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Guyana Budget Day is January 26

Guyana's Senior Minister in the Office of the President with Responsibility for Finance, The Honourable Dr. Ashni Singh, has announced that Budget 2026 will be presented to the National Assembly on Monday January 26, 2026.

The finance minister (pictured above) emphasized that Budget 2026, the first national budget since the People's Progressive Party/Civic's (PPP/C) re-election to Office, will serve as the operational blueprint for the PPP/C's manifesto and is set to translate the comprehensive promises made during the 2025 election campaign into tangible benefits. Minister Singh affirmed that the budget is "firmly grounded in the comprehensive and inspiring manifesto that we would have taken to the people of Guyana in the run-up to the 2025 elections."

President Ali, during his recent address to the nation in December 2025, explicitly identified measures to be implemented during the current term of office, including but not limited to: economic diversification and job creation by offering tax-free incentives for high-quality jobs in special development zones; housing and home ownership support to provide direct assistance to households to help them build or upgrade their homes; direct financial support for citizens through the universal \$100,000 cash grant, increases in pensions and public assistance; support for childcare and elderly care through tax relief measures for companies engaged in childcare and elderly care; financial support to institutions involved in animal care and welfare...and many more.

Mottley calls early election for Feb.11

Barbadians will go to the polls on Wednesday, February 11, 2026, to elect a new government, Prime Minister Mia Amor Mottley announced, formally setting the stage for a general election months ahead of the constitutional deadline.

The announcement was made at a Barbados Labour Party (BLP) nomination meeting at Westbury Primary School on Saturday, where attorney-at-law Michael Lashley, KC, was confirmed as the party's candidate for the City. With his nomination, the ruling BLP has now completed its slate of candidates for all 30 seats in the House of Assembly.

Parliament will be dissolved to trigger the election campaign, with Nomination Day scheduled for January 27. Parliament will be dissolved on January 19.

The decision brings forward an election that was not constitutionally due until 2027 and follows months of speculation after Mottley hinted late last year that an early poll was likely. At the time, she urged BLP supporters to prepare for political work in 2026, signalling that the party would not wait until the final year of its mandate.

"Whilst there is work to be done, there is work for the Barbados Labour Party and its soldiers to do, and we are all turning up for work in 2026," Mottley said in December. "We are all turning up for work in 2026, because if something can be done, it is this Barbados Labour Party that will do it, always, always, always."

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Canada, Qatar sign trade pact

By Milan Maharaj

LJI REPORTER

Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney has announced a new partnership between Canada and Qatar on January 18 during a visit to Doha. The partnership focuses on expanding trade, investment and cooperation across many economic and security related sectors.

The government of Canada announced in a news release that the partnership is designed to expand economic cooperation between the two countries. The agreement outlines plans to collaborate in areas like artificial intelligence, advanced manufacturing, defence technologies, aerospace, and cleaner energy. Government officials said the partnership is part of a broader plan to strengthen ties between Canada and several countries in the Middle East.

As part of the new partnership, Canada and Qatar agreed to move forward with negotiations on a Foreign Investment Promotion and Protection agreement, with the goal of completing the talks by summer of 2026. The two governments are also planning to discuss a double taxation agreement to solve tax-related issues for businesses that operate in both countries. In

addition, a joint commission will be created to support commercial, economic, and technical cooperation between the countries.

Included in the announcement are measures that relate to defence and security. Canada plans to establish a Defence Attaché office in Doha which will support security and military collaboration. Both countries said they would share security practices and explore the expansion of air travel connections between Canada and Qatar.

Officials have also pointed out cultural cooperation between the two countries. Qatar has designated 2026 as its "Year of Culture" with Canada, an initiative that is aimed at promoting cultural exchange and interpersonal connections through events and programs throughout this year.

In a statement at the announcement, Carney said the partnership reflects Canada's interest in expanding international economic relationships, and working with Qatar on shared priorities, including trade, security, and investment. Canada and Qatar have shared diplomatic relations since 1973, with cooperation in areas including education, energy, and aviation, according to figures from the government. This connection is set to expand throughout 2026 and beyond.

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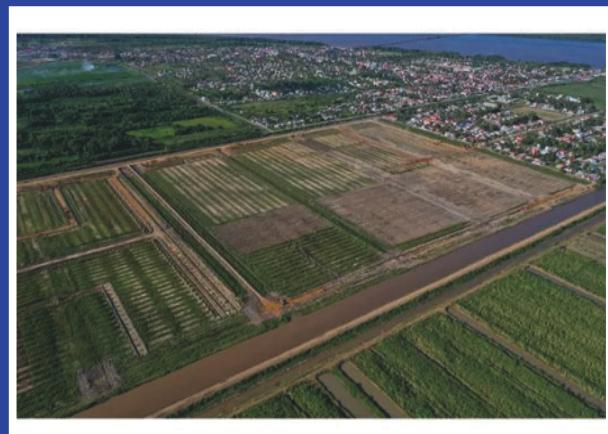


Guyanese DIASPORA DIGEST

KEEPING THE DIASPORA INFORMED EDITION 110

NEW 'YAS SCHOOL OF INSPIRATION' OPENS DOORS TO INCLUSIVE EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

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THOUSANDS OF FAMILIES TO BENEFIT AS PRESIDENT ALI UNVEILS \$46B REGION FIVE PLAN

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THOUSANDS OF FAMILIES TO BENEFIT AS PRESIDENT ALI UNVEILS \$46B REGION FIVE PLAN



President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali delivers the feature address at the land title distribution exercise in Region Five

Residents of Region Five (Mahaica-Berbice) are set to benefit from billions of dollars in government investment aimed at expanding agriculture, improving drainage and irrigation, and accelerating land ownership.

President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali on Friday, January 9, 2026, announced that contracts worth approximately \$10 billion have already been awarded to construct Hope-like canals, with a total investment expected to reach \$20 billion.

These works will improve drainage across 186,000 acres of agricultural land from Mahaica to Abary, while opening access to an additional 55,000 acres of new farmland for small farmers.

Significant resources are also being directed toward housing

development in the region. Over the next five years, more than \$46 billion will be invested in housing through public and private funding.

The government plans to support the development of 1,500 undeveloped house lots by bringing together homeowners, banks, and the state to facilitate financing and construction, potentially generating \$12 billion in moderate-income housing investment.

At the same time, the administration aims to eliminate a backlog of 2,300 housing applications by developing 2,000 acres of land in Blairmont and Experiment into serviced house lots.

Overall, more than \$40 billion will be spent to fast-track home ownership through the construction of low and moderate-income homes, housing for young professionals, and investments by upper-income earners.

The head of state said these initiatives represent development activity seven times greater than that achieved between 2020 and 2025. Supporting



Region Five Residents

infrastructure is also being upgraded, \$30 billion invested in community roads, costing over \$540 million and more than living conditions and economic opportunities across Region Five.



Lands to be developed for housing in Region Five

GUYANA SECURE AND PREPARED - PM PHILLIPS REASSURES CITIZENS FOLLOWING MADURO'S CAPTURE



On Saturday, January 3, 2026, Prime Minister Brigadier (Ret'd) Mark Phillips assured residents of Guyana's border communities that the country remains secure and on high alert following overnight US military operations in Venezuela.

As part of the government's response, he led a high-level security engagement with the Guyana Defence Force and Guyana Police Force in Region One, emphasising that preventing any spillover of instability into Guyana is the government's top priority.

He said the joint services are fully deployed across the borders, hinterland and coastline and are prepared to respond to any eventuality.

The prime minister said the government is taking a whole-of-government and joint services approach to national security, with security ranks briefed and instructed to maintain heightened vigilance, intelligence sharing and joint

operations.

He reassured residents of Mabaruma and surrounding communities that the PPP/C Government, under President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali, is closely monitoring developments and engaging regional and international partners, while urging citizens to remain calm, vigilant and report any unusual activity.



PRESIDENT ALI'S VISION PUTS PEOPLE AT THE CENTRE OF GUYANA'S RAPID TRANSFORMATION - MIN SINGH



On Wednesday, December 31, 2025, Senior Minister in the Office of the President with responsibility for Finance, Dr Ashni Singh, stated that the 2026 National Budget will be firmly rooted in President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali's people-centred vision for national development, building on Guyana's rapid economic transformation.

Speaking on a televised programme on the National Communications Network (NCN), he described the President's recent address to the nation as inspiring and reassuring, emphasising that citizens remain at the centre of all economic planning and decision-making.

Dr Singh noted that Guyana has recorded

strong economic growth since 2021, with GDP growth estimated at about 7.5 per cent this year and the non-oil economy expanding by an average of 11 per cent, leading to increased employment, higher incomes and improved access to services.

He stressed that economic growth is a means to improving people's lives,

highlighting major investments in human capital through free education at the University of Guyana, the removal of tuition fees at technical institutes, the GOAL scholarship programme and expanded skills training.

Dr Singh also pointed to housing and infrastructure development, including the distribution of over 50,000 house lots and significant investments in roads, bridges, hospitals, schools and energy under the Public Sector Investment Programme.

Looking ahead, he said preparations for Budget 2026 are well advanced and guided by the government's manifesto and public consultations, ensuring future budgets continue to reflect the priorities of the Guyanese people.



US\$35M MACKENZIE-WISMAR BRIDGE TO BECOME FULLY OPERATIONAL BY JUNE- MIN EDGHILL



The US\$35 million Mackenzie/Wismar Bridge in Region Ten is 93.2 per cent complete and on track to be fully operational by June, once the approach roads are finished.

On Thursday, January 8, 2026, Minister of Public Works Bishop Juan Edghill confirmed this during a site inspection, noting that construction will proceed around the clock to meet the deadline while maintaining quality and safety standards.

When completed, the toll-free bridge is expected to enhance connectivity, improve safety, and deliver long-term economic and social benefits to Linden and surrounding communities.

The 220-metre bridge, being built

\$161M SOESDYKE-LINDEN HIGHWAY UPGRADE REACHES HALFWAY MARK



Minister of Public Works Bishop Juan Edghill engages contractors and engineers on the Soesdyke-Linden Highway project



A section of the \$161M Soesdyke-Linden Highway being upgraded



Linden-Soesdyke highway

Construction on the US\$161 million Soesdyke-Linden Highway is now about 50 per cent complete, marking the halfway point of the landmark upgrade aimed at transforming the highway into a modern transport hub. The project, a joint venture between Trinidad and Tobago-based Namalco Construction Services and local firm GuyAmerica Construction Inc, includes road widening, bridge work, walkways, and street lighting, with reconstruction and rehabilitation progressing across various sections.

Minister of Public Works Bishop Juan Edghill urged contractors to meet the September 4 deadline, ahead of Guyana's 60th Independence anniversary, and emphasised careful planning to ensure safety and durability.

The project, a joint venture between Trinidad and Tobago-based Namalco Construction Services and local firm GuyAmerica Construction Inc, includes road widening, bridge work, walkways, and street lighting, with reconstruction and rehabilitation progressing across various sections. The project, a joint venture between Trinidad and Tobago-based Namalco Construction Services and local firm GuyAmerica Construction Inc, includes road widening, bridge work, walkways, and street lighting, with reconstruction and rehabilitation progressing across various sections.

and reconstruction at 60 per cent.

Street lighting materials are expected by the end of April, improving nighttime safety for road users. When finished, the upgraded highway will increase traffic capacity, enhance safety, and stimulate economic growth, reinforcing its role as a vital national corridor and key contributor to tourism and transport development.

