

Our Ref:.....

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Chambers

*Director of Public Prosecutions,
P.O. Box 1031,
Georgetown,
Guyana*

15th August, 2023

DPP's CHAMBERS - DPP MAKES HISTORICAL VISIT TO BARAMITA, REGION 1

Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP), Mrs. Shalimar Ali-Hack, SC, made history when she travelled to Baramita, Region 1 on Monday 14th August, 2023 for a three-day Outreach to the remote Amerindian Community located in the western region of Guyana.

At a public meeting held at the Baramita Primary School hours after she arrived by plane from Georgetown, she addressed residents who expressed their great appreciation for her presence. One resident said her visit to Baramita was historic since it was the very first time that a sitting DPP took the time to travel to the community to meet one-on-one with them.

Mrs. Ali-Hack, SC, listened to the many complaints from residents; these included but not limited to issues relating to registration of births, no resident probation and Welfare officer, proper maintenance of roads among others. Matters relating to criminal activities were reported and these were taken note of for follow-up.

In her remarks, the DPP spoke to the dangers of alcohol consumption by young teenagers, smoking of marijuana, the scourge of Domestic Violence and consumption of alcohol by adults that often times lead to DV in the home.

She also addressed the issue of Trafficking in Persons. Parents were admonished to discuss with their Toshao Onika Melbourne, any employers who got into the community to recruit young people for employment, particularly in the backdam (gold fields.)

Complaints from the residents suggest that selling alcohol to underage children is a major problem in Baramita. In this regard, DPP admonished the police to better patrol the community to arrest this issue.

Several ranks of the Baramita Police Station were in attendance. DPP suggested that the Toshao in collaboration with the Police and Village Council meet with the parents along with Social Workers to confront the selling of alcohol to children. It was reported at the meeting that children are seen consuming high wine on a regular basis.

At the conclusion of the meeting, DPP recommended and agreed with ASP James Tappin's suggestion for the Village Council to set up a Task Force that would comprise of individuals from the various government and non-government entities to work along with resident on their complaints.

Among the residents who turned out to meet with the DPP were Toshao Onika Melbourne who interpreted the English language to the Carib dialect spoken by the residents and Medex Holly Edghilo, who has served the community for over a decade.

The DPP's Team included Assistant DPP Dionne McCammon and Communications Officer Liz Rahaman. The DPP's Office had collaborated with the Justice Education Society (JES) Guyana on a 4-day Gender and Cultural Sensitivity Training for police ranks of the Guyana Police Force at the Baramita Police Station, local village councilors, health workers and the Toshao Onika Melbourne.

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DPP's CHAMBERS – TREAT AMERINDIANS WITH RESPECT

Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP) Mrs. Shalimar Ali-Hack, SC on Tuesday 15th August, 2023 admonished police ranks from the Baramita Police Station to always respect the Indigenous Community which they serve.

Her admonishment came during brief opening remarks to participants at a Gender and Cultural Sensitivity Training hosted by the Justice Education Society (JES) in Baramita Region 1, North West District from August 14 to 17, 2023.

DPP Ali-Hack, SC, told the participants to be respectful to residents of the Amerindian Community since like all other Guyanese, the Amerindian people have rights under the supreme law, the Constitution of Guyana.

She implored the police ranks that whenever complainants approach them to make reports of crimes involving trafficking in persons, sexual offences, domestic violence, consumption of alcohol by underage children and young teenagers and the smoking of marijuana, *“you must always treat them with respect, they are like any other Guyanese who have rights under the supreme law.”*

On the day 1 of the training, the DPP explained the criminal law governing indictable matters such as Murder, Rape, Sexual Offences to the lesser serious offences of Disorderly Behavior, Larceny and Assault.

During her introductory remarks, JES's Country Representative Lisa Thompson echoed similar sentiments to those of the DPP's when she told the participants that they are the first persons who would interact with the residents when something happens, *“you are the first people they come to when they need help.”*

JES training was aimed to deliver greater equality in access to justice for women and girls and to empower Indigenous women and girls to be less vulnerable to violence, in particular sexual and gender-based violence, sexual violence, homicides and gender-based assaults.

The objective of JES's Gender-Based and Cultural Sensitivity Training is designed for the Guyana Police Force throughout Guyana, Toshaos, Community members including teachers, local village council members, health care providers and young people. Its focus is to support the building of capacity of indigenous leaders including women leaders and the police force to deliver transformative gender and rights-based public legal education to respond to SGBV. The DPP's Team at Baramita included Assistant DPP Dionne McCammon and Communications Officer Liz Rahaman while JES's Team included Country Representative Lisa Thompson and Specialist Consultant Camille Ishmael.

After the Baramita Training, JES and the DPP's Office continued training in Sub-Region 1 Santa Rosa Mocura, for police ranks, toshao, village councilors and health workers from 21st to 25th August, 2023.

On this leg of the training, DPP's State Counsel Caressa Henry represented the DPP's Chambers.