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# INDO CARIBBEAN WORLD

Vol. 42 • No 23 • August 6, 2025 • Tel: 905-738-5005 • 312 Brownridge Dr. Thornhill, ON L4J 5X1 • indocaribbeanworld.com • indocaribbeanworld@gmail.com

## Our Community Is Thriving!



Toronto's streets exploded with rhythm, colour, and culture this August long weekend as the TCC brought our city to life. The 2025 season, themed *Take Me Home*, pulsed with pride, paying tribute to the deep-rooted ties between Canada and our beautiful Caribbean. From dazzling costumes to our delectable Caribbean cuisine, from Lamport Stadium to Lakeshore Boulevard, Toronto swayed, sang, and danced with our indomitable Carnival spirit. In photo at left, like a radiant, exquisite, and nurturing mother bird, TCC's Executive Chair Jennifer Hirlehey guides her vibrant brood on July 31 at Lamport Stadium; at right, pretty maids all in a row, three young ladies radiate at the Grand Parade in yellow, green, and reds, our Caribbean's splendour stitched into every fold. More on Pages 14-15. *Photos by Russell Lutchman.*



## Caribbean diaspora seeks Heritage Month recognition

— Our community numbering over 1.6 million Canadians, with deep roots tracing back to the 18th century and vibrant celebrations nationwide, remains notably absent from Canada's official multicultural recognition calendar. Now, the Caribbean Canadian diaspora seeks national acknowledgment through a call for a designated heritage month.

...

By Romeo Kaseram  
LJI Reporter

**Toronto** – A petition urging the Government of Canada to officially recognise July as Caribbean Heritage Month has been launched by the Indo-Caribbean Canadian Association (ICCA), calling attention to the long-standing contributions, historical presence, and ongoing cultural impact of our Caribbean diaspora community in Canada.

The petition, formally tabled in Parliament and endorsed by Member of Parliament Michael Coteau (Scarborough-Woburn), aims to address what ICCA Chair Ryan Singh describes as an "overdue" recognition of a community woven deeply into Canada's multicultural fabric.

"Appropriate recognition of the Caribbean diaspora that has been in Canada for several centuries and contributes to the multicultural mosaic of the nation is long overdue," said Singh in the ICCA's official press release.

He added, "The diversity of the Caribbean has furthered the diversity of Canada. Canada's Caribbean deserves to be acknowledged for its lasting impact – we are here, and we should be seen, heard, and recognised."

Our Caribbean community's historical presence in Canada dates back cen-

turies, a fact that is highlighted directly in the ICCA's petition, when it notes, "People from the Caribbean arrived in Canada since the 1700s."

Over the subsequent centuries, immigration steadily increased, resulting in a thriving, diverse diaspora that today numbers approximately 1.6 million, according to the latest *Statistics Canada Census* (2021).

The rapid growth rate of our community is particularly notable during periods such as 1996 to 2001. As detailed in the ICCA's proposal, "Canada's population increased by four percent, whereas our Caribbean community grew by 11 percent," underscoring its increasing prominence in the national demographic landscape.

Despite this substantial growth and significant contributions, Canada currently has no official Caribbean Heritage Month. That this is so contrasts sharply with recognition given to other cultural communities, as outlined explicitly in the proposal document.

"In 2023, Canada's Parliament adopted Bill S-246, Lebanese Heritage Month Act, declaring November as Lebanese Heritage Month... January as Tamil Heritage Month. March is recognised as Irish Heritage Month, while June is designated as Heritage Month for the Italian, Filipino, and Portuguese communities. German and Latin American communities share October for their Heritage Month," the proposal noted.

Internationally, Canada's absence of Caribbean Heritage Month is particularly notable, given the established precedent in the US. The proposal highlights this comparison to the US clearly, stating, "The official campaign for a National Caribbean American Heritage Month began in 2004... A Proclamation making

See Page 5: Recognising



Michael Coteau



Ryan Singh

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George Maharaj (second from left) with colleagues from the band Toronto Revellers at the Toronto Caribbean Carnival Grand Parade last Saturday. Photo by Hinano Beekhoo

# Quack of a cricket bat meets curry duck at Trinifest

– Cricket meets curry, chow, and soca on August 23 in Brampton, where Trinifest will serve up a spicy spectacle of sport, food, and culture to celebrate Trinidad and Tobago’s 63rd Independence anniversary – with a pitch-perfect delivery of fun for our entire Caribbean community.

**Brampton** – A cricket ball, a duck, and a deck of cards walk into a Brampton park – and this is no joke. Well maybe not until the ball makes a duck from the first delivery in a cricket match! But seriously, folks. On August 23, Andrew McCandless Park will come alive with Trinibagonian flair, as Trinifest returns to Brampton to mark Trinidad and Tobago’s 63rd Independence anniversary. With a main course of cricket and a hearty side of cultural celebration, including chow, curry duck, All Fours, and contests for best-dressed Trinis, the event promises to be a spicy mix of sport, music, all in one, big community *lime*. At the centre of Trinifest is the much-anticipated Independence Cricket Match between Trinbago XI and Windward Islands XI. But cricket is only the first course in a packed cultural menu. Attendees can also enjoy the Curry Duck Cooking Competition, a highly-seasoned Chowfest Chow Contest hosted by Chownation, and an All Fours card showdown, with the possibility that culinary and card-playing reputations, along with wickets, may take a big hit come August 23. Adding a rhythmic beat to the festival will be *tassa* drumming, steelpan melodies, and a vibrant *riddim* section, transforming McCandless Park into a soundscape map of the islands. Prizes and games, including trivia contests and giveaways, round out the festivities, while Best Dressed Male and Female awards will go to the proudest wearers of Trinidad and Tobago’s

red, white, and black. Brampton Mayor Patrick Brown will bowl the first delivery of the match, followed by Acting Consul General Tracey Ramsubagh-Mannette, well-known for her pace and accuracy, and who is expected to cartwheel the three stumps that are dressed in Trinidad and Tobago’s national colours. Speaking with *Indo-Caribbean World* earlier this week, Trinifest founder George Maharaj confirmed that the teams are ready, and all preparations nearly complete. “We began celebrating Trinidad and Tobago’s Independence by having Trinidad and Tobago teams playing each other. Today, we have expanded to include regional teams, with Jamaica, Guyana, and this year, the Windward Islands,” Maharaj said. The festival, now in its 12th year, was born out of Maharaj’s vision to celebrate the homeland, and to foreground Trini culture in the Greater Toronto Area. “It has been going on for 12 years, and already we are looking to next year,” he said, noting the focus would be on Guyana celebrating its 60th year of Independence. Maharaj emphasised the festival’s strong cultural connection to Trinidad and Tobago, adding, “Even the stumps on the field are in Trinidad and Tobago’s national colours: red, white, and black! Come to the event, and you will see hundreds of Trinidad and Tobago flags. We even have contests for the best-dressed Trini male and female wearing the national colours!” He also extended heartfelt appreciation to the committee, volunteers, and the many sponsors, all who have contributed to making Trinifest an iconic summer festival in the GTA. “Make sure you *all-yuh* come out and have a good time!” he exclaimed.



Attendees having a good time at last year’s Trinifest. Photo by Russell Lutchman



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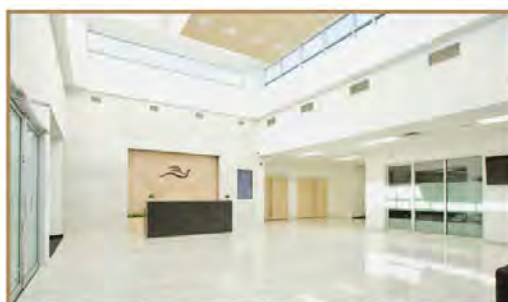
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In photo on the left (from left to right) are Desiree Charles-Momah; Helen Pierre; Haiti's Consul General Eric Pierre; Jennifer Hosten; Ambassador Sam Hinds; former Consul General for Grenada, Genny Gumbs; and Consul General for Grenada, Gerry Hopkin. At right, Ambassador Hinds addresses the gathering.



MP Judy Sgro presents Ambassador Hinds with the Coronation Medal



Attending the reception were Ned Blair (right) and special guest

Ambassador Sam Hinds visits Toronto

Toronto – Guyana's Ambassador to the US, His Excellency Dr Samuel Hinds, paid a warm visit to Toronto over the recent long weekend, blending official engagements with festive celebrations while vacationing in Canada.

Ambassador Hinds, accompanied by wife, Yvonne, made the stop in Toronto to reconnect with friends and take in the vibrant sights and sounds of the Toronto Caribbean Carnival.

As part of his visit, he paid a courtesy call to the Guyana Consulate in Toronto, where he participated in its Emancipation Day celebration, which was held on July 31.

The Ambassador and his wife were also honoured guests at a dinner reception hosted on August 3 at the Caribbean Queen Banquet

Facilities in North York. The evening brought together community members, friends, and invited guests in celebration of Guyanese heritage and national pride.

A memorable moment of the night saw Ambassador Hinds symbolically conferring honorary Guyanese nationality on seven staff members, recognising their contributions and connection to the Guyanese community.

Capping the evening was a special presentation by Humber River-Black Creek Member of Parliament Judy Sgro, who presented Ambassador Hinds with the King Charles III Coronation Medal, the moment adding a regal touch to what was a successful evening of celebration, camaraderie, and unity.



Ambassador Hinds interacting with guests at the August 3 reception



Consul General Hopkins presents Ambassador Hinds with a pin



Evening saw spontaneous rendering of Guyanese songs by these ladies



Danny Doobay (right) presents Ambassador Hinds with a plaque

Recognising Caribbean Heritage Month

From Page 1

the resolution official was signed by President George W. Bush on June 5, 2006.”

Advocates argue that official recognition is more than symbolic; it serves vital cultural, educational, and social purposes. According to the ICCA's proposal, recognition would fulfill five critical objectives, namely: recognition, celebration, amplification, education, and connection.

“We need to celebrate triumphs and achievements attributed directly to Canada's Caribbean community,” notes the proposal.

At the same time, it emphasises education as essential, stating, “The broader public does not fully understand the Caribbean community. Providing educational opportunities on the fullness of Caribbean culture and history is vital.”

Additionally, the proposal asserts the importance of connecting communities, highlighting that “[connectivity] will empower, especially for youth who are part of the diaspora.”

Canada already hosts major Caribbean-themed events, showcasing our diaspora's vibrant cultural presence, as described in the petition itself: “Canada is home to the Toronto Caribbean Carnival (formerly known as Caribana), the largest festival celebrating Caribbean culture, along with many other Caribbean community and cultural events and gatherings.”

Beyond Toronto, events such as the Caribbean Days Festival in Vancouver, SOS Festival in the Greater Toronto Area, i-Land Fest on Vancouver Island, and Taste of the Caribbean Festival in Montreal collectively reinforce the nationwide influence and participation of Caribbean Canadians.

In October 2023, the strength of ties between Canada and Caribbean nations was further highlighted during the inaugural Canada-Caricom Summit, which was held in

Ottawa. Under the theme *Strategic Partners for a Resilient Future*, then-Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and Caricom leaders discussed strengthening economic partnerships, sustainable development initiatives, trade expansion, and collaborative resilience strategies.

The ICCA maintains that official heritage month recognition would significantly build upon this strong foundation. Singh also directly encourages governmental action, stating in the ICCA's release: “We encourage all Parliamentarians to support this initiative to ensure its swift passage through the legislative process.”

Momentum around the petition is building, with Canadians across the country already signing up in support via the official parliamentary e-petition ([e-6648](#)).

The petition explicitly underscores our community's impact, noting, “Many Canadians of Caribbean origins or background have significantly contributed to the success and enrichment of Canada's economic, social, political, and cultural fabric.”

Meanwhile, Singh stated, “Leveraging a month-long recognition will ensure more opportunities to share the Caribbean community with the broader Canadian society, fostering understanding, appreciation, and connectivity.”

Proponents see the establishment of a Caribbean Heritage Month as a crucial step toward a more inclusive, multicultural Canada, arguing that official recognition will affirm our Caribbean community's value and integral role in Canada's national identity.

Opened for signatures on July 30, the petition closes on November 27 at 9:57 a.m. (EDT). It resides on the Government of Canada's official House of Commons website, inviting Canadians nationwide to participate in our historic push for recognition.

[Click here to sign the petition.](#)



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Editorial

# ICJ’s sea-change opinion

A sea-change does not always announce itself as a tsunami. On July 23, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) issued a watershed opinion that nations failing to curb climate change may be violating international law. For Small Island Developing States (SIDS) impacted by rising seas and hurricanes, this was not just legal interpretation; it was long-overdue recognition. And for the Caribbean region, a moment of vindication, our homelands too often dismissed by powers abroad as climate’s canary, but now standing as its conscience.

Led by the Pacific nation of Vanuatu and backed by over 130 countries, a legal request to the ICJ posed two questions: What are States legally obliged to do to prevent climate harm? And what are the consequences if they fail? The court responded forcefully, ruling that climate inaction may constitute an “internationally wrongful act”; additionally, it affirmed that a “clean, healthy and sustainable environment” is a human right.

Though non-binding, the opinion sets a new legal precedent with global implications. It gives moral force and legal shape to what our Caribbean homelands, and other SIDS, have long argued: that climate change is neither a technical issue, nor a charitable cause. Instead, it is a question of rights to life; to land; and to our children’s future.

The ruling affirms that countries responsible for greenhouse gas emissions have legal obligations to prevent harm, and to support those who are already suffering. As Bahamas Prime Minister Philip Davis declared, “This decision confirms what we have long advocated – that climate change threatens the most fundamental human rights of Bahamians”; and, indeed, many other nationalities.

For years, our Caribbean leaders have pleaded for action in global climate forums, with destructive hurricanes like Dorian and Beryl offering brutal testimony. Now, the ICJ has given these lamentations judicial weight. As Bahamas Attorney General Ryan Pinder declared, “This is not charity – it is a legal obligation.”

Importantly, the ICJ connected climate obligations with human rights law. Prime Minister Ralph Gonsalves of St Vincent and the Grenadines highlighted this shift, noting obligations under climate treaties are not just procedural; that they are “substantive legal obligations”.

The ICJ’s message is thus quite clear: countries that pollute must act, or face legal consequences. Among the consequence are the potential for reparations, domestic lawsuits, and more forceful negotiation positions for climate-vulnerable nations.

It is not only future emissions that are at stake. As the Center for International Environmental Law’s Nikki Reisch noted, the ICJ “rejected the attempts of the biggest cumulative emitters ... to sweep history under the rug”. States are now accountable for both past and ongoing harm, and our homelands in the Caribbean have direct evidence, which has been lived through for many decades.

It can be argued that the ICJ’s opinion lacks leverage for enforcement; that it cannot compel China, the US, and Saudi Arabia to slash emissions. But the point here is legal transformation rarely begins with the power of a tsunami, but clarity. Thus the ICJ’s opinion comes with lifting leverage for SIDS in climate talks, in lawsuits, and in diplomacy.

Moreover, the decision joins a rising tide of climate jurisprudence. From the European Court of Human Rights to the Inter-American Court, a legal consensus is emerging that climate justice is a matter of human rights. The ICJ’s opinion fortifies this narrative shift, offering SIDS new leverage in multilateral fora such as COP30.

In the real world, there remains resistance, with some developed nations already casting doubt on the ruling’s impact. But as our Caribbean people and our leaders know too well, this global progress started with our homelands speaking truths to powers that did not wish to listen.

Now the tide of jurisprudence is rising, and as members of the diaspora, and our Caribbean people, we must keep leveraging collective shoulders with coordination, strategy, and resolve. As Gonsalves said, “[The ICJ] has given us an excellent platform. We have ... to follow through with some heavy lifting.” Like the tide, our voices too must rise.

Views expressed are not necessarily those of this publication.  
Letters to be published will be edited where necessary.  
Publisher: Harry Ramkhelawan  
Editor: Romeo Kaseram  
Columnists/Writers/Photographers: Vidur Dindayal, Kamil Ali, Dwarka Laxhan, Dhanpaul Narine, Ryan Singh, Nalini Mohabir, Ramesh Ramkalawan, Russell Lutchman.  
Contact Information: Indo Caribbean World Inc.  
312 Brownridge Drive, Thornhill, Ontario. L4J 5X1  
(905) 738-5005; indocaribbeanworld@gmail.com  
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# When Canadian clinic care gaps collide with Caribbean needs

I am writing this on Caribana weekend, a time of jump-up and joy. Yet, my thoughts are occupied by migration journeys and twilight years, as I watch my aging mother’s health decline. Struggling to support her, I know I’m not alone in grappling with the complexities of care – both past and present.

Maddi Chan, a PhD student at McMaster, has been doing fantastic work on Caribbean women’s knowledge that disrupts the institutionalisation of Western medicine. She warns against medical language that erases our embodied knowledge and experiences, especially given our fraught histories with medical authorities.

Consider Scottish surgeon William Nimmo who was based in Demerara. Nimmo’s uncle was John Gladstone, the infamous absentee plantation owner who brought the first shipload of so-called Hill Coolies to Demerara in 1838 with the shameful but substantial proceeds of compensation after slavery ended. Nimmo was responsible for what passed as care in Plantation Bellevue’s infirmary.

