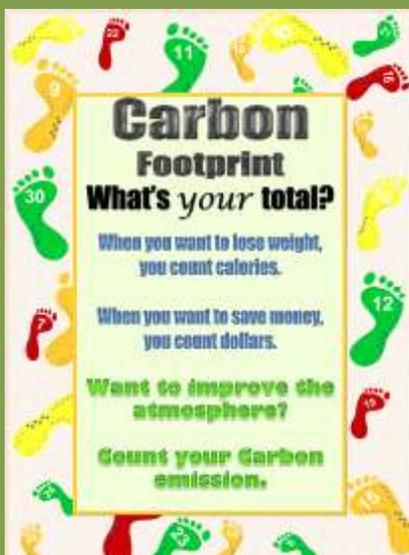


December 2009

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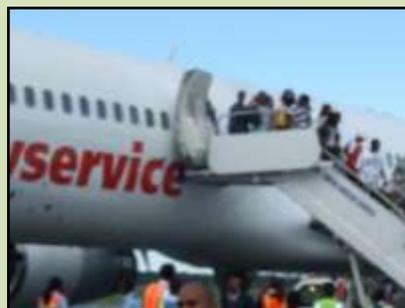
'King Pele' visits Guyana for the Kashif and Shanghai Final

Edson Arantes do Nascimento known to the world as King Pele - the World's Greatest footballer, visited Guyana for the Finals of the 20th Kashif and Shanghai Football Tournament held at the Guyana National Stadium. King Pele was greeted by a large crowd at the Cheddi Jagan International Airport who participated in a procession to Georgetown on Saturday 12th December. King Pele who scored 1,281 goals during his football career was accompanied by a television crew. The Football Legend was given the key to Georgetown, Guyana's Capital City by Mayor Hamilton Green at a welcome ceremony held at City Hall. The Kashif and Shanghai Final kicked off in grand style with King Pele conducting the kick off at the National Stadium.



New weekly flights to Toronto by Sky Service

Sunrise International Travel operating out of Toronto introduced a weekly, all-year round service between Georgetown and Toronto. The Travel Company leased a 757 aircraft from Sky Service to facilitate the flights, which departs the Cheddi Jagan International for Lester Pearson Airport on Tuesday evenings. The Inaugural flight was conducted on December 7th and the Ministry of Tourism and the Guyana Tourism Authority hosted a welcome reception at the CJIA prior to the flight's departure for Toronto on December 8th 2009.



Atta Eco Lodge commissioned



The Tourism industry expanded its accommodation sector with another new development - the Atta Eco Lodge. During a two-day outreach to the Rupununi in November, the Hon. Manniram Prashad, Minister of Tourism, Industry and Commerce, commissioned the 1st phase of the newly re-furbished Atta Eco Lodge at Iwokrama, within close proximity to the canopy walkway. The Atta Lodge now boast eight spacious rooms which can accommodate 16 persons. Minister Prashad lauded the initiative and stated that tourist will be more comfortable when visiting the Rupununi – a popular bird watching and wildlife hot spot. The Minister urged Guyanese to embark on ‘stay-cation’ and to enjoy Guyana’s natural beauty; he also noted that there are so many places in Guyana that Guyanese may not have heard of or visited and that the Rupununi is a good place to start.

Tourism Ministry successfully conduct two-day Rupununi Outreach



A team from the Ministry of Tourism comprising, the Hon. Manniram Prashad, Minister of Tourism, Mr. Indranauth Haralsingh, Director of the Guyana

Tourism Authority and other top officials from the Ministry conducted a two-day Rupununi Outreach during Tourism Awareness Month 2009. The team also visited areas along the Lethem/Brazil Bridge and the commercial zone, in which 50 plots of land were allocated for business development. Minister Prashad concluded his visit by attending the opening of the 2009 Rupununi Expo which

was held at the Triple ‘R’ Ground. The Minister during his brief remarks at the Expo said that the Rupununi district stands to benefit from the recent opening of the Takutu Bridge. The Minister also pointed out that there are seven hotels and several restaurants which already exist in Lethem and that his Ministry will work closely with the Lethem Community to further develop and improve Guyana’s tourism potential in the area so that Guyana can tap into the Brazilian market.

ACTO’s Fifth Technical Committee Meeting of convened.

The Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization (ACTO) 5th Technical Committee Meeting was held from the 1st December 2009 to the 4th December 2009 at the Guyana International Conference Centre and was hosted by the Ministry of



Tourism and Guyana Tourism Authority as a Tourism Awareness Month 2009 activity. Sixteen tourism officials from seven member countries of ACTO including Guyana, Brazil, Suriname, Peru, Colombia, Ecuador and Venezuela participated in this four day meeting, under the theme “Community Based Sustainable Tourism” which featured strategic visioning, planning and implementation of sustainable tourism development for the Amazon as a single geo-destination.

