Under the suspension, the excise tax rate on gasoline and diesel will be reduced to zero during the suspension period. The federal excise tax is typically applied at a rate of 10 cents per litre on gasoline and four cents per litre on diesel fuel, and is incorporated into the retail price paid by consumers.

The change is estimated to lower prices at the pump by approximately 10 cents per litre for gasoline and four cents per litre for diesel, depending on market conditions. The temporary suspension will also apply to aviation fuels.

According to the Department of Finance, the suspension of the tax is intended to address fuel price pressures linked to global oil market disruptions, including supply challenges associated with ongoing instability in the Middle East.

The federal government indicated that the tax suspension is expected to provide approximately \$2.4 billion in relief over the duration of the measure.

Fuel excise taxes in Canada are collected at the federal level and are generally paid by manufacturers or wholesalers before being passed on through the supply chain. The cost is typically reflected in the final price paid at retail, such as at gas stations.

The federal excise tax exists alongside provincial and territorial fuel taxes, as well as sales taxes such as the Goods and Services Tax (GST) or Harmonized Sales Tax (HST), which continue to apply unless otherwise adjusted by provincial governments.

The announcement forms part of a series of other measures introduced by the federal government related to affordability and the cost of living. The change comes amongst efforts to reduce household expenses and support economic stability during times of elevated global energy prices. The suspension is scheduled to end after Labour Day, at which point the federal excise tax rates are expected to return to their previous levels unless further policy changes are introduced.

Officials stated that legislative amendments to the Excise Tax Act will be introduced to implement the temporary suspension. Additional details, including the timing of tax changes within fuel distribution systems, are expected as the suspension comes into effect next week.

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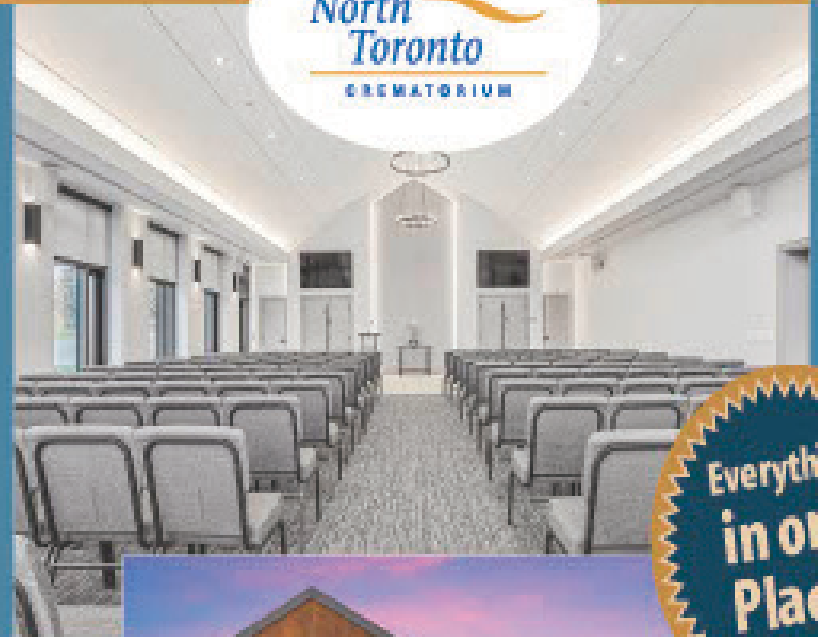
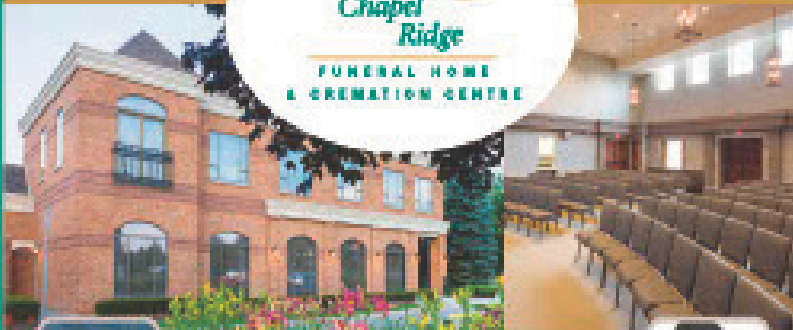
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# Guyanese DIASPORA DIGEST

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## NEW GUYANA-ST KITTS AND NEVIS AGREEMENTS TARGET FOOD SECURITY, AGRICULTURE, DIGITAL GOVERNANCE

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President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali and Prime Minister Dr Terrance Drew at the signing Memoranda of Understanding on agriculture, food security and government modernisation.



"YOU RETURNED AS HEROES" – GDF TROOPS RECOGNISED FOR HURRICANE MELISSA RESPONSE

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EXIM CHAIRMAN VISITS GUYANA AS US\$527M GAS-TO-ENERGY PROJECT GAINS MOMENTUM

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TRINIDAD PM TO TRAVEL TO GUYANA AMID PUSH TO REMOVE TRADE BARRIERS

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## NEW GUYANA-ST KITTS AND NEVIS AGREEMENTS TARGET FOOD SECURITY, AGRICULTURE, DIGITAL GOVERNANCE

Closer ties between Guyana and Saint Kitts and Nevis were formalised with the signing of three Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) aimed at strengthening cooperation in agriculture, governance and security.

The agreements were signed at the Office of the President by Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali and Terrance Drew, marking a new phase in bilateral relations. The two leaders signed MoUs focused on agriculture



*Guyana, St. Kitts and Nevis sign key agreements to expand cooperation*

and food security, as well as government modernisation, initiatives expected to support shared development priorities. A separate agreement

on security cooperation was signed by Kayode Sutton, Commander Acting Major of the St. Kitts and Nevis Defence Force, and Guyana's Brigadier Omar Khan,

underscoring plans for deeper defence collaboration and regional stability.

During the engagement, President Ali also welcomed St. Kitts and Nevis into the Global Biodiversity Alliance, emphasising the importance of collective action to protect natural resources and support sustainable development. He noted that biodiversity protection is directly linked to agriculture, heritage and long-term environmental

resilience.

Prime Minister Drew expressed appreciation for the partnership, highlighting biodiversity as critical to innovation

and future development, including the discovery of life-saving pharmaceuticals.



*President Ali and Prime Minister Terrance Drew, signing the Memoranda of Understanding on agriculture and food security and on government modernisation*

## "YOU RETURNED AS HEROES"

### — GDF TROOPS RECOGNISED FOR HURRICANE MELISSA RESPONSE



*President Ali honours GDF ranks for Jamaica disaster mission*

**"You returned as heroes"** — GDF troops recognised for Hurricane Melissa response

A mission that carried supplies, rebuilt communities and strengthened regional bonds was formally recognised when Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali honoured ranks of the Guyana Defence Force (GDF) for their humanitarian

deployment to Jamaica. During a medal decoration ceremony at Base Camp Ayanganna, one officer and 41 other ranks were awarded the Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Response Medal for their service following the devastation caused by Hurricane Melissa. The award recognises extraordinary courage, compassion and dedication in disaster

relief operations both locally and internationally.

Addressing the ranks, President Ali said the ceremony was about more than medals, describing it as a tribute to the enduring spirit of service that defines Guyana. He told the soldiers that their deployment reflected the country's commitment to standing with its Caribbean neighbours in times of crisis.

**"This ceremony recognises that the strength of a nation is revealed not only in how it defends its territory, but in how it extends its hand to others in their hour of need,"** the Commander-in-Chief said.

The president praised the professionalism of

the GDF, noting that the troops' contributions went far beyond logistics and infrastructure. He said while they transported supplies and assisted with rebuilding

he told the ranks. **"You went to Jamaica as soldiers; you returned as heroes."**

President Ali also used the platform to highlight the growing

of reversing years of development.

Against this backdrop, he reaffirmed Guyana's commitment to disaster preparedness and regional cooperation, describing humanitarian assistance as a core responsibility of the defence force. The mission to Jamaica, he said, demonstrates Guyana's growing leadership in regional disaster response.

President Ali was joined by Chief of Defence Staff Brigadier Omar Khan, National Security Advisor Gerry Gouveia, and Chairman of the Private Sector Commission Gerry Gouveia Jr., along with other officials, as the nation honoured soldiers whose compassion and service strengthened Caribbean solidarity.



*President Ali honours GDF ranks for Jamaica disaster mission*

efforts, they also brought comfort and reassurance to communities grappling with loss.

**"You carried supplies, yes, but more importantly, you carried hope. You built structures, yes, but more importantly, you helped rebuild lives,"**

threat posed by climate change, warning that Caribbean countries remain highly vulnerable to increasingly severe natural disasters. He noted that stronger storms, deeper floods and prolonged droughts are becoming more frequent, with a single hurricane capable

## GUYANA PITCHED AS INVESTMENT GATEWAY IN TALKS WITH QATAR'S AMIR



*President Ali and His Highness, Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani of Qatar*

President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali has pitched Guyana as a strategic destination for Qatari investment, highlighting the country's geographic

advantage and expanding economic potential during a telephone engagement with His Highness, Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani.

According to a statement from the Office of the President, Dr Ali outlined Guyana's growing role as a logistics, storage and investment hub, particularly as global supply chains face disruptions linked to geopolitical tensions in parts of the Middle East.

The president noted that Guyana's location in the Western Hemisphere, coupled with direct Atlantic access and proximity to major markets such as Brazil, positions the country as an attractive

base for investment and regional distribution. He also pointed to opportunities for large-scale storage facilities capable of holding critical supplies, including food, fertiliser and petrochemicals.

During the engagement, President Ali conveyed the solidarity of the people of Guyana with the State of Qatar and strongly condemned attacks against the Gulf nation and members of the Gulf Cooperation Council. He emphasised the

importance of building resilient, forward-looking partnerships amid increasing global uncertainty.

In response, the Amir expressed appreciation for Guyana's support and signalled Qatar's interest in strengthening bilateral cooperation. Priority areas identified included investment, human capital development, technology, food security and critical infrastructure.

The discussion comes as Guyana continues to promote

itself as a strategic logistics and energy support hub. President Ali has previously noted that disruptions affecting key maritime routes, including the Strait of Hormuz, have highlighted the fragility of global supply networks.

Against this backdrop, he said Guyana's expanding oil and gas sector, natural resources and regional trade arrangements further strengthen its capacity to support regional and international demand while attracting new investment partnerships.

# EXIM CHAIRMAN VISITS GUYANA AS US\$527M GAS-TO-ENERGY PROJECT GAINS MOMENTUM

High-level discussions regarding the transformation of Guyana's energy sector and upcoming financing opportunities reached a milestone this week as John Jovanovic, Chairman of the U.S. Export-Import Bank, concluded an official visit to the nation. The visit reinforced Washington's commitment to the US\$527 million EXIM-financed Gas-to-Energy (GTE) project while opening the door for further development across food security, government efficiency, and national security.



The site visit to the project

Chairman of the U.S. Export-Import Bank, concluded an official visit to the nation. The visit reinforced Washington's commitment to the US\$527 million EXIM-financed Gas-to-Energy

(GTE) project while opening the door for further development across food security, government efficiency, and national security. During his stay, Jovanovic engaged

by U.S. Ambassador Nicole Theriot and Chief of Defence Staff Brigadier Omar Khan, where leadership identified priority areas for future collaboration. Jovanovic also met with representatives from the American Chamber of Commerce and the team at Lindsayca Inc., the Houston-based contractor tasked with executing the monumental project.

To assess physical progress, Prime Minister Brigadier (Ret'd) Mark Phillips accompanied the U.S. delegation on a site inspection at Wales, Region Three. The Prime Minister reported significant advancements since January, noting that major construction is poised to begin in the coming weeks. Preparatory works are

currently on schedule, with foundation tasks nearing completion and pipe installation expected to commence within the next fortnight. As the project enters this intensive phase, the workforce is set to surge from 1,100 personnel in the near term to a peak of approximately 1,600 workers. This labor force is the engine behind the

largest infrastructure undertaking in Guyana's history, a project designed to solve decades of grid instability and some of the highest electricity rates in the Caribbean. By utilising offshore natural gas from the Stabroek Block, the GTE initiative aims to slash electricity costs by 50%, providing the



President Ali held a working lunch with the EXIM Bank, Chair, and his delegation

reliable power necessary to catalyze a domestic manufacturing boom. The project remains on a fast track for completion, with major power generation expected to be integrated into the national grid by late 2026, serving as the cornerstone of Guyana's strategy for sustained, long-term economic expansion.

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## TRINIDAD PM TO TRAVEL TO GUYANA AMID PUSH TO REMOVE TRADE BARRIERS

An official visit to Guyana by Trinidad and Tobago Prime Minister Kamla Persad-Bissessar is in the works, after discussions with President Dr Irfaan Ali on strengthening trade, energy and investment links.

During a bilateral engagement in Port of Spain, the two leaders agreed on a

development, trade and economic agenda aimed at deepening bilateral relations and advancing greater integration between the people and economies of both countries.

Key areas discussed included food security and investment opportunities, energy integration, technology exchange, human capital

development, and strengthening security cooperation. The leaders also agreed to establish a joint working group to remove trade barriers and improve competitiveness.

It was further agreed that the working group, featuring private sector participation from both countries, will focus on addressing development

challenges and unlocking new opportunities ahead of the Prime Minister's visit.

President Ali also thanked Prime Minister Persad-Bissessar for her strong support for Guyana's territorial integrity and sovereignty, expressing appreciation on behalf of the people of Guyana.



Guyana, Trinidad leaders agree on closer economic ties, working group to remove trade barriers

## "A BROTHER AND TRUE FRIEND"

— PRESIDENT ALI REMEMBERS FORMER SURINAMESE PRESIDENT CHANDRIKAPERSAD SANTOKHI

President Mohamed Irfaan Ali delivered an emotional tribute to late former Surinamese President Chandrikapersad Santokhi, describing him as "a brother" and "a true friend" during funeral proceedings at the De Olifant Foundation.

Reflecting on their personal bond, President Ali spoke of a connection that extended beyond formal diplomacy. He recalled their first interactions as leaders, noting that an unspoken understanding quickly developed into a lasting friendship that strengthened ties between Guyana and Suriname.



The funeral service for the former Surinamese President Chandrikapersad

"What began as a murmur between two presidents became a river between two nations," he said, adding that their relationship evolved into a fraternity built on trust, shared values and mutual respect.

President Ali noted that Santokhi believed

deeply in the intertwined destinies of the two neighbouring countries, working to ensure cooperation extended beyond governments to ordinary citizens, trade and cross-border connections. He said the late leader consistently advocated for mutually beneficial partnerships

and closer collaboration between small states.

