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‘Indigenous people must be players’

President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali has reaffirmed his government’s commitment to advancing the development, dignity and prosperity of Guyana’s Indigenous peoples, while urging Amerindian communities to assess leadership by its record, actions and continued presence beyond moments of crisis. “In our one Guyana, the Amerindian community occupies a special place as our first people,” the president said during the opening ceremony for Amerindian Heritage Month 2026.

He noted that government’s investments over the past five years have sought to ensure that Indigenous Guyanese are not left on the margins of national progress, but are positioned to actively participate in and benefit from the country’s economic transformation.

Ali: refinery key to national oil company

President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali has clarified what government means when it talks about a national oil company, stating it would not be a state-run firm producing or investing in oil, but rather an entity built around a domestic refinery to bring down fuel costs and protect Guyana from global price shocks.

The clarification matters because Guyana, despite producing crude oil offshore, imports all of the refined gasoline and diesel used at the pump. This means every spike in global fuel prices is passed on directly to Guyanese consumers and businesses. “We cannot have crude oil and don’t have security of supply,” the president further explained. A refinery would give the country control over its own fuel supply and “some shield against shocks that are currently existing.”

Asked directly about plans for a national oil company, he was clear on what it would not be.

“[The national oil company is] not as an investor but... one company that looks holistically at the entire ecosystem in terms of the supply,” president Ali said. “The plan would also require expanding the country’s fuel storage capacity, which he said currently falls short of “the development aspirations of our country.” Storage options being considered range from 30 to 120 days’ worth of supply.”

Longer term, president Ali said the refinery and expanded storage could also position Guyana as a fuel supplier to the wider CARICOM region.

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Global Affairs Canada steps up efforts to find Canadians missing in Nepal

By Milan Maharaj
LJI REPORTER

The Canadian government is stepping up its efforts amid flooding and mudslides in the area around the border between Nepal and China as it tries to find Canadians and permanent residents who have not been accounted for after the natural disaster.

Global Affairs Canada reported on Aug. 31 that it had information regarding about 30 Canadians and permanent residents in Nepal and Tibet Autonomous Region who had not yet been accounted for. It added that the figure might still change depending on the contacts established by the authorities with people in the affected area.

The floods and mudslides occurred

in the mountainous region along the border on Aug. 26 and caused damage on a large scale as many people are still unaccounted for.

For officials in Canada, the finding of citizens and permanent residents is currently their immediate priority. Canadian consular staff based in Kathmandu, as well as those based in the Canadian Emergency Watch and Response Centre, have been busy contacting Canadians in the affected regions and providing information to the families of those affected.

Global Affairs Canada has also been in direct communication with the families of the Canadians whose whereabouts are unknown. According to officials, they have been in contact with families, have listened to their fears, and are



Rescuers search for survivors in Nepal

aware of the uncertainties of the rescue mission.

Search teams face extremely challenging conditions in searching for the missing individuals due to the mountainous region and damage to the transportation system. The government of Nepal and China have been clearing roads in order to allow better access for both search and rescue missions, as well as clearing the debris in the area.

Officials have noted that information in the case can change rapidly due to information from the emergency crews reaching the inaccessible regions.

Canada's Travel Advice and Advisories for Nepal and China were revised after the flooding incident. The country's authorities have advised travelers from Canada to be updated with the latest Travel Advice and Advisories while in these places.

As of Aug. 27, Global Affairs Canada stated there were 858 registered Canadians in Nepal and another 18 in the Tibet Autonomous Region of China. It was emphasized that the figures were estimates as registration was voluntary and could include people who had registered but had no intention of traveling to that place at the moment.

Canada also has contributed humanitarian aid to assist in disaster relief efforts. The country's authorities noted that its help will allow addressing immediate needs caused by the disaster while assisting humanitarian organizations in their work in this matter.

The humanitarian assistance comes amid the continued work of emergency organizations on addressing the scale of the catastrophe. Flooding caused damages to transport routes in the region as well as other essential infrastructure. The tragedy has also affected those working or traveling in the area. The list of those missing includes

tourists, local residents, as well as people working at construction sites. The main objective of rescuing is to get to remote locations and individuals that have possibly been cut off due to damage to roads and landslides.

The situation has kept developing since the flooding occurred. As of Sept. 1, there was an indication that despite challenging circumstances for rescuers, the number of people missing increased considerably as more information was gathered.

The magnitude of the crisis has also led to help from multiple countries and organizations. Helicopters and other pieces of equipment have been used to access the difficult-to-reach locations.

In case of Canada, the main priority is its citizens and permanent residents trapped by the disaster. Updates about the situation are provided by Foreign Affairs Minister Anita Anand and other Canadian officials.

The government has made it clear that the number of Canadians thought to be in the affected zone cannot be taken as the actual number of those in danger. Those who have registered themselves are doing it voluntarily, and authorities are still trying to find out those who have made their way to safety, those who are still trapped and those who have not been in touch.

Canadian families waiting for news still have a lot of uncertainties as the rescue efforts are still ongoing. The Canadian government claims that the consular staff will continue to cooperate with the local authorities as well as the families of the victims as events unfold.

The flooding has brought out the problems associated with handling disaster in mountainous areas where the infrastructure has been affected.

As the search and rescue efforts are ongoing, the government claims that its first priority is finding out if the Canadians and permanent residents affected by the disaster are safe.

For Canadians who have relatives, friends or future travel plans in the area affected, according to the authorities, the scenario is dynamic. Canada's Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade has been updating its travel advisory as further developments take place, while Canadian consular officials have been in search of those missing.

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Guyanese DIASPORA DIGEST

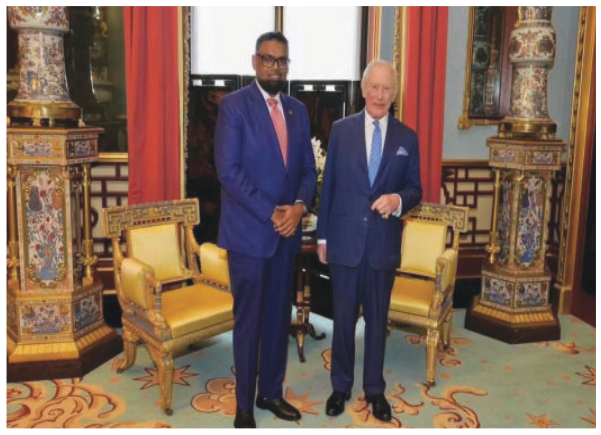


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ERREA WITTU TO PUSH GUYANA PAST 1 MILLION BARRELS OF OIL A DAY



FPSO Errea Wittu at the Stabroek Block, approximately 200 kilometres offshore Guyana, where the vessel will support the development of the Snoek, Mako and Uaru resources.



ROYAL VISIT TO GUYANA TO MARK 60 YEARS OF UK-GUYANA RELATIONS

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\$75M IN RELIEF, HOMES APPROVED AND COUNSELLING EXPANDED FOR MV BARIMA FAMILIES

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NEW WORLD BANK CARIBBEAN DIRECTOR SIGNALS CONTINUED SUPPORT FOR GUYANA

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ERREA WITTU TO PUSH GUYANA PAST 1 MILLION BARRELS OF OIL A DAY



The Errea Wittu

Guyana is on the verge of crossing a major milestone in its rapidly expanding petroleum sector, with the arrival of its fifth and largest Floating Production, Storage and Offloading (FPSO) vessel expected to push production beyond one million barrels per day.

The Errea Wittu, constructed by MODEC for the Uaru development in the Stabroek Block, arrived in Guyana and is expected to commence

production in the fourth quarter of 2026.

The US\$12.7 billion Uaru project is targeting more than 800 million barrels of recoverable oil, adding another major production stream to Guyana's expanding offshore industry.

Natural Resources Minister, Vickram Bharrat described the vessel's arrival as an important development, while stressing that increased production must translate into greater benefits for Guyana and its people.

"With first oil expected in the fourth quarter of 2026, production is poised to

cross the one-million-barrel-per-day mark," Minister Bharrat said.

The Stabroek Block currently produces approximately 900,000 barrels of oil per day through four FPSOs: Liza Destiny, Liza Unity, Prosperity and One Guyana.

President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali said the Errea Wittu is larger than the existing vessels and will take Guyana across the one-million-barrel threshold for the first time.

The increase is expected to strengthen government revenues and expand resources for infrastructure,

healthcare, education and housing. Government is also pushing for greater local participation through expanded local-content opportunities.

The Stabroek Block is operated by ExxonMobil Guyana Limited, which holds a 45 per cent interest. Chevron holds

30 per cent, while CNOOC Petroleum Guyana Limited holds 25 per cent.

The vessel's arrival marks another step in Guyana's rapid transformation into a major offshore oil producer since first oil in 2019.



Guyana welcomes arrival of fifth FPSO

COST RECOVERY FALLS, GUYANA NOW RECEIVES ABOUT 39.8% OF EVERY BARREL PRODUCED

Guyana is now receiving approximately 39.8 per cent of total oil production from the Stabroek Block as the share allocated to recover eligible project costs has fallen.

The figure does **not** represent Guyana's share of oil profits. Under the 2016 Production Sharing Agreement (PSA), Guyana's share of profit oil has remained 50 per cent since the agreement was signed.

The 39.8 per cent represents Guyana's effective share of total production after cost oil is deducted.

Under the PSA, Guyana receives a 2 per cent royalty before cost recovery. Up to 75 per cent of production can be allocated to cost recovery in a given period. The cap limits the rate at



President Ali, during his press conference

which eligible costs can be recovered; it does not mean companies automatically receive 75 per cent of production or recover more than their actual eligible expenditure.

The remaining production is treated as profit oil and divided equally between Guyana and the oil companies.

President Ali said that during the early stages of production, the cost-recovery component

was substantially higher.

"75 of every 100 barrels produced went to cost recovery," he said.

As more eligible investment has been recovered, approximately 20 barrels out of every 100 are now being allocated to cost recovery. Roughly 80 barrels therefore remain as profit oil, of which Guyana receives 50 per cent.

That produces an effective Guyana share of approximately 39.8 per cent of total production.

Government has stressed that reaching this stage earlier than anticipated should not be viewed as a loss. Strong production levels and oil prices accelerated cost recovery, moving Guyana into the higher-earning profit-oil stage sooner.

The Ministry of Natural Resources reported that the Stabroek Block is currently producing approximately 900,000 barrels per day. Guyana's monthly cargo lifts have also increased from about three million barrels previously to

US\$306 million for Guyana during the first half of 2026, providing revenue before the division of profit oil.

However, the current cost-recovery position could change as ExxonMobil and its partners pursue new developments and

examining how future oil and gas projects should be structured, considering global oil prices, investment requirements, financing arrangements and remaining exploration opportunities.

"I can't tell you now what the final position will be, but that is currently being analysed," he said.

The issue will become increasingly significant as production exceeds one million barrels per day with Uaru.

For Guyana, the challenge is therefore not simply to produce more oil, but to maximise the economic value retained from each barrel while managing the costs associated with continued offshore development.



An FPSO (Floating Production Storage and Offloading) unit offshore Guyana

between 10 million and 12 million barrels.

Separately, the 2 per cent royalty paid on every barrel sold generated

additional eligible capital expenditure enters the cost bank.

President Ali said government is

STATE PROCUREMENT SET FOR DIGITAL OVERHAUL

The government is moving to fully digitise public procurement by the end of 2026, bringing contractors, suppliers and consultants under a single electronic system designed to strengthen oversight, efficiency and transparency.

President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali said the National Procurement and Tender Administration

Board (NPTAB) is developing an integrated e-procurement platform combining a digital bills register, e-tender lifecycle system and e-marketplace.

The President said the Finance Secretary is leading efforts to complete and integrate the system before the end of the year.

The digital bills register will provide a

comprehensive profile of contractors, suppliers and consultants, including beneficial ownership, Guyana Revenue Authority and National Insurance Scheme compliance, contractor classification, past performance and any suspensions or debarments.

The e-tender module will digitise the procurement

process from planning and tender creation through bid submission, evaluation, contract award, administration, variations and payment, while retaining statutory approval requirements.

It will also automate compliance checks, flag risks, support structured bid evaluations and generate oversight dashboards.

Meanwhile, the e-marketplace will allow government agencies to purchase routine goods and standard services



electronically from pre-qualified suppliers at published prices.

President Ali said government is also targeting 25 to 30 per

cent of procurement for small and medium-sized enterprises, potentially creating greater access to state contracts for smaller businesses.

\$75M IN RELIEF, HOMES APPROVED AND COUNSELLING EXPANDED FOR MV BARIMA FAMILIES



President Ali meets the relatives of the missing persons on MV Barima in Region One

More than 750 people affected by the MV Barima tragedy have already received assistance through a growing national recovery effort, as the Government of Guyana intensifies support for survivors, bereaved families and communities still coping with the aftermath of the disaster.

At the same time, preparations are advancing on two other fronts, with a Commission of Inquiry (COI) preparing to begin substantive work and the process to recover the sunken vessel moving into its next phase.

The H.E.A.R.T. (Hope, Empathy, Aid, Resilience and Trust)

Initiative, launched by President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali on July 31, has emerged as the centrepiece of the government's response, coordinating psychosocial, legal, educational, housing, material and spiritual support for those affected.

Operating from the Stephen Campbell Building under the leadership of Lieutenant Colonel Dominic Shepherd, the initiative has mobilised assistance across all ten administrative regions, ensuring families receive support beyond the immediate aftermath of the tragedy.

To date, more than \$75 million has been

distributed to assist families with funeral expenses, memorial services and wakes. Additional support has included food hampers, school supplies and educational assistance for children whose lives were disrupted by the disaster.

Recognising the long-term impact on affected households, the Ministry of Housing and Water has approved 20 families for house lots and turn-key homes, while relocation plans are being developed for displaced families requiring permanent accommodation solutions.

Families are also receiving practical assistance to rebuild

their lives. Fast-track systems have been established through the Guyana Elections Commission (GECOM), the Guyana Police Force and the Guyana Revenue Authority to replace lost identification cards, passports and driver's licences. The Attorney General's Chambers is meanwhile providing guidance on probate, estate administration and guardianship matters.

A major focus of the recovery effort remains mental health and emotional wellbeing.

Minister of Human Services and Social Security Dr Vindhya Persaud said social workers, therapists, psychologists and faith-based representatives have been deployed through regional H.E.A.R.T. units to provide continuous support to affected families. Home visits, telephone outreach and counselling services are ongoing, particularly for relatives still dealing with grief, uncertainty and trauma.

The Government has also expanded access to psychological support through EMBRACE, a free national online counselling platform launched on August 21. The service offers confidential audio and video counselling

and draws on local professionals as well as Guyanese diaspora volunteers trained in grief counselling and trauma care.

Minister Persaud stressed that EMBRACE complements the face-to-face services already being delivered through regional support teams.

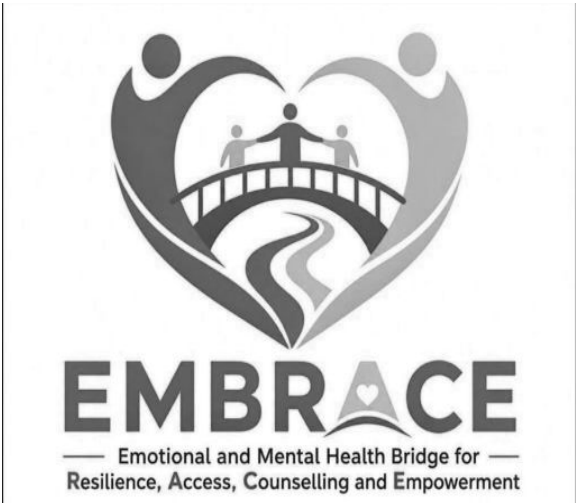
While assistance continues to reach families, preparations are also underway for the formal investigation into the tragedy.

President Ali

President said during a recent press conference.

The government is also advancing plans to recover the MV Barima. President Ali disclosed that approximately 10 companies submitted expressions of interest for the salvage operation. Shortlisted firms will now be invited to submit financial proposals before a final contractor is selected.

As the nation continues to mourn the lives lost, the Government's response



confirmed that the five-member Commission of Inquiry is now in place and has begun developing its procedures and work plan ahead of substantive hearings expected in early September.

"They have started looking at their procedures, settling their procedures and working on their work plan," the

has evolved into a broad recovery programme focused on helping families rebuild, uncovering the facts behind the tragedy and recovering the vessel itself.

The MV Barima tragedy occurred on July 18. According to official figures, 76 people were rescued, while 30 remain unaccounted for.

NATIONAL CASH GRANT RECIPIENTS WELCOME SMOOTH CHEQUE COLLECTION

Georgetown residents who opted to receive their \$100,000 Cash Grant by cheque are now accessing their payments, with several recipients describing the collection process as quick, straightforward and convenient.

