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Thursday October 1 2026. Volume 44, Issue #40 www.equalitynews.ca. For advertising, call 647-216-2359



Mia celebrates Barbadians in Canada

Toronto's Barbadian community gathered in celebration of heritage, achievement and the next generation as the Barbados Diamond Charity Ball welcomed Barbados Prime Minister Mia Amor Mottley as its featured speaker. The gala brought together more than 800 members of the Barbadian diaspora, dignitaries, community leaders and friends of Barbados for an evening that combined celebration with a commitment to education and community development.

Prime Minister Mottley's appearance in Toronto came during an important milestone year for Barbados. In 2026, the country marks 60 years since achieving independence in 1966 and five years since becoming a parliamentary republic. The Government of Barbados has organized activities at home and internationally to commemorate what it calls the country's "60 and 5" anniversary.

At the Diamond Charity Ball, that milestone was also an opportunity to look toward the future. Education was a major focus of the evening, with 24 scholarships awarded to students. Mottley spoke to themes including education, opportunity and investing in the next generation. The Prime Minister also announced that not just the Canadian-born children, but the grandchildren of Barbadians, will now have a pathway to citizenship in the island, adding that "One drop of Bajan blood makes you a Barbadian."

— Courtesy Terrence Afu



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World mourns The King of Calypso

Tributes continue to pour in for calypso icon Slinger "The Mighty Sparrow" Francisco, with national and regional leaders, artistes and cultural organisations mourning the loss of one of Trinidad and Tobago's most influential cultural figures. Sparrow, 91, who died peacefully Sunday surrounded by family in New York, is being remembered as a giant of Caribbean culture, whose music, wit and unmistakable voice helped define calypso, Carnival and the identity of T&T for generations. Among those paying tribute were Prime Minister Kamla Persad-Bissessar and regional leaders, including Guyana President Irfaan Ali (*see Page 21*), who described his death as the end of an era in Caribbean music and culture.

Persad-Bissessar described Sparrow as a patriot and a revered ambassador of T&T's culture, saying his music, wit and artistic contributions carried the nation's spirit and stories to audiences around the world.

Barbados Prime Minister Mia Mottley said Sparrow had been woven into the fabric of Caribbean civilisation for seven decades, with his music capturing the region's history and spirit. She said calypso had given ordinary West Indians a voice and Sparrow carried that voice to the world through his unmatched talent.

Meanwhile, US Congresswoman Yvette Clarke has also paid tribute to Sparrow, describing him as a cultural institution whose music and influence transcended the Caribbean and reached audiences worldwide.

Sparrow was born in Grenada and raised in Trinidad and Tobago. He later moved to New York, where he died.

The T&T Government said it was waiting on directions from the family before making any announcement on his funeral arrangements.

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Ontario offers \$ support to firms hit by tariffs

By Milan Maharaj
LJI REPORTER

The government of Ontario is making additional financial support available to employees and firms impacted by the new U.S. trade actions against the Canadian export industry. New tariffs and restrictions are expected to impact various sectors across Ontario.

The Ontario government announced on September 10 that it is widening the scope of its financial assistance through the Protect Ontario Financing Program and the Ontario Together Trade Fund, amounting to a total value of \$1 billion and \$150 million respectively.

In the new list of goods and services, certain metal products including steel and

aluminum; mattresses, furniture, paper goods, motorboats and golf carts, dairy, leather and hides are all goods that are included. In addition, some of the U.S. import restrictions against Canadian goods include alcoholic beverages, dairy, and motorcycles.

The Protect Ontario Financing Program offers financing that firms can utilize for their expenses, including payroll, rent and utilities. The Ontario Together Trade Fund offers financial assistance to small and medium enterprises trying to grow their businesses within Canada.

Ontario also announced that eligibility for these programs would be extended as soon as the corresponding measures imposed by the U.S. take effect for each set of exports.

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Liberal Government of Canada, is where Frank McKenna and Justin Trudeau still have a presence.

Frank McKenna, one of our last Finance Ministers and a MacLeod family friend, trusts me, Norman MacLeod.

Justin Trudeau former PMO, had his cottage across the North Miramichi from the Willy Irving, MacLeod camp.

Justin trusts me.

I am still the only man in Toronto Municipal Politics trusted federally and wanted in Toronto council, as insurance against spending Our People's money.

I am trusted, because The Right Hournable Frank McKenna, Pierre Elliot and Justin Trudeau.

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PRESIDENT ALI BACKS RODRIGUES-BIRKETT AS GUYANA PUSHES FOR UN REFORM



President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali addresses world leaders at the 81st Session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York.

GUYANA DRAWS CLEAR LINE ON BORDER DISPUTE AS VENEZUELA CALLS FOR RETURN TO TALKS

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PRESIDENT ALI BRINGS GUYANA'S FUTURE INTO FOCUS
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PRESIDENT ALI BACKS RODRIGUES-BIRKETT AS GUYANA PUSHES FOR UN REFORM



President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali addresses the 81st UNGA Session in New York

Guyana is putting the UN's commitments into meaningful action. Ambassador Carolyn Rodrigues-Birkett at the centre of its argument for a United Nations (UN) that better reflects the world it is expected to serve, with President, Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali linking her candidacy for Secretary-General to a wider push to reform the organisation's leadership and power structures.

Addressing the 81st United Nations General Assembly, President Ali argued that restoring confidence in multilateralism requires more than defending the existing system. It requires leadership capable of bridging divisions, strengthening cooperation and turning

the UN's commitments into meaningful action. **"The United Nations needs leadership that can bring its different organs, agencies, and programmes into greater unity of purpose, leadership that can build bridges where division has become habitual,"** he told world leaders.

It was against that backdrop that President Ali made the case for Rodrigues-Birkett, Guyana's Permanent Representative to the UN, whose candidacy was endorsed by CARICOM Heads of Government. If selected, she would become the first Caribbean woman

to serve as Secretary-General.

President Ali pointed to Rodrigues-Birkett's experience, convictions and record of service, including her journey from an Indigenous village to one of the highest levels of international diplomacy.

"We believe that her experience, her convictions, her record of service speak directly to the kind of leadership this moment demands," he said.

But the nomination was presented as more than a national bid for the UN's top diplomatic post. It was positioned within Guyana's broader argument that the institution itself must change.

President Ali called for permanent representation for Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean on the Security Council, arguing that its existing structure reflects the geopolitical balance of 1945 rather than the realities of the 21st century.

"We need a Security Council

that reflects the geopolitical realities of the 21st century, not the power structures of 1945," he declared.

Guyana's position carries particular weight after completing a two-year term as a non-permanent Security Council member in 2024-2025, giving the country recent experience inside the body it is calling to be restructured.

President Ali also called for a stronger General Assembly, greater transparency and accountability, and a UN capable of responding more effectively to global challenges.

The connection between reform and leadership is central to Guyana's argument that institutions cannot renew themselves without leaders prepared to push that change.

For Rodrigues-Birkett, that case is already part of her campaign. In presenting her vision for the UN, she has advocated reforms aimed at making the organisation more



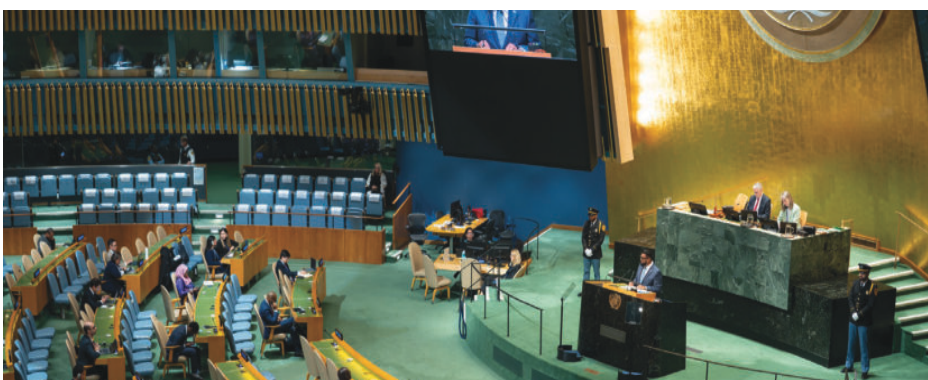
Carolyn Rodrigues-Birkett presents her vision during the informal dialogue for candidates seeking the post of UN Secretary-General.



Carolyn Rodrigues-Birkett (left), Guyana's candidate for UN Secretary-General, participates in an informal dialogue at UN Headquarters

agile and effective in confronting conflict, development deficits and other global challenges. **"Look beyond the small country that nominated her,"** President Ali urged the Assembly. **"CARICOM as a body has endorsed her."**

GUYANA DRAWS CLEAR LINE ON BORDER DISPUTE AS VENEZUELA CALLS FOR RETURN TO TALKS



President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali delivers Guyana's address at the 81st Session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York.

Guyana has reaffirmed its commitment to the International Court of Justice (ICJ) as the country's legal case against Venezuela moves toward a ruling, with President, Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali telling the United Nations that Guyana will abide by the Court's decision and expects Venezuela to do the same.

President Ali's declaration came less than 24 hours after Venezuela's acting President Delcy Rodríguez used the same UN General

Assembly podium to call on Guyana to return to bilateral negotiations under the 1966 Geneva Agreement.

Rodríguez said Venezuela continued to assert its "historic rights" over the Essequibo and argued that lasting agreements are better achieved through bilateral negotiations than through external institutions.

President Ali, addressing the 81st UN General Assembly, presented a different account of how the dispute reached the World Court, stressing

that Guyana's recourse to the ICJ followed decades of efforts to settle the controversy bilaterally.

"Recourse to the ICJ came after decades of efforts to resolve the controversy bilaterally," he said, pointing to previous mechanisms including a mixed commission and the UN Secretary-General's good offices.

The contrast places the forthcoming ICJ ruling at the centre of the diplomatic positions presented by both countries before

the international community.

Guyana filed the case in 2018 after the UN Secretary-General referred the controversy to the ICJ under the Geneva Agreement. The Court subsequently affirmed its jurisdiction, and substantive hearings on the merits were completed in May 2026.

President Ali said Guyana participated in those proceedings in full respect for international law and urged Venezuela to do likewise.

"Now that we have both participated in the hearings, which were completed in May 2026, we urge Venezuela to abide by the forthcoming ruling in accordance with their obligation under the UN Charter, as Guyana will do," he told world leaders.

The President also sought to frame the legal process as a pathway toward improved

relations rather than an end in itself.

Guyana, he said, hopes the Court's decision will open a new chapter between the neighbouring states, serving the interests of their peoples and contributing to regional stability and prosperity.

The exchange at the UN unfolded against the backdrop of the 81st General Assembly, held under the theme **"Restoring Trust, Managing**

Transformation: A United Nations That Delivers for All".

President Ali's intervention placed Guyana's position firmly on the international record: after decades of bilateral efforts and with both countries having participated in the ICJ hearings, Georgetown is now looking to the Court's forthcoming ruling as the next step in resolving the longstanding border controversy.



Guyanese delegates show their support as President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali addresses the 81st UN General Assembly.

PRESIDENT ALI JOINS HEMISPHERIC LEADERS IN FIGHT AGAINST NARCO-TERRORISM



President Ali participates alongside US President Donald Trump and regional leaders at the Shield of the Americas

President, Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali joined United States (US) President Donald Trump and leaders from across the Western Hemisphere to advance a coordinated regional strategy aimed at confronting narco-terrorism, transnational crime and other security threats that continue to challenge countries throughout the Americas.

Meeting on the sidelines of the 81st United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in New York, leaders of the Shield of the Americas adopted a Joint Communiqué committing member states to closer cooperation across economic, security and multilateral priorities.

The gathering signals a growing effort by countries in the hemisphere to address threats that increasingly transcend national borders, including drug trafficking networks, organised crime and illicit financial activities.

For Guyana, participation in the initiative reflects the government's broader push to strengthen security partnerships as the country's economic profile and strategic importance continue to expand.

President Ali was joined by Foreign Secretary Robert Persaud and Guyana's Permanent Representative to the UN, Ambassador Carolyn Rodrigues-Birkett.

The Shield of the Americas brings together

15 countries from North America, South America, Central America and the Caribbean, creating a platform for collective action on regional security and stability.

The coalition was launched in March this year at the inaugural summit in Doral, Florida, where leaders signed the Doral Charter and committed to dismantling drug cartels and transnational criminal organisations while promoting peace and stability across the hemisphere.

Guyana was among a select group of Caribbean nations invited to participate in the founding summit, underscoring the country's growing role in regional and international affairs.

Speaking earlier this

year during celebrations marking six decades of Guyana-US relations, President Ali identified security cooperation as a key pillar of the bilateral partnership.

"That is why we are a founding member of the Shield

of the Americas," he stated.

The latest communiqué reinforces that commitment, placing Guyana alongside regional partners in a coordinated effort to build a safer, more resilient hemisphere.



President Ali participates alongside US President Donald Trump and regional leaders at the Shield of the Americas

BARBADOS PM TAKES CARIBBEAN CASE FOR RODRIGUES-BIRKETT TO UN FLOOR

The campaign to place a Caribbean national at the helm of the United Nations has gained another high-level voice, with Barbados Prime Minister Mia Mottley using the 81st UN General Assembly to put the region's case for Guyana's Ambassador Carolyn Rodrigues-Birkett before the international community.

Mottley told world leaders that Rodrigues-

Birkett possesses the **"experience, the skills and the understanding"** to serve the entire UN membership at a time when confidence in multilateralism is being tested.

The intervention adds weight to a regional position already backed by CARICOM Heads of Government, who have formally endorsed Guyana's nomination of Rodrigues-Birkett.



Barbados PM puts Caribbean weight behind Rodrigues-Birkett at UN Barbados PM puts Caribbean weight behind Rodrigues-Birkett at UN Barbados PM puts Caribbean weight behind Rodrigues-Birkett at UN

For Guyana, the significance extends beyond a national nomination. Rodrigues-Birkett is now one of the formally nominated candidates in the UN's selection process, having presented her vision for the organisation during an interactive dialogue with member states and civil society in June.

The next stage, however, rests with the Security Council, which must recommend

a candidate to the General Assembly. The Council's five permanent members, China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States, hold permanent seats in the process.

If successful, Rodrigues-Birkett would bring a Caribbean voice to the UN's top post, turning a regional call for greater representation into a global leadership proposition.

THE WORLD NEEDS MORE PEACE, NOT MORE WAR -PRESIDENT ALI



The world needs more peace, not more war -President Ali

The international community has developed increasingly sophisticated means of waging war, but not the diplomatic capacity needed to prevent conflicts from destroying

lives, uprooting families and reversing development, President, Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali told world leaders at the 81st United Nations General Assembly.

Making peace

the central thread of Guyana's intervention, President Ali challenged the international system to move beyond managing the consequences of conflict and strengthen its ability to prevent and resolve crises through diplomacy.

"The world does not need more sophisticated instruments of destruction. It needs a more sophisticated capacity for peace," he declared.

The appeal was most pointed in relation to the Middle East, where President Ali renewed

Guyana's call for a just and lasting settlement that ends civilian suffering, recognises the Palestinian people's right to self-determination and supports their right to a secure homeland.

Guyana also reaffirmed its support for a two-state solution, placing diplomacy and a political settlement at the centre of its position on the conflict.

But President Ali's message extended well beyond the Middle East. He called for an end to the war between Russia and Ukraine, the conflict in Sudan and other crises that continue to consume

lives and undermine development.

For Guyana, the common thread is the failure of conflict to produce durable solutions, and the need for multilateral institutions to do more than respond once crises have already escalated.

That argument also shaped President Ali's position on Haiti, where he called for sustained international support to address the country's security, political and development challenges while insisting that outside assistance must strengthen rather than displace Haitian leadership.

"Ultimately, the future of Haiti must be Haitian-led and

Haitian-owned," he said.

He similarly reiterated Guyana's support for a peaceful, people-centred and development-focused solution for Cuba, with CARICOM prepared to contribute to that effort.

President Ali placed these conflicts within a wider crisis of multilateralism, alongside climate change, food insecurity, biodiversity loss, geopolitical tensions, inequality and rising living costs.

The message came at the UN's 81st session focused on "Restoring Trust, Managing Transformation: A United Nations That Delivers for All".

US EXIM EYES FINANCING FOR GTE-2, DEEPWATER PORT AND HOUSING PROJECTS

The United States Export-Import (EXIM) Bank is preparing to deepen its investment footprint in Guyana, signalling support for a second Gas-to-Energy (GTE) project, the Deepwater Port in Berbice and other strategic initiatives as the country advances its next wave of transformative infrastructure developments.

The expanded partnership was discussed during a meeting between President, Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali and EXIM

Chairman and President, John Jovanovic in New York.

President Ali said EXIM will continue supporting the completion of the Gas-to-Energy Project at Wales, Region Three, while indicating its willingness to become involved in a second gas project as Guyana expands its energy infrastructure to support industrial growth.

The bank is also expected to participate in the investment structure for the Deepwater Port, a key project intended



President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali with EXIM Chairman John Jovanovic in New York

to strengthen Guyana's trade and logistics capabilities.

"EXIM will be part of a structure that will see the investment in this port, the widening

of EXIM support and investment in Guyana, now into housing, security and other areas of national interest and on our transformation agenda," President Ali said.

The discussions also covered affordable housing initiatives being pursued with US companies, as well as other infrastructure priorities identified by the government.

