

# IT'S TIME FOR **BRAZIL** *in* **SINGAPORE**



**RIO OLYMPICS 2016**  
Best & Brightest of the  
Rio Games

**BRAZIL RE-BOUNDS**  
Early Indicators Provide  
Reason for Optimism

**BUSINESS VISITS**  
Ceará, Espírito Santo,  
Pará and Roraima



2016





Majestic Village



Costa Azul



Ritz-G5 is a leading international development and investment company with offices in Brazil, UK and Singapore. Much of Ritz-G5's investment activity is focused in Northeast Brazil - Rio Grande do Norte and its capital city, Natal. With a vision for excellence in luxe-living solutions, Ritz-G5 is shaping a new

skyline in Northeast Brazil, and evolving into one of the most respected and award-winning developers in this region. Its vision for inspiring developments and intelligent investments is constantly evolving.

The following projects are two award-winning examples.



**Majestic Village** is a highly sought-after serviced land plot condominium development set across 75 hectares in Parnamirim, Natal. Designed to appeal to the domestic market and Brazil's middle and upper class population, it utilizes an impressive build density of only 34 percent. A total of 2,850 residential units will be built, presenting a brand new condo neighbourhood, never before seen in Natal.

The impressive facilities will include a primary school, supermarket, kindergarten, medical clinic, swimming pools, sports facilities, children's play area, gym and clubhouse. A central square Grande Ponto will provide a focal point for the community, surrounded by bustling cafes and restaurants.

The project will see the development of three globally-inspired condominiums maximizing both natural light and views. The second stage of Majestic Village will entail the construction of residential apartments and townhouses on the serviced land plots and other areas of the site.



**Costa Azul** (or 'Blue Coast') is a new high-rise development inspired by the Atlantic Ocean. This modern and luxurious 160-apartment project is located in Petrópolis, one of the most exclusive and exciting districts in Natal in which to live, work and play. The biggest challenge was to find the land to acquire for residential development in such a popular area. Ritz-G5, however, managed to purchase the land due to its strong local network and excellent reputation.

Its prime hilltop position complements its remarkable design statement with views of Newton Navarro Bridge, the beach and ocean. Costa Azul will comprise three towers named: Forte, Atlântico and Potengi. Forte will offer three-bedroom residences measuring 96m<sup>2</sup>, while Atlântico and Potengi will offer two-bedroom residences of 53m<sup>2</sup> and 56m<sup>2</sup>. Residents' first class amenities include a swimming pool, gym, private bar and spa.

The internal design of Costa Azul has been carefully thought through by the architects to ensure that space is maximized and suitable for 21st century living. Large windows ensure natural sunlight floods each apartment and high quality bathrooms and appliances are installed as standard. High-speed internet and satellite smart televisions are also installed in all apartments. Buyers are able to fully customize their unit to their own individual specification, subject to additional payment depending on the materials selected.

★★★★★

**BEST MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT AMERICAS**

Majestic Village by Ritz-G5

★★★★★

**HIGHLY COMMENDED RESIDENTIAL HIGH-RISE DEVELOPMENT BRAZIL**

Costa Azul by Ritz-G5

# FOREWORD



(From left): Secretary Rodrigo Soares, Ambassador Flávio Damico, Minister Daniella Menezes and Secretary Herbert Drummond

**A**fter a two-year stint in Baghdad, I am back to Singapore and back to the position I held until December 2013, that of head of the Trade Section at the Embassy of Brazil. People are still curious about how I wound up in Baghdad and how life unfolded there. To them I reply that, regardless of all the limitations imposed on us by the lack of security, I enjoyed working there and do not ever regret my choice. Interesting job, wonderful people and delicious food - these are the memories I will always carry from those two years.

Coming back to Singapore was a gratifying experience. Ambassador Luís Fernando Serra, with whom I had the pleasure to work for two years, moved to Seoul, and we have now a new Ambassador, Mr. Flávio Damico. The number of diplomats also increased and we are now three under Ambassador Damico: Minister Daniella Menezes, Secretary Rodrigo Soares, and myself. The business community also grew, with a new batch of Brazilian companies establishing their offices in Singapore, as well as Brazilian businesspeople opening their startups here. All of them were invited to work closely with the Embassy, exchanging ideas during our regular business breakfasts and also supporting several of our events, such as our National Day celebration and this very magazine.

During my absence, Secretary Rodrigo Soares was the one in charge of editing this magazine, and he implemented several improvements that will be maintained, since they were all for the better. This edition will be a many-hands operation. Since the number of diplomats increased, we decided to share the job and everybody contributed a little. We also had the inputs of our colleagues from the Trade Section, Mr. Carlos Pheysey and also Ms. Shobha Sankarankutty, not to mention the hard work of Ms. Nomita Dhar and all the team of Sun Media.

The present edition, as always, is a diary of our activities during 2016. It will display our commercial and cultural events, comment on the present situation in Brazil and possible scenarios for the future, and discuss the bilateral relations between Brazil and Singapore. I hope all of you enjoy it.

Cheers!

**Secretary**  
**Head of the Commercial Section**  
**Embassy of Brazil in Singapore**

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# HE Flávio Soares Damico

## Ambassador of Brazil to Singapore

■ The new Brazilian ambassador arrived during a momentous period in Brazil's history. He shares with Editor in Chief Mrs Nomita Dhar how there are still many opportunities for investors for both countries

***It's Time for Brazil in Singapore* was first published almost 20 years ago and it's our pleasure to welcome you to Singapore and to speaking to our readers for the first time. Could you to throw some light on the growing buzz around the Brazilian economy and update us on its current state, especially in light of the change of leadership in the country?**

As you know 2016 was a very difficult year for the Brazilian economy. We had the combination of difficulties arising from slow growth and falling commodity prices and decreased levels of confidence in our economy, coupled with the fact that we were confronting a major political crisis. All this had an enormous impact on the perspectives for 2016.

Unfortunately, all these less-than-optimistic circumstances consolidated themselves in a way that the levels of growth for 2016 were negative. So in spite of the change in government in 2016, there was very little that could have been done to change the circumstances dramatically.

Nevertheless, we had already noticed, starting from the month of May, improvements in the confidence levels of our economy and better prospects for the year 2017. So over the year, although we saw the consolidation of a decrease in our GDP of around three per cent for 2016, we also had a notion that we would be moving back to positive territory by the end of the year and all these things are beginning to happen. We expect a return to positive growth of more than one percent in 2017. All this has been reflected in the key indicator of confidence in the Brazilian economy—the rate of exchange of the *real* vis-à-vis the US dollar. In fact the *real* is one currency which has appreciated the most in the world throughout 2016. So what you see is a period of normalization and the perception of the market that the short term swings that we faced will not affect the long term prospects of the economy.

Brazil continues to be a very rich country for resources. We have world-class mining and agriculture sectors that are recovering with the industrial sector along with the GDP. So we could expect investments picking up as we have just seen an enormous repatriation of Brazilian funds held abroad—a clear indica-

tion of restored confidence in the country.

Furthermore, we have a number of policy changes that are being implemented. The most important of all is the approval of a constitutional amendment which will impose a ceiling on government expenditures (something which is going to be completed by end of this December). This will be essential for containing the public deficit that was inherited from previous administrations.

***For the large good of investors how do these policy decisions and changes translate into ease of doing business in Brazil?***

You have touched on one of the key complaints by businessmen, that doing business in Brazil is complicated. But first, we have to first focus on the most important thing - reforms – they need to be carried out so as to change and improve the economic environment. The first as I mentioned earlier, is the constitutional amendments on government expenditures. The second, is we need to address the issue of social benefits. We have a marked change in Brazilian demographics and people are living longer, which is a good thing. But if the system continues as it is with the current levels of yearly returns, long term payments



and pensions, this would imbalance the government accounts. So we have to tackle that and this, I think, is a key priority for 2017. Finally, discussions are already ongoing about updating our labour laws.

Beyond that, we have just approved new measures to enable our national oil producing company Petrobras, which was in a very difficult situation prior to May 2016, to be more capable in choosing undertakings in the future. Petrobras has (so far) been mandated as an investor of oil wells being drilled in Brazil and it will only be part of those projects which it can foresee to be profitable for the company. This will certainly alleviate the pressure on its accounts and speed up the recovery of this very large and important Brazilian company.

The Oil and Gas (O&G) industry is a key

HE Flávio Soares Damico presented his credentials to President Tony Tan Keng Yam on 19 May 2016



Source: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Singapore

sector of the Brazilian economy that has been growing very fast. Due to a number of regulation problems and excessive optimism about the potential of the sector, we had projects that were put together in an excessively optimistic way and they might be adjusted to the reality of lower oil prices and enhanced competition from alternative energy sources and also shale gas.

So this sector needs to be looked into with lots of criteria and reforms. This will certainly lead to much better prospects. This sector also has an impact on the bilateral relations as a number of Singaporean shipyards are very much linked to the O&G sector in Brazil. These companies have suffered from this slower growth. As I told you, we are seeing how to reframe those projects and be a little more realistic in relation to the current economic circumstances. Brazil has a very large offshore sector with a number of oil rigs already getting old, which need to be replaced; so there will be opportunities. It will not be entirely all domestic as it has been in the past, but it does not mean the sector has been closed.

**There are a lot of Brazilian companies which have done relatively well in the Singapore market. Would you like to share their success stories?**

We have in Singapore perhaps the best Brazilian companies that are open to the world markets. They are very competitive. The decision to set up offices in Singapore to deal with the Asian market as a whole is an indication that they have a global strategy very much attuned to what is going on in the world and so they are relatively independent of the domestic circumstances. Companies like BRF and JBS, who are giants in agri-business, are doing extremely well, not only here in Singapore, but also in the Asian market at large. In fact, if you look at the long-term fundamentals, the prospects for the agri-business sector in Asia are enormous.

In Asia, there is a large population and huge scarcity of water. They will need food products from Brazil, be it vegetable commodities like soya bean or corn, plus beef, poultry or pork. This is an area where business will continue to prosper. I have no doubt whatsoever that this sector will have a run for many years and it's no accident that Brazil is among the world's top three exporters of beef and poultry and amongst the five largest exporters of pork. And this trend will only continue.

**This year has also been important in terms of the mega games - the Summer Olympics in Rio. Could you share some aspects of the Olympics story with Brazil playing the host?**

We were very happy with the outcome of the Games. It proved the Olympic Games are still one of the greatest sporting events on the planet; that Brazil was capable again to be a gracious host to athletes and fans from all over the world in a very dignified manner. It was

in a manner that showed the happiness and openness of Brazilian society to foreigners and that has also propitiated a number of spin-offs - a legacy for the Brazilian population.

For me, the Olympics were emblematic of this new era of Brazil. Rather than as something (that was originally conceived) to flaunt the prowess of a superpower, what actually took place symbolised a country that could lick its wounds, put its act together



Photo by Michael Ozaki

Ambassador hosted Rio medal winners (from left) Yip Pin Xiu, Joseph Schooling and Theresa Goh, their families and officials, to a reception at his residence

and present its real image to world; it was not something brushed-up but real. Rather than something artificial, real Brazil was on display, which was a very appealing thing. I can tell you the outcome was very pleasing to the eye.

**The Olympics also had a Singapore bonus for us. Could you share that with us?**

When I was watching the swimming competition, particularly the butterfly that Saturday morning, and saw Joseph Schooling win that fantastic race, I told my wife, I thank God up there that he likes me. We knew it was a great story from the beginning - the first gold medal ever awarded to Singapore - and listening to *Majulah Singapura* in Rio was beautiful, with President Tony Tan there to witness it. It encapsulated a very special relationship that would always be remembered by every Singaporean. The association with my country would inevitably be positive. This was reinforced by the very good results by Singapore's Paralympics team, when swimmers Yip Pin Xiu and Theresa Goh took gold and bronze medals respectively.

One of the things that I really appreciate about my job is that it offers me so many opportunities to meet so many different people. I received a number of Paralympians and some members of the Olympic Committee, including their families and loved ones at my residence. It was a very touching moment meeting them. I said in my speech how,

although I was not so aware of the circumstances of those boys and girls, I felt that they weren't just heroes - they were superheroes. I have to thank my job for propitiating what was a very emotional moment.

**It's on the cards that very soon you will have all of them come together to celebrate this great event.**

Yes, this will be a very happy moment of celebration not just for the Olympics and Paralympics, which were great events, but also to celebrate the dedication and the commitment of the athletes and the results of the games. I think that was a very nice closing act.

**We've had many visits this year. What is on the cards for next year, especially when Singapore and Brazil will celebrate a special milestone in 2017 - 50 years of bilateral relations?**

We are still consulting with Brazil and our Singaporean friends as to exactly what could be the programme for the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration of bilateral ties. I am in contact with different authorities in Brazil, in terms of organizing high-level visits (and from the Singaporean side as well).

Another thing I would like to highlight is that, apart from policy reforms, there's a different climate in Brazil today. There is a total reversion of perception from what has prevailed so far. People thought the state should lead for the country to grow. But with so many responsibilities on the state such as maintaining social security, servicing the internal debt, the government lacks the means to be the sole promoter of investments. We are now much more open to Public-Private Partnerships and, of course, Brazilian companies would be part of that. However, it would not be possible without foreign capital.

With the economic environment improving in Brazil, more opportunities are arising for investment. Given the fact that Singaporean sovereign funds might be available for foreign investments, I think it's quite natural to presume we will be a magnet for them.

I think Singapore is particularly well suited as it has an excellent track record. I've visited a number of Singaporean firms who have invested in Brazil and I could see the approach is very flexible, very agile. They adapt well to circumstances; they are not top-heavy and come with high overheads of executives from Singapore to dictate to the nationals what to do or boss them around. When Brazilians working for Singapore companies come to Singapore they immediately marvel at the accomplishments of this society and they are immersed in a very good corporate culture which they embrace with open arms.

**Brazil has always been at the forefront for paying attention to climate change issues. What is happening lately?**

Brazil has an important role, playing a leading part in environmental issues. We

have moved away from the past where we resisted and thought that environment concerns would contain our growth. We have changed dramatically since the early 90s when Brazil decided to host the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCD). I would like to mention the amazing role played by an eminent Singaporean ambassador, Tommy Koh, who was the chairman of the main committee of that Conference in 1992, which actually initiated the conceptual start for the discussion on environment. Since then we have moved a long way ahead by coming to the realisation that 'common but differentiated responsibilities' does not mean no responsibilities whatsoever, for developing countries.

**Please share with us the recent initiatives you took when you met business leaders about the subject of the environment.**

Recently, I had the opportunity to organise a discussion of a number of Singaporean and Brazilian CEOs with Mr Philippe Joubert, who is a very eminent advocate for greater corporate responsibility for the environment. He is associated with the Prince of Wales's Corporate Leaders Group and discussed about the way forward after the 4<sup>th</sup> November Paris Agreement on climate change which asked countries for their national contributions in tackling climate change. Brazil was one of the leaders in the developing world to take up very ambitious commitments that are more in-line with those taken up by developed countries.

Mr Joubert made it very clear that old business models of environmental sustainability are outdated and finished and cited the case of Volkswagen in the US where they have not been upfront about emission levels. Not only the managers were indicted but the case affected the members of the board. So now board members need to be much more proactive in demonstrating their awareness of environmental issues. It's a trend that needs to be mainstreamed by big corporations and during this dialogue the Brazilian companies indicated things they had been doing in the realm of the environment. He was very much impressed. For example, we discussed how Embraer is improving the design of its planes; its association with Boeing to develop renewable fuels for aviation; CBMM, a company involved in using niobium, an element used to make metals lighter and tougher in car parts such as the chassis, making them more efficient; all the things being done at Petrobras to heighten the level of environmental awareness. A leading Singaporean trading company, Olam, related how in the pollinating of almond trees in China they were forced to buy billions of bees, because the beehives in China have disappeared due to environmental degradation. So there was a consensus that the problem is serious and that more needs to be done. Mr Joubert pointed out that we have to put a price on goods that have been

so far been considered free - like water - you have to give up the shadow price; you have to put prices on carbon emissions and the costs of tackling them so as to provide the necessary economic stimulus for the companies to really assess their environmental costs of producing goods. So it was a very long-ranging discussion and was, I think, one of the most interesting initiatives taken by this embassy under my purview.

**Can you brief us on some of the visits that have taken place during your time?**

Brazil is a federation with the different states having very dynamic business sectors. They are growing at different rates and there are specific states that are doing quite well. We have had visits by four of them: Roraima in the north, bordering Venezuela; we had a visit from Ceará, a state in the northeast, very close to Europe, and we had a visit from Pará, also in the north of the country, and from Espírito Santo (ES), one of the best economically performing states in the federation. ES is very well governed and is probably the biggest exporter in Brazil; performing well in oil and gas, export of mining products and very much linked to Singapore via the Jurong Aracruz Shipyard (wholly owned by Sembcorp Marine Ltd). During his visit, H.E. Paulo Hartung, the Governor of ES, was very impressed by the Singaporean public services and education system. It is a matter of time before we will see cooperation in these areas and beyond. I would also like to add 2016 was also an electoral year in Brazil so there were not many politicians readily available for international travel, so I feel more optimistic about the number of visits from Brazil in 2017.