In 1839 Nimmo wrote to his uncle in Liverpool, “I have now to admit to the story of my having struck a Coolie. A coolie of Bellevue, who ought to have been in the hospital, was found by me at a considerable distance from it, having some stuff applied to his sore by a negro woman. I told him in Hindostanee to go to hospital and tapped him once on the shoulder with a twig of about 18 inches long and as thick as a quill, expressing in words my displeasure at him.”

The medical institution that employed Nimmo offered little treatment for the combination of chiggers and malnourishment; it was a space of confinement. Instead, this un-named man took it upon himself to escape and seek the help of a local woman who knew how to treat the inflammation resulting from larvae buried under the skin. Unfortunately, he was caught and flogged by Nimmo for “disobedience”.

The medicine woman reported the illegal whipping (this brutal treatment was supposed to have ended with slavery), and Nimmo was fined. In my mind, the violence of that moment lingers on: our ancestors, denied adequate care, had to forge their own healing traditions.

# Unmoored fisherman’s legacy set adrift on an endless, digital sea

Scattered across the globe, the fisherman’s brood of children broadcast his funeral on *Facebook*, breaking up his body into data and pixels and streaming it across continents, his final rites an Internet spectacle. In this bleak and final digital rendering down of his wasted body, I felt the renewed chill of our ancestral displacement, as if something vital within had again been severed, and this time replaced by a more profound loss.

Growing up back in the homeland, this neighbour lived for the ocean. A fisherman by trade, the sea was more than a livelihood. He was the eldest son of the generation that had crossed the black water, a child of ancestors who braved the *kala pani* to an uncertain future in the cane fields. Perhaps then, yet unknown to his parents, he too had joined them in the journey across the sea.

He took to fishing in his early youth; a fish in water, it was as if he was bound to the sea, the rhythms of his life guided by tides, the lines on his face a map etched with the contours of a lifetime of sun-baked days tossed about in an open boat.

Even his house was scented with a sea-smell, the fishing nets redolent of salt and sea-rot, an endless, intricate weaving among the coconut trees into lanes, rites of passage for me, through which I ran with his brood of children in games of hide-and-seek.

Woven into the tapestry of the fishing nets were too-tiny dead fish too intricately trapped to be extracted, their silver scales momentarily flickering like gems in the sunlight whenever a gentle breeze souged through.

We danced through those nets, fueled by laughter and chasing invisibility in our game of concealment, our days as children organic, sensory-rich, filled with tactile moments in the raw simplicity that was a resolute pat of victory, having being caught as quarry in hide-and-seek behind a discarded pile of fishing nets.

In the humid heat, the nets were moist and pungent with a mingling of brine, decay from the desiccated remains of alien-looking sea-horses, the abandoned seine’s broken and torn array of filaments encrusted and flavourful with dried-out sea-salt.

Here were the scents and tastes of authenticity in life and death intertwined, reminisces of the ocean trapped on land; and it lingered for hours after dusk, long after my grandmother had caught and extricated me gasping with dismay and squirming with disobedience from among the fishing nets, scolding me for disregarding her frantic neighbourhood calls to come home.

The fisherman-neighbour watched us play while he mended the nets, his spidery fingers adeptly working the needle through the network of knotted threads. Sometimes he paused to smoke, the act itself an ancient ritual he learned from his father, the cigarette gripped between the forefinger and middle fingers, hands cupped into a chamber, inhaling deeply through the aperture between both thumbs.

He exhaled with deep reverence, the acrid blue smoke effort-

These anxieties and traditions persist. When my *Ajah* was diagnosed with cancer, he felt like a “lamb being led to slaughter” as he was wheeled into the hospital. This reflected his fear of an impersonal and sterile institution. Yet when my cousin entered palliative care his hospital room brimmed with Sai Baba’s images and *bhajans* playing softly.

Chan writes about her own grandmother’s end stage of life and her insistence of not going to a long-term care facility:

“In Guyana, we took care of we parents.”  
“In Guyana, we die in we home.”

But our lived realities are complicated. Not all families can afford home care or manage round-the-clock needs. Not all of us have the physical stamina to help a loved one bathe, eat, toilet. There are legitimate reasons why someone might need to enter a long-term care facility. Canada’s aging population demands more options, yet culturally specific care remains scarce. There is still no nursing home for Caribbean peoples. A proposed Afro-Caribbean home in Pickering was rejected, and no Indo-Caribbean facilities exist.

What of those who need institutional care, but crave familiar comforts? Where does one go if you have complex needs that require institutional care, but still want someone to *Jharay* you? Would your loved one waste away if they didn’t have access to the foods they grew up on, and on which they raised and nurtured you?

If they were in a South Asian assisted living facility, would they know if the curry powder wasn’t the “right” one (for example, *Chief Curry*)? Do they need *roti* (not *chapati*)? Or bush tea? Does listening to Harry Belafonte or Byron Lee and the Dragonaires alongside Lata Mangeshkar help jog their memory?

Many of parents and grandparents came to this country decades ago and built their lives here, yet the medical bureaucracy often feels indifferent, even hostile, to their traditions. Like Chan’s grandmother, we were raised to understand that both life and death take place in the home. We don’t “throw away” our elderly, as my father says – but when institutions become unavoidable, how do we ensure dignity in care? This is an urgent community conversation; we need to have it now.

lessly filtering through the fishing net, each exhalation a piece of his soul escaping confinement.

It seemed the decades and our history had left him destabilised. Perpetually off-balance, his gait was a swaying and uncertain one, the earth constantly rolling beneath his feet. It was if he was anchored to the sea, an inhabitant in the liminality that I would later appreciate to be part of our legacy of ongoing journeys after our historical displacement from an ancestral mainland.

It came to pass that a few from his brood of children began yet another drifting away. Drawn towards urban promises, they chose navigating seas of road traffic abroad, pounding among the surf of faces on foreign concrete pavements, instead of landing from their father’s boat onto the wet sands on the homeland’s shore. They dreamed under electric bulbs, not starlight; their horizon was bounded by skyscrapers, not an endlessly murmuring and unsettled sea.

The neighbour’s fishing boat began decaying on its side behind the house, abandoned among heaps of cracked, discarded coconuts husks, micro-vessels with a similar sea-borne diasporic displacement, companions washed-up together in the stagnancy of rot, mould, and uprootedness.

The siblings that remained behind began cluttering the coconut trees with mechanical carcasses, vehicles in varying stages of decay, shells of metal with cracked window glass that returned fractured reflections of our teenaged faces.

Cameras emerged as watchful sentinels installed along the perimeter of the fisherman’s house. The fishing nets and residual sea-sand now absorbed oil spills; the lingering sea-scent was replaced by gasoline fumes. Clicks of surveillance switches replaced the sigh of the wind lamenting its absence from the sea. Floodlights flashed on with nocturnal ground movement, casting clinical brightness over spaces where once I ran with abandon, my imagination and senses unfolding.

The fisherman spent his final years ill and adrift, bedridden in liminal suspension in a hammock beneath the silent gaze of ceiling cameras installed by his children. He was being monitored from remote spaces, through a camera’s steadfast gaze as he floated along gently in the hammock’s pitch. Human touch, conversation, and warmth gave way to microphone-filtered inquiries, screen-mediated check-ins, and a convenience of hands waving adieus that bled to the edges of the screen.

This sterile surveillance masked as care greyed out the absence of the human face, get-well speeches delivered beyond the proximity of the medical smells of debilitating illness, and expressions of care transmitted digitally that were caloric-deficient, lacking any nourishment for healing.

He died quietly, unheralded, and unseen; then the cameras recorded his funeral, setting him adrift yet again, his gravestone and archived memory now tossed on restless, digital seas.



Nalini Mohabir



Romeo Kaseram





India's PM Narendra Modi is greeted at Piarco International Airport; at left is PM Kamla Persad-Bissessar

# Modi's TT visit opens up new era of opportunity

**Dear Editor,**

We must congratulate the Trinidad and Tobago government, the High Commission of India, and all others responsible for the successful visit by India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

The visit highlighted the deep ancestral and cultural ties we share, the tenacity of Trinidadians in preserving our culture, and the remarkable ability to maintain unity in diversity. It is indeed an opportunity for all of Trinidad and Tobago to take pride, not just the Indo-Trinidadian community.

Optics aside, the visit was more than a cultural exchange, as six memoranda of understanding were signed, aimed at enhancing trade, investment, and partnership. Trinidad and Tobago stands to benefit from the immense opportunities that the world's largest democracy and the fourth-largest economy bring to us.

However, in observing the intense Indian media coverage of the visit, it is clear the opportunities are mutual. The media and government officials used the following accolades to describe Trinidad: "Largest economy in the Caribbean and Caricom"; "Strategically located"; "Energy giant"; and, "Gateway to Latin America".

Although commentaries highlighted that trade between the two countries is just above US\$300 million per year, everyone

continues to emphasise that for a small nation this is a substantial sum. Some experts hope that within the next three to five years, bilateral trade could double to over US\$700 million.

India, in its thrust to become the natural leader of the Global South, sees Trinidad and Tobago as an essential ally. The implications and opportunities these present to both nations cannot be understated.

For Trinidad and Tobago, this is an opportunity to reset our mindset. For some time we have begun to view ourselves as a small country with limited leverage on the global stage. This mindset limits us to being responsive, rather than proactive. Yes, we are small, but that does not mean we should not actively try to leverage everything good about us, both our hard and soft power.

In the past, Trinidad and Tobago punched above its weight, and we need to do so again if we are to grab all opportunities and reclaim our position as a natural leader in the region.

We must be open for business, and the ease of doing business here must be a priority. We must start leveraging our soft cultural power more, and let the world know that everything Trinidadian is indeed something special. I urge all our policymakers and the private sector to renew their enthusiasm in this regard.

**Vedavid Manick, Trinidad and Tobago, via email.**

# How to fix WI cricket

**Dear Editor,**

Check on the mental health of all West Indies cricket fans. Revamp West Indies cricket, including executive, financial and commercial strategy, audit risk and compliance, cricket strategy and officiating. Also, women's cricket development, people and culture, strategic governance, sports science and medical and integrity and conflict resolution committees. And the principal president, CEO, CFO, umpire coach, integrity officer, vice president, directors, secretary, men and women coaches, and lead physio.

The Wehby report reviewed the committee structure of CWI and found it overloaded and overly costly. The recommendation was for a reduction of committees of the board and rather ad hoc committees as needed for specific purposes, which makes sense and is less costly.

The report also notes that the weak structures of the territorial boards as the shareholders of CWI contribute to the dysfunction found across CWI. It recommended a three-year term from among the directors and a term limit of two consecutive terms for the chairperson.

We want new captains. Strip West Indies of Test status, and grant associate member status to individual islands like Jamaica and Barbados. Island countries will play with more pride.

Qualifying tournament to represent the region in different events and formats? This would result in more regional training and matches, and more revenue. This would also put to rest accusations of favouritism by selectors and coaches towards their respective native countrymen, and so on.


How much longer must the West Indies as a region sustain constant embarrassment? How much more must WI bear?

Also, reform the system of granting Test status, and include having two tiered divisions with honours, promotion, relegation and a play-off for Test-playing nations, since West Indies Test cricket has become a joke with constant empty stands.

Place teams accordingly via rankings. The West Indies island countries teams can split to make up for the lack of Test-playing nations. Promotion and relegation actually may make West Indies fight harder to prove they belong at the top.

West Indies Test cricket is no longer interesting or competitive. I remind all that history is in the past. The good ole glory days are things of the past.

**Ishmael Tarouba, Trinidad and Tobago, via email.**




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Persad-Bissessar's win signals continuity, trust

Dear Editor,  
I congratulate Prime Minister Kamla Persad-Bissessar on her uncontested and official declaration as the political leader of the UNC. This is more than a political achievement – it is a resounding endorsement of her leadership, character, and service to the people of Trinidad and Tobago.

In a time where leadership across the world is being challenged and questioned, the fact that Persad-Bissessar was unopposed in her bid to retain leadership speaks volumes. It reflects the faith, trust, and admiration of party members across the country. It shows a united UNC. A party rooted not just in loyalty, but in a shared belief that under her direction the movement for progress is alive and well.

This is no ordinary moment in our political history. The UNC, under her guidance, has evolved into a party that stands for inclusion, innovation, and integrity. The nation has witnessed her commitment not only to her political base but to every citizen – urban and rural, young and old, of every creed and race. She has shown the kind of leadership that is rare: one that listens, acts, and follows through with compassion and resolve.

Let us be honest, this uncontested leadership is not the result of silence or absence of ambition among others. It is the result of clear evidence that no one else, at this time, carries the vision, steadiness, and national respect that Persad-Bissessar has built over the years. Her experience, legal expertise, and proven track record of governance place her in a league unmatched in our political landscape.

As the country begins a new chapter following the historic victory of the UNC in the recent general election, this declara-

tion reinforces continuity and strength at a critical time. The people are looking for certainty. They are looking for someone they can trust. Someone who understands the pain and struggle they endured for a decade under neglect, mismanagement, and scandal.

Persad-Bissessar understands this moment. She has committed her life to public service. From her days as a school teacher to becoming the country's first female prime minister, her journey has been marked by courage, resilience, and a deep love for this nation.

In this new term, as she leads both the government and the party, we look forward to the fulfilment of bold promises – job creation, economic revival, social support, justice reform, and national unity. We believe in her ability to work across party lines, rebuild broken institutions, and ensure that no one – especially the most vulnerable – is left behind.

To every citizen still unsure, still sceptical, still wounded by past failures – look not just at the words but at the actions. Look at her service. Look at the stability she offers. Look at the calm assurance in her leadership when others floundered. Her leadership has never been about self-glory: it has always been about empowering others, lifting up the downtrodden, and moving our country forward.

This is not just her victory. It is our collective triumph. A triumph of hope over despair. Of unity over division. Of people over politics.

Congratulations, Prime Minister. The people have spoken, not just at the polls, but through your uncontested re-election. You are the choice, the leader, and the light Trinidad and Tobago needs at this time.

Curtis A OBrady, Trinidad and Tobago, via email.



Kamla Persad-Bissessar



Columbus' statue in Port-of-Spain

Modern slavery issues remain

Dear Editor,

The removal of Christopher Columbus statues and the rewriting of Caribbean history often feel like symbolic gestures, but they do little to address the deeper systemic issues.

Columbus, for all his historical significance, was not a plantation owner himself, but his voyages symbolised the beginning of colonisation, exploitation, and the forced labour that underpinned the transatlantic slave trade.

In today's context, we see new forms of slavery – such as low wages, underpaid workers, and the exploitation of immigrants – perpetuating economic dependency and social inequality. Human trafficking, which amounts to modern slavery, continues to thrive under the guise of legality and economic necessity, revealing that the system of bondage persists under different names.

True emancipation is not about statues or symbols; it is about dismantling the structures of inequality, exploitation, and systemic injustice that still control many aspects of life. Citizens must wake up and realise that the rhetoric of change often masks superficial gestures.

Real freedom involves confronting economic injustices, fighting exploitation, and creating equitable opportunities. Only then can we move past illusion and achieve true emancipation – where every person is truly free, not just in name, but in their daily lives and struggles.

Gordon Laughlin, Trinidad and Tobago, via email.

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# Guyana elections see fringe parties seeking to disrupt majority

As September 1 quickly approaches, campaigning for Guyana's national and regional elections has heated up to unprecedented levels.

With campaigning in full swing, public meetings by political parties have enveloped the country, social media have been flooded with a variety of truths, mistruths, and propaganda, while local newspapers are having a field day either supporting, analysing, or criticising the various parties contesting the elections.

Six parties have been approved by the Guyana Elections Commission (GECOM) to contest the elections, including three existing parties, A Partnership for National Unity (APNU), Alliance For Change (AFC), and the People's Progressive Party /Civic (PPP/Civic); and three new parties, Assembly for Liberty and Prosperity (ALP), Forward Guyana Movement (FGM), and We Invest in Nationhood (WIN). A seventh party, the Horizon and Star Party, was rejected for failing to meet minimum filing requirements.

Of the six parties contesting the elections, only APNU, AFC, PPP/Civic, and WIN have submitted lists to contest the elections in all ten electoral districts, while ALP will be contesting in districts 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 10, and the FGM will participate in districts 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 10 for the Regional Elections.

WIN, led by Azruddin Mohamed, is the only of the three new parties that appears to be garnering sizeable support. Incidentally, Mohamed has been sanctioned by the US for allegedly evading more than US\$50 million in taxes on the export of more than 10,000 kilograms of raw gold. He has also been charged by the Guyana Revenue Authority with tax evasion and making a false declaration in connection with the importation of a Lamborghini car. WIN is being led by Mohamed and Mark France.

The PPP/Civic opted to retain its current leadership, with Dr Irfaan Ali as Presidential candidate and Mark Phillips as Prime Ministerial candidate. APNU, currently the largest Opposition party, will be led by Aubrey Norton as presidential candidate, with Juretha Fernandes as his running mate.

