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National Report-Guyana



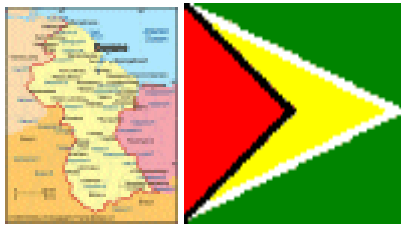
National Report

Demographics: Guyana is a tropical country located on the northern coast of South America with an approximate size of 196,850 Sqkm. Its estimated population is 735,554 with a growth rate of 0.11%, birth rate of 15.9/1000, infant mortality rate of 33.56/1000 and a life expectancy of 67.81. A tropical forest covers 80% of the country. Its capital and largest city is Georgetown with an approximate population of 127,000. Its immediate neighbors are Venezuela, Suriname and Brazil (www.infoplease.com). Its official language is English; the majority of the population speaks a Guyanese Creole, which is an English-based Creole language with slight Dutch, Arawakan and Caribbean Influence. Its ethnic groups are East Indians (43.5%), African Black (30.2%), mixed (16.7%), Amerindians (9.1%) and others 0.5% (www.wikipedia.org).

History: The indigenous tribes, the Caribs and Arawaks were the first tribes to inherit this country, which was then called Guiana, meaning the “land of many waters”. In the late 16th Century, the Dutch settled in this country, while in battle with these indigenous tribes, most of these indigenous tribes were killed, other died from diseases and the remaining population moved to the hinterland areas to live as nomadic people. The Dutch who utilized the plantations for sugar production established the three colonies, which still exist until today, Essequibo, Demerara and Berbice. African slave laborers were imported to work on the sugar plantations as slaves. Following the Napoleonic war, this country was taken over by Britain who renamed it British Guiana. Slavery was abolished in 1834, however many indentured laborers were still brought from India, China and Portugal to work on the sugar plantations until 1917 when this practice was stopped by the British. At that time, there were predominantly two ethnic groups, the Afro-guyanese who occupied the urban areas and the Indo-Guyanese who occupied the rural

areas. These two ethnic groups co-existed until today and at times were peaceful among themselves and at other times had turbulent conflicts. Racial tensions have existed since the 1960's and still continue today, dividing the population at large into two main political parties. In its history, there were number slave revolts, the most significant one, being the 1763 Berbice Slave Rebellion led by one of its hero named Cuffy (Coleman, 2014, p. 7).

National Symbols Flag



Coat of Arms



Map



Currency



Politics: The first political party was named the People's Progressive Party was formed Jan 1,1950. Its leaders were Forbes Burnham, as Chairman, he was a British educated Afro-Guyanese, Dr. Cheddi Jagan, an American educated indo-guyanese as secretary general and also his wife as General Secretary. She was an American born Jew. A few months later, the British suspended the constitution and landed troops in Guyana in fear that the PPP were planning to make the Country a Communist (Coleman, 2014, p. 7). Following this Forbes Burnham broke away and formed his party, The People's National Congress. Elections were allowed again in 1957 and 1961; Jagan emerged as the leader and became the first premier of British Guiana, which he held for 7 years. In 1963, the British Government agreed to grant independence and at an election in 1964, the PPP won 46%, the PNC 41% and the TUF 12%. The TUF gave its support to the PNC and Forbes Burnham became President. Guyana was officially granted independence in May 1966 and became a republic on Feb 23,1970. Burnham remained as executive president until his death in August 1985. Elections were controlled and viewed as fraudulent under his regime, with the assassinations of many political opposition leaders. During

Burnham's last years, the government attempts to build a socialist society, caused a massive emigration of skilled workers and along with other economic factors led to a significant decline in the overall quality of life. Ethnicity became the main dominant influence (Coleman, 2014, p. 9-10). Following Burnham's death in 1985, Prime Minister Hoyte acceded to presidency and was formerly elected in 1985. He gradually reversed the Burnham's policies, moving from State Socialism and one market control to a market economy and the unrestricted freedom of press and assembly. In 1992, with the assistance of former US President Jimmy Carter, Cheddi Jagan of PPP was elected and sworn as president. The PPP continued as the leading party until Dec 2011, when they won the "plurality of seats but not with an outright of majority. Donald Ramotar became the president with a minority government (Coleman, 2014, p.25-26).

