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IDB an 'invaluable partner'

GUYANA has reaffirmed its commitment to working with the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) to drive sustainable and inclusive growth that benefits every Guyanese citizen, according to Senior Minister in the Office of the President with responsibility for Finance, Dr. Ashni Singh.

He made this declaration in a Facebook post following a meeting with the President of the IDB, Ilan Goldfajn, during the 2026 Annual Meetings of the Boards of Governors of the IDB and IDB-Invest, held in Asunción, Paraguay.

During the engagement, Dr Singh expressed appreciation on behalf of President, Dr Irfaan Ali and the Government and people of Guyana, for the IDB's role as an "invaluable development partner, noting that the bank has remained a constant and reliable partner to Guyana, providing consistent support through both challenging periods and our current era of unprecedented economic transformation."

The finance minister commended the progress made by the IDB in advancing its reform agenda, emphasising that the institution was able to move decisively from reform discussions to implementation in 2025.

However, he stressed that greater consideration must be given to the specific challenges confronting Caribbean states.

"The countries in the Caribbean Region remain amongst the most vulnerable in the world to more frequent and extreme natural disasters, external shocks and global economic volatility," Dr Singh said.



Barbados delivers a 'people's budget'

Barbados Prime Minister Mia Mottley (above, surrounded by Barbadians) has described the 2026 Budget as a "people's budget", saying it delivers on campaign promises while taking steps to protect Barbadians from mounting global pressures.

Speaking after the presentation made by Minister of Finance Ryan Straughn in Parliament on Monday, Mottley framed the proposals as a continuation of commitments made to the electorate less than five weeks ago.

"He has delivered for what really can be described as a people's budget... putting more money in the pockets of people, as we promised also during the campaign," she said.

She argued that the measures are intended not only to provide direct relief, but also to limit the impact of external shocks, particularly those linked to geopolitical tensions and rising oil prices.

"A people's budget that allows us to start to take measures that will help shield and protect the Barbadian public from the impact... where the prices of oil are affecting us," Mottley said.

Pointing to key cost drivers, she indicated that controlling energy and freight costs remains central to the Government's approach.

"If we can help control... the price of gas and fuel at the pump, and... the price of freight, we can at least reduce the extent to which those increases can have an inflationary impact on costs for all of these households and all of these businesses."

Mottley said the Budget also reflects continued efforts to diversify the economy while addressing pressing social concerns.

"At the same time, you saw that he spoke about the critical areas of diversifying our economy and our work towards that, as well as... critical social issues."

She maintained that the proposals represent a government delivering on its mandate within a short timeframe following the general election.

"This really is a budget where this government has kept faith with the people," she said.

"I don't know that there's been any other time where so many manifesto promises have been delivered in such a short period of time for the benefit of the people of this country," she said, referring to the election held less than five weeks ago, when her Barbados Labour Party completely swept the polls.

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Poll: Home ownership still key

By Milan Maharaj
LJI REPORTER

A majority of Canadians continue to view home ownership as a key financial goal despite ongoing concerns about affordability of homes and housing market conditions, according to a recent poll conducted by RBC.

RBC's Spring 2026 Home Ownership Poll found that 67 percent of Canadians say they have always dreamed of owning a home, up from 62 percent in 2025. The survey also found that 32 percent of respondents plan to purchase a home within the next two years, which is the same response from last year's survey.

The poll indicates that home ownership continues to be widely viewed as a financial milestone. About 80 percent of responses said that buying a home is one of life's largest financial achievements, while 73 percent associated home ownership with financial independence.

At the same time, respondents reported concerns about affordability. According to the survey, 44 percent of responses said that thinking whether they can afford a home is always on their mind, compared to 37 percent from last year. In addition, 46 percent of replies said there is too much pressure to buy a home.

The poll also found that many new home buyers expect to make financial adjustments in order to enter the housing market. More than half of respondents said they would make significant sacrifices to purchase a home, including delaying major life decisions or increasing sources of income.

Uncertainty about market timing remains a factor for new home buyers. About 66 percent of first-time buyers reported concerns about whether it is the right time to purchase a home, while 63 percent said they worry about making the wrong decision given its importance.

Among current homeowners, concerns over mortgage were also identified. The poll found that 59 percent of respondents are concerned about covering the costs of home ownership, and 39 percent reported concern about making the wrong decision during mortgage renewal periods. 58 percent of current homeowners who took the survey have mortgages up for renewal within the next two years.

The survey also found mixed views of current market conditions. 33 percent of those surveyed described the housing market as favouring sellers, while 27 percent viewed it as a buyer's market.

The poll was conducted online by Leger between January 7 and January 25, 2026. 1,719 Canadians were surveyed.

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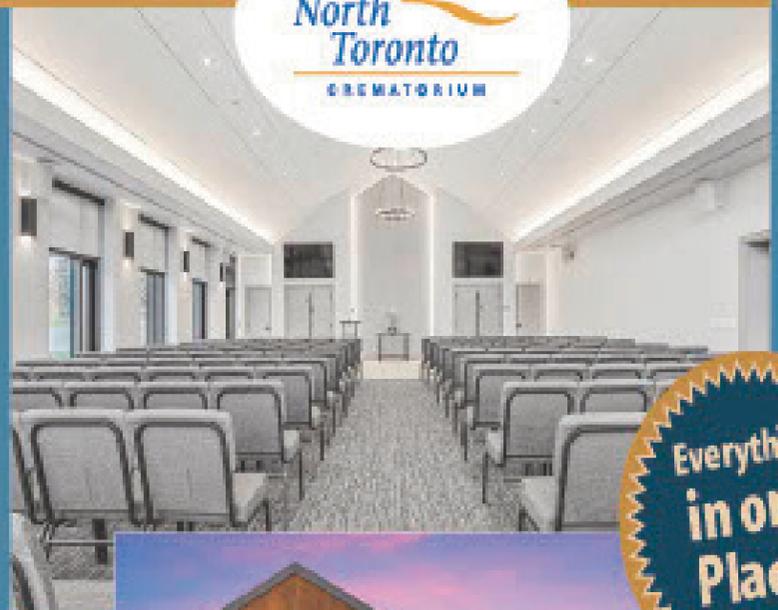
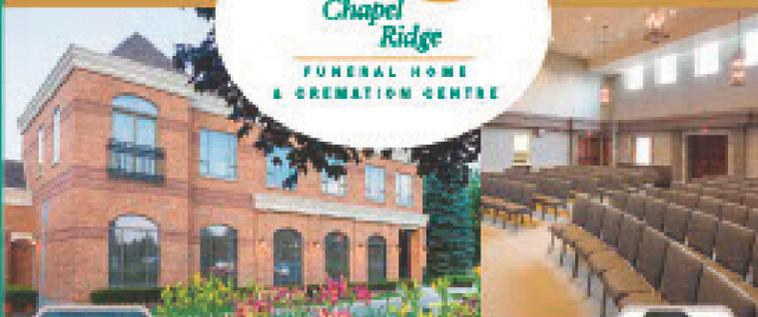
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PRESIDENT ALI ATTENDS HISTORIC 'SHIELD OF THE AMERICAS' SUMMIT

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His Excellency President Dr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali with U.S. President Donald Trump at the 'Shield of the Americas' Summit in Doral, Miami, Florida.



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PRESIDENT ALI ATTENDS HISTORIC 'SHIELD OF THE AMERICAS' SUMMIT



President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali j and leaders from Latin America with United States President Donald Trump

President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali joined United States President Donald Trump and leaders from 11 Latin American countries at the historic 'Shield of the Americas' Summit in Doral, Miami, Florida, a gathering aimed at strengthening regional security and cooperation. Among the Caribbean, only President Ali and Prime Minister Kamla Persad-Bissessar were invited, highlighting Guyana's growing role in hemispheric security matters. The summit brought together leaders from Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador,



President Trump displays the declaration as Latin American leaders observe



President Ali with President Trump at the Shields of America Summit

Honduras, Panama, Guyana, Paraguay, and Trinidad and Tobago. President Trump urged participants to take coordinated action against drug trafficking cartels and transnational criminal organisations, describing them as an "unacceptable threat" to the hemisphere's security. Following the remarks, the leaders signed a proclamation committing to dismantle

criminal networks and foreign terrorist organisations operating in the region.

On the sidelines of the summit, President Ali spoke with Fox News about the security and political climate in the Caribbean and Latin America. He highlighted recent developments in Venezuela, particularly the capture of President Nicolás Maduro, noting that the situation has shifted significantly. **"That by itself has brought a change in the mindset, a change**

have long exploited Caribbean and Latin American borders, affecting regional security and reputation. **"It's an issue that has exposed the region... so we support strong action on drug cartels,"** he said, reaffirming Guyana's support for coordinated measures against transnational crime and narco-terrorism.

President Ali also addressed political developments in Cuba, emphasising that change must be gradual and focused on improving conditions for citizens. **"There must be dialogue, but those changes must lead to better conditions for the people of Cuba, to a society in which the rule of law, democracy, and freedom are celebrated,"** he said, noting ongoing discussions with CARICOM leaders and U.S. officials, including Secretary of State Marco Rubio.

During the summit, President Ali participated in a working lunch with U.S. officials, including Secretary Rubio, Special Envoy Kristi Noem, Secretary of Energy Chris Wright, and Secretary of War Pete Hegseth, alongside other senior administration members. He was joined by Guyana's Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Hugh Todd and Foreign Secretary Robert Persaud.

For President Ali, the summit underscored the importance of regional collaboration to address shared challenges, from political instability in Venezuela and Cuba to the fight against drug trafficking. By engaging directly with hemispheric partners, Guyana continues to assert its voice in shaping security, governance, and stability in the Caribbean and Latin America, while promoting democratic values and economic opportunities for the region.



President Ali with War Secretary, Pete Hegseth

GUYANA BIDS TO HOST COP35

With an eye on the future, Guyana is bidding to host the 2030 United Nations Climate Change Summit (COP35), aiming to showcase innovative climate solutions and inspire the next generation of leaders under the vision of President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali.

The bid received formal backing from the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) during its 50th Regular Meeting of the Conference of Heads of Government, held in Basseterre, St Kitts and Nevis, from February 24 to 27. The announcement positions

Guyana as a hub for global discussions on sustainable development, climate resilience, and environmental stewardship.

If successful in this bid, COP35 would bring thousands of international delegates to Guyana, highlighting the nation's unique balance as a growing oil and gas economy that simultaneously preserves 86% of its forested land. Under President Ali's leadership, the country has developed the landmark Low Carbon Development

Strategy (LCDS), now extended through LCDS 2030, which aligns economic growth with environmental protection.

Guyana has already monetized its forest carbon, earning US\$750 million from just 30% of its forest carbon, and sold two million carbon credits under the Carbon Offsetting and Reduction Scheme for International Aviation (CORSA). Recently, the Architecture for REDD+ Transactions (ART) issued nine million high-integrity TREES carbon credits for 2023, reinforcing the nation's

commitment to climate action.

Beyond carbon management, Guyana is leading on biodiversity. The 2024 Global Biodiversity Alliance Summit, convened in Georgetown by President Ali, unveiled a roadmap focused on protecting 30% of land and sea by 2030, integrating biodiversity into development planning, unlocking innovative finance, empowering Indigenous communities, and building robust monitoring systems.



President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali delivers remarks at COP30 held in Belém, Brazil, in 2025

GUYANA SIGNS REGIONAL PACT TO FIGHT CARTELS, PROTECT INFRASTRUCTURE

Guyana has joined regional partners in a renewed push to confront organised crime and narcotics trafficking across the hemisphere, signing a joint security declaration during the Americas Counter-Cartel Conference in Florida.

At the centre of the gathering was Prime Minister (Ret'd) Mark Phillips, who led Guyana's delegation and reaffirmed the country's commitment to strengthening security cooperation with regional allies, particularly the United States.

The two-day conference, held at the headquarters of United States Southern Command in Doral, Florida, brought together leaders, defence officials and security experts from across the Americas to address the growing threat posed by criminal networks operating



The adoption of the Joint Security Declaration

across borders. During the conference, Guyana formally signed the Americas Counter-Cartel Joint Security Declaration, a multilateral agreement aimed at strengthening cooperation among countries to tackle narco-trafficking, organised crime and threats to critical infrastructure. The declaration emphasises expanded intelligence sharing, enhanced border security

measures and closer defence partnerships among participating nations. Prime Minister Phillips said the move reflects Guyana's determination to work closely with regional partners to protect citizens and preserve stability across the hemisphere.

"The transnational activities of cartels, gangs, and other criminal

threaten regional peace and security," he noted during his address. "These networks undermine the rule of law, weaken institutions, and threaten democracy and the safety and economic well-being of our citizens."

For Guyana, he explained, the fight against narco-trafficking carries particular urgency. Situated along key maritime and regional transit routes, the country faces increased exposure to trafficking networks operating across the Caribbean and South

America. Prime Minister Phillips stressed that confronting these challenges requires sustained regional collaboration. "These threats demand coordinated intelligence

partnership between criminal cartels and other transnational threats. Prime Minister Phillips also highlighted the expanding strategic partnership between

sharing, enhanced operational cooperation, and strengthened defence capabilities across the hemisphere," he said.

The conference was convened by the United States and featured remarks from Pete Hegseth, who emphasised the importance of regional unity in combating



Prime Minister Phillips at the inaugural Americas Counter-Cartel Conference held at the US Southern Command headquarters in Doral, Florida

partnership," Prime Minister Phillips said, "we can ensure that our hemisphere remains safe, secure, and a Zone of Peace."

partnership," Prime Minister Phillips said, "we can ensure that our hemisphere remains safe, secure, and a Zone of Peace."



President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali

Amid growing conflicts across the globe, President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali has called on world leaders to prioritise dialogue over armed confrontation, warning that war continues

to bring devastating consequences for civilians, particularly women and children.

Speaking at a pre-Phagwah celebration on the lawns of State House on Main Street, the Guyanese leader reflected on the contrast between Guyana's peaceful cultural observances and the turmoil affecting other parts of the world.

Addressing the gathering, President Ali noted that while Guyanese are fortunate to celebrate in harmony, many countries remain trapped in cycles of violence and instability.

"We do so not unaware of the

PRESIDENT ALI ADVOCATES PEACEFUL DIALOGUE AS PATH TO GLOBAL STABILITY

current global situation," he said, urging citizens to reflect on ongoing conflicts, including tensions in the Middle East and other regions where destruction and suffering continue to unfold.

The president highlighted what he described as a troubling contradiction in international affairs, noting that many leaders claim to seek peace while simultaneously pursuing war as the means to achieve it.

"Everybody wants

peace, but in their opinion the road to peace is war," President Ali said.

He rejected that approach, stressing that genuine and lasting peace can only be achieved through meaningful dialogue and sustained diplomatic engagement.

"For us in Guyana, we say the road to peace is dialogue. The road to peace is promoting and ensuring that we don't remove ourselves

from the table of conversation," he emphasised.

President Ali warned that withdrawing from negotiations removes the opportunity to listen, understand differing perspectives and identify common ground.

Instead, he called on global leaders to strengthen diplomacy and allow discussions to prevail over displays of force.

"We call upon all the stakeholders, all the countries in the Gulf, Israel, Iran, the U.S., and everyone

to allow the table of conversation to supersede the table of strength," the president declared.

"Let the table of conversation deliver lasting peace with respect, with the rule of law, with freedom, with dignity, and with honour."

He added that Guyana's own experience as a multicultural society shows how dialogue and unity can overcome divisions and help guide the world toward a more peaceful future.

DEMOCRACY MATTERS AS GUYANA DEVELOPS - MINISTER TEIXEIRA

Even as Guyana undergoes rapid transformation through new infrastructure and economic expansion, Minister of Parliamentary Affairs and Governance Gail Teixeira is reminding citizens that development must never come at the expense of democracy.

Speaking on the Starting Point Podcast, the minister reflected on the country's recent political history and the

lessons learned about protecting democratic institutions.

Minister Teixeira pointed to the challenges surrounding the 2020 Guyana General and Regional Elections, which saw disputes over the vote count and months of political tension. She said the experience reinforced the importance of safeguarding the country's electoral system and ensuring that democratic values

remain protected.

