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# INDO CARIBBEAN WORLD

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Attending the International Conference on Indentureship that took place over the weekend in Fiji were delegates from Trinidad & Tobago, Guyana, St Vincent, Jamaica, South Africa, India, & many other nations with Girmitya presence. In photo above from left to right are Radica Mahase (Trinidad & Tobago); Lomarsh Roopnarine (Guyana); Lenroy Thomas (St Vincent); Biman Prasad (Deputy Prime

Minister, Fiji); Vishnu Bisram (New York/Guyana); Ganesh Chand (Conference Convenor, Fiji); Primnath Gooptar (Trinidad & Tobago); Brij Maharaj (South Africa); Amba Pande (India); & Akshai Mansingh (Jamaica). In right photo are (left to right) Brij Maharaj from Durban, South Africa; Ashutosh Kumar (India); & Primnath Gooptar (Trinidad & Tobago).

## Ottawa recognises diaspora's Indian Arrival celebrations

By Romeo Kaseram  
LJI Reporter

In light of Indian Arrival celebrations here in Canada and abroad, the government in Ottawa earlier this week recognised the diaspora for their contributions to the socio-economic development of Canada, and "for strengthening our rich, multicultural fabric".

The recognition came from MP Chandra Arya, member of The House of Commons for Nepean, Ontario.

Arya told the House that Indian Arrival Day is celebrated during the month of May "in many countries including Guyana, Trinidad and Tobago, Jamaica, Grenada, Fiji, Mauritius, Suriname, and many other countries..."

He added that these countries commemorate "the arrival of people from the Indian subcontinent to their respective nations as Indentured labourers brought by European colonial authorities".

He also noted that, "Canadians who have come to our wonderful land from all these countries continue to mark [Indian Arrival Day]. They have worked hard and preserved their history, their culture, and heritage, which also benefit future generation Canadians."

Arya also recognised the International Conference on Indentureship that took place in



MP Chandra Arya speaks in Parliament in Ottawa on May 15

Fiji last weekend, and which was organised by the Global Girmitya Institute. The conference's primary objective was to facilitate discourse on all aspects related to documenting, researching, writing, and communicating the histories and lives of Girmityas.

The conference saw in-person attendance as well as virtual participation by many Indo-Caribbeans, among them Trinidad and Tobago's Dr Primnath Gooptar, Dr Brinsley Samaroo, Dr Kumar Mahabir, and Dr Radica Mahase; St Vincent's Lenroy Thomas; and Jamaica's Akshai Mansingh.

There was also a contingent from Guyana/US/UK that included Dr David Dabydeen, Dr Clem Seecharan, Dr Lomarsh Roopnarine, Dr Baytoram Ramharack, and Dr Vishnu Bisram.

Fijian President Ratu Wiliame Katonivere delivered its opening address. In his speech, Katonivere urged Fijians to foster a culture of inclusivity and respect, while emphasising the need to celebrate and embrace diversity.

He also spoke to the significant challenges and injustices that were faced by Indentured labourers during their tenure in Fiji, while stressing the urgency to recognise and recall these hardships as takeaways leading to a more just and equitable future.

In order to achieve such a goal, Katonivere called for a national commitment to truth-telling, acknowledging past harm, and making amends whenever possible.

Katonivere spoke not only to Fijians, but to the many visitors from abroad, saying, "And in this capacity, I remind us all of our responsibility as citizens to promote diversity and cultural exchange and encourage us to reject any form of discrimination or prejudice. It is paramount that we work together to create a society that recognises and celebrates our differences and encourages mutual understanding and respect."

The conference saw hundreds of scholars, researchers, and academics from around the world, See Page 10: Embrace & respect

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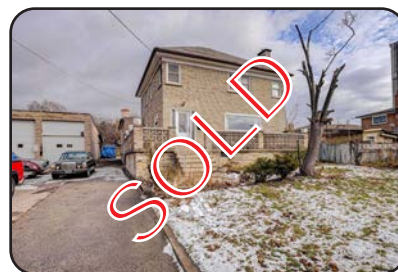
Features large lot with 10-car driveway & double car garage with 220 volt outlet! About 25 mature fruit trees, large heated solarium, oversized kitchen & solarium-style dining room. Also, large rec room with wood burning stove & full washroom! The basement is finished with additional bedroom!



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### A Touch of City!

Spacious 2 bedroom unit has gleaming laminate floors, spacious kitchen w/bountiful storage, open concept combined liv/din room walks out to open balcony with magnificent view of city's skyline. Large mirrored closets in both bedrms & hallway with lots of storage potential. Close to highways, public transit & amenities - best location in town!



**\$2,000,000**

### W-O-W

This home is on about 0.6 acre land. Features a 7-car garage/workshop with high ceilings, gas heating & 220 volts for welding + a 13' door for a truck. Ideal for a home business & a great property for redevelopment. Enjoy this sprawling 4 bedroom home while running your home-based business.



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### Prime Location!

This lovely home is on a premium lot with a private driveway. It features two bedrooms on the main floor & two bedrooms on the upper level. The basement is finished with a rear entrance, kitchen, living room, & bedroom. Can't beat the location - only a 20-minute commute to downtown!



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A Bhajan Satsangh was held last Saturday at Vishnu Mandir to commemorate the 75th birthday of Denahnath Doobay. Denah & his family are devotees at VM; the event saw the attendance of close family members, friends, & devotees, who all celebrated with devotional singing & extended good wishes for future wellness & longevity. In photo above, Denah is sitting at right, with wife Arifah on the left; in the back row at right are the couple's daughter Amanda, with her two sons, Jacob on the left, & Jaylen on the far right, with husband Peter standing on the extreme left.

## Muslim Education, Brickdam Secondary reunion & picnic

**M**uslim Education Trust College, later known as Brickdam Secondary School of 45 Brickdam, Georgetown, Guyana will be having a reunion on May 27 at Bombay Palace, 200 Advance Boulevard, Brampton from 4:00 p.m. to 12:00 midnight.

This will be followed by a picnic at G. Ross Lord Park, 4801 Dufferin St., North York the following day, on May 28, from 12:00 noon to 6:00 p.m.

The total contribution is \$100 per person for all attendees and family members.

Tickets are available from Aubrey Carrega at 905-676-0185; or Osman Khan at 416-452-4437; also, funds can be sent by e-Transfer to aubreycarrega@sympatico.ca.

Dinner will comprise of a variety of vegetarian and Halal main courses, appetisers, salads, fruits, juices, desserts, and other delicacies.

It promises to be a nostalgic evening, where all would have the opportunity to reflect and reminisce on a variety of pleasant memories of those good old days. The event will consist of some light entertainment and pleasantly soft music.

Former Principals Satya J. Sawh, Mohamed Yusuf, Hazrat Haniff, former teachers (including Samad Sheriff), and alumni from England, Guyana, the Caribbean and various parts of the US and Canada will be in attendance.

Do not miss this opportunity to participate in what promises to be a most memorable event.



Bonnie Crombie



Patrick Brown



Peter Fonseca



Myron Demkiw

## Mississauga Monarch Lions club hosts anniversary brunch

**T**he Mississauga Monarch Lions Club will host its Anniversary Brunch at the Crystal Banquet Hall at 2110 Dundas St. E, Mississauga on June 11, and will take place between 12 noon to 5:00 p.m.

It starts at noon. The event will see the honouring of Lion Quest partners for their services in promoting the Social and Emotional Learning Program throughout the year for the 2022-2023 term.

Among the Lion Quest partners and special guests at the event will be Mississauga Mayor Bonnie Crombie; Brampton Mayor Patrick Brown; Toronto Police Chief Myron Demkiw; and MP Peter Fonseca. Other special guests are Dr Jean

Augustine, and District Governor Ferdinand Corolen.

The Lion Quest Fellowship Special Awardee is Ontario's Premier Douglas Ford Jr.

The Lions Quest Fellowship was established in 2002 to recognise Lions Club members and other deserving recipients who truly care about Canadian children, regardless of the challenges they may face, or the gifts they may possess.

Contact Khalilah M. Campbell at 416-732-9390, or Janice Gordon-Daniels, 416-839-4884, for more information.

Cost for the event is \$75; make cheques out to Mississauga Monarch Lions Club, with payment comments, MMLC Brunch; or send eTransfers to monarchlionsclub@gmail.com.

## Author Maeck to launch prequel to 'The Unwanted Wife'

**L**aunch of the new book, *The Ungracious Daughter*, a prequel of the *Unwanted Wife*, will be held on June 4 at 11:00 am at the Tropical Nights Restaurant Outdoor Patio, 1154 Morningside Avenue in Scarborough. The books' author, Sandy Shobha Maeck is also a Life Coach, CEO and Founder of STCC Dance Academy, and a businesswoman.

She is the author of the #1 Amazon Best Seller *The Unwanted*

*Wife*, and now its prequel, *The Ungracious Daughter*. Both books are about failed arranged marriages, domestic violence, sexual abuse, narcissism, family secrets, and betrayal.

"As a local author, I believe it is important to spread the word about my work in the community," Maeck said.

The launch will include a reading, book signing, and an opportunity to meet the author.

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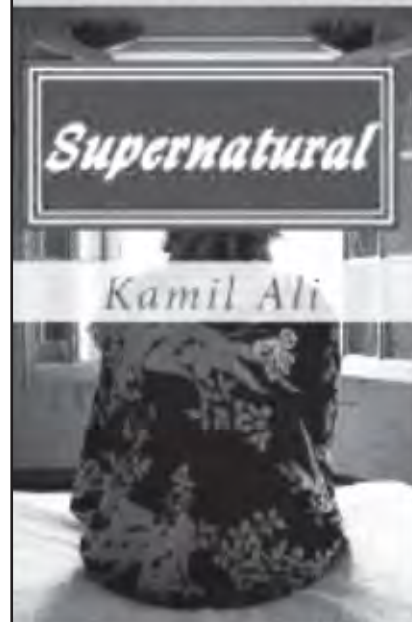
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# Ministers pledge to step up co-operation to tackle planetary crisis

Ministers from the EU-Latin America and the Caribbean have pledged to step up co-operation in a move to tackle the triple planetary crisis of climate change, pollution, and biodiversity loss.

The resolution was taken at the second EU-Latin America and the Caribbean ministerial meeting on environment and climate, which took place on May 5 at San José in Costa Rica, the European Commission's Energy, Climate Change, and Environment Directorate for the Environment reported.

The ministers agreed to promote a transition towards low carbon, circular, and clean economies where nature is protected and restored. The meeting took place ahead of the EU-CELAC summit, which will take place July 17-18 in Brussels.

It was attended by 14 ministers and 65 representatives from LAC and the EU, was co-chaired by Franz Tattenbach, Costa Rican Minister of Environment and Energy, and Virginijus Sinkevičius, European Commissioner for Environment, Oceans and Fisheries.

As Commissioner Sinkevičius said: "The EU and many Latin American and Caribbean countries are true leaders on environmental protection and climate policies. The implementation of the Paris Agreement, together with the recently agreed historic Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework provide us with a clear road map to carbon-neutral, circular and nature-positive economies."

Sinkevičius added, "Getting there will mean transformative change of our societies and economies within very short time. The EU is committed to work with its LAC partners to foster the green transition, and reach net zero emissions by 2050, to better protect and restore critical ecosystems, to support the most vulnerable countries in adapting to the effects of climate change effects, and to increase collective climate and biodiversity finance."

And as Tattenbach noted, "To meet all agreed environmental and climate targets in Latin America and the Caribbean, we need to redirect investments towards a sustainable,



Virginijus Sinkevičius

inclusive, and resilient economy."

Additionally, "The Common Framework of Sustainable Finance Taxonomies for LAC, which will be released as an input from the Forum of Ministers of Environment of LAC during the EU-CELAC Summit, provides guiding principles for the LAC region drawing on EU and international good practice to ensure harmonisation and inter-operability with other taxonomies globally, helping mobilise cross border capital flows towards our common goals. This tool, together with efforts in collaboration with the EU and the rest of the international community, can help bring solutions to our communities."

Ministers for environment and climate from LAC countries and the EU and its Member States also discussed opportunities for closer cooperation on the conservation, restoration, and sustainable use of biodiversity in line with the new Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, including the fight against deforestation, forest degradation, and the promotion of deforestation-free supply chains.

Also discussed were policies and best practices to make their economies more circular and less carbon-intensive and polluting, includ-



Franz Tattenbach

ing accelerating the transition to a circular economy, and cooperating towards an ambitious global agreement to tackle plastics pollution.

The ministers also emphasised the need to promote synergies with ministers of finance, financial regulators and supervisors, and central banks to jointly build a conducive environment for sustainable finance to steer capital flows into an environmentally sustainable direction, recognising that sustainable finance has a key role to play in the Latin America and the Caribbean Green Transition.

As was noted, environmental and social impacts caused by investments and economic activity can no longer be disconnected.

In the final discussions, the group focused on policies to address vulnerabilities to the effects of climate change by making economies more resilient, as well as measures to enable viable transitions towards decarbonised economies.

Ministers from both regions also pledged to

work together to bring forward the implementation of the Paris Agreement on climate change and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.

The EU-CELAC summit will be held on July 17-18 in Brussels, and will be an opportunity to discuss common challenges, and to agree on a forward-looking agenda for partnership between both regions.

The goal is to provide new impetus for stronger bi-regional relations, where trade, investment and cooperation merge into a cohesive and positive offer.

The Global Gateway strategy is the EU's positive offer to partner countries in support of their resilience and sustainable development. This offer aims at narrowing the global investment gap with value-driven investments from public and private sectors, supporting global economic recovery, and accompanying the twin green and digital transitions outside the EU.

The European Investment Bank has already mobilised investments amounting to €31 billion under Global Gateway.

The year 2022 was a record for the EIB in Latin America and the Caribbean. The EU bank more than doubled its support to the region, providing €1.69 billion of financing for projects in 2022, compared to €742 million in 2021. These funds contribute to sustainable and inclusive development in the region, and to promoting climate action, in line with the Global Gateway objectives.

The EU and its Member States also demonstrate their commitment to climate and biodiversity action in Latin America and the Caribbean through flagship programmes such as Euroclima+, and through a large number of bilateral programmes and partnerships.

The EU is committed to spending at least 30 percent of its cooperation budget on climate and biodiversity initiatives in the LAC region.

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Sean Fraser (right), Marie-France Lalonde (left), & Karina Gould unveil the new Canadian passport

## Ottawa unveils new re-designed Canadian passport

Ottawa – The government has unveiled a new Canadian passport that has been re-designed from cover to cover with state-of-the-art security features and new artwork.

It was unveiled last week by Sean Fraser, Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, and the Honourable Karina Gould, Minister of Families, Children and Social Development.

Said Fraser, “The new Canadian passport is more than a travel document; it is a representation of our national identity and values. It is a reminder of the beauty and diversity of Canada, and it reflects the country’s commitment to welcoming people from all around the world.”

The new passport includes state-of-the-art security features designed to keep Canadians’ identities safe, such as a polycarbonate data page – a technology similar to Canada’s driver’s licences.

“The Canadian passport is a fundamental document of citizenship, recognised around the world. The government is committed to ensuring passport services are quick, efficient

and modern. We are working hard to give Canadians a seamless experience, from the moment they apply until the moment the passport arrives in their hands,” said Gould.

Passport holders’ personal information will now be laser engraved instead of being printed with ink, making the data page more durable and resistant to tampering and counterfeiting.

Other features include a Kinegram over the main photo, a custom see-through window with a secondary image of the passport holder, a variable laser image, and a temperature sensitive ink feature.

The new passport celebrates Canada’s heritage and identity with iconic images of our natural beauty throughout the four seasons. It also includes a new cover design with an outline of a maple leaf – the first significant change in decades.

It will start rolling out in later this summer. Until then, the current passport remains secure and reliable, so Canadians with valid passports will only need to renew them when they are getting close to their normal renewal date. More details regarding the roll-out will be provided at a later date.

## TATR funding announced

Toronto – Ottawa last week announced an investment of \$13,507,270 for the City of Toronto’s Taking Action on Tower Renewal program.

The announcement was made by Julie Dabrusin, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources and to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, on behalf of the Honourable Jonathan Wilkinson, Minister of Natural Resources, and Scott Pearce, Acting President of FCM.

Toronto is home to over 500,000 residents who live in apartment towers. The TATR program will support eligible property owners of older high-rise towers in Neighbourhood Improvement Areas to complete energy efficiency upgrades.

These upgrades, which will include retrofits such as new windows, replacing home appliances and reinsulating roofs, walls and doors, will help reduce emissions while supporting unit affordability and improving tenant comfort.

Once completed, the upgraded towers will see energy use reduced by 15 percent, natural gas use reduced by nearly a quarter, provide annual operating and maintenance cost savings of over \$1.3 million, and reduce GHG emissions by almost 2.5 million kg/year.

It aligns with the City of Toronto’s climate action strategy, which aims to reduce the city’s emissions to net zero by 2040.

Said Dabrusin “The Government of Canada is teaming up with the City of Toronto and the FCM to help upgrade our city’s towers to become more energy-efficient and climate-resilient. Through this investment, we are supporting Torontonians in nearly 800 units to lower their energy bill while cutting emissions and creating more climate-smart homes.”

The funding includes \$11,745,460 in loans and \$1,761,810 in grants through the Federation of Canadian Municipalities’ Green Municipal Fund. The Government of Canada has invested \$1.65 billion in GMF since its inception, empowering municipalities to develop projects that leverage local resources to drive innovative solutions.

