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Our Community Is Thriving!



The Rotary Club of Brampton Flowercity held its changeover gala recently that saw its new executive inducted. Outgoing President Dhaman Kissoon extended his thanks to members, highlighted the projects that were successfully completed, as well funds donated to many charitable causes. Incoming President Ashni Ramsammy outlined the plans ahead, and encouraged the new Board and members to work at the highest level so the club continues in its upward trajectory. Nine new members were inducted over the course of last year. Ramsammy also thanked Kissoon for his outstanding leadership, and presented him with a Paul Harris Plus 3 pin. In photo are the executive, members, and guests, with Kissoon (second, right), and Ramsammy (fourth, right). *Photo by Ramesh Ramkalawan*

Doobay recognised with Order of Canada

By Romeo Kaseram
LJI Reporter

Toronto – Our thriving community was again celebratory last week following the announcement by the Governor General of Canada, Mary Simon, that our own Dr Budhendranauth Doobay had been appointed a Member to the Order of Canada.

The Order of Canada honours are appointed by the Governor General on the recommendation of the Advisory Council for the Order of Canada.

As Governor General Simon stated last week, “The Order of Canada recognises individuals who have made positive and lasting impacts on communities here in Canada, or who have brought honour to our country abroad.”

She added, “As we progress towards an Order that is reflective of Canada’s full diversity, I encourage all Canadians to nominate individuals who inspire them, from all walks of life and backgrounds. Congratulations to the new appointees, and thank you to the nominators who cast a spotlight on their achievement, purpose, and exceptional talent.”

Doobay was born in the village of Weldaad, West Coast Berbice in Guyana in 1940, and will celebrate his 84th birthday later this year.

In a statement to *Indo-Caribbean World* last week, Doobay

said he was honoured to be appointed to the Order of Canada, and to be recognised for the work he has done in Canada and abroad. The appointment also brought back “many fond memories”, he added.

He also declared, “I am humbled to be recognised for my lifelong and ongoing work in Canada in the field of medicine



Dr Budhendranauth Doobay

as a cardiovascular surgeon; also, to be recognised for the pioneering work that saw us building up our community in Canada, while at the same time putting down foundational roots that have since blossomed to become our sacred and iconic Vishnu Mandir in the city of Richmond Hill, Ontario.”

Additionally, “I also recall the pioneering good work being done abroad to help the needy, and victims of natural disasters. Also, to offer affordable health care in Guyana with the Doobay Medical Centres, which assist all Guyanese in need of life-saving dialysis interventions.”

The Order of Canada recognition by “such an eminent group as the Advisory Council for the Order of Canada brought back many reflective moments”, Doobay stated, noting that it triggered recall of the “hard work, long hours, and the commitment across the many, many decades”.

Said Doobay: “However, this is also a moment to look forward in time – to our future with invigorated resolve to keep

See Page 4: Prestigious appointment

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\$479,700

Location! Location! Location!

This condo's amazing location makes for easy travelling! Close to the subway, public transit, Yorkdale Mall, shops, and restaurants. This newly renovated bright unit features beautiful laminate flooring, a clean kitchen, and an open balcony with an unobstructed view of the skyline!



\$1,189,900

Right Place Right Value!

This lot has great potential for conversion into a commercial property! Has approximately 127 feet facing Confederation Parkway. Features a large double car garage – ideal for the home mechanic. It's a rare find with a lovely corner lot property – endless possibilities await!



\$1,129,000

A Pleasure to Treasure

This spacious home is impressively maintained with careful attention to detail. The main floor features a tall, nine-foot ceiling, California shutters, and internal access to the garage! There are three full baths upstairs! This lovely home features a stamped concrete front porch and patio.



\$779,000

What a Sun-Sational Delight!

Impeccable home with hardwood floors & stairs, gas fireplace, internal access to garage, & large private deck. Backyard extends over landscaped hill to other side for avid gardener. Impressive upgrades include modern light fixtures & modern ceramics. In quiet neighbourhood near university. A hot buy so call now!



\$569,900

Truly Delightful

This mega-spacious corner unit suite will leave you breathless! Walk into a breath of fresh air & take in the large eat-in kitchen, 2 spacious bedrooms, plush & lush carpet for a cozy feel & an open & oversized balcony! This beautiful unit comes with two parking spaces! The amenities are just an added bonus!



\$699,890

Bright and Spacious!

Spacious corner property with fenced lot for your enjoyment! Upon entry, you will love the modern gourmet kitchen with cabinets, quartz counters & backsplash. Sun-drenched property with modern LED pot lights, 4 spacious bedrooms on upper level & finished basement for an extended family.



\$497,000

Can't Beat Location

Spacious & clean unit features 2 bedrooms & 2 washrooms! Open concept living area walks out to large balcony. Minutes away from the University of Waterloo! Freshly painted unit comes furnished, & features laminate floors, large windows & stainless-steel appliances! Comes with a parking spot!

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Guyana's VP Dr Bharrat Jagdeo visited Toronto late last month and attended a number of events put on by the diaspora in the GTA to celebrate the homeland's 58th Independence anniversary. Among the gala events that saw widespread participation by the diaspora, officials from the Consular office and the High Commission, and many friends of Guyana, was the 58th Independence Anniversary Festival, which took place on June 22 at the Malvern Family Resource Centre in Scarborough. The event saw generous sponsors stepping up, among them Geranium, Key Plus Realty, Norman Sue Bakery, Highpower, Joe Jaglall Real Estate, and Caribbean Airlines. In photo, CAL's Nazie Mohammed is at right with VP Jagdeo at the well-attended Guyana Festival that took place in Scarborough.



Congratulations to Dr Sauliha Alli, who convocated as a medical doctor last month from the University of Toronto's Temerty Faculty of Medicine. Born in Enmore, Guyana, she is the daughter of community leader, philanthropist, and head of One Love Table, Habeeb Alli. Dr Alli plans to work in family medicine in the GTA.

Nation marks Canadian Multiculturalism Day

Ottawa – Canadian Multiculturalism Day was celebrated on June 27 with Prime Minister Justin Trudeau declaring that Canada was stronger “not in spite of our diversity, but because of it”.

The government of Canada has been celebrating Canadian Multiculturalism Day on June 27 since 2002. According to recent census data, people from over 450 ethnic or cultural origins today call Canada home.

Last week Trudeau issued an official statement marking the occasion, saying, “Today... we celebrate multiculturalism – one of Canada's greatest strengths.”

He added, “Canadians know that we're stronger not in spite of our diversity, but because of it. That's why, in 1988, we adopted the Canadian Multiculturalism Act, making Canada the first country to recognise multiculturalism as an official policy. Today, the Act serves as a guiding principle in ensuring every Canadian – no matter their background – has a fair chance to succeed.”

Trudeau also noted that as Canada celebrates multiculturalism, the nation was also “making our communities more diverse, inclusive, and welcoming”.

Additionally, “We're investing in cultural centres, museums, and festivals, so more communities can share their own stories. And through our renewed Anti-Racism Strategy, we're making health care, housing, and the justice system fairer for everyone.”

He concluded, “On this Canadian Multiculturalism Day,

let's celebrate the diversity that makes us who we are. And let's reaffirm our shared commitment to building a Canada where everyone can succeed.”

June 27 was also recognised by Minister of Diversity, Inclusion and Persons with Disabilities Kamal Khara, who declared that Canadian Multiculturalism Day was “a celebratory occasion to honour the many diverse individuals and communities from around the world that call Canada home”.

She also stated, “Our country's collective identity is rooted in the recognition that our many languages, traditions, and beliefs enrich our social fabric. In fact, Canada was the first country in the world to adopt multiculturalism as an official policy in 1971, and further committed to this value by enshrining it in law through the Canadian Multiculturalism Act in 1988.”

Khara added that her government in Ottawa “remains steadfast in our commitment to combatting systemic racism and discrimination through policies such as our recently announced Anti-Racism Strategy”.

Additionally, she noted it was a strategy that “reflects our unwavering efforts to dismantle all forms of inequalities in order to build a more equitable Canada for its entire population”.

She also declared that Multiculturalism Day was an opportunity to celebrate the variety of cultures that strengthen Canada collectively; and that is was a day for reaffirmation of “our dedication to equity, and inclusion”.



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Doobay (second, right) with Ajax and Brampton Crematorium & Visitation Centres' General Manager Puneet Aujla (right), lawyer Dhaman Kissoon (second, left), and guest Mena (left) at Radha Krishna Mandir's Vasant Ki Raat fund-raiser in April



Doobay addresses guests while supporting the Radha Krishna Mandir's Bhakti Sangeet 2 mega-concert fund-raiser, which was held in Etobicoke last month; at left is the mandir's President Dwarka Persaud

Prestigious appointment to the Order of Canada for Doobay

From Page 1

up the good work in building our thriving community, a stronger Canada, and a better world.”

He ended his statement by extending “my sincerest appreciation to the Advisory Council for the Order of Canada for this distinguished appointment”.

And at the same time, he also extended “heartfelt gratitude to the many volunteers and devotees, to friends and my cohort, and to my family, who all contributed to making this journey possible”.

News of Doobay’s appointment to the Order of Canada was received with similar enthusiasm, adoration, and encomiums in the homeland back in Guyana.

Said Guyana’s President Dr Irfaan Ali: “I extend warmest congratulations to Dr Budhendranauth Doobay, founder of the Doobay Medical and Research Centre, on being awarded the Order of Canada, the highest civilian honour in the country. Dr Doobay is an outstanding Guyanese cardiovascular surgeon (retired), esteemed religious leader, and dedicated mentor who serves as a pillar of the Guyanese-Canadian community.”

Similar encomiums were expressed here in Toronto over Doobay’s well-deserved appointment to the Order of Canada.

Speaking to the honour, Guyana’s Honorary Consul Mani Singh at the Guyana Consulate General in Toronto noted Doobay was well-respected, and that his humanitarianism and philanthropy were well-known and appreciated, both in Canada and abroad.

“On behalf of the Consulate General in Toronto, and the Guyana diaspora, I would like to congratulate Doobay for his achievement of this prestigious and eminent recognition. It is well-deserved for the work he has done in Canada and abroad in the areas of philanthropy, social service work, and in the religious and humanitarian fields. He is also well-regarded for the work he has been doing in Guyana with the dialysis clinics.”

News of the Order of Canada appointment was also greeted with praise and respect from Dhaman Kissoon, a senior lawyer, community builder, and philanthropist in the community.

“Doobay’s recognition to the Order of Canada is deserving; also, the appointment elevates the entire community,” Kissoon declared.

He added, “It is a reflection on all of his hard work and the sacrifices that he made over the many years. Doobay is a tall man; now add to this a towering presence, and this charisma becomes notable at the many community functions that he attends. It is this presence that brings out the best at these events – he has eminence and stature, and so people trust him,



Doobay with guests and colleagues at RKMCC's Vasant Ki Raat concert



Devotees extend congratulations

On behalf of the entire congregation of Voice of the Vedas, we extend our heartfelt congratulations to you on being honoured with the prestigious Order of Canada. This esteemed recognition is a testament to your tireless dedication, exceptional spiritual service, and remarkable contributions to both the medical field and our community.

Your unwavering commitment to the values of compassion, service, and excellence has been an inspiration to all of us. Through your pioneering work and selfless efforts, you have not

only advanced the cause of healthcare but have also embodied the true spirit of humanity. Your achievements reflect the highest ideals of our faith and the boundless potential of human kindness and perseverance.

We are immensely proud to call you one of our own and to celebrate this remarkable milestone with you. May you continue to be a beacon of hope and a source of inspiration to many.

Your legacy is a guiding light for future generations, and your contributions will undoubtedly leave an indelible mark on our world.

Canadian Museum of Indian Civilisation and the Senior’s Home, Anand Bhavan, adjacent to Vishnu Mandir, as well the Doobay Gaffoor Medical Centre in Guyana...”

Persaud also noted he had the “opportunity to participate in many disaster and relief programs throughout the world with Doobay”, adding that “he never stops performing selfless service to mankind”.

He added, “...I do not know of a person who is more deserving than Doobay to be [recognised by the Order of Canada], and I am proud to know that [he] is being recognised for his contributions in making Canada and the world a better place, as he continues to serve all regardless of religion, country of origin, and race.”

Also speaking to Doobay’s notable elevation to the Order of Canada was Roy Doobay, a chartered professional accountant, and volunteer team lead for Vishnu Mandir’s Run for Guyana Dialysis fund-raiser with the Toronto Waterfront Marathon.

Said Roy: “I extend hearty congratulations to Doobay. He is a determined and courageous trailblazer, and his contributions nationally and globally are invaluable. He makes a remarkable difference by enriching the lives of many through his medical expertise, spiritual teachings, and humanitarian work.

He added, “Being awarded the Order of Canada is a testament to these philanthropic qualities. It is an honour to know and learn from Doobay, and I am proud of him, and his dedication to improving the quality of life in our communities.”

Doobay studied medicine at the University of the West Indies in Jamaica, at the University of London, and completed his training at the Hamilton General Hospital, where he also worked; he also served as an Associate Professor in the Department of Cardiovascular Surgery.

In 1977 he established Vishnu Mandir in Richmond Hill. Since then, the site has seen addition of the Canadian Museum of Indian Civilisation, which was opened in 2004. He also led development of Anand Bhavan, a senior’s home that is also located at the mandir’s site.

In his work abroad, Doobay developed an orphanage for girls in India, an Information Technology school in Guyana, and the Doobay Medical Centres in Guyana.

Among his other awards are the Order of Ontario; The Queen Elizabeth II Gold and Diamond Jubilee Medals (2002, 2012); Guyana Award for Leadership (2004); The Canadian Governor General Good Citizens Award (2006); and the Lifetime Achievement by Indo-Canada Chamber of Commerce in 2007.

knowing that with him being there means the event must be a worthy cause.”

President of the Radha Krishna Mandir & Cultural Centre Dwarka Persaud also praised Doobay for receiving such a distinguished honour. As Persaud declared, Doobay has been an inspiration not only to the RKMCC, its man-

agement, leaders, and congregation, but also to the many other leading Hindu organisations.

Said Persaud: “Doobay is not only a visionary, but a person with whom I and members of my family have had the opportunity to work with on many of his projects, including Vishnu Mandir, The Hindu Federation,



Kisson tournament raises \$75K for dialysis

By Romeo Kaseram
LJI Reporter

Toronto – True to its humanitarian objective, once again the Latchmin Kisson Golf Tournament took charity to the forefront when it surpassed last year’s fund-raising total of \$70,000.

This year the effort raised \$75,000, the sum going to assist Vishnu Mandir’s leader Dr Budhendranauth Doobay and Global Care Outreach in its work to make dialysis care affordable to patients in Guyana.

Now in its third year, the fund-raiser golf tournament prove yet again to be a successful event, said its lead organiser, Dhaman Kisson.

“It was a very successful tournament that raised \$75,000,” Kisson told Indo-Caribbean World last week.

“In fact, one donor, a Guyanese businessman, gave the tournament \$25,000,” he revealed.

Kisson added that once again his mother, Latchmin, was touched by the generosity.

“Mom thanked God, and everyone, for contributing to making a difference for such a worthy cause,” Kisson said.

Noting that this year’s fund-raiser passed last year’s total by \$5,000, Kisson added he was again impressed by the turnout this year.

“We had all kinds of golfers at the tournament. There was ten-year old Nathan Dyke, who was challenging the adults to beat his drive,” he said. Young Nathan is training to be a professional golfer, he said.

“Out of the 36 groups, only 11 of the groups were able to pass Nathan’s drive. This young man was at the tournament to support the fund-raiser for dialysis in Guyana. If the adults did not outdrive him, he would then sell his ball

to them. He raised an additional \$600 with that challenge for the dialysis fund. However, the money was instead generously donated to his scholarship fund instead,” Kisson stated.

Another corollary gesture of generosity that emerged out of the main tournament saw Eshranie Dhori, who runs the Little Library, raising \$2,000 to aid with the shipment of books to Guyanese children in the homeland.

As Kisson noted, Dhori is committed to empowering students in Guyana via books from Canada, which Little Library ships to sites of learning in Guyana.

This year she managed the putting contest at the tournament, and raised \$2,000, which the tournament donated to her worthy effort to empower young readers in the homeland.

Kisson also noted that the presence of Dr Budhendranauth Doobay at this year’s tournament was again inspirational and motivating for its many participants.

“He attended the event for the entire day, and spoke afterwards, thanking everyone for doing an excellent job. He has been to many golf tournaments, and said ours was well-organised and classy,” Kisson stated.

The Latchmin Kisson Golf Tournament was revived during an announcement made in March 2022 at Vishnu Mandir, when the matriarch celebrated her 85th birthday.

During the announcement, Kisson stated that the revived effort was being undertaken by his family to assist with dialysis care for all Guyanese needing treatment in Guyana.

Since its re-emergence, the proceeds from each tournament have gone to the Doobay Medical Centres’ dialysis effort, with last year’s event donating \$70,000.



In the photo at top left are Dr Budhendranauth Doobay (sixth from left); Latchmin Kisson (fifth from right); Dhaman Kisson (sixth from right), with family members, friends, and supporters; the energy, camaraderie, and entertainment during the tournament are notable in what was a glorious day of golfing and generosity. Photos by Ramesh Ramkalawan



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Editorial

Regional food security

Caricom leaders in our homelands need to heed the call that was made last month for establishment of a regional food security agency.

