



State Visit by His Excellency General Raúl Modesto Castro Ruz, President of the Republic of Cuba and IV CARICOM - Cuba Summit

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <p>2 • State Visit to Trinidad and Tobago by His Excellency General Raúl Modesto Castro Ruz, President of the Republic of Cuba</p> <p>• Trinidad and Tobago and Switzerland Sign Agreement on Mutual Visa Exemption</p> | <p>5 • Career Diplomat, Anthony Edghill, appointed as Trinidad and Tobago's Ambassador to Venezuela</p> <p>• Senator Dyer-Griffith presents Mrs. Kwailan La Borde with copies of the La Bordes' Sailing Adventures Documentaries</p> | <p>9 • Creating New Opportunities for Young Artists</p> <p>• 2nd Future Diplomats Essay Competition</p> |
| <p>3 • Visit by Ayush Delegation</p> <p>• Visit of the Peace Ark</p> | <p>6 • The Story of Divali</p> | <p>10 • Ambassador Dr. Neil Parsan Day in the City of Hartford, Connecticut</p> <p>• Trinidad and Tobago Musicians and Steelpan dazzle in Costa Rica</p> |
| <p>4 • Stop the Spread of Dengue Campaign</p> <p>• Make Your Health a Priority</p> | <p>8 • A Journey to Africa: Inter-Ministerial Emancipation Celebrations</p> <p>• Eid-UI-Fitr Celebrations</p> | <p>11 • Calypso History Month Launched in Style</p> |
| | | <p>12 • Day of Fun</p> <p>• Happy Retirement Charlo</p> |

State Visit to Trinidad and Tobago by His Excellency General Raúl Modesto Castro Ruz, President of the Republic of Cuba



His Excellency Professor George Maxwell Richards, President of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago greets His Excellency Raúl Modesto Castro Ruz, President of the Republic of Cuba



The Honourable Kamla Persad-Bissessar, Prime Minister of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago greets His Excellency Raúl Modesto Castro Ruz, President of the Republic of Cuba

His Excellency Raúl Modesto Castro Ruz, President of the Republic of Cuba paid a State Visit to the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago on December 7th, 2011. The State Visit coincided with President Castro's participation at the IV CARICOM-Cuba Summit which was held in Port of Spain during the period December 7th to 8th, 2011.

The Republic of Trinidad and Tobago and Cuba have enjoyed a fruitful relationship since the formal establishment of diplomatic relations on 8th December, 1972.

During the State Visit President Castro Ruz paid a courtesy call on His Excellency, Professor George Maxwell Richards, President of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago; laid a wreath at the Cenotaph, Memorial Park; and held bilateral talks with Prime Minister Kamla Persad-Bissessar at the Diplomatic Centre. Their Excellencies, Professor George Maxwell Richards and Dr. Jean Ramjohn-Richards also hosted a State Dinner in honour of His Excellency Raúl Castro Ruz.

His Excellency departed Trinidad and Tobago on 9th December, 2011.

Trinidad and Tobago and Switzerland Sign Agreement on Mutual Visa Exemption

Dr. the Honourable Surujrattan Rambachan, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Communications, and His Excellency Markus Alexander Antonietti, Ambassador of Switzerland to Trinidad and Tobago, signed an Agreement on Mutual Visa Exemption for Holders of Diplomatic, Official or Service Passports on behalf of their respective countries on Friday 4 November, 2011. The Agreement will facilitate the pursuit of initiatives by Trinidad and Tobago in numerous areas including trade, investment, tourism and culture.

This is the second agreement to be signed between Trinidad and Tobago and Switzerland since 2010, as an Agreement on the Reciprocal Promotion and Protection of Investments was signed between both countries in October 2010.

Since the establishment of diplomatic relations some 48 years ago (1963), Trinidad and Tobago and Switzerland have enjoyed and continue to enjoy a very fruitful relationship.