Currently Guyana has a political risk factor of 5. This is calculated using established methodology by Country Watch Editor in Chief. 0-10 being the scale (Coleman, 2014, p. 27).

Another factor calculated by this group is the Political Stability Index, of which Guyana ranks #6. #10 being the highest level of political stability (Coleman, 2014, p. 28).

Economic Overview: Although this country is rich in its natural resources such as sugar, rice, bauxite, gold, timber among other resources, it may be considered one of the poorest countries in the Western Hemisphere. Its resources have suffered exploitation at the hands of its leaders in their decision making, and at the same time had faced many challenges over the past few years. Nevertheless it is on its way to recovery. According to the 2014 Economic review article, it experienced years of rapid economic growth during the 1990's following the transition from a planned economy to a market economy. Some of its setbacks include poor investment climate, inadequate infrastructure and a lack of skilled laborers. According to the article, Instead of declining, its real GDP growth increased in 2009, with recovery in Agriculture, strong gold

production. The global recession led to a slow down in the growth in 2010. Growth remained robust in 2011 with the slow down in the domestic economy and lower import costs helping to narrow the country's current deficit. Growth slowed for 2012 as a result of second global recession. For 2012 its real GDP growth rate was 4.7 and inflation was 0.4% (Coleman, 2014, p. 67). No other more recent information was found, however it was projected by the Political Risk Services that the Real GDP growth for 2013 will be 5.0 with an inflation of 5.8 and for the period 2014-2018, it is estimated that the real GDP will be 4.6 with an inflation of 5.3 (The PRS Group Inc., 2013, p. 10).

Guyana has also received several debt forgiveness, one notable one, In March 2007, the Inter-American Development Bank, Guyana's principal donor, cancelled Guyana's nearly \$470 million debt, equivalent to nearly 48% GDP, which along with other Highly Indebted Poor Country (HIPC) debt forgiveness brought the debt –to-GDP ratio down from 183% in 2006 to 120% in 2007 (Coleman, 2014, p. 81).

Historic Sites:

St. George's Cathedral, one of the tallest wooden buildings in the world



Kaiteur Falls, is the world's largest single drop waterfall by volume.



Demerara Harbour Bridge, the World's fourth-longest floating Bridge.



Media Report: Earlier in the history of this country, prior to 1985, the president at that time, Forbes Burnham had adopted a socialist style of governing. As it relates to the media, even the media were owned and regulated by his socialist government. At that time, the country being

divided politically by ethnic lines, the afro-guyanese and indo-guyanese population, contributed to existence of a disgruntled population, the indo-guyanese population who believed that they were not heard. The media caught in the middle and manipulated by the state was seen as a powerful arm of the government, propagating the agenda of the autocratic leader. “State-run monopolies on radio and nation-wide television continued to serve as government mouth pieces”(Evans, p. 2). Thus severe tension was created among the ruling party and its followers, a minority population and the media.

With his death in 1985, his successor, Desmond Hoyte tried to gradually reverse the social government to a market economy and unrestricted freedom of press. And with the 1992 elections being accepted as the first time of a democratically fair government one would expect from then to now that steps would be put in place to ensure proper media governance, independence and responsibility. However this process has been extremely slow and according to one author, “Without a legal foundation or permanent regulator, both the government-run and private media continued to operate in an unregulated, “wild west environment”(Evans, p. 2), and this exists until today.

Numerous attempts are made to put in place the necessary legislations to ensure at least some level of professional journalism and proper media regulations. One such initiative was through CIDA’s Deployment for Democratic Development Program. The objectives were “modern broadcast legislations, establishment of a permanent regulator, a new media code of conduct and public complaints process and creation of a media industry association “; the government and state control media withdrew. With this low commitment, the group focused on establishing the Guyana Media Proprietor’s Association (GMPA)(Evans, p. 1). There was the first drafting of broadcasting legislation in 2002, however it was not finalized. From then until

now there are involved of quite a number of external bodies involved such as UNESCO and a number of milestone however it remains far from its goals.

Currently one can consider the technology used in communication on par with other developing countries. It is not as elaborate and sophisticated as the developed countries and consists of the use of the Internet. This country still utilizes “cablegram” which is an ancient method of transmitting writing information and also telegram, which is also another ancient method of communicating. The local radio stations are 98.1 HotFM and VOG; 560AM while the local TV stations are Capitol News, Channel 6-CNSTV, MTV and NCN. There are a few newspapers in circulation and these include the Catholic Standard, Guyana Chronicle, Kaiteur News, Mirror, Stabroek News and Regina News/Interlands Highlands. Most of the US TV channels can be accessed if there is an “antenna”. Most of the homes except for the Hinterland areas have a television and acquire foreign signals by the way of the antenna, which is a “luxury” item for the home.