Citing the compounding challenges facing the region's drive to feed itself, the appeal for formation of the agency was made in Barbados by former Director General of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture, Dr Chelston Brathwaite.

"These are not ordinary times," Brathwaite rightly said.

As we are all aware, global dissonances are now driving anxiety, uncertainty, and precarity in our troubled times. As Brathwaite noted, among the prominent rippling are the lingering effects of Covid-19, geopolitical unrest in Gaza and Ukraine, and ongoing climate change threats.

"As we seek to build economies for the next 50 years of Caricom, we need to place food security as a priority," Brathwaite stated.

Outlining the purpose of the proposed Caribbean food security agency, Brathwaite declared its *raison d'être* would see the body coordinating regional efforts, and mobilising the Caribbean towards achieving food security.

Coordination and mobilisation of Caricom's resources were a sensible move on an economic level, he added.

According to the data, Barbados' food and beverage import bill hit a high of (B) \$817 million in 2022, up from the estimated \$653.6 million in 2021; on average, it spends just over \$600 million on food imports annually.

Comparatively, according to statistics from the Trinidad and Tobago government, this nation's food import bill averages (TT) \$5 Billion. Also, 2023 data from the Bank of Guyana indicate Guyana's final food consumption bill in 2022 was (US) \$236.9 million, an increase of \$30 million from 2021, when its food imports stood at \$206.9 million.

Meanwhile, the *Jamaican Observer* reported earlier this year that the country's food import bill dipped slightly over the first nine months of 2023, but continued to stay above the (US) \$1 Billion mark.

In the light of such compelling data, it is sensible for Brathwaite to question Caricom's ongoing reliance on foreign food supplies. As he declared, "We pay farmers in Miami, Idaho, California, Mexico, and Thailand. Are we paying our own farmers?"

This economic and pragmatic current driving one of Brathwaite's assertions for a regional food security agency, one that will help keep nourishing expenditures inside the regional family, runs even deeper. In fact, it resonates even more profoundly with the dire ripples of food precarity that are now part of everyday life in the Caribbean.

As the *American Quarterly* noted earlier this year, hunger spiked in 2022 in the Caribbean region that saw around 4.1 million people, or 57 percent of the English-speaking Caribbean, reporting food insecurity. The publication was citing a study by the World Food Programme and Caricom.

It also cited World Bank data that indicate food accounting for 20 percent of the value of total imports in small Caribbean states, compared with eight percent for Latin America and the Caribbean as a region.

As the data further indicated, "Some countries in the region import more than 80 percent of the food they consume, creating a regional import bill of [US] \$6 billion per year, according to Caricom."

Meanwhile, in response to such high foreign expenditure, Caricom is continuing with its Twenty-Five by 2025 plan, with the objective being to lower the region's food import bill by one quarter by 2025.

Also among the Twenty-Five by 2025 objectives is to reduce tariffs on food within the region in a move to encourage intra-regional trade. This shift has seen notable and committed leadership by Guyana's President Dr Irfaan Ali, and Barbados' Prime Minister Mia Mottley.

Caricom nations are also onboard with Twenty-Five by 2025 plans to improve small-farm productivity through better infrastructure, more advanced irrigation, with intra-regional synergies noted among Guyana, Barbados, Belize, and Trinidad and Tobago.

Even as these moves unfold, Caricom's leaders should heed Brathwaite's call for a regional food security agency.

Views expressed are not necessarily those of this publication.
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Canada Day a time of celebration, regeneration

Each year, the arrival of Canada Day launches the summer season across the country.

Despite its traditional wintery imagery, Canada is a lively nation on its national holiday on July 1, and beyond during a brief period of warmer days.

Leveraging the holiday, Canadians host celebrations, visit cottages, go on vacations, and do lots more. Locally, family and friends get together, BBQs are lit, and many flock to beaches and parks.

Celebrated annually on July 1, Canada Day formally marks the anniversary of the Confederation of Canada, when the Constitution Act of 1867 united the provinces of Canada (Ontario and Quebec), New Brunswick, and Nova Scotia into a single Dominion within the British Empire.

As Canada grows as a nation, the notion of what Canada is, and what we celebrate as a nation, are important to discuss.

Yes, Canada Day is the day we recognise the above-mentioned, the creation of a new nation from that was former European colonies on Indigenous lands.

Built in a period when rights were afforded to a limited few, Canada at the time of its founding was a significantly different nation than the one we know today.

Many do not recognise Canada Day. They cite the racist colonial past of the nation, and the corrosive legacy of colonialism on Indigenous People.

It is important to understand and recognise the dark past of the nation and the events of a history that would not be upheld to the standards of our modern concept of societal norms.

Canada is on a journey, and as it transforms into a mature and modern nation, we must recognise the potential of the country that we can build despite the issues of the past.

Canada Day must not be limited to one perspective, but simply, if Canada is a thriving diverse nation, we must all find how we want to honour and recognise the potential of our nation.

Canada Day is an opportunity for us to celebrate the diverse cultures, histories, and stories that have shaped this land, which many of us call home.

However, this observance must begin with an understanding of the stories, legacy, and presence of Indigenous people.

As newcomers, Canada's Indo-Caribbean community should recognise Canada Day as a moment to celebrate the place where we have established ourselves, and recommit to how we can do



Ryan Singh

more to ensure it becomes a better place for all of us, including the Indigenous People of these lands.

It is our responsibility to remember, respect, and honour these lands, waters, and the First Nations, Inuit, and Métis communities who continue to keep these lands, and call them home from centuries before. It is also important for all of us to reflect on how this country came to be – from the colonised foundations, to the lasting racism and discrimination experienced by Indigenous communities. And from now on, what must be done to correct these wrongs.

We should take the opportunity to learn and discover the unique possibilities of Canada.

Canada's multiculturalism policy, officially adopted in 1971, recognises and celebrates the cultural diversity of Canadian society, promoting the idea that all citizens are free to maintain their cultural heritage while participating fully in Canadian life.

In a country where multiculturalism is policy, and despite the challenges and barriers, there is a path to be better, and to become truly inclusive.

We need to ensure that we give back to our community, participate and engage in society in meaningful ways.

Canada Day serves as a reminder of the values of tolerance, acceptance, and respect that underpin Canadian society. It encourages individuals to embrace their cultural identities while fostering understanding and dialogue among different communities.

This celebration reinforces the notion that diversity is not just tolerated, but celebrated as a fundamental aspect of what it means to be Canadian.

We should use Canada Day to recommit to taking the steps and teachings that we are each responsible for as part of our own truth and reconciliation journey; also, learning about the diverse cultures that also share this space, and discovering the rich arts, food, and music that make this land great.

As we celebrate the nation that we can be, we must ensure that we correct the wrongs of the past, and seek to build a better, stronger, and inclusive future together, where no one is left behind.

We must use Canada Day to celebrate and regenerate our dedication to ensuring this becomes truly a country that respects its Indigenous People, and becomes a truly modern and diverse society where anyone can succeed.

Ma would say, 'Hold strain!' when using social media

I have noticed recently that more and more articles from credible sources are emerging that confirm what I have wondered about for some time now, namely, that some social media users share too much personal and intimate information about themselves online.

And of course, I wonder what my dearly departed grandmother would have said were she still here in this troubled world, and I was speaking to her about this modern-day pattern of divulgent and indulgent behaviour, now described in the social science world as "oversharing".

A broad definition of "oversharing" describes those who divulge more details than are necessary about their personal lives on social media. Of course, reasonable adults are free to share as much details about themselves on *Facebook*, *YouTube*, or *TikTok*.

However, divulging granular details about young family members, particularly young children, could become problematic later in their adult lives, given the data's enduring availability online on social media.

Now my dear grandmother was the epitome of discretion in those "analog" days during my childhood when I was growing up back in the homeland.

In fact, now that we are into decades since her departure, surviving family members still recall her idiolectic turn of phrase, and often repeat phrases and statements that are today affectionately and humorously attributed to Ma's extensive, unique, and enduring lexicon.

Among her cautionary exclamations was Ma immediately taking control of a breakneck tale, the narrator's voice rising with the surplus energy generated by the excitement, the storyteller totally oblivious to Ma's widened eyes shouting out that there were eager neighbourly ears cupped against the hibiscus fence that separated our "Ajoupa" from the one next door.

Ma would exclaim, *sotto voce*, as she leaned backwards to pull heftily on the reins of the runaway tale, the narrator rearing up in surprise: "Hold strain, bhaiya! Hold strain! Don't talk too hard! Shoosh!"

Accompanying the deployment of this soft but emphatic command would be Ma's adjuring forefinger pressed tightly against her thin lips, the tilt of her head indicating the inquisitive hibiscus running along the boundary between the houses.

Now as an aside, try as we did in later years when the fam-

Romeo Kaseram



ily moved up in life into a high house with radio, in the eternal textuality of the late Guyanese author Rooplall Monar, Ma stubbornly refrained from saying, "Upstairs house", and instead retained, and maintained, a lifetime fondness for "Ajoupa".

Now later in my decades, I finally understand her obstinacy; that it was likely that her denial of other synonyms for "house", particularly later in life when her legs grew weaker and she began to detest the "stairs" in "Upstairs" – that this was her way of holding on to the memories of her early life.

Here was a repository where she hid away those memories, no doubt similar to her "cash pan" that she secretly buried in the bushes at the back of the "Ajoupa".

In this repository were the memories of setting up house with my late grandfather, who sadly had left her behind as a young widow. Among these memories too were reminders of her early childhood, those years before she prematurely entered adulthood after becoming a child-bride.

And then there was the "Ajoupa" itself where I spent my early years of boyhood, and which was undoubtedly similar to her childhood house.

Ma always recalled in the stories she told us on rainy evenings how the roof of the house she lived in as a child leaked whenever the rains poured, driving down like nails on the thatch.

That her father and mother had built it with their own hands with white clay, plaited strips of bamboo, and the uneven imbrications of thatch, lengthy leaves of palm trees covering the roof, which after saturation from inclement weather let the spiking rain drain through.

But back to our regular programming. With Ma constantly aware there were listening ears around us saw her inculcating a similar discretion during my early life. I recall as a teenager how she warned me to be careful what I said in public places whenever I was setting out to explore the wider world of the homeland back in the day.

Brushing my forehead with prayerful fingertips before I set out beyond "the gap", that threshold between the house and the roadway, Ma would sternly remind me with another of her mantras of discretion.

"Child, you must careful what you say in the taxi. You don't know who sitting next to you".

I suspect she would say the same to me today in the moments before I login into "the gap" to enter my social media accounts.

Enigmatic erasure of historical Prashad Nagar street name needs a re-visit

Dear Editor,

In July 1958, Dattatreya Balkrushna Kalelkar (1885-1981), an Indian nationalist, visited British Guiana. Kalelkar was described as "...a freedom fighter, social and political worker, journalist, publicist, and educationist, shuttlecocking between the Ashram and jails..."

Originally from the Indian state of Maharashtra, where the famous paintings and rock-cut sculptures of Ajanta and Ellora are found, Kalelkar was considered a notable political activist during India's independence movement. A loyal follower and protégé of Mahatma Gandhi, he was appointed a member of the Rajya Sabha, the Upper House of India's bicameral parliament, from 1952 to 1964.

He was also president of India's Commission for Backward Classes in 1953, the same year British Guiana held its first election under universal adult suffrage.

Kalelkar was credited with having written some 80 books, published in Marathi, Gujarati, Hindi, and English, which have been widely read in India. His commentary on the *Bhagavad Gita* and translations of Rabindranath Tagore's classical works into Marathi and Gujarati were some of his most impressive accomplishments.

He received India's second-highest civilian award, the Padma Vibhushan, in 1964.

Hari Prashad hosted Kalelkar during his visit to Guyana. Hari must have been immensely impressed by his guest. It is possible, too, that Kalelkar may have inspired Hari, whom he referred to as "Hariprashad ji," culturally and politically.

In his travel log of the many places he visited in British Guiana, Kalelkar described his initial visit to Georgetown with these words:

"... The house we live in is opposite Georgetown Railway Station. Due to the absence of crowds going from the station to the port, one could see the beauty of the wide-open road. All the houses here, being built on pillars and having wooden walls, create a beautiful map in the city structure. All houses white! That is why instead of calling this city Georgetown, I must have called it Sudha

Nagari or Dhavalpuri. The roads here are very straight and wide and due to being divided into two parts by a canal flowing in the middle..."

"Sudha", a Sanskrit word, has several meanings, but it is usually a name given to a girl child, meaning "nectar"; while "Nagari" translates to mean "beautiful city".

"Dhaval" is also a name given to a child, which is translated to mean "white"; while "Puri" means city, so the word "Dhavalpuri" could certainly be translated to mean "White city".

Presumably, Kalelkar was impressed with the colour of the many "white houses" he discovered in Georgetown.

Remarkably, when Hari designed Prashad Nagar (with the help of town planner Audrey Barker), he attached Indian names to all the streets, including names of his family, places in India, and of Indians in Guyana.

He named one of the streets "Kaka Street", out of respect and admiration for Kalelkar. However, one will never be able to locate the name "Kaka Street", although it was an original moniker that Hari assigned to one of the streets.

This street, perhaps more than Hari's choice of street names, preserved an enduring cultural history and a legacy that eternally linked Hari with ancestral India. He had taken his family to live in India in 1952, but returned in 1953.

Hari's deliberate naming of "Kaka" as a street name was a natural outgrowth rooted in his cultural connection with the land of his Indian ancestors. More importantly, it is a name that gives us a glimpse into Hari's philosophical thinking, and the unshakably profound, enduring, and unbreakable cultural embrace he shared with India.

Pakistani diaspora, the matches were basically guaranteed sell outs.

In my opinion, such scheduling was not only short-sighted, but a detriment to growing the game. You will never see the NFL, NBA, NHL, MLB, MLS, or even the NCAA, scheduling games at 10:30 a.m., and the US is in a sports mad country with the richest and most professional sports teams in the world.

If the main objective of the ICC is to get as much money as possible by pleasing the BCCI, then they should really consider scheduling all ICC tournaments in India. They have already pretty much killed Test Cricket by hardly scheduling any matches outside of the big three, that is, India, Australia, and England.

Some teams like the West Indies will be lucky to play five Test matches in a year. Others like Ireland, Afghanistan, and Zimbabwe, maybe two or three at the most. So, India won the T20 World Cup, and it was certainly a success for them. Afghanistan certainly made themselves and their countrymen happy, at least for a while.

The ICC made a lot of money, so it must be successful to them. As for the game of cricket, well, I am old school, and like the great Michael Holding, I really do not believe that T20 is real cricket anyway.

Mohamed Z. Rahaman, Maryland, US, via email.

However, the name was not without its controversy, as readers familiar with Guyanese colloquialism, would have surmised by now.

Hari was aware that Kalelkar was revered as "Kakasaheb" or "Kaka" as a sign of respect for his meaningful contributions to India's independence struggle. Contrary to what some individuals may think, Kaka (which is another word for "Cha-cha"), is also a very dignified term commonly used among Indians in Guyana and the wider Caribbean.

Its usage as "Chacha" or "Khakhaa" with reference to a father's younger brother can be traced to its original usage in ancestral India.

Here in Guyana, it is sometimes used in reference to both a father's younger and older brother. For most Indians, all of one's father's brothers are called "Chacha". It is important to note, too, that in Indian culture, such words are "relationship words" that connote familial respect among family members. As such, their usage has nothing to do with age.

The creolisation of Guyanese culture, particularly in the use of the word "kaka", has contributed to the elimination of a key historical reference for which Hari originally intended for his housing scheme. The fact that a bureaucratic adoption, using "Omai" instead as a replacement for "Kaka", was arbitrarily selected for Hari's originally intended designation for his urban village can be considered an attack on the Indian archive, and a desecration of Hari's memory and his enduring legacy.

Regardless of the thinking process that

was associated with this name change, which remains unexplainable and perplexing to Hari's son-in-law, the late Prem Persaud, no explanation was forthcoming from any government authorities on the reason behind the name change.

Prem Persaud surmised that there were two possible explanations for this erasure. For one, the name "Kaka" may not have been recorded in the transport survey. If one were to submit an application for the purchase of a piece of land in the "short street behind Sachibazaar", the name "Kaka" would not appear on the survey. The use of the name was Hari's prerogative.

Two, Prem Persaud surmised that it is possible that, over time, some people who lived on that street may have substituted the name "Omai" because several individuals who resided in the street were workers associated with the Canadian gold mining company, Omai Gold Mines Ltd, which began operations in the Cuyuni-Mazaruni region in the early 1990s.

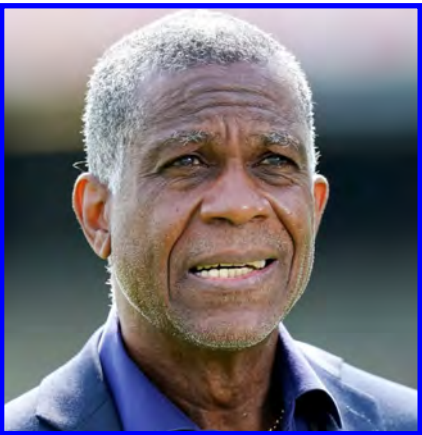
Unfortunately, what can most probably be attributed to a combination of creeping globalisation, cultural neglect, and historical amnesia has led to the erasure of this historic street name in Prashad Nagar. Today, Kaka Street bears the name "Omai Street".