Jovanovic said the talks focused on taking the US-Guyana

partnership to a higher level through investments that support economic growth and long-term development.

He noted that reliable energy generation remains central to Guyana's industrialisation plans, describing the completion of the first Gas-to-Energy project and the advancement of a second project as important components of that strategy.

Both sides credited their respective teams for advancing cooperation in recent months, with President Ali thanking EXIM for its growing partnership with Guyana and its support for the country's development agenda.

PRESIDENT ALI SEES QATAR MODEL AS BLUEPRINT FOR GUYANA'S NEXT ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION



President Ali during his recent state visit to Qatar, advancing Guyana-Qatar cooperation and investment opportunities

President, Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali has signalled that Guyana's long-term prosperity will depend not on simply exporting its natural gas, but on using it to build industries capable of creating jobs, generating value and sustaining economic growth for decades to come.

Drawing lessons from Qatar's transformation into one of the world's most successful energy-driven economies, President Ali said Guyana is pursuing a development model centred on industrialisation, diversification and the creation of home-grown demand for energy.

a special interview on Guyana-Qatar relations, the president pointed to Qatar's ability to convert its gas resources into manufacturing, food security, education, tourism and broader economic development despite having a relatively small population.

"Qatar really gives us that platform of partnership that understands the challenges of small population, but also converts those challenges into opportunities," President Ali said. "That is why I see Qatar as a model that is highly applicable."

The head of state argued that Guyana's opportunities may be

even greater because of its broader natural resource base, including freshwater, fertile agricultural lands and a range of mineral resources.

He said advice received by the government consistently points toward bringing natural gas onshore and using it as the foundation for downstream industries rather than pursuing a strategy focused solely on exporting the resource.

"We want to create long-term opportunity. We want to create opportunities for Guyana for the next 50, 60 years," President Ali stated.

According to the president, natural gas

can underpin a range of industries, including alumina production using Guyana's bauxite resources, large-scale fertiliser manufacturing to support regional agriculture, hyperscale data centres, agro-processing facilities and advanced manufacturing operations.

Such investments, he explained, would generate demand throughout the economy, strengthening transportation networks, boosting port activity and creating new commercial links with markets across the Caribbean and northern Brazil.

President Ali also revealed that discussions with Qatar have expanded beyond energy cooperation to

include infrastructure, agriculture, food security, mining and hospitality.

A major area of interest is Guyana's proposed deepwater port, a multi-billion-US-dollar project being developed with Bechtel. Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United States Export-Import Bank have all indicated interest in participating.

The two countries are expected to develop a national project framework in the coming weeks to identify priority areas for cooperation, as Guyana advances a strategy aimed at converting current energy resources into long-term economic opportunities for future generations.

PRESIDENT ALI PITCHES GUYANA'S NEXT GROWTH FRONTIERS TO GLOBAL INVESTORS

President, Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali used his United Nations (UN) General Assembly engagements to position Guyana's next phase of growth around a broader investment landscape spanning energy, agriculture, mining, infrastructure, biodiversity and human capital.

Addressing an economic discussion hosted by the FIU Adam Smith Center for Economic Freedom at the Harvard Club of New York City, President Ali outlined opportunities for investors as Guyana seeks to build productive capacity, expand connectivity and open new markets beyond its rapidly growing oil and gas sector.

The president identified energy, mining, agriculture and infrastructure among the areas with significant potential, while highlighting biodiversity and environmental sustainability as emerging components of Guyana's economic development strategy.

He also emphasised that investment in



The bilateral discussions with Saudi Arabia's Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Adel al-Jubeir in New York

people must accompany investment in physical infrastructure, pointing to the government's drive to strengthen human capital to support

both emerging and established industries.

A central part of the message was the role of Guyanese businesses.

P r e s i d e n t

Ali underscored opportunities for collaboration between international investors and local companies as Guyana expands connectivity, strengthens productive capacity and positions itself to access new markets.

The investment push also featured in bilateral discussions with Saudi Arabia's Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Adel al-Jubeir in New York.

The two sides discussed advancing investment cooperation

and strengthening bilateral relations, adding another dimension to Guyana's efforts to broaden its international investment partnerships.

The Saudi engagement follows a wider expansion of economic cooperation between the two countries, including Saudi-supported infrastructure and housing investments.

The engagements underscore a deliberate effort to present Guyana not simply as an emerging petroleum producer, but as an economy with opportunities across multiple sectors.

GLOBAL BANKING GIANT CITI ESTABLISHES GUYANA OFFICE



Citi opens Guyana office, strengthening access to global capital

Guyana’s expanding economy has secured a new link to global financial markets with the official opening of Citi’s representative office, strengthening the country’s access to international financing, expertise and cross-border business

opportunities. President, Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali officially opened the Georgetown office, marking Citi’s formal on-the-ground entry into Guyana after nearly three decades of maintaining a relationship with the country without a local presence.

The move comes amid rapid expansion in Guyana’s infrastructure, investment and export sectors, areas Citi identified as key drivers behind its decision to establish the office. The bank said its local presence will help connect clients and partners to global markets while

supporting the country’s financial infrastructure and major development projects.

For Guyana, the significance extends beyond the establishment of another financial institution. The office creates a direct local channel into Citi’s international network at a time when the economy is generating greater demand for sophisticated financing, cross-border transactions and investment partnerships. “Citi bank’s presence opens another important door between Guyana and the international financial architecture, where

capital can flow, ideas can travel, partnerships can be built, and opportunities can be created,” President Ali said.

Citi’s Head of Latin America, Julio Figueroa, said the office will strengthen collaboration with the Government, its agencies, financial institutions and the private sector, while supporting Guyana’s economic growth and Citi’s wider Latin American operations.

The President had previewed the development days earlier, linking Citi’s arrival to the growing scale of investment and



Citi opens Guyana office, strengthening access to global capital

development activity in Guyana, and the increasing need for international financial services.

President Ali also said the Government is working with international partners on a framework to combine government-to-government financing with international

financial resources to support major projects of national, regional and global significance.

Citi’s entry adds another international financial connection to an economy increasingly seeking to mobilise capital for infrastructure, industry and long-term development.

GUYANA DEVELOPMENT BANK TO BE LAUNCHED ON OCTOBER 5

Thousands of aspiring entrepreneurs and small business owners who have struggled to secure financing from traditional banks will soon gain access to a new source of capital when the Guyana Development Bank begins operations on October 5.

Backed by an initial US\$100 million investment, the institution is expected to widen access to financing by offering eligible borrowers loans of up to G\$3 million, including zero-interest and zero-collateral options.

Mohamed Irfaan Ali said the initiative is designed to remove two of the biggest obstacles facing small entrepreneurs: high borrowing costs and collateral requirements.

The financing will target productive sectors such as agriculture, agro-processing, manufacturing, tourism, services and technology, with borrowers also receiving mentorship, training and technical assistance aimed at improving long-term business success.

The launch follows the signing and gazetting of the Commencement Order

by Senior Minister in the Office of the President with Responsibility for Finance, Dr Ashni Singh, officially bringing the institution into operation. The enabling legislation was passed in the National Assembly on July 27 and assented to on July 30.

Officials expect the bank to play a major role in supporting small and medium-sized enterprises, particularly among women, youth and persons with disabilities who often face challenges accessing conventional credit.

Beyond the initial financing, successful

applicants may qualify for up to G\$7 million in additional funding through co-financing arrangements with commercial institutions.

The Development Bank is being launched at a time of rapid growth within Guyana’s financial sector. Private sector credit and commercial bank deposits more than doubled between 2020 and 2025, while non-performing loans declined sharply.

By targeting entrepreneurs who have viable ideas but limited access to capital, the institution is expected to become a key tool

 The Official Gazette (EXTRAORDINARY) OF GUYANA Published by the Authority of the Government	
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Commencement Order to operationalise the Guyana Development Bank. A first tranche of US\$100 million (\$20 billion) would be injected at start-up

for expanding business ownership, encouraging investment in non-oil sectors and ensuring more Guyanese benefit directly from economic growth.

DEVELOPMENT BANK TO REACH HINTERLAND COMMUNITIES THROUGH APP AND BANKING DESKS



A bank teller assisting a customer with currency and documents at Guyana Development Bank

The Guyana Development Bank will take its services directly into communities across the country through a mobile application, dedicated desks in commercial bank branches and a network

of local business facilitators, ensuring entrepreneurs can access financing regardless of where they live.

President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali announced the measures during discussions with

representatives of the banking sector, private sector organisations, entrepreneurs and community advocates ahead of the bank’s October 5 launch.

The initiative is intended to close longstanding gaps in access to financing, particularly in hinterland, riverain and rural communities where distance and limited financial infrastructure have often prevented entrepreneurs from accessing support.

Through the mobile application, individuals will be able to submit financing requests

without travelling to a physical office, while dedicated service desks within existing commercial bank branches will provide the institution with an immediate nationwide footprint.

The government also plans to train successful entrepreneurs within communities to help residents refine business ideas, prepare proposals and become investment-ready before seeking financing.

President Ali said the objective is not simply to approve loans but to build stronger and more sustainable businesses.

Under the model, entrepreneurs will receive support in developing proposals, accessing technical services and linking their businesses to existing government programmes and market opportunities.

The president noted that the approach could help small operators collaborate on larger ventures, particularly in sectors such as agriculture and tourism, allowing communities to benefit from economies of scale and improved productivity.

He also emphasised that the Development

Bank is intended to complement, rather than compete with, commercial banks by helping unlock opportunities that might otherwise remain outside the formal financial system.

By combining financing with mentorship, technical assistance and nationwide access points, the institution is expected to extend entrepreneurial opportunities to communities that have traditionally faced the greatest barriers to capital.

GUYANA MOVES TO PROTECT 1.5 MILLION HECTARES OF PRISTINE FOREST



President Ali outlined Guyana's contribution to the global 30x30 conservation target at the United Nations 30x30 Leaders Event

Guyana is single conservation advancing plans to place approximately 1.5 million hectares of pristine forest in the Acarai-Rupununi corridor under permanent protection, a move President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali said could become one of the largest

Guyana's contribution to the global effort to protect 30 per cent of the world's land and oceans by 2030.

The proposed conservation area covers a vast expanse of intact forest in southeastern Guyana and is home to exceptional biodiversity.

An international team of scientists and Indigenous experts who surveyed the area in 2024 identified more than 30 species believed to be new to science, along with dozens of species never previously recorded in Guyana.

"As this process moves forward, this area will likely be one of the largest single



President Ali outlined Guyana's contribution to the global 30x30 conservation target at the United Nations 30x30 Leaders Event

blocks of permanent conservation designated globally by a High Forest Cover, Low Deforestation country," President Ali said.

The head of state noted that the designation would make a significant

contribution to Guyana's 30x30 commitment and could effectively double the country's area under permanent conservation.

Guyana currently has about nine per cent of its landmass under protected status, while approximately 85 per cent of the country

remains forested.

President Ali said the initiative will be supported through Guyana's Low Carbon Development Strategy (LCDS) 2030, which combines forest conservation with sustainable economic development and directs 20 per cent of forest-carbon revenues to Indigenous and forest communities.

The president also used the forum to promote the work of the Global Biodiversity Alliance, founded by Guyana, and announced that the country will host the alliance's second conference and financing forum on October 30 and 31, 2026, aimed at mobilising greater global investment in biodiversity protection.

WORLD MUST PREPARE NOW TO PREVENT THE NEXT PANDEMIC CATASTROPHE - PRESIDENT ALI

President, Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali has called for pandemic prevention and preparedness to move beyond the health sector and become a sustained priority for economic resilience, national security and development.

Addressing a high-level dialogue on the sidelines of the 81st United Nations General Assembly, President Ali argued that the lessons of recent health crises should translate into permanent investments in the systems and capacity needed to detect and contain future

outbreaks before they overwhelm societies and economies.

"While we cannot prevent every outbreak, we can prevent an outbreak from becoming a catastrophe," the president said.

The dialogue, themed **"Two Regions, One Future: Financing Pandemic Prevention, Preparedness and Response to Build Global Health Security"**, was convened by Guyana and Burundi in collaboration with the Pan American Health Organization



President Ali at the Guyana-Burundi high-level dialogue, held in collaboration with PAHO, Africa CDC and the United Nations Foundation

(PAHO), Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC) and the United Nations Foundation. The organisers specifically positioned sustained financing as a foundation for global health security,

economic resilience and sustainable development.

President Ali said pandemic preparedness cannot be left to health ministries alone, warning that vulnerabilities extend across economies

and societies.

He called for stronger laboratories and hospitals, trained personnel, resilient critical systems and greater investment in scientific and technological capacity.

The president also pressed for deeper cross-border cooperation, arguing that countries can strengthen their collective ability to respond by pooling resources, sharing technology and scientific expertise and expanding the capacity to manufacture life-saving medicines closer to where they are needed.

The call comes as PAHO and Africa CDC have similarly urged sustained investment and stronger cooperation between Africa and the Americas to strengthen pandemic prevention, preparedness and response.

For Guyana, the initiative also places the country at the centre of a wider push to connect health preparedness with economic and national security planning, rather than treating pandemic response as an emergency measure activated only after a crisis has begun.

PRESIDENT ALI TELLS GLOBAL LEADERS PARTNERSHIPS ARE POWERING GUYANA'S TRANSFORMATION



President Ali delivering the Clinton Global Initiative (CGI) Annual Meeting in New York

President, Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali has told world leaders, investors and philanthropists that strategic partnerships are enabling Guyana to overcome the limitations often faced by small developing states and deliver results in health care, energy, climate action and food security.

Addressing the Clinton Global Initiative (CGI) Annual Meeting in New York, President Ali argued that a country's influence should not be measured solely by

its size or population, but by its ability to build partnerships capable of driving transformative development.

"Guyana is indeed a small state, but we are learning that the power of a country is not measured only by size and population. Power can also be measured by the partnership a country builds," the president said.

He described partnerships as the driving force behind some of Guyana's most significant achievements in recent years.

In health care, President Ali pointed to the country's collaboration with Mount Sinai Health System and Hess Corporation, which has been extended for another five years and aims to transform Guyana's public health system by 2030.

He noted that the partnership has already produced baseline health data for every primary school child in Guyana and has supported major advances in medical training and specialist care. He also highlighted the successful robotic cardiac surgery

conducted between Guyana and India through telemedicine.

The president said the same approach is being applied to climate and biodiversity through the Global Biodiversity Alliance, which now includes 140 members from governments, research institutions and academia.

On energy and food security, he said Guyana is leveraging partnerships with international financing institutions, technology providers and agricultural research organisations to

accelerate development and strengthen regional food production.

President Ali also highlighted the government's digital transformation agenda, noting that all government services are expected to be available through the MyGuyana app by next year.

"The question is not whether a small state can do everything itself. The question is, can we build partnerships that allow us to do what we could never do alone?" the president asked.

THE NEXT FOOD CRISIS COULD BE DRIVEN BY COST, NOT SCARCITY - FINANCE MINISTER



Dr Ashni Singh at the High-Level Ministerial Dialogue on sustaining progress against hunger in Latin America and the Caribbean

Food security is increasingly being tested not only by how much food countries can produce, but by how much it costs to produce, transport and ultimately put on consumers' tables. That was the warning from Senior Minister in the Office of the President with Responsibility

for Finance, Dr Ashni Singh, as he pressed for greater investment and coordinated action to make agrifood systems more resilient to the shocks driving up the cost of food. Speaking at a High-Level Ministerial Dialogue at United Nations (UN) Headquarters in New York, under the theme "From Leaving the Hunger Map to Sustaining Progress in Latin America and the Caribbean", Dr. Singh pointed to uneven progress against hunger, noting that an estimated 520 million people could still face hunger in 2030. He warned that the outlook could deteriorate further as geopolitical tensions, severe weather

and supply-chain disruptions push up the cost of producing and transporting food, with fertiliser and fuel among the critical inputs under pressure. "These and other similar developments do not augur well for the global food security outlook in the near term," Dr. Singh told the forum, stressing that countries must strengthen their ability to withstand external shocks rather than wait for those shocks to translate into deeper food insecurity. Guyana, he said, is already taking steps to reduce that vulnerability. Dr. Singh highlighted the country's reduction of hunger and undernourishment to

below 2.5 per cent, while noting that this progress does not shield Guyana from international price movements, severe weather or geopolitical disruptions. The Government's response has therefore focused not simply on producing more food, but on strengthening the systems that determine how efficiently and affordably food reaches consumers. Measures include investment in agricultural diversification and exports, transport infrastructure to open more arable land, improved farm-to-market connectivity and development of a regional food hub with cold-storage capacity to facilitate trade.

Government is also promoting climate-resilient production methods, including hydroponics and shade-house technology, while incentivising private investment in agriculture and rolling out farmers' markets to improve competitiveness and ease food-price pressures. The National School Feeding Programme provides fortified hot meals to children, alongside school health screening and other nutrition-focused interventions. Dr. Singh also linked food security to household purchasing power, pointing to 156,000 new jobs created over the past five years as part of efforts to increase incomes and strengthen

families' ability to meet basic nutritional needs. The strategy extends beyond Guyana's borders, with the country continuing to push for increased regional agricultural production and more efficient intra-regional trade under CARICOM's "25 x 2025 + 5" initiative. The broader challenge, Singh argued, is to ensure that progress against hunger is not undone by the next external shock. For Guyana and the Caribbean, that means building food systems capable not only of producing enough, but of keeping food accessible and affordable when global conditions turn against them.