The recipients had previously registered for the cash grant but chose not to receive the payment through a bank account. They were subsequently contacted and directed to the Cliff Anderson Sports Hall to collect their cheques.

For many, the process proved relatively seamless.

One recipient told the Department of



Cash Grant distribution

Public Information (DPI) that after receiving a call informing him that his cheque was ready, he visited the Sports Hall and was assisted within minutes.

"It was smooth

for me. I got here about 10:00 am, and within 30 minutes I was done," he said.

Another recipient, who spent approximately an hour at the venue, also described the process as hassle-free.

"It was easy. I had no problem, no hassle or anything," the recipient said.

For Roxanne Holder of Princes Street, the opportunity to return and collect her cheque was particularly welcomed after she was unable to complete the process the previous day.

"I came back this morning, after I was here yesterday and they had to close off early because of an event... everything was quick and okay," she said.

Meanwhile, Raj Coomar said the cheque option ensured he could access the benefit despite not having an active bank



Raj Coomar

account.

"I was grateful because I didn't have a bank account," he said, adding that the experience may encourage him to open one.

The cheque distribution provides an alternative for eligible recipients who are



Roxanne Holder

not using the banking system, ensuring they can still access the \$100,000 benefit.

The current distribution is continuing on a community-by-community basis across all regions and will remain in effect until further notice.

ROYAL VISIT TO GUYANA TO MARK 60 YEARS OF UK-GUYANA RELATIONS

His Majesty, King Charles III, is set to visit Guyana following the Government’s invitation, with the anticipated October visit expected to mark a major milestone in the country’s 60-year relationship with the United Kingdom (UK).

Buckingham Palace announced the visit as part of Their Majesties’ Autumn Tour, with the Guyana leg expected in the latter part of October.

The visit will come against the backdrop of expanding Guyana-UK cooperation in trade, investment, climate action, development and people-to-people relations, adding a significant diplomatic dimension to the anniversary year.

President, Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali, has maintained sustained high-level engagement with the UK since taking office. He visited London

in 2022 for the Caribbean Council’s House of Lords Annual Reception and an investment seminar focused on attracting British investment to Guyana.

In 2023, President Ali returned to the UK to attend King Charles III’s Coronation and held several high-level engagements.

The two leaders met again in Scotland in September 2024, discussing climate

resilience, sustainable development, agriculture and community-led initiatives. The engagement also advanced cooperation with The King’s Foundation on sustainable urban development under Guyana’s Low Carbon Development Strategy 2030.

Economic ties have also accelerated. Bilateral trade rose from



President Ali and His Majesty King Charles III meeting in 2022

£587 million in 2020 to £1.64 billion in 2024, while UK Export Finance has expanded support for opportunities in Guyana.

The royal visit is expected to

further strengthen the longstanding partnership while showcasing Guyana’s development, cultural heritage and growing international profile.



President Ali meets with World Bank Division Director for the Caribbean, Achim Fock

President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali has held high-level talks with the World Bank’s new Division Director for the Caribbean, Achim Fock, as the international financial institution reaffirmed its commitment to supporting Guyana’s development priorities.

The meeting at State House focused on strengthening cooperation in critical areas including health,

education, poverty reduction, housing, flood mitigation and food security.

Fock was accompanied by outgoing World Bank Representative for Guyana and Suriname Diletta Doretta, who is concluding her tenure, and incoming Representative Juan Carlos Alvarez.

Senior Minister in the Office of the President with Responsibility for

NEW WORLD BANK’S CARIBBEAN DIRECTOR SIGNALS CONTINUED SUPPORT FOR GUYANA

Finance Dr Ashni Singh also met with Fock at the Ministry of Finance, where discussions centred on sustaining the Bank’s partnership with the Government and building on projects already delivering results across the country.

Minister Singh expressed appreciation for the Bank’s support over recent years, pointing to collaboration on initiatives including the Guyana One Health Project, Caribbean Efficient and Green Buildings, Human Capital Development and the Integrated Transport Corridor Project.

The partnership currently operates under the World Bank’s Country Partnership Framework for 2023–2026, covering a portfolio of approximately US\$312.87 million across education, public health, natural resource management, transport, renewable energy and environmental resilience.

During Doretta’s tenure, the Bank also provided financing and technical assistance for coastal protection, drainage rehabilitation and flood-risk management.

Guyana further

strengthened its relationship with the World Bank Group in July 2024 by becoming a Joint Client Representative office, providing direct access to the Group’s financial instruments, advisory services and global expertise.

More recently, the World Bank joined the Guyana-led Global Biodiversity Alliance, while Guyana and the Bank signed a US\$1.8 million One Health Project agreement in August 2026, forming part of US\$22 million secured through the

Pandemic Fund and World Bank support for disease surveillance and laboratory systems.

Fock brings more than 25 years of World Bank experience and expertise in agriculture and agricultural economics.

The latest engagements signal continuity in a longstanding development partnership as Guyana seeks to strengthen infrastructure, human capital, economic resilience and public services while managing rapid national growth.

NEW G-MEX PLATFORM OPENS GUYANA'S MINING SECTOR TO GLOBAL INVESTORS

Guyana has launched G-MEX, a new annual international mining investment platform aimed at connecting the country’s mineral potential with global investment, technology, expertise and partnerships.

The initiative represents a strategic push to raise the profile of Guyana’s mining sector while attracting

responsible investment and creating greater opportunities for local businesses and communities.

G-MEX will be built around five pillars, the G-MEX Conference, Exhibition, Investor Forum, Geological Showcase and Awards, bringing together government, industry, investors, communities and international

partners.

The platform is expected to promote Guyana’s mineral resources, encourage new exploration and introduce local operators to international technologies, expertise and best practices.

Beyond attracting investment, G-MEX is intended to generate opportunities for local

miners, suppliers, contractors and entrepreneurs, while supporting employment, skills development and knowledge transfer.

The initiative also provides a platform for Guyana to strengthen relationships across the mining value chain and position its mineral sector within the international



G-MEX to connect Guyana’s mineral wealth with global capital and expertise

marketplace.

G-MEX ultimately seeks to move the conversation beyond the country’s mineral wealth to its capacity to manage and develop those resources responsibly.

The annual platform

is therefore being positioned not simply as a mining event, but as a gateway connecting global opportunities with Guyanese potential and supporting the sustainable growth of the sector.



The High Commissioner presents his Letter of Credence to the President of Sri Lanka, His Excellency Anura Kumara Dissanayake

Guyana is moving to deepen diplomatic and economic cooperation with Sri Lanka following

the formal accreditation of His Excellency Dharamkumar Seeraj as the country’s

NEW ACCREDITATION OPENS WAY FOR DEEPER GUYANA-SRI LANKA COOPERATION

Non-Resident High Commissioner to the island nation.

Seeraj presented his Letter of Credence to Sri Lankan President, Anura Kumara Dissanayake, formally assuming responsibility for representing Guyana in the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka.

During the ceremony, Seeraj reaffirmed Guyana’s commitment to expanding friendship, cooperation and collaboration between the two countries, signalling Georgetown’s continued efforts to strengthen bilateral engagement beyond its traditional partners.

Guyana and Sri Lanka established diplomatic relations on July 14, 1974, and have maintained cooperation in areas of mutual interest.

Seeraj’s concurrent accreditation is being managed from New Delhi, where he serves as Guyana’s High

Commissioner to India.

The latest diplomatic move provides an avenue for Guyana to further engage Sri Lanka on shared interests while broadening its international partnerships across South Asia.

GUYANA'S RODRIGUES-BIRKETT TAKES LEAD IN UN SECRETARY-GENERAL RACE AFTER SECOND STRAW POLL

Guyana's bid for the United Nations' top diplomatic post has gained momentum, with Ambassador Carolyn Rodrigues-Birkett emerging as the leading candidate in the second Security Council straw poll for the next UN Secretary-General.

Rodrigues-Birkett secured eight "encourage" votes, compared with seven for her closest rival, Rebeca Grynspan. She also received three "discourage" votes and four "no opinion" votes, while Grynspan recorded four discourage and four no-opinion votes.

The result marks a shift from the first straw poll, when Grynspan led with 10 encourage votes to Rodrigues-Birkett's nine. Although Rodrigues-Birkett's support fell by one, Grynspan's dropped by three, moving the Guyanese candidate into first place.

The straw poll is informal and non-binding and does not mean Rodrigues-Birkett has been selected. The 15-member Security Council will continue consultations before recommending a candidate to the UN General Assembly for appointment.

The anonymity of the polls also means it is not known which countries are backing or opposing individual candidates. That could become critical later, as China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States, the Council's five permanent members, hold veto power.

For Rodrigues-Birkett, the latest tally puts a Caribbean candidate at the front of an increasingly consequential international contest.

Her campaign has focused on making the UN more effective at preventing and resolving conflicts before they escalate.

Speaking to the Department of Public Information, Rodrigues-Birkett said she would assess longstanding conflicts, examining previous diplomatic interventions and why they failed to deliver lasting solutions.

"I will examine the conflict landscape to see what has been tried and what was not," she said.

She has also identified preventive diplomacy and early warning as central to her approach, arguing that conflicts rarely erupt without preceding signals.

Rodrigues-Birkett said the Secretary-General has diplomatic tools, including good offices and mediation, that can be deployed before tensions become full-scale conflicts.

She said she would be prepared to act as a broker, mediator, negotiator or messenger where necessary, while working with conflicting parties and the Security Council to de-escalate disputes.

"There are certain tools at the disposal of the Secretary General," she said, pointing to the UN's global presence as a source of early-warning information.

Her stated objective is straightforward: **"to move the needle."**

The next stages will determine whether her second-round lead can translate into broader and ultimately decisive Security Council support.

The next Secretary-General is expected to be appointed by the General Assembly in 2026, succeeding António Guterres at the beginning of 2027.



The straw poll

GOV'T SECURES RETURN OF CANAWAIMA AFTER DAYS OF INTENSIVE BILATERAL ENGAGEMENT

Guyana and Suriname have restored the M.V. Canawaima ferry service after the vessel received clearance from the Maritime Authority Suriname (MAS), ending a temporary suspension that disrupted travel and trade between the neighbouring countries.

The Government of Guyana announced that the ferry resumed operations on August 28 following successful technical inspections and compliance with requirements outlined by MAS. Priority is being given to transporting passengers who were stranded during the suspension.

The restoration follows several days of intensive engagement between officials from both countries aimed at addressing safety and structural concerns raised by the Surinamese maritime regulator.

In a statement, the Government said safeguarding passengers remained the foremost consideration throughout the process, even as the suspension caused significant inconvenience for travellers and businesses that rely on the vital cross-border link.

The ferry service had been halted despite technical assessments by maritime experts from Guyana and Suriname indicating that the vessel could continue operating for up to three months before undergoing scheduled drydocking. MAS, however, maintained that certain maintenance issues required immediate attention before operations could continue.

Responsibility for the vessel's maintenance and drydocking falls under Suriname. During the suspension, Guyana proposed alternative arrangements to maintain the route while discussions continued with the Surinamese authorities.

The Government thanked the relevant agencies and stakeholders involved in resolving the issue and expressed appreciation to the travelling public for its patience.

Officials from both countries will now continue discussions on the vessel's future drydocking and the acquisition of a replacement vessel to ensure uninterrupted ferry operations between Guyana and Suriname.



Guyana, Suriname continue efforts to resume Canawaima Ferry Service

LOANS FOR SOUNDPROOFING ON THE TABLE AS GOV'T TACKLES NOISE NUISANCE

Entertainment businesses could soon access financing through the Guyana Development Bank (GDB) to install noise-proofing measures as government moves to tackle growing complaints about noise nuisance across communities.

President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali said the issue has repeatedly surfaced during public consultations and is affecting residents' quality of life, but stressed that solutions must also protect the viability of entertainment businesses.

"Noise nuisance is affecting the quality of life of people, and we have to address it in a way that allows the entertainment sector and allow people to have a quality of life, but at the same time, does not destroy the businesses," President Ali said during a press conference at the Office of the President.

For established bars and nightclubs, the President said operators could potentially use GDB financing, once the institution becomes operational, to enclose their facilities with noise-proof materials.

For open-air venues, government is working with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) on a monitoring mechanism that would alert operators and patrons when noise levels approach unacceptable limits.

President Ali said this would encourage businesses and patrons to regulate themselves before complaints escalate to police intervention.

"Self-regulation is important in any country," he said.

A multi-region task force has also been established to address the issue with the Guyana Police Force, following repeated concerns from residents about inadequate responses to noise complaints.



Government to push nightclubs, bars toward noise-proofing to tackle noise nuisance

PRESIDENT ALI STANDS BY FARM INVESTMENT

President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali has reaffirmed that his private farm investment was developed transparently, financed through legitimate banking arrangements and declared to the Integrity Commission in keeping with his legal

obligations.

Responding to questions at a press conference at the Office of the President, the Head of State said all assets associated with the farm have been submitted to the Integrity Commission, the independent

parliamentary body established under the Integrity Commission Act of 1997 to promote accountability and ethical conduct among public officials.

“I have nothing to hide,” the President said when questioned about the property’s

financing.

He stressed that the farm predates his presidency and was developed over time through bank financing, with the underlying loans and financial arrangements available for independent verification.

The President also maintained that the investment received no preferential treatment from the State, pointing to the Integrity Commission as the appropriate mechanism for examining officials’ asset declarations.

President Ali reiterated his intention to eventually facilitate greater public access to the property, although no timeline has been set.



President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali

At five o’clock one morning in September 2024, a call brought together young Guyanese in Windsor Forest with a challenge: take a stake in the country’s agricultural future.

For Florence, a young poultry farmer, the message was immediate.

“I realised that it was time for change,” she recalled. **“When the initiative was put to us, I said I’m going to get on board right away.”**

Two years later, that decision has grown into a 24,535-bird poultry operation in Cornelia, Region Three, owned and operated by 17 young Guyanese.



President Ali meeting with young people at Windsor Forest in 2024

Demerara Chicken Incorporated represents more than a commercial venture. With no outside investors, its 17 owners have pooled their efforts around a common belief that agriculture can provide young Guyanese

with a pathway to ownership, income and long-term economic opportunity.

Inside the facility, Operations Manager Samantha oversees the daily operations, monitoring thousands of

birds and maintaining a mortality rate of just 2.5 per cent.

“We’re doing extremely well,” she said. **“As you can see behind me, the birds are growing bountifully.”**

For Chairman Darren Jordan, however, the significance of the operation extends beyond production figures. He sees the enterprise as evidence of what can happen when young people are given the opportunity to invest in agriculture at scale.

Jordan credited

President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali and the Government for creating opportunities for young Guyanese to participate directly in the agricultural sector, describing the initiative as part of a wider vision for food security and sustainability.

Co-owner Brandon said the project is equally about inclusion, giving ordinary Guyanese an opportunity to become investors and producers in an industry critical to the nation’s future.

“I would like to thank the

G o v e r n m e n t of Guyana for recognising the importance of agriculture in Guyana, and allowing young people and ordinary Guyanese like myself to be part of such an investment,” he said.

For these 17 young owners, the birds in Cornelia represent more than a growing business. They are betting that agriculture can be both a livelihood and a vehicle for national food security.

KIMBIA GETS 1,500-TONNE BEAN STORAGE AND PROCESSING FACILITY

Construction is advancing on a new bean conditioning and storage facility at Kimbia, Region 10, as the Government of Guyana moves to expand infrastructure to support growing agricultural production.

The facility will feature six silos with

a combined storage capacity of 1,500 tonnes, with each silo capable of holding 250 tonnes. It will also include two wet bins, two dry bins, a warehouse and a processing plant.

Agriculture Minister Zulfikar Mustapha led a team to inspect the

ongoing works, stressing the need to expand storage and processing capacity alongside increased production.

The facility is expected to strengthen post-harvest handling, reduce losses and provide farmers with greater capacity to store

and process beans before they reach markets.

The project forms part of broader efforts to build agricultural infrastructure capable of supporting increased production and improving opportunities for farmers and agro-processors in Region 10.



Kimbia bean facility to boost storage, processing capacity



A rice farmer adding his contribution to the discussions

Guyana’s rice industry has received approximately \$250 million in investment over the past six years to construct more than 12 drying floors, strengthening post-harvest capacity and reducing the need for farmers to dry paddy along public roadways.

The investment was highlighted during a stakeholder engagement at the Windsor Forest Community Ground, Region Three, where Minister within the Ministry of Agriculture Vikash Ramkissoon met with rice and cattle farmers and representatives of

the Guyana Rice Development Board (GRDB), Guyana Livestock Development Authority (GLDA) and the Neighbourhood Democratic Council.

