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President Ali meets with survivors



The MV Barima as it sank, killing dozens of passengers

Ali assures nation of independent probe

PRESIDENT Dr. Irfaan Ali has assured the nation that there will be a full, thorough and independent investigation into the MV Barima tragedy while urging Guyanese to remain united as rescue and recovery efforts continue.

Addressing the nation, the Guyanese leader said the government's immediate focus is on rescuing survivors, assisting grieving families, and locating every person who remains unaccounted for. He also announced 3 days of mourning.

"At this time, our priority remains to protect every life that still can be saved, to support those who have endured unimaginable trauma and loss, to comfort grieving families, and to account for every person who remains unaccounted for," Dr. Ali said.

He added, "Every minute matters, every life matters, and every possible resource is being mobilised in pursuit of this mission." He praised the swift response mounted following news of the tragedy, describing it as a national effort that demonstrated the country's unity in a time of crisis.

Ferry sinks, 53 dead, dozens missing

At least 53 people have drowned after a passenger ferry capsized off the coast of Guyana on Saturday night local time.

Seventy-six people aboard the MV Barima had been rescued as of Tuesday night, Prime Minister Mark Phillips told reporters, adding close to 60 more remained missing. The actual number of persons on board remains unknown.

Divers continue to search the site where the vessel capsized and people who believe their loved ones may have been on board the stricken vessel have been asked to contact the authorities. The sunken vessel has been located by divers.

"Our focus again is on finding people," said Phillips. "We still have hope."

An investigation into the tragedy had been launched, he said earlier.

"Let me be absolutely clear: where negligence, misconduct or criminal wrongdoing is established, those responsible will face the full force of the law," he said.

Guyana's Public Works Minister, Juan Edghill, expressed his anger at a news conference on Sunday, accusing those who operated the ferry of trying to "cheat the system".

The official registry had listed 133 as being on board the ferry, but Phillips said on Monday he was now "confident" there were 179 people.

Edghill also said the ferry's captain and at least one crew member had tested positive for cannabis. He added the captain and several of his crew had been taken into police custody.

The ferry, MV Barima, departed from the capital, Georgetown, on Saturday afternoon local time, headed for Port Kaituma, in the north of the country. A distress call was received at 11 p.m. after survivors said the vessel was hit by a large wave and began sinking, triggering a search operation involving government teams and privately owned boats. *More stories inside*

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The MV Barima

Canada, world responds to deadly Guyana ferry disaster

By Milan Maharaj
LJI REPORTER

The international community has responded with an outpouring of support for Guyana following the tragic sinking of the passenger ferry MV Barima on Saturday night.

The ferry was travelling from the capital, Georgetown, to Port Kaituma in Guyana’s inland Essequibo region when it capsized around 11 p.m.

Survivors report that the boat was hit by a large wave before it capsized.

Among the countries expressing sorrow over the ferry disaster is Canada. The Canadian government, through Global Affairs Canada, issued a statement on the weekend, extending condolences to the families of those who lost their lives, and expressing support for those still awaiting news of missing loved ones.

Canada said it was “saddened by the tragic loss of life caused by the ferry sinking in Guyana.

“We extend our deepest condolences to the loved ones of those who lost their lives, and our thoughts are with those still missing,” the statement read.

Several other countries, regional organisations, and international partners have conveyed messages of sympathy and solidarity with Guyana following the disaster, offering condolences to grieving families, and support for the ongoing response.

Among them was the United States, which via its Embassy in Guyana, expressed deep sorrow and sympathy for the victims, missing passengers, and grieving families.

The Caribbean Community (CARICOM) nations also expressed sympathy for the loss of life, while offering emergency air-naval deployment and logistical assistance to aid Guyana’s defense force in the ongoing search-and-rescue operations.

As of Tuesday night, 53 bodies have been recovered from the scene, while a search continues for survivors. A recovery mission for the close to 60 other people believed to have been on board is also underway.

At least 69 people have been rescued.

The vessel was believed to have been carrying a total of 179 people -- and possibly more -- when it flipped over, even though the passenger manifest only listed 133, officials have said. The number includes 17 crew members.

The captain of the ferry survived the incident, and is in police custody as an investigation takes place. Officials have said that the rescued captain and at least one other crew member tested positive for marijuana.

The government said 16 vessels have been deployed to the wreckage area, where French and local divers are leading operations.

Authorities have pointed to the incomplete passenger list and potential drug use among crew members as factors that potentially contributed to the disaster.

The ferry was built in 1939, according to the shipping website VesselFinder.

Boats typically travel by sea before reaching a river to arrive at Port Kaituma, which is located in the depths of a dense rainforest in northwestern Guyana, near Venezuela.

One of the survivors said she lost four of her grandchildren in the chaotic disaster and that the ship seemed to sink in an instant.

“I was fighting for my life. The boat sunk in minutes, seconds,” Helena Moonsammy recalled, saying that boxes fell on her as she tried to save her grandchildren. “I told my grandbabies to cling on to anything as I hollered for them. I prayed all night and was in the water for nine hours.”

Surviving passenger Alicia Atkinson, 18, said her 3-year-old daughter is missing but that she was able to save her 10-month-old son and float with him in the ocean, holding onto debris for about 8 hours.

“I ended up in the water and was hustling to come up for air, but my daughter just rushed out of my hand and disappeared,” she said. “I miss my daughter.”

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OVER \$1B INVESTED TO LAUNCH YOUNG AGRI-ENTREPRENEURS INTO POULTRY INDUSTRY

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Prime Minister Brigadier (Ret'd) Mark Phillips, Minister of Agriculture Zulfikar Mustapha and other officials inside the tunnel ventilated pens.



CARICOM ENDORSES GUYANA'S NOMINEE FOR UN SECRETARY-GENERAL POST

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SIX NEW MAGISTRATES, FIVE COMMISSIONERS OF TITLE TAKE OATH OF OFFICE

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CARICOM ENDORSES GUYANA'S NOMINEE FOR UN SECRETARY-GENERAL POST



Ambassador Carolyn Rodrigues-Birkett meeting with Pakistan's Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar

Guyana's bid to place a Caribbean national at the helm of the United Nations (UN) has gained regional backing, with CARICOM Heads of Government formally endorsing Ambassador Carolyn Rodrigues-Birkett as the community's candidate for the next UN Secretary-General.

The endorsement was announced in the communiqué issued following the 51st Regular Meeting of the Conference of Heads of Government of CARICOM held in Saint Lucia, where regional leaders reaffirmed their commitment to multilateralism and stronger representation for developing states on the global stage.

CARICOM leaders said the selection of the next UN Secretary-General comes at a critical time for the international community and welcomed Guyana's nomination of

Ambassador Rodrigues-Birkett, expressing their full support for her candidacy.

President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali previously announced Guyana's decision to

affairs, governance and international relations.

The ambassador currently serves as Guyana's Permanent Representative to the UN and previously held the position of

the country's foreign policy priorities.

If successful, Rodrigues-Birkett would become the first Caribbean national to serve as Secretary-General of the UN.

As part of her campaign outreach, Ambassador Rodrigues-Birkett has been engaging international partners to build support for her candidacy.

During a recent meeting with Pakistan's Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Senator Mohammad

Ishaq Dar, Rodrigues-Birkett outlined her vision for a United Nations that is more agile, effective and responsive to the challenges facing the world.

She highlighted the importance of principled multilateralism and the

role of the UN Secretary-General in upholding the purposes and principles of the UN Charter.

Senator Dar reaffirmed Pakistan's support for the UN's central role in global affairs and emphasised the importance of international law, treaty obligations and effective UN reforms.

The engagement forms part of Rodrigues-Birkett's continued diplomatic efforts as she seeks international support for what would be a historic Caribbean candidacy for one of the world's most influential diplomatic positions.

With CARICOM's endorsement, Guyana's nomination now moves forward with the backing of the region as it seeks greater representation within the global governance system.



CARICOM unites behind Guyana's UN Secretary-General candidate

nominate Ambassador Rodrigues-Birkett, describing her as a distinguished diplomat with extensive experience in foreign

Minister of Foreign Affairs. Throughout her diplomatic career, she has represented Guyana at major international forums while advancing

CARICOM-BACKED GUYANA RELIEF VESSEL REACHES VENEZUELA



Ambassador Van West-Charles coordinated the handover of the aid package in La Guaira

Hundreds of miles from Georgetown, a shipment carrying relief and regional solidarity safely arrived in Venezuela, bringing much-needed assistance to communities recovering from the recent earthquake.

The vessel *Mega* was spearheaded by

Motti docked at La Guaira Port loaded with food, medicines, water tanks, equipment, and other emergency supplies, marking a significant milestone in Guyana's humanitarian response effort.

The mission was spearheaded by

President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali and supported by CARICOM member states, Guyana's private sector, local citizens and members of the Venezuelan community living in Guyana.

Foreign Secretary Robert Persaud described the successful delivery as a demonstration of Guyana's commitment to helping its neighbours during times of need.

"Guyana remains a reliable partner in times of crisis and stands in solidarity with the Venezuelan people as they

recover from the devastating impacts of the earthquake," Persaud said.

The relief supplies were officially received by Venezuela's Minister of Foreign Affairs, H.E. Yvan Gil, in the presence of Guyana's Ambassador to Venezuela, H.E. Dr Richard Van West-Charles.

Among the items delivered were 88 containers of humanitarian aid, including 300 water tanks, pharmaceuticals, food supplies such as Guyanese rice, cleaning

materials and two pieces of earth-moving equipment to support recovery operations.

As rebuilding continues in affected communities, the arrival

of the supplies serves as a powerful reminder that, in moments of hardship, Caribbean solidarity extends beyond borders and politics to the people who need it most.



Guyana and CARICOM deliver relief package to Venezuela

T&T BECOMES 125TH NATION TO JOIN GLOBAL BIODIVERSITY INITIATIVE

Trinidad and Tobago has officially become the 125th member of the Global Biodiversity Alliance, strengthening a Guyana-led international effort to protect and restore the world's biodiversity through cooperation and collective action.

President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali presented the certificate of membership to Trinidad and Tobago's Prime Minister Kamla Persad-Bissessar on the sidelines of the Forty-Ninth Regular Meeting

of the CARICOM Heads of Government in Saint Lucia.

The milestone marks another expansion of the alliance, which was established following a commitment made by Guyana at the United Nations General Assembly to create a global platform bringing together governments, experts, Indigenous Peoples, stakeholders, and communities to advance global ecological protection.

Welcoming Trinidad and Tobago's accession,

President Ali said the country's participation represents an important step in strengthening international collaboration on environmental protection.

"I was pleased to officially welcome Trinidad and Tobago as the 125th member of the Global Biodiversity Alliance," President Ali said.

He noted that the alliance reflects Guyana's commitment to building partnerships that support the

protection of ecosystems while promoting shared knowledge and solutions.

Prime Minister Persad-Bissessar welcomed Trinidad and Tobago's inclusion, saying her government is ready to contribute to the initiative and work alongside other member countries.

"I wanted to join this very important initiative because I am sure we can accomplish a great deal together," she said, adding that collaboration and



President Ali handing over the Global Biodiversity Alliance membership certificate to Trinidad and Tobago's Prime Minister Kamla Persad-Bissessar

shared expertise would help address global environmental challenges.

With Trinidad and Tobago's membership, the Global Biodiversity Alliance continues to

grow as a platform for countries to exchange knowledge, strengthen conservation efforts and advance coordinated action to safeguard biodiversity worldwide.

OVER \$1B INVESTED TO LAUNCH YOUNG AGRI-ENTREPRENEURS INTO POULTRY INDUSTRY



High-tech poultry farm facilities commissioned at Mon Repos

Guyane se farmers have battled unpredictable weather, rising costs, pests, diseases and market uncertainty, for generations; challenges capable of wiping out months of hard work in a matter of days.

Today, however, a new model of agriculture is emerging, one powered by technology, innovation and strategic investment.

Speaking at the commissioning of the Agriculture Innovation and Entrepreneurship Programme (AIEP) Tunnel-Ventilated Pen Project at Mon Repos, East Coast Demerara, Prime Minister Brigadier (Ret'd) Mark Phillips said Guyana is building a more resilient agricultural sector designed to protect farmers from these long-standing risks while positioning the country as the food-producing capital of the Caribbean.

"This initiative is a declaration of intent," the prime minister said. **"It signals that the days of subsistence farming and fragile harvests are giving way to a new era of resilience, abundance and technologically driven agriculture."**

The project, conceptualised by President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali, represents an investment of

more than \$1 billion in infrastructure, equipment and training. It has expanded the AIEP programme across Regions Three, Four and Five through the construction of five state-of-the-art poultry facilities located at Mon Repos, Cornelia Ida and

poultry annually through multiple production cycles, helping to reduce dependence on imports while strengthening national food security.

Beyond production, the initiative is opening doors for a new generation of agricultural entrepreneurs.



High-tech poultry farm facilities commissioned at Mon Repos

Onverwagt.

Each facility can accommodate between 20,000 and 45,000 birds and bring them to market weight within just five to six weeks. Together, the facilities are capable of producing between 350 and 450 tonnes of

Approximately 40 young Guyanese are directly involved in managing and operating each facility, gaining valuable experience in modern livestock production and agribusiness management.

The project comes

as Guyana's poultry industry continues its rapid expansion. According to Prime Minister Phillips, poultry production has more than doubled in five years, rising from 43,726 tonnes in 2020 to 91,382 tonnes in 2025, an increase of nearly 109 per cent.

That momentum is expected to continue, with production projected to reach approximately 99,310 tonnes in 2026.

The tunnel-ventilated facilities are also expected to significantly improve efficiency and reduce losses. Mortality rates, which can exceed 10 per cent in traditional systems, are projected to fall to about 2.8 per cent under the climate-controlled model.

Phillips said the government is complementing these investments with improvements in drainage and irrigation systems, agro-processing,

scientific research, digital agriculture and climate-smart farming practices. Efforts are also underway to expand local corn and soybean production and explore the establishment of a regional vaccine manufacturing facility to strengthen livestock biosecurity.

"The livestock sector has emerged as one of the fastest-growing areas within agriculture," the prime minister said. **"The work we are doing today is laying the foundation for a more productive, technology-driven and sustainable agricultural sector."**

As Guyana continues to modernise agriculture, projects like the AIEP poultry facilities are demonstrating how innovation can transform livelihoods, create opportunities for young people and strengthen the nation's food security for generations to come.

THREE SEASONS OF TRIALS POINT TO BIG GAINS FROM NANO UREA

Guyana's rice farmers could soon benefit from a more efficient fertiliser technology, after three consecutive seasons of field trials showed that Nano Urea can increase yields while reducing input use and production costs.

Research conducted by the Guyana Rice Development Board (GRDB) found that

rice crops treated with Nano Urea produced yields up to 10 percent higher than those using conventional fertilizser, while maintaining strong grain quality.

GRDB Agronomist and Head of Department, Dr. Ghansham Payman, said evaluations at the Burma Rice Research Station showed that the technology consistently produced healthier

plants and improved crop performance.

"The yields are identical, and in some cases, as much as an eight to 10 percent increase in grain yield," Dr. Payman explained.

Unlike traditional urea, Nano Urea is a liquid fertilizer containing extremely small nitrogen particles that are absorbed more

efficiently through plant leaves. This allows crops to use nutrients more effectively, reducing waste and environmental losses.

Dr. Payman said the technology helps rice plants remain greener for longer, improves plant vigor, and supports healthier grain development.

The trials form part of the government's



GRDB trials prove Nano Urea boosts rice yields by 10%

broader push to increasing productivity, modernise Guyana's rice industry through strengthening the competitiveness of local farmers.

As Guyana's hospitality industry continues to expand, the Ministry of Agriculture is preparing to connect hotel owners directly with local farmers, creating new business opportunities while reducing the country's dependence on imported produce.