The citizens, having access to the external media is made aware of some of the positive effects of globalization in other countries. Captivated by the soft power of these more developing or developed nations, they realize the extent of their poverty, powerlessness and the injustices demonstrated by their elected leaders seeks the smallest opportunity to leave. “ People are leaving in droves, going to Surinam, Venezuela, Canada, the United States and Britain. No where else is this process of depopulation taking place so quickly in the absence of war or natural disasters” (Peake, 1987, p. 356).

On another note, they become part of the Diaspora population elsewhere that seeks to ensure friends and families that are left behind will follow them whether by sponsorship, employment etc. This sad state of affairs continues and the foreigners that are attracted to this country are

tourists after seeing some of its natural beauty and external investors for its natural resources. Unable to manage some of its most valuable natural resources, “many of the problems associated with production in Guyana have internal origins”(Peake, 1987, p. 358), the “bulk of the assets are owned and operated by multinational companies (MNC) (Peake, 1987, p. 358). “Guyana has a new relationship with the IMF, which in 1985, declared Guyana ineligible for new loans”(Peake, 1987, p. 359). Even with their “stringent” policies, Guyana still remains highly indebted to the IMF and other lending institutions. This country has not realized some of the positive effects of globalization.

In concluding this country may never be able to reach an acceptable level of professionalization of journalism unless it receives the full commitments of its political leaders and there is dissolution of the tensions that exists among its ethnics groups.

Other Pictures:

Stabroek Market, named after the Dutch Parliament Building Lighthouse Statue of Cuffy



Cheddi Jagan International Airport

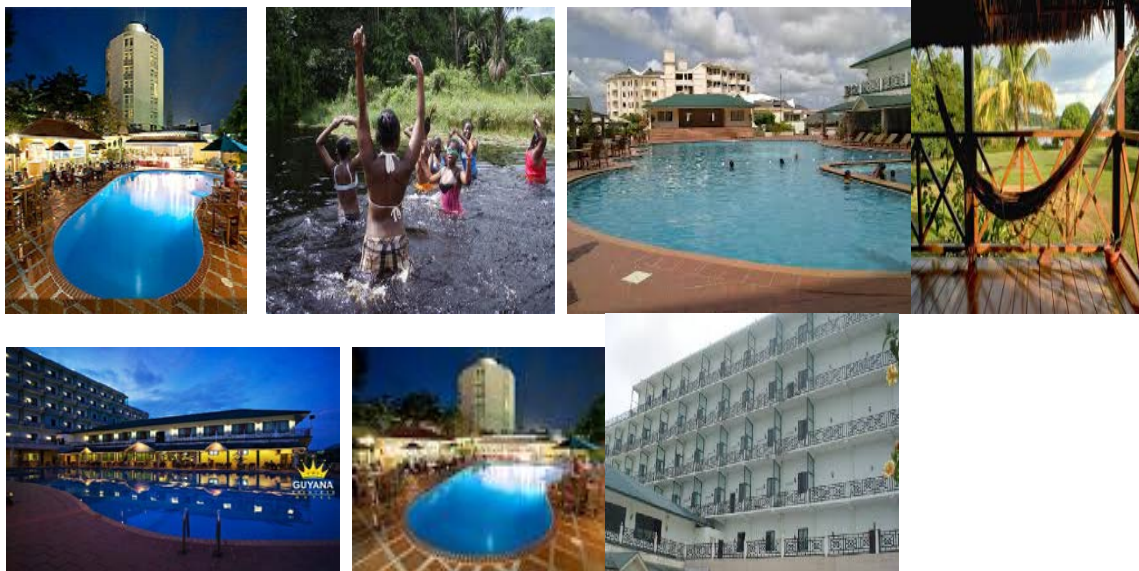
Endangered Species



Other Views



Hotels & Resorts



Indigenous way of living





Delicacies

Fresh Fruits & Vegetable available everyday.



Housing Disparity



“Mc Donalization”



Signs of economic development



Festival Dancing



Traditional Amerindian house named a benab



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