“With support from the Green Municipal Fund, municipalities of all sizes are implementing smart sustainable solutions. We deliver results with our federal partners by supporting cities like Toronto in their innovative ways to save energy and energy-related costs and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Together, we are on the path to net-zero and are contributing to respond to affordability issues,” Pearce said.

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**Editorial**

**WHO & Covid-19**

**N**ations can now begin to transition from emergency mode into managing Covid-19 alongside other infectious diseases, WHO's Director-General Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said earlier this month.

On May 5, Ghebreyesus announced that Covid-19 was no longer a global health emergency, which as we all know only too well, was declared a pandemic by the WHO in January, 2020, three long and bitter years ago.

For many of us, the time for transition from emergency mode to infection and disease management has taken too long to arrive.

As Ghebreyesus said, "With great hope, I declare Covid-19 over as a global health emergency."

However, he was also quite categorical in stating that Covid-19 was not yet done as a global health threat, noting that the week before, "Covid-19 claimed a life every three minutes and that's just the deaths we know about..."

And as he noted, emphatically, "The virus is here to stay. It is still killing, and it is still changing. The risk remains of new variants emerging that cause new surges in cases and deaths."

While the WHO's announcement emphasised that caution be mixed with vigilance against becoming infected with the coronavirus and its evolving variants, at the same time it also brought some relief that this traumatic episode in our global lives was no longer at front and centre; and that we must continue working together to keep it firmly in its lane, and so hopefully see it growing distant, but not altogether fading away, in the rear-view mirror.

However, it must be emphasised that we can no longer leave our doors unlocked; let us not forget that Covid-19 arrived at our front doors as an inimical presence, entered insidiously into our homes, and then turned our lives upside down; it took away relatives, friends, and neighbours here in our diaspora, and back in our homelands.

And in its global impact besides the trauma of escalating deaths, as Ghebreyesus noted, the pandemic brought "severe economic upheaval, erasing trillions from GDP, disrupting travel and trade, shuttering businesses and plunging millions into poverty".

At this time, Covid-19 remains a clear threat. Its severity for exponential escalation of mortality, and social and economic uncertainty, still remains a possibility, and thus it is wise and in our interest to heed Ghebreyesus' caution.

As he declared, "The worst thing any country could do now is to use this news as a reason to let down its guard, to dismantle the systems it has built, or to send the message to its people that Covid-19 is nothing to worry about. What this news means is that it is time for countries to transition from emergency mode to managing Covid-19 alongside other infectious diseases."

Meanwhile, let us not forget the trauma and its concatenations of grief and economic disruption that this pestilence brought into our homes and into our lives; and is still continuing with its deadly impact in many more millions of lives across the globe.

The statistics are stark reminders of how virulent was this penetrating, deleterious, and deadly pathogen. As of May 10 this year, the WHO reported there were 765,903,278 confirmed cases of Covid-19 worldwide; so far, there have been 6,927,378 global deaths; and counting.

While the official reports of deaths are countable and measurable, it is also a known fact that the total, global number of those who perished from Covid-19 could be greater: that millions more of its victims were not officially recorded.

The WHO has indicated it hopes higher up in State hierarchies that nations will now "sustain the national capacity gains and prepare for future events to avoid the occurrence of a cycle of panic and neglect"; and that governments "should consider how to improve country readiness for future outbreaks". Also, notably, that Covid-19 vaccination be integrated into life course vaccination programmes, among other recommendations.

Covid-19 sea-changed our world, and our lives; moving forward, with the global emergency over, we must realign our lives to accommodate its insidious presence among us.

**'Arrival or survival' – still a turning point**

**W**ithin many Indo-Caribbean households across Canada, there is an awareness of what it is to be 'Indo-Caribbean'. Whether it is the music we listen to, the food we consume, or the vernacular we selectively opt for. Within our lives, experiencing this double diaspora, there is an understanding of standards and norms that we seemingly adopt, whilst longing to connect to the journeys of our ancestors.

May is an ideal month to reflect on how we deal with the complexities of being Indo-Caribbean while living within a North American reality.

This month, a number of dates will mark the "arrival" of Indian people to specific countries. May itself has informally become known as "Arrival Month". "Indian Arrival Day" in many Caribbean (and South American) nations not only allows for a pause to reflect on our history, but it established a cause to conduct a reality check on how we recognise that history.

For context, "Indian Arrival Day" is recognised this month in Suriname (1st), Guyana (5th), Saint Lucia and Martinique (6th), Jamaica (10th), and Trinidad and Tobago (30th). It is also recognised outside of May in other nations, and Girit Remembrance Day is observed in the southeast Asian Island nation of Fiji on May 14.

There is also a nod to South Asian "arrival" in Canada. In Ontario, through legislation, May 5 is recognised as "South Asian Arrival Day" – the day when the first South Asians entered the Americas. This coincides with when Indentured workers arrived in Guyana in 1838 on that day.

Recognising arrival day is the literal observance of when South Asian Indentured persons first arrived in set nations. Stripped from context and conditions, this is actual fact. However, the notion of arrival might be a masking, almost a dressing up, of a harsh reality that was associated with when our ancestors disembarked from ships and began years of jarring servitude.

Within recent years, a younger generation within the Indo-Caribbean diaspora have applied more recognition to the torture, pain, agony, and even deaths associated with these arrivals, therefore designating these dates as "survival days" instead. I first saw this term used by the *Cutlass Magazine*.

There have been accusations that a young, woke crowd have

once again stepped in to apply a politically correct approach to what were long-standing "arrival" dates. However, the question is, "Does this actually matter?"

The notion of recognising arrival dates as survival dates is a noble gesture towards ensuring that the occurrences are not misrepresented in any way, while delving into the deep and painful legacy associated with the arrival of Indentured workers from India to the Caribbean and other European-held colonies. The fact is that arrival is correlated with survival and those who survived did arrive.

The labeling of these events is probably more irrelevant in the grand scheme of things. While the concept of "survival" is an important nod to the negativity associated with when South Asian Indentured workers entered the Americas, the point is that recognition of the events is not in fact a celebration.

Those who opt to recognise "arrival" are not celebratory about the suffering of our ancestors, but are conscious of the sign of a turning point when South Asian communities were introduced to the Americas.

And regardless of one's preference of "arrival" or "survival" – the reality is that this was a turning point in the history of people. It was a moment when a new community, a new culture, and a new identity would be established.

Throughout the history of humanity, there have been significant movements of peoples for an array of reasons. The story of Indo-Caribbean people would have a start when arrival through Indentured servitude would lead them to new lands – and it is absolutely necessary to recognise that.

To many people, those who hold pride in their (Indo-) Caribbean culture, they have found optimism built from the toil of our ancestors, and identify the distinct future that would have been established from that. And to others, who also are proud of their Indo-Caribbean culture and heritage, there is a need to assure that the pain caused upon colonial rule is not forgotten.

Choosing between "arrival" or "survival" does not dilute the facts of history, but instead, recognition of the historic events is vital to ensure that we understand who we are, our ancestral connections, and that we should remain as determined as possible to guarantee that the legacy of our hardworking ancestors is not forgotten.



Ryan Singh

**There was a time when we had no clocks & watches**

**H**ere is a memory that I treasure as an adult – I do not recall seeing clocks, or wristwatches, when I was growing up back home. Fact is, I cherish this period for not knowing about timepieces: clocks, watches, and even sundials, since it is the one time, so to speak, where I was inhabiting a space of innocence and free will, and was not being regulated by seconds, minutes, hours, and lifetimes spent in endless and fatiguing labour.

Such is the early immunity that young children in my time had through youthful detachment from control and regulation by the unseen hands of authority, which were holding the adults around us in tight and unrelenting reins.

The adults where I grew up were tightly bound to production in the cane fields, which, among other things, was being driven by the endlessly turning imperial gears of time and profit, and from which my grandmother, for example, could not detach.

So despite the absence of time-keeping instruments in my immediate, occupied space, the adults were still connected to the passage of time beyond our village to an insidious, demanding, and extractive empire that was eternally imposing on their time. And I was aware of its presence and passage, even while I was inhabiting my innocent childhood frame.

For example, as predictable as clockwork, my grandmother was awake right after the first roosters began flapping noisily, shaking the sleep out of heads weighted down with combs, and clearing their long throats like baritones warming up while the rest of the orchestra was finding its pitch.

There was no clock alarm to wake up my grandmother; no cacophonous and jarring hammering on two tiny bells, dragging her out of slumber so she could begin to prepare for the fatiguing labour that was her day ahead in the brutalising fields of sugar canes.

Later in life I would wonder whether it was the roosters, which in anticipation of the predictable sunrise, were indeed raising the alarm that the sun would be arriving within three hours or so.

Or perhaps it was how we chose to read that crested, ornamental throwback of the crowned head, the prominence of an embroidery of chest feathers heaving to deliver what was nothing less than territorial assertion.

Perhaps we were interpreting their choral crowing to fit into our daily lives, making it into an accessory, the way we wear a wristwatch, or today carry expensive cellphones as a third,

opposable thumb.

Whatever it was, the telegraphing of a connectivity of crowing across the towers of roosts saw the repetitive, competitive heralding leaping across the households in the village.

My grandmother opened her eyes with the first, tentative crowing, lying briefly in bed, hoping the alarm was a dream, until the full orchestral symphony got underway in full-throated acclaim.

Then wearily, her back bent to begin shouldering the baggage left at the foot of the bed the night before, she would smooth out the untidy tidal-tossed bedsheets, and cover me up securely against the feasting mosquitoes.

She only left for the kitchen after tucking me in with a final pat, and an admonition from the gravel in a voice that was also awakening that I remain covered, leaving me to swim in my sleep beneath blanket, occasionally lifting my head up for air.

With the moving gears of time and routine now spinning noiselessly, my grandmother lit the *chulha*, huffing and puffing if the firewood was reluctant and wet, with short respites for bouts of asthmatic coughs and recovery from the effort.

By now, beyond the chirping of the crickets being absorbed into the dew-damp cloth of the lifting night were other lit *chulhas* in our neighbourhood, their fires flickering with yellow intensity through cracks in the makeshift walls of distant kitchens, seeming to communicate with each other across the vastness of the softening darkness.

It seemed then that time was winding itself into the communal setting of our village life, despite an absence of clocks. That it was present in the unifying and similar actions in lit fires sending out smoke signals that meals were being cooked, with rotis swelling like balloons to bursting among the red and black embers. And peas being harried, hurried, and curried to a symphony of pot spoons keeping musical time on the rims of cast iron pots.

A few years later I was introduced to telling time in school. A circle cut from cardboard with handwritten interval of numbers, its two hands re-purposed popsicle tongue-depressor sticks, were my introduction to the challenging adult world.

After acquiring the knowledge of clocks, there was no winding back. More and more now the world spun faster away on its axis, upon which sat the hour and minute hands marking my passage of time. And so our unfolding lives were driven forward, our childhood rapidly unwinding as adulthood beckoned.



Romeo Kaseram

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# Experts analyse media content portrayal of Indians in diaspora

Dear Editor,

What do content analyses of the media show about Indians in the diaspora, especially in countries such as Trinidad, Guyana, and Suriname, where they constitute the largest ethnic group?

How much are Indian culture and artistes featured in the entertainment sections of the newspapers? Are Indian children seeing themselves mirrored equitably in the media? Do the advertisements in these multi-ethnic societies reflect diversity, equity, and inclusion? Are Indian men muted, erased, and made invisible?

As with ethnic minorities in the media in Canada, are Indians in the diaspora made to feel alien, devalued, and as second-class citizens in their own nations? Do the media promote and grant legitimacy to certain cultural art forms at the expense of others?

Answers to these questions are critical in building a peaceful, harmonious, just, inclusive, and progressive multicultural society.

The following are excerpts from a ZOOM public meeting that was held September 10, 2022 on the topic **"Portrayals of Indians in the Diaspora by the Media: Biased, Muted, Marginalised or Made Invisible?"**

The Pan-Caribbean public meeting was chaired by Shakira Mohammed and moderated by Shalima Mohammed, both from Trinidad. It was hosted by the Indo-Caribbean Cultural Centre and the Ameena Gafoor Institute.

Speakers were Professor Yasmin Alibhai-Brown, a journalist, broadcaster, author, and lecturer; Rajan Nazran, chief explorer for Global Indian Series; Dr Kumar Mahabir, anthropologist, university lecturer and Executive Director of the ICC ZOOM programme; and Dr Vishnu Bisram, political opinion pollster and international journalist.

**Professor Yasmin Alibhai-Brown** of the UK said, "You were treated very badly in the newsrooms; you weren't paid the same as white journalists; you never had a contract; you always felt you were made to feel grateful. I remember once being paid so little that I asked the editor why I was being paid so little money, and she said: 'You should be grateful for writing for the *Guardian*'. The brutal racism is now built not so much on



ZOOM event was helmed by Shakira Mohammed



Kumar Mahabir



Yasmin Alibhai-Brown



Vishnu Bisram

the colour of our skin, but on a nationalist ownership of these islands. It's a very edgy relationship among people of colour and Indian origin, the nation, and the media. It is hard to accept that journalism has the right to be critical of everybody if it is criticism with evidence and is justified. I don't think just because we are discriminated against, we should never be criticised."

**Rajan Nazran** of the UK said, "Trinidad culture is that everybody has to fit in and it is defined by the steel pan, calypso, limbo, and Carnival, which is [promoted by the media as] national culture, but Phagwa or Diwali are not. True journalism is the conversations that people don't want to have. The reality is the media, and news especially, is PR... South Asian journalists

whether there is fair coverage of Indians relative to other ethnic groups. The media are small in proportion to the population and profit. Positive articles honouring Indians are very rare and far. Those that cast Indians in a negative light are significantly higher than the positives. I suggest that we need to have more ethnic publications that focus on the community as we do on social media through the Indo-Caribbean forum. We should encourage more Indians to join the profession so that they could give us greater publication space as well as positive coverage in the media."

**Dr Kumar Mahabir & Trishana Jeenath, Trinidad and Tobago, via email.**

may have diversity of skin colour, but not diversity of thought, which is what the news needs to be. Journalists should say what are the key issues because they intimately acknowledge the fragility of these stories to local people."

**Dr Kumar Mahabir** of Trinidad said, "I did the first empirical study on Indian men in the media. My presentation statistically examined the frequency of Indian men in advertisements in two daily 'national' newspapers in Trinidad and Tobago. The methodology used in this study was content analysis that coded the frequency of images of men of all ethnicities in 116 colour advertisements in 60 editions of the *Newsday* and *Guardian* over a 30-day duration. The findings revealed that Indian men were marginalised/under-represented in advertisements in comparison to African men (11:61) in the print media in a country in which Indian men outnumber African men (236,823 or 36 percent, and 228,068 or 34 percent respectively). This study is framed within the Agenda Setting Theory. The agenda of these advertisers is to create a perception that Indian males are unimportant, marginalised, inferior, and invisible."

**Dr Vishnu Bisram** of the US said, "Historically, Guyana's media were controlled by the white colonial establishment. Guyana became Independent, and the government acquired control of the media. I examined how Indians are portrayed, and

## T&T's non-stop crime

Dear Editor,

With cricket legend Brian Lara chiming in, Trinidad and Tobago is now fully aware of the mind-blowing crisis that the veritable orgy of violent crime has become, and which is ongoing on a daily basis.

In this regard, many learned commentators have suggested the usual collection of short, medium, and long-term measures to tackle this epidemic of violent crime plaguing the nation non-stop.



Brian Lara

In the long-term column the most often mentioned measures are reform of the education system, rebuilding of the nuclear family unit, provision of more viable career opportunities for youth, along with youth counselling programmes of various designs.

However, the fall-out from this ubiquitous and heinous crime buffet is massive trauma for the many victims and their families.

So, as a nation we desperately need the best law enforcement officers, together with a properly functioning judicial system to apprehend, prosecute, and swiftly punish those who choose to break the law in a violent manner.

Anything less will surely see Trinidad and Tobago become entangled with our neighbour Haiti much sooner than you think.

**Gregory Wight, Trinidad and Tobago, via email.**



Fitzgerald Hinds



Reginald Armour

## Incompetence in key areas putting T&T nationals on edge

Dear Editor,

Nationals of Trinidad and Tobago are now at bursting point, overcome by rampant crime, poor governance, and overburdened by the arrogance of those in office.

Upon assuming office, Attorney General Reginald Armour was welcomed with a buzz of excitement and expectation as a breath of fresh air. His qualifications as senior counsel and his record at the Bar created the impression that at last someone of stature had joined the government.

Sadly, this excitement and expectation quickly disappeared as the Attorney General was involved in a series of legal gaffes. His memory as to whether he was a note-taker or a senior counsel in the Brian Kuei Tung court matter shattered the public's confidence as to his apparent legal prowess. Questions were being asked as to whether he had sacrificed legal acumen for

political subservience.

A series of political blunders seem to have followed the now hapless Attorney General, and his reasoning and explanations in the Brent Thomas matter have only amplified questions as to his competence for that office.

As for the public's anticipation of the appointment of Fitzgerald Hinds as Minister of National Security, suffice to say he has lived up to all expectations: an abject failure whose incompetence seems to be without bounds, one who seems to be without an iota of shame, and one who spews unending and meaningless utterances.

The minister seems to be ecstatic about his new-found fetish of long oral encounters.

Citizens are on the edge.

**Moses Sargeant, Trinidad and Tobago, via email.**

# National sovereignty still being challenged by outside influence

Dear Editor,

For centuries, all of what we know today as the Global South was at the receiving end of domination by a handful of European countries. It took hundreds of years of bloody struggle, including slave rebellions in Berbice (1763), Demerara (1823), and Essequibo (1834) to see the backs of the colonisers.