Minister of Agriculture, Zulfikar Mustapha, announced the initiative during the commissioning of the Agriculture Innovation and Entrepreneurship Programme (AIEP) Tunnel-Ventilated Pen Project, describing it

FARM-TO-HOTEL INITIATIVE TO CREATE NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR LOCAL FARMERS



Hydroponic farmers positioned to supply Guyana's luxury hotels

as another step toward building a modern and sustainable agricultural sector.

The ministry will soon convene hotel operators and farmers to establish supply

arrangements that allow fresh produce to move directly from farms to hotels and other hospitality businesses.

"We will be inviting all the owners of hotels to come into our ministry to talk to them and link them to farmers," Minister Mustapha said.

The initiative is expected to particularly benefit young entrepreneurs who have entered agriculture

through government-supported programmes such as the AIEP. Many of these young farmers are already cultivating high-value crops using modern shade houses and hydroponic systems.

According to the minister, Guyana imported approximately \$2.6 billion worth of vegetables; including broccoli, cauliflower, lettuce, carrots, and sweet peppers, in 2021, much of it destined for the hospitality sector.

Today, however, a rapidly growing share of these high-value crops is being produced locally.

Minister Mustapha said the government's investments in technology-driven agriculture are creating viable business opportunities for young people, strengthening national food security, and ensuring that more of the country's food demand is met directly by Guyanese farmers.

NOTHING TO HIDE - PRESIDENT ALI REJECTS CLAIM OVER PRIVATE FARM INVESTMENT

President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali has pushed back against allegations surrounding his privately owned farm, declaring that there is **“absolutely nothing to hide”** and insisting that the investment has been conducted lawfully, transparently, and without any special benefit from the state.

The president responded to claims raised by opposition leader Azruddin Mohamed, dismissing suggestions that the property was recently uncovered or that its development involved preferential treatment.

“My farm is not a discovery. It is public information,” President Ali stated.

He said the farm investment that has been developed through legitimate means, with all financial commitments properly recorded and disclosed.

“My farm carries a huge loan, and everything has been disclosed to the Integrity Commission, in and out of government. There is absolutely nothing to hide,” President Ali said.

The head of state rejected claims surrounding the size and value of the property, describing the figures being circulated as exaggerated and disconnected from the facts.

He also maintained that the land lease governing the property is subject to the same terms



President Ali addressing the misinformation

and conditions applied to other leaseholders, stressing that no state-funded infrastructure, special concessions or preferential arrangements were provided to support the development.

“This is not something that was hidden. This is not something that was created in secrecy,” the president said, noting that the farm’s existence and development have been known publicly.

President Ali also addressed criticism connected to sanctions imposed on Mohamed, making clear that those measures were not taken by his government.

“These sanctions did not come from President Ali. They did not come from the PPP/C Government. They came from the United States of America,” he said.

The president said he has received messages and recordings that he believes carry security implications and explained that he has a responsibility to respond when he believes misinformation is being presented as fact.

To allow citizens to better understand the operation, President Ali said he intends to periodically provide live updates from the farm.

“I’ll go live because I want people to learn. I want people to see directly from me the misrepresentation and the mischief, the deception, the lies,” he said.

The president urged Guyanese to examine information carefully and separate verified facts from claims circulating in the public domain.

“This People’s Progressive Party Civic Government, this president, will continue to work relentlessly hard every single day for the people of this country,” President Ali said.

1,000 HIGH-GENETIC CATTLE ARRIVE FROM BRAZIL



GLDA CEO, Dr Dwight Walrond

A major step toward strengthening Guyana’s livestock sector has been completed with the arrival of 1,000 pregnant, high-genetic cattle from Brazil, following a carefully

importation process, from selection and quarantine overseas to transportation and arrival at the Ebini livestock facility, was carried out under strict regulatory measures.

GLDA’s Chief Executive Officer Dr Dwight Walrond explained that the cattle were imported to improve the country’s breeding stock and help rebuild livestock numbers following years of high processing rates of female cattle.

“No animal will be allowed in or out of Guyana without the necessary documentation,” Dr Walrond stressed, highlighting the importance of the safeguards in place.

The animals underwent mandatory quarantine in Brazil, veterinary inspections at Port Lethem and continuous monitoring throughout their journey. A veterinarian, livestock extension officers and attendants accompanied the cattle, ensuring they received regular checks, food, water and care.

During transportation, the animals were provided with silage, baleage, hay

and molasses mixtures, with scheduled stops every four hours for feeding, hydration and health assessments.

Dr Walrond said the journey experienced a delay at the Tacama waterfront due to tidal conditions that prevented the safe movement of the barge. The team waited until conditions improved and worked with nearby personnel to reinforce the loading ramp before continuing.

While a small number of cattle died during transport due to cramping, the CEO said such challenges can occur during livestock movement despite proper handling and precautions.

He noted that the animals remained under veterinary supervision throughout the journey, with the team using satellite communication to respond quickly to any concerns.

The arrival of the cattle marks another investment in Guyana’s push to expand domestic livestock production, improve breeding capacity and strengthen food security.

GUYANA EYES NEW RICE ACCORDS WITH MEXICO, CUBA, AND HAITI

Guyana is stepping up efforts to secure new markets for locally produced paddy as the country’s rice industry continues to expand and farmers seek stronger opportunities for their crops.

Minister of Agriculture Zulfikar Mustapha said the government is actively pursuing additional export opportunities while working to strengthen access to existing markets across the Caribbean and beyond.

The minister said discussions are ongoing

with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation to identify more profitable markets for Guyanese farmers.

“I have been talking to my colleague, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Hugh Todd, so that we can look to find more lucrative markets for the farmers’ paddy,” Minister Mustapha said.

Guyana is also seeking to increase its presence within CARICOM, where demand for the country’s rice continues to grow.

Minister Mustapha pointed to markets such as St Lucia and Jamaica, noting that both countries have become significant buyers of Guyanese rice and could potentially expand their purchase commitments.

While European markets remain important, the minister said stronger returns are often available in CARICOM and North American markets.

Government discussions are also ongoing with Mexico, Haiti, and Cuba as Guyana seeks to diversify

its export base.

Meanwhile, preparations are being made to support increased production, with the government investing in additional storage capacity to manage larger volumes of paddy.

New storage facilities, including a silo at Onderneeming in Essequibo, are planned as part of efforts to strengthen the industry’s infrastructure.

Minister Mustapha said he remains optimistic about the upcoming second crop of 2026, with favourable



High-return export markets eyed to benefit rice farmers

weather conditions farmers have reliable expected to support markets, improved higher yields. infrastructure and greater opportunities to benefit from the growth of Guyana’s rice sector.

As production increases, the government’s focus remains on ensuring

\$2.76B FERTILISER AND PRODUCTION GRANT REACHES LOCAL RICE FARMERS



Government rolls out massive cash grant to 5,000+ rice farmers

Thousands of rice farmers across Guyana are receiving direct financial support under a \$2.76 billion government assistance programme aimed at reducing production costs, strengthening food security, and helping the sector navigate global market challenges.

The nationwide initiative, announced by President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali following consultations with farmers, is benefitting 5,106 active rice farmers cultivating more than 234,900 acres across Regions Two, Three, Four, Five and Six.

For many farmers, the assistance comes as timely relief as they contend with rising input costs and lower international paddy prices.

More than \$403 million has been distributed to farmers in Region Two.

Bhagwandat Mangal, who farms along the Essequibo Coast, said the grant will help him purchase fertiliser for his next crop.

"It will help me purchase about 10

bags of fertiliser, which will make a significant difference in preparing my fields," Mangal said.

Veteran farmer Ibrahim Baksh said the support reflects the government's continued investment in the rice industry.

"I have spent my entire life in rice farming, and I am thankful for this cash grant.

The government has consistently supported farmers, including through fertiliser assistance," he said.

In Region Three, 560 farmers cultivating 15,636 acres received more than \$201 million in assistance, while 374 farmers in Region Four received \$113.14 million.

Farmer Nigel Miller, who cultivates 30 acres at Den Amstel, said the support will help him manage financial obligations accumulated during production.

"We're grateful for this kind of help that we've gotten here as a relief measure. It might just be enough to help pay some of the remaining debts that we have," Miller said.

Satie Ramnawag of Cane Grove said her husband now manages their three-acre rice farm after she underwent

open-heart surgery and could no longer work in the fields.

She said the assistance will help the family purchase fertiliser and chemicals needed for cultivation.

"I am thankful for this help. It will allow us to start a new rice crop and buy fertiliser and spray," she said.

Region Five received the largest allocation under the programme, with \$1.18 billion distributed to 1,387 farmers cultivating 104,519 acres.

In Region Six, 1,484 farmers received \$862.9 million in assistance.

Farmer Vijai Lachminarine said the funds will help her return to cultivation.

"I'm very happy to receive this cheque because it will help us go back and cultivate again," she said.

Minister of

Agriculture Zulfikar Mustapha said the initiative demonstrates the government's commitment to supporting farmers during difficult periods.

"This is not simply the distribution of cheques and cash grants. Today is about keeping a promise," the minister said.

He emphasised that the programme is not charity, but an investment in production, food security and the farmers who sustain the country's agricultural sector.

The assistance is expected to help farmers reinvest in their operations, maintain production and ensure Guyana's rice industry remains a key contributor to the economy and national food security.

CHEQUE DISTRIBUTION PHASE OF NATIONAL CASH GRANT ROLLOUT BEGINS



470,000 payouts has been processed

The government has commenced the third phase of the National Cash Grant Initiative, allowing eligible Guyanese who do not have bank accounts or who selected cheque payments to access their grants.

Senior Minister in the Office of the President with Responsibility for Finance, Dr Ashni Singh, said persons who

chose the cheque option through the official cash grant portal will be contacted once their payments are processed and informed where and when their cheques can be collected.

"Once we have cut those checks, we will be distributing them to several locations countrywide," Minister Singh said.

Recipients will

be able to monitor the progress of their applications through the cash grant portal, where updates will be provided once cheques are ready for collection. Teams will also contact beneficiaries using the telephone numbers submitted during registration.

The cheque distribution phase follows the successful rollout of direct

payments and targeted outreach exercises for persons living in remote communities and shut-ins.

Minister Singh said government agencies worked together to identify and support vulnerable beneficiaries, including using the Ministry of Human Services and Social Security's register of shut-in persons.

Teams were deployed across the nationwide to assist with registration and ensure that eligible persons were not left behind. In some cases, special arrangements were made for cheques to be prepared and delivered directly to beneficiaries at their homes.

More than 470, 400 cash grants have been processed, representing a \$47 billion injection into the disposable incomes of Guyanese citizens.



Charles Usher

For many senior citizens across Guyana, the cost of getting from one place to another can be a daily challenge. But a new \$20,000 annual transportation allowance is providing much-needed relief as the government begins distributing support to pensioners nationwide.

The rollout began on July 8 and will continue until November 8,



Vilma Usher

providing thousands of elderly Guyanese with additional assistance to manage transportation expenses.

The allowance is intended to help senior citizens cover everyday travel needs, including trips to medical appointments, shopping, and family visits.

For pensioners like Vilma Usher, the support means less worry about

PAYOUT UNDERWAY FOR NEW \$20,000 SENIORS TRAVEL ALLOWANCE

finding extra money whenever she needs to travel.

"I feel happy because the transportation fee can be difficult at times. Sometimes you don't have the money to pay, so now that I will be getting the \$20,000, I am very grateful," she said.

Charles Usher, who travels from St Cuthbert's Mission, said transportation costs can quickly add up, making the assistance especially valuable.

"It is a good

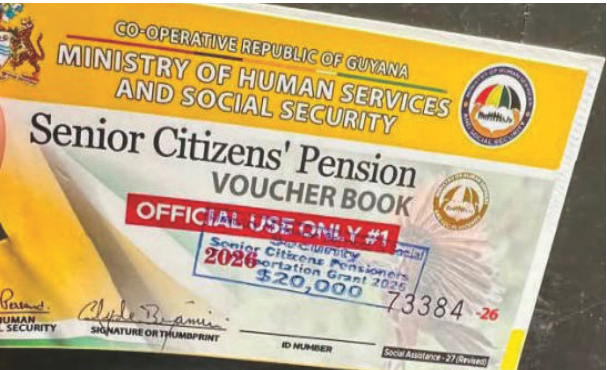
initiative. I am very appreciative of what the government is doing for senior citizens across the country," he said.

Patricia Lambert said the allowance will also help her plan her expenses better, knowing she has funds set aside specifically for transportation.

"I feel wonderful about receiving the \$20,000 for my transportation. I know whenever I want to go out, I have my transportation money put aside," she said.

The transportation allowance can be accessed through existing payment channels, with vouchers redeemable at approved agencies including MoneyGram, Western Union, and SurePay.

For many of Guyana's elderly citizens, the initiative represents more than financial assistance; it provides greater independence, mobility and peace of mind.



Government rolls out \$20,000 travel grant for seniors

YOUNG FARMERS LAUNCH 50,000-BIRDS POULTRY PROJECT IN BERBICE

A new generation of farmers is stepping forward to reshape Guyana’s agricultural landscape, with 30 young people from Upper Demerara and West Berbice joining forces to establish a modern tunnel-house poultry operation aimed at strengthening food production and creating sustainable livelihoods.

Operating as Coastal Agri Innovation Inn, the youth-led initiative is located at Onverwagt on the West Coast of Berbice and represents a major investment in technology-driven poultry farming.

The facility has the capacity to accommodate up to 50,000 birds per production cycle, showcasing the potential of modern farming methods to improve efficiency, increase production, and support national food security goals.

For participants, the project is more than an agricultural venture, it is an opportunity to build careers, gain technical skills and create income opportunities.

Akinni Barrington from Rosignol, West Bank Berbice, said the initiative is helping young people develop practical agricultural expertise while creating a pathway toward financial independence.

“As a youth, this tunnel house project will provide sustainable opportunities by helping me to



Youth and women take the lead in 50,000-bird poultry hub

advance in my agricultural skills. It will also help us to have a steady income and learn more about poultry,” he said.

Barrington added that the project contributes to wider food security efforts across the Caribbean.

“I want to thank the president for this initiative because we are part of an initiative which is helping us to secure food not only in Guyana but across the Caribbean,” he said.

For Shamar Hercules of C Field Village, the project has provided exposure to commercial poultry production on a scale he had never experienced before.

“We were able to acquire one of the manual pens that has the capacity of 50,000 birds that we can rear at a time. It increases my knowledge because I never did rearing of birds on this scale,” he explained.

The initiative also promotes greater inclusion, with women accounting for 30 per cent of participants.

The government has been supporting the expansion of the poultry industry through measures aimed at reducing production costs and improving competitiveness. These include lowering financing costs for farmers, strengthening the National Poultry

Association and investing in livestock health and nutrition systems.

The Guyana Livestock Development Authority has also received support to enhance quarantine, surveillance and nutrition laboratory capabilities, while additional measures include VAT removal on heavy-duty agricultural equipment, fuel tax reductions, flood relief support and fertiliser assistance.

As Guyana continues to modernise its agriculture sector, projects such as Coastal Agri Innovation Inn demonstrate how young entrepreneurs are using technology and innovation to help build a more resilient and food-secure future.

NEW FORESTRY CENTRE TO EQUIP 300 PERSONS ANNUALLY WITH SKILLS FOR SUSTAINABLE CAREERS

A new \$60 million forestry training centre at Yarrowkabra along the Soesdyke-Linden Highway is expected to create expanded opportunities for skills development, vocational training and sustainable livelihoods across Guyana.

The 2,500-square-foot facility, being constructed by the Guyana Forestry Commission (GFC), will significantly increase the commission’s ability to train communities, students and professionals interested in developing skills in forestry and related fields.

G F C’s Commissioner, Edward Goberdhan, said the new centre will serve trainees from communities across the country, including students from the Guyana School of Agriculture, the University of Guyana and residents of Region 10.