Dr. the Honourable Surujrattan Rambachan, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Communications and His Excellency Markus Alexander Antonietti, Ambassador of Switzerland to Trinidad and Tobago sign agreement on Mutual Visa Exemption for holders of Diplomatic, Official or Service Passports

Visit by Ayush Delegation

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Communications in collaboration with the High Commission of India and their Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Department of Ayurveda, Yoga & Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homoeopathy (AYUSH) facilitated a visit of a high-level delegation to Trinidad and Tobago from 2nd to 5th November, 2011.

The six member delegation conducted a two-day workshop and seminar on Ayurvedic medicine held at the Divali Nagar. The discussions were very fruitful on matters pertaining to the role of traditional healing in combating diseases in Trinidad and Tobago and possibly in the Caribbean.

Ayurveda is the ancient Indian philosophy of health and wellbeing and is considered by many scholars to be the oldest healing science. It is a holistic approach to health that is designed to help people live long, healthy, and well-balanced lives. The basic principle of Ayurveda is to prevent and treat illness by maintaining balance in the body, mind and consciousness through proper diet and lifestyle, as well as using herbal remedies which do not have any side effects.

In his address at the opening session of the workshop and seminar, Minister Rambachan indicated that he has always believed that there is a place for traditional medicine techniques as part of a holistic healing process. He outlined that during his Ambassadorial tour of duty to Brazil he was privileged to witness both the commercial potential and healing benefits offered by Ayurveda.

This event was quite successful, and some major outcomes of the Seminar and Workshop included an agreement on the need for greater collaboration between health professionals from India and Trinidad and Tobago, as well as technical co-operation among our countries' tertiary level institutions to facilitate greater understanding of Ayurvedic medicine.



From left to right: Shri Anil Kumar, Secretary, AYUSH; Dr. the Honourable Surujrattan Rambachan, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Communications and His Excellency Malay Mishra, High Commissioner of India to Trinidad and Tobago.

Visit of the Peace Ark



Minister Rambachan receiving medical care



Mr. Ray Mejias, Messenger 1, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Communications

A picture tells a thousand words. This was reflected in the new smile of Mr. Ray Mejias, Messenger 1 attached to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Communications' Office Management Unit, after he completed dental work on board the People's Liberation Army Navy Hospital ship - the "Peace Ark".

Led by Rear Admiral Qiu Yanpeng, Deputy Commander of East China Sea Fleet, the Peace Ark docked at the Cruise Ship Complex, Port of Spain at 10:00 a.m. on November 11, 2011, for a seven day visit to Trinidad and Tobago aptly called "Mission Harmony 2011". This goodwill mission by the Chinese Government and people sought to promote peace, friendship, health and harmony, by rendering humanitarian medical services to citizens of Trinidad and Tobago and developing joint medical care with local medical practitioners.

During the visit of the Peace Ark, free primary health care and specialist clinics were offered to school children and members of the public at specially arranged venues. Several patients also had the opportunity to be treated on board the floating hospital. Among them was Minister Surujrattan Rambachan, who had an acupuncture procedure performed. Overall, the public response to the medical clinics was tremendous.

The visiting medical team also had the opportunity to exchange ideas with their local counterparts in a lecture session and also conducted a public lecture at City Hall on Traditional Chinese medicine, which was well received by those in attendance. Social activities and guided tours were also included in the programme for the benefit of the visiting Chinese medical good samaritans.

Stop the Spread of Dengue Campaign



From left to right: Dr. the Honourable Surujrattan Rambachan, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Communications; the Honourable Dr. Fuad Khan, Minister of Health and Senator Nicole Dyer-Griffith, Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Communications

On August 11, 2011 the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Communications together with the Ministry of Health launched a national campaign to enlist the support of all media houses to prevent the spread of the deadly dengue virus.