Three other parties agreed to form a coalition – Forward Guyana, The People's Movement, and the Vigilant Political Action Committee agreed to contest the election as one entity, opting to label the joinder the Forward Guyana Movement (FGM). The FGM is led by Amanza Walton Desir, with Nigel London as prime ministerial candidate.

Traditionally, elections in Guyana have always been a two-horse race – between the PNC/Reform, now A Partnership for National Unity and Alliance for Change (APNU+AFC) coalition, and the People's Progressive Party/ Civic (PPP/Civic). They have been largely dominated by voting along racial lines – Blacks for APNU+AFC, and East Indians for the PPP/ Civic. Fringe parties have had little to no effect on the results.

However, this trend appears to be changing, although APNU and the AFC, which are now contesting the elections under their own banner, have apparently retained a racial bias.

In the 2025 elections, APNU is expected to remain the main Opposition party, although its support appears to be waning. However, APNU can potentially be the most disruptive force in terms of holding free and fair elections.

In early July, Vice President Bharrat Jagdeo told the press that the only threat to the conduct of free and fair elections in Guyana is from the People's National Congress/Reform

(PNCR), also known as APNU.

He said: "If there is ever a threat to holding free and fair elections at GECOM from anyone, it would be the PNC cabal... In the five months [after the 2020 elections], that cabal sought to support the rigging, and that cabal is already seeking to undermine the preparations for the [2025] elections." Regardless of its declining fortunes, APNU remains a well-oiled machine.

Although numerous fringe parties have emerged in recent years, they have all, excepting the AFC, failed to break the stranglehold of the two major parties. But the AFC, led by its Presidential candidate Nigel Hughes and his running mate, Laura George, has since lost its influence, and is apparently shifting into oblivion.

The other two fringe parties Assembly for Liberty and Prosperity (ALP), led by Simona Broomes, a former APNU government minister and the Forward Guyana Movement (FGM), are not expected to draw any significant support.

However, AFC appears to be aligning itself with the ALP. Recently, Broomes shared the stage in a public meeting held by the AFC, which indicates an alliance of sorts. When addressing the meeting, Hughes stated that the AFC is taking all necessary steps to position the PPP/Civic for a potential minority government.

Evidently, the combined new Opposition parties hope to secure enough votes to deny the PPP/Civic a majority in parliament. That is, only if APNU can secure as many votes as it did in previous elections.

Whether the new political parties can together result in a true shift in the balance of power is a tough question for anyone to answer, given shifting allegiances among the electorate. This is not to say that racial politics no longer prevails, it is just that the electorate will do just about anything to bring about a change in government.

Incidentally, the PPP/Civic is aware of this potential outcome. Bharat Jagdeo publicly warned PPP/Civic supporters of what he described as a covert plan among the opposition parties, including several smaller newly-formed political parties, to recreate the political instability of 2011, when the PPP/Civic held a minority government and faced repeated legislative blockages by the combined opposition of APNU and the AFC.

He added, "With the PNC-led APNU and AFC no longer holding credibility to make promises to the electorate after failing to deliver during their 2015 to 2020 term in office", Jagdeo said they have now turned to the small parties like We Invest in Nationhood (WIN), led by US-sanctioned businessman Azruddin Mohamed, "to ensure the PPP/C fails to secure a parliamentary majority".

It is widely anticipated that the age-old problem of disputing the election results will once again rear its ugly head. In preparation for this eventuality, GECOM met with the Heads of the Diplomatic Missions of the US, UK, Canada, EU, and the UNDP in late July to discuss the Commission's state of readiness for the conduct of the upcoming elections.

So far, several overseas missions have also committed to observing the elections. The US has announced its support for the Guyana Police Force (GPF) in strengthening its capacity, according to American Ambassador to Guyana Nicole Theriot. She said law enforcement agents from Las Vegas and Miami-Dade, accompanied by a small number of experts to train GPF trainers are expected to arrive in Guyana.



Dwarka Lakhan



Nicole Theriot



A sea of PPP/Civic supporters at a campaign meeting earlier this week

The U.S. envoy also said her government would be funding two-thirds of the Organisation of American States' (OAS) election observation mission and "working closely" with the Carter Center that would be observing the results tabulation. The UK, EU, and Canadian Chiefs-of-Mission are also backing these efforts.

In addition, the US Embassy would be fielding 50 observers, and will be assisted by UNDP advisors.

The Carter Center announced that it has launched an international election observation mission to Guyana, comprising of a four-person core team of experts that is already in Guyana, with additional electoral experts and observers expected to join them closer to Election Day. As well, the European Union has

also promised to dispatch an election observer mission to Guyana.

Evidently, the 2025 general and regional elections will come under intense scrutiny to avoid a repeat of the 2020 elections fiasco which took five months for the results to be formally released. In spite of all the side shows by opposition parties, it is widely anticipated that the PPP/Civic will emerge victorious.

...  
Dwarka Lakhan, BA, MBA, FCSI, FICB is a Member of the Canadian Association of Journalists, and an accomplished financial writer. His book, *Winning Ways, Real World Strategies to Help You Reimagine Your Practice*, is available on Amazon and on [winningways101.com](http://winningways101.com). He can be reached at [dlakhan@rogers.com](mailto:dlakhan@rogers.com).

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# Toronto cardiologist honoured with King Charles III Coronation Medal

- Toronto cardiologist Dr Sherryn Rambihar has been awarded the prestigious King Charles III Coronation Medal, recognising her exceptional contributions to cardiovascular medicine, education, and advocacy. Honoured by the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada, Dr Rambihar joins a distinguished group advancing health equity and research across the country.

...  
**Toronto** - Cardiologist Dr Sherryn Rambihar was awarded the King Charles III Coronation Medal at an awards ceremony hosted by the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada in June 2025, honouring her contributions to heart and stroke awareness, education, and community health.

She received the medal from Doug Roth, CEO of the Heart and Stroke Foundation. Among the attendees was her father, cardiologist Dr Vivian Rambihar.

The Coronation Medal honours exceptional Canadians for their role in improving cardiovascular health, and is the first such medal issued by Canada to mark the May 6, 2023 coronation of His Majesty King Charles III.

In its official statement, the Foundation said each "recipient was honoured for their role in helping to improve the heart and brain health [of] people in every community in Canada".

It added that the group of honourees reflects "the strength and diversity of the Heart & Stroke community", including people living with heart disease and stroke; community-based fundraisers; scientists and researchers; medical professionals; members of Heart & Stroke's national board and provincial advisory boards; [and] members of Heart & Stroke committees.

Roth noted, "I am continuously inspired by our volunteers' dedication, resilience, knowledge and shared passion for our

cause. We simply wouldn't be able to do the work we do without their support - and I am proud that we were able to honour their contributions in such a meaningful way."

Dr Rambihar holds a BSc from the University of Toronto, an MD from Western University, and a Master's in Health Professional Education from the University of Illinois at Chicago. She is currently a staff cardiologist and educational lead at Mackenzie Health, and serves as Adjunct Assistant Professor of

Medicine at the University of Toronto. She led the integration of new technologies into the Echocardiography Lab at Women's College Hospital, and serves on a national panel tasked with developing simulation-enhanced echocardiography assessment tools for residency training.

In addition to her clinical and academic roles, Dr Rambihar is a strong advocate for public education in heart health, especially in vulnerable communities across the GTA. She has worked extensively with the Indo-Caribbean, South Asian, and wider communities through advocacy, published research, and educational events, including her presentation at a Heart Health Symposium in Guyana in March 2025.

A committed voice on women's heart health, Dr Rambihar has highlighted disparities and research gaps affecting women, and helped raise awareness through conferences, Heart Month campaigns, and Heart and Stroke's annual initiatives. She has also used national media - print, radio, and television, to communicate signs and symptoms, risk factors, and the need for equity in care.

The Coronation Medal, administered by the Office of the Secretary to the Governor General, was designed by the Canadian Heraldic Authority and struck by the Royal Canadian Mint. It is the first Canadian honour to feature the Canadian Royal Crown as part of its design. Its front displays King Charles III's effigy, while the reverse features the royal cypher over the sunburst design of the Canadian coronation emblem.

The award also acknowledges His Majesty's long-standing charitable work, having founded 18 charities and supported hundreds more over several decades.

Looking ahead, Dr Rambihar is expected to continue her work in clinical cardiology, medical education, research, and community-based outreach, helping to build a healthier and more equitable future for Canadians.



In photo at left, Dr Sherryn (right) with Heart and Stroke's CEO Doug Roth; in photo at right, Dr Sherryn with her father, cardiologist Dr Vivian Rambihar

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TCCF holds annual cruise fund-raiser

Friends and supporters of The Caribbean Children Foundation set sail on Lake Ontario on July 19 aboard the *Enterprise 2000* for a celebration of generosity, culture, and purpose.

The TCCF's 21st annual boat cruise was more than just a festive summer escape. It was also a floating fund-raiser with a vital mission to help critically ill children from the Caribbean receive life-saving medical care abroad.

To pulsating Caribbean sounds, guests danced on deck while enjoying a delicious curry lunch buffet. Warmed by the summer sun, soon the deck was filled with community spirit, laughter, and camaraderie for a shared cause.

Behind the scenes, TCCF's devoted crew of volunteers made it all look effortless, ensuring the event ran smoothly while reminding

everyone of its deeper purpose. Each ticket purchased, each plate served, and each number played by the DJ supported TCCF's efforts to remove financial and logistical barriers for children in dire medical need.

TCCF is a registered charity working tirelessly to ensure poor and critically ill children in the Caribbean can access the specialised medical procedures they require abroad and without delay. Its bold vision is to remove every obstacle that stands between a sick child and the care they urgently need.

What sets the TCCF apart is its unwavering transparency, with all of its funds raised going directly toward helping children. There are no administrative fees, no overhead costs, only compassion in action.

To learn more about the TCCF's humanitarian work, or to offer support, contact TCCF's President Jay Brijpaul at 416-418-2745.



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**Contents:** Early Beginnings of Accounting and Auditing; The Major Companies; The Accounting Firms; Professional Accounting Bodies; Accounting Education and Schools; The Accounting and Auditing Landscape Over the Years; Women in Accounting and Auditing; The Audit Office of Guyana; Institute of Chartered Accountants of Guyana (ICAG); Internal Auditing in Guyana; Ministry and Ministers of Finance; Bank of Guyana History; Guyana Revenue Authority (GRA) History;

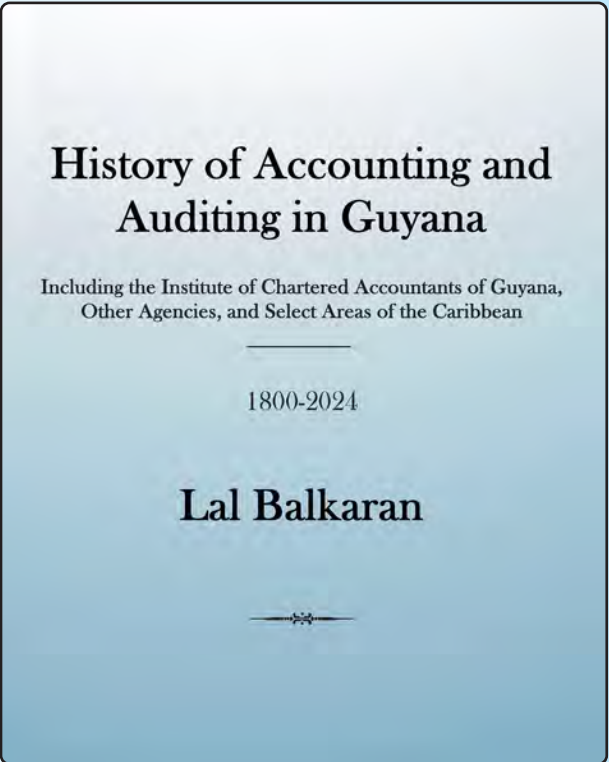
**Appendices:** Chronology of Accounting and Auditing Institutes; Economic, Business and Financial Factors; Regulatory Statutes; Guyanese Accountants in Public Service; List of Presidents of the GCC; Profiles of Past Presidents of the ICAG; Membership Statistics by Accounting Bodies.

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## West Indies veterans from the 1975 win with CWI's Kishore Swallow at right SVG rolls out citizenship pitch to WI greats

– In a landmark move that intertwines sport with national identity, St Vincent and the Grenadines' Parliament has passed a bill inviting West Indies' 1975 World Cup-winning cricketers to apply for citizenship, honouring their legacy amid political tensions and regional pride.

...

**Kingstown, St Vincent** – In a gesture aimed at honouring their enduring legacy in Caribbean cultural life, the Parliament of St Vincent and the Grenadines passed a bill late last month offering Vincentian citizenship to the surviving members of the West Indies cricket team that won the inaugural One Day International World Cup in 1975.

The bill, presented by Prime Minister Ralph Gonsalves, was approved despite a collective abstention by Opposition lawmakers, who objected to what they described as the politicisation of cricket legends in a pre-election context.

"...[What] we are seeking to do in this bill is to provide the opportunity for the surviving 12 members of the West Indies, Cricket World Cup team, the opportunity to apply for it, but they not having satisfied any of those other conditions," Gonsalves told Parliament, quoting from the bill's preamble.

He added, "Now, a person, when they get the citizenship, they may, if they wish to, apply for a passport. That is another stage in a process."

Gonsalves clarified that the new law allows an exceptional route to citizenship, which is distinct from birthright, marriage, or residency, by enabling the 12 surviving cricketers to write to the minister of citizenship, indicating their desire to be registered as Vincentian citizens.

He emphasised that the bill does not automatically confer citizenship, but creates a unique pathway based on the team's regional impact and cultural significance.

Quoting the bill's language, Gonsalves said it was crafted to "recognise and acknowledge their contributions to and impact on the sport of cricket and the general culture of the West Indies".

In his parliamentary address, Gonsalves framed the initiative within a broader cultural context, saying the 1975 team is "lodged in the consciousness of people across the region, and certainly St Vincent and the Grenadines... this thing, which is part of our core, part of our essence is now conjoined with the highest office in the land".

He said the government had considered two historic teams, namely the 1965 West Indies team that unofficially became World Champions in Test cricket, and the 1975 ODI World Cup winners.

However, he noted it was the latter that remains embedded in popular memory.

"In addition to entitling the cricketers to hold a Vincentian passport, should they so desire, they can also buy land in SVG without having to apply for an alien land holding license," he said.

The timing of the bill's passage arrives during an ongoing regional celebration of the 50th

anniversary of the West Indies' 1975 World Cup win, a milestone also recently marked by Cricket West Indies. The celebration has seen competing interpretations and gestures of tribute.

Notably, the president of CWI, Kishore Shallow, who was once praised by Gonsalves, is now a candidate for the main Opposition New Democratic Party in the upcoming SVG general elections, which is expected by November 2025.

Opposition MPs said their abstention was motivated by a desire not to politicise the region's cricketing heroes.

In outlining the law, Gonsalves reviewed existing pathways to citizenship: by birth, parentage, marriage (if not deemed a marriage of convenience), or residence over seven years. Another discretionary route allows citizenship to those associated with SVG for at least five years who have made "a significant contribution to the economic development of the country or to sports or culture or some social sphere".

These applicants must also demonstrate English proficiency and be of "good character". A September 2023 bipartisan law also permits second-generation Vincentians to apply.

Gonsalves said that while the cricket legends do not meet these existing criteria, the special bill gives them "the opportunity to apply for it". He also reiterated that the initiative does not reflect any interest in citizenship-by-investment, stating, "I haven't heard anything adverse to this idea."

Gonsalves said he was uncertain how many of the cricketers would take up the offer, but noted that the team's captain, Guyanese-born Clive Lloyd, had indicated his intention to apply.

The initiative has also received support from Guyana's President Dr Irfaan Ali, who, according to Gonsalves, told him it was "a good idea to offer Vincentian citizenship to the cricket legends".

"[Maybe] we may offer it and nobody applies... or some may do and some may not... I'm hopeful that as many as possible find it in their circumstance," Gonsalves said, acknowledging that existing citizenship commitments may legally or personally restrict some from accepting dual nationality.

In his address, Gonsalves reflected on sporting dominance in global history, referencing the Soviet Union in ice hockey, East Africa in long-distance running, Cuba in boxing, and the West Indies in cricket.

"But since then, we have not been doing particularly well what is expected of us," he said of current West Indies cricket performance, adding, "There is a sense that something should be done... to bring back in this lean period, some sense of upliftment to this critical element in our civilisation, this cultural sporting phenomenon."

Gonsalves appealed to Parliament for consensus on the bill, saying, "Let us do honour to these great men without controversy today, and hope that we all support this bill."



## Ask Jay...

Please send your questions to  
TheBrij@TheBrij.com or call: 416-418-2745

### THE SMART INVESTOR'S GUIDE: KEY INFORMATION BEFORE BUYING COMMERCIAL REAL ESTATE

#### Why Consider Commercial Real Estate?

If residential real estate is your foundation, then commercial real estate serves as your growth engine. From office buildings to retail malls, warehouses to multifamily units, commercial properties generally offer higher returns and attract more dedicated tenants. But the stakes are also higher. What distinguishes an intelligent investor from a speculative buyer? Strategy, knowledge, and a bit of hustle.

