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Guyana wins top world tourism award

GUYANA'S growing tourism industry has gained international recognition yet again. Recently, the country was named Best Emerging Destination 2026 at the World Tourism Awards held in Brussels, Belgium.

Minister of Tourism, Industry and Commerce Susan Rodrigues accepted the award on behalf of Guyana, describing the recognition as a reflection of the transformation taking place across the country, driven by increasing international interest in 'Destination Guyana' and the growing vistor numbers.

In her acceptance remarks, Rodrigues said the award was a tremendous honour, particularly as the government continues to position tourism as an important pillar of the country's economic diversification agenda.

The minister emphasised efforts being made to ensure the sector is being developed to contribute more significantly to national development, create employment, and attract investment, while still showcasing the country's natural attractions, cultural heritage and people to an international audience.



Guyana and India sign three pacts

Guyana President Dr Irfaan Ali and the Minister of External Affairs of India, the Honourable Dr Subrahmanyam Jaishankar, have signed three major bilateral agreements aimed at bolstering relations between the two countries.

Among the agreements is a Memorandum of Understanding regarding Indian Grant Assistance for the Implementation of Quick Impact Projects (QIPs); a Memorandum of Agreement on Supply and Installation of Micro and Small Enterprises (MSEs) Manufacturing Projects; and an Agreement on Cooperation in the Field of Digital Public Infrastructure and the Functioning of a Unified Payments Interface (UPI)-like system in Guyana.

The meeting was held on the sidelines of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Antigua and Barbuda last week, and also included a comprehensive review of India-Guyana bilateral relations and discussed ways to further strengthen cooperation in areas of mutual interest.

Additionally, the Ministry of External Affairs announced India's extension of a US$500 million new Line of Credit to support Guyana's development priorities and infrastructure projects.

Above, His Excellency President Dr Irfaan Ali and the Minister of External Affairs of India, the Honourable Dr Subrahmanyam Jaishankar, hold copies of the agreements they signed. *Full story, Page 9*

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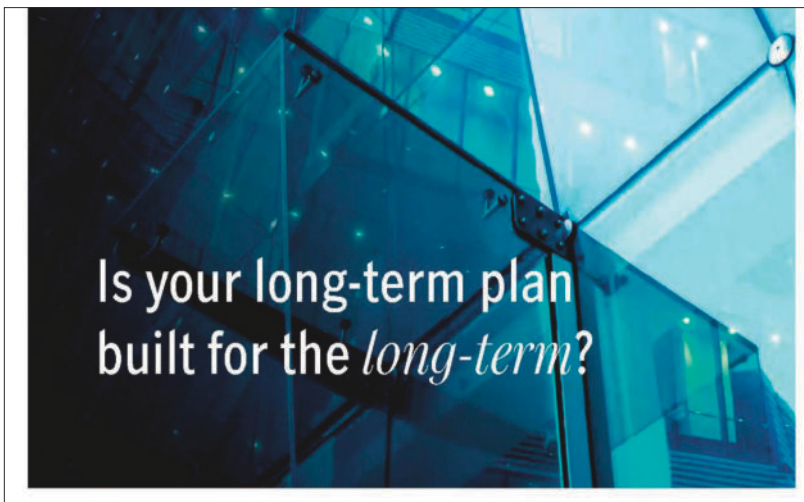
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New transit line will connect to Brampton

By MIlan Maharaj
LJI REPORTER

Ontario has begun preliminary efforts towards expanding the Hazel McCallion LRT line into downtown Brampton by drilling bore holes in preparation for the upcoming extension.

The bore holes are being drilled on Main Street and other neighboring streets, providing valuable information which will be used to inform the construction of the more than three-kilometer extension. The new extension will link the Brampton Gateway Terminal located at Steeles Avenue East with the Brampton Innovation District GO Station.

Upon completion of the project, it will offer connections with Brampton Transit and Züm, allowing people in the area to easily travel around the city and even Greater Toronto Area. According to the provincial government, the project is aimed at increasing access to employment opportunities and businesses in the area, as well as reducing road traffic congestion.

Construction of this extension will use the 18-kilometer Hazel McCallion Line, which will link Brampton and Mississauga via 19 stations on the dedicated light rail line. Light rail vehicles have been tested in the main route, while the Downtown Brampton and Mississauga extensions are being developed separately.

Michael Lindsay, Metrolinx President and CEO, stated that this investigation is an essential phase in figuring out what equipment will be required for the construction. He also noted that the investigation would be disruptive for the community and business located close by.

Patrick Brown, Brampton's mayor, appreciated the development but called on the province to fast-track from planning to construction. There is no start date of the construction, cost of the project, or any opening date in this latest announcement.

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KING'S VISIT OPENS FRESH CHAPTER IN GUYANA'S CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIP

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His Majesty King Charles III delivers remarks on the sidelines of the Global Biodiversity Alliance Conference, with President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali looking on, during his state visit to Guyana on October 29, 2026.



GBA GROWS FROM 17 FOUNDING MEMBERS TO AN INTERNATIONAL PLATFORM

PAGE 3



INDIA BACKS GUYANA'S NEXT DEVELOPMENT PHASE WITH US$500M FINANCING AND DIGITAL INVESTMENT

PAGE 7



PRESIDENT ALI NAMED COMMONWEALTH CHAMPION OF BIODIVERSITY AS GUYANA'S GLOBAL PROFILE GROWS

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GUYANESE DIASPORA DIGEST KEEPING THE DIASPORA INFORMED

KING'S VISIT OPENS FRESH CHAPTER IN GUYANA'S CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIP



President Ali speaking on the sidelines of the Global Biodiversity Alliance Conference

Nearly two decades after supporting Guyana's vision for forest conservation, King Charles III is looking to deepen his partnership with the country through new initiatives in sustainable development, biodiversity and community advancement.

During the King's October 29–30 state visit, President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali said the two sides were building on their longstanding cooperation, with work now underway on the revitalisation of Georgetown and the development of a village of harmony in Moraikobai, Region Five.

Speaking on the sidelines of the Global Biodiversity Alliance (GBA) Conference, President Ali credited the King's early support with helping Guyana demonstrate that its low-carbon development model could work.

"Your Majesty, we have not disappointed you. Nearly two decades later, Guyana has demonstrated what is possible," the President said.

He recalled the King's 2008 speech in London, when, as Prince of Wales, he praised the Low Carbon Development Strategy (LCDS), then being advanced by President Bharrat Jagdeo, and used his Prince's Rainforests Project to encourage international support for Guyana's vision.



The King toured the Global Biodiversity Alliance exhibition

President Ali said Guyana had since kept its forests standing, pioneered international financing for forest conservation and channelled the resulting earnings into thousands of projects across the country.

The partnership is now extending beyond forest protection. The President said the King's vision also encompassed creating opportunities for people, preserving heritage, building skills and strengthening communities.



The King toured the Global Biodiversity Alliance exhibition

That philosophy is informing the Moraikobai initiative, which is expected to bring together Indigenous knowledge, traditional craft, sustainable livelihoods and environmental protection.

President Ali also pointed to opportunities for further cooperation through the King's Foundation, the Sustainable Markets Initiative and other partnerships, bringing together governments, businesses, communities and international expertise.

During the visit, the King also toured the GBA exhibition, met scientists, Indigenous representatives and innovators, and received a briefing on the work of the Iwokrama International Centre.

His visit was his first to Guyana as monarch and his first since February 2000, when he visited as Prince of Wales and became Patron of Iwokrama.

FROM UMANA YANA TO THE SEAWALL, KING SEES GUYANA'S HERITAGE AND CONSERVATION EFFORTS



King Charles III in Guyana

From meeting Indigenous leaders at Georgetown's Umana Yana to examining mangrove restoration along the Kingston Seawall, King Charles III's two-day visit to Guyana placed the country's cultural heritage and environmental priorities at the centre of his engagements.

At the Umana Yana, the King met representatives of the National Toshaos Council and was presented with a traditional Indigenous necklace symbolising the heritage of Guyana's first peoples.

He also examined a traditional bow and interacted with Indigenous leaders, with discussions touching on cultural preservation, environmental stewardship and the protection of the country's natural resources.

The engagement formed part of a wider programme that connected Guyana's history and cultural identity with its work towards a more sustainable future.



King Charles III in Guyana



King Charles III in Guyana

On Friday, October 30, the King visited the Georgetown Memorial at Rabbit Walk, where he joined veterans and citizens in honouring Guyanese, British and Commonwealth service personnel who died in service. He was accompanied by Prime Minister Brigadier (Ret'd) Mark Phillips and heads of the disciplined services.

He also visited Promenade Gardens, where he experienced performances and displays highlighting Guyana's cultural and artistic traditions.

His final engagement brought the focus to the country's coastal defences. At the Kingston Seawall, accompanied by First Lady Arya Ali, First Son Zayd Ali and Agriculture Minister Zulfikar Mustapha, the King received a briefing on Guyana's national mangrove restoration programme.



King Charles III in Guyana

Minister Mustapha explained how mangroves help reduce coastal erosion and flooding, protect agricultural lands, support fisheries and create economic opportunities for communities.

The King also met participants in the Wilton Park Commonwealth Sustainable Cities Initiative Dialogue, which was examining practical approaches to sustainable urban development ahead of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting.

The engagements reflected several shared priorities in Guyana–United Kingdom relations, including cultural preservation, climate resilience and sustainable development.

The King departed Guyana on October 30 for Antigua and Barbuda, concluding his first state visit to the country as monarch.

KING CHARLES, FORMER COLOMBIAN LEADER PRAISE GUYANA'S CONSERVATION LEADERSHIP



The King speaking on the sidelines of the Second Global Biodiversity Alliance Conference and Financing Forum

Guyana's efforts to protect its forests while pursuing economic development have drawn praise from King Charles III and two senior Colombian leaders, who have highlighted the country's conservation approach as an example with wider international relevance.

During his visit to Guyana, which coincided with the Second Global Biodiversity Alliance (GBA) Conference and Financing Forum, King Charles commended the country for preserving a significant portion of its forest cover.

"You've managed to keep an enormous percentage of your forests. That is an incredible achievement and, of course, deserves to be rewarded," the King said.

Returning to Guyana after 26 years, he also recalled his involvement in the early development of the country's Low Carbon Development Strategy (LCDS), through his Rainforest Project and the International Sustainability Unit. Those efforts helped bring partners together to demonstrate how forests could be conserved while supporting development.

The King expressed hope that Guyana's approach could be replicated elsewhere, including through agroforestry and mixed land-management practices. He also warned that continued deforestation and biodiversity loss threatened human health and future generations.

"People forget it's not just nature out there; we are part of that," he said, warning that continued destruction of nature was prejudicing "our future and other people's futures and our health".

Former Colombian President, Iván Duque Márquez, who co-founded the GBA with President Ali, also described Guyana's biodiversity leadership as a model for the Amazon region.

"This is the time to use this leadership that Guyana has built," Duque said during a conference panel on financing nature.

He further said Guyana was well positioned to launch its own biodiversity taxonomy internationally by 2027 or early 2028, which could help direct investment towards projects with measurable environmental benefits. Duque pointed to Colombia's experience with its green taxonomy, introduced in 2021, as an example of how technical assessment and transparency could build investor confidence.

Colombia's Vice President, José Manuel Restrepo also praised Guyana's role in building international support for biodiversity protection,



Former Colombian President Iván Duque Márquez



Vice President of Colombia, José Manuel Restrepo

noting that the GBA had grown to more than 140 members in just over a year.

"President Ali, Colombia thanks you for bringing us together. In little more than a year, this alliance has grown to more than 140 members. And that tells us something: many countries have been waiting for a place where good intentions become partnerships," Restrepo said.

He also commended Guyana's approach to balancing environmental protection with economic development, saying conservation and prosperity could go hand in hand.

The remarks from the three leaders underscore the international attention being given to Guyana's conservation record and its growing role in efforts to mobilise cooperation and financing for biodiversity protection.

GBA GROWS FROM 17 FOUNDING MEMBERS TO AN INTERNATIONAL PLATFORM



More countries join expanding Global Biodiversity Alliance

The Guyana-led GBA has grown from 17 founding members in July 2025 to more than 140 members, drawing support from countries representing more than two-thirds of the world's population.

The expansion gained further momentum during the Second GBA Conference and Financing Forum in Georgetown, where Colombia, Rwanda, Panama, India, France and the United Kingdom were formally welcomed. China also joined during the two-day event.

President Ali said the alliance's growing membership reflected the international interest in working together to protect biodiversity.



More countries join expanding Global Biodiversity Alliance

"Membership of the GBA, an initiative that was launched in this room just a year ago, now has country members that represent well over two-thirds of the world's people," he said.

The alliance brings together countries of different sizes, with the aim of pooling expertise and strengthening cooperation on conservation.

President Ali pointed to India's experience in technology and geomapping as an example of the contribution new members could make to monitoring and conservation efforts.

Guyana is also seeking to expand the alliance further, with the President indicating that the country would encourage Brazil to join before the end of the year.

"If they are serious, they need to be here. It is just as simple as that," he said.

With its membership continuing to expand, the GBA faces the task of turning its growing international support into practical cooperation and measurable conservation outcomes.

PARTNERS PLEDGE US$12.5M TO ADVANCE CONSERVATION ACROSS GUYANA



CEO of Rainforest Trust, Dr James Deutsch

International conservation partners have pledged US$12.5 million to support projects in Guyana, including the protection of the Acarai-Corentyne Corridor, protected areas and Indigenous territories.

The commitment was outlined during the Second GBA Conference and Financing Forum, where Rainforest Trust Chief Executive Officer, Dr James Deutsch said the funding was expected to be channelled into projects over the next year.

The pledge involves the Bezos Earth Fund, Andes Amazon Fund, Nia Tero and Rainforest Trust. One priority is protecting the Acarai-Corentyne Corridor from mining and other activities that could threaten its ecosystems.

Deutsch said delivering on the conservation targets would require governments, non-governmental organisations and communities to work together on clear proposals.

The Bezos Earth Fund's Programme Manager, Padu Franco, said partners were also preparing to support the identification of key biodiversity areas in Guyana, helping determine where conservation investments should be directed.

The partners also pointed to Project Finance for Permanence as a possible model for sustaining conservation over the long term. Under this approach, governments, communities and funders agree on targets and costs, then combine public, philanthropic and market financing to support protected areas over 20 years or more.

The US$12.5 million pledge provides a further source of potential support as Guyana works to protect its natural assets and strengthen long-term financing for conservation.



Programme Manager at the Bezos Earth Fund, Padu Franco

GUYANA PROPOSES BIODIVERSITY RESORTS AMONG NEW INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES



President Dr. Moahed Irfaan Ali

Guyana is seeking to attract new private-sector investments in biodiversity, with President Ali proposing a joint investment vehicle to develop nature-based tourism destinations across countries in the Global Biodiversity Alliance (GBA).

The proposal would see biodiversity resorts marketed under a common brand, with shared values, regulations and a platform connecting destinations across member countries.

President Ali said the approach could create opportunities for villages and communities while opening a wider market for investors.

"I want to ask the private sector from all of the countries of our alliance so far, maybe to come together and create an investment vehicle where we can have biodiversity resorts across each one of the destinations," he said.

He also identified opportunities in medicine, scientific research, tourism and conservation financing, arguing that private-sector expertise and capital could help address funding gaps.

A separate development that could support investment is Guyana's proposed biodiversity taxonomy. Former Colombian President, Iván Duque Márquez said the country was well positioned to launch the framework internationally by 2027 or early 2028.

A taxonomy establishes measurable criteria for identifying projects that qualify as nature-positive and assessing their environmental impact. Duque said Guyana's framework, being developed with the Ministries of Finance and Natural Resources, could help attract financing for the Low Carbon Development Strategy, the 30-by-30 initiative and protected areas.

He pointed to Colombia's green taxonomy, introduced in 2021, as an example of how a transparent, technically grounded framework can build investor confidence.

Together, the proposals signal an effort to make biodiversity protection a platform for investment, economic opportunity and community development.

