

TRINIDAD & TOBAGO

A nation of possibilities

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Experience the nation's renowned steel drums at their best at the 10-acre Port of Spain National Academy for the Performing Arts, a 1,500-seat performance hall offering state-of-the-art acoustics and an inspirational setting for T&T's artistes

T&T: A STABLE DEMOCRACY AND A LAND OF CULTURE AND DIVERSITY

The twin islands of Trinidad and Tobago, often referred to as T&T, had much to be proud of as they reached 50 years of independence on August 30, 2012. The commercial, creative and dynamic Trinidad is complemented perfectly by the relaxed, peaceful and beautiful Tobago, which is the focus point of the archipelago's tourism sector. Both at home and abroad, particularly in the diaspora of Miami, New York, Toronto and London, the 50th anniversary was marked by various festivities designed to highlight, celebrate and inform the world of the nation's achievements and of its plans for the future.

The home of calypso, chutney and soca music, T&T not only has one of the world's liveliest cultures, but also the most industrialized, diversified and open economy in the Caribbean.

The energy sector is the main driver of the economy. Some 75% of homes on the U.S. East Coast are powered with natural gas from T&T, which also has the oldest oil well in the world. "Our oil industry is well over 100 years old; it is older than that of Libya and Iran," says Neil Parsan, Ambassador of Trinidad and Tobago to the U.S. "We have had very long and cordial relations with the United States that go back to 1962, and we still continue to be an energy resources supplier to the U.S. However, we have also been looking at exporting gas to Brazil, India, and China. We do not want to put all of our LNG (liquefied natural gas) eggs in one basket."

In addition to large reserves of petroleum and gas, the country has well-developed heavy industries, such as iron and steel, and it is the world's largest producer of methanol and ammonia.

"WE HAVE ACHIEVED A LOT FOR SUCH A YOUNG COUNTRY. WE ARE THE WORLD'S LARGEST PRODUCER OF AMMONIA AND METHANOL, AND WE HAVE NOT STOPPED THERE. THE GOVERNMENT HAS EMBARKED ON A DIVERSIFICATION STRATEGY TO TAKE THE ECONOMY FORWARD."

NEIL PARSAN,
T&T's Ambassador to the U.S.



encouraged to generate wealth and security for Trinbagonians. In 2010, T&T attracted more than US\$549 million in foreign direct investment (FDI); a total that increased by 5% to US\$574 million in 2011.

According to Prime Minister Kamla Persad Bissessar: "While there are various government bodies to facilitate investment in the country, the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago encourages the creation of new opportunities and the incubation of new business without government interference. We believe it is the responsibility of government to be business facilitators for and not competitors with the private sector. We are open for business."

From its people to its geography and climate, T&T offers a wide range of incentives that accompany a long-established stable and democratic political system, a literate population, a well-developed professional class and a strategic location for exporting to the Americas, Europe and Asia.

In recent years, a renewed mandate to boost the non-oil sector of the economy has revealed investment opportunities abound in a wide range of industries the government would like to develop: food and beverages, seafood, movie production, music and entertainment, printing and packaging, merchant marine, yachting, healing/wellness tourism, ICT, financial services, food production and agro processing. "We are expanding our presence in different sectors," says

Minister of Foreign Affairs Winston Dookeran. "The new architecture of the economy is being built."

The T&T government sees

the private sector and entrepreneurs as key partners in the nation's socioeconomic development, with both local and foreign investment welcomed and

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Open for business

The country's aim is to become a commercial and manufacturing hub of the Caribbean and the Americas

Trinidad and Tobago is the most industrialized nation in the Caribbean, with oil and gas reserves being major contributors to the health and growth of its economy. Yet although it is already the manufacturing hub of the region, the government wants to increase its manufacturing base and raise the sector's contribution to T&T's GDP.

The government is working hard to increase the country's attractiveness for foreign direct investment, with the U.S. being its main area of interest.

"Trinidad and Tobago must be a one-stop shop for investment," says Stephen Cadiz, T&T's Minister of Tourism and former Minister of Trade, Industry and Investment. "We have built quite a substantial energy-related business in Trinidad. Our oil industry is more than 100 years old, T&T being one of the oldest oil producers in the world. We are

also a leading producer of methanol and ammonia and have huge LNG exports. On the other hand, Tobago's economy is based on tourism and that is the beauty of our country: the mixture of an industrial base and a Caribbean paradise. But we need to do more."