\$920M AISHALTON AIRFIELD COMMISSIONED, MODERN TERMINAL TO FOLLOW



President Irfaan Ali and the residents cutting the ribbon for the Aishalton airstrip

The Aishalton airfield in Region Nine has been officially commissioned following a \$920.399 million rehabilitation, delivering a new 2,500-foot runway that significantly improves safety, reliability and connectivity for residents. Once a laterite strip prone to flooding and unsafe landings, the upgraded facility now allows more dependable air access for medical care, supplies and economic activity, eliminating long journeys to Lethem for flights.

On Friday, January 9, 2026, President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali delivered the feature address to the gathering. He said the investment reflects a people-centred approach to

development, ensuring geography does not limit opportunity.

The project, executed by the Ministry of Public Works with strong community involvement, employed at least 60 residents and was completed between October and December

2025. The president announced plans for

a \$50 million modern terminal building to support tourism and public services, highlighted improved market access with the first shipment of mangoes leaving Aishalton, and

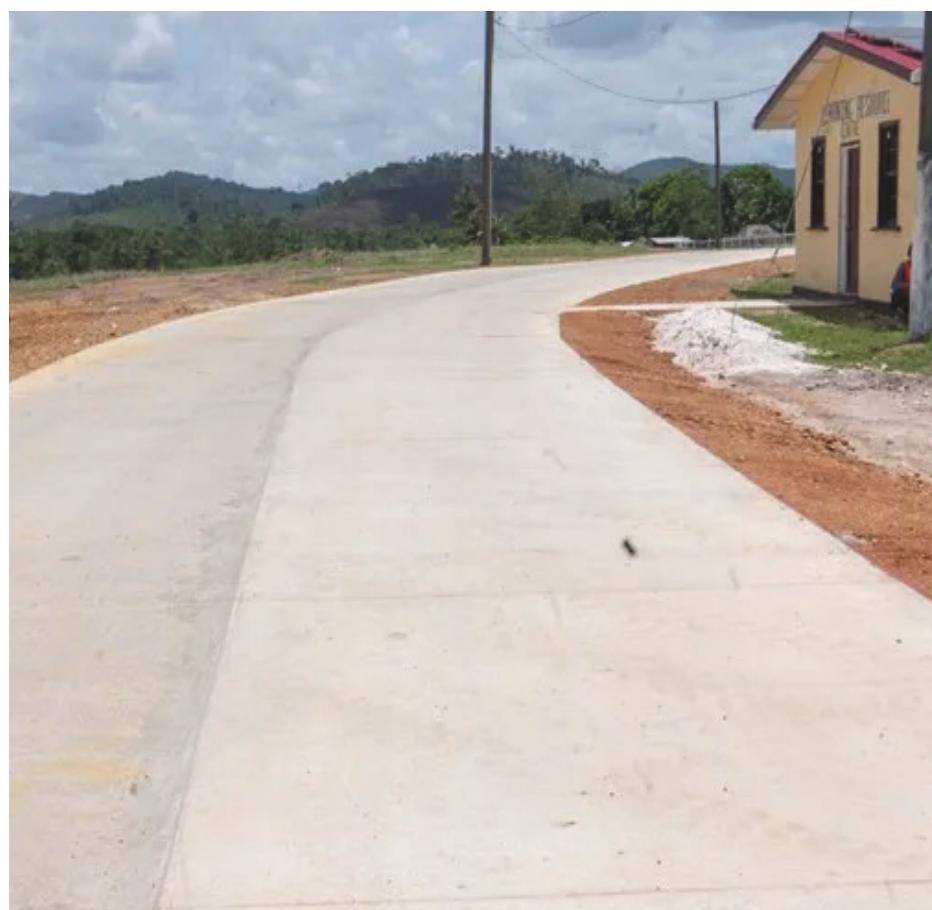
confirmed reduced airfares by Jags Aviation from February 1.

He also reaffirmed plans for additional hinterland airstrips and a new airport in Lethem as part of a broader push for inclusive, nationwide development.



\$920M Aishalton airfield

GOV'T TO LINK HINTERLAND REGIONS TO BOOST CONNECTIVITY, IMPROVE COST OF LIVING



Minister of Public Works Bishop Juan Edghill on Tuesday, January 6, 2026, outlined the government's plan to improve connectivity in hinterland regions, focusing on infrastructure projects that will enhance access

to services and reduce the high cost of living. Key projects include the construction and upgrading of the Karasabai airstrip, the building of 29 bridges between Karasabai and Monkey Mountain, and the extension of roads to

Paramakatoi, which will allow for more efficient transport of goods and lower prices for necessities. The minister noted that similar projects between Linden and Lethem have already demonstrated the

economic benefits of improved roads and bridges. The government is also expanding roads to accommodate larger vehicles, reducing travel time, vehicle wear, and transport costs.

Beyond Regions

Eight and Nine, road works are underway emphasised that these in connection with the investments form part of a long-term strategy to promote regional support from Suriname, development, lower living costs, and boost Dorado to Orealla and economic activity across planned links to Siparuta Guyana and Kwakwani.

PRESIDENT ALI LINKS INVESTMENT IN NEW PARAMAKATOI AIRSTRIP TO AFFORDABLE TRAVEL, STRONGER LOCAL ECONOMY



A section of the Paramakatoi airstrip

President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali on Monday, January 5, 2026, called on local airline operators to reduce airfares to Region Eight following the commissioning of

million.

The 2,500-foot runway is expected to improve safety, reliability and operating conditions, and the president said airlines

can no longer justify

high fares based on poor infrastructure. He warned that the president said airlines

can no longer justify

President Ali said improved connectivity will stimulate economic activity in agriculture and tourism, announcing plans for the Ministry of Agriculture to

passed on to passengers.

commercialise high-value crops in Paramakatoi and Kato, with a focus on youth and women. He also highlighted the life-saving importance of the airstrip for medical evacuations.

Minister of Public Works Bishop Juan Edghill noted that the project has created jobs for residents and forms part of a wider \$1.4 billion investment in Paramakatoi's infrastructure.

Minister of Public Utilities and Aviation Deodat Indar also announced plans to upgrade several other hinterland aerodromes. The project is part of a broader government strategy that has seen about \$40 billion invested in Region Eight over the past five years to improve livelihoods and support sustainable development.

PRESIDENT ALI URGES CHEAPER AIRFARES, BK GROUP AND RORAIMA AIRWAYS DELIVER - JAGS AVIATION SLASHES HINTERLAND AIRFARES TO PASS SAVINGS TO PASSENGERS

President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali's call for more affordable hinterland air travel is gaining traction, with Jags Aviation announcing fare reductions to Paramakatoi in Region Eight and Aishalton in Region Nine from February 1, 2026.

On Thursday, January 8, 2026, the airline, part of the BK Group of Companies, said the move follows the commissioning of the upgraded Paramakatoi airstrip and the president's challenge to operators to pass on savings from improved infrastructure to passengers.

President Ali reaffirmed that the government will closely monitor airlines to ensure that reduced operating and maintenance costs translate into lower fares for residents who rely on air transport.

Jags Aviation Executive Chairman Brian Tiwari described the fare reduction as long overdue and credited the president's

leadership and "One Guyana" vision for restoring confidence in the business community.

On Friday, January 9, 2026, Roraima Airways also announced a seven per cent reduction in airfare to all rehabilitated hinterland airstrips, responding to President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali's call for lower travel costs to interior communities.

The fare cut takes effect immediately and applies to upgraded airfields across Regions One, Seven, Eight and Nine.

The airline said the improved condition of airstrips has reduced operating costs, allowing

savings to be passed directly to passengers. Roraima also confirmed that the same reduction will automatically apply to any newly rehabilitated or constructed hinterland airstrips as they come into service, ensuring consistent nationwide pricing.



Residents of the opening of the Paramakatoi Airstrip



BK Group and Roraima Airways deliver

PARAMAKATOI RESIDENTS WELCOME A SIGNIFICANTLY IMPROVED AIRSTRIP

Hundreds of excited residents from Paramakatoi and surrounding communities gathered on Monday to mark a historic milestone in Region Eight – the commissioning of a state-of-the-art concrete airstrip.

The airstrip is expected to spur a new wave of development in agriculture, tourism, education and access to health for the Amerindian village, which is located in the Pakaraima Mountains.

The Department of Public Information (DPI) interacted with several residents from the village, including Christopher Chung. He recalled that the

community previously relied on a much smaller airstrip, which made reliable air travel difficult for residents and visitors.

One of the most significant benefits of the upgraded airstrip, Chung said, is improved access for medical evacuations. The new facility will

allow residents to be transported out of the community more quickly. "We don't have lights to help shine the tourism impact, noting that Region Eight has much to offer, including in agriculture.

"Our products will be transported...and Paramakatoi has a lot of produce," he told the DPI. Currently, the village is producing tomatoes in bulk to be processed into ketchup.

Vickiola Aaron, a teacher at Paramakatoi Primary School, also highlighted the project's benefits for health services. She added that the new airstrip could help unlock the region's untapped tourism potential, while the business community stands to gain significantly from the improved infrastructure.

He told residents that travellers and tourists are seeking authentic cultural experiences, which Paramakatoi is well-positioned to offer.



Christopher Chung - life long resident of Paramakatoi

GOV'T PLANS NEW TRANSPORT LINKS TO SUPPORT PALMYRA DEVELOPMENT

The government announced plans to advance and develop several major transport routes, which enhance access to Palmyra in Region Six, positioning the area as a key hub for large-scale national development.

Minister of Public Works Bishop Juan Edghill said Palmyra is already undergoing significant transformation, with projects such as modern stadiums, women's development facilities and a planned deep-

water harbour that will drive unprecedented connectivity and economic activity.

To support this transformation, a new high-span Berbice River Bridge, similar in design to the Bharrat Jagdeo Demerara River Bridge,

is being constructed to ensure uninterrupted marine and vehicular traffic.

Additional infrastructure plans include a new municipal airport at Canje near New Amsterdam, future air facilities in Lethem,

and the integration of the deep-water harbour with the Linden to Lethem Road to facilitate large-scale cargo movement and regional trade. Minister Edghill said construction has begun on the first phase of the Linden to Lethem Road,

with further phases under negotiation and consideration, alongside plans for a Kurupakari River bridge within the government's current term.



Ongoing construction of the modern Palmyra stadium

MAINSTAY ACCESS ROAD PROJECT ENTERS FINAL PHASE



A bird's-eye view of Lake Mainstay Resort

Construction of the stretch expected to be \$187 million Mainstay completed shortly. The project includes access road on the Essequibo Coast in reinforced concrete curbs, additional Region Two has entered its final phase, with pavement, a three-lane road markings on the upgraded one-kilometre

and new signage, and is expected to enhance tourism, particularly access to the Lake Mainstay Resort.

The upgraded road will improve connectivity for more

than 2,500 residents of \$139 million to replace two timber bridges with concrete structures and is carrying out major access to the Mainstay road rehabilitation in Airstrip and improving Lima Sands at a cost of emergency response \$438.7 million.

The works have created jobs for local government has invested residents and form part of

the People's Progressive Party Civic's (PPP/C) Administration's wider effort to upgrade rural transportation infrastructure and address long-standing road deterioration.



Upgraded Mainstay access road in Region Two

PALMYRA STADIUM ADVANCING, SET TO TRANSFORM SPORT, ECONOMIC ACTIVITY IN REGION SIX

The Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport reported significant progress on the international stadium at Palmyra in East

Berbice Corentyne, with structural steel frames installed, high-mast floodlights in place, and the field layout defined.

The stadium,

designed to host major sporting, cultural, and commercial events, will feature a canopy roof for spectator comfort, improved parking, and

better access to support traffic flow.

When completed, the state-of-the-art facility is expected to transform the experience for

athletes and spectators, attract regional and international events, and generate substantial benefits for tourism, hospitality, and the

broader development of Region Six, positioning Palmyra as a new hub for national and regional engagement.