NEW BIODIVERSITY SYSTEM TO PUT GUYANA'S ENVIRONMENTAL DATA IN NATIONAL HANDS



Executive Director of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Kemraj Parsram

Guyana is developing a National Biodiversity Information System (NBIS) to document the species and ecosystems found across its forests, wetlands, savannahs and marine environments, strengthening the evidence available for conservation planning and financing.

The system will complement existing forest-monitoring tools by recording the diversity of life beneath the forest canopy and across other ecosystems.



Executive Director of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Kemraj Parsram

Environmental Protection Agency's Executive Director, Kemraj Parsram said the NBIS would draw on years of research by institutions including the Iwokrama International Centre, the Field Museum and Map of Life, while introducing continuous monitoring.

He stressed that the information would remain under Guyana's ownership, with individual agencies retaining control of their respective datasets.

"The most important thing, though, is that this data, this information, is ours," Parsram said.

The information is expected to support Guyana's reporting under the Convention on Biological Diversity, inform decisions on biodiversity financing and expand environmental monitoring beyond carbon.

The initiative stems from an agreement between the Government of Guyana and the Yale Centre for Biodiversity and Global Change, signed at the inaugural GBA Summit in July 2025.

The longer-term vision includes using satellite imagery, acoustic monitors and sensors to feed environmental information into a digital model of the country's ecosystems.

By bringing research and monitoring information together, the system is intended to give Guyana a stronger national evidence base for managing and protecting its biodiversity.

FIELD MUSEUM AGREEMENT RENEWS SCIENTIFIC TIES DATING TO 1920S



The signing of the MoU

Guyana and Chicago's Field Museum of Natural History have renewed a scientific partnership dating to the 1920s, extending cooperation on biodiversity research, field inventories and the identification of areas requiring protection.

A new memorandum of understanding was signed during the Second Global Biodiversity Alliance Conference in Georgetown. It will see the museum's conservation experts continue working with Guyanese counterparts on rapid biodiversity inventories, research and the establishment of conservation areas.

British Member of Parliament, David Lammy, who introduced the signing, said the agreement reflected the need to ensure scientific research informs practical decisions.

"Research is not meant to be on the shelves. Research is meant to influence change," he said, recalling President Ali's words.

Field Museum's Chief Scientific Officer, Thorsten Lumbsch said understanding a country's biodiversity, its people and their knowledge are fundamental to protecting its natural heritage.

The renewed agreement builds on a relationship spanning almost a century and brings the museum's scientific expertise into Guyana's current conservation efforts.

It also complements the country's work to strengthen biodiversity monitoring and identify ecosystems and species requiring protection.

As Guyana seeks to expand conservation areas and attract financing for nature protection, the partnership is expected to support the research and inventories needed to guide those decisions.

DESERT VIPERS BRING SPORT INTO GUYANA'S GLOBAL BIODIVERSITY CAMPAIGN

The Desert Vipers have become the first sports team to join Guyana's Global Biodiversity Alliance (GBA), using their international platform to promote environmental responsibility.

The team's sustainability efforts were highlighted at the opening of the Second GBA Conference, where its Sustainability and Biodiversity Awareness Kit was unveiled.

The franchise reported a 27 per cent reduction in its carbon footprint and a 77 per cent reduction in plastic use since its inaugural season.

A BioBlitz activity held during Guyana's Global Super League also recorded 1,600 observations across 600 species.

Guyanese cricketer and team ambassador. Shimron Hetmyer encouraged simple changes, including reducing single-use plastics, and expressed hope that similar practices could be adopted by local cricket teams.

Hetmyer also presented President Ali with a signed sustainability jersey and an autographed GBA cap.



Desert vipers ambassador Shimron Hetmyer making the presentation to President Irfaan Ali

MORE THAN US$500M MOBILISED THROUGH GUYANA'S FOREST CARBON PROGRAMME



Senior Minister in the Office of the President with responsibility for Finance, Dr Ashni Singh

Guyana has mobilised more than US$500 million through the sale of forest-carbon credits, with proceeds supporting thousands of community-led projects and major climate adaptation works.

President Ali highlighted the results of the Low Carbon Development Strategy (LCDS) during the Second GBA Conference, describing the programme as an example of how conservation can generate economic returns.

The initiative has supported more than 3,000 community-led projects, while also providing financing for national adaptation measures.

Vice President, Dr Bharrat Jagdeo said more than 3,000 projects had been completed across 252 Indigenous villages, using approximately 20 per cent of LCDS funds.

The remaining 80 per cent supports adaptation, including 840 kilometres of canals and 125 kilometres of embankments.

The experience is now informing Guyana's push for financing that recognises the value of biodiversity beyond forest carbon.

Senior Minister in the Office of the President with responsibility for Finance, Dr Ashni Singh, said the international community must move faster in recognising and paying for biodiversity than it did in developing the forest-carbon market.

For Guyana, the challenge is to build on the LCDS experience and establish mechanisms that reward countries and communities for protecting a wider range of ecosystems and natural resources.

DR. JAGDEO WARNS BIODIVERSITY FINANCING FACES US$700B SHORTFALL



Vice President Dr Bharrat Jagdeo

Jagdeo has warned that global biodiversity conservation faces an estimated US$700 billion financing gap, with limited public funding, no major voluntary market for biodiversity credits and no agreement on how such credits should be defined.

Speaking at the Second GBA Conference, Jagdeo said the alliance must support the targets and decisions of the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity rather than establish a competing framework.

"The alliance cannot supplant the UN Convention on Biodiversity. That's a point we need to make right up front," he said.

He outlined four priorities for the GBA: keeping nature on policymakers' agendas, providing negotiators with sound technical analysis, preventing countries from reversing conservation gains and demonstrating practical approaches that work.

Dr. Jagdeo called for focused technical working groups to address the questions surrounding biodiversity credits, drawing on Guyana's earlier experience developing the framework for forest-carbon financing.

"We need to go back to establish a sense of urgency," he stressed.

He also cautioned against proposals that could see countries with extensive standing forests, such as Guyana, receive less compensation than countries that had cleared forests and were now replanting.

Such an approach, he argued, would penalise countries that had maintained their forests while rewarding damaging practices.

Dr. Jagdeo said the alliance must concentrate on the detailed technical work needed to build credible financing mechanisms and ensure that conservation efforts are properly recognised.

GUYANA TO BECOME PERMANENT HOME OF GLOBAL BIODIVERSITY ALLIANCE



The design for the permanent headquarters of the GBA secretariat in Guyana

Georgetown is set to become the permanent home of the GBA Secretariat, with the design completed for a headquarters that will support the initiative's research, learning and international cooperation.

President Ali announced the development during the Second GBA Conference and Financing Forum, saying the building was conceptualised through collaboration involving the Qatar Foundation and The King's Foundation.

The facility will house the Secretariat and serve as a centre for learning and advancing the alliance's work. Its establishment is expected to provide a permanent base for an initiative launched in 2025 to strengthen global cooperation on biodiversity protection.

Guyana and the Commonwealth have also agreed to establish the Guyana Commonwealth Centre for Biodiversity. The centre will support the GBA's work plan and collaborate with the Iwokrama International Centre, bringing together scientific expertise, research and capacity-building for biodiversity-rich countries.

The alliance has also strengthened its engagement with the Inter-American Development Bank, the World Bank and the Caribbean Development Bank, while expanding knowledge partnerships to include Yale University and the Commonwealth Secretariat.

The planned headquarters and biodiversity centre will give Guyana a more established institutional role in international conservation cooperation.

FOUR NEW DIPLOMATIC REPRESENTATIVES ACCREDITED TO GUYANA



Executive Director of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Kemraj Parsram

Guyana is seeking to expand cooperation with the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Canada, Germany and Panama following the accreditation of four diplomatic representatives to the country.

President, Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali received the Letters of Credence or Commission from the newly accredited envoys during separate ceremonies at the Office of the President.

They include the UAE's first Resident Ambassador to Guyana, Muhannad Sulaiman Abdalla Ahmed Al Naqbi; Canada's High Commissioner, Deborah Gomes-Schultz; Germany's Non-Resident Ambassador, Peter Neven; and Panama's Ambassador, Ernesto Francisco Méndez Chiari.

Discussions with the UAE representative focused on potential partnerships in digitisation, government efficiency, housing, energy, food security and tourism. Guyana and the UAE established diplomatic relations in 1995.

With Canada, President Ali and Gomes-Schultz discussed his recent conversation with Prime Minister, Mark Carney and plans to strengthen bilateral relations. The two countries established diplomatic ties in 1966.

Talks with Germany's Ambassador Neven covered opportunities for collaboration in health, education, food production, energy, biodiversity and manufacturing. Guyana and Germany established relations in September 1966.

Meanwhile, President Ali and Panama's Ambassador discussed a development framework to support mutual economic growth. Diplomatic relations between the countries date back to 1973.

The engagements form part of Guyana's continued efforts to broaden international partnerships and identify areas for cooperation.

GUYANA-UK TRADE REACHES £1.7B



Dr Singh addressing the business engagement with the Guyanese and British private-sector leaders

Trade between Guyana and the United Kingdom (UK) has climbed from approximately £350 million in 2021 to £1.7 billion last year, making Guyana the UK's largest trading partner in the Commonwealth Caribbean and strengthening opportunities for British companies seeking to enter the local market.

Senior Minister in the Office of the President with Responsibility for Finance, Dr Ashni Singh highlighted the growth during a business engagement involving Guyanese and British private sector leaders, held as part of the State Visit of His Majesty King Charles III.

"Guyana is open for business, and we want to see more British companies doing business in Guyana," Dr Singh told the gathering.

He said bilateral trade totalled approximately £6 billion over the past five years, with Guyana accounting for almost half of the UK's trade with the Commonwealth Caribbean.

The minister also pointed to the expansion of UK Export Finance (UKEF) support for Guyana. Its country financing ceiling has increased from £750 million in 2021 to £3.5 billion currently, providing access to direct lending and loan guarantees for Government and private-sector importers.

Guyana's country risk classification by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development has also improved from Category 5 to Category 4, the second upgrade in four years. The change is expected to lower risk premiums on officially supported export credit, potentially making British goods and services more competitive for local buyers.

UK-backed initiatives already include support for the Guyana Fire Service's equipment fleet upgrade and the 121-kilometre Linden-to-Mabura Hill road, financed through the UK Caribbean Infrastructure Fund.

Dr Singh identified further opportunities in infrastructure, oil and gas, mining, agriculture, aviation, tourism and services. He also highlighted plans for a deep-water port and industrial complex along the Berbice coastline, linked to the second gas pipeline, as potential areas for British contractors, engineers, operators and service providers.

He said British companies could pursue these opportunities independently or partner with Guyanese businesses, with UKEF expected to help facilitate future investment.

CARICOM STANDS FIRMLY BEHIND RODRIGUES-BIRKETT'S UN LEADERSHIP BID

The Caribbean Community (CARICOM) has reaffirmed its full support for Guyana's Ambassador Carolyn Rodrigues-Birkett as a candidate for United Nations Secretary-General, expressing confidence in her ability to lead the global organisation through mounting challenges and institutional reform.

The endorsement was reiterated at the Community's 44th Intersessional Meeting of Heads of Government on October 23, 2026, where regional leaders reviewed developments in the selection process and reaffirmed their commitment to multilateralism and the principles of the UN Charter.

In their communiqué, the Heads of Government described Rodrigues-Birkett as a distinguished daughter of Guyana and the Caribbean, pointing to her more than two decades of experience across field operations, legislative and political service, diplomacy and international civil service.

They also highlighted her diplomatic skills and ability to build consensus, expressing confidence in her integrity and capacity to lead the UN during a period of pressing global challenges and calls for institutional renewal.

CARICOM leaders further underscored the importance of equitable geographical representation and regional rotation in selecting the next Secretary-General, arguing that it is now time for a candidate from Latin America and the Caribbean to assume the organisation's top leadership post.

They acknowledged the broad support extended to candidates from the region and said the selection of a CARICOM woman would mark an historic new chapter for the UN and the world.

Rodrigues-Birkett welcomed the reaffirmation, thanking regional Heads of Government for maintaining their support for her candidacy.



H.E. Carolyn Rodrigues-Birkett, Permanent Representative of Guyana to the United Nations

UK-GUYANA PARTNERSHIP TAKES SHAPE IN $65.5M CJIA TERMINAL PROJECT

Guyana's aviation infrastructure is set for a major upgrade with the construction of a US$65.5 million terminal at the Cheddi Jagan International Airport (CJIA), a project that also highlights the United Kingdom's (UK) role in supporting the country's infrastructure development.

UK Foreign Secretary, the Rt. Hon. Ed Miliband, visited the Terminal 2 construction site during his engagements in Guyana, where he met with Senior Minister in the Office of the President with Responsibility for Finance, Dr Ashni Singh.

The project is supported by UK Export Finance (UKEF) and is being constructed by UK firm Mowlem International (UK) Limited.

Once completed, the terminal is expected to ease congestion during passenger processing, provide separate facilities for arriving and departing passengers, improve departure areas and expand commercial services through additional duty-free shopping, restaurants and other amenities.

President Ali, who turned the sod for the project in August 2025, has described the expansion as part of a broader vision to position Guyana as a regional aviation hub with in-transit capabilities.

The airport engagement was also attended by Foreign Affairs Minister, Hugh Todd, Minister of Public Utilities and Aviation, Deodat Indar, UK High Commissioner, Joseph Fisher, His Majesty's Trade Commissioner for Latin America and the Caribbean, Amy Barklam, and UKEF Chief Executive Officer, Tim Reid.



The UK Foreign Secretary tour of the construction site

PRESIDENT ALI LOOKS TO DEEPEN GUYANA-BRAZIL TIES FOLLOWING LULA'S RE-ELECTION

President, Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali has congratulated Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva on his re-election as President of Brazil, describing the outcome as a historic milestone that will allow him to pursue further opportunities for the Brazilian people.

In a congratulatory message posted on Facebook, President Ali said Guyana and Brazil share strong bonds of friendship, mutual respect and cooperation, and expressed his interest in building on that relationship during Lula's new term.

He identified deeper regional integration, expanded trade and investment, and sustainable development as key areas for continued collaboration between the neighbouring countries.

President Ali also extended his best wishes to Lula and the people of Brazil, expressing hope for continued peace, progress and prosperity.

Lula's re-election provides an opportunity for both countries to continue strengthening bilateral relations and advancing shared regional interests.



H.E. Carolyn Rodrigues-Birkett, Permanent Representative of Guyana to the United Nations

GUYANESE DIASPORA DIGEST KEEPING THE DIASPORA INFORMED

INDIA BACKS GUYANA'S NEXT DEVELOPMENT PHASE WITH US$500M FINANCING AND DIGITAL INVESTMENT



New Indian financing targets highways, housing access and healthcare

Guyana has secured a US$500 million line of credit from India to finance major investments in roads, healthcare and defence, alongside new agreements that will bring Indian technology, grant assistance and manufacturing opportunities into the local economy.

The financing and three bilateral agreements, formalised during talks between President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali and India's Minister of External Affairs, Dr Subrahmanyam Jaishankar, signal a significant expansion of economic cooperation between the two countries.

The announcements came on the sidelines of the 28th Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in Antigua and Barbuda, advancing a commitment made by Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi during his November 2024 visit to Guyana.

The US$500 million facility will support transformative infrastructure, including roads to unlock thousands of new homes and house lots, improvements to major highways, and investments in the health and defence sectors.

For Guyana, the financing creates additional scope to accelerate infrastructure development while strengthening access to essential services and national security capabilities.

Beyond the credit facility, the two governments signed agreements targeting three areas with direct implications for Guyana's economic development: digital public infrastructure, community development and small-scale manufacturing.

One of the most significant is an agreement to develop a modern national payment system modelled on India's Unified Payments Interface (UPI), which has transformed digital transactions in the Asian country.

President Ali said Guyana expects to launch the system by the end of 2026, with India providing technical expertise to support its implementation.

The platform is expected to make financial transactions more efficient, reduce the cost of doing business, strengthen payment security and improve transparency.