The Guyanese Head of State also shared a personal moment, recalling that Santokhi had recently messaged him on the occasion of Eid-ul-Fitr and had been encouraged to visit Guyana for a break. Addressing the former First Lady, Santokhi's wife, resident Ali extended an invitation for the family to visit Guyana after the mourning period, describing the two nations as "family".

He remembered Santokhi as a calm and principled leader who chose dialogue over confrontation. "When

anger could have flared, he chose stillness. When others might have raised a fist, he opened a door," the President said, praising his commitment to harmony and cooperation.

President Ali also reminisced about long late-night discussions shared with Santokhi and Barbados Prime Minister Mia Mottley during regional meetings, describing them as moments where ideas for strengthening the Caribbean were shaped.

Closing his tribute, President Ali vowed to continue the shared

vision they built, including deeper economic integration and infrastructure connectivity such as the planned Corentyne River bridge.

Santokhi, Suriname's ninth president who served from 2020 to 2025, was credited with advancing bilateral cooperation through strategic dialogue, joint energy initiatives and agricultural collaboration.

His passing in late March prompted national mourning in Suriname, and the rest of the Caribbean for a statesman remembered for humility, service and enduring friendship.

## TALKS CONTINUE ON SURINAME CHARGES AFFECTING CORENTYNE RIVER

President Mohamed Irfaan Ali has confirmed that the government is intensifying efforts to address concerns over Suriname's proposed charges for use of the Corentyne River. Speaking with reporters at a Guyana

Defence Force event, the president said the issue is receiving high-level attention, with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs fully engaged through diplomatic channels. **"We will be increasing our**

**advocacy in the coming days to have this matter resolved,"** he stated.

President Ali warned that the proposed charges could create barriers to trade, disrupt long-standing arrangements, and weaken investor

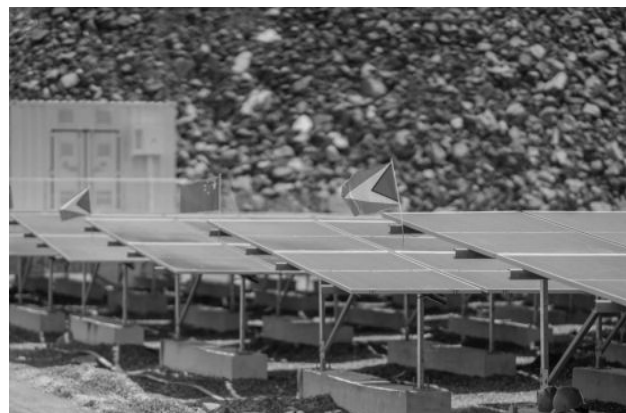
confidence. He emphasised the importance of reciprocity, noting that Surinamese businesses have long operated freely in Guyana.

Ongoing discussions involve Suriname's Foreign Minister Melvin



President Ali engaging with members of the media

Bouva and Guyana's countries' commitment to maintaining strong bilateral relations. Foreign Secretary Robert Persaud, reflecting both



PM Phillips commissions major solar facility at Aurora Gold Mine

The hum of diesel generators at the Aurora Gold Mine is expected to fade as a new solar farm comes online, marking a shift toward renewable

energy in the hinterland. Prime Minister Mark Phillips commissioned the facility, describing it as a landmark investment that reduces

## NEW SOLAR FARM CUTS DIESEL USE, CREATES JOBS AT AURORA GOLD MINE

reliance on diesel while strengthening Guyana's push toward cleaner, sustainable power.

The installation, one of the largest solar projects in Guyana, is expected to cut approximately 46,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide annually. It will also reduce sulfur and nitrogen oxide emissions, significantly improving the mine's environmental footprint. According to the prime

minister, the project replaces a system that previously depended entirely on diesel-generated electricity.

An integrated solar generation and battery storage system will balance power in real time, ensuring a steady and dependable supply for operations in the remote Region Seven location. The shift is expected to improve efficiency while lowering operational costs over

time.

Beyond environmental gains, the project created about 100 jobs during construction. Guyanese workers received practical training in renewable energy systems, battery storage and microgrid management, skills that will remain valuable as the country expands its clean energy capacity.

Prime Minister Phillips said the initiative aligns with

Guyana's Low Carbon Development Strategy 2030, demonstrating how renewable energy can be integrated into large-scale industrial operations, even in remote communities. He added that similar solar investments, alongside grid upgrades and battery storage, are helping to build a more resilient and diversified national energy system.

## REGION NINE COMMUNITIES TO GET FIRST DISTRICT BORDER PATROL UNIT

Residents of border communities in Region Nine are set to take on a more active role in safeguarding Guyana's frontier, following President Dr. Irfaan Ali's announcement of the country's first district-level Border Patrol Unit.

The President made the disclosure during a recent community meeting with residents of Rukumutu and surrounding villages, where he outlined plans to formalise and expand an existing community

policing group into a structured border patrol team.

**"Our borders are important. Supporting you in the protection of our borders is important... we want our borders to be protected from the level of the community,"** President Ali told residents.

The initiative will build on a community policing group recently formed by villagers,

currently comprising about 30 members. Under the new arrangement, the unit will be expanded to roughly 40 members drawn from several communities, all working collaboratively to monitor and protect border areas.

Members of the unit will receive stipends similar to those provided to community policing ranks, but with full-time focus on border patrol duties. The team will also operate under

the national security framework, working closely with regional authorities and security agencies.

To support operations in the challenging hinterland terrain, the government will provide three new all-terrain vehicles (ATVs), significantly improving mobility across remote areas. The vehicles will allow patrols to cover wider distances, respond faster to incidents, and maintain a stronger presence



Community policing expanded into border patrol unit in Region Nine

along vulnerable border locations.

President Ali linked the initiative to broader development efforts in Region Nine, noting that improvements in security go hand in hand with investments in roads, bridges, agriculture, education, health services and water

supply. The new unit also aligns with the government's wider "Safe-Country" programme, which seeks to strengthen national security through community engagement and expanded monitoring systems.

## CASH GRANT ROLLOUT PASSES 150,000 MARK

Tens of thousands of Guyanese are now seeing direct financial relief, with the National Cash Grant Initiative surpassing 150,000 payments since the programme's rollout.

Minister within the Office of the President with Responsibility for Finance, Dr Ashni Singh, announced that 150,963 payments have been processed to date, reflecting steady progress as the initiative expands nationwide.

The majority of recipients, 140,546 persons, received

their grants through direct deposits into bank accounts. These include central government employees and individuals who completed registration through the programme's online platform.

For residents in hinterland communities, where access to banking services remains limited, alternative arrangements were introduced. More than 10,000 payments have already been issued, primarily by cheque,

ensuring those without bank accounts are not left out.

According to the minister, the initiative was designed to balance efficiency with inclusivity. Over 126,000 persons have completed self-registration online, with more than 91,000 of them already receiving direct transfers.

Government teams have also been deployed to support registration and payment distribution in remote communities. Following a successful rollout in Region Nine,

similar exercises are expected to expand to other hinterland regions.

Additional measures are being introduced to improve access, including home-based assistance for elderly and incapacitated persons and the establishment of help desks nationwide.

The initiative, announced by President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali and funded under Budget 2026, continues to scale up as authorities work to ensure eligible citizens receive support in a timely manner.

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## NEW DEFENCE PROGRAMME AIMS TO PREPARE GUYANA FOR MODERN SECURITY CHALLENGES

Standing before a new cohort of trainees at Base Camp Ayanganna, Prime Minister Mark Phillips delivered a message that reflects a changing world: national security is no longer defined by weapons alone, but by people, preparedness and adaptability.

Speaking at the launch of the National Defence Institute's Certificate in Defence Studies programme, Prime Minister Phillips said Guyana must embrace a broader, more modern approach to

safeguarding its future. Delivering remarks on behalf of President Mohamed Irfaan Ali, he described the initiative as a key step in building a resilient and forward-looking security sector.

**"The world we live in today has no place for delay,"** Prime Minister Phillips told participants, pointing to global instability, from conflicts in Eastern Europe to unrest in parts of Africa and the Middle East, as a reminder of the need for readiness.

But beyond global threats, the programme



The opening of the National Defence Institute's Certificate in Defence Studies programme

is also focused on human security, addressing challenges like poverty, disease and social instability that impact everyday lives. **"At the end of it all, it is the**

**security of the people that matters most,"** he emphasised.

The training programme is designed to shape strategic thinkers across the

disciplined services, with a curriculum covering land, air, maritime and cyber security. It also brings together agencies such as the Guyana Defence Force

and the Guyana Police Force, encouraging a more unified national approach.

For participants, the initiative is an opportunity to play a role in shaping Guyana's future security landscape.

The National Defence Institute, launched in 2024 and currently based at the University of Guyana, is already building partnerships with leading international institutions. With plans for a dedicated facility, it aims to become a regional hub for defence and security studies.

In a moment of pride for Guyana, Colonel Nazrul Hussain stood among some of the hemisphere's most influential leaders as he received one of the region's highest honours for security and defence.

The ceremony, held on March 24 in the "Simón Bolívar Room" at the headquarters of the Organization of American States, marked the 84th anniversary of the Inter-American Defense Board (IADB). The occasion brought together diplomats, military officials, and

## GUYANA'S CDC HEAD RECEIVES PRESTIGIOUS IADB MEDAL FOR DISASTER LEADERSHIP



Colonel Nazrul Hussain honoured with IADB Medal

policymakers from across the Americas in recognition of outstanding service and cooperation.

Colonel Hussain, who serves as Director General of the Civil Defence Commission (CDC), was awarded the

IADB Medal, the Board's highest distinction, for his steadfast leadership and commitment to strengthening disaster risk management and humanitarian coordination across the region.

His recognition places him among a select group of 15 awardees, including OAS Secretary General Albert Ramdin and Assistant Secretary General Laura Gil, as well as senior

defence officials and military leaders.

For Hussain, the award reflects years of quiet but critical work behind the scenes, coordinating national responses, building partnerships, and ensuring that Guyana remains prepared in the face of natural disasters. Central to this recognition was his leadership in the successful planning and execution of the

Mechanism for Disaster Cooperation Exercise (MECODEX) 2025, hosted in Guyana.

That exercise not only tested emergency response systems but also strengthened collaboration between the IADB, its member states, and international partners, reinforcing a shared commitment to coordinated action in times of crisis.

## SMALL BUSINESSES URGED TO GO GREEN WITH NEW GRANT OPPORTUNITY

**Small businesses urged to go green with new grant opportunity**

The Small Business Bureau (SBB) has officially launched its 2026 Green Technology Fund, creating new opportunities for entrepreneurs to turn environmentally friendly ideas into viable, income-generating ventures. Up to \$1.2 million is now on the table for small

business owners ready to go green.

The initiative is already making an impact. Since 2020, 53 entrepreneurs have benefited from more than \$54 million in funding, supporting innovative projects such as drone-based fertilisation, organic fertiliser production, and integrated digital business solutions.

For many aspiring

business owners, the fund represents more than financial assistance. It offers a pathway to build sustainable enterprises while contributing to a greener economy.

SBB's Chief Executive Officer Mohamed Ibrahim said the programme is designed to help entrepreneurs grow while addressing environmental

challenges.

**"The Green Technology Fund provides a valuable opportunity for entrepreneurs to develop innovative solutions that address environmental challenges while strengthening their businesses,"** he said.

To qualify, applicants must be registered with the SBB and submit detailed



Susan Rodrigues, Minister of Tourism, Industry and Commerce (center), with officials and the 2025 Green Technology Fund awardees

proposals outlining their concepts, including projected costs, environmental impact, and use of technology. Shortlisted applicants will then present their ideas before a panel for final selection.

With the May 31 deadline approaching, interest is building across the country as more entrepreneurs explore how to align their businesses with Guyana's sustainability goals.



The launch of the new Government of Guyana (GoG) Service Centre at Cotton Field, Region Two

Residents along the Essequibo Coast are now accessing government

services closer to home following the launch of the third Government of

## ONE-STOP GOVT HUB OPENS AT COTTON FIELD, REGION TWO

Guyana Service Centre.

The new hub at Cotton Field, Region Two will significantly reduce the needs for residents to travel long distances, particularly to Georgetown, to conduct official business. For many, the new centre means saving time, cutting transportation costs, and accessing

essential services more conveniently.

Minister of Public Service, Government Efficiency and Implementation, Zulfikar Ally, interacted with residents, and outlined the range of services now available under one roof. The centre houses key

agencies including the General Register Office, Passport Office under Immigration Services, Environmental Protection Agency, Small Business Bureau, Guyana National Bureau of Statistics, and Legal Aid, among others.

By integrating these agencies, the centre

provides a seamless, one-stop experience designed to improve efficiency and accessibility. The initiative is particularly beneficial for elderly residents, small business owners, and others who often face challenges accessing services.

## PRESIDENT ALI ANNOUNCES FIELD HOSPITAL FOR ESSEQUIBO AFTER IMPACTFUL US MEDICAL MISSION

For thousands of Guyanese, the past few weeks have meant more than medical check-ups; restored sight, renewed hope, and access to care that once seemed out of reach were achieved.

Now, that impact is set to continue. President Mohamed Irfaan Ali announced that residents of Region Two will soon benefit from a fully equipped field hospital, further expanding access to healthcare in the Essequibo region.

The announcement came during a closing reception at State House on Main Street, marking the successful completion of the 2026 Lesser Antilles Medical Assistance Team (LAMAT) mission, a joint initiative between Guyana and the United States (US).



US Air Force medical professionals offering a medical service

The field hospital, valued at approximately US\$1 million and donated by the U.S. Southern Command to the Guyana Defence Force, will be established in Essequibo and outfitted with a full range of medical services. A similar initiative is also being planned for Region Nine, ensuring that more remote communities benefit from improved

healthcare access.

Over the course of the two-week mission, U.S. military medical professionals worked side by side with local doctors, nurses, and technicians, delivering nearly 3,000 patient consultations across 26 specialties. The services ranged from primary care to complex procedures, including approximately 500 surgical and dental

interventions and 600 emergency cases.

Among the most powerful outcomes were 29 complex retinal surgeries that restored sight to patients who might otherwise have faced permanent blindness. According to U.S. Ambassador Nicole Theriot, 17 individuals who were completely blind regained their vision, an outcome she described as life-changing.

Beyond patient care, the mission also strengthened Guyana's healthcare system. Technical teams repaired more than 130 critical medical devices, while local professionals gained hands-on training that will continue to benefit communities long after the mission ends.

President Ali praised both the international and local teams, noting that their work extended far beyond clinical settings. **"Your work has moved into the**

Swanson highlighted the importance of the partnership, noting that professionals from both countries shared expertise and built lasting relationships.