The meeting was convened to resolve concerns over the proposed location of another drying floor at Windsor Forest. Rice farmers had been using the roadway to dry paddy, while cattle farmers raised concerns that the proposed site could restrict access to pasture and disrupt livestock movement.

Following discussions, stakeholders agreed on an alternative location designed to serve both groups.

Engineers will now work with the NDC and farmers to finalise the site, including requirements for fencing and access.

Minister Ramkissoon said the government’s approach is to consult affected communities and find solutions that balance competing needs.

GRDB’s Deputy General Manager,

Kuldip Ragnauth, said drying floors are critical to improving the safety and efficiency of paddy handling. Each facility costs approximately \$20 million and can process about 300 to 400 bags of paddy daily.

The proposed Windsor Forest facility is expected to serve approximately 300 farmers, providing them with a dedicated space to dry their harvest rather than using public roads.

GLDA’s Deputy Chief Executive Officer Dr Praitnauth Tihul said the alternative site

resolves the concerns of both rice and cattle farmers.

Meanwhile, construction of another drying floor is advancing at Den Amstel, with completion expected around October.

The continued rollout of drying floors forms part of the government’s broader effort to modernise agricultural infrastructure, improve post-harvest handling and raise productivity across the rice sector.

FIRST NATIONAL DEFENCE INSTITUTE GRADUATES CHALLENGED TO HELP CREATE A MORE MODERN SECURITY ARCHITECTURE

Guyana's first cohort of Defence Studies graduates has been challenged to challenge outdated practices, strengthen interagency cooperation and help build a security architecture capable of keeping pace with the country's rapid transformation.

Thirteen professionals, including one female rank, graduated from the inaugural Certificate in Defence Studies programme of the National Defence Institute (NDI), marking a significant step in the development of Guyana's strategic and security leadership capacity.

Minister of Home Affairs, Oneidge Walrond, told the graduates that their training must translate into better decisions, stronger institutions and practical solutions

to emerging national challenges.

"When your orientation is defined solutions, you can acknowledge that something is no longer fit for purpose. You don't have to be combative. You don't have to be destructive when you challenge the status quo," Minister Walrond said.

She said Guyana's economic expansion cannot be sustained without a corresponding strengthening of its security institutions, particularly as the country faces increasingly complex challenges involving cyber security, intelligence, border security, emerging technologies and information sharing.

The minister said government's approach is therefore focused



Thirteen graduate from inaugural defence studies

not only on acquiring modern security equipment, but also on developing professionals capable of understanding and effectively deploying those resources.

The graduates were trained in strategic studies, human security and development, foreign policy analysis, operational planning, joint operations and interagency cooperation.

Minister Walrond urged them to take the knowledge gained to their

respective agencies and ask difficult questions, challenge complacency and promote innovation without losing sight of professionalism and institutional integrity.

She also stressed that modern security threats do not fall neatly within the jurisdiction of the military, police, fire or correctional services, making cooperation and information sharing essential.

NDI's Advisory Board

Colonel Sheldon Howell, said the programme was designed to produce strategic thinkers capable of using analysis, foresight and collaboration to address contemporary security challenges.

NDI's Director, Dr Randolph Persaud, similarly urged the graduates to apply their knowledge in practice and contribute meaningfully to Guyana's national security community.

Minister Walrond said the government expects the NDI to evolve into a national and regional centre of excellence for defence scholarship, security research, strategic policy development, professional military education, executive leadership and cybersecurity.

As the Institute's first graduates, the 13 professionals now carry the additional responsibility of setting the standard for future cohorts and demonstrating that strategic education can produce stronger decisions, institutions and national security outcomes.



GUYANESE SCHOLARS HEAD TO CHINA WITH EYES ON BUILDING A STRONGER NATION

For Sasha Bentham, a five-year medical degree in China is more than an opportunity to advance her career. It is a chance to acquire the knowledge and experience she hopes to bring back to Guyana and use to make a difference in the health sector.

Bentham, a recent University of Guyana Biology graduate, is among a new group of Guyanese preparing to pursue tertiary education in China under the 2026 Chinese Government Scholarship Programme.

Her decision to pursue medicine is deeply personal. Growing up, she watched her father cope with rheumatoid arthritis while her sister managed asthma, experiences that strengthened her desire to understand the human body and help people facing illness.

"I am someone who cares and feels deeply for individuals. So, whenever I feel helpless, or I can't help them, that's when I feel sad," Bentham said.

She now hopes to eventually return home as a doctor, with



The officials with the scholarship recipients

an emerging interest in orthopaedics, and contribute to a healthcare system that she believes can benefit from her training and



Bentham recently graduated from the University of Guyana

international exposure.

"I want to make a change in the health sector," she said. **"I want to be different, an example for future doctors who come."**

Bentham's journey reflects the broader purpose of the scholarship programme, which the Government is positioning as an investment in the skilled workforce needed to drive Guyana's expanding economy.

Minister of Public Service, Government Efficiency and Implementation Zulfikar Ally told scholarship recipients that their opportunity carries a responsibility to return

with knowledge, skills and new perspectives that can contribute to national development.

"It is not just about studying. It is about learning different things, learning different cultures, learning ways in which, as a country, we can improve and do better," he said.

Minister Ally said Guyana-China cooperation now extends across education, healthcare, infrastructure, technology, financing and skills development. He noted that approximately 170 Guyanese have studied in China over the past six years, alongside

scholarship and training opportunities secured through partnerships with India, Chile, Peru and Mexico.

Chinese Ambassador to Guyana Yang Yang

put their full trust in my potential to become a future doctor."

As she prepares to leave for China, Bentham is



Sasha Bentham and fellow scholarship recipient Ronetta Cort receive their certificates from Minister Ally and Chinese Ambassador HE Yang Yang, respectively

said education and professional training are central to preparing Guyanese to capitalise on emerging opportunities, particularly as the country pursues economic diversification and technological advancement.

For Bentham, that investment has already taken on a personal meaning.

"To me, it's more than financial aid," she said. **"It tells me that the Governments of China and Guyana**

looking beyond the qualification itself, toward the day she can return with new knowledge, a broader perspective and the skills to serve Guyana.

Her journey captures the larger ambition behind the scholarships: not simply to send Guyanese abroad to study, but to bring knowledge home and turn education into national capacity.

GOV'T SETS TIMELINE TO RESOLVE OUTSTANDING LAND CLAIMS

The Government of Guyana is accelerating efforts to resolve long-standing land regularisation issues in communities across the country, with investigations expected to be completed by the end of August 2026.

Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs Mohabir Anil Nandlall, SC, and Minister of Labour and Manpower Planning Keoma Griffith recently convened a high-level meeting with technical officers from the Ministries of Legal Affairs, and Labour and Manpower Planning and the Central Housing and Planning Authority (CH&PA) to advance the process.

The exercise is aimed at issuing transports and certificates of title to persons legitimately occupying lands, including members of co-operative and former co-operative societies.

Regularisation has already commenced



AG, Labour Minister meets with teams to discuss resolution of land regularisation issues, titles

in Devonshire Castle, Paradise, Jib, Westbury and Walton Hall on the Essequibo Coast; Friendship on the Pomeroon River; Melanie, Foulis and Vigilance on the East Coast of Demerara; and several communities along the West Coast of Berbice.

Work is also progressing in communities along the East Bank corridor, including areas within Kuru Kururu, Hauraruni and Yarrowkabra.

Officials said a clear roadmap and timeline have been established, with investigations expected to conclude by

the end of August. Public outreaches will also be conducted to ensure residents understand the process and the steps required to secure legal ownership.

The Melanie exercise is among the more advanced interventions, with more than 250 families expected to receive formal titles to land they currently occupy.

Speaking at an engagement at the Melanie Nursery School, Minister Nandlall said surveys have already been conducted to establish occupants and allocations, including vacant lots previously

assigned to residents. **“This exercise that we have embarked upon... will ultimately result in each of you getting title for the land that you are currently occupying,”** he said.

Formal ownership will provide residents with greater security while allowing them to legally transfer or sell their property, use it as collateral for financing and pass the asset on to

necessary documents. Minister Nandlall urged residents to ensure that names and ownership information submitted to officials are accurate, since these details will form part of the final title documents. He also cautioned that some residents may have to adjust fences, bridges or other structures to conform to approved layouts.

For residents, the process could resolve



Shenolfa Walters

occupied land there for more than 20 years.

“I feel so happy, and I appreciate it. The people of Melanie thank the government because without them, this could not have been possible,” she said.

The government said the coordinated regularisation drive is intended to bring greater order to affected communities while giving residents the legal recognition and economic security associated with formal land ownership. Melanie is also being considered for development as one of the government’s pilot model villages.



Residents of Melanie and surrounding communities gathered at the engagement

their children.

The government is also absorbing major costs associated with regularisation, including surveying and preparation of the

decades of uncertainty over land ownership.

Shenolfa Walters, who attended the Melanie meeting on behalf of her daughter, said the family had

RUPUNUNI TOURISM OPERATORS TO GAIN TOOLS TO TRACK VISITORS, BOOST BUSINESS

Indigenous and local tourism operators in the Rupununi are set to gain stronger tools for tracking visitors, managing businesses and making decisions as government and partners launch a new tourism data initiative.

The Ministry of Tourism, Industry and Commerce and the Guyana Tourism Authority (GTA), in collaboration with Visit Rupununi

and Conservation International-Guyana (CI-Guyana), launched the **DATA Collection and Analysis 2026** initiative in Lethem under the Nature’s Opportunity for Development (NODe) Project.

The initiative will train Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities involved in tourism in financial management, occupancy reporting and digital literacy, while

strengthening systems for collecting visitor and business information.

Visitors will be encouraged to scan QR codes at strategic locations to provide information on where they travelled from, how long they stayed and their spending patterns.

The data will give tourism operators a clearer picture of visitor behaviour, helping them identify service gaps, anticipate trends and



The launch brought together GTA officials, the Small Business Bureau, community leaders and tourism operators

improve their offerings.

It will also provide the government with

stronger tourism data

from the Rupununi, one of Guyana’s key

tourism circuits, while contributing to the development of a Tourism Satellite Account to better measure the sector’s economic contribution.

The initiative is also intended to strengthen community businesses and ensure local residents remain owners and beneficiaries of tourism growth.

NEWLY TRAINED RUPUNUNI HOSPITALITY WORKERS URGED TO RAISE SERVICE STANDARDS

Tourism workers in the Rupununi are gaining new skills as Guyana moves to

strengthen service standards and expand community participation in the growing tourism

sector.

Graduates of the three-month Visit Rupununi/Baganara Hospitality Training Programme received their certificates from Minister of Tourism, Industry and Commerce Susan Rodrigues at Baganara Island Resort.

The programme, supported by the Guyana Tourism Authority (GTA) and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), focused on strengthening hospitality



Rupununi graduates equipped to capture growing tourism opportunities

skills and improving service delivery and visitor experiences in the Rupununi.

Minister Rodrigues said Guyana’s tourism potential depends not only on its natural

attractions, but also on the professionalism and knowledge of the people serving visitors.

She stressed the need to build tourism capacity in communities such as the Rupununi so residents can capture more opportunities created by industry growth.

The Minister urged graduates to pursue continued training and entrepreneurship as they help raise service standards and strengthen the region’s tourism offering.



Rupununi graduates equipped to capture growing tourism opportunities

SCHOOLS INSPECTED NATIONWIDE AS GUYANA PREPARES FOR NEW ACADEMIC YEAR

Government officials are conducting school inspections across Guyana as preparations intensify for the August 31 reopening of the new academic year, with a strong focus on classroom readiness, safety and student wellbeing.

During recent school visits, Minister of Education Sonia

Parag assessed facilities and engaged students participating in the Ministry's anti-bullying campaign, underscoring the importance of creating learning environments where students feel safe and respected.

Students have been actively helping to install posters promoting kindness,

mutual respect and non-violence, carrying the campaign's message beyond the classroom and into the wider school environment.

"We want to ensure a safe and productive academic year, and it is vital that our students are directly involved in fostering these safe

spaces," Minister Parag said.

The nationwide assessments are examining classrooms and the broader school environment to identify and address outstanding readiness issues before thousands of students return to school for the new term.



Gov't ramps up school readiness drive ahead of August 31 reopening

Guyana is strengthening the link between school-level competition and higher sporting opportunities, with the 2027 CARIFTA Games expected to provide a major platform for young athletes to advance their sporting and educational prospects.

As Guyana prepares to host CARIFTA for the first time, the Ministry of Education is adjusting its athletics calendar to give student-athletes a more structured route into the regional competition.

Minister of Education Sonia Parag announced that the Interschools Games will be held in October

CARIFTA 2027 TO TURN SCHOOL COMPETITION INTO GREATER OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUNG ATHLETES

this year, followed by the National Secondary School Championship Games from March 3–5, 2027. The timing is designed to give athletes adequate preparation ahead of the CARIFTA Games at Easter.

"This is going to help our athletes to align themselves to the CARIFTA Games," Parag said during the launch of CARIFTA 2027.

The National Secondary School Championships will be hosted at the Bayrock



Team Guyana making a strong and exciting start to the 53rd CARIFTA Games held in Grenada

facility in Linden, bringing the major school athletics competition to the town and creating greater opportunities for

athletes to compete on home soil.

Minister Parag said the pathway from Interschools to Nationals

and CARIFTA could extend well beyond competition, with strong performances potentially opening doors to athletic scholarships and further education.

Minister of Culture, Youth and Sport Charles Ramson Jr. pointed to investments in sporting facilities, the Sports Academy, ELITE and stipend programmes as part of the wider effort to identify and develop Guyana's young talent.

With CARIFTA 2027 serving as the next step after school and national

competition, the Games are being positioned as a springboard to greater sporting exposure, educational opportunities and the development of Guyana's next generation of elite athletes.



REGION EIGHT HEALTHCARE GETS MAJOR BOOST WITH NEW CENTRE, OXYGEN PLANT AND DIGITAL X-RAY

Healthcare delivery in Region Eight is receiving a major boost as the Government continues to expand infrastructure, modernise diagnostic services and bring essential care closer to hinterland communities.

During a recent visit to Potaro-Siparuni, Minister of Health Dr Frank Anthony commissioned and inspected several investments aimed

at strengthening healthcare access across the region.

At Campbellton, the Minister participated in the ribbon-cutting ceremony for a newly established health centre valued at approximately \$15 million. The facility is equipped to provide quality primary healthcare services to residents of Campbellton and surrounding communities, reducing the need for travel to

access basic care.

At Mahdia Hospital, Minister Anthony inspected the newly upgraded Oxygen Generator Room, valued at approximately \$13.985 million. The facility will provide a more reliable supply of medical oxygen, particularly for patients requiring respiratory and emergency care.

The hospital's new Digital X-ray Unit, valued at approximately

\$160 million, was also highlighted as a significant expansion of diagnostic capacity, enabling healthcare professionals to assess and manage patients more effectively.

The Minister also commissioned the Mahdia Hospital Rehabilitation Department, valued at approximately \$14 million. The new department will provide rehabilitation services



Healthcare access expands in Region Eight with new facilities and upgraded diagnostics

closer to home for patients recovering from injuries, illnesses and other conditions, helping to eliminate costly and difficult travel outside the region for essential care.

Together, the investments mark continued efforts to strengthen healthcare delivery in Guyana's hinterland.



Cattle grazing at the Guyana Livestock Development Authority's Mon Repos facility

he government is moving to secure additional grazing land for cattle farmers as rapid housing and infrastructure development

increasingly puts pressure on areas traditionally used for livestock production.

Agriculture Minister Zulfikar Mustapha made the commitment during

GRAZING LANDS TARGETED AS GOV'T BALANCES HOUSING GROWTH WITH FOOD SECURITY

an engagement with cattle farmers at the Liliendaal Community Centre, where concerns were raised over shrinking access to suitable grazing areas.

Minister Mustapha stressed that Guyana's development must not undermine agricultural production, particularly as the country seeks to strengthen food security and expand its livestock sector.

"We cannot do development at the expense of another industry too," he said.

One intervention will target land beyond the Crown Dam, where the ministry plans to work with farmers to develop additional grazing space for approximately 30 cattle farmers.

Similar arrangements are being explored between La Bonne Intention (LBI)

and Diamond, but Minister Mustapha said the government will first determine future housing plans before allocating agricultural land to farmers.

He said the government must avoid developing grazing areas that could later be consumed by further housing expansion.

Officers of the Agriculture Ministry, Guyana Livestock

Development Authority and the National Agricultural Research and Extension Institute will also visit farmers directly to assess their needs and determine practical interventions.

The process is expected to begin within a week as government works to protect grazing access while supporting continued development and livestock production.

GOV'T MOVES TO PROTECT €30M HOSPITAL INVESTMENTS



Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs, Mohabir Anil Nandlall, S.C.