More than 20 Guyanese are also expected to receive practical training within India's UPI environment, creating opportunities for local technical expertise and knowledge transfer.

President Ali said the partnership would connect innovators in both countries and accelerate the adoption of new technologies and systems.

The other agreements provide for Indian grant assistance towards Quick Impact Projects (QIPs), targeting community-level development priorities, and support for the supply and installation of manufacturing projects for micro and small enterprises.

The latter is expected to strengthen entrepreneurship, expand technical capacity and create opportunities for local employment.

President Ali also highlighted India's growing contribution to Guyana's healthcare sector through affordable medication, technology transfer and the introduction of Indian medical technology.

Dr Jaishankar confirmed India's decision to extend the US$500 million facility and said both governments would now work towards identifying and developing projects under the arrangement.

He noted that the agreements deliver on commitments made by Prime Minister Modi during his visit to Guyana.

Taken together, the financing and agreements broaden a partnership that is increasingly focused on tangible economic returns, from major infrastructure and healthcare investments to digital innovation, local manufacturing and community development.

FIFA PARTNERSHIP TARGETS 10 NEW FOOTBALL FACILITIES ACROSS GUYANA



Guyana, FIFA partner to build 10 football pitches nationwide

Guyana is moving to expand its football infrastructure through a partnership with FIFA to establish 10 mini-pitches nationwide, while pursuing plans for an international tournament that could position the country as a regional sporting destination.

The initiative, announced by President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali following talks with visiting FIFA President Gianni Infantino, will be financed through a co-investment arrangement between the Government and FIFA.

The Government expanded FIFA's initial proposal for two pitches to 10, with designs already available and the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport expected to coordinate implementation.

One of the facilities has already been commissioned at Haslington, East Coast Demerara, providing a starting point for the wider rollout.

Beyond the construction of playing facilities, the partnership is also targeting a bigger opportunity: creating a pathway for young Guyanese to develop their football talent while building an economy around the sport.



Guyana, FIFA partner to build 10 football pitches nationwide

President Ali said football could generate significant economic and social benefits if supported by the right infrastructure and investment.

Infantino underscored the importance of giving young people in smaller footballing nations access to facilities and competitive opportunities, noting that infrastructure and competitions are essential to developing talent.

The discussions also included a proposal for a world-class football tournament in Guyana, attracting regional and international teams, broadcasters and commercial investors.

President Ali said discussions on the competition should begin before the end of 2026, with the longer-term ambition of developing a sustainable tournament that could eventually extend across the Caribbean.

The proposed investment therefore goes beyond adding football facilities, linking grassroots participation with talent development, international exposure and opportunities in the wider sports economy.



President Ali extends congratulations to Grenada's re-elected Prime Minister

PRESIDENT ALI CONGRATULATES MITCHELL ON GRENADA RE-ELECTION

President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali has congratulated Grenada's Prime Minister Dickon Mitchell on his re-election, describing the renewed mandate as a vote of confidence in his leadership and the policies pursued by his government.

In a congratulatory message, President Ali said he looked forward to strengthening cooperation between Guyana and Grenada during Mitchell's new term, particularly in advancing regional integration.

He also reaffirmed Guyana's commitment to close collaboration with Grenada, extending best wishes for a successful term and continued peace, progress and prosperity for the Grenadian people.

The message underscores Guyana's continued focus on strengthening CARICOM partnerships and regional cooperation.

PRESIDENT ALI, PM CARNEY DISCUSS STRONGER GUYANA-CANADA AND CARICOM PARTNERSHIPS



President Ali and Canada's Prime Minister Mark Carney

President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali and Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney have discussed opportunities to strengthen bilateral relations and expand cooperation between Canada and the Caribbean Community (CARICOM).

The two leaders met on the sidelines of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Antigua and Barbuda, where member states are considering ways to deepen partnerships and advance shared priorities.

President Ali reaffirmed the importance of Guyana's longstanding relationship with Canada, while commending Carney's leadership and commitment to strengthening the Commonwealth.

"It is always a privilege to meet with Prime Minister Carney," President Ali said, expressing appreciation for Canada's commitment to expanding partnerships in trade, security, climate change, biodiversity and development financing.



President Ali joined the Canadian PM for a breakfast engagement on the sideline of CHOGM

The discussions also focused on areas where both countries could deepen collaboration, with Prime Minister Carney reaffirming Canada's commitment to partnership and highlighting potential investment opportunities.

The engagement comes as Guyana continues to pursue international partnerships across key areas of its development agenda. Canada's involvement in trade, security, climate and development financing makes the relationship important not only bilaterally but also within the wider Caribbean region.

The discussions underscore the continued importance of relations between the two countries and the potential to broaden cooperation across areas of shared interest.

LOCAL CONTENT REVIEW TARGETS GREATER ACCESS TO PETROLEUM INDUSTRY OPPORTUNITIES



Director of the Local Content Secretariat, Michael Munroe

Guyana is preparing to amend its Local Content Act to widen opportunities for domestic businesses in the petroleum industry, as the Government shifts its focus from securing local participation to building companies capable of sustained growth and regional competitiveness.

Director of the Local Content Secretariat, Michael Munroe, confirmed the planned legislative review while delivering the keynote address at the Guyana Supplier Forum 2026, where he said five years of implementing the legislation had provided valuable experience to guide improvements.

Munroe said the priority is no longer simply establishing whether Guyanese businesses can participate in the oil and gas industry, but ensuring they can expand their operations, strengthen their capacity and compete over the long term.

"**The capability conversation is out the door, more or less,**" he said, calling for greater emphasis on building resilient local enterprises.

While specific additions to the framework are still being considered by policymakers, Munroe said the Secretariat is examining opportunities to expand the categories of goods and services in which Guyanese companies can participate.

He also challenged petroleum operators and their contractors to do more to translate local content requirements into meaningful commercial opportunities.

This includes providing businesses with early information about procurement needs, structuring contracts to accommodate local suppliers, investing in companies that have demonstrated their ability to deliver and avoiding unnecessary requirements that restrict local participation.

However, he stressed that local businesses must also strengthen their own operations through investment in technology, sound management systems, workforce development and strategic partnerships.

Such partnerships, he said, must preserve meaningful Guyanese ownership, control and value rather than simply provide a local name to foreign-led arrangements.

Munroe further called for a responsive regulatory environment, stressing that government oversight must support business development without creating unnecessary delays.

"**Government regulation must be nimble**," he said.

The forum, hosted by the Centre for Local Business Development in collaboration with ExxonMobil Guyana and its prime contractors, also provided procurement insights for 2027, connecting local suppliers with potential opportunities across the petroleum industry.

The engagement brought together major contractors, including SBM Offshore, MODEC, SLB, Baker Hughes and Halliburton, to discuss procurement requirements, business readiness and opportunities for local companies.

Enacted in 2021, the Local Content Act established requirements to prioritise Guyanese nationals and businesses in petroleum-sector employment and procurement. Its proposed review comes as the Government seeks to deepen domestic participation and strengthen the capacity of Guyanese enterprises to capture greater value from the country's growing oil and gas industry.

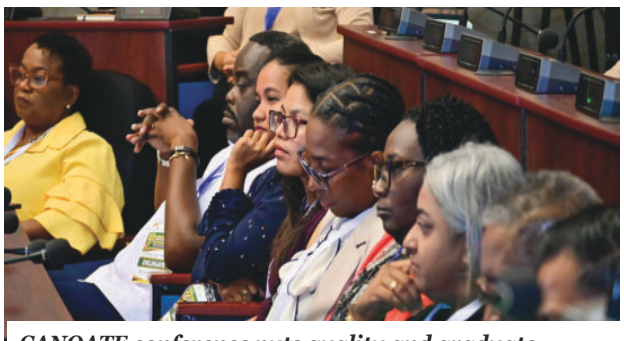
CARIBBEAN EDUCATION LEADERS URGED TO MAKE TERTIARY QUALIFICATIONS COUNT

As access to tertiary education expands across the Caribbean, education leaders are being challenged to ensure that students are not simply earning qualifications but receiving an education that prepares them for the demands of the workforce and a changing economy.

That challenge was at the centre of the 22nd Caribbean Area Network for Quality Assurance in Tertiary Education (CANQATE) Conference, held at the Arthur Chung Conference Centre in Liliendaal under the theme "Education for Impact: Quality Assurance as a Catalyst for Social and Economic Transformation."

The conference brought together education leaders, policymakers, accreditation professionals and other stakeholders from across the region and beyond to examine how stronger academic standards, innovation and institutional accountability can improve educational outcomes.

In a pre-recorded address, Education Minister Sonia Parag urged delegates to measure their work by its impact on students and the opportunities it creates for them.



CANQATE conference puts quality and graduate readiness at centre of education debate

"**This year's theme asks us to consider a question that should remain central to every decision we make in education: What difference does our work make in the lives of the people we serve?**" she said, stressing that institutions have a duty to make that promise worthy of public trust.

Minister Parag highlighted Guyana's expansion of access to tertiary education under President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali, including tuition-free education at the University of Guyana.

However, CANQATE President Dr Sherlene Enriquez-Savery stressed that wider access must be matched by credible quality assurance, strong academic programmes and graduates equipped with the knowledge and skills required by employers.

She challenged institutions to produce graduates capable of critical thinking, questioning information and demonstrating genuine understanding rather than simply obtaining qualifications.

Established in 2004, CANQATE promotes regional cooperation and the sharing of good practices in evaluating, accrediting and improving tertiary education.

Delegates were encouraged to use the conference to review existing approaches, listen to students' concerns and develop practical commitments to strengthen higher education across the Caribbean.

PRESIDENT ALI CALLS FOR REGIONAL FINANCING STRATEGY TO CUT CARIBBEAN SHIPPING COSTS



Caribbean ports need private capital and lender support, President Ali says

Caribbean countries need a coordinated investment strategy to modernise ports, lower shipping costs and strengthen regional trade, President, Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali has said, calling on major development banks to help shape and finance the initiative.

Addressing the Caribbean Shipping Association's 56th Annual General Meeting, Conference and Exhibition in Georgetown, President Ali proposed that the Caribbean Development Bank, Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and IDB Invest support an urgent regional policy document outlining the financing measures needed to upgrade port infrastructure.

The plan, he said, should identify fiscal incentives, banking support and public-private partnership arrangements to attract private investment into infrastructure that serves the wider public.

"We need to come up with a plan that allows private capital to merge with a public good," he said.

President Ali identified high shipping costs, uneven port infrastructure, weak inter-Caribbean trade, climate-related disasters and geopolitical instability as five challenges requiring a coordinated regional response.

He pointed to a 2018 IDB study which found that most Caribbean ports were at least 50 years old, leaving much of the region's infrastructure struggling to meet modern demands.



Attendees at the conference

The impact extends beyond the shipping industry. Citing a May 2026 International Monetary Fund working paper, Ali said every Caribbean country except Jamaica pays shipping costs above the global average, adding to the cost of food, construction materials and other goods.

"Ultimately, high shipping costs become a cost-of-living problem for our people and a competitiveness problem for our businesses," he said.

He pointed to Guyana's experience in attracting private investment, saying shore bases, laydown yards and port facilities along the Demerara River had attracted close to or more than US$1 billion over the past four to five years.

The Government is also working with Bechtel on a proposed deepwater port and engaging potential financing and investment partners, including US EXIM and the Qatar Investment Authority.

President Ali urged the regional shipping industry to move beyond discussions and engage the institutions capable of financing the infrastructure improvements required.

The four-day conference was held under the theme "Building a More Connected, Resilient, and Competitive Caribbean."

PRESIDENT ALI URGES CARIBBEAN ASSESSMENT OF COSTS OF SHIPPING'S GREEN TRANSITION

Caribbean countries must assess the financial and operational costs of decarbonising global shipping to avoid placing additional pressure on regional economies and consumers, President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali has warned.

Speaking at the Caribbean Shipping Association's 56th Annual General Meeting, Conference and Exhibition in Georgetown, Ali called for independent analysis of the investment, fuel and infrastructure requirements involved in the industry's transition to cleaner energy.

He said the global shipping industry is expected to require an estimated US$2 trillion by 2050 to support the landing, storage and delivery of clean fuels.

Citing figures from the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), Ali said decarbonising vessels could require annual investment of between US$8 billion and US$28 billion up to 2050. Full decarbonisation could also initially increase annual marine fuel spending by 70 to 100 per cent.



Caribbean Shipping Association's 56th Annual General Meeting, Conference and Exhibition in Georgetown

He questioned how those additional expenses would be distributed, particularly in Caribbean economies already facing above-average shipping costs.

"No one is taking that cost as a social good. That cost has to be passed on to someone," he said.

President Ali stressed that his concerns were not about the objective of reducing emissions, but the need to understand the economic implications before commitments are made.

He also pointed to uncertainty over the fuels that will power the transition, including biofuels, green methanol, green ammonia, hydrogen, battery electricity and liquefied natural gas.

Shipowners, he argued, need greater certainty about fuel availability, supply infrastructure and prices before committing billions of dollars to changing their vessels.

"This net zero conversation must not just be a sexy conversation for a room. It must be a practical conversation," he said.

The President urged the industry to use regional and international forums to develop independent assessments that would help Caribbean governments pursue environmental goals without undermining business competitiveness or placing an unreasonable burden on consumers.

GUYANA URGES CARIBBEAN ACTION AGAINST FRAUDULENT SHIP REGISTRATIONS



Caribbean Shipping Association's 56th Annual General Meeting, Conference and Exhibition in Georgetown

Caribbean countries must strengthen cooperation to stop vessels from fraudulently flying national flags, Minister of Public Utilities and Aviation Deodat Indar has warned, pointing to the use of false registrations to facilitate the movement of weapons, sanctioned oil and people illegally.

Addressing more than 450 maritime stakeholders, policymakers and industry representatives at the Caribbean Shipping Association's 56th Annual General Meeting, Conference and Exhibition in Georgetown, Indar said Guyana had also been affected by fraudulent ship registrations.

He explained that criminal operators use false registration documents to make vessels appear authorised to sail under countries' flags, exposing those states to reputational damage and creating risks for maritime authorities, insurers and legitimate shipping operators.

"It is a curse on the shipping industry. It is a black stain on maritime authorities," the minister said.

Minister Indar, who said he had witnessed the problem alongside Maritime Administration Department (MARAD) Director General Stephen Thomas, described cases involving operators claiming registration under the flag of a supposed state based on a tiny, uninhabited island in the South Pacific.

He stressed that countries must work together to address the practice.

"If we don't work together, [we] simply can't stamp it out," he said.

Guyana operates a closed ship registry, restricting registration under its flag to vessels owned by Guyanese nationals, residents, CARICOM citizens and companies established under Guyanese law.

Since 2021, MARAD has identified vessels falsely claiming Guyanese registration and shared information with international maritime bodies and other states.

One notable case involved the Majestic X, seized by United States forces in the Indian Ocean in April 2026 while carrying Iranian oil and fraudulently flying Guyana's flag. The vessel had been sanctioned in 2024 under the name PHONIX.

Minister Indar's call highlights the need for stronger information-sharing and coordinated enforcement to protect national registries and the integrity of regional shipping.

PRESIDENT ALI URGES GDF TO REMAIN PROFESSIONAL AND APOLITICAL



President Ali praises generations of service as GDF marks 61 years



President Ali praises generations of service as GDF marks 61 years

President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali has reaffirmed the Government's commitment to strengthening the Guyana Defence Force (GDF), citing investments in equipment, training and infrastructure as the military marks its 61st anniversary.

In a message issued on November 2, the President congratulated officers, ranks, reservists, civilian staff and veterans, describing the anniversary as a celebration of service to the country.

He noted that the GDF was established 61 years ago, before Guyana's Independence, with the mission of defending the nation's territorial integrity and serving its people.

President Ali said that, over the past five years, his Government had pursued continuous recapitalisation across the Force, expanded and modernised training, and invested in infrastructure and improved living conditions.

Those investments, he said, included new vessels and aircraft, modern barracks and reinforced forward operating bases across the country. He said the measures had helped make the Force "**more aware, more adaptable, and more agile**" in responding to the complex demands of a changing Guyana.