During the opening address of the briefing session, Dr. the Honourable Surujrattan Rambachan, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Communications urged members of the media fraternity, particularly popular radio talk show hosts, to answer the Government's call to whole-heartedly and vigorously support its efforts to stop the proliferation of dengue fever.

The Honourable Senator Nicole Dyer-Griffith in her address echoed the Honourable Minister's sentiments and outlined the details of the campaign, aptly entitled the "Stop the Spread Campaign". The initiative involved the simultaneous broadcasting of simple pointed messages from the Honourable Dr. Fuad Khan on all of the nation's radio stations. These messages urged, listeners to undertake preventative measures to stop the breeding of mosquitoes, as well as educated the public on the early signs of the onset of the disease and the immediate steps to be taken should the disease be suspected.

At the close of the briefing session, Minister Khan further underscored the urgency of the dengue situation in Trinidad and Tobago, by highlighting that a new and more resilient strain of the disease had been recently discovered. The media were encouraged to partner with the Government on the "Stop the Spread Campaign".



Make Your Health a Priority

An integral part of maintaining a healthy lifestyle is having regular general check-ups. Therefore, in keeping with this impetus, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Communications continued its efforts to promote healthy life choices and habits amongst its staff members by hosting a "Health Fair" on September 6th, 2011. Everyone was encouraged to participate in this initiative, as medical personnel were on hand to conduct a variety of health examinations on interested staff members.

The response was overwhelming. Approximately one hundred proactive staff members attended the fair to have their vision and blood sugar tested, as well as blood pressure and BMI measurements taken. HIV testing was also available.

The health drive continued on September 27th, 2011 with a visit from representatives from the Trinidad and Tobago Cancer Society, who conducted Pap smear and breast examinations on staff members from a mobile unit stationed on the Waterfront Esplanade.



Ms. Edna Myal getting tested for blood sugar

Career Diplomat, Anthony Edghill, appointed as Trinidad and Tobago's Ambassador to Venezuela



Dr. the Honourable Surujrattan Rambachan, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Communications presents Mr. Anthony David Edghill with his Instrument of Appointment as Trinidad and Tobago's Ambassador to Venezuela, in the presence of other Ministry officials.

Mr. Anthony David Edghill has been appointed Ambassador of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago to the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela. Ambassador Edghill received his Instrument of Appointment from Dr. the Honourable Surujrattan Rambachan, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Communications at a ceremony held at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Communications on 22nd November 2011.

Renowned for his shrewd negotiating skills, innovativeness and excellent communication ability, Ambassador Edghill is a seasoned Foreign Service professional with extensive experience in all aspects of the Ministry's operations. With a combined sixteen (16) years of experience at this country's foreign missions in Venezuela, Canada and New York; and a further ten (10) years service at the Ministry's Headquarters in Trinidad and Tobago, he carries a wealth of expertise in International Relations to his new portfolio. He is currently the Director, CARICOM and Caribbean Affairs Division. Ambassador Edghill has also served as the Head, European Affairs, Bilateral Relations Division within the Ministry.

His Excellency holds post graduate certification from both the University of the West Indies and the Central University of Venezuela (UCV) in Caracas, and has benefitted from several specialised training opportunities in the areas of international negotiations and export promotion.

Senator Dyer-Griffith presents Mrs. Kwailan La Borde with copies of the La Bordes' Sailing Adventures Documentaries

Senator Nicole Dyer-Griffith, Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Communications met with Mrs. Kwailan La Borde on Monday 3rd October, 2011 at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Communications to officially hand over copies of the two films 'Lonely Oceans South' and 'All Oceans Blue.' Both films are documentaries on the sailing adventures of Harold and Kwailan La Borde, the first known Trinidadian sailors to circumnavigate the world during the period 1969 to 1973, in their 40 ft boat, Hummingbird II.

The films 'Lonely Oceans South' and 'All Oceans Blue' are jointly owned by the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago and the La Bordes. The La Bordes requested the assistance of Senator Dyer-Griffith to secure personal copies of the documentaries.

