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## GUYANA

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*Area:* 214,969 sq. km

*Population:* 925,000

*Capital:* Georgetown

*Head of State:* L. F. S. Burnham (President)

*Minister of Home Affairs:* J. R. Thomas

The territory was first partially settled by the Dutch West India Company about 1620. In 1796 it was captured by the English and ceded to them in 1814 under the name British Guiana. In 1966 it became an independent member of the Commonwealth under the name of Guyana and the world's first co-operative Republic in 1970.

Guyana is divided into Greater Georgetown and six districts, listed below with their respective capitals:

East Berbice-Corentyne (New Amsterdam)

East Demerara-West Berbice (Mahaicony)

Mazaruni-Potaro (Matthews Ridge)

North West (Mabaruma)

Rupununi (Lethem)

West Demerara-Essequibo (Anna Regina)

### ORGANIZATION

A paramilitary police force existed in British Guiana from 1891. The British Guiana Police Force came into being in June 1939. Its name was changed to the Guyana Police Force upon the achievement of independence.

The Guyana Police Force is headed by a Commissioner of Police and has limited paramilitary capability. It includes a Mounted Branch which is trained for riot control, a Rural Constabulary and a Special Constabulary which acts as a Police Reserve, to be called upon when necessary. Total personnel strength is about 5000. Additionally, there are a number of supernumerary constables, employed by the government and private companies for property security.

The Fire Department, which was part of the police force until 1957, is now a totally independent service.

As a result of the régime's ideological orientation, the police have been required to keep foreign visitors under surveillance. As there has been no marked increase in manpower, this has meant that other police duties have been downgraded. Consequently, crime figures are on the increase, and thefts, especially in Georgetown, are far too common an occurrence.