The President recognised veterans who built the Force and served along the country's frontiers, as well as current personnel operating on land, at sea, in the air and in communities during times of need.

"Service is what defines the Guyanese soldier. It is service before self, service to community, and service to the Cooperative Republic of Guyana," he said.

While reaffirming Guyana's commitment to peace, international law and peaceful coexistence, President Ali stressed that the country remained resolute in preserving its sovereignty and territorial integrity.

He expressed confidence in the GDF's ability to fulfil that responsibility and urged members to maintain professionalism, remain apolitical and uphold their loyalty to the Constitution.

The President thanked the families who support all members of the Force and paid tribute to those who had lost their lives in service, saying their contributions would not be forgotten.

$1B BELL 407 HELICOPTER ACQUISITION ADDS CAPACITY TO GUYANA'S AVIATION INDUSTRY



Jags Aviation adds $1B Bell 407 helicopter to fleet

Guyana's aviation sector has gained another major investment with the commissioning of a new Bell 407 helicopter valued at more than $1 billion, as the country's aircraft fleet continues to expand.

The helicopter, acquired by Jags Aviation Inc., a member of the BK Group of Companies, was officially commissioned by Minister of Public Utilities and Aviation, Deodat Indar. It joins an industry with more than 110 locally registered aircraft in operation.

Minister Indar said the investment reflects growing private-sector confidence and a shift among operators towards purchasing brand-new aircraft rather than refurbished, pre-owned assets.

"This particular asset sends a signal that we are gearing ourselves up for the transformation of the country," he said.

The minister linked the investment to President Ali's vision for an expanded aviation industry capable of meeting Guyana's growing transportation and development needs.

He also urged the Guyana Civil Aviation Authority (GCAA) to work with the company to complete the regulatory requirements while ensuring that all safety standards are met before the helicopter enters commercial service.

GCAA's Director General, Egbert Field said the aircraft would strengthen passenger movement to hinterland communities and remote airstrips, while supporting the expansion of tourism.

The commissioning ceremony was attended by BK International Founder and Chairman Brian Tiwari.



Jags Aviation adds $1B Bell 407 helicopter to fleet

300-BED HOSTEL TO STRENGTHEN HEALTHCARE ACCESS FOR INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES



Sod turned for new $1.16 billion facility to expand support for Indigenous patients

For Indigenous and hinterland families travelling to Georgetown to access specialised medical care, finding somewhere to stay while navigating the healthcare system can be an added financial and logistical burden.

A new $1.16 billion Amerindian Hostel in Ogle, East Coast Demerara, is expected to ease that challenge, with construction officially commencing following a sod-turning ceremony.

The three-storey facility will accommodate up to 300 people at a time, providing temporary accommodation and welfare support for patients travelling from hinterland communities, as well as relatives accompanying them.

The investment responds to growing demands on the existing Princess Street hostel in Georgetown, which was built in 1972 and has supported thousands of Indigenous and hinterland residents over more than five decades.

The scale of that demand remains significant. Last month alone, the facility accommodated 257 people, while approximately 2,500 persons benefit from its services annually. Government-funded assistance includes accommodation, meals, transportation to hospitals, welfare support and return passage.

Minister of Amerindian Affairs Sarah Browne-Shadeek said the new facility represents a significant improvement in how the government supports residents who must leave their communities to access medical attention and other essential services.

The project is being executed through the Central Housing and Planning Authority (CHPA) and awarded to Mac Junior International.

Its location, opposite the new maternal and paediatric hospital, is expected to strengthen access to healthcare services, while placing residents within the expanding Ogle-Eccles development corridor.

Finance Minister Dr Ashni Singh said the project forms part of a wider investment programme targeting Indigenous development. He disclosed that more than $46 billion has been allocated across ministries and programmes in 2026 for initiatives benefiting hinterland communities, including healthcare, education, infrastructure, water, renewable energy and village ecoknomies.

Housing Minister Collin Croal said the facility goes beyond providing somewhere to sleep, describing it as an investment in temporary care and support for people accessing critical and specialised healthcare.

The project fulfils a commitment by President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali to improve living standards and access to essential services for hinterland populations.



Sod turned for new $1.16 billion facility to expand support for Indigenous patients

US$202.2M PLEDGE BACKS COMMONWEALTH CONSERVATION DRIVE, GUYANA PUSHES FOR ECONOMIC RETURNS



President Ali at CHOGM

A US$202.2 million initial commitment is backing a new Commonwealth conservation initiative, as Guyana presses for countries that protect globally significant ecosystems to receive financial returns for their contribution to the environment.

The Commonwealth Nature Initiative (CNI), led by King Charles III, was launched during the 28th Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in Antigua and Barbuda, with the initial funding expected to support the establishment and expansion of protected areas and programmes advancing the rights, participation and governance of Indigenous peoples and local communities.

The initiative aims to help middle- and low-income Commonwealth countries accelerate progress towards the global 30×30 target of conserving at least 30 per cent of the world's land and oceans by 2030. A further US$1 billion is being targeted by 2030 through additional contributions from donor countries and philanthropic partners.

The initial commitments came from founding supporters including the Minderoo Foundation, Rob Walton Foundation, Rainforest Trust, Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation, Waitt Foundation and National Geographic Pristine Seas.

Guyana was among 12 countries presenting conservation commitments at the launch, which brought together governments and conservation partners aboard the Fortescue's Green Pioneer vessel.

President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali used the occasion to call for stronger financing mechanisms and practical partnerships that connect countries rich in natural resources with the financial and scientific expertise needed to protect them.

"His Majesty's vision is not simply about protecting nature but about creating opportunities for people, preserving heritage, building skills, and strengthening communities," the President said.

He argued that biodiversity protection must be integrated into broader economic and development planning, allowing countries and communities to benefit from safeguarding their natural resources.

Pointing to Guyana's experience under its Low Carbon Development Strategy and partnership with Norway, President Ali noted that the country has mobilised more than US$500 million through forest partnerships and carbon credits.

The CNI's initial focus areas include the Eastern Caribbean, Africa and the Pacific, where regional programmes are expected to support protected-area expansion and sustainable financing for long-term conservation.

The initiative comes with only four years remaining to achieve the 30×30 target established under the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework in 2022. For Guyana, the challenge is ensuring that global conservation commitments translate into resources and opportunities for countries and communities doing the work of protecting nature.

PRESIDENT ALI NAMED COMMONWEALTH CHAMPION OF BIODIVERSITY AS GUYANA'S GLOBAL PROFILE GROWS

President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali has been appointed a Commonwealth Champion of Biodiversity, recognising his advocacy for conservation financing and efforts to build international partnerships around the economic value of protecting nature.

The appointment was announced during the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Antigua and Barbuda, placing Guyana's environmental agenda within the Commonwealth's wider efforts to address biodiversity loss and advance sustainable development.

Central to that agenda was the Global Biodiversity Alliance (GBA), established by President Ali in July 2025 to bring governments, institutions and international partners together to strengthen biodiversity financing and turn conservation commitments into



practical results.

The alliance has grown from 17 founding members to 149, with countries including China, India, France, Colombia, the United Arab Emirates and Panama among those now involved.

Its expansion reflects the growing international interest in developing new approaches to biodiversity protection, particularly mechanisms that recognise the economic value of ecosystems and provide financial incentives for countries that maintain them.

President Ali has consistently argued that conservation must be linked to economic opportunity, community development and the protection of Indigenous heritage, rather than treated solely as an environmental obligation.

His appointment as Commonwealth Champion of Biodiversity adds another international platform from which to advance that approach, as countries face growing pressure to protect ecosystems while securing the financing needed to meet global conservation targets.

GUYANA ADVANCES GLOBAL PUSH FOR FINANCING THAT REWARDS CONSERVATION



President Ali at the Commonwealth Heads of Government and Business Breakfast meeting

Guyana is seeking to expand the international financing available to countries that protect globally significant ecosystems, with plans being explored for a major investment forum in London in June 2027.

The proposed forum is expected to build on the second Global Biodiversity Alliance (GBA) Conference held in Georgetown in October, where governments, private-sector representatives, philanthropic organisations and scientists examined ways to mobilise new sources of biodiversity financing.

President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali announced the proposed follow-up while addressing the Commonwealth Nature Initiative in Antigua and Barbuda, arguing that countries protecting forests and other critical ecosystems must receive tangible economic benefits for their contribution.

The forum will seek to advance practical mechanisms to recognise the value of biodiversity services and reward countries for maintaining ecosystems of global importance.

Guyana is positioning its own experience as evidence that environmental protection can generate significant economic returns. Under its Low Carbon Development Strategy and forest partnership with Norway, the country has mobilised more than US$500 million through forest partnerships and carbon credits.

President Ali has pointed to that experience as an example of how conservation can be incorporated into national development, rather than treated as a cost that countries must carry without compensation.

He also highlighted plans to establish a Commonwealth Centre of Excellence through Guyana's partnership with the Commonwealth Secretariat. The centre is intended to focus on biodiversity science, knowledge-sharing and innovative financing.

The proposed centre, the GBA and the Commonwealth Nature Initiative are expected to serve as complementary platforms for strengthening international cooperation.

The President has argued that biodiversity loss threatens food security, economies, climate resilience and the wellbeing of future generations. He has also called for biodiversity to become part of broader economic planning, connecting environmental protection with jobs, investment and opportunities for communities.

For Guyana, the proposed London forum represents an opportunity to move the conversation beyond international pledges and towards financing arrangements that recognise the contribution of countries protecting the natural assets on which the wider world depends.

Farmers meet agriculture minister at Region Six Open Day

CLOSE to 300 farmers and residents from across Region Six (East Berbice-Corentyne) engaged directly with Minister of Agriculture Zulfikar Mustapha on Saturday during an Agriculture Open Day at the Albion Sports Complex, where concerns were addressed and immediate interventions initiated.

The Open Day provided farmers with an opportunity to meet one-on-one with the minister and representatives of agencies under the Ministry of Agriculture, raising concerns ranging from irrigation and drainage to land leases, livestock production and agricultural development.

Speaking with reporters following the engagement, Minister Mustapha disclosed that hundreds of persons had visited the venue throughout the day, with consultations beginning at approximately 10:00 a.m. and continuing well into the afternoon.

"In all, we saw over 300 persons here. There were a number of issues raised," the minister explained.

According to Mustapha, many of the concerns centred on farmers' need for more access to irrigation water, assistance to expand agricultural production, and access to lands for cultivation and livestock rearing.

"People are looking for us to get irrigation water. They are looking for intervention to get into agriculture in terms of farming. They want to get into livestock rearing, they have applied for land and they are looking for the land leases, and some of them are looking for the clearing of land so that they can start agricultural production," he stated.



Minister Zulfikar Mustapha (l) engages with farmers

The minister noted that the majority of concerns were addressed during the consultations, while outstanding matters were referred to the relevant technical officers and agencies within his ministry.

He explained that staff within the various agencies were given seven days to address those matters requiring further intervention, underscoring the importance of timely responses to farmers' needs.

Issues falling outside the Ministry of Agriculture's mandate will also be forwarded to the relevant government ministries and agencies for attention.

Mustapha emphasised that the Open Day is part of the People's Progressive Party/Civic (PPP/C) government's continued efforts to make agricultural services more accessible, highlighting the importance of direct engagement, noting that such initiatives allow farmers to explain their challenges personally while providing ministry officials with a clearer understanding of the interventions required.

"I am happy we have dealt with almost 300 issues this morning, and I am sure that most of these issues will be resolved," Mustapha said.

For several farmers who attended Saturday's engagement, the opportunity to speak directly with the agriculture minister brought renewed optimism, particularly as commitments were made to address challenges affecting their livelihoods.

Among them was 61-year-old Somra Samaroo of Number 7 Village, Corentyne, a rice and brackish-water shrimp farmer who welcomed the minister's intervention in addressing irrigation challenges affecting shrimp production. "We very glad to meet the minister. He was very interested in the problems we had, and he solve it. He give us very progressive answer to the problem," Samaroo said.

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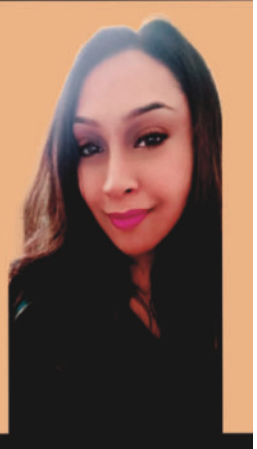
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GUYANESE DIASPORA DIGEST KEEPING THE DIASPORA INFORMED

A ROYAL VISIT. A

Highlights from King Charles III's historic two-day state visit to Guyana, October 29–30, 2026



































GUYANESE DIASPORA DIGEST KEEPING THE DIASPORA INFORMED

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Ali urges Bank of Baroda to finance small businesses

PRESIDENT, Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali has called on the Bank of Baroda to put more of its parent company's global capital into Guyana's local market, particularly in small businesses.

When President Ali took office in 2020, the bank was looking to leave the Guyanese market. It is now expanding here.

He said one of his first tasks as head of state was to keep both Bank of Baroda and Scotiabank in Guyana.

President Ali explained that that involved meetings at the level of the presidency and with the Minister of Finance.

"I'm much happier standing here launching this new headquarters with you than just six years ago in 2020, listening to you wanting to exit the market. It's a completely different day today," the president said.

President Ali emphasised that the government is working with commercial banks, through the Guyana Development Bank (GDB), to provide additional financing of up to $10 million for qualifying businesses.

He described this as an important opportunity for institutions such as the Bank of Baroda.

"Small business lending can be good banking," President Ali said, stating that, "It is the thousands of smaller enterprises, the entrepreneurs, the manufacturers, the farmers, the service providers, the contractors, and the retailers who create the economic depth and resilience that allow growth to endure."

He said commercial banks have been very responsive to the policy, and that government and banks have never worked so closely together.

The head of state also said that government will soon announce major projects linked to national and regional energy security.

Meanwhile, President Ali also pointed to a US$500 million credit facility that was agreed to by India's External Affairs Minister, Dr Subrahmanyam Jaishankar.

The facility will fund defence, health and infrastructure, mainly roads that open new lands for housing, agriculture, and manufacturing. He said the Bank of Baroda will play a very important role in it.

The bank received its licence to operate in Guyana in January 1966, months before independence. It became a wholly owned subsidiary of its parent bank in 1999 and opened its Mon Repos branch in 2012.

"Let this new headquarters become a centre from which new businesses are financed, new partnerships are forged, new entrepreneurs are empowered, and new opportunities are created," President Ali said.

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GUYANA COURTS INTERNATIONAL VISITORS, INVESTORS AT WORLD TRAVEL MARKET



Guyana takes tourism investment drive to London

Guyana used its participation in World Travel Market (WTM) London 2026 to pursue new international tourism markets, investment and commercial partnerships, strengthening efforts to convert growing global interest into increased visitor arrivals and economic opportunities.

The November 3–5 exhibition brought together international travel operators, investors and industry stakeholders, providing Guyana with a platform to showcase its nature-based experiences, cultural attractions and distinctive tourism offerings.

The delegation was led by Tourism, Industry and Commerce Minister Susan Rodrigues and Guyana Tourism Authority (GTA) Director Kamrul Baksh, who engaged international stakeholders on opportunities to expand the country's tourism reach.

Among the engagements, Minister Rodrigues held discussions with Saint Lucia's Deputy Prime Minister and Tourism Minister Ernest Hilaire on shared interests and stronger regional tourism cooperation.

The Guyana pavilion also facilitated commercial networking and cultural promotion, with international guests sampling El Dorado 12-Year-Old Rum and local delicacies.

Another highlight was the launch of the latest edition of *Explore Guyana* magazine by Tourism and Hospitality Association of Guyana (THAG) President Mitra Ramkumar, further supporting the country's international destination marketing efforts.

The delegation included representatives from THAG, Wilderness Explorers, Trail Masters Adventure Tours, Travel the Guianas, Iwokrama and Visit Rupununi, alongside the Guyana High Commission in the United Kingdom.

