



THE KEY

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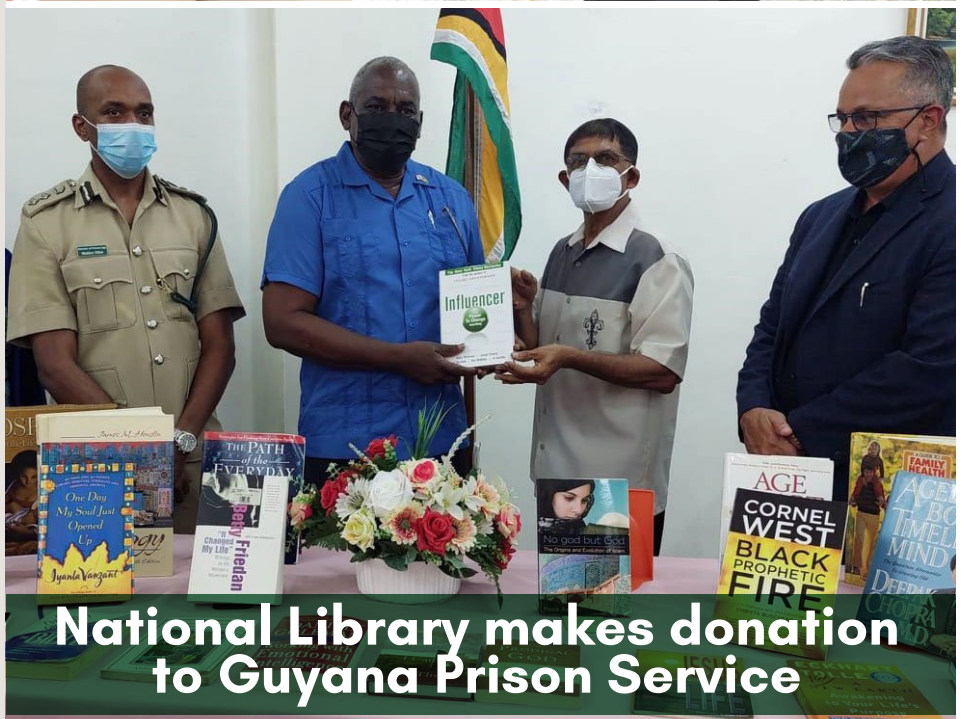
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BACKGROUND

The Guyana Prison Service (GPS) operates under the Prison Act # 26 of 1975 along with its subsequent amendments. This is the legislative framework for the GPS which establishes the key parameters that include the articulation of the management structure of the Prisons as well as the main powers and responsibilities of the Director of Prisons.

The prisons operate under the jurisdiction of the Minister of Home Affairs. Under the Prison Act, Cap 11:01 Laws of Guyana, the Minister has powers that present an oversight framework for ensuring that the GPS functions effectively.

The core function of the Guyana Prison Service is to provide safe custody of offenders who have violated the law of the land and are referred to it by the courts.

MISSION STATEMENT

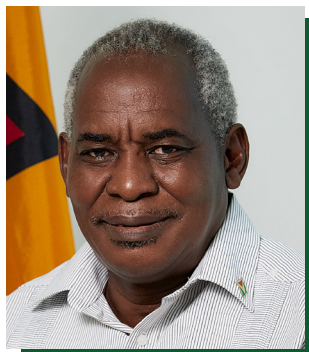
The Guyana Prison Service, as an integral part of the Criminal Justice System, utilizes international standards and practices to provide a secure environment for staff and offenders. The aim, through these approaches, is that offenders are rehabilitated and reintegrated into society as law-abiding citizens, thus contributing to public safety, so critical for national development.

VISION STATEMENT

Guyana Prison Service is a highly efficient correctional institution with modern technological facilities and competent staff who empower and rehabilitate inmates through structured programmes thereby contributing to reduced recidivism and increased public safety.

'FRESH START FOR PRISONERS'

- Govt to roll out new reintegration programme for prisoners



Home Affairs Minister Robeson Benn

undertake, we want to give them the toolkits, when they are leaving, to be presented with," Minister Benn said.

The Ministry of Home Affairs is currently designing a programme aimed at bolstering the efforts undertaken to rehabilitate prisoners and to provide them with the requisite skills for their reintegration into society.

Code named 'A Fresh Start', the programme according to Home Affairs Minister Robeson Benn explained is geared towards providing a toolkit with the basic needs to persons who are leaving the prison system.

The minister made the disclosure while addressing guests at the Guyana Prison Service's 38th Thanksgiving Anniversary Church Service held on Sunday September 26, 2021 under the theme 'working towards improving the image of the Guyana Prison Service' at the National Cultural Centre Tarmac, Hadfield Street, Georgetown.