The government is making changes year on year to diversify the economy as much as possible. Attracting U.S. companies is high on its agenda.

"Oil and gas represents 45% of our GDP but only employs 5% of our working population," says Mr. Cadiz. "The other 55% of our economy is based on manufacturing, services, and agro-processing industries."

"Our target is to increase our manufacturing base and its contribution to the country's GDP; we are running at 63% of our capacity and we need to increase that rate by finding new markets



"WE WANT TO DEVELOP A KNOWLEDGE-BASED ECONOMY FOUNDED ON INNOVATION AND COMPETITIVENESS. OUR MAIN PRIORITY IS TO ADD VALUE TO OUR RAW MATERIALS BY PROCESSING THEM ON THE ISLANDS."

STEPHEN CADIZ, Minister of Tourism

outside of CARICOM, like Central America, the Spanish-speaking islands, and the EU.

"We also aim to develop a knowledge-based economy, founded on innovation and competitiveness, to capitalize on our highly educated workforce and attract ICT companies to

the downstream energy sector, especially natural gas producers," says Mr. Cadiz. "For example, we are interested in creating a plastics industry here."

"Our main priority is to add value to our raw materials by processing them on the islands. For instance, Lake Asphalt currently exports raw asphalt and we would be looking to add value to that product."

"Also, T&T's cocoa is considered to be the world's finest. Our cocoa industry is 250 years old but we have never produced chocolate here on a large scale. Rather than just selling the beans, we can add value to those beans and then export them."

"We look at all the different areas and see through the eyes of a foreign investor. If we are able to come into T&T and set up a facility in a short period of time, we are increasing the attractiveness of our country."

Trinidad & Tobago has come of age

A harmonious place where races and religions combine beautifully on coral and volcanic islands teeming with wildlife and enhanced by picture-perfect beaches and tropical forests, Trinidad and Tobago is also a hard-working nation and a great place to do business.

T&T's growth plans are two-pronged: it seeks broad-based development while preserving its heritage and environment. Even as it looks to modernize, the Ministry of Tobago Development places great emphasis on keeping the island – which is dubbed "the capital of paradise" – pristine, considering it a gift to future generations.

Developing paradise comes with its challenges, no doubt, but the Ministry is not afraid to embrace modernity in an effort to move towards self-sufficiency and entrepreneurship, while leaving a survival and subsistence economy behind as a thing of the past.

One key to a safe and sustainable transition is the employment of green technologies so as to achieve a neutral carbon footprint. Though a modern concept, Trinidad and Tobago's economy traditionally depended on eco-friendly windmills and water-driven factories, so in a sense, the country is going back to its roots.

Collaborating with universities, the Ministry of Tobago Development is seeking ways to foster a "sea-friendly" maritime industry, as well as an approach to revitalizing agriculture. Indeed, Trinidad and Tobago was formerly known as "the bread basket of the Caribbean."

Another area the country would like to further develop is tourism, especially through the public-private partnership model, and the yachting industry. Trinidad and Tobago has won the World Travel Award for Best Eco-Tourist Destination in the World over four consecutive years, as well as the Best Heritage Destination Award, for the island's preservation of nature and culture for future generations.

Expanding on quality and technology

Qualitech Machining Services Ltd. provides a wide variety of manufacturing and repair services for machine equipment and components

Established in 1995, Qualitech Machining Services Ltd. specializes in repair and manufacturing. Its primary aim is to serve the commercial and industrial communities of Trinidad and Tobago by providing comprehensive spare-part manufacturing and machine shop services that cater for any type of industrial plant and machinery.

"We pride ourselves on timely delivery and most importantly, quality workmanship. As a matter of fact, since we started the business, it has always been our number one priority," says Managing Director Deo N. Lall. "Qualitech is actually a combination of the words quality and technology; it has been embedded in everything we do."