“We have an existing one there,



Forestry trainees during a practical field session. The new facility will expand hands-on training for 300 individuals annually.

but it is small, and it is not a modern facility. We’re also building a value-added facility there, so it will complement the classroom training with

practical sessions within a forestry environment,” Goberdhan explained.

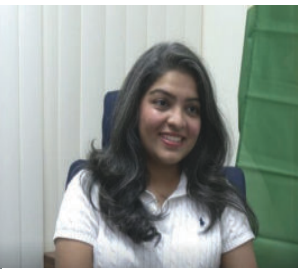
The centre is expected to train approximately 300 persons annually, providing participants with practical knowledge and technical skills to support careers in sustainable forest management and the wider forestry sector.

Among the planned programmes are courses designed to strengthen community forestry organisations and

promote responsible management of Guyana’s forest resources.

Construction is expected to begin in September. The project is being implemented under the Guyana Forestry Commission’s Sustainable Livelihood Project and funded by the Agence Française de Développement (AFD) through the European Union Forest Partnership Facility Programme.

The facility forms part of broader efforts to build local capacity while creating new economic opportunities linked to Guyana’s natural resources.



Arianna Seeraj

For many young Guyanese, the country’s natural resources sector is often viewed from a distance; through headlines about oil, mining, forests, and conservation. But through the Ministry of Natural Resources’ Youth in Natural Resources Apprenticeship Programme, students are gaining firsthand insight into the industries shaping Guyana’s future.

The programme has already impacted



Sarah Persaud

participants like fourth-year Geography student Rahul Changa, who joined with a desire to better understand how Guyana’s extractive industries operate while balancing development with environmental protection.

Speaking with the Department of Public Information (DPI), Changa said the experience expanded his knowledge of the agencies responsible for managing the country’s resources and strengthened his ability

YOUTH PROGRAMME OPENS DOORS INTO GUYANA'S RESOURCE SECTOR



Rahul Changa

to work with others.

“I didn’t think the Guyana Forestry Commission really played a big role before I did the programme. Now I’m much more aware of what they do and their importance,” he said.

For petroleum engineering student Sarah Persaud, the programme provided a deeper appreciation of Guyana’s wider

natural environment. While she initially joined to strengthen her understanding of the oil and gas sector, the experience broadened her awareness of forests, biodiversity and conservation.

Persaud said the programme offers value to students regardless of their chosen career path, exposing them to areas they may not have previously considered.

Programme Coordinator Arianna Seeraj explained that the initiative was created to introduce young people to Guyana’s mining, forestry, oil and gas sectors, while also highlighting the

of conservation, biodiversity management and environmental stewardship.

She noted that many young people are aware of Guyana’s expanding industries but may not fully understand the range of careers and opportunities available within them.

The programme combines classroom sessions with field-based learning, allowing participants to develop practical skills such as GPS navigation, map reading and compass use, while also strengthening communication, leadership and teamwork abilities.

Beyond technical training, Seeraj said the

programme serves as a career guidance tool, helping young people make informed choices about their future studies and professions.

Since its launch in 2021, approximately 200 young Guyanese between the ages of 16 and 25 have participated, gaining valuable exposure to the sectors responsible for managing and protecting Guyana’s natural wealth.

As the country’s resource industries continue to grow, the programme is helping to prepare a generation of skilled, informed and environmentally conscious Guyanese ready to play their part in shaping the future.

SIX NEW MAGISTRATES, FIVE COMMISSIONERS OF TITLE TAKE OATH OF OFFICE

Six new magistrates and five commissioners of title have officially joined Guyana’s justice system following a swearing-in ceremony at the Arthur Chung Conference Centre, where Prime Minister Brigadier (Ret’d) Mark Phillips underscored the importance of an independent judiciary.

Before members of the legal fraternity, the judiciary, and government officials, the newly appointed officers took their oaths of office, marking the

start of a new chapter in public service. The newly appointed magistrates are Ocelisa Marks, Nikkisha Logan, Jimelle Joseph, Shareefah Parks, Taneisha Saygon, and Caressa Henry, while the five commissioners of title are Deputy Registrar Alicia Lowenfield, Magistrates Annette Singh, Alisha George, and Shivani Lalaram, and Attorney-at-Law Utieka John.

Addressing the gathering, Prime Minister Phillips reaffirmed



Six New Magistrates, Five Commissioners of Title sworn in

the government’s commitment to upholding the constitutional separation of powers, making it clear

that the executive has no role in determining judicial appointments or influencing the work of the courts.

“We do not control the judiciary. We do not determine whom they appoint. We do not determine how they function,” he stated.

Instead, he explained, the government’s responsibility is to ensure the judiciary has the resources required to effectively administer justice.

Prime Minister Phillips noted that significant investments have been made since 2020 to modernise the justice system, including

the construction and rehabilitation of courthouses and the expansion of electronic litigation services in the High Court, Court of Appeal, and Caribbean Court of Justice.

Congratulating the appointees, the Prime Minister urged them to serve with integrity, professionalism, and fairness, noting that a strong and independent judiciary remains essential to public trust, national development, and investor confidence.

Guyana is strengthening its fight against organised crime by expanding its asset recovery framework, with the government moving to seize and forfeit properties and financial assets believed to have been acquired through criminal activity.

Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs Mohabir Anil Nandlall, SC, made the disclosure during the opening of the 2026 Annual General Meeting of the Asset Recovery Inter-Agency Network of the Caribbean (ARIN-CARIB) at the Guyana Marriott Hotel.

The regional network brought together law enforcement and judicial practitioners specialising in tracing, freezing, seizure and confiscation of criminal assets.

Minister Nandlall said asset recovery has become one of the most effective tools in confronting modern criminal networks, which increasingly operate across borders and exploit sophisticated financial systems.

“Asset recovery

GUYANA STEPS UP ASSET RECOVERY FIGHT TO STRIP CRIMINALS OF ILLEGAL WEALTH



ARIN-CARIB 2026 Confab

is no longer simply about identifying and confiscating criminal proceeds. It is about transforming the way our institutions operate, strengthening our legal framework, enhancing public confidence in the administration of justice, and ensuring that organised crime can never retain the financial rewards of criminal conduct,” he said.

The attorney general said Guyana’s approach

is shifting from simply securing convictions and imposing penalties to actively pursuing the financial gains obtained through illegal activity.

“The emphasis now going forward is on forfeiture, is to seize proceeds of crime,” Minister Nandlall stated. “We are now going to pursue the fines, and we are going to seize, using the law, properties that evidence suggests are the proceeds of crime or acquired through

criminal means and criminal proceeds.”

He said Guyana has already recorded successes through collaboration among the Attorney General’s Chambers, the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP), the Special Organised Crime Unit (SOCU), the Guyana Police Force, the Customs Anti-Narcotic

bank accounts and the detention of significant quantities of gold and other precious metals.

Minister Nandlall also revealed that amendments to Guyana’s Anti-Money Laundering and Countering the Financing of Terrorism (AML/CFT) legislation are being reviewed to strengthen confiscation provisions, improve

Ali-Hack, SC, stressed that modern crime is no longer limited by geography, with technology allowing criminal networks to operate across jurisdictions.

She said effective asset recovery depends on strong investigations, credible evidence and close cooperation among regional partners.



ARIN-CARIB 2026 Confab

Unit (CANU) and the Guyana Revenue Authority (GRA).

These efforts have resulted in court-approved actions, including the freezing of

investigative powers and bring the country’s framework further in line with international standards.

Director of Public Prosecutions Shalimar

Deputy Executive Director of the Regional Security System Atlee Rodney similarly warned that criminal organisations continue to evolve, making regional collaboration essential.

The ARIN-CARIB Annual General Meeting, held under the theme “From Tracing to Transformation: Building an Asset Recovery-Ready Caribbean,” highlights a regional commitment to ensuring criminals are deprived of the financial benefits of illegal activities.

GUYANA MOVES CLOSER TO REGIONAL LAW SCHOOL AS DESIGN PROCESS ADVANCES

Guyana is moving closer to establishing its own regional law school, a development expected to create greater opportunities for aspiring lawyers across the Caribbean.

Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs Mohabir Anil Nandlall, SC, announced that bids for the design

of the institution are currently being evaluated by the National Procurement and Tender Administration Board (NPTAB), marking a key step forward in the project.

The minister said the new law school will help address long-standing challenges faced by Guyanese students

who are restricted by limited spaces at existing regional institutions.

“It is going to be a regional law school... Guyanese will have access to it, and there will not be any limit to our numbers,” Minister Nandlall said.

He explained that the initiative forms part of Guyana’s

wider effort to expand tertiary education and professional training.

Guyana will also host the Council of Legal Education’s meeting in September, where members will be invited to review the proposed site and discuss the institution’s development.



Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs, Mohabir Anil Nandlall, SC

SILICA CITY, NEW SCHEMES TO DRIVE SOLUTION TO HOUSING DEMAND



President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali during the social media address

The government has unveiled a nationwide strategy aimed at eliminating Guyana’s housing backlog, with pending applications in most regions expected to be cleared by the end of 2027 as new housing schemes, land acquisitions and major infrastructure projects accelerate.

President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali, during a social media address, said the

government exceeded its commitment to distribute 50,000 house lots between 2020 and 2025, delivering approximately 53,000 lots during that period.

However, he noted that growing confidence in the economy and increased demand for homeownership have resulted in a national backlog of approximately 75,000 to 78,000 applications.

More than 50,000 of those applications are concentrated in Region Four, which remains the country’s biggest housing challenge due to limited land availability.

“As of early 2026, Guyana faces a housing backlog of approximately 75,000 to 78,000 pending applications. What is interesting is that over 50,000 of that backlog

is concentrated in Region Four,” President Ali said.

Under the government’s new strategy, Regions One, Three, Five, Six, Seven, Nine and Ten are expected to have their backlogs cleared by the end of 2027, while Region Eight is projected to achieve that milestone by the end of 2026.

For Region Two, the government is acquiring additional state and privately owned lands to meet current demand while preparing for future applications.

President Ali said Region Four requires a different approach, with the government investing heavily in new urban developments, particularly Silica City and housing expansion along the Linden-Soesdyke Highway.



President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali during the social media address

“The amount of land being acquired in Region Four currently can only clear 50 percent of this backlog by the end of 2027. That is why we are investing heavily in Silica City and opening up new housing areas along the Linden-Soesdyke Highway,” he said.

Silica City, Guyana’s planned smart urban

centre, will initially span approximately 3,800 acres, with future expansion expected to exceed 10,000 acres. The development is projected to accommodate about 60,000 residents and include housing, commercial activity, public services and modern infrastructure.

The president said the new city’s location, approximately 20

to 25 minutes from Georgetown, will provide families with greater access to affordable homeownership while reducing pressure on the capital.

He added that the government’s housing programme is moving beyond the distribution of house lots toward helping more Guyanese secure completed homes through improved financing options, affordable housing initiatives and targeted assistance.

Over the past five years, nearly \$240 billion has been invested in the housing sector, supporting the development of new communities and expanding access to homeownership.

“We believe that every Guyanese who is qualified, every Guyanese family qualified, should be able to live in their own home,” President Ali said.

Nearly 1,000 fixed-rate contracts have been awarded under the Ministry of Public Works’ small-contractor programme in the past three weeks, creating opportunities for local contractors while accelerating drainage and beautification works across Georgetown and other Region Four communities.

Speaking during a live broadcast on the ministry’s Facebook page, Minister of Public Works Bishop Juan Edghill said the initiative is designed to empower

UAE INVESTMENT PARTNERSHIP TARGETS GUYANA’S GROWING ENERGY DEMAND



1,000 small contractors commence draiange works across the City

emerging contractors and improve the communities in which they live and work.

The minister also addressed concerns about the quality of works being undertaken, stressing that contractors are required to carry out comprehensive drainage maintenance rather than superficial cleaning.

“These contracts are not for people to just come and weed the road edge, dip out

a couple of buckets of slush, and move on,” Minister Edghill stated.

Under the programme, contractors must remove all silt, slush, vegetation and debris from drains, clear culverts and bridges, and properly dispose of waste material. They are also tasked with cleaning alleyways, road shoulders, verges and parapets while removing accumulated garbage and other obstructions.

Minister Edghill said the ministry is closely monitoring the works to ensure contractors meet required standards.

Residents are encouraged to report concerns through the Ministry of Public Works hotline as the government continues its push to transform Georgetown into a cleaner, more resilient and well-maintained capital city.

3,000 TO 5,000 SOCIAL HOMES PLANNED FOR GUYANA’S MOST VULNERABLE FAMILIES



Government to launch social housing programme for vulnerable Guyanese

Thousands of vulnerable Guyanese are expected to benefit from a new social housing programme designed

to help those facing the greatest economic and social challenges secure safe and dignified homes.

President Dr

Mohamed Irfaan Ali announced that the initiative will become a major component of the government’s housing

agenda over the next five years, with between 3,000 and 5,000 social homes targeted for construction.

The programme will focus on citizens who often face the greatest barriers to homeownership, including single mothers experiencing financial hardship, persons living with disabilities and elderly citizens requiring additional support.

“We’re going to build a mechanism through which we’re going to identify highly vulnerable persons within our

society... and we’re going to have a social housing programme to support home ownership,” President Ali said.

The president explained that clear eligibility criteria will be developed to ensure assistance reaches families and individuals with the greatest need.

He said the initiative is part of a broader commitment to ensure housing is not only about providing land, but also about creating opportunities for families to live with security, comfort and dignity.

“We want to not only make home ownership easier, but to empower people, to bring dignity to every single Guyanese family in where they live, how they live and the circumstances surrounding their living condition,” he stated.

The social housing programme will complement the government’s wider target of constructing 40,000 housing units during its current term, while expanding access to affordable homeownership nationwide.

YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT HALVED AS GUYANA'S ECONOMY CREATES MORE THAN 100,000 JOBS



Senior Minister in the Office of the President with Responsibility for Finance Dr. Ashni Singh

Guyana's youth unemployment rate has fallen by more than half over the past four years as the country's expanding economy continues to generate new employment opportunities, Senior Minister within the Office of the President with responsibility for Finance, Dr Ashni Singh, has disclosed.

Speaking at the opening of the National Youth Skills Forum and Skills Search Expo 2026 at the Arthur Chung Conference Centre, Dr Singh said more than 104,000 jobs have been created since 2020, driven largely by growth in sectors such as construction, services, energy, and other productive industries.

He said the country's economic challenge has shifted from a lack of jobs to ensuring

enough skilled workers are available to meet increasing demand.

"The reality is jobs are being created more rapidly than we can produce people with the skills that are required to take up those jobs," Dr Singh said.

According to the minister, Guyana's overall unemployment rate declined from 12.8 per cent in 2020 to 6.8 per cent in 2024, while youth unemployment dropped from 30.2 per cent to 12.1 per cent during the same period.

Dr Singh said this presents a major opportunity for young Guyanese, who are being encouraged to pursue technical training, certification and entrepreneurship to benefit from the country's rapid development.

He noted that government investments in education, technical and vocational training, and higher education are already producing results, pointing to graduates from the University of Guyana and the Guyana Online Academy of Learning (GOAL) who have gained qualifications in fields supporting emerging industries.

Meanwhile, Minister of Labour and Manpower Planning Keoma Griffith announced that more than 2,200 persons have already benefited from skills training programmes offered through the Board of Industrial Training (BIT).

Speaking at the forum, Minister Griffith said BIT exceeded its

initial target of training 2,000 persons for the year and is now aiming to train an additional 2,000 persons by the end of 2026.

He said expanding skills development is critical as Guyana attracts new investment and sees the growth of new industries.

"Today's employers are looking beyond certificates. They are seeking individuals who possess technical competence, digital literacy, professionalism, integrity, teamwork, communication skills, and a strong work ethic," Minister Griffith said.

The minister also highlighted BIT's focus on green skills, noting that between 2020 and

2025 the organisation implemented 49 training projects in areas such as solar photovoltaic installation, electric vehicle maintenance and charging infrastructure.