At the launching of a book on Hari Prashad on June 23 on the Indo-Caribbean Cultural Centre program, Evan Persaud noted that the combined Bell Air/Prashad Nagar PPP group is perhaps the most influential and most organised PPP group in the country today.


The PPP group boasts membership of two sitting Ministers from the area (Ministers Vindhi Persaud and Colin Croal), among a slew of other prominent Guyanese. Perhaps Evan and his group can mount a lobbying effort to correct this historical anomaly.

Baytoram Ramharack, New York, via email.

Questions on the ICC T20 World Cup



Michael Holding



GUYANA PROPERTY MATTERS

Does paying the Land Tax guarantee possession of your Property... Perhaps not!

By Maj Khan

It has been generally understood that one of the best ways to protect your property anywhere in the world is to pay the land taxes. The fact is land taxes must be paid, and in Guyana there is an annual filing requirement with a two percent penalty for failure to do so. The government arm responsible for land taxes is the Guyana Regulatory Authority.

The optics are quite straightforward; however there is *caveat* with far-reaching consequences, of which owners should be aware. Those who are familiar with land disputes strongly advise that taxes must be paid in person. Why? The receipts for paying land taxes are often handwritten on a carbon-copy book.

In fact, property transactions in Guyana including title, valuation, mortgage, and tax compliance receipts are all done on paper. In the age of the Internet, those living abroad are well-versed with the digital world, where access to home ownership is at their fingertips. In Guyana, the government has just implemented an e-service platform that will take time to develop. In the meantime, most land records are written or typed and housed in local offices. It means that remote property owners have to invest a great deal of time and funds to ensure their paperwork is in order.

Currently, most owners living abroad have a 'trusted' family member they rely on to ensure the daily upkeep of their property, including paying the land tax. If that receipt is written in the name of anyone else other than the registered owner, it can create conditions that are favourable for that individual whose name is on the receipt. Translation: that individual is in a position to file for possession of that property. This is especially viable if the owner has not visited the property for years.

Unfortunately, today property disputes are common, with siblings pitted against each other, parents against children, and families at war with each other. The stakes are high, and the price paid heavy – often with a bitter experience fraught with a gamut of emotions, with substantial time and monies invested over decades. And the question is always asked, "What could they have done differently to ensure none of this would come to bear in the first place?"

RE/Guyana is a property services company dedicated to making it easier for overseas property owners to administer, divest, acquire, and develop their real estate assets in Guyana. [Click here to visit RE/Guyana's website.](#)

Breadfruit production in Guyana best plan since sliced bread

Dear Editor,

I am happy that Guyana's President Dr Irfaan Ali has revealed plans to restart the large-scale production of versatile crops such as breadfruit, among others.

As Ali told residents of Waramuri, Region One, recently, "We want to do some major crops here that are high-valued, and that will put you back on the regional map."

He then detailed that Guyana's government will support villagers with local breadfruit production to meet the demands of local and regional markets.

And why not? Breadfruit is a staple food in many tropical regions. Most breadfruit varieties produce fruit throughout the year, and both ripe and unripe fruit have culinary value.

The unripe breadfruit is roasted, baked, fried, or boiled before consumption. When cooked, the taste of a moderately ripe breadfruit is described as potato-like, or similar to freshly-baked bread. Also, it is quite versatile when curried, fried, boiled, baked, roasted, and so on.

On the nutritional side, breadfruit is not only a good source of carbohydrates, dietary fibre, and protein, but also contains substantial amounts of micronutrients such as calcium, potassium, iron, and vitamin C and B3.

Also notable is the breadfruit tree is quite prolific, and can produce as many as 200 kilograms each season.

It means the work ahead will have to focus on the preser-



vation of harvested fruit. I have read that in some places the traditional preservation technique is to bury peeled and washed fruits in a leaf-lined pit, where they ferment over several weeks to produce a sour, sticky paste.

When stored in this manner, it could last for a year or more, and some pits are reported to have produced edible contents

more than 20 years later.

What I proposed that we do is find ways to market and preserve our breadfruit.

As Ali stated, "...We want to replant 5,000 breadfruit plants in the region so that we can become an important supplier of breadfruit for the country. We are going to move into this production because these are crops that have value on the regional market."

Additionally, "I think there is tremendous potential in this region, and we want to now move to another phase of development where we create opportunities; where we invest in opportunities for the future; where more of the women in our society can earn; more young people can enter forms of entrepreneurship – and agriculture is a main aspect of that."

What is pleasing about all of this is that Budget 2024 is becoming more and more of a reality. In January 2024, some (G) \$527.4 million were allocated to increase opportunities for agro-processors, farmers, and women. We are now witnessing this happening.

I also recall the Senior Minister in the Office of the President with responsibility for Finance and Public Service, Dr Ashni Singh, saying, "Guyana is promoting the growth of the agro-processing industry, including value-chain development and market expansion for its produce and products."

Hargesh B. Singh, Guyana, via email.

Solution to TT's water woes lies in united action

Dear Editor,

Water is life. It transcends political affiliations and serves all without bias. Yet the reality of Trinidad and Tobago's water supply is riddled with inequities. Some communities have access to standpipes, while others eagerly await the 2:00 a.m. whistle from WASA to fill their containers.

Still, some rely on water trucks for their needs, supposedly provided free of charge by WASA. And then there are those fortunate enough to have an endless supply, oblivious to the struggles of their less fortunate neighbours. The tale of the thirsty crow comes to mind, where necessity drives ingenuity and resilience.

Water scarcity is not a new issue; it has been persistent under several political administrations. Communities have evolved for generations, developing plans to deal with the unpredictable supply.

The everyday struggle to obtain water affects household habits and way-of-life decisions, demonstrating the tenacity of Trinidadians. This resiliency, though, also draws attention to a structural shortcoming that fails to meet a basic need. It emphasises how urgently infrastructure has to be improved, and that these shortcomings need to be addressed.

Due to ongoing water shortages, bottled water companies have prospered, turning a basic human necessity into successful businesses. In a similar vein, the market for water tanks has flourished as families purchase storage options to get through dry seasons.

This business success exposes a concerning dependency in which the public good of access to water has been reduced to a commodity. It reminds me of the efforts made by a thirsty crow, who searches for answers out of pure need, frequently at great



Residents in south Trinidad protest over a lack of water

expense.

Families should "simply" buy tanks and stop depending on government assistance, according to critics. Even with tanks, though, people frequently require trucked water from WASA to replenish the tanks – just like the parched crow stacking stones.

Our grandparents repeatedly said, "Drip, drip water does fill bucket", but a drip must initially exist. This demonstrates how complicated the problem is – it involves more than just storage – and the need for a steady supply of clean water. To solve a problem that has afflicted generations, the situation demands co-operation.

This is not a criticism of any particular party. Rather, it is an appeal to all those who possess the ability to alleviate this persistent problem. To guarantee equitable distribution, the government and its partners in the business sector must give priority to modernising and maintaining the water infrastructure.

The era of "empty bucket, knock a bottle, burn a tyre, block a road protests" is over, and we should now concentrate on working together to find solutions.

Many people's voices and hardships call for a concerted effort to bring about long-lasting change.

It is true that "who feels it knows it" establishes the importance or immediacy of a problem and the degree of urgency with which it must be resolved. Nevertheless, I have hope in individuals who can unite, set aside partisanship, and prioritise the good of the people and the nation.

In conclusion, we are reminded by an African proverb that, "Once you carry our own water, you will value every drop", and that the people living in these areas "know the value of each drop".

S. Benois-Selman, Trinidad and Tobago, via email.

Time to change method used to award Senior Counsel

Dear Editor,

Questions are being asked about the criteria for awarding silk or Senior Counsel status to members of the bar in Trinidad and Tobago.

Some of the questions are: Who is really deserving of silk? How is the process played out in awarding silk to attorneys? Who are the members in the selection panel to award silk?

The last question is interesting and deserves further analysis.

According to the media, the two biggest players in the selection process are the Prime Minister and the Attorney General. One must remember that the AG is selected by the PM, so in reality the PM has the final say in this matter.

The AG (as we have seen in recent times) always does the bidding of his 'boss', or faces replacement or dismissal.

But it begs the question: how did we get into this mess in the first place? The only logical answer is that the holders of these high offices were entrusted with such a big responsibility many decades ago, because leaders and the general citizenry trusted

the office-holders with the responsibility to award silk to select individuals with fairness, equity, justice, level-headedness, and unbiased, non-political interference.

I don't think it was meant to be used as a political tool to be handed out to friends, family, or cabinet colleagues, and as gifts to members of one political party.

However, of late we have not seen this in the selection process, and that has flared up into chaos, confusion, and vexatious debunking by attorneys, the Law Association, attorneys who felt sidelined, and the general public. So, what is the lesson here?

Politicians are not to be trusted in making important decisions that will ultimately affect the wider cross-section of society. This lesson should stretch across the board to selection of a Commissioner of Police and President of the Republic.

Politicians across the divide have shown their true colours. It is time to change some of these archaic processes, or we will be 'spinning top in mud'.

W.K.S. Hosein, Trinidad and Tobago, via email.



A police officer on patrol in Trinidad

Stand up, speak out on crime

Dear Editor,

In a society where hard-working citizens should feel safe and secure in their own homes, it is truly disheartening to witness the rise of criminal activities that threaten the very fabric of our communities.

The image of families being subjected to violence, theft and trauma within the sanctity of their homes is a sobering reminder of the harsh reality many face on a daily basis.

The lack of urgency and accountability in addressing these heinous crimes are a stark reflection of the disconnect between those in power and the ordinary citizens they are meant to serve and protect.

It is unacceptable that politicians, shielded by their blue lights and security details, seem detached from the daily struggles and fears faced by the common people.

When reports of crimes go unanswered, when justice is delayed or denied, it erodes the trust and confidence that citizens should have in their law enforcement agencies and government officials. The prioritisation of political games over addressing the pressing issues of crime and public safety is a betrayal of the very essence of governance.

It is time for citizens to rise up, to unite in solidarity, and to demand the change and action that are long overdue. The rights of law-abiding citizens should never be overshadowed by the privileges afforded to criminals. The well-being and security of every individual must be upheld and protected at all costs.

We cannot afford to tolerate a system that discounts the concerns and fears of its own people. It is imperative that more drastic measures be taken to root out the evil that walks among us and threatens the very foundation of our society.

The time for complacency and indifference is over. It is time to stand up, speak out and demand the safety and security that every citizen deserves.

Act now!

Elijah Motieram, Trinidad and Tobago, via email.

Gold smuggling remains a pervasive problem in Guyana

First of Two Parts

US sanctions against the father-son duo, Nazar Mohamed and Azruddin Mohamed, for smuggling some ten thousand kilograms of gold have highlighted a pervasive problem in Guyana that has been largely allowed to flourish for almost two decades.

Evidently, government and industry officials have been fully aware of gold smuggling, but have been wilfully blind about it – which incidentally is a criminal infraction under money laundering laws, equivalent to being complicit with the smugglers.

Since the US sanctions were imposed, the government has been quite vociferous about taking action to prevent gold smuggling, but such actions can only be enforced by the regulatory bodies associated with the gold industry.

Perhaps the most scathing criticisms of the failure to curb smuggling comes from the Guyana Gold and Diamond Miners Association (GGDMA), which in a release last month said that illegal mining, illegal shops, and the unregulated trading of gold within the interior, are the “pillars” upon which the illicit gold smuggling enterprises survive.

The GGDMA also inferred that the government’s regulatory agency, the Guyana Geology and Mines Commission (GGMC), as well as public servants associated with the industry, are also to blame for gold smuggling. It stated that lax enforcement by GGMC has allowed illegal activities to flourish, noting that over the years, it has turned “a blind eye” to repeat offenders, merely slapping them on the wrist, which in turn has fostered a culture of “unabashed lawlessness”.

According to the release, these illegal operators openly disregard the orders of GGMC officers, and brazenly make violent threats against anyone trying to stand in their way.

“An illegal operation is shut down one day, but by the very next day they return to contravening the orders of the GGMC as if nothing had ever happened. Equipment is seized from repeat offenders and within days the said equipment is returned to them. There is no real serious consequence for their actions,” stated the release.

The GGDMA complained that every year for the past ten years, it has been calling on the GGMC to step up its enforcement against illegal activities in the gold sector, but to no avail. It stated that in the past, there were a number of areas in the interior that were gazetted to permit trade to take place; however, this has degenerated into persons simply setting up itinerant trading posts, also known as ‘landings’ at will.

The release explained this has resulted in a “multitude of landings” throughout the interior, too numerous to be properly regulated, where illegal gold buyers set up shop and buy directly from unethical miners who are willing to sell their production for higher prices, free of any paper trail, thus avoiding the paying of any royalties or taxes. These landings are also hubs for human trafficking, as well as the sale of illegal drugs and weapons.

The GGDMA said that: “We have repeatedly called for the reduction of the vast number of these hubs, and for the ones that remain to be properly regularised, but to date no meaningful action has been taken. If the avenues through which illegal miners and illegal buyers are connecting are significantly reduced, then there would undoubtedly be an increase in gold declarations.”

The release also asserted that “a blind eye” is turned by certain individuals appointed by the State to safeguard its interest in these areas to facilitate illegal mining for which they are no doubt handsomely rewarded, which prompts the following questions: How much gold is produced in these areas that goes undeclared?

How many illegal operations in these areas are being funded by smugglers?”

The claim was also made that many miners have made repeated appeals to the GGMC about illegal activities, but very little gets done. And miners who report often find themselves targeted by the officers and have such, resorted to joining the “stay quiet gang”.

The GGDMA acknowledged that while overall gold production may be down for several factors, it remains convinced that reduced gold declaration is

“inextricably linked to the proliferation of illegal mining”. It iterated that illegal mining, coupled with the establishment of illegal shops that facilitate the purchase and sale of gold without effective oversight, are among the chief reasons the government fails to get its revenue.

Given this state of affairs, the association opined that it is time the government also engages its financial agencies such as the Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU) and the Special Organised Crime Unit (SOCU) to investigate the many shop owners and mining operators, who despite having massive operations, do not declare any significant amounts of gold. In addition, the owners of some of the operations are well-known, and flaunt their wealth despite, on paper, not declaring any gold.

“And who is actually the real owner of these large active operations that do not declare any gold, but yet regularly purchase large quantities of fuel, spares and other supplies to support their operations? Is the equipment even really owned by these operators, or is the equipment in fact owned by the smuggling ring to which the gold is eventually sold?” the association questioned.

The release also touched on the issue of civil servants connected to the industry, who are enjoying lifestyles beyond what their salaries can support.

All of this, it adds, must be investigated, as it is of the firm belief that these financial agencies have the relevant tools and procedures at their disposal to put all the pieces of this puzzle together, and consequently take action condignly against the “masterminds” who currently reside in the shadows.

Incidentally, gold has been an integral component of Guyana’s socio-economic fabric. In addition to being a major source of capital formation over the past 175 years, the industry has evolved to become a significant contributor to the country’s GDP growth; and the largest contributor to foreign exchange earnings and foreign direct investment (FDI), aside from the oil sector.

Gold’s increasing contribution to GDP has resulted from higher levels of production. In 2019, the sector produced, 634,905 troy ounces of gold, below its peak year in 2016, when production was 710,706 ounces, almost four times greater than production of 182,216 ounces in 2006. Since then, production has steadily declined to 432,034 ounces in 2023.

It is estimated that actual gold production is even significantly higher, with as much 60 percent of all production going unreported. A significant portion of such production is believed to be illegally funnelled through the country’s porous borders, and supports a range of illegal activities, including money laundering, tax evasion, and the illegal drug trade.

Gold is largely produced by artisanal, small, and medium scale mining (ASM), which currently accounts for approximately 80 percent of gold total production in Guyana. Over the past five years, large scale mining commenced making inroads, and is expected to erode the contribution of ASMs over time; however, ASMs are expected to remain the major source of gold production for years to come. Currently, there are more than 20 foreign mining companies operating in Guyana, but only two companies are engaged in large scale mining.

It is believed that many artisanal miners sell their gold illegally to smugglers who pay them ready cash, compared to selling to the Guyana Gold Board, where they would have to pay taxes/royalties.

According to the country’s recently released Second Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing National Risk Assessment (NRA) report, the estimated value of the proceeds generated from smuggling, including gold smuggling, is (US) \$2.2 billion, compared to drug trafficking at a mere (US) \$13.4 million and tax evasion at (US) \$10.4 million.

The assessment was compiled by the Anti-Money Laundering and Countering the Financing of Terrorism National Coordination Committee. It noted that while Guyana has an overall money laundering risk of Medium High based on an assessment of 20 sectors, the Dealers in Precious Minerals or Licensed Traders’ sector was the only sector among the 20 assessed that had a high vulnerability rating.

The major contributing factors to the country’s Medium High money laundering vulnerability rating, according to the NRA, are directly related to its ability to combat money laundering. These factors include the poor quality of criminal investigations, prosecutions, adjudications, and asset forfeiture frameworks, as well as the lack of an AML Policy and Strategy and inadequate cross-border controls on cash and similar instruments.

Gold smuggling has been an age-old problem that has been tied to crime, corruption, and money laundering. It has attracted attention both nationally and internationally for

several years, with little action to implement measures to control the problem.

It was estimated that as much as 60 percent of all gold production goes unreported. A significant portion of such production is believed to be illegally funnelled through the country’s porous borders, and supports a range of illegal activities, including money laundering, tax evasion, and the illegal drug trade.

