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Carney renews Guyana partnership

Canadian Prime Minister, Mark Carney, participated in the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in St. John's, Antigua and Barbuda this past week

Prime Minister Carney, met with the President of Guyana, Dr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali, on the margins of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in St. John's, Antigua and Barbuda.

The leaders underscored the strong and growing Canada-Guyana partnership, with trade reaching nearly $360 million last year. They discussed opportunities to deepen cooperation in energy, mining, infrastructure, and agriculture, and welcomed progress on the proposed framework for enhanced trade, investment, and economic cooperation.

The Prime Minister and the President also explored opportunities for a potential Canada-Guyana foreign investment promotion and protection agreement (FIPA), which would provide greater predictability for Canadian and Guyanese investors.

The leaders exchanged views on regional priorities, reaffirming their commitment to build greater resilience across the Caribbean.

Prime Minister Carney and President Ali agreed to remain in close contact.

At CHOGM, the Prime Minister hosted a meeting with Caribbean leaders to build momentum for the renewed Canada-CARICOM Strategic Partnership. He underscored the Caribbean's importance as Canada's regional neighbour and focused on the opportunities for our nations to strengthen collective resilience in the hemisphere.



Trump pledges deals after Blue Wave

Democrats have torn up Donald Trump's political map on a night that will send shockwaves through American politics for years to come.

With a string of major Senate victories in states that have been reliably Republican for decades - and in Kansas's case, nearly a century - a blue tidal wave crashed across the nation, sweeping Republicans out of power.

Halfway through President Donald Trump's second term, the Democrats now have decisive control of the House of Representatives and have wrested a majority back in the Senate.

They will be able to frustrate Trump's agenda, and launch investigations into his administration. A historic third impeachment attempt could also be on the cards.

Few imagined such an outcome was possible in the months after Trump returned to the White House with unified Republican control of Congress in January 2025.

As the public mood turned against him and his party, Democrats had hopes of retaking the House.

But they contemplated a Senate map that appeared unfriendly, populated by states Trump had won comfortably just two years ago.

Instead, Democrats rewrote the political equations with victories in Texas, Maine, Kansas, Ohio, Iowa and North and South Carolina.

Trump pledged to strike deals with congressional Democrats, adding that he didn't want to have to spend his final two years in office rejecting their legislation.

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Six Caribbean nationals charged in North Carolina illegal voting cases

Six Caribbean nationals, including citizens of Jamaica, Barbados, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Bermuda and St. Kitts and Nevis, are among 18 non-U.S. citizens indicted or charged in North Carolina for allegedly voting illegally in the 2024 U.S. elections.

The U.S. Department of Justice announced the charges on Oct. 29, bringing the total number of people charged in North Carolina this year with illegally registering to vote or voting to 30.

The six Caribbean nationals are lawful permanent residents of the United States, according to the Justice Department.

Among them is Karl Anthony Wilkins, 62, a Jamaican native who now resides in Fulton County, Georgia. He is charged with falsely claiming U.S. citizenship to register to vote and voting as a noncitizen. Prosecutors allege that Wilkins registered in 2018 and voted in the 2020, 2022 and 2024 general elections, as well as the 2020 primary election, in Wake County, North Carolina.

Gregory Eugene Wade, 64, a native of Bermuda residing in Wake County, North Carolina, faces the same charges. He allegedly registered to vote in 2000 and participated in 12 general elections between 2000 and 2024, as well as two primary elections in 2002 and 2020.

In the Middle District of North Carolina, Phillip Alexander Carter, a Barbados native living in Winston-Salem, and Juan Florencio Ramos, a Cuban citizen residing in Salisbury, were each indicted on charges of knowingly making false claims of U.S. citizenship to vote and voting as noncitizens.



In the Western District, Luis Alberto DeJesus, 50, a Dominican national residing in Conover, is charged with voting in a federal election as a noncitizen and falsely claiming U.S. citizenship on an early voting application. Prosecutors allege that he voted on Oct. 30, 2024, after claiming to be a U.S. citizen.

Edread Ray Stanley, 63, a national of St. Kitts and Nevis residing in Charlotte, was charged with voting as a noncitizen in the Nov. 5, 2024, federal election. Unlike the other five Caribbean nationals, he faces no separate charge of falsely claiming U.S. citizenship.

The cases form part of a broader Justice Department crackdown on alleged illegal voting by noncitizens in North Carolina. Of the 18 new cases announced Oct. 29, nine were filed in the Eastern District, five in the Middle District and four in the Western District.

The charges carry potential prison sentences and financial penalties. Knowingly making a false claim of U.S. citizenship to vote carries a maximum penalty of five years in prison and a US$250,000 fine, while voting by a noncitizen carries a maximum penalty of one year in prison and a US$100,000 fine.

The FBI and Homeland Security Investigations are investigating the cases. The Justice Department emphasized that the charges are allegations, and the defendants are presumed innocent unless proven guilty in court.

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New Tobago Airport opens, boost for tourism

Tobago's new East Terminal at ANR Robinson International Airport is now in operation, marking a major step in the island's drive to grow tourism and improve international access.

The two-storey, 25,500-square-metre facility began flight operations on Wednesday 14 October 2026, a day after its official opening. National and Tobago officials at the ceremony included Prime Minister Kamla Persad-Bissessar, Tobago Chief Secretary Farley Augustine, government ministers, members of the Tobago House of Assembly Executive Council, former prime minister Dr Keith Rowley, Opposition Leader Pennelope Beckles and PNM Tobago leader Shamfa Cudjoe-Lewis.

The terminal can accommodate up to three million passengers a year and includes seven departure gates, three air bridges, larger check-in halls and self-service kiosks. Passenger facilities include a children's playroom, prayer room, breastfeeding room, pet-relief space and an artisanal marketplace. The Tobago House of Assembly invested $10 million in the interior design.

Access to the airport has also been upgraded. A further 196 parking spaces take the total to 436, while taxi and car-hire areas have been expanded. Motorists must now use the new roundabout on Store Bay Local Road to reach the terminal. The building also features energy-efficient lighting, solar panels and water-conservation systems.



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Pandit Joe Jaglall: A Lifetime of Service, Humility and Giving Back to the Community

For some, recognition comes through professional accomplishments, business success or personal achievements. For Pandit Virjanand Joe Jaglall, however, the greatest measure of success has always been the opportunity to make a difference in the lives of others.

That philosophy was at the heart of a memorable evening on September 26, 2026, when Toronto Arya Samaj honoured Jaglall with its prestigious 2026 Annual Award during a special awards celebration at the Vedic Cultural Centre in Markham.

The sold-out gathering brought together religious leaders, community representatives, dignitaries, business professionals, family members and friends to celebrate a man whose contributions have extended across generations and international borders.

It was more than an awards presentation. It was a celebration of a lifetime dedicated to service, compassion, cultural preservation and the betterment of society.

Jaglall's journey began in Number 66 Village on the Corentyne, Berbice, Guyana, where he was raised by his parents, Jeet and Savi.

Growing up in a hardworking agricultural family, he was influenced by the values of discipline, humility, religious devotion and helping others. His late uncle, Pandit Budhram Mahadeo, also played an important role in shaping his religious and community outlook.

When Jaglall migrated to Canada in 1982, he brought those values with him.

Like many immigrants, his early years involved hard work and determination. He began his Canadian working life in a factory, gradually building his professional career while becoming increasingly involved in community and religious activities.

Within the first week of arriving in Canada, he connected with the late Sash Sawh, Guyana's former Minister of Agriculture, and became involved with the Association of Concerned Guyanese.

His association with Toronto Arya Samaj also became a defining part of his life in Canada.

In 1983, at just 19 years old, he performed his first wedding ceremony in Canada, marking the beginning of a longstanding commitment to religious service.

Over the years, Jaglall has become involved with numerous religious, cultural and humanitarian organisations in Canada and Guyana.

His contributions have reached institutions including Toronto Arya Samaj, Peel Arya Samaj Mandir and Cultural Centre, Shiva Mandir in Scarborough, Shiv Sewa Sangh Mandir, Seva4Life Canada, the Humanitarian Mission of Port Mourant, Vedanta Academy in Bush Lot, Berbice, and Prabhu Sharan Orphanage in Guyana.

He has also supported youth development initiatives, cultural programmes, music and dance organisations, religious training camps and the Guyana Festival in Toronto.

One particularly notable humanitarian initiative took place in January 2019, when Jaglall spearheaded a fundraising effort to assist Jessica Motilall, a survivor of domestic abuse and violence, helping her rebuild her life.

For Jaglall, these initiatives are not about publicity or accolades. They are about recognising that people sometimes need a helping hand and that those in a position to assist should be willing to do so.

He has often described himself as a humble servant of the community, explaining that his greatest blessing is having the opportunity to help others, regardless of their background or differences.

Beyond his charitable work, Jaglall has played an important role in preserving Guyanese and Indo-Caribbean cultural traditions within the Canadian diaspora.

He was instrumental in establishing the first Arya Samaj Internet Radio programme, creating another platform through which religious teachings, cultural awareness and community discussions could reach a wider audience.

He has also worked alongside fellow community leaders to encourage young performers and musicians, helping provide opportunities for emerging talent to share the stage with established artists.

His involvement with cultural organisations and community events reflects his belief that the next generation must remain connected to its heritage while being encouraged to pursue new opportunities.

While community service has remained central to his life, Jaglall has also established himself professionally in the real estate industry.

Today, he is known as a realtor in the Greater Toronto Area and serves as Vice-President of Mahaica Meadows, one of Guyana's major privately owned real estate companies, which is developing a significant residential community along the East Coast of Demerara.

His involvement with Mahaica Meadows represents another important connection to his homeland and its development.

Despite professional responsibilities, he has continued to devote considerable time and energy to charitable and community initiatives on both sides of the border.

The September 26 celebration attracted a distinguished gathering, including Attorney-at-law Roger Sawh, who introduced Jaglall, delivered a heartfelt tribute highlighting his uncle's upbringing, migration journey, religious foundation and lifelong commitment to humanitarian service.

Guyana's President, Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali, also sent a special video message recognising Jaglall's contributions and describing him as a remarkable son of Guyana whose dedication to community and country has endured over the years.

Other congratulatory messages came from former Consul General Sattie Sawh, Dr Terry Gajraj, international lawyer Selwyn Pieters, Dr Yog Mahadeo, Natural Resources Minister Vickram Bharrat and several other prominent personalities.

The evening also featured cultural performances and musical entertainment, including a performance by Toronto musician Devin Ramoutar.

Congratulations to Pandit Virjanand Joe Jaglall on this well-deserved recognition.

King Charles arrives in Guyana as Bahamas visit declared 'a success'

King Charles III has arrived in Guyana for the second leg of his Caribbean tour, following a visit to the Bahamas that Buckingham Palace described as a "sensitive balancing act" and a "diplomatic success".

The main themes of the two-day state visit to Guyana will be the environment and sustainability - alongside the growing commercial ties between the UK and Guyana.

The King is due to have an audience with President Irfaan Ali and will attend a state reception celebrating the 60 years of bilateral relations betweeen the two nations.

After visiting Guyana, the King will travel to Antigua and Barbuda, where he will open a major Commonwealth leaders summit in his role as the head of the "family of nations".

Guyana - formerly British Guiana - is the world's fastest growing economy due to the discovery of oil reserves there in 2015.

More than four fifths of Guyana is covered by rainforest and it has one of the lowest rates of deforestation in the world.

Cultural exchanges will also feature with a group of bagpipers from the National Piping Centre in Scotland joining the royal tour.

As the King left the Bahamas on Thursday to fly to Guyana, his spokesman said the islands he was departing had "a special place in the King's heart".

"The great wall of cheers he received when greeting crowds will echo long in his memory - and be a source of tremendous pride and encouragement as the tour continues to Guyana, and Antigua and Barbuda."

The two-day trip to the Bahamas saw the King meet young boxers, environmentalists and politicians.

He also joined the dancing in a Junkanoo parade to celebrate island life.

In his only public speech of the tour so far, delivered during his first engagement in the Bahamas, the King referenced the UK's involvement in the slave trade acknowledging the "suffering of the past."



The King observed a guard of honour from the Guyana Defence Force as he arrived in Guyana

His spokesman said: "The King had hoped the visit proved an opportunity to celebrate and reaffirm the modern partnership between the Bahamas and the UK - and to address the shared challenges of the future and also to acknowledge the great injustices of the past in a respectful way."

The tour comes amidst renewed calls from Caribbean nations for Britain to apologise for its role in the slave trade and to offer reparations - compensation from those countries that profited from the trade in enslaved men and women.