GOVT ABSORBS RISING ENERGY COSTS TO SHIELD CONSUMERS



Farmers' markets are to be expanded across the country

Government is absorbing rising energy, transportation and production costs rather than allowing the full impact of global price shocks to reach consumers, while using its fiscal space to strengthen household protection and build greater economic resilience.

President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali said the approach has become increasingly important as geopolitical conflicts, disrupted supply chains, extreme weather and higher logistics costs continue to pressure economies worldwide. Guyana remains particularly exposed because much of what is consumed locally, including refined petroleum products and agricultural inputs, is imported. "We are not an isolated case. We do not exist in a hemisphere by ourselves. We are part of a global

system," President Ali said during an interview on the 2026 Mid-Year Report. The pressure is already being felt in the energy sector. According to the President, diesel costs for Guyana Power and Light (GPL) have risen substantially since the start of the year, but the increase has not been passed on to consumers. "As a government, we have not passed on a cent of this increase to the consumer," he said. Guyana Water Incorporated (GWI) is similarly absorbing higher energy-related operating costs, while government is also

foregoing fuel excise revenue and continuing to fund subsidies and essential services. The strategy extends beyond energy. Government spending continues on regional and specialised healthcare, transportation support for children, higher old-age pensions, salaries, the Because We Care programme and community infrastructure. At the same time, the government is pursuing investments intended to reduce Guyana's exposure to future external shocks. The Gas-to-Energy project is expected

to reduce energy costs by 50 per cent, while investments in manufacturing, agro-processing, agriculture, farm-to-market roads and industrial development are aimed at expanding domestic production and lowering dependence on imports. Food security is also being treated as a price-stability measure, with increased production of onions, potatoes, beans and soya, alongside efforts to strengthen poultry production, hatching-egg supply and storage capacity. President Ali said maintaining reserves is critical to preventing temporary shortages from becoming price spikes. The government is also expanding farmers'

markets and building storage capacity to create buffers when production exceeds immediate demand. The broader strategy, Ali said, is to use the current period of economic growth to prepare for the next phase, one driven by lower energy costs, increased investment, diversification and stronger productivity across financial services, tourism, agriculture, manufacturing, mining and construction. The objective is to ensure that economic growth does not remain confined to headline indicators, but translates into greater resilience, investment and earning opportunities for households.

US CONGRESS DEEPENS SUPPORT FOR GUYANA AS ICJ RULING NEARS

A United States (US) congressional delegation has reaffirmed its commitment to Guyana's sovereignty and territorial integrity while signalling deeper engagement with Georgetown as the country prepares for the International Court of Justice (ICJ) ruling on the Guyana-Venezuela border controversy. The commitment emerged from a meeting between President, Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali and three US lawmakers on

the margins of the 81st United Nations (UN) General Assembly in New York. The delegation was led by Representative Gregory Meeks and included Representatives Pramila Jayapal and Jonathan Jackson. Meeks, Ranking Member of the US House Foreign Affairs Committee, reaffirmed US support for Guyana's territorial integrity following the discussions. The engagement comes at a consequential

point for Guyana's diplomacy, with the ICJ process remaining a central element of the country's efforts to secure international recognition of its sovereignty and territorial integrity. President Ali said the discussions focused specifically on Guyana's sovereignty and territorial integrity in the context of the anticipated ICJ ruling. But the talks extended beyond the border controversy, reflecting Guyana's effort

to deepen its relationship with the US around economic development and emerging areas of international cooperation. The leaders discussed Guyana's continued expansion and diversification beyond oil and gas, as well as developments surrounding the Global Biodiversity Alliance. The US lawmakers also committed to maintaining and expanding engagement through the House



President Ali, US Lawmakers advance talks on sovereignty and economic diversification

Foreign Affairs Committee and other relevant congressional committees and caucuses, including the Congressional Black Caucus. President Ali was accompanied by Senior Minister in the Office

of the President with Responsibility for Finance, Dr Ashni Singh; Guyana's Permanent Representative to the UN, Ambassador Carolyn Rodrigues-Birkett; and Foreign Secretary Robert Persaud.

POWER DEMAND, DRIVING MAJOR GRID INVESTMENT



President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali engaging media representatives at the Office of the President

Guyana’s electricity demand is rising at a pace that is putting unprecedented pressure on the national grid, forcing a major expansion of generation, transmission and distribution infrastructure as the economy continues to

grow. Peak demand on the Demerara-Berbice Interconnected System climbed from about 205 megawatts in 2024 to 242.6 megawatts in August 2026, an 18 per cent increase. President, Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali said the growth is more than five times the 3.4 per cent average recorded across Latin America and the Caribbean.

“We cannot continue with an unreliable system,” President Ali said at a press conference, signalling a broader push to bring the electricity network in line with the demands of a rapidly expanding economy.

An independent

assessment by InterEnergy projects electricity demand could increase by approximately 138 per cent by 2029, while the Guyana Power and Light (GPL) could add more than 62,000 customers as new homes, businesses and industries connect to the grid.

The scale of the expected growth is driving billions of dollars in infrastructure investment, including more than 360 kilometres of new high-voltage transmission lines, more than 10 substations, grid modernisation and battery energy storage.

The Government is also absorbing rising

generation costs. Diesel consumption for power generation has increased sharply, with the cost of imported fuel placing additional pressure on the electricity system. President Ali said increased subsidies are being used to prevent those costs from being passed directly to consumers.

Financing discussions with Qatar are also underway as Guyana seeks the capital required for the next phase of grid expansion.

The Government’s target is not simply more generating capacity, but a more resilient network capable of rerouting electricity, detecting faults faster and reducing the scale and duration of

outages.

InterEnergy has recommended additional generation, smart metering, greater transmission and distribution investment and an independent grid reliability task force.

President Ali acknowledged that interruptions cannot be eliminated

entirely, but said the frequency and severity currently experienced by consumers are unacceptable.

The challenge now is to build a power system capable of keeping pace with the economic transformation driving the demand in the first place.



An electrical tower

US\$20M CONTROL CENTRE TO GIVE GPL REAL-TIME VIEW OF POWER GRID



GPL Team Leader of the Executive Management Committee, Kesh Nandlall, and team during walkthrough exercise

Guyana is building a US\$20 million National Control Centre designed to give GPL real-time visibility across the electricity network and allow faults to be detected and isolated faster.

The facility, which

the power company expects to bring into operation by the end of 2026, is being positioned as a central component of the country’s transition towards a smart electricity grid by 2030.

The centre will use Supervisory Control

and Data Acquisition (SCADA) technology to continuously monitor the transmission and distribution system, allowing operators to identify faults almost instantaneously.

GPL’s Executive Management Committee Team Leader, Kesh Nandlall said the system will allow the utility to see when feeders or transmission lines fail and respond immediately.

It will also allow operators to automatically switch sections of the network to alternative lines where available, limiting the number of customers

affected by a fault.

The first phase will monitor the transmission network and substations, while a second phase will extend coverage into distribution feeders, transformers and individual meters.

Additional communications infrastructure will be installed throughout the network to support the expanded monitoring capability.

The centre will operate around the clock and is being designed to remain functional during major disruptions, including arrangements allowing essential personnel to remain on

site for extended periods if access to the facility is restricted.

The building itself includes 160 kilowatts of rooftop solar capacity, charging stations and automated building-management systems.

The new control centre comes as electricity demand

rises sharply and Government undertakes a wider programme to strengthen generation, transmission and distribution.

Once fully operational, the system is expected to give GPL a centralised view of the network, enabling faster fault detection, targeted switching and more effective management of electricity flows.



New US\$20 million National Control Centre

NEW SUBSTATIONS AND TRANSMISSION LINES TO STRENGTHEN THE GRID

Guyana is expanding its electricity transmission backbone with new substations and approximately 322 kilometres of high-voltage lines designed to increase capacity, create backup routes and reduce the risk of widespread outages.

Construction of new substations at Chateau Margot and Enmore, together with the expansion of the Columbia Substation, is about 60 per cent complete as GPL advances the wider grid upgrade.

The projects are particularly important for the East Coast Demerara, where residential, commercial and industrial development is pushing electricity demand higher.

Nandlall said the new infrastructure will provide additional capacity for existing customers whose feeders are already under pressure, while creating room for new industrial developments.

The substations will also provide alternative pathways for electricity



Infrastructure upgrades include new substations at Chateau Margot, Enmore, Columbia

across the network, meaning sections can be isolated for maintenance or during faults without necessarily disrupting the wider system.

Approximately 155 kilometres of

230-kilovolt double-circuit transmission lines will connect the Goedverwagting Substation to a new substation at Williamsburg in Region Six. One hundred sixty-

seven (167) kilometres of 69-kilovolt double-circuit lines will replace existing infrastructure along the railway embankment.

The system is being designed around greater redundancy, with multiple transmission routes reducing reliance on individual sections of the network.

Power generated at the 300-megawatt Gas-to-Energy plant at Wales, for example, will initially be produced at 13.8 kilovolts, stepped up to 230 kilovolts for efficient long-distance

transmission and then reduced at substations before reaching consumers.

The new infrastructure will therefore serve as more than an expansion of capacity. It will form part of the network required to absorb new generation, support industrial growth and eventually enable wider smart-grid technology.

As Guyana’s electricity demand accelerates, the investment is intended to ensure that a failure on one section of the network does not translate into a wider disruption for consumers.



Prime Minister Phillips at the 27th INTERPOL Americas Regional Conference at the Arthur Chung Conference Centre

Criminal networks are moving faster across borders, financial systems and digital platforms, and regional law enforcement must match that speed with intelligence-sharing and coordinated action, Prime Minister Brigadier (Ret'd) Mark Phillips has warned.

Prime Minister Phillips made the call as he opened the 27th INTERPOL Americas Regional Conference at the Arthur Chung Conference Centre, where law-enforcement

CRIME MOVES ACROSS BORDERS, SO MUST REGIONAL LAW ENFORCEMENT - PM PHILLIPS

leaders and security professionals from across the Americas have gathered in Guyana for two days of discussions on transnational crime.

The Prime Minister said the increasingly sophisticated nature of organised crime has made fragmented national responses inadequate, particularly as criminal networks exploit jurisdictional boundaries to traffic narcotics and firearms, move people, launder money and conduct cybercrime.

“Once an investigation crosses a national boundary, any delay can shift the advantage to the offender and place justice further out of reach. Our cooperation must therefore move as

swiftly as the threat itself,” he said.

For Guyana, the issue carries particular significance given its position on the South American mainland and its connections to the Caribbean.

Phillips identified narcotics and firearms trafficking, human smuggling and trafficking, cybercrime, money laundering and the illegal trade in natural resources among the threats requiring stronger regional coordination.

He pointed to Operation Guyana Shield, conducted in December 2025 with authorities from Brazil, French Guiana, Guyana and Suriname, as an example of countries combining their capabilities to tackle

illegal gold mining and its links to organised crime.

Guyana’s first successfully completed extradition with Canada in February 2025, following an INTERPOL Red Notice, was also cited as evidence of how international cooperation can strengthen domestic investigations and judicial processes.

Prime Minister Phillips said Guyana is simultaneously strengthening its national capacity through intelligence-led policing and modern investigative systems, while improving coordination among the Guyana Police Force, Immigration Department, Customs Anti-Narcotic Unit and other agencies.

He urged the conference to produce practical mechanisms that allow reliable intelligence to move quickly and be converted into lawful operational action.

“The success of this conference will not be determined by the language of its resolutions, however carefully written, but by the effect of

its decisions on the work of our officers,” Prime Minister Phillips said.

He stressed that stronger cooperation must be accompanied by trust, accountability and lawful protection and use of intelligence, as Guyana seeks to ensure that national borders do not become opportunities for offenders to evade justice.



Prime Minister Phillips at the 27th INTERPOL Americas Regional Conference at the Arthur Chung Conference Centre

DECISION ON AMAILA HYDROPOWER BID COULD COME WITHIN WEEKS



165MW Amaila Falls Project moves closer to reality

The government could identify a preferred proposal for the Amaila Falls Hydropower

Project within weeks, as the evaluation of bids for the landmark renewable energy initiative enters a

critical stage.

President, Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali provided the update during a special interview, confirming that bids were received following a renewed tender process for the project.

“We are hoping that in the coming weeks, we will be in a position to say what structure or what bid is the best in the interests of Guyana’s development and our people’s

development,” the president said.

The government has indicated its preference for a design, build, finance and operate arrangement supported by a power-purchase agreement.

The Amaila Falls Hydropower Project, to be developed in Region Eight (Potaro-Siparuni), is designed to deliver a minimum of 165 megawatts of renewable energy to the national grid.

It forms part of the

PPP/C Administration’s broader strategy to diversify Guyana’s energy mix through investments in natural gas, hydropower and solar energy while strengthening long-term energy security.

The project also aligns with Guyana’s Low Carbon Development Strategy (LCDS) 2030, which identifies hydropower as a key component of the country’s transition to cleaner and more sustainable energy

sources.

The latest update comes as the United States Export-Import (EXIM) Bank has expressed interest in supporting the project. The potential financing formed part of wider discussions between President Ali and EXIM’s Chairman and President, John Jovanovic on expanding cooperation across major infrastructure initiatives.

No preferred bidder or finalised financing arrangement for the Amaila Falls Hydropower Project has yet been announced.

EASIER CERTIFICATION PROCESS NOW AVAILABLE THROUGH UPGRADED LOCAL CONTENT PORTAL

The process of securing and maintaining Local Content certification is now faster and more accessible for Guyanese nationals and businesses with the launch of a revamped online portal by the Ministry of Natural Resources.

The upgraded platform, now available at **localcontent.gov.gy**, introduces a range of new features designed to reduce administrative hurdles, improve transparency and make it easier for Guyanese companies

to participate in opportunities generated by the country’s growing petroleum sector.

Applicants can now complete certification forms through a more user-friendly interface, save their progress and return later, upload and replace supporting documents online, and track the status of their applications from a dedicated personal workspace.

The new system also allows certificate holders to receive renewal reminders, access certificates

online, respond to requests from the Local Content Secretariat and update key business information, including changes to ownership, directorship and registered addresses.

For the public, the portal introduces online certificate verification, providing an added layer of transparency and confidence in the Local Content certification process.

Importantly, existing user accounts, applications and Local Content Certificates remain valid and have

been transferred to the new platform. Current certificate holders are not required to reapply.

The ministry is encouraging applicants and certificate holders to bookmark the new portal and continue using their existing login credentials, while first-time users can create accounts and begin the certification process online.

The upgrade is part of ongoing efforts to modernise public-service delivery and ensure Guyanese businesses can more



New Local Content Portal cuts red tape for Guyanese businesses

easily access and benefit from opportunities

created under the Local Content framework.

OIL EARNINGS SURGE PAST US\$15B



President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali sat down with Al Jazeera

Guyana’s oil economy is generating money at a scale that is rapidly reshaping the national balance sheet, with crude exports surpassing US\$15 billion in the first half of 2026 and projected petroleum revenues for the full year approaching US\$6.5 billion.

At the same time, President, Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali is defending the controls governing those revenues, pointing to tougher terms in the production sharing agreements that followed the country’s original 2016 deal.

Speaking to Al Jazeera during his State Visit to Qatar, President Ali rejected the suggestion that the Government has direct access to the Natural Resource Fund (NRF), stressing that withdrawals must pass through Parliament and are subject to audit.

“It is not that the government has a direct dip into the fund,” President Ali said, explaining that the process involves parliamentary approval and auditing by the Auditor General.

The legal framework also requires petroleum revenues deposited into the NRF to be publicly notified in the Official Gazette within three months. Parliamentary oversight records confirm that such notifications are also tabled in the National Assembly.

The transparency question comes as the value flowing through the system expands sharply. According to the 2026 Mid-Year Report, crude oil exports reached US\$15.05 billion in the first six months, while total exports climbed 76.4 per

cent to US\$16.2 billion. Petroleum deposits into the NRF are now projected at US\$6.4976 billion for the year, 136.8 per cent above the amount projected at Budget 2026.

Guyana produced 163.3 million barrels during the first half, with average daily production rising to about 902,000 barrels. Four FPSOs operated simultaneously throughout the period, while the Errea Wittu FPSO is expected to produce first oil in the final quarter.

The expanding production is also putting in the spotlight the country’s first major petroleum contract. President Ali acknowledged that the 2016 ExxonMobil agreement, inherited from the previous administration, was favourable to the

company, but said the Government was bound by the sanctity of contract.

The stated response has been to change the terms going forward.

“We have developed a new production sharing agreement that does not disincentivise investment... but that

is more balanced,” President Ali said.

The Government projects US\$5.97 billion in profit-oil earnings and US\$508.1 million in royalties in 2026, while withdrawals from the NRF are projected at US\$2.37 billion. At the end of June, the Fund held US\$4.29 billion.



Oil earnings surge past US\$15B

LONGTAIL AND HAIMARA PUSH GUYANA DEEPER INTO NATURAL GAS ERA

Guyana is moving closer to its first offshore petroleum development centred on natural gas, with the government now reviewing the Field Development Plan and production licence application for the Longtail Project.

The project, outlined in the 2026 Mid-Year Report, signals a major shift in the evolution of the country’s oil and gas sector. While Guyana’s existing offshore developments have been designed primarily around crude oil production, Longtail is expected to become

the first Stabroek Block project in which natural gas forms a central part of the development.

The Field Development Plan was submitted in March and is currently undergoing regulatory assessment alongside an application for a production licence. If approved, production is expected to begin in 2030.