#### Financing is an entirely different game.

Unlike residential mortgages, where personal income and credit history are key factors, commercial financing primarily focuses on the property's ability to generate income. Lenders see these deals more as business investments rather than personal loans. Commercial lenders expect you to have a greater stake; a typical down payment is at least 25 percent, and can go up to 50 percent.

Lenders will request your personal and business income statements, net worth statements, tax returns, and credit history. Usually, you will serve as the guarantor for the company's mortgage. The lender will also require a list of current tenants and their rents (a rent roll), expected income and expenses, an appraisal, a structural engineer's report, and an environmental report.

#### Rental rules are different.

Apart from the basic rent, commercial tenants usually pay additional costs like property taxes, insurance, and maintenance – this arrangement is called a Triple Net Lease (NNN), which is very attractive to investors because it reduces the landlord's responsibilities. Other common lease types include gross leases, where the landlord covers all operating expenses, and modified gross leases, where costs are shared between landlord and tenant. Understanding the particular lease terms before purchasing a property is important because they directly influence your monthly cash flow and management responsibilities.

In commercial real estate, your tenants are your business partners. Commercial tenants usually sign long-term leases lasting from three to 15 years, and tend to be more financially stable. Their presence can influence the value and overall performance of your property. That is why it is essential to carefully evaluate each potential tenant's financial health and the stability of their industry. For example, a dental clinic or government office is a much safer investment than a newly opened café.

#### With commercial properties, every detail matters.

Thorough due diligence in commercial real estate is crucial for success. Verify the property's zoning and permitted uses to ensure they match your plans. Request an Environmental Site Assessment (ESA), especially for industrial or older properties, to spot any contamination risks. Carefully review all existing leases and tenant obligations, and carry out detailed inspections of key building systems, including the roof, HVAC, plumbing, and electrical systems. It is also vital to consult legal and accounting experts. Missing even one detail can quickly turn a promising investment into a costly mistake.

#### Managing commercial properties.

Managing commercial real estate isn't entirely passive. As an owner, you'll be responsible for negotiating leases, maintaining the property, handling vacancies, and ensuring that insurance and legal compliance are current. These tasks can be time-consuming, especially with larger or more complex assets, which is why many investors choose to hire professional commercial property managers to oversee daily operations and safeguard their investments.

Commercial real estate isn't an emotional buy; it is a business decision focused on income, growth, and long-term potential. When done correctly, commercial investments can generate higher cash flow, longer lease terms, and faster wealth building.

I view residential investing as a reliable and straightforward way to buy property, manage it, and build wealth. Once you have a strong portfolio of residential investments, it is time to use the accumulated equity as a down payment on a commercial property. When purchasing a commercial property, having a trustworthy business partner is a valuable asset.

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What a memorable weekend!

Toronto – The August long weekend saw Toronto transformed, our city once again hosting the Toronto Caribbean Carnival, our streets pulsating to pounding footsteps, humming with basslines, and lit up with a kaleidoscope of costumed colour. Last weekend, Toronto became a canvas splashed with expressions of Caribbean dance, cuisine, culture, and joy.

From the glittering feathered regalia to the delicious aroma of Caribbean cuisine, jerk, doubles, pelau, and roti spicing up the warm summer air, our own TCC took the electric energy of our islands to the beating heart of Canada's most diverse metropolis.

The 2025 Carnival season launched on June 14 grew into a crescendo, arriving with unstoppable momentum over the weekend, its theme *Take Me Home* spreading the heartfelt narrative about our ancestral memory and cultural belonging.

The Grand Parade was more than a parade – it was a pilgrimage of proud believers committed to, and honouring, the deep-rooted ties between Canada and our many Caribbean homelands.

From the majestic display of creativity at the Kings and Queens Showcase at Lamport Stadium on the evening of July 31, to the explosive spectacle of the Grand Parade down Lakeshore Boulevard on August 2, revellers, masqueraders, and spectators came together in a sea of sequins, rhythm, and shared joy.

It was as good as a rejuvenating visit to the beach in one of our Caribbean homelands! The energy in the waves could be felt transplanted at every corner, where it was revitalising the connections that hold us together as a community, sparking our pulses of creativity, and where our collective Caribbean resilience was being prominently evoked.

Live calypso and pan performances ignited the stages, the international marketplaces overflowed with handcrafted treasures and island vibes, and the pulse of TCC thrummed to the beat of drums and its accompaniment of footsteps pounding on the pavements.

Once again, Toronto danced, feasted, and luxuriated in our TCC. As a Caribbean people, we do not listen to music without our feet moving to the beat. And in 2025, when the music hit the streets, Toronto did not only listen – the city responded, rhythmically chipping to the syncopation, then entering and wholly participating in a universal jump up. What a memorable weekend! Much respect to the TCC, its philosopher queen and visionaries, and the cadre of volunteers that made it happen!

*In photos, and on Page 15, Kings and Queens promenade on the evening of July 31; and on August 2 at the Grand Parade. Photos by Russell Lutchman, Hinano Beekhoo, and our many friends.*







Kings and Queens promenade at Lamport Stadium on the evening of July 31. Photos by Russell Lutchman



Welcome to the planet of the apps!

By Dhanpaul Narine  
The revolution is digitised. Are we a nation that has become dumb on smart gadgets? Are we Facebookers that sit for hours staring at a screen where FaceTime, Inbox, Outbox, Dropbox, and miles of sockets and docket, have immersed us in a new vocabulary?

There are those that believe we are hooked up, addicted and uneducated, and standing in corners glued to smart screens, as we invite Internet apnea.

Jonathan Haidt is a social psychologist at New York University. He uses the story of Babel in *The Atlantic* to argue that we live in a fractured society, and says that Babel is a fragmentation of America.

According to Haidt, "Something went terribly wrong, very suddenly. We are disoriented, unable to speak the same language or recognise the same truth. We are cut off from one another and from the past."

Social media has created dislocation in which we have lost "social capital, with high levels of trust, strong institutions, and shared stories. Social media has weakened all three", argues Haidt.

There can be no doubt that social media have resulted in disorientation and a reluctance to explore the treasure-trove of literacy. But is this "very suddenly" as Haidt says? The signs of anti-intellectualism have long manifested themselves in American education. In 1963, Professor Richard Hofstadter provided the theoretical basis for anti-intellectualism. He argued that "the strain of anti-intellectualism has been a constant thread winding its way through our cultural life, nurtured by the false notion that democracy means that my ignorance is as good as your knowledge".

In 1982, Daniel Moynihan bemoaned the fact that video tapes were knocking books off the shelves, and a year later, a publication sent shockwaves across America. The document, *A Nation at Risk* was published under the Reagan Administration. It found that the students were not equipped to meet the demands of science and technology. According to the Report, "A total of 13 percent of all 17 years-old in the US were functionally illiterate. Functional illiteracy among minority youths may run as high as 40 percent."

What was damning about these revelations was that many students did not possess higher order thinking skills, and more than 40 percent "could not draw inferences from written material; only one-fifth could write a persuasive essay from written material; and only one third could solve a mathematical problem requiring several steps".

The National Endowment for the Arts reported in 1982 that the number of adults that read for pleasure was 82 percent, but by 2002 this figure had dropped to 67 percent. The proportion of 17 years-old read that nothing, unless required by school, doubled between 1984 and 2004.

There are other disturbing revelations. In 2009, the Oklahoma Council of Public Affairs found that among public school students, 77 percent of them did not know that George Washington was the first US President; nor could they name the author of the Declaration of Independence. Many students did not fare better with the citizenship tests, as only 2.8 percent of eight graders were able to pass it.

It is little wonder that a number of educators feel that the educational skills of the previous generation will not be surpassed by current performance in schools. Many educators feel that students in today's educa-

tional institutions will not surpass, equal, or even approach those of their parents.

When asked to name a country that begins with the letter 'U' some seventh-graders replied, "Europe, Utah or Utopia". The currency of England was given as the "pesos, the dollar, I don't know, or the Queen's money". The name of America's neighbor, south of the border, was given as, "Disney World, Texas or Montana".

The point from these examples is that the seeds of dumbing-down were sown in the 1970s. They slowly worked their way into the classrooms through government's control of the school system, and the lack of choice that brings competition. In 2006, it was reported that American students were behind other countries in the basic subjects. For example, America was placed 18th in reading, 22nd in science, and 28th in math, behind countries such as Poland, Australia, and South Korea.

In the 2009 *Journal of Science*, it was found that Chinese students outperformed their American counterparts in science, based on test scores in four American universities, and three Chinese universities. The Americans averaged 50 percent, while the

Chinese scored 90 percent. What has been the role of the Internet on college students? Information shapes one's thought process, but as Nicholas Carr argues, "The 'Net seems to be chipping away my capacity for concentration and contemplation."

The surfeit of information, at a click, is not without its drawbacks. We browse and skip, rather than bury our minds into the beauty of the

prose. We hop and skim, and read abstracts, rather than decipher the essence of the long passages. The malleable mind wanders, and cognitive development becomes obscure. Enter Sergey Brin, from Google, who wants our brains to be replaced by artificial intelligence, which is a scary thought.

As far as college students are concerned, a report in *Applied Cognitive Psychology* found that they spent five hours a day on their smart phones that has created a cascade of substandard performances. The conclusion was that more phone use led to poorer problem solving skills.

Where do we go from here? Social media have given a voice to many, the minorities that clamour for change, and who have been able to organise, to effect revolutions. The Arab Spring is one such example. The search engines have presented a world library, at the fingertips, and have given us information to transform societies.

But social media are uncontrolled and unregulated. It has lumped people into categories, of right and left, conservative and liberals, and centrists; progressives and patriots, racists and traitors.

Social media have also allowed a few to drive and dictate the agenda, and almost everyone to be an authority, and a critic. A child is cyber-bullied every 15 minutes and little is done to stop it. There are those that predict social media will get worse, as viral piles on viral, the planet of the apps increases, and people do not know what to believe anymore. Institutions, known for their credibility, are damaged. The leak in the US Supreme Court, *Roe vs Wade*, has added to the confusion.

Haidt argues that the answer lies in the creation of voluntary associations to "fix local problems". But this is not enough. Power lies in education. It lies in the schools, and colleges, where sound curricula can accommodate the digital embrace, to reflect and enhance learning. As the social media engines grind away, the simple stories continue to hold the truth.



Sergey Brin



# Fyrish to forever, centenarian’s legacy built on love, resilience, and grace

**Chanderdai Lakhan**  
**March 9, 1924 - July 3-2025**  
**Delivered by Dwarka Lakhan**

Family, relatives, friends, and well-wishers: Thank you all for being here today to support the Lakhan family, and to pay your final respects to our beloved mother, Chanderdai Lakhan, who passed away peacefully at home on July 3, at the extraordinary age of 101.

Today, July 11, 2025, we are laying our mother to rest – exactly 59 years to the day since she lost her own mother in 1966. Coincidence. Or a poignant reminder of the mysterious symmetry of life and loss.

For those who may not know me, my name is Dwarka Lakhan. I am now the third eldest of the six surviving members of our family, following the recent loss of two of my older brothers, Sam and Vish; and, just over two months ago, our eldest sister, Radica.

Our beloved mother was born on March 9, 1924, in the quiet village of Fyrish on the Corentyne Coast, what was then British Guiana. She was the youngest of four children born to Jangai Singh and Dukhni – both of whom came to British Guiana during the Indentureship era from India.

Her parents’ journey to British Guiana was one of survival and sorrow, with her mother’s own parents dying at sea on the journey to British Guiana – cast overboard, as she was told – leaving her mother an orphan in a strange land. These harrowing stories, passed down to her, remained embedded in her memory, and shaped her resilient spirit.

She grew up in modest circumstances, working alongside her husband in the rice fields, on the farm, and later in the family’s general store. She was also a gifted seamstress, sewing clothes not just for her children, but also for neighbours and villagers – a craft she practiced with skill and pride.

She was married to our father, Sewnarine Lakhan, who sadly passed away in 1973, more than half a century ago. Left widowed with nine children – Radica, Bato, Krisendat, Vish, Sridatt, myself, Ahilia, Janet, and Jerome – she shouldered the burden of raising us on her own. And she did so with unmatched strength, love, and tenacity.

She was the glue that held us together. Even as we grew into adults, moved away, and started families of our own, she never

stopped worrying about us. If one of us was unwell, she would lie awake through the night, and even if we tried to hide our troubles, she would sense it – just by hearing our voice or looking into our eyes.

“Beta, wah wrong, you sure you all right?” she would ask with knowing concern. As they say, mothers always know best.

She nursed our father back to health after he was seriously injured by a political bomb in 1964, during a time of intense civil unrest in Guyana. At that same time, she was also caring for her ailing mother, who passed away in 1966.

Life for her was never easy – it was about survival, feeding her children, and keeping her family intact during some of Guyana’s most difficult times.

In 1986, she immigrated to Canada because all of her children had already done so. But even after so many years abroad, she longed for the home she left behind.

“I want to go and see my house,” she would often say. To her, Guyana was more than a place – it was the essence of freedom as she frequently compared life in Canada to living like “a bird in a cage”.

Still, she adjusted. And she continued to inspire. Her mind remained sharp until the end. Her memory was astounding. She could recount events and tell stories from decades ago with vivid clarity – everything from *jumbie* tales to colonial songs, and old Guyanese proverbs.

She would recite poems, sing patriotic songs like, *Born in the Land of The Mighty Roraima*, and say the *Lord’s Prayer* and *Psalm 23* without missing a beat – well into her centenarian years.

She was not only our mother, but a second mother to many. Her house was always open, her advice always given freely, and her kindness extended beyond blood. She was the matriarch not just of our family but of an entire community. Even in her final years, she kept in touch with old friends and people from the village. She was witty, strong-willed, and as she liked to say, always had “a bandage for every sore”.



Chanderdai Lakhan

But even the strongest souls have their limits. When our brother Vish passed away in 2018, we saw a flicker, a dimming of her light. Then last year, when our eldest brother Bato died, it dimmed further. But it was the loss of our eldest sister Radica, just this past March that broke her. As any mother will understand – it is the most unnatural sorrow to bury your own child. She had endured more than most could bear.

She leaves behind six surviving children – Krisendat, Sridatt, myself, Ahilia, Arunie, and Rajendra – as well as her daughters-in-law, sons-in-law, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, great-great-grandchildren, and many others who loved and cherished her.

She was, and will always be, the embodiment of courage, resilience, and unconditional love. She was our moral compass, our guiding light, our home.

She epitomised the strength, industriousness, and struggles of women who grew up in the post-Indentureship era in Guyana.

She was also witty and very “sassy”. She had an answer to every question and “a bandage for every sore”. She was a fighter and a strong and amazing woman whom we will always be proud to call “MOTHER”, or Ma.

Our mother was not just a strong woman; she was a wise one. She often told us, “There are three things in life you can’t get back: the spent arrow, the spoken word, and the missed opportunity.”

And yet, today, I realise there is a fourth – that is you, Ma. Like the spent arrow, spoken word, and missed opportunity, we will not get you back. You’re gone forever.

All we have now are the beautiful memories, the lessons, the love, and the legacy you leave behind.

So today, even as we mourn, we also celebrate her remarkable life. A century of wisdom, grace, sacrifice, and strength. A mother like no other.

Rest in peace, Ma. We will always love you. And we will never forget you.

# Remembering Karam: Moral compass, community builder, a family’s heart

**Karam Chandre Daljit**  
**September 22, 1944 - July 16, 2025**  
**Delivered by Dr Nandini Daljit**

In the early morning of July 16, 2025 the last breath from a beacon of human connection began the immortalisation of the legacy of the man known as Karam Chandre Daljit. At the age of 80, Karam died peacefully, surrounded by his family after a courageous battle with cancer.

The Daljit family held end of life services for their beloved husband (Leila), father (Nandini and Priya) and grandfather (Niko, Aria, Noah, Kaden and Maliha). Over 400 people paid their respects to Karam, eager to recount their love, gratitude and appreciation of a man so may describe as a good and gentle soul.

Karam lived his life in complete alignment with his namesake Mohandas Karamchandra Gandhi. This son of Guyana embodied Mahatma Gandhi’s values of truth (*satyagraha*), non-violence (*ahimsa*), compassion and kindness (*karuna*), self-discipline (*brahmacharya*), fearlessness (*sarvatra bhayavarjana*), equality of all faiths (*sarva dharma samantva*), simplicity and humility (*saadagee aur vinamrata*), service to others (*doosaron kee seva*), and justice and equality (*nyaay aur samaanata*).

Karam had a distinguished career of 39 years at Sheridan College culminating in his service as Vice President, Finance and Administration and Chief Financial Officer (CFO). Within his portfolio, Karam was also the accountable executive for Human Resources and Payroll Administration, Student Services, Facilities Management and Campus Security. However every decision he made was against a single measure – what would be best for the students.