In countries like Guyana, the Cold War generated a second phase of the struggle for national Independence. Formal Independence was supposed to have guaranteed our national sovereignty, but, as we are now seeing, even private international organisations are interfering in our affairs.

While we are indeed a sovereign nation, it cannot be said that we live in a world where all states enjoy the same freedoms. This is so because there are global institutions so biased that, instead of rational decision-making being the anchor of global

governance, a handful of nations (and one major alliance) continues to define the rules of the game. The P5 of the UN Security Council is the most notable example of a profoundly undemocratic global system of institutionalised power.

What is even worse is the proliferation of private international organisations – most of them in the 'West' – that have arrogated to themselves the right to pronounce on the Third World. These organisations are private, and many of the top executives make CEO-type salaries. While they are called non-profits, they are often funded through either suspect means, or are secretly sustained by the handful of hegemonic states.

What these organisations, such as Reporters Without Borders and Transparency International, do is contrary to the spirit of a democratically governed world system. These organisations take it upon themselves to first penetrate; then study, classify, monitor, rank, rate, grade and, like an old colonial master, tell us what to do. They function like the colonial

overseers of old times by recruiting local collaborators, who for a few pennies and a bit of recognition from the white West, are willing to be the new colonial assistants, selling out their country and their conscience.

Some pick up a scholarship, others accept invitations to a conference in Paris, London, or New York. Still others get 'funding' for their favourite local organisations. All of them get regular attention and plenty of praise from Opposition columnists, letter writers, and even a pat on the back by the 'Foreign.'



Irfaan Ali

I want to go on record and state unequivocally that Reporters Without Borders' submission on Guyana is biased, empirically wrong; and further, that it is a brazen attack on our national sovereignty. I am using this letter to challenge any one from the Reporters Without Borders (not from Guyana, but the head office) to a debate on press and media freedom.

It should be in Georgetown.

Further, I specifically challenge them to point to a single verifiable instance of abuse of anyone in the media/press by Guyana's President Mohamed Irfaan Ali, Vice President Jagdeo, or any member of the current cabinet.

Private NGO-type organisations have become platforms for career opportunities for many in the Western world, where most of these institutions are located. During the Cold War, many public organisations were conduits for intelligence operations, including overthrow of democratic governments, Guyana included. Now the private international non-profits are publicly intervening in Third World states, always under the guise of protecting freedom.

These neo-colonial international non-profits continue to work with the civilisational assumption that the white West knows best, that they are the teachers and we are the pupils. We stand in determined resistance against this racial-civilisational bullying.

Dr Randolph Persaud, via email.



Guyana's govt is seeking to regularise electric bikes on the road

## Act carefully on electric bike legislation

Dear Editor,

I have been reading many negative comments recently surrounding the usage of electric bikes in Guyana. There was news from the Traffic Department that riders must have a valid motorcycle licence.

Also that Guyana's Attorney General Anil Nandlall plans to enact laws in Parliament to control the usage of e-bikes, all towards road safety and proper rules for riders and the other road users.

I am aware of the misuse of these electric bikes, for example, children riding, no lights, non-observance of traffic regulations, and so on.

I would like to ask the Government to take a mature look at electric bike usage, and not

disrupt the livelihood of our Guyanese brothers and sisters. The electric bike has become a Guyanese tradition, since it is an upliftment of our living standard.

People feel proud to own an electric bike. Some families have three or four, as those have replaced bicycles. Mothers use them to take their children to and from school, and to run errands. They use them to help with household chores, since motorcycles require a licence, and a tougher to use. Less affluent Guyanese use electric bikes to ride and sell, to go to work, and so on. On any given day, we see many electric bikes on the roads.

Please do not disrupt our people's lives. Please think before you act, AG Nandlall.

Artist Allim, Guyana, via email.

## Who Owns Your Property in Guyana?

By Maj Khan RE/Guyana

For decades, a significant number of Guyanese have migrated to other lands, carved a new life for themselves and continue to own property in the country. But property for them is more than possession, it represents a continuous link of what they have left behind and what is possible.

What is possible is here today. The discovery of oil in 2015 has brought Guyana into sharp focus on the world stage. Global attention and investments are pouring in as everyone expects great fortunes to be made. The first acute impact of this hyperactivity is a property market that is already severely undersupplied, exacerbated by increasing demand, which has pushed values upward exponentially.

With this steep demand, a number of cracks and challenges in the system has been laid bare. The recent headline is the case of Marlene Todd who bought property, only to discover the person who sold it to her, Ann Jennifer Jeboo, forged her signature as power of attorney and actually sold land that belonged to Allan Price. The High Court ruled in favour of Todd because she had no knowledge of the fraud.

Fraudulent property sales is a double-edged sword where both the purchaser and the legitimate seller can find themselves in a legal battle. At least for now, it is clear the onus is on the buyer to determine the property they purchase is legitimate. It also begs the question: what measures, if any, are in place to prevent fraudulent activities, and who is responsible for its oversight.

"Prescriptive Title" is where a person has been in possession of a property for a period of 12 years without any interruption for the paper owner, can file to become the owner of the property. Next of kin, extended family, friends and whomever the owner has left in charge can file for ownership, often successfully.

Inheritance is also an interesting situation. Expats often have a rude awakening when attempting to claim what they consider is rightfully theirs. They discover other family members who reside on the property also file for ownership by virtue of the fact that they have lived on the said property, usually for decades.

All this is happening in a country where the proper storage of documentation is a somewhat fragile endeavour. Guyana has been plagued by a series of unfortunate incidents over the years. Between the late 1990s to today, the Government of Guyana has had at least 25 of its buildings destroyed; buildings where property owners' paper records are housed and leaving it vulnerable to destruction. This list includes: The Ministry of Public Works and Communications accounts department, The Ministry of Finance, The Central Tender Board, Ministry of Housing and Water (hundreds of transports, plans, and drawings destroyed), The central Housing and Planning Authority, to list but a few. Housed in these buildings are records forever gone.

To compound the issue Guyana has two legal codes working side by side. The Civil Code and the Common Law introduced by the British. The country also has a dual register system of property rights: The Deeds Registry and the Land Registry, that operate in separate jurisdictions. The mismatched legal framework is the backbone of a perplexing system weighed down under overlapping rules and complex regulations.

One thing is certain, the *status quo* cannot continue and the current government knows they have a daunting task ahead of remedying this crisis. They recognise the application process is tedious and frustrating, insufficient lands to develop, expensive construction materials, and inadequate access to financing. But it will take time, considerable time before real change occurs.

In the meantime, the question still stands: Who owns your property?

There are organisations positioning themselves to take the lead to work within the system to optimise the outcome for property owners. With implementation of technology and an ever increasing global village where information is readily accessible, Guyanese both at home and abroad are much sophisticated in their understanding of the property market.

As such, companies such as Re/Guyana are using technology and online platforms to take a streamlined step-by-step common sense approach to resolve the range of existing issues. It has forged ahead with its portfolio because of its ability to leverage its connections with the legal system, the government, and private entities in Guyana.

Simply put, it has boots on the ground, and understands what needs to be done.

The 18th century botanist, Thomas Drummond, encapsulated it well when he stated: "Property has its duties as well as its rights". Everyone seems to know what their rights are, but what of duty? Do they know and understand what questions must be asked, what actions need to be taken, what proof do they have, to ensure they own their property?

RE/Guyana is a property services company dedicated to making it easier and safer to administer, acquire, divest and develop real estate assets in Guyana. We offer property owners a free online assessment to determine if they face property fraud risk. [Click here for more information.](#)



# Guyana makes preparations for June 12 local Govt elections

As Guyanese head to the polls on June 12 for the country's local Government Elections, it would not be unusual for political turmoil and social unrest to rear their ugly heads once again – as they always do around any major elections.

Incidentally, the current environment, which is charged with politically-motivated racial and anti-government tensions, would provide certain disruptive opposition forces with the ideal opportunity to create chaos – especially if the voting process is found to have flaws, and the results are not in their favour.

Guyanese have been anticipating the hosting of LGE for some time now. Eligible voters would be able to cast their ballot for representatives within the country's ten Municipalities and 70 Neighbourhood Democratic Councils. The last LGE was held in November 2018.

Though the local government system is an essential part of the country's governance framework, it does not apparently work very efficiently. The elections are contested by political parties, voluntary groups, and individuals.

As part of the government's commitment, some (G) \$2.9 billion have been allocated to the Guyana Elections Commission for preparatory works to ensure the successful planning and execution of the elections.

The LGE were constitutionally due in 2021. However, GECOM was experiencing a number of administrative issues, including the non-appointment of a Chief Election Officer.

Last October, it was announced that the LGE would be held on March 13, 2023. However, the date was postponed by GECOM because it had to reopen the claims and objections process for the submission of applications for the approval of symbols for LGE.

GECOM also had to ratify a proposal for the hosting of another round of "claims and objections" for a new Register of Voters to be produced, which further delayed the elections.

In addition, GECOM had to approve the work plan for the LGE, which paved the way for the secretariat to proceed with the implementation of the relevant statutory and administrative activities for the elections country-wide.

Though the elections do not typically attract as much attention as the country's general elections, the pre-election rumblings have been no different. In recent months, GECOM has come under scrutiny for its delay in holding the constitutionally due election. A dispute had also erupted over the demarcation of constituencies and the voters' list.

During the last week of April, the Alliance For Change called for the postponement of the elections until the List of Electors is "purged of contaminants and fraud", noting that the current list of electors is not clean.

In a press release, the AFC stated that it found it astonishing that despite the national embarrassment of fraudulent activities revealed

during the national recount exercise, agents of the People's Progressive Party have continued in their corrupt actions to forge and abuse the names of the deceased and migrated in the composition of the current list of electors.

It added that "if the recent reports of fraud blatantly committed in the process of submitting documents to GECOM for parties to qualify for the upcoming LGE are anything to go by, they confirm that the List of Electors held up by GECOM to be safe, secure, and sacrosanct is far from being so".

The AFC allegations set the stage for innumerable questions and disputes once the elections are over.

Last week, the Opposition also called for urgent electoral reforms to address ongoing challenges with the country's electoral integrity.

It urged the government to implement the recommendations made by the European Union's 2020 Election Observer Mission follow-up team, which is currently in the country to assess progress made on electoral reforms.

In a local press report, the Opposition claimed that GECOM has failed to deliver credible elections and eroded public confidence in the electoral process. It stated that, "Preparations for the 2023 LGE have amply demonstrated that the electoral process is still prone to political manipulation, corruption, and fraud. They have further exposed an elections commission that has been politically hijacked, is poorly chaired, is administratively unfit, and is unaccountable to the people."

With the elections less than a month away, a total of 46 parties, voluntary groups and individuals have been approved by GECOM to contest the LGE. Based on information from GECOM, the PPP/Civic is already poised for default wins in 12 of the 80 Local Authority Areas being contested. This is because these LAAs are not being contested by any other party in the Proportional Representation component of the elections, or have a limited number of the individual constituencies in the LAAs.

According to GECOM, APNU is only contesting 261 or 42.9 per cent of the 610 constituencies and 55 or 68.75 per cent of LAAs, while the PPP/Civic has been approved to contest in all 80 LAAs, which includes 70 Neighbourhood Democratic Councils and ten municipalities.

The LAAs where the PPP/Civic is the only contesting entity include Leguan, Canal Polder, and La Jalousie/Novelle Flanders in Region Three (Essequibo Island-West Demerara); Herstelling/Little Diamond in Region Four (Demerara-Mahaica); Kintyre/No 37 Borlam, Ordnance/Fort Lands No 38, Kilcoy/Hampshire, Port Mourant/Johns, Bloomfield/Whim, and No 64/No 74 in Region Six (East Berbice-Corentyne); and the Aranaputa/Upper Burro Burro NDC and municipality of Lethem in Region Nine (Upper Takutu-Upper Essequibo).



Dwarka Lakhan



Guyanese nationals line up to cast their votes

While APNU has managed to contest in all of the LAAs in Regions One, Two, Five, Seven, Eight and Ten, the party had no submissions for Region Nine, and struggled in most of Region Three, where it only managed to submit PR lists for two of the 14 LAAs, and has candidates for six of the 124 constituencies in that region.

In Region Six, APNU has only managed to field candidates for 61 of the region's 152 constituencies, spread across 14 of the region's 22 LAAs.

Evidently, APNU has lost ground in the electoral process for a number of reasons, including internal disenchantment and fragmentation. The PPP/Civic, on the other hand has been able to court former APNU supporters to join the party to contest the elections.

The municipality of Georgetown is expected to have the most contesting parties, with a total of 14 participants. Aside from the PPP/Civic and APNU, the Guyana National Services Party, Independent Citizens for Progress, and

Movement for Unity and Democracy are also contesting the PR component of the elections.

Several individuals and groups are also contesting the elections in individual constituencies across the country.

It would appear that the PPP/Civic is poised to secure a majority victory at the LGE. In 2018, the PPP/Civic won 61 percent of votes at local polls, APNU 34 percent, and the AFC four percent.

It is believed that should the PPP/Civic win the elections, there will be numerous disputes and allegations of fraud, which can lead to civil unrest in some parts of the country.

Dwarka Lakhan, BA, MBA, FCSI, FICB is a Member of the Canadian Association of Journalists, and an accomplished financial writer. His recently published 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](mailto:dlakhan@rogers.com).

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A section of visiting delegates at the International Conference on Indentureship **‘Embrace & respect cultural diversity’**

**From Page 1**

together with Girmitiya descendants gathered at The University of the South Pacific Laucala Campus. It was a two-day affair, which took place from May 12-13.

Speaking to the Girit experience, Katonivere said the presence of all visiting scholars to participate in the conference signified the importance of Girit Day and its history.

Said Katonivere: “Cultural diversity should not just be recognised; it needs to be embraced and respected. Our society needs to continuously foster an environment of inclusivity where everyone, regardless of their race, ethnicity, religion or cultural background, feels valued and appreciated.”

As the GGI has noted, ‘Girmityas’ refer to diasporic members who can trace their ancestry back to the Indian Indenture System, which took place between 1834-1921. Girmityas are estimated to number between 12-15 million worldwide, reside in nearly every country in the world, and are bound together by a shared history.

The keynote address was delivered by USP Vice-Chancellor Professor Pal Ahluwalia, who emphasised the importance of remembering the history of Girmityas.

Said Ahluwalia: “For the localised Indians,

Fiji was the only home they knew. Sure, they were Indo-Fijians, but they were not willing to succumb to being merely part of an Indian diaspora. They were a unique localised indigenious Indo-Fijian diaspora.”

He added, “Girit Day has the potential to be a powerful endorsement that a new dawn has arrived where inter-racial harmony is recognised not only as a pragmatic solution to contemporary issues but fundamentally born of an ethic which embraces the other.”

Also speaking was Fiji’s Deputy Prime Minister, Honourable Professor Biman Prasad, who was also the National Committee on Girit Chair.

As he noted, his nation’s “144th anniversary commemoration is a momentous occasion for us to reflect on the significance of Indian Indenture in shaping the course of Fiji’s history.”

He added, “For Indo-Fijians, ‘girit’ connects us; it is the foundation for our shared language; it is the foundation of our spirituality. It is part of our history and our very being today.”

Also, “The history of Indian Indenture is a crucial part of Fiji’s past, and it is essential that we continue to study and reflect on the period, not only to understand the challenges and hardships faced by our ancestors but also to honour their legacy and contributions to our society.”



**Ratu Wiliame Katonivere**



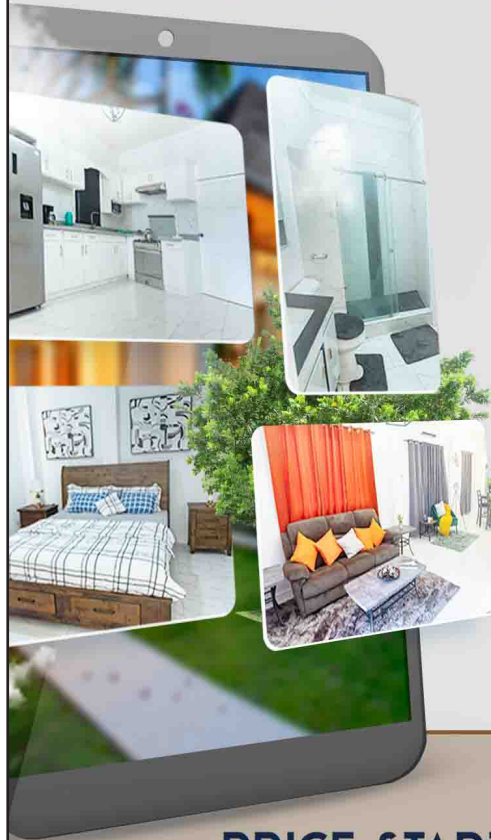
**Performers at the Indentureship conference**



**A section of attendees at the opening of the conference**



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# London Docklands museum holds Indo-Caribbean exhibition

The Museum of London Docklands will open a new free display **Indo + Caribbean: The creation of a culture**, in its London, Sugar and Slavery gallery on May 19.

Working together with Londoners of Indo-Caribbean descent, it will tell the under-represented history of Indian Indenture in the British Caribbean, and explore Indo-Caribbean culture in London, England today.

Following the Slavery Abolition Act of 1833, British planters in the Caribbean devised a new scheme to source cheap labour for their plantations, recruiting workers from India to work for three to five years in return for transport, a minimal wage and some basic provisions.

Having successfully petitioned the British government for their support, the first indenture ships, *The Hesperus* and *The Whitby*, set sail in 1838.