The range of services offered by Qualitech has expanded over the years in response to its customers' requirements. The company presently occupies a modern workshop of over 45,000 sq. ft. on a two-acre site in the heart of the Point Lisas Industrial Estate, the industrial nucleus of the nation. "Our range of equipment is extremely diversified, as is the variety of machinery components which we are capable of manufacturing or repairing," says Mr. Lall. "Qualitech will always be adding state-of-the-art equipment as the company grows, this is part of our philosophy."

Qualitech is proud to be the first company in the Caribbean, and most of South America, to own a CNC waterjet cutting machine. This machine is capable of cutting up to 10" thick steel, stainless steel, monel, titanium,

granite, marble, aluminum, brass, carbon fiber, composites, glass, rubber, plastics, and pretty much any other material known to man. The machine cuts most jobs rapidly, without heat, hence causing no metallurgical change or distortion. Customers' jobs can be done in minutes instead of hours.

Mr. Lall, who has a BSc (Hons) degree in Nuclear Physics and

had was my house. So I spoke with my family and said: 'Listen, I'll take a chance, I'll mortgage my house, open a small company. I have been successful in what I have been doing so far, and if things don't turn out, we'll have to sell our home, rent a house and start all over again.' I was confident enough to know that the plan B would not be needed, and that I was going to survive."

Since Mr. Lall launched Qualitech, it has grown steadily over the last 17 years. "I do not want the company to get too big because I want to keep control," he says. "We have a lot of companies looking for joint ventures, but we are careful to pick the right companies. We are definitely open to new partnerships. For example, we have signed a contract with a com-

pany from the United States to work with them to repair gearboxes locally."

To ensure that the quality of Qualitech's service is always in tiptop shape, the company became ISO 9001:2008 certified in 2002 and they certify and inspect everything that they do.

"We always have meetings with our staff and let them know what is going on and what services are demanded," says Mr. Lall. "At the end of the day everybody wants service and quality. We always have someone available; somebody is on call 24 hours a day, seven days a week to provide the required service."

Mr. Lall also emphasizes the importance of human capital at Qualitech, and the training and the incentives the staff receive. "We have a lot of long-term employees because we put things in place for them: they have good health plans and we create retirement plans. We have people who started on day one with the company 17 years ago and are still with us. These are the things you need to encourage people, because money is not everything. And if you share the profits with the employees they are happier and they are willing to work harder."

Although the company is doing extremely well, it still has many ambitions, for example being more high tech and technologically advanced. It has recently opened a company called Qualitech CNC Manufacturing Solutions Ltd., which is a demonstration of its investment in technology.



has lived in Trinidad and Tobago since 1977, decided to start his own company when he realized that there were many opportunities he wanted to pursue that his employers at the time did not agree with. "I wanted to do things that I could not do in my previous job so I decided to implement them by creating my own company," says Mr. Lall. "I have always loved technology and new opportunities. I did not have any money and the only capital I

DEO N. LALL, Managing Director of Qualitech Machining Services Limited



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KEVIN C. RAMNARINE, Minister of Energy and Energy Affairs



"TRINIDAD IS A GREAT LOCATION FOR BUSINESS AND TOBAGO FOR LEISURE TOURISM."

GERALD HADEED, Chairman of the Airports Authority



"WE HAVE THE RESOURCES AND COMPETENCIES TO WORK WITH ANY MULTI-NATIONAL COMPANY."

DENIS LATIFF, General Manager of Tiger Tanks



"TRINIDAD IS THE REGION'S BUSINESS CAPITAL. WE ARE THE CARIBBEAN'S MOST SECURE INVESTMENT LOCATION."

WAYNE PERSAD, Managing Director of Lennox Petroleum Services

World-class airport infrastructure

The Airports Authority of T&T has transformed the islands' airport network to attract a higher number of international passengers and achieve the dream of becoming a logistical hub

With an extensive highway system, two recently remodeled international airports, and contemporary facilities to host worldwide events, the Caribbean archipelago of Trinidad and Tobago has one of the most modern infrastructures in the region and continues to make significant improvements towards becoming an international hub both for business and leisure.

The world took notice of Trinidad and Tobago's strides when in 2006 its Piarco International Airport was voted the Caribbean's Leading Airport for customer service and operational efficiency at the World Travel Awards. "The Airport Authority has

been working to transform Piarco into an international transport hub by building better facilities and fully developing the 1,700 acres of land that we have available," explains Gerald Hadeed, Chairman of the Airports Authority of Trinidad and Tobago, a state institution that manages both Piarco International Airport in Trinidad and A.N.R. Robinson International Airport in Tobago.