Closing reception at State House for the 2026 Lesser Antilles Medical Assistance Team (LAMAT) mission

**lives of our people,"** he said, expressing gratitude on behalf of the nation.

The collaboration also reflects deepening ties between the US and Guyana. U.S. Air Force Brigadier General Leigh

Looking ahead, the Government plans to invest further in training for local healthcare workers, with support from institutions such as the University of Miami.

## FIRE SERVICE READY FOR EVERY TYPE OF DISASTER - PM PHILLIPS

No longer limited to fighting fires, Guyana's fire service is being equipped and trained to serve as the first line of defence in all types of emergencies, Prime Minister Mark Phillips announced at the Guyana Fire Service Officers' Conference 2026.

Speaking at the conference held at Eve Leary, PM Phillips stressed that today's firefighters must be prepared to respond to car crashes, floods, wildfires, and hazardous incidents, not just structural fires. **"We are no longer living**

**in an era where we can afford to look at a house fire and ignore the car crash down the street,"** he said.

The Prime Minister outlined a shift from a centralised firefighting model to a hybrid system combining professional firefighters with community-based response units. Each Neighbourhood Democratic Council (NDC) is expected to receive its own fire tender, a move designed to ensure faster response times across coastal and hinterland regions.

Over the past five

years, the government has invested more than \$3.5 billion in modernising the fire service. These funds have been used to purchase new vehicles, expand training programmes, and build a modern organisational structure. **"The era of scarcity is over. The era of strategic investment has begun,"** PM Phillips said, noting that these initiatives align with Guyana's rapid economic growth.

Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs) of the Guyana Fire Service (GFS) have

also played a critical role in national safety, responding to more than 7,000 emergency calls in 2025 alone. **"To date, they would have responded to no less than 7,000 calls, aiding the sick and injured, rescuing persons, and transporting them to the nearest hospital for further treatment,"** Fire Chief (ag) Gregory Wickham said.

Beyond emergency responses, EMTs delivered at least 12 babies during the year, demonstrating their



Guyana Fire Service's Annual Officers Conference 2026

crucial role in moments of life and death. **"Touching over 7,000 lives is no easy job, but our EMTs do so with joy and pride,"** Wickham added, highlighting ongoing efforts to strengthen the unit's capacity.

The Officers' Conference also served as a platform for reflection and planning, allowing leaders to discuss

strategies to enhance national emergency and disaster response systems.

With these reforms, Guyana's fire service is poised to become a more agile, community-integrated force, ready to meet a wider range of emergencies and better protect citizens across the country.

## GUYANA-TRINIDAD PARTNERSHIP STALLED BY RED TAPE, PRESIDENT ALI URGES 72-HOUR SOLUTION EFFORT

Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago should spend 72 hours fixing the issues holding back their partnership, President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali said during a business address in Port of Spain.

He made the call while delivering a feature address at the Trinidad and Tobago Chamber of Industry and Commerce business meeting at the Hyatt Regency, where he urged both countries to move urgently to strengthen economic ties and remove longstanding



President Ali at the business outlook meeting

bureaucratic hurdles. The Guyanese President said both nations, driven by oil and

gas, must work to future-proof their economies and build a stronger joint economic front capable

of competing globally.

**"If we care about partnership, if we care about building consortiums, we care about building a joint economic front between Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago then we must care about fixing the problem and let's get in that room, lock ourselves up for 72 hours and fix the damn problem,"** President Ali said.

He stressed that opportunities for

collaboration extend beyond energy, pointing to areas such as agriculture and manufacturing, including Guyana's growing soya bean industry and Trinidad and Tobago's well-known cocoa production.

President Ali also highlighted investment gaps, praising the ANSA McAL Group for its projects in Guyana, including a shopping mall development, while noting that more Trinidad and Tobago-led

investment was needed in sectors such as gold.

He further pointed to inefficiencies in travel and immigration processes in Trinidad and Tobago, saying such delays were limiting regional movement and constraining the full potential of carriers such as Caribbean Airlines.

(Sourced and adapted from CNC3 News, Trinidad and Tobago)

## GUYANA'S PROGRESS VISIBLE, BUT HUMAN CAPITAL WILL DEFINE ITS FUTURE - WORLD BANK CARIBBEAN DIRECTOR

Guyana is changing, and fast.

Over the past five years, the country's transformation has moved from promise to reality, with visible upgrades in infrastructure, rapid economic expansion, and a growing focus on improving the lives of its people, according to Lilia Burunciuc.

Speaking on the *Investing in the Future* podcast, the World Bank Caribbean Director reflected on her first visit to Guyana at a pivotal moment in its history.

**"It was the moment Guyana discovered oil and was preparing to receive the revenue,"** she recalled. **"It was still one of the lowest-income countries**



Senior Minister in the Office of the President with responsibility for Finance, Dr Ashni Singh, and World Bank Caribbean Director, Lilia Burunciuc, during the interview

**per capita in the hemisphere, but I could feel the change in the air."**

Today, she said that change is unmistakable. From newly built and upgraded roads to expanding developments near the airport, the country's progress is evident. Yet, Burunciuc emphasised that Guyana's most valuable resource is not its oil wealth, but its people.

"The biggest asset

the country has, even with oil, is its people. It is human capital," she said, noting that global trends show human capital becomes more important as countries grow wealthier.

That perspective aligns with the government's priorities, as outlined by Senior Minister with responsibility for Finance, Dr. Ashni Singh.

For decades, he

explained, Guyana invested heavily in sea defences and drainage systems to protect its low-lying coastal regions. While progress was steady, physical constraints often limited the pace of development.

In recent years, however, that pace has accelerated significantly.

**"What we have been able to do in the past five years is dramatically accelerate our investment in building a more resilient Guyana,"** Dr Singh said.

Major investments in drainage, irrigation and water management, many supported through partnerships with the World Bank, are helping to reduce flood risks and



World Bank Caribbean Director, Lilia Burunciuc

he noted.

This has placed education and training at the centre of the country's development strategy, with expanded access to schooling, curriculum reform, and investments in specialised training.

Looking ahead, Burunciuc believes Guyana's trajectory remains one of the most striking in the region.

**"I could only imagine what this country will be in another five or ten years,"** she said.

As development continues at pace, both leaders agree that sustained investment in people, infrastructure and resilience will be key to ensuring that Guyana's growth delivers lasting benefits for all.

protect communities. Projects like the Liliendaal pump station have already improved drainage along the East Coast.

At the same time, economic growth is creating unprecedented opportunities.

**"We have more jobs being created than at any other time in our history, but these are new types of jobs, requiring new types of skills,"**



The engagement with Brazilian investors

Minister of Agriculture, Zulfikar Mustapha, recently met with a high-level team of Brazilian investors to explore large-scale opportunities amidst Guyana stepping up efforts to expand its agricultural sector and attract foreign

investment.

The discussions formed part of a broader national strategy to enhance production, support local farmers, and strengthen Guyana's contribution to regional food security. Minister Mustapha highlighted the country's vast lands, favourable policy environment, and potential for collaboration between international investors and local producers as key factors making Guyana an attractive destination for agro-industrial development.

## GUYANA COURTS BRAZILIAN INVESTORS TO BOOST AGRICULTURE AND TRADE



The engagement with Brazilian investors

The engagement comes amid transformative infrastructure projects, including the Linden to Lethem corridor, which will provide a direct land link to northern Brazil.

The upgraded roadway is expected to reduce transportation time and costs, creating a vital trade route connecting Brazilian markets to Guyana's ports and beyond to the Caribbean and North America.

Complementing the corridor is the development of a modern port facility at Parika, designed with integrated cold storage, packaging, and agro-

processing capabilities. This will help farmers preserve produce, reduce post-harvest losses, and access regional and international markets more efficiently.

These initiatives will unlock economic potential for Guyana and the State of Roraima in Brazil, creating opportunities for farmers, investors, and regional partners.

aligned with national priorities.

The Enmore facility is already building technical capacity

expand operations into four buildings by mid-year, further increasing output and job creation.

The project

## LOCAL VISION DRIVES OILFIELD MANUFACTURING EXPANSION AT ENMORE

A former sugar estate at Enmore is being reshaped into a growing industrial hub, as Guysons K+B Industries and the Guyana Office for Investment (Go-Invest) advance a partnership aimed at expanding local manufacturing and oilfield services.

The initiative reflects Guyana's broader push to convert national development goals into tangible economic opportunities, while positioning local companies to play a leading role in the country's rapidly expanding energy sector. What began as a local ambition has evolved into a joint venture between Guysons

Engineering and United States (US)-based K&B Industries, focused on building advanced oilfield manufacturing capacity in Guyana.

The company

a modern fabrication and machining complex designed to serve the oil and gas industry. With tens of millions of US dollars already invested, the operation has created

Officer, Peter Ramsaroop, said the project represents a deliberate shift in how Guyana approaches development, with local companies moving beyond support roles to become producers competing at international standards.

Behind the project is the vision of Guysons founder Kadim "Kads" Khan, who believed Guyanese industry could rise to meet global demands. Following his passing in 2022, the company's leadership, including Faizal Khan and his brothers, continued the expansion, working alongside Go-Invest to shape an investment strategy



A tour of the Guysons K+B joint venture

acquired approximately 55 acres at the former Enmore Sugar Estate and has been transforming the old GuySuCo sugar packaging facility into

more than 100 jobs while introducing in-country manufacturing, machining, and repair services.

Chief Investment



A tour of the Guysons K+B joint venture

through advanced CNC machining, workforce training, and internationally recognised certifications. The company has also established a specialised clear plating line, positioning the operation within a highly technical segment of the regional industrial landscape. Plans are underway to

highlights how policy support, investment facilitation, and private sector execution can work together to build productive capacity. The repurposing of Enmore from a former sugar asset into a modern industrial complex also reflects Guyana's economic transition.

## KARASABAI GETS ALL-WEATHER AIRSTRIP

Residents of Karasabai are now benefiting from safer, faster, and more reliable transportation following the commissioning of a modern airstrip designed to transform access to essential services and economic opportunities in the community.

The upgraded facility, which is expected to serve more than 1,200 residents, replaces an earthen airstrip that for decades became unusable during periods of rainfall and at night. These conditions often forced flight cancellations and delayed emergency medical evacuations, leaving residents vulnerable during urgent situations.

President Mohamed Irfaan Ali described the project as transformative, noting that the new infrastructure allows aircraft to land at full capacity both day and night. "Just over



*The Karasabai airstrip at night*

70 days ago, if the weather changed, pilots had to rush to leave or risk being stranded. Today, aircraft can land here at full capacity, day or night," the President noted during his address.

The airstrip, completed in just three months at a cost of

\$1.53 billion, features a rigid concrete surface measuring 3,000 feet long and 50 feet wide, designed to last up to 30 years. Approximately 50 navigational lights were also installed to support safe nighttime operations.

With the improved facility, medevac aircraft can now access



*Some of the workers employed in building the Karasabai airstrip*

Karasabai directly, eliminating the need for lengthy travel to Lethem during emergencies. The enhanced connectivity is expected to significantly reduce response times for patients requiring urgent care.

The project also delivered immediate benefits during construction, employing about 60 residents and injecting income into the local economy. A modern passenger terminal, modelled after the one in Aishalton, was

also donated, providing a more comfortable and efficient space for travellers.

Beyond transportation, the upgraded airstrip is expected to support agriculture and business development. Government officials indicated that efforts are underway to expand production of crops such as peanuts, ginger, cassava, and coffee, supported by improved storage and transportation.

The Karasabai project forms part of a broader hinterland development strategy, with similar airstrip upgrades already completed in Paramakatoi and Aishalton. These investments aim to bridge the gap between hinterland and coastland communities while opening new opportunities for growth and improved quality of life.

## CHEAPER HINTERLAND FLIGHTS AHEAD AS AIRLINES ANSWER PRESIDENT'S CALL



*The arrival of the planes in Guyana*

A call by President Mohamed Irfaan Ali to make hinterland travel more affordable is now translating into real changes, as airlines begin lowering fares.

For many families, miners, and small business operators

travelling to Guyana's interior, the cost of air travel has long been a challenge. Now, several domestic carriers are stepping in to ease that burden.

Leading the push is Jags Aviation, which has expanded its fleet

with two new Dornier 228 aircraft. The planes, acquired from Hindustan Aeronautics Limited, recently arrived in Guyana and are expected to be assembled and deployed shortly.

Each aircraft seats 19 passengers and

introduces onboard washroom facilities, a first for domestic aviation in Guyana, bringing added comfort to long-distance hinterland travel.

According to owner Brian Tiwarie, the investment is part of a wider effort to meet growing demand while supporting the drive to reduce fares.

Other operators are also responding. Roraima Airways and Trans Guyana Airways have each committed to a 7 per cent reduction in ticket prices, while Air Services Limited plans to cut fares by 9 per cent.

Beyond affordability, the development also



*The arrival of the planes in Guyana*

international ties. Acting High Commissioner of India to Guyana, Manoj Kumar noted that the partnership could position Guyana as a hub for Dornier aircraft operations and maintenance in the region.

communities, where air travel is often essential, the combined efforts of government and private operators promise improved access, greater affordability, and stronger connections across the country.

## CRACKDOWN ON ILLEGAL MINING RESULTS IN 16 MINERS BEFORE COURTS

Sixteen gold miners were brought before the courts in March as authorities intensified efforts to clamp down on illegal mining across Guyana.

The charges ranged from operating without permits to using unregistered dredges and occupying mining

properties without permission. All 16 miners pleaded guilty when they appeared at the Bartica Magistrate's Court and the Mahdia Magistrate's Court, and were fined accordingly.

The cases stemmed from operations uncovered by the Ministry of Natural

Resources' Corps of Wardens, who continue to monitor mining districts closely. The increased enforcement is aimed at protecting both livelihoods and the environment.

Illegal mining has long posed serious risks, contributing to environmental

degradation, unsafe working conditions, and loss of revenue for the state. Authorities warn that such activities also threaten legitimate miners who comply with regulations.

In a separate but related operation, five Brazilian nationals were arrested for illegal entry

and mining. Appearing before the Mahdia Magistrate's Court, they pleaded guilty and were ordered to leave the country within 24 hours.

The Ministry of Natural Resources has since commended the swift action of the Guyana Police Force and partner agencies in addressing

the violations.

The crackdown is not just about enforcement, but about preserving Guyana's natural wealth for future generations. As surveillance continues across all regions, miners are being urged to operate within the law.

# DIGITAL ID CARDS NOW IN FORCE, PROMISING FASTER, EASIER ACCESS TO GOVT SERVICES

The way Guyanese access government services is set for a major transformation, as the Digital Identity Card Act of 2023 officially came into force on March 31, 2026.

Announcing the move, Prime Minister Mark Phillips described the rollout as a significant step toward modernising the relationship between citizens and the state.