The National Youth Skills Forum and Skills Search Expo brought together hundreds of young people, training institutions, government agencies and private sector representatives to connect participants with career pathways and opportunities.

Dr Singh urged young Guyanese to recognise the opportunities created by the country's transformation and prepare themselves to participate fully.

"You live in one of the fastest-growing economies in the world," he said. **"It means that more and more opportunities are being created for you, and these are the opportunities for you to seize."**

YOUNG DEBATERS SHARPEN SKILLS FOR FUTURE LEADERSHIP ROLES



Minister of Education, Sonia Parag handing over award to young debater

For a group of young Guyanese, the Speaker's National Youth Debating Competition 2026 was more than a contest, it was an opportunity to build confidence, strengthen communication skills and prepare for future leadership roles.

Minister of Culture,

Youth and Sports Charles Ramson congratulated the winning team, Helpful Hands, while commending all participants for their dedication and commitment throughout the competition.

He said the annual initiative plays an important role in developing young people by equipping them with skills that extend beyond the classroom.

"It has done a lot to develop young people and also start to impart some important skills that you will need throughout your life," Minister Ramson said.

He encouraged participants to make thoughtful decisions about their education and careers, noting that the skills they develop must align with the needs of a changing job market.

Minister of Education Sonia

Parag highlighted the importance of public speaking and confidence-building, saying the experience would benefit students regardless of the career paths they choose.

Minister of Labour and Manpower Planning Keoma Griffith also urged the young debaters to value the opportunity and use it as a stepping stone for personal growth.

This year's competition challenged students to debate whether countries should treat artificial intelligence systems as a national security asset, encouraging research, critical thinking and informed discussion on emerging global issues.



Minister of Culture, Youth and Sport, Charles Ramson

KITTY MARKET MOVES CLOSER TO REOPENING AS REHABILITATION EFFORTS RESUME



The Local Government Minister visiting the market

The Kitty Market has been a central part of community life for generations, providing a space where vendors earn livelihoods and residents access fresh produce and goods. However, years of delays have left the historic facility closed and traders waiting for its return.

Minister of Local Government and Regional Development Priya Manickchand recently visited the market to assess the progress of the long-awaited rehabilitation

project and engage vendors, municipal officials and key stakeholders on the way forward.

During the visit, the minister expressed disappointment over the extended closure of the market and the failure to maintain proper cleaning and sanitation of the facility during the delay.

"This cannot continue," Minister Manickchand told stakeholders, as vendors and residents also voiced their concerns about the prolonged situation.

The rehabilitation works, which began in 2016 under the Georgetown Mayor and City Council, faced repeated setbacks, including challenges with electrical infrastructure.

Representatives from Guyana Power and Light Inc. (GPL) said progress has now been made, with a transformer installed and utility poles erected. The remaining electrical connections are expected to be completed within weeks.

GPL representative Kesh Nandlall explained that each stall will be equipped with its own prepaid meter once vendors complete the required applications.

During a walkthrough of the market, vendors raised concerns about cleanliness, security, project timelines and the allocation of stalls when the facility reopens.

Minister Manickchand assured traders that the allocation process would be transparent and fair, while committing to ensuring the rehabilitated Kitty Market becomes a safe, modern and functional space for vendors and residents.



The Local Government Minister visiting the market

CHARACTER OVER PLACEMENTS - PRESIDENT ALI SHARES VITAL VISION AS NGSA SCORES HIT ALL-TIME HIGH



President Ali during his social media address

As thousands of Guyanese children celebrated their National Grade Six Assessment (NGSA) results, President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali delivered a message that went beyond grades and school placements: one examination does not determine a child's future.

Addressing students following the release of the 2026 results, the president congratulated every pupil who sat the examination, describing

been rewarded, and you should be proud of what you have accomplished," President Ali said.

He also encouraged students who may not have achieved the results they hoped for, reminding them that success is built through consistent effort and the choices they make each day.

"It is not the name of the school that determines your future. It is the commitment you bring into the classroom every single day," the president told students.

As pupils prepare to enter secondary school in September, President Ali reminded them that the next chapter of their education will be about more than academics. It will be a period where character is strengthened, lifelong friendships are formed and ambitions begin to

by parents, guardians and teachers, whose sacrifices, guidance and encouragement contributed to the students' achievements.

His message came as Guyana recorded its strongest NGSA performance in the history of the

score of 484.52, sharing the position of top performer.

The outstanding students represented schools across Regions Two, Three, Four, Six and Ten, as well as Georgetown, reflecting strong performances across multiple areas



Scene from the 2026 NGSA results ceremony

examination.

During the official release of the results at the Arthur Chung Conference Centre, Minister of Education Sonia Parag announced that the 2026 cohort produced the country's best-ever NGSA results, while also surpassing the regional benchmark.

A total of 15,706 students sat this year's assessment.

"These are the best and strongest National Grade Six Assessment results, not only over the past five years, but also the best result that has ever been recorded in our country's history," Minister Parag said.

For the first time in NGSA history, 20 students attained the highest standardised

of the country. Queen's College was the top school awarded to the largest number of high performers, with students also heading to St Stanislaus College, St Rose's High School, Bishops' High School and Port Kaituma Secondary School.

Exceptional results were also recorded in the hinterland, including Region Seven's Shristi Hardeo of Two Miles Primary School, Region Eight's Reid Levi Pereira of Mahdia Primary School and Region Nine's Jacob De Freitas of Arapaima Primary School.

The overall results showed improvements across all four subject areas.

According to Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC) Director

of Operations Dr Nicole Manning, the percentage of students achieving 50 per cent or more increased across English Language, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies when compared with 2025.

English Language recorded the highest pass rate at 73.08 per cent, while Mathematics recorded the largest improvement, increasing from 55.51 per cent in 2025 to 59.80 per cent this year. Science and Social Studies also recorded gains.

Dr Manning also highlighted an increase in the number of students attaining full marks across the subjects, alongside a decline in the number of students receiving zero scores.

For the first time in recent years, no candidate received zero marks in English Language or Social Studies, while Mathematics recorded its lowest number of zero scores in the past five years.

She said the improvements were achieved while maintaining strict quality assurance measures, including standardisation exercises, independent reviews, forensic checks and continuous monitoring throughout the marking process.

"This gradual improvement that you are seeing year-on-year is something you should be happy about because it is saying that whatever interventions you are doing, it is having an impact," Dr Manning said.

The results come amid continued



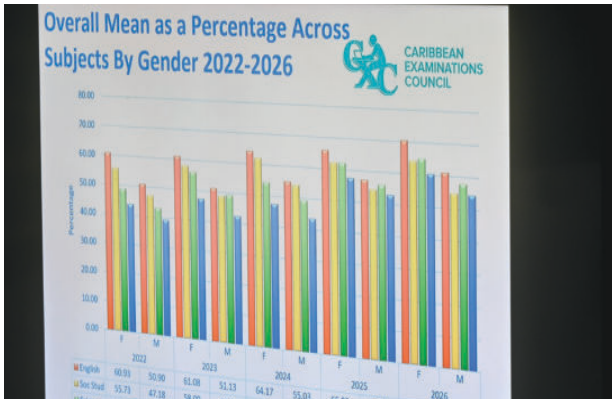
Scene from the 2026 NGSA results ceremony

investments in education, including expanded learning opportunities, improved infrastructure, teacher training and support programmes aimed at ensuring every child has access to quality learning.

Reaffirming that commitment, President Ali said the government will continue investing in the resources, facilities and opportunities needed to help every child realise his or her full potential.

"Our commitment is that no child should be denied the opportunity to achieve his or her fullest potential because of circumstance," the president said.

For thousands of students and their families, the 2026 NGSA results marked the end of one chapter and the beginning of another. While many celebrated placements at their schools of choice, the message from national leaders remained clear: achievement is not defined by a single score, but by the effort, choices and determination that follow.



Scene from the 2026 NGSA results ceremony

the achievement as an important milestone and a reflection of their perseverance, discipline and determination.

"I congratulate those who achieved outstanding results. Your hard work, discipline, and determination have

take shape.

"Your future will not be written by one examination. It will be written by thousands of choices you make from this day forward," he said.

The president also recognised the important role played

Chung Conference Centre.

Beginning in September, the Guyana Digital School will host curriculum content for Grades One to Eleven, providing students nationwide with 24/7 access to learning materials at no cost.

"This September, through the Guyana Digital School, we will take another significant step forward by making

Students across Guyana will soon have free online access to the complete primary and secondary school curriculum, as the government expands its digital learning programme through the Guyana Digital School.

The announcement was made by Education Minister, Sonia Parag during the release of the 2026 National Grade Six Assessment (NGSA) results at the Arthur



Guyana Digital School puts complete school curriculum online this September

the complete primary and secondary curriculum available online," Minister Parag announced.

She explained that the platform is intended to reinforce classroom learning by giving students additional educational resources that can be accessed from anywhere.

"It is a school that will have all of the curriculum and content from Grades

1 to 11 and will serve as a reinforcement to what is being taught in the classroom, free to every single child in Guyana," she said.

The initiative builds on the launch of the Guyana Digital School in December 2025 and forms part of the government's broader push to modernise education through technology.

ENTIRE SCHOOL CURRICULUM GOES DIGITAL IN SEPTEMBER

TWENTY STUDENTS SHARE TOP SPOT IN STUNNING NGSA RESULTS

For the first time in the history of Guyana’s National Grade Six Assessment (NGSA), 20 pupils have achieved the highest standardised score of 484.52, marking a historic milestone in the country’s education system and highlighting exceptional academic performances from schools across all regions.

Behind the impressive scores, however, are stories of discipline, sacrifice, and determination that began long before examination day.

Among the top performers is Divya Isha Persaud of New Guyana Primary School, who admitted that achieving the country’s highest score was beyond what she had imagined.

“I never thought I would even get in the top 10, much less first place,” she said.

Persaud attributed her success to months of focused preparation, balancing school, extra lessons, homework, and study sessions. She also paid tribute to her teachers, particularly those who guided her through Grades Five and Six.

“I’m very grateful for all the support and encouragement they gave me,” she said.

In Region Two, Giana De Silva of Better Hope Primary School is also celebrating a remarkable achievement. Still

overwhelmed by the results, she described her feelings as a mix of excitement and joy.

“I feel elated,” she told the Department of Public Information (DPI).

De Silva encouraged future NGSA candidates to remain committed to their studies and make regular use of past examination papers.

“You have to stay consistent with your books,” she advised, noting that confidence and persistence are just as important as academic ability.

She expressed gratitude to her parents, grandparents, teachers, friends, and everyone who supported her throughout her educational journey.

For Asiera Mohamed of Graham’s Hall Primary School, success was built over several years rather than a few months.

“This examination preparation started from the lower grades,” she explained.

Mohamed said she focused on understanding concepts rather than memorising information and regularly practised past papers to strengthen her confidence.

As she celebrated her achievement, she offered words of encouragement to next year’s candidates.

“Be determined and work and strive

for excellence,” she said.

She also thanked God, her parents, relatives, friends, and teachers, with special recognition for her Grade Five and Grade Six educators.

The 20 top

performers came from schools across Guyana, demonstrating the breadth of academic talent nationwide and underscoring the role played by dedicated teachers, supportive families, and strong school communities.

As thousands of pupils and their families celebrate this year’s NGSA results, the accomplishments of these young scholars stand as a powerful reminder that perseverance, hard work, and belief in one’s abilities can turn ambitious goals into historic achievements.

Chaitram Haripershad (Success Elementary) | Gaurav Deonarine (Success Elementary) | Nathalya Khan (Success Elementary) | Shivendra Brijbhukan (Success Elementary)

Region 5: Ranveer Itwaru (Mortice Primary)

Region 6: Kacy Hailie Kamal (Tain Primary)

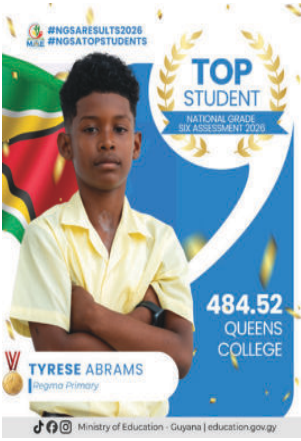
Region 7: Shruti Hardeo (Two Miles Primary)

Region 8: Reid Levi Pereira (Mahdia Primary)

Region 9: Jacob De Freitas (Arapaima Primary)

Region 10: Tyrese Abrams (Regma Primary)

Georgetown: Anjali Persaud (Mae’s Under 12) | Asiera Mohamed (Graham’s Hall Primary) | Divya Isha Persaud (New Guyana Primary) | Kayleigh Phillips (Westfield Prep) | Raiden Rambissoon (Westfield Prep) | Zahriya Niamatali (Mae’s Under 12)



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1.29 lb	1.99 lb	1.99 lb	2/\$3.00	3.99 pk	1.29 lb
1.29 lb	1.59 lb	1.99 lb	2.99 bag	3.99 lb	6.99 ea
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99c ea	9.99 ea	7.99 ea

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Chicken Breast 雞胸肉 25kg 290.00 case	Pork Intestine 豬大腸 10kg 50.00 case	Mr. Goudas Long Grain Rice 20kg 黃米 20kg 29.99 bag	Long Grain White Rice 20kg 優質絲苗米 29.99 bag	ADM All Purpose Flour 20kg 面粉 19.99 bag
P.R.B Monosodium Glutamate 50Lb 珠江橋牌味精 49.99 bag	Redpath Sugar 20kg 白糖 26.99 bag	Sunspun Canola Oil 菜油 16L 43.99 case	LKK Chun Oyster Flavoured Sauce 李錦記錦珍鮮味蠔油 6x2.2Kg 37.99 case	EP-28 Hinged 150pcs 餐盒 18.99 case
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98-16 Plastic Cold Cups (Clear) 1000pcs 杯子 55.99 case	98-FL Clear Straw Slotted Lid 1000pcs 透明帶孔吸管蓋 18.99 case	TS-018 MFPP Clamshell Container 餐盒 200pcs 20.99 case		

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GUYANA'S BRIGHTEST TALENT IC

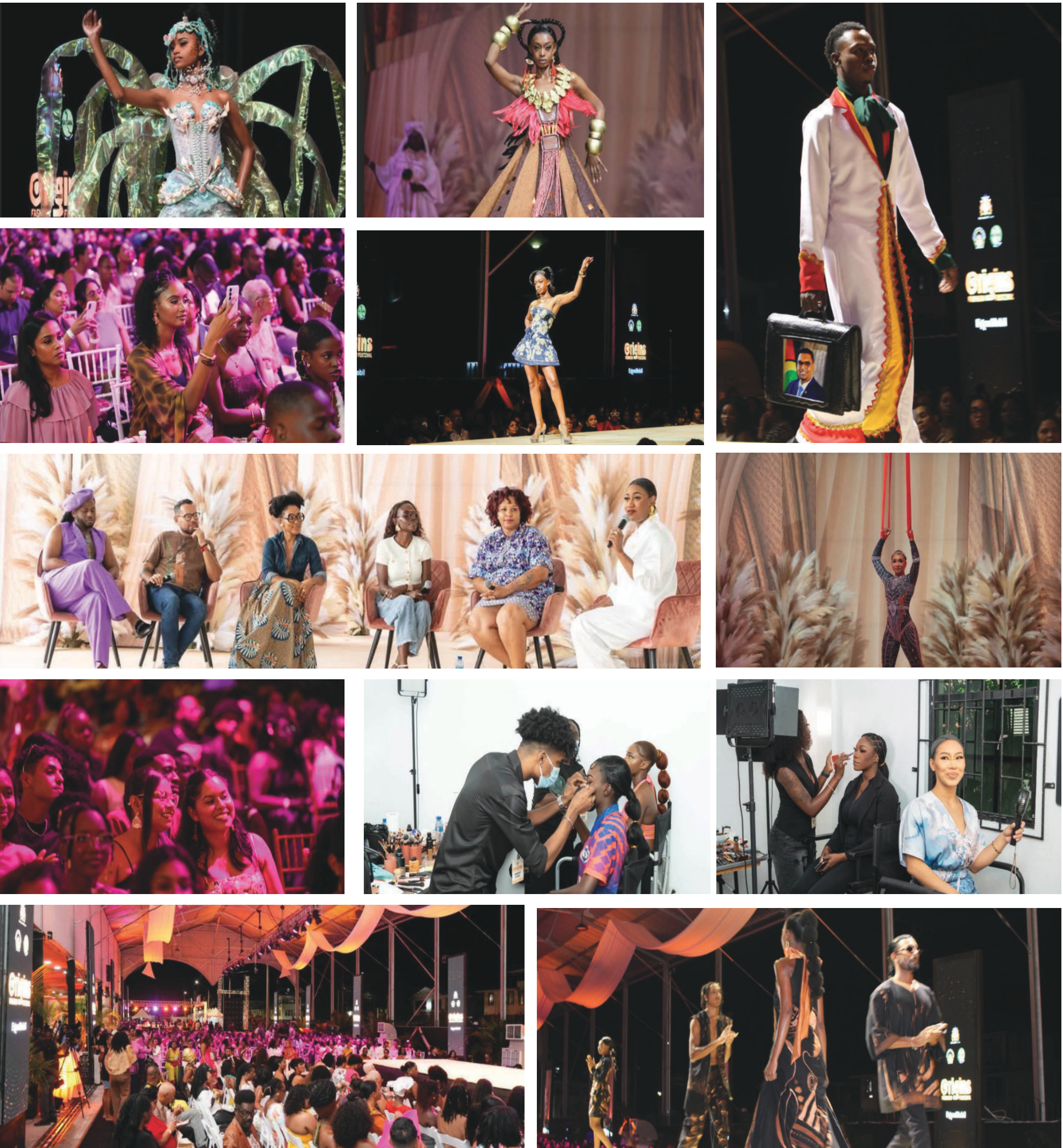
Guyana’s fashion scene took centre stage as the Origins Guyana Fashion Festival transformed the Railway Courtyard into a vibrant showcase of local talent, culture, and creativity.