"Piarco will create high quality jobs and bring economic benefits to the nation, giving our engineers a reason to come back home, work in the industry and foster further growth in the country." Mr. Hadeed adds that the

airports are designed to make travelers feel special and give them a sense of personalized service and comfort. Piarco International is one of the few airports that offers free WiFi Internet and actively works to reduce the time spent going through customs.

With these modern transportation capabilities, Trinidad and Tobago has the facilities and confidence to host international events such as the Summit of the Americas, held in the capital city Port of Spain in 2009, and the Cricket World Cup in 2007, attracting tens of thousands of people.

"We have the capability for the development of Trinidad as a major international meet-



The atrium at the state-of-the-art Piarco International Airport

ing center and we can use our experience to market our nation as the international hub for conferences," says Mr. Hadeed, adding it is the ideal location for both business and pleasure. "Trinidad is a great location for business tourism and Tobago for leisure tourism: it's the only nation in the Caribbean that offers you both."

Aside from leisure, Trinidad and Tobago, with discounted fuel prices and an ideal location, wants to become a hub for international flights needing to refuel or make repairs. Mr. Hadeed explains: "Trinidad will bring Central and South America together with the Caribbean."

The island's top oil service company

Lennox Petroleum Services has built up a solid reputation based on service quality and professionalism

One of the wealthiest countries in the region, Trinidad and Tobago relies on its energy industry for 40% of its GDP and 80% of its exports. In recent years the boom of LNG in Trinidad and Tobago, which provides the United States with 70% of its LNG imports, has led to unprecedented

growth for the nation and allowed the small country to become an economic center for its area.

made us the Caribbean's most secure investment location and dozens of the world's leading corporations are active here." The managing director explains that Lennox, which is both STOW and TRACE certified, not only has projects going on in the neighboring Caribbean islands of St. Lucia, Tobago, Jamaica and Antigua, but also has commercial links with many U.S. companies that have set up operations in the country.

Mr. Persad – whose company was founded by his father in 1976 – has had ample experience in oil and gas services, and is open to new opportunities for expansion and diversification, such as a national courier service or a venture in medical tourism.

"Expansion and diversification is imminent and as an opportunity presents itself we would be willing to go in such direction," he says. While it is important for Lennox to look globally for business ventures, the company always stays locally minded as well through its charity group, called Friends of Lennox Petroleum, choosing a different cause to assist each year such as schools or community groups.

"EXPANSION AND DIVERSIFICATION IS IMMINENT AND AS AN OPPORTUNITY PRESENTS ITSELF WE WOULD BE WILLING TO GO IN SUCH DIRECTION."

growth for the nation and allowed the small country to become an economic center for its area.

"Trinidad is now the business capital of the region," says Wayne Persad, Managing Director of Lennox Petroleum Services Ltd., one of the island's leading providers of general oilfield contracting services both on land and offshore. "Our natural resources, financial system, location and communication links have

A wealth of experience in logistics

Tiger Tanks is the largest regional supplier of logistic offshore cargo carrying equipment

Although the small Caribbean archipelago of Trinidad and Tobago only totals about 2,000 square miles, it boasts a huge energy sector, being the fifth largest exporter in the world of liquefied natural gas (LNG) and an international leader in the petrochemical industry.

For more than a century, these islands have developed

that this "reduces the dependence on multinational technical support."

Tiger Tanks specializes in hazardous waste disposal, as well as offshore cargo carrying equipment rental, tank cleaning services, liquid cargo and waste haulage services, emergency and spill response services, and safety equipment rental services.

While currently using Trinidad as its operating base, Tiger Tanks has already expanded to Venezuela, Guyana, Suriname, French Guiana, and Colombia, among others, and Mr. Latiff says the potential for further growth is always considered.

Meanwhile, the government is pushing for greater expansion within the domestic petroleum sector and hopes to attract foreign investors with an already developed infrastructure for business within the energy sector, skilled local labor and incentive programs.