According to the minister, while governments can deliver development through infrastructure and economic progress, those achievements hold little meaning if the foundations of democracy are weakened.

She also urged individuals interested in political leadership to enter the field with the right motivations, stressing that public

office carries a heavy responsibility and must always be rooted in service to the people.

Those who pursue politics primarily for personal ambition, she said, may be in the wrong profession.

Minister Teixeira further noted that while Guyana is seeing visible improvements in roads, buildings and other infrastructure, development must be matched by responsible behaviour from citizens.

"There's a gap between infrastructure development, legislative change and people's behaviour," she said, noting that even with new roads being built, citizens must still follow traffic laws and safety regulations.

For Minister Teixeira, the country's future depends not only on development projects, but also on protecting democracy and strengthening civic responsibility.



Minister of Parliamentary Affairs and Governance Gail Teixeira on the 'Starting Point' podcast

FIRST PHASE OF \$100,000 NATIONAL CASH GRANT TO REACH PUBLIC SERVANTS NEXT WEEK

Thousands of Guyanese are set to receive financial support in the coming days as the government begins distributing the \$100,000 National Cash Grant to citizens aged 18 and older, with central government employees among the first to benefit.

The initiative fulfills a commitment made by President Mohamed Irfaan Ali and announced during the 2026 Budget presentation by Senior Minister in the Office of the President with responsibility for Finance, Dr. Ashni Singh.

Dr Singh said the first group to receive the grant will be central government employees who already receive their salaries directly through the banking system.

“The first cohort will comprise those central government employees who have previously provided their bank account information and are receiving their government salaries into their bank accounts,” Dr Singh explained. **“We anticipate that these government employees will receive their \$100,000 cash grant by the end of next week.”**

Approximately 50,000 public servants, teachers and members of the disciplined services are expected to benefit in this initial phase, as the government utilises existing financial systems to ensure quick and secure transfers.

The approach aligns



50,000 public servants to receive \$100,000 cash grant first

with the government's wider push toward digital financial services. President Ali has repeatedly encouraged citizens to open personal bank accounts to make transactions like these more efficient and transparent.

“We are digitising

everything, so I am urging every Guyanese to open their bank accounts,” the president said previously. **“We want every Guyanese to own their own bank account so that this digital transfer would be easy and efficient**

and, of course, transparent.”

According to Dr Singh, promoting financial inclusion is a central goal of the programme. By encouraging citizens to participate in the formal banking system, the government hopes to make financial services more accessible while also simplifying the delivery of public benefits.

To support this effort, the Ministry of Finance has been working with commercial banks to make it easier for people to open accounts, including through online application systems. Several banks now offer digital onboarding services, allowing individuals to begin the process without visiting a branch.

In the coming weeks, the government will also launch an online platform that will allow other eligible citizens to register for the grant. Additional guidance will be provided to help people navigate the process.

The current distribution follows earlier cash grant initiatives introduced by the administration. In late 2024, more than \$60 billion was distributed to over 600,000 Guyanese through the first \$100,000 national cash grant programme.

The initiative forms part of a broader strategy to strengthen financial inclusion, expand economic opportunity and ensure more Guyanese can access the formal financial system.

Hundreds of teachers across Guyana now have an opportunity to benefit from duty-free concessions on motor vehicles as the government moves to expand support for educators in public schools.

The initiative forms part of a multi-year agreement for 2024–2026 between the government and the Guyana Teachers Union (GTU), which increases the number of duty-free concessions available to teachers by 50 per cent.

Educators in all 10 administrative regions are eligible to apply, with the deadline for submissions set for April

HUNDREDS OF TEACHERS ELIGIBLE FOR EXPANDED DUTY-FREE CONCESSIONS



April 3 set as deadline for teachers' duty-free concession applications

3, 2026.

Under the updated arrangement, teachers who hold positions such as principals, deputy principals, senior masters or mistresses, heads of departments, and lecturers at the

Cyril Potter College of Education may qualify once they meet specific service requirements.

Importantly, teachers who hold a substantive appointment as a senior master or mistress and

are within three years of retirement, but have not previously received a duty-free concession, are now also eligible to benefit.

The programme allows qualified educators to access duty-free concessions for a motor car up to 1500cc, providing meaningful financial relief for teachers who have dedicated years of service to the nation's education system.

Applicants are required to submit supporting documents including their birth

certificate, appointment letters, TIN certificate and national identification card.

Officials from the Ministry of Education (Guyana)

are encouraging all eligible teachers to take advantage of the opportunity before the application deadline.



April 3 set as deadline for teachers' duty-free concession applications

GUYANA HIGHLIGHTS PROGRESS IN PROTECTING WOMEN AT UN GENDER EQUALITY FORUM



Minister Persaud presents Guyana's women protection initiatives at UN

Guyana's commitment to protecting women and survivors of violence took centre stage at the 70th session of the United Nations Commission on

the Status of Women in New York City, where Minister of Human Services and Social Security Vindhya Persaud outlined the country's ongoing efforts.

Addressing delegates, Dr Persaud acknowledged that women and girls worldwide continue to face barriers to justice, but highlighted initiatives in Guyana that provide both legal protections and practical support. She emphasised the

recently enacted Family Violence Act 2024, which expands the legal definition of violence to include economic and psychological abuse, strengthening safeguards for survivors.

“The 2024 Family Violence Act expands definitions of violence to include economic and psychological abuse and improves protections for survivors,” Dr Persaud stated, noting its significance in providing comprehensive legal

support.

Beyond legislation, the minister highlighted the role of integrated support services, particularly Guyana's Hope and Justice Centres, which allow survivors to access medical care, psychosocial support, legal assistance, and safe shelter in one location. **“These centres are producing positive results, ensuring survivors receive the care they need,”** she said.

Dr Persaud

also addressed the challenges of digital harassment, noting that perpetrators often evade accountability online. She called for international cooperation with technology companies to create safer digital spaces and ensure justice for victims.

Additionally, the minister highlighted the Gender Equality and Empowerment Seal, which promotes equal opportunities and safer workplaces across public and private

sectors. She further underscored economic empowerment, revealing that women now own 60 per cent of government-distributed housing lands.

The CSW70, running from March 9–19, 2026, focuses on “Ensuring and strengthening access to justice for all women and girls,” bringing together global leaders to advance gender equality and remove barriers that prevent women from claiming their rights.

NEW OUTPATIENT PAVILION OPENS AS GUYANA MOVES FORWARD IN HEALTHCARE TRANSFORMATION



Dr Balwant Singh's new outpatient pavillion

As Guyana's skyline rises and its economy expands, the transformation is also reaching hospital corridors. The commissioning of the new Outpatient Pavilion at Dr Balwant Singh's Hospital signals a deeper shift, one that could redefine how healthcare is delivered across the

country. President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali, speaking at the opening on East Street in Georgetown, described the facility as part of a broader national strategy to eliminate the divide between public and private healthcare. His vision, he explained, is for Guyanese to access quality care as a matter of choice, not limitation.

"We want healthcare to have no distinction between public and private," the President said, outlining a system where integration replaces separation and national standards apply across the board.

That philosophy has already influenced policy decisions. Addressing criticism over the government's partnership with

private hospitals to clear diagnostic backlogs, President Ali said the move was about efficiency, not outsourcing responsibility. By leveraging private capacity, he argued, the government reduced waiting times and

services and modern patient spaces reflect that integrated approach. The hospital remains the first and only in Guyana to achieve ISO 9001:2015 certification for quality management, reinforcing its reputation for high standards.

But the President's



Dr Balwant Singh's new outpatient pavillion

strengthened overall service delivery.

Inside the new pavilion, upgraded diagnostic rooms, expanded outpatient

remarks stretched well beyond one facility. He spoke of a healthcare system rapidly embracing digital transformation, from



Dr Balwant Singh's new outpatient pavillion

the nationwide rollout of electronic health records and telemedicine services at 200 sites, to AI-assisted diagnostics for X-rays and CT scans and GPS-integrated emergency response systems.

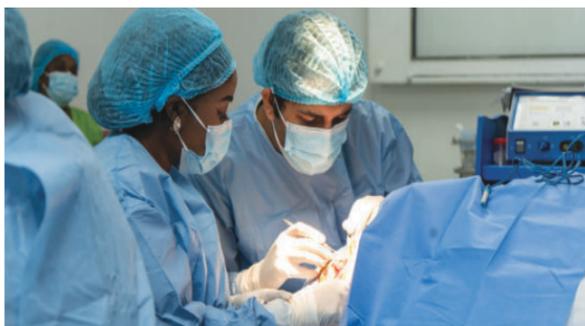
"There should be no shortages with the investments we are making," he stated, noting that technology would help eliminate inefficiencies that often strain the system.

Perhaps most ambitious is the push toward robotic surgery,

with President Ali declaring that Guyana intends to be among the leaders in advanced surgical technology in the Western Hemisphere.

Beyond service delivery, the government is also laying the groundwork to manufacture medicines locally and create an integrated medical supply platform, a move aimed at strengthening health security while positioning Guyana as a regional hub.

ADVANCED, SIGHT-SAVING SURGERY OFFERED LOCALLY



First-ever scleral buckle surgeries completed at the Georgetown Public Hospital Corporation

Retinal detachment can steal vision without warning, but for 11 patients treated at the Georgetown Public Hospital Corporation (GPHC), it also brought something unexpected, access to advanced surgery right at home.

In a landmark step for Guyana's public healthcare system, the hospital successfully completed the country's first-ever scleral buckle surgeries within the public sector. For patients who once faced the daunting prospect of

travelling overseas for specialised retinal care, the procedures marked a turning point.

The surgeries were carried out during a week-long collaboration between the World Eye Mission and the Ministry of Health from February 9 to 13. The initiative combined international expertise with growing local capacity to deliver complex, sight-saving treatment.

Leading the effort was Guyanese ophthalmologist Dr Arlene Bobb-Semple, the country's only practising retina specialist, alongside the visiting

United States-based retina surgeon Dr Krishi Peddada. Over five days, the team performed 11 complex retinal surgeries, including two scleral buckle procedures, a technique used to repair retinal detachment by placing a flexible silicone band around the eye to gently reposition and support the retina.

The achievement reflects years of steady development in local retina services. Since joining GPHC in 2018, Dr Bobb-Semple has worked to expand specialised eye care, introducing complex

vitreoretinal surgeries in 2021 and steadily building the hospital's surgical capacity.

Beyond restoring sight, the collaboration

partnerships and investment, procedures like scleral buckle surgery are expected to become routine within Guyana's public



First-ever scleral buckle surgeries completed at the Georgetown Public Hospital Corporation

also focused on hands-on health system, bringing training and knowledge advanced, sight-saving care closer to home for teams. With continued those who need it most.

Minister of Health Frank Anthony, during the opening of a new wellness centre at the Eccles Health Centre, encouraged Guyanese to embrace healthier eating habits and lifestyle changes as part of a shift toward preventative healthcare.

The centre, a pilot initiative, is designed to focus on keeping people healthy rather than treating illness after it occurs. Minister Anthony highlighted the importance of balanced diets, portion control, and plant-based foods that are organic and nutrient-rich, while cautioning against ultra-

NEW WELLNESS CENTRE AIMS TO KEEP PEOPLE HEALTHY BEFORE ILLNESS STRIKES

processed foods high in oils, fats, sugars, and starch.

"We want to start by encouraging people to eat the right foods...Very often people go to the supermarket and buy all the wrong things," the minister said, noting that poor eating habits contribute to chronic conditions such as hypertension, diabetes, and heart disease.

The facility will provide routine check-ups, nutritional guidance, and support

for lifestyle changes, including reducing alcohol consumption, quitting smoking, managing stress, and improving sleep habits. Minister Anthony stressed that many, particularly men, avoid regular medical check-ups, often seeking care only when illnesses have progressed.

Portion sizes were also highlighted as a major concern, with overeating contributing to rising obesity levels in the country.

The wellness

centre aims to change these patterns by encouraging early detection, prevention, and sustainable lifestyle choices. If successful, the pilot programme will be expanded across Guyana, offering a model for healthier living and stronger community wellbeing.

"This is about keeping our people healthy before they become patients," Minister Anthony stated, calling on all Guyanese to take proactive steps toward better health.



The new wellness centre



An inside view of the new wellness centre

PRESIDENT ALI UNVEILS LANDSCAPED PROMENADE, PLANS SIMILAR PROJECTS ACROSS CAPITAL



The newly developed promenade on East Street

Trees, benches, and landscaped walkways may seem simple, but at Dr Balwant Singh's Hospital, they represent a bigger idea, that thoughtful urban design can inspire citizens, improve behaviour, and transform the way people interact with public spaces.

President Irfaan Ali announced that

the newly unveiled hospital promenade will serve as a model for similar projects across Georgetown, forming part of a broader cultural and urban transformation agenda. Developed by the Office of the First Lady in collaboration with the Ministries of Housing, Public Works, and Local Government,

the promenade features landscaped greenery and pedestrian-friendly spaces that enhance both aesthetics and functionality.

"The environment does something to you psychologically,"

to throw a bottle alongside them." He explained that such initiatives aim to fast-track mindset changes while raising national standards, showing that development can shape culture as much as it



The newly developed promenade on East Street

President Ali said. **"It is very difficult to walk down and see these trees and decide**

shapes infrastructure.

President Ali praised the First Lady and the supporting ministries

for their collaboration, emphasising that these projects are part of a forward-looking vision for Guyana. **"We are not only building infrastructure,"** he said. **"We are building a culture. We are building a society that works for everyone."**

Since 2020, the National Beautification Project has delivered numerous recreational and public spaces, including Independence Esplanade, Zia's Play Park in Leonora, Unity Beach Play Park, and the May 26 Nursery Complex at Melanie Damishana. Additional projects have

been completed at Okum Beach, Leguan, Bath Settlement, Bush Lot, Number 63 Beach, Kato, Wismar, and Spikeland in Linden.

This year, \$35 million was allocated in the national budget to continue the initiative, covering construction and upgrades of parks, installation of play sets and bins, and general improvement of public recreational spaces.

With the hospital promenade as a model, similar projects are set to roll out across Georgetown, reinforcing the government's commitment to creating vibrant, accessible, and culturally inspiring spaces for all citizens.

GUYANA COMMENDS DOMINICAN REPUBLIC ON 182 YEARS OF INDEPENDENCE

As the Dominican Republic celebrated its 182nd Independence Anniversary, the occasion became more than a national milestone, it also served as a reminder of the growing partnership between the Dominican Republic and Guyana.

Speaking at a reception held at the AC Marriott Hotel, Prime Minister Mark Phillips reaffirmed Guyana's commitment to strengthening bilateral relations as the two countries expand cooperation in several key sectors.

Extending congratulations on behalf of the Government

and people of Guyana, Duarte, Francisco del



The reception held at the AC Marriott Hotel

Prime Minister Phillips reflected on the Dominican Republic's historic journey to independence on February 27, 1844, and paid tribute to national heroes Juan Pablo

Rosario Sánchez and Matías Ramón Mella, whose sacrifices laid the foundation for the nation's sovereignty.

Today, he noted, the Dominican Republic stands among the largest economies in the

Caribbean, with strong economic performance and institutional stability reflecting decades of determined leadership.

Looking ahead, the prime minister emphasised opportunities for deeper collaboration between the two countries in agriculture, energy, tourism, air services, and the oil and gas sector, areas that align with Guyana's expanding development agenda.

Dominican Ambassador to Guyana Ernesto Torres Pereyra also reflected on his

country's history of resilience, noting that despite wars, political upheaval and natural disasters, the Dominican Republic has emerged as one of the region's fastest-growing economies and

now welcomes nearly 12 million visitors annually.

He said both nations remain committed to strengthening ties through trade, investment and private sector collaboration.



The reception held at the AC Marriott Hotel

Guyana and Sweden took another step toward strengthening diplomatic ties as officials and members of the diplomatic community gathered to welcome Sweden's newly appointed Non-Resident Ambassador, Maria Velasco.

The reception, hosted at Banks DIH Ltd in Georgetown, brought together government representatives, diplomats and invited guests to celebrate the growing partnership between the two countries.