Held under the theme “A Diamond Legacy: Fashioning 60 Years”, the three-day festival brought together designers, artisans, models, and creatives, celebrating the growing influence of Guyana’s fashion industry.

From bold runway collections to handcrafted jewellery, accessories and locally made products, visitors experienced the talent and innovation driving the country’s creative economy.

The festival featured runway showcases, exhibitions, workshops, panel discussions and cultural performances, creating a space for creatives to connect, promote their work and explore new opportunities.

As Guyana continues to invest in its orange economy, events like Origins are helping to elevate local designers and artisans while positioning fashion and creativity as powerful drivers of entrepreneurship, cultural pride and economic growth.



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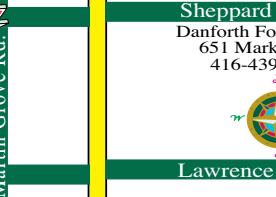
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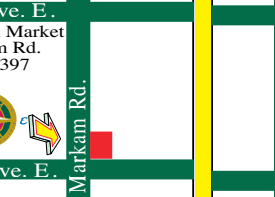
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GUYANA TAKING ESSENTIAL SERVICES DIRECTLY TO OVERSEAS CITIZENS



The engagement with the Guyanese living in St Lucia

Guyanese living overseas will soon have easier access to essential government services as the administration moves to establish mobile service centres in countries with significant diaspora populations. The initiative, announced by President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali during an engagement with Guyanese in Saint

Lucia, is aimed at taking government services directly to citizens abroad and reducing the need for costly and time-consuming travel to Guyana.

“We want, at least once every year in the beginning, to take the mobile government service across every country where we have a large diaspora, so we can service that diaspora with one unit, whether it’s NIS, birth certificates, replacement of any document and all of these things,” President Ali said.

The president explained that the programme forms part of Guyana’s broader push to modernise public service delivery

through technology and improved access.

He also announced that a mobile team will soon begin providing biometric passport services to Guyanese overseas, allowing many citizens to complete the process without having to return to Guyana.

President Ali highlighted the impact of newly established government service centres across the country, noting that many transactions that previously took weeks can now be completed within minutes because multiple agencies and services are available under one roof.

During the diaspora engagement, citizens were also invited to submit their concerns,

contact information and requests for assistance. These matters will be entered into a central database, allowing government agencies to track and respond to issues raised.

Meanwhile, Minister of Public Service, Government Efficiency and Implementation Zulfikar Ally encouraged Guyanese abroad to use the Citizens Connect mobile application, which provides another avenue for citizens to communicate directly with government agencies.

The minister said the platform allows users to submit complaints or concerns through their mobile devices and track the progress of their requests from



The engagement with the Guyanese living in St Lucia

submission to resolution. **“For any issue you have, you just put it there directly to the agency where you have the issue, and they have 24 hours to respond and work with you to fix the issue,”** Ally said.

He explained that users can monitor when their concern was submitted, which agency received it, responses provided and follow-up actions taken. Since its launch, approximately 800 matters have already been resolved through the platform, while remaining cases involve issues requiring longer processing periods.

The initiatives form part of the government’s wider effort to strengthen engagement with Guyanese overseas, improve access to public services and ensure citizens remain connected to Guyana’s development regardless of where they live.

Guyanese living overseas could soon access free online programmes from the University of Guyana (UG), as the government moves to extend tertiary education opportunities beyond national borders and deepen its connection with the global Guyanese community.

President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali announced the initiative during an engagement with Guyanese living in Saint Lucia, outlining plans to ensure that citizens abroad and their children can benefit from Guyana’s expanding

education system regardless of where they reside.

“We want to be able also to move to a position where our online platform at the University of Guyana can be available to our diaspora, wherever they are,” President Ali said.

The proposed expansion would allow Guyanese overseas to pursue online degree programmes through UG at no cost, mirroring the tuition-free access currently available to students in Guyana.

President Ali said

GUYANA TO OFFER FREE UG ONLINE DEGREE TO CITIZENS ABROAD

the initiative builds on the government’s wider investment in education, including the removal of tuition fees at UG and the expansion of the Guyana Online Academy of Learning (GOAL), which has opened access to tertiary education through partnerships with more than 40 international institutions.

He highlighted the continued growth of Guyana’s higher education capacity,

including the digitisation of teacher training programmes and the graduation of more than 30 doctoral candidates through the GOAL programme.

The president said expanding online education access to the diaspora forms part of a broader effort to ensure Guyanese abroad remain connected to the country’s development and benefit from national opportunities.



President Ali during an engagement with Guyanese living in Saint Lucia

BIT CULINARY GRADUATES PRIME FOR GUYANA'S FOOD SECTOR



Suzanne Bremer

For many Guyanese, a skill is more than a certificate; it is a pathway to independence, entrepreneurship and a better future.

That opportunity is being created through the Board of Industrial Training (BIT), which continues to equip citizens with practical

skills needed to enter the workforce or create their own businesses.

At the Eccles Skills Training Centre, 36 trainees recently completed the four-month Commercial Food Preparation Programme, gaining expertise in commercial cooking, baking, food safety, nutrition, menu planning and entrepreneurship.

The programme combined classroom learning with hands-on training, preparing participants to meet the demands of the culinary industry.

Technical Officer at the centre, Grace Andrews, said the programme was designed not only

to develop technical ability but also to build confidence, discipline and professionalism among trainees.

Among the graduates was 50-year-old entrepreneur Ulinda Softley, who joined the programme to strengthen her small business.

“I have a small business that I started last year, and I thought this programme would help to enhance it. You never stop learning, and I wanted to learn new things,” Softley said.

She encouraged others to take advantage of skills training opportunities, noting

that the knowledge gained can create lifelong benefits.

For Minister of Labour and Manpower Planning Keoma Griffith, the next step for graduates is turning their skills into businesses and economic opportunities.

Addressing the graduates, Minister Griffith encouraged them to look beyond receiving a certificate and consider entrepreneurship, highlighting opportunities available through the Guyana Development Bank.

He said skilled Guyanese can access financing of up to \$3 million with low collateral requirements to establish or expand



36 graduate from BIT's commercial food preparation programme

businesses.

“Move from having a certificate to establishing a business and eventually an enterprise. Nothing is stopping you,” the minister urged.

The impact of BIT’s work extends beyond the classroom and

across regions. Through programmes in culinary arts, welding, fabrication and other technical fields, BIT continues to provide Guyanese with practical skills that can lead to employment, entrepreneurship and greater economic participation.

International community rallies behind Guyana after MV Barima tragedy

THE international community has expressed an outpouring of sympathy and support for Guyana following the tragic capsizing of the MV Barima, with governments, regional organisations and diplomatic missions extending condolences and offering assistance as search-and-rescue operations continue.

Among the first to respond was the United States Embassy in Guyana, which said it was “deeply saddened” by the tragedy.

The Embassy of the People’s Republic of China also conveyed its sympathy, saying it was closely following developments and expressing concern for the passengers, crew members and their families.

The embassy said it sincerely hopes the search-and-rescue operation will proceed smoothly and that everyone aboard will return safely, adding that China stands ready to provide assistance in keeping with Guyana’s needs.

Across the Caribbean, governments and regional leaders also voiced solidarity with Guyana.

The Government of Belize extended condolences to President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali, the Government and people of Guyana, particularly families who have lost loved ones or are awaiting news of relatives. Belize also commended the dedication and courage of emergency responders involved in the rescue efforts.

Jamaican Prime Minister, Dr Andrew



The MV Barima — sank with 133 people on board

Holness, said he was deeply saddened by the capsizing and expressed solidarity with President Ali, the Government and people of Guyana.

The Government of The Bahamas likewise offered prayers and support to Guyana, reaffirming the close friendship between the two CARICOM member states while wishing for the safe recovery of those still missing and a speedy recovery for those injured.

Meanwhile, Trinidad and Tobago Prime Minister, Kamla Persad-Bissessar, extended condolences to President Ali and

the people of Guyana, while revealing that Trinidad and Tobago Defence Force air and naval assets, along with personnel, are assisting in the ongoing recovery effort.

“Trinidad and Tobago stands in solidarity with our brothers and sisters in Guyana as they anxiously await the safe return of their loved ones,” Persad-Bissessar said.

St. Kitts and Nevis Prime Minister, Dr Terrance Drew, said the people and Government of his country stand with Guyana during this difficult time.

“In moments like these, we are re-

minded that the Caribbean is one family,” he said while offering prayers for those still unaccounted for and support for rescue personnel.

In a statement, the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) said it was deeply saddened by the tragedy and continued to closely monitor the ongoing search-and-rescue operation.

CARICOM paid tribute to the courage, dedication and selfless efforts of rescue teams, including members of the Guyana Government, private vessel operators and emergency responders who mobilised overnight under difficult conditions.

“The Community stands in solidarity with the Government and people of Guyana, particularly the families and communities affected by this unfolding disaster,” the statement said.

The Delegation of the European Union in Guyana also expressed sadness over the incident, extending its thoughts to those still missing and their loved ones while commending the tireless efforts of the search-and-rescue teams.

“The European Union stands in solidarity with Guyana during this difficult time,” the delegation said.

The messages of support continue to pour in as Guyana presses ahead with an extensive search-and-rescue operation to account for all passengers and crew members who were aboard the MV Barima when it capsized off the country’s coast.

Our Family Caring for Your Family

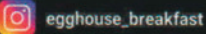
Sending best wishes to the community as you celebrate the
60th Anniversary of Guyanese Independence.



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Guyana helping Caribbean countries strengthen agriculture

GUYANA is playing an increasingly important role in strengthening agriculture across the Caribbean, with local technical experts helping several regional countries build capacity as they work towards improving food security, Minister of Agriculture Zulfikar Mustapha has said.

The minister was at the time delivering remarks at the recent commissioning of a state-of-the-art tunnel-ventilated poultry pen project, during which he indicated that Guyana's transformation into a regional agricultural leader has enabled it to share its expertise with neighbouring countries seeking to expand food production.

According to the minister, Guyana's technical personnel are already working in several Caribbean states to support the development of their agricultural sectors.

"Guyana is now helping to build capacity. Guyana have their technical people working and helping out in those countries to build their agricultural sector. That is the importance of food security," Mustapha said.

He explained that under President Dr Irfaan Ali's leadership of CARICOM's agriculture and food security agenda, there has been renewed regional interest in expanding agricultural production, particularly in countries whose economies have traditionally relied on sectors such as tourism and energy.

Mustapha identified Barbados, Trinidad and Tobago, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia and Grenada among the countries making greater investments in agriculture.

"Since he has taken up the mantle of leadership in that area, we have seen a renewed interest not only in Guyana, but across the Caribbean countries," the minister said.

He noted that Guyana's efforts are aligned with CARICOM's commitment, adopted in Belize in 2021, to reduce the region's food-importation bill by 25 per cent through increased local production.

Mustapha expressed confidence that the regional target could be achieved, arguing that Guyana's continued expansion of agricultural production would be central to its success.

"If that has to be successful, then Guyana has to be successful," he said, adding that he was optimistic the initiative would become a reality by 2030.

Against this backdrop, the minister also pointed to investments being made to support Guyana's own agricultural expansion, including the construction of a grain hub at Yarrowkabra and preparations to capitalise on the planned regional ferry service, which is expected to improve the movement of agricultural produce among Caribbean countries. He said these initiatives would position Guyana not only to satisfy domestic demand, but also to increase exports to regional markets.

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SCAN ME

"NO NEW BENEFITS"- AG DEFENDS FORMER PRESIDENTS' BILL, SAYS LEGISLATION ENSURES EQUAL TREATMENT

Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs Anil Nandlall, SC, has rejected criticism surrounding the Former Presidents' Benefits and Other Facilities Bill 2026, insisting that the proposed legislation does not create new benefits but seeks to ensure equal treatment for all former Presidents of Guyana.

Speaking during his Issues in the News programme, AG Nandlall said the bill has been the subject of what he described as a deliberate campaign of misinformation and distortion.

"I see in certain political quarters that a deliberate



His Excellency Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali (second from left), along with former Presidents Dr Bharrat Jagdeo, Mr Donald Ramotar, and Mr Samuel Hinds

campaign has been deployed designed to mislead, distort, and scandalise the Former President's Benefits and Other Facilities Bill of 2026," he said.

The attorney general explained that the legislation largely mirrors the Former Presidents' Benefits and Other Facilities Act of 2009, which established a legal framework for

benefits provided to former Heads of State.

"First, the bill is simply a replication of the Former President's Benefits and Other Facilities Act of 2009. There has been absolutely no material addition to or subtraction therefrom," he stated.

AG Nandlall said the 2009 law was introduced to provide a clear legal basis for benefits that had previously existed through administrative arrangements, which he argued could have been changed by any sitting government.

He further claimed that while the APNU+AFC administration repealed the 2009 Act in 2015, the replacement legislation could not remove benefits already granted because laws do not operate retrospectively.

"They passed a law that they told the people would rescind all the benefits that former Presidents were getting, but the law could not operate retroactively. So, the law had no teeth," he said.

The attorney general also pointed to the Hamilton Green Pension Bill passed in 2017, arguing that similar considerations were extended to a former Prime Minister long after leaving office.

He maintained that the 2026 bill is designed to establish fairness and

consistency for all former Presidents, regardless of political background.

"The 2026 Bill is intended to restore the dignity to the office of a former President and to bring certainty and equity to the entitlements of that office to ensure that all former holders of that office enjoy equal treatment," AG Nandlall said.

He rejected suggestions that the measure is intended to benefit President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali, stressing that the legislation would apply equally to former President David Granger and future holders of the office.

GUYANA PROPOSES REGIONAL 'CYBER SHIELD' AT DEFENCE MINISTERS SUMMIT

Prime Minister Brigadier (Ret'd) Mark Phillips has called on defence leaders across the Americas to strengthen collective security, deepen cooperation, and develop coordinated responses to the evolving threats confronting the region.