The development would mark a new chapter for Guyana as the country seeks to unlock the commercial potential of its vast gas resources while continuing to expand

offshore production.

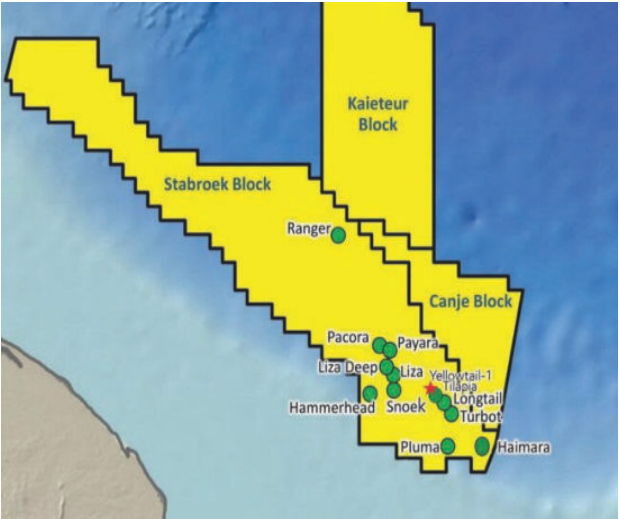
Longtail has previously been identified as the proposed eighth development in the prolific Stabroek Block. Government projections indicate it will produce both oil and gas, but with a stronger emphasis on gas than any previous project.

At the same time, a second gas-rich development, Haimara, is advancing through the approval process. An application for environmental authorisation was submitted during the

first half of 2026, while public scoping meetings have already been completed as part of the environmental review.

Haimara, identified as the proposed ninth Stabroek Block development, is also expected to focus heavily on natural gas and condensate production, with startup envisaged in the early 2030s.

The advances come as Guyana continues to expand the role of natural gas in its energy mix. The government’s Gas-to-Energy project at Wales is expected to bring its first gas turbine



Longtail moves closer to becoming Stabroek Block’s first gas-focused development

online by the end of this year, reducing electricity costs and increasing generating capacity.

With the seventh offshore development, Hammerhead, already approved and two major gas-focused projects

moving through the regulatory pipeline, Guyana is laying the groundwork for a new phase of petroleum development in which natural gas plays an increasingly prominent role.

PRESIDENT ALI OPENS FOREIGN POLICY DIALOGUE WITH PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE



Gas-to-Energy Project advances rapidly as Guyana prepares for major power expansion

President Dr Irfaan Ali has opened a direct dialogue with the Parliamentary Sub-Committee on Foreign Relations, bringing key issues on Guyana’s international agenda into closer discussion with the legislative arm.

During a meeting at the Office of the President, the Head of State briefed committee members on major foreign policy matters, including Guyana’s

proceedings before the International Court of Justice (ICJ) and the Third Country National Agreement with the United States.

The engagement forms part of the Government’s effort to strengthen coordination with parliamentary committees on matters of national importance and ensure that foreign policy priorities benefit from broader institutional engagement.

The President’s briefing proceeded in the absence of opposition members of the Parliamentary Sub-Committee, who had been invited through the Speaker of the National Assembly but had neither accepted nor declined the invitation by the time the meeting was held.

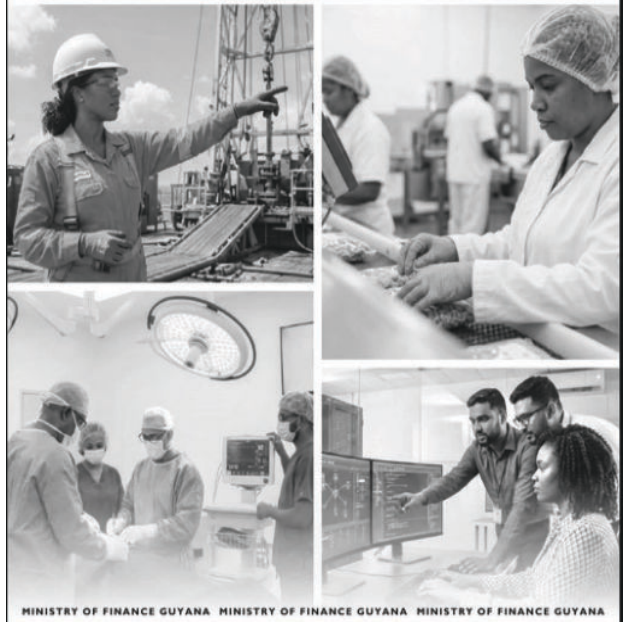
Those present welcomed the engagement and expressed a desire for continued dialogue as

Guyana advances its foreign policy agenda.

President Ali said his Government intends to strengthen engagement with all parliamentary committees in an open, transparent and accountable manner, signalling a continued effort to build closer coordination between the Executive and legislative branches on issues affecting Guyana’s national interests.

33.3% GROWTH PUTS GUYANA ON TRACK FOR RAPID ECONOMIC EXPANSION IN 2026

MID-YEAR REPORT
2026



MINISTRY OF FINANCE GUYANA MINISTRY OF FINANCE GUYANA MINISTRY OF FINANCE GUYANA

Guyana’s economy expanded by an estimated **33.3 per cent in the first half of 2026**, with the non-oil economy growing 10.1 per cent, signalling that the country’s rapid expansion is increasingly being supported by activity beyond the petroleum sector.

The performance outlined in the 2026 Mid-Year Report was accompanied by a sharp increase in investment, with Government’s capital expenditure approaching **\$250 billion** during the first

six months and private-sector credit expanding by 11.5 per cent.

Based on the first half performance, the Ministry of Finance has revised its full-year growth forecast to **20.8 per cent for real GDP and 10.2 per cent for the non-oil economy**.

The figures point to an economy being driven simultaneously by oil and gas expansion, construction, mining, services and private investment, with the Government directing a substantial portion of petroleum revenues

towards infrastructure and human development.

Construction was among the strongest non-oil performers, expanding by **24.7 per cent** in the first half and now projected to grow 27.6 per cent for the year. Mining and quarrying grew 40.7 per cent, while services expanded by 7.2 per cent.

The oil and gas sector grew 41.3 per cent, while gold mining increased 11.3 per cent and bauxite production rose 7.3 per cent.

The investment cycle is also feeding into private economic activity. Private-sector credit reached **\$592.8 billion**, with real estate mortgages rising 21.2 per cent to \$224.7 billion and lending to households increasing 14.6 per cent.

Export earnings provide another measure of the scale of the expansion. Total exports climbed 76.4 per cent to **US\$16.2 billion**, driven primarily by crude oil exports, which rose 82.1 per cent to US\$15.05 billion. Non-oil exports also increased 24.6 per cent to US\$1.15 billion.

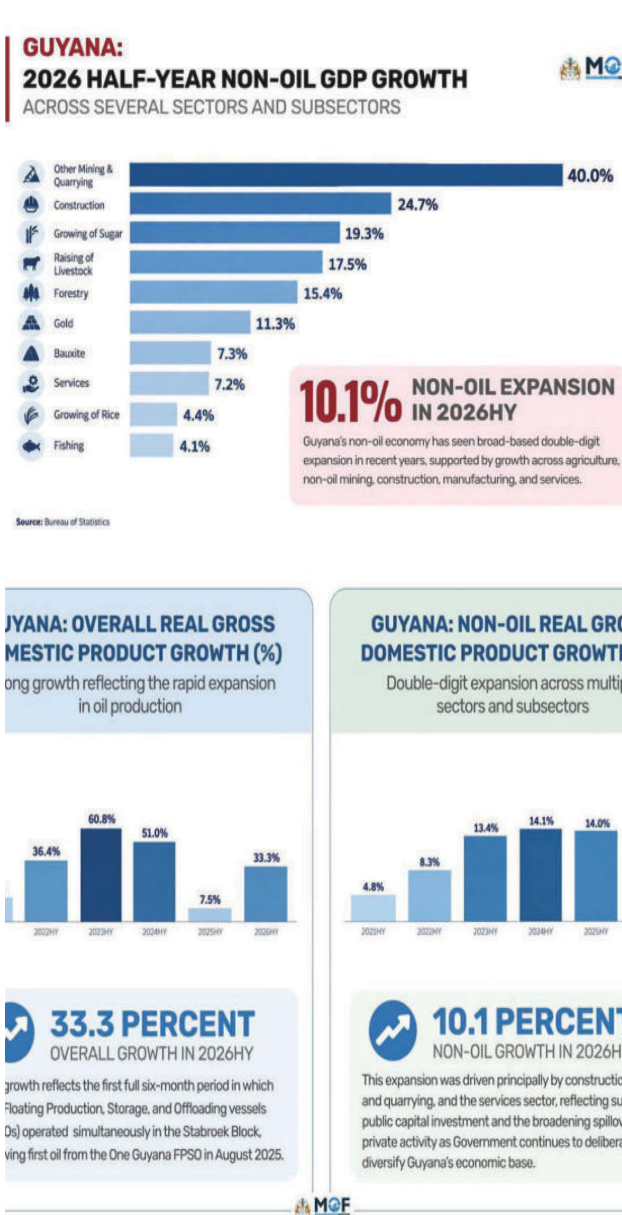
The report comes against a backdrop of international recognition of Guyana’s rapid growth. The International Monetary Fund has previously highlighted strong oil and non-oil expansion, particularly construction and services, while cautioning that rapid growth brings risks including inflationary and overheating pressures.

For Government, the central policy challenge remains, converting the unprecedented revenue from the petroleum sector into productive capacity that can sustain growth beyond oil.

Senior Minister in the Office of the President with Responsibility for Finance, Dr Ashni Singh, said investments in infrastructure, education, health and social protection are intended to strengthen productivity, resilience and living standards.

President, Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali, meanwhile, said the Government’s objective is to ensure that the country’s expanding economic position translates into greater opportunities for households.

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17 ⁰⁰ case	20 ⁰⁰ case	27 ⁰⁰ case	33 ⁰⁰ bag	37 ⁰⁰ case	38 ⁰⁰ case	41 ⁰⁰ case
Green Onion 蔥	Avocados 365 牛油果	Yellow Plantains 黃大蕉	Head On Shrimp 20/30 有頭白蝦 24Lb	Headless White Shrimp 無頭白蝦 21-25 10x4Lb	Frozen Pacific White Shrimp 91/110 10x4Lb 精選白蝦	Iriple Crown Vegetable Spring Roll 春卷 10x1000g
45 ⁰⁰ case	53 ⁰⁰ case	70 ⁰⁰ case	132 ⁰⁰ case	210 ⁰⁰ case	155 ⁰⁰ case	40 ⁰⁰ case
Extra Large Egg 箱裝大雞蛋	Beef Small Intestine 牛小腸 30Lb	Fresh Chicken Leg Quarter 18kg 新鮮雞大腿	Pork Stomach 10kg 豬肚	Chicken Breast 雞胸肉 25kg	Pork Intestine 豬大腸 10kg	Mr. Goudas Long Grain Rice 20kg 黃米 20kg
56 ⁹⁹ case	75 ⁰⁰ case	77 ⁹⁹ case	30 ⁰⁰ case	290 ⁰⁰ case	50 ⁰⁰ case	32 ⁹⁹ bag
Dunya Long Grain White Rice 20kg 優質白米 320kg	P.R.B Monosodium Glutamate 珠江橋牌味精 50Lb	Redpath Sugar 20kg 白糖	Saporito Vegetable / Canola Oil 16L 菜油/菜籽油	LKK Chun Oyster Flavoured Sauce 李錦記錦珍鮮味蠔油 6x2.2Kg	TS-018 MFPP Clamshell Container 200pcs 餐盒	PP-881 MFPP Clamshell Container 150pcs 餐盒
29 ⁹⁹ bag	49 ⁹⁹ bag	26 ⁹⁹ bag	43 ⁹⁹ case	37 ⁹⁹ case	17 ⁹⁹ case	24 ⁹⁹ case
PP-993 MFPP Clamshell Container 餐盒 150pcs	YS-64 Microwavable Plastic Soup & Deli Container 120sets 帶蓋湯盒	S-32 Microwavable Plastic Soup & Deli Container 240sets 帶蓋湯盒	S-24 Microwavable Plastic Soup & Deli Container 240sets 帶蓋湯盒	CN-38W Microwavable 868 Microwavable Container 帶蓋餐盒 150sets	PC-10 Portion Containers 2500pcs 餐盒	ADM All Purpose Flour 20kg 面粉
29 ⁹⁹ case	39 ⁹⁹ case	39 ⁹⁹ case	32 ⁹⁹ case	29 ⁹⁹ case	25 ⁹⁹ case	16 ⁹⁹ case

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5 ⁸⁸ ea	3/\$10 ⁰⁰	10 ⁹⁹ ea	2/\$7 ⁰⁰	4 ⁸⁸ ea	2 ⁹⁹ ea
Great Lake Butter Fish 400g 瓜子鱈 Reg:\$3.99	Sarangani Bay Marinated Milkfish Series 400g 開邊牛奶魚 Reg:\$6.99	Amstus Matooke Fresh Peeled Green Bananas 1kg 凍香蕉 Reg:\$8.99	Saba Sweetened Sliced Banana 454g 凍香蕉 Reg:\$2.99/ea	Ocean Food Imitation Crab Meat 454g 蟹肉條/片 Reg:\$3.99/ea	Centro Americana Creamy Dip 453g Reg:\$8.99
2 ⁹⁹ ea	5 ⁹⁹ ea	7 ⁹⁹ ea	2/\$4 ⁰⁰	2/\$7 ⁰⁰	7 ⁹⁹ ea

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11 ⁹⁹ ea	88 [¢] ea	1 ⁹⁹ ea
Datu Puti Soy Sauce 1L 醬油 Reg:\$3.59	Bulacan Pancit Canton 大黃面 454g Reg:\$3.99	White King Puto 米糕粉 400g Reg:\$2.99
1 ⁹⁹ ea	2 ⁷⁹ ea	1 ⁹⁹ ea
Kababayan Coconut String In Syrup Macapuno 340ml 椰絲甜品 Reg:\$3.99	S&W Fruit Cocktail 796ml 雜果罐頭 Reg:\$3.59	Grace Coconut Milk Powder 椰子粉 50g Reg:\$0.99
2 ⁵⁹ ea	1 ⁹⁹ ea	69 [¢] ea
Grace Malta Malt Beverage 麥芽飲料 330ml Reg:\$1.59	Oishi Salt & Vinegar Crackling 50g 鹽味脆片 Reg:\$1.29	Choco Stik-O Chocolate Wafer 600g 巧克力威化餅 Reg:\$6.99
99 [¢] ea	69 [¢] ea	4 ⁹⁹ ea
X.O. Coffee Flavoured Candy Series 175g 咖啡糖 Reg:\$1.99	Excelsior Cream Crackers 餅乾 225g Reg:\$1.99	Monde Bread Stix Biscuits 餅乾 130g Reg:\$1.59
1 ²⁹ ea	1 ²⁹ ea	99 [¢] ea
Buldak Cream Carbonara 火鍋面 5x140g Reg:\$8.99	Coconut Tree Rice Paper Square 400g 越南米紙 Reg:\$2.99	PAN Pre-Cooked White Corn Meal 5Lb 白玉米面 Reg:\$8.99
4 ⁹⁹ ea	1 ⁸⁸ ea	5 ⁹⁹ ea

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5 ⁹⁹ lb	4 ⁹⁹ lb	2 ⁹⁹ lb
Pre Frozen Squid 冰鮮魷魚 Reg:\$7.99	Frozen Fresh Head-On White Shrimp 冰鮮有頭南美白蝦 Reg:\$6.99	Live Blue Crab 生猛藍蟹 Reg:\$7.99
6 ⁹⁹ lb	5 ⁹⁹ lb	5 ⁹⁹ lb

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PRESIDENT ALI BRINGS GUYANA

President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali used a packed engagement with members of the Guyanese diaspora in Queens, New York, to spotlight the opportunities emerging from Guyana’s rapid transformation and to invite overseas Guyanese to play a greater role in the country's development.

Addressing the gathering at the Jericho Palace Banquet Hall, the President outlined major infrastructure projects, expanding opportunities in sport and eco-tourism, and new international investment partnerships that are helping to drive economic growth. He urged Guyanese abroad to invest, collaborate and contribute their skills and expertise as Guyana advances its development agenda.

The engagement, held during the President's visit to New York for the 81st Session of the United Nations General Assembly, underscored the strong ties between Guyana and its diaspora and the growing role overseas Guyanese can play in shaping the country's future.



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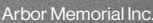
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US cancels visas for foreign nationals undermining democratic Western govts

THE United States Department of State has cancelled the visas of several officials and imposed visa restrictions on others and their immediate family members, citing corruption, narcotraf-ficking and actions that undermine dem-ocratically elected governments.

The measures, announced Monday, were taken under a new visa restriction policy pursuant to Section 212(a)(3)(C) of the US Immigration and Nationality Act (INA).

According to the Department, the policy restricts visas for foreign nationals “who undermine a demo-cratically-elected gov-ernment through corruption or narco-trafficking activities” in the Americas.

“Under the Trump Administration, corrupt foreign officials can no longer freely enter the United States. Today the Department of State is taking actions to fulfill the commitments to defend democratic governance across our hemisphere against corruption and narco-trafficking made at the Doral Summit and reaf-firmed in the Shield of the Americas leaders’ statement of September 22,” the State Department said.