For everyday Guyanese, the new digital ID system promises something simple but powerful: easier access to services, less paperwork, and shorter waiting

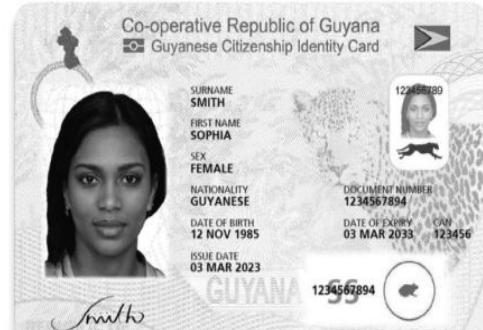
times. Behind the scenes, much of the groundwork has already been completed. The government has established a secure national database, put systems in place to produce the cards, and appointed a Data Protection Commissioner to oversee how personal information is handled.

Importantly, officials say the process is designed to be familiar. Rather than requiring people to submit entirely new information, the initial phase will rely

largely on data already provided to agencies such as the Guyana Elections Commission, the Guyana Revenue Authority, and the National Insurance Scheme.

Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs, Anil Nandlall SC emphasised that this phased approach is intended to build public confidence, assuring citizens that sensitive personal data will not be requested until full legal protections are in place.

**“The data that would be taken at this point in time remains data that is already**



*The card promises easier access to Government services*

**accessible,”** he explained, underscoring the government’s commitment to privacy.

That reassurance is key for many citizens who may be cautious about how their personal information is used.

Officials say stronger safeguards will come into effect once the Data Protection Act is fully operational, at which point additional data may be incorporated under stricter oversight.

Across the country,

preparations are already visible. Registration offices have opened in several regions, including Georgetown, Anna Regina, Leonora, and Fort Wellington, with more locations expected in the coming months.

While applying for the digital ID will now be mandatory, the government believes the long-term benefits will be felt in everyday life, from accessing healthcare and financial services to conducting routine transactions more efficiently.

# FACE RECOGNITION TECH TO SPEED UP PASSENGER PROCESSING AT CJIA

For thousands of Guyanese returning home each year, long lines at the airport may soon become a thing of the past. The government is moving ahead with plans to introduce an automated passenger identification system at the Cheddi Jagan International Airport (CJIA), promising faster, smoother arrival for citizens.

Minister of Public Utilities and Aviation, Deodat Indar, said the system will use biometric technology linked to the national e-ID card to identify passengers instantly.

For travellers, the experience is expected to be seamless; step off the plane, approach the gate, and walk through as facial recognition confirms identity.

“We want when you come off the plane, you walk straight through,” Minister Indar explained. “The system must recognise that you are a citizen... you don’t have to see anybody.”

The upgrade is part of a wider push to transform Guyana into a regional aviation hub, with major investments underway to modernise



*Passengers arriving at the Cheddi Jagan International Airport*

airport infrastructure. At CJIA, expansion works are ongoing, with plans already in place for a second terminal to handle growing

passenger demand. Behind the scenes, the growth is already visible. Guyana now hosts approximately 16 airlines, up from just

four in 2020, including American Airlines, Copa Airlines, Caribbean Airlines and Surinam Airways. Officials say more carriers are expressing interest as the country’s economy expands.

Beyond Georgetown, new airports are also taking shape. Facilities in Berbice and Lethem are being developed to improve regional connectivity and support economic activity, from oil and gas operations to cross-border trade with Brazil.

In Berbice, a new airport with a 6,500-foot runway is expected

to allow direct jet travel, reducing the need for long road transfers. Meanwhile, the Lethem airport is being positioned as a gateway for passenger and cargo traffic from northern Brazil.

For everyday travellers, these changes signal more than infrastructure upgrades, they represent convenience, efficiency, and a glimpse into a more modern travel experience. As Guyana continues to grow, the goal is simple, make coming home easier than ever.

# GUYANESE WOMEN - BREAKING THE COCKPIT CEILING



*The Women in Aviation Conference 2026*

The growing presence and influence of women in Guyana’s aviation sector took centre stage at the Women in Aviation Conference 2026, where industry leaders and aspiring professionals gathered to celebrate progress and map the way forward.

Held at the Arthur

Chung Conference Centre under the theme “Charting Your Course: Empowerment through Skill-Building and Leadership”, the two-day conference created a dynamic space for mentorship, dialogue, and knowledge sharing.

For many in attendance, the event underscored just how far

women have come in an industry once dominated by men. From pilots and engineers to regulators and air traffic controllers, women are steadily reshaping Guyana’s aviation landscape.

Minister of Public Utilities and Aviation, Deodat Indar, emphasised that Guyana continues to uphold

equal opportunities for all.

“There are parts of this world that have laws that say women can’t participate in what you are doing here today. This country is one where fundamental rights are given to everyone,” he stated.

He added that inclusivity remains essential to the sector’s growth, encouraging more women to pursue careers across all areas of aviation.

A standout example of women’s impact came during Guyana’s 2024 recertification audit by the International Civil Aviation Organization, where Deputy Director General Artie Heeralall



*The Women in Aviation Conference 2026*



*The Women in Aviation Conference 2026*

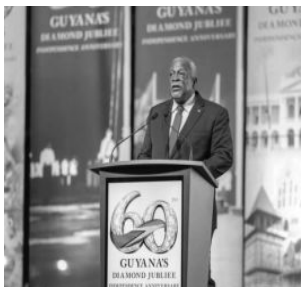
led the Guyana Civil Aviation Authority’s (GCCA) team to a 66 per cent score, surpassing that of Canada.

Director General of the GCAA, Egbert Field, described women as “trailblazers” and “visionaries”, highlighting their growing presence across every aspect of the industry.

“You are not just occupying space in this industry; you are rising to the level of commanding it,” he told attendees.

The conference also spotlighted future opportunities, building on initiatives such as the aviation training programme which aims to train 1,500 young people by 2028.

## CULTURAL CALENDAR UNVEILED FOR GUYANA'S 60TH INDEPENDENCE CELEBRATIONS



*The launch of Guyana's 60th Independence Anniversary Celebrations*



*The launch of Guyana's 60th Independence Anniversary Celebrations*

The countdown to Guyana's 60th Independence Anniversary has begun, with the launching of the "Homecoming" celebrations, promising a vibrant mix of cultural, tourism, and heritage activities throughout the year.

The celebrations, under the theme "Homecoming", set the stage for a year of cultural pride, heritage reflection, and renewed

connections with Guyanese around the world.

The launch, held at the Railway Courtyard, signalled the beginning of a robust calendar of activities designed to honour the nation's journey while inviting the diaspora to return and be part of the milestone. Minister of Tourism, Industry and Commerce, Susan Rodrigues described the Diamond Jubilee as both

a tribute to Guyana's progress and an opportunity to reconnect with its global family.

She explained that the Homecoming theme serves as an invitation for Guyanese abroad to engage, celebrate, and experience the country's transformation firsthand. The celebrations also come amid continued growth in the tourism sector, with increased visitor arrivals and expanding international recognition in major global publications.

A major highlight of the anniversary calendar is the return of the Guyana Festival, scheduled for May 15-17 at the Guyana National Stadium. The event will feature heritage villages representing Guyana's six races, alongside

cultural performances, culinary experiences, and nightly entertainment designed to showcase the country's diversity.

The national programme also includes "Taste of Guyana", heritage tours, regional

the opportunity to experience Guyana's unique traditions and landscapes.

Prime Minister Mark Phillips said the anniversary provides a moment to reflect on Guyana's achievements

independence.

Traditional observances, including the Independence Flag Raising Ceremony and National Interfaith Service, will also form part of the calendar, reinforcing national unity and reflection. The celebrations will culminate with Guyana Carnival Independence Weekend, organised in collaboration with Hits and Jams Entertainment, highlighting the growing role of public-private partnerships in advancing cultural industries.

Minister of Culture, Youth and Sport, Charles Ramson Jr. said the milestone reflects unity and resilience, noting that the anniversary is an opportunity to celebrate shared identity and chart the nation's future.



*The launch of Guyana's 60th Independence Anniversary Celebrations*

food festivals, lakeside camping activities, and riverine community showcases. These events are expected to extend the celebrations beyond the coast, giving visitors and locals alike

in nation building, democracy, education, infrastructure, and economic development, while recognising the significance of reaching 60 years of

## OVERSEAS JOURNALISTS EXPLORE GUYANA'S TOURISM OFFERINGS

A group of North American journalists has completed a 10-day familiarisation tour of Guyana, hosted by the Guyana Tourism Authority (GTA), aimed at strengthening the country's international tourism presence.

During the visit, the media representatives, from April 1-10, travelled across several destinations, experiencing Guyana's rich cultural heritage, pristine natural landscapes, and



*The North American journalist on the Press Familiarisation Trip*

renowned hospitality. They engaged with local communities, explored riverine and rainforest environments, and

sampled authentic cuisine, gaining firsthand insight into the country's diverse tourism offerings. The initiative formed

part of a strategic push to deepen global awareness of Guyana through immersive, on-the-ground storytelling. It also built on the destination's growing visibility in leading international publications, further positioning Guyana within key travel markets.

With their combined editorial reach, the visiting journalists are expected to generate expanded exposure among high-value

audiences, including eco-conscious travellers, adventure seekers, and cultural explorers, while highlighting tourism's

potential to support livelihoods and drive sustainable community-based economic growth.



*The North American journalist on the Press Familiarisation Trip*

## \$1.3B MUSEUM AND ART GALLERY TO PRESERVE GUYANA'S STORY FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

For generations, Guyana's stories have lived in its people, traditions, and landscapes. Soon, those stories will have a permanent home, as plans move ahead for a modern museum and

art gallery designed to preserve and celebrate the nation's cultural identity.

The \$1.3 billion project is already gaining momentum. Director of Culture Tamika Boatswain and

Director of National Events Andrew Tyndall recently joined engineers and representatives from China IPPR International Engineering Corporation for a site visit, marking a key transition from concept to execution.

Envisioned as more than just a building, the new facility will serve as a vibrant cultural hub. It is expected to house historical artefacts, contemporary artwork, and interactive exhibits that bring Guyana's story to life for both locals and visitors.

The project



*Director of National Events, Andrew Tyndall, along with the Chief Engineer within the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport and representatives from the China IPPR International Engineering Corporation, at the site visit*

represents an opportunity to safeguard the nation's heritage. From indigenous traditions to modern artistic expression, the

museum will offer a space where generations can connect with Guyana's evolving identity.

Beyond preservation, the initiative is also

poised to open doors for the creative community. Artists, historians, and curators will benefit from a dedicated venue for exhibitions, collaboration, and cultural programming.

The new museum is also expected to strengthen Guyana's tourism appeal, adding a premier attraction to its growing list of experiences.

With international collaboration ensuring modern design and innovation, the project reflects a broader commitment to cultural development, one that blends history, creativity, and opportunity under one roof.



*Artifacts on display at the Guyana National Museum*

# GOOD FRIDAY WORSHIP UNITES CONGREGATIONS AND NATIONAL LEADERS

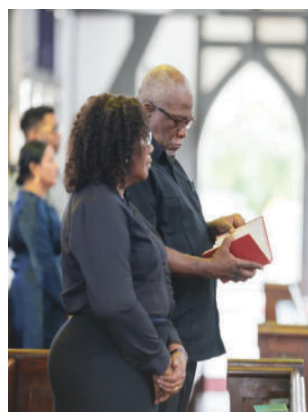
Congregations across Guyana gathered in prayerful observance on Good Friday, with national leaders joining worshippers at churches and places of worship throughout the country.

President Dr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali attended services alongside several members of his Cabinet, participating in moments of reflection and fellowship with congregations, including at the Ruimveldt Life Improvement Centre, Avocado Square, East Ruimveldt, and Life Spring Ministries at Chateau Margot, East Coast Demerara.

At the Good Friday services, the President spoke about strengthening communities through faith-based partnerships, highlighting plans to integrate churches into the delivery of basic primary healthcare, including blood pressure and glucose checks, counselling, and health education. He emphasised that churches are trusted community spaces that can play a frontline role in promoting wellbeing and early intervention.

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Mark Phillips and his wife joined worshippers at St George’s Cathedral, where hymns, scripture readings and quiet reflection marked the solemn observance. Similar scenes unfolded at churches across the country, as families gathered to commemorate the significance of the day.

The services formed part of the wider Easter observances, blending spiritual reflection with messages of hope, renewal and community support, as leaders and citizens alike paused to mark one of the most sacred days on the Christian calendar.



## PRESIDENT, CABINET SHARE EASTER MOMENTS WITH FAMILIES NATIONWIDE

Families gathered along the Kingston Seawall and recreational spots across Guyana on Easter Monday, filling the skies with colourful kites and enjoying picnics as part of the country’s cherished traditions.

President Dr. Irfaan Ali spent Easter afternoon mingling with families on the seawall, greeting children, chatting with parents and sharing in the relaxed, festive atmosphere.

Across the country, members of the Cabinet also visited popular kite-flying locations and community spaces, interacting with citizens who turned out in large numbers to celebrate the long Easter weekend with food, music and outdoor games.

The scenes reflected the message delivered by President Ali in his Easter address, where he urged Guyanese at home and in the diaspora to embrace the season as one of hope, renewal and enduring joy. Describing Easter as the “heartbeat of the Christian faith,” he reminded citizens that the celebration symbolises triumph after hardship and light after sorrow.

He also highlighted the vibrant traditions that define Easter in Guyana, from kite flying and seaside picnics to events such as the Bartica Regatta, Rupununi Rodeo and horse racing on the Corentyne, activities that bring communities together and showcase the country’s rich cultural spirit.



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# KITES, PICNICS AND DOMINATE EAST

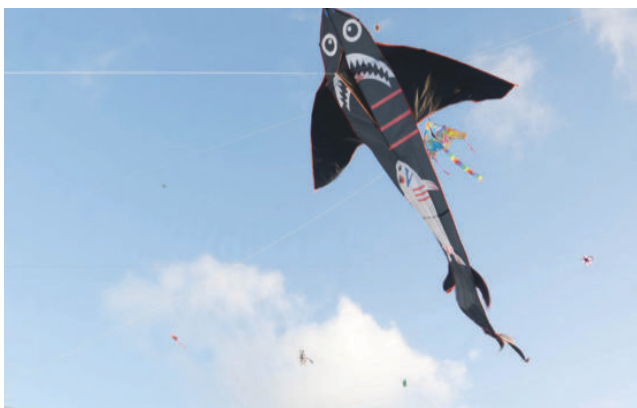
**C**olourful kites dotted the skies across Guyana on Easter Monday as families gathered in open spaces, seawalls and community grounds to celebrate one of the country's most cherished traditions. From coastland parks to hinterland savannahs, children ran against the breeze while parents set up picnic blankets, shared meals and enjoyed the relaxed holiday atmosphere.

