



BRYANELIZA LATCHMAN

Guyana

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Honourable Irfan Ali
President of Guyana
Office of the President
Georgetown
Guyana

Dear Mr. President,

I am an eleven year old student at Providence Primary School. I am now starting to understand the realities of the world I live in. I was watching a National Geographic episode on "Climate Change". I learnt that serious changes in the weather have already caused forest fires, hurricanes, heat waves, floods, droughts and storms all around the world. This has caused many deaths, shortage of food, destruction of homes and fear of animals becoming extinct.

This made me so scared knowing that the Low Coastal Plain of Guyana is below sea level and densely populated. It has me seriously thinking about the possibility of Guyana going under water! What will happen to all of us Guyanese?

After chatting with my mom and dad about my fears, they suggested I do some research online. I learnt there are things we can all do to manage the effects of Climate Change in our country thus inspiring other countries to do the same. Mr. President, as the Head of State, I believe you have the power to make decisions that will benefit our country. You have Guyana's resources at your hand and relationships with CARICOM members and the cooperation of other Heads of States if you should need extra help.

Here are some ways we can manage Climate Change before it is too late:

1. Educate Guyanese:

Making everyone aware that a problem exists is the first step. I think you should run infomercials via social media. Most kids like myself watch TikTok. My 13 and 16-year-old cousins are on Instagram and my father likes to watch Facebook. These trending apps are wide spread ways of quickly and easily sharing information to all age groups. It should also include ways to reduce water wastage. Advise persons to recycle water. For instance, collect rainwater for everyday usage and reuse the water we bathe with to flush the toilet. Conserve water by turning off pipes when not in use.

2. Revise and reinforce the environmental laws that exist against pollution.

There should be stronger penalties for persons who pollute the air, water and land, for example, person littering the streets, waterways and factories that contaminate the air with harmful gases and chemicals.

3. Move residents to higher ground:

Guyana is about six to eight feet below sea level. This means that when the polar ice caps melt, causing the oceans, seas and rivers to rise and overflow, flooding will occur. When the coastal areas start to flood, people will be forced to give up their homes and go to higher ground. This will also cause a lot of infectious diseases. Before this happens, I suggest you start giving out free house lots to Guyanese in elevated areas such as the Linden Highway. You can also lower the prices of materials to make it affordable for persons to readily build their homes.

4. Use renewable energy sources:

On a yearly basis, distribute energy saving lightbulbs to each household thereby reducing the amount of electricity used. I recently learnt in Social Studies about the Christianburg Waterwheel that powered a sawmill in Linden years ago. A similar more upgraded concept should be brought back to reduce the amount of fossil fueled generators that are presently being used. Today, countries around the world are already seeing the benefits of using turbines where wind energy turns a turbine blade which feeds an electric generator and produces no direct carbon emissions.

Fun Fact: According to the National Renewable Energy Laboratory, "more energy from the sun falls on the earth in one hour than is used by everyone in the world in one year".

Solar energy has been around for many years. Materials in solar panels transform sunlight into electricity to power devices both in home and businesses. These solar panels on rooftops that directly absorb the sun's rays should be made affordable for everyone to use. You should consider community projects that generate power to neighbourhoods. Giftland Mall on the East Coast has already shown such capabilities.

Government taxes on energy saving appliances should be reduced. This will allow business owners to sell these items at cheaper prices thereby attracting customers to use these energy products over others.

5. Prevent food shortages

Just as we have community playparks, we should have community farmlands and gardens where residents contribute to the rearing of livestock and planting and reaping of crops. This will ensure that every household has a sufficient supply of food. Things like fertilizers and manure should be made cheaper to encourage more Guyanese to start farming.

6. Have fewer motor vehicles:

There is an obvious increase in the number of vehicles on the road which is causing an increase in gas emissions polluting the air. You should make the public transportation system more energy efficient, affordable, safer, comfortable and accessible. This will surely encourage people to drive less.

Our First Lady, Honourable Arya Ali, has already started a bicycle service to move around the city. More of this should be done in other parts of the country to reduce the carbon footprint.

7. Cleaning up our home Guyana!

I have been observing volunteers from various companies and communities collaborate with each other to clean up Guyana. This practice is commendable and should be continued on a regular basis.

I really hope you understand my fears and why we need to quickly act. These are my ideas and researching actions to manage Climate Change. Feel free to build on these ideas in a way you see fit. It is important to me that I write you this letter sharing my concerns so we can preserve and protect both our beautiful country Guyana and planet Earth!

Yours Sincerely,

Bryaneliza Latchman