For instance, way back in January 2016, former Natural Resources Minister Raphael Trotman stated in the local press that some 15,000 ounces of raw gold were being transported out of Guyana weekly. He then disclosed that the Federal Bureau of Investigation and US Homeland Security were looking into the issue.

Trotman stated that some of the gold came directly from Guyana, while some of it was sourced from other South American nations. The former minister indicated the gold leaves via several ports making its way to the US, Brazil, Suriname and Europe. It was also reported that Guyana’s gold finds its way to the Middle East and China.

In addition, *Demerara Waves Online News* reported in 2015 that more than (G) \$40 billion of the precious metal had been smuggled to the US as “scrap gold” between late 2014 and early 2015.

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. He can be reached at dlakhan@rogers.com.



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One of the top events for the summer so far took place on June 22 when One Love Table held its first Annual Father's Day and Eid ul Adha Fish Fry and Barbecue Lime fund-raiser at its headquarters in North York. The Golden Series celebration saw an abundance of food, music, face painting, and fund-raising sales of the Palestine flag. Entertainment was provided by DJ Rick, with participation by community personalities Chandan Paul, Chalissa Raj, Shalini Persaud, and Raj Vinod Kumar, among many others. The energised 'lime' also saw Father's Day prize giveaways in a day of fun and fund-raising that was attended by over 300 supporters. One Love Table's President Habeeb Alli later expressed heart-felt gratitude to the community family that attended the event, and noted that despite the inclement weather, the effort raised enough funds for the food bank. He also thanked all the volunteers, sponsors, and attendees.



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Honouring a faithful devotee, entrepreneur, and a mother of all seasons

Edited acceptance speech delivered by Dr Ramesh Seegobin for the Signal Service Award bestowed on his mother, Shrimati Lakshwatee Mewa on June 30 by the Bharat Sevashram Sangha Canada in celebration of her 85th birthday.

By Dr Ramesh Seegobin

Aunty Gladys is not here today, because as you know, she is not well. She had stroke during the Labour Day long weekend in 2016. However, she is living her best life – she is still ‘The Boss’, and has her needs fulfilled, which include being in her own home surrounded by her children, grandchildren, and great grand kids. She is also surrounded by relatives, friends, and the family from the Ashram.

Mom’s daily needs are also met by her own private housekeeper, along with caregivers 24 hours a day.

Her affiliation with the Ashram started several decades ago in Guyana at Nigg, near the post office. Her house was conveniently located directly behind the Hindu temple, with only a gate that separated both compounds.

She took full advantage of this contiguity, and did not miss a function at the temple, among them the Sunday morning service, Friday night services, and monthly full moon pujas.

It is at the temple there in Nigg where she met Swami Purnananda; and then later Swami Brahmananda, who became her Guruji. Later, she met Swami Vidyananda and Swami Bhajananda, and all the Brahmcharis.

Aunty Gladys, as she is well known, was the eighth in a line of nine children to parents Samundri and Mohabir Singh. After almost all her siblings were married and had left the parental home to build their married lives, it was Gladys, her mom, and younger sister Saab who remained behind.

It came to be that her mother was unable to work. In response, Aunty Gladys took up the mantle, and consequently dropped out of school. She began making *bara* and *channa*, which she sold at the street corner. She also started a vegetable garden, which saw additional income from the sale of *genip* and gooseberries.

The business experience from selling *bara* and *channa*, and fruits from the garden, saw the early emergence of Aunty Gladys’ latent entrepreneurial spirit.

These were challenging times. In those hard days, Aunty Gladys and sister Saab walked barefoot to Port Maurant, about three kilometres away, to babysit their nieces and nephews. Here was also the start to Aunty Gladys’ singing career. From this commitment, the pennies that she earned were dutifully given to her mother upon arrival at home, which went towards the family’s grocery budget.

As well as having an entrepreneurial spirit, mom was also enterprising and forward-thinking. We all recall the anecdote from our family’s history, where one day during mom’s girlhood, she noted that a visiting friend was cleaning out one of their bearing trees of its ripened fruit.

Waiting with other friends at the bottom of the tree, mom grew anxious that there would soon be no fruits left. The sale of these fruits was an important part of the family’s income.

To avoid the tree being left without any fruit, mom cleverly



Shrimati Lakshwatee Mewa

threw a rock at a nearby wasp’s nest, disturbing the insects, which also sent her companions flying. Thereafter, her friends had a healthy respect, and a disinclination for fruits from that tree.

Then there came one of those momentous shifts that occurs in early life.

Mom’s *bara* and *channa* stall began being frequented by a handsome young man who always arrived on his motorcycle. A book-keeper and a cricketer for the local team, this young man on the motorcycle soon developed a healthy appetite for mom’s delicious *bara* and *channa*.

So frequent were his visits that it piqued the curiosity of her attentive and protective brothers. Warning said motorcyclist that her brothers were growing suspicious, the handsome young man then shifted gears. That added momentum led the couple to start their journey together on the marital road.

At first the newlyweds lived with mom’s mother. Here mom’s entrepreneurial eye discerned a demand for headwear that saw her sewing and embroidering the head-kerchief known as the *Rumal*, which was then worn by married women.

She spent long hours in intensive industry, over ten hours a day, making dozens of headwear, at times late into the night.

Meanwhile, mom was taking care of us six children.

The success of this small home business led to mom taking her entrepreneurial talent up yet another notch.

Soon, she was buying and selling grocery items. Noting the growth in mom’s acuity and her industry, it convinced dad to quit his book-keeper job, and to instead open a grocery store.

The business thrived, and mom kept working hard while saving her pennies; meanwhile, despite owning a grocery, us children still went to school barefoot.

Mom and dad began building their dream-home after my grandmother passed away. However, the tragic loss of dad shattered the family.

Aunty Gladys became a widow at 39 years of age. But despite the turbulence in her life, she remained steadfast, and a pillar

in our family.

And supporting her during this turbulent and life-changing time was the Ashram. She immersed herself totally in its activities. Here she had a sense of belonging; its sacred presence added a new and stable mandir family; it offered sanctuary and hope, and provided routine and structure to her day.

In a generous gesture of altruism, mom donated half of dad’s life insurance to the Ashram when it was printing its *Hindutvam*. Later, for each *Shiva Ratri* observance, mom made a bucket of garam masala for the celebration.

It was this blend that later became her signature, branded Maywah Garam Masala.

In 1983, Aunty Gladys made the migration move to Canada; she arrived here with two of her sons, Buddy and myself.

Mom also arrived in Canada with her own determined characteristic, which is to overcome tribulation; and that tremendous energy to push beyond boundaries into new entrepreneurial frontiers, doing so with hard work, industry, and faith in her religion.

Among these qualities was also a purposeful and futuristic commitment, which was for my brother and myself to acquire higher education and a better life in Canada.

As we have seen so far, mom was never one to stay too long inside a comfort zone. And of course, that gate between her house and the Ashram, now a metaphorical fixture in her life, was always present, and remained constantly open.

Similarly, here in Toronto, that open gate took her to the Bharat Sevashram Sangha, where she met Swami Brahmananda, Swami Bhajananda, and later Swami Pushkarananda.

And of course, it was a challenging life in Canada. Here Aunty Gladys worked on evenings in sewing factories, while babysitting during the day.

She supported me throughout university. She began making her blended masala when I was about to start medical school. It was first done in one of the bedrooms of our condo using a hand mill. Later two expert engineers, brother Kumar and brother-in-law Brij, worked together and mechanised the mill with a motor, and so production increased.

The growth in production saw mom also supplying stores in the US, with her sister in New York assisting with the distribution and sales.

And so it came to be that mom’s industry and entrepreneurial spirit had not only crossed the border to the US, but also went on to make the leap across a generation. It was the sale of these spices that made up the balance of my tuition fees, which was needed for my medical school.

The operation then moved to an industrial unit; and later on, mom bought her own unit. Today, Maywah Foods Inc is in its 35th year of operation, and remains a successful enterprise, with a loyal and devoted clientele in Canada and the US.

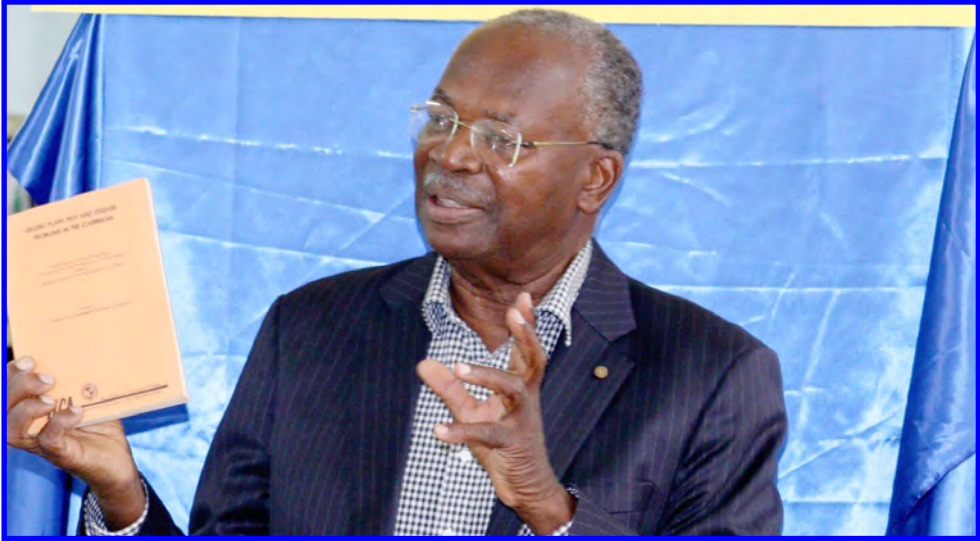
I am eternally blessed and grateful to have her as my mother. Without her I would not have been who I am; and where I am today. Thank you, mom.

And to our Ashram, my sincerest gratitude to all of you for so generously honouring my beautiful mom.



Dr Seegobin (photo at left) with certificates of recognition from the Office of the Premier of Ontario and the Bharat Sevashram Sangha honouring Aunty Gladys, one of the Sangha’s foremost devotees; also, relatives, officials from the Sangha, devotees, and friends gather in celebration. Photos by Ramesh Ramkalawan





Dr Chelston Brathwaite

Call for regional food security agency

Bridgetown – A prominent agricultural expert last month called for the establishment of a Caribbean food security agency, citing compounding challenges facing the region's drive to feed itself, the media in Barbados reported.

Dr Chelston Brathwaite, former Director General of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture, made the appeal at the unveiling of a book collection in his name, which was donated to Barbados' National Library Service and the Ministry of Agriculture.

"These are not ordinary times," Brathwaite said, pointing to the lingering effects of Covid-19, geopolitical unrest in Gaza and Ukraine, and ongoing climate change threats.

He added, "As we seek to build economies for the next 50 years of Caricom, we need to place food security as a priority."

The proposed Caribbean food security agency would coordinate regional efforts and mobilise the Caribbean community towards achieving food security, according to Dr Brathwaite. He emphasised the link between poor nutrition and the high incidence of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) in the region.

Said Brathwaite: "Poor nutrition and poor food choices are major contributors to the high incidence of diabetes, hypertension, cancers, and obesity in the Caribbean. These chronic, non-communicable diseases continue to be a threat to the development of the Caribbean region."

At the same time, Brathwaite also highlighted Barbados's substantial food import bill, estimated at approximately (B) \$800 million.

And he also questioned the reliance on foreign food supplies, saying: "We pay farmers in Miami, Idaho, California, Mexico, and Thailand. Are we paying our own farmers?"

Citing a recent Caribbean Development Bank report, he added: "The current data show

that eight out of every ten deaths in [Barbados] are due to non-communicable diseases, and four out of every ten premature deaths in Barbados are due to an NCD."

He warned that the economic costs of NCDs would burden Barbados, and undermine human capital investment.

He also noted that Barbados would continue to be manipulated if the country did not acquire self-sufficiency in food production.

"They will give us what they want at prices we cannot afford, which is bad for us, and then sell us medicine to treat the resulting health issues," he declared.

Barbados' Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Agriculture, Terry Bascombe, echoed Brathwaite's concerns while distinguishing between food security and food sovereignty.

Said Bascombe: "You can be food secure if you have enough money to import food, but you will still be reliant on the rest of the world. We are in a better place when we control our diets from seed to swallow."

Brathwaite concluded with a call to action, stating, "We have to commit, as we have committed to sustainable energy, to becoming a food-secure nation. If we do nothing about it, the day will come when we will ask if the next generation of Caribbean people will be fit to confront the challenges of development."

The remarks were made when Brathwaite donated 200 books from his personal collection to the Ministry of Agriculture's library, including nine authored by him.

Director of the National Library Service, Jennifer Yarde described the donation as "a unique collection of invaluable information, covering a wide range of topics in agriculture."

Also, Professor Emeritus Sir Henry Fraser commended Brathwaite's gesture, expressing hope that the library would make good use of the donation.



Caribbean leaders attended the recently concluded ICC World Cup T20 final between India and South Africa. India took the ICC trophy in a thrilling finish in the game that was held in Barbados. Enjoying the final match, and in a display of Caribbean camaraderie, were (left to right) Saint Lucia's PM Philip Pierre; Barbados' PM Mia Mottley; Guyana's President Dr Irfaan Ali; and Antigua and Barbuda's PM Gaston Browne. Photo courtesy Gaston Browne's Facebook page.



Ask Jay...

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

LET'S TALK PIZZA AND ECONOMICS

Imagine sharing a large pizza with four people. Each person gets a quarter. Add six more friends, and suddenly, the pizza is divided into tenths. That is how inflation works – things get sliced thinner as the value decreases.

During the pandemic, interest rates hit record lows, and prices for goods and services surged. The Central Bank responded by raising interest rates, resulting in a sluggish market where sellers outnumber buyers, leading to a drop in home prices. Real estate is the economy's main engine because a home purchase or sale generates revenue.

Spring is a busy season for real estate, but with a high interest rate, the market is staggering. The Central Bank dropped the interest rate by a quarter percent, hoping to kick-start the housing market, but to no avail. Inflation is a big problem for Canadians, where the cost of shelter increased by 6.4 percent in a year and mortgage interest costs by a whopping 24.5 percent. First-time buyers must grapple with high house costs and high interest rates at the same time.

The Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation stated that roughly 45 percent of all mortgages are up for renewal between 2024 and 2025, and homeowners must allocate additional funds to cover higher mortgage payments. It is becoming increasingly challenging for families to maintain a balanced budget.

While the Central Bank is trying to keep inflation around the two percent mark, the federal government can do more. Why not introduce a fixed-rate mortgage for 25 years so a family can budget adequately? Another idea is to allow families to choose an amortisation schedule that can stretch from a 25 to a 50-year payment plan. With this concept, homeowners can adjust their payments to suit their pockets. They can afford to keep a roof above their head in bad times, and pay down their mortgage in good times.

The government reintroduced a 30-year mortgage with restrictions that derailed its intent – the 30-year amortisation is only for first-time buyers purchasing newly-built homes under one million dollars. The question remains: Why exclusively for new homes and first-time buyers? What about buyers looking to purchase a resale condo in their neighbourhood? This initiative sparks inquiries about fairness and inclusivity.

Recently, the Feds increased the capital gains tax, stating that it would only affect a few wealthy Canadians. If a family works hard and buys an investment property or a cottage, they are considered rich. This move will do more harm because investors would choose to invest abroad, where the tax laws are more favourable, exacerbating the rental market.

Almost half of Canada's population will be on retirement income in a few years, and with Canada's aging population, the cost of health care will balloon. Canada's debt will increase, and, as a result, more taxation. The government will continue to boost immigration, and with more immigrants in the GTA, there will be a greater demand for housing. As the dollar weakens, everything will become more expensive, placing additional strain on budgets and resources.

Interest rates are falling. Indeed, there will be a few more rate cuts, which is significant for those with variable mortgages. If you are about to renew your mortgage, stick with the variable because you can lock it in later when the rates drop.

If you buy your home for the first time, look for an affordable one. It is much better paying a mortgage than rent. Choose a long closing to take advantage of today's low price and tomorrow's low interest rates.

Homeowners on a tight financial rope should explore all options before giving up homeownership. Money in the bank will lose value over time, as real estate acts as a hedge against inflation. Consider increasing the amortisation to reduce monthly payments, or renting a room or two to make ends meet. Many seniors are selling and buying another home away from GTA, with lower prices and quieter roads.

In summary, while the real estate market may fluctuate, it is expected to rebound. Securing housing is crucial, given its role as a financial anchor in uncertain times.

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At the Diaspora/Business event on June 23 were (left to right) Mani Singh, Faaz, Tony Whyte, VP Jagdeo, Mohamed Osman Ali and Bibi Shariman – parents of President Dr Irfaan Ali, and Guyana’s High Commissioner to Canada, Keith George



‘Rock star’ Jagdeo gets warm welcome to TO

By Romeo Kaseram
LJI Reporter

Toronto – The visit to Toronto by Guyana’s Vice President Bharrat Jagdeo was long-awaited and long-overdue, Honorary Consul at the Consulate General in Toronto Mani Singh said last week.

“It was a five day tour by VP Jagdeo, and a successful visit where he met with the diaspora,” Singh stated. He added it was also the first visit by Jagdeo since his last tour in 2019, and following the 2020 general election.