A small number of protesters were at some of the King's engagements in the Bahamas, with campaigners holding signs saying "pay us what you owe us" but their presence did not disrupt events.

The Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting (CHOGM) being held in Antigua and Barbuda from 1 November will discuss the legacy of slavery. The King will deliver a speech as Head of the Commonwealth.

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EDITORIAL & OPINIONS

The blue wave and the trade war

While many in Canada are probably breathing a sigh of relief that the USA seems to have regained some of its senses in Tuesday's midterm elections, putting the Democrats in charge of both the Congress and the Senate, we caution you not to celebrate just yet.

Donald Trump is still the US President. And he still has 2 years of his term to go.

Instead of seeing the defeat of his Republican party in the midterms as a sign that the electorate has rejected his policies, including his trade war with Canada, Trump emerged defiant, saying they only lost because he was not on the ballot, and posting on social media a bold red hat with one word on it: Veto.

In other words, nothing has changed for him.

He plans to use the power of the Presidential veto to try to force his way past the combined Houses, defying any legislation they might bring to stop him, or at least reign him in.

The Presidential veto is not an absolute power, however. Trump can reject any legislation brought before him, but under the Constitution he has to return the legislation to Congress with a reason why he chose to reject it.

The Congress has the power, however, to pass the legislation anyway, with a two thirds majority.

Since the new Congress does not have such a big majority, the Democrats will have to convince some of the Republican members to vote with them.

That might be a hard battle to fight. But given the result of the midterms, some of the Trump magic might have disappeared. He may not have the hold he seemed to have over them for the last two years, and some Republicans might be inclined to vote with their Democrat colleagues, especially since the election was clearly a rejection of the policies of the past two years. They now know they do not need his endorsement to win their own seats. In fact, just the opposite -- an endorsement from him might cost them re-election.

If they value their membership in the House, they might realise that they are there to serve the needs of the people, and not the president, and act accordingly.

But that's a lot of what-ifs. There's no guarantee that the tariffs on Canada, for example, might be removed because the Democrats have a majority.

So we're not out of any hot water yet.

The results of the election, though, need to also give us pause to send a message home.

This US election was fought and won on issues of affordability. The average American simply cannot afford groceries and gas, much less rent and mortgages.

A similar story exists here in Canada, where more and more people are turning to the food banks -- a recent study has shown that 1 in 8 children in Toronto depend on food banks to eat today -- and many are struggling to pay their rent.

Evictions are up, seniors are struggling to survive on their pensions, and these are all issues that the Carney government needs to address.

The people cannot be left to hang.

To its credit, the Carney government has done a lot to try to help the average Canadian survive even while grappling with the challenges brought on by the Trump tariffs.

But the Prime Minister needs to keep in mind that right now, affordability remains the highest priority for the majority of Canadians.

Yes, we all want to see the back of Trump and his asinine policies that hurt so many people in his country and elsewhere, but we also need to be able to buy food and pay rent at the end of the day.

We hope the "blue wave" next door sends the message to Ottawa.

Over to you, Mr Carney.

PPP/C is not a dictatorship and will never be

Dear Editor,

THE constant, noisy claims from opposition critics calling the current PPP/C government a "dictatorship" completely ignore history and basic legal facts.

The truth is simple: when the People's Progressive Party/Civic first took office, it legally inherited a powerful constitutional system. This framework, with long-lasting ill will, was specifically created by Forbes Burnham and Dr. Mohamed Shahabuddeen to give a single leader king-like power.

If the PPP/C government actually wanted to be an absolute dictatorship, it had the perfect legal rule book to do so. The party was within its legal rights to rule by decree, shield its leaders from the courts, and shut down Parliament.

Under the old People's National Congress (PNC) regime, that is exactly how things worked.

This change reached a turning point during the 1999–2001 constitutional reforms, led by Attorneys General Charles Ramson and Doodnauth Singh. The PPP/C voluntarily gave up its own executive privileges. The party locked in a strict two-term limit for presidents to make sure no one could rule for life, and it introduced a revolutionary power-sharing system that completely changed Guyanese democracy.

Today, this inclusion is not just a nice gesture—it is a strict legal requirement. Unlike the old days of absolute PNC control, the president cannot act alone. President, Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali must formally consult with the leader of the opposition before making key appointments to the Judicial, Public, Police, and Teaching Service Commissions.

Furthermore, on bodies such as the Local Government Commission, the president is legally required to accept and appoint the exact nominees put forward by the opposition. This level of shared power and structural input never existed under the old PNC rule.

This democratic system is backed by a strong team. Attorney General Mohabir Anil Nandlall, SC, has acted as the nation's legal shield. It was Nandlall's fierce court battles during the tense five-month election standoff in 2020 that successfully protected the vote of every single Guyanese citizen from being thrown out.

Knowing that a great legal plan needs a forward-thinking leader, President Ali has fully backed the ongoing Constitutional Reform Commission (CRC). The commission is intentionally split 50/50 between politicians and ordinary civil-society groups. With the December 31, 2026, deadline coming up, the government is actively asking regular citizens, trade unions, and private groups to submit ideas. President Ali has ensured that the final power to write our laws belongs to the Guyanese people, not the president's office.

This open approach stands in embarrassing contrast to an opposition that sits on the sidelines. They have allowed themselves to be blinded by internet lawyers and political smooth-talkers.

These advisers have badly misled the opposition, convincing them to boycott national progress and scream "dictatorship" rather than using the real constitutional powers they have been given to help their supporters.

Their loud complaints are just a clumsy cover-up for their own lack of policies, lack of vision, and total failure to connect with the public.

A real dictatorship does not strip itself of life-time immunities, it does not share judicial choices with its rivals and it definitely does not hand the pen to regular citizens to rewrite the constitution.

The people-centred leadership of President Ali and AG Nandlall has permanently broken the back of Burnham's authoritarian past. While the opposition stays stuck listening to bad advice, the PPP/C's clear record of sharing power and protecting democracy speaks for itself.

Yours truly,

Rovina Ramdass.

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New guidelines to ease process for refugees within ‘certain time frame’

By Milan Maharaj
LJI REPORTER



New refugee rules will not compromise the rights of those fleeing oppression

New guidelines have been set by the Canadian government to ease the application process for refugees while ensuring processing within a certain time frame in a bid to cut down on delays but not compromise the rights of those seeking refuge from oppression.

The new guidelines became applicable as of Nov. 3, 2022, under the Immigration and Refugee Protection Regulations, after the introduction of the Strengthening Canada’s Immigration System and Borders Act, also referred to as Bill C-12, in March 2022. The government believes that the changes will ensure an easy process for applying, eliminate delays and prepare all claims for hearing at the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada (IRB).

One of the key changes relates to creating a single online process for applying for asylum. Those making their applications from inside Canada will do this through the Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) online portal, after which they will be called for an in-person interview by an immigration officer in order to present their claim.

For the claims eligible for referral to the IRB, claimants will get 60 days to provide their completed claim forms together with the evidence. Claimants are able to request once for an extension period of up to 30 days. The government argues that the new system will minimize the duplication of questions and forms while allowing immigration officers to review applications before referral to a hearing. The regulations also outline time frames for the government's pre-hearing review processes that include security, criminality, admissibility and program integrity checks. Previously, delays in conducting these reviews contributed to claims being referred to the IRB before they were ready for hearings.

Through the implementation of the required screenings early, the government anticipates reducing the number of delayed hearings and providing a more predictable procedure for the applicant and board.

The final area covered by the amendments concerns the withdrawal or abandonment of applications. An application is said to be abandoned where the applicant does not complete the necessary actions to process the claim. The new regulations provide the means by which the claimant can react to the determination that the application was not abandoned as well as situations where a withdrawn claim could be restored.

The government believes that such actions would reduce the number of inactive applications in the system.

The revised regulations provide further assistance to vulnerable claimants including minors under 18 and persons who may not fully comprehend the proceedings. Representatives may be appointed to guide such claimants through various parts of the process. Regulations explain when representatives should be appointed, their obligations, and when they should stop representing the claimant.

Claimants who are eligible to claim asylum will continue having access to work permits once they file a complete application. The regulations will make the current practice permanent, providing eligible individuals the opportunity to work and sustain themselves while their application is being processed.

The amendments also explain the way in which Canada-United States Safe Third Country Agreement is implemented within the new application procedure. The agreement states that in most cases, the person seeking refuge at the Canada-United States border should claim asylum in the first country he reaches.

According to the new regulations, the 14-day period for those making a claim after their arrival at a non-official crossing point between Canada-U.S. land borders starts from the moment a person sends their electronic declaration of the intention to claim asylum. This provision is said not to impact the way the agreement works but just aims at avoiding any possible misunderstanding while applying to the country. There are some exceptions made from the ineligibility requirements of the new regulation in terms of the unaccompanied minors and people declaring their intentions of seeking protection via the online declaration system within the first year of their stay in Canada.

These new eligibility requirements are outlined by Bill C-12 and they relate to the applications that are going to be made after June 2, 2025. According to the new regulation, a claim will be considered to be ineligible for referral to the IRB if it is presented more than a year after the first arrival of a person in Canada after June 24, 2020, or more than 14 days after entering at a non-official crossing point between official Canada-U.S. land borders. People who are not referred can receive a pre-removal risk assessment concerning returning them to their home country.

However, there has been a reduction in the number of asylum claims in Canada. As per IRCC, there was a decline of 52% between January and August 2026 compared to the same months in 2025 and 68% from 2024, bringing relief to the system from the pressures seen in the last two years.

The government hopes that the reforms will increase the processing efficiency of the system without affecting those who are eligible for refugee protection. It all depends on the manner in which the immigration authorities will adopt the reforms in the system.



Essequibo Coast Praant ushers in Diwali with spectacular Deep Jale

THE spirit of unity, togetherness and cultural celebration filled Anna Regina on Friday evening as the Guyana Hindu Dharmic Sabha (GHDS), Essequibo Coast Praant, hosted its Annual Deep Jale, marking the commencement of activities leading up to the Hindu festival of lights, Deepavali.

The seventh annual event attracted a large gathering of residents, religious leaders, youths and supporters, who came together to celebrate the significance of light, hope and the triumph of good over evil.

A major attraction was an impressive structure featuring Goddess Lakshmi and Lord Ganesha, conceptualised and constructed by members of the Essequibo Coast Dharmic Naujawan, the youth arm of the Praant.

The beautifully illuminated structure was erected in front of the Anna Regina Town Council compound, where it will remain until Deepavali, providing residents and visitors with an opportunity to take photographs while adding to the festive atmosphere of the township.

The symbolic diya was lit by the Office Manager of Agrobest/Morning Glory Inc., Indrawattie Natram, assisted by Praant members. The lighting ceremony was followed by a cultural programme featuring several dance troupes and talented youths from across the region.

Addressing the gathering, a Praant member, Mahindra Sharma, highlighted the importance of Deepavali in promoting unity, peace and togetherness among people of different backgrounds.

He described Deepavali as a festival that brings immeasurable joy, peace and happiness, while encouraging individuals to kindle within themselves the burning flame of divinity.

President of the Essequibo Coast Praant, Pandit Kaydar Persaud, explained the significance of the Deep Jale initiative, noting that the concept was introduced by the Guyana Hindu Dharmic Sabha several years ago to bring communities together in the spirit of the festival.



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Gov't taking recruitment drives overseas to attract skilled Guyanese home – Ramsaroop

THE government is stepping up efforts to attract skilled Guyanese living overseas to return home and participate in the country's expanding economy, with job fairs being organised in major diaspora communities as part of efforts to address the growing demand for labour.

This was disclosed by Chief Investment Officer within the Office of the President and Head of the Guyana Office for Investment (GO-Invest), Dr Peter Ramsaroop, during a recent interview on the Energy Perspectives podcast.

Ramsaroop said the government has been conducting job fairs overseas, including in Toronto, Canada, and New York, United States, as it seeks to reconnect with Guyanese who migrated during periods of economic difficulty.

"Guyanese doesn't mean Guyanese living in Guyana alone. We're trying to attract the diaspora back. We're doing trade shows around the world. I went to a job fair in Toronto. I went to a job fair in New York. And it's fascinating to see Guyana on the world stage, recruiting our own people who left during the bad times in Guyana back in the 1980s and are now looking to come home," he said.



GOInvest CEO Peter Ramroop

He explained that the initiative is part of a broader effort to encourage members of the diaspora to reconsider returning to Guyana, particularly as the country experiences significant economic and infrastructural development.