Palmyra stadium advancing

GOV'T PUSHES BIGGER ROLE FOR AGRICULTURE IN JOBS, INCOMES AND FOOD SECURITY



High-value crops being sold in Guyana's market

Farmers and rural communities are set to benefit from expanded agricultural investment as the government moves to implement its 2025–2030 manifesto through Budget 2026.

The plan builds on progress made since 2020 and focuses on modernising agriculture, improving resilience, and putting people at the centre of production and food security.

Key priorities include opening more than 100,000 acres of new agricultural land, particularly in Regions Two, Five, Six and hinterland areas, alongside investments in drainage, access and farm-to-market infrastructure.

Budget 2026 is also expected to expand direct support for farmers and fisherfolk through inputs, technical assistance and climate-resilient systems, while promoting agro-processing and value-added production to increase incomes.

By strengthening value chains, reducing production costs and supporting rural livelihoods, the government aims to boost productivity, stabilise food prices and reinforce agriculture's

role in national development, translating manifesto commitments into tangible benefits for farmers and consumers.



A farmer taking care of his crops

PRESIDENT ALI ANNOUNCES PLAN TO COMMERCIALISE HIGH-VALUE CROPS IN PARAMAKATOI

The Ministry of Agriculture is set to launch a plan to commercialise high-value crops in Paramakatoi and Kato, Region Eight, with specialists beginning work within three months.

On Monday, January 5, 2026, President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali announced that the initiative will focus on engaging young people and women, promoting the cultivation of crops like carrots, onions, and potatoes, while leveraging government investments in improved connectivity and the newly commissioned \$800 million Paramakatoi Airstrip to transport goods efficiently to markets.

The project will also



President Ali addressing residents in Paramakatoi

support agro-processing ventures in both communities, backed by the Guyana Development Bank, which will offer zero-collateral loans of up to \$10 million for SMEs and receive an initial US\$200 million injection from the government.

With technologies such as solar freezers and containerised cold storage, the initiative aims to extend shelf life, reduce transport costs, and add value to agricultural products, building on years of government investment in tools, resources, and technical support to make hinterland agriculture sustainable.

LETHEM, TOKA FARMERS EARN DIRECT INCOME FROM FIRST MANGO SHIPMENT



Farmers in Region Nine (Upper Takutu-Upper Essequibo) have begun earning income from their harvest after selling more than 2,000 pounds of mangoes to a local agro-processor in January 2026.

The shipment, totalling 2,070 pounds and sourced from

farmers in Lethem and Toka villages, marks the first under a new government-led initiative aimed at strengthening food security while creating sustainable income opportunities for hinterland farmers, in keeping with a commitment made by President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali.

On Friday, January 2, 2026, Regional Chairwoman Vania Albert told the Department of Public Information DPI that plans are already in place to expand production, coordinate additional

shipments and include more villages so that a greater number of families can benefit.

She noted that the initiative directly addresses long-standing challenges faced by hinterland farmers, where produce often goes to waste due to limited market access.

President Ali has assured that, through the Ministry of Agriculture, the government will continue helping farmers secure markets, positioning Region Nine for further agricultural growth and development.



Region Nine's Regional Chairwoman, Vania Albert

NAREI PARTNERS WITH FARMER TO CULTIVATE ONIONS IN LETHEM

The National Agricultural Research and Extension Institute (NAREI) has partnered with local farmer Christopher Moses to cultivate five acres of onions in Lethem, marking another step in efforts to expand domestic crop production. Early estimates indicate that the five-acre onion plot in Lethem, marking another step in efforts to expand domestic crop production. Early estimates indicate

President Dr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali recently announced that the government, through the Ministry of Agriculture, is projected to yield approximately 250,000 pounds of onions, with harvesting expected

farmers in Region Nine and Region Eight to boost agricultural output in 2026. He noted that the two regions are expected to significantly increase production across both traditional and non-traditional crops.

around mid-April. This projection exceeds initial expectations for onion production from the two regions for the year, underscoring the growing potential of hinterland agriculture.

The initiative aligns with the government's broader strategy to strengthen food security, reduce imports, and create new income opportunities for farmers across Guyana's hinterland communities.



BARTICA WORKERS, FAMILIES TO BENEFIT FROM MAJOR LOCAL QUARRY INVESTMENT



Some of the machinery that was handed over

Bartica and expand operations at communities across the BK Quarry, creating more jobs for residents set to benefit from and strengthening increased employment linked and economic activity to quarrying, following a major local investment by the BK Group of Companies.

The company's acquisition of 19 Caterpillar excavators from MACORP will

signals confidence in Guyana and its people, translating directly into income stability and long-term employment for families.

He noted that quarry production has grown from 650,000 tonnes in 2020 to nearly 5.5 million tonnes now, reflecting not just higher output but



improved opportunities have been placed in the development agenda. For households and the government's leadership to trust local businesses and people-centred

PARAMAKATOI RESIDENTS TO BECOME OWNERS OF \$400M QUARRY IN LANDMARK EMPOWERMENT PROJECT



President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali

President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali on Monday, January 5, 2026, announced a major community empowerment initiative for Paramakatoi and surrounding villages in Region Eight, centred on a \$400 million quarry investment linked to the recent \$799 million expansion of the Paramakatoi airstrip. Under the arrangement, the contractor will jointly manage the quarry with the community for five years, while training residents in its operations, after which

full ownership will be transferred to the people.

The president said the model represents a shift from traditional short-term contracting toward sustainable, community-owned development.

He explained that the initiative reflects a long-term partnership between government, the private sector and local communities, aimed at building skills and lasting economic opportunity.

President Ali also highlighted broader investments in human capital, noting that 1,500 residents have been employed in road construction and 2,000 people from rural areas trained in specialised

construction. The policy, he said, is designed to ensure communities play a direct role in hinterland projects, gaining skills, jobs and a stake in national development.



GOVT CONTINUES BUILDING ON MASSIVE HOUSING RECORD ALREADY SET



President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali and Minister within the Ministry Housing Vanessa Benn with a Greenwich Park resident

The People's Progressive Party/Civic's (PPP/C) Government is advancing housing priorities outlined in its 2025-2030 manifesto, aiming to support the construction of 40,000 new homes over five years, which translates to about 8,000 homes annually.

This builds on strong

performance during the previous term, when more than 53,000 house lots were allocated nationwide, reviving dormant schemes and restoring confidence in the housing programme.

Budget 2026 is expected to drive continued nationwide housing development.

Key focus areas include expanding serviced land with proper infrastructure, speeding up access to house lots and titles, and strengthening affordable housing options for low, and middle-income families through subsidies and core housing programmes.

The manifesto also emphasises building

safer, more liveable communities with lighting, security, and recreational facilities, alongside continued land titling to enhance the government's financial security. Recent commitment to turning title distributions, such as those in Cotton Tree Village, underscore tangible benefits for Guyanese families.



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2/\$5.00	2.99 ea	5.99 ea	2/\$10.00	6.59 ea	

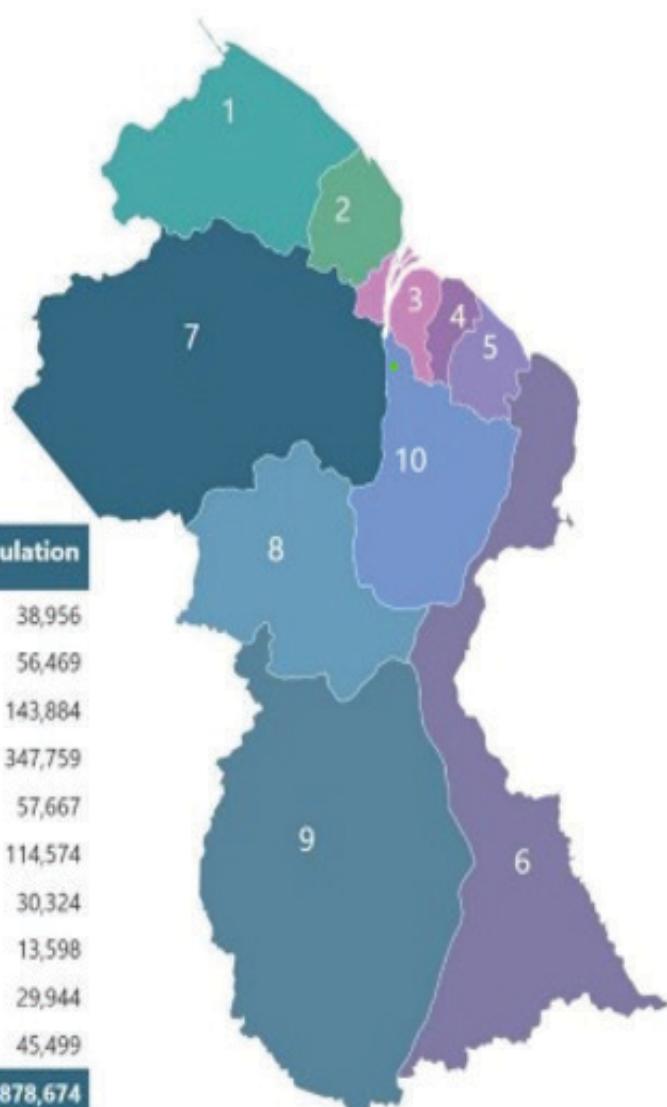
SEAFOOD

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Fresh Mullet 新鮮烏頭魚 Reg:\$3.99	Frozen Fresh Pompano 冰鮮黃立鯧 Reg:\$5.99	Frozen Fresh Head-On White Shrimp 冰鮮頭南美蝦 Reg:\$5.99
2.99 lb	4.99 lb	4.99 lb

CENSUS HIGHLIGHTS GUYANA'S TRAJECTORY OF EXPANDING HOUSING

Figure 1.3: Population Distribution Map

Region	Population
Region 1 - Barima-Waini	38,956
Region 2 - Pomeroon-Supenaam	56,469
Region 3 - Essequibo Islands-West Demerara	143,884
Region 4 - Demerara-Mahaica	347,759
Region 5 - Mahaica Berbice	57,667
Region 6 - East Berbice-Corentyne	114,574
Region 7 - Cuyuni-Mazaruni	30,324
Region 8 - Potaro-Siparuni	13,598
Region 9 - Upper Takutu-Upper Essequibo	29,944
Region 10 - Upper Demerara-Berbice	45,499
Guyana	878,674



The preliminary results of Guyana's 2022 National Population and Housing Census were officially released on Monday 12th January at the Arthur Chung Conference Centre, marking a major milestone in the country's statistical and development planning process.

President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali received the first copy of the report from officials of the Bureau of Statistics before its public presentation.

The census, the most comprehensive data-gathering exercise conducted in the country, offers key insights into Guyana's demographic profile, housing trends, and social development patterns.

It provides the foundation for evidence-based policymaking, guiding national planning, resource allocation, and investment decisions in both the public and private sectors.