"To create a globally competitive energy industry, the financial and technical (R&D) resources must be readily available," says Mr. Latiff, adding that Tiger Tanks "has the resources and competencies to work with any multinational companies willing to invest in Trinidad."

"OUR INTERNATIONALLY CERTIFIED TRAINING PROGRAMS... REDUCE THE DEPENDENCE ON MULTINATIONAL TECHNICAL SUPPORT."

their energy industry consequentially resulting in economic stability and an experienced and skilled workforce within this field.

One local company in particular, Tiger Tanks, not only provides equipment and services consistent with the strictest global standards, but also runs internationally certified training programs.

Denis Latiff, General Manager at Tiger Tanks, stresses

Local expertise with a global appeal

The Kenson School of Production Technology Ltd. trains a globally competitive workforce for the oil and gas industry

The extensive experience Trinidad and Tobago has acquired in recent decades in the energy industry – its leading sector – helps provide the nation's workforce with another dynamic commodity: local expertise within this field.

The Kenson School of Production Technology Ltd. is paving the way in the development of this competitive national workforce in T&T's oil and gas sector. By providing hands-on experience using a locally produced simulator, students are able to thrive in an increasingly global environment.

"Our core mandate for the school is building capacity within the country," explains the school's Executive Director, Blair Ferguson. "We believe in local capabilities and have been doing this for 100 years. We want to maximize our local capacity within Trinidad."

Internationally minded, Kenson maintains excellent relationships with both the U.K. and Canada, also hosting students from Africa. Open to future joint ventures such as with the United States, Kenson is ready to compete on a global scale.



Blair Ferguson, Executive Director, and Lance Dowrich, Training Director

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Plenty to celebrate in T&T

World-class hospitality and tourism training from the Trinidad and Tobago Hospitality and Tourism Institute ensures visitors to the culturally diverse nation receive the warmest of welcomes

Whether coming for the idyllic beaches and natural forests, the colorful Carnival festivals, or the overwhelming number of other religious and cultural holidays, visitors to the Caribbean archipelago nation of Trinidad and Tobago will always have some cause for celebration.

"We celebrate each other's festivals," says Patricia Butcher, Executive Director at the Trinidad and Tobago Hospitality and Tourism Institute (THTI), the country's leading institution for training and education across all areas of the hospitality and tourism industry. "For example, we have Divali, Eid and a lot of Christian religious festivals, and everyone gets an opportunity to celebrate."

The nation, which passed under the colonial rule of the Spanish, British, French and Dutch until finally gaining its independence, has combined its past influences and pre-colonial indigenous roots to form an authentic melting pot culture. Approximately 80% of the population is made up of Indo-Trinidadian and Afro-Trinidadian, while the remaining citizens are an eclectic mix of European, Chinese and Syrian-Lebanese, among others.

There is also a harmonious coexistence among T&T's religious communities, which are 65% Christian, 25% Hindu and 6% Muslim.

"I would say that Trinidad and Tobago is a multiethnic, multiracial, and very diverse society, where we all live in harmony," explains Mrs. Butcher. "We really appreciate our racial and ethnic diversity and have something special and different to give to the world."



Patricia Butcher, Executive Director of the Trinidad and Tobago Hospitality and Tourism Institute

One of the most famous international events is the islands' Carnival celebration, where the entire population takes to the streets in colorful costumes for the two-day party.

"Our Carnival is a major event that especially attracts music lovers," says Mrs. Butcher, whose institute puts on an annual Taste of Carnival event that showcases local cuisine.

The celebration is so crucial to the country that everyone watches as local musicians compete in a televised competition called Calypso Monarch, the name honoring the traditional Afro-Caribbean calypso music originating on the islands. Other competitions include stick fighting and the limbo, a dance contest whose origins date back to the 1950s in Trinidad and Tobago.

Besides Carnival, the nation comes together at many other times in the year to celebrate the various religious holidays.

Divali, known as the festival of lights, is a Hindu holiday where families light clay lamps and eat vegetarian meals together. The Catholic holidays of Corpus Christi and Easter are also observed, as well as Arrival Day on May 30, which



The islands' beaches are a major draw, yet they are just the tip of the iceberg when it comes to T&T's attractions

marks the arrival of the first Indian laborers in the 19th century, commemorating their influence.