Delivering remarks at the event, Minister of Parliamentary Affairs and Governance Gail Teixeira said Guyana remains optimistic about its future and is eager to

GUYANA WELCOMES SWEDEN'S NEW AMBASSADOR



Guyana welcomed the appointment of Sweden's Non-Resident Ambassador

strengthen relationships with international partners.

She noted that as the country continues to grow and develop,

partnerships with nations such as Sweden will play an important role in advancing national goals.

"We are excited

and our country is optimistic about the future and about where we are going and what Guyana's potential could be,"

Minister Teixeira said, adding that Guyana looks forward to deepening its friendship with Sweden and other global partners.

Minister Teixeira highlighted cooperation on global issues such as climate change as a key area for collaboration. She pointed out that Guyana is home to one of the world's most intact forest systems and continues to balance environmental protection with economic development.

Minister Teixeira

said the country's Low Carbon Development Strategy serves as a model for achieving sustainable growth while safeguarding natural resources.

She also spoke about the country's expanding digital landscape and the growing focus on the **"orange economy"**, which includes cultural industries and digital innovation. Improved connectivity across the country, she said, has already transformed how citizens access services and opportunities.

Meanwhile, Ambassador Velasco emphasised Sweden's strong tradition of international cooperation. She noted

that Sweden works closely with its Nordic neighbours and the European Union, one of the world's largest trading blocs.

Velasco said Guyana and CARICOM share many of the same democratic values with the European Union, including respect for international law and multilateral cooperation.

She expressed optimism that closer ties among Guyana, the Caribbean and Europe will create new opportunities for collaboration while helping address global challenges.

GUYANA'S UNEMPLOYMENT FALLS TO HISTORIC LOW

From a peak of 15.6 per cent in 2021, Guyana's unemployment rate has dropped to a historic 6.8 per cent, signalling not only economic recovery but renewed opportunities for those who once struggled to find work. For thousands of households, this stability, income, and hope restored.

The latest Guyana Labour Force Survey, released by the Bureau of Statistics, shows that the journey to this milestone began in early 2020, when the national unemployment rate stood at 12.8 per cent. Women and

rural residents were disproportionately affected, with jobless rates of 14.4 per cent and 13.1 per cent, respectively. By the first quarter of 2021, the situation reached its most critical point: nearly one in five women in the workforce, 19.1 per cent, were unemployed, while rural communities continued to lag behind urban areas, highlighting the depth of economic strain across the country.

Recovery in mid-2021 was gradual. Men's unemployment fluctuated before settling at 12 per cent, while women remained



Labour force participation rose from 49.6 per cent in 2021 to 56.5 per cent in 2024

in the high teens at 18.4 per cent. Rural areas continued to face greater challenges than urban centres, with rates of 14.8 per cent and 13.8 per cent, respectively.

Between late 2021 and the end of 2024, Guyana's economy underwent a dramatic transformation. By the fourth quarter of 2024, unemployment

had fallen to 6.8 per cent, a remarkable improvement from 14.5 per cent in late 2021. Men reached a low of 5.1 per cent, while women saw the most significant gains, falling from 19.1 per cent to 9.3 per cent. The long-standing rural-urban divide essentially disappeared, with rural unemployment at 6.6 per cent and urban at 7.1 per cent.

Youth employment also strengthened, with rates dropping from 31.9 per cent in 2021 to 12.1 per cent in 2024. Labour force participation rose from 49.6 per cent in 2021 to 56.5 per cent in 2024, reflecting

more adults entering or remaining active in the workforce. The survey highlighted that most Guyanese are employed in wholesale and retail trade, construction, agriculture, forestry and fishing, public administration, defence, and manufacturing.

Behind the numbers are stories of renewed livelihoods, families regaining stability, and communities finding hope. The data reflects not just economic recovery, but a Guyana in motion, creating opportunities for citizens across regions, genders, and generations.

NEW PROJECT AIMS TO STRENGTHEN SOIL HEALTH AND RICE PRODUCTION IN GUYANA

A new climate-smart rice project launched at the Burma Rice Research Station is expected to help Guyana's rice farmers better withstand the changing climate while modernising one of the country's most important agricultural sectors.

Through a US\$50,000 grant from the Government of New Zealand, Guyana is implementing the ADOPT Caribbean Soil Health for Climate-Resilient Agriculture Project, an initiative designed to strengthen soil health and introduce more sustainable farming practices.

As part of the project, two climate-smart rice blocks will be established at the research station. These plots will serve



Minister of Agriculture Zulfikar Mustapha meets with New Zealand Ambassador to the Caribbean Linda Te Puni and delegation

as demonstration sites where farmers can observe and learn new techniques designed to improve resilience against unpredictable weather conditions.

Minister of Agriculture Zulfikar Mustapha explained that

once the model blocks are fully established, rice farmers will be able to visit the site and gain practical knowledge on how to adapt their own farming methods.

"Farmers will be able to see how to start and how

these systems can help them deal with the severe weather conditions we sometimes experience," the minister told the Department of Public Information (DPI).

Guyana currently has about 6,000 rice farmers cultivating more than 232,000 acres of land, making rice a cornerstone of the country's agricultural production and rural livelihoods.

The new initiative will test improved farming techniques capable of withstanding heavy rainfall, extended dry spells and other climate-related

challenges.

Beyond rice, the government continues to invest in modern agricultural technologies such as hydroponics, shade houses and tunnel-ventilated poultry pens to boost production and attract younger generations to the sector.

Minister Mustapha said these initiatives are helping to reshape agriculture in Guyana.

"We are changing the perception," he noted, adding that innovation and technology are turning agriculture into a modern and profitable industry.



Minister of Agriculture Zulfikar Mustapha meets with New Zealand Ambassador to the Caribbean Linda Te Puni and delegation

WORKERS CELEBRATE RECORD SUGAR OUTPUT AT ROSE HALL, ALBION, AND BLAIRMONT



Rose Hall estate manager, Threhowan Shiwprasad

Workers at the Rose Hall, Albion, and Blairmont sugar estates in Berbice are celebrating a major achievement after surpassing their weekly sugar production target during the second week of the current crop. The estates produced 2,457 tonnes of sugar—468 tonnes more than the targeted 1,989 tonnes.

The milestone is a significant boost for the Guyana Sugar Corporation (GuySuCo) as it continues to rebuild operations following the reopening of estates. Rose Hall estate's manager, Threhowan Shiwprasad, revealed that the estates also recorded the highest daily sugar output since reopening, reaching 156

tonnes in a single day.

A key factor behind the success was the collaborative effort between Albion and Blairmont estates, with



Rose Hall estate manager, Threhowan Shiwprasad

canes from Blairmont processed at Albion due to mechanical issues. Efficient harvesting and rapid transportation of cane ensured fresher

deliveries, allowing for higher juice extraction and better sugar yields.

Workers were motivated by the Weekly Production Incentive

(WPI), which grants an extra day's pay for surpassing production goals. Veteran cane harvester Somadat Rangasammy, who has

worked in the industry since 1995, said the achievement has brought a renewed sense of pride to the community.

"Everything fell apart when the estate closed in 2017. This week's production made us feel happy. We got that extra pay because we passed the target, and I know we'll go even further," Rangasammy said.

GuySuCo is also advancing mechanisation with billet harvesters and converting fields from Dutch beds to English beds to improve efficiency. Jamaican

contracted harvesters are expected to join soon, adding further support to operations.

While weather remains a challenge, harvesting manager Partap Kuldeep remains optimistic. **"With good weather and continued teamwork, we are confident in meeting our targets for this crop,"** he said.

The record-breaking week not only rewards the hard work of GuySuCo employees but also signals a promising revival for Berbice's sugar-producing communities.

GUYANA ASSERTS SOVEREIGN AUTHORITY OVER OFFSHORE SEISMIC ACTIVITIES

The Government of Guyana has reaffirmed its sovereign right to conduct offshore exploration activities after rejecting objections raised by the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela regarding a planned three-dimensional multi-client seismic survey in Guyana's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ).

In a statement issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, the government said Venezuela's claims are **"legally unfounded"** and misrepresent the geographic and legal realities governing Guyana's maritime jurisdiction.

The seismic programme, which will gather high-resolution subsurface data to support oil and gas exploration, forms part of Guyana's broader strategy to strengthen its understanding of the offshore petroleum

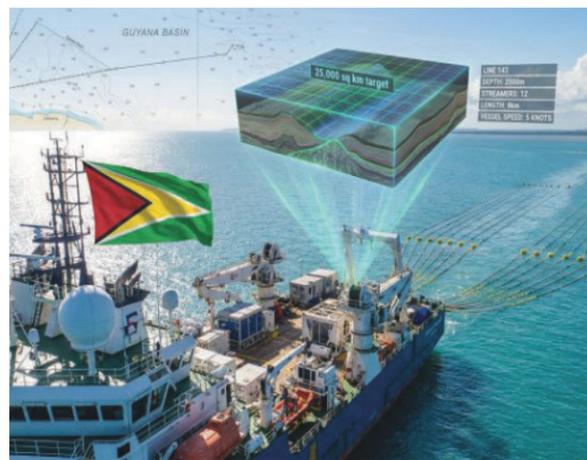
basin and improve long-term management of the country's natural resources.

The ministry emphasised that the planned survey will take place entirely within Guyana's Exclusive Economic Zone and continental shelf, areas over which the country exercises sovereign rights under international law.

Under these rights, Guyana has the exclusive authority to explore, exploit and manage natural resources within its maritime jurisdiction. The government therefore maintains that facilitating the seismic survey is a lawful exercise of those rights and consistent with established international practice.

The ministry noted that the maritime zones

associated with Guyana's coastline is derived from the boundary established by the 1899 Arbitral Award, which

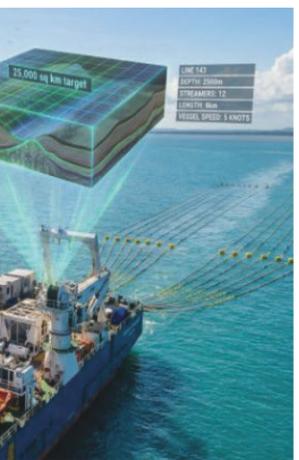


New seismic survey to expand understanding of Guyana's offshore basin

definitively settled the land frontier between British Guiana and Venezuela more than a century ago.

Guyana also referenced the Geneva

Agreement, which provides the framework for addressing Venezuela's later contention that the



New seismic survey to expand understanding of Guyana's offshore basin

1899 award is invalid. Government noted that the agreement does not prevent Guyana from pursuing economic development activities within its territory or

maritime areas.

"The Government of Guyana has consistently exercised peaceful administration and jurisdiction over its maritime spaces," the ministry stated, pointing to ongoing offshore licensing and exploration activities as examples of that authority in practice.

Government further rejected Venezuela's suggestion that Guyana's offshore activities are taking place in **"undelimited maritime areas,"** describing the claim as inaccurate and misleading.

The government also dismissed statements from Caracas indicating that it would not recognise concessions or licences issued by Guyana within its

maritime domain, stressing that no state has the authority under international law to invalidate another country's lawful sovereign decisions within its own territory or maritime zones.

The seismic acquisition initiative is expected to support future exploration by providing detailed geological data that helps energy companies better understand potential oil and gas reserves beneath the seabed.

As Guyana continues to expand its rapidly developing offshore energy sector, the government says it remains committed to exercising its rights responsibly while safeguarding the country's natural resources for the benefit of its people.

SECURITY STRENGTHENED ALONG GUYANA'S BORDER WITH NEW IMBOTERO FACILITIES

Security along Guyana's northern frontier has been strengthened with the commissioning of a new police station, wharf and boathouse at Imbotero along the Barima River in Region One, Guyana.

The facilities, valued at more than \$200 million, are expected to significantly improve law enforcement operations in the border community by enhancing river patrols, strengthening monitoring of border activity and enabling faster response times for residents in surrounding villages.

For communities along the Barima River,



Imbotero facilities bolster security along Barima River

where waterways serve as the main transportation routes, the new infrastructure

represents a stronger

security presence and improved support for officers tasked with safeguarding the area.

The rebuilt police

station provides a modern and more comfortable working environment for ranks stationed in the community. Meanwhile, the newly constructed boathouse and upgraded wharf will support docking, maintenance and deployment of patrol boats used to monitor activity along the river and nearby border areas.

Speaking at the commissioning ceremony, Minister of Home Affairs Oneidge Walrond highlighted the importance of

strengthening security in border regions.

"Border communities are not the edges of Guyana; they are the frontline of our sovereignty," the minister said, noting that investments in infrastructure and resources are critical to supporting the work of law enforcement.

Chairman of Region One, Guyana, Brentnol Ashley, described the project as an important step in enhancing security across the region. He noted that

improved facilities, internet access and modern boats will allow officers and other joint services to operate more effectively while delivering better services to residents.

For officers stationed at the outpost, the new building is already making a difference. Sergeant Walker said the upgraded environment allows ranks to work more comfortably and efficiently as they continue to protect the community and Guyana's borders.

NEW GARBAGE TRUCKS BRING RELIEF FOR COMMUNITIES IN REGION TWO

Communities across the coast of Region Two, Guyana are set to benefit from improved sanitation services following the delivery of 10 garbage trucks by the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development.

The trucks will support waste collection in the Anna Regina, Guyana municipality and five Neighbourhood Democratic Councils (NDCs), helping to tackle long-standing garbage disposal challenges in the region.



Region Two NDCs welcome sanitation boost with new trucks

For residents and local leaders, the delivery represents more than just new equipment, it signals progress in addressing a key community concern.

Chairman of the Good Hope/Pomona NDC, Andy Ramnarine, welcomed the initiative, noting that it fulfils a commitment made by Mohamed Irfaan Ali to

improve services across local communities.

"We want to say how happy we are that the commitment has been fulfilled today," Ramnarine said, explaining that garbage disposal has been a persistent issue for the region.

He also assured the government that the trucks will be carefully maintained and fully utilised to improve sanitation services for residents of what is often referred to as the **"Cinderella County."**



Region Two NDCs welcome sanitation boost with new trucks

Minister of Local Government and Regional Development Priya Manickchand said the initiative forms part of the government's broader effort to strengthen local governance and deliver on promises made to citizens.

"Once we promise something,

we deliver it," the minister stated.

The government has committed to ensuring that every NDC and municipality across Guyana is equipped with at least one garbage compactor truck by mid-2026, improving waste management services nationwide.

NEW WISMAR-MACKENZIE BRIDGE NEARS COMPLETION

Residents of Linden are just months away from enjoying a safer and more convenient crossing over the Demerara River, as the New Wismar-Mackenzie Bridge nears completion. During a site visit on March 6, Minister of Public Works, Bishop Juan Edghill, was informed that physical works on the 233-metre-long concrete bridge

were close to being finished.

The minister, along with technical staff, contractors China Railway Construction (Caribbean) Company Ltd., GuyCo Construction Inc., and consultants from Politecnica, conducted an on-site walkthrough, inspecting the bridge and its connecting roads. While the main

bridge structure is nearly finished, work continues on the Western End, including the West Watooka Connector and Dacoura Haul Roads, with foundation and curbing works advancing steadily. On the Eastern End, subsurface preparation and retaining structures are underway, with prefabricated vertical drains and geotextiles

already in place.

Once completed by June 2026, the bridge will offer toll-free passage, modern lighting, two barrier-separated pedestrian walkways, and new roundabouts on both ends.

Minister Edghill thanked residents and commuters for their patience, emphasising that the project will transform travel in Linden and the wider Region Ten.



Physical works on the 233-metre-long concrete bridge are over 90 percent completed



The final stretch of the Aubrey Barker Road expansion project officially opens

FINAL PHASE OF AUBREY BARKER ROAD PROJECT OPENS TO PUBLIC

The final stretch of the Aubrey Barker Road expansion project was officially opened to the public on March 8, marking an important milestone in improving transportation in and around the capital.

For commuters and residents, the upgraded roadway is expected to make daily travel faster and more convenient by easing traffic congestion

and strengthening connections among major communities.

The expanded corridor now serves as a key link between South Ruimveldt and the East Bank of Demerara through the Heroes Highway, while also providing access to the East Coast via the Ogle Bypass Road. It also creates an important route for residents

accessing the developing Cummings Lodge Housing Scheme.