Popular kite-flying spots filled early, with vendors, music and friendly competitions adding to the festive mood. Groups of friends and extended families spent the day outdoors, flying homemade creations, grilling, and capturing moments as the skies filled with vibrant shapes and colours.

The nationwide scenes reflected the enduring appeal of Easter Monday in Guyana, a day when communities come together, neighbourhoods reconnect, and generations share in simple traditions that blend recreation, culture and family time.



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# EASTER IN THE SAVANNAH

The dry-season sun hung over the golden savannahs as dust rose from the Triple R Grounds in Tabatinga, Lethem, where the Rupununi Ranchers' Rodeo once again brought the region to life over the Easter weekend.

Crowds gathered around the arena as vaqueros tested their grit in bull riding, bronc competitions and calf roping, skills rooted in the everyday work of managing cattle across the vast Rupununi. Families browsed stalls filled with traditional crafts, sampled local delicacies and cheered contestants in the Mr. and Miss Rupununi Ranchers' Rodeo pageant, while music and festivities continued late into the night.

President Dr. Irfaan Ali and members of his Cabinet were among those in attendance, interacting with patrons and witnessing the high-energy performances that have made the rodeo one of Guyana's most anticipated cultural events.

Minister of Amerindian Affairs, Sarah Browne, said the



Rupununi is stepping confidently into a new era, shedding its "sleeping giant" label and emerging as a hub of growth, culture and opportunity. She noted that the rodeo has evolved from its humble beginnings as cattle roundups into a national and international attraction that promotes unity while showcasing the region's heritage.

With visitors travelling from across Guyana and beyond, the annual gathering continues to celebrate the enduring spirit of the Rupununi, where tradition, community and the thundering of hooves signal both history and a region on the rise



# EASTER THRILLS AT GUYANA'S OLDEST REGATTA

The riverside town of Bartica came alive on Easter Sunday as engines roared and crowds lined the waterfront for the annual Bartica Easter Regatta, one of Guyana's most anticipated holiday traditions.

Prime Minister Brigadier (Ret'd) Mark Phillips officially declared the races open, joining thousands of spectators who gathered to witness the high-speed spectacle. In his feature address, he reaffirmed the government's continued commitment to the event, noting that support will be channelled through relevant ministries to further expand and enhance the regatta, which remains a proud reflection of Bartica's culture and community spirit.

This year's edition delivered one of the most action-packed programmes to date, with organisers scheduling 20 powerboat races, including three

Formula One events that drew loud cheers as competitors sliced through the water at breathtaking speeds. Several new boats made their debut, adding to the excitement as seasoned racers and newcomers battled for top honours.

Beyond the water, the Easter weekend celebration extended across the town, with football matches, domino competitions, and a beauty pageant creating a festive atmosphere for residents and visitors alike. The excitement continued into Easter Monday with the traditional grass track racing at Mora Camp, another crowd favourite that brought the regatta weekend to a thrilling close.

Blending speed, tradition and community pride, the Bartica Regatta once again showcased the enduring appeal of Guyana's oldest annual regatta and the vibrant spirit of the river town that hosts it.



# Government urges public to avoid panic buying as fuel shortages hit Guyana

PRIME Minister, Brigadier (Ret'd) Mark Phillips, has assured the public that there is no need to worry about fuel availability.

He urged citizens to avoid panic buying or hoarding amidst a short and manageable disruption in fuel supplies.

“I want to stress that there is no need for concern, panic buying, or hoarding,” the Prime Minister said, adding that “sufficient fuel supplies are entering the system, and this temporary disruption is being resolved.”

The government recognised that public anxiety stemmed from reports of a supply delay. They confirmed that one major oil company faced a setback in the arrival of its shipment. However, officials clarified that the situation is already starting to improve after discussions with fuel importers. The delayed shipment has now arrived, and discharge operations are currently happening.

Importers have assured the government that supply levels will stabilise quickly. Several consignments arrived earlier on Monday, April 13, and more shipments are set to come today and throughout the rest of the week.

Breakdown of fuel arrivals this week:

Guyana Oil Company (Guyoil):

- 9,000 barrels of diesel expected on April 15, offloading Thursday morning

- 21,000 barrels of gasoline expected on April 15, offloading Thursday morning

SOL Guyana Inc.:

- 3,000 barrels of gasoline — arrived April 13; discharge underway, distribution to begin Monday evening

- 14,000 barrels of diesel — arrived April 13; discharge underway, distribution to begin Monday evening

- 12,000 barrels of gasoline — expected April 14

- 6,000 barrels of diesel — expected April 14

Rubis Guyana Inc.:

- 10,000 barrels of gasoline — arrived April 13

- 6,700 barrels low sulphur diesel — arrived April 13

- 4,500 barrels ultra-low sulphur diesel — arrived April 13

- 10,000 barrels of gasoline — expected April 14

- 18,000 barrels of diesel — expected April 14

- 3,000 barrels of aviation fuel — expected April 14

Prime Minister Phillips also used this opportunity to remind consumers not to stockpile fuel at home.

He emphasised that petroleum products are very flammable and must be handled and stored carefully.

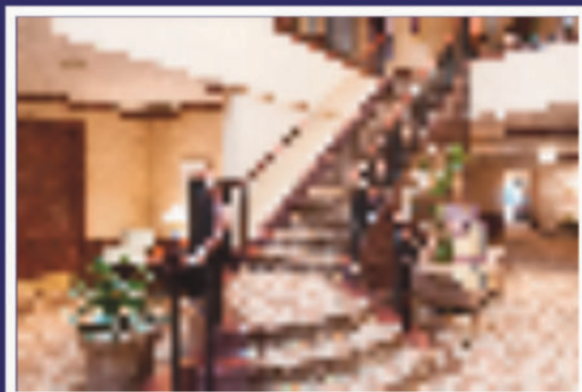
“Storing gasoline in improper containers poses a serious fire risk and greatly increases the chances of injury, loss of life, and damage to property,” the Prime Minister warned. The government has committed to continue monitoring the situation closely.



Prime Minister Mark Phillips

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# GOVT DRAINAGE UPGRADES CREDITED FOR RAPID FLOOD RECOVERY AFTER HEAVY DOWNPOURS



Distribution of relief supplies

Recent heavy rainfall across Georgetown and surrounding communities put Guyana's upgraded drainage infrastructure to the test, with government officials crediting swift interventions and improved systems for the rapid recession of floodwaters.

Despite significant downpours, authorities reported minimal disruption, as streets and communities returned to normalcy within a short period.

In the immediate aftermath, ministers were deployed across Regions Three, Four and Five to assess conditions on the ground. During a walkthrough in South Georgetown, Minister of Public Works, Juan

Edghill, pointed to the visible impact of recent infrastructure upgrades.

**"If this level of rain had fallen three weeks ago, this street would be under water today,"** he said. **"I am happy that these interventions have held up. People can get in and out."**

Minister Edghill attributed the improved response to elevated roadways and reinforced concrete drainage systems, particularly in areas historically prone to flooding.

The response was bolstered by coordinated efforts between central government and local authorities. Minister of Local Government and Regional Development, Priya Manickchand, said teams from

Neighbourhood Democratic Councils (NDCs) and Regional Democratic Councils (RDCs) remained on high alert, closely monitoring drainage systems, especially during high-tide cycles.

Minister of Agriculture, Zulfikar Mustapha, provided a technical overview,

infrastructure must be actively managed, revealing that the Cowan Street sluice was found closed during low tide, a critical issue that was immediately corrected. Technical teams were subsequently deployed nationwide to ensure all sluices and pumps were functioning at optimal capacity.

strategy. Ongoing works, including desilting outfall channels, clearing internal drains, and installing additional pumps, aim to strengthen long-term urban resilience.

**"These upgrades show how proactive planning and infrastructure investment make**

residents. The Civil Defence Commission, in collaboration with government ministries, distributed cleaning hampers and sanitation supplies to households in Regions Three, Four, and Five.

Minister Manickchand led distributions in East La Penitence and



Ministers moved immediately into affected areas



Ministers moved immediately into affected areas



One day after - Floodwaters receded quickly thanks to swift drainage intervention



One day after - Floodwaters receded quickly thanks to swift drainage intervention

noting that Georgetown recorded more than 3.5 inches of rainfall within 24 hours, while other areas experienced peaks of up to 145 millimetres. He stressed that

The quick drainage of floodwaters, with most streets cleared within a day, is being viewed as a strong indication of the effectiveness of the government's

**a real difference in communities,"** Minister Mustapha said.

Alongside infrastructure efforts, relief support was mobilised for affected

Albouystown, while Minister of Labour, Keoma Griffith, assisted residents in East and West Ruimveldt.

# GOVT MAPS OUT MAJOR UPGRADES FOR EAST RUIIMVELDT

Residents of East Ruimveldt received a detailed update on upcoming community improvements during a government-led engagement spearheaded by Minister of Local Government and Regional Development Priya Manickchand. She was joined by Minister of Labour and Manpower Planning Keoma Griffith and Minister within the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport Steven Jacobs.

The meeting



The meeting with the residents

followed a recent walkthrough of the community by President Mohamed Irfaan Ali, part of a sustained push to address longstanding challenges and accelerate development in the Georgetown community.

Minister Manickchand emphasised that this engagement is part of an ongoing process, not a one-off visit. **"Your presence here tells us that you are invested in your community and willing to be part of the process to make it better. That**

**kind of engagement is critical if we are to achieve real, lasting change,"** she said.

She highlighted the government's commitment to improving lives, particularly by expanding opportunities for youth. Residents were reminded that the aim is to create conditions for children to access education, pursue careers, and explore creative and entrepreneurial paths.

Minister Manickchand also clarified the roles of central and

local government, acknowledging the challenges communities face due to years of systemic neglect and finger-pointing. **"Residents are not concerned with who is responsible; they simply want their roads fixed, drains cleared, garbage collected, and safe spaces for their children,"** she said.

Looking specifically at East Ruimveldt, the Minister unveiled a series of planned interventions: the community playground will be transformed into a modern, multi-purpose recreational space with a walking track, upgraded basketball court, and facilities for youth and seniors. Open spaces for football and other sports will be enhanced to promote healthy lifestyles.

The East Ruimveldt Market is also slated

for redevelopment, including expanded vending areas, improved traffic flow, and upgraded amenities for vendors and shoppers. Drainage systems will be upgraded to address flooding and

and inviting feedback to ensure projects reflect residents' needs. She concluded by reaffirming the government's commitment to sustained engagement and results-driven action.



The meeting with the residents

public health concerns, and garbage collection services will increase from once to twice weekly.

Minister Manickchand emphasised the importance of community input, presenting preliminary designs for the playground and market

**"This is a collaborative process,"** she said. **"We have come back because we are serious about getting things done, and we will continue to work with you every step of the way to ensure East Ruimveldt reaches its full potential."**



The meeting with the residents

# PUBLIC WORKS MINISTRY PUSHES BACK ON CITY HALL OVER ROAD CONTROL

The Ministry of Public Works is asserting its legal authority over Georgetown's road network, pushing back against criticism from City Hall and defending its move to designate over 50 roads as public infrastructure.

In a strong response to statements made by the city's mayor, the Ministry rejected claims that the Government acted unlawfully, describing the assertions as misleading and based on a fundamental misunderstanding of the law.

At the centre of the dispute is the question of who ultimately controls the city's roads. The

Ministry maintains that under existing legislation, once a road is declared a public road, it no longer falls under the jurisdiction of the City Council. The Ministry pointed to the legal framework governing municipal and national authority, arguing that responsibility for public roads rests with the Minister of Public Works.

But beyond the legal debate, the Government said the issue reflects a more pressing concern, conditions on the ground.

For years, residents and commuters have raised concerns about deteriorating roads,

traffic congestion, and inadequate maintenance across the capital. According to the Ministry, repeated calls for improved upkeep were not adequately addressed, leaving some roads in disrepair and, in certain cases, unsafe for public use.

The decision to designate the roads as public, the Ministry said, is part of a broader effort to improve coordination, enhance safety, and respond more effectively to those concerns.

The Ministry also highlighted the scale of Government's investment in the city's infrastructure. Between 2020 and



Over \$40B spent on Georgetown roads, drainage, and urban upgrades from 2020-2025

2025, more than \$40 billion was spent on road rehabilitation, maintenance, drainage, and urban upgrades across Georgetown, figures the Ministry said underscore a sustained

national commitment to improving the capital. In that context, the Government dismissed suggestions that it had "seized" council assets, noting that roads are public infrastructure

rather than property owned by municipal bodies. Instead, the move was described as a lawful reassignment of responsibility within the existing legal framework.

# LINDEN-MABURA HILL ROAD PROJECT ON TRACK FOR AUGUST COMPLETION



The site visit by Minister within the Ministry of Public Works, Madanlall Ramraj, Foreign Secretary Robert Persaud, and Brazilian Ambassador to Guyana, Maria Cristina de Castro Martins

For residents and visitors travelling to Guyana's hinterland, the journey from Linden to Mabura Hill is about to become dramatically easier. The 121-kilometre road, once a mud-filled trail, is about 86 per

cent complete, with 100 kilometres already paved and the project on track for completion by August 2026.

The update came during a site visit by Minister within the Ministry of Public Works,

Madanlall Ramraj, Foreign Secretary Robert Persaud, and Brazilian Ambassador to Guyana, Maria Cristina de Castro Martins, who toured the corridor alongside the team from contractor Álya Construtora.

Paving activities have accelerated in recent weeks, transforming what was once a treacherous journey into a sleek asphalt corridor. Travel times between Linden and Mabura Hill have been cut from up to 10 hours to roughly one hour, a change that will be felt by the more than 50,000 citizens who rely on the route for work, trade, and essential

services. "This transformation is truly significant," Minister Ramraj



The site visit by Minister within the Ministry of Public Works, Madanlall Ramraj, Foreign Secretary Robert Persaud, and Brazilian Ambassador to Guyana, Maria Cristina de Castro Martins

said, pointing out the remarkable amount of daily movement along the road, with residents now commuting by

bicycles and motorcycles. Foreign Secretary Persaud described the highway as "a super highway,"

linking Guyana and Brazil," noting that it will strengthen trade and regional integration while positioning

Guyana as a strategic hub for northern Brazil and the wider region.

Brazilian Ambassador Martins highlighted the broader benefits of cross-border connectivity. "We are neighbours, and the best way to be connected is through the development of this road," she said.

As works continue at a rapid pace, the corridor stands as a symbol of national development, regional cooperation, and the government's commitment to improving hinterland access, economic activity, and quality of life for Guyanese citizens.

# GUYANA EYES CRUISE SECTOR GROWTH - INFRASTRUCTURE EXPANSION UNDERWAY

Guyana is laying the groundwork for a major expansion in its cruise tourism sector, with targeted infrastructure upgrades and long-term planning taking center stage.