Between then and its end in 1917, around 450,000 Indians undertook the long and difficult journey, taking up to five months, to the British Caribbean.

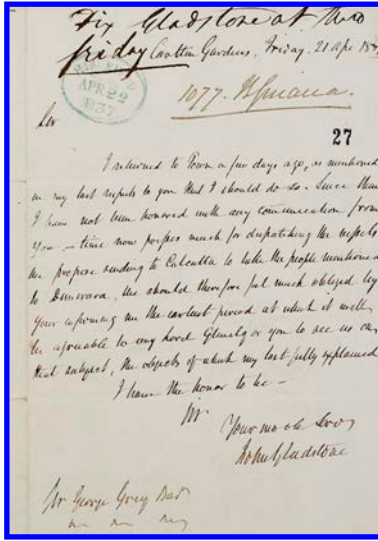
The display will explore: the transition between enslaved African labour and the start of Indian Indenture, including letters petitioning the government from planter Sir John Gladstone; and the journey from India to the Caribbean, examining the poor conditions on board and strong bonds forged between migrants as they crossed the *kala pani* or 'dark waters'.

It will also explore life in the Caribbean for Indentured labourers, addressing the difficult conditions faced by migrants and the impact of their arrival; and, Indo-Caribbean Londoners today, exploring migration to the UK, and drawing on personal stories of London's Indo-Caribbean community.

In addition to Gladstone's letters, the display will feature contracts, shipping company records, postcards, and papers from the Parliamentary Archives that give insights into the realities of life under Indenture.

The display will also draw on photos, jewelry, film and artwork to uncover personal stories and family memories from London's Indo-Caribbean community.

Shereen Lafhaj, Curator at the Museum of London, said: "As we mark the 75th anniversary of Windrush this year, *Indo + Caribbean* is a chance to learn more about Britain's colonial footprint and the diverse communities from the Caribbean that have enriched our city."

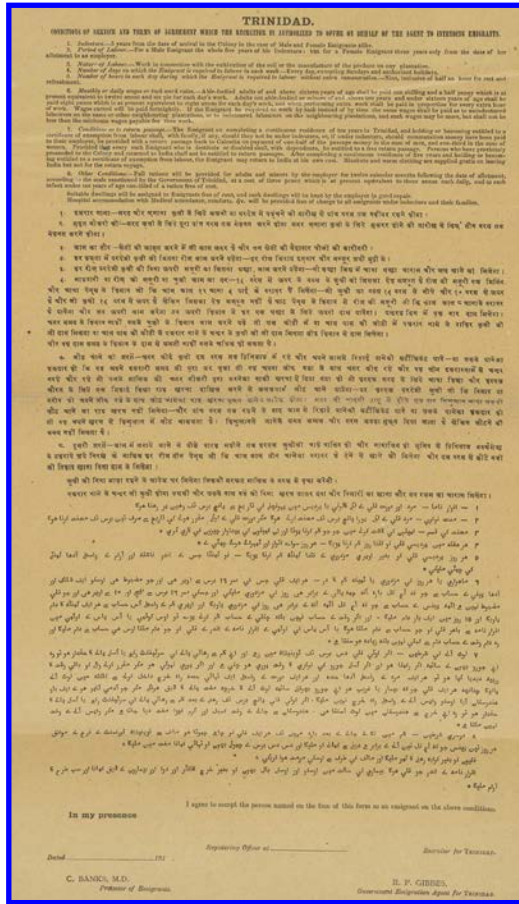


**Gladstone Letter. Copyright The National Archives, UK**

Lafhaj added, "Exploitative and often shockingly cruel, Indian Indenture was a system that nonetheless produced a unique culture, where individuals found agency to forge a new life. We hope this will be a starting point for people to find out about this lesser known aspect of our history."

And Makiya Davis-Bramble, display Co-Curator and Curator at Liverpool's International Slavery Museum, said: "Understanding the history of Indian Indenture in the Caribbean is essential to unpack perceptions of Caribbean heritage. The harsh Indenture system led to the creation of entwined cultures and hyphenated identities. This in turn created displacement, with the Indo-Caribbean diaspora seeking to carve out their own cultural traditions whilst honouring their Indian ancestry."

Additionally, "Indo-Caribbean culture continued to thrive against Britain's colonial rule and grew to represent both cel-



**Indenture Contract 1. Copyright The National Archives, UK**

Opened in 2003, it occupies one of the few remaining original grade one listed warehouses, built in 1802 to store produce from the West Indies.

A shared place in the heart of the East End, where stories cross and collide, it confidently shows how international trade, migration, enslavement and the river Thames were integral to shaping London and the world we live in today.

[Click here to explore the Museum of London](#) with collections online – home to 90,000 objects with more being added regularly.

bration and resistance. This display helps us explore the untold stories of Indenture and showcases the variety of culture in Caribbean communities today."

Dr Saurabh Mishra, Academic advisor to the display and Senior Lecturer in History at the University of Sheffield, said: "The question of Indenture has been an emotionally charged issue right from its initial days, when rumours circulated about the cruel treatment meted out to Indian migrants in plantation colonies. This intensified in the early 20th century, championed by critics including Gandhi and the nationalist movement in India. Their campaigning helped bring the degrading conditions and abuses to a much wider audience."

Also, "This, alongside other factors including resistance by Indian Indentured labourers themselves, led to widespread condemnation and pressure to finally put an end to the system after almost 80 years."

*Indo + Caribbean: The creation of a culture* is the result of a call for ideas to feature in the museum's London, Sugar and Slavery gallery. The display will opens May 19 and runs until November 19. It is part of the Museum of London Docklands' 20th anniversary programme.

The Museum of London Docklands is located at West India Quay in east London.

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Álvaro Enrique Sánchez Cordero, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Venezuela (second from right), applauds after cutting the ribbon to officially mark the resumption of CAL's operations to Caracas on May 13. First from right is CAL's Vice President, Maintenance & Engineering, Varma Khillawan; & Alicia Cabrera, CAL's Executive Manager Marketing & Loyalty at left.

## CAL resumes operations to Caracas

Caribbean Airlines last week announced the resumption of operations to Caracas, Venezuela, which started on May 13. The airline also announced the expansion of its route network to the Eastern Caribbean in the coming months. These are significant milestones for the airline and signal its intention to continue its growth trajectory, a release stated.

Flights between Trinidad and Caracas will initially operate every Saturday, with increased frequency expected later on. Returns from Caracas are the same day.

Said CAL's CEO, Garvin Medera at the re-launch event at the Piarco International Airport in Trinidad and Tobago last week: "We are excited to resume our operations to Caracas and expand our network to the Eastern Caribbean. Our passengers have been eagerly awaiting the restart of the Caracas route and the overall expansion of our network, and we are thrilled to meet their expectations."

He added, "This is a testament to our commitment to providing travellers with more options and improved connectivity. We believe these developments will enhance the travel experience for our customers and bring more economic benefits to the region."

The Eastern Caribbean expansion was always part of Caribbean Airlines' strategic

plan, but was paused during the pandemic. With the acquisition of four new ATRs, the airline is now ready to improve connectivity in the region.

Medera added, "The Caribbean is our home, and we are dedicated to connecting our people and communities."

Also speaking at the event was his Excellency Álvaro Enrique Sánchez Cordero, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

"I am delighted that Caribbean Airlines has restarted these non-stop flights between Caracas and Trinidad and Tobago. It will be very important for trade and the movement of people. I believe that this expansion will enhance the travel experience when persons fly between our countries, and I look forward to increase frequency in the coming months," he said.

In its release, Caribbean Airlines stated it remains committed to providing the best service to its customers. The restart of flights to Caracas and the expansion of the airline's route network to the Eastern Caribbean are just the beginning of its ambitious plans.

CAL is also confident that with the support of its loyal passengers, employees, and partners, it will continue to lead the way in the region's aviation industry.

## OCCBA welcomes St Lucia to CCJ

The Organisation of Commonwealth Caribbean Bar Associations last week congratulated St Lucia on making the Caribbean Court of Justice its final court while urging the other ten Caricom countries that have not already gone that route to do so.

St Lucia is now the fifth Caricom nation to accede to the CCJ's appellate jurisdiction, joining Barbados, Belize, Dominica, and Guyana.

"We offer our heartiest congratulations to the people of St Lucia as well as to the St Lucia Bar Association and our colleague attorneys-at-law who practise in that jurisdiction," the Jamaica-based OCCBA said in a statement.

Other Caricom member nations Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Grenada, Haiti, Jamaica, Montserrat, St Kitts and Nevis, St Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago – have only acceded to the Trinidad-based court's original jurisdiction under which it discharges the functions of an international tribunal, applying rules of international law in respect of the interpretation and application of the Treaty of Chaguaramas.

"As regards the timing and process of the CCJ becoming the final appellate court for the remaining ten Caricom jurisdictions that have not yet become full members of the CCJ, OCCBA recognises that each country will have their own processes and relevant legal and

constitutional amendments as well as changes to other laws, regulations rules and codes," its statement noted.

Additionally, "We implore those governments, particularly those presently undergoing constitutional reforms, such as Jamaica, to treat as an urgent imperative the necessary changes/reforms of the constitutional, legal, and administrative frameworks geared towards the CCJ becoming the final appellate court."

The OCCBA also urged the various Bar associations to assume an active role in this important exercise, and to lend their voice, experience, and guidance aimed at achieving this objective.

"Our support for the CCJ has been consistently maintained and endorsed by the Bar associations of the 15 member states comprising OCCBA. Many of these Bar associations have supported the call for the CCJ to become the final appellate court for their jurisdiction. Their support includes resolutions of the various Bar associations, support in public, and debates as well as submissions to the various parliaments," it noted.

The association also called on regional lawmakers to "take a considered and responsible approach to this important issue, and to support the CCJ as the final appellate court for all Commonwealth Caribbean jurisdictions."



# Ask Jay...

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

## HANG ON TO YOUR HOUSE

Fewer homes are available for sale, and there are plenty of buyers. The Canadian Real Estate Association said that the number of new listings of homes on the market dropped by 5.8 percent. The number of months of inventory trickled to 3.9, and the housing supply is the lowest since 2003.

Over 850,000 immigrants came in 2021, and about 1,050,000 in 2022. Builders are building fewer homes, and in so doing, limit the supply. From these factors, prices will climb despite the interest rate.

The latest bouts of interest rate hikes have resulted in higher borrowing costs for homeowners. Homeowners increased their amortisation period well beyond 40 years instead of selling. Amortisation is an equal mortgage repayment system with a fixed end date. By extending their amortisation, homeowners maintain their regular monthly payments, and as a result, manage to keep their homes.

Most mortgages have a 25-year amortisation. With a 40-year payment option, most monthly payments go towards interest instead of the principal. Poorer families that cannot keep up with the interest rate hikes choose the 40-year payment option, and consequently will be the ones who are affected in the long run.

Nevertheless, extending the amortisation is better than selling the home and renting a property. For these homeowners, it is best to revise your budget or get a second job to reduce the number of years it would take to pay off your home. Today's sacrifice will bring prosperity later.

For buyers, I advise looking at homes sitting on the market for ten days or more. Sellers for these homes will likely drop their prices, allowing buyers to arrange to finance and complete a home inspection. A buyer can then upgrade the house gradually. Another option for buyers frustrated with the GTA real estate market is to relocate to smaller towns. This move can be appealing if the buyers can work remotely.

There is a new trend where more than one family is living together. This way, they can share the expense. Instead of selling and moving to another home, many people are choosing to renovate and keep their homes. The demand for houses in GTA is high, while the supply is low. Do what it takes to get a home, or hang on to your current home. It is a shelter against poverty.

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# Queens Book Fair honours NY's 'phenomenal women'

**Profile of the Month**  
By Dhanpaul Narine

The Queens Book Fair and Literary Festival Inc honoured a number of 'Phenomenal Women' at its last meeting. This was done to observe 'Women's History Month', and it attracted a wide cross-section of the community.

The program was moderated by the phenomenal Judge Karen Gopee, who did an excellent job. She hails originally from Trinidad and Tobago, and has the distinction of being the first Indo-Caribbean judge in America.

It was also great to welcome Judge Andrea Ogle, a Guyanese who is making waves in New York. The program began with an award to Tafazool Baksh, our resident musician from New Jersey. Baksh was originally in the 'Indian Hot Shots Orchestra' in Guyana that was led by Neville Kallicharan.

Chuck Mohan called on women everywhere to join in the struggle for equality, and he also suggested that more women's history should be taught in schools.

Hayden Morris, a student in Queens, New York, recited the poem 'Phenomenal Women' by Maya Angelou from memory that was well received by the audience. His mom Kaydia received an award and thanked the Book Fair for the work it is doing to promote literacy in New York.

Faiuze Ali from Community Board 9 introduced a number of phenomenal women who bring time and talent to the community. Alexandra Sumpter Delves was described as a quintessential multitasker, and was happy to be honoured.

Zoila Bofill from Ecuador was described as a valuable player in the community. She thanked her family for getting her interested in community work. Faiuze also introduced three other dynamic women: Annie Mohan, Aleena Knight, and Rajwinder Kaur. They are all grounded in social and community work. Their stories were inspirational and uplifting.

Faiuze says that the women were phenomenal because they recognised the need to work together to bring about change.

There can be no doubt that Jennifer Bisram is a phenomenal woman. She has brought a wealth of experience to broadcasting and media. She is a reporter at CBS Channel 2 News. She thanked the Queens Book Fair for taking the initiative to recognise phenomenal women in the community.



**Dr Rosalind October dramatises Maya Angelou's Phenomenal Women**

It was important to bring women together and to learn about their outstanding work. She said that she was there to help and to provide a voice that could hopefully make a difference.

"I am one of a handful of Guyanese reporters in the country on a national level and it is a position that I don't take lightly. It is a great deal of responsibility, and I try to get out and to mix with the community," Jennifer said.

She was proud of the fact that the children were involved in the program. She pointed out that education, persistence, perseverance, and belief in oneself are important.

Jennifer was followed by Judge Andrea Ogle. She thanked all and said that these programs were important. She acknowledged her parents for their hard work, and urged the others to take their studies seriously. She called for a removal of disparities against women so they could enjoy the same benefits as men.

Sabrina Fleming is the Principal of the Adult and Continuing Education School 3 in Queens. Under her leadership, thousands of persons have been given second chances to complete their studies and to matriculate to colleges.

Fleming said that her passion is to see adults reach for the

stars. She added that the Adult Education programs are all over Queens, and urged people to take advantage of them.

Binrowtie Angelini of Bena Home Care Agency has been providing high-quality services for years to community. She is a mentor to her staff, and was honoured by the Queens Borough President for her distinguished service. She was happy to be recognised as a phenomenal woman.

Shanaz Hussain has an Internet radio service with a big following, and her work with the Lions is also outstanding. She thanked the Queens Book Fair for raising the bar.

She was followed by Dr Rosalind October who dramatised beautifully the poem Phenomenal Woman. October spoke about her varied experience in social work, and challenged the young people to pursue their dreams, despite the obstacles.

Fazal Yusuf from the International Center for Democracy brought greetings, and congratulated the women for their achievements.

Patricia Jordan Langford was honoured for her many contributions. She said the object was to change the world and to leave it better.

It was time for the youths to present awards to their mothers. Annessa Lall said that her mom Anita has made great efforts to raise the family for which she is grateful.

Amelia Persaud said her mom is always there for her, and has played many roles in her life, and is her best friend.

Karissa Jagbeer said that her mom Diana is a wonderful provider and a supermom, and gives her love unconditionally.

Rusat Ramgopal waxed lyrical about his mom, Indi Mohan. He said his mom is his confidant, strength, and his princess. Rusat has finished law school and is running for political office in Queens.

Ambika Chandra spoke about her mom Mala Boodram. Ambika said her mom is selfless and the world is a better place because of her.

Jelecia Blair spoke about her mom Samantha Tappin, who worked hard to become a decorator. Her mom also taught her to read. Samantha said that the Queens Book Fair is a great event and thanked the organisers.

Harmanpreet was full of praise for her mom Rajwinder Kaur, who is her rock.

Maya Somwaru said that her mom Debbie Somwaru is a great friend and supporter.

Mamta spoke from the heart about her mom Youranie (Marlene). She described her mom as a warrior that cared for others, and is warm and friendly to all.

Jayden Singh said his mom Shireese is a nurse that works with special needs children. She has a talent for education and has changed many lives. Shireese is studying to be a doctor.

Judge Karen Gopee did a remarkable job as the moderator. She urged the phenomenal women to continue to serve their communities selflessly. We thank the Queens Library, Richmond Hill Branch, for its generosity. Our next event is on Saturday, May 27, 2023 when we meet to observe Indo-Caribbean Heritage Month.



**Three phenomenal women are Jennifer Bisram (centre) CBS reporter Channel 2 News, with Judge Karen Gopee (left), and Judge Andrea Ogle**



**Heather McKenzie (second from right) with Guyana Consulate staff, Osafo Scott, Vice-Consul at left; Nutuna Singh, Executive Assistant; & Acting Consul General Grace Joseph at the exhibition's launch**



## RECLAIMED: Indo-Caribbean HerStories exhibition on at Gardiner

Over a year in the making from concept to creation, Heidi McKenzie's exhibition, *RECLAIMED: Indo-Caribbean HerStories*, is now on at the [Gardiner Museum](#). It ends on August 27.

It is a mixed-media ceramic-based exhibition that illuminates the power, courage, and strength of Indo-Caribbean women, past and present. Through a feminist lens, McKenzie reveals the little-known histories of Indo-Indentureship in the mid-19th and early 20th centuries through to today.

