

Improving Guyana for ALL



**Celebrating 11 years of
return to democracy and
good governance under
the PPP/C**

Eleven years after the restoration of democracy in Guyana, the country has progressed in all areas, in spite of the run-down state of the country inherited and the many challenges, politically inspired and otherwise. The PPP/C Government has remained committed to ensuring that the quality of life of all Guyanese improves.

The following are just a few of the many highlights of development under the PPP/C:

- The Constitution has been reformed with the aim of consolidating democracy and enhancing inclusive governance.
- Government has initiated and maintained a policy of dialogue and constructive engagement with the Opposition and civil society
- An Ethnic Relations Commission is now fully constituted. The Constitution provides for a Human Rights Commission and commissions for children, women and indigenous people.
- From 1993, the Auditor General's Department has been submitting annual reports on Government's financial transactions to Parliament after a lapse of close to ten years, and an Integrity Commission has been established as part of the PPP/C's emphasis on transparency and accountability. The President, ministers, government officials and public officers are required to submit yearly declarations of their assets to the Commission.
- In 1991, the budgetary allocation for national security stood at \$910M. In 2003, the allocation rose to \$7.2B.
- 400 community-policing groups are in existence across the country.
- In 1992, Government inherited an external debt of approximately US\$2.1B. Today, that figure has been reduced to just over \$1B
- Before 1992, Guyana's inflation rate was about 100%. Today, the rate is 4%.
- In 1992, the minimum wage of Public Servants was \$3,050 per month. Today, that figure has soared significantly to \$21, 047 per month. In 1992 the income tax threshold was \$10,000. In 2003, the threshold was increased to \$20,000. exempting 13,500 persons from paying income taxes.

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- In 1992, about 76% of the country's population lived below the poverty line. Now the level of poverty is below 35%. A Government Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper was approved by the International Financial Institutions to assist in the further reduction of poverty
- With the involvement of the political parties and civil society, a National Development Strategy Paper was drafted and tabled before the National Assembly.
- The government has created the legislative framework, enabled fiscal incentive regime and provided supportive infrastructure to create an investor- friendly environment to attract local and foreign investment. Despite acts of political destabilization and deliberate tactics by the opposition to scare investors away, billions of dollars in new investments has been injected into the economy annually through new foreign and local investments, thus creating hundreds of new jobs every year. For example, for the years 2002/2003, approximately \$30B in new investments would be realised. The economy is now more diversified than ever before.
- Between 1988 -1990 Guyana was ranked number 58 in terms of inward foreign direct investment performance by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. Between 1999-2001, Guyana moved up to number 17 in terms of inward foreign direct investment performance in the world by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development.
- Since 1992, Guyana stopped importing sugar, and the average annual sugar production has been recorded at over 300, 000 tonnes.
- The sugar levy has been removed.
- The Guysuco Skeldon Modernisation five-year immediate plan has commenced at a cost of \$US110M.
- A \$400M Linden Economic Advancement Programme was launched in Linden to stimulate economic activities following the decline of the bauxite industry. The government is undertaking a massive restructuring programme of the bauxite industry with private investment as an integral component.
- A US\$5M stone quarry was established in Linden, creating new jobs for residents of the mining region.

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- Billions of dollars are spent annually to upgrade and maintain drainage and irrigation systems which are essential to the agriculture sector, especially rice cultivation.
- In 1992, non-traditional exports realised \$130M. Now about \$700M is earned annually from non-traditional exports. There is a growing aquaculture industry
- Special incentive packages have been provided for new economic activities including information technology, tourism, and food processing. New industrial sites have been established with near full development. Information Technology centres have been opened countrywide.
- In 1992, the education sector was allocated a meagre \$1B or 4.8% of the national budget. This year, 17% of the budget, equivalent to \$14.5B was approved for spending in this sector. Schools have been constructed, repaired and enhanced while wages and salaries for teaching personnel have also increased.
- Since 2001, 225 students were awarded scholarships to study in Cuba. Through special training programmes, President Bharrat Jagdeo has recently received similar offers from other friendly countries.
- More than 5000 new teachers were trained. In-service teacher training facilities were opened at Linden, New Amsterdam, Rose Hall, Vreed-en-Hoop, and Anna Regina.
- More than 800 schools across the country were built and rehabilitated. Several technical and vocational training centres were built across the country
- Since the remodelling of the Guyana National Service, about 2500 young Guyanese have benefited from skills training under the new Youth Entrepreneurial Skills Training Programme.
- A University of Guyana Berbice Campus was built to expand university education to students in that area.
- Approximately 60,000 house lots have been distributed and 65 squatter settlements regularised. Close to one hundred new housing schemes have been established.
- The Housing Ministry in collaboration with the private sector has commenced a special low-income house construction programme in Regions 3, 4, 6 and 10.
- About 1000 miles of new pipeline was installed along the coastal belt. New water pumps and distribution net

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works were constructed along the Coast and in the Hinterland. 67 new wells were drilled on the coastland and 114 pump stations were rehabilitated/modernized countrywide.

- Before 1992, Amerindians were treated as second-class citizens. Today, Amerindians enjoy the same rights, facilities and opportunities as any other group.

- For the first time ever, 30 Amerindian communities have been demarcated and given legal titles to their land. In addition, the first Fast Track Initiative Programme for qualified teachers for the Hinterland Regions of Guyana was launched.

- Before 1992, only \$703M was allocated to the health sector. Today, \$6.5B goes towards improved health care delivery across the country.

- To reduce the spread of HIV/AIDS, Cabinet approved a \$4B plan that coincides with the National Strategic Plan on HIV/AIDS. A Prevention of Mother-to-Child Transmission Programme was also launched. Guyana is one of few countries that manufacture their own drugs and provides universal coverage.

- Infant and maternal mortality has been reduced.

- Several highways, including the Linden/Soesdyke, Georgetown-Mahaica, Mahaica-Rosignol and the Railway Embankment were either rebuilt or constructed. The rebuilding of the Mahaicony/Rosignol Highway has commenced. Construction is underway for 66 new bridges stretching from Timehri to Rosignol.

- Over \$1B was spent on upgrading and maintaining the Demerara Harbour Bridge .

- Some US\$4.5M was expended to upgrade the Cheddi Jagan International Airport to meet international standards.

- **Government continues to pursue the policy of good neighbourly relations and remains vigilant in ensuring that Guyana's border sovereignty is maintained. Guyana maintains an impressive standing in CARICOM and the wider international community. In 2003, President Bharrat Jagdeo held productive meetings with the Presidents of the United States of America, India, China, Brazil and South Africa.**

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