"What for persons who are suitable, eligible and willing, is to be able to pursue a type of vocation or profession which they want to return to or un-

The new programme is expected to be rolled out in the new year.

In terms of the infrastructure of the prisons, Minister Benn highlighted that the new holding bay being constructed at the Lusignan Prison and the expansion of the Mazaruni Prison, in Region Seven, will allow for rehabilitative efforts.

"We want that new complex at Lusignan to have educational and vocational teachings so that we will be finally, properly on the road towards rehabilitating prisoners. The new facility at Lusignan is expected to be the place where the greatest effort in that regard will be placed," Minister Benn said.

He disclosed that a new facility at the New Amsterdam Prison, in Region Six, is expected and there are plans to move female inmates from New Amsterdam to Lusignan in order to facilitate visitation.

Message from the Director of Prisons (ag)

The Guyana Prison Service (GPS) continues to make efforts to consolidate its institutional capacities to effectively deliver a better quality of service to prisoners, staff and the public.

In this regard, the Service's Strategic Development Plan continued to provide the framework by which the organization sought to reposition itself, by transitioning from a penal system to that of a correctional facility.

Through this means, the GPS would have established a Public Relations Department with the aim rebuilding public trust and confidence within the organization thus highlighting the positives from within the prison.

Emphasis was also placed on the Prison Administration to be steadfast towards the fulfillment of its mandate, relative to the safe custody and the rehabilitation of inmates, as well as the development of the Institution. Therefore, over (300) prisoners were trained in Literacy and Numeracy, Behavior Modification of Programmes, Vocational Skills training and Art and Craft.

Throughout the period under review, the staff within the Guyana Prison Service played an important role in the execution of the organization's mandate, thus more emphasis was placed on enhancing the capacity of the staff. The Directorate was enthusiastic about the numerous training opportunities which were provided to staff in the area of Prison Management.

Notably, the Guyana Prison Service collaborated with the University of Southern Caribbean to provide accredited training programmes for Prison Officers at all levels, while the Officers at the senior management level benefitted from leadership training including Human Rights Training. It was envisaged that the various training programmes would aid all staff to improve their work performance.

Consequently, greater efforts were made to ensure that the reconstruction of the Mazaruni Prison. In addition, plans are being made for the reconstruction of the New Amsterdam and Lusignan Prisons which will improve the living conditions of the prisoners.

The Agricultural Sector did not perform as was expected, nevertheless efforts are being made to restructure the sector by making it become self-sufficient. This will see greater efforts being placed on planting more fruits and vegetables and rearing of chickens to enhance prisoners' diet.

As a result, of the restructuring of the sector, a Dietician was employed to review meals intake for prisoners. This would have seen a great improvement in the meals issued to prisoners thus allowing them to receive fruits and eggs to supplement their diet.

In closing, I wish to express great appreciation to the Minister of Home Affairs, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs and the Government of Guyana for their support and vision given towards GPS, thus allowing this noble organization to fulfil its mandate regarding safe custodial and rehabilitation of Officers.

Thank You.
Nicklon Elliot
Director of Prisons (ag)





The Lusignan Prison has fourteen of the twenty-nine retrofitted containers. (Guyana Prison Service Photo)

29 RETROFITTED CONTAINERS ESTABLISHED FOR VIRTUAL LEGAL PROCEEDINGS

The COVID-19 pandemic has placed severe restraint on the movement and gathering of persons in every endeavor.

To this end, the Government of Guyana has empowered the Judiciary, the Guyana Police Force and the Guyana Prison Service to uniquely collaborate to enhance the speedy hearings, trials and disposal of cases in the Criminal Justice System. The stakeholders, with the support of the GoG, have been able to utilise a total of 29 retrofitted containers at the Lusignan, New Amsterdam, Timehri and Camp Street Prisons to host virtual court proceedings.

The principal objective of the engagement is to establish the required physical and technical infrastructure for criminal litigation to take place on virtual platforms. The initiative also obviated the need for prisoners to be transported physically out of the prisons and taken to the various Courts for their cases.

Retrofitted containers have been constructed at prison locations situated at Camp Street, Georgetown (4); Lusignan, East Coast Demerara (14); New Amsterdam (8), Berbice; Timehri, East Bank Demerara (3) and plans are in place to host three virtual court rooms at the Mazaruni Prison Estate.

This undertaking was strategic and timely, as the nation continues to protect the health and wellbeing of its citizenry while adapting to world changes.