The Government of Guyana is moving to protect its investment in two major hospital projects following the termination of contracts with VAMED Engineering GmbH, while insisting that the contractor's exit will not derail the country's broader healthcare expansion.

The contracts for the New Amsterdam

Hospital Campus in Region Six and the Guyana Paediatric and Maternal Hospital at Ogle were terminated on July 23 after what the government described as persistent delays, contractual breaches and failure to restore the projects to schedule despite repeated engagements.

Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs Mohabir Anil Nandlall, S.C., said the government had exhausted efforts to resolve the problems before exercising its contractual rights.

"Government was forced to terminate both contracts," Minister Nandlall said, noting that both projects were significantly behind their required completion levels at the time of termination.

The government has since secured the

hospital sites and materials and begun invoking performance securities attached to the contracts.

Each contract is backed by a performance bond of approximately €15 million, with the government initiating steps to recover the sums from bonds issued by the Bank of Austria.

The dispute is now heading into international arbitration, as provided for under both contracts. The government has initiated proceedings through the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) and appealed aspects of High Court orders concerning control of the sites and materials pending establishment of the arbitration tribunal.

Minister Nandlall stressed that the contractual fallout does not amount to abandonment of the



The new \$7B Diamond Regional Hospital is one of six regional hospitals

hospitals. Instead, he said the legal and financial measures are intended to safeguard public assets and create a pathway for the projects to be completed.

The arbitration proceedings will have their seat in Guyana, despite the ICC being headquartered in Paris. Nandlall said this reflects efforts to position Guyana as a credible destination for international commercial arbitration.

The VAMED dispute comes against the backdrop of an expansion

of Guyana's healthcare infrastructure, with six recently constructed regional hospitals already providing services.

President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali said the facilities have collectively recorded about 3,700 surgeries, more than one million laboratory tests, 82,200 X-rays, 37,700 ultrasounds and 13,680 CT scans.

More than 101,000 specialist clinic visits have also been recorded, alongside approximately 2,400 deliveries

and nearly 280,000 prescriptions.

President Ali said the figures demonstrate that investment in regional healthcare is translating into direct services for citizens, with average waiting times of about 10 minutes for emergency care and 30 minutes for outpatient services.

The government is therefore pursuing legal and financial measures to protect its investment in the two affected projects while continuing to expand hospital capacity nationwide.

DIAMOND REGIONAL HOSPITAL FIRST AMONG NEW HEALTHCARE FACILITIES TO ADMIT PSYCHIATRIC PATIENTS

Diamond Regional Hospital has become the first of Guyana's six new regional hospitals to provide inpatient care for psychiatric patients, marking a step forward in the decentralisation of mental health services.

Hospital Administrator Dr Sheik Amir said the facility has already begun admitting and managing psychiatric patients.

"We are the only facility of the six new hospitals that has psychiatric patients admitted," Dr Amir told the Department of Public Information (DPI).

While severely aggressive patients may



Administrator of the Diamond Regional Hospital, Dr Sheik Amir

still require referral to the Georgetown Public Hospital Corporation (GPHC), Diamond can now manage a range of psychiatric cases closer to where patients live.

The hospital's mental health services also extend into

communities through a mobile clinic launched by Head Psychiatrist Dr Andria Veeren. The clinic operates on the first Thursday of every month and targets patients who have difficulty accessing the hospital, including those who may struggle with regular treatment or routine visits.

"The whole idea behind the mobile clinic is to reach patients who can't come to the hospital," Dr Veeren explained.

The psychiatric team also conducts follow-up checks between appointments, contacting patients to assess their condition and monitor their

progress.

The department treated approximately 2,087 patients over the past year, including referrals from GPHC, other departments at Diamond Regional Hospital and walk-in patients.

Veeran, who was posted to the Diamond Diagnostic Centre in 2023 as part of the Ministry of Health's effort to decentralise psychiatric care, also provides services at health centres in Kuru Kuru, Eccles, Herstelling, St Cuthberts, Supply and Soesdyke.

The expansion forms part of the wider healthcare capacity

available at the \$6.6 billion Diamond Regional Hospital, commissioned by President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali.

The 75-bed facility provides 24-hour emergency and laboratory services, CT scanning, digital X-ray and ultrasound services, as well as three surgical theatres.

It also offers intensive and high-dependency care, neonatal services and specialist clinics covering internal medicine, surgery, obstetrics, paediatrics, ophthalmology, audiology and dentistry.

The development of inpatient psychiatric care



Head of the Psychiatric Department, Dr Andria Veeren

at Diamond represents another step towards bringing specialised healthcare closer to communities, reducing reliance on Georgetown-based services and expanding options for patients requiring ongoing mental health support.

LINDEN POWER SUPPLY GETS IMMEDIATE 1.5MW BOOST

Linden and Wismar have received an immediate 1.5-megawatt (MW) boost in electricity generation as government moves to strengthen power reliability in the mining town.

The additional capacity was installed and brought online at

Bosai Minerals Group's Linden powerhouse, increasing its generation supply to the two communities from 14MW to 15.5MW.

The development fulfils half of the government's commitment to add 3MW of additional generation capacity to Linden. Work

is continuing to bring the remaining 1.5MW online, which would raise available capacity to approximately 17MW.

Minister of Public Utilities and Aviation Deodat Indar said government is also arranging to transport three 1MW generating sets from a manganese

company in Port Kaituma to Linden.

The ministry said it will continue working with Bosai Minerals Group (Guyana) Inc., the Hinterland Electrification Company Inc. and other suppliers to ensure an adequate and reliable electricity supply.



The new generator supplying 1.5 megawatts of electricity to Linden, Region Ten

The measures form part of ongoing efforts to address Linden's growing power needs and reduce reliability

pressures affecting the mining community.

CARIBBEAN MEDIA CHALLENGED TO HARNESS AI, NOT BE DEFINED BY IT – AT CBU 57TH AGA

PRESIDENT ALI CHALLENGES CARIBBEAN MEDIA TO HARNESS AI WITHOUT SURRENDERING CULTURAL IDENTITY

President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali has challenged Caribbean broadcasters to harness artificial intelligence (AI) to strengthen journalism and project the region's stories globally, warning against allowing technology and global platforms to erode

Broadcasting Union's (CBU) 57th Annual General Assembly at the Arthur Chung Conference Centre, President Ali said the region is at a critical juncture as AI reshapes how information is produced, distributed and consumed.

fragmented audiences, AI-fuelled misinformation and rapid technological change as major challenges facing regional broadcasters. He cited estimates that 15 to 25 per cent of advertising revenue in some Caribbean markets is shifting to global platforms such as Google, while pay-TV penetration across Latin America and the Caribbean fell from 42 per cent in 2016 to 31 per cent in 2024 as streaming expanded.

Ali urged broadcasters not to retreat from platforms such as YouTube, TikTok and Netflix because of the volume of foreign content they carry. **"The answer to globalisation is not cultural isolation. It is cultural confidence,"** he said, arguing that the Caribbean already produces content

capable of attracting global audiences. **"We have a product. Are we leveraging the product? We have a culture. Are we leveraging the culture?"** he asked. He also warned that AI must remain a tool under human control, rather than becoming a substitute for journalism.

"Never allow the technology to become the journalist," President Ali said, noting that AI can assist with transcription, translation and data analysis but cannot replace editorial judgement, human experience and professional responsibility. He called on the CBU to champion standards for identifying AI-generated content and help media organisations develop sustainable revenue models suited to the streaming era.



President Ali addresses a room of broadcasters, policymakers, content creators and journalists at the CBU 57th AGA at the Arthur Chung Conference Centre



The CBU's 57th Annual General Assembly at the Arthur Chung Conference Centre

Caribbean identity. Under the theme **"Caribbean Media and AI"**, he identified economic sustainability,

President Ali linked the challenge to the CBU's original mission, established in 1970 to ensure Caribbean people saw their lives, language and culture reflected in media. That mission, he said, is more urgent in an environment where **"everybody transmits, everybody receives, everybody comments, everybody becomes, potentially, a publisher."** He urged investment in people and skills, arguing that Caribbean journalists, producers and creators will ultimately determine whether the region controls its narrative. Broadcasters, he said, should measure success not only by foreign content consumed in the Caribbean, but by how much Caribbean content reaches international audiences.



Anthony Greene, President of the Caribbean Broadcasting Union during his address

CBU's President, public trust. Anthony Greene, Greene said similarly urged technological platforms and audience habits will change, but journalism's fundamental obligations remain: verification,

CBU CHIEF: AI MUST STRENGTHEN JOURNALISM, NOT ERODE TRUST

context, protection of vulnerable persons, challenging power and serving the public. **"Let us use AI to strengthen journalism, rather than allowing AI to weaken journalism,"** he said. Greene warned particularly of AI-generated misinformation during emergencies, when fabricated information presented as official could endanger lives. He called for greater

protection of media archives and intellectual property, as well as stronger representation of Caribbean and indigenous languages in AI systems. While AI can improve efficiency, audience reach and revenue, he cautioned that automation cannot replace editorial decision-making. **"Speed is not a substitute for accuracy. Automation is not a substitute for editorial**



Another section of the audience at the CBU's 57th Annual General Assembly at the Arthur Chung Conference Centre

judgment. Efficiency is not a substitute for trust," Greene said.

MINISTER MCCOY: MOVE AI DEBATE FROM THEORY TO ACTION

Minister within the Office of the Prime Minister with Responsibility for Public Affairs and Information Kwame McCoy challenged Caribbean media organisations to move beyond discussion and implement concrete safeguards against manipulated and synthetic content. He warned that AI can produce

fabricated photographs, recordings, personalities and headlines within seconds, making media literacy and verification increasingly important. **"Journalists must be able to detect data manipulation,"** Minister McCoy said, stressing that citizens must be able to distinguish fact from fiction and access reliable information.

He called for stronger regional verification and fact-checking mechanisms, noting that misinformation can cross borders and platforms within minutes. **"I charge every delegate to return to your institution and move one element of this conversation from theory to implementation,"** he said.

Minister McCoy urged media houses to develop AI policies, conduct staff training, update editorial codes, establish verification desks and strengthen digital archives. The calls formed part of wider discussions at the CBU's 57th AGA, held in Georgetown from August 17 to 19, which brought together media, communications and



Minister within the Office of the Prime Minister with Responsibility for Public Affairs and Information, Kwame McCoy, during the address at the conference day

technology professionals broadcasting, culture, from across the region regulation and the future to examine AI's of Caribbean media. impact on journalism,

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BERBICE STUDENT LEADS 2026 CSEC RESULTS WITH 26 GRADE ONES



Tagore High School student, Nitya Narine, has emerged as the standout performer in Guyana's 2026 preliminary Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate (CSEC) results, securing an exceptional 26 Grade Ones and one Grade Two.

Her performance was highlighted by Minister of Education Sonia Parag during the preliminary results ceremony, where she described Narine's achievement as a remarkable first for a student from Berbice.

"Now, this is something the country has not seen. In all of the years of our results, I believe this is a wonderful first," Minister Parag said.

Narine's performance places her at the head of an exceptionally strong group of CSEC candidates, with 78 students securing 12 or more Grade Ones in the preliminary results, up significantly from 59 in 2025.

Queen's College student Anushka Singh was among the leading performers, earning 25 Grade Ones and one Grade Two.

Shreya Ramnarine of Anna Regina Secondary secured 22 Grade Ones and six Grade Twos, while Joseph Daniel of Bishop's High School recorded 21 Grade Ones.

Queen's College student, J'kell Whyte, and Feiaz Dhanny of Saraswati Vidya Niketan, each earned 20 Grade Ones.

Queen's College students Abhigyan Chatterdeo and Ethan Thakurdin each secured 19 Grade Ones, while Michael Somwar of Tagore High School and Zhijie Yang of Saraswati Vidya Niketan each recorded 18 Grade Ones.

Sanjana Mohan, Anna Singh and David Thorne of Queen's College, along with Serena Gangoo of Abrams' Zuil Secondary, each earned 17 Grade Ones.

The results are preliminary, and the Ministry of Education has stressed that students should not yet be formally designated as the country's top performers. Candidates have the opportunity to request reviews before the results are finalised.

Nevertheless, the early results point to a strong showing among the country's highest-performing secondary students.

This year, 13,052 candidates sat CSEC, compared with 12,685 in 2025, representing a three per cent increase in participation.

The number achieving 12 or more Grade Ones also rose by 32 per cent, from 59 to 78.

Minister Parag congratulated the students and credited their achievement to their determination, while reaffirming the government's commitment to strengthening schools, supporting teachers and expanding opportunities for students across Guyana.

"We will continue to strengthen our schools, support our teachers, expand opportunities, and make the investments necessary to ensure that every child, wherever they live in Guyana, can receive a quality education and fulfil their potential," she said.

The minister also urged the 2026 cohort to view their results as the beginning of their next stage rather than the conclusion of their educational journey, encouraging students to pursue tertiary education, technical training and other opportunities.

The final CSEC results will determine the official national rankings once the review process has been completed.



QUEEN'S COLLEGE'S DAVID SUGRIM TOPS PRELIMINARY CAPE RESULTS

DAVID SUGRIM

QUEEN'S COLLEGE

MOST OUTSTANDING STUDENT

CARIBBEAN ADVANCED PROFICIENCY EXAMINATION

11

GRADE ONES

7

GRADE TWOS

TOREKA PERSAUD

QUEEN'S COLLEGE

MOST OUTSTANDING STUDENT

CARIBBEAN ADVANCED PROFICIENCY EXAMINATION

9

GRADE ONES

MAHESA BOODHOO

QUEEN'S COLLEGE

MOST OUTSTANDING STUDENT

CARIBBEAN ADVANCED PROFICIENCY EXAMINATION

9

GRADE ONES

SAVANNAH BOVELL

QUEEN'S COLLEGE

MOST OUTSTANDING STUDENT

CARIBBEAN ADVANCED PROFICIENCY EXAMINATION

8

GRADE ONES

DAVE CHOWTIE

QUEEN'S COLLEGE

MOST OUTSTANDING STUDENT

CARIBBEAN ADVANCED PROFICIENCY EXAMINATION

6

GRADE ONES

4

GRADE TWOS

ANNESSA HUSSAIN

QUEEN'S COLLEGE

MOST OUTSTANDING STUDENT

CARIBBEAN ADVANCED PROFICIENCY EXAMINATION

6

GRADE ONES

1

GRADE TWO

MALIQUE LINDORE

QUEEN'S COLLEGE

MOST OUTSTANDING STUDENT

CARIBBEAN ADVANCED PROFICIENCY EXAMINATION

6

GRADE ONES

5

GRADE TWOS

2

GRADE THREES

3

GRADE FOURS

SIDDIQAH NIZAMUDEEN

QUEEN'S COLLEGE

MOST OUTSTANDING STUDENT

CARIBBEAN ADVANCED PROFICIENCY EXAMINATION

6

GRADE ONES

MARIA PERTABSINGH

QUEEN'S COLLEGE

MOST OUTSTANDING STUDENT

CARIBBEAN ADVANCED PROFICIENCY EXAMINATION

6

GRADE ONES

2

GRADE TWOS

SHANEL STORM

QUEEN'S COLLEGE

MOST OUTSTANDING STUDENT

CARIBBEAN ADVANCED PROFICIENCY EXAMINATION

6

GRADE ONE

1

GRADE ONE

AFFIANNE KELLMAN

ST STANISLAUS COLLEGE

MOST OUTSTANDING STUDENT

CARIBBEAN ADVANCED PROFICIENCY EXAMINATION

6

GRADE ONES

3

GRADE TWOS

1

GRADE THREES

JANEE GREENE

MACKENZIE HIGH SCHOOL

MOST OUTSTANDING STUDENT

CARIBBEAN ADVANCED PROFICIENCY EXAMINATION

6

GRADES ONE

Queen's College student, David Sugrim, has emerged as the leading performer in Guyana's 2026 preliminary Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examination (CAPE) results, securing Grade One passes in 11 units and Grade Two passes in seven.

Sugrim's performance was among several strong results recorded by students across the country as participation in CAPE continued to increase.

A total of 666 students sat CAPE this year, compared with 650 in 2025, representing a 2.5 per cent increase.

Sugrim's Queen's College colleagues also featured prominently among the leading performers. Toreka Persaud and Mahesa Boodhoo each secured nine Grade Ones, while Savannah Bovell earned eight Grade Ones.

Dave Chowtie recorded six Grade Ones and four Grade Twos, while Annessa Hussain earned six Grade Ones and one Grade Two.

Other strong performances came from Malique Lindore, who secured six Grade Ones, five Grade Twos, two Grade Threes and three Grade Fours; Siddiqah Nizamudeen, with six Grade Ones; Maria Pertabsingh, with six Grade Ones and two Grade Twos; and Shanel Storm, who earned six Grade Ones and one Grade Two.