During the meeting Mrs. La Borde indicated that it is her hope that these documentaries can be used in the nation's schools and libraries to encourage the youth to follow their dreams.

Harold and Kwailan La Borde were both awarded the Trinity Cross in 1973 for their achievements.



Senator Nicole Dyer-Griffith, Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Communications presents Mrs. Kwailan La Borde with copies of the films 'Lonely Oceans South' and 'All Oceans Blue.'

The Story of Diwali

"Hinduism is not just a faith. It is the union of reason and intuition that cannot be defined but is only to be experienced"....

Sir Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan-former president of India

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Communications marked the sacred Hindu festival of Diwali with a gala presentation of the stage production 'The Story of Diwali - The Choice of Two Kingdoms', at the Lord Kitchener Auditorium of the National Academy for Performing Arts in Port of Spain on November 6, 2011.

Dr. the Honourable Surujrattan Rambachan, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Communications, members of the Diplomatic Corps, senior officials and staff members of the Ministry, as well as members of the general public were present to enjoy the production and participate in the celebrations which expounded on the true meaning and spiritual values of the festival of lights.

The presentation of the story involved the dramatization of the following statement made by Professor Anantanand Rambachan, Professor of Religion. The statement was adapted into the performance as a narrative which accompanied the stage production.

"While the many religions that flourish in our midst offer distinct and unique insights into the meaning of human existence, we are united in the affirmation of the reality of God, in the light of whose existence our own lives gain purpose and significance. We understand God to be the creator of all life and not of specific communities and to be the destiny and support of all beings. We share a view of God that would make it contradictory to claim that God could be anything other than One. In the midst of our diversity, God is the common reality, unifying us with each other, making us a single human family and inspiring us to lives of love and service.

"Religion," the American theologian Paul Tillich once said, "Is the substance of culture and culture the form of religion." This is particularly true of Hinduism, with the result that a religious dimension can be discerned in almost all of the festivals that originate in India. Diwali, the festival of lights, the most popular and widely celebrated Hindu festival, is no exception. It will not surprise us to know, given the antiquity of Diwali and the diversity of India, that the traditions associated with it are many. Some celebrate Diwali as ushering in the New Year and the beginning of a new business calendar. It is an occasion of thanksgiving for blessings received and prayer for future well-being.

The most widely shared tradition, however, associated with Diwali, is the one that connects the festival with the celebration and rejoicing over the return of Rama to his home, after a lengthy exile, and his defeat of the oppressive and tyrannical, Ravana. Citizens welcomed him by lighting thousands of lamps, even as over one billion Hindus do today on the continents of Asia, Africa, Australia, the Americas and Europe. The story of Rama has become, perhaps, the central narrative of Diwali because it addresses, universally, the human longing for freedom from tyranny and oppression and the hope of living in a world where there is no fear and where the fullness of the human potential can be realized. Since this is what Diwali is truly about, let us linger on the story of Rama, for a moment.

Ravana established and maintained a rule by the exercise of fear and violence. He was intent on conquering and imposing his will throughout the world, enslaving others and depriving them of freedom. The practice of religion was prohibited and brutally suppressed. We get the picture of a spiritually arid land ruled by a tyrant with no value for the sanctity of human life and property.

Snapshots of Diwali Event





The defeat of Ravana by Rama, and liberation from oppression, are not the only reasons for the rejoicing and celebration that are central features of Diwali. Rama is represented as establishing and providing a model for a new society that was radically different from the one imposed by Ravana. In the new kingdom, the state is no longer violent and oppressive towards its citizens. Nations live at peace with other nations, suffering is overcome and human relationships are characterized by love, compassion and generosity. People are free to realize and express their unique human gifts in the service of each other.