“And the diaspora was not disappointed. VP Jagdeo is a champion of the earth as much as a champion of Guyana’s democracy. Also, the diaspora recognises him as the leader of the struggle following the 2020 general elections that saw the successful return of democracy to Guyana,” Singh declared.

Consequently, VP Jagdeo was thoroughly and “warmly mobbed like a rock star” by hundreds of fans in the diaspora during the visit, Singh declared.

He added, “VP Jagdeo was thoroughly appreciated and embraced while he was here.”

Singh was recalling the surging attendance at the events that were held for the visiting government dignitary.

Among these events were an evening at the Windies restaurant in Scarborough, appearances at the International Muslim Organisation in Etobicoke and Brampton Triveni Mandir, and

See next page





VP Jagdeo (second from right) addresses attendees at the Diaspora/Business meeting on June 23; also in photo are (left to right) Mani Singh, Anthony Whyte, and High Commissioner Keith George

‘Close-knit and supportive’ diaspora attends all events

From Previous Page

the Guyana 58th Anniversary Festival, which took place on June 22 at the Malvern Family Resource Centre in Scarborough.

Jagdeo was also the guest of honour at a Diaspora/Business Meeting, which took place on June 23 at the Pearson Convention Centre in Brampton.

Said Singh: “I think he was very pleased when over 600 persons turned up for that meeting. It was an incredible attendance, and a massive turnout for an event that was organised by the Guyana Consulate here Toronto.”

Singh also cited the energy and the nationalism that were evident at all the gatherings. And at the same time, he also acknowledged entrepreneur Anthony Whyte for his generosity in entirely funding the June 23 event, which was held at the packed Pearson Convention Center.

“What was evident at that event in Brampton, and at the other locations, was along with the large turnout came an accompanying outpouring of affection and appreciation for VP Jagdeo. It was a wonderful show of how close-knit and supportive we are here in Canada,” Singh declared.





Elton proudly draped with Guyana's Golden Arrowhead in NY



Elton in Guyana after his WBA Super Flyweight Gold title win in 2024; with him are Guyana's Vice-President Bharrat Jagdeo (centre), and other officials



Elton thanks the Guyana Day, NY Chapter, after receiving an award

Guyana-born boxer Elton has a career on his hands and the world at this feet

By Dhanpaul Narine
When we met 15 years ago, he was already a champion in the making. He had the fire in his eyes and the determination to reach to the top.

In the succeeding years, one heard about his prowess in the ring, and the struggles against the odds to get a break. Life was never easy, but he was in no mood to give up. He brought the boxer's grit outside the ring, and with a stiff upper lip, he kept moving on to better things.

Elton Dharry has had one of the most challenging rises to boxing stardom. He was born in the rural countryside in Leguan, Guyana. The island of Leguan is in the Essequibo River.

Elton grew up in the Richmond Hill area, and says that at one time, Leguan had the best beaches in Guyana. Elton's dad was Everton, and his mom was Enid Dharry.

Elton is the fourth of six children. When he was 13, the family made a momentous decision, and moved from Leguan to New York City to pursue the American Dream.

What was the initial impression like? The family landed in chilly weather and had to adjust quickly to life in the big city. They settled in Brooklyn and Elton said it was a different world.

He was 13 and had to go back to school. It was IS 171, and mathematics was his favourite subject. Elton graduated and went to Franklin K. Lane High School. He took part in a number of sports that included handball, soccer, and martial arts.

It was here also that his interest in boxing started. He said that the state of his neighbourhood drove him to the sport.

There was a lot of 'drama', and it was good to know how to defend oneself. In addition, members of his family were boxing fans.

The television opened up new avenues to the sport, and ESPN classics allowed him to appreciate the history of boxing.

"I watched Jack Johnson all the way to the current boxers at the time," Elton said.

He added, "Many people don't know that Joe Walcott, a world welterweight champion, was born in British Guiana in 1873. He was champion from 1901 to 1906."

How did Elton get active in boxing? He was taken by his older brother Irving to a gym in Manhattan. It was a tough schedule to combine school with boxing because the commute was long.

But Elton was determined, and the fact that he was able to mix with famous names was worth it. For example, he met Rawle Frank, a former Guyanese champion there.

As his progress continued, Elton went over

to Gleason's Gym. This was the place where the top boxers honed their skills. As it happens, Elton is one of the longest members at Gleason's, and he even took a picture with Mike Tyson.

Elton set goals for himself. He wanted to be a great professional fighter. He got himself a trainer. An exhibition fight was arranged. It was competitive and Elton showed dazzling boxing skills. His big break came when he was paired with a Mexican fighter. Elton knocked him out in the second round.

Now he was moving up the ranks, earning the New York Golden Gloves, a place in the New York Metros, and he worked his way to the US Nationals. He represented Guyana in the 2004 Olympics. He lost on points to a fighter from Puerto Rico, but the experience was invaluable.

It was not long before he became a professional boxer. It took place on December 26, 2004. It was a big clash with a fellow Guyanese, but Elton knocked him out. He returned to the US, and after an injury, he went to the West Coast.

He spent a few years in Los Angeles and continued his career. After much experience, he was back in New York and he took on a competitive fight. He won a string of fights, and he was now fighting for the world title in Australia in 2019.

Elton is currently listed among the top fighters in the Super Flyweight Division, and he thanks the Guyanese authorities for their support.

The next step is for him to fight again for the world championship. In 2024, he won the WBA Super Flyweight Gold title in Guyana, defeating Dexter Marques. He is close to another crack at the world championship, and this could happen soon, probably in Guyana. It would be for the WBA Flyweight Championship.

It would be great if Elton could do an exhibition fight in 'Little Guyana' in New York so the community could see his skills. He is a rank fighter and the world is at his feet. Elton thanks his family for their support and his teachers and fans.

Apart from boxing, he likes cricket. His favorite cricketers are Shivnarine Chanderpaul, Carl Hooper, and Brian Lara. His advice to the youngsters is to do the right thing and keep moving.

Elton Dharry has made his country and his community proud. He is friendly and approachable, and whatever happens in the ring, he can rest assured that he is the people's champion. We wish him and his family all the best in the future.



Elton in action in the ring



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Amit (647) 703-1283	Donna (416) 741-4970	Ross (416) 412-0306

New Investment Guide highlights tourism opportunities in the Caribbean

A wide range of investment projects available in the Caribbean's tourism and hospitality sector are featured in the just-released 2024 edition of the *Caribbean Tourism And Hospitality Investment Guide*, a publication of the Caribbean Tourism Organisation (CTO) Scholarship Foundation.

The fourth edition of the *Investment Guide* highlights investment opportunities in 21 CTO member countries and recent investments in the sector across the region.

Produced by Florida-based Carigold Signature, the *Investment Guide* was made available to the region's tourism ministers who attended last month's CTO "Caribbean Week" events at the InterContinental Hotel in New York.

"We feel strongly that this important publication that focuses on identifying investment opportunities, is a critical tool for the members of the CTO," said Chairman of the Foundation, Jacqueline Johnson in a message in the publication.

She added, "Prospective companies interested in the development of the Caribbean tourism and hospitality industry can secure information on infrastructure development, including airport and seaport upgrades as well as hotel development and expansions. This resource is also very valuable to high-net-worth individuals with a desire to invest in the region."

Also speaking on the *Investment Guide* was CTO Chairman,

Kenneth Bryan.

As he noted, "The Caribbean has substantial investment potential. In the hospitality and tourism sector, opportunities abound in areas such as medical and sports tourism, conference hosting, cruise homeporting, ferry services, and yachting. These sectors represent niche or emerging markets ripe for growth."

Bryan is also the Minister of Tourism and Ports in the Cayman Islands.

The *Investment Guide* is being distributed to targeted business organisations and executives, as well as diaspora leaders in New York, Florida, and Toronto.

It will also be available at the annual Caribbean Hotel Investment Conference and Operations Summit, which takes place later this year in Barbados from November 13 to November 15.

"In addition to international brand name properties, several countries welcome investment for more boutique hotels and eco-lodges, marina facilities, theme parks and entertainment centres, medical, wellness and

sports tourism projects, cultural tourism and Agri-tourism initiatives," said Sandra Ann Baptiste, Chief Executive Consultant of Carigold Signature. She is also the Editor of the *Investment Guide*.

Baptiste said several governments have recently enhanced their package of investment incentives, upgraded infrastructure and expanded airlift to their destinations.



Sandra Ann Baptiste displays the new Investment Guide with CTO Chairman Kenneth Bryan

Investment Guide features Guyana's tourism potential

Guyana is one of 21 countries featured in the 2024 edition of the *Caribbean Tourism and Hospitality Investment Guide*, which highlights investment opportunities in the member countries of the Caribbean Tourism Organisation.

Projects listed as investment opportunities in Guyana include upscale eco lodges, resorts and villas, recreational facilities, including amusement and theme parks, golf courses and ancillary facilities.

Guyana is also seeking investment for convention and catering services and transportation providers, in particular, more scheduled and charter air services, as well as overland and river transportation.

The Guyana Tourism Authority and The Guyana Office for Investment have identified Pomeroon-Supenaam (Region 2) as a location suitable for developing resorts, falls, lakes, and historical sites.

The *Investment Guide* said Riverfront investment opportunities in Soesdyke Linden (Region 10) are worth considering, while new projects in The Rupununi (Region 9), the gateways to the Savannahs, are encouraged.

The fourth edition of the publication will be available at the annual Caribbean Hotel Investment Conference and Operations Summit, which is being held in Barbados from November 13 to November 15.

WHO cites worrisome data showing world off-track with inactivity

Geneva – Almost 1.8 billion adults across the globe are at risk of diseases such as cancer, stroke, dementia, and diabetes due to a lack of exercise, the World Health Organisation reported last month. The WHO report also noted that the situation is getting worse.

According to the latest study, researchers and academics found physical inactivity globally rose by about five percentage points between 2010 and 2022.

However, the data also show that nearly one third of adults worldwide, approximately 1.8 billion people, did not meet the recommended levels of physical activity in 2022.

These findings point to a worrying trend of physical inactivity among adults, which has increased by about five percentage points between 2010 and 2022.

The report further noted that if this trend continues, then levels of inactivity are projected to further rise to 35 percent by 2030, and the world is currently off track from meeting the global target to reduce physical inactivity by 2030.

WHO recommends that adults have 150 minutes of moderate-intensity, or 75 minutes of vigorous-intensity physical activity, or its equivalent, per week. Physical inactivity puts adults at greater risk of cardiovascular diseases such as heart attacks and strokes, Type 2 diabetes, dementia, and cancers such as breast and colon.

The study was undertaken by researchers from WHO,

together with academic colleagues, and was published in *The Lancet Global Health* journal.

"These new findings highlight a lost opportunity to reduce cancer, heart disease and improve mental well-being through increased physical activity," said Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, WHO Director-General.

He added, "We must renew our commitments to increasing levels of physical activity and prioritise bold action, including strengthened policies and increased funding to reverse this worrying trend."

The highest rates of physical inactivity were observed in the high-income Asia Pacific region (48 percent) and South Asia (45 percent), with levels of inactivity in other regions ranging from 28 percent in high-income Western countries to 14 percent in Oceania.

Of concern were disparities that remain between gender and age. Physical inactivity is still more common among women globally compared with men, with inactivity rates of 34 percent compared to 29 percent.

In some countries, this difference is as much as 20 percentage points. Additionally, people over 60 are less active than other adults, underscoring the importance of promoting physical activity for older adults.

"Physical inactivity is a silent threat to global health, contributing significantly to the burden of chronic diseases," said Dr



Tedros Ghebreyesus

PAHO finds life expectancy up in Americas alongside rising NCDs

A new report launched by the Pan American Health Organisation has revealed that while overall life expectancy has risen in the Americas, so has the number of people living with non-communicable diseases (NCDs).

According to PAHO, rapid population aging has led to an increase in ill-health and disabilities caused by NCDs and injuries. The report urges countries of the Americas to take action to address the challenges to health systems posed by the region's aging population.

The report is titled *Leading causes of death and disease burden in the Americas: Noncommunicable diseases and external causes*. It analyses the burden of diseases and mortality in the Americas from 2000 to 2019, focusing on NCDs such as cardiovascular diseases, cancers, respiratory diseases, and diabetes; mental and substance use disorders and neurological conditions, as well as unintentional and intentional injuries (or external causes).

It found that the total number of deaths increased by 31 percent from 2000 to 2019 in the Americas – a larger percentage increase than in any other World Health Organisation region.

Overall, NCDs dominated as the leading cause of death in the region, with a mortality rate of 412 per 100,000 in 2019 for women and men combined.

"NCDs and external causes remain a major challenge, not only to health systems, but also to the social and economic development of the Americas," said Dr Anselm Hennis, Director of NCDs and mental health at PAHO.

Hennis added, "It is crucial that countries implement proven interventions to reduce risk factors, as well as strengthen the provision of quality care at the primary health level."

According to the report, the growth and rapid aging of the population in the Americas contributed to a 31 percent increase in the total number of deaths within the last two decades. The region's population also grew from 829 million to 1.01 billion.

During the same period, there was a five-percentage point increase in the number of people aged 40-64 years, and a three-percentage point increase in those aged 65 and older.

This demographic shift could prove a challenge to unprepared health systems, and the report urges countries to prepare

for a growing incidence of NCDs as populations live longer.

The percentage of deaths due to NCDs and external causes increased from 87 percent to 90 percent between 2000 and 2019, with the most significant increase in deaths due to mental and substance use disorders and neurological conditions at 179 percent.

The report also notes that despite the increase in the absolute number of deaths, the mortality rate for NCDs and injuries decreased by 17.2 percent and eight percent, respectively. This has contributed to an increase in life expectancy, and also in the number of people living with NCDs in the region.

This report also highlighted persisting disparities. The mortality rate for NCDs in the Latin Caribbean is approximately 1.5 times higher than in the Andean sub-region.

Furthermore, throughout the region, men experienced consistently higher rates of death and disability than women due to a greater burden of cardiovascular diseases and cancers, as well as high rates of interpersonal violence.

However, women were significantly more likely to experience intimate partner violence. When it comes to mental health, men were more likely to experience alcohol and drug use disorders, while women suffered higher rates of anxiety and depressive disorders.



Anselm Hennis

Tobago spared hurricane onslaught as Beryl flattens Carriacou

Port-of-Spain – Tobago was spared the onslaught from a monster Category 4 hurricane on Monday when Beryl brushed past the island, violently churning its way north towards the Windward Islands. It then made landfall on the island of Carriacou, off Grenada, where it left behind a trail of damage and destruction before heading further north.

Beryl careened into Carriacou on Monday morning after regaining Category Four strength with maximum sustained winds at approximately 225 kilometres an hour.

It is the first storm on record in the Atlantic to reach Category Four strength in June.

It was reported that Grenada Prime Minister Dickon Mitchell said Carriacou had been “flattened”. According to the reports, Mitchell was quoted at a news briefing saying there were “widespread reports of destruction and devastation in Carriacou and Petite Martinique”.

“In half an hour, Carriacou was flattened,” he was reported to have said.

Earlier, Mitchell had said he anticipated the damage caused by Beryl in Carriacou “will be extreme”.

Carriacou has a population of about 10,000, and is best known for its beaches and coral reef.

The area was also remaining vigilant with another disturbance forming about 1,609.3 kilometres east-southeast of the Windward Islands, and also reportedly on a path similar to the one that Beryl took.

Earlier, the US Hurricane Center in Miami warned, “Environmental conditions appear marginally conducive for additional development of this system, and a tropical depression could form by the middle part of this week while it moves generally westward at 15-20 mph across the central and western tropical Atlantic. It has a 20 percent chance of development over the next two days and a 50 percent chance of development over the next seven days.”

Meanwhile, in the wake of Beryl’s ongoing path of destruction, Caricom chairman and Guyana President Dr Irfaan Ali said he was deeply concerned over the hurricane’s passage through the Caribbean.



Unicef Eastern Caribbean posted this photo on its Facebook page of a location in Carriacou that was severely impacted by Hurricane Beryl

In a statement on Caricom’s website, Ali said, “Initial reports have indicated significant damage and destruction to infrastructure and private property in some territories.”

He added, “As this weather phenomenon roars its way through the region, we must continue to brace ourselves against the effects of high winds, storm surges along sea coasts, and heavy rainfall.”

He also called on nationals and the private sector to co-ordinate with their respective governments and regional emergency response agencies to provide support and relief to those

affected by the hurricane.

And he indicated that the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency was already working to mobilise and co-ordinate assistance and disaster relief.

“This is a time for all of us as a regional community to stand together and extend our support to those impacted, or likely to be impacted, by Hurricane Beryl. Let us mobilise the necessary assistance and relief efforts in the true spirit of regional solidarity,” Ali said.

The 47th regular meeting of the Caricom Heads of Government was also postponed fol-

lowing Beryl’s arrival. It is due to take place in Grenada from July 3 to July 5.

Also, the Caricom Private Sector Organisation met on July 1 to begin co-ordination to support impacted member states.

The CPSO stated that its Chief Executive and Technical Director Dr Patrick Antoine was seeking “to ensure co-ordination and alignment of the private-sector response, and that participating entities were on standby and in a state of readiness to provide the required aid”.

Private-sector companies and business support organisations from Trinidad and Tobago, Antigua and Barbuda, Suriname, and Guyana, participated in that meeting.

