

“We Must Tell the True Story”: Cheddi Jagan Research Centre Launches “Guyana at 60” Independence Exhibition

GEORGETOWN, GUYANA | May 15, 2026 — The Cheddi Jagan Research Centre (CJRC) officially opened its doors today for the **“Guyana at 60: Independence Exhibition,”** a Diamond Jubilee event dedicated to chronicling the nation’s sixty-year journey from colonial rule to sovereign republic. The launch event, held last evening at the historic ‘Red House,’ featured stirring reflections on the struggles of the past and a call for national healing and unity.

The opening ceremony was attended by several high-ranking dignitaries, highlighting the international significance of Guyana's independence milestone. In attendance were Chinese Ambassador to Guyana, H.E. Yang Yang, and Deputy Chief of Mission, Huang Rui, both of whom expressed their support for the exhibition and the preservation of Guyana’s rich history. The event also gathered relatives of Dr. Cheddi and Janet Jagan in attendance to honour the enduring legacy of the nation's founding leaders. They were joined by education stakeholders, reflecting the exhibition's primary mission to serve as a pedagogical resource for the next generation of Guyanese.

A primary focus of the exhibition is the "Long Road to Independence," providing a deep dive into the specific events and political milestones that defined the decades preceding 1966. Visitors will explore detailed archival accounts of the 1940s and 50s, including the formation of the Political Affairs Committee (PAC) and the subsequent rise of the People’s Progressive Party (PPP) as a mass movement. The display offers specific insights into the 1953 suspension of the constitution and the turbulent 1960s, documenting the international and local pressures that shaped the final push for sovereignty.

Central to the realisation of this project was the curatorial expertise of Amrita Naraine, a specialist in Data Science and AI for Creative Industries and the founder of Artellica AI.

The formal proceedings were initiated by Mr. Hydar Ally, Chairman of the Cheddi Jagan Research Centre, who emphasised the importance of institutions like the CJRC in maintaining a factual record of the nation's progress. He then invited Mrs. Indranie Chandarpal, Administrator of the Women’s Progressive Organisation, and former President Donald Ramotar to the podium to share their reflections on the arduous journey toward Guyanese sovereignty.

Mrs. Indranie Chandarpal reflected on the exhibition as a tool for national reconciliation. “There comes a time when people understand that we have to keep fighting for what we believe in. We have to heal and work together as one. In 1957, we talked about One People, One Nation, One Destiny... and now, our President is talking about 'One Guyana.' That is what we have to focus on—our independence, which came as a result of a lot of struggles and heartbreaks.”

Former President Donald Ramotar, in delivering the featured address, provided historical context framing the 1966 achievement as a continuation of centuries of resistance. “The winning of Independence in 1966 was the continuation of a long struggle in our country,” Mr. Ramotar remarked. He traced the roots of Guyanese freedom back to the 1763 Uprising, noting its global significance alongside the Haitian Revolution. Ramotar also addressed the historical efforts to use race as a weapon to divide the movement, a challenge he noted the nation is still working to overcome in the spirit of the unity upon which the movement was founded.

The exhibition is free to the public and runs through May 29, 2026, at the ‘Red House,’ Cheddi Jagan Research Centre, Kingston, Georgetown. The doors are open Monday through Friday from 9:30 AM to 3:00 PM. In his closing remarks, Mr. Hydar Ally, Chairman of the CJRC, encouraged all members of the public to attend, noting that the archival films, doctoral theses, and rare photographs on display are indispensable for understanding Guyana's post-war social and political development.

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