The latest actions target nationals from Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador and

Peru, all participants in the Shield of the Americas initiative.

“This is a durable mechanism that allows the United States to act quickly, in coordination with our partners, as evi-dence develops. The Department of State is taking steps immediately to im-pose visa restrictions under this policy

in support of fellow Shield of the Americas participants Bo-livia, Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru,” the de-partment added.

The State Department said the actions were consistent with commitments made at the Doral Summit and reaffirmed in the Shield of

the Americas leaders’ statement of Sep-tember 22, which called for coordination of sanctions, designations and financial actions against terrorists and criminals who undermine security, rule of law and democracy.

The visa restrictions were imposed under Section 212(a)(3)(C) of the INA, which bars entry to individuals whose entry or proposed activities could have potentially serious adverse foreign pol-icy consequences for the United States.



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Hello Neighbours,

I'm Maria Voutsinas, and I'm running to be your City Councillor here in Ward 14, Toronto–Danforth. I raised my family here, and I love the diversity, cultures and small businesses that make our community feel like home. Like you, I have watched our city change. The **cost of living** keeps rising. Road **congestion**. Concerns about **safety**. I want to help find solutions we can all live with.

For over 20 years, I have served as Executive Director of the National Ethnic Press and Media Council of Canada. From my office at City Hall, I have worked with all levels of government to ensure voices in diverse communities are heard. I know how the system works and how to turn **advocacy** into **action**.

I will be knocking on doors across Toronto–Danforth, listening to what matters to you and working to earn your support.

Let's build a safer, more affordable and more liveable community together.

Maria Voutsinas

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Guyana seeks major airline to make CJIA Terminal Two its hub

PRESIDENT Dr Irfaan Ali says Guyana is seeking a major international airline to establish a hub at the new Terminal Two currently under construction at the Cheddi Jagan International Airport (CJIA), as Government moves to position the country as a significant player in global aviation.

The Head of State made this disclosure while delivering remarks at the opening ceremony of the ICAO/EASA Third Global RSOO and RAIO Forum on Aviation Safety.

President Ali said the Government has already mandated the Ministry of Public Utilities and Aviation to begin discussions with major international carriers interested in using the new terminal as a base for regional and international connections.

“For those international players here, we are looking now for a partner in Terminal Two, someone who will take Terminal Two as their hub, their global hub,” the President said.

He said negotiations are expected to target airlines capable of using Guyana’s geographic position to facilitate connections to South America, the Caribbean and Africa.

“We are mandating the ministry to



Artist's impression of the CJIA Terminal Two

begin negotiations with all the big players who want to use Terminal Two as their hub, whether it’s to West Africa, South America, connected to the Caribbean. We are ready to finalise those negotiations,” Dr Ali said.

The move forms part of a broader effort to expand Guyana’s aviation infrastructure and improve its international connectivity amid rising passenger and visitor numbers.

At the sod-turning ceremony for Terminal Two in August 2025, President

Ali said the Government’s vision was for CJIA to become a major arrival and departure point for Guyana while also serving as a transit station for travellers moving between South America, Africa, and North and Central America.

At that time, he said the new terminal should reflect Guyana’s identity and provide travellers with an experience that showcases the country’s culture and natural environment.

The new 150,000-square-foot facility is intended to accommodate growing

traffic at CJIA and provide additional space and facilities, while the existing international terminal will also be reconfigured.

The project received a \$3.2 billion allocation in Budget 2026, with preparatory work having commenced in 2025. The expansion is being pursued against the backdrop of increased international travel to Guyana associated with the country’s economic growth and growing interest from investors and tourists.

Further to this, the Government had also outlined plans for new municipal airports and upgrades to hinterland airstrips as part of a wider effort to strengthen national and international air connectivity.

However, President Ali told the Aviation Safety forum that, “Our humble...task in Guyana here is to position Guyana as a global provider in terms of aviation.”

Against this backdrop, he pointed to the country’s geography, infrastructure investments, institutional capacity, partnerships, and investment in training and human development. “We have to ensure that we have a major player utilising Terminal Two as the hub, as their hub, our hub,” the President said.

US firms to construct 10,000 affordable houses in Guyana

TWO United States companies are partnering to construct 10,000 affordable homes in Guyana, US Ambassador to Guyana Nicole Theriot has disclosed, as American businesses respond to calls for greater involvement in the country’s housing sector.

Theriot identified the companies as US Frame Factory from Louisiana and Golden Shield from Indiana, stating the two firms are working together on the large-scale housing initiative.

The Ambassador made the disclosure during a recent interview on the Energy Perspectives podcast, where she highlighted affordable housing as one of the areas in which the expanding US-Guyana commercial relationship is moving beyond the country’s major oil and gas investments.

She said Golden Shield’s entry into the Guyanese market is particularly significant because the company had not previously operated outside the United States. “Golden Shield has never operated outside of the United States before, but it heeded the call,” Theriot said.

According to her, the two companies will work together on the construction of 10,000 homes in Guyana, with the project specifically geared to-

wards affordability.

She said, “And they’re going to be constructing together 10,000 homes here in Guyana—affordable homes, homes that, you know, are not just for the elite, that the average Guyanese person can purchase.”

The Ambassador made the comments while discussing the growing participation of US small and medium-sized businesses in Guyana and President Dr Irfaan Ali’s efforts to attract more of those companies to the country.

Theriot said the President has been encouraging a broader US commercial presence, beyond the large American corporations already operating in Guyana.

She noted that Guyana already has major US companies such as ExxonMobil and Chevron, but said the President wants more smaller and medium-sized American businesses to establish themselves in the country.

The planned housing project was cited by the Ambassador as an example of that development.

Theriot also linked the housing initiative to financing from the US Export-Import Bank, which she said would be providing funding for afford-



US Ambassador Nicole Theriot

able housing construction.

The planned housing development is part of the Guyanese Government’s continued efforts to promote homeownership and investment in housing, amid increased construction activity and demand driven by the country’s expanding oil economy.

The US-backed housing initiative comes as Guyana is moving to expand the use of prefabricated and modular construction as part of its broader 40,000-home programme. Housing Minister Collin Croal has said prefabricated construction will be critical to increasing the pace of housing delivery, particularly given the scale of the Government’s housing target.

Croal said the Government has engaged three major contractors to support the rollout of prefabricated homes, with agreements already signed with two of them. The contractors are expected to supply homes in various categories as the housing programme expands.

The Ministry of Housing has also been piloting a foundation programme in Leonora and Meten-Meer-Zorg, designed to assist people who already have, or are preparing, foundations for their homes. Under the approach, prefabricated structures can be installed once the foundations are ready. Croal said the preparatory work is intended to pave the way for more visible construction by the end of 2026, with the pace expected to increase over the following four years.

GUYANESE DIPLOMAT'S UN BID PUTS FIRST WOMAN SECRETARY-GENERAL WITHIN REACH

For the first time in the United Nations' 80-year history, the prospect of a woman leading the world body is no longer a distant aspiration but a realistic possibility, with Guyana's Ambassador Carolyn Rodrigues-Birkett emerging as a serious contender for the organisation's highest office.

Nominated by President, Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali and endorsed by CARICOM Heads of Government, Rodrigues-Birkett's candidacy has placed both Guyana and the Caribbean at the centre of one of the most consequential



leadership selections in international diplomacy. Beyond the politics of the selection process, her campaign has brought renewed attention to a historic reality: nine men have served as UN

Secretary-General since the organisation was established in 1945, while no woman has ever occupied the post.

For Rodrigues-Birkett, that imbalance is not merely a statistical footnote but a gap that reflects decades of untapped leadership at the highest level of global governance.

“Half of humanity – women – have never had the opportunity to serve,” she noted, arguing that the appointment of a woman Secretary-General would send a powerful signal to women and girls worldwide that leadership at the highest international level is within reach.

Her candidacy has gained notable traction during the informal straw polls conducted by the UN Security Council. In July, she secured nine “encourage” votes, two “discourage” votes and four “no opinion” votes. In August, she received eight “encourage” votes, three “discourage” votes and four “no opinion” votes, the highest number of encouragements recorded among the candidates in that round.

The bid also carries major regional significance. The Caribbean has never produced a UN Secretary-General,

and Rodrigues-Birkett has argued that the current cycle presents a rare opportunity for the Latin America and Caribbean region to put forward a successful candidate. Based on the UN's informal regional rotation system, she has noted that another opportunity may not arise for decades.

As member states continue deliberations, Rodrigues-Birkett's candidacy represents more than Guyana's pursuit of the UN's top diplomatic position. It has become a test of whether an organisation founded on principles of equality and representation is prepared to break one of the last major barriers in its own leadership history.

COMMEMORATIVE STAMP MARKS GUYANA'S SIX-DECADE UN JOURNEY

Guyana has marked six decades of active engagement at the United Nations (UN) with a reaffirmation of its commitment to multilateralism, international law and the principles of the UN Charter, as the country commemorates 60 years since joining the global organisation.

The milestone was marked with the unveiling of a commemorative postal stamp commissioned by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, the UN Country Team in Georgetown and the Guyana Post Office Corporation.

Featuring Guyana's

map alongside the official UN emblem, the stamp serves as a symbol of a relationship that has seen Guyana assume significant responsibilities within the UN system while using the organisation as a platform to advance its national and international interests.

Guyana was admitted to the UN on September 20, 1966, during the 21st session of the General Assembly.

Since then, Guyanese representatives have served in several senior positions, including President of the General Assembly and President of the Security Council, while the country has also served on the



Guyana marks 60 years of active engagement at the United Nations

Council for Namibia, the International Court of Justice, the Economic and Social Council and other UN bodies.

Director General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation George Talbot said the country's membership reflects its longstanding commitment to multilateralism and the principles of the UN Charter.

He noted that the UN has also played an important role in Guyana's development

and in efforts to preserve its sovereignty and territorial integrity.

“We are therefore pleased to mark this important occasion with a modest symbol of Guyana's enduring partnership with the United Nations, which the commemorative stamp signifies,” Talbot said.

Acting UN Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative Katy Thompson described the stamp as a tribute to six decades of cooperation centred on peace, sustainable development, human rights and international partnership.

G u y a n a ' s

Government, in a statement marking the anniversary, said its engagement has remained focused on peace and security, development, human rights, self-determination and the peaceful settlement of disputes.

The country has also served twice as Chair of the Group of 77 and China.

Marking its 60th year of membership, Guyana has nominated Ambassador Carolyn Rodrigues-Birkett for the post of UN Secretary-General.

The Government said the nomination demonstrates its continuing faith in the UN and the principles underpinning the organisation.

CEAPI HONOUR PUTS GUYANA'S INVESTMENT AMBITIONS BEFORE IBERO-AMERICAN BUSINESS LEADERS

Guyana's expanding economic profile and push for greater international business partnerships took centre stage in Madrid, Spain, where President, Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali received the CEAPI Medal of Honour during a one-day visit.

The distinction, awarded by the Consejo Empresarial Alianza por Iberoamérica (CEAPI), recognises President Ali's leadership and Guyana's ongoing economic transformation, while placing the country

before a network of more than 400 Ibero-American business leaders. CEAPI said the recognition also reflects Guyana's focus on investment, economic diversification and regional integration.

The ceremony brought together business leaders from Spain, Portugal and Latin America and featured a laudatio by José Rafael Gómez Sánchez, a CEAPI partner and vice-president of Tecoconsult Group.

The Madrid



Madrid spotlight turns to Guyana's expanding economic opportunities

engagement also opened a window into sectors beyond Guyana's traditional economic profile.

President Ali met Madrid Mayor, José Luis Martínez-Almeida, to discuss the economic impact of sports

tourism on cities and national economies, before touring the Santiago Bernabéu Stadium, home of Real Madrid, to examine the management and maintenance of the globally recognised sporting facility.

For CEAPI, the recognition comes against a backdrop of Guyana seeking to convert rapid oil-driven growth into broader and more diversified economic development. The organisation has identified opportunities

for international businesses in infrastructure, energy, transport and logistics, agro-industry, tourism, mining, manufacturing, healthcare, education and technology.

The organisation also sees Guyana's geographic position as a potential platform linking the Caribbean with northern Brazil, Suriname and French Guiana, adding a regional dimension to its investment ambitions.

President Ali mourns passing of ‘King of Calypso’ The Mighty Sparrow

PRESIDENT Dr Irfaan Ali has paid tribute to legendary calypsonian Slinger Francisco, the Mighty Sparrow, describing his passing as a moment when “a prayerful quietude has fallen over Caribbean calypso.”

Francisco died on Sunday, September 27, at the age of 91. His family said the Grenadian-born, Trinidad-raised performer died peacefully in New York following a brief illness, surrounded by loved ones.

In his tribute, President Ali said, “The King of Calypso is no more,” and recalled the singer who gave the region “Jean and Dinah,” “Congo Man,” “Mr. Walker,” “Ten to One Is Murder,” and “a treasury of unforgettable hits.”

The Head of State said that although Sparrow “no longer rises in song,” his music would endure as it has for decades.

“His compositions – insightful, witty and at times mischievous – became the soundtrack of generations, their lyrics etched with wit, rhythm, and fearless social commentary—mirrors held up to the Caribbean’s character, its contradictions, its unbroken spirit,” the President said.

President Ali credited the calypson-



President Irfaan Ali

ian with bringing recognition to “our Caribbean civilisation,” noting that his melodies and lyrics “sailed far beyond the region’s shores.”

“Sparrow lifted calypso from mere entertainment into an art form. He was the peerless virtuoso of the double entendre and picong, turning sly innuendo and biting mockery into unforgettable craft,” he said.



The Mighty Sparrow

“And though now the Mighty Sparrow has taken his final bow, the curtain never truly falls. His music, his wit, and his legacy live on in the pulse of the people of our region.”

On behalf of the government and people of Guyana, President Ali extended heartfelt condolences to Sparrow’s family, the people of Trinidad and Tobago, and “the legions of his fans in

the Caribbean and around the world.”

Born on July 9, 1935, in the fishing village of Grand Roy, Grenada, Francisco moved to Trinidad as a young child and grew up in Laventille, near Port of Spain. His breakthrough came with the 1956 hit “Jean and Dinah.”

He went on to become one of calypso’s most decorated performers, winning Trinidad and Tobago’s Calypso King or Monarch title eight times and the Carnival Road March competition on eight occasions.

Affectionately known as “Birdie,” he recorded hundreds of songs and performed around the world, including at New York City’s Madison Square Garden. His honours included Trinidad and Tobago’s Chaconia Gold Medal and an honorary Doctor of Letters from The University of the West Indies.

In announcing his death, his family described him as an institution in the entertainment industry, admired for his skill as a singer, songwriter and mentor. The Trinbago Unified Calypsonians’ Organisation remembered him as a defining voice of the country’s culture whose music carried calypso from Trinidad and Tobago to the world.

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\$122M IN AID REACHES FAMILIES AFFECTED BY BARIMA TRAGEDY

More than 750 people affected by the MV *Barima* tragedy are now receiving coordinated support through the Government's HEART Initiative, as the state response moves from immediate relief into longer-term recovery across all 10 regions.

President, Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali, said the initiative's Secretariat is fully operational under Lieutenant Colonel Dominic Shepard, with the affected-persons registry and comprehensive needs assessment almost complete.

"The government is in this for the long term. We understand the long-term responsibility," President Ali told reporters at a press conference.

The initiative has thus far delivered \$122.35 million in financial assistance to families of deceased people, survivors and families of those still missing.

Housing support is also being advanced, with the Ministry of Housing approving 20 families for land and turnkey homes valued at approximately \$73.99 million.

But the recovery effort extends beyond financial and housing assistance. Psychological support remains active, with social workers and psychologists assigned to affected families and Tier 3 and Tier 4 trauma interventions underway. Children returning to school are also receiving assistance to meet their educational needs.

The Government is also helping families navigate legal and administrative challenges arising from the tragedy. Agencies, including the Guyana Police Force, are assisting with probate, estates, guardianship and immigration documentation, including for affected non-Guyanese families.

President Ali said livelihood restoration, spiritual and community support and family-focused activities are also being incorporated into the response, with private-sector partners contributing resources.

A legal team has begun working directly with families to advise them on their rights and help structure immediate, medium and long-term financial and material support, particularly where



\$122.35 million in financial assistance have been delivered to families of deceased people, survivors and families of those still missing

children are involved. The scale of the response, according to the Government, reflects the understanding that recovery from the tragedy will not end with immediate assistance, but will require sustained intervention as affected families rebuild their lives.

\$100,000 CASH GRANT, HIGHER PENSIONS PUT MORE SUPPORT INTO HOUSEHOLD BUDGETS



Households are receiving support through direct cash

A \$100,000 cash grant for every Guyanese aged 18 and over, higher pensions and public

money and services into households as families face rising food costs.

The government distributed \$42.5 billion through the adult cash grant during the first half of 2026, while Old Age Pension increased from \$41,000 to \$46,000 monthly and Public Assistance rose from \$22,000 to \$25,000. More than 30,000 people with disabilities received the higher assistance.

For families with school-age children, more than 206,000 children were eligible

for a combined \$85,000 through the Because We Care grant, uniform allowance and transportation grant, up from a previous combined value of \$55,000.

The support is also reaching household budgets indirectly. Government spent \$3.4 billion on the National School Feeding Programme and covered examination fees for thousands of CSEC and CAPE students, reducing expenses parents would otherwise have to meet.