CONSTRUCTION OF TWO NEW PRISON BLOCKS AT LUSIGNAN PRISON COMPLETED



One of the two new Prison blocks at Lusignan Prison. (Guyana Prison Service Photo)

The construction of two new Prison blocks at the Lusignan Prison Estate have been completed

According to the Director of Prisons, Nicklon Elliot (ag), and the Officer-in-Charge of the location, transfer of inmates from the currently temporary makeshift holding area to the 2nd newly constructed dormitory (pictured below) is slated for August 27, 2021. The living quarters, which were built in response to the 2020 fire, have been equipped with improved facilities to fulfill the Services mandate of providing safe and purposeful custody for inmates while they are incarcerated.

Some 200 inmates will occupy those two dormitories.



LUSIGNAN PRISON RECONSTRUCTION MOVING APACE



Construction works moving apace at the Lusignan Prison. (Guyana Prison Service Photo)

The reconstruction of the Lusignan Prison is moving apace, this is according to Director of Prisons (ag), Nicklon Elliot.

Mr. Elliot is of the view that the construction marks the beginning of a new and innovative chapter for the Prison Service.

Earlier this year, contracts to an estimated \$ 1.2B GYD were signed to construct three new blocks at the Lusignan Prison. The contracts, which are referred to LOTS 1-3, were awarded to Mohamed's Enterprise, M&P Investment in a joint venture with Construtora Cobra Eireli, and Nabi Construction Inc.

The completion of the three new blocks at the Lusignan Prison will accommodate 600 inmates.



Lot 1 was awarded to Mohamed's Enterprise. (Guyana Prison Service Photo)



Chairman of the National Library, Petamber Persaud (fourth from right) handed over one of the books to Minister of Home Affairs, Robeson Benn. Also, in picture are - Director of Prisons (ag), Nicklon Elliot (fourth from left), Captain Gerald Gouveia (third from right) and staff members of the National Library. (Guyana Prison Service Photo)

NATIONAL LIBRARY MAKES DONATION TO GUYANA PRISON SERVICE

Aimed at the boosting of rehabilitation opportunities for prisoners, the National Library earlier this month handed over a quantity of books to the Guyana Prison Service.

Delivering brief remarks, Minister of Home Affairs, Robeson Benn said that the donation will aid in the development and rehabilitation of prisoners.

“...The question of rehabilitation of persons in incarceration, the question of turning them out to be better citizens is useful to society, their families and community is an important one,” Benn said. He added that the time in prison offers the incarcerated the opportunity and introspection to read.

“I think if they could now have the opportunity, the time and the resources to read, to learn, to understand and to absorb, it will be critical for them to learn of issues, scenarios, interventions and opportunities, so as to avoid making mistakes again,” Benn explained.

He further noted that reading can also provide a platform for prisoners to adapt to new ways-of-living. “A livelihood other than the resort for which they would have been incarcerated for and also to

adopt a calmer, a more solid and perhaps relationship outlook in life,” Benn said.

The libraries at both the Georgetown and Lusignan Prisons were destroyed by fires. Benn promised that these libraries will be re-established. “We are building new, modern and safer prisons. We want our prisoners to be treated more humanely. Our objective is to rehabilitate them. We are not about social pledges but social rehabilitation,” he said.

Meanwhile, Director of Prisons (ag), Nicklon Elliot, said the donations of books will strengthen the capacity to expose prisoners to rehabilitation opportunities. “As part of our mandate, we are required to expose prisoners to all the programmes in prison and of course we are limited in terms of our infrastructure and in terms of some programmes,” Elliot said. As such, he said the donation is timely and will not only expose prisoners to reading but will also complement the effort at conflict resolution.

Also making brief remarks were Ms. Emiley King, Chief Librarian of the Guyana National Library, Petamber Persaud, Chairman of the National Library and chairman of the Guyana Prison Service Sentence Management Board, Captain Gerald Gouveia.

PRISON SERVICE TRAINS NEW RECRUITS



The Guyana Prison Service (GPS) has welcomed 27 new fully trained recruits into its system. Likened to all other new entrants, this 1st batch of 2021, underwent the Service's twelve-week Basic Recruit Training Course (BRTC). Currently, the 2021's second batch of 29 recruits are being exposed to both practical and written training on host of topics, including, Powers of Observation, Emergency Response, Cell Examinations, Financial Regulations, Management of Inmates and Basic Human Rights.

The objective of the BRTC is to produce quality prison officers, who will be able to carry out the duties of the institution.

Due to the overcrowding in the prisons the Guyana Prison Service has had to collaborate with the Guyana Fire Service to utilise its training facilities at the Lenora Fire Station, West

Coast Demerara to fulfil the mandate and required conditions of training for the BRTC programme.

Training for the last batch of new entrants for 2020 included 57 individuals.

The GPS plays an integral role within the country's Criminal Justice System, and according to Director of Prisons Mr. Nick-lon Elliot (ag), the administration of the GPS is happy to have the 2021 recruits on board. He further noted that the prison environment is very complex and multi-dimensional in scope, where ranks are expected to execute their tasks with a high level of efficiency, integrity and honour.