Ramsaroop said, "We're trying to attract the diaspora back."

He shared the experience of his sister, who recently returned to Guyana after spending time overseas and expressed surprise at the changes she observed.

According to him, his sister had contacted him after returning, telling him that she had previously never considered relocating to Guyana.

"I never thought I would even think of moving back to Guyana," he recalled her saying.

However, he said her experience during the visit had changed her outlook, with her eventually expressing a willingness to return permanently.

"She said finally in her heart she feels she can live and work in Guyana."

He argued that such experiences demonstrate the changing perception of opportunities in Guyana among overseas-based nationals and reinforce the importance of maintaining engagement with the diaspora.

While the government is seeking to attract returning Guyanese, Ramsaroop acknowledged that the country's relatively small population presents a challenge to meeting the labour requirements of its rapidly expanding economy.

"We're not afraid to tell folks that, you know, our population, a million is probably small compared to where we need to be," he said.

He noted that the government is encouraging investors to identify their labour requirements and indicate where additional workers may need to be sourced to support their operations.

"We're okay if we don't have enough. We're telling investors, let us know where you want to bring them from, where you want to combine," he explained.

However, Ramsaroop stressed that Guyanese remain the government's primary focus in its efforts to develop the country's workforce and ensure citizens benefit from the expanding economy.

"Rest assured if you were a Guyanese looking at this, Guyanese will still be our number one focus," he said.

He also pointed to investments in education and technical training, arguing that developing the skills of the local population remains essential to sustaining economic growth.

According to Ramsaroop, between 40,000 and 50,000 people have obtained bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees in recent years, while investments are also being made in technical institutions to train workers in specialised fields. "We're putting money back into people," he said.

He added that the country is developing its technical workforce through skills training.





President Dr Irfaan Ali outlines the Global Biodiversity Alliance's six-step action plan during the final day of the GBA Conference and Financing Forum

President Ali unveils six-step plan to turn biodiversity commitments into action

PRESIDENT Dr Irfaan Ali has outlined an ambitious six-step action plan for the Global Biodiversity Alliance (GBA) over the next 12 months, aimed at transforming international biodiversity commitments into practical projects, mobilising financing and creating economic opportunities for communities.

The plan includes establishing specialised solution labs, preparing investment-ready projects for a major financing summit in London in June 2027, and identifying up to 30 biodiversity-rich communities for initiatives that combine conservation with improved livelihoods.

The President outlined six priority areas intended to guide the Alliance's work and ensure that its initiatives produce tangible benefits for member countries and their communities.

1. ESTABLISHING GBA SOLUTION LABS

The first priority is the establishment of specialised solution labs that will bring together experts to address challenges preventing biodiversity proposals from becoming practical, financeable projects.

"I would like us to establish what we might call GBA solution labs. Small focus groups bringing together the right expertise to work through the difficult questions that still stand between good ideas and practical action," President Ali said.

He explained that the labs would bring together governments, scientists, investors, businesses and communities to examine proposals, assess their feasibility and identify practical solutions.

2. ALIGNING ACTION WITH GLOBAL BIODIVERSITY COMMITMENTS

The second priority will ensure that the Alliance's work remains aligned with international biodiversity commitments, particularly those under the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity.

President Ali said the GBA should help countries identify progress, overcome implementation challenges and strengthen co- operation to meet their commitments.

He cautioned against allowing the momentum generated by international conferences to fade once delegates return to their respective countries.

3. MOBILISING INVESTMENT IN LONDON

A major component of the plan is the preparation of biodiversity projects for an investment and financing summit expected to be held in London in June 2027.

President Ali said the GBA would work with member countries to identify and develop projects capable of attracting support from investors, philanthropic organisations, international development agencies, private-sector entities and participants in the bond market.

He stressed that proposals must be properly structured and technically developed before they are presented to potential financiers.

4. DEVELOPING PROJECTS IN COMMUNITIES

The fourth priority will take the Alliance's work directly into biodiversity-rich communities, with a focus on developing projects that improve livelihoods while protecting natural ecosystems.

President Ali announced that the GBA intends to identify between 20 and 30 communities across its membership where practical initiatives can be developed.

Before the end of 2026, the Secretariat is expected to establish a coordinating team to provide technical assistance for these community-based programmes.

5. EXPANDING TECHNICAL AND SCIENTIFIC SUPPORT

The fifth priority focuses on strengthening access to technical assistance, research, scientific documentation, auditing and monitoring systems.

President Ali said the Secretariat would work with relevant institutions and partners to examine existing support mechanisms and integrate them into a more accessible system for GBA members.

6. HARNESSING ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND QUANTUM COMPUTING

The sixth priority will explore how artificial intelligence (AI) and quantum computing can support biodiversity conservation, research, project development and implementation.

President Ali said the Alliance would identify members and technical institutions with advanced capabilities in these fields to examine opportunities for applying emerging technologies.

He stressed, however, that the adoption of such technologies must be accompanied by appropriate safeguards to ensure their responsible and sustainable use.

CARICOM reaffirms support for Guyana's Carolyn Rodrigues-Birkett as next UN chief

The Caribbean Community (CARICOM) has reaffirmed its support for Guyana's Ambassador Carolyn Rodrigues-Birkett to become the next secretary-general of the United Nations, calling for Latin America and the Caribbean to have the opportunity to lead the global body.

In a statement issued Wednesday, CARICOM said its heads of government reaffirmed their endorsement of Rodrigues-Birkett at the 44th Intersessional Meeting of the Conference of Heads of Government, held Oct. 23, 2026.

The leaders first endorsed her candidacy in the communiqué issued at the 51st Regular Meeting of the Conference on July 10.

CARICOM said it had confidence in Rodrigues-Birkett's ability and integrity to lead the United Nations amid pressing global challenges and calls for institutional reform and renewal.

The Community highlighted her more than two decades of experience in fieldwork, legislative and political affairs, diplomacy and international civil service. It also pointed to her diplomatic skills and ability to build consensus and drive change.

The regional bloc also stressed the importance of equitable geographical representation in the selection process, urging the UN Security Council and General Assembly to uphold regional rotation when choosing the organization's next leader.

CARICOM referenced a Sept. 21 declaration by the foreign ministers of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), issued in New York, on the selection process.



Guyanese UN Representative Carolyn Rodrigues-Birkett

The leaders said regional rotation was an important safeguard for all countries, particularly small states seeking to contribute to the United Nations and its senior leadership.

"Accordingly, they shared the view that it is now time for a national of Latin America and the Caribbean to assume the mantle of leadership of the Organization," the statement said.

CARICOM also acknowledged the support extended so far to candidates from Latin America and the Caribbean and expressed appreciation for backing for Rodrigues-Birkett.

The Community said the appointment of a woman from CARICOM as secretary-general would mark a historic new chapter for the United Nations and the world.

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The World Guyanese Congress (WGC) is a federally incorporated non-partisan global organisation that represents the interests of citizens of Guyanese heritage around the world. The organisation focuses on the successful development of our communities globally with an emphasis on leadership development and collaborative activities in diaspora communities to strengthen the community worldwide.

The organisation is headquartered in Toronto, Ontario, Canada and led by a Chairman and Executive Committee supported by an Advisory Council and various Committees as well as a Board of Governors that acts as ambassadors for the organisation. It has nine national and regional chapters:

Key priorities of the WGC include:

- Build a globally cohesive community with a focus on youth and women in business and civic leadership worldwide.
- Support social entrepreneurship and civic engagement in communities around the world.
- Engage diaspora communities in the social and economic development of Guyana.

World Guyanese Congress
5200 Yonge Street, 2nd Floor
Toronto, Ontario, Canada M2N 5P6

To find out more about World Guyanese Congress and our goals and priorities. Scan the QR code, or visit www.wgc-org.com

If you have any questions feel free to get in touch:
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Guyana Opposition Leader Azruddin Mohamed remanded over cybercrime



Jailed: Azruddin Mohamed

Guyana Opposition Leader Azruddin Mohamed and a police officer have been remanded to prison after being charged under the Cybercrime Act in connection with the alleged unauthorized disclosure of government surveillance footage.

Mohamed and Police Constable Ryan Greene were denied bail when they appeared at the Sparendaam Magistrates' Court on Friday. They are scheduled to return to court on Nov. 24.

The charge, brought under Section 9(2)(b) of the Cybercrime Act, relates to the alleged unauthorized access to and disclosure of electronic data connected to national security.

The case stems from the alleged downloading and release of surveillance footage showing an Oct. 12 incident in which Senior Superintendent Prem Narine, head of the Guyana Police Force's Special Branch, fired at a vehicle carrying Mohamed. The incident occurred after the vehicle was reportedly intercepted near Narine's residence.

Police have alleged that Greene admitted to downloading the footage from the government's Safe Country surveillance system and that Mohamed paid him GY$800,000 (US$3,828) for the recording. Mohamed subsequently played the footage at a news conference this week.

Mohamed, his driver and a staff member are also on bail in connection with separate allegations involving the possession of firearms and ammunition and attempting to obstruct the course of justice by discharging a loaded firearm near Narine's residence.

Narine is a key witness in proceedings relating to a United States request for the extradition of Mohamed and his father, Nazar Mohamed.

The media were barred from entering the courtroom during Friday's proceedings.

Following the hearing, Mohamed's attorney, Senior Counsel Roysdale Forde, said there was "absolutely no basis for the refusal of bail."

Forde said the magistrate denied bail because Mohamed had previously been granted bail and was accused of committing other offenses.

He also challenged the prosecution's case, arguing that it had failed to establish the elements of the cybercrime offense.

"Mr. Mohamed was charged under Section 9 of the Cyber Crime Act, and a simple reading by a Common Entrance student would understand what are the elements of an offence. It requires for you to obtain something – in this case, data – and requires you to give it to someone. The prosecution's case has failed to demonstrate the elements of the offence," he said.

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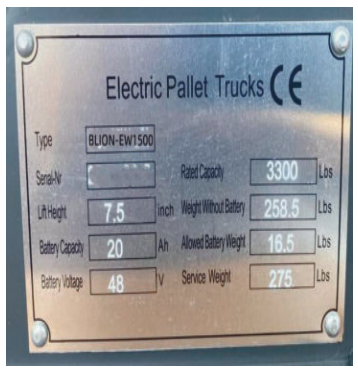
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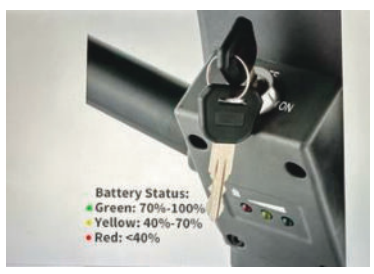
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King Charles praises Guyana's forest conservation efforts

King Charles III has praised Guyana's efforts to protect its forests, saying the country's conservation record demonstrates what is possible and deserves greater recognition and financial reward.

The King made the remarks Friday at the Second Global Biodiversity Alliance Conference and Financing Forum at the Arthur Chung Conference Centre, where he highlighted the importance of restoring biodiversity and balancing economic development with environmental protection.

His address followed remarks by Guyana President Mohamed Irfaan Ali, who welcomed the monarch and reflected on the longstanding connection between Guyana's environmental agenda and the King's work in rainforest conservation.

"Your Majesty, we have not disappointed you," Ali said, recalling a 2008 speech in London in which King Charles praised Guyana's then-emerging Low Carbon Development Strategy as an innovative approach to national development and a potential model for the world.

Ali said Guyana had since maintained its forests, pioneered international financing for forest conservation and directed revenues toward national development and thousands of projects across the country.

He also highlighted the country's ambitions in biodiversity protection, sustainable urban development and strengthening the relationship between people and nature.

The president pointed to ongoing collaboration with the King's Foundation and other partners, including efforts to revitalize Georgetown and develop a proposed Village of Harmony in Marakabay. The initiatives aim to bring together Indigenous knowledge, traditional crafts, sustainable livelihoods and nature conservation.

Addressing the gathering, King Charles said he was pleased to return to Guyana after 26 years and highlighted his longstanding role as patron of the Iwokrama International Centre, which he said remained active.

He recalled his involvement in the early development of Guyana's low-carbon development agenda through his former Rainforest Project and the International Sustainability Unit, which brought together individuals and organizations to demonstrate how sustainable development could be achieved.

The King expressed hope that Guyana's approach could be replicated elsewhere as countries confront environmental destruction and biodiversity loss.

He praised the country for retaining a significant proportion of its forests, arguing that such conservation efforts deserved to be rewarded. However, he acknowledged the ongoing challenge of establishing an appropriate value for nature.