The project included several upgrades aimed at improving safety and usability, such as thermoplastic road markings, traffic signs, a centre median, bicycle lanes, paved shoulders and walkways.

In addition, four precast prestressed concrete bridges were

constructed across drainage canals, while government reserves were established along both sides of the roadway.

Together, the improvements are expected to provide a safer, more efficient route for thousands of commuters travelling in and out of Georgetown each day.

NEW LEONORA ROADWAY TO BOOST COMMERCE AND HOUSING

A new 7.7-kilometre roadway in Leonora is set to boost economic activity, improve logistics, and support housing development as it connects Versailles to the Parika Highway in Region Three. The project marks phase one of a larger integrated transportation network, which will eventually link Leonora to the Canal Number One Highway, creating faster, more efficient travel between the West Coast and West

Bank of Demerara and neighbouring areas.

During a recent site visit, Minister of Housing Collin Croal, alongside Minister of Housing Vanessa Benn, inspected the planned roadway alignment. They were joined by Permanent Secretary Bishram Kuppen, Senior Engineer of the Central Housing and Planning Authority (CHPA) Randolph Hunte, and technical staff from

the CHPA Projects and Surveys Units.

Minister Croal explained that the roadway will significantly reduce travel times for commuters while providing improved access to more than 300 new homes being constructed in the Leonora/Groenveldt area. He also noted that the project will support commercial activity along the corridor, enhancing logistics for businesses in rapidly

growing zones.

“These infrastructure investments are critical to our vision of a modern, well-connected Guyana,” Minister Croal said, emphasising that accelerated housing development must be matched with reliable and resilient transportation links to ensure sustainable growth and improved quality of life for residents.



The roadway will provide improved access to more than 300 new homes being constructed in the area (1)

Evenings in Annandale North may soon feel very different. With new street lights rising along roadways and corners, residents are anticipating safer walks home, brighter streets for children at play, and a renewed sense of comfort after dark.

Within the next two weeks, the entire East Coast Demerara community is expected to be fully illuminated as government accelerates its nationwide rollout of 100,000 street lights. During an on-site inspection, Minister

of Public Works Juan Edghill assured residents

that the installations are moving steadily and



New street lights rising along roadways and corners

BRIGHTER NIGHTS AHEAD FOR ANNANDALE NORTH

strategically.

But this initiative, he explained, goes beyond simply placing poles and bulbs. Certified electricians and licensed contractors are conducting detailed assessments, including nighttime audits, to identify dark spots and potential security risks.

“The engineers and technicians have to come into the communities at night, see where it’s dark and where the

security risks are, and then come back with a plan,” the minister noted, underscoring that proper coverage is the priority.

Works are not limited to Annandale North. Installations are also ongoing in neighbouring Sections ‘C’ and ‘D’ of Non-Pariel, as part of a coordinated effort involving dozens of contractors across the country.

For residents, the transformation is about

peace of mind. Better lighting means greater visibility, improved safety, and the freedom to move more confidently after sunset, whether returning from work, attending church, or visiting neighbours.

Minister Edghill encouraged community feedback to ensure the lights remain functional and properly placed, cautioning against tampering or improper removals.

WE LIFT 6 BOOSTS WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS - 120 GET START-UP SUPPORT



120 women received business starter packs during the closing ceremony

For many women across Guyana, the journey to entrepreneurship often begins at the kitchen table, balancing family responsibilities while nurturing small ideas that slowly grow into businesses. At this year's We Lift 6 Conference and Expo, dozens of those dreams received a major boost.

One hundred and twenty women from across the country received business starter packs during the closing ceremony at the Arthur Chung Conference Centre, giving them the tools needed to launch or strengthen their ventures.

The initiative forms part of the Women's Innovation and Investment Network (WIIN), implemented through the Guyana Women's Leadership Institute. Two women from each administrative region were selected and trained in skills designed to help them build sustainable businesses.

Participants completed courses in areas such as social media marketing, graphic design, garment construction, childcare and elderly care. After completing their training, they received starter packs tailored to their new professions.

Women who studied

garment construction were presented with industrial sewing machines, while those trained in childcare received toys and educational materials to support the development of children in their care. Participants in the social media marketing programme were provided with laptop computers to help them manage online businesses and digital marketing services.



We Lift 6 Conference and Expo

For many recipients, the equipment represents more than just a starter pack, it is the first step toward financial independence. Speaking at the event, Minister of Human Services and Social Security Dr. Vindhya Persaud said the initiative is part of a broader effort to remove barriers that often prevent women from pursuing their ambitions.

"For me, it has always been about dismantling barriers, especially for women who have potential

that many times delay exploring it because of the many challenges they face," she said.

Minister Persaud noted that many women begin their entrepreneurial journeys from their homes, carefully balancing work with family responsibilities while trying to grow their businesses.

The event also saw the signing of



We Lift 6 Conference and Expo

several memoranda of understanding with partner organisations aimed at expanding mentorship, training opportunities and business development support for women entrepreneurs.

Meanwhile, Minister of Parliamentary Affairs and Governance Gail Teixeira emphasised that meaningful progress for women requires strong systems of support.

"If you don't create the enabling environment, all you have is the will of a woman in a kitchen making products to

sell. We have to create the environment to allow women to take their rightful place in the society and the economy," she said.

Beyond equipment and partnerships, the government is also investing in programmes designed to help women succeed. Among these is a \$1.2 billion investment in childcare services under the Care Economy Initiative, aimed at ensuring women can pursue careers or business opportunities without sacrificing reliable childcare.

Access to financing is also expanding through the Guyana Development Bank, which is being capitalised to offer collateral-free loans of up to \$3 million and preferential financing of up to \$7 million to help women start or expand their businesses.

Meanwhile, more than 21,000 women



We Lift 6 Conference and Expo

have already received training through WIIN, gaining skills in entrepreneurship,



We Lift 6 Conference and Expo



We Lift 6 Conference and Expo

information technology and other fields aimed at strengthening financial independence.

The three-day expo, held under the theme "Let Her Bloom," featured more than 400 women-owned businesses showcasing products ranging from crafts and jewellery to skincare items, plants and condiments.

By the end of the event, the expo proved to be more than just a marketplace. For many women, it was a reminder that with the right support, mentorship and opportunity, small ideas can grow into thriving enterprises capable of reaching markets both locally and internationally.

WIIN APP RELAUNCHES WITH MARKETPLACE FOR WOMEN



Minister of Human Services and Social Security, Dr. Vindhya Persaud, along with Resident Representative of the Inter-American Development Bank, Lorena Solórzano-Salazar and ministry officials

Hundreds of women entrepreneurs across Guyana now have a new opportunity to grow their businesses following the relaunch of the Women's Innovation and Investment Network (WIIN) App, which now features a digital

marketplace designed to help women sell their products more easily both locally and internationally.

The upgraded platform was unveiled by Minister of Human Services and Social Security Dr. Vindhya

Persaud in collaboration with the Inter-American Development Bank during the closing of the We Lift 6 Conference and Expo at the Arthur Chung Conference Centre.

For many women who started businesses from their homes or small community spaces, the new digital marketplace represents more than just an app upgrade, it is a gateway to wider markets and greater visibility.

The platform functions much like major online shopping sites, allowing customers to browse products, add items to a cart and

complete purchases directly from their mobile devices. Plans are also underway to integrate delivery services, ensuring customers can conveniently receive their orders after purchasing.

Minister Persaud said the platform places powerful tools directly in the hands of women entrepreneurs, allowing them to promote and expand their businesses with greater confidence.

"With the digital marketplace, the power is in your hands to advertise, to market, to have enormous sales and to make yourself visible locally and internationally," she said.

The WIIN programme,

began with just 75 women, has since grown to include more than 400 entrepreneurs participating in training, networking and business development initiatives.

Beyond providing a sales platform, the digital marketplace also aims to address challenges many entrepreneurs face, including product visibility, packaging standards and access to



Minister of Education Sonia Parag inspects the progress on the school

STATE HOUSE BURSTS INTO COLOUR AS PRESIDENT ALI CELEBRATES PHAGWAH WITH NATION

The colours of Phagwah came alive at State House as President Mohamed Irfaan Ali and the First Family hosted a vibrant celebration that showcased Guyana’s rich multicultural identity, demonstrating how the Festival of Colours continues to inspire unity across the nation.

The lawns of State House on Main Street, Georgetown, were transformed into a lively scene of Chowtaal, songs, and playful splashes of colour as families, children, and community members gathered to mark the festival. Speaking at the event on the eve of Phagwah, President Ali reflected on Guyana’s unique ability to celebrate diversity, noting that the nation simultaneously observes Ramadan, Lent, and Holi in harmony.

“In the month of Ramadan, in the month of Lent, and in the holy season of Holi, we show what true unification is,” he said, adding that Guyana bridges divides that often fragment societies elsewhere. Using the symbolism of colour, the president emphasised that diversity strengthens national identity. “Imagine a world without colour...when colours merge, they create something more beautiful,” he stated.

President Ali encouraged citizens to embrace the traditions of Holi, including temple observances, Holika burning, Chowtaal singing, and sharing traditional foods such as seven curries on a leaf. He highlighted that the celebration is not only about play, but also about reflecting on life, love, and the triumph of good over evil.

On Phagwah morning, the president addressed the nation, urging citizens to foster a society where differences do not determine a person’s opportunities or sense of belonging. “Let us build a Guyana where the colour of a child’s skin matters less than the colour of their dreams,” he said.

He also expressed gratitude to the Hindu community for preserving the festival across generations and welcomed returning diaspora members, calling their presence “like the returning tide...completing our circle.”

As powders flew and melodies filled the air, the celebration at State House reflected the nation’s spirit of unity, joy, and cultural pride. President Ali extended warm wishes to all Guyanese, encouraging them to let their lives be filled with colour, love, and shared harmony, the true essence of Phagwah.



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English Cucumber 長青瓜 Reg:\$2.59 199¢ ea	Branch Tomato 有枝番茄 Reg:\$3.59 259¢ lb	Cauliflower 椰菜花 Reg:\$3.99 299¢ ea	Head Lettuce 圓生菜 Reg: 2 for \$5.00 2/\$3.50	Lemon In Bag 袋裝黃檸檬 Reg: 2 for \$7.00 2/\$5.00	Sunkist Oranges 新奇士橙 Reg:\$1.59 99¢ lb	Thai Banana 泰蕉 Reg:\$1.59 99¢ lb
US Fuji Apple 美國富士 Reg:\$1.79 129¢ lb	Asian Pear 水晶梨 Reg:\$1.79 129¢ lb	Tangerine 小桔子 Reg:\$2.59 199¢ lb	Strawberry 草莓 Reg:\$2.99 199¢ pk	Small Red Grape 小紅提 Reg:\$3.99 299¢ lb	Vietnam Red Meat Pomelo 越南青柚 Reg:\$6.99 499¢ ea	Blueberry 藍莓 Reg:\$6.99 499¢ pk
					Avocado 牛油果 Reg: 3 for \$7.00 3/\$5.00	

GROCERY

Erawan Glutinous Rice Flour Rice Flour 400g 三象糯米粉 粘米粉 Reg:\$1.99 99¢ ea	LKK Oyster Flavoured Sauce 錦珍鮮味蚝油 480g Reg:\$2.99 188¢ ea	Flying Lion Brand Fish Sauce 飛獅魚露 682ml Reg:\$13.99 959¢ ea
Knorr Chicken Broth Mix 家樂雞粉 1kg Reg:\$11.99 888¢ ea	Aurora Bread Crumbs 680g 面包糠系列 Reg:\$4.99 288¢ ea	Goya Masarica Instant Corn Masa Flour 4Lb 玉米面粉 Reg:\$8.99 499¢ ea
Demerara Golden Yellow Cane Sugar 7Lb 蔗糖 Reg:\$10.99 779¢ ea	Grace Dry Pigeon Peas 豆子罐頭 540ml Reg:\$2.59 169¢ ea	Kopiko Coffee Series 咖啡 750g-900g Reg:\$9.99 699¢ ea
Lady's Choice Sandwich Spread 470ml 三文治醬 Reg:\$3.99 179¢ ea	Knorr Original Liquid Seasoning 250ml 家樂牌鮮露 Reg:\$2.99 179¢ ea	M.Y. San Sky Flakes Crackers 長條餅乾 300g Reg:\$2.99 179¢ ea
Lucky Me Instant Cup Noodle 70g 杯面 Reg:\$1.99 139¢ ea	Samyang Buldak Artificial Spicy Chicken Flavor Noodle 三養火雞面 650g Reg:\$8.99 659¢ ea	Acecook Oh! Ricey Rice Noodles 500g 沙河粉 Reg:\$3.99 269¢ ea
Arizona Tea Series 680ml 綠茶系列 Reg:\$1.99 99¢ ea	Vita Malt Classic 能量飲料 330ml Reg:\$1.79 119¢ ea	Supligen Vanilla Flavour Beverage 250ml 香草味飲料 Reg:\$1.99 139¢ ea

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Lemon 黃檸檬 43.00 case	Head Lettuce 30S 圓生菜 50.00 case	Green Onion 葱 47.00 case	Chinese Eggplant 中國茄瓜 68.00 case	Blue Jay California Citrus 藍鳥橙 50.00 case	Avocados 36s 牛油果 50.00 case
Frozen Black Tiger Shrimp 8/12 老虎蝦 20x400g 230.00 case	Headless White Shrimp 無頭白蝦 21-25 10X4Lb 210.00 case	I Mei Frozen Gua Bao 義美刈包 12x360g 52.00 case	Extra Large Egg 箱裝大雞蛋 56.99 case	Fresh Flamingo Chicken Leg Quarter 新鮮鷓鴣 18kg 75.99 case	Chicken Breast 雞胸肉 25kg 260.00 case
Gold Plum Dried Black Fungus Strips 5Lb 木耳絲 29.99 case	Mr. Goudas Long Grain Rice 黃米 20kg 29.99 bag	Long Grain White Rice 優質絲苗米 20kg 29.99 bag	P.R.B Monosodium Glutamate 50Lb 珠江橋牌味精 58.00 bag	ADM All Purpose Flour 面粉 20kg 19.99 bag	Capri Vegetable / Canola Oil 菜油/芥菜籽油 16L 34.99 case
Redpath Sugar 20kg 白糖 26.99 bag	YR-24W Microwavable Container 150s 餐盒 19.99 case	YS-32 Microwavable Plastic Soup & Deli Container 240s 餐盒 34.99 case	YS-64 Microwavable Plastic Soup & Deli Container 120s 餐盒 34.99 case	MP-0601 6"X6" Mfpp Clamshell Container 250pcs 餐盒 22.99 case	MP-0188 9"X6" Mfpp Calmshell Container 150s 餐盒 18.99 case
MP-0901 9"X9" Mfpp Clamshell Container 150pcs 餐盒 27.99 case					

MEAT

Boneless Pork Belly 無骨豬腩 Reg:\$4.99 3.99 lb	Beef Flank 牛腩 Reg:\$7.99 6.99 lb	Ground Beef 牛肉碎 Reg:\$5.99 4.99 lb
Quail 鸚鴉 Reg:\$13.99 12.99 pk	Young Chicken (Headless) 無頭嫩雞 Reg:\$3.59 2.59 lb	

FROZEN

Full Moon Frozen Head On Shrimp 20/30 400g 有頭蝦 Reg:\$7.99 5.99 ea	Tuna Steak 6oz 吞拿魚扒 Reg:\$4.99 3.99 ea	Sliced Lemon Grass 227g 凍香茅 Reg:\$2.59/ea 3/\$5.00	Bulacan Grated Cassava 木薯碎 454g Reg:\$1.99/ea 2/\$3.00	Len Xiang Glutinous Corn Series 500g 蓮香糯米 Reg:\$2.99 1.99 ea	Sirens World Frozen Golden Pompano 300-400 1kg 凍金鯧魚 Reg:\$12.99 9.99 ea
Frozen Fish Egg 454g 魚蛋 Reg:\$8.99 7.77 ea	Gay Lea Butter Series 454g 黃油 Reg:\$8.99 5.99 ea	SH Whole Round Squid 船凍魷魚 340g Reg:\$4.99 3.99 ea	Sanford New Zealand Greenshell Mussels 800g 紐西蘭半殼青口 Reg:\$13.99 10.99 ea	Tripe Crown Frozen Panga Basa Fillets 1.5Lb 巴沙魚柳 Reg:\$4.99 2.99 ea	AA-1 Whole Baby Milkfish 整條牛奶魚 600g Reg:\$5.99 4.99 ea

SEAFOOD

Fresh Salmon Steak 新鮮三文魚扒 Reg:\$7.99 5.99 lb	Fresh White Perch 新鮮單邊魚 Reg:\$3.99 1.99 lb	Fresh Pickeral 新鮮體古魚 Reg:\$7.99 5.99 lb
Frozen Fresh Head-On White Shrimp 冰鮮有頭南美白蝦 Reg:\$5.99 4.99 lb	Frozen Fresh Pompano 冰鮮黃立鯧 Reg:\$5.99 4.99 lb	

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3⁴⁹ each



Tim Hortons Hot Chocolates 500 g

4⁹⁹ each



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Nu Chef Whole Kernel Corn 425 g

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American Eagle All Purpose Flour 5 kg

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Catelli Macaroni 400 g

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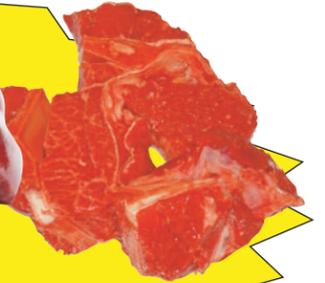
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Headless Tiger Shrimp
400 g**



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\$1⁹⁹
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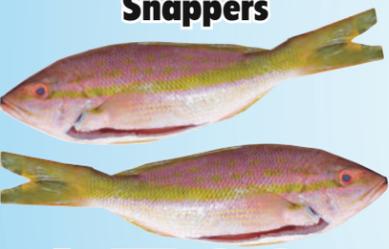
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3⁹⁹
lb

GUYANA MARKS WOMEN'S DAY WITH RENEWED CALL TO END GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE



The International Women's Day walk

As Guyana joined the rest of the world to mark International Women's Day, First Lady Arya Ali delivered a heartfelt call for stronger action to end domestic violence, reminding the nation that behind the statistics are women and girls whose lives were tragically cut short.

violence continues to take on families and communities.