**What is the number of Brazilians in Singapore and how does the embassy engage with them?**

The ball park figure by the embassy would put it to around 1,000 people who either work for Brazilian or international companies. Not all will come forward to enroll in the list at the consulate. But we have a very active Facebook page and I have my Twitter account to disseminate information about the activities and services of the embassy. We also have a very large engagement with Singapore both in cultural terms and promotion and support to the Brazilian companies located here.

In the cultural area, we have several activities including the PianoBotanica, showcasing Brazilian classical music, an aspect not so well known, i.e. the fact that we have a very sophisticated musical inheritance. People



Ambassador in a press conference with Governor Paulo Hartung of Espírito Santo (seated left), who was on one of several visits by Brazilian states to Singapore this year

tend to discount this and be more attuned to the samba and the dances, but as a very large country Brazil has a plurality of cultural manifestations that are not always encapsulated in what is more evident in the media. This is one of the areas I'm very committed to, that is, portray Brazil as a very dynamic and diversified nation and not reduced to one or two manifestations.

**The Latin American countries as a grouping have been very active recently in Singapore; could you share something with us about this?**

I've very good contacts with my peers—the Latin American group has a very dynamic Chamber of Commerce and we have been doing a number of events, including presentations by the countries to the financial markets. We had a very nice gala of which I am happy to be a part. We also launched another edition of the Latin Film Festival. The good thing about the Latin American group is that we are avoiding competition amongst us. We have come to the conclusion to pool our forces together so that we are able to overcome the distances and lack of knowledge in Singapore about our countries.

**The name of our magazine is *It's time for Brazil in Singapore*. Sceptics ask 'Is it?' What do you have to say to that?**

It's always. But each year it will have a different theme, different quality, different sectors... As I told you, Brazil cannot be summed up in a page. It is so different, so diversified—with so many inexhaustible possibilities for co-operation between our two countries.

**Is it a good time for investors to look at Brazil?**

I think it's the ideal time. As you know, you have to get into the market when prices are low—it's a bit late to do it when there's a boom; you have to anticipate the trends—there's no time for hesitation.

# Celebrating Brazil!

■ The week of the Brazilian Independence Day was filled with celebrations. The much anticipated 8th of September. The event was held at Clifford Pier, Fullerton Bay Hotel, and had the presence



**T**he Cocktail Reception was graced by Dr Amy Khor, Senior Minister of State, Ministry of the Environment and Water Resources, and Minister of Health. Among the guests were members of the Brazilian community as well as valued friends and partners in Singapore. This year, the National Day Reception was rather special. With Marina Bay as the backdrop, crowning the venue, the National Anthems of Brazil and Singapore were sung by Brazilian lyric soprano, Taiana Froes. Her breath-taking rendition of the anthems left both Brazilians and Singaporeans visibly touched.

With the well-known Brazilian signature cocktail, Caipirinha, being whipped up by Fabio Kraiczzyk's team from BBE.SG and the delicious galinhada (chicken stew) offered by SATS-BRF, The Fullerton

ated event of the year was the Cocktail Reception hosted by the Embassy of Brazil on the  
ce of around 350 guests with Guest of Honour, Senior Minister of State Dr Amy Khor



Photo by Michael Ozaki



Bay Hotel did not let us down with the variety of Brazilian dishes that they offered.

The entire event was sponsored by Brazilian companies, SATS-BRF, BB Securities (under Banco do Brasil), Braskem, CBMM, Embraer, Forship, Petrobras, Seara, Tramontina, Vale, FYI, Maracatu Cachaça, Sapiens Global, Suncaged Analytics and Xcullen. Thanks to them, this occasion became a night to remember.

**A Musical Soirée**

On the eve of the National Day Reception, Ambassador Flávio S. Damico and Mrs. Rosa Damico opened up their beautiful home for an evening of music sung by Taiana Froes (picture above).

A Brazilian soprano, Taiana received training from the University of Brasília, in Brazil, and from the National Conservatory of Lisbon, in Portugal. As a member of the prestigious Gulbenkian Choir, she has participated in several concerts such as The Creation by Haydn and Missa Solemnis by Beethoven. She has performed a number of key roles in various operas such as Countess in the opera Le Nozze di Figaro by Mozart and played Prima Donna in the musical Phantom of the Opera by Andrew Lloyd Webber.

The evening was enchanting, albeit just a brief preview of what was to come later that week at PianoBotanica 2016.

Taiana sang a small collection of Brazilian favourites and captivated all those present with her melodious voice and unique interpretation of old ballads.

(Right): Mr. Ho Tong Yen (GM of Group Corporate Communications, Keppel Corporation), Ambassador Flávio S. Damico, Benjamin Boo, Taiana Froes and Marcos Jank (VP - Corporate Affairs and Business Development at BRF Asia)



*Pianobotanica is well-known for bringing Brazilian artists and music to Singapore's shores and this year's edition attracted over 2,000 people.*

**Pianobotanica 2016**

The charm of Brazilian music continued on to the 11th of September when the Brazilian Embassy along with Art-Management held an open air concert at Singapore Botanic Gardens in the annual PianoBotanica performance, now in its fourth year.

Pianobotanica is well-known for bringing Brazilian artists and music to Singapore's shores. It has been supported and sponsored by Keppel Offshore & Marine, a testament to the longstanding friendship between Singapore and Brazil. This year, SATS-BRF, a joint venture between SATS, a leading provider of gateway services and food solutions in the region, and global Brazilian food company BRF, co-sponsored the event.

Taiana Froes teamed up with Singapore's boy-wonder, Benjamin

Boo, with a selection of Brazilian music written by famous Brazilian composers Heitor Villa-Lobos, Waldemar Henrique, Carlos Gomes and Chiquinha Gonzaga.

Benjamin did not disappoint as he masterfully accompanied Taiana in the piano. He also played a few solos showing his magnificent skills with the instrument.

With an estimated 2,000 people watching the concert, hand-held fans provided by SATS-BRF came in handy in keeping the heat more manageable and comfortable for the audience to savour Brazilian classics.

Taiana and Benjamin ended the evening in style with the classic Singapore National Day Parade theme song "Home".

# KLAFF 2016: Greater Appreciation for Latin American Cinema

By Shobha Sankarankutty

■ Ten Latin embassies participated in the fifth edition with virtually full houses at every screening!

**F**ive years ago, in 2012, Latin American Embassies residing in Singapore and Keppel Offshore & Marine Ltd together decided to bring a little of Latin American culture to this corner of Asia through motion pictures. Today, Keppel Latin American Film Festival (KLAFF) has become a well-known fixture in the events scene of Singapore.

In its fifth edition, with the participation of the Embassies of Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Mexico, Panama, Peru, Venezuela and Uruguay, KLAFF brought award-winning movies from these countries to the screens of the Golden Village Cinemas in Suntec City from the 17th to the 20th of November.

The Opening Ceremony took place on the 16th of November to resounding success. The Guest-of-Honour this year was Mr Ng Teck Hean, MFA Deputy Secretary for Asia-Pacific and former Director of Americas Directorate. After a short speech from Mr Hean, H.E. Alfredo Toro Hardy (Ambassador of Venezuela and head of the Latin American and Caribbean Group - GRULAC) spoke a few words, followed by Ambassador Alfredo Alberto Spiegel Aponte of Panama.

The festival opened with a screening of *Panama Canal Stories*. The movie

is an anthology spanning 100 years and depicts, through five segments, the intimate lives of various men, women and children living around the Canal.

*The Way He Looks* was the Brazilian movie selected to be screened at the festival this year. Since its release in 2014 it has been making waves in festivals around the world. It was the winner of the 2014 FIPRESCI Award Berlinale (Germany), Best Screenplay at the 2014 Skip City International D-Cinema Festival (Japan), Teddy Award for best LGBT-themed feature, El Colón de Plata for Best Director at the 40th Festival de Cine Iberoamericano de Huelva (Spain), to mention a few. A romantic comedy written and directed by Daniel Ribeiro, it is a delicate story of friendship and love where a blind teenage boy with an over-protective mother, bullied at school, is torn between his best friend and a new student in class. The movie was very well received in Singapore, ending its screening with a standing ovation.

This year, KLAFF managed to gather over 1,200 viewers from both the expat circles and local community, with a full house in almost all movie screenings, proving that the Festival has gained popularity within this city state. No doubt, next year is bound to deliver more outstanding movies!

## More about Brazil's Submission

Set against the music of Belle and Sebastian, Daniel Ribeiro's coming-of-age tale, *The Way He Looks* is a fun and tender story about friendship and the complications of young love. Leo is a blind teenager who's fed up with his overprotective mother and the bullies at school. Looking to assert his independence, he decides to study abroad to the dismay of his best friend, Giovana. When Gabriel, the new kid in town, teams with Leo on a school project, new feelings blossom in him that make him reconsider his plans. Meanwhile, Giovana grows jealous of this new found companionship as tensions mount between her and Leo.

Written and directed by Daniel Ribeiro  
Produced by Strand Releasing and Lacuna Filmes



**KLAFF 2016 SELECTION**

- One for the Road* (Mexico)
- Back to School* (Peru)
- Two Waters* (Costa Rica)
- The House at the End of Time* (Venezuela)
- The Story of Artigas* (Uruguay)
- The Wind Journeys* (Colombia)
- Havanastation* (Cuba)
- The Way He Looks* (Brazil)
- Family Holiday* (Chile)
- Panama Canal Stories* (Panama)

# Brazil's Special Place in Singapore Sports History

■ In Celebration of the XXXI Olympiad Games and XV Games of the Paralympiad the Ambassador of Brazil and Mrs Flavio S. Damico invited the stars of the games, along with their friends, families and Singapore sports officials to their residence



*Photos by  
Michael Ozaki*



The ambassador recalled the first cocktail reception held in August (see box story) likewise at the residence, where there were concerns about the readiness of Brazil in hosting the Games. Since then he is happy to note the country has worked hard to make the mega-event very successful. He was sure the Games would be memorable for a long time to come and that it would be even more so for Singaporeans as the *Majallah Singapura* was sung three times in Rio. The cocktail reception felt very festive as the Ambassador led a toast and everyone joined in a 'cheers' to closer relations between our two countries, to the spirit of the Olympic Games and to all the athletes who trained and sacrificed much to win honour for their nation. Among those who attended were the gold medal winners: Joseph Schooling and Yip

Pin Xiu as well as Theresa Goh who won a bronze; Singapore National Olympic Council Mrs Jessie Phua, Sport Singapore's CEO Lim Teck Yin and Singapore Disability Sports Council's President Kevin Wong. The representatives from the sporting bodies congratulated Brazil on the successful hosting of the Olympic and Paralympic Games and assured the Ambassador that Brazil will always have a special place in Singapore's sporting history.

This was Schooling's first visit to Rio and he said, "We were lucky. we had a high 17th floor apartment in the Games Village that overlooked the mountains and to see the sunrise over the mountains in the mornings that was really pretty." What he was most impressed with was how, "The people are really sweet, very receptive and warm. During competition the spectators gave us a fantastic reception - they were screaming and yelling - I like the energy from the Brazilian crowd. They are

very energised and very enthusiastic especially if there is a fellow Brazilian swimming in my heat. The crowd would go nuts. Sometimes I could not hear my music through my headphones because they were cheering so loud. That is how it should be. That's how a nation should support its own athletes. I am very impressed to see that."

For Yip Pin Xiu and Theresa Goh this was their second trip to Rio. The first was in 2005 for the International Wheelchair and Amputee Sports World Games, Theresa remembered, "It was very beautiful. We stayed near the beach and the weather was great. It was a little warm but way less humid than Singapore." For her, Rio this time was memorable not only for the win but also the whole atmosphere and she wished she could have stayed on to explore, as she found it, "a really beautiful place."

**Celebrating Opening of the Games**

On 4th August 2016 Ambassador Flavio hosted a cocktail reception to celebrate the opening of the Olympic Games. Members of Singapore's paralympics committee and team members were there including Ms Grace Fu, Singapore's Minister of Culture, Community and Youth.



# Best & Brightest of Rio Olympics

By Ranee Sahaney

■ The sound and the fury surrounding the Rio Olympics 2016—its highs and its lows... in the end brought home one truth - the Games still Inspire...still matter



Source: www.gazetadapovo.com.br

**W**hen the stars they pluck out of the skies light up their eyes ...and the adulation of the crowds in the stadium washes over them like heavenly music, they know they are home and free and no one, but no one can take away that wonder... that ineffable joy of that tryst with victory.

The allure of being the chosen one teaches them soon enough a thing or two about rivalry — and it is this very thing that drives them on to reach into themselves... to defy their very nature... to pull out all stops to reach their goals — figuratively and in reality. And once they are out there in the track...on the wrestling mat...the tennis court or the swimming pool — everything else fades away. Only what they are there

to accomplish matters...All else is naught.

Yes, the blood, sweat and tears are their companions on the long journey to become champions, but it's a price they readily pay — and though the medals may prove elusive, the courage to try and try again is an addiction. Rio reminds us of that.

We bring you some of the most inspirational moments of one of the greatest global sports shows on earth which brings together so many nations, showcased this year in Brazil's wondrous city of Rio de Janeiro, where the likes of Usain Bolt and Michael Phelps, Simone Biles and Yusra Mardini came together to amaze us...made us laugh... moved us in those moments of raw emotion... brought tears to our eyes at their failures or their victories— and lifted up our spirits at the wonder of human endeavour at that

hallowed football Mecca — the Maracanã Stadium, from 5th to 21st August. Brazil's own 'O Globo' newspaper described the high-energy opening ceremony of Rio Olympics 2016 as "beyond beauty" and "a moment of pride for a troubled country".

Two of our greatest sports legends of today may have decided to call it a day in Olympics, at Rio — but not before reminding us once more why they are the legends they are. That engaging crowd-pleaser, Jamaican sprinter and 11-time world champion and the 100/200m record holder, Usain Bolt, grabbed his place in the record books once more with his ninth Olympic gold medal with a greased lightning performance. The power and glory was his once again in 'his finishing first in the individual 100m and 200m.' Bolt gave us a repeat of this staggering feat

Photo by Michael Ozaki



## Joseph Schooling Wrests Olympic Gold from Michael Phelps

All of Singapore turned out to celebrate and joyously welcome 21-year-old home-boy Joseph Schooling, who returned triumphant from the Olympics in Rio, armed with smiles, the island nation's first Olympic gold medal. Amongst those cheering him on at the Games were Schooling's mother and Singapore's President Dr Tony Tan, who was there in a private capacity. Having been inspired since by American ace swimming Olympic champ Michael Phelps, for Schooling the winning of the coveted gold was all the sweeter, having wrested it from no less than his childhood hero, for the butterfly stroke. The cherry on the pie for Schooling was that he also set the new Olympic record of 50.39 seconds to grab the men's 100 m butterfly title.

at three consecutive Olympic Games — a unique “Triple-Triple”.

US swimming legend, Michael Phelps — ‘the most decorated Olympian of all’ — while exulting in his 23rd gold medal in the 4X100 medley at the Rio Aquatics Center, told Todayshow's Matt Lauer, ‘I wanted to come back and finish my career how I wanted, and this was the cherry on top of the cake’ ... but now, he said ‘I'm done. I'm finished. I'm retired. I'm done. No more.’

Exploding off TV screens around the world with her superhuman skills in gymnastics, the girl who defied gravity, 19-year-old American Simone Biles roused us with her ‘novelty factor and wow factor,’ keeping us collectively in thrall, for six days, of her personal brand of gravity-defying, near-flawless performances on the vault, uneven bars, beam and floor at Rio. Amongst those cheering her in the stands was former moon-walking astronaut Buzz Aldrin. Mesmerised spectators around the world watched the petite Simone walk away with four golds and a bronze.

Fellow American Katie Ledecky, also 19, on the other hand was making waves in the pool by winning the 800m freestyle—breaking her own world record with a time of eight minutes and 04.79 seconds— a momentous 11 seconds ahead of Britain's Jazmin Carlin. Ledecky totted up four golds (all in freestyle) and a silver in the 4x100m relay.

Ethiopia's Almaz Ayana demolished the women's 10,000m record, with her finish in 29 minutes 17.45; she chipped off China's Junxia Wang record (unbroken for nearly 23 years) by 14 seconds.

One of the most astonishing performances on the tracks at the Rio Games was that of South Africa's Wayde



## Singapore Home Team Does its Country Proud at Rio Paralympic Games

Mr Ho Cheng Kwee, Chef-de-Mission of the 2016 Rio Paralympic Games Singapore team described the Paralympic Games as ‘the highest level of international competition for para athletes around the world. The nation's flag bearer at the 2016 Paralympic Games Opening Ceremony held on 7th September, was swimmer Yip Pin Xiu (above left), who was participating in her third Paralympic Games. She went on to break her own world record in the Women's (S2) 100m backstroke and grabbed the gold at 2:07.09s. The Singaporean swimmers were clearly in the ascendant having brought home three medals from Rio— two Golds and one bronze from Theresa Goh (above right) in the 100m breaststroke.

van Niekerk, when he broke the 400m record with a timing of 43.03 seconds—smashing American legend Michael Johnson's 17-year-old world record by 0.15 seconds. Niekerk's greatest inspiration, Usain Bolt, later that night told him, ‘I told you you can do it.’