Healthcare

initiatives have similarly reduced out-of-pocket costs, with tens of thousands receiving eye examinations, spectacles and universal healthcare vouchers, while some patients received free prosthetic limbs and hearing aids.

The measures come as the cost of basic household consumption continues to rise. Food prices increased 6.7 per cent during the first six months of 2026, accounting for most of the 4.4 per cent increase in consumer prices, according to the

government's Mid-Year Report.

Energy costs have also been contained through stable electricity tariffs and a zero per cent excise tax on petroleum products.

The combined measures mean households are receiving support through direct cash, higher monthly benefits and services that remove or reduce expenses at a time when food is taking a larger share of family budgets.

The government has said it will continue targeted interventions to contain cost-of-living pressures as higher food and energy prices remain a concern.

40 HOMES, 1,000-PLUS LOTS SET TO RESHAPE ESSEQUIBO HOUSING LANDSCAPE



40 new homes take shape on Essequibo Coast

Housing opens up the next major development on the Essequibo Coast is accelerating, with 40 new three-bedroom homes under construction at Onderneeming and more than 1,000 additional residential lots being prepared for allocation as new infrastructure

Housing's first bungalow development of this type in the region.

Minister of Housing, Collin Croal said the homes are targeted for completion by the end of 2026, with some families potentially receiving keys around Christmas. Each house costs \$10.5 million to construct, with land valued at \$500,000.

Beyond the 40 homes, the ministry is preparing more than 1,000 lots at the rear of Plantation Perseverance, forming part of the next major batch of allocations on the Essequibo Coast.

Critical infrastructure is being advanced to support that

expansion, including a major concrete bridge through Queenstown. The bridge is about 50 per cent complete and is being built to accommodate heavier traffic while providing access to the existing Hoff Van Aurich development and future



1,000-plus new lots to expand housing access on Essequibo Coast

housing areas.

At Hoff Van Aurich, more than 500 lots have already been allocated. Infrastructure works are being delivered through five contracts valued at approximately \$1.4 billion, with a separate contract covering the main access bridge.

Two infrastructure lots have been completed, with allottees expected to soon begin identifying their lots. Two additional lots are expected to be completed shortly, with further allottees expected to begin the identification process within approximately a month.

Minister Croal said the current pace of construction should allow all Hoff Van Aurich allottees to identify their lots within about a month and a half.

Electrical and water networks are also being installed, strengthening the infrastructure needed to support the growing residential community and future expansion along the Essequibo Coast.

PRESIDENT ALI'S QATAR VISIT DELIVERS AGRI DEAL FOCUSED ON INNOVATION AND SUSTAINABILITY

Guyana is set to benefit from greater access to agricultural technology, innovation and technical cooperation following the signing of a new Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Qatar aimed at strengthening sustainable agricultural development.

The agreement, signed during President, Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali's State Visit to Qatar, establishes a framework for collaboration in agricultural technology and the application of modern farming solutions to improve productivity, efficiency and sustainability in the sector.

Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Hugh Hilton Todd signed on behalf of Guyana, while Qatar's Minister of Municipality, His Excellency, Abdullah bin Hamad Al Attiyah, signed for the State of Qatar.

The pact forms part



New Guyana-Qatar agreement targets modern farming and food production

of a broader effort by the Ali administration to expand international partnerships that support economic diversification, food production and long-term agricultural growth.

The agreement was concluded as President Ali and His Highness Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, Amir of the State of Qatar, explored new opportunities to deepen bilateral cooperation across several areas of mutual interest.

Minister Todd, who accompanied the president throughout the September 6-10 visit, also participated in engagements aimed at strengthening Guyana's international profile, including activities marking the country's 60th Independence Anniversary and initiatives promoting Guyanese products in the Qatari market.

Guyana and Qatar established diplomatic relations on August 23, 1996.

OVER 100 NON-NATIONALS BLACKLISTED IN ILLEGAL MINING CRACKDOWN



Gold seized

Guyana has blacklisted more than 100 non-nationals as part of an intensified crackdown on illegal mining, gold smuggling and undeclared production, as

authorities move to protect the country's mineral resources and ensure more gold enters the formal economy.

Minister of Natural Resources Vickram Bharrat said the enforcement measures are already yielding results, with gold declarations increasing significantly during 2026 despite tighter monitoring and compliance checks across mining districts.

The development signals a major push by the government to close loopholes that have historically allowed illegal operators and

undeclared production to bypass the country's regulatory systems.

According to Minister Bharrat, those blacklisted were linked to concerns ranging from illegal mining activities to cases where gold production was not properly declared or accounted for.

At the same time, the government has expanded legitimate channels for miners to sell their gold, making compliance easier while strengthening oversight of the sector.

There are now six Guyana Gold Board offices across the country, double the previous number, along with four licensed gold exporters and between 60 and 70 licensed gold traders. The expanded network is intended to reduce opportunities for illicit trade while improving access to legal purchasing points in mining communities.

Authorities have also strengthened traceability systems that allow gold to be tracked from miners through licensed traders and exporters. Transactions are documented through official receipt systems and monitored by regulators, creating



Mining activities in Guyana

a clearer record of production and sales.

Minister Bharrat acknowledged that some individuals continue to attempt to circumvent the law, but stressed that enforcement efforts are targeting illegal mining, unauthorised gold sales and other illicit activities that undermine the sector.

He emphasised that the objective is not to hinder legitimate mining operations but to ensure that miners obtain the required permits, register equipment and comply with national regulations.

As enforcement expands, the government is seeking to increase accountability in the mining sector while ensuring Guyana receives the full benefit of its growing gold industry.

5,000 MORE ACRES, FURNITURE TRAINING TO EXPAND BERBICE FORESTRY OPPORTUNITIES



Residents engaged in discussions with the natural resources minister

Berbice loggers are set to gain access to more forestry resources and new opportunities to earn beyond the sale of raw timber, as Government moves to expand the sector through a larger concession, furniture production and skills training.

Minister of Natural Resources Vickram Bharrat announced plans for an additional

5,000 acres to be added to the approximately 8,500-acre concession currently held by the local logging association, once the group is reorganised and a new executive elected.

The expansion is expected to accommodate the association's growing membership and give more residents access to forestry resources.

But the

Government's plans extend beyond cutting and selling timber.

A full-fledged furniture and joinery facility is to be established on the East Bank of Berbice, where residents will be trained by the Guyana Forestry Commission to produce items including school furniture, wardrobes, cabinets and kitchen cupboards.

The move is aimed at keeping more of the value generated from Guyana's forest resources within local communities while creating opportunities for employment and entrepreneurship.

"We continue to work with loggers, and to find areas in which we can help them to move towards more value-added," Minister Bharrat said.

The minister said value-added production could create jobs, strengthen the viability of the forestry sector and support more sustainable use of forest resources.

The Government is also considering a medium-scale mining block for interested members of the association, creating another potential income stream for residents whose livelihoods are tied to natural resources.

Before the concession can be expanded, however, the association must first be reorganised. The Guyana Forestry Commission is scheduled to meet with

the firewood association and other small associations in Mara on September 27 to facilitate the formation of a new East Bank association and the election of an executive.

The Government is also bringing skills outside the traditional forestry sector. A free jewellery-making course is expected to be introduced in

Berbice before year-end, with participants to be equipped for entrepreneurship or employment.

Minister Bharrat said the combined initiatives represent an investment of nearly G\$5 million and are intended to broaden the ways residents can earn within their communities.

The measures mark a shift from simply expanding access to forest resources to helping residents extract greater economic value from them.



Sculpture woodcraft made by local producer

50 CHILDREN PER SHIFT AS LITTLE DIAMOND CENTRE OPENS



New Little Diamond Centre expands childcare beyond the 9-to-5

Working parents in Little Diamond and surrounding communities will soon have access to childcare that extends beyond the traditional workday, following the opening of the \$123.7 million Little Diamond Day and Night Early Childhood

Development Centre. The purpose-built facility, funded through the Government of Guyana and the Caribbean Development Bank's Basic Needs Trust Fund (BNTF), can accommodate up to 50 children per shift and is designed to respond to

families whose working hours do not fit the conventional 9am-to-5pm schedule. Night-care services will begin on October 1, providing an important option for parents who work nights, shifts or extended hours and need safe, dependable care for their children. BNTF's Guyana Project Manager, Karen Roopchand said the investment should ultimately be measured by the children and families it serves, while highlighting the significance of the centre's day-and-night model. The facility goes beyond supervision, with furnished learning spaces, a dedicated play area and provisions to support accessibility and inclusion. Parenting education programmes will also equip parents and caregivers with knowledge to support children's development and well-being. Minister of Human Services and Social Security, Dr Vindhya Persaud, said the centre will provide children with a safe and loving environment while easing some of the challenges facing working and single parents. The initiative is also expected to create employment opportunities for women in the community, while



New Little Diamond Centre expands childcare beyond the 9-to-5

the Ministry is working to strengthen its pool of trained caregivers, including through plans to provide special-education training. Minister Persaud stressed, however, that the centre's success cannot rest solely on government or caregivers. **"Our success will depend on everyone. This is the family that we are building for this community."** She reinforced the importance of community involvement in raising and supporting children, echoing the longstanding principle that **"it takes a village to raise a child."** With additional centres planned for Regions Two, Five and Six, the investment forms part of a wider push to expand early childhood development and flexible childcare across Guyana.

FORENSIC ANALYSIS EXPOSES MAJOR GAPS IN REGION FOUR ELECTION FIGURES

A forensic accountant's comparison of certified Statements of Poll (SoPs) with two official Form 24 declarations has revealed substantial numerical differences in the Region Four results of Guyana's 2020 General Election, with the largest gap involving the APNU+AFC vote. Terrence Jaskaran, a chartered accountant and forensic audit consultant attached to the Guyana Police Force's Criminal Investigations Department, told the ongoing election



Chartered Accountant and highly regarded forensic audit consultant attached to the Guyana Police Force's CID, Terrence Jaskaran

fraud trial that he was tasked with tabulating certified copies of the March 2, 2020 SoPs and comparing the resulting totals with the

Region Four Form 24 declarations. For APNU+AFC, Jaskaran's own tabulation of the certified SoPs he examined

produced 116,215 votes. That figure was then compared separately with two Region Four Form 24 declarations. The March 5 Form 24 recorded 136,458 APNU+AFC votes, which was 20,243 more than the SoP total. The March 13 Form 24 recorded 136,057 votes, 19,842 above Jaskaran's SoP-based figure. The PPP/C figures moved in the opposite direction. J a s k a r a n ' s tabulation of the certified SoPs produced 80,288 PPP/C votes. The March 5 Form 24 recorded 77,329 votes, 2,959 fewer than the SoP total, while the March 13 Form 24 recorded 77,231, 3,057 fewer. The distinction between the sources is central: the 116,215 and 80,288 figures are totals generated by Jaskaran from the certified SoPs he examined, while the other figures are those appearing on the two Form 24 declarations. Jaskaran said three certified SoPs were blank and two others were not provided, meaning those documents were excluded from his calculations. Smaller

variances were also recorded for other parties and in other regions. The court accepted Jaskaran as an expert in forensic accounting and analysis despite defence objections. Magistrate Faith McGusty indicated that his evidence concerned the numerical comparison, while the court would ultimately determine the weight to be given to that evidence. The figures form part of the prosecution's evidence in the ongoing trial and, at this stage, represent testimony and analysis before the court rather than a final judicial finding on the cause of the discrepancies.

CRIME REDUCTION GAINS CONTINUE WITH SHARP DROP IN SERIOUS OFFENCES



Enhanced training, modern technology and increased operational support are improving law enforcement capabilities nationwide

Guyana recorded a 16.9 per cent decline in serious crime during the first half of 2026, extending a downward trend that points to the growing impact of

investments in policing, surveillance technology and crime-prevention strategies. The figures, contained in the government's 2026 Mid-

Year Report, suggest that efforts to strengthen law enforcement capacity are translating into improved public safety, with fewer serious offences affecting communities across the country. The reduction follows a 25 per cent decline in serious crimes during the first half of 2025, indicating sustained progress in the national push to make neighbourhoods safer and reduce the social and economic costs associated with criminal activity. Behind the decline is a multi-pronged strategy focused on strengthening the Guyana Police

Force through training, technology and operational support. The government has set a target of reducing the overall crime rate per 100,000 population from 6,832.49 in 2025 to 6,149.24 this year, with reductions expected across both vehicular and non-vehicular crimes. A major component of that strategy is the expansion of the Safe Country Initiative, which is increasing the use of intelligent surveillance systems to assist with crime detection, investigations and real-time monitoring. At the same time,

the government is investing heavily in human resources. A total of 5,000 police officers and 500 detectives are expected to receive specialised training this year, significantly higher than the 3,997 officers

and 293 detectives trained in 2025. The continued decline in serious crime suggests that a combination of stronger policing, smarter technology and enhanced community engagement is producing measurable results in the effort to improve public safety and security nationwide.



Enhanced training, modern technology and increased operational support are improving law enforcement capabilities nationwide

GUYANA KEEPS VETO OVER US MIGRATION TRANSFERS- PRESIDENT ALI



President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali addressed the arrangement in a wide-ranging interview with Al Jazeera

Guyana has retained full control over who enters the country under its one-year migration cooperation framework with the United States (US), with President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali making clear that no third-country national can be transferred without prior approval from Georgetown. The arrangement, implemented through the International Organization for Migration’s (IOM) Assisted Voluntary Return Programme, has already seen its first cohort arrive in

Guyana on September 4. President Ali said all individuals were vetted by Guyanese authorities and confirmed to have no criminal records before being accepted. Speaking to Al Jazeera and subsequently clarifying the arrangement after his return to Guyana, the President rejected suggestions that the US could simply send people to Guyana. **“People just can’t arrive on a plane, as is being portrayed on social media,”** he said, stressing that Washington must first provide information on each proposed transferee

and that Guyana retains the authority to approve or reject them. The framework establishes specific eligibility requirements. Only third-country nationals with final US removal orders and medical authorisation to travel are eligible for consideration. Unaccompanied children under 18, Guyanese nationals, persons with pending asylum claims in the US and individuals with known violent criminal records are excluded. Guyana must also receive information on proposed transferees, including criminal

history where applicable and health-screening results, before conducting its own security, health and other assessments. **“Guyana retains complete discretion to approve or deny individuals proposed for removal,”** President Ali said, adding that Georgetown will determine how many people it is prepared to accept and can establish its own criteria. The final flight manifest must be submitted to Guyana before any transfer, while approved individuals must be accompanied by US Department of Homeland Security personnel. Anyone not previously approved by Guyana can be refused entry. The financial arrangement also places

the cost of relocation on the US, while the IOM is responsible for reception, accommodation, healthcare access and other support for those accepted. The framework does not amount to permanent resettlement. Individuals remain in Guyana while their immigration status is determined and can work with the IOM to return voluntarily to their countries of origin or pursue other options. **“Neither Guyana nor IOM will facilitate forced removals,”** President Ali said. The Government has also stressed that months of negotiations preceded the arrangement and that its implementation is intended to include US financial and technical support

GUYANA, CHINA EYE EXPANDED COOPERATION IN TRADE, TECHNOLOGY AND DEVELOPMENT

Guyana and China are looking to deepen cooperation across trade, technology, infrastructure, agriculture and other emerging sectors as the two countries build on more than five decades of diplomatic relations. Prime Minister Brigadier (Ret’d) Mark Phillips said the longstanding relationship has already produced practical benefits for Guyana while creating a strong foundation for expanded economic and development cooperation. He was at the time speaking at a reception

hosted by the Embassy of the People’s Republic of China to mark China’s National Day and the 77th anniversary of the founding of the People’s Republic of China. This year also marks 54 years of diplomatic relations between Guyana and China, as Guyana celebrates its 60th anniversary of Independence. Prime Minister Phillips pointed to cooperation in infrastructure, healthcare, agriculture, education, transportation and human resource development, highlighting the



Guyana and China chart next phase of cooperation

Bharrat Jagdeo Demerara River Bridge, constructed by China Railway Construction Corporation International, and the six regional hospitals project. He also recognised

the contribution of Chinese medical teams to Guyana’s health sector over the years. Looking ahead, the Prime Minister said Guyana’s expanding and diversifying economy presents opportunities

for stronger trade and commercial engagement with China. He identified sustainable urban development, renewable energy, smart infrastructure, modern transportation and urban planning among areas with potential for deeper cooperation. Agriculture, food processing and agricultural technology were also highlighted, alongside fisheries, aquaculture, marine science and environmental protection. Education and skills development remain another avenue for closer

ties, with the Chinese Government Scholarship Programme and other training and capacity-building initiatives providing opportunities for people-to-people exchanges. **“The question before us is not simply what we have achieved together, but what more we can accomplish together,”** Prime Minister Phillips said. He said Guyana looks forward to working alongside China to build a future that is more prosperous, resilient, sustainable and inclusive, while pursuing cooperation based on mutual benefit and shared development priorities.

GUYANA LOCKS IN STRONGER US CONGRESSIONAL TIES



Minister of Labour and Manpower Planning Keoma Griffith with House Democratic Leader Hakeem Jeffries in Washington, D.C.