Probably the messiest of all celebrations is Phagwa, a Hindu festival, where participants are sprayed with colorful dyes while singing and dancing in the streets. This diverse mix of festivals showcases T&T's

rich culture while giving tourists an almost constant party.

When not celebrating with the locals, visitors can enjoy the cosmopolitan cities of Trinidad, where more than 90% of the population lives and include the capital city Port of Spain. Tobago offers scuba diving in the famous Buccoo coral reef.

Mrs. Butcher points out that many people only know about T&T's beaches, but it has so much more to offer: "We are special and different, so we should not only promote sun and sand. There is a place for leisure tourists who like that aspect, but there are also tourists who would like to enjoy the culture, the cuisine, our events and ecotourism."

Transforming the country with higher education

Trinidad and Tobago's top university, COSTAATT is showing significant growth and helping to create a knowledge-based economy

"In our degree programs, we transform lives," says Emmanuel Gonsalves, President of the College of Science, Technology and Applied Arts of Trinidad and Tobago (COSTAATT). "We see students coming into the college, scared at first, but at graduation, we see confident young people, ready to take on the world of

work and many ready to be more involved citizens."

COSTAATT, the largest public institution for higher education on the small Caribbean island-nation of Trinidad and Tobago, was established in 2000 and is already having a huge impact on changing the lives of its citizens, pushing the country toward a knowledge-based economy and significantly contributing to the government's goal of the country achieving world-class status.

Already 10,000 students have graduated from its 31 associate

degrees, 42 bachelor degrees and six postgraduate programs into the national workforce, contributing significantly to the economy over their working lives. With campuses and learning centers throughout the country, enrollment is rapidly increasing, more than doubling between 2008 and 2011 from 5,014 to 11,600 respectively.

Receiving accreditation in 2008 from the Accreditation Council of Trinidad and Tobago, COSTAATT is the first institution that can claim this recogni-

tion. It also was ranked as T&T's top university in terms of quality in the country in November 2011, showing the prospective students and the world that its degree programs hold up to the highest standards. In fact, Mr. Gonsalves is trying to put the institution to the test by applying for further accreditation in Atlanta, Georgia, demonstrating their degree programs are benchmarked against international standards.

"I believe that you cannot educate a person for a local environment only," explains Mr. Gonsalves, who was born in Trinidad and Tobago and spent 30 years studying and working in the United States before returning to his homeland. "They have to be 'glo-cal' globally prepared, but locally focused—being competitive in the global environment and being able to use those tools and skills and apply them in a local environment. That is what we do here."

In order to do this, COSTAATT has already signed Memorandums of Understanding with four colleges in the United States and one in the United Kingdom to begin working on faculty and student exchange programs. There are also considerations to market their programs within the United States, especially on the grounds that it is considerably cheaper in T&T, with a credit costing only TTS\$300 (US\$46), and with easy access through online courses.

Degrees offered range from nursing, information technology, management, journalism, and environmental studies among many others. In 2009, COSTAATT debuted its first bachelor degree in entrepreneurship, empower-





"I BELIEVE THAT YOU CANNOT EDUCATE A PERSON FOR A LOCAL ENVIRONMENT ONLY."

EMMANUEL GONSALVES, President of COSTAATT

ing its graduates to be creators rather than just job seekers.

Mr. Gonsalves does not consider higher education to be a privilege, but rather a right. COSTAATT has taken significant steps to allow students with less than the requisite qualifications to enroll for classes after going through a developmental program called COMPASS to prepare them for the rigors of a college education.

"We are opening the doors of opportunity for people. There are approximately 2,000 of our almost 12,000 students who would not be here without the COMPASS Program," explains Mr. Gonsalves, noting that this supports the national thrust to achieve a 60% participation rate in higher education and is consistent with the school's motto: "Transforming lives, communities and the nation, one student at a time."

**TRANSFORMING LIVES, TRANSFORMING COMMUNITIES
TRANSFORMING THE NATION... ONE STUDENT AT A TIME.**


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The College of Science, Technology and Applied Arts of Trinidad and Tobago (COSTAATT) is an accredited, multi-campus higher education institution offering a diverse range of programmes and services.

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