She urged citizens not to forget the mothers, daughters, sisters and friends whose deaths have left loved ones grieving and communities searching for answers.

"The number of killings which result from domestic violence or intimate partner violence is a stark reminder of the hard work which lies ahead," Mrs Ali said, stressing that while progress has been made, the fight to protect women and girls must continue with renewed urgency.

Acknowledging

the country's advances in promoting gender equality, Mrs Ali noted that challenges remain both locally and globally. Citing international research, she pointed out that full gender parity may still be generations away, underscoring the importance of sustained action and advocacy.

many from hinterland communities, support for women-led start-ups, and the construction of homes for women who are single parents.

Minister of Human Services and Social Security Dr. Vindhya Persaud echoed the call for collective responsibility, urging



The International Women's Day walk

that women in both Guyana and China are increasingly gaining access to education and opportunities that empower them to shape their futures.

The walk formed part of a broader series of activities organised

by the Office of the First Lady under this year's theme, *"Rights. Justice. Action. For All Women and Girls,"* bringing together government officials, diplomats and citizens in a united show of solidarity for women across Guyana.



The International Women's Day walk

Speaking during a morning walk organised by the Office of the First Lady at the Kingston Seawall Esplanade, the First Lady reflected on the devastating toll domestic and intimate partner



The International Women's Day walk

Beyond raising awareness, the First Lady highlighted practical initiatives led through her office aimed at improving the lives of women and girls across the country. These include the distribution of free sanitary pads to more than 3,000 schoolgirls, scholarships for over 200 women,

citizens to support women facing abuse or hardship.

"Open your homes, open your hearts, and open your arms... Let the women know that they do not stand alone," she told participants gathered along the seawall.

Labour Minister Keoma Griffith also paid tribute to women across the country, praising their resilience, leadership and dedication to national development.

Meanwhile, Chinese Ambassador to Guyana, Yang Yang highlighted the importance of international cooperation in advancing gender equality, noting



The International Women's Day walk



The International Women's Day walk



The International Women's Day walk



Samira Khan, a first-year mechanical engineering student at UG

Before the sun rises over Berbice in Region Six, Samira Khan is already on the road. For months, her pursuit of a mechanical engineering degree was measured in miles and hours, beginning at 4:00 a.m. to reach the University of Guyana's (UG) Turkeyen campus in Region Four. Today, that gruelling commute has been replaced by a short journey to the John's Science Centre, a facility that is transforming the

academic lives of 20 students in the region.

The centre, an extension of UG's Tain campus, has become a sanctuary for students previously stretched to their physical, financial, and emotional limits. For Samira, the relocation represents a complete shift in her quality of life. The energy once spent navigating traffic is now devoted entirely to learning.

"Now, it's saving transportation costs and improving how I learn, since we have more face-to-face classes closer to home," she said, encouraging other students to pursue engineering.

Her sentiment is echoed by Akila Munroe, a first-year civil engineering student

THE END OF THE TURKEYEN TREK



Akila Munroe, a first-year civil engineering student

from Alness Village. For Akila, the change was about more than saving money, it was about protecting her mental health. She recalls the discouragement of long hours travelling to Turkeyen only to have classes cancelled. Today, she calls the new facility a **"new chapter"** for everyone.

The atmosphere at the centre is one of gratitude and historic

significance. Malachi Benjamin, a first-year mechanical engineering student, describes the move as more than a convenience, it is a landmark moment for the region. He praised



Malachi Benjamin, a first-year mechanical engineering student

the government's efforts to reduce the stress of constant travel, noting that the opening of the facility is historic for all



Devashree Dhanai, a first-year civil engineering student at UG

current students.

Devashree Dhanai, pursuing civil engineering, feels the impact most profoundly. Previously, attending classes required relocating away from her family. Returning to Berbice has provided what she calls **"emotional relief."** **"Being back in a familiar environment**

helps me focus better and feel more comfortable," she said, adding that she hopes to use her education to give back to her community.

The students' experiences highlight the broader impact of free tertiary education and the government's commitment to accessibility. While the John's Science Centre currently serves a small cohort, its effect is significant. By bringing the curriculum to students rather than forcing them to travel to the city, Guyana is bridging the gap between rural talent and professional opportunity.

Cancer-care expansion, cutting-edge treatments on Guyana’s health agenda

AS part of the broader push to position Guyana as a regional healthcare hub, President, Dr Irfaan Ali recently disclosed plans to expand cancer treatment and accelerate advanced medical services.

The President highlighted the ongoing discussions during the recent commissioning of the Dr Balwant Singh Hospital’s new six-storey outpatient pavilion.

“...Dr Madhu and this family have already approached government in finding a solution for cancer care and investing in that solution and those are ongoing discussions,” the President said.

Importantly, Guyana’s investments in cancer care are reshaping how patients are diagnosed and treated. The country is now expanding access with the incorporation of new technologies and improved screening capabilities.

From a single radiation unit to plans for a national oncology hospital, the advancements in cancer care not only reflect medical progress, but also a growing national will to ensure no one faces cancer without access to care.

Notably, Guyana’s Cancer Institute itself has gone through a number of phases and now offers CT scans, mammograms and X-rays. Soon, it will offer brachytherapy or internal-radiation therapy, to the Guyanese public.

Notably, approximately two years ago, mammography services were available only at the Georgetown Public Hospital Corporation (GPHC).

Breast-cancer screening has since expanded, with mammography machines now in place at Suddie Hospital in Region Two, New Amsterdam Hospital in Region Six, and the Linden Hospital Complex in Region 10.

Also, the government is working with Mount Sinai Hospital to establish an advanced oncology centre in Guyana, President Ali disclosed last year. This will bring cutting-edge cancer diagnostics, treatment and research to these shores, thereby reducing the need for patients to travel abroad for specialised care.

With this, the health transformation also includes the establishment of Guyana’s first

stroke-rehabilitation centre, which is designed to support one of the country’s leading causes of death and disability.

Health services in Guyana have dramatically improved in recent years, with various health institutes receiving significant boosts to better serve cancer patients.

The proposed cancer-care investment forms part of a wider transformation of the health sector, aimed at providing world-class treatment locally.

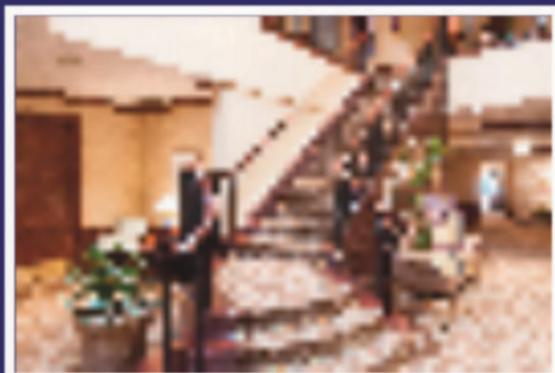
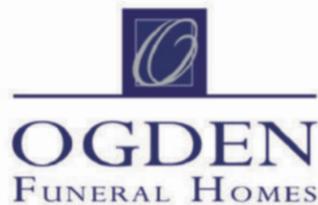
The government’s international partnership with Northwell had integrated the local procurement system to focus on specialised stents.



President Ali at the commissioning of the Dr Balwant Singh Hospital

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GUYANA PUSHES HOLISTIC APPROACH TO FOOD SECURITY AT MINISTERIAL ROUNDTABLE IN BRAZIL



Minister of Agriculture Zulfikar Mustapha

The face of Guyanese agriculture is rapidly changing. High-tech laboratories, precision farming, and innovative techniques are now at the forefront as the government works to boost production of disease-free planting

materials from 13,000 to one million annually. At a high-level Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) summit in Brasilia, Minister of Agriculture Zulfikar Mustapha highlighted this scientific leap as a cornerstone of Guyana's strategy to close the productivity gap.

Addressing a ministerial roundtable on agricultural productivity in Latin America and the Caribbean, Minister Mustapha stressed that Guyana's transformation is aligned with the country's Low Carbon

Development Strategy, ensuring growth is environmentally responsible and socially inclusive.

"Closing the productivity gap requires a holistic approach. Innovation, risk management, climate resilience, and inclusion must go hand-in-hand," he said.

Guyana has launched programmes that directly benefit farmers and rural communities. The Premium-Free Crop Insurance Programme,

introduced in 2025, covers losses from floods or drought and has already enrolled more than 4,200 rice farmers. Investments in drainage and irrigation systems, new farm-to-market roads, weather stations, and the National Flood Early Warning System further safeguard households and agricultural assets.

Science and innovation are central to the national strategy. The new laboratory at the National Agricultural Research

and Extension Institute (NAREI), developed in partnership with TERI India, will support the massive increase in disease-free planting materials. Farmers are also adopting integrated rice-fish-duck systems, precision agriculture, digital monitoring, and nano-urea fertilisers to increase efficiency and output.

Inclusion is a priority, with at least 35% of programme participants being youth and women. Over 300 young people are currently enrolled in the Agriculture Innovation and Entrepreneurship Programme (AIEP), supported by more

than 700 shade houses nationwide. The proposed Guyana Development Bank will further empower small farmers and women-led agri-processing initiatives through mentorship and zero-interest loans.

Minister Mustapha reaffirmed Guyana's commitment to working with regional partners to build sustainable, inclusive, and resilient agri-food systems that strengthen communities, improve livelihoods, and support the long-term food security of the Caribbean and Latin America.



Bonasika Creek farmers receive fingerlings to commence rearing in ponds

Residents of Bonasika Creek are diving into a new era of opportunity as tambaqui aquaculture activities officially commence in their community, part of the

Government of Guyana's expanding aquaculture development initiative.

Two local farmers have already received feed and fingerlings and begun pond-rearing activities, with their first harvests projected for June 2026. Five more farmers in the area are scheduled to start production in the coming weeks, broadening the project's reach.

The initiative forms part of President Mohamed Irfaan Ali's vision to diversify income opportunities, strengthen food security, and stimulate sustainable

economic growth in riverine and hinterland communities. It builds on earlier successes, including the launch of cage aquaculture at Mashabo in August 2023, where villagers have regularly harvested tambaqui, generating income and bolstering local economies. The most recent Mashabo harvest in January 2026 produced over 400 pounds of fish, reinforcing the programme's impact.

Minister of Agriculture Zulfikar Mustapha said the expansion demonstrates the soundness of the President's vision. **"Each harvest translates into direct income for families, improved access to protein, and stronger village economies,"** he noted, adding that the initiative empowers communities with sustainable livelihoods while boosting national food security.

Significant upgrades at the Anna Regina Fish Culture Station in Region Two have supported the expansion, including improved water supply systems, aeration, and additional tanks, enabling the production of small tambaqui and tilapia fingerlings for local farmers. Students from the Guyana School of Agriculture's Essequibo Campus have also benefited from hands-on training at the facility, gaining exposure

to modern aquaculture practices without leaving their region.

Further developments include a planned aquaculture station in Bartica, expected to be operational before May, which will supply fingerlings to nearby communities and support both pond and cage aquaculture projects. A similar facility is planned for Lethem.

LOCAL CATTLE PRODUCTION TO BE BOOSTED WITH \$25M PROJECT

Farmers and livestock enthusiasts in Guyana are set to benefit from a \$25.59 million investment to upgrade cattle breeding operations at the Livestock Farm in Mon Repos, East Coast Demerara. The initiative forms part of the government's push to modernise the livestock sector, enhance genetic improvement programmes, and boost

local production. The Guyana Livestock Development Authority (GLDA) under the Ministry of Agriculture has invited eligible contractors to submit bids for the reconstruction of artificial insemination cattle pens, a key component in improving breeding efficiency and herd quality.

Over the past years, the GLDA has been

actively rehabilitating and upgrading livestock infrastructure across the country, including breeding stations and cattle pens, providing farmers with better access to modern facilities and services.

The investment aligns with the government's broader agriculture agenda, which seeks to strengthen food security, increase local production, and

reduce reliance on imported livestock products.

This year's national budget allocated \$113.2 billion to food security, including \$1.9 billion earmarked specifically for the livestock sector, signalling a strong commitment to the growth and sustainability of Guyana's agriculture industry.



GLDA has been actively rehabilitating and upgrading livestock infrastructure across the country

EXTRA LESSONS HELP STUDENTS PREPARE FOR NATIONAL GRADE SIX ASSESSMENT

More than 1,500 students across several regions are now receiving extra support to prepare for this year's National Grade Six Assessment (NGSA), thanks to an expanded programme by the Ministry of Education.

Delivered through the National Centre for Educational Resource Development (NCERD) Math Unit, the initiative now reaches 41 locations, providing pupils with

additional lessons focused on strengthening their understanding of key subjects, especially mathematics. The sessions also aim to build confidence and reduce exam-related anxiety by familiarising students with the NGSA format and expectations.

Alongside student support, the ministry is investing in teacher development. On March 4 and 5, over 100 grade six teachers in Region Two

took part in specialised training designed to enhance instructional strategies and reinforce core curriculum content.

By combining targeted student lessons with professional development for teachers, the programme ensures that pupils are better prepared and more confident when sitting their exams.



The training for the grade six teachers in Region Two



The training for the grade six teachers in Region Two

LOCAL HANDS BUILD REGION THREE'S NEWEST HOUSING SCHEME

Walk through the Leonora/Groenveldt Housing Scheme today, and the story of Region Three's growth is written in concrete, timber, and the steady rhythm of hammers. With 115 flat three-bedroom homes more than halfway complete, the project is rapidly turning blueprints into reality, bringing homeownership within reach for hundreds of

families.

Minister of Housing Collin Croal recently toured the site alongside Minister within the Ministry Vanessa Benn and Permanent Secretary Bishram Kuppen, praising the "improved quality" and pace of construction.

The development isn't just about buildings; it's about people. A team of 19 local contractors from

Region Three leads the work, ensuring that the homes are constructed with pride and care. Each 1,013-square-foot house features modern kitchens, dining areas, and front and back patios, blending functionality with comfort. For these builders, the project is also personal: they are literally helping shape the community they live in.