Brazil gave the frantic home crowd a nail-biting finish at the Maracanã football final when the last 10 minutes of the game culminated in Neymar's penalty to beat Germany and seal the gold, demolishing at one stroke memories of Brazil's defeat by Germany in the 2014 World Cup semi-finals in Belo Horizonte.

The Olympics is not always about winning medals as shown by rival distance runners Nikki Hamblin (New Zealand) and Abbey d'Agostino (U.S.), who stopped their

sprints to help each other reach the finish line when they both collided and tumbled onto the tracks (injuring one of them) in the heats for the 5000m race.

Amongst the most inspirational stories emerging from the Games was that of the 18-year-old Syrian refugee swimmer Yusra Mardini (who, having survived, a year ago, the perils of the sea when the dingy carrying her and other asylum seekers capsized and she helped get them to safety) went on to win the opening heat of 100m butterfly at Rio. Yusra was part of the first-ever Olympics competing Syrian refugee contingent of 43 athletes, forced to flee their homelands; she now lives and trains in Germany. ‘I want to show everyone that after the pain, after the storm, comes calm days,’ she told reporters.

# Sustainability and the Global Role of Brazil

By Ambassador Roberto Jaguaribe,  
President of the Brazilian Trade and Investment Promotion Agency (Apex-Brasil)



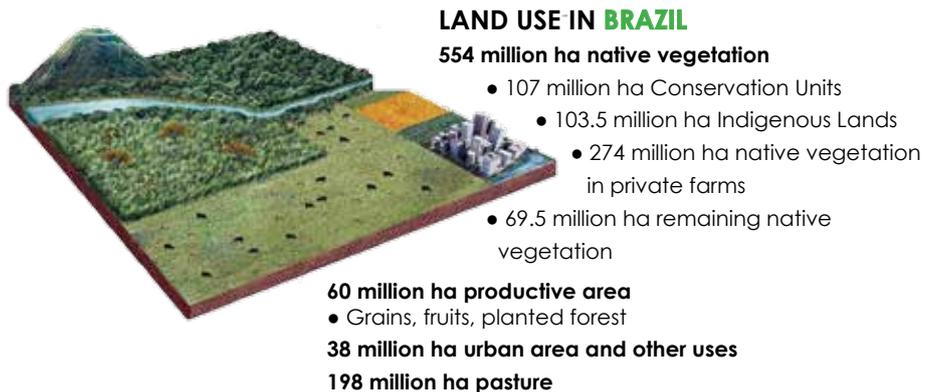
Source: ISS Expedition NASA Earth Observatory

Satellite image of the diverse agricultural landscape in the western part of Minas Gerais.

Sustainability is of crucial relevance for the future of humankind and Brazil is playing its part as a protagonist in this area. Within the broad international agenda on this topic which includes issues such as food security, land use, production models, climate, water, energy and biodiversity - there are innovative initiatives in Brazil, which yield great results and need to be recognized throughout the world

At first, it is important to note that while Brazil is a world power in agribusiness, it maintains more than 60% of its territory covered by native vegetation. Several factors have contributed to this achievement. Notable amongst them is the fact that research carried out over the past forty years has led to advanced technological achievements that have increased agricultural productivity more than threefold. Together with the use of degraded pasture and a significant increase in second harvests as an additional yield for agriculture, it has allowed an enormous increase in grain production without depletion of native vegetation, as can be seen in the graph below. Further good news is the fact that we still have close to 200 million hectares of degraded pasture that can be used to substantially increase agricultural production.

Brazil also has a strong and innovative public policy, the ABC Plan, which offers a number of productive alternatives in addition to funding, so that rural Brazilian producers can reduce carbon emissions in their properties. Of the alternative methods of productions, there is the agroforestry



Source: ICONE (2012)

system, which follows the logic of the forests, where the organic material from fallen trees turns into a rich, natural fertilizer, or the Crop-Livestock-Forest Integration System, which promotes the recovery of degraded pasture areas, incorporating different production systems in the same property, such as grains, fiber, meat, milk and agro-energy.

Progress toward sustainability includes the approval of the Brazilian Forest Code, which is one of the strictest in the world, with significant areas of productive farms mandatorily set up as preservation areas, on top of the more than 210 million hectares of land in conservation units and indigenous lands. One of the instruments of the code is the CAR (Rural Environmental Record), a land-use map for rural properties in the country.

### Relevant & Innovative Movements

There are relevant and innovative movements in Brazil aimed at the certification of sustainable production, and we have seen a continuous increase in partnerships between producers, NGOs and Government towards the constant improvement of our sustainable production patterns. I can say with confidence that, over the last decades, no country in the world has done more than Brazil regarding sustainable agriculture, and we are open to sharing our experiences with the world.

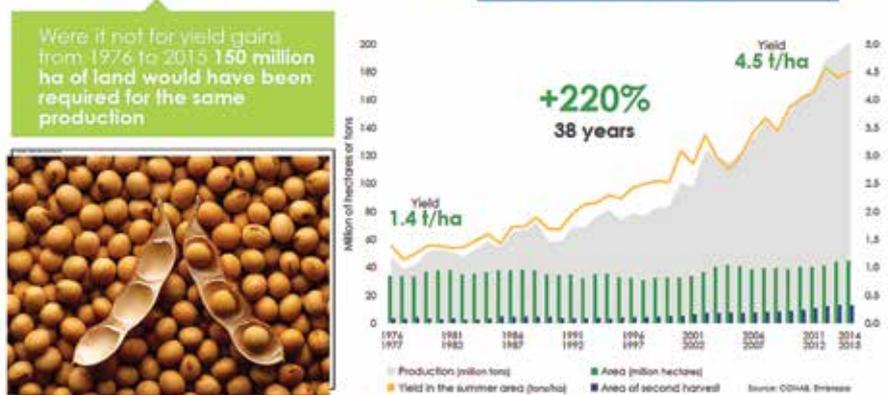
Also on the topic of energy, we have many successful experiences to present. The Brazilian energy matrix is one of the cleanest and most renewable in the world. Currently, 41.2% of Brazilian energy comes from renewable resources, a rate much higher than the world average of 13% and even more than the OECD average of 9%. As Brazil advances in deep-water oil and gas exploration, it also increases the investment in the construction of hydropower plants and in the production of bioenergy - in particular, sugar cane ethanol and biodiesel, as well as investment in the use of biomass for power generation.

Regarding the above, over the past three decades Brazil has prevented 800 million tonnes of carbon dioxide from being released into the atmosphere, due to the use of ethanol as a substitute for gasoline or a mixture of both. In Brazil, 79% of electric power comes from renewable resources, especially water, and there is still substantial hydroelectric potential to be explored.

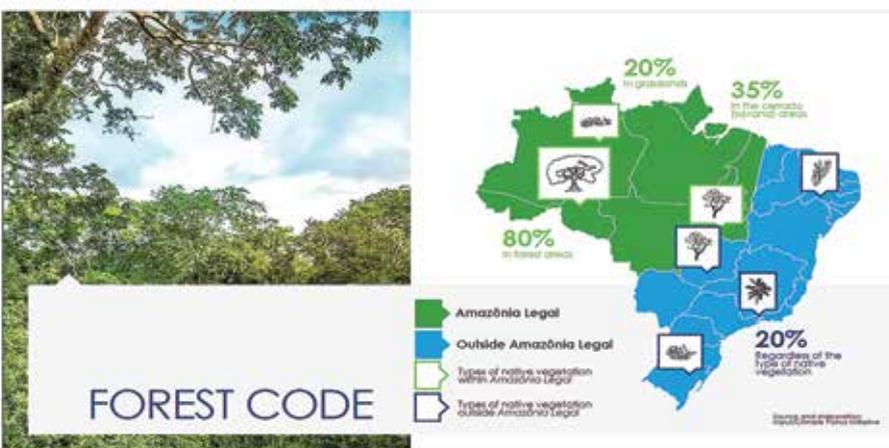
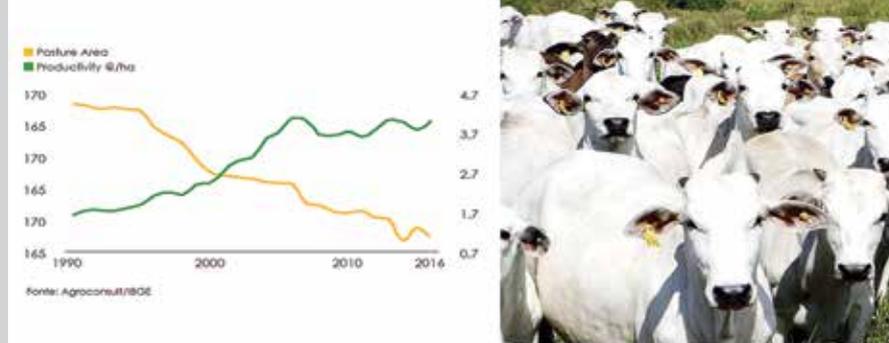
There still is a lot to be achieved, especially in a country undergoing economic and social development. Nonetheless, we are able to present to the world positive data and the specific cases in which Brazil brings real solutions to global problems.

We firmly believe that it is possible to Be Sustainable. Be Brasil.

## AREA X PRODUCTIVITY GRAINS



## AREA SAVING LIVESTOCK



# Ceará State - New Synergies in Brazil's Northeast

By Carlos Brian Pheysey

In line with our annual effort to feature among our pages, a distinct federal state within Brazil, we turn our spotlight toward the state of Ceará, one of the leading states of Brazil's Northeast, having more than doubled its GDP per capita in the decade from 2006 to 2016.

Home to one of the most spectacular coastlines of Brazil, Ceará has become a vibrant corner of the country. Its capital, Fortaleza (meaning "Fortress" in Portuguese), with a population of almost 3 million cearenses, hosts a third of the state's population. Urbanisation has taken root and industries have flocked to Ceará to make use of its tax incentives. Its shores receive constant wind from the Atlantic, a feature that has led to the setting up of wind-turbine towers, adding to the hydropower supply to meet the land's urban and industrial needs.

Ceará was traditionally a land producing for its own internal demand, which was mostly geared toward agriculture and livestock over a span of centuries. However, the economy's profile and outlook are changing rapidly. Primary products are still a mainstay of the economy, but the share of value-added items has grown considerably.

Footwear (mostly of rubber, but also of leather) accounts for one-quarter of Ceará's exports. Cured leather represents a further 15% of its shipments to the world. Another 20% comprises cashew fruit (and cashew nuts), melons and other tropical fruit. Fruit juices make up a further 4%, waxes about 6% and cotton fabrics almost 6%. Of interest to Singapore's keen taste for seafood, more than 2% of Ceará's exports entail crustaceans.

Other exports include refined petroleum, iron ore, metal ovens, electric-motor parts, among other products. It becomes clear that Ceará has moved up the value-added chain by processing its primary products at manufacturing plants, thus finding a niche in the ever-growing sophistication of international markets. Its industry spans foodstuff, garments, metals, chemicals and more, activities that are heavily concentrated in Fortaleza and the industrial parks of its abutting municipalities.

In fact, various manufacturers and producers from Ceará have been supplying merchandise to Singapore. Footwear from Grendene, Democrata and Paquetá found its way to the island in 2015. Ceará harbours vast fields of carnaúba, a wax-producing tree native to Brazil's Northeast, with companies such as Pontes Indústria de Cera and also Agrocerca shipping wax to this Southeast Asian shore. Inbop has sent rubber and polymer products to this market as well. Singaporean consumers have also purchased ocean produce from Ceará, whether from companies such as Ipesca or H&K (both in seafood) or from Carlyle Peixes (ornamental fish).

In the realm of logistics, Fortaleza comprises the port of Mucuripe, which along with the port of Pecém, located 55 km west of that



capital, constitute Ceará's main doors to the world. Fortaleza itself has an international airport linking Ceará with the Americas, Europe and West Africa, whether for passengers or cargo. A railway network spans Ceará, carrying freight to Fortaleza, as well as the bordering states within Brazil and soon to the port of Pecém.

## Mission from FIEC to Singapore

A key addition will be the planned industrial park farther west, to harbour chemical, pharmaceutical and petrochemical plants. With that aim, a private-sector delegation visited Singapore in July, from FIEC – Federation of Industries of the State of Ceará. Targeting Singaporean companies that might take an interest in setting up in Ceará, the directors of FIEC delivered presentations to showcase the opportunities for industrial investment. The executives comprised heads of various clusters within that business federation: foodstuff, chemicals, metal-mechanical, infocomm and more.

A meeting with Ambassador Flávio Soares Damico marked the beginning of the tour, an occasion for an exchange of insights. The delegates then visited the SBF (Singapore Business Federation, photo above) and SMF (Singapore Manufacturing Federation), meeting key counterparts that can further this dialogue and draw companies to the proposed new industrial hub of Ceará.

The businessmen also toured one of the container terminals of PSA, the main port-operator company in Singapore. PSA also runs port facilities in other continents, including Buenos Aires, in the southern cone of the Americas. It stands to reason that a terminal in Ceará would benefit PSA and the state, in view of its location closer to the Panama Canal and to the North Atlantic.

The executives met likewise with SPRING, the statutory board that fosters competitiveness, benchmarking and training among Singapore's businesses, a model that can be emulated by FIEC and its affiliated companies. Last but not least, these leading cearenses opened a dialogue with Surbana Jurong. Its Senior Vice-President for Planning is a long-time visitor of Brazil, having developed various projects in central-southern Brazil. Surbana Jurong has ignited an economic revolution in formerly average-performance municipalities by combining into a single vibrant unit, a business-cum-technology park with amenities, executive and professional residences, retail, leisure, production logistics, etc. The concept dovetails therefore with the proposed hub in Ceará and Surbana Jurong could possibly lend a hand along such lines.

*A key addition will be the planned industrial park to harbour chemical, pharmaceutical and petrochemical plants. With that aim, a private-sector delegation targeting Singaporean companies that might take an interest in setting up in Ceará... FIEC delivered presentations to showcase the opportunities for industrial investment. The executives comprised heads of various clusters within that business federation: foodstuff, chemicals, metal-mechanical, infocomm and more.*

### Added features, sights and singularities of Ceará

Higher pursuits are integral to Ceará's insertion into the 21st century. R&D within its borders encompasses efforts into crop and livestock improvements, high-performance information technology, plus radio-astronomy (Ceará is home to the largest radio-telescope complex within Brazil) and also paleontology, which includes the Geo-park of Araripe, a first of its kind in the Americas.

Fortaleza was one of the 12 Brazilian cities hosting matches for the 2014 World Cup. Its stadium, Castelão, has become part of the city's sports heritage, henceforth hosting other matches, concerts and other events. The city's Carnival is among the best in Brazil, a medley of lively music, colourful parades, float processions and joyful outpourings of sheer fun by cearenses.

Tourism has become a pillar of Ceará's economy. Sensational beaches dot the coast, such as Jericoacoara, Canoa Quebrada and Porto das Dunas, drawing fellow Brazilians, many Europeans and others. The museums, colonial architecture, art-nouveau buildings and other heritage aspects are plentiful, along with countryside century-old farms that are open to visitation. Colourful religious processions and pilgrimages bear witness to the strong faith that is intrinsic to life in small towns. In the hinterlands, many handicraft items made from weaving, wood, clay, straw, etc. are found. Thriving outlets for semiprecious stones are also present for those who marvel at the sparkling magic of such pieces.

Increasingly, one sees the introduction of radical sports such as climbing, kitesurfing, spelunking and more. Eco-tourism has also been a key feature of Ceará, with treks to waterfalls, caves, mesetas, highlands, valleys, coastal mangroves, distinct varieties of forests, fauna-conservation reserves and other attractions for the adventurous trekker.

Ceará is nothing but an attractive and inviting location, whether you are a business investor or a discerning traveller. With its hospitable people, amenities, infrastructure, rising productivity and its desire to join the new global economy, Ceará remains an interesting destination for all who come with a keen eye for new opportunities and experiences.



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1. Ideal location in Brazil's Northeast
2. The state capital: Fortaleza, at dusk
3. Maracanaú Industrial Park
4. The port of Pecém: key to Ceará's exports
5. A waterfall in Araripe Geo-Park
6. Jericoacoara beach and its tranquil warmth
7. The massive monolith boulders of Quixadá
8. Pilgrims flock to Juazeiro do Norte



Governor Paulo Hartung at talks with Semcorp Marine, largest investor in his home state

# Espírito Santo - Tie-ups in Infrastructure & Capacity-building

By Carlos Brian Pheysey

The southeastern state of Espírito Santo (ES) has been featured in past issues and likewise in this current edition, for a good reason: the visit by Governor Paulo Hartung in September, as part of a mission to draw further Singaporean investments into infrastructure, training and other sectors, aiming at boosting the state's competitiveness. In fact, Espírito Santo has expressed the wish to become a Singapore within Brazil, an ambitious concept that calls for firm action.