The kingdom of Rama was the inspiration for Mahatma Gandhi's vision of an ideal human community that was all-inclusive and committed to the removal of the fundamental sources of human suffering. We are not surprised that the Hindu tradition has invested Rama with the attributes of divinity and understood his rule as a vision of what a human community looks like when God is recognized as supreme and ultimate and when human beings devote themselves to working for God's purpose. The kingdom of Ravana, on the other hand, reveals what becomes of community when God is displaced by human tyranny.

Diwali endures as a reminder that the struggle between the kingdoms of Rama and Ravana is one that occurs inwardly daily in the human heart and outwardly throughout the world in efforts of those who labor and sacrifice for freedom, justice and human dignity. The lights of Diwali are the inextinguishable flames of faith and hope in the ultimate triumph of goodness over evil and the assurance that, in this perpetual struggle, we choose the side of God. These lights also testify to our human yearning for a world that is free from hate, fear and violence and where there is an abundance of compassion and happiness. These are the aspirations articulated in the Hindu prayer that is commonly recited during this season of Diwali.



Asato ma sad gamaya
 Tamaso ma jyoti gamaya
 Mrityor ma amritam gamaya
 Sarve bhavantu sukhinah
 Sarve santu niramayah
 Sarve bhadrani pashyantu
 Ma Kaschid dukhamapnyat.
 Aum Shanti Shanti Shanti

God:
 Lead us from untruth to truth
 Lead us from darkness to light
 And lead us from death to immortality
 May all be happy
 May all be free from misery
 May all be filled with goodness
 And may there be an end to all suffering



A Journey to Africa: Inter-Ministerial Emancipation Celebrations

Staff of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Communications, Energy and Energy Affairs, Labour and Small and Micro Enterprise Development along with the Ministry of Tourism; journeyed to Africa together as they participated in an Inter-Ministerial event to celebrate Emancipation Day at the Waterfront Esplanade, Waterfront Complex, Port of Spain on July 27th 2011.

Approximately 1500 public officers together with members of the Diplomatic Corps and specially invited guests joined in the celebrations which were hosted by Dr. the Honourable Surujrattan Rambachan, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Communications, Senator the Honourable Kevin Ramnarine, Minister of Energy and Energy Affairs and the Honourable Errol McLeod, Minister of Labour and Small and Micro Enterprises.

The Feature Speaker Brother Aiyegoro Ome, the Servant Chairman of the National Action Cultural Committee, in his address, spoke about the retention of many aspects of African culture in our society, as well as the need for people to carry their observances and celebrations of Emancipation into their homes as opposed to solely engaging in the public activities and communal celebrations.

Attendees were also treated to a wide range of African Cultural presentations which were carefully selected to both educate and entertain. Featured performances included the pulsating sounds of the Malick Folk Performing Company, Ella Andall and Band, Spoken Word artiste and Musician Muhammed Muwakil and the Codrington Pan family, among others.

The afternoon's main attraction was a resplendent two-part cultural fashion show appropriately entitled "A Journey to Africa". Parading alongside our in-house models were seven Queens who participated in the Emancipation Queen Show held at the Women's Prison. The Queen Show is one of the rehabilitative programmes at the institution, where pageantry is used to help in the restoration of mind and body.



Eid-UI-Fitr Celebrations



Minister Rambachan and guests at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Communications Eid-ul-Fitr Luncheon



Recognising the significance of all religious denominations to our society and in a continued effort to strengthen the bond with the Muslim community, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Communications hosted its second annual Eid-UI-Fitr luncheon on September 11, 2011.

Gaston Courts was transformed to provide an inviting atmosphere in which members of staff, their family members and friends; diplomats and leaders of the Muslim Community enjoyed the afternoon's proceedings.

East Indian cultural singer Ruby Khan Gupta provided the event's first item of entertainment with a captivating musical rendition, which set the stage for the delivery of the khutbah (sermon) by Imam Imran Hussaini. In his sermon Imam Hussaini spoke of the importance of knowing the origins of the month of Ramadan and the role of fasting as a method of engendering self control and self-discipline. He also urged those present to seek inner peace through the pursuit of God and Godliness and the relinquishing of the shackles of materialism and self-centredness.