For the families

waiting to turn keys, the rising walls symbolise security, opportunity, and the promise of a future in a stable home. The scheme is a vibrant hub of activity, combining standard concrete houses with young professional and modular units, reflecting the diversity and ambition of the region.

Minister Croal highlighted that Region Three, alongside Region Four, remains central to the government's nationwide goal of delivering 40,000



The three-bedroom houses at Leonora are 65% completed

homes. He stressed that the Leonora/Groenveldt project is more than just housing; it is a catalyst for economic activity, providing jobs, stimulating the local construction sector, and creating opportunities for small contractors and skilled labourers.

The Ministry of Housing is urging allottees to take possession of their house lots and begin construction, as the government steps up efforts to process agreements of sale and certificates of title across multiple housing schemes.

Minister of Housing, Collin Croal, explained that the Central Housing and Planning Authority (CHPA) will hold signing exercises over the next two-and-a-half months,

ending in April, to help residents complete their agreements more efficiently.

On March 7, over 250 residents of Lusignan Phase Two attended a signing exercise, joining allottees from Lusignan Phase One and Good Hope Phase Two, who are also completing their agreements. Additional sessions are planned for Berbice villages,

RESIDENTS ENCOURAGED TO TAKE POSSESSION OF HOUSE LOTS AS MINISTRY ACCELERATES SIGNINGS



Allottees from Lusignan Phase One and Good Hope Phase Two

Vriesland in Wales, and Laurentia Catherina, with dates scheduled through April.

Minister Croal encouraged residents to not only finalise their paperwork, but also to take ownership of their land and start construction. He highlighted that CHPA surveyors are available to assist allottees who are unsure of their house

lot locations. The accelerated programme forms part of the government's wider commitment to home ownership, with 40,000 houses slated for construction over the next five years. Between 2020 and 2025, more than 50,000 house lots were allocated, reflecting continued efforts to make housing accessible for citizens.

A PARKING SOLUTION FOR EAST BANK DEMERARA

For residents along the East Bank Demerara, the rumble of heavy-duty trucks has become part of daily life, lining road shoulders, squeezing through narrow streets and at times leaving behind damaged infrastructure. But at Golden Grove, a new solution is steadily taking shape.

On a sprawling fourteen-acre plot, sand filling and levelling works are underway to create a dedicated heavy-duty vehicle park designed to ease

congestion and protect nearby communities. The project, being developed by the Central Housing and Planning Authority, is part of a wider effort to manage the surge in trucks brought on by Guyana's construction boom.

During a recent visit to the site, Housing Minister Collin Croal and Minister within the Ministry of Housing Vanessa Benn underscored the importance of keeping pace with the country's rapid development. The

facility represents more than just a parking area. It promises safer roads, less congestion and relief from the constant roadside parking that has strained public spaces.

Contractors have been urged to maintain strict standards and timelines to ensure the project is delivered promptly. Once completed, the Ministry plans to engage truck owners and operators, especially those without private parking, encouraging them to use

the new facility instead of public roadways and residential areas.

Minister Benn noted that infrastructure must grow alongside national progress, ensuring development does not come at the expense of safety and order.

The Golden Grove vehicle park is part of a broader push to strengthen parking infrastructure across Guyana. At the Diamond Regional Hospital, two new parking lots are under construction to improve access for



Parking facility for heavy duty trucks progressing at Golden Grove

patients, visitors and healthcare workers. bring structure, safety and long-term planning to the country's expanding transport network.

Meanwhile, additional truck parking facilities are planned for Regions Three, Four, Five and Six, signalling a coordinated effort to



Vendors operating along the La Grange and Bagotville corridor, Region Three, will soon be relocated

VENDORS RELOCATED TO SAFER SPACE AMID WEST DEMERARA ROAD EXPANSION

Vendors along the La Grange and Bagotville corridor will soon be relocated as road expansion work progresses.

Minister of Public Works Bishop Juan Edghill met with the affected vendors to explain the relocation process and outline plans for the new vending space. "This happens around the country. What we will do is try to create a facility, a tarmac

that the people who will be removed would be able to go there and ply their trade," he said, noting that similar measures have been successfully implemented in other construction zones.

Vendors have been asked to remove their pallets after trading so that the contractor can grade the site, clear mud, and lay the tarmac. A lottery system will also determine individual vending spots, ensuring

fairness in the allocation process. expected to be completed by June 30.

Minister Edghill For vendors, the move represents a balance between continuing their livelihoods and prioritising safety. Many expressed optimism that the new space will not only provide protection from traffic hazards but also offer a more organised and professional environment to serve their customers.

Despite the roadside stalls, the \$2.9 billion West Bank Demerara Road expansion, executed by Gaico Construction and General Services Inc., continues steadily and is

100 PERSONS BEGIN FOUR-YEAR MEDEX TRAINING

The title “Medex” is only the beginning. That was the message delivered to 100 eager trainees as they launched into a rigorous four-year associate degree programme at the Health Science Education Building in Kingston. While these students will soon fill critical gaps in Guyana’s healthcare system, Minister of Health Dr. Frank Anthony challenged them to look

even further, envisioning a future where these very trainees evolve into the nation’s next generation of specialised doctors and surgeons. The cohort represents a tapestry of backgrounds from all 10 administrative regions. For Nikhil Cummings, a prison officer from Region Five, the programme is a chance to elevate the medical department within the Guyana Prison Service.



These students will soon fill critical gaps in Guyana’s healthcare system

Driven by a passion for helping others, he views this associate degree as the foundation for a lifelong career in medicine.

In the hinterland, the inspiration is often familial. At just 16 years old, Iniki Bartolomeu of Region Nine is following the footsteps of her grandfather, a dedicated medex. Her sights are set high: she aspires to transition from this programme into specialised surgery. Similarly, Kimberly Jonas of Region 10 joined after seeing the thin margins of healthcare in her own

community, hoping to become an “able and efficient” contributor to the national system. Minister Anthony noted that over the last few years, 5,000 young people have entered the ministry through such training initiatives. He emphasised that while the four-year path requires discipline and sacrifice, it is the key to bridging service gaps in remote areas.



Another 125 join Guyana Media Academy

A new group of aspiring media professionals has begun their journey into the world of journalism and communications, as 125 individuals commenced studies at the Guyana Media and Communications Academy (GMCA). The programme,

an initiative of the Department of Public Affairs, continues to attract participants from across the country, including students travelling from Guyana’s hinterland regions in pursuit of careers in the media sector.

At the orientation ceremony for the academy’s fifth cohort, held at the Windjammer Hotel, Minister in the Office of the Prime Minister Kwame McCoy emphasised that the programme was created to open doors for

MEDIA ACADEMY’S FIFTH COHORT BEGINS TRAINING

individuals seeking to develop new skills or begin careers in media and communications.

Minister McCoy encouraged the new students to take full advantage of the training, noting that the academy aims to provide an engaging and interactive learning experience with facilitators throughout the programme.

“We provide you with the opportunity

to grow and develop continuously wherever you believe is the best place for you,” the minister said.

Since its establishment, the academy has trained dozens of young professionals who have gone on to work at both private and state media houses across Guyana.

Former student Fusha Loncke told the gathering that the

programme boosted her confidence and helped her believe more strongly in her abilities.

Another graduate, Delroy Mark, urged the incoming cohort to embrace the opportunity.

“Learn as much as you can and prepare yourself to tell the Guyana story with accuracy, professionalism, and excellence,” he advised.

Guyanese aspiring to advance their education in cutting-edge technical fields now have a unique opportunity to pursue postgraduate studies abroad. The Ministry of Public Service, Government Efficiency and Implementation has announced that a limited number of scholarships are available under the Heydar Aliyev – International Education Grant Programme for the 2026/2027 academic year.

Offered in partnership with the

Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the scholarships target masters level studies in high-demand, technology-driven areas including Computer Science (MSc), Data Analytics (MSc), and Mechatronics and Robotic Engineering (MEng).

The programme aims to equip Guyanese professionals with the skills and knowledge necessary to contribute to the country’s growing focus on innovation and digitalisation.

MASTERS LEVEL SCHOLARSHIPS IN TECH FIELDS NOW AVAILABLE FOR GUYANESE



Guyana and the Republic of Azerbaijan are offering a limited number of scholarships in technical fields

Applicants must meet eligibility requirements, including holding a valid Guyanese passport, being under 40 years of age by September 15, 2026, and possessing a relevant bachelor’s degree with a minimum GPA of 3.0.

Authorities are urging qualified candidates to submit their applications promptly, ensuring all supporting documents

are included before the closing date of March 27, 2026. This initiative represents an important pathway for Guyanese students to gain international experience, advance their careers, and contribute to the country’s technology and innovation sectors.

For more information and to apply, visit <https://mps.gov.gy/scholarships/gog>.

KUMAKA’S NEW X-RAY SUITE CONNECTS REGION ONE TO CITY SPECIALISTS



The new Digital X-Ray system commissioned at the Kumaka District Hospital in Region One

Minutes matter when diagnosing a fracture or a serious chest infection.

At the Kumaka District Hospital, those minutes are no longer lost to

outdated processing or long-distance referrals. A newly commissioned \$60 million digital X-ray system is now providing instant, high-resolution results, backed by a high-tech “Picture Archiving” network that connects local doctors with specialists in Georgetown at the click of a button.

The upgrade marks a major transformation for the Moruca Sub-District, where residents previously relied on

equipment nearly 30 years old. For decades, the “darkroom” era of healthcare required film and chemicals that often resulted in grainy images and long wait times. During the commissioning ceremony, Minister of Health Dr. Frank Anthony noted that the government made a deliberate decision to phase out these analog units to ensure equitable, world-class care across Guyana.

For a patient in a riverine community, this technology is a profound relief. Transportation in Region One often involves lengthy and expensive river travel; having advanced diagnostics closer to home means fewer costly referrals and less time spent in transit while in pain. To ensure the service remains uninterrupted, the hospital has been outfitted with specialised electrical wiring, voltage stabilisers, and a modern generator to safeguard the sensitive equipment during power outages.

In the coming

months, the facility will be further enhanced by the Picture Archiving and Communication System (PACS). This will allow digital images to be transmitted to specialised radiologists in the city for expert interpretation within minutes. By bringing these high-tech capabilities to the hinterland, the Government is ensuring that residents can access specialist support whenever they need it, leading to earlier detection and better lives for families across Region One.

OFFSHORE SEISMIC PROJECT TO ENHANCE GUYANA BASIN EXPLORATION PROSPECTS



Guyana moves to de-risk offshore exploration with massive seismic project

Guyana is positioning itself even more competitively in the global energy market with plans for a massive offshore seismic survey that will help de-risk exploration areas and attract future investors. Through the Ministry of Natural Resources, the Government of Guyana has partnered with global geoscience and Earth data company Viridien to advance a 3D multi-client seismic acquisition programme offshore. The initiative follows an international procurement process that began in September 2024 and builds on a longstanding working relationship between the company and Guyana

that dates back to 2010. The project will utilise advanced seismic technology to create high-resolution, three-dimensional images of geological formations beneath the ocean floor. By sending sound waves deep into the earth's subsurface and analysing the returning signals, scientists can map geological structures and identify areas that may contain oil and gas resources.

The survey will cover approximately 25,000 square kilometres offshore Guyana, including eleven blocks offered during the country's 2022 Licensing Round. These blocks are located south

of the prolific Stabroek Block and extend toward the Guyana-Suriname border.

Importantly, the initiative will be undertaken without direct public expenditure. Instead, it will be financed through a pre-funding model in which energy companies provide early capital for the survey in exchange for exclusive early access to the processed data. Despite this arrangement, all seismic data acquired will remain the sole property of the Government of Guyana, which will retain the right to license the data to third parties.

The survey will significantly reduce

exploration risks within the Guyana Basin, strengthening investor confidence and improving the country's ability to market offshore blocks in future bid rounds.

Acquisition activities are expected to begin

once pre-funding commitments are secured. The survey phase will take about a year to complete, after which the data will undergo detailed processing and interpretation.



Guyana moves to de-risk offshore exploration with massive seismic project

CUTTING-EDGE OFFSHORE OPERATIONS POWER GUYANA'S OIL EXPANSION AT YELLOWTAIL PROJECT



Yellowtail development project is located in the Stabroek Block, 202.77km offshore Guyana.

Guyana's offshore energy sector is buzzing with activity as ExxonMobil Guyana Limited recently commenced development drilling at the YT_3111 Drill Centre within the Stabroek Block on February 26, 2026. The move highlights the nation's growing expertise in advanced offshore operations, supported by the Noble Sam Croft drilling unit and multiple specialised vessels. The Yellowtail Project forms part of a broader wave of developments that have steadily expanded Guyana's oil production over the past several years. Key milestones,

including the Liza Phase One, Liza Phase Two, and Payara projects, have positioned the country among the fastest-growing oil producers globally. Each new well drilled is essential to sustaining output and ensuring that floating production vessels operate at full capacity once installed.

For the offshore crews, engineers, and support teams, the project is more than technical work; it is a testament to Guyana's rapid energy sector growth and a source of national pride. "Every day offshore, we see how innovation and expertise come

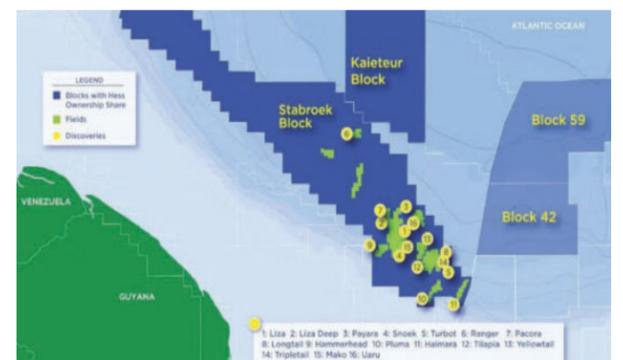
together to deliver results that impact the entire country," noted a crew member at the drill centre.

The Ministry of Natural Resources has underscored that safety remains a top priority. Mariners have been advised to navigate carefully near the operational zone as activity intensifies, reflecting the commitment to protect both people and the environment.

As drilling continues through March, the Yellowtail Project is expected to play a critical role in the country's long-term energy strategy. The work underway

represents a seamless integration of cutting-edge technology, skilled personnel, and forward-looking development planning, all aimed at maximising Guyana's offshore resources while maintaining sustainable growth in the nation's booming oil sector.

Through these operations, Guyana not only expands its production capacity but also strengthens its position as a regional energy leader and a model for modern, high-tech offshore resource management.



Yellowtail development project is located in the Stabroek Block

SMALL BUSINESS VISIBILITY GETS A LIFT THROUGH LED BILLBOARD PARTNERSHIP



The signing of the MoU

For many small business owners, advertising can feel like an expensive luxury rather than a vital tool for growth. That is set to change thanks to a new partnership between the Small Business Bureau (SBB) and local media technology company Pixels Guyana Inc. The collaboration, formalised through a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), will give registered small businesses access to Pixels' digital advertising platforms, including LED billboards, social media channels, and live

traffic camera feeds, at roughly half the standard cost. The initiative will benefit more than 6,000 SBB-registered entrepreneurs, providing them with a chance to reach wider audiences and boost their visibility across Guyana.

SBB's Chief Executive Officer, Mohamed Shazim Ibrahim, explained that small businesses often struggle to access effective advertising. To further support the initiative, the Bureau will sponsor 50 percent of

the reduced advertising cost for three clients each month.

"Entrepreneurs often see advertising as an added expense, but it is a critical tool for business growth. This partnership will provide our registered small businesses with affordable advertising while significantly increasing their visibility through LED billboards and Pixels' digital platforms," he said.

Pixels Guyana Managing Director, Leonard Gildarie, noted that the company has been working to make advertising more accessible since its launch in 2022. "Many entrepreneurs underestimate the importance of branding and advertising in building a successful business. Through this partnership, we want to make it easier and more affordable for small businesses to showcase their

products and services," he added.

The initiative reflects the government's commitment to supporting the small business sector, expanding market access, and fostering strategic partnerships that help entrepreneurs grow and compete in an evolving economy. By lowering the cost barrier for advertising, the partnership promises to empower small business owners and give them a stronger platform to succeed.