"Still, everybody argues about how much, but it's priceless. That's the answer. Totally priceless," he said.

King Charles also warned that biodiversity loss has consequences for human health and future generations, emphasizing that people are part of nature rather than separate from it.

"The more biodiversity is destroyed, the worse the health problems become," he said.

He added that he admired Guyana's progress and looked forward to seeing how the country continues to balance development with conservation and nature restoration.

Earlier, the King toured an exhibition at the conference showcasing the work of local agencies and organizations, including the Guyana Energy Agency and the Iwokrama International Centre.

The two-day conference, held Oct. 30-31, brought together government representatives, investors, scientists, Indigenous representatives and conservation organizations to explore how biodiversity commitments can be translated into practical action and sustainable financing.

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Guyana rapidly approaches the 50,000-gallon mark in honey production

50,000 gallons of honey by year's end

GUYANA is rapidly approaching the 50,000-gallon mark in honey production, moving from 3,745 gallons in 2022 to 40,000 gallons in 2025.

According to the Minister of Agriculture, Zulfikar Mustapha, the 2025 figure represents a 54 per cent increase compared to 2024.

Delivering the feature address at Honey Fest 2026, Minister Mustapha said Guyana's honey industry is no longer a "small story," it is becoming a national story of rural development, economic opportunities, and sustainability.

Through the Guyana Livestock Development Authority (GLDA), there is a deliberate strategy in place to strengthen each aspect of the honey value chain.

The vision is clear: To increase the number of active beekeepers and productive hives, while also improving honey yields through a modern colony management, strengthened quality assurance system, expanded value-added production, bee population and habitat protection, and positioning Guyana as a competitive supplier of premium honey products to regional and international markets.

He continued to state that the goal is for Guyana to become the premier food producer for the Caribbean region. Guyana is uniquely positioned to achieve this, with our tropical climate, vast forested areas, and mangrove ecosystem providing conditions for safe, sustainable beekeeping all year.

The agriculture leader explained that while many countries struggle with environmental challenges that affects pollinators, Guyana possesses a "natural advantage," that can make us a leader in green apiculture.

This is important, because for those who are producing honey the room is there for expansion in honey production.

He told the beekeepers that Guyana needs them to be successful, adding that if we are to reduce the food import bill of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) by 25 per cent, Guyana needs to be successful.

According to the minister, "We have two main commodities, valuable arable land, and abundant fresh water. Two major ingredients for us to make us a strong food producer. So, if Guyana has to be successful, for Guyana to be successful, you (beekeepers) will have to produce, and I want you here this evening to recommit yourself, because when you look at the global honey market, it's expected to grow from US$9.9 billion in 2025 to around approximately US$18.3 billion by 2034."

Minister Mustapha expressed that this will be a "very lucrative market," and as producers, they have the unique opportunity to position themselves within an expanding international industry.

He continued to say that if we are aiming to increase honey production, we have to ensure that we do so massively.

"The government has been increasing budgetary allocation. We have been making boxes available. We are working to develop hives. We are helping apiculturists to get PPE protection, and other facilities to build capacity. We have specialists who are working with apiculturists to train them, and we want Guyana to have a strong export system where we can export our honey," he said.

Minister Mustapha mentioned that when we look at the region, we are importing honey at a high cost. Guyana, he underscored, can be the main supplier of honey in CARICOM.

The minister related that the government, through the agriculture ministry, has invested heavily in the development of the honey industry, recognising that with the correct support, it has the potential to grow. The government has supported this growth through large financial investments in protective gears, production input, training, technical support, and some 3,700 ice boxes.

From 2020 to 2026, they have distributed a total of 3,320 ice boxes, 52,204 frames, 2,552 extruders, 57,140 wax sheets, and 3,053 hive stands.

"5,705 items such as PPE, tools, and equipment, and 2,500- honey samples were tested at GLDA lab. Investment and government support are expanding honey production while creating opportunities for women, as I mentioned and youth, and also for indigenous communities to participate in attracting agricultural enterprise," Minister Mustapha revealed.

"As I said, today, Guyana has approximately 280 beekeepers, an increase over the previous years, while the number of active hives has expanded from 1,145 to 1,983. These are not merely statistics; they represent individuals and families whose livelihoods are being improved through sustainable agriculture," he added.

He noted that equally important is government's commitment to building the infrastructure that will support the industry's long-term growth.

The minister spoke of the recent establishment of Guyana's first queen-rearing facility at Kairuni which will strengthen bee programmes and improve colony performance. This facility is expected to be commissioned later this year.

Additionally, government's efforts to establish a modern honey testing and grading laboratory will ensure Guyana's honey meets international standards and assure of product quality.

Committing to continued investments in training, research, quality assurance, modern equipment, market development, and infrastructure necessary to support the growth in the apiculture industry, the Minister told beekeepers that the government will continue to create opportunities for youth and women to become leaders in this industry and will continue to work with its partners to unlock new markets for Guyana's honey product.

JAGS Aviation adds brand-new Bell 407 helicopter to fleet

JAGS Aviation on Monday welcomed the addition of a brand-new Bell 407 helicopter, reflecting the company's vision to strengthening its operational capabilities, while supporting the continued growth of two important sectors of Guyana's economy: tourism and mining.

At the same time, this strategic investment demonstrates the company's confidence in Guyana's long-term economic prospects and its commitment to investing in services and infrastructure that support the country's continued development.

Through continued investments in modern aircraft and premium service delivery, JAGS Aviation is strategically positioning itself to play an increasingly important role in connecting Guyana's people, industries, and destinations.

In terms of tourism, the new aircraft will enhance the company's ability to support scenic excursions, private charters, executive transfers, and access to destinations where conventional transportation may be limited.

The helicopter will also support the mining industry, by providing greater flexibility for personnel transportation, executive travel, site visits, and access to remote mining locations. JAGS Aviation aims to contribute to the operational needs of businesses working in some of Guyana's most challenging geographical environments.

Through this investment, the company is reinforcing its commitment to being a dependable aviation partner for industries that are essential to Guyana's economic growth.

The Bell 407 is a proven single-engine turbine helicopter recognised for its versatility, performance, and suitability for a wider range of commercial and private aviation operations. Depending on its configuration, the aircraft can typically accommodate up to six passengers in addition to the pilot, making it well suited for small-group charters, tourism experiences, corporate transportation, and specialised aviation support.



Minister of Public Utilities and Aviation, Deodat Indar, flanked by GCCA's Director General, Lt. Col. (ret'd) Egbert Field, JAGS Staff and other officials on Monday

Beyond this, the helicopter offers the opportunity to deliver a refined passenger experience. Its comfortable cabin, excellent visibility, and turbine-powered performance make it an attractive option for passengers travelling to Guyana's interior for business or leisure.

Minister of Public Utilities and Aviation, Deodat Indar, in a moment of reflection spoke of the consistent investment in the sector.

"Now we have a brand-new asset, an investment in excess of a billion dollars…that the company has invested. [This] is a mark of a number of things. One is that the company sees this sector as one that's commercially viable and two is that they see this sector as one that has answered the call so that aviation in the country has now moved to in excess of 110 local assets between the various companies."

JAGS Aviation's investment in the Bell 407 sends a signal that we are gearing for the transformation of Guyana.

Meanwhile, the Guyana Civil Aviation Authority's (GCAA) Director General, Lt. Col. (ret'd) Egbert Field, said Guyana is blazing the trail in the aviation industry.

He committed as the GCAA Head to working with JAGS Aviation to ensure that the company completes requirements associated with bringing the helicopter to Guyana.

JAGS Aviation is committed to national development, which extends beyond aviation. JAGS Aviation says it views the acquisition of the Bell 407 as more than a fleet expansion. According to the company, it represents a continued commitment to connecting people, businesses and opportunities across Guyana. JAGS remains focused on providing air services that support economic activity while also offering customers dependable, comfortable and professional travel experience.

Currently, JAGS is preparing to launch a dry dock facility and an asphalt plant in Bartica, which demonstrates a willingness to explore opportunities beyond aviation sector that align with Guyana's wider development needs.

Jagdeo calls for support of environmental negotiators

VICE-PRESIDENT Dr. Bharrat Jagdeo has called for technical working groups to give negotiators practical evidence and analysis on climate and biodiversity policy.

Addressing the 2nd Global Biodiversity Alliance Conference and Financing Forum held here in Georgetown on Friday last, Dr. Jagdeo pointed to Project Catalyst, a climate think tank established in 2008, as an example of how expert support can help negotiators address complex issues.

He said the project provided briefing notes to decisionmakers and helped advance discussion of forest carbon.

Jagdeo proposed applying a similar approach to biodiversity credits, with working groups examining how such schemes could be designed and what safeguards they would require.

He said proponents would need to address concerns including additionality, permanence, leakage, Indigenous rights and the accountable use of funds.

"We need now to give answers to those, like we did in that period when we were working out this instrument of a carbon credit for the forest," he said.

That experience, he said, showed how technical support could help explain complex policy ideas to the people responsible for negotiating them. "We need to get back to quiet work," he said, proposing that new working groups could continue the approach and develop analysis relevant to biodiversity credits.

A central task for such groups, he said, would be to establish what conditions a biodiversity-credit system would need in order to be credible.

Jagdeo compared the questions being raised about biodiversity credits with earlier debates over forest-carbon credits. He said those proposals faced objections and concerns about whether emissions reductions were genuinely additional, whether benefits would last, whether activity would simply shift elsewhere, and how Indigenous rights and funds would be protected.

The Vice-President linked that argument to the relationship between climate funding and biodiversity protection. Conserving tropical forests, he said, can deliver climate benefits while also protecting the distinctive ecosystems and species they contain. He urged participants not to treat climate and biodiversity objectives as separate when funding or designing conservation programmes.

He urged global leaders to rebuild the sense of urgency to help galvanise climate action.

He pointed to what he described as a lack of established financing for biodiversity; this is an issue Guyana is hoping to address with partners through the alliance.

He stressed that public funding was not available at the scale required, with a financing gap of about US$700 million, and that international discussions had yet to settle on a final definition of a biodiversity credit.

Guyana working to reduce hatching eggs importation - Agriculture Minister

AGRICULTURE Minister Zulfikar Mustapha recently announced that the government is taking steps to reduce Guyana's dependence on imported hatching eggs as part of ongoing efforts to strengthen the country's poultry industry and boost local agricultural production.

"I want to tell you; I want to break the news that we are working also to reduce the importation of hatching eggs to our country," he said.

According to Mustapha, Guyana imports approximately 54 million hatching eggs. "We have started to produce hatching eggs and for the first time last year, we produced close to a million hatching eggs," he said.

He then revealed that they have already signed an agreement with a private investor, "who will be going into the production of hatching eggs."

By expanding local capacity to produce hatching eggs, the government hopes to provide poultry farmers with a more reliable supply, reduce production costs and create additional opportunities for investment and employment within the industry.

Meanwhile, a major investment in Guyana's poultry industry was officially commissioned on Sunday last when businessman Haji 'Pampy' Ishmail opened a multimillion-dollar chicken processing facility at Lot 9 Fyrish Public Road, Corentyne, Berbice.

The state-of-the-art facility, which has the capacity to process approximately 1,000 chickens per hour and an estimated 8,000 daily, is said to be the largest of its kind in Region Six and the third largest in Guyana.



Agriculture Minister Zulfikar Mustapha

The investment represents a significant boost to the local poultry industry, with the potential to increase processing capacity, create employment opportunities and contribute to the country's growing agricultural sector.

Mustapha noted that he was told that Ishmail will also be involved in hatching eggs "and that will help us to reduce importation of hatching eggs."

"So, I want to compliment him, I want to thank him," he noted.

Last Sunday Mustapha explained that while the new facility is expected to generate revenue for its owners, its wider significance lies in the economic opportunities it will create for residents of Region Six, particularly through employment and increased activity within the poultry industry.

He had emphasised that such investments benefit Guyanese regardless of their political affiliation, race or religious background.

"As Minister of Agriculture, I am pleased to see investment of this nature," Mustapha said, highlighting the government's continued efforts under President Ali's leadership to strengthen national food security and expand agricultural production.

The minister pointed out that Guyana's agricultural transformation is not simply about increasing the quantity of food produced, but also about developing the infrastructure necessary to process agricultural products locally.

He explained that for too long, the country had relied heavily on the production and export of primary agricultural commodities, stressing that investments in processing facilities are critical to expanding value-added production.

"We do not want Guyana simply to produce more, but we want Guyana to have more processing facilities," he stated.