Pointed and insightful addresses were delivered by Mr. Yacoub Ali, President of the Anjuman Sunnat-UI-Jamaat Association (ASJA) and Dr. Brinsley Samaroo of the University of Trinidad and Tobago, which reflected on various aspects of Islam and the Islamic tradition in its contemporary form, as well as the role of Muslims in our society. Guests were also treated to a sterling performance of a qaseeda by Mr. Gideon Hanoomansingh, Adviser Communications and Media Affairs who hosted the afternoon's proceedings.

Creating New Opportunities for Young Artists



Minister Rambachan with the winners of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Communications Secondary Schools Art Competition – "Bridging Borders through Art"

As a part of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Communications' initiative to create awareness of its work among students, the 'Bridging Borders through Art' competition was conducted during the period 1st June, 2011 to 8th July, 2011.

The competition was the brainchild of Minister Surujrattan Rambachan and was conceptualized as a means of exposing to the world the work of young talented local artistes, whilst simultaneously bolstering the Ministry's efforts to market the culture of Trinidad and Tobago. At the prize giving ceremony held on 6th September, 2011 at UTT Campus, National Academy for Performing Arts, Port of Spain,

the Minister emphasized the importance of exposing the culture of Trinidad and Tobago through the medium of visual art, as well as the merits of encouraging and rewarding the myriad of talented young people in our country.

Fifty-six Secondary Schools from across the nation participated in the competition with the Ministry receiving 220 art pieces. Cash awards and certificates were presented to the top three winners in the 11-14 and 15-18 age group categories, as well as to twenty-two special prize winners. Dale Barran of

Trinity College East placed first in the 11-14 category, while the top honour in the 15-18 category went to Ijaz Allibally of ASJA Boys College, Charlieville. The winning pieces will be used to decorate the Ministry's headquarters and Overseas Missions or will be presented as gifts to visiting dignitaries.

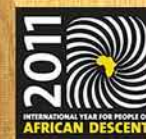
The occasion was also used to pay tribute to and display selected art pieces created by staff members of the Ministry - Mr. Matthew Fountain, Ms. Sabrina Brumant-Tappin and Mr. Linsley Lingo. Mr. Lingo also assisted in judging of the competition together with Mr. Shastri Maharaj and Ms. Turnesh Pommell-Raymond.



Ministry of Foreign Affairs
and Communications

2nd Future
Diplomats

Essay Competition



During the period 19th September, 2011 to 28th October, 2011, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Communications conducted the 2nd Future Diplomats Secondary Schools Essay Competition in observance of the International Year for People of African Descent (IYPAD) which was proclaimed by United Nations Resolution 64/169.

This year's essay competition which focused on creating awareness of the diverse heritage and culture of people of African descent received 139 entries from 47 secondary schools throughout Trinidad and Tobago.

The official prize-giving ceremony for the 2nd Future Diplomats Essay Competition will be held on 11th January, 2011.

Ambassador Dr. Neil Parsan Day in the City Of Hartford, Connecticut



Saturday August 13, 2011 was proclaimed Ambassador Dr. Neil Parsan Day by Mayor Pedro Segarra, Mayor of the city of Hartford Connecticut. In the presence of over 25,000 persons in Bushnell Park, Mayor Segarra congratulated Ambassador Parsan on behalf of the city of Hartford, the Court of Common Council and the citizens of Hartford for being selected the Grand Marshall of the 49th West Indian Independence and Emancipation parade.

The mayor explained to the excited crowd that the Ambassador Parsan was selected as the Grand Marshall based on his great effort in representing the People of Trinidad and Tobago in cities across the United States and his willingness to actively pursue business opportunities and cultural exchanges with the city of Hartford.