Recent arrivals of cruise vessels have highlighted both the country's growing appeal and the need to scale up capacity. Speaking on the "Livewire" programme, Minister of Tourism, Industry and Commerce, Susan Rodrigues, confirmed that Guyana has welcomed two cruise



A design of the Parika International Port Project

ships within the last six to seven months, bringing hundreds of visitors eager to explore its natural and cultural attractions.

However, she noted

that current river depth limits the ability to accommodate larger vessels. In response, the government is investing in key upgrades to improve port

infrastructure and visitor readiness.

Works are already underway at Parika, with additional development planned for Berbice. These enhancements are expected to expand capacity, improve docking facilities, and create a more seamless experience for incoming passengers.

"We can handle smaller ships now, and we are continuing to invest so we can welcome more," Minister Rodrigues stated, pointing to a



Tourists from the luxury cruise ship SH Vega, docking in Georgetown

phased approach to growth.

Beyond physical upgrades, discussions are ongoing with international cruise lines exploring the inclusion

of Guyana in their itineraries, and even the possibility of establishing the country as a home port.

# MORE LETHEM FAMILIES RECEIVE HOMES, HOUSING SUPPORT



More Lethem families receive homes, housing support

For Judith Browne, the day she received the keys to her new home was nothing short of a birthday miracle. Just days before celebrating, Browne became one of 11 families in Lethem handed the keys to their very own homes under the Government of Guyana's Lethem Housing Support Initiative.

The homes were officially presented by

Minister of Housing, Collin Croal, alongside Regional Housing Officer Teshana McDonald and staff of the Central Housing and Planning Authority (CHPA).

For Ann Paulino, a mother of four and grandmother, the new home marked the end of years spent living with relatives. **"This house brings stability and independence for my family,"** she said.

**"It is something I can one day pass on to my grandson, which is deeply meaningful for our future."**

Each home measures approximately 550 square feet and includes two bedrooms, a living room, kitchen, and bathroom. Valued at around \$3 million, the cost is made more affordable through a \$1 million building-materials subsidy from the Ministry of Housing, with beneficiaries financing the remainder through mortgages. Locally sourced materials were used in construction, supporting regional communities and local economic development.

The Lethem Housing Support Initiative is now moving into its

second phase, with construction underway on 45 more homes within the Tract CHPA Housing Scheme and an additional 55 expected to begin in the coming



More Lethem families receive homes, housing support

weeks. In addition, 28 families who recently commenced building their homes received construction assistance vouchers to help advance their projects. Minister

Croal highlighted that the programme eases financial pressures while encouraging homeownership.

Beneficiaries expressed heartfelt



More Lethem families receive homes, housing support

gratitude for the support. Nadia Davidson said, **"I feel proud, and this will be a great help for my family."** Similarly, Ron Albert called the assistance a **"much-**

**needed boost,"** while Alisa Mootoo encouraged others building homes to apply for the programme.

The initiatives continue to provide



More Lethem families receive homes, housing support

safe, affordable, and meaningful housing opportunities for families in Region Nine, bringing independence, and stability families in Lethem.

# NEW HOUSING SCHEME IN MATARKAI SUPPORTS COMMUNITY GROWTH

Families in the Matarkai Sub-Region are set to gain access to residential house lots with the upcoming Tract PK Housing Scheme in Port Kaituma, Region One. Minister of Housing, Collin Croal, recently visited the site and expressed satisfaction with the progress being made to develop it.

The project spans roughly 40 acres and is designed to provide safe, serviced lots for families, supporting community



The project spans roughly 40 acres

growth and improving living conditions in the hinterland. Infrastructure works, including roads, drains,

culverts, and a pipe network, are moving apace. Three contractors are engaged in the first phase, which has a total

cost of approximately \$391.8 million.

Minister Croal confirmed the project is on track for completion by May 2026, after which allocations will be made to eligible applicants. He also addressed concerns raised about debris burning during land clearing, offering guidance and reassurance to residents.

The Minister emphasised that the housing scheme reflects the Government's ongoing commitment



The project spans roughly 40 acres

to expanding affordable housing opportunities in hinterland regions, ensuring that more families have access to structured, safe, and

accessible plots for home construction, and fostering long-term community development.

# SOLAR PANELS BRING BRIGHTER DAYS TO KUMAKA AND MORA RESIDENTS



Residents of Kumaka and Mabura Hill receive their solar panels from Minister of Housing, Collin Croal, alongside Minister of Amerindian Affairs, Sarah Brown-Shadeek

Residents of Kumaka and Mora in Region One are experiencing brighter, more productive days thanks to a recent distribution of solar panels that is transforming life in these hinterland communities

Led by Minister of Housing, Collin Croal and Minister of Amerindian Affairs, Sarah Brown-Shadeek, the initiative provided 29 households in Kumaka and 18 in Mora with solar photovoltaic systems giving families

reliable electricity for the first time.

For Senior Councillor Barry Atkinson of Kumaka, the solar panels have been a game changer, **"Because we do not receive electricity 24/7, the system has been very helpful."**

**People feel more secure and are able to do more activities at home after hours,"** he said, while stressing the need for continued expansion to meet the community's growing demand.

In Mora, the impact has been equally



Barry Atkinson- Senior Councillor (Kumaka Village)

noticeable, particularly for students and households. Senior Councillor Fieona Benjamin explained, **"It makes education much easier; students no longer have to strain their eyes, and they can study longer with proper lighting."** Families also now have the ability to charge devices and use fans during hot spells, improving comfort and daily life.

Each solar system includes a control box, solar panel, two lights, a fan, and distribution cables, providing at least eight hours of power with a lifespan exceeding

35 years, offering a long-term solution for remote energy needs.

The project forms part of the government's broader push to expand renewable energy



Fieona Benjamin- Senior Councillor (Mora Village)

solutions in hinterland communities, aiming to enhance living standards, support education, and give residents reliable access to electricity.

# RUPUNUNI AGRICULTURE ATTRACTS INVESTMENT PUSH

Standing amid rows of thriving crops in the Rupununi savannahs, President Dr. Irfaan Ali issued a direct appeal to investors to seize what he described as “bold and innovative” opportunities emerging in Guyana’s agricultural sector.

During a recent visit to a farm in Region Nine, the President pointed to successful trials of onions, tomatoes, beets, ground provisions, peanuts and watermelon, cultivated on a commercial scale, as evidence that large-scale agriculture in the Rupununi is no longer a concept, but a growing reality.

He called on

investors, particularly those in Georgetown with available capital, to move beyond traditional ventures and partner with local farmers and communities to expand production.

**“We give all the tax incentives, zero corporate tax for everything in agriculture... because we want you to come where the land is, partner with the villages, partner with the farmers, and let’s do this,”** the Head of State said.

The trials, supported by the Ministry of Agriculture and the National Agricultural Research and Extension Institute (NAREI),



President Ali during a recent visit to a farm in Region Nine

began in 2025 and have since demonstrated the viability of cultivating both traditional and non-traditional crops in the region. Farmers have also received agronomy support from Brazilian specialists, helping to improve yields and introduce new techniques suited to the

savannah environment. President Ali that emphasized the Rupununi is being positioned as a major agricultural hub, supported by mechanisation, improved logistics and a package of fiscal incentives designed to attract private

investment. He noted that collaboration between farmers in Regions Eight and Nine will further boost production in 2026.

**“I am impressed by the results I have seen and by the tremendous potential in Region Nine for large-scale agriculture,”** he said, adding that expanded cultivation will strengthen food security locally while contributing to regional supply.

With vast lands, improving infrastructure and growing technical support, the Rupununi is increasingly being viewed as a new frontier for agriculture, one



President Ali during a recent visit to a farm in Region Nine

where community partnerships and private investment could transform the savannahs into a major food basket.

More than 400 businesses across Guyana are receiving direct support through

## GOVT BUSINESS CLINICS BRING DIRECT SUPPORT TO ENTREPRENEURS



More than 400 businesses strengthened by business clinics

government-led business clinics designed to help entrepreneurs strengthen operations and position themselves for growth.

At a recent clinic in Westminster Village, Region Three, Minister of Tourism, Industry and Commerce Susan

Rodrigues said the initiative offers a “one-stop shop” where small business owners can access essential services, guidance and training in their own communities.

**“We are serious about ensuring that our population is educated, is protected, is healthy, and that**

**our business owners can thrive in that healthy economic environment that we are creating here in Guyana,”** the minister said.

Since the initiative began, more than 16 clinics have been hosted, connecting entrepreneurs with key agencies such as the Guyana Revenue Authority, National Insurance Scheme, Deeds and Commercial Registry, Local Content Secretariat, Guyana National Bureau of Standards, Guyana Tourism Authority, Small Business Bureau, Competition

and Consumer Affairs Commission, and the Department of Commerce.

Through these engagements, business



More than 400 businesses strengthened by business clinics

owners receive assistance with registration, tax and social security compliance, grant

and loan applications, and business plan development. Participants are also guided on regulatory requirements and

opportunities available within Guyana’s expanding economy.

Minister Rodrigues noted that non-

compliance remains a major challenge for small enterprises, often preventing them from capitalising on new opportunities due to missing documentation. The clinics, she explained, aim to bridge that gap by bringing services directly to entrepreneurs.

With nine additional clinics planned this year, the government intends to expand outreach nationwide, ensuring more small and medium-sized businesses are equipped to grow, formalise operations and benefit from Guyana’s evolving economic landscape.

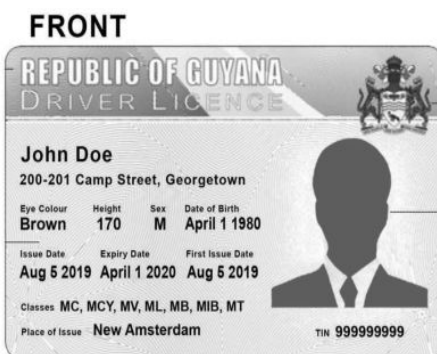
## LIST OF LICENCE IRREGULARITIES TO BE PUBLISHED AS GOVT CRACKS DOWN ON ROAD VIOLATIONS AND LICENSING FRAUD

A technology-driven audit is driving a major crackdown on road violations and licence fraud in Guyana, as President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali moves to restore confidence in the driver licensing system and make roads safer.

Speaking at a recent Guyana Defence Force event, the President said a list of persons implicated in widespread irregularities in licence issuance will soon be published. **“The reconciliation is ongoing, and very**

**soon a list will be published of persons who will be asked to come in and explain the issues,”** he stated.

The audit revealed serious discrepancies, including practical driving certificates issued to candidates who failed the theoretical exam, and licenses granted to individuals who did not meet basic requirements. In December 2025, President Ali gave violators a six-week window to come forward or face prosecution, licence suspension, and



Government is moving to restore confidence in licensing and improve road safety

public disclosure.

Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs Anil Nandlall, SC has been instructed to prepare amendments to the Motor Vehicles

and Road Traffic Act for Parliament, aiming to close loopholes, strengthen penalties for dangerous driving, and ensure mandatory sanctions for serious

offences.

**“We had increased the fines and have some of the harshest penalties for different traffic offences, drinking and driving and all of these things. The enforcement is a problem, but we’re improving enforcement with the cameras,”** the President noted, highlighting enhanced surveillance and technology as key tools in compliance.

President Ali

emphasised that road safety is critical for national development. **“We cannot develop a society without care and without attention to these, what some may believe are small details, but very important details, if our society is to be disciplined,”** he said.

The reforms mark a significant step toward safer roads, stricter accountability, and renewed public trust in Guyana’s licensing and traffic enforcement systems.



The stakeholders engagement on the road

Residents along the East Berbice corridor are preparing for a major transformation as work begins on the US\$604 million Palmyra to Moleson Creek four-lane highway, a project expected to significantly improve travel, safety and economic opportunities. Minister of Public Works Bishop Juan Edghill recently met with residents during stakeholder consultations at Sheet Anchor Primary, Leeds Primary and Skeldon Secondary schools, where hundreds gathered to learn about the scope and timeline of the works. The three meetings corresponded with the project's three construction lots. **"Berbice is getting an international-standard four-lane**

## BERBICE RESIDENTS BRIEFED ON MAJOR PALMYRA-MOLESON CREEK HIGHWAY

highway right here in your county. This is one of the largest road infrastructure projects being undertaken in Guyana," Minister Edghill told residents.

The design-build project will upgrade approximately 80 kilometres of roadway and include bridges, culverts, improved drainage systems and pedestrian sidewalks to enhance safety. Street lighting and proper signage will also be installed along the corridor, with medians planned for some sections.

While acknowledging

that construction will temporarily disrupt access for some communities, the minister assured residents that alternative routes will be provided and contractors will be required to restore permanent access upon completion. He also apologised for the delayed consultations, emphasising the importance of keeping communities informed.

Lot One runs from Canje Bridge to John Village; Lot Two spans Bloomfield to Number 54 Village; and Lot Three continues from Number 55 Village to Moleson Creek.



The stakeholders engagement on the road

The highway forms part of a broader infrastructure push, including plans for a new four-lane high-span Berbice River bridge and discussions for a Corentyne River crossing to Suriname. Together, these projects are expected to improve connectivity, support trade and open new opportunities for communities across Berbice.

## THREE-WEEK DEADLINE SET TO ADVANCE CRITICAL BRIDGES IN RUPUNUNI

Residents of several Region Nine communities could soon see improved access and connectivity, after President Dr. Irfaan Ali ordered a fast-track push to complete seven critical bridges across the region.

During a community meeting with residents of Rukumutu and surrounding villages, the President announced a three-week deadline for a full technical assessment, describing the bridges as essential to economic activity, mobility and everyday life in the Rupununi.

**"There are seven important bridges that the region has raised with me that are important for the economic well-being and the connectivity of the region,"** the Head of State told residents.

Among the priority projects are the Sand Creek, Yakarita and Katoka bridges, along with others identified by regional authorities. Engineers will also examine the possible use of components from the old Demerara Harbour Bridge to help accelerate

construction where feasible.

President Ali tasked Minister of Public Works Juan Edghill with leading a technical team to assess the scope of work, resource requirements and timelines for each structure. The review will determine which bridges can be completed most quickly and establish an accelerated construction schedule.

**"They will complete an assessment within the next three weeks of what it will take to have those major bridges completed,"**

the President said.

The bridge initiative forms part of a wider development push for Region Nine, which also includes improvements to internal roads and expanded community services. The President noted that regional authorities have already submitted proposals for internal road works, and instructed that a joint meeting be convened with the Ministries of Public Works and Local Government to coordinate implementation.

