

Suriname

Also known as:

“Beating Heart of the Amazon”

Motto:

“Justitia, Pietas, Fides (Justice, Compassion, Loyalty)”

History:

Amerindians inhabited the country up to the 15th century. Settlers came from England, The Netherlands, France and Germany among others. African slaves, indentured labourers from India, Indonesia and China were brought to Suriname during the 18th century. Struggle for possession by the French, British and Dutch ended with control by the Netherlands in 1815. Slavery was abolished in 1863. The country gained independence in 1975. In February 1980 a military coup brought Commander Desi Bouterse into power. In 1987 national elections were held and democracy was restored. In October 1997 an attempt to overthrow the government was foiled.

Economic Summary:

Agriculture is an important economic sector for Suriname. The main crops are rice, fruit (including bananas) and vegetables. Rice accounts for approximately half of total cultivated land. The export of shrimp and scalefish also contribute to Suriname's foreign exchange earnings. There is a small fish-farming sector producing fish, shrimp and crabmeat mainly for domestic consumption.

The timber industry is a growth sector, supported by the abundance of tropical forestry resources. Suriname is the world's eighth largest bauxite producer. Alumina and aluminum are crucial to the economy, accounting for more than two-thirds of export earnings. Gold mining continues to be a growth area despite suffering severely from weak world prices in the late 1990s.

The manufacturing sector continues to hold its own. This sector includes aluminum production, import-substituting industries using local and imported inputs, and processing of local agricultural products. Food processing accounts for about 60% of manufacturing activities. Tourism is a prime potential growth sector. The interior rainforest and coastal wetlands augur well for a vibrant eco-tourism industry.

Airport: Johan Adolph Pengel International, Zanderij

Capital: Paramaibo



Head of Government:

H.E. Desiré Delano Bouterse
President

Date of birth: 13 October 1945

Marital Status: Married

Education:

Military Sports Academy (Holland)

1980-1988: Chairman, National Military Council

1980: Interim President

1982: Interim President

2000: Chairman, National Democratic Party (NDP)

2010: Chairman, Mega Combination

(Government Coalition Party comprising NDP, KTPI, PALU, and New Suriname)

2010: Elected President

Population:

492,829 (2004)

Date of CARICOM Membership: 4 July 1995

National Anthem:

God zij met ons Suriname
Hij verheft ons heerlijk Land
Hoe wij hier ook samen kwamen
Aan zijn grond zijn wij verpand
Werkend houden we in gedachten
Recht en Waarheid maken vrij
Al wat goed is te Betrachten
Dat geeft aan ons land waardij.

Opo kondre man Un opo
Sranan gron e kari un
Wans' ope tata komopo
Wi mus' seti kondre bun

Stre def' stre Wi no sa frede
Gado de wi fesiman
Heri libi te na dede
Wi sa feti gi Sranan

Highest National Award:

Drager van het Groot Lint in de Ere Orde van de Palm

National Dish:

Pinda Soup with Tom Tom; Saoto soup; Pom

National Symbols:



Coat of Arms



National Flag



National Flower