Mustapha noted that the commissioning of the Fyrish facility aligns with the government's plan of modernising agriculture, expanding agro-processing and positioning Guyana as a major contributor to regional food security.

Highlighting the growth of the poultry industry, the minister disclosed that production has increased from approximately 41,000 metric tonnes to 91,000 metric tonnes, reflecting the significant expansion taking place within the sector.

He had also said facilities such as the one commissioned at Fyrish will play an important role in supporting further growth by strengthening processing capacity and creating additional opportunities for poultry farmers.

Mustapha also underscored the importance of private-sector participation in Guyana's development, noting that the government's responsibility is to create an enabling environment in which local entrepreneurs can confidently invest and expand their businesses. He credited the administration's policies and investment climate for encouraging major undertakings such as the Fyrish poultry processing facility.

Prison service denies mistreatement of Mohamed

SINCE he has been remanded to prison, Azruddin Mohamed's relatives and close associates have made numerous claims that he is being mistreated by prison officials.

On Sunday, the Guyana Prison Service (GPS) debunked those claims, emphasising that it has facilitated every effort to ensure his safety and comfort.

Mohamed, in keeping with established protocols, was medically examined and by Officer-in-Charge of Lusignan Prison on the rules of the institution and the conditions governing his detention, the GPS said.

The GPS said that the Mohamed's were able to see and speak to him, permission was granted for them to deliver his meals and on his request the fan servicing his cell was adjusted.

The following is a full text of the statement issued by the GPS:

"The Guyana Prison Service (GPS) rejects allegations that remanded prisoner Azzruddin Mohamed is being subjected to inhumane or degrading treatment while in custody at Lusignan Prison.

Claims have been circulated alleging that Mr. Mohamed is being improperly isolated and subjected to unacceptable conditions, including inadequate ventilation, continuous lighting, restrictions on exercise and limitations on contact with other prisoners.

The GPS wishes to make clear that Mr. Mohamed is being managed in accordance with established prison procedures, having regard to his classification, security requirements, safety and welfare.

Upon his admission on Friday, October 30, 2026, Mr. Mohamed was assessed and classified as a high-profile prisoner through the Prison Management Offenders System. That classification informs decisions concerning his placement, accommodation and level of supervision. It is a security and management determination and is not intended as punishment.

As part of the admission process, Mr. Mohamed was examined by a medical officer and seen by a welfare officer. He was also briefed by the Officer-in-Charge of Lusignan Prison on the rules of the institution and the conditions governing his detention.

The GPS further wishes to place on record that reasonable access to his family and communication has been facilitated.

On Saturday, October 31, 2026, Assistant Director of Prisons, Operations (Acting), Deoraj Gyandat, met with Mr. Mohamed's mother and two sisters and explained the arrangements governing visits and telephone communication. His relatives were subsequently permitted to visit him.

Following that visit, the family requested permission to provide meals for Mr. Mohamed because of concerns regarding his safety. The GPS accommodated that request, subject to the applicable security procedures, and authorised a designated family member to deliver his meals.

Later that day, Director of Prisons Nicklon Elliot, accompanied by the Officer-in-Charge of Lusignan Prison, Seon Charles, personally visited Mr. Mohamed to assess his welfare and reinforce the requirements governing his conduct while in custody.

During that interaction, Mr. Mohamed requested permission to telephone his son ahead of his son's birthday on Sunday, November 1, 2026. That request was granted.

He also requested that the fan serving his cell area be adjusted. Prison officials responded to that request and the necessary adjustment was made.

The Guyana Prison Service has a duty to maintain the security of its institutions while safeguarding the dignity, safety and welfare of every person lawfully placed in its custody. A prisoner's public profile does not diminish those protections, nor does it exempt that prisoner from the security procedures applicable to his classification.

JA Martime students on Carnival Cruise



Carnival Corporation, the world's largest cruise company, welcomed more than 100 participants from Caribbean Maritime University, including 20 cadets, aboard Carnival Dream in Ocho Rios on Oct. 28 for an educational visit designed to connect the next generation of maritime and logistics professionals with career opportunities across the cruise industry.

The visit brought together students and chaperones from the university's Faculty of Marine and Nautical Studies and Faculty of Shipping and Logistics, giving participants a look at the range of professional disciplines that support cruise ship operations and the broader maritime sector.

Marie McKenzie, senior vice president of government and destination affairs at Carnival Corporation, hosted the visit with members of the Carnival Cruise Line team.

"As a Jamaican, it is especially meaningful to welcome students from Caribbean Maritime University aboard Carnival Dream and give them a first-hand look at the many career opportunities available across the cruise industry," McKenzie said. "Jamaica has a strong maritime heritage and a talented pool of young people who can help shape the future of this sector. We hope this tour will broaden the students' understanding of what is possible and encourage them to chart their paths in the industry."

The program featured an educational session highlighting shipboard departments and career pathways, followed by a guided tour of Carnival Dream and lunch on board. Through direct engagement with the ship's leadership and team members, students and cadets gained insight into the technical, operational and hospitality functions that contribute to the successful operation of a cruise ship.

From the bridge and engine room to guest operations, the tour showed the range of expertise required to run a modern cruise ship, connecting the students' classroom studies with the people and processes behind the guest experience.



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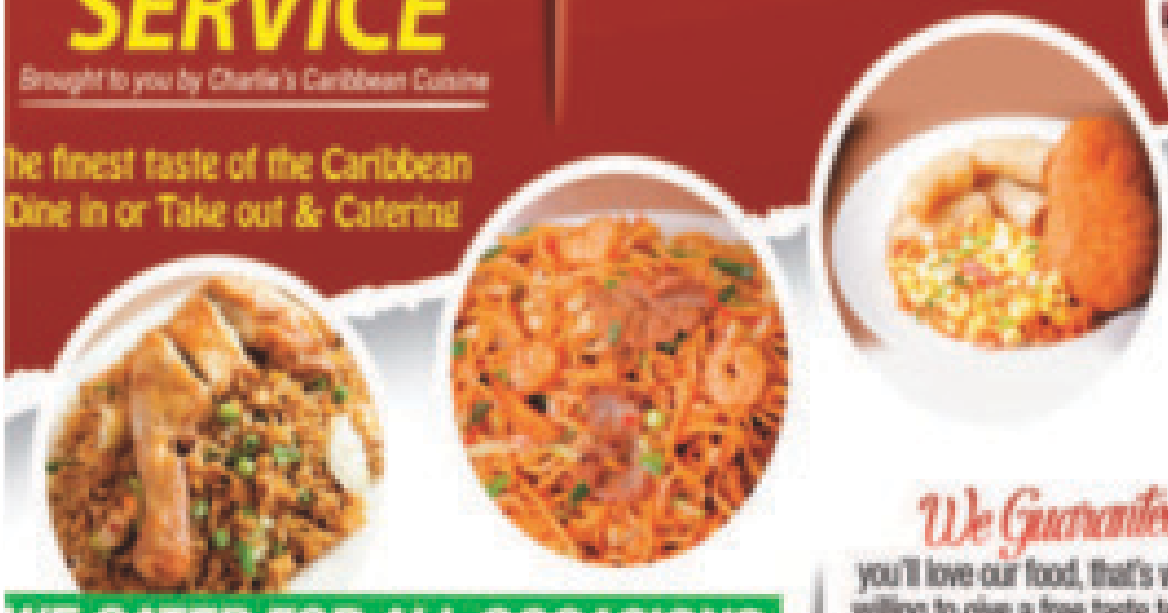


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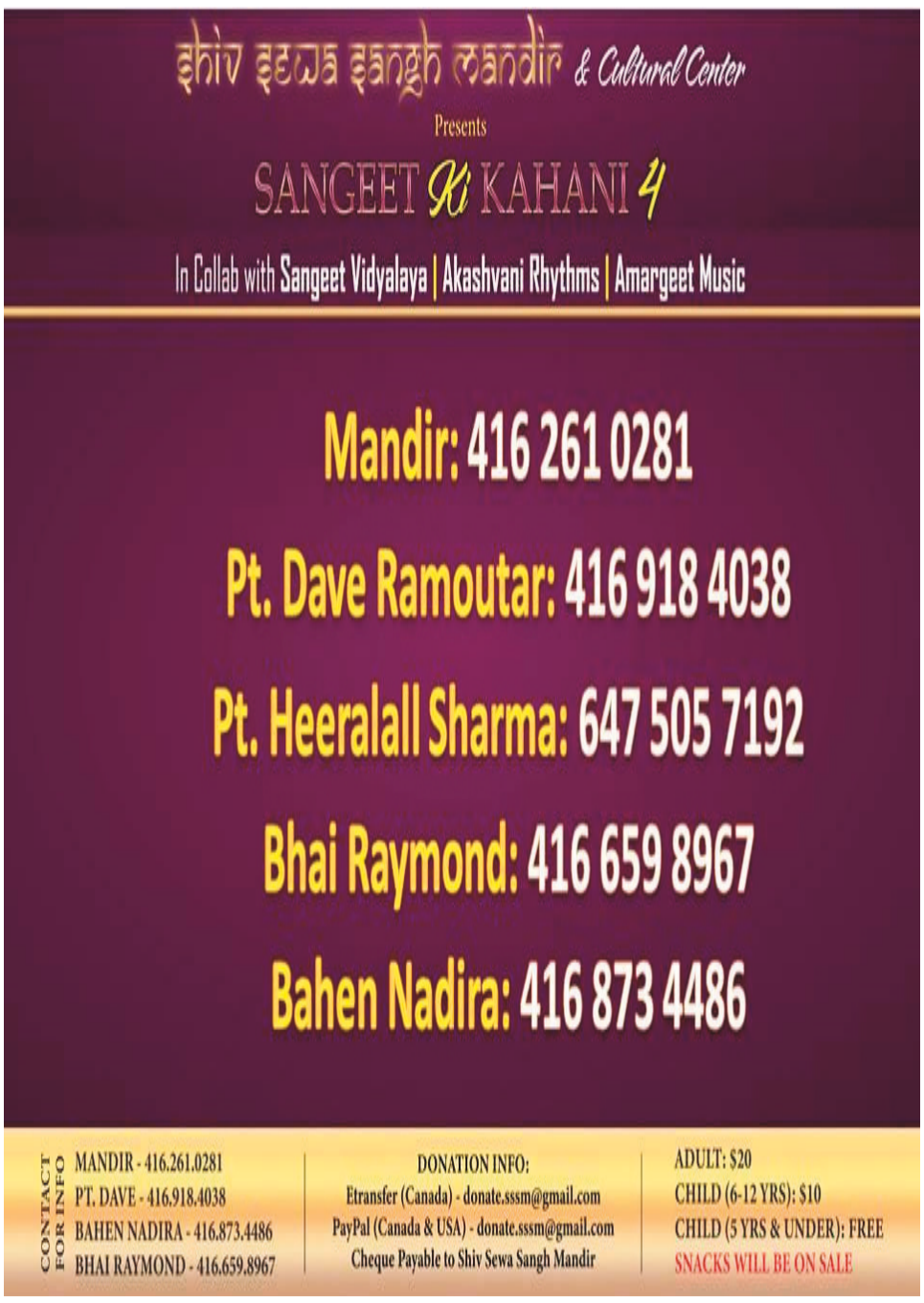
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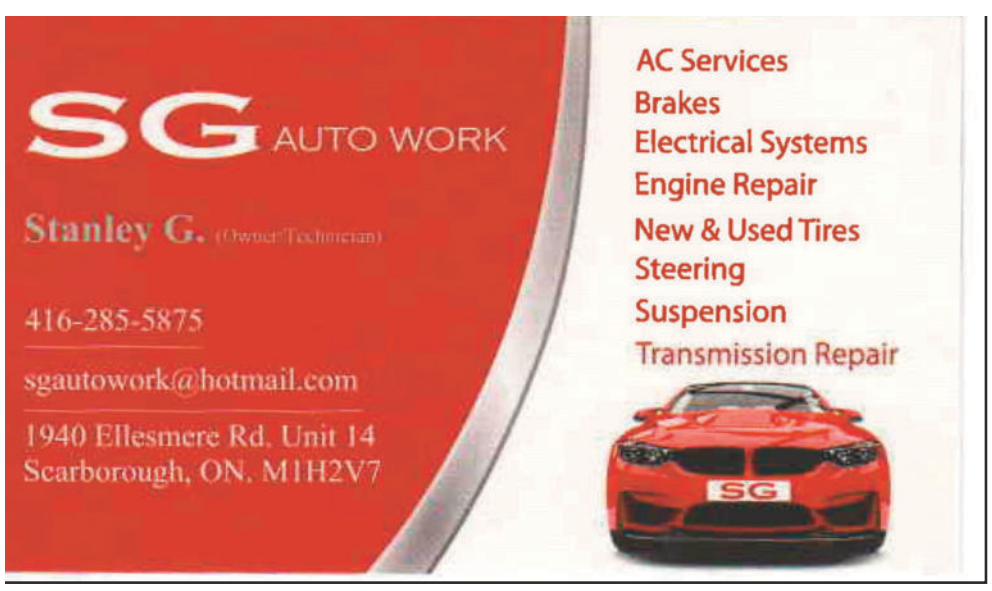








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Guyana urges Caribbean cooperation to combat 'dark fleet' operations

Guyana is calling on Caribbean countries to strengthen cooperation against so-called dark fleet operations, warning that vessels fraudulently flying national flags are being used to transport weapons, sanctioned oil and smuggled people.