Among the installations are a wall-mounted set of contemporary portraits on porcelain, lit from behind, depicting Indo-Caribbean women with portraits of a female ancestor; and a

collage of "Coolie Belles" on porcelain window panes, inspired by turn-of-the-century postcards and ephemera.

Also on exhibit are a series of abstract figurative sculptures that respond to the work, alongside select pieces of the Indo-Indentureship silver jewelry. The installation is accompanied by [a series of video testimonials by Indo-Caribbean women](#).

McKenzie is a Toronto-based ceramic artist with Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago roots. She completed her MFA at OCAD University in 2014.

In 2022, she was a finalist and exhibitor for the Shantz Award, Canada's national ceramics emerging artist award, and received the FUSION Clay & Glass Award of Achievement. In 2021, she

was juried Best in Show at the Gardiner Museum exhibition, Flux, The Toronto Potters Biennale.

McKenzie has exhibited nationally and internationally in Europe, Southeast Asia, the US, and Canada, including the Toronto International Art Fair.

She uses photography, digital media, and archives to forefront themes of ancestry, race, migration, and colonisation. She has curated and exhibited *Decolonising Clay* at the Australian Ceramics Triennale in 2019, and participated in the World Indian Diaspora Congress in Trinidad in 2020.

McKenzie was recently inducted into the International Academy of Ceramics in Geneva, Switzerland.

# On August 3, 1897 my great grandparents set sail from India

By Romeo Kaseram  
LJI Reporter

A quiet moment always emerges after an entire family has been brought together by a major event. It happens at weddings and funerals, with the sacred pitch-pine fires burning low after the forging of a marital union; or in the crackling cool-down after towering tongues of flames were almost licking the underside of clouds during a cremation.

It is in this quiet, reflective space where relatives begin to regroup, flowing together like drops of water to coalesce into a larger pool, where subdued and spent, they begin settling among the disarray of rental chairs into a loose and informal circle.

This is when the family stories emerge. It comes as a balm following the ebb and flow of emotions heightened by the sacredness of spoken wedding vows; or after the pundit's final chanting of the send-off incantation that permanently seals in eternal closure the faded smile underneath the coffin's lid.

One of the satisfying narratives that always took my family members away from the preceding turbulence into the soothing, placid circles of comfort is a much-requested tale about my yet-to-be mother, which always brings my second eldest aunt onto centre stage.

My dear aunt was a gifted *raconteur*, and she luxuriated in the story of my young mother-to-be, who then had barely taken a few steps into her teenage years, and without her foreknowledge, involvement, and approval, had been betrothed by Ma and Pa to

a rice farmer from central Trinidad; and to put it mildly, this farmer's greying sideburns under the weather-beaten, raindrop-stained felt hat revealed he had witnessed quite a few decades more of sunsets than his now-dawning, teenaged wife-to-be had seen sunrises.

"Now the day come when the boy-side reach by the girl-side," Auntie told her pool of amused listeners. However, after the greetings and small talk about seasonal flooding and rice farming with the guests, it came to the time when my mother-to-be, who ensconced in a different part of the house, was called upon to enter the room.

Just before the arrival of the guests, she had been urgently, and forcibly coached by my grandmother to enter as a demure presence, slowly shuffling forward with her back bent like a bow, both hands clasped, and with eyes looking downwards at a clumsily painted big toe.

But my mother-to-be with those fierce eyes, and her legendary determined jawline, was not to be found. A frantic opening of doors followed, the guests sitting wide-eyed with amazement, and shifting restlessly in their creaking seats of honour with growing unease. Long minutes of shouting followed as her name echoed through the house, only to be absorbed into the overhead thatch, the calls likely escalating from pleadings into threats. But my mother-to-be did not shuffle demurely out.

Many decades later I asked her about this recurring request from family lore. Perhaps my aunt had exaggerated a few details. But the *griot's* retention by my aunt was mostly accurate.

My teenaged yet-to-be mother had quickly pieced together the events of the puzzling afternoon, her youthful, unplucked eyebrows raised at the unusual attentiveness from her solicitous parents. She had been instructed to take a bath; to comb out her hair to remove its inextricable knots; and despite it not being Sunday, her best dress with its oversized bow sewn into the back had been laid out on the stiff, coconut fibre mattress.

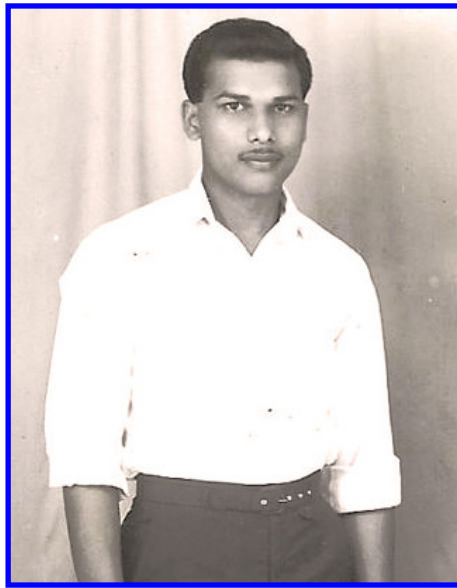
"When these people reach inside the house, right away I could smell the brown rice in their clothes," she recalled. The house filled with the musty mix of the earthiness of rice fields, and the fermentation of soaked paddy awaiting husking.

It appears that indeed, the young-bride-to-be, in a lightning strike of fleet-footedness, in a veritable *coup d'état*, had fled the confines of the cultural coop in what she intuitively knew was a pot-holed road ahead that was an arranged marriage.

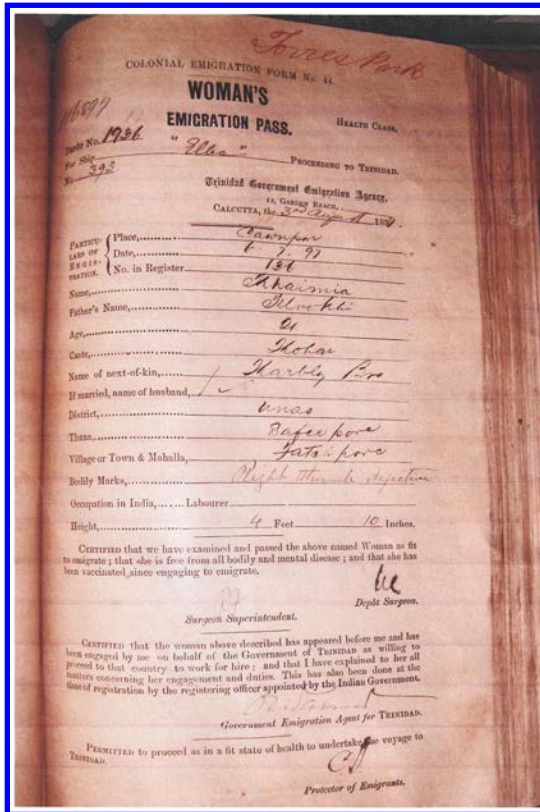
"I put a small *peerhah* against the wall, climbed up and balance myself on the sill, and jumped down from the back Demerara window," my mother-to-be said.

"I land barefoot right inside the nasty chicken coop, and all of them start to squawk and scatter. It was all the noise from the fowls that made Pa run in the back – he thought it was another mongoose. He only saw the big bow stitch on the back of my dress. I run straight inside the cocoa, clean out my foot with leaves, and hide until evening, long after them people left," she said.

The episode left my grandparents embarrassed; of course, with village life back then, a butterfly flapping its wings in any household was quickly amplified into a hurricane of whispers.



A teenaged Ramgarib, circa 1960s



Khaimia's Emigration Form

So it was gossiped with embellishments that my feisty mother-to-be had brought chaos to my grandparents' house in not only forthrightly refusing an offer of marriage, but that she had not told the visitors where to plant their next

crop of rice seedlings.

Also, that she had chased a rejected, chastised, and chastened suitor out of the house while wielding a *cocoyea* broom tightly held by its spiny end, menacingly swinging its thickly-bound top like a club, and in so doing, also effectively sweeping out of her young life further parental intrigues to marry her off among rice fields somewhere behind God's back.

I would like to credit my great grandmother, Khaimia, as the originator of such sweeping, fleet-footed agency.

The backstory to the discovery of my great grandmother began over a year ago. A grandson of Khaimia, Nagassar Ramgarib, reached out to family members informing us he had contacted the eminent genealogist, Shamsu Deen, with a request to trace the footsteps back to India of his grandparents, who were also my great grandparents. Deen's research had been successful; he returned with intriguing, official British colonial documentation.

Ramgarib is now in his eighties; it was a generous gesture, sharing these nuggets of data. I am grateful to him for such generosity, for opening a window for me to peer backwards, over time's horizon and in reverse across the *kala pani*, for a glimpse at the progenitors who rooted our family's Indentured genealogy in the Caribbean.

Deen's data were astonishing; it lifted my pores tremendously, Khaimia's Colonial Emigration Form No 14 reaching right down to the tip of my roots. A photograph of a page in a thickly bound book, Khaimia's document was metonymic, its sepia-red tonality fleshing out granular details of who she was more than 125 years ago: four feet, ten inches tall; and as the depot's examining doctor, the initials illegible, perhaps RA, who examined her before she set sail to Trinidad clinically noted in the sweep of an ink pen, her right thumb was defective.

Moments after Khaimia's second arrival, this time into my Inbox, in the sweep of emotion that overcame me, I understood I was witness to a partial reincarnation; that the minimal details painted with the finer tip of a brush of who my remarkable great grandmother had been as she stood before the medical examiner, was simultaneously invoking innumerable swaths of broader brush strokes that left behind many more unanswerable questions.

As Deen noted, Khaimia registered at the sub-depot of Kanpur on July 6, 1897. She had travelled from the village of Fatehpur Chaorasi, which was in the nearby district of Unnao. She was 21 years old, and left behind her father Tilookhi, and brother, Tharby.

Eighteen days later, on July 24, 1897, my great grandfather Ramdeen was medically examined at Kanpur for fitness to emigrate. He was 22 years old when he left the village of Thakurgunj in the district of Lucknow; the relatives left behind were his father, Sobheddin, and interestingly, a wife, Darga. He was five feet, two inches tall, and had received a wound that left a scar on his right ankle.

Ramgarib is likely the last surviving relative among us who recalls conversations with Khaimia. Now across more than seven decades, he remembers her speech was Bhojpuri, the

Caribbean's own mix of Hindi and English. She was a feisty woman; determined and no-nonsense, who took charge of the grandchildren of her second son whenever she visited, bossily delegating chores while scrubbing the pots and pans on the outdoor *machaan*.

Ramdeen lived for barely two decades more after disembarking from the SS *Elbe* in 1897. He left Khaimia behind after his early death with six young children; my grandmother, a twin, among them.

"[Khaimia] walked about five miles to come to our house, and was so independent that she arrived with her own bottle of water, and with a piece of roti with peas, which she shared with us," Ramgarib recalled; it was the late 1940s, and he had passed his fifth year.

We are fortunate that during these visits she spoke to the young Ramgarib about village life in Fatehpur Chaorasi, telling him she endured great hardship and intense indigence.

In his summary, Deen adds context with the big picture that was then extractive British colonial domination, which by the late 1800s, and in Khaimia's youth, had decimated many of India's key industries; he also speaks to the impoverishment wrought on farmers by the debilitating, British-created Zamindari system.

As Ramgarib recalls, Khaimia made daily peregrinations as a young girl carrying a tray on her head, visiting nearby villages and districts as an itinerant vendor of vegetables. Could it be that Khaimia had crossed paths with a similarly mobile Ramdeen looking for work, husband of wife Darga?

Perhaps it was also during one of her itinerant trips when she met a recruiter, an *akarti*, a British government's agent, who roamed the districts in search of immigrants for the sugar cane fields in Trinidad, Guyana, and other Caribbean ports.

It is notable that Khaimia was also at a marriageable age. Could it be that her father, Tilookhi, and brother, Tharby, were scouting nearby villages for a suitable boy? That the feisty, determined Khaimia, like my mother-to-be decades later, was under pressure to accept an arranged marriage?

It is tempting to place Khaimia's right foot securely on a *peerhah* urgently jammed against an adobe wall in Fatehpur Chaorasi, have her clamber up onto a window sill, and then take a leap of faith into a scatter of startled chickens.

We would never know why Khaimia left her father and brother behind; neither would we know why Ramdeen left father, Sohebodin, and wife, Darga, back in Thakurgunj.

Did they fall for the false promise made by the *akartis* about an easy life of *chalay chinee*, effortlessly filtering sugar crystals out of sugar-cane juice while sitting in the shade? Did the overwhelming poverty, wrought by British colonial greed, drive them to cross the *kala pani*? And, who knows, perhaps Khaimia, like my mother-to-be, could have also leapt out of a window.

There is another possibility. Ramgarib notes Khaimia spoke about becoming quite ill during the passage from Kanpur to the port at Kolkata; as she told the young Ramgarib, she threw up a lot. Notably, my great grandfather joined Khaimia at the sub-depot in Kanpur 18 days later.

If what I am thinking is correct, then Khaimia's nausea and vomiting would have been even more intense with the accompanying sea-sickness during transit on the SS *Elbe*.

The couple arrived at Nelson Island, west of Port-of-Spain, Trinidad, on November 12, 1897. There are no records when the couple's, my grandmother's first sibling, was born. However, it is quite likely our first ancestor to be born on Trinidad's soil may have taken root while Khaimia and Ramdeen were still cradled in the arms of Mother India.

The broad brush strokes of possibilities provide no answers why my great grandmother left her father and brother behind; and why Ramdeen left his father, and a wife behind, to either join Khaimia, or meet her for the first time, at the sub-depot.

Ramgarib recalls the last time his grandmother visited their home. At the end of the visit, his father hitched the horse to the cart, and had taken his young son and Khaimia through the lonely and dangerous dirt tracks among the sugar cane fields. She alighted in a safe zone beyond the fields. Before walking away, she turned to face her son, and seven-year old grandson.

In her halting, imperative style, she commanded, "Turn around and go back home! It is not safe here."

She passed away soon after. Ramgarib was seven years old; my great grandmother was in her mid-70s when she died.

She was buried near the home she and Ramdeen had built, surrounded by a sea of sugar canes, and a lifetime away from her village of Fatehpur Chaorasi. At her burial, the young Ramgarib noted how eager the earth was to reclaim his grandmother, her grave caving in rapidly, hungrily, even as she was being gently lowered for yet another journey, this being her final one.



**Mississauga Monarch Lions Club**

# ANNUAL ANNIVERSARY BRUNCH



The Lions Quest Fellowship was established in 2003 to recognize Lions Club members and other deserving recipients who truly care about Canadian children, regardless of the challenges they may face or the gifts they may possess.

**Sunday, June 11, 2023**

**Cost: \$75.00**

**Crystal Grand Banquet Hall  
2110 Dundas St. E, Mississauga ON**

**Time: 12:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.**

## ENTERTAINMENT

**Trumpeter and DJ – Lion Casburt Jeffrey**

## KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

**Past International Director, Lion Thomas Gordon  
District A711 Lions Quest Faculty Speaker  
Past District Governor, Terrence (Tebo) Richards**

## SPECIAL GUESTS:

**Hon. Bonnie Crombie, Mayor of Mississauga  
Hon. Patrick Brown, Mayor of Brampton  
MP Peter Fonseca, Mississauga East-Cooksville  
MPP David Smith, Scarborough Centre  
Toronto Police Chief, Myron Demkiw  
Hon. Dr. Jean Augustine  
District Governor, Ferdinand Coronel**

**LION QUEST FELLOWSHIP SPECIAL AWARDEE  
Premier Douglas Ford Jr.**

**RSVP: Khalilah M. Campbell – 416-732-9390  
Janice Gordon-Daniels – 416-839-4884**

**E-Transfer: [monarchlionsclub@gmail.com](mailto:monarchlionsclub@gmail.com)**

**Cheques: Mississauga Monarch Lions Club**

**Payment comments – MMLC Brunch**



# Balkaransingh's *The Wanderers* takes path of merging & emergence

Eternal and replicating motifs of love of family, people, nature, and Trinidad and Tobago as a landscape of merging and emergence are deftly woven into the recently published book of poetry, *The Wanderers (Bathohiya): Poetic Journeys of Satmarine Balkaransingh and Lal Balkaransingh*.

As reviewer Paula Lindo, writing in Trinidad and Tobago's *Newsday*, has noted, the latest work by Balkaransingh, and his late elder brother Lal, collectively span a period of approximately 60 years.

The structure of the text is such that the first section is written by Balkaransingh himself, and fills in a timeline between the years 1988-2021. The second section, written by brother Lal, contains the work of 30 years between 1961-1991.

Both brothers were born in Trinidad and Tobago, and are third generation descendants of Indian Indentured immigrants. Balkaransingh is well-known as a Kathak classical dancer, choreographer, dance instructor, cultural anthropologist, mentor, author, playwright, pianist, economist, development planner, and a poet.

His latest poetic effort, alongside his brother's writings, explore Trinidad and Tobago's history, where among other things, he chronicles the lives of Indian Indentured labourers, their arrival to Trinidad and Tobago, and establishment of a new culture and identity.

In his latest poetic effort, Balkaransingh explores traditions and festivals as Hosay and Ramleela, which were brought to Trinidad and Tobago. In these poems, he explores how these festivals were transformed, and merged with the customs of those who were historically resident in Trinidad and Tobago, among them the Indigenous peoples, and then from arrivals prior to Indentured workers, who were forcefully shipped to these shores. Out of these peoples and festivals emerged eclectic movements such as Carnival, and other celebrations.