Addressing the XVII Conference of Defence Ministers of the Americas (CMDA), Prime Minister Phillips said countries must move beyond isolated approaches and work together to build a more resilient and secure hemisphere.

"The principles of collective security, mutual respect, and stability that have bound us together since 1995 are not mere historical relics; they are our



PM Phillips addresses 17th Defense Ministers Conference

guiding stars today more than ever," he stated.

The Prime Minister reaffirmed Guyana's commitment to peace, international law and the peaceful resolution of disputes, while stressing that national sovereignty

remains non-negotiable.

"Guyana seeks not to be a theatre of conflict, but a zone of peace and a pillar of stability," he said, highlighting the country's continued participation in the International Court of Justice process

requiring stronger regional partnerships.

Prime Minister Phillips also outlined Guyana's evolving approach to security, which now incorporates economic resilience, environmental protection and climate preparedness.

He stressed that threats such as climate change and food insecurity must be treated as security concerns, declaring that "food security is national security."

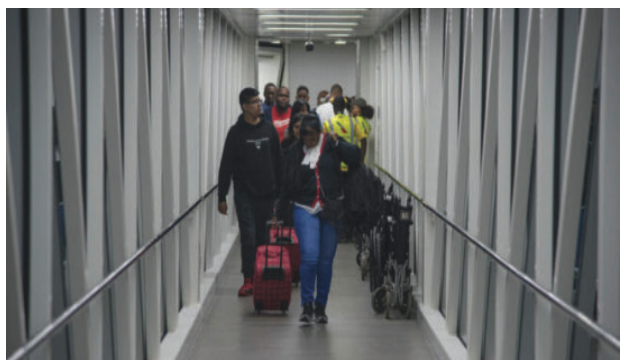
The Prime Minister highlighted Guyana's investments in modernising its defence capabilities through technology, including artificial intelligence, digital systems and enhanced surveillance tools to monitor its land borders and maritime space.

He also called for greater regional

cooperation on cyber defence, including the development of a "Cyber Shield" to protect critical infrastructure, while emphasising that AI must be guided by transparency, human oversight and respect for human rights.

Guyana's role in regional humanitarian assistance was also highlighted, with Prime Minister Phillips pointing to the country's support for neighbours affected by natural disasters, including recent relief assistance provided to Venezuela following devastating earthquakes.

He urged hemispheric partners to strengthen cooperation not only during crises but also through sustained efforts to build a safer, more resilient and prosperous Americas.



Visitors arriving at CJIA

Guyana's aviation sector has recorded unprecedented expansion over the past five years, with the Cheddi Jagan International Airport (CJIA) experiencing

significant increases in aircraft movements, passenger traffic, available seats and cargo activity.

Data from the airport shows that international aircraft

CJIA CLOSES IN ON MILLION PASSENGER MILESTONE AFTER 432% GROWTH

landings increased from 1,646 in 2020 to 5,827 in 2025, representing a 254 per cent increase. The number of landings also grew by 14.6 per cent between 2024 and 2025, reflecting continued demand for air connectivity to and from Guyana.

Passenger movement recorded even stronger growth, rising from 182,736 in 2020 to 973,016 in 2025,

an increase of 432.5 per cent. Passenger traffic also increased by 13.6 per cent over the previous year.

The expansion of airline services has resulted in greater travel options for passengers, with available seats increasing from 341,506 in 2020 to 1,708,095 in 2025, representing growth of more than 400 per cent.

Cargo operations

have also expanded alongside Guyana's growing economy. Cargo imports and exports increased from 7.66 million kilogrammes in 2020 to 14.43 million kilogrammes in 2025, an 88.5 per cent increase, with volumes rising a further 6.3 per cent between 2024 and 2025.

CJIA said the growth reflects the impact of continued investments in national infrastructure,

tourism, agriculture and economic development, which have strengthened Guyana's position as a regional gateway.

The CJIA management said that increased connectivity and cargo capacity are supporting greater movement of people, goods and investment while linking Guyana more closely with international markets.

10 DAYCARES FUNDED TO CREATE CHILD-FRIENDLY SPACES



Daycare centres receive grants to create safer, higher-quality learning environments

Ten daycare operators from across Guyana are receiving a boost to improve their facilities and create safer, more stimulating environments for children as the government expands its investment in early childhood development. Each operator received a \$200,000 cash grant under the Childcare and Protection Agency’s Enhancement of Childcare and Early Learning Facilities initiative, aimed at helping daycares upgrade their services and transition into Centres of Excellence. The grants were presented during the second National Early Childhood Development

Sunlight Daycare owner Abiola Walls, the grant will assist with replacing damaged items and purchasing additional equipment, toys and furniture. “I am very grateful, and my school will benefit tremendously from it,” she said. Onica Peters-Fraser

assure you it is going to go towards making our centre a whole lot more child-friendly,” she said. The initiative forms part of a wider government effort to strengthen childcare services nationwide. Guyana now has 25 Centres of Excellence, while 100 daycare



Daycare centres receive grants to create safer, higher-quality learning environments



Daycare centres receive grants to create safer, higher-quality learning environments

of Fraser Foundation described the support as a timely investment that will help make her facility more child-friendly. “I am elated. I am overjoyed. I feel that the governing body has our interest at heart, and I can

operators have collectively received \$10 million in grants to improve their facilities. Minister of Human Services and Social Security Dr Vindhya Persaud said 352 childcare facilities have been licensed and 376 centres registered as

part of efforts to ensure providers meet required standards. More than 1,100 childcare practitioners have also received Early Childhood Development training, while the Women Innovation and Investment Network (WIIN), in partnership with the Childcare and Protection Agency, has trained more than 6,000 people in childcare over the past five years. The minister said the government’s new Co-Invest Initiative will further expand access to care by training hundreds of persons to provide home-based and community-based childcare services. With an investment

of \$1.2 billion, the initiative aims to establish care centres across all regions, while the childcare subsidy programme continues to support working parents. To date, 460 parents have received a combined \$25 million in assistance. The National Early Childhood Development Conference, organised by the Childcare and Protection Agency in partnership with UNICEF and the Government of Canada, brought together stakeholders under the theme: “It Takes a Village: Uniting Hearts and Minds for Early Childhood.”

NEW KITCHENS IMPROVE SCHOOL EXPERIENCE FOR BASHAIZON AND BARACARO STUDENTS



Anjalie Henry – Head teacher for the Baracaro Nursery school

In two remote Indigenous communities, new investments in school facilities are helping to improve the daily experiences of students by making access to nutritious meals easier and more convenient. In Bashaizon Village in the Deep South Rupununi, a new \$5 million school kitchen funded through Guyana’s Low Carbon Development Strategy (LCDS) is strengthening the school’s hot meal programme by providing a dedicated space for

preparing and serving food closer to students. Previously, meals were prepared at the village kitchen and transported to the school. With the new facility, pupils can now access breakfast and lunch more conveniently. Senior Councillor Jacintha Johnson told the Department of Public Information (DPI) that the project has already made a positive difference for students, teachers, and parents, although additional equipment and furnishings are still being added.

“I think it’s an improvement for the school children. Before, they used the village kitchen, but now I think it is much nearer and it benefits the children and the school,” Johnson said. The hot meal programme currently supports 39 nursery and primary school pupils, along with six teachers, helping to ensure children receive meals during the school day. Johnson said the initiative has also eased pressure on parents while encouraging better attendance and

participation. “Everybody is glad to get the hot meal. We were worried because children were not taking their lunch, but now at least they are eating something, taking breakfast or lunch at the school,” she explained. Meanwhile, in another remote Indigenous community in the Lower Pomeroon area of Region Two, Baracaro Primary School is also seeing the benefits of an expanded school meal programme. Acting Headmistress

Lalitha France said the initiative has become an important source of support for families, allowing children to receive breakfast and lunch at school. “The breakfast programme is very good, because in the morning parents don’t have to wake up and prepare meals for the children. When they reach the school, they leave their bags and go to the kitchen for their breakfast,” France said.

The programme now prepares meals for approximately 150 people, including nursery and primary pupils and teachers. Meals include breakfast, lunch, locally prepared fruit juices and coconut water. The initiative also supports local livelihoods, with the school purchasing chicken from poultry farmers within the village and sourcing produce such as coconut, cherries and pineapples from



Lalitha France - Head teacher for the Baracaro Nursery school

community members. Beyond nutrition, Baracaro Primary continues to benefit from investments in teacher development, with educators pursuing training while remaining in their communities. Together, these initiatives demonstrate how targeted investments in hinterland education are helping to create healthier learning environments and stronger support systems for children and families.



New \$5M school kitchen at Bashaizon Village

GUYANA'S GAS-TO-ENERGY GRID ALMOST READY

Guyana's transition toward a more reliable and affordable energy future is moving closer to reality, with the country's Gas-to-Energy transmission network almost completed.

The massive infrastructure project, which will transport electricity generated at the Wales natural gas facility to communities and businesses across the Demerara-Berbice Integrated System, represents a critical step in reducing Guyana's dependence on costly imported fuels.

The update was provided exclusively to the Department of Public Information (DPI) by Head of the Gas-to-Energy Taskforce and Ministry of Natural Resources Consultant Winston Brassington.

Brassington described the transmission system as the backbone of the project, explaining that it will function as an "electrical highway" carrying power from Wales across the Demerara River and into areas that require a stable electricity supply.

Currently, Guyana Power and Light Incorporated (GPL) relies heavily on imported Bunker C fuel to generate electricity. Once operational, the Gas-to-Energy project will introduce natural gas-powered generation, replacing more expensive heavy fuel oil and helping reduce electricity costs for consumers.

"This is not simply about electricity; this is about creating



Electrical towers along the East Bank Demerara

opportunities, lowering costs and building prosperity," President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali has previously said, describing the project as a foundation for Guyana's transformation into a more competitive and industrialised economy.

The scale of the infrastructure is already visible across the Demerara landscape. According to Brassington, crews have installed 370 transmission towers and poles while stringing approximately 82 kilometres of power lines.

Among the most notable structures are four massive river-crossing towers spanning the Demerara River. Rising up to

150 metres, the towers support a double-circuit transmission system designed to move electricity safely and efficiently across the waterway.

The completed network includes a 230-kilovolt transmission backbone stretching from Wales to Goedverwagting, supported by additional 69-kilovolt corridors serving the West Bank, Georgetown and the East Coast.

Three new substations, along with upgrades at Vreed-en-Hoop, are also significantly advanced and will support the efficient distribution of electricity nationwide.

Brassington noted that procurement of transmission materials has been completed and the project has achieved more than two million safe man-hours without a fatality.

When energised, the network will deliver electricity from the new 300-megawatt power plant being constructed at Wales.

The first gas turbine is expected to come online by the end of 2026, with all turbines expected to be commissioned by the first quarter of 2027 and full combined-cycle operations targeted for June 2027.

The Gas-to-Energy project is expected to significantly reduce electricity generation costs, lower reliance on imported fuel and create new opportunities for industrial growth as Guyana advances toward a more resilient and diversified energy sector.

NEW NATIONAL SECURITY TOWER ON BRICKDAM TO UNIFY POLICE OPERATIONS



New security tower to serve as Central Police Headquarters

The new National Security Tower on Brickdam is taking shape as a symbol of Guyana's push to build a more modern, technology-driven and efficient police force.

Senior Minister in the Office of the President with Responsibility for Finance, Dr Ashni Singh, who was performing the duties of Minister of Home Affairs, inspected ongoing works at the

the old Brickdam Police Station. It is a major investment in building a truly modern police force equipped to meet the requirements of a modern Guyana," he said.

The minister



New security tower to serve as Central Police Headquarters

highlighted that the facility forms part of a wider transformation

strengthening the force's ability to prevent and investigate crime while improving the quality of services delivered to citizens.

During the visit, Dr Singh urged contractors to ensure the project is completed before the end of the year, noting the building has already become a defining feature of Georgetown's landscape.

When completed, the National Security Tower will serve as the Guyana Police Force's central headquarters, bringing key operations and services together under one roof.

The facility will support the force's digital transformation agenda while improving coordination, efficiency and public service delivery.



New security tower to serve as Central Police Headquarters

NEW ONDERNEEMING FIRE STATION TO DRASTICALLY CUT ESSEQUIBO RESPONSE TIMES



Onderneeming Fire Station under construction

Construction of the new Onderneeming Fire Station in Region Two is progressing steadily, bringing the Essequibo Coast closer to expanded emergency response services and improved fire protection.

The facility, being developed as part of efforts to strengthen the Guyana Fire Service

(GFS), will provide an additional base for firefighters and emergency personnel, helping to improve response times and safeguard communities across the region.

For years, emergency operations in Region Two have relied mainly on the Charity and Anna Regina Fire Stations.

Once completed, the Onderneeming facility is expected to reduce pressure on those stations while increasing the GFS' operational capacity.

The Ministry of Home Affairs said the project forms part of wider efforts to modernise fire services nationwide, including

measures introduced following the devastating Charity fire in 2023.

Under the 2026 National Budget, \$52.1 billion has been allocated to the Ministry of Home Affairs to support upgrades and expansion of security and emergency services.

GUYANA GREENLIGHTS NEW OIL EXPLORATION BEYOND STABROEK BLOCK



Minister of Natural Resources Vickram Bharrat

Guyana is entering a new phase of petroleum development as the government accelerates exploration beyond the world-renowned Stabroek Block, opening new opportunities for investment, employment and economic growth.

Minister of Natural Resources Vickram Bharrat said the country's expanding oil sector is now attracting new operators, with exploration activities advancing under recently signed petroleum agreements.

Speaking on the *Starting Point* Podcast, Minister Bharrat disclosed that the consortium of TotalEnergies, QatarEnergy, and Petronas has already begun seismic surveys offshore Guyana.

He explained that the surveys represent an important first step in identifying potential hydrocarbon deposits before exploration drilling begins.

"We are very happy that they are progressing in just a short period of time... they already have a vessel in Guyana's waters conducting the seismic survey," Minister Bharrat said.

The minister noted that once the seismic data is analysed and confirms potential resources, operators will move toward drilling exploration wells.



An FPSO offshore Guyana

Guyana is also advancing exploration opportunities in other offshore areas, including the Berbice Block, following an agreement with the Dominican Republic.

Minister Bharrat said the block was already available after being relinquished by a previous operator and will now undergo renewed exploration activity.

"We have given them a very short timeframe, and within four to six months, we must see

some kind of activity in the Berbice Block," he stated.

According to the minister, exploration in the area could generate new economic opportunities for Region Six through employment, local business activity, transportation, housing and services.

He also addressed the petroleum agreement with Cybele Energy, noting that while the company has requested additional time to meet its signing bonus obligation due to investor-related challenges, government

continues to engage to ensure compliance.

Minister Bharrat said the company has established a local office, hired Guyanese workers and met other financial requirements, including licence and environmental fees.

Meanwhile, the minister highlighted the rapid expansion of Guyana's petroleum sector, noting that oil production has grown from approximately 80,000 barrels per day in 2020 to more than 900,000 barrels per day.

With additional FPSO (floating production, storage, and offloading) vessels expected to come online, production capacity is set to increase further.

Minister Bharrat said the government has maintained transparency in managing the sector by making production figures, licences,

environmental permits and oil revenues publicly available.

He added that oil revenues are being directed toward national development, including infrastructure, education, housing, employment and business growth.

Responding to criticism, the minister pointed to the thousands of Guyanese benefitting directly and indirectly from the sector.

"When we have 7,000 Guyanese trained and employed in the oil and gas sector, that is 7,000 families putting up their hands and saying, 'I have benefitted from the oil and gas sector,'" he said.

Minister Bharrat maintained that Guyana's petroleum strategy is focused not only on production, but on ensuring the sector creates lasting opportunities for citizens and communities across the country.

Minister of Natural Resources Vickram Bharrat has renewed the government's call for qualified Guyanese working in the oil and gas sector to receive the same salaries as expatriate employees performing identical roles.