Karam was the lead government liaison for the Sheridan with municipal, provincial and federal governments. He secured millions of dollars for the College in grant funding, building envelopes and new program initiatives. Karam worked closely with the late Premier William Davis who was the founder of the Ontario Community College system, and for whom the Davis Campus of Sheridan College is named. He was also the lead project manager on the building of the start of the Hazel Macallion Campus in Mississauga.

On word of his passing, many of Karam’s esteemed colleagues at Sheridan College forwarded heartfelt messages. Among these messages were, “He was the moral compass for Sheridan”; “He was a solid fair-minded ally and resource to whom we could go to for support or assistance whenever needed”; and, “The

world is a better place for having had him with us during his life journey”.

Karam was a devoted family man married to his wife Leila for 60 years. As ex-pats of Guyana, they were known as stalwart supporters of the Indo-Caribbean community. Karam participated in the first Caribbean Indo-Caribbean Association in Hamilton, and was a steadfast supporter of the Indo-Caribbean Golden Age Association (ICGAA), of which his wife Leila is a co-founding member. Members of the ICGAA attended the services *en masse* to remember Karam for his kindness and humility.

He was a stickler for detail in his maintenance of the organisational bookkeeping, membership registration, and dues collection. All ICGAA members will miss his cheerful smile at the registration desk – a post he served filled with a welcoming and cheerful disposition.

As a first generation immigrant, Karam navigated the trials and tribulations of a visible minority in a new country. Upon leaving his position in accounting at Kings College Hospital in London, the family initially settled in Guelph Ontario where Karam humbly picked corn for research at the University of Guelph.

While teaching part-time at Sheridan College, Karam finally acquired an accounting position with a private corporation. When he was asked by his employer to “cook the books”, Karam resigned immediately. Despite having struggled to find a job, he was not willing to compromise his integrity. He returned to Sheridan College, where he had a highly accomplished career.

All aspects of Karam’s life involved a commitment to community. He worked at a community college and volunteered at non-profit community organisations. Karam never sought the spotlight, rather he preferred to be the ‘behind the scenes guy’ leveraging the trust, relationships, and reputation he built with so many to achieve greater gains for all involved.

At home, Karam was a loving father to his daughters Nandini and Priya, and passed on his value of service to others to his two girls. His daughter Nandini is a registered psychotherapist who holds a doctoral degree in Higher Education and Leadership. While also working at Sheridan, Nandini wrote the concept paper for what is now known as the *Centre for Healthy*



Karam Chandre Daljit

*Communities* at the Davis campus. Nandini retired as the Dean of Health Sciences at Mohawk College, and is now in private practice.

His daughter Priya is a graduate of the Sheridan Early Childhood Education Program. Priya is a successful entrepreneur qualified to offer a myriad of life event services as a Life Coach, Spiritual Healer, Retreat Leader, and Death Doula, all while maintaining a strong media personality and influencer presence. Priya is also a published author and recording artist. Her songs can be found on *iTunes*.

Nothing gave Karam more joy than his role as “Papa” to his five grandchildren. Ranging in age from 15-32, Karam’s grandchildren spoke eloquently at his service of his love, warmth, thoughtfulness, integrity, humour, kindness, and gentle nature that endeared him to them.

Memories of drop-offs and pick-ups from school, frying plantain chips, baking sponge cakes, and making pepper sauce are some of the simple things that they hold near and dear to their hearts.

Karam shared his keen interest in world events with his grandchildren, and in doing so developed a sense of global awareness and citizenry amongst them. His daughters are

second generation immigrants, and his grandchildren are third generation. Yet Karam and Leila were successful, infusing within them their Indo-Caribbean culture, faith practices, and core values of love of family and respect for others, especially elders.

Karam was as father figure for many. He loved youth of all ages and enjoyed nothing more than assisting young persons in bettering themselves. Many of the attendees at the family services, both from within the family and outside of the family, recount tales of Karam offering steadfast support, wise advise, and a strong shoulder to lean on without being asked or seeking thanks. He was a charitable individual both in means and in deed.

Every corner of Karam’s life was revered by colleagues, neighbours, friends, and family all overflowing with sadness of his loss, yet brimming with gratitude for his presence in their life.

His goodness was timeless, ageless, and limitless. While he will be deeply missed he lives on through the many who were touched by his presence, warmth, and meaningful human connection.



# Speaking from the margins, SVG elders unearth buried silences

— With the 2021 publication of Lenroy Thomas’ *Stories from our Indian Elders*, the ancestral voices of St Vincent’s Indo-Caribbean community begin rising above the silence to now echo across the generations. Through oral history, lived testimony, and authorial insight, the overlooked descendants of Indentureship in the SVG are telling their own story in their own words.

It began with articulation of a whisper, one that had been growing for over 160 years beneath the dominant rhythms of colonial record-keeping. In *Stories from our Indian Elders* (2021), author Lenroy Thomas gives full breath to that whisper, inviting readers to witness the survival of a people and listen to their voices long buried beneath the weight of imperial history.

Thomas’ book is not just an historical record; it is a reclamation, a chorus of voices that finally broke through silence to begin inscription of the Indo-Vincentian experience onto our Indo-Caribbean cultural scroll, and our inventory of memories.

Launched in 2021, the book drew wide acclaim for its careful interweaving of oral testimony, historical research, and reflective commentary. It marked the first publication of its kind in St Vincent and the Grenadines (SVG), foregrounding as it did those lived stories of descendants of East Indian Indentured labourers, a population brought across the *kala pani*, the black water, between 1861 and 1880, and then largely buried and forgotten in public narratives.

Between 1861 and 1880, British colonial authorities permitted Caribbean planters in SVG to import approximately 2,500 Indentured labourers from India to fill the labour vacuum left by the abolition of slavery.

As historian Lomash Roopnarine noted in his review of Thomas’ book in *Caribbean Studies*, Vol. 51, No. 1 in 2023, “These Indians are buried in the larger Caribbean indentured experience and marginalised in the history of SVG.”

Indeed, Thomas makes this very argument. His book emerges from that marginalisation, seeking to unearth these buried voices through interviews with eight elder Indo-Vincentians, all in the twilight of their lives.

“The Indian elders who were interviewed have told the stories of their experiences and of their ancestors as they were handed down to them,” notes Dr Adrian Fraser, former Head of the University of the West Indies Open Campus, in the publication, *Searchlight*.

Citing an African proverb as long as a lion does not wear a uniform, its history will be told by the hunter, Fraser stated, “[The elders], having done so, helped to tell their story and not

that of the colonial hunter.”

Their stories are at once local and diasporic. The elders speak of ancestors recruited in India under false pretences, of long, cramped voyages across the *kala pani*, of labour and exploitation, but also of resilience, adaptation, and belonging.

These narratives are then contextualised by Thomas, who offers commentary that compares the oral accounts with historical documentation, reflecting on divergences, silences, and shared cultural forgetting.

Thomas is also aware that his book tells only part of the narrative, declaring, “It is only the tip of the iceberg, an appetiser to their story.”

Yet the scope of his work is significant. It charts the broader socio-economic conditions that pushed migration from India, drawing the reader into the SVG world the Indentured labourers entered upon arrival: sugar plantations, shifting labour needs, and eventual absorption into Vincentian society.

As he wrote, “Sugar was a very profitable business for the British planters, but with variation in prices and hence profitability, demand for Indian workers [in SVG] fluctuated.”

Unlike Trinidad or Guyana, where Indentureship continued until 1917-1920, SVG ceased importing Indian labourers by 1880. It was a truncation that created a different trajectory for assimilation and cultural erasure.

Thomas explores this trajectory with sobering clarity and archeological fortitude.

The interviewees note how their ancestors and themselves became “Christianised and westernised” by the late 19th century. With little replenishment of cultural practices and no organised religious infrastructure, the Indo-Vincentian community diverged significantly from their Indo-Caribbean cousins elsewhere.

Fraser’s endorsement of the book provides both affirmation and challenge.

“This book is really for all Vincentians,” he declared at the 2021 launch, adding, “Since the Indian population is a significant part of the nation and has made valuable contributions to overall national development... it is a useful document for all interested in Vincentian history and nationhood.”

However, he also offers a scholarly critique. He reflects on the silences that remain: little was captured about foods, traditional dress, or musical forms, elements that he indicated could have enriched the record of pre-Creolisation of Indian culture in SVG.

“One wished it had been done before so that more of the

stories of those who arrived could have been captured,” he said, noting that among the interviewees were a 93-year-old man and others in their eighties.

Additionally, “Oral history breeds life to the subject since we are hearing from the experiences of the interviewees, or from the stories that have been handed down.”

However, Fraser declared the book to be part of a growing corrective movement.

“Our early history, as taught to us, was really the history of the colonisers who depicted us in a way that glorified themselves... This type of history has its critics, understandably so... but [Thomas] has done an extremely important job,” he said in praise of the author and his text.

Meanwhile, *Stories from our Elders’* most poignant revelations lie not just in its historical framing, but in the quiet ironies that emerge from generational memory. Many Indo-Vincentians today carry names like “Bacchus”, which is a remnant of Muslim ancestry, but practice Christianity. In contrast to Indo-Trinidadians who still dance to Bollywood songs (even with many not understanding the Hindi lyrics), Indians in SVG lost both the music and the language generations ago.

This rupture was not accidental. It was shaped by small numbers, social pressure, and absence of institutional support. As Thomas noted, there were “no serious efforts to retain customs and heritage in SVG until 2007”. The cultural inheritance was not simply diluted; instead, it was rewritten.

Yet even amid this transformation, a quiet resilience endures. The stories collected in the book reveal strategies of adaptation, entrepreneurial drive, participation in civil service, and entry into political life. One elder, Evans Morgan, entered formal politics, becoming a member of the Legislative Council less than a century after the first Indians landed.

A pivotal turning point was in 2007 as Thomas noted, with the founding of the SVG Indian Heritage Foundation. Since then, there has been renewed awareness of Indo-Caribbean identity in St Vincent, along with celebration of Indian Arrival Day, growing diasporic connections, and cultural exchange with India, the wider Caribbean, and the diaspora abroad.

Thomas has been at the forefront of that movement, both as co-founder of the foundation, and as its chronicler. His efforts have “resulted in bringing Indians from the doldrum of Indian indentured experience in SVG... instilling in them a sense of pride as citizens of SVG,” Roopnarine noted.

At the 2021 launch of the *Stories from our Elders*, Thomas stated that the explorations had only just begun, urging, “More research and interviews with additional elders need to be done as there is a lot more to be written about their history.”

He added it was his hope that others will continue where what he started “in writing from the Indian perspective the history of the people of St Vincent and the Grenadines”.



Lenroy Thomas

# Kempadoo’s Naniki honoured with Guyana Prize for Literature

— With her latest novel *Naniki*, Oonya Kempadoo has not only claimed the 2024 Guyana Prize for Best Book of Fiction, but has cast her literary voice across waters and time, evoking ancestral threads, Indigenous wisdom, and Caribbean futurism. A diasporic daughter of Guyana, she returns bearing stories flowing on water and with love.

There are some writers who return to the homeland in word before they do in body. Oonya Kempadoo is one such voyager. In *Naniki*, her latest novel and winner of the 2024 Guyana Prize for Literature’s Best Book of Fiction, Kempadoo offers more than narrative; she offers a confluence of memory, myth, and matrilineal wisdom flowing back to the Land of Many Waters like a tributary finally finding its delta.

“Winning means connection for me and full circle,” Kempadoo told *Stabroek News* last month. “It really feels good because with this book, the theme of it is we are all connected by water and love.”

And like water, her words flow with intention. *Naniki*, which means “active spirit” in the Taino language, is more than a novel. It is a layered vessel: a Caribbean-futurist story project that stretches across platforms and disciplines, while remaining anchored in the Guyana’s riverine landscapes.

“I am grateful that this story which I received in the Caribbean Sea can return to the homeland,” she said, drawing a historical arc from the region’s first peoples to her own storytelling homecoming. “Our histories and stories and futures are so inextricably connected.”

Though born in Sussex, England, Kempadoo’s spiritual and creative compass has long pointed to Guyana. She was raised in Golden Grove, East Coast Demerara, from age four until 17, and

credits the country not just as her birthplace of memory, but as the wellspring of her literary vision.

“Guyana holds special meaning to me,” she told *Stabroek News*, recalling her childhood in a large family of nine children. Her upbringing was rich with what she calls “the school of culture”, namely, the vibrancy of village life mixed with a unique, creatively liberated home-schooling experience led by her progressive educator parents.

“They had a very flexible curriculum where you [could] choose your subjects for the day; half-day school with applied learning in the garden, writing outdoors, appreciation for the arts, languages, and so on,” Kempadoo shared.

Her parents are Peter and Rosemary Kempadoo. Together, mother and father curated an environment where literature, music, storytelling, and Caribbean intellectualism were part of daily life.

“They were collectors of Caribbean literature,” she noted with gratitude. “We were all exposed to local and Caribbean artists, fine arts, literature, music, local storytelling, story collecting, story sharing.”

Yet formal schooling introduced its own lessons, she recalled, admitting, “Attending Bygeval Multilateral came as a culture shock.”

But what it lacked in pedagogical freedom, village life compensated for in raw, unstructured education.

As she stated, “I learnt through observation, listening; the school of culture, life, language that was complementing my studies at home.”

Originally drawn to visual art, Kempadoo studied in Amsterdam, but eventually returned to the Caribbean. A sojourn in Trinidad and Tobago saw her immersed within the quiet encouragement she needed to begin writing.



Oonya Kempadoo



# Monumental shift as PoS City Council removes Columbus statue

– In an historic move aimed at cultural reparation and historical clarity, the Port-of-Spain City Council has announced the removal of the Christopher Columbus statue and the renaming of Columbus Square, marking a renewed national reckoning with colonial legacy and honouring victims of genocide, slavery, and oppression.

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**Port-of-Spain** – The Port-of-Spain City Council has decided to remove the bronze statue of Christopher Columbus from the capital city and rename Columbus Square, replacing the existing colonial monument with one that honours the victims of genocide, slavery, and colonialism.

PoS Mayor Chinua Alleyne made the announcement on August 1, during the Kambule Street Procession commemorating the 187th anniversary of African emancipation. The move forms part of a broader effort by the council to recognise local heroes and ensure future generations are educated within an accurate and reparative historical context.

Alleyne explained that the statue, gifted to the Borough Council in 1880 by Hypolite Borde, a wealthy cocoa planter and merchant from Martinique, was erected after Borde paid for the refurbishment of an old cemetery, which was renamed Columbus Square and opened in 1881 by then-Governor Sir William Young.

“More than 140 years later, restoration and repair require that as we ensure that the yet-to-be-born revere our ancestors like Kwame Ture, we also ensure that they learn our colonial history in its most appropriate historical context,” Alleyne said.

He added, “For that reason, the Council of the City of Port-of-Spain has taken the decision to remove the statue of Christopher Columbus from Independence Square and to make it available to the National Museum and Art Gallery for display.”

A new art collective will be tasked with designing a monument for the site, and a committee will be appointed to rename the square in tribute to the victims of the trans-Atlantic slave trade, colonialism, and Indigenous genocide.

“Ladies and gentlemen, a name is a powerful thing,” Alleyne affirmed.

In a concurrent announcement, the council confirmed that a section of Oxford Street, from Argyle Street to Charlotte Street, will be renamed Kwame Ture Way. The renaming honours the legacy of Trinidad-born pan-African revolutionary and civil rights leader Kwame Ture, who was born Stokely Carmichael on June 29, 1941.

“He was a monumental figure in the American civil rights



**The defaced statue of Columbus in PoS**  
and Black Power movements and a titan of the global pan-African movement,” Alleyne said. He invoked the names of Martin Luther King Jr, Angela Davis, Malcolm X, and Ghanaian leader Kwame Nkrumah, aligning Ture with other global figures in the struggle for justice and liberation.

Quoting Ture, Alleyne added, “The job of the conscious is to make the unconscious conscious,” expressing hope that future generations “will grow up inspired by the work of this global pan-African hero from behind the bridge in Port-of-Spain”.

Meanwhile, Ricardo Bharath Hernandez, Chief of the First Peoples Community, welcomed the decision to relocate the Columbus statue to the National Museum, but opposed its destruction.

“Regardless of whether history is good or bad, it should be told,” he told the media.

Hernandez, who served on a national committee that held public consultations on monuments and street names, said, “We tried our best to touch all the communities and organisations that would have been impacted by this, and for the most part, people were in agreement that it should be removed.”

While he acknowledged that some called for the statue’s destruction, Hernandez maintained, “Whether the history is good or it is bad, it should be told. That is our position.”

Point Fortin Borough Corporation alderman Kobe Sandy, who also participated in the consultations, stated, “The Columbus statue has no rightful place in our capital, nor should it be celebrated as a symbol of national pride.”

He added, “Our monuments must reflect the values, struggles, and triumphs that define us.”

Public reactions varied following the announcement, with most expressing support for the removal while offering differing views on the statue’s final fate. On social media, users responded with praise and criticism.

One user wrote, “Good moves overall. Once proper context is placed in [the] museum for those who come after to read.”