As Lindo writes, Balkaransingh's poem, 'Kairi Sanctus',

for example, is a multi-page re-telling of the history of the Indigenous people of Trinidad and Tobago and their experiences since colonisation.

Balkaransingh also shares personal experiences of time lived abroad, out of which emerges a being yearning for belonging. Also, a range of intense emotional experiences is evident in this latest collection, among them tonalities of the patriotic and romantic; that of a nature lover, and a philosopher with mystical depth.

In his exploration of 'Kairi Sanctus', reviewer Wesley Gibbins writes in the *Trinidad Guardian* that the poem, along with others, will eventually be choreographed onstage by Balkaransingh as a dance performance. However, Gibbins is quick to note that 'Kairi Sanctus' itself "stands on its own as a powerful poetic tribute to the contribution of aboriginal ancestors".

And as Gibbins writes in this poem, Balkaransingh's voice as poet also strongly resonates with scholarly observation. As Balkaransingh urges, "Listen to my moving history, / A gory but gallant, though sad story. / We once freely roamed the hills and dales; / Young braves tramping through the rolling plains".

And as Gibbins notes, Balkaransingh closes 'Oh Yacoah!' with the assertion, "When the midnight hour arrives, / And you listen to your peoples' plaintive cries, / Wrathfully descend with thunder and fire, to cleanse us. / Shower your grace and restore to Kairi, its Sanctus".

Gibbins also describes the collection as a "cultural tour" that also focuses heavily on Balkaransingh's East Indian heritage "within the context of a thriving multiculturalism, which he embraces as part of self-identification".

Quoting from the poem 'The Wanderers', Gibbins cites the following: "I know for sure from whence I came / My heritage, literature and attire determined my name. / But this pioneer knew not, / To what desh [country] he was bound and just

where, / Except that out of the fires of his hope and prayer, / He might be forging a new destiny there."

As Gibbins notes, this opening proclamation in the poem "launches an exploration of the story of East Indian immigration".

He adds, "At times, it reads as history-telling text in verse, changing voices and personages, then slows as if in choreographed motion in the way, perhaps, Balkaransingh would instruct his dancers on stage."

And as he declares, the collection, as a socio-cultural message, could have begun and ended with this poem. It raises questions that occur throughout: "Now we were all Euro-Afro-Chino and Indo-Trinbagonians / Black, White, Yellow, Mestizo and Brown, / Sharing community space, though not really as one. / Living in peaceful co-existence, on common ground, / Each seemingly pursuing his own destiny, / A veritable confusion, while creating fusion in diversity."

Speaking to the section of the text containing Lal's poems, Lindo notes that its pages reveal a poet that is keen and observant. Among his poems are writings that recall childhood memories, personal adult experiences, philosophical and religious musings, and a range of emotions.

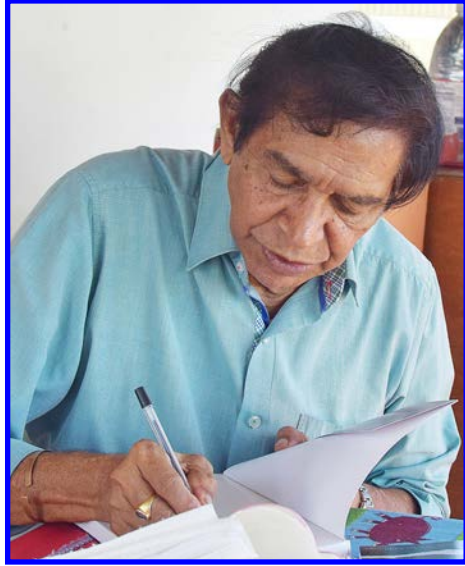
Trinidad and Tobago's rich and eclectic culture and landscape are also highlighted through Lal's poetic eye, Lindo states. Additionally, there are poems that focus on Carnival, evocative landscapes throughout Trinidad and Tobago, its fallout from colonisation, and the syncretic mixing of cultures.

Trinidad and Tobago's environment is also explored, along with hummingbirds, poui trees, flowers, toads, and even chickens.

Gibbins also comments on Lal's contribution, saying that while it is substantial, at the same time it veers in different poetic directions "with insightful reflections on religion and spirituality". He concludes, "It is worthy of wholesome understanding on its own".

In his conclusion, Gibbins declares the *The Wanderers* to be "a delightful anthology of poems by two committed Trinidad and Tobago patriots who approach both universal and narrowly focused themes from different angles, but find fraternal commonality when capturing joy and sadness, the lowly and the sublime, the ugly and the beautiful".

*The Wanderers* is available at [Amazon](#).



Sat Balkaransingh

plains".

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## The Supernatural

### The Curse

Kamil Ali



"She's been acting strange lately." Samantha glanced at Cecilia playing with toys in the middle of the daycare classroom.

"How so?" Martha felt the hairs at the back of her neck stand on end.

"She talks to someone that only she can see." She pulled the sleeves down to hide the goosebumps. "From my 20 years experience, it's not an ordinary imaginary friend."

"Really?" Martha pretended that she had heard about Cecilia's behaviour for the first time. "When did it start?" She had to ask but she knew the answer.

"A week ago." Samantha glanced again at Cecilia, whose little hands animated her toys as she spoke for them in her make-believe world of child's play. "It started on her birthday."

"What do you suggest?" Martha dreaded the answer. She had heard it before.

"A child psychologist would be my recommendation." The day care teacher pulled a business card out of her pocket and used her index finger to slide it across the desk toward Martha. She glanced at her watch.

"Okay." Martha picked up the card and read the name. "I'll give Doctor Hall a call."

When they arrived home, Martha added Doctor Hall's business card to the stack she kept in a shoebox on the top shelf of her closet. After giving the four-year-old a bath, Martha left her to watch TV and play with her dolls. Martha showered with the bathroom door open to listen for sounds coming from the living room.

A sudden chill shook her body when she heard Cecilia scream. Her wet feet on the tile slid her across the bathroom floor and slammed her against the door jamb. She gritted her teeth from the pain and peeked into the living room. Cecilia did not seem disturbed.

Martha pulled soiled clothing from the laundry hamper and dropped them on the water that her dripping body had left on the floor. She finished her shower and put on her nightgown before she picked up her novel and joined Cecilia on the living room sofa. She opened the book and stared at

it, but her troubled mind lingered on the scream. Did she imagine it? Was her mind playing tricks on her?

Her thoughts returned to the age of 20, when she and Cecilia were the same age. Cecilia told her of the family curse that started in the Middle Ages when their ancestor named Jeb Bullward, punished devil worshipers for the Christian king.

"In the name of Satan, I curse you and all your generations

after you!" The high priest of the Church of Satan named, Jespeller shouted to Jeb as the flames licked at him a thousand years earlier. "Disaster will befall you and all your clan!" He snarled in defiance.

Jeb pulled out his pistol and aimed it at Jespeller's forehead. He scoffed and put the gun away. A quick death would be too easy for the evildoer. "You will never have another male offspring

and your daughter will be the first in line to deliver my seed through every generation." Jespeller screamed in agony before the orange flames consumed him.

When Jeb returned to his home, his house was a rubble of ashes. Neighbours told him that the screams of his wife and two sons in the middle of the night meant that they had perished in the mysterious fire.

Jeb got on his horse and sped to the convent two miles away to deliver the devastating news to his 40-year-old daughter, a nun at the convent. When he arrived, the mother superior called him into her office and gave him unsettling news. She told him that Milicent, his daughter, had given birth to a daughter on her 40th birthday while he was away on his campaigns. Despite her protestations of not having

contact with any men, they had to secretly send her away before the authorities,

including Jeb could find out. Fornication was punishable by death and Jeb had an obligation to report the occurrence to the king, so the mother superior could not disclose his daughter's location to Jeb.

Jeb told the mother superior about the curse and said that he wished he had shot Jespeller before the vile devil worshiper could finish his curse.

Unable to carry the burden that cost the lives of his entire family, Jeb clutched his chest and died of a heart attack before he fell to the floor. The mother superior sent a message with the details of her conversation with Jeb and his subsequent death. Milicent had to force herself to eat so that she could be nourished enough to breast feed her baby. She had to remain under the protection of staunch supporters of the church who remained loyal to the mother superior and risked their own lives. Milicent and her baby had to keep moving to different locations, every time they felt the slightest chance of being discovered. The authorities would find it hard to believe that she had given birth without contact with a male.

Milicent was shocked a few years later, when she realised that she was getting younger with each year that her baby was growing older. The baby and Milicent celebrated their 20th birthdays together. Milicent told her of the family curse, before she continued to go backward in age as her daughter continued to grow older and take on the motherly role while Milicent retarded into childhood.

Milicent's mind stayed current with her physical form. She found the need to play with toys and behave like a toddler as she regressed toward her birth, which would coincide with her daughter's 40th birthday.

On the eve of her daughter's 40th birthday, Milicent disappeared, only to be reborn on the following day. Their cycle of life continued through the ages. The church, unable to break the curse, helped them to continue moving every time they were on the verge of being exposed. Cecilia had started speaking to her father, the evil priest. Martha had three years to live.



# Harewood-Christopher rates performance as 'excellent'

**Port-of-Spain** – Commissioner of Police Erla Harewood-Christopher last week rated her performance in office in the first 100 days as “excellent”, a response that raised incredulous eyebrows in the Opposition, among others.

Harewood-Christopher gave herself the approving pat on the back following completion the inspection of 26 march past teams at the Police Service Sports Day at the Police Training Academy last week.

She was asked by reporters to rate her performance during her first 100 days in office. “You have time to check 100 days, while I have been busy working,” she replied.

The follow-up question was then put to her on how did she rate her performance.

“Excellent,” she said.

It was a response that was framed within the context of Trinidad and Tobago recording four more murders less than 48 hours before. So far for the year, the nation has seen over 200 murders.

The same question about Harewood-Christopher’s 100-day performance was put to National Security Minister Fitzgerald Hinds.

Hinds’ response was expertly oblique: “One hundred days or 100 years of serious policing? One hundred days or 100 years of serious policing and social and cultural and sporting activity... I heard a hundred, and I am here very proudly as a former member of the Police Service to recognise that many years ago I participated in this as a police officer.”

He added, “And [yesterday evening there was] what we call a retreat, where the police service will put on a quite professional and in an organised and disciplined way, a retreat. I think it starts at 5:30 and it is really going to be a fantastic display.”

Hinds then described the police’s march past as inspiring, and celebrated the men and women in the Service who maintained law and order.

He was also evasive about Harewood-Christopher’s extension of service past her 60th birthday.

“The Commissioner of Police has been appointed by the Police Service Commission in her current capacity. The law,



**A sheltered Erla Harewood-Christopher at the police inspection parade last week**

the Police Service Act Chapter 15:01, defines what happens with a first division officer having attained the age of 60 years in respect to the possibilities in extension of service. The law is there and we complied with the law,” he said.

Following Harewood-Christopher’s top self-marking of her performance, the Opposition issued the call on her to apologise to the nation for the unscientific self-assessment.

“What she should have said is that this is a work in progress; I am trying my hardest; I will stick to the job,” Opposition Senator David Nakhid said.

Nakhid added that such an assessment should come from assessment of the statistics, and if Harewood-Christopher rated herself so highly, “then we have to say anybody that comes under the jurisdiction of this government or involved in this government, they become delusional”.

He declared, “She has shown us she is now completely delusional and she should apologise to the nation for making that statement.”

Said Nakhid: “I remember one Prime Minister previously

Police Commissioners should never assess themselves, he said.

“I would never rate myself. I will let the data and staff do the talking, and let the public do the talking,” Griffith said.

He added that from the moment he heard Harewood-Christopher promise to reduce the murder rate by June 2023, he told her it was infeasible.

“I inherited a gradual spike in crime annually for four years before I came to CoP, and it took me over a year to get that turnaround... It is going to be impossible,” he said.

Similarly, former acting police commissioner McDonald Jacob, who gave himself a B-plus for his performance in 2022, said it is the Police Service Commission’s responsibility to evaluate commissioners.

He did not want to comment on Harewood-Christopher’s 100-day on-the-job milestone, but commended her attitude towards the job.

“So, if she believes she’s doing an excellent job, I’m glad she has that level of confidence,” he said.

stating that it is not so much about the crime, is about the perception of crime and the feeling you get. He now heads this government, so the feeling about crime in this country is one where we are in a very dark place.”

However, he noted that Harewood-Christopher has shown she is not completely delusional, and should apologise for her unrealistic self-assessment.

Former National Security Minister and former Police Commissioner Gary Griffith shared a similar view about her “excellent” self-rating.

He said it is unfortunate that at a time when crime is the number one concern, and public trust and confidence in the police are dwindling rapidly, that Harewood-Christopher would give herself such an assessment.

“If you try to commend yourself and you really see this as being excellent, in a situation where the ratio for her is the highest spike in crime in the history of Trinidad and Tobago, and you see this as being ‘excellent’, we really going into quicksand,” Griffith said.

# Persad-Bissessar writes to Barbados’ Mottley on ‘abduction’

**Port-of-Spain** – Opposition Leader Kamla Persad-Bissessar writing to Barbados Prime Minister Mia Mottley earlier this month calling for a full enquiry into the ‘abduction’ of Trinidad and Tobago national Brent Thomas from Barbados has come under criticism from Trinidad and Tobago’s government, with Prime Minister Dr Keith Rowley describing the intervention as an “intrusion” and “self-promotion”.

In her letter dated May 10, 2023, Persad-Bissessar noted the judgment delivered by Justice Devindra Rampersad in the High Court of Trinidad and Tobago on April 25.

She said, “The chilling facts outlined in the judgment represent a blotch in our nation’s democracy. It raises serious concerns of extrajudicial exercise of coercive powers by the law enforcement bodies of both our sovereign nations.”

She added, “The series of events involving the abduction of Thomas calls for transparency and accountability. It has caused damage to the reputation of both our nations which subscribe to the fundamental rule of law. To restore confidence and in the interest of the people of our two nations, I respectfully call upon you, as Prime Minister of the Republic of Barbados, to initiate a full, public enquiry into this matter.”

Persad-Bissessar sending a letter off to Mottley did not find favour with Rowley.

In his response, Rowley chastised Persad-Bissessar for writing to Mottley and calling for an investigation into the affair.

In a Facebook post, he chastised Persad-Bissessar for overstepping, saying “there is a role for the Opposition and a role and responsibility for the government in managing the affairs

of the state of Trinidad and Tobago”.

Said Rowley, “The latest self-promotion of the Leader of the Opposition as an insertion into the business of the handling of the sensitive Brent Thomas matter between the Government of Barbados and the Royal Barbados Police Force, and the Government of Trinidad and Tobago and the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service, is a wholly unnecessary and out of place intrusion by the Leader of the Opposition.”

Additionally, “The interest of the people of Trinidad and Tobago will always be better served and protected if the country has one Government at a time.”

In her letter, Persad-Bissessar said that on April 28, Energy Minister Stuart Young confirmed that the airplane used in Thomas’ ‘abduction’ in Barbados was a Regional Security System aircraft out of Barbados. She quoted Young’s comments in the Parliament, where he indicated the plane was not a Trinidad and Tobago Air Guard aircraft.

Persad-Bissessar also noted the statement made by Barbados Attorney General Dale Marshall on May 9, where he indicated that Mottley, himself, and

the Barbados government, welcomed a full distillation and ventilation of the matter.

Persad-Bissessar also quoted from Justice Rampersad’s judgment as she outlined what had transpired in Barbados based on the judge’s findings.

She said that on October 3, 2022, Thomas travelled to Barbados with the intention to connect to a flight to Miami for medical purposes, and then return to Trinidad.

“At around 3:00 a.m. on October 5, 2022, Thomas was at

a hotel in Barbados when he was ‘jolted awake’ by shouts of ‘Police’ and banging on his hotel door. Thomas was taken by a large group of armed men dressed in black, placed in handcuffs, taken to a police station and put in a cage in the back of a Barbados Police Service van,” Persad-Bissessar said.

She added, “Thomas was kept in the back of the police van until midday without water, food, or the opportunity for a phone call. After midday, he was taken by Barbadian officers to another police station and kept in a cell until 5 p.m. No reason was given to him for his detention. Thomas was then taken to Grantley Adams International Airport into a small plane to Trinidad, by Trinidad and Tobago Police Officers.”

Persad-Bissessar noted that Rampersad’s judgment stated that the process of detaining someone under the Extradition Act was not followed, and the judge had minced no words with respect to the treatment meted out to Thomas.

She also quoted from the judgement that declared, “Words cannot express the abhorrence that the court feels towards this unlawful act in a supposed civilised society governed by a Constitution in which the freedoms of the citizens are supposed to be protected.”

Also, “The preamble to the Constitution itself alludes to the people of Trinidad and Tobago recognising that men and institutions remain free only when freedom is founded upon respect for moral and spiritual values and the rule of law while expressing the desire that the Constitution should enshrine the protection of fundamental human rights and freedoms.”

Persad-Bissessar noted Justice Rampersad ordered that, among other things, “The arrest, detention and forcible abduction within, and the removal of the first claimant from the jurisdiction of Barbados to this country, at the behest of the State of Trinidad and Tobago acting through its servants and or agents, were grossly abusive, unconstitutional, unlawful, unnecessary and disproportionate and in particular contravened the first claimant’s constitutional rights...”



**Kamla Persad-Bissessar**



Rowley at centre, with Howard University president Wayne Frederick (left), and vice-chairman of the Howard University Board of Trustees Mark Mason following receipt of an honorary degree Washington, DC last week

## Howard U awards doctorate to Rowley

Port-of-Spain – Trinidad and Tobago’s Prime Minister Dr Keith Rowley was last week congratulated by US President Joe Biden following receipt of an honorary degree from Howard University. Biden said he did not know Rowley was “so talented”.

