THE NATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS REGULATORY COMMISSION

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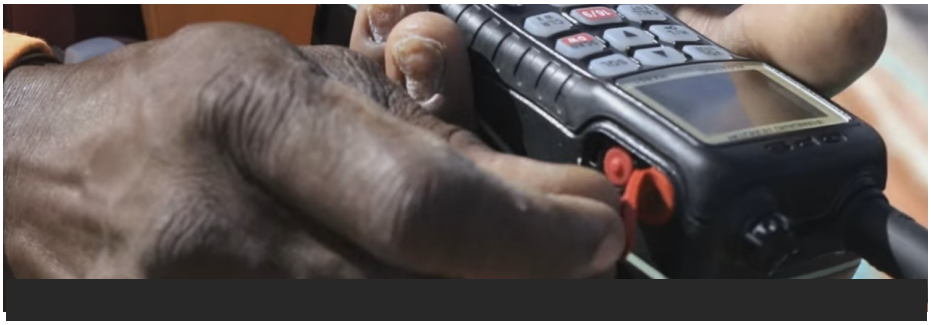


NTRC to host GMDSS Radio Training for Fishermen in St. Vincent and the Grenadines

The National Telecommunications Regulatory Commission (NTRC) in collaboration with the St. Vincent and the Grenadines Coast Guard will be hosting a series of one day GMDSS Radio training sessions at various locations across St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

The objective of the training sessions is to further equip fishermen on the use of VHF Radios that work with the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS). The basic concept of this system is that the Coast Guard as well as vessels in the immediate area of a ship in distress will be rapidly alerted to the emergency so that they can assist with minimum delay time.

The NTRC implemented the GMDSS system in St. Vincent and the Grenadines to improve the VHF maritime coverage around the country. Under this project, the control system, consisting of work stations for the radio operators and servers, were installed at the Coast Guard Base. Additionally, a total of one hundred (100) Digital Selective Calling (DSC) enabled radios were procured and made available to owners of marine vessels at a subsidized cost. Some of the radios were distributed free of cost to fishermen in the major fishing villages across St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

The Maritime project was done jointly with the NTRC and the Eastern Caribbean Telecommunications Authority (ECTEL). The NTRC via ECTEL was able to secure part funding for the project via a grant made available by the World Bank in the amount of Two Hundred Thousand US dollars (USD $200,000.00).

The training is free of cost and would begin on April 28, 2016 at the Fisheries Conference Room in Kingstown. Interested fisherman asked to register by April 14, 2016 by contacting the NTRC at 457-2279.

Android Security

Download apps only from the Google Play Store

Indeed, the most 'dangerous' thing about Android is not the OS itself, but apps that a user can install. Contrary to iOS, installing an app by oneself or with 'help' from another user is super easy on Android. Just never download an app from third-party platforms and websites: they might be infected. It is easier to fully disable this capability in settings and deploy an integrated app security check. Also, say no to root access, as it significantly elevates the risks of running into infected applications.

***How it helps**: significantly lowers your chances of getting malware.*

***How to set it:** go to "Settings" -> "Security", un-check the "Unknown Sources" box, check "Verify Apps."*

NTRC focused on engaging the Public

A section of the attendees and panelists at the town hall meeting on March 10, 2016 at NIS Conference Room

The National Telecommunications Regulatory Commission is focused on engaging the public to gather their concerns on matters related to telecommunications services. On March 11, 2016, the NTRC held a town hall meeting at the NIS Conference Room to discuss the Consumer Protection Regulations which were recommended for consultation in St. Vincent and the Grenadines by the Eastern Caribbean Telecommunications Authority (ECTEL). Noting that the consumer protection regulations impacts the consumers of telecommunications services, the meeting was held to allow consumers to express their views so that their comments can be incorporated into the draft regulations.

At the town hall meeting, there were presentations from the Hon. Camillo Gonsalves, Minister responsible for Telecommunications, Mr. Junior Bacchus, President of the Consumer Affairs Association and officials from ECTEL and the NTRC.

The NTRC will be having another of these public forums in the form of a community discussion in the Grenadine island of Bequia to give residents of the island the opportunity to provide their feedback on the telecommunications services. The community discussion will be held on April 7, 2016 at the Paget Farm Community Center, Paget Farm, Bequia.

