



## The National Gas Company of Trinidad and Tobago Limited Media Release

### Tassa goes Tech: Another First for NGC Trinidad and Tobago Sweet Tassa Academy

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In yet another first, NGC Trinidad & Tobago Sweet Tassa Academy created the first Tassa Academy website offering online classes from May 1st 2020. The idea came about as a result of COVID-19 restrictions which forced the cessation of in-person tassa classes at the Academy's compound.

The Academy's main mission is to tutor persons interested in learning tassa drumming, and is located at Mt Stewart Village, Princes Town. NGC has sponsored this dynamic tassa group since 2014. The group launched the country's first Tassa Academy in 2017, and their all-female band is also the first all-female tassa group in Trinidad and Tobago.

The NGC Trinidad & Tobago Sweet Tassa Academy website gives access to members who register online to one-on-one tassa classes with Mr. Lenny Kumar, tassa drummer for 48 years and founder of Trinidad and Tobago Sweet Tassa. Sessions are conducted via ZOOM and payment is also done online. Mr. Kumar also worked alongside Digital Business Limited to create the first tassa app, and is well known as the creator of the renowned tassa hand "Chutney", a style of tassa drumming.

NGC Trinidad & Tobago Sweet Tassa Academy sees these online sessions as integral to their mission of ensuring that tassa drumming continues to grow and develop as an artform in Trinidad despite the current COVID-19 conditions. The online sessions have been well received by students thus far, and will continue to be relevant for tassa enthusiasts who cannot attend classes in person, and may prefer to learn the art of tassa drumming from the comfort of their homes.

The NGC Trinidad & Tobago Sweet Tassa Academy has been advertising via social media to provide the opportunity to persons keen on learning tassa drumming. The website also allows for international students to log on for classes where they too can learn about tassa drumming and our culture. The band will continue weekly updates on the website as they aim to provide a seamless experience.

When referring to his passion, Mr. Lenny Kumar states that *"I would like to preserve and protect the roots and original style of the art form of Tassa Drumming, to positively promote the culture and to produce an appreciation for the culture within and beyond the shores of Trinidad and Tobago."*

According to Lisa Burkett, NGC's Corporate Communications Manager, *"NGC Sweet Tassa Academy's online initiative demonstrates our continued resilience as a people. We all must make the requisite changes as we adjust to our new normal. We urge the band to continue gaining momentum, and promoting our country and our culture, both locally and internationally."*

Persons interested in learning more about the art of tassa drumming can visit the NGC Trinidad & Tobago Sweet Tassa Academy at <https://www.sweettassaedu.com/>.

**For more information:**

**Lisa Burkett, Manager, Corporate Communications**

**The National Gas Company of Trinidad and Tobago Limited (NGC)**

**Orinoco Drive, Point Lisas**

[lisa.burkett@ngc.co.tt](mailto:lisa.burkett@ngc.co.tt)