Speaking on the *Starting Point* podcast, Minister Bharrat said Guyana's workforce has evolved significantly since the country's first oil discovery, with many citizens now possessing the qualifications, technical training and industry experience required for highly specialised positions.

According to the minister,

GUYANESE OIL WORKERS DESERVE SAME SALARIES AS EXPATRIATES - NATURAL RESOURCES MINISTER



Welding onboard the Liza Destiny floating production storage and offloading (FPSO) – Guyana's first oil development

Guyanese who have attained comparable qualifications and experience to foreign workers should not be paid less simply because

of their nationality.

"Ten years after discovery to production, we have Guyanese who have upskilled themselves,

who went abroad and studied on scholarships or on their own. We have Guyanese who qualify themselves through technical training colleges in Guyana, and they are on FPSOs (floating production, storage, and offloading vessels) working alongside Exxon," he stated.

Minister Bharrat argued that salary structures should be based on skills, qualifications and job responsibilities rather than whether

an employee is local or expatriate.

He explained that if a Guyanese reservoir engineer possesses the same qualifications and five years of experience as an expatriate colleague performing the same duties offshore, both employees should receive equal compensation.

While acknowledging that expatriate workers may receive additional allowances linked to relocation and overseas assignments, the minister maintained that base salaries should

remain equitable.

The issue has already been raised with key operators in the sector, including ExxonMobil, SBM Offshore and MODEC. According to Bharrat, these companies have expressed support for the principle of fair compensation.

The minister said the government's position reflects the growing maturity of Guyana's oil and gas workforce, with increasing numbers of citizens now filling technical and operational roles that were once largely occupied by foreign personnel.

GUYANA'S E-ID SET TO EXPAND ACROSS CARICOM

Guyana's electronic identification (e-ID) system is gaining regional attention, with several CARICOM member states expressing interest in integrating their digital identification platforms to support easier and more secure travel across the region.

Minister of Public Service, Government Efficiency and Implementation, Zulfikar Ally announced that discussions on expanding e-ID

integration gained momentum following his participation in the 51st Regular Meeting of the Conference of CARICOM Heads of Government in Saint Lucia alongside President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali.

Guyana and Barbados have already taken the first step toward passport-free regional travel through an agreement that will allow citizens of both countries to use their national e-ID cards for

travel between the two states.

Minister Ally encouraged Guyanese who have not yet registered for their e-ID cards to do so, noting that the system's benefits will continue to grow as more regional partnerships develop.

The initiative forms part of efforts to create a modern, secure and interconnected Caribbean digital identification network.



CARICOM nations move to adopt Guyana's e-ID system

TWO SINGLE MOTHERS RECEIVE NEW HOMES IN OREALLA-SIPARUTA



Clarine Hendrix

For years, single mothers Clarine Hendrix and Helouise Simon dreamed of having a place they could truly call their own. Today, that dream has become a reality.

The two women are now settling into newly constructed homes in Orealla-Siparuta

Village, Region Six, after benefiting from a government-supported housing initiative aimed at assisting vulnerable Indigenous families.

For Hendrix, the moment is still difficult to put into words.

“I feel excited. I feel glad. I’m proud. I’m grateful. I feel free because I get my own home,” she said during an interview with the Department of Public Information.

Having previously lived with her mother, Hendrix now shares her home with her son and grandchild, providing her family with a level of privacy and stability they had long hoped for.

For Simon, a single



Helouise Simon

mother raising five children, the new house represents independence and peace of mind after years of relying on others for accommodation.

“I am glad for this home, and I don’t have to depend on anyone. I am a single mother. I am glad and thankful for the

support from the government and the village council,” she said.

The homes were built by the Orealla-Siparuta Village Council with support from the Ministry of Amerindian Affairs under a housing initiative announced during the 2025 National Toshias Council (NTC) Conference. The programme was designed to help Indigenous communities address urgent housing needs among vulnerable residents.

According to Toshao Laurence Vandenburg, the two families were selected after the village council assessed housing conditions and identified



One of the homes

those most in need of assistance.

The village received \$3 million through the initiative and supplemented the funding with additional resources to complete both homes, each costing approximately \$1.9 million.

“Being able to complete that with the help of the government, I feel really proud as

a leader. The two families no longer have to worry about where they will stay, and their children now have a much safer, cleaner environment,” Vandenburg said.

For Hendrix and Simon, the houses are more than structures of wood and concrete. They are symbols of security, dignity and a brighter future for their children.

GOVT LAUNCHES NEW PROGRAMME TO JUMPSTART CONSTRUCTION IN REGION THREE



Housing Ministry offers pre-built options starting at \$600,000

For many Guyanese families, receiving a house lot is a major milestone. Yet for some, turning that plot of land into a home can take years due to construction costs, labour shortages, and difficulties finding reliable contractors.

To help bridge that gap, the Ministry of

Housing and Water has launched a new Foundation Programme aimed at helping allottees in the Leonora and Meten-Meer-Zorg Housing Schemes take the first step toward homeownership.

Speaking at the programme’s launch, Minister of Housing and

Water Collin Croal said the initiative is part of the government’s broader effort to move beyond land allocation and provide practical support that enables families to begin building.

“Every single day...the real work is what you don’t see, as to how we get to these occasions,” Minister Croal said, referring to the extensive investments made to prepare housing developments, including land acquisition, road networks, and utility services.

Addressing beneficiaries, he noted that all those invited had already been allocated

house lots but had not yet commenced construction.

“All of you here have one commonality. You were allocated. You have your land, but you have not built. We want to therefore launch an initiative

that can help you,” he said.

Under the programme, beneficiaries can access one of three standardised reinforced concrete foundation options. The foundations are priced at \$600,000 for 400 square feet, \$800,000



Housing Ministry offers pre-built options starting at \$600,000

for 600 square feet and \$900,000 for 950 square feet.

Minister Croal emphasised that participation is voluntary and does not prevent allottees from hiring private contractors or constructing homes using their preferred methods.

Representatives from several commercial banks were also present to provide information on financing options and loan prequalification, giving prospective homeowners additional support as they plan their construction journey.

The Foundation Programme being piloted in Leonora and Meten-Meer-Zorg is expected to be expanded to other housing schemes across Guyana.

Dreams of homeownership are becoming reality for more than 50 families in Mabaruma, Region One as the government moves ahead with infrastructure works in the area’s new housing development.

After receiving their house lots, beneficiaries can now identify and access their lands, marking a major milestone on the journey toward building homes of their own.

The excitement is expected to grow even further in the coming weeks as works to provide water and electricity get underway, transforming the developing scheme

WATER AND ELECTRICITY PREP BEGIN FOR NEW 50-FAMILY MABARUMA HOUSING SCHEME



Families during the lot identification exercise

into a fully serviced community.

Minister of Housing and Water Collin Croal, who recently provided an update on the project, said a contract has already been awarded

for the drilling of a well to supply the area with water.

“We have already awarded a contract for the drilling of a well to supply this area, and

the contractor is currently mobilising. He’s expected to come in within two weeks,” the minister explained.

At the same time, preparations are advancing to bring electricity to the development. Minister Croal said procurement is progressing and the installation of utility poles is expected to begin within a month.

According to the minister, beneficiaries have responded enthusiastically, with



Families during the lot identification exercise

many eager to finally stand on the land they will soon call home.

The development forms part of the government’s broader effort to expand

homeownership opportunities in hinterland regions while ensuring communities are equipped with the essential services needed for families to thrive.

"A GIANT HAS FALLEN"- PRESIDENT ALI PAYS TRIBUTE TO CRICKET LEGEND SIR GARFIELD SOBERS



Sir Garfield St. Aubrun Sobers

The Caribbean and the global cricket community are mourning the passing of one of the sport's greatest icons, Sir Garfield St Aubrun Sobers, with President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali describing him as a **"towering Caribbean figure"** whose legacy will live on for generations.

In a tribute marking the death of the West Indies cricket legend, President Ali said Sir Garry's passing represents the loss of not only an extraordinary sportsman, but a symbol of Caribbean pride whose impact reached far beyond the cricket field.

"A giant has fallen. And the cricketing firmament seems a little dimmer today," the President said, noting that grief has swept across the region following the loss of the Barbadian great.

Widely regarded as cricket's greatest all-rounder, Sir Garfield Sobers captivated generations with his unmatched skill as a batsman, bowler and fielder.

The President highlighted Sir Garry's importance during a defining period in Caribbean history, when West Indies cricket became a source of regional pride and identity.

"He carried the hopes of a region still finding its voice," President Ali said.

As Guyana joins Barbados and the wider cricketing world in mourning, the President extended condolences to Sir Garfield's family, describing his passing as an **"immeasurable loss"** and celebrating a legacy that will forever inspire future generations.

Sir Garfield Sobers, who played for the West Indies from 1954 to 1974, remains widely recognised as one of the greatest cricketers of all time.

PAEDIATRIC HEART SURGERIES TO SOON BEGIN IN GUYANA

For families waiting anxiously for their children to receive life-saving heart surgery, a new chapter of hope is emerging as Guyana prepares to begin performing specialised paediatric cardiac procedures locally.

President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali has given the Ministry of Health a two-month deadline to prepare for the surgeries using the country's newly acquired robotic surgical technology, reducing the need for children to travel overseas for treatment.

Speaking at the commissioning of the Ministry of Health's new drug bond in Region Two, President Ali said the ministry has been instructed to compile a list of children who are medically ready for surgery and ensure preparations are completed so procedures can begin as soon as possible.

"We have invested in the latest robotic technology, and I said to the minister that every child that requires cardiac surgery and is ready for that surgery...that list must be compiled, each case must be filed, and that we must be prepared in two months to have those surgeries done here in Guyana," he said.

The initiative is expected to bring significant relief to families who previously had to seek treatment abroad, where such procedures can cost up to US\$150,000. Under the government-supported programme, children will receive the surgeries at no cost.

President Ali said specialised cardiac teams will be brought to Guyana to work alongside local medical professionals as the country moves to clear the backlog of children awaiting treatment, particularly babies and infants.

The move builds on Guyana's efforts to expand advanced healthcare services locally, including plans announced in 2024 to provide cardiac surgeries for more than 150 children.

The development follows a landmark demonstration of Guyana's robotic surgical capability, when renowned cardiac surgeon Dr Sudhir Srivastava remotely performed a procedure on a patient in India using the SSI Mantra 3 robotic surgical system from Guyana.

ENMORE REGIONAL HOSPITAL RECORDS 58,000 PATIENT VISITS IN FIRST YEAR OF OPERATION

The Enmore Regional Hospital has provided critical healthcare services to thousands of residents across the East Coast of Demerara during its first year of operation, recording more than 58,000 patient visits across its outpatient and emergency departments.

Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and Medical Superintendent Dr Tracey Bovell said the hospital has treated 33,331 outpatients and managed 25,359 emergency room visits since opening its doors,



Enmore Regional Hospital records 58,000+ visits in first year

demonstrating the growing demand for expanded healthcare services in the region.

Dr Bovell emphasised that the hospital's reach extends beyond Enmore, serving patients from communities across the wider East Coast of Demerara.

"With this being a regional hospital, to see that magnitude of patients is significant, and also we have been able to see more than 25,000 emergency cases," she said.

Over the past year, the facility has also recorded 3,137 admissions, 556 deliveries, 47,840 prescriptions issued, 51,583 laboratory tests conducted, 19,073 X-rays performed, 2,329 CT scans, and 6,035 ultrasounds.

The modern healthcare facility, one of six new hospitals constructed across the country, has expanded the range of services available to residents, including surgical procedures that were previously unavailable at smaller health facilities.

"With our three operating theatres, we can do surgical interventions. We can remove appendices, we can do bone repairs. These kinds of services would not have been offered at a polyclinic," Dr Bovell explained.

She added that continuous training remains a priority for medical staff, with doctors and healthcare workers receiving ongoing professional development to strengthen patient care.

The hospital is also preparing to introduce dialysis services, with nurses currently undergoing specialised training.

Dr Bovell said the continued expansion of services reflects the government's investment in bringing quality healthcare closer to communities.

DIALYSIS CARE SOON TO BE ACCESSED IN REGION TWO

Patients in Region Two requiring dialysis treatment will soon have access to the lifesaving service closer to home, as the government moves to operationalise two dialysis chairs at the Lima Regional Hospital.

President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali announced the initiative during the commissioning of the Ministry of Health's new drug bond in Region Two, noting that the move will reduce the burden on patients and families who currently travel to Regions Three and Four for treatment.

About a dozen regional patients currently make the journey outside of Essequibo to access dialysis care.

The Ministry of Health has already completed staff training and secured the necessary reagents to begin providing the service.

President Ali said the expansion of dialysis care at Lima Regional Hospital forms part of the government's broader effort to decentralise specialised healthcare services and ensure that quality medical treatment is available to citizens regardless of their location.



Lima Regional Hospital to launch dialysis services

EAST RUIMVELDT MARKET TO BE REBUILT AS MODERN COMMERCIAL CENTRE



Sod turned for new, modernised East Ruimveldt Commercial Centre

For nearly five decades, the East Ruimveldt Market has served as a vital source of income for vendors and a convenient shopping destination for residents. Now, the ageing facility is preparing for a major transformation. The Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development has officially turned the sod for a new \$528 million market that will replace the existing 48-year-old structure with a modern commercial hub designed to better serve vendors and customers. When completed, the upgraded facility will feature 237 modern stalls, expanded parking

areas, designated vending spaces and multiple new bridge entrances aimed at improving accessibility and convenience. Speaking at the sod-turning ceremony, Minister Priya Manickchand said the redevelopment is focused on creating a more comfortable and productive environment for vendors, many of whom have long operated in cramped conditions. Under the new design, stall sizes will increase significantly. The smallest stalls, which currently measure about 6 feet by 4 feet, will be expanded to 7 feet by 8 feet, while larger spaces will also be available for businesses requiring additional room.



East Ruimveldt Market slated for \$528M transformation



East Ruimveldt Market slated for \$528M transformation

The minister noted that the market's layout is being designed to accommodate a wider range of commercial activities, including businesses such as tailoring and beauty services that may operate beyond traditional market hours. Construction is expected to begin within weeks and be completed in about four months. Vendors will be provided with temporary accommodations to ensure they can continue earning an income throughout the process. Once completed, the new market is expected to breathe fresh life into East Ruimveldt, creating a safer, more attractive space where businesses can grow and communities can thrive.

MON REPOS VENDORS MOVE TO NEW TARMAC FOR AGRICULTURE ROAD EXPANSION

Thirty vendors operating along Agriculture Road, Mon Repos, East Coast Demerara, are being relocated to a newly completed market tarmac as government works move ahead to expand the roadway. The relocation will clear the area needed for the next phase of the Agriculture Road Expansion Project while allowing vendors to continue their businesses with minimal disruption. Minister of Public Works Bishop Juan Edghill inspected the



New market tarmac opens for relocated Mon Repos vendors

new facility and engaged vendors and residents to finalise arrangements for the transition.

During the visit, vendors were able to view their allocated spaces, ensuring the relocation process was carried out in an organised and transparent manner. The new tarmac will provide vendors with a designated area to maintain their livelihoods while major construction works begin. Following the completion of the relocation, the site will be handed over to the project contractor next week for construction to commence.



New market tarmac opens for relocated Mon Repos vendors

The initiative forms part of the government's wider plan to establish vending plazas across the country, providing vendors with safer, cleaner and more organised spaces that support livelihoods while improving public spaces.