In accepting the proclamation, Ambassador Parsan said he was humbled by the gesture of the Mayor and the city and is looking forward to further engagements with the business community and the office of the Mayor. Dr. Parsan also challenged the organizers of the event into making the parade the biggest event in 2012, in recognizing the presence of the Caribbean diaspora in Hartford as both Trinidad and Tobago and Jamaica celebrate 50 years of independence in the year 2012.

Trinidad and Tobago Musicians and Steelpan Dazzle in Costa Rica

For the second consecutive year, under the auspices of the Embassy of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago in San José, Costa Rica, Trinidad and Tobago participated in the Credomatic Music Festival, which was held from August 6 to 21. In addition to Trinidad and Tobago, participants in this year's Festival included groups from the Netherlands, Spain, South Korea, France, Cuba and the USA.

For the XXI edition of the Festival this year, invitations were extended to Mr. Jessel Murray Artistic Director and Conductor of the National Steel Symphony Orchestra and Head of the Department of Creative and Festival Arts at UWI, St. Augustine and Mr. Liam Teague, Head of Steelpan Studies and Associate Professor at Northern Illinois University. Under the baton of Mr. Murray as guest conductor of the Cartago Municipal Symphony Orchestra, Mr. Teague performed as featured soloist, including for the Festival's final Gala performance at the National Theatre of Costa Rica on August 20. They also appeared in an open air concert on August 21 at the Parque España in San José to close the Festival.

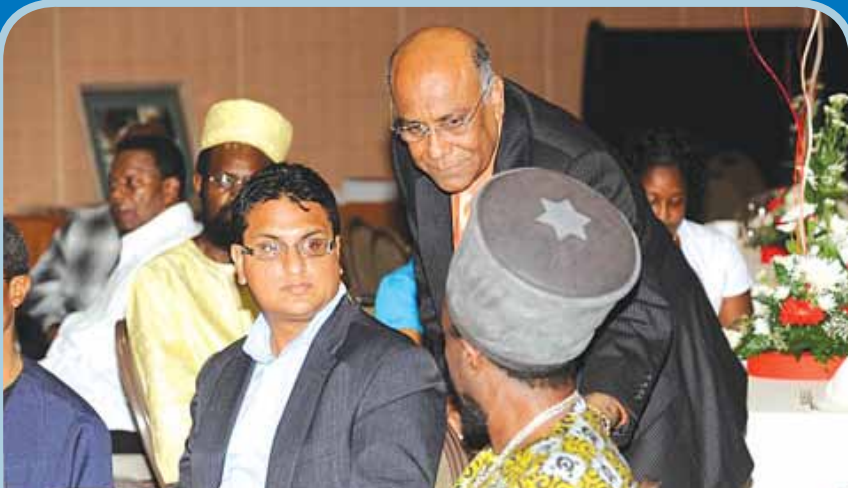
The country was first represented in Costa Rica's most prestigious classical music festival in August 2010 by the National Steel Symphony Orchestra. Participation by Trinidad and Tobago in this Music Festival for a second consecutive year gave effect once again, to the Government's goals of "sharing our creative products and talents with the rest of the world" and of "making cultural promotion an essential function of Overseas Missions".



Conductor Jessel Murray, Liam Teague and the Cartago Municipal Symphony Orchestra capture an enthralled audience at an open air concert on August 22, 2011 to close the XXI Credomatic Music Festival in San José, Costa Rica

Mr. Murray and Mr. Teague also performed at a recital and reception on Monday, August 22 hosted by Ambassador Sandra Honoré in commemoration of the country's forty-ninth anniversary of Independence. Programme performances of piano and steel incorporated works of the classical masters and compositions by Aldwyn Roberts (Lord Kitchener), Slinger Francisco (The Mighty Sparrow) and Liam Teague.