CPSO executive committee member and Trinidad and Tobago Energy Chamber CEO Dr Thackwray Driver said, “Ultimately, the assistance and support that we aim (to provide) must be informed by a needs list. Sometimes, unfortunately, well-meaning private-sector and other persons may wish to share a variety of items, but we want to ensure that the support we extend matches the needs of the persons and private sectors in the affected countries as much as possible.”

The CPSO added that regional water agencies have pledged “to ensure that an emergency supply is ready and on hand, if required. Additionally, several manufacturers and conglomerates have been approached for the provision of required relief items.”

Antoine also stated that regional vessels and ground transport providers have been engaged for assistance.

Trinidad and Tobago’s Prime Minister Dr Keith Rowley also offered to assist. In a Facebook post, Rowley indicated that Trinidad and Tobago “survived Beryl without too much bruising”.

In the post he also thanked his Caricom colleagues who “reached out to commit assistance to the people of Trinidad and Tobago, even as the hurricane was bearing down on us”.

He added, “We stand ready to offer support to Grenada and St Vincent and the Grenadines at this time as we pray, ‘There but for the grace of God go I’”.



A vehicle negotiates a roadway in Trinidad yesterday that was partially blocked by a fallen tree following inclement weather caused by Hurricane Beryl

Barbados reports damage to houses, vessels

Bridgetown – While Barbados escaped the worst of Hurricane Beryl, this nation’s Prime Minister indicated yesterday the island had suffered damage to at least 40 homes, while an estimated 20 fishing vessels was sunk.

Among the vessels that went under were the *Jolly Roger* and the *Dream Chaser* party boats, Mottley stated in a national address.

She also reported other fishing vessels were damaged, and two areas of Highway 7 were impassable.

“So far, reports are of 40 homes with some kind of damage, roof loss, partial collapse or minimal like roof leaks. We expect that that number may increase because we have over 400 persons in shelters, and now the all clear is given, some may return to their homes and find that it may have sustained damage,” she told the nation.

Mottley said that arrangements were also

implemented for preliminary assessments to be done to those homes reported to have sustained damage. She also encouraged others to share the information with the relevant authorities.

She also announced she would be going on a tour of the island to assess the damage.

Mottley noted that the experience with Hurricane Beryl turned out to be the “building block” for the island to prepare for similar and more frequent storms in the future to ensure that it becomes more resilient.

“This could have been far worse for us from the point of view that had we taken a direct hit or an even close hit. We now know how bad the level of devastation could have been,” she stated.

However, she noted that “it was not over” as there was another weather system that was already on approach.

Gonsalves: COP ‘largely a talk shop’

Kingstown – The annual United Nation’s Climate Change Conference (COP) was criticised earlier this week, with St Vincent and the Grenadines Prime Minister Ralph Gonsalves describing it as “largely a talk shop” in the wake of the devastation caused by Hurricane Beryl.

Gonsalves’s comments were published earlier this week by *The Guardian* in the UK after the Category 4 Hurricane Beryl made landfall in the Windward Islands on July 1.

In the interview, Gonsalves expressed frustration over what he saw as the lack of meaningful action by major greenhouse-gas-emitting countries.

“You hear a lot of talk, but you don’t see much action – like making funds available to small-island developing states and other vulnerable countries,” he stated.

He said the early-season hurricane should raise awareness of the region’s vulnerabilities, and prompt action on commitments from the Paris Accord and other agreements.

He also pointed to the July 4 UK election campaign as an example of weak political will on climate action.

“Climate change is not a major part of the campaigns. While some Labour and Green party members mention it, it is not central to the major parties’ messages because it is not seen as an election winner,” he lamented.

Additionally, “The same situation is occurring in Western Europe and the US as countries shift to the right. It’s a terrible time for

small-island developing states and vulnerable countries.”

Gonsalves said impact from the hurricane ripped off roofs in St Vincent, including that of the 204-year-old St George’s Anglican Cathedral in the capital city of Kingstown.

The hurricane was being felt at the time of *The Guardian’s* interview with Gonsalves, who reported on the conditions that were being experienced.

“We have no electricity, and as I speak, the rain is pounding on the official prime minister’s residence and the winds are howling. It’s going to get much worse. The coming hours are going to be horrendous,” he stated.

Beryl’s torrential rain and gale-force winds downed power lines, damaged vehicles, and forced thousands into shelters. Also, videos posted on social media showed roofing sheets flying through the air.

Gonsalves said 90 percent of homes on Union Island lost roofs, or were severely damaged.

The US Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration had warned that Beryl posed a “life-threatening” danger. It rapidly intensified from a tropical depression to a major hurricane in just 42 hours, a rare event in Atlantic hurricane history.

By the morning of June 30, countries across the eastern Caribbean, including SVG, Barbados, Grenada and St Lucia, were on hurricane watch. By the end of the day, some islands had declared a State of Emergency, imposing curfews and movement restrictions.



Ralph Gonsalves

Rowley defends investor interest

Port-of-Spain – Those who criticise the government for not attracting foreign investment are the same ones who are seeking to dissuade foreigners from investing in Trinidad and Tobago, Prime Minister Dr Keith Rowley stated last week.

Rowley's statement was made following calls from the Opposition asking him to explain why he met with Indian billionaire Naveen Jindal, who is facing corruption charges in India.

He was addressing a party fund-raiser Port-of-Spain when he defended his decision to seek business from Indian investors.

Rowley noted that despite such opposition, he would continue to press on with the government's programme to attract investors from countries where Trinidad and Tobago has not traditionally had strong business ties, such as India.

"We of the PNM are accustomed to that [kind of opposition], and we will not be dissuaded. There has not been a single initiative in this country of any consequence... advanced by the PNM that has not been resisted by a fraction of the population, whether it was PAYE, free education, UTC, NIB," he declared.

Rowley met with Jindal, who is chairman of Jindal Steel and Power, last month to discuss the now mothballed Petrotrin refinery.

Said Rowley: "There seems to be an attempt to dissuade foreigners from investing in Trinidad and Tobago. Interestingly, it is com-

ing from the same people who would say from time to time, there is not enough direct foreign investment, and that one of the failures of the government is that it needs more direct foreign investment, and we not getting it."

He added, "And, lo and behold, we now have the potential for foreign investment from a place where there are people who want to invest abroad, and we are investing abroad. And we are saying, if you are investing in

Oman and Qatar and Dubai and Spain and wherever you are, consider Trinidad and Tobago. And that seems to be upsetting some people."

According to Rowley, the government had to close the refinery as it threatened to bankrupt the country.

"We have a refinery which has not been operating since 2018, and we said from day one, it is available to the world if there is anybody or any agency who would like to use it. That if you have oil and you want to operate a refinery, there is one in Trinidad and Tobago that the government is not operating," Rowley said.

He added, "I can tell you at this point in time, after how many years of trying and trying, we do have some possible expression of interest. I don't know what the expression is because we have not yet looked at the expression. But what we have are people saying to us, we think we are interested. So for the first time, we have some people of worth who are saying that. When we open their proposals we will know what their proposals are."



Keith Rowley

Govt should sell oil refinery - Hosein

Port-of-Spain – It would be beneficial for Trinidad and Tobago were the government to sell the Pointe-a-Pierre refinery to a foreign investor of good standing, economist Dr Roger Hosein said last week.

At the time, he was speaking at The University of the West Indies Faculty of Law's fourth Oil and Gas Law Conference, which was held in Port-of-Spain.

Hosein told the conference he noted a significant decline of approximately 40 percent in economic activity around the refinery since its closure in 2018.

"...[If] we could get a foreign investor using private sector capital and restart the refinery, [then yes] by all means, restart the refinery. Once it does not depend on the State for handouts, or for any type of subventions..." Hosein stated.

Media scrutiny on the sale of the refinery started up recently after Indian businessman Naveen Jindal met with Prime Minister Dr Keith Rowley on June 17 in Port-of-Spain.

At the meeting, Rowley and Jindal discussed investment in the former Petrotrin refinery.

Immediately after Rowley posted a photo of the meeting with Jindal, it was disclosed that the businessman is facing corruption charges in India. In response, Rowley said he was unaware that Jindal had been charged.

Following these disclosures, Opposition Leader Kamla Persad-Bissessar accused the government of planning to hand over the refinery to Jindal, claiming that doing so was part of a scheme to facilitate processing of Venezuelan crude oil for the Nicolas Maduro government. Such as move would mean Venezuela avoiding sanctions.

Speaking to the recent controversies, Hosein emphasised that it did not matter who the investor was once they were in good business standing.



Roger Hosein

"I wouldn't know much about the legal aspect of it. As long as the gentleman is clean and clear to conduct economic activity and business transactions in Trinidad and Tobago, (they could) invest..." he stated.

Also, "My intervention is not with the specific person. I am concerned about the refinery reopening, and should we find an investor, I would say, 'By all means, gladly open the refinery, embrace [the investors].'"

He also stated he had surveyed the refinery's surrounding communities, and noted there was a "40 percent contraction, approximately, in the level of business activity in the fence-line community of Paria".

"...So if there is a chance...that an investor could come and open the refinery using private sector funds and no State subventions, I would wholeheartedly support that, because this country needs capital injection..." he stated.

Restarting the refinery would support and boost a number of areas, he added.

"It will help to create employment in the community. It will help to create demands for other types of goods in the community, and these are the type things you would want see taking place in this environment in 2024, which is about 20 percent less in real economic terms as compared to 2015," he stated.

A restart would also generate foreign exchange, Hosein noted.

"[These investors] will be coming here, and they would have the intention of selling the refined product, and it will help generate foreign exchange. That is something we don't have a lot of right now," he said.

Additionally, "[It] will help create employment; it will help generate foreign exchange; it will help create forward and backward linkages for other types of goods in the economy."



CAL wins best airline staff service award

Port-of-Spain – Caribbean Airlines has won an award for Best Airline Staff Service in the Central America and Caribbean region. The airline was awarded the title at the 2024 World Airline Awards last month at the Fairmont Windsor Park in London.

The event was hosted by an international air transport and rating organisation, Skytrax.

In a release, CAL chief executive officer Garvin Medera attributed the award to the dedication and hard work of its staff members. He added it was a significant honour that would further influence the company's drive to service its customers.

"At Caribbean Airlines, we focus on creating memorable travel experiences by delivering exceptional service with the genuine warmth and friendliness that is synonymous with the Caribbean spirit," Medera said.

He added, "Being recognised by our passengers and industry peers as the best in staff service is a significant honour, and it fuels our commitment to continue exceeding our customers' expectations."

As the release stated, the World Airline Awards are an independent and impartial event that took off in 1999 as a global customer satisfaction study.

The awards are determined by votes in the largest passenger satisfaction survey taken by passengers across the world from September 2023 to May 2024.

This year over 100 nationalities participated in the survey, and 21.42 million eligible entries were counted in the results, with over 250 airlines were featured in the final awards, it said.

CAL was commended by Edward Plaisted, CEO of Skytrax, who said, "We congratulate Caribbean Airlines on this fabulous achievement of being named as the Best Airline Staff Service in Central America & Caribbean at the 2024 World Airline Awards. This service and hospitality accolade should be a source of pride for the Management and Staff of Caribbean Airlines."

Caribbean Airlines was established on September

27, 2006, and provides passenger and cargo services.

"As an authentic Caribbean airline, we are proud to offer a genuine Caribbean experience to all our customers, both on and off the aircraft, thanks to our team of skilled professionals. We boast the most extensive network in the Caribbean, connecting numerous destinations across the Caribbean, North and South America," the media release concluded.



Gavin Medera

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The Golden Years of Indian Cinema

Nargis recalled as towering model of highest quality as an actress

By Vidur Dindayal

Nargis, regarded as the greatest Indian actress of all time, was among the ten most iconic beauties of Hindi cinema. Her sarees were unique in style. The British Film Institute considered Nargis movies, *Awaara* and *Mother India*, as among the greatest films ever made.

Nargis was the unchallenged, towering model of the highest qualities and attributes as an actress, as a person, a wife and mother.

I caught a glimpse of Nargis in a trailer in early 1951. This was at the Astoria cinema in West Coast Demerara. She was modern-looking. My relative told me that was the upcoming new star. I had never heard her name before that. Then the biggest lady star was Kamini Kaushal.

In *Wikipedia*, I discovered that the mega hits that we all know – in which Nargis starred in early in her career were *Andaz* and *Barsaat*. These movies ushered in the top entertaining era of Nargis with fabulous iconic co-stars Dilip Kumar and Raj Kapoor.

Nargis, also known as Nirmala Dutt, was born Fatima Rashid in Calcutta, (now Kolkata in West Bengal, India) on June 1, 1929, and died on May 3, 1981.

She was the daughter of Abdul Rashid, formerly Mohanchand Uttamchand. He was originally a wealthy heir from Rawalpindi who had converted from Hinduism to Islam.

Her mother was Jaddanbai Hussain from Benares, Uttar Pradesh. She was born into a Muslim family who were Hindu Brahmin originally, and had converted to Islam. Jaddanbai was a Hindustani classical music singer, and one of the early pioneers of Indian cinema. Jaddanbai introduced Nargis into the early Indian movie world at that time.

In 1935, Nargis made her screen debut at the age of six with *Talash-E-Haq* as Baby Rani Nargis. After that she acted in films *Shadi Ki Raat*, *Sher Dil Aurat*, and in 1936 in *Hriday Manthan*, in 1937 as a child artist in *Moti Ka Haar*, and in 1942 in *Pardanasheen*.

In 1943 at age of 14, she appeared as a lead actress in Mehboob Khan's *Taqdeer*, opposite Motilal. The film was a success. Filmindia referred to it as an excellent debut.

In 1944, she appeared in *Anban*; in 1945 in *Bisvi Sadi*, and in *Humayun* starring opposite Ashok Kumar; in 1947 in *Mehandi*, *Romeo & Juliet*; as Sita in *Ramayani*; and in 1948 in *Aag*, her first film co-starring Raj Kapoor. This film marked the first of more than a dozen movies with co-star Raj Kapoor.

Then followed *Anjuman*; *Anokha Pyar*; *Mela*; and *Aaj Ka Farhad*. In *Anokha Pyar*, Nargis starred with Dilip Kumar and Nalini Jaywant. It was a super hit with 12 songs, with music by Anil Biswas.

A memorable song is *Yaad Rakhna Chaand Taaron*. Also, *Mela* was highly successful, with 12 songs with music by Naushad – most well-known of these songs are *Ye Zindagi Ke Mele*, and *Mohan Ki Muraliya Baaje*. Also, the *Dance Theme* is very enjoyable.

The year 1949 was the record-breaking year with *Andaz*. It was Nargis' breakthrough role. Directed by Mehboob Khan, the drama was a major success – the highest-grossing film, the first hit in Raj Kapoor's career, and a breakthrough for Nargis and Dilip Kumar.

Barsaat, the super hit followed, starring Nargis and Raj Kapoor, with Nimmi in her debut, who later became famous. It was the highest-grossing film, then, of all time, breaking *Andaz*'s record. Both *Andaz* and *Barsaat* put Nargis at the very top of the list of best actresses.

Nargis followed this in 1950 by starring in *Meena Bazaar*; *Jogan*; *Jan Pahechan*; *Babul*; and *Aadhi Raat*. I liked the name *Meena Bazaar*, and the popular song by Rafi and Lata, *O Mahio Dupatta Mera Dede*. In *Jogan*, she was truly a devotee of Lord Krishna, singing the bhajans *Ghunghat Ke Pat Khol Re*; *Main To Giradhar Ke Ghar Jau*; and *Mat Ja Paav Padu Main Tori*. Four others were happy songs.

Babul was a sell-out, with music by Naushad and memorable songs as *Nadi Kinare Saath Hamare*; *Miltey Hi Aankhein Dil Hua*; and *Jaadu Bhare Naino Mei*. The saddest of them all *Chhod Babul Ka Ghar*, which is sung by Dilip, as she was dying. *Jogan* and *Babul* were super hits.

Nargis also starred in the films *Hulchul* and *Deedar*. Released in March 1951, *Deedar* was also filled with songs, with the music by Naushad all memorable, notably the two children on



the horse singing, *Bachpan Ke Din Bhula Na Dena*. The most famous of them all was Dilip singing *Meri Kahani Bhoolnewale*; then there was *Chaman Mein Rahke Virana*, a happy song; also, *Le Jaa Meri Duwayen Le Jaa* and *Dekh Liya Maine Kismat*, which were both sad songs.

Raj Kapoor was so impressed by Nargis and the success of *Andaz* and *Barsaat*, that he chose her for a role in his 1951 movie *Awaara*, which was released in December 1951. Nargis portrayed an outspoken woman-lawyer, and not a “woman made for household chores”, unlike the roles played by other actresses of those times. She wore swimwear in *Awaara*, bold for an Indian woman in that era.

Awaara received universal acclaim not only in India; it was a blockbuster overseas too, making Nargis and Raj well-known stars in Greece and in the US. It became the highest-grossing film of all time, breaking *Barsaat*'s record. Music director was Shankar-Jaikishan. All the songs are memorable – the most is *Awara Hoon*, followed by *Dam Bhar Jo Udhar Munh Phere*; *Ghar Aaya Mera Pardesi*; *Ek Do Teen*, a happy song; and *Jab Se Balam Ghar Aaye*, among others.