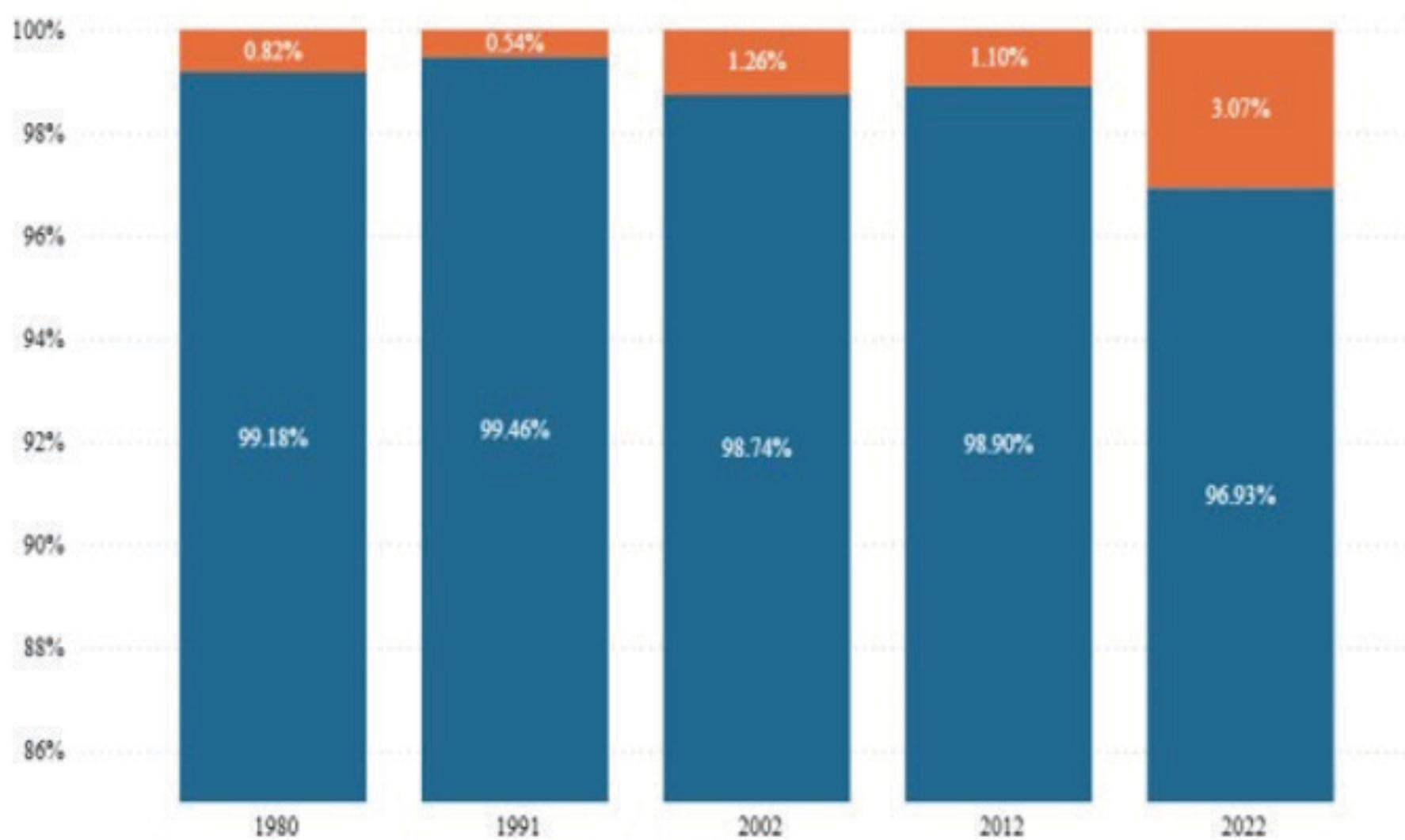
Guyana's population was recorded at **878,674** as of Census Day – September 15, 2022 – representing a **17.6 per cent increase** from the **746,955** registered in 2012.

The Bureau of Statistics projects continued growth, estimating the population at around **956,044** by the end of 2024 – the highest level in modern history, reversing decades of population decline.

According to the Bureau, all ten administrative regions recorded population growth, with Region Four (Demerara-Mahaica) remaining the most populous at 347,759 persons. Region Three (Essequibo Islands-West Demerara) emerged as the second most populous region for the first time, followed by Region Six (East Berbice-Corentyne).

The data also reveal a demographic shift by gender, with males now representing 50.18 per cent of the population compared to 49.8 per cent females, reversing a previous trend in which females slightly outnumbered males.

Additionally, the proportion of foreign-born residents rose to 3.07 per cent, compared to **1.10 per cent** in 2012, reflecting increased migration into Guyana amid expanding economic opportunities.



FORMATION - RISING POPULATION, NEWED CONFIDENCE

HOUSING AND LIVING CONDITIONS

The census recorded **311,742** buildings across the country in 2022, up from **219,509** in 2012, an increase of **42 per cent over the ten years**. Of these, approximately **80.99 per cent** were occupied, while **4.47 per cent** were still under construction.

At the household level, the findings show **271,946 households**, up by almost 3 per cent since 2012. The average household size declined from **3.65** to **3.23** persons, continuing a steady shift toward smaller household units.

Officials noted this trend reflects the government's policy focus on widening homeownership, community expansion, and affordable housing access through major national housing and infrastructure programmes.

These housing statistics will serve as a key planning tool for utilities expansion, land use management, and the equitable distribution of community services nationwide. They also highlight the need for sustained investment in water, electricity, sanitation, and transportation systems to match the pace of population and housing growth.



Senior Minister in the Office of the President with Responsibility for Finance, Dr Ashni Singh, with officials at the release of the 2022 National Population and Housing Census on Monday



POLICY AND DEVELOPMENT SIGNIFICANCE



Senior Minister in the Office of the President with Responsibility for Finance, Dr Ashni Singh, said the release of the preliminary data represents an important milestone in the census process and reaffirms the government's commitment to producing high-quality, credible official statistics.

He noted that the data will play a vital role in shaping future policy across sectors such as infrastructure, social services, and investment planning.

"The data generated from this census will form an extremely valuable

tool for policymaking, particularly in guiding future infrastructure projects, social services, and national development planning," Dr Singh said, while emphasising that accuracy, transparency, and public confidence remain central to the process.

Dr Singh also commended the Bureau of Statistics team for their professionalism and dedication, acknowledging the thousands of enumerators and technical officers who contributed to the census exercise. The

preliminary findings, he said, represent the first stage of data dissemination, with detailed analytical reports to follow later this year.

The Bureau underscored that census-based information is fundamental to effective governance and long-term planning, informing decisions on education, healthcare, housing, and economic opportunities while ensuring development keeps pace with population change.

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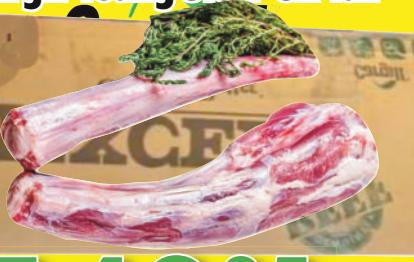


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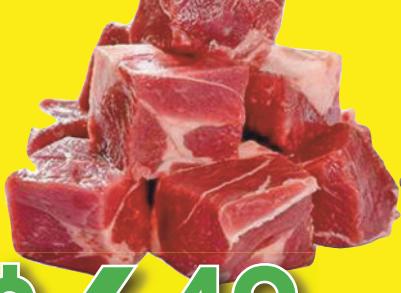
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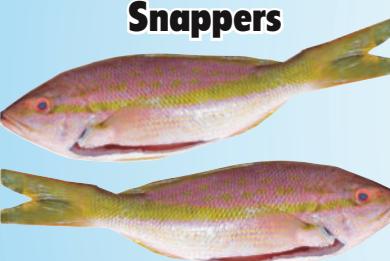
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GOV'T EXPLORING NEW LANDFILL SITES TO TACKLE GARBAGE CRISIS



The government is planning to develop sanitary landfill sites across Guyana to address long-standing waste management challenges and promote a cleaner, more sustainable environment.

Minister of Public Works Bishop Juan Edghill said the initiative will involve identifying suitable lands, building or upgrading roads and supporting infrastructure for heavy-duty garbage trucks, and strategically managing waste in an environmentally friendly manner.

President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali and comprising multiple ministries, has been established to drive the project.

In addition to landfills, the government is exploring designated spaces for truck parking, relocating noisy industrial activities from residential

areas, and enhancing that environmental and economic activity open and community improvements are and development spaces, ensuring balanced with ongoing opportunities.



An excavator clearing garbage along Regent Street, Georgetown

EXPANDED ACCESS TO WATER, ELECTRICITY AND TRANSPORTATION IS IMPROVING LIVES



Minister of Public Utilities and Aviation, Deodat Indar

Hundreds of Guyanese families are benefitting from major government investments in water, electricity, aviation, and maritime infrastructure, aimed at improving the quality of life and supporting national development.

On Tuesday, December 30, 2025, during a Facebook post, Minister of Public Utilities and Aviation Deodat Indar noted that



Water-treatment-plant

access to potable water nationwide has reached 98.3 per cent, with hinterland communities at 91 per cent, while electricity generation has more than doubled since 2020, creating a more stable and reliable power supply for homes and businesses.

The minister highlighted that improved connectivity is expanding opportunities, particularly in hinterland and riverine areas, where aviation upgrades and reduced fuel costs are making travel more affordable for medical care, education, and commerce.

Expanded airport facilities and modern systems are also

enhancing the travel experience, boosting tourism and trade, while ongoing projects like the anticipated gas-to-energy initiative are expected to further reduce household expenses and support economic activity.

Guyana bolsters border defences as tensions in Venezuela escalate

Guyana has stepped up its border security after recent political unrest in neighbouring Venezuela, Prime Minister Brigadier (Ret'd) Mark Phillips said this week, underscoring the country's commitment to safeguarding its territorial integrity.

Speaking on the Starting Point podcast on Sunday, the prime minister said that while the Guyana Defence Force (GDF) has long maintained deployments along the borders with Venezuela, Suriname and Brazil, recent events prompted an immediate shift to an even higher state of readiness. "Immediately, we went into a more heightened state of readiness. In fact, I would argue that the troops...were already in a heightened state of readiness," he said, referring to the situation that unfolded in Venezuela on January 3.

Phillips, a former army chief, noted that the government has intensified monitoring and coordination with regional authorities, especially along the western frontier. He travelled to Region One (Barima-Waini) where he met with members of the Defence Board, regional officials, law enforcement and residents to discuss security arrangements. "We...met with the regional administration because they have an important role in terms of intelligence," he explained, adding that improved internet connectivity has helped local communities stay informed about developments.

While authorities have not observed any unusual activity along the Guyana-Venezuela border, Phillips stressed that current cross-border movement "is routine activity." Still, he warned that vigilance remains critical: "We will not fall into any false sense of security... and ensure that any instability on the other side of the border does not spill over into Guyana."

The prime minister said Guyana's priority remains ensuring

that every citizen, especially those in border regions, feels safe. In discussing wider regional responses to the situation in Venezuela, Phillips said that while CARICOM member states may voice differing positions, "each country must ultimately act in accordance with its own national interests." He also voiced support for the balanced stance taken by President Dr. Irfaan Ali in addressing the developments.

Guyana's strengthened posture comes amid ongoing historical tensions with Venezuela over territorial claims — particularly related to the Essequibo region — a dispute that has periodically heightened security concerns for Georgetown.



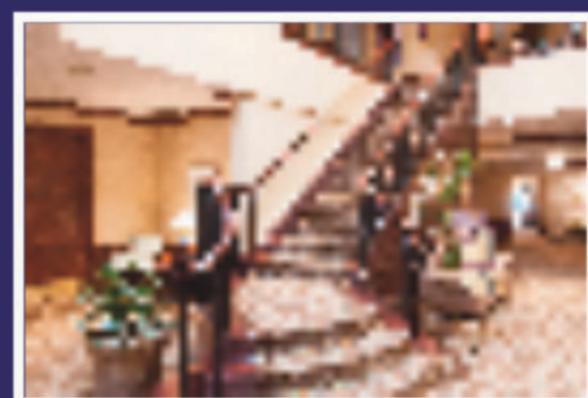
Prime Minister Mark Phillips

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SIX NEW HOSPITALS UNDERWAY TO STRENGTHEN HEALTHCARE DELIVERY ACROSS GUYANA



De Kinderen Regional Hospital

Construction is part of the People's under way on six new Progressive Party Civic general hospitals as (PPP/C) Government's

plan to modernise Guyana's healthcare system and expand access to quality medical services nationwide.

