

## **SPEECH BY AMBASSADOR**

### **Inauguration of the Automatic Weather Station in Kwamalasamutu**

#### **“Enhanced Early Warning Service Delivery to Communities of Suriname in Order to Build their Resilience to Flooding due to Excess Rainfall”**

**13 December 2024**

Hon'ble Minister for Public Works Dr. Riad Nurmohamed,

Mr. Jimmy Toeroemang, Chief of the Trio Tribe

UNDP Representative

Friends of India, Members of the Media, Ladies & Gentleman,

**Good Morning,**

I'm honored to be part of this gathering today, this marks another milestone in the strong and enduring relationship between India and Suriname.

Our relations are cordial and are built on mutual understanding, trust, and strong people-to-people ties that predate even the establishment of formal diplomatic relations in 1977. Both countries share common experiences of colonization and a commitment to democracy as the foundation of nation-building. With rich cultural diversity and ongoing economic development, the deep bonds of Diaspora, continue to strengthen our social, cultural, and economic ties, laying the groundwork for further cooperation and mutual growth.

Since diplomatic ties were established, the bilateral relations have been cemented by several high-level exchanges of visits and meetings at various levels. I am, therefore, happy to note the continuing momentum and substantive engagement between India and Suriname.

India is committed to South-South cooperation and inclusive growth, aiming to spread the benefits of development to all nations. Our Development Partnership assistance is human-centric, focused on sustainability, and guided by respect and diversity, without any conditions or strings attached. As our Hon'ble Prime Minister has emphasized, it is driven by the priorities of partner countries, aimed at unlocking potential without limiting their future. Guided by the philosophy of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam,' India views the world as one family. This philosophy could be well observed during the pandemic times when India donated Vaccines and health gears to the needy countries around the world. Suriname also received protective gear worth USD 100,000, and 50,000 doses of Covishield vaccines in that time. As you may also have noted that recently, India has also sent a shipment of essential food supplies to Suriname, reinforcing our support for its food security. Suriname is one amongst the many countries who have received relief supplies and essential food items.

To help the Suriname's farmers and bolster their incomes, India have also extended a grant of 1 million US dollars under which Machinery for Passionfruit processing will be supplied by India. India has also extended grants for Quick Impact Projects that support local communities by rehabilitating recreational centers, creating engagement spaces, developing skill-building sites, and enhancing educational institutions with essential tools for effective learning.

Amongst the flood related assistance, I can recall that, in June 2023, during the Indian President's visit to Suriname, India donated medicines valued at over USD 600,000 to address Suriname's health challenges due to flooding. India also provided cash assistance of USD 150,000 for flood victims in 2017 and USD 50,000 in 2018 for flood relief.

India's developmental cooperation model also involves instruments like capacity building through our Indian Technical & Economic cooperation programmes. It ranges across various fields from culture to commerce, engineering to energy and housing to health, sports, Information technology, humanitarian assistance etc.

I am pleased to see the completion of this weather station, an important piece in this project. This initiative is part of the USD 1 million grant announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi for each CARICOM member state under the India-UNDP Fund, aimed at Climate resilience. Under this fund, other two other projects, focused on construction of information technology related building and sports development through rehabilitation of stadium, have also been approved in principle and I would be happy to see completion of those during my tenure in Suriname.

The current project, valued around USD 250,000, is crucial for building resilience against flooding and addressing the impacts of climate change. It includes an automatic weather station, an automatic water level station, and an ARCGIS cloud-based geospatial platform. These tools, alongside training for personnel from Suriname's Meteorological and Hydraulics Departments, will enhance weather prediction and flood forecasting and will help Suriname conserve wetlands, protect residential areas, upgrade its hydro-meteorological network, and establish a multi-hazard early warning system to improve disaster preparedness and communication.

It gives me immense pride and pleasure that we have reached this stage of implementation of this project. I hope that the project will achieve its intended benefits for building resilience and capacity in Suriname for dealing effectively with the dangers of the perennial problem of flooding.

Ladies and gentlemen, let me conclude by commending the Ministry of Public Works and the UNDP for their commitment to ensure the success of this project.

Thank You!