Emphasising the link



The meeting with the residents in Region Nine

between infrastructure and livelihoods, President Ali said the government remains committed to delivering tangible improvements in remote communities, including better access to education, healthcare, and services for pensioners.

Meanwhile, Minister Edghill highlighted that many hinterland projects are being executed by local contractors, creating employment while building technical capacity within communities. He praised the quality of work completed in areas such as Monkey Mountain and Karasabai, noting that the approach empowers residents through training and opportunities.

## OVER 22,000 STREET LIGHTS INSTALLED AS GUYANA EXPANDS SAFETY INITIATIVE

Communities across Guyana are seeing brighter and safer streets as the government's 100,000 street lighting initiative progresses. Minister of Public Works, Bishop Juan Edghill, reported that more

than 22,000 lights have already been installed, with a significant number in Berbice.

**"We are now installing street lights in communities, not just along main roads,"** Minister

Edghill said, noting that works are ongoing across the country.

The initiative is designed to improve public safety by increasing visibility for drivers, cyclists, and pedestrians, helping to

reduce road accidents. Many of the new lights are also expected to include traffic cameras, further enhancing security in residential and commercial areas.

All installations are being carried out

under the supervision of certified electricians and licensed contractors to ensure safety and quality, reflecting the government's commitment to reliable, long-term infrastructure improvements.



The meeting with the residents in Region Nine

The \$1.8 billion December, providing Cotton Field Secondary School is expected to open its doors by Minister of

## NEW COTTON FIELD SECONDARY SCHOOL ON TRACK FOR DECEMBER COMPLETION



Region Two to welcome modern 1,000-student secondary school by year-end

Education, Sonia Parag, confirmed the timeline during a recent site visit, instructing contractors to work around the clock to meet the year-end goal.

The visit followed a meeting with all headteachers across Region Two and included

senior education officers such as Permanent Secretary Shannielle Hoosein-Outar, Chief Education Officer Saddam Hussain, and Chief Planning Officer Mischka White-Griffith, who conducted a detailed assessment of the site.

Once completed, the school will feature 35 modern classrooms, laboratories, a spacious library, and sports facilities, significantly enhancing Region Two's educational infrastructure and offering students a safer,

more modern learning environment.



# DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SURVIVORS TURN NEW PAGE WITH BUSINESS GRANTS



Minister of Human Services and Social Security Dr Vindhya and beneficiaries

Ten survivors of domestic violence are now charting a path to financial independence after receiving \$300,000 each in business grants through a government-supported initiative.

The grants, distributed under the Support for Safety Net Programme, a collaboration between the Ministry of Human Services and Social Security and the Inter-

American Development Bank (IDB) aim to help women rebuild their lives through entrepreneurship.

The recipients are part of a wider group of 54 women supported by the Ministry's Sexual Offences and Domestic Violence Policy Unit.

At a simple ceremony at the Umana Yana, Minister Vindhya Persaud, alongside IDB's Country Representative

Lorena Salazar, presented the grants.

For these women, the

funding is a fresh start. By launching or expanding small businesses, they are gaining stability, confidence, and the opportunity to break free from cycles of abuse while contributing to their communities.



Ministry of Human Services and Social Security Dr Vindhya Persaud, alongside IDB Country Representative Lorena Salazar and Political Counsellor at the High Commission of Canada, Daniel Bood, and a beneficiary

# COMMUNITY POLICING OFFICERS TRAINED TO COMBAT HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Twenty community policing group (CPG) liaison and executive officers have sharpened their skills in detecting and responding to human trafficking and migrant smuggling through a specialised training seminar hosted by the Ministry of Home Affairs.

The one-day programme, held at the Guyana Police Force Training Centre on Camp Road, brought together officers from Regions

Two, Three, Four, Five, Six, Seven, and Ten. Dubbed "Introduction to Trafficking in Persons and Response Mechanisms", the seminar was part of efforts by the Ministerial Taskforce on Trafficking in Persons (MTFTIP) to strengthen national capacity against this growing threat.

Coordinator of the taskforce, Daniel Griffith, emphasised the importance of equipping frontline officers with

the knowledge and tools for early detection and timely intervention. "Strengthening reporting mechanisms and improving access to victim support services are critical in our fight against trafficking," he said.

Participants explored the definitions and indicators of trafficking and migrant smuggling, learned to identify victims of all ages, and received

guidance on safe reporting, trauma-informed care, and inter-agency collaboration. The training also highlighted the link between criminal activity and drug use, while interactive exercises allowed officers to practice victim identification, response, and referral procedures.

Presenters included representatives from the Ministry of Home Affairs, the Guyana Police Force Trafficking



Participants during the TIP training programme

in Persons Unit, the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions, the Ministry of Human Services' Counter-Trafficking Unit, and the Customs Anti-Narcotics Unit.

This initiative strengthens not only the capacity of

community policing groups but also the protection and recovery of vulnerable victims, reflecting Guyana's ongoing commitment to combating trafficking in persons.



Minister of Education, Sonia Parag along with representatives from Recover Guyana and the Greater Guyana Initiative

Students across Guyana are set to benefit from improved access to clean, purified drinking water as 155 schools come on stream under the National Water Purification Project – FLOW.

The initiative will support secondary schools, technical and vocational institutions, and special needs schools across all 11 education districts, strengthening student welfare and promoting healthier

# 155 SCHOOLS SET TO RECEIVE CLEAN WATER THROUGH FLOW PROJECT

learning environments. By reducing reliance on unsafe water sources, the project aims to lower the risk of waterborne illnesses while encouraging environmentally sustainable practices.

During a recent courtesy call, Minister of Education, Sonia Parag met with representatives from Recover Guyana

and Greater Guyana Initiative.

Regions Three and Six will be the

first to benefit, with systems expected to be operational soon. Reliable access to purified water will improve attendance, support student health, and create more comfortable, productive learning environments across the country.



Miniature purification model of the plans outlined for the National Water Purification Project – FLOW



The sport programme empowering the children at Plum Park

# YOUNG ATHLETES POWER GUYANA TO FIFTH AT CARIFTA

Guyanese middle-distance runner Olivia Solomon delivered a standout performance at the 53rd CARIFTA Games, powering to gold in the Girls' Under-17 800 metres at the Kirani James Athletics Stadium in Grenada.

Solomon clocked an impressive 2:10.74, narrowly missing the meet record of 2:09.59 after entering the final with the fastest qualifying

time. Her victory secured Guyana's fourth gold medal and sixth overall, highlighting a strong showing by the 24-member team. Grenada's Annalisa Brown took silver, while Haiti's Aisha Wajid claimed bronze.

Another major highlight came from Guyana's 4x400m mixed relay quartet, Tishawn Easton, Tianna Springer, Akeela Dover

and Malachi Austin, who shattered the CARIFTA record with a blistering 3:20.79, eclipsing the previous mark set by Guyana in 2024.

Springer and Austin also struck individual gold in the Under-20 400m events, while Jermaine Shepherd earned silver in the Boys' Under-17 1500m and Javon Roberts secured bronze in the Boys' Under-20 1500m.

After three days of competition, Guyana finished fifth overall among 28 countries, capping a campaign defined by youthful talent, record-breaking performances and a growing presence on the regional athletics stage



The Seventh-day Adventist Caribbean Union Conference

Amid the energy and fellowship of thousands of young people gathered at Loo Creek, President Mohamed Irfaan Ali delivered a message that went beyond inspiration, calling on youth to shape their future through strong values, faith and

service. Addressing the Seventh-day Adventist Caribbean Union Conference's "The Greatness II Camporee", the president reminded campers that true greatness is not measured by power or

## YOUTH URGED TO BUILD CHARACTER, NOT POWER - AT ADVENTIST CAMPOREE

wealth, but by character and integrity.

"You are blessed with leadership, vision and compassion," he said, urging them to build on the foundation laid by their church and use the experience as a turning point in their lives.

For many of the young attendees, the camporee is a space for growth, reflection and purpose. President Ali encouraged them to see themselves as future leaders, drawing on biblical examples to illustrate his point.

"This camp will produce the Timothys

of tomorrow... the Josephs of integrity... the Davids who will defeat giants with courage... and the Esthers who will serve selflessly," he said, drawing applause from the crowd.

He challenged the traditional idea of an "empire", explaining that while history often celebrates dominance and wealth, such empires fall when they lose their moral direction. Instead, he urged youth to build lives rooted in truth, humility and compassion.

"It is not about ruling over people,



The Seventh-day Adventist Caribbean Union Conference

it is about building people up," he emphasised.

Reflecting on the growth of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Guyana, from a small congregation in 1887 to

more than 200 today, the president praised its role in education, youth development and community service.

"That is greatness," he said.

## OVER 3,000 YOUTH TAKE PART IN EASTER SWIMMING PROGRAMME

From Georgetown to Berbice, children are diving into more than just water this Easter, learning essential swimming skills that could save lives, thanks to the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport's nationwide "Teach Them Young" Swimming Programme.

Sessions kicked off simultaneously at the Imam Bacchus Pool in

Essequibo, Watooka Guest House Pool in Linden, Albion Estate Compound Pool in Berbice, and the newly refurbished Colgrain Pool in Georgetown. For the first time, Berbice is officially part of the initiative, hosting over 250 young participants. Overall, participation has surged from 1,530 children in 2025 to more than 3,000 this year.

Delivering feature remarks, Minister within the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport Steven Jacobs highlighted the importance of nurturing skills from an early age. He stressed that such programmes not only teach water safety but also prepare young athletes to represent Guyana in various sporting disciplines. The Minister also reaffirmed

the government's commitment to upgrading facilities nationwide to provide youth with safe, high-quality environments to learn and grow.

Beyond swimming, the programme promotes discipline, confidence, and healthy lifestyles, offering a structured environment for children to engage positively within their



Participants engaging in the 'Teach Them Young' Learn to Swim Programme

communities. By steering youth toward constructive activities, it contributes to national development through sport while fostering awareness of water safety.

## NEW SCHOOL IN PAKURI TO EASE OVERCROWDING, BOOST LEARNING

A long-standing challenge in St Cuthbert's Mission (Pakuri) is finally being addressed, as a new \$298.8 million primary school promises to ease overcrowding and improve learning conditions for local students.

Toshao Alvaro Simon described the situation, saying, "Overcrowding and ventilation were

major concerns. The heat inside the building made learning difficult, and it was clear we needed a new school."

The project is the result of collaborative efforts among the community, educators, the Parent Teachers Association, and government officials.



The site earmarked for the new St. Cuthbert's Mission Primary School

Following sustained advocacy, a suitable plot of land was approved by the Ministry of Education, and construction is now underway.

The new facility will feature expanded classrooms, improved ventilation, a dedicated science laboratory, and recreational spaces. Plans also include a

kitchen to support the national school feeding programme, with the school expected to accommodate up to 200 students, nearly double the current capacity.

"This school is not just a building; it is an investment in our children and the future of our village," Toshao Simon said, highlighting the broader significance of the project for Pakuri.

Residents of Region One are set to see significant improvements in healthcare access, as the government advances several medical infrastructure projects across the region.

The Region One Regional Democratic Council (RDC) has invited bids for the construction of a new health centre in Warapoka, valued at \$35.8 million. The facility will provide timely services to the riverine community,



The site earmarked for the new St. Cuthbert's Mission Primary School

## WARAPOKA AND SURROUNDING VILLAGES TO BENEFIT FROM \$72M HEALTHCARE INVESTMENT

ensuring residents can access quality care closer to home.

In addition, existing rehabilitation centres in Hotoquoi, Kwebanna, and Arakaka will be expanded under a \$18.3 million plan. Three new sub-cluster bonds are also set for construction at a similar cost.

These projects are part of the government's \$161.1 billion 2026 investment in healthcare, focusing on modernising facilities, enhancing digital health systems, expanding drug distribution, and strengthening patient-centred care across Guyana.

## TECHNICAL TRAINING OPENS DOORS FOR GUYANA'S YOUTH WORKFORCE



BIT graduates ready to meet Guyana's expanding demand for skilled labour

For Al Thomas Lall, a once-unemployed young man, the spark of opportunity came in the form of a welding torch. A recent graduate of the Board of Industrial Training (BIT), Lall now works as a welding fabricator at the Mahaica-Mahaicony-Abary project, a position made possible through a government-backed technical training programme.

**"The hands-on training was amazing and convinced me**

**that welding was my calling,"** Lall said, crediting the programme for providing a pathway to a good-paying job and igniting his passion.

Lall was among 165 graduates who received certificates at BIT's graduation ceremony in New Amsterdam, including 80 from Region Five and 85 from Region Six. Teresia De Silva, who completed the Electrical Installation programme, described her training as **"great"** and said she is now

actively pursuing her childhood dream of becoming an electrician.

Minister of Labour and Manpower Planning, Keoma Griffith, addressed the graduates, highlighting the transformative potential of technical education. **"We do not train just for training's sake... every programme is designed to give an opportunity so that persons can transform their lives, the lives of their families, and their communities,"** he said.

In addition, 613 other graduates from Regions Three and Four received certificates at a BIT ceremony held at the National Cultural Centre.

Seventeen-year-old Jazmaine Brant called her graduation **"a stepping stone"** toward a career and a secure future. Moments after receiving

her Certificate in Information Technology, Brant explained that the programme had also strengthened her preparation for CSEC exams and future studies at the University of Guyana.

For Mervin Mariano, who trained in refrigeration and air conditioning, the programme has unlocked new opportunities. **"There are a lot of opportunities... especially with the hotels that are being built. I'm just thankful that one day I will fall into a contract,"** he said. Mariano added that he never had such a chance when he was younger and praised the government for funding BIT.

Delivering the feature address, Senior Minister within the Office of the President with Responsibility

for Finance, Dr Ashni Singh, stressed that technical training is part of a deliberate national strategy to prepare Guyanese for a rapidly



BIT graduates ready to meet Guyana's expanding demand for skilled labour

expanding economy.

**"We are struggling to produce people with the right skills as quickly as they are needed,"** Dr Singh said, noting the strong demand for skilled workers across sectors like construction, mining, and hospitality. **"Every single heavy**

**equipment operator graduating here today will be snapped up in the shortest possible time."**

Over the past five years, BIT has trained more than 60,000 Guyanese, with over 77 percent gaining employment or starting

their own businesses. Budget 2026 has allocated \$2.5 billion to support technical and vocational education nationwide, ensuring equitable access for youth in hinterland and riverine communities and strengthening Guyana's workforce for the future.

## NEW SCHOOLS, MAJOR UPGRADES OF EXISTING ONES SOON FOR REGION ONE



Northwest Secondary School in Region One

The government is investing in new schools, Special Education Needs (SEN) facilities, and teachers' quarters across hinterland communities in Region One to ensure every child can succeed.