Guyana's participation formed part of broader efforts to strengthen international industry relationships, attract investment and create opportunities for tourism businesses and communities as the country expands its presence in the global travel market.



Guyana takes tourism investment drive to London

DEEP JALE SHOWCASES CULTURAL DIVERSITY AS PILLAR OF GUYANA'S NATIONAL UNITY



PM Phillips at the Deep Jale celebration of Hindu heritage in Guyana

Guyana's cultural and religious diversity remains central to its national identity, with Prime Minister Brigadier (Ret'd) Mark Phillips urging citizens to preserve their traditions while strengthening the bonds that unite the country.

The prime minister made the call during the Guyana Hindu Dharmic Sabha's Deep Jale celebration at the Kitty Seawall Roundabout, where he was accompanied by his wife, Mignon Bowen-Phillips.

Extending Diwali greetings to the Hindu community, Phillips commended the Dharmic Sabha for its continued work in preserving Guyana's religious and cultural heritage.

He said celebrations such as Deep Jale create opportunities for people from different backgrounds to share in one another's traditions, build friendships and reinforce a common sense of national belonging.

"Our diversity remains one of Guyana's greatest strengths. Celebrations such as Deep Jale demonstrate how our cultural and religious traditions contribute to our shared national identity," he said.

Reflecting on Diwali's spiritual significance, the prime minister highlighted its message of light overcoming darkness, good triumphing over evil and knowledge overcoming ignorance, noting that these values resonate beyond religious boundaries.

He stressed that national development must extend beyond economic transformation to include the relationships, shared values and mutual respect that hold communities together.

Prime Minister Phillips also encouraged citizens to translate the festival's message into everyday actions by showing kindness to neighbours, supporting those in need and contributing to national peace and prosperity.

The celebration brought together members of the Hindu community, government officials and representatives of the diplomatic corps. It featured the traditional lighting of diyas and cultural performances, highlighting the traditions and expressions that continue to enrich Guyana's multicultural society.

Among those attending were Human Services and Social Security Minister and Dharmic Sabha President Dr Vindhya Persaud, Housing Minister Collin Croal and Minister within the Ministry of Housing Vanessa Benn.



PM Phillips at the Deep Jale celebration of Hindu heritage in Guyana

PRESIDENT ALI TAKES TO CRICKET FIELD IN COMMONWEALTH UNITY MATCH



Cricket brings Commonwealth leaders together, with President Ali among participants

President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali joined Caribbean leaders on the cricket field for a friendly T5 showdown against counterparts from the wider Commonwealth, using the sport to celebrate friendship, unity and shared Commonwealth ties.

The match, held at the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium in Antigua and Barbuda on November 1, formed part of activities surrounding the 2026 Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM).

President Ali was part of the Caribbean Commonwealth team, which faced an opposing side led by Kenya's Deputy President, Professor Kithure Kindiki. His Majesty King Charles III performed the ceremonial coin toss ahead of the match.



Cricket brings Commonwealth leaders together, with President Ali among participants

The event, dubbed "One Commonwealth, One Team – A Commonwealth Cricket Celebration", brought together political leaders for friendly competition, with cricket serving as a common bond among member countries.

West Indies cricket legend Sir Vivian Richards and former England captain David Gower served as honorary team managers, leading the Caribbean and Wider Commonwealth teams respectively.

The initiative highlighted cricket's ability to bring people together across borders, reinforcing the spirit of camaraderie and sportsmanship underpinning the Commonwealth.

Guyana accounts for 62% of Caribbean goods exports in 2025 – IDB report

GUYANA'S expanding petroleum sector continues to elevate its position in regional and international trade, with the country accounting for 62 per cent of the Caribbean's total goods exports in 2025, according to the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB).

Guyana recorded US$23.2 billion in goods exports last year, representing a 20.8 per cent increase over 2024.

The trend continued into the first half of 2026, with the country's exports growing by a further 28.9 per cent, helping to drive overall Caribbean export growth to 19.1 per cent, the IDB reported in its 2026 Trade and Integration Monitor.

Guyana and Suriname were identified as the principal contributors to the region's export expansion, reflecting the growing significance of petroleum production in the Caribbean's trade landscape.

The report also documented a substantial increase in foreign direct investment (FDI) entering Guyana, underscoring the scale of investment accompanying the country's economic transformation.



Average annual FDI inflows increased from US$254 million during 2012 to 2014 to US$8.281 billion between 2023 and 2025.

In relation to gross domestic product (GDP), this represented a rise from 6.2 per cent to 37.4 per cent.

Guyana further accounted for 78.1 per cent of the increase in foreign investment inflows across the Caribbean, with the oil industry identified as the principal driver.

The IDB also recorded significant growth in the country's accumulated foreign investment stock, which rose from US$2.552 billion in the earlier period to US$34.252 billion between 2023 and 2025.

While recognising the scale of Guyana's trade and investment expansion, the report pointed to the importance of managing exposure to international commodity price movements, particularly given the increasing concentration of regional exports in petroleum.

Between January and August 2026, movements in commodity prices generated a positive impact on Guyana's trade balance equivalent to 8.3 per cent of GDP.

The report also recorded a 27.6 per cent decline in Guyana's goods imports during the first half of 2026, following a 41.3 per cent increase in 2025. This was partly influenced by an unusually high comparison base, including exceptionally elevated imports in May 2025.

The findings provide further insight into Guyana's expanding contribution to regional economic activity, as the country continues to attract substantial foreign investment and consolidate its position as a major exporter within the Caribbean.

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New homeowners with Minister Zulfikar Mustapha

Two families receive new homes following tragic losses in Region Six

TWO families in Region Six who endured devastating tragedies were given a fresh start on Saturday when Minister of Agriculture Zulfikar Mustapha, and Member of Parliament Zamal Hussain handed over two newly constructed homes, made possible through the generosity of private individuals.

The emotional handovers brought renewed hope and stability to the families, both of whom faced tremendous hardships following the loss of their homes and loved ones.

Among the beneficiaries was Shenieza Yussuf and her family, who lost their home in a devastating fire last year. The family received the keys to a brand-new, three-bedroom house at Number 76 Housing Scheme, Corentyne.

The house was made possible through the generosity of businesswoman Sita Gumani, who purchased the plot of land and financed the construction of the home, ensuring that the family could once again enjoy the comfort and security of having a place to call their own.

Meanwhile, 25-year-old Amrita Singh, whose husband tragically lost his life in a drowning incident in March of this year, was also presented with the keys to a fully furnished, three-bedroom house. For the young widow, the handover marked an important milestone as she continues to rebuild her life following the heartbreaking loss.



MORE BARTICA RESIDENTS ARE CLOSER TO OWNING A HOME



New homes offer 21 Bartica families a fresh start

Twenty-one families in Bartica, Region Seven, have moved into newly constructed three-bedroom houses, while other residents are receiving assistance to build on their own land as housing opportunities continue to expand across the mining town.

The turnkey bungalow houses, each valued at approximately G$13.5 million, were handed over by Housing Minister, Collin Croal at the new Bartica housing scheme extension. Forty houses have been constructed at the development.

For first-time homeowner Mohamed Ishak, the keys represent the fulfilment of a long-held dream shared with his wife as they raised their children while renting.

"**It is a feeling beyond expression at this moment**," he said, noting that owning a home would give his family greater independence and control over their living space.

Single mother, Latoya Norville described the opportunity as relief from the financial pressure of paying rent while raising her family. Kelsy Brown, a mother of four who lost her home in a fire, said the new house would allow her to rebuild her life.

Beyond the completed homes, housing development is advancing in other parts of Bartica, including the Track Bar housing development, where infrastructure works are moving apace. Minister Croal said applicants could be shown their properties before the end of the year, once outstanding infrastructure works allow the Central Housing and Planning Authority (CH&PA) to begin identifying individual lots.

Beneficiaries allocated lots at Bartica Extension South are expected to begin accessing their properties from mid-November, with CH&PA surveyors contacting applicants to arrange visits and confirm lot locations.

Minister Croal cautioned applicants against relying solely on housing scheme plans to identify their properties, urging them to have authorised surveyors show them the correct lots before beginning construction.

The support also extends to residents who already have land and need help financing construction. Three residents of Five Miles received G$225,000 each in steel and cement grants under the Government's housing subsidy programme.

The assistance will help Carol Lively continue construction already started on her property, while single parent Jagdei Dindyal plans to use the grant to begin laying her foundation. Heman Benn also said the support would help him start foundation works.

Introduced in 2022, the subsidy programme is intended to reduce building costs for low- and middle-income citizens constructing homes on government-allocated or privately owned land.

Together, the initiatives provide different routes towards homeownership in Bartica: completed houses for families ready to move in, access to land for those preparing to build, and material assistance for residents working to turn their properties into homes.



New homes offer 21 Bartica families a fresh start

4,000 HOUSE LOTS SET TO OPEN UP IN REGION SIX BY NOVEMBER



New housing developments bring 4,000-plus land opportunities within reach

More than 4,000 families in Region Six are expected to move closer to homeownership by November, as the Government advances housing developments at Overwinning and Providence/Glasgow with a combined infrastructure investment of $14.6 billion.

The developments will deliver approximately 4,800 house lots, expanding access to land for thousands of applicants awaiting allocations in the ancient county.

At Overwinning, a 744-acre development is being transformed to accommodate more than 3,000 house lots, backed by $5.3 billion in infrastructure works. The project is approximately 91 per cent complete, with most water distribution works expected to be finished within two weeks.

Most allocated applicants will be contacted within the coming month to view their lots, bringing them closer to beginning construction.

Meanwhile, $9.3 billion more is being invested at Providence/Glasgow, where approximately 1,800 house lots are being developed across more than 650 acres.

Additional investments are planned to strengthen water supply and electricity distribution as occupancy increases.

The developments form part of the Government's wider housing programme to reduce the backlog of applicants and expand access to affordable land, giving more families, including those planning to return to Guyana, an opportunity to establish permanent homes.



New housing developments bring 4,000-plus land opportunities within reach

NEW DIGITAL SYSTEM TO PROTECT HOMEOWNERS FROM COSTLY LAND DISPUTES



Four boundary markers, photographs and digital signatures to verify house lots

Guyanese securing house lots will have an additional safeguard against costly allocation mistakes, as the Government introduces a digital verification system requiring surveyors to electronically record and photograph each property identification exercise.

Effective November 2, the Central Housing and Planning Authority (CH&PA) will implement geo-referencing across all regions, creating a digital record of the precise location of each allocated lot and confirming that beneficiaries have been physically shown their land.

Housing Minister, Collin Croal said the measure addresses cases in which allottees have mistakenly constructed homes on land belonging to other beneficiaries, sometimes because boundaries were not properly identified.

Under the new system, CH&PA surveyors will use tablets to record each lot's coordinates, upload photographs of the identification exercise and obtain the allottee's digital signature acknowledging receipt and identification of the property.

The information will be stored in the agency's digital registry, allowing officials to verify boundaries and address potential disputes. Beneficiaries will also be able to obtain copies of their lot coordinates for future reference.

Minister Croal stressed that allottees must ensure surveyors physically identify all four boundary markers, commonly called paals, before accepting their lots.

The minister said the system will protect both beneficiaries and the agency by providing verifiable evidence that the correct property was identified.

For Guyanese living overseas who secure land in anticipation of returning home or building a property for family members, the digital records could provide an additional layer of protection and accountability.

The initiative forms part of the Government's wider digital transformation programme.

TWO CHILD DEATHS TRIGGER NATIONWIDE REVIEW OF GUYANA'S CHILD PROTECTION SYSTEM



New task force to examine child safety across homes, schools and communities

Two recent child deaths have prompted a nationwide review of Guyana's child protection framework, with a high-level task force beginning work on recommendations for stronger policies, legislation and safeguards across homes, schools and communities.

The deaths occurred last week at Bath Settlement, West Coast Berbice, and Charity, Essequibo Coast.

Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs, Mohabir Anil Nandlall, SC, who coordinates the National Task Force on Children's Welfare and Safety, said the body was established by President Ali to examine the wider circumstances affecting children and identify measures to prevent abuse.

Speaking on *Issues in the News*, Nandlall said the task force was initially reviewing existing studies, reports and data on children to establish an evidence base for its recommendations.

"**Drastic, exceptional circumstances require drastic measures and responses,**" he said, describing the recent deaths as part of a wider pattern of child abuse.

The task force brings together representatives from the Ministries of Legal Affairs, Home Affairs, Education and Human Services, alongside the Judiciary, law enforcement agencies, constitutional rights commissions, the National Toshaos Council, religious organisations and child protection institutions.

The Guyana Bar Association has also been invited to participate, while the Private Sector Commission and Restorative Justice Centre have expressed interest in joining.

The review will examine child safety across different environments, including homes, schools, recreational facilities, religious institutions and Indigenous communities.

Following the desk review, public consultations will be held before the task force submits a report to the President with proposed policy and legislative reforms.

The initiative seeks to bring national institutions and communities together to strengthen protections for children and address vulnerabilities that existing safeguards may not adequately cover.

FIRE SERVICE RECRUITS TRAINED TO IDENTIFY HUMAN TRAFFICKING VICTIMS

Thirty Guyana Fire Service recruits are being equipped to recognise human trafficking, identify potential victims and respond appropriately to suspected cases as Guyana strengthens its frontline efforts against exploitation.

The specialised training, organised by the Ministry of Home Affairs through the Ministerial Task Force on Trafficking in Persons, was held at the Fire Service Training School in Leonora, West Coast Demerara.

Participants are being trained to identify different forms of exploitation, recognise indicators of trafficking and understand the vulnerabilities of adult and child victims.

Inspector Marilyn Rodney, Head of the Guyana Police Force's Trafficking in Persons Unit, is among the presenters guiding recruits through victim identification and appropriate response procedures.

The programme also covers offences under the Combating Trafficking in Persons Act No. 7 of 2023, using case studies, role play and group discussions to strengthen practical knowledge.

The training emphasises a human rights-based approach, including proper reporting and referral procedures for suspected victims.



New training equips fire service recruits to recognise signs of exploitation

NEW PLATFORM TO TRACK TVET STUDENTS FROM ENROLMENT TO CERTIFICATION

Guyana is introducing a digital management system for technical and vocational education that will allow authorities to follow students from application through training and certification, while giving the Ministry of Education information to assess the sector's performance.

The Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Education Management Information System (EMIS) was launched through a collaboration involving the Ministry, the World Bank and other stakeholders. It is intended to strengthen institutional management, improve efficiency and support quality skills training.

The integrated platform will cover stages of the students' journey, including applications, enrolment, training and the issuance of certificates. It will give education officials a clearer picture of programme performance and where additional support may be needed.

The system will help the Ministry assess equipment and facility needs, identify gaps in service delivery and use reliable information to guide decisions across the TVET sector.

The initiative forms part of the Government's push to digitise public services and improve decision-making through data. Its success, however, will depend on management and whether the information collected is put to practical use.

At the launch, Education Minister, Sonia Parag urged educators to ensure that the platform remains active and delivers useful results.

"**This must be a system that you are constantly ensuring that it is working, that it is giving you the results that you are looking for,**" she said.

Minister Parag said effective use of data would support evidence-based policies and stronger quality assurance,



TVET digital platform to improve training quality and institutional efficiency

helping ensure students receive the training and certification needed to contribute to the workforce and their communities.

For Guyana, strengthening technical and vocational education is part of building the skilled human capacity needed to support national development.

22 SECONDARY SCHOOLS TURN LOCAL CROPS INTO MARKETABLE PRODUCTS



Student innovators demonstrate commercial potential of locally grown crops

Students from 22 secondary schools showcased how locally grown crops can be transformed into marketable products, as the Ministry of Education uses practical agricultural learning to encourage innovation and entrepreneurship.

The schools participated in the 2026 Student-led Value Addition Symposium and National Competition, hosted by the ministry's Secondary Sector Agricultural Science Unit at the Royal International Hotel.

Chief Planning Officer, Mischka White-Griffith said the initiative demonstrates how classroom learning can be applied to real-world opportunities, stressing that agricultural science extends beyond planting and harvesting to include processing, mathematics, marketing and business development.