For decades, the Buxton Market has been a centre of commerce and community life, but residents say its long-awaited redevelopment represents a chance for a new beginning. Following the sod-turning ceremony for the construction of a new \$338.1 million marketplace, residents and vendors are looking ahead to the economic opportunities the modern facility is expected to bring. David Jones of Buxton said the project will create new possibilities for residents and strengthen business activity within the community. "I support this development



The sod turning ceremony

as it will bring major economic opportunities to the community of Buxton," Jones told the Department of Public

Information. The new market, which is being constructed by Skylines Architecture Inc. and is expected to be completed within eight months, will provide a safer and more organised environment for traders and shoppers. Vendor Jacklyn Andrews, who has been selling near the market since 2001, welcomed the project, saying she was pleased that vendors will finally have a better space to operate. Young entrepreneur Malika Cole said the facility will also allow

residents to turn their skills and agricultural production into businesses. "We will be able to bring in our agricultural produce from the backlands and start doing business," she said. The modern facility will accommodate 136 stalls, including spaces for fresh produce, retail businesses, salons, barber services, and dedicated meat and fish sections. It will also feature improved sanitation facilities, CCTV security,

waste management systems and enhanced drainage infrastructure to improve climate resilience. Minister of Local Government and Regional Development Priya Manickchand said the project will provide vendors and residents with a space to earn, trade and connect. The new Buxton Market is expected to preserve the community's historic commercial role while creating a modern platform for local enterprise and growth.

LAKEVIEW CABINS PUT MAINSTAY ON THE TOURISM MAP



The Lake view cabins

For residents of proving that tourism Mainstay/Whyaka can be more than a Village, a community-owned eco-lodge is pathway to jobs, income

and development. The Lake View Cabins, funded through Guyana’s Low Carbon Development Strategy (LCDS), have been providing employment opportunities and generating revenue for the village since opening nearly a year ago. Managed by the Village Council, the eco-lodge sits just steps away from the scenic Lake Mainstay and offers visitors comfortable

accommodation while exploring one of Region Two’s popular attractions. Resident Valita Fredericks told the Department of Public Information (DPI) that the initiative has created meaningful opportunities for villagers while helping to promote their community. **“It’s really a great opportunity to work in my village and**

showcase this here,” Fredericks said. **“I think it’s something really great to showcase Mainstay, put us on the map, [and] know where people can locate us.”** The facility includes two cabins and three self-contained rooms, with earnings from the operation reinvested into community needs. Fredericks explained that revenue helps support residents

through initiatives such as assistance during times of loss and other village contributions. Beyond tourism, Mainstay/Whyaka continues to expand its economic base through projects including a cassava processing facility, water treatment plant, shade house and caged-fish initiative; strengthening the village’s drive toward sustainable development.

SAWARIWAU VILLAGE BUILDS NEW TOURISM FUTURE WITH \$15M GUEST HOUSE INVESTMENT



LCDS and Government grants fund new Sawariwau Guest House hub

Residents of community guest house Sawariwau Village in the Central Rupununi designed to strengthen tourism, improve are preparing to hospitality services, and welcome new economic create employment for opportunities as residents. construction continues The facility is now on a \$15 million approximately 85 per

cent complete and was funded through a \$5 million grant from the Ministry of Amerindian Affairs, along with \$10 million from the village’s Low Carbon Development Strategy (LCDS) allocation. Toshao Bernardine Fernandes said the project was driven by a growing need for proper accommodation as more government officials, non-governmental organisations and visitors travel to the community. **“We are having**

so many government officials, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and other guests visiting our community, and one of the biggest challenges is that we do not have proper accommodation for them. That was the main reason we decided to construct the guest house,” she explained. The facility will feature six guest rooms, a kitchen and four washrooms, providing

visitors with comfortable accommodation while allowing more economic activity to remain within the village. According to Toshao Fernandes, the investment represents an important step in Sawariwau’s community-led development efforts. **“We feel good about this grant. We are happy and proud of it because we are working together to develop our village,”** she said. Once completed,

the guest house is expected to generate sustainable income and create employment opportunities, particularly for women. A management committee has already been established, with positions identified for a cook, housekeeper, receptionist, and other support staff. Training programmes are also being planned to equip residents with the skills needed to deliver quality hospitality services as Sawariwau expands its tourism potential.



President’s commitment realised as \$17M Waramuri Pavilion officially opens

Residents of Carbon Development Waramuri Village in the Strategy (LCDS) Moruca Sub-District, following a proposal Region One, are set submitted by the Village Council, while additional to benefit from a new \$17 million pavilion upgrades were made designed to strengthen possible through a \$10 sporting activities, youth development, and million commitment from President Dr community engagement. Mohamed Irfaan Ali The facility was funded during his 2024 visit to through the Low the community.

Toshao Vivan Edwards said the investment comes at an important time for a village with a strong sporting tradition and a history of producing talented athletes. **“W a r a m u r i in general is a sports-oriented community. We have produced local and international sportsmen and sportswomen. We promote sports in our various disciplines, and this investment will help us to continue providing opportunities for our young people,”**

WARAMURI PAVILION OPENS NEW POSSIBILITIES FOR YOUTH

Edwards told the Department of Public Information (DPI). The toshao highlighted the achievements of athletes from the community, including footballer Annalisa Vincent and cricketer Bruce Vincent, who represented Guyana at the Under-15 and Under-19 levels. He said the pavilion will provide improved seating for residents and visitors attending sporting events while also serving as a space for

village meetings, school activities and other community gatherings. Additional works included a \$5 million bleacher, a \$4 million sanitary facility and \$1 million in signboards showcasing the village’s landmarks, sporting achievements and tourism potential. Edwards said residents have welcomed the project, describing it as an example of what can be achieved through proper planning and responsible use of

resources. **“The feeling in general is that it is a great initiative that we have embarked on and completed. We had this plan, and the plan was successfully executed,”** he said. He added that the facility represents an investment in the future of Waramuri’s young people and will provide a lasting space for generations to come.

CHILDREN'S SWIM INITIATIVE SPLASHES OFF IN REGIONS FIVE AND SIX

For many Guyanese children, learning to swim is more than a recreational activity, it is a skill that could one day save a life. The Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport’s annual **“Teach Them Young” Learn to Swim Programme** has resumed, giving young people the opportunity to develop swimming skills, build confidence and improve water safety awareness. The programme began on July 13 in Region Five and at the Albion Estate Compound Pool in Region Six, with plans to continue providing structured swimming lessons for children nationwide.

While the initiative helps identify and nurture young talent for competitive swimming, its impact extends beyond the sporting arena. With rivers and waterways playing an important role in everyday life across Guyana, the camp focuses on reducing

drowning risks by teaching children essential swimming and survival skills from an early age. The training series also encourages discipline, healthy lifestyles and positive youth engagement while creating opportunities for young people to develop through sport.



National ‘Teach Them Young’ Swim Programme resumes

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20,000 PACKED SOUTH DAKOTA CIRCUIT FOR HISTORIC GT CHALLENGE



Guyana's South Dakota Circuit explodes with historic GT Challenge

The roar of engines, the energy of thousands of fans and the thrill of international competition marked a historic moment for Guyana as the country hosted the inaugural **GT Challenge de las Américas** at the South Dakota Circuit.

The landmark motorsport event attracted more than 20,000 spectators and brought world-class racing to Guyanese soil for the first time, featuring FIA-sanctioned GT3 machines from brands including Ferrari, Lamborghini, McLaren, and Mercedes.

President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali joined fans at the Guyana Grand Prix, the third leg of the regional championship, cheering on local competitors, visiting racing teams and experiencing the excitement from the pits and grandstands.

The event highlighted Guyana's growing

ambition to become a premier sports tourism destination, supported by major investments to transform the South Dakota Circuit into an international-standard facility.

Minister within the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport Steven Jacobs described the

that the upgraded circuit demonstrates Guyana's ability to host major global competitions.

The GT Challenge, held on July 11 and 12, showcased the country's expanding sports tourism potential while creating opportunities for businesses, hospitality providers and



Guyana's South Dakota Circuit explodes with historic GT Challenge



Guyana's South Dakota Circuit explodes with historic GT Challenge



Guyana's South Dakota Circuit explodes with historic GT Challenge

track, the event represented a wider vision of using sport to attract visitors, stimulate economic activity and create new opportunities for Guyanese.

event as a historic achievement, noting communities. Beyond the race

PROVIDENCE LIGHTS UP FOR HIGH-PROFILE WEST INDIES VS. NZ ODI CLASH



President Ali joins thousands of fans at Providence for West Indies ODI opener

The Guyana National Stadium at Providence came alive as Guyana welcomed international cricket action, hosting the opening three matches of the West Indies' five-match One-Day International series against New Zealand.

The series formed part of Cricket West Indies' 2026 home international schedule, launched under the board's new campaign, **"WI OUTSIDE!"**, celebrating the return of regional cricket to fans across the Caribbean.



President Ali joins thousands of fans at Providence for West Indies ODI opener

Hundreds of passionate supporters filled the stands for the opening match on Saturday July 11, with President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali joining cricket fans as the West Indies secured a seven-wicket victory over New Zealand

under the Providence lights.

The teams returned to the Guyana National Stadium for the second ODI on July 13 before concluding the Guyanese leg of the series on July 16.

The remaining two matches of the five-game series will be played at Barbados' iconic Kensington Oval on July 19 and 21.

From the roar of the crowd to the excitement on the field, Providence once again showcased Guyana's passion for cricket and its ability to host world-class sporting events.



Now seating 2,000+, Cliff Anderson Sports Hall is ready for regional tournaments

Athletes and spectators are set to enjoy a more comfortable experience as the Cliff Anderson Sports Hall continues its transformation into a modern, international-standard sporting facility.

The latest phase of the upgrade project has seen the installation of new seating, improving comfort and enhancing

NEW SEATING AND AC INSTALLED AT CLIFF ANDERSON SPORTS HALL

the overall experience for fans attending events at the multipurpose venue.

Minister within the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport Steven Jacobs shared an update on the ongoing works, noting the government's continued investment in improving the facility.

More than \$300 million has been committed to the rehabilitation project, which has increased the sports hall's capacity to accommodate more than 2,000 spectators.

The renovation has



Now seating 2,000+, Cliff Anderson Sports Hall is ready for regional tournaments

included major structural and mechanical improvements, including a new roof, ceiling, vented walls, refurbished sections of the building, electrical upgrades and new air conditioning systems.

Once completed, the upgraded facility will provide athletes with a better training environment while strengthening Guyana's ability to host regional and international sporting events.



Guyanese DIASPORA DIGEST



KEEPING THE DIASPORA INFORMED EDITION 123

ONE GUYANA WORSHIP EXPERIENCE

More than 30,000 worshippers gathered at the Guyana National Stadium for the One Guyana Worship Experience, creating a powerful display of faith, unity and praise.

Featuring inspiring performances from local gospel ministers Joanna Singh, Alonica, Renwick Duesbury, Solid Youth, Faith Corrica and Timothy Roberts, alongside Trinidad and Tobago’s Positive and internationally acclaimed worship leaders Naomi Raine and Sinach, the event brought thousands together in worship and celebration.

The record-breaking gathering transcended denominations, cultures and communities, embodying the spirit of One Guyana as families and friends united for an unforgettable evening of hope, gratitude and spiritual upliftment.



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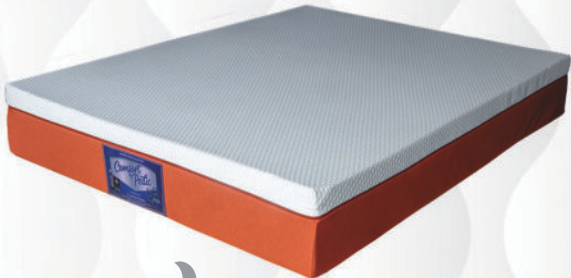
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Expanded search, rescue, recovery efforts to continue until every effort exhausted

PRIME Minister, Brigadier (Ret'd) Mark Phillips, on Tuesday, assured the nation that search, rescue and recovery efforts following the tragic sinking of the MV Barima will continue until every reasonable effort has been exhausted, as the official number of persons rescued increased to 76, and bodies recovered reached 53 in total thus far.

The Prime Minister made this disclosure while providing an update on the operations during a press briefing, during which he indicated that operations have intensified following confirmation of the vessel's location, with both local and international assets working around the clock to locate any remaining victims.

"Following confirmation of the coordinates of the MV Barima wreck-age yesterday, search, rescue and recovery operations have intensified significantly," Phillips said.

He revealed that 16 state and private sector vessels are now deployed within the wreckage area, while the designated search zone has been expanded by an additional 400 square miles, bringing the total search area to approximately 2,100 square kilometres, extending as far as Waini Point.

"As at 18:00 hours today, we have recorded 76 persons rescued following our verification exercise, while a total of 53 bodies has been recovered," the Prime Minister said.

He noted that 22 of those bodies were recovered during Tuesday's operations, and of the 53 bodies in total that have been recovered, 26 have been positively identified.

PM Phillips said 42 bodies remain at the storage facility while 11 have already been repatriated to their respective communities at the request of their families for burial.

Against this backdrop, the Prime Minister explained that while divers initially entered the submerged vessel in hopes of rescuing survivors, those efforts have now transitioned entirely to recovery.

UNDERWATER OPERATIONS

French and local divers continue to conduct underwater operations at the wreck-age site.

"They hoped that if anybody was still alive there, they could have rescued them. Unfortunately, after searching the wreck-age, nobody is alive there," he said.

Divers have located one body trapped inside the wreck-age but were unable to retrieve it before operations paused Tuesday evening.

"Our hope is that they will reach a point where they can extract that body from the wreck-age," Phillips said, adding that recovery efforts will continue.

As the efforts continue, PM Phillips told members of the media that additional assistance from Trinidad and Tobago and Brazil is expected to arrive

on Wednesday.

Personnel from the Trinidad and Tobago Coast Guard and the Brazilian Navy will join ongoing operations, while the Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre remains fully operational.

He said aerial surveillance also continues to complement the sea search in the expanded operational area.

Responding to questions from the media, the Prime Minister stressed that the government has been transparent throughout the tragedy.

It was against this backdrop, he pointed to the immediate disclosure that the captain and another crew member had tested positive for cannabis after blood samples were taken following the incident.

"The positive cannabis results were immediately released to the public and they were arrested," he said.

Phillips also noted that once authorities discovered there were more passengers aboard the ferry than were listed on the official manifest, that in-

formation was promptly made public.

NOTHING TO HIDE

"These are not the actions of a government that is covering up anything," he said.

The Prime Minister urged members of the public to exercise caution before sharing images and videos circulating on social media that allegedly show the vessel before it sank.

He explained that many passengers lost their mobile phones during the tragedy, making it difficult to verify the authenticity and timing of such material.

"Those photos and videos could be fake. We should verify first before posting and causing panic," he cautioned.

Addressing speculation that the vessel may have been overloaded, it was disclosed that preliminary information suggests that may not necessarily have been the case.

Head of the Maritime Administration Department told the press that ac-

cording to the information provided to them as part of the initial investigation, the vessel's 'load line' was barely submerged upon departure, indicating that it may not have been overloaded.

"From all reports at the wharf, the vessel load line was barely submerged," he said, noting that investigators will continue examining all possible factors.

He emphasised that a separate investigation will determine the exact cause of the ferry's capsizing.

Meanwhile, President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali has declared three days of national mourning in honour of the victims.

"The Government of Guyana again extends its deepest condolences to the families who have suffered unimaginable loss and remains steadfast in its commitment to supporting them through this difficult period," Phillips said.



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Sat 25 19:00 AST	GUYANA AMAZON WARRIORS vs DESERT VIPERS	
Sun 26 10:00 AST	SAN FRANCISCO UNICORNS vs PERTH SCORCHERS XI	
Sun 26 19:00 AST	GUYANA AMAZON WARRIORS vs LAHORE QALANDARS	
Mon 27 19:00 AST	SAN FRANCISCO UNICORNS vs DESERT VIPERS	
Tue 28 19:00 AST	DESERT VIPERS vs PERTH SCORCHERS XI	
Wed 29 10:00 AST	LAHORE QALANDARS vs SAN FRANCISCO UNICORNS	
Wed 29 19:00 AST	GUYANA AMAZON WARRIORS vs PERTH SCORCHERS XI	
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