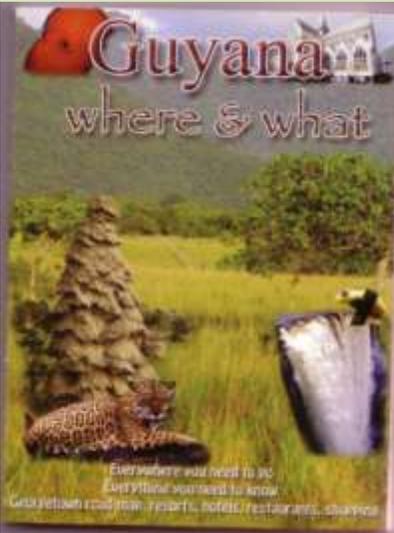
Guyana’s main focus during this meeting was to deliberate on ways in which community sustainable tourism capacities can be expanded.

ACTO, an Inter-Governmental Organization that unites the eight member countries of the Amazon, was formed in 2003 with a mission of promoting integrated and sustainable development of the Amazon Region, as such Year 2009 was designated ‘Destination Amazonia Year’ and numerous activities were planned in observance of the year which included the Rockstone Fish Festival, Mashramani, Pakaraima Mountain Safari and the Rupununi Rodeo.

LIAT meets with Ogle International Airport management

Officials from LIAT Airline were in Guyana to have discussions with the Management of Ogle International Airport (OIA) to deliberate on the possibilities of improving regional air services and the utilisation of Ogle Airport to provide air services in the near future. A meeting was held at the Caricom Headquarters in Guyana, which included the Caricom Secretary- General, Edwin Carrington; LIAT Chairman, Dr Jean Holder; Executives from LIAT Airline and members of the Aircraft Owners Association of Guyana to discuss these matters. The Ogle Airstrip recently received an International ranking and management is currently seeking to work along with regional carriers to accommodate inter-regional services. Weekly flights are already being conducted between Ogle International Airport and Zorg International Airport in Suriname.

'Guyana Where and what' Pocket Guide Launched



The third edition of the 'Guyana Where and What' Pocket Guide is now available for circulation. The 136-page Pocket Guide is produced by General Executive Management Services (GEMS) Inc, which exclusively features Guyana's tourism products. A simple launching ceremony was held on

Friday 4th December 2009 at the Ministry of Tourism. Author of the Pocket Guide, Gem Madhoo-Nascimento, stated that her company intends to print more than 50,000 copies for distribution in 2010, since there is an ever increasing demand for the pocket guide which has international recognition. Speaking at the ceremony, Tourism Minister, Hon. Manniram Prashad noted that this new edition captured almost all aspects of tourism and lauded the effort of the producer. The Minister also noted that it is a classy Pocket Guide and that other writers should consider doing similar publications on Guyana.

Guyana Nature School at Botanical Garden re-commissioned

The Guyana Nature School which was built in 1992 with funding from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) was recently refurbished and extended to accommodate the increasing number of students who visit the school. Canadian High Commissioner to Guyana, Francios Montour during his remarks, urged the administration of the nature school to continue their efforts in promoting wildlife conservation and environmental protection among visitors, students, nature groups and the general public. He also mentioned that these institutions are tasked with the role of promoting methods to preserve nature and the environment.

The Arapaima Fish species population on the increase in the Rupununi



Figures have shown a significant increase in the population of the largest fresh water fish in the world - the Arapaima. The Arapaima is a popular gaming fish and adds to the development of Sports Fishing Tourism in Guyana. Sports fishing fanatics usually travel to Guyana to visit popular sport fishing hotspots especially Rockstone. The Arapaima can readily be spotted in the North Rupununi and Iwokrama Rainforest Centre.



Guyana has the largest cats in South America – *the Jaguar*

Guyana looking to have greater co-operation in sports tourism development

Guyana is looking to increase its tourism potential by developing and expanding its sports tourism sector. Experts in the field of Sports, Culture, Tourism and Foreign Relations convened in Barbados from December 14th to 16th to discuss the development of sports tourism in the region and Guyana's presence was marked by a representative from the Guyana Tourism Authority (Ms. Annarie Shiwram). Sports tourism is relatively a new area for development in Guyana, but the country is fast becoming a popular sports destination. In 2010, Guyana will be hosting several mega sporting events such as Cricket, Football, Motor Racing, Karate and Horse Racing. With Guyana's successful hosting of 2007 Cricket World Cup games, the country gained tremendous recognition and experience and is seeking to expand its sports tourism potential by tapping into new sporting events such as Darts, Rugby, Squash, Badminton, Cycling, Swimming and Track and Field. At present, many sporting venues are being renovated and constructed such as the Olympic size swimming pool at Liliendaal, Sports Complex in Berbice and Essequibo and a Racket Centre to accommodate these events.