At the time, Biden was delivering the feature address at Howard University’s 155th commencement convocation ceremony at the Capital One Arena in Washington, DC.

Biden and Rowley were both conferred with honorary Doctor of Letters degrees from the university.

There was mixed commentary following Rowley receiving the degree, with posts that praised his achievement, while others criticised the university.

A number of commentators on social media congratulated and praised the Prime Minister after he received the degree. However, the UNC Opposition was critical.

Commenting on social media, one post said Howard University was “rewarding failure”, while another said the people who awarded the honorary degree should live in Trinidad and Tobago for six months.

In its response, the UNC said Howard University may need to revoke the degree, as it was a deliberate attempt by the PNM to hide his failures.

UNC Senator David Nakhid said he attended St Mary’s College with the university’s President Dr Wayne Frederick. While he lauded Frederick’s accomplishments, he said he believed Frederick was way off the mark.

Said Nakhid: “If you listen carefully to his laudations of Keith Christopher Rowley, almost every single thing he said... was misplaced. I think it was laughable to who knows the true story.”

Before receiving his degree, Rowley was described as a “renowned social and political leader, pioneering statesman, and scholar” by Frederick.

He said Rowley was a major player in the political arena, and has been instrumental in strengthening the relationship between Trinidad and Tobago and the US.

He hailed Rowley’s leadership of Trinidad and Tobago and his work to improve energy, education, and other sectors.

Frederick also lauded Rowley’s handling of the Covid-19 pandemic as “exemplary”, saying lives were saved, and the spread of the virus was lessened due to Rowley’s quick and incisive actions.

He also noted Rowley came from humble beginnings to becoming a scientist and volcanologist, as well as an author.

“Howard University applauds your living legacy of achieve-

ment, and applauds you as a shining example of our core values of leadership, excellence, and truth and service,” said Frederick.

During his speech, Biden took note of Rowley’s accomplishments, saying: “Prime Minister, I didn’t know you were so talented. I just thought you were a foreign policies... Latin American guy. We gotta talk.”

He also praised Rowley as a strong partner to the US.

“All kidding aside, thank you for being a strong partner in the Caribbean and addressing climate change and supporting democracies across the western hemisphere,” Biden said.

The PNM later congratulated Rowley, saying the party continues “to take pride in you and your achievements”.

It added, “So happy to see that an organisation of the calibre of Howard University has chosen to recognise your valuable contribution and your undoubted integrity, as we have done so long before.”

PNM public relations officer Laurel Lezama-Lee Sing said Rowley was “doing the country proud and putting us on the world stage for good reason”.

However Nakhid remained critical of Howard University, saying Frederick had written the list of accolades that described Rowley, then at the very least, an apology was owed to Trinidad and Tobago.

Said Nakhid: “If he thinks that Keith Rowley has done a fantastic job, if he wrote that script himself, then he should apologise to the nation of Trinidad and Tobago, he should give back the award that Rowley bestowed on him – Order of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago (in 2020), and then take back that doctorate from Keith Christopher Rowley, who not only does not deserve a doctorate, but, in my opinion, based on his behaviour in public office, should be facing charges for misbehaviour...”

Also, Princes Town UNC MP Barry Padarath said he believes this was an attempt to prop up a “failed leader” as Local Government Elections are approaching.

“We have to call them out and say it for what it is. This is just not happening coincidental and by accident. This is happening by design. They’re using their tentacles, their PNM tentacles in institutions both locally and abroad to prop a ...failed Prime Minister and a failed political leader,” Padarath said.

He added, “No amount of going abroad and writing scripts for persons to read about the wonderful roads, and the infrastructure, and the development in education and so on would fool people of Trinidad and Tobago. They live the poor infrastructure, the crumbling, dilapidated, dysfunctional infrastructure in this country.”



Dr McKenzie looks at the plaque citing the renaming of the science block at Naparima College after him

## Naparima College honours principal

Port-of-Spain – A former principal of Naparima College was last week honoured for his outstanding contribution to education in Trinidad and Tobago. The event saw the eminent and well-liked Dr Allan McKenzie praised for his work almost three decades after his retirement.

The ceremony took place at the San Fernando school on May 13, where a commemorative plaque was unveiled in his honour, and the school’s Science Block renamed after him.

McKenzie was credited for not only advancing the educational eminence of the school, but for also producing countless scholars, distinguished, and well-rounded young men who excelled locally and abroad.

In his remarks, past student Dr Wayne Small, an electrical and computer engineer, said McKenzie believed in the holistic development of each student, and instilled values of integrity, compassion, and resilience. He said McKenzie had positioned the school as one of the leading academic institutions in the country.

Another past student, Maritime Financial group general manager Trevor ‘Rex’ Baddaloo, recalled, “There was never somebody who was too insignificant for you to help, for you to scold, or for you to counsel.”

Another past student, consultant urologist Dr Lall Sawh, said, “We are serving society, hopefully illustriously, in so many fields, and it is entirely as a result of your influence, your leadership, your guidance and your mentorship,” he said.

Thanking the administration, under the leadership of acting principal Roger Ali and vice principal Rodney Pardasie, for honouring him, McKenzie recalled that he had sometimes faced opposition from teachers and students, but forged ahead because he believed he was destined by God to transform the school.

Boasting that he never once expelled or suspended a student during his tenure between 1966 and 1993, he advised teachers to recognise that students were the most important stakeholders in a school.

“Don’t knock the students; don’t complain. They are a blessing to you, that’s your job, and thank God for them. So, the first thing you have to do is love students.”

He said he spent 41 years of his life at the college, starting as a student, then a teacher, dean, and finally, principal.

He has received numerous accolades in education and other fields, he said.

Also, “My life is indissolubly connected to this school and I have ties, emotional and affinitive, to this school and this particular award has a sentimental and even spiritual significance in my life much more than any other award. I got a President’s Award for Public Service in Education, it doesn’t mean the same thing as this. A simple little plaque means much more than that.”



Dr McKenzie (centre), with former pupils & well-wishers at the ceremony honouring his lifetime’s work

## The Golden Years of Indian Cinema

# A life of inspiration, enrichment by Hindi films & celebrities

By Vidur Dindayal

**A**shok Kumar and Leela Chitnis were the big stars in my very early days. After the film *Anjaan* in 1941, Devika Rani moved away from the limelight. Until then, she was always the bigger star. That made Ashok Kumar emerge as a star in his own right. He was paired opposite Leela Chitnis. She was more well-known.

Leela Chitnis started her acting career in the film *Navra* (1934) produced by her own film group. She worked at Prabhat Pictures, Pune and Ranjit Movietone, before becoming the leading lady in many Bombay Talkies films. Leela was a great success with co-star Ashok Kumar in many box-office hits, including *Kangan* (1939), *Bandhan* (1940), and *Azad* (1940).

She later became very successful in mother roles in *Shaheed* (1948) starring Dilip Kumar; *Awaara* (1951); and *Ganga Jumna* (1961), starring Raj Kapoor; and *Guide* (1965) starring Dev Anand.

With Leela Chitnis and Ashok Kumar appearing in *Jhoola* (1941), Ashok Kumar was established as the most popular star of the time. He was the big film star that my parents and their friends used to talk about.

*Jhoola* was very popular, after *Bharat ki Beti*. Everybody was talking about *Jhoola*. It had some popular songs too. This one – *Na jaane kidhar aaj meri nav chali re* – was actually sung by Ashok Kumar. The music director was Saraswati Devi, one of few female music directors. Another popular song was *Salona ritu saloni, aaj mausam salona re*, again sung by Ashok Kumar.

When growing up back in Guyana, lots of people used to come from Rampoor to see Indian 'pitcha' at the cinema at Rosignol. Rampoor was a settlement about two miles in the cane fields where people worked. The cinema used to show Indian film on Saturday night, the big night, then on Monday, matinee time at about 1:30 p.m., and at night around 8:00 p.m. The Monday matinee show was popular for people coming from Rampoor.

One of the most celebrated of the old films was *Kismet* (1943). The best part is the melodious songs, everyone a hit with lyrics by the revered poet Pradeep, and Music Director Anil Biswas. The stars were Ashok Kumar, singer and actress Amirbai Karnataki, Moti, and Mumtaz Shanti.

All the songs in *Kismet* were hits and memorable. I like all of them. *Dheere dheere aare badal* – the words, the little I can work out, are touching and entertaining. The singer is saying 'My loved one is sleeping, don't be loud to wake her up. I must sing softly, not to interrupt her dreaming about me'. Another song, a prayer – *Ab Tere Siwa Kaun Mera* – I have always seen it as a bhajan. Sung by Amirbai Karnataki – 'Now is your turn, where is my Krishna'. Another *Ghar Ghar Mein Diwali Hai* – 'Every house celebrating Diwali with bright lights, but my house is in the dark'.



Leela Chitnis

Ashok Kumar had a long career at the top of his profession well into his late years. He played a key role as an elderly patriarch in the hit *Pakeezah*. He was highly respected in the industry. He gave a break into movies to many notable stars like Dev Anand, and others. He was referred to in a reverential, respectful term as 'Dadamuni'.

Ashok Kumar was honoured in 1988 with the 'Dadasaheb Phalke Award', the highest national award for cinema artists, by the Government of India. He also received the honour of 'Padma Bhushan' in 1999 for his contributions to Indian cinema.

Two younger brothers of Ashok Kumar came later into films – Anoop Kumar and Kishore Kumar. The three brothers acted together in the films *Bhai Bhai*, and *Chalti Ka Naam Gaari*.

I always remember Anoop Kumar for the lovely song *Kaun Aaya Mere Man Ke Dwaare* in the 1957 film *Dekh Kabira Roya*; playback singer was Manna Dey, with music director, Madan

Mohan.

Kishore Kumar became very successful as an actor, but moreso as playing singer. His first opportunity to be playback singer was for the film *Ziddi* (1948). For this film, he and Lata Mangeshkar recorded their first duet – *Ye Kaun Aya Re*. The song was sung by Dev Anand in the film. The film story was by Ismat Chughtai. The film helped establish its stars Dev Anand, Kamini Kaushal, and Pran in Hindi films.

Pradeep is the revered poet and songwriter of Hindi film songs. He wrote the lyrics for the well known song, which he also sang – *Dekh Tere Sansar Ki Halat Kya Ho Gayi Bhagwaan, Kitna Badal Gaya Insaan*; translated, 'Look at your world; what has happened to its condition. Oh Lord, How much mankind has changed'.

Pradeep wrote the patriotic song *Aye Mere Watan Ke Logo* as a tribute to the soldiers who had died defending the country in 1962. It is a song, I heard sung by Lata Mangeshkar at a couple of national events.

Pradeep has written the lyrics for the song *Chal Chal Re Naujawan* in the 1940

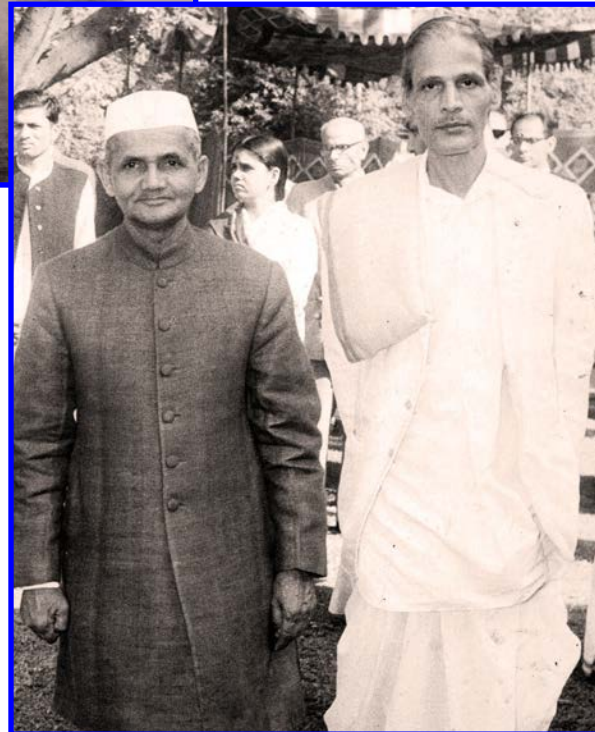
film *Bandhan*, which became very popular. He has written about 1,700 songs and the lyrics for some 72 films, including the 1954 film *Jagriti* with well known patriotic songs *Aao Bachcho Tumhein Dikhayen* and *De Dee Hame Azaadi*.

Pradeep wrote the ever popular devotional song/bhajan, *Tere Dwar khada Bhagwan* – translated, 'I am standing at your door, O Lord' – which featured in the 1955 film *Waman Avatar*, starring Trilok Kapoor, well-known in religious films, and Nirupa Roy.

In 1997, Kavi Pradeep was honoured with India's highest

award in cinema, the 'Dada Saheb Phalke Award', for lifetime achievement.

Hindi films and their 'celebrities' always inspire me and enrich my life, for which I am grateful.



Pradeep (right) with India's Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri

## India's first feature film Raja Harishchandra marks 110 years

By Sruthi Kuruganti

**F**rom silent and black-and-white to full of colours; from multiple reels to the single show reel; from zero graphics to animation, Indian cinema has come a long way, and it all started 110 years ago, with the release *Raja Harishchandra*.

Directed and produced by the Father of Indian Cinema, Dhundiraj Govind Phalke – better known as Dadasaheb Phalke – the silent film, which was widely regarded as the first Indian feature film, premiered on May 3, 1913, at Coronation Cinematograph and Variety Hall, Mumbai (then Bombay).

The mythological film tells the story of King Harishchandra, a legendary ruler from India who was known for his honesty and integrity. The film portrays his struggles and sacrifices to uphold his values, even when faced with difficult choices and personal hardships.

With the film, Phalke experimented with new techniques and technologies, such as using double exposure and special effects. He also introduced the concept of film music, which has now become an integral part of Indian cinema.

The commercial success of the film was a landmark achievement in Indian cinema, which gave birth to an art form whose sound echoed around the world. The film inspired a generation of filmmakers to explore the possibilities of the medium.

The film is partially lost; only the first and last reels of the film are preserved at the National Film Archive of India. However, it is unclear if it is this film, or its 1917 remake.

It took nearly two decades post-*Raja Harishchandra* for the release of *Alam Ara*, the first motion picture with sound. Directed by Ardeshir Irani, the film was released on March 14, 1931. In 1937, the first colour film *Kisan Kanya* directed by Moti B. Gidwani was released.

From *Raja Harishchandra* to *RRR*, printing its impressions on a global audience lately, Indian cinema has since been evolving into various forms and genres that one would not have imagined a century ago.



Still from India's first feature film, *Raja Harishchandra*, made 110 years ago



**Abhishek & Aishwarya Bachchan**

## One says 'fight'; the other says 'disagreement'

**A**ishwarya Rai and Abhishek Bachchan are one of the most popular couples in Bollywood.

While one might believe that the couple might never have a fallout, back in 2010, Aishwarya and Abhishek admitted to having fights every day. While Aishwarya called it a 'fight', Abhishek addressed it as 'disagreements'. He also shared how they have been solving their disputes, as usually, he is the one to make up after a fight.

Abhishek Bachchan and Aishwarya dated for only some time after which he proposed to her in 2007. In the same year, the couple got married in Mumbai on April 20. They turned parents to daughter Aaradhya Bachchan in November 2011. Abhishek and Aishwarya have starred together in many movies, such as *Dhoom 2* (2006), *Guru* (2007) and *Raavan* (2010), among others.

Talking about their marriage, the couple was once asked how often they fight. Aishwarya was the first one to reply and told *Vogue India* in July 2010, "Oh, every day". Abhishek clarified, "But they're more like disagreements, not fights. They're not serious, they're healthy. It'd be really boring otherwise."

Abhishek also answered on who is the one

among them to make up, saying: "Me! Me. Women don't make up! But we have a rule – we don't sleep on a fight. And in defence of all men, I want to tell you, half the time the reason we give in and say sorry is because we're just so sleepy and want to go to bed! Besides, women are the superior race, and they're always right. The sooner men accept that, the better. It doesn't matter what you say, even if you have concrete proof, in their world, it's futile, it makes no sense."

Abhishek and Aishwarya completed 16 years of their marriage last month. Both had shared a sweet picture of themselves on Instagram to celebrate the milestone. The mushy photo showed Abhishek and Aishwarya in white outfits, smiling at the camera.

Abhishek wore dark-rimmed glasses while Aishwarya had her signature hairstyle, poker-straight with a middle parting. He held her tightly in his arms. While Abhishek wrote in the caption, "(Candy emoji) 16" and added an evil eye emoji, Aishwarya added to hers, "Sweet 16" with a bunch of emojis in her caption.

Aishwarya was recently seen in Mani Ratnam's *Ponniyin Selvan 2*. Abhishek, on the other hand, will be seen in the sequel to *The Big Bull* (2021).

## Qureshi 'choosy' about new projects

**I**t's been almost two years since actor Huma Qureshi made a foray into the West with web film, *Army of the Dead*, and garnered positive response. But there has not been an announcement of her second international project since then. And she admits she is being very choosy as she explores her career and is in no rush.

"*Army of the Dead* was released in 2021, and in the same year the first season of *Maharani* was also streamed. Last year I had a packed year with *Mithya*, *Maharani* Season 2, *Valimai*, *Double XL* and *Monica*, *O My Darling*. Honestly, I haven't had the mind space to think about chasing after a project because I haven't had a breather," Huma Qureshi says.