Outside of Queen's College, Affianne Kellman of St Stanislaus College recorded six Grade Ones, three Grade Twos and one Grade Three, while Janee Greene of Mackenzie High School secured six Grade Ones.

The results come as the Ministry of Education reports a continued expansion of advanced secondary education. Guyana now has 18 public and private institutions offering CAPE, with Diamond Secondary School participating in the examination for the first time this year.

Diamond Secondary recorded a preliminary pass rate of 96.8 per cent in its inaugural CAPE sitting.

The CAPE results also form part of a wider shift in Guyana's secondary education system, with almost half of CAPE entries this year in TVET or science-based subjects.

The trend reflects increasing emphasis on preparing students for both tertiary education and an expanding economy requiring higher-level scientific, technical and professional skills.





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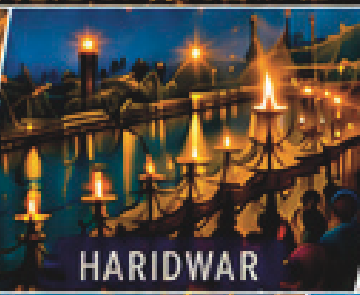
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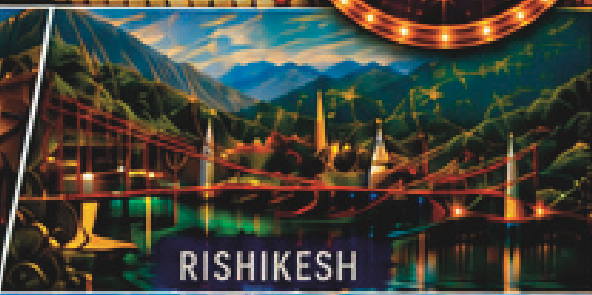
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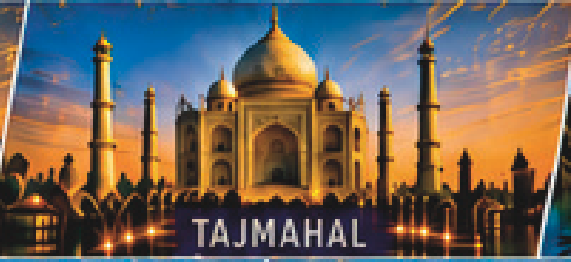
HARIDWAR



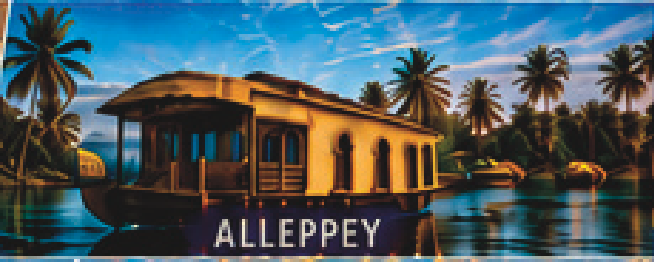
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What does it mean if you see a house advertised as “Power of Sale”?

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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.

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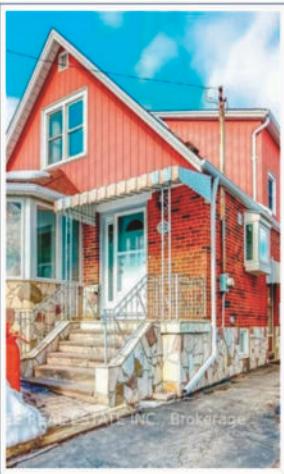
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\$749,000
*Basement Apartment With Separate Entrance



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



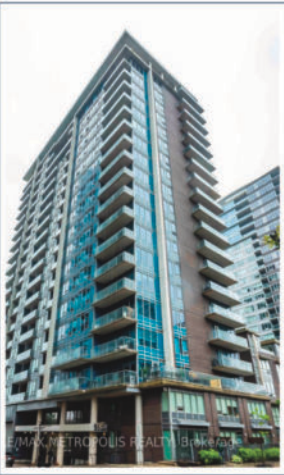
1623 Keele St, Toronto
5 3 4
\$899,000



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5 4 7
\$919,000



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1 1
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CSEC, CAPE AND TVET PARTICIPATION GROW



Minister of Education, Sonia Parag

Guyana's 2026 examination results are pointing to a broader shift in the education system, with more students entering secondary-level examinations, with stronger high-end academic performance and growing participation in technical and vocational programmes linked to the labour market.

Preliminary results for the Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate (CSEC), Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examination (CAPE) and Caribbean Vocational Qualification (CVQ) show growth not only in participation, but across the range of pathways available to students.

A total of 13,052 students sat CSEC this year, up three per cent from 12,685 in 2025. The number of candidates securing 12 or more Grade Ones also rose, from 59 last year to 78 in the preliminary results.

Minister of Education Sonia Parag

said the results reflect continued investment in schools, teachers and opportunities for



Chief Education Officer, Saddam Hussain

students, while noting that the results remain preliminary and subject to review.

"It is another indication of the strong performance we are seeing this year," she said.

The CAPE cohort also expanded, with 666 students sitting the examinations compared with 650 in 2025, an increase of 2.5 per cent.

Beyond the headline academic results, however, participation in technical and vocational education is also growing, reflecting the skills demands of an economy undergoing rapid expansion.

At the CSEC level, participation in technical and vocational education increased by 8.9 per cent, bringing the number of students taking at least one TVET subject to close to half of all CSEC candidates.

At CAPE, almost half of all entries were in either TVET or science-based subjects, signalling a growing effort to move students beyond a narrow academic pathway and

said the qualification gives students the option of entering both tertiary education and employment.

"These students have matriculated from secondary

also being offered, demonstrating efforts to align training with specific industries and services.

The significance of these trends extends beyond examination

is gaining technical competencies designed to support immediate employment or further training.

Diamond Secondary School participated in CAPE for the first time and recorded a preliminary pass rate of 96.8 per cent. Guyana now has 18 public and private institutions offering CAPE.

Minister Parag urged students not to treat their examination results as an endpoint, but as a launchpad for further education, training and employment.

"Do not stop here," she told students, encouraging them to explore the opportunities available to them.

For Guyana, the emerging picture is therefore larger than a single year of examination results. It reflects a more diversified education pipeline, one producing high academic achievers while expanding the pool of young people equipped with practical, technical and industry-relevant skills.

That combination will become increasingly important as Guyana seeks to translate economic growth into a workforce capable of sustaining and broadening that growth.



Minister of Education, Sonia Parag with the top performers

towards qualifications with direct relevance to employment, technology and production.

That shift is being reinforced through the CVQ programme, with 2,813 Guyanese students expected to gain Caribbean Vocational Qualifications in 2026.

Unlike conventional academic examinations, the CVQ pathway is based on demonstrated practical competence, allowing students to leave secondary school with skills that can be applied directly in the workplace or provide a foundation for further technical education.

Chief Education Officer Saddam Hussain

school and can now access tertiary institutions. It also means that they can work because they have the necessary skills," he said.

The CVQ programme covers a growing range of disciplines, including agro-food processing, aquaculture, crop production, electrical installation, construction, welding, motor vehicle repair, metalwork engineering, garment making, data operations, business administration, food preparation and housekeeping.

Specialised areas such as cricket pitch management are

statistics. As Guyana's economy expands, employers require workers across professional, technical and skilled occupations. A larger corps of students with science, technology, vocational and practical qualifications therefore provides a broader workforce base.

The results also suggest that academic excellence and workforce preparation are increasingly being treated as complementary priorities.

At the top end, students continue to demonstrate strong academic performance, while a growing cohort

NEARLY 98% OF COVID-ERA COHORT REMAINED IN EDUCATION SYSTEM

Guyana has recorded a 97.96 per cent secondary school retention rate among a cohort of students whose transition into secondary education was severely disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic, with hundreds who did not sit CSEC remaining in the education system through technical and vocational pathways.

Chief Education Officer Saddam Hussain highlighted the figure during the release of the 2026 Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate (CSEC), Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examination (CAPE), Caribbean Vocational Qualification (CVQ) and Caribbean Certificate of Secondary Level Competence

(CCSLC) results.

The cohort entered secondary school during an unprecedented period of disruption. They completed the National Grade Six Assessment in 2021, but their transition into secondary school was interrupted, with physical classes only resuming on April 25, 2022.

Of the 13,821 students who wrote the 2021 examination used for secondary-school placement, 13,052 went on to sit CSEC five years later, a difference of 769 students.

However, the Education Ministry said the gap does not represent students simply dropping out of education.

A total of 488

students instead opted to pursue technical education after Grade 10 or Grade 11, choosing vocational pathways through Guyana's technical institutes.

Hussain said the figures demonstrate the value of maintaining multiple pathways through the education system.

"I want to commend the government ... for this, for their foresight," he said, noting that the decision to resume schooling during the pandemic contributed to the outcome.

The broader results reinforce the shift towards technical skills, with CSEC participation in TVET subjects



Students of the Three Miles Secondary School in Bartica writing an examination back in 2020 during the COVID era

increasing by 8.9 per cent this year, bringing participation to close to half of all CSEC candidates.

The trend means students who may not follow the traditional academic route can

remain engaged in education while acquiring recognised, practical skills that can lead directly to employment or further training.

The government is positioning these

alternative pathways as a critical part of keeping young people within the education and skills-development system while preparing them for a labour market increasingly demanding technical competencies.

Nearly 4,000 farmers now using Farmers Connect app- Minister Mustapha

THE Farmers Connect application is expanding access to agricultural services across Guyana, with almost 4,000 farmers already registered on the platform and more than 2,000 non-farmers also utilising its services.

Minister of Agriculture, Zulfikar Mustapha, provided the update on Monday on the sidelines of the Farmers Forum held at the Arthur Chung Conference Centre (ACCC), highlighting the platform’s growing reach and its role in connecting farmers with key agencies within the agriculture sector.

According to the minister, the application provides farmers, including those in some of the country’s most remote communities, with direct access to assistance on a wide range of agricultural matters.

“You can be with your smartphone in Orealla, and you can send a message to the Ministry of Agriculture to get help in terms of extension services, to get help in marketing, drainage and irrigation, look at problems with pests and diseases and other things like that,” Minister Mustapha said.

The platform allows farmers to communicate with agencies such as the New Guyana Marketing Corporation (GMC) for marketing support and the National Drainage and Irrigation Authority (NDIA) for drainage and irrigation concerns.

Minister Mustapha explained that per-

sonnel from agencies under the Ministry of Agriculture are active on the platform and monitor issues reported by farmers, which are then directed to the relevant agencies for action.

“So, the app is an entire process that can deal with a number of issues, right, in terms of agriculture. So, it’s a very useful app,” he said.

Through Farmers Connect, users can access market prices, weather updates and pest and disease alerts, while also receiving guidance on crop selection based on soil conditions.

The platform further facilitates direct connections between farmers and buyers, agro-processors and exporters, helping to improve market access and reduce ineffi-

ciencies along the agricultural value chain.

Among its other features is AI-assisted crop diagnostics, which can help farmers identify plant diseases and receive treatment recommendations.

The minister noted that the platform has already achieved nationwide penetration, with farmers from all regions using the application. (DPI)



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The Aiden Hotel — has seen sustained growth

Aiden marks second year

IN October 2024 when the Aiden by Best Western – Midtown Hotel was officially commissioned, it was opened as a nine-storey building with a total of 144 rooms, seven executive suites and one presidential suite, a private bar and terrace, a private gym, a rooftop bar and cigar lounge, a ground floor restaurant, and Giraffe Café.

As the hotel prepared to celebrate its second year of operation in October, the owner of Aiden and Managing Director of Arimu Investments Investments Inc., Lorenzo Alphonso recently spoke about expansion plans and the guest traffic.

Lorenzo shared that from room quality, staff etiquette, and hospitality to food and drinks quality, the hotel has been praised for its unblemished record since it opened its doors. While there is always room for improvement, Alphonso said they have received an outpour of support from the local com-

munity and its various guests. Speaking about the first four months, the owner said there was a substantial growth recorded, with no form of regression to be seen in any area.

He revealed that the hotel has an occupancy rate of 60 per cent, with the majority of its guests being predominantly international visitors.

Last year, the government called for selected hotels in Guyana to offer discounted rates for local residents and the diaspora to encourage domestic travel in our country.

Answering this call, Alphonso said Aiden was one of the first hotels to “get onboard” with this initiative by launching a US\$200 fixed rate for Guyanese.

This means that anyone of Guyanese heritage, ancestry or citizenship can use this fixed rate. He revealed that this has been applied mostly during specific events such as the upcoming Guyana leg of the CPL.

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FIRST COHORT OF DIGITAL HEALTH SPECIALISTS GRADUATES

Guyana’s push to modernise healthcare through technology received a major boost as the first cohort of the Digital Health Training Institute graduated, creating a new cadre of specialists to support the country’s rapidly expanding digital health infrastructure.

Fifteen graduates successfully completed 17 specialised training modules and a comprehensive two-part final assessment, qualifying them to serve as Digital Health Specialists within the

Ministry of Health. The graduates are expected to play a critical role in supporting the ministry’s growing suite of digital health services, including Electronic Health Records (EHRs), telemedicine platforms, pharmaceutical management systems and emerging artificial intelligence-assisted diagnostic technologies.

Speaking at the graduation ceremony, Minister of Health Dr Frank Anthony said the ministry’s investment in technology must be matched by investments

in people capable of operating, maintaining and expanding those systems.

“What we try to do as a ministry is see where we want to go, and if we don’t have the people to take us there, we train people who can give us the technical support,” Dr Anthony stated.

He explained that the specialists will help strengthen the technical backbone of the national healthcare system, ensuring that digital platforms remain functional, secure and interconnected across healthcare facilities.

The initiative forms part of Guyana’s broader effort to build a modern, technology-driven healthcare system capable of improving patient care, increasing efficiency and enhancing access to medical services nationwide.

For patients, the expansion of digital health services is expected to improve the management of medical records, strengthen coordination between healthcare facilities and provide healthcare



Minister of Health Dr Frank Anthony, along with representatives from Mount Sinai and graduates of the Digital Health Training Institute

professionals with faster access to critical information needed for treatment and diagnosis.

The programme was developed through a partnership between Mount Sinai and the Ministry of Health, with support from the Greater Guyana Initiative.

As Guyana accelerates the rollout of digital healthcare solutions, the newly trained specialists are set to become a key part of the workforce driving the country’s transition towards a more connected, efficient and technology-enabled health system.



Minister of Health Dr Frank Anthony receives automated testing devices and fitness equipment for the Health Promotion Centre

The Ministry of Health is moving to establish a Health Promotion Centre aimed at building a healthier workforce while strengthening the focus on disease prevention, physical activity and healthier lifestyle choices.

Minister of Health, Dr Frank Anthony, recently received automated health-testing devices and fitness equipment to support the establishment and operation of the Centre, which is being developed as Guyana confronts the growing burden of chronic non-communicable diseases

HEALTH MINISTRY MOVES TO BUILD HEALTHIER WORKFORCE THROUGH NEW WELLNESS CENTRE

(NCDs).

The initiative will target lifestyle factors associated with NCDs, including physical inactivity and unhealthy diets, by giving employees greater access to exercise facilities, health monitoring and preventive health information.

The Centre is being developed under the leadership of Dr Zhu Qianrang, Public Health Specialist attached to the

China Medical Team to Guyana, in collaboration with AGM Inc. and Shandong Hi-Speed Dejian Group.

Once operational, employees will be able to use fitness equipment and automated testing devices to monitor key health indicators while incorporating regular physical activity into their routines.

The facility will also promote nutrition,

exercise and preventative healthcare, giving staff practical tools to identify potential health concerns early and make healthier choices.

Dr Anthony said the initiative will begin with the Ministry of Health’s own employees, stressing that the sector responsible for promoting health must demonstrate those practices internally.

“What we want to do is start at the

Ministry of Health with our employees and get them into the habit of eating right and exercising,” he said.

The Minister said healthier workplace practices can extend beyond employees, influencing their families and communities and reinforcing prevention as a central component of healthcare.

REGION EIGHT NURSING STUDENTS TO BENEFIT FROM HANDS-ON TRAINING CLOSER TO HOME

Region Eight has received a major boost in healthcare education with the commissioning of a new \$140.8 million simulation centre designed to expand training opportunities and strengthen the region’s healthcare workforce.

The facility will enable nursing students and other healthcare trainees to complete critical practical training closer to home, reducing

the need to travel while improving access to high-quality health sciences education.

Commissioning the centre, Minister of Health Dr Frank Anthony described the investment as another significant step in the government’s strategy to build a skilled and resilient healthcare workforce across Guyana.

“Whether it’s learning how to give

an infusion, find a vein, deliver a baby, whatever the skill we require each nurse to know, this facility will enable it,” the minister said.