Public Utilities and Aviation Minister Deodat Indar raised the issue at the Caribbean Shipping Association's 56th annual general meeting, conference and exhibition, telling more than 450 maritime stakeholders, policymakers and industry executives that Guyana had been among the countries affected.

Indar said he had witnessed the problem firsthand alongside Stephen Thomas, director general of Guyana's Maritime Administration Department (MARAD).

"It is a curse on the shipping industry. It is a black stain on maritime authorities," Indar said, describing how criminal operators use fraudulent registrations to allow vessels to sail under the flags of countries where they are not registered.

The practice can damage the reputations of countries whose flags are misused, while creating risks for shipping companies, insurers and maritime authorities.

"When your ship flag is used for nefarious activities, moving things, guns, sanctioned oil, sanctioned products, people smuggling, those are not things that any nation would like to have (associated with) their name or their flag," he said.



Public Utilities and Aviation Minister Deodat Indar

To illustrate the extent of the problem, Indar described an operator who registered vessels under a purported flag state based on a tiny, uninhabited island in the South Pacific.

He urged Caribbean governments to coordinate their efforts, warning that individual countries would struggle to eliminate fraudulent ship registrations on their own.

"If we don't work together, (we) simply can't stamp it out," Indar said.

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

MARAD has reported identifying cases of vessels falsely claiming Guyanese registration since 2021. The department also shares information about fraudulent registrations with maritime states and international organizations.

In April 2026, US forces seized the Majestic X in the Indian Ocean over its transportation of Iranian oil while it was allegedly fraudulently flying Guyana's flag. The vessel had been sanctioned in 2024 under the name Phonix.

The Caribbean Shipping Association's conference is being held under the theme "Building a More Connected, Resilient and Competitive Caribbean."

GPHC completes 100 robotic-assisted surgeries

The Georgetown Public Hospital Corporation (GPHC) in Guyana has completed 100 robotic-assisted surgical procedures since launching its robotic surgery program on May 26, 2026.

The milestone marks a step forward in the hospital's efforts to expand access to modern surgical care, with procedures performed across three specialties: general surgery, urology and gynecology.

According to the hospital, robotic-assisted surgery uses advanced technology to help surgeons perform operations with greater precision, while the surgeon maintains control of the robotic system throughout the procedure.

Of the 100 procedures completed, 47 were performed by the general surgery team. These included gallbladder removal, hernia repairs, colectomies and single-anastomosis gastric bypass, a type of weight-loss surgery.

The urology team completed 19 procedures, including prostate and kidney removal, repairs of abnormal connections between the bladder and vagina, and procedures to treat enlarged veins near the testicles and conditions affecting kidney drainage.

The gynecology team accounted for the remaining 34 procedures. These included ovarian cyst removal, hysterectomies, the removal of ovaries and fallopian tubes, and fallopian tube removal.



Of the 100 procedures completed, 47 were performed by the general surgery team

GPHC said the achievement reflects the growing use of robotic-assisted surgery at the hospital and the capabilities of its surgical teams.

The hospital also plans to begin training additional surgeons in the three specialties to operate the robotic surgery system, an initiative it said will strengthen local expertise and expand the number of surgeons able to perform the procedures.



King Charles III is received by a Guard of Honour on his arrival in The Bahamas

King Charles acknowledges slavery's legacy during Bahamas visit

King Charles III has acknowledged the suffering and historical injustices caused by slavery as he began a nine-day Caribbean tour amid renewed calls for Britain to apologize and pay reparations.

Speaking Tuesday at a youth rally in the Bahamas, the monarch said aspects of the country's culture had emerged from a painful history, stressing the importance of recognizing the region's past even as it celebrates its present achievements.

"We know that some of what is best in Bahamian culture today, the most joyful, the most hopeful, the most bright, was born out of darkness," Charles said.

"It is only right that we should acknowledge the great suffering and injustices of the past in these islands and beyond, even as we rejoice in the successes of the present."

The remarks came as Caribbean nations continue to press Britain to address its role in the transatlantic slave trade. Buckingham Palace had indicated before the visit that Charles would acknowledge the region's colonial legacy and the impact of slavery but would not apologize or offer reparations, in keeping with the British government's position.

Charles arrived in the Bahamas on Tuesday for his first official visit to the country as monarch. The government closed public schools on New Providence, the most populous island, as part of arrangements to welcome the royal visitor.

Upon arrival, he met Governor General Dame Cynthia A. Pratt and Prime Minister Philip Davis before inspecting a guard of honor and meeting members of the Royal Bahamas Defence Force.

He later attended the youth rally at Clifford Park, where he was greeted by cheering crowds. Charles last officially visited the site in 1973 as Prince of Wales, when the Bahamas celebrated its independence after approximately 300 years of British colonial rule.

The visit also drew protesters, including members of the Bahamas' Rastafarian community, who called for reparations for slavery and its enduring consequences.

"Pay us what you owe us!" one woman shouted, while another protester said she stood in memory of the atrocities committed against Black people.

The Bahamas is the first stop on Charles' nine-day Caribbean tour, which will culminate in the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM). The monarch has confirmed that leaders will discuss the legacy of slavery during the gathering.

The issue of reparations has remained a point of contention between Caribbean countries and Britain, with regional leaders and advocates seeking acknowledgment, apologies and measures to address the lasting effects of slavery.

During his stay in the Bahamas, Charles is also expected to visit a nature site and meet government officials, civil society representatives and members of the Royal Bahamas Defence Force.

The tour comes amid wider discussions across the Caribbean about the legacy of British colonialism and the region's calls for reparatory justice.

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INDIA न्यूज़



Ranji Smile was one of the most colourful and enigmatic figures to shape the American food scene

The Indian chef who brought curry to America - then vanished

One hundred and twenty-five years ago, in 1901, an Indian chef opened what was almost certainly the first Indian restaurant in the US.

Ranji Smile was one of the most colourful and enigmatic figures to shape the American food scene.

In the summer of 1899, Smile sailed from London to New York. We know hardly anything about his origins and early life, not even his real name.

"Ranji" was probably a nod to the Indian cricketing sensation KS Ranjitsinhji, then a star attraction at Test matches in Britain. "Smile" could have been an anglicisation of "Ismail".

Whatever his origins, Smile possessed an uncommon knack for reinvention. Once through the portals of Ellis Island, he appended a new name to his identity, something more in keeping with America's egalitarian promise: Joe.

Joe Ranji Smile arrived in New York to work at Sherry's Restaurant, a glittering new establishment on Fifth Avenue.

In London, he had been a curry cook at the Cecil and Savoy hotels. Here, according to an 1899 profile in Harper's, he was noticed by Sherry's owner, Louis Sherry, who invited him to bring his culinary skills across the Atlantic. Late Victorian London already boasted an Indian dining scene: as early as 1810, Sake Dean Mohamed, a native of Patna, had opened his Hindostanee Coffee House near Portman Square, plying customers with both curry and hookah.

Manhattanite tastebuds lacked much exposure to masala. There was, however, growing curiosity about India and its culture. Swami Vivekananda, the spellbinding orator and exponent of Hindu philosophy, enthralled audiences during his visits to the city in the 1890s. At the same time, more Indian sailors, students and professionals trickled into New York. This was probably why Louis Sherry decided to add a curry cook to his kitchen staff.

At Sherry's Restaurant, Smile joined one of the great culinary institutions of the American Gilded Age. Positioning itself as a rival to Delmonico's, New York's byword for fine dining, Sherry's catered to city plutocrats like the Astors and was famed for over-the-top dining experiences. During one such soiree, patrons marched their horses into a ballroom, saddled up and ate on horseback.

Smile, a skilled showman, thrived in this environment.

Customers soon flocked to taste his preparations of Bombay duck, a glutinous lizardfish that is a delicacy along the western Indian coast, and novel creations like "Lettuce Ceylon".

Cooking and serving became a performance. Dressed in a satin coat and blue silk turban, Smile salaamed in front of customers before enquiring, "Will you have the curry hot or mild, sahib?" Pictures of Sherry's curry chef were soon splashed across newspapers and magazines. One headline said it all: "New York women go wild over him."

As his fame grew, Smile decided in 1901 to leave Sherry's and set up his own establishment, one exclusively devoted to Indian cuisine. For financial backing, he leaned on Roland R Conklin, a prominent financier and the inventor of an early version of the motorhome.

Omar Khayyam, Smile's Indian restaurant, opened in late 1901 at 325 Fifth Avenue. This was prime real estate, a block away from the original Waldorf-Astoria Hotel where, 29 years later, the Empire State Building would rise. Smile adorned the restaurant with Indian draperies and hanging lanterns. In Washington DC, Smile prepared dishes, including a dubious-sounding dessert called "bungalow", while a juggler and dancing girl entertained him.

While Smile's theatrics and good food kept people entertained for a while, the tall tales and outright fabrications soon caught up with him.

By the 1920s, he apparently abandoned cooking entirely, listing his occupation as a merchant.

Despite this inglorious end, Smile and his Indian restaurant did pave the way for the popularisation of Indian cuisine in America.



ARIES (March 21 — April 20): Honesty is always the best policy, and if you are open about what you want from other people today, they will most likely go out of their way to get it for you. You don't need to use deception; you just need to be truthful.

TAURUS (April 21 — May 21): You seem to be a lot more laid-back about an issue that has been on your mind for weeks, if not months, but with Mercury moving retrograde, there is a danger you might overlook some genuine concerns. Don't let your guard down too far.

GEMINI (May 22 — June 21): If you are in any way ambitious, then what happens over the next few days will encourage you to take a chance or two on the work front. Hopefully you can tell the difference between a genuine opportunity and what could be a trap set by your rivals.

CANCER (June 22 — July 23): Your sense of duty may hold you back from getting out and about and having fun today, but in the long term your determination to do the right thing will work in your favour. Important people are watching you closely and will like what they see.

LEO (July 24 — Aug. 23): A problem that was a bit of a mystery to you in the past will give up its secrets today, and you will be amazed how simple the answer actually is. Maybe in future you should try to be a little less set in your ways of thinking.

VIRGO (Aug. 24 — Sept. 23): A new start in your personal life is not just possible but hugely desirable, so if you get the chance to reset a relationship or your living arrangement today, don't waste it. At times like these, even a Virgo needs to be a bit more adventurous.

LIBRA (Sept. 24 — Oct. 23): If you do not approve of what a friend is up to, then you must speak up. They may not thank you for it now, but they will do later on when it becomes apparent that your intervention saved them from making a very big mistake.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24 — Nov. 22): With love planet Venus going through its retrograde phase, you need to be careful when dealing with affairs of the heart. The most important thing by far is that you don't make promises you may not be willing or able to keep later on.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 23 — Dec. 21): Be tolerant of someone's silly ways but don't let it get to the point where they think they can do anything and everything and get away with it. If you step in and call a halt now, it could prevent a serious falling out between you later on.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 — Jan. 20): You may be tempted to get involved in a dispute that needs someone with a clear head to sort it out, but the planets warn that someone must not be you. This is one of those situations where both sides could decide to gang up on you.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 21 — Feb. 19): You need to avoid making any kind of snap decision over the next 24 hours, because almost certainly it will be wrong. Even if you have all the facts and figures at your fingertips, you may not be able to successfully interpret what they mean.

PISCES (Feb. 20 — Mar. 20): If you are feeling in a bit of a rut at the moment, it could be because you have too many things going on in your life and they are getting in each other's way. Focus on just two major activities between now and the end of the week.

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Canada backs Caribbean maritime security ahead of 2027 regional exercise

Canada has reaffirmed its commitment to strengthening maritime security in the Caribbean through regional partnerships aimed at improving information sharing, operational readiness and efforts to disrupt trafficking networks.