Having completed the training programme, the recruits will be transferred to the various prison locations to undergo on-the-job training.



David Shepherd, Superintendent of Prisons (ag) at the Lusignan Prison (left), Rajiv Bisnauth - Public Relations Officer (second left), Rae-Dawn Corbin - PRRM-Technical Officer and Fitzgerald Singh, Doctor attached to the Lusignan Prison.

BOXING GEAR FOR GUYANA PRISON SERVICE



GBA president, Steve Ninvalle, makes a presentation to a representative of the Guyana Police Force in the presence of other affiliate gym representatives and GBA executives

The Guyana Boxing Association (GBA) aided the development of sport within the prison system by donating a quantity of boxing gear to the Guyana Prison Service.

The presentation was done by GBA president, Steve Ninvalle, in the boardroom of the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport earlier this month.

According to Ninvalle, who is also the Country's Director of Sport, the donation was made possible by the sport's global governing body, the International Boxing Association (AIBA).

Ninvalle said the Prison Service was chosen for the donation because of the diverse talents that exist within the Prison system.

Deputy Director of the Prison Service, Kevin Pilgrim, shared that the donation is extremely timely as the Prison Service Sports Club is in rebuild mode.

"In reality boxing has helped to impart discipline because when some of the guys enter the ring, after a couple of sessions they become more focused and this will aid the Prison Service," Pilgrim shared.

Among the items donated were boxing gloves, head gear and punching bags.

Mazaruni Inmates Participate in Leadership Workshop

– Hoping to see more of the sessions, inmates say

Personal development and leadership skills were among the main focus of a workshop for selected inmates housed at the Mazaruni Prison located in the Essequibo River.

The workshop conducted by Empower Guyana Consultancy was done to expose the inmates to ideas and concepts related to capacity building. The session served as a step in the direction of restorative justice as it encourages inmates to return to their communities as reformed and rehabilitated citizens.

The inmates expressed thanks to the members of the Empower Guyana team, and said they are hopeful about having more of those sessions in the future.

According to the participating inmates, who composed of a mixture high profile and lower profile inmates, said that more of the sessions are needed in order for them to continue to be optimistic about life. They also said that the sessions can play a role in decreasing prison violence.

Officer-in-Charge of the Mazaruni Prison Alexander Hopkinson welcomed the initiative and expressed his desire to have more of the leadership and personal development sessions in the coming months. *(BIG SMITH NEWSWATCH)*



Amar Panday, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Empower Guyana Consultancy making a point.



OUR RANKS



Nicklon Elliot
Director of
Prisons (AG)



Kevin Pilgrim
Deputy Director
of Prisons (AG)

**Kofi David – Senior
Superintendent of Prisons (AG)**

**Mark Smith
Superintendent of Prisons**

**Kirk Joseph
Assistant Superintendent of
Prisons**

**Marielle Bristol
Officer-in-Charge, Prisoners
Welfare & Correction**

**Grace Roberts
Staff Welfare Officer**

Georgetown Prison "A"

**Olivia Cox
Superintendent of
Prisons**

**Roddy Denhart
Assistant Superintendent
of Prisons**

Georgetown Prison "B"

**Deoraj Gyandat
Senior Superintendent
of Prisons (AG)**

**Carlton Cameron
Superintendent of
Prisons**

Mazaruni Prison

**Alexander Hopkinson
Senior Superintendent of Prisons**

**Oldrield Romulus
- Assistant Superintendent of Prisons**

New Amsterdam Prison

**Udistair Holligon -
Superintendent of
Prisons (AG)**

**Christine George
Superintendent of
Prisons**

Lusignan Prison

**David Shepherd
Superintendent of
Prisons (AG)**

**Seon Charles
Superintendent of
Prisons (AG)**

Timehri Prison

**Amias Benjamin
Assistant
Superintendent of
Prisons**

**Shirley Crossman
Assistant Superintendent
of Prisons**

50 per cent of prisoners fully vaccinated against COVID-19

Half of the country's prison population is fully vaccinated against COVID-19, this is according to Public Relations Officer (PRO) of the Guyana Prison Service Rajiv Bisnauth.



Of the total number of prisoners, Bisnauth said 55% of them received a first dose of a COVID-19 vaccine and 50% are fully vaccinated, meaning they have taken both doses of the vaccine.

In addition, Bisnauth said that nearly 70% of prison officers and other staff members are fully vaccinated.

He noted that the GPS in collaboration with the Ministry of Health has a weekly vaccination drive at each prison facility.

Also high on the agenda, Bisnauth said, is an initiative to increase confidence in COVID-19 vaccines and reinforce basic prevention measures among inmates.