The simulation centre is equipped to provide hands-on instruction in a controlled environment, allowing trainees to develop and refine clinical skills before entering real healthcare settings. Training will

extend beyond nursing to include other categories of healthcare workers needed to support the region’s growing health sector.

Dr Anthony said the investment forms part of a broader healthcare transformation underway in Region Eight, including plans for the construction of a modern hospital at Kato. The facility, the first of its kind in the region, is expected to significantly



New simulation training centre in Region Eight

improve access to quality healthcare services for hinterland communities.

The new simulation centre is expected to create a stronger pipeline of trained

healthcare professionals while expanding career opportunities for residents of Region Eight.

More than 6,000 transactions have been processed at the Government’s newly established service centre in Lethem, Region Nine, bringing multiple public services closer to residents and reducing the need to travel to Georgetown.

The centre, officially launched by Minister of Public Service, Government Efficiency and Implementation Zulfikar Ally, consolidates several government agencies under one roof, including the General Register Office, Passport Office, Guyana Revenue Authority,

GOVT’S SERVICE CENTRE IN LETHEM SURPASSES 6,000 TRANSACTIONS

Environmental Protection Agency and Small Business Bureau.

The Lethem facility forms part of President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali’s decentralisation drive to expand access

to government services across the country.

It follows centres established at Leonora, Anna Regina, Fort Wellington and Port Mourant.

Minister Ally said a

person’s location should not determine the quality or accessibility of government services available to them.

The government is also advancing plans

for new centres in Bartica and in Region 10, with the broader goal of establishing accessible government service points in every administrative region.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT SYSTEM FACES COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OVER FARE, SERVICE CONCERNS

The government is moving to undertake a comprehensive review of Guyana’s public transportation system as concerns over rising fares, service gaps and inconsistent pricing continue to surface during national public consultations.

President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali said transportation has become a recurring concern among residents, particularly those travelling to and from large housing schemes and communities where access to reliable and affordable transport remains a challenge.

He said the concerns require government to examine the entire transportation ecosystem rather than pursue isolated interventions.

“These things, having the consultations and having them raise the consultation, require policymakers to look at the entire ecosystem, and to see how we can come up with a formula that would address this issue holistically,” President Ali said.

The President pointed specifically to complaints about varying fares at different times of the day, including in communities such as Diamond, where residents can face higher charges despite no corresponding increase in operators’ costs.

The review will examine the fare structure, service delivery and the broader relationship between commuters and transport providers. Operators are expected to be part of the process as government considers a multi-stakeholder approach.

Among the options being discussed is a public-private transportation model or a dedicated public transport service targeting vulnerable groups, particularly elderly persons and children.

Government has already introduced several measures aimed at reducing transportation costs, including the removal of excise taxes on gasoline and diesel in 2022, the removal of tolls on the Bharrat Jagdeo Demerara River, Berbice River and Wismar bridges, and the removal of VAT on hinterland travel.

The bridge toll removals alone provide direct relief to more than 50,000 commuters daily, according to the President.

Government has also introduced a \$20,000 annual transportation allowance for pensioners and a \$20,000 transportation grant for students.

President Ali said the new review is intended to go further, producing a more structured and sustainable transportation system that balances the interests of commuters and operators while ensuring citizens have access to affordable, reliable and predictable public transport.



President Ali signals comprehensive review of public transportation system

RENEWABLE ENERGY SAVINGS TO DRIVE NEXT WAVE OF ELECTRICITY PRICE CUTS

More communities are expected to benefit from lower electricity costs in the coming months as the government advances its phased plan to reduce electricity prices by 50 per cent nationwide.

President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali said the reduction has already begun in communities where investments in solar power, battery storage and other renewable energy systems have lowered electricity generation costs.

“We are fully committed to the reduction of that cost, and that is to bring it down by 50 per cent for consumers across the country,” President Ali said.

He identified Bartica in Region Seven and sections of Region One as communities that have already benefitted, while assessments are underway in other areas with renewable energy systems.

“In the coming months, there will be additional communities that will feel the first tranche of that reduction,” the President said.

Bartica provides an early example of the approach. A 25 per cent reduction in electricity costs was announced earlier this year following investment in a 1.5-megawatt solar photovoltaic farm, which has reduced the town’s dependence on diesel and displaced more than 6,000 drums of fuel.

In Region Two, a five-megawatt solar farm at Onderneeming, commissioned in November 2025, is projected to generate about 7,700 megawatt-hours annually and save approximately \$447 million in fossil-fuel costs each year.

Solar and battery storage systems have also been installed on Leguan and Wakenaam, reducing reliance on diesel-generated power.

President Ali said the government is now examining the savings generated by these renewable energy investments to determine how much can be passed directly to consumers through lower tariffs.

Lethem is also being assessed, with renewable energy already contributing to its electricity supply.

The government’s strategy therefore links renewable energy investment directly to consumer relief, with savings from reduced fuel consumption expected to support successive reductions in electricity costs.

President Ali said consumers will **“definitely benefit tremendously”** as the phased reductions expand to additional communities.



The Bartica Solar Farm in Daag Point, Region Seven

CONTRACTOR UNDER REVIEW AS HAGUE BACK ROAD WORKS REMAIN UNFINISHED

The Government has ordered an immediate review of the delayed Hague Back Road Project in Region Three, with Minister within the Ministry of Public Works Madanlall Ramraj demanding greater accountability from the contractor following mounting concerns from residents.

During a site visit, Ramraj expressed disappointment with the pace of the works and instructed ministry engineers to conduct a full assessment of the project, including completed works, outstanding activities and the contractor’s proposed timeline for completion.

“We have given this contractor enough time to get these works completed,” Minister Ramraj said, stressing that residents cannot continue to bear the disruption caused by prolonged delays.

The review will guide the government’s next decision on the contract and how the remaining works will be completed.

NK Engineering was awarded the project in July 2025 to construct 660 metres of revetment works and 1,000 metres of asphalted roadway. The works were initially scheduled for completion in January 2026, before an extension was granted to February.

More than six months after that revised deadline, however, the project remains incomplete. The revetment is approximately 71 per cent complete, while overall progress stands at 52 per cent.

Meanwhile, government road rehabilitation works are advancing in Vriesland, where approximately 3.8 kilometres of roadway have been upgraded to asphalt.

The Ministry of Public Works’ Special Projects Unit (SPU) is executing the works, which will continue toward Free and Easy.

SPU’s Head, Collin Gittens, said the project was initiated following residents’ complaints about the poor condition of the road. Initial remedial works were undertaken before the government moved to a full asphalt upgrade.

Gittens said the works are targeted for completion within three months and apologised to residents for temporary traffic disruptions as construction continues.



Minister within the Ministry of Public Works, Madanlall Ramraj inspects road project at Hague



Minister of Public Works, Bishop Juan Edghill and engineering team explains the boundary point and scope of the Soesdyke Junction roundabout construction

Bridges along the alignment of the Soesdyke Junction are expected to be dismantled within two weeks as the Government moves to clear the way for two major road projects that will reshape connectivity between the East Bank Demerara and Soesdyke-Linden corridors.

TheGoodSuccess-to-

Timehri Road expansion and Linden-Soesdyke Highway upgrade will converge at Soesdyke Junction, where a new roundabout is planned to improve traffic flow and connectivity.

Minister of Public Works, Bishop Juan Edghill met with residents, occupants and other stakeholders at the junction as government

SOESDYKE JUNCTION SET FOR MAJOR OVERHAUL AS TWO ROAD PROJECTS CONVERGE

engineers outlined the project boundaries, relocation requirements and the work schedule.

“We want to be able to set clear timelines. We want to be able to get this project going,” Minister Edghill told stakeholders.

The works will extend beyond the road itself, with drainage improvements planned through the excavation and reshaping of drains before they are lined with geocell material. Surveyors will also identify and mark the legal boundaries of properties in the project area.

Some occupants currently using government reserves will have to relocate. The Minister said affected persons have been engaged through several discussions and were made aware of the relocation requirements from the project’s launch.

Minister Edghill stressed that delays in handing over work sites can have significant financial consequences for the State. Contractors are subject to liquidated damages when they fail to meet contractual deadlines, but where delays result from government not providing access to sites, contractors can make claims for additional costs.

“So, when we need to get these things done, we need to get it done expeditiously, and in a fair manner,” he said.

The Minister also proposed that taxi operators affected by the relocation work with the Neighbourhood Democratic Council to identify an alternative location for their operations. The contractor would subsequently assist with constructing a tarmac at the new site.

With the bridges set for removal and preparatory works advancing, the Soesdyke Junction is poised for a significant physical transformation as the two road projects move toward implementation.

PALMYRA-MOLESON CREEK UPGRADE ENTERS MAJOR CONSTRUCTION PHASE

Paving has begun on Lot 2 of the Palmyra-Moleson Creek Road Project, marking a major step forward in the construction of the transformative four-lane highway linking communities along the Corentyne corridor.

A 200-metre asphalt trial section is currently being laid, with

President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali announcing that full-scale paving is expected to commence on September 15. Crews are projected to advance at approximately 100 metres per day.

Lot 2, stretching from Bloomfield to Number 54 Village, carries a value of more than G\$2.9 billion and

is being executed by China Road and Bridge Corporation (CRBC).

The works form part of the wider US\$604 million Palmyra-to-Moleson Creek four-lane highway project, which Government has identified as a major catalyst for development in Region Six.

Minister within the Ministry of Public Works, Madanlall Ramraj said crusher run is also being placed along sections of the remaining road network to prepare the corridor for expansion.

The completed highway is expected to deliver wider carriageways, improved road geometry, safer parking, street lighting



Paving commences on Lot 2 of Palmyra-Moleson Creek road project

and modern safety features, significantly improving travel times, connectivity and road safety while opening new opportunities for economic activity across the region.

President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali called on Guyanese at home and in the diaspora to embrace unity, compassion and justice as the nation observed Youman Nabi, the national holiday commemorating the birth and teachings of the Holy Prophet Muhammad.

In his message, President Ali reflected on the Prophet’s enduring legacy and the values of faith, humility, mercy, forgiveness, patience,



The head of state reflected on the Prophet’s legacy as one that reshaped not only Islam but human civilisation itself.

truth, justice and peace.

“May this blessed occasion bathe your

PRESIDENT INVOKES PROPHET MUHAMMAD’S LEGACY OF MERCY AND UNITY

homes in peace, bind your families in strength, cradle those who weep, and kindle in our nation an inextinguishable flame of hope,” he said.

The President drew particular attention to the Prophet’s teaching that humanity is like one body, where pain affecting one part is felt by the whole.

He said the message carries added significance for Guyana as the country continues to grapple with the loss and uncertainty surrounding the MV Barima tragedy.

President Ali cautioned citizens against allowing grief and anger to deepen divisions, stressing that accountability must be pursued through truth and justice rather than vengeance.

“Sorrow must not become hatred, and tragedy must never become a chisel of division, nor a spark for suspicion, nor a seed for strife,” he said.

He urged Guyanese to seek answers with restraint and pursue justice without malice.

“Seek truth, but without fury. Pursue justice, but without malice. Correct what is broken, but without vengeance,” the President said.

His message ultimately called for national healing grounded in compassion, solidarity and hope.

NEW WORLD BANK’S CARIBBEAN DIRECTOR SIGNALS CONTINUED SUPPORT FOR GUYANA

Passport applications will move to an online, appointment-based system starting October 1, with walk-in appointments no longer being accepted at passport offices.

Deputy Chief Immigration Officer Senior Superintendent Stephen Telford highlighted that **“all passport applicants will be required to make an online**

appointment before visiting a passport office.”

The new system will allow applicants to select their passport office location and date and time that is convenient for them.

The deputy commissioner urged citizens to be cautious when accessing online platforms, warning that fake websites exist and may be used to mislead applicants.

The official platform is **pp.gpf.gov.gy**. This platform encourages citizens to use the correct website, complete their application, and secure an appointment before visiting an office.

The new appointment-based system is expected to provide a more organized process for passport applicants while giving citizens greater flexibility

in choosing when and where they access the service.

Uplifting passports will now be easier with the reduction of three working days, and persons who pay for the expedited service can receive their passport within 24 hours.

Passport offices have now introduced an at-home service to cater to the elderly and people who are differently abled.

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PASSPORT APPOINTMENT SYSTEM

Effective 1st October 2026, all passport applications will be STRICTLY ONLINE at all the Government of Guyana Service Centres and the Central Immigration & Passport Office, Georgetown.

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\$8B IN APPROVED INVESTMENT SIGNALS NEW ECONOMIC PUSH FOR REGION 10

Region 10 is being positioned for a new wave of private investment, production and exports, with more than G\$8 billion in approved investment agreements already recorded between 2020 and 2026, according to Guyana's Chief Investment Officer and GO-Invest Agency



Dr Ramroop and team engaging residents in Region 10

Head, Peter Ramsaroop. Speaking at an investment and export engagement in Linden, Ramsaroop said improved infrastructure and government investment policies

are creating the conditions for Region 10 to expand its role as a manufacturing, logistics, agricultural and production hub linking Guyana's coast, interior and northern Brazil. **"The President's vision is clear: Region 10 is playing a major role in**

Guyana's economic transformation and is now moving into its next level of investment, production and export growth," Ramsaroop said.

He said local investors account for the majority of the region's approved investment agreements, with hundreds of jobs expected across sectors including agriculture, agro-processing, bauxite-related activity, tourism, hospitality, Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) and other services.

GO-Invest is now targeting another area of growth: keeping more spending within Region 10.

The agency plans to identify goods and services currently sourced from Georgetown, other regions or overseas and match those supply gaps with Linden-based entrepreneurs and investors.

"Every dollar currently being spent outside Region 10

for something that can competitively be produced or supplied here represents a potential opportunity for a local entrepreneur," Ramsaroop said.

Potential opportunities include industrial fabrication, equipment servicing, logistics, warehousing, construction inputs, wood manufacturing, food processing, cold-chain services and digital businesses.

The agency is also intensifying export support, helping businesses improve product development, packaging, standards, certification and market access. Ramsaroop pointed to Linden-based Taz Foods and its dehydrated cook-up rice as an example of how local products can be processed and packaged



Dr Ramroop and team engaging residents in Region 10

for international consumers.

BPO is another emerging export opportunity. Prochant currently employs 59 people in Linden, with 15 additional trainees, providing specialised services to overseas clients.

Ramsaroop said infrastructure investments, including the Linden-Mabura corridor, Wismar-Mackenzie Bridge and Soesdyke-Linden Highway upgrades, are strengthening Linden's

strategic position.

"The next phase for Region 10 is about converting the opportunities being created into investment, production, jobs and exports," he said.

GO-Invest plans to deepen investor aftercare and one-on-one engagement with businesses to resolve implementation challenges, support expansion and build a stronger pipeline of commercially viable projects.



CEO of the Board of Industrial Training (BIT) speaking at the graduation ceremony

A total of 107 Guyanese have completed specialised training aimed at preparing them for employment and entrepreneurship in some of the country's emerging industries, as Guyana strengthens its workforce to meet changing labour-market



President of the Georgetown Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Chairperson of the BIT Board, Kathy Smith, speaking at the graduation ceremony

demands. The graduates were recognised at a ceremony at MovieTowne Cinemas following a collaborative training initiative led by the Board of Industrial Training (BIT), with programmes focused on skills relevant to Guyana's expanding economy.

107 GUYANESE GRADUATE WITH SKILLS TO POWER THE ORANGE ECONOMY

Training covered video production, drone operation, social media strategy, digital marketing, visual design and culinary arts, disciplines increasingly connected to opportunities in the creative, tourism, media and business sectors.

Chief Executive Officer of BIT, Richard Maughn, said the initiative reflects the agency's evolving approach to skills development, with greater emphasis on short-term programmes that respond directly to industry needs.

"The Board of Industrial Training has been evolving. We are involved in many short-term programmes that speak to the direct need of the labour market," he said.

The programme was developed through a partnership among BIT, the University of the Southern Caribbean and the Guyana Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

The training comes as Guyana continues to develop its orange economy, which encompasses film, music, fashion, media

production, digital content and cultural tourism. At the same time, the country's growing screen economy is creating new demand for people with technical and creative skills.

President of the Georgetown Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Chairperson of the BIT Board, Kathy Smith urged graduates to use their skills to pursue emerging opportunities.

"Companies in Guyana need people who can tell their stories visually, market their products effectively,

use technology, create compelling content, and deliver quality service," she said.

For the graduates, the training provides a pathway into jobs, freelance work and entrepreneurship while strengthening Guyana's pool of skilled creative professionals.

The initiative ultimately reflects a broader push to ensure Guyanese are equipped to participate in, and help build, the new industries emerging alongside the country's wider economic expansion.

192 CHILDREN IN CARE HOMES TREATED TO NIGHT AT THE MOVIES

For 192 children from nine care homes across Guyana, the new school term began with more than preparations for the classroom, it began with an evening dedicated to laughter, friendship and simply enjoying being children.