Latin America and the Caribbean called on to strengthen efforts on cybersecurity

Leaders of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and the Organization of American States (OAS) on March 14, 2016 called on the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean to step up their efforts on cybersecurity after releasing a new study, carried out by the two institutions with the support of Oxford University, that shows the region is highly vulnerable to potentially devastating cyber-attacks.

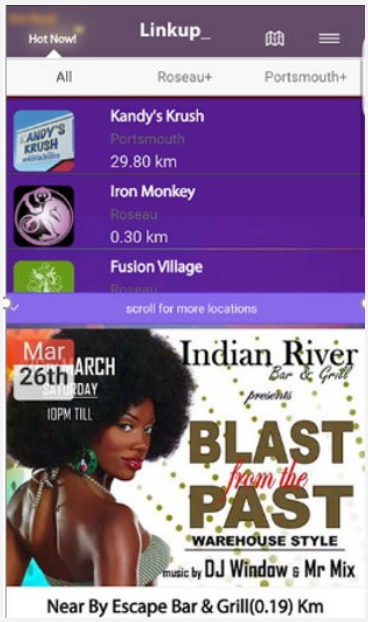
The 2016 Cybersecurity Report, Are we ready in Latin America and the Caribbean?, shows that four out of every five countries in the region do not have a cybersecurity strategy or plans for protecting critical infrastructure. Two out of three countries do not have a command and control center for cybersecurity. And a large majority of prosecutors lack the capacity to punish cybercrimes and face other problems as well. The report analyzes the state of preparedness of 32 countries based on 49 indicators. It is the first significant examination of the level of preparedness in Latin America and the Caribbean against the growing threat of cybercrime. Uruguay, Brazil, México, Argentina, Chile, Colombia and Trinidad and Tobago have achieved an intermediate level of preparedness, but remain far from advanced countries like the United States, Israel, Estonia and Korea.

“This report is a call to action to protect our citizen and our critical infrastructure for the 21st century,” said IDB president Luis Alberto Moreno. “Our region arrived late to the Industrial Revolution. We cannot miss the opportunity that the Digital Revolution offers us,” he said. “Because of that, cybersecurity must be a priority.”

The risks of abuse increase as Latin America and the Caribbean join the digital revolution. The region is the fourth largest mobile market in the world. Half its population uses the Internet. There are countries in Latin America that process 100 percent of their government purchases electronically. And the risks will multiply with the advent of “The Internet of Things,” where not only computers will be interconnected, but a universe of smart devices and sensors will monitor and control virtually everything we use every day.

Source: Caribbean News Now via ICT Pulse

Dominicans create events mobile app



Two young Dominicans are aiming to innovate the event advertising industry and create an opportunity for others. They have created a mobile app, Linkup_, which promises to centralize event information for the masses and give event promoters a new way of getting their events out there.

H. Irus Toussaint and Daniel L.Pond have been developing the app since last year, using the latest technology available, getting information and trying to make something of value for Dominicans.

"We made the app because it was difficult figuring out what was going on in Dominica," they said. " You're always hearing that nothing is happening in Dominica but the day after you hear an event has past and it was so good or it's sold out when you hear about it".

Linkup_'s mission statement is to bring people together to enjoy themselves in places where they have been and in places where they didn't know about. They will discover new places and make new connections with the people they meet there.

Recently, the app was submitted to World Summit Youth Award 2016, an award initiated in 2003 in the framework of the UN World Summit on the Information Society (UN WSIS). Participation in contests like this will allow Dominican talent to be showcased to the world.

Another resource which they have been able to access is the PitchIT Caribbean Challenge 2016 through The National Telecommunications Regulatory Commission (NTRC) with business/mobile technology training at the Dominica State College. The challenge will bring together app developers from across the Caribbean and Linkup_ will be carrying the Dominica Flag.

The mobile app is available in the Google Play Store, the Windows App Store, and the Apple App Store. The app features push notifications, easy navigation, and tells clients which event has the most people.

According to their website http://www.linkmeup.co, "Linkup_ is currently only available for: Dominica. (For now)".