Others expressed concern that housing the statue in a museum still gave it undeserved reverence.

Kristoff Alexander commented that keeping the statue on public display, even in a museum, felt like “still too much”, citing the need to confront “the damage done by the false history given to us by our oppressors”.

He added, “I like the turnaround on finally acknowledging Kwame Ture. Let’s speak of him more.”

Some users advocated for a complete removal, declaring, “It should be destroyed. The statue should commemorate First Peoples – and commission someone from the community to create it if possible,” said Natasha Gill.

Former UNC senator Jayanti Lutchmedial-Ramdial suggested the museum being “a good place for it with a proper account of what his journey meant and the effect on Indigenous peoples who were here”. She also proposed a statue of Ture to replace it.

Other comments raised concerns that the capital has more urgent issues to address, such as homelessness and cleanliness. Still, the symbolic weight of the decision found broad support.

One Instagram user wrote, “Sink him in the ocean”; another added, “Love to Kwame Ture. He deserves more recognition and respect, so this is a solid start.”

Another statue of Columbus is in Moruga, south Trinidad.

## Parliament, nation pay tribute to iconic broadcaster, cultural advocate

– Members of Parliament and national figures gathered at an extraordinary sitting of the House of Representatives to honour Hansley “Hans” Hanoomansingh, pioneering broadcaster, cultural advocate, and former MP, whose legacy shaped Trinidad and Tobago’s media, cultural consciousness, and commitment to pluralism across generations. He passed away on July 4.

...  
**Port-of-Spain** – The House of Representatives held an extraordinary sitting at the Red House on July 28 to pay tribute to the iconic Hansley “Hans” Hanoomansingh, 82, former parliamentarian, trailblazing broadcaster, and cultural icon who passed away on July 4.

The tribute acknowledged Hanoomansingh’s enduring legacy across multiple spheres of national life, including politics, media, and the advancement of multiculturalism.

Speaker of the House Jagdeo Singh described Hanoomansingh’s life as one defined by “unwavering service” and “a distinctive voice that narrated our national journey across generations”.

“His was a voice etched in the cultural, political, and intellectual fabric of this nation,” said Singh, adding that Hanoomansingh’s influence extended far beyond Parliament, “reaching deep into the soul of the nation through the arts, culture, and media”.

Singh noted that Hanoomansingh served as Member of Parliament for Caroni East from 1966 to 1971, and later founded *Heritage Radio 101.7 FM*. In 2010, he was awarded an honorary Doctor of Laws from the University of the West Indies for his contributions to national upliftment.

He also credited Hanoomansingh as a key architect behind the establishment of Diwali Nagar, now a major cultural event on the national calendar.

Leader of Government Business Barry Padarath called Hanoomansingh’s work foundational to “the multicultural tapestry of Trinidad and Tobago”.

Diego Martin Central MP Symon de Nobriga praised Hanoomansingh for bringing integrity and grace to his media presence, noting, “His work was about national integrity... a breath of fresh air at a time when some preferred noise over nuance.”

During the sitting, multiple MPs affirmed Hanoomansingh’s unifying spirit and his dedication to advancing national har-



**Hans Hanoomansingh**  
mony through dialogue and cultural celebration.

At his funeral, Hanoomansingh was remembered not only as a nation-builder, but as a beloved father, husband, brother, uncle, and mentor.

His brother, veteran broadcaster Gideon Hanoomansingh, reflected on their childhood in Las Lomas, marked by hardship and resilience following their father’s death. He recalled how Hansley assumed a fatherly role and later emerged as a “champion of Indian culture” grounded in mutual respect and shared humanity.

“He had a humanity that allowed him to embrace all people,” Gideon said.

Hanoomansingh’s sons spoke of his unwavering support and their growing admiration as they came to understand the

breadth of their father’s impact. Since his passing, the family has received an outpouring of messages from people whose lives he had touched.

Tributes flowed from across the political spectrum and the cultural landscape.

Prakash Ramadhar, Leader of the Congress of the People, said he was “personally hurt” by the passing, describing Hanoomansingh as “extraordinarily kind” and possessing “a heart that was rare”.

“He really was a one-in-a-generation kind of man,” Ramadhar added.

Trade unionist and former government minister Rudy Indarsingh recalled being interviewed by Hanoomansingh numerous times, and praised his support for cultural events, including those at Rienzi Complex in Couva.

“We shared a special bond over history, culture, and politics,” Indarsingh said, calling Hanoomansingh “a quintessential citizen of this country”.

Former finance minister Winston Dookeran expressed gratitude for having walked “this journey” alongside Hanoomansingh, and said his legacy would be treasured.

Musical icon Mungal Patasar called Hanoomansingh one of the “greatest humanitarians” he had known and lauded his pioneering work in elevating local broadcasting to new standards.

Hanoomansingh’s contribution to culture was not confined to East Indian traditions alone. He was celebrated for promoting pluralism and mutual respect among all religious and cultural groups.

Former ambassador and National Council for Indian Culture (NCIC) founding member Chandradath Singh described him as “a visionary” whose creative output contributed to the building blocks of society.

“Though a devout Christian, he promoted all religions and cultures in Trinidad and Tobago,” Singh said, adding, “He brought excellence and creativity to every endeavour.”

Hanoomansingh was awarded the Hummingbird Medal Gold in 1990 for his contribution to media and culture.

He was widely remembered for his signature “golden voice”, which became part of the national soundscape through decades of broadcasting, both in delivering news and documenting the country’s evolving history.



# US increase to tariffs triggers business concerns, govt response

– *Trinidad and Tobago faces mounting economic uncertainty as the US imposes a 15 percent tariff starting tomorrow on key exports, prompting urgent government action, widespread concern from manufacturers and economists, and calls for regional solidarity, diversification, and immediate diplomatic efforts to mitigate the escalating trade pressure.*

**Port-of-Spain** – A sudden hike in US tariffs to 15 percent on Trinidad and Tobago's exports has triggered alarm across economic, political, and business sectors, with stakeholders warning of potential blows to foreign exchange, manufacturing, and the nation's trade competitiveness.

The increased levy, which is now up from the ten percent in April, was formalised last week under US President Donald Trump's latest executive order titled *Further Modifying the Reciprocal Tariff Rates*, part of a sweeping revision affecting 69 trading partners worldwide.

The tariff will take effect on August 7. It targets exports from Trinidad and Tobago, Guyana, and Venezuela, while other Caricom nations remain subject to the earlier ten percent rate.

Following the announcement by the US government, Foreign Affairs Minister Sean Sobers confirmed Prime Minister Kamla Persad-Bissessar had ordered an urgent review, leading to the formation of an inter-ministerial committee comprising the ministries of foreign affairs, energy, trade, finance, and planning.

"We do have long-term plans that we intend to engage in, which you will see being ruled out within the very near future to address this issue," Sobers said last week.

He added, "There are a number of things that we've looked at within the last couple of days to try to figure out what are our steps moving forward... but that is basically in the short term what we intend to do."

Sobers also stressed that the government would work closely with affected stakeholders and regional trade bodies like the Council for Trade and Economic Development, urging the public not to panic.

According to the Trinidad and Tobago Energy Chamber, the US accounts for approximately 30 percent of the country's total exports. Over 95 percent of these exports to the US are energy-related commodities such as LNG, crude oil, ammonia, methanol, iron, and steel. While crude oil, LNG, and some fertilisers remain exempt, the new tariff directly affects ammonia, methanol, and potentially urea, which are core components of the Trinidad and Tobago's non-oil industrial base.

The Central Statistical Office reported that Trinidad and Tobago exported (US) \$3.1 billion worth of goods to the US in 2024.

Former Finance Ministry official Brian Manning called the tariff increase "extremely vital" to national economic stability, adding, "It would negatively affect our diversification efforts, and



Donald Trump

also the areas of industry and export, especially manufacturing."

Manning urged the Foreign Affairs Ministry to begin negotiations with the US to seek removal from the tariff list, noting, "Exports are the main way in which we generate foreign exchange outside of the energy sector."

President of the Trinidad and Tobago Manufacturers' Association, Dale Parson, said the five percent hike would cause "a terrible negative impact on all goods and services exported from Trinidad into the US", particularly in markets like Houston, Miami, New York, and North Carolina.

Parson noted that 39.4 percent of the country's exports go to the US, making this market essential for the local business ecosystem.

"This tariff adds another stumbling block to the competitiveness of Trinidad and Tobago's products," he said.

Chaguanas Chamber of Industry and Commerce head Baldath Maharaj also warned that the increase could destabilise decades of trade ties, disproportionately hurting manufacturers, agro-processors, and food and beverage producers.

"A 15 percent tariff drastically alters the competitive landscape for our exporters," Maharaj stated, adding that many exporters already operate under tight margins and face global supply chain volatility.

"For SMEs in particular, which form the backbone of our industrial base, this policy shift could result in slowed growth, reduced foreign exchange earnings, and job losses if urgent remedial action is not taken," he said.

Maharaj urged the Ministries of Trade and Foreign Affairs to act swiftly, saying, "We urge the government of Trinidad and Tobago to initiate immediate and constructive dialogue with their US counterparts... to either reverse the tariff or reduce its impact through negotiated exemptions or phased implementation."

Multiple business leaders and chambers also called for a re-evaluation of export strategies, urging a pivot toward Latin American and intra-Caricom trade.

President of the Fyzabad Chamber of Commerce Angie Jairam called for diversification of export markets and increased investment in domestic production to mitigate risks.

"We certainly have to explore our possibilities to trade fairly," she said, noting that SMEs will need to pivot to survive in a changed global trade environment.

Jairam recommended "engaging in policy dialogue" with government bodies to advocate for better trade conditions, and emphasised monitoring international trade policies closely to anticipate future shifts.

Greater San Fernando Chamber of Commerce president Kiran Singh added that while Trinidad and Tobago currently faces the lower end of the US tariff spectrum, the country's energy-heavy economy lacks sufficient diversification to remain competitive.

"Energy production has fallen over the years, contributing to the current [foreign exchange] crisis," Singh said, arguing that government support is critical to buffer the impact.

"We suggest that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the diplomatic connections be employed to look at the possibilities of reducing the recently proposed tariff structure... or have it zero-rated for this country," he said.

Political analyst Dr Winford James described the move as a form of "economic bullying", accusing the US of leveraging its power to pressure smaller nations.

"You bully small countries, weak countries, both economically and militarily," James said, adding the question, "Is there a way for countries like Trinidad and Tobago to bargain, to negotiate?"

He also questioned whether there is a limit to the US tariff escalation.

"There comes a point in time when we simply cannot go on that way," he warned.

James also posed a critical question echoed by others, namely, "Should Trinidad and Tobago now be looking more seriously toward South America and Latin America as alternative markets?"

# Govt commits to reparatory justice, building relationships with India, Ghana

– *Prime Minister Kamla Persad-Bissessar has pledged to move reparations from aspiration to action during her second term, vowing to revitalise Trinidad and Tobago's Reparations Committee, support Caricom's advocacy at the global level, and pursue strategic partnerships with Africa and India to address historic injustices and shape a sustainable economic future.*

**Port-of-Spain** – Prime Minister Kamla Persad-Bissessar has committed to revitalising Trinidad and Tobago's National Reparations Committee and moving reparatory justice from "aspiration to achievement", using her second term to pursue economic redress, curriculum reform, cultural revitalisation, and deeper partnerships with Africa and India.

The announcement was made on August 1 during her feature address at the Lidj Yasu Omowale Emancipation Village at Queen's Park Savannah, in commemoration of African Emancipation Day.

Persad-Bissessar outlined her administration's intention to re-empower the country's National Reparations Committee, and to align with Caricom's reparatory justice thrust at the upcoming Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in October.

"In this, my second term as your Prime Minister, my government will do the following. We will re-empower the National Reparations Committee. We will support Caricom's charge at the Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting this October, pursuing debt relief, developmental financing and binding institutional reforms," she said.

"This is a lawful debt, forged in centuries of unpaid labour and stolen futures. I commit my voice, I commit my office, I commit every ounce of political capital to move reparations from aspirations to achievement, so our next generation inherits not just a memory of freedom, but the means to flourish in its fullness," she stated.

Her remarks came in the light of Jamaica signalling its readiness to request a legal opinion from the UK-based Judicial

Committee of the Privy Council on whether enslavement was a crime against humanity under English law, and whether reparations are due.

Persad-Bissessar pledged to collaborate with the Emancipation Support Committee to implement a four-point cultural action plan focused on grants for drumming schools and mas camps; investment in heritage archives; support for digital storytelling labs; and integration of Afro-Trinbagonian history and African civilisation into national curricula.

She said the Ministry of Education would lead the effort to restore curriculum content related to African resistance and cultural achievements, noting that reparatory justice must address both historical and contemporary inequities.

The government also unveiled plans to collaborate with Ghana on several strategic initiatives, including revitalising the cocoa industry and finalising the Ghana-Trinidad and Tobago Air Services Agreement.

"We will launch a West African Caribbean Special Economic Zone and dual-list our top small and medium enterprises on both the Trinidad and Tobago and the Lagos Stock Exchanges," Persad-Bissessar said, adding, "We will look at youth and food security to kick-start phase one."

Plans include expanded access to microcredit, crop insurance, and export licenses for young farmers.

Incoming President of the African Export-Import Bank (Afreximbank), Dr George Elombi, confirmed that Trinidad and Tobago stands to benefit from a US\$3 billion investment package, conditional on Caricom membership in the bank. Targeted sectors include tourism, healthcare, renewable energy,



Kamla Persad-Bissessar

shipping, manufacturing, agriculture, and creative industries.

Minister of Trade, Industry and Tourism Satyakama Maharaj stated the government would sign the necessary agreements to unlock the investment.

"We have instant financing for a lot of major projects..." Maharaj said, identifying the reopening of the country's steel mill as a possible first beneficiary.

Persad-Bissessar also reported successful outcomes from bilateral talks with Ghana and India. In early July, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi paid an official visit to Trinidad and Tobago, resulting in the signing of several memoranda of agreement.

Most recently, Persad-Bissessar held discussions with Ghana's Minister in Charge of Special Initiatives, Emmanuel Kwadwo Agyekum. The talks focused on enhancing cooperation across sectors and delivering tangible outcomes for both nations.

Among the areas discussed were bilateral air transport via Caribbean Airlines (formalised on March 8, 2020); export of Trinidad and Tobago's asphalt products to Ghana as a regional hub; labour exchange involving health professionals and agricultural officers; and education scholarships and student exchange programmes.

Persad-Bissessar described the Ghanaian partnership as central to her government's push for economic sustainability and cultural alignment.

"Trinidad and Tobago will reap rewards from these partnerships," she said, adding, "We are committed to expanding our presence across the African continent."



# How Bollywood, climate change root in diasporic ecosystems

– Bollywood's Golden Age films like *Mother India* and *Guide* captured a reverence for land and water that mirrored the lived practices of our Indo-Caribbean ancestors back in the homelands. Today, as climate change impacts India, the Caribbean, and our lives here in Canada, these cinematic and cultural memories resonate as urgent blueprints for resilience and recovery.

...

By Romeo Kaseram

An LJI Series for the Caribbean Diaspora

In the opening scene of *Mother India* (1957), a frail and aged woman is sitting in a ploughed field clutching a clump of earth; tractors power through behind her, the camera then panning to an electricity pylon tower; a jeep speeding along on a roadway is oblivious to the sorrowing, wrinkled woman sitting in the field. We then see a power station, and bulldozers reshaping the land, indicators of technology, mechanisation, and modernisation overtaking the woman's reverential uplifting of the clump of earth.

Yet the old woman remains grounded, even as she is foregrounded breathing-in the earth's scent, then reverentially taking it up to her forehead, the soundtrack accompaniment to this poignant scene a *bhajan* praising *Dharti Ma*, Mother Earth.

This opening of *Mother India* is also an invocation lifting Radha away from being just a protagonist; despite her great age in this opening sequence, she retains the presence of her younger self throughout the movie as the soil incarnate, both as guardian and burden-bearer of the land's dignity.

As Rachel Dwyer observes in *Open Magazine*, Radha's journey "identifies her with the earth throughout the film", from reaping harvests to singing of struggle, from rallying villagers in flood-ravaged mud, to heaving the plough, herself a beast of burden, when there are no oxen.

Radha's reverence for the land in this opening scene is not only symbolic; it acquires additional textures in its becoming – cinematic, ritualistic, and survivalist. And importantly, for our narrative, it is about memory.

...

In another hemisphere, in a village among the symmetry of rice fields in Guyana, or at the edge of creeping cane fields in Trinidad, an Indo-Caribbean woman, barefoot, brow glistening, her back an arc of concentration, is dropping *ochro* seeds with a silent prayer for germination into the tilled ground that is a humble kitchen garden.

What *Mother India* captured as myth, this industrious Indo-Caribbean woman lived as practice. Across cinema and soil, across oceans and generations, Radha's and this woman's agrarian reverence passed from hand to hand. And today, as climate change shakes both India and the Caribbean to their roots, that reverence, once a way of life, feels as fragile as the steps we are taking on earth that continues to loosen underfoot.

