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INDO CARIBBEAN WORLD

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'We are motivated by caring, compassion'

Toronto – While responding to the call to our community to up its activity level for a healthier lifestyle, at the same time participants in the upcoming TCS Toronto Waterfront Marathon at Vishnu Mandir and its ancillary Global Care Outreach are also being driven by a more profound and powerful humanitarian desire to give back.

It is a deeply-felt need made manifest in the outpouring of care and support for dialysis patients needing critical and life-saving medical interventions in Guyana, Global Care Outreach volunteer and Vishnu Mandir's TWM coordinator, Roy Doobay told *Indo-Caribbean World* earlier this week.

At the same time, Doobay also commended the decision by *Indo-Caribbean World* to participate in the upcoming October 15 event. As he noted, this gesture was yet another show of support for the community in exemplary participation, not only in leadership for increased physical activity, but to also help raise funds for a humanitarian cause in Guyana.

And as Doobay noted, so successful and enthusiastic was the 2023 marathon sign-up that all of the TWM events have now been taken.

"The good news is we have a sold-out event," he said on Monday.

"It is completely sold out, and even after this remarkable achievement, we still have folks inquiring about joining up, and



Vishnu Mandir's Global Care Outreach participants are prominent at the start of 2022's TWM's 5K event leaving disappointed that they can't run in the event."

However, Doobay noted that while it is not possible now to join the in-person and virtual events, participation can still be made via supporting the Global Care Outreach team, and the 25,000 other participants, who will be on the marathon route in downtown Toronto on the morning of October 15.

"While they can continue with their personal physical activity regimen, at the same time they can donate to the humanitarian component of the event. Visiting the donation site and supporting one of our stellar participants with a contribution to their commitment will go a long way in helping someone in dire need of dialysis in Guyana," he stated.

Doobay also pointed out that Global Care Outreach is a charity partner with TCS TWM. It is an official endeavour, and all donated funds go to "a noble cause".

Additionally, "All donations go directly to the Dialysis Centres
See Page 15: Stellar participants

ICW recognised in Ottawa

Ottawa – *Indo-Caribbean World* was on Tuesday recognised in the House of Commons in Ottawa by Liberal MP for Nepean, Chandra Arya, for serving the community for four decades.

Following is the text of MP Arya's speech:

"Mr Speaker,

"I would like to congratulate *Indo-Caribbean World* on its 40th anniversary which published its first edition on September 14, 1983.

"It has succeeded in its mission to become the voice for an under-represented and largely unrecognised Indo population in the growing Caribbean diaspora in Canada.

"I would like to recognise the founder and publisher Harry Ramkhelawan, and editor Romeo Kaseram, for their excellent work and achievement.

"Their team informs and



Chandra Arya

educates not only the growing community, but all of Canada about the Indo-Caribbean, Caribbean, and our Canadian sub-continental roots.

"*Indo-Caribbean World* plans to stay committed to its 40 years of history, and philosophy, in bringing the voices from the margin into the centre, and to continue contributing to building a glorious and free Canada.

"Thank you, Mr Speaker."

VCC recognises, honours community leadership

By Romeo Kaseram
LJI Reporter

Markham – Two eminent community leaders were recognised last month by the Toronto Arya Samaj Vedic Cultural Centre for their stalwart contributions, invaluable selfless service, and for maintaining strong cultural traditions in the diaspora.

The recipients were Mani Singh, Honorary Consul at the Consulate General in Toronto, and Robin Doobay, Executive Vice President at Vishnu Mandir.

Singh is also an eminent and successful real estate broker, while Doobay is an engineer, and a social and religious worker.

Both recipients were honoured on September 23 at the Vedic Cultural Centre in Markham during the centre's annual dinner and awards' recognition presentation.

In his introduction, community leader and Vishnu Mandir volunteer Roy Doobay told the gathering that while Singh had successfully defined a territory of his own as "King of the Real Estate Jungle", at the same time his majestic gaze was "more expansive and deeper".

Born in Guyana, Singh spent his early and part of his formative teenage years in the homeland before arriving in Canada. Here he completed high school, and tertiary education at Humber College and York University before entering, and building, a "very successful career in real estate".

Evidence of his success in the real estate world is noted in several awards that Singh has received over
See Page 14: Awardees honoured



VCC award recipient (left to right) Honorary Consul at the Guyana Consulate in Toronto, Mani Singh, with wife Prema; Markham Mayor Frank Scarpitti; and Annie, wife of the second awardee, Robin Doobay, who is standing on the right

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Participants and supporters at the TCCF's Bhajan Evening at the Peel Arya Samaj mandir

TCCF holds evening of bhajan singing, fund-raiser

Toronto – The Caribbean Children's Foundation held its Bhajan Evening on September 30. The event was a fund-raiser that highlighted youth in what turned out to be a wonderful evening of singing and dancing. There were about 300 people in attendance, with children from various mandirs assembling to showcase their talents and to raise funds for children who need life-saving surgeries.

TCCF was registered 23 years ago in September 2000. From its start with helping one child access critical medical needs abroad, today the TCCF is an accomplished foundation with four treatment centres: Sick Kids Hospital in Toronto; Dell's Children Medical Center in Austin, Texas in the US; Georgetown Hospital in Guyana; and Children's Hospital in the Dominican Republic.

TCCF also has three international partners: The Herbie Foundation; SpineHope; and Gift of Life International. It also has no paid staff, with everyone being a volunteer, so 100 per cent of all donations go towards making the dreams of both the children and their parents come true.

And of course, TCCF is eternally grateful to its supporters whose donations all go to improving or saving the lives of many children.

For its treatment centres in Guyana and in the Dominican Republic, the TCCF sends medical teams headed by Dr Rodrigo Soto, a paediatric cardiac surgeon. This team is made up of a surgeon, an anesthesiologist, and ICU nurses. Together they make two or three visits each year, with each trip lasting two weeks. While there the team performs surgeries, and train local staff in post-surgical care.

As always, the September 30 event at the Peel Arya Samaj mandir saw a cohort of volunteers in attendance doing stellar work to make the event a success. TCCF has extended its gratitude to Sister Ojah for planning and coordinating the fund-raiser; Peel Arya Samaj for donating the use of the mandir, and its sound system and overhead projector free of charge; and to the children who volunteered to sing, dance, and play musical instruments, and to their parents. And to everyone who donated the snacks that were enjoyed during the intermission.



Federal MP Chandra Arya recently visited the Kurdistan Region of Iraq and Azerbaijan. In addition to meeting senior government officials, Arya also visited a number of unique locations, such as the Sharya camp for Yazidi people in Kurdistan. In Azerbaijan he discovered an ISKCON temple, and also visited the Ateshgah Fire Temple, which several centuries back was a holy place for Zoroastrians, Hindus, and Sikhs. Arya also met Mountain Jews, who have lived in Azerbaijan for many centuries. In photo at left, Arya at the Azerbaijan Fire Temple; in photo on the right, a visit to the Azerbaijan ISKON temple.



Members of the Trinidad and Tobago diaspora recently celebrated the 55th anniversary of the twinning of Port-of-Spain and St Catharines. At the celebratory event on September 27 were Trinidad and Tobago's Acting Consul General at the Consulate General in Toronto, Tracey Ramsubagh-Mannette, and the Mayor of St Catharines, Matt Siscoe. In photo, members from the Trinidad and Tobago diaspora, with officials and residents from St Catherines holding the national flag of the twin-island republic. Ramsubagh-Mannette is standing at left, first row, with Mayor Siscoe, second from left. Photo courtesy the Consulate General.

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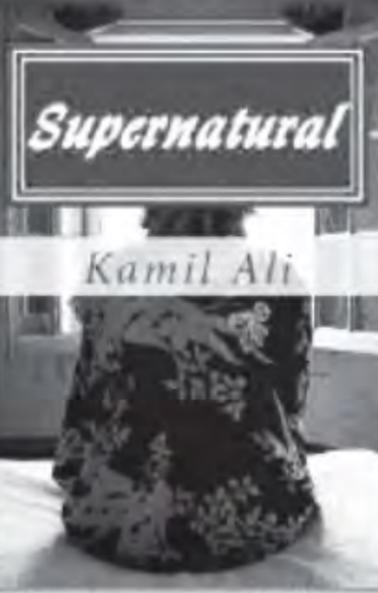
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UK, Caricom climate change centre sign funding MOU

In a move to help strengthen climate resilience and to access finance for the Caribbean, the UK government last month delivered on a COP26 promise by signing a Memorandum of Understanding with the Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre region.

The MOU will see £2.7 million going into work to be done under the Small Island Developing States Capacity and Resilience Programme (SIDAR), the UK's Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office reported last month.

The SIDAR programme represents delivery on part of the UK's overall commitment of £11.6 billion for climate finance, with a specific aim to support adaptation and resilience in Small Island Developing States, a government release stated.

The SIDAR Caribbean programme aims to augment access to climate finance, and support programmatic acceleration of climate resilient actions in selected Caribbean countries.

The UK's support to the CCCCC will help Caricom member states address the challenges they face in accessing climate finance. Non-Official Development Assistance eligible member states will be invited to participate in lesson learning and virtual training activities.

Through the CCCCC, the programme will help address the barriers that Caribbean SIDS face in planning for, accessing, and effectively utilising climate finance. The programme aims to facilitate a sustainable increase in the flow of climate finance, enhance project development and implementation capabilities, and support simplification of the multilateral funding processes with which they must engage.

The CCCCC, in partnership with member states, will develop funding proposals that are aligned to national priorities for submission to various financial mechanisms under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and other multilateral and bilateral financing partners.

This concerted effort by the UK is expected to help the Caribbean access (US) \$50 million for the region over the next three years. Dedicated resources will be allocated to beneficiary countries for project preparation grants, including readiness activities, with a target of mobilising (US) \$3 million in readiness support during the programme's implementation.

The SIDAR Programme will also establish a Help Desk to provide assistance to Caricom member states in the develop-



UK MP David Rutley with CCCCC's Colin Young



MP Rutley and CCCCC's Young sign the MOU

ment and implementation of climate change projects. By fostering collaboration, knowledge sharing, and strategic leveraging of resources, the programme is expected to drive sustainable climate actions in the Caribbean region.

Speaking at the signing ceremony on September 6, UK Minister for the Americas and the Caribbean David Rutley expressed his optimism about the partnership.

Said Rutley: "The implementation of this initiative under the SIDAR programme marks an important moment in our collective efforts to combat the impacts of climate change. Through

close collaboration with the [CCCCC], the UK is delivering on its promise to help unlock greater amounts of climate finance, strengthen resilience, and secure a sustainable future for SIDS, including those in the Caribbean."

In response, CCCCC Executive Director Colin Young stated: "The CCCCC is pleased to partner with the UK to implement the SIDAR programme in the Caribbean, that will increase both the flow and scale of climate finance to Caricom member states to help build their resilience to escalating and adverse impacts of climate change, as well as strengthen their capacity to effectively utilise these resources."

Young added, "We are appreciative of the UK's commitment to tangibly assist Caricom in increasing the flow of climate finance in the region."

The collaborative and strategic interventions in the programme are designed to lead to sustainable change and foster a climate-resilient future for Caricom member states.

The SIDAR programme aims to respond to the unique disadvantages SIDS face through small population sizes, remoteness, vulnerability to economic shocks and natural disasters, and limited capacity. The programme will focus on building sustainable capacity and increasing access to affordable finance.

The specific objectives of the programme are to increase access to and scale of climate finance by Caribbean states, using a programmatic approach where possible; to assist in building capacity to overcome structural constraints in selected countries; and to identify and prioritise climate actions that can be developed into bankable projects/programmes for the mobilisation of climate finance for select Caricom member states.

Also, to explore and deploy innovative climate financing instruments, where appropriate, to increase scale; to contribute to filling information and data gaps on climate finance in Caricom member states; and to coordinate with funding partners to simplify the requirements for accessing financing.

The CCCCC is an intergovernmental organisation established by Caricom's Heads of Governments to coordinate the region's response to managing and adapting to climate change.

The CCCCC also serves as a delivery partner for climate finance for the region, a repository for regional climate change information, and a data provider of climate change-related policy advice and guidelines to the Caricom member states.

Children are the lamps that light our lives –
Let us kindle the flame in them



Like so many activities over the past 3 years, Covid-19 disrupted the very vibrant & focused classes that were conducted at the Pranav Ashram in the areas of singing, music, Hindi language, Havan, Sandhya, & other Hindu scriptural teachings. The Ashram is now inviting registration for children ages 6-12 years to continue these vital activities in the interest of preserving & furthering our Dharma – all are invited without any distinction.



Please contact Ashram at 416-741-4335



Devotees in prayer with the Pandits

Ganesh Visarjan celebrations

It was a beautiful day on September 23 when approximately 400 devotees turned out to celebrate Ganesh Visarjan at the Alex Robertson Park in Pickering.

The attending members were from the Hindu Federation, namely, the Brampton Triveni Mandir, the Mississauga Ram Mandir, the Devi Mandir in Pickering, Maha Rudra Dev Mandir, and Nityanand Meditation Academy, as well as members of the public.

Each mandir's entrance into the park with their Murthis was accompanied by tassa and dhol music, and an enthusiastic group of devotees, many of whom arrived by bus from the west end of Toronto.

The program included chanting of mantras

by the Pandits who were present, puja, and offering by devotees, as well as kirtans and bhajans by each mandir's kirtan mandali.

The procession to the lake was colourful and energising, as devotees chanted their praises to Ganapati Bhagwan to the accompaniment of tassa and dhol music.

The immersion of the Murthis in Lake Ontario was touching, with devotees singing bhajans and kirtans while the Pandits offered prayers.

The Hindu Federation has expressed its thanks to the participating member temples, as well as to members of the public. Special thanks were also extended to The City of Pickering for allowing the use of its wonderful facilities.



Immersion of the Murthis into Lake Ontario



Devotees were accompanied to the lake with tassa drumming



Staff, volunteers from PSA: Detect and Protect clinic at Taibu CHC on Sept. 30

PSA: Detect and Protect clinic a success

Toronto – A free prostate cancer screening and education clinic titled *PSA: Detect and Protect* was held at TAIBU Community Health Centre in Scarborough on September 30.

It was held courtesy the University Health Network's Dr Neil Fleshner, in collaboration with The Walnut Foundation, and Taibu Community Health Centre. *PSA: Detect and Protect* was a community outreach clinic aimed at reducing inequalities in health care by providing free PSA testing to men in Black communities at higher risk of prostate cancer, but may lack access to these services.

"This project will make the information, outreach, and medical support accessible, and bring resources to the communities where Black people are," said Dr Fleshner. He is a urologist and medical director at the University Health Network, and Love Chair in Prostate Cancer Prevention at the Princess Margaret Cancer Centre.

He added, "So many people don't have a family doctor, or get lost in a sea of appointments. We want to bypass the barriers to care that these men face and make it convenient and easy for people to get tested."

Black men have been found to have not only a higher risk of getting prostate cancer, but also a higher chance of having aggressive forms of the disease that require more intense therapies, and are more likely to lead to death.

While researchers are continuing to understand why, it is thought that Black men may be genetically predisposed to prostate cancer, as well as face social barriers that affect access

to care.

"In an environment where Black men are 76 percent more likely to be diagnosed, and 22 times more likely to die from prostate cancer, health equity demands that resources be leveraged to change the course of this disease in Black communities," said Anthony Henry, President, The Walnut Foundation.

The September 30 event saw over 100 men attending, and 89 were administered the PSA blood test. It was a hugely successful event, and encouraging to see so many members of the community come out and participate in PSA screening to advocate for their own health.

Test results will be sent out over the next four to eight weeks to the patients with follow-up instructions. Family doctors will also be notified if consent was provided.

"There was a large team involved in making this event happen, and it was amazing to see so many dedicated individuals come together from across UHN and the community to ensure this clinic was a success," said Jess Cockburn, Scientific Associate 1V, Surgical Oncology and Family Genetics Project Lead at Princess Margaret Cancer Centre.

"It was such a great day! I don't recall the last time we had such a buzzing environment with a lot of Black men in the building!" said Liben Gebremikael, CEO of Taibu Community Health Centre.

Plans are to conduct more PSA screening outreach clinics at various locations across the GTA to under-served areas.

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Editorial

Good job, CGCC

We commend the good work that is being done in Canada and Guyana by the Canada Guyana Chamber of Commerce.

As we reported last month, in keeping with one of its mandates to facilitate synergies between businesses in Canada and Guyana, the CGCC held its first in a series of information sessions, *Canadians Doing Business in Guyana – Tax Implications*, which took place in Toronto.

As is typical of the energy, connectivity, and commitment to purpose by the CGCC, the session saw expert lawyer, accountant, and consultant to the Guyana government, Tamesh Lilmohan, taking the helm.

And as we later reported, Lilmohan spoke about tax implications for Canadian taxpayers considering doing business in Guyana. Also, among the topics discussed were registering a business, preliminary requirements, and tax consequences. He also elaborated on the Canada-Guyana Double Taxation Treaty.

Also, yet another event is being planned by the CGCC – its upcoming Maple Leaf Gala, which takes place in Georgetown on October 6. And similar to the Canadian information session, the CGCC is noting the momentum and growing interest by companies and individuals interested in investing in Guyana. Once more it is anticipating a sold-out event for Friday's gala in Georgetown.

Notably, support on the Guyana front for the latest CGCC gala is being driven by the attendance of Guyana's President Dr Irfaan Ali. He will be delivering the keynote address at the event.

As one of CGCC's directors Fareed Amin stated, President Ali's attendance could be seen as endorsement by the government for the work being done by the CGCC, and this could be driving the gala's attendance.

In fact, Amin expressed satisfaction with the presidential endorsement, stating, "The CGCC feels very privileged President Ali is attending, and is supporting the chamber. As we have noted, he has a special attachment to Canada, and wants to see trade and investment strengthened. He has always been a great supporter of the CGCC."

The ongoing work by the CGCC in facilitating, nurturing, and engaging businesses is in tandem with the uptick in growing global confidence as momentum picks up, and as the engines driving Guyana's economy begin shifting into a higher gear.

And the statistics continue to show positive numbers in support of Guyana's economic surge.

In fact, last month the mid-year report released by the Ministry of Finance predicted economic growth of 28.2 percent this year for Guyana, with its non-oil sector growing by 9.3 percent,

According to the report, growth in overall real GDP is estimated at 59.5 percent in the first half of the year, with the non-oil economy growing by 12.3 percent.

The mid-year report also noted that the agriculture, forestry, and fishing industries expanded by an estimated 7.6 percent in the first six months of this year. Growth was observed for all sub sectors, namely rice, livestock, fishing, forestry, and sugar.

Also, according to the report, the sugar industry grew by 30.1 percent compared to the first half of 2022, with the full-year projection maintained at 29.3 percent.

Meanwhile, Guyana's rice industry grew by an estimated 3.2 percent in the first half of 2023, with a revised growth rate of 7.4 percent for the entire year.

The economic recovery continued with the other crops sub sector estimated to have grown by 9.4 percent in the first half of this year, with a revised growth rate projection of 4.9 percent for 2023.

It is also notable that Guyana's petroleum sub sector grew by 98.4 percent, with 68.7 million barrels of oil produced in the first six months of 2023.

And as the IMF noted last month, following a record GDP growth in 2022 of 62.3 percent, the highest in the world, Guyana's "real GDP is expected to continue to grow extremely fast in 2023 at 38 percent".

With such promising indicators, the work being done by the CGCC deserves encouragement, and our support.

Views expressed are not necessarily those of this publication. Letters to be published will be edited where necessary. Publisher: Harry Ramkhelawan Editor: Romeo Kaseram Columnists/Writers: Frank Birbalsingh, Vidur Dindayal, Bernard Heydorn, Adit Kumar, Dwarka Laxhan, Dhanpaul Narine, Harry Persaud, Arti Panday, Mohan Ragbeer, William Doyle-Marshall. Contact Information: Indo Caribbean World Inc. 312 Brownridge Drive, Thornhill, Ontario. L4J 5X1 (905) 738-5005; indocaribbeanworld@gmail.com Website: www.indocaribbeanworld.com

Caribbean at heart, while still at home in Canada

The smell of fresh *dhal puri* on a hot *tawa*, paired with the melodious voice of Lata Mangeshkar. These were not Saturday mornings in India, Guyana, or Trinidad. This was the setting of my upbringing in suburban Canada.

Born and raised in Toronto, I have had the luxury of experiencing the food and music of cultures from around the world.

However, vital to experiencing the culture of others was my constant assurance to live the cultural traditions of the Caribbean through my parents.

Hundreds of miles away from Guyana, I admit that my experience would never replicate that of a young person growing up there. But my family roots and connections to the Caribbean were evident throughout my life manifesting in a variety of ways.

My linkage to the Caribbean and my authenticity of being Caribbean have been a matter of interest to some. Not necessarily me as an individual, but that of diasporic children who were born in Canada to parents who originated from the Caribbean.

Recent events awakened my realisation further. Despite my understanding of my rootedness in the Caribbean, whilst living in Canada as a Canadian, some did not consider us, who are diasporic children, as part of the Caribbean community.

A good friend of mine, Saira Batasar-Johnie, who also operates an Indo-Caribbean community organisation in Canada, had her cultural identity not only questioned, but denied.

Saira's action that lured such a visceral response was that she referred to jackfruit as *katahar* in an Instagram post... although in her Guyanese/Trinidadian home that was the norm.

Not to delve into the debate on whether *katahar* and jackfruit are interchangeable or not, the point is that Saira was called-out, and characterised as not being Caribbean because of her upbringing in Canada.

These harmful accusations that the diasporic children automatically severed links to the original countries of our parents limit the continuation and sharing of culture.

Are children who are born in Canada to parents from the Caribbean somehow automatically disconnected from their cultural identity and roots because of where they were born and raised?

I go back to the fact that my own day-to-day experiences



Ryan Singh

might not be aligned with a person who was raised and currently lives in Guyana, but my connection to the culture and traditions remains strong.

Each and every day, many of my own actions do differentiate me from others here in Canada, and those various acts are constantly a reflection of my cultural upbringing.

Toasting plait bread on a *tawa* for breakfast, walking by a giant red *puja* flag embroidered with the face of Hanuman (the Hindu monkey God) on our front lawn, eating aloo balls for lunch, and *salara* to complete the meal.

These are simple, but still noticeable elements that keep me connected to my family's roots.

Canada's Indo-Caribbean diasporic community is strong, vibrant, and alive, but it will continue to survive because of the daughters and sons of Caribbean immigrants who came to Canada and instilled deep foundational cultural roots in their children.

Saira and I may never live the lives exact to our peers in the Caribbean, but our constant upholding of our Caribbean culture and values is all we need to remain Caribbean at heart, while at home in Canada.

As Canada prevails as a multicultural society, at the core is the ability for people from around the world to bring their cultural practices and traditions here, and to share it with others.

Also at the core is that here in Canada all newcomers can make this their home, raise a family, and watch them grow. Most importantly, newcomers not only share their cultural traditions with others, but they instill those in their offspring.

The assertion that children born in Canada to parents from the Caribbean are not Caribbean is a limited perspective on the world. And this further denies the cultural spread and awareness of the ever-growing diaspora.

The daughters and sons of hardworking women and men from the Caribbean, not only upkeep their cultural identities, but ensure that they thrive. They put these to the test, assuring that there is understanding and an appreciation for those values.

It is limitless in terms of what diasporic children can accomplish, and their pride in their cultural identity should not be denied. In the ever-changing modern world, we need to lean in and ensure that we not only enjoy the riches of our cultural roots, but share them with everyone around us.

Boyhood visits to relatives were lengthy, emotional

Back in the homeland during my boyhood days, plans for a visit to distant relatives were made by the adults, with major decisions taken without input from the family member who was the far-away target. It was not exactly my preferred, unexpected, and surprise "parachute" drop-in today.

Nowadays, I am often told at the dinner table, a reminder of my recurring penchant for repetitiveness, that I have lately acquired a preference for military metaphors, in this case, for the parachute.

I land this observation at the door, to be picked up, unfolded, and examined at a later date. It is this: that we live in a world now constantly at war.

I fulsomely admit that recently I have been invoking, more and more, the metaphor of a parachute to indicate dropping-in on an unsuspecting host for a quick visit.

Typically, extraction follows soon after a refreshing cup of Earl Grey tea ("What! Black, just so? No condensed milk and sugar?!"). Particularly after visiting family members who cannot cope with disruptions, especially visitors like yours truly, who speak in metaphors, and sprinkle similes generously like salt.

But back then when I was a boy listening intently to the adults concocting their trips, no visit was a case of just dropping by and then quickly exiting the site of intrusion.

Certainly, it was not what I do today, when I drink quickly and deeply from an heirloom chipped mug, each sip placing the lips in mortal danger, firmly putting the cup down on the centre table with a thud of finality, and then padding softly away in socks to the heap of shoes at the front door.

"Perhaps I should leave the engine running," I say mischievously to the family as we walk up the prospect's driveway. Or, "Why bother to untie my shoelaces at the front door? We're just parachuting in for a quick cup of tea."

The response from the other half, enunciated in tones of *sotto voce*, a warning half-hiss, and a winning social media smile as the front door is cautiously opened, is: "Keep this up, and soon you'll be wearing Velcro shoes."

Instead, back then during my boyhood, a family visit was an affair that lasted the entire day, with the parting in the late evening accompanied by clumsy moments of too-well-fed chickens clucking with disappointment after failing to flap up to lopsided, makeshift ladders that served as roosts. And of course, cascades of tears from the emotional farewells.

My childhood question, put to the adults from the back

seat of the vehicle from the tight squeeze among the brood of cousins, most of them lethal with bony projections, and a few already with too-large feet, would interrupt the tail-end aftermath of sobbing that accompanied the first few kilometres on the journey back home.

"Why all the bawling and crying always whenever we leaving by auntie and uncle?"

Innocent as it was, at least in my eyes, it touched a few raw nerves in the adults cramped on the bench seat at the front of the car.

"Now look here, child! Watch outside the window and keep your little tail quiet. When you grow up and you have family living far, you will know what o'clock it is."

Well, to speak truth to scathing adult power back then, this has since come to pass as an exponential, or as is colloquially stated, "in spades", since I now live abroad in a flat landscape that stretches out for thousands of kilometres in all directions.

Back in the homeland the drive itself to visit relatives residing in far-off places typically took at least three to four hours, the time mostly stretched out along a continuum of desperate calls from among the cousins for urgent and repeated stops.

Decades later, I would come to marvel at my old man's patience and sagacity, and his capacity to deal with childhood exigencies occurring on both ends of the spectrum.

A quick pull-over with the wheels rapidly decelerating, the tires crunching down hard on the graveled roadway shoulder, then a mad scramble of sharp toes across laps, legs, and flailing arms, and it was with relief that a cousin disappeared among the trees, with a solicitous aunt or uncle tumbling in pursuit, unable to keep up with the urgent momentum of the exit.

Indeed, it was a few decades later, with my old man finally enjoying his well-deserved eternal rest away from highways that suddenly became lonely, gravelled roadways, and the chorus of cousins in the back seat reminiscent of the bedlam in a kindergarten class with the stressed-out teacher out of sight, when I finally discovered "what o'clock" it was.

Indeed, when poetic justice arrived, it came in a far-away place, along flat prairie lands where seas of yellow canola murmured to the susurration of soft, sibilant breezes. So vast was this land that the fields merged into the sky to become horizons.

Here, among the unending canola fields, my progeny left behind powerful streams as territorial markers, even as the vehicle's engine idled, and I saw a replay of my old man's anxious eyes in mine, vigilant in the rearview to oncoming traffic.



Romeo Kaseram

No surprise Guyana the victor

Dear Editor,

It is no surprise to me that Guyana has won the Caribbean Premier League this year. Not to be unpatriotic as a national of Trinidad and Tobago, I told my friends beforehand that Guyana might beat Trinbago Knight Riders. They laughed at me as if I was being crazy. We were on a bus ride, and apart from myself, there was only one other person who suggested Guyana could win. We were both laughed off the scene.

However, here is my rationale on why I thought Guyana would beat Trinidad and Tobago.

(1) Things are connected. The general mood of Guyana is we are winning. I am not talking about cricket, but with the finding of oil, and with the changing of the economy in Guyana, there is a general up mood in Guyana. That general mood transfers into cricket.

(2) The natural availability of resources helps in a way to make life better. When things are going well, they go good all around.

(3) But the reverse of what I say is also true. When things are going bad, they go bad all around. The negativity in Trinidad and Tobago is too much. Cricket is following the natural way of the world on the island.

(4) Sports imitates life. We think things follow a scientific path, but they are following a socio-cultural path. I am a religious person. My professor of religion said "that we think



Bharrat Jagdeo

there is a specific standard of leadership that we follow, but really is what taking place in the world that affects our leadership. When there were Kings we followed the path, Papal leadership, and so on".

(5) But there is a lesson here for leadership, and it has to do with the use of arrogance. There was a song we used to sing that goes like this: "Be careful of the little guys; treat him well on your way up, because you will meet him on your way down".

I have a friend, from what we call a small island, and he would tell me about the great disrespect he received from Trinidadians at The University of the West Indies.

Even recently, the Vice President of Guyana, Bharrat Jagdeo, had to respond to Trinidad and Tobago's Prime Minister Dr Keith Rowley making disparaging remarks about Guyana. The worse thing is that it came so natural to him that he was unaware what he was doing. He probably still has not got it.

(6) Finally, we need to pay attention to this country. We need to give up stupid politics and focus on development. We need to pay attention to the people and make sure we have a better life. We need to focus on the road ahead, not on the past in that time of how much we won.

Dr H. Lincoln Douglas, Trinidad and Tobago, via email.

of people in the country. Are we given a fair shake?

Former Central Bank governor Jwala Rambaran was correct in publicising the names of the largest foreign exchange users. The conglomerates themselves earn US dollars but are they repatriating it?

Or are they continuing to buy and fund more overseas businesses while still consuming the lion's share of local US dollars, the bulk of which is supplied via the Central Bank?

The allocation system is not working in an equitable and transparent manner.

I would like to see less Volvos and BMWs in showrooms locally, in favour of more goods on the shelves of smaller businesses across the nation.

C. Alexander, Trinidad and Tobago, via email.

Allocation of US \$\$ inequitable in T&T

Dear Editor,

Republic Bank of Trinidad and Tobago has reduced the access to US dollars on credit cards by 50 percent.

Most small businesses and individuals have no access to US dollars other than by credit cards, as the bank itself decides to prioritise who gets currency, and who does not.

Credit cards are a small business' lifeline to resupply its operations.

Ask yourself this question: Between big businesses with sizeable bank loans, and small businesses with Trinidad and Tobago cash in bank (no loans), who is going to get US dollars from said bank?

Is this a fair system when it will favour the likes of grocery stores such as PriceSmart, conglomerates, and car dealerships? Small businesses are collectively the largest employer

Stop blame game over these tragic losses

Dear Editor,

When four divers lost their lives in 2022, one would safely surmise that the companies involved and the Trinidad and Tobago government would have learned their lesson for not immediately taking care of the families of the divers.

Instead, the companies and the government began playing the blame game, while the families of the divers hung in limbo. It is more than a year later, and neither answers nor relief are forthcoming. The companies involved are the State-owned Paria and privately owned LMCS, which hired the divers.

Then this year we faced another tragic death on an industrial site owned by NiQuan and serviced by Massy, and neither are accepting responsibility. The family is forced to file legal action for answers about what happened to their loved one.

The common denominator in both incidents is the PNM government and the companies they support. In NiQuan's case, according to a statement by the company, the government was involved in a supporting partnership with NiQuan by working together to supply gas to

run the plant. Prime Minister Dr Keith Rowley and other Cabinet members were at the opening ribbon-cutting ceremony in March 2021.

In the final analysis, it does not matter to the families on who compensates them for a lifetime of earnings, and the loss of loved ones and dreams denied. What matters is the pain and suffering of lost loves and grief as they relive the nightmare of how their breadwinners suffered in their final hours, while the owners and the government avoid culpability.

In the divers' case, their deaths were slow and painful as they slowly suffocated. At NiQuan, a worker was severely burned, and suffered for two days before dying.

The government and companies need to step up and accept responsibility for their part in the tragedies, beg forgiveness from the families, and make the ethical and moral decision to stop the alleged cover-up of what went wrong.

They can do this by working together to issue a joint statement that will begin healing for the families and the nation.

Rex Chookolingo, Trinidad and Tobago, via email.



Amazon Warriors' captain Imran Tahir (front row, centre) with the CPL trophy

Job well done, Amazon Warriors!

Dear Editor,

Congratulations to the Guyana Amazon Warriors! They have excelled above and beyond normal cricket talents. This team under Imran Tahir's leadership have demonstrated throughout the tournament what unity in strength means, how to overcome obstacles and challenges, and more importantly pay homage to a well-deserved Guyanese community.

It is an historic moment. My fellow Washingtonians join fans around the world in celebrating their victory and to remind them that we are still hungry for more. Congrats Warriors.

Sheik Zamal Housein, Washington DC, via email.

Dear Editor,

Congratulations are in order for the Guyana Amazon Warriors for winning the finals! I had expected to see a much better fight from the Trinidad and Tobago Knight Riders, but it appeared that the bowling got the better of them.

It was good cricket played much louder than before. The crowds, even though partisan, were great.

The hunger and passion for victory were very much in evidence in all the games.

This is a victory for Guyana, but it is also a demonstration of the unifying power of sports in terms of patriotism and love for country.

Hydar Ally, Guyana, via email.



GUYANA PROPERTY MATTERS

What to do with inherited property in Guyana

Anyone who has inherited property in Guyana should act to ensure the property is effectively administered, all fees and taxes due to the Guyana Revenue Authority are paid, the grant of probate is obtained, and the property is transferred to the new owner. Failure to act in a timely manner introduces the opportunity for property fraud as it is known by more persons that a property owner has passed on and their heirs are absent.

The documents required for the probate process would include the death certificate, the will of the deceased, a list of assets, and a valuation of the inherited land at the date of the death. The probate process usually takes approximately 6-12 weeks, and is best managed by an experienced attorney who prepares the necessary documents, manages the submission process with the Guyana Revenue Authority, and determines the applicable process fees and taxes.

Once a certificate of payment is obtained from the GRA, the application for probate is prepared and filed by the attorney, and the execution of the will and the transfer of the property can proceed. The cost associated with the probate process and transfer of ownership can be estimated by the attorney managing the case, and would be based on several factors including the value of inherited property.

In cases where multiple heirs are involved, the proceeds from the sale of the property would be distributed according to the will, or upon collective agreement by the heirs. Where the objective is to sell the property, it is possible to plan the sales process to coincide with the probate process so that the property is transferred directly to the buyer.

Many are torn between selling their inherited property or keeping it in light of Guyana's rising economic fortunes. For those that don't need the money, consider retaining ownership. Many have modernised their ancestral homes in Guyana into shared vacation properties used by the entire extended family. Others have renovated and rented out their properties, and receive significant incomes. Hanging on and renovating Grandpa's old house in the village may be one of the smartest investment decisions you might make.

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

Why reparations remain a relevant priority for the region today

Dear Editor,

Richard Madeley's name hardly rang a bell to Guyanese until last month when he made headlines for his disrespectful interview with the President of Guyana, Dr Irfaan Ali.

The scorn with which he treated Ali, and the unbridled manner in which he was allowed to do it, are poignant reminders of why reparations remain a profoundly relevant priority today.

If Madeley allowed Guyanese to respond, we, like our President, would tell him that we do not want to be bestowed with a castle that embodied the historical pretense that its occupants had the divine right to enslave entire African nations for generations to come.

Reparations do not equate to short-lived handouts and fleeting compensation; it means ensuring that the children descended from enslaved Africans can enjoy the same freedoms, social privileges, and economic opportunities accorded to their British counterparts.

Instead, our children have inherited the trauma of generations of enslavement, denial of basic human dignity, systemic discrimination, and racism. Their legacy is one of brutality premised on the dehumanisation of African families, who have had their cultures, languages, identities, and ties with their ancestral lands whipped out of them.

One of the many historical disadvantages was the decimation of traditional African family structures, where the authority of elders, parents, and heads of households was stripped away.

Along with this was the separation of African men from their families, physical abuse, and psychological degradation, which have left an inter-generational imprint on the mental health and



Richard Madeley with Susanna Reid during the *Good Morning Britain* edition, with Ali at right

identity construct of African families

This is the historical injustice that holds the walls of England's castles together, and it is this historical injustice that requires reparation. In a time of shifting global power dynamics, the question of reparations is now more than just a grievance; it is a

pressing development priority for countries in the region.

Conversely, it represents an opportunity for former colonial empires to shed the weight of their historical shame, and lay the foundation for an equitable future.

Anna Correia De Sá, Omattie Madray, Guyana, via email.

More needs to be done after first step by Gladstone descendants

Dear Editor,

Guyana's President Ali stood his ground during his appearance on the British TV programme *Good Morning Britain* with the "interrogation" from one of the hosts Richard Madeley when asked about reparations from the descendants of British and Scottish slave owners in Guyana.

When Madeley thought he posed a "got you" question banging his hand on the desk (like an elementary school boy) demanding from Ali if he wants one of the palaces from the Royal family, he was reminded that the exotic materials and all the hardwoods used in the construction of the said palaces were plundered from Guyana and other countries they colonised.

Also, that the blood, sweat tears were also used of the enslaved Blacks, thousands of whom were whipped to death even whilst doing their labour intensive tasks.

While it is a good first step to see the descendants of the four-time former British Prime Minister William Gladstone apologising for their family's past as enslavers in Guyana, they went as far as urging the UK government to discuss reparations to their former British colonies in the Caribbean.

William Gladstone's father, John Gladstone was of Scottish descent and an absentee landlord; he never visited his estates in the Caribbean, but became extremely rich from the proceeds of slavery, and later Indentureship.

Gladstone was also one of the largest enslavers in parts of the Caribbean; he owned several ships, including the first two ships (the *Hesperus* and the *Whitby*) that transported hundreds of Indians to Guyana in 1838.

On August 25, during a launch of the International Centre for Migration and Diaspora Studies (announcing a grant to the tune of £100,000) at the University of Guyana, Charles Gladstone, who is the great great-grandson of UK Prime Minister William Gladstone, said, "Slavery was a crime against humanity and its damaging impact continues to be felt across the world today. It is with deep shame and regret that we acknowledge our ancestor's involvement in this crime, and with heartfelt sincerity that we apologise to the descendants of the enslaved in Guyana."

Additionally, "We also urge other descendants of those who benefited from slavery to open conversations about their ancestors' crimes, and what they might be able to do to build a better future."

The Gladstones also apologised for their role in Indentureship.

While, £100,000 is a paltry sum, it nevertheless sets the foundation for Guyanese of African ancestry to see more like-minded gestures from the other descendants of British, Scottish, and Dutch slave owners to step up to the plate and to acknowledge the gruesome past of their ancestors; also, to try to engage in dialogue with regards to reparations. After all, they are all beneficiaries of the financial gains from 400 years of slavery.

In July 2013, the Caricom Reparations Commission was



Eric Blair



John Cameron

launched. This has energised the global movement for reparatory justice, and which has inspired the formation of the National African American Reparations Commission, the European Reparations Commission, and similar formations in Canada and the UK.

In April 2015, hundreds of reparations advocates from more than 22 countries, including representatives from the CRC, assembled in New York City for an International Reparations Conference organised by the US-based Institute of the Black World 21st Century.

It is for this, as well as other related reasons that the Caribbean has emerged as the epicentre of the global reparatory justice movement. Its campaign for reparations for the crimes of slavery and colonialism has served as a template for the Global South to seek a level playing field for development within the international economic order.

In addition, it serves as a model to address new forms of equity, including climate change. Presenting evidence of past wrongdoings so as to facilitate the call for a new global order that includes fairness in access to economic and social development issues and equality in participation, should be applauded.

The 1833 Emancipation Act passed by the British government freed around 650,000 Black slaves in the British Caribbean. However, the freedom for the slaves came at a cost for the slave owners when slavery was finally abolished in 1834.

According to Nicolas Draper, the British government paid approximately £20 million to the absentee slave-owners as compensation for the loss of their slave property on their plantations across the British Empire. This amounted to the equivalent of approximately 40 percent of the total annual government expenditure in the 1830s.

The compensation was worth approximately £16-£17 billion at the time Draper did the computations some time between 2005 and 2010, this amount is most likely well over £20 billion today. The former plantation owners of British Guiana received a total of £4,297,117 10 shillings, 6½ pence, as compensation

for the "loss of approximately 84,915 slave property".

The enslaved people themselves received nothing. Ultimately about 50 percent of the funds the plantation owners in the UK received proved to be one of several significant sources of "funding for new industrial and infrastructure development, above all the railway boom" in the country.

It took British taxpayers 182 years to pay off this debt, the loan the government took out to compensate slave owners for the abolition of slavery in 1833 was only repaid in full in 2015. Some of the descendants of those owned by British people later became residents in the UK (including many Guyanese), and through taxation contributed to paying off the debt created by the huge windfall paid to the slave-owners, who once owned their ancestors as property.

Among the British descendants who benefited from slavery are ancestors of the former Prime Minister, David Cameron; former Member of Parliament, Douglas Hogg; authors Graham Greene and George Orwell (George Orwell's great-grandfather, Charles Blair, received £4,442, equal to more than £3 million today, for the 218 slaves he owned); poet Elizabeth Barrett Browning; and the Chairman of the Arts Council, Peter Bazalgette.

Other prominent names that feature in Nicolas Draper's records include scions of one of the nation's oldest banking families, the Barings, and the second Earl of Harewood, Henry Lascelles, an ancestor of the Queen's cousin.

Some families used the money to invest in the railways and other aspects of the Industrial revolution; others bought or maintained their country houses, and some used the money for philanthropy.

While the Dutch tried to erase Guyana from their slave history, they occupied Guyana longer than any of our occupiers. We should not let them off the hook in ensuring that the Dutch ancestry are also held liable to compensate descendants of their slave property they once held in Guyana.

From the 17th century through the 19th century, the Dutch brought about 16,000 Africans to Essequibo; 15,000 to Berbice; and 11,000 to Demerara; making it a total of approximately 42,000 give or take a few thousand at the time ownership was transferred to the British in 1814.

The Dutch had a significant role in the global slave trade – the stately mansions lining the canals in Amsterdam is a testament to the fortunes amassed during the Dutch Golden Age, from the use of slave labour in their colonies, Guyana was their number one export earnings during the period.

Also, the construction of the canals in the city of Amsterdam was financed through the proceeds from slavery. There is even a mansion in Voorschoten, called the Berbice country estate, which is in close proximity to The Hague, and which dates back to 1669. In 1827 the then owner Jon Kheer Goldberg named the mansion after Berbice when he was in the colony during the time he was stationed in Guyana.

Bibi Halima Khanam, Guyana, via email.

Guyana-Venezuela border dispute now on front burner

Guyana's growing oil wealth has triggered renewed tensions with Venezuela over the two neighbours' century-old border dispute.

The dispute, which has been simmering for several decades, intensified following Exxon's discovery of an estimated 11 billion barrels of recoverable oil resources in the offshore Stabroek Block, which is located in the disputed territory.

Venezuela is claiming nearly 62,000 square miles, or roughly three-quarters of Guyana's territory, including the territorial waters containing the Stabroek Block. This area includes all of Guyana's land east of the Essequibo River.

The long-standing territorial dispute has never been really resolved, in spite of the fact that in 1899 the Washington Treaty of Arbitration granted Guyana the disputed land. The Treaty granted Venezuela control of the land surrounding the mouth of the Orinoco River, while Britain (British Guiana was then a colony) was given all land west of the Essequibo River.

However, Venezuela was not satisfied with the arbitration results, and in 1962, declared the Treaty of Arbitration null and void.

Venezuela's main contention is that the Essequibo River to the east of the region forms a natural frontier between the two countries that was recognised as the border in 1777.

Prior to Guyana gaining Independence in 1966, the United Nations attempted to find a solution with the parties signing the Geneva Protocols, which stipulated that Venezuela, the UK, and Guyana will find a peaceful and satisfactory solution to the dispute. This led to the creation of the Good Offices Process by the UN to mediate Venezuela's territorial claim.

However, Guyana and Venezuela were unable to reach an agreement after several decades, and the matter was referred to the International Criminal Court of Justice in 2018. The court accepted the case, but has made little headway. In November 2022, the ICJ concluded its preliminary hearing on the objections raised by Venezuela, which argued that Guyana's case should be dismissed.

Last month, the dispute gained steam following Guyana's decision to auction 14 oil blocks in the Essequibo region. Guyana's

Todd updates Brazil on border issue

Georgetown – An update on recent developments on the Guyana-Venezuela border controversy was given earlier this week by Guyana's Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Minister Hugh Todd to his Brazilian counterpart, Mauro Vieira.

In a government release, it was stated that Todd reiterated Guyana's commitment to a peaceful resolution of the controversy in accordance with international law, and underscored reaffirmation for the current International Court of Justice process.

As Todd noted, the ICJ's process represents a mutually agreed mechanism for a peaceful, just, binding, and permanent settlement of the controversy over the validity of the 1899 Arbitral Award, and the course of the land boundary between Guyana and Venezuela.

In response, Vieira expressed Brazil's support for the current ICJ process, and indicated that his country adheres to the peaceful settlement of boundaries.

He also underscored that Brazil has great respect for the ICJ, and awaits its final verdict, which it believes is the best solution in accordance with international law, especially since the matter was referred by the United Nations Secretary General.

neighbour contends that Guyana has no right to award blocks to any oil company because the area is in its maritime territory.

Since Guyana commenced oil explorations in 2015, Venezuela has openly vowed to seize the disputed territory, and has been stepping up its aggression towards Guyana. It had ordered the Exxon exploration consortium to cease operations, but its orders were ignored. It also redrew the Guyana map to include the disputed territory as its own with the intent of infuriating Guyana and inciting its own people to take action

in keeping with the popular slogan "Guyana is ours. We must take it".

There have also been numerous incidents of provocation in recent years, with Venezuelan naval vessels harassing shipping in Guyana's territorial waters, including drilling vessels contracted by Exxon. In 2021, two fishing vessels from Guyana were detained for weeks by Venezuela's navy.

In early 2018, press reports state that Brazil's military revealed it had discovered plans for Venezuela's invasion of Guyana, which would see Venezuela use force to annex the Essequibo region.

In September, Venezuela's Foreign Minister Ivan Gil said the nation would be asked to vote in a referendum to ratify its borders against aggressive enemies. In a release he said: "Venezuela's national assembly unanimously decided to call our people to vote in a consultative referendum to ratify the defense of our sovereign territory against the aggressions of the American empire, which wants to lead us to a war for natural resources."

Venezuela has also contended that the US government is using ExxonMobil to stir up war and enmity between the two countries.

"We alert the international community of US intentions to create, in our peace zone of Latin America and the Caribbean, a military base in the Republic of Guyana, to turn that country into the spearhead of an aggression operation against the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, which would put the peace and stability of the entire region at risk. The people and the government of Venezuela, united in defense of the homeland, will not give in [to] or be intimidated by pressure, blackmail, or

Todd also emphasised the position as articulated by President Irfaan Ali, that Guyana is irrevocably committed to the settlement process at the ICJ, and is available to meet with Venezuela on any subject of interest to the two countries – other than the controversy over the 1899 Arbitral Award.

Todd further debunked the false narrative being propagated by Venezuela, and reaffirmed there is no intention by Guyana, or any other State, to establish a military base in Guyana's territory.

Vieira emphasised the importance of the peaceful co-existence of countries in the Region if it is to advance its integration agenda.

Todd and Vieira also discussed ideas to advance bilateral relations, and collaboration at the multilateral level.

Only recently, Guyana reached out and communicated its displeasure to Venezuela over a referendum planned by the Spanish-speaking country to have its citizens vote on the border controversy with Guyana.

According to media reports in the Caribbean, the Venezuelan National Assembly recently approved a nationwide consultative referendum for Venezuelans to express their views on the Guyana-Venezuela border controversy, either directly, or through secret votes.



Dwarka Lakhan



Irfaan Ali



Nicolás Maduro

threats when it comes to defending the sacred homeland," a Venezuelan statement said.

In the meantime, Guyanese President Irfaan Ali made it clear that Guyana had acted lawfully when it opened bids for the new offshore blocks, and would not be bullied by Venezuela, which argues that it was cheated out of a large area by an international boundaries commission back in the 1980s.

Ali stated: "We demand that Venezuela honours its obligation under the charter to pursue only peaceful means to settle any disputes it may have with Guyana, including adjudication before the International Court of Justice," at the annual UN forum.

He added, "Allowing the court to decide would ensure a resolution that is peaceful, equitable, and in accordance with international law. Guyana will spare no effort in defending its sovereignty and territorial integrity."

Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro has called for direct talks with his Guyana counterpart over the border dispute.

In remarks directed to Ali, Maduro said: "I am ready to meet with you very quickly, at the

location of our choice in the Caribbean... to resume peace negotiations and put an end to these threats."

He added that Guyana's actions, "violate international law and endanger peace in the region".

Under threat of a Venezuelan invasion, Guyana has garnered support from a range of international institutions and countries, among them Caricom, the OAS, The Commonwealth Ministerial Group, and the US.

It is hoped that the border dispute would not escalate, and can be resolved peacefully. In fact, Guyana would be unable to repel a Venezuelan invasion on its own, which would most likely lead to regional and/or international involvement.

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.



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Honorary Consul Mani Singh (left in photo at the left) with CIOG members, Consulate staff, and members of the diaspora at Rexdale on October 1

Guyana Consulate General takes lead with unifying, diaspora events

Toronto – Ongoing and unifying community activities continued this fall with the Guyana Consulate General hosting and participating in two significant events here in Toronto.

The first event saw Consulate General celebrating Amerindian Heritage Month in September. Then on October 1, Honorary Consul Mani Singh and Consulate staff attended the annual dinner & fund-raising gala of the Canadian chapter of the Central Islamic Organisation of Guyana.

The first event took place on September 19, and saw the Toronto Consulate observing Amerindian Heritage Month for the first time. This tradition was started in 1995 by then President Dr Cheddi Jagan, when he officially designated September as Amerindian Heritage Month.

September is a time when the government and all Guyanese come together to celebrate the deep and rich traditions, heritage, and cultures of Guyana's Indigenous peoples, who are known as Amerindian-Guyanese.

The event was well-attended by leaders of Guyanese-Canadian diaspora organisations, members of the diaspora, and many friends of Guyana.

The evening's program featured numerous items reflecting and celebrating the richness of Guyana's Amerindian Guyanese culture and heritage. It was hosted by Acting Consul

General Grace Joseph, with Nutana Singh handling the Land Acknowledgment. Guyana government MP Alister Charlie extended a warm welcome in the nine different Amerindian languages.

And in keeping with the motif of languages, a prayer was said in Akawaio by an Amerindian teenager.

Meanwhile, Brother John O'Dell sang the two national anthems, Canada's and Guyana's, and also said a Christian prayer. The inter-faith section of the program continued with Pandit Nandalall Mathura saying a Hindu prayer, and Brother Omar Farouk reciting the Muslim prayer.

A youth sister and brother team, Navita & Avinash Persaud of Moraikobai, recited a poem, *The Arawak Way of Life*, written by Mr Sarius of Orealla.

Speaking on connecting the Indigenous peoples of the Americas was Claire Carew, who was accompanied by Geoff Daybutch of the Mississaugas of the Credit.

Special remarks were delivered by Honorary Consul Mani Singh. Delivering the keynote address via Zoom was Guyana's Minister of Amerindian Affairs Pauline Sukhai. In her address, Sukhai highlighted all the economic development and progress that the government is fostering in Indigenous communities throughout Guyana. The evening's vote of thanks was delivered

by the Consulate's Osafo Scott.

Attendees were afterwards treated to sumptuous appetisers and desserts, which were catered by Norman Sue Bakery. They were also treated to various refreshments.

Then on October 1, Honorary Consul Singh, accompanied by Consulate staff, attended the CIOG's annual dinner & fundraising gala.

The CIOG was founded in Guyana in 1989, with its main mission of doing humanitarian work in Guyana. Countless Guyanese of all ethnicities, religions, and gender have benefitted from its work over the last 40 years.

The event was held at the IMO mosque in Rexdale, and was well-attended by members of the Guyanese-Canadian diaspora, and friends of Guyana.

The event raised over \$100,000 from generous donations by many other mosques in the GTA, the International Development Relief Fund, a support partner of CIOG, and many individuals in the diaspora.

Honorary Consul Singh thanked the CIOG, on behalf of the government and people of Guyana, for the outstanding humanitarian work that it has been doing in Guyana over the last four decades.

And yet again, an elaborate and sumptuous feast followed.



The Guyana Consulate General in Toronto celebrated Amerindian Heritage Month on September 19.



Radha Krishna fund-raiser

Radha Krishna Mandir & Cultural Centre Inc Cambridge Ontario held its fund-raising concert and dinner on September 23 at the Bhawani Shankar Mandir in Brampton.

The well-attended concert featured the talented Pt Munelal Maharaj, formerly of Trinidad and Tobago. He now resides in Orlando, Florida. The evening also saw many other young artists and performers in the lineup.

This latest event by Radha Krishna is a continuation of its drive to complete its Cambridge mandir. Construction is ongoing, with the objective being to have the building enclosed by December 23. The mandir's executive is aiming for a Spring 2024 opening.

In order to achieve this target, Radha Krishna is counting on the continued support from the community meet this goal. Funds raised will go into RKMCC Building Fund.

Tax deductible donations can be made at www.radhakrishnamandir.ca, or eTransfer to donate@radhakrishnamandir.ca.

Also, the mandir's buy-a-brick programme is underway at the cost of \$1,500 per brick. There are many available areas in the building open in the programme for anyone, including families, a name, or family, or a family member to be named after.

For more info please contact Dwarka Persaud at 519-240-0870; email president@radhakrishnamandir.ca, or visit the mandir's website [here](http://www.radhakrishnamandir.ca). Photos show the audience having a wonderful time at the recently-concluded concert and dinner.



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Newly-elected Speaker Holness being 'forced' to take the chair

New Speaker for Jamaica's Parliament

Kingston – Members of Jamaica's parliament last week united across the political divide to welcome Juliet Holness to the Speaker's chair.

Holness is a second-term MP for St Andrew East Rural, and was nominated by acting leader of government business Delroy Chuck to the post. The move received support from the Opposition, led by Phillip Paulwell.

Holness succeeded Marisa Dalrymple-Philibert, who resigned as Speaker effective September 21, the *Jamaica Gleaner*, *Observer*, and *Caribbean Media Corporation* reported.

Dalrymple-Philibert tendered her resignation as Speaker, and as MP for South Trelawny, following a damning report from an investigation and ruling by the director of corruption prosecution.

The Integrity Commission ruled that she be charged on eight counts in relation to her statutory declarations over seven years.

According to the commission's director of investigation, Kevon Stephenson, in a report tabled in Parliament last month, it was recom-

ended that the report be referred to Prime Minister Andrew Holness "for him to take such disciplinary and/or administrative actions which both recognise the seriousness of Mrs Dalrymple-Philibert's conduct", and to deter recurrence.

The ruling follows an investigation by the commission in relation to a motor vehicle that Dalrymple-Philibert purchased through a concession afforded to legislators, and which she failed to declare in her filings.

She now faces the eight charges for providing false information in her statutory declaration to the Integrity Commission, and for breaching the law.

Holness was nominated to the Speaker's role following Dalrymple-Philibert's resignation. She is the wife of Prime Minister Holness.

Last week when the Clerk to the Houses of Parliament Valrie Curtis asked whether there was any nomination other than Holness for the Speaker's job, all of its members shouted "No".

And in what is a long-held parliamentary tradition, after being announced as the new Speaker, Holness 'feigned' resistance in taking the chair, and had to be 'forced' to the high seat by fellow lawmakers, Michelle Charles, Krystal Lee, and Juliet Cuthbert-Flynn.

Chuck welcomed Holness to the Speaker's chair, and congratulated her on the elevation.

"I can say, Madam Speaker, as someone I have known for over two decades, I have absolutely no doubt that your competence, your skill, your intelligence will ensure that this Parliament is conducted in an orderly [man-

ner], and in a way that the Jamaican people can be proud," he said.

Chuck added he was confident that Holness would conduct meetings of the House "without fear or favour, without bias and also to give the opportunity for all the members to participate, and to make their voices heard".

In his comments, Paulwell also expressed best wishes to Holness in her tasks as Speaker.

"We generally want you to do well so that your tenure can be very successful," he said.

Heroy Clarke, MP for St James Central, was elected deputy speaker of the House.

His nomination was agreed on by members of the Government and Opposition sides.

In her response, Holness thanked her parliamentary colleagues for "the confidence reposed in me to handle the very difficult job of being the Speaker of this Parliament".

She added, "I accept my responsibility with great humility, and I will always endeavor to ensure that I manage with equity, judiciously, balance, and always in keeping with the standing orders of this noble House."

She also expressed the hope that as the Parliament does its duty on behalf of the people of Jamaica, "we will continue to display that type of relationship that keeps our House disciplined and orderly in the benefit of all the people of Jamaica".

Holness also noted that it was "the beginning of excellent camaraderie when a member from the Opposition side stands up to second the nomination of the member from the government side for speaker and deputy speaker".

In her resignation statement, Dalrymple-Philibert noted that what occurred with her could have happened with any other member of the Jamaica Labour Party.

"Since the [IC] has decided to charge me criminally for an omission, I have considered the damage this has done to my reputation and have decided to tender my resignation both as the Speaker of the House of Representatives and Member of Parliament for South Trelawny, with immediate effect," she said.

Additionally, "I wish to state categorically that my decision is entirely voluntary, and not at the request of anyone. I also wish to state and emphasise that I remain a loyal and committed member and supporter of the [JLP], and more particularly to the Andrew Holness administration. I will continue to render assistance in whatever way I can and I will always support my party."

She also stated she was looking forward to the matter going to a court of law, and not the "Court of Public Opinion".



Marisa Dalrymple-Philibert



Ask Jay...

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A BUYER MUST PAY \$27.7K TO A SELLER'S TENANT FOR WRONGFUL EVICTION

Picture this: A family of four in Surrey, BC, was suddenly evicted from their rental home because a buyer had purchased the property and wanted to move in. However, things didn't go as planned for the buyer, and the deal ultimately fell through due to a lack of financing. The Residential Tenancy Branch ordered the buyer to pay the tenants \$27,700 – equivalent to 12 months' rent – for wrongful eviction.

As it turns out, the sale contract did not include any financing conditions, ultimately binding the buyer to its terms. When the closing date arrived, the buyer could not pay for the home, leading to the collapse of the entire deal, and this left the tenants in a tight spot, forced to find another, more expensive home farther away from their children's school. It's a harsh reminder that unconditional offers are a seller's preference in a hot real estate market, and buyers should always seek pre-approval from their lenders before committing.

In the end, the buyer was left with an unbearable financial weight on his shoulders, forfeiting a \$30,000 deposit and paying out \$27,700 to the seller's tenant for damages. The situation spiraled out of control after the buyer asked the landlord to serve the tenant with an N12 form, which is compulsory to end their residence because a purchaser or family member requires the rental unit, which would have led to a minimum of 60 days' notice for a month-to-month tenancy, compensating the tenant with at least a month's rent upon termination.

The ordeal could have been avoided if the landlord had been more prudent, and followed the guidelines laid down by the board. In particular, informing the former tenant and offering to re-rent the property at the original rent would have fulfilled their obligations. However, acting in bad faith, they likely hiked the rent up, further complicating matters for everyone involved.

Selling a rental property can be tricky, as the seller must ensure that the tenants are dealt with fairly and following the law. However, problems can still arise even when everything is done by the book. For example, if a tenant refuses to move out on the closing date, the sale can fall apart, leaving both the seller and buyer in a difficult position.

The trouble is that even when parties request a hearing at the Landlord and Tenant Board, it can take up to six months to resolve the issue, by which time the closing date may have passed, and the deal may have fallen through. This can lead to buyers either suing the seller or leaving the deal altogether.

Furthermore, assuming the existing tenants can be problematic in certain situations, particularly when the buyer is purchasing the property to live in, and the lender stipulates that the mortgage is approved if the property is the buyer's primary residence and not a rental property. By assuming the tenants, the property would be considered an investment property, and the lender can refuse to finance it.

In such a situation, the buyer should take certain precautions before committing to anything. For example, it's advisable to meet with the tenant beforehand and ask the seller to share any necessary documents, such as the rental application and lease agreements. Additionally, if the basement apartment needs to be registered, it's better to get vacant possession, retrofit, and register the apartment, and then look for tenants.

These insights highlight the need for buyers and sellers to know all the intricacies involved when dealing with rental properties. It's essential to follow all the legal procedures, and treat all parties fairly.

In conclusion, this riveting story of a legal battle among tenants, buyers, and sellers is a reminder of how precarious the world of rental properties can be for all those involved. It's a cautionary tale to exercise due diligence, and tread carefully when buying or selling such property to avoid legal and financial headaches.

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Awardees honoured by VCC for service

From Page 1

the years, Roy stated. Among the awards are the Re/Max Prestigious Hall of Fame, Lifetime Achievement, Pinnacle and President Club Awards.

Meanwhile, in tandem with his acquisition of education and a burgeoning professional career, Singh also became actively involved in the Guyanese-Canadian diaspora, and the wider Canadian society.

Said Roy: "For over 35 years [Singh has remained focused] in areas of religion, culture, sports, and humanitarian causes through support to several charities that are too many to name."

Roy also highlighted Singh's towering stature, which is notable in how he seamlessly combined a professional career, community work, and recently, has taken up yet another major leadership role as Honorary Consul at the Consulate General in Toronto.

As Roy declared, "[Singh] is always trying to leave the world better than he found it; he is very inclusive; he stands tall on a foundation of personal integrity; he is hard-working, very determined, and is always looking for the best in others. He gives the best of himself in everything that he does."

Describing the evening's other awardee, Robin Doobay, as personifying "the ideals and attributes of a true Bhakta (one who serves with unconditional selflessness and committed devotion)", another community leader, Cliff Rajkumar, informed the gathering at the VCC that the evening's second recipient was "born to a pious Hindu family" in Guyana, and "raised in ... a noble home".

Rajkumar is a well-known and prominent community advocate, and is also an award recipient for his passionate preservation of the diaspora's cultures and traditions. He is also recognised for his executive roles in the international finance sector, and for his entrepreneurship.

As Rajkumar noted, Doobay's early years saw him influenced by his father, Pandit Ramsahai Doobay, who served the Hindu community as a "knowledgeable and respected advocate of his ancestral dharmic creed"; at the same time, the patriarch "also played a key role in the preservation and propagation of his dharmic culture and traditions in Guyana".

Consequently, Doobay was raised in "a home that conditioned his entire family to serve the greater good of the community and society at large, as a natural symbiotic derivative of the noble dharmic influences of his ancestors".

And as Rajkumar revealed, Doobay was a qualified electrical engineer with a master's degree; also, he was the Assistant Dean of the University of Guyana, Faculty of Technology.

Foregoing a scholarship to move on to the higher education level of a doctorate, Doobay instead came to Canada, where he acquired a master's degree in mathematics and computer science at the University of Waterloo.

Afterwards, Doobay worked for Ontario Hydro until 2002, following which he dedicated himself to the service of his community. He also served on the York Regional Polices Services Board.

Speaking to Doobay's altruistic capabilities, Rajkumar noted that he "is a man of humble and unassuming simplicity, whose contributions and accomplishments bear testimony to his self-sacrificing nature, and resolute commitment to his life's purpose and mission".

Additionally, "He has, and continues to play, a pivotal and invaluable role in the life, growth, and success of Vishnu Mandir. He has been serving, full-time, since 2002 with unconditional dedication and devotion. Indeed, he has provided stability and consistency by anchoring and executing the ever-changing needs and demands of such a dynamic and globally engaging charitable public service organisation."

Rajkumar also recognised Doobay's philosophical and world view, stating that looking on at his actions was to "see a true *sevak* in action at the altar of selfless service".

He added, "His calm demeanor underscores his attentiveness to his duty-bound compulsion to be objectively responsible and accountable for keeping [Vishnu Mandir's] credibility and authenticity intact... He stands resolute on the principle-based foundation of his Karmic imperatives to serve without motives of gain or fame."

Rajkumar also spoke to Doobay's rootedness and commitment to "his Dharmic faith, which subscribes to the inclusive and ennobling humanistic concept of *Vasudaiva Kutumbakam* (the world is one)".

And he stated, "[Doobay] has dedicated his life and energies to selflessly serve, by giving back to society by teaching, mentoring, and uplifting the new generation of Hindu children about the enlightened cultural traditions, moral values, incomparable philosophical legacies of their [sagacious] and resourceful ancestors."

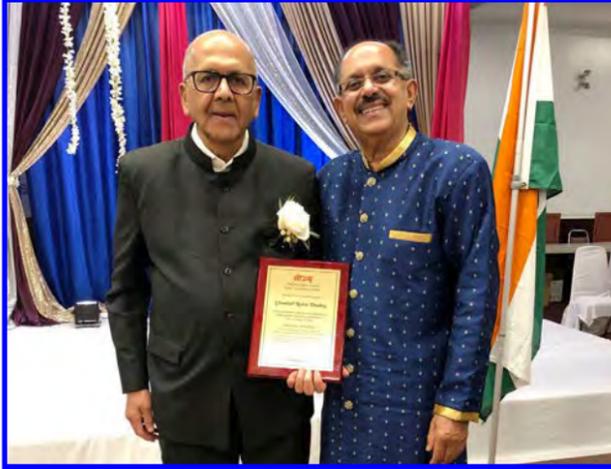
(With files by Dhevin Indar)



Awardees Singh, Doobay with family members



Dr Budhendra Nath Doobay, Prema, and Mani Singh



Robin (left) with Roy



Robin (left) with wife Annie and family members

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Guyana, Venezuela border dispute - a brief look at its history

By Dhanpaul Narine

Venezuela has upped the ante in the border dispute with Guyana. It is calling for a referendum that everyone knows will come out in favour of reclamation. In the meantime, Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro keeps saying that Venezuela poses no threat to Guyana. He wants to meet with Guyana's President Irfaan Ali. A meeting at this time is ill-advised. The International Court of Justice should be allowed to make its ruling.

There is the popular belief that the oil veins are in Venezuela, but the nest is in Guyana. The recent discoveries of oil and gas in Guyana could very well lend credence to that long-held view.

Juan Carlos is married to Sunita Persaud. They met in college in Caracas. On the wall of their apartment is a large map. The Essequibo region is shaded with the words 'Reclamacion.' This means that the area is under reclamation by Venezuela.

If Venezuela gets its way, and reclaims that portion of land, one-third of Guyana will be gone. It would include much of the unexplored wealth of the country.

Juan Carlos was born in Venezuela, and is fiercely nationalistic. He learned in school that the territory in dispute belonged to Venezuela, and his friends feel the same. No such information is to be found in the curriculum, or lesson plans in the schools in Guyana. At election time, Juan would hear the candidates pledge to take back the land of their fathers for Venezuela.

Essequibo is usually on the agenda of the Venezuelan political campaign, and who has the most persuasive argument end up winning the most votes. Sunita, on the other hand, is Guyanese. She is one of the thousands of Guyanese to settle with her family in Venezuela. She is of the firm view that "reclamation or not, every square inch of land belongs to Guyana".

In border disputes, it is the side with the strongest and most convincing case that carries the day. How strong are the cases of Guyana and Venezuela?

In 1498, Christopher Columbus sighted the coast of Guiana, and in 1531 Europeans set foot on its shores when Diego de Ordaz led a Spanish expedition there. The name 'Guiana' was given to all lands between the Amazon and the Orinoco.

In 1595, Sir Walter Raleigh landed in Guiana to search for El Dorado. In his reports, he was able to distinguish the lands between Guiana and Venezuela. In 1616, the Dutch established settlements in the Essequibo, and in 1811 Venezuela proclaimed its independence from Spain. In 1814, the British acquired Guiana, and renamed it 'British Guiana.'

In 1840, it was felt necessary to demarcate the borders, and geographer Robert Schomburgk was given the task to draw the lines. He took into account Spanish and Dutch occupations of Guiana, and came up with a boundary that was known as the 'Schomburgk Line.' But Venezuela did not agree to the map as demarcated by Schomburgk. The discovery of gold in the Barima basin excited the Venezuelans, and they claimed the entire area west of the Essequibo.

Britain refused to negotiate over the Essequibo, and Venezuela broke off diplomatic relations with Britain as a result. President Grover Cleveland of the US intervened and called for arbitration. A tribunal was estab-

lished in 1897 to look into the dispute. It consisted of two persons from Britain, two from America, and one from Russia. General Benjamin Harrison, a former US president, was one of the two persons from America.

After much deliberations, it was agreed by the tribunal to award Venezuela "the strategic mouths and lower reaches of the Amakura and Barima Rivers and the upper reaches of the Cuyuni River".

Venezuela agreed that the award was a full and final settlement, and signed off on it in 1904.

But Venezuela was not satisfied. It wanted more territory. It should remind itself that if the British had refused to compromise Venezuela would have received much less. As it stands, Guyana has a good case to renegotiate for the loss of the Amakura, Barima, and Cuyuni Rivers. In the ensuing years, Venezuela felt that the award was unjust, and various political leaders in Caracas made it a political issue.

They cited a letter that was written by a junior member of the team. The letter stated that the 1899 agreement was null and void. This letter by Severo Mallet-Prevost was posthumously released in 1949.

Mallet-Prevost was feted by the Venezuelan government in January 1944 and given 'The Order of the Liberator', and a month later, he decided to dictate his letter. No evidence was found of a deal between Great Britain and Russia, but Venezuela's claim is largely based on Mallet-Prevost's assertions.

Venezuela's claim for territory must be seen in the context of other neighbouring countries. It was engaged in a bitter dispute with Colombia over the Gulf of Venezuela. In 1941, after legal battles, Colombia gained access to the Gulf, much to the angst of Venezuela. In order to save face with the Venezuelan public, successive governments in Venezuela have resorted to making claims on Guyana's territory.

In 1962, when Guyana made representations with Great Britain for its independence, Venezuela was opposed to it. Premier Cheddi Jagan refused to entertain Venezuela's claim, and pointed to the 1899 award. But Venezuela was not satisfied. Guyana's independence date was set for May 26, 1966, and in February of that year a most dramatic announcement was made. According to Orlando Gomez, "Four months prior to Guyana's official independence date, the governments of Great Britain and Guyana agreed with the government of Venezuela to establish a Mixed Commission of Guyanese and Venezuelan representatives."

What was the purpose of the Mixed Commission? Gomez says, "The Mixed Commission was to settle the ongoing controversy as a result of the Venezuelan claim that the 1899 Arbitral Award delineating the border between Venezuela and present day Guyana was null and void. The arrangements to this effect were laid out in the Geneva Agreement in 1966, and was signed by Great Britain, British Guiana and Venezuela in February 17, 1966."

This is where it went wrong for Guyana. There was no need for the Geneva Agreement of 1966 to talk about the border. It was settled in 1899. Guyana was still a British colony in early 1966, and Venezuela's objection to Guyana's independence would not have led to military action on the part of Venezuela. But was a deal struck between the Opposition parties and Venezuela, prior to the 1964 Guyana

elections?

Did Venezuela help the Opposition parties with its propaganda work to combat Jagan's so-called communism? Did the Guyanese Opposition parties agree to talk about the border, if elected?

Great Britain wanted to avoid international objections to Guyana's independence, and signed off on the Mixed Commission. Besides, it was washing its hands from a messy affair.

But the 1966 Geneva Convention was seen in Venezuela as an admission by Great Britain and Guyana that Venezuela had a case.

The politicians in Caracas argued that it was a victory for Venezuela, and that it was only a matter of time before the Essequibo and its adjoining lands would be returned to the fatherland.

Venezuela showed its true intention shortly after Guyana's independence. It breached the Geneva Agreement by seizing the eastern half of Ankoko Island on October 12, 1966, and made an attempt to annex part of Guyana's offshore waters.

On January 1, 1969, Venezuela was involved in a secessionist movement to annex the Rupununi as part of Venezuelan Guayana. In the face of international criticisms, Venezuela offered a policy of "joint development" for the Essequibo, but Guyana was not interested.

In April 1981, Guyanese Prime Minister Forbes Burnham made an official visit to Caracas. At the end of his visit, Venezuela issued a communiqué stating that the 1970 Protocol of Port-of-Spain was null and void.

The Essequibo, it said, belonged to Venezuela.

Guyana issued a statement that said that the Essequibo was always an integral part of its history.

Venezuela responded by opposing the construction of the Upper Mazaruni Hydroelectric Project.

By 1981, thousands of Guyanese were living in Venezuela, mostly from the Essequibo region, and with Spanish names. Since then, there has been no resolution to the border issue, and the country is in economic turmoil.

Thousands of Venezuelans are seeking refuge in Guyana. A few days ago, a boatload of them landed at Tuschen on the East Bank of Essequibo.

Venezuela's border claim is weak. It is based on a spurious note from a junior official that did not have the courage to reveal its contents, while he, and the other tribunal members, were alive.

The discovery of oil and gas in Guyana has renewed Venezuela's territorial ambitions. But the facts do not support Venezuela's claim to even a drop of Guyanese creek water.



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Yhip's book offers reader tools to assess Guyana's journey to oil wealth

Yhip, Terence: *From Rags to Riches: Is Guyana Ready for the Oil Bonanza?*

By Sieyf Shahabuddeen

Terence Yhip is as solid as they come with outstanding academic and professional credentials in banking and finance in various international settings. He taught briefly as a Visiting Fellow at University of the West Indies, Mona, and has a doctorate in economics from McGill University.

Yhip comes from Canje, and despite living for decades abroad, has not lost his authentic "Berbice brogue".



Terence Yhip

gross inequities.

Recently, Yhip updated *From Rags to Riches* with a new Preface that brings the reader up-to-date with the major economic developments, including the new PSA, and what it means for new contracts outside the Stabroek Block.

Rags to Riches is available on [Amazon](#), and at Austin's bookstore; a Kindle edition should be out before the end of this year.

The following overview gives insights into what the reader will encounter in *Rags to Riches*:

At this time, Guyana is experiencing a growth surge, which is

not unique to the country. The surges, typical of oil-rich economies, usually give way to growth deceleration and even economic stagnation; moreover, the countries remain resource-dependent.

Also, the oil money is being used for productive investment, transportation, human capital (hospitals and schools), housing, and energy. The Gas-to-Energy Project is the largest capital project in which Guyana has ever invested.

Rags to Riches also notes that (US) \$1.5 billion has been saved in the Natural Resource Fund, a positive start compared to other oil-rich countries that had been exporting oil and gas for many decades, and now have little in absolute dollars, or in proportion to the tens of billions earned.

Also, it notes that the Guyana government's emphasis on growth rather than blanket income distribution, much leaking out in imports, is a wise decision.

There is also a reminder to policy-makers that growth and development are not a sprint, but a marathon. Guyana has proven to the rest of the world its capacity for growth; it must also prove its capacity for development.

And there is the provocative, but honest question posed at

the end of *Rags to Riches*, namely, "Can Guyana go 'from rags to riches, and to rags'?"

Yhip's book neither applauds nor disparages political parties, political leaders, nor governments of the day.

However, while its author gives the current government credit for laying the foundations for future growth and development, at the same time he cautions against the governance risks that tend to accompany "oil money".

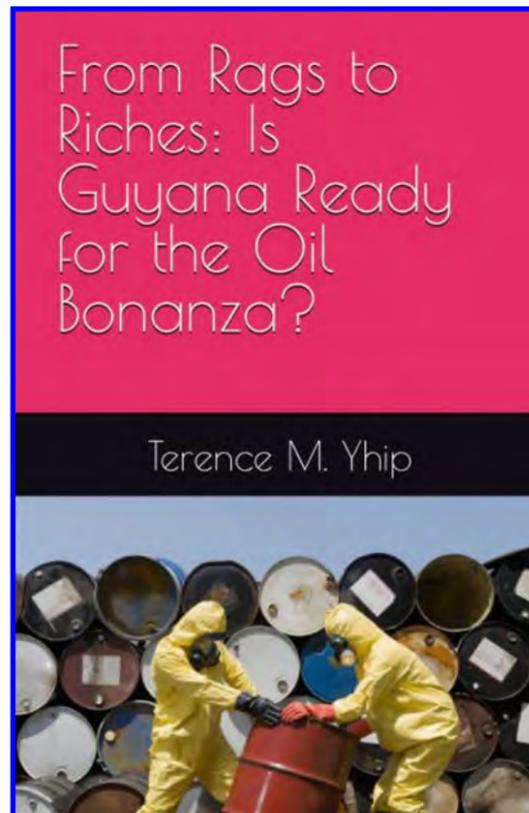
There are unequal distribution of economic opportunities, and uncontrolled spending, which would cause macroeconomic instability, and lead to Dutch Disease, all of which would deepen racial divisions, and trigger a brain drain.

Rags to Riches is an excellent and timely work. Anyone having anything to do with managing Guyana's new-found wealth would do well to read this stellar text.

Can Guyana go "from rags to riches and to rags" again?

Yhip's text invites the reader to explore the book to seek out the

information, and its analytical tools, in order to make an informed judgement.



Many people are so worried about what they did in the past, or what happened in the past, and are so anxious about the future, that they do not focus on today, or on the present moment. Yet, as the spiritual teacher Eckhart Tolle says, "The present moment is all you will ever have."

We are encouraged to focus on today by the famous Indian poet, Khalidasa, who wrote a beautiful poem entitled:

Salutation to the Dawn

Look to this Day!
For it is life, the very life of life.
In its brief course lie all the verities
And realities of your existence:
The glory of action, the bliss of growth,
The splendor of beauty.
For yesterday is but a dream,
And tomorrow is only a vision.
But today, well lived, makes
Every yesterday a dream of happiness
And every tomorrow a vision of hope.
Look well, therefore, to this Day!
Such is the Salutation of the Dawn.

...

Another powerful poem also stresses the fact that we should live for today.

Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow

There are two days in every week about which we should not worry,

Thoughts To Meditate On

Occasional Articles on Self-Help & Inspiration
By Kennard Ramphal

Two days which should be kept free from fear and apprehension.

One of these days is Yesterday, with its mistakes and cares, Its faults and blunders, its aches and pains. Yesterday has passed forever beyond our control.

All the money in the world cannot bring back Yesterday. We cannot undo a single word we said; we can't erase a single act we performed. Yesterday is gone.

The other day that we should not worry about is Tomorrow, with its possible adversities, its burdens, its large promise and poor performance. Tomorrow is also beyond our control.

Tomorrow's sun will rise, either in splendour, or behind a mask of clouds – but it will rise. Until it does, we have no stake in Tomorrow, for it is as yet unborn.

This leaves only one day – Today. Any man or woman can only fight the battles of one day. It's only when you or I add the burdens of those awful

eternities – Yesterday and Tomorrow – that we break down.

It is not the experience of Today that drives people mad.

It is the remorse or bitterness of Yesterday, or the dread of what Tomorrow may bring.

Let us therefore live but one day at a time.

...

I am surrounded by these powerful messages, but nevertheless find myself worrying about what I did yesterday, and being anxious about what tomorrow will bring.

Worry and anxiety have become such persistent habits, that I cannot get rid of these two emotions entirely. However, I do remind myself about the above poems and other writings on the same subject, and find that I spend much less time worrying about the past and being anxious about the future than I did before. This leaves me more time to be grateful for my blessings.

In effect, I am gradually developing a new pattern of thought, which is gradually replacing the ones of worry and anxiety.

I remind myself not to be too hard on myself when I find that I spend precious moments worrying and being anxious. I know that old habits die hard. I am aware that I am developing new habits, however slowly, and that these new habits will eventually choke out the old destructive habits.

My advice to you, my dear reader, is to live one day at a time. Better still, focus on the present moment.

Be Your Best Self!

There are lots of forces, dangers rattling our planet nowadays

A recent CNN news report has pointed out the dangers under which we live on earth. Climate change is a major factor, and to that I would add the threat of war. A number of scientists have pointed out the thresholds of danger facing the world as a result of climate change. Included is biodiversity, freshwater, land use, and the impact of synthetic chemicals. Human activity has reportedly increasingly broken a number of these boundaries.

Limits need to be considered in these areas and more. There are ocean acidification and aerosols in the atmosphere. There are some good news in the attempt to phase out ozone depleting aerosols, which are now reportedly on track to recover.

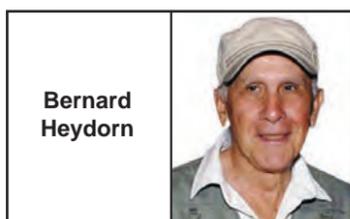
On the other hand, the world's forests seem to be on fire. Razing the forests leads to huge climate change. Polluting our cities and homes and the air that we breathe is destroying our planet and food supply. Biodiversity is being destroyed. Many of the factors of destruction work together, and we are approach-

ing limits to survival. We are gambling with the future of our planet.

By polluting our oceans, we are cutting off an important food supply source. Land, sea, and air are under increasing threats. Scientists have noted these changes decades ago, but they are being ignored by radicalised right wing politicians and big business, blinded by greed, profits, and monetary gain. Donald Trump, former president of the US, is a primary example.

Added to the natural disasters and misguided politicians, there are the increasing threats of war and nuclear war in Europe and elsewhere. Vladimir Putin, the Russian dictator, is making it clear he has no boundaries. War started by Putin, and currently spreading in Europe, is becoming a distinct possibility.

While the US in the past had provided a counterbalance to these threats, the Trump era and its aftermath have significantly reduced that counteracting force that the once great nation had provided to the world.



Bernard Heydorn

Now North Korea, China, and other dictatorships, are collecting nuclear "toys", and are lining up to engage in the nuclear game!

Not surprisingly, outer space has become the new frontier. Efforts are being made to stake a claim on the moon and set up permanent residence. There is even exploration to planets further afield, such as Mars and others in the solar system. The bottom of the sea is also a new frontier for exploration, exploitation, and discovery. Artificial intelligence is becoming a leading tool in many advances, be it in peace or war. The robot will soon be boss!

The last 100 years have turned the world upside down. Much has changed from the time I boarded a DC 3, Dakota aircraft in British Guiana in the late 1950s for a flight to Barbados. The "bone shaker" rattled me!

It is hard to imagine what the next century will bring. A lot more things are rattling our planet these days. One thing is for sure, we would not be around to witness the eve of destruction. If the creeks don't rise and the sun still shines, I'll be talking to you



Wind-damaged roof of a house with missing sheets of galvanise



Galvanised roofing sheets were blown off roofs

Roofs blown off as 'tornado-like' winds hit south Trinidad houses

Port-of-Spain – It was not a good adventure for residents of Bonne Aventure, Gasparillo in south Trinidad last week after they were left shaken and in shock from tornado-like winds that blew off roofs from houses and uprooted several trees.

To add to the residents' woes, torrential rain followed the loss of their roofs, which led to household belongings becoming thoroughly soaked.

Additionally, vehicles were also damaged, while power lines came down in the wake of the storm.

As reported by the media in Trinidad and Tobago, the extreme inclement weather took place on the afternoon of September 28.

Councillor for the area Ravi Pooran Maharaj told the local media that about 11 homes were damaged at Rahaman Drive, Phekoo Avenue, and Surprise Avenue. Thankfully, there were no injuries, he stated.

The weather event took place around 1 p.m., in what was about five minutes of terror for residents.

Speaking with the *Trinidad Express* last week, a resident from Rahaman Drive, Maureen Nobbee, said she was still shaking from the fright.

"It was like a real tornado. When the roof started pulling out, it was very loud," she said.

Nobbee was at home alone watching television, and preparing lunch at the time.

"I heard the galvanise start to shake and when I look up, I see the galvanise start to pull out and fly. I run in the kitchen. I turn off the stove and I try to come outside by the other door, and that is when I watch the roof from half of the house gone," she said.

She stayed in the kitchen and started making calls on her



Sheets of galvanise were blown away from houses and landed on the roadway

cellphone.

"I say this is what a natural disaster looks like. I get soaking wet inside my house," she declared.

The roof of her brother's house was also blown away, and the interior ceiling of another neighbour's house collapsed. The couple inside escaped unharmed.

Another resident, Stacia Andrews, said there was lightning and thunder as the rain fell.

While closing a window, Andrews said what then unfolded appeared to have been a tornado.

"I see this white thing spinning coming. It look like a tornado, and then it pass over the house, you just see the roof pulling. I get down low and stay in the house," she said.

Andrews runs a shop at the front of her house, which is located near the entrance to the Gasparillo Secondary School.

She sells food and other merchandise to pupils.

As she stated, she had losses of about (TT) \$500 following the passing of the storm. Items in the kitchen suffered water damage from rain, among them electronic gadgets, she stated.

Also, Andrew revealed that a roof fell on the hood of a car at her brother's business place, causing minor damage. Her brother is a mechanic, she said.

"Wind does come; wind does go, [then] nothing. But this [episode] shocked me," Andrews said.

Councillor Maharaj visited several of the residents last week, and spoke with the media afterwards.

"Persons said it was a tornado-like effect, but I've been advised it was a downburst... so it was described by a meteorologist, like a ripple effect of the breeze... originating at one point and just radiating outward," Maharaj said.

He added, "Trees were uprooted – I don't mean broken: they were uprooted, whole, entire roofs gone... It did a lot of damage."

Maharaj said at the Gasparillo Secondary School, branches fell and damaged a new vehicle.

He added, "Trees [at the school] looked as though they were pruned, and all the [fallen branches thrown aside]. It's not just a regular hard breeze; it was something intense. Nothing long, but it was intense. Big Downs tree almost uprooted. That is to give an indication how strong [the wind] was."

Following the event, initial assessments were done by the disaster unit at the Couva/Tabaquite/Talparo Regional Corporation (CTTRC), and tarpaulins distributed to temporarily cover roofs.

Residents also received forms to access grants from the National Commission for Self Help.

South residents continue to complain over poor water supply to homes

Port-of-Spain – A disabled man and his critically ill wife last week complained that their Hilltop Dive St Croix Road, Princes Town house has not received pipe borne water for approximately two months.

Razeek Mohammed told the media in Trinidad and Tobago that despite installing pipelines, and paying diligently paying his water rates, he now has to go on the hunt for water with buckets, kegs, and other plastic containers in order to meet his household's daily needs.

And as Mohammed also informed the media, he suffers with a disability that causes him to blackout without any warning. Also, his wife had a stroke, and cannot help him locate water, nor help him and lift the many containers.

Said Mohammed: "I have pipelines running to my home for more than 36 years, but I am having real water problems. It is approximately 60 days since I have not received water in my tap, yet I keep getting bills from [the Water and Sewerage Authority]. I am paying little by little for them not to cut my supply, but I can barely afford that because the public assistance I was getting was cut."

Mohammed says he has two tanks that are now empty. Also, that he requested water delivery from WASA using the company's WhatsApp service. However, he has not received a response.

"WASA told me they would open the line, but because I live on top of a hill, the pressure on the line is insufficient to send the water up the hill to fill my tanks," he stated.

People on the level below his house receive water, he said.

"Many times I have to borrow my brother's car and drive to



A section of containers Mohammed fills each day Borde Narve, where there is a standpipe, to fill my containers. I have been having this problem for years. Sometime around April, I had no water for 55 days, and now...I am in the same

situation again," Mohammed lamented.

Additionally, "WASA knows about my problem. My councillor knows about my problem. I just don't know what to do any more."

He also revealed that despite having a washing machine, he and his wife are now doing laundry by hand.

"I can't tell you when last we used the shower. We have to bathe from buckets. Fill the toilet tank to flush," he bemoaned.

As the media have documented, it has been months that Princes Town MP Barry Padarath, and several of his Opposition colleagues have been taking Public Utilities Minister Marvin Gonzales to task for what they claim is the suffering of their constituents.

The issue is impacting mainly residents in south and central Trinidad, and as both officials continue to point out, it is being caused by potable water not flowing to their houses.

Padarath has said that many parts of the country are at a critical stage, with regional corporations inundated with requests for truck-borne water.

And as he has noted, the problem is a combination of production and distribution issues, along with poor management and leadership in the water sector.

He has also advocated against WASA issuing bills to customers not getting a regular supply, and said rebates should be given to paying customers who do not receive a water supply.

WASA has acknowledged challenges in its distribution system to some elevated areas, but continues to state that it is working on improving its delivery.

ATM model not workable for T&T in crime surge – Kamla

Port-of-Spain – The banking community has been urged to reconsider directing the public and micro and small business operators to ATM for financial deposits. The request came from Opposition Leader, Kamla Persad-Bissessar last week.

In a news release on September 29, Persad-Bissessar noted that local commercial banks have lately been directing many transactions to ATMs. She added that while this may be a standard practice in other parts of the world, under the current crime surge in Trinidad and Tobago, such a move makes clients vulnerable to criminals.



Kamla Persad-Bissessar

“Since there are financial limits on each deposit transaction, a single customer could spend several minutes at an ATM machine, leading to long lines that quickly grow, leaving banking customers standing on the street with cash on their person for extended periods of time,” Persad-Bissessar said.

As she noted, bank customers standing on the street with cash occurs in environments where several customers have been assaulted and robbed, with some even killed, after visiting the bank.

Persad-Bissessar recalled an on-duty security officer being murdered while on duty at an ATM at Cunupia. She also noted there have been other instances of armed security guards being ambushed and attacked while transfer-

ring money. “Small business women and men are much more defenceless than armed security officers in the current atmosphere of rampant lawlessness, especially under a government that has all but given up on addressing the violent crime crisis citizens are facing today,” she said.

She added, “I strongly recommend that the Bankers Association critically review the diversion of deposit transactions to ATMs, and work toward creating the safest setting for its clients.”

In an online statement in July, BATT said it acknowledged that the group was concerned over the increased risk being faced by clients before and after they visit its branches and ATMs.

“In an effort to combat the uptick in these criminal activities, BATT has strengthened its coordination effort among all banks; broadened the interaction with the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service; and is finalising a partnership with Crime Stoppers Trinidad and Tobago Ltd with a view to mitigating and or managing incidents of this nature collectively and expeditiously,” it noted/

It also assured customers that their safety remained a primary concern of BATT, “and while we encourage clients to make greater use of our non-cash service options, we are committed to doing what we can to provide a safe environment for clients who choose to avail of our cash services”.

Budget increases minimum wage

Port-of-Spain – The government of Trinidad and Tobago kept in line with its promise to improve the economic situation of nationals with lower incomes when it increased the minimum wage by 17 percent effective January 1, 2024.

The move came when the government presented a (TT) \$59.209 billion budget in the House of Representatives for the fiscal year 2023-2024. The Budget presentation was made by Finance Minister Colm Imbert.

The government also approved a \$1 billion Christmas bonus package for public sector workers who have accepted the four percent wage increase. Also there will not be an increase in taxes for 2024.



Colm Imbert

In announcing the measures, Imbert said, “I propose to initiate action to minimise the country’s socio-economic imbalance and stimulate consumer spending aimed at economic expansion. To achieve this objective, I propose to increase the minimum wage by 17 percent, or \$3 per hour, from \$17.50 to \$20.50 per hour.”

Trade unions had advocated for an increase to \$30 an hour, but business chambers called on government to do a balancing act so those earning minimum wages would not be the first to be fired.

Imbert said, “This measure will benefit approximately 190,000 persons in the workforce, and will require an amendment to the Minimum Wages Act, Chapter 88:04 via a minimum wage order.”

He said it should be noted this pay rise will increase government expenditure by at least \$50 million per year. For those who work a basic 40-hour week, it would put an additional \$500 in their monthly pay packet.

“For those who currently work a 12-hour

shift at the minimum wage for a six-day week, like some security guards, this will increase their monthly take-home pay by over \$900 per month,” Imbert said.

He added, “The focus is on improving the well-being of every individual in our society so that they can reach their full potential. We are investing in our people.”

The government also made a deliberate decision to not increase or reduce any existing taxes in 2024, other than adjustments to the energy-sector tax regime to stimulate exploration and production, among a few other minor adjustments.

“In this year, 2024, we did not feel that we should impose any further burdens on our citizens, but rather, we should provide some relief in key areas to those at the lower end of the scale. Therefore, our fiscal and budgetary measures for 2024 are quite simple,” he declared.

Said Imbert: “We have provided \$1 billion in back pay for those 37,000 public-sector workers who have accepted our offer of a four percent increase, plus increases in some allowances. We shall also bring all those public-sector workers up to their new salary levels immediately, at a cost of an additional \$360 million per year. We are also exempting the one-off payment of \$4,000 to retirees from tax, which forms part of this process.”

Additionally, “I am also giving these 37,000 public-sector workers an undertaking that all ministries and agencies involved will be provided with the necessary funds to pay this \$1 billion in back pay by Christmas 2023. I am requesting all permanent secretaries and accounting officers to immediately start preparing the paperwork to achieve this deadline for these payments.”



Clients line up to enter a T&T bank

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The Golden Years of Indian Cinema



Marine Drive from the hotel room's balcony



Vidur at the Taj Mahal



Vidur at RK Studios

Unforgettable! Raj Kapoor in person!

By Vidur Dindayal

Memory is a blessed gift. It is a gorgeous window opening into a vast world of joyful moments of my past life, near and distant. Among these are enjoying the scene of beautiful Marine Drive in Bombay, India, from the balcony of my hotel. The other, was visiting RK (Raj Kapoor) studios and actually bumping into the film star in Kashmir. It was long ago.

In 1956, I travelled from then British Guiana in South America, by plane to Trinidad, then by ship across the Atlantic to Britain; and then from Liverpool, England, to Gibraltar, and through the Mediterranean Sea and Suez Canal to India.

My destination was the University of Delhi. For me at 21, the excitement was beyond words. In those days most people travelled by ship. Even today I cannot think how my parents felt, letting me go all that way, and in those days accepting that we won't see one another for years.

The ship docked at Bombay. I spent a week there before my last journey to Delhi. I made a friend on the ship who came from Trinidad. We stayed at the Sea Green Hotel, on Marine Drive. From the back of the hotel you could see the famous Brabourne Cricket Stadium. The balcony of our hotel room gave a box seat to all of Marine Drive. I believe film Star Nargis lived at Marine Drive at the time.

Being in Bombay, famous as the Indian film city, I could not miss a visit to RK Studios. I phoned and found out whether I could visit. The man who answered the call replied with a positive "Yes". Without delay I got out, took the train and headed to Chembur, the site of RK Studios.

I arrived at an office building. The studios were at the back. I met the man who spoke on the phone. He welcomed me, and said I could look around, but that there was not much happening then at daytime; if I wanted to see some shooting I would have to come in the evening. This I did.

But I could not leave the place without nosing around. I had some help from a boy who probably lived nearby and regularly meets people like me who visit the studio. Back of the office is an open area. There was what looked like a Fort-high brick structure with a brick step up the wall to the top. There was nothing behind the wall. I enjoyed looking around and pictured myself acting out a part of sword fencing with the Fort as background.

The boy who showed me around asked me if I would eat anything. He took me to a restaurant nearby. He knew his way around, and he even ordered for me curry and chapati. In gratitude for his kindness I bought him lunch too. Afterwards, we parted.

That night my Trinidad friend and I got into a taxi and headed straight for the studios, as the man said there would be

shooting. Indeed there was. We were showed into a large space, more like a large tent, with what looked like walls but painted to look like hills in the background. And right in front of us was a small pond with vegetation all around.

Shooting had begun. Some ladies were dancing to music being played on a gramophone. The man who was in the office in the morning was also an actor. He had a large moustache and make-up which made him look like a participant in the piece being shot.

Gramophone music was played over and over again and the ladies were dancing. That was all about the shooting; not much to write home about, except it was how they do filming. The proper music would be added to the film later. It was an experience, and that too about filming at a film studio.

I saw the man, the great icon Raj Kapoor, in real life in the summer of 1958, in Kashmir. They were doing some shooting there at Pahalgam.

Around 50 or so foreign students, myself included, were on a summer camp for over a month in Kashmir. This was arranged for foreign students by the Indian Council for Cultural Relations. It is a non-governmental organisation like the British Council. Not long before, it was headed by Kaka Saheb Kalelkar. I think he had visited Guyana and my father met him. He was an Indian social reformer, historian, educationist, and journalist.

We stayed in houseboats at Srinagar, the capital of Kashmir. A government minister visited us there at Srinagar and gave us a talk. We also met the Kashmir Chief Minister at a special reception held for visiting Indian film celebrities. There I saw the beautiful Nalini Jaywant, Shashikala, Shyama, Yakub, and others.

From Srinagar, we went uphill to the resort at Pahalgam, where we stayed in tents, and then uphill again to Gulmarg. There for the first time I saw real snow. It was like crushed ice.

At Pahalgam, our tents were set up next to a narrow river running by. In the morning we would go to the riverside to wash and brush our teeth. The water was cold. A bridge across the river was near to us. That took us into the main street of the small town of Pahalgam.

One day I was walking along the street with a few friends. Walking towards us was Raj Kapoor, the man himself, chatting along with two of his friends. My friend said, "Did you see him?"

I asked, "Who?" He replied, "That was Raj Kapoor!"

I could not believe my eyes. I looked. Yes, it was Raj Kapoor. It seems local people did not make much of it.

As I recall, there was no cinema there and it was regular in the summer for film celebrities to visit places like Pahalgam, to



Fort set for filming at the back of RK Studios



RK Studios. 1956 photos by Vidur Dindayal

do shooting, or simply take a break.

It was not like the crowded cities, such as Bombay, where there would be crowds, and celebrities such as Raj Kapoor would be surrounded by lots of fans.

That evening a few of us foreign students visited the clubhouse at Pahalgam. There, was the man himself, enjoying a game of table tennis, with some of his friends. A couple of us joined in as well.

Unforgettable! Raj Kapoor himself – in person! Wow!

Lyrics no longer rooted in today's film narratives

Poet-lyricist Javed Akhtar says lyrics today do not work the way they did earlier because they are not rooted in a film's story and its emotions.

The 78-year-old has written some immortal lyrics for songs such as *Yeh Kahan Aa Gaye Hum* for *Silsila* (1981), *Ek Ladki Ko Dekha* for *1942: A Love Story* (1994), and *Jashn-e-Bahara* for *Jodhaa Akbar* (2008), to name a few.

"It is not that writers can't write good songs, it is that they are not getting an opportunity to write good songs. There are a number of reasons why songs have become forgettable. One, the tempo and beat have become very high. Two, most songs are in the background today, there is no lip-sync anymore," Akhtar told *PTI*.

Javed Akhtar said that since the songs are no longer a part of the story, they lack personal feelings of sadness, happiness, and heartbreak.

"Songs today are played in a generic situation, it is playing in the background. Earlier, songs were used to capture a particular human emotion, and would be part of the story. The character

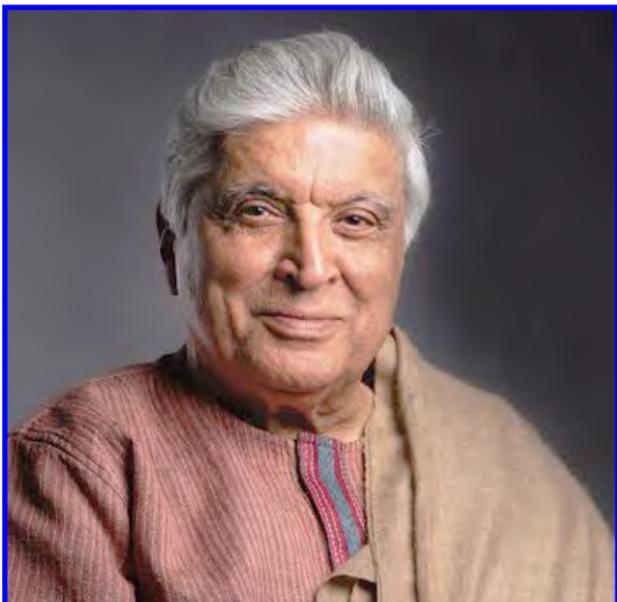
would lip-sync so it used to become a part of the drama. A song was like a scene," he said.

According to the lyricist, most of the songs are set to high-tempo music where the human mind gets only a fraction of a second to register the word.

"The tempo of songs has become high and frantic that the voice loses its value. Words only go deep into your psyche or your hearing when there is some space for the words. When you have a fraction of seconds to register the word, if the tune is so fast, the words become irrelevant," Akhtar noted.

Javed Akhtar was recently in New Delhi to attend a session and book signing event organised by real estate developer The Anant Raj Corporation. He talked about his biography *Talking Life*, which is written by documentary filmmaker and writer on films, Nasreen Munni Kabir.

A conversational biography, in *Talking Life* Akhtar looks back at his struggles, mistakes, and his penchant for swimming against the tide. The book is the final part in the trilogy that includes *Talking Films* and *Talking Songs*.



Javed Akhtar



Arjun Rampal pitches in at Miramar Beach



Akshay Kumar at work in the clean-up initiative

India's award-winning actors make a clean sweep

In a display of commitment to environmental conservation, Bollywood actor Arjun Rampal teamed up with renowned filmmaker-actor Rahul Mittra and Akshay Kumar to participate in a clean-up drive at Miramar Beach in Goa.

This eco-conscious initiative, organised in alignment with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's call for Ek Tareekh Ek Ghanta Ek Sath on October 1, 2023, witnessed an enthusiastic turnout of nature enthusiasts, school children, and youth, who joined hands with these celebrities to make a cleaner and greener India.

Arjun's commitment to the cause was evident as he carried and filled garbage bags to clean up the beach. His dedication and willingness to actively participate in the cleanup resonated with the gathered crowd.

Images shared on his Instagram account showed a side of the actor that fans love to see.

"It's our responsibility to leave a clean planet for our successive generations," declared the actor, highlighting the vital importance of preserving the environment for future generations.

Sharing the pictures from the event, Arjun wrote in caption, "A morning well spent in cleaning our mess. A beach clean up initiative of honourable Prime Minister @narendramodi ji call for #ektareekhekgghantaeksaath shramdaan for swachh-hata. Organised by Principle director of IT. Shri #SushilMadhuk #goatourism #rotaryclub #elshaddai. And a large amount of volunteers and environmental enthusiasts. Great job everyone. I hope everyone around our country doing their bit. #SwachhataHiSeva #CleanlinessCampaign #miramarbeach

#Goa. #1stOct."

Arjun's participation in the cleanliness drive at Miramar Beach in Goa showcases his unwavering commitment to environmental conservation. As his fans eagerly await the release of his movie *Bhagavant Kesari* with co-star Nandamuri Balakrishna, they have all applauded this dedicated gesture from the actor.

And sharing a picture of the same clean-up drive, Akshay Kumar wrote, "Cleanliness is not just about physical spaces, it is a state of mind. Being out of the country couldn't stop me from paying a tribute to Swachhata Abhiyan. So I would say wherever you are, do your bit to keep your space, and mind, clutter free. #SwachhataHiSeva."

As soon as he shared the picture, fans poured their love for the actor in the comments section. Reacting to the picture, a user wrote, "Real Hero #akshaykumar" while another comment read, "One of the best actor in country."

Several fans also dropped heart emoticons in the comments section.

Ek Tareekh Ek Ghanta is an initiative by the Indian Ministry of Labour and Employment calling on citizens to engage in efforts to promote community service and cleanliness.

During the on-going Swachhata Hi Seva campaign, which began on September 15, the Ministry of Labour and Employment is encouraged by the following achievements: a total of 248 SHS activities organised; participation from 5,726 persons; and a collective contribution of 6,196 man-hours in the Swachhata Hi Seva portal.

Annu Kapoor gets crash course in online fraud

Bollywood actor Annu Kapoor was cheated last year of Rs. 4.36 lakh by an online fraudster. According to police and media reports, the fraud occurred after Kapoor was approached by someone posing as a bank official seeking to collect information for its Know Your Customer database.

At the time of the incident, Kapoor was starring in the 2022 Prime Video series, *Crash Course*.

Police was approached immediately after Kapoor discovered the fraud, and according to an October 1, 2022 report, Rs. 3.08 lakh was returned.

A media report by NDTV stated that Kapoor received a phone call from a man posing as an employee of a bank on September 29, 2022.

The person told the actor he needed to update his KYC form. Annu Kapoor then shared bank details with the fraudster, and even the One Time Password, according to an Oshiwara police station official.

The official said, "Sometime later, the caller transferred Rs. 4.36 lakh from Mr Kapoor's account to two other accounts in two transactions. However, the bank immediately called him up to inform him about the transaction, and also told him his account was compromised."

Kapoor reportedly approached the police, and banks were informed to freeze the accounts.

"Both the accounts [were] frozen by these banks and Kapoor will get back Rs. 3.08 lakh," the official said.

A case was also registered under the Indian Penal Code and Information Technology Act provisions.

In November last year, police said a 28-year-old man was arrested from Mumbai. The accused, Ashih Paswar, was apprehended in suburban Andheri. He is from Darbhanga in Bihar, and earns commission by helping people open bank accounts, police said.



Annu Kapoor



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Ravichandran Ashwin

Off spinner Ashwin on India's WC team

Veteran off spinner Ravichandran Ashwin was last week named in India's final 15-man squad for the upcoming World Cup, replacing Axar Patel who is in the provisional squad, but is still recovering a left quadriceps strain. Patel suffered the injury in the Asia Cup match against Bangladesh on September 15.

As the cricket website *Cricbuzz* reported, Ashwin worked his way up for his return in two of the three home ODIs against Australia, picking up four wickets in the two matches. He took 3 for 41 in the second ODI in Indore, with Australia's David Warner and Marnus Labuschagne encountering turbulence with the different varieties of Ashwin's carrom balls. Both batsmen had difficulty navigating Ashwin on what was a very good batting track at the Holkar Stadium.

Ashwin's inclusion adds an off spinner to India's squad alongside Ravindra Jadeja's left-arm orthodox, and Kuldeep Yadav's left-arm wrist-spin, making it a complete spin attack going into the tournament.

Ahead of the final ODI in Rajkot, Rohit had spoken highly of

Ashwin's ability to deliver in the big moments.

Said Rohit: "He has got the class and the experience of playing the sport and handling the pressure. It is just that he has not played ODIs in the last year or so, but you cannot take away the class and the experience... and in the last couple of games we saw how well he bowled."

This will be Ashwin's third ODI World Cup, and his second at home. He was a part of India's victorious campaign in 2011, and he also went on to play the 2015 edition in Australia.

However, he was not picked for the 2019 edition when India decided on two leg spinners, but since then, the team management has found a way to return finger-spin into the game plan.

Full Squad

Rohit Sharma (captain), Shubman Gill, Virat Kohli, Shreyas Iyer, K.L. Rahul (wicketkeeper), Ishan Kishan (wicketkeeper), Suryakumar Yadav, Hardik Pandya (vice captain), Ravindra Jadeja, Ravichandran Ashwin, Kuldeep Yadav, Shardul Thakur, Mohammed Shami, Mohammed Siraj, and Jasprit Bumrah.



Nicholas Pooran

Wildcard pick for Pooran

West Indies T20 batter Nicholas Pooran was last week unveiled as the Durban's Super Giants wildcard pick ahead of the SA20 auction that took place in Johannesburg, *ESPNcricinfo* has reported.

This is Pooran's first-time appearance in the tournament. He will represent the same owners he plays for in the Indian Premier League. He has been performing with the bat, with a confident reminder of his capabilities noted in his 51-ball hundred during the recently-concluded Caribbean Premier League. He acquired the runs with his team, Trinbago Knight Riders, which played in the final, but lost to Guyana's Amazon Warriors.

He was also the highest scorer in the inaugural Major League Cricket tournament in the US earlier this year. It was a helpful performance as captain for his team, MI New York, which took the title. So far, Pooran has hit 5,861 T20 runs, with a strike rate of 144. His career has so far seen him in 292 matches over a span of ten years.

T&T, region, US to host ICC T20 2024

Trinidad and Tobago is among the seven Caribbean countries that will be hosting matches at next year's ICC T20 Cricket World Cup. The event is being jointly hosted by the West Indies and the US.

The Caribbean media reported last week on an ICC release that also confirmed Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Dominica, Guyana, St Lucia, and St Vincent and the Grenadines as the other Caribbean hosts.

In the US, Dallas, Florida, and New York have also been announced as hosts for the marquee T20 competition that will run from June 4-20, 2024.

ICC CEO Geoff Allardice said he was excited about the staging of the biggest-ever World Cup.

"We're delighted to announce the seven Caribbean venues that will host the biggest ICC Men's T20 World Cup ever staged, with 20 teams competing for the trophy. They're all popular venues with players and fans alike that will provide a wonderful backdrop to the event," Allardice said.

He added, "This will be the third ICC senior men's event hosted by the West Indies, and the matches will again give cricket fans the unique experience of enjoying cricket in the Caribbean. I would like to thank Cricket West Indies and the seven host governments for their continued commitment and support of our sport."

West Indies won the T20 World Cup on two occasions (2012 and 2016). However, the team failed to qualify for the 2022 edition, and were knocked out of the 2021 T20 World Cup at the Super 12s stage.

CWI CEO Johnny Grave said hosting the event was an "exciting moment" for the region.

"We are grateful to the host governments of the Caribbean for their overwhelming responses and enthusiasm for hosting what will be the most significant sporting event held in our region for a generation," Grave said.

He added, "We are confident that together we will deliver a world-class tournament showcasing the best this region has to offer with our unique culture and carnival atmosphere that will ensure there is a real celebration of the sport next June."

The Trinidad and Tobago Cricket Board was also excited about the development, with its first vice president Arjoon Ramlal saying they were happy to host a major ICC event once again.

"We feel proud to be named as one of the countries hosting T20 World Cup matches. We feel confident that we will be able to showcase Trinidad and Tobago to the rest of the world in a very positive way," Ramlal told the local media.

Additionally, "We are confident about the administrative and organisational ability of the personnel here to host such a mega event. We did it in 2007 by hosting matches in the 50-over World Cup. We look forward to it, and we embrace it as an opportunity – not only for us – but for all of Trinidad and Tobago."

The number of games Trinidad and Tobago will host is not yet available.

However, Ramlal said he was confident matches can be held at both the northern Queen's Park Oval, and at the Brian Lara Cricket Academy in central Trinidad.

"We have two international venues... The more the merrier for us. A lot of the internationals who have played at those venues like [both cricket fields]."

Both venues are now staple locations for the Caribbean Premier League, which is in its 11th year.

So far, 15 of the 20 World Cup teams have already been confirmed, with the Americas, Asia, and Africa qualifiers set to determine the remaining five spots in the coming months.

England are the defending T20 World Cup champions. England and WI are the only teams with multiple T20 World Cup titles.



Geoff Allardice



Johnny Grave



Naveen-ul-Haq

In a social media message, Naveen said it was not an "easy decision" to retire, but one that he made in order to "prolong my playing career".

He added, "It has been an absolute honour to represent my country, and I would like to announce my retirement from the ODI format at end of this World Cup, and will continue to wear this blue jersey in T20 cricket for my country."

Also, "It hasn't been an easy decision to make but to prolong my playing career, I had to take this tough decision would like to thank the Afghanistan Cricket Board and all my fans for their support and unwavering love."

Afghanistan are set to begin their World Cup campaign against Bangladesh on October 7 in Dharamsala.



England women's London Spirit following their maiden win of The Hundred this year

ECB not ready for equal pay targets for women

Higher pay for men continues to outpace fees earned by women in English cricket. Last week the England and Wales Cricket Board indicated that equal pay targets for men and women set out in a major report on Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion in cricket cannot be committed to at this time, the *Independent* reported last week.

According to the British publication, the Independent Commission for Equity in Cricket report published in June found that women in the sport were treated as "second class citizens". Along with this statement, the ICEC recommended that the ECB strive to ensure equal pay on average at domestic level by 2029, and at international level by 2030.

The ICEC report authors said they had received credible evidence that in international white-ball cricket, where there is a broadly equivalent amount of play, the average salary for England women was 20.6 percent of the average salary for England men in 2021.

The report also found the total spent on women's salaries in The Hundred was 25 percent of what was spent on men's salaries.

However, while the ECB is determined to close the gap, it has not committed itself to the report's timeline for achieving equality.

ECB Chief executive Richard Gould said: "(Equal pay on average) is something that we would like to achieve. We know though that we need to accelerate the growth of the commercial element of the women's game. Broadcast value is the key determinant in any of these sports, and that is something we are going to have to deliver on."

He added, "That is why we want to be open and honest and say that is not necessarily something we can do within those timescales, but we'll have a good go. Most of our current major broadcast contract runs until the end of 2028. We know we've got a journey on there. Can we do it in one broadcast cycle? I don't know is the answer. But we're going to do whatever we can."

ECB deputy chief executive Clare Connor said there was a "live conversation" ongoing about England Women playing a Test match at Lord's, after the ICEC report highlighted that one



Clare Connor

has not been played there to date.

The ICEC report, which was based on evidence gathered from over 4,200 individuals and organisations connected to cricket, found racism was entrenched in the sport, and that women routinely experienced sexism and misogyny.

It also found the sport to be elitist, highlighting cost barriers within the talent pathway, and also issues around cricket's regulatory and complaints procedures.

Last month the ECB set out its formal response that included commitments to investing £25 million per year above the revenue it receives from the women's game into growing women's and girls' cricket at all levels. It also committed to removing finance as a barrier in the talent pathway by 2025.

Also, developing action plans to tackle specific barriers facing state school and Black children; setting up a new Cricket Regulator independent of the ECB, to act as prosecutor in disciplinary cases, in time for the 2024 season, and commissioning annual assurance checks to ensure the Regulator is truly independent.

The plan is to also enhance EDI standards for counties, including more ambitious targets for gender and ethnic diversity; assessing counties' performance against minimum EDI standards; and having the power to reallocate matches from venues if there is evidence of non-compliance.

Said Gould: "I reaffirm our absolute commitment that cricket will strive to become the most inclusive sport in England and Wales. This response represents a set of actions that will accelerate and intensify our work to make cricket a game for everyone, actions that cricket can deliver and fund within an achievable timeframe."

He added, "It builds on a huge amount of work which is already under way right across the network. Cricket hasn't got it right in the past, but this is an opportunity to move forward together. I would urge everyone to now come together, to put their energy and effort into delivering these actions, and to playing their part in ensuring cricket becomes England and Wales's most inclusive team sport."

Bangladesh's Sakib warned about misogyny

Bangladesh cricketer Tanzim Sakib was last week warned to not make social media posts that could impact on and hurt public sentiment.

As the cricket website *Cricbuzz* reported, Sakib found himself embroiled in controversy following misogynistic social media posts condemning working women.

His cricket star is now rising following a remarkable debut against India in the recently concluded Asia Cup. He has also played 12 first-class matches in his short senior career after helping Bangladesh win the Under-19 World Cup in 2020.

However, last month he came into the spotlight for all the wrong reasons after his post hurt public sentiment, and raised eyebrows over his religious belief, *Cricbuzz* reported.

As was reported, last year Sakib posted to *Facebook*: "If the wife works, the husband's rights are not ensured. If the wife works, the child's rights are not ensured. If the wife works, her elegance is damaged."



Tanzim Sakib

He also stated earlier that sons would not have a "modest" mother if men married "a woman who is accustomed to free mixing with her male friends in a university".

Both posts went viral hours after he made a notable debut against India, *Cricbuzz* noted.

Last week a BCB official said the board spoke with Sakib following the development coming to their attention. The official added with the World Cup coming up, they were only proceeding now with a warning. However, he would not be spared if he is found guilty in the future.

"We had a discussion with Tanzim Sakib, and wanted to know about the *Facebook* post. He said that he did not post it to hurt anyone; rather, he posted for his own self, and even if it hurt someone, he is sorry for that," BCB's cricket operation chairman Jalal Yunus said.

Yunus added, "He said he was sorry. We have warned him so that he does not put up such posts in the future, and he said he will remain away from making such kind of comments."

WC Cricket Schedule

(Oct. Matches ALL TIMES LOCAL)

Thursday October 5

1st Match (D/N), England vs New Zealand, Ahmedabad, 2:00 p.m.

Friday October 6

2nd Match (D/N), Netherlands vs Pakistan, Hyderabad, 2:00 p.m.

3rd Match, Afghanistan vs Bangladesh, Dharamsala, 10:30 a.m. Local

Saturday October 7,

South Africa vs Sri Lanka, Delhi, 2:00 p.m.

Sunday October 8

5th Match (D/N), Ind. vs Aus., Chennai, 2:00 p.m.

Monday October 9

6th Match (D/N), Netherlands vs New Zealand, Hyderabad, 2:00 p.m.

7th Match, Bangladesh vs England, Dharamsala, 10:30 a.m.

Tuesday October 10

8th Match (D/N), Pakistan vs Sri Lanka, Hyderabad, 2:00 p.m.

Wednesday October 11

9th Match (D/N), India vs Afghanistan, Delhi, ICC Cricket World Cup, 2:00 p.m.

Thursday October 12

10th Match (D/N), Australia vs South Africa, Lucknow, 2:00 p.m.

Friday October 13

11th Match (D/N), Bangladesh vs New Zealand, Chennai, 2:00 p.m.

Saturday October 14

12th Match (D/N), India vs Pakistan, Ahmedabad, 2:00 p.m.

Sunday October 15

13th Match (D/N), Afghanistan vs England, Delhi, 2:00 p.m.

Monday October 16

14th Match (D/N), Australia vs Sri Lanka, Lucknow, 2:00 p.m.

Tuesday October 17

15th Match (D/N), Netherlands vs South Africa, Dharamsala, 2:00 p.m.

Wednesday October 18

16th Match (D/N), New Zealand vs Afghanistan, Chennai, 2:00 p.m.

Thursday October 19

17th Match (D/N), India vs Ban., Pune, 2:00 p.m.

Friday October 20

18th Match (D/N), Aus. vs Pakistan, 2:00 p.m.

19th Match, Netherlands vs Sri Lanka, Lucknow, 10:30 a.m.

Saturday October 21

20th Match (D/N), England vs South Africa, Wankhede, 2:00 p.m.

Sunday October 22

21st Match (D/N), India vs New Zealand, Dharamsala, ICC Cricket World Cup, 2:00 pm

Monday October 23

22nd Match (D/N), Afg. vs Pakistan, 2:00 pm

Tuesday October 24

23rd Match (D/N), Bangladesh vs South Africa, Wankhede, 2:00 p.m.

Wednesday October 25

24th Match (D/N), Aus. vs Nether., 2:00 p.m.

Thursday October 26

25th Match (D/N), England vs Sri Lanka, Bengaluru, 2:00 p.m.

Friday October 27

26th Match (D/N), Pakistan vs South Africa, Chennai, 2:00 p.m.

27th Match, Australia vs New Zealand, Dharamsala, 10:30 a.m.

Saturday October 28

28th Match (D/N), Bangladesh vs Netherlands, Eden Gardens, ICC Cricket World Cup, 2:00 p.m.

Sunday October 29

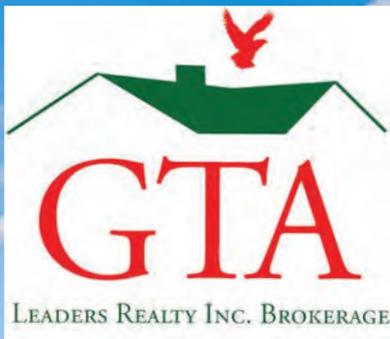
29th Match (D/N), Afghanistan vs Sri Lanka, Lucknow, 2:00 p.m.

Monday October 30

30th Match (D/N), Afghanistan vs Sri Lanka, Pune, 2:00 p.m.

Tuesday October 31

31st Match (D/N), Ban. vs Pakistan, 2:00 p.m.



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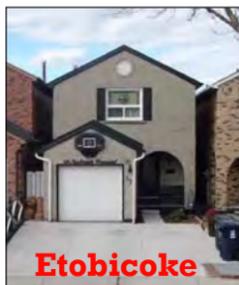
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