



**Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago**  
**Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts**

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**MEDIA RELEASE**

**Minister Mitchell: New initiative to recognize and reward local artistes**

The Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago has put systems in place to ensure the cultural sector survives the COVID-19 pandemic and emerges stronger after this health crisis.

Minister of Tourism, Culture and the Arts the Honourable Randall Mitchell told the Trinbago Unified Calypsonians Organisation (TUCO) Gala and Awards Ceremony 2020 that there is a plan to help artistes and other citizens weather the storm.

He said the Cultural Relief Grant, the Micro-Enterprise Grant Programme, the Income Support Relief Grant and the Corporate Tax Allowance for the Creative Sector are just some of the Government measures that can be accessed by cultural groups like TUCO. The cost of the rental of state-owned performing spaces was also reduced by 50 per cent.

Apart from public sector assistance, he said, the Government provided incentives, such as increased tax breaks for private sector companies which support the local cultural fraternity.

“...the Minister of Finance recently announced as a fiscal measure an increase in the Corporate Tax Allowance incentive from \$6M to \$12M. What this means is that corporate Trinidad and Tobago can now increase their sponsorship budgets to sponsor more creative projects or more artistes in the same financial year,” he explained.

Moreover, there is a comprehensive plan to recognize and reward local artistes.

“The Government recently laid in Parliament, the National Cultural Policy which will be supported by a Cabinet-approved National Cultural Recognition Policy... As Minister, I will be speaking more on this in the coming months and how it will impact cultural icons, legends and high performing artistes,” Minister Mitchell told the celebrations at Queen’s Hall.

The theme of this year's Calypso History Month, which was observed in October, is *Calypso...Beyond Boundaries and Borders*. These celebrations are held annually to honour calypsonians for their work. This year's gala which took place on Friday, 6 November 2020, was held in keeping with public health regulations and was significantly scaled down. However, Minister Mitchell assured the calypsonians that the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts stands ready to support TUCO to ensure they emerge stronger, better and more resilient.



President of the Trinbago Unified Calypsonians Organisation (TUCO) Lutalo Masimba popularly known as *Brother Resistance* (left) exchanges greetings with the Minister of Tourism, Culture and the Arts the Honourable Randall Mitchell during last evening's Gala and Awards Ceremony held by TUCO in celebration of the just-concluded Calypso History Month.



Minister of Tourism, Culture and the Arts the Honourable Randall Mitchell (right) presents Albert Bushe with an award for his contribution to the promotion of calypso music during the Trinbago Unified Calypsonians Organisation (TUCO) Gala and Awards Ceremony last evening at Queen's Hall.



**Thank you for your service to the arts:** Supporting vocalist, Allan Elizabeth Julien “Maggie” received an award from the Minister of Tourism, Culture and the Arts the Honourable Randall Mitchell during the Trinbago Unified Calypsonians Organisation (TUCO) Gala and Awards Ceremony for long and distinguished contribution to calypso music.