In 1952, Nargis starred in *Bewafa*; and also the drama *Anhonee*, which was a hit. Her performance was highly praised for her dual role as the gregarious courtesan Mohini, and as her dignified half-sister Roop. With music by Roshan, there is the song *Main Dil Hoon Ek Armaan Bhara* by Talat Mahmood, and the popular lively song *Zindagi Badali Mohabbat Kaa*. In *Aashiana* the same year there is the beautiful song *Main Pagal Mera Manwa Pagal* by Talat Mahood, with music by Madan Mohan.

In the 1953 movie *Aah*, with lots of memorable songs with music by Shankar-Jaikishan, was Nargis' last film that year. It is often regarded as a cult classic. The songs are all enjoyable, among them *Raja Ki Aayegi Barat*; *Jaane Na Nazar Pehchane Jigar*; and *Aaja Re Ab Mera Dil Pukara*. In the movie *Chhoti Si Yeh Zindagi*, Mukesh is singing while riding and in control of a tonga. Also, *Jhanan Jhanan Ghungharwa Baje* is an enjoyable dance song. Nargis' only film in 1954 was *Angarey*.

Her success led to the 1955 comedy-drama *Shree 420*. Nargis portrays a schoolteacher to whom Raj Kapoor took a liking. The film, a major blockbuster, was the highest grossing film in India at the time. Dazzling dancing Nadira stole the show with her dance and dancers in the song *Mur Mur Ke Na Dekh Mur Mur Ke*. *Mera Joota Hai Japanese*, the most memorable, is among other popular songs in that movie; also, *Ichak Dana Beechak Dana*; *Pyar Hua Iqrar Hua*; and *Ramayi Vastavaiya*.

Romantic comedy *Chori Chori* followed in 1956, with Raj Kapoor, another super hit and one of the highest grossing films of the year. Music by Shankar-Jaikishan, with all the songs quite entertaining. Among them were *Yeh Raat Bheegi Bheegi*; *Panchhi Banoon Udti Phiroon*, a happy song; *Aaja Sanam Madhur Chandni Men*; *All Line Clear*, with Johnny Walker sing-

ing; *Us Paar Sajjan*, with boats in the river. That year, Nargis made a special appearance in Raj Kapoor's *Jagte Raho*.

Mother India, Mehboob Khan's Oscar-nominated epic drama in 1957, and was the highest-grossing film in India at that time. Baburao Patel of Filmindia, described *Mother India* as “the greatest picture produced in India”, and wrote that no other actress would have been able to perform the role as well as Nargis.

Mother India is regarded as Nargis' best performance. The movie's gross earnings were the highest for an Indian film up until *Mughal-e-Azam*. Box Office India estimated in 2017 that *Mother India* had over 100 million footfalls, making it one of the highest-grossing Indian films of all time.

She made her last film appearance in the psychological drama *Raat Aur Din* (1967) about a woman with an identity disorder.

Nargis married Sunil Dutt in 1958. After that she gave up her film career to settle down with her family. Prior to their marriage, Nargis converted to Hinduism and adopted the name Nirmala Dutt. They had three children: Sanjay Dutt, Namrata Dutt, and Priya Dutt. Sanjay became a successful film actor. Namrata married actor Kumar Gaurav, son of veteran actor Rajendra Kumar. Priya became a politician and a Member of Parliament.

Nargis was also nominated to the Rajya Sabha in 1980.

On August 2, 1980, Nargis fell ill during a session of the Rajya Sabha. She was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer in 1980, and underwent treatment at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center in New York City. Upon her return to India, her condition deteriorated. Nargis went into a coma on May 2, 1981, and died the next day, at the age of 51.

She wanted to be buried in accordance with Muslim customs. Her body was carried on a bier according to Hindu customs. Sunil and Sanjay offered Namaz along with other mourners. She was buried on May 7, 1981, at the premiere of her son's debut film *Rocky*; one seat was kept vacant for her.

Nargis is regarded as one of the greatest and finest actresses of Indian cinema.

In November 1956, Nargis was sent to the Soviet Union by the government of India as a part of delegation – consisting of Raj Kapoor, Suraiya, and Kamini Kaushal, where her films were screened. In 1957, she acted in the Indo-Soviet co-production *Pardesi*.

In 1958 Nargis won the Filmfare Award of Best Actress for her role in *Mother India*, and won the inaugural National Film Award for Best Actress. She also became the first Indian to receive the Best Actress award at the Karlovy Vary International Film Festival in present-day Czech Republic. Nargis was honoured by government of India with the Padma Shri for her Contribution in the field of Arts.

For her performance in the 1967 drama *Raat Aur Din* she received the inaugural National Film Award for Best Actress.

The award for Best Feature Film on National Integration in the Annual Film Awards ceremony is called the Nargis Dutt Award in her honour. A postage stamp was issued by India Post in Nargis' honour on December 30, 1993.

In 2001, Nargis was honoured by Stardust Awards as the Best Actress of the Millennium. In 2011, the website Rediff.com listed her as the greatest Indian actress of all time.

A street in Bandra, Mumbai, is named Nargis Dutt Road in her memory. Nargis' sarees were a major style statement in the 1950s. She was known for her female characters that stood “shoulder-to-shoulder” with the male characters. Along with Madhubala, she also had large fan following in Greece.

Nargis loved wearing white saris, speaking over the telephone, and eating pani puris that were sold on the streets. She was an excellent swimmer, and enjoyed playing cricket with her brothers.

Nargis was deeply involved in charitable work with husband Sunil Dutt. They formed the Ajanta Arts Cultural Troupe, with several leading actors and singers, and performed to entertain Indian soldiers at the border. It was the first troupe to perform in Dhaka, after the liberation war of Bangladesh in 1971. Later, Nargis worked for spastic children, and became the founder of the Spastic Society of India.

In 1982, the Nargis Dutt Memorial Cancer Foundation was established in her memory.

Janvhi Kapoor discusses Gandhi, Ambedkar

Along with her acting talent, Janvhi Kapoor recently revealed another creative side when she spoke in an interview with *The Lalantop* on societal issues that included insightful views on Mahatma Gandhi, B.R. Ambedkar, and casteism.

Kapoor is well-known for her role in the movie *Bawaal*. In the interview, she spoke about the historical period that she would like to experience firsthand, expressing a wish to witness a debate on casteism between Gandhi and B.R. Ambedkar, the latter being the principal architect of the Indian Constitution.

"I think Ambedkar was still very clear and stern from the start what his stand was. But I think Gandhi's view kept evolving as he got more and more exposed to [casteism]. This issue of casteism that we have in our society, to gather information from a third person, and to actually live it – there is a huge difference there," she stated.

Kapoor also noted that caste was never a topic of conversation at her school or home. She said, "...There was no conversation around caste, even at my home."

The candid discussion on such a significant issue garnered a variety of reactions online. One user on X (formerly Twitter) shared a clip of the interview, stating, "Rather surprised to see this from a mainstream Bollywood actor. Janvhi Kapoor on Ambedkar, Gandhi & caste [applause emoji]."

Another user compared her to Swara Bhasker, noting that while Bhasker has been vocal on political matters for a long time, Kapoor's perspective was unexpectedly thoughtful and clear.

Several users expressed admiration for her understanding



Janvhi Kapoor

of the topic. One commented, "Very impressed!" Another noted, "Very rare to see such level of understanding and study [applause emoji]."

However, not everyone was convinced. Some critics felt her comments lacked depth, with one remarking, "Lol, except taking two famous names, what intellectualism did I miss here?"

Meanwhile, Kapoor's latest movie, *Mr & Mrs Mahi*, which co-stars Rajkumar Rao, was released on May 31. Directed by Sharan Sharma, the story revolves around the lives of Mahendra, who is played by Rao, and Mahima, played by Kapoor. The story explores the couple's shared passion for cricket, and the trials they face as newlyweds.

In preparation for the role, Kapoor underwent rigorous training, including extensive cricket practice.

She shared, "When I started prepping for the film – during Mili promotions – I was [eight to nine] kilos heavier. Sharan [the director] was very stressed. He said, 'You don't look like a cricketer, and if you really want to do this film, you need to lose weight and start training in cricket.'"

Her training was notably intense, even leading to injuries. She practiced daily with Kolkata Knight Riders players, and the rigorous sessions resulted in ligament injuries on both her shoulders.

Meanwhile, the movie appears to not be doing too well, with the *Times of India* reporting that it seemed to struggle at the box office after its opening innings.

As the publication noted, in cricket terminology, the movie had "a great power play session". However, it was "unable to handle itself in the middle overs against some of the newer releases like *Munjya* and *Chandu Champion*".

RD Burman remembered on his 85th birthday

June 27 marked the 85th birth anniversary of the legendary music composer RD Burman. Affectionately known as Pancham Da, he was one of the most influential and beloved musicians in the history of the Indian music industry. Born on June 27, 1939, in Kolkata, he was the only son of composer Sachin Dev Burman.

From an early age, Pancham Da mastered various instruments, and immersed himself in both eastern and western musical traditions. His career spanned over three decades, during which he redefined the sound of Bollywood music and composed musical scores for 331 films.

Pancham Da's musical journey began in the 1960s as an assistant to his father and quickly rose to prominence as an independent composer with the film *Chhote Nawab* (1961).

He then worked continuously for 33 years, and showcased his versatility and ability to create some of the most poignant and memorable songs in Hindi cinema that still resonates today. What set RD Burman apart was not just his mastery of melody, but also his ability to push the boundaries of traditional film music. He is credited with introducing the genre of electronic rock and jazz to Bollywood.

His collaborations with singers like Asha Bhosle, Kishore Kumar, and Lata Mangeshkar resulted in some of the most iconic and enduring songs in Indian cinema.

Tragically, the great music maestro passed away on January 4, 1994, leaving behind a rich musical legacy that continues to inspire generations of musicians and listeners. His legacy as a maestro and a musical pioneer is etched forever in the annals of Hindi cinema, and his contributions to Bollywood music are immeasurable.

Recalling Pancham Da's birthday last month Rishi Kapoor told *Times Now News* he believed his best songs were composed by Burman. The two collaborated in movies like *Khel Khel Main*, *Hum Kissi Se Kam Nahin*, *Saagar*, and many more.

As he told *TNM*, "[Pancham Da] was like family to me. He used to come home, and I used to visit him. Ashaji [Bhosle was married to Burman] used to cook for us. Like me, he was very fond of eating and drinking."

Kapoor recalled the rapport with Pancham Da started early. "At the start of my career RD did music in my *Zehreela Insaan*



RD Burman (left to right), Neetu Kapoor, Asha Bhosle, and Rishi Kapoor

and *Khel Khel Mein*. These had evergreen songs like *O Hansini* and *Khullam Khulla Pyar*. I had become a big star after *Bobby*. I wanted to work with [Pancham Da]. I vibed with him much better than with Laxmikant-Pyarelal, who did *Bobby*," he said.

He also noted that Pancham Da was ahead of his time.

Said Kapoor: "Picture *Chale Na Chale*. RD's music was damn good. His music suited my age and image. Pancham loved watching me shoot his songs. He told all my directors, 'Chintu perform kar rahaa hai mera gaana? I want to see him do it.' I'd get nervous. On the sets of Nasir Husain's films *Hum Kissi Se Kam Nahin* and *Zamane Ko Dikhana Hai*, he'd have lunch with Nasir saab and then watch me dance. It was a great compliment."

He added, "For the song *Dil Dena Khel Hai Dildar Ka* in *Zamane Ko Dikhana Hai*, Pancham came on the sets twice because the choreographer Suresh Bhatt was also Pancham's buddy. He used to shout, 'Buck up, buck up'. We were all a team."

Kapoor also shared an incident that took place just before

RD's death.

"[Pancham Da] and I were great buddies. Just before he died, this was the time when Nadeem Shravan, *et al*, had taken over, he called me and said, 'I'm not short of cash. But I desperately need work'. I explained to him that producers came to me with pre-decided music directors. After *Deewana* and *Bol Radha Bol* I had succeeded with Nadeem Shravan and Anand Milind. These two became music directors in all my films."

He also spoke to Pancham Da's disappointment at being rejected in the 1980s.

Said Kapoor: "I remember I was working with Raj Santoshi in *Damini*, which had music by Nadeem Shravan, while Santoshi's Ghatak had music by RD. I remember how unhappy RD was about this."

In total, Kapoor did 17 movies with music by Pancham Da. "Though my first film *Bobby* had music by Laxmikant-Pyarelal, my maximum hit songs were by Pancham," he stated.

Also, "There's one thing that you must note about RD's music. All of his youthful music was for Rishi Kapoor. The other heroes like Rajesh Khanna and Amitabh Bachchan were older. But for Rishi Kapoor, Pancham could really unplug the grooviest sounds."



Hina Khan

Hina Khan being treated for Stage 3 breast cancer

New Delhi – Television star Hina Khan last week revealed she has been diagnosed with Stage three breast cancer, and is being treated for it, the media in India reported.

Khan shared the news via *Instagram* in a lengthy note in which she said she was "determined and truly committed to overcoming this disease".

Her statement read, "Hello everyone: To address the recent rumours, I want to share some important news with all the Hinaholics, and everyone who loves and cares for me. I have been diagnosed with Stage Three breast cancer."

The note added, "Despite this challenging diagnosis, I want to reassure everyone that I am doing well. I am strong, determined, and truly committed to overcoming this disease. My treatment has already begun, and I am ready to do everything necessary to emerge from this even stronger."

Khan also requested that her fans give her "respect and privacy during this time".

And despite the challenging time ahead, she ended on a positive note, saying, "I deeply appreciate your love, strength and blessings. Your personal experiences, anecdotes, and supportive suggestions would mean the world to me as I navigate this journey. I, along with my family and loved ones, remain focused, determined and positive. With the grace of Almighty, we believe I will overcome this challenge and be completely healthy. Please send your prayers, blessings and love. Love, Hina."

Khan is 36 years old, and a popular name in the Hindi television industry. She became a household name after she featured as Akshara in the popular television show *Yeh Rishta Kya Kehlata Hai*. She was also a part of *Kasautii Zindagii Kay 2*, in which she played the antagonist Komolika. However, she quit the show after a few months.

Khan has also participated in television reality shows like *Khatron Ke Khiladi* Season 8, and *Bigg Boss 11*.

She made a brief appearance in the TV show *Naagin 5*, in which she starred as the titular shape shifting serpent. Her film credits include *Hacked*, *Smartphone*, *Lines*, *Wishlist*, and *Unlock*, to name a few. She also starred in the second season of the web-series *Damaged 2*.

Her diagnosis and positivity garnered an outpouring of support from fans and colleagues, with many sharing messages of strength and encouragement on social media, while expressing the wish for her recovery.

Among the well-wishers were Ankita Lokhande, who wrote on *Instagram*, "Hina you are stronger than this. That's it girl! This shall too pass!! Sending love and lots of strength to you right away."

Also, Niti Taylor wrote, "...I want you to know that from today you are in my thoughts and prayers. Sending you all my love, support, positivity, and more and more power to keep fighting. You are stronger than you know! Wishing you lots of strength."

Gauahar Khan also sent "duas", writing, "...U are good. U will be good ! Ameen", while Jannat Zubair reacted stating, "You are so so strong, inshallah you will be alright. Love and blessings always."

Arti Singh wrote, "You are stronger than anything in this whole wide world. All of us are praying. And your dad is with Allah to give u best way to get u out of this. Lot of prayers for u."

Khan's courage was also noted by Karishma Tanna, who wrote, "You are a strong girl. And you will come out stronger. I know it. Sending you all the loves and luck and prayers."

And commenting on Khan's illness, Kavita Kaushik declared, "Cancer should be very scared... it chose the wrong address, if anyone can kick it's a** and emerge beautifully, it's you Hina. Sending you and the family strength in abundance."

Kohli's knock takes India to T20 World Cup win

Virat Kohli reserved his finest innings of the Twenty20 World Cup for Kensington Oval in Barbados on June 29 when he helped India take home their second ICC T20 title. It turned out that this game was also his final T20 International.

Taking on the South African bowlers, the right-hander carved out a brilliant 76 off 59 deliveries to help India recover from a stuttering start to gather 176 for seven off their 20 overs after choosing to bat first.

With just 75 runs from his previous seven innings, Kohli turned the page on that ordinary form, starting slowly before flourishing to belt a half-dozen fours and a brace of sixes.

In pursuit of the highest total ever in a T20 World Cup final, South Africa looked to be in a winning position when they reached 151 for four at the start of the 16th, with Heinrich Klaasen top-scoring with 52, Quinton de Kock accumulating 39, and Tristan Stubbs tossing in 31.

However, with 26 runs required from the last four overs, seamers Hardik Pandya (3-20), Jasprit Bumrah (2-18), and Arshdeep Singh (2-20) went into overdrive to decelerate the scoring while making key strikes that took India to the chequered flag for a sensational win.

"It's very hard to sum up what we've been through for the last three, four years. We've worked really hard as individuals and as a team," said India captain Rohit Sharma.

"A lot has gone on behind the scenes for us to be here today and winning this game. It's not what we did today – it's what we've been doing for the last three, four years. That's the result that has come for us today," he declared.

He also added, "We've played a lot of high-pressure games as well and we've been on the wrong side of [them] as well, so guys do understand when the pressure is on, what needs to be done. And today was a perfect example of when your back is against the wall, what is required."



Kohli and Sharma with the ICC T20 World Cup trophy

For South Africa, the heartbreak was amplified as they once again came up short in their quest for their first-ever global title, having previously fallen at the semi-final seven times.