Under the theme, "From Farm to Market: Transforming Our Crops, Building Value, Creating Opportunities!", the competition assessed students' presentations, products and previously submitted project booklets.

While all 22 schools displayed their products, six students delivered presentations as part of the judging process. The initiative aims to strengthen students' agro-processing skills and expose them to opportunities across the wider agricultural sector.

$545M REHABILITATION PLANNED FOR GUYANA'S 50-YEAR-OLD NATIONAL CULTURAL CENTRE

Guyana's National Cultural Centre (NCC) is set for a major rehabilitation, with the Government moving to address structural deterioration and modernise the landmark performing arts venue ahead of its next chapter.

The Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport has invited bids for works estimated at $545.7 million, targeting the building's exterior restoration and repairs to structural cracks.

The project follows technical assessments conducted earlier this year by Culture Minister Charles Ramson, Minister within the Ministry Steven Jacobs, consultants and other technical personnel.

In June, Minister Jacobs confirmed that consultants were finalising designs for a wider restoration and modernisation programme, which is expected to include internal improvements



Five decades on, National Cultural Centre prepares for major facelift

to performers' dressing rooms and public washroom facilities.

The upgrades are intended to improve conditions for local artists, cultural organisations and patrons while preserving the centre's capacity to host theatrical productions, performances and national events.

Opened on May 16, 1976, the NCC has served as one of Guyana's principal stages for cultural expression for five decades. Its auditorium accommodates approximately 2,000 patrons and features a stage equipped with an orchestra pit.

The planned rehabilitation represents a significant investment in preserving a national cultural landmark and maintaining an important platform for Guyanese artistic talent and future generations.

GUYANA BACKS 146 HUMAN RIGHTS RECOMMENDATIONS, REAFFIRMS DEMOCRATIC COMMITMENTS



Government targets overgrown cemeteries with clean-up and maintenance programme

Families visiting the graves of loved ones at Le Repentir Cemetery are set to benefit from improved access and cleaner surroundings as the Government undertakes a major clean-up and introduces plans for more consistent maintenance of burial grounds across Guyana.

The Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development is clearing overgrown areas and improving access to burial plots, addressing conditions that have made it difficult for families to visit and maintain graves.

During a site visit, Minister Priya Manickchand stressed that burial grounds must be maintained with dignity and consideration for grieving families.

"**Any burial ground is a hard place to be. It's either you're bringing someone you love to bury or you are going to visit someone you loved,**" she said.

The minister emphasised that the initial clean-up must be followed by routine maintenance to prevent vegetation from returning and restricting access.

Beyond Le Repentir, the ministry is working to improve burial grounds nationwide, drawing on previous interventions such as the clean-up at Bartica Cemetery.

A proposed burial ground policy is also being advanced to establish minimum standards covering fencing, washroom facilities, access to graves and general upkeep.

The policy is expected to strengthen compliance with existing Public Health Act requirements, including provisions governing the spacing of graves where land remains available.

For Guyanese at home and abroad, the improvements address an important community need: ensuring that families can visit, honour and care for the resting places of loved ones in properly maintained surroundings.

The initiative forms part of wider efforts to improve the management of essential public facilities and ensure that cemetery maintenance extends beyond occasional clean-up exercises.



Government targets overgrown cemeteries with clean-up and maintenance programme



Government targets overgrown cemeteries with clean-up and maintenance programme

150 YOUNG PEOPLE TRAINED THROUGH ALBOUYSTOWN SALON PARTNERSHIP



The ministers during the outreach, encouraging residents to pursue skills, jobs and entrepreneurship

One hundred and fifty young people from Albouystown have received training through a partnership between the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport and local salon Boss Lady, as government encourages residents to use skills development and business support programmes to improve their livelihoods.

The initiative was highlighted during a ministerial walkthrough of the community, where residents engaged government representatives on local concerns and available opportunities.

Minister of Labour and Manpower Planning, Keoma Griffith urged residents to pursue technical skills and further education to improve their prospects for employment and entrepreneurship.

"**The best way to do that is to get a skill, get upskilled, position yourself**," he said, encouraging residents to prepare to participate in the country's expanding economy.

He also pointed to financing available through the Guyana Development Bank and urged aspiring entrepreneurs to explore opportunities to establish or expand their businesses.

Minister within the Ministry of Culture Youth and Sport, Steven Jacobs said the partnership with Boss Lady demonstrated how businesses could help young people develop practical, income-generating skills.

He encouraged more businesses to participate in similar initiatives and urged young residents to contact government ministries to learn about programmes available to them.



The ministers during the outreach, encouraging residents to pursue skills, jobs and entrepreneurship

The walkthrough also focused on improvements to the community's surroundings. Jacobs pointed to recently paved streets and a lit boulevard, describing the space as an area where families could relax and spend time together. He announced that concrete alleyways are also planned to complement the community's upgraded roads.

The visit provided residents with direct access to government representatives and an opportunity to raise issues affecting their neighbourhood. Representatives from several ministries, including housing, were present to respond to concerns.

113 FARMERS SECURE AGRICULTURAL LAND LEASES AFTER DECADES OF WAITING



Decades-long wait ends for farmers receiving agricultural land leases

After decades of uncertainty over their right to occupy and cultivate agricultural land, 113 farmers in Region Five have received leases, strengthening their tenure security and ability to invest in production.

The leases were distributed by Agriculture Minister, Zulfikar Mustapha during the Mahaica-Mahaicony-Abary Agricultural Development Authority (MMA-ADA) Open Day at Onverwagt, West Coast Berbice.

Among the beneficiaries are farmers from Rampoor and surrounding communities who have spent years seeking formal recognition of their land rights.

Beyond the allocations, the government is also targeting one of the major costs affecting agricultural production: land rental.

Minister Mustapha warned against individuals securing large agricultural land allocations only to rent them to other farmers at inflated rates instead of cultivating the land themselves.

He explained that rental costs represent a significant component of farmers' production expenses, making access to government land at lower rates particularly important.

The MMA scheme remains a major agricultural hub, covering approximately 224,000 acres and supporting some 7,000 farmers involved in rice cultivation, livestock rearing and cash crop production.



Decades-long wait ends for farmers receiving agricultural land leases

With an estimated 28,000 people directly dependent on the scheme through their households, investments in its infrastructure and operations have implications extending well beyond individual landholders.

Minister Mustapha reaffirmed the government's commitment to improving agricultural infrastructure, introducing modern technologies and increasing production.

The Open Day, held during Agriculture Month, also featured exhibitions by agricultural agencies showcasing their products and services, alongside recognition of MMA-ADA employees for their years of service.

DIGITAL PLATFORM PUTS GUYANA'S MANGROVE PROTECTION DATA AT STAKEHOLDERS' FINGERTIPS



23,000 hectares of mangroves now mapped as Guyana expands coastal protection

Guyana is strengthening its ability to monitor and protect its vulnerable coastline through an upgraded digital system that brings mangrove data, restoration projects and environmental research together in one platform.

The relaunched Guyana Mangrove Information System (GuyMIS) will allow government agencies, researchers, students and other stakeholders to track mangrove distribution, monitor coastal changes, identify erosion-prone areas and access information to guide restoration efforts.

The technology comes as Guyana continues to invest heavily in mangroves as a natural defence against coastal erosion and climate-related threats. More than $592 million has been spent on mangrove restoration and coastal protection initiatives since 2020, with $285 million more budgeted for 2026. By the end of 2025, the country's mangrove cover had expanded to more than 23,000 hectares.

Agriculture Minister Mustapha said mangroves play a critical role in reducing wave energy, trapping sediment, stabilising vulnerable coastal areas and supporting biodiversity.

He stressed that restoration efforts extend beyond environmental protection, helping to safeguard food security, farmers' livelihoods and communities exposed to climate change.

Developed by the National Agricultural Research and Extension Institute (NAREI), with support from the Global Green Growth Institute (GGGI), GuyMIS features interactive maps, project records, photographs, research reports and educational resources.

The platform is also expected to strengthen government planning and decision-making by improving access to reliable environmental data.

GGGI Country Representative, Daniel Smith called on agencies to share relevant information to improve coordination and ensure future restoration investments target priority areas.

GuyMIS is accessible at **mangroves.gov.gy**.

HONEY OUTPUT CLIMBS MORE THAN TEN-FOLD AS INDUSTRY EYES EXPORT MARKETS

Guyana's honey production has increased from 3,745 gallons between 2020 and 2022 to 40,000 gallons in 2025, with the Government targeting output of nearly 50,000 gallons by the end of this year as it moves to meet growing domestic demand and develop export markets.

Agriculture Minister, Zulfikar Mustapha announced that approximately 280 beekeepers will each receive 10 hive boxes through the Guyana Livestock Development Authority (GLDA), providing additional capacity for producers to expand their operations.

The distribution forms part of more than $241 million invested in the apiculture industry, covering equipment, protective gear, production inputs, training and technical assistance. Between 2020 and 2026, 3,320 hive boxes were distributed, alongside frames, hive stands, tools and other equipment.

The support has coincided with an increase in active hives from 1,145 to 1,983. The GLDA laboratory has also tested approximately 2,500 honey samples.



The event featured displays of honey products, a tasting competition and a fashion show

Minister Mustapha said local demand currently exceeds production, creating opportunities for beekeepers to increase supply, develop value-added products and eventually serve regional and international markets. Specialists are also working with producers across the country to strengthen their technical skills and improve colony management.

At the Honey Fest, held under the theme "Next Generation Hives: Growing Guyana through Green Apiculture", leading beekeeper and Kingdom Apiary Products and Supplies co-founder Linden Stewart welcomed the support but said more work was needed to develop the industry.

Stewart, who trains students in apiculture through a partnership with the Guyana School of Agriculture, credited training, government assistance and support from the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture with helping the sector grow.

His company is expected to represent Guyana at the 13th Beekeeping Congress in Suriname following the festival.

The event also featured displays of honey products, a tasting competition and a fashion show, while highlighting opportunities for women, young people and Indigenous communities to participate in the growing industry.

RESTORATIVE JUSTICE TO REACH 49 OF GUYANA'S 53 COURTS



A recent forum to address the restorative justice expansion targetting court backlogs and repeat offending

Restorative justice services are set to reach 49 of Guyana's 53 courts by the end of 2026, expanding access to an approach that brings victims and offenders together to address harm, encourage accountability and resolve certain disputes outside the traditional trial process.

Nine centres are currently operational, with plans to increase that number to 11 by year-end. The expansion is intended to ease pressure on the court system while providing communities with additional avenues to address conflict and repair damaged relationships.

Attorney General Nandlall said restorative justice is now established within Guyana's formal legal framework through the Restorative Justice Act 2022. He highlighted the importance of magistrates in referring suitable cases and building public confidence in the process.

"Restorative justice presents a unique opportunity of bringing the offender and the victim together and to repair that human relationship that would have broken," AG Nandlall said.

He also identified opportunities to extend the approach into schools, religious institutions and social organisations, allowing conflicts and their underlying causes to be addressed before they escalate.

Chancellor of the Judiciary (ag), Justice Roxane George-Wiltshire, said not every matter requires a full trial, encouraging magistrates to make greater use of mediation, negotiation and constructive engagement. She noted that restorative justice can promote victim satisfaction, accountability and reduced reoffending.

Director of the Restorative Justice Centre, William Orrin Boston reported an increase in referrals since the magistracy began using the programme in March 2025. By December that year, 73 cases had been referred, with an 80 per cent resolution rate and no recorded recidivism. In 2026, referrals increased to 204, with the resolution rate rising to 85 per cent; one case of recidivism was recorded.

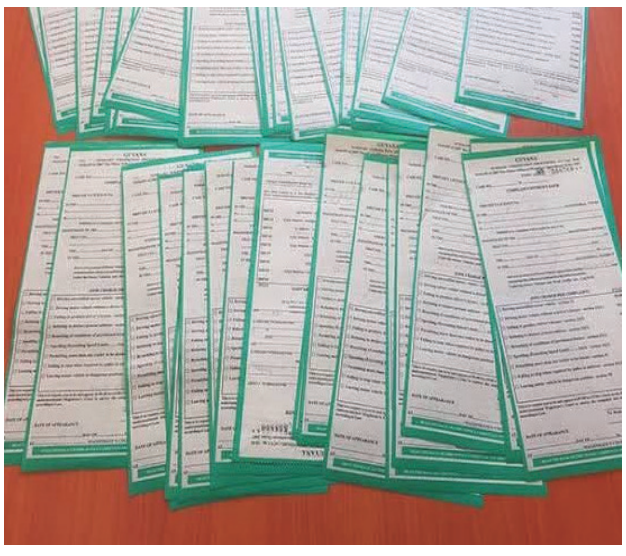
The programme is also aligning its services with the Probation Department to make use of existing facilities and countrywide institutional networks. Plans include a national referral directory and a digital Restorative Impact Hub to track outcomes, victim experiences, compliance with agreements and repeat offending.

With an estimated 5,000 cases of the type suitable for restorative justice outstanding as of 2023, the expansion is expected to provide another avenue for resolving disputes while allowing courts to focus on matters requiring formal adjudication.



A recent forum to address the restorative justice expansion targetting court backlogs and repeat offending

UNPAID TRAFFIC TICKETS COULD BLOCK LICENCE AND VEHICLE DOCUMENT RENEWALS



Traffic Tickets

Motorists with outstanding traffic tickets could be prevented from renewing their drivers' licences and essential vehicle documents as the Government moves to enforce penalties for unpaid fines.

Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs, Mohabir Anil Nandlall, SC, announced that the Guyana Revenue Authority (GRA) will deny renewals of road licences and certificates of fitness for vehicles with unpaid tickets. Individuals named on outstanding tickets will also be unable to renew their drivers' licences.

The enforcement measure comes as more than 39,000 traffic tickets remain unpaid. Citing figures provided by Traffic Chief, Mahendra Singh during his 'Issues in the News' programme, Nandlall said the Guyana Police Force issued 88,332 tickets, but only 49,326, approximately 56 per cent, have been paid.

"Unpaid tickets will not go without consequences," the Attorney General said.

He argued that motorists cannot expect police officers to issue tickets in place of detaining them or their vehicles, only for those tickets to be ignored.

AG Nandlall also renewed his call for Commissioner of Police, Clifton Hicken and the Traffic Chief to instruct officers against detaining motorists or vehicles for offences that can be addressed through tickets.

He said he had discussed with the Traffic Chief the possibility of expanding the range of offences for which tickets may be issued, reducing the need for detentions.

The Attorney General warned that officers who unlawfully detain individuals or vehicles could face both criminal and civil consequences, including prosecution and lawsuits.

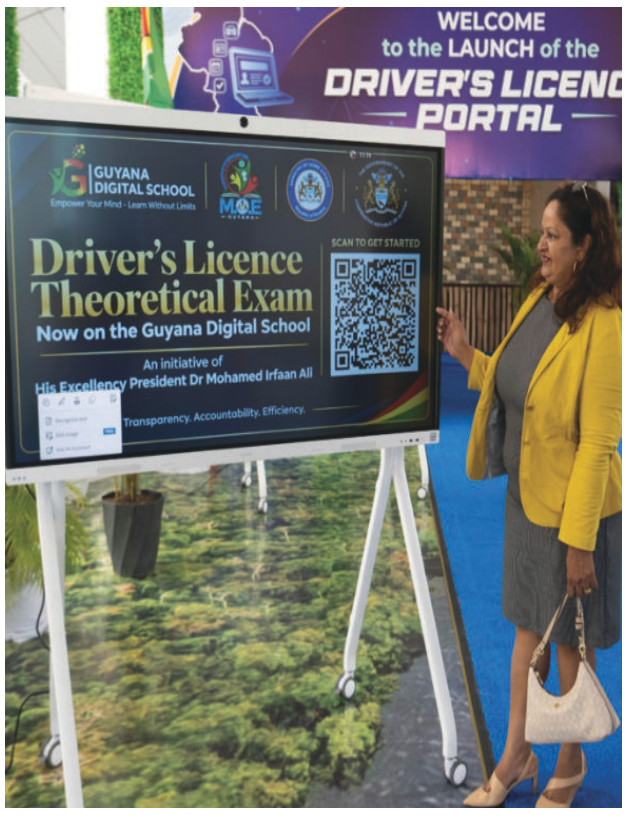
NEW ONLINE LICENSING SYSTEM PUTS FAIRNESS AND ROAD SAFETY IN FOCUS

Guyana is bringing greater transparency to its driver licensing system through a new digital examination platform that uses artificial intelligence (AI) to assess prospective drivers, reducing opportunities for favouritism and strengthening accountability.