It is worth recalling that the municipality of Aracruz already houses the EJA yard, built and managed by Jurong Shipyard, a subsidiary of Semcorp Marine, from Singapore, one of the largest Asian investments into the Brazilian economy.

Right next to its capital, Vitória, lies the port of Tubarão, consolidating much of the exports of ES along with those from states farther in central Brazil. It is working at full capacity, therefore an addition would be welcome to alleviate the occasional bottlenecks. Thus a new port is being devised in the south of the state and Singapore's sovereign funds and other holdings and operators from this powerful Asian player would be much welcome to consider this opportunity.

Other infrastructure projects open to bidders – often through public-private partnerships – entail upstate highways, railways, landbased oil drilling, power generation (gas, wind, waste-to-energy and other sources) and its distribution grid as well as waste-water treatment, and other fronts of interest to international players.

The very city of Vitória is in need of urban solutions, which Surbana Jurong can provide as Singapore's key designer of urban spaces coupled with infrastructure (metro-rail, for instance), business logistics, retail options and leisure amenities, constituting a vibrant eco-system of high-tech companies providing jobs, plus everything else that makes a truly viable city pulsate. Surbana Jurong experts have already assisted other Brazilian states and cities and therefore know Brazil's singularities thoroughly and are thus well positioned to enact further projects.



Gov Hartung (right) addresses the Latin American Chamber's gala dinner in Singapore

Espírito Santo has sent students for training in Singapore's centres of excellence in marine technologies, but the scope of cooperation in sciences and other fields of knowledge can be expanded further. One example is the idea to refer to Singapore's case and establish longer daily school hours and the mass teaching of English more firmly in the education system within ES.

## Governor's schedule in Singapore

With all of these objectives in mind, Governor Paulo Hartung paid visits to entities in Singapore such as the National Institute of Education, a centre of excellence in teacher training, Ngee Ann Polytechnic, which hosted ES marine-engineering students in recent



EJA: Jurong Shipyard's facility in Aracruz

## Economic potential

Espírito Santo is well known as the outlet for some key exports of Brazil, such as iron ore (both from its own deposits and from the bordering state farther inland, Minas Gerais).

years, and the prestigious Nanyang Technological University, the 2nd best university in the AUR (Asian University Rankings).

The schedule also included the Governor's brief opening words at the seminar "Doing Business in Brazil after the storm: opportunities and lessons", organised by the Latin American Chamber of Commerce in Singapore in tandem with the Singapore Business Federation - a powerful event for anyone in Singapore looking into tapping into Brazil. A press conference also helped to spread word in Singapore of the Governor's visit.

He also met with Surbana Jurong for discussions on urban challenges, revitalization, mobility, etc. and the planning and creation of business/tech-parks linked to retail, executive amenities and satellite townships for enhanced economic growth. Further in his tour, Governor Paulo Hartung had fruitful exchanges with Olam International, a trading company from Singapore that already buys Brazilian coffee, with the potential to expand the range toward other Brazilian produce.

The Governor also held discussions with Mr. Lim Hng Kiang, Minister of Trade and Industry, in order to find common ground on trade and investments between the two opposite shores of the globe. He also met with PSA, the company that manages the largest transshipment port worldwide and other terminals in all continents. PSA would be a welcome addition to Espírito Santo, were it to build there a container terminal to tap into Brazil's vast output. Needless to say, he also toured the facilities of Jurong Shipyard, thus reinforcing the existing bonds between Singapore and Espírito Santo deriving from the construction of the EJA yard in Aracruz.

In the realm of capital sourcing, the Governor held talks with GIC (Government Investment Corporation of Singapore) and Temasek Holdings, two state-linked funds that wield vast stakes in infrastructure and other enterprises, whether in Singapore or abroad. In fact, with a view to tapping into Brazil's potential, both already have offices in São Paulo, just a ninety-minute flight from Vitória.

For urban mobility, Singapore's leading metro-rail operator, SMRT, provided insights on how it can assist in streamlining Vitória's traffic conditions. Governor Paulo Hartung also had a chance to deliberate further tie-ups with International Enterprise Singapore, the statutory board that fosters the global presence of Singaporean firms, services, systems, consulting, engineering and more. Last but not least, in his hectic programme while here, he held talks with the SCE (Singapore Cooperation Enterprise), the statutory board that shares with interested countries some of Singapore's expertise and models of excellence in public-sector services and infrastructure.

Iron ore accounts for over half of all products shipped abroad by Espírito Santo, feeding steel mills in East Asia and the broader world. Its byproducts, i.e. iron rods, sheets and other formats make up another 5%. Steel is also shipped as another derivative. In fact, Vale, the third largest mining company worldwide, has its own terminal in Vitória and a branch office in Singapore.

The EJA shipyard was built to serve the huge oil and gas fields lying off the coast of ES and also partly on land, with crude oil being responsible for a further 11% of the state's exports. Espírito Santo also exports stone for construction purposes, totaling almost 7% of ES products shipped globally. Paper pulp makes up a further 10% and coffee 4%. Black pepper is a product from Espírito Santo shipped regularly to Southeast Asia. There is further potential in sugar, fruit, juices and meats (chicken, pork and bovine). One should recall that, within Singapore's market for meats, Brazil is the leading supplier to the island in all 3 categories, despite the distance from Brazil to Singapore - a striking feat stemming from Brazil's veterinary sanitation, vertical integration and economies of scale.

Espírito Santo already supplies a range of products to Singapore. For instance, Frisa has shipped meat to the Asian nation, and Grancafé and Blendcoffee are two producers from ES that supplied coffee to the island-state in 2015. Brazilian kids all over are fond of sweets from a local manufacturer, Chocolates Garoto, and its trademark yellow box, found on supermarket shelves all over Brazil, with its products now equally available in Singapore, including the latest biennial Food & Hotel Asia trade exhibition. Various granite companies from ES, i.e. Granito Zucchi, Santo Antônio Granitos and Brasigran, shipped their stones to these shores. Other products from Espírito Santo found in Singapore are footwear from Calçados Itapuã and ornamental fish from Aqua Fauna.

A strong rail network links the mines and mills to the main port on the coast. The land still sources two-thirds of its energy off the grids of neighbouring states. Nevertheless, ES harbours modern agribusinesses, mining conglomerates, steel mills and more industries, which emphasises the need for a ramped-up energy supply.

The state has an urban outlook to its population and economy, with 80% of its people living in cities and towns, with a density similar to Malaysia's. The HDI (Human Development Index) of Espírito Santo is classified as high, by UN parameters. The capital bears the category of 'very high' in that ranking, thus making Vitória a very liveable city within Brazil. The population of Espírito Santo is a friendly and colourful combination of descendants of Portuguese, Italians, Germans, Africans, Amerindians and many others that have made Espírito Santo their home.

*Vitória is home to many museums, galleries, cultural centres, colonial-era churches and a nightlife that resembles that of its neighbouring state capitals (like Rio de Janeiro)*

### Sights to behold

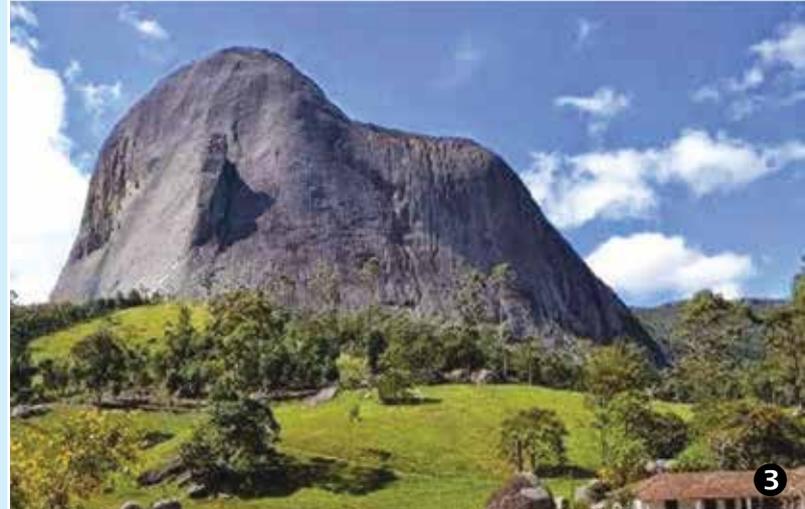
Despite being so close to Rio de Janeiro, the fact remains that Espírito Santo is still largely unknown to foreign tourists, though many global executives and professionals have already visited Vitória and its vicinity for meetings and projects. In reality, ES has much to offer to casual visitors.

Vitória is home to many museums, galleries, cultural centres, colonial-era churches and a nightlife that resembles that of its neighbouring state capitals. Religious processions dot the month of June. Other towns in ES hold music festivals, food fairs, religious festivities, handicraft fairs, football tournaments, and so on. Farther south, Guarapari beach is a draw for visitors from the neighbouring Minas Gerais state and, needless to say, seafood is a strong feature of ES, particularly its moqueca capixaba, a rich fish stew.

Espírito Santo is a mountainous state and the towns of the deep valleys of its interior reflect the architecture of the towns of Italian and German origins. The third highest point of Brazil, the Pico da Bandeira, is located within ES. The Pedra Azul, 'Blue Rock', is a massive boulder standing splendidly against the blue sky, drawing visitors from everywhere. Winter in Espírito Santo is a singular experience, for those who want the feel of chilly mountain weather with a cozy cup of chocolate and a fireplace, in contrast with the heat of the lowlands.

A hospitable land of contrasts, wealth and opportunity, ES is open to foreigners, be they tourists, investors or people from other walks of life interested in a new side of Brazil little known abroad, the state of Espírito Santo.

1. Espírito Santo, a key coastal state of Brazil
2. The state capital, Vitória
3. Pedra Azul – the Blue Boulder, for a wintry chill-out
4. The happy-go-yellow HQ of Chocolates Garoto
5. Port of Tubarão, key to exports from ES state
6. Moqueca capixaba, the fish stew





# Pará and Roraima - Two Bright Stars Shine in the Amazon

By Carlos Brian Pheysey

■ The vast Amazon region in northern Brazil is anything but uniform. The features within it change over distances and, in fact, the region is divided into various states, each with its own unique character. In this article, we shall take a closer look at two northern states that have sought to reinforce ties with Singapore in 2016

**B**oth Pará and Roraima sport a star on their respective flags, thus it is only fair that we may call these two states rising stars in the realm of Brazil-Singapore partnerships, having both sent delegations to Singapore in the same month of October, with a view to draw Asian investment, know-how and excellence into their respective economies, infrastructure and governance.

## Potential in Pará

Were Pará to be a country, its vast territory would make it the 22<sup>nd</sup> largest country in the world with great economic potential. Congressman Martinho Carmona came to Singapore to pave the way for a 2017 mission by the Governor of the state. Mr. Carmona, aided by the staff of the Commercial Section of the Brazilian Embassy, held a discussion with Singapore's Ministry of Trade and Industry, with the participation of International Enterprise Singapore (I.E. Singapore is the statutory board that assists in launching Singaporean companies into overseas ventures and projects).

On that occasion, Congressman Carmona invited Singapore's investors to tap into the upcoming construction of a 1400-kilometre railway for the hauling of 18 million tonnes per annum of soya and iron ore to dockside shipping, so as to feed Asia's hunger for protein and steel. There are also opportunities in mining of bauxite and its refining into aluminium. A new steel mill expected to produce 2.5 million tonnes per year is also in the pipeline. Vale, the key operator of the mines, is already well established with a branch office in Singapore.

Back to soya, the state of Pará also has room for the construction of processing mills. Meat plants for poultry and pork also make use of soya feed, which would make for a combined boost in soya and meat production for foreign markets. A highway is also being planned for regions not served by the rail project, and there is a theme park foreseen near the state capital, Belém. Such was the broad range of projects that Mr. Carmona presented to the MTI, in hopes that Singaporean enterprises will inject resources into this promising new frontier within Brazil.

Though mineral by-products account for over three-quarters of its exports, there is also the aforementioned soya, along with pepper and bovine meat. The industry linked to forestry is also active, shipping not just timber but its value-added products such as furniture. However, Pará's riverine ports could do with much upgrading, technology and expansion, hence the desire for Singaporean operators to pitch into the logistics network of that state, heavily dependent as it is on waterways, rail and air transportation. Water treatment and water supply for the population at large are also aspects that need attention. The Governor's mission in 2017 is bound to present more about Pará.

(from left) Ambassador Flávio Damico; Mr. Loh Khum Yean (Permanent Secretary for Trade & Industry); and Congressman Martinho Carmona, from Pará



*Needless to say, the Amazon forest is also home to colourful wildlife. The native culture of the Amerindians remains alive in reserves such as Xingu and in villages along the river banks or inland*

### What to see in Pará

The climate of Pará will remind Singaporeans of home: hot and humid, with frequent but short downpours. Belém, the state capital, is well connected by air to Florida, the Guyanas, Portugal as well as the rest of Brazil. Its fresh-produce market, Ver-o-Peso, is a riot of scents and colours, featuring exotic fruits found only in the Amazon. The region is home to açaí, the berry that is now all the rage among Singaporeans seeking its antioxidant properties and a healthy lifestyle. The so-called 'Brazil nut' is actually named castanha-do-pará, from its origin in that state. There are beaches, both seafront and riverside ones. The point where the massive Amazon River meets the Atlantic Ocean produces a magnificent and sonorous clash, a rush of waves that is unique worldwide, known as pororoca.

The many tributaries of the river offer views of delightful waterfalls and opportunities aplenty for sport fishing aficionados. Fresh and exotic fish remain abundant for everyone seeking a tasty delight. Needless to say, the Amazon forest is home to colourful wildlife. The native culture of the Amerindians remains alive in reserves such as Xingu and in villages along the river banks or inland.



1. Pará: where the Amazon region meets the Atlantic
2. Rolling out the ores of Pará
3. The port of Barcarena, a door to the world for Pará
4. Amerindian culture comes alive in Xingu, Pará
5. Ver-o-peso: the fresh-produce market in Belém, the state capital of Pará
6. Açaí, the berry from Pará: rich in antioxidants, now a global craze
7. Pororoca: the fierce wave caused by the Amazon River crashing into the Atlantic



(Left): Roraima's delegates visited the Commercial Section of the Embassy of Brazil in Singapore. (Below): At the helm of UFRR, Prof. Jefferson Fernandes targeted academic partnerships while in Singapore



## Roraima's Star Shines Likewise

Let us turn now to Roraima, the other Amazonian state which, though small and remote, is also looking to the outside world for partnerships.

On their way to a trade show in China, the Secretary of Planning and Development of the state of Roraima, Mr. Alexandre Alberto Henklain Fonseca, the Chancellor of UFRR (a state university), Prof. Jefferson Fernandes do Nascimento and a director from SEBRAE/RR (Micro and Small Business Support Service), stopped by the Brazilian Embassy in Singapore for some insights from the staff of its Commercial Section.

The conversation addressed prospects of collaboration between researchers in Singapore and Roraima in the fields of Tropical Disease and Epidemiology. UFRR professors and researchers need upgrading towards doctoral degrees and research capabilities need to be enhanced. In addition to tie-ups with great universities in Singapore, it may be worth investing in a relationship with A\*STAR (Agency for Science, Technology and Research).

Thereafter, Mr. Henklain Fonseca was in talks with Aegea, a water treatment company whose stakeholders include GIC Pte. Ltd. (until recently known as Government of Singapore Investment Corporation).

It is worthwhile noting that the eco-diversity of Roraima is ideal for joint efforts on coffee cultivation, fish-farming, orchid-growing and more, with a view to accessing global markets of scale. Singapore may also look into acquiring land and facilities there for the production of foodstuff that this Asian nation may need in the future for its own food security.

## Output of Roraima's economy

Roraima is keen to export its non-transgenic soya, grown on its savannah. Much of that production needs an outlet for this land-locked state. Therefore, Roraima seeks investors to turn



Landmark of the UFRR campus in Boa Vista, Roraima

into reality an improved highway to link its farms and production plants with ports on the Amazon and with a new port in the neighbouring country of Guyana, which, like Singapore, is a member of the Commonwealth of Nations. Access to that port would place Roraima's output closer to the Panama Canal and the Pacific than Brazil's southern ports.

Funds from Singapore would favour not greenfield operations, i.e. operations built from the ground up, but rather existing and operational facilities open to foreign capital. Attracting players from Singapore in the water

supply and treatment area is an interesting prospect, in view of Singapore's successful catchment and recycling of water, as well as its fostering of a water-tech ecosystem of companies. Singapore's track record in industrial and business parks also interests Roraima and its food processing and construction-materials clusters, as do Singapore's state-of-the-art port terminals.