On Wednesday, December 31, 2025, Minister of Health Dr Frank Anthony highlighted that work has begun on facilities, including the West Demerara Hospital, featuring X-rays, CT scans, MRIs, and a Cath lab for cardiac procedures, as well as a new Paediatric and Maternal Hospital, which will be among the best in the Caribbean.

These projects, along with hospitals in Moruca, Kato, and Lethem, aim to bring specialised medical care

closer to residents across all regions, including the hinterland.

Dr Anthony noted that health sector investment has risen significantly, from \$35.8 billion in 2019 to around \$142 billion, enabling the expansion of modern infrastructure and services.

The construction of these hospitals is part of a broader strategy to reduce disparities in healthcare access, ensuring that high-quality, technologically advanced medical services are available nationwide over the next two to three years.



No.75 Village Regional Hospital

AI-DRIVEN DIAGNOSTIC SYSTEMS TO TRANSFORM HEALTHCARE DELIVERY ACROSS GUYANA



The Ministry of Health is modernising diagnostic services across Guyana with advanced digital imaging technology supported by artificial intelligence, aiming to improve accuracy, reduce wait times, and enhance patient care.

At the commissioning of a new digital X-ray system on Tuesday, December 30, 2025, at Oscar Joseph District Hospital in Charity, Region Two, Minister of Health Dr Frank

Anthony highlighted the evolution from outdated analogue equipment to state-of-the-art digital systems, including mammography, ultrasound, and CT scanning, which provide higher-quality images with less radiation exposure.

AI-assisted systems now enable rapid interpretation of results, producing tentative diagnoses in as little as 17 seconds, significantly improving clinical decision-making.

Minister Anthony emphasised that these innovations will be implemented nationwide, reflecting the government's commitment to creating a world-class healthcare system that benefits all regions, not just the coast, and ensures more efficient, reliable, and accessible care for Guyanese patients.

GUYANA'S JUSTICE SYSTEM STRENGTHENED WITH \$US400,000 TECHNOLOGY BOOST

On Thursday, January 8, 2026, Guyana's justice system received IT software and hardware valued at US\$400,000 to improve service delivery and modernise court operations.

The donation was handed over at a ceremony in Georgetown, and forms part of the Partnership of the Caribbean and the European Union on Justice (PACE), involving the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), European Union (EU), Ministry of Legal Affairs and Ministry of Home



From left at the handing over are EU Ambassador Luca Pierantoni, Acting Chancellor of the Judiciary Roxane George-Wiltshire SC, Attorney General Anil Nandlall SC and Katy Thompson, UNDP Guyana & Suriname acting Resident Representative

Affairs.

With this contribution, total donations to Guyana's Judiciary under the initiative now stand at about US\$870,000.

Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs, Mohabir Anil Nandlall, SC, said the support comes at a critical time as Caribbean justice systems undergo reform, noting that crime is increasingly being treated as a public health issue.

He added that Guyana will host a regional roundtable of Caribbean Attorneys General to further

examine criminal justice reform under PACE.

Acting Chancellor Justice Roxanne George-Wiltshire highlighted that the Judiciary has embraced digital transformation, including cloud-based e-litigation and case management systems and new court recording technology to improve efficiency and accuracy.

UNDP and EU representatives underscored the importance of technology, skilled personnel and sustained upgrades in strengthening the rule of law.

GUYANESE TO BENEFIT FROM FIRST-EVER BIOSAFETY LEVEL THREE LABORATORY

Patients in Guyana are set to benefit from faster and more accurate diagnostics with the establishment of the country's first Biosafety Level Three (BSL-3) laboratory, which will safely handle dangerous and complex samples.

Minister of Health Dr Frank Anthony highlighted that this, alongside upgrades to the National Public Health Reference Laboratory, including

gene sequencing technology, will improve disease tracking, molecular surveillance, and timely medical decisions for mothers, elderly patients, and others requiring urgent care.

Hospital laboratories are also being upgraded and digitally connected to reduce delays and provide doctors with quicker access to results.

Additional developments include



the creation of a Human Leukocyte Antigen (HLA) laboratory for local organ donor-recipient matching, eliminating the need to send tests overseas, and a new Food and Drug laboratory at the University of Guyana (UG) to enhance medicine and food safety oversight.

PENSIONERS URGED TO GO DIGITAL AS GOVERNMENT ROLLS OUT CAMPAIGN

The Ministry of Human Services and Social Security launched a campaign to help pensioners transition from pension book payments to receiving their pensions through bank accounts or Mobile Money Guyana (MMG).

Minister of Human Services and Social Security Dr Vindhya Persaud, on Wednesday, January 7, 2026, said the initiative aims to remove hardship from the collection process by

working with financial institutions to assist pensioners in opening accounts, allowing pensions to be deposited directly each month in a safer and more convenient manner, particularly for elderly persons and those living far from distribution centres.

The campaign also encourages newly eligible pensioners to opt for digital payments as part of the government's push to modernise public



Pensioners urged to go digital as government rolls out campaign

services.

The old-age pension currently stands at \$41,000 per month following an increase in January 2025, and President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali has announced plans to further raise it to \$60,000 monthly, along with a new annual \$50,000 grant to help offset transportation costs for pensioners.

GREENWICH PARK RESIDENTS EXPRESS JOY AFTER RECEIVING LAND TITLES



Chandra D'Souza



Rokmin Ashma

Several residents of Greenwich Park on the East Bank of Essequibo in Region Three on Wednesday, December 31, 2025, celebrated the long-awaited land ownership after receiving their certificates of title under the government's land regularisation programme.

Among them were Chandra D'Souza, who lived on the land for decades without legal ownership and described receiving her title from President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali on New Year's Day as a "priceless gift."

The initiative, led by the Central Housing and Planning Authority (CHPA), aims to provide security of tenure to families who have occupied state lands for years, allowing them to formally own property and pass it on to future generations.

Other beneficiaries expressed gratitude, describing the titles as

life-changing despite the long wait. Residents such as Prakash Indar and Rokmin Ashma stated that the certificates bring peace of mind, security for their families, and new opportunities for future generations.

Greenwich Park comprises 52 house lots identified for

formalisation, with 23 families receiving titles so far: 18 on Old Year's Day and five on New Year's Day, during the handover ceremonies at State House led by President Ali and Minister within the Ministry of Housing, Vanessa Benn.



Prakash Indar

125 COTTON TREE RESIDENTS RECEIVE FORMAL TITLES TO THEIR LANDS



After decades of uncertainty, 125 residents of Cotton Tree along the West Coast of Berbice received formal land titles, marking a major step toward security and asset ownership for families who have lived on the lands for generations.

The certificates were presented by President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali and Attorney General Mohabir Anil Nandlall SC at a ceremony in Rosignol, Region Five, on Friday, January 9, 2026.

President Ali said land ownership is central to reducing poverty and building long-term stability, describing the titles as both an opportunity and a responsibility. He urged beneficiaries to use their land to build homes, invest, and create lasting legacies for future generations.

The president

emphasised that national development depends on citizens owning and growing assets, not merely surviving.

Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs, Mohabir Anil Nandlall, SC, highlighted that the regularisation process began in 2011 under a previous People's Progressive Party Civic's PPP/C Administration, but was stalled between 2015 and 2020, before being completed in 2026 at no cost to residents.

He said the exercise transforms the future of families by allowing them to legally sell, transfer, or develop their lands. The programme will be extended to other communities, as the government continues its national land regularisation drive, which has already benefited hundreds of residents in Cotton Tree.



NEW 'YAS SCHOOL OF INSPIRATION' OPENS DOORS TO INCLUSIVE EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

The modern 'Yas School of Inspiration' in Crane in Region Three has opened its doors to 50 incredible children living with disabilities, offering them world-class facilities, as well as a nurturing environment for learning, and unleashing their full potential.

President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali, First Lady Arya Ali and the United Arab Emirates' Minister of State for International Cooperation, Reem bint Ebrahim Al Hashimy, and several cabinet members, commissioned the modern facility on Thursday, January 15, 2026.

In his feature address, President Ali said his government measures progress by how it treats its most vulnerable citizens, with equity guiding policies that ensure every child has a genuine chance to succeed.

He announced that plans are underway, including initiatives supported by the First Lady's Office, to create a safe, inclusive ecosystem within the

compound. This will be complemented by three

purpose-built

buses

to ensure the safe and reliable transportation

of students.

While enrollment has already begun, careful matching of teachers to students is underway, and activities are expected to commence within the next few weeks.

Minister Reem bint Ebrahim Al Hashimy expressed her appreciation for the warm welcome and described the school as more than an educational institution, but as a gateway to improve the quality of life, not only for the children, but also for their families.

The project was executed by the Government of Guyana in conjunction with the Office of the First Lady, who partnered with the Government of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) to establish the \$100 million facility.



GOVERNMENT TRANSFORMS SPECIAL EDUCATION NATIONWIDE AS SEND REACHES 50-FACILITY MILESTONE

Five years ago, families raising children with disabilities often had to relocate or travel long distances to access specialised education. In 2020, Guyana had only 13 recognised Specialised Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND) spaces nationwide, leaving many children without adequate support.

That reality has changed dramatically. Through sustained Government investment, SEND services are being transformed from limited, specialised access into a standardised national system, ensuring that children with disabilities can learn, grow and thrive within their own communities.

With the commissioning of the modern Yas School of Inspiration in Crane, West Coast Demerara, Guyana now has 49 SEND facilities. The new school will serve approximately 50 children between the

ages of three and seven, providing purpose-built classrooms and a nurturing learning environment tailored to early developmental needs.

In total, the 49

SEND spaces are now impacting the lives of 1,350 learners, giving them access to high-quality education and support services designed to help them

reach their full potential.

Speaking at the commissioning ceremony, Sonia Parag announced that another specialised facility dedicated to learners who are deaf will be

commissioned bringing the total to 50 SEND spaces nationwide. She emphasised that this milestone reflects continuous progress rather than an endpoint.

Beyond infrastructure, the Government is strengthening the human resource base to support learners with special needs. For the first time, the Cyril Potter College of Education now offers specialised courses for parents of children with disabilities.

Through the Guyana Online Academy of Learning, more than 300 persons have graduated with SEND specialisations from the University of the Southern Caribbean, while the University of Guyana introduced specialised SEND programmes in 2025.

The Government is also working closely with national stakeholders and organisations representing persons with disabilities to strengthen

screening in schools and deepen family engagement.

Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali, alongside Arya Ali, continues to lead this national push, with a clear vision that every region will eventually have its own SEND centre. The President has also committed to integrating 5,000 persons living with disabilities into the workforce.

That vision is already taking shape. In 2025, the First Lady commissioned the Centre for Equity, Opportunity and Innovation at Palmyra, Region Six, providing direct employment for 120 persons with disabilities. Financial support has also expanded, including cash grants and increased public assistance, underscoring the Government's commitment to inclusion, dignity and opportunity for all Guyanese.



GOVERNMENT-BACKED FREE LEGAL CLINIC EXPANDS ACCESS TO JUSTICE FOR VULNERABLE CITIZENS



Jagnandan helps complainants or survivors in criminal cases who may feel too afraid to go to court by providing free legal representation when needed.