The Driver's Licence Portal, launched on the Guyana Digital School platform, modernises the theoretical examination process, allowing applicants to complete their tests online while ensuring results are generated objectively.

The initiative, introduced during National Road Safety Month 2026, is a collaboration involving the Ministries of Education, Home Affairs and Public Service, Government Efficiency and Implementation, the Guyana Police Force and the Guyana Revenue Authority.

Minister of Public Service, Government Efficiency and Implementation Zulfikar Ally said the platform represents an important step in modernising public service delivery and urged young people to reject the practice of purchasing licences rather than earning them through legitimate assessments.



"Your score will be generated based on the correct answers that you're given, and AI will judge that for you, and it doesn't discriminate," Minister Ally explained.

Minister of Home Affairs Oneidge Walrond emphasised that the system is designed to ensure applicants are assessed fairly, regardless of personal connections or influence.

"A driver's license must represent competence, and not simply a completion of a process," she said.

Beyond digitising examinations, the programme will introduce driver education into the school curriculum, with students expected to begin benefiting from 2027, Education Minister Sonia Parag announced.

While theoretical tests will move online, practical driving assessments will remain mandatory.

The initiative forms part of the government's wider digital transformation agenda, linking more accessible public services with stronger licensing standards and efforts to reduce road accidents.

TOURISM EXPANSION OPENS NEW MARKETS FOR FARMERS, FISHERFOLK AND COMMUNITIES



Tourism campaign urges all Guyanese to share in industry's growth

Guyana is targeting more than 500,000 visitors by the end of 2026, as rising arrivals and expanding hotel capacity create new opportunities for farmers, fisherfolk, manufacturers and community-based tourism operators.

Tourism Minister, Susan Rodrigues announced the target during the launch of Tourism Awareness Month 2026 at the Aiden By Best Western Hotel in Georgetown, under the theme "Tourism is Everybody's Business".

Visitor arrivals reached 360,623 by September, a 10 per cent increase over the same period in 2025. The country added 738 hotel rooms last year, with more than 1,000 additional rooms projected by the end of 2026, taking national capacity beyond 5,600.

Minister Rodrigues said the sector's growth must benefit communities beyond hotels and tour operators. Increased demand from accommodation providers and restaurants can create wider markets for local agricultural produce, fish, manufactured goods, Indigenous products, crafts and cultural experiences.

This year's observance highlights Georgetown's growing potential as a destination for business travel, conferences and cultural experiences. The minister also stressed that clean public spaces, reliable transportation and the hospitality of residents all contribute to visitors' experiences.

Meanwhile, the Hospitality and Tourism Training Institute is expected to begin operations in 2027. Digital initiatives are also being developed to improve tourism licensing and connect visitors with local experiences through a national booking platform.

Director of the Guyana Tourism Authority, Kamrul Baksh said November's activities will include discounted domestic travel packages, digital promotions, a tourism village at GuyExpo from November 12 to 15, a familiarisation trip to Essequibo and promotional engagements in London and Brussels.

GUYEXPO 2026 TO CONNECT LOCAL SUPPLIERS WITH TOURISM INDUSTRY BUYERS



Prep ongoing at the exhibition site

Guyana's small businesses will have an opportunity to connect directly with hoteliers, restaurants and tourism operators at a business networking session planned for GuyExpo 2026, as organisers seek to strengthen local supply links within the growing hospitality sector.

The BizLink session, organised by the Ministry of Tourism, Industry and Commerce in collaboration with the Guyana Office for Investment, will take place on Friday, November 13, from 9 am to 2 pm at the National Exhibition Centre, Sophia.

The session will bring together manufacturers, processors and other local suppliers with potential buyers, including hotels and tourism businesses seeking goods and services.

Tourism Minister, Susan Rodrigues said the initiative is intended to create more opportunities for small businesses to become suppliers to the country's hospitality industry.

"I have expressed publicly that I would like to see more small businesses supplying our local restaurants and our big hotels and all of the accommodation providers here in Guyana and within the tourism sector," she said.



Prep ongoing at the exhibition site

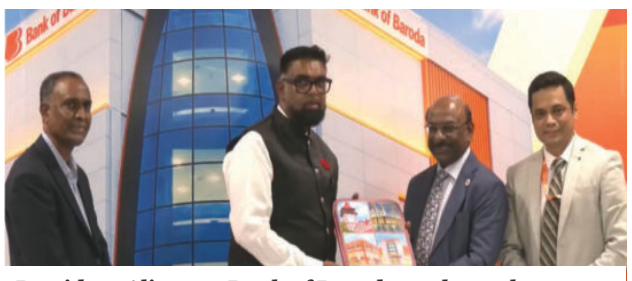
The networking event forms part of the four-day GuyExpo 2026, which runs from November 12 to 15 under the theme, "Creating Tomorrow's Opportunities through Today's Investments".

Minister Rodrigues said most of the exhibition's 334 booths had already been allocated. This year's event will feature 13 new sponsors, alongside returning companies, and showcase new products, international exhibitors and business offerings across several sectors.

Electric vehicles and other technology products are among the innovations expected to be displayed, while an international pavilion will accommodate overseas companies.

The tourism village will also return with local cuisine, live cooking, cultural performances and displays from tourism and hospitality businesses.

President Ali is expected to address the opening ceremony at 5 pm on November 12. Admission will be free that afternoon.



President Ali urges Bank of Baroda to channel more global capital into Guyanese businesse

NEW BARODA HEADQUARTERS MARKS EXPANDED BANKING AMBITIONS IN GUYANA

President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali is challenging the Bank of Baroda to direct a greater share of its international capital into Guyana, particularly towards small businesses, as the country seeks to translate economic growth into wider commercial opportunities.

The call came as the Head of State inaugurated the bank's new headquarters at Carmichael and Quamina Streets, Georgetown, marking 60 years of operations in Guyana.

The expansion represents a significant turnaround for the institution, which was considering withdrawing from the local market when Ali assumed office in 2020. The President recalled that retaining both Bank of Baroda and Scotiabank was among his early priorities, requiring direct engagement at the highest levels of government.

"I'm much happier standing here launching this new headquarters with you than just six years ago in 2020, listening to you wanting to exit the market," he said.

With the bank now expanding its presence, Ali urged it to make small-business financing a greater priority, pointing to the thousands of entrepreneurs, farmers, manufacturers, contractors and retailers who sustain economic activity.

Through the Guyana Development Bank, the government is working with commercial banks to provide qualifying businesses with additional financing of up to $10 million.

"Small business lending can be good banking," the President stressed.

He also outlined plans to broaden investment opportunities for Guyanese, including major projects linked to national and regional energy security, which will allow both institutional investors and ordinary families to put their savings into strategic developments.

A national digital payments system is also being developed to extend financial services across the country through mobile phones.

President Ali pointed to the strength of the banking sector, noting that private-sector credit grew by approximately 19 per cent in 2025, while domestic credit increased by 15.5 per cent in the first half of 2026.

He also highlighted a recently agreed US$500 million credit facility with India, intended to support defence, healthcare and infrastructure development, particularly roads opening new areas for housing, agriculture and manufacturing.

Bank of Baroda received its Guyana operating licence in January 1966, months before Independence. Its new headquarters signals a markedly different chapter in that relationship, with the government now pressing for a greater role in financing Guyana's expanding economy.



Bank of Baroda expands operations

'MY PENSION NO LONGER GOES TO RENT' - MEN ON MISSION BENEFICIARY

For 73-year-old Angela Emmanuel, receiving a home through the Government's Men on Mission (MoM) initiative has meant no longer having to spend $30,000 of her monthly income on rent, freeing up money for medication and other basic needs.

Before moving into her new home about a year ago, Emmanuel struggled to balance rental payments with the everyday costs of living. The house, built under the initiative launched by President Ali on October 29, 2022, has given her greater financial security and something permanent to build on.

"A house is not something that you throw away. A house is something that you can build on," she said.

Her experience reflects the impact of a programme that has constructed more than 170 homes, with approximately 161 handed over to vulnerable beneficiaries, including pensioners and single parents who own their house lots.

For Basanti Persaud, the intervention replaced a home where leaking roofs left her bed soaked, flooded the downstairs area and made cooking difficult.

"When I get this house, I was so grateful and thankful," she recalled.

Another beneficiary, James Hercules, said his new home has eliminated rental expenses for his family and created room for additional livelihood opportunities. With Government support, he has also established a shade house for farming.

Beyond housing, MoM operates Youth Empowerment Programmes in Georgetown, Regions Six and Nine, providing children with meals, academic support, life skills training and sporting activities.



Angela Emmanuel

The initiative is also developing a Men Empowerment and Mentorship Programme targeting incarcerated men and their children, with the aim of strengthening family relationships and breaking cycles of offending.

As MoM marks four years, it continues to assess applications for housing assistance, prioritising vulnerable individuals and families who meet its eligibility requirements.

BREAST CANCER CARE EXPANDS BEYOND GEORGETOWN AS GUYANA LAUNCHES NATIONAL

Women across Guyana are gaining greater access to breast cancer diagnostic and treatment services, with mammography now available at four regional hospitals as the Government rolls out a national plan to strengthen care and reduce delays in treatment.

The Action Plan for Breast Cancer Management was launched by the Ministry of Health at its Brickdam office, bringing together medical specialists, policymakers, cancer advocates and other stakeholders to coordinate improvements in screening, diagnosis and treatment.

Mammography services are now available at the Suddie, Linden, New Amsterdam and Lethem regional hospitals, expanding access to diagnostic imaging beyond the Georgetown Public Hospital Corporation (GPHC).

At GPHC, a newly established pathology laboratory is also strengthening the identification of specific breast cancer types, allowing doctors to develop more targeted treatment plans.

Specialised oncology services have been expanded through an upgraded clinic at GPHC and a new oncology clinic at New Amsterdam Hospital.

Health Minister, Dr Frank Anthony said the action plan will improve coordination among radiology, pathology, surgery, oncology and primary healthcare providers, helping patients move more efficiently from initial assessment to treatment and follow-up.

It also prioritises stronger referral systems and patient navigation to guide women through the different stages of care and minimise delays.

The strategy was developed with contributions from the National Breast Cancer Steering Committee, GPHC, healthcare professionals, non-governmental organisations and cancer advocates.



Minister of Health Dr. Frank Anthony addressing the launch of the plan

The Ministry is also emphasising public education and early detection, encouraging women to seek medical attention promptly when they notice potential warning signs and make use of available screening and diagnostic services.

THREE-BEDROOM HOMES OFFERED FROM $13M IN PALMYRA DEVELOPMENT

Two hundred and ten more three-bedroom homes are being constructed at Palmyra, Region Six, expanding homeownership options for families and young professionals, with prices starting at $13 million.

The development comprises 110 young professional flat houses priced at $19.5 million each and 100 bungalow homes costing $13 million each. Both categories are being offered at construction cost, with no profit added.

Housing Minister Croal said the initiative places greater emphasis on providing completed homes rather than simply allocating house lots, allowing more applicants to move directly towards homeownership.

Applications are open to eligible beneficiaries and other interested persons already in the housing system. Applicants can contact the Region Six Housing Office for screening and referral to financial institutions for prequalification.

Minister Croal said applicants' income levels will be assessed to determine which type of home they can reasonably afford, ensuring the programme caters to different income groups.

The construction programme is also generating employment in the region, with approximately 50 contractors engaged, many of them from Region Six.



Palmyra adds 210 homes for families and young professionals

GPHC COMPLETES 100 ROBOTIC-ASSISTED SURGERIES IN FIVE MONTHS

The Georgetown Public Hospital Corporation (GPHC) has completed 100 robotic-assisted surgical procedures since launching its programme on May 26, 2026, expanding the use of advanced surgical technology across three medical specialties.

The procedures were performed by teams in General Surgery, Urology and Gynaecology, with General Surgery accounting for 47 operations, Gynaecology 34 and Urology 19.

Among the procedures were gallbladder and hernia repairs, bowel and weight-loss surgery, prostate and kidney operations, and procedures to remove ovarian cysts, the womb and fallopian tubes.

Robotic-assisted surgery allows surgeons to use specialised technology to perform operations with greater precision and control. The surgeon remains in control of the robotic system throughout the procedure.

GPHC said the milestone reflects the growing use of the technology and the capabilities of its surgical teams.

The hospital also plans to train additional surgeons in the three specialties to operate the robotic system, building local expertise and expanding the number of medical professionals able to perform these procedures.

The programme forms part of GPHC's efforts to strengthen surgical services and increase access to public healthcare modern treatment system. options within Guyana's



100 robotic surgeries mark milestone in GPHC's modernisation drive

POOR WORKMANSHIP COULD COST YOU GEORGETOWN ROAD CONTRACTS - MINISTER EDGHILL WARNS CONTRACTORS



Contractors warned against damaging roads, water pipes during city upgrades

Contractors working on Georgetown's road-shoulder improvement programme risk losing their contracts if they continue to carry out substandard work or disregard the inconvenience caused to residents, Minister of Public Works Bishop Juan Edghill has warned.

The minister issued the warning during a meeting with contractors at the Umana Yana, following reports of improper excavation, indiscriminate dumping of construction materials, damage to existing roads, broken water pipes and the removal of trees.

Minister Edghill stressed that the programme must deliver lasting improvements rather than create additional problems for communities, insisting that contractors are expected to meet engineering standards and execute their work responsibly.

"The Ministry of Public Works is not there to annoy people, we are here to improve people's lives," he said.

The programme involves replacing Georgetown's uneven, earthen road shoulders with compacted layers of sand, sifting and crusher-run aggregates, creating firmer surfaces for parking while improving roadside drainage and maintaining two-way traffic.

In several parts of the capital, raised road verges restrict rainwater from flowing into roadside drains, contributing to water accumulation and deterioration of road surfaces. Reshaping these areas to appropriate levels and slopes, while keeping drainage outlets clear, is expected to improve runoff and reduce localised ponding.

The ministry has clarified that the shoulders will remain granular, with no concrete casting, allowing water to filter through the material and replenish groundwater.

The works will also reclaim roadside spaces occupied by derelict vehicles, unauthorised structures, shops and stockpiled building materials. Residents and businesses are being urged to clear these obstructions ahead of construction.

Minister Edghill instructed contractors to engage communities before starting work, coordinate with supervising engineers and technicians, and promptly refill excavated sections to minimise disruption. He also assured residents that existing bridges would not be demolished during the current phase, with those requiring attention to be addressed separately.

The programme extends beyond Georgetown, with similar improvements planned across Regions Two, Three, Four, Five and Six. The wider initiative is intended to improve parking, roadside drainage, access and the use of public spaces, while creating scope for future road widening and tree planting at suitable locations.

The minister's warning places responsibility on contractors to ensure that the promised improvements are reflected in the quality of work delivered to residents.

GUYANA BACKS US SANCTIONS TARGETING NETWORK BEHIND FRAUDULENT USE OF NATIONAL FLAG

Guyana has welcomed US sanctions against two India-based individuals accused of operating a criminal network that fraudulently registered vessels under the Guyanese flag, as the country intensifies efforts to protect the integrity of its national ship registry.

The Maritime Administration Department (MARAD) said the United States Department of the Treasury's action against Suniel Kumar Sharma and his wife, Jaspreet Preeti Shahid, supports international efforts to combat maritime fraud and the unauthorised use of national flags.

According to MARAD, the individuals managed a network that falsely represented vessels as being registered in Guyana through an entity identified as the International Maritime Safety Agency of Guyana (IMSAG).