Other co-operation fronts are possible, as witnessed in the interest shown by SEBRAE/RR toward SPRING, the statutory board of Singapore that fosters capacity-building, innovation and competitiveness among small and medium enterprises. Small fish farmers and orchid growers mentioned earlier would have, as a result, better means to upgrade the quality and market placement of their products.

The Embassy's team suggested that Roraima send a mission to Singapore to present in greater detail projects, public tenders, PPP openings and more technical and economic data that would prompt Singaporean operators to want to tap into that corner of Brazil.

The GDP of Roraima is small, but one of the fastest-growing at over 7%. Among its exports, timber accounts for 40%, soya 33% and iron bars 7%. The exports of bovine leather fluctuate considerably but remain a key component among shipments from Roraima. There is potential for coffee, given its savannahs and highlands, and for maize and rice alike.

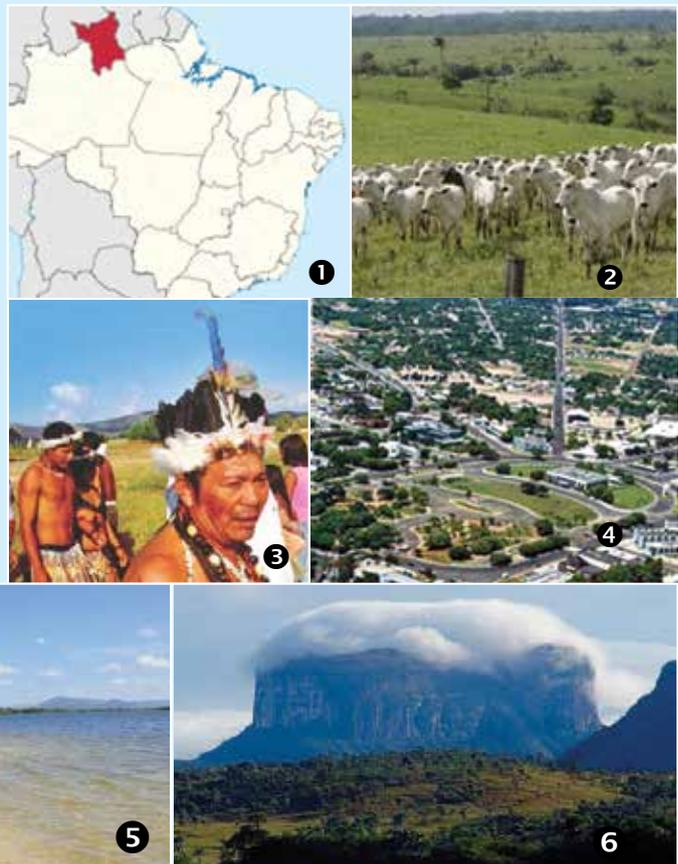
As in Pará, the logistics network depends quite often on air travel, with waterfalls preventing full use of river transportation. In the absence of rail, road transportation remains essential.

*Roraima's eco-diversity is ideal for joint efforts on coffee cultivation, fish-farming, orchid-growing... Singapore may also look into acquiring land and facilities in Roraima for the production of foodstuff*

## Uncanny nature in Roraima - a draw for travellers

Setting itself apart from much of the Amazon, Roraima is a land where lowland jungle starts giving way to savannahs, as the ground rises toward the highlands of the Guiana Shield and its eerie flat-topped peaks, termed tepuis in native languages of the forest. The odd topography and the isolation of that corner of Brazil lead to a distinct climate, flora and fauna. Treks to Mount Roraima continue to lure growing numbers of eco-adventurers. For those less bent on wandering through highlands, the lake of Caracaranã provides stunning beauty surrounded by cashew trees. As keen seafood lovers, Singaporeans will surely appreciate the variety of fish being served in the culinary traditions of Roraima.

Rio Branco, or 'white river', fronting the city of Boa Vista, is the only state capital of Brazil that lies in the northern hemisphere, whereas the rest of the Brazilian state capitals are located south of the equator, hence the portrayal of a corresponding red line near the bottom of Roraima's flag. The town and its environs concentrate over half of Roraima's population, rendering the rest of the state rather devoid of people but rich in pristine nature. The tribes of Amerindians that inhabit Roraima provide another fascinating aspect to this once-remote area of Brazil, now ever more interconnected to the rest of Brazil and with a wider world of opportunities.



1. Roraima, at the northwestern end of Brazil 2. Cattle in the Roraima's savannahs: source of its leather exports 3. Amerindians of Roraima speak a range of native languages 4. Boa Vista: only state capital in Brazil that lies north of the equator 5. Lake Caracaranã provides a seaside feeling for landlocked Roraima 6. Flat-topped Mount Roraima marks the triple border of Brazil, Venezuela and Guyana

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Trading panel at the São Paulo Stock Exchange (Bovespa)

# Brazil: Ready to Resume Growth

By Herbert Drummond  
and Carlos B. Pheysey

■ Since the new Brazilian President Michel Temer took office, emergency measures were instituted to tackle various issues that were hindering growth as well as to reduce bottlenecks in infrastructure, limit Government expenditure and widen possibilities of foreign investment

**B**etween 2001 and 2014, the GDP of Brazil grew, on average, 3.2% yearly, hitting a peak of 7.6% in 2010. In 2014, however, alert signs began to emerge and the year ended at nearly level point, with a growth of a mere 0.1%. The following year, nevertheless, would be worse: political and economic crises of significant dimensions prevented the country from resuming its normal growth and led it from stagnation to recession, causing a drop of 3.8% in GDP.

The economic crisis had political consequences with the approval of the impeachment process against the President. The new constitutional President, Michel Temer, took office on 31 August 2016. He took charge of carrying out emergency measures to redirect Brazil onto a path toward economic growth. The government then decided to tackle, gradually, various issues that hindered growth, so as to curb bottlenecks in infrastructure, limit Government expenditures and widen the possibilities of foreign investment in Brazil.

## Placing Limits on Federal Expenditure

The first problem to be addressed was containing governmental expenditure. The gross public debt of Brazil stands at 70% of the

GDP, constituting a strong barrier against growth. In this context, the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Planning, Budget and Management submitted to the President a joint proposal for a constitutional amendment, which places limits on government expenditure at the level of the amount disbursed the previous year, corrected by inflation. The measure is aimed at all branches of the Federal Government, i.e. the Executive, Legislative and Judiciary Powers, also the Board of Accounts of the Union, the Public Ministry of the Union and the Public Attorney's Office of the Union. The containment measures outlined by this amendment shall be valid for twenty years, but they can be revised in ten years by the President then in power. Should that be infringed, the implicated public organ can be penalised, with the amendment stipulating eight types of punishment.

This amendment was sent to National Congress and approved by the Lower Chamber, on the first round, on 10 October 2016, and, on the second round, on 25 October 2016, having been forwarded then to the Senate. The text was then approved in its first reading on the Senate on 29 November 2016 and ratified at a second reading in December. As a result, Brazil will reduce substantially its primary deficit, bringing order to national accounts.

*“...the confidence ratings from the industry, commerce and consumers have risen in constant increments. All of this is proof of the acceptance of the measures by the population and the economic agents of Brazil, a testament that the government is on the right path toward resuming growth.”*

## Social Welfare System

The reduction of expenditure foreseen by the amendment proposal, as necessary as it may be, might not be sufficient to settle the matter of the Brazilian deficit in the long term since one of the main sources of the deficit is not covered by the new legislation: social welfare. This problem, however, has deeper and ancient roots that must be studied with circumspection in order to provide a long-term solution.

The Brazilian social welfare system was set up in the 1930s and consolidated in the 1960s. At the time, there were about eight workers for every retired individual in Brazil, which made it easier to fund the pensions under a regime of cost-sharing. Nowadays, the ratio is of fewer than two workers for each retired person, which renders impossible the maintenance of such a system conceived in the previous century. In addition, life expectancy in

be the alteration of the minimum age for retirement, eliminating instances in which some individuals may enjoy benefits provided by the state longer than the time spent in the workforce.

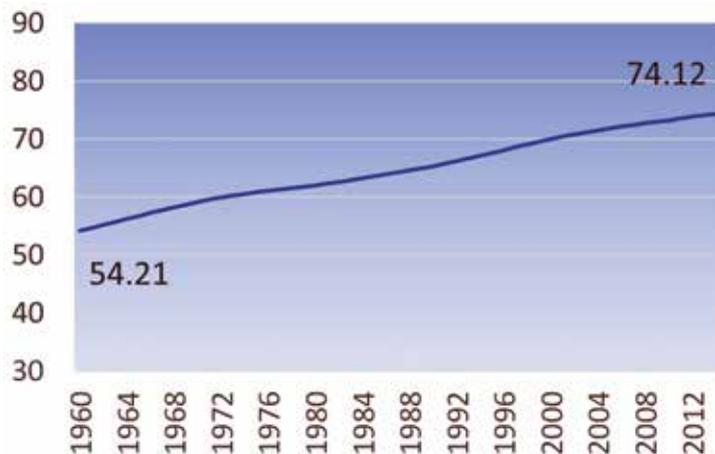
## Investments in the Oil & Gas Sector

Another important measure recently enacted by the Federal Government was the upgrading of law 12351, from 2010, which had set the rules for exploration and production of oil and natural gas under the regime of production sharing in pre-salt areas. According to alterations introduced into the text, in 2012, Petrobras should partner with a minimum equity of 30% in any consortium set up to exploit pre-salt fields, as occurred in the Libra block, tendered out in October 2013.

Previous rules mandated that Petrobras participate in any grouping established, even if the company might not be interested.

Thus, the planned budget of the oil company was constrained and its freedom of choice limited. The new framework shall reconstitute its right of choice. This way, the company can decide its own destiny and, should it not wish to take part in any consortium, it will suffice for it to inform the National Council on Energy Policy (CNPE), under the Ministry of Mines and Energy, within 30 days, whether it wishes or not to be the operator of the block area to be commissioned under the regime of production sharing. This shall award Petrobras the freedom to manage better its own budget, freeing up the company to participate in those ventures deemed strategic and profitable by its management.

### Life Expectancy in Brazil



Brazil has increased significantly since the creation of the system of retirements. Between 1960 and 2015, the life expectancy at birth of the average Brazilian went from 54 to 74 years of age, overburdening the accounts yet further as pensions were due for longer periods. Add to that the fact that, with the advances in medicine, in the near future it shall be common for an individual to exceed the age of one hundred years. As such, in keeping with similar efforts in many developed countries, there must be a reformulation of the welfare system, which is already overwhelmed and ridden with shortfalls, having led some Brazilian states to declare their inability to settle their payments.

Therefore, the Federal Government shall submit to Congress, shortly, a proposal for welfare reform, which will aim at recalibrating the entire system, in order to solve the problem in the long run. Today, on average, a Brazilian retires at age 58, with some ceasing to work at even earlier than 45 years of age, depending on the job category. Therefore, one of the items to be proposed will

## Land Acquisition

The purchase of land by foreigners shall also have its rules revised. In 2010, the Attorney-General Chambers of the Union (AGU) issued a new interpretation on Law 5709, of 1971, which had set rules for the acquisition of rural estate by foreigners residing in Brazil or by a foreign legal entity authorised to function in the country. According to AGU's understanding, the size of the plots should be limited with a view to "secure national sovereignty in a strategic sector of the economy and development".

The main concern was that foreign companies would acquire large tracts of land in the country, as had been done in Africa, in order to secure foodstuff supply to their own citizens, consequently reducing the available land for Brazilian farmers and driving the prices up. In response to those concerns, the AGU established a stricter control upon the sale of large-scale agricultural lands.

The new Government, however, considers that Brazil has legislation that is sufficiently robust to avoid abuses. Its

understanding is that new investments in the agriculture domain may boost other investments in infrastructure, with a view to channelling the production by setting up integrated agricultural chains.

### Investment Partnership Program - PPI

The main stimulus for investment in Brazil shall be outlined by the Investment Partnership Programme (PPI), for which an Executive Secretariat has been created and linked directly to the Office of the Presidency of the Republic. The project lays down predictable rules, with announcement of tenders with at least 100 days' notice, so that bidders have effective time to assess their participation. In addition, the concessions shall be offered only upon the granting of the environmental licences and the documents shall bear versions in Portuguese, English and Spanish. In this manner, the Government hopes to foster greater competitiveness and to widen the prospects of international participation, which will result in greater tax monies collected by the state.

The primordial facet of PPI is the project Crescer ("Grow"), which initially disclosed a list of 34 proposals, the tendering rules of which shall be made known shortly. The items will comprise two highways, three railways, four airports, three ports, three blocks of oil and gas deposits, three sanitation projects, 12 projects for power generation and distribution and four mining operations. In total, this would garner over a half trillion US dollars and solve part of the logistics bottlenecks that hinder the full development of Brazil.

### Crescer Project

In the first quarter of 2017, privatisations of the airports of Fortaleza, Salvador, Florianópolis and Porto Alegre will have taken place. Together, these mentioned airports receive annually 27.4 million passengers and process over 132 thousand tonnes of cargo. With this privatisation, the government expects to collect more than US\$ 1.8 billion. Additionally, the concession winners shall augment the operations and introduce new management methods, which will lead to the development of all sectors involved.

In the ports sector, there will be tenders for the operation of two terminals for fuel in the region of Santarém, Pará, and a bulk grain terminal in the Port of Rio de Janeiro. The terminals of Santarém are already operational, but they will require investments for their modernisation. Both are responsible for handling and storage of liquid bulk cargo (gasoline, kerosene, diesel and ethanol) that supply the state of Pará. The grain terminal of Rio de Janeiro is at the project stage and shall constitute a greenfield initiative. Upon conclusion, it will be responsible for supplying the states of Rio de Janeiro, Espírito Santo and Minas Gerais, in the southeast region of Brazil.

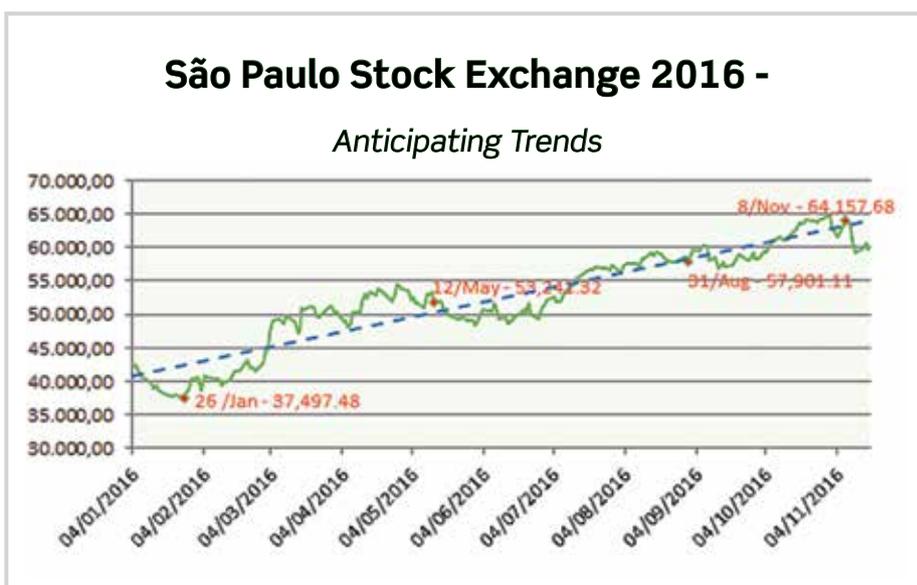


Crescer project – Source: Brazilian Government

The timetable of projects to be offered to the investment partnerships dictates that the tenders for the airports, ports and some concessions in oil and gas should occur in the first half of 2017. The second semester will stage the tenders for the remaining portion of the oil and gas blocks, the railways, the projects of electric power generation and distribution, the highways and the mines. Finally, on the first half of 2018, sanitation tenders will be received as well as those for the final portion of electric power generation and distribution projects.

### Conclusion

The new Brazilian Government under President Michel Temer is taking swift measures to attract investments into the country and eliminate the chief bottlenecks that exist in Brazilian infrastructure. The market has been demonstrating confidence towards the proposals announced, having reacted in a positive fashion, as attested by various economic indicators. The exchange rate has declined systematically without reduction of our foreign reserves. The BOVESPA rate, pertaining to the market value of the largest stock exchange of Latin America, has climbed consistently. Also the confidence ratings from the industry, commerce and consumers have risen in constant increments. All of this is proof of the acceptance of the measures by the population and the economic agents of Brazil, a testament that the government is on the right path toward resuming growth.



# EY Drums Up Brazil's Business Framework

By Carlos Brian Pheysey



(Inset): Home of EY in Singapore - 1 Raffles Quay. (Above): The new EY address in São Paulo

Ernst & Young's seminar provided updates on doing business in Brazil with the latest figures showing a marked change for the better in foreign exchange, foreign reserves and stock-exchange ratings

Formerly known as Ernst & Young, the firm EY is known worldwide for the professional and advisory services it renders to businesses, providing solutions through branch offices in numerous countries, such as in Brazil and Singapore. Its teams of experts canvass vast resources and manage to deliver briefings that serve a multitude of needs of businesses, commerce and investors, such as seen in the thoroughly informative seminar EY staged recently in Singapore in tandem with the Embassies of Brazil and Mexico – the “Update on doing business in Brazil and Mexico, from commercial, tax and legal perspectives.”