The cost of legal services remains a significant barrier to justice for many citizens, particularly those facing social and economic challenges. To help remove that obstacle, the Ministry of Human Services and Social Security (MOHSSS) offers free legal advice every Thursday at its head office on Lamaha

Street. The clinic operates from 09:00hrs to 12:00hrs and is facilitated by Andre Jagnandan, Attorney-at-Law. Services cover a wide range of matters, including protection and occupation orders, tenancy and ancillary orders, child support, and spousal maintenance. Since the

programme began, more than 25 persons have already benefited from the service. Beyond general legal advice, the clinic provides critical support to complainants and survivors in criminal cases who may feel intimidated or fearful about appearing in court. Where necessary, Jagnandan offers free

legal representation, helping to ensure that fear or financial hardship does not prevent access to justice.

The initiative forms part of the MOHSSS's broader strategy to institutionalise pro bono legal services and ensure that citizens who cannot afford private legal representation still receive expert guidance. By providing consistent, weekly access to legal advice, the ministry is strengthening protections for vulnerable groups and improving confidence in the justice system.

The clinic also builds on the Ministry's Legal Pro-Bono 500 Initiative, launched in December 2021 in partnership with the Guyana Bar Association. Under a Memorandum of Understanding, the Bar Association committed to providing pro bono legal support to 500 victims of gender-based violence annually, addressing financial and logistical barriers that



Minister Vindhya Persaud

often prevent survivors from seeking legal redress.

These weekly sessions complement existing support programmes by creating a predictable, no-cost avenue for legal assistance, while reinforcing the Government's commitment to equitable

access to justice.

As the demand for affordable legal services continues, the free clinic stands as a practical example of how targeted, people-centred initiatives can make justice more accessible—particularly for those who need it most.

GOVERNMENT STRENGTHENS MARINE TRANSPORT WITH NEW VESSEL FOR REGION ONE



The people of Region One (Barima-Waini) and surrounding areas can look forward to more comfortable and faster travel with the arrival of a modern vessel that strengthens the Government's marine fleet.

During a tour of the vessel at the Georgetown Wharf on Wednesday, Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali said the acquisition forms part of a broader strategy to incrementally renew the existing fleet. He explained

that over the coming years, older vessels will be replaced to deliver more consistent service, improved comfort, enhanced reliability and reduced travel times across all regions.

President Ali also announced that the Government is in the process of acquiring additional vessels, particularly to strengthen the Parika-Bartica route in Region Seven, ensuring residents along the Essequibo corridor

benefit from the same upgraded level of service. He noted that this parallel investment is designed to expand capacity on the Parika-Supenaam-Bartica circuit and better support the movement of people and goods.

The President underscored that the modernisation drive goes beyond vessel acquisition, noting that key ports and wharves are being upgraded to accommodate front-loading vessels of this

type in Region One, Kingston, Parika and across the Essequibo.

Accompanying the President on the tour, Deodat Indar said the vessel is powered by three Hyundai engines and supported by two generators. It has a seating capacity of 284 passengers and can transport up to 51 vehicles, or the equivalent of 14 trucks, with an air-conditioned passenger area. Operating at an average speed of 10 to 12 knots, the vessel is expected to significantly cut travel time along the coastal route serving Region One.

Before departing Greece, the vessel underwent a rigorous vetting and procurement process, including fuel capacity reinforcement, ballast testing, inspection of bulkheads and valves, and certification of all safety, navigation and communication systems.



GOVERNMENT BOOSTS LIFE-SAVING CAPABILITIES WITH \$123M SEARCH AND RESCUE SYSTEM

Guyana has taken a major step in strengthening its emergency response and life-saving capabilities with the installation and launch of a modern Search and Rescue Information and Management System (SARIMS) at the Timehri Control Tower Complex.

The \$123 million system was implemented through collaboration with the Guyana Civil Aviation Authority, as part of the Government's ongoing investment in public safety, aviation oversight and emergency preparedness.

Speaking at the launch on January 12, Deodat Indar said the platform is a critical pillar of Guyana's national search and rescue framework and will significantly reduce response and deployment times during emergencies.

He explained that a faster response is essential in life-threatening situations.

"When you are getting a stroke or a

heart attack, there is something called the golden half hour or golden hour. That is the time between when you can save a life or lose a life. That is what the reduction in time does to the process," Minister Indar said.

The system was

supplied and installed by Canadian firm Intelcan Technosystems Inc., in collaboration with the International Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue.

Previously, search and rescue operations depended largely on

manual processes such as phone calls, faxes and handwritten log sheets, often involving multiple staff at different stages. This labour-intensive approach increased workload at the Rescue Coordination Centre and heightened the risk of human error,

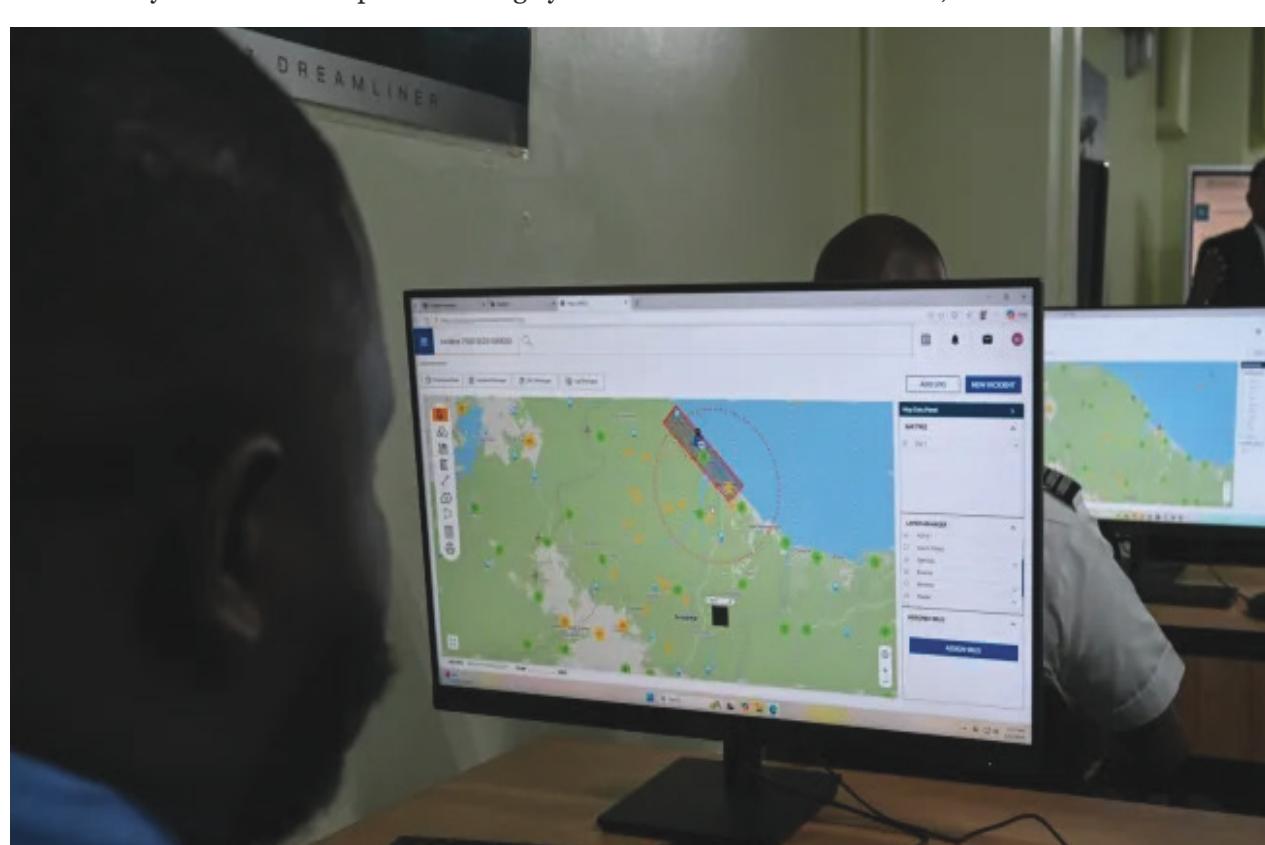
particularly during prolonged missions.

SARIMS now fully computerises the coordination and management of search and rescue operations, streamlining workflows, improving accuracy and enabling faster access to critical information.

With increased flight operations in Guyana, the platform integrates local and international agencies on a single system, allowing missions to be executed more efficiently and cost-effectively.

The digital system will be housed at the Georgetown Rescue Coordination Centre and provides real-time data integration to support better decision-making. Minister Indar also noted that 16 officers from GCAA, Cheddi Jagan International Airport, the Guyana Defence Force and Ogle Airport were trained as mission coordinators by Canadian experts.

Meanwhile, the Government is moving ahead with plans to construct a maritime search and rescue centre at Kingston, which will mirror the system implemented at Timehri, further strengthening national emergency response coverage.



A screen displays SARIMS

TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY INSTITUTE ON TRACK FOR MID-2026 COMPLETION

Expected to play a significant role in strengthening Guyana's tourism workforce, the Tourism and Hospitality Institute is on schedule to be completed by mid-2026.

During an appearance on the "Starting Point" podcast that aired on January 10, Minister of Tourism, Industry and Commerce Susan Rodrigues emphasised the importance of the institution, noting that work has already begun to develop the curriculum.

"This project is being managed under the Ministry of Education, and they are working with the Guyana Tourism Authority to create



Ministry of Tourism, Industry and Commerce, Susan Rodrigues, along with contractors at the construction site during its earlier phase

a curriculum for the institute. The idea is to train Guyanese to international standards," Minister Rodrigues stated.

When completed, the institute will play a vital

role in strengthening Guyana's tourism workforce by equipping Guyanese with practical and globally competitive skills in various areas of hospitality, including tourism services for tour

operators, mixologists, tour operations and other food handlers and basic related services. The customer service. The overall goal is to enhance visitors' experience.

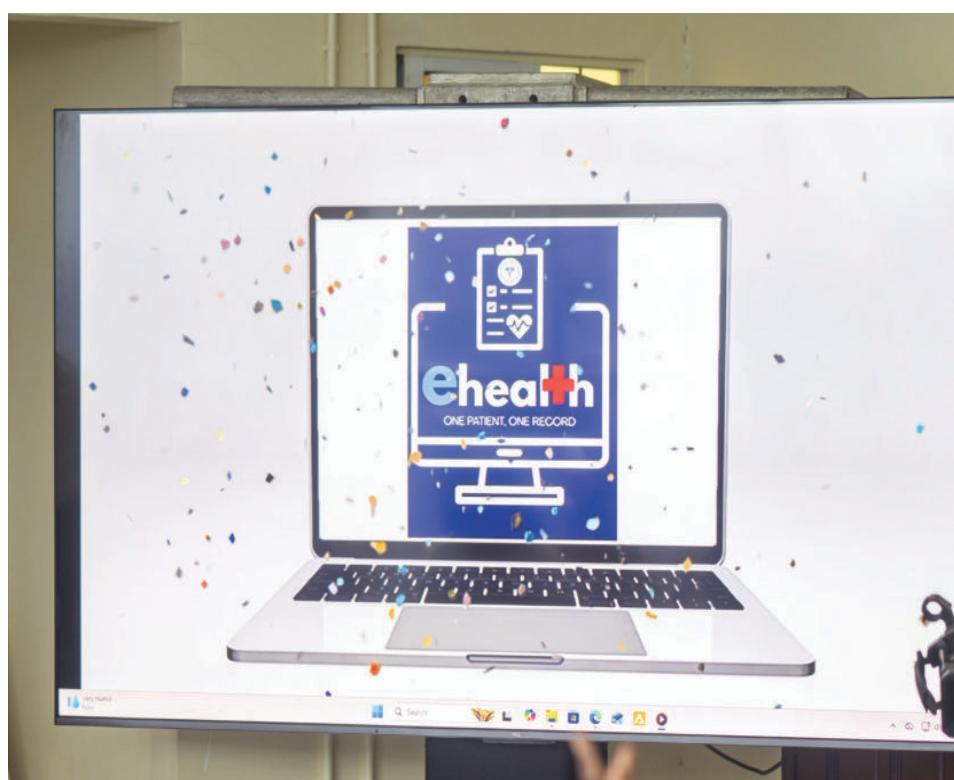
The facility will help address existing skill gaps countrywide, explained that although improve service delivery in hotels, restaurants, providing theoretical training at the institute

will be impactful for professional development, it is also important that students learn practical skills on the job.