A new plant specie discovered in Guyana

Carapa akuri, a new plant specie with commercial significance was discovered by Botanists in Guyana. The discovery was published in *Brittonia*, a Journal produced by the New York Botanical Garden. The Specie for a long time was mistaken for the *Carapa guianensis*, a plant that is used in furniture production and widely found in the Amazon. Pierre-Michel Forget, a leading author of the journal stated that the *akuri* plant is an important plant specie and that the discovery was significant, since the plant is a source of natural oil for the *Makushi* tribes and is used in the production of cosmetics. The specie is endemic to the region and may be at risk of exploitation due to logging.

GTA host Christmas welcome reception for Visitors arriving at CJIA

Passengers arriving in Guyana for the Christmas season were treated to a traditional Christmas welcome organised by the Ministry of Tourism, Guyana Tourism Authority and

CJIA Management. To usher in the festive season in Guyana, the organisers arranged a welcome treat for passengers arriving at CJIA. This



year passengers were greeted by Santa Claus and the Chico Mascot while caroling was done by the Marigold Choir.

Thousands of visitors to Guyana for the Christmas season had a taste of our Guyanese Black Cake, Plantain and Cassava Chips, 'Salsaire', and the well known 'Gold Finger' sweets, Banks Beer and El Dorado Rum. The 'meet and greet' exercise started on the December 15th and concluded on Christmas Eve. Visitors were very happy and some stated that they never experienced such welcome before. Many visitors to Guyana for the first time stated that they appreciated what was done and they never expected the reception.

All airlines were fully booked for the Christmas season

Incoming flights to Guyana were fully booked for the Christmas season. According to the commercial Manager at the Cheddi Jagan International Airport, Ms. Dursatty Doodnauth-Mangru, all airline flights to Guyana for Christmas were fully booked and she expected that the passengers' arrival figures will increase for the month of December. Ms. Mangru also noted that airlines are currently conducting extra flights to Guyana and sometimes twelve to fifteen flights can be seen on a daily basis arriving at the Airport with more than 1000 passengers each day. Ms Mangru further stated that additional staffs were recruited by management to assist with luggage handling and customer service during the peak season as this trend is predicted to continue in January 2010.

WWF celebrated its 10th Anniversary in Guyana

World Wide Fund (WWF) Guianas celebrated its 10th Anniversary for its operations in Guyana. The WWF programme in Guyana mainly focuses on marine turtle conservation; carbon credits negotiations and other conservation projects throughout the country. The organization has so far achieved its goals set out which is a remarkable achievement for them and will continue working in Guyana to achieve other goals outlined in phase three of the programme and has been able to



attained a \$7.1 M grant with the water sector to closely examine the use of groundwater resources along the coast.

Guyana to host several mega sporting events in 2010

In an effort to promote sport tourism in Guyana, the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports will be hosting several international sports events in Guyana. Among some of the major sporting events to be hosted in 2010 are: six ICC Twenty/20 Cricket World Cup Super 8 matches, West Indies vs. Zimbabwe one- day matches, Caribbean Power Lifting Championships, Pan-American Karate Championships, Caribbean and Central America Rugby and International Motor Racing Championships.

Extension of the Ogle International Airport in progress

The 4000-foot runway expansion at the Ogle International Airport is well ahead and is expected to be completed by late 2010. The Ogle Airport has recently been accredited international status and several regional flights are utilizing the airport. The operating structure of the airport was recently revised to improve safety, health and fire fighting capabilities, Customs and Immigration and baggage handling and the parking area was also expanded to accommodate the ever growing number of vehicle. Several weekly flights are currently being conducted between Suriname and Guyana and recently LIAT airlines met with the airport management to discuss ways in which the airport can facilitate LIAT airlines. The focus of the airport is to become an intra-Caribbean port to facilitate transport between the Caribbean and Latin America which will help to promote multi-destination tourism.

Extensive tourism educational campaign planned for 2010

The Ministry of Tourism and Guyana Tourism Authority plans to conduct a series of industry training and education/sensitization services in 2010. This decision was made by Minister of Tourism, Industry and Commerce, Hon. Manniram Prashad, who stated that since Guyana is currently receiving significant recognition internationally, there is need to educate the sector about Guyana's tourism product, its prospects, the importance of tourism to Guyana and how everyone can contribute to selling destination Guyana. Tourism contributes at least 8% of the Gross Domestic Product for Guyana and creates employment for more than 2,000 Guyanese. Recently the

more high-end International Tour Operators have been showing interest in destination Guyana, with major interest coming from UK, USA, Canada, Germany, Holland, Switzerland, Austria, Italy, France, Russia, Hong Kong and China. With interest and demand growing for the Destination Guyana experience, there is need to further educate people on our tourism product and how they can contribute positive tourism experience for visitors.

Main Big Lime a grand Success



More than 30,000 people converged on Main Street to participate in Main Big Lime 2009. Main Big Lime is an annual event published on the Ministry of Tourism Calendar of Events and is held on the 26th December - **Boxing Day** each year. The event started at 10:00 hrs but picked up momentum at about 17:00hrs, the time when many Guyanese usually come out to party and lime.



Please feel free to contact us and let us know how we can improve our newsletter.

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