Before climate change policy and carbon budgets entered our global lexicon, Bollywood had already composed its own ecology, one grounded not in United Nations' COP declarations, but in longing. From the late 1940s through the 1970s, the Golden Age of Indian cinema projected more than melodrama or escapist fantasy. It caught, in flickering light and lingering close-ups, the pulse of us as a land-bound people: our rains, rituals, our buried grief.

These films etched in its celluloid reels, intentionally or otherwise, became palimpsests, a layering of emerging narratives over memory that remains visible beneath, fixing our ancestral relationships with land and water into the language of cinema.

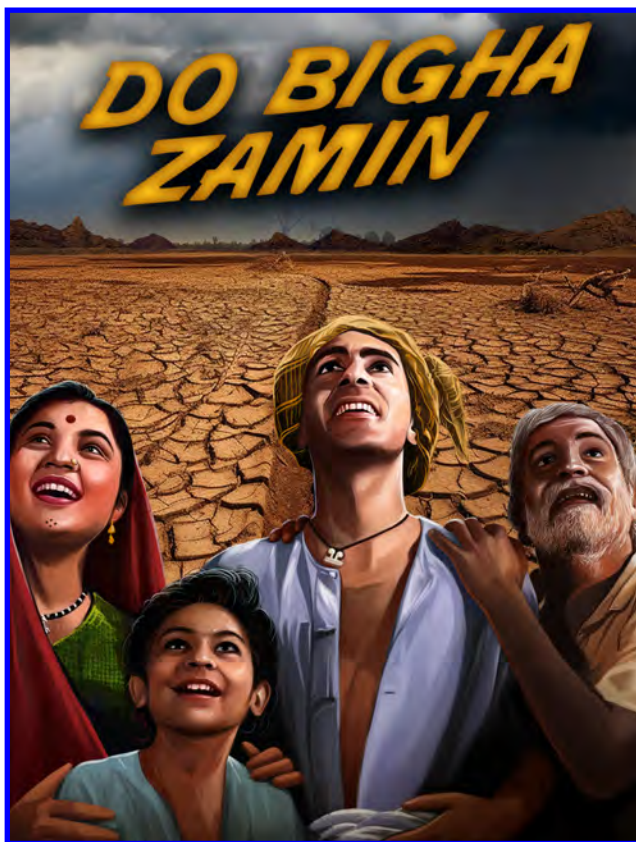
*Mother India* did not invent the sacrament of the soil in the Radha's opening benediction; instead, it inherited it. Protagonist Radha is no passive figure of mourning. After the monsoon destroys her crops and drowns the land she and her family depend on, she does not surrender; instead, she rises with renewed resolve. Her resilience becomes a form of reverence: not by romanticising suffering, but by transforming loss into constructive labour.

Radha goes on to rebuild; she replants in the mud, evolving into a moral axis around which the fractured village begins to cohere. Her relationship to the land is not only sacred. It is active, reciprocal, and regenerative, forged through endurance and recognition of opportunity in disaster, sediment, and mud.

In her figure, the film crafts not merely a mother, but a cultivator of both soil and spirit, a symbol of perseverance who teaches that reverence for land also means fighting for its restoration.

Then we have the movie *Guide* (1965), where the drought is not merely meteorological, but moral as well. Redemption arrives not just with rainfall, but with a return to ecological humility. And in *Do Bigha Zamin* (1953), land evolved to become more than property. It becomes linked to memory, inheritance, and identity.

These Golden Age films did not so much represent agrarian values as preserve them, aestheticising ancestral wisdom into its frames, gestures, and resonating motifs.



...

While Bollywood was fixing these motifs into its golden frames, across the *kala pani*, the black waters that our Indentured ancestors crossed, those same values were already being lived, re-articulated, sustained, and passed down to us as legacy.

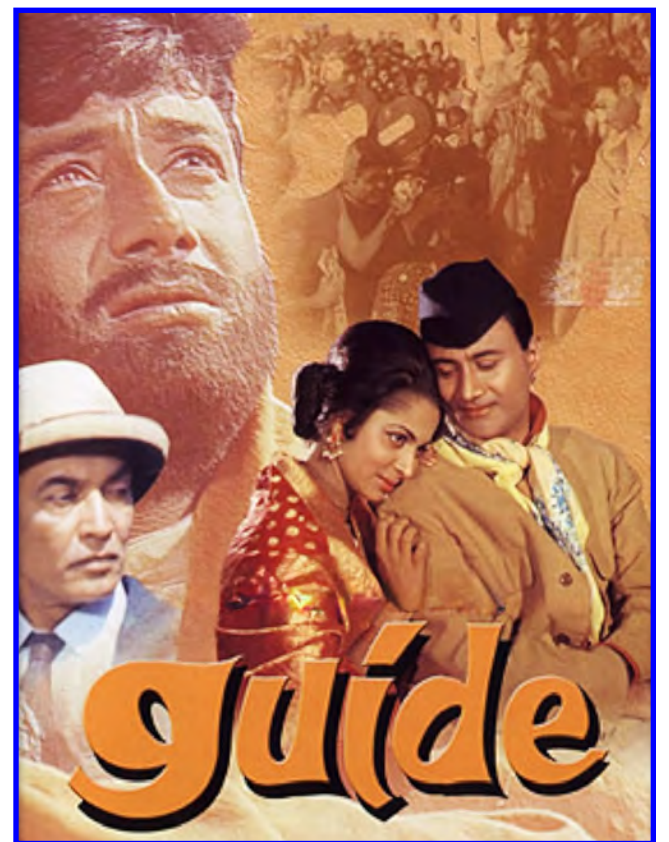
Between 1838 and 1917, over half a million of our ancestors traveled from India, many from the Bhojpuri-speaking agrarian heartlands of eastern Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, to colonies like Trinidad, Guyana, Suriname, and other locations in our Caribbean region. What they brought across the water was more than the alienation of their hands for labour – they also arrived with legacy.

As indentureship gave way to freeholding, our ancestors transformed fragments of memory into gardens, paddies, and ritual offerings. Festivals like *Phagwah* and *Diwali* were recalibrated to the new growing seasons under Caribbean skies.

Kitchen gardens bloomed behind barrack houses in Trinidad and logies in Guyana. Rows of home-grown vegetables supplanted trips to grocery store aisles. And through it all, reverence was iterated anew in the sowing of *ochro* and *carrillie* seeds, in the *pujas* blessing the soil, in the careful application of cow manure to the roots of plants, not only as cultural habit, but as daily labour rooted in ancestral knowledge and praxis.

Later, when Bollywood films like *Mother India*, *Guide*, and *Do Bigha Zamin* made their way to temporary cinemas and open-air screenings in Annandale, in San Fernando, and in Paramaribo, the images thrown onto unsteady white screens were not unfamiliar and alien scenes from a distant land.

Rather, these images reaffirmed what was already being lived across the *kala pani*. The cinematic metaphors embedded in the celluloid of soaked fields, hard-working and enduring women, prayerful farmers, aligned with the realities of diasporic children and grandchildren who were making new lives across the black water.



In this way, cinema and cultivation became twin inscriptions: one on screen, the other in soil, with each confirming the other. It was such that the palimpsest was not just artistic; it was transoceanic.

The fields of *Mother India* may have flickered through a noisy projector in a Port-of-Spain or a New Amsterdam movie house, but for many of us in the audience, what we were viewing did not feel like fiction. For our Indo-Caribbean viewers descended from the *Jahajins* and *Jahajis* who had crossed the *kala pani*, whose parents still rose at dawn to light firewood under iron pots and then to tend small garden beds, these visuals were not dramatic abstractions. They were recognitions as much as they were affirmations.

These films, consciously or not, reiterated the values our communities had brought from India: reverence for land, ritualised labour, ethical frugality, and deep, spiritual relationships with water, season, and soil.

Thus in *Guide*, Raju's slow transformation into a fasting holy man during a crippling drought is as much ecological atonement as moral redemption. The parched earth mirrors the ruptured self; the return of rain signals reconciliation with nature's rhythms. In our Caribbean, where dry seasons burnt the edges of the broad cane leaves, cracked the lengthy sugar-filled stalks, and impacted on yields, and where entire planting cycles depended on the timely arrival of the rainy season, Raju's tribulation and atonement were lived experiences.

As we noted in our previous narrative, *Do Bigha Zamin's* tale of landlessness resonated with our Indentured ancestors long haunted by instability, colonial oppression, and the fight to own freehold plots. Even as Radha, forging forward after devastation, mirrored the village woman planting *bigan* and pumpkin in Trinidad, and the matriarch navigating through thick mud while harvesting rice in Essequibo.

It is an alignment that was not invented; in fact, it was

Turn to next page



# Bollywood’s ecology, our diasporic rootedness, and climate change

From previous page remembered.

While Bollywood films recorded a stylised reverence for land, scholars of our Indo-Caribbean experience have long confirmed that this reverence was not symbolic. It was embodied, enacted daily by our ancestors who cultivated, protected, and revered their small plots with the devotion seen on screen.

The University of the West Indies’ historian and professor emerita Bridget Brereton, writing on the post-Indentureship era in Trinidad, has observed that our ancestors did not simply work the land, but sought to own it.

She writes in the *New West Indian Guide*, 2007, that, “Their ‘innate’ love of the land, their culturally determined propensity for landownership and agriculture, created a sturdy independent small farming class”.

This farming class emerged not from colonial benevolence but from cultural insistence: a determination to re-anchor identity through soil after the rupture of migration and Indentureship.

Brereton’s insight is echoed and extended in a 2016 interview with University of the West Indies’ historian Patricia Mohammed, conducted by Lommarsh Roopnarine, and published in *Journal of International Women’s Studies*, 2016.

In this text, Mohammed emphasises the central, often under-acknowledged role of Indo-Caribbean women in preserving and advancing this agrarian continuity.

As she stated, “The estate offered a safety net for men, but women were the ones who saved extensively... Sometimes without the knowledge or approval of their husbands, they purchased land and houses outside of the estates from savings... They had to earn extra wages through selling market garden products, milk and milk products.”

This quiet but radical agency was recorded not only in oral tradition, but in the visual archive, Mohammed stated.

“This occupational shift is recorded in numerous postcards from circa 1920s that show women as market or milk sellers”, evidenced in images of ecological entrepreneurship woven into everyday life.

Roopnarine added another layer to Mohammed’s response, noting: “They worked in the wet rice fields in British Guiana, even in the advanced stage of pregnancy, and were also seen with baskets steadied on their heads and cans slung around their shoulders selling vegetables and milk from door to door in Port-of-Spain, Georgetown, Paramaribo, and Kingston.”

These accounts are not merely records of labour, but are testimonies of resilience. The Indo-Caribbean woman emerges as a cultivator, economist, and ecological steward, an echo of Radha in *Mother India*, not fictional but fully real and evidenced, itinerant and entrepreneurial, inhabitants at sites of initiative and commerce.

These scholarly voices confirm what our Bollywood films intuited: that land, for many in the Indo-Caribbean world, was not just terrain; that it was inheritance, ritual, and identity.

The reverence seen in cinema was not an abstraction imported to the diaspora. It was already there, in regimented and manured rows of *ochro* plants, in buckets warm with early morning milking, in fingers stained with turmeric before *Bhoomi puja* paying homage to Mother Earth.

Here in our GTA, backyard gardeners such as our community’s philanthropist, Jay Brijpaul, continue the cycle of reverence for the land and cultivation. Through his gardening videos and photographs posted to *Facebook*, Brijpaul speaks of carbon reduction, stress relief, and ancestral planting strategies.

His garden, described by admiring followers as “prolific” and “excellent”, is a diasporic iteration of inherited reverence and memory, which he practices with his own enabling hands. Here in the GTA, Brijpaul’s backyard is a testament to this continuity.

“Animals do not like the onions and garlic,” he says in one video, explaining his natural pest control. In another, “Gardening helps the environment.”

Here is more than advice; instead, we note the lived philosophy of a man whose ancestors were organically rooted in Guyana. Brijpaul’s hands, encrusted with earth, patient and precise, form yet another narrative layer in our palimpsest. His garden is more than functional and aesthetic; it is ancestral, diasporic, and deeply-rooted in our collective past.

In India, the monsoon is no longer reliable; it arrives too early, too late, or all at once, drowning crops in minutes or starving them for weeks. Already this year, temperatures in North India climbed above 48 degrees Celsius during an historic heatwave, killing hundreds. Flash floods now surge through Himalayan villages once defined by terraced calm. Glacial melt accelerates and droughts linger longer.

According to the World Bank, India needs an estimated \$2.4 trillion by 2050 to climate-proof its cities and safeguard



In photos, Jay Brijpaul with bountiful harvests from this thriving garden

the infrastructure already under strain from extreme weather patterns.

In our Caribbean, the waters are rising. A 2024 *Nature* study found that sea levels in the region have been rising at 6.15 mm per year since 2004, outpacing the global average by 67 percent. Coastal communities in Guyana, Suriname, and southern Trinidad face chronic flooding, saltwater intrusion, and the collapse of local agriculture.

What we are losing is not only acreages; also with this loss is our ancestral practice. The rituals of the land that Bollywood captured is now becoming fading flickers of light.

What we are losing is real. In Radha lifting up a clump of earth to breathe-in its life giving sustenance, and up to her forehead with reverence in the opening sequence of *Mother India*, it is as if the soil is speaking; but too few of us are listening.

Yet what cinema has preserved, our diaspora continues to iterate. These are more than our memories etched on a palimpsest; they are now blueprints. The question is no longer whether we recall the reverence with which Radha holds that clump of earth, as if tuned-in to its lamentation, the *Dharti Ma* now a funeral dirge, as the celluloid begins its unreeling, revealing the inexorable march of machines in *Mother India*. It is whether we will enable that reverence once again, reclaiming it before the land becomes so broken that it cannot forgive and forget.

If Bollywood’s Golden Age offered a cinematic benediction to the land, it was only echoing what countless hands already knew: that the soil remembers. That reverence is not an idea, but an act.

That when our ancestors, and contemporary gardeners like Brijpaul, kneel down to put a plant into the ground, this too is

an act of reverence; that when we bless a plot before the first rain, bending our bodies in prayerful arcs for sowing seeds, we are not only re-enacting ancestral history, but ensuring its continued fruitfulness.

Across celluloid and sugarcane, across flooded fields and *Facebook* garden posts, a through-line endures. The woman in *Mother India*, soaked to the bone yet unbroken, stands beside a grandmother harvesting *bhaji* in the rain in her kitchen garden in central Trinidad, and beside an avid gardener hailing from Triumph in Guyana, her skilled hands harvesting *carrailie* from vines proliferating in a Thornhill backyard.

Together, they lift the palimpsest into the realm of a blueprint, further layering our stories of resilience, while etching architectural inscriptions for future reproduction in mud and memory, in cinema and seed.

Today, as our earth warms, floods rise, and the future teeters, we are called not just to remember, but to return via the inscriptions in this blueprint to our organic past. To reach for the rituals that nourished both crop and conscience; to rediscover that sacred relationship between care and cultivation; and to begin writing with renewal a better, climate-friendly future.

To recognise that the same hands that built rice field embankments “one dutty” at a time in Guyana, that layered compost in Brampton backyards, and filmed fields in India during the magical Golden Age still exist, sometimes cracked, at times calloused, and like Brijpaul’s earth-healing, plant-nurturing fingers, impatient for the final frost to take its leave.

It means our narrative is not over. The land will be here, the rain will come, and if we intervene with healing, it will thrive; and somewhere, a woman’s back will always be arched in reverence and prayer, putting down *ochro* seeds into the welcoming earth.



# Holder wins a battle, but WI lose Pakistan war

– Jason Holder’s last-ball heroics and four-wicket blitz secured a dramatic West Indies win in Game 2, but Pakistan held their nerve in the decider to clinch a tense 2-1 T20I series victory in Florida.

Jason Holder’s all-round brilliance in Game 2 of the three-match series against Pakistan momentarily lifted the West Indies out of their T20 spiral, but familiar inconsistencies returned in the decider as Pakistan edged to a 13-run win at the Broward County Stadium in Lauderhill, Florida, sealing a 2-1 series victory on August 3.

The victory marked Pakistan’s seventh straight bilateral T20I series win over the West Indies, and left Captain Shai Hope once again searching for the centre of the bat.

In the final match, the visitors posted 189-6 after a disciplined 138-run opening stand between Saim Ayub (67) and Sahibzada Farhan (65), before late fireworks lifted them above par.

In response, West Indies started brightly, racing to 33 in two overs, but were pegged back by a clutch death bowling spell led by Haris Rauf and Sufiyan Muqeem. The home side finished on 176-7, falling short despite early promise and a bold chase that unraveled in the final overs.

The three-match series opened with a grim reminder of West Indies’ ongoing T20 woes. Pakistan took the opener by 14 runs, defending 178-6 with spin and control. The West Indies reply stalled at 164-7, despite contributions of 35 from both Johnson Charles, and 18-year-old debutant Jewel Andrew. Mohammad Nawaz (3-23) and Ayub (2-20) choked the middle overs, while Shamar Joseph’s 3-30 stood out with the ball for the hosts.