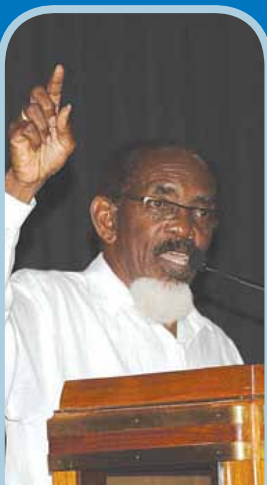
Calypso History Month Launched in Style



Minister Rambachan chats with Nirad Tiwarie and Lutalo Massimba



His Excellency Makandal Daaga (center) with Senator Embau Moheni, Mr. Lutalo Massimba and junior calypsonians Timel Rivas and Aaron Duncan



Calypso icons

In-keeping with the National commitment to work towards the fulfilment of the United Nations General Assembly resolution 64/169, which calls for the respect for and promotion of the heritage and culture of people of African Descent, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Communications partnered with the Trinidad Unified Calypsonians' Organisation (TUCO) to officially launch the 9th Annual Calypso History Month.

Recognising that Calypso music is a significant element of the culture of people of African descent, TUCO cited the initiative as one of the projects for consideration on the National Agenda of activities for the commemoration of the International Year for People of African Descent.

The event was hosted by Dr. the Honourable Surujrattan Rambachan, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Communications and was held at the Hyatt Regency on 30th September, 2011. Also in attendance at the event were officials of the Ministry, members of the Diplomatic Corps, as well as many renowned and respected members of the Calypso fraternity.

Minister Rambachan in his opening address praised the skill of young Timel Rivas, winner of the 5-18 age group in the NACC Emancipation Calypso Competition, for his riveting performance of a composition called 'Ancestors' which kicked off the morning's proceedings. He also acknowledged the impact and influence which Calypso music has had and continues to have across the world, citing the myriad ways in which calypso music has been sampled and copied by people of various nationalities.

Lutalo Massimba, President of TUCO, reminded those present of the hardships that the art form has endured in its struggle for mainstream recognition and declared that while he is grateful for the support the art form is currently receiving, the calypso fraternity should still recognise the fact that the struggle is far from over.

In his brief remarks, Professor Hollis Liverpool advised that the key to the resolution of most problems facing today's society could be found in the verses of many of the exponents of the art form. He concluded that "If our people listen to calypso we can solve most of our problems".

In true celebration of the genre, entertainment at the event was provided by some of the very best artistes that calypso has to offer. Featured were performances by the reigning Junior Calypso Monarch Aaron Duncan and the reigning Xtempo Champion Sheldon John. The wealth of young talent on show left those present confident that the future of the art form is in very capable hands.

Day of Fun

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Communications is exploring the possibility of formulating a Sports & Cultural Club. In an effort to get staff interested in this initiative Mr. Linsley Lingo and other members of staff hosted a "Day of Fun" in collaboration with the Ministry of Sports at the Jean Pierre Complex on Saturday 10th September, 2011.

Members of staff enjoyed the day's activities as they participated in what can be described as 101 clinic sessions in small goal football and all fours, as the team from Ministry of Sports did most of the goal scoring and successfully 'hung' the most jacks.

A rematch is scheduled for the New Year.



Mr. Nolan Holder and Mrs. Carrieann Gerald-Redhead present Mr. Rudolph Charles with a retirement gift



Mr. Nieves Callendar thanks Mr. Rudolph Charles for his service rendered to the Ministry

After twenty-three (23) years of dedicated service, staff at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Communications came together to pay tribute to Mr. Rudolph Charles, Messenger I as he proceeded on pre-retirement leave on 7th September, 2011.

Charlo, as he was fondly known joined the Ministry on 16th June, 1988. He was a dedicated and hard worker who on most days worked late to ensure that the evening mail was delivered before the next day. His co-workers also boasted of the great fatherly advice that he gave to all, and his love for the Spanish language which he spoke with charm.

Mr. Charles will surely be missed for his no nonsense approach to the job, his willing attitude, sportsmanship, strong lyrics and undoubtedly, his fish broth and pelau.