The event drew an audience of sixty executives from Southeast Asia and from the two powerhouses of Latin America under the spotlight – Brazil and Mexico. Brazilian Ambassador Flávio S. Damico kick-started the seminar with his insights on the political and economic juncture in Brazil, a country that has seen a positive shift in late 2016 in economic policies, now headed toward liberalisation, once President Michel Temer took office mid-year. Ambassador Damico provided figures that evidence a marked change for the better in foreign exchange, foreign reserves and stock-exchange ratings in Brazil.

The result, he enthused, was a boost in confidence, seen in polls conducted among industries, retail and consumers. Ambassador Damico further expounded on PEC 241, a proposed amendment to place limits on public expenditure that was ratified by the Lower Chamber of the National Congress and was then being deliberated by the Senate at the time of publishing of this magazine article. Such a move would contain runaway expenses and allow Brazil to focus its energies on matters that require urgent attention.

The branch offices of Brazilian companies in Singapore likewise provided speakers on that day who shed a positive light on the new

horizons for those interested in doing business in Brazil. BB Securities (the local subsidiary of Banco do Brasil), the law chamber in São Paulo of Mayer Brown International LLP, plus the EY expert (in Singapore) on Brazil's tax framework, Mr. Jérôme van Staden, ministered further insights on how Brazil has been gradually – and successfully – reversing the decline that had beset the country by mid-decade.

The briefings enabled a better picture on what to expect from Brazil's current tax, legal, banking and credit framework. Tapping into a Singaporean perspective, the event counted on Mr. Raphael Chua, from Surbana Jurong Pte. Ltd., to elaborate on its vast experience in Brazil in designing satellite townships of industrial-cum-business parks coupled with urban fixtures, executive housing, amenities, retail, schools, mobility, logistics, etc.

Mexico too had a chance to present itself, highlighting its ideal position as a trade partner in the Pacific Rim, the TPP, NAFTA and Central America, despite assertions of the new US President against the Trans-Pacific arrangement. The seminar proceeded then to a lively Q&A, engaging the audience, which yielded queries from those present regarding tariffs, company formation and more. The day ended with one-on-one meetings between the speakers and keen executives.

The initiative by EY and the Embassies thus served a crucial role, that of allaying concerns among Singaporeans about injecting effort and resources into what used to be deemed the far end of the globe, Brazil and Mexico. Much to everyone's ease of mind, the world has shrunk, business conditions have been streamlined in these countries and new paths toward liberalisation have been taken that will make it easier for Singaporean enterprises to venture into the two Latin giants.

# CBMM: Breath of Fresh Air

By Foo Yong Han

■ Powered by the sun, the world's first zero-emission electric cargo motorcycle will help make the concept of a totally clean and green vehicle a reality



**E**nergy Efficiency. Lightweight Design. Better Performance. This is the tagline for Companhia Brasileira de Metalurgia e Mineração's (CBMM) niobium-based product line. Niobium is a soft, grey and ductile transition metal and it is the heart and soul of CBMM's business. It is a Brazilian company that is the world's leading producer and supplier of niobium products and niobium technology.

From 24 to 28 October, Asia had a preview of what the future of motoring would be like, at the Singapore International Energy Week, hosted at the Marina Bay Sands Events Square, when CBMM unveiled their Niobium Solar Mobile Project.

This groundbreaking project is a collaboration between CBMM and motorcycle company Current Motor, the College for Creative Studies in Detroit and steel producer SSAB. Through the application of niobium technology, they produced the world's first zero-emission electric cargo motorcycle.

The Niobium Solar Mobile Project is just one example of a partnership that harnesses the tremendous impact of a small amount of niobium added to steel, making it lighter, stronger, tougher and more weldable. These properties enabled the design of the electric cargo motorcycle to have a 31 per cent lighter frame and travel faster and farther on a single solar charge than the previous model of this motorcycle which has a standard steel grade frame. This eco-friendly motorcycle can cover up to 114km per charge and, according to CBMM, this has a huge potential for take-up in the Asian market, where the use of motorcycles is the dominant form of transport in many countries.

The electric cargo motorcycle is complemented by a steel container, which is also made lighter using niobium. Apart from storing the motorcycle, this transportable container doubles as a solar charging station for the motorcycle. It comes with built-in solar panels that pop out from its sides to trap sunlight and can simultaneously charge up to four motorcycles. Other key benefits niobium brings to the table include the efficient design and construction of gas pipelines and wind towers. Emerging applications such as increasing the energy storage capacity of batteries with the addition of niobium point the way to the metal being used for a multitude of products associated with generating, transporting and consuming energy.

*"...this has a huge potential for take-up in the Asian market, where the use of motorcycles is the dominant form of transport in many countries."*



(Above): The Niobium team with Mr Ng Wai Choong, CEO of the Energy Markets Authority (4th from left), who visited the booth



## Niobium - Key to providing energy solutions

During the Singapore International Energy Week, Tadeu Carneiro, CEO of CBMM, emphasised the importance of the soft, grey transition metal known as niobium. He reveals, "For decades, we have been developing niobium technology for applications where the element's properties make it the unbeatable choice due to improved efficiency, safety and performance."

Niobium provides a variety of benefits. For example, niobium steels are both tough and strong, which makes it possible to safely transport twice as much gas through pipelines. Wind towers made with niobium steel withstand fatigue and other stresses, increasing efficiency and prolonging life cycles.

With the world's first zero emission electric cargo motorcycle, CBMM is providing what world governments are currently striving for: developing clean, renewable and sustainable energy solutions.



# Embraer @ Singapore Airshow

By Henry Tan

Embraer readies the market for a new generation of jets possessing leading-edge technologies.

**SINGAPORE  
AIRSHOW  
2016 16-21 Feb**  
Changi Exhibition Centre

In the world of commercial aircraft makers today, the virtually equal giant duopoly of the American Boeing and Europe's Airbus has the mainline jetplanes - of about 150 seats and above - sewn up in their bulging pockets. The next tier down the line are the regional jetliners or trunkliners which carry approximately 120 passengers and below. (The grey area in-between, with a little overlapping, thereof is shaping up to be a keen tussle between the smallest "shrunken" siblings of the mainliners and the longest "stretched" models of the regionals).

The two biggest players, by far, in this crowded "miniliners" market are Embraer of Brazil and Canada-based Bombardier. After many years of vying closely for the position of the third largest civilian liners manufacturer, Embraer (acronym for Empresa Brasileira de Aeronáutica, name in Portuguese meaning Brazilian Aeronautic Company in English) is discernibly forging ahead in recent times.

Founded in 1969, the Brazilian conglomerate is relatively young compared to the legacies of other major aircraft builders of the world. The path to respected and reliable supplier to airlines around the globe has not been easy. Selling airplanes is only the first step for the manufacturer in its relationship with the operator. Making the giant leap to be a credible blue-chip player is for the long haul, so to speak.

During the typical twenty and more years of airplanes in operation, continuous service and the all-important spare parts support is the lifeline underpinning profitability to the owner. An aircraft sitting unnecessarily on the ground is bleeding the airline serious money. Like its fellow firmly established counterparts/competitors, the fact that Embraer's products are embraced wholeheartedly by their diverse customers from private individuals to multibillion dollar corporations is testament to its hard-earned reputation made possible by their relentless pursuit of excellence in design, manufacturing, marketing, and after-sales.

Initially supplying only domestically its first product, the EMB 110 twin turboprop (propeller driven) of around 20 seats, within half a dozen years the fledgling company had spread its wings beyond its shores...and airspace. By the succeeding decade, the follow-up 30-passenger EMB 130 was introduced and went on to scale new heights in sales. Its next major endeavour - in the mid-90s - the ERJ



The advanced state-of-the-art digital cockpit of the Legacy 500

145 family of twin turbofan regional jetliners comprising the ERJ 135, 140 and 145 carrying 37 to 50 people, embedded Embraer firmly on the world map. Building up from the success, the bigger E-jet brood constituting the 170, 175, 190 and 195 with capacities ranging from 80 to 122 "self-loading cargos" (tongue-in-cheek aviation-speak for passengers) were introduced from shortly after the turn of the new millennium.

## Next Generation E2

Not one to rest on its laurels, Embraer is presently fully immersed into the development of the next generation E-jets, suffixed as the E2. Basically retaining the airframes of the well-proven originals, these latest iterations, the first of which is scheduled to be flying passengers in 2018, will be powered by the newly introduced super efficient Pratt & Whitney GTF or Geared TurboFan engines. Other enhancements include taller landing gears and new wings. Response has been notably encouraging since the programme was officially launched more than thirty-two months ago, with orders, options and purchase rights at the 640 mark, to date. (By the way, the first test plane, a E190-E2, has just been rolled out of its São José dos Campos factory on 25th February, with first flight staged in the middle of 2016).

The future skies look propitiously bright and sunny for the upcoming E-Jet E2 three-member family, even with the looming intense competition of clean sheet designs from longtime rival Bombardier's excellent C Series, and recent market entrants with viable contenders such as the Sukhoi SuperJet of Russia, the Chinese Comac ARJ21 and the Mitsubishi Regional Jet from the Land of the Rising Sun.

Besides the regional jetliners, Embraer's ever-growing stable also comprises a wide range of executive jets of both clean sheet designs and derivatives of the E-jets. From the entry-level Phenom series through the midsized Legacy models to the large Lineage 1000, corporations and private individuals line up to hand over



(Left): The E190 - E2 is expected to be in service by first half of 2018



(Above left): The children with Embraer personnel on the Embraer chalet rooftop and (above right) awaiting their turn to hop onto the Legacy 500 cabin



Photos by Henry Tan

(Above): The Embraer EMB 314 Super Tucano light attack, counter-insurgency, close air support and aerial reconnaissance aircraft

their fat cheques. Asian wushu (martial arts) movie superstar and Embraer brand ambassador Jackie Chan has proudly taken delivery of a Legacy 650 and a Legacy 500 in 2012 and 2016 respectively.

### Other Aerial Products

Other aerial products on its plate include a slew of military transport and aerial tanker, turboprop trainer, ground-attack aircraft and an AEWC (Airborne Early Warning and Control) flying radar plane. There's also the "baby" of the lot, the top-selling Ipanema single-seat piston-engined and now ethanol-fueled agricultural aircraft. With more than 90 countries having taken delivery of thousands upon thousands of its executive, commercial, military and agrarian metal birds - with much more to come - plenty of eyeballs would have spied an Embraer in the air or on the ground at one time or another.

As for the long-term future of, say, in the next 20 years, both Embraer (and Bombardier too) could be well placed to fully break into the lower domain of the two biggies; Boeing and Airbus, thereby breaking their stranglehold on the very lucrative single-aisle mainline world market currently occupied by their 737 and A320 families respectively. From a little upstart with a small turboprop offering hardly half a century ago, Embraer has certainly trekked a long way today, muscling into the periphery of the giants' sacred turfs.

At the recent biennial Singapore Airshow, where they are a regular exhibitor, besides showcasing a nice little selection of their flying machines, the progressive South American aircraft manufacturer took time out for community service to host a group of 15 less privileged children from a little corner (RC Zone H @ Sengkang South) of the island nation. That's a sweet and thoughtful touch

from a leading corporate citizen of the world. The kids who have never been on an airplane previously were feted at the Embraer chalet and pampered to personal tours of the Legacy 500 luxury private and business jet. The impressed future possible pilots, cabin crew, engineers and other aerospace professionals went home with a clutch of souvenirs and many a happy smile on their young faces.

### Fleet Ownership: New Perspectives on Maximising Success



Embraer posits a new paradigm for fleet owners to consider

Embraer held a press conference during the Airshow, where it said that Asia Pacific carriers will be taking delivery of 1,570 new jets in the 70- to 130-seat range over the next two decades. The Embraer Commercial Aviation Market Outlook report said that this represents approximately 25 per cent of the worldwide demand in this sector and is valued at about US\$75 billion.

President and CEO Paulo C. Silva said it was showing airlines the benefits of moving away from the crowded marketplace to instead tap into markets that are under-served or not served at all. The key was the use of smaller, versatile and economical regional-range aircraft where it is possible to realise greater yields, moving from one to two digits. Such markets, he said, were better served by 70- to 130-seat jets, based on the average number of passengers per departure. Embraer sees "untapped opportunities" in Asia Pacific, where more than 250 markets or 30 per cent of the narrow-body exclusive markets are served with less than one daily flight frequency.

Another opportunity in the region is the replacement of aging fleets, where there are more than 250 jets in the 50- to 150-seat category that are over 10 years of age, which will become targets for replacement in the near future. In the 70- to 130-seat segment, Embraer has a global market share of 51 per cent of orders and 62 per cent of deliveries since 2004.



# First Stop - for Interested Investors in Brazil and Singapore

Two-way trade is building up as more Latin American and Asian companies look outwards for fresh markets



More often than not, many contacts are made and business transacted at exhibitions, conferences and seminars. And if they are related to creating opportunities for Latin American and Asian companies to find greater growth in new markets and potential partners to work with, then Helio Galvão Ciffoni, the CEO of Sapiens Global, is the go-to man to realise those objectives.

The prominent Brazilian business consultant is much sought after for his insights and often invited to speak at conferences. His reading of the current situation on the ground for Brazil was, "About two weeks after the impeachment announcement I was back in Brazil visiting Ceará State talking to the industry federation officials there and found there is a new perspective shown by businesses - they are now more interested in exports. I also met entrepreneurs who are seriously analysing what the Southeast Asian market can offer."

This has led Sapiens Global to make preparations for two trade missions to Singapore in 2017; one specialising in the food sector and the other in Brazilian companies interested in ASEAN." In terms of politics he said, "It is still early and it will take time to see the results of the measures taken by the new leadership."

He said that, talking of politics, something of real concern to Brazilian IT companies was the election of Donald Trump in the USA. "It is one of the world's biggest IT markets and they are worried about what is going to happen. But I have talked and written about it, that their destinies should be tied to Asia. This is a great potential market for Brazilian IT even with the presence of India and China companies here. Brazil specialises in several financial IT applications e.g. for banks and insurance companies. Countries like Indonesia are at a similar stage as Brazil was a few years ago and developing countries like Myanmar can also benefit from the Brazilians' IT solutions. For example, many American banks use Brazilian IT solutions and the country's online exchange and payment systems is one of the best in the world!"

## Helicopter Operation & Management

Another area of Brazilian expertise that Sapiens Global is keen to bring to this part of the world is helicopter operations. "In Brazil there are many fleet owners who use them, for example, for surveillance of large areas, air rescue, fire fighting, tourism, etc, that we can offer as business service solutions for similar countries such as Indonesia in ASEAN," said Helio.

In a nutshell, there are many of such business opportunities being offered by Brazilian companies. "We can also sell services and expertise from Brazil, but what is also needed are investors. We have a different approach. We are not inviting Asian companies to buy up Brazilian companies. Sapiens Global is here to find investors for Brazilian companies to come to Asia." The range of investments can range for projects worth US\$20 to over US\$100 million.

In the past year there has been a flurry of activities by Sapiens Global to promote Brazilian products and services in Asia (see pictures above). Helio listed out, "In February Sapiens Global opened its Jakarta office in response to the great interest shown by Brazilian companies toward Indonesia. In May, I was a speaker at the ASEAN China Entrepreneurs Conference in Sarawak, as they wanted to know what kind of businesses can be developed by Latin America and ASEAN. In March, we organised for five Brazilian coffee makers to participate in Cafe Asia 2016. The next month we had the biggest booth at the Latin Fair, representing 35 Brazilian F&B companies. In July, there was the Brazil Fair at a major department store here. As consultants we don't buy or sell; in this case, we helped our clients find the distributors and points of sale in Singapore. This year we also helped five Singapore companies venture abroad, working with IE (International Enterprise) Singapore."

## More about Sapiens Global

Sapiens Global is an international consulting firm that has offices in Brazil, Tokyo, Jakarta and Singapore, that is experienced in bridging and facilitating for firms to enter and expand in Asia and Latin America; now the scope has extended to Southeast Asia as well. For more information, Singapore Office: Level 42 Suntec Tower Three, 8 Temasek Boulevard, Singapore 038988. Tel: +65 6866 3648. Email: singapore@sapiensglobal.com

# Philippe Joubert: A Call to Action for the Environment

By Carlos Brian Pheysey

■ In a CEO Lunch discussion organised by the Brazilian Embassy, he explains why corporations have no choice but to lead the drive for sustainability

The world's economy and business on the one hand and the global eco-system on the other hand are no longer mutually exclusive realms of human action. Both impact on each other and are dependent on a fine-tuned balance. In fact, conserving the natural environment will allow companies to pursue sustained revenues, i.e. striving for a constant re-activation of renewable resources taken from the planet will allow for a continuation of our prosperity attained thus far in business and human civilisation overall. One can even posit that environmentalism is not viable if pursued without a dialogue with business leaders. In line with such principles, Brazil and various countries have sought to re-align their modus operandi to take eco-systems into account in their economic decision-making.