In the second game, West Indies broke a six-match losing streak with a sensational last-ball win orchestrated by Holder, who finished with figures of 4-19 and an unbeaten 16. Chasing 134, the hosts slipped to 98-7 before a 29-run burst between Holder and Romario Shepherd revived hopes. With three needed off the final ball, Holder clipped Afridi past fine leg to complete the dramatic finish.

But the momentum failed to carry through. In the decider, Ayub and Farhan’s partnership laid a solid foundation, but also saw pockets of dot-ball pressure. Their dismissals triggered a late acceleration with five sixes in the final four overs, pushing Pakistan to a total just beyond reach.

West Indies, despite a blistering start, lost steam in the latter stages. Holder was bowled by a Muqeem flipper for a two-ball duck, as Rauf and Muqeem sealed the game with tight lines.

Ayub was a constant thorn for West Indies, notching two half-centuries and chipping in with key wickets and tight spin. He was instrumental both at the top of the order, and in applying pressure with the ball. Nawaz proved equally vital, picking up 3-23 and 3-14 in the first two games to cripple the West Indies’ middle order.

## Gloves off as Dujon calls for CWI structural shift

Former West Indies wicketkeeper/batter Jeffrey Dujon has joined growing calls for Daren Sammy’s removal as head coach, warning that the concentration of power in one individual’s hands is damaging the regional game.

Speaking on the Mason and Guest cricket programme last week, Dujon said Sammy “has not proven to have the capability to be in control of all three forms of the game” and criticised Cricket West Indies (CWI) for making him the sole selector.

“Remember, this is about taking us forward, making us better. I don’t think that whole process makes sense in the first place,” said Dujon, who represented the West Indies during their dominant 1980s and early 1990s era.

Echoing comments made two weeks earlier by former selector Lockhart Sebastien, Dujon accused CWI of nepotism. Referring to the recent 3-0 Test series defeat to Australia, he stated, “The latest exhibition of nepotism has now put us in a position where... this is worse than embarrassing.”

Dujon questioned the decision to remove Jamaican Test coach Andre Coley in favour of Sammy’s all-format appointment, saying it lacked transparency and objectivity.

“I don’t want to seem nationalistic because I’m not, but I can’t understand why Andre Coley was replaced and all of a sudden, we have a coach for all disciplines and... sole selector,” he stated.

He also challenged CWI’s assertion that public criticism of Sammy was due to him being from the “small island” of St Lucia — a claim made by CWI president Dr Kishore Shallow — dismissing it as “deflection.”

Dujon’s criticism comes amid a period of heavy losses for

For West Indies, Shamar Joseph showcased his T20 promise with five wickets across the series, including a fiery spell in the opener. Andrew, on debut, impressed with flair and poise, scoring 35 and showing early signs of belonging on the international stage.

But it was Holder who stole the spotlight with his all-round effort in Game 2. His four wickets set up the game before his composed finishing touch brought rare joy to a struggling side.

Pakistan’s consistency in executing plans across the three matches was a defining difference. Their use of spinners Nawaz and Ayub, particularly on the slow Florida surfaces, kept West Indies from accelerating in the middle overs.

In contrast, West Indies suffered from dot-ball accumulation, with Hope lamenting nearly 60 dot balls in the first game alone.

“If we had converted 20 of those dots into singles, it could have been a different game,” Hope said, adding, “We have to be smarter in building innings and minimising risky shots.”

The standout tactical moment came in Game 3 when West Indies opted to retire out Roston Chase to send in Holder. But Muqeem’s immediate impact saw an astonished Holder castled with a flipper, taking out any hope for a Game 2 repeat miracle.

The result extended Pakistan’s dominance over West Indies in the T20 format, sealing a seventh consecutive series win. For the hosts, the series came on the heels of a 5-0 T20I whitewash and Test series sweep by Australia, compounding a difficult stretch for the rebuilding, struggling side.

Coach Daren Sammy, who had earlier urged his players to “change their mindset” and “execute better under pressure”, has been leading the development phase with Ravi Rampaul overseeing the bowling unit. With several key players injured, including Shimron Hetmyer, Brandon King, Rovman Powell, and Evin Lewis, the West Indies fielded a youthful and make-shift side to make a stand in the Florida sun.

“Ravi’s been doing an excellent job trying to instil this type of confidence and skill into the bowlers,” Sammy noted, adding, “but it’s first the mindset that will determine the skill set.”

Hope, speaking after the opening defeat, pointed to all-round inconsistency that continues to dog the West Indies.

“We need to bowl well, field well, and bat well – something we haven’t been doing consistently as a team,” he said. However, following the win in Game 2, he struck a more hopeful chord, saying, “Been a tough couple of weeks for us. We always try to get better. The guys have put in a lot of hard work. Hopefully today is the turnaround we are looking for.”

The turnaround did not come. In the wake of the series loss to Pakistan, Sammy’s statement ahead of the series had indicated a clear need for a mental reset. He is now likely assessing the latest loss in the light of his statement, “You don’t want to turn up in this new series with any baggage... We’ve got to believe that we are good enough to execute our plans.”

The slump prompted CWI to announce an emergency meeting of its cricket committee, with invitations extended to Sir Clive Lloyd, Sir Vivian Richards, and Brian Lara.

However, Dujon labelled the move “deflection” and a “smoke trick,” insisting it would not address the deeper, structural issues undermining West Indies cricket.

“This has been coming for some time, and every time we seem to be making a little bit of progress, something like this happens,” he said.

For Dujon, the solution lies in overhauling grassroots coaching to improve game awareness and fundamentals. He noted that some West Indies Test batters against Australia “didn’t understand what the opposition was trying to do”, pointing to a lack of tactical education.

“Our cricket is not going to get better until we get better fundamental coaching for our youngsters, where they learn the game, not just be coached, but be taught how the game is played because we are being outplayed by everybody because they think more than we do.”

He urged CWI to invest in local coaching talent, or look overseas if necessary, adopting international best practices to develop players. He stressed that change will require significant financial and structural commitment.

“It’s going to take money, it’s going to take an investment, it’s not going to take more competitions... It’s going to take a serious fundamental investment.”

If implemented now, Dujon believes such reforms could bear fruit within five to six years, producing “a really good youth team and some really potentially good players.”



Jason Holder



Mohammed Siraj

## Siraj swings India win

– Mohammed Siraj produced a sensational final-morning spell under overcast skies at The Oval to lead India to a dramatic six-run victory, leveling the Anderson-Tendulkar Trophy 2-2 and capping a remarkable comeback from 1-2 down...

Mohammed Siraj’s five-wicket haul under pressure etched a famous win for India at The Oval earlier this week, the visitors pulling off a come-from-behind six-run victory over England to square the Anderson-Tendulkar Trophy 2-2.

Needing just 35 runs with four wickets in hand on the final morning, England looked favourites. But Siraj’s masterful control with the old cherry and Prasidh Krishna’s incisive support flipped the script to make for a spellbinding finale.

With a drizzle in the air and the ball swinging prodigiously, Siraj picked up three of the last four wickets in a spell of relentless precision, finishing with figures of 5 for 78. The final blow came when he castled Gus Atkinson with a trademark yorker, sealing a famous win in front of a near-capacity crowd, and underlining India’s refusal to fold, even when the odds were stacked.

England resumed Day 5 on 339 for 6, chasing 374. With Chris Woakes nursing a dislocated right shoulder and only four wickets remaining, their path to victory appeared precarious. Still, Jamie Overton and Jamie Smith offered early resistance. Overton opened with back-to-back boundaries off Krishna, but the real drama unfolded at the other end.

Siraj beat Smith twice before inducing a thick edge to the keeper without the batter adding to his overnight score. Overton’s innings then met its end when Siraj’s nip-backer struck him in front of middle and leg. The review upheld the decision on umpire’s call, reducing England to 350 for 8.

Josh Tongue’s LBW decision was reversed via DRS, but Krishna soon removed him with a searing yorker that left England needing 17 runs with only an injured Woakes left to join Atkinson. Despite valiant efforts, including a six by Atkinson parried over the rope, Siraj’s persistence prevailed. His final delivery of the match cleaned up Atkinson for 17, securing one of India’s most memorable overseas Test wins.

Siraj was the undisputed hero of the morning, adding three crucial wickets on Day 5 to complete his five-wicket haul. His performance was the lynchpin of India’s resurgence.

Krishna played a vital supporting role. His dismissals of Tongue and earlier pressure spells contributed heavily to the final outcome.

India’s victory was set up by their resilience on Day 4 after Joe Root and Harry Brook each scored centuries and shared a 195-run stand that took England within 73 runs of their target with seven wickets in hand.

Shubman Gill, who captained India in the absence of regular leaders, was named Player of the Series, and credited India’s “never-say-die” spirit for the turnaround. With contributions across the series, including tactical leadership and a composed batting presence, Gill underscored his growth as a leader.

India’s defining decision came late on Day 4 when a spell of rain extended play into the fifth day. Choosing not to take the second new ball on the final morning, Gill backed Siraj and Krishna with the 84-over-old ball, and the bet paid off.

Siraj’s mastery in getting the old ball to swing by up to two degrees in damp conditions broke England’s momentum. Atkinson and Woakes, despite tactical efforts to shield the latter, could not resist the relentless pressure.

Gill noted that once Brook fell late on Day 4 and India dismissed Jacob Bethell soon after, the team sensed an opening. “It’s a one-ball game,” he told reporters, explaining India’s strategy to delay the game and heighten pressure on the batting side.





Harmanpreet Kaur

Kaur shines as India edge England to win series

– Harmanpreet Kaur’s defiant century and Kranti Goud’s six-wicket haul powered India to a 13-run win at Chester-le-Street, sealing a 2-1 ODI series triumph despite a spirited England fightback led by Sciver-Brunt and Lamb.

India wrapped up their tour of England with a tense 13-run victory in the third and final One Day International last month, claiming the series 2-1 and delivering a composed, if nervy, finish in the English sunshine.

Captain Harmanpreet Kaur was the backbone of India’s innings, striking her seventh ODI hundred under pressure and lifting her side to 318 after finally winning the toss. Seamer Kranti Goud then held her nerve with a decisive six-wicket haul as England fell just short of completing what would have been a record chase.

England, who slipped to eight for two in pursuit, showed tenacity in recovery, with Nat Sciver-Brunt and Emma Lamb adding 162 runs for the third wicket to keep the hosts in the hunt before India’s death bowling and sharp fielding stifled their late surge.

After losing the toss for the seventh time this tour, Kaur made her opportunity count with a composed and timely century. Despite struggling for form throughout the series, her ton underlined her reputation for rising in moments of crisis. With the innings poised delicately and Smriti Mandhana already back in the pavilion, bowled for 17 by a probing spell from Sophie Ecclestone, Kaur anchored the innings with calm authority.

India were 198 for five in the 40th over when Kaur accelerated the scoring with support from the lower order. A late onslaught yielded 120 runs from the final ten overs, shifting momentum firmly in India’s favour.

England’s chase stuttered early, losing Tammy Beaumont and Maia Bouchier cheaply. But Sciver-Brunt (98) and Lamb (68) rebuilt admirably. Their third-wicket stand gave England hope, but both fell in quick succession, with Lamb bowled by Shree Charani, and Sciver-Brunt caught off a gloved edge by a diving Richa Ghosh just two runs short of a century.

Despite brisk cameos from Sophia Dunkley, Charlie Dean, and Alice Davidson-Richards, India’s fielding discipline and Goud’s incisive bowling proved too strong in the closing stages. England needed 55 from the final five overs, but Jemimah Rodrigues clung on to two key catches at long-on, and Goud mopped up the tail to finish with career-best figures of six for 52.

Harmanpreet’s hundred, her first fifty-plus score in seven innings on the tour, was the cornerstone of India’s batting. Calm under pressure, she drove her team to a formidable total after a slow start against tight bowling. Her ability to find gaps and escalate in the final overs reflected her experience and match awareness.

Goud’s six-wicket performance was a difference-maker. The seamer’s ability to mix pace and accuracy in the death overs choked England’s lower middle order and derailed their chase just as it appeared to gather steam.

Ecclestone’s miserly spell stood out amidst the heavy scoring. Finishing with 1-28 from her ten overs, including a remarkable seven-over opening burst yielding just 14 runs, she strangled India’s early momentum. Mandhana’s dismissal, pulling to Dunkley at midwicket, was a testament to Ecclestone’s control and deception.

Sciver-Brunt once again led England’s charge with the bat and in the field, nearly steering her side to a record chase. Her 98-run knock, composed and stylish, was the platform for England’s fightback, and underlined her stature as a vital cog in the lineup.

India’s tactical patience in weathering Ecclestone’s stranglehold early before attacking at the death, paid off handsomely. Their ability to capitalise once England’s premier spinner was bowled out by the 34th over allowed them to double their score in the final phase of the innings.

England’s own strategic lapse came in the form of two missed DRS opportunities, both of which could have removed Kaur and Harleen Deol earlier in the innings. England coach Charlotte Edwards acknowledged the uncertainty over the review system’s chain-of-command, noting that captaincy responsibilities may have been blurred.

“It exposed some uncertainty about England’s DRS chain-of-command,” the post-match analysis observed, with Sciver-Brunt seemingly deferring to wicketkeeper Amy Jones both times.

Ecclestone’s resilience took on deeper significance. In a recent emotional interview, she revealed that she had contemplated retirement earlier this summer after backlash from her refusal to give an interview during the Women’s Ashes.

“During that West Indies series [in May] I wasn’t actually sure if I was going to come back and play cricket,” she admitted, holding back tears. “I cried to a few people. I cried to my dad. It was a tough time.”

Her return to form and presence in this series earned praise from coach Edwards: “She’s had an exceptional series. She’s been amazing around the group and she’s in a good place for us moving forwards.”

Reflecting on the match, England coach Edwards said: “We’ve been so composed and smart – the way we navigated that run chase... from 20 for two was outstanding. Nat played a big part in that, but it was lovely to see other players contributing and we so nearly chased that down.”

On Ecclestone’s return, Edwards added: “She’s had an exceptional series.”

Meanwhile, Sciver-Brunt was central to both tactical execution and leadership, but may rue the DRS lapses, both of which shaped the match’s outcome.

Tensions stoked as India deny England

India’s Ravindra Jadeja and Washington Sundar batted into the twilight of the final day at Old Trafford to notch commanding centuries and seal a hard-earned draw in the fourth Test against England, as tensions flared over the manner of the match’s conclusion.

With India under pressure and a draw inevitable late on day five, England skipper Ben Stokes offered the handshake with 15 overs remaining. But with Jadeja on 89 and Sundar on 80, the Indian pair chose to bat on, eventually reaching their respective hundreds, with Sundar bringing up his maiden Test ton off the part-time bowling of Harry Brook.

The sequence, which saw Brook concede 24 runs in three overs, left Stokes irked and ignited a post-match exchange over sporting convention versus personal milestones.

After a tense contest in which England pushed hard for a series-clinching win, India’s lower order stood firm on the final day to deny the hosts.

Jadeja and Sundar, both left-handers, weathered England’s front-line attack and nullified any remaining hopes of a result, extending their unbeaten partnership well into the final session.

By the 105th over, with the score firmly in India’s favour and both batters within sight of centuries, England formally abandoned pursuit of victory. Stokes, citing workload concerns, opted to rest his main bowlers and turned to Brook to bowl out the final overs.

Brook’s gentle medium pace allowed Jadeja and Sundar to accelerate, with Sundar eventually reaching his hundred and Jadeja following shortly thereafter. Stokes offered the draw with 15 overs still remaining, and the match was called with both teams settling for a stalemate in Manchester.

For England, Stokes delivered another tireless all-round performance by scoring a century and collecting a five-wicket haul, despite visibly struggling with the physical toll on the final day.

“Mentally, decent. Physically, been better,” he later admitted.

England’s attempt to press for victory on day five was gradually eroded by the Indian pair’s discipline. The failure to convert early chances and the grind of back-to-back Tests informed Stokes’ decision to withdraw his main bowlers, effectively ending England’s pursuit.

Stokes explained: “As soon as it got to that point where the draw was inevitable, I was never going to risk my frontline bowlers with the short turnaround... I did have to tell [Brook]: ‘Don’t do anything stupid.’”

Brook’s spell, although uneventful in a tactical sense, enabled the Indian batters to reach personal milestones, a decision that did not sit well with the England captain.

“You hold your hands up, they played incredibly well,” Stokes conceded. “But I don’t think there would have been too much more satisfaction from walking off 100 not out... Ten more runs or whatever it [wasn’t] going to change the fact that you’ve managed to get your team out of a very tricky situation,” he said.

However, India’s head coach Gautam Gambhir pushed back strongly, saying, “If someone is batting on 90 and the other one is batting on 85, don’t they deserve a hundred? Would they have walked off? If someone from the England side would have been batting on 90 or 85... wouldn’t you allow him to do it, if they weathered the storm?”

Stokes said later, “It’s been a pretty big workload... I said a few times to the guys out there: ‘Pain is just an emotion.’”



Gautam Gambhir

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