FIRST PIPE RACK ARRIVES FOR GUYANA'S GAS-TO-ENERGY PROJECT



The first pipe rack for the massive Gas-to-energy (GTE) project has arrived in Wales

Another visible sign of progress has emerged at the site of Guyana's transformative Gas-to-Energy project, as the first pipe rack arrived at Wales on the West Bank of Demerara. President Mohamed Irfaan Ali shared the update on his official social media page, describing the delivery as an important milestone in the construction of the

massive energy facility. The pipe rack will play a critical role in the project's infrastructure, supporting pipelines that will transport natural gas from the offshore pipeline system to the

Natural Gas Liquid plant and the power generation facility currently under construction.

Once operational, the Gas-to-Energy project is expected to significantly reshape Guyana's energy

landscape. The facility will generate up to 300 megawatts of electricity, supplying thousands of homes and businesses while supporting the country's expanding economy.

The project is also expected to cut electricity costs by about 50 per cent, reducing the price of power from approximately US\$0.22 to US\$0.11 per kilowatt-hour and saving the country an estimated US\$100 million annually.

Located in the emerging Wales

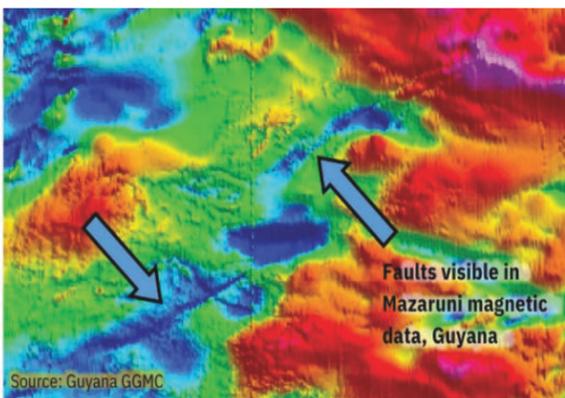
Development Zone in Wales, West Bank Demerara, the energy facility forms part of a broader vision to transform the area into a major industrial hub. Spanning about 1,400 acres, the zone is expected to host a range of future investments, including a fertiliser plant, data centres, agro-processing operations and light manufacturing facilities.

The project is being executed by CH4/Lindsayca with engineering consultancy provided by Engineers India Limited, and remains on track for completion by the end of the year.



Linden-Mabura project creating jobs and skills

NEW MAPPING INITIATIVE REDUCES RISK FOR SMALL AND MEDIUM-SCALE MINERS



In an industry long driven by boots on the ground and instinct, digital mapping tools are quietly transforming how Guyana's miners plan their next move.

For decades, many small and medium-scale miners relied heavily on experience, word of mouth and outdated records to guide expensive exploration decisions.

Today, that uncertainty is being reduced with the release of new airborne geophysical datasets under the Guyana Mineral Advancement & Prospecting Strategy (GMAPS).

The Ministry of Natural Resources has made the 2025 datasets publicly available through the Guyana Geology and Mines Commission (GGMC)

website, free of cost. The data include magnetic, radiometric and gravity grids covering more than 12,000 square kilometres of newly surveyed land, along with an additional 22,000 square kilometres of legacy data reprocessed to modern standards.

For miners operating in Guyana's vast interior, this means access to detailed information that can help identify rock types, geological structures and potential mineralised zones before investing in machinery and field operations. The datasets are compatible with user-friendly platforms such as Google Earth, making them accessible even to smaller operators.

Minister of Natural

Resources Vickram Bharrat noted that the last major national mining mapping effort was completed in 1968. He said the release fulfils a commitment to equip miners with accurate and actionable data, strengthening resource management while supporting sustainable practices under the Low Carbon Development Strategy 2030.

The data were acquired in 2025 by Global Venture Consulting, a Florida-based natural resource firm engaged for a four-year programme. In collaboration with AGF and Xcalibur Smart Mapping, the company will continue work in 2026 with detailed ground

mapping, targeted sampling and validation of priority areas.

Beyond identifying mineral potential, the initiative also includes training and capacity building for GGMC staff

and local professionals, ensuring that technology reshapes the sector, Guyanese miners are prepared to compete and grow with confidence.



Remote communities across Guyana are set to gain improved access to clean and reliable water, as the government moves forward with six major watersupply and infrastructure projects valued at \$312 million.

Spanning Regions One, Seven, Eight, Nine, and Ten, these initiatives aim to strengthen water security, enhance community infrastructure, and improve the quality of life for hinterland residents.

Over the past four years, the People's Progressive Party Civic (PPP/C) Administration has invested approximately \$1.2 billion in water and

sanitation projects in these areas. Budget 2026 alone earmarks over \$14 billion for hinterland infrastructure, with \$3.15 billion dedicated to completing multi-year projects currently underway in Regions Five, Seven, Eight, Nine, and Ten.

The new projects will bring clean water closer to both homes and schools. Communities in Region Ten will benefit from a newly installed water supply system, while Jawalla Secondary School in Region Seven and Kopinang

Secondary School in Region Eight will receive modern water systems to improve sanitation and hygiene for students and staff. In Lethem, Region Nine, a potable water well will be drilled and surrounding fences rehabilitated to provide sustainable access for the wider community. Similarly, residents of the Salbora catchment in Mahdia, Region Eight, will gain improved water infrastructure, and Mabaruma in Region One will see both a new water supply system and additional community

infrastructure enhancements.

These projects are being tendered by Guyana Water Incorporated under the National Competitive Bidding process, with interested contractors required to submit proposals to the National Procurement & Tender Administration in Georgetown by 9:00hrs on Tuesday, March 24, 2026.

The significance of these initiatives goes beyond pipelines and pumps. For families in the hinterland, they

mean cleaner water for daily use, safer sanitation for schoolchildren, and

stronger communities better equipped to thrive.



The new Micobie well expands water access for 500 residents

33 YEARS ON, ART WILLIAMS AND HARRY WENDT SCHOOL OPENS EXPANDED AVIATION FACILITY



Unveiling of the official plaque

Since its founding in 1993, the Art Williams and Harry Wendt Aeronautical Engineering School has been at the forefront of aviation training in Guyana. Recently, students, staff, and aviation professionals celebrated a major milestone with the opening of the school's new premises, reflecting 33 years of growth and a commitment to producing highly skilled aircraft engineers.

Minister of

Education, Sonia Parag, delivered the feature address describing the facility as a significant investment in the country's aviation sector and in the development of human capital.

"This new building represents an investment in improving the quality of aeronautical training. It provides more modern, convenient and first-class facilities in which aviation engineers and

other professionals can acquire the knowledge and technical skills required for a demanding and highly specialised industry," Minister Parag said.

She highlighted the critical role of aviation in Guyana, noting that the country's vast rivers, dense forests, and remote hinterland communities rely heavily on, air transport. "When an aircraft takes off from the coast and lands in a remote hinterland community, it is doing far more than transporting passengers or cargo. It is delivering opportunity ... carrying medical supplies, teachers, technicians, miners,

foresters and entrepreneurs," she said.

Addressing students directly, the minister reminded them of the responsibility they carry in every safe flight. "No aviation system can rise higher than the people who design it, maintain it and operate it. Aircraft do not maintain themselves," she emphasised.

The expanded premises will allow the school to accommodate more students while improving the quality of training. The institution, the first ISO-accredited tertiary aviation school within CARICOM, has operated continuously since its establishment and offers comprehensive programmes, including the Ab-initio Programme,

that combine theoretical instruction with hands-on practical training.

Minister Parag congratulated the founders and administrators for their continued investment in aviation education, describing the expansion as a cornerstone for the country's broader national development. "Here we are today with an expanded facility to accommodate

more persons and improve the quality of training. This is part of building the foundation for our national development," she said.

With this new facility, Guyana takes a step closer to strengthening its aviation infrastructure, workforce, and readiness to meet the demands of a modern, high-tech sector.



The new premises of the Art Williams and Harry Wendt Aeronautical Engineering School

GUYANA TO INTRODUCE ROBOTICS, AI IN CUTTING-EDGE HEALTHCARE OVERHAUL



Government leveraging AI, robotics and telemedicine to deliver world-class healthcare

Guyana is embracing cutting-edge technology to modernise healthcare and deliver faster, more efficient services to citizens, President Mohamed Irfaan Ali announced, highlighting investments in

telemedicine and digital health records systems that aim to improve access and elevate standards of care.

Speaking recently, the President emphasised that the government's goal is to

build "a health and education sector that is second to none, one that exceeds all global standards." He noted that public and private healthcare providers must work together as complementary forces to ensure quality, affordable care for all Guyanese.

"Artificial intelligence and robotics are the future of healthcare in Guyana," he said, outlining ambitious plans to introduce advanced technologies. "We want to be the

first country, maybe in the Western Hemisphere, to have a transatlantic surgery performed through robotics here in Guyana, and I've already set that challenge to the team. We are going full robotics, no turning back."

AI will also play a crucial role in managing pharmaceuticals and medical supplies, reducing errors, and ensuring hospitals and health centres maintain adequate stocks of critical medicines.

Tools capable of rapidly interpreting medical imaging, such as CT scans and X-rays, are set to lower costs and deliver results in seconds, the President added.

Advanced technology will further strengthen emergency services, supporting the National Ambulance Authority with GPS-equipped land, air, and river ambulances, pre-deployed strategically for faster response times. Real-time monitoring and emergency response systems will enhance efficiency

and professionalism nationwide.

Telemedicine sites have already been rolled out across hinterland and riverine communities, giving residents far from urban centres access to consultations and care.

President Ali said the overarching aim is to create a health system that is just, efficient, and responsive to the needs of every citizen. "We are building a society that works for everyone," he said, highlighting a vision for a modern, technology-driven healthcare system that positions Guyana as a regional leader.



123 trainees graduate from BIT

A new generation of skilled tradespeople is ready to enter Guyana's industrial workforce, as another batch of 123 students have graduated from the Board of Industrial Training (BIT) completing programmes

in plumbing, electrical installation, and heavy-duty operation at the Unity Centre in Mahaica, East Coast Demerara.

The graduates leave with practical skills that are in high demand in the country's rapidly

growing construction and industrial sectors.

Heavy-duty operation graduate Leslie Rose shared that the programme gave him the opportunity to pursue a long-held dream despite financial challenges. "They take their time. They make sure we understand what we were about and everything," he said, praising the lecturers for their guidance and patience.

Joshua Abrams, also a heavy-duty operation graduate, recalled the

excitement of operating an excavator during the course. He plans to use his certification and license to secure employment and start his career in the field. Another graduate, Leslie Williams, described the experience as invaluable and encouraged other Guyanese to take advantage of the training opportunities offered by BIT.

At the ceremony, Keoma Griffith, Minister of Labour and Manpower Planning, congratulated the

graduates and reminded them that their skills come with responsibility. "Someone will trust you with their property or their project when they hire you. In return, you are paid for your expertise. Never misuse or abuse the trade you have been given," he advised.

Richard Maughn, CEO of BIT, emphasised that the programmes are designed not only to equip graduates with technical knowledge, but also to empower them

to build sustainable careers. He encouraged the new professionals to believe in themselves and use their skills to create opportunities for success.

The graduation highlights the government's continued investment in technical training, with \$2.5 billion allocated in Budget 2026, reinforcing BIT's ongoing mission to equip Guyanese with the skills needed to thrive in a modern industrial economy.

MORE THAN 100 PRISON OFFICERS ACROSS RANKS PROMOTED

More than 100 officers of the Guyana Prison Service (GPS) are stepping into new leadership roles after a major round of promotions approved by the Ministry of Home Affairs.

A total of 101 officers were promoted in what the ministry described as one of the most comprehensive advancement exercises in recent years. The promotions include five superintendents, 17

chief prison officers, 28 principal prison officers II, and 23 principal prison officers I. Also advancing through the ranks are two cadet officers (internal) on probation, 13 assistant superintendents of prison, 12 prison trade instructors and one coxswain.

Minister of Home Affairs Oneidge Walrond said the promotions recognise experienced officers who have demonstrated dedication

to maintaining secure facilities and supporting rehabilitation efforts for inmates.

“Secure facilities and effective rehabilitation depend on their discipline, fairness, and daily commitment to lawful and humane custody,” Minister Walrond noted.

She encouraged the newly promoted officers to continue strengthening their

leadership skills and to pursue further professional development within the service.

The ministry said the promotions form part of a broader effort to modernise Guyana’s correctional system. Ongoing initiatives include infrastructure upgrades at correctional facilities such as Lusignan Prison and Mazaruni Prison, as well as improved electronic security systems.



Some 101 prison officers promoted



Three buses and one pick-up were handed over to the Guyana Prison Service.

GUYANA PRISON SERVICE GETS NEW VEHICLES

The Guyana Prison Service has received a boost to its operations with the addition of four new vehicles aimed at improving mobility and response within the prison system.

The keys to three minibuses and a pickup truck were officially handed over by Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Home Affairs, Andre Ally, to Director of Prisons (ag)

Nicklon Elliot.

The vehicles form part of a commitment made by President Mohamed Irfaan Ali to provide additional resources to strengthen the operations of the prison service.

Elliot expressed appreciation for the swift support, noting that the request for assistance was addressed almost immediately.

“Today is a

special day for us at the prison service. I wish to commend His Excellency for his commitment and assurance,” he said.

He explained that during a meeting with the president just a day earlier, the service raised several operational challenges, including transportation needs.

“I met with His Excellency to address prison operations,

and within less than 24 hours he delivered on his promise,” Elliot said, adding that the vehicles will significantly improve the service’s ability to carry out its duties.

The addition of the vehicles is expected to enhance the movement of officers and inmates, while strengthening overall operations within the prison system.

MOTORISTS TAKE PART IN VOLUNTARY TINT TESTING AHEAD OF NEW REGULATIONS

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A certified tint meter used by trained Guyana Police Force officers during voluntary vehicle tint testing at Traffic Headquarters, Eve Leary, ahead of full enforcement of the new tint regulations



Several projects have already been completed as part of this national push

NEW FIRE STATIONS PLANNED FOR ROSIGNOL AND CUMBERLAND

Residents in Regions Five and Six could soon benefit from faster emergency response, as the government moves to build two new fire stations in Rosignol and Cumberland.

The Ministry of Home Affairs has officially invited bids for the construction of these modern facilities, signaling a major step forward in strengthening the Guyana Fire Service (GFS) and improving public safety.

The project forms part of the government’s broader effort to modernise firefighting infrastructure and enhance emergency services nationwide. Under the recently approved \$1.558 trillion national budget, the Home Affairs Ministry has been allocated \$52.1 billion to support improvements in the sector.

Several projects have already been completed as part of this national

push. New fire stations at Soesdyke, Wisroc and Onderneeming are now operational, boosting response capacity in those communities.

Work is also ongoing to complete new stations at Diamond and Mahaicony, while plans are in place for a marine fire station in Georgetown to improve emergency response along the coast and waterways.

Meanwhile, the Campbellville Fire

Station is being rebuilt, and rehabilitation and furnishing works are planned for the station in New Amsterdam. An electrical upgrade is also scheduled for the fire station in Bartica.

Officials say these projects are aimed at ensuring that firefighters have the facilities and resources needed to respond quickly and effectively to emergencies.

REGION SIX GEARS UP FOR SPORTS AND CULTURE HUB WITH PALMYRA STADIUM

In the next few years, Region Six will gain a facility that could rival the National Stadium in impact; the Palmyra Multipurpose Stadium is shaping up to become a hub for sports, culture, and community pride.

Recently, Minister of Culture, Youth and Sport Charles Ramson visited the site to assess progress and meet with contractors, emphasising the importance of resolving any logistical hurdles to keep the project on schedule. **“We just had a big meeting with all of the contractors working here to ensure that any of the challenges they have are not left unaddressed so that the project continues to move towards completion,”** he said.

The Minister described the stadium as **“very impressive”**



Minister of Culture, Youth and Sport, Charles Ramson Jr visiting the site

and noted that, once completed, it will be one of the finest facilities in the region. With seating for 10,000 and modern infrastructure, the stadium is expected to host major sporting events, cultural programmes, and community gatherings, bringing new life and opportunities to Palmyra and the surrounding areas.