"It's tough. This group's a great bunch of people. In my opinion, they deserve really good things to go their way," lamented captain Aiden Markram.

He added, "I had a really good feeling about this competition before we came here and as the competition went on, that feeling got stronger and stronger. So [it's] pretty tough to deal with now. But it's a sport at the end of the day – someone's going to win, someone's going to lose."

India slumped early on when Rohit (9), Rishabh Pant (0), and Suryakumar Yadav (3) all fell cheaply, left-arm spinner Keshav Maharaj (2-23) striking twice in the fifth over to leave the innings tottering on 34 for three.

Kohli then masterminded India's recovery, putting on 72 for the fourth wicket with Axar Patel (47), and a further 56 for the fifth wicket with Shivan Dube (27), before

holing out in the deep in the penultimate over. Axar blasted a four and four sixes in a 31-ball cameo, while Dube counted three fours and a six in a 16-ball knock.

In reply, South Africa was reeling at 12 for two in the third over after Reeza Hendricks (4) was bowled by an unplayable jaffer from Bumrah, and Markram (4) edged a wide delivery from Arshdeep behind.

Left-hander de Kock, who faced 31 balls and struck four fours and a six, posted 58 for the third wicket with Stubbs before adding a fourth 36 for the fourth with Klaasen, who blasted two fours and five sixes off 27 deliveries.

When de Kock holed out to deep backward square off Arshdeep in the 13th over, Klaasen stepped up to post a further 45 for the fifth wicket with David Miller (21) before South Africa lost four wickets for 17 runs, as India powered back to take the win.



Tony Gray

T20 had takeaways for West Indies says Gray

It was a "very disappointing" end to a decent World Cup campaign for the West Indies, Tony Gray told the Caribbean media last week.

And while the former West Indian pacer expressed his disappointment, at the same time he said that the takeaway lessons from the T20 World Cup tournament should not be ignored.

After an unbeaten run in the group stage, the West Indies side came unstuck in the Super Eights, going down to England and South Africa, with a solitary win coming against the USA.

"The game against England would have been a huge disappointment for many reasons," Gray told the media in Trinidad and Tobago.

He also stated, "I think that we have the combination of players that could beat England on any given day... Afghanistan to me is much more of a test than any other team for us because of their spin department, and because the swing bowlers have improved."

In his analysis of England's performance, Gray said: "We started off well and unfortunately because of the injury to Brandon King we didn't pick up the pieces after that. Johnson Charles and Pooran were a little stagnated... The English bowlers bowled well... but not fantastically well, and we allowed them to get back into the rhythm of the game."

He added, "It was very difficult for us to post a score of over 200 or more runs. I think on the strength of the English batting, we needed to post that type of total on that very good batting track."

With the South Africa match, Gray felt West Indies "didn't make the adjustment to the team from the match against USA".

And the South African attack was "vastly different", he said.

"[We] didn't make adjustments on that bouncy surface, and we played the same type of shots that we played against America, which is a vastly different bowling attack," Gray stated.

However, he acknowledged the opponents, stating that "hats must go off to the tactical ploys the South Africans used".

Said Gray: "There was an element of surprise tactically, with not bowling the amount of overs from the fast bowlers that we expected. They came with spin; and spin paid off. They know it is a problem for us to score runs when the ball is turning both ways and they don't have the pace to work with. That's why we struggle with a lot of dot balls."

Moving forward, Gray felt a third specialist opener in the squad should be mandatory.

Citing the example of King's injury against England, and Johnson Charles' struggle for his best form in this tournament, Gray said it was a mistake not to have included King's replacement Kyle Mayers in the original squad.

He also thought that West Indies must work on getting more cohesion from the players.

"We have to consistently not depend on one person. In the first round, we really depended a lot on one very good performance, for example, Roston Chase in the first game against Papua New Guinea; in the third game against New Zealand, you had a masterful innings from Sherfane Rutherford, and we were not consistently playing as a team," he stated.

"So what you needed to have to go forward in a tournament from the Super Eights to the semi-final and the final is a much more concerted, collective effort by our players," he declared.

Gray also spoke to the pace of tournament and the little rest time for players between games. To this end, there should be better squad rotation, he said.



Brian Lara Cricket Academy in central Trinidad

Brian Lara Cricket Academy's pitch gets a few knocks

Port-of-Spain – The pitch at the Brian Lara Cricket Academy came in for a few knocks following the semi-final of the recently concluded T20 World Cup tournament.

As *ESPNcricinfo* reported, the poor condition of the pitch was an immediate giveaway after the first two deliveries of the chase saw the first ball practically rolling along the ground, with the next rearing off a similar length.

When asked what he thought about the pitch, Afghanistan coach Jonathan Trott started off carefully and with diplomacy, saying, "I don't want to get myself into trouble, and I don't want to come across as bitter, or it being a case of sour grapes."

Then he continued, "[But] that's not the pitch that you want to have a match, a semi-final of a World Cup, on plain and simple. It should be a fair contest. I'm not saying it should be flat completely with no spin, and no seam movement. I'm saying you shouldn't have batsmen worrying about going forward, and the ball flying over their head. You should be confident in your foot movement and being able to hit through the line, or use your skills."

He added, "T20 is about attacking and about scoring runs and taking wickets, not looking to survive. If the opposition bowled well and got to a position where they bowled very, very well and it's through skill, then that's fine, and then it's about adapting to that."

Trott further noted, "But once the ball starts misbehaving and rolling... if we had bowled as straight as South Africa had, I think you would have seen a very interesting second half as well. South Africa bowled well, used the conditions, and showed our boys what it's capable of. But it just didn't go our way..."

South Africa's captain Aiden Markram also commented on the same question, saying, "The wickets that we've had throughout the competition have been pretty challenging... It's hard to say that a wicket is not good because it can't just always be a batter's game, but I think if we reflect back on this wicket, we'll probably be pretty happy that we're not playing here again."

Speaking on *ESPNcricinfo's* *Timeout*, Tom Moody said the track was not fit for any game of cricket, leave alone a World Cup semi-final.

Said Moody, "I don't think you would want to see [this kind of a pitch] in any game. You want a fair contest between bat and ball, and I'm not advocating we need to have surfaces for 200-plus; but for one, you need consistent bounce. That's the most important thing."

He added, "As a batter, you're trying to predict where the ball is going to be. You want to meet it somewhere near the middle of the bat at least. On this pitch, it was almost impossible to do that on any consistent basis."



Two former Afghanistan women openers head out to the pitch

Afghan women seek to form a team

Members of the former Afghanistan women's team have called on the International Cricket Council to help them form a refugee team based in Australia, the *British Broadcasting Corporation* reported earlier this week.

Formed in 2010, the Afghanistan women's team disbanded in 2021 when the Taliban returned to power and banned women from universities, parks, sports, and raided the homes of female athletes.

The ICC has been largely silent on the issue since the Taliban's return to power in Afghanistan. Cricket Australia previously called off a series against Afghanistan earlier this year, citing "deteriorating human rights for women and girls in the country under Taliban rule".

Also, Richard Gould, the Chief Executive of the England and Wales Cricket Board, has been reported saying that England would not schedule bilateral series against Afghanistan while the country lacks a women's team.

The ICC requires that its full members, with Afghanistan being among them, to have a national women's team.

Meanwhile, the Afghanistan men's team was not disbanded, and has retained its Test status, and even reached the semi-finals of the T20 World Cup that took place in the Caribbean and the US last month.

In a letter to ICC chair Greg Barclay, the Afghanistan women said: "Creating a team of Afghan refugees can give us a chance to play, coach, and administer a cricket team without borders. The creation of this team will allow

all Afghan women who want to represent their country to come together under one banner."

The Afghanistan women's team was created nine years after the Taliban regime fell at the hands of a US-led military coalition.

The Afghanistan Cricket Board initially barred the women's team from playing at several international tournaments, saying it received "Taliban threats".

Twenty-five female cricketers were handed contracts by the ACB in 2020. Less than a year later the Taliban returned to power, ending any progress towards Afghanistan playing an official women's international.

More than 20 Afghan women's cricketers managed to leave the country, and are currently living in Australia.

"We are asking the ICC to assist us in setting up a refugee team in Australia," said the letter.

It added, "Through this team we aim to represent all Afghan women who dream of playing cricket, but are unable to in Afghanistan. Our goals in having a refugee team are to develop and showcase our talent, give hope to the women remaining in Afghanistan, and to draw attention to the challenges women of Afghanistan face."

The letter also pointed to the men's team, saying, "Like the Afghanistan men's team are afforded, we aim to compete at the highest levels. We want to recruit and train girls and women who love cricket, to show the world the talent of Afghan women, and to demonstrate the great victories they can achieve if given a chance through the leadership and financial support of the ICC."

Chloé Tryon back on SA women's team

All-rounder Chloé Tryon has been selected to South Africa's squad for the T20I series in India following her recovery from a back injury. The injury put her on the sidelines in April this year, the cricket website *Cricbuzz* reported.

Also, Delmi Tucker and Nondumiso Shangase will head back home after the conclusion of the one-off Test in Chennai.

"[Tryon] brings a lot of experience to the team, and we can't wait to see her back on the field," said SA women interim head coach Dillon du Preez

Additionally, "We have our last three T20I matches against India. This will give us some time to look at one or two options before we go home and start our final preparation for the T20 World Cup in Bangladesh."

Clinton du Preez, the SA women convenor of selectors, said they had focused on "maintaining consistency" while picking the squad "to build on our strengths and cohesion".

Du Preez added, "This approach allows us to

refine our strategies and enhance team dynamics, which are crucial as we prepare for the T20 World Cup in Bangladesh. Our goal is to provide a platform for our players to gain valuable experience and showcase their skills, ensuring we are well-prepared for the challenges ahead."

Also, "The return of Chloé Tryon is a significant addition, and we are confident that this squad will perform with the determination and excellence that defines Proteas Women cricket."

South Africa play three T20Is against India in Chennai on July 5, July 7, and on July 9. They lost the ODI series 3-0 in Bengaluru, and lost the one-off Test in Chennai by ten wickets.

South Africa women squad for T20Is vs India:

Laura Wolvaardt (capt), Anneke Bosch, Tazmin Brits, Nadine de Klerk, Annerie Dercksen, Mieke de Ridder, Sinalo Jafta, Marizanne Kapp, Ayabonga Khaka, Masabata Klaas, Suné Luus, Eliz-Mari Marx, Nonkululeko Mlaba, Tumi Sekhukhune, Chloé Tryon.



Chloe Tryon

Cricket Schedule

(Matches ALL TIMES LOCAL)

Wednesday July 3, 2024
Kenya Quadrangular Cup 2024
Kenya vs Rwanda, 9th Match, Aga Khan SCG, Nairobi, 9:30 AM
Zambia vs Malawi, 10th Match, Aga Khan SCG, Nairobi, 1:30 PM

Thursday July 4, 2024
Kenya Quadrangular Cup 2024
Zambia vs Rwanda, 11th Match, Aga Khan SCG, Nairobi, 9:30 AM
Malawi vs Kenya, 12th Match, Aga Khan SCG, Nairobi, 1:30 PM

Saturday July 6, 2024
Kenya Quadrangular Cup 2024
Zambia vs Kenya, 13th Match, Aga Khan SCG, Nairobi, 9:30 AM
Malawi vs Rwanda, 14th Match, Aga Khan SCG, Nairobi, 1:30 PM
India tour of Zimbabwe, 2024
Zimbabwe vs India, 1st T20I, Harare Sports Club, Harare, 1:00 PM

Sunday July 7, 2024
Kenya Quadrangular Cup 2024
Zambia vs Malawi, 15th Match, Aga Khan SCG, Nairobi, 9:30 AM
Kenya vs Rwanda, 16th Match, Aga Khan SCG, Nairobi, 1:30 PM
India tour of Zimbabwe, 2024
Zimbabwe vs India, 2nd T20I, Harare Sports Club, Harare, 1:00 PM

Monday July 8, 2024
Kenya Quadrangular Cup 2024
Malawi vs Kenya, 17th Match, Aga Khan SCG, Nairobi, 9:30 AM
Zambia vs Rwanda, 18th Match, Aga Khan SCG, Nairobi, 1:30 PM

Wednesday July 10, 2024
Kenya Quadrangular Cup 2024
TBC vs TBC, 3rd Place Play Off, Aga Khan SCG, Nairobi, 9:30 AM

TBC vs TBC, Final Aga Khan SCG, Nairobi, 1:30 PM

West Indies tour of England, 2024
England vs West Indies, 1st Test, Day 1, Lord's, London, 11:00 AM
India tour of Zimbabwe, 2024
Zimbabwe vs India, 3rd T20I, Harare Sports Club, Harare, 1:00 PM

Thursday July 11, 2024
West Indies tour of England, 2024
England vs West Indies, 1st Test, Day 2, Lord's, London, 11:00 AM
Friday July 12, 2024
West Indies tour of England, 2024
England vs West Indies, 1st Test, Day 3, Lord's, London, 11:00 AM

Saturday July 13, 2024
Nigeria tour of Kenya 2024
Kenya vs Nigeria, 1st T20I, TBC, TBC, 12:00 PM

West Indies tour of England, 2024
England vs West Indies, 1st Test, Day 4, Lord's, London, 11:00 AM
India tour of Zimbabwe, 2024
Zimbabwe vs India, 4th T20I, Harare Sports Club, Harare, 1:00 PM

Sunday July 14, 2024
Nigeria tour of Kenya 2024
Kenya vs Nigeria, 2nd T20I, TBC, TBC, 4:00 PM

West Indies tour of England, 2024
England vs West Indies, 1st Test, Day 5, Lord's, London, 11:00 AM
India tour of Zimbabwe, 2024
Zimbabwe vs India, 5th T20I, Harare Sports Club, Harare, 1:00 PM

Monday July 15, 2024
Nigeria tour of Kenya 2024
Kenya vs Nigeria, 3rd T20I, TBC, TBC, 12:00 PM

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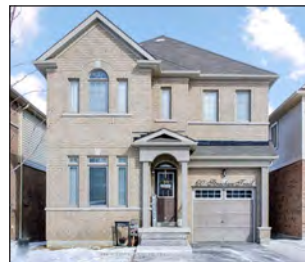
Mississauga For Sale \$740,000

Location! Location!
Location! Welcome to this beautifully well-kept 3 bedroom townhouse in the highly sought after neighbourhood of Malton. Home features large living and good-sized dining room. Large kitchen with stainless steel appliances & granite countertops. Walkout to your fully-fenced private backyard. Upstairs features 3 good-sized bedrooms and updated bathroom. Lower level features recreation room with additional storage area and walkout to your private garage. Close proximity to highways, public transit, Go, Westwood Mall, schools, library, airport, park, and community centre.



Beeton For Sale \$1,139,000

Location! Location!
Location! Welcome to this lovely 4 bedroom, full brick home. This premium lot boasts a beautiful walk-out with patio, brand new glass façade deck above, both outdoor spaces providing an unobstructed view of the Beeton Creek. Hardwood throughout, freshly upgraded oak stairs with iron pickets, new light fixtures, open-concept kitchen with custom backsplash, quartz counters & breakfast bar, rough-in for central vac as well as three piece basement rough-in & an extended driveway.



Pickering Condo For Rent \$2,800

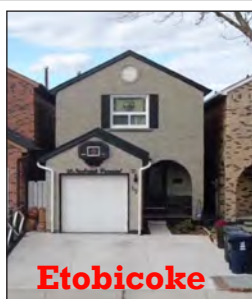
Location! Location! Location! Step into the world of modern elegance with this exquisite 2-bedroom, 2-bathroom home for lease in one of Pickering's new vibrant neighbourhoods. This unit boasts an updated, open-concept living space, perfect for entertaining and relaxation. The kitchen shines with stainless steel appliances and sleek design. Unit features beautiful wraparound balcony with extravagant views. Nestled in a desirable neighbourhood, this home provides unparalleled access to local schools, shopping, and entertainment options. The proximity to Pickering GO Station makes commuting a breeze, while Farm Boy and Pickering Town Centre are just a short walk away. Highway 401 access further enhances your connectivity to the greater Toronto area. Seize the opportunity to be part of this vibrant community. This brand-new unit is more than just a home; it's a gateway to a lifestyle of convenience, luxury, and charm! Don't miss out!!



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\$350,100
OVER
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Etobicoke

Ajax For Sale \$949,000

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Welcome to this BRAND NEW, NEVER LIVED IN modern 3 story 3 bedroom 3 bathroom townhouse in a highly sought-after neighbourhood in Ajax. The main floor beckons with its open-concept design, guiding you to a spacious second floor featuring a generous kitchen and breakfast area that overlooks the combined living and dining room. This seamlessly flows to a walk-out balcony, the third floor features 2 adequately-sized bedrooms with a large primary bedroom with 4 piece ensuite.



Richmond & Jarvis Downtown Toronto Condo For Sale \$598,990

Location! Location! Location!
Bright & spacious 1 bed 1 bath corner suite located in the rarely available prestigious French quarters. The residence features a functional open concept layout boasting 9' ceilings. The spacious living room seamlessly transitions to a breathtaking private balcony overlooking quiet courtyard. Building features world class amenities; spectacular roof top garden with BBQ, gym, party room, lounge/library suites. Steps from the St Lawrence Market, distillery, and financial district.




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Essa For Lease \$2,995

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OVER ASKING!**

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