Guyana is strengthening its ties with key lawmakers in the United States (US) Congress as Government continues

to build bipartisan support for the country’s development agenda. Minister of Labour and Manpower Planning, Keoma Griffith

used his participation in the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation’s Annual Legislative Conference in Washington, D.C., to engage senior members of Congress, including House Democratic Leader Hakeem Jeffries, Congressional Black Caucus Chair, Yvette Clarke and Congressman Jonathan Jackson. The engagements provided an opportunity to update US lawmakers on developments in Guyana while reinforcing the importance of

continued American partnership as the country advances its development priorities. Discussions with Congressman Jackson focused on the importance of continued US support for Guyana’s development, while meetings with other members of the Congressional Black Caucus formed part of broader efforts to strengthen relationships across the US political landscape. The engagements build on successive high-level visits between

Guyana and Washington and underscore Government’s focus on maintaining strong congressional

relationships and ensuring US partners remain informed about Guyana’s progress.



Minister of Labour and Manpower Planning Keoma Griffith with Congressional Black Caucus Chair Yvette Clarke in Washington, D.C.

17 CHILDREN TO RECEIVE COMPLEX HEART SURGERY IN GUYANA AS SPECIALIST CARE EXPANDS



President Ali sharing a warm moment with a baby who will receive specialised paediatric cardiac care

Seventeen children will undergo complex heart surgeries at the Georgetown Public Hospital Corporation (GPHC) from September 28, as Guyana moves to expand its capacity to provide specialised paediatric cardiac care at

home. The five-day surgical mission, running through October 2, will bring a specialist team from Apollo Health Systems of India to work alongside Guyanese doctors and healthcare professionals, allowing children requiring advanced congenital heart procedures to receive treatment without travelling overseas.

President, Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali, who hosted the children and their parents at State House, said the programme is part of Government's wider investment in building world-class healthcare capacity while responding to urgent

needs. The immediate target is clear: reducing the backlog of children awaiting specialised cardiac intervention.

"I want to bring to zero, to nil, all of the cardiac, specialised cardiac surgeries required by children," President Ali said.

Approximately 40 children are currently awaiting specialised congenital heart surgery. A second mission is planned for December, with 10 more children expected to receive treatment.

The expansion of the programme followed assessments by Guyanese cardiologists, who identified cases requiring greater

technical expertise and a broader specialist team.

Health Minister, Dr Frank Anthony said the response was to bring that expertise directly to Guyana rather than requiring families to travel abroad.

"Here it is, we are bringing an entire team to Guyana, and they'll be operating using our facilities here," he said.

The partnership is also strengthening local capacity. Apollo Health Systems has previously supported training for Guyanese doctors and collaborated with the local health system in other areas, creating opportunities for specialists here to work alongside international teams.

For families, the immediate benefit is treatment closer to home. For the health system, the missions represent a step towards making complex paediatric cardiac intervention an increasingly available service within Guyana.

President Ali said the investment ultimately goes beyond the procedures themselves, describing it as an investment in children's future and their opportunity to grow into healthy and productive citizens.



President Ali alongside children who will receive specialised paediatric cardiac care

NEW AMSTERDAM'S ONCOLOGY UNIT CHANGES THE CANCER CARE JOURNEY



Jonathan Madar

For cancer patients in Berbice, access to treatment is no longer defined by a three-hour journey to Georgetown.

Since opening in October 2024, the Oncology Department at New Amsterdam Hospital has grown

from 57 patients to 207, delivering approximately 750 doses of chemotherapy and bringing specialised cancer care within reach of patients in Regions Five, Six and Ten.

The service was established in response to a critical gap in cancer care. Dr Mahendra Rampersaud, who provides supervisory oversight at the department, said doctors found that many patients were undergoing cancer surgery in Georgetown but failing to return for chemotherapy and other follow-up treatment because of the distance and associated burden.

"We were losing maybe half of the patients who weren't going to get the chemo or complete the other treatment that they needed," he said.

Bringing treatment closer has since helped build a more comprehensive service at New Amsterdam, supported initially by specialists from the Georgetown Public Hospital Corporation and now staffed by two full-time oncologists. Patients also have access to nutrition, pain management and counselling services.

For 54-year-old

headteacher, Mahalia Crawford, who was diagnosed with stage-three cancer in 2021, the service has made treatment more manageable after she transferred her care from Georgetown.

"The nurses and doctors are very nice to us patients. They are always there," she said.

Jonathan Madar, who was recently diagnosed with Hodgkin lymphoma, said proximity has made a significant difference, allowing him to access treatment minutes from his home rather than making repeated trips to



Mahalia Crawford

Georgetown.

"The treatment here, the staff, the doctors, they are very pleasant," Madar said.

The expansion of oncology care forms part of a wider push to increase access to cancer services, including chemotherapy,

targeted and hormonal therapies, palliative care, screening and financial assistance for specialised treatment unavailable locally.

Guyana is also developing its first National Oncology Centre in partnership with Mount Sinai Health System. The facility is expected to strengthen national cancer care through advanced diagnostics, chemotherapy and radiotherapy.

For patients and doctors alike, the expansion reflects a simple but consequential shift that specialised cancer treatment is moving closer to the people who need it.

SPECIALISED EYE CARE SET TO REACH DEEPER INTO THE HINTERLAND



Eye care moves closer to hinterland patients as Port Mourant clears surgical backlog

Patients in Guyana's hinterland will soon be able to access eye surgery closer to home, as the

National Ophthalmology Hospital at Port Mourant moves from clearing long-standing

surgical backlogs to taking specialised care directly into remote communities.

Beginning in October, ophthalmology teams will conduct surgical outreaches in hinterland regions, starting with Regions Eight and Nine before expanding to other areas.

Dr Saif Alli, ophthalmologist and doctor in charge of the hospital, said the move will eliminate the need

for patients identified during outreach screenings to travel to Port Mourant for surgery.

"Instead of getting the hinterland patients to come to our institution, we are planning surgical outreaches which will start in October, where we go out there and do the surgery right there," Dr Alli said.

The shift marks a significant change for a hospital that previously

faced a backlog of cataract and other eye surgeries. Following major upgrades and the resumption of surgical services, Dr Alli said the facility has now cleared its waiting list.

"At the moment, we don't have a waiting list for cataract surgery or any other surgery. You can come in today and get the surgery tomorrow. We came a far way to get where we are at this moment," he said.

The hospital has also expanded its diagnostic capacity, introducing Optical Coherence

Tomography (OCT), allowing doctors to examine the back of the eye and identify changes earlier, particularly among patients with diabetes.

Patients also have access to laser treatment and intravitreal injections, while the hospital handles emergency surgeries and sees approximately 90 patients daily.

The expansion forms part of the broader effort to bring modern specialised healthcare closer to patients, including those living far from major medical centres.

NEW REGION THREE MARKETS TO CREATE SPACE FOR 235 VENDORS, DRIVE BUSINESS GROWTH



Government launches major market project to expand economic activity in Region Three

Hundreds of vendors in Region Three are set to benefit from expanded business opportunities as the government moves ahead with more than \$2.8 billion in market infrastructure investments designed to strengthen commerce, improve vending conditions and support growing communities along the West Coast and West Bank of Demerara. The latest projects include a new \$1.5 billion

market at Pouderoyen and a \$1.3 billion market at Zeelugt, which together will create space for more than 235 vendors and significantly expand commercial activity in the region. At Pouderoyen, a new two-storey market will accommodate 145 vendors, nearly doubling the capacity of the existing facility, which currently serves 78 registered vendors. Construction is expected

to be completed within 18 months. Minister of Local Government and Regional Development, Priya Manickchand said investment forms part of a wider programme to modernise markets and create stronger economic centres within communities. “This is one of three markets that is going up across the region,” the minister said, noting that major investments are also underway in Parika, Hydronie and Leonora, with additional developments planned for Zeelugt and Tuschen. The minister said the new facilities are expected to attract more shoppers from surrounding communities, creating increased opportunities not only for vendors but also for transport operators, small businesses and service providers. At Zeelugt, the new market will accommodate more than 90 vendors, compared to the approximately 54 vendors who currently operate along reserves and streets in the community. “The development is happening, and before the end of the year, we will turn the sod for Port Maurant, La Penitence, Lusignan, Soesdyke, Skeldon, McKenzie and Plaisance, even as we work on restoring and extending the Stabroek Market and building a brand new Bourda Market,”

Minister Manickchand said. The modern Zeelugt facility will include dedicated sections for meat and fish, fresh produce, prepared foods and other services, along with parking areas, a taxi bay, administrative offices, training facilities, modern washrooms and an integrated waste-management system. The market developments are expected to create stronger commercial hubs, improve access to goods and services and support continued economic expansion across Region Three.



Minister Manickchand and other officials turn the sod for the construction of the new Zeelugt market

EIGHT-LOT HIGHWAY PROJECT OPENS NEW EAST BANK DEVELOPMENT CORRIDOR



Craig-Land of Canaan highway advances, with 2027 completion targeted

A major highway expansion is taking shape along the East Bank Demerara corridor, with the Craig to Land of Canaan Road project advancing across eight construction lots as Government pushes to strengthen connectivity between communities, residential areas and agricultural zones. The project is targeted for completion by the end of the first quarter of 2027 and forms part of approximately \$52 billion being invested by the Ministry of Housing in road infrastructure across Guyana. The broader investment

covers multiple road development and connectivity projects, rather than the Craig-Land of Canaan highway alone. Minister of Housing, Collin Croal inspected all eight lots during a recent site visit, engaging contractors on progress and the technical challenges involved in delivering the new highway. The scale of the works extends beyond road construction, with sections of the alignment requiring extensive sand filling across swamp areas, major bridges, drainage and irrigation infrastructure, as well as careful soil settlement and compaction. A major bridge at Land of Canaan has already received design approval, while drainage plans have been approved by the National Drainage and Irrigation Authority (NDIA). The highway will provide a major exit at Land of Canaan and extend the connectivity being established between Diamond and Craig, improving access to communities and areas supporting agricultural activity. Minister Croal said the project cannot be

rushed at the expense of construction standards, particularly where settlement, compaction and concrete curing are required. The project includes several bridges, including a 300-foot span, alongside extensive drainage and irrigation works. The eight lots are being executed by a combination of local, regional and international contractors, with the ministry continuing to monitor progress toward the 2027 completion target.



Craig-Land of Canaan highway advances, with 2027 completion targeted

WINDSOR FOREST GAINS STRONGER SHIELD AGAINST EROSION AND FLOODING

Residents of Windsor Forest, West Coast Demerara, are set to benefit from stronger protection against coastal erosion, flooding and tidal overtopping as the government advances a new phase of sea defence works in the community. The Ministry of Public Works is constructing an additional 225 metres of sea defence, expanding on the 300 metres completed in 2025. The project is aimed



Windsor Forest project forms part of a wider national programme

at strengthening a vulnerable section of coastline and reducing risks to homes, agricultural lands, roads and other critical infrastructure. For communities situated along Guyana’s low-lying coastal plain, sea defences serve as a critical line of protection

against the impacts of climate change, rising sea levels and increasingly unpredictable weather patterns. The Windsor Forest project forms part of a wider national programme that has seen significant investments in both new sea defence structures and the maintenance of existing protections across the country. Over the last five years, more than 35,300 metres of new sea defence infrastructure have been constructed nationwide, while more than 425,800 metres of existing structures have undergone maintenance and rehabilitation to ensure their continued effectiveness. The government has also strengthened natural coastal barriers through the restoration and development of more than 6,000 hectares of mangroves, helping to reduce wave action and improve shoreline stability. In 2025,

approximately \$12.6 billion was invested in sea defence projects at locations including Amsterdam, Bengal, Buxton, Den Amstel, Moleson Creek and Onderneeming. An additional \$11.3 billion has been allocated this year to continue reinforcing vulnerable coastal and riverain communities. The ongoing Windsor Forest extension adds another layer of protection for residents while supporting Guyana’s long-term climate resilience and coastal security agenda.

NIS MOVES TO END PENSION QUEUES WITH DIGITAL SERVICES



The 57th anniversary observance of the National Insurance Scheme

More than 40,000 National Insurance Scheme (NIS) pensioners still collecting their benefits through pension books and vouchers could soon be able to complete the process from home, with the government preparing to digitise the Scheme's services.

Senior Minister in the Office of the President

with Responsibility for Finance, Dr Ashni Singh, said the planned overhaul will allow pensioners to submit Life Certificates digitally, including through WhatsApp, and have their pensions deposited directly into bank accounts without travelling to NIS offices or joining lines.

The push comes as the number of

pensioners receiving payments directly into their bank accounts has nearly doubled since 2020, increasing from just over 11,000 to more than 20,000.

Dr. Singh urged the remaining pensioners to make the transition, pointing to the financial and time costs associated with physically collecting pension books and encashing vouchers.

But the planned changes go well beyond pension payments. Dr. Singh said the entire NIS process will be digitised, allowing citizens to register, employers and self-employed persons to submit returns and contributions, and contributors to check their records online.

Claims for benefits

will also be submitted and tracked digitally, removing the need for repeated visits to NIS offices.

The transformation is being driven by the government's wider financial inclusion and digitalisation agenda, with Singh stressing that access to a bank account and digital payment systems is increasingly essential to participation in the modern economy.

The minister also challenged current contributors to take greater control of their NIS records by regularly checking their contribution statements and ensuring deductions made on their behalf are actually paid over to the Scheme.

He called on NIS

to provide annual statements to employers and urged employees to deliver citizen-friendly services, warning that government has a zero-tolerance policy for poor service.

The planned digital overhaul marks a significant shift in how citizens will interact with the 57-year-old Scheme, replacing paper-based processes and physical queues with services designed to be accessed from home.

For pensioners in particular, the change could turn a routine trip to collect a benefit into a transaction completed from a phone or computer.



The 57th anniversary observance of the National Insurance Scheme

STARTING UP STRONG REACHES HUNDREDS



Starting Up Strong backs small businesses

For hundreds of Guyanese seeking a pathway to financial independence, the difference between an idea and an income-generating business can come down to having the right tools.

That is the focus of the Ministry of Human Services and Social Security's Starting Up Strong initiative, which provides practical, in-kind support to people

seeking to establish or expand small businesses and strengthen their livelihoods.

Launched almost four years ago by Minister Dr Vindhya Persaud through the Ministry's Difficult Circumstances Unit, the programme targets persons who have the drive to start small businesses but lack the resources to get off the ground.

Rather than providing cash grants, the initiative supplies beneficiaries with equipment and other



Starting Up Strong backs small businesses

resources directly linked to their income-generating activities. Women have made up the majority of beneficiaries, while men have also received support.

For Nickita McFarlane, owner of Nikki's Dazzling Creation, a printer provided through the programme is expected to expand her business and increase her earning

capacity.

"I would have applied, and today I would have uplifted my printer that would help me to boost my business and bring in an income for myself and family," she said.

Another beneficiary, Looknauth Persaud, received a bicycle that enables him to travel from Good Hope to Lusignan Primary School for work.

The Ministry continues to monitor beneficiaries, tracking how the support translates into stronger businesses, household income and greater self-reliance.

18-YEAR-OLD FARMER GETS GOVT BACKING TO EXPAND CASH-CROP OPERATION



Minister Ramkissoon engaging with the cash crop farmers

An 18-year-old La Retraite farmer Brian Cooper was who has spent three years building a cash-crop operation is set to receive government support to address drainage and access problems that have been limiting production and his ability to get produce to market.

among farmers who raised concerns with Minister within the Ministry of Agriculture, Vikash Ramkissoon during a community engagement, prompting immediate instructions for the National Drainage

and Irrigation Authority (NDIA) to assess his farm and identify an intervention.

The ministry is also working with Cooper to prepare him for financing through the Guyana Development Bank, potentially giving the young farmer access to capital to strengthen and expand his operation.

"We will work with you... so that you can have the lands clear. You can go on the lands, and you can farm, you can produce," Minister Ramkissoon told farmers.

Cooper currently produces pak-choy, lettuce, celery, cabbage, pumpkin, bora, okra and squash, but said the challenges affecting his farm had placed significant pressure on his ability to continue.

"I feel much better. I feel a great release, because my stress is done, finally done," he said.

He said access to financing could help transform his operation while encouraging other young people to consider agriculture as a viable livelihood.

Beyond Cooper's concerns, farmers raised issues ranging from land clearing, drainage and farm access roads to bridges, irrigation, planting materials,

equipment and agricultural inputs.

Minister Ramkissoon directed the relevant agencies to compile the requests and conduct assessments, with interventions to be implemented in phases.

He also urged farmers to strengthen their newly formed farmers' group, which could help them access financing, technical assistance and other support collectively.

The minister is expected to return shortly to assess progress and review the interventions being pursued.



Minister Ramkissoon engaging with the cash crop farmers

NEW AMSTERDAM CENTRE TO RAISE STANDARD FOR WORKPLACE SAFETY TRAINING



New Centre of Excellence to build Guyana's next generation of safety professionals

As Guyana's economy expands across construction, mining, manufacturing, infrastructure and oil and gas, a new Centre of Excellence in Occupational Safety and Health is being positioned to strengthen the country's capacity to prevent workplace accidents before they happen.