Construction milestones are already

visible: the roof over the stands has been installed, and work on seating has begun. Minister



Minister of Culture, Youth and Sport, Charles Ramson Jr visiting the site

Ramson assured that the project remains on track for completion by May 2026, with only one final item still awaiting delivery.

“This is probably the largest and grandest project we’ve done, and Guyanese will be very happy when they experience it,” he said, highlighting the stadium’s potential to stimulate economic growth. The facility is expected to attract visitors, encourage new

hotels and restaurants, and create opportunities for local businesses.

Minister Ramson also underscored that the

access to the stadium.

Construction began in March 2023 with a \$3.7 billion investment from ExxonMobil’s ‘Greater



Palmyra Multipurpose Stadium is shaping up to become a hub for is expected to host major sporting and cultural events

Palmyra Multipurpose Stadium aligns with President Irfaan Ali’s vision of making Guyana a **“premium destination for world-class events.”** Supporting infrastructure, including culverts and bridges, is being developed in tandem to ensure smooth

Guyana’s initiative. Once finished, the Palmyra Multipurpose Stadium will stand as a landmark of pride, culture, and opportunity, a venue that unites communities while driving sports, economic, and social development across Region Six.



The project provides a positive outlet for youth and a central gathering point for families

A new basketball and football facility at Gill House Square in West Ruimveldt marks the completion of a project valued at approximately \$13 million.

The facility was developed following

consultations with residents to ensure it reflects the community’s needs. Upgrades include a newly constructed and painted basketball court with hoops, a marked football area, improved lighting, perimeter

fencing, and a designated parking area. These enhancements aim to provide a structured environment for sports, social engagement, and healthier lifestyles.

Minister of Labour and Manpower Planning, Keoma Griffith, a native of East Ruimveldt, encouraged residents, particularly young people, to participate in skills training and employment initiatives offered through his ministry. **“These spaces are more than recreation, they’re opportunities**

for growth and development,” he said.

Minister of Local

Government and Regional Development Priya Manickchand supported the project by

facilitating the donation of waste bins to help maintain the facility’s cleanliness.

Residents welcomed the development, noting that it will provide a positive outlet for youth and a central gathering point for families. The project forms part of the government’s broader effort to enhance recreational spaces nationwide, with plans to expand opportunities for West Ruimveldt and surrounding communities.



The project provides a positive outlet for youth and a central gathering point for families

GUYANA FESTIVAL TO RETURN AS PART OF DIAMOND JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS



Minister of Tourism, Industry and Commerce, Susan Rodrigues engaging her team on the anniversary preparation

From tassa drums and African drumming to traditional crafts and authentic Guyanese

cuisine, the Guyana Festival is set to make a vibrant comeback in 2026, reconnecting citizens with the traditions that shape the nation’s identity.

After more than a decade, the festival will return as part of Guyana’s 60th Independence Anniversary celebrations, creating a dynamic platform to showcase the country’s rich cultural heritage.

Minister of Tourism, Industry and Commerce,

Susan Rodrigues, recently met with the Guyana Festival committee to discuss preparations for the highly anticipated event, which was last hosted in 2014.

The festival will bring together the diverse expressions that define Guyanese identity through art, craft, storytelling, cuisine, live demonstrations, music and dance, all combined into an immersive cultural experience.

Its revival comes at a time when cultural preservation and national unity remain central to the country’s development agenda. By highlighting the traditions of the six cultures that form Guyana’s social fabric, the event aims to strengthen a shared national identity while celebrating the uniqueness of each heritage group.

The festival will also create opportunities



Minister of Tourism, Industry and Commerce, Susan Rodrigues engaging her team on the anniversary preparation

for elders, artisans, performers and culinary artists to pass down authentic traditions to younger generations, ensuring that important cultural practices continue to thrive.

Beyond its cultural significance, the event is expected to generate economic opportunities for local creatives and vendors by increasing exposure and patronage.

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YOUNG ATHLETES TAKE THE SPOTLIGHT AT NATIONAL SCHOOLS ATHLETICS CHAMPIONSHIPS



The 2026 National Secondary School Athletics Championship

The energy was electric at the National Track and Field Centre as more than 1,200 secondary school athletes from across the country gathered to compete in the annual National Secondary Schools Athletics Championships.

Representing all 10 administrative regions, 1,250 students participated in the three-day event, showcasing

speed, endurance and determination as they battle for podium finishes and national recognition.

The championships were officially opened by Prime Minister Brigadier (Ret'd) Mark Phillips, who emphasised the vital role sports play in shaping confident, disciplined and well-rounded young people.

“Events such as this celebrate talent

and discipline and provide a platform for our young people to test and push their limits in pursuit of their athletic dreams,” the prime minister said.

Beyond the excitement of competition, many of the athletes see the championships as a

the most significant sports events in our country because what it does is identify our future Olympians and world champions,” he told participants. He also highlighted the ministry’s elite training programme, which aims to expose promising athletes to training opportunities



The 2026 National Secondary School Athletics Championship

stepping stone to bigger opportunities. The event has long been regarded as one of the country’s key platforms for identifying emerging athletic talent.

According to Minister of Culture, Youth and Sport Charles Ramson Jnr, the championships play an important role in discovering the next generation of elite athletes.

“This is one of

comparable to the best in the world.

Education Minister Sonia Parag echoed the importance of the event, noting that participation in sports allows students to grow beyond the classroom.

“Our children are getting the opportunity, as they usually do every year, to participate in something other than academics,” she said. **“This builds grit,**



The 2026 National Secondary School Athletics Championship

builds character and gives students an identity outside of academics.”

The government has significantly increased investment in sports development since 2020, allocating \$6 billion in the 2026 national budget to support facilities, maintain grounds and strengthen programmes across the country. In 2025 alone, \$8 billion was directed toward sports infrastructure and development.

For many of the

athletes on the track, however, the focus remains on the race ahead, chasing personal bests, regional pride and perhaps a future on the international stage.

Next year, the championships are expected to move to the newly commissioned Bayroc Stadium, where another generation of young athletes will have the chance to write their names into Guyana’s school athletics history.



The 2026 National Secondary School Athletics Championship



The 2026 National Secondary School Athletics Championship

TIGER BAY WOMEN REAP FIRST CELERY HARVEST FROM HOMESTEAD FARMING PROJECT

Just six weeks after the launch of a homestead agricultural initiative aimed at empowering vulnerable communities, a group of women from Tiger Bay celebrated their first harvest of celery at the One Guyana Kitchen on Main Street in Georgetown.

The small but promising crop represents more than just fresh produce; it signals new economic opportunities for women seeking additional sources of income and greater self-reliance.

The project was launched in January by President Mohamed Irfaan Ali as part of a broader effort to encourage urban agriculture and create sustainable livelihoods in vulnerable communities. During the harvest, the women were joined by Ministers Zulfikar Mustapha, Priya Manickchand and Steven Jacobs, who assisted in gathering the crop



First crop harvested under President Ali’s homestead agri-project for Tiger Bay women

and interacting with participants.

For the women involved, the harvest marked the beginning of what could become a steady stream of income. Minister Mustapha announced that the government has already secured a market for the produce, with the first batch of celery set to be sold to Massy Stores.

Based on current market prices, the agriculture minister projected that each crop cycle could generate

about \$250,000 for the group. With celery capable of producing up to six harvests annually, earnings could reach as much as \$1 million over the cycle.

“This here doesn’t take a lot of work,” Minister Mustapha explained. **“Half an hour to one hour to do the watering, and the system that we built here costs about \$150,000 to set up.”**

The shade house used for the cultivation was constructed at a cost

of \$150,000 and serves as a model for similar facilities that could be introduced across Georgetown.

Minister Manickchand said the initiative is expected to expand, with plans to establish at least 50 similar sites throughout the city. She noted that



First crop harvested under President Ali’s homestead agri-project for Tiger Bay women

the government hopes to collaborate with the Georgetown Mayor and City Council to identify additional locations where the project can

take root.

“The whole idea is to make us self-sufficient and income earners,” she said, noting that the programme places special emphasis on empowering women and young people.

Technical support for the project is being



First crop harvested under President Ali’s homestead agri-project for Tiger Bay women

Commerce and Industry, are also lending their support.

Beyond the harvest itself, the initiative forms part of a wider effort to revitalise communities such as Tiger Bay, Kingston and Cummingsburg, demonstrating how small-scale agriculture can help transform lives while strengthening community resilience.

provided by the National Agricultural Research and Extension Institute, while private sector partners, including the Georgetown Chamber of



Guyanese DIASPORA DIGEST



GUYANA-CHINA FRIENDSHIP PARK READY FOR VISITORS

The Joe Vieira Park, Region Three is set to reopen as the Guyana-China Friendship Park ahead of Easter. Redesigned in the style of a Chinese garden, the upgraded space features sports courts, a children’s zone, jogging paths, an open-air theatre, and modern amenities. Enhanced security and accessibility make it a safe, family-friendly destination.



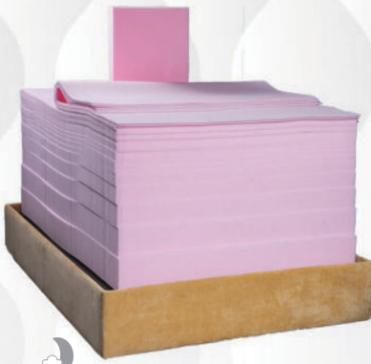
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President Ali touts development of ‘prison avoidance’ system

COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF of the Armed Forces, President Dr. Irfaan Ali, has called for a strategic overhaul of the Guyana Prison Service, urging the officers to move from a reactive role to a proactive pillar of national security.

Addressing the opening ceremony of the Guyana Prison Service (GPS) Annual Senior Officers Conference at the Arthur Chung Conference Centre, Liliendaal, on Monday, the President said the country’s approach to security must be unified and collaborative.

He stressed the need for the prison service to play a constructive societal role, proposing the development of a “prison avoidance” system focused on preventing people, particularly young people, from entering the criminal justice system in the first place.

“Over the past five years, we’ve been integrating our systems, integrating our leadership, and building on the success of each other, because that is the only way we can confront the multifaceted nature of the challenges of the future,” he said.

“We talk about rehabilitation, which is important, but before we get to prison, how do we avoid getting there?” he questioned.

To this end, Dr. Ali announced that in the coming weeks, he will announce a high powered group of experienced individuals to guide the integration of systems and lead the implementation of the initiatives outlined.

He emphasised that the Guyana Prison Service is an integral part of the nation’s security architecture, and must be afforded equal standing alongside the police and defence forces as it works to secure the country and reshape outcomes in communities.

“Today, I want to spend some time speaking about what we want to create and how do we go about creating an institution that is not only reactive, but one that will play a proactive role,” he said, noting that the security apparatus can play a greater role in shaping more positive outcomes, especially in vulnerable communities.

President Ali further warned of migrating criminal networks seeking to recruit persons who are vulnerable.

He cautioned that youths, especially those who dropped out of school, suffered some form of trauma and live in stigmatised communities, often fall victim to these networks.

“In the long term, the prison service must be redefined and realigned with a heavy focus on avoiding more persons, especially youths entering the



President Dr Irfaan Ali

system. As pressure grows in other large economies, criminal networks are pressed. When they are pressed, they look for new grounds,” Dr. Ali said.

He noted that data and key analysis from these vulnerable groups and

areas will be crucial in first adopting a system that prevents persons from entering the criminal justice system.

The President said: “We have to identify where those grounds are. And here in Guyana, we know with the

growth in the economy, there is a natural attraction. How do we prepare for that? How do we analyse the data?”

He added: “I hope that at this level, we are having access to that data that allows us to do the analysis so that we can craft measures based on paper, based on reality, based on the awareness of what surrounds us.”

Home Affairs Minister Oneidge Walrond highlighted the conference’s theme, “Fostering growth, driving synergy and securing the future of corrections,” as central to the country’s wider national security agenda.

She stressed that a “modern state cannot exist with outdated security institutions,” noting that for too long, corrections have been treated as the “forgotten arm” of the justice system.

The minister noted that under the leadership of President Ali’s administration, billions of dollars are being invested across the security sector in new infrastructure, training, technology-driven security systems and leadership development.

She said: “The transformation of the Guyana Prison Service is not accidental. This transformation is the result of memory policy decisions by this government to strengthen and modernise our institution.”



NEW AMBULANCES: The Honourable Minister of Health, Dr Frank Anthony, handed over six ambulances to support the operations of the country’s newly commissioned regional hospitals.

The ambulances will serve the Lima Regional Hospital (Region Two), De Kinderen Regional Hospital (Region Three), Diamond Regional Hospital (Region Four), Enmore Regional Hospital (Region Four), Bath Regional Hospital (Region Five), and the Number 75 Village Regional Hospital (Region Six). These facilities were recently opened as part of the Government’s ongoing efforts to modernise and expand Guyana’s healthcare system.

Each ambulance was procured at a cost of \$18 million and will strengthen emergency response capabilities while improving the safe and timely transportation of patients requiring urgent medical care.

This investment forms part of the Ministry of Health’s continued commitment to strengthening healthcare infrastructure and improving access to quality health services across Guyana. Also present were, Director General, Vishwa Mahadeo; Director of Regional Health Services, Dr Cerdel Mc Watt; Senior Operations Manger, Michael Gouveia and Regional Health Officer and representatives of respective regions.

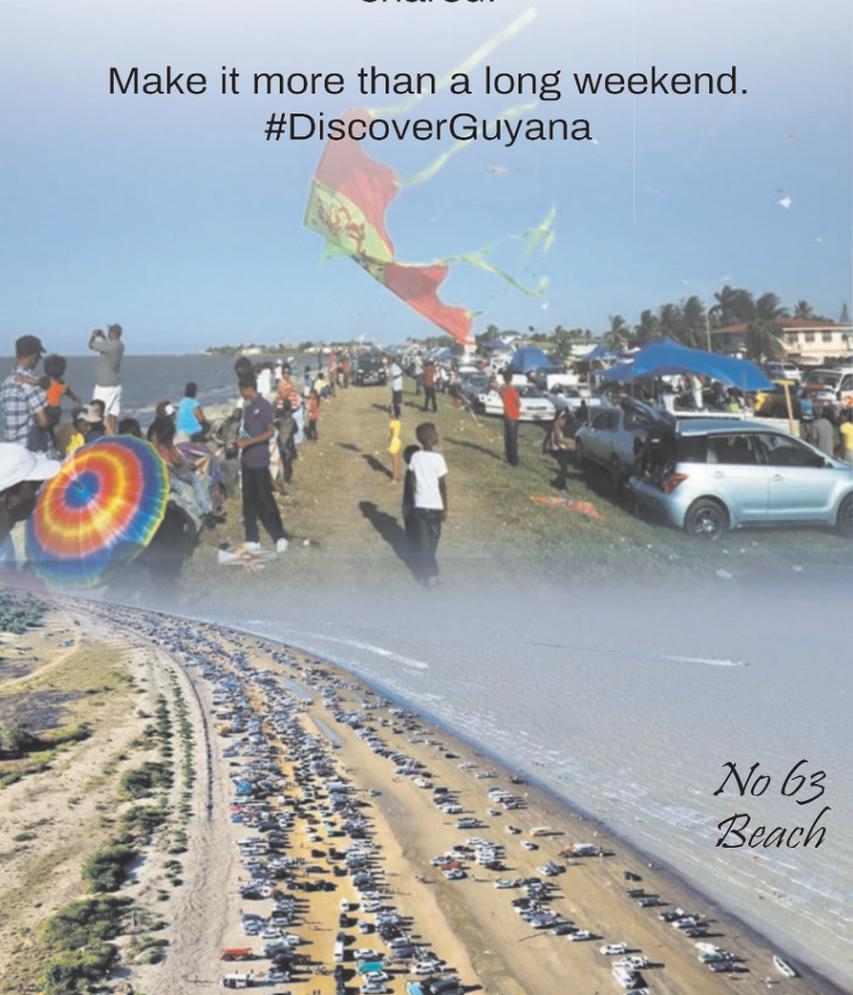


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