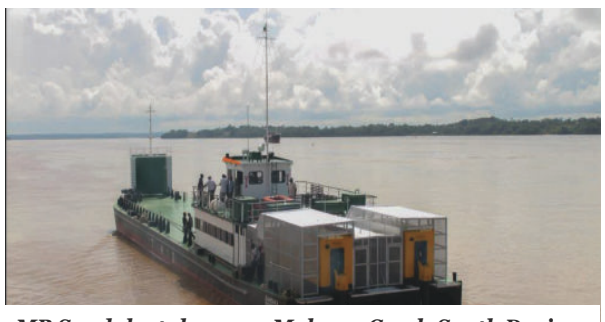
Such schemes undermine the credibility of national shipping registries, compromise maritime security and can facilitate the circumvention of international sanctions.

Guyana has been raising the issue at international and regional maritime forums, calling for stronger cooperation and enforcement measures against fraudulent vessel registration.

In July 2026, Public Utilities and Aviation Minister Deodat Indar presented a case study, *Fraudulent Registration: Guyana's Perspective*, at the Global Maritime Security and Sanctions Enforcement Symposium in Antigua and Barbuda. The matter was also highlighted at the Caribbean Shipping Association's 56th Annual General Meeting, hosted in Guyana.

MARAD and the ministry reaffirmed their commitment to working with international partners, maritime administrations and enforcement agencies to prevent the country's flag from being exploited for criminal activity or sanctions evasion.

MB SANDAKA TO MAINTAIN GUYANA-SURINAME FERRY LINK DURING CANAWAIMA REPAIRS



MB Sandaka takes over Moleson Creek-South Drain route on November 7

Cross-border travel and trade between Guyana and Suriname will continue uninterrupted after the Government announced the deployment of the MB Sandaka to maintain passenger and cargo movement while the MV Canawaima undergoes dry-docking.

The vessel will begin operations on Saturday, November 7, 2026, serving the route between Moleson Creek, Guyana, and South Drain, Suriname.

The MV Canawaima is scheduled to enter dry dock on the same day, prompting the temporary arrangement to prevent disruption to an essential transport link connecting the neighbouring countries.

The decision follows discussions between ministers responsible for the relevant portfolios in both countries, alongside collaborative efforts by their respective maritime authorities to secure continuity of the service.

The temporary deployment is intended to maintain the movement of people and goods across the Corentyne River while the Canawaima is out of service.

The route is an important connection for cross-border travel, commercial activity and the movement of goods between Guyana and Suriname.

RECORD 47,726 VISITORS ARRIVE IN GUYANA DURING OCTOBER

Guyana recorded a historic 47,726 visitor arrivals in October 2026, a 12.8 per cent increase over the same month last year, as leisure tourism, business travel and international conferences drive demand for the destination.

The Guyana Tourism Authority (GTA) reported that leisure travellers accounted for 59 per cent of October's arrivals, reinforcing the country's growing appeal for visitors seeking its natural attractions, cultural experiences and hospitality.

Business travel contributed another 17 per cent, while 24 per cent visited for other purposes.

The United States remained Guyana's largest source market, accounting for 37.7 per cent of arrivals, followed by the Caribbean at 33.9 per cent. Latin America contributed 9.3 per cent, Canada 7.1 per cent and Europe 5.5 per cent.

The month's performance coincided with several major international and regional events hosted locally, including SOTIC, the Bethune Round Table, the Caribbean Shipping Association's 56th Annual General Meeting and the Global Biodiversity Alliance Conference and Financing Forum.

The influx supported activity across hotels, transportation, restaurants and other tourism-related businesses.

Cumulative arrivals reached 408,349 between January and October, keeping Guyana on track to achieve its anticipated target of 500,000 visitors by the end of 2026.



Guyana records 408,349 arrivals in first 10 months of 2026

Mitchell leads NDC to win 14 of 15 seats in Grenada general elections

Grenada's Prime Minister Dickon Mitchell has called for an end to divisive politics and personal attacks, urging citizens to embrace unity, accountability and collective nation-building as he begins his second term in office following a landslide election victory.

Mitchell made the appeal during his swearing-in ceremony on Sunday, November 8, at the Kirani James Athletics Stadium, where he formally took the oath of office after his National Democratic Congress (NDC) secured 14 of the 15 parliamentary seats in the November 5 general election.

The ceremony was attended by several regional dignitaries, including St. Lucia's Prime Minister Philip J. Pierre and Dominica's Prime Minister Roosevelt Skerrit.

Addressing the nation, Mitchell said Grenadians had delivered a clear message through the ballot box, choosing progress and national development over political division.

"Grenada has no intention of returning to the days of negative politics, of personal attacks, of division and divisiveness," he declared.

The prime minister said his party's campaign message, "Me, You, Us. Ready for More," had resonated with voters because it emphasized the importance of working together and placing national interests above political differences.

He described the NDC's overwhelming parliamentary victory as a triumph for the people of Grenada, Carriacou and Petite Martinique, rather than a personal achievement or victory belonging solely to his political party.

Mitchell also reflected on the tone of the election campaign, acknowledging that he had sometimes been slow to respond to personal attacks directed at him.

He explained that political leaders have a responsibility to demonstrate maturity and restraint, particularly as their conduct influences the attitudes and behavior of younger generations.

The prime minister urged political representatives to focus their discussions on policies, ideas and solutions to national challenges rather than engaging in character attacks against their opponents.

He said Grenada's political future should be built on mutual respect, constructive dialogue and a shared commitment to improving the lives of citizens.

Mitchell also emphasized that national unity must be accompanied by honesty, integrity and accountability among those entrusted with public office.

He encouraged Grenadians to hold his administration accountable for its promises and performance, stressing that public officials must remain answerable to the people they serve.

"As the Prime Minister of Grenada, I pledge to always put the interests of the people of Grenada, Carriacou and Petite Martinique first," he affirmed.

The prime minister further stressed that the responsibility for developing the country extends beyond elected officials and government institutions.

He called on citizens at home and throughout the diaspora to contribute their skills, resources and ideas to the country's continued progress.

"There is more than enough work for all of us to do. We should put our shoulders to the wheel to build these islands of Grenada, Carriacou and Petite Martinique," Mitchell said.

He described national development as a continuous process that requires sustained effort across generations, noting that each administration has a responsibility to build on previous achievements while preparing the country for future challenges.

"Our development is a continuous race. We are running our leg of the relay to pass the baton to those coming after us," he said.



Grenada Prime Minister Dickon Mitchell



US$35M FOUR-LANE MACKENZIE-WISMAR BRIDGE OPENS ON NOVEMBER 15



New Linden bridge ends decades of one-way traffic restrictions

Linden's decades-old single-lane bridge bottleneck is set to become a thing of the past when the new US$35 million Mackenzie-Wismar Bridge is officially commissioned on November 15, replacing a crossing that has restricted traffic movement since 1967.

The four-lane bridge, which has been substantially completed and formally handed over to the Ministry of Public Works, will be commissioned by President, Dr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali at 4:00 p.m. at the bridge site.

The new 224-metre concrete structure spans the Demerara River and will allow vehicles to travel simultaneously in both directions, eliminating the need for traffic to wait while vehicles cross the former one-lane bridge.

It also features two barrier-separated pedestrian walkways, modern street lighting and navigational clearances designed to maintain river traffic. The crossing will be toll-free for motorists and pedestrians.

The bridge is supported by upgraded eastern and western approach roads, including four-lane connections, roundabouts, drainage infrastructure and lighting. These links connect the crossing to the Linden-Soesdyke Highway, Linden-Mabura Road and the wider national road network.

Beyond easing daily travel between Mackenzie and Wismar, the project is expected to strengthen a major transport corridor serving the hinterland through the Linden-Lethem routes.

The improved connectivity is particularly significant for the movement of goods and services supporting mining, agriculture, tourism and other commercial activities, while providing residents with a more efficient crossing.

The new structure replaces infrastructure that served Linden for nearly six decades, marking a major change in how residents, commuters and businesses move across the river.

NEW HIGHWAY LINK TRANSFORMS ACCESS FOR CUMMINGS LODGE HOMEOWNERS

Residents of the expanding Cummings Lodge Housing Scheme will soon have two reliable access routes, as a 1,800-metre road project creates a direct connection to the Aubrey Barker Four-lane Highway, improving daily travel and linking the community to major road networks.

The reinforced concrete roadworks are 75 per cent complete, following commitments made during a community outreach in July. The connection will give homeowners and families constructing properties an alternative to accessing the scheme through Red Road in 'E' Field, Sophia.

The Aubrey Barker Highway provides links to the Ogle-Eccles, Mandela-Eccles and Heroes highways, improving access to Georgetown, the East Coast and East Bank of Demerara, as well as Region Three through the Bharrat Jagdeo Demerara River Bridge.

During a recent inspection, Housing



1.8km road project opens new connections for the growing housing community

Minister, Collin Croal said the eastern access route was already partially open, with all types of vehicles expected to soon use it. The western section is expected to be completed shortly.

For residents, the improvement addresses a practical challenge associated with settling in a developing housing community.

First-time homeowner, Chandra Singh welcomed the new connection, saying it would make access easier as families continue building and occupying their properties.

Resident, Tara Balram also highlighted the convenience of the new route, particularly for travelling to work.

The northern section of the scheme already has more than 450 completed two- and three-bedroom flat and elevated turnkey homes, alongside concrete roads, a police outpost and public open spaces.

In the southern section, where house lots have been allocated, infrastructure development is progressing, with electrical networks and pipelines installed as homeowners begin construction.

The Government said further infrastructure improvements will accompany increasing occupancy, as Cummings Lodge continues to develop into a growing residential community.

US$75.9M GOOD SUCCESS-TIMEHRI ROAD PROJECT REACHES MOVING APACE

The US$75.887 million expansion of the Good Success to Timehri road has reached about 64 per cent completion, advancing a 23.7-kilometre upgrade expected to improve connectivity along the East Bank corridor and link the route to the Soesdyke-Linden Highway.

The 36-month project, being executed by China Road and Bridge Corporation, includes road reconstruction, bridge and culvert upgrades, improved drainage and new road safety features. A roundabout will connect the upgraded roadway to the Soesdyke-Linden Highway.

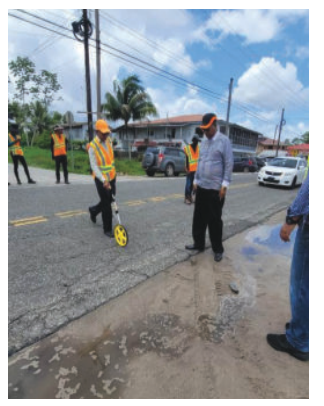
Works are progressing across three sections. The Good Success-to-Supply section is more than 67 per cent complete, while Supply-to-Soesdyke has reached over 80 per cent and Soesdyke-to-Timehri stands at about 80 per cent.

Construction activities include utility relocation, concrete drain installation, culvert reconstruction, bridge works and the provision of permanent access points for properties. Streetlights are also being installed between Garden of Eden and Supply.

Full-depth road reconstruction is being carried out overnight between 8:30 p.m. and 6:00 a.m., with the roadway being reopened each morning. Asphalt paving in New Hope, Craig and Good Success is expected to resume after reconstruction in Good Success is completed.

When finished, the upgraded two-lane road will feature sidewalks and cycle lanes, LED streetlights, traffic signs and thermoplastic road markings. These improvements are intended to provide safer conditions for motorists, pedestrians and cyclists.

The Ministry of Public Works said its traffic management arrangements will keep at least one lane open during construction, with two lanes maintained wherever possible to limit disruption to road users.



Construction ongoing on the road route

$2.2B TRUCKING FACILITIES TO REMOVE HEAVY-DUTY VEHICLES FROM REGION SIX COMMUNITIES

Two dedicated trucking facilities costing approximately $2.2 billion are being developed in Region Six to move heavy-duty vehicles away from residential streets, improve road safety and address environmental concerns linked to vehicle servicing.

The facilities are under construction at Smithson's Place, commonly known as Palmyra, and Number 75 Village along the Corentyne Coast. The initiative follows a policy directive from President Ali after residents raised concerns about trucks occupying road shoulders and narrow streets, as well as improper disposal of used oil and other waste.

The 30-acre Palmyra facility is approximately 65 per cent complete, while the 10.6-acre Number 75 site is nearing completion, with three of its four lots practically finished.

The facilities will provide designated spaces for truck owners to park, service and repair their vehicles, reducing pressure on community infrastructure.

Both sites will have fencing, lighting, security and management teams. Operators will pay a minimal fee to help cover maintenance and operating costs.



New truck parks aim to ease pressure on residential roads

GUYANESE DIASPORA DIGEST
KEEPING THE DIASPORA INFORMED

Guyanese DIASPORA DIGEST

KEEPING THE DIASPORA INFORMED EDITION 131

PRESIDENT ALI JOINS GUYANESE IN CELEBRATING THE FESTIVAL OF LIGHTS



























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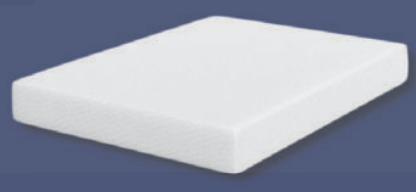
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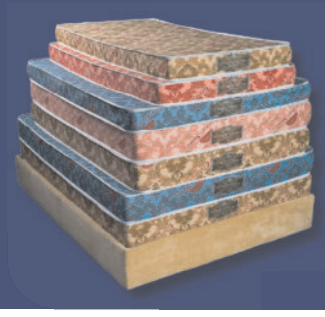
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TOURISM AWARENESS MONTH 2026
NOVEMBER 1 - 30

EVENT	DATE	LOCATION
The Launch of Tourism Awareness Month	Oct 31	Aiden Hotel, Georgetown
Tourism Is Everybody's Business Campaign	Nov 1 - 30	Online/Physical
Communications/PR-Advertising & Marketing Support, Banners, Videos, Ads	Nov 1 - 30	Online/Physical
TOURVEMBER	Nov 1 - 30	Discounted curated tour packages across Destination Guyana
Clean Up Exercise	Nov 1	Kara Kara Blue Lake
Guyana for $10,000	Nov 1 - 20	Online
World Travel Market	Nov 3 - 5	Excel, London
Launch of GuyWay	Nov 6	Four Points by Sheraton
Radio Broadcast & Trivia	Nov 6, 13, 20 & 27	Georgetown & Linden
Bauxite to Blue Adventure Family Quest	Nov 8	Linden, Region 10
Global Tourism Forum	Nov 9	Brussels, Belgium
Business Proposal Writing Training	Nov 11	Region 2, Guyana
Tourism Village at GuyExpo	Nov 12 - 15	National Exhibition Centre, Sophia
School Outreach	Nov 16 - 27	Region 10

EVENT	DATE	LOCATION
Tourism Product Launch	Nov 18	Georgetown
Birding Exploration	Nov 18 & 19	Linden, Region 10
Launch of Rif's Hotel	Nov 20	Anna Regina, Region 2
Canvas & Cassava: A Cultural Experience.	Nov 20	Lake Capoey, Region 2
Media Familiarization Tour	Nov 20 - 22	Region 2
Taxi Driver Ambassador Training Programme	Nov 23	Georgetown, Guyana
Launch of WildKai	Nov 25	Bartica, Region 7
South Rupununi Safari	Nov 25 - 30	South Rupununi
Snap and Share Video Edition Awards Ceremony	Nov 26	ACCC
Rupununi Expo	Nov 28 - 29	Lethem, Region 9
Bauxite to Blue Biz Mixer	Nov 28	Linden, Region 10
Christmas Tree Light Up	Nov 29	Rahaman's Park, Region 4
Clean Up Exercise	Nov 29	Demerara Riverfront, Linden, Region 10
Small Business Bureau Awards Ceremony	Nov 30	Four Points by Sheraton
Diaspora Symposium	Nov 30	Hybrid
Launch of Christmas Village, Main Street	Dec 4	Main Street, Georgetown
Tourism Awards and Hall of Fame	Dec 12	Lethem, Region 9



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