Source: Dominica Vibes via ICT Pulse

Samsung brings Smart schools to T&T

Jennifer Donley, regional marketing manager, Samsung Electronics, and Leo Silva, device trainer, show the new Samsung Galaxy S7 and Galaxy S7 Edge during the official launch of the new smartphones

Samsung has committed to modernising T&T's education system through its Smart Classroom initiative, the technology giant's regional marketing manager, Jennifer Donley announced on March 31, 2016.

"We are actually working on focusing and enhancing and ensuring that those Smart Schools are successful in 2016 and hopefully be able to expand later in the year and of course in 2017," she said as Samsung unveiled its latest mobile handsets and associated gear before the local media at the Hilton Trinidad and Conference Centre.

The Smart Classroom initiative uses tablets and educational tools to connect teachers and students. The digital classroom allows teachers to keep track of students' progress in real time, which enables them to adjust their teaching instantaneously if they see that students are having trouble with a specific topic.

Commenting on the company's other projects in the country, Donley said the Samsung Experience stores at Gulf City Mall, Westmall and Trincity Mall are very appealing to the public.

She said the company takes pride in listening to its customers and many of the new features available in the next generation handsets were developed and included based on consumer request. In a deliberate effort to transform the lives of its customers, she added, Samsung introduced handsets with sleeker designs, advanced camera functionality, as well as streamlining of software aimed at pushing the limits of what traditional smartphones are capable of.

The company also addressed issues related to storage by adding an extra micro SD card slot, while increasing battery capacity and wireless charging capabilities.

Source: Trinidad Guardian

Google seeks to improve internet access in Cuba

US technology giant Google has opened an online technology centre in Cuba as part of a broader cooperative effort to improve internet access for the island's citizens. ABC News reports that the technology centre, which is situated at the studio of local artist Alexis Leiva Machado (also known as Kcho), has been equipped with laptops, mobile phones and virtual-reality goggles. Internet access is provided by Cuba's state-owned telecoms monopoly Empresa de Telecomunicaciones de Cuba (ETECSA) over a new fibre-optic connection, offering maximum speeds of 70Mbps. The report cites US President Barack Obama as saying that Google's efforts in Cuba are part of a wider plan to broaden access to the internet across the island, although further details have not been announced and plans are said to be at an early stage.

Earlier this year, ETECSA launched two pilot fibre-optic network projects in Old Havana, following an agreement with Chinese equipment vendor Huawei, although home internet connections remain prohibited for average citizens, TeleGeography's GlobalComms Database notes. The government took a first step towards increasing access for Cubans in June 2013, when it began offering internet services at over a hundred ETECSA outlets, known as 'salas de navegacion'. More significantly, in June last year the island began offering Wi-Fi connections to citizens at a number of public locations. Customers with a temporary or permanent 'Nauta' account are able to surf the web using their Wi-Fi-enabled device at maximum downstream speeds of 1Mbps, although the cost – USD2.0 per hour – remains unaffordable for most Cubans.

Source: Telegeography

Broadband commission sets new connectivity targets

The Broadband Commission for Sustainable Development has agreed on a new set of connectivity targets to help governments meet the 17 sustainable development goals set by the United Nations. During debates in Dubai, the attendees focused on the need to measure the use of broadband-enabled public services, according to a press release from the International Telecommunication Union (ITU). Commissioners also highlighted the importance of developing digital scorecards to measure how countries are meeting broadband targets. The commission will now formulate measurable broadband connectivity goals, which will be submitted during the next meeting in New York in September. Established by UNESCO and ITU in 2010 to promote connectivity, the 62-member commission is made up by experts from governments, UN agencies, civil society and the private sector.
The commission's state of broadband report released last September showed that 57% of the world's people were still offline and unable to take advantage of the internet.
"Agreement on new targets in September would serve as the next stepping stone to the commission's vision of broadband for all," said ITU Secretary-General Houlin Zhao.
"Broadband represents a powerful way to accelerate progress towards the attainment of the 17 SDGs, and new broadband networks and services will play a key role in the delivery of education, healthcare and basic social services, particularly for chronically disadvantaged communities."

Source: CANTO

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