In this spirit, Mr. Philippe Joubert, a French-Brazilian former head of Alstom in Brazil, at the behest of H.E. Flávio S. Damico, Ambassador of Brazil to Singapore, delivered a presentation to a gathering of CEOs, both Singaporean and Brazilian ones, at Singapore's Fullerton Bay Hotel in November 2016. He is a Senior Adviser and Special Envoy for Energy and Climate for WBCSD, the World Business Council for Sustainable Development, and has championed numerous initiatives in the sustainability domain. The Brazilian companies present at the event comprised executives of local branch offices of Brazilian giants such as BRF, CBMM, BB Securities Asia (a subsidiary of Banco do Brasil), Embraer, Petrobras and Vale.

Ambassador Damico highlighted that the occasion was opportune, in view of the coming into force of the 2015 Paris Agreement on climate and energy solutions. H.E. also reminded those present at the function that Singapore was present at the Rio '92 UN Conference. He added further that Brazil has committed to a carbon reduction that equals the levels promised by developed nations, even though their carbon footprint exceeds by far that of Brazil.

Philippe Joubert, in turn, highlighted that the Paris Agreement was a first in its inclusion of companies' voices in the negotiations. Businesses have thus had a chance of being heard, but they must lead the drive toward sustainability from now on, he points out in his effort to convey a sense of urgency and action among business leaders. He is buoyant about the change in mindset seen during this decade when set against the scarcely proactive attitude of the past decade.

Mr. Joubert put forth that sustainability is not a cost, but rather an investment in the future. He added a warning to the effect that leaders and companies that fail to take heed of this maxim will not be around long enough to discuss the matter years from now. The



Leading Brazilian and Singapore companies were invited to listen and share their experiences

expert stressed that the "business as usual" approach has its days numbered.



After the Rio +20 UN (2012) and Paris Conferences, the next step....

Company executives at the function shared their insights, efforts and experiences in the carbon-reduction front. In a historical first, China will now be bound by law to cut back on coal and electricity by 95%. Executives that seldom feared court action will be prosecuted henceforth in countries that range from Brazil to the US, whenever caught in violation of new rules put in place to protect environments. New laws stipulate time behind bars instead of a mere corporate fine. Financial markets likewise take into account reports that show whether a company has acted responsibly or recklessly towards nature's resources. These considerations now influence decisions on whether to grant credit and loans.

Petrobras and Embraer's executives briefed the audience on the installing of more efficient systems and engines, use of new materials and other measures to curtail the impact of their activities at sea, on air and on land. BRF and Olam brought up the concern over the use of vast water resources in their agribusiness operations.

The gathering of CEOs thus demonstrated a new consciousness of the nexus between business and the environment, and yet Philippe Joubert's urgent appeal for swifter and solid action remains looms ever more pressing in everyone's agendas worldwide. Time will tell if our prosperity and our very existence and viability are reaching a tipping point sooner than thought. The time is now for action to save our way of life through responsible commitments.

# Christine Veras: Of Shadows & Illusions

By Shobha Sankarankutty

■ A winner of the Best Illusion of the Year award she creatively combined the traditions of the zoetrope and Asian shadow theatre



Christine Veras, recipient of the NTU Research Scholarship and the *Science Without Borders* Program – a joint initiative between the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation and the Ministry of Education in Brazil – which provides grants for exchange programs in various fields, is a PhD student at the School of Art, Design and Media (ADM) in Nanyang Technological University (NTU). NTU ranked 13 in the 16<sup>th</sup> QS World University Rankings 2016 and 2<sup>nd</sup> in Asia, published in September 2016. In the 6<sup>th</sup> QS World University Rankings, published in March 2016, it held the 48<sup>th</sup> position in the world and 9<sup>th</sup> in Asia in the field of Art & Design.

Born in the small town of Santana, Amapá, and raised in Belo Horizonte, Brazil, it's been an interesting journey that led her to the third prize for the “Best Illusion of the Year” in 2016. The prize is awarded by the Neural Correlate Society with members including neuroscientists, ophthalmologists, neurologists and visual artists who promote research into the neural basis of human perception through optical illusions. With entries from around the world including those from experienced mathematicians, neuroscientists, and cognitive psychologists, it has been indeed quite a unique achievement.

Christine won this prestigious award for her invention, the Silhouette Zoetrope, a device inspired by the traditional zoetrope (precursor to cinema) combined with the time-old Asian tradition of shadow puppet theater. Here, we talk to her about what led her to this journey and what she expects of the future.

Christine had the opportunity to show off the Silhouette Zoetrope to an appreciative Ambassador!

## Tell us about how you got to Singapore

In 2009, I had a two-day stopover in Singapore when I was on my way back to Brazil from a conference in China. Here I met with Professor Heitor Capuzzo<sup>1</sup>, a former professor from my days at the Federal University of Minas Gerais. He insisted I must visit the School at NTU. I immediately fell in love with it but around that time they did not have a Graduate Program. It would be only three years later that they opened the Ph.D. program and I decided to apply. I was the first person awarded by the program *Science Without Borders* to study in Singapore, which opened up the path for other Brazilian students.

## How did the idea of the Silhouette Zoetrope come to you?

It all came in a dream. Even though the design looked unlikely it would work, I had decided to give it a try. I built the first prototype with paper and cardboard, and the result was astonishing. Later on, for a larger version prepared for an exhibition, I had to use many different parts from unusual sources such as the microwave plate that was used as the base of the zoetrope, the handle of an old meat grinder to make the plate turn. The box was built from wood pieces cut to specific measurements and painted. I also used laser cutting and 3D printing, all with the support of professors and the amazing staff from ADM.

## How was the process that led to the submission of the Silhouette Zoetrope to the “Best Illusion of the Year Contest”?

One of the conditions of entry into the “Best Illusion of the Year Contest” was that the movie had to be no longer than 1 minute. I had doubts about submitting it because the ‘live’ effect of the Silhouette Zoetrope is much more impressive than a video recording,



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*“The making of the movie for the presentation of my device was a tour de force. I was fortunate to have the best professors in the field of cinema in ADM to help me with the task. One of them had won an Oscar...”*



but I decided to give it a try. The making of the movie for the presentation of my device was a tour de force. I was fortunate to have the best professors in the field of cinema in ADM to help me with the task. One of them had won an Oscar (Prof. Ben Shedd), another one is a multi-award winning special effects expert in Bollywood (Assoc. Prof. Biju D.) and the cameraman is an award-winning professor from Belgium (Senior Lecturer Lucas Jodogne). They all contributed in the shooting of the movie, which in itself was a very interesting experience. After editing it and having the original music specially composed for the video by my husband, Dácio de Castro, I submitted the video to the contest.

#### **What has this prize meant to you and how has it affected your life?**

I am very happy with the award, especially, since I am from the field of arts and humanities and not from neuroscience-related fields. It has been an incredible inspiration to see the reaction of people and the positive feedback I've been receiving from people all over the world. There have been several articles published about my illusion, such as in the Scientific American<sup>2</sup>, The Smithsonian Magazine<sup>3</sup>, the Washington Post<sup>4</sup> as well as the Gizmodo<sup>5</sup> website. The YouTube video of my illusion<sup>6</sup> has had more than half a million views so far.

It is also very likely that the award would have helped secure the U.S. patent for the Silhouette Zoetrope<sup>7</sup> in record time!

#### **How do you find working at the School of Art, Design and Media and living in Singapore?**



(Top): The YouTube video of the Silhouette Zoetrope has been viewed over half a million times! Christine was on her way back to Brazil from a conference in China (above) when she visited NTU and “fell in love” with it

helpful through my adaptation process, teaching me the nuances of the local languages as well as introducing me to many culinary delicacies. Singapore is a very beautiful cosmopolitan garden-state. Its humidity, heat, and frequent rainfall remind me a lot of the northern part of Brazil where I was born, and its mix of cultural vibrancy and greenery have a lot in common with Belo Horizonte, where I grew up.

#### **What next?**

I am finishing my dissertation now. But I have many plans to develop the Silhouette Zoetrope even further. An art installation in a grander scale or possibly a toy...

The experience of studying at ADM has been incredible. I have access to top of the line equipment and world-renowned professors in the fields of animation and cinema. My advisor, Vibeke Sørensen, Chair of the School of Art, Design and Media, is one of the pioneers in Visual Music, combining music, science and technology and it is my privilege to work with her and to be part of such a distinct community.

Through the doctoral program, I have had the opportunity to lecture as well as participate in projects at an international level. I have also been able to travel to conferences and workshops and interview artists and professionals in the area of animation. I am very grateful to NTU and Singapore for also providing me the financial, logistical and intellectual support to do all of this. The entire experience has also helped me learn a lot about working and dealing with people in a more global setting.

I cannot, of course, forget the friends I've made here who have been very

<sup>1</sup>Prof. Heitor Capuzzo was featured in *It's Time For Brazil in Singapore 2015* edition

<sup>2</sup><http://blogs.scientificamerican.com/illusion-chasers/a-review-of-2016-s-best-illusion-of-the-year-contest-video/>

<sup>3</sup><http://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/check-out-best-illusions-2016-180959703/?no-ist>

<sup>4</sup><https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2016/07/07/five-of-the-best-optical-illusions-reveal-hidden-secrets-about-the-brain/#comments>

<sup>5</sup><http://gizmodo.com/this-mind-bending-trick-is-actually-two-illusions-in-on-1782953231>

<sup>6</sup>[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2-A\\_Pcrz6xU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2-A_Pcrz6xU)

<sup>7</sup>U.S. Patent number: 9,488,903

# Booming Asian Consumer Markets Attract Brazil's BRF

By Nomita Dhar

■ The world's leader in poultry and pork exports underscores its reputation as an agile global market player and innovator with its exciting consumer-centric foray in Singapore to reach out to consumer markets in Asia



**D**id you know that each bite of your plate of chicken rice...or the sausage that you have just ordered magically transports you to exotic Brazil... thousands of miles away? How so?

And well you may ask! Very few Singaporeans shopping at the meat sections at the supermarket are even aware that the leading chicken and pork brands on display are of Brazilian origin. In fact, Brazil's BRF, the world's top poultry exporter, has been servicing Singapore's supermarkets for over 20 years directly from Brazil and most recently, from the two plants the company has set up in the island nation through their joint venture with SATS, reveals Marcos Jank, Vice President of Corporate Affairs and Business Development for Asia.

## Ramping Up Awareness of BRF's Brands

Andréa Beer, the company's brand manager for Asia, tasked with managing its brands - Sadia and Perdigão - in its key markets in the region such as Singapore, Hong Kong, China and now Malaysia, reveals that 50 percent of the frozen chicken in Singapore's supermarkets and warehouses are BRF brands. About 47 percent of Singaporeans have heard of Sadia, BRF's main brand, but most of them are still learning what the brand is all about. Her job is thus to increase the dissemination of information that will make consumers understand that quality and care are in the core of everything BRF does, from raising the animals in Brazil to producing the products and transporting them to the supermarkets. Quality control is one of the critical factors behind BRF's success as a global market leader.

"We can't be the largest exporter to Japan, Europe and Singapore if we don't have the highest standard of quality control, because 50 percent of the production is exported to 120 countries — and we need to control every aspect of the production", Marcos explains. To ramp up awareness, BRF has run an integrated marketing campaign in Singapore and Hong Kong, through outdoor media, radio, print media and also in-store and digital media to promote the brand for working mums. BRF has also projected the zippy promotional campaign on buses,

## Credibility of the Brand Name

Why choose Sadia and Perdigão over other brands in the frozen meat section at the supermarket? When you buy their products, you know the raw materials are sourced, supervised and processed under the strictest of world-class hygiene systems before they reach the shelves at the supermarket. Their chickens are naturally grain-fed and not treated with growth hormones. To maintain optimal nutrients and freshness, the meat is flash-frozen and packed in the shortest time, under three hours.

malls and subway stations as well as cabs plying across town. Next time you are at the supermarket, enjoy the free sampling sessions of their latest products on display.

BRF's success in the Asian market (its net operating revenue in Asia was R\$3.2 billion or about US\$1 billion in 2015) has also been rooted in its reputation and performance over 70 years in the commodities market, where it has been the leading exporter not just in Brazil but also worldwide for its agri-foods. Its portfolio includes poultry, pork, beef, processed meat products, margarine and dairy products. In 2008, the merger of two Brazilian food giants — Sadia and Perdigão — now its two signature brands, upped the ante for the inroads in the domestic market as well as its forays in internationalization. Domestically, Sadia is Brazil's best known and best loved brand, covering 98 percent of the Brazilian market. To control every aspect of the business the company has a core group of technicians who stringently control the processing and sourcing of all raw material, before approving the final products to reach stores. Marcos reveals that the firm has 52 plants globally and employs 105,000 people to ensure that its stringent standards for quality and value-addition make them the preferred brand over all others. Exporting to 120 countries worldwide, BRF had a 14 percent share in the world's chicken exports in 2015, making it the largest chicken exporter globally.



(Clockwise from far left): BRF's marketing efforts in full swing for higher consumer profile. (Below): The BRF team in Singapore



## World's No. 1 Halal Brand

Having solidified its presence in Brazil's domestic market and as a commodity export leader in the agri-food business, BRF's goal is to move from being a commodity-driven exporter to a branded consumer goods company; it has been progressing rapidly in its internationalization trajectory by targeting the consumer markets across the world. After starting operations in Argentina, it set up two plants in Europe and then a massive one in Abu Dhabi — the Middle East's largest further food processing (FPP) plant, which feeds over 10 countries in the region. "With BRF's excellent distribution network and reach in the Middle East, BRF is now the largest halal brand in the world", Marcos adds. Today, the Middle East is BRF's No.1 export destination.

Having successfully captured the Middle East, BRF then shifted its sights to Asia — while promising great potential, Asia also poses a huge challenge for the company because meat is a sensitive sector and often subjected to protectionist measures in the form of non-tariff barriers that block market access. A case in point: Indonesia and India, where there are hindrances that can range from sanitary or technical restrictions to the non-transparent process of plant approval or event total prohibitions. In fact, Marcos reveals that BRF is currently still blocked from entering almost half of Asia, underlining the challenge of accessing growth markets in the region.

## Expanding BRF's Footprint in Asia

Why Singapore for BRF's first manufacturing presence in Asia? For BRF, it was the most conducive place (having operated here for 20 years already) to start expansions in the Asian market. In May 2015, BRF established its first joint venture in the region with Singapore-based SATS Ltd, to process and distribute food products. Later, to diversify its regional footprint, it also acquired a company in Thailand — the country's third largest fully integrated chicken processor and a global leader in manufacturing fully cooked chicken products with access to important markets, such as Europe, Japan and Southeast Asia. "Brazil and Thailand", Marcos says, "are called the platforms for chicken exports. Thailand is great at producing cooked products and this is important for BRF's European and Japanese markets". BRF's newest venture is its partnership in Malaysia with FFM (whose parent company PPB is a majority shareholder of the Singapore-based Wilmar group) and this venture is positioned to be very focused in the halal markets of Asia.

The Malaysian operation is strategically aligned with BRF's vision of a more integrated market for chicken meat in South East Asia. As Malaysia also has very stringent standards for halal products, this will enhance BRF's understanding of regional halal requirements and specifications which will complement BRF's halal expertise from the Middle East. From Malaysia, BRF would be able to feed not just the Malaysian market but also the regional markets in the future. As a global leader, although BRF shares its best practices wherever it goes, it also firmly believes in learning from local companies to improve ways to address market needs.

"Here in Singapore we are learning a lot about the characteristics of Asian consumers as it is a multi-cultural, multi-religious country. This rich diversity inspires us to innovate quickly with products targeted at the different consumer groups", says Andréa. Today, in the supermarkets in Singapore the frozen meat sections feature an extensive range of BRF products: chicken, beef, sausages, hamburgers and nuggets. With the SATS partnership, the company has expanded its portfolio of brands with Handwerker (sausages), FarmPride (finger food) and Amyr (frozen beef). They have recently also launched Sadia franks and burgers. On the cards are consumer-convenient packages with smaller, user-friendly portions to be launched next year along with some of BRF's more premium products. The tie-up with SATS enhanced local production capability: the plants here produce products such as halal lamb or chicken sausages and hamburgers using the best raw materials from Brazil and with the same rigorous processing methods they would use back home. BRF is also supplying a full range of marinated products for food service clients in Singapore.