The facility, commissioned at the New Amsterdam Technical Institute, will provide specialised training for occupational safety professionals and serve as a national and regional hub for workplace safety development. It is the first facility of its kind in Guyana and the Caribbean to

serve as the official home of the CVQ Level 3 Occupational Safety and Health programme, combining classroom instruction with practical training, field-based exercises, applied learning and competency development. Minister of Labour and Manpower Planning, Keoma Griffith said the investment comes as Guyana faces increasingly complex workplace environments and emerging occupational risks. **"Every workplace accident is one too many. Every workplace injury is one too many, and every workplace fatality is one too many,"** Minister Griffith

said, underscoring workplace safety as both a legal and moral responsibility. He said the centre will help build the human capacity required to identify and address hazards before they result in accidents, while strengthening the safety practices of employers, supervisors and workers. Minister of Education, Sonia Parag said the facility also reflects the Government's broader push to expand Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) beyond access to infrastructure and towards practical, market-ready competencies. **"The success of this training centre will not be measured**



New Centre of Excellence to build Guyana's next generation of safety professionals

by the building itself, or the equipment in that building by itself. It will be by the training that is administered," Minister Parag said. The initiative forms part of ExxonMobil Guyana and partners' US\$100 million, 10-year Greater Guyana Initiative, with support from the Ministry of

Education, NORME International and the New Amsterdam Technical Institute. Beyond training safety professionals, the centre is expected to strengthen Guyana's technical skills base, support safer workplaces and create a platform for regional occupational safety development.

EVERY REGION SET FOR TVET CENTRE DURING 2026



TVET expansion targets every region, connecting skills to jobs

Every region of Guyana is set to have a Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) centre by the end of 2026, expanding access to practical skills as the country prepares a workforce for a rapidly changing economy. Minister of Education, Sonia Parag made the announcement at the opening of the three-day TVET

Fair and Expo 2026 at the Arthur Chung Conference Centre, positioning technical education as a critical pathway to employment, entrepreneurship and national development. **"The government has made a bold commitment that every region of Guyana will have a TVET centre by the end of 2026,"** Minister

Parag said. The expansion is being guided by Guyana's TVET Policy 2025-2035, which sets a 10-year framework for strengthening technical education and aligning training with industries driving national growth, including construction, energy, climate-resilient agriculture, hospitality, manufacturing and digital technology. Minister Parag said Guyana cannot build a modern economy through academic knowledge alone, stressing the importance of people who can turn knowledge into practical solutions, products and services. She also challenged

the longstanding perception that technical education is a lesser alternative to traditional academic qualifications. **"Technical education is not a lesser form of education. It is rigorous. It is valuable, and essential,"** she said, noting that students skilled in areas such as machinery, design, food, technology and construction are equally capable of contributing to the country's development. The Expo brought that message to life, with students showcasing practical projects, emerging technologies and skills across

multiple disciplines under the theme "From Classroom to Career: TVET in Action". Minister Parag urged students to see their projects as potential businesses rather than simply school assignments, noting that an idea developed in the classroom could eventually become a source of income, create employment and reach markets beyond Guyana. With TVET access being expanded nationwide, Government is positioning skills development as a direct bridge between education, employment and the opportunities emerging across Guyana's economy.



TVET expansion targets every region, connecting skills to jobs

PROJECT FLOW REACHES REGION SIX



More than 8,400 Region Six students benefit from school water initiative

Thousands of students in Region Six are now benefitting from reliable access to purified drinking water as Project FLOW continues its nationwide rollout, improving student welfare while advancing environmental sustainability in schools across Guyana.

The initiative, implemented through a partnership among the Greater Guyana Initiative (GGI), Recover Guyana and the Ministry of Education, was officially commissioned at New Amsterdam Secondary School (Multilateral). In Region Six alone, 17 secondary schools and two Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) institutions have been equipped with water purification systems,

benefitting 8,438 students and 1,164 teachers. The project forms part of a broader national effort to install water purification systems in 141 public secondary schools, 10 TVET centres and four special education facilities by 2029, ultimately reaching more than 58,000 students across the country. Minister of Education, Sonia Parag said the initiative demonstrates the impact

that strong partnerships can have on improving students' daily learning environment and overall wellbeing. She encouraged students to view the systems not only as a source of safe, chilled drinking water but also as an example of how innovation and infrastructure can support Guyana's sustainability goals. Head of ExxonMobil Guyana Limited, Alistair Routledge, noted that investing in young people

remains one of the most important contributions to the country's future development. Beyond improving access to safe drinking water, Project FLOW is expected to significantly reduce plastic waste. Through integrated monitoring systems, the programme is projected to eliminate approximately 25 million plastic bottles by the end of its implementation, creating healthier schools while supporting a cleaner and more sustainable Guyana.

POWER OF SALE!

OPPORTUNITY TO BUY A HOUSE IN TORONTO AT STEEP DISCOUNT

DID YOU KNOW?



In Toronto, Canada a “power of sale” is a legal process that allows a mortgage lender to sell a property when the borrower has defaulted on the mortgage. It is very common in Ontario and is governed primarily by the Mortgages Act.

Being able to purchase a property on power of sales presents an opportunity to acquire a property at a significant discount to the market value.

What does it mean if you see a house advertised as “Power of Sale”?

This is particularly important if you're thinking about buying one. It generally means the seller is the mortgage lender (or someone acting on its behalf), because the previous owner defaulted on the mortgage. In the Toronto/GTA market, data reported in May 2026 showed that power-of-sale transactions were approximately five times higher in 2025 than they were in 2022.

Example: A property is worth \$1M. The borrower owes \$600,000 on the mortgage and is unable to make the required payments. The lender puts the property up for power of sale at \$1M. A potential buyer makes an offer at a significantly lower price than the \$1M value. The lender is only entitled to receive the \$600,000 owed to them from the sale.

The lender is required to sell the property on the open market and pass any funds above the \$600,000 owed to the borrower. However, the lender is not obligated to wait indefinitely to sell the property and could ultimately sell it at a steep discount to recover the outstanding loan.

HERE ARE SOME OF THE HOUSES ON SALE!

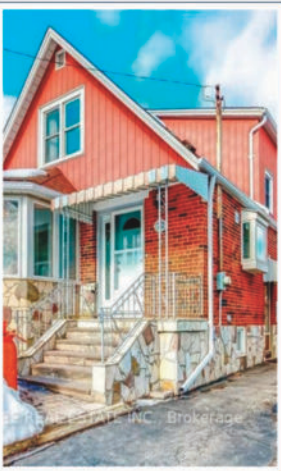
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*Basement Apartment With Separate Entrance



📍 23 Manorwood Rd, Toronto
🏠 7 🚗 3 🚗 4
\$899,000



📍 72 Exford Dr, Toronto
🏠 6 🚗 3 🚗 6
\$769,900
*Basement Apartment With Separate Entrance



📍 41 Tofield Cres, Toronto
🏠 4 🚗 3 🚗 4
\$120,000
*Basement Apartment With Separate Entrance



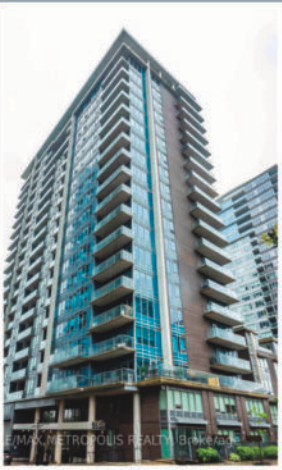
📍 1623 Keele St, Toronto
🏠 5 🚗 3 🚗 4
\$899,000



📍 345 Silverstone Dr, Toronto
🏠 5 🚗 4 🚗 7
\$919,000



📍 215 Fort York Blvd #215
🏠 1 🚗 1
\$419,000



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CARIFESTA XVI BRINGS GUYANA A CULTURAL HOMECOMING AND A BIGGER OPPORTUNITY



Minister of Culture, Youth and Sport Charles Ramson Jr., Minister Seven Jacobs, CARICOM Secretary-General Dr Carla Barnett and senior CARICOM officials at the Secretariat's Georgetown headquarters

Guyana will host the Caribbean's premier cultural festival for the third time when CARIFESTA XVI arrives from October 8 to 17, 2027, bringing thousands of artists, cultural practitioners and visitors into the country and placing Guyana at the centre of regional creative exchange.

The return carries particular weight: Guyana hosted the inaugural CARIFESTA in 1972, making the 2027 edition a homecoming nearly six decades after the festival first brought Caribbean creativity together on Guyanese soil. But Government is positioning CARIFESTA XVI as more than a 10-day celebration. Minister

of Culture, Youth and Sport, Charles Ramson Jr., who are recently spoke of the hosting during discussions with CARICOM Secretary-General Dr Carla Barnett in Georgetown, said Guyana wants the festival to leave lasting benefits for artistes, young people and the wider creative economy.

“Beyond the performances and celebrations, we want

CARIFESTA XVI to create a lasting legacy for Guyana and the Caribbean,” Minister Ramson said.

That ambition gives the festival a broader economic and developmental dimension. The event is expected to create opportunities for artistes and cultural practitioners to gain regional and international exposure, develop collaborations

and build professional networks across music, dance, theatre, literature and other creative fields.

It also comes as Guyana seeks to strengthen its tourism and international profile, creating an opportunity to showcase the country's cultural diversity and heritage to regional and international audiences while drawing visitors and participants into the local economy.

For young creatives, CARIFESTA could provide a platform to move beyond performing and exhibiting into collaboration, entrepreneurship and market access.

The festival also offers Guyana an avenue for cultural diplomacy, strengthening relationships among CARICOM states

through the exchange of artistic traditions, ideas and creative practices.

Guyana formally indicated its willingness to host CARIFESTA XVI through President, Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali at the 51st Regular Meeting of CARICOM Heads of Government in July 2026.

Preparations will draw on the experiences of the three most recent host countries, allowing Guyana to incorporate lessons and best practices as it designs the festival.

For Guyana, CARIFESTA XVI represents both a return to where the Caribbean cultural movement began and an opportunity to connect that legacy with a new generation of creatives, while using the regional spotlight to advance culture, tourism and the creative economy.



Members of the National School of Dance performing to Vanilla's "One Dance" as part of the rehearsals for the 'Guyana Night' event of CARIFESTA XIV

NEXT GENERATION TAKES A SEAT AT GUYANA'S TOURISM TABLE



Himanshi Kumar emerged as Guyana's Junior Tourism Minister

The next generation of Guyana's tourism leaders is being given a direct voice in shaping the sector, with students from across the country coming together to debate ideas, test solutions and tackle the challenges that will define tourism's future.

The Regional Tourism Youth Congress, held at the Arthur Chung Conference Centre, forms part of Guyana's preparations to host the Caribbean Tourism Organisation's State of the Tourism Industry Conference (SOTIC) 2026 and Regional Tourism Youth Congress in October.

Director of the Guyana Tourism Authority (GTA), Kamrul Baksh said youth participation must extend beyond symbolic involvement, with young people bringing perspectives that are essential to developing the industry they will eventually lead.

“We can't be

having a discussion on tourism development and promotion without the ideas and inputs from our youths,” Baksh said.

Participants examined community-based and sports tourism, sustainable tourism, digital innovation and youth engagement, while a mystery topic challenged them to think critically and develop solutions under pressure.

Baksh said the presentations had already produced recommendations that could warrant further engagement with the participants, creating an avenue for young voices

to feed into ongoing tourism discussions.

GTA's Senior Manager of Destination Marketing, Annarie Seecharran, said the initiative is designed to ensure youth perspectives contribute meaningfully to decisions shaping the industry.

At the regional congress, participants will take on the roles of junior ministers or tourism commissioners and confront issues including climate resilience, smart technology and inclusive growth.

Following the national competition, Himanshi Kumar emerged as Guyana's

Junior Tourism Minister and will represent the country at the regional congress during SOTIC 2026.

Her participation will place Guyana's emerging tourism talent alongside young

representatives from across the Caribbean, as the country prepares to showcase not only its tourism product but the generation expected to drive its next phase of growth.



Young Guyanese step forward to shape the future of tourism

FLOOD-HIT WALES GROUND TO GET DRAINAGE AND PLAYING-SURFACE INTERVENTION

The Wales Community Centre Ground is set for a much-needed intervention after persistent flooding, a deteriorating playing surface and damaged infrastructure limited its use for sports and community activities.

The Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport has committed to addressing the facility's most pressing problems following an engagement between Minister within the ministry, Steven

Jacobs, and residents, who outlined the challenges affecting the ground.

The playing field is used for cricket, football, athletics and other community activities, but poor drainage has left the area vulnerable to flooding, while an uneven surface and damaged fencing have further reduced its usability.

Minister Jacobs said restoring the ground will be the immediate priority, but stressed that



Meeting wrere held in Wales and Belle West

drainage must also be addressed to protect the investment and prevent the same problems from recurring.

“The main thing

is, right now, is making sure that we fix the ground so that you can utilise it,” he said.

The minister said

engineers will assess the facility and develop a broader plan for its rehabilitation, including the playing surface and surrounding infrastructure. He also indicated that the nearby multipurpose court will be examined to ensure residents retain access to recreational space while works are undertaken.

The intervention comes as the government continues efforts to improve community sporting facilities across

Region Three, with the focus extending beyond construction to ensuring grounds remain functional and accessible.

Minister Jacobs also met residents of Belle West, where the condition and usability of recreational facilities were raised.

The engagements are intended to identify problems directly with communities and guide investments towards facilities that can support youth development, sporting talent, healthy lifestyles and wider community activity.



Guyanese DIASPORA DIGEST



KEEPING THE DIASPORA INFORMED EDITION 128

NEW WISMAR-MACKENZIE BRIDGE NEARS FINISH LINE

Asphalt paving is now underway on the deck of the new Wismar-Mackenzie Bridge, bringing the US\$35 million four-lane crossing closer to opening.

The new bridge will replace the existing two-lane crossing, easing congestion and improving the movement of people, vehicles and goods between Wismar and Mackenzie. Supporting roadworks, including new carriageways, roundabouts, medians and traffic islands, are also taking shape around the bridge.

With load testing to follow the paving works, Linden is moving closer to a safer, toll-free connection built to serve the town and communities across Region Ten and the wider hinterland.





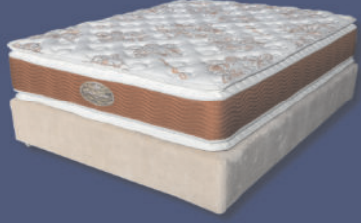
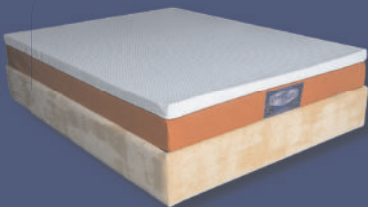
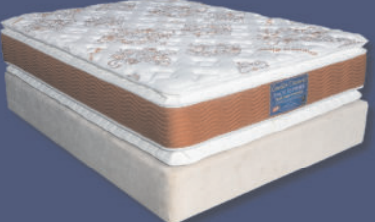
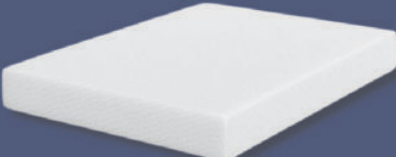
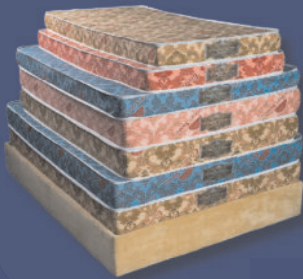
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MV Barima accused file application to halt murder proceedings

DEFENCE attorneys for two of the three Transport and Harbours Department (T&HD) employees charged with multiple counts of murder in connection with the MV Barima disaster have filed submissions seeking a stay of the criminal proceedings.

The accused are captain Kevin Price, 40, known as “KP”, of Melanie Damishana, East Coast Demerara (ECD); chief mate Rondell Dwayne Roberts, 42, of Grove Public Road, East Bank Demerara (EBD); and goods superintendent Delon Granderson, 33, of Fellowship, West Coast Demerara (WCD).

Attorney Dexter Todd, who represents Price and Granderson in association with other counsel, confirmed on Monday that the submissions had been completed and would be served on the court, the prosecution and attorney Everton Singh-Lammy, who represents Roberts.

The matter was adjourned to October 12, when the prosecution, led by Senior Police Legal Advisor Mandel Moore, is expected to respond to the defence submissions.

The three accused, who appeared virtually via Zoom, were further remanded to prison until that date.

The stay application is being pursued while the murder case remains at the preliminary stage. Magistrate Ravindra Mohabir, sitting at the Charity Magistrate’s Court, is scheduled to rule on the stay application on October 19, 2026.

Magistrate Mohabir had previously indicated that paper committal proceedings are expected to begin on November 16 and are to be completed by the end of that month.

The three men were members of the MV Barima’s crew when the vessel sank on July 18, resulting in the deaths of dozens of passengers. They were jointly charged with over 60 counts of murder following legal advice from Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP) Shalimar Ali-Hack, SC.

The accused first appeared before Chief Magistrate Judy Latchman at the Georgetown Magistrates’ Courts on July 28. They were not required to plead to the indictable murder charge and were remanded to prison.

The proceedings were subsequently transferred to the Charity Magistrates’ Court.

According to the charge, police alleged that the three men murdered 68 named persons and other persons unknown on July 18, at a location approximately 9.3 nautical miles off the Essequibo Coast near Devonshire Castle. The allegations arise from the sinking of the MV Barima that was travelling from Georgetown to Port Kaituma in Region One (Barima-Waini).

The vessel departed the Kingston Goods Wharf in Georgetown at approximately 15:15hrs on July 18. Later that night, the vessel encountered difficulties



Some of the victims of the MV Barima tragedy

while travelling off the Essequibo Coast, near the mouth of the Pomeroon River, before eventually capsizing. Approximately 179 passengers and crew were believed to have been on board. The disaster resulted in 73 deaths, while 76 people survived. Authorities have said approximately 30 people remain unaccounted for. The incident triggered a large-scale search, rescue and recovery operation involving several state agencies and other responders.



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