The Regional Democratic Council (RDC) is inviting bids for several projects, including the extension of Canal Bank Primary School and the construction of new

primary schools at Five Star, Big Creek, and Eye Lash, with a total investment of approximately \$114 million. SEN facilities are also set for Moruca and Port Kaituma, each valued at \$37.4 million, to ensure children with additional learning requirements have access to proper educational environments.

To support educators serving in remote communities, three new teachers' living quarters, each costing \$14.4 million, will be

built, providing comfort and security for those dedicated to teaching in



President Ali with students in Region One

the hinterland.

The 2026 Budget allocated \$24.3 billion to education, reflecting a

strategic push to expand access, improve quality, and create inclusive

learning opportunities nationwide. Since returning to office, the administration

has constructed 66 nursery schools, 34 primary schools, and 33 secondary schools, while upgrading dozens of existing facilities and 19 student dormitories.

With over 40 schools scheduled for completion this year, the government aims to ensure that students in hinterland and riverine communities can learn in modern, safe, and supportive environments, bridging gaps and fostering equitable education for all Guyanese children.

## BIT GETS SCAFFOLDING EQUIPMENT TO PREPARE SAFER CONSTRUCTION WORKFORCE

A new donation of scaffolding equipment is set to strengthen workplace safety and expand technical training opportunities for Guyanese workers, as the country's construction sector continues to grow.

The Board of Industrial Training (BIT) has received scaffolding tubes, ladders, and specialised tools through a joint contribution from SBM Offshore and Panthera Solutions Inc., aimed at improving how



BM Offshore and Panthera Solutions Inc. donated scaffolding equipment and accessories to BIT

workers are trained for high-risk environments.

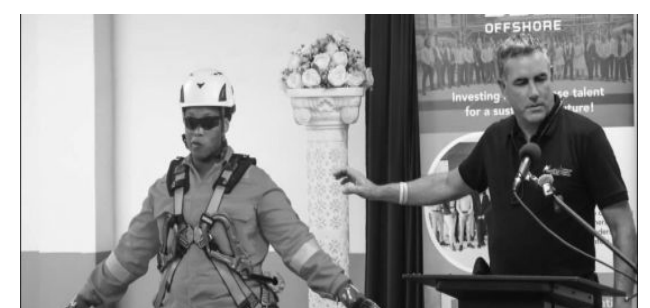
At the handing-over ceremony held at Unity, Mahaica, Minister of Labour and Manpower

Planning, Keoma Griffith, underscored the importance of safety in national development. **"We will not be able to enjoy our**

**development unless we put safety first,"** he said.

The equipment will first be used to train BIT lecturers in the proper techniques for erecting and inspecting scaffolding. Those instructors will then pass on the knowledge to trainees, creating a ripple effect across the construction industry.

With Guyana's rapid development, the demand for skilled labour continues to



BM Offshore and Panthera Solutions Inc. donated scaffolding equipment and accessories to BIT

rise. However, gaps in technical expertise remain. The new training focus, covering hazard identification, fall prevention, and safe practices at heights, aims

to bridge that divide.

The initiative highlights a growing partnership between

government and private sector, working together to equip Guyanese workers with the skills needed to build safely and confidently.

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# FIRST SON'S LEMONADE SALE GENERATES \$10M FOR ANIMAL RESCUE GROUPS



Zayd Ali's annual lemonade sale raises millions for animals

the animals because I love them," he said, drawing warm applause from those gathered.

First Lady Arya Ali explained that the initiative goes beyond fundraising, serving as a way to instill compassion and generosity at an early age. She noted that the event is "not just about tasting great lemonade but about giving back to animals who do not have a voice."

"Zayd is very passionate about animals, and this is one of the initiatives we have developed to teach him compassion,

A simple lemonade stand led by First Son Zayd Ali has once again turned into a major act of compassion, raising an impressive \$10 million to support animal welfare organisations across Guyana.

Held on the lawns of State House, the annual lemonade sale drew hundreds of patrons who turned out to support the cause while enjoying a lively, family-friendly atmosphere filled with activities for children. The proceeds from this year's event were distributed to ten animal shelters and welfare

groups working to care for abandoned and vulnerable animals.

During the presentation ceremony, Zayd shared the inspiration behind his efforts. "I want to help



Zayd Ali's annual lemonade sale raises millions for animals



Zayd Ali's annual lemonade sale raises millions for animals

kindness and the importance of giving back," she added. She also highlighted that the effort supports ongoing work to reduce the number of stray animals while encouraging responsible care nationwide.

President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali, members of Cabinet, and visiting Chair of the Export-Import Bank of the United States, John Jovanovic. Between 150 and 200 children from orphanages were also invited, reinforcing the inclusive spirit of the event.

Beneficiaries included Tails of Hope, Animal Kingdom Pet Care, Paws for Cause, Rosewood Foundation, Hope for Animals Inc.,

the Guyana Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, Ravena's Rescue, Furball and Friends Foundation Inc., The Guyana Foundation for Animal Rescue and Welfare and Pawsome Oasis.

Government ministers attending the event described the initiative as heartwarming, praising the young philanthropist's leadership and the First Family's continued advocacy for animal welfare.



Zayd Ali's annual lemonade sale raises millions for animals

## NEW SPORTING INITIATIVE CREATES OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHILDREN IN CARE



The sport programme empowering the children at Plum Park



The sport programme empowering the children at Plum Park

Laughter and excitement filled the grounds of the Plum Park Children's Home as a new series of sporting activities was introduced to give children in state care opportunities for growth, confidence-building, and improved well-being.

The initiative, led by the Ministry of Human Services and Social Security in collaboration with the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport, brings structured exposure to football, basketball, archery, badminton and other disciplines. The programme is designed to help children discover new interests while providing a positive

developmental value of athletics. He noted that sports teach young people how to handle competition, manage both wins and losses, and control emotions under pressure. According to the minister, participation also strengthens resilience and prepares the body and mind for life's challenges.

The Ministries, working alongside the National Sports Commission, will ensure the children are guided by trained and experienced coaches. Through consistent participation, the programme aims to nurture talent, build self-esteem, and inspire children to pursue their interests.



The sport programme empowering the children at Plum Park



The sport programme empowering the children at Plum Park



The sport programme empowering the children at Plum Park



The sport programme empowering the children at Plum Park



# Guyanese DIASPORA DIGEST



KEEPING THE DIASPORA INFORMED EDITION 116

## PRESIDENT ALI'S ROLLING TRIBUTE TO HISTORY

President Dr. Irfaan Ali brought a touch of nostalgia to the Kingston Seawall this Easter Monday, arriving in a burgundy Jaguar XJ6 (Series 1). The vintage car, part of his ongoing "antique arrivals" series alongside a Hillman and Morris Oxford, turns public appearances into living tributes to Guyana's automotive and cultural heritage.



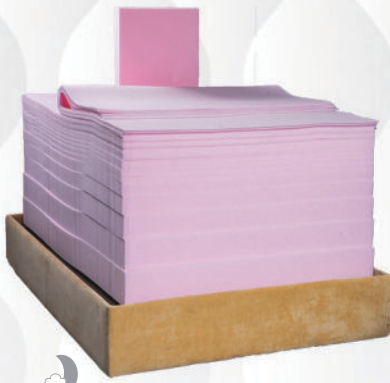
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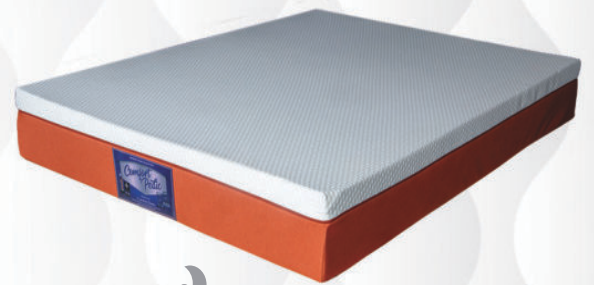
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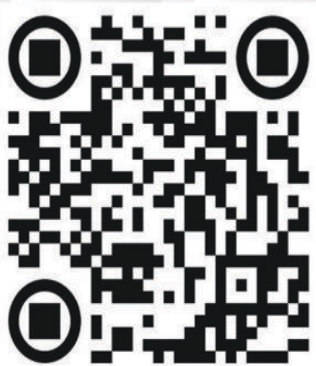
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# Sarwan, Ramdin, Simmons lead WI charge for over-40 World Cup

A formidable blend of experience and proven match-winners will carry West Indies' hopes at the upcoming IMC Over-40s Masters Cricket World Cup, with former internationals Ramnaresh Sarwan, Denesh Ramdin, and Lendl Simmons headlining a 29-man provisional squad.

The tournament is set for October 17-31 in Georgetown, where home conditions are expected to play a decisive role. The final squad of 16 to 18 players will be named by the Cricket West Indies Masters Association in the lead-up to the competition.

The provisional group reflects a deliberate strategy: combine international pedigree with players deeply familiar with regional conditions.

Alongside the headline trio, former West Indies representatives such as Devendra Bishoo, Dale Richards, and Narsingh Deonarine add further depth and experience.

Manager Daniel Sadeo emphasized that the squad was carefully curated with a clear competitive blueprint in mind, leveraging both familiarity with Guyana's surfaces and the tactical awareness of seasoned players.

If there is a defining theme to this West Indies unit, it is spin.

Led by Bishoo, the slow-bowling

arsenal features an array of options, including Neil McGarrell, Sunil Dhaniram, Antonnel Atwell, Rakesh Maharaj, and Deonarine. The inclusion of Imran Khan of Guyana and Imran Khan of Trinidad & Tobago further expands the team's tactical flexibility.

The intent is unmistakable: dominate on Guyana's traditionally low, turning pitches by deploying a relentless and varied spin attack capable of suffocating opposition batting lineups.

The batting unit mirrors the bowling attack in experience and reliability.

Sarwan, Sewnarine Chattergoon, Dhaniram, and Simmons form the backbone of a lineup designed to adapt to challenging surfaces. Behind them, Ramdin, bringing his dual role as wicketkeeper, and Rayad Emrit provide crucial balance, contributing with both bat and ball.

This blend ensures the team is equipped not only to set competitive totals but also to recover from pressure situations.

While spin is the focal point, the squad is not without seam options. Larry Babb, Rudy Hinds, and Trevon Garraway offer pace support, giving selectors the ability to tailor combinations based on match conditions.

Additional all-rounders and spin

resources provide further adaptability as the team narrows its provisional list to a final tournament squad.

The West Indies enter the tournament with unfinished business, having reached the final of last year's edition in Pakistan but falling just short of the title.

That experience, combined with home advantage, has fueled belief within the camp that this squad can go one step further.

Sadeo expressed strong confidence in both the composition and mindset of the group.

"We've selected experience with a plan. Guyana rewards discipline and spin; we have that in abundance. Fitness will be managed, but cricket IQ is paramount. This squad knows how to win on these tracks," he said.

The 29-man squad includes: Denesh Ramdin, Narsingh Deonarine, Rayad Emrit, Devendra Bishoo, Sewnarine Chattergoon, Hemnarine Chattergoon, Antonnel Atwell, Lawrence Farnum, Larry Babb, Devon Clements,



Ramnaresh Sarwan

Sunil Dhaniram, Lendl Simmons, Shazam Ramjohn, Reno Mittleholtzer, Dale Richards, Imran Khan (Guyana), Neil McGarrell, Ramnaresh Sarwan, Devi Maharaj, Asif Chan, Randy Thomas, Imran Khan (Trinidad & Tobago), Vic Mahabeer, Randy Ramanan, Ryan Nurse, Rakesh Maharaj, Jieunick Mingo, Rudy Hinds, Trevon Garraway.



## AgriConnect to prioritize national agenda

The Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture hosted a roundtable for its AgriConnect Initiative for Latin America and the Caribbean (LARC) at its headquarters in Washington, DC on Friday. The event brought together Ministers of Agriculture and other senior officials from across Latin America and the Caribbean.

During his presentation, Agriculture Minister, Hon. Zulfikar Mustapha, said Guyana is moving in a direction that focuses on building the right food ecosystem—one with strong small-scale farmers, improved market linkages, and better access to finance and digital tools.

"Guyana's agriculture sector is transitioning from traditional practices to a modern, climate-smart, and data-driven industry. Our initiatives are designed to reduce production costs and enhance household incomes, demonstrating our commitment to progress. AgriConnect's emphasis and research mirrors Guyana's national agenda. We are prioritizing modern drainage and irrigation systems, expanding farm-to-market roads, upgrading storage and cold chain systems, and building a digitally enabled extension service," he explained.



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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

THE GOVERNMENT OF THE CO-OPERATIVE REPUBLIC OF GUYANA

- APRIL 7, 9, 14, 16, 21, 23, 28, 30  
SOCA.FIT
- APRIL 19, 20, 21, 22, 23  
VISIT OF CHINESE ACROBATIC GROUP
- APRIL 17, 24 & MAY 1, 8  
CARNIVAL AVENUE
- MAY 7, 12, 14  
SOCA FIT
- MAY 8  
TASTE OF GUYANA
- MAY 2, 9, 16 & 23  
HERITAGE SITES TOUR
- MAY 3 - JUNE 7  
INDEPENDENCE VISUAL ARTS EXHIBITION  
\*except Sundays
- MAY 15, 16 & 17  
GUYANA FESTIVAL
- MAY 16  
ROUTE MARCH - GDF, GPF, GFS, GPS, SCOUTS
- MAY 16  
KING'S DUCK CURRY COMPETITION & CHUTNEY SONG CONCERT
- MAY 17  
STREET FOOD ON THE TERRACE - AIDEN HOTEL
- MAY 17  
BAND DISPLAY (GDF, GPF, BARBADOS MILITARY), AIRSHOW, MILITARY EXPO, HORSE/CANINE DISPLAY
- MAY 20  
TOUCHDOWN
- MAY 20  
PARATROOPING, HORSE/CANINE DISPLAY, BAND DISPLAY
- MAY 21  
EL DORADO STINGINGNETTLES
- MAY 22  
XTRA STINK X DUTTY JOUVERT
- MAY 23  
MAGNUM BADERATION
- MAY 24  
SOCA & WINE
- MAY 24  
JAMMERS ON THE WATER
- MAY 25  
INTER- FAITH SERVICE
- MAY 25  
INDEPENDENCE FLAG RAISING
- MAY 25  
KABISA KOOLOUT
- MAY 25  
NIGHT ON LAKE CAPOEY
- MAY 26  
GUYANA CARNIVAL INDEPENDENCE ROAD PARADE
- MAY 27  
PAN & SOCA
- MAY 28  
STREET FOOD ON THE TERRACE - AC MARRIOTT
- MAY 30  
GUYANA ELECTRONIC MUSIC FESTIVAL
- MAY 31  
PLAYLAND - THE CARNIVAL ALL CHILDREN SHOW
- MAY 31  
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