## Investors - Waiting in the wings

"With the government and cabinet changes in Brazil five months ago, things are changing rapidly — the exchange rates, the stock markets... there's much more stability...Brazil's new Minister of Agriculture Blairo Maggi also did a whirlwind tour of eight countries in Asia recently in September. That has helped strengthen confidence in Brazil's agriculture exports. Everyone's interested in what's happening in Brazil again. Three or four years ago, Brazil was attracting many investors and I believe the interest will recover again now. As the world's third largest exporter of food, Brazil has been the world leader of agricultural productivity gains in the last 20 years and also in developing safe and quality integrated food chains. Today, animal proteins are at the centre of Brazilian expertise in the agri-food sector." - Marcos Jank, BRF, Vice President, Corporate Affairs and Business Development – Asia Pacific

# Chicken in the Soup

■ Tracing the origins of The Soup Spoon's tasty chicken that is used in their signature dishes,



**T**he *Soup Spoon* is a famous born, bred and branded restaurant in Singapore known for its tasty soup-and-sandwich/flatbread combo dishes. If you

trace the origins of its tasty chicken used in its signature dishes such as the *Tokyo Chicken Stew* and *Peppery Chicken Hotpot* you will find a culinary connection to Brazil.

Anna Lim, director of *The Soup Spoon* and a founding member of the restaurant chain, gave glowing praise for BRF and its quality chicken meat. "We started using BRF's chicken in 2012 when our suppliers recommended it and the quality was immediately apparent upon switching to BRF. Its chicken is lean and has very little fat and therefore it is a lot healthier than the chicken meat we've been buying over the years since we first started in 2002", explains Anna.

Switching to BRF after 10 years of using other brands of chicken for their dishes is testament to Anna's and her business partners' drive to improve the taste and health quotient of their food and a 'thumbs up' from customer feedback. She elaborates, "We believe in providing the best tasting meals and cosy dining environment to our customers to fulfill our vision as the 'Starbucks of Soup'. Hence, we take great pains to sample our chicken as well as pay close attention to customer feedback."

They finally settled on BRF's chicken and never looked back. The affinity to BRF became even stronger this year when BRF approached *The Soup Spoon* directly to work out a partnership that resulted in a series of Brazilian-themed soups sponsored by Sadia that were served at all *The Soup Spoon* outlets during the Rio Olympic Games. This initiative was the result of BRF's increased marketing efforts to expand its growth in Southeast Asia, especially in Singapore.

"We use mainly chicken thigh and chicken breast, either with or without skin for our chicken steak, grilled dishes and chicken fillet in our soup and sandwiches", adds Anna.

Customer feedback has been very positive, with many customers praising the chicken's tender texture and juicy and savoury taste. With compliments around, *The Soup Spoon's* love affair with BRF can only get stronger.

## Galinhada (Traditional Brazilian Chicken Rice)

Following recipe was from Chef Anna, owner of *The Soup Spoon*. For more recipes visit <http://Sadia.sg/Recipes/>



### Serves 4

Time taken: 1hr

Product: Sadia Chicken thighs—skinned and unskinned

Ingredients:

- 2 unskinned Sadia Chicken thighs
- 2 skinned Sadia Chicken thighs
- 2 unskinned Sadia Chicken drumlets/ wings
- 300g white rice
- 600g chicken stock
- 1 medium onion - diced
- 2 cloves garlic - chopped
- 1 tsp tomato paste
- 1 tbsp white vinegar
- 4 tbsp olive oil
- 4 tbsp salt
- 2 tbsp ground turmeric
- A pinch of ground cumin
- A pinch of ground black pepper
- 2 tbsp parsley - freshly chopped

### Method:

- Season the chicken (skin-on) with turmeric, 2 tbsp salt, pepper, vinegar; marinate overnight.
- In a hot pan, add olive oil, then the chicken with the skin on; fry till skin is crisp; remove chicken.
- In the same pan, add the onion, then garlic and sauté gently. Add tomato paste and tomato, 2 tbsp salt and rice. Mix well.
- Pour rice mixture into rice cooker; add crispy chicken on top. Pour chicken stock and ensure that it covers rice and crisp chicken completely. Set cooker timings.
- Remove when done; garnish with parsley.

# Serving Brazilian Epicurean Delights!

By Carlos Brian Pheysey

■ Brazilian food & beverage and equipment registers favourably at *Food & Hotel Asia* as well as at *Cafe Asia - ICT Expo 2016*



(Left) The packed crowds at FHA 2016 where Selvá displayed a jazzed-up version of açai (middle) mixed with tasty ingredients and Tramontina's kitchen utensils were showcased on a class of their own (right)

**B**razil remains a strong foodstuff provider to Singapore, and yet many Singaporeans still believe their chicken, pork and beef come from the Asia-Pacific realm, when, in fact, Brazil is Singapore's largest supplier of those items, beating all other nations that used to rank high as suppliers to the island-state. Such was the natural outcome of superior sanitation, vertical integration, branding and benchmarking practiced in Brazil.

What way to best showcase that quality than to exhibit at Singapore's trade shows. At FHA - Food & Hotel Asia, in April 2016, at the complex known as Singapore Expo, various Brazilian products left their mark. Brazil is known for its top-notch quality steel production, so it's no wonder that Tramontina, a well-established manufacturer in southern Brazil, offers superb knives and other cutlery, metal tableware, barbecue utensils, kitchenware, pans, grills, kitchen sinks, steel hobs, and more. Tramontina not only possesses an office in Singapore but also staged its very own booth at FHA 2016, thus consolidating its brand name in this part of the world.

Another presence was that of SATS-BRF, the joint venture between Singapore and Brazil to process Brazilian poultry and pork meats in Singapore, for distribution to retailers, wholesalers, restaurants, ship chandlers, etc. The pavilion was massive, dominating a sizeable portion of one of the exhibition halls. BRF, a vast Brazilian conglomerate, is the 7th largest food company worldwide by revenue. Its brands, such as Sadia, dominate supermarket gondolas in Singapore. Some Singaporeans eating their beloved 'bak kut teh' might be aware by now that the pork meat, its chief ingredient, arrives in containers from Brazil, its huge volumes superseding any pork from Asian, Australian and other sources.

Açaí, the famously healthy Brazilian berry now taking the world by storm as a lead antioxidant, was represented by Selvá, an outfit set up by two active youngsters from Brazil and Singapore. Their booth was tastefully decorated and the cups of açai mousse were a delightfully tasty and healthy treat. Selvá's products are bound to be a hit among the rising health-conscious segment of Singapore's community.

For those with a sweet tooth, there was also the booth of the alliance ABICAB, the Brazilian Cocoa, Chocolate, Peanut and Candies Manufacturers Association – a mouthful indeed – founded in 1957 to represent in its entirety this successful sub-sector of the Brazilian food industry. Two leading companies joined the booth, Garoto and Riclan. A giant player, Garoto is a household name among various

generations of Brazilian children and adults alike, made famous throughout the decades by its yellow box of various chocolate-based sweets. Riclan, likewise a traditional company with many decades of experience, displayed chewing gum, cereal bars, lollipops, mints and other sweets that are exported to the neighbouring nations of the Americas, plus Europe, South Africa, Australasia, and soon, it is to be hoped, Asian markets as well.

Let's keep our fingers crossed so that many more executives and brands from Brazil exhibit yet again their treats and much more at FHA 2018!



At *Cafe Asia 2016*, Mr Ciffoni (2nd from right) exhibited Pilão, a leading Brazilian coffee brand

## Brazil shines further at Cafe Asia 2016

Yet another trade show in Singapore helped to highlight an old Brazilian specialty – coffee. *Cafe Asia 2016* (also known as *ICT Expo 2016* – the 4th International Coffee and Tea Industry Expo) saw a booth by Sapiens Global, a consulting and trading firm set up in Singapore by Mr. Helio Ciffoni, a native Brazilian. In his booth, he marketed edible coffee sweets, along with brands of coffee beans such as Pilão.

Mr. Ciffoni has thus successfully introduced Brazilian coffees to a Singaporean public eager for South American tradition, taste and aroma. Therefore, Sapiens Global's partner products are slated to be displayed once more in the year that's beginning now, thus making for a renewed presence at *Cafe Asia 2017*. Hail to some more of fragrant Brazilian coffee!

# RITZ-G5: Tenth Launch Anniversary

■ Successful reception of this tenth offering showed real estate projects still have appeal for selective areas in Brazil



The Marina Bay Sands Ballroom was filled to capacity as past and potential clients of real estate development firm, Ritz-G5, held its tenth anniversary celebrations of the upcoming development called Greenfield Village near the city of Natal. Guests of Honour HE Ambassador Flávio S. Damico and Mrs. Rosa Damico graced the event held on 19th November 2016.

The Ambassador was invited to give a talk outlining the present and anticipated overall economic potential for Brazil's recovery. He expressed optimism as there have been positive indicators since the appointment of the new Brazilian President and the new fiscal measures introduced by the country this year.

Presentations were made by Ritz-G5's managers that highlighted the proven track record of the company for the last nine properties they have handled and they are confident the tenth Greenfield Village, located in Parnamirim, the third largest city in the state of Rio Grande do Norte, presents exciting prospects for home buyers and investors. The city has the highest Human Development Index (HDI) and the third highest GDP, concentrated in services and industry.



# O Menino e o Mundo

## Making Waves on the Big Screen

By Shobha Sankarankutty

■ Multi-award winner Brazilian animated movie wows audiences in Singapore. The film by talented film maker Alê Abreu has won (to date) 40 awards!

**A**nimation Nation, the self-subscribed voice of the animation industry, was back again in its 9th edition after a five-year hiatus. The festival, held in Singapore this year from the 13th to the 16th of October and organised by the Singapore Film Society, presented animated feature films, shorts, seminars and workshops. It showcased works from around the world as well as those of local artists.

“We are extremely delighted with the success of the festival. To have a reboot after five years was almost like starting all over again. It was important to focus on both culturally and artistically significant films and also draw on the support of the local and the international community here in Singapore”, said the festival’s director, Michael Lim.

This time the privilege of opening the festival fell on *Boy and the World*, a 2016 Academy-award nominated Brazilian dialogue-free jewel of animation.

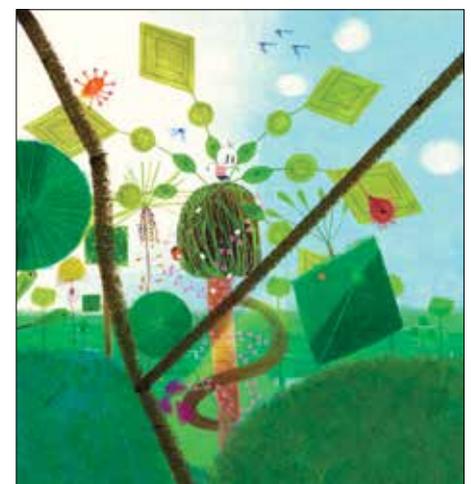
In his quest to reunite his family, a boy journeys to the city and experiences the contrast between village life and the modern world dominated by animal-machines and industrial landscapes. The topic may be all too familiar; however, the magical and evocative view of a globalized world from the boy’s perspective adds to the wonder and sadness of the theme. Immersed in Brazilian samba and hip-hop, the story of *Boy and the World* was told in a visually rich and vibrant movie – a delightful feast for the eyes. Essentially a movie for children, it is thought-provoking and emotionally captivating to the adult audience as well.

Written and directed by Alê Abreu, it has won over 40 awards around the globe, including Best Film at Festival de Cinema de Animação de Lisboa, the Cristal Award for Best Feature Film at the Annecy International Animated Film Festival 2014 and the 43rd Annie Awards for Best Animated Feature-Independent (2016).

The success of the movie has been replicated in Singapore with a nearly-full house screening at the Projector.



Alê Abreu



STOP  
PRESS

## Ceremony for FPSO Vessel "Pioneiro de Libra"

By Carlos Brian Pheysey

**J**urong Shipyard Pte. Ltd. (JSPL) reached in December another milestone in shipbuilding, by completing the conversion of an FPSO vessel and staging a ceremony to name it "FPSO Pioneiro de Libra". Ambassador Flávio S. Damico graced the event for this vessel is bound for the oil and gas fields of Libra, off Brazil's southeast coast.

JSPL was at the helm of a group of companies for this project. The structure was the spawn of OOGTK, a joint venture between Odebrecht Oil & Gas, a Brazilian construction giant, and Teekay Offshore, a Singaporean leader in vessel conversions. The vessel's naming

ceremony also served the purpose of commemorating 15 million man-hours without lost-time incidents, thus proving a commitment to safety, life, health and a good environment.

This marine-building endeavour was kick-started in early 2014 when Petrobras, Shell, Total, CNOOC and CNPC began the bidding process for a vessel to receive, treat, store and export 50,000 bpd of oil and 4 million cubic metres of gas. Work began in October 2014.

FPSO Pioneiro de Libra will conduct an extended well testing programme on the 6 wells already drilled. The first oil is expected in June 2017, with full production in the northwest sector of Libra



expected in 2020, for which the same yard in Singapore is bidding to build two permanent units. With the inputs of Singapore, the future of energy in Brazil is in good hands!

## BRAZIL TRADE SHOWS CALENDAR 2017

Note: In each trade show's website, click on a U.K./U.S. flag or option for English.

**COUROMODA – International Shoe, Leather Goods and Accessories Fair**

15-18 January

[www.couromoda.com/en/fair](http://www.couromoda.com/en/fair)**Vitória STONE Fair – International Marble & Granite Fair**

14-17 February

[www.vitoriastonefair.com.br](http://www.vitoriastonefair.com.br)**IBAS – International Brazil AIR SHOW**

29 March-2 April

[www.internationalbrazilairshow.com](http://www.internationalbrazilairshow.com)**LAAD – Defence & Security**

4-7 April

[www.laadexpo.com.br](http://www.laadexpo.com.br)**INTERMODAL South America – International Exhibition for Logistics, Cargo & International Trade**

4-6 April

[www.intermodal.com.br](http://www.intermodal.com.br)**AUTOMEC HEAVY & COMMERCIAL – Heavy and Commercial Vehicles Fair**

25-29 April

[www.automecpeados.com.br](http://www.automecpeados.com.br)**AUTOMEC – International Trade Fair for Autoparts, Equipment and Services**

25-29 April

[www.automecfeira.com.br](http://www.automecfeira.com.br)**AVESUI – Latin America Fair for the Poultry and Pork Industry**

25-27 April

[www.avesui.com](http://www.avesui.com)**HOSPITALAR – International Technology Fair for Hospitals, Laboratories, Pharmacies & Clinics**

16-19 May

[www.hospitalar.com](http://www.hospitalar.com)**FCE PHARMA – International Exhibition of Technology for the Pharmaceutical Industry**

23-25 May

[www.fcepharma.com.br](http://www.fcepharma.com.br)**TECNOMULTIMEDIA & INFOCOMM – Multimedia and ICT Fair**

23-25 May

[www.tecnomultimedia.com](http://www.tecnomultimedia.com)**EXPOSEC – International Security Fair**

23-25 May

[www.exposec.tmp.br](http://www.exposec.tmp.br)**FISPAL Food Service – International Food Service Trade Show**

6-9 June

[www.fispalfoodservice.com.br](http://www.fispalfoodservice.com.br)**BIO BRAZIL Fair – International Fair of Organic Products & Agroecology**

7-10 June

[www.biobrazilfair.com.br](http://www.biobrazilfair.com.br)**ETHANOL Summit – International Technology Exhibition on the Sugar & Ethanol Industry**

July

[www.ethanolsummit.com.br](http://www.ethanolsummit.com.br)**FIEE – Electric, Electronic, Power and Automation Trade Show**

25-28 July

[www.fiee.com.br](http://www.fiee.com.br)**NETCOM – Network & Telecom Exhibition**

15-17 August

[www.arandanet.com.br](http://www.arandanet.com.br)**MARINTEC South America NAVALSHORE – Shipbuilding & Offshore Industries**

15-17 August

[www.marintecsa.com.br](http://www.marintecsa.com.br)**FENASUCRO & AGROCANA – International Fair of Sugar, Ethanol and Energy Technology**

22-25 August

[www.fenasucro.com.br](http://www.fenasucro.com.br)**FISA – Food Ingredients South America**

22-24 August

[www.fi-events.com.br](http://www.fi-events.com.br)**PHOTOIMAGE Brasil – Consumer Electronics Expo**

28-30 August

[www.reedalcantara.com.br](http://www.reedalcantara.com.br)**FUTURECOM – Information & Telecommunications Technology**

2-5 October

[www.futurecom.com.br](http://www.futurecom.com.br)**TUBOTECH – International Fair on Tubes/Pipes, Valves, Pumps, Fittings & Components**

3-5 October

[www.tubotech.com.br](http://www.tubotech.com.br)**Expo LOGÍSTICA – International Supply-Chain Fair**

9-11 October

[www.expologistica.com.br](http://www.expologistica.com.br)**MOVIMAT – Transport & Logistics Brazil**

16-19 October

[www.expomovimat.com.br](http://www.expomovimat.com.br)**FENATRAN – International Transport Industry Show**

16-20 October

[www.fenatran.com.br](http://www.fenatran.com.br)**FIMAI ECOMONDO – International Fair of Industrial Environment and Sustainability**

24-26 October

[www.fimai.com.br](http://www.fimai.com.br)

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