The children were treated to a movie outing under First Lady Arya Ali's Adopt-an-Orphanage Initiative, providing a welcome

opportunity to unwind, socialise and create positive memories outside their usual surroundings.

Participants came from Save R Kids, Joshua's House, Bless The Children Home, St John's Bosco, Ruimveldt Children's Home, Shaheeds Boys, Shaheeds Girls, Hope Children's Home and Prabhu Sharan.

With the demands

of a new school term approaching, the outing offered the children a chance to relax and connect with their peers in a setting centred on recreation and enjoyment.

For children living in residential care, such experiences carry significance beyond entertainment. Opportunities to socialise and participate in activities alongside

their peers can strengthen confidence, foster relationships and reinforce a sense of belonging and inclusion.

The initiative also highlights the importance of ensuring children in care have access to experiences that support their emotional and social wellbeing, alongside their educational and material needs.

Through the



First Lady Arya Ali engaging with children at the Adopt-an-Orphanage Initiative outing

Adopt-an-Orphanage Initiative, the First Lady continues to engage directly with children in residential care, creating opportunities designed

to promote inclusion, normalcy and positive development while reminding them that their wellbeing remains a priority.

AI TO TAKE CENTRE STAGE AS BERBICE EXPO RETURNS IN OCTOBER

Artificial intelligence (AI) will be the key focus at this year's Berbice Expo and Trade Fair, with government and business leaders positioning technology as a key driver of future economic growth, productivity and innovation.

Minister of Agriculture Zulfikar Mustapha officially launched the 20th Berbice Expo and Trade Fair, which will be held from October 2 to 5 at the Rose Hall Estate Canje Ground under the theme, **"Harnessing AI to Transform**



Minister of Agriculture, Zulfikar Mustapha at the official launch of the 20th Berbice Expo and Trade Fair

the Future: While Enhancing Our People". Addressing the launch, Minister Mustapha said AI is already reshaping industries, governments and economies worldwide, including Guyana's agricultural sector.

"The question is no longer whether AI will become part of our future. It already is," the minister stated, urging businesses and citizens to embrace emerging technologies and prepare for a rapidly changing global landscape.

He highlighted the Ministry of Agriculture's growing use of digital tools, including the Farmers' Connect App, which now serves more than 4,300 subscribers and offers AI-assisted plant disease identification through smartphone technology.

The ministry is also advancing partnerships with the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) to promote AI-driven agriculture, climate-smart production systems and real-time monitoring capabilities across the region.

Minister Mustapha linked the expo's focus on innovation to broader investments transforming Region Six, including plans for a deep-water port, a new four-lane Berbice

River Bridge, expanded road networks, a municipal airport and an international-standard stadium.

He encouraged farmers, manufacturers, investors and young entrepreneurs to use the expo as a platform to forge partnerships, showcase innovation and unlock new business opportunities.

"The Berbice of tomorrow must be more productive, more technologically advanced and more connected to markets," the minister said.

BERBICE FARMERS GET MACHINERY AND CITRUS PLANTS TO EXPAND PRODUCTION



Minister of Agriculture, Zulfikar Mustapha at the official launch of the 20th Berbice Expo and Trade Fair

Farmers across the Berbice River and East Bank of Berbice are receiving new machinery and planting material to expand production, modernise their operations and strengthen the region's contribution to Guyana's food security.

Minister of Agriculture Zulfikar

Mustapha handed over eight tractors, eight rotovators and a harvester to farmers from DeVeldt, Geatroy, Fort Nassau, Sand Hills, Kimbia, Ebini, Wiruni and Wikki.

The equipment is expected to help farmers move beyond small-scale production by reducing dependence on manual

labour, allowing larger acreages to be cultivated and productivity to increase.

The intervention is particularly aimed at increasing production of beans, including black-eyed peas and red beans, for both domestic and export markets.

Toshao of Wiruni, Rohan Fredricks, welcomed the investment, saying the machinery would give farmers greater capacity to expand their operations.

Farmer Trishel Hinds, who plans to cultivate beans and corn, said access to equipment would allow farmers to **"think bigger, plant more and produce**

more."

Minister Mustapha said the objective is to move farmers towards commercial agriculture while reducing Guyana's food-import bill and creating opportunities for local producers.

The government is also expanding support for farmers along the East Bank of Berbice, where 5,000 citrus plants were distributed following requests for planting material.

The minister said the intervention is part of a broader effort that includes drainage and irrigation improvements and technical support from agricultural agencies.

With production

expected to increase, Mustapha said government is considering establishing

while creating new income opportunities for farmers.

Together, the



Eight Tractors delivered to enhance crop production

an agro-processing facility in the area through the next national budget.

The facility would help add value to locally produced crops, strengthening markets

interventions are aimed at turning agricultural potential in Berbice into increased production, value-added activity and stronger rural livelihoods.

YARROWKABRA VILLAGE UPGRADE TAKES SHAPE

Yarrowkabra is set for a broad government intervention targeting drainage and irrigation, agricultural inputs, roads, street lighting and community facilities, following concerns raised by farmers and residents during recent engagements.

Agriculture Minister, Zulfikar Mustapha, has committed to begin excavation of waterways in the area within two weeks, with a technical assessment to identify creeks and tributaries requiring urgent attention.

"Every single

creek in this area here, I will ensure that we do a survey, and we have a preliminary excavation," Minister Mustapha told farmers.

A joint technical team from the National Drainage and Irrigation Authority (NDIA), Guyana Livestock Development Authority (GLDA) and the National Agricultural Research and Extension Institute (NAREI) is expected to return to assess the waterways and determine the irrigation requirements of farmers along the Soesdyke-

Linden Highway.

The intervention comes as farmers contend with water-

addressing concerns over the quality and availability of planting materials, directing



Minister of Agriculture, Zulfikar Mustapha, along with representatives from NDIA and NAREI

access challenges that can constrain production, particularly during prolonged dry conditions.

Minister Mustapha also committed to

NAREI to conduct a needs assessment and distribute suitable plants based on farmers' requirements.

The ministry also plans to rehabilitate the

existing plant nursery in Yarrowkabra and develop it into a modern facility where farmers can access quality planting materials locally.

"We want to make it a modern plant nursery, so that you can go get all your planting materials here," Minister Mustapha said.

The intervention is extending beyond agriculture.

The Central Housing and Planning Authority has identified Yarrowkabra Newtown Extension for streetlight installation and internal road upgrades following assessments of residents' concerns.

CH&PA's Chief

Executive Officer, Dr Martin Pertab, said several roads require rehabilitation, while the community playfield is also being considered for improvements under a national playground programme.

The combined interventions signal a broader government push to address Yarrowkabra's development needs, from the infrastructure required to support communities to the water, planting materials and agricultural facilities needed to sustain production.

For residents and farmers, the focus is now on turning the commitments into visible works on the ground.

CPCE INTRODUCES FIRST-OF-ITS-KIND STEM EDUCATION DEGREE IN THE CARIBBEAN

Guyana has taken a major step in reshaping its education landscape with the launch of the Guyana Stellar STEM Associate Degree in Education at the Cyril Potter College of Education (CPCE), positioning 62 students at the forefront of a programme designed to prepare a new generation of STEM educators.

The STELLAR programme—Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics: Enhancing Learning, Leadership and Rigour—is the first initiative of its kind in the Caribbean and among the first in the Southern Hemisphere. It aims to equip teachers with advanced STEM knowledge and practical skills needed to prepare students for a rapidly evolving global economy.

Speaking at the launch, Minister of Education Priya Manickchand Parag described the programme as a significant milestone in Guyana’s ongoing education transformation, which is focused not only on expanding access to education but also on improving quality and relevance.

“You are part of history, but you



CPCE introduces first-of-its-kind STEM education degree in the Caribbean

are also part of our important history in education,” Minister Parag told the inaugural cohort.

The programme forms part of a US\$100 million, 10-year investment in STEM education by the ExxonMobil Foundation, announced earlier this

year. The initiative also includes plans for a state-of-the-art STEM Centre at the University of Guyana, which will serve as a hub for innovation, research and advanced learning.

CPCE Director Tamashwar Budhoo said the programme responds directly to the

demands of a rapidly changing economy, where sectors such as energy, agriculture, construction, manufacturing and technology increasingly require highly skilled and innovative workers.

President of the ExxonMobil Foundation, Alvin Abraham, noted

that strengthening STEM education begins with strengthening teachers, who will play a pivotal role in developing critical thinking, creativity and problem-solving skills among students.

For the 62 pioneering students, the programme represents more than a new academic opportunity. It marks the beginning of a national effort to build a highly skilled workforce and ensure future generations of Guyanese are equipped to lead, innovate and compete on the global stage.



Region Three women gaining carpentry skills through WIIN programme

Sixteen women from Region Three are gaining practical carpentry skills through the Ministry of Human Services and Social Security’s Women’s Innovation and Investment Network (WIIN), opening new pathways to employment, entrepreneurship and financial independence.

The training, delivered in collaboration with Nations Incorporated, is being conducted at the Leonora Technical Institute, where participants are acquiring practical skills in a field traditionally dominated by men.

For participants, the programme is providing more than technical training, it is creating opportunities to strengthen household

WOMEN BREAK INTO CARPENTRY THROUGH WIIN SKILLS TRAINING

incomes and tackle personal economic challenges.

Single mother, Coreen Thomas of Good Fortuin, said acquiring a marketable skill is particularly important as she navigates the workforce while supporting her family.

“I came today for the carpentry course, which I have learned a lot from, especially as a single parent,” Thomas said. **“Learning a skill is the best thing right now.”**

For Bibi Shaneeza Salem, the training is also helping bring a personal goal closer to

reality.

The mother of two is building a home but said the rising cost of construction has made the project increasingly difficult to afford.

“I am thankful to the Ministry for this opportunity and the skills that I learned here,” Salem said, explaining that the training will allow her to undertake some construction work herself.

Upon completion, participants will receive an internationally accredited City & Guilds certification, giving them a recognised qualification they can use



Some of the other participants during a training session

to pursue employment or income-generating opportunities.

The initiative reflects WIIN’s broader focus on equipping women with practical, marketable skills while challenging traditional gender barriers in areas such as construction and

carpentry.

Through the programme, participants are gaining not only technical competence, but also greater confidence to create economic opportunities for themselves and their families.

SKILLS TRAINING TURNS CERTIFICATION INTO LIVELIHOODS

For 30-year-old Eshwar Doedat of Region Two, completing a six-month welding and fabrication course through the Board of Industrial Training (BIT) was more than earning a certificate, it gave him the skills and confidence to build a business of his own.

Just a month after completing the programme in 2025, Doedat opened his own welding and fabrication workshop, using the practical knowledge gained through BIT to strengthen skills he had already developed as a former MTA student.

“The training was nice,” Doedat said, explaining that the programme provided the additional practical knowledge he needed to turn his skills into an income-generating venture.

Since opening his workshop, he has also embraced social media to showcase his work and attract customers.

“Financially, it works...the more people get to know you, the more customers you get,” he said.

While finding additional workers remains a challenge,

Doedat is focused on expanding the business and eventually hopes to train someone to work alongside him.

He encouraged other young Guyanese, particularly those who may have left school without formal qualifications, to take advantage of government-supported skills training.

“Go there and do what you have to do. Don’t watch for money. Just learn and get training. When you finish, then you will see the outcome,” he advised.

In Region One,



Eshwar in his workshop, operating a welding machine

35-year-old mother of five, Ellena Williams, is similarly turning training into an opportunity for income.

Williams, from Moruca, completed a six-month tractor-driving programme through BIT. She acknowledged that the training was challenging, particularly learning to reverse the tractor, but persevered.

“Yes, it was hard,” she recalled. **“Driving it slow, the reversing part was more difficult for me but I overcame it.”**

Today, Williams is using her qualification to secure tractor-driving jobs within her community, creating an additional avenue to earn a living.

Her experience, like Doedat’s, demonstrates the practical impact of skills training in helping Guyanese enter the workforce, pursue

self-employment and strengthen their earning potential.

Through BIT, participants gain access to practical trades designed not only to improve employability but also to support entrepreneurship and independent livelihoods.

For Doedat, the investment has already produced a workshop and a growing customer base. For Williams, it has created a marketable skill she can use within her community.

Together, their stories underscore the value of equipping Guyanese with practical skills that can translate directly into work, income and greater economic independence.

ELDERLY FIRE VICTIMS, STROKE SURVIVORS AMONG BENEFICIARIES OF NEW HOMES

Ten vulnerable families in Region Six are starting a new chapter in their lives after receiving newly constructed homes through the Men on Mission (MoM) initiative, providing relief to households affected by fire, illness and financial hardship. Among the beneficiaries are 68-year-old Jerry Alexander and his wife, Rosaline, 76, whose home at

Fourth Street, Swamp Section, was destroyed by fire. The couple was presented with a new house, allowing them to rebuild after losing everything in the blaze. In Letterkenny North, 53-year-old Dankumarie Balkarran, a stroke survivor, received a home designed to provide a safer and more comfortable living environment. Fellow resident Shivbachan

Harrikishun, 64, also became a beneficiary of the programme. Meanwhile, in Sisters Village, Shamila Seetaram and Nazim Ganni were handed fully furnished homes, while 59-year-old Totaram Narine of Chesney, Corentyne, expressed gratitude after receiving the keys to his new residence. The homes were handed over by Minister

of Agriculture Zulfikar Mustapha on behalf of President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali. Minister Mustapha said the initiative fulfils a commitment made by the People's Progressive Party/Civic (PPP/C) to provide support for vulnerable citizens. "These homes are being built, furnished and given to vulnerable groups at no cost," he stated.



The newly constructed home of Jerry and Rosaline Alexander, who lost their home in a fire

The Men on Mission initiative, a programme established under the leadership of President Ali, continues to provide housing and other forms of support to vulnerable families, helping to improve living conditions and restore dignity to those facing difficult circumstances across Guyana.



Minister within the Office of the Prime Minister with Responsibility for Public Affairs and Information, Kwame McCoy handing over a certificate to a graduate of the innovation camp

Thirty-eight young Guyanese have gained practical digital skills through a five-day Innovation Camp designed to prepare them for opportunities in an increasingly technology-

driven economy. The programme, which targeted participants between 14 and 21 years, provided hands-on training in coding and programming, website

INNOVATION CAMP PUSHES YOUNG LEARNERS INTO EMERGING DIGITAL CREATORS

development, Microsoft Office applications, cybersecurity and ICT literacy. For participants, the camp offered an opportunity to move beyond basic computer use and explore skills with potential applications in education, employment and entrepreneurship. Gowri Seeram said the programme introduced her to areas of technology she

had never previously explored, including coding and productivity software. "I learned more about Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint and I even learned coding which I've never done before," she said. Jayda June, who joined to strengthen her existing IT knowledge, said she gained practical experience

in programming and website development. "I learned how to create my own website and program in general," she said. Sareeta Rameshwar Singh highlighted both technical and social benefits, including learning Python and building new friendships. The participants' experiences underscore

the camp's wider objective of equipping young people with marketable digital skills while fostering creativity, problem-solving, innovation and entrepreneurship. The initiative also provides an early pipeline of digitally skilled youth as Guyana's economy increasingly demands expertise in technology and digital services.

GUYANA POLICE FORCE - ZARA PROGRAMME PRODUCES 320 DIGITAL SKILLS GRADUATES

More than 320 young people have graduated from the Guyana Police Force (GPF)-ZARA Computer Centre summer programme, strengthening efforts to equip youth with practical digital skills for education and future employment. The graduates were recognised during the Annual Summer Graduation Ceremony held at the Police

Officers' Mess Annexe at Eve Leary, Georgetown. The event brought together students from the Georgetown and Cove and John campuses, along with parents, instructors and invited guests. Founder of the ZARA Computer Centres, Dr Jay Sobhraj, said the programme reflects a longstanding partnership between the organisation and

the Guyana Police Force that has been helping young people develop technology skills for more than 15 years. He noted that nearly 20 ZARA Computer Centres now operate across Guyana, with more than 2,800 students participating in this year's summer programmes nationwide. The Georgetown campus produced more than 150 graduates,

while the Cove and John campus accounted for 171 graduates. Participants received training in a range of foundational computer skills, including Microsoft Word, Microsoft PowerPoint, Microsoft Paint, keyboard and mouse operations, typing and document editing. The initiative forms part of ongoing efforts by the Guyana



Graduates with their award

Police Force and ZARA Computer Centres to expand access to digital literacy training and prepare young people



with skills increasingly required in education, the workplace and the modern economy.