Canadian High Commissioner to Jamaica Mark Berman outlined the commitment on October 27 during the Final Planning Conference for Exercise Event Horizon 2027 at the Jamaica Defence Force (JDF) Caribbean Military Academy.

The multinational exercise, scheduled for January 15-29, 2027, will bring together military, civilian and regional partners to test coordination and readiness in maritime security, search and rescue, cybersecurity, and humanitarian assistance and disaster relief.

Planning coordination is being supported by international partners, including the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the World Food Programme.

Berman said effective regional security depended on cooperation among countries and institutions with complementary expertise and resources.

"Lasting security outcomes depend on partnerships and the complementary strengths, expertise and resources of our partners to support effective, multifaceted solutions," he said.

He cited Exercise Event Horizon 2027 as an example of how joint planning can build the trust and coordination needed to respond effectively to real-world crises.

The exercise, led by the JDF, is expected to strengthen collaboration across the region's maritime security community as countries seek to address existing and emerging threats.

Berman also recognised the contributions of the Regional Security System (RSS) and the Caribbean Community Implementation Agency for Crime and Security (CARICOM IMPACS) to regional security cooperation.

Both institutions play roles in coordinating expertise, strengthening collaboration and supporting collective responses to security challenges across the Caribbean.

The Canadian high commissioner said maritime security was a shared responsibility requiring sustained cooperation among regional governments, security agencies and international partners.

He added that combining capabilities and resources would help participating countries detect and respond to threats while protecting legitimate maritime activity and supporting regional stability.



Canadian High Commissioner to Jamaica, His Excellency Mark Berman

"Together, these efforts help to build effective security cooperation to meet today's challenges and prepare for those of the future. Canada is very interested in supporting these efforts and working alongside our partners," Berman said.

"Through partnerships, shared values and collective action, we can build a safer, more secure and more prosperous Caribbean, where legitimate trade, economic opportunity and sustainable development can thrive," he added.

Exercise Event Horizon is a biennial, multinational, multi-agency and multidomain military and security exercise hosted by the JDF through its Maritime Air and Cyber Command (MACC).

The exercise simulates security threats, maritime law enforcement challenges, cybercrime and natural or human-caused disasters to test and improve regional readiness, interoperability and standard operating procedures.

St. Vincent establishes crime reduction task force

The St. Vincent and the Grenadines government has established a National Crime Reduction Task Force to coordinate efforts to combat escalating violent crime, including gun-related offenses, as the country records more murders than at the same point last year.

Prime Minister Dr. Godwin Friday announced the initiative during his inaugural Independence Day address on Tuesday, saying the government was taking a more coordinated approach to tackling the problem.

"I know that many of us continue to worry about the serious problem of violent crime. Gun-related crime is shattering our peace and destroying young lives. We are addressing this problem head-on," Friday said.

The task force will bring together agencies responsible for law enforcement, border protection, maritime security, financial intelligence, customs, immigration, the Coast Guard and the justice system. Relevant ministers, department heads and senior police officials will also participate.

Deputy Prime Minister and National Security Minister St. Clair Leacock and Attorney General Louise Mitchell will co-chair the task force.

Friday said the initiative would strengthen communication and coordination among government agencies involved in crime prevention, law enforcement and the administration of justice. The task force will also consult other stakeholders where necessary.

"To be one step ahead of the criminals, we have to make sure that our networks are stronger," he said. "The political will is present; we are using it to organize better to confront the difficult societal problem."

The announcement comes amid another violent year in the Caribbean nation, where authorities have reported 42 murders so far this year, compared with 40 for all of last year.

Friday said the Attorney General's Chambers had been directed to pursue criminal justice reform aggressively to close any loopholes that criminals could exploit.

The government has also examined crime-fighting initiatives in other Caribbean countries, including St. Kitts and Nevis, Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago, to identify measures that could be adapted locally.

"We have looked at crime-fighting initiatives in other countries in the region such as St. Kitts and Nevis, Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago and wherever there are lessons to be learned, we will learn them and apply," Friday said.

CARICOM welcomes UK PM's openness to slavery apology

The Caribbean Community (CARICOM) has welcomed British Prime Minister Andy Burnham's willingness to consider a formal apology for Britain's role in the transatlantic slave trade and engage in structured dialogue with affected countries, but insists that reparatory justice must remain central to any discussions.

In a statement Saturday, CARICOM Chair and Saint Lucia Prime Minister Philip J. Pierre said the Community was prepared to engage with the United Kingdom but rejected Burnham's position that financial reparations were not "the right answer."

Burnham, who is expected to attend the Nov. 1-4 Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in Antigua and Barbuda, recently said he was open to listening to calls for a formal apology on behalf of Britain for its role in the slave trade, but ruled out financial compensation.

In an opinion article published in The Guardian, Burnham argued that present-day British citizens should not be held liable for historical wrongs in which they had no personal involvement. He instead proposed structured dialogue with countries and communities affected by slavery.

"I want to express my sorrow and regret for the pain and suffering of so many millions and to recognise the way it still shapes our world today," he wrote.

Pierre described Burnham's expression of sorrow and regret, along with his willingness to consider a formal apology on behalf of the British state, as a significant development.

"No British Prime Minister has gone this far before. It would be wrong of us not to say so, and we welcome it in the spirit in which it appears to be offered," Pierre said. "For more than a decade, this Community has asked for exactly such a dialogue. We are ready to engage."

However, he rejected the argument that reparations were inappropriate or that Britain's responsibility had ended because current generations had not personally participated in slavery.

"Reparatory justice has never been about individual guilt. It is about the responsibility of states and institutions – and that responsibility does not expire with the passing of generations," he said.

Pierre pointed to Britain's role in establishing, protecting and profiting from slavery, as well as its decision to compensate enslavers following emancipation while formerly enslaved people received no land, wealth or compensation.

He also noted that British taxpayers continued repaying the loan used to compensate enslavers until February 2015.



CARUICOM chairman, St Lucia PM Philip J Pierre

The consequences of slavery, Pierre said, remain evident across the Caribbean through chronic diseases, inequalities in education and economic opportunities, extractive economic structures, national debt and vulnerability to economic and climate shocks.

He maintained that while a formal apology would be an important first step, it must be accompanied by practical measures to address slavery's enduring effects.

Pierre pointed to Caricom's Ten-Point Plan for Reparatory Justice, which calls for a formal apology, public health initiatives, education and training, cultural heritage restitution and reconnection, psychological rehabilitation, technology and innovation, entrepreneurship, debt cancellation, monetary compensation and decolonization.

He said structured dialogue must include all elements of the plan, along with reparations for the genocide of Indigenous Peoples and the harm inflicted on people brought from India and China to sustain colonial systems.

"A dialogue that begins by placing reparations outside the room cannot be a complete dialogue," Pierre said.

The Caricom chair also acknowledged the UK's proposed initiative, to be led by former British Prime Minister Gordon Brown, to restructure the debt of the poorest Commonwealth countries.

He said the Community would examine the proposal but cautioned that most Caricom member states are classified as middle- or high-income economies and are often excluded from concessional debt relief despite their exposure to climate and economic shocks.

"Any initiative that is to be meaningful for our region must measure vulnerability, not income alone," he said, adding that debt relief could not replace reparatory justice.

Pierre said the Caricom Prime Ministerial Sub-Committee on Reparations, led by Barbados Prime Minister Mia Mottley, and the Caricom Reparations Commission, chaired by Sir Hilary Beckles, were prepared to work with the British Government to establish the terms, agenda and timetable for structured dialogue.

He said he looked forward to meeting Burnham in Antigua and Barbuda in the coming days during the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting.

"Our ancestors did not receive justice in their lifetime. We owe it to them, and to the generations who will come after us, to see this work through – with dignity, with patience, and with resolve," Pierre said.



Trinidad PM defends vote against UN resolution on Cuba embargo

Prime Minister Kamla Persad-Bissessar has defended Trinidad and Tobago's decision to vote against a United Nations resolution calling for an end to the United States' economic embargo on Cuba, insisting that her government supports the Cuban people but will not support what she described as a military dictatorship.

In a statement published on social media on Wednesday, Oct. 28, Persad-Bissessar said the country's position reflected its commitment to democracy, freedom and the fundamental rights of all people.

"The UNC supports the Cuban people; we do not support a military dictatorship. The Cuban people deserve democracy," she declared.

Persad-Bissessar said Trinidad and Tobago would not support Cuba's political system, arguing that its citizens should enjoy the same democratic rights and freedoms as people across the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), including the ability to freely elect and change their government.

"Why should citizens of CARICOM nations enjoy the right to freely elect and change their governments while the Cuban people are denied that same democratic choice?" she asked.

She also endorsed the position of US Secretary of State Marco Rubio, who has advocated political reforms in Cuba, saying the United States Government had been spearheading a campaign for democracy on the island.



Kamla Persad-Bissessar

Persad-Bissessar argued that appeals for compassion towards the Cuban people had been manipulated to defend a political system that denied them fundamental democratic freedoms.

While acknowledging the suffering and economic hardship experienced by ordinary Cubans, she accused the country's leadership and their families of living in luxury while the population endured difficult conditions.

"The exploitation of ordinary Cubans to support the lavish lives of those associated with the ruling regime has to end," she said.

The prime minister maintained that Trinidad and Tobago's position was directed at Cuba's political leadership and not its people, adding that her government respected the sovereign right of other nations to determine their foreign policies and expected the same consideration in return.

The statement followed Wednesday's vote at the United Nations General Assembly, where 130 countries supported a resolution calling for an end to the US economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba. Seventeen countries voted against the measure, including Trinidad and Tobago and the United States, while 25 abstained.

The resolution was adopted for the 34th consecutive year, although support fell significantly from the 165 countries that voted in favour in 2025.

Trinidad and Tobago's opposition marks a historic departure from its long-standing position on the issue. The country abstained when the resolution was first introduced in 1992 but voted in favour in every subsequent year through 2025.

The decision also placed Trinidad and Tobago at odds with most of its CARICOM partners. Seven regional countries supported the resolution, while Jamaica, Guyana and Haiti abstained. Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica and Saint Lucia did not record votes.

The annual General Assembly resolution is non-binding and does not compel the United States to lift its sanctions against Cuba.

Persad-Bissessar concluded that her government stood for democracy, freedom, human dignity and the right of every citizen, including Cubans, to determine their political future.

GPH signs 30-year cruise port deal in St. Vincent

Global Ports Holding (GPH), the world's largest cruise port operator, has signed a 30-year concession agreement with the Government of St. Vincent and the Grenadines for the development and operation of St. Vincent Cruise Port in Kingstown, the country's capital and main port.

The agreement follows a memorandum of understanding signed between GPH and the Government in June 2026 and marks an important milestone in the development of the country's cruise tourism sector.

The signing ceremony took place on Oct. 26, 2026, at Kingstown Cruise Ship Berth in the presence of Prime Minister Dr. Godwin Friday, senior government ministers and other officials.

Subject to the fulfilment of conditions under the concession agreement, GPH is expected to begin operations at St. Vincent Cruise Port in the first quarter of 2027.

Under the agreement, GPH will bring its cruise port management expertise, operational capabilities and established relationships with leading cruise lines to support the port's long-term development and strengthen St. Vincent and the Grenadines' position as a cruise destination in the Southern Caribbean.

St. Vincent Cruise Port is expected to welcome more than 250,000 cruise passengers during the 2026-27 cruise season, providing a foundation for future growth under GPH's management.

The company plans to implement a phased investment programme focused on modernizing port infrastructure, expanding berthing capacity to accommodate larger cruise ships and enhancing the overall passenger experience.

Beyond infrastructure improvements, GPH will work with the Government and local stakeholders to develop shore excursions, support local businesses and generate wider economic benefits for communities across the destination.

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Barbados eliminates mother-to-child transmission of HIV, WHO announces



Barbados has eliminated mother-to-child transmission of HIV as a public health problem, becoming one of 15 countries and territories in the Americas to achieve the milestone, the World Health Organization (WHO) has announced.

The certification follows an independent assessment confirming that Barbados met global targets for eliminating mother-to-child transmission of HIV. Between 2022 and 2024, the country recorded no new HIV infections resulting from mother-to-child transmission among infants born during the period.

Barbados now joins 26 countries and territories worldwide recognized by WHO for eliminating mother-to-child transmission of HIV, syphilis or hepatitis B, or for being on track to achieve elimination.

The Americas account for 15 of those countries and territories, making the region the global leader in these public health achievements.

WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus congratulated Barbados, highlighting its provision of free health services to pregnant women regardless of nationality.

"Barbados has shown what universal health coverage looks like in practice: free services for every pregnant woman, regardless of nationality, and care that respects her rights and privacy," he said.

The assessment found consistently high coverage of maternal health services between 2022 and 2024. Some 98% of pregnant women received antenatal care, 98% were tested for HIV, and 98% of pregnant women living with HIV received antiretroviral treatment.

Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) Director and WHO Regional Director for the Americas Jarbas Barbosa said the achievement demonstrated the importance of ensuring women and children have access to quality health services without barriers.

"This achievement means that children are born free of HIV and that women living with HIV can access the care and treatment they need. It is a proud moment for Barbados, the Caribbean, and the global effort to end AIDS in children," he said.

Barbados Minister of Health and Wellness Lisa Cummins described the recognition as a significant milestone for the country, saying it would help ensure children can live healthy lives while mothers receive the treatment and support they need during pregnancy.

A longstanding collaboration between the Barbados government, PAHO/WHO and other partners to strengthen HIV services, disease surveillance and quality of care contributed to the achievement.

Barbados' certification adds to regional efforts to eliminate mother-to-child transmission of HIV and other preventable infections through expanded access to maternal health services, testing and treatment.

10 of 22 third-country nationals have left Jamaica

Ten of the 22 individuals who arrived in Jamaica earlier this month under the Third Country Nationals (TCN) arrangement with the United States have departed the island, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade Kamina Johnson Smith has said.

Johnson Smith provided the update during Wednesday's (Oct. 28) Post-Cabinet Press Briefing at Jamaica House, noting that one individual had requested to remain in Jamaica, while discussions continue with the others regarding their departure.

The arrangement follows a memorandum of understanding (MOU) signed by the governments of Jamaica and the United States earlier this year to facilitate the temporary reception of individuals in Jamaica before their return to their countries of origin.

The transit program, supported by the International Organization for Migration (IOM), provides assistance to the individuals during their stay and facilitates their onward movement.

The agreement limits the number of people expected to arrive to no more than 25 every two weeks.

Johnson Smith reiterated that individuals with criminal histories would not be permitted to transit through Jamaica under the arrangement.

"Our country has negotiated arrangements whereby persons with criminal antecedents will not be sent to Jamaica. And what do I mean? Other than having broken the United States immigration laws, that is, having illegally entered the US, they are not criminals. Those are the persons who are sent to transit Jamaica," she said.

She added that individuals are vetted by both the United States and Jamaica before being allowed to enter the island.

The MOU also provides for the suspension of the arrangement if 10 individuals apply to remain in Jamaica through asylum applications or other humanitarian processes.



Kamina Johnson Smith

Holness urges Jamaicans to get NIDS cards to access assistance

Prime Minister Andrew Holness is urging Jamaicans to obtain their National Identification System (NIDS) cards and maintain active bank accounts to help speed up the processing of government assistance, including housing and disaster-relief grants.

Holness made the appeal Friday, Oct. 30, during the handover of a three-bedroom house under the New Social Housing Programme (NSHP) in Guy's Hill, St. Catherine.

He said incorrect identification and banking information, dormant accounts and competing claims to damaged properties have delayed payments to beneficiaries under the Restoration of Owner or Occupant Family Shelters (ROOFS) programme.

The prime minister urged residents to ensure that their personal information, Tax Registration Number (TRN) and banking details are accurate and up to date.

The government is working toward a more streamlined system that would allow verified beneficiaries to receive assistance electronically, with fewer administrative delays, he said.

"I am asking for your cooperation. Get identified, open and maintain a bank account, and keep your information up to date. It is an important step in ensuring that you can access the assistance available to you," Holness said.

He said the government verifies applicants' identities, circumstances and eligibility before allocating assistance through social welfare programmes, including the NSHP.

The process includes physical inspections and social investigations, with officials consulting community members, relatives, schools and justices of the peace to determine whether applicants qualify for assistance.



Jamaica PM Andrew Holness

Additional requirements depend on the type of support being provided. People receiving cash transfers must have functioning bank accounts, while those receiving land or houses must demonstrate legal ownership or obtain permission to occupy the property through an appropriate long-term lease.

Holness said the measures are intended to ensure that public assistance reaches eligible beneficiaries and that permanent assets, such as houses, are protected against competing ownership claims.

He acknowledged that verification can lengthen the time needed to deliver assistance but said accurate, up-to-date information can help prevent unnecessary delays.

Caricom observers in Grenada for general election

The Caribbean Community (CARICOM) has deployed an 11-member election observation mission to Grenada ahead of the country's Nov. 5 general election.

The CARICOM Election Observation Mission (CEOM) was established following an invitation from the Grenadian government dated Oct. 5. It comprises senior electoral officials from eight CARICOM member states and three members of the CARICOM Secretariat, who will provide administrative and logistical support.

The mission is headed by Herman St. Helen, chief elections officer of the Saint Lucia Electoral Department. Sase Gunraj, commissioner of the Guyana Elections Commission, will serve as deputy chief of mission.

Other members include representatives from Antigua and Barbuda, The Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Jamaica, and St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

The mission's core group arrived in Grenada on Oct. 29 and 30, while the remaining members are expected to arrive on Nov. 1. The team is scheduled to depart between Nov. 6 and 7.

During its deployment, the mission will assess the pre-election environment, the conduct of voting on Election Day and the immediate post-election period, including the response to the election results.

As part of its preliminary engagements, the team has met with Gloria Thomas, chairperson of the National Democratic Congress (NDC); Emmalin Pierre, leader of the New National Party (NNP); Police Commissioner Randy Connaught and his commanding officers; Calistra Farrier, chairperson of the Media Workers Association of Grenada; Peter David, leader of the Democratic People's Movement (DPM); and political and social analyst Kem Jones.

The mission also plans to meet with Supervisor of Elections Arthur Pierre, Progressive Labour Party (PLP) leader Jonathan La Crette, representatives of other international election observation missions, the Council for the Disabled, political analyst Jennifer Simon, the Grenada Chamber of Commerce and the Grenada Trades' Union Council.

On Nov. 5, observers will monitor preparations for the opening of polling stations, the casting of ballots, the closure of polls, the counting process and the declaration of results. They will also assess the immediate post-election atmosphere.



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Chase, Warrican rip through Bangladesh as WI seize control

Roston Chase and Jomel Warrican transformed the contest with a devastating spell of spin bowling on the third afternoon in Dhaka, reducing Bangladesh to 79 for 6 and leaving the hosts with a lead of just 106 runs when bad light brought an early end to play.

Bangladesh had appeared to be in a favorable position after securing a narrow first-innings advantage, but the West Indies mounted a fierce response, taking six wickets in a dramatic afternoon session to turn the pressure firmly back on the home side.

Chase delivered the initial blow, claiming three wickets for three runs in just 10 deliveries, while Warrican followed with two more after the interval. The collapse left Bangladesh struggling to recover, with only Nayeem Hasan and concussion substitute Jaker Ali managing to offer meaningful resistance.

The slide began when Tanzid Hasan, who had scored only seven in the first innings, edged Shamar Joseph to Chase at second slip for a four-ball duck.

Chase then took charge in the 11th over, removing first-innings centurion Shadman Islam for 13 after the opener played around a straight delivery and was bowled.

Two balls later, Towhid Hridoy attempted another aerial stroke but picked out Jayden Seales at mid-on. Bangladesh captain Najmul Hossain Shanto followed when Chase beat him with another delivery that skidded on, trapping him lbw for 10.

That remarkable burst left Chase with three wickets for three runs from 10 balls and Bangladesh in serious trouble at 34 for 4 at tea.

Warrican deepens the damage

The break did little to halt the West Indies momentum. Warrican took over after tea, drawing Litton Das forward with a delivery that drifted and turned just enough to trap him lbw for four, clipping the top of the back pad.

He struck again in his next over, using a quicker arm-ball to beat Mehidy Hasan Miraz and pin him in front for the second time in the match.



Roston Chase — delivered the initial blow

At 53 for 6, Bangladesh were facing the prospect of an even more damaging collapse. Nayeem and Jaker, brought into the side as a concussion substitute for Mominul Haque after a fielding mishap earlier in the match, steadied the innings with an unbeaten 26-run partnership.

Their resistance carried Bangladesh to 79 for 6 before deteriorating light forced the players from the field, an hour before the scheduled 4:30 p.m. close.

Nayeem's four wickets give Bangladesh narrow advantage

The West Indies had earlier been dismissed for 245, giving Bangladesh a first-innings lead of 27 runs after Nayeem completed an impressive four-wicket haul.

Tagenarine Chanderpaul resumed the day on his overnight score and continued to bat with patience, reaching 50 by lofting Taijul Islam for six, the first boundary of the day.

His determined innings ended at 56 from 184 balls when Shoriful Islam had him caught at second slip.

Chase and Justin Greaves then added 51 runs to rebuild the West Indies innings, but Nayeem broke their partnership by trapping Greaves lbw for 46.

After lunch, Mehidy removed Joshua Bishop with a low-bouncing stumping during an expensive 10-run over.

Nayeem then took control of the tail, having Shamar Joseph caught behind and trapping Warrican lbw in the same over. Seales was the final wicket, caught at mid-off for a duck as the West Indies innings closed at 245.

Bangladesh's 27-run advantage appeared useful at that stage, but the home side's second-innings collapse has left the match finely poised, and the West Indies firmly in contention to take control.

Windies Over-40s rout Wales for third IMC World Cup

Jason Mohamed unleashed a breathtaking unbeaten century, and captain Larry Farnum delivered a second hundred as the West Indies Over-40s overwhelmed Wales by 181 runs in the International Masters Cricket (IMC) Over-40s World Cup on Sunday.

Mohamed smashed 151 not out from just 68 deliveries, including 12 sixes and four boundaries, while Farnum contributed 119 from 113 balls to propel the West Indies to an imposing 372-2 in their allotted 45 overs at Anna Regina National Stadium.

The emphatic victory marked the regional side's third win in the competition, with their formidable batting display setting up a total that Wales never seriously threatened to chase.

The West Indies' innings gathered momentum through a series of substantial partnerships after Randy Thomas fell early for eight.

Farnum and Chattergoon steadied the innings with a 122-run stand, although the captain briefly retired hurt after reaching 50 from 73 balls, which included six fours.

Mohamed then joined Farnum in a partnership worth 142 runs that dramatically accelerated the scoring rate. The pair attacked the Welsh bowling with increasing authority, pushing the run rate beyond nine and a half an over.

Farnum eventually departed in the 40th over, bowled by Lee Dixon, after striking 14 fours and two sixes. By then, the West Indies had advanced to 272-2 and were positioned to launch a devastating finish.

Larry Babb joined Mohamed for the closing assault, and the pair turned the final five overs into a procession of boundaries as Wales struggled to contain the scoring.

The West Indies plundered 100 runs during that period, carrying their total to 372-2 and leaving the visitors with a daunting target.

Mohamed remained unbeaten on 151, having scored at a remarkable rate, while Babb provided a powerful finishing contribution with 30 not out from only 13 balls. His innings featured three sixes and two fours.

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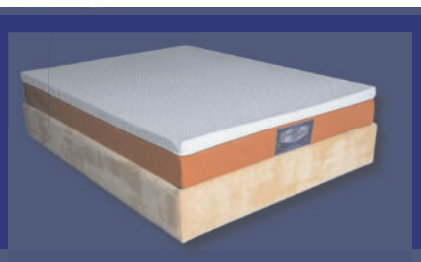
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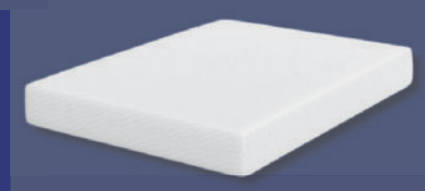
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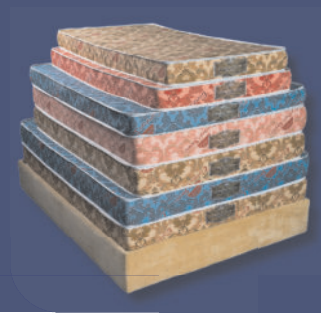
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Tourism Is Everybody's Business Campaign	Nov 1 - 30	Online/Physical
Communications/PR-Advertising & Marketing Support, Banners, Videos, Ads	Nov 1 - 30	Online/Physical
TOURVEMBER	Nov 1 - 30	Discounted curated tour packages across Destination Guyana
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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