As an actor, she admits she is hungry for good films, series, and roles.

"Whether it's in India or in the film industry in the US, I want to be part of cinema. I have always been choosy about the work that I do, and it's no different when it comes to saying yes to the work that comes my way from the west. When it comes to the work announcement from the West, you will have to wait and watch," she adds.

Huma Qureshi asserts that there is no denying that Indian representation is getting better internationally, especially Indian projects making a mark at the Oscars as well.

"Indian cinema has captured the imagination of the west for a long time now.

But what's applause-worthy, and should be celebrated is the fact that a Telugu film (*RRR*), which celebrates the true spirit of commercial Indian cinema has won the Oscar for Best Original Song and other important recognitions in the US this year. That's not all, *The Elephant Whisperers* hit it out of the park by winning the Best Documentary Short

Film Oscar. As an Indian and as a member of the Indian film fraternity, I felt proud because we had been recognised in two completely different genres," she said.

Additionally, "Indian actors have always played an important role in the cinema of the West."

Thanking the late Irrfan Khan and Priyanka Chopra for paving a way, Huma Qureshi says, "With Hollywood films becoming global in terms of the actors who are cast from different countries and ethnic backgrounds, it bodes well for actors at



**Huma Qureshi**

large is what I feel."

She also sheds light on the fact how of late, actors from India and actors who are American with Indian roots have changed the narrative immensely.

"Top actors from the Hindi film industry including Irrfan Khan and Priyanka Chopra have featured in films backed by top studios and directed by some of the most celebrated names in the west. Their journeys are inspiring and they have clearly been able to break the stereotypes associated with Indian actors," she says.



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Inshan Kishan

## Kishan replaces injured Rahul for WTC final

Inshan Kishan was last week named as the replacement for K.L. Rahul in the WTC final, the cricket website *Cricbuzz* reported. An injured Rahul is set to undergo surgery followed by rehab.

In what is India's latest woes with injuries, Rahul is not the only one on the injured list in India's WTC squad. Pacers Umesh Yadav and Jaydev Unadkat are also under the scanner for injuries, but are in the WTC squad for now.

Said the BCCI in a media release last week: "Jaydev Unadkat sustained a left shoulder injury by tripping over the side rope while bowling in the nets. A specialist consultation has been sought, and the left-arm fast bowler is currently at the National Cricket Academy in Bengaluru undergoing strength and rehab sessions for his shoulder. A decision on his participation in the WTC final will be taken at a later stage."

While Unadkat's participation in the final is uncertain, with his rehab happening at the NCA, the other pacer Umesh has been allowed to be with his IPL team.

In another statement from the BCCI signed by Secretary Jay

Shah, it was noted, "Umesh Yadav sustained a minor left hamstring injury during Match 36 of TATA IPL 2023 between Royal Challengers Bangalore and Kolkata Knight Riders on 26 April. The fast bowler is currently under the care of the KKR Medical Team, and has started low-intensity bowling as part of his rehab process. The BCCI Medical Team is in regular touch with KKR Medical Team, and is closely monitoring Umesh's progress."

Additionally Ruturaj Gaikwad, Mukesh Kumar, and Suryakumar Yadav have been named as the standby players for the WTC final.

### WTC squad

Rohit Sharma, Shubman Gill, Cheteshwar Pujara, Virat Kohli, Ajinkya Rahane, KS Bharat (wicketkeeper), Ravichandran Ashwin, Ravindra Jadeja, Axar Patel, Shardul Thakur, Mohd. Shami, Mohd. Siraj, Umesh Yadav, Jaydev Unadkat, Ishan Kishan (wicketkeeper).

The latest revision in the squad follows a number of injuries to India's first-choice squad with the likes of Shreyas Iyer, Jasprit Bumrah, and Rishabh Pant all ruled out due to various ailments.

## Archer injured again

Jofra Archer's tortuous search for full fitness took another frustrating twist earlier this month when he was ruled out of the remainder of the Indian Premier League season, the *Guardian* has reported.

Following the setback, Archer immediately returned to England from India to recover from his latest elbow surgery, and improve his chances of participating in the Ashes.

He played only five of Mumbai Indians' first ten games in the IPL. He had minor elbow surgery in Belgium in April, and despite rapidly returning to action, he still had discomfort.

"Archer has been recovering from right elbow surgery," the England and Wales Cricket Board said in a statement.

It added, "However, pushing through the discomfort while playing, hoping it will settle, has proven challenging. Therefore, it has been agreed for him to return to the UK for a period of rest and rehabilitation to give him the best opportunity for a full recovery."

It is more than three years since Archer's elbow injury first flared up, forcing him out of a Test match in South Africa in January 2020, and two years since the first operation. At the time, the England bowling coach, Jon Lewis, shrugged this off as "a small blip on his journey".

However, April was the fifth time Archer had undergone surgery on the same joint, and his continued struggles with the relatively light workloads of Twenty20 cricket make his participation in this summer's Ashes appear increasingly remote.

However, his early return from India will allow the ECB's medical department to oversee his recovery with the Ashes in mind, and perhaps the 50-over World Cup that follows later this year in the fall.

The ECB is confident Archer is fit enough to play T20s, but feels he would recover better by staying off the field.

Following his latest surgery, Archer said he had been enduring "a worrying and troubling time". However, he was continuing to target a return to England's Test side.

In April, he told *ESPNcricinfo*: "It's a huge year. I think everything is intertwined; everything bounces off everything else. If I can get through [the IPL], then I'll be in a good position to play in the Ashes, and then everything else will follow with it."



Jofra Archer

## New CWI Test, ODI coaching appointments for Sammy, Coley

Cricket West Indies last week announced the appointment of Andre Coley as Head Coach for the Test and 'A' Teams, and Daren Sammy as Head Coach for the white ball One Day International and T20 International Teams.

The new Head Coaches were selected following an open and transparent interview process, a CWI release stated. It added the appointments were confirmed following the CWI Board of Directors meeting on May 11.

Sammy's first assignment will be the three-match ODI Series against the United Arab Emirates in Sharjah in June, ahead of the ICC Men's World Cup 2023 Qualifier tournament in Zimbabwe. Coley's first assignment will be the two-match Test Series against India in the Caribbean in July.

Sammy is a former West Indies captain in all three formats. He led the West Indies to the ICC T20 World Cup titles in 2012 and 2016. Since retirement, he has coached franchise teams in the Pakistan Super League and the Caribbean Premier League.

Coley is a former Jamaica wicket-keeper/batsman who has coached at all levels in West Indies cricket. He was Interim Head Coach of the West Indies team on the tours of Zimbabwe and South Africa earlier this year, with his most recent assignment as Head Coach of the West Indies Academy.

Said Sammy: "It will be a challenge, but one that I'm ready for and excited about. I'm really looking forward to the opportunity, especially looking at the players we have and the impact that I believe I can have in the dressing room. I believe I will bring the same approach as I had as a player: the passion, the desire for success, and my undying love for West Indies cricket."

He added, "When I look around there is an abundance of talent, and what I saw in South Africa in the white ball matches under new captains Shai Hope and Rovman Powell and the



Andre Coley



Daren Sammy

leadership provided by Andre Coley, there is great belief that we can do well. I'm looking forward to imparting my knowledge, my tactical acumen, my communication skills and my man-management skills. I get excited about putting the plans together and seeing the players execute them."

Commenting on his appointment, Coley said, "I am honoured to be appointed West Indies Men's Head Coach of the red-ball team after serving in the interim role on the Zimbabwe and South Africa tours. I am looking forward to the challenges ahead, as well as the opportunities as we sharpen our focus on moving up the Test rankings, and qualifying for the World Test Championship final in June 2025."

Additionally, "I also look forward to working with all our stakeholders, deepening relationships and fostering a high-

performance mindset. I am also excited to be working closely with the 'A Team' as we seek to optimise opportunities for teams to play competitive cricket outside of our first-class competition and giving players greater exposure to different conditions at the international level."

Coley also noted that he believed his "expertise in the use of analytics... leadership style and technical knowledge along with collaborative efforts alongside Daren, will make a positive contribution to player development and team performances".

In March, CWI announced that the role of Head Coach for the West Indies Senior Men's Teams will be split into two separate position. It was a decision made with reference to the recommendation by the independent three-member World Cup Review Group to consider splitting coaching duties as one factor to help improve team preparation.

In a statement following the appointments, Johnny Grave, CEO of CWI said: "We are delighted to announce the appointments of Andre and Daren to the positions of red ball and white ball Head Coaches of the Senior Men's Teams. They are well equipped for their roles, and we are confident they will bring different perspectives, skills and real passion to the West Indies dressing room. The introduction of separate coaches signals the start of a new approach for the West Indies Men's Teams, and we know it will enable greater focus on player communication, team planning and preparation to the benefit of our players and West Indies cricket."

CWI also revealed that the recruitment process for a Head Coach of the West Indies Women's team has commenced, with today being the deadline for applications. Further information on the timing and process for appointing a new Head Coach of the West Indies Academy to replace Coley will be announced at a later date, CWI said.



Ebony Rainford-Brent

## Ebony Rainford-Brent joins England Cricket Board

**E**bony Rainford-Brent has joined the England and Wales Cricket Board as one of two new cricket non-executive directors, the *British Broadcasting Corporation* and *ESPNcricinfo* reported last month. She is the World Cup-winning former England batter, and founder of the African-Caribbean Engagement programme.

Also appointed was sports development expert Pete Ackerley, the move completing the restructuring of the ECB board.

In April, the ECB announced four new non-executive directors: Penny Avis, Baroness Zahida Manzoor, Jennifer Owen Adams, and Gareth Williams. Katie Bickerstaffe has also been reappointed for a further three-year term as senior independent non-executive director.

"I'm delighted to make our final board appointments," said Richard Thompson, ECB chair.

He added, "We have a strong and diverse board with extensive experience and a wide range of skills. Ebony is a unique talent, a trailblazer who was a winner on the pitch and has achieved so much off it. Her ACE programme has already made a huge impact in creating opportunities for youngsters from Black communities, and she shares my impatience for making further progress in creating a truly inclusive sport."

Thompson added, "Pete also brings with him a vast amount of cricketing experience along with invaluable insight in other

sports. He is steeped in the recreational game, and will be another huge asset to the board."

Thompson noted too that he was "delighted that Katie Bickerstaffe has been appointed as senior non-executive director".

As he stated, "Katie has already made a huge contribution over the past three years, utilising her experience from a number of different senior roles along with her passion for growing the game."

Rainford-Brent worked with Thompson while director of women's cricket at Surrey. She was the first Black woman to play for England, and part of the teams that lifted the World Cup and World T20 in 2009, winning 29 caps between 2001 and 2010.

Since retirement, she has worked as a broadcaster for the *BBC* and *Sky Sports*.

Ackerley is currently Chief Executive Officer of the British American Football Association, and has previously served on the ECB's participation and growth board, as well as working with Lancashire Cricket Foundation, the Lord's Taverners, the England and Wales Cricket Trust, and the Football Association. He is also a former head of development at the ECB.

Rainford-Brent received an MBE for services to cricket and charity in 2021, when she praised the progression of women's sport, but called for more to be done to "close the gender pay gap", and for increased investment.



Scotland's women cricketers

## Scotland's women receive 2023-2024 contracts

**N**ine of Scotland's women cricketers have been issued with professional contracts for the 2023-2024 season, the *British Broadcasting Corporation* reported earlier this month.

Last November, Cricket Scotland revealed they would introduce salaries to the women's squad for the first time, calling it a "watershed moment".

The selection process was undertaken by a panel in February and March. The players are Abbi Aitken-Drummond, Loran Jack, Megan McColl, Priyanaz Chatterji, Katherine Fraser, Ailsa Lister, Orla Montgomery, Hannah Rainey, and Ellen Watson.

"I'm absolutely delighted that nine of our best women's players have agreed to be the first to sign with Cricket Scotland," said interim head of performance Toby Bailey.

Bailey added, "Given the rapid growth of women's cricket

across the world, promotion and investment in the women's game in Scotland is now a cornerstone of the strategy for the organisation, and [this] news is a big step on the road to ensuring that cricket in Scotland is fair and inclusive for all."

Also, "Our new set-up will enable those players from the women's squad who have signed to devote more time to training and practice, and we believe this is a major move towards putting the women's game onto a fully professional footing."

Captain Kathryn Bryce and her sister Sarah have pro deals in England, as does Abtaha Maqsood.

Also, the 14 male players on pro-contracts for this season are Richie Berrington, Matthew Cross, Ally Evans, Chris Greaves, Jack Jarvis, Michael Leask, Chris McBride, Brandon McMullen, George Munsey, Liam Naylor, Safyaan Sharif, Chris Sole, Hamza Tahir, and Mark Watt.

## Cricket Schedule

(ALL TIMES LOCAL)

Thursday May 18, 2023

Nordic T20I Cup 2023

Denmark vs Norway, 1st Match, Svanholm Park, Brondby, 11:00 AM

Denmark vs Finland, 2nd Match, Svanholm Park, Brondby, 3:30 PM

Norway vs Sweden, 3rd Match, Solvangs Park, Copenhagen, 3:30 PM

Friday May 19, 2023

Nordic T20I Cup 2023

Denmark vs Sweden, 4th Match, Svanholm Park, Brondby, 11:00 AM

Finland vs Norway, 5th Match, Solvangs Park, Copenhagen, 11:00 AM

Denmark vs Finland, 6th Match, Svanholm Park, Brondby, 3:30 PM

Norway vs Sweden, 7th Match, Solvangs Park, Copenhagen, 3:30 PM

Saturday May 20, 2023

Nordic T20I Cup 2023

Finland vs Sweden, 8th Match, Svanholm Park, Brondby, 11:00 AM

Finland vs Norway, 9th Match, Solvangs Park, Copenhagen, 3:30 PM

Sunday May 21, 2023

Nordic T20I Cup 2023

Finland vs Sweden, 10th Match, Solvangs Park, Copenhagen, 10:30 AM

Friday May 26, 2023

Ireland tour of England Only Test, 2023

Essex vs Ireland, 3-day Practice Match, Day 1, County Ground, Chelmsford, 11:00 AM

Saturday May 27, 2023

Ireland tour of England Only Test, 2023

Essex vs Ireland, 3-day Practice Match, Day 2, County Ground, Chelmsford, 11:00 AM

Sunday May 28, 2023

Ireland tour of England Only Test, 2023

Essex vs Ireland, 3-day Practice Match, Day 3, County Ground, Chelmsford, 11:00 AM

Thursday June 1, 2023

Ireland tour of England Only Test, 2023

England vs Ireland, Only Test, Day 1, Lord's, London, 11:00 AM

Friday June 2, 2023

Ireland tour of England Only Test, 2023

England vs Ireland, Only Test, Day 2, Lord's, London, 11:00 AM

Afghanistan tour of Sri Lanka, 2023

Sri Lanka vs Afghanistan, 1st ODI, Mahinda Rajapaksa International Stadium, Hambantota, 10:00 AM

Saturday June 3, 2023

Ireland tour of England Only Test, 2023

England vs Ireland, Only Test, Day 3, Lord's, London, 11:00 AM

Sunday June 4, 2023

Ireland tour of England Only Test, 2023

England vs Ireland, Only Test, Day 4, Lord's, London, 11:00 AM

Afghanistan tour of Sri Lanka, 2023

Sri Lanka vs Afghanistan, 2nd ODI, Mahinda Rajapaksa Int. Stadium, Hambantota, 10:00 AM

Monday June 5, 2023

West Indies tour of UAE, 2023

United Arab Emirates vs West Indies, 1st ODI, Sharjah Cricket Stadium, Sharjah, 5:00 AM

Wednesday June 7, 2023

ICC World Test Championship Final 2023

Australia vs India, Final, Day 1, Kennington Oval, London, 10:00 AM

Thursday June 8, 2023

ICC World Test Championship Final 2023

Australia vs India, Final, Day 2, Kennington Oval, London, 10:00 AM

Friday June 9, 2023

ICC World Test Championship Final 2023

Australia vs India, Final, Day 3, Kennington Oval, London, 10:00 AM.

Saturday June 10, 2023

ICC World Test Championship Final 2023

Australia vs India, Final, Day 4, Kennington Oval, London, 10:00 AM

Sunday June 11, 2023

ICC World Test Championship Final 2023

Australia vs India, Final, Day 5, Kennington Oval, London, 10:00 AM.



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## Mississauga For Sale \$1,588,000

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## Oshawa For Sale \$824,900

Location! Location! Location!  
Fully reno. 3+1 bdrms, 2 full bthrm (+1 half bthrm) in family friendly neighbourhood in the lakeview area of Oshawa. Main flr has: hardwood floors thru-out, open concept w/upgraded ktchn w/ large eat-in island, granite countertops & all new S/S appls (2022). Open concept lvngrm flows seamlessly to private backyard w/ deck. Bsmt has engineered laminated flooring thru-out, large open concept lvng/rec. area, bdrms w/ private ensuite (2022), sep. laundry area w/brand new washer & dryer (2022). Upper flr has 3 large-sized bdrms w/full bath (2022), close to all amenities; walking distance to schools, parks, trails & shopping. Short drive to the beach. Don't miss opportunity to own one of the few detached homes in this neighbourhood.



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## Belmont Newcastle Starting @ \$800,000s

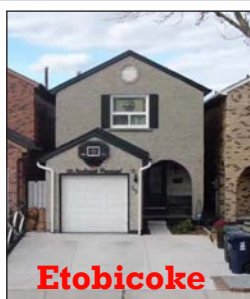
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