Bibi Khan

Residents of Soesdyke and Timehri are gaining easier access to digital identification services as the Digital Identity Card Registry (DICR) takes its registration drive directly



Rookhamin Singh

into communities. Eligible residents were invited to register for their Digital Identity Cards (e-ID) at the Prime Minister's Sub-Office on Madewini Public Road, allowing applicants to

SOESDYKE, TIMEHRI RESIDENTS GET CLOSER ACCESS TO DIGITAL ID REGISTRATION

complete the process without travelling farther afield. The e-ID is designed to provide a secure and convenient way for citizens to verify their identities when accessing government and private-sector services, both online and in person. Its biometric security features, including photographs and fingerprints, strengthen

identity verification while helping streamline everyday transactions. Resident Vishnu Persaud welcomed the community-based registration, highlighting the card's potential to simplify banking transactions and other services. "One of the great benefits of this e-ID is that you get to use it at the bank to get

the loan," he said. Another resident, Alana Jones, described the initiative as a positive step in Guyana's digital development, saying it could reduce the need for citizens to repeatedly gather and submit documents. The DICR said applicants must present the required original supporting documents before their personal and

biometric information is captured. Citizens are subsequently notified when their cards are ready for collection. The rollout forms part of the government's broader digital transformation agenda to modernise public services, strengthen identity security and make essential services more accessible to citizens.

Vendors at Hydronie Market in Region Three are set to benefit from expanded shed and drainage facilities, as the Government moves to extend recent market upgrades across the entire compound. President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali announced the plans during a tour of the market, where vendors previously operated from



The additional shed facilities will bring greater comfort to vendors

HYDRONIE MARKET TO GET SHED UPGRADE

a congested roadside area. Government investment has already provided improved drainage and new shed facilities on sections of the market, with vendors reporting greater comfort and improved conditions. **“The people are very happy with the new shed at the back. They’re very happy with the shed in the middle [and] with the improved drainage,”** President Ali said in a video posted to social media. Following requests from vendors operating on the remaining undeveloped side, the President said the government will extend the same drainage and shelter improvements to that section. Funding is being transferred to the region, which will soon advertise for contractors. Construction is expected to begin within six to eight weeks. Once completed, the project will provide covered, properly drained vending spaces throughout the market, improving conditions for vendors and shoppers.

NEW SOPHIA MARKET TARMAC CLEARS PATH FOR ROAD UPGRADE

Vendors operating along the ‘E’ Field Sophia Road corridor are being relocated to a newly completed market tarmac, clearing the way for major road expansion while protecting the livelihoods of those affected by the works. Minister of Public Works Bishop Juan Edghill recently, officially handed over the facility and oversaw the drawing of lots for vendors who will move from the roadway to the designated space. The minister said 60 vendors have been documented for relocation, while the new facility has capacity for 70 vendors. **“We have documented 60 persons that have to move from the carriageway to the tarmac that we agreed on,”** Minister Edghill said, stressing that infrastructure development should not come at the expense of people’s livelihoods. The facility includes two walkways and two parking areas, creating a safer and more organised environment for vendors and customers while allowing road construction to proceed without obstruction. The intervention comes as Sophia undergoes a major infrastructure upgrade. Minister Edghill said roads parallel to the University of Guyana (UG) are being expanded, including the conversion of UG Road and Dennis Street into four-lane roads. A roughly 900-metre road linking UG Road to Sophia is also being reconstructed under a \$275 million contract awarded in December 2025. Works began in January 2026. Minister Edghill said similar market tarmacs have been established in B-Fields, Plaisance, Buxton, Aubrey Barker, La Grange and



Vendors displaying their lot number



Bagotville, with plans to expand the model nationwide. The government is also exploring vending plazas through Neighbourhood Democratic Councils, potentially incorporating food courts and other amenities. The Sophia upgrades form part of a broader push to modernise the road network while creating safer trading spaces and ensuring communities and small businesses benefit alongside major infrastructure development.

The Guyana National Bureau of Standards (GNBS) is intensifying verification of commercial weighing instruments as it moves across the country to ensure consumers receive the correct quantities for which they pay.

The ongoing exercise will continue along the East Coast corridor before moving to the West Coast, while GNBS regional offices are conducting verification checks at strategic locations nationwide.

Head of the GNBS Legal Metrology



GNBS steps up scale verifications to protect consumers

Services Department, Shailendra Rai, said the inspections are critical to protecting consumers and maintaining accuracy in commercial

GNBS INTENSIFIES SCALE CHECKS TO PROTECT CONSUMERS FROM SHORT-WEIGHTING

transactions. **“The purpose of this is to ensure that scales being used at retail outlets are working accurately,”** Rai said, stressing that consumers must receive the correct weight for products purchased.

The checks form part of the National Weights and Measures Programme, under which commercial weighing and measuring instruments are required

to undergo verification twice each year. GNBS inspectors examine the instruments to determine whether they meet the prescribed accuracy standards. Scales that pass verification are affixed with the appropriate verification mark, signalling that they have been tested and approved for commercial use. The programme is particularly important

for transactions involving commodities sold by weight, where inaccurate equipment could result in consumers receiving less than the quantity paid for. The nationwide verification drive also reinforces the role of GNBS in regulating weights and measures and ensuring fairness between consumers and businesses. Businesses using

commercial scales are required to ensure their equipment are properly maintained and presented for verification within the prescribed periods. The GNBS said the continued inspections are aimed at strengthening compliance, safeguarding consumers and maintaining confidence in commercial transactions across Guyana.

THOUSANDS OF YOUTHS EQUIPPED WITH CRITICAL WATER-SAFETY SKILLS

A total of 4,815 young people from across Guyana participated in the 2026 “Teach Them Young-Learn to Swim” programme, reinforcing the government’s push to equip youths with critical water-safety and swimming skills.

The initiative, organised by the Ministry

of Culture, Youth and Sport in partnership with the National Sports Commission (NSC), concluded with a closing ceremony at the Colgrain Swimming Pool on Camp Street.

Implemented across Regions Two, Four, Five, Six and Ten, the programme attracted

1,958 males and 2,857 females, highlighting growing interest in swimming as an essential life skill. Director of Sport, Steve Ninvalle, said the programme continues to expand, with plans already underway to introduce it in Region Eight. He said that

preparations for the expansion will begin later this month. Ninvalle also announced that an adult learn-to-swim programme is expected to be launched before the end of 2026. The expansion is expected to increase access to swimming



Participants in the 2026 “Teach Them Young-Learn to Swim” programme

lessons and water-safety training, particularly for youths in hinterland communities, helping to reduce water-related risks nationwide.

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LEONORA STADIUM INSPECTED AS GUYANA GEARS UP FOR 2027 CARIFTA GAMES

Guyana has officially begun, preparations to host the 2027 CARIFTA Games, setting the stage for a historic first as the country prepares to welcome the Caribbean's premier youth and junior track and field championship.

North American, Central American and Caribbean Athletic Association (NACAC) President Michael Sands and Technology Commission Chair John-Paul Clarke are in Guyana for initial consultations and assessments ahead of the Games.

Recently, the NACAC delegation inspected the National Track and Field Stadium at Leonora, which is expected to serve as the principal venue for the competition.

The delegation also met with Minister of Culture, Youth and Sport Charles Ramson Jr., Minister within the ministry Steven Jacobs, Director of Sport Steve Ninvalle, National Sports Commission Vice-Chairperson Cristy Campbell and Guyana Athletics Association President Sheryl Hermonstine.

Discussions centred on Guyana's readiness, infrastructure, organisation and the technical requirements needed to successfully stage the regional championship.

The 2027 Games will represent a major milestone for Guyana, which has never previously hosted CARIFTA despite being a longstanding participant and producing athletes who have excelled regionally and internationally.

First held in Barbados in 1972, the CARIFTA Games have become a major launching pad for young Caribbean athletes, with many going on to compete at the highest levels of international athletics.

Guyana's hosting of the 2027 edition will therefore place the country at the centre of talent to compete on regional youth athletics home soil while providing a major platform for its emerging



NACAC begins readiness assessment for Guyana's 2027 CARIFTA Games



ONE GUYANA T10 RETURNS WITH \$4M PRIZE PURSE FOR REGION 10 TEAMS

The third annual One Guyana Prime Minister's T10 Softball Cricket Competition has bowled off in Region 10, with 26 teams competing for a combined \$4 million in prize money.

Prime Minister Brigadier (Ret'd) Mark Phillips officially opened the competition at the Kwakwani Community Centre Ground, joining players, organisers and residents for the launch.

The tournament features 13 male and 13 female teams, with the winners in each category set to collect \$1 million. Runners-up will receive \$600,000, while third-place teams will take home \$400,000, alongside trophies.

Phillips has continued to support the One Guyana tournament, which uses sport to bring communities together while creating opportunities for local talent and competitive development.

Matches will be staged across Kwakwani, Coomacka, Wiruni, 47 Miles, Sandhills, Rockstone and Kimbia.

The competition will return to Kwakwani for the Super 8 stage, semi-finals and finals, where the region's top teams will battle for the titles and major cash prizes.



Region 10 cricket heats up as One Guyana T10 bowls off



Guyana's young boxers rule Caribbean ring

GUYANA SWEEPS CARIBBEAN BOXING TITLES

Guyana's emerging boxing talent has delivered a commanding performance on the regional stage, dominating the Caribbean Schoolboys and Juniors Boxing Championships at the Cliff Anderson Sports Hall.

Guyana topped the medal table with eight gold and two silver medals for 18 points, finishing well ahead of the competing Caribbean territories.

The dominance extended beyond the medal count, with Guyanese fighters claiming all three Best Boxer honours and underscoring the depth of talent developing through the country's boxing programme.

St Lucia finished second with two gold and two silver medals for six points, while Trinidad and Tobago secured three silver medals for three points.

St Maarten earned two silver medals, with The Bahamas taking one.

Guyana Boxing Association's (GBA) President, Steve Ninvalle welcomed the result, despite the challenges involved in preparing for and hosting the championships. He also noted the continued support of regional associations, which brought young fighters to Guyana.

The tournament provided valuable international competition for the boxers while giving coaches and officials an opportunity to assess the progress of emerging talent.

BOXING ENTERS GUYANA'S FEMALE PRISON REHABILITATION PROGRAMME

Female inmates at the Guyana Prison Service (GPS) have entered the boxing ring for the first time, marking a new chapter in the country's rehabilitation efforts and using sport to build discipline, confidence and resilience.

The historic bout between inmates Orina Silas and Shania Benjamin was held during the ninth annual Winfield Braithwaite Caribbean Schoolboys and Juniors Boxing Championships.

Guyana Boxing Association President, Steve Ninvalle, described the contest as the first boxing fight involving female inmates in Guyana and potentially the wider Caribbean Community (CARICOM).

The championship, hosted by the Guyana Boxing Association in partnership with the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport, features boxers from Guyana, Trinidad and Tobago, Antigua and Barbuda, St Maarten and St Lucia.

The participation of female inmates follows the introduction of a structured boxing programme at the GPS, where both male and female prisoners are being trained for the first time.

The programme is designed to make sport a practical rehabilitation tool, helping inmates develop self-control, concentration, discipline and physical fitness while providing a constructive alternative to idle time.

Training covers boxing fundamentals including stance, balance, footwork, defensive movement, offensive techniques, combinations, timing and pad and heavy-bag work. Participants are also taught hand wrapping, equipment care and ring safety, with coaches closely monitoring training.

The initiative reflects a broader effort to equip inmates with skills and positive habits that can support their eventual reintegration into society.

For female inmates in particular, the landmark bout represents an opportunity to challenge traditional barriers while demonstrating how structured sport can contribute to rehabilitation and personal development behind prison walls.



The female inmates who participated in the boxing bout

Guyanese
DIASPORA DIGEST

KEEPING THE DIASPORA INFORMED EDITION 126

LAKE MAINSTAY COMES ALIVE
FOR ANNUAL REGATTA



The annual Lake Mainstay Regatta once again brought Essequibo to life, blending high-speed boat racing, music, culture and community into one of Guyana’s signature events. President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali joined thousands of patrons, racers and visitors as the lakeside venue buzzed with excitement and celebration.



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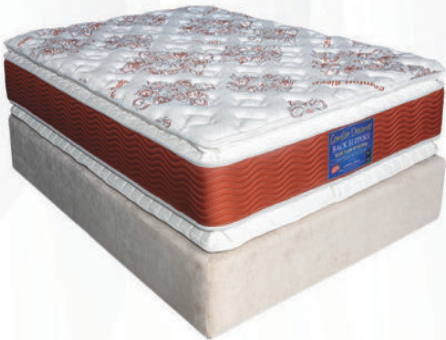
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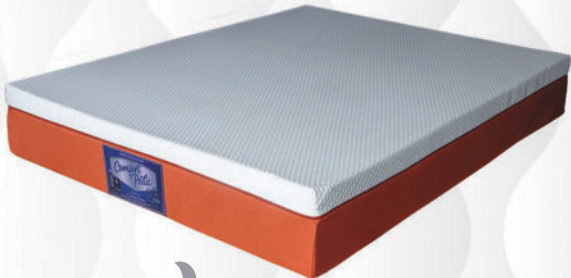
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Education Minister commits to ensuring students, teachers are comfortable as schools reopen

AS a new academic year begins for children, teachers and parents across Guyana, Education Minister Sonia Parag and senior ministry officials visited several schools around Georgetown.

The ministry, over the last month, worked assiduously to ensure that schools were ready for reopening on Monday, guaranteeing washroom facilities that are functional, clean water flowing through the taps, secure guttering, a clean school environment and furnished classrooms for students and teachers' comfort.

"We are looking at almost 1,200 schools across the country, so it's not an easy task, and while the government has been investing in infrastructure as well as academic resources, we were able to have textbooks in schools, we were able to have dormitories filled with furniture, as well as classrooms. Those who would have needed repairs, those who would have needed additional furniture, those were made available; and we ensured that we constantly engaged with those officials and through the channels that would be able to have the information available to us," Minister Parag said.

According to the minister, while there were no delays in the reopening of schools, there are some students and teachers who may have had to be relocated to facilitate ongoing repairs and construction.

She noted that 98 per cent of schools that are re-opened have their students and teachers occupying space at the school.

Providing an example of this, the education minister said there was a consultation that was held with regional officials, parents and teachers of the Airy Hall Nursery School in Region Five, (Mahaica Berbice), for the temporary relocation of its learners to the Mahaicony Technical and Vocational Training Centre for the entirety of the first week of school.

This ensures that although the children won't be in an unsafe environment, there is no disruption in their learning process.

Minister Parag disclosed that, "to ensure that that happens, consultation was held. We also have Linden where we were fixing a few things with the Mackenzie High School and the LICHAS (Linden Concert Hall and School) facility as well; but even though there have- and I have seen a number of negative narratives going out in relation to those schools- I can tell you that the Regional Education Officer and the REO have been working along with the Ministry of Education to make sure that we make the buildings safe as well as students continuing their learning process."

The next step is maintenance of all school facilities. Minister Parag assured the public that while all institutions were prepared for reopening on Monday, maintenance crews will be working throughout the year to ensure that if any



The school year started on August 31 for students in Guyana

work (minor or major) needs to be done, it can be.

"I say to the nation, just have a bit of patience with us. We are ensuring that

we are working for the betterment of all of our children as well as our teachers and the environment in which they are at in school, and I am asking for cooper-

ation from all stakeholders...we are working with every facility to ensure that it has all of the resources available," the minister said.



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AMERINDIAN HERITAGE MONTH CELEBRATION 2026

Theme: *“Observing Our Cultural Heritage During Our Diamond Jubilee”*

CALENDAR OF ACTIVITIES			
DATES	ACTIVITIES	TIME	VENUE
August 31	Amerindian Religious Service	17:00hrs	Umana Yana
September 1	Amerindian Heritage Cultural Extravaganza (Opening Ceremony)	18:00hrs	Whirl Wind Village, Sophia
September 2 – 5	Amerindian Arts, Craft and Cuisine	10:00hrs Daily	Whirl Wind Village, Sophia
September 2 – 5	Amerindian Heritage Month Cultural Nights	19:00hrs	Whirl Wind Village, Sophia
September 6	Amerindian Fitness Walk	06:00hrs	Umana Yana to National Park
September 7	Amerindian Art Exhibition	18:00hrs	National Gallery of Art – Castellani House
September 10	Reflection on the Life of Stephen Campbell	19:00hrs	Santa Rosa, Moruca
September 12	Amerindian Heritage Village Day	10:00hrs	Bumbury, Region 1
September 14 - 18	School Tour (Kariako)	Daily	Office of the President and various National sites
September 18	Amerindian Heritage Dinner	19:00hrs	Royal Ballroom
September 19 - 20	Amerindian Heritage Safari	06:00hrs	MoAA to Fall Mouth, Reg 10
September 24 - 27	Amerindian Heritage Games	10:00hrs	Everest Ground
September 30	Amerindian Heritage Pageant	19:00hrs	National Cultural Centre