"Because the real-life experiences that you will get to improve the way you deliver your services can only happen in the field, it can't happen in the classroom only," she noted.

This investment in human capital represents the government's commitment to support private sector growth, expand employment opportunities and position Guyana to meet the increasing demand of a rapidly growing tourism sector.

GOV'T LAUNCHES NATIONAL ELECTRONIC HEALTH RECORD SYSTEM TO MODERNISE HEALTHCARE DELIVERY



The Government of Guyana has taken a major step in transforming public healthcare delivery with the launch of the National Electronic Health Record (EHR) System, on Saturday, January 17, at the Festival City Polyclinic, North Ruimveldt, Georgetown.

Dr Frank Anthony stated that the new system aims to provide faster, more efficient health services by reducing delays, preventing duplicate tests, and enhancing

diagnosis and treatment. He explained that the EHR will allow doctors, pharmacists, laboratory staff and other authorised healthcare professionals to securely access and input patient information, ensuring continuity of care across services.

The rollout will begin at the Festival City Polyclinic, followed by implementation at the Georgetown Public Hospital Corporation (GPHC), before being expanded to all public health institutions nationwide. In the long

term, the system will also be integrated with the private healthcare sector.

Strong safeguards have been built into the system to protect patient privacy. The Minister emphasised that unauthorised sharing of patient information attracts severe penalties under the Laws of Guyana, including fines of \$20 million for individuals and up to \$100 million for institutions found in breach.

The launch is a significant milestone for

patients, caregivers and medical professionals. The absence of an integrated electronic record has long posed challenges, particularly with patients receiving care from multiple clinics and specialists, often leading to polypharmacy and incomplete information for physicians, according to Chief Executive Officer of the Guyana Public Hospital Corporation Robbie Rambarran.

The Festival City Polyclinic alone manages more than 2,000 patients monthly, underscoring the importance of a unified system to support safer and more timely care.

In addition to healthcare professionals, patients will also benefit directly. A mobile application, to be launched shortly, will allow patients to access their own medical records, empowering

them to take a more active role in managing their health.

The National EHR System was developed under a US\$3.3 million contract with RioMed Limited, and forms part of the Government's broader agenda to modernise healthcare through the use of technology and improve outcomes for all Guyanese.



Minister Frank Anthony is flanked by officials and senior members of the GPHC and the Ministry of Health

HINTERLAND AIRFARE REDUCTIONS - A BOOST FOR CONNECTIVITY AND OPPORTUNITY



Pauline DaSilva, resident of Aishalton Region Nine

For years, the residents of the hinterland have pleaded for more affordable air travel to and from Georgetown, even as the government has poured substantial investments into upgrading airstrips across the interior. Nine village of Aishalton home for more than three decades. Pauline DaSilva, resident of Aishalton, Region Nine first arrived in Aishalton with her husband as a missionary and today proudly identifies the scenic hinterland community as her home.

Among them is Pauline DaSilva, who has called the Region

Public Information at the commissioning of the Aishalton airfield, DaSilva welcomed the ongoing development but underscored the need for affordable airfares. "This has been my home for 35 years. I'm proud to see all the development happening in my community, but I'm hoping they can put together flights from Ogle to here, and that they are reasonable," she said. DaSilva's appeal did not go unheard.

While commissioning the newly upgraded Paramakatoi and Aishalton airfields in early January 2026, President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali urged airline

operators to "pass on the savings to passengers," particularly the communities who rely heavily on air transport. President

Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali, along with the Minister of Public Works, Bishop Juan Edghill, interacting

with residents at the commissioning ceremony of the new airfield. Four airlines were quick to respond to President Ali's appeal.

Roraima Airways and Trans Guyana Airways announced a 7% reduction in airfares, while Air Services

Limited implemented a 9% on routes and added two new caravan aircraft to their existing fleet. Jags Aviation also confirmed reduced fares to be determined for the respective locations. rewrite headline only and reorder paragraphs to make smooth easier



Aishalton Airstrip

FIFTY KARASABAI RESIDENTS EMPLOYED TO HELP CONSTRUCT \$993M CONCRETE AIRFIELD



Karasabai community members interacting with Minister Juan Edghill

As the government accelerates hinterland infrastructure and connectivity, some 50 people from the village of Karasabai in Region Nine will be employed to upgrade the current

earthen airstrip into a concrete airfield. This project will be built at a cost of \$993 million, transforming it into eight inches of thick, rigid paved concrete, spanning a length of

3000ft by 50ft, with a strength of 5000 pounds per square inch (PSI). About 50 navigational lights will be installed along the strip, allowing planes to land and take off at night in the event of an emergency.

Minister of Public Works, Bishop Juan Edghill, and a technical team from the ministry, including Head of the Special Projects Unit (SPU) Colin Gittens, visited the community on January 15 to discuss the project with residents. The current earthen track construction is scheduled to begin on January 19 with an

estimated duration of 75 days, to be executed by the SPU using a community participation model. Fifty skilled and unskilled persons will participate in this transformative project.

"This model of development, where the Government of Guyana, through the Special Projects Unit, has been working with communities to do two things, ensure there is employment and add to economic activity, but at the same time delivering infrastructure development," the minister said.

International Import and

Supplies, the company responsible for supplying materials for the project, will also gift the village a terminal similar to the one being constructed at the new Aishalton airfield. "During the 70 days or 75 days that this airstrip would be closed for construction, we'll have to ensure that the road that links you with Lethem is improved."

Minister Edghill assured residents, noting that this will ensure persons in any medical emergency get to the closest airstrip safely in the shortest possible time. In early January, President Dr Mohamed

Irfaan Ali commissioned two modern concrete airstrips in the villages of Paramakatoi, Region Eight and Aishalton, Region Nine, further boosting hinterland connectivity as outlined in the People's Progressive Party/Civic's 2025 Manifesto. These projects provide safe and consistent transportation and create opportunities in agriculture, tourism, and other businesses, which improve livelihoods by creating jobs, increasing incomes, and supporting a healthy village economy.

GOV'T TO LAUNCH CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT APP TO IMPROVE RESPONSE TIMES AND SERVICE DELIVERY

The Government of Guyana is preparing to launch a new mobile application before the end of January aimed at strengthening communication between citizens and public officials, while improving how concerns are received, tracked and addressed across communities.

The announcement was made by Priya Manickchand during an engagement with residents of Canal No. 1. She explained that the app will allow citizens to submit complaints and

concerns digitally and receive a response within 24 hours, ensuring issues are acknowledged and properly logged.

Minister Manickchand clarified that while the application will provide timely feedback, it does not guarantee immediate action on every matter. Instead, it is intended to improve transparency, accountability and follow-up by ensuring concerns are formally recorded and routed to the appropriate authorities.

The Minister noted

that Neighbourhood Democratic Councils (NDCs) will play a key role in responding to issues submitted through the

app, particularly those that fall within their remit. She added that senior officials will have oversight of complaints

to ensure responsiveness and coordination across agencies.

The initiative forms part of the Government's wider digital transformation agenda, which seeks to modernise public service delivery and align Guyana with international best practices in e-governance. Several other digital platforms are also being rolled out, including AskGov, an AI-powered chatbot to answer citizens' questions, the Ministry of Housing's Single Window System, and

the Guyana Revenue Authority's Padna app.

These initiatives support the vision of Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali to harness technology to improve efficiency, accessibility and citizen-centred governance.

Once launched, the new app is expected to provide a more structured and responsive channel for engagement, ensuring citizens' concerns are heard, tracked and addressed in a more timely and transparent manner.



PLAZA COURT HOTEL ADDS 54 ROOM ACCOMMODATION TO GEORGETOWN'S GROWING TOURISM LANDSCAPE

Guyana's hospitality sector continues to expand with the opening of the Plaza Court Hotel, a new room boutique hotel located at 45 Main Street, Georgetown. The investment adds to the country's steadily growing accommodation offerings, supporting tourism, business travel and urban development.

Situated in the heart of the capital, the hotel is strategically positioned near key commercial centres, government offices and cultural attractions, providing visitors with convenient access to Georgetown's business and social hubs.

The Plaza Court Hotel offers a range of accommodation options, from standard rooms to more spacious suites, designed with modern finishes and personalised Guyanese hospitality.

The opening of the Plaza Court Hotel aligns with the Government's broader push to strengthen the tourism and services sectors, encourage private investment and improve visitor experiences. As Guyana continues to attract increased international and regional interest, developments such as this contribute to job



creation, economic diversification and product. the enhancement of

AC MARRIOTT OGLE SIGNALS STRONG INVESTOR CONFIDENCE IN GUYANA - PRESIDENT ALI

President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali, on January 10, said the opening of the AC Marriott Hotel at Ogle reflects strong investor confidence in Guyana's economy and underscores the country's deliberate, forward-looking development agenda.

Speaking at the official opening, President Ali commended the investors for advancing to the second phase of the project without delay, noting that this move signals confidence in Guyana's economic trajectory and long-term prospects. He emphasised that the development aligns with the Government's vision to modernise

infrastructure, expand tourism and diversify economic opportunities.

The President

highlighted significant growth in air travel and connectivity, pointing to sharp increases

in arriving passengers,

at Guyana's ports of entry over the past four years. He noted substantial growth in aircraft movements, international carriers servicing Guyana and destinations served, describing these trends as clear indicators of economic momentum.

President Ali also underscored the link between economic growth and security, noting that Guyana has invested heavily in technology-driven crime-fighting and intelligence, resulting in the country recording its lowest crime levels in more than a decade.

Delivering remarks on behalf of the investors, Chief Executive Officer John Aboud said the current phase of the project will provide permanent employment for approximately 250

persons, with the vast majority being Guyanese. He announced that construction of the next phase will commence shortly, with the overall investment projected to reach approximately US\$200 million.

President Ali assured investors of the Government's continued partnership, noting that Guyana is open, confident and committed to quality and sustainable growth.



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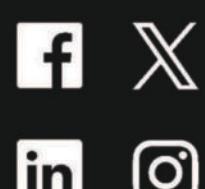


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REG. 4 FISHERFOLK BENEFIT FROM \$150,000 RELIEF GRANT

Hon. Zulfikar Mustapha, Minister of Agriculture, on January 12 distributed cheques to more than 2,000 fisherfolk from Region Four as part of the Government of Guyana's ongoing efforts to deliver relief to fisherfolk across the country.

The distribution exercises, held at the Everest Ground in Georgetown and in Lusignan and Unity

Overall, approximately 7,000 fisherfolk nationwide are set to benefit from approximately \$1,050,000,000.

While addressing the gatherings, Minister Mustapha said this is the second time fisherfolk are receiving assistance in the form of a grant from the PPP/C government. He further noted that, in addition to direct cash support,

because we want to ensure the facilities are in place for the sector to develop and make it resilient. We've built sheds, installed water, lighting, security, and washroom facilities. While we are making these investments, as fisherfolk, you must have a broader outlook because you can no longer depend on one activity. We have to diversify the sector.



Minister Zulfikar Mustapha handing over a cheque to a female fisherfolk during the distribution at the Everest Cricket Club

on the East Coast of Demerara, formed part of a commitment made by H.E. President Dr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali and represent a government investment of approximately \$309 million.

“We’ve expended millions of dollars to upgrade the landing sites across the country

When I meet with fisherfolk across the country when catches are low, they insist that they do not have any other activity. So, as fisherfolk, you have to diversify,” the Minister said.

He also indicated



Minister Mustapha handing over a cheque to a fisherfolk at Lusignan

that institutional support for fisherfolk is being strengthened and that fisherfolk will soon benefit from training to commence additional wealth-generating activities while away from sea.

“We’ve been working with various organizations within the sector. I resuscitated the National Fisherfolk Organization, and they, along with the Fisheries Department, will work with you to see how we can assist individual

fisherfolk to get involved in other activities so that you don’t have

to depend solely on fishing. So, if you have your homestead, we can assist you with a small shadehouse to cultivate different crops in your backyard because you do not need a lot of land for that. We’ve already started that process in several areas in the country,” he noted.

Highlighting safety and cost-reduction measures implemented by the government, Minister Mustapha spoke about some additional interventions that were implemented by the government to improve the livelihood of fisherfolk.

“We’ve been working with you to put new mechanisms in place. Many of you who are boat owners know that we have been procuring and installing Vessel Monitoring Systems on vessels so that we can respond to emergencies at sea. We removed all the taxes from fishing inputs. Things like seine, twine, and rope. We also removed the taxes on outboard engines up to 150 horsepower so that boat owners can have this equipment at a cheaper cost,” he explained.

He also spoke about ongoing efforts to create new opportunities within the sector through training and value-added initiatives.

“The President spoke about value-

added being prioritized within the agriculture sector. So, the Fisheries Department will be working with the various fisheries organizations to train fisherfolk across the country so that they can get involved in value-added initiatives and other alternative livelihood opportunities that we have planned for fisherfolk,” the Minister explained.

Turning to aquaculture development, Minister Mustapha noted that the sector is being expanded to create new income streams for fisherfolk.

“We are also developing the aquaculture industry. We started to produce our own prawns, and soon, we’ll commence exporting these same prawns across the region. In the coming years, that project will also be replicated across the country. The brackish water project that started in Region Six is another success story. We are now working with other persons to replicate that project in region five and other parts of the country. So, when we are speaking about the fishing industry, we are not only speaking about marine fishing. We are speaking about diversification and expanding the industry and how we can support our fisherfolk,” he said.



A section of the gathering at Lusignan



Guyanese DIASPORA DIGEST

KEEPING THE DIASPORA INFORMED EDITION 110

THE GOVERNMENT TO INVEST OVER \$120 MILLION IN MASHRAMANI 2026

In a vibrant celebration of rhythm, movement, and national pride, Mashramani 2026 was officially launched on Friday January 16, at the Railway Courtyard in Georgetown.

Recognising that Mashramani's role in shaping Guyanese identity, Minister of Culture, Youth and Sport, Charles Ramson, announced that the government will invest over \$120 million – the largest investment to be made – in making this year's celebration a truly remarkable national experience.

Beyond the spectacle, Mashramani is a national platform that celebrates our shared history, resilience, and creativity, and to mark Guyana's 60th Independence anniversary, the celebration will be bigger, bolder, and more tied to our history.

Under the theme "Expressing our culture through innovation and creativity," Mashramani 2026 aims to bridge the past and present by encouraging creatives to reinterpret heritage through new lenses without losing sight of cultural integrity.

The launch featured local designers in a colourful display of costumes from various government ministries and private groups, along with diverse performances from local artists.

Meanwhile, Minister within the Ministry of Culture, Youth, and Sport, Steven Jacobs, congratulated the team for organising and showcasing their costumes for the launch.

He highlighted that this year's celebration will be rooted in heritage.

"Mashramani 2026 will be different. We will continue to bring the vibes and the energy, because Mashramani is who we are, this is our culture, our history, and this is how we will express ourselves to the world," the minister said.

The government's approach positions the festival as a living archive of Guyanese identity, which strengthens national pride, boosts the creative industry and reinforces Mashramani's role as the cornerstone of national unity.



Charles Ramson
Minister of Culture, Youth & Sport



Steven Jacobs
Minister within the Ministry of Culture, Youth & Sport



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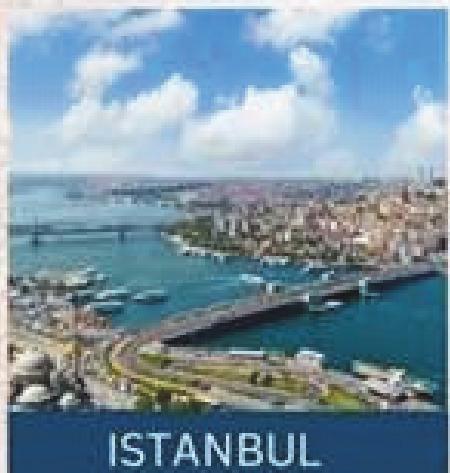


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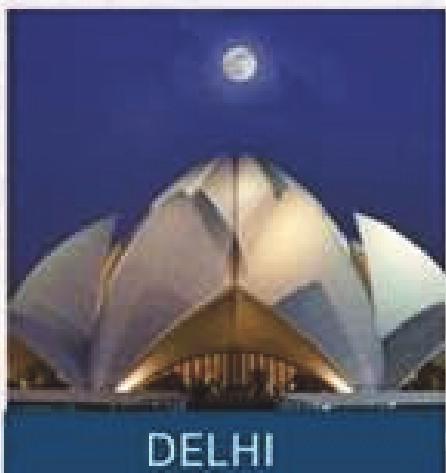
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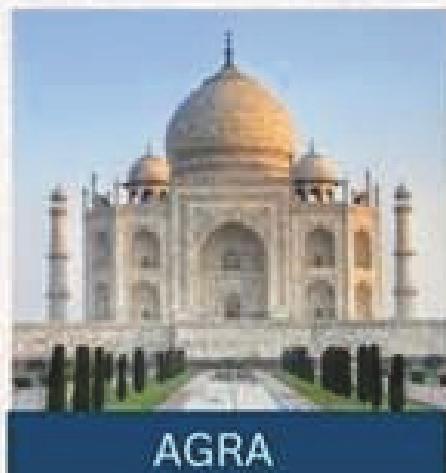
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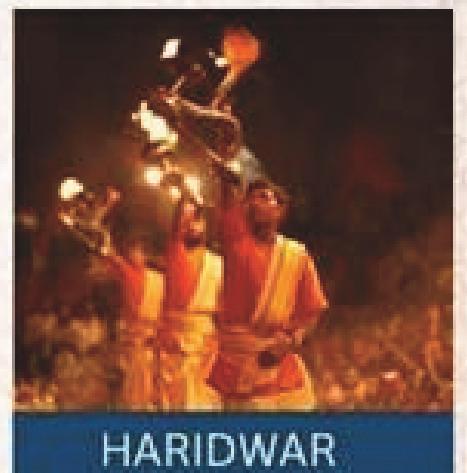
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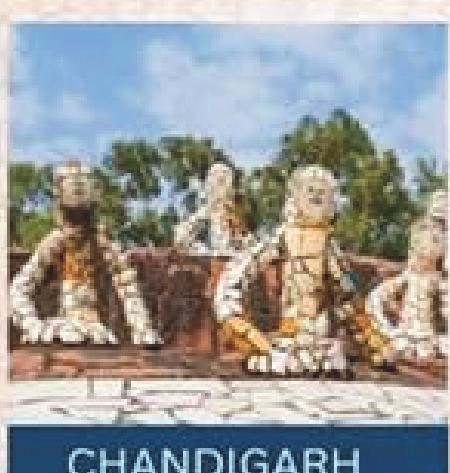
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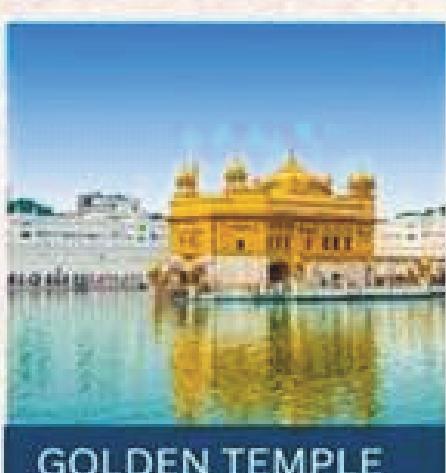
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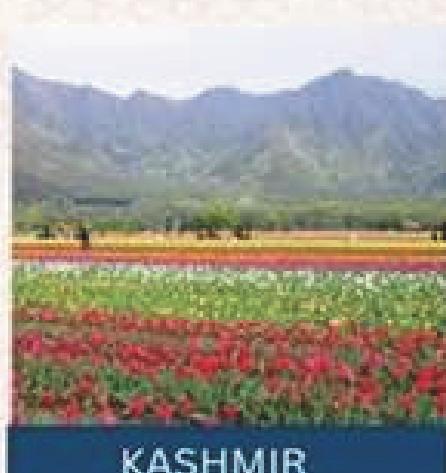
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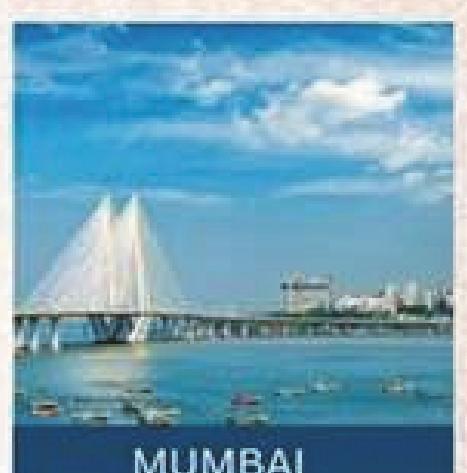
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MASHRAMANI 2026

It's a Vibe! It's a Guyanese Thing!

Calendar of Events



Banks Mash in de Avenue Main Street, G/Town	Pop Up Concert Main Street New Amsterdam	Guinness Pan in de Avenue Main Street, G/Town	Mash Jamboree Linden Bayroc Track & Field Stadium	Pop up Concert Essequibo Anna Regina Car Park
Friday Jan. 23, 2026	Saturday Jan. 24, 2026	Friday Jan. 30, 2026	Saturday Jan. 31, 2026	Sunday Feb. 1, 2026
Masquerade Jamboree Essequibo Anna Regina Car Park	Banks Mash in de Avenue Main Street G/Town	Mash Jamboree Tapachinga Ground Region 9	M.O.E Children's Mashramani Finals	Pop Up Concert Moruca Region 1
Sunday Feb. 1, 2026	Friday Feb. 6, 2026	Saturday Feb. 7 2026	Thurs. & Fri. Feb. 12-13, 2026	Friday Feb. 13, 2026
Children's Costume Parade	Calypso Monarch Mabaruma Region 1	Dancehall Monarch 1823 Monument Site Kitty Seawall	Panorama Kingston Beach	Soca Monarch Georgetown Bus Park Linden
Saturday Feb. 14, 2026	Saturday Feb. 14, 2026	Sunday Feb. 15, 2026	Thursday Feb. 19, 2026	Friday Feb. 20, 2026
Chutney Monarch Albion Stadium	Masharama National Park	Splashramani Providence National Stadium	Republic Flag Raising Public Buildings	Costume & Float Parade Georgetown
Saturday Feb. 21, 2026	Saturday Feb. 21, 2026	Sunday Feb. 22, 2026	Sunday